

The official publication of St. John's Episcopal Church

WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Vestry Meeting Minutes-12-15 St. John's May Calendar- 19 Dear People and Friends of St. John's,

In this season when we are celebrating graduations and retirements, with trees budding out and long-dormant flowers blossoming into color, I am reminded of the cycle that seems to underlie our lives. Birth – growth – generativity – integration – then passing it all on to the next generation. Nature's cycles I can grasp somewhat, can appreciate, can even relish.

There are other "cycles" I'm observing, though. Much of what is going on in our world today reminds me of things from the past – as if we are caught in a repeating loop. One evening this week, Sr. Linda-Susan was relating much of what she had been reading about the "situation" in Gaza. She ended by speaking the question I feel in my own heart and hear echoed from many others, "But what can I do?" She ended up writing an essay, which you will find later in this issue, in the new column, *Another Perspective*...It's a long read - but worth it. She has promised any future such columns will be no more than two pages!

What can we do? We can be witnesses – in the sense of *seeing and listening and being intentionally present*. It's what Jesus tells us in the gospel: "You will be my witnesses..." We can be *present* and *listen* and hear the stories of others.

We have an opportunity to do that on May 16 by attending the *No More Stolen Sisters* event, observing the National Day of Remembrance for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, which will be held at Broadway Park near the Soaring Eagle. The **details are below**. Here is a chance to be *present* – to *witness* what another's life is about – to honor another's pain and offer the support of our presence.

In a more stay-at-home-friendly way, we can "listen" to another's story by being part of the Wednesday morning Church School zoom for a few weeks, as the group explores Thurman's Jesus and the Disinherited. (See below.) It isn't long - and is available as a PDF file free here! Even if you can't attend the morning Zoom class, you can attend an evening Conversation (again on Zoom) that will relate to the Thurman text.

Finally, next month will be PRIDE month – and the Pop-Up PRIDE event in Mt. Pleasant is once again at Broadway Park – on Saturday, June 1. Come be a supportive presence to the LGBTQ+ community and their allies!

What can we do? We can be witnesses... we can listen...learn...love.

Remember that you are loved and you belong – and pass it on.

Sr. Diane+



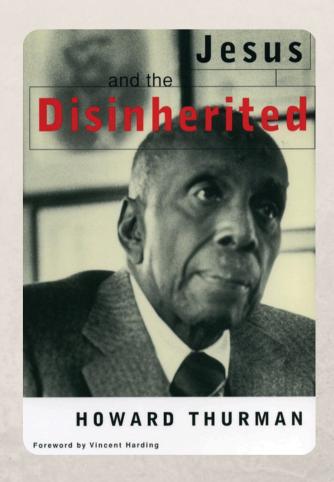
St. John's Work Week will be June 17 – 20, beginning at 5:30 PM each evening

- The brick on the original church should be given a second coat of paint.
- Powerwash and paint the front steps of the Church.
- Paint and hang the old wooden sign on the west end of the Fellowship Hall facing the parking area.
- Clean gutters.
- Stain handicap entrance into the Rectory, just one coat on walking area.

- Seal and stripe the Fellowship Hall parking spaces.
- Refresh English Garden.
- Clean and organize kitchen.
- Install new LED lights in undercroft, two lights with battery backup.
- Paint the brick base of the new sign white or coat with a sealant.
- Install set of shelves to the right of new refrigerator in the kitchen.

Juneteenth potluck dinner on June 19. Volunteers may decide they would prefer to take Wednesday evening off.

Wednesday Church School



Beginning on May 8, 2024 at 10:00AM, Wednesday Church School will begin a study of Howard Thurman's profound work, "Jesus and the Disinherited." All are invited to participate in this insightful study.

TEAM UP WITH TIM!

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE

Over 40,500 Sunday meals served since 2016

In April/May 2024,

Tim Brockman's family pledges

to match PHP donations

up to \$10,000!

Scan the QR Code to make a donation, or make checks payable to People Helping People.





Kina bi maad ziim gak Kchi pii tend da kwad "All life is sacred"

No More Stolen Sisters

A Missing and Murdered Indigenous People Event

Thursday, May 16, 2024

- ▶ Time: 4:30-6 p.m.
- ▶ Location: Broadway Park 2451 Nish Na Be Among Dr.
- Spread awareness to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP) Movement
- · Guest speakers
- Light refreshments







Red Dress exhibits will be featured all throughout the community starting the end of April, until the middle of May to bring recognition to this powerful movement.

