



# THE EVANGEL

*The official publication of St. John's Episcopal Church*

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Dear People and Friends of St. John's,

A new calendar year is upon us! And with it comes the proverbial push to make “New Year’s Resolutions” – those things we write down or speak aloud that we “resolve” to do in the coming year. We could make resolutions at any time. We can take on new practices or try to get rid of some old ones in July or November. The “clean slate” that the new year seems to provide, however, makes it seem more fitting to make those resolutions now. Or perhaps not.

Last year I started a new practice for myself. Instead of making a list of things I would do, or things I would no longer do, I asked myself what it was that I wanted to nurture in my life. What was my heart longing for? What did I want more of in my life? And how could I nurture those things?

What does that look like practically speaking? If I wanted closer relationships with my family, how could I nurture that? Perhaps I would make more phone calls or take the time to write and send cards. I wanted more quiet in my life, and realized I could nurture that by skipping the morning dose of NPR on occasion.

The point is that I did not set up certain parameters ahead of time. Instead, each evening (or most evenings), I asked myself how I had nurtured the three or four things I wanted more of in my life – and in the mornings, I asked myself how I planned to nurture those things in the day ahead of me.

The “nurturing” questions helped me focus on the heart of the matter, perhaps, and allowed me to see that how I did the nurturing might change from day to day, and that was okay.

What do you want to see more of in your life – and how can you nurture that?

Mostly, may we all find a way to nurture the Divine Spark that dwells within each of us.

A blessed new year to us all.

Sr. Diane+

# Blessing of the home



In Deuteronomy 6:9, God tells the people of Israel: “These words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house... You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

So at the start of this new year, chalking the doorway is a tangible way to honor God in our lives. This celebration is a way of marking our homes, usually at the front or main entrance, with sacred signs and symbols as we ask God’s blessing upon those who live, work, or visit throughout the coming year.

Church tradition names three of the Magi, Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar and on Epiphany we celebrate these three saints and their gift-bringing. The numbers of the year are the bookends of the inscription.

C M B above the door, also stands for *Christus Mansionem Benedicat*, Latin for “Christ, this house Bless.” The inscription this year is: 20+C+M+B+23. God of heaven and earth, you revealed your Son to the world by the guidance of a star. Bless this house of prayer and all who pass through its doors. Fill us with the light of Christ, that our concern for others may reflect your love. We ask this through Christ our Savior. Amen.

# Calendar Blessing

Eternal God, to you belong all times and seasons.

In the circle of the year,  
the unending wreath of days and months,  
through midwinter emptiness and summertime fullness,  
through autumnal death and vernal rebirth,  
through ferial\*, fast, and feast days,  
we journey in the mystery of your saving grace;  
rejoicing in Christ's coming among us  
in the past, the present, and the future,  
we watch, and serve, while yearning for that day  
when time will be no more  
and all will be seated at the great feast of your love.

Bless our calendars we pray  
and our lives in each of their days,  
that we may ever give voice to your praise  
and enact your love and grace;  
through Jesus Christ our Savior,  
who, with you and the Holy Spirit,  
lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting.

Amen.

\* ferial are ordinary days, as opposed to fast days and feast days.

— adapted from “A Blessing of Calendars for the New Year,” by The Rev. Andrew G. Varga, ©2012, at <http://teamrcia.com/.../a-blessing-of-calendars-for-the.../>

# A Message from the Giving Secretary

Through the past year, I have noticed that more of our members have decided to give to the church through the online giving site or have their financial institutions send out their checks. Other members watch our services online and do not attend in person and they also send their checks to the church and do not use envelopes. Many also only give monthly so do not need a booklet of 52 plus envelopes. Since we have to order a minimum of 50 booklets, the treasurer and I decided to order a large amount of loose giving envelopes.

