



St John's Episcopal Church, Lancaster PA

The Messenger - DECEMBER

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**Thank you for your generous
pledges for the 2024 year! We are
getting closer and closer to reaching
our goal of \$425,000! If you have
not made a pledge, please pick up a
pledge card at the back of the
church, or visit our website!**

THANK YOU!

Rector's Message

Dear St. John's family and friends,

Normally, when I sit down to write the monthly rector's message a theme emerges rather quickly, and my fingers have a hard time keeping up with my thoughts. This month is no different. I'm entering this December with one theme running through my mind: opportunity. The holy and mysterious season of Advent is overflowing with opportunities to participate. No matter where your head and heart are this month there is an invitation waiting for you to experience grace, hope, love, and, most importantly, relationship.

Perhaps you're struggling to get into the "Christmas spirit" this year; you're grieving the loss of a loved one, a dream, or the way things used to be, then join us for the Service of Belonging on December 3 at Covenant United Methodist Church. Maybe you desire the brisk air on your face as you worship outdoors in a smaller group setting – then join the youth group as they lead worship around our community Christmas tree in the courtyard every Wednesday evening.

Or maybe you're feeling traditional, and you want to light advent candles in the quiet of your home each day – then join us for the Advent Event on Sunday to make your own wreath to take home with you. For me, I yearn for the sacred music of Advent and Christmas. You'll find me at the McCaskey High School Concert on December 8th and praying through the hymns every Sunday morning. Maybe service is what connects you to the divine as you prepare and wait for the coming of Christ – then fill up your Advent Calendar with canned goods for the food pantry and take a couple tags from this year's Angel Tree. There are so many opportunities waiting for us to explore and connect with God incarnate and each other this season.

Advent is probably the most moving yet overlooked season of our church calendar. So much is vying for our attention these days, our priorities can get skewed without us even realizing it, so I invite you to pause for a morning, afternoon, or evening and during that pause search your heart for what will feed your soul this month. Be intentional and open to how the spirit is calling you to enter this new sacred and holy year.

God decided a long time ago, that being separated from us wasn't an option – God entered our world with that same intentionality and purpose and thankfully our lives have been forever changed because of that act of love. Perhaps God is waiting for us to enter his kingdom this season. Friends may your Advent season of waiting and preparing break you open to the possibilities that await and the love that is yours to claim.

God's peace,
Amanda+

WORLD AIDS DAY

A CELEBRATION TO COMMEMORATE THE AIDS PANDEMIC



THE BETTY FINNEY
AIDS MEMORIAL GARDEN

December 1st
6:00 PM

Janice Stork - Linear Park
W Lemon - Water St Intersection

Blessed to Belong:
A Service of Hope for Times of Loss

Sunday, December 3rd at 2:00PM

Covenant UMC
110 N. Mulberry Street
Lancaster PA

Advent Event

When: Sunday, December 3 following the 10:15 service

Where: Parish Hall

Who: Kids of all ages! This event is intergenerational!

Why: Preparing for Advent is a spiritual practice that helps us enter into the season with open hearts as we anticipate the arrival of Christ!

What:

Make an Advent Wreath (\$12)

Write Christmas Cards to Parishioners

Decorate Cookies

Pack Care Packages for College Students

Or Just Hang Out!

***Please sign up in the Parish Hall**

Contact Sue Dodge with questions!*

*“The Lord is coming, always coming.
When you have ears to hear and eyes to
see, you will recognize him at any
moment of your life. Life is Advent; life is
recognizing the coming of the Lord.”*

– Henri Nouwen



MCCASKEY
HIGH
SCHOOL



Choir Concert

DECEMBER 8TH | FRIDAY | 7PM

321 W Chestnut St | St John's Episcopal Church | Sanctuary

McCAskey Vocal Ensemble & Chamber Choir

Join Musical Director William Broaddus for a Winter Concert,
featuring the students of McCaskey High School!

RETURN OF THE VOYAGERS

We are pleased to announce that after a hiatus of about three years, the Voyagers Ministry is returning to St. John's. For new members of the church, the Voyagers are a collection of senior citizens who gather monthly for fellowship and to share experiences. There is no set age limit.

We will begin in January 2024 and meet on the second Saturday of the month from 9 to 11 AM. We will have a light snack that any attendee is welcome to bring to share.