Locations will include:

- Ziibiwing Center: 6650 E. Broadway Rd., Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
- Clarke Historical Library: 250 E. Preston, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859
- Veterans Memorial Library: 301 S. University Ave., Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
- •McLaren Central Michigan Hospital: 1221 South Dr., Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
- Central Michigan University Libraries: 250 E. Preston, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859
- Mid Michigan College: 2600 S. Summerton Rd., Mt Pleasant, MI 448858
- Art Reach Mid Michigan: 111 E. Broadway St., Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858 The Red Dress exhibit will run from April 29 until May 7, with a gallery reception and speaker on May 2 from 5-6:30 p.m.

For more information, contact: Behavioral Health Victim Services at 989.775.4400 or BHvictimservices@sagchip.org



Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan

"Working Together for Our Future"



ALS Benefit



Please help us support

Dominic Thrasher

also known as

Mikey Sheahan-Stahl

y9

Reserved tables for the event are available!

6-person table \$90 8-person table \$120 Includes tickets to the event.

> Reserved tables will be entered into a special drawing.

Call a committee member*
to reserve your table today!

Morey Courts, 5175 E. Remus Road, Mt. Pleasant, MI
Silent Auction Begins at 4 pm
Live Auction Begins at approximately 6 pm

Saturday, May 4, 2024

In January 2023 Dominic (Mikey) was diagnosed with ALS

(Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis – Lou Gehrig's Disease)

All funds will help with growing expenses in Dominic's fight

@Linda-Fabian-3

Pulled Pork Dinner and Refreshments will be available

Suggested donation, \$10 for adults/person, \$5 for children ages 6-18, \$30 per family max.

Cash donations can be made at ANY Isabella Bank location please reference Dominic Thrasher's ALS

Benefit or by using Venmo (scan the code above)

*Nathalie Dube 734-276-7496, Claire Bunker 989-621-2733, Linda Fabian 989-289-6490, Monica Horan 989-506-5122, Deb Campbell 989-560-3649, Kathleen Bunker 646-259-1176, Kelli McDonald 218-370-0515

Donations may also be dropped off at Brickner & Bunker Ins Group, 2163 E. Pickard Road, Mt. Pleasant, MI between 8:00 am – 4:30 pm (Monday – Friday)

I've chosen a new mantra to live by. "I'm going to win at life for as long as I can!" If I can leave you all with this. Life truly is short. We all die. It's just some earlier than others. Stop worrying so much. Make a list of things you want to do or achieve. Start NOW by checking them off and achieving them.

NO REGRETS! — Dominic



The 2024 Altar Flower Calendar is posted in the Lantern across from the elevator. Please consider a Sunday that is a good date for you to honor or remember a loved one and sign up to provide altar flowers. Flowers are a wonderful addition to worship! You may use flowers from your garden or a store and arrange them yourself, or arrange with Elliot's or Norm's Florist to do arrangements and they will deliver to the church. Thank you!

In years past, for many years, the Evangel had a regular column called "Anglican Worthies" written by Henry Fulton. Each month, Henry gave us a generally two-page biography of one of our Anglican forbears. The column was educational, thoughtful, and a nice read. We have not had a "reading" column for quite some time. This month, we introduce "Another Perspective" – an essay on faith-related matters that will give us something to ponder. If you would like to submit something for "Another Perspective," please send it to Mekeila at the office.

saintjohnsmp@gmail.com

Another Perspective...

I want to draw attention to a remarkable course I taught during the more than quarter- century I served as an English professor at Bryn Mawr College. The course focus was on the literature of *survivors* of the intergenerational trauma of chattel slavery, apartheid, and the 20th century European Holocaust. I could only teach the course twice, as I recall, because the subject matter was excruciatingly painful for all of us. (Had I ever found the strength to offer the course one final time, I planned to substitute the Intifada for the Holocaust – the intense Palestinian uprising against Israel (1987-1990 and 2005-05) -- deliberately to avoid the notion that there was or is a single unitary or pre-eminent exemplar of 20th century suffering.) I very much needed a multi-year gap between the two offerings of the course because the students and I both had to have recovery time. I knew the course was inviting students to be witnesses and I never forgot, for a moment, that such witnesses are called, in Greek, martyrs.

