



# THE VOICE

May 2024

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**The deadline for The Voice is the 15th of each month.**

Email submissions to [officeadmin@stjohnflatrock.org](mailto:officeadmin@stjohnflatrock.org) or deliver them to the church office.

## From the Rector's Desk

### *New Life into an Old Space*

During Easter, we celebrate the resurrection of Christ and how God continues to bring new life into our lives and our world. I am excited to share with you that one way we are experiencing new life at St. John is through the renovation of our Education Building. Located between the Parish Hall and the offices, these five rooms have served a number of purposes over the years, but today they are mainly used for our Sunday School classrooms and nursery. If you have not noticed, we are in the middle of a major overhaul of these spaces, and you deserve a lot of credit for this newness of life.

It all started when someone suggested that we expand the nursery. The existing nursery space that has been used for decades was only about 10'x12'. It was far too small for more than a child or two, especially with two adults minding them, and on some Sundays we have a lot of little feet running around in there. We decided to tear down the wall between the nursery and Fr. Alex's old office to expand the nursery. As we began making these plans, we realized how worn out all of those rooms actually were. Gibson Sims helped us look at the details and suggested that new lighting would help a lot. We began getting quotes for new flooring, painting, bathroom and water fountain fixtures, as well as electrical work. Drywall repairs would be needed, too. As it often happens, the costs quickly rose, until we needed \$60,000 for the job. Jerry Tanner helped organize things after having recently reformed the Buildings and Grounds Committee with the help of Will Rodriguez, Jr. Warden. After lots of quotes, the team selected a contractor, and work began with Gibson Sims overseeing it.

Progress is now well underway. We expect things to be finished by late spring or early summer. Because of your generosity in pledging and giving, the Vestry was able to pay for the majority of this project with funds we saved up from last year. Thank you, people of St. John! We may need help paying for a few finishing touches, but we are thrilled to have a newly expanded nursery and refreshed classrooms. Enjoy these pictures and, again, thank you for being so welcoming to young families and so generous in making these changes possible.

In Christ,  
**Fr. Josh Stephens+**

## Summer Scholar & Dates Announced

*Learn more on page 3!*

*Education Building Renovation  
"Before" and Progress Photos:  
"After" Coming Soon!*



*Nursery Before*



*Nursery Progress*



*Nursery Progress*



*Youth Room Before*



*Youth Room Progress*



*Excerpt: Letter from Fr. Josh Stephens to  
The Most Reverend Hosam E. Naoum, Archbishop of the Diocese of Jerusalem*

*April 4, 2024*

We know life has been incredibly difficult for Arab Christians for a long time. I work regularly to share our deep connection to you with members of my parish and the broader community whenever possible. On behalf of my church, St. John in the Wilderness in the Diocese of Western North Carolina, I would like to send a word of encouragement to you and to all of the Christians whom you serve, as well as the employees of the many ministries you oversee. Your continued witness to God's peace and love in the midst of so much violence, death, and destruction speaks ever so boldly and clearly of the power of Christ's resurrection. Your presence in a sacred but challenging place shows us what it means to live as the wounded yet healing Body of Christ in a broken world. Your continued worship and ministry in the middle of warring factions bears witness to this Easter hope given to us in Christ Jesus that, while death may have the next word, it in no way has the final word. On behalf of my entire community, we thank you for your ministry and the life and ministry of all the people who are a part of the Diocese of Jerusalem in Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Amman, and all the Holy Land.

To demonstrate our deep gratitude, we have sent a dear follower of Jesus from our parish, Mr. Bill Taylor, to offer you encouragement in Christ. Please receive him as you would me. We also have designated our special Easter offering to your ministry. (We will continue to send our Good Friday offering into the National Church, but this year we wanted to do something more.) We were hoping to have Bill Taylor give you a check directly, but it was recommended to direct it to the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. Our collections on Good Friday and Easter for your benefit totaled \$4,938. We will be mailing these funds to AFEDJ this month.

Again, thank you for continuing in the work of Christ Jesus by bearing witness to his Kingdom even through much difficulty. We hope to wage peace with you in Jesus' name. And please remember that you are not alone or forgotten: God is with you at this time and so are we.





