



St. John's Chapel Newsletter

Vol. 7, No. 1

January 2026

Saying (writing) "Thank You!!"

Psalm 107

Are you looking for a different New Year's resolution this New Years? I have been, and I think I've found it. Science is telling us that gratitude is a sure-fire way of curing a lot that ails us. So, here's a New Year's resolution that is guaranteed to make you feel better about life in general, and most likely feel better physically as well. It's right in-line with the sentiments of Psalm 107 when it states, "O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever." (Psalm 107 v.1) That call to gratitude is repeated, in various ways, seven more times in this Psalm, and ends, calling the "wise" to heed this instruction. Given what science is telling us now about gratitude, this call isn't just for the wise, but for those who wish to have a healthier New Year. What follows here, is a testimony from Allison Young as to what can happen for all of us, if we start a daily discipline of gratitude.

"Science says practicing gratitude is not only associated with greater happiness, but it can also improve your sleep quality, bolster relationships, and even provide a boost to the immune system. I'm a believer, but I've always thought of gratitude as an inward project, something I could journal about or meditate on. Then I heard about a study by Martin Seligman, PhD, a psychologist at the University of Pennsylvania. In the study, people wrote a gratitude letter to someone they'd never properly thanked and reported soaring happiness both immediately afterward and up to a month later. Bingo! This was the missing piece of my gratitude puzzle. It was time to take my appreciation public. So, I grabbed a pen and vowed to write a

thank you note every day for a week. Would the seven letters be worth my time and postage?

Here's what happened:"



"I was flooded with love.

I sent the first five "thank you" cards to people I don't thank enough: Old friends, new friends, my sister, and my son's preschool teacher. I had no agenda, no cookie cutter inscription; each card was authentic and from the heart. And every time I put pen to paper I felt a wave of joy well up in my heart. There were even tears —happy tears! Thanking loved ones for all the sharing, caring, celebrating, commiserating, listening, and learning they'd done

through the years—something I definitely don't do enough, in person or on paper—reminded me of positive memories and proved to me how lucky I was to have them in my life."

"I beat back my brain's negativity bias.

Most of us are wired with a negativity bias, where we think more about what goes wrong and less about what goes right. It's ingrained in us to keep us out of harm's way, but it also means the icky, nasty stuff has a bigger impact. Research shows that giving thanks can help us build happier brains—and writing the "thank you's" was definitely a stop-and-smell-the-roses wake up call for me. There's a saying in neuroscience: "neurons that fire together, wire together." Once I put my attention on the positive, I noticed it everywhere: The sky was clearer, people's smiles were brighter, and even cleaning seemed like less of a chore."

"I learned a valuable lesson about difficult people.

I wrote one thank you card that I never intended to send. It was written to a particularly difficult

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"Thank You," Continued from page 1 person in my life, a friend turned frenemy who stabbed me in the back without seeming to care. Yes, I'd forgiven her and forgiven myself, but I'd also filed the experience away under *I'll deal with this later*—which is where the thank you card came in. Writing to her forced me to look back on the situation with a fresh lens and recognize that she'd actually taught me some valuable lessons. I thanked her for bringing out my resilience and empathy, for steering me back to trusting my gut, and most of all for seeing and appreciating the connections that really matter in my life. Just like that, she went from being a curse to a blessing. (And no, I didn't send it!)"

"I started to appreciate myself more.

I thought the note to the difficult person was the toughest to write—until I got to my own thank you note. How often do I thank myself? Never. So, I crafted a gratitude letter to yours truly. The words didn't flow as easily as they had to friends, and the sentiments got a little stuck in my throat, but eventually I found ways to thank myself. I used Punkpost to send the card (Confetti, yes please!), and by the time it arrived in my mailbox, I felt like the

receiver as opposed to the giver. This brought about another lesson: Saying thanks not only makes your day, but it can also make someone else's."

"One cautionary note: My week sending thank you cards made my happiness soar—this project was cheap and easy, and delivered instant gratification, too. But even though the week was gratifying, the joy wore off quickly. Don't expect these positive results to stick around forever. Time to send another thank you!"

So, let me say, (write), "Thank You, Allison!" You've given us food for thought, and, coupled with the Psalmist's challenge to increase our thankfulness, given us a call to action. In this New Year, let's all take up the spiritual discipline of this gratitude challenge: start speaking and writing our thanks to and for each other, and see what good things will happen!

