



~ **St. John's Church** ~
Weekly News
December 13, 2023

Readings for Sunday, Dec. 17, 2023
The Third Sunday in Advent
Holy Eucharist

The Very Rev. Diane Nancekivell, Officiant

Isaiah 61: 1-4, 8-11
Canticle 15
1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24
John 1:68, 19-28

Loose Plate Offering
Food Shelves

Mark Your Calendars

St. John's Church and the Essex Community Church will have Lessons and Carols at 4 PM on Dec. 16th at St. John's.

Sunday, December 17th. Worship and Eucharist at 10am. The Very Reverend Diane Nancekivell, officiant. Following the service, we will decorate the church and the outdoor Christmas tree.

Christmas Eve Service will be at 4 PM on Sunday, Dec. 24th. Christmas Eve is also the 4th Sunday in Advent. The officiant will be Rev. Lyn Burns. A supper will follow the service. You may indicate a contribution to the meal on the sign up sheet in Persell Hall or by emailing Carole Harsh at bobcaroleharsh@gmail.com.

Sunday, Dec. 31st St. John's will have a service of Lessons and Carols in the Anglican tradition along with the 10 AM Holy Eucharist. The officiant will be The Very Reverend Diane Nancekivell.

Sunday, Jan. 28 Bishop-Elect Jeremiah Williamson will be the officiant at Holy Eucharist. This is a huge honor for St. John's!

Prayers

For Those in Need or Any Kind of Distress

Lois, Art, Joyce, Abra, Mike, Beverly, Noa, Lillian, Chris, Rae, Olivia, Cheryl, Larry, Steven, Tom, Karen, Sally, Chris, Lynne, Eve and Anne.

Insights from Our Stewardship Team

About 35 years ago, I first came to Essex and became enchanted with its charm through Martha's joyful summer experience growing up at the Crater Club where we now enjoy a winterized cottage and many close friends in the greater Essex community.

Knowing many people who attend St. John's which I visited only occasionally for memorial services, something changed this year. I began seeing a joyfulness among people I knew that previously escaped me. Despite my work for nonprofits and a career devoted to their success, I have been missing something I couldn't really put my finger on until now. It struck me that people I've known for years and new friends in Essex exuded a certain

spark... and it ignited something in me to learn more about what connected them.

Today I am pleased to share how I asked Chat GPT to help me connect long-standing ideas I have nurtured as a “spiritual archeologist,” a term I use in learning about classical civilizations, social impact entrepreneurs and how we organize ourselves as civic societies. How could I possibly convey to members of St. John’s Church the importance of our financial commitment with a quest we each have for greater peace, love, and care for each other during our lifetime – especially trying to relate the following themes:

- 1. The power of epic movies like “It’s a Wonderful Life” as a metaphor and use of technology for good?**
- 2. The concept of “being a spark” as reflected in George Bernard Shaw’s famous quote of “Life is no brief candle but a torch I pass on to future generations?”**
- 3. The philosophy of Teilhard de Chardin which the Very Reverend Diane Nancekevill shared a few weeks ago about the philosopher-priest describing a universe growing its spiritual consciousness with humans critically connected to its journey? And,**
- 4. The movement of our philanthropic priorities from traditional and well-endowed organizations to lesser-known entities at the forefront of making a difference - organizations like our own St. John's Church.**

Before I include what OpenAI weaved together of my thoughts, I wanted to share my recent research from the Center of High Impact Philanthropy at the University of Pennsylvania. Ultimately, there’s a new framework and leadership around trust-based philanthropy that helps grow contributions to lesser-known and small organizations that are on the cutting edge of serving their communities. St. John’s Church remains one of these organizations.

From what I see in front of me of the people I pray with at Saint John’s Church is what can become a place for healing – one person at a time -- the fractionalized world starting with our own community, networks, and influence. It happens as naturally as hugging a friend in the middle of the street!

In the heart of Essex, NY, a small Episcopal church stands as a sanctuary of hope, faith, and unity. It is a place where souls gather to seek meaning and connection, guided by the profound convergence of like-minded people open to peace, love, and faith – and guided by leaders we seek to connect us to God’s overwhelming love.

