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St. George's Episcopal Church

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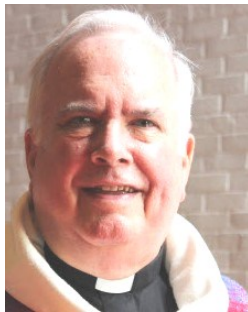
July 2025

This is a free publication for members and friends

Volume 32, No. 7

Spiritual Maturity

By Fr. Tom Gehlsen



So often we get frustrated and ask the question, "What does God want from us?" When I ask that question of myself, I always end up with the same answer: Spiritual Maturity. In fact in Hebrews 6:1, we hear, "Let's press on to maturity."

I believe that God intends for us to always pursue spiritual growth so that we may be conformed to the image of his Son. One of our main purposes as a community is to assist each other in spiritual growth and maturity. So often we feel stumped, attempting to grow in our spirituality. Here are some concepts to consider in this spiritual journey:

A spiritually mature person is . . .

1. positive under pressure
2. sensitive to people
3. someone who has mastered their mouth
4. a peacemaker, not a troublemaker
5. patient and prayerful

This is the kind of person who is mature and growing in Christ-likeness.

From the Office

By Marion Hunner,
Parish Administrator



Directory Update - The new directory is complete! You can find copies in the Parish Hall - one per household, please.

Remote Office Hours - During the week of July 7-11, Marion will work remotely and not have regular office hours. This is the week that she runs Vacation Bible School at St. Christopher's. She will check email and phone messages regularly Tues.- Thurs.

Vacation Days

- July 19-28 Fr. Tom will be out of the office. Deacon Diane will lead Morning Prayer on Sundays July 20 & 27.
- July 22-23 Marion will be out of the office.

Giving Statements will be emailed in July. Please check to see if your pledge is up to date. If you requested a paper copy, those will be mailed.

Links in the Newsletter - To follow links in the electronic copy of the newsletter, hold down the Ctrl key and click on the link. If you are reading a paper copy, look at the bottom of page 8 for instructions on how to find the links.

Welcome to Our Future

By Jane Jacobson, Interim Warden

St. George's Discernment Process: FAQ

June 2025

Q: Why is the vestry recommending that we leave our current building?

A: After prayerful study of our finances, the vestry concluded that we can no longer sustain the cost of keeping our building open. Using large amounts of our Endowment Fund to cover operating deficits is not good stewardship and is not a long-term solution.

Q: Does this mean St. George's is closing?

A: No. The vestry is committed to keeping the community of St. George's worshipping together in the Episcopal tradition. We are not closing as a parish; we are discerning how and where to continue our ministry.

Q: What options are being considered?

A: The vestry is exploring two options:

1. **Merging** with another vibrant Episcopal church whose mission and ministry align with ours. We have identified four local churches and have begun conversations with them.
2. **Remaining together as an independent congregation** by renting space in another building for worship and parish life.

Q: Why are these the two options?

A: These are the two paths that allow us to stay together as a worshipping community in the Episcopal tradition, while being financially sustainable.

Q: What happens next?

A: The vestry is actively exploring both options and gathering information. A parish vote is planned to decide which direction to pursue. In the meantime, we will hold parish meetings for questions, discussion, and input.

Q: How can I be involved?

A: Your voice matters! Please attend the upcoming parish meetings, pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and share your thoughts and questions with vestry members.

Q: Where is God in all of this?

A: This is the heart of our discernment. The vestry believes God is calling us to faithful change, to focus on our mission, and to seek new ways of being church together. We trust that the Holy Spirit is leading us toward a hopeful future.

Church Growth Committee

What Is an SEO and Why Does It Matter?

By Ed O'Donnell

Click on [this link](#) to find out more about SEO's (Search Engine Optimizations) and how Reach Right is working to improve ours. Note that the video will begin with an advertisement.

Photo Permission

By Kathie Brown

We have been, or will be, taking pictures of various church activities to potentially include on a new church website being worked on by the Church Growth Committee. If you don't want to be included in any photos on the website, please advise Kathie Brown ASAP (katherinepbrown@msn.com or 612-827-5760). Thank you!

Reviews

By Ed O'Donnell

The Growth Committee is asking the congregation to help grow our church by giving a positive review of Saint George's using this QR code.





July Birthdays

02 - Rachel Santos	11 - Paul Santos
08 - Nancy Becker	19 - Sherryl Hutton
08 - Douglas Krueger	23 - Nolyn Snyders
10 - Elena Schulte	29 - Mary Alice Troyer
10 - Japheth Norton	31 - Suzi Hood

Financial Updates

By Kathie Brown, Treasurer



The following financial information is through May. When June information is approved at the July Vestry meeting, we will post it in the August monthly newsletter.

