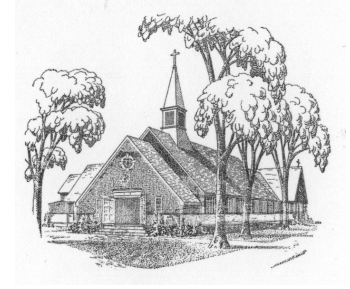


St. John's Good News

Epiphany 2025



January 2025

Dear Friends,

The Feast of Epiphany held on the 12th day of Christmas (January 6th) is also referred to as *The Manifestation of the Lord to the Gentiles*. It is on that day that we celebrate the Magi - sometimes referred to as Wise Men and (mistakenly) as kings. These were scholars who studied the stars and discerned that something strange and wonderful was happening in Bethlehem. It was a matter of pressing importance that they travel to this obscure spot, risking dangers posed by robbers along the way and by Herod - a powerful man who was dying. There are few things more dangerous than a powerful man realizing that his power is slipping away.

We do not know how many of them took on this journey. The hymn *We three Kings* inferred from the fact that there were three gifts, so there must have been three kings. What we do know about them is that they were not Jewish. The term *Gentile* is a term which is only properly used by Jewish people. It refers to all human beings who are not Jewish. It represents the foreigner who is sometimes to be welcomed and often to be feared.

The power of this Feast Day is that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is not merely a Jewish phenomenon. The Good News speaks to the life every human being on this planet. To celebrate this feast is to acknowledge that God's love is to be demonstrated not only to our family, tribe, or nation. We are called upon to recognize the dignity of every human being in the world.

To celebrate this feast is to challenge all of the forces of nationalism and xenophobia in our midst. In doing so, we can experience the joy of Christ who can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.

Peace,
John+

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Sunday worship remains at 10am, in-person and virtually: All are welcome to participate. The service also continues to broadcast via Zoom, with dial-in and link options shared by email.

Phone: 781-233-1242

Twitter:
[@StJohnsSaugus](#)

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<u>In this issue</u>	<u>Page</u>
From Rev. John	1-2
Stewardship, and Looking ahead	3
Word Search	4

Epiphany Prayer

By William Sloan Coffin

'Once again, O God, we gather to praise thy name that with all its sham and drudgery and broken dreams it is still a beautiful world. We thank thee for the blessing of the work just past, the days when we saw the sun overhead, the nights when we beheld the perfect silence of the moon and stars. We thank thee for all the snow that fell so that "the earth in solemn stillness lay." Yea, we would even thank thee for the cold and bleakness of winter, without which the warmth and the splendor of spring could never be. So too we bless thee for the bitter medicine that heals, the misfortunes without which we could never grow wise or know the meaning of true joy.

In the coming week, keep us unfaltering, affectionate, faithful. And keep us humble, that we may continue to grow. Hear now our prayers of intercession for those who are cold and hungry, that they may find rest; for the rulers of the world that they may be ruled by thee; for those who suffer wrong unjustly, that they may not be diminished by bitterness.

As the new year continues to unfold, bless us all, O God, with the sure knowledge that we are loved for ourselves and in spite of ourselves. So may we continue to love our world, to laugh at its sham, redeem its drudgery, and fulfill at last, its broken dreams. All this we pray in the name of the Son, Jesus Christ.'

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

(from the prologue of "*The Desert*" by Minnie Louise Haskins, 1875-1957)

I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year
'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.'

And he replied,
'Go into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God
That shall be to you better than a light and safer than a known way!'

~ ~ ~ ~ ~



Report on St. John's 2025 Stewardship Ministry

I would like to thank everyone for your prompt response to our Stewardship Ministry for 2025. Sixty pledge packets were sent out in early December. To date we have received 52 pledges, totaling \$85,490.

More numbers: 13 pledges increased and 34 stayed the same; 3 pledges decreased, and we received 2 new pledges. Two more pledgers have signed up for ACH (auto withdrawal from checking) so we now have 27 pledges on ACH. Thank you! ACH payments gives the church money in the bank every month to pay monthly bills, so we don't have to use investment funds.

The current sum of pledges for 2025 is \$4,762 less than last years, which was 53 pledges totaling \$90,252. All pledge envelopes have either been mailed or handed out at church. Please see Julia with any questions or concerns.

Thank you all for your support of St. John's with your treasure, time and talent!

Julia Aston
Stewardship Ministry 2025

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Upcoming Annual Meeting

Mark your calendars - St. John's annual meeting will convene **Sunday, February 2th at 11:30.** We welcome and look forward to everyone attending this important gathering to review 2024 accomplishments, consider goals for the new year, review church financials and vote for 2025 budget, in addition to electing officers, vestry, and delegates. Hope you will be there!

By the way, if you are interested in expanding your involvement with St. John's as an officer, vestry member, or delegate, please contact the wardens, Rev. John, or a current vestry member.

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WORD SEARCH

A number of wildlife species live in the Arctic Circle.
Some are here—can you find them?

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

Bear ~ Beavers ~ Beluga ~ Caribou ~ Fox ~ Goose ~ Hare ~ Lemming

Loons ~ Lynx ~ Moose ~ Narwhal ~ Ptarmigan ~ Puffin ~ Seal ~ Tern

Walrus ~ Wolverine ~ Wolf

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Officers: The Rev. John T. Beach, Priest-in-Charge, Brenda Caggiano, Sr. Warden, Daniel Casey, Jr., Jr. Warden, Phil Littlehale, Treasurer, Paul Felci, Assistant Treasurer, and Kristina Palazzo, Clerk of the Vestry & Sexton

Vestry: Bill Bidmead, Sr. (2026), Rose Holt (2027), Joanne Lancaster (2027), M. Dibby LeBlanc (2026), Sandy Mears (2025), and John Rogalski (2027).