

ST. JOHN'S JOURNEY



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 Tom Manney

Senior Warden
 Becky Foster

Junior Warden
 Jack Dodd

A Note from Tom



Advent is here.

And boy do we need it.

As is always the case with the approaching Christmas holidays, Advent reminds us of the need to 'hit the pause button' on the stress of the world. There has been—for the last 22 months now—the ever-present strain of the Covid pandemic, which seems to have created a permanent weight bearing down on us. Add to it the 'normal' stresses of work, relationships, personal health, etc., and you have a recipe for serious anxiety.

And into our lives come Mary and Joseph, travelling with a donkey making their way toward Nazareth. The two of them are almost a biblical cavalry, arriving *just in the nick of time* to save us besieged settlers.

And this is what the season of Advent is—sort of a rescue from God. As the year winds down and we feel tired and worn out, we receive from God the image of a young couple, nervously and excitedly waiting for the birth of their child. And we get to *share* in that excitement because that child is for us too. Not just Mary and Joseph's baby, but *our* baby. Our Savior, our Redeemer, and our Messiah.

So let us try our best to leave the stress behind. Advent is here and that means that it is time to prepare for the coming celebration of our Lord's nativity.

Just in the nick of time.

With every blessing...

Tom+

Holiday Party!



When: December 11 @ 4PM

*Where: Fr. Tom & Teri's house at
 2128 Miles, Lapeer*

*Main course and beverages provided but
 a dish to share would be welcomed.
 All are welcomed — but if you can't
 come, please let Fr. Tom know.*

Website: www.stjohnschurchdryden.org

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Find us on Facebook!



Editor: Becky Foster

St. John’s Journey is published monthly. We’re looking for your photos and articles. Please email them to “stjohnschurchdryden@gmail.com” with the word “Newsletter” in the subject line. Deadline for January is Dec. 31st



Happy Birthday...

- Kathleen Buszek
- Jane Harlow
- Sherry Wagner
- Bob Miller
- Mary Cameron

Happy Anniversary

Russ & Kitty Underwood



Dear Friends,
You are probably reading this in early December but I’m writing just before Thanksgiving. And just before the first Sunday of Advent. I am filled with gratitude and hope. Grateful for the gentle perseverance that I see around me every Sunday. Grateful for help offered when least expected. Grateful for new opportunities for us to learn and grow as a congregation. And hopeful that we can find ways to press the “pause” button during Advent to create time to remember the gifts that surround us every day and the greatest gift given to all of us on Christmas.

What a great month we’ve had. Halloween was fun if chilly – see the pics later in this issue. We had a wonderful, if belated, Canadian Thanksgiving on November 8th. Not only did we have a great meal, but “O, Canada” sounded like we were in an arena full of hockey fans. I’m sure Don Smith heard us! Our Taste & See classes were another opportunity to feed body, mind and soul. The class on what the Bible says about homosexuality was riveting. And the class on Spirituality gave us some new options to add to our faith journey.

And we recently had a guest preacher for Sunday – Katie Forsyth, Canon for Evangelism and Networking for the dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan (bet she has an extra-large business card). It was Christ the King Sunday and she had us thinking about what it means to follow Christ as our King in world where most see things from a totally opposite point of view. It was great having her with us. I hope we can do it

again soon.
As a Vestry, we are wrapping up the current year and planning for 2022. 2021 was a good year, in spite of all the stress from Covid. So much has been accomplished – our upcoming Annual Meeting will have a long list to celebrate. Financially, we have been in good shape throughout the year thanks to steady pledge giving and also to generous donations for specific projects. On the subject of pledges, if you missed the deadline for submitting your 2022 pledge, no worries – just drop it in the mail or the offering plate on Sunday. Getting that little card is so important – it provides a good estimate of donations as we create the budget for 2022. And I thank all who have already sent in their pledge cards.