## Education for Ministry (EfM): What About Registration?

*Don Stine, Class Mentor*



As the time approaches for me to send registration notices to those who expressed interest in class participation, I've realized how much has changed since I took EfM myself. Gone are the days when Mentors collected payments for registration, ordered books, and distributed them on the first day of class. In addition, the Resource and Reflection Guide, affectionately known as the "RRG" is no longer provided in hard copy format. All of those actions and resources must now be found and completed online.

As the class Mentor, I will provide links and resources that will coach participants through registration, payment, and ordering of class materials. My experience with the EfM website has been positive and I find their teaching videos excellent. In any event, I will make myself available to assist when necessary. I hope this information helps, and as always, feel free to refer questions to me, Don Stine, your Class Mentor, at 704-691-4089.

## The Cost of Forgiveness in God's Economy

*Dr. Kenneson to Return as 2024 Summer Scholar*

Dr. Phil Kenneson will join us once again this summer as our Scholar-in-Residence. He has taught at Milligan University in Johnson City, TN for over 30 years, dedicating his career to shaping the lives of undergraduates to better understand the narrative of God's redemptive work and how Christians live out that story in our world.

The topic of our time with Dr. Kenneson is "The Cost of Forgiveness in God's Economy." We will explore the theological foundation of forgiveness and reconciliation, hindrances and helpers to forgiveness, and more.

Summer Scholar Formation sessions will take place on Sunday mornings during Formation Hour and Thursday evenings at 5:00pm. Thursday evenings are "Saintry Hors d'Oeuvres" sessions--bring a snack to share! all meetings will take place in the Wilderness Room.

Don't miss your once-a-year-chance to receive seminary-level education at St. John in the Wilderness! We hope you will join us in learning from and alongside Dr. Kenneson.

## Empty Bowls Tickets on Sale Now!

*Sunday, May 19, in the Parish Hall*

*12:00-2:00pm | 4:00-6:00pm*



Local ceramic artists will once again fire up their kilns for this year to help hungry children in the greater Flat Rock area. On Sunday, May 19, "Empty Bowls," a community meal benefiting the Flat Rock Backpack Program, will take place in the Parish Hall.

Advance tickets are strongly recommended for the two seatings: 12:00pm-2:00pm and 4:00pm-6:00pm. Each ticket includes one hand-crafted bowl donated by area potters, a soup-based meal, with soups and breads donated by local restaurants and bakers, plus homemade cookies baked by church members. For those wishing to eat at home, take-away is an available option.

Tickets are \$30 per person or \$50 for a family of two adults and children under 12. Tickets are available for purchase online at [www.stjohnflatrock.org/empty-bowls](http://www.stjohnflatrock.org/empty-bowls). Tickets may also be purchased in person in the Parish Library between 10:00am and 12:00pm on Friday, May 10. Cash or check are accepted for in-person sales.

Please join us for this fun community event that nourishes so many of our neighbors!

### *Formation Dates*

**All sessions take place  
in the Wilderness  
Room.**

Sunday, May 26, at 10:00am

Thursday, May 30, at 5:00pm\*

Thursday, June 6, at 5:00pm\*

Sunday, June 9, at 10:00am

Thursday, June 13, at 5:00pm\*

Sunday, June 16, at 10:00am

Thursday, June 20, at 5:00pm\*

Sunday, June 23, at 10:00am

***\*Bring a snack to share!***





## Summer Refreshments After Sunday Services Return

*Sunday, May 19*



*Joey & Catherine Popp serving at Refreshment Time in 2023*

The much enjoyed Refreshment Time (formerly called Coffee Hour) after both services from May through September is starting back up on Sunday, May 19. This time is an informal opportunity for the fellowship we all appreciate—and it is an important way

we as a church and as individuals connect with visitors, new members, and our parish family.

