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Let's connect faith and life. *Together.*

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## St. John's to host four services for Christmas Eve

By Susan Shinn Turner

St. John's is hosting four Christmas Eve services this year: 11 am, 2 pm, 5 pm and 8 pm. Because of Covid-19 restrictions, each service will be limited to 100 worshippers, so a reservation system has been set up through our website, or you can contact the church office. The 8 pm service will be live-streamed and available as a recording throughout the week of Christmas.

"We can't have a packed church or a packed choir this year, but there's no doubt we will joyfully give it our all," says Rob Durocher, Minister of Worship and the Arts.

The 5 and 8 pm services will feature brass. The other services will feature a combination of handbells, harp, cello, choir members, soloists, and contemporary worship musicians.

A video explaining the Christmas Eve services will be available in early December.

"Things are different this year, but we're still holding onto those elements that are particularly meaningful, like the singing of carols and the candle lighting ceremony" says Rob. "It's still Christmas Eve and we will still worship the King of Kings."

Pre-service preludes will begin 15 minutes before each service. We're eager to involve as wide a variety of participants as possible, so if you'd like to participate as a reader or in leading prayers, let Rob know.

Of special note is that Pastor Munther Isaac will join us for the online service at 8 pm. He'll be reading the Gospel from Manger Square in Bethlehem, the traditional site of Jesus' birth. Munther is the pastor of Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem, a sister congregation of St. John's.

"We are deeply committed to making Christmas Eve a particularly meaningful worship experience," Rob says.

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### Especially for Children

For families with children, a Christmas Eve Bedtime Story with Pastor Laura and Stacey will stream live online at 6:30 pm.



# Pastor's Letter

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Dear friends,

How quickly can we bid farewell to 2020?

Who knows if it's a record or not, but the first Christmas tree I saw this year was the week before Halloween. I was driving down S. Fulton Street at night and noticed the tree glowing through a neighbor's large picture window.

No doubt, they're ready for 2020 to be over with.

My back door neighbor works in sales at the Lowe's corporate office. She said that Christmas tree sales have already been far beyond what they were this time last year. It's shaping up to be a big haul for tree farmers in Ash County.

Although most did not, it's funny how certain industries thrived this past year, thanks to Covid-19. DoorDash meal delivery service went bonkers, which is no big surprise since indoor dining wasn't an option.

The same is true with home exercise equipment. A few weeks after the March shut-down, I went to Walmart to buy some exercise equipment. The shelves were totally empty. Amazon could hardly get their hands on yoga mats for several weeks last spring.

Likewise with anything related to DIY home projects. Boy, I wish I would have bought stock in Lowe's or Home Depot. Sales have been out-the-roof.

The same is true with Netflix, Amazon, most any supermarket, and liquor stores (so I've been told!).

Speaking of which, do you remember when the whole country stopped and watched "The Last Dance" together, ESPN's documentary on Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls? Or when every kid in the neighborhood created sidewalk chalk art? And everyone was planting a Victory Garden?

This morning, friends from Virginia sent pictures of their still-thriving Victory Garden. They were never much for gardening until this year, but my goodness did they produce a big harvest. A sign of hope for what is to come.

I know a lot of folks struggled this past year, and we should never forget that part of the story. Depression and loneliness are reaching frightening numbers. Too many people are still without meaningful work.

But 2020 definitely had some bright spots. I'll always remember the time spent with our kids this past summer — time we never imagined we'd get, given their ages (24, 22, and 18 at the time). Krista and I honestly thought we'd be empty nesters by now! ... but Covid had other plans, and we're grateful.

We'll also remember long summer nights that weren't overwhelmed with work or responsibility — nights when we could sit on the front porch with a good book and a glass of wine.

I know, it's time for 2020 to go. I'm ready to close the curtain and turn out the lights. This year-that-feels-like-ten-years will long be remembered as one of the most challenging in history.

But I hope you will remember it in fond ways, as well — when things slowed down a bit and friendships seemed to deepen since, well, we had time to sit and chat and enjoy each others' company.

No doubt, I will grieve with those for whom this has been a particularly difficult year. I will also give thanks to a God who has always promised the gift of presence during times like these:

"When you pass through the waters,  
I will be with you," God says.

"And when you pass through the rivers,  
they will not sweep over you.

When you walk through the fire,  
you will not be burned;  
the flames will not set you ablaze." Isaiah 43:2

As we step into a new year, may we remember God's promise of presence and the wonderful blessing of community. If nothing else, this past year has shown us that these two gifts can guide us through most any challenge at all.

May they be God's gift to you for 2021.

Peace+  
Pastor Rhodes

# Christmas at St. John's

## **Longing: 2020 Advent Devotional**

*See page 23 for details.*

## **Christmas Re-Mix**

### **✦ A Men's Chorus Christmas: "Greatest Hits"**

Although the Men's Chorus can't share a Christmas concert this year, we can enjoy some of your favorites over the last *seven* years, accompanied by stories and reflections from Norman Sloop, Bob Tannehill, and others

*Join us for this live online event on Thursday, Dec. 17 at 7 pm. See page 10 for details.*

### **✦ A rebroadcast of the 2019 service of Lessons and Carols**

Lessons and Carols has been a time-honored tradition at St. John's. Join us for this "live" rebroadcast of last year's phenomenal service, *Sunday, Dec. 20 at 7pm. Read more on page 10.*

## **A Contemporary Christmas Celebration**

*9:27 service, Dec. 20, Faith Center.* Featuring soloists, drama, and our worship band.

## **"Simply Christmas" Children's Drive-thru**

*Tuesday, Dec. 22, 5:30-7:30 pm*

Children and youth, birth to 18, can celebrate Christmas in drive-thru fashion. Enjoy some special treats and surprises, a Happy Birthday Jesus birthday cake mix, and your annual Chrismon ornament.

Learn more on page 11.

## **Christmas Eve Candlelight Services**

*11 am, 2 pm, 5 pm, 8 pm — in-person and online (8 pm)*

Our time-honored festival candlelight services include the story of Christmas as presented by brass, choirs, handbells, festival liturgy, and candlelight. Space is limited to 100 persons/service, so reserve your space online or by contacting the church office.

Read more on page 1.

## **Christmas Eve Bedtime Story**

*Thursday, Dec. 24, 6:30 pm*

Our children are in for a special treat this Christmas Eve, as Pastor Laura and Stacey will read a favorite bedtime story live online (Facebook, Youtube, and [stjohns-salisbury.org](http://stjohns-salisbury.org)).

## **1st Sunday after Christmas**

*Sunday, December 27 — online only*

A special Christmas service will be broadcast online on December 27 at 11:00 am. Please note that there will be no in-person worship services that day.



## FIRST LOOK



### December

This month in First Look (birth to 4 years old) we will answer the question: Why is Jesus special? Jesus is God's Son. We will use Christmas Cookies to tell the Christmas story!

#### Our Bible verse of the month:

**"GOD LOVED THE WORLD SO MUCH THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY SON." John 3:16, GNT**

Dec. 6, 8:45-9:15 am — Sunday School Facebook Live/Zoom  
Dec. 13, 8:45-9:15 am — Sunday School Facebook Live/Zoom  
\*\*Dec. 13, 3:30-5 pm — First Look @ Church  
Dec. 20, 8:45-9:15 am — Sunday School Facebook Live/Zoom  
Dec. 27 No Sunday School



### January

In January in First Look, we will answer the question: Who is amazing? Jesus is amazing. Jesus is out of this world!

