

On Eagle's Wings



St. John's Monthly Newsletter – December 2017

Growth

Pastor's Paragraphs

There are two tasks I loathe: sanding joint compound on drywall, and stripping paint from woodwork. Maintaining and restoring my old house requires me to do plenty of both. I procrastinate, drag my feet, and do every other conceivable chore before turning to sanding or paint removal. I've been working on removing paint from the woodwork in my dining room for over two years now! I keep telling myself I should just buckle down and get it done. The wood is so beautiful once it's re-stained. But that doesn't motivate me much! Sooner or later I will get it done, but I'll loathe every minute of it.

By contrast I gladly jump into everything that is fun. I look forward to fun things. I'll rearrange things on my calendar to make opportunities to do what I enjoy.

The Christmas season is all about celebrating God coming to earth. Our infinite God lived a lifetime as a human. That lifetime included birth, growing up, good times, bad times, and even death. One of the key pieces of Christian faith is that we can point to specific times and places where God acted first hand from a human perspective.

Perhaps a question to ask at Christmas is, did God loathe being a human or like being a human? Or maybe, does God love us but only grudgingly, or does God look upon us with delight? Actually let's make this even more basic: Does God like us?

If God likes me then it's a lot easier for me to like myself; even with my flaws. If God looks at me in the same way that I look at removing paint from the woodwork of my dining room, well, then I'm in a mess!

Almost as if God knew we'd ask such questions, God gave us answers. Perhaps the most concise answer is in Colossians 1:19, "For in [Christ] the fullness of God was pleased to dwell." The Greek word translated as "pleased" is "εὐδοκῆσεν". It suggests joy, delight, and great happiness. The next verse goes on to say that God not only delighted to be in human form but that God also

delighted to do the hard work of saving us and all creation!

This is good news! It is a great Christmas message. Not only are we joyful that God has come, God is happy to have come! Though the task of saving us is far nastier than any task I try to avoid, God does it with joy.

Many people in Jesus' day weren't too pleased to learn that God was actually happy; and especially that God was happy to save people who were less-than-perfect! The religious leaders clung to the idea that God only liked righteous people. They clashed with Jesus many times over this, and as you know well, they finally had him arrested and executed. Even today most people find it is easier to see God as harsh and judgmental than joyful and happy.

May we not be in that majority and instead know the truth of God!

You'll probably say, "Merry Christmas" or "Happy Holidays" more times than you can count in the next several weeks. When you say something like that I challenge you to see the other person as someone that God is delighted to save; even if you find that person impossible to like! I don't ask you to do this in order to force you into liking someone you don't. This is about liking yourself. It is impossible to realize that God likes you if you can't see that God likes others too.

Blessings,
Pastor Jon



December 24 Schedule

8:30am Service of the Word

9:30am Sunday School/Play Rehearsal

10:30am Christmas Play – *A Christmas Story*

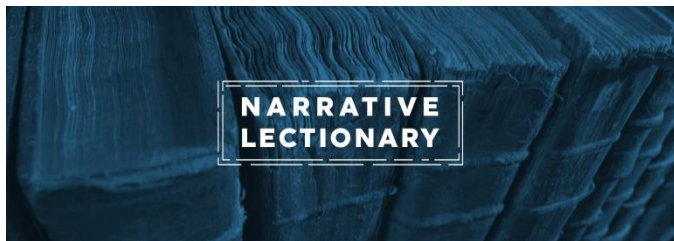
7:00pm Candlelight Holy Communion

The 11:00pm candlelight service we have offered in the past is being cancelled due to low attendance.

Worship

December Worship Assistants

	December 3	December 10	December 17	December 24	December 31
Greeters & Ushers	Rob & Laura Stroup	Sue Kaufmann & Linda Flood	Phyllis & Dick Henderson	Tim & Liz Brown	Kim & Gary Boisseau
Lector	Ellen Storch (8:30)	Judy VanDeVelde (8:30)	Susie Maynard (8:30)	Kevin Maynard (8:30)	Ellen Storch
Acolyte	Aly Buch	Sarah Brownlee	Mary Ehrlinger	Ben Deibler	Scott Wilmot
Altar Care	Linda Thompson		Linda Thompson		Linda Thompson
Communion Assistants	Sue Kaufmann & Linda Flood		Bruce & Connie Stevenson		Gary Boisseau & Rob Stroup
Nursery Care	Laura Stroup	Kristi Bullwinkle	Beth Perdan	Katy Stimmel	Laura Stroup
Counters	Babette Huber & Burdie Gillern	Connie & Bruce Stevenson	Don Mansfield & Tim Brown	Beth Perdan & Bettina Kalish	Tom Kuriilovitch & Helen Crown
Coffee Hour	The Kurilivitches				



December Worship Texts

The new church year begins on December 3rd. We'll be reading through Mark's gospel between then and Easter. However, Mark's gospel has nothing about Jesus birth or early life. For most of December we'll look at prophecies from Isaiah that Christians have used to point toward Jesus' birth. We'll also read the pre-birth stories from Luke's gospel. On December 31 we'll begin reading Mark in earnest.

