



The Beacon

July 2026



Founding Fathers

Our Sunday lectionary survey of Genesis has got me thinking about “founding fathers,” in particular Abraham who was a complicated figure, more mythological than historical. Like Noah before him and Moses after him, Abraham’s special relationship with God led to a covenant, effectively a promise of eternal favoritism, we still wrestle with. Hmmm, what other founding fathers fit that mold?

I recently spent a few days in the Shenandoah region of Virginia, a green landscape full of farms and vineyards, adjoining (and nestled between) two branches of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Several founding fathers of our country had extensive plantations down there, especially Thomas Jefferson’s *Monticello* and James Madison’s *Montpelier*.

Both these estates relied on enslaved laborers – men, women and children – to operate. How sad that these two brilliant authors of the Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution (and its Bill of Rights) respectively, did not actually see ALL men as equal; nor women!

My eyes had already been opened by the Civil Rights pilgrimage that I described back in March of this year. Slavery made the plantations profitable (though Jefferson would die in debt – he was better at words than accounting, apparently).



We can say “it was the times,” but keeping Black people enslaved was certainly in white people’s self-interest. When Jefferson traveled to France and lived there as US ambassador, his “staff” had to be paid – because slavery was not legal in France! Why did they not just leave? Strongly tempted, enslaved maid Sally Hemings demanded a deal from Jefferson. She was 16 and pregnant with his child

St. Jude’s Episcopal Church

106 E. ELIZABETH STREET
FENTON, MI 48430

(810) 629-5681
STJUDESFENTON.COM

OFFICE HOURS:

MONDAYS & THURSDAYS
9 AM - NOON

TUESDAYS & WEDNESDAYS
9 AM - 4 PM

STJUDESCHURCHFENTON106@GMAIL.COM

...continued on next page...

July Birthdays

1st Jessica Miller
 10th Mike Little
 13th Jerry Graham
 14th Liz Sailus
 16th Lucy Brewer
 18th Ron Trimmer
 21st Kathy Kortge
 Austin Rayner
 25th Shirley Gernack
 28th Bill McDonald
 Tim Norred
 30th Kathy Hopper
 Nancy Ryan

July Anniversaries

1st Charles & Francine
 Johnston (48th)
 4th Katie Young &
 Laura (11th)
 12th Doug & Diane Hill
 (59th)
 Dave & Denise
 Rayner (52nd)

“Founding Fathers” continued...

(the first of six; four survived to adulthood). Jefferson agreed to free her children at the age of 21; and he did, as well as several of her brothers. But never Sally herself. Their relationship was denied by Jefferson and his friends (calling it politically-motivated slander); but DNA testing of Heming’s known descendants shows a strong genetic connection. The truth comes to light eventually... as does the racism that has persisted all these years.

Abraham’s story also features sexual relationships with tragic outcomes. Ishmael and Isaac were only the start of the tension, and later violence, between Abraham’s Jewish and Arabic descendants. We can hope for better, always, but lasting reconciliation among “tribes and languages, peoples and nations” remains the task of all generations.

Happy July 4, a reminder of past accomplishments and future challenges.

Susan+

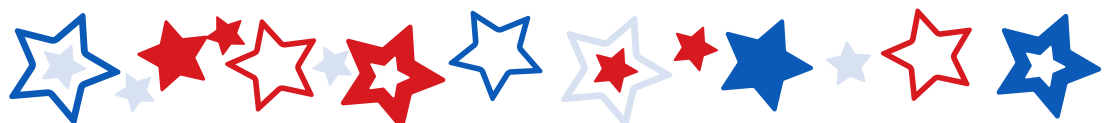
Truck Load Food Give-Away Volunteers Needed

On **Saturday, August 8th** St. Jude’s will be joining the Fenton Fire Department to distribute food to our neighbors in need. Volunteers will be needed to pass out food from 8:00 a.m until approximately 11:00 a.m. at the Fenton Fire Station. Drivers with trucks will also be needed to deliver any left overs to local food agencies. Look for a sign-up list on the Outreach Bulletin Board in early July. Thank you to all !



Special Guest on July 19

On **Sunday July 19**, we welcome The Rev. Alan James, the Interim Executive Officer of our diocese, who will preach at the 10:30 service, field your questions at Coffee Hour, and meet with the Vestry over lunch. The topic: resources that the diocese can offer St Jude’s as we begin the search for our next Rector! The goal is to call a priest next summer, so time is right for Alan’s visit and your participation.



St. Jude's Staff

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ORGANIST

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SEXTONS

Vacation Gratefully

As you spend time relaxing this summer, enjoying the beauty of Michigan's lakes, forests and (perhaps) golf courses, *take a moment to thank God*. We are surrounded by signs of God's abundant Love – which we can choose to ignore, and focus on what we lack, rather than what we received or share. It's a whole lot healthier for our spirit and mood to count blessings! And I invite you to note and share the story of anything particularly inspiring; whether that's close to home or at a place you visit. When did you stop in your tracks and say "Wow, thank you God!" or experience grace from an unexpected source? When did your heart brim with joy? Tell it out!



