



## *Evangelist* Lent 2021

Roughly translated from ancient Greek, the word Liturgy means “the work of the people”. Our church practices are organized into various liturgies, or “works”, for various occasions and purposes. For those of us in the Episcopal Church USA, our liturgies are expressed, in handy detail, in the Book of Common Prayer. In its pages, we can find liturgies for Sunday worship, for Baptisms, for Marriages, for Funerals, for Daily Prayers, and for special occasions. And for each, there is an understanding of the “work” the people ought to share. In Baptism, for example, the work we do focuses on how we can respond to the covenant God offers us; how we can shape our lives, and the lives of our children, around the teachings and the grace of God in Christ. Marriages have a work, too, of course; a work of relationship-building which respects the individual while creating a specific team, a holy bond, to do the work of God together. At funerals, our work, expressed by the BCP liturgy, is to commend the departed to God and attend to those who mourn. As a parish family, we are called to do these works together, just as we are called to the work of the Sunday worship liturgy.

We are entering a new liturgical season of the church, marked by the special occasion of Ash Wednesday. It is called Lent. You may not see dramatic changes in our various liturgies, but our work takes on a different sort of attitude during Lent. Yes, for the six weeks of Lent we will delete the word ‘Alleluia’ from our worship script, and our physical ‘backgrounds’ will be less ornamental, but the important work to which Lent is calling us is a change of heart. During Epiphany, the liturgical season which we are now completing, the attitude which our readings and practices encourage is one of awe. We are awed at the revelation of God’s love, at the unveiling of the meaning of Christ’s presence among us, at Christ’s authority over the powers of this world, and at the light of Christ to guide us and warm our hearts. We have been unwrapping a remarkable gift. Lent causes us to wonder, though, if we truly deserve this gift. Was it really meant for us? Was it really meant for me? Are we actually worthy to receive such an awesome offering? And yet, even as we are pondering these questions, God goes on giving the gift to us anyway.

Lent is often compared to looking in a mirror. As we see our reflections, we are called to be brutally honest. Do we like what we see? Are there changes we can make to the identity we display to the world? Accept, for a moment, those things which cannot be changed, and remember that we are made in God's own image, made to be lovable even with our warts and wrinkles. But, think about how we project ourselves to our neighbors: do we really reflect how loving and loveable we are meant to be? Can we lament our errors and mistakes, while simultaneously rejoicing in the life and opportunities God has created for us? Frankly, yes. That, to me, is the Lenten message. It helps me specify the work I need to do, and the liturgy which should guide my course. Metaphorically, I should perhaps brush my wayward hair, put on a clean shirt, adjust my suspenders, and generally make myself more presentable. I should rejoice in what God has given me, including the Light of Christ, and then clean it all up so others can see God's glory reflected in me. Lament need not mean hopelessness. The past need not predict the future. Metaphoric cleanliness is next to, but not equal to Godliness.

Will we ever succeed in making ourselves perfectly deserving of God's remarkable gifts? Frankly, no. But God continues to give the gifts, the blessings, anyway. Count on it. Just the same, the liturgy of Lent expresses our intent to improve, to wash away the dirt and brush off the dust and continue the work of becoming more like what God is dreaming of. We should do it for ourselves, we should do it for our neighbors, and we should do it out of devotion to God's dream. And, thankfully, we can do it together as a church family; we can support and encourage one another in this spiritual fellowship. I invite you, therefore, to join us in the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination in that metaphoric mirror, by repentance to turn things around and clean them up, by prayer to join in God's dream, and by gathering with us to hear and meditate on God's holy Word. Though it begins with the pronouncement that we are but dust, and ends with the startling event of the crucifixion, Lent need not be a time of darkness and despair. The Light of Christ shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it, and hope for a better world and our better selves drives our liturgical work this season. May God bless our labors. Nick+

## **HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH JANUARY 24, 2021**

The meeting was called to order by Father Smith at 9:30 a.m., January 24, 2021, during the Sunday worship, and reconvened afterward on zoom at 10:50 am. **Val Hill** was elected to serve as the meeting's clerk

A delightful **musical introduction was played on violin by Zachary Hirst.**

**Memorial Prayers were offered for those who have passed on ahead during 2020:** James Davis, Shirley Laurin, Arthur Hill, Arthur Smith, Connie Bernholz, Robert Cole, Lois Irons, Georgianna Williams, Laura Bennett, Dave Meeker, and Virginia Griesmyer