December 3 (Advent 1) – Isaiah 11:1-10, Luke 1:5-24

December 10 (Advent 2) – Isaiah 40:1-11, Luke 1:26-38

December 17 (Advent 3) – Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-10, Luke 1:39-56

December 24 (Advent 4) –Christmas Play

December 31 – Mark 1

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.



A Christmas Story

“In Search of Faith”

This year's Christmas “pageant” has been written by our very own Beth Schroeder! It is a play with several scenes and congregational participation. Come and see how a mother and daughter learn how blessed they are to be able to share the blessed gift of Jesus they have already been given. It will be performed at the 10:30 worship service on December 24. If you are in the cast please look for emails and texts from Beth about rehearsal times.

Nuts and Bolts

November Council Meeting Notes

Discussed reviving our youth ministry as a 2018 priority. Recommended dropping 11:00 pm Christmas Eve Service due to three other services being held that day and declining attendance at that service. Highlighted plans for intergenerational play being done at the 10:30 am Christmas Eve service. Reiterated delay in Family Promise to September 2018. Recognized outreach activities for Thanksgiving and Christmas were on track. Recognized status of endowment fund activities just getting started. Reviewed progress of stewardship drive with actions taken to send reminders. Closed out the Pay It Forward capital campaign with \$66,015 raised (99.2% of pledged!) Agreed to consider mortgage pay down options. Assigned action to create an up-to-date mailing list of congregation members. Reviewed topics from April Council workshop and renewed focus on youth and young adults as priorities. Planned to review the church's Continuing Resolutions at the next council meeting. Submitted by Tim Brown

Financial Update

	Income	Expenses	Difference
Year to Date	\$167,371.75	171,199.61	(3,827.86)

Service



The Rev. Matthew Nickoloff and the South Wedge Mission in Rochester. Also the Rev. Eric and the Rev. Wendolyn Trozzo as they work in Malaysia. Gail Holbig as she has an increasing number of health problems and is often confused. Linda Ellis who has metastases on her spine and hip. Bob Stroup, Rob Stroup's dad, who has been suffering from dementia and other health problems.

Linda Roy, sister-in-law of Helen Crown, who has metastatic breast cancer.

Leigh Adams, Linda Flood's brother, who is slowly recovering from an infection in the bones of his leg.

Community Outreach Projects



Thank you to everyone who brought in food or made donations for the Victor Farmington Food Cupboard Thanksgiving Baskets. Six hundred (600) baskets were created and distributed.

Day of Giving 2017 will be December 16th. St. John's will serve as a Christmas Basket Distribution site. Volunteers are needed for several of the activities for the day. Flyers and contact information to help are posted in the Gathering Area; check and see if anything catches your eye.

Christmas Gifts for Families in Need – We are again getting gifts for Canandaigua and Victor families. The gift charts are up and the wrapped gifts need to be at the church by December 11th. If there are gift cards for gifts, give them to Burdie Gillern.

The Mitten Tree collection of mittens, gloves, hats, and scarves need to be at the church by December 11th. This year the collection will be donated to the VICTIM RESOUCCE CENTER in Newark.

Shopping on Amazon = \$ for Family Promise

Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to Family Promise of Ontario County. AmazonSmile is the same as Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.

To begin:

- Start your shopping at smile.amazon.com
 - In the *Search for a charitable organization* box, type Family Promise of Ontario County, Inc.
 - Select Family Promise of Ontario County, Inc, located in Victor NY
 - Start shopping!
- Talk to Cindy Swigart if you have any questions. Thank you!

Service (Cont.)



-Thank you to Jim and Karen Spawton, Mike and Bettina Kalish, Heidi Griffith, Gary Boisseau, Gary Wood and others who helped cook the German lunch we had on Reformation Sunday.

-Thank you to everyone who provided food for the bell tower dedication on October 31.

