



ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN SOMERVILLE, NEW JERSEY

The Newsletter

158 West High Street, Somerville, NJ 08876 • 908.722.1250 • stjohsomerville.org

DECEMBER 2023

FROM THE RECTOR

FAMILY TRADITIONS FOR THE SEASON OF ADVENT

Saying Grace Together

If your family doesn't have a tradition of saying grace, now is a great time to start. Pick one meal a day and try to say grace at that meal for each day during Advent. You can read a grace from *The Book of Common Prayer* (look at page 835), use your own words to thank God for your food, or go around the table and each say one thing that you are grateful for that day. *You can even sing!* The Doxology (*The Hymnal 1982*, 380, stanza 3) is a wonderful grace to sing—it's great fun!



Praying Together

Find a time once a week to pray together as a family. Express your joys and your concerns, and ask God for guidance and blessing. If you haven't taught your children the Lord's Prayer or the 23rd Psalm, the season of Advent is a wonderful time to practice saying those beautiful prayers together. Pray them together as a family before the children go to bed.

Reading Scripture Together

Advent is a time to grow closer to God, to pay more attention to God by simplifying our lives and reminding ourselves of God's great love and mercy towards us. What better way to grow closer to God than reading the Bible? Read a few verses of the Bible together every night. You may wish to follow the lectionary. Or you might pick and choose—something from the Announcement to the Virgin Mary all the way through the Wise Men. See how far you get. If you do have a tradition of reading the Bible together, choose a different translation of the Bible, like Eugene Peterson's *The Message*, so that the stories sound fresh and new.

Proclaim the Gospel in Word and Deed

As a family, find a project that will shine the light of Christ to the world. Here are some suggestions of how to love your neighbor as yourself:

- *Count how many pairs of shoes you have and see if you might have an extra pair you could donate to someone in need. Add some socks and underwear for good measure!*
- *Consider the Adopt-a-family program at St. John's. Bring a bag of food items to church.*

- Consider buying a Christmas toy, present or gift card for someone in need.
- Give up eating out once a week and donate the money to the Episcopal Relief & Development Fund.
- Volunteer at an animal shelter. Collect blankets and donate them to a shelter.
- Care for God's creation by starting a compost for your garden next spring.
- Invite a lonely classmate to eat with you at the lunch table at school
- When you are filling out your Christmas cards, send one or more to:
 - A resident of a local nursing home, residential care facility or a patient in a hospital.
 - A Recovering American Soldier, c/o Walter Reed, National Military Medical Center.



Advent

Learn about the season of Advent, the Advent Wreath, Colors of Advent, Church Year Calendar, the Feast of St. Nicholas, Prophets, the Annunciation, Gabriel visits Mary, Joseph's Dream, the Peaceable Kingdom, the Visitation, Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth, the journey to Bethlehem, No Room in the Inn, Animals in the Stable, the Shepherds, the Heavenly Host, Silent Night, Christmas, preparing your house, gifts, the Feast of the Epiphany, the Adoration of the Magi, make Advent Cookies & Plum Sugar (*see flyer for the recipe in Parish Hall*).

Advent Wreath

As a family, make your own special Advent wreath. This is a wonderful custom that will help mark time for the four weeks leading up to Christmas. Use 3 blue and 1 pink candles (or 3 purple and 1 pink candles). Feel free to use the prayers found in the Advent brochure provided at St. John's.

The Good Deeds Jar

Put a jar on the kitchen counter next to a bowl of dried black-eyed peas. During Advent, any family member who performs a good deed, such as folding someone else's laundry or making their bed, moves a pea into the jar. On Christmas, the peas are replaced with candy canes or some other favorite family candy item. Add a few more pieces of candy for good measure! During Christmas everyone is invited to talk about one of the nice things they did for someone else. The tradition reminds us that while you never have control over whether someone else does something nice for you, but you always have control over whether you do something kind for someone else.

See you in Church or online,

Father Ron

*Some ideas taken from What We Do in Advent: An Anglican Kids' Activity Book,
by The Rev. Anne E. Kitch*



CHRISTMAS-NEW YEAR'S SERVICES

December 24, Christmas Pageant and Eucharist, 5 pm

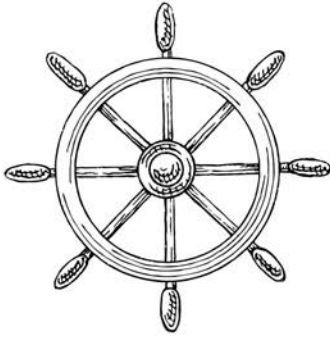
December 24, Festal Choral Eucharist at 11 pm

December 25, Christmas Day Eucharist at 9 am

December 31, New Year's Eve Eucharist, 5 pm

January 7, 2024, Chorister Evensong at 5 pm

STEWARDSHIP AT ST. JOHN'S



Think of our church as a ship.

