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THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

Wednesday, Jan 04 - Tuesday, Jan. 10



Future Church: 8 Church Trends to Watch in 2023

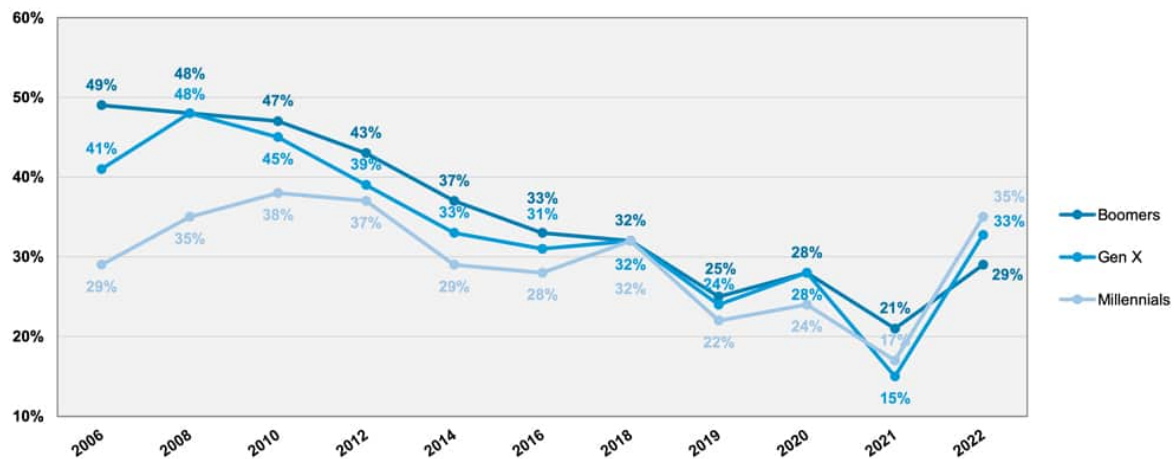
OK, so that headline isn't mine. **I am not the prophet Isaiah. Neither am I one of those geeks who study social trends and predict the future.** (I think they're called futurologists.) The headline belongs to a Canadian church leadership guru named Carey Nieuwhof, whose newsletters drop into my email inbox each morning. The one with this headline didn't just drop into my mailbox – it crashed straight through it and into the floor. It was that heavy. Heavy, but fascinating.

I won't bore you with a detailed summary of Carey's **8 Church Trends to Watch in 2023**. He's writing from a perspective of 40,000 feet, looking at the entire continent of North America. So, his observations don't always apply to a particular congregation in, say, Montgomery, Alabama.

But here are a couple that I think are both interesting and also encouraging. We need to start this new year with some good news:

1. Younger generations will make up a larger proportion of churchgoers than before the pandemic. As the graph below shows, since the pandemic, younger generations are attending church more regularly than older generations. In fact, more younger adults are attending church than before covid.

% WHO ATTEND CHURCH WEEKLY



2. The youngest generations of adults are spiritually hungry. I'm excited by the graph below.

RIISING SPIRITUAL HUNGER

● Gen Z ● Millennials ● Gen X ● Boomers



"I am more open to God today than I was before the pandemic".

n=2,000 U.S. adults, collected October 21 - 31, 2022. | SOURCE: Barna Group

So, there's my New Year's cup of good cheer. God is at work in the hearts of young adults and children. Our mission, should we choose to accept it, is to connect with those folks in their openness to spiritual things, and lead them to the One their hearts are seeking.

Happy New Year!



The Welcome Course

and the Episcopal tradition.

If...

- You're new to Christianity, or
- You've been to a lot of church services over a long time, but still have many questions about God and faith, or
- You've been a Christian for years, but have never had the chance to seriously examine your faith in a friendly, accepting place, or
- You want to make an adult declaration of faith and commitment to God by being baptized or confirmed, or
- You've been a member of another church but want to know what Episcopalians believe, and how St John's is different from the church you grew up in,