Net Income = Income minus expenses
YTD = Year to date
Numbers in parentheses are negative

Pledges Received in May	\$12,456
Percent of the Monthly Budget	122.7 %
Total Pledges Received YTD	\$45,753
Percent of the Annual Budget	37.5%
Net Income for May	\$1,219.50
Net Income YTD	(\$22,336.88)
*	
Budget Net Income YTD	(\$34,294.81)
Actual Net Income compared to Budgeted Net Income YTD	\$11,9576.93*

*Reflects \$10,000 taken from the General Investment Fund (Mtkla Blvd Reserve Dedicated Account)

Open Sings: We Need You

By John Hoffacker

Wednesdays in July starting on July 9, we host singers and orchestral musicians from all around the state. We need people to **set up**, and people to **bring food** and to **host** at the 8pm refreshment break.

July 9 • to benefit The Food Group

Handel: Messiah

July 16 • to benefit Open Arms Minnesota

Mendelssohn: Elijah

July 23 • to benefit International Institute of Minn.

Mozart: Requiem

July 30 • to benefit STEP

Brahms: Ein deutsches Requiem

OpenSings.org

contact JohnHoffacker@gmail.com



By Camille Schroeder

The St. Louis Park Emergency Program's Back to School project is ready to begin. This project provides school supplies for some 500 students in St. Louis Park. These students are from families that are clients of STEP. And, it is up to us to donate the supplies. Crayola crayons, water color paints, markers and colored pencils. Three holed spiral notebooks (wide lined and college lined) in all colors. Two-pocket folders in all colors. Sketch books, highlighters, pencil pouches, and of course, Ticonderoga pencils are some of the needed supplies. Usually there are sales in July so keep an eye out for them. Supplies can be brought to church through August 14th. Many thanks for your donations. Camille Schroeder 952-470-5730.

Parish Calendar



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
				6:30 pm AA		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
10 am Holy Eucharist		Marion works remotely				
			7 pm Open Sing	6:30 pm AA		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
10 am Holy Eucharist 11:15 am Vestry	7 pm Finance		7 pm Open Sing	6:30 pm AA		Fr. Tom Out
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Fr. Tom Out						
10 am Morning Prayer		Marion Out				
		Newsletter Deadline	7 pm Open Sing	6:30 pm AA		
27	28	29	30	31		
10 am Morning Prayer	11:30 am Women of St. George's		7 pm Open Sing	6:30 pm AA		

Sunday Ministries



	Sunday July 6 4th Sunday after Pentecost	Sunday July 13 5th Sunday after Pentecost	Sunday July 20 6th Sunday after Pentecost Morning Prayer	Sunday July 27 7th Sunday after Pentecost Morning Prayer
Lectionary Readings	2 Kings 5:1-14 Psalm 30 Galatians 6:1-16 Luke 10:1-11, 16-20	Amos 7:7-17 Psalm 82 Colossians 1:1-14 Luke 10:25-37	Amos 8:1-12 Psalm 52 Colossians 1:15-28 Luke 10:38-42	Hosea 1:2-10 Psalm 85 Colossians 2:6-19 Luke 11:1-13
Lectors	Tom Harmon Mark Schulte	Kathie Brown Tyler Williams	Mary Weekes Sarah Schulte	Carole Leonard Bruce Wachutka
Acolytes	Lilly Schulte Elena Schulte	None	None	None
Chalice Bearers	Laura Harmon Jane Jacobson	Rachel Santos Kathie Brown	None	None
Ushers	Gregg Jacobson	Tom Harmon	Tom Zaun	Bob Jones
Altar Guild	Jane Jacobson	Kris Kelley Rachel Santos	Laura Harmon Heather Whitesell	Jane and Gregg Jacobson
Coffee Servers	Bruce & Iris Alexander	Bob Jones	John & Jane Carlson	Betty Bauer Carole Leonard

Exploring Our Options: A Visit to St. David's in Minnetonka

By Jane Jacobson



As part of our discernment process, parishioners from St. George's are visiting several Episcopal churches this summer. On June 1st, five of us worshiped at St. David's in Minnetonka and completed a visit rubric to help guide our reflections — a practice we will continue with each church we visit.

Of course, summer visits offer only a glimpse into a parish's life — choirs and children's ministries take a seasonal break, and many parishioners are away. We encourage anyone interested to visit their website at www.stdavidsprish.org for a fuller picture. Their Mission Statement reads in part, "We at St. David's Episcopal Church are devoted to loving and serving God, one another, and the world..."

