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Vestry

*Jackie Mabrey, Sr. Warden
Bill Archer, Jr. Warden

*Wesley Buerkle, Treasurer
Emily Bidgood
Brandon Guffey
Ed Jordan
Rebecca Paluzzi
Rita Plemmons
*Joe Ripepi

* The three members marked by asterisks are rotating off the Vestry at the end of December. Vestry election results will be available after December 1.



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE IN EAST TENNESSEE
WWW.DIOET.ORG

A message from the Rector

*Every eye shall now behold him. (The Hymnal 1982)
For God wishes to be seen, and he wishes to be sought, and he wishes to be expected.
(Julian of Norwich)*

In the darkness, every evening of the Advent season, my family and I light the Advent wreath that sits on our supper table, lighting one more candle each week. We sing a verse or more of the Advent chant and pray the collect for the week.

*Light one candle to watch for Messiah
Let the light banish darkness
He shall bring salvation to Israel
God fulfills His promise*

We often sing inexpertly and off-key, but in the darkness of winter evenings, punctuated by the light of the candles, we make a moment for holy hush and expectancy, for the birth of God in our world, in our midst, and in our very flesh. I feel blessed to be part of a people – the people of God – who hold a hope so luminous and large and near. Christ has come and is coming and will come again.

We begin a new liturgical year with the first Sunday of Advent. This year we are able to gather in person to celebrate the holy seasons of Advent and Christmas. Though at one time unremarkable, I do not now take this gift for granted: we are able to gather in the flesh to celebrate the arrival of the Word made flesh.

When you are ready, or as your health permits, I invite you to come, celebrate the holy seasons of Advent and Christmas in the flesh. Your appearance, your presence, your arrival, is also a piece of the celebration, and reason for rejoicing. With you the grace of God also attends and is present.

After months and months, almost two years, of caution and distance and separation, and still a need to take precautions, we are relearning the arts of gathering as a body and a people. Slowly, perhaps fitfully, maybe awkwardly, and with due caution, we will do so. This season of Advent, I live with holy hope and joyful expectation, that as Christ comes again and again, we will come together once again, in God's good time, in the fullness and glory of his body.

I am so grateful to celebrate my first year as your rector. As challenging as the year was, we had so much to celebrate at our annual parish meeting, and we have so much hope for what God may accomplish in us and through us in the new church year ahead. For God wishes to be seen, and wishes to be sought, and God wishes to be expected.

Peace to you and all the blessings of this Advent season.

Rev. Laura

500 N. Roan Street ❖ Johnson City, TN 37601 ❖ 423-926-8141

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An Episcopal Church in the Heart of Johnson City

A message from the Senior Warden

On more than one occasion this year, I have heard Bishop Brian refer to a new church plant. He refers to churches, like St. John's, that closed their doors for a period due to Covid-19. When we reopened for in-person worship and meetings, we had to figure out how to be together. Everything is new.

My favorite day of the year is New Year's Day. It's a fresh start, a clean slate, a reminder to look forward. So it is no surprise that Advent is my favorite season of our liturgical year. It is the season of preparation and expectation.

A new church plant, a fresh start, and a new beginning can be overwhelming, but these things can also be exciting and fun, with opportunities to listen and learn and create.

Below is an excerpt from a book of blessings by John O'Donohue entitled *To Bless the Space Between Us*. It speaks to me at a personal level, but I also hear it on a church-wide level. As we enter this new season together, let's intentionally pray for our new beginning at St. John's.

It has been a blessing in my life to serve on your vestry. Thank you!

Jackie Mabrey

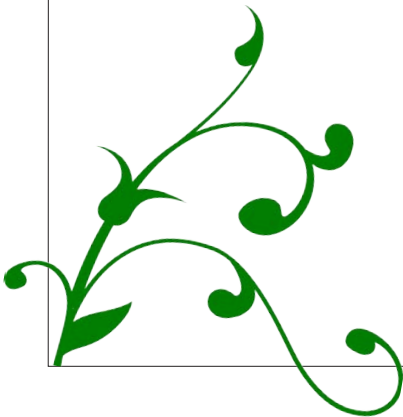
For a New Beginning

In out-of-the-way places of the heart,
Where your thoughts never think to wander,
This beginning has been quietly forming,
Waiting until you were ready to emerge.

...

Though your destination is not yet clear
You can trust the promise of this opening;
Unfurl yourself into the grace of beginning
That is at one with your life's desire.

Awaken your spirit to adventure;
Hold nothing back, learn to find ease in risk;
Soon you will be home in a new rhythm,
For your soul senses the world that awaits you.



Holy Baptism November 2021

Flora Adeline Osborne
Daughter of
Bradley and Amanda Osborne



No matter the language, our wish is the same: *Merry Christmas!*

สุขสันต์วันคริสต์มาส ¡Feliz Navidad! Ezi ekeresimesi! Frohe Weihnacht! Zelig kerstmis! Joyeux Noel!

