

# THE SPOKESMAN



July 25, 2020

## Worship Updates from the Pastors' Desks

### ***Weekly Communion -- The Fast Is Over!***

By now many people know that the first Sunday of the month is Drive-in Communion in the parking lot at St. John's from 8am to 10am. One of your pastors will be there vested and ready to serve you at a distance, with the service broadcast to your car's radio. These will continue to be offered as an in-person way to share the meal together.

Now we are going to offer a new way for us to commune together weekly online. Starting on Sunday, August 9th we will do communion during our 9am Worship Watch Party on Zoom. Because we believe communion is an event that takes place in real time as the people of God gather with bread and the cup in their midst, we have fasted while we were not gathering. When we were only offering pre-recorded worship on YouTube, we refrained from communion because we were not meeting in real time. Now that we have been doing worship together live on Zoom, we want to try this new way of sharing the meal.

You will be invited to collect the elements – bread and wine or grape juice – in your own homes, finding a space that can become an altar in your midst. At 8:45am we'll gather for pre-worship chat. At 9am we will worship together with the same worship prepared ahead of time, stopping the video after the Prayers of the People. At that time we will prepare our communion tables and the pastor will preside at communion in their own home.

We know God promises that where two or three gather Christ is there, and we are being thoughtful about how that looks in a time of gathering virtually. Last month, we celebrated a baptism during this live Watch Party, and it was very meaningful. We hope this will also be a meaningful way to experience one of the central pieces of our liturgy in this time of extended time apart.

### ***Coming Soon – R2 (Refreshment and Renewal) Online Worship Experience***

Pastor Amy and Eliseo Paniagua are working on a new real-time worship experience that will be a little different than the Sunday morning "Worship in Place". We hope to launch on Sunday, August 23rd at 5pm on Zoom. More information is coming soon!

Sincerely,

**Pastor Amy Kienzle**

# Our Journey Through The Unexpected

**Steven Johnson**  
**Director of Music & Worship**

Since the onset of mandated social distancing protocols and witnessing the barriers they create, I've come to understand that while we are all experiencing the same storm, we are all navigating different boats through a sea of spiritual waters.

For us creative types, whose craft is dependent upon engaging large groups of people in close proximity, our worlds have been turned upside down. We are required to create and plan well outside the box (even outdoors) while learning, cultivating and harnessing various technologies that enable us to present our works within the existing safety protocols.

Working within these parameters leaves you a bit fatigued and numb at times. Everything is now developed in relative isolation through the computer screen. The word "Zoom" has taken on a new definition and is now synonymous with video conferencing, virtual open houses, and a myriad of other online conversations and 'social' gatherings.

I mention the obvious only to illuminate the duality of the environment in which we now plan and produce the music that brings us together in faith, hope and love. Curating a liturgical experience that uplifts, unites and ushers in the holy spirit is now a much more tempered and technical process.

In the midst of it all, I am pleased to introduce several creative and connective projects in the works that will engage our members and enrich the spirit of St. John's as we make our way through the summer and fall.

## **A Living Labyrinth: (Postponed until Sunday, August 23rd)**

As discussed earlier this year, I was charged with developing an outdoor worship opportunity for those wishing to gather and connect with others. Given social distancing, gathering in larger groups has been off limits, especially indoors. and It occurred to me we could provide a worship opportunity for 'larger' numbers of people.

The Labyrinth will allow participants to gather and participate in smaller groups of 8-10. The idea of a spiritual pilgrimage spawned the idea of creating The Living Labyrinth. It will take place within a city block of Land Park. And it will allow participants to gather and participate in smaller groups of 8-10 with a more intentional inward focus and deeper communion with nature. (Kind of like walking the El Camino de Santiago in Spain or the Pilgrims' Way in England.)

The labyrinth will consist of seven varied places to stop and participate in prayerful and meditative rituals. Each group will be scheduled for every 15 minutes and the entire experience will last 40-60 minutes.

I am not going to reveal any other details and spoil the element of surprise.

Come walk with us in August.

