

A Word from the Pastor...for Advent and the New Year

In Shamanic societies, if you went to a medicine person because you were feeling dispirited or disheartened, they would ask you these questions: When did you stop singing? When did you stop dancing? When did you stop being enchanted by stories? And when did you stop finding comfort in the sweet territory of silence?

The one that got me was the stories. When did we stop being excited by them? As we come to Advent and Christmas, we see the greatest story ever told, and it should stir us and excite us and cause us to ponder just what God is up to. Think of these men and women of faith, like Elizabeth and Mary, John the Baptist, nameless shepherds and Magi traveling great distances. Played out every year, this is **the** story, because this story is **for** us. This is not played out in a "galaxy far, far away," but here among us and with us.

And so, my advice for Advent and Christmas is to sing and dance, recall God's story and for one moment, pull away from all the commotion that the season has to offer, and dwell on the silence of that one night in Bethlehem, so long ago. A blessed Advent, a Merry Christmas and a revealing Epiphany!

Pastor V.

ST. JOHN'S ADULT CHOIR

We would like to thank all who attended our Concert on 10/22 and hope you enjoyed the selections of anthems and hymns we sang for you.

Being a Bills home game day, attendance was a little thin but we had a good time and raised \$ 461.58 for our Mortgage Reduction Fund.

Our thanks to Trevor Godus and Rick Blanch for sharing their talents with us, to Bethann Hintzman and her crew for setting up for the concert, serving and cleaning up afterwards and to all of you who brought goodies that were enjoyed by everyone who stayed for food and fellowship.

As always, our special thanks to Cindy Godus and Nick Barnhard for their leadership as we grow in our musical ministry here at St. John's.

St. John's Adult Choir

Pastor Roger's Bible Study for November and December:

November 21: Ephesians 1: 15-23

November 28: 1 Corinthians 1: 3-9

December 5: Mark 1: 1-8

December 12: 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24

December 19: Romans 16: 25-27

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

(3512 Clinton Street @ Union Rd, West Seneca)

Presents: **Our Monthly Community Dinner**

**Time:4pm – 6:30pm or until we
run out- Whichever comes
first**

Date:12/29/17

**Christmas Party with Pizza and Chicken Wing Soup
We will also have Desserts & Drinks
*** Menu subject to change *****

Date:1/26/18

**Goulash with salad
We will also have Desserts & Drinks
*** Menu subject to change *****

The meal is provided for ANYONE in need of food,
fellowship or fun... As always, the food, the seat and
the smiles are FREE but good will offerings are always
accepted.

WANTED: coupons from The Buffalo News Sunday paper. These coupons are mailed to Fort Bragg where our military personnel and their families can use them at their PX up to six months after the expiration date. Just drop them in the box on the counter in the Narthex and Sandy Stango will take it from there. Another way to support our troops and their families. Thanks, Sandy Stango

Crossbeam Deadline

Articles for the **February** issue of the Crossbeam are due by **January 14th**. Please e-mail your articles to Sue Koeppel (sekoeppe@gmail.com) or leave them in the Crossbeam mailbox outside of the church office. Electronic articles are preferred, if at all possible.



Food Barrel for WS Food Pantry

Needed for the winter months are boxed meals such as Hamburger Helper, pasta and pasta sauce.

Women of the ELCA

We all certainly enjoyed the Advent Program Sylvia Delaney presented to us. It was so good that I will share some of the highlights with you. As you know, Advent means to arrive. It refers to both past and future. We celebrate the coming of Christ and look forward to his coming again. But does this get lost in the pre-Christmas craziness and dread of the season? We thought about that and then read the Christmas story Luke 2 1-20. We all got to be a part of it by thinking about the people and animals, the star, the angel, the shepherds, the innkeeper and even the manger. What could they have been thinking? Our imaginations were very creative and we really got to think about this event in a new light and their role in it. You should try it!

Why not try to make this the year that you reduce the outside noise that surrounds the pre-Christmas season. Try to follow Mary's example and ponder things in your heart. Remember, it is the inner journey that is essential when we seek to follow Christ. So, as we wish you the peace and happiness of this season and the new year, reflect on the thought of the mystic Meister Eckhart as our

Thought for the month and the new year:

"What is the good if Mary gave birth to the son of God two thousand years ago if I do not give birth to the son of God today? We are all meant to be mothers of God. For God is always needing to be born" God needs to be born in many hearts and places around us. We are called, each in our own way to prepare the way in our own hearts first.

