

On Eagle's Wings



St. John's Monthly Newsletter – December 2022

Pastor's Paragraphs

Advent begins on November 27th this year. It is often seen a season to prepare for Christmas, but it is actually a season to prepare for the coming of Christ. As such, it is a total mismatch to the Christmas celebrations our culture is having. Typically pastors push churches to have little or no recognition of the Christmas season until Christmas actually arrives; or perhaps Christmas Eve. That is my annual inclination too. However, it just doesn't work.

My whole life it's seemed like the church has fought the secular consumerism of Christmas. It goes well before my life actually. Even in the early 1900's the church was fighting that battle. But now the secular celebration of Christmas (or the "holiday season") has become so ubiquitous that it is inescapable. You just can't go anywhere or do anything and not be bombarded by Christmas! So when we Christians do finally get to Christmas, and the church finally starts its Christmas season, we're sick of it. There's even a part of me that is ready to do away with the Christmas decorations on December 26th. It's just been too much for too long!

If I were a stickler for liturgics (i.e. the study of worship forms) I'd insist that we hold off the Christmas story until Christmas Eve. But I get it. Now is the time that we Christians need a theological foundation for the season. Now is when we need a faith reason for doing what we're doing.

We're going to be reading through Matthew's gospel next year. We're starting on November 27th by reading Jesus' genealogy. Then, on December 4, we'll be reading Matthew's account of Jesus' birth. We'll be reading about the arrival of the Wise Men on December 11. That is way too early in the season to read these stories! But hopefully they will give us a faith basis for what is happening in the world around us. Preparing for Christmas without having Jesus in it is just a rat race of decorations and parties; and it leaves our bank accounts thinner in the process!

May the strength, confidence, and creativity that comes with a life of faith be with you in the weeks ahead. And may God give you a sense of purpose for all that you do!

Blessings,
Pastor Jon

Adult Sunday School

The adult Sunday school has changed course and will begin using the Netflix series *The Good Place*. The show will be shown in the Fellowship Hall during the Sunday school hour. It is not a formal class time, even though the series will inspire discussion. Feel free to just step in at any time.



The symbol for Matthew

(The gospel symbols: Matthew, a human with wings; Mark a lion with wings; Luke, an ox with wings; John, a flying eagle.)

New Church Year

- Matthew's Gospel -

The 2023 Church Year begins November 27. Next year we'll be reading from the Matthew's gospel. We'll read the whole thing during worship, although we won't read it all in order. We'll pull out the Sermon on the Mount and look at it carefully after Easter.

November 27 (Advent 1) - Matthew 1:1-17

December 4 (Advent 2) - Matthew 1:18-25

December 11 (Advent 3)- Matthew 2:1-23

December 28 (Advent 4) - Children's Christmas Program

December 24 (Christmas Eve) – Luke 2:1-14

December 25 (Christmas Day) – John 1:1-14

December Worship Assistants

	December 4	December 11	December 18	December 25
Greeters & Ushers	Sue Kaufmann	Helen Crown	Tom and Carol Urbanic	Volunteers
Acolyte	Creed White	Owen Young	Thomas Bullwinkle	
Altar Care (10:30)	Linda Thompson		Linda Thompson	Volunteer
Communion Assistants	Rob Stroup		Adele Garvey	Volunteer
Counters	Bruce and Connie Stevenson	Linda Flood and Sue Kaufmann		Helen Crown
Coffee Hour				

10:30 Worship In-person and Zoom

Note the Zoom Link has changed

10:30 is in-person worship in the sanctuary and also by Zoom. The Zoom link for 10:30 is emailed weekly. If you cannot connect to the 10:30 service with a computer you can still hear and participate in the service with any phone.

Dial (929) 436 2866 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 894 6565 2592

Passcode: 537281



Christmas Eve Worship 7:00 Candlelight Holy Communion

Christmas Eve worship will only be at 7:00 this year.

We will not have an 11:00 service. The service will also be available by Zoom. The link is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88196123572?pwd=TUQvYlJSd3NuRDdxWWlpWThHMHR2QT09>

Meeting ID: 881 9612 3572

Passcode: 386489

To phone: 1 929 436 2866 US (New York)

Sanctuary Seating for Advent and Christmas

For the seasons of Advent and Christmas the seating in the sanctuary will be arranged in a U shape. The advent wreath will be placed in the center of the room where it will count down the Sundays to Christmas.