That said, St. David's made a very positive impression. It consistently rated high for hospitality, worship experience, music, mission and outreach, inclusivity and diversity, leadership and vision, and the quality of the space.

Highlights from our group included:

- Clergy were warm and genuinely welcoming.
- The congregation felt vibrant, energetic, and loving.
- Many ministries and outreach efforts were familiar to us — including Lay Eucharistic Visitors, Prayer Shawls, and Loaves and Fishes — reflecting a shared sense of mission.
- Parish events like their Bake Sale/Craft Fair echoed

the spirit of our former Rummage Sales.

- Strong attention to children and youth, which brought back fond memories of our own past youth programs.

The "Prayer of Welcome" at the close of worship was especially meaningful.

A smaller sanctuary was mentioned as a potential drawback by one visitor, but overall, everyone said they would consider returning or continuing the conversation with St. David's.

We hope many of you will take the opportunity to visit one or more of the churches we are exploring this summer. It's a valuable way to listen for where God may be calling us.

Exploring our options: A visit to Trinity Episcopal Church in Excelsior

By Jane Jacobson



On June 15th, four of our parishioners attended worship at Trinity Episcopal Church in Excelsior. We were warmly welcomed at the door, and several parishioners and staff members sought us out after the service to answer questions and introduce themselves. Trinity's newly installed rector, the Rev. Charissa Bradstreet, was out of the country during our visit. The Rev. Julie Luna presided at the Eucharist.

We encourage you to explore Trinity's website — www.trinityexcelsior.org — which highlights their

strong outreach programs, vibrant children and youth ministries, rich musical life, and core values. Trinity describes itself as: *“a caring community that seeks a deeper relationship with God in Jesus through worship, learning, and service to each other and our neighbors.”*

Our impressions:

- The worship experience was very similar to St. George’s, with two services combined into a single 9:30 am summer service.
- More than 100 people were in attendance.
- Flags celebrating LGBTQ+ inclusion were prominently displayed on the property.
- Although there was no choir or youth programming during the summer, the service included familiar hymns accompanied by a beautiful pipe organ.
- The church campus includes a lovely worship space and an adjacent historic chapel — the oldest Episcopal church building still in use in Minnesota. One potential downside: Trinity does not have a dedicated parking lot; parking is on the street or in a nearby ramp.

Visiting and worshiping with our neighbors in Christ offers many benefits: it reminds us of our shared Episcopal tradition and mission, builds relationships among congregations, and opens the door to future opportunities for working together for the greater good.



We Love a Parade!

By Fran Bly

The morning of June 14 was cool with drizzly rain, but that did not deter us! The St. George’s banner, a little red wagon, and nine hardy souls were ready. Thanks to transportation provided by the Alexander family, we were off! Our place in the parade put us behind the horses (oops, watch your step...) and the art cars, and just in front of the Klondike Kate float (lots of great music). We were popular with our lollipops - 400 of them gone too soon. The crowd was enthusiastic and having fun. I will report that “someone” cleverly provided bottled water for us in clearly marked Haskell’s wine boxes, which we carried in the wagon. When the crowd pointed at them and cried “we’ll have some of that,” we invited them to church!



About St. George's

5224 Minnetonka Boulevard
St. Louis Park, MN 55416
952-926-1646

www.stgeorgesonline.org

Office hours Tuesday-Thursday
8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

PARISH STAFF:

Rector: The Rev. Thomas J. Gehlsen, Ph.D.

tong@stgeorgesonline.org

Deacon: The Rev. Diane McGowan

Revdianedarby@gmail.com

Parish Administrator, Marion Hunner

office@stgeorgesonline.org

Music Director, John Hoffacker, D.M.A.

johnh@stgeorgesonline.org

ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE:

Monica Murray, soprano

Alexis Winters, mezzo-soprano

Luke Slivinski, tenor

Vanessa Vaughn, bass

INTERIM WARDENS:

Jane Jacobson and Lou Michelich

VESTRY:

Members at Large: Iris Alexander, Ed O'Donnell,
Camille Schroeder, Cyprian Troyer, and Mary
Weekes

PARISH TREASURER:

Kathie Brown

Sunday Worship at

St. George's 10:00 am

Sunday Services

are offered in person

and available on St. George's

YouTube Channel

LINKS IN THIS NEWSLETTER

There are many links in this newsletter. If you would like to follow them, please begin by going to our website, www.stgeorgesonline.org and then clicking on News and Docs at the top. There you will find the online version of this publication. Press the Ctrl key as you click on the links, and that should take you where you need to be.

**NOTE: If you would like to receive
a printed copy of the church
newsletter, please contact Marion
in the office.**