



Evangelist July / August 20

Dear St. John's Friends !

Are you missing your church family? Would you like to see them in person !

Here's an opportunity for getting together:

We would like to gather in small groups outside, at various homes, taking all necessary precautions.

These would be recurring gatherings, repeated with re-shuffled groups, perhaps every two weeks.

If you'd like to participate, here's what you need to do:

Call, text, or write Fr. Nick an email to let him know you are interested.

His phone number is: (315) 727-1787. His email is fathernicksmith@gmail.com

At these gatherings we will be following specific guidelines, and you'll have to agree to follow them for everyone's safety:

Wear a mask over your nose and mouth

Keep your distance

Bring your own lawn chair

Go potty before you come

Make yourself a name-tag (we might not recognize you behind that mask!)

Each gathering will last about 90 minutes, and will be devoted to conversation followed by closing prayers. Sadly, there can't be any singing or loud outbursts that might spread virus germs. Uncontrollable laughter, though, might be an exception.

We'll still be having our Facebook Live Sunday services, of course; these gatherings are just a supplement.

So, let Fr. Nick know ASAP if you'd like to get in on this!

*These gatherings have been approved by the Bishop and her Covenant Review Team

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

We are excited to tell you that our new parish website is poised for launch !!

stjohnsoneida.org

will be available in the next few days, sharing our parish information with all 7 world continents!

Shane Rand, Marietta Smith's fiancé, has volunteered his time to help us get this done. He is a professional website-designer in Rochester, and has guided our committee through the preparation of content, the securing of our domain name, and the maze of prompts and text necessary to create an up-to-date digital presentation. Gloria Wilkins, an experienced webmaster, is our parish point person, and Leslie Zebrowski will be her second-in-command.

Following Shane's instructions, they will be able to keep our website current and appealing. A website, you know, is different than a newsletter. Our monthly Evangelist is primarily an inhouse document in which we communicate with other parishioners, while a website is a way by which we can present the nature of our church life to the surrounding world. When strangers and neighbors are looking for a church home, or are curious about the culture and activities of St. John's Church, they will now be able to access such information digitally. Our worship times, special events, an interactive map, an activities calendar, past sermons, descriptions of our various ministries, past copies of the Evangelist, and even a "donate button" for online contributions will all now be available to anyone with internet access. We invite you each to check it out, and to consider what additional things you might like in this public presentation of our beloved parish! We will launch in just a few days!



July 2020

Dear Heavenly Father,

Your Word says I can bring my problems to you in prayer and that your peace will guard my heart and my mind (Philippians 4:7). I struggle with this, Lord. I try to stay focused on you when I pray, but so often my mind wanders back to those problems I've already prayed about. The cares of the day distract my thoughts. Focusing my mind on you is a difficult task, so I am asking for your help. God, I want to hear your voice. Help me push away distracting thoughts and set my mind on you. Thank you for giving me authority as your child to "take thoughts captive and make them obedient to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5). I pray today for the strength and wisdom to continue taking each wayward thought captive and refocusing my mind on you in prayer.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

We offer the above prayer to our St John's Family because we are all struggling to stay connected, to stay on track, to stay faithful. We know it is especially difficult to stay away from those we love, including our St John's family. Fr Nick is very creative in ways to keep us all connected; Sunday services, Zoom Bible study, Zoom Hug-A-Mug and Zoom Saturday night parties. Even though we are apart, we are still connected. Our church is still thriving. Our bills keep coming in, so we ask you to keep up your faithful pledges. You can get it to the church in a few different ways; snail mail, through your bank/credit union and through the diocese webpage. The life of our church depends on our continued financial support. Thank you.

Faithfully yours,

The Wardens; Sue Slaunwhite & Leslie Zebrowski



A Pentecost Lament

God, the world is on fire.

**But it feels more like the fires of Gehenna,
where our ancestors in faith burned their trash,
more than it feels like the fires of Pentecost.**

Injustice feels so heavy.

The sins of humanity weigh us down.

For some of us, it feels like a weight on our chest, making it hard to breathe.

