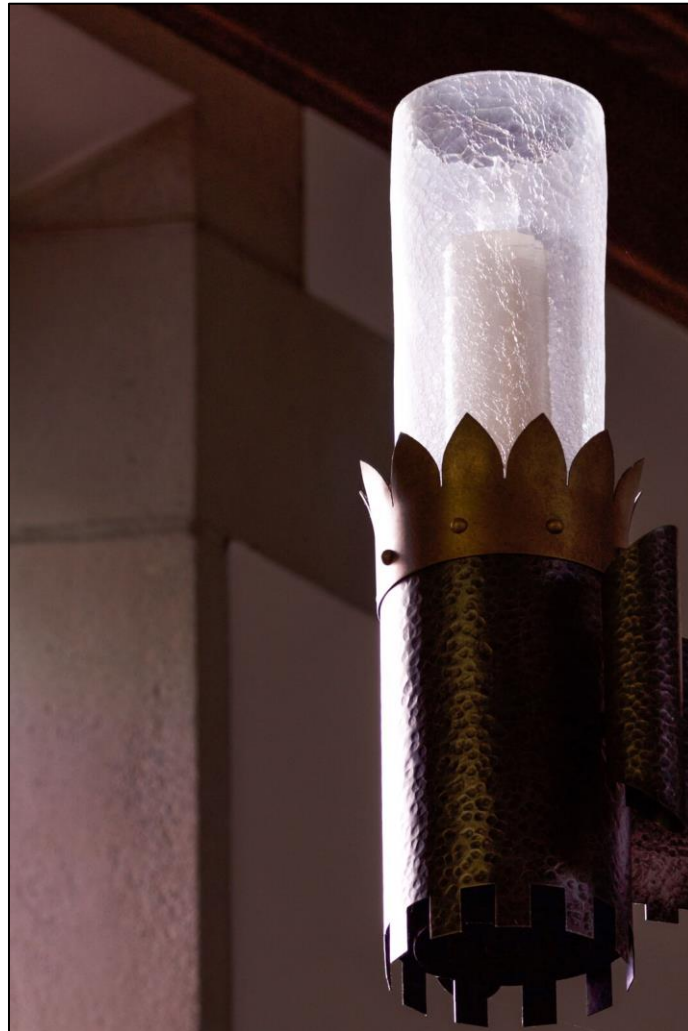


St. John's Episcopal Church

A place to discover connections with God and one another

www.sjparish.net



The Second Sunday of Advent

HOLY EUCHARIST RITE II

December 4, 2016

10:30 a.m.

An Advent Message from the Rector

This is the season of Advent, a time of paradox. Advent is both beginnings and endings as we prepare to encounter the Mystery of God in our very midst. We are invited to enter into a time of quiet contemplation as we anticipate God breaking into human history in the shape of a tiny, fragile infant we will welcome as the Christ Child. At the same time we wait for the day of the Lord's coming. In this in-between time, we wait with hope in the darkness of winter for the light of Christ to come into the world. Advent is the beginning of a new church year, with the focus on a particular gospel in our Sunday lectionary readings. This year, we will read from Matthew's gospel. These four weeks of Advent are an opportunity to listen to that still small voice within, beckoning each one of us to stop and set some time apart from our busy holiday preparations to simply be with God. Time spent with the Holy One is to experience the greatest gift of all: God's extravagant outpouring of love and mercy made manifest on Christmas morning. There is no greater gift.

If you are with us for the first time, please make yourself comfortable, and stay for coffee following the service. We look forward to meeting you. If you would like to learn more about the church, please fill out a card (hanging in each pew), put it in the offering plate or hand it to an usher or member of the clergy, and we will be in touch. It is our custom to be silent before the service, so as you take some time to pray, please turn off all electronic devices. All you should need to participate in the service is found, here, in this bulletin and in the blue hymnal in the pew rack. Hearing assist devices are available as is nursery care. Please ask the ushers for assistance with these or with any other request. Again, welcome. (The photo on the front of the bulletin is by parishioner Ginny Kemp.
© Virginia Kemp 2016)

ORDER OF SERVICE

THE ORGAN VOLUNTARY Two settings of *Es ist ein 'Ros* Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)
Emma Lou Diemer (b. 1927)

THE PROCESSIONAL HYMN 56 (st. 1,2,6,7,8) O come, O come, Emmanuel VENI, VENI EMMANUEL
All stand and sing.

