

THE FORERUNNER



January 2019

St. John's Episcopal Church



From the
Rector

*And now he has **made all of this** plain to us by the appearing of Christ Jesus, our Savior. He broke the power of death and illuminated the way to life and immortality through the Good News (II Timothy 1:10).*

Welcome to Epiphany, the season after the twelve-day celebration of Christmas. The English word "Epiphany" comes from a Greek word meaning "appearing" or "revealing." Epiphany focuses on God's self-revelation in Christ. In Epiphany we pay special attention to the visit of the Magi, the encounter the boy Jesus had with religious leaders in the Temple; and the baptism of our Lord. The good news is that Good News is for all people everywhere and for all time; God is being made known through Jesus for the whole world. God has made "all of this" plain to us through epiphanies: experiences of a sudden, surprising and striking realization of God's grace. The original language makes it clear that "all of this" is God's plan (or purpose) and grace. In other words, though Jesus, God not only reveals himself to us, but also reveals his plan to save us, a plan that centers in God's unmerited and unearned favor for us. This plan of grace reflects and confirms God's character of love through our experience of Jesus Christ and in our affection for one another.

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. (Isaiah 6:1).

We understand this darkness as rampant injustices, people groping for something to hold on to and desperate for a way forward. God's plan is hope for those without hope. Within our present darkness the Lord will shine in our midst revealing God's glory – God's presence. God is light. Light breaks the dark. What is revealed, then, to eyes that have spent too much time in the dark, is the presence of God and the realization that God has always been with us." This is Good News: God's light overcomes darkness and draws others to it, making their way to the source of light – Jesus - even as the wise men were drawn by the light of a star to the manger.

Without light we feel so very alone. In darkness there is disoriented confusion where nothing is as it seems; we are lost and confused and cannot see a way out. All of us knows what that feels like. However, some

of us know amazing grace – that saved a wretch like me/who once was lost/ but now am found/ was blind but now I see. Those of us who have experienced grace guide others through acts of love and compassion – which reflects and confirms for us God's character.

Like the magi, God will guide and direct us. God will bring us into contact with people who will help us on our journey. We will encounter situations that will alter our paths and point us to God. God will touch our eyes. God will open our ears. We will see light realize that God has been with us all along.

**O Star of wonder, star of night
Star with royal beauty bright
Westward leading, still proceeding
Guide us to Thy perfect light**

In peace, Fr. Chuck+



ANNUAL MEETING

Our Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 27, 2019, immediately following the 10:30 am service. We will start, as always, with a luncheon. Please sign up in the Parish Hall and let us know how many are coming and what side dish or dessert you will bring. Sandwiches or a main dish will be provided. This is the chance for the congregation to hear about the status of the church, the budget, the goals and hopes for the new year and to elect members of the Vestry and the Wardens. We need YOU to attend. Please contact the office with any questions.



On Sunday, January 20, we will adorn our fences with donated mittens, scarves and hats for our local community. Please make sure that all donations of new or gently used items need to be at the church by January 20. For more information, contact Deacon Sally.



From The Deacon's Bench

Happy New Year! Seems to me that 2018 flew by so I thought it would be helpful to review how St John's helped the community and see just what kept us so busy. Overlying all of our outreach efforts was the search and calling and celebration of new ministry of our new rector, Fr. Chuck. I know I am thankful that this process has brought to us an energetic, productive leader. For me, the responsibilities of being 'Deacon-in-Charge' were overwhelming at times but I could not have done this without the willingness of this congregation! Every time I asked, you stepped up and for that I am eternally grateful. So, in addition to all the extraordinary parish activities, here is a review of our Outreach Activities for 2018:

Ongoing Activities:

1. Food Pantry – the food pantry, under the leadership of the Pankonians, hands out an average of 60 pre-packed bags of food every Tuesday. These bags contain a 'days worth' of food including tuna fish, milk, mac n cheese and toilet paper. There are several faithful volunteers who sign up for the rota to greet and distribute these bags every week.
2. Quilters – Nearly every Tuesday several ladies, under the leadership of Gail Boyd, meet to craft beautiful children's quilts. Displayed at our annual meeting, these quilts and dozens of handmade stuffed animals (Peg Fittable) will be taken to the Ronald McDonald House in Camden to brighten the day of children and their siblings.

Activities by Month:

January – We 'hung out' approximately 50 scarves, 25 hats and a dozen or so pairs of gloves on our fence on the corner of Grant and Market St. Mary Ann Clisham observed that they were almost completely gone by the following morning.