For some of your children, Lord, it is a weight that has choked the life out of them.

There is so much to fear.

I fear a virus that I can't see, yet whose reach has upended the lives of your people.

**I struggle to learn to live in a world where hugs are hazardous and raising our voices
together in**

song in the same room is a public health danger.

I miss my family and friends so much that tears fall on this page.

And yet I remember that this could be so much worse.

I try to force gratitude.

I can't feel it now, which brings me some measure of shame and guilt.

**It's a familiar feeling to have so many emotions crowded in the space of my heart,
vying for attention.**

**For now, I'll leave a corner free for gratitude and trust that we'll meet up when the
time is right.**

Because, with a voice as loud as sadness,

Rage also demands my attention.

I am angry because your black and brown people are not treated fairly.

**I am angry because they fear for their lives in so many ways because of the colors of
their skin.**

**I am angry because we were all born into a sinful world where racism, prejudice, and
systemic,**

**structural injustice aren't just left to its own devices – they're fed, nurtured, and
encouraged in ways I**

can't even understand right now.

I am afraid that I am part of the problem

**I am afraid I don't have enough stamina, courage, or wisdom to do the work that is
mine to do**

of learning, unlearning and understanding,

and asking you to heal that racism in me that I cannot even see.

We need so much from you right now, God.

I need you so much right now.

Breathe your Holy Spirit of peace into our hearts.

Not just into the open hearts, asking for your peace,

**But breathe it also, with all your might, into the cold corners of hearts that don't feel
a need for**

peace.

Breathe your Holy Spirit of peace

into all of those places in our society where racism has taken root.

Breathe your Holy Spirit of peace

into the places where we can't even see one another's humanity.

**Breathe your Holy Spirit of peace into every place of entitlement, self-righteousness,
misguided loyalties, and selfishness.**

**God, we need so much from you right now.
God, we need so much of you right now.
Breathe your Holy Spirit of peace
into the homes and hearts of those who mourn and grieve.
Breathe your Holy Spirit of peace
into places where fear abides.
Breathe your Holy Spirit of peace
into the lives of your people who are sick.
Sick in body, sick in spirit, and just sick of all the weight of injustice and sin.
God, we need so much from you right now.
God, we need so much of you right now.
Even as the world groans with sickness and sin.
Even as I groan in sadness and rage.
I trust in you.
I know you are big enough
to hold all of this in your loving hands.
I know you are close enough
to dwell even in the furthest parts of my heart.
I know you are strong enough
to see us through this storm.
For you are the God who brings order out of chaos.
You breathed your Spirit over creation and made order in our world.
You are a God who liberates captives, who calms stormy seas, who raises the dead to
life.
I put all my trust in you.
Thank you for being with me always,
Even in fear, even in rage.
Thank you for not placing limits on my emotions and letting me bring it all to you,
All of my unrefined, unedited feelings.
I will trust you always.
Even when the order you bring out of the chaos is not what I expect.
Even when the Kingdom you bring shatters things that I've clung to
Even when life changes.
Even when the status quo is upended.
I will trust you always.
Even when your Holy Spirit feels like the rush of a violent wind.
Even when I'm confused.
Even when I'm scared.
I will trust you always.
For you are the peace which passes all understanding.**

(May 31, 2020 The Rev. Carrie Schofield-Broadbent)

Submitted by Gloria Wilkins

Church Ladies With Typewriters

They're Back! Those wonderful Church Bulletins! Thank God for the church ladies with typewriters. These sentences actually appeared in church bulletins or were announced at church services:

The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.

Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.

The sermon this morning: 'Jesus Walks on the Water.' The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus.'

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

Don't let worry kill you off - let the Church help.

Miss Charlene Mason sang 'I will not pass this way again,' giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.

For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

Next Thursday there will be try-outs for the choir. They need all the help they can get.

Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.

A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow..

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What Is Hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practice.

Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.

Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered..

The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hostility.

Pot-luck supper Sunday at 5:00 PM - prayer and medication to follow.

The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.

This evening at 7 PM there will be a hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.