#### Our Bible verse of the month:

**"EVERYONE WHO HEARD HIM WAS AMAZED. Luke 2:47, NIV**

Jan. 3 No Sunday School  
Jan. 10, 8:45-9:15 am — Sunday School Facebook Live/Zoom  
Jan. 17, 8:45-9:15 am — Sunday School Facebook Live/Zoom  
Jan. 24, 8:45-9:15 am — Sunday School Facebook Live/Zoom  
Jan. 24, 3:30-5 pm — First Look @ Church

## 252 Kids



### December

In December, our 252 Kids (K-5th graders) will learn that the real meaning of Christmas is simple: we celebrate Jesus, God's greatest gift. We can find hope, joy, love, and peace when we remember that God sent Jesus to be our Savior.

#### Our Bible verse of the month:

**"TODAY IN THE TOWN OF DAVID A SAVIOR HAS BEEN BORN TO YOU. HE IS THE MESSIAH, THE LORD." Luke 2:11, NIV**

\*\*Dec. 4, 5:30-7:30 pm — 252 Kids (K-5th Grade) @ Church



### January

In January our 252 Kids (K-5th graders) will learn that to live with responsibility, you've got to play well and finish strong. That's how you show you can be trusted with what is expected of you

#### Our Bible verse of the month:

**"SUPPOSE YOU CAN BE TRUSTED WITH SOMETHING VERY LITTLE. THEN YOU CAN ALSO BE TRUSTED WITH SOMETHING VERY LARGE." Luke 16:10A, NIV**

Jan. 31, 5:30-7:30 pm — 252 Kids (K-5th Grade) @ Church

\*\* Watch upcoming emails for updates regarding in-person meetings.

We are closely monitoring updates to local Covid-19 case numbers and recommendations based on number of participants.



### The Well Middle School

In a series titled, “Best Christmas Ever,” our middle school students will talk about what makes Christmas the best ever—the God who came to be with us and invites us to be with him in a real and personal way.

**GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST HEAVEN, AND ON EARTH PEACE TO THOSE ON WHOM HIS FAVOR RESTS. (Luke 2:14, NIV)**

#### December Schedule

Dec. 2, 6:30-7:15 pm— Confirmation Unit 2 (ZOOM)  
 Dec. 6, 4-5:15 pm, in the Pit – Youth Group  
 Dec. 9, 6-7pm—Confirmation Unit 2 (In-Person)  
 Dec. 13, 4-5:15 pm, in the Pit – Youth Group  
 Dec. 20, 4-5:15 pm, in the Pit – Youth Christmas Party

\*No Youth Group Dec. 27— Merry Christmas



In January, our middle schoolers will begin a series called, “It’s Personal.” We don’t want fake relationships; they want personal ones. The same thing can even apply to our faith. In this series, we’ll look at five ways Jesus made it personal and what that means for our lives.

**“FOR THE SON OF MAN CAME TO SEEK AND SAVE THOSE WHO ARE LOST.” (Luke 19:10 NLT)**



### FUEL High School

Our high school students will focus on a series called “Christmas Lights!” They make the holiday season feel a bit brighter and inviting. And in this series we want to help students learn how the Christmas story is one that invites them to come close and see it for themselves.

**“FOR TO US A CHILD IS BORN, TO US A SON IS GIVEN, AND THE GOVERNEMENT WILL BE ON HIS SHOULDERS. AND HE WILL BE CALLED WONDERFUL COUNSELOR, MIGHTY GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER, PRINCE OF PEACE.” (Isaiah 9:6, NIV)**

#### December Schedule

Dec..6, 6-7:15 pm, in the Pit – Youth Group  
 Dec. 13, 6-7:15 pm, in the Pit – Youth Group  
 Dec. 20, 6- 7:30 pm, in the Pit– Youth Group Christmas Party

\*No Youth Group Dec. 27— Merry Christmas



In January, our high school students will begin a series called, “It’s Personal.” We don’t want fake relationships; they want personal ones. The same thing can even apply to our faith. In this series, we’ll look at five ways Jesus made it personal and what that means for our lives.

**“FOR THE SON OF MAN CAME TO SEEK AND SAVE THE LOST.” (Luke 19:10 NIV)**

## Senior Seasons

### December Service Project

Unfortunately, onsite *Christmas parties and special events* are cancelled this year due to increasing cases of Covid-19 and the risk to senior adults. In lieu of all that, we'll participate in a service project with our friends at the Child Development Center. The items they need are listed below. On **December 8, from 10 am -12pm, please drop your gifts off at the back door drive-through on Jackson Street.** Also, please deliver your gifts in holiday gift bags. Santa Claus will be available for pictures and some holiday treats will be on hand as well.



- A children's book
- Art Supplies (paint, construction paper, crayons, markers, etc.)
- Playdoh
- Scholarship Money for student's in need
- Kleenex
- Wipes
- Small white boards and white board markers

### 2021 Lunch— N—Learn Series

Tuesday or Wednesdays, once per month, from 11:30 am-12:30 pm. If enough people want to come onsite, we can do a combination zoom and onsite gathering.

#### January 19

**Alyssa Nelson, Urban Design Planner in Salisbury, NC**

Alyssa will speak about her work with BlockWorks, a grass-roots program developed in 2010. Each BlockWorks event strives to bring residents and community volunteers together to build cleaner and safer neighborhoods, one block at a time

#### February 17

**Mary Arey of Arey Realty of Salisbury, Mooresville, Kannapolis, & Huntersville, NC**

Mary and Jo Kearns will speak on all aspects of Seniors' transition to smaller & safer homes. Jo is a Move Manager, specializing in decluttering and downsizing.

*Even if you have already downsized or reorganized, but you know someone who would benefit, please invite them to the Lunch N Learn. All are welcome.*

## Senior Academy Winter Season

The Winter Academy will be a 4-week series, Tuesdays, February 2-23, with Pastor Rhodes' Bible Study from 10-11:30 am, lunch from 11:30 am -12:30 pm, and a "master's class" in the afternoon. All classes will be in The Well and available on zoom.

There is no cost for attendance either onsite or via zoom meeting. A box lunch will be provided for those who purchase. Cost is \$10. You may also bring your lunch.

#### Morning Bible Study

Pastor Rhodes Woolly will again teach the bible study, the title of which is **"The Walk: 5 Essential Practices for Christian Living."**

He writes this: "How do we walk with Christ? In our Bible study, we'll focus on five essential spiritual practices that are rooted in Jesus' own walk with God. Embracing these five practices will literally change your life. Join us!"

#### Afternoon "Masters Class"

Dr. Gary Freeze, retired Professor of History at Catawba College, will provide a seminar entitled **"Been There (Kinda), Done That (Sorta): The Way American History Repeats Itself,"** on the historical precedents for the times in which we live.

Dr. Freeze will draw upon his 30 years of teaching American political culture to argue for a largely bipartisan, multicultural, regionalistic, perennialist understanding of how we got into our present predicament. The weekly titles are:

- Feb 2 The Founders
- Feb 9 The Agrarians
- Feb 16 The Industrialists
- Feb 23 The Corporatists

## Join a Small Group this Winter

### Looking for a new small group study?

If you are still looking to join one of our new small group bible studies, please see below for 2 new studies that are starting in January. If you are interested in one of these small group studies, email Danny Hines at [danny@stjohns-salisbury.org](mailto:danny@stjohns-salisbury.org) or sign up on the St. John's website in the small group ministry section. These 3-4-week studies provide you with the opportunity to engage in Bible study that is practical, thought provoking and applies to your everyday life. We will provide descriptions of these studies in Faith-Life as well. We will begin this in a Zoom format but can easily transition to meeting in person when possible.

### How do I sign up?

Sign-up on the St. John's website or contact [danny@stjohns-salisbury.org](mailto:danny@stjohns-salisbury.org) for more information and/or if you are interested in leading one of these small groups.

