



ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN SOMERVILLE, NEW JERSEY

The Newsletter

158 West High Street, Somerville, NJ 08876 • 908.722.1250 • stjohnsomerville.org

APRIL 2024

From the Rector

Resurrection

"If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain, and your faith has been in vain."

—1 Corinthians 15:13-14.

IT ALL BOILS DOWN TO THIS. It would be a lot easier if it were more complicated, if the Christian faith were a matter of complex doctrines and rituals and long lists of do's and don'ts. But it really isn't. In one short sentence St. Paul puts it in a nutshell. Either God did enter history in the person of Jesus and did raise this Jesus from the dead into eternal life, or God didn't. That's it. You either buy it or you don't.

Here we are, living life as if it is all about us—what we do or fail to do, what we own or fail to own. Our principal task in life is the perfection of self. Oh, we may go to church and say our prayers. We go to the gym too—and to the bank and to the grocery store. But all of it is about maintaining our self in a world full of other selves.

But it is like a terrarium. Then it dawns on us that there really is a God, magnificent beyond our wildest conception, who creeps into our terrarium, not merely to prune the dead leaves and till the soil, but to break us out of self, to make everything new.

For this brief time here on earth we have a job, to let the Risen Christ grow in us and through us to others. In a world that so often chews itself up, we Christians can offer hope. Knowing the gift that we have been given, how can we not share that gift as loudly, lovingly, and passionately as possible?

Be gone God's frozen chosen; we have work to do! We'd best be at it, for we cannot be on both sides of the Good News at once; we either hide to our peril or we proclaim it. "Alleluia. Christ is Risen. The Lord and all God's people are Risen indeed. Alleluia!"

Come to St. John's Church. Invite a family member, neighbor or friend.

See you in Church or online!

Father Ron



The Day of Pentecost and the Sacrament of Baptism

The Day of Pentecost, this year on Sunday, May 19, is one of the four principal Baptismal days in the Church Year. If you or someone you know desires to receive the Sacrament of Baptism, contact Fr. Ron at fronpollock1@verizon.net. Find out more about the Sacrament of Baptism at St. John's here:

<https://stjohnsomerville.org/baptism>

Holy Week and Easter 2024



Easter Thanks

Once upon a time, Mark Twain was the highest paid writer in America, earning \$5 per word for a syndicated newspaper column. A reader sent him \$5 and requested his most important word. Twain responded with a letter bearing this single word: *Thanks*. Thanks may well be the most important word as well as the most important faith expression there is. Having been through the depths of the liturgical season of Lent, Holy Week, Triduum, and Easter, I pause now to say thank you for all that you continue to do to build up the Body of Christ here at St. John's and in the world. Some things that stand out to me are:



- The faithful people who showed up and participated in the various Lenten offerings, such as the Thursday evening book on-line discussion group, Sunday morning Bible study group, Lent Madness on-line, Episcopal Church 101 Class, the Episcopal Church Women sponsored Lenten Communion Breakfast and presentation by Deacon Keith McCoy.
- The Parish Choir for their faithfulness in making beautiful liturgical music on Sundays in Lent, Holy Week and Easter, as well as participating in the joint Lenten Vespers with the Presbyterian Church Senior Choir in Bound Brook. Special thanks to Mark Trautman for his leadership with the choir.
- The Altar Guild members for their quiet devotion in maintaining a sacred order in setting up the altar for corporate worship. Special thanks to Altar Guild Directress, Diane Sireci.
- Chef Kir and his team for the wonderful dinner after the Easter Vigil.
- For the many who support our mission outreach efforts, particularly: Laundry Love, Clothes Closet, Meals To Go, those who supplied hams for families known to us in the community, socks and diapers collected by the Episcopal Church Women, so much more.
- For the strong support shown to Episcopal Relief & Development Fund, particularly in helping our brothers and sisters in Ukraine, Russia, and the Holy Land.
- To church school teachers and parents of our church school and for their assistance putting together Laundry Love baggies filled with washer pods, dryer sheets, and rolls of \$10 worth of quarters.
- For Jennifer and Matt Kosensky coordinating the Easter Egg Hunt.
- For our excellent staff: Deacon Keith McCoy and Mark Trautman. We are deeply blessed to have these extraordinary leaders and servants of Christ.

There are some days when I hear people say, "I've never seen such a high level of participation at any church!" The recruitment of volunteers to engage in sacred ministry, will always be hard work, but at St. John's it is also one of the marks that makes this parish as special as it is.

