

# NEWS FROM THE PEWS

The Monthly Newsletter of St. John UMC

February 2021



We recognize that our nation is divided on many issues. The work of the church will be vital as we seek ways to bring about unity in the midst of our differences. In light of all that has taken place, we realize that the world and the church has shifted. It will be slow for physical congregations to come back to 100% attendance, even after all quarantines are lifted. Potentially we will have more worshippers out of the room than in the room. We will be more committed to *connecting* over just gathering. Instead of trying to fill sanctuaries, we must fulfill the mission of Christ.

In the past we have used the internet to get people into the building; now we will start using our facilities to get people online. In a recent survey 71% of Baby Boomers prefer physical worship over digital or online worship. Yet 41% of Gen Z prefer digital worship to physical worship. I suspect as we move forward those percentages will increase. We, the church, will have to be actively seeking and trying new ways to communicate the love of Jesus Christ.

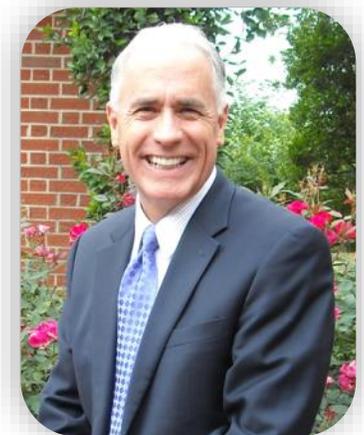
What, today, are “unchurched” people looking for? Well, it’s not ideology. What they are looking for is Christ. Let’s make sure this is what we are offering and not our own political agenda. 2021 will be messy. The leaders in the church will have to try new things, look for creative solutions, and not just point to the problems. Maybe whether we see it or not, 2020 has forced the church to seek to become more relevant to a hurting world and to become more connected to the digital age. 2021 will continue to have surprises: some of our ideas won’t work, we will have to continue to make some excellent mistakes, there will be some chaos, and it will be wonderful. I am hopeful for the days ahead.

Jody Alderman

PS. In light of all of this I urge you to pray for our Upcoming Lenten Season (Ash Wednesday is February 17). Our theme for Lent will be entitled *Holy Vessels*. We will be looking at ways to heal. Be in prayer for your clergy and staff as we make those preparations.

(Thoughts from this article were taken from Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson’s recent address at <https://vimeo.com/499308684>

and from “8 Disruptive Church Trends That Will Rule 2021” by Carey Nieuwhof.)



# We are currently in Reopening Phase 1

Full details at [StJohnAugusta.org/reopening-updates](http://StJohnAugusta.org/reopening-updates)

## PHASE 1

OCCURS:  
WHEN RICHMOND COUNTY'S RISK LEVEL IS RED

### GREENE ST. CAMPUS IS LIMITED

- Office open by appointment only,  
Monday - Thursday, 9am-3pm.  
Call 706-724-9641



- Masks required.



## CURRENT NEEDS

Want to help at church?  
We need Audio and Video techs  
on Sunday mornings and office help  
Monday -Thursday 9am-3pm.  
Please let Jennie or Nichole  
know your interest!  
706-724-9641



## Shrove Tuesday

### February 16, 2021

This year we offer a virtual party!  
We will have songs, jokes, and other spectacular talent  
premiering on video on Facebook and YouTube  
on February 16.

David Bartlett returns as Master of Ceremonies.

Fill out a reservation form online under the Shrove Tuesday post or call the church office to  
"reserve" your spot. All reservations will receive a **Party Box** delivered on  
Monday, February 15, which will include: masks, beads, candy, a small king cake, and more!

Please contact Nichole by  
**Feb 8** if you want to share  
a talent or joke by video  
submission.

We can come to you to  
film if you need assistance.