## The foundation for the Living Labyrinth

*"An early 6th Century theologian described God as 'beguiled by beauty'. The creator was lured by a longing for beauty and so set in motion a world of immense diversity and beauty. We were made for this Divine Goodness. We were made inherently worthy, not by our 'doing,' but by our simply being. All things are beautiful - not by a standard of 'pretty' as seen by our eyes, but by the essence of sacred worth that is known by the spirit. This is the root and heart of all compassion and justice. Practices of contemplation help focus our gaze to these deeper truths. In walking and participating in the Living Labyrinth, we will dwell with the God of Divine Goodness, deeply in love with us, and practice ways to return that love as we fall more deeply in love with creation, our creator and one another."*

*Scripture (Beguiled by Beauty) Ezekiel 31: 3-7:*

*"Look to Assyria, once a Lebanon cedar beautiful branches, dense shade, towering height; its top among the clouds. Springs nourished it, and deep waters made it grow tall; their streams flowed around its base, sending their channels to all trees in the countryside... It was majestic in its beauty with its spreading boughs, its roots reaching deeply into an abundance of water."*

**St. John's Youth Choir:** We have a small but steady group of youth cantors participating in weekly Zoom gatherings to sing camp songs. The opportunity to engage with each other, in addition to singing, has been meaningful and fun. Parents are appreciative of the extracurricular activities the church is providing every Wednesday at 4pm.

**Sacramento Children's Chorus Collaborative:** I have been asked to facilitate an online collaborative with the Sacramento Children's Chorus and the members of St. John's Youth Choir. Eliseo and I will be working together to schedule, facilitate and implement the various stages of production required to create these projects. The events will begin in late August and conclude near the end of November. We will announce more details later. Stay tuned. This will be a wonderful collaboration with one of our significant community ministry partners. St. John's "VIRTUAL" Choir: I am SO PROUD of the choir members who are embracing technology and their willingness to be vulnerable while encountering the challenges that singing alone into a microphone and listening to an accompaniment track can impose. This virtual singing "gig" is self-revealing and it's easy to cast judgment on yourself. We are all in the SAME BOAT as far as this project is concerned. Currently, we are working on three anthems that will become part of the Worship in Place videos later this summer and fall.

**Recording Sessions for Worship in Place:** We are now recording music for Worship in Place with one singer in the room at a time. Virtually no contact with anyone other than the voices within the headsets. This creates a much more complex approach to creating choral music than singing with a few voices at a time. (A shout out to John Bologni for the expertise and high level of professionalism that he brings to the music environment). We are all adhering to safety protocols. For those of us participating in this weekly music recording session, it is a meaningful and rewarding experience we all look forward to.

**The Heart of The Matter:** Do you have a table grace that is a meaningful part of your faith practices? A favorite bedtime prayer that you have passed along to your children or that has been passed along to you? A poem or scripture passage that you find especially comforting and connects you to a deeper and more significant relationship with God? If so, you are invited to share those prayers and scripture passages by sending them to: 1701HeartofGod@gmail.com.

There are plans in the works to create musical and narrative settings of prayers, scriptures and table graces that would then be crafted into individual virtual videos that could be shared with all households as a meaningful way to connect with each other in these days when we can't gather as a group. Please share your submissions.

**On A Personal Note:** For this year's continuing education endeavor, I have taken on a mentor/coach in learning music notation software (Sibelius) and in learning the seemingly endless and pertinent music engraving rules, such as how notes, rhythms and articulations need to appear on the printed page.

I have always handwritten my compositions and handed them over to someone to properly engrave them. The time has come to take ownership of this craft. Progress in this endeavor hasn't come without a heavy lift in focus and brainpower. I am already seeing a portal of significant insight and learning that will greatly aid my own ability to compose and arrange new inspired music.

Virtual projects take a significantly longer time to coordinate, plan, rehearse and assemble the varying moving parts. While this journey was completely unexpected, I am delighted with the way so many of our choir members have embraced the challenge and continue to give of their voices to elevate the Spirit of St. John's in music and song. I have come to know that the meaningful and purposeful aspects of life, those that give greater understanding of ourselves and of God, will always find ways to express themselves. Together we are living examples of God's deep and abiding love.

Virtually Yours,

**Steven Johnson**  
**Director of Music and Worship**

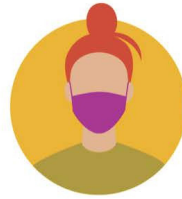


# WEAR A MASK.

Slow the spread.

[covid19.ca.gov](https://covid19.ca.gov)

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## COVID-19 - What is St. John's doing?

**Linda Baldwin**  
**Executive Director, Administration**

Since that first day in March when Sacramento County ordered its Stay at Home Order, we have been keeping a close eye on all available information from national, state, and local authorities, as well as trusted researchers.

