

ST. JOHN'S MESSENGER

St. John's Episcopal Church • 325 Little Silver Point Road • Little Silver, NJ 07739

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Rector

Rev. Valerie T. Redpath

Deacon

Rev. Eve Chamberlain

Parish Administrator

Janice Lima

Treasurer

Lyle Connor

Music Ministers

Karen Feeny

James Scavone

Sexton

Orinzo Martinez

Vestry

Paul Chalifour

Sr. Warden

Hazel Kelly

Jr. Warden

John Davies

Kate Galbavy

Curt Goss

Paula Hayes

Eileen Kennedy

Chris Nalbandian

Tom Perez

Amy Thomas

Beverly Van Winkle

Reflections From the Rector

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I'll admit it: I love the Season of Advent. It is the Church's way of reminding us to slow down. It is a reminder that Christmas is not just about one day, December 25th. It is not about children, holiday shopping, and frazzled nerves. Advent is about preparing us for the experience of God coming into this world 2000 years ago—as well as into our lives each and every moment, of each and every day. So take advantage of this season to stop, look and listen.

God is coming, God has come, God—Emmanuel—is with us.

A poem by David A. Redding, from *If I Could Pray Again* (1965)

Adult Advent Announcement

O Lord,
 Let Advent begin again
 In us,
 Not merely in commercials;
 For that first Christmas was not
 Simply for children,
 But for the
 Wise and the strong.
 It was
 Crowded around that cradle,
 With kings kneeling.
 Speak to us
 Who seek an adult seat this year.
 Help us to realize,
 As we fill stockings,
 Christmas is mainly
 For the old folks —
 Bent backs
 And tired eyes
 Need relief and light
 A little more.
 No wonder
 It was grown-ups
 Who were the first
 To notice
 Such a star.

Take the time to slow down...breathe deeply...and ponder the wonder of God's gift to us all.

Blessings,

Val+



WE ARE THANKFUL

Our youngsters gave thanks by dashing a Thanksgiving chain they created into church.

Each link represents something for which one of the children is thankful.



Sunday School Update

Calling all Shepherds, Sheep, Angels, Camels, Donkeys, Wisemen, Singers, Readers, Instrument Players!

The children's pageant is during the 4:00 service on Christmas Eve. There will be two, 30 minute rehearsals on December 10 and December 17. We have parts for all children! It is an adorable service, and the children are always so proud to showcase their talents.

Please let us know if your children would like to participate.

Amy & Taryn



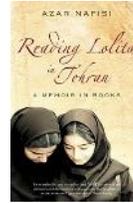
Christmas Memorial Flower Envelopes

Christmas Memorial Flower Envelopes are in the pews. Please return them in the offering plate or to the Parish Office by December 17 to ensure the inclusion of your memorials and thanksgivings in our Christmas Eve and Christmas bulletins.

Advent and Christmas Thanks-giving

It is an interesting coincidence that Advent follows on the American-made holiday of Thanksgiving and leads into Christmas. Advent is the church season of preparing ourselves inwardly to celebrate the birth and await the second coming of Jesus. Thanks-giving out of gratitude is an essential part of that inward preparation.

There is a tendency to experience Thanksgiving Day as the starting canon for celebrating Christmas, quickly leaving thanks-giving far behind. Thanksgiving Day is intended to cause us to pause and think about how blessed we are. What a tremendous shift it would make in our experience of Advent and Christmas if we opened our hearts to thanks-giving on Thanksgiving day and carried it through Christmas and the new year.



ST. JOHN'S BOOK CLUB
Wednesday, Dec. 13,
7 p.m.

Reading Lolita in Tehran

by Azar Nafsi

at Doris Clark's home.

This book is a memoir of the experience of the author who returned to Iran during the revolution (1978-1981) and lived and taught in the Islamic Republic of Iran until her departure in 1997.

Everyone is invited and encouraged to join. Just read the book and show up!



Mark Your Calendars—

great things are happening at St. John's!

DECEMBER

3 Jesse Tree Sunday

10 & 17 Pageant Rehearsals

24 Christmas Eve

25 Christmas Day

JANUARY

21 Annual Meeting

FEBRUARY

14 Ash Wednesday

18 1st Sunday of Lent

"We have learned to soar through the air like birds, to swim through the seas like fish, to soar through space like comets. Now it is high time we learned to walk the earth as the children [trustees] of our God." - William Sloan Coffin

Adult Forum continues

on Sunday mornings after the 10 a.m. Mass.

Grab some coffee and a snack, check in with friends, and then join us in the Library to go deeper into Sunday's Scripture readings or to explore whatever faith issue is on people's hearts.

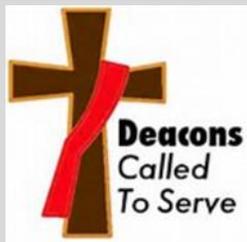


Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life:
Such a Way, as gives us breath:
Such a Truth, as ends all strife:
Such a Life as killeth death.

