



ST. JOHN'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
LAFAYETTE

The Eagle

St. John's Episcopal Church | Lafayette, Ind. | February 2022

The St. John's Annual Meeting ***6 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 6 | Zoom***

The St. John's Annual Meeting will be at **6 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 6, via Zoom**. While we intend to continue in-person worship, it is safer and more convenient to hold the annual meeting via Zoom. To continue our tradition of fun, positive annual meetings, we are providing gift bags for everyone with St. John's swag, prizes and homemade cookies. Each household can pick up their bag Sunday morning, Feb. 6 (or a few days before when the office is open). If you have questions, please call the office at 765-742-4079. — *Bradley Pace, bradleypace@stjohns-laf.org*

Thank You!



Thanks to everyone who took part in this year's Virtual Epiphany Pageant! 28 children and youth, and a few other guests, joined in the fun. Thanks to Gretchen, Bradley, Michael and all the parents who helped.

Adult Formation this Winter: "In the Images of God" **Beginning Jan. 30**

In the Bible's very first chapter, we learn that human beings are created "in the image of God." If this is true, what does it tell us about human beings? And what does it tell us about God? Closer to home, what does it tell us about the images of God and Jesus (and of the forebears of our faith) that adorn our church? Do these images help us or hinder us? Do they give us a limited impression of who God is and who God loves? Can they lead us to a wider understanding of God? Join the St. John's clergy for a conversation beginning Sunday, Jan. 30 after the 10:30 a.m. service. In Lent (beginning Sundays in March), we will discuss Sabbath as a call to rest, justice and purpose. Look for more information as we get closer to March. — *Bradley Pace, bradleypace@stjohns-laf.org*

In Good Health

*Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health,
just as it is well with your soul. III John 2*

By the time we receive this article, we will be well into the new year. The time between thinking, writing, editing, printing, addressing, mailing and finally seeing the article in our mailboxes for reading are spaced weeks apart. I have come to appreciate all those involved in each step. The deadlines don't always work so well for my schedule. Yet I find the outcome worth the challenges, even when I fail to make the deadline, rework my schedule and need to ask for grace and forgiveness.

There are areas in each of our lives where we want the outcome but the steps to get there are littered with stumbling blocks. As a child, I was introduced to New Year's resolutions. Because of my failures, they have disappeared from my conversation. Have you ever felt the same way? But they had a purpose. They allowed us to consider what was important to us and the changes that we needed to make to bring them into reality.

So, I invite you NOT to make a resolution. This month, as we remember Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birth, and his "I have a dream" speech, I invite you to take a moment to also dream. To just take a full minute and daydream. What is it that moves your heart? What differences would you like to see in your own life and the world at large? What might God be calling you to in this next year? What do you need to leave behind or add? What gifts do you have that might be worth developing or sharing?

It might be as grand as learning a language, adding more physical activity, or mending a relationship. It might be as simple as shredding a box of papers stashed in a corner, removing items that no longer enhance your life, writing your representative, or sending a check to a different charity each month. Maybe, you have always wanted to read the Bible all the way through. Maybe you would be great as a tutor for children.

And if you are afraid to dream for fear it may not come true, it's OK. They are DREAMS, pathways on an unknown journey. Start out smaller, gain more confidence and perhaps later, dream bigger. Because sometimes dreams DO come true or on the way, something you never dreamed of happens and you find meaning there. I can say this as a Southern Californian delighted to be living in 11-degree Lafayette, thankful for my car seat warmers that were never used before! (Except as a prank.)

This ongoing pandemic has made hoping and dreaming a bit harder as we continue to face new variants and fears. Life is not the norm we expected by now. But this pandemic has taught us flexibility, that time is finite and relationships are precious. We are here, and we are changed. So, let's together embrace this year ahead with fresh eyes, an open heart, and a willingness to dream again. And I pray that wherever your daydreams take you, it may all go well with you. — *Andrea Arsene, andrea@stjohns-laf.org*

From the Rector: Candlemas

Katie and I became Episcopalians at Emmanuel Memorial Episcopal Church in Champaign, Ill., and one of our earliest memories of that parish was the celebration of Candlemas. Candlemas, known as the Presentation of Jesus in the Book of Common Prayer or as the Purification of Mary in other traditions, commemorates the story in Luke's Gospel (chapter 2:22-40) where Mary and Joseph take Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem. In the story, Mary and Joseph take Jesus to the Temple in accordance with Levitical law ("the law of Moses") and offer sacrifice 40 days after his birth. The sacrifice was meant to "redeem" the firstborn son and to dedicate him to God (again, in accordance with Mosaic law) and to purify the woman after childbirth. (For the record, ritual purity is a complicated thing in the Mosaic Law, but it didn't imply that a woman was morally unclean after childbirth.)

