



Pastors: Jennifer Beamsley, Robin E. Caldwell, Evan Mayhew

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July 23, 2021

Dear Beloved Faith Community,

I hope you've been enjoying God's good creation this summer. There are many things that have changed since last year, and I'm grateful for our return to Sanctuary worship, our worship for people who are "at-home" through our YouTube channel, and all the things in the works for this fall. Read on for a few more details on upcoming changes you will want to know about:

### **Ellen Goodwin completes her time as St. John staff to continue her degree**

From time to time, long-time staff members move on and continue their calling at a different place or venue. Ellen Goodwin, our Music Coordinator, resigns at the end of August to complete her Masters Degree in Speech Language Pathology at Governors State University. Ellen and her family— Mike, her husband, and their kids, Julia and Henry— will continue membership at St. John.

When Ellen joined our staff in 2007, we were beginning our current contemporary worship, deeply in the throes of a major transition after our merger. Ellen graced us with her exceptional talent, creativity, and love of music, leading us through a time of many changes. Later, Ellen took on the position of coordinating music programming for all worship services and youth choirs. She led us with a sense of vision, humor, excellence and integrity, felt throughout the worship she's tended for many years. We all are recipients of Ellen's deep faith and gifts to St. John. When we worshipped solely online during the pandemic, Ellen made it possible for us to have new music offerings at a time when we needed it most. Ellen articulated what might help us in worship, consulting with pastors and helping guide our way. She spent hours in service to St. John, learning and creating new things that supported our shared worship, as she's always done for us.

One of the many qualities I treasure about Ellen is her desire to help people find their voice, literally and figuratively. It seems quite apropos that Ellen continues to help people "find their voice" in the field of speech disorders. She will continue to make a difference in the lives of others, as a person of faith, using the gifts God gave her.

I am so very immensely grateful for getting to work with Ellen all these years. I am grateful for who she is, and what she brought to our shared mission at St. John. I am full of gratitude for her continued friendship and wish her the very best as she finishes her degree.

New changes always bring mixed emotions, and it is so as we accept her resignation. We rejoice she's accomplished so much in her studies, and is at this exciting part of her journey. And, we will miss her



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presence on our staff family. Ellen's talent and leadership created beautiful worship and laid groundwork that will be felt at St. John for years to come. Thank you, Ellen.

### **Sunday, August 29th: Farewell for Ellen**

On Sun., Aug. 29<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 & 11<sup>am</sup>, we are sending Ellen off with our love and support, prayers and blessings. Please save this date on your calendar and make plans to join us. We will give thanks to God for Ellen's ministry, and provide time for fellowship where you can personally give Ellen your regards and gratitude.

### **Tori Hicks Takes on Music Coordination, Youth Choirs, and Praise Team while continuing to direct the St. John Chorale**

We are pleased to announce that Tori Hicks, our Sr. Chorale Director for 30 years, will continue our excellence in music ministries on September 1<sup>st</sup>. Tori will continue to lead the St. John Chorale, and will add worship/music coordination, youth choirs, and Praise Team direction to her repertoire. She has retired from her daytime job as a Preschool Director to do so.

As many of you already know, Tori has a deep love for the people and mission of St. John, and a deep love of music and how it frees us to converse with God through song and sound. One has only to watch her face as she directs to know this is true. We are most thankful that God has placed Tori in our faith community and opened up the door for Tori to lead us in this way!

### **Fall Programming at St. John**

We are planning for our programs to resume this September, and are putting protocols in place to make this possible. It's really important to open your emails and mail from St. John to receive sign ups and launch dates. Many of you have asked: will programming start up this fall in-person? The answer is: YES. This includes adult & youth choirs, Confirmation, Sunday School, MOPS, PDO, High School ministries, etc.

We are also planning some congregational events where we can stop and celebrate together, such as Confirmation Day, Blessing of the Backpacks, Quilt Dedication, and an event to celebrate paying off the mortgage. There is much to look forward to in the months to come!

### **Worship**

Pastor Robin, Pastor Evan and I still feel the electricity in the air every Saturday and Sunday as we welcome everyone back into our Sanctuary. It's a grand homecoming for our faith community and if you have not attended yet, we have a spot saved just for you! There is no need to sign up, show up as you are and invite a friend who may need to hear God's words of healing, comfort and hope.

We also continue to Livestream worship every Sunday to our YouTube and Facebook social media. Providing At Home Worship from the Sanctuary is a lovely work in progress and we are grateful to offer this to our faith community unable to attend in person.

Lastly, you may have noticed some worship series going on here! We are halfway through "Season of Creation." Prior to this, our worship series focused on Jeremiah. You can watch, re-watch or share any of our previous services on our socials.

I hope you are well and enjoying God's good creation this summer. We look forward to seeing you in worship!



Pastor Jen