The Welcome Ministry at St. John needs folks who will help continue this important tradition. Hosting refreshment time is easy! Almost all the items needed are stored in cabinets at the church. You provide a beverage and a snack. Detailed instructions are provided. *Won't you please volunteer for just one Sunday this year? Your help is needed and valued.*

Questions? Want to sign up? Contact Judy Petersen at 828-697-1967 or by emailing [jpsewnsew@aol.com](mailto:jpsewnsew@aol.com).

## A New Format for Men's Bible Study

*Wednesdays, 3:00-4:00pm in the Library/on Zoom*

The Men's Bible Study meets on Wednesdays from 3:00 to 4:00pm. Previously, meetings were online-only, but we are happy to announce that the format has shifted to hybrid! Men's Bible Study is now held in the Library AND on Zoom for those who can't make it here in person. All men of the church are welcome to join this weekly study of the lectionary.

Want to get connected? Reach out to Fr. Ian Williams at [ian@stjohnflatrock.org](mailto:ian@stjohnflatrock.org) to add your name to the mailing list!



## Save the Date: Feast of the Ascension

*Thursday, May 9, at 5:30pm at Kanuga*

St. John in the Wilderness will join other Episcopal churches in the Hendersonville Deanery for a the Feast of the Ascension at Kanuga on Thursday, May 9. Ascension Day marks Christ's ascent to Heaven 40 days after Easter and 10 days before Pentecost.

The evening includes worship offered by members of the Hendersonville Deanery, dinner, and a kite-making activity. Tickets are required for the food and activities, but not for the worship service. **Register today with the code "Hendoascends" for 40% off ticket prices at [bit.ly/Hendoascends](https://bit.ly/Hendoascends).**



## Good News Gardeners Invite You to May Workday

*Thursday, May 10, at 10:00am*

*Foster Educational Garden at Kanuga*

It's time to pull out those gardening gloves! The Good News Gardeners will meet on Thursday, May 9, at the Foster Educational Garden at Kanuga Conference Center. We will start at 10:00am with liturgy and prayer, followed by work in the garden led by Mary Kait Brown, Kanuga's Environmental Programs Specialist. There will be tasks for every interest and ability level. As is our pattern, we will enjoy lunch together afterward in the Kanuga cafeteria at half-price.

For more information, contact Kathryn Whitten at [kaymwhitten@gmail.com](mailto:kaymwhitten@gmail.com). Please register at [bit.ly/goodnewsgardeners](https://bit.ly/goodnewsgardeners) or email Kathryn, so that we have a good idea of the number of people participating and can plan our time together accordingly.



## (Re)Introducing the Buildings & Grounds Committee

*Jerry Tanner, Chair*

I would like to introduce you to your Buildings and Grounds (B&G) Committee. We are a standing committee of the Vestry, charged with oversight of the property of the Parish. One of our primary tasks is to take a leadership role in the long range planning of the use, maintenance and upkeep of our buildings and grounds. We accomplish this by working with the Junior Warden and Treasurer in the preparation and maintenance of the Capital Assets Replacement/Maintenance Schedule, the Noncapital Replacement/Maintenance Schedule, and preparation and ongoing monitoring of the B&G portion of the Parish Budget.

The B&G Committee has undertaken two major projects this year. The first is the remodeling of the Education Building. Built in the 1960s, this building was long overdue for updating. We are doubling the size of the nursery, installing new window coverings for the nursery, replacing lighting and flooring, and painting throughout. When completed, the flooring, trim, and paint will mimic that used in the Parish Hall, to tie these two buildings together. This building is used for our youth, and this renovation is an investment in our growing parish's future.

The second project is the Mission House. The building was renovated a couple of years ago to provide space for all our committees, missions, and the Sexton to safely and neatly store items used by them in the various programs, missions, and services of the parish. We have had extensive cleaning out of the building, installed additional shelving, allocated spaces for all using groups depending on their individual needs, and labeled their spaces.

The year 2024 is off to a great start and we look forward to addressing additional needs as we move forward.