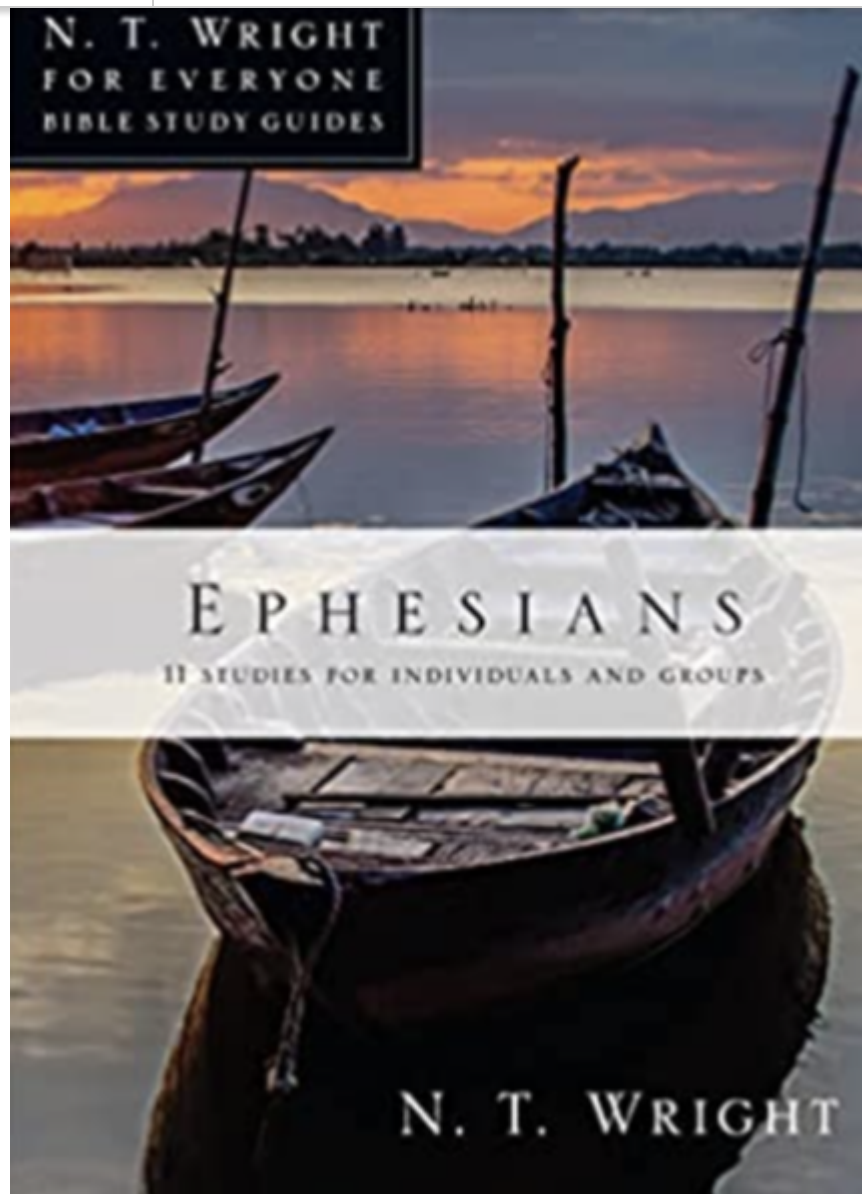
... then the Welcome Course may be right for you.

The Welcome Course Schedule

(Sundays at 9.15am in the Library)

January 15	Who is God?
January 22	What does Christianity teach?
January 29	How do we worship?
February 6	What about evil?
February 12	What is our purpose?
February 19	How should we live?

Please register for the Welcome Course by emailing Duncan:
duncan@stjohnsmontgomery.org



Winter Bible Study on Ephesians

Deonna will lead an 11-week Bible study on Paul's letter to the Ephesians beginning Sunday, January 8th, 2023. Two identical sessions will be offered to provide a variety of participation options.

- 1) Sunday mornings (in-person in the Archives room on the 3rd floor) from 9.15 to 10.15am.
- 2) Tuesday nights (via Zoom) from 7pm to 8pm.

We will be using NT Wright's Study Guide *Ephesians: 11 Studies for Individuals and Groups*. You can purchase it online via the link [HERE](#) or from the bookstore after the New Year, the price will be \$12.00 (\$13.60 with tax).



Breakfast Dreams for 2023

Hard to believe...the (3-4) Men of St. John's have consistently prepared and served a hot breakfast each week for more than a year now. Every Sunday, before dawn, the (3-4) Men of St. John's are hard at work, boiling water for grits, preparing bacon, scrambling eggs. These (3-4) Men aren't looking for glory. They shy from any attention. They are the coal miners of the church...toiling underground in brutal working conditions to provide the parish all the energy it needs to be alert and participatory in Sunday School and Church. In 2022 those rock solid (3-4) Men prepared 3,000 eggs, 4,000 slices of bacon, 100 gallons of grits containing 50 pounds of butter and 50 pounds of cheese, 100 lbs of Conecuh sausage, 50 lbs of patty sausage, 1,200 donuts, 600 biscuits, 400 slices of toast and 10 fried quail. They served Quaker grits, Charleston grits, Alabama grits, white grits, yellow grits and purple grits. They had grits so nice you have to store them in the fridge. This a'int no slack breakfast...

No one talks much about these (3-4) Men, but they talk amongst themselves. Their conversations are as fascinating as breakfast is delicious. Primarily, they discuss what great cooks they are, current events, hunting, auto racing, football and important things like God, marriage and children. While you sleep or blow dry your hair, or help your kids get dressed, they are there... cooking, serving, and growing.

All that said, the (3-4) Men of St. John's are not without their dreams. For 2023, they sincerely hope to drop the prefix and just be the Men of St. John's. I mean seriously...it's literally just the 3-4 of us, week in and week out. Like 52 weeks of blah, blah, blah... We've become so familiar with each other that we're finishing sentences. And we talk *a lot* about grits. Like *a whole lot* about grits, 'cause you know, when you've covered everything else, what's left? Grits. It's getting a smidge creepy. We need new blood (and new stories)...So, if being at church at 6:30am, cooking breakfast and hanging out with a bunch (and at the moment a "bunch" = 3-4) men for an hour appeals to you, pick a Sunday and show up...any Sunday...bring your teenage sons if you've got 'em...we'll be there...forever???



