

DECEMBER 2023



St. John Journey

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

Council President's Corner

Shirl and I were in Target just before Halloween looking for treats for the kids in our neighborhood. While there, I became confused. It was mid-October, and whereas the store had plenty of Halloween candy and costumes, there were also lots of Christmas decorations. Is it me, or does the holiday hustle and bustle start earlier and earlier every year?

A new church year is upon us; but, if we're not careful, the beginning of Advent might slip right by us. In this day of television, internet, and email, we are bombarded with Christmas gift ideas and encouraged to buy before whatever we're thinking about buying is gone. It is easy to get caught up in the commercialization that has become Christmas.

Interestingly, this year the first Sunday in Advent is December 3 and the last Sunday in Advent is December 24, or Christmas Eve. So, even our lectionary seems rushed this year as we go from Advent to the Nativity of Our Lord on the same day.

There are certain signals we all recognize that tell us Christmas is on its way. The day after Thanksgiving, the busiest shopping day of the year, reminds us that Christmas will be here before we know it. Holiday advertising is everywhere we look and in everything we hear. Christmas

jingles won't let us forget what's just around the corner. We're told of every financing plan imaginable to ensure that we can afford all the gifts we "need" to buy for all the people on our growing list. Websites assume their "Christmas look," and retailers put on their most elaborate displays. Families also begin the task of tying all their loose ends together—in the hope that, for a few days at least, they can "be a family" in the holiday spirit.

But for us, the most significant indicator that a special day is drawing near is on our church calendar and the beginning of Advent. The season of Advent is the time we prepare, not for extra expenditures of cash, but to remember the Christ child who came to live among us. We attempt, once again, to consider that God actually assumed our humanity and was born and entered our world to secure our redemption.

So, while it is difficult to not get caught up in all the hustle and bustle activity of the Christmas season, let us also take time this Advent to prepare our hearts to welcome once again the God who laid aside His glory and assumed our humanity simply because of His love for us. There are few truths in this world that can be more wonderful, more startling, or more exciting than this.

This year, I am committed to slowing down and welcoming the Advent of Jesus—the light of the world, and I look forward to experiencing this Advent season with each of you.

God's Peace and Blessings,

Bill



Prayer Chain

Jim Suhrbier
Richard Brumleve
Joel Rosen
Dallas Church
Bridgette Smith
Peg Curphey

Taulbee Cherry
Debbie Boyd

Prayers of Christian Sympathy for the family and friends of Erik Flynn, son of Linda and David Flynn, who passed away Nov. 24th following a battle with cancer.

We pray for all on the front lines: doctors, nurses, medical personnel.

We pray for the homebound: Vickianne Dotten, Ann Godsey, Barbara Wright, Nancy King, Betsy Bohham.

If you have names to add (or ones to be taken off) the prayer chain, please email the church office.

Quilters will meet on Tuesday Dec. 5th and Tuesday Dec. 12th at 9:30AM--on Dec. 19th, they will go out to lunch at the Peppermill @11:00AM. No Quilting Dec. 26th.

**Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship 7PM
Sunday December 24th**

**St. John's NexTrex Plastic Recycling Update:
Oct.--17 lbs., Nov.--33 lbs
Keep up the great work--bring your plastic
and fill our bins!**

**FOOD PANTRY-January 22nd-26th, 2024
St. John serves at the Food Pantry .
Volunteers needed on Monday 9AM-1PM,
Tuesday 406PM, and Friday 9AM-1PM.**

Book Group will meet at St. John FH on Sunday January 14th 2PM. We are reading "The Incredibile Life of Sam Hell" by

December Birthdays

Dec. 18--Sandy Davis
Dec. 19--Julie Kroll

**If we missed your November birthday,
please let the church office know.**

Volunteers for December

Sunday December 3
Lay Asst.: Linda Garnett , Lectors:Charlie Garnett, Debbie Phillips, Kelly Read
Ushers: Meachams,
Altar Guild: Helen Findley
Counters: Helen French, Roger Nipper

Sunday December 10
Lay Asst. :Joan Shaver, Lectors:Kelly Read, Michael Jenkins, Linda Garnett
Ushers: Giffords , Altar Guild:
Counters:The Krolls

Sunday December 17
Lay Asst.: Ed Davis, Lector:Sue and Ken Croghan

Robert Dugoni. Carolyn Church will lead the discussion.

Tapestry Group is taking the month of December off. We will meet Tuesday January 16th at 7PM on Zoom.



Ushers: Spencers, Altar Guild:
Counters: Doris Vaught, Chris Meacham

Sunday December 24
Lay Asst.: Ken Croghan, Lector:
Ushers: Sue Croghan, Don William,
Altar Guild:
Counters:

Christmas Eve, December 24, 7:00PM
Lay Asst.: Ken Croghan, Lector:
Ushers:,
Altar Guild:
Counters:

Sunday December 31
Lay Asst., Lector:
Ushers: ,
Altar Guild:
Counters:

Sign-up sheets for Usher and Altar Guild are on the bulletin board. There is also one for refreshments.

Please find someone to trade with if you cannot serve your assigned Sunday.