The origins of "O come, O come, Emmanuel" date to medieval times. In the 800s, a series of Latin hymns were sung, called the "O" Antiphons. Over time, these were restructured, and the first draft of the beloved hymn we know came from Anglican priest John Mason Neale, in 1851. Born to a family of clergy, Neale wanted to become a parish minister, but his poor health prevented this. He instead became the director of Sackville College, a home for elderly men. This proved to be a good match, as Neale was compassionate with a great heart for the needy. A traditionalist, he was outspoken against the change that other hymn writers like Isaac Watts stood for, but today we find Neale and Watts side-by-side in our hymnals. We owe Neale our gratitude for this great hymn, as well as "Good King Wenceslas," "Good Christian Men, Rejoice," and "All Glory, Laud, and Honor."

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Kate and Robert Eikel and family

Reader #1 We light this candle as a symbol of the purity of heart only God can bring.

Reader #2 For he shall purify his people like gold and silver, until they shine forth his righteousness.

All **Come, Lord Jesus, come!**

THE COLLECT FOR PURITY

Celebrant Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People **And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

Celebrant Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord.

People **Amen.**

KYRIE ELEISON

Cantor, then all: Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Chri - ste e - le - i - son.

Cantor, then all: Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.

Music: Litany of the Saints, adapted by Richard Proulx, ©1991, GIA Publications, Inc.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray. Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

People **Amen.**

THE WORD OF GOD

THE FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 11:1-10

All sit.

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,

and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.

The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.

On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

THE PSALTER

Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

*The people say the responses in **bold** and sing the Antiphon as indicated.*

By God's gift shall justice and peace flourish

- 1 Give the King your justice, O God, *
and your righteousness to the King's Son;
- 2 That he may rule your people righteously *
and the poor with justice;
- 3 That the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, *
and the little hills bring righteousness.
- 4 He shall defend the needy among the people; *
he shall rescue the poor and crush the oppressor.
- 5 He shall live as long as the sun and moon endure, *
from one generation to another. *Antiphon*
- 6 He shall come down like rain upon the mown field, *
like showers that water the earth.
- 7 In his time shall the righteous flourish; *
there shall be abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

- 18 Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, *
who alone does wondrous deeds!
- 19 And blessed be his glorious Name for ever! *
and may all the earth be filled with his glory.
Amen. Amen.

Antiphon

THE EPISTLE

Romans 15:4-13

Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, "Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles, and sing praises to your name"; and again he says, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people"; and again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him"; and again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope." May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

THE SEQUENCE HYMN 597 O day of peace that dimly shines

JERUSALEM

All stand and sing.

THE GOSPEL

Matthew 3:1-12

Minister The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Matthew.

All **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. "I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Minister The Gospel of the Lord.
 All **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

THE SERMON

The Rev. Hope Eakins

The children are invited forward for a brief message by the preacher before the sermon. They will then be led to the education wing for the Word Alive program and will return at the Peace.

THE NICENE CREED

All stand.

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

A period of silence is kept.

Sisters and brothers in Christ, for the sake of the world that God so loves, let us pray.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

All **We pray for peace in every nation—
 that hatred and ill will in the hearts of all people
 will be burned away in your refining fire,
 leaving only love.**

Pray for the peace of the church.

All **We pray for peace in Christ's body—
 put an end to fear and fighting,
 that we may proclaim your good news
 and be awake in your presence.**

Pray for the peace of this community.

All **We pray for peace in this place—
 for safety in our homes and streets,
 for the prosperity of our neighbors,
 and for the health of family and friends.**

Celebrant God of the future,
make us ready for the coming of your reign,
when you will bring everlasting peace
and renew the face of the earth;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE CONFESSION OF SIN

Celebrant Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

All remain standing or kneel.

All **Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

Celebrant Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All **And also with you.**

We greet one another in the name of Christ.

