



Community through Caring

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PastoralCare@stjohnsec.org

A Message from the Pastoral Care Commission

Jesus called his disciples into a community of love.

St. John's Episcopal Church, like all Christian communities, is empowered by the Spirit to care for one another, not for our own sake, rather so that we might equip each other to take the message of Christian hope to the world.

In the pages that follow, you will find the variety of ways that pastoral care happens at St. John's — both for those in need of care and those who offer care. Our hope is that you will reach out and receive the care your St. John's community has to offer when you are in a time of need. We are here for you.

As people called to care for one another, we invite you, as well, to become a minister of care. No matter what your background, talents, or time constraints, there are concrete ways that you can contribute to the spirit of community by caring for others.

Together, each one of us and our parish community are stronger and grow more deeply in faith and service as we care for each other.

In Christ,
The Pastoral Care Commission



At St. John's All Are Welcome!

Wherever you find yourself on your faith journey; whatever you are believing or doubting; whether you are married, partnered or single; whatever your physical or mental abilities; no matter your age or economic status, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity: we welcome you here to be met by God, who already knows you and loves you.

Pastoral Care Commission Ministries

www.stjohnsec.org/pastoral-care

- **Pastoral Emergencies/Clergy On-Call Phone**
443-538-2806
- **Pastoral Care Commission**
PastoralCare@stjohnsec.org
- **Eucharistic Visitors (EVs)**
EucharisticVisitors@stjohnsec.org
- **Mental & Spiritual Wellbeing**
Wellbeing@stjohnsec.org
- **Prayer Requests**
For inclusion in the Prayer Chain: PrayerChain@stjohnsec.org
For inclusion in worship bulletins: PrayerList@stjohnsec.org
- **Prayer Shawl Ministry (“Clicks of Comfort”)**
PrayerShawlMinistry@stjohnsec.org
- **Stephen Ministry**
StephenMinistry@stjohnsec.org
- **Walking the Mourner’s Path**
WalkingtheMournersPath@stjohnsec.org



Clergy Assistance & Care

On-Call Phone: 443-538-2806

For parish members who need immediate assistance from a clergy person in a time of crisis. The on-call clergy phone is staffed 24/7.

The clergy are available for non-emergency pastoral conversation at various life transitions, offering spiritual guidance and referrals, when appropriate. The following situations are just some of the times when contacting clergy is important:

- You have a question of faith or religious experience
- Before going to the hospital
- A parishioner becomes unable to attend church
- A death occurs, or is imminent
- A baby is born
- The sacrament of baptism, marriage, reconciliation, or Holy Eucharist is desired
- You want to discuss a difficult subject affecting your life
- Drugs or alcohol become a problem for you or someone you love

If you are uncertain about what kind of pastoral care you need, the clergy can advise you on how they, and lay ministers, can assist you. You are welcome to call us at the church office, 410-461-7793, or email us at *PastoralCare@stjohnsec.org*.

Grief Ministries at St. John's

At the Time of Death

Clergy provide care, prayers, and guidance for funerals when a parishioner or family member dies. The clergy at St. John's are on-call for pastoral emergencies, with one clergy member available 24 hours a day at 443-538-2806. Please notify clergy prior to an impending death, when possible, and before funeral planning with the funeral home.

Bereavement Receptions

The Bereavement Ministry provides food and service for a reception following a funeral at St. John's. The funeral announcement to the parish invites friends and families to help.

In the Early Days Following a Death

Stephen Ministers, trained lay care givers, will be assigned to those who would like regular support through the early days of mourning. Grief is different for everyone. The one-on-one weekly support of a Stephen Minister can assist the bereaved in coping with the pain and changes the death of a loved one brings. (Learn more about Stephen Ministry on pages 7-8.)

Walking the Mourner's Path®

Death and its accompanying grief are part of the human experience. Walking the Mourner's Path is a grief support ministry offered for individuals who have experienced a death of a loved one at least six months prior to the workshop. This ministry consists of 8 consecutive weekly small group workshops led by trained lay facilitators and a member of the clergy. Participants discover Christ-centered support in their grief, tools for moving forward with joyful living, and ways to honor their loved one. Continuing support is offered in quarterly gatherings following completion of the workshop. To learn more or participate in one of the upcoming workshops, contact WalkingtheMournersPath@stjohnsec.org.

Unresolved or Complicated Grief

Unresolved grief or multiple death or trauma can cause emotional pain that lingers and affects our functioning. Those who find they need support with these issues should speak to the clergy about a referral to a local professional counselor.

Grief Booklets

A series of four booklets is mailed to parishioners who are grieving the death of a loved one. Spaced throughout the first year following a death, these booklets provide insight into the grieving process.

All Saints Day, November

On All Saints Day, we come together to mourn the dead, affirm hope in the resurrection, and live into the fullness of whom God calls us to be as an individual and as the church. We reflect on the promises of eternity and give space to remember and honor the lives of those who are no longer a part of the community in the flesh. During the Offertory ceremony, attendees are invited to place a picture of their loved one on a table of remembrance near the altar, tie a ribbon on a remembrance tree, and light a votive candle. We also remember departed loved ones in the Prayers of the People and in our service bulletins.

Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry is an essential, front-line pastoral care at St. John's. The parish has 14 Stephen Ministers, men and women of various ages and backgrounds, all who share a passion for bringing Christ's love and care to others. Trained to listen, care, encourage, and provide emotional and spiritual support, confidentiality and compassion are the foundation of their ministry. Providing one-to-one spiritual caring for our parishioners, Stephen Ministers meet regularly with their care receiver to support them through difficult times—through grief, in acute illness or a new diagnosis, divorce, the stress of parenthood, and other life transitions. This caring relationship lasts as long as the need for care arises.



Stephen Ministry has been present at St. John's for more than 25 years. In the past year, Stephen Ministers at St. John's have collectively spent hundreds of contact hours serving care receivers. Because of its confidential nature, Stephen Ministry is a quiet ministry, actively supporting parishioners behind the scenes. Parishioners are encouraged to contact clergy or one of our Stephen Ministry leaders when a need arises and connection to a Stephen Minister might be beneficial. You can find out more about Stephen Ministry on the St. John's website or online at stephenministries.org.

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The Blessings of Stephen Ministry *(continued)*

Stephen Ministry multiplies blessings throughout the church and community:

- Christ's commandment to "love one another" is carried out in a powerful and practical way.
- The church has a team of gifted, trained, and committed lay caregivers ready to minister to hurting people.
- Laypeople nurture and use their gifts in meaningful ministry, growing spiritually as they serve others.
- People who are hurting have a caring, Christian presence to provide emotional and spiritual support, and someone to walk alongside them.

To become a Stephen Minister or to be connected with a Stephen Minister, contact StephenMinistry@stjohnsec.org

Care to Homes

Meals Ministry

Nutritious food heals and food shared creates community. That is why the stories of Jesus' ministry were often set around a table. St. John's Meals Ministry extends the hospitable love of Jesus by providing meals to those who:



- Experience a crisis
- Undergo surgery
- Are ill
- Have a new baby

Recipients are brought to the attention of the Meals Ministry Team coordinator, by the clergy, church staff, and fellow parishioners. After speaking with recipients regarding dietary concerns, preferences and allergies, the coordinator organizes meal preparation and delivery. The team prepares and delivers meals, discerning what works best for each recipient's situation. Soups-stews-casseroles, vegetarian-vegan, gluten-free, low salt or spice, easy to swallow, etc. We prepare it all!

If you feel called to the Meals Ministry Team, or have questions, email MealsMinistry@stjohnsec.org.

Clicks of Comfort: The Prayer Shawl Ministry

The Prayer Shawl Ministry began in 2006 by late parishioner Gudrun Huden. Since then, *nearly 1,000* hand-crafted prayer shawls have been distributed to parishioners and friends. Parishioners who are sick, have celebrated a birth, or have other significant life events are given a prayer shawl to remind them of Christ's love. Hundreds of mini prayer shawls have also been distributed far and wide as a reminder of Christ's healing grace. Learn more by emailing PrayerShawlMinistry@stjohnsec.org.





Prayer Requests

The Prayer Chain leaders, inspired by the Holy Spirit, prayerfully put into words the intercessions, petitions, and thanksgivings of those who seek a specific prayer. Written by leaders of the Prayer Chain, these beautiful, directed prayers are then distributed to those who commit to daily prayer for those in need. The Prayer Chain is *distinct and different* from prayer requests made to the church office for inclusion in the weekend worship bulletins.

- To request prayers from the Prayer Chain:
PrayerChain@stjohnsec.org
- To add someone to the Prayer List in the weekend worship bulletins and our *Blessings* e-news:
PrayerList@stjohnsec.org



Sunshine Ministry

The Sunshine Ministry sends notes to parishioners who are sick, grieving, or homebound. The homebound also receive worship bulletins and other information to connect them to the parish community.

Altar Flower Delivery

The Altar Flower Delivery Ministry delivers weekly altar flowers, Christmas poinsettias, and Easter flowers to the bereaved, homebound, and ill parishioners. A committed team of deliverers has brought the beauty of our church to those in need, a tangible reminder of St. John's caring presence. Contact Kathy Young, *kyoung@stjohnsec.org*, if you would like to join this ministry.



Ministry of Mental & Spiritual Wellbeing

The Ministry of Mental & Spiritual Wellbeing joined Pastoral Care in 2023. The ministry offers workshops, training, and resources through posts in St. John's *Blessings* e-news and on the Pastoral Care page of St. John's website, as well as through community partnerships and classes that encourage and support mental and spiritual wellbeing. For more information, email Wellbeing@stjohnsec.org.



Pastoral Care Begins in Worship



Eucharistic Visitors (EVs)

The Eucharistic Visitors ministry has resumed. Please consider being trained as an EV to connect the homebound and sick to our worshiping community. For those whose circumstances create ongoing social isolation, receiving communion through the ministry of a Eucharistic Visitor is life giving and connects them to St. John's. Please contact EucharisticVisitors@stjohnsec.org if you are interested in this ministry — either giving or receiving.

*Beloved, since God
loved us so much, we
also ought to love one
another. No one has
ever seen God; if we
love one another,
God lives in us, and
his love is perfected
in us.*

1 John 4:11-12

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