



Rector's Essay

Rejoice, I say again, Rejoice

By Jarrett Kerbel (09/25/26)

There is a lot to celebrate here at St. Johns! Here are some aspects of our community that are causes for my rejoicing. This list is not comprehensive of every reason to give thanks but it is a start.

Circles of Care: My goodness does this church community know how to rally around fellow members in times of need! I have seen it again and again with my own eyes. When someone is sick, or grieving, or struggling, loving kindness flows from our members in concrete actions of caritas, in companionship, in hugs, and in prayer. Always let us know when you need support so a circle of care can form around you!

Prayerfulness: This is a truly prayerful community. Prayer is the air we breathe around here and I want to celebrate that fact and encourage it. In every situation we turn our hearts to God and say, thank you, help, and wow! We all pray, we all ask for prayer, we all step up and lead prayer when needed.

A Deep Bench: In sports we talk about having a deep bench, which means that we have so many talented players, some sit on the bench while others play. St. John's has a deep bench of spiritually mature and prayerful leaders - elders if you will - who bring wisdom, discernment and stability to whatever they do. Our elders include people in their 20s, and 30s, which is an extra-special blessing!

Every Generation: When we gather before God the body of Christ in this place is old and young and in the middle too. Unlike many congregations we have a wonderful group of children, youth and young adults. People comment on this fact when they visit. This is a sign of vitality and a rich resource of new experiences to learn from in our congregation.

Hospitality: Our congregation is welcoming. Just last Sunday I saw our members reach out to and welcome newcomers including two young adults. Nothing warms my heart as much as members who notice, pay attention to the newcomer and extend their hand in fellowship and lean in with interest. We still need someone to lead our welcome ministry so please see the Rector if you feel that calling.

One visitor recently shook my hand at the back door and said, “Something good is happening at this church! If I lived up here I would be attending this church!” Two visitors last Sunday - from my last church in Rhode Island - said, “Worship was wonderful and beautiful at St. Johns.” Yet another visitor said, “I grew up Roman Catholic so your church had some familiarity, but it was also very different because it felt so personal.” Wow. Thanks be to God. Let us be good stewards of that gift.