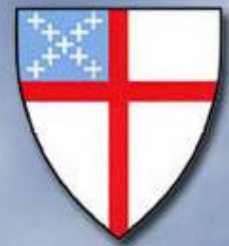


St. George's Episcopal Church

Uniting in Worship. Welcoming in Grace.



5224 Minnetonka Boulevard

▪ Saint Louis Park, MN 55416

▪

952-926-1646

St. George's Episcopal Church

office@stgeorgesonline.org

December 2022

This is a free publication for members and friends

Volume 29, No. 12

A Reflection for a Sacred Christmas

By The Rev. Tom Gehlsen



My favorite Christmas carol is “O Holy Night.” The words take me away and fill me with such joy. I am reminded that Christmas isn’t just another season or day celebrated without a second thought. The words of the song echo in our hearts this year, “a thrill of hope, a weary world rejoices.”

We live in a weary world in need of hope. There is no lasting hope outside of Jesus.

We need a thrill of hope in the darkness. We need the sacredness of the season to strengthen us for the new year. We need our hearts stilled in the darkness that we may be fully able to recognize the great and glorious light that has come.

The question becomes, how do we keep a season sacred when the last few years have been challenging for everyone? How can we reclaim the year and feel the thrill of hope again?

From the Office

By Marion Hunner,
Parish Administrator



2022 Pledges—Thank you for keeping your 2022 pledge up to date. If you would like to know your balance before the end of the year, you can email anytime or call during office hours.

Holiday Hours—The office will be closed the week between Christmas and New Years.



Financial Update

By *Connie Kotula, Treasurer*



The following financial information has been approved by Vestry. This information is from October. When November information is approved by the Vestry, we will post that as soon as possible in the weekly email and the monthly newsletter.

Pledges Received in October	\$ 20,857
Percent of the Monthly Budget	113%
Total Pledges Received YTD*	\$126,682
Percent of the Annual Budget	89%
Total Net Income (Loss) October	\$15,671
Total Net Income (Loss) YTD*	(\$2,368)
Total Budget Income (Loss) YTD*	(\$6,211)
YTD* Actual to Budget Benefit (Deficit)	\$3,843

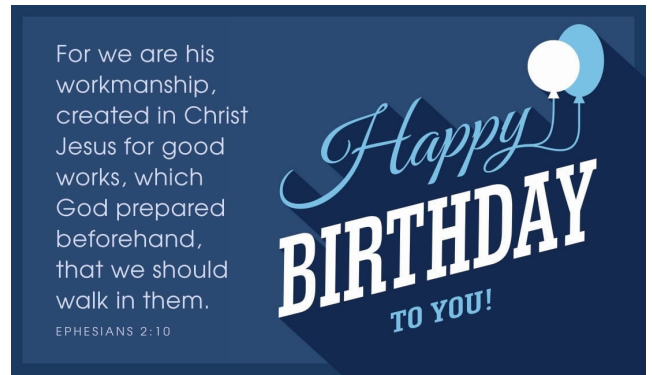
* Year To Date

Questions? Email Connie Kotula:
connie.kotula@gmail.com

Advent Activities

By *Heather Whitesell*

There are Advent wreath take-home kits available in the parish hall. Feel free to grab a bag and assemble at your home. There will also be copies of Advent calendar activities for your family to enjoy throughout each day of the Advent season.



December Birthdays

1 -Al Kotula	17 -Lindsay Benjamin
3 -Shannon Engel Westlund	17 -Mari Mejia
6 - Lou Michelich	17 -Claudia Hoffacker
11 -Robert Holbach	18 -Dr. Hope Thornberg
12 -Laura Harmon	24 -Loren Dwyer
12 - Drew Monroe	27 -Patricia Janke
14 -Suzy Garland	29 -Blossom Tsang
16 -Pamela Moore	31 -Ed 'Donnell
16 -Oyinkansola Kuku	

**Thank you to everyone who
contributed to the prayer chain.**



STEP News

By Camille Schroeder

Thank you so very much for your tremendous participation in the November food drive for STEP. A total of 887 pounds of food was donated. You can be sure that every bit of it was appreciated by the clients of STEP. However, the need does not end and we should continue to donate throughout the year. Helping our neighbors when they are in need is great community engagement. The Women of St. George's were the sponsors.

The STEP Toy Shop will be open the third full week in December.

Registered clients will be able to choose toys for their children. In



order for that to happen we need to donate. Toys with a retail value of \$20 to \$40 are needed for children up to 8 years of age. For children 9 and older \$10 Target gift cards are wanted. **Your donations should be brought to church no later than Sunday, December 11, 2022.** Thanks so much in advance for donating.

