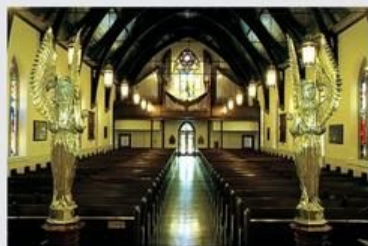


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THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

Wednesday, Dec 07- Tuesday, Dec. 13



The Ps of the Lord Be With You (and also with you)

There were once identical twins. They were alike in every way but one - one was a hope filled optimist who only ever saw the bright side of life. The other was a gloomy pessimist, who could only ever see the downside of every situation.

Their parents were so worried about the extremes of optimism and pessimism in their twins they sought advice from a parenting specialist. She suggested a plan to develop each child's shadow side. "On their next birthday give the pessimist a shiny new bike but give the optimist a pile of manure."

It seemed an extreme strategy, but the parents agreed. So, it's the twins' birthday and here comes the pessimist to unwrap the most expensive, top of the range bike a child has ever owned. But when she sees the bike her first words are, "Thanks, but I'll probably just crash and break my leg. So please take it back to the shop."

Now it's the optimist's turn to behold her present. She closes her eyes, and her parents lead her into the backyard, where stands a ten-foot pile of manure. She opens her eyes and squeals with delight. She rushes to the pile and leaps onto it and starts digging with her hands, giggling and whooping. "Yay", she shouts, "I just know there's a pony in here somewhere."

So much of how we feel in life – hopeful or hopeless, optimistic or pessimistic, settled or anxious, peaceful or worried, bitter or accepting – is rooted in how we interpret the bad things that happen to us.

Dr Martin Seligman of the University of Pennsylvania has done groundbreaking work on what he calls 'Positive Psychology'. He believes that happiness is influenced by how we treat misfortune. It comes down to three P's: Permanence, Pervasiveness, and Personalization. See what you make of his theory:

When something unpleasant or harmful happens, we have three questions to answer.

1. Is this bad event just one more link in the chain of misfortune and unhappiness that is my life? Or is it a temporary blip that will disappear soon, and leave me peaceful again? Permanence. Optimistic people believe that bad events are temporary, and they bounce back quickly from failure, whereas others may take longer periods to recover. However, when an optimistic person experiences good events, they believe that they are permanent, rather than seeing the transient nature of positive events. Optimists point to specific, temporary causes for negative events.

2. Is this failure a sign that I AM a failure? Or is it a single event that doesn't say anything about my life generally. Pervasiveness: Optimistic people place their failures in a box, separate from the rest of their lives. Optimistic people also allow good events to brighten every area of their lives rather than just the particular area in which the event occurred. So, they failed the math test. All this means is that they are poor at math. It doesn't mean they are bad at everything, or complete losers. However, pessimistic people assume that failure in one area of life means failure in life as a

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3. Did this regrettable event occur because I deserved it? Or was I just the victim of things outside my control? Personalization: Pessimists take their misfortunes personally. If bad things happen to them, it is because they caused them. They are therefore to blame for their own suffering. Optimists, however, blame bad events on causes outside themselves. This makes them more confident. Optimists also quickly internalize positive events while pessimists externalize them.

Seeing our suffering, misfortune, and failure as temporary, specific, and impersonal makes it easier to move on from them, and to accept them peacefully in the meantime. Acceptance is a gift.

So, how about this message for Advent? There are so many things that are outside our control. Face it, not much that happens to you today will be something you have total power over. That gives us plenty of opportunity to think deeply and prayerfully about how we are going to interpret that painful event. Being God's faithful and hopeful people means that we receive our circumstances with acceptance. We can do this because we know that God loves us, that we are incredibly important to him, and that we find our identity in being his child. So, when we fail it does not mean that we are losers. When we suffer it is probably not our fault. When something unfortunate happens it will not be God's plan for us to live forever in the deep suffering caused by that loss.

May the God of Advent wait grant us a deeper knowledge of his love for us.