The head of the Church is Jesus Christ, but its soul is its people, people who continue to give of themselves beyond reason, even when they are tired, and who exceed all expectations. Thanks may be a single word, but is there any other that matters more? As we live more fully into these next 50 days of unbridled joy in Easter, allow me to add my thank you to all of you who make this Church as it is. By Christ's Spirit we surpass our individual abilities and form a body that gives hope to the world and honors our Risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Thanks, and with God's love—Father Ron

Book Club Continues

I'm excited to announce that Fr. Jerry Skillicorn's new book, *Revisiting the Trinity*, will be the focus of our Spring 2024 study. Our six week study will begin on Thursday, April 11, at 7 pm and conclude on May 23. We then will be fully prepared for a spirit-filled celebration of Trinity Sunday on May 26! The book may be purchased on Amazon



for \$9.99. Please read the *Forward* (by our very own Fr. Ron!), *Introduction*, and Chapter 1 in advance of our gathering. If you need assistance in purchasing the book, I can help, so please let me know. For Zoom credentials, please email me at dlazartic@gmail.com. All are welcome! As always, Fr. Jerry and Melisande will be joining us—so this is a very special opportunity to experiencing the Holy Trinity in a fresh and exciting way! So—if you've been considering joining our study group, there is no better time than now! No prior bible study experience needed. We are all learning, exploring and growing together in the Spirit!


—Donna Lazartic

St. John's Stewardship—Easter Communication

WE WISH YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY AND JOYOUS EASTERTIDE as we continue to live out Easter's promise centered on the Risen Christ.

While every service at St. John's celebrates and offers thanks for Christ's resurrection, Easter is always a special and glorious time for our parish community where celebrating Christ's resurrection leads everything we say, sing, or do. The incredible sermons, the joy-filled music, and the church made even more beautiful by the Altar Guild.

STEWARDSHIP AT ST. JOHN'S




Think of our church as a ship. We need the leadership and guidance of our "captain" and officers, but the ship does not function unless the crew are doing their part. We need your help.

How can I help?
Volunteer for one of our ministries. Attend or volunteer for one of our various events or clean-up dates. Join one of our groups such as the choir, the Episcopal Church Women, the Altar Guild. Volunteer to take on a role with the vestry or one of the church committees. Details are shared in the church newsletter and website, but please call the church office if you'd like to learn more.

In addition to your time, your financial contribution also helps with the operation and maintenance of the church, as well as providing funding to the ministries that are vital to our church and the community. Please consider making a pledge to help us serve.

Why Pledge?
By letting us know your expected contribution, we are better able to set budgets and plan for the following year.

How Do I Pledge?
Please use the method that works best for you. Fill out a pledge card and either mail to the church or drop it in the collection plate. Or set up an automatic pledge by using this QR code.



During this season of our church, it is a wonderful time to look at the many ways you can be involved in our life together.

We currently have 85 pledges, \$185,150 of our \$235,000 goal. It is never too late to pledge and *every* pledge regardless of the amount makes an impact on the future of St. John's. So also does each volunteers' work and prayers. Let's ensure that St. John's is a place where everyone is welcome as we seek to fulfill our mission: "To Know Christ and To Make Him Known." **Come and See**

THE WORK OF MINISTRY

Loose Change Sunday—First Sunday of the Month

Loose Change Sunday is observed every first Sunday of the month, and our next scheduled date is *Sunday, April 7*. Feel free to bring a jar (or a Ziplock sandwich baggie) filled with loose change to church and put it in the designated baskets in the Narthex (front door area of church) or on the little table by the side door that leads to the Parish Hall. Or, simply put whatever loose change you may have in the alms basins. This money is placed into the Discretionary Fund and used to help the many who reach out to St. John's for assistance.

Clothes Closet

It's time for the semi-annual Awesome Accessory Sale on Saturday, April 6 at the St. John's Clothes Closet from 9 am to noon. Handbags, shoes, scarves, and jewelry guaranteed to enhance your spring wardrobe are on sale. Plus, there's great door prizes every 30 minutes, and a raffle for designer handbags. Free refreshments will be offered. The Clothes Closet features reasonably priced clothing and accessories for all ages—men and women, boys and girls, infants, and toddlers. Shoppers should bring their own bags—masks are suggested and social distancing is required. Cash only.

Do you have fashionable new or gently used items that you'd like to donate? Contact Linda Willard at 347-276.6491. We are open the first and third Saturdays of each month from 9 am to 12 noon. *The upcoming Clothes Closet dates are April 20 and May 4.* For more information contact clothescloset@stjohnsomerville.org.

Laundry Love News

We are pleased to report that St. John's Laundry Love ministry is now an approved affiliate of the national Laundry Love organization, making us one of four locations in New Jersey and among 240 locations nationwide. We continue to meet at the Somerville Express Wash Laundry on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month, 5-6 pm. Quarter rolls can be left in the alms basin on weekends, along with any cash/check donations—indicate *Laundry Love* in the memo line.