It's December... Happy Birthday to you!

7 Bill Fryar	17 Tom McGinnis	22 Elizabeth Cloyd	28 Allison Benson
11 Jeff Lucas	17 Phyllis Ray	22 Margaret Howington	30 Nancy Nichols
14 Bill Archer	19 Louie Gump	24 Bert Bach	31 Crawford Lilavivat
15 Charles Byrne	21 Brandon Bass	25 Van Huyck	31 Madaline Morrissey
17 Brian Dunkelberger	21 Rhett Byrne	26 Beth Talley	31 Peter Pawlowicz



Here's a heads-up on January birthdays!

1 Charles Honeycutt	6 Owen Grosserode	15 Ken Johnson	22 Joe Wallen
1 Robin Maylott	8 Sandy Radford	16 Emily Nagy	23 Ree Hunter
1 Michael Morrissey	9 John Edwards	18 Tamar McCollum	26 Mark Merriman
1 Bonnie Pedersen	11 Wesley Buerkle	18 Lydia Sweatt	27 Rev. David Booher
2 Angie Green	11 Finn Lilavivat	18 Joel Tramel	27 Catherine Phillips
3 Joy McGinnis	11 Ed Lilly	19 Linda Lucas	28 Nancy Jane Earnest
3 Ann VanDreumel	11 Eddie Miller	19 Calvert Williams	31 Nita Summers
4 Pat Potter	12 Terri Walker	20 Laura Duncan	

Children's Education



St. Nick to visit St. John's - December 12

Get ready to welcome St. Nick, otherwise known as the Bishop of Myra. Last year he had to meet with us on Zoom, but this year he plans to visit in person! Join us after the 10:30 service on Sunday, December 12th, to chat with the bishop and enjoy a simple craft or game. All children of God, regardless of age, are welcome.

And who exactly is this St. Nick? History.com tells us, "Today, he is thought of mainly as the jolly man in red who brings toys to good girls and boys on Christmas Eve, but his story stretches all the way back to the 3rd century, when Saint Nicholas walked the earth and became the patron saint of children." *Learn more at www.history.com/topics/christmas/santa-claus*

Epiphany Pageant - January 9

The annual St. John's Epiphany pageant will be returning LIVE to the 10:30 service on January 9. We will present our traditional pageant, which was written by one of our own youth. Rehearsal will be held during the Sunday School hour on the 9th. There are no speaking parts and no experience is necessary. ALL children, youth, and the young at heart are encouraged to participate. Make plans to join us for the return of this much-loved tradition!

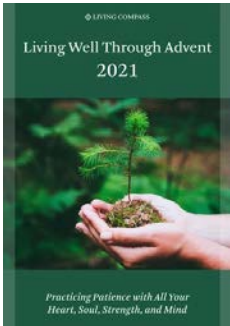


We ♥ our Nursery!

The nursery's a bustling place these days during the 10:30 service on Sunday. If you have a heart for these littlest ones among us, here's an opportunity to help – as a backup volunteer nursery attendant to fill in when our regular nursery staff are sick or have a family emergency. The nursery serves children newborn through four years of age, and the busiest time is from 9:15-11:30 am. Minimum age is 16, and anyone working with children must have taken the "Safeguarding God's Children" training.

If you'd like to learn more about how you can help, please see Hannah Holder in the Nursery or contact Emily Bidgood. (ph 919-636-8112 or email epbidgood@gmail.com)

Adult Faith Formation



Advent program – Several ways to participate!

We will be reading and discussing the Living Compass Advent Booklet, *Practicing Patience with all of your Heart, Soul, Mind, and Strength*. This is a beautiful way to embrace the Advent season, for parishioners teenage through adult. Everyone is welcome to join in however and whenever you can.

There is no fee, and no need to sign up in advance. You can pick up a hard copy of the booklet at the church, or you can obtain the booklet in the form of a PDF either through the church office or by visiting the Living Compass website (see below).

❖ Sunday mornings in-person at St. John's

ADULT FAITH FORMATION (Yes, it's back after a long hiatus!)

4 weeks beginning Nov 28. 9:15–10:15 am (between services)

❖ Thursday evenings via Zoom

CONVERSATIONS & COMPLINE

4 weeks beginning Dec 2. 6–7:15 pm

The first hour is “Conversations” followed by 15 minutes of Compline / Evening Prayer. A link to the Zoom meeting is published in *This Week at St. John's*. (If you are not receiving those weekly emails, please call the church office at 423-926-8141 or send a request by email to office@stjohnstn.org)

- ❖ **Other options:** While everyone is encouraged to participate in these programs alongside our fellow parishioners at St. John's, it's understood that everybody's schedule doesn't always allow for that. Good news: you can receive each day's readings via email directly from Living Compass, and they also offer additional ways to follow the program. Visit www.livingcompass.org/living-well-through-advent-2021

Centering Prayer Tuesday evenings, 6 - 7:00 pm via Zoom



All are welcome to join in. There is no need to register in advance. A link to each week's Zoom meeting is included in *This Week at St. John's*.

