

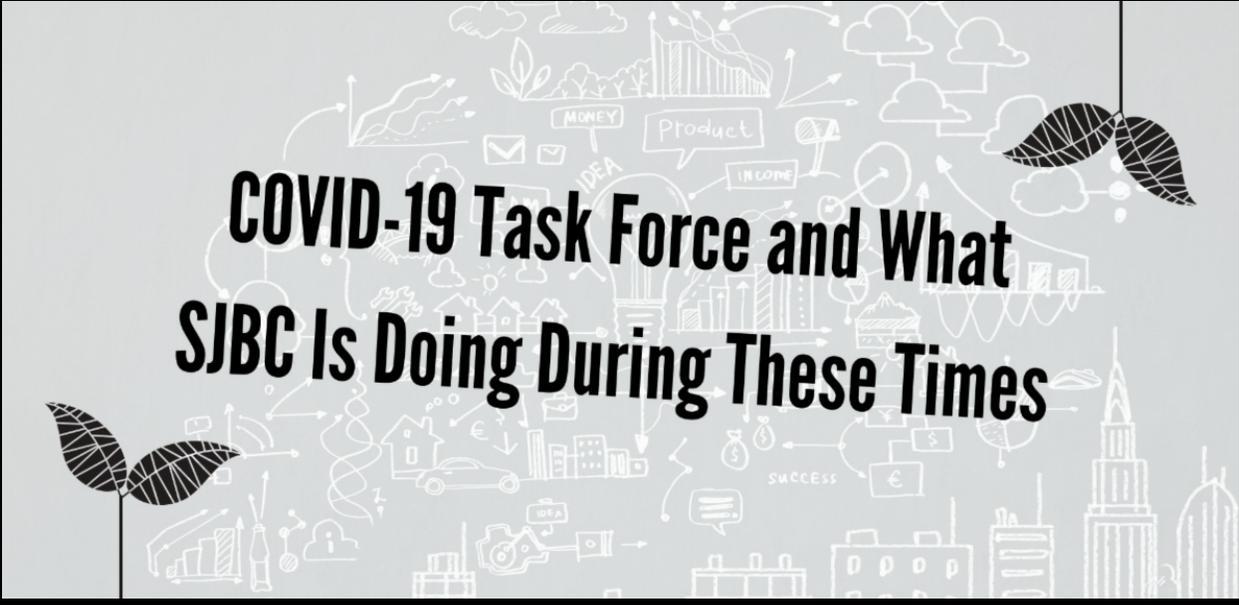


St. John's Family News: Vol. 78 Issue 21 for the Week of May 25-31, 2020

**This week's Mid-Week Moments are available NOW on our website and Facebook page:**

Website link: <https://stjohnsbaptistchurch.org/2020/05/28/mid-week-moments-on-may-28-2020/>

Facebook link: <https://www.facebook.com/sjbccharlotte/videos/307721243590922/>



## **COVID-19 Task Force and What SJBC Is Doing During These Times**

### **SJBC COVID-19 Task Force and What SJBC Is Doing During These Times**

As we continue through this COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Foust has enlisted a special task force consisting of thirty persons, including eleven medical professionals, to propose recommendations to our deacons and congregation. Our COVID-19 Task Force is being guided by compassion, safety and science (not politics), as we transition through phases two and three. Although we desire to be the Gathered Church once again, we also realize it will not be safe for the whole congregation to do so in the immediate future. We further realize our need to implement certain protocols in our facilities at all times. Some gatherings will be able to

occur prior to others. Some of our expressions of 'Gathered Church' will not be able to return for quite some time.

Our eleven medical professionals are joined by seven church members with specific expertise in areas related to health, facilities, security, legal services, care and safety; five deacon officers; and church staff. These thirty persons are branched into four different Work Teams. Each Work Team is developing 2-4 scenarios or pathways the congregation could follow based on varied situations. Once these pathways are completed, the group will develop a proposed path to guide us during the coming months. (The article below explains some of what we are doing and are planning to do.)

Jacquelyn McAbee will be our administrative resource person and Mallory Brown will be the communications resource person to each group.

