



Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 20, 2015

Welcome!

It is our pleasure to have you join us for worship today! If this is your first visit, or even if you've been attending for a little while, and you'd like to learn more about us, please fill out one of the yellow welcome cards in our pew and place it on the offering plate or hand it to one of our greeters or clergy so that we can be in touch with you.

Today's Collect, Readings

The Collect of the Day

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Micah 5:2-5a

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace.

Canticle 15

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *
and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, *
and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,

The promise he made to our fathers, *
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. *Amen.*

Hebrews 10:5-10

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God' (in the scroll of the book it is written of me)." When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." [And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm, he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."]

The SJEC Youth Impromptu Christmas pageant will take place during the 6:30 PM worship service, on Christmas Eve. All interested youth, ages 3-17, will participate in the telling of the Christmas Story, and will lead the congregation in singing some traditional Christmas hymns. Participating youth are requested to meet in the Youth Activity Room at 6:00 on Christmas Eve. Contact Sara Philo, Pageant Coordinator, at sphilo@pdkg.com or Nancy Taylor, Youth Ministry Coordinator at nancy@sjec-midland.org.

Next Week's Readings December 27, 2015 — First Sunday after Christmas

Isaiah 61:10-62:3
Psalm 147

Galatians 3:23-25, 4:4-7
John 1:1-18

Why not spend a little time this week looking at the readings for next Sunday? It's a great way to prepare for worship and to build your own personal spiritual discipline of regular bible reading.

"Preparing for Sunday" on St. John's website: www.sjec-midland.org/devotional-resources provides scripture passages, reflection and prayer resources for each week.

Parish Potluck Lunch Christmas Gathering Today following 10am worship

Tree Trimming,
Carol Singing,
Festive Eating...



All are invited to enjoy these fellowship activities following our 10am worship today.

We hope you'll join us as we celebrate together as a parish family.

TODAY!

Collegiate Recital - Monday, December 28 at 7:00pm

St. John's sanctuary will host the Midland Alumnae Chapter of Sigma Alpha Iota's event showcasing local college students majoring or minoring in music. In the past, vocalists, pianists performing their own works, wind and string players have been featured among those invited to perform. Students hail from CMU,



Western Michigan, MSU, U of M, and Carnegie Melon. Following the recital, which will last about an hour, SAI will host a reception for the audience to meet the performers in a relaxed setting. Come out and enjoy this wonderful event!

Contact Us

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Rector email ken@sjec-midland.org

Website www.sjec-midland.org

Office Hours

Monday to Thursday ... 9am-3pm
Friday ... 9am-noon

Rector Hours

Monday to Thursday ... 9am-5pm
Please call to make an appointment.

Facebook: St. John's Episcopal Church

Twitter: @LinkingLives

Sundays at St. John's

8:00am	Worship	Holy Eucharist, BCP - Rite Two
9:00am	Adult Formation	Bible Study in the Activity Room
10:00am	Worship	Holy Eucharist, BCP - Rite Two -with music, nursery care and children's formation classes
11:15am	Fellowship	Coffee, juice and goodies

Youth Formation (Education)

Babes in Arms Parents requiring privacy to soothe or feed babies will find a rocking chair behind the name tag board in the narthex. This will accommodate infant needs, while allowing parents to see and hear our service.

"Splash Newsletters" (ages 0-35 months) The Daughters of the King mails monthly newsletters to all families with children under the age of 3. These newsletters are tailored to the child's age and give families ideas on how to share their faith with their little ones. Please contact Nancy Taylor at nancy@sjec-midland.org to be added to the mailing list.

Sunday Morning Joyful Noise Nursery (approximate ages 3 and under) The nursery is available from 9:00 AM through conclusion of the 10:00 AM worship service, excluding Christmas and Easter. Toddlers will engage in a simple curriculum that includes a Bible story and related activity, as well as biblical play.

Sunday Morning Worship Center (approximate ages 4, 5, 6)

Sunday Morning Kids@Church (approximate ages 7, 8, 9)

Sunday Morning Building Bridges of Faith (approximate ages 10-13)

This year, St. John's begins an Episcopal curriculum for elementary & middle school, *Weaving God's Promises*, a program named after our process of faith formation in which we learn how God's promises of salvation are inextricably woven into our lives. Sunday formation is education in the ways of Christ in church and in the world, and while we sometimes use media to learn, our goal will be to emulate our teacher Jesus Christ, who taught through action, not by analyzing books.

Youth Service Ministry St. John's believes that our youth can learn *and* play, while serving others. We are seeking interest and participation from youth and adults, so that we can provide service and learning opportunities about twice each month.

Sunday Evening Formation (approximate ages 0-11) is a Christian education and child care opportunity for children of parents participating in Faith, Families, and Fellowship Adult Bible Study, every other Sunday evening beginning Sept 13, in the adult activity room on the lower level. Children ages 0-3 will be in the nursery. Children ages 4-11 will participate in the Holy Moly curriculum.

Activity Bags are available in the narthex. They are meant to supplement, not replace, age-appropriate participation in the service. Bags are loosely organized into age groups, including quiet toys for toddlers. Children are encouraged to take consumable materials home, and replace the bags.