One of the elements of the second offering of the course, which originated in my role as a Contemplative Fellow of the Contemplative Mind in Society Project, was to incorporate, in the syllabus, a variety of experiences that I prayed would help all of us to stand dangerously close to the "burning bush" without ourselves being immolated. We were deeply immersed in profound human suffering, but our focus was on the indomitable will of the human spirit to survive. Death would not have the final word.

The Bryn Mawr course was deliberately triangulated to avoid what was, for me, the callously ghoulish game of comparative atrocity. Whose suffering was the longest or the most significant or the most unnamable? Any time the seminar seemed to devolve into any straightforward or oblique comparisons of that kind, I gently asked students to close their eyes for a few moments while they listened to the ghosts of the dead quietly weeping. I said that the room was full of such ghosts, encircled by one another's arms, while we somehow failed to recognize their intimate human connection to one another and their ongoing presence among us. For me, it felt blasphemous to turn the conversation into a suffering lottery or competition.

That always signaled time for a break in our conversation; and students were invited to take half an hour to be quietly reflective, to go outside for a walking meditation alone or with others, to journal, or write poetry, or draw, or *practice lectio*. (That is an ancient Western monastic practice of choosing a very short line from a sacred or other text, by letting it choose you, as you repeat the line over and over inaudibly in the soft quiet.)

There was no limit to the possibilities students might imagine. Then, when we came back together again after the break, the seminar always moved to a deeper, more contemplative place – away from reductive dismissal or abstract intellectualization to a centered space.

The course, which I deliberately taught only during the spring semester, ended with my bringing in blooming pansies for each student, acknowledging the extraordinary difficulty of the journey we had travelled with one another, and as an affirmation of life despite unspeakable horror. I used the end of Andre Schwarz-Bart's novel, The Last of the Just, with its provocative, haunting litany in the shape of a prayer before the closing of that final session.

"And praised. Auschwitz. Be. Maidanek. The Lord. Treblinka. And praised. Buchenwald. Be. Mauthausen. The Lord. Belzec. And praised. Sobibor. Be. Chelmno. The Lord. Ponary. And praised. Theresienstadt. Be. Warsaw. The Lord. Vilna. And praised. Skarzysko. Be. Bergen-Belsen. The Lord. Janow. And praised. Dora. Be. Neuengamme. The Lord. Pustkow. And praised..."

In the epilogue to his book, *A Double Dying: Reflections on Holocaust Literature* (1980), Alvin H. Rosenfeld suggested that Schwarz-Bart "ends his novel in such a way as to leave the issue intentionally ambiguous and unresolved, reflecting what amounts to a struggle for primacy between the forces of life and the forces of death. At this point, all we can say is that we do not know which will prevail."

I think that we find ourselves in a teachable moment for asking excruciatingly difficult soul-wrenching questions. What was the legacy of the Holocaust of almost a century ago? The Nazis systematically began to deprive European Jewry of access to education, employment, financial security from the destruction of businesses, and ultimately life itself in heinous networks of death centers designed to attempt to eliminate Jews, literally, from history. The Nazis hoped to give Hitler a Europe that was *juden-frei* [literally "Jewfree"].

But is there something also terrifyingly familiar in the apparent repetition of that same template in the apartheid colonization of the Palestinian people? This includes segregation into distinct, territorial, legal and administrative domains; arbitrary land and property seizures; endless evictions to make way for Israeli settlers; lack of access to education and employment; deliberate impoverishment; and lack of essential services (health, gas, oil, permits for access to water sources, and public transportation). The government of South Africa has called this apartheid. Amnesty International, The Episcopal Church, and other groups have used this same language. Of course, the largest disparity has been in the disproportionate loss of life and shelter. Underneath so much of the rubble in Gaza are mass graves. Did the Israeli Defense Forces hope to make the world Hamas-free by making it Palestinian-free?