## The May Altar Flowers are Given in Loving Memory of:

*May 5*

**Jim and Fran MacDonald**

*by Susan, James, and Inna*

*May 12*

**Robert & Jeanne Littlefield**

*by their loving sons,*

*Robert, Richard, and Donald*

AND

**All Mothers**

*May 19*

**Newell Doty**

*by Gaston & Nelson Motes*

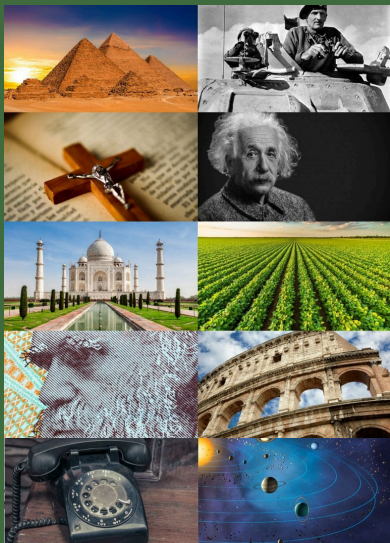
*May 26*

**All Military Personnel Who Died in Service to Our Country**



## The World Was Never the Same: Events that Changed History

*Tuesday Night Group Announces 2024 Series Topic*



Calling all history and culture buffs! We've chosen our topic and look forward to **our first meeting of the year on Tuesday, May 7**. We'll meet in the Wilderness Room a few minutes before 5:30pm to share a potluck dinner, watch a Great Courses lecture, and have a short discussion on what we've learned.

This year's topic is "The World Was Never the Same: Events that Changed History." Hopscotch across more than 3,000 years of world history with Dr. J. Rufus Fears, from the ancient city-states of Mesopotamia and Greece, to medieval Europe and colonial America, to revolutionary Russia and China. In each instance, Professor Fears weaves a captivating story about each event: what led up to it, how it unfolded, and how the world was changed as a result.

The course will run through Tuesday, October 15. No outside reading is required; just your curious and sociable presence. Questions? Please call Polly Morrice at 713-206-1036 or email her at [pamorrice@gmail.com](mailto:pamorrice@gmail.com).



## May-king a Difference with ECW

This May, your ECW board is so grateful for our church family and the women who care for it. As a board we continue to gather information and ideas to grow and nourish our faith and serve the Lord together.

What does Making a Difference mean and feel like to you? We count on our membership to help guide us as we seek to be relevant to the women of St. John in the Wilderness across all ages and stages of life. Reach out to us anytime at [carmen.lasercurtis@gmail.com](mailto:carmen.lasercurtis@gmail.com) to share your thoughts.

For now, we have prayerfully come to some conclusions:

- We will seek out fundraising opportunities with high returns but less wear-and-tear on our church family.
- We look forward to supporting “Empty Bowls” on Sunday, May 19, by baking cookies to give to event attendees as dessert with their meals. Sign up to bring two dozen (or three, or four!) at [bit.ly/ecwbakers](http://bit.ly/ecwbakers). Contact Elizabeth Christenbury at 828-676-7163 for assistance with signing up.
- As we move into June, July, and August, we will initiate monthly, informal “Walks at Flat Rock Park.” Stay tuned for details.

In the meantime, we wish to all those who are celebrating this season a happy graduation and happy Mother’s Day!

Warm regards,  
Carmen Curtis, ECW Chair

## Join Us for a Parish Breakfast

*Sunday, May 5, 9:30-10:30am in the Parish Hall*

Join us for another Parish Breakfast hosted by the Chefs of St. John! In addition to the regular offerings of bacon, sausage, eggs, grits, gravy, fruit salad, potatoes, biscuits, and juice/coffee/tea, the Chefs will serve up breakfast burritos. All of this plus great fellowship for only \$6 per person or \$12 per family! No registration necessary. We hope to see you there.