THE WELCOME

THE HOLY COMMUNION

THE OFFERTORY Jesus Christ the apple tree

Elizabeth Poston (1905-1987)

Words from *Divine Hymns of Spiritual Songs*, compiled Joshua Smith, 1784

The tree of life my soul hath seen
Laden with fruit and always green
The tree of life my soul hath seen
Laden with fruit and always green
The trees of nature fruitless be
Compared with Christ the apple tree

His beauty doth all things excel
By faith I know but ne'er can tell
His beauty doth all things excel
By faith I know but ne'er can tell
The glory which I now can see
In Jesus Christ the apple tree.

For happiness I long have sought
And pleasure dearly I have bought
For happiness I long have sought

And pleasure dearly I have bought
 I missed of all but now I see
 'Tis found in Christ the apple tree.

I'm weary with my former toil
 Here I will sit and rest a while
 I'm weary with my former toil
 Here I will sit and rest a while
 Under the shadow I will be
 Of Jesus Christ the apple tree.

This fruit does make my soul to thrive
 It keeps my dying faith alive
 This fruit does make my soul to thrive
 It keeps my dying faith alive
 Which makes my soul in haste to be
 With Jesus Christ the apple tree.

THE PRESENTATION HYMN

OLD 100TH

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
 Praise him, all creatures here below;
 Praise him above, ye heavenly host:
 Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

The Celebrant continues.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

THE SANCTUS

Cantor, then all:

Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and God of might.

Cantor:

Heav - en and earth are full of your glo -

ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est,

ho - san - na in the high - est.

All:

Ho - san - na in the high - est,

ho - san - na in the high - est.

Cantor:

Bless - ed is he who comes in the name

of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the

high - est, ho - san - na in the

high - est. *All:* Ho - san - na in the high -

est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Music: Missa Emmanuel, Richard Proulx, ©1991, GIA Publications, Inc.

All remain standing or kneel.

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The Celebrant continues.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Celebrant And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

All **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.**

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.

Cantor

1. Je - sus, wis - dom and might - y Lord:
 2. Je - sus, true branch of Jes - se's tree: you take a - way the sins of the world,
 3. De - sire of na - tions, our Em - man - u - el:

1.2. *All* have mer - cy on us, have mer - cy on us. 3. *All* grant us peace, grant us peace.

Music: Missa Emmanuel, Richard Proulx, ©1991, GIA Publications, Inc..

THE INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Celebrant The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

Gluten-free wafers are available; please ask the clergy at the communion rail.

If you would like a blessing instead of Communion, please cross your arms over your chest.

To request healing prayers, proceed to the baptismal font in the back of the nave immediately after receiving communion.

THE COMMUNION ANTHEM Lo, how a rose e'er blooming Michael Praetorius (1571-1621),
Hugo Distler (1908-1942)
Text: Hymn 81

THE POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

All stand or kneel.

Celebrant Let us pray.

All **Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

THE BLESSING

The Celebrant gives the blessing and the people respond, Amen.

THE HYMN IN PROCESSION 616 Hail to the Lord's anointed ES FLOG KLEINS WALDVÖGELEIN
All stand and sing.

THE DISMISSAL

The minister dismisses the people and they respond, Thanks be to God.

THE VOLUNTARY Fantasy on *Veni, veni Emmanuel* Wilbur Held (1914-2015)
The closing voluntary is a part of worship, extending the beauty of holiness so that the congregation can remember and give thanks for God's Word as it has been experienced this day. All are invited to say Amen at the end of the Voluntary as a conclusion to our worship.

**Vestry members are on hand today to welcome you to St. John's.
This morning's greeter is Buffy Ineson, Warden.**

The Bible texts of the Old Testament, Epistle and Gospel lessons are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Church of Christ in the USA, and used by permission..

Hymns used by permission of OneLicense, No. A-724992.

All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Psalm Antiphon from A HymnTune Psalter, Revised Common Lectionary Edition ©2007 Carl P. Daw, Jr., and Kevin R. Hackett.

All rights reserved. Used by permission

Prayers of the people from Feasting on the Word, edited by David L. Bartlett, Barbara Brown Taylor, and Kimberly Bracken Long, ©2014 Westminster John Knox Press.

THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE LITURGY

Celebrant: The Reverend Susan Pinkerton

Preacher: The Reverend Hope Eakins

Deacon: The Reverend Walter McKenney

Layreader: Mike Corey

Cantor: Daaé Ransom

Acolytes: Gus Murchie, Eddie Genece, Ethen Worrell, Caleb Worrell

Ushers: John Amamoo (*Team Leader*), Shirley Blean, Bette-Jean Hardersen, Sarah Kieffer, Philip Chapman

Healing Prayers: Cindy Lawler and Marie Montas

Altar Guild: Paul Shaker and Karen Stook

At Hughes Convalescent Home:

Layreader: Wes Winterbottom

Musician: Steve Metcalf

All are welcome to coffee hour immediately after the service. Thank you to the Brooks family for hosting today. We are looking for people to sign up to host coffee hour in the new year. Please sign up for your preferred date on the sign-up sheet in Hubbard Hall.

In your prayers this week, please pray for:

Peace in our world, for those serving our country in armed services, and for all victims of war and violence.

The parish of Santa Cruz del Norte, our companion parish in Cuba, and Saint Sauveur, Les Cayes, Haiti.

Séinaire de Théologie d'Église Épiscopale d'Haïti (STEEH), the Episcopal Seminary in Haiti.

Residents of the Caleb Hitchcock Center at Duncaster; the George Beach Apartments, Allen Place, Hartford; and the Hughes Convalescent Home.

Our postulants, Stacey Kohl and Michael Corey, and our missionary in Haiti, Dr. Lucinda Mosher.

All those whose hurts, burdens and fears are unspoken or unknown.

Those in need of healing:

Jim Evans	Janet Ray	Paul Dewey	Kathy	Chas
Kim Green	Jim Tracy	Charlie	Jay	Nancy
Carol Grieco	Andrew Lee	Susan		

Those who are celebrating birthdays this week:

Lissie Brooks	Ann Hutchinson	Lyn Walker	Nancy Walker
Lawrence Uricchio	Virginia Van Dyk	Ellen O'Brien	
Bobby Biondi	Marshall Barnes	Edward Nelson	

Those celebrating anniversaries this week:

Albert and Barbara Lennox

The Anglican Cycle of Prayer:

Pray for the Diocese of Karnataka North (South India) and the Rt Rev. Ravikumar J. Niranjan.

In our Diocesan Cycle of Prayer:

Pray for Christ Church, Bethany; St. Thomas', Bethel; Christ Church, Bethlehem; Old St. Andrew's, Bloomfield, and for the children of the world, the Bishops' Fund for Children, and for all ECCT ministries for children at risk.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR.

We are offering a **midweek Eucharist at 12:10 p.m. on Wednesdays in Advent**, with Bible study to follow. Bring a bag lunch if you wish; coffee will be provided. Please contact the Rev. Helen M. Moore at helen@sjparish.net if you plan to come.

The Women's Fellowship Group will meet on Tuesday, December 6 at 7 p.m. All women at St. John's are invited to carve out time to prepare for Christmas in fellowship with friends.

A Candlelight Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols will be held on Sunday, December 11 at 3:00 p.m. Join us for this beautiful liturgy featuring scripture read by parishioners and music from the St. John's Choirs. A reception will follow.

An art show featuring the work of Lisa Bell will be in Hubbard Hall through the month of December. Lisa Bell expresses her artistic skills and love of early and medieval Christian art by combining lush, visceral fields of color with illuminated manuscripts and texts taken from liturgy, music, and Scripture. An opening reception, to which all are welcome, will be held on **Friday, December 9, at 7:30 p.m.** and we will get to enjoy this beautiful work throughout the Christmas season. Preview her art at her web site: www.Lisa-Bell.com.

Men's Bible study is held every Thursday at 6:30 a.m. in the Reception Room. Join us!



Candlelight Festival of Lessons & Carols

In the style of King's College, Cambridge, enjoy this spiritual respite from busy December.

St. John's Choir
Scott Lamlein, choirmaster & organist

Sunday, December 11, 3:00 p.m.

Free Admission, Suggested Donation \$20

Reception and Art Show to follow featuring works by local artist **Lisa Bell**, whose art is inspired by liturgy, music, and scripture.