I feel tremendous heartache over the horrendous events in Israel of October 7th that raised both shock and the ancient recall of intergenerational trauma for so many Israelis. That day of infamy involved the ruthless slaughter of about 1200 innocent human beings and the taking of hostages – some of whom have already

died or been tortured including by rape. Should the latest round of negotiations with Hamas involving the U.S., Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and the Palestinian Authority break down, Israeli Defense Force tanks stand positioned to invade a vulnerable Rafah and its one million residents. I am simultaneously speechless and incredulous in the face of the ruthless slaughter of more than 30,000 innocent Palestinians, mostly women and children. While some claim that these numbers are grossly inflated, Johns Hopkins and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine believe the number is a very conservative underestimate. Meanwhile, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, as of March 30, 2024, estimates that about 2.3 million Palestinians are facing "catastrophic" food insecurity. That does not include the many who are wounded without access to either medicine, physicians, or anesthesia. There are mass graves at Auschwitz and Dachau and all across Europe; Gaza, as one commentator put it, has become a massive morgue.

Yet the world does not seem to be able to have reasoned, compassionate, and necessarily horrified conversation about this massive loss of life and the specter of irreversible famine in Gaza. Where is the conversation about just war theory of Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-430)? He clearly addressed the ethical matter of proportionality. Augustine also noted: "Right is right even if no one is doing it; wrong is wrong even if everyone is doing it." He adds that the use of force **must always distinguish between the militia** and civilians.

There are Israelis as well as Palestinians and other world citizens who want the insanity and the war crimes of both Hamas and the Israeli leadership to cease. How many of us, however, are actively and energetically **demanding** that the insanity cease? History, our consciences, our children, and God will ultimately hold us each accountable for the evil done on our behalf with the financial assistance of superpowers with weapons of mass destruction.

In the meantime, The New York Times of April 28th reports that the International Criminal Court at the Hague is preparing arrest warrants for top Hamas and Israeli leaders for war crimes. In March, a warrant was issued for Vladimir Putin and Maria Lvova-Belova, Russia's Children's Rights Commissioner, for the kidnapping and forced deportation of more than 6,000 Ukrainian children and teens to Russia. The Hague focuses on genocide and crimes against humanity. We are certainly in such territory – again.

Linda-Susan Beard

May 1, 2024

Professor Emerita

Present: Diane Stier, Liz Brockman, Pat Thurston, Mary Kiesgen, Kevin Davidson, Dan Eichinger, Clancy Delong, Alice Ciccu, Jerry May, DJ Proctor, Jen Dingman (clerk)

Absent: Lara Raisanen

Meeting called to order at 11:43am. Pat led the group in an opening prayer.

Minutes from Feb 18, 2024 and Feb 29, 2024, Vestry meetings were reviewed. Mary moved to approve the minutes; Kevin seconded. All approved.

Rector's Report

- At-home Communion
 - Mary and Pat lead and provide this ministry to a group of 12 individuals (at home and in care facilities) and any others that are added periodically to the list. Each of them provides to a group every other week but more individuals are needed to help so that these folks can get communion every week.
 - This group loves to hear from friends and St. John's family, so if anyone is interested in reaching out to Mary Lou, Joan, Emelia, Elliott, Diana, Nancy, Nancy, Sandy, Bernice, Martha, Harry, or Margaret, please reach out to the office for contact details.
- Holy week is set, schedule in the bulletin
- Juncture vote was 84% in favor to combine the Eastern and Western Diocese, first combined convention will be in Mt. Pleasant in October.
- Paying very close attention to our 2024 budget monthly
 - DJ mentioned that he'd seen an interesting option in his childhood parish. Local businesses advertised in the Sunday bulletins and created a source of revenue, something to consider.

Property Committee

- Lighting for behind the church
 - Would a dusk to dawn light post be an option? Enough lighting to brighten it enough for people walking there after dark but not enough to affect nearby houses

- Time to renew the contract with Toto to mow the lawn
 - Longstanding relationship and he does a great job
 - Edging included; do we want it?
 - Clancy noted that it's best to have it done in the fall to aid with water drainage in the winter to minimize ice build up
 - Jerry made a motion to accept Toto's contract, including the edging, Mary seconded. All approved.
- Parish Hall guidelines for outside use, clean up, what to pay, etc.? Contract is on the website for outside renters (Alice to make it more discoverable). Should we put it on the sign? Cut and paste the kitchen clean-up rules to post in the kitchen.

