

An asterisk (\*) indicates that you are invited to stand, as you are able.

#### Welcome & Announcements

Introit

"I'm Not Okay"

*Jelly Roll*

#### Lighting the Advent Wreath

The Kaskey Family

One: In a world full of fear, where do you see glimmers of joy?

**All: We see glimmers of joy in birthday candles and homemade cards.**

**We see joy in the laughter of children and the delight of grandparents.**

**We see joy in meals around the table and in the singing of Christmas songs.**

One: Even in a fearful world, joy is all around us.

**All: Today we light the candle of joy as a reminder of this good news.**

*(Light candles)*

One: May this flicker of light help us remember that even in a fearful world, joy is here. Joy is *real*. We just have to look for it.

\*Hymn 91 (Green) "Awake! Awake and Greet the New Morn"

#### Prayer of Invocation & Confession (ending with the Lord's Prayer)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

#### The Promise of Forgiveness

#### \*Gloria Patri 198 (Red) vs. 1, 5

My soul gives glory to my God. My heart pours out its praise. God lifted up my lowliness in many marvelous ways. Praise God, whose loving covenant supports those in distress, remembering past promises with present faithfulness.

#### \*Affirming Our Faith

One: We have seen the valley. We have seen a sky without stars.  
We have seen the longest night, and still we believe.

**All: We believe in a with-us God. We believe in the hope of tomorrow.**  
**We believe that good news is louder than fear.**  
**We believe this good news is for all people.**

One: So even when our knees shake, even when our voice trembles, even when fear is all around us, we will hold onto that good news.

**All: We will reach for each other. We will look for God in our midst.**  
One: We will sing songs of joy. We will proclaim:

**All: Unto us, love is born.**

One: We have seen the longest night, and we have seen unimaginable love.  
**All: So still, we believe. Amen.**

Scripture Reading Jeremiah 1:4–10 (pg. 698, O.T.) Brian Binkley

#### Children's Time

As Pre-K–12th graders leave for Sunday School, we send them with this liturgy:

Pastor: Now we go our separate ways to worship and learn about God.

Cong.: **May God be with you there!**

Children: **May God be with you here!**

#### Anthem

#### "Show Up"

Kusserow

*I believe that a God born into empire,  
carries the message that hope is enough.  
A little brave candle against growing shadows:  
Fearful or not, we show up!*

#### Scripture Reading

Luke 1:26–39 (pg. 56, N.T.)

#### Sermon

#### FEAR MOVING FORWARD

Rev. Dr. Marshall

*After the sermon, a brief musical interlude will offer time for reflection.*

\*Presentation of Offering & Doxology (Hymn 95, Red)

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below;  
praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

\*Prayer of Dedication & Prayers of the People

\*Hymn (Insert)

"Prepare the Way, O Zion"

\*Benediction

\*Postlude

"Do Not Fear"

*The Many*

*Do not fear, I am here; I know you by heart.  
Just as you are, you are mine; I know you by heart.  
Your name is written in the palm of my hand.  
Do not fear, I am here; I know you by heart.*

*Please take time after the Postlude to greet one another,  
especially people you don't already know!*

#### ENRICHING OUR WORSHIP OF GOD

Music Director

Janet Kaido

Ushers

Jen & Dan Lortz

Greeter

Barbara McConnell

Joy Messengers

Patrick Bullock, Linda Duncan, Lauren Feldman, Lisa Howell, Nancy Kimmons, John McClintick, Pam Schafer, John Senior, Jeff Wagner

#### WELCOME TO ST. JOHN'S!

No matter who you are, where you come from, what you look like, or what you are wearing, you are welcome here! No matter where you are in your faith, you belong here. All we want is to help you experience the presence and love of Jesus Christ! If there is anything we can do to help you feel more at home, please feel free to ask one of the ushers located at the sanctuary doors. We would love for you to join us for refreshments downstairs in the Fellowship Hall following worship. We are glad that you are here and hope you will worship with us again soon!