-Duncan



St. John's "Coffee Hour" with Officer Candidates at Maxwell AFB

Thank you to all the parishioners who were able to come out and visit the officer candidates on November 30th.



We are Waiting Rector's Forum Advent Course

Join Duncan for a lively exploration of the great Advent theme of "Waiting".

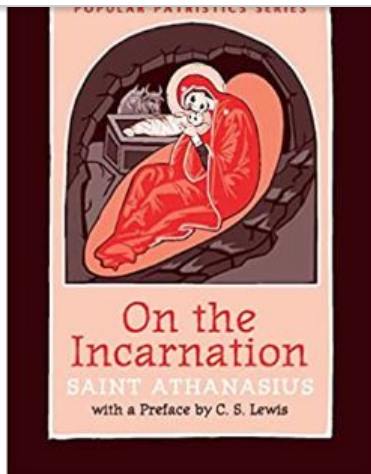
December 4th: [Why are we waiting?](#)

December 11th: What are we waiting for?

December 18th: How shall we wait?

Session one and two will start at 9:15am and session three will begin at 9:00am. This is to accommodate the Christmas pageant at 9:45am.

Links to previous weeks can be accessed by clicking the links above.



Online Advent Book Study

Join Deonna online Tuesday nights from 7pm-8pm during Advent (11/29-12/20) for a book study on the 4th century ancient text *On the Incarnation*, by St. Athanasius. The hope is that this book will help you experience Christmas in a deeper and more meaningful way.

The class is on TUESDAYS: Dec 13 and Dec 20 from 7pm to 8pm

There will be 15 copies in the bookstore.. You can order your own online as well. We will be using the SVS Press "Popular Patristics" Edition.

[The text is also FREE by clicking here](#)

Just a fair warning, because we will be doing a close reading of this 4th century text, it will be a theologically intensive class and will require some heavy intellectual lifting at points. However,

Deonna has complete confidence that you are all very much up to the task!

[Click here for the Zoom link](#)



An advent reflection group will meet on Sundays at 6:00 at the home of Polly Williamson (1248 Westmoreland Ave.). If you would like to participate or have any questions, please contact Carrie Shaw (gracyegray@gmail.com)



Christmas Pageant

Dec. 18 9:45 AM

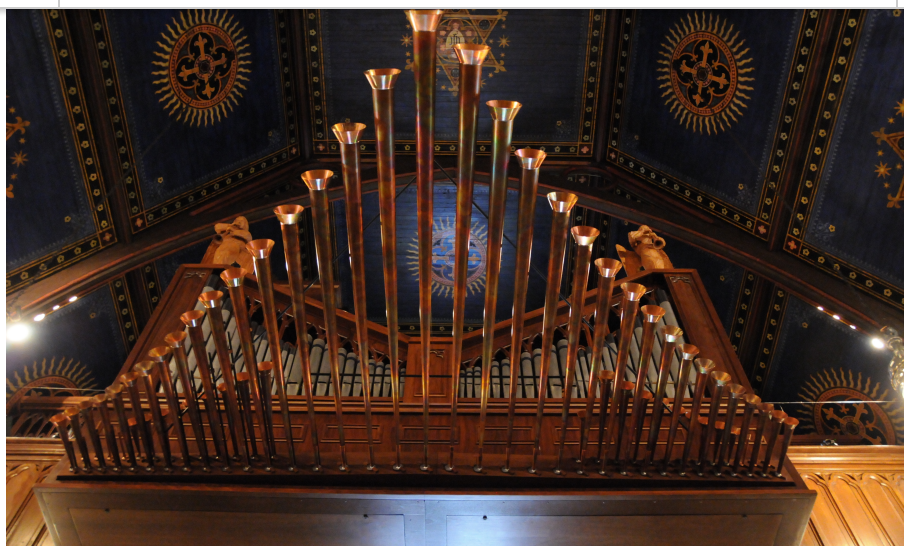
Join us for the Christmas Pageant Sunday, December 18, at 9:45 AM. This is an intergenerational worship service, all are welcome and encouraged to come enjoy beautiful music while the children of the parish illustrate the Nativity story.

