

StGs Adventures in 2020





For many people, creating a scrapbook or photo album is an important part of recognizing, honoring, and remembering the journeys of life. It's fun to curl up on the sofa, flip through the pictures, and experience again the joy and excitement of what we have done before. Not many of us can create a photo album of our 2020 travel adventures, because most of us weren't able to leave our towns, if not our homes, for most of the year. Perhaps we also think we don't want to remember the year at all – there is no question that there was a tremendous amount of pain, death, and suffering. Even with all of that, there is also much that grew out of our adapting to the new circumstances surrounding us. Each of us, society, and the church itself have learned to exist differently, to live differently, and to look at the world around us differently.

StGs is a faith community anchored in the love of Jesus Christ that radiates God's grace by sharing joy and hope, feeding people, and facilitating community. In doing so, we hope to equip all people to change the world. Everything we did as a community in 2020 was planned with these truths in mind. And even though we grieve all that was lost in the year, we also can celebrate the ways in which we held true to who we are and expanded anew to what we can be. So this is a sort of scrapbook of our spiritual journey through 2020. Curl up

on the sofa, and enjoy remembering how beloved you are as a child of God, and as a part of this community.

*The Story of Jerome -
a great skit!*



We started 2020 with fun, creative ways to pray, learn, worship, and strengthen community. Little did we know how much that creativity and adaptability was going to be needed!

Pancake Breakfast with Joyful Noise Worship.



Harry Potter Family Retreat.



Story time & Game Night online to find joy together.



Lent is a season of slowing down, looking inwards, and anticipating the radical change that the resurrection brings. This year, Lent took on a whole new meaning as we entered quarantine.

Hymn Madness was fun and taught us a deeper appreciation of our music.



Parishioner, Jon Dutcher painted Stations of the Cross for us to use in our Friday devotions in Lent.

We celebrated Palm Sunday separately but together.



We worked together to stay connected: to care for those who are isolated, share love with the community, and to feed as many people as possible.

Pentecost celebrates the manifestation of the Holy Spirit. We showed that with pinwheels in everyone's yards.



Our LOFT group continued to gather with Living Compass formation & Photography Contests.

We celebrated our High School Graduates with signs, hand-knit scarves, Bibles with bookmarks, & notes from parishioners.



We sent Care Packages to our college students to remind them of our love for them.

If church is Christ's body in the world, then we have to be outside our walls and in the world. StGs continues to expand how we love our neighbors.



StGs partnered with BJBE to learn from each other and grow in our faith.



Friday Night Flix brought joy and hope to the community.



StGs offers Friday morning Yoga free to the community to help us all center our heart, mind, body, and soul.

While the weather allowed, we prayed Compline around the firepit (with cello music & s'mores.)





StGs is full of joy, and we love to share that joy in creative ways!

StGs showcases a tremendous diversity of talent in our Talent Shows, emceed by the always-engaging Keanon.

Welcoming teachers and families Back to School took a different form this year with COVID-safe photos and an ice cream truck.



StGs specially designed masks for kids and adults that proclaimed God's love to everyone.

Even though much of 2020 was different, StGs remained committed to caring for the least, lost and marginalized.

Even though most learning was online, we collected school supplies and blessed backpacks.



Feeding people at Community Meals remained a priority, and we donated masks and paper products.

As George Floyd and other people of color were killed, we supported Hear POC at Mitchell Park.



The Pumpkin Patch was a fun place for people to gather outside in a time when we all desperately needed to be together. This year we raised a record amount, and gave half to the Food Pantries.