February – Ashes to Go – with Ann Neff's help, I imposed ashes on nearly 200 nursing home and assisted living residents and staff around the county

July – St John's housed the young men and male leaders for 'Project Restore' and outreach project of LightHouse Ministries. Instead of traveling to Appalachia, they chose to restore several homes and yards on Olive and Elm Streets in Salem. Fr Chuck and I served as Chaplain of the Day as well.

Late July/Early August – St John's hosted a week long VBS. This is such a rewarding project and is an all parish event – many hands are required to make this happen. About 35 children were blessed

August – we gear up for our annual BackPack project – this year we delivered 35 fully stocked back packs to the Salem Middle School. Each backpack cost approx. \$20 to fill and each one had a small bag tag that said 'God's got your back'. They were delivered right after Labor Day

October – we begin our 'Operation Christmas Child' shoebox project – some of you take shoeboxes and fill them, some of you donate money for extras and some of you help us pack 'extra boxes' on ingathering Sunday. We also have a "Trunk or Treat" on October 31 for area children to enjoy a safe Halloween experience.

November – the Ministerium decided to have an underwear and sock offering at the Community Thanksgiving Service and I asked for your help. I brought a big 35 gallon clear trash bag of socks and underwear to the service and later delivered all of the offering to St John's Outreach Church for distribution!

December – Our big project was our Secret Santa Shoppe which gives local children the ability to 'shop' for gifts for their family members. With your help, we were able to provide gift items for women, men and children. Approximately 60 children came that day. If you consider that we limit them to 5 gifts each, that is over 300 items that were available for selection.

Also, our Parishioner, Amy, asked us to help her with her project collecting Pajamas and books – there were an impressive amount of items in the box she provided. You came through on very short notice in a loving response.

In addition to all of these 'projects' we have a budget to support a number of organizations that help others in our community. These include:

Fenwick Ambulance
Salem Fire Department
Meals on Wheels
The Needlework Guild
Salem Area Ministerium Scholarship Fund

I have served as the President of the Salem Area Ministerium for the past 2 years and my term is now up. A new president has been selected, Sheila Palmer, wife of the new Presbyterian Minister, and ordained clergy in her own right. I have an acute awareness of the needs of Salem City now and we are doing a lot to help. There are no easy fixes to the problems of this city and it 'takes a village' to address these needs and we are doing our part to help. As we start 2019, Fr. Chuck and I will be sitting down to look at this big picture. It is my hope that I will host a 'think tank' meeting to hear all your ideas as well.

Now bring me all your scarves, hats and mittens – cuz the January 2019 scarf event is happening!

Much Love,
Deacon Sally

"The lion is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way; he is gone forth from his place to make thy land desolate; and thy cities shall be laid waste, without an inhabitant" Jeremiah 4:7, King James Authorized Version of A.D. 1611



Archaeology, as a science of fact, not truth, is in a constant state of introspection, even civil war with itself as its conventions are regularly challenged by new artifacts. Of that remarkable stream of finds confirming the Bible and refuting the 19th Century allegation among western scientists that the scriptures are myth, is the Babylonian Ishtar Gate. This gate is yet another evidence for characters in the Book of Daniel.

The Babylonian set assembly in our chapel and on a portion of the church wall with displays of the children's artwork from Vacation Bible School this past Summer was a copy of the Ishtar Gate constructed by King Nebuchadnezzar on the north side of Babylon. The large gate was excavated by Herr Doktor Robert Koldewy, whom we discussed here previously and restored for display at the Pergamom Museum in Berlin. The gate contains a cuneiform inscription which includes the following passage "I (Nebuchadnezzar) laid the foundation of the gates down to the level and had them built out of pure blue stone. Upon the walls in the inner room of the gate are bulls and dragons and thus I magnificently adorned them with luxurious splendor for all mankind to behold in awe."

Dr. Koldewey's work would not have been possible without the vision of self-taught archaeologists & many successful explorers who used the Bible and other ancient texts as literally true and as geographic trails. This method used in this case by Mr. Claudius James Rich, an Englishman living in Baghdad in 1815 and doing his own scholarly work to collect the field data that would enable future site excavations.

King Nebuchadnezzar's two sieges of Jerusalem, 597 and 587 BC, are recounted for us in II Kings 24 & 25. The prophet Jeremiah labels Nebuchadnezzar the "destroyer of nations" (see above verse) and he records certain details of the second siege and fate of the First or Solomonic Temple in Jeremiah 39.

