

# *The Eagle*

September 2023

A Publication of St. John's Lutheran Church in Albany, NY

## Welcome Back BBQ & All-Church Service Project



"God's work. Our hands." Sunday



September 10  
2023

(more on page 8)



# From the Pastor

## What I Did This Summer

Vacations are winding down. School is beginning (or has already begun). A new church program year is on the horizon. The St. John's Collegium returns! Soon, the leaves will start to change into warm autumn colors, and temperatures will dip. Already, the days are growing shorter. (Sunsets before 8? Say it ain't so!)

As summer days give way to fall nights, familiar routines resume at home and at church. There is much to love about these routines and even some of the new things coming soon. I invite you to peruse the pages of this newsletter to find out more.

**But before we close the door on summer, I also want to invite you into a time of reflection: *Where have you experienced God this summer?***

Maybe it was in church – St. John's or another place you visited. Maybe it was at camp or on vacation, around a picnic table with friends, at a baseball game, or on a peaceful walk.

As the late Jesuit priest and poet Gerard Manley Hopkins begins his well-known poem, "*The world is charged with the grandeur of God.*"

**The truth is, our experience of God is not limited to church alone, as the beginning of Hopkins' poem and Stephen's speech, right before his martyrdom, in the book of Acts both remind us:**

"The Most High does not dwell in houses made with human hands; as the prophet says, 'Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool.'" (Acts 7:48-49)

During my recent vacation, I was able to get together with two good friends (also pastors) in the rural hamlet of Yulan, New York, nestled in the Catskills, just a couple hours outside of New York City. One of the most memorable images from that trip was a short excursion to Shohola Falls, just across the Delaware River into Pennsylvania. After a mildly treacherous hike along a steep and narrow path, we were rewarded with stunning views of the falls (pictured below). There is no doubt in my mind that this was holy ground: The divine is surely present here!

**What about you? What holy ground did you stand on this summer? Where did God/the divine/the sacred show up for you?**

I'd love to hear your stories (and see your photos), too. So please: Share them with me! I look forward to hearing all about them.

Grace and peace,  
Josh +



photo credit: Josh Evans

## Thank You

*Our special thanks to...*

- All who donated school supplies for Delaware Community School and Giffen Memorial School.
- Everyone who provided refreshments following summer worship.
- All who baked communion bread for Sunday worship.

thank you

### Access *The Eagle* online!

For an online edition of *The Eagle* with clickable links, visit [stjohnsalbany.org](https://stjohnsalbany.org). Hover over “News & Events” from the top menu, then click “News & Announcements.”



## In Our Prayers

*For what shall we pray?*

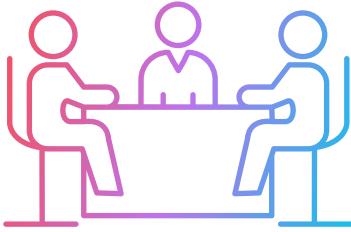
- Prayer prompts, events, and observances on the ELCA Worship Blog (<https://blogs.elca.org/worship/>)

Prayer requests are published in *The Eagle* so that the whole community can hold one another in prayer and support. Submit a prayer request [online](#) or [contact Pastor Josh Evans](#).

### *Eagle* Deadline

Submissions for the October edition of *The Eagle* are due by **Monday, September 18**, and may be sent to Parish Secretary Maggie Anderson at [parishsec@stjohnsalbany.org](mailto:parishsec@stjohnsalbany.org).

## Council Corner



**St. John's council did not meet  
in August.**

**Next meeting:**  
Tuesday, September 19  
6:00 p.m. (in person)

## Albany Lutheran Cluster

### September/October Cluster Outreach Ministry

The shelter, run by Capital Area Council of Churches and housed at First Lutheran, will be reopening for the season in November. To prepare for the opening, several supplies need to be provided or purchased. We are asking for your assistance with this.