Members of our COVID-19 Task Force are:

- GROUP A: Allison Benfield, Colleen Cardella, Stacey Norris, Graham Claytor, Nancy Wilson, Jason Benton, Natalie Moore (Resource)
- GROUP B: Lee Gray, Raleigh Godsey, Casey Perkins, Libby LeVie, Minh Callaway, Judy Godsey, Sally Young
- GROUP C: Kevin Gray, Hank Packman, Cathy Hartsell, Wes Watts, James Laney, Bert Green, Kathy Turner (Resource)
- GROUP D: Dennis Foust, Randy Mahnesmith, Lynn Erdman, Robert Tutterow, Jeff LeVie, Derek Henson, Don Hinson (Resource)

***If you have suggestions you would like to offer for consideration by our COVID-19 Task Force, please email Mallory at [mbrown@sjcharlotte.org](mailto:mbrown@sjcharlotte.org) before Friday, June 5th.***

## **WHAT IS ST. JOHN'S DOING DURING THIS COVID-19 PANDEMIC?**

Recent news stories serve as a reminder that many people, politicians or otherwise, do not understand that churches like St. John's do not need to "re-open" because we never closed. St. John's knows how to be Church whether we are Gathered or Scattered. We are followers of 'the Way of Jesus.' We seek to continue the life-giving ministry of Jesus in today's world – whatever may be our situational context. When we are able to be Gathered Church, we learn together, serve alongside one another, encourage one another, pray with one another, embrace one another, worship with one another, comfort one another, challenge one another, befriend one another, laugh and cry with one another, listen to one another, etc. And, when we are Scattered Church, we still learn, serve, encourage, pray, worship, comfort, challenge, befriend, laugh, cry, listen, etc. However, during this COVID-19 pandemic period, we are missing shared experiences in the presence of one-another – especially the embracing.

Although we are living as Scattered Church during these months, the staff, deacons, individual members and several resource teams, task forces, small groups, a search team are incarnating active faith following the Way of Jesus. Here are some examples of what we are doing/planning:

1. Planning and recording videos which are produced and offered for Sunday worship online;
2. Offering live on Facebook 'Story Time with Allison' on Tuesdays;
3. Offered yoga live on Facebook with Sara Vavra on Wednesdays through May;
4. Recording videos for Midweek Moments and posting on Thursday/Friday;
5. Sending the *Family News* on Thursday;
6. Assuring information is available to Personnel Resource Team for planning and financial reports are ready for Finance Resource Team (paying invoices and posting gifts);
7. Communicating with Residential Partners, vendors and contractors;
8. Offering 'Along the Way' open-conversation Zoom calls (See schedule in Family News);
9. Dennis' weekly Zoom calls with staff, church leaders, pastoral deacons and prayer list;
10. Allison's weekly Zoom calls with children, parents and various groups;
11. Lee's weekly Zoom calls with youth, parents, and various groups;
12. Kevin's weekly Zoom calls with choir, musicians and various groups;
13. Several Resource Teams and Task Forces meeting via Zoom;
14. Several Sunday Morning Small Groups meeting via Zoom;

15. Pastoral Deacons calling their flocks;
16. Ministers calling through households, members 80+ years of age and guest lists;
17. Staff updating member information related to addresses, phone numbers, emails, etc.;
18. Improving our digital presence through Realm, Constant Contact, Online Giving, etc.;
19. Our Minister with Youth and Young Adults Search Team is completing their work and presenting a candidate for this position this week;
20. We will celebrate Pentecost this Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup> (expect some surprises);
21. We will celebrate our 17 high school graduates in worship on Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup>, hear a message from Lee and have a 'Drive-By Celebration' of our graduates that afternoon and hear from three of our high school graduates on Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup>;
22. Our worship and my theological reflections this summer will focus on '*Jesus' Beatitudes: Right-Side-Up Living in an Upside-Down-World*';
23. Although we have needed to cancel Vacation Bible School (VBS) & camps and postpone our Habitat-Build Trip to the summer of 2021, we are still learning and serving;
24. We have continued to participate in feeding persons experiencing hunger;
25. We have continued to provide housing for families experiencing homelessness and helped to expand shelter spaces for men experiencing homelessness;
26. Some women of St. John's have made more than 1,500 masks/face coverings which have been donated to staff & members, medical centers, ministry partners, and care facilities;
27. Some women of St. John's have made blankets for Baby Bundles;
28. Some men of St. John's have installed hand sanitizers throughout our facilities;
29. We have surpassed our State and Community Mission Offering goal and given our tithes and offerings with faithfulness according to our abilities;
30. Our custodians have used this time to purchase supplies and sanitize our facilities;
31. Purchasing supplies and equipment to assure our facilities are thoroughly sanitized;
32. With parents returning to their workplaces, our Week Day School (WDS) ministry is planning to restart with reduced-size classes in mid-June, so our WDS teachers are preparing for the return of the children by sanitizing each preschool room; and
33. Our COVID-19 Task Force has been enlisted to help us move forward with clarity.