### Plot Twist

**Starting Tuesday, Jan. 12**  
**6:30pm – 7:45pm**  
**3-week study**



Have you ever been watching a movie and thought you knew exactly what was going to happen? You identified the hero, the villain and the general plot, and you really thought you knew how this whole thing was going to end. Then something happened—something you never saw coming—and it changed everything. A plot twist. Now, what's interesting about plot twists is that we usually love seeing them on screen. They keep us on the edge of our seats! But a plot twist in our own lives—when the stakes affect us personally? Well, that's an entirely different story. In this series, we'll look at the life of Paul—a life defined by some of the biggest plot twists of all times. As we do, we'll discover what we can do with the unexpected plot twists in our own lives—in our families, careers, relationships or even health— and how God may be using them to write a better life story for us.

### The Making of a King

**Starting Jan. 14, 7 – 8:15pm**  
**4-week study**



Almost all of our favorite stories have one thing in common: a hero. And not just any hero, but a larger-than-life superhero— someone who, against all odds, still manages to come out on top. Part of the reason why so many stories involve such a character is because everyone loves a good superhero. Why? Because heroes are epic and they do amazing things. In some sense, we love heroes because they can do things ordinary people like us could never do. In this series, we're going to look at one of the Bible's greatest heroes: a guy named David. At first glance, David doesn't seem like much of a hero. He was a younger brother, a shepherd, a poet, a warrior, a musician, and eventually, a king. As we'll see, no one else (David included) would've guessed he would one day be a king, but God saw something no one else did. God saw a hero in the making. As we follow David through his fair share of difficulties and downfalls, we'll see that amidst everchanging circumstances, one thing stayed the same—through the making of this king, God was always there.

### Ongoing Opportunities

Contact [Deborah@stjohns-salisbury.org](mailto:Deborah@stjohns-salisbury.org)

#### Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study

With Pastor Laura, 8-9 am via zoom

#### Thursday Morning Men's Bible Study

With Pastor Rhodes, 8-9 am via zoom

#### Just For Mom's Support Group

With Stacey Shafer, Wednesdays 8 pm via zoom

### Upcoming Online Book Studies

We will be starting new book studies in January. Watch Faith-Life and the St. John's website in December for the selected titles. If you are interested, please contact Danny Hines at [danny@stjohns-salisbury.org](mailto:danny@stjohns-salisbury.org).



## O Come, All Ye Faithful *A Christmas Carol Reflection*



By Rob Durocher  
Minister of Music and the Arts, Deacon

I don't know about you, but there is always something so incredibly triumphant and soul stirring when we all join together to sing the wonderful Christmas carol, *O Come, All Ye Faithful* at the beginning of each Christmas Eve service of worship! As far back as I can remember, and that's a good long time, this has always been a carol that fills my musical senses and seals the deal for me that Christ became like us, fully human and that he became is the '*Word of the Father now in flesh appearing*' and that we are extended a wonderful invitation to '*come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*'

We sometimes use the word Christmas *carol* instead of the word Christmas *hymn* because while hymns are traditional poems based on scripture or scriptural thought and have been around for centuries sung by congregations in worship, carols, are seasonal, festive songs. They are usually religious in nature and represent Christmas, Easter and Advent, and have a joyful and festive character to them. *O Come, All Ye Faithful* in a way is actually BOTH a hymn and a Christmas carol!

The text of *O Come, All Ye Faithful* is a little bit of a mystery. There are some that say the text goes as far back as the 13<sup>th</sup> century but when it first appeared in publication, it was called *Adeste Fidelis, laeti triumphates!* The version that we are familiar with today is attributed to the 18<sup>th</sup> century hymnist, John Francis Wade. Wade (1711-1786) was a Catholic layman who left England to live in France following the Jacobean

rebellion of 1745 (when the Catholic, exiled Stuart, 'Bonnie Prince Charlie,' grandson of former King James II who fled England at the glorious Revolution of 1688, tried to gain his ancestral throne of Scotland back from Protestant King George II of England. This was a time when England and Scotland were steadfastly Protestant and Catholics would often escape difficulties by fleeing to Europe for safety.) The text to Wade's carol was written in Latin because Latin was considered the language of academia in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

*O Come, All Ye Faithful!* was translated into English by in 1841 by Frederick Oakley, a former Anglican priest who converted to Roman Catholicism, and became a canon at Westminster and hymnals. Song books quickly adopted this newly translated Christmas carol. Oakley used four verses of the carol and 19<sup>th</sup> century hymnist William Brooke (1848 – 1917) added more some years later. The carol has evolved over subsequent years with stanzas falling away as other stanzas were added.

The tune *ADESTE FIDELIS* has been attributed to both Francis Wade and even to Frederick Oakley, with the refrain, *O come, let us adore him* being added later. Other possible composers have also been suggested like Thomas Arne, and John Reading. Another school of thought has this carol in a slightly different form attributed to King John IV of Portugal a musician, king, composer, and lover of the arts who might have written the tune. Throwing a little more confusion upon the carol's history is the fact that *Adeste Fidelis* was also called the "Portuguese Hymn" since it was sung with great familiarity regularly in the Chapel of the Portuguese Embassy in London. Whatever its origination the carol has transcended borders and continues to be one of the best loved hymns and Christmas carols throughout the world.

In the first verse of the carol one hears the whisper of Luke 2:15 where the shepherds say "Let us go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass" which places us among the shepherds as they ran with joy to Bethlehem to see the newborn Holy child. We also join the great procession of the faith as they once journeyed in their hearts to Bethlehem!

The original second verse echoes John 1:14 and references

*Continued...*



the second article of Nicean Creed establishing a link that reaches back to the church of 325 A.D. to the Council of Nicea where the Creed originates. This verse is also filled with very good theology!

*God of God, Light of Light, lo, he abhors not the  
Virgin's womb.  
Very God Begotten, not created. O come, let us adore  
Him, Christ the Lord!*

In verse three we join with the angel's chorus singing 'Glory to God, glory in the highest' (Luke 2:14),

*Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation; sing ye bright citizens  
of heaven above.  
"Glory to God, all glory in the highest"!*

The final verse triumphantly joins all those in heaven above and earth below in greeting and adoring our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ at his incarnation as we sing:

*Yea Lord we greet thee, born this happy morning; Jesus to  
thee be glory given!  
WORD of the Father, now in flesh appearing. O come, let us  
adore him, Christ the Lord.*

In these days of pandemic, political dissatisfaction and issues of racial inequity, this simple Christmas carol, *O Come, All Ye Faithful* still speaks to us! Throughout these last nine months we've been encouraged to 'be bold and courageous,' but to also be faithful! Being bold means being faithful. Jesus came into a world that was upside down. He entered 'the midst of humanity that could have shocked his perfect nature.' It wasn't the rich and ennobled who went with haste to Bethlehem to 'see this thing which has come to pass', it was common shepherds and village folk. This was Jesus who would break bread with his friends and disciples, teach and preach from a mountainside, heal the sick, raise the dead, be misunderstood by his family, friends and the government of his day but would show us by his death and glorious resurrection that he was real and dynamic and that the power of his Gospel changes our lives giving us a newness that compels us to share this good news of salvation with others.

We are extended an invitation to 'come and behold him, born the king of angels,' an invitation for us to come to Jesus and find hope, forgiveness and life in him - this little child in a

manger who now reigns supreme as King of kings and Lord of lords who reigns forever and ever. O COME, LET US ADORE HIM, CHRIST THE LORD!

## Worship at St. John's

*Online and In-person (subject to change)*

Sundays at 11am

Broadcast online from the Sanctuary. Join us by visiting our website or YouTube channel. Search "SJLC"  
***In-person worship is postponed until Dec. 6.***

Sundays at 9:27am

In-person worship in the Faith Center. A gentle, 45-minute service led by our worship team. Thanks for wearing masks. More details on our website.

