

# The Messenger



December 2020

## A MESSAGE FROM THE RECTOR

Dear St. John's,

“Love came down.” This is the phrase that I’ve been repeating over and over again as I prepare for this often rushed, chaotic, and yet beautiful season known as Advent. “Love came down.” Over 2000 years ago, love came down and took the form of an innocent vulnerable baby and in an instant the world was changed forever. Because love came down nothing is beyond God’s imagination, nothing is off limits when it comes to revealing light and love in an all too broken and hurting world. That’s how I’m preparing for the coming of the Christ child this year: by recognizing the light and love that is revealed in such ordinary and extraordinary ways day in and day out.

This year, I am preparing for the coming of Christ (both the celebration of His birth and the anticipation of His return) through the spiritual art of detection. Over the next month, I hope to recognize God’s gifts of grace, love, and promises by being more intentional and by inviting the possibility of surprise. I invite you to join me.

Charles Péguy, the French poet and spiritual writer, once wrote, “*Grace is insidious. When you think it will come from the right, it comes from the left. When you think it will come from the left, it comes from the right. When it doesn’t come straight it comes bent, and when it doesn’t come bent it comes broken. When it doesn’t come from above it comes from below.*” In a shocking turn of events, God himself took on flesh and dwelt among us. Perhaps we should be preparing our hearts for a few more surprises this month.

This year, as our traditions are put on hold, as we choose not to gather with loved ones from near and far, as we mourn the loss of what was, may we remember what is. Love came down and continues to pour down upon us. This Advent, I pray you experience that love in surprising and life-giving ways. Love came down, friends, and there isn’t a pandemic in the world that can stop it.

I remain faithfully yours,

*Amanda+*

### December Highlights:

- Pg 2 Scouting for food
- Pg 3 XMAS Tree Galore
- Pg 4 Memorial Garden
- Pg 5 Vestry Highlights  
Financials
- Pg 6 Global Partnership  
Capital Campaign
- Pg 7 Parish Read  
Poinsettias
- Pg 8 Advent and  
Christmas Schedule
- Pg 9 Gifts that give Hope  
Martha’s Ministry
- Pg 10 Advent Calendar
- Pg 11 Gingerbread Houses

### Weekly

#### Sundays:

10:00AM Holy Eucharist

#### Wednesdays:

12:00PM Prayer at Noon  
on Facebook Live

7:00PM Evening Prayer at  
the Community Tree

**December Birthdays:**

- Marcia Meikrantz 2
- Lorraine Hayford 6
- Eleanor Honaman 8
- Charles Braught 8
- Jill Gross 9
- Bradley Moyer 12
- Shirley Parmer 15
- William Honaman 16
- Faith D'Urbano 17
- Kendall Stonerook 18
- Polly Ann Brown 19
- Lenwood Jackson 19
- Edward Summers 21
- Stefan Latshaw 24
- Janet Brown 24
- James Crothers 25
- Donna Schnee 25
- Richard Brenton 26
- Jeannie Zeller 29
- Daniel Dorgan 29
- Adam Kilp 30
- Edgar Grove 31

**December Anniversaries:**

- Michael & Shelby Kilhefner 1
- David & Amy Dissinger 17
- Merle & Donna Schnee 26
- Stefan & Karen Latshaw 28

**Continued prayers for our Homebound:**

- Margaret Crothers, Ellen Keller, Fritz Lawrence, Don Lovett, Nancy Nemith, Peter Plaxa, Ricky Smith, Joanna Sweeney