With thankfulness,
Fr. Rick



St. John's Memorial Rose Garden

By Elizabeth and Richard Barratt, St. John's Historians



Summer days show St. John's Rose Garden blossoming in full splendor, and when we're lucky, the blooms last into fall. Passersby and Sunday parishioners love to pause and luxuriate in the fragrance wafting through the soft air. Although it took nearly two decades to develop, the original idea for a garden dates all the way to 1963, when discussion arose to develop the unused space between the chapel and parish hall. Establishing a memorial garden seemed like a good idea, but didn't gain momentum until 1968, when the added idea for a patio for post-service socializing seemed a welcome garden addition.

Parishioners had to wait until May 1976 for the concept to materialize. A committee was appointed to consider ways of creating a landscaped area in the space. After the committee met with an architect, the project took off, intended to be a memorial as well as a sunny gathering spot. By June 1976, the project was well underway and by September 1976, Elizabeth McNaughton finalized the gift of a new brick terraced patio in memory of her husband MG Kenneth McNaughton, a spot that continues to welcome parishioners and visitors today. During Covid, the patio was the designated spot for our outdoor services, allowing worshippers to continue to meet despite all the local churches being ordered closed.

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Rose Garden, Continued from p. 2

By June 1980 St. John's Memorial Rose Garden itself was already well planted, thriving and formally blessed. It was dedicated to the memory of Dorothy Monro Bell by her husband, LTC Frederick Bell Jr. She had been a U.S. Army nurse, active in community affairs and head of the Episcopal Church Women at St. John's Chapel. The Rt. Rev. Clarence R. Haden, retired, of the Diocese of California, presided at the formal dedication, assisted by Fr. Jerome Politzer and staff. St. John's choir participated in the ceremony.



Since 2003 the garden has been lovingly maintained by Bill and Margee Bennett after they, to their astonishment, discovered that a landscaper had left the beloved bushes "macheted" as Margee put it. They began by pruning the bushes as best as they could, nurturing them back into blooming shape and recovery from the butchering they had endured. Since that time, the pair have been eager volunteers in the rose garden, maintaining the healthy plants and replacing those occasionally reaching the end of their years. At present our garden holds 89 rose bushes. Each January, with the help of much-appreciated volunteers, 60 sacks of manure are delivered, to be spread around the bushes, with each bush getting its own additional helping of bone meal, fertilizer and tender, loving care.



As you enter through the garden gates, notice the row of lovely roses on your right, lining the lower terrace edge. These were donated by movie actress Joan Fontaine, who was married at the chapel in August 1939 and who became a devoted parishioner following her retirement from Hollywood.

In 2015 the garden was further enhanced by a capital campaign headed up by Dr. Bill Locke. A small patio close to the chapel was enhanced by a covering of subscription bricks. Today the sunny spot features a bench and a St. Francis statue. The welcoming nook provides contemplative space for visitors and parishioners to sit and smell the roses.

Over the past year, St. John's has been further blessed by professional landscapers from the church of San Pablo Apóstol. As their own church parking was becoming too crowded to park their vans, they asked to leave them in our parking lot overnight in exchange for doing the main landscape work on our property. They work on Mondays and Fridays, weeding and doing the heavy leaf blowing that keeps our premises neat and tidy. Their work is very much appreciated by everyone who admires our trim and appealing landscape.



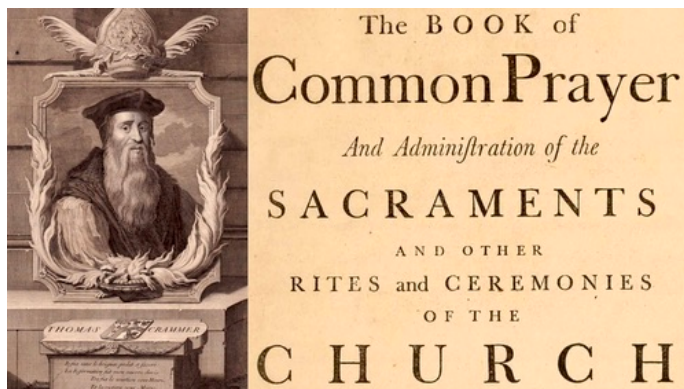
The ancient and thick-trunked wisterias that wrap around the poles supporting the roofed areas surrounding the garden have also been a source of admiration. When they recently also came under some unfortunate butchering, the Vestry quickly decided to add professional pruning to these scented, lavender-blooming beauties.