Wednesdays  
12:15-12:45

Our mid-week communion service in the Chapel. Strict health protocols are followed. ***Postponed until Dec. 9.***

***Please watch for updates regarding in-person worship in FaithLife, social media, and website as we monitor recommendations and guidelines for in-person indoor gatherings.***

## A Christmas Re-Mix

*2 online rebroadcasts you don't want to miss*

### **A Men's Chorus Christmas:**

*Their Greatest Hits, Dec. 17 at 7 pm*

*An Online event*

Although the Men's Chorus can't share a Christmas concert this year, we can enjoy some of your favorites over the last seven years, accompanied by stories and reflections from Norman Sloop, Bob Tannehill, and others. Join us for this live online event on Thursday, Dec. 17 at 7 pm through our website, Facebook, or YouTube channel. Search SJLC.

### **A Service of Lessons and Carols: *Revisited***

*Sunday, Dec. 20 at 7 pm Online*

Lessons and Carols has been a time-honored tradition at St. John's. Join us for this "live" rebroadcast of last year's phenomenal service, which will be re-broadcast on Sunday, Dec. 20 at 7pm. Once again witness in word, song and music the prophecy and birth of Jesus Christ as it unfolds in scripture, carols, anthems and special readings. Carols and anthems led by the Chancel Choir, St. John's Men's Chorus, St. John's Women's Ensemble, soloists, strings, and brass.



### **Reminder Facility Use:**

Masks are required on campus.

Anytime you plan to use a space on campus, please contact the office by filling out a facility request form so that we can make sure a space is available, cleaned, and heated or cooled.

Covid-19 guidelines for on campus facility use are listed on the forms and policies page of the St. John's website.

# Youth to receive Chrismons on Dec. 22 at drive-through event

By Susan Shinn Turner

Children and youth at St. John's will celebrate a simple Christmas this year.

Simply Christmas and Chrismons is set for 5:30 to 7:30 pm Tuesday, Dec. 22. Families can enter the campus through the Jackson Street entrance to receive a fun bag, then drive around to the upper level to receive their Chrismons from the Chrismon Ministry Team.

Stacey Shafer, children's minister, is assembling about 100 bags, which will include supplies to make a birthday cake for Jesus.

"'Simply Christmas' is the theme for our Kingdom Kids during December," Stacey says. Thrivent Financial grants have helped Stacey purchase supplies for the event.

In addition to the fun bags and Chrismons, families will receive chocolate milk and cookies along the way. Several staff members will assist with the event as well as the Chrismon ladies, Stacey says. "This will be a fun way for us to give back."

Stacey says she would like to thank Thrivent for the Action Team grants.

She encourages all families with children ages birth to 18 to come to the event. "I really want this to be a success and have as many families come as we can."

Stacey sends out a weekly newsletter to families, and says they may pick up their packages later if they can't be there that evening. "It always works out."

Carol Hair and her Chrismon Team are working to finish 200 Chrismons for the event. Whatever Chrismons are left go to



*2018 Lessons and Carols—The Chrismon team passed out Chrismons to our children and youth.*

homebound members the next year. The ladies are meeting on Wednesday afternoons, and have plenty of room to social distance and use their own tools. She and her team are thrilled that the Chrismon tree is going up in the Sanctuary.

For this year, Carol has adapted a pattern from a Rufty ornament, which is under wraps until it is distributed. It's always fun to see how the kids like it each year, she says. "We keep the kids in suspense."

Carol says that making Chrismons has become an addictive hobby. "We probably get more out of our fellowship and the satisfaction of making a Chrismon than the children do in receiving them. It is absolutely a win-win situation."

She makes Chrismons at church and at home, she says. "I try to make two a night. I'm an overachiever!"



# 50 Years of Ordaining Women in the Lutheran Church

By Susan Shinn Turner

As the year 2020 draws to a close, so does the ELCA's 50th anniversary of women in ordained ministry. We want to recognize all the women who have served as pastors at St. John's.



**The Rev. Dr. Marty Stevens** was the first woman to serve as a pastor of the congregation.

As she said then of being a trailblazer, "It was interesting. Some people were not in favor of it, and other people were fine. It takes awhile to change. I get that. Once they got to know me and saw the ministry I had, it was fine." Pastor Stevens returned to St. John's last February as a featured preacher.

**Pastor Mary Peters** became an associate pastor in 1998, the same year that Rob Durocher joined the staff. It was not long after the death of her husband, David.

"Bill Safrit, call committee chair, encouraged me in a way for which I am ever grateful," Mary says. "He said, 'Please consider this call; we will help you,'."

"Love came again and marriage to Donald Miller took me away to Virginia in May of 2000. We were married at St. John's on one exceedingly hot day in May. After a short time in Virginia, Bishop Bolick phoned and I was called to serve on the his staff from 2001 to 2003.

"After a move to Atlanta, Pastor Robert Sims (of the Sims family at St. John's) phoned and I was subsequently called to serve at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Atlanta in 2005 as their Pastor for Member Care. I served as dean of my conference of the Southeastern Synod during that time. I retired from Redeemer in November of 2019. My husband and I moved to Spartanburg, SC, for retirement, but Bishop Smith phoned and Donald and I are now interim pastors at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Kings Mountain.

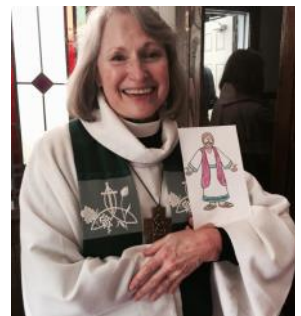
"All the significant people in my ministry career have been connected with St. John's, and I credit this congregation for

loving me back to health. I find myself wanting to say thank you to lots of people, like Pastor Carl Sachtleben. I have a debt of gratitude to folks at St John's."

After serving as a pastor at St. John's from 2000 to 2009, **Pastor Jennifer Ginn** now serves Cross and Crown Lutheran Church in Matthews.

Pastor Ginn was instrumental in helping to form the contemporary service and enjoyed a unique ministry in story-telling. She helped train a team of story-tellers who presented the gospel stories in worship.

**Pastor Jan Huntley** was to preach at St. John's in November, but that opportunity has been delayed because of the virus. After serving at St. John's from 2010 to 2013, Pastor Jan now lives in Durham with her husband, the Rev. Dr. Harvey Huntley.



"It was one of the most joyful times in ministry I have ever experienced," Pastor Jan says.

**Pastor Danielle DeNise** now serves as the synod's Director for Evangelical Mission, based at the N.C. Synod Headquarters. She and Pastor Laura Henrik recorded a podcast together earlier this year about the joys and challenges of being a female pastor.

Pastor DeNise began work at St. John's as a youth director, until discernment led her to complete work towards ordained ministry. She was ordained at St. John's in 2015, leaving 9 months later to accept the synod's call. Along the way she married Michael. They are the parents of Moses and Olive.

In January of 2018, **Pastor Laura Henrik** and her family moved from the upper Midwest to Salisbury to begin a new call at St. John's as the Pastor for Discipleship. Pastor Henrik grew up in Knoxville and attended seminary in Columbia, but her first two calls were in Minnesota and North Dakota.

"I tossed out the snow shovel whenever we moved."

Currently she manages the congregation's youth program and oversees staff in children's and adult discipleship ministry. She and her husband, Davin, are the parents of Eliana and Everett.



**Pastor Beth Kearney** was a longtime member of St. John's while serving as an assistant to the bishop. She retired in 2017 after 36 years in ordained ministry.

"I was sort of at the beginning of the second wave of women," Beth says. "I was the third ordained woman in North Carolina, and then Doug and I were the first clergy couple in North Carolina."

Early in her ministry, Beth and Doug were in a restaurant with high booths. The men in the booth next to her were talking about their congregation. One was complaining that his pastor never visited, and another complained that his pastor always asked for money. The third man, whose voice they recognized, then said, "Y'all think y'all got problems? My pastor is pregnant!"