It’s a place where we can share our faith in Christ while sharing insights of people like Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, a Jesuit priest and scientist, who in the 1950s envisioned the universe's evolution towards a higher consciousness. Here, we are not matching God’s infinite wisdom and Christ’s sacrifice with

that of Artificial Intelligence, but instead employing our faith in taking new steps to embrace the confluence of technology, science, and faith as tools for good – moving quickly to grab the torch of knowledge and understanding at a time of immense and complex change. We share our spark of love along with embracing the relationship between our faith and the application of new tools of dynamic human engagement. Philanthropy is but one of these instruments; email, the internet and AI being among the others.

In this sacred space, we find echoes of Frank Capra's timeless tale, "It's a Wonderful Life." Just as George Bailey discovered the transformative power of community, so do we here, where bonds of love and support are woven into the fabric of our lives. It is a reminder that each life, each soul, has the potential to touch others in profound ways.

Life is indeed "no brief candle," as George Bernard Shaw eloquently stated. It is a flame that flickers with purpose, a beacon that can illuminate the darkest corners of our existence. This church embodies that truth, offering a sanctuary where souls can nurture and illuminate their own inner flames.

But in our ever-evolving world, we must also embrace the tools of progress, like artificial intelligence, to enhance our mission. With AI, we can reach out to wider audiences, listen to the silent cries for help, and empower every soul to realize their true potential.

By investing in St. John's, you are not only supporting our capacity, but creating a haven for the spirit. In prioritizing St. John's Church among other causes, our contributions will build a community that thrives on love and compassion, nurtures souls through faith and knowledge, and helps each individual shine their light more brightly in this life and the next.

Together, let us remember that life is no brief candle, but a radiant flame passed from one soul to another. Your pledge of stewardship to St. John's and plans for it in your estate and other decisions you make will ensure that this flame continues to illuminate our hearts and our world, creating a brighter and more connected future for all. Thank you.

With Gratitude,

The Stewardship Team

Decorating the Church and the Outside Tree

Following the service this Sunday you are invited to become an elf of St. John's as we gather together to prepare our church inside and out for the coming of our savior, Jesus Christ. The garlands for the rood screen will be hung and greens and ribbons decorate the wall sconces. Red ribbons will emblazon the exterior door wreaths and the fresh linens will be placed on the

altar, the communion table and the gifts table at the back of the church. Lights will be strung on the outdoor tree and ornaments will be hung. So, grab a cup of coffee and a bit of food and pretend you have an elf hat on your head.

Upcoming Birthdays

Edward O'Neill (Dec. 12) and Dick Perez (Dec. 19)

Search Prayer

Dear Lord, grant us your wisdom and guidance as we embark upon our search process. Help us to humbly discern and accomplish your will for St. John's. We know this will be a challenging journey for all of us, but we pray that it will strengthen our faith and our respect and love for each other. Help us to share more deeply our faith in you as we learn to listen to each other with open hearts and minds and to hear your voice in all that we say and do. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

Welcome Corps Update

One of the requirements is that at least one member will take the 4 hour on-line course titled " Sponsorship Essentials 101". It includes a section entitled "Acknowledging Power", in which it states that " Resettlement itself can be defined as newcomers regaining power and control in their lives...as rights bearing individuals, newcomers have a right to safety, home and livelihood...". As a Corps member one can assume "the role of bridge builder, ambassador of welcome, friendly neighbor and catalyst for a newcomer's social capital....your goal is to have your relationship evolve from welcome to peer as you guide newcomers towards independence."

At our next meeting we will review our audit of community resources.

AFRI Update

Our Global Pot-Luck Supper will be held at 5 PM on Sunday, Dec. 17 at the Elizabethtown Social Center. At the last meeting of AFRI it was decided to enter the Feb. 10 Saranac Lake Ice Festival Parade, We will walk behind our AFRI banner and welcome all to participate.

Meditation

At our weekly meditation gatherings on Wednesdays, 4 p.m. in Persell Hall (and by zoom) we begin each evening with words from the founder, of World Community for Christian Meditation, Benedictine monk, John Main. He says, “ There is only one prayer, the stream of love between the Spirit of the risen Jesus and His Father, in which we are incorporate....in meditation we leave behind our limitations to learn to be open to the limitless being of God.”