**A tribute was given to John and Carol Reinhardt for their dedication, commitment to, and hard work for this parish. A RESOLUTION was adopted to dedicate this meeting to both of them. Flowers had been sent to them from the parish, and Carol displayed them on zoom.**

**MINUTES** of the January 26, 2020 meeting were discussed and accepted

**Special recognition was given to Shelly Sears's photo documentation in scrap books of the "Life of St. John's During 2020."** From her albums slides were shared of various St. John's events, including visiting Laura Bennett at ECF, music tributes from our youth, Bible Study (Thursdays), various Sunday services, Saturday Evening Theme Parties, Hug-A-Mug (Wednesdays), outdoor gatherings, and coffee hours.

**Nominating Committee Report:** Susan Slaunwhite placed the following slate into nomination: Warden (Senior)-**Leslie Zebrowski** (1 year), Warden (Junior)-**Peter Slaunwhite** (2 year term-1 year as Junior) Vestrypersons: Suzanne Bauer (3 year term). Garry Hirst (3 years), Valerie Hill (3 years), Bob Wilkins (1 year)

**Special thanks were given to Warden Susan Slaunwhite, and Vestry Persons: Beth Wieland, Laura Weismore and Shane Weismore for their years of service.**

**Motion** was made by **Valerie Hill** and **seconded** by **Colette Coppola** to accept and elect all nominees to the offices and terms as presented by the Nominating Committee's report. **APPROVED.**

### **Rector's Report**

Being online we have been able to reach out to people from various parts of the country and world, whether it is for our Sunday Services, Weekly Bible Study, or Coffee Hours.

The "Coach's Pep Talk"

\* We have the opportunity to succeed, to win against this virus and separation. Let's use the time wisely, not to just endure the virus, but to build with God's help. What are we being called to do?

\* We are being called to:

1) Don't take people for granted-share with others- take advantage of offerings from diocese/parish to "see" each other and participate in what is offered.

2) Assess our options and arrange our priorities. Listen for God's guidance.

3) Prepare ourselves for victory. Revitalize our Ministry Teams. Use this time to refocus: be innovative, imagine a future just a little bit different, learn from our experience, and pray!

**Warden's Report** It's difficult to fill the Reinhardt's shoes, but we are in great hands with Treasurer Jack MacMullen and Office Manager Kelly Brown.

We are so blessed with the service and friendship of Father Nick and Gale to us.

Susan thanked Leslie Zebrowski and Peter Slaunwhite for their service and Leslie thanked Susan for stepping up and taking charge in these difficult times. Susan Slaunwhite added that we have much to be thankful for here at St. John's: Strong leadership, community outreach, opportunities for spiritual growth, and faithful parishioners who are family and are eager to develop relationship. It is a time to be hopeful.

### **Finance Report & Investments**

**Women of St. John's and Quilt Guild** accounts closed and moved to separate lines within General Fund. The Vestry will be **transferring Memorial and Building Maintenance Funds** to investments.

**Fund raising-** \$400 from Pancake Supper, but other fundraising dinners and auctions had to be cancelled  
**Windows/Property Pledges/Donations** received to date- \$16,114.

**Generous end of year donations** which helped offset the lack of opportunity to hold various fund raisers.

Utilities down, due to church services remaining remote

Building maintenance/repair-\$7000= roof repairs and organ maintenance

**Investments: Account Review** presented by **Brad Adams**

\*Balanced Approach + there are 7 different accounts in stocks/bonds (mutual funds)-moderate risk return

\*Up 11.36% compared to 11.03% which was the "Return Benchmark"

\*Money can be deposited and withdrawn from the investments without penalty.

### **Other Reports**

**St. John's Episcopal Church Website- Gloria Wilkins** walked us through the new website, which was built with the guidance and effort of Shane Rand, Father Nick's future son-in-law. As Webmaster, Gloria updates and posts these various communications Upcoming Special Services with live links posted, Weekly sermons, Monthly Evangelists, Monthly Calendars. Special Features: Prayer Requests and "Donate button"

**Quilters- Beth Wieland- Mission- reach out to community who are struggling in any manner.**

10 people on committee, who normally meet twice a month

People have been making quilts during COVID times. For example, Sue Bauer has made 20+ quilts.