#### SUNDAY SCHOOL

After the scripture reading, grades K–12th will leave with their teachers. If this is your child's first time in Sunday School, the ushers have pamphlets that tell you everything you need to know. As always, nursery care is provided for children ages 5 and under.

#### CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Longtime St. John's member **Henrietta Damiano** passed away on Monday, Dec. 8. A memorial service is being planned for Saturday, March 14.

#### OFFERING & PRAYER CARDS

If you would like to support the life and ministry of St. John's, there are offering trays located at each door in the sanctuary. You can also give electronically by scanning this QR code. Prayer request cards can be placed in one of the offering trays.



#### WOMEN'S BOOK STUDY – 2 OPPORTUNITIES!

The Sundy book study meets at 8:15 a.m. in the Carriage House, apart from the first Sunday of every month. They are taking a break from their current book to read *Advent in Plain Sight: A Devotion Through Ten Objects* by Jill Duffield. Contact Nancy Wolfe ([nj.wolfe@verizon.net](mailto:nj.wolfe@verizon.net)) for more information.

The Monday group meets at 10:00 a.m., both in person and on Zoom (use the church Zoom link found on the website under Quick Links). They are discussing *Elusive Grace: Loving Your Enemies While Stiving for God's Justice* by Scott Black Johnston. If you would like to find out more or order a book, contact Nancy Arico ([nancy.arico@verizon.net](mailto:nancy.arico@verizon.net) or 610-550-9547).

#### MEN'S GROUP

The Men's Group will meet this Wednesday, December 17 at 7:00 a.m. in the Carriage House to continue their study of Isaiah. Contact Pastor Patrick for more information.

#### GIFT CARDS FOR GREAT VALLEY FOOD CUPBOARD

Great Valley Food Cupboard is in need of Acme Gift Cards for the Christmas holiday. You can write a check to St. John's and note "Gift card for food cupboard" on the memo line. The cards will be purchased on Saturday December 20, so if you want to contribute, please do so before then.

#### CHILDREN'S WORSHIP RESOURCE STATION

Our littlest worshippers are now able to customize their worship experience. In the coat closet in the sanctuary, kids can pick out a bag to fill with a children's bulletin, art supplies, fidget toys, books, and games to enrich their time. Please return to the brown basket when finished! In a hurry? Pre-made bags are available.

#### THE BOOK NOOK AND CHILDREN'S LIBRARY HAVE MOVED!

Both the Book Nook and the children's library have moved to the library behind the sanctuary (where the copier is). Check it out if you or your kids are looking for some good books to read!

#### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY – CODE BLUE SHELTER - NORRISTOWN

TLC For the People is looking for volunteers to help run the Code Blue Cold Shelter in Norristown at St. John's Church (520 Church Street) this week. If there are not volunteers, the shelter cannot open for those who need a warm place to sleep. There are 3-hour shifts from 5pm-8am. Please consider signing up to help! Click the links in the weekly email to sign up.

## CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICES

We hope that you will join us for one (or both!) of our Christmas Eve services:

4:00 p.m. Family Service (with kids' Christmas pageant)  
8:00 p.m. Candlelight Service (Prelude starting at 7:45 p.m.)

Feel free to bring family and friends! Children and youth wishing to participate in the nativity story are encouraged to come to the Family Service at 3:50 p.m. to pick out their costumes ahead of time.

## YOUTH GROUP CHRISTMAS PARTY – TODAY! (4:30–6:00 P.M.)

Join Pastor Ridgley and Michael Whalen for our best Christmas party yet! Wear your Christmas PJs and join us for a waffle bar! We will do an ABSURD Santa Gift Exchange, so don't forget to bring the most absurd (wrapped) gift you can find for under \$20 to the party!

## FAMILY ADVENT CALENDAR

You can find a red and green poster board "calendar" on the wall in Fellowship Hall with 24 days listed. Simply lift off one of the decorations, revealing an item to purchase for Home of the Sparrow, an Exton organization that helps women in need of housing, supplies, educational advice, and support. Write your name on the form next to the calendar, corresponding to the date/gift you've selected. Bring your unwrapped items back to Fellowship Hall by next Sunday, Dec. 21 and place them in the container marked "Advent Calendar Gifts."