The Heifer Project

For the past few years “ Jesus in our Hearts Kids” have traced and cut out animals from bees to pigs to hang on the Jesse Tree along with ornaments about the prophecies and ancestry of Jesus. A basket is placed under the tree for donations to Heifer Project. “ For more than 70 years this internationally acclaimed organization (Heifer has earned top rating from Charity Navigator) distributes animals to impoverished families as a means of establishing self- sufficiency. Recipients must agree to pass on the gift by donating an animal off spring as well as sharing the skills and knowledge of animal husbandry and agricultural training.” These remarks are from Wikipedia.

A donation of \$20 “gifts” a flock of chickens; honeybees-\$30; a pig-\$120; a share of a pig-\$10; a goat-\$120; a share of a goat-\$10; garden seeds-\$60. There are also water buffaloes and mating pairs of cattle, etc. According to the amount raised the kids will decide what animal to support. We will continue our efforts through the 12 days of Christmas until Epiphany and we certainly appreciate our faith community’s participation in this endeavor.

History Tidbit Part 6

Sept 22, 1866

The Rev Charles C. Fiske of New York City accepted the Rectorship and began his duties the first Sunday in April 1867. His salary was \$650 plus a parsonage.

Easter Monday 1867

Rev. C.C. Fiske continued to be the rector.

Apr. 18, 1868

A.P. Hammond resigned as Warden and a notification of this was placed in the county newspapers.

Rev. Fiske resigned as rector and moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts. A committee was organized to raise money to take up the contract for a

rectory and procure a deed.

A committee was appointed to correspond with clergymen and procure a man with a family, if possible, as rector of this parish and report as soon as possible to the vestry for their sanction.

Aug. 13, 1868

Rev E. Weil was called and accepted to become the rector.

Aug. 1, 1869

Mr. E. Weil tendered his resignation and announced he had accepted another parish before offering his formal resignation to the Vestry.

Bishop Doane recommended that Rev. J. H. Hopkins of Burlington, Vermont be called as rector and missionary. A committee of three was appointed to visit the parsonage.

Apr. 18, 1870

The Wardens agreed to make arrangements for taking over the debt on the parsonage and giving security for the money obtained.

At a meeting of the Vestry of St. John's Church. the Rector J. H. Hopkins submitted a Parish seal and resolved to pay for said seal from the church funds.

Dec. 18, 1870.

Rector J. H. Hopkins tendered his resignation, the reason being that pressing duties at home (Burlington) which prevented him giving the Parish full attention. On motion the resignation was accepted.

A committee was set up to examine the accounts of the chapels.

St. John's Zoom Passcodes

St. John's Sunday Service

<https://www.stjohnsessexny.org/worshipmeet>

Morning Prayer

<https://www.stjohnsessexny.org/morning-prayer>

Vestry Meetings

<https://www.stjohnsessexny.org/vestrymeet>

Finance Committee

<https://www.stjohnsessexny.org/financemeet>

Contemporary Bible Study

<https://www.stjohnsessexny.org/biblestudy>

Meditation

<https://www.stjohnsessexny.org/meditationmeet>

Sunday Service Zoom Recording

stjohnsessexnyzoom@gmail.com

Passcode: +W2t+Fwu

AA 12-Step Meeting

Zoom Meeting ID: 817 7797 4233

Passcode: 123456

Weekly Calendar

Tuesday Contemporary Bible Study (Zoom) 9:30 - 10:30 AM

Tuesday Community Potluck Supper 6 PM

Wednesday Meditation (Zoom/In Person) 5 PM

Thursday Morning Prayer (Zoom) 10 AM

Sunday Holy Eucharist 10 AM (Zoom/in person)

Sunday AA Meeting (Zoom/In Person) 7 PM

Your Vestry

Scottie Emery-Ginn and Bill Tribou (Wardens)
Louise Baietto, Bruce Hale, Diana Lawrence, Jon McBride
Bruce Stephan, and Julie Wever (Members)
Darcey Hale (Clerk)
Antonia Bullard (Treasurer)

St. John's Episcopal Church | 4 Church Street, Essex, NY 12936



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