



ST. JOHN'S JOURNEY

LIVING IN HOPE † UNITED IN FAITH † LED BY LOVE

January 2025

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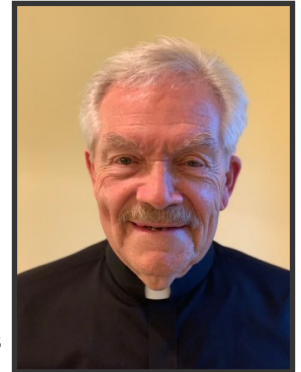
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Dear people of St. John's,

Happy New Year! Merry Christmas! Yes, it's still Christmas and I hope everyone enjoyed a safe, relaxing (if that is possible), and holy Christmas. Here at St. John's we spent a Silent Night, Holy Night, as the waiting ended. It happened where we would least expect it: In a makeshift barn with a manger, to a humble human family, in humble surroundings. The child was born like every other human, although in difficult circumstances. This child, despite the humble birth, was adored and will be adored for generations.

Though he was adored by the humble shepherds, who were filled with awe, the readings for Christmas suggest the child will grow as any other child. Yet he will amaze the teachers in his youth. He will have to confront the reality of the human condition and make choices. In time, he will be recognized as one fully human in whom God is fully present: Emanuel, God with us. We celebrate his coming. Soon his family will flee with him to avoid Herod. He will confront the realities of the human situation and respond to all the challenges.

After the Advent - Christmas celebration is completed. On the twelfth day of Christmas, January 6, Epiphany is the day Christians celebrate the manifestation of Jesus as the Messiah. The visit of the Magi, coming from far-away places representing diversity of people, serves to confirm this.



Throughout the days of Epiphany our readings will present a series of events, from Jesus' baptism and the wedding at Cana to his teaching of the beatitudes. In these moments Jesus is revealed as the Christ. The adored infant has become the human in whom the people begin to recognize as the very presence of God. These signs each suggest something about what it means to be a disciple of Jesus.

The Church is called to reveal Jesus to the world, to reaffirm our baptismal vows to strengthen the ways to see Christ in all persons, and to continue the apostles' teachings, (Continue Pg 2)

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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 February is January 24.



**Sorry folks,
The calendar is blank!**

Vestry Notes

Dear Friends,

The Christmas holiday is past. January has begun and we have a new year to explore. After the frantic pace of December, we can take a few moments to quietly recognize the positive things from 2024 and plan for 2025. That's where the Annual Meeting comes in.

We'll hold the meeting on Sunday, January 12th after Eucharist during coffee hour. In addition to review of accomplishments, financials and voting on Vestry members, we'll take some time to recognize Jack Dodd (and Ida Lynn) for making our building improvements happen. Jack has been on Vestry for 6 years now (how is that possible?) which is the limit for continuous service on Vestry according to our bylaws. Jack has been wonderful. I'm sure you'll agree. I'm pretty sure he'll keep his hand in on

some projects – like finding out where that critter who's eating through Fr. Harold's ceiling tiles is getting in the building!



Do you have some ideas or requests for St. John's to include in 2025? Topics for classes? Suggestions for worship? Ideas for outreach? Ideas for increasing our bonds of community within the congregation? We welcome your input. It could very well be the Holy Spirit is working in your heart to help us become a better church.

I hope your January is refreshing and encouraging. AND maybe even warm with no snow? OK – that's probably asking too much. Please attend our annual meeting. We always have great food, some fun and I'll keep it from going too long. Promise.

Happy New Year,
Becky

(Continued from page 1) the the bread, and the prayers. Epiphany is the sudden realization or comprehension of something sacred. This is a wonderful season to take each sentence of the Baptismal Covenant seriously and determine how to put it into action, not only for ourselves but for the community.

We have been exploring the Word from the beginning of the first light; now human, flesh, and living among us. We are certainly not the first religion to make a claim our leader was a deity, but there is something about Jesus which makes him feel like a regular guy. He had friends, was a carpenter, a teacher, and had rifts with the local leaders. It was this daily existence which caused the Glory of God to shine, and makes it possible for God to be revealed in our daily life and seem more believable. So our lives of devotion, trying and failing, service and stillness, may also be filled with grace and truth. Emanuel, God with us!

May God bless and keep you in this New Year,

Rev. Harold

Christmas 2024 – A Holy Night

The church looked as lovely as ever. The lighted arches, the candles in the windows, the altar creche, the sprays at the pews – all done with love and joy. We had a full house Christmas Eve – friends and family from near and far. And St. John’s received a Christmas gift! A wall hanging for the back corner of the church – a gift from Connie Ogg, Mary Cameron, Ina Dockham and Becky Foster. Many thanks to all who made this service so special.



The outside creche is still lovely – the new figurines are holding up well to our changeable weather.



Three of the four wall hanging team display their work. You can see it in person next time you’re at church. It will be there through Christmas tide.



Annual Meeting: Sunday,

January 12th after Eucharist Service

It’s time for us to review 2024 and talk about 2025. The meeting will be in the Parish Hall and include a pot-luck, so it’s bound to be good. Mark you calendars and be sure to come.

Twenty Nine Years and Counting



Kitty and Russ Underwood celebrated their 29th wedding anniversary just before Christmas. Father Harold read a blessing and then said, “You may kiss the bride”. Looks like Russ added a hug for good measure. Best wishes to this wonderful couple. May there be many more blessings in the year to come.

Father Harold’s New Look?