Pageant Practice This Sunday, Dec 11



Christmas Flowers.

If you would like to contribute money towards decorating the church for Christmas, you may do so by writing a check to St. John's, or you may pay online [HERE](#). If you would like to add honorarium or memorial names, please list them in the memo section or fill out an order form at the church. All Memorial & Honorarium names will be included in the Christmas bulletins.



Christmas Organ Concert

Joel Gregory's Christmas Organ Concert - Thursday, December 22, 7pm

Joel will be performing a selection of Christmas music. It will be a beautiful lead into the Christmas weekend.



Mary and Martha Christmas Party

Dec 13 6:30 pm

It's time for the famous Mary & Martha Guild Christmas Party! Tuesday December 13, 6:30 pm at the home of Fairlie Herron. We will play Dirty Santa, so please bring a wrapped gift valued at \$25 or less. Fairlie will provide the main meal but has requested some help in supplying additional items. If you can bring something extra, [Click here to access the Sign Up Genius.](#)

3403 Silver Lane



Young Adult Supper Club Christmas Party
Dec. 20 @6:30 pm

Dustin and Georgia Holmes will host our Young Adult's Christmas party on December 20 from 6:30-8:30 pm. Everyone should bring a side dish, appetizer or dessert to share. Please wear your favorite "tacky sweater". We will play Dirty Santa, so please bring a wrapped gift under \$25. This will be an adults only gathering this month.

782 Felder Avenue



Club 56 is adopting an Angel from the Angel Tree. This is the season of GIVING, and this is a great opportunity for our pre-teen children. Each child/family is asked to purchase one small gift, if possible. Join us at the Target in Eastchase to shop together, or you can drop off a gift with Ms. Sarah before Dec 13th.



Club 56 will meet on **Sunday, December 18th** for cookie decorating, Dirty Santa and we will watch the "Grinch" movie on the big screen in the parish hall. *Every child should bring a GAG gift (for the Dirty Santa game), and the price limit is \$20. this group is for 5th and 6th graders only.*

There will also be pizza and popcorn, so come hungry and invite a friend! **We will meet in the parish hall (of St. John's) from 5-7:30 pm.**

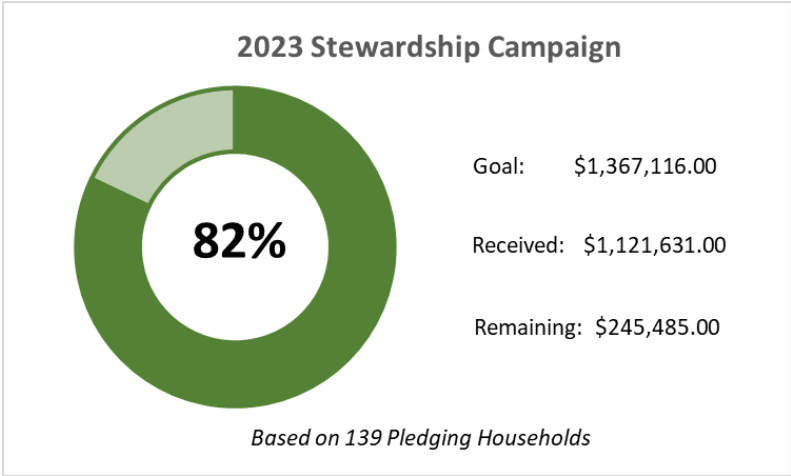
Please RSVP to Sarah Collier (sarah@stjohnsmontgomery.org) if you can attend.