The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the Congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday.

Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM . Please use the back door.

The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the Church basement Friday at 7 PM .. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.

And this one just about sums them all up:

The Associate Minister unveiled the church's new campaign slogan last Sunday:

'I Upped My Pledge - Up Yours.'

Nice to know we all make mistakes. LOL. We are only human. Laura

Submitted by Peg & Jack Macmullen

FOOD PANTRY

Please continue to not bring items to the church but instead make a cash donation to these organizations below:

Karing Kitchen
116 W. Grove St.
Oneida, N.Y. 13421

Church on the Rock
164 Madison St.
Oneida, N.Y. 13421

Food Bank of CNY
7066 Interstate Island Rd
Syracuse, N.Y. 13209

Too Blessed To Be Stressed

Our ongoing ZOOM activities at St. John's:

Wednesdays: Hug A Mug Coffee Hour (**New Time**) 930 a.m. to 1030 a.m.

Thursdays: Bible Study @ 7p.m.

Saturdays: Zoom Partys !!! Tons of fun and laughs.

Sundays: Church Service on Facebook Live @ 930 a.m. Please Join Us !

For **Hug A Mug**, Bible Study, as well as **Sunday services**, please watch your emails for the correct links (or email Father Nick and ask)

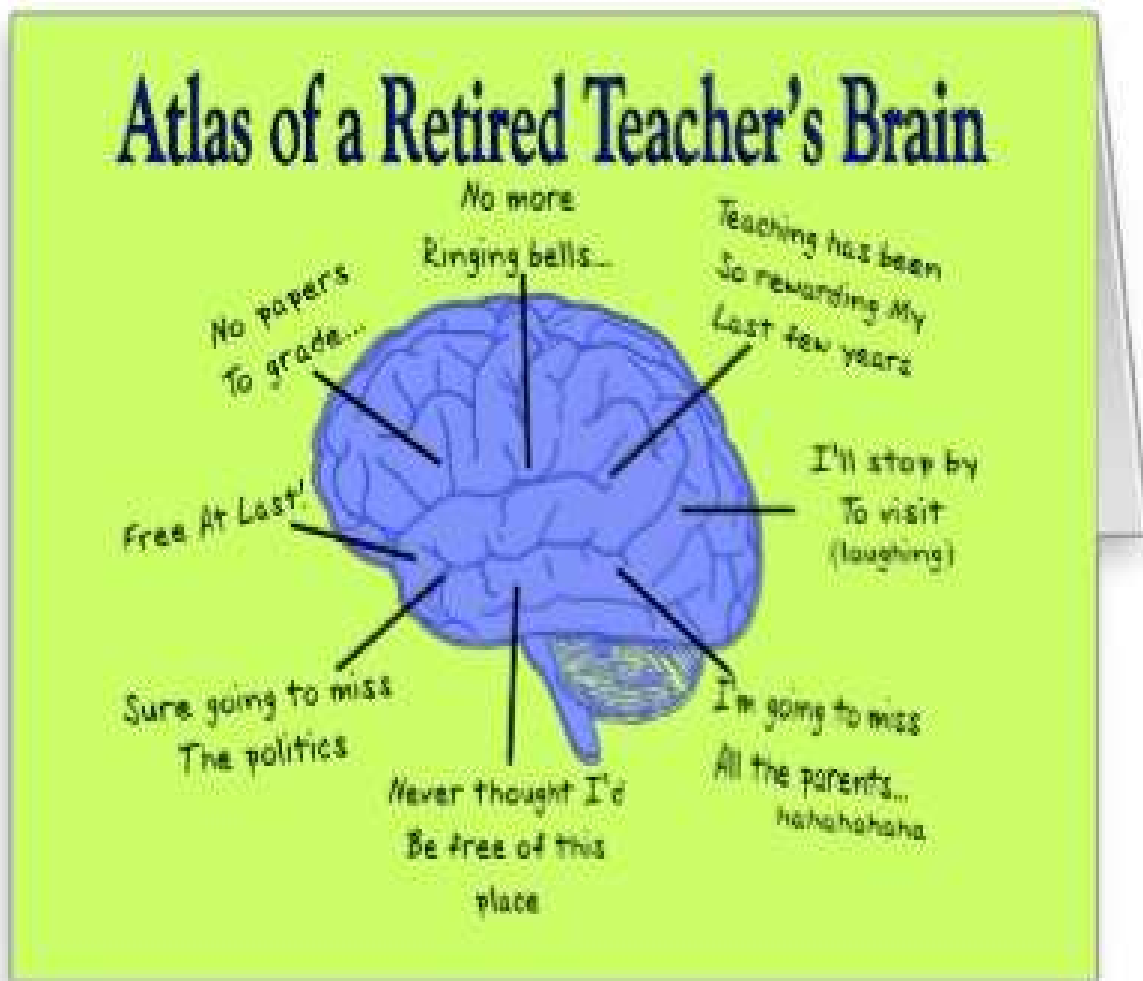
Submitted by:
Gale Smith

