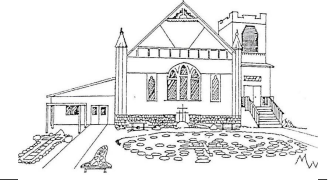


# ST. JOHN'S JOURNEY



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Senior Warden

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## A Note from Tom

What a tragedy the losses of the Reverends Lydia Speller and Ann Norton have been. Their sudden

deaths have resulted in great loss to their families, their congregations, and our diocese. And, while my response to the two events has been markedly different, I find that both losses have left a very large void in my heart and psyche.

My relationship with Lydia was close from the very moment she discerned the call to be interim priest at Grace, Port Huron. I was senior warden at the time, and her selection by the vestry was unanimous. I remember that with amazement because I had heard many stories of past divisions among the vestry during the selection process. But her credentials were impressive. She was clearly a veteran priest with an exceptionally high skill level.

We forged a relationship—as most priests and senior wardens do—but it quickly became a more pastoral one. She guided me through the stress of my divorce, and checked my enthusiasm when I began to rediscover a call to Holy Orders. She became my supervising priest throughout the discernment and ordination process. Her advice was measured and sound. I think that, because of her influence, the process of my formation was exactly as it should

have been.

And as the years marched on, I began to appreciate how much I was learning from her. Each day spent with Lydia seemed to yield a new lesson; from preaching techniques to church management to issues of social justice, Lydia was a treasure chest of valuable knowledge and experience. After ordination I began to create lists of things to ask her. Questions would arise in my head and I knew they were things that she was best suited to answer. My last conversation with her was about Bishop Whayne. As usual, she offered the right amount of perspective and insight.

Her death was a shock to my soul. I immediately felt that her loss was *my* loss; like I no longer carried around this trump card of Episcopal knowledge. I thought of her work on the Standing Committee—I was sure her absence would be felt there in much the same way. And I thought of Grace Church in Port Huron. I knew just how her leadership had pivoted the very character of the church. What a loss would be the end of her leadership there.

I was already a postulant by the time I got to know Ann Norton. I first met her at a clericus meeting in Flint. I remember remarking at how effortlessly nice she was. So very pleasant. It wasn't long before I felt drawn to her and her congregation. I began to car-pool with her up to diocesan events. I attended some church fellowship activities.

(continued page 2)

Website: [www.stjohnschurchdryden.org](http://www.stjohnschurchdryden.org)

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Find us on Facebook!



## Editor: Becky Foster

St. John's Journey is published monthly. We're looking for your photos and articles. Please email them to "stjohnschurchdryden@gmail.com" with the word "Newsletter" in the subject line. Deadline for June is May 28th.



### Happy Birthday...

Richard Buszek

Liam Carr

Neil Hargrave

Margaret Smith

Happy

Anniversary

Richard & Kathleen

Buszek

And of course, visited her church on some Sundays. When the pandemic hit, I began to join Ann's Zoom worship services. I thought that her services seemed to have the perfect blend of spirituality and fun. I became aware of the success story of ministry team at St. John's— from near-closing to a thriving congregation. Didn't surprise me, I thought, I'd practically joined her church myself.

And I knew that she had survived breast cancer. When she was diagnosed with lymphoma, it seemed unfair, but I thought that if anyone could handle it, it would be her. Then, a few weeks ago, came the news that she had COVID. Too much, I thought.

More than a more merciful God should allow. No way should she have to endure this.

And as I thought about my own little faith crisis that week, I realized that my thinking was juvenile. God does not dictate illness in such a way. So, when I was told that she had died, I found myself oddly at peace with it. She had not been struck down. This godly woman, this saint, had been called home.

What I find most with the losses of Lydia and Ann is how much I miss them. I miss them differently, for sure, but I miss them both very much. I thank God that they were part of my own spiritual journey, and treasure my memories of these two wonderful people.

## Vestry

Dear Friends,

I've been away quite a bit in April. As many of you know, my sister died mid-month and I was in Kansas City to help arrange her memorial service. I'm so grateful for your prayers and support during this difficult time. I know that I am not alone in this experience and that helps.



Meanwhile, St. John's continues to get even better. Kitty Underwood offered to increase our Worship Leader numbers. Her first Morning Prayer on April 25<sup>th</sup> was great. Our congregation's application to the Thriving Bi-Vocational Congregations program was approved. To tell the truth, I'm not totally sure what this involves but it sounds like it's a chance for Tom, Neil and me to discover different approaches to being a vibrant church. We have a really good start, of course. But there is always room for growth. We've also received a grant from the Diocese to help us improve our on-line presence – which, by the by, looked pretty good from KC. Work on the roof continues – there's just a little bit to complete and then the gutters can be replaced. It's going to be MAHVALOUS!

Mark Sunday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> on your calendar. It's Pentecost Sunday. We're hoping that as many of you join us as possible – for worship AND to be part of our almost annual congregational picture. The last one looked so good, we're thinking of doing it every year. What do you think?

