

Good News from St. John's

January 2025

St. John's Episcopal Church
313 S. 18th St. — PO Box 882
Parsons, KS 67357



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MISSION STATEMENT: With God's help we seek to share our love, fellowship, charity and faith with all in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Merry Christmas - all twelve days of it! That's right; don't put the Christmas mess away just yet. The season of Christmas lasts until the Feast of the Epiphany on January 6th. In a society that is driven by instant gratification and short attention span, we may already be sick to death of all things Christmas and ready to move on to the next neatly packaged greeting card holiday. Metaphorically speaking, the real tragedy of putting the baby Jesus away with the holiday ornaments right after December 25th is that it can inadvertently deny the reality of this season of Emanuel, 'God With Us'. By neatly packing Christmas away, until the retail stores begin pushing Christmas sales on us again sometime late next summer, we may be betraying the true nature of our faith. We may be living into the foolishness of believing that a relationship with God is both tidily organized and completely under our control.

Sometimes we may find ourselves thinking that we can have God on our terms and in a simple fashion. Sometimes folks believe that all we really must do is sit down with our Bibles, as well as our personal biases, and all of the answers to life's riddles will become instantly clear and neatly packaged. There are those who believe that Holy Scripture is meant to be our political guidebook, our science textbook, our legal code and our judge of who's in and who's out. This is not faithful to our tradition as Anglicans. Scripture is meant to be the story of a messy relationship with the Incarnate One and the beloved ones that this One created and redeemed.

If Scripture is to be mistaken for any other literary form, misconstrue it as a love letter. Love letters are likely the messiest literary genre humans have ever scribbled. They are subject to hyperbole and outlandish allegory. And yet, their beauty comes in the profound truth that they convey. "My love for you is an ocean and the joys you bring me are all the grains of sand on all of its beaches", may not be literal, legally factual or even grammatically correct. But it is true if I write it to someone I love.

Regardless of all of the other things the above statement may or may not be, it's messy. Being human is a messy experience. Nothing ever really turns out completely as expected and God surprises us. As Christians, we believe that God does not deny this messiness of creation but instead embraces it in being born of the Virgin Mary. God embraces our messiness by walking with outcasts and the impure. God embraces our messiness by challenging the Pharisees and Sadducees, religious authorities who would use Scripture as their tool to make their world both tidily organized and completely under their control. God embraces our messiness despite these authorities that believe they exclusively know the will and ways of God. God embraces our messiness even though the birth we celebrate at this season can only lead to a shameful, messy death on Good Friday and the surprise of Easter. God embraces our messiness at Christmas. Merry Christmas and a messy new year!

Pax, Kelley +

St. John's Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting
November 24 2024

Present: Candy Scarborough, Verlyn Bolinger, Carrie Tierney, Anna Baker, Martha Stone, Jupe Allen, Deacon Jeanine Blessant and Father Lackey.

Absent: Heidi Daily.

Minutes from October 14, 2024 Vestry Meeting were reviewed and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

The Transaction Report and the Budget were reviewed and discussed. The report was approved.

Old Business:

The status of the January elections were discussed. Some parishioners have been asked to run for positions but no one has stepped up at this time. The slate as it stands will be finalized next month but nominations will be taken right up until the voting actually takes place.

Anna and Bess have Thanksgiving plans in place lacking mostly volunteers to help serve and clean up.

Martha is playing internet tag with the Memorial Garden sign manufacturer over fonts and such. May have to find a new provider. It's a long way until spring so stay tuned.

Due to the balmy fall weather, our garden maintenance has outrun the garden season.

So we agreed to continue paying our gardener, Scott until such time as the work is completed.

New Business:

The Discretionary Fund and how to administer it was a subject that garnered a lot of attention. The way Mother Sharon handled it is no longer feasible due to Father Kelly not

living in Parsons. Evidently St John's is one of only a few churches in town that offers this service. The consensus is that this is a worthwhile ministry to pursue if we can develop a workable plan. To this end, Verlyn will reach out to the police department to discover what other entities offer services and which services they do offer to the needy.

Father Lackey will contact Jean McCandless about what services and assistance Labette Assistance Center specifically provides. Armed with this information we will develop an arraignment to disperse discretionary funds.

Ava Tierney has completed the Safe Church training program so she can be a child-care attendant.

Congratulations and thanks to Ava.

Our website has crashed and we may possibly have to hire outside help to get it up and

running once more. Study and consultation are needed to discover the best way to proceed.

Labette Community College Food Pantry sent a letter requesting assistance. After discussion we decided to not provide them any monetary assistance but rather revive efforts to help Labette Assistance with their mission by once again bringing non-perishable food items the first Sunday of any month. Due to the efforts of Fr Kelly our sound system has been revived and the speakers in the church are in operation once again and the bluetooth speaker has been retired.

The Parsons Ministerial Alliance is a non-denominational organization which among other things provide holiday services for the community. St John's has been a member for a while with Mother Sharon as our representative. With her no longer available a new representative is needed. It need not be clergy. A search is underway to fill this position.

