

The Episcopal Church of
SS Peter & John
169 Genesee Street
Auburn, New York 13021

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Return Service Requested

The Gospel Messenger

True Worship † Powerful Community † A Heart for the Lost



December 2023

Grace to you and Peace from our Lord Jesus Christ;

Well, we're here again. The beginning of Advent, I am just amazed at how fast time seems to be moving. But it is here and it is the beginning of a new church year. So – Happy New Year! We have left Year A, which is largely devoted to Matthew's Gospel and we have moved into Year B, which uses Mark's Gospel. So, a new Church season and a new year.

By way of explanation, we try to mark the Seasons of the Church in the way we worship at Ss. Peter and John. You may have already noticed that we use the altar on the floor of the Nave for what the Church calls Ordinary time. We will stay on the floor through Advent. Then on Christmas Eve we'll move to the high altar and stay up there until Epiphany. You've probably noticed different colors as well, Ordinary Time is Green. Advent is dark blue or purple. And Christmas is of course, white. We also change up the music as well. For instance in Advent we sing a Kyrie instead of a Gloria. We omit the 'Hymn of Praise' (sometimes called the Doxology) during Advent as well. As soon as we get to Christmas eve they will come back.

Advent in the Church year is a time of preparation and anticipation. Not just for the birth of the baby Jesus but for his return in glory, and the way that he returns in our lives, day after day, year after year. It's a beautiful time of the Church year and counter cultural to the way our society treats this time of year. Those of you who know me, know that I go to a great author, theologian and Presbyterian pastor, Fred Buechner. He writes this about Advent.

“THE HOUSE LIGHTS GO OFF and the footlights come on. Even the chattiest stop chattering as they wait in darkness for the curtain to rise. In the orchestra pit, the violin bows are poised. The conductor has raised the baton.

In the silence of a midwinter dusk there is far off in the deeps of it somewhere a sound so faint that for all you can tell it may be only the sound of the silence itself. You hold your breath to listen.

You walk up the steps to the front door. The empty windows at either side of it tell you nothing, or almost nothing. For a second you catch a whiff in the air of some fragrance that reminds you of a place you've never been and a time you have no words for. You are aware of the beating of your heart.

The extraordinary thing that is about to happen is matched only by the extraordinary moment just before it happens. Advent is the name of that moment.

The Salvation Army Santa Claus clangs his bell. The sidewalks are so crowded you can hardly move. Exhaust fumes are the chief fragrance in the air, and everybody is as bundled up against any sense of what all the fuss is really about as they are bundled up against the windchill factor.

But if you concentrate just for an instant, far off in the deeps of yourself somewhere you can feel the beating of your heart. For all its madness and lostness, not to mention your own, you can hear the world itself holding its breath.

-Originally published in *Whistling in the Dark* – Fredrick Buechner

Grace and Peace,

John +

Father John ✠

ON-LINE WORSHIP

Sundays - 10am Worship Service

Livestream on Facebook and YouTube.

Wednesdays – 8pm Compline

Livestream on Facebook .

Zoom Worship Schedule and Numbers

Tuesdays – 10am Bible Study

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94333886777?pwd=WnNKSnycQkkzS1g0Yjc3ZGIVbk1PQT09>

Meeting ID: 943 3388 6777

Passcode: 577455

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Wednesdays – 12pm Worship Service

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/95528786615?pwd=Z01DVGdvcG5XeVBIUVRMKzFFVVBjZz09>

Meeting ID: 955 2878 6615

Passcode: 634665

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Wednesdays – 7pm Bible Study

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94333886777?pwd=WnNKSnycQkkzS1g0Yjc3ZGIVbk1PQT09>

Meeting ID: 943 3388 6777

Passcode: 577455

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Monday – Tuesday – Wednesday – Thursday – Friday

MORNING PRAYER – RITE II

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/john.rohde.16/>

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/92662278952>

Meeting ID: 926 6227 8952

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 926 6227 8952

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/ac4XCk34Dn>

Please note the additions to the above listing:

Bible Study – Wednesday night @ 7:00 pm via Zoom

Compline – Wednesday night @ 8:00 on Facebook

Vestry Voice

The November Vestry meeting began with an opening devotional. The October minutes were approved.

The October finances were approved.

John Gillmeister – Person in Process. John is going through the process to become a priest. The vestry needs to get to know him and then vote on whether they will sponsor him. Father John has already agreed to sponsor him.

The Mutual Ministry has been done and the vestry needs to see Father John's before a Letter of Agreement can be done.

The Diocesan Convention approved a 5.65% cost of living increase. The vestry voted to approve this increase for our staff.

We have received the reports from the energy audit performed on August 10 and there were no silver bullets that would reduce our energy costs significantly.

We have received the 2024 Diocesan Assessment and it is lower than last year. The vestry approved the assessment and Terry Beyor will email the approval to Cathy Hobart.

We have received notification that the Church Insurance Premium for 2024 will have a 15% increase.

Terry Beyor will start work on the budget for 2024.

The meeting closed with a blessing by Father John. Next Vestry meeting will be December 19, 2023.



