



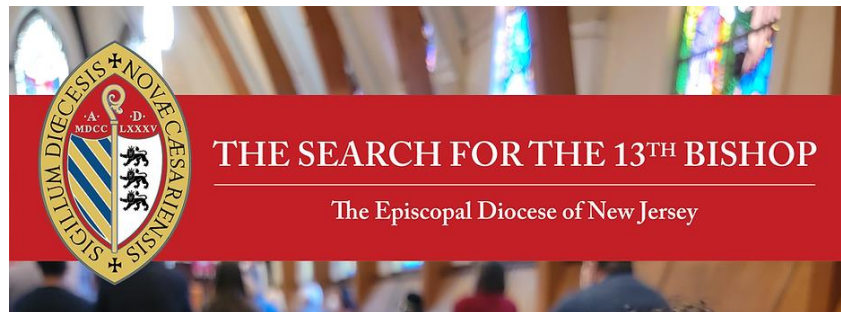
# Episcopal Church News

St. George's, St. Luke's, St. John's

January 2023

*Welcome to the first issue of the newsletter serving the Episcopal Churches of Salem County! We need a name that encompasses the mission of all 3 churches. If you have a suggestion, please email it to [stjohnssalemnj@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnssalemnj@gmail.com). The leaders of the 3 churches will pick one and it will be used starting in February.*

*We really want your input. Each newsletter will feature a message from the leadership of each church, news from each church, special events and more! Please submit anything you would like included by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month for inclusion in the next newsletter.*



The search for the 13<sup>th</sup> Bishop of the Diocese of NJ is nearing the end. The candidates have been announced and will be doing Meet and Greets in several churches of the diocese over the next few weeks. Information on the search and the candidates can be found here:

<https://www.bishopsearchnj.org/>

The Electing Convention will be held on Saturday, January 28 at Trinity Cathedral and online. Delegates should have already been certified and registered.

Meet and greets will be held at the following nearby locations:

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2023**

**1:30PM - 3:30PM**

Church of the Ascension  
(live-streamed & recorded)  
110 S. Sussex Street, Gloucester City NJ 08030

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 13, 2023**

**7:00PM - 9:00PM**

St. Mark and All Saints Episcopal Church  
(live-streamed & recorded)  
429 S. Pitney Road, Galloway NJ 08205



2022 was a grand year at St John's as we celebrated 300 years of God's grace at St John's. 2022 was a year of acknowledging the foundation laid by generations who have come

before us and giving thanks for their generosity of time, talent, and treasure ensuring the ongoing ministries of St John's to this day. It was right and fitting that we dedicated 2022 as a year of celebration. Now we look to the future of our church home and the foundation and legacy of what we leave behind to those who come after us.

2023 is a year we look to the future. This year, let us ask the Holy Spirit to enable us to dream what St John's can be in the years to come. There are several new things St John's is engaging in you should be aware. We are being intentional in strengthening the ties that bind us between the three Episcopal congregations of Salem County. You'll notice that this is the inaugural edition of a newsletter that brings news from St George's in Pennsville, St Luke's in Woodstown, as well as the happenings here at St John's. It is our hope that sharing what is going on in each individual parish, we as Episcopalians of Salem County, can support and encourage one another. This is but a first step in doing more activities together.

2023 is a year we strengthen our commitment to support St John's through our ongoing stewardship. Yes, this means your financial commitment to the ongoing ministries of your church home is vital. We have delighted in a year full of the most exquisite music from our choir led by our Minister of Music, Bill Clisham. It takes your financial gifts and offerings to keep our incredible music ministry going. Your financial pledges are vital to our congregation, but they are inconsequential without your presence and participation in the weekly life of St John's. We need you here. You have unique gifts you are called to give to benefit others. There is opportunity for you to live out life as a minister of the gospel by strengthening what ministries we do have and other places we've yet to discern. We need you in every ministry of the church. If you cannot read during the Sunday morning services, you can give up ten minutes before each service to welcome people as they come in. You can usher by

bringing up the offerings. You can help with coffee hour. Come to Bible Study each Thursday for food, interesting topics, and conversation. We all desire to have families with children; however, are we ready to receive them? You and your gifts are needed. I pray you heed the sway of the Holy Spirit as you find your ministry at St John's.