Specific supplies the shelter needs are:

- paper towels
- heavy paper plates
- paper hot and cold cups (8 oz. preferred)
- plastic knives, forks, and spoons
- napkins
- disposable face masks
- disinfecting wipes (Lysol, Clorox, or basic brand)
- solid air freshener
- liquid Pine Sol (or basic brand)

You may also purchase any of these items from Amazon and ship to the Council of Churches address (646 State Street, Albany, NY 12203). If you prefer to send a check to cover the cost of some supplies, please make your check payable to Capital Area Council of Churches at the address noted above. Please write “shelter supplies” in the memo section.

**Thank you for your continuing support of the shelter. Your generosity is appreciated!**





## Sunday School

### ALL AGES WELCOME!

On Sunday, September 10, kids and families are encouraged to join us for our all-church service project (p. 8) and **Welcome Back Sundaes Sunday**. During the Welcome Back BBQ, Sunday School students will help serve make-your-own ice cream sundaes.

Contact Paige Pierle, Sunday School teacher, at [sundayschool@stjohnsalbany.org](mailto:sundayschool@stjohnsalbany.org) with any questions.

### *Upcoming Fall Dates*

October 1  
October 22  
October 29  
November 5  
November 19



## Brewed Theology

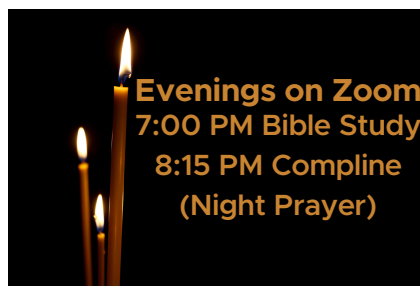
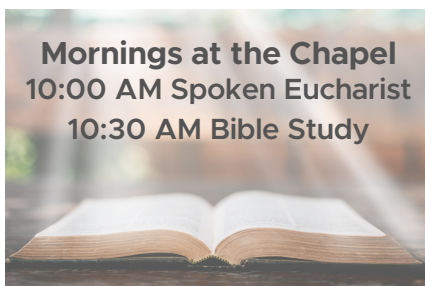
**Thursday, September 28 + 6:00 p.m.**

**@ BJ's Restaurant & Brewhouse  
(Wolf Rd & Central Ave)**

Join us for dinner, drinks, and a guided conversation at the intersection of faith and culture. This month's topic is **Listening 101: Can You Hear Me Now? Listening as the First Act of Love** ([learn more](#)). [RSVP to Pastor Josh Evans](#) by Tuesday, September 26 for a copy of the "homework" (always optional, but strongly encouraged!) and so we can be sure to reserve a table (if needed).

## Wednesdays at St. John's

**Beginning September 13**, join us each week as we pray together and look ahead at the texts for the coming Sunday. Come for one or both segments. No commitment or prep work required, and all ages are welcome.



([CLICK HERE](#) or contact Pastor Josh for the Zoom link.)

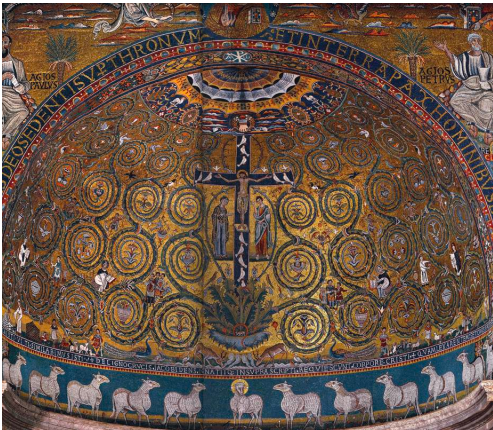
# Worship



## Rally Day Worship with a Blessing of the Backpacks

Sunday, September 10 + 9:30 a.m.

Join us for a festive liturgy on Sunday, September 10, at 9:30 a.m. (in-person and online) for a St. John's "homecoming" after a long summer. Choir is back, and we'll have a special blessing of the backpacks as our kids head back to school. (Grown-ups are invited to bring purses, work bags, diaper bags, etc., too!)



## Holy Cross Day

Sunday, September 17 + 9:30 a.m.

