

The Eagle

October 2023

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

Blessing of the Animals

Sunday, October 8

9:30 AM

(more on page 6)



From the Pastor

Grateful

Recently I came across this ancient, but new-to-me poem by the 13th century poet, Islamic scholar, and Sufi mystic Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Rūmī – more commonly known as, simply, Rumi:

*This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.*

*A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.*

*Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.*

*The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them in.*

*Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.*

We humans often go to great lengths to *control* our environment, don't we? There's a certain – well – *certainty* in such control. When we can control things, there is little chance for things to go “wrong.” Keep things “the way they always have been,” we tell ourselves. *Predictable*. And there's a certain *comfort* in that, isn't there?

But what about when we *lose* control? When the “dark thought, the shame, the malice” come

knocking on the door of our guest house? Lock the door, turn off the lights, pull down the shades, and wait for the unwanted house guest to go away. Right?

Not so fast, Rumi cautions. “Meet them at the door laughing, and invite them in.” And, perhaps most importantly, “Be *grateful*.”

On the one hand, exercising control lends us a measure of predictability and comfort. But it also leaves little room for *surprise* – and, perhaps, every once in a while, in that surprise we will find *gratitude* for the unexpected house guest.

Things don't always go the way we plan. (Understatement.) Bible study schedules shift. Liturgy plans get interrupted by illness. *Stuff* happens, the saying goes.

I am so incredibly *grateful* to be a part of a community that rolls with the *stuff* – always adapting and practicing a generous grace with one another.

Keep opening the door, keep inviting, keep on being grateful.

Grace and peace,
Josh +



Photo by [Dylan Ferreira](#) on [Unsplash](#)

thank you

- Karen Bielinski for stepping in to cover Sunday worship not just once, but *twice* this past month.
- All who helped make Rally Day a success – whether you helped with set up or clean up, served food, or brought something yummy to share.
- Everyone who donated their time and resources to “God’s Work, Our Hands” to assemble 100 winter care kits for our neighbors experiencing homelessness this winter.



In Our Prayers

For what shall we pray?

- Prayers of healing for Henrietta Larsen who was hospitalized over the summer
- Prayers of healing for Peg Rendert who is recovering from a broken ankle
- Prayer prompts, events, and observances on the [ELCA Worship Blog](#)

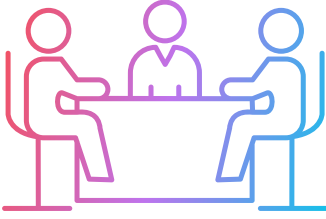
Prayer requests are published in *The Eagle* so that the whole community can hold one another in prayer and support. Submit a prayer request [online](#) or [contact Pastor Josh Evans](#).

“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday



Council Corner

St. John's congregation council met on Tuesday, September 19:



- Plans were discussed for our annual generosity (stewardship) appeal, with Generosity (pledge) Sunday set for Sunday, October 29. Stay tuned for further communications.
- A proposal to install new dimmable wall sconces in the sanctuary was approved, replacing the existing floor lamps.
- A special congregation meeting has been called for Sunday, October 15, following worship to discuss building plans for the future of St. John's ministries on Sand Creek.
- A generous bequest from the Turner estate for both the congregation and the cemetery was received with thanks and will be tithed to five ministry partners beyond our walls.

Next meeting: Tuesday, October 17, 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!

Kids of all ages are invited to join us for Sunday School immediately following the liturgy.

Upcoming Fall Dates

October 22

October 29

November 5

November 19

Contact Paige Pierle, Sunday School teacher, at sundayschool@stjohnsalbany.org with any questions.



Brewed Theology

Thursday, October 26 + 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.*** [RSVP to Pastor Josh Evans](#) by Tuesday, October 24 for a copy of the "homework" (always optional, but strongly encouraged!) and so we can be sure to reserve a table (if needed).



Fall Bible Study

Bible Stories for Grown-Ups

Wednesdays + 7:00 p.m. via Zoom

October 4 – November 8

Read the Bible for the first time – again. In *Bible Stories for Grown-Ups: Reading Scripture with New Eyes*, Pastor Josh Scott looks at familiar Bible stories and reveals new details and interpretations for an adult audience. This six-week Bible study will consider stories many read as children including Noah's Ark, the binding of Isaac, Jonah and the big fish, Jesus and Zacchaeus, Jesus healing a blind man, and the parable of the talents. [Contact Pastor Josh Evans](#) for more information, including a link to buy the book.