On Sunday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, we'll hold our Annual Meeting. I hope you'll all make a point to attend after the 10:30 worship service. We will be electing new vestry members and giving reports of ministries and their activities this last year. It is also a time for fellowship as we gather to share lunch together. (More details of menu to come.)

It is the start of a new year. 2023 brings with it a new hope of things to come, possibilities we've yet to consider. 2022 was a great year of celebration, but as we enter the potential of 2023, let us hold fast to the unchangeable faith in Jesus Christ to be with us in good times and bad and in God's grace to endure whatever may come our way.

It is my joy to serve St John's as it's rector and to give myself to you as your pastor in the year to come. My life's purpose finds its conclusion in serving you and dispensing the gifts of God to the people of God. My prayer for 2023 is that we'll grow closer as a congregation and that our love for one another and for our community will be a beacon of light that draws seekers of God to this corner of our Lord's vineyard.

Happy New Year! God is with us!

*Fr. Chuck*



Happy Birthday Jesus!

From St. Luke's  
Vicar



We have left the stressful, sad, and often tragic old year behind us and begin 2023 fresh with hope, love, and promise. Don't bring the troubles of the past into this new beginning.

"You've done your best, trust God to transition you with His Grace." (*Shelby Condo Kelly's Treehouse*) As we celebrate the gift of the Christ-child let us remember that we are reflections of Jesus' love.

"St. Paul says that when people bog down in their prayers, 'the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words' (Romans 8:26). The time he outdid himself, of course, was when 'he so loved the world that he gave his only Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life' (John 3:16). To put it another way, his final word to the world was the Word itself, wearing flesh like a uniform and dwelling among us full of grace and truth (John 1:14)." Frederick Buechner from *Peculiar Treasures, a Biblical Who's Who*, p 201.

The Feast of the Manifestation, or Epiphany, is traditionally celebrated the 12<sup>th</sup> day after Christmas, January 6<sup>th</sup>. In the Episcopal and Catholic dioceses of the United States, according to the new calendar, this feast has been moved to the Sunday between January 2 and January 8, if the 6<sup>th</sup> falls during the week. For us, this year, it is on January 8<sup>th</sup>.

On Epiphany (Twelfth Night), St. Luke's marks the occasion of a time-honored Christian tradition of "chalking the doors." The formula for the ritual...adapted for 2023...is simple: take chalk (blessed by the priest) of any color and write the following above the entrance to the church or your home: 20 + C + M + B + 23

The letters have two meanings. First, they represent the Magi---we have come to know them as Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar---who came to visit Jesus in his first home. They also abbreviate the Latin phrase, *Christus mansionem benedicat*: "May Christ bless the house." The + sign represents the cross, and the 20 at the beginning and the 23 at the end mark the year. Taken together, this inscription is performed as a request for Christ to bless those homes (and churches)

so marked and that He stay with those who dwell or worship therein throughout the entire year.

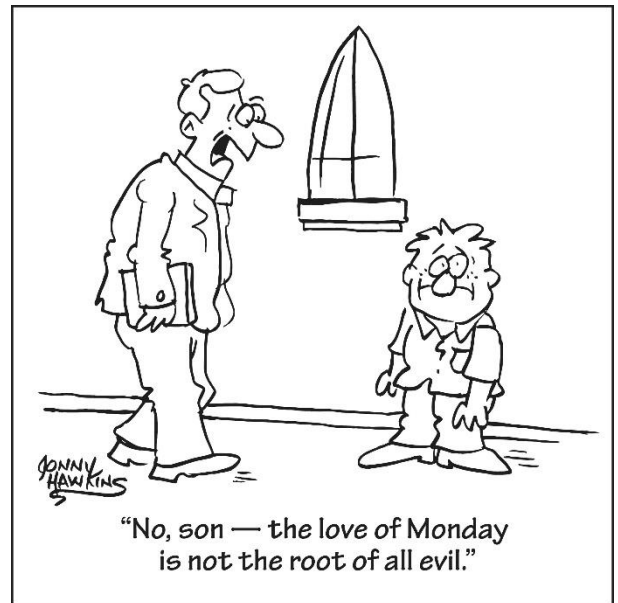
The chalking of the doors is a centuries-old practice throughout the world, though it appears to be somewhat less well-known in the United States. It is, however, an easy tradition to adopt, and a great practice whereby we dedicate our year to God from its very outset, asking his blessing on our homes and churches and on all who live, work, or visit them there.