"The Lord is in His Holy Temple; Let all the earth keep silence before him." Habakkuk 2:20, AV1611

Ryan Bailey, Sr



We pray for those who serve in our military, especially:

Major Ryan Bailey, US Army
PFC Justin Francisco, US Army

Lt. Col. Peter Larrabee, USAF
Senior Master Sgt. David John Milne, USAF
Captain Tyler Patrick VanSant, USAF
Captain Joseph Flescher III, USAF
2nd Lt. Marlene Flescher, USAF Academy
2nd Lt. Michael McCormick, US Army
LCpl Jessica Armstrong, US Marine Corps



01/02 Tammy Peterson
01/06 Jimmy Trinidad (Dad)
01/13 Father Chuck Messer
01/14 Eileen Miller
01/16 Joseph Peterson, Jr.

01/16 Mary Beth Chard
01/20 Dianne Messer
01/23 Joseph Peterson, Sr.
01/23 Matthew Wayne Runkle
01/25 Emma Messer
01/26 Charles Miller IV
01/26 Diane Wohlrab
01/27 Mary Miller
01/31 Rosie Carroll



01/06/1979
John Jr. and Wendy Laning





We have, without question, one of the finest—if not THE finest—liturgical ministries around. We are rich in talent: excellent choir, best organ in the county, profound and challenging preaching. We are rich in liturgy and rich in history. Our facilities host a multitude of ministries to the community at large. Good things continue to happen at St. John's. Please invite your friends and neighbors to come and see for themselves. We can all be quiet evangelists in this way.

ST. JOHN'S CHOIR

The St. John's Choir has been extremely busy this past Advent and Christmas season. The choir sang wonderful music all the way through Advent. The highlight may have been Lessons & Carols on Advent IV (December 23). Then the Choir sang beautifully at the 10:30 PM Christmas Eve service. But, it seems to be true that "there is no rest for the weary". We will lead a very special liturgy celebrating the Feast of the Epiphany on January 6 and then the Baptism of Our Lord on January 13, after which we will begin immediately to prepare for the remainder of the Epiphany Season, then Lent (Ash Wednesday is March 6), Holy Week, and Easter (April 21). We are always actively seeking volunteer singers. Know of someone? Let Bill Clisham know, too.

Reading resolutions

Every January, many Christians resolve to read the entire Bible in one year. That's a worthy goal, but God doesn't require us to read a certain number of verses or chapters per day. Instead, he tells us to simply be in his Word — and thus be with him — so he can grow our faith, light our path and assure us of his love and forgiveness. God's Word is a precious gift, but we need to "unwrap" it!

F.B. Meyer offers this helpful advice for a new year of discovering (and rediscovering!) Scripture: "Read the Bible, not as a newspaper, but as a home letter. If a cluster of heavenly fruit hangs within reach, gather it. If a promise lies upon the page as a blank check, cash it. If a prayer is recorded, appropriate it and launch it as a feathered arrow from the bow of your desire. If an example of holiness gleams before you, ask God to do as much for you. If the truth is revealed ... entreat that its brilliance may ever irradiate ... your life."



The legend of the sand dollar

There's a pretty little legend that I would like to tell
Of the birth and death of Jesus found in this lowly shell.

If you examine closely, you'll see that you find here
Four nail holes and a fifth hole, made by a Roman's spear.

On one side the Easter lily, its center is the star
That appeared unto the shepherds and led them from afar.

The Christmas poinsettia etched on the other side
Reminds us of his birthday, our happy Christmastide.

Now break the center open, and here you will release
The five white doves awaiting to spread good will and peace.

This simple little symbol, Christ left for you and me
To help us spread his Gospel, through all eternity.

—Author unknown

Activity Page



Puzzle

A fresh start

Baptism is a blessing because it changes us and gives us hope.

Directions: Write the boxed letters in the squares below. Then unscramble those letters to form two words that complete the Bible verse and represent the gift of baptism.

We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a _____.

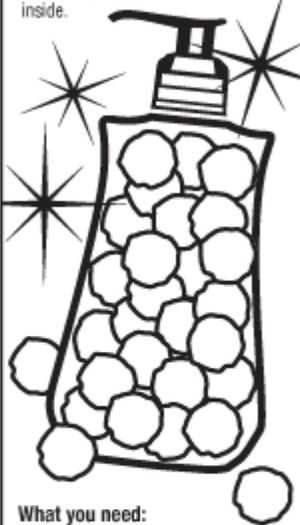
Romans 6:4, NIV

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Answer: f i e l e w n; new life

Washed Clean

Decorate a soap bottle as a reminder of how baptism cleans us on the inside.



What you need:

- Bottle of clear liquid hand soap
- Small craft pom-poms (different colors)
- Wooden skewer

What you do:

1. Remove the bottle label and unscrew the lid.
2. Using the skewer, push pom-poms down into the soap one at a time.
3. Replace the lid and put the dispenser in a bathroom or kitchen.