We have reinstated some Covid protocols at St. John’s in response to the high levels of infection in our area and across the country. Wearing a mask is mandatory. We’ve roped off pews once more to increase the space between people. And we’ve spread out the chairs in the parish hall for the same reason. We’ll be using a similar approach for our Christmas Bazaar. I’m hoping this is sufficient but if we need to take additional steps, we will do so. It feels to me that we need to gather together even more this Advent and Christmas than in former years. We are committed to in person worship and gatherings as long as we can count on each other to help with safety precautions. For those who decide to stay home, we will continue to stream our services on Facebook and hope that you will join us there. We will be sure to hold you in our prayers and in our hearts.

(continued on page 3)

Senior Warden (continued from page 2) December will be a busy month and St. John's. The Christmas Bazaar is on the first Saturday of the month. I hope you're making something for the tables. It always a fun time and you might just find a few unique gift items for your list. We'll have another Taste & See class (these have been great), the Longest Night service, a Christmas Eve AND Christmas Day service along with our "normal" Sunday worship schedule. My prayer for all of us this holiday season is that our journey to Christmas Day be almost stress free and filled with a joyous sense of shared bounty and peace.

Merry Christmas,

Becky



A Prayer for Stewardship

– Submitted by Corinne Fry

Written by Catherine Thomas, Daughters of the King, St. Paul's in St. Joseph, MI. Edited for our church of St. John's.

*Heavenly Father, Giver of all,
I confess that I don't give what is asked of me,
Don't deliver the things taught to me,
And often forget the community surrounding me.
I give thanks for the beloved St. John's community and
Am grateful for the amount I am able to give.
I pray to You for help in recognizing
Additional ways to give,
To fight the fears within myself That hold me back from
giving to my fullest.
In the glory of God and for my adored, St. John's,
Lord, hear my prayer.*



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and
suddenly
there was with
the angel
a multitude of
the heavenly host
praising God
and saying
Glory to God
in the highest, and on earth,
peace, goodwill towards
men
Luke 2
13-14

Please join us as we celebrate the birth of Christ on

Friday, December 24th

At 8:30 PM

And on

Saturday, December 25th

At 10AM

Services will be in-person & on FaceBook

(Masks required at all in-person services)





Loving Kindness Meditation

A recent Taste & See Class focused on Spirituality. One member of the class described a meditation that she had learned while taking a class on Yoga – it was called the Loving Kindness Meditation. It sounded like something that might be a good prayer for some of us. Looking into it, I found there are quite a few variations. The original meditation is from a Buddhist tradition and can be quite lengthy. However, there is a version that fits with the Judeo-Christian tradition that is easier to remember. The following article from the **Christians Meditate** website, provides instruction on how to prepare for meditating and for each iteration of the prayer. Give it a try – many people love how this opens them to God’s love.

Loving Kindness Meditation by Sandra Miller, March 31, 2019 – One Mindfully

Our two contemplative prayer groups met together yesterday for an eight-hour prayer retreat. We did meditations on letting go, forgiveness, transforming judgment into empathy and loving kindness. At the end participants shared what resonated most for them from the day. The overwhelming majority said it was the loving kindness meditation. Here it is.

I recommend you read through the meditation once to get the structure of it. Then identify the people you will pray for. Finally memorize the three short blessings. This preparation will free you to be fully present with those you pray for while experiencing God’s spirit inside you and inside them.

Plant your feet firmly on the floor – connecting to all who have lived throughout time as well as all who live on this Earth now. Sit comfortably straight. Drop your shoulders. Open your fin-

gers and relax your hands. And follow your breath – ruach, the spirit of God – as it enters your nostrils and moves to the back of your throat to your diaphragm. Follow your breath as it returns from your diaphragm and out your nostrils. In out, in out. Notice as your breath deepens and slows.

Try to visualize breathing into your heart. Feel the area around your heart grow warmer with each in breath. feel your heart enveloped in the love of the spirit – ruach within. Feel the presence of God’s spirit in your being as we pray for loving kindness.

Sometimes the most difficult person to pray to receive loving kindness is ourselves. But without some measure of loving kindness for ourselves, it is difficult to extend loving kindness to others. Given this, we start our prayer with ourselves and from there our prayers move out in ever-widening circles.