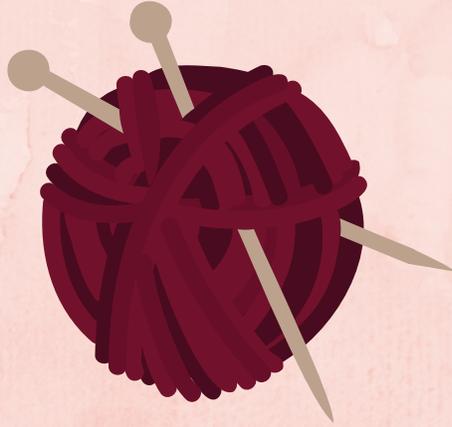
I will put together a group of 12 envelopes for anyone and they can pick them up at the church. There will also be loose envelopes in the pews and the entrances to the church. If you choose to use the loose envelopes please put your name and date on them and if you are giving to more than the operating fund please write in the other designation you are giving to.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at home 989-772-4814 or email me at [padingman@hotmail.com](mailto:padingman@hotmail.com).

As your Giving Secretary, I thank you all for your gifts and talents that you give to St. John's throughout the year.

Pamela A. Dingman

# Thoughtful Threads



St. John's is revitalizing our fiber arts ministry. Yarnists, weavers, embroiderers, quilters, sewists... whether you've decades of experience or just want to learn how, join us! This is a space to learn, to focus on our projects, to socialize, and to celebrate these ancient arts. All are welcome. The first meeting will be **Tuesday, January 24 at 6:00 in the Parish Hall.**

# Children's Picture Bibles



As we begin Sunday school for our youngest members, we'd like to present them with a Children's Picture Bible. If anyone would like to help gift these Bibles, please contact Sr. Diane.

A church family grows and changes just like any other family. New members are born, some members pass, and some members are adopted into our family. Throughout all of these changes, there is one constant - Love.

As you may remember, last month our St. John's family celebrated the marriage of two members, Renée Babcock and Kathleen Conlon. Renée and Kathy have since relocated to the west side of the state. Below is a Christmas card we received from Renée and Kathy which perfectly sums up what St. John's message truly is.



We wanted to say thank you for allowing us to share our wedding vows with you- but "thanks" just doesn't express what it meant to us. It is a memory that will stay with us forever.

For me (Renée), this is such a difficult card to write. St John's has been part of my life since 1998! without question, leaving you all is the hardest part of moving. This place is filled with love, warmth, and acceptance. It brings tears to my eyes how you welcomed me and how you embraced Kathy into your fold. I know you gave her the feeling of belonging that is leading in so many faith communities your love will stay with us forever -

# Ways to Help...

Help the Ukrainian People:

**UNICEF** - <https://www.unicefusa.org/>

**Doctors Without Borders** -

<https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/what-we-do/countries/ukraine>

**Voices of Children** - [www.voices.org.ua/en/](http://www.voices.org.ua/en/)

**International Committee of the Red Cross** - <https://icrc.org/en/donate/ukraine>

**Save the Children** - <https://support.savethechildren.org/>

**UN Refugee Agency** - <https://give.unrefugees.org/>

**CARE** - <https://my.care.org/>

**International Medical Corps** -

<https://internationalmedicalcorps.org/country/ukraine/>

**Episcopal Relief & Development** - [support.episcopalrelief.org/donate](https://support.episcopalrelief.org/donate)



Remember Our  
Homebound Members  
Drop a card to our parish  
members who are homebound.

**Alma Dickerson**  
461 E. Wing Rd.,  
Mt. Pleasant MI 48858  
989-772-2516.

**Sandy Wood**  
Prestige Centre  
5785 E. Broadway Rd.,  
Mt. Pleasant MI 48858

**Fran Weaver**  
Comfort Care  
1945 Churchill Blvd.  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

**Joan Kadler**  
Crestwood  
2378 S. Lincoln Apt.7  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858  
989-772-2803



### January Birthdays

Nancy Hartshorne	01/01
Christi Brookes	01/04
Harry Kuhn	01/09
Barbara Sheperdigian	01/10
Martha Rarick	01/15
Kip Cosan	01/21
Matthew Kinney	01/22

### St. John's Prayer Group

If you wish to add or remove names from the Prayer List, please call Sr. Diane Stier, 989-807-0215, the church office, or email Pamela Dingman: [padingman@hotmail.com](mailto:padingman@hotmail.com). Thank you.