Second Offering

By Sarah Schulte

We will be resurrecting our monthly 2nd offering starting in December. In the past, St. George's has collected a special offering the 2nd Sunday of each month with funds collected going to the Outreach Fund, now renamed Community Engagement. You may remember the noisy buckets going up and down the aisles as people drop money into them. Thank you in advance for giving generously to this 2nd Sunday 2nd Offering that will impact lives in our community.

Greening of the Church

Sunday, December 18

PLEASE JOIN US

By Carole Leonard

The annual "Greening of the Church" will be held following the "Coffee & Conversation" time after the 9:30 a.m. service.



Please NOTE: The Greening of the Church will take about an hour. Everyone is welcome to join us in making St. George's beautiful as we prepare for Christmas.

There's plenty to do; a tree to put up, roping and lights, boughs and swags, and lots of poinsettias. Many hands make light work and a fun time. If you have questions, please check with Carole Leonard.



Fontanini Bethlehem Village

By Sarah Schulte

Lilly and Elena Schulte helped Mary Kuhfeld set up her Fontanini Bethlehem village in preparation for the Advent season. Mary shared stories while guiding the girls in creatively placing the figurines. We hope you can take a moment to enjoy the details of the beautiful changing scene throughout the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany.

Parish Calendar



Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

<p>GBD: GOSPEL-BASED DISCIPLESHIP – 11 A.M. EVERY WEDNESDAY – https://zoom.us/j/397934453</p> <p>Meeting ID: 397 934 453 – You may also join audio by phone: +1 312 626 6799</p>				<p>1</p> <p>6:30pm AA</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>4</p> <p>9:30 Holy Eucharist 10:30 Choir 10:30 Coffee & Conversations</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p> <p>11am GBD 7pm Worship Leader Training</p>	<p>8</p> <p>6:30pm AA</p>	<p>9</p> <p>5:30pm Supper Club offsite @ Camille Schroeder's house</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>11</p> <p>9:30 Holy Eucharist 10:30 Choir 10:30 Coffee & Conversations</p>	<p>12</p> <p>7pm Finance</p>	<p>13</p> <p>12:00pm Staff Newsletter Early Deadline</p>	<p>14</p> <p>11am GBD</p>	<p>15</p> <p>10:30 am Welcoming Committee 6:30pm AA</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>
<p>18</p> <p>9:30 Holy Eucharist 10:30 Choir 10:30 Coffee & Conversations 4pm Caroling</p>	<p>19</p> <p>7pm Vestry</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> <p>11am GBD</p>	<p>22</p> <p>6:30pm AA</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p>4pm Christmas Eve Festival Eucharist</p>
<p>25</p> <p>Christmas Day No Services</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p>11am GBD</p>	<p>29</p> <p>6:30pm AA</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>New Year's Eve</p>
<p>Office Closed</p>						

MINISTERS OF THE EUCCHARISTIC ASSEMBLY



	Sunday December 4 Advent 2	Sunday December 11 Advent 3	Sunday December 18 Advent 4	Saturday December 24 Christmas Eve 4pm
Readings	Isaiah 11:1-10 Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19 Romans 15:4-13 Matthew 3:1-12	Isaiah 35:1-10 Canticle 15 James 5:7-10 Matthew 11:2-11	Isaiah 7:10-16 Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18 Romans 1:1-7 Matthew 1:18-25	Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 Luke 1:26-35, 38 Luke 2:1, 3-7
Lectors	John Rash Kathie Brown	Claudia Hoffacker Tom Harmon	Cyprian Troyer Leslie O'Donnell	Carole Leonard John Rash
Chalice Bearers	Kris Kelley Kathie Brown	Leslie O'Donnell Ron Holbach	Cyprian Troyer Kathleen Boe	Bill Stromberg Kathie Brown
Ushers	Bill Stromberg Bruce Becker	Tom Zaun Lou Michelich	Bob Jones Bruce Wachutka	Tom Harmon Tom Zaun
Altar Guild	Kitty Reese Bill Stromberg	Kathleen Boe Katie Campbell Rachel Santos	Nancy & Bruce Becker Kathie Brown	Gregg & Jane Jacobson
Coffee Servers	Ron Holbach	Bob Jones	John & Jane Carlson	None

Education Update

By Heather Whitesell

The youth took our annual trip to the grocery store to help stock the shelves at STEP. There were four kids and they each had \$10 to come up with a different meal for a family of four. They were able to fill their bags with lots of essentials and still stay within the budget.

We are looking into an opportunity to connect with the youth at St. David's. I am excited about this.



2023 Pledge Update

*By Laura Harmon
Stewardship Chair*

As they say during the PBS pledge drive, programing is due to the support of its members. St. George's, like public broadcasting, relies to a large extent on pledged income. To date, the amount of the pledges received for 2023 is short of the total pledged for 2022.

The Finance Committee and the Vestry will use the total amount pledged to put together a budget for 2023. That budget includes funds for buildings and grounds, salaries for clergy and staff, liturgy, and music.