2023 Stewardship Drive

Our 2023 stewardship drive will run from Pie Sunday (Sunday, October 30) to the Parish Thanksgiving Dinner (Sunday, November 20). Your materials will include time and talent sheets for 2023, a proposed budget for 2023, and a pledge card. If you can't make it to the kickoff with Pie Sunday we'll mail your materials to you. If you have any questions get in touch with Bill Stimmel at wstimmel@rochester.rr.com



-The Rev. Matthew Nickoloff and the South Wedge Mission in Rochester.

-Rev. Karen Anderson for her missionary work in Chile.

-David Storch as he lives in a memory care facility.

-Rev. Jennifer Phelps, former member of St. John's, as she slowly recovers from neck and back injuries.

-Joan Kamisch-Kibitlewski, friend of the Boisseaus in your prayers. She has recently been diagnosed with breast cancer and is awaiting news of treatment options.



- Thank you to everyone who helped to install the wiring to add ceiling fans to the sanctuary.
- Thank you to John CiPollina for making various repairs around the property.
- Thank you to Mike Ross for making and installing a handrail for the steps in the parking lot.
- Thank you to Jim Spawton and Gary Boisseau for helping with worship leadership on the Sundays Pastor Jon has been away.
- Thank you to everyone who prepared food for the annual parish Thanksgiving dinner. A special thank you to those who made food from ingredients grown in the church garden.
- Thank you to everyone who contributed pies for Pie Sunday.
- Thank you to everyone who bought gift cards for the Victor Christmas Giving Tree.
- Thank you to Emma Deibler for covering the camera and microphone system the Sunday Jim and Gary were away.

Community Outreach Committee

Christmas Mitten Tree

The mitten tree will be in the gathering area until Dec. 18th. The tree is to collect new hats, scarves and gloves/mittens, which will be given to the Victim resource Center (for abused wives and children) in Newark

Thanksgiving Food Baskets

Thank you to everyone who donated items for the Thanksgiving food baskets the Victor Farmington Food Cupboard is creating. We collected 55 boxes of stuffing mix and 40 boxes/bags of instant potatoes.

Victor Giving Tree

Thank you to everyone who bought gift cards for this year's giving tree. The families who receive them are very appreciative!

November Council Highlights

Church council held its regular monthly meeting on November 21st. There were no new major items on the agenda, but reports on ongoing work included:

- Website and social media presence revamping
- Stewardship 2023
- Educational ministry
- Leadership and strategic planning for 2023

New Neighbor Program

In an effort to encourage new families to worship with us at St. John's, we developed the New Neighbor Program. So how does it work? If you have a new neighbor you'd like to welcome, contact Katy Stimmel at (585) 298-6515 (call or text), or sign up using the sign up sheet posted in the gathering area. She will arrange for a lovely inkwell flower vase to be at church on a Sunday of your choosing. Each flower vase comes with a welcome not ready for you to deliver to your new neighbor! (Flowers arranged by Hopper Hills floral shop in Victor.)

2023 Stewardship Drive

You should have received the 2023 stewardship drive materials. Please prayerfully consider how you will support the ministries of our congregation in the coming year. Please talk to Bill Stimmel for more information.

Communion Cards

Please remember to fill out a communion record card if you have not done so this year. Cards are available on the usher's stand. All churches in the synod are being advised to be able to verify their voting roles. Voting members are those who in the last year: are confirmed, received communion, and given an offering recorded by the financial secretary.

Weather Cancellations

If we need to cancel a worship service or event due to weather we will post it on the church's Facebook page and send it to the email list. Please contact Pastor Jon if you have any cancellation questions.



Gingerbread House Competition

Our 11th annual gingerbread house competition is scheduled for Sunday December 11th at noon. The walls (graham crackers) and glue (frosting) will be provided. Each family is asked to bring candy for decorating. Let's see how creative we can be! The following Sunday the houses will be on display. The congregation can vote for their favorite.

Never built a gingerbread house? That's okay, half of the houses usually collapse before judging! Sign up in the Gathering Area.