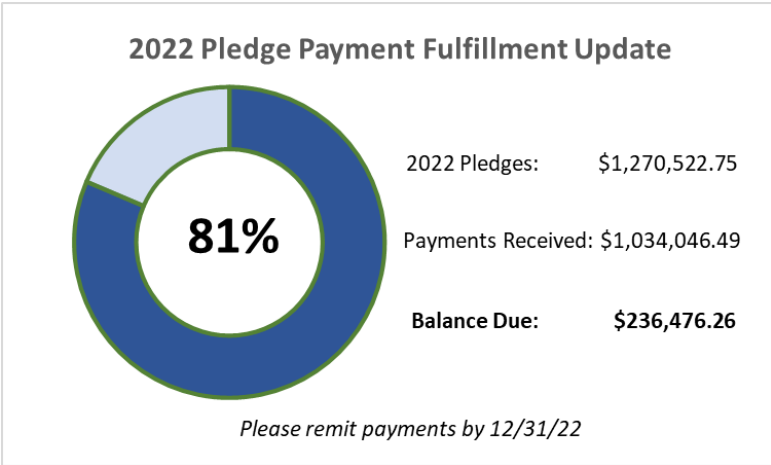
Mercy House Lunch Servers

Thanks to everyone who has taken the time to volunteer at [Mercy House](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10CoC4AAEA622A4FC1-mercy1) this fall. This has been a wonderful opportunity for Ascension and St. John's to come together in service. For anyone who is interested, the work is pretty simple. Mercy House prepares the food to be handed out and we just assist with bagging it and getting it out the door. Some meals are delivered via Door Dash and others are served to clients onsite in take-home containers. A new Sign Up Genius link is available with dates to volunteer for Thursdays (11:00 – 1:00) from December through March at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10CoC4AAEA622A4FC1-mercy1>.

when issues arise. If you are willing to serve in that role, please let Stephanie Norrell know. You can reach her at 334-467-6989 or sbnorrell@gmail.com.



[Click Here to Schedule your 2023 General Fund Pledge](#)



[Click Here to Make a Payment on your 2022 Pledge](#)

New pledge envelopes have been mailed and should arrive this week. We are using a new company, so they will look different. Envelopes will now be mailed quarterly instead of annually. **Weekly, monthly and annual pledges may also be made online using the St. John website.** If you would like to make your pledges online, please let Heather Herring (heather@st.Johnsmontgomery.org) know so she can stop your pledging envelopes.



December In-Gathering

Thank you for all who participated in the Angel Tree ministry this year. **Please remember that all gifts are due by the 14th.**



ST. JOHN'S TREASURE HUNT

WE ARE SO LUCKY TO BE SURROUNDED WITH AMAZING TREASURES HERE AT ST. JOHN'S! JOIN US FOR A TREASURE HUNT AROUND THE CHURCH. EACH WEEK WE WILL FEATURE A PRECIOUS ITEM LOCATED SOMEWHERE IN THE CHURCH BUILDINGS OR GROUNDS. IF YOU FIND IT, TELL MS. SARAH AND GET A REWARD.

**Can you find me? Clue: I'm in a place of quiet reflection.**

If you have a favorite treasure that you'd like us to highlight email Constance@stjohnsmontgomery.org.

**Flower Delivery Team Seeking Drivers**

The flower guild makes vases of flowers after the 10:30am service from the altar flowers. It is the job of the flower delivery group to then take the flowers to people on the delivery list. Usually these are people who are sick, had a baby, etc. Teams work one Sunday a month and teams have 3-5 members, so deliverers only have one or two stops.

If interested in joining a team please contact Valerie Wilkerson, vwilkerson@earthlink.net



WEEKDAY OFFERINGS

Sundays

- 7:00 PM Family Story Time (Facebook Live)

Tuesdays

- 7:30 AM Holy Eucharist in Chapel
- 9:00 PM Compline (Facebook Live)

Wednesdays

- 11:30AM Contemplative Prayer in the Library

Thursdays

- 12:05 PM Healing Eucharist in Chapel
- 9:00 PM Compline (Facebook Live)