**What is St. John's doing during the pandemic? We are missing being in one-another's presence. However, our incapacity to be Gathered Church has not kept us from being Scattered Church.**

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## **Graduate Celebration Parade on June 7**

St. John's has a large group of seniors graduating this year - 17 total. We will honor them in the online morning worship service on June 7. On Sunday, June 7, they will be honored in the morning worship service. In the afternoon at 1PM on June 7, you can come congratulate them yourself in our Drive-By recognition parade for our graduating seniors.

They will be lined up in socially distanced family units on the backside of the church at 1PM. You are encouraged to drive by them with honks, posters, and affirming words. On that day drivers will **enter on 5th Street** and, after driving by our graduates, **exit on 5th Street**.



**If your last name begins with A-I, please arrive at 1PM; and if your last name begins with J-Z please arrive at 1:20PM.**

Come affirm our fine group of graduating seniors that day. Our seniors have lost many opportunities in the last several months, but you can come and help to make this day special for them! Questions? Contact Lee Gray.

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## Important Announcement from the Search Task Force

The Search Task Force charged with finding the next Minister with Youth and Young Adults at St. John's Baptist Church is excited to announce that we have identified a final candidate for the congregation's consideration in calling to the position. Before we introduce you to this exceptional young man, I first want to remind you of what brought us to this point in our history. When Rev. Dr. Martha Kearse was called to lead the congregation at Peakland Baptist Church, our leadership wisely decided it best to reassess our church's staffing rather than just automatically fill an existing position. This led to the formation of the Staffing Our Future Task Force which took a critical lens to the current needs of our congregation and how best to shape our ministry staff to address those needs. After much conversation and consultation



with the congregation, that group developed a list of strategic focuses along with suggested avenues for better addressing each item. This led to our ministry staff growing into new roles and responsibilities, but it also identified a key need in providing structure and programming to attract young adults to our congregation. This, coupled with Lee Gray's anticipated transition to the position of Minister for Congregational Care and Recreation, made clear our need to search for a new minister to lead our ministries to youth and young adults.

The Search Task Force began last July by holding a conversation with members of the Staffing Our Future Task Force and reviewing their recommendations. From there, our group developed a position profile outlining the characteristics, attributes, and professional and personal experiences that we wanted to see in an idealized candidate to fill the position. Developing the position profile was a meticulous process that took place over many weeks as we carefully crafted the language and curated the list of attributes. We then held a "roadshow" in the fall (including listening sessions as well as visiting any Sunday School class that would have us) to solicit feedback from the congregation. This was critical to ensuring that our position profile was reflecting the views, aspirations, and concerns of the congregation. We then went to work revising the position profile to incorporate the feedback we received. The resulting profile was a tall order! Undeterred, we began posting the position publicly and reviewing applicants.

Nathan (Nate) Dove (pictured above with wife, Emma) proved himself to be the most dynamic and endearing candidate we met. He has roots in the Denver, NC and Chester, SC areas and was looking for an opportunity to bring his ministry to a progressive congregation like ours in an urban setting. Nate is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and earned his Master of Divinity from Yale Divinity School. While he is an ordained Baptist minister, his experience and training is truly ecumenical as he has also worked with Episcopal, Presbyterian and Catholic churches and organizations. For the past two years, he has served as the Minister to Families with Youth at First Baptist Waynesboro in Virginia. His [resume can be found here](#). Nate distinguished himself from other candidates by forging connections with task force members over video conference interviews, expressing considered views on how best to reach and be church to youth and young adults in today's world, and demonstrating a superior level of expertise with technology and multiple mediums of communication. While we were fortunate to have been in conversation with a number of very qualified applicants, Nate presented a level of professionalism and passion that separated him from all other candidates. He was the only candidate to have unanimous support of the Search Task Force at every stage of our process. It has truly been a pleasure to be in conversation with Nate and his wife, Emma, throughout this process. You can hear from some of the task force members themselves in the video attached to this message.