Our homes are where many of us will make the greatest strides in our spiritual growth, through observance of daily prayer, spiritual reading, and work offered as an oblation to God. Seeing the symbols over our doors can help to remind us that our homes and all those who dwell there belong to Christ. It also serves as reminder of welcoming all those who come to our homes and church to visit us!

Blessed chalk will be available for parishioners to take home and mark their doors.

God bless you and keep you.

*Mother Antoinette*





## From The Deacon's Bench

December was an incredibly busy month for this Deacon. Yet, it was probably the most fulfilling month I can remember. Thanks to all three churches, nineteen refugee children and their families received presents, surprising them with items they probably never expected. In case you didn't know this, our idea of a giving tree spurred Interfaith Rise to have a giving tree for ALL of the refugee children they are helping. We collected and delivered gifts to 2 Afghan families and 2 Ukrainian families. Mother Antoinette and I delivered the gifts to one of the Ukrainian families and I think the grandmother who received them was overwhelmed. Their Case Manager, Zoryana, told me they were in tears with the generosity. I got to meet a couple of the Afghan children – 4 year old Zeyneb, who was very shy and 14 year old Sanga, who received the presents for her family. In addition I returned to the Nesterenko family because I forgot a necklace for Diana and had a lovely conversation with the whole family. Tymofii, age 2, came right to me showing me his action figure and Diana (14) has become quite fluent in English at Quinton Schools, with the help of John Wernega, a friend of St. John's. It was lovely.

In addition to all of this activity, St. John's held their annual Secret Santa Shoppe and had over 90 local children 'shop' in the store for gifts for their family members. Many many people from both St. George's and St. John's made this happen and it was a huge success! We were nearly wiped out of gift items so start collecting those items that you'd like to donate for next year and we'll store them. As you put your Christmas decorations away, if there are items you are not using any longer don't toss them, give them to me.

I was also given another family – a Guatemalan mother and her 2 boys, age 10 and 5, who live in Penns Grove. Through many generous donations, I have been able to give her kitchen supplies, pots and pans, a brand new bunk bed for the boys and Christmas presents that included a brand new bike for the 10 year old. I will continue to support them and try to get things for them to help them with their life here. My Spanish has been

greatly challenged as they speak very little English – the 10 year old has had to translate for me!

Now onward to 2023 – I need your old hats, gloves, scarves and warm clothing. St. John's is gifted with a marvelous wrought iron fence around the property and each year we 'hang out' warm clothing. We will be putting these items out on Jan. 22<sup>nd</sup> so now's the time to sort your winter clothes and get me any items you wish to donate. Please don't go out and buy a lot of new stuff – gently used is great. If you have time to stop at a thrift store, those items are also appreciated.

We are the hands and feet of Christ. We are the image of Christ that the world sees. We are identifying the needs of the world and addressing them. God bless you all for your walk in Christ.

*Deacon Sally Maurer*



Zeyneb, one of the children from one of the refugee families, with the gifts for her family.



# St. John's News

## ANNUAL MEETING

Annual Meeting: Sunday, January 15, 2023, following the 10:30 service. Attendees are asked to bring a side dish or dessert; entrée will be provided by the vestry. Anyone who needs to submit a report for the annual report is asked to have it to the office (via email) no later than Monday, January 9.



Everyone is invited to join Sue & Curt Harker for their annual Twelfth Night Open House. It will be held on Sunday, January 8, 2023 at their home-24 Oak Street, Salem-from 4-8 pm. All are welcome-no RSVP needed. Hope to see you there!



### St. John's Prayer List January 2023

Helen Acton	Frances Ames	Suzanne Pankonian
George Neff	Janice	Anna Hiller
Carol Bacon	Gail Boyd	Doug (Glenn) Hancock
Pat Major	Sally Maurer	Francine Peterson
Joseph Peterson, Jr.	Joseph	George
Jim	Bill Fox	Michele Pfeffer
Elaine Pfeffer	Brenda & Bill Gaunt	Evan Crim
Rich Frieze	Eric Kates	John Ensslen
The Kamera Family		Susan Ewan
Joel Norton	Emma Messer	Jim Acton
Andrew & Judy	Doug & Theresa	VanSant & family
Beth T.	Steph Miller	
Family & Friends of Betty Wismer		



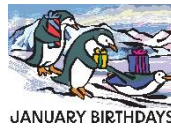
We extend our sympathy to the family and friends of Betty Wismer, a lifelong member of our parish family and the first female member of St. John's Vestry. Services were held at St. John's, with committal following in our graveyard. May she Rest in Peace and Rise in Glory!