Visualize yourself as you are at this very moment – not who you were yesterday or who you want to be tomorrow but who you are here and now. Notice the mix of emotions you are feeling – painful and joyful. Cultivate a soft, loving heart toward your pain and your joy. Extend yourself grace and love. Visualize your heart enveloped in God’s love – resting God’s presence. And repeat over and over in your mind’s eye these blessings.

May I experience God’s mercy

May I experience God’s peace

May I experience God’s love

Now bring to mind someone who you love who loves you now or at some time in the past. If you have difficulty bringing someone to mind, visualize a pet or someone from your imagination. Visualize them – not only their physical appearance and mannerisms but also the emotions they evoke in you.

Cultivate a soft, loving heart toward their pain and joy. Extend them grace and love. Visualize their heart wrapped in God’s love. And repeat over and over in your mind’s eye these blessings.

May you experience God’s mercy

May you experience God’s peace

May you experience God’s love

Now bring to mind an acquaintance – someone you know but not well. Visualize them – not only their physical appearance and mannerisms but also the emotions they evoke in you.

Cultivate a soft, loving heart toward their pain and joy. Extend them grace and love. Visualize their heart wrapped in God’s love. And repeat over and over in your mind’s eye these blessings.

May you experience God’s mercy

May you experience God’s peace

May you experience God’s love

Now bring to mind someone neutral – someone you see on the elevator, a clerk at the grocery store, someone at church. Visualize them – not only their physical appearance and mannerisms but also the emotions they evoke in you.

Cultivate a soft, loving heart toward their pain and joy. Extend them grace and love. Visualize their heart wrapped in God’s love. And repeat over and over in your mind’s eye these blessings.

May you experience God’s mercy

May you experience God’s peace

May you experience God’s love

Now bring to mind someone who mildly irritates you – the person in the next cubicle who talks too loudly on the phone, the friend who never asks how you are doing or the relative who eats with their mouth open. Visualize them – not only their physical appearance and mannerisms but also the emotions they evoke in you.

Cultivate a soft, loving heart toward their pain and joy. Extend them grace and love. Visualize their heart wrapped in God’s love. And repeat over and over in your mind’s eye these blessings.

May you experience God’s mercy

May you experience God’s peace

May you experience God’s love

(Continue on page 5)

(Loving, Kindness Meditation, continued from page 4)

Now bring to mind someone who hurt you deeply. Perhaps you still feel the emotional pain when you see them or think about them. Perhaps you avoid seeing them and have stuffed the pain deep in your psyche. Visualize them – not only their physical appearance and mannerisms but also the emotions they evoke in you.

What I'm going to ask you to do next is going to be hard. But I want you to try to cultivate a soft, loving heart toward them Transform their bad behavior into a recognition of their painful emotions. Extend them grace and love as you would want them to extend their grace and love

to you. Visualize their heart wrapped firmly in God's love. And repeat over and over in your mind's eye these blessings.

May you also experience God's mercy
May you also experience God's peace
May you also experience God's love

Now bring to mind all living beings — Animals, insects, birds, reptiles. Edible and inedible plants, trees, shrubs. And people of all ages, colors, nationalities, ethnicities, religions, incomes, genders, sexual orientations, in all states of health – each with a unique generative story that makes them a unique child of God. Visualize them – not only their physical ap-

pearance and mannerisms but also the emotions they evoke in you.

Cultivate a soft, loving heart toward their pain and joy. Extend them grace and love. Visualize their hearts wrapped in God's love. And repeat over and over in your mind's eye these blessings.

May all living beings experience God's mercy
May all living beings experience God's peace
May all living beings experience God's love

May the peace that surpasses all knowledge, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, wholly human, wholly divine, who shows us the way, the truth and the life through his example. Amen.



It's almost here!!! **Christmas Bazaar** – December 4th from 9:30 – 4PM, time to bring all the goodies you've been collecting to sell. Crafts, Baked Goods, gently used holiday items and maybe some gently used toys as well. With possible shortages, we all might find something "perfect" when we bring our donations.

