



## RECTOR'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! If you find it strange that I'm greeting you this way in December, don't worry; there's still an issue of *The Herald* coming in January, and I haven't lost my sense of time (a common secondary side effect of COVID). I'm wishing you a Happy New Year because Advent is here, which marks the beginning of a new church year.

While our new calendar year doesn't start for a few more weeks, Advent kicks off our church season to prepare us for Christmas. What makes Advent truly distinct from all other church seasons is that it is a season of anticipation and waiting. Our Sunday readings lean into these themes; but if you look closely, you will notice that our Advent texts—the assigned biblical passages, the collects and prayers, the poetry and hymnody—all point us to Jesus' dual-Advent: his birth and second coming.

The promise of Jesus' return is the closing scene in God's unfolding plan of salvation. This concept might be hard to grasp or even perplex us a bit. The

promise of Jesus' return is God's ultimate promise that God's kingdom—

God's justice, peace, and love—will reign supreme over all human systems and structures, especially those that seek to harm and to destroy the innocent and the vulnerable. It is God's ultimate commitment that the world he so desperately loves will one day be made right and whole.

During Advent we wait for the once and future coming of Jesus; and this Advent in particular we also wait for a return to some sense of pre-COVID normalcy and tranquility. While I don't know when said day will come, I do hope and pray that that day is not too far. I hope that you, too, will not lose hope and that you continue to do what you can to help us move beyond our present state.

As we enter this new year, waiting for things to return and for new opportunities to blossom, I am happy to share with you that both old and new things will be gracing us at Saint John's. I'm excited to announce that we will be returning to our previous Christmas Eve and Day worship schedule. You will find our full 2021 Christmas Schedule later in this issue. This Advent we will be launching a new weekday worship schedule with Evening Prayer (5:15 p.m.)

and Low Mass (5:30 p.m.) on Tuesdays and Thursdays. As we enter this new liturgical and calendar year, please consider making a weekday mass part of your spiritual and prayer life.

We also welcome a familiar face and a new face to Saint John's: Father Kevin as Assisting Clergy, and Haley Rhone as Children and Youth Assistant. Fr. Kevin will serve at Saint John's once a month, celebrating and preaching. It is truly a blessing to have Fr. Kevin with us for another eight months.

Haley Rhone will be working with Ellen Dyakiw and me to support our existing ministries for children and youth. It is a gift to have Haley on board as we continue to offer rich formation experiences for our youngest parishioners. You will find (re)introductory messages from Fr. Kevin and Haley later in this issue.

As this is the last issue of The Herald for 2021, I want to end with a special list of "Thank You's." First and foremost, I need to thank our parish vestry for their faithful leadership and guidance during this pandemic. I can honestly say that we would have not been able to maneuver and adapt (multiple times) during this pandemic without their great leadership and support.

I especially need to thank our Senior Warden, Larry Robertson, who has, for more than a year, served as the

cameraman for our Sunday morning live-stream. He has faithfully been here Sunday after Sunday to ensure that we continue to stream our worship online. I also need to thank all of those who work with me to continue our parish's ministry and mission: Deacon Alex, Trish Weidemann, and Erik and Rebecca Clayton.

Last but not least, THANK YOU for your faithfulness and support during these last 21 months. I have been your rector longer under COVID than not, which always feels a bit surreal to say out loud. We went months without seeing each other, and yet I felt your support and love for our parish. In-person and from home you have participated in the prayer and worship life of this parish, and have shared in our common duty to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ, making his love, peace, and mercy known in Bellefonte and beyond. It is truly an honor and a privilege to serve as your priest.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Carlos†

***Editor's Note:*** An Advent calendar can be found at the end of this newsletter.

## FROM THE DEACON'S PERCH

*"In you, Lord my God, I put my trust."*

*-Psalm 25:1*

Dear Friends,

**Advent, (from Latin *adventus*, "coming"), in the Christian [church calendar](#), the period of preparation for the celebration of the birth of [Jesus Christ](#) at [Christmas](#).** (Source: Britannica.com)



As I sit here on Sunday afternoon, many people are out shopping, and others are eagerly waiting for Cyber Monday to help make that the largest shopping day of the season. Hmm! Did I miss something, while I kept Psalm 25 for my Sunday mantra, "In you, Lord my God, I put my trust?" To be honest, I was out shopping, too, in order to get cereal for the food bank and looking for items to purchase for the youth center. That's where I was putting my mantra to use and remembering to prepare in my heart for the birth of Jesus.