## Readers in the Wilderness

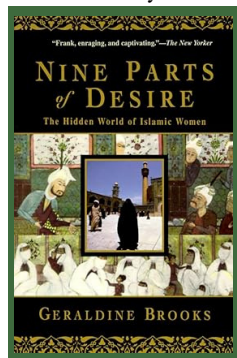
*First Fridays (except January)*

*10:00am in the Library*

**May 3: *Nine Parts of Desire:***

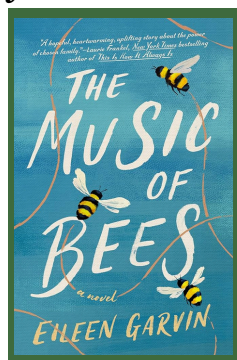
***The Hidden World of Islamic Women***

by Geraldine Brooks



During her six years covering the Middle East for the *Wall Street Journal*, Brooks sought to find out how Muslim women feel about their societies' attitudes toward women. What she discovered is sometimes astonishing, sometimes shocking, but always fascinating. Taking on the hijab herself, Brooks talked with women throughout the Islamic world, reexamined the Koran, spent time with fundamentalist and feminist alike, and emerged with a deeper understanding of how pride and power have warped the original message of a once liberating faith.

**June 7: *The Music of Bees* by Eileen Garvin**



Forty-four-year-old Alice Holtzman is stuck in a dead-end job, bereft of family, and now reeling from the unexpected death of her husband. Three lonely strangers in a rural Oregon town, each working through grief and life's curveballs, are brought together by happenstance on a local honeybee farm where they find surprising friendship, healing--and maybe even a second chance--just when they least expect it.

## Annual Altar Guild Meeting

*Thursday, May 9, 10:00am in the Wilderness Room*



We look forward to seeing the Altar Guild all together and welcoming new members. Anyone who is interested in learning about the Altar Guild and what it does is also invited to attend our annual meeting on Thursday, May 9, at 10:00am in the Wilderness Room. For more information, reach out to Cathryn Harrell at [thredbenda@gmail.com](mailto:thredbenda@gmail.com) or 828-606-3785 or to Elaine Harris at [2eharris2@gmail.com](mailto:2eharris2@gmail.com) or 828-606-3002.



## Friends of Music Presents A Chamber Music Trio

*Sunday, May 19, 4:00pm in the Wilderness Room*

On Sunday, May 19, Friends of Music will present a concert featuring a trio of noted local musicians: Kate Steinbeck, flute; Katherine Haig, cello; and Dewitt Tipton, piano. The chamber music program will be held at 4:00pm in the Wilderness Room. Attendees of Empty Bowls are encouraged to join us for this concert before or after you enjoy your meal!

Kate Steinbeck is recognized across the U.S. and in Europe as a unique interpreter of a wide-ranging repertoire, an innovative producer and collaborator, as well as an enthusiastic teacher/ coach. In 2011 she co-founded Pan Harmonia. Visit [www.panharmonia.org](http://www.panharmonia.org) to learn more.

Katherine Haig, a cellist, singer and arranger living in Asheville, is passionate about both early and contemporary music. Having studied at Baldwin Wallace University, she is currently training in the Suzuki method and is dedicated to teaching young students to be joyful and thoughtful musicians.

Dewitt Tipton, retired Furman University music professor, serves as Organist and Director of Music at St. John in the Wilderness. He founded and coordinates the annual Friends of Music series.



The concert will feature musical selections by artists J.S. Bach, John Rutter, Ernst Bacon, and Carl Maria von Weber. It is free and open to the public with no reservations required. Donations for Friends of Music are gladly accepted.



- 1 Jim Olson
- 1 Mary Pharr
- 1 Victoria Meade
- 2 Peg Van Bergen
- 2 Stephen Bruno
- 3 Charles Cornwell
- 4 Stan Rogan
- 6 Kathy Limmiatis
- 7 Jerry Tanner
- 8 Danielle Pharr
- 9 Joey Saltz
- 9 Dorothy Trotter
- 10 Virginia Rehn
- 11 Ann Kanipe
- 11 Thomas Pickral
- 12 Eduard Wiescholek
- 13 Sandy Harris
- 13 Dottie Dalzell
- 13 Sally Books
- 13 Bill Williams
- 14 Lauren Kanipe
- 15 Bonni Spry
- 16 Sallie Williams
- 16 Margaret Pharr
- 17 Fred Lasswell
- 17 Barbara George
- 17 Wilder Stephens
- 17 Elaine Hull
- 17 Joe Rome
- 20 Joanie Covell
- 21 Robert Odean
- 22 Sandy Rex
- 23 Joan Odean
- 24 Gordon Smith
- 24 Suess Gunter
- 25 Jennifer Hudgens
- 26 Jim Thaxton
- 26 John Ogletree
- 28 Lois Karcher
- 30 Anne McCormick
- 31 Beverly Creely