If you'd like to know more about Centering Prayer and/or this group at St. John's, please contact Frances Jackson. (phone 423-946-3345 or email jxn621@gmail.com) Many resources are also available at www.contemplativeoutreach.org.

Education for Ministry (EfM)

EfM is a four-year course offered by the School of Theology at Sewanee. But don't be intimidated by the name; it is not a path to ordination, nor is it an academic study in a vacuum. Rather, EfM equips us to explore the intersection of theology and daily living, helping each of us to discern the call to ministry throughout our daily lives. “In coming to terms with the notion that everything we do has potential for manifesting the love of Christ, we discover that our ministry is at hand wherever we turn.” (courtesy: efm.sewanee.org)

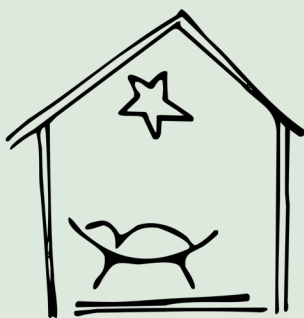
At St. John's we meet in a small group of six to twelve adults. If you are interested or even the slightest bit curious about EfM, please contact Lee Phillips. (phone 423-676-7902 or email lee@wordmatters.com)

St John's Men's Group

The next get-together is December 14, 6 pm at Bella Vita. No need to sign up in advance, just show up!

Questions? Contact Jon Lau (jlau2jctn@aol.com, ph 423-943-3076) or David Kalwinsky (kalwinds@etsu.edu)

Visit www.stjohnstn.org/publications/ to view this and prior Journals online.



Almighty God, you have given your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and to be born of a pure virgin: Grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with you and the same Spirit be honor and glory, now and for ever.

Amen.

Lessons & Carols

On Sunday, December 19 at 5 pm (prelude 4:45 pm), we will hold our annual Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, a tradition dating back to England in 1880. Readers of the lessons will include leaders in our local community and parish. A reception will follow the service in the narthex. The offering at the service will go toward supporting St. John's "Friends of Music."



Here's a little "Fun Fact to know"...

Surprisingly, it wasn't until the late-1800s that Christmas carols were regarded as appropriate for singing at church. Instead, it was a common practice for choirs to visit parishioners' homes to sing Christmas carols ... but as part of an actual church service? No way.

Turn the page to the year 1875, a particularly pivotal moment in time. Composers were composing more carols, and several "influential" books were being published in favor of incorporating carols into church services.

A breakthrough occurred when carols were included in the service of Choral Evensong at St Paul's Cathedral in London in 1878. Just two years later, on Christmas Eve of 1880, the Right Rev. Edward White Benson, at the time Bishop of Truro (and later Archbishop of Canterbury), conducted the first formal service of "Nine Lessons and Carols."

You can learn more at
www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nine_Lessons_and_Carols

Decorating the Church for Christmas - December 19 - All hands on deck!

Many people wonder why we don't decorate our church until right before Christmas. It's not that Episcopalians are Scrooges; instead it's part of our Episcopal tradition. Advent is a time of waiting and preparation. So we stay in that spirit through the four week season of Advent, and then we go all out just in time for Christmas.



This year, we'll be "decking the halls" with poinsettias and evergreens immediately following the 10:30 am service on December 19. It's a big job, but it's fun and comes together pretty quickly with enough volunteers on hand! So please consider sticking around after the service to assist.

Christmas Flower Fund

The mass of poinsettias that adorn the altar and nave are made possible by donations. If you would like to contribute in honor of, or in memory of, loved ones, please do so no later than Sunday December 19. "Christmas Flowers" envelopes are available in the narthex for your convenience, or you can contact the church office. (423-926-8141 or email office@stjohnstn.org)

“Hotel Amenities and More”



Thank you to all who have participated by donating items, assisting with deliveries, and praying for this ministry. As cold weather sets in, let's remember to be mindful of the needs of the less fortunate in our community. Look for notice of most-needed supplies in *This Week at St John's* and the worship service bulletins.

The next drop-off will be Saturday Dec 18, noon-1:15 pm at the church. For more information, please contact Rebecca Paluzzi. (email paluzzir@etsu.edu)

Newcomers Luncheon October 2021



Rare photo of Photographer discovered!