I want to share with you how others are preparing a place for Jesus. Our church is collecting gifts for a Penns Valley family; Fr. Carlos heads a drive to support Centre Safe; and one of our church members, Tom Bathgate, was



able to procure five cases of adult underwear for our food bank. To all who have contributed to the deacon's discretionary fund, I thank you. Your gifts allow me to help others on your behalf as I go throughout the community.

Fr. John Harwood is getting ready to supply many families in Lewistown with the Toys for Tots program and Mother



Hubbard's food bank, which is St. Mark's project. St. Andrew's is getting ready to host the Out of the Cold Program, with a place to shelter. I helped to unload a truckload of cots and personal items there. I didn't know this, but many of the people who come aren't homeless because of destitution; they are the working poor. They have jobs, but their pay can't sustain affordable rent in the area, and outside the area, transportation is not available. This is happening even in our backyard. I will be training to help with this program and will provide details in the next newsletter.

In speaking to the coordinator at the food bank, I learned that they would really appreciate donations of cereal for December, when the schools go on break. They give extra cereal to families since children will not have the school breakfast program to go. Please consider this when shopping.

I'm sure that you have seen the sign "Jesus is the reason for the season" or even the TV commercial. Let us prepare for putting Jesus in the season. Fr. Carlos is offering new services on Tuesday and Thursday evenings with evening prayer at 5:15, followed by a Eucharist service at 5:30. You have read many times when I speak of divine intimacy with Christ. If you want to feel that connection, try attending some of the services to get out of your daily routine. Come and sit quietly with God

during this time. With all the hustle and bustle of the shopping season, connect with Jesus this Advent by remembering the Christ child in our lives.

In the photograph of the Men's Spiritual Group are: standing, Ed Burke and Bill Donovan (and Lulu Dyakiw!); sitting: first row, Larry Roberson; second row, Dave Provan, Richard Parmenter; third row, Dcn. Alex and Thomas Bathgate. Not pictured are George Holt, Rev. Chuck Curly, Rick Yoder, Joe Puczyki. In January, the Men's Spiritual Group will enter its twenty-second year of Bible study. We meet on Monday nights from 7 to 8. All are welcome. I like to consider that all of us are on a journey to try to understand the Bible better and to apply



it to our daily life. Pray for us as we pray for all of you each Monday night.

Fr. Carlos and I are always there for you for spiritual care in times of crisis. When there is nowhere to turn, remember that we can help you. In ending this newsletter and the last issue for 2021, I wish all of you a Blessed Christmas, and be safe. ~Deacon Alex†

### **A MESSAGE FROM FR. KEVIN BARRON, ASSISTING CLERGY**

Dear Friends,

I am overjoyed to accept the very gracious invitation from Fr. Carlos to continue my time with you at St. John's. I will be with you on the first



Sunday of each month through July, serving alongside Fr. Carlos and Deacon Alex. Your warmth and acceptance of me into this church family has nurtured and fed me over the past months. I look forward to continuing my fellowship and service with you.

Yours in Christ,  
Father Kevin†

### **INTRODUCING HALEY RHONE, OUR NEW CHILDREN & YOUTH ASSISTANT**



Hello, my name is Haley. I graduated from Penn State in May of this year with a bachelor's degree in Rehabilitation and Human Services. I am a resident of State College and work at the Youth Service Bureau (YSB). I specialize in prevention and have three years of experience in running small groups, leading curriculum, and working with youth and their families. I am the proud owner of one cat, three fish, and a crested gecko.

