

Pastor Sarah July 2021

So often we talk about what happened in a month in our council reports, and that is an important thing – to reflect on what we have accomplished and to thank God for the blessings that we have seen and shared with others. But we can also use this report to look at what is to come and what is important to be planning and focusing on for our ministry at St. John's.

This month was filled with blessings in our life together. Pastor Elizabeth's installation service was one of my favorite worship services we have done in a long time. The joy of having our entire congregation together to celebrate this part of our life together was wonderful. I hope that the congregation realizes how truly blessed we are to have called Pastor Elizabeth – she has already brought a jolt of energy and life to us that we were needing. See her and Jay finally moving to the parsonage has also been a joy, though one with lots of work for them. But it is wonderful to know the house is being used by a pastor again – for the first time in my time at St. John's.

July also brought work for the congregation. We had our very long finance meeting to work on a recommended budget for 2022. We will be looking at that at our council meeting, so please look at it before so we are ready to discuss. We also had to deal with some cemetery issues once again and the team and Deanna handled them well. Vacation Bible School wasn't exactly laborious work, but it was shared with the congregation and gave joy to those who experienced it!

So.... what's to come and what do we have to work on? Pastor Elizabeth and I have been working on plans for the fall, including a Wednesday night plan that includes a weekly meal and lots of other activities – I'm excited about this. I've been working on getting some folks to commit to different parts and we are looking forward to what it might look like. I also been working on recruiting for Sunday School and putting that plan in place as well.

One concern, of course, is the rising Covid numbers in our area. I have asked the congregation to again mask in indoor worship and any other changes that we have to make will hopefully be supported by the council and congregation. I know that a good number of our congregation is vaccinated, but that doesn't mean that there aren't breakthrough cases. I also very much worry about our children that can't be vaccinated yet, including my own daughter. We will continue to watch the numbers and make decisions that we feel are best for the congregation as a whole.

Things to discuss:

1. Budgets! Yay! We have both our 2022 budget as well as the Children's Garden budget to look at this month.
2. Renovation – how do we get over this hump of not moving forward? We've talked about it, have some drawings and ideas, have people willing to work on it – what do we have to do to get moving?
3. Nominating for next years council – we will need to fill 4 spaces for the council next year. Who is willing to serve on nominating and making calls?
4. What is our plan for worship for the fall? I would like to keep 1045 (it will go to 1045 when Sunday school starts on September 12) outside for at least September. I just think that we should offer that outdoor option as long as we can.

Pastor Acts:

Funerals for:

Joel Conway – July 25

Janet Coleman – July 28

Ike Reeder – July 31