The Vestry Nominating Committee has been in consultation for potential vestry members. I want to thank Doug Van Sant and Annemarie Lawless for their help. There are two terms to be filled. Candidates will be announced prior to the meeting date. There will also be nominations taken from the floor at our Annual Meeting on January 15<sup>th</sup> following the 10:30 AM worship service. If you feel called to serve as a member of the vestry, see Fr Chuck.



It's time for the annual Hanging of the Hats (mittens/gloves/scarves). Go through your (gently used) winter gear and donate it to St. John's annual drive. Items will be hung on the fence (tentatively) January 22.



1/2	Tammy Peterson
1/6	Jimmy Trinidad (Dad)
1/13	Father Chuck Messer
1/14	Eileen Miller
1/16	Annemarie Lawless
1/16	Joseph Peterson, Jr.
1/16	Mary Beth Chard
1/20	Dianne Messer
1/23	Joseph Peterson, Sr.
1/23	Matthew Wayne Runkle
1/25	Emma Messer
1/26	Charles Miller IV
1/31	Rosie Carroll



1/6/1979 John Jr. and Wendy Laning

# St. Luke's News

## ANNUAL MEETING

Annual Meeting with Potluck Lunch will be held on Sunday, January 15, 2023, at 11:15 am, following the 10 am service.

(Bible Study resumes January 22)



Our Bible Study on the book of Genesis will begin on January 8 at 11:15 am. (Bring your Bibles!)



We will celebrate Epiphany, with the Chalking of the Door Ceremony and Holy Eucharist at 10 a.m. on January 8.



### St. Luke's Prayer List: January 2023

- |   |       |       |            |
|---|-------|-------|------------|
| Sally                                     | Mike  | Joy   | Allesandra |
| Jill                                      | Steve | Donna | Chris      |
| The Liccordello Family, especially Rachel |       |       |            |
| Cynthia                                   | Joe   | Alena |            |
| The people of Ukraine                     |       |       |            |
| Those affected by gun violence            |       |       |            |

# St. George's News

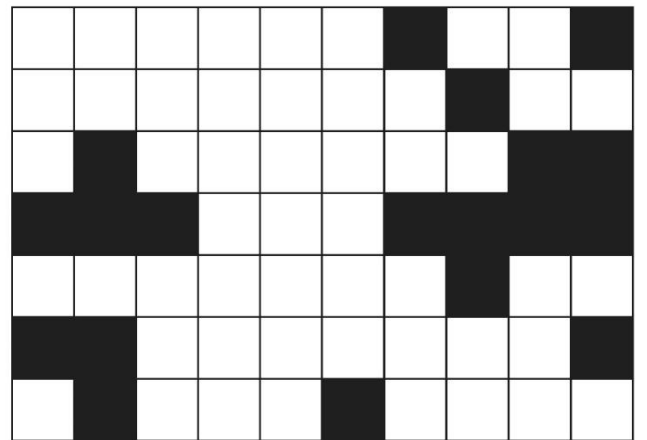
## ANNUAL MEETING

Annual Meeting with Lunch will be held on Sunday, January 15, 2023, following the 9 am service.

# Puzzle!

Match the blocks of spaces and letters to complete an NIV Bible verse about an important commitment.


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Answer: Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ. 1 Cor. 11:1



