

St. John's Good News

From Reverend Sarah...

*"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'"*

Dear Friends,

Our Episcopal and Anglican Traditions rely on a variety of visual symbols to mark the seasons of the calendar: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and Ordinary Time. The most obvious is the change of colors on the altar: blue for Advent, purple for Lent, white for Epiphany/Easter, green for Ordinary Time and red for Feast days like Pentecost. We also change aspects of our common worship to fit the tone of the season. This Advent we focus on the Incarnation with a Eucharistic Prayer from *The Scottish Liturgy 1982*.

Each of these changes, and the many others that I won't list, are not done to annoy or confuse people. Rather these changes help us to recognize that we have begun a new worship season.

Unlike the earthly seasons, that we can't ignore, worship seasons are quite easy to ignore. Advent, Lent and Ordinary Time aren't mentioned on the news or in the weather forecast. They are not part of the everyday conversations with family and friends at work or school. Unless you participate in regular worship and/or were raised in the church you might move through the seasons totally oblivious. Which is why it's vital that we have visual changes in our worship to remind us that a season has ended and new one has begun.

Advent, which begins the first Sunday of December, is the season with the hardest transition. It seems that no matter how much we plan and prepare for Advent, we are surprised when it arrives. But that doesn't mean we need to be a constant rush to make up for lost time or just throw our hands up in the air in frustration. It means that we need to stop, to take a breath, and a notice where we find God. When we stop, even if at first, it's only for a moment we can fully appreciate that Advent is different.

cont'd.



December 2017

Advent Worship
Schedule

Sunday Morning
8am Rite I
10am Rite II

Phone: 781-233-1242

Twitter:
@StJohnsSaugus

Facebook: Friends of
St. John's Episcopal
Church Saugus

Inside this issue **Page**

From Rev. Sarah, December Events	1-3
From the Sr. & Jr. Wardens, Dinner update	4
ECDS & Community updates	5
Word Search	6

During the four weeks of Advent we actively prepare for the birth of Jesus by preparing for his arrival in our hearts. Yes, there are outer preparations but these are empty if they do not come out of the inner preparations. On the first Christmas morning, Jesus was born in the flesh to Mary and Joseph. Through the grace of the resurrection Jesus is reborn each year in our hearts and in our souls. We each become the stable and the manger that will hold the tiny infant.

So how do we make ourselves ready to receive the baby Jesus? First, we ask for help preparing for this change and admit that we can't complete all the preparations on our own. We find people who will encourage us to move our attention away from the world and back to God. We join Tuesday's Bible Study group to learn about the women in the Christmas story. We participate in Wednesday night's program: *Finding Hope in Advent* which includes a shared meal, program and Healing Eucharist. We use Advent Calendars that offer simple activities or prayers for each day of the Christmas countdown. We sit in silence as we light the candles of the Advent Wreath on our kitchen table. Through all of these actions we clear up the unnecessary stuff in our lives so that there's room for the birth of the Messiah.

May the Prince of Peace be born in each of us this Christmas.

Peace,
Sarah

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DECEMBER EVENTS

WELCOME TO ADVENT!

On Sunday, December 3 we enter into the season of Advent when we prepare for the birth of Jesus. The four weeks of Advent are meant to be a time to reflect upon how Jesus is or isn't present in our lives and how we might better connect with the incarnate God. In Sunday worship we will pray a Eucharistic Prayer from *The Scottish Liturgy 1982* that has a special emphasis on the Advent themes of creation and light/darkness. *The first Sunday of Advent, December 3, we welcome The Rev. Canon Libby Berman as our guest preacher.* As the Canon for Congregational Life, Rev. Libby supports parishes in their work within the congregation and the wider community. *On the same Sunday we'll welcome our Warmth Tree which will collect hats, gloves, scarves, mittens etc...for children and adults in need this winter.*

FOR WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS, THERE WILL YOUR HEART BE ALSO STEWARSHIP UPDATE.

Thank you to everyone who has generously responded to our stewardship campaign by returning a 2018 pledge card. As of last count pledges have reached over \$65,000 which is near last year's amount of \$76,000. If you have not returned your pledge card please do so that the Treasury Team can have an accurate amount as they work on the 2018 budget. Please speak with Rev. Sarah for more info or if you have any questions or concerns about pledging.

ADVENT LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES TUESDAY MORNINGS AND WEDNESDAY EVENINGS.

During Advent all are encouraged to participate in both or one of our Adult Formation Programs! SIGN UP ASAP! For more info please see Rev. Sarah.

* **Bible Study (Tuesdays, 10:30-noon):** Come learn about the women of the Christmas story: Elizabeth, Mary and Anna

* **Finding Hope in Advent (12/6, 12/13, 12/20, 6:00-8:00pm):** Each evening will begin with a potluck dinner followed by a short class.

~ On 12/6 Stephen Belyea will lead an Icon Class which will include a short history as well a chance to paint your own icon using water colors.

~ On 12/13 Rev. Sarah will teach a class on Lectio divina which is an ancient method of praying with Scripture.

~ On 12/20 a Blue Christmas Service will be offered in recognition that many of us experience feeling "blue" during the holiday season.

YOUTH GROUP MEETS SUNDAY, 12/10, 12-2, FOR GUEST SPEAKER & COOKIE DECORATING.

The Rev. H. Mark Smith is the Director of Youth Ministries of the entire Diocese providing leadership training, mission trips, and lots of fun for youth in grades 6-12. He will visit with the Youth Group and parents to share about opportunities for our youth to join the Diocesan Youth Council, attend the summer mission trip and much more. We will also decorate Christmas cookies!!