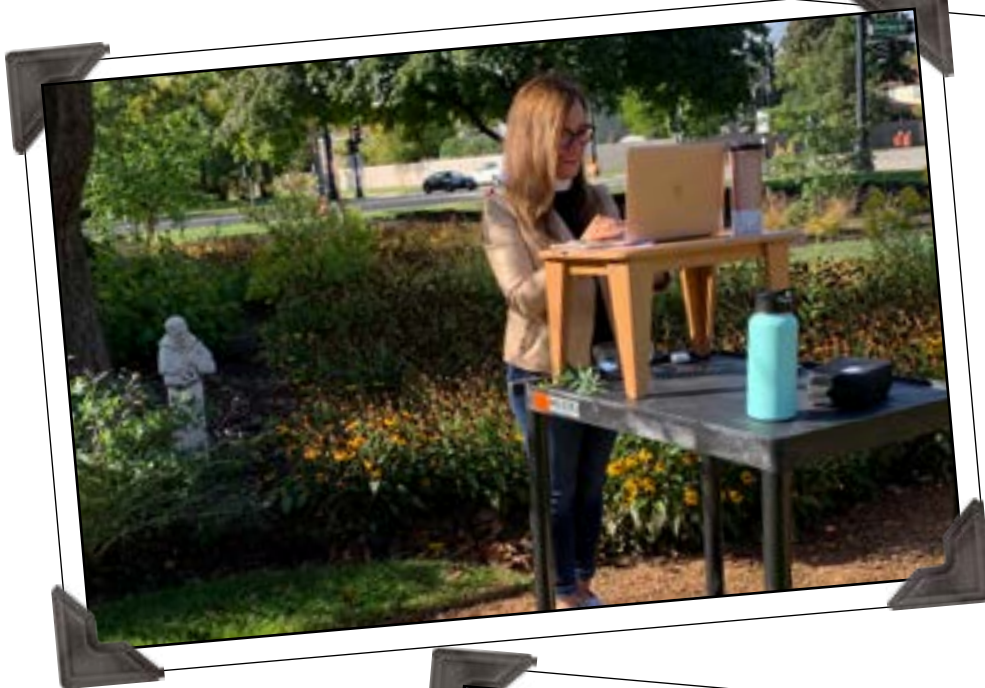


Partnering with Deerfield & Providence Farms Sober Living House to unload pumpkins.



Knitted Pumpkins brought us together and spread hope and joy.

StGs learned that worshipping on Zoom allows us to see each other, share in liturgical leadership, and find new ways to connect to God. We also adapted so we could receive the sacrament of Communion safely. On the Feast of St. Gregory and on All Saints, we rejoiced in seeing each other briefly and sharing Christ's body and blood.



*On St Francis Day, we
blessed a new statue,
& commissioned
Critter Chaplains.*

*All Saints &
All Souls Day
with Bagpipes.*



Growing in faith and sharing faith means we expand beyond ourselves to embrace our community and the world.

Kids and adults enjoyed a socially distanced Halloween parade with goodie bags before watching "It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown!"

We had a special conversation with the producer of the Defiant Requiem to expand our hearts and minds with the stories of these people of faith.



We celebrated with Max Smith as she was ordained to the diaconate. It is wonderful to have her serving at StGs as a Deacon - reminding us of the needs of the world.



Radiating God's grace involves opening our hearts, minds, and doors to others. StGs loves facilitating community, and has a central location, making us a perfect place for groups to gather: Scouts, 12-step groups, voters, and more. Expanding in generosity goes hand in hand with opening our doors, and StGs gives abundantly to the local food pantries. Each month, we collect money to feed others, and our Faith in Action funds match every dollar given. Expansive, generous, abundant love – manifest in so many ways – this is StGs.



One of StGs core values is feeding people, and we regularly support the Deerfield and Vernon Hills Food Pantries. In 2020, we gave \$31,834!



StGs serves as a polling place for the community, providing a safe place for all to come.

Scouting is an important part of StGs. Our troops managed to meet safely, and even camp this year.





Christmas is the celebration of the incarnation of God on earth. We may have worshipped apart, but we manifested God's love in so many ways. Christ, the Light of the World shines brightly!

In one week, we purchased and wrapped Christmas gifts for over 50 families served by our community partner, NICASA!

We created Advent bags which included an Advent Devotional with contributions from many parishioners.



StGs, Zion Lutheran and Christ United Methodist had a Lessons & Carols service with a virtual choir. Mayor Harriet Rosenthal joined us and read a lesson. It was a wonderful way to pray with others in Deerfield.