## This Month in Worship

11am Online Worship:

February 7, 2021

with Drive-by Communion 12 - 1pm

Sharing the Message

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 9:16-23

*Psalm 147:1-11, 20c, Mark 1:29-39*

February 14, 2021

I Saw the Light

**Scripture:** 2 Kings 2:1-12

*Psalm 50:1-6, Mark 9:2-9*

February 17, 2021

Ash Wednesday

It's Not About You

**Scripture:** Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

*Psalm 51:1-17, Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21*

February 21, 2021

Wild Beast

**Scripture:** Genesis 9:8-17

*Psalm 25:1-10, Mark 1:9-15*

February 28, 2021

Walk With Me

**Scripture:** Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

*Psalm 22:23-31, Mark 8:31-38*

## In Our Prayers

David Allard, Tonya Griggs,  
Judith Goodwin, Wyck Knox,  
Jim Richardson, Abigail  
Aldridge, our military at home  
and abroad, the global  
pandemic, and the troubled  
corners of our world.



Sincere condolences to the family of Mary Louise Dixon, who passed away January 7, 2021; and to the family of Dennis Hayes, who passed away January 16, 2021.

## HONORARIUMS AND MEMORIALS

JANUARY 2021

### **Budget:**

In memory Leonard Brubaker by Steve and Sandy Hobbs

In memory of Harriet Ottinger by Steve and Sandy Hobbs

In memory of Buddy Holbrook by Steve and Sandy Hobbs

In memory of Buddy Holbrook by Allen and Becky Smith

### **Music:**

In memory of Mary Louise Dixon by Margaret Brubaker

## HOLY VESSELS



## A LENTEN SEASON OF RECOVERY

Each of us is created a precious and holy vessel of embodied love. We have been through a harrowing time since last Lent that has shattered our sense of wholeness—body, mind, and spirit—like a glass vessel fractured into pieces. In this Lenten “season of recovery” for our physical, communal, mental, intellectual, and environmental health, we will explore the healing narratives of Jesus that tell of divine solidarity with human suffering and remind us that we can begin a journey toward making something beautiful from that which is seemingly broken.

St. John will be using these resources by Worship Design Studio to develop our worship and study experiences this Lenten season. Please see the website and newsletter for more details.

OUR LIFE IS FULL OF BROKENNESS—  
BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS, BROKEN PROMISES,  
BROKEN EXPECTATIONS.  
HOW CAN WE LIVE WITH THAT BROKENNESS  
WITHOUT BECOMING BITTER AND RESENTFUL  
EXCEPT BY RETURNING AGAIN AND AGAIN  
TO GOD'S FAITHFUL PRESENCE IN OUR LIVES.  
— HENRI NOUWEN

For more information, visit us online at [www.StJohnAugusta.org](http://www.StJohnAugusta.org)

Join our **Remind text groups!**

For reminders about worship, schedule changes, reopening changes, etc...

Text @stjohn1798 to 81010.

If you are new to Remind, they may ask you to create an account and/or download the app. You do not need to do that to just receive messages from St. John.

We also have a text group for the lake ministry. Text @stjohnlake to 81010 if you want those updates that just pertain to lake.

Remember that Facebook, our website and newsletter provide the most information during this time.

Please check those platforms.

<https://StJohnAugusta.org>

On Facebook search:

“St John UMC Augusta”

“St John UMC at the Lake”

**UMW -United Methodist Women**

We continue to meet by Zoom or outdoors on the Second Monday of the month. Join us!

We gather for service, fellowship, and discussion on the book “Finding Peace in an Anxious World.”

See Nichole Kuehl or Jeanne Lee for information on our next meeting.

February 8 at 7pm.

We appreciate your continued giving by check, cash, credit card, or automatic bank transfer.

Please mail checks to the church at:

St. John UMC

P.O. Box 444

Augusta, Ga 30903

Or drop by during office hours:

Mon– Thurs, 9am –3pm. Call first 706.724.9641

Or go online to [stjohnaugusta.org/donate](http://stjohnaugusta.org/donate) to give your tithe to the general budget or other fund designation.

Point your phone camera at this screen code to go directly to the website.



Please fill out your financial pledge for 2021 at this link if you haven't already.

**CLERGY AND STAFF OF ST. JOHN UMC**

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**Brandon Germany, Custodian**

**Please remember that in the red phase, our office is open limited hours.**

**Please call before you come by.**



St. John United Methodist Church

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Augusta, GA 30901