### **FROM THE SUNDAY SCHOOL**

As a repeat from last month's newsletter, we are still seeking input from families for children and youth participation in our Christmas Eve services. There will be many opportunities for children and youth to take part in this Christmas Eve service.

For younger children, we will retell the story of Jesus' birth. For older children, we are offering musical participation with instruments or song. Youth can also serve and read scripture during this special service. They can sit with their families and be part of the congregation at this mass or at our later evening

solemn mass. Please let us know how your child will participate in our program. ~Miss Ellen

### NEW WORSHIP OFFERINGS BEGINNING IN ADVENT

Beginning on Tuesday, November 30, we will be launching a new weekday worship schedule. We will offer two evening weekday masses, preceded by evening prayer; and our monthly parish requiem will now take place on the first Saturday of each month. As we enter this new liturgical and calendar year, please consider making a weekday mass part of your spiritual and prayer life.



### LET US KEEP THE FEAST!



*Let us keep the Feast!* is a monthly worship and dinner series that celebrates feast days of the Church that would otherwise go unobserved. Each gathering will begin with mass in the church, followed by a thematic dinner in the parish hall. Please save the dates below and bring a friend!

#### 2021 Feast Days

Tuesday, December 14 – St. John of the Cross

#### 2022 Feast Days

Thursday, January 6 – The Epiphany  
Wednesday, February 2 – Candlemas  
Thursday, March 24 – The Annunciation  
Thursday, May 26 – Ascension Day

**Worship - 5:30 P.M.**

**Dinner - 6:00 P.M.**

Please RSVP for dinner by contacting the parish office:

[office@stjohnsepiscopalbellefonte.org](mailto:office@stjohnsepiscopalbellefonte.org)

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Lillian	North	December 2
Ian	Ousley	December 2
Kathryn	Grossman	December 6
Bill	Donovan	December 7
Claire	Bonner	December 9
Vivienne	Clayton	December 9
Thomas	Quigley	December 10
Carl	Meeker	December 17
Stuart	Hough	December 23
Ellen	Dyakiw	December 27



## AROUND THE PARISH FAMILY TABLE



### Ruth Theodora Germano

is doing well and growing strong since coming home on Nov. 13

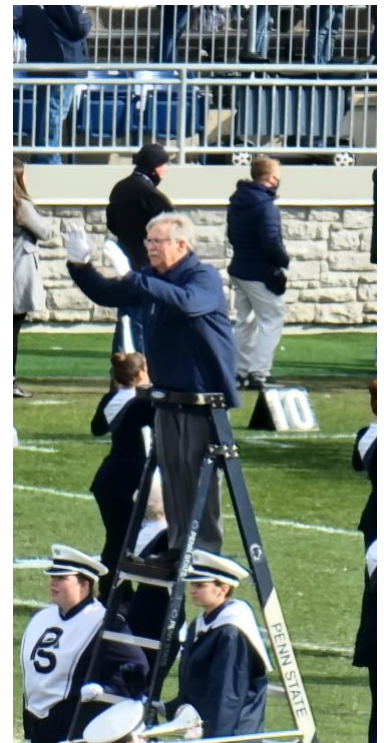


from her Nov. 5 surgery at Children's Hospital Of Philadelphia. Alex and Adela

send their thanks for all the prayers of support and healing!

### David Cree

conducted the Blue Band in the National Anthem at the last 2021 home PSU football game. After 31 years with the band, this was his final field appearance. He will continue his job as the band's instrument repair and maintenance technician (and jack of all trades!). Thanks, Betsy Quigley, for taking the photos!



## VESTRY UPDATE

The vestry met via Zoom on Nov. 17.

- Two funerals at Saint John's; one at a funeral home during October.
- Many new initiatives and programs were launched and are now sailing along.
- Received a gift of \$24,900 from Ruth Eby's estate. The money was deposited into the memorial fund.
- Received \$5K for capital campaign. The money was deposited into the building fund.
- Shaped by Faith Campaign
  - What will the shape of our church be in the future?
  - We at St. John's are very blessed. We can explore how we can continue to collaborate with the community and grow.