Ford & Pamela Dingman 01/23

### Pastoral Care

Just a reminder: you should let the parish office know if you are ill and wish to receive a call from the Rector.



## *Minutes for Vestry Meeting for December 2022*

Present: Pat Thurston, Diane Stier, Olivia Ohler, Jerry May, Clancy Delong, DJ Proctor, Tom Cochrane, Alice Ciccu, Ulana Klymyshyn, Nancy Herman-Kinney, Mary Kiesgen, Dan Eichinger, Jen Dingman (clerk)

Meeting called to order at 11:43 am. Diane led the opening prayer.

Minutes from November meeting were reviewed. No changes suggested. Dan moved to accept minutes as written. Nancy 2nd. All approved.

### **Property Committee**

- 2022 “to-do” list didn’t get completed. Items will be carried over to 2023 list. Also on the 2023 list are
- Trim on church needs to be fixed and painted
- East side of the church also needs paint
- Toilet in Undercroft needs to be repaired
- Suggest to the snow removal person that when walks are cleared, handrailing’s also need to be cleared

### **Worship Committee**

- Committee was asked whether or not they would continue to participate in 2023 given the new focus on the family services
- Jan 8, 2023 – Bishops’ visit
  - Diane is talking to the Bishop on Dec 15th so any suggestions/topics that need to be addressed, get them to her by then.
  - Plans for a special coffee hour are in the works, Jen to reach out to Lynne and Laura to make arrangements.
  - There are several who might like to be received and/or baptized during his visit, plans are being finalized.
  - Meeting with Vestry afterwards

### **Outreach Committee**

- Sign-up for the 3 Christmas families is on-line and printed and in the Narthex. Diane noted 2 additional families that need assistance and we will find some way to help them.

### **Education Committee**

- Nothing to report

### **Parish Life/Social Committee**

- Potluck/Greening of the Church planned for Dec 18th
- Plans in the works for the 2023 St Johns Loons game, trying to coordinate it during a Faith & Family Day

### **Administrative Committee**

- Budget is up ~\$10k in 2023
- Expenses
- B&G increased to ensure we have funds to take care of all needs
- New copier is more expensive but has a lot more features

## *Minutes for Vestry Meeting for December 2022*

- Significant increase in utilities expected in 2023
- Fair Share amount explained and calculated
- Increases in other paid church staff suggested by Diane to remain consistent with the increase suggested for clergy
- Rector Compensation Package (Diane left for this discussion)
  - Budget takes into account a 5% increase, Dioceses suggested 8.7% and asked parishes to make up the difference if they can
  - Rector salary proposal accepted by consensus
  - Required content for the minutes

The vestry on the 11th day of December, 2022, after discussing the amount to be paid to the Rev. Sr. Diane Stier as parsonage allowance, on motion duly made and seconded, adopted the following resolution:

Whereas the Rev. Sr. Diane Stier is employed as Reverend of St. John's Episcopal Church, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan, which does not provide a residence for her, the vestry resolves that of the total compensation of \$96,260 to be paid to the Rev. Sr. Diane Stier during 2023, that \$24,000 be designated as parsonage allowance within the meaning of that term as used in Section 107 of the IRS Code of 1986.

- Total expenses vs budgeted amount will leave us with a similar deficit as 2022 (~\$24K) and \$13K of the Employee Retention Tax Credit will be carried over to cut that in half.
- Overall, the outlook for St Johns 2023 financial performance is positive.
- Dan made a motion to accept the new budget as proposed, Nancy seconded. All approved
- Vestry thanked Clancy for all of his efforts on the budget this year and in the last several years

### **New Business**

- A parish wide planning calendar was suggested. Pat will pull everything together, send events to Pat
- Suggested adding a celebration for Canadian Thanksgiving and it was noted that it is the same as Indigenous Peoples Day/Columbus Day. Maybe something can be coordinated with CMU
- Nominating committee report
- 3 openings
- Dan Eichinger has agreed to be nominated for his 1st term
- Clancy will serve if needed
- Ulana and Tom both have potential candidates to approach
- Open nominations will also be taken during the annual meeting
  - Annual reports are due by Jan 1st

Next meeting January 2023

Diane led the closing prayer.