Sunday School

December 10, 2023

December 17, 2023

10:00 am in the community room

Denise Whalen will be leading Sunday School.

Kids can be dropped off in the community room before the 10 am service and will come back into the church during the announcements so that they can attend the Eucharist.



Longest Night Service

December 21, 2023

7:00 pm



**Christmas Eve
Service**

December 24, 2023

9:00 pm



Wreaths Across America December 16, 2023

GoFundMe

Let us join together to help our brother Jeff as he prepares for knee replacement surgery

<https://gofundme/6252fc55>

We are helping to raise funds for our dear friend Jeffrey Sawyer, aka, Jammin' Jeff, aka Mr. Jeffrey. He is in dire need of a total knee replacement and needs our help with payment for his surgery and necessities during his recovery afterward. This has been a long time coming and those of you who know Jeffery personally, know that it's about time. There is no one who deserves our help more than Jeffery, He is kind, unselfish, hard-working and caring. He always helps others without being asked, he goes out of his way to share a kind word or a funny joke...and boy...what a beautiful smile he has! Jeffery is also a man of great faith and gives his all for his church each day: even when the pain in his knee is so awful, he has to crawl to get up the stairs. Jeffery loves to walk and ride his bike but even these simple pleasures cause him terrible pain. We are asking that you please consider donating to this wonderful man. Let's ease his burden and get Jeffrey walking again!

THE GRACE AND THE IMPATIENCE TO WAIT – AN ADVENT POEM BY WALTER BRUEGGEMANN



I have been reading this beautiful Advent poem by Walter Brueggemann every day this last week and wanted to share it with you. It is published in his book [Awed to Heaven, Rooted to Earth.](#)

In our secret yearnings
we wait for your coming,
and in our grinding despair
we doubt that you will.
And in this privileged place
we are surrounded by witnesses who yearn more than do we
and by those who despair more deeply than do we.
Look upon your church and its pastors
in this season of hope
which runs so quickly to fatigue
and this season of yearning
which becomes so easily quarrelsome.
Give us the grace and the impatience
to wait for your coming to the bottom of our toes,
to the edge of our finger tips.
We do not want our several worlds to end.
Come in your power
and come in your weakness

in any case and make all things new.
Amen.



Calendar of Events for December 2023

Sundays:	8:00 am 10:00 am 12:30 pm	Worship Worship w/Music – Livestreaming Centering Prayer – Community Room
Mondays:	8:30 am 10:30 am – 12:30 pm 11:30 am – 12:30 pm	Morning Prayer – Facebook/Zoom Event Clothes Closet Soup Kitchen
Tuesdays:	8:30 am 10:00 am 11:30 am – 12:30 pm	Morning Prayer – Facebook/Zoom Event Bible Study - Zoom Soup Kitchen
Wednesdays:	8:30 am 10:30 am – 12:30 pm 11:30 am – 12:30 pm 7:00 pm 8:00 pm	Morning Prayer – Facebook/Zoom Event Clothes Closet Soup Kitchen Bible Study - Zoom Compline - Facebook
Thursdays:	8:30 am 12:00 Noon	Morning Prayer – Facebook/Zoom Event Worship – In-Person - Community Room
Fridays:	8:30 am	Morning Prayer – Facebook/Zoom Event

Saturdays: 11:30 am – 12:30 pm Soup Kitchen

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Sun., Dec. 10<sup>th</sup> 10:00 am Sunday School in Community Room  
 Sat., Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> 12:00 Noon Wreaths Across America  
 Sun., Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> 10:00 am Sunday School in Community Room  
 Tues, Dec. 19<sup>th</sup> 7:00 pm Vestry Meeting via Zoom  
 Wed., Dec. 20<sup>th</sup> 5:00 pm Ultreya Meeting via Zoom  
 Thurs., Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> 7:00 pm Longest Night Service  
 Sun., Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> 9:00 pm Christmas Eve Service  
 Mon., Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> Christmas Day – Office Closed

**Jan. – Oct. 2023 - Actual vs. Budget**

|                      |                             | <u>Jan. – Oct. 2023</u>      | <u>Budget</u>               |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>INCOME</b>        | Offerings                   | 92,630.25                    | 78,859.50                   |
|                      | Other                       | 28,051.46                    | 19,475.00                   |
|                      | Legacies/Bequests           | -                            | -                           |
| <b>Total Income</b>  |                             | <u>\$ 120,681.71</u>         | <u>\$ 98,334.50</u>         |
| <b>EXPENSE</b>       | Gas, Electric, water, sewer | 23,511.40                    | 17,583.40                   |
|                      | Salary & Benefits           | 96,216.88                    | 95,550.30                   |
|                      | Insurance                   | 18,205.00                    | 13,333.30                   |
|                      | Other                       | 32,986.07                    | 37,158.30                   |
| <b>Total Expense</b> |                             | <u>\$ 170,919.35</u>         | <u>\$ 163,625.30</u>        |
|                      | sale/purchase of securities | <u>0</u>                     | <u>0</u>                    |
|                      | <b>Net Income</b>           | <u><b>\$ (50,237.64)</b></u> | <u><b>\$(65,290.80)</b></u> |