While Holy Cross Day falls midweek, we observe this ancient festival day, which originated in the fourth century, on Sunday. On this day, the church celebrates the triumph of the cross. Paul reminds us that Christ crucified is the power and wisdom of God. As Moses put a serpent on a pole to be a source of healing for the Israelites, we lift high the cross as the sign of our health and salvation. Each time we make the sign of the cross, we remember our baptism into the death and resurrection of Christ.



## Michael & All Angels

Sunday, October 1 + 9:30 a.m.

While the feast of Michael and All Angels falls midweek, we observe this festival day on Sunday. Historically, the archangel Michael is pictured as a prince and a general of the heavenly army, defeating a dragon (understood in biblical context as the ancient serpent, the devil, or Satan). Most importantly, beyond the symbolism and metaphor, this day reminds us that God's victory ultimately comes by Jesus' death and the testimony of his followers. The power of God's truth gives us confidence in the face of evil on earth, even in the face of our own death.

## Blessing of the Animals

Sunday, October 8 + 9:30 a.m.

On October 4, the church remembers St. Francis and his love of all creatures. Today, on October 8, we celebrate all God's creatures in our worship together. Furry, feathered, and scaly critters of all kinds are welcome to join us in worship this Sunday and receive a special blessing in recognition of their companionship in our lives.

**All pets and animals (on leashes, in kennels, etc.) are welcome with the supervision of their humans.** Because this is an animal-friendly liturgy, those with severe allergies may wish to worship online this Sunday or during our animal-free midweek eucharist on Wednesday morning.



## Our Choir Returns!

The Saint John's Collegium Choir will return on Sunday, September 10.

Thank you, Dan and Collegium Choir, for your dedication to excellent music!



# News & Announcements



## Welcome Back BBQ & All-Church Service Project

Sunday, September 10 + after worship

Following worship on September 10, please plan to join us for this year's "God's Work, Our Hands" Sunday service project, as we put together winter care kits to distribute to those in need in the Capital Region in the colder months to come. Monetary donations are welcome to help offset the cost of ordering supplies for the kits; you may give on Sundays, mail your donation to our PO Box, or [give securely online](#). Contact Lindsay Stannard ([lmh3098@yahoo.com](mailto:lmh3098@yahoo.com)) for more information.

In addition, you are also invited to join us for a special potluck meal. The church that prays and works together also eats together! Volunteers are needed to provide side dishes, desserts, chips, beverages, etc. A sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board in the kitchen, or you may contact [Parish Secretary Maggie Anderson](#) for current opportunities.



## 2024 Calendars Wanted

We are collecting 2024 calendars for clients of [Rehabilitation Support Services](#), who use them to track appointments, medication, etc. A collection box is located on the cart near the kitchen.



## Cemetery Decorations

A reminder that all summer decorations must be removed from gravesites at St. John's Cemetery by October 1st.



## Ecumenical Dementia Friendly Service

Sunday, September 17 + 5:00 p.m.

Delmar Presbyterian Church (585 Delaware Ave, Delmar)

Join us for a music-heavy worship featuring old-time hymns. The shortened service will last approximately 30 minutes and feature uplifting and brief messages for those with dementia, as well as their care partners. A reception with light refreshments will be held following the service.

To register, contact Tony Rivera at [tarivera@alz.org](mailto:tarivera@alz.org) or 518.675.7214. You can also register at the Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline at 800.272.3900. All registrants will receive a link to participate in the service virtually, if they are not able to join us in person.

*This event is jointly sponsored by the Capital Area Council of Churches and Alzheimer's Association of Northeastern New York.*




# Serving This Month – September 2023

Please [contact Parish Secretary Maggie Anderson](#) if you can fill one of the *Available* slots.