We need the leadership and guidance of our "captain" and officers, but the ship does not function unless the crew are doing their part. We need your help.

How can I help?

Volunteer for one of our ministries. Attend or volunteer for one of our various events or clean-up dates. Join one of our groups such as the choir, the Episcopal Church Women, the Altar Guild. Volunteer to take on a role with the vestry or one of the church committees. Details are shared in the church newsletter and website, but please call the church office if you'd like to learn more.

In addition to your time, your financial contribution also helps with the operation and maintenance of the church, as well as providing funding to the ministries that are vital to our church and the community. Please consider making a pledge to help us serve.

Why Pledge?

By letting us know your expected contribution, we are better able to set budgets and plan for the following year.

How Do I Pledge?

Please use the method that works best for you. Fill out a pledge card and either mail to the church or drop it in the collection plate. Or set up an automatic pledge by using this QR code.



STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN 2024

'Come and See'

St. John's 2024 Stewardship campaign will run through January 7. *As part of our campaign, we would love to hear from you!* Let us know if you would be willing to deliver a testimonial about why St. John's is special to you and why pledging is important? We encourage the entire congregation to make a pledge by Sunday, December 3.

Why Pledge?

By letting us know your expected contribution, we are better able to set budgets and plan for the following year. Your financial contribution also helps with the operation and maintenance of the church, as well as providing funding to the ministries that are vital to our church and the community. Please consider making a pledge to help us serve our church, our diocese, and our world.

AN INVITATION TO PLEDGE NOW!

All parishioners who make a pledge before this Sunday, December 3 will be entered into a raffle for a special prize.

The winner of the raffle will be announced on the morning of December 10.

<https://stjohnsomerville.org/pledge-card-form/>

YEAR-END GIVING FOR 2023

"For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward..." —1 Corinthians 9:17

WE KNOW GROWING DISCIPLES and funding ministry impact is even more important during this unprecedented time of ministry. We're committed to resourcing our vital ministries with tools, ideas, and best practices to reach people and change lives, even during these challenging times.

I pray that our beloved St John's is a recipient of year-end dollars so that we can increase and fortify our impact as well as the buildings we call our spiritual home.

Throughout the year, we have seen extraordinary efforts succeed to help many in our community facing economic hardships and more. We continue our many outreach ministries, including *Meals To Go*, *Laundry Love* and *Clothes Closet*.

When so much attention is given to what divides us, generosity brings people together across races, faith, and political views. St. John's is a powerful force for good! We have a deep reserve of generosity which can deploy in a myriad of ways to make a difference in the lives of many and to the church we all love so much.

You are invited to consider making a year-end gift to St. John's Church. This is not in lieu of your faithful pledge, but a separate gift to our church. For those who may be able to make even a small gift it would be gratefully appreciated. Perhaps as 2023 comes to a close, this is a final opportunity to build important momentum for year-end giving as we look to our future. The excitement generated can act as a catalyst for a strong finish to our calendar year.

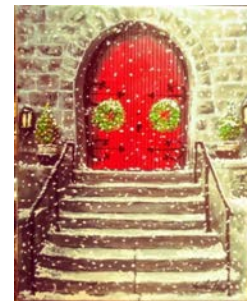
Every generous act of giving counts. Prayerfully consider making a year-end gift no matter how small or large.—*Faithfully, Father Ron*

Loose Change Sunday: First Sunday of every month

Our next scheduled date is **Sunday, December 3**. If you would like to participate in this important ministry, please feel free to bring a jar (or a Ziplock sandwich baggie) filled with loose change to church and put it in the designated baskets in the Narthex (front door area of church) or on the little table by the side door that leads to the Parish Hall. Or, simply put whatever loose change you may have into the baskets. This money will be placed into the Discretionary Fund and used to answer the needs of the many who reach out to St. John's for assistance.

St. John's Church Christmas Cards on Sale

Ten festive Christmas cards along with envelopes may be purchased for \$15. The cards feature artwork created by Somerville artist Les Floyd. The proceeds benefit St. John's Church. A sign-up sheet is available in the Parish Hall, or contact Father Ron at frronpollock1@verizon.net. Checks made out to *St. John's Church*. Cash is also accepted. This is a wonderful way to celebrate the Christmas season and support St. John's ministries!



ST. JOHN'S CHURCH SCHOOL

Christmas Pageant

Calling all children interested in participating in this year's Christmas Pageant. The rehearsal will be on Sunday, December 10 following the 10:15 am service.



The Children's Christmas pageant will be held at 5 pm at the Christmas Eve service. There is enough room for all of our children from different ages, abilities and talents. Please encourage your child to participate. If your child is unable to participate in the rehearsal, they can still participate in the pageant. It would be helpful, though, to check in with a teacher, Mark Trautman or Father Ron to become familiar with the pageant and any particular roles your child may have. Copies of the pageant are available for children and parents to become familiar with.