Two daughters of the congregation are serving in ordained ministry. **Pastor Adrienne Martin** is pastor of Sardis, Hickory, while **Julie Tonnesen** will begin a call as associate pastor of Macedonia, Burlington, on Jan. 1. Adrienne's mom, Debbie Martin Purpur, is a certified lay preacher through the N.C. Synod.



"In honor of their ministries at St. John's and the Lutheran church, each of these pastors was invited to preach during 2020," says Pastor Rhodes. "Unfortunately, Covid-19 changed most of those plans. Nevertheless we give thanks for their ministry, their deep sense of call, and their continued commitment to the work of the church. No doubt we are better people and congregations because of their presence. Thank you!"



## *Merry Christmas*

Mail our homebound members Christmas Cards or bring them to the church office by Dec. 8 to be delivered by visitors.

**Sonny Allen**

C/O Laura Sumner  
405 Muirfield Way  
Salisbury, NC 28144

**Tommy and Nancy Austin**

790 Cedar Farm Rd  
Salisbury, NC 28147

**Benny Banks**

c/o Col. Morgan Banks  
880 Barber Road  
Southern Pines, NC 28387

**Claudette Barger**

1806 Benjamin Dr.  
Salisbury, NC 28146

**Jane Barrier**

5146 Barrier Rd  
Concord, NC 28025

**Dorothy Bedford**

Autumn Care  
1505 Bringle Ferry Rd #806  
Salisbury, NC 28146

**Joyce Brady**

c/o Mr. Robert Brady  
829 Cherokee Place SW  
Lenoir, NC 28645

**Paul and Lois Carter**

106 Covenant Woods Dr  
Salisbury, NC 28144

**Jack Connery**

306 Majestic Heights Dr.  
Salisbury, NC 28144

**Sally Dubois**

138 Stibbs Cross Rd  
Moorestville, NC 28115

**Phyllis Edwards**

414 Hidden Creek Cir  
Salisbury, NC 28147

**Anita Foreman**

728 Klumac Rd, Apt 227C  
Salisbury, NC 28144-5745

**Hal Furr**

728 Klumac Rd, Apt. 202 A  
Salisbury, NC 28144

**Frances Goins**

728 Klumac Rd Apt 126B  
Salisbury, NC 28144

**Bud and Nan Graeber**

105 Snead Ct  
Salisbury, NC 28144

**Connie and Tom Hurlocker**

307 Majestic Heights Dr.  
Salisbury, NC 28144

**Fran Hoke**

2627 Southpoint Ln  
New London, NC 28127

**Gerald Jones**

565 Neel Rd  
Salisbury, NC 28147

**Judy Johnson**

335 Lumen Christie Lane #104  
Salisbury, NC 28147-6799

**Margaret Ketner**

728 Klumac Rd, Apt 281-D  
Salisbury, NC 28144

**Gene Myers**

2070 Godbey Rd  
Woodleaf, NC 27054

**Pat Nelson**

728 Klumac Rd, Apt 303-A  
Salisbury, NC 2814

**Ermine Peeler**

12809 Fox Meadow Dr.  
Richmond, VA 23233

**Gerald & Pansy Peeler**

145 Jesse Safrit Rd  
Salisbury, NC 28147

**Dick Petherick**

424 Wildwood Dr.  
Salisbury, NC 28146

**Jim Rabon**

1810 W Innes St  
Salisbury, NC 28144-2508

**Sarah Roberts**

322 Laurel Valley Way  
Salisbury, NC 28144

**Jean Rufty**

1550 Sells Rd  
Salisbury, NC 28144

**Rachel Safrit**

820 Klumac Rd, B-15  
Salisbury, NC 28144

**Ann Sachtleben**

16 Pickett Ave  
Spencer, NC 28159

**Gloria Samuelson**

728 Klumac Rd #332 B  
Salisbury, NC 28144

**Barbara Sims**

540 Club House Dr.  
Salisbury, NC 28144

**Peggy Smith**

728 Klumac Rd., Apt. D-247  
Salisbury, NC 27188

**Alda Smith**

114 North Milford Dr  
Salisbury, NC 28144

**Marilyn Smith**

985 Agner Rd  
Salisbury, NC 28146

**Shirley Smith**

Brookdale Room 49  
2201 Statesville Blvd  
Salisbury, NC 28147

**Anne Steele**

728 Klumac Rd., Apt. 324-B  
Salisbury, NC 28144

**Rich Soderberg**

728 Klumac Rd Apt. 309 A  
Salisbury, NC 28144

**Irene and Ted Stewart**

728 Klumac Rd Apt. 339 C  
Salisbury, NC 28144

**Andrew Stirewalt**

1255 Stirewalt Rd  
China Grove, NC 28023

**Gail Swan**

820 Klumac Rd, AA3  
Salisbury, NC 28144

**Shirley Trexler**

4355 Queens Rd  
Salisbury, NC 28144

**Leon Williams, Jr.**

820 Klumac Rd, Rm A-02  
Salisbury, NC 28144



# Wreaths, Poinsettias and Candles

Be a part of a beautiful tradition at St. Johns as we decorate our worship spaces for the Advent and Christmas seasons. Purchasing a poinsettia, hanging a wreath or lighting a candle is a way to remember and honor those you love, appreciate, or admire--perhaps a family member, teacher, church leader, friend or neighbor.

For centuries, lighting candles has been a symbol of hope and remembrance. This year we are offering the opportunity to light a candle in honor or memory of a loved one or friend.

Donations may also be made to the general decorating fund in honor or memory of someone.

Money, along with the order form, for may be mailed to or taken to the church office.

**Deadline for ordering will be Friday, December 16.**



Donations will be acknowledged in the Christmas Eve Service bulletin.



## 2020 Christmas Decorations Poinsettias, Wreaths and Candles

Given by \_\_\_\_\_

Decoration	Price	In Memory of.....	In Honor of.....
Poinsettia	\$12.50 each		
Hanging a Wreath	\$25.00 each		
Lighting a Candle	\$20.00 each		
General Decorations	Amount \$ _____		

# A budget to support our ministry

The St. John's Congregation Council recognizes our role to be good stewards of God's resources and to invite people into a relationship with the vision and mission of this church. As staff and Council developed the 2021 Budget, fully aware of these uncertain times, three priorities were kept in mind:

1. To present a balanced budget that relies on revenue projections based on the 2021 Consecration Sunday response.
2. To use conservative income revenue projections.
3. To begin the year with a three-month budget reserve.

With that in mind, the Council offers the following Proposed 2021 Budget, which represents a .4 percent decrease from 2020 income and a .2 percent decrease in expenditures.

## **Children and Youth Discipleship**

Kingdom Kids and EPIC Sunday school, weekday church school,  
Milestone ministries, bible school, The Well middle school &  
Fuel high school leagues, Sunday school, mission trips, outreach support  
Staff Support : Youth Pastor  
Children's Minister

**83,811**

## **Adult Discipleship**

Library resource center, Disciple Bible Study, new member programs,  
Adult education & Sunday school, Small group training, materials,  
GIFT women's and men's ministries  
Staff Support: Adult Discipleship Minister

**41,200**

## **Congregational Life**

Congregation-wide fellowship events, Easter events, Octogenarian  
Luncheon, bereavement meals, Senior Seasons, Senior Academy,  
Healthcare ministries  
Staff support: Senior Adult Minister

**24,550**

## **Mercy and Justice**

Note: in 2018 the Endowment Fund provided \$54,000 in grants to  
Local and global ministries

**2,300**

## **Worship and The Arts**

Music library, organ/piano maintenance, guest musicians,  
Guest preachers, worship supplies, altar supplies, radio ministry,  
home bound bulletins, media, choral and hand bell music  
Support staff: Minister of Worship and the Arts  
Contemporary Worship Leader  
Associate Parish Musician  
Production Manager