Submitted by Connie Arnold

Ladies Aid

We had a great turnout to try our luck at the mystery pound sale last month. Many fun and yummy items were bid on and we raised \$67.00 for the Crop Walk.

We also decided on our annual gift giving. The West Seneca Community Cupboard (food pantry), West Seneca Cares for Kids, Meals on Wheels, Harvest House and St John's Mortgage Reduction Fund are the beneficiaries of these donations.

The annual Christmas gathering will be on Sunday, December 3 at the Forestview Restaurant. It is always an enjoyable time and we look forward to the fellowship and the sharing of gifts for the Kathleen Mary House.

Our next meeting will not be until May 3 so until then, the ladies send you blessings of the holiday season and good health and happiness in the New Year.

Submitted by Connie Arnold

Power Point Schedule

	Preparer	10:45 am Presenter
December 3	Nick Barnhard	Matthew & Autumn Brown
December 10	Nancy Kessler	Trevor Godus
December 17	Nick Barnhard	Linda Altman
December 24	Nancy Kessler	Jean Stankowski
December 31	Dawn Tymorek	Keith Lang
January 7	Nick Barnhard	Matthew & Autumn Brown
January 14	Nancy Kessler	Trevor Godus
January 21	Nick Barnhard	Linda Altman
January 28	Nancy Kessler	Jean Stankowski

The community dinner group is looking for \$5 gift card donations to give away at the December Christmas Party. Some ideas are Tops, Tim Horton's, local pizzerias or restaurants, Target and K-Mart. Please give cards to Mark or Sue Koepfel by December 17th. Thank you and God bless

Assisting Minister Schedule

	9 am	10:45 am
December 3	10 am: Nancy Kessler/Sue Springer	
December 10	Pat Lipka	Karen Rothenberger
December 17	Sandy Gordon	Adam Wolff
December 24	10 am: Jim Steiner, 5 pm: Caroline Rackl, 10 pm: Evelyn Hicks	
December 31	10 am: Sue Springer	
January 7	Pat Lipka	Karen Rothenberger
January 14	Sandy Gordon	Adam Wolff
January 21	Jim Steiner	Caroline Rackl
January 28	Sue Springer	Evelyn Hicks

St. Johns Halloween Party Update

Our Halloween Party was held on Sunday October 29th at 5:00 and it was Spooktacular. There was plenty of yummy treats and food for everyone. The children made treat bags, pumpkin magnets, and went trick-or-treating in the classrooms. Pastor Valerie came dressed as a beautiful Monarch Butterfly and some lucky adults went home with door prizes. We had over 90 people attend. Thank you to everyone who helped to make this fellowship event a success. We are already making plans for next year.

God's Peace
Membership

Parish Social Life Committee

What we do:

The Parish Social Life committee's purpose is to provide opportunities for fellowship among the members of the congregation. The committee's job is to develop activities that take into consideration all ages and interests of the congregation and to provide functions, both on and off premises that aid the members in getting to know each other better. If you have a penchant for party planning, this is the group for you! Past activities have included Halloween parties, country line dancing, meeting at the movies, a day trip to Amish country, craft days and evenings, Christmas cookie exchanges, church picnics, potlucks, Lutheran Nights at the Ball Park, nights out at Shea's Performing Arts Center and more!

How YOU can help:

- Volunteer to run an activity
 - Have an idea for something fun to do? Share it with us!
 - Help out the day of the activity
- Attend various activities and get to know new faces

PSL will meet on January 7th, immediately following the 2nd service, in the Parish Hall. Our goal at this meeting will be to plan activities for 2018. If you can't make the meeting, but have ideas to share, please contact Kathy Moody at 824-9632.

Altar Guild

As I prepare this article we have not celebrated Thanksgiving yet, but we do hope everyone had a wonderful day and thanked God for the many blessings he has bestowed upon us, our families and St. John's.

Now it's time to prepare for the holidays and our greatest gift of the baby Jesus! To help decorate our church and celebrate the holiday, the guild will again be selling poinsettias. The cost is \$6.00 per plant. Please place your order by using the form found in your church bulletins or the one found in this crossbeam. Please place your money or check (made out to St. John's Altar Guild) in an envelope found in the foyer and place in the box or mail to the church. Thank you!!

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year to all, as we look forward to 2018 and the beginning of a blessed wonderful year here at St. John's!!!!