Please join us for a special service of comfort and peace during the darkest night of the year. For all of us who feel the absence of family members and friends during the holidays. And for those who struggle with loss of health, jobs or other trials.



Our

last Taste & See Class for 2021 is on

Thursday - 12/09 5:30 PM at St. John's. Masks required.

The topic is: BCP Writing Collects and Prayers of the People. Each session has been unique and interesting. Please take some time from holiday preparations to join us – we would love to see you.

When: **Tuesday, December 21st**

Time: **7PM**

How: In person at St. John's (masks required) or through our **Facebook Live** broadcast

You can find our church Facebook page by clicking on this link (or entering it in your Internet address bar at the top of the screen). You **DO NOT NEED TO BE A FACEBOOK USER.**

<https://www.facebook.com/stjohnschurchdryden>

If you plan to participate virtually,

please **email the names** of those you would like to include in the memorial portion of the service **to heislerbecky52@gmail.com.**

And have a candle or two near you to light yourself when your names are recited.

May the Peace of the Lord be with each of us throughout this holiday season.



About the Rt. Rev. Prince G. Singh – Our new Provisional Bishop



Here's a brief overview of Bishop Singh's history:

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Prince G. Singh served as the Eighth Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester, New York. Bishop Singh was born in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India. He graduated from Madras Christian College, Tambaram, and Union Biblical Seminary, both in India. He was ordained a priest in the Church of South India (Anglican Communion) in 1990 and served congregations in rural South India. Bishop Singh holds postgraduate degrees in Practical Theology from Union Theological Seminary, Virginia (1994), from Princeton Seminary (1995), and a Ph.D. from Drew University in Religion and Society (2005). In 2011, Bishop Singh was awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity Degree from General Theological Seminary in New York City. He served in the Diocese of Newark as Associate Rector at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Morristown New Jersey (1997-2000), and as Rector of St. Alban's Episcopal Church in Oakland, New Jersey, from 2000 until his election as Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester in February 2008. The most recent Eastern & Western Michigan joint Diocesan Convention resulted in the election of the Rt. Rev. Prince Singh as provisional bishop of the dioceses for the next 3-5 years, a resolution that passed almost unanimously. Bishop Singh will officially begin his time with us in February.

If you are able to use your computer, there are a few pod-casts on [Caste Away: Addressing Caste Divisions with Bishop Prince Singh](#) and [The Pillars of Caste and Hope for the Beloved Community](#). They talk about his formative years in India and his experiences as a person of color here in the United States. I hope we get to here from him directly very soon.

A Christmas List Poem

Author Unknown – Submitted by Sherry Petrie. Thanks, Sherry!

There is a list of folks I know, all written in a book,
And every year at Christmas time I go and take a look,
And that is when I realize that these names are a part,
Not only of the book they're written in but of my very heart.

For each name stands for someone who has walked
my path sometime,
And in that meeting, you've become "Rhythm of the Rhyme."
And though sometimes the list may change and not remain the same,
I really feel that I'm composed of each beloved name.

And while you may not be aware of any special link,
Just knowing you has shaped my life more than you can think,
For once you've met somebody, the years cannot erase,
The memory of a pleasant word or of a loving face.

Never think my Christmas cards are just a mere routine,
Of names upon a Christmas list forgotten in between.
For when I send a Christmas card that is addressed to you,
It's because you're on that list of folks I'm indebted to.

For be you relative or friend or just folks I have met,
You happen to be one of those I prefer not to forget.
And whether I have known you for many years or few,
In some way you have had a part of shaping things I do.

And every year when Christmas comes, I realize anew,
The biggest gift that life can give is knowing folks like you.
May the spirit of Christmas that eternally endures,
Leave its richest blessing in the hearts of you and yours.

And as you read this message that I send at Christmas time,
Know that I send you all my love, while you are on my mind.