Take note of our regular schedule:

- On **Sunday, December 3**, all students will be in Church where they are invited to participate by serving as an usher, acolyte, lay reader, chorister, and the like.
- On **Sunday, December 10**, all students will report to the downstairs Chapel for "Children's Chapel" with Father Ron from 10 am to 10:10 am. Following that, students will go to their respective classrooms for instruction. Students will join their families in Church, and the rest of the congregation, after "The Peace." **Christmas Pageant rehearsal follows.**
- On **Sunday, December 17** we invite all children and their families to join us for Advent Lessons and Carols at 5 pm, followed by the unveiling of the Gingerbread Church thanks to our own Kir Rodriguez.
- There will be **no** Class or offered instruction on **December 24 and 31.**

Questions? Contact one of our Church School teachers, Mark Trautman (mtrautman@stjohnsomerville.org) or Father Ron (frronpollock1@verizon.net).

WELCOME TO THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH:

Confirmation and Reception

If your child is interested in being Confirmed, it is time to register them for Confirmation classes **today!** Youth Confirmation classes have already begun on an individual basis with Father Ron. Group classes for youth will begin soon. Adult Confirmation classes have already begun on an individual basis. If you are an adult who is interested in being Received into the Episcopal Church, it is time to register for a class with Father Ron **today!** I am more than happy to meet with adults on an individual basis. We can find a mutually convenient time to get together. There will be a mandatory rehearsal for everyone being Confirmed or Received on Saturday, January 20 at 2 pm. The Right Reverend Sally French, Bishop of The Diocese of New Jersey, will be at St. John's on Sunday, January 21, 2024 for her Episcopal Visitation. For more information, please contact Father Ron. Please pray for all those who are preparing for Confirmation or Reception. —*Father Ron*



FATHER RON'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION:

To my brothers and sisters in Christ here at St. John's Church,

Where have these last twenty-five years gone? Much has happened in the world since my arrival in 1998 as well as in the Borough of Somerville, and especially here at St. John's Church. We have walked the journey together. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as your fifteenth Rector of St. John's Church.

I have reflected upon my 25th anniversary Evensong and Gala Dinner so many times over these last few days. I am very grateful! The evening was simply glorious. I was so pleased with the incredible positive energy, care, thoughtfulness, hard work, and generosity of spirit that went into making the night so special. There was such a wonderful team of people working together making sure that the event was enjoyed by all. You poured so much of your love, time, talent and treasure into making the night memorable and delightful.

I was touched and overwhelmed by the generous check presented to me from the parish. Thank you! Please know that some of the money will go toward my vacation next summer. From the bottom of my heart, Thank you!

*With deep and abiding gratitude, I remain faithfully yours in Jesus Christ,
Father Ron*



PARISH CHOIR NEWS

The Parish Choir and the Bound Brook Presbyterian Church Choir sang their third annual Choral Evensong on All Saints' Sunday, November 5 at 5 pm. at St. John's.

The Parish Choir and friends joined forces again on Saturday, November 18 for a special Evensong celebrating Father Ron's 25th anniversary as Rector of St. John's Church.

Currently we are working on music for Advent Lessons and Carols and Christmas. Everyone is welcome to join the Parish Choir—we rehearse every Thursday evening at 7:15 and join for a brief rehearsal on Sundays at 9:30 prior to the 10:15 service. Contact Mark Trautman, mtrautman@stjohnsomerville.org.



ADVENT LESSONS AND CAROLS

Sunday, December 17

Join us for our annual Advent Lessons and Carols Service, Sunday, December 17 at 5 pm. Lessons and Carols was developed by Dean Eric Milner-White for King's College Cambridge, England at the end of the First World War. He wrote: "The main theme is the development of the loving purposes of God ... seen through the windows and the words of the Bible."

The service will be followed by a Dessert Extravaganza in the Parish Hall, and featuring the unveiling of the St. John's Gingerbread Church made by Chef Kir. *Everyone is welcome—invite a friend to this festive community event!*



Christmas Flowers and Music

Special flowers and music adorn our worship, especially at Christmas. If you wish to write a check, please mark "Flowers" or "Music" in the memo line. Please let the Parish Office know if you are giving your gift in thanksgiving or in memory of loved ones, and clearly print or type each name or intention. Send names to

mtrautman@stjohnsomerville.org or send via regular mail to the Parish Office. *Please make sure to deliver your gift and names no later than Friday, December 22.* Poinsettias, greens, and special music are cherished traditions at St.

John's and remind us of the joy of the birth of Jesus. Gifts to the **Brent F. Miller Memorial Music Fund** will fund a string quartet for the late Christmas eve service.