**204,145**

**Stewarding God's Resources**

Stewardship programs and materials, Ministry Response **5,000**

**Partnership with the NC Synod** **100,000**

**Pastoral support**

Senior Pastor

Pastor for Youth and Discipleship

Minister for Care and Homebound Ministry **151,281**

**Facility Management**

Maintenance supplies and repairs, major repairs,

Utilities and fuel, property insurance, yard maintenance

Support staff: Facilities Manager

Maintenance **325,177**

**Office Management**

Printing supplies, equipment, service contracts, postage,

telephones, office hospitality, computer equipment,

accounting service

Support Staff: Business Manager

Office Manager

Communication Specialist

Bookkeeper **242,039**

**Congregation Council and Leadership Training**

Conventions and Synod Assemblies, travel expenses, leadership training **8,900**

**Personnel**

Pension, health insurance, workers compensation, FICA **233,455**

**Total Proposed 2021 Budget     \$ 1,416,858**

*Compared to the 2020 budget of \$1,421,545*



## Around the Congregation



During the month of November, we participated in the 30 Days of Thanks. Our children and youth shared memory verses and “Psalms of Thanks,” our CDC children shared what they are thankful for, we heard special music from our worship teams and kindergarten, some turkey art from our kindergarten, and said “Thank You” in countless ways on social media!

Check out the photos, videos, and more on St. John’s Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram!





## The Perfect 1st Stop for your Christmas Gifts



## Shop with a Mission at St. John's Seasons Gifts

Christmas Décor & Holiday Gift Giving for Everyone on Your List!



Call Diane Poole at 704.636.3431 to schedule a virtual or in person shopping experience with a Personal Shopper. We'll take care of you!

Seasons Gifts continues its **Facebook Live** events, making holiday shopping a breeze.

Settle into your favorite chair and tune in each Wednesday at 7pm through December 15 at [www.facebook.com/seasonsgifts.sjlc](https://www.facebook.com/seasonsgifts.sjlc). Hosted by Corinne Mauldin, these one-hour sessions are packed full of unique and one-of-a-kind gifts for babies, children, and adults, including beautiful pottery, Christmas décor, ornaments, and winter-themed bird feeders, books, women's accessories, and adorable talking plush animals like the storytelling Pig plus piglet & wolf finger puppets shown here.

If you miss a **Live** event, you can watch each week's videos on our Facebook page, at your convenience. Contact Diane Poole at 704.636.3431 or [diane@stjohns-salisbury.org](mailto:diane@stjohns-salisbury.org) to make a purchase or get more information about anything you see. Seasons Gifts offers pre-scheduled, in person or virtual shopping with a Personal Shopper who will give you ideas for everyone on your list. Purchases may be picked up, or in some cases, delivered, but the store is not currently open except by appointment.

Note that many of the products in Seasons Gift Shop are hand made by our Mission partners around the globe and each purchase is dedicated to helping someone in need.

### **“Plant Some Joy” at the St. John's CDC this Christmas**

*Give a Tree or Shrub in Honor of a Loved One this Christmas*



The new playground at the CDC — what we call the Outdoor Learning Environment — is almost complete! To help finish up the project, members of the church are invited to “Plant Some Joy” this Christmas.

Here’s how it works: Honor someone special with a shrub or a tree and we will send them a Christmas Card to share the news! The card can be sent with whatever message you choose. What a great way to show your encouragement to this most worthwhile project.

“Plant Some Joy” by completing your purchase online at [stjohns-salisbury.org/plantjoy](http://stjohns-salisbury.org/plantjoy). Be sure to add your special message. Thanks for participating!

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### **Kindergarten Registration Now Open**

*St. John’s Member Priority for 4 and 5 Year Olds*

As a member in good standing at St. John's, children are granted priority enrollment in St. Johns Kindergarten.

For enrollment in the Pre-K program for next Fall, children must turn 4 years old on or before August 31.

For enrollment in the Kindergarten program for next Fall, children must turn 5 years old on or before August 31.

Interested parents must contact the Kindergarten prior to December by calling 704-636-4404 for more information.





## Updates from Guatemala



### Year-End Matching Campaign

Thanks to the generosity of a few of our supporters, GRACES will have a matching campaign through the end of December. We are raising money to support the continuation of at-home learning, meal support for families and operating costs in 2021. To have your donation doubled, visit [www.wearegraces.org/matchingcampaign](http://www.wearegraces.org/matchingcampaign).

GRACES is thankful for all of the members of St. John's and their faithful support throughout the years! Escuela Integrada would not exist without your

### Graduation!

Escuela Integrada's Graduation was virtual this year! The students successfully completed their school year this October, with three of their four quarters in fully online learning. GRACES and Escuela Integrada celebrated this significant achievement Nov. 6 with a virtual graduation party streamed live on Facebook and Zoom.

Graduating from middle school in Guatemala is truly no small feat—many of these students will be the first ones in their families to graduate from middle school. GRACES is so proud of each student and their achievements! Will you join us in celebrating them? You can write a note of encouragement, or upload a picture or video at [tinyurl.com/gracesgrads](http://tinyurl.com/gracesgrads).



and **WHAT** *Lord* require of you?  
DOES THE  
To act **JUSTLY** and  
To love **MERCY** and  
To walk **HUMBLY**  
with your *God*  
MICAH 6:8



## *The Other Side of the Wall Book Discussion*

Led by Pastor Munther Isaac, Jan. 25– Feb. 15, 12pm via zoom



By Mike Connor

When faced with life challenges, how do we embrace suffering? What does it mean to hope when there is “no end in sight”? How does God’s covenant to Abraham relate to today’s world?

If you’re interested in these questions and/or learning more about marginalized life in the West Bank, we invite you to participate in a book discussion beginning Monday, January 25, 2021, at noon. As part of the St. John’s covenant relationship with Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem, Rev. Dr. Munther Isaac will be leading a discussion of his most recent book, *The Other Side of the Wall: A Palestinian Christian Narrative of Lament and Hope*.

"This book is my invitation to you," Pastor Munther writes, "to step into the other side of the wall and listen to our

stories and perspective. It is my humble request to you to allow me to share how Palestinians experience God, read the Bible, and have been touched and liberated by Jesus—a fellow Bethlehemite who has challenged us to see others as neighbors and love them as ourselves. . . This book paints a picture of our story of faith, lament, and hope. And I invite you to join and listen, on our side of the wall."

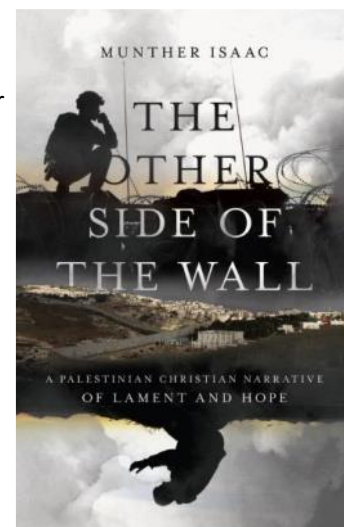
Pastor Munther will facilitate four Zoom discussions. The sessions are scheduled at noon Eastern Standard Time to accommodate the time zone difference. The dates and discussion topics are as follows:

January 25 - Palestinian Christian Community  
February 1 - Christian Zionism, Bible, and the Land  
February 8 - Jews and Muslims as our Neighbors  
February 15 - Peacemaking and Hope

Participants are asked to have read the pertinent book sections prior to each weekly discussion. *The Other Side of the Wall* is published by InterVarsity Press and is available for purchase on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) and [ivpress.com](https://www.ivpress.com).

Register online and contact Mike Connor ([mjconnor1982@gmail.com](mailto:mjconnor1982@gmail.com)) for more information.