Funding comes from donations. Thank you to all for the time, money, and fabric

**Communication-Leslie Zebrowski**

\*Zoom for all

\* Directory revised twice-thank you to Father Nick and Gale- need to stay connected

\* Grid designed by **Colette** to stay connected with everyone so no one is left out or left behind.

\* Evangelist Newsletter- Special thanks to **Laura** for her work and dedication on this. Also thanks to **Shane and Cathy** for their assistance. Laura addressed the meeting, encouraging everyone to contribute articles and photos. She has added a "Book Review" column, is pondering changing the publication schedule, and hopes that the Evangelist encourages participation in all church activities.

**Women of St. John's- Sandy Aylesworth-** Money we raised last year, \$1000, was contributed this year to assist families of North Broad Street Elementary School students who are in need.

**Karing Kitchen- Ann Hodgins-** Meals can't presently be served at the Methodist church, but KK is receiving donations of food or money. Once a month deliveries come from Syracuse Food Bank, and the food is then placed in bags and delivered to the homes. Special donations of children's books and other items are being planned, and we hope to take part

**Father Nick-** Special thanks to **Shelly and Tom Sears** for their commitment to this parish.

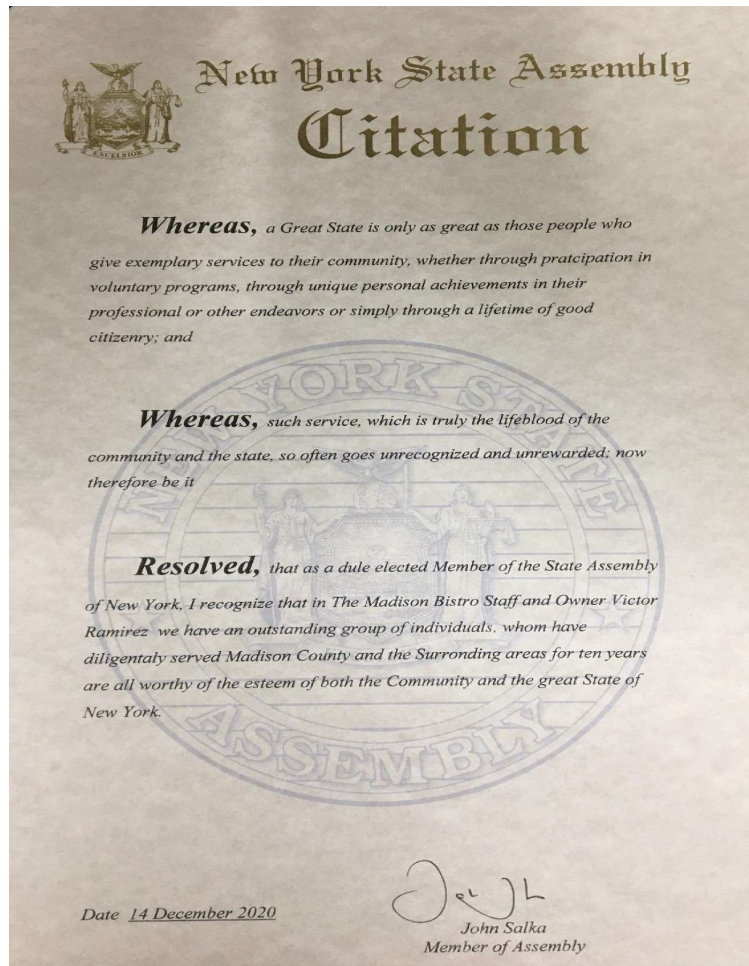
**Father Nick-** also expressed his thanks to all parishioners who give their time and talents to this church

**Shelly Sears-** expressed her thanks and gratitude to Father Nick and Gale for keeping this St. John's family connected.

A **motion** was made by **Gerry Miller** and seconded by **Brad Adams** to adjourn the meeting at 12:45pm. **APPROVED.**

Respectfully submitted, **Valerie Hill**, clerk of the Vestry

## Congratulations to **Madison Bistro**



### Special Thank You from the Editor

Shane and I both would very much like to thank everyone who brought us meals and sent cards while I have been so sick. The cards brightened my days and the meals were delicious and such a help. We love our church family and are so very blessed to have you in our lives.