Submitted by Nancy Weber

Pastor Valerie's Bible study for December and January:

December 7: Luke 2: 1-21

December 14: Matthew 2: 1-18

December 21: Advent/Christmas/Epiphany traditions: St. Nicholas and St. Lucia

January 4: Genesis 1:1-5 and Mark 1: 4-11

January 11: I Samuel 3: 1-10 and John 1: 43-51

January 18: Jonah 3: 1-5, 10 and Mark 1: 14-20

News From the Pews

In The Hospital

John Anderson
Anne J. Hauck
Debra Kerner

Baptism

Molly Julia Budniewski, - November 5, 2017
daughter of Nicholas and Lori (Kujawa) Budniewski

Funeral

Anne J. Hauck

"I just wanted to take a moment to thank everyone for their prayers, cards and good wishes - before, during and after my recent surgery. I look forward to being back to worship soon. Love and blessings to all" **Evelyn Hicks**



This is the QR code for the St John's website. If you're not familiar, a QR code will take a mobile device directly to our web site, just by taking a picture of it.

LOST & FOUND

If you find items around our complex, please place them in the lower cabinet in the Foyer, next to the Guest Book stand. Please do not leave them lying where you found them.

If you lose something please look in that cabinet first.

Items of value are kept in the church office.

If you bring in goodies for our many receptions during the year, please take your dishes home. Those left in the kitchen will be placed on the pew next to the Classified Ads bulletin board in the Parish Hall.

We do thank everyone who brings in goodies but we just don't have room to store the dishes left behind.

Please call Carolly Huth if you can't find what you are looking for at 826-0506.

Fund Raising Committee

During the past 3 months \$55 was raised through our Penny Jar, which is on the kitchen counter. Thanks to all who added their loose change! It sure adds up!

The October mystery box was won by a friend of Sue Springer. It was a beautiful hand made quilt of the "Women of the Bible" and the explanation of each square. It was made and donated by the talented Sue Spring and made with so much love! Over \$100 was added to the Building Fund.

More surprises are to be found in the Parish Hall—see Marie Ramey for 3 for \$1.00 tickets and you could be the next winner of the next surprise!

Submitted by Sandy Haase

HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS TO:

12/2 Diane Sloma
12/9 Sandy Haase
12/11 Karen Rothenberger
12/11 Maxine Steiner
12/12 Rick Wolf
12/13 Bob Kulak
12/20 Tracy Lumb
12/20 Suzanne Schindler
12/21 Daniel Abendenschein
12/21 Heather Gulas-Karazewski
12/24 Lee Delaney
12/24 Brian Fredericks
12/25 Jason Perillo
12/28 Michael Lollier

HAPPY DECEMBER ANNIVERSARY TO:

12/16/1972 Bill and Sandy Marzahn
12/29 Paul and Georgiana Napier

HAPPY JANUARY BIRTHDAYS TO:

1/1 Jonathan Wolf
1/4 Georgiana Napier
1/7 Evelyn Hicks
1/8 Trevor Hintzman
1/9 Gracelyn Germano
1/10 Christopher H. Gulas-Karaszawski
1/10 Jean Sankowski
1/14 Scott Luderman
1/20 Graham Vosseler
1/22 Sam Corless
1/22 Debbie Dunphy
1/24 Russ Then



*Anniversaries
and Birthdays*

DINING OUT CLUB

We will NOT be dining out in December but:
All are welcome to join us:

WHEN: JANUARY 25 - Thursday - 6:00 p.m.
WHERE: POLISH VILLA II
ENTREES: 10.95 & up entrees (Polish plates, roast beef, pork chops, seafood), appetizers, salads, sandwiches, burgers, potato pancakes.

DIRECTIONS: 1085 Harlem Rd. north of Clinton St. in Cheektowaga

RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE DUE TO THE SIZE OF OUR GROUP. PLEASE SIGN UP ON THE SHEET ON THE COUNTER IN THE FOYER AND NAME WHO YOU ARE RIDING WITH.

RESTAURANT REVIEW:

Ruby Tuesday's: - 15 of us enjoyed dinner together and we had a good time as always. Their salad bar is back to normal which is a good thing. A variety of entrees were ordered and all seemed happy with their choices and, yes, some food went home!

We choose our next restaurant from a sheet that is passed around at each dinner. The restaurant with the most Xs is where we go next. Sometimes a favorite is included on the list and we go there again. This is a chance to visit a restaurant you wouldn't normally go to and get to know your fellow members at St. John's. Your family and friends are always welcome. Please call Carolly Huth at 826-0506 should you have questions or suggestions.

Submitted by Carolly Huth

Sunday Church School

Merry Christmas and Blessings in the New Year to all of our families!