- Charlotte Zmyslo and Scott Mauger will join Father Carlos in our parish's Shaped by Faith team.
- First Convocation meeting set for Dec 2 at 6:00 p.m.; we're hosting in the Parish Hall.
- New weekday worship schedule: Tuesday and Thursday 5:15 evening prayer; 5:30 mass.
- Let us keep the feast will continue through May.
- We'll begin offering Quarterly Evensongs @ 5:00 p.m. Sunday followed by reception in parish hall. (Feb., May, Sept., Dec.)
- Larry and Jeff got onto the roof to remediate the water issue until Spring.
- Landscaping complete; tree will be planted in front of rectory next year.

### COFFEE HOUR VOLUNTEER SIGN-UP



We are looking for volunteers to help set up, serve beverages, and clean up afterward. *All beverages and food items will be provided by the church.* **We need volunteers in December and January. To sign up, please visit our new sign-up link:**

<https://bit.ly/3um2fBp> or contact the parish office.

### SUPPORT SAINT JOHN'S ON AMAZON SMILE

Do you shop on Amazon.com? Amazon Smile is a website operated by



Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on Amazon Smile, that foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to Saint John's. To choose Saint John's as your charitable organization, visit our unique charity link:

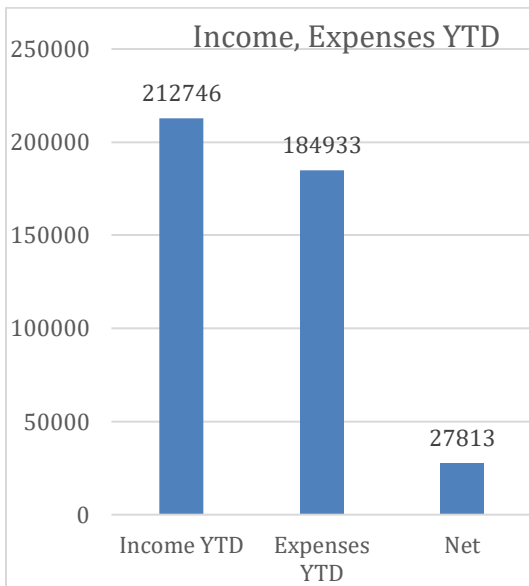
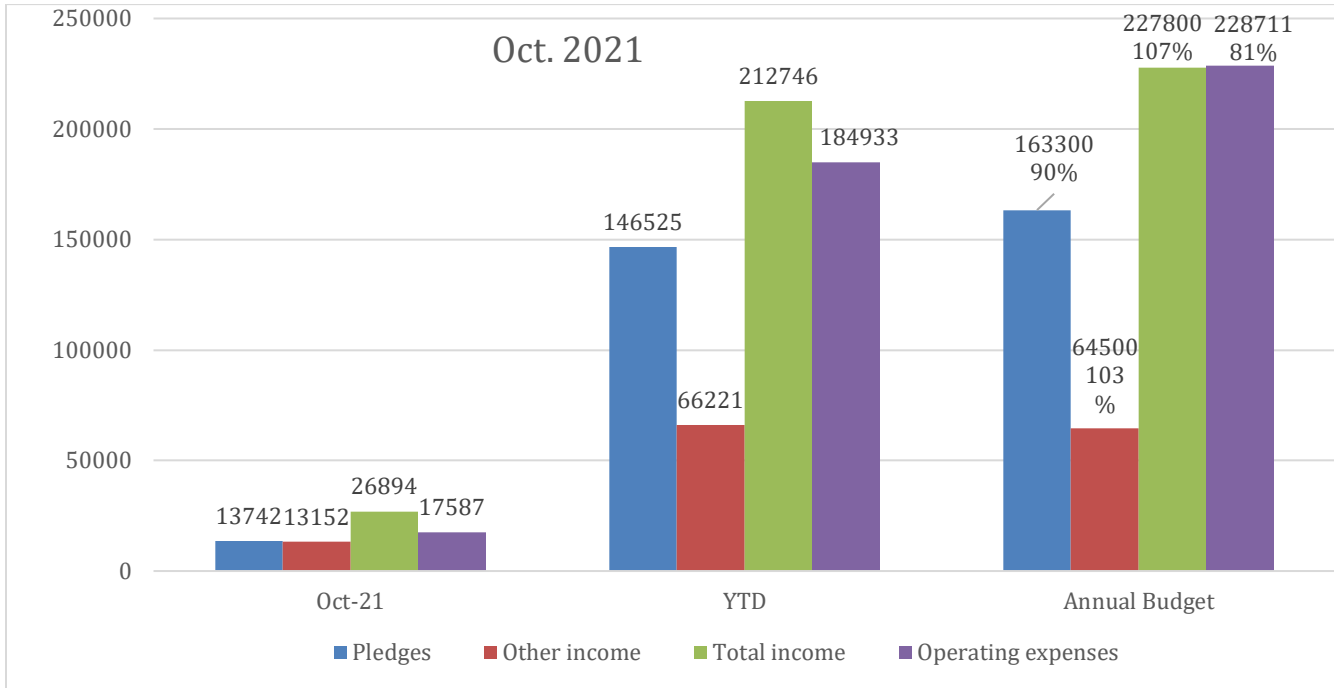
<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/24-6020380>.

