



The Episcopal Church of St. John the Baptist

Post Office Box 441 / 507 Federal Street
Milton, Delaware 19968



www.saintjohnsmilton.org

The Rev. Thomas M. White, Rector

Pentecost 2017

Dear Members and Friends of St. John the Baptist,

We value being connected, don't we? On a recent car trip as a passenger, I marveled as I was able with my smart phone to stay connected: through calls to family members and friends, emails, world and national news, the weather, fellow "Words with Friends" players, my bank account, texting, a purchase at Amazon, and, via Google, researching the origin of a Hebrew word that had come to mind! And isn't the appeal of call-waiting the ability to be connected with two callers at once?

Well, long before smart phones, in fact way back when on the day of Pentecost, God sent the Holy Spirit to Jesus' followers—and that includes us—because God wanted and wants to stay connected with us. Jesus' incarnation, ministry on earth, death, glorious resurrection, and return to the Father, the ascension, were done. Now it was time for God to pour out the Holy Spirit in order that Christ's people might be connected to the redemption Jesus accomplished, and connected to each other: the Church was born! When four of our children are baptized this Sunday, June 4, the Festival of Pentecost, it is a Spirit connection, God adopting them as God's precious and beloved children. In the power of the Holy Spirit, ordinary tap water in our baptismal font will become extraordinary, as by water and God's Spirit, those baptized are connected to each of us, our newest sisters and brothers in God's family, the Church. Praise God! As the Word is preached and the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Eucharist are celebrated, the Holy Spirit creates connection to God and one another, a connection even death cannot end.

Since the liturgical color for the Festival of Pentecost is red, symbolizing the fire, the zeal, of the Holy Spirit, each of you is asked to wear red this Sunday. In addition to the baptisms, we will celebrate the 140th anniversary of the consecration of our present building and the signing of the consecration document by The Rt. Rev. Dr. Alfred Lee, first bishop of The Diocese of Delaware. Please stay a few moments after Mass to gather at the altar in order for our annual congregational photo to be taken—our family portrait!—as we are the community of faith God's Spirit has created.

Good news! New name tags have been made for every member as well as our friends. Like the above letterhead, they portray the shield of The Episcopal Church and that of St. John the Baptist. Being magnetic (though tags with pins are available for those who prefer them), they are more user-friendly. Your name tag may be found in the parish hall next to the bulletin board. We hope all of us can get in the habit of wearing our name tag every Sunday. They are a great way of celebrating our connectedness!

As we draw closer to the Diocesan Convention on July 15, during which the next bishop of our Diocese of Delaware will be elected, three "walkabouts" have been scheduled, to which you are invited. It will be an opportunity for the five candidates to introduce themselves and answer our questions: Christ Church, Christiana Hundred, June 28; St. Peter's, Lewes, June 29; and Christ Church, Dover, June 30, each from 6 until 9 p.m. For more information on the candidates, go to the *News* page of our parish website at www.saintjohnsmilton.org. Please share with our delegates, Ray and Ann Jung, rcjung@comcast.net, your choice for the new bishop.

Two very exciting ministries of The Episcopal Church of St. John the Baptist to the children of our congregation and the Town of Milton, are planned for this summer. "Sandwich Thursdays" will begin on Thursday, June 22, and continue every Thursday through August 31, 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. Free bag lunches, which will include a sandwich, fruit, sweet, and bottled water, will be prepared and distributed to the children of Milton during the summer when school lunches are not available. If you pass by, you will see our tents, banner, and coolers with the lunches on the church's lot across Atlantic Street from our parking lot. On rainy Thursdays the lunches will be distributed from our parish hall. We will be feeding any children in Milton who are hungry. Praise the Lord!

Also, "Tuesdays with God's Buddies," for children ages 5 to 10, will meet for four Tuesdays, July 11, 18, 25, and August 1, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Children will enjoy games, songs, crafts, a Bible lesson, and a light supper. To sign up your child or grandchild, please send a note to office@saintjohnsmilton.org. These are congregational events, so we pray and hope for wide congregational support. Please say "Yes!" when God calls you via your fellow members.

Our children's trip to Hershey Park will be on Tuesday, August 14, times to be announced. Please, please invite the children of friends and family to join us for this trip, as well as the "Tuesdays with God's Buddies" ministry! The sign-up sheet for Hershey Park is on the bulletin board in the parish hall.

Looking ahead, we are planning to create a pictorial congregational directory. When completed, it will be sent via email to you, with photos of your fellow members and friends at St. John the Baptist, as well as a listing of addresses, phone numbers, and emails. In this way, the directory can be easily updated as the congregation grows. Those without email will receive a hardcopy.

In closing, I pray that each of us will focus on the many rich blessings the Holy Spirit is pouring into the life of our congregation. I believe the Holy Spirit is alive, well, and busy at St. John the Baptist, seeking constantly to keep us connected! "Blest be the tie that binds!"

Pentecost blessings,
Fr. Tom White