



The Lampstand

A Periodic Newsletter of

Saint John's Episcopal Church - Niantic

"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the LAMPSTAND, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

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Pandemic Issue Summertime 2020

St. John's Episcopal Church

Rector + Editor
The Rev'd Anthony C. Dinoto

Asst. to the Rector
Laura J. Stefanski

Officers

Pamela Dolin	Sr Warden
Chip Flanagan	Jr. Warden
Dave Rutherford	Treasurer
Rosemarie Querns	Clerk

Vestry

- Chester Fairlie
- Elizabeth Kimble
- Dick Miller
- Carol Kensel
- Gina Lincoln
- Lesley Sollima
- June Cordeau
- Patsy Fowler
- Martin Karu

ST. JOHN'S SUNDAY "MASS ON THE GRASS"

During the Covid-19 Virus Pandemic, we continue to gather outdoors on Rogers Field to celebrate the Holy Eucharist each Sunday morning at 9 am. So far, we have been blessed with wonderful weather each Sunday. We plan to continue offering Sunday celebrations of the Holy Eucharist on Rogers Field through August and into September. Our fall back plan is to move indoors to the sanctuary when it rains on Sundays. Our Covid-19 seating capacity in the Church has been established at



63 persons. This maximum capacity number reflects 1/4 (one-fourth) of our normal seating capacity of 250, as established, at our request, by the

East Lyme Fire Marshal's Office in early Spring this year.

Please consider joining your fellow parishioners on Sunday. We are observing **social distancing**, we're urging the wearing of **cloth face coverings/face masks** throughout the service and we provide **hand sanitizer**. At times we'll all pray the "Prayer of Spiritual Communion" in place of actually

receiving the consecrated sacraments. We're not passing the Offering Plate, we refrain from physical contact at "The Peace" and the gifts of bread and wine are not brought forward at the Offertory. We've



elimated hymn singing and Holy Communion is offered in the form of consecrated bread only. We've also elimated offering a time of hospitality and refreshments following the service. Church School programs have continued and will resume, by ZOOM in September.

“THANK YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFULNESS AND GENEROSITY”

St. John’s Parish Treasurer David Rutherford’s latest report shows that, despite these unprecedented times that have affected us all in many ways, the faithfulness of so many has kept us on a sound financial footing. Certainly, we are doing without a major portion of the “loose plate offering*” as part of our revenue. (*Loose Plate-offertory gifts given each Sunday by non-pledging members and friends of St. John’s) For parishioners who wish to continue their regular giving but are not yet ready to gather here for worship, please consider giving to support our Operating Budget by mailing in your offering to the Parish Office.

ST. JOHN’S SUMMER CARNIVAL, V.B.S. CANCELLED



Due to the current Covid-19 Pandemic, it was decided in late May to either cancel or postpone St. John’s Annual Summer Carnival. This annual fundraising event has typically raised between \$7,500.00 and \$9,000.00. Shortly after we announced the carnival’s cancellation, I received a parishioner’s **anonymous** donation to help offset the lost revenue from the carnival’s cancellation. (*see below*)

TWO GENEROUS GIFTS RECEIVED

I am pleased to announce to you that TWO ANONYMOUS DONATIONS have been made to St. John’s in response to the anticipated lost revenue from the summer carnival and our regular Sunday “loose-plate offerings”. As I announced on the previous two Sundays, a parishioner, who wishes to remain anonymous, has made a gift of **\$ 8,000.00** , and this week a 2nd parishioner has made an anonymous gift of **\$5,000.00** Surely, the Holy Spirit is watching over the ministry of St. John’s Parish. I ask each of you to offer a private prayer of thanksgiving for these wonderful “votes of confidence and affirmation” of the mission and ministry of St. John’s Parish.

MORE GOOD NEWS...

Since we began offering outdoor celebration of Holy Eucharist on Rogers Field, we have had the benefit of using a *borrowed* public address system, thanks to Vestry Member Patsy Fowler. By most estimates Covid-19 protocols will be around for an extended period of time.

So far, we have been blessed with blue skies and sunny Sundays. We hope to continue to take advantage of outdoor worship through the summer and beyond. It became clear that St. John’s ought to invest in our own



public address system. I am pleased to share news with you that **thanks to a generous offer of support from MRS. JEAN WISEMAN**, we have been able to purchase a much needed *portable public address system* that will serve the parish well, during this Pandemic and in the future. **Thank you SO MUCH, Jean, for your faithfulness, support and generosity.**

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THE RECTOR LEAVES FOR VACATION AUGUST 1ST

Father Dinoto will begin his annual vacation on August 1st and will be away for the entire month of August. The Dinoto's will be spending time on Block Island, R.I. We are blessed to have **Mother Joan Phelps**, St. John's Pastoral Associate, as our Celebrant and Preacher on the Sundays in August. Obtaining so-called "supply clergy" to step in and serve during a Rector's vacation was once a routine part of parish life. That

is certainly **NOT** the case in the diocese anymore. The ever-shrinking pool of 'supply clergy' makes it impossible, in many cases, for parishes to offer the celebration of Holy Eucharist on Sundays when a Rector is absent. We are very fortunate to know that Mother Joan will be available, as able, during the Covid-19 Pandemic, to respond to calls for Sacramental Pastoral Care in 'end of life' events. (see below *Summer-Vacation Pastoral Care*)



PASSTORAL CARE IN AUGUST

Should emergency Pastoral Care needs arise during the month of August, please notify the Parish Office. Asst. to the Rector Laura Stefanski has resumed regular office hours (Mon. – Fri, 8:45 am to 12:45 pm) Laura will be monitoring parish voice mail for messages and will direct the information, either to Mother Joan, who will be responding to calls for **Clergy Pastoral Care/End of Life** issues or to Chester Fairlie has volunteered to respond in other cases. *Please do not call Mother Joan or Chester directly.* Regular home and hospital visitations are suspended during the pandemic.



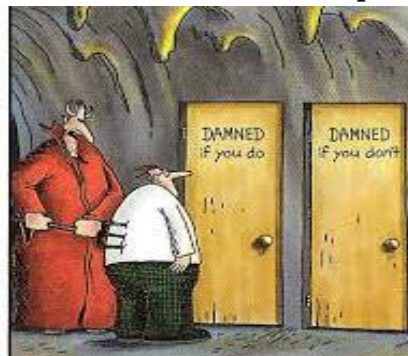
AUGUST VESTY MEETS AUGUST 10TH

The next regular monthly meeting of Saint John's Vestry is scheduled to meet 'virtually' by ZOOM at 7:00 pm, **Monday August 10th**. Unless otherwise announced each regular monthly meeting of the Wardens and Vestry is held on the **2nd Monday of the month**. Zoom link information will be sent to each member prior to the meeting.



ANNUAL DIOCESAN CONVENTION

The 234th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut (ECCT) will be held **VIRTUALLY**, and will be spread over **FIVE DAYS** in short sessions. Convention dates are: Wed. Oct 14-Sun., Oct 18. St. John's Lay-Delegates to Diocesan Convention are Gina Lincoln and Pam Dolin, Clergy Delegates are Father Dinoto and Mother Phelps. The Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut is the oldest Episcopal Diocese in the United States.



When Rectors choose controversial Sermon Topics to Preach On