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS AT ST. JOHN'S

Happy Birthday to members and friends of our St. John's family who are celebrating birthdays this month! Please consider wishing them a happy birthday in person or sending them birthday wishes by text, email or a card in the mail. Contact Barbara McConnell (blbmcconnell@aol.com) if you would like to be added!

December 10 – Melanie Henricks	December 25 – Jesus Christ, Avery Hillier
December 12 – Sue Chudy	December 26 – Lisa Howell
December 13 – Barb Beucler	December 26 – Nancy Phillips
December 16 – Earline Eck	December 30 – Sarah Crill

## END OF YEAR GIVING

Year-end gifts will be credited in the 2025 tax year if they are postmarked by Dec. 31. Some members and friends of St. John's donate shares of stock or mutual funds at the end of the year. If you are interested in this option, we use Vanguard to process these transactions. Please ask your broker to use DTC number 0062; our account number is 6142 8971. If you have any questions, please contact Brian Bouvier (215-979-1415 or brianbouvier57@gmail.com).

## ST. JOHN'S CALENDAR

Scan the QR code below or visit our website for the complete calendar:



Sun, Dec. 14	<b>The Third Sunday of Advent</b>
	8:15 am Trustees Meeting (Kean)
	8:15 am Women's Book Group (Carriage House)
	9:30 am Worship & Sunday School
	11:00 am Implementation Team Meeting (Kean)
	4:30 pm Youth Christmas Party (CH)
Mon, Dec. 15	10:00 am Women's Book Group (CH)
	7:00 pm Session Meeting (Kean)
Tues, Dec. 16	5:00 pm Exercise Class (FH)
Thurs, Dec. 18	5:00 pm Exercise Class (FH)
	7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
Sat, Dec. 20	9:00 am Exercise Class (FH)
Sun, Dec. 21	<b>The Fourth Sunday of Advent</b>
	8:15 am Women's Book Group (CH)
	9:30 am Worship & Sunday School
	5:00 pm Officers' Christmas Party (CH)

## This Week in the Church Office

Please send any bulletin announcements to [admin@stjohnsdevon.com](mailto:admin@stjohnsdevon.com) by **Noon on Wednesday**.

Friday is Pastor Patrick and Pastor Ridgley's sabbath day, and the church office is closed on Saturday. If you email or call on those days, you will not get a response until they are back in the office.

If you have a pastoral emergency pertaining to a death, hospitalization, or crisis situation when the office is closed, please call 484-604-0499



[www.stjohnsdevon.com](http://www.stjohnsdevon.com)

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Rev. Dr. Patrick Marshall, Senior Pastor (patrick\_marshall@stjohnsdevon.com)  
Rev. Ridgley Beckett, Associate Pastor (rbeckett@stjohnsdevon.com)  
Annie Carruthers, Church Administrator (admin@stjohnsdevon.com)  
Janet Kaido, Director of Music (music@stjohnsdevon.com)  
Sue Chudy, Clerk of Session (susan.chudy@stjohnsdevon.com)



"The First Step"  
by Rev. Sarah Speed

Watch any parent. It starts with the first step.  
They kneel down. They smile with anticipation.  
They reach for their baby, calling and cooing them forward.  
And then before they know it, they're running behind a bike.  
They're yelling, "Keep pedaling! You got it! I'm right here!"  
And they're jumping up and down,  
because that little red helmet passed the mailbox.  
And then, just like that, they're driving circles  
in the church parking lot.  
They're giving instructions about easing on and off the pedal.  
They're having conversations about curfew and heartbreak.  
And then, before they know it,  
they're standing in a hospital room.  
Their heart is bursting. And they say,  
"Put her head right here.  
Rock her gently.  
Do you remember the nursery rhymes?  
You were born for this."  
The first step is always the hardest,  
but you, beloved, were born for this.

Sunday, December 14, 2025  
The Third Sunday of Advent