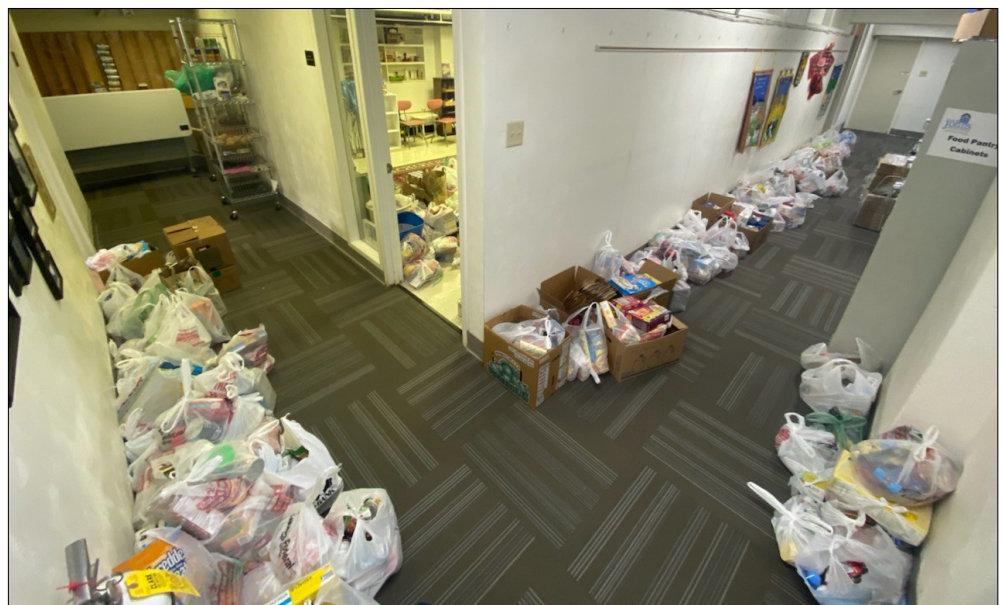
- Military:** Brian Hobbins, Laurel Hobbins, Alex Kelly, Kirby Kinderwater, Kyle Kinderwater, Joshua Watkins, Cameron Watts

## SCOUTING FOR FOOD

Scouting for Food (November 14) yielded an enormous bounty for St. John's Food Pantry! Scouts from the Way and Williams families, Evan Sipe, and scouts from Troop and Pack 4 at Bethany Presbyterian Church, picked up donated food from porches in several neighborhoods.

This food will help us meet the increased needs of our neighbors – we're serving about 3 times as many people as we've served in past years!

Note: if you're involved with another organization that wants to do a food drive, we'd be glad to receive any and all donations.





## *A Community Affair: The St. John's Christmas Tree*

COVID-19 has interrupted many of our traditions, but it can't take away the gift of expectation as we prepare our hearts for Christmas! Our Christmas tree will be placed in the courtyard and we need your help with decorating it! Throughout the month of December, you are invited to bring an ornament to hang on our tree. Together we will wait with hope and anticipation for the birth of our Savior. Together we will journey to Bethlehem and celebrate the night God tiptoed down the backstairs of history and deposited the light of the world into a manger.

**Every Wednesday at 7:00PM in December, we will gather around the tree for prayer and community.**

### **ANGEL TREE MINISTRY**

Tis' the season for spreading joy! Each year our church family generously supports the Angel Tree ministry to share the holiday cheer with our community. This past year has provided our ministry with some beautiful new challenges as to how to best serve those new to our city. Our traditionally tagged Christmas tree has become a virtual sign up to support individuals and families through Church World Service (CWS). Partnering with our Angel Tree ministry group, CWS identified needs of toiletry, kitchen, and employment kits along with larger items of microwaves, rice cookers, and vacuum cleaners. Contributions of ANY amount are welcome...a bottle of shampoo or a \$100 grocery card. You may access the sign up to review the needs and commit to what works best for you and your family this Christmas. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090C48A9A72BA02-2020>

Over the years, our congregation has gone above and beyond to welcome refugee families. Thank you for your continued support of this ministry.