Worship



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.

Reformation Sunday

Sunday, October 29 + 9:30 a.m.

Rooted in the past and growing into the future, the church must always be reforming in order to live out the love of Christ in an ever-changing world. On this and every Sunday, we celebrate the good news of God's grace, that Jesus Christ sets us free every day to do this life-transforming work. Trusting in the freedom given to us in baptism, we pray for the church, that Christians will unite more fully in worship and mission.



Wear RED (the color of the Spirit and of reformation) if you have it!



All Saints Sunday

Sunday, November 5 + 9:30 a.m.

In preparation for this liturgy, we invite you to record the names of departed saints who have died since last All Saints Day in our necrology (book of the names of the dead). You are also encouraged to bring in photos of your departed loved ones to include on our altar of remembrance in our worship space.

The necrology will be available on Sundays beginning October 8 to inscribe the names of those who have died since last All Saints Day. You may also contact the church office, and we will add the names of your loved ones for you.

Compline

Contemplative Night Prayer

Wednesdays at 8:15 PM on Zoom

Compline, also called “Night Prayer,” is part of the ancient monastic pattern of daily prayer, sometimes called the “Daily Office” or “Liturgy of the Hours.” It’s a short, simple, contemplative service, meant to be prayed at the close of the day before bed. It’s also a great way to unwind and decompress at the end of a long day and spend some quiet time with God in the midst of it all.

Pray compline with us on Wednesdays this fall. For Zoom access, visit our website, check your eNews, or [contact Pastor Josh Evans](#). No internet access? Contact Pastor Josh to learn how to connect by phone (landline or mobile).



Albany Maritime Ministry – Christmas at Sea

This Christmas, many of us will be surrounded by family and friends, at home and in church. At the same time, Christmas for most seafarers will be in the middle of the ocean with neither family nor friends, home nor church. As a part of Albany Maritime Ministry’s “Christmas at Sea” program, we’re seeking your help to gather a few items to be gift wrapped and given to port volunteers to distribute to seafarers this holiday season. Even though crews are confined to their ships, we can deliver some Christmas joy to them.



How can you help? Collect a few items, place them in a shoebox, and gift wrap it. *Suggestions include: knit cap, gloves, socks, writing paper, envelopes, comb or brush, book, ear buds, toiletries (razor, shaving cream, shampoo, shower gel), and new and gently used DVDs. No candy or other food, please.*

**Both wrapped gift boxes and empty shoeboxes (for later packing)
may be left in the church kitchen.**

News & Announcements



Generosity Appeal

Our 2023 generosity appeal kicks off this month, centered on Jeremiah 29:11: *“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says God, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.”* The rhythms of diaspora and gathering, exile and return, have been part of the life of faith for generations – and as the world opens up, we can all look ahead to the next chapter, “a future with hope.”

Mark your calendars now for Generosity Sunday, October 29, and look for more information, including a pledge commitment card, coming soon.



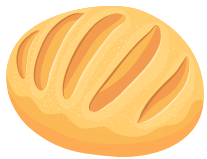
Special Congregation Meeting

Save the date for a special congregation meeting on **Sunday, October 15,** immediately following worship. Official notice, along with agenda items, will be shared in a separate communication. [Contact Lindsay Stannard](#), congregation president, with any questions.



Emergency Homeless Overflow Shelter Dinners

As the overflow shelter, housed at First Lutheran, re-opens for the season in November, St. John’s has several opportunities to prepare a meal for the shelter guests, including **November 14, January 9, March 5, and April 30.** A typical dinner consists of a main entrée (casseroles are a great choice), a starch, a vegetable or salad, and a dessert. If you’d like to help prepare a meal, please contact Karen Bielinski at 518.463.6224 or kbielins@nycap.rr.com.