Laura & Shane



“The Lord announces the Word. And the women who proclaim it are a Mighty Throng.”

Psalm 68:11

I like to imagine this....

All of us standing together, all over our country and the world...standing arm in arm (even though we're social distancing) But I like to imagine we're all coming together as a force

A force for good.

A force of great love.

A force of courage.

And we're not just standing arm in arm,  
But we're bringing something with us that's very powerful.

Maybe it doesn't look powerful to the world,  
But oh my...it's power upon power.

It's God's Word.

We have God's Word to combat all the fear. May we let that sink into our bones and hearts.

His word is here...to go into action.

Big beautiful action.

To give us mighty strength.

To encourage us.

To give us light.

To give us truth.

To give us hope.

So here we are...  
All standing together.  
Arms linked together.  
Rising up.  
And we have the joy of proclaiming it !  
And we can remind each other that we're not alone. We have the beauty of reaching out...it can be a phone call or a message to another person.  
It's a gift.  
Checking on others is key during this time. And we can think outside the box as we spend more time with our families.

It may be taking groceries to an older neighbor.  
Sharing the stack of toilet paper or the face masks.  
Getting out the board games.  
Creating and painting together.  
Or sending notes of encouragement.

Wouldn't it be so wonderful if the headlines on a newspaper read..."The world is helping in love. God is here No need to panic."

Cheers to proclaiming the News from God.  
The news that lights up our hearts and makes us strong.  
The news that takes us from fear to hope. Cheers to our "Mighty Throng"  
I'm standing in a row with you... arm in arm !

love,  
Tricia

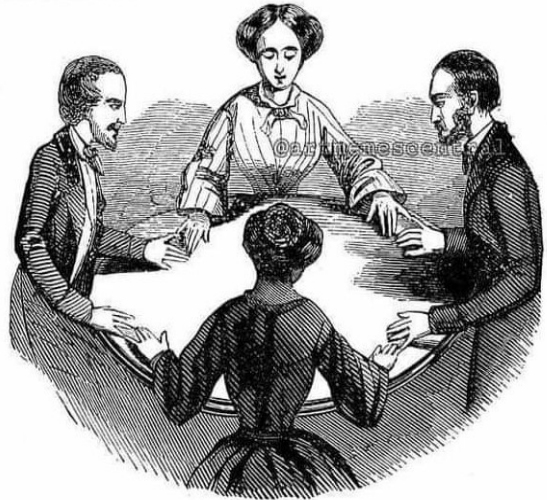
Written by Tricia Robinson, Artist



## Funny Moments



### Zoom meetings are just modern seances



"There's someone who wants to join us."  
"Elizabeth, are you there?"  
"We can't hear you."  
"Can you hear us?"





## New Edition for Beth and Roger Wieland




We are asking for the  
**Public's Support**  
*via donations of lightly worn and new shoes.*

**Shoes for Social Good**  
**Rotary Shoe Drive**  
*All profits will be invested back into our communities.*

The shoes that we collect will go to Funds2org in Florida where the shoes will be cleaned and sorted. Then, the shoes will be distributed to start-up micro-enterprises in countries like Haiti and Ghana. The first shipment to each new business will be free and the business owners will be given instructions and support on how to make their businesses successful.

The micro-enterprises in developing countries are instrumental in efforts to help raise people out of poverty. The shoes bridge a gap of thousands of miles and cultural differences and help people from our community connect and make a difference in the lives of many people across the globe.

Donations accepted include all types of shoes, boots, slippers, sandals, sneakers, and soccer cleats. *It does not include specialty sport equipment like ski boots or ice skates.*



If you have donations contact Jack MacMullen @ 315-264- 2290

## FOOD PANTRY

Please continue to not bring items to the church but instead make a cash donation to these organizations below:

Karing Kitchen  
116 W. Grove St.  
Oneida, N.Y. 13421

Church on the Rock  
164 Madison St.  
Oneida, N.Y. 13421

Food Bank of CNY  
7066 Interstate Island Rd  
Syracuse, N.Y. 13209

I would also like people to consider donating to the [CNYSPCA](#) for the animals in need as well. Unopened packages of pet food and litter are appreciated or contact them at [FrontDesk1@cnyspca.org](mailto:FrontDesk1@cnyspca.org) to find out what they need the most.