All staff, except property staff, have been working from home since then. Property staff are on site to assure St. John's remains a "well-oiled machine", ready for us when we return. As you know, we are filming our Worship in Place services in the sanctuary, and following strict protocols to keep everyone safe. Although the office is closed, St. John's is still very active and available to you and our neighbors. Our leaders have kept all of our ministry areas alive and well in creative new ways.

Back in April, we thoughtfully put together a reopening plan when we thought we might gather together again in a couple of weeks or month. Since then, we have continued to gather information, listen to the latest orders, and watch current COVID-19 positive rates and hospitalizations. We know now that the first plan drafted is no longer relevant. And so, we continue to tweak plans, and realize we are in this for the long haul. While it is a work in progress, we have a framework/template to build on that will allow us to add current and relevant protocols when we do return.

What does this all mean for St. John's now? It means that we know that this is not a one-size-fits-all plan. We cannot borrow from another church who may be in a different county, or state. And, we know that we must continue to closely monitor new information.

It also means that we have learned that this is a marathon, not a sprint. It is important for St. John's to approach the reopening process with a commitment to persistence, grounded in the reminder in 2 Timothy 4:7 that we are called to finish the race; not win the first lap. We know that this kind of "marathon" mindset means that church members may have different viewpoints on what the right timing is, what risk level is or isn't acceptable, and how this should be done. We ask that you put your trust in us, the leadership staff at St. John's, to know that we will continually work to create a reopening plan that will keep our members, neighbors, and friends safe and healthy for the long run. Our calling is to remain faithful, to love our neighbors as ourselves and serve our community both today, next month, next year, and for years to come.

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We have also learned that reopening is not a linear process in which we only progress forward. It's okay to take steps backward when we receive new information or when the infection rates continue to climb. You will remember we recently postponed the Living Labyrinth for this reason.

**There is good news:** As the church we are uniquely prepared for this challenging season. St. John's is not identified only by the walls around us or by our beautiful sanctuary, but rather in our fellowship with Christ and our mission to share that broadly. As the church, we find opportunity to focus not on what we lack in this moment, but on what we uniquely bring to it. We can bring meaning to what feels like chaos. We can bring a message of hope to those who feel hopeless. And you, our members, are very much part of this calling, to continue the good work you all do, every day, by Living God's Love in the World.

## Scholarship Committee Announce Winners

It is with great pleasure that the Scholarship Committee announces the winners of this year's St. John's Scholarship and the Morgan Awards.

Aiden Burns is this year's recipient of the \$3,000 St. John's Scholarship. Aiden has shown himself as a servant leader, from his years in Boy Scouts to his organization of Family Promise dinners. At the University of New Mexico, Aiden plans on pursuing his passions in science, with the goal of either becoming a physicist or environmental scientist.

Our two winners of the Morgan Awards are Adam Montiel and Annika Remme. These two remarkable people have endured great challenges for ones so young, and yet, they remained committed to showing grace and grit through it all. Adam and Annika plan on attending Sacramento City College and American River College, respectively.

We couldn't be more proud of these fine young people who have demonstrated what it means to Live God's Love in the World!

## Worship in Place Breakdown

A red circle with a black border containing the number 42 in white.

42

Total number of countries that have had website visitors log onto [stjohnslc.org](http://stjohnslc.org).

A red circle with a black border containing the number 21,268 in white.

21,268

Total number of unique pageviews ([stjohnslc.org](http://stjohnslc.org)) since March 22, 2020.

A red circle with a black border containing the number 14,852 in white.

14,852

Number of views on our YouTube Channel since March 22, 2020.

A red circle with a black border containing the number 5,912 in white.

5,912

Total number of views of our Virtual Coffee Hour on Facebook Live since March 22, 2020.



## Summer 2020 in Youth Ministry

**Sarah Jessop Street**

**Assistant Director of Youth & Family Ministry**



This has been a strange time. And even in the midst of all this life has continued-- graduations, surgeries, birthdays, protests, AP tests, illnesses, moves, births and deaths have all occurred within our community.