For our first few meetings, we will ask church members who may have had different experiences to share them with us for about 30 minutes or so. The bulk of the time will be spent socializing. John and Fran Gouveia will be serving as hosts for the first few meetings. Anyone who wishes to join them as hosts will be welcome. For planning purposes in the beginning, we do ask that you contact them either in person or by email or phone to let them know that you will be attending. This is so we can be sure there is an adequate amount of coffee, tea and juices available.

John's phone number is (717)392-1655, his email is jounandfran43@aol.com
We hope to see many new and returning Voyagers at our January meeting,

ANGEL TREE & FULTON ELEMENTARY

Friends as the Advent Season and the Spirit of Christmas comes upon us, so does the opportunity to share with those who need it most. Currently at Fulton Elementary School, there are 20-30 students who find themselves without homes or in transitional housing this holiday season. The yellow tags found on the "Angel Tree" in the parish hall are specifically for these students. These presents will be distributed to these young people when they attend our dinner with Santa event on December 10th. If you feel so inclined, please take a tag (or two) and return that present wrapped to the church by 12pm on December 10.

Sincerely,
John Knouse

CHRISTMAS AT ST. JOHN'S

Sunday, December 24th

9:00 AM - A Celebration of the Fourth Sunday of Advent with Advent Hymns & Holy Eucharist

3:30 PM - A Family Celebration of Holy Eucharist and Annual Christmas Pageant with Special Music by the Handbell Choir

9:30 PM - A Festive Candlelit Holy Eucharist with Prelude of Carols by Brass & Christmas Carols led by the Choir

St. John's 2023 Christmas Pageant



During the 3:30 Service
Sunday, December 24th

All St. John's children,
youth and their
cousins, neighbors, and
friends are welcome!



HOLIDAY BAZAAR

A Community Success!

This is to thank everyone who played a role in this year's Bazaar. Whether you are a member of Martha's Ministry, a craftsperson or someone who contributed goods for sale, a volunteer who worked in setting up the bazaar weekend or on the weekend itself, or a buyer or donor who contributed money at the Bazaar itself, thank you for playing your part.

As you may remember, two months ago we announced a goal for the Bazaar was to raise \$5,000 for our Outreach and In-reach Ministries. This was nearly double what we had ever raised in the past. We are happy to report that not only did we exceed our expectations; we raised over \$7,000 this month.

The Martha's Ministry members had agreed in advance that rather than trying to support just one ministry, they wanted the proceeds to benefit our Outreach ministries and our ministries in support of our own members. Their goal was that 70-75% is used in support of our Outreach ministries and 25-30% be used to support ministries to our members. We would trust the Vestry in making the final call.

As successful as the event was, we still have some hard decisions to make regarding the future of the Bazaar. The members of Martha's Ministry agree that if this event is to be repeated in the future, they need a broader base of support in planning and executing the event. If any persons or groups from other ministries are willing to participate, then planning meetings will have to begin by May of next year. We need people to chair the event, set the goals and objectives for the event, and carry out the physical labor needed for the event. If we cannot find enough people for this, then the members would just as soon return to the smaller sales conducted on two Sundays.

This event was a very successful fundraiser, but we would need a broader base of support to continue and grow it in the future. If you have any interest, please contact Amy Dissinger or Deb Smith when you see them in church.



FOOD PANTRY

A Feeding Ministry Report

Our Food Pantry sees more and more need among our neighbors each month. In the last 12 months we averaged 42 visitors per week; they took home food for an average of 117 people. But in October, we averaged 53 visitors (157 household members) per week.

As we promised in November's Messenger, we now have Advent Calendar Giving Packages! The calendar shows a different suggested food for each day in Advent, and these can be stored in the accompanying package (a box or a cloth bag, your choice). If you haven't already done so, you can pick

up a calendar package at the Advent table in the atrium, before or after worship on December 3 (the first Sunday in Advent). We ask that you return the filled package any time between Christmas Eve and Epiphany.

Also, if you're eligible to receive a turkey or ham from your favorite grocery store's rewards program, please consider donating it to our food pantry; some lucky visitor will be very happy to use it! (If you bring it after hours, please place it in the freezer at the base of the stairs between the atrium and the Parish Hall.)

Thank you for your continued generosity in support of this important ministry to our neighbors!

Make a donation to the St. John's food pantry and Blessings Box Ministry to honor others and receive a beautiful gift card and matching envelope to mail to that special person! For more information, contact Marion Wear at wearall@comcast.net! Visit the Food Ministry Table in the Parish Hall on Sundays December 3rd, 10th, 17th, and 24th to donate and pick up your gift donation card. Thank you for your support for the Food Pantry and Blessing Box Ministry!