To those who have returned pledge cards, thank you. If you have not already done so, please complete and return your pledge card to the church office. If you did not receive a pledge card or have any questions, please contact the church office at 952-926-1646.

Caroling Dec 18, 4pm

By John Hoffacker

Join the merry band of carolers as we stroll down Salem Ave spreading Christmas cheer!

For our Jewish neighbors who begin celebrating Hanukkah that evening we'll sing secular carols - or if we're ambitious, learn a Hanukkah carol!

Hot cocoa in the fellowship hall when we finish!
Bring your friends and family!



SUPPER CLUB is back. Hooray!!!!

By Camille Schroeder

We will meet on Friday, December 9, 2022, at Camille Schroeder's home beginning at 5:30. Supper club is for all adults in the church. Please let Camille know by Tuesday, December 6th, that you will attend. This is a potluck so you also need to let her know if you will be bringing a hot dish, a salad, an hors d'oeuvre, or a dessert. This is a fun evening and a great kick-off with your church family for the holidays. Camille's home is at 23750 Lawtonka Drive in Shorewood. See you there.



Notes on Music & Liturgy

By John Hoffacker

December 18, Advent IV

Miracles abound in the Gospel this day. An angel appears to Joseph with the news that his fiancée is pregnant by divine means, and Joseph believes. He cares for Mary, and she delivers the baby Jesus in Bethlehem.

The Prelude is an ethereal song in honor of the Virgin, composed around 1150 by the mystic Hildegard of Bingen, sung in Latin by Cristina Czaia.

The lovely German carol “Joseph, dearest Joseph mine” is our Offertory anthem, sung by the choir.

When does the Prelude start?

Two reasons for beginning the Prelude at 9:30: the music is a bridge into corporate worship from private contemplation (or conversation) and the instrumental music creates a shared environment for worshippers. Second, if we have a wonderful guest organist, we can expect the music to begin at the start of worship

Gospel-Based Discipleship Returns In-Person in January

By Marion Hunner

Fr. Tom will be bringing back in-person Gospel-Based Discipleship on Wednesdays in January. Stay tuned for details as we look forward to the in-person return of this weekly gathering.

Adult Education

By Sarah Schulte

We are ready to think about Adult Education for the new year. Please send in ideas to the office of what topics you'd like to discuss. We are still figuring out how often and when we'll meet, but we look forward to bringing back this important time together.

Buildings & Grounds

By Carole Leonard

The replacement of the white metal gutters, fascias, and cap flashings on the Quonset building have now been completed by Armor Construction Company. This was part of the hail damage repairs that was covered by the Church Insurance Company, which also included a new roof on the A-frame church in 2021. The cost to St. George's Church for the entire project was a \$2,500 deductible.



Coffee & Conversation Sundays in Advent

By Sarah Schulte

It was heartening to have so many parishioners join us for the first Coffee & Conversation small group discussions after the service on Sunday, November 27. The discernment process is one that will challenge our hearts, spirits, and minds. That said, our first discussions went very well and were filled with insightful ideas. We appreciate your willingness to share thoughts honestly and openly. We will continue to root our small group conversations in scripture and focus on questions that guide us in who we are, what is important to us as St. Georgeites, and how we can move forward and grow together as a community. We see this as an opportunity to build and strengthen our community as we follow the teachings of Jesus into the future. Our hope is that the entire parish will be involved in this important work. We want to hear your voice and ideas and concerns, and we are here to listen.

If you were not able to join us this past week, we hope you will jump into our conversations in the coming weeks!

About St. George's

5224 Minnetonka Boulevard
St. Louis Park, MN 55416
952-926-1646

www.stgeorgesonline.org

Office hours Tuesday-Thursday
8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

PARISH STAFF:

Rector: The Rev. Thomas J. Gehlsen, Ph.D.

tomg@stgeorgesonline.org

Deacon: The Rev. Diane McGowan

smarl@aol.com

Parish Administrator, Marion Hunner

office@stgeorgesonline.org

Music Director, John Hoffacker, D.M.A.

johnh@stgeorgesonline.org

Children and Youth Coordinator, Heather Whitesell

heatherw@stgeorgesonline.org

ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE:

Cristina Czaia, soprano

Alexis Winters, mezzo-soprano

Vanessa Vaughn, Bass

VESTRY:

Bruce Wachutka, Rector's Warden; Sarah Schulte, Parish Warden; Bruce Becker, Jill Burns, Ellen Manion, Suzy Garland, Charles Hample, Gregg Jacobson, Rachel Santos, and Roxy Zaun.

Clerk of the Vestry:

Laura Harmon

Parish Treasurer:

Connie Kotula

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Sunday Worship at St. George's
9:30 a.m.

Sunday Services
are now in person
and available on St. George's
You Tube Channel

NOTE: If you would like to receive a printed copy of the church newsletter, please contact Marion in the office.