

The Eagle

Winter
2023

**ST. JOHN'S
CONGREGATIONAL
LEADERSHIP**

Rev. Don Reidell
president

CJ Ullrich
vice president | personnel

Lee Dryden
secretary | mutual ministry

Ellen Pancoe
treasurer

Ginny Hohl
financial secretary

Rick Bosch
building & grounds

Lisa Leach
fellowship

Candy Scorsone

Shirleen Besch
social ministry

Brian Hirschev
finance

THE PASTOR'S NOTE...

What are we going to do?

That's how the council meeting began and ended on Tuesday, December 21st. We were just a few days before our biggest day of the year and the forecast called for the "storm of a generation." (Or something like that.) The pressure to worship was exacerbated by the unfathomable reality that we were staring three years without Christmas worship right in the face. Three years without candles and Silent Night. Three years without Joy to the World at the exact moment we all agreed we need some more joy in this world. Three years without incarnate, corporate worship on the night set aside to celebrate the incarnation.

There was frustration and worry and fear. There was disappointment and angst and anger. We were torn on what to do, how to proceed, and what was right. After a series of conversations over the next 24 hours a simple scheme was hatched...

Operation: Let It Be.

We cancelled Christmas Eve worship and planned a service for the night before the storm. We had no expectations; we made no promises. We simply asked our staff and volunteers to be flexible and invited anybody who wanted to worship before the storm to gather at St. John for a Christmas Eve Eve Eve celebration. I remain in awe of how powerful that worship turned out and how right it was for our congregation at that time.

Let it be is a consistent message in the ministry of Jesus. In fact, the Nativity story starts right there. Though she was alarmed and perplexed by the message from the angel, Mary responds, "Let it be." In the season of Epiphany as Jesus approaches John the Baptist, the baptizer says, "No. No. No. No. No." And Jesus replies, "Johnny B., let it be." At one point in his ministry, Jesus' disciples hear about others casting out demons in His name. They want to shut it down, snuff it out. Jesus tells them, "Relax. Breathe. Let it be." Even at the end in the garden as Jesus is betrayed, Peter grabs a sword and starts to fight until Jesus says, "Pete, let it be."

There are times in life when the best course of action is not to force things or fight the universe. Inevitably, there will be moments in each of our life when we simply need to let it be.

con't. page 2.

"let it be so now."

MATTHEW 3:15



HAPPY
NEW YEAR

con't. from page 1...

On my last day of internship in 2009 in Beaufort, SC, we went waterskiing. We were having so much fun we lost track of time and didn't realize how rapidly the tides had turned. (Literally.) As the sun was setting over the tidal creek we had to make a decision – rev it and go over the growing sandbar (which was the most direct way to the dock) or turn around and take the back channel (which would add about a half hour to the ride). We voted. My friend Henry and I said to go over the sandbar. Our wives said to take the long way. Since my buddy, Henry, was driving the boat, he broke the tie and gunned the engine. About a minute later we were high and dry sitting on top of a sandbar with not a drop of water under the boat and the rest of the water ebbing out to the sea. (At 3AM when the tide came back in, we were able to get home. Henry and I still hear about it to this day.)

All of which is to say: sometimes you can force things and get away with it, but often times it just leaves us pooped, pathetic, and perplexed. Sometimes you just have to let it be.

If there's anything we can learn from these last few years, months, days, and maybe hours, it is the importance of letting it be. (Which does not mean tolerating injustice or abuse or anything like that.) When we let it be, we can pattern our lives in such a way that we are responding and not reacting to the situations we face. When we let it be, we can handle anxious situations in a non-anxious manner. When we let it be, we can accept life for what it is rather than what we want it to be.

I am so proud of this congregation – it's membership and leadership – for facing the storms of this life with a non-anxious, positive approach. Instead of fighting against the universe, we have leaned into the Holy Spirit. That faithfulness has brought us this far along the way. It has got us through storms and pandemics (and all of the other hardships we face). So, let us continue operation: let it be and may we also continue to astounded at what God has done.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Scott

Pastoral Acts

Carter SanFillippo was baptized
on December 4, 2022.

Altar Flowers

This year we are reintroducing Altar Flowers to our worship. We encourage members to sponsor the altar flowers each week in honor, memory, or celebration of loved ones and events.

A sign-up sheet is posted in the narthex. Please place the short altar flower form in the offertory plate or return to the main office.

There are two arrangements and they cost \$30 each (\$60 total).

You're Invited to a Birthday Party!

In celebration of 190 years of ministry, we are having a birthday party for the church on **Sunday, February 5th at 11:30.** All are welcome and encouraged to attend. The meal will be pot-luck style. A sign-up will be posted or you may RSVP to the office@sjlcamherst.com.



