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Join The Rev. and Mrs. Kevin (Susan) Warner & The Rev. and Mrs. David (Allman) Warner with St. John Divine Episcopal Church

Holy Land

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 Kevin Warner
 kwarner@stjohndivine.com • 248-931-3545
 David Allman • pastorallman@gmail.com

SJD St. John Divine

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR POSTPONED TRIP

POSTPONED

Join us on this Holy Land trip program that will give you knowledge of the Bible in this sacred land. A journey following in the footsteps of Jesus will change the way you read the Bible, and you will learn why scholars refer to it as the "Fifth Gospel". Please consider this our personal invitation to be a part of this adventure in faith and join us in experiencing a once in a lifetime journey as we walk where Jesus walked!

Revelations
July, 2020

Offering Meaningful Worship
Teaching the Gospel
Caring for God's People



HOLY LAND TRIP – POSTPONED UNTILL NOVEMBER, 2021

KEVIN'S KERYGMA by Fr. Kevin Warner

I have three things to ramble about this month: pandemic, people and personal stuff. First, about the pandemic .

"I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine and take it. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance inflict and pollute others and so cause their death as a result of my negligence. If God should wish to take me, he will surely find me, and I have done what he has expected of me and so I am not responsible for either my own death or the death of others. If my neighbor needs me however, I shall not avoid place or person but will go freely as stated above. See this is such a God-fearing faith because it is neither brash nor foolhardy and does not tempt God."[Prayer by Martin Luther during Black Plague]

Sometimes the best prayers and wisdom can be found in history. This prayer of Luther's seems prudent advice as we try to navigate uncertain times. While his pandemic was much worse than ours given the medical care at the time and a mortality rate almost 4x's as great (11% vs. 2.8%), the difficulty of balancing action and inaction, going out and staying in, touching and not touching was as real then as it is now. At SJD we are trying to find that balance. A combination of zooming, streaming and in-person worship and meetings seem to be the new normal. If you need help with technology, we have staff and volunteers eager to help.

Next, about people. Currently there seems to be a great deal of animosity and polarization among people everywhere. As Fr. David pointed out Sunday, June 21 in his excellent sermon, ([Watch Here](#)) peace that is the result of oppression is not the Peace of God. Things change when we seek to understand one another and attempt to walk in one another's shoes. As I pointed out in my sermon on June 14 ([Watch Here](#)) many of us have been blissfully ignorant of the struggles facing people of color in this world.

A couple of sermons open the topic, but a wider discussion concerning racism is needed. On Wednesdays in July we will be offering a 3-part podcast produced in conjunction with Pastor Zelvis Applin, of South Hills Church. The topics will be:

1. How Did We Get Here? July 10
2. The Church's Response July 17
3. Where Do We Go from Here? July 24

The links will be posted on the website closer to the date of release. Each podcast will be roughly 30 minutes in length. As this issue is troubling for some, please do not hesitate to call any of your priests with concerns and/or comments.

Finally, on the personal front, I am a grandpa for the second time! Elijah MacGregor Warner was born on Father's Day, June 21, which also happened to be his father's birthday. He showed up early, he was supposed to wait until I was there in mid-July, but showed up a month early. That said, he is still a keeper at 6 lb. 11 oz. and 20 in. long. All are doing well and even his big brother seems to be happy. I look forward to seeing him in person soon.

Many of you have been asking about my hip. I just had my 4-month check-up with the surgeon and things are progressing. While I may never be completely free of a limp, it is much better than it was, and it takes about a year for the muscles to recover fully. Continued physical therapy, losing some weight and time are the prescription.

Prayers for all of you during this time of uncertainty. As we seek to understand how best to adapt to the pandemic know that your church family is here for you, and only a phone call, video chat, zoom away.

Stay safe!

Blessings!

Fr. Kevin+

|| Timothy 1:11



Levi & Eli



Fr. Lee Miller

Several years ago, I attended a lecture by a well-known national figure. The audience was packed, and a quiet hush fell over the crowd as he announced that his speech would be a departure from the subject previously announced – that he would speak on what was then a “touchy” regional issue. Throughout the speech, his manner of delivery would indicate he was making some rather bold statements, but they had been so carefully worded that one could not really be sure. An hour later, he received a standing ovation, and everyone marveled at the courage of a man who would speak on such a forbidden subject. The speaker’s duplicity in meaning had made him a hero.

We are seeing this attitude today as it seems the whole been lectured by public health experts about gathering in public places, wearing face masks and pretty much staying at home and now, with the number of infections increasing, world is in freefall. During the last couple of months we have we are told, despite the spike, we can become more socially involved. We cannot but ask ourselves if these warnings are not ideological and hypocritical and are coming from persons who, for whatever reason, simply do not want to make waves. We are critical of the actions of those who do not wish to make waves but we, too, have been guilty.

Scripture reminds us, “Do not withhold good (honesty, truthfulness) from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act.” Proverbs 3:27

I remember talking with Ronald Reagan when he was running for president. It was a day following, in a speech, in which he had made some statements regarding a very controversial subject. I

asked him how his speech had been received. He said, so far, he had only talked with his friends and they liked it. Of course, he was only injecting some humor into the conversation, but it was also a clever way to sidestep my question – so clever I didn’t pursue it.