MINISTRIES AROUND ST. JOHN'S

Altar Guild

Sunday Flowers

Do you wish to honor or recognize a loved one? A lovely way is to sponsor the Sunday Altar Flowers. Prominently placed next to the altar for both Sunday services, names are listed in the weekly worship bulletin and *Good News*, and included in the Prayers of the People. Many Sundays are available—contact Dana Keefer (908.448.6220, dzkeefe@yahoo.com) to reserve a Sunday or for more information. Weekly flowers are only \$75. Checks need to have “flowers” indicated on the memo line, and there is also a giving tab for *Altar Flowers* on our website.



Altar Guild is a special ministry, preparing the altar for worship and honor. Membership is open to women and men, adults and teens—anyone who would like to participate in and dedicate themselves to this ministry. Contact Father Ron or Altar Guild Directress Diane Sireci (dianesireci61@icloud.com) to learn more.

Ushers

Are you looking to help grow our St. John's community? Please consider becoming an usher. This work is important as we are the first impression people have as they arrive at Church. Your impression helps us to continue to grow and make our Church home a friendly and welcoming place. The commitment is once per month and schedules are worked around your availability. Please reach out to Steve Mandraccia at smandraccia@verizon.net.

TAKE NOTE!

New Outdoor Seating Area

Have you noticed the new outdoor seating area in front of the Church? *It looks beautiful!* Lukas Disko, son of parishioners Bob and Buffy Disko, completed his Eagle Scout Project on Saturday, November 18. After a lengthy application process, Lukas' proposal was approved by his Eagle Scout officials and work began. Crushed gray stone and gray slate pavers were installed, a wooden bench was restored, a new planter was provided, and a new bird house was hung in the big tree out front. Lukas put a tremendous amount of work into this project and I know that the people at St. John's will enjoy the fruit of his labor for years to come. God bless you Lukas, we are proud of you!



Beautiful New Ethan Allen Furniture Donated to St. John's

Sadly, Gordon Nilson, an attendee of our Monday evening AA Group, died on December 25, 2022. He is survived by his father, Bruce Nilson, and his mother, Lynne Hagan. From his obituary, we learned that Gordon was a member of several Alcoholics Anonymous groups and advocated for their support services in dealing with both narcotic and alcohol addiction. Gordon was a fighter—open, funny and loving.



Perfect? Not a chance. But he would bring his powerful energy to everything he did. He is missed by all who were touched by that energy.

Gordon's mother was deeply touched by the fact that St. John's has opened up our doors on Monday evenings for 25 years providing a safe and comfortable space for people who are in recovery. Lynne wanted to support our on-going efforts in providing a safe and comfortable space where people could come together, better educate themselves, connect and receive mutual support and encouragement. And so, with my concurrence she contracted with Ethan Allen, a local furniture store. She consulted with a designer to formally arrange for new furniture to be installed. There are 15 "Brooke" armless chairs, 4 sets of Navina Nesting tables, 2 "Marcus" medium sofas, a Lynton Broadloom rug, and a large screen Samsung TV screen.



St. John's Church is deeply grateful for Lynne Hagan's generosity. And we remember Gordon Nilson in our prayers of remembrance. May Gordon continue to Rest in Peace with the saints and angels in heaven. — *Father Ron*

Episcopal Church Women (ECW)

WREATHS ARRIVE DECEMBER 2

The Christmas wreaths and swags will be available for pick up on Saturday, December 2 from 10 am to 1 pm and Sunday after both services in the Parish Hall. Remember—checks or cash; no credit cards. For more info contact Terry McShane.

NEXT MEETING

The next ECW meeting is Monday, December 11 (note the date change). Advent Eucharist is at 7 pm, followed by a brief business meeting, and then refreshments and the annual Yankee Swap. Please bring a wrapped present to share valued no more than \$20. For more info contact Jennifer Kosensky.

Questions? Contact the ECW officers:

Vice-President Jen Kosensky (908-386-6152, jrkosensky@gmail.com)

Corresponding Secretary Linda Willard, (347-276-6491, nolaandboogie@aol.com)

Treasurer Paula Windus (908-526-7150, paulawindus@verizon.net)

The Philadelphia Eleven, December 10 at 2 pm

Fifty years ago in Philadelphia there was a dramatic breakthrough of the so-called stained-glass ceiling that caused a seismic shock wave through the world-wide Anglican Communion and gave hope to Christian women everywhere.



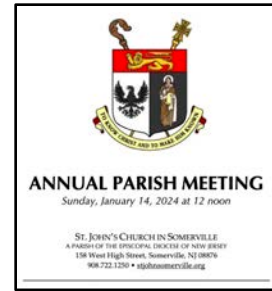
In 1974, a group of 11 women were ordained to the Episcopal priesthood by other bishops of the church using the proper liturgical rites, but in violation of the constitution and canons of the Episcopal Church. This story is told in a compelling new documentary *The Philadelphia Eleven*, which will be screened ***December 10 at 2 pm*** at St. John's, followed by a communal discussion of the film and its implications for the past, present, and future of the Episcopal Church.