*Thank you for serving!*

Role	Sept. 3	Sept. 10	Sept. 17	Sept. 24
<b>Altar Guild</b> <i>(set-up &amp; clean-up)</i>	Paula Schwab	Gilda Fake	Linda Davis	Diane & Kelly Conley
<b>Changing Paraments &amp; Laundering Linens</b>	Gilda Fake & Paula Schwab			
<b>Assisting Minister</b>	Karen Bielinski	Lindsay Stannard	Paula Schwab	Karen Bielinski
<b>Reader</b>	Thaisa Beach	Avery Heaney	Thaisa Beach	Melissa Savage
<b>Communion Assistant(s)</b>	Karen Bielinski & <i>Available</i>	Lindsay Stannard & <i>Available</i>	Paula Schwab & <i>Available</i>	Karen Bielinski & Melissa Savage
<b>Ushers</b>	Freddy Boyzer & Kelly Conley			
<b>Opener / Closer</b>	Maggie Anderson / Maggie Anderson	Maggie Anderson / Maggie Anderson	Maggie Anderson / Karen Bielinski	Maggie Anderson / Maggie Anderson
<b>Coffee Hour Host(s)</b>	Volunteers	Welcome Back BBQ & Sundaes	Maggie Anderson & Linda Davis	Maggie Anderson, Ruth Klee, & Barbara Ableman

# September 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
27 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:30 AM Sunday Liturgy at St. John's</li> <li>10:30 AM Coffee Hour</li> </ul>	28 Pastor's Day Off	29	30
3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:30 AM Sunday Liturgy at St. John's</li> <li>10:30 AM Coffee Hour</li> </ul>	4 Labor Day – Church Office Closed Pastor's Day Off 	5	6
10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:30 AM Rally Day Worship with a Blessing of the Backpacks</li> <li>10:30 AM Welcome Back BBQ &amp; All-Church Service Project</li> </ul>	11 Pastor's Day Off	12	13 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10:00 AM Wednesday Morning Eucharist &amp; Bible Study (in-person)</li> <li>7:00 PM Wednesday Evening Bible Study &amp; Compline (Zoom)</li> </ul>
17 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:30 AM Liturgy for Holy Cross Day</li> <li>10:30 AM Coffee Hour</li> </ul>	18 Eagle Deadline Pastor's Day Off	19 6:00 PM Congregation Council Meeting	20 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10:00 AM Wednesday Morning Eucharist &amp; Bible Study (in-person)</li> <li>7:00 PM Wednesday Evening Bible Study &amp; Compline (Zoom)</li> </ul>
24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:30 AM Sunday Liturgy at St. John's</li> <li>10:30 AM Coffee Hour</li> </ul>	25 Pastor's Day Off	26	27 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10:00 AM Wednesday Morning Eucharist &amp; Bible Study (in-person)</li> <li>7:00 PM Wednesday Evening Bible Study &amp; Compline (Zoom)</li> </ul>

# St. John's Month at a Glance

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	1	2
7 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	8	9
14 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	15	16
21 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	22	23
28 6:00 PM Brewed Theology 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	29	30



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[stjohnsalbany.org](http://stjohnsalbany.org)

for the most up-to-date  
calendar of events

## *Office Coverage*

**Monday & Friday**

Maggie Anderson

**Tuesday-Thursday**

Pastor Josh Evans

*Please call ahead before  
stopping by to ensure  
someone is in the office.*



**St. John's**

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

**PO Box 5085**

**Albany, New York 12205**

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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

***Our Mission***

We worship God, serve faithfully, and reach out.



***We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation.***

Trusting in the extravagant grace of God that sets us free,  
we affirm the sacred worth and dignity of our siblings in Christ  
– of all sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions,  
racial and ethnic identities, ages, abilities, and socio-economic statuses.

We confess the church's complicity in systems that harm God's people,  
including homophobia and transphobia, sexism,  
racism and white supremacy, and ableism.

Together, as a community of Jesus followers, rooted in grace,  
we commit ourselves to the work of racial equity and anti-racism  
and to confronting and dismantling all systems of injustice and oppression  
in all we do and say.

***Church Staff***

***The Rev. Josh Evans***

Pastor

[pastorjosh@stjohnsalbany.org](mailto:pastorjosh@stjohnsalbany.org)

***Dan Foster***

Director of Music

[danfoster@stjohnsalbany.org](mailto:danfoster@stjohnsalbany.org)

***Maggie Anderson***

Parish Secretary

[parishsec@stjohnsalbany.org](mailto:parishsec@stjohnsalbany.org)