Ina's Apple Cake – Ina Dockham brought this to coffee hour a while back and it was **SCRUMPTIOUS**. Thanks for sharing,

Ingredients:

- 2 cups sugar
- 6 Tblspns shortening, melted
- 1 tspn vanilla
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups flour
- 1 tspn salt
- 1 tspn baking soda
- 3 cups chopped apples
- 1 cup chopped nuts

Directions

Preheat oven to 350° and grease cake pan.
 Cream sugar, melted shortening, vanilla, eggs.
 Add flour, salt, soda. Dough will be stiff.
 Mix in chopped apples, chopped nuts
 Bake for 30 minutes.



Roasted Brussels Sprouts with Curry sauce
 Connie Ogg

Preheat a metal pan in the oven at 425 degrees while you trim a 1lb bag of Brussels sprouts and cut

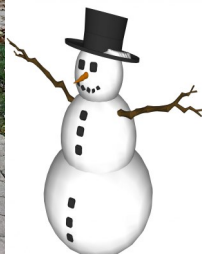
them in half.
 Don't discard leaves that may fall off: they blacken well and provide crunch.
 Put prepared sprouts in a bowl and add 2T olive oil, 1T sugar, salt and pepper to taste. Mix by hand till coated.
 Remove heated pan from oven. Dump sprouts on pan and spread into single layer.
 Roast at least 30 minutes. Stir on pan and decide if you want them more blackened.

The drizzle sauce consist of the following:

- 1/4 c mayonnaise
 - 1t Dijon mustard
 - 1T maple syrup
 - 1T soy sauce
 - 1/2 t curry powder (mild madras is best)
- Stir all ingredients in a small jelly jar with fork or whisk.

Halloween at St. John's

Some fun times with children and parents that night. It rained a bit. Blew a bit. But turn-out was strong. The last picture is probably the scariest of the batch – thanks to John & Yvonne, Mary, Dianne, Wes and Kathy for joining me in that night.





Three Wise Women
 Would have asked directions
 * Arrived on time *
 Helped deliver the baby
 Brought practical gifts
 * Cleaned the stable *
 Made a casserole
 and there would be
 * Peace on earth! *



Who was the best mathematician in the Old Testament?

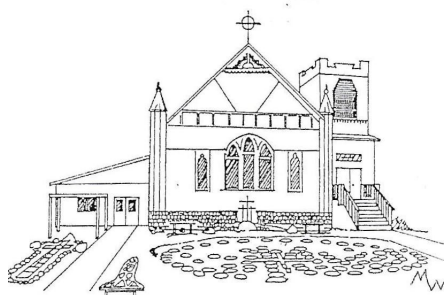


Moses! He wrote the Book of Numbers!

Ministry & Counting Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Lector</u>	<u>Eucharistic Minister</u>	<u>Worship Leader</u>	<u>Videographer</u>	<u>Counting Member 1</u>	<u>Counting Member 2</u>
Dec 5th	Ina	Neil	Rev Manney	Wes Wagester	Ina	Neil
Dec 12th	Margaret		Kitty	Ida Lynn Dodd	Becky	Wes
Dec 19th	Darlene	Mary	Rev Manney	Becky Foster	Neil	Jack
Dec 24th	Kathy	Neil	Rev Manney	Mary Cameron	Wes	Ina
Dec 25th		Tammy	Rev Manney	Becky		
Dec 26th	Wes		Becky	Sherry	Jack	Becky

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 10am - Morning	29	30	1 4pm - Bible Study	2	3	4 9:30am - Christmas
5 10am - Worship-Rev	6	7	8 4pm - Bible Study	9 5:30pm - Taste &	10	11 4pm - St. John's
12 10am - Morning	13	14	15 4pm - Bible Study	16	17	18
19 10am - Eucharist 4pm - Vestry	20	21 7pm - The Longest	22 4pm - Bible Study	23	24 8:30pm - Christmas	25 10am - Christmas
26 10am - Morning	27	28	29 4pm - Bible Study	30	31 Newsletter deadline	1



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