VESTRY NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Annual Parish Meeting: Sunday, January 14, 2024

POSITIONS OPEN INCLUDE:

- One (1) Warden;
- Three (3) Vestry positions for three-year terms;
- Six (6) Representatives to Watchung Convocation for one year term;
- One (1) Deputy to Diocesan Convention for a three-year term;
- One (1) Alternate to Diocesan Convention for a three-year term.



CALLED TO SERVICE: VESTRY

WHAT DOES THE VESTRY DO?

It's the legal governing body of the parish, the "board of directors." With the rector as its leader, it sets policy and goals and oversees the finances and property. But it has another equally important role: providing leadership to implement the ministries that serve the parish and the community. It actively supports the work and ministry of the Rector.

WHO CAN RUN FOR VESTRY?

Any baptized member of the Episcopal Church who has been a member of our parish in good standing for at least one year, is at least 16 years old, makes a regular financial contribution to the parish, and worships regularly with us.

IS THERE AN EXPECTED TIME COMMITMENT?

Yes. A term runs for three years. The Vestry meets once every month. Vestry members are also members of either the Property Committee or Finance Committee. We have one all-day Vestry Retreat once a year. And since every vestry member's voice matters our goal is for members to have no more than three unexcused absences from regular meetings in a year.

WHAT DO WE LOOK FOR IN A VESTRY MEMBER?

Someone who is involved in some parish ministry, and preferably (but not necessarily) has shown some leadership ability. He or she should keep informed about the parish and be willing to contribute to working out solutions to issues that arise. Every Vestry member should work respectfully with other members and participate in discerning the parish's vision and encouraging its ministries. The Vestry affords people the opportunity to share a variety of their own gifts and talents.

HOW ARE VESTRY MEMBERS CHOSEN?

They are nominated by the Nominating Committee, whose recommendation must be approved by the Vestry, and they are elected at the annual meeting.

HOW DOES THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE WORK?

It accepts suggestions from parishioners, discusses possible candidates, decides who it thinks should be nominated, makes sure people are willing to run, and presents a proposed slate to the Vestry. The approved nominees are then announced to the parish. Each nominee will then be asked to prepare a statement of qualifications of no more than 100 words.

HOW CAN I NOMINATE SOMEONE?

You may complete and give this form to Father Ron or a member of the Nominating Committee, or put it in the collection basket, or leave it with Mark Trautman in the Parish Office. You may nominate yourself or someone else.

HERE ARE MY SUGGESTIONS FOR SOMEONE TO RUN IN JANUARY FOR VESTRY, DIOCESAN CONVENTION, WATCHUNG CONVOCATION:

Name: _____

I RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) FOR:

Vestry _____

Diocesan Convention _____

Watchung Convocation _____

Please make sure each nominee is willing to be considered.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Annual Meeting of St. John's Parish will be Sunday, January 14, in the Parish Hall following the 10:15 am Eucharist. Come cast your vote for your Warden, Vestry Members, Diocesan Convention Deputies and Watchung Convocation delegates.

All submissions for the Annual Report are due in the Parish Office by Monday, January 8; email to mtrautman@stjohnsomerville.org.

The Canons of the Church (49:1) wisely require an Annual Meeting of every congregation in which to elect those whose duty it is to protect the church property, and see that all things needed for the orderly worship of God and for the administration of the sacraments and Ordinances of the Church be provided. And further, to see that the funds of the Parish are expended properly (50:2,3). Those elected to the Vestry, and those elected to represent the parish in Diocesan capacities are expected to be faithful in their attendance at worship and to set an example in stewardship.

The Episcopal Church provided for a democratic method of governing itself and the annual elections are proof of that method. It takes seriously the responsibility laid upon people to support, to suggest, to extend the Kingdom of God through the Church. Canon 49:2, 4 defines the qualifications of votes and officers to be elected:

- The voters shall be baptized, at least 16 years of age, domiciled in the Parish, of good moral character, adhering to this Church and to no other religious body, regular attendants at the services of the Church in said Parish, meaning thereby those who are more frequently present than absent, and regular contributors to the current expenses of the Parish in the manner prescribed by the Vestry.

- The qualified voters shall elect such officers who shall be communicants in good standing. The term “communicant” shall be taken to mean a person who has been confirmed by a Bishop of this Church or by a Bishop of a Church in communion with this Church, or has been received into this Church by a Bishop of this Church, and who shall have received the Holy Communion at least once during the preceding year.

To all heads of organizations and their treasurers:

Send materials to mtrautman@stjohnsomerville.org by January 8

HEADS: Please prepare a written report about the ministry and activities of your group or committee.