COUNCIL UPDATE - DECEMBER

The December Council meeting was held on the 20th at 7PM. The meeting began with prayer followed by the adoption of an agenda and approval of previous month's minutes. Pastor then reported on pastoral acts, including a funeral and a baptism. We continue to make progress on the Outdoor Ministry Center. Pastor thanked Matt Cote for his faithful service over these last few years as St. John's president. Pastor also thanked Rev. Irmer for her dutiful work as the stewardship lead. New Council Members – Lisa Leach and Candy Scorsone – were welcomed to the meeting.

The committees offered the fellowship reports...

Social Ministry – The donated items from the Advent project will be donated to Family Promise of WNY in January.

Worship & Music – Christmas Eve worship will be held at 3PM & 5PM. (Little did we know!)

Personnel – Brigid Monica has been hired as the Administrative Assistant. There was discussion on how to ensure staff members do not burn out.

Christian Education – A pageant was provided on December 18th at 9:30AM. Many thanks to the leaders, volunteers, and kids.

Youth – As we resume youth activities we are looking for additional leadership & help. If you know a young adult interested in serving as a youth director, please contact Pastor Scott.

Buildings & Grounds – The lights in the fellowship hall have been replaced. Thank you Rick & Paul!

Stewardship – A report on the pledges was provided. Pastor Irmer emphasized the benefit of pledging as a spiritual practice (and not just paying bills).

Finance – A motion was made to donate the remaining community benevolence to the Heather Moore Foundation. It was approved.

At the conclusion of committee reports, the meeting adjourned with prayer. Dr. Cote and Rev. Irmer left the meeting. Pastor Hannon called the first meeting of the new council to order. Pastor nominated Rev. Don Reidell as president, CJ Ullrich as vice-president, Lee Dryden as secretary, Ellen Pancoe as treasurer, and Ginny Hohl as financial secretary. After discussion a single ballot was cast for the executive officers of the church. It was approved unanimously.

This meeting concluded with discussion about the anticipated blizzard. The council recognized there may be a need to cancel and emphasized that we begin considering online options. The meeting was adjourned and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

On Wednesday, December 21st after conversation with church leaders an executive decision was made to cancel worship on Christmas Eve and provide the same service on Thursday, December 22nd at 7PM. This service was received with great enthusiasm and provided an online resource for Christmas worship as well. Many thanks to our leadership & membership for once again adapting and problem-solving.



congregational meeting

On Sunday, December 11, 2022 a congregational meeting was held. At this meeting a budget for 2023 was approved & annual reports were shared from Pastor Scott & our lay leadership.

Lisa Leach & Candy Scorsone were elected to the Church Council.

Thank You

Many Thanks to the office volunteers who covered things for 3 months while a replacement Administrative Assistant was found.

Bobbie Traina
Judy Nitche
Candy Pankow
Donna Moore
Joni Cote

Thank you for your donation to The Way Program. We Appreciate your generosity, Sincerely,
the Students of The Way

You are Heroes,
It means more than we can ever express that you have entrusted us to ensure that more people like Stephen can be heroes of their own story.

We are very grateful for your generous gift to Heritage Christian Services. Please know that there are already many heroes in the making as a result of your generosity.

Sincerely,
Heritage Christian Services

A heartfelt thank you for all the cards, thoughts and prayers sent to me as I went through my recent surgery.
Bobbie Traina

Lake Chautauqua Lutheran Center is truly blessed by friends like you who give to our Ministry. Through gifts such as yours, we are able to provide programs that encourage and nurture the spirit of our guests and campers.

Your generous donation will help us continue to reach out and connect with many individuals.

Thank you, St. John, for sharing in LCLC outdoor ministries. We are so grateful for your support.

In Christ,
Lee M. Lindeman
Executive Director

A PURR-FECT FUR ANIMAL RESCUE WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR APPRECIATION FOR THE USE OF THE CHURCH HALL FOR OUR EVENTS

On Behalf of all at Danceability,

We'd like to thank you for your donation to our 2022 Annual Appeal campaign. As we celebrate "Sweet Sixteen" we are grateful for the support of so many. It means the world to us and our dancers.

We would love to have your parishioners come to our show at Amherst Middle School on 5/13/2023!

Thank you,
Robin Bishop
Executive Director

THE AMHERST GARDEN CLUB WOULD LIKE TO THANK EVERYONE AT ST. JOHN FOR THE USE OF YOUR FELLOWSHIP HALL TO HOLD OUR MEETINGS

The Niagara Lutheran Health Foundation would like to thank you for your support of the *Leadership Council* campaign. The funds will support initiatives that support senior care providers as well as remodeling The Greenfields to ensure the best possible experiences for our residents and staff.

Thanks to everyone at St. John for this wonderful expression of generosity towards our senior community.

Best,
David E. McMullen, Executive Director

THE ANGLE TREE MINISTRY WOULD LIKE TO THANK EVERYONE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE COLLABORATIVE PROJECT WITH FAMILY PROMISE OF WNY.