**Corona Virus -
explained in craft
terms. You and 9
friends are crafting. 1 is
using glitter. How many
projects have glitter?**

CONGRATULATIONS LESLIE ZEBROWSKI

Well, this picture is kind of like my brain. I am retired! I taught for almost 20 years and loved almost every day. I will miss those little smiling faces and honest hearts the most. Now on to my next adventure, whatever that may be.

Your St. John's Family wishes you all the best on that next adventure !!!



New Zebrowski Grand Puppies

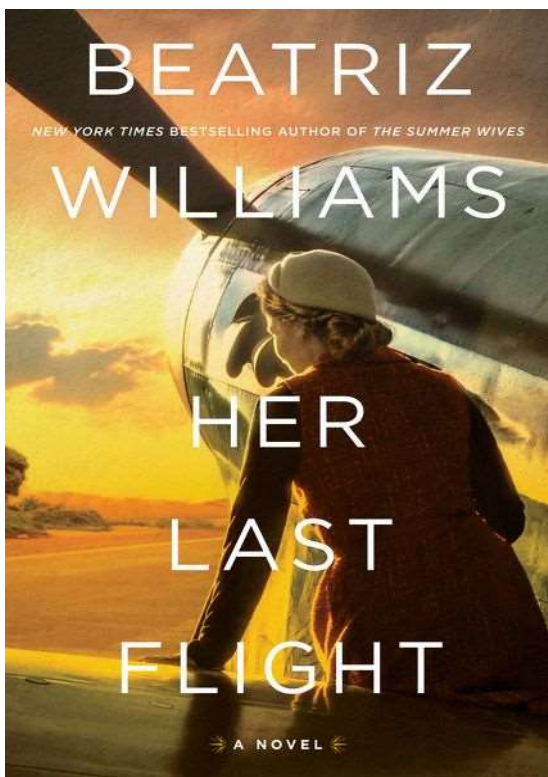
GEMMA



SIR HENRY



LAURA'S BOOK REVIEW



Historical Fiction

Listed as one of the Summer's Most Anticipated Reads, according to **Goodreads**, **SheReads**, and **Bookish**. The story of a lost pilot and wartime photographer. A "what if" story about Amelia Earhart surviving her last flight. Strong and vibrant characters. Suspense and love. Even a kitty named Sandy. I couldn't ask for more. A great book club pick as well.

Past, Present, and Future By Sue Miller

Past, Present, and Future identify this column, but our guest honoree this month, **Nigel Priest**, speaks to his own past and present beautifully. We all wish to continue as part of his **future** here at St. John's !

Dear Sue,

I have just found your letter from three whole months back in my 'pending' file. I do apologize. Getting back to you had completely slipped my mind, and I hope you can use the following synopsis about me.