TREASURERS: Please prepare your financial report including: receipts—opening balance, receipts, (list categories, not single items), total receipts, balance and total. Disbursements (list categories, not single items), total disbursements, year’s closing balance disbursements, and closing balance. Treasurers must include reports of monies in all saving accounts using the same information above.

Many thanks in advance for your continued leadership, cooperation, and timeliness.

MINISTRY IN THE COMMUNITY

St. John’s Clothes Closet

Check out the array of \$1 and \$2 fashion items at the Clothes Closet on *Saturday, December 16 from 9 am to noon*. And, don’t miss the seasonable styles for both women and men.



The Clothes Closet features reasonably priced seasonal clothing and accessories for all ages—men and women, boys and girls, infants, and toddlers. We accept men’s, women’s, and children’s clothing, shoes, and accessories for all ages. They should be clean, gently used, and in current fashion. Please do not donate clothing with damage, stains, or signs of heavy wear. Not acceptable are underwear, socks, bathing suits, pajamas (unless they are new), or any non-clothing items. We are accepting only fall and winter items now. If you are interested in donating any clothes, shoes, or accessories, you must contact Linda Willard at nolaandboogie@aol.com or 347-276-6491. You may bring your items in on the Saturday sale days or Linda will schedule a mutually convenient time to drop them off during the week.

If you would like to help on sale days, or during the week to sort and hang clothes, please contact Linda (contact information above), or email clothescloset@stjohnsomerville.org. *Clothes Closet will not be open on Saturday, December 2.*

Meals to Go News

Meals to Go is now offered the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month, 9-10 am. Upcoming dates are December 2 and December 16. If you know someone (including yourself) who might enjoy a meal, stop by St. John’s Parish Hall. Use the ramp door entrance and bring a bag.



Updates

With the recent passing of Chef Jim McGrady, Meals to Go is in a period of discernment. In the near term, we are offering prepared food purchased at local

grocery stores, in individual servings, supplemented by frozen meal options. We would be grateful for your financial donations to support the ministry during this interim period. Any amount is very much appreciated—a few dollars, combined with that of others, will go a long way to serving our customers.

Volunteers

Thank you to Janet Hahn and Linda Willard for shopping and packaging meals. At this time, the Saturday volunteer signup is full. If you would like to be added to the volunteer list, or if you would like to provide suggestions for this ministry please contact me, Christine Bean, cbean727@gmail.com or call the Parish Office.

THANKSGIVING ADOPT-A-FAMILY UPDATE

Here is a quick update on how the Adopt-A-Family ministry went this year for Thanksgiving: Eleven turkeys and one ham, along with the appropriate canned and dry good items, and a home-made pumpkin pie, were distributed to needy families. Several individuals received \$40 gift cards to ShopRite. Donations came from parishioners of St. John’s Church, the Episcopal Church Women (gift cards), the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Mannions Pub & Restaurant in Somerville and an anonymous local friend of St. John’s Church who made the pumpkin pies. Thank you to all for such tremendous support for this important community outreach ministry. — Father Ron

ADOPT-A-FAMILY

HELP FEED A FAMILY THIS CHRISTMAS

Families within our own parish and local community are struggling to make ends meet.

A basket of non-perishable food items plus a \$40 gift card* to ShopRite** will provide Christmas Dinner for a family of four.

**any amount will be gratefully accepted. **any kind of gift card will be gratefully accepted.*

Please deliver the food basket and gift card to:

***St. John’s Church, 158 West High Street, Somerville, NJ 08876
by Saturday, December 16 respectively—no later than 9 am SHARP!***

You may also bring your basket and gift card to church on Sunday,

Or contact the Parish Office for drop off during the week.

St. John’s Christmas Gift Giveaway

Mark your calendar-Saturday, December 16, 11 am-1 pm for the annual St. John’s Christmas Gift Giveaway in the Parish Hall. There are stacks of gifts we will distribute to families in need and tons of smiles to be found. Volunteers will be needed beginning at 9 am to prepare. If you are available, please consider helping with this festive event. For more information, contact Jennifer Kosensky, jrkosensky@gmail.com.



Laundry Love News

Laundry Love ministry will be offered on December 14 and 28. On average, the ministry assists 45 people each month.

Representatives of the ministry will return to Somerville Express Wash Laundry, 20 Division St., Somerville, from 5 to 6 pm. Each guest receives a bag containing \$10 in quarters along with laundry pods and dryer sheets. The ministry needs donations of quarter rolls. They may be dropped off on Sundays in the collection baskets or left during the week at St. John’s.

Guests who are interested in signing up can contact Paul Grzella at 908.507.8020 or email pgrzella@verizon.net. For more information how you can support the Laundry Love ministry, call St. John's at 908.722.1250 or email mtrautman@stjohnsomerville.org.