Meeting adjourned at 1:08 pm

# November 2022 Financial Report

Below is a summary of operating fund activity through the end of November (91.67%).

Unrestricted operating fund receipts.....	\$ 176,912.17 (97.09% of budget)
Unrestricted operating fund expenditures.....	187,733.93 (91.13% of budget)
Operating fund receipts over (under) expenditures.....	\$ (10,821.76)

Please verify that your current year estimated giving amount is up to date.

If you have not already done so, please make sure you have turned in your estimated giving amounts for 2023. This will greatly assist us in developing the 2023 budget. Contact Pamela Dingman, our giving secretary, for forms or additional information.

Please verify that your current year estimated giving amount is up to date.

## Special projects:

**External Sign Upgrade:** Whittemore Foundation grant request has been approved. The sign committee is creating a proposal to send to additional vendors. Grants and funds collected account for \$13,492.21 being raised to date.

**Columbarium Expansion:** The proposal for the expansion of our columbarium has been approved and the funds disbursed. The concrete slab and installation will commence this fall. If you are interested in a niche, please contact Pamela Dingman for more information.

### Cash Balances

<b>Cash in Checking Account</b>	68,609.55
<b>Savings</b>	26,781.15
<b>Certificates of Deposit</b>	16,093.55
<b>Endowment Fund</b>	88,620.18

<b>Total</b>	<b><u>200,104.43</u></b>
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### Cash Sources This Month

<b>Traditional Giving</b>	9,181.75	61.14%
<b>Online Giving</b>	5,835.51	38.86%
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>15,017.26</u></b>	100.00%

Weekly Schedule:

Sunday 10AM: Holy Communion: In Person or [Facebook](#)  
or [YouTube](#)

Wednesday 10AM: [Church School by Zoom](#)

Wednesday 7PM: [Connections Conversations by Zoom](#)

Thursday 8PM: [Compline \(Night Prayer\) by Zoom](#)

Coffee Hour Schedule:

January 8	Lynne L'Hommedieu & Jennifer Dingman
January 15	David & Jennifer Dingman
January 22	Ford & Pamela Dingman
January 29	Dan & Jasmine Eichinger

Lay Ministers:

	Lectors	Prayers
January 1	Kip Cosan	Mary Kiesgen
January 8	Mary Kiesgen	Jim Thurston
January 15	Carol Lauffer	Jennifer Dingman
January 22	Ulana Klymyshyn	Jeanne Maxon
January 29	David Kinney	Patricia Thurston

Greeters Schedule:

January 1	Jim & Patricia Thurston
January 8	David & Jennifer Dingman
January 15	Clancy & Patricia DeLong
January 22	Jim & Patricia Thurston
January 29	DJ Proctor & Christi Brookes

# January Calendar

**Sundays: 01/01, 01/08, 01/15,  
01/22, 01/29**

10am Holy Communion  
(In person, Facebook, &  
YouTube)

**Mondays: 01/02, 01/09, 01/16,  
01/23, 01/30**

6:30 pm G.A.