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Rose Garden, Continued from p. 3 As with any garden, annually the appeal goes out to “adopt” a rose bush in exchange for its maintenance. St. John’s Memorial Rose Garden needs ongoing volunteer upkeep. If you are interested in helping with this pleasant task, the Bennetts extend an open invitation to anyone who would like to help our rose garden continue to thrive.



History of the Book of Common Prayer



Cranmer was concerned not only to purge ancient services of many accumulations of abuses in doctrine and superstition, but also to achieve simplicity in the corporate worship of the church.

Simplification of the complexity of the old service books was one aim of the reformers. “There was more business,” wrote Cranmer in his Preface to the first English Prayer Book, “to find out what should be read [at the church services] than to read it when it was found out.”

Uniformity was another goal. “Heretofore,” continues the Preface, “there hath been great diversity in saying and singing in churches within this realm...now the whole realm shall have but one use.”

The worship of the Early church had been deeply affected by the religious ideas and by the language of Holy Scripture. Over the years of the Middle Ages the scriptural foundations of the church’s worship had ceased to be plain. Lessons from the Bible had come to be replaced with “uncertain stories and legends.” Often no more than the first few chapters of a scriptural book

would be read. Restoration of the Scriptural character of the church’s worship ranked in importance in Cranmer’s mind with the translation of the services into the common language of the people. This restoration was one of the great accomplishments of the new *Book of Common Prayer*.

Open your Prayer Book to the title page and read the description of its contents. At once the continuity of our services with those of the church’s historic worship becomes clear. The new Prayer Book incorporated the chief service-books of the Middle Ages, now revised and simplified, within the covers of a single volume. If we supply the words understood, the title page reads:

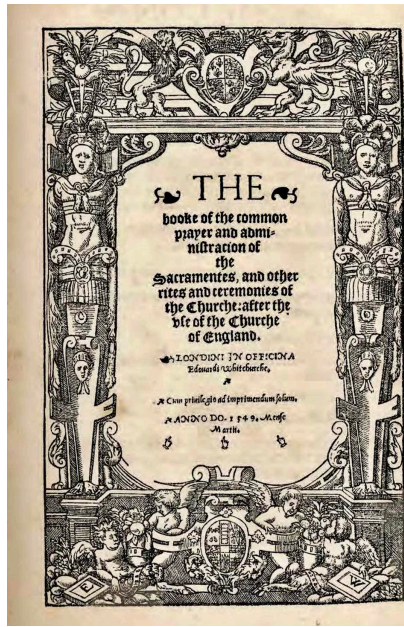
1. The Book of *Common Prayer*, and
2. [The Book of] *Administration of the Sacraments*; and
3. [The Book of] *Other Rites and Ceremonies*, together with
4. *The Psalter* [or the Book of Psalms]

Here are the *Breviary*, the *Missal* and the *Manual* of the old services, bound up with the Psalm Book. A glance at pages 1, 65, 271 and 343 will show that each separate book still possesses a title page to divide it from the others. To these has been added the *Ordinal* with its own title page on page 527 of our Prayer Book. This was the revised medieval *Pontifical* or Bishop’s Book.

The first book, that of *Common Prayer*, contains Cranmer’s revision of the old daily hours of prayer familiar in Christian worship. He combined the morning offices into a single service called Matins (Morning Prayer) and the evening hours into another called Evensong (Evening Prayer). Today we *Continued on Page 5*

Book of Common Prayer, Continued from Page 4
have added to this section other devotions generally used in connection with these services. The second book, the successor to the medieval *Missal* contains the service of Holy Communion, together with the Collects, Epistles and Gospels ordered to be used at the Eucharist throughout the Church Year.

Next comes the book of *Other Rites and Ceremonies* containing the services of the church which follow a Christian throughout his whole life from the Baptism of the child to the last rites for the departed soul. This is our version of the old *Manual*.



In the *Psalter* or Psalm Book, the Psalms are arranged for use in the daily offices of Morning and Evening Prayer.

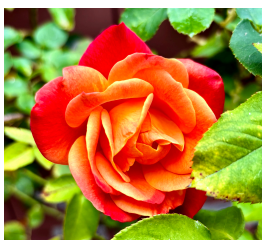
The last book in the Prayer Book volume is the *Ordinal*, the counterpart of the Bishop's Book of the Middle Ages, containing the services of ordination and other rites and ceremonies performed by the bishop alone.