Worship & Hospitality Committee

• 3-month calendar circulated for additions and planning

Human Resources

• No report

Administrative Committee

- Finance Report
 - Slow the first 2 months of 2024, 13.4% thus far. Some years are similar, some years are more.
 - Computer software QuickBooks is outrageously priced, trying to get rid of the desktop version to move to their online version
 - Clancy to look at the Enterprise version @\$1,300 that can be split amongst a few different users
 - Easter basket fund has \$800 in it for those working on Easter baskets
 - Switching bank to ICCU is in the works to improve customer service and provide better options for St. John's accounts
 - Interest rates will be a bit better on CD's
 - Business credit cards have cash back options that can be sent to your "favorite charity"
 - Some bills are linked directly to the current Isabella Bank & Trust account and would need to be changed

- CD will be moved in April
- DJ asked about confidence in the move considering that we don't want to do this move very often
 - Years of experience amongst Vestry members alone is high so a high level of confidence
- Clancy made a motion to move the CD from Isabella Bank & Trust in April, Kevin seconded. All approved.
- Clancy will bring all the paperwork to April Vestry meeting. We will also discuss moving the rest of the accounts.

Education/Christian Formation Committee

• No report

Outreach Committee

Easter basket items due by March 25th

Diocesan Update

• No report

Parish Life/Social Committee

No report

Senior Warden Report

• No report

Old Business

- Safe Church training will be discussed in the coming weeks
- Alice will continue to manage sign usage and what will be displayed
 - Jerry asked about the sign top and whether it is still going forward and Alice/DJ confirmed that it is in the works, just waiting for warmer weather

New Business

- DJ noted that this weekend is the last ever Restoration House and that at some point in the future we should have a discussion about how to contribute in the future.
- B&G decision tree to clarify how the Vestry member responsible for B&G makes timely decisions to spend \$ to repair things
 - Two options
 - \$2000 in the B&G budget and B&G leader has the authority to spend it as needed until it's gone
 - Tiered approach
 - Up to \$1000, at the B&G leaders' discretion
 - \$1000 \$2000 Jr Warden B&G leader plus Treasurer and Sr Warden approval, via email
 - ->\$2000 approval by Vestry
 - Jerry made a motion to approve the tiered approach, Kevin seconded. All approved.
- Special circumstances sometimes require a special Vestry meeting, either online or via email and the question has come up whether there needs to be a motion to call a meeting like that. Diane would like a motion for the Sr Warden or the Rector to be able to call one without the need for a motion to do so.
 - Dan will review the by-laws to determine what is needed to move forward
 - Jen to send electronic copy of the by-laws to Dan for review

Next meeting Sunday Apr 21, 2024, at 11:30am

Pat led the closing prayer

March 2024 Financial Report

Below is a summary of operating fund activity through the end of March (25.00%).

Your treasurer is breathing a sigh of relief. March income equaled that of January and February combined. Through the first quarter, both income and expense are at or near where they should be.

Please confirm that your estimated giving amount is up-to-date.

Cash Balances

Total

Cash in Checking Account	48,562.10
Certificate of Deposit #1	44,738.51
Certificate of Deposit #2	20,530.67
Endowment Fund	104,333.78

218,165.06

Clancy



Remember Our Homebound Members Drop a card to our parish members who are homebound.

Sandy Wood 2812 Weatherwood St. Mt. Pleasant MI 48858

Nancy Fulton Comfort Care 1945 Churchill Blvd. Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

Elliott & Emelia Parker Crestwood 2378 S. Lincoln Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

Mary Lou Nowicki Crestwood 2378 S. Lincoln Rd. Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

Joan Kadler

Crestwood 2378 S. Lincoln Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858 989-772-2803

Nancy Rivard Green Acres Mt. Pleasant 1809 E. Remus Rd., Apt 303 Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

Diana Clapp Comfort Care 1945 Churchill Blvd. Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858



May Birthdays

Byron Davidson	05/03
Jacob Hartshorne	05/10
Candy Henderson	05/17
Donald Schurr	05/18
Katie Hodgkins	05/19
Ulana Klymyshyn	05/28
Emily Scott Schaffer	05/29
Stephen Weber	05/30
Joan Kadler	05/31

St. John's Prayer Group

If you wish to add or remove names from the Prayer List, please call Sr. Diane Stier, 989-807-0215, the church office, or email Pamela Dingman: pamela.dingman@gmail.com.
Thank you.