# January

<b>1</b> <b>Holy Eucharist</b> 8 am St. John's 9 am St. George's 10 am St. Lukes 10:30 am St. John's		<b>3</b> 8 am Yoga-Parish Hall <b>SJ</b> 9 am Quilters <b>SJ</b> 8 pm NA <b>SJ</b>	<b>4</b> <b>Holy Eucharist</b> 10 am Holy Eucharist <b>SL</b> Noon Holy Eucharist <b>SJ</b> 8 pm AA <b>SJ</b>	<b>5</b> 8 am Yoga-Parish Hall <b>SJ</b> 6:30 Bible Study with Potluck Dinner <b>SJ</b>		
<b>8</b> <b>Holy Eucharist</b> 8 am St. John's 9 am St. George's 10 am St. Lukes 10:30 am St. John's <b>All 3 Churches: Annual Meeting following the service.</b>		<b>10</b> 8 am Yoga-Parish Hall <b>SJ</b> 8 pm NA <b>SJ</b>	<b>11</b> <b>Holy Eucharist</b> 10 am Holy Eucharist <b>SL</b> Noon Holy Eucharist <b>SJ</b> 8 pm AA <b>SJ</b>	<b>12</b> 8 am Yoga-Parish Hall <b>SJ</b> 6:30 Bible Study with Potluck Dinner <b>SJ</b>		
<b>15</b> <b>Holy Eucharist</b> 8 am St. John's 9 am St. George's 10 am St. Lukes 10:30 am St. John's	 <b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 8 am Yoga-Parish Hall <b>SJ</b> 11 AM-7 PM SCDOH Blood Drive <b>SJ</b> 8 pm NA <b>SJ</b>	<b>18</b> <b>Holy Eucharist</b> 10 am Holy Eucharist <b>SL</b> Noon Holy Eucharist <b>SJ</b> 8 pm AA <b>SJ</b>	<b>19</b> 8 am Yoga-Parish Hall <b>SJ</b> 6:30 Bible Study with Potluck Dinner <b>SJ</b>	<b>20</b> <b>Deadline for articles for February Newsletter</b>	
<b>22</b> <b>Holy Eucharist</b> 8 am St. John's 9 am St. George's 10 am St. Lukes 10:30 am St. John's		<b>24</b> 8 am Yoga-Parish Hall <b>SJ</b> 8 pm NA <b>SJ</b>	<b>25</b> <b>Holy Eucharist</b> 10 am Holy Eucharist <b>SL</b> Noon Holy Eucharist <b>SJ</b> 8 pm AA <b>SJ</b>	<b>26</b> 8 am Yoga-Parish Hall <b>SJ</b> 6:30 Bible Study with Potluck Dinner <b>SJ</b>		
<b>29</b> <b>Holy Eucharist</b> 8 am St. John's 9 am St. George's 10 am St. Lukes 10:30 am St. John's		<b>31</b> 8 am Yoga-Parish Hall <b>SJ</b> 8 pm NA <b>SJ</b>				<i>Activities are held in the following churches:</i>  <b>SG-St. George's</b> <b>SL-St. Lukes</b> <b>SJ-St. John's</b>

**From the Editor:** Please have any information you would like printed in the next Forerunner to me by **January 20**. Family news, articles, information, articles, recipes, book or movie reviews, or anything you think would be of interest to our church families. Items can be emailed to [ecmiller114@gmail.com](mailto:ecmiller114@gmail.com) or [stjohnssalemnj@comcast.net](mailto:stjohnssalemnj@comcast.net).

**St. John's Episcopal Church**

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Rector: The Rev'd Charles Messer 856-935-1798 (office) 610-800-8795 (cell) [frchuckmesser@gmail.com](mailto:frchuckmesser@gmail.com)  
Deacon: The Rev'd Sally Maurer 856-769-1409 (h) 856-297-2385 (cell) [slarrabee@comcast.net](mailto:slarrabee@comcast.net)  
Facebook: [St. John's Salem](#) Website: [St. John's Salem](#)

**St. Luke's Episcopal Church**

37-39 E. Grant Street, Woodstown, NJ 08098

Parish Office: 856-472-1501 E-Mail: [stlukeswoodstownnj@gmail.com](mailto:stlukeswoodstownnj@gmail.com)

Vicar: The Rev'd Antoinette Tackett 856-472-1501 (office) [stlukessupply@gmail.com](mailto:stlukessupply@gmail.com)  
Facebook: [St. Luke's Woodstown](#) Website: [St. Luke's Woodstown](#)

**St. George's Episcopal Church**

3 Church Landing Road, Pennsville, NJ 08070

Parish Office: (856) 678-7979

Deacon: The Rev'd Sally Maurer 856-769-1409 (h) 856-297-2385 (cell) [slarrabee@comcast.net](mailto:slarrabee@comcast.net)  
Facebook: [St. George's, Pennsville](#) Website: [St. George's, Pennsville](#)



**St. John's Episcopal Church**

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Salem, NJ 08079

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