Life in Youth Ministry goes on as well, though with a different rhythm than our typical Summer. Many of the activities and trips that usually keep us busy during these months have been cancelled for this year. In the absence of these big events, we find different ministries and connections forming. We've met online for cooking challenges, game, and movie nights. We've put on Youth Sunday, preaching, singing, praying, and serving with all of you. We've met together for Confirmation Class. We've played St John's Trivia and learned about our friends and our church in the process. We've run through our houses for scavenger hunts, making parents scratch their heads at our seemingly random activity. We've put on facemasks and painted our nails via Zoom and discussed the importance of rest and self-care. We've talked about racism and how it shows up even in the places we love the most. We've prayed for each other and read scripture. We've taken care of each other during this time and through it have each lived God's love in the world.

We are all adjusting to our call to help protect our neighbors through limiting our contacts, washing our hands, and wearing our masks. In each family this call will take different forms. We are all struggling to discern what the right thing to do is, as we're faced with a myriad of decisions on a daily basis. If you can, rest in this: the God of all the universe called you by name and loves you as you are, right now. No mistake you make can separate you from that redeeming love. Being loved like that, we can work to love our neighbors with that kind of boundless love. We will not do it perfectly (or even well sometimes), but through the grace of God, the love of Jesus, and the gift of the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, we have a place to start.

On the next page is a calendar of events for our Youth and Family Ministry through August. There are opportunities for connection for parents, babies and toddlers, preschool and elementary aged kids, middle schoolers, and high schoolers. We know that these events might change and we are reminded that God's love is constant, even when so much else is in flux.

If you would like to be added to our Youth Ministry email lists please contact myself at [sarah@stjohnslc.org](mailto:sarah@stjohnslc.org) or Katie Holeman at [katie.holeman@stjohnslc.org](mailto:katie.holeman@stjohnslc.org).



◀ July	August 2020						September ▶
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
						1	
2	3	4	5 2:30pm HS Check-in 4pm Music w/ Mr. Eliseo (Zoom)	6 7pm Confirmation Game Night	7	8	
9  7pm HS Movie Night	10 Parenting group 12: 30pm	11  3pm MS/HS Bible Study	12  2:30pm HS Check-in  4pm Music w/ Mr. Eliseo (Youtube)	13  11am Peer Ministry Meeting  Sunday school scavenger hunt zoom 4pm	14	15	
16  Parenting group HH 5pm	17	18	19  2:30pm HS Check-in  4pm Music w/ Mr. Eliseo (Zoom)	20 Children's craft time 10am	21	22	
23	24 Parenting Group 12: 30pm	25	26 2:30pm HS Check-in  4pm Music w/ Mr. Eliseo	27	28	29	
30	31	Notes:					





## Farewell, Vicar Carolyn Brodt

As I look back on my “meet the Vicar” article in last year's Spokesman, which seems like just a few months ago, it is hard to imagine that now, in the midst of COVID-19, I am writing a farewell. Having experienced hundreds of goodbyes in my lifetime, one would imagine that I was someone who was good at goodbyes.

A friend recommended that I read Joyce Rupp's book, *Praying Our Goodbyes* and I started to read it in preparation to say goodbye to this faithful community at St. John's. One point stood out from this book that ritual is important in saying goodbye. Part of my ritual is physically walking the space and appreciating the beauty and all that occurs in that space. This coming week, I will visit our sanctuary and visualize each of you and where you sit and your mannerisms and I will pray a thank you to you for supporting me and my growth in ministry. I will next look towards the altar and see Pastors Frank, Amy and Jon and thank them for their unique gifts they shared freely with me. And as my eyes survey the sanctuary and building, I will give thanks for the staff and their gifts from this past year. In Bethany, I will give thanks for Lynne Gilbertson chair of my Internship Committee and for it's members and for those on the Care of Creation team whose passion inspired me.

Rupp writes, “We all need to learn how to say goodbye, to acknowledge the sorrow that is there for us so that we can move on to the next hello.” I am saying goodbye and I wish that circumstances were different and I was able to say goodbye in person. Please know that part of my ritual is to acknowledge that goodbyes are not forever they are more like “until we meet again.” I am moving on but part of St. John's will always be a part of me. Thank you for a fantastic year!

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COMING MARCH 2020



***Sacramental  
Sacramento***

with Pastor Amy Kienzle

Pastor Amy Kienzle's new podcast, ***Sacramental Sacramento***, will be LIVE and ready to download on iTunes, Spotify and wherever you listen to podcasts this month! It will also be available on our YouTube page.