Step 1 - Log on to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090C48A9A72BA02-2020>

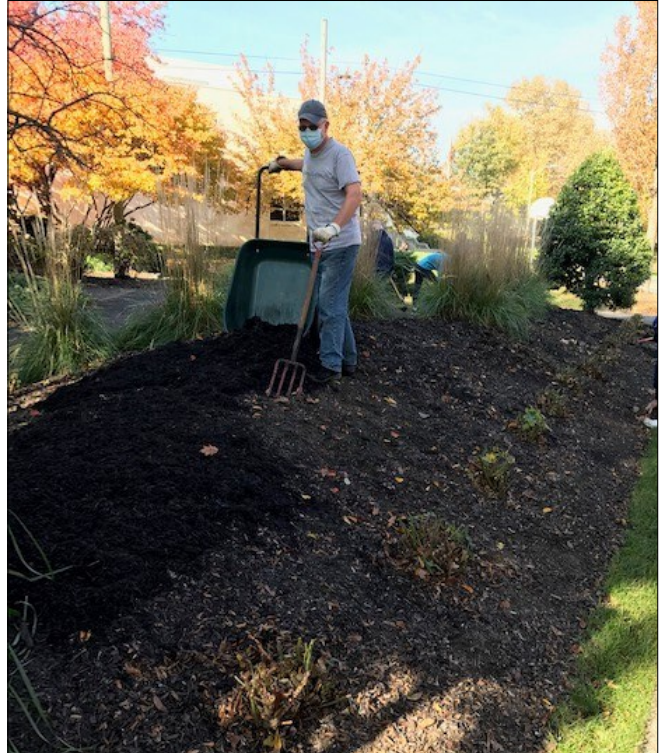
Step 2 - Select any number of items to contribute; you may sign up as an individual, a family, or any other wonderful collection of humans.

Step 3 - Drop off to St. John's or request a pick up (717-368-6545 or [anniela@verizon.net](mailto:anniela@verizon.net)) by January 6, 2020.

\*No tags, numbers, or gift bags are required. These donations will be organized and safely delivered to Church World Service Lancaster. \*Handwritten notes of welcome are also encouraged.

## THE BETTY FINEY MEMORIAL GARDEN

Thank you to everyone who came out to help spruce up the Memorial Garden for the holidays! Many hands make light work!



## VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS

Our Annual Parish Meeting began with a moving video, assembled by Pastor Amanda, which presented highlights of our year: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xyh7QKSmEFg&t=9s>). We expressed appreciation for members of the Vestry who are completing their 3-year term – Sue Heilman, Nicole Pham, and Heather Trenary – and we elected the following members as the Vestry class of 2023: Leslie Morgan, Marylee Sauder, and Mary Waskowicz. Our thanks to all for their willingness to serve!

In our November Vestry meeting, we reviewed a draft budget, but because our budget depends heavily on pledges, and we still haven't heard from several of you, we're holding off on finalizing it. We realize that many of you are facing uncertainty about jobs and money in the near future. If you have intended to pledge but just haven't made that decision (or you've filled out the pledge card but just haven't submitted it yet), please get it to us very soon, so that we can include it in our budget review on December 13.

As of November 22, due to increased coronavirus numbers everywhere, we've moved back from in-person worship to live-streamed-only worship services. You can find links to our services on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/StJohnsLancasterPA>) or our YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxG1Ib6PwHvxnlCLprlONuw>).

***And, finally, here is some timely info about the flu, from the CDC and shared by our own Kenneth Brown, MD, who wants to alert us to the very real possibility of a twin-demic (COVID-19 and flu).***

Q: Can you get COVID-19 and the flu at the same time?

A: Yes. It is possible to have flu, as well as other respiratory illnesses, and COVID-19 at the same time. Health experts are still studying how common this can be. Some of the symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are similar, making it hard to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone.

*CDC Q&A, 11/6/20* (<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/season/faq-flu-season-2020-2021.htm>)

So, please, for your health and that of others, get a flu vaccine!

### St. John's Episcopal Church Budget vs. Actual as of November 30, 2020

#### Operating Statement: Cash Basis (Preliminary)

|                                | November          | 2020              | 2020              |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                                | <u>Actual MTD</u> | <u>Actual YTD</u> | <u>Budget YTD</u> |
| <b>Income</b>                  |                   |                   |                   |
| Pledge & Offering              | \$30,972          | \$363,521         | \$372,991         |
| Draw from Investments          | \$0               | \$20,000          | \$44,489          |
| Other Income                   | \$2,790           | \$38,898          | \$19,800          |
| Jubilee Ministries             | \$2,545           | \$30,117          | \$72,966          |
| <b>Total Income</b>            | <u>\$36,307</u>   | <u>\$452,536</u>  | <u>\$510,246</u>  |
| <b>Expense</b>                 |                   |                   |                   |
| All Expenses                   | <u>\$37,730</u>   | <u>\$480,530</u>  | <u>\$538,897</u>  |
| <b>Net Surplus/(Shortfall)</b> | <u>(\$1,423)</u>  | <u>(\$27,994)</u> | <u>(\$28,651)</u> |

## GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP CHALLENGE

I AM, WE ARE...ONE WORLD: HERE, THERE, EVERYWHERE



**December 6th - St. Nicholas Day**  
Think how the legend of Santa says he goes to visit ALL people - No exclusions - Just a request to “be good”. So think how caring, supporting, friendly actions will

put smiles on hearts both yours and those with whom you connect and the gift to ALL this season when we were gifted from above.

### December 13th

“Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world.” ~ Robert Louis Stevenson  
In a time when we cannot connect in person, make the connect via mail, email, donations to those so much less fortunate. Let the gift of your expression of love be felt.

### December 20th - Christmas

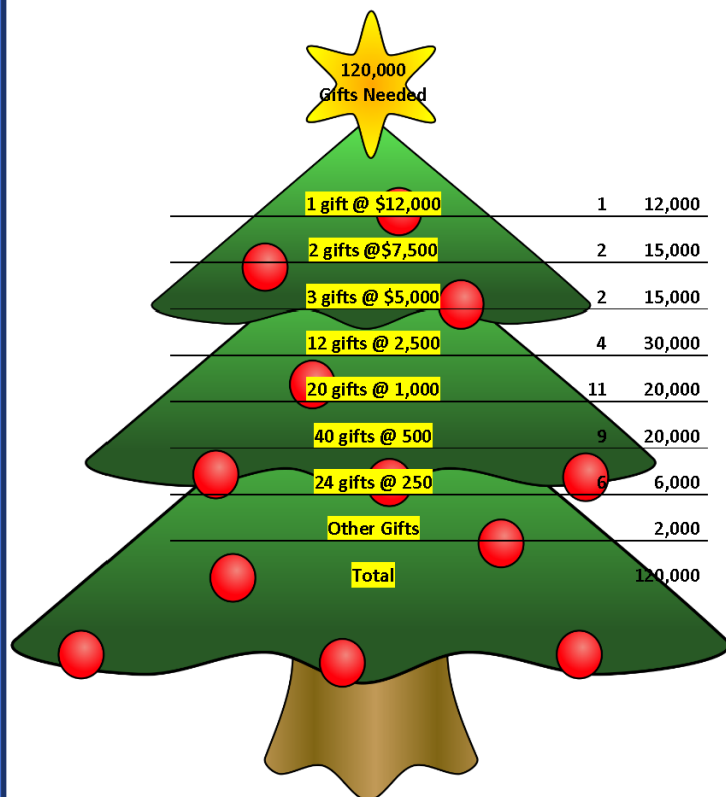
In this meditative Christmas, may we each feel and give thanks for the sacredness of God’s love, His gift of his son and all things around us every day that allow us to know we are His children.  
Blessings and Peace to ALL God’s children

### December 27th

“We cannot get to where we dream of being tomorrow unless we change our thinking today.”  
~ Einstein

A new year starts soon. As we step ahead, let our resolutions be focused on extending our thoughts and prayers and actions to be accepting and helping to our brothers and sisters - the smallest action can make a huge difference. Open your eyes to see and your heart to love.

## HONORING THE PAST...SECURING THE FUTURE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN



### Our tree needs gifts!

This Advent season, our spirits will be lifted by gingerbread houses in our atrium, a Christmas tree in the courtyard labyrinth, elevator access for everyone, and a spacious columbarium. However, we remain \$120,000 from meeting our responsibility to pay for these spaces.

**Please consider putting an extraordinary gift under the Capital Campaign tree this Christmas.**

Your generosity will decrease our monthly interest payments and help retire St. John’s current debt. You may mail your check, clearly marked for CCII, to St. John’s, or contact our Financial Manager Gina for directions if contributing stocks or IRA distributions.

