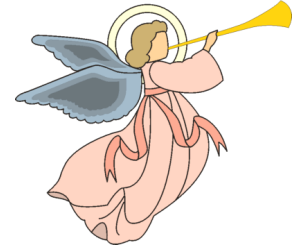


St. John's Good News



December 2019

Advent Worship

December
8am ~ Rite I
10am ~ Rite II

Phone: 781-233-1242

Twitter:
[@StJohnsSaugus](#)

Facebook: St. John's
Episcopal Church
Saugus

From Rev. Rebecca....

*Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

As a church, we have said this collect every Sunday for hundreds of years.

In it we acknowledge that God is all knowing. God knows our hearts. God knows our deepest desires. God knows the secrets we keep even from ourselves.

What a blessing this is! Because God knows us inside and out, God can help us find and dwell within the Hope, Peace, Joy and Love that we desperately need.

These are the watchwords of Advent: Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. Let us pray as we have prayed so often, that the thoughts our hearts might be open to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and Hope, Peace, Joy and Love might grow not only in our hearts but in our church and in the world.

In Christ,
Rebecca

~~~~~

### Holiday Worship Schedule

Advent Worship ~ Sunday at 8 & 10am  
December 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, and 22<sup>nd</sup>

Christmas Eve Pageant ~ December 24<sup>th</sup> at 4:30pm

Christmas Eve Vigil ~ 10pm

A Festival of Lessons and Carols ~ December 29<sup>th</sup> at 10am

Epiphany Sunday ~ January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 8 & 10am

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Cont'd

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We are offering a few opportunities during the Advent season to help us remember that Advent is not only a countdown for Christmas, but an opportunity to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ.

Advent Wreath Making Workshop

*After church on **Sunday, December 1st**
All supplies will be provided. Please sign up to ensure we order enough.*

Prayers and Pizza (and Salad)

*Wednesday Evening, **December 11 @ 6:30 pm***

*Pretty music, simple prayers, and pleasant fellowship while we eat.
Please sign up (in Ashworth Hall) so we know how many to prepare for.*

The Christmas Story for Children and Their Families

***Sunday, December 15 @ Noon** in the Chapel (Hurll Room).
I will tell the Christmas Story using the Beulah Land Felt Board.
This will be followed by a child friendly Eucharist.*

*This is a great opportunity to invite grandchildren, neighbor children,
any and all children in your lives who do not come to our church, but
would be blessed by hearing and experiencing the Christmas Story.*

~ Rev. Rebecca

~~~~~

**About Advent...**

Julia Aston found this prayer by author Renee Swope on the internet - we quote from it here:

*This Advent, Lord, come to the manger of my heart.  
Fill me with Your presence from the very start.  
As I prepare for the holidays and gifts to be given,  
Remind me of the gift You gave when You sent Your Son from Heaven.*

~ Renee Swope, "The Manger of My Heart" from Proverbs 31 Ministries

*Cont'd*

## The Advent Wreath and Candles



The Advent wreath is created out of evergreens, symbolizing everlasting life in the midst of winter and death. The circle reminds us of God's unending love and the eternal life He makes possible. Advent candles are often nestled in the evergreen wreath. Additional decorations, like holly and berries, are sometimes added.

The most common Advent candle tradition, involves four candles. A new candle is lit on each of the four Sundays before Christmas. The first, second, and fourth candles are purple; the third candle is rose-colored. Occasionally, a fifth white candle is placed in the middle and is lit on Christmas Day to celebrate Jesus' birth.

## What is Advent? History & Meaning

The word "Advent" is derived from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "coming," which is a translation of the Greek word *parousia*.

By the 6<sup>th</sup> century, Roman Christians had tied Advent to the coming of Christ. But the "coming" they had in mind was not Christ's first coming in the manger in Bethlehem, but his second coming in the clouds as the judge of the world. It was not until the Middle Ages that the Advent season was explicitly linked to Christ's first coming at Christmas.

Today, the season of Advent lasts for four Sundays leading up to Christmas. To balance the two elements of remembrance and anticipation, the first two Sundays in Advent (through December 16<sup>th</sup>) look forward to Christ's second coming, and the last two Sundays (December 17<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>) look backward to remember Christ's first coming. Over the course of the four weeks, Scripture readings move from passages about Christ's return in judgment to Old Testament passages about the expectation of the coming Messiah to New Testament passages about the announcements of Christ's arrival by John the Baptist and the Angels.

~ Our thanks to Julia for finding this information for us!

Excerpts from Christianity[dot]com

**Please be sure to pick up an **Advent** calendar insert; they will be available at the church (reprinted with permission).**

## Christmas Card & Treat Sale

**December 8th and 15th**

**After 8 & 10am worship in Ashworth Hall ~ browse the table and pick up a treat/gift for a loved one...or indulge yourself!**

**Christmas Cards ~ Chocolate Treats ~ Christmas Crafts**

~ Julia, Jeannine, Elizabeth

## 2020 Stewardship Update

The Stewardship Ministry Team mailed out 96 pledge packages in the beginning of November. As of November 19th, 38 pledges have been returned totaling \$62,204.00. Thirteen people were able to increase their pledge this year in the amount of \$2,360.00, 21 pledges stayed the same as last year and 2 pledges decreased.

Last year we had 59 pledges totaling a little over \$87,000. The finance committee is hoping to be able to budget \$86,000.00 for the 2020 church budget.

In 2019, pledges made up about 49% of the church budget. Rental of the church to two other churches and rental of the rectory accounted for 32%, while fundraising, investment dividends and incidental donations made up the final 19%.

Thank you to all who have already returned their pledge cards. If you have not returned yours yet, we hope you are able to do so soon.

The Stewardship Ministry team will be sending out reminders at the end of November. Pledge envelopes will be distributed at the end of December.

Thank you for your support of St. John's and it's ministry for 2020!

Julia Aston, Chair  
2020 Stewardship Ministry

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Amazon Smile

Shopping online this holiday season? Your gift-giving can give a little extra—please sign in to Amazon Smile and choose St. John's as your nonprofit. A portion of all eligible purchases will be donated directly to the church. :)!

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## Christmas Prayer List

Please forward names in remembrance (or in thanksgiving) for the Christmas prayer list to the church office no later than **Wednesday, December 18th**. Thank you.

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Wishing you all a most joyous and blessed Christmas!

WORD SEARCH

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

Carolers ~ Cider ~ Creche ~ Eggnog ~ Emmanuel ~ Gingerbread ~ Goodwill
 Holly ~ Icicle ~ Magi ~ Mittens ~ Myrrh ~ Pageant ~ Poinsettia ~ Prophecy
 Shepherds ~ Star ~ Stockings ~ Tidings

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**Officers:** The Rev. Rebecca Blair, Bridge Priest ~ T. J. Martin, Sr. Warden ~ Daniel Casey, Jr. Warden ~ Phil Littlehale, Treasurer ~ Janet Lancaster, Asst. Treasurer ~ Brenda Caggiano, Clerk of the Vestry

**Vestry:** Dale Coogan (2021) ~ Paul Felci (2020) ~ Rose Holt (2022) ~ Kieron Sharwood (2020) ~ Sandy St. Clair (2022) ~ William 'Bill' St. Clair (2021) ~ Jeanne Seaboyer (2020) ~ Jenna Sharwood (2020) ~ Diana White (2021)