Then simply sign in to your existing Amazon account and shop. It's that easy!



# FINANCIAL (OCTOBER)

Operating Budget	Oct-21	YTD	Annual Budget	YTD % of Budget
Pledges	13742	146525	163300	90%
Other income	13152	66221	64500	103%
<b>Total income</b>	<b>26894</b>	<b>212746</b>	<b>227800</b>	<b>107%</b>
<b>Operating expenses</b>	<b>17587</b>	<b>184933</b>	<b>228711</b>	<b>81%</b>
<b>Net</b>	<b>9307</b>	<b>27813</b>		



Income YTD	Expenses YTD	Net
212746	184933	27813

Numbers do not include checking account balance, investments, or savings.

**Vestry Members:** Larry Roberson (Sr. Warden), Matt Perkins (Jr. Warden), John Fusco, Carol Fyfe, Debra Cree, Thomas Quigley, David King, Charlotte Zmyslo, Susan Christy, Peggy Jackson



O COME, LET US ADORE HIM

# CHRISTMAS EVE

4:30PM FAMILY MASS &  
NATIVITY PAGEANT

9:30PM CAROLS OF THE SEASON

10:00PM SOLEMN HIGH MASS  
MISSA BREVIS SANCTI JOANNIS DE DEO  
(LITTLE ORGAN MASS), FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN

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# CHRISTMAS DAY

9:30AM LOW MASS OF CHRISTMAS

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SAINT JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
120 W LAMB STREET | BELLEFONTE, PA

# CHRISTMAS FLOWERS & DECORATIONS



Saint John's Altar Guild is receiving contributions to assist in decorating the church for Christmas. Please use this form for making your donations. All forms and donations should be returned to the parish office no later than **Sunday, December 19**. Checks should be made payable to **St. John's Episcopal Church** and should be clearly marked **Christmas Decorations** on the memo line.

You can also donate online by visiting our [giving web page](#) and selecting "Christmas Flowers & Decorations" from the drop-down menu. You may type your dedication in the message box or you may email the Parish Office your dedication, which will appear in our Christmas Orders of Service.