Holy Comforter Food Pantry

Listed below are some suggested items that are popular.

- Canned Fruit
- Condiments(mayo, mustard, ketchup, relish, & pickles)
- Instant coffee & regular tea bags
- Soup & chicken broth
- Grits & oatmeal (instant)
- Instant potatoes & ramen noodles
- Healthy snacks, such as granola bars & crackers
- Jelly & syrup
- Canned meats: Spam, tuna, Vienna sausages, SpaghettiOs, Ravioli, etc.
- “Southern style” canned vegetables-Margaret Holmes & Glory brands
- Toilet tissue & paper towels (individually wrapped)
- Small bags of flour, sugar, & cornmeal

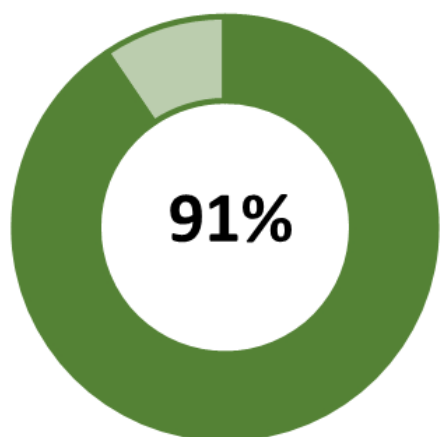


Mercy House Lunch Servers

Thanks to everyone who has taken the time to volunteer at [Mercy House](#) 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>.

This group could use a few people who would be willing to serve as substitutes on short notice 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.

2023 Stewardship Campaign



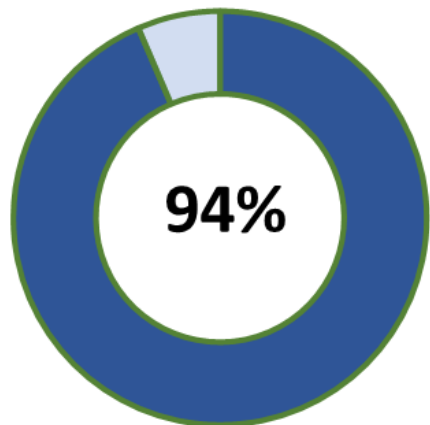
Goal: \$1,367,116.00

Received: \$1,237,643.00

Remaining: \$129,473.00

Based on 156 Pledging Households

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



2022 Pledges: \$1,270,522.75

Payments Received: \$1,188,300.26

Balance Due: \$82,222.49

Please remit payments by 12/31/22

[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.



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 contain all kinds of knowledge, designed for kids!

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



WEEKDAY OFFERINGS

Tuesdays

- 7:30 AM Holy Eucharist in Chapel

Wednesdays

- 11:30AM Contemplative Prayer in the Library

Thursdays

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



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

7:30 AM

- *Lector:* Tony Hughen
- *Ushers/Greeters:* Brice Johnston
- *Altar Guild:* Nancy Benner

10:30 AM

- *Acolytes:* Bobby Eskridge, Bobby Bradford, Helen Johnston, Nancy Bradford, Ella Claire Corsino
- *Eucharistic Ministers:* Mark Chappall, Morgan Chappell, Leale McCall
- *Lectors:* Mary Hughes, Debbie Schremser
- *Ushers/Greeters:* William Haynes, Kathleen Bradford, Cam Hughes, Dudley Perry
- *Altar Guild:* Ashley Hamlett
- *Flower Guild:* Bette Smith, Carroll Nason
- *Flower Delivery Team:* Anne and Reggie Hamner, Nancy Buzard, Maria Pacheco
- *Videographer:* Scott Mitchell

Wednesday
04

CALENDAR REMINDER

This Week At St. John's

See below the church schedule for the next week

JANUARY
2023

WEDNESDAY 04

11:30 AM Contemplative Prayer
5:00 PM Instrumentalist Practice

THURSDAY 05

12:05 PM Healing Eucharist in Chapel
12:00PM Cursillo Reunion Group
1:30 PM Archives Committee Meeting
5:30 PM Instrumentalists Rehearse
9:00 PM Compline (Facebook Live)

SATURDAY 07

SUNDAY 08

10:00 AM Holy Eucharist Rite I

MONDAY 09

TUESDAY 10

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
7:00 PM Zoom Winter Bible Study on Ephesians
9:00 PM Compline (Facebook Live)



Joys & Concerns

PLEASE NOTIFY US WHEN YOU ARE SICK OR HOSPITALIZED SO THAT WE MIGHT PROVIDE PASTORAL CARE. THE PRAYER LIST WILL BE UPDATED MONTHLY. PLEASE NOTIFY IF THE NAME LISTED NEEDS TO BE INCLUDED LONGER.

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 Worrilow.

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

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](#)



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:
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Phone: 334-262-1937

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