Finding a new organist is proving next to impossible, a search for a pianist was instigated and evidently the only thing harder to find than a pianist is an organist! The fact remains that we have a very lovely, very serviceable organ. We just don't have anyone to play it on a regular basis. The idea was floated to investigate converting our organ to be played digitally. The technology exists, the questions are who can accomplish such a feat and as always, the big one for St John's is how much? This most interesting line of inquiry will be pursued.

On a related note the most rare of all things a pianist and an organist, Mr. Ken Weaver, someone who is a maestro of both instruments, will be playing the organ for us on Christmas Eve.

Let it be noted a new start time for the Christmas Eve service will be 8:00 pm.

Reports:

Priest: Fr Kelly described getting up to speed at St John's designing the bulletin, contributing to Worship and Music and writing for the Newsletter.

Deacon: Jeanine talked about her deacon led COMAP service, attending ministry meetings and pastoral care visits.

Sr Warden: No report.

Jr Warden: No report.

Ministries:

Worship & Music: Christian Copyright Licensing International aka CCLI is a company which protects the song rights of the artists who write them. They do this by charging everyone who sings or plays the songs.

Without a doubt a quasi-legitimate arm of organized crime, CCLI extracts a goodly sum annually from our impoverished church to send to the likes of Johan Sebastian Bach and all of the other dead masters

who have contributed to our hymnal. Of course we can only perpetuate this farce by paying them or having a music free service. I was so wrapped up in the story of the thievery I forgot how much we need to pay them.

Outreach: We will pack SnakPaks in January.

Evangelism: No report.

Communications: No report.

Children's Education: No report.

Adult Formation: The Way of Love will be the theme, the study will be on Thursdays at

6:00 with the reading of Compline after.

Stewardship-Planned Giving: No report.

Buildings & Grounds: No report.

Altar Guild: Changing of the Greens will happen

Saturday November 30.

Endowment: October 31, 2024 \$103,499.37 down

\$1,306.20

Clergy Support: October 31, 2024 \$172,295.99 down

\$533.40

ECW: Christmas Dinner is December 18.

Fellowship(wine) at 6:00 Dinner at 6:30.

Pastoral Care: The Home Communion kits have arrived and have been provided by the Altar Guild through a gift from the Jan Chubb Memorial Fund.

Next regular meeting, Sunday December 22 after church.

A blessing by Father Kelly concluded the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Jupe Allen, Clerk



Prayer List

Teresa, Jim, Harry, Gina, Ethan, Wuanita, Jeffrey, Boo, Jane, Regina, Bretten, Carolyn, Lynn, Dwayne, Lorrie, Addlee, Jon, Randy, John & family, children with special needs their families and caregivers, Les, Michelle, Karla, Becky, Cindy, Antonio, Karla, Bess, Michelle, Joel, Jill, Michael, Casey, Cayla, Randall, Jaylynn, Dominic, Joaquin, Jessica, John, Carla, Tom, Pete, Douglas, Sarah, those in Israel, Palestine and Gaza, Bob, Jeanie, Kelly, Darin, Heather, Jayden, Nicole, Bill, Tony, Gail, Olive, Rex, Tiffany, Lisa, Kaylan, churches in the Southeast Convocation in their call to mission, all clergy in the Southeast Convocation, BKSM students, dispatchers and first responders, the men & women serving our country here and abroad, and those who have served.



January Birthdays

6 Sue Long
12 Karla Cox
26 Fran McLarty
29 Regina Cook



January Anniversaries:

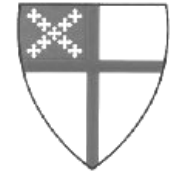
12 Mike & Candy Scarborough
18 Lynn Reeves

Please send Articles for The Good News to Senta Meister, sentabradmeister@aol.com or St. John's Episcopal Church, PO Box 882, Parsons, KS 67357.



St. John's Episcopal Church

JANUARY 2025



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5 The Second Sunday after Christmas Morning Prayer 9:30 am	6 Epiphany Service	7	8	9	10	11
12 The First Sunday after the Epiphany Holy Eucharist 9:30 am	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 The Second Sunday after the Epiphany COMAP 9:30 am	20 Newsletter Deadline	21	22	23	24	25
26 The Third Sunday after the Epiphany Holy Eucharist 9:30 am	27	28	29	30	31	

St. John's January 2025 schedule

	Morning Prayer 01/05/2025	Epiphany 01/06/2025	HE 01/12/2025	COMAP 01/19/2025	HE 01/26/2025
Clergy	Deacon	Father K/Deacon	Father K/Deacon		Father K
Leader	Martha			Patty, Jupe	
Eucharistic Minister	None	Candy	Verlyn		Joe
Lector	Daria	Jupe	Patty		Alice
Acolytes	Joe	All	Verlyn, Nola	Zoe	Verlyn, Ava
Eucharistic Visitor	None	None	None	Senta	None
Greeters	Daria		Frank & Patty	Candy	Alice & Harry
Coffee Hour	Tierneys & Jolene	Celebration	Help Yourself	Help Yourself	ECW
Counters	Vestry				
Altar Guild	Martha, Bess				