**YOUR NAME(S):**

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**IN MEMORY OF:**

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**IN HONOR OF:**

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**IN THANKSGIVING FOR:**

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# DEC 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			<b>01</b> Feria	<b>02</b> Feria 5:15pm Evening Prayer 5:30 Low Mass	<b>03</b> St. Francis Xavier	<b>04</b> St. John of Damascus
<b>05</b> The Second Sunday of Advent 9:00am Low Mass 10:30am Solemn Mass	<b>06</b> St. Nicholas of Myra	<b>07</b> St. Ambrose of Milan 5:15pm Evening Prayer 5:30 Low Mass	<b>08</b> Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary	<b>09</b> St. Juan Diego 5:15pm Evening Prayer 5:30 Low Mass	<b>10</b> Our Lady of Loreto	<b>11</b> Feria
<b>12</b> The Third Sunday of Advent 9:00am Low Mass 10:30am Solemn Mass	<b>13</b> St. Lucy of Syracuse	<b>14</b> St. John of the Cross (Let us keep the Feast) 5:30pm Low Mass 6:00pm Dinner	<b>15</b> Feria 6:00pm Vestry Dinner & Meeting	<b>16</b> Feria 5:15pm Evening Prayer 5:30 Low Mass	<b>17</b> Feria	<b>18</b> Feria
<b>19</b> The Fourth Sunday of Advent 9:00am Low Mass 10:30am Solemn Mass	<b>20</b> Feria	<b>21</b> St. Thomas, Apostle & Martyr 5:15pm Evening Prayer 5:30 Low Mass	<b>22</b> Feria	<b>23</b> Feria 5:15pm Evening Prayer 5:30 Low Mass	<b>24</b> Christmas Eve 4:30pm Family Mass & Pageant 9:30pm Carols of the Season 10:00pm Solemn High Mass	<b>25</b> Christmas Day 9:30am Low Mass of Christmas
<b>26</b> The First Sunday after Christmas (St. Stephen) *9:30am Parish Mass	<b>27</b> St. John, Apostle & Evangelist	<b>28</b> Holy Innocents 5:15pm Evening Prayer 5:30 Low Mass	<b>29</b> St. Thomas Becket	<b>30</b> Feria 5:15pm Evening Prayer 5:30 Low Mass	<b>31</b> St. Sylvester	