To make the most of the book discussion, registration is limited to 12-20 participants. **Priority registration is given to St. John’s members, but registration will open up to other groups on Dec. 15, so register early!**



*"The distinct suffering of Palestinian Christians needs to be heard, felt, and lifted up, not least before the minds and hearts of many American evangelicals. The pain some American Christians have added to the lives of Palestinian Christians has further ravaged the dignity and value of our beloved Palestinian brothers and sisters. Munther Isaac's clear, passionate, honest rendering of this ignored and distorted narrative of Palestinian Christians is a powerful antidote."* - Mark Labberton, president of Fuller Theological Seminary, author of *Called*.

### Our Latest “Conversations that Matter” Podcast

*Pastor Rhodes Interviews Pastor Munther Isaac*

Have you subscribed to the St. John’s “Conversations that Matter” podcast ?

In December, Pastor Rhodes interviews the Rev. Dr. Munther Isaac, pastor of our sister congregation, Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem. Pastor Isaac will share intimate details about life in Bethlehem during the pandemic, now that for the first time tourism and holiday gatherings/rituals have all been cancelled ... in the town of Jesus’ birth.

Listen to the full conversation by searching “Conversations that Matter” on Apple Podcast, iHeart Radio, Spotify and more.

You can also catch up on past sermons on the SJLC Sermon Podcast Channel. Search “SJLC,” and don’t forget to rate and subscribe!



**The 2020 Advent Devotional.** Again, this year, we’ll join our sisters and brothers in Bethlehem in producing a 30-day Advent Devotional, including inspiring stories and images from Salisbury and the Holy Land.

This year’s theme is “Longing.” We’ve been longing for lots of things these days – normalcy, peace, community. We join a long line of Christians who, in the midst of their longing, lean into God and one another.

Why a joint devotional? In September 2019, Christmas Lutheran and St. John’s entered into a formal partnership in which we agreed to accompany one another in our journey of faith, walk in solidarity in our struggle for mercy and justice, and learn from the other’s experience and wisdom. This

Advent Devotional gives us the opportunity to hear from members of both congregations, each writing from very different contexts, but yoked together as sisters and brothers in Christ.

The Advent Devotional is available on our website, hardcopy (by request), and sent out through our daily email. If you don’t wish to sign up for our regularly scheduled daily emails, but would like to receive the Advent Devotional via email each day (Mon-Sat), you may sign up online or email [angel@stjohns-salisbury.org](mailto:angel@stjohns-salisbury.org).

New this year, you will be able to enjoy some of the devotions as videos.



# Our Partners



## Supporting Student Growth - Even in a Pandemic *St. John's Local and Global School Partnerships*

By Karen Puckett

Most people's lives and routines have changed since the onset of the pandemic. Whether here in the United States, or in far-away places, many have suffered loss of social interaction, security, and health. Many have also found ways to cope and continue living life in spite of challenges inherent in a world that requires the uncomfortable reality of social distancing.

Possibly, nowhere have the challenges been felt more than by our learners and students here and overseas. Schools scramble to discover how to balance important health and safety measures while continuing to ensure that students are nurtured academically, physically, and emotionally. Two of St. John's partner organizations are experiencing such challenges and developing innovative ways to meet them.

### Isenberg Elementary School

St. John's has been in partnership with Isenberg Elementary School since 2015 with the creation of the "Gator Reading Club." (St. John's Strategic Plan includes a commitment to "help break the cycle of poverty in Rowan County.") This reading program focuses on third grade students who tested just below grade level in reading and pairs them with St. John's volunteers twice weekly for 45 minutes each session. As over 90% of Isenberg's students are living in poverty, based on federal guidelines, these tutoring sessions provide a crucial intervention that has consistently enabled students to make growth on their state reading tests. Please visit [tinyurl.com/IESStJohns](https://tinyurl.com/IESStJohns) to view a message from Isenberg's Principal, Nicholas Anderson.



*Isenberg Elementary garden*

When schools were closed by North Carolina's stay-at-home order in March, volunteers were no longer able to enter the school building to work with Isenberg's students. Students received online remote instruction from their regular teachers during this time up until the end of the school year. Fortunately, St. John's is continuing its presence at Isenberg. The St. John's Endowment fund provided funding for over 150 new library books for Isenberg's Media Center and late last spring, several church members provided furnishings for an Isenberg family that was moving from a shelter to a permanent home. Once schools can safely return to normal, the Gator Reading Club will resume.

On a hybrid live instruction/virtual instruction schedule, Isenberg's learners rotate attending school physically two days a week and virtually three days. In order to maintain

# Global Partners

academic growth, students receive and submit instruction via learning management systems called SeeSaw and Canvas. Students who need a helping hand in reading and math receive targeted interventions 2 to 3 times a week. Staff members maintain virtual “office hours” where students can call in via Zoom to check in with their teachers regarding coursework or with the school Guidance Counselor for social and emotional learning needs.

In order to provide students with enrichment experiences, Isenberg continues its emphasis on global competencies and team-building endeavors. As part of its global focus, Isenberg is in its second year of a Dual Language Immersion program. Other extracurricular experiences continue to be provided such as Student Government Association, K-Kids (Kiwanis Kids), spirit week, virtual parties, and cultivation of a school garden through a partnership with Happy Roots.

Isenberg’s PTA continues to actively take steps to enrich the school environment. Currently, the PTA is raising funds to purchase an Isenberg sweatshirt for each of its 305 students. Sweatshirts are \$30 each, with part of the proceeds going to the PTA for parent and student engagement activities.

If you would like to help sponsor a sweatshirt for a child, please make a \$30 tax deductible donation to the Isenberg PTA and mail to Nicholas Anderson, Isenberg Elementary School, 2800 Jake Alexander Blvd. N., Salisbury, NC 28147.

## South Sudan

As part of St. John’s global ministries for over 10 years, Sudan Rowan has, with the help of St. John’s Endowment fund, been instrumental in establishing the Gumriak and Nyarweng Primary Schools as the #1 and #4 performing primary schools in Ruweng State, a region of South Sudan where historically 90% of adults cannot read. Although schools are closed and not expected to open before early to mid 2021, the South Sudanese government permits primary school teachers to initiate targeted education support during COVID-19 so that educational gains are not lost to the pandemic.

In September, Sudan Rowan received Endowment funds to



*Sudan Rowan Mayar John Panthou instructor at the Gumriak school*

provide partial support so that teachers can provide specialized small group tutoring for Grades 7-8 (the two years that lead to all-important national exams and secondary school placements) and receive professional development to improve lesson plans in anticipation of the 2021 academic year. Also, 15 graduates (5 girls and 10 boys) of Gumriak and Nyarweng Primary Schools are the only students from Ruweng State who attend private secondary schools (high schools) - a huge honor! Due to school closures, they need tutoring to maintain academic progress, including virtual access to curricular content via radios, solar-charged tablets/laptops with English as a Second Language content (ESL), a desktop computer, and printer for written exercises.

In addition, Sudan Rowan plans to resume providing support to Angela Nyangok Ngor, a South Sudanese college student who is studying in Uganda. One of Angela’s educational goals is to return to her tribal family and help provide opportunities for literacy and to encourage girls to receive an education.

Donations can be mailed to Sudan Rowan at 576 Adrian Road, Salisbury, NC 28146. Donations to any of St. Johns’ International Ministry partners can be made directly to the church with the specific ministry (Bethlehem, Guatemala, or South Sudan) designation on the check memo.



*Students in South Sudan just prior to the Covid-19 Outbreak.*



## Happy Birthday!

*Congratulations to our Octogenarians  
celebrating December birthdays:*

Jane Barrier, Margaret Brady, Joanne Bullard, Mike  
Durham, Margaret Ketner, Meetta Lampert, Nancy  
Lippard, Anne Loeblein, Sarah Roberts, Peggy Smith, Bob  
Tannehill

*Congratulations to our Octogenarians  
celebrating January birthdays:*

Nancy Austin, Jim Benton, Raymond Gandy, Nan Graeber,  
Carol Hair, Mary Lou Lentz, John Lipe II, Bob Loeblein,  
Nancy Parrish, Barbara Wagoner

## Cindy Fink's Term of Service Ends December 31



The congregation owes a debt of gratitude to Cindy Fink, who served as president of Congregation Council in 2020.