### About ***Sacramental Sacramento***

Jesus' ministry to seek and save the lost brought him in contact with all sorts of people, and he revealed how God was at work in unexpected ways. In *Sacramental Sacramento*, Pastor Amy Kienzle seeks to highlight the people and places where God is at work right here in our own city of Sacramento. From politicians to shopkeepers, the unhoused and the unsure about religion -- the spiritual and the sacred can be found in the most surprising people and places.

## Stephen Ministry

**Debra Cribbins**  
**Stephen Ministry Leader**

Most of us have made it through the last several months with overwhelming memories of how a life-threatening virus changed our world. Each individual's world has been affected differently, there are none of us with the same experiences.

We are now entering our new "normal," which is more cautious about the health and safety of everyone. Our current goals should be to face our difficulties without fear because we know our God will strengthen us and get us through (see Isaiah 41:10).

Stephen Ministry has become creative meeting via Zoom (an online application) with each other, and meeting with our spiritual companions via telephone or video chats. Ministering from afar is not a new Christian concept. An example is that the Apostle Paul practiced it, which we see in his Epistles (or letters) sent to the churches he planted in Thessalonica, Ephesus, Galatia, Philippi, Colossus, and Rome. Paul's epistles show he found it challenging to minister from afar, but he did so with enthusiasm, using the tools available to him. We are grateful for modern day technology that helps us stay connected; and that the tools we are now using in Stephen Ministry are relatively easy. However, we look forward to face-to-face meetings in the Fall.

At St. John's, some of our Stephen Ministry team have successfully formed a "phone ministry" to the older members of our congregation. While our team are not acting as spiritual companions on these calls, they are checking on members, lifting them up, providing a listening ear, and praying with, and for, them. We are grateful this additional ministry has been well-received.

This pandemic may have caused you to struggle with your family, faith, work, or sleep (amongst others). During this time, we are still providing spiritual companions to those in need. Please consider if a faithful listening ear could help you through. If you would like a spiritual companion to help you with these times, a difficult transition in life, to discern and grow while achieving your goals, or if you are interested in becoming a Stephen Minister, please contact one of the Stephen Leaders, Pastors, or Parish Nurses.

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## Drive-In Communion

When: Every first Sunday of the month

Time: 8am - 10am

Where: St. John's parking lot (please enter through the alley way)

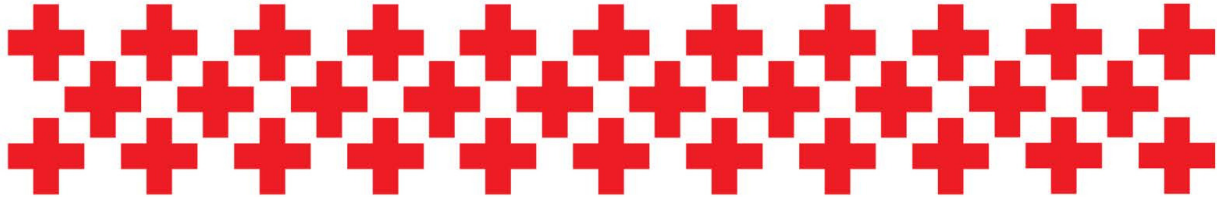
We will be hosting Drive-In Communion in our parking lot during the first Sunday of every month from 8am to 10am. After you worship online, come to the church campus with your own bread and grape juice (no open containers in your car!).

For further safety precautions, we will be communicating through the power of radio waves! When you arrive, tune to 88.5 FM on your car radio to hear the liturgy, and prepare your heart and mind and body for Holy Communion.



## American Red Cross

*Give blood.* Help save lives.



American Red Cross Blood Drive  
Saint John's Lutheran Church

1701 L Street  
Sacramento, CA 95811

**Thursday, September 17, 2020 (9am-3pm) - limited availability!**

To schedule your appointment or for more information visit [redcrossblood.org](https://redcrossblood.org) and enter Sponsor Code "stjohnslutheransac" or call 1-800-RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

If you have any questions regarding eligibility to donate blood, please call 1-866-236-3276.

Streamline your donation experience and save up to 15 minutes by visiting [RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass](https://RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass) to complete your pre-donation reading and health history questions on the day of your appointment.

Return Service Requested

**Postmaster:** Dated Material

**Mailed on:** August 1, 2020



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Web: [www.stjohnslc.org](http://www.stjohnslc.org)

### Want to get The Spokesman by email?

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