We should be sure our attitudes and actions are honest and sincere. A “flexible” nature is appealing, but if we expect the truth, we should make certain we give the truth. I am reminded of the words of Robert Bolt’s commentator in “A Man for all Seasons.” He is called the “common man.” At the end of the play, when Sir Thomas More has been executed for refusing to deny his own deep-rooted principles, the common man turns to the audience and offers the following advice: “It isn’t difficult to keep alive, friends. Just don’t make trouble. Or if you must make trouble, make the sort of trouble that’s expected.”

HAPPY 1 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

FATHER DAVID AND FAMILY

July 6 will mark the 1st anniversary of Father David Wyly and his wonderful family joining our SJD community. It has been a great year; along with leading services, preaching, ministering, counseling, and all the other duties of a priest, he helped decorate the youth room in the Banner building. The kids can relax, play games, watch TV, work on their homework, use the computer, and visit with each other in a safe environment. He organized and led his first Celebration Sunday and Back to School drive where we collected enough backpacks and supplies for 2 elementary schools. Father David also organized a youth mission trip where he supervised 7 of our youth for a week in southern Florida. He has truly been a blessing to St. John's. Please help me in wishing Father David a very happy anniversary.



RUMBLINGS OF AN OVER-CAFFEINATED, SLEEP DEPRIVED MILLENNIAL



Live Stream Changes

Hello! If you have watched the Live Stream or a sermon since [Ascension Day \(watch here\)](#) you have noticed our new cameras! We are so excited to have them in and operating, and we are, of course, learning as we go. There was also new mics added to our production and we are working hard on properly integrating them. It will take some time for the AV Booth to become fully comfortable with all our new toys, but we hope the new additions will serve to bring St. John Divine's services to all! Here is what the changes mean for you.

- Picture in Picture (or PIP) – PIP is an addition that allows us to have the slides (prayers, lyrics, etc.) in the corner of the screen on the Live Stream. With that addition we can focus on the “action” with the cameras and let everyone watch the service with the added benefit of the slides on the side. We have been wanting and needing a PIP system for a long time as people have mentioned their dislike of having the slides taking over the screen. Right now, we can keep the information of the slides by putting them on the side, but it has been at the cost of screens in the Sanctuary and Parish Hall as they only get the slides now. We are currently working on a fix with the installers, as it was an unforeseen issue that came up when we reopened for [Pentecost \(watch here\)](#).
- Single Audio/Video Feed – This is a technical subject matter that would typically not end up in one of my articles, but I feel like this is a major change and should be mentioned. In the past we had two separate tools giving the Live Stream the audio and video from the service. This led to issues where the audio would not match up to the video. I am not going to delve deep into why they were not matching, but now we have a single tool taking the audio and video to the Live Stream. Because they are coming from the same tool, they have same internal clock and they stay in sync.
- Organ & Piano – The last thing I wish to cover is our new advancements on how sound is Live Streamed from the organ and piano. Jim Smith and I met with our organ technician recently and, with his help, were able to get a direct line from the organ to the AV Booth. The piano has been recorded in the past with a mic that did not receive the best sound due to placement. We needed to find a new option to work with the Live Stream and provide high quality sound. Jim Smith and Howard Roshaven worked hard, and with their expertise managed to give us the great sound quality that was heard on the [June 21st Live Stream \(watch here\)](#).

Once again, thank you all who have donated toward the updates. Last month we received \$500 in new donations, \$200 were from former members who are enjoying our services as their new church does not have the ability to Live Stream.

I hope this article finds you well,

Tristan M. Warner
Media & Tech Specialist



εὐαγγέλιον "The Good News"



In the February issue of Revelations, I told you about a sermon I heard preached at The National Cathedral by gentleman named Bryan Stevenson. Mr. Stevenson is an attorney and founder of The Equal Justice Initiative (EJI). This organization provides legal representation to prisoners who may have been wrongly convicted. The EJI guarantees a legal defense for death penalty cases in the State of Alabama. My purpose in writing the February article was to draw attention to African American History Month. Now, our nation finds itself in a continued season of unrest because of the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery; you have heard calls from civic leaders, politicians, activists, and clergy for racial justice. So, I want to draw your attention to the substance of Mr. Stevenson's sermon.

Mr. Stevenson's sermon centered on what it takes to "do justice" in a legal system that incarcerates black men at an astounding rate. Stevenson noted that "[t]he Bureau of Justice now predicts that 1 in 3 black male babies born in this country today can be expected to be incarcerated, a statistic that wasn't true in the 19th or 20th centuries." He also pointed out that this is not the only injustice we see in American society we see evidence of inequality, poverty, despair, and abuse in many places in this country. Mr. Stevenson suggested that to do justice, as people of faith, we are called to do four things: (1) to "get proximate" to the problem; (2) to "change the narrative"; (3) to "stay hopeful"; and (4) to "be willing to do uncomfortable things." Proximity: As Christians, God calls us to care for the "least" of our neighbors, those who have been marginalized and to minister where there is poverty, inequality, social injustice, and despair. I agree with Mr. Stevenson that we cannot do these things from a distance. These are not "remote" activities and require us to get close to, "get proximate to," where these things happen. We cannot possibly grasp the intricacy of social injustice merely by being told about it.