Have a blessed and wonderful Christmas!



GLOBAL

PARTNERSHIP CHALLENGE



December is the time of Advent. Advent like Lent is a time to include more prayers into our hearts. Let us look around us at those we know and those we don't and give gifts of kindness and caring in a world that is SO needing of our love.

DECEMBER 3RD

Hanukkah Begins December 7th thru December 15th

Our Jewish friends need our love and support more than ever in the world's environment.

We are ALL God's children and the simplest connection could be huge - a greeting, a coffee time to connect, a card expressing your caring.

DECEMBER 10TH

Human Rights Day and International Children's Day

Stream your prayers to include those in your presence and those distant that they feel loved and valued and in hopes of peace.



DECEMBER 17TH

"What happens to another, whether it be a joy or a sorrow, happens to me." -Meister Eckhart

Cold? A pair of socks, a sweater...Hungry? a can of soup, peanut butter, bread....

The smallest gift could be huge to someone...Let them feel blessed.

DECEMBER 24TH

Christmas Eve

Let Christ be born anew in each of us on this Holy Day. Blessings to ALL - Here, There, Everywhere - NO Exceptions

DECEMBER 31ST

"Lord, make me an instrument thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love." -Francis of Assisi

Make a pledge and act on being an instrument of peace in 2024 knowing that the smallest gesture can be huge to someone in a world that SO desperately needs change.

TREASURER'S REPORT

CHARLES WEAR

	2022			2023		
	Actual Oct	Actual YTD	Budget Full Yr	Actual Oct	Actual YTD	Budget Full Yr
Income						
Pledge Income	\$26.5	\$325.5	\$384.6	\$25.6	\$341.5	\$415.0
Other Contributions	\$7.4	\$41.9	\$35.5	\$2.5	\$53.0	\$50.5
Investment Draws	\$0.0	\$52.1	\$63.0	\$21.5	\$51.5	\$63.6
Other less Transfers	\$1.7	\$22.9	\$23.6	\$4.4	\$43.5	\$20.7
Jubilee	\$3.9	\$15.1	\$16.9	\$8.5	\$20.4	\$23.9
Total Income	\$39.5	\$457.5	\$523.5	\$62.5	\$509.9	\$573.7
Expenses						
Clergy	\$23.9	\$172.2	\$205.6	19.3	\$199.2	\$247.0
Lay Staff	\$9.4	\$73.1	\$90.8	8.2	\$81.6	\$116.5
Vestry/Finance/Comm	\$2.0	\$17.0	\$25.3	\$7.0	\$27.7	\$27.6
Utilities	\$2.5	\$33.0	\$29.5	\$5.5	\$42.1	\$39.2
Building Repairs & Supplies	\$1.1	\$20.5	\$38.4	\$6.9	\$33.3	\$33.6
Other Property	\$2.0	\$22.9	\$29.6	\$2.6	\$24.7	\$28.9
Worship/Ed/Community	\$1.1	\$11.6	\$14.1	\$3.0	\$31.2	\$17.2
Outreach	\$10.2	\$61.1	\$65.8	5.5	\$55.0	\$64.6
Jubilee	\$1.9	\$18.3	\$24.4	\$1.9	\$26.0	\$34.2
Total Expenses	\$54.0	\$429.6	\$523.5	\$60.1	\$520.8	\$608.7
Net Total	(\$14.4)	\$27.9	\$0.0	\$2.4	(\$11.0)	(\$35.0)

We had a \$2.4k operating surplus in October due to booking \$21.5k of budgeted unrestricted funds as income. This is the last budgeted draw from our unrestricted account. Next month we will complete all budgeted draws from the restricted account for the year by transferring \$12.1k to operating checking.

Our YTD operating deficit is \$11k. This is considerably lower than the budgeted \$35k deficit, and we remain optimistic that we will complete the year better than budget. Notable October expenses included organ/piano repairs at \$1.3k, tree removal on Chestnut Street at \$4.8k and our annual color printing charges \$4.1k.