**Tuesdays: 01/03, 01/10,  
01/17, 01/24, 01/31**

11am Tai Chi  
with Judy

**Wednesdays: 01/04, 01/11, 01/18,  
01/25**

10am Church School  
via Zoom

6pm Yoga with Judy

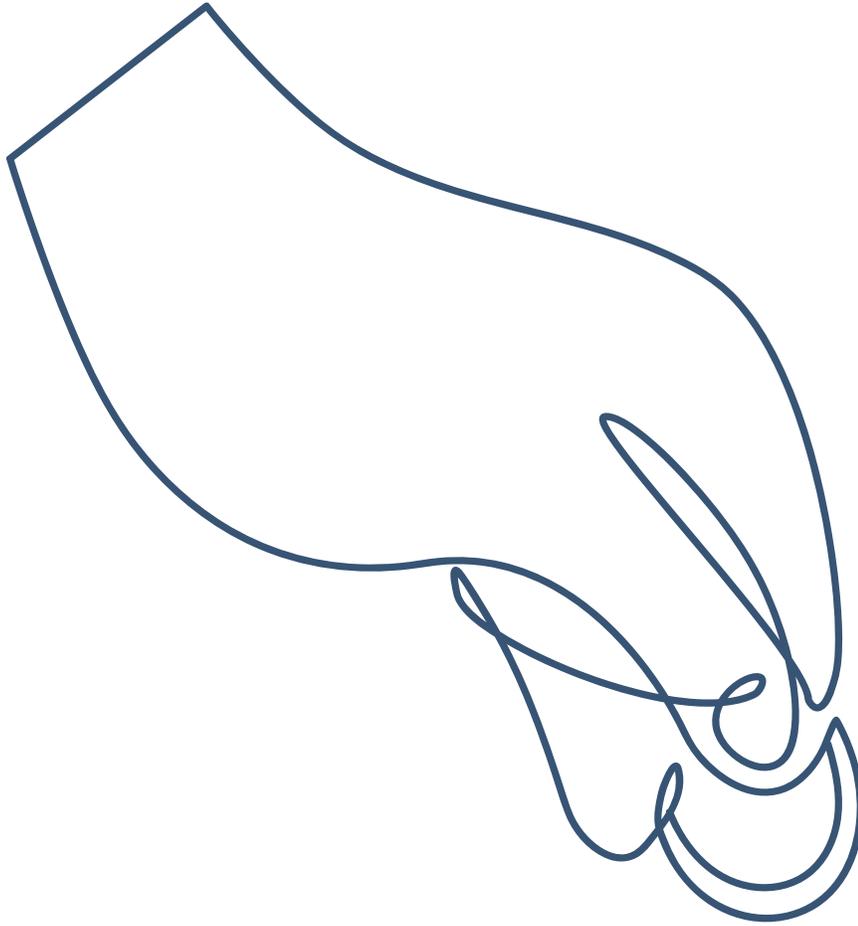
7pm Weekly Connection via Zoom

**Thursdays: 01/05, 01/12, 01/19,  
01/26**

11am Tai Chi with Judy  
8pm Compline  
via Zoom

**Fridays: 01/06, 01/13,  
01/20, 01/27**

Nothing on these days  
Office Closed



## Different ways to give...

We now have four different ways to give back to the church. You can now drop off at the church, mail your offer to the church, give through “Giving Tools”, and shop on Amazon. Here are the details on how to give:

1. You can come to the Church office and drop it through the mail slot.
2. You can mail your offering to the Church, 206 W Maple, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
3. You can go to Giving tools and give one time or set up recurring donations from a credit card or bank account.
4. You can sign up through Amazon Smile to make a donation when you spend money on Amazon, no extra spending involved!

**Saint John's Episcopal Church**  
**206 West Maple Street Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858**  
**Phone: 989-773-7448**  
**Fax: 989-772-3480**  
**E-mail: [saintjohnsmp@gmail.com](mailto:saintjohnsmp@gmail.com)**  
**Website: [www.stjohnsmtpleasantmi.com](http://www.stjohnsmtpleasantmi.com)**

**St. John's Mission:**

**St. John's Episcopal Church, with God's help and in the Episcopal Church tradition, lives to proclaim the Gospel of Christ by ministering through worship, outreach, fellowship and education. We welcome all who enter our doors, and we support the diverse callings of each member as we seek to serve Christ in every person.**

**Rector:**

**The Rev. Sr. Diane Stier, 989-807-0215**

**Deacon Emeritus:**

**The Rev. Nancy Casey Fulton**

**2022 Vestry Officers**

**Sr. Warden: Dr. Nancy Herman-Kinney**

**Jr. Warden: Jerry May**

**Treasurer: Clancy DeLong**

**Co-Treasurer: Lynne L'Hommedieu,**

**Vestry Clerk: Jennifer Dingman**

**2022 Vestry Members**

**David Proctor**

**Mary Kiesgen**

**Olivia Ohler**

**Pat Thurston**

**Tom Cochrane**

**Ulana Klymyshyn**

**Organist:**

**Dennis Flynn**

**Choirmaster pro tempore:**

**Eric Vinciguerra**