Wishing you a blessed and safe Advent and Christmas!

**The Capital Campaign Committee**

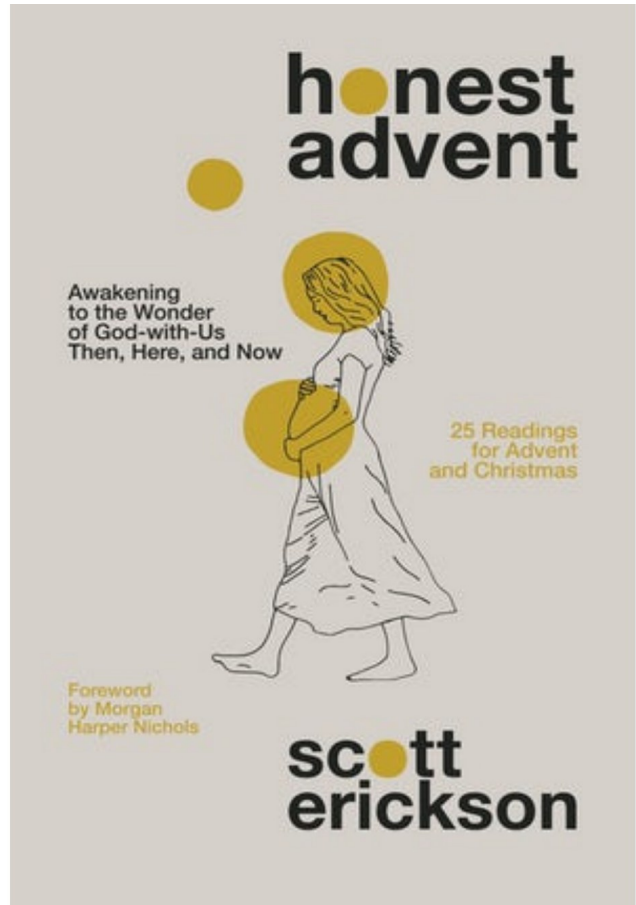
*Rosemary Coverly, Kent Strickler, Debbie Carter, Webb Cook, Charles Wear, Marion Wear*

**ALL PARISH READ FOR DECEMBER**

**All Parish Read  
for December**

**Jesus appeared in a way  
no one expected:  
incarnating by way of  
human vulnerability. He  
does the exact same  
thing in our lives today:  
bringing light and life  
through our ordinary  
everyday vulnerabilities.**

**Join us Wednesday, Dec. 23  
on Zoom for our discussion!  
Meeting ID: 836 4233 9763  
Passcode: 909407**



**CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS AT THE ALTAR**



Order poinsettias to be placed in honor/thanksgiving of or in memory of a loved one this Christmas. Please send your contribution (in the amount of your choice) to the Church office.

Contact the Parish Administrator, Equilla Curry via email at Equilla@stjohns-lancaster.org or by calling the office at 717.299.1188 with your Christmas Poinsettias order request. Complete form and return to the church office no later than Friday, December 18, 2020.

**Please include:**

**In memory of/In honor of/ In thanksgiving of:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_



## ADVENT & CHRISTMAS AT ST. JOHN'S

### Sundays at 10:00 AM in Advent

Each week in Advent we will gather for worship. Join us as we light the advent wreath, hear the beloved advent hymns, and wait with anticipation for the birth of our savior!

### Wednesdays at 7:00PM in Advent

This year, St. John's will have it's very own outdoor Christmas Tree. Every Wednesday in December, we will gather around the tree for evening prayer and fellowship.

### Christmas Eve at 7:00PM

On Christmas Eve we invite you to join us online for a festive celebration! Covid-19 has interrupted many of our traditions, yet we will still worship! Our service will include breathtaking scripture, special music, and the Good News that Christ has been born! Special music begins at 7:00PM with the liturgy beginning at 7:30PM.