January 2019



		1	2	3	4	5
		 New Year's Day	9:00 am-2 pm IAC 8 pm NA			
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
8 am Rite I Chapel 9 am Choir Rehearsal 10:30 Rite II Church Birthday Sunday ECW Meeting		9 am-12 pm YSC/CIACC 9 am Quilters 12-2 pm Food Pantry 8 pm NA	10:30 am Bible Study 12 Noon Holy Eucharist in Chapel 8 pm AA	6:30 pm Potluck Supper followed by Bible Study		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
8 am Rite I Chapel 9 am Choir Rehearsal 10:30 Rite II Church Sandwich Sunday Vestry Meeting		9 am Quilters 12-2 pm Food Pantry 8 pm NA	10:30 am Bible Study 12 Noon Holy Eucharist in Chapel 8 pm AA	6:30 pm Potluck Supper followed by Bible Study		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
8 am Rite I Chapel 9 am Choir Rehearsal 10:30 Rite II Church Fellowship Hour Hanging of the Hats		9 am Quilters 12-2 pm Food Pantry 8 pm NA	8 am-3 pm IAC Homeless Survey 10:30 am Bible Study 12 Noon Holy Eucharist in Chapel 8 pm AA	6:30 pm Potluck Supper followed by Bible Study		
27	28	29	30	31		
8 am Rite I Chapel 9 am Choir Rehearsal 10:30 Rite II Church Annual Meeting following 10:30 service		9 am Quilters 12-2 pm Food Pantry 8 pm NA	10:30 am Bible Study 12 Noon Holy Eucharist in Chapel 8 pm AA	6:30 pm Potluck Supper followed by Bible Study		Office Hours Monday: Closed Tuesday-Friday: 9 am-4 pm (Fr Chuck) 12 pm-3 pm (Office)
				CIACC-Children's Inter-Agency Council YSC-Youth Services Council IAC-Inter-Agency Council NA-Narcotics Anonymous AA-Alcoholics Anonymous		

From The Editor: Do you want to change how you receive the Forerunner? Simply leave a message with the church office and it will be rerouted with the next issue

You can also check out St. John's website: www.stjohnssalemnj.org. The most recent Sunday Bulletin is on the website, as well as current and past issues of the Forerunner and special announcements. St. John's is also on Facebook (St. John's Salem)

Please have any information you would like printed in the next Forerunner to me by **January 25**. Family news, articles, information, articles, recipes, book or movie reviews, or anything you think would be of interest to our church family. Items can be emailed to ecmiller114@gmail.com.

Special request: We are always looking for family news, articles, stories, poems, recipes, and other items of interest. Email them to me or leave them in the office.



St. John's Episcopal Church

76 Market Street, Salem, NJ 08079

Established 1722

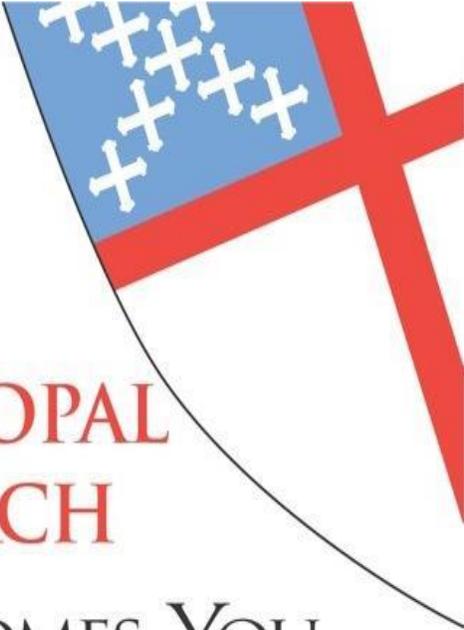
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Vestry Class of 2021	Ryan Bailey	Ron Magill	Bill Mecum	Recording Secretary: MaryAnne
Class of 2020	Sue Harker	Gwen Norton	Ann Neff (Clerk)	Clisham
Class of 2019	David Miller	Jean Miller	Ron Wohlrab	



**THE
EPISCOPAL
CHURCH**
WELCOMES YOU

Schedule of Services

Every Sunday

8 AM—Holy Eucharist Rite 1 in the Chapel

9:15 AM-Christian Formation-NOOMA in the Parish Hall

10:30 AM---Holy Eucharist Rite II in the Church followed by Fellowship Hour

Every Wednesday

10:30 AM Kerygma Bible Study in the Parish Hall

Noon---Holy Eucharist in the Chapel

Every Thursday

6:30 PM Kerygma Bible Study in the Parish Hall with Potluck Dinner

Special Events

Sunday, January 27

Annual Congregational Meeting
immediately following the 10:30
am service



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76 Market Street
Salem, NJ 08079

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

