

# St. John's Good News

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**From Reverend Sarah...**

Dear Friends,

Merry Christmas! We are now in the midst of the 12 Days of Christmas, when every day we celebrate God incarnate in the infant Jesus. And so the story we heard in the Christmas Pageant continues beyond December 25.

For the last 80 plus years the town of Rockport puts on a live Nativity Pageant that winds its way through the village square to the front lawn of the First Congregational Church. Rockport takes great pride in the long-held traditions that regularly bring together the town community. With modern technology we are connected with our global neighbors but it's equally important to connect with our next door neighbors.

The Nativity Pageant, like most pageants, starts off in total chaos. About an hour before it begins the actors meet in an empty art gallery to dig through piles of costumes. At the back of the gallery are older women ready to help by pinning up long robes or loosening tight tunics. Children full of excitement run around trying on the costumes and escaping their parents' grasps. Just two blocks away a crowd starts to assemble on the church lawn in front of a small barn adorned with lights and containing a small manger. The dark cold air pushes people together to find shelter from the wind. At first they wait patiently, but as the start time approaches and then passes, the crowd becomes increasingly impatient and cold.

Finally, the pageant begins with a solemn march as the Roman guards, shepherds, men, women, and finally Joseph and Mary make their way to the barn. As they walk a narrator tells the nativity story based on the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Once the pageant arrives at the barn the chaos begins again as people start taking pictures, children run up to say hello to their family and friends, babies start to cry and the sound system begins to die. Following this second round of chaos is my personal favorite part of the pageant. At the end of the story the entire crowd sings "Silent Night." And even though we are all tired and cold we stand in silence after the last verse.

*cont'd.*

**January 2018**

**Winter Worship  
Schedule**

**Sunday Morning  
8am Rite I  
10am Rite II**

Phone: 781-233-1242

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Church Saugus

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The silent stillness always catches my breath. Surrounded by hundreds of people the silence is even more powerful. It reminds me that at the actual birth of Jesus, there was this moment of silence. In that second between coming into the world and taking his first breath, there was total silence as his parents, the women helping with the birth, and all of creation, waited. I imagine it was the longest moment in history as all awaited proof that God had been incarnated in human form in a tiny baby with ten fingers and ten toes.

After what must have felt like an eternity, baby Jesus drew in his first breath and let out a loud cry. The waiting was over! Jesus, our Emmanuel, had arrived to bring God's peace and love to the world. May the God of the Incarnation bring you that peace and love during this Christmas season and in the New Year.

Faithfully,

The Reverend Sarah van Gulden  
Priest-in-Charge

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**EPIPHANY BIBLE STUDY: THE GOSPEL OF MARY MAGDELENE.** During the 7 weeks of Epiphany our weekly Bible Study will read and discuss the non-canonical, meaning not in the Bible, the Gospel according to Mary of Magdala. During organization of the first, official New Testament church leaders decides which gospels and letters fit within the parameters of the church's understanding of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Works that presented "unorthodox" stories or ideas were purposely excluded from the final version of what we now know as our New Testament. Together we will look at how the Bible was put together and the reasons why this gospel was originally left out. **\*\*Please note Bible Study meeting times in January: Tuesday, January 2<sup>nd</sup> 2-3:30, Tuesday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 10:30-12, Monday, January 15<sup>th</sup> 10-12:30, Tuesday, January 30<sup>th</sup>, 10:30-12.**

**YOUTH GROUP MEETS SUNDAY, JANUARY 7 NOON-2.** Youth in grades 6-12 are welcome to the 2018 kick-off meeting after the 10am service on January 7. After lunch and outdoor games Stephen Belyea and Rev. Sarah will lead a workshop on planning a Youth Worship Service: readings, music, sermon, etc. Please bring you favorite snack to share with the group!

**VESTRY MEETS JANUARY 14 AFTER 10AM SERVICE.** The Vestry's first meeting in 2018 will be on Sunday, January 10 to approve the 2018 budget, continue conversations about the Priest-in-Charge (PIC) process and prepare for the **Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 4.** In December the Vestry met with our PIC consultant who will be working with us to answer the question: "Who does God need us to be as faith leaders in Saugus?" While this question may seem overwhelming Lynn will guide the parish through a step-by-step discernment process. At the end of 3 years the parish will have a clear sense of identity and mission as well as a description of the right Rector. The Vestry is also looking for 4 new members to serve on 1, 2, or 3 year terms. **Please speak with a Vestry member or Rev. Sarah if you are interested in this ministry!**

**SPECIAL LESSONS AND CAROLS SERVICE AT ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL**

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 6 at 1pm.** Worship leaders from St. James Church, Cambridge will offer an Epiphany Lessons and Carols service that address the on-going racial tensions in our country. This service includes traditional as well as less common Scripture passages focused on the human struggle to include people of every description in the family of God. Carols range from old favorites to new compositions and include a number of African-American freedom songs. St. James's minister of music, Pat Michaels, will lead the music, and the St. James's Choir invites any and all singers to join in the offertory anthem, "The Storm is Passing Over." Anyone who would like to join the choir should e-mail Michaels at [patrickgmichaels@aol.com](mailto:patrickgmichaels@aol.com) to get a copy of the music and then arrive at 11 am for a rehearsal before the service. Speak with Rev. Sarah if you are interested in singing and/or attending.

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**EVERY CHILD DESERVES TO SMILE**

**During the month of January** we will continue to collect paper towels, paper plates, plastic utensils, microwaveable meals, pasta and sauce, granola bars, soup, crackers and snacks.

The turnover at the motel has increased. Presently there is an immediate need for kitchen items: can openers, large bowls for cooking in a microwave, metal utensils, dish towels, pot holders, etc. Donations may be left in the Every Child Deserves to Smile collection container in the vestibule.

**Next Meal:** Keep the Christmas Spirit alive! Volunteer to help prepare the Sunday, **January 14<sup>th</sup> meal.** We'll meet in the kitchen at **3PM.** Look for the signup sheet on the board in Ashworth Hall. If you have any questions or wish to volunteer to prepare a meal, please contact Jeanne Seaboyer 781-662-4342/ [jmseaboyer@gmail.com](mailto:jmseaboyer@gmail.com)

**GIVING BACK TO THE SAUGUS COMMUNITY:**

Update: On December 8<sup>th</sup> \$275 worth of gift certificates were delivered to Ret. Capt. Bill O'Malley for distribution to Saugus teens in need. Bill and his wife, Carol, expressed great appreciation for the support of our St. John's family. Thank you to all who expressed their Christmas spirit in such a generous way!



In April, we will once again put together toiletry care packages for patrons of The Bread of Life, as well as Every Child Deserves to Smile families. From **January through April** we are collecting travel-sized shampoo, soap, lotion, lip balm, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste and emergency rain ponchos. If you have any questions, please contact Jeanne Seaboyer: 781-662-4342/ [jmseaboyer@gmail.com](mailto:jmseaboyer@gmail.com)

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# Word Search

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

ALPINE ~ ANTIFREEZE ~ BOBSLED ~ CRISP ~ CRYSTALS ~ FLANNEL  
 FRIGID ~ FROSTBITTEN ~ GLACIAL ~ HEATED ~ HOCKEY ~ PLOW ~ POLAR  
 SHIVERING ~ SKATING ~ SNOWBOUND ~ THAW ~ TOASTY ~ TOBOGGAN  
 TUNDRA ~ VISIBILITY

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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)