It's a busy time of transition at Family Promise. Two of our Geneva families are moving out - one to Monroe County and the other to a new apartment that they secured from landlord Paul Dykeman, from whom we rent our North Exchange Street emergency apartment. Paul was impressed with the way the family had taken care of his apartment, and consequently felt that they would be great tenants. For families without solid references from previous landlords, a positive reference from Family Promise can make all the difference!

We hope to move a multigenerational family into our new emergency shelter in East Bloomfield this week, depending on their ability to find a placement for their ten year-old shih tzu! Unfortunately we cannot allow pets in any of our apartments because of agreements with our landlords. If anyone is interested in caring for a cranky old dog for the duration of this family's stay with us, let me know!

Our three Canandaigua families are making good progress toward securing permanent housing. The mom with three children in one of the North Main Street apartments is next on the list for an apartment which is currently being rehabbed in Canandaigua. The mom with two boys in the second North Main Street apartment is struggling with transportation, and consequently employment. Her old car suffered a terminal engine seize-up. Bus transport is inconvenient and time-consuming at best, and with her kids' school schedules limiting her work availability she lost what had been a promising job. She is at a job fair as I write this note. The dad with two boys in our Saltonstall apartment is tirelessly looking for work that he can physically manage and also for an apartment that will work for his kids. While looking everywhere in Ontario County, he is also expanding his search to adjacent counties.

There was a tremendous response to the Baby Shower invitation that went out via email. Folks in our extended community have been extremely generous, and the graduate mom is awash in gifts. She is experiencing gestational hypertension and there is some chance that she will be induced before the December due date, so please keep her in your prayers!

We are still anticipating our first permanent supportive housing location to come on line in Geneva - a three-unit building owned by Joseph Furmansky, the landlord from whom we rent our two Elm Street emergency apartments. The building includes two 2-bedroom apartments that should be ready for occupancy in December and a 3-bedroom apartment that will be ready in January. These apartments will be available for guest families who have been unable to find other options or graduate families who are experiencing housing insecurity. In a permanent supportive housing arrangement, the graduate family signs a lease directly with the landlord. They pay the rent and are responsible for the apartment - either through their own employment income or with a Section 8 voucher - and Family Promise provides ongoing case management. We will visit these graduates regularly to help with budgeting, help them keep the apartment in good condition, help smooth over any conflicts between the family and other residents of the building, and so on.

We've hired a part time driver - **Melissa Farrell** - who is an astonishing bundle of energy. Melissa is available to transport guests to appointments, meetings, shopping, etc. She has removed some of the rear seats in our Family Promise Van, making it a more usable vehicle for transporting furnishings and food, as well as people. Melissa is a Jane of All Trades, and wields a torque wrench as effectively as a steering wheel. Here's a picture of her on one of her first days, loading up baby shower gifts.



As always, thank you for your generosity and hard work. Please reach out to me with questions, concerns, and ideas. I appreciate your enthusiasm, but if you're ready to pass the torch to someone else in your congregation, please send me an introduction! Blessings and Gratitude,

Jay

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Jay Garrett-Larsen, Community & Landlord
Engagement Manager
Family Promise of Ontario County



Sponsor Accessories for the New Playground

We have received several donations toward buying the accessories for the playground. Thank you to everyone who has given! None of those gifts have been for a specific item. That means that every accessory is still available to sponsor. (We'll use the undesignated donations for those things that are not sponsored.) The They are as follows:

Sm Rock Wall	\$249
Sm Crooked Log Climber	199
4' Wave Slide	499
Angled Climber	100
6' Torpedo Straight Slide	599
Tic Tac Toe Panel	299
Lg Rock Wall	399
Log Rope Climber	299
Steering Wheel	100
Swing Set	1499

Please talk to Julie Stewart or Pastor Jon if you're interested in sponsoring an accessory.

Annual Report Deadline

Committee Chairs – Please have your annual reports to the church office by December 31.



Missions Update



South Wedge Mission, Rochester Rev. Matthew Nickoloff, Developer

The South Wedge Mission on Caroline St. in Rochester has been in development for almost ten years now. It was to leave mission status and become a full congregation in 2022. However, its lay leadership is not as fully developed as it needs to be in order to be healthily independent. The mission has plans in place to become a full congregation in late 2023.