In the interest of safety, there are at least two screened adults with children at all times. Adults assisting with children have met the requirements of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan, including background checks and Safeguarding God's Children, a child sexual abuse response program.

Contact:
Nancy Taylor
Youth Ministry Coordinator
989-631-2260
nancy@sjec-midland.org

The Coming Week

Sunday, 12/20 11:15am—Tree Trimming, Carols 5:30pm—Faith, Families, and Fellowship	Wednesday, 12/23 12:00pm - Holy Eucharist
Monday, 12/21 12:00 Noon - AA 7:00pm—Mental Health Support	Thursday, 12/24 <i>office closed at noon</i> 6:30pm—Worship and Children's Pageant 10:00pm—Candlelight Service
Tuesday, 12/22 10:00am - Samaritan Fund	Friday, 12/25 <i>office closed all day</i> 12:00 Noon - AA
	Saturday, 12/26
	Sunday, 12/27

Christmas Eve - Thursday, December 24

6:30pm - Worship and children's pageant

Again this year at the 6:30 Christmas Eve worship service, youth (ages 3-17) will present gifts for those less fortunate. The criteria for shopping is that gifts should be appropriate for the same age and gender as the giver. Youth will be invited to deliver their gifts to the front of the church, during the service.

10:00pm - Worship with candlelight and choir

Note: Nursery care will not be offered during Christmas Eve worship.

Office closings: *St. John's parish office will be open 9am-12pm on Thursday, Dec. 24 but closed rest of that day as well as all day Friday, Dec. 25 in observance of Christmas.*

December Sale at Uniquely Uganda

Uniquely Uganda, the store at 503 S. Saginaw Rd. (next to SAMS Food Pantry) and part of the non-profit ACT Uganda, is having a sale through end of December. Proceeds from sales of colorful and unique handcrafted items go back into the Muko Empowerment Program. Store hours: Mon - Sat, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Uniquely Uganda is staffed by volunteers and more are urgently needed. The time commitment is one day, every other week, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Contact Anne at houseshome@aol.com to learn more. Thank you for your prayerful consideration.

The 12 Days of Christmas: Have you checked out the table with the pamphlets in Williams Hall recently? There are a number of new items there related to Christmas and celebrating the 12 Days of Christmas. It's often easy to think of Christmas as just one day, December 25, but the season in the church does last for 12 days, and these booklets, pamphlets, and cards give some ideas for maintaining our Christmas through all the 12 days. Be sure to check out the table in Williams Hall or the pamphlet rack at the back of the church and celebrate Christmas all the way to Epiphany!

Our Daily Prayers

Please keep the following people in your prayers...Lynn Purves, Mike Wilson, Lisa Winterbottom, Phil Robinson, Bill Elliott, Ian Alsgaard, Joseph and Maureen Cleland and family, Rev. Cathy Chang and Juan Lopez, Michael and Jill Anna Foster.

Give thanks with those from St. John's celebrating birthdays this week December 20-Vicki Leigeb, Carole Adams, 22-Lynn Pottenger, 23-Katherine Loyer, 24-Betty Morden, 25-Michael Hart, 26-Betty Kirkley.

Give thanks with those from St. John's celebrating anniversaries this week December 23-Lowell and Judy Youngquist, 24-John and Louise Parsons.

Pray for our Bishop Todd Ousley and for the people of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan - this week we pray for Deacons of the Diocese.

In our international Anglican prayer cycle, Yewa (form. Egbado) - (Lagos, Nigeria) The Rt. Rev. Michael Adebayo Oluwarhunbi.

Endowment Grants Information Session: Sunday, Jan. 17

To share how our church is linking lives with others through grants approved by our Endowment Committee, St. John's is hosting this Information Session on Sunday, Jan. 17 following our 10am worship. Grant recipients Cathy Chang and Juan Lopez will discuss their upcoming mission work in the Philippines addressing issues of migration and human trafficking. Endowment Cte members will also give brief updates on other recent projects/ grant recipients. You are encouraged to attend to help St. John's speak to needs and spread awareness about support we are giving towards outreach efforts.

Annual Meeting—Important Notices

- ◇ **Proposed Bylaw Changes** are posted outside Williams Hall. See related article in December Epistle or website for more info.
- ◇ **Nominations** are open for those interested in serving on St. John's Vestry, Endowment Committee and as Diocesan Convention delegates. See related sheets on bulletin board.
- ◇ **Report submissions** from ministry/ group leaders are due to the office Thur., Jan. 7 (please email for ease of preparing report).
- ◇ **Annual Meeting is Sunday, Jan 31 and will be incorporated into our only worship service that morning at 9:00am.**

To learn more, visit www.sjec-midland.org/annual-meeting

SAMS Pantry notes

No more egg cartons please...Our cup runneth over and we ask you to hold off on donations of egg cartons until further notice.

Snow/ Salt - Flexible schedule needed to tackle winter precipitation that isn't plowed at SAMS. Snow blower, salt spreader provided.

Contact Carol Sullivan at **631-2260** or carol@sjec-midland.org