We saw a different side of Fr. Harold on the 4th Sunday of Advent – he wore some special head gear during his sermon. It wasn’t because of the cold weather. He got into character – the character of Elizabeth, Mary’s exuberant cousin, who was the subject of the gospel for the day. I’m not sure the headshawl was his best color – but it was one of his best sermons. I wonder what’s next?



Financial Summary for November

November is the last full month the Vestry reviewed.

November 2024	Monthly Budget	Monthly Actual	Better or Worse than Budget	YTD Budget	YTD Actual	Better or Worse than Budget
Income	\$5,547	\$3,623	\$1,924	\$61,018	\$62,185	\$1,167
Expenses	\$5,449	\$4,447	\$1,002	\$71,422	\$68,987	\$2,435
Net Profit	\$98	-\$825	\$923	-\$10,404	-\$6,802	\$4,524

Income:

The monthly number is not as far below budget as it appears once adjusted for the large annual tithe contribution last January. The adjusted figure is under budget by \$841. The visit to Sandusky meant one less collection week which may have contributed to the shortfall. The YTD number continues to show us over budget. However, as that annual tithe winds down, we may close the year slightly below budget.

Expenses:

As you can see, expenses are lower than budget for the month and YTD. However, since we paid for the Paint Project, our total YTD expenses are higher than our YTD income which means we have almost \$6,000 deficit to our initial plan. This was a planned reduction in our General Fund which is still in good shape. The Checking Account is at \$21,710 which is over the minimum in our Investment Guidelines. The overall “profit” deficit is a bit lower than last month and may shrink again after December’s numbers are in. Even so, we’ll probably show a deficit at year’s end.

Christmas Bazaar 2024 – another FUN Success!

We held our annual Christmas Bazaar on December 14th this year. As usual, the place was packed with decorations and baked goods. Those of us who were early shoppers were dazzled by the choices available. Traffic was pretty constant and we had some wonderful donations made to OTR as well. The new idea this year was to sell single servings of soup to take home – this was very popular. So we'll probably do it again next year.

We raised over \$1,300 which Vestry decided to share with Linked Hearts, the Ausable Inclusion Center (Beckett LeClaire's ministry). Vestry also voted to use some of the funds to replenish the Building Improvement Fund which was depleted when we bought our new furnace.

So many people made this a success. Many thanks to Ina Dockham and Connie Ogg for keeping the ball rolling. And we also thank everyone who donated items and baked goods, who helped set up and clean up. With so many helpers, it helps get us all in the Christmas spirit. Looking forward to next year.



<u>Ministry Schedule</u>							
<u>Date</u>	<u>Lector</u>	<u>Eucharistic Minister</u>	<u>Crucifer</u>	<u>Worship Leader</u>	<u>Video</u>	<u>Counting Member 1</u>	<u>Counting Member 2</u>
01/05/2025	Jack			Kitty	Wes	Jack	Neil
01/12/2025	Wes	Jack	Neil	Fr. Schneider	Ina	Becky	Connie
01/19/2025	Mary			Becky	Ida Lynn	Neil	Russ
01/26/2025	Ina	Neil	John	Fr. Schneider	Becky	Connie	Mary
02/02/2025	Jack			Kitty	Sherry	Russ	Jack
02/09/2025	Neil	Mary	Jason	Fr. Schneider	Wes	Mary	Becky
02/16/2025	Beth Ann			Becky	Ina	Jack	Neil
02/23/2025	Mary	Jack	Neil	Fr. Schneider	Ida Lynn	Becky	Connie

Our First Annual Christmas Caroling Party at The Bells in Almont Hit all the Right Notes

A group of folks from St. John's went to The Bells Senior Home in Almont on Monday, December 16th to have a Christmas caroling party. Several of us dressed in festive head gear in tune with the season. Fr. Harold got things organized with the staff and we ended up with a good group of singers. Even Margaret came – in spite of a cold! Becky Foster was at the keyboard to get things started and we had song books for lyrics but most folks knew the lyrics by heart. There were lots of smiles and a small gift from Santa for participants. It seemed that folks really enjoyed singing as a group – we may go back before next Christmas! What do you think?



Santa's helpers

Gathering for some fun

Land of Nod Cinnamon Buns

Yvonne Malinich made these for coffee hour in late November and they were an instant hit! Then she made some of the Christmas Bazaar and they were gone like a flash. She kindly shared the recipe. This has the best cinnamon gooey filling that I've tasted outside of those mall stores. It should be good for cold days later this winter.

Land of Nod Cinnamon Buns

Ingredients:

20 unbaked frozen dinner rolls
1 cup brown sugar
¼ cup instant vanilla pudding mix
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
¾ cup raisins
⅓ cup butter, melted

Directions:

1. Lightly grease a 10-inch Bundt pan. Place frozen rolls into the prepared pan and sprinkle with brown sugar, pudding mix, and cinnamon. Top with raisins. Pour melted butter over rolls. Cover the pan with a clean, damp dish cloth and let sit at room temperature for 8 hours to overnight.
2. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
3. Bake in the preheated oven until golden brown, about 25 minutes. Turn rolls out onto a serving plate and serve warm.



You are cordially invited to
Celebration Honoring the
20th Anniversary of the
Ordination to the Priesthood of
The Rev. Susan C. Rich

4pm Saturday, January 18, 2025
Trinity Episcopal Church
815 N. Grant Street
Bay City, MI 48708

Evensong
Presentation from the Diocese
Reception with heavy hors-d'oeuvres



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