-Thank you to Tom Kurilovitch for setting up the projector and sound system to watch the Luther movie on Reformation Sunday.

-Thank you to Beth Schroder, and Beth, Molly, and Emmy Perdan for setting up the fellowship hall for Reformation Sunday.

-Thank you to Tim Brown and Tom Urbanic for their remarks at the bell tower dedication.

Thank you to Heidi Griffith for the press release she wrote for the Reformation Day and the bell tower.

Thank you to John Thompson and John CiPollina for their work in the fellowship hall.

Thank you to Connie Stevenson for the display she created about the bell tower construction and to Gary Boisseau for his research into the church where the bells came from.

them safe and have everyone retrieve their ornaments after the Christmas season, but we can't make any guarantees. So don't bring anything too valuable or irreplaceable. Also, it is a church tree, so gaudy Santa Clauses and the like probably won't fit it very well. The tree will be set up after worship on December 10th so you can bring your ornament then or the next Sunday. Talk to Pastor Jon for more information.



November Bible Trivia Questions – Joseph in Genesis

1. What was the unique thing about Joseph's coat?

Answer: long sleeves (Genesis 37:3)

Bous: What mistake did Martin Luther deliberately introduce into the text when describing Joseph's coat?

Answer: The coat had many colors.

2. How many brothers did Joseph have? Answer: 11 (Genesis 29:31-30:24, 35:16-18)

3. How many sisters did Joseph have? Answer: 1 (Genesis 30:21)

4. When Joseph's father Jacob dies what does he do to his brothers for all the horrible things they did to him?

Answer: Tells them God turned their deeds to good (Genesis 50:20)

December Bible Trivia Questions

1. Which two gospels contain a genealogy for Jesus?

2. Who is the first human we meet in Mark's gospel?

3. What angel came to Mary to tell her of Jesus' conception?

4. Who was born first, John the Baptist or Jesus?

Fun



Gingerbread House Competition

Our 7th annual gingerbread house competition is scheduled for Sunday December 10th 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! Judging categories will be decided that day – so you can't premeditate a strategy! Never built a gingerbread house? That's okay, half of the houses usually collapse before judging! Sign up in the Gathering Area; lunch will be provided.

Sanctuary Tree Decorations

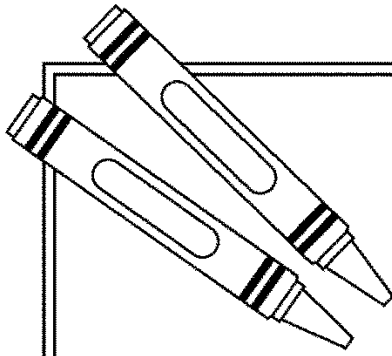
This year we'll again have a congregational Christmas tree! Everyone is invited to bring a tree ornament from home to hang on our tree. We'll do our best to keep

December Birthdays

1	Gregory Bright
6	Noah Brown
7	Knute Halvorson
8	Kenneth Kusel, Hanna Boisseau
11	Mary Ehrlinger, Carol Urbanic
15	Jeremy Mann
16	Julia Bullwinkle, Jennifer White
17	Rudy Stroup
23	Stephen Christie
27	Donald Phillips, Christine Centola
31	Linda Ellis, Laura Szydlowski, Grace Kravetz, Emma Kravetz