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT IS COMING!

Each year at the 4:30pm Christmas Eve service the St. John's children and youth will offer the Christmas Pageant to tell the story of the birth of Jesus. The rehearsal will be at 2:30pm on Christmas Eve and will include pizza. Sign up ASAP! For more info please speak with Alison Coppola.

ADVENT IV, CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS MORNING SERVICES.

This year the last Sunday of Advent is ALSO Christmas Eve so there will be one regular service at 9:00am. There will be 2 Christmas Eve services: at 4:30pm with the Christmas Pageant and at 11:00pm with the Church Choir. There will be a Christmas morning service at 10:00am in the Hurl Room.

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**From the Sr. Warden...**

Wow, it's December already?

It's been a busy year at St. John's, and one that has seen us navigate our ship of faith without a spiritual leader for a good part of the year. While we were going through the Priest-in-Charge process, we did quite well in not only keeping St. John's active in our community, but also maintaining many of our most valued traditions. None of this could be possible without all of you, our wonderful parishioners, who ceaselessly give of your time. And in this season of appreciation, I want to extend a heartfelt "Thank You" to everyone who chips in to keep St. John's alive and relevant to all of us, and our community of Saugus.

Best wishes to all for a wonderful Christmas and New Year.  
T.J. Martin

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From the Jr. Warden...

Collecting Bottles and Can deposits for "My Brother's Table"

Armand Couture has volunteered to take over the redemption of the bottles and cans collected for "My Brother's Table" Please bring in your rinsed bottles and cans and leave them in the labeled blue recycling barrel found by the stairs at the Ashworth Hall entrance next to the Church. This ministry has generated \$500 this year which will be sent in to relieve someone's hunger. Every nickel can make a difference.

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas.....Just for you.

On Friday evening 6:30 P.M. December 22nd, all are invited to decorate the Church for our Christmas services. We will be putting up the Rood Screen, hanging the evergreens and other preparations for the holiday. It won't be as much fun without you.

Thanks,
Fritz White

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**Roast Beef Dinner**

Our annual roast beef dinner was a triumph! It was wonderful gathering of St. John's parishioners and friends in the community. Again, heartfelt thanks to the White Family, Bill Bidmead, Armand Couture, Donna Manoogian, and several others who helped make the evening a success.



The proceeds far exceeded years past—we are deeply blessed and grateful for everyone's support!

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Every Child Deserves to Smile



During the month of December we will continue to collect paper towels, paper plates, plastic utensils, microwaveable meals, granola bars and snacks. Also in need are travel-sized shampoo, soap, lotion, lip balm, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste and emergency rain ponchos. Donations may be left in the Every Child Deserves to Smile collection container in the vestibule.

The next quarterly meeting will be held December 7th, 9:30 AM in the Hurll Room. All are welcome as we make plans for 2018! Contact Jeanne Seaboyer at 781-662-4342 or jmseaboyer@gmail.com with any questions or if you wish to be placed on the email list.

Giving back to the Saugus community:

Thank you to all who contributed to our collection for the Saugus Fire Department's annual Christmas drive. As of this writing, we will be sending \$175 in gift certificates to be distributed by the Fire Department to teens in need in Saugus. Your donations will make Christmas a little brighter for a teen. Thank You!



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**Have a most blessed and joyous Christmas!**



# Word Search

R E G G N O G N C E N J R V F P E  
 W W R P V A A G O O D W I L L O V  
 A O T V I T R I N I T Y W X J I V  
 B G R P M G F I R E P L A C E N Z  
 L B I S E V I P K C Y F D U S S G  
 N D L F H A O N V H A B H E U E D  
 H A J U T I C R G X O N A S S T B  
 V Q W F S S P E N E Y L D L N T W  
 W K C E Z T C R A A R J L L S I I  
 R C V E M N E S I G M B N Y E A T  
 E J A Y M S J R S B C E R R E S M  
 A W O R Y M M O Y R B N N E L X A  
 T J P S O F A Y Y F N O A T A O R  
 H X W T E L R N R F E R N D S D Y  
 L E B N X P E V U R U O L F L F R  
 G S B T B H H R O E H L H Y I Z N  
 P A G E A N T G S X L R H N N L F

BALSAM ~ BLUSTERY ~ CANDLES ~ CAROLERS ~ EGGNOG ~ EMMANUEL  
 FIREPLACE ~ GIFTS ~ GINGERBREAD ~ GOODWILL ~ HOLLY ~ JESUS  
 JOSEPH ~ JOYFUL ~ MARY ~ MYRRH ~ ORNAMENTS ~ PAGEANT ~ PEACE  
 POINSETTIA ~ RIBBON ~ TRINITY ~ WORSHIP ~ WREATH

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Officers: The Reverend Sarah van Gulden, Priest-in-Charge, T. J. Martin, Sr. Warden ~ Fritz White, Jr. Warden ~ Phil Littlehale, Treasurer ~ Janet Lancaster, Asst. Treasurer ~ Sandy Mears, Clerk of the Vestry

Vestry: Nancy Belyea (2019) ~ Alison Coppola (2018) ~ Armand Couture (2018) ~ Paul Felci (2020) ~ Sandy St. Clair (2019) ~ Jeanne Seaboyer (2020) ~ Jenna Sharwood (2020) ~ Nick White (2018)