When I was asked to lead this task force, I was initially apprehensive. I was finishing out my first term as a deacon and had never participated in a search committee before. I didn't know what to expect, where to look, and I had only ever sat on the wrong side of the desk in an interview. But after reflection, I knew our church was approaching an inflection point that could have an indelible impact on our future. Creating and sustaining meaningful programming, service, and fellowship opportunities for young adults has been a challenge and it is not likely to get

easier. Also, as a product of the St. John's Youth program and now as a parent of a (very distant) future-Youth member, I wanted to see our rich heritage of youth ministry preserved and strengthened in dynamics ways. I believe Nate is the candidate to lead us through these challenges. He has an innate ability to connect and build relationships with young adults and youth and has the skills to communicate with these groups in ways that are relevant and impactful. Nate also recognizes the challenges churches like St. John's face in outreach to these demographics and spoke articulately of the ways to make us more welcoming and affirming of them. He is a believer in the theology and mission of St. John's and will be an effective representative of our church in the community.

At this time, the Search Task Force is recommending that Nate Dove be called to join St. John's Baptist Church as the Minister with Youth and Young Adults. This recommendation has been affirmed by the Deaconate and the Church Council and is now being brought to you, the congregation. **We will be holding a listening session over Zoom at 9:00AM on Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup> for anyone who would like to know more about Nate or the task force's process. A link to join that session is copied below. With the worship materials to be circulated for our May 31<sup>st</sup> worship service, there will be a link by which you may insert your name and vote to affirm the calling of Nate to this position.**

Finally, I would like to thank the members of the Search Task Force for their diligent work, exceptional representation of St. John's in this process, and their unwavering patience with their committee chair. Elizabeth Rodden, Sam Vavra, Clara Howell, Steven Follis, Natalie Moore, Lindsay Wilson, Meredith Sorrell, Todd Stillerman, Dr. Foust (ex-officio) and John Fries (ex-officio) gave generously of their time and talents to help us find such a great candidate. Our congregation should be especially proud of the contributions of Elizabeth and Sam who were integral to our interview process (among many other aspects of our search process) and who provided invaluable perspective as current youth group members. I would also like to thank the Staffing Our Future Task Force for their work that gave us such a clear charge for our search and the Personnel Resource Team for their generous support and efforts in completing this process. This collaborative and combined effort has led us to a candidate that I believe we can all be excited about and proud of. **I hope you will join me on May 31<sup>st</sup> in affirming the call of Nate Dove as our next Minister with Youth and Young Adults.**

***Jordan Benton***  
***Chair – Search Task Force***

**Join in the virtual listening session THIS SUNDAY, MAY 31, at 9AM. Zoom details below:**

Listening Session Information:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83512850602>

Meeting ID: 835 1285 0602

One tap mobile

+16465588656,,83512850602# US (New York)

+13017158592,,83512850602# US (Germantown)

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 835 1285 0602

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kbUxbbGlbX>



# Conversation Hours with St. John's

## Conversation Hours

### St. John's Ministers Offer New Online Conversation Hours Each Week

As we explore new ways to do ministry, we are realizing our mutual loss of “along the way conversations.” Therefore, your Equipping Ministers are beginning a new ministry called “Along the Way.” **Each of us has chosen an hour a week and named our hour something that reflects our approach to this time:**

- **Monday: On the Porch with Dennis from 5pm-6pm**
- **Tuesday: Afternoon Coffee with Lee from 3:30pm-4:30pm**
- **Wednesday: Happy Hour with Allison from 5pm-6pm**
- **Thursday: Poet's Corner with Kevin from 2pm-3pm**

**Mallory will send the links out each day for each meeting.** At the time of each hour, click the appropriate link and you can join in as you have an internet connection. You can use your smartphone, iPad (or other tablet), laptop computer, or desktop computer. ***If you have trouble getting on the Zoom hour, please contact the minister in charge of the hour you are trying to join for assistance.***

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## Mission Resource Team Responds to COVID-19

### Mission Resource Team Responds to COVID-19

In last week's Family News we shared with you some ways in which some of the ministries we support are continuing to provide vital services for the hungry and homeless in our area and for anyone seriously impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Here is a brief look at how our other partner agencies have shifted their operations in order to bring relief.