"The year was marked by incredible uncertainty because of the pandemic," says Pastor Rhodes, "but Cindy was remarkable in her commitment, faithfulness, wisdom and grit. She never backed away from a challenge and was always well-prepared. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to Cindy."

Cindy is the executive director of Meals on Wheels of Rowan County and a life-long member of St. John's.

Mike Edwards will take the helm on January 1, 2021. Mike is the retired general manager of the Salisbury Walmart store.

## St. John's Leadership

### CONGREGATION COUNCIL

2020 President .... Cindy Fink  
2021 President-elect .... Mike Edwards  
Vice President .... Rosalind Hines  
Secretary .... David Phillips  
Treasurer .... Tommy Page  
Financial Secretary...Cory Gebhardt  
Personnel Secretary ... Jeanie Moore

### Term Expires 2020

Larry Cesario  
Cindy Fink  
David Phillips  
Wesley Rhyne  
Aleksandr (Sacha) Witt

### Term Expires 2021

Randy Overcash  
David Hord  
Mike Agee  
Mary Wymbs  
Larry Britt

### Term Expires 2022

Christopher Derrick  
Mike Edwards  
Penny Moss  
Dennis Rogers  
Rosalind Hines

### Youth Members

Grace Shafer and Elizabeth Jones

### Benevolent Foundation Trustees

John Henderlite, Chair  
Chip Bridges  
Chris Agner  
Margaret Kluttz  
John Denker

### MINISTRY GROUP STAFF CONTACTS

Worship and the Arts – Rob Durocher  
Discipleship – Pastor Laura Henrik  
Mercy and Justice – Pastor Rhodes Woolly  
Congregational Life – Diane Poole  
Stewarding God's Resources – Ruth Ann Diehl

**Many thanks** to the Class of 2020, who retire as Council members this December 31.

### Creation Care

As we strive to be good stewards of the planet and church financial resources, we want your feedback on the Eagle's View. Do you read it? How do you read it? Would you like to continue to receive it by mail, or would you like to save paper by going digital—you may read it online or have it emailed to you each month.

Email [angel@stjohns-salisbury.org](mailto:angel@stjohns-salisbury.org) or call the church, 704.636.3431, to let us know!

*Hope for Today*  
A Counseling Ministry of St. John's  
Lauren Stephenson, M.S., LMHCA, NCC

**Finding Hope: Coping with  
COVID-19 and Our New Normal**

**Individual Counseling**  
With Lauren Stephenson, M.S., LMHCA, NCC. Free and available to the community. Contact the Church Office (704-636-3431) or sign up online at [stjohns-counseling.youcanbook.me](http://stjohns-counseling.youcanbook.me)

### Consolation

Fred Williams, Jonathan Williams, and family, on the death of his mom, Frances Williams on Oct. 31.

Harold Mowery and family, on the passing of Dorothy "Dot" Smith, his sister, on Thurs. Oct. 29.

Jill Connery and family, on the passing of Jack Connery on Thursday, Nov. 5.

Ken Fink and family, on the passing of his brother, Butch Fink who lived in San Antonio, on Nov. 3.

### Devotions and Birthday Parties at Trinity Oaks

Trinity Oaks has asked area churches to support their ministry in two ways.

- Provide a weekly devotion for pre-selected dates on Wednesdays at 10:45 am or evenings at 6:30 or 7pm. The signup sheet may be full soon.
- Host a monthly birthday party for residents with birthdays in the given month at 2 pm or 6:30 pm. *If you can help on June 8 at 2:30 pm, call Diane at 704-223-5589.*

As you know, we have close to 40 St. John's members living at Trinity Oaks, so we would like to support this ministry. If you would like to volunteer for this



worthwhile service project, please contact Diane Poole at [diane@stjohns-salisbury.org](mailto:diane@stjohns-salisbury.org) or call 704-223-5589. The deadline for sending the information in is December 10, so please let Diane know ASAP. If any Ministry Groups would like to participate, let me know that as well.

## St. John's Ministry Staff

### Pastoral Ministry

Senior Pastor .....Rhodes Woolly  
Pastor of Youth and Discipleship.....Laura Henrik  
Visitation.....Wade Rouzer

### Worship and Music Ministry

Minister of Worship and the Arts.....Rob Durocher, deacon  
Associate Parish Musician.....Rosemary Kinard  
Director of Music Emeritus.....Karl Kinard, deacon  
Director, St. John's Men's Chorus..... Jason Harwood  
Assisting Organist.....Deanna Boksleitner  
Bell Choirs.....Kimberly Lentz  
Production Manager.....Taylor Hutchins  
Contemporary Worship Leader.....Bradley Chestnut

### Program Ministry

Adults.....Danny Hines  
Children.....Stacey Shafer  
Youth .....Laura Henrik  
Senior Adults .....Diane Poole  
St. John's Kindergarten (4 and 5 year olds) .....Teresa Stoner  
CDC Interim Directors ..... Lonna Richardson and Kristy King

### Administrative Team

Business Manager .....Ruth Ann Diehl  
Office Manager.....Deborah Cross  
Accounting.....Mark Bias  
Communications Specialist ..... Angel Owens  
Writer .....Susan Shinn Turner  
Facilities Manager.....Jon Koppe  
Maintenance.....David Ellenburg

The Rev. Dr. Timothy M Smith, Bishop of the NC Synod  
The Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Eaton, Presiding Bishop of the ELCA

### The best way to contact staff at this time is by email.

Staff Email: first name@stjohns-salisbury.org  
Visit us on the web at stjohns-salisbury.org  
Kindergarten 704.636.4404  
Kindergarten@stjohns-salisbury.org  
Child Development Center 704.636.6756  
cdc@stjohns-salisbury.org  
Kindergarten@stjohns-salisbury.org

### Office hours

The office building is closed while church staff members work from home.

Monday-Thursday, 9 am-5 pm; Friday 9-12.  
Telephone 704.636.3431; Fax 704.636.4461

### Worship During Covid-19 Restrictions

Online worship Sundays at 11 am  
Contemporary Worship Sundays at 9:27 am in the Faith Center  
Mid-week Communion Service, Wednesdays at 12:15 pm in the Chapel

Visit stjohns-salisbury.org and click "listen live,"  
watch on Facebook Live, or search "SJLC" on YouTube

Listen to worship each Sunday morning at 11 am on stjohns-salisbury.org, and click Listen Live. Listen to previous week's service at 9 am Sunday on WSAT 1280 AM.

### EAGLE'S VIEW (USPS 716—020)

is published once a month by St. John's Lutheran Church  
200 West Innes Street, Salisbury, NC 28144  
Vol. 20, Issue 11  
Periodical postage paid at Salisbury, North Carolina

POSTMASTER: Send address change to  
EAGLE'S VIEW, 200 W. Innes Street, Salisbury, NC 28144

**Please deliver by Nov. 24**

### Eagle's View Deadline

The February Eagle's View will be published in January.  
Please email stories and news to  
angel@stjohns-salisbury.org by Jan. 8!

### On Call List

If there is a pastoral emergency, please call **704.856.9751** to reach the pastor on call.

**Prayer Chain.** Our Prayer Chain is updated daily and emailed to interested persons Monday through Friday. To add or subtract a name, please contact Deborah Cross at deborah@stjohns-salisbury.org. Also let Deborah know if you would like to receive the daily Prayer Chain.



Let's connect faith and life. *Together.*