DECEMBER 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3 <u>1st Sunday in Advent</u> 8:30 Worship 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Holy Communion	4 6:30-9:00 YMCA Child Care 9:00 Holy Yoga 3:00-8:00 Music Lessons 7:00 Boy Scouts	5 6:30-9:00 YMCA Child Care 3:00-8:00 Music Lessons 5:30 Weight Watchers 7:00 Community Chorus	6 6:30-9:00 YMCA Child Care 8:00 Men's Breakfast 3:00-8:00 Music Lessons 7:30 Alcoholics Anonymous	7 6:30-9:00 YMCA Child Care 1:00 Women's Bible Study	1 6:30-9:00 YMCA Child Care 3-8 Cello Lessons 3:30-6 Amadeus Chr 8 6:30-9:00 YMCA Child Care 3-8 Cello Lessons 3:30-6 Amadeus Chr	2 9
10 <u>2nd Sunday in Advent</u> 8:30 Holy Communion 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	11 6:30-9:00 YMCA Child Care 9:00 Holy Yoga 3:00-8:00 Music Lessons 7:00 PM Church Council 7:00 Boy Scouts	12 6:30-9:00 YMCA Child Care 3:00-8:00 Music Lessons 5:30 Weight Watchers 7:00 Community Chorus	13 6:30-9:00 YMCA Child Care 8:00 Men's Breakfast 3:00-8:00 Music Lessons 7:30 Alcoholics Anonymous	14 6:30-9:00 YMCA Child Care 1:00 Women's Bible Study	15 6:30-9:00 YMCA Child Care 3-8 Cello Lessons 3:30-6:00 Amadeus Chorale	16 9:00-12:00 Victor Farmington Food Cupboard Christmas Distribution
17 <u>3rd Sunday in Advent</u> 8:30 Worship 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Holy Communion 2:00 Eagle Scout Ceremony	18 6:30-9:00 YMCA Child Care 9:00 Holy Yoga 3:00-8:00 Music Lessons 7:00 Boy Scouts	19 6:30-9:00 YMCA Child Care 3:00-8:00 Music Lessons 5:30 Weight Watchers 7:00 Community Chorus	20 6:30-9:00 YMCA Child Care 8:00 Men's Breakfast 3:00-8:00 Music Lessons 7:30 Alcoholics Anonymous	21 <u>St. Thomas, Apostle</u> 6:30-9:00 YMCA Child Care 1:00 Women's Bible Study	22 6:30-9:00 YMCA Child Care 3-8 Cello Lessons 3:30-6:00 Amadeus Chorale	23
24 <u>4th Sunday in Advent/Christmas Eve</u> 8:30 Holy Communion 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 A Christmas Story Play 7:00 Candlelight Holy Communion	25 <u>Christmas Day</u>	26 <u>St. Stephen, Deacon and Martyr</u> 7:00-6:00 YMCA Fun Clubs	27 <u>St. John, Apostle</u> 7:00-6:00 YMCA Fun Clubs 7:30 Alcoholics Anonymous	28 <u>The Holy Innocents</u> 7:00-6:00 YMCA Fun Clubs	29 7:00-6:00 YMCA Fun Clubs	30
31 <u>1st Sunday of Christmas/New Years Eve</u> 8:30 Holy Communion 10:30 Holy Communion						



Just for KIDS

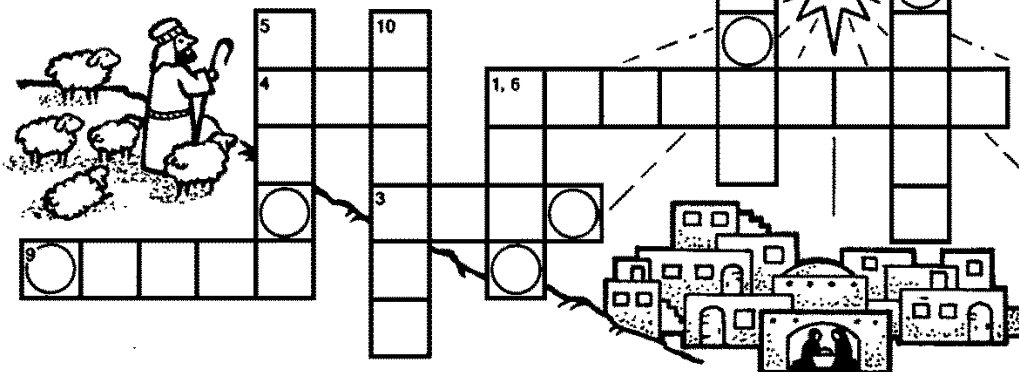
Who am I?

Choose a word from the list below to finish each line. Fit it into the correct squares in the puzzle. Unscramble the circled letters to find the answer to the question.

inn born kinds animal Joseph
star Mary angels knees Bethlehem

1. I made an important journey from Nazareth to _____.
2. I walked beside a kind man named _____.
3. I carried a young woman named _____.
4. I was patient when there was no room at the _____ and we had to keep looking for a place to stay.
5. I stood with many _____ of animals in a stable on that special night.
6. I watched as Jesus was _____!
7. I saw the bright _____ in the sky.
8. I heard the _____ singing.
9. I met the shepherds and their sheep as they got on their _____ by the baby in the manger.
10. I am a very gentle and strong _____.

Who am I? I am the _____!





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

888 County Rd. 9

Victor, NY 14564

The Reverend Jonathan Deibler, Pastor

(585) 924-5192

www.stjohnsvictor.com

Address Service Requested

December Newsletter

December 10 – Gingerbread House Competition

December 24 – 10:30 Christmas Play

7:00 Candlelight Holy Communion