**WE CELEBRATE, WE REMEMBER, DECEMBER:
BIRTHDAYS**

1. Michelle Hernandez, Jack Poklikuha
4. Bob Disko
7. Timothy Windus
9. Connor Elliston, John Newton
10. John Daniel, Romir Tonk
11. Alison Manko
12. Christopher Spolarich, Kathryn Helen Van Arsdale
13. Katelyn Wilson
14. Lisa Moor, Charles Kletz, Peter Chetwynd
15. Gavin Williams, Sean David Edwards
16. Elizabeth Foreman, Eva Dalrymple
17. Elizabeth Hollingsworth, Jagger Bachman, James R. Richart
18. Christine Anobile, Deirdre A. Kramer
19. Michelle Barkin, Natalia Mathews, Kraig Williams
20. Christopher Foreman
21. Jonathan Martin, Kevin Hewett, Julian Anobile, Lisa Vandever
22. Marika Foreman
23. Joshua Zambrano, Keri Siliwono
24. Tom Kothe, Jason Yingst, Kayla Bancone
26. Ashley Bowden, Keith Bowden, Tammy Harimon, Hope Tracey
28. David Chudy
29. Shirley Lyken, Emily Todd, Rafael De LosSantos, Renee DePetris, Margaret Massey
30. Logan Billy, Rana Keefer, Carolyn Gioia
31. Christine Kutlow

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

5. Ed Edwards & Paul Grzella, Anthony & Danielle Liberatoscioli
9. Kyle & Renee Ferris
16. Michael & Barbara Christel
19. Keith & Rebecca Wiley
23. Gregory & Karen Krueger
24. Olumide Olawoye & Ibiyo Lawrence
27. Jonathan & Christine Kutlow
28. Pamela & Robert Becker; Kraig and Janice Williams
31. Raymond & Roseann Brown, Kristian & Martha Fried

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

2. Gladys Henderson, Sylvia Smith
3. William C. Ellis
4. Robert T. Bonham, John Francis deVoe, Frank Agins
7. Hazel McConnell, Emma H. Degler, Deanna Jameson
8. Daniel Casey Sr.
9. Michael Osinski
14. Julianna Nagy
15. Gary Bower
18. Clifford F. Haring, Charles Swody
20. Jennie S. Kosensky
23. Beverly Jean Gardner
25. John Wood Goldsack
27. Pattie Sherwood Smith, David Salanik
28. Robert Otis Pennell, George Lloyd Snyder, Sophia Rodriguez
29. Lois Schmelz
31. Margaret Hicks, Gertrude Vanderbeek

Looking Ahead

- Saturday, December 2:** Meals to Go, 9-10 am
Saturday, December 2: Marianne Salanik Requiem at 10:30 am (no Clothes Closet)
Sunday, December 3: First Sunday of Advent
Sunday, December 3: Fundraising Committee Meeting, 9:15 am
Monday, December 4: Parish Office closed
Monday-Wednesday, December 4-6: Clergy Conference, Father Ron away
Thursday, December 7: Mary and Martha Guild Luncheon, following 10 am Eucharist
Saturday, December 9: Diocesan Convention
Sunday, December 10: Advent III, Deacon Keith McCoy, preacher
Sunday, December 10: A viewing of the film Philadelphia Eleven at 2 pm
Monday, December 11: ECW Meeting at 7 pm
Saturday, December 16: Clothes Closet, 9-noon
Saturday, December 16: Meals to Go, 9-10 am
Sunday, December 17: Advent Lessons and Carols, 5 pm; Unveiling of Gingerbread Church and Dessert Extravaganza Reception
Sunday, December 24: Advent IV services 8 and 10:15 am; Steve Welch, preacher
Sunday, December 24: Christmas Eve, Services at 5 (pageant) and 11 pm (Choral Eucharist)
Monday, December 25: Christmas Day, Service at 9 am
Sunday, December 31: Eve of the Holy Name/New Year's Eve, Service at 5 pm