LAY MINISTRY - DECEMBER 11 REMINDERS

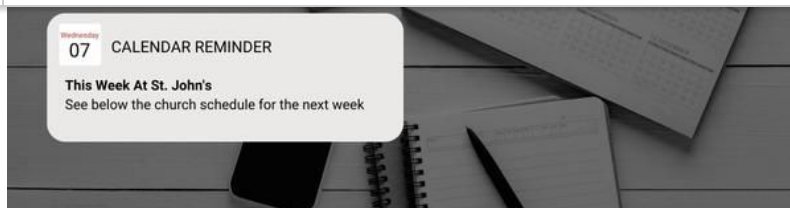
Listed below are who will be serving as Ushers, Acolytes, Altar Guild, Lectors and Flower Delivery on Sunday.

7:30 AM

- *Lector: Carrie Shaw*
- *Ushers/Greeters: Will Hill Tankersley*
- *Altar Guild: Nancy Benner*

10:30 AM

- *Acolytes: Brett Westhauser, Allie Fitzpatrick, James Marshall, Robert Marshall, Parker Mantooth, Molly Selman*
- *Eucharistic Ministers: Tracey Campbell, Callie Dietz, Leale McCall*
- *Lectors: William Haynes, Ashley Hamlett*
- *Ushers/Greeters: Will Hill Tankersley, Christie Anderson, Scott Mitchell, Dudley Perry*
- *Altar Guild: Josie Eskridge*
- *Flower Guild: Cam Armstrong, Catherine McLemore*
- *Flower Delivery Team: Anne and Reggie Hamner, Maria Pacheco, Nancy Buzard*
- *Videographer: Anne Tippet*

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DECEMBER 2022	WEDNESDAY 07 11:30 AM Contemplative Prayer 5:00 PM Instrumentalist Practice	THURSDAY 08 12:05 PM Healing Eucharist in Chapel 12:45 PM Cursillo Reunion Group 1:30 PM Archives Committee Meeting 5:30 PM Instrumentalist Practice 9:00 PM Compline (Facebook Live)	SATURDAY 10
	SUNDAY 11 7:30 AM Holy Eucharist Rite I 8:15 AM Breakfast 9:15 AM Children & Adult Christian formation 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist Rite II 5:00 PM Club 56 Target Shopping Trip 6:00 PM Advent Reflection Group 7:00 PM Family Story Time (Facebook Live)	MONDAY 12 	TUESDAY 13 6:30 AM Al-Anon Meeting in Loft 7:30 AM Holy Eucharist in Chapel 8:30 AM Prayer Group in SCR 3pm J. Conely organ practice 6:00 PM HIM Graduation 6:30PM Mary & Martha Christmas Party 7:00 PM Advent Zoom Class 9:00 PM Compline (Facebook Live)



Your prayers are requested for the following parishioners: Jim Bennett, Bill and Lida Bowman, Rod Frazer, Karen Jarrell, Leslie Little, Ken Mahan, Christopher Marshall, Richard McCrory, Eddie McDowell, Marilyn Pickett, Shirley Price, Carrie Shaw, Evelyn Sherbert, Tommy Tyson, Larry Worriow.

Prayers are also requested for these friends: Johnathon Pace, Karen and Angelo Pacheco, Robert Proctor, Sarah Stone Walker, Jodelle Oakley

During Advent we will be refreshing this list. Please let us know if your friend needs to remain on this list, or if you have a friend in need of prayer. You may email prayer requests to Constance@stjohnsmontgomery.org

If you or someone you know needs Pastoral Care, please contact December's pastoral care team: Betsy Cannon, Michelle Shaw, Josie Eskridge, Mary-Nelms Parsons, Renee Taylor, Laura Knapp

[Click here for the Sunday Bulletins](#)

[Click here for this Sunday's Lessons](#)

[Click here to meet our staff and vestry.](#)

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Links to all of the St. John's Offerings

Church Services:

[St. John's Facebook Page](#)

[St. John's YouTube Page](#) (Sunday morning services & adult Christian Ed classes)



Our mailing address is:

St. John's Episcopal Church
113 Madison Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36104
Phone: 334-262-1937

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