Dates to note:

December 10th: Christmas program at the 9 am service

December 24th & 31st: Winter break, no Sunday School classes

January 7th: SCS resumes and we celebrate Epiphany during the Sunday School hour

March 18th: First Communion

May 20th: Confirmation

Looking for the new 2018 offering envelopes? They will arrive just before Christmas and will be delivered to your child's classroom.

Submitted by Kathy Moody

Preschool

I would like to thank the following for the very generous donations to our Preschool:

\$450 from a member of the congregation

\$202.69 from Mark's October Chili Dinner

\$417.33 from Pastor Roger's ordination offering taken at Holy Trinity on November 4th

Finally, thanks to all who came to the Panera bread fund raiser on November 15th.

We continually ask for your prayers for our students and school and staff.

Submitted by Sandy Haase

Stewardship November 2017

The members of the Stewardship Committee are Pastor Valerie de Cathineau, Pastor Roger Griffiths, Sharon Tyler, Sylvia Delaney, Rick Lipka, and Ron Wirth.

Sunday Nov. 5th we held one final meeting to prepare for the scheduled kick-off the Stewardship Program, on the weekend of November 11th and 12th, and Stewardship Sunday the weekend of November 25th and 26th. Pastor Valerie and Pastor Roger will be gearing their Sermons to Stewardship.

Thanks and God Bless

Ron Wirth

St. John's Stewardship Committee

St. John's Community Preschool 4th Annual Toy Sale will take place May 4-5, 2018

Please consider donating to our biggest Preschool fundraiser of the year!

We are looking for

- * Gently used or antique Toys
- * Gently used or antique Books (kids books only please)
- * Baby items
- * Outdoor play items
- * Homemade items for children

All money raised to be used for new toys/equipment for St. John's Community Preschool & the classroom used by our littlest Sunday School Students (3 & 4 year olds). Donations may be dropped off upstairs in the educational building-room 203a.

Also, won't you please consider volunteering to help. I am looking for help with publicity and to set up and price during days on May 2 or 3 as well as on the sales days from 9-1 to cashier or assist. Please call or text me with any questions or to offer assistance. 901-6570
Tracy Lumb

CHARLES E. BURCHFIELD

Saturday, 11/11 we hosted a book signing for Nancy Tomchuck Barlow who wrote and self-published a book entitled Charles Ephriam Burchfield Watercolor Artist The Gardenville Years 1925 - 1967. It was to have been held at the Burchfield Nature and Arts Center but, with the problems there, the building could not be used. They called us and we said yes as the Burchfield's lived four doors down from our church...we were neighbors.

Nancy interviewed many of their neighbors and friends in Gardenville. Their reminiscences, Mr. Burchfield's own entries from his journals that he kept all his life, pictures of his paintings and pictures of what Gardenville looked like during those years, courtesy of the Penny-Burchfield Art Gallery and the West Seneca Historical Society, are included in her book.

Some of our members are acknowledged in this book as is Pastor Printzenhoff. We have two copies of the book, one in our Library and one in our Archives. Please see Karen Rothenberger to sign out a copy.

A reception, courtesy of the Docents from the Burchfield Nature and Arts Center, was held in our Parish Hall so that people could chat with old friends and share their stories.

If you would like your own copy of the book, please contact Nancy Barlow, P.O. Box 980, Williamsville NY 14321.

Thank you Mark & Sue Koepfel for manning our kitchen and setting up the Parish Hall for this community event.

Submitted by Carolly Huth

Poinsettia Order Form

\$6.00 per plant

Number ordered _____

PLEASE PRINT

In loving memory of _____

In honor of _____

Given By _____

Please return to the church office by December 10th.

Checks made payable to St. John's Altar Guild



Christian Education Committee

What we do:

The Christian Education committee acts as a reporting agent for all educational programs and activities within the congregation and makes recommendations which will enhance the educational program.

Our Christian Education programs include the Adult Education programs, the Catechetical program, the First Communion program, Library, the Community Pre School, Sunday Church School, SCS Christmas program and Vacation Church School. The committee monitors each of the programs and offers assistance to our volunteer leaders whenever needed.

How YOU can help:

Each member of our congregation has a talent or talents that when shared, can be mutually beneficial! Please consider these ideas:

- Teach Sunday Church School or volunteer to be a substitute teacher
- Help out as a teacher's aide in SCS
- Offer your talents during our Vacation Bible Study week
- Foster friendships and learn more about your faith in a bible study class!
- Like to read? Borrow a book from our library!

If you are interested in offering your assistance to any of the CE groups, please contact Kathy Moody or Sandy Haase.

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