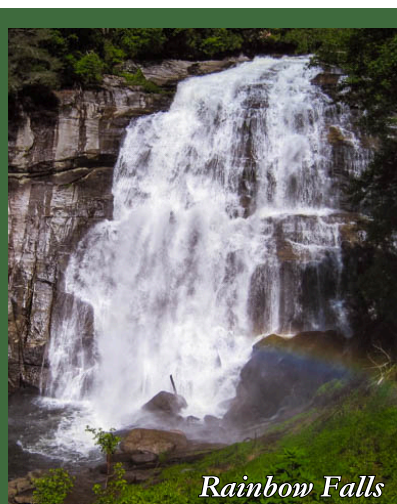
## Join Us on Our Next Hike!

*Tuesday, May 14, 10:00am*

*Rainbow Falls and Turtlehead Falls Trail*

On May 14, Meg and Jerry Holt will introduce Holy Hikers to NC Gorges State Park. They will lead us on a trail that travels along the Horsepasture River before reaching Rainbow Falls. This 3.4-mile trail is rated moderate (not easy). It will be one of our more challenging hikes with an elevation gain of around 700 feet.

The trailhead address is Rainbow Falls and Turtleback Trailhead, Grassy Ridge Rd, Lake Toxaway, NC 28747. Please plan to meet at the trailhead at 10:00am. The trailhead is about 43 miles from St. John in the Wilderness (see directions below). If you wish to convoy from the church, meet at the Parish Hall parking lot no later than 8:40am.



*Rainbow Falls*

*Don't see your birthday here?  
That means we don't have a  
record of it!*

*Please email Sarah at  
[officeadmin@stjohnflatrock.org](mailto:officeadmin@stjohnflatrock.org)  
to update your information.*



Flat Rock, NC 28731  
PO Box 185  
**St. John in the  
Wilderness**  
THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF



## The Episcopal Church of St. John in the Wilderness

### Clergy and Staff

The Rev. Josh Stephens  
*Rector*

The Rev. Ian Williams  
*Curate*

The Rev. Dn. Charles Rex  
*Deacon*

Sarah Yeargin  
*Director of Parish Communication &  
Administration*

Stacy Knapp  
*Parish Financial Assistant*

Dewitt Tipton  
*Organist and Director of Music*

Kevin Hunt  
*Sexton*

### Vestry

Jerry Holt  
*Senior Warden*

Will Rodriguez  
*Junior Warden*

Tom Griswold  
*Treasurer*

Margaret Barker  
*Clerk*

Clint Adams, Patrice German,  
Jim Gibbs, Jon Fitzpatrick,  
E.R. Haire, Jr., Jill Owen,  
Marissa Pharr, Kim Sanders,  
Sandy Skelton, and Laura Teel



## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

### Sunday

8:45am - Rite II Eucharist

11:00am - Rite II Eucharist

*\*Services are live-streamed to Facebook on a rotating schedule.*

*\*St. John uses Rite I liturgies during Advent and Lent, and Rite II during the rest of the year.*

### Monday through Thursday

9:00am - Morning Prayer (live-streamed on Facebook)

### Wednesday

10:30am - Healing Service in the Wilderness Room

4:30pm - Evening Prayer in the Atrium Chapel

## Our Mission Statement

To know and love God as He is revealed to us in Jesus Christ, to bring others to His saving love, and to serve the world in His name.

828-693-9783

[www.stjohnflatrock.org](http://www.stjohnflatrock.org)

[officeadmin@stjohnflatrock.org](mailto:officeadmin@stjohnflatrock.org)



[@stjohnwildernessflatrock](https://www.facebook.com/stjohnwildernessflatrock)