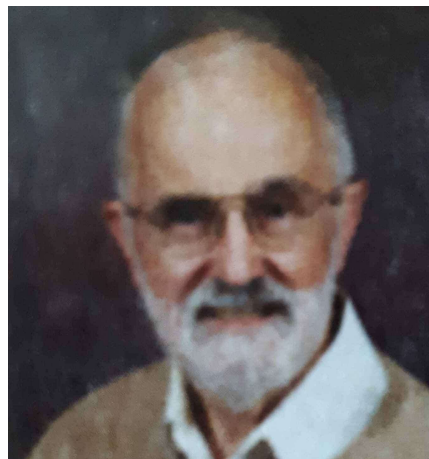
My dad was a dentist with the British Army in Europe at the beginning of WWII and was at Dunkirk and got back safely in June 1940. My mother must have been very glad to see him because I was born nine months later, March 31, 1941 ! My first memories were of life in North Wales, escaping the bombing, then we got back to North London after the war. My two brothers were born in 1942 and 1945. I remember rationing, horse-drawn milk and bread vans, steam-powered coal wagons, and gas lamps in the streets. In 1950, we moved to the West of England, deep countryside, where my father established a successful dental practice. From 1954 to 1959 I was at Ardingly College, a small 'public' boarding school, boys only, of course, very much Church of England with chapel every day and twice on Sundays ! At age 18 I went to a training hospital to be a doctor, but this was a complete misfit for me, so I joined a firm doing chemistry, and was soon taken on as a perfumer. Perfumery was my career and my love for the rest of my working life until I retired in 2006.

I started perfumery in the East End of London and after a few years the company sent me to the States to set up an American division. After a year in New Jersey, I returned to London where I met my American wife, Anne, through a friend of a colleague of a friend. Anne was over on a long weekend and we met up. What a long string of coincidences ! To think how I might have missed meeting the love of my life ! Scary ! This was in 1972 and we married in England in the Fall. We returned and set up home in New Jersey in 1976 where our two sons Phillip and Ian were born. I worked for more than twenty years for a company in Teaneck, New Jersey, but in 1998 I moved to a company in Manhattan where I spent the last eight years of my working career. So exciting to be in New York City at the heart of things !! By then, we had bought our little Lakeside house in Canastota, and we moved there permanently in 2006. Anne grew up in Utica with a summer house on Oneida Lake, so she was delighted to get back to the Lake after all those years away. After three frozen lake-side winters, we thought we might try Florida life, as Anne had inherited her mother's apartment in Mount Dora. We loved it and still do, but we also love our lake-side Summers, too ! At the moment, we are stuck in Florida because of the Virus, but we hope to make it back soon.

As I mentioned, my boarding school was Church of England, so I have been an Episcopalian all my life, except for brief adventures to the Unitarian and then the Presbyterian Churches. I am blessed to belong to two thriving churches near my two homes. Whenever I am in Oneida, I miss Mount Dora and vice versa ! For me, the liturgy and the music are important, as is the commitment to out-reach in both of my churches. I know that God works through people gathered together though this is difficult for a shy person like me. I find all my spiritual needs met by my church memberships, and I hope that my dual life will continue for a few more years yet.

All the best, and hope to see you soon, Nigel Priest

(as of June 20th : Nigel and Anne are safely up in their Canastota home. WELCOME ! Sue)



ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

341 Main St.

Oneida, N.Y. 13421

Phone: (315) 363-1940

Bishop: The Rt. Rev. Dr. DeDe Duncan Probe

Rector: The Very Rev. Arthur W. Smith

Parish Administrator: John Reinhardt

Treasurer: John Macmullen

Clerk of the Vestry: Valerie Hill

Senior Warden: Susan Slaunwhite

Junior Warden: Leslie Zebrowski

Vestry:

Sandra Aylesworth

Sheila Aylesworth

Cathy English

Valerie Hill

Ann Hodgins

Shelly Sears

Laura Weismore

Shane Weismore

Beth Wieland

Loving God, by your grace you have gathered us from many walks of life to become a loving family at St. John's. Help us to sustain the miraculous love within this parish, and guide us in sharing this love with our neighbors. All this we ask through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

Please submit Evangelist articles to Laura Weismore by the 15th of each month. Anything not submitted by the 15th, will go in the next newsletter.

snowkittens7311@gmail.com