Each guest receives a \$10 quarter roll and a bag with laundry pods and drying sheets. We always need donations of dryer sheets. The ministry received two recent community donations: \$380 in quarters and cash from members of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Somerville, and \$209 in quarters and additional laundry supplies from Somerset Hills resident Susan Kennedy. These community donations will support the ministry for at least three meetings.

If you have any questions about the ministry, would like to donate or to get involved in some way, just ask Ed Edwards or Paul Grzella in church, call 908-507-8020, or pgrzella@verizon.net.

Meals to Go

Meals to Go is offered the first and third Saturdays of the month, 9-10 am. If you know someone (including yourself) who would enjoy a meal, stop by the St. John's Parish Hall, use the ramp entrance and bring a bag. *Our days this month are April 6 and 20.* For more information or to be added to the volunteer list, please contact Christine Bean, cbean727@gmail.com. We are grateful for your financial donations to support the ministry during this interim period. Any amount is very much appreciated—a few dollars, combined with that of others, will go a long way to serving our customers. If you wish to donate online, go to Meals-to-Go on the dropdown menu on our website, www.stjohnsomerville.org.



Episcopal Church Women News

Tea Time in April

DEADLINE FOR TICKETS, APRIL 7

Tickets are now available at coffee hours for an afternoon tea featuring a Titanic tale on April 20. Well-known regional historical storyteller Alisa Dupuy will relay the tale of a fictional Titanic survivor concerning the events of that fateful night—April 15, 1912—and dispel common misconceptions. Tea, lemonade, and sweet and savory finger foods will be served. Add to the enjoyment by donning period dresses and hats; prizes will be awarded for the preeminent hats. Also there will be door prizes for lucky patrons.

April 20 in the Parish Hall from 2 pm to 4 pm.

Tickets are \$35 per person. Advance ticket sales only; seats are limited—contact Paula Windus for more information.



Questions? Contact an ECW officer:

Vice-President Jenn Kosensky (908-386-6152, jrkosensky@gmail.com)

Corresponding Secretary Linda Willard (347-276-6491, nolaandboogie@aol.com)

Treasurer Paula Windus (908-526-7150, paulawindus@verizon.net).

WE CELEBRATE, WE REMEMBER: APRIL 2024

BIRTHDAYS

1. Stacey Callahan, Madeline Spolarich, Christopher Khan
2. Ashley Tiano, Andrew Martinez, Luca DeMarinis
4. Amie Gilroy, Anjola Olawoye
5. Susan W. Huck
6. Jesse Daniel Agins, James Ryan
7. Courtney Bennett, Emilie Nawrock
8. Elizabeth Szumigala, Richard Lake,
9. Larry Jones, Wyatt Fleming
10. Charissa Poklikuha
11. Phillip Jones, Sheila Wilson, Justin Collins, Kinsley Golder
12. Tracey Miller
14. Christopher Fraser, Gail Saydek, Thomas Keefer
15. Carly McCabe, Tina Mandraccia
16. Richard Ellis
17. Carly Moor, Evan Jacino
18. Kaitlyn Chattin
19. Leigh-Anne Tom-Wolverton, Christopher Frost, Jr., Mark Ellis, Colt Conceicao
20. Brandon Leonidas, John Hamer
21. Nicholas Britanak
22. Charles Agins, Robert Strano
23. Ron Jacob, Debbie Jameson Jelinek, Olunide Olawoye
24. Thomas DeLaney
25. Barbara Jones, Alison Voss
26. Teresa McShane, Mila Drew Fletcher
27. Kerry Foderingham, Marilyn Meier Smith, Rachel Jacob, Kavitha Nirmal, Cynthia Dalrymple

30. Kimberly Buck, John Kotlarchick, Reilly Wawrzyniak

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

5. Steve & Toni Marchick
10. Stuart & Caryle Steggall
14. Jeffery & Donna Daugherty
16. Rajkumar & Kavitha Nirmal
17. Dina & Michael Sena
21. Edward & Amie Gilroy
22. Susan & Scott Bender
24. James & Wislene Edwards
28. Christopher & Samantha Venet
30. Patrick & Gloria Bower

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

2. George Stone Thomson
3. Helen Randolph Long
4. Don Mistrik
5. Edith Foreman, John Chester Harris, Owen John Klosin
7. Lily Altamura
9. Charles Caruccio, Jean Moore
10. Cecil McConnell
12. Rosalie Cornelia, Willard Norman
13. Mary Pfauz
14. Harry A. Schamp
17. Lucy Agins
20. Henryk Jachim
21. Irene Glines
25. Carson Kendall
28. James Edward Holmes
29. Gretchen Long, Michael LaCosta
30. May Stokes