CNYSPCA  
5878 East Molloy Rd  
Syracuse, N.Y. 13211

## Too Blessed To Be Stressed

Our ongoing [ZOOM](#) activities at St. John's:

[Wednesdays](#): Hug A Mug Coffee Hour 930 a.m. to 1030 a.m.

[Thursdays](#): Bible Study @ 7p.m.

[Sundays](#): Church Service on Facebook Live @ 930 a.m. Please Join Us !

For Hug A Mug, [Bible Study](#), as well as [Sunday services](#), please watch your emails for the correct links (or email Father Nick and ask)

## Wonderful Job Megan



Megan was selected to represent New York State in this year's NAfME All-Eastern Mixed Chorus Honor Choir! Megan was chosen from among hundreds of All-State applicants throughout 13 Northeastern states for this honor. For those of you who like numbers, here's a few:

\*275 Singers in the Mixed Chorus

\*68 total singers in the Mixed Chorus from NY

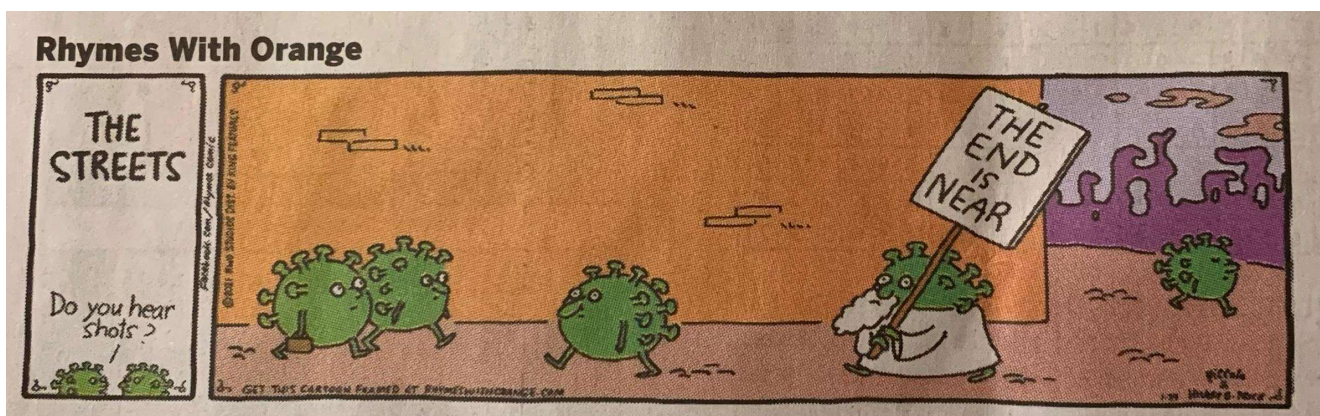
\*20 total Alto 2's (that's Megan's voicing)

\*7 Alto 2's from NY (!!)

\*Only 2 other students besides Megan are from our area in the Mixed Chorus (Watertown and Caz)

All-Eastern festival will be virtual this year. Megan will virtually attend workshops, masterclasses, and rehearsals with collegiate level choral conductors over 3 days- March 4-6. She will record her music following that weekend and they will put together the final performances to share as a link. Congratulations Mrs. O'Connell! And a BIG Congratulations to Megan, we are proud of you!

#WeAreOneida



St. John's Episcopal Church  
341 Main St.  
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Phone: (315) 363 -1940

Bishop: The Rt. Rev. Dr. DeDe Duncan Probe

Rector: The Very Rev. Arthur W. Smith

Parish Administrator: John Reinhardt

Treasurer: Jack MacMullen

Clerk of the Vestry: Valerie Hill

Senior Warden: Leslie Zebrowski

Junior Warden: Peter Slaunwhite

Vestry:

Sandra Aylesworth

Sheila Aylesworth

Suzanne Bauer

Cathy English

Valerie Hill

Garry Hirst

Ann Hodgins

Shelly Sears

Bob Wilkins

Loving God, by your grace you have gathered us from many walks of life to become a loving family at St. John's. Help us to sustain the miraculous love within this parish, and guide us in sharing this love with our neighbors. All this we ask through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

Please submit Evangelist articles to Laura Weismore @ [snowkittens7311@gmail.com](mailto:snowkittens7311@gmail.com)