St. John's Episcopal Church
679 Farmington Avenue (near Prospect)
West Hartford, CT 06119
www.theRedDoor.org

Music at the Red Door

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY, GIVING AND CONNECTION

The Nominating Committee is preparing a slate of names for a new class of Vestry members to serve from February 2017 through January 2020. The Vestry meets monthly and takes on a variety of other responsibilities to provide oversight and guidance to the parish and the rector. Vestry and officer elections will take place at the Annual Meeting on January 29, 2017. If you would like to learn more about what it means to serve on the Vestry, be considered for an open position, or recommend another parishioner for the Vestry, please talk to a member of the Nominating Committee (David Beers, Eleanor Barnes, Lynn Brooks, and Marki Ware) or the rector.

Donate items for Blessing Bags! St. John's puts together "blessing bags" for people staying in shelters or otherwise in need during cold weather. We need warm socks, gloves, and hats for both men and women; hand warmers; non-perishable snacks (such as granola bars); and gift cards to Subway, Dunkin Donuts or McDonald's in small denominations only (\$5 to \$10). Items will be collected throughout the Christmas season. See the poster in Hubbard Hall with cards that you can take to remind you to pick up a particular item.

Help us stock the bird feeders in the Cloister Garden this winter. We're looking for quality bird seed, such as black oil sunflower seeds or Nyger seed (commonly called "thistle"), which help attract the greatest variety of songbirds. Seed can be dropped off inside the parish office entrance any time.

Making Room for Advent

When the stores have been advertising Christmas sales for weeks, and the parish is ramping up for the annual Christmas Festival, it can be hard to observe Advent as a time of quiet, contemplation, and preparation. Here are some ways to make an Advent practice part of your holiday preparations:

- ❖ Attend a midweek Eucharist at St. John's at 12:10 p.m. on Wednesdays (12/7, 12/14, 12/21).
- ❖ Subscribe to an online source of daily inspiration, prayers, or Bible studies. Try the Society of St. John the Evangelist, which offers a daily "Advent word," or the Archbishop of Canterbury's free online Advent course on "How to Read the Bible Better."
- ❖ Pick up an Advent devotional in Hubbard Hall today. We have a variety available that offer daily or weekly Advent readings. (Suggested donation: \$2)
- ❖ Light an Advent wreath each night at dinner, or just on Sundays. If you don't have a wreath, we have supplies for making one. (Suggested donation: \$5)
- ❖ Start a simple prayer practice. The Book of Common Prayer defines praying as "responding to God, by thoughts or by deeds, with or without words." PrayFirstCT (www.prayfirstct.org) offers many resources and ideas, including this simple "breathing prayer": Choose a short phrase to repeat to yourself as you breathe in and out. You can use simple phrases such as "Lord, increase my faith," "O God, make haste to help me," "Holy Spirit, pray in me," "Light of the world,": or the classic Jesus prayer, "Lord Jesus Christ, son of God, have mercy on me." You can pick a favorite phrase from the Bible, or follow writer Anne Lamott's advice to try one of the two most essential prayers: "Help" or "Thanks." Slow your breathing as you repeat the phrase silently, matching the phrase to the rhythm of your breath.
- ❖ Attend our Candlelight Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols on December 11.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER!

- ❖ Advent Midweek Eucharist and Bible Study – Wednesdays at 12:10 p.m., starting November 30
- ❖ Women's Fellowship Group – December 6 at 7:00 p.m.
- ❖ Art Show Opening – December 9, 7:30 p.m.
- ❖ Christmas Pageant Rehearsal – December 11, 9:30 a.m.
- ❖ Candlelight Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols – December 11, 3:00 p.m.
- ❖ Christmas Pageant Rehearsal – December 17, 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon, with pizza lunch provided
- ❖ Christmas Pageant – December 18, 10:30 a.m.
- ❖ Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist – December 24 at 4:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. (10:30 p.m. choral prelude)
- ❖ Christmas Day Holy Eucharist – December 25 at 10:00 a.m.

The parish office will be CLOSED on Friday, December 23 and on Monday and Tuesday, December 26 and 27.