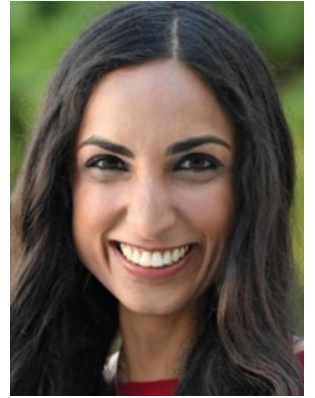
Finally, I'm grateful for our faith family. Seeing people in church after such a long separation has been a real gift. I hope to see you there soon.

Becky

Valarie Kaur is a Sikh activist and civil rights lawyer who writes about the “revolutionary love” of “seeing no stranger.”

## Seeing No Stranger an excerpt from Richard Rohr’s Weekly Summary from April 3, 2021

Richard Rohr commented: Though René Girard believed the Gospel could transform our impulse to scapegoat, people of the Sikh faith have been more faithful to practices of nonviolence and compassion than many Christians. Valarie writes:



*See no stranger* has become a practice that defines my relationships. Seeing no stranger begins in wonder. It is to look upon the face of anyone and choose to say: *You are a part of me I do not yet know*. Wonder is the wellspring for love. Who we wonder about determines whose stories we hear and whose joy and pain we share. Those we grieve with, those we sit with and weep with, are ultimately those we organize with and advocate for. When a critical mass of people come together to *wonder* about one another, *grieve* with one another, and *fight* with and for one another, we begin to build the solidarity needed for collective liberation and transformation—a solidarity rooted in love.

Out in the world, I notice the unconscious biases that arise in me when I look at faces on the street or in the news. To practice seeing each of them as a sister or brother or family member, I say in my mind: *You are a part of me I do not yet know*. Through conscious repetition, I am practicing orienting to the world with wonder and preparing myself for the possibility of connection. (Sometimes I do this with animals and the earth, too!) It opens me up to pay attention to their story. When their story is painful, I make excuses to turn back—“It’s too overwhelming” or “It’s not my place”—but I hold the compass and remember that all I need to do is be present to their pain and find a way to grieve with them. If I can sit with their pain, I begin to ask:

*What do they need?* Listening to more stories, learning about a community’s history, or showing up to vigils or marches or memorials gives me information for how to fight for them. I seek out organizations that are already fighting for them and offer my voice or time or money or labor to assist them. When I worry that I’m not enough, I ask myself: *What is my sword and shield? How will I fight? What will I risk?* When I get overwhelmed, I ask: *What is my role in this moment?* I remember that I only have to shine my light in my corner of sky.



Sunday, May 23

Wear something RED and bring your smile

## Episcopal priest goes viral for wearing the same dress for 100 days as a fashion sustainability challenge

By Egan Millard

Posted Apr 8, 2021

[Episcopal News Service]



For many who have worked from home during the pandemic, wearing the same clothes for more than a day has become a normal occurrence. But one Episcopal priest is doing it to the extreme, on purpose.

In 2020, the Rev. Sarah Robbins-Cole, rector of [St. Michael's Episcopal Church](#) in Holliston, Massachusetts, and chaplain at [Wellesley College](#), wore the same dress for 100 days in a row as a challenge to counter “fast fashion” – the now-ubiquitous practice of buying cheap, mass-produced clothing and throwing it away or donating it to charity when it's no longer fashionable.

The challenge is intended to change people's perceptions of how much clothing they need, and to bring awareness to the fashion industry's unsustainable and environmentally harmful practices.

“I've always been concerned about fast fashion anyway and the impact on the planet,” Robbins-Cole told Episcopal News Service.

She wore a breathable black merino wool dress from Sept. 6 to Christmas – except to sleep and work out – and it only needed to be washed about a dozen times. She enjoyed the challenge so much, she said, that she's now more than halfway into yet another 100-day dress challenge, which she started on Jan. 29 with a different dress.

Robbins-Cole got the idea for the 100-day dress challenge from a social media post several months into the pandemic.

“I thought, ‘Well, this seems like something that would be an interesting challenge to do during a pandemic,’” she said. “It just kind of suited my mor-

al compass and ... I usually wear a dress to work anyway.”

Among the environmental impact statistics that stick with her are the approximately [700-800 gallons of water](#) that go into producing one cotton T-shirt and the [81 pounds of clothing that end up in landfills](#) for each American every year. Americans [now buy five times as much clothing as they did in 1980](#), according to textile recycling company USAgain; when it's no longer wanted, 85% of that clothing gets thrown away, and even the remaining 15% that gets donated often ends up in landfills anyway.

For Robbins-Cole the project started as more of a personal challenge – a way to get creative with putting together a new look each day with the same dress as a base.

“I chose the first dress because it seemed the most versatile,” she said, “so I thought I could probably get 100 different looks out of it.”