This is a rare photo because Ellen Wallen is usually the one taking pictures, not starring in them. Indeed, Ellen's photos account for about 99.99% of photos of St. John's activities that you've seen over the years. Thank you Ellen, for the gift of your time, effort, energy, and talent.

Tips for staying connected

This Week at St. John's. Are you receiving the weekly email newsletter from St. John's? If not, please call or email the church office and Nick will get you signed up to receive it directly to your email inbox.

Would you like assistance with Zoom, Facebook live, and/or online meetings? If you would like to become more comfortable with these technology platforms, please do not hesitate to ask for assistance. Just call or email the church office, and we'll be happy to help. Please note that the church office will be closed Dec 24 and Dec 31.

Report from the Annual Parish Meeting



The annual parish meeting was held on November 14 following a 10 am worship service. Rev. Laura's "report" was an energetic one: She named several ways in which we participate and contribute to the life of the church and asked us to stand – and remain standing – if we had ever done any of those things, and furthermore, to add "gestures" as each successive item was named.

By the end of her list, everyone in the church was standing, waving arms, clapping, and more. Rev. Laura expressed gratitude for our vibrant church family, staff, volunteers, and all who continue to support St. John's by their presence and with time, talent, and resources.

Vestry nominees were introduced, as voting began Nov 14. Several individuals gave year-end reports. (More of that in a future Journal. For now, here are a few photo highlights.)



YTD Financial Report

	Oct 2020 Actual YTD	Oct 2021 Actual YTD	Oct 2021 Budget YTD	YTD Actual 2021 vs 2020	Variance YTD Actual vs Budget
Plate Offerings	\$ 1,582	\$ 2,044	\$ 7,550	\$ 463	\$ (5,506)
Pledge Payments	230,801	224,438	212,500	(6,363)	11,938
Prior Pledges	286	1,885	400	1,599	1,485
Contributions	37,486	52,890	22,000	15,404	30,890
Misc. Income	442	326	792	(116)	(466)
Prepaid Pledges	10,272	41,070	8,300	30,798	32,770
Total Income	280,868	322,653	251,542	41,785	71,111
Total Expense	256,866	273,837	299,502	16,971	(25,665)
Net Income	\$ 24,002	\$ 48,816	\$ (47,960)	\$ 24,814	\$ 96,777

There are a lot of numbers here, but the one that means the most is at the bottom of the second column. (Oct 2021 Actual YTD) The difference between actual income and actual expenses through October was \$48,816.

It's important to keep in mind that while we received a larger amount of income than

anticipated through October, most of that is due to \$41,070 in "prepaid pledges," which refers to funds received ahead of schedule, for example, as part of a household's financial planning for the next year. This amount varies from year to year, so as the budget is developed, it does not rely on the results from just one year. Your Finance Committee analyzes several years of historical data while making projections for the coming year.

Thank you all for your steadfast support. We are heartened by the loyalty and generosity of our parishioners this year and for the year to come.



Christmas Worship & Special Events

Sunday Dec 12	11:30 am	St. Nick is visiting! <i>(See page 3)</i>
Sunday Dec 19	11:30 am	Hanging of the Greens
	5:00 pm	Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols <i>Nave and Facebook Live</i> <i>Nursery available</i> Reception following the service
Friday Dec 24		Christmas Eve Feast of the Nativity – Candlelight Services
	4:00 pm	Holy Eucharist Rite II <i>Nursery available</i>
	10:30 pm	Christmas music
	11:00 pm	Holy Eucharist Rite II <i>Nave and Facebook Live</i>
Saturday, Dec 25		Christmas Day
	10:00 am	Holy Eucharist Rite II
Sunday, Dec 26	10:00 am	Holy Eucharist Rite II
Sunday, Jan 2		Resume regular worship schedule

December Meetings & Events

- Tuesday Dec 14..... Men’s Group meeting, Bella Vita, 6 pm
- Saturday Dec 18..... Hotel Amenities Drop-off, noon-1:15 pm
- Sunday Dec 19 Church decorating, 11:30 am *(See page 5)*
- Tuesday Dec 21..... Vestry meeting, 7 pm

Recurring Weekly

- Tuesdays Centering Prayer, 6 pm
- Wednesdays Choir Rehearsal, 7 pm
- Thursdays Conversations & Compline, 6 pm
- Sundays EfM, 5 pm
- Handbell Choir Rehearsal, 11:45 am

Regular Worship Schedule

- Tuesdays 5:30 pm, Evening Prayer/Healing Service
- Thursday 10 am, Morning Prayer
- Sundays 8 am, Holy Eucharist Rite I
- 10:30 am, Holy Eucharist Rite II
Nave & Facebook Live
- 9:15 am | Adult Faith Formation
| Children’s Sunday School
| Youth Sunday School

❖ *Nursery is available on Sundays, 8-11:30 am*

Return Service Requested

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