- **Roof Above**
  - What is that, you ask? It is the new name for the combined Urban Ministry Center and Men's Shelter program. All Urban Ministry Center and Mens' Shelter signage

will now read **Roof Above**, as these two agencies combine forces to more efficiently address local hunger and homeless services, including emphasis on employment. During the current crisis we are not providing banana pudding or purchasing chicken for the third Fridays of the month or making 200 sandwiches each month; but, we are sending \$520 each month to cover cost of the chicken dinners and a dessert.

- Additionally, for this quarter, we sent \$508 from the Hunger Fund.
- In lieu of making 200 sandwiches per month, we are currently sending funds (\$200 for this quarter) for sandwiches to be made at the center. Individuals wishing to supplement this, please go here for details:
  - <http://www.mensshelterofcharlotte.org>
  - <http://www.urbanministrycenter.org>
- **Charlotte Family Housing** has been accelerating the transition of families from their shelters to independent housing due to the health risks of COVID-19. Families in all stages of their program have been impacted by the loss of jobs and other supports, so CFH is collecting food items and cleaning supplies at their office in St. John's for use as needed. Items can be dropped off at the doors of the church Contact Josiah Daniels at 704-312-0070 to know what to donate and set up a drop off time.
  - You may learn more at <https://charlottefamilyhousing.org/>.
- **Hope Chapel** will be resuming services this weekend to be held outside with over 40 masks provided by St. John's members.

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## SSSHHHH! HELP US KEEP A SECRET

On Friday, June 12, Virginia Allen will wake up to her 100th birthday. We want to surprise her with a card shower. Since these are not normal times, we ask that you send cards to the home of her son, David.

Please mail your card so it arrives at David and Kim's house on or before Tuesday, June 9. This will significantly reduce her exposure to COVID-19 as our cards pass through the mail.



### Send cards to:

Virginia Allen, c/o David Allen,  
4926 Plum Nearly Lane,  
Charlotte, NC 28211-3045.

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## Prayer Concerns and Sympathy

Andrew Adair, Emily Batts, Byron Bullard, Mary Chilton (mother of Amy Chilton), Carol Drye, Teri Franklin, Don Furr, Camille Green, Polly Hull, Maddie and Domhnall Minogue and baby Cian, Gene Poole, Elma Thomas, Alison Zieglmeier (daughter of Ken and Donna Scott); Parker Jackson, military; Chip Wilson, assigned to the Pentagon for COVID-19 response

Sympathy to James Laney and Elizabeth Laney in the passing of James's aunt and Elizabeth's sister, Frances J. Cope, on Friday, May 22, at the age of 95.

Sympathy to Lindsay and Chip Wilson in the deaths of Lindsay's paternal grandmother, Joyce Whitmire, Ed's mother, and her maternal grandfather, Marcia's father, within a few days of one another. Sympathy also to Parker and Whit in the loss of two great-grandparents.

Week of May 20-26: \$13,499

Income through May 26: \$500,659

**Annual 2020 Ministry Plan Budget Goal: \$1,175,000**

**Community & State Missions: \$5670 total**

*being distributed to Together for Hope and COVID-19 Relief Fund*

***Thank you for your continued financial faithfulness!***

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### **Contact the Staff**

- **Dennis Foust- 704-359-7234; [dfoust@sjcharlotte.org](mailto:dfoust@sjcharlotte.org)**
  - **Lee Gray- 704-451-1309; [lgray@sjcharlotte.org](mailto:lgray@sjcharlotte.org)**
  - **Allison Benfield- 828-448-8412; [abenfield@sjcharlotte.org](mailto:abenfield@sjcharlotte.org)**
  - **Kevin Gray- 803-524-0287; [kgray@sjcharlotte.org](mailto:kgray@sjcharlotte.org)**
  - **Mallory Brown- 704-477-3349; [mbrown@sjcharlotte.org](mailto:mbrown@sjcharlotte.org)**
  - **Jacquelyn McAbee- 434-579-1177; [jmcabee@sjcharlotte.org](mailto:jmcabee@sjcharlotte.org)**
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St. John's Baptist Church | 704-333-5428 | 300 Hawthorne Lane, Charlotte, NC 28204 | [stjohnsbaptistchurch.org](http://stjohnsbaptistchurch.org)

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