Change the narrative: For many decades, if not centuries, politicians have used the narrative of fear and anger to battle over the issues of crime and punishment. As a result of these battles, we now see children as young as 12 being condemned, as "super-predators", to lengthy prison sentences. Many of these children do not have the cognitive ability to understand the crimes they have been accused of committing. We must reject the narrative that "some children are not children", especially when most of the time the children the system deems as "not children" are children of color.

Hopeful: We must remain hopeful. People of faith are required to be hopeful even when our hopes seem impossible to achieve. Just as the hemorrhaging woman who touched Jesus' cloak remained hopeful for 12 years, we too are called to remain hopeful, even when it seems as though there is no hope left. In times, such as these, it is easy to lose hope...but hope is how we stand for justice when others tell us to sit.

Doing uncomfortable things: The work of ending inequality and social injustice requires us, especially us white folks, to put ourselves in places, situations, and conversations that challenge our sense of comfort. Conversations about race and inequality are never comfortable but this is the work

God calls us to do. Jesus reminds us “blessed” are those who are hungry or poor in spirit or suffering persecution for righteousness sake (Matthew 5:1-12).” It is impossible to “hunger for righteousness sake” and be comfortable.

The sin of systemic racism is one that God calls us to repent for and to reconcile. I invite everyone to begin this journey by taking Mr. Stevenson’s suggestion and first, commit to doing the uncomfortable. If we are not willing to step out into the uncomfortable, we can’t possibly expect to get proximate, change narratives, or be hopeful for that change that this world so desperately needs. There are many resources available to learn about inequality, injustice, race, and racism. Here is a brief list of resources that may be helpful to us in beginning this journey:

- Feb. 14th, 2016: Sunday Sermon by Bryan Stevenson
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K0N3g-HdEUw>
- The Central Park Five: A Film by Ken Burns & David McMahon & Sarah Burns
- The Episcopal Church Resources for Racial Reconciliation
<https://episcopalchurch.org/racial-reconciliation/resources>
- Bryan Stevenson, Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption

As always, if you want to speak more about this issue or are interested in doing “deeper work” please do not hesitate to contact me.

Blessings,

Fr. David+

JULY BIRTHDAYS

7/1	Sheila Turpin
7/3	Marianne Izzo
7/4	Michelle Garis
7/5	Marcia Schwarm
7/5	James Speicher
7/5	Alan Tisdale
7/9	Elmer Joerg
7/12	Marietta Fitzgerald
7/12	Michael Fitzgerald
7/14	Shirley Luxana
7/15	Cherie Cerebe
7/16	Linda Justin
7/16	Bettie Mannon
7/18	Lindsay Pratt
7/19	Reba Goewey
7/19	Denise Smalls
7/20	Vivian Smalls
7/21	Richard Callaghan
7/21	Edward Patrick
7/22	Kenneth Worachek
7/23	John Collins
7/24	Nancy Phillips
7/26	Paula Engle
7/27	June Lohren
7/27	Mary Merrill
7/28	Rebecca Carlisle
7/29	Aubrey Thompson
7/31	Douglas Myrick

JULY

ANNIVERSARIES

7/5	Magda & Brad Bell
7/13	Maria & Vince Martucci
7/22	Norma & John Collins
7/25	Kaki & Spike Speicher
7/31	Michelle & Ryan Garis



We ask if you notice information is missing or incorrect, please let us know. Thank you!



Daily Morning Prayer

SJD is offering a service of Morning Prayer, in the Sanctuary, weekdays at 9:00am. Please join us and start your day in prayer. If you are interested in learning to Officiate this service, please contact Fr. David.



WE'VE MOVED

**Jackie and Tom
Winder**

110 Silverbell Ct

**Sun City Center Fl
33573**

**THE LORD'S
LIGHTHOUSE MINISTRY
DESPERATELY NEEDS
FOOD AND MONEY**

If you are able to help, please bring your food donations to The Lord's Lighthouse area of the parish hall.

Checks may be made out to:
St. John Divine earmarked
The Lord's Lighthouse.

Any contribution, no matter how small, will be greatly appreciated. Thank you for supporting The Lord's Lighthouse mission to feed hungry people.

***We want to welcome all
our new members to St
John Divine.***

Although we cannot meet you in person right now, please know we are excited to have you join us and getting to know you.

**Katie Freeman &
infant son, Ethan**

OUR RECENTLY DEPARTED

*Patricia Colwell – 5/6/2020
Rosamond Nicolson – 5/8/2020*

Our prayers go out to their families





St John Divine Episcopal Church 1015 E. Del Webb Blvd. Sun City Center, FL 33573

813-633-3970

sjd-office@stjohndivine.com

www.stjohndivine.com

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