December 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 <i>Father Ron's Day off</i>	2 9 am, Meals to Go 10:30 am, Salanik Requiem <i>No Clothes Closet</i>
3 <i>ADVENT 1</i> 8 am, Eucharist 10:15, Eucharist <i>Loose Change Sunday</i>	4 12:30-1:30 All Recovery Meeting 8 pm, AA Meeting <i>Parish Office closed</i> <i>Fr. Ron away (Clergy conference)</i>	5 No Tuesday Eucharist <i>Fr. Ron away (Clergy conference)</i>	6 <i>Fr. Ron away (Clergy conference)</i>	7 10 am, Eucharist Mary-Martha Guild luncheon 7:15 pm, Parish Choir Rehearsal	8 <i>Fr. Ron's Day off</i>	9 Diocesan Convention
10 <i>ADVENT 2</i> 8 am, Eucharist 10 am, Church School 10:15, Eucharist 2 pm, viewing of 'The Philadelphia Eleven'	11 11 am, Claire Rokisky memorial service 7 pm, ECW 8 pm, AA Meeting	12 7 pm, Holy Eucharist (chapel)	13 7 pm, Vestry	14 10 am, Eucharist Mary-Martha Guild 5 pm, Laundry Love 7:15 pm, Parish Choir Rehearsal	15 <i>Fr. Ron's Day off</i>	16 9 am, Meals to Go 9 am Clothes Closet Christmas Gift Collection and Adopt-A-Family
17 <i>ADVENT 3</i> 8 am, Eucharist 10:15, Eucharist 5 pm, <i>Advent Lessons and Carols</i>	18 12:30-1:30 All Recovery Meeting 8 pm, AA Meeting	19 7 pm, Holy Eucharist (chapel)	20	21 10 am, Eucharist Mary-Martha Guild 5 pm, Laundry Love 7:15 pm, Parish Choir Rehearsal	22 <i>Fr. Ron's Day off</i>	23
24 <i>ADVENT 4</i> 8 am, Eucharist 10:15, Eucharist <i>CHRISTMAS EVE</i> 5 pm and 11 pm Eucharist	25 <i>CHRISTMAS DAY</i> 9 am, Eucharist 8 pm, AA Meeting	26 OFFICE CLOSED No Tuesday Eucharist	27 OFFICE CLOSED	28 OFFICE CLOSED No Thursday Eucharist	29 <i>Fr. Ron's Day off</i>	30

St. John's in Somerville, Leadership 2023

PARISH STAFF

The Rev. Canon Ronald N. Pollock, *Rector*, frronpollock1@verizon.net

The Rev. W. Keith McCoy, *Deacon Associate*, kmccoy1@optonline.net

Mark A. Trautman, *Organist-Choirmaster and Administrator*, mtrautman@stjohnsomerville.org

Ministers: The People of St. John's

Altar Guild

Diane Sireci, *Directress*, dianesireci61@icloud.com

Tom Keefer, *Treasurer*, thomasekefer@yahoo.com

Dana Keefer, *Flowers, Weddings, & Funerals*, dzkeefery@yahoo.com

Bread & Wine and Altar Candles, mtrautman@stjohnsomerville.org

Music Program

Mark A. Trautman, mtrautman@stjohnsomerville.org

Canon Chancellor John W. Goldsack Church Library

Deacon Keith, kmccoy1@optonline.net

Church School

Michelle Hernandez, chellehernandez1@gmail.com

Tracey Jameson, tkayj@aol.com

Taffy Scherr, tafrika@aol.com

Episcopal Church Women (ECW)

Jennifer Kosensky, *Vice-President*, jrkosensky@gmail.com

Mary & Martha Guild

Joanne Polito, *President*, jozpolito@gmail.com

Episcopal Youth Community (EYC) Adviser

Fr. Ron

Clothes Closet Council, clothescloset@stjohnsomerville.org

Valerie Gibson, Taffy Scherr, Linda Willard, Paula Windus

Laundry Love

Paul Grzella, pgrzella@verizon.net

Meals to Go

Christine Bean, cbean727@gmail.com, Niki Hoffman, nikihoffman@hotmail.com

Red Door Ministries

Baby Blankets for newborns and those baptized: Pauline Boyer, 908.722.1832

Loose-Change for Discretionary Fund: position open

Happy Mealers: Parish Office, mtrautman@stjohnsomerville.org

Finance Committee

Kenneth Miller, *Chair*, kemiii3@yahoo.com

Stewardship

Fr. Ron, *Adviser*; Kenneth Miller, *Chair*, kemiii3@yahoo.com, Barbara Christel, Carolyn

Gioia, Michelle Hernandez, Leigh Meaders, Devron Robinson, Linda Willard

Treasurer

Sam Galpin, *Parish Treasurer*, sam.galpin@outlook.com

Anne Tom, *Parish Co-Treasurer* annetom@comcast.net

Vestry (Class year)

Steve Mandraccia, *Senior Warden*, Smandraccia@verizon.net (2025); Kenneth Miller, *Junior*

Warden, kemiii3@yahoo.com (2024); Carolyn Gioia cgioiabella@gmail.com (2024); Michelle

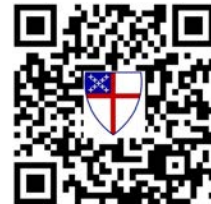
Hernandez, mhernandez718910@gmail.com (2024); George Mullen, bigbrown11@optimum.net

(2024); Jean Stamets, Jasoz08887@gmail.com (2024); Megan McNamara,

meganmcnamara1@yahoo.com (2025); Leigh Meaders-Robinson, Leigh.meaders1@gmail.com

(2025); Barbara Christel, barbarachristel@yahoo.com (2026); Sheila Fuhrmann,

jfuhrmann00@aol.com (2026); Terry McShane, (2026) t1m49@comcast.net



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