A great time was had at the Parish Picnic on June 28. Many thanks to the Social Committee for organizing us, and to all who brought extra items, arrived early to set up, expertly cooked our hot-dogs, and helped to tidy the Bush Park pavilion after lunch. Let's do it again next summer!

GUESS WHO'S TURNING 90?



**YOU'RE INVITED
TO HELP US
CELEBRATE OUR
AMAZING MOM!**

OPEN HOUSE FOR NANCY RYAN

When: July 25, 2026

3—6 pm (light lunch provided)

Where: St. Jude's Episcopal Church

106 E. Elizabeth Street

Fenton, MI

CARDS AND BEST WISHES ONLY

RSVP: Tracie Little (TracieLLittle@gmail.com)

Join us for free programs:



Living with Alzheimer's:

For Care Partners & For People Living with Dementia



Part 1

Saturday, June 20
10:30 a.m. - Noon

Part 2

Saturday, July 18
10:30 a.m. - Noon

Part 3

Saturday, Aug. 15
10:30 a.m. - Noon

Location:

St Jude's Episcopal Church
106 E. Elizabeth St, Fenton

Register:

Contact our 24/7 Helpline:
800.272.3900

Each session will include information for care partners and for people living with dementia. Participants may choose to attend any or all programs.

24/7 Helpline: 800.272.3900 | alz.org/gmc



Help raise money for our church with RaiseRight

Raise money for **St. Jude's Episcopal Church** when you buy gift cards to pay for purchases, shop online, dine out, or book travel through RaiseRight. It's a fundraiser that works with your routine—not against it.

How it works



Earn from hundreds of brands as you shop, dine, or book travel.



The brand gives a portion of each purchase back to St. Jude's as earnings.



We share the earnings back with St. Jude's to help you offset costs.



Sunday, July 12 during coffee hour, Liz will demonstrate how to download, sign up and use the RaiseRight app to raise money for St. Jude's!

Taking **PRIDE** in Our Welcome

One of the hallmarks of St Jude's is the warm welcome that visitors receive. Whenever I have asked both new and long-time parishioners "Why St Jude's?" the answer has been, "I felt welcomed and wanted, right away."

A hallmark of the whole Episcopal Church, internationally, is the welcome we provide LGBTQ+ (or simply, "queer") folk who want to worship and belong, as themselves. We don't discriminate with our sacraments or leadership opportunities. We don't call anyone out from the pulpit, or condemn their kids/grandkids in sermons.

The Vestry has given the go-ahead for a study group on Building an Inclusive Church, an action plan which begins with testing our level of welcoming and then builds upon it, with church growth as a consequence.

If you would be interested in joining this effort, talk to Rev. Susan, Liz Sailus, Mark Jagos or Megan Rosa. And keep up the welcoming – it's more important than ever.

Reflections

Submitted by Judy Marinco from "Our Daily Bread", June 19th edition

The Path of Life

Proverbs 3:1-6



He was born a slave in the 1860s. A sickly baby, he was sold to a slave owner for the cost of a horse. As a teenager, he witnessed the killing of a black man by a group of white people. Remarkably, George excelled in school, but when he applied to Highland University in Kansas, he was denied admission because of his skin color. Yet through it all, the young man maintained a deep faith in God. George Washington Carver's life verse was Proverbs 3:6: "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

We sometimes feel overwhelmed by our circumstances. We experience setbacks. We find ourselves at a loss for where we should go. But Proverbs encourage-

ges us, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding" (v. 5). This is the Bible's way of saying, "Let go and let God" lead your life. George Washington Carver followed God's path, persevering against all odds, teaching himself botany and geology and eventually becoming a renowned scientist. He famously developed hundreds of uses for the peanut plant but also developed methods of crop rotation that revolutionized agriculture in the United States. God has a way of making the best out of bad situations. Whatever you're facing today, the key is to "acknowledge Him" and listen for His voice. Watch Him open up the paths of your life.

• By Kenneth Peterson

Reflect & Pray

What circumstances are troubling you? How can you seek God's direction for your life?

Loving God, please help me focus on You always and listen for Your direction for my life

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, 7/8

6 pm: Outreach Meeting

Saturday, 7/11

9 am - Noon: Basic Needs Pantry

Sunday, 7/12

RaiseRight Fundraising Presentation during coffee hour

Thursday, 7/16

6 pm: Book Club

Saturday, 7/18

10:30 am- Noon: Alzheimers Seminar Part 2

Sunday, 7/19

The Rev. Alan James visiting & preaching

Saturday, 7/25

3 pm: Nancy Ryan's Birthday Party

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St. Jude's Episcopal Church



VESTRY

2027

Doug Hill

Dave James

2028

Charles Johnston

Sue Premo

Megan Rosa-Norred

2029

Mark Jagos

Diane Putnam

Denise Rayner

Dolores Ruby

Delegates to the Diocesan Convention
Mark Jagos, Charles Johnston
Alternates: Katie Young, Amy Freeman