## GIFTS THAT GIVE HOPE

### **Alternative Gift Fair Inspires Hope with Unique VIRTUAL Shopping Experience**

Gifts That Give Hope Lancaster will celebrate 13 years of spreading holiday cheer through alternative giving on Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup> from 10am-4pm VIRTUALLY in light of the current pandemic. GTGH to date has raised over \$300,000 for a variety of charitable organizations based here in Lancaster and those working around the world.

Shoppers at the fair will find 30 local and global nonprofit organizations making the world a better place through a range of humanitarian efforts (more information can be found at <http://giftsthatgivehope.org/lancaster>). Each nonprofit will have a donation-based gifts for shoppers to purchase in honor of friends and family on their holiday gift list

The goal of the gift fair is to encourage the generous spirit of the giving season down a more mindful path via alternative giving. Rooted in compassion, alternative giving helps people give threefold by showing friends and family you care about them with a thoughtful gift, by supporting organizations who contribute positively to the social landscape, and by combating the environmental impact of consumerism on our planet.

Each nonprofit at the fair will be offering one undesignated gift that allows shoppers to contribute a custom donation that will support its general mission. Upon checkout, shoppers will receive a gift insert and card which will be mailed to their home in time for the holiday season.

Gifts That Give Hope Lancaster is excited to have you join them to rethink gift giving in Lancaster! To learn more about Gifts That Give Hope Lancaster, please visit [www.giftsthatgivehope.org/lancaster](http://www.giftsthatgivehope.org/lancaster).

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### **MARTHA'S MINISTRY**

**Winter is coming and we are in the process of making scarves, hats, and gloves for the homeless in our community. Please consider donating to this cause.**

**All sizes are accepted. Material may be new, gently used, and handmade.**

**For more details, please contact Jeannie Zeller.**



# REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

**EACH DAY ADD AN ITEM TO A BOX.  
ON CHRISTMAS EVE DONATE THE CONTENTS TO A  
FOOD BANK.**

- December 1 - box of cereal
- December 2 - peanut butter
- December 3 - stuffing mix
- December 4 - boxed potatoes
- December 5 - macaroni and cheese
- December 6 - canned fruit
- December 7 - canned tomatoes
- December 8 - canned tuna
- December 9 - dessert mix
- December 10 - jar of applesauce
- December 11 - canned sweet potatoes
- December 12 - cranberry sauce
- December 13 - canned beans
- December 14 - box of crackers
- December 15 - package of rice
- December 16 - package of oatmeal
- December 17 - package pasta
- December 18 - spaghetti sauce
- December 19 - chicken noodle soup
- December 20 - tomato soup
- December 21 - can corn
- December 22 - can mixed vegetables
- December 23 - can carrots
- December 24 - can green beans



## GINGERBREAD HOUSES!



### St. John's Episcopal Church

## *First Annual Gingerbread House Building Contest*

Decorate one house as a family, or amp up a little competition in your house and make one per individual! “Young’, “old’, or “in-between’, the fun of this event is ageless!

#### **How it works:**

We will be taking pre-orders for the kits. Each kit will cost \$15.00.

To pre-order your gingerbread house, simply contact John Knouse: [johnknouse@hotmail.com](mailto:johnknouse@hotmail.com) or Equilla Curry: [equilla@stjohns-lancaster.org](mailto:equilla@stjohns-lancaster.org)

Let us know how many you wish to order and simply drop by with your payment when you pick up your house, or mail it to the church office.

All orders must be placed by Monday, November 30th! Gingerbread Houses will be available for pickup on Sunday, December 6th.

All entries must be delivered back to the church by Saturday December 12th.

The houses will then be placed on tables in the atrium where parishioners will be able to stop by during the week or stop and peek through the glass to vote for their favorites!

## A SPACE FOR GRACE

Even though we aren't able to participate in in-person worship at this time, the church is open for you. If you would like to spend some time in the quiet, reflecting on this season of waiting and preparing, please don't hesitate to contact us at the church office. Now more than ever, we journey together out of the darkness and into the light. Love will win, friends. Love always wins. There's a pew waiting for you should you ever want to explore that light from the beauty of St. John's.



**St. John's Episcopal Church**  
**321 W. Chestnut St.**  
**Lancaster, PA 17603**