Excerpted from "the Struggle for the Prayer Book," The National Church, 1945

St. John's Chapel, Del Monte January 2026 Schedule

Date	Activity	Notes
January 4 <i>Christmas 2</i>	10:00 AM – Holy Communion	Fr. Rick Miles Presiding
January 11 <i>Epiphany 1</i>	10:00 AM - Holy Communion 11:30 – Vestry Meeting (following service)	Fr. Rick Miles Presiding Centennial Hall – Senior Warden
January 18 <i>Epiphany 2</i>	10:00 AM - Holy Communion 11:30 – Annual Meeting & Potluck	Fr. Rick Miles Presiding
January 25 <i>Epiphany 3</i>	10:00 AM - Morning Prayer	Licensed Lay Reader Conducting

(NOTE BENE: Schedule subject to change dependent on front office)



Altar Flowers: The Flower Chart is in its usual place in the Parish Hall. Reserve those important dates now. Costs are \$30.00 for regular seasonal flowers, greenery and candles, OR \$40.00 for roses.





Annual Giving Campaign - Pledge Card 2026

St. John's Chapel + Del Monte

Our/my gift is \$ _____ per [week | month | year] for an annual total of \$ _____
(circle one)

Name(s): _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone(s): _____ E-mail: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

☐ I do not wish to receive pledge envelopes. (you will automatically receive pledge envelopes unless you check the box.)

It's Not too Late to Pledge!

Pledge cards (see above) are still being accepted for the 2026 Pledge Year. We need your help! The new St. John's budget will be drafted with pledges as a major source of income. If you need a pledge card, there are extra cards on the table at the back of the Sanctuary. You may also email or call the church office to have one sent to you. The Vestry appreciates your continued support as we begin our 135th year. It's not too late to pledge!

St John's Chapel Current Financial Encapsulation 2025 Year to Date¹

Income	\$ 221,716.00
Expenses	\$ 223,130.00
Bottom Line (+/-)	\$ -1,414.00

¹ as of Sunday 20DEC25

Prayer Lists Reset

It's time to do a reset of the lists of people for whom we pray. We will purge these lists and begin anew on Sunday, January 4, 2026. If you have names of people you'd like to add to the prayer list, please email or call the office.

stjohnschapel@redshift.com

(831) 375-4463

For all names added, please give us your contact information (as requester) and expect a monthly call or email for an update on the status of your requests. This will help us to manage the lists and help us all to pray better.

St. John's Chapel, Del Monte & Our Military Connection



David Jones, longtime member of our congregation, is undertaking the daunting task of chronicling the members of St. John's who have served in the military. Our connection to the military goes back even before the US Navy acquired the Del Monte Hotel. David is asking everyone in the congregation to search their memories and provide him with names, photographs in uniform (or partial thereof), any military memorabilia, and any history you might have. He can be reached at davediane1@comcast.net, or you're welcome to chat with him during "coffee hour" after service on Sundays.

We'll be celebrating St. John's 135th Anniversary on June 14, 2026, with several special observances. To help fund the event, Elizabeth Barratt is offering for sale this set of 8 luncheon/dessert plates from the historic Hotel Del Monte. Although priced at \$120 per plate, she is offering them to St. John's members at \$100 each for 7 plates in pristine condition, one for \$75 with a small chip not visible on the top; or \$775 for the set. These Syracuse China Co. plates date to the 1930s. If you are interested, please email Elizabeth at HRHANDQE3@gmail.com or call 831-241-6927.





THE BENEFIT SHOP ACCEPTS

Clean, gently used clothing
Clean, working small appliances
Clean Kitchen items
Chinaware, Glassware
CDs and DVDs
Knick knacks and bric-a-brac
Small furniture items in good condition
Art and Art objects
Holiday items
Jewelry

WE DO NOT ACCEPT

ELECTRONICS: such as MEDICAL EQUIPMENT, PRINTERS, COPIERS, LAPTOPS, CELL PHONES, TELEVISIONS, OR COMPUTERS.

Soiled or worn-out clothing or shoes
Cassettes or VHS videos
Non-working small appliances
Broken, chipped, or cracked items
Worn kitchen ware
Broken jewelry or watches

Please Note: We do not have the woman-power to dispose of unsaleable items. Please do not leave items at the gate, it is unlawful.



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