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IS JUST ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE WONDERFUL COMMUNITY THAT IS ST. JOHN.

Thank you for your purchase of a sewing machine from Marie's Sewing Center. We hope this is a sewing machine that you will enjoy for many years.

Thanks Again,
Marie, Don & Girls



The Childrens Christmas Pageant

Please help our homeless Veterans by donating a \$5 Tops gift card or \$5 cash. (The card will be purchased for you.) They are also in need of personal hygiene products. Our donations will be delivered to the VA Hospital Outreach Program to be distributed by social workers to veterans in need. Collection runs from January 15th through February 12th. Look for the sign located in the narthex. Questions? ask Deb Francis. Thank you for caring!



Ash Wednesday

Worship will be held on Wednesday, February 22nd at 7PM.



congregational challenge

St. John enters 2023 with a projected deficit. We are asking our members to help us bridge the gap through giving. Please consider St. John if you are in a position to help. God Bless You.
-Your Stewardship Team



THE OUTDOOR MINISTRY CENTER
PROGRESS



Building continues as the framing has begun and the roof should appear soon!

ST. JOHN PRAYER LIST

Hospitalized and Homebound

Colleen Gunning, Ann Henry, Wayne Yendall & Ethel Semrau

Loss and Bereavement

Family and Friends of Robert Pankow

Family and friends of Michelle Newman, friend of Susan Hadala

Friends and Family of Ed Utz

Family and Friends of Rick George, nephew of Deni Krantz

Healing, Comfort & Special Concerns

Bobbie Traina, Rick Bosch, Bob Tiffany, Wayne Yendall, Gayle Bosch,
Jerry Szykowny, Jennifer Ekberg, Judy Yendall, John Sivak, Ethel Semrau

Tom & Barb Roman, friends of James & Candice Pankow

Marcy Keeler, cousin of Diana Brock

Brian Cook, friend of Pam Figel

Jen Diakun, daughter of Kate & Jim Olson

Miriam Benson, friend of Kate & Jim Olson

Joanna Graser, niece of Jean Delamere

Sandy Fritschi, friend of Pam & Ken Figel

Paula Altieri, friend of Iris Reese

John Bacon, uncle of Walter & Sue Hadala

Mattie Hanna (13y/o) & Family, friends of Marsha Irmer

Rev. Gene Ferguson, father of Lori Schonrank

Mary Mussel, family of Susan Hadala

Peggy Warfield, friend of Marsha Irmer

John Senn, uncle of Rich Bosch

Rick & Jan Vincent, sister of Deb Francis

Elaine and Syd Small, friends of Marsha Irmer

For wise governing dealing with world tension, suffering, and war in Ukraine.

Healing, comfort and strength for those seeking refuge from climate change and natural disasters.

For all suffering after mass shootings.

Those victimized by any form of violence, racism, abuse, coercion, and addiction.

Military

Matt Newman, Drew Steinhilber, John Wendelin, Nicholas Ford, Ben Hoyt

Names will be kept on the prayer list for 4 weeks, if you need your loved one on for longer,
please let the office know and we will be glad to keep them on.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

JANUARY

Candice Pankow 01/02
Jim Pankow 01/02
Rob Zdrojewski 01/02
Andrew Goubksi 01/03
Bobbie Traina 01/05
Claire Ohanessian 01/06
Debbie Schugardt 01/06
Grace Manning 01/07
Laura Maraschiello 01/07
Josiah Kachelmeyer 01/08
Roy Lewis 01/08
Donnette Hong 01/11
Natalie Goubksi 01/12
Pamela Figel 01/14
Iris Reese 01/14
Zachary Slaper 01/14
Jillian Goehle 01/15
Timothy Mayer 01/15
Olivia Suszynski 01/15
Raelynn Anasiewicz 01/17
Molly Hannon 01/18
Debbie Steinhilber 01/22
Charlotte Carnes 01/22
Lori Ostwald 01/25
Mark Cox 01/26
Lisa Markarian 01/27
Patricia McCarty 01/27
Marilyn Sirface 01/28

FEBRUARY

Sheri Steinman 02/04
Steve Favale 02/07
Aeryn Zahn 02/07
Matthew Cote 02/08
Amanda Zdrojewski 02/08
St. John Lutheran Church 02/10
Cheri Crankshaw 02/10
Addison Lawida 02/12
Anita Rosa 02/13
Deborah Anasciewicz 02/14
Cindy Lin 02/14
Jason Ekberg 02/15
Jackson Manning 02/16
Judith Yendall 02/17
Larry Schroeder 02/18
Caitlyn Kutis 02/20
Shaelyn Kutis 02/20
Joni Cote 02/21
Caleb Martin 02/21
Grayson Snyder 02/21
Michael Oles 02/22
Peggy Eberhard 02/23
Mia Tobia 02/24
Lauren Markarian 02/27
Adam Lawniczak 02/28