Since she wasn't seeing people in person as much, not many people noticed initially, especially since she often wears black clerical clothes anyway, but she did tell the students she was working with at Wellesley College that it was intentional.

“I thought, ‘If anyone's going to notice I'm wearing the same dress, it's going to be my students,’” she said. “I told, like, one friend, two friends maybe, but really didn't share it with a lot of people.”

She gets comments and questions about the challenge and about her life “all the time” and has come to view it as a kind of ministry.

“That was one of the reasons why I kept going,” she told ENS. “I'm on sabbatical right now for my (Continued on page 5)

church, so it's, in some ways, kind of pastoral care. Some of it is just advice. Some people ask me for styling advice, which is really funny, because it's not really my thing."

A common reaction she gets is disbelief – "That's so great you can do that; I could never do it." But it turned out to be easier than she expected, and "it's just seriously not a big deal," she said. As of April 8, she's 68 days into the second 100-day challenge, this time using a different dress – also made from breathable black merino wool – that she received as a gift. Because her followers asked her to keep posting her daily outfits, she's kept up the routine every day.

But is this just a Zoom-era challenge? When it's safe enough to gather in person regularly, will she switch it up more often?

"I don't know – I'll probably go back to my clothes at some point," she said. Until then, she's enjoying making connections and educating people. "I don't know how long I'll do it into the future, but it's working."



I'M WORKIN' ON A  
BUILDING, I'M WORKIN'  
ON A BUILDING,  
I'M WORKIN' ON A  
BUILDING, FOR MY  
LORD, FOR MY LORD.

**Roof is ALMOST done. Gutters will soon follow.**

**Expect a special Sunday blessing of our new roof in early June.**



May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021

To all the mothers (both biological and spiritual) –  
Have a wonderful day!

Here's an easy treat for Mother's Day or any other day.

## Homemade Whipped Strawberry Butter

This strawberry butter is fluffy, creamy, and lightly sweetened! It's delicious served on toast, croissants, biscuits, and bagels.

Prep Time 5 mins

### Ingredients

- ½ cup salted butter softened to room temperature
- ¼ cup mashed or pureed strawberries room temperature
- ¼ cup confectioners sugar

### Instructions

Make sure the butter and (washed) strawberries are at room temperature.

Mash or puree the strawberries using a stand or immersion blender.

Take the butter and start whipping in a stand mixer using the paddle attachment, or in a handheld mixer until light and fluffy, about 5-7 minutes.

Add the confectioners sugar and mix for another 2 minutes.

Add the strawberry puree and mix for another 2 minutes.

Scoop the strawberry butter into a jar or another container. Store in the refrigerator for up to one week in an airtight container or covered with saran wrap.

When ready to use, remove from the refrigerator for at least 10 minutes to soften before using.

### Notes

The recipe calls for ¼ cup of strawberry puree, which equates to about 5 medium strawberries.

This recipe is a great way to use up strawberries that are starting to get mushy and need to be used before going bad.



Our gardens could use some helping hands. Could you adopt a section to weed and tend through the summer? It can be whatever size you feel you can manage. See Jack Dodd for more info.



I'm really not into spring cleaning.  
Come to think of it, I'm not into summer, fall or winter cleaning either.

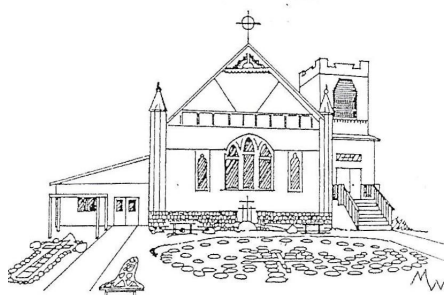
Visit Jim Hurt at facebook.com/jimhurtcartoons



*The Official* **STATE FLOWER**  
**of MICHIGAN**  
The **Orange Construction Barrel**  
(*Barrelus Orangerum*)  
Blooms April 1st thru March 31st.  
Brought to you by The Michigan Department of Transportation  
where our motto is, "Um, we're gonna be here a while..."



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
25 10am - Morning	26	27 10am - Office Hours	28 4pm - Bible Study	29	30 Newspaper Deadline 10am - Office Hours	1 First Day of Asian
2 10am - Worship-Rev	3	4 10am - Office Hours	5 Cinco de Mayo 4pm - Bible Study	6	7 10am - Office Hours	8
9 Mother's Day 8:30am - Eucharist 4pm - Vestry	10	11 10am - Office Hours	12 4pm - Bible Study	13	14 10am - Office Hours	15
16	17 Tax Day	18 10am - Office Hours	19 4pm - Bible Study	20	21 10am - Office Hours	22
23 Pentecost Sunday	24	25 10am - Office Hours	26 4pm - Bible Study	27	28 Newspaper Deadline 10am - Office Hours	29
30 10am - Morning	31 Memorial Day	1 10am - Office Hours	2 4pm - Bible Study	3	4 10am - Office Hours	5



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