Communion Bread Bakers Needed

There is a sign-up sheet on the kitchen bulletin board, as well as copies of a simple recipe. The recipe makes enough bread for one month (4-5 Sundays) and freezes well. Call the church office or [email Maggie Anderson, parish secretary](#), for more information.



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 **as soon as possible.** Thank you for helping to maintain the beauty of our sacred space and the hard work of our groundskeepers.

Serving This Month – October 2023

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

Thank you for serving!

Role	Oct. 1	Oct. 8	Oct. 15	Oct. 22	Oct. 29
Altar Guild <i>(set-up & clean-up)</i>	Paula Schwab	Gilda Fake	Linda Davis	Diane & Kelly Conley	Paula Schwab
Changing Paraments & Laundering Linens	Gilda Fake & Paula Schwab				
Assisting Minister	Karen Bielinski	Lindsay Stannard	Paula Schwab	Karen Bielinski	Lindsay Stannard
Reader	Thaisa Beach	Avery Heaney	Melissa Savage	Thaisa Beach	Thaisa Beach
Communion Assistant(s)	Karen Bielinski & <i>Available</i>	Lindsay Stannard & <i>Available</i>	Paula Schwab & <i>Available</i>	Karen Bielinski & Melissa Savage	Lindsay Stannard & <i>Available</i>
Ushers	Freddy Boyzer & Kelly Conley				
Opener / Closer	Maggie Anderson / Maggie Anderson	Maggie Anderson / Maggie Anderson	Maggie Anderson / Karen Bielinski	Maggie Anderson / Maggie Anderson	Maggie Anderson / Maggie Anderson
Coffee Hour Host(s)	Maggie Anderson	Maggie Anderson & Gilda Fake	Maggie Anderson & Linda Davis	Maggie Anderson, Ruth Klee, & Barbara Ableman	Maggie Anderson

October 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
<div>1</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:30 AM Liturgy for Michael & All Angels 10:30 AM Coffee Hour 10:30 AM Fall Sunday School 	<div>2</div> <div>Pastor's Day Off</div>	<div>3</div>	<div>4</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 PM Bible Study: Bible Stories for Grown-Ups 8:15 PM Compline
<div>8</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:30 AM Sunday Liturgy at St. John's with Blessing of the Animals 10:30 AM Coffee Hour 	<div>9</div> <div>Indigenous Peoples' Day - Church Office Closed</div> <div>Pastor's Day Off</div>	<div>10</div>	<div>11</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 PM Bible Study: Bible Stories for Grown-Ups 8:15 PM Compline
<div>15</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:30 AM Sunday Liturgy at St. John's 10:30 AM Coffee Hour 10:45 AM Special Congregation Meeting 	<div>16</div> <div>Eagle Deadline</div> <div>Pastor's Day Off</div>	<div>17</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6:00 PM Congregation Council Meeting 	<div>18</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 PM Bible Study: Bible Stories for Grown-Ups 8:15 PM Compline
<div>22</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:30 AM Sunday Liturgy at St. John's 10:30 AM Coffee Hour 10:30 AM Fall Sunday School 	<div>23</div> <div>Pastor Evans Away - Rostered Leader Ministerium</div> <div>Pastor's Day Off</div>	<div>24</div>	<div>25</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 PM Bible Study: Bible Stories for Grown-Ups 8:15 PM Compline
<div>29</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:30 AM Liturgy for Reformation Sunday 10:30 AM Coffee Hour 10:30 AM Fall Sunday School 	<div>30</div> <div>Pastor's Day Off</div>	<div>31</div>	

Eagle Deadline

Submissions for the November edition of *The Eagle* are due by **Monday, October 16**, and may be sent to Parish Secretary Maggie Anderson at parishsec@stjohnsalbany.org.

St. John's Month at a Glance

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5 ■ 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	6	7
12 ■ 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	13	14
19 ■ 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal ■ 7:00 PM Thursday Night Reads – Everyday Advocate	20	21
26 ■ 6:00 PM Brewed Theology ■ 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	27	28



Looking ahead...
 Daylight Savings Time ends
 November 5. Don't forget to
fall back one hour on Saturday
 night, November 4!



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or visit us online



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

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Albany, New York 12205

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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

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Dan Foster

Director of Music

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Maggie Anderson

Parish Secretary

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