This story is quite beautiful on the surface. Mary and Joseph meet Simeon who recognizes Jesus as the coming Messiah — as YHWH's salvation — and he proclaims that Jesus will be "a light for revelation to the nations and for the glory of the people of Israel." They also meet a prophet named Anna who praised God upon seeing the child and proclaimed good news "to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem." Like Luke's version of the Christmas story, though, the story belies a gritty reality. Mary and Joseph had travelled to Bethlehem from Nazareth — some 90 miles — while Mary was pregnant. The infant Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day as was the custom. Then, on the 40th day, they travelled to Jerusalem on their way back to Nazareth (Bethlehem being a few miles south of Jerusalem, while Nazareth lay further to the north). Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus travelled all this way, almost certainly on foot. They had nowhere to stay and likely few provisions. It would have been a perilous journey under any circumstances. Nevertheless, God was with Mary, Joseph and Jesus. Indeed, God had come into the world in just this way. With beauty, yes, but in the very midst of this gritty reality, in the sweat and the toil and the danger. God's light was shining.



Katie and I remember that first celebration of Candlemas at Emmanuel because we received a blessed candle at that service. We kept that candle and burned it anytime we wanted to hold someone or something in prayer, anytime we wanted to remember that God was with us and with those we loved. It seems to me, that, given the difficulties of the pandemic, given the losses we have all shared, given the challenges we continue to face as a community and personally, this is a good time for us to celebrate Candlemas. It's true, we read this story each year on Feb. 2 or the Sunday closest to it (Feb. 6, this year). But this year, it seems especially poignant. This is a good time for us to remember that God is with us even when the journey is long and difficult. This is a good time to hold one another in prayer and to remember that God calls us to his work, to his mission in the world. And it is a good time to carry that light into the world, so that we remember the light that has come, the light that reveals God's salvation to us and to the whole world.— *Bradley Pace, bradleypace@stjohns-laf.org*

Book Review: Jesus and the Disinherited by Howard Thurman

I have had this short book on my shelf for a few years but hadn't gotten around to reading it. Fortunately, it was one of the core texts for the recent round of Sacred Ground (the Episcopal Church's dialogue series on race). Thurman, considered to be among the greatest Christian mystics and preachers of the 20th century, sets out to explain how the teachings of Jesus address issues of discrimination and injustice, how they speak to those "with their backs against the wall," how they speak to the "disinherited."

"I can count on the fingers of one hand," Thurman writes, "the number of times that I have heard a sermon on the meaning of religion, of Christianity, to the man who stands with his back against the wall ... the poor, the disinherited, the dispossessed. What does our religion say to them? ... The search for an answer to this question is perhaps the most important religious quest of modern life."

While the book was first published in 1949, Thurman shows a keen insight into the psychology of oppressed and oppressor alike. His words speak to our own moment, calling us to hear Jesus' words as Gospel for those whose backs are against the wall. Some of us should read this book looking for comfort. Some of us should read it for the challenge it presents. Either way, I highly recommend it. — *Bradley Pace, bradleypace@stjohns-laf.org*



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Deadline for the March Eagle is
Monday, Feb. 14. Submit items to
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St. John's Financial Summary December 2021

	Dec-21	Total 2021	Annual Budget	% of Budget
INCOME				
Pledge Income	\$64,815	\$422,502	\$391,080	108.0%
Operating Income	\$39,059	\$107,301	\$91,101	117.8%
Non-Operating Income	\$3,101	\$39,810	\$51,270	77.6%
Transfer Income	\$0	\$8,800	\$0	
TOTAL INCOME	\$106,975	\$578,413	\$533,451	108.4%
EXPENSES				
Outreach	\$5,800	\$76,867	\$91,998	83.6%
Program	\$4,106	\$11,335	\$13,650	83.0%
Administration	\$0	\$1,890	\$4,400	43.0%
Personnel	\$28,183	\$302,794	\$312,519	96.9%
Office	\$6,673	\$22,019	\$23,950	91.9%
Property	\$11,823	\$90,817	\$86,935	104.5%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$56,585	\$505,722	\$533,451	94.8%
Net Income (Loss)	\$50,390	\$72,691	\$0	