Physical reminders like photo albums prompt us to go out again: experience something new, see new places, expand our view of what the world is and how we fit into it. As we move into 2021, we continue to imagine what it means to be the church in a world that seems to be hurting more than ever. We are aligning staff to meet changing needs, investing in technology, and considering other ways to serve both the StGs worshipping community and the broader world as well. We are conservative in spending the money generously given to the ministries of StGs, yet there are many things that are critical to do in order to continue serving as a light of Christ to the world.

In 2021, we will continue our focus on sharing joy and hope, feeding people, and facilitating community. We can do this through focusing on three God-given traits: **adaptability, visibility, and vitality**. The leadership team of StGs (Rector, Wardens, Vestry, and Staff) are focused on all of this as we seek to engage in more partnerships, collaborations, and get to know our neighbors. We have aligned our staff differently by bringing Kathryn Duncan on full time to focus on making our online worship opportunities more robust and interactive. All of the staff is learning and shifting to ensure that everything we do has an online interactive component moving forward. This also requires us to invest in more technology infrastructure, evaluate and upgrade our physical worship space to accommodate life with online interaction, and constantly evaluate how we can reach more people with the good news of Jesus Christ.

We invite you to prayerfully consider what you can give to God's work at StGs in 2021. Giving is an act of spiritual discipline, guided by our love of God and gratitude for the abundance that God gives us. When you let us know an amount you intend to give, it is both an act of commitment to your discipline, and also a courtesy to our financial team so that we can, in good faith, continue to plan how to serve. Thank you for the gifts that you give, and the ways in which you participate in our lives together!

Please fill out your intent form online, or return the form Included in this mailing by our Annual Meeting on January 24th.

The Year in Review - 2020

Year Round

- Sponsor Troop 50
- Sponsor Pack 50
- Hosted two elections
- Movie discussion group
- StGs masks for adults and kids
- Food Pantry monthly donations with matching funds
- A Priest and a Rabbi discussions
- Book club
- Care Circles
- Community Meals
- Relieving stress on our families with children home by providing one meal a month that no one has to plan, shop for or cook
- College care packages
- Friday Night Flix in the parking lot
- Friday Yoga by the Labyrinth/Online
- Talent shows
- 12-step support groups
- Online worship on zoom every Wednesday and Sunday
- Online Children's Church every Sunday

Epiphany/Season after Epiphany

- Host Faith in Action Volunteers group
- Epiphany Pageant
- Skit "The Story of Jerome"
- Harry Potter Weekend Retreat
- Pancake Breakfast/
Joyful Noise Sunday Worship
- Broadway/Disney-themed Joyful Noise Sunday Worship

Lent/Holy Week/Easter

- Hymn Madness!
- Holy Week Devotional
- Online Stations of the Cross with cello music
- Palm Sunday palms

Pentecost and Season after Pentecost

- Pentecost Pinwheels
- Graduates drive-by (signs, hand-knit scarves and Bibles with bookmarks and notes from parishioners)
- LOFT Youth Formation (Living Compass study and photography contests)
- Storytime on Zoom
- Game nights on Zoom
- Racial awareness event in Mitchell Park
- Gathered school supplies
- St Francis Day: commissioned pet chaplains, and new statue
- Max Smith ordained to the Diaconate
- Diocesan Convention
- Thanksgiving service
- Interfaith Thanksgiving service
- Defiant Requiem online event
- Complaine by the firepit with cello music
- Drive-by Communion for St Greg's Day and All Saints/All Souls
- Back to School event with ice cream truck and picture opportunities
- Pumpkin Patch unloading with cooperation from Deerfield and Providence Farms Sober Living House
- Knitting pumpkins

Advent/Christmas

- Luminaries for longest night in Deerfield
- Advent Devotional Book and bags
- St. Nicholas on Zoom
- Christmas Packages for NICASA
- Bishop Election
- Outside Nativity Scene
- Lessons & Carols with other congregations
- Longest Night Worship Service



St. Gregory's Episcopal Church

www.StGsChurch.org