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

May Anniversaries

Rod Leslie & Marian Matyn 05/23 Kevin & Jillian Davidson 05/27



Pastoral Care

Just a reminder: you should let the parish office know if you are ill and wish to receive a call from the Rector.

Weekly Schedule:

Sunday 10AM: Holy Communion: In Person or Facebook

or YouTube

Wednesday 10AM: Church School by Zoom

Wednesday 7PM: Connections Conversations by Zoom

Thursday 8PM: Compline (Night Prayer) by Zoom

Coffee Hour Schedule:

May 5 Lynne L'Hommedieu & Sharon Bolton

May 12 Ford & Pamela Dingman

May 19 The Davidson Family

May 26 Clancy & Patricia DeLong

Olivia Ohler & Lois Klumpp

Lay Ministers:	Lectors	Prayers
May 5	Carol Lauffer	Derek Rivard
May 12	Sr. Linda-Susan Beard	Jim Thurston

May 19 Sharon Bolton David Kinney

May 26 Tom Cochrane Jeanne Maxon

Greeters Schedule:

May 5	Mary Stewart Kiesgen & Laura Cochrane
-------	---------------------------------------

May 12 David & Jennifer Dingman

May 19 Ford & Pamela Dingman

May 26 Tom & Mary Ellen Cochrane

May Calendar

Sundays: 05/05, 05/12, 05/19, 05/26 10am Holy Communion (In person, Facebook, & YouTube)

Mondays: 05/06, 05/13, 05/20, 05/27 6:30PM GA

Tuesdays: 05/07, 05/14, 05/21, 05/28
11am Tai Chi with Judy

Wednesdays: 05/08, 05/15, 05/22, 05/29
10am Church School
via Zoom
6pm Choir Practice
7pm Weekly Connection via Zoom

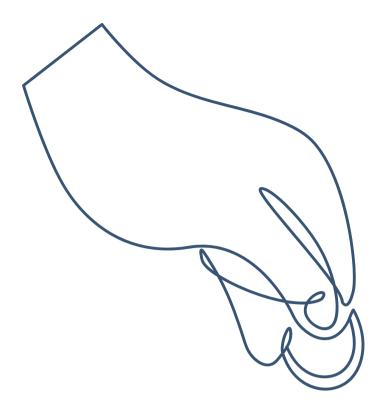
Thursdays: 05/09, 05/16, 05/23, 05/30
11am Tai Chi with Judy

11am Tai Chi with Judy8pm Compline via Zoom

Fridays: 05/10, 05/17, 05/24, 05/31

Nothing on these days

Office Closed



Different ways to give...

We now have four different ways to give back to the church. You can now drop off at the church, mail your offer to the church, or give through "Giving Tools." Here are the details on how to give:

- 1. You can come to the Church office and drop it through the mail slot.
- 2. You can mail your offering to the Church, 206 W Maple, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
- 3. You can give online by visiting the Giving Tools link on our website, or by scanning the QR code below.



Saint John's Episcopal Church 206 West Maple Street Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

Phone: 989-773-7448

Fax: 989-772-3480

E-mail: saintjohnsmp@gmail.com

Website: www.stjohnsmtpleasantmi.com

Facebook: St. John's Mount Pleasant

St. John's Mission:

St. John's Episcopal Church, with God's help and in the Episcopal Church tradition, lives to proclaim the Gospel of Christ by ministering through worship, outreach, fellowship and education. We welcome all who enter our doors, and we support the diverse callings of each member as we seek to serve Christ in every person.

Rector:

The Rev. Sr. Diane Stier, 989-807-0215

Deacon Emeritus:

The Rev. Nancy Casey Fulton

Organist:

Ethan Kindle

Choirmaster:

Eric Vinciguerra

2024 Vestry Officers

Sr. Warden: Dan Eichinger

Jr. Warden: Jerry May

Treasurer: Clancy DeLong

Co-Treasurer: Lynne L'Hommedieu,

Vestry Clerk: Jennifer Dingman

2024 Vestry Members

David Proctor

Clancy DeLong

Mary Stewart Kiesgen

Elizabeth Brockman

Pat Thurston

Kevin Davidson

Lara Raisanen