The South Wedge in Rochester is stronger for the presence of the mission. There is worship twice on Sunday, a community garden, a professional clothes closet for those who need professional dress, a food pantry on the sidewalk, and the building hosts various service and recovery groups.



Missions, Continued

Educacion Popular en Salud (EPES), Chile

(Popular Health Education)

Rev. Karen Anderson, Missionary



Rev. Anderson was instrumental in founding EPES in 1982. She continued to serve as its developer until 2000. She then returned in 2009 and continues in a leadership role. During the pandemic she returned stateside. Remote leadership is allowing her to contribute without needing to be present there as often. They continue to offer basic health education to women in the area as well as provide food and support. Learn more about EPES at epes.cl You'll probably have to use your browsers translator unless you know Spanish. We will show a video about their community garden in worship in the weeks to come.



Church Playground

Can & Bottle Collection Continues

We continue collecting deposit cans and bottles for replacing the playground. The cans and bottles fund is up to \$2475!!



November Bible Trivia Answers

1. The author of 2 Timothy says the time will come when people will not want to hear sound teaching, but have what instead? Answer: Itching ears (2 Timothy 4:3)
2. Can you complete this, the most racist statement in the New Testament? “_____ are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.” Answer: Cretans (Titus 1:12)
3. The author of 2 Timothy mentions Timothy’s mother and grandmother. What are their names? Answer: Mother – Eunice, Grandmother – Lois (2 Timothy 1:5)
4. Matthew traces Jesus’ supposed genealogy back to what famous faith ancestor? Answer: Abraham (Matthew 1:1)

December Bible Trivia Questions

Hint: All the answers may be found in the Bible readings chosen for worship in December.

1. In what type of building was Jesus when the Wise Men visit him?
2. To what nation does Jesus’ family flee after the visit of the Wise Men?
3. What convinces Joseph to marry Mary despite her pregnancy?
4. What does Emmanuel mean?

December 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 10:00-2:30 Monarch Homeschool 1:15 Women's Bible Study 7:00 Cub Scout Pack 67	2 3-8 Cello Lessons	3
4 <u>2nd Sunday of Advent</u> 8:30 Service of the Word 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Holy Communion	5 3-7 Violin Lessons 7:00 Boy Scouts	6 <u>Nicholas, Bishop of Myra (a.k.a. Santa Claus)</u> 3-7 Violin Lessons 7:00 Community Chorus	7 8:30 Men's Breakfast 3-7 Violin Lessons	8 10:00-2:30 Monarch Homeschool 1:15 Women's Bible Study 7:00 Cub Scout Pack 67	9 3-8 Cello Lessons	10
11 <u>3rd Sunday of Advent</u> 8:30 Holy Communion 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Service of the Word 11:45 Gingerbread House Competition	12 3-7 Violin Lessons 7:00 Boy Scouts	13 3-7 Violin Lessons 7:00 Community Chorus 7:00 Property Committee	14 8:30 Men's Breakfast 3-7 Violin Lessons	15 10:00-2:30 Monarch Homeschool 1:15 Women's Bible Study 7:00 Cub Scout Pack 67	16 3-8 Cello Lessons	17 Food Cupboard Christmas Food Distribution
18 <u>4th Sunday of Advent</u> 8:30 Service of the Word 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Sunday School Children's Program	19 3-7 Violin Lessons 7:00 Boy Scouts 7:00 Church Council	20 3-7 Violin Lessons 7:00 Community Chorus	21 8:30 Men's Breakfast 3-7 Violin Lessons	22 0:00-2:30 Monarch Homeschool 1:15 Women's Bible Study 7:00 Cub Scout Pack 67	23	24 <u>Christmas Eve</u> 7:00 Candlelight Holy Communion
25 Christmas 10:30 Holy Communion	26 <u>Stephen, Deacon and Martyr</u>	27 <u>John, Apostle and Evangelist</u>	28 <u>The Holy Innocents, Martyrs</u>	29	30	31 <u>New Year's Eve</u>



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

**Grace for Everyone
-Always-**

*We are a community of faith
committed to living and sharing the love of God.*

St. John's Lutheran Church

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The Reverend Jonathan Deibler, Pastor

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Address Service Requested

December Newsletter

December 11 – Gingerbread House Competition

December 24 – 7pm Candlelight Holy Communion