April 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 12:30-1:30 All Recovery Meeting 7 pm, ECW Parish Office closed	2 Parish Office closed	3 Parish Office closed	4 Parish Office closed	5 Fr. Ron's Day off	6 9 am, Meals to Go 9 am, Clothes Closet
7 EASTER 2 8 am, Eucharist 10:15, Eucharist Loose Change Sunday Fr. Scott Russell, celebrant Neva Rae Fox, preacher	9 12:30-1:30 All Recovery Meeting 8 pm, AA Meeting	5 7 pm, Holy Eucharist (chapel)	10	11 10 am, Eucharist Mary-Martha Guild 5 pm, Laundry Love 7:15 pm, Parish Choir Rehearsal	12 Fr. Ron's Day off	13
14 EASTER 3 8 am, Eucharist 10 am, Church School 10:15, Eucharist	15 12:30-1:30 All Recovery Meeting 8 pm, AA Meeting	16 7 pm, Holy Eucharist (chapel)	17 7 pm, Vestry	18 10 am Eucharist Mary-Martha Guild 7:15 pm, Parish Choir Rehearsal	19 Fr. Ron's Day off	20 9 am, Meals to Go 9 am Clothes Closet
21 EASTER 4 Good Shepherd Sunday 8 am, Eucharist 10:15, Eucharist	22 12:30-1:30 All Recovery Meeting 8 pm, AA Meeting	23 7 pm, Holy Eucharist (chapel)	24	25 10 am, Eucharist Mary-Martha Guild 5 pm, Laundry Love 7:15 pm, Parish Choir Rehearsal	26 Fr. Ron's Day off	27
28 EASTER 5 8 am, Eucharist 10:15, Eucharist	29 12:30-1:30 All Recovery Mtg 8 pm, AA Meeting	30 7 pm, Holy Eucharist (chapel)				

St. John's in Somerville, Leadership, 2024

PARISH STAFF

The Rev. Canon Ronald N. Pollock, *Rector*, frronpollock1@verizon.net

The Rev. W. Keith McCoy, *Deacon Associate*, kmccoy1@optonline.net

Mark A. Trautman, *Organist-Choirmaster and Administrator*, mtrautman@stjohnsomerville.org

Ministers: The People of St. John's

Altar Guild

Diane Sireci, *Directress*, dianesireci61@icloud.com

Tom Keefer, *Treasurer*, thomasekefer@yahoo.com

Dana Keefer, *Flowers, Weddings, & Funerals*, dzkefer@yahoo.com

Bread & Wine and Altar Candles, mtrautman@stjohnsomerville.org

Music Program

Mark A. Trautman, mtrautman@stjohnsomerville.org

Canon Chancellor John W. Goldsack Church Library

Deacon Keith, kmccoy1@optonline.net

Church School

Michelle Hernandez, chellehernandez1@gmail.com

Tracey Jameson, tkayj@aol.com

Taffy Scherr, tafrika@aol.com

Episcopal Church Women (ECW)

Jennifer Kosensky, *Vice-President*, jrkosensky@gmail.com

Mary & Martha Guild

Fr. Ron

Episcopal Youth Community (EYC) Adviser

Fr. Ron

Clothes Closet Council, clothescloset@stjohnsomerville.org

Valerie Gibson, Taffy Scherr, Linda Willard, Paula Windus

Laundry Love

Paul Grzella, pgrzella@verizon.net

Meals to Go

Christine Bean, cbean727@gmail.com, Niki Hoffman, nikihoffman@hotmail.com

Red Door Ministries

Baby Blankets for newborns and those baptized: Pauline Boyer, 908.722.1832

Loose-Change for Discretionary Fund: position open

Happy Mealers: Parish Office, mtrautman@stjohnsomerville.org

Finance Committee

Terry McShane, t1m49@comcast.net,

Stewardship

Fr. Ron, *Adviser*; Barbara Christel, Carolyn Gioia, Michelle Hernandez, Leigh Meaders,

Devron Robinson, Linda Willard

Treasurer

Sam Galpin, *Parish Treasurer*, sam.galpin@outlook.com

Anne Tom, *Parish Co-Treasurer* annetom@comcast.net

Vestry (Class year)

Steve Mandraccia, *Senior Warden*, Smandraccia@verizon.net (2025); Terry McShane, *Junior Warden* (2026) t1m49@comcast.net, George Mullen, bigbrown11@optimum.net (2025); Megan

McNamara, meganmcnamara1@yahoo.com (2025); Leigh Meaders-Robinson,

Leigh.meaders1@gmail.com (2025); Barbara Christel, barbarachristel@yahoo.com (2026); Sheila

Fuhrmann, jfuhrmann00@aol.com (2026); Janice Williams (2026), jmwbells@icloud.com; Kyle

Ferris (2027), kyleferris1@hotmail.com; Carolyn Groff (2027) camy.groff@gmail.com; Steve Sireci

(2027) sireci@comcast.net