DID YOU KNOW?***Focus on Pastoral Counseling and Spiritual Direction***

(This is a repeat "Did you know?", as we've had a lot of interest in this new ministry at St. John's!)

One of St. John's newest ministries comes courtesy of the Rev. Helen M. Moore, who joined the staff as director of pastoral and spiritual ministries a few months ago. Thanks to Helen and a grant from the Long Foundation, we are now offering pastoral counseling and spiritual direction free of charge here at St. John's.

What do we mean by "pastoral counseling" and "spiritual direction"? How are they different from each other and from other modes of counseling and therapy?

The purpose of **pastoral counseling** is to empower someone to penetrate beneath the surface of his or her life, move beyond the façade of conventional gestures and attitudes that one presents to the world, and bring out his or her inner freedom and inmost truth—what we might call the image of God abiding in one's deepest aspects. The counselor helps people identify ways in which they have sought satisfaction and fulfillment from sources that haven't worked, and have perhaps pushed God aside. Pastoral counseling enables another in the journey toward wholeness as experienced in work, family, partnership—in short, in one's relationship with God, self, and others.

Spiritual direction (also called spiritual companionship) is an ancient faith discipline in which a director or "soul friend" guides another in a growing, intimate relationship with God. Using discernment, the director can help others notice, see, and understand where God is at work and present in their lives. Spiritual direction explores a deeper relationship with the spiritual dimension of being human, paying attention to God's personal communication to someone through their life experience, dreams, prayer, journaling and Holy Scripture. Spiritual direction is a pilgrimage, a journey with God and toward God that fosters transcendent experiences that exist beyond and above language yet long to be articulated and made concrete in everyday living. It is a contemplative practice that awakens one to the mystery of God and helps one grow in discovery of freedom and commitment.

Get in touch with Helen by phone at 860-331-1127 or at helen@sjparish.net to discuss whether one of these disciplines might be a good fit for you, wherever you are in your life and your journey of faith.

St. John's Episcopal Church

A place to discover connections with God and one another

www.sjparish.net

679 Farmington Avenue, West Hartford, Connecticut 06119

860 523 5201 office@sjparish.net



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. each Sunday morning

5:00 p.m. Evensong on selected last Sundays of the month

5:30 p.m. Evening Prayer each Monday, Wednesday and Friday

Christian Education at 9:30 a.m. September – May

STAFF

The Rev. Susan Pinkerton (susan@sjparish.net).....	Rector
Scott Lamlein (scott@sjparish.net).....	Director of Music
The Rev. Walter McKenney* (walter@sjparish.net).....	Deacon
The Rev. Hope Eakins* (hope@sjparish.net).....	Priest Associate
The Rev. William Eakins* (bill@sjparish.net).....	Priest Associate
The Rev. Helen M. Moore* (helen@sjparish.net).....	Director of Pastoral and Spiritual Ministries
Janet Babbitt (janet@sjparish.net).....	Director of Religious Education
Mirella Russo (mirella@sjparish.net).....	Financial Administrator
Ellen Painter Dollar (ellen@sjparish.net).....	Parish Manager and Assistant to the Rector
Dwight Latif (dwight@sjparish.net).....	Sexton
Mary Scripko (mary@sjparish.net).....	Religious Education Assistant
Ralph Valentine.....	Organist and Choirmaster Emeritus

**These positions are non-stipendiary. These clergy give generously of their time and expertise to support St. John's mission and ministries.*

VESTRY

Jeff Verney.....	Warden
Buffy Ineson.....	Warden
Beth Grieco and Chris Byrd.....	Co-Treasurers
Ellen Painter Dollar.....	Clerk

2014-16: Eleanor Barnes, Lynn Brooks, David Beers, Marki Ware

2015-17: Courtney Bass, Jan Hickcox, Heather Simon, Wes Winterbottom

2016-18: Mike Corey, Tim Goetz, Ginny Kemp, Will Smith

SAINT PAUL'S DEAF CONGREGATION

Sundays, 10:30 a.m., in the church

Lay leaders: Victoria Crosta – text: 860-478-6524; Melissa Render – text: 860-983-4606