Come, my Light, my Feast, my Strength:
Such a Light, as shows a feast:
Such a Feast, as mends in length:
Such a Strength, as makes his guest.

Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart:
Such a Joy, as none can move:
Such a Love, as none can part:
Such a Heart, as joys in love.

--George Herbert (1593-1633)



From the Deacon's Desk

Greetings and Grace to all!

About four weeks ago I (and several parishioners) read an email letter from our Bishop and were stirred to respond. Bishop Stokes wrote about a book that he had read during the summer that brought back personal memories for him. The book, Evicted, is about the effects of poverty as revealed in the act of being evicted from one's home. Bishop Stokes wrote about his experience of being evicted from his family home when he was 18. He urged us to read this book during Advent.

Why during Advent? When visions of a baby in a manger, pretty lights and an abundance of joy fill the airways. Read this from the Bishop:

"Although set in Milwaukee, the accounts in Evicted might just as easily have occurred in Trenton, Plainfield, Camden, Elizabeth or any one of New Jersey's inner cities. In my travels, I often hear people say ignorant things about the poor. Frequently, such people have little understanding of what poverty is truly like or of how systemic structures in our society perpetuate oppression. Matthew Desmond's book Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City is a powerful book that invites readers to discover and better understand the machinations of the societal systems that feed poverty and perpetuate oppression.

Advent is approaching and with it our celebration of the birth of our Savior who was born in a stable. The false gospel of consumerist materialism, the hallmark of the so-called "Christmas shopping season," works to seduce us. It strikes me that Matthew Desmond's book Evicted has important things to say to us in the midst of all of this.

With this in mind, I am inviting the people of the Diocese of New Jersey to read together Matthew Desmond's book Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City from Thanksgiving through Advent. I encourage churches to engage in small group discussions and forums using the study guide provided by the publisher; to share in meaningful conversations about the many issues the book addresses, especially the issues of systemic racism and poverty which go hand in hand and impact us all."

Last week during Reflections at the Rectory we listened to and discussed words spoken by Fr. Greg Boyle, a Jesuit priest well known for his work in gang intervention. He spoke about how Jesus would stand on the margins, stand with those who live on the margins.

In thinking about this as our Advent discipline (to read Evicted) I was struck by these words of Fr. Boyle: "The measure of our compassion lies not in our service of those on the margins but in our willingness to see ourselves in kinship. And so that means the decided movement towards awe and giant steps away from judgement." Boyle says: "This is not work of helping but of finding kinship."

Jesus asks us to be present to those who are not the same as us. Sometimes that is particularly difficult – especially when we don't even understand the world that they inhabit. I don't expect this to be easy but I do expect that my heart will be changed.

I invite you to join me in reading the book and discussing it together Tuesday evenings at the Rectory.

Come, Lord Jesus

Eve

Reflections at the Rectory

Do you hear Jesus Speaking to you?

Tuesday's at 7pm

During Advent we will meet weekly to discuss Matthew Desmond's book,

[Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City.](#)

Books are available for purchase in the office at St John's. If you are not able to read the book please come and join the discussion anyway. If Tuesday evenings don't work for you and you would like to participate in a discussion group on Sunday mornings, please let me know.

Advent Blessings,

Eve



You do know what would have happened if it had been three wise WOMEN instead of men, don't you?

They would have asked for directions, arrived on time, helped deliver the baby, cleaned the stable, made a casserole and brought disposable diapers as gift.

Martin Luther in one of his Christmas sermons said there were three miracles that occurred in Christ's birth: God became human, a virgin conceived and Mary believed. For Luther, the greatest miracle was the third miracle, Mary believed.

— Faith J. Conklin, "The third miracle." Advent Sermon, Kresge Chapel, Claremont School of Theology Web Site, December 10, 2003. cst.edu.

Prayer Works



We invite you to pray for those in our parish family and our friends who need our prayers. Our prayer list in our bulletin is for you to take home and pray daily for those listed. The list is below. Please call our office to add anyone.

Mike Biehl, Joanne & Bill Bowman, Bruce & Lori Lynn, Andrew Cook, Mike & Laurie Ann Collins, Mitties, Karen Feeney, Karina George, Alison Hayes, Emily Hayes, Alvaro Jaramillo, Kym, Michael Lima, Maria Madden, Ann McClure, Marge Mistysyn, Pat Nelson, Rene O'Neil, Mike Redpath, Loren Rabon, Grace Scott, Louise Stives, Lois Symons, Ray & Elizabeth Taylor, Phyllis & Rich Tetley, Justin Tucker, Wes Tyson, Florence Wasek

Our prayer chain has been actively praying for individuals as the requests come in. If you are interested in being a pray-er, contact Hazel Kelly at hazelann0214@gmail.com. Praying is something that can be done at your convenience...no meetings involved! If you know of someone who needs prayer, let us know after getting their permission, and we will put that out on our confidential prayer chain.