Respectfully submitted,
C Wear, Treasurer

Church Prayer List

Pat Pankey, Jeannie Zeller,
Kent Strickler, Nancy Strasburg,
Justin & Lisa, Ella & Colleen,
Matt Patterson, Michael Yoder, Kevin,
Judy Modene, Angie Stamm,
Andrew Gilpin, Jesse Rutledge,
Ann Marie, Cheryl & Rhoda,
Lynn Hayford, Erin Potts,
Dave, Colleen Murphy, Joan Inshetski

Friends at Home

Ellen Keller, Nancy Nemith,
Peter Plaxa, Ricky Smith,
Joanna Sweeney, Al Kuser,
Mary Sue Farmer, Ellen Sellers,
Edith Kane, Merle Schnee,
Carol Greenfield, Sandy Grove,
Carole Humphrey, Darlene Bentley,
Peggy Zuke

Serving in the Military:

Amelia Dissinger
Alex Kelly
Brooks Morgan
Brian Hobbins
Joshua Watkins
Kirby Kinderwater
Kyle Kinderwater
David Wolfe

Birthdays

2 - Marcia Meikrantz
2 - Charles Wear
6 - Lynn Hayford
7 - Julia Hale
8 - Charley Braught Jr
9 - Gretchen Walden
12 - Bradley Moyer
15 - Shirley Parmer
16 - Fred Honaman
17 - Faith D'Urbano
18 - Kendall Stonerook
19 - Len Jackson
19 - Randy Krueger
19 - Polly Ann Brown
21 - Ed Summers
24 - Steve Latshaw
24 - Jenny Kintner
25 - Jim Crothers
25 - David Rutledge
26 - Rich Brenton
29 - Jeannie Zeller
30 - Adam Kilp
31 - Ned Grove

Anniversaries

3 - Christine & Thomas Shevock
17 - Amy & David Dissinger
28 - Karen & Steve Latshaw

Church CALENDAR

Friday the 1st

Rector's Day Off

6:00PM World AIDS Day Prayer Service

Sunday the 3rd

8:00AM Holy Eucharist: Rite I

9:15AM Sunday School

10:15AM Holy Eucharist: Rite II

11:30AM Advent Event

Monday the 4th

4:30PM Trans Loving Community

5:00PM Executive Committee

6:00PM Daughters of the King

6:00PM Ministries Council

Tuesday the 5th

1:30PM Martha's Ministry

2:30PM Food Pantry

Wednesday the 6th

12:00PM Healing Service

6:30PM Courtyard Service

7:00PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Thursday the 7th

9:00AM Minister's Meeting

2:30PM Food Pantry

7:00PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal

Friday the 8th

Rector's Day Off

7:00PM McCaskey High School Concert

Saturday the 9th

4:30PM Walden-Cook Wedding

Sunday the 10th

8:00AM Holy Eucharist: Rite I

9:15AM Sunday School

10:15AM Holy Eucharist: Rite II

3:00PM Fulton Christmas Party

Monday the 11th

6:00PM Caring Ministry

Tuesday the 12th

1:30PM Martha's Ministry

2:30PM Food Pantry

4:00PM Finance Committee

Wednesday the 13th

12:00PM Healing Service

6:30PM Courtyard Service

7:00PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Thursday the 14th

9:00AM Minister's Meeting

2:30PM Food Pantry

7:00PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal

Friday the 15th

Rector's Day Off

Saturday the 16th

9:00AM Community Breakfast

at First Reformed Church

Sunday the 17th

8:00AM Holy Eucharist: Rite I

9:15AM Sunday School

10:15AM Holy Eucharist: Rite II

12:00PM Vestry Meeting

Monday the 18th

6:00PM Daughters of the King

Tuesday the 19th

1:30PM Martha's Ministry

2:30PM Food Pantry

Wednesday the 20th

12:00PM Healing Service

6:30PM Courtyard Service

7:00PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Thursday the 21st

9:00AM Minister's Meeting

2:30PM Food Pantry

6:30PM Men's Gathering

7:00PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal

Friday the 22nd

Rector's Day Off

Sunday the 24th

Christmas Eve

9:00AM Advent IV Service

3:30PM Christmas Eve Family Service

9:30PM Christmas Eve Candlelit Service

Monday the 25th

Christmas Day

10:00AM Christmas Day Morning Prayer

Tuesday the 26th

Office Closed for Holiday

Wednesday the 27th

*Office Closed for Holiday:

No Choir Rehearsal*

Thursday the 28th

*Office Closed for Holiday:

No Handbell Rehearsal*

Friday the 29th

Rector's Day Off

Sunday the 31st

8:00AM Holy Eucharist: Rite I

9:15AM Sunday School

10:15AM Holy Eucharist: Rite II