\*Please note  
that we will  
only have one,  
joint mass on  
Sunday, Dec 26

# ADVENT CALENDAR 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>28 Worship</b> <b>Advent 1</b> Read Luke 21:25-36. How do the symbols of the Advent season help you understand the story of Jesus? Where do you see them in your worship today?	<b>29 Go</b> Go out of your way to have a conversation with someone you might not normally visit with today. Ask God to open your heart to hear this person as God does.	<b>30 Learn</b> Read Matthew 4:18-22. How do these verses from Matthew inspire you to read Scripture with new eyes? Try reading several different translations of this passage. See how the language might change your reading of it.	<b>1 Pray</b> Pray along with the Collect for Advent 1, found on page 211 of The Book of Common Prayer. Set a timer for three minutes to sit in silence and hear what God might be saying back to you.	<b>2 Bless</b> We know that angels are God's special messengers to us, and that Gabriel spent intentional time with Mary, helping her to understand her part in God's story. Who has shared an important lesson or their presence with you this week? Thank them today with a call or note.	<b>3 Turn</b> Read Isaiah 58. How does this reading challenge you to think about feasts and festivals differently? How might this lesson change the way you celebrate or recognize this holy season?	<b>4 Rest</b> Put your phone on airplane mode and leave it in a dresser drawer for an hour or two. Whatever happens in that time, you can handle later. Give this time to yourself and Jesus, to rest and recharge for the week ahead.
<b>5 Worship</b> <b>Advent 2</b> Read Luke 3:1-6. How does the story of John the Baptist fill your heart with hope?	<b>6 Go</b> Read or watch your local news. Ask God to open your heart and eyes to ways you can promote reconciliation and healing in your community.	<b>7 Learn</b> Read Luke 1:45. Share your faith story with one new person this week. It can be someone you have known for a while who has not heard the faith part of your story.	<b>8 Pray</b> Pray along with the Collect for Advent 2, found on page 211 of The Book of Common Prayer. As you are out and about for the rest of this week, notice the people you pass. Ask God to bless them in their lives and work. See how this changes the way you go about your week.	<b>9 Bless</b> Call or write a letter to a family member with whom you would like to have a closer relationship. Make plans in the new year to chat on the phone or meet over Zoom or in person. Let them know how much you love them and look forward to knowing them better.	<b>10 Turn</b> Where did you struggle this week? Do you have amends or apologies or adjustments you need to make? Ask God to open your heart and mind to those opportunities for reconciliation and growth. Thank God for the gifts of mercy and love, and the courage to make the changes necessary. And then do your best, with God's help, to make those changes.	<b>11 Rest</b> Set aside 30 minutes to spend in silence with your best friend today. Sure, it may feel a little weird to be silent on the phone or while sitting next to each other on the couch or across the table. Just give it a try. Make sure to set aside time after your silence to pray for each other and to say thanks for the time of rest.
<b>12 Worship</b> <b>Advent 3</b> Imagine the faces you'd like to see at church — an all-star list of folks you want to worship with. This could be people you know from summer camp when you were a kid, people who might have already died, people you work with — all your favorites. Commit to pray for those folks this week. And make a commitment to ask one of your all-stars to come to church with you in the next month.	<b>13 Go</b> Take a new or different route to work, or school, or out to run errands. See how using a different route requires you to see the world differently — to pay a different kind of attention. What do you notice along the way that makes you stop and take a second look? Does anything on this new route inspire your faith journey or remind you of lessons learned?	<b>14 Learn</b> Read Luke 1:59-80. When Zechariah's speech returns, he praises God. If you lost the power to speak for nine months like Zechariah did, what would be your first word of praise? Share this with your family, friends, and on social media.	<b>15 Pray</b> Pray along with the Collect for Advent 3, found on page 212 in The Book of Common Prayer. How will prayer guide you through the rest of the week? Set aside special time today to focus your intentions on stirring up peace and spreading joy.	<b>16 Bless</b> Spend a significant amount of time today discerning if there is a special blessing or gift you can share with your church, a local ministry, or with your community. Ask God to inspire and equip you with the fortitude and tools to make this gift something truly memorable and heartfelt.	<b>17 Turn</b> Turn away from the busyness of the world right now. Turn your heart and mind toward giving thanks for this time of reflection, refreshment, and renewal. Turn your attention toward how you will be resting tomorrow, and put things in place so you can make the most of your sabbath time.	<b>18 Rest</b> Spend at least 45 minutes outside today, without doing yard work or fixing lights or redoing bows on the garland. Take some time to just sit outside and let the air wash over you, taking away the stress and worry of the moment. Read Psalm 100 before and after your outside time. See how this psalm may help you rest and recharge your spirit.
<b>19 Worship</b> <b>Advent 4</b> Linger before leaving your worship time today. How is God calling you to hear and sing along with Mary's Song? Read Luke 1:39-55.	<b>20 Go</b> Go out into your neighborhood today. Where is God at work? Ask God to show you how you can celebrate that good work and name God's presence in your community.	<b>21 Learn</b> Read Habakkuk 2:1-4. Does this reading remind you of Thomas the disciple? Why do you think the folks who organized the lectionary picked this reading from the Old Testament for this friend of Jesus?	<b>22 Pray</b> Pray along with the Collect for Advent 4, found on page 212 in The Book of Common Prayer. Pick three or four of your beloveds to focus your prayers on today. Make sure to leave some silent space for God to offer you some wisdom about what they may need right now.	<b>23 Bless</b> Make sure to pick up an extra present or two — a nice candy sampler or a warm pair of slippers or pajama pants, just in case you have extra friends or guests drop by. Ask God to bless those who travel and those who may be alone in the coming days. Take some bottled water and sports drinks over to your local community cold weather shelter. They will be extra glad to have that during the winter months.	<b>24 Turn</b> <b>Christmas Eve</b> If you are gathering with friends and family today, consider taking time during the meal to turn to the folks on your right, and then on your left, to thank them for their love in your life. See how this might spread some joy and comfort around the table — or maybe even ease some potentially prickly guests.	<b>25 Rest</b> <b>Christmas Day</b> The conventional wisdom is that new parents should rest when the baby is resting. Make sure you take some time out to rest with Baby Jesus — and marvel in the wonder of a fresh, new, clean, shiny, tiny, precious start. Take a nap and thank God for the gift of Jesus and for peace at Christmas.