Flower Guild Workshop — December 2

Flower Guild members will be participating in a workshop on December 2 at 9:30AM in the church at St. John's. Beverly Van Winkle will be demonstrating how to make the wreath that is used during church services for special occasions. If you have noticed the wreath that surrounds the Paschal Candle at Easter, that is an example of Beverly's work. Flower Guild members, don't miss this opportunity to develop a new skill and expand your opportunities to participate in this ministry.

Thank You Sickles

Flower Guild members were treated to a demonstration by Jenny DeStefano, floral designer at Sickles on Saturday morning, October 28. Refreshments were also provided. The workshop was well attended by six members of St. John's Flower Guild, Mother Val and Deacon Eve. Jenny showed us how to make three different arrangements in three different vases used at St. John's. We learned tricks to make our arrangements last longer and got new ideas on how to create arrangements. We appreciate the support Sickles Floral Department offers -- helping us select the flowers that will work for the occasion, obtain supplies, and get ideas to use in our flower ministry. Thank you, Sickles.

Episcopal Church Women - ECW

On Wednesday, December 6, noon, in the parish hall, all are welcome to enjoy ECW's Advent/Christmas celebration and delightful, delicious luncheon of chicken francaise with lemon sauce, eggplant rolletini with tomato sauce, broccoli and cavatelli pasta, salad n' dressing, bread n' butter, members' special holiday desserts, hot mulled apple cider, coffee, tea. Cost: \$15. Free: friendship and fun. In lieu of a gift exchange, we ask each member to bring 1 or 2 unwrapped toys to be donated to Jason's Dreams for Kids and 2 cans of nonperishable food for St. James's Pantry. Please RSVP to MaryAnn O'Connor or Linda Rizzo by Dec 3.

Mark your new 2018 calendars:

Wed., Jan. 3-No Meeting

Wed, Feb 7, noon- Outreach Ministry: Cards of Friendship and Gratitude

Wed, Feb 14, ASH WEDNESDAY, 9:30AM –Eucharist, ashes & light brunch for all attending the Mass
ECW thanks St. John's parishioners for their heartfelt support and generous donations of toiletries and knitwear to make 70 ditty bags and extra supplies for Seamen's Church Institute, donations of winter coats, warm winter clothes and "Suited for Success" business attire for Lunch Break of Red Bank, and winter coats, jackets and sweaters for Appalachia. Also our congregation's purchases of handmade Christmas and all-occasion cards and gift card holders support our on-going outreach projects. Your offerings are appreciated greatly!!

HOORAY!! The Nifty Knitters' nimble fingers created over 70 hats/scarves/cowls sets and 8 extra hats for Seamen's Church Institute and 20 knitted items, toys and teddy bears for Appalachia. Under the "watchful eye" of Ann Dupree, they celebrate 11 years of knitting progress and friendship. WOW!!

Every Member Canvass Update

We are grateful for the generous response we have received to the 2018 Every Member Canvass. A most sincere thank you to all the members who have pledged. To date, we have received 62 pledges for a total of \$181,143.

Because of your generous support, we can continue to meet our financial obligations and expand our ministries.



Year-End contributions must be received by December 25 for credit in the 2017 tax year. Statements will be mailed in December for your information. Questions? Contact the parish office. Help us end the year on a positive note through the fulfillment of your pledge!

Shifting the Focus

Focus is one of the challenges of Christmas. There is a tendency to have a weak focus on something that happened 2000 years ago, a bit of a focus on the sentimental memories and current activities of family and friends, and a strong focus on the overwhelming stridency of the marketplace.

The reality of God present in the world tends to quietly get lost behind those other, seemingly more immediate, focuses. Christmas is about Emmanuel, which translates "God is with us." God came to earth incarnate as Jesus. When Jesus departed, he left behind the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, who dwells within us every moment of our lives.

The noise and bustle of our contemporary Christmas tends to divert our attention anyplace but inward. Yet, overcoming the distraction and anchoring our Christmas activities in the reality of Emmanuel would enrich and give greater meaning to every aspect of the season.

Pause. Take a deep breath. Set aside time each day to anchor yourself in God's presence in you.



Advent Quiet Day *Inner Christmas*

Exploring inner connections with Christmas— images and meditations by Mike Redpath

Saturday, Dec. 2

9:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.

Saint John's Episcopal Church

325 Little Silver Point Road, Little Silver, NJ

PLEASE RSVP There is no charge, but we do need to plan for materials and refreshments stjohnslittlesilver@verizon.net

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What is at the center of your life?

Carefully examine where you spend your attention, your time.

Look at your appointment book, your daily schedule.

This is what receives your care and attention—and by attention, your love.

Wayne Muller

ST JOHN'S CHURCH
325 LITTLE SILVER POINT ROAD
LITTLE SILVER, NJ 07739

Christmas at St. John's

Sunday, December 24
10 a.m. Morning Prayer

Christmas Eve
December 24

4 p.m. Choral Eucharist with Children's Pageant
10 p.m. Vigil Mass

Christmas Day
December 25

10 a.m. Holy Eucharist with Hymns

