



July/August 2024

The Eagle

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



**Bearing God's creative,
redeeming,
and *fabulous love*
to all the world!**

More from Capital Pride
on [page 11](#)

HERANS

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Encounter the grace of the Living C

First Lutheran Church
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www.FirstLutheranAlbany.org

From the Pastor

Stories

"We tell ourselves stories in order to live."

– Joan Didion,
writer and journalist

Stories are part of the fabric of human existence. From the time we're born, parents, grandparents, and caregivers read us bedtime stories. We catch up with friends, colleagues, and family and tell stories over after-work happy hour or holiday dinners. At funerals, we bear witness to the lives of our loved ones by sharing stories and memories.

We tell stories in order to live, and our stories make meaning out of our lives.

The same could be said of church. Every week, we gather to hear the stories of our biblical ancestors. Their stories inspire us in our own time and help us to make meaning of the world around us. Immersed in "Ordinary Time" this summer, we'll hear a lot of those stories about Jesus from Mark's gospel ([page 6](#)).

Sometimes, our stories can be painful too. Later this month, we'll have a chance to hear from Mother Grace Ferris in a presentation exploring the ways our sacred scriptures have been weaponized against marginalized groups, including the LGBTQIA+ community ([page 5](#)). Acknowledging the harm caused is an important step in reclaiming and transforming stories of shame into stories of joy and pride.

The very pages of this newsletter themselves tell the story of this community of faith:

A community that worships together and learns together.

A community that bears witness to God's inclusive and extravagant love together for the sake of the world ([page 11](#)).

A community that supports each other and holds one another in prayer ([page 3](#)).

The story of St. John's is rooted in a treasured history and continues through a vibrant present.

We tell – and we live – this story in order to give life: to ourselves, to our neighbors, to the world.

We tell this story in order to make meaning of the increasingly troubled world we live in, bearing witness to God's story of resurrection promise that is *always* being told and re-told in every time and place.

Thank you for telling the story, dear church.

Keep on telling the story.

Josh +



Photo (above) by [dodotone](#) on Canva
Cover photo (previous page) by [Lori Van Buren/Times Union](#)

Thank you

Our special thanks this month to...

- **everyone who participated in the CROP Hunger Walk.** Whether you donated or walked with our team (or both!), we are grateful for your commitment to help us meet our goal in eradicating hunger in our communities. Together, **our congregation raised a total of \$576.40** – you're amazing!
- **everyone who brought in red flowers for Pentecost – and to Maggie Anderson for planting them** around the chapel the following week. They look lovely!
- **everyone who lent a hand for our annual Spring Cleaning day** on June 2, with a special shout-out to **Nick Klapp** for giving the chapel building a nice 'bath' with his power-washer! 🍷💧
- **everyone who contributed to our World Hunger offering** for synod assembly, **raising a total of \$598.75** that we were able to bring to Syracuse in June.
- **Paula Schwab & Lindsay Stannard** for representing our congregation as voting members at the Upstate New York Synod Assembly, June 3 & 4.
- **St. John's members and others from our Albany-area congregations who marched and tabled with us at Capital Pride** 🏳️ on June 9 to share God's inclusive and extravagant love with our neighbors.

In Our Prayers

For whom or what shall we pray?



- For Dick Rendert who is recuperating in rehab at Daughters of Sarah.
- For Joe Pierle Sr. who is recovering from hip replacement surgery.

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](#).

Pastoral Care

Hospitalized? Undergoing or recovering from surgery? Grieving a loss? Or just feeling alone? Please let us know. We care about you and want to accompany you in difficult times. **If you or a loved one would like a pastoral call or visit, please call or text Pastor Josh Evans at 518.250.9098.** If you would like communion brought to you, please let us know that as well.



Council Corner

St. John's congregation council met on **Tuesday, June 18** for its regular monthly meeting and:

- **welcomed new council members** Staren Bielinski & Melissa Savage.
- **bid farewell, with gratitude, to outgoing council members** Jackie Campbell, Mike Centanni, Gilda Fake, & Paula Schwab.
- **elected new officers**, including Lindsay Stannard as president, Jerry Schwab as vice president, Staren Bielinski as secretary, Melissa Savage as treasurer, and Joy Pierle as assistant treasurer. All terms retroactively began on June 1, 2024 and will end May 31, 2025.
- **received an update on the estate of Shirley Kane** and approved a tithe of 10% (\$15,600) to the Upstate New York Synod and placing the remainder (\$140,400) in a Certificate of Deposit.
- **approved the renewal of the Certificates of Deposit from the Turner estate** (received last year) for another term which will mature on March 20, 2025.

Welcome
new
council
members!



Above: Staren Bielinski, pictured here as the unofficial understudy for the angel Gabriel for the Sunday School Christmas Program.

Left: Melissa Savage, pictured with her spouse and children.



Save the Date
Council Installation
Sunday, July 21

Next meeting:
Tuesday, July 16
7:00 p.m. via Zoom

Albany Lutherans Together



July & August Outreach Ministry

Throughout July & August, we are collecting items for teachers and students at Delaware Community & Giffen Memorial Schools in Albany. Suggested donations include: B&W marble composition notebooks, 3-hole loose-leaf paper, folders, index cards, crayons, markers, glue sticks, disinfectant wipes, pencils (#2 & colored), dry-erase markers, paper plates, napkins, small brown paper lunch bags, boxes of tissues, and quart and gallon size Ziploc bags. **Items may be left in the collection basket in the kitchen.** Thank you for supporting our students and their teachers!

Albany Lutherans Together presents

The Maleficent Seven: How to Handle the Clobber Passages

A Presentation by Mother Grace Wilgefortis Ferris, FCR



**Albany
Lutherans
Together**



Sunday, July 28 at 1pm

A light lunch will be served at 12:30.



St. John's Lutheran Church
303 Sand Creek Road, Albany, NY 12205



Please RSVP at
stjohnsalbany.org/mothergrace

Albany Lutherans Together (ALT) hosts Mother Grace Ferris for a unique learning opportunity to delve more deeply into scripture and the ways that it has been harmful to marginalized groups, particularly the LGBTQIA+ community. This event is available to the wider community, both in person and on Zoom. **Please RSVP at stjohnsalbany.org/mothergrace** to help us plan for logistics, including lunch, or sign up on the bulletin board in the kitchen.

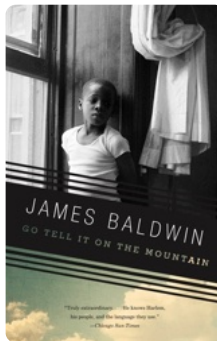
Summer Book Club Opportunities

Copies are available on the book club shelf at the Book House of Stuyvesant Plaza. Mention the book club to receive 20% off.

Questions?

[Email Pr. Lowell Chilton.](mailto:prlowell@stuyvesantplaza.org)

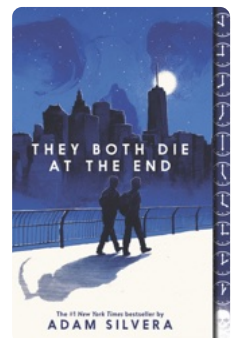
Join via [Zoom](#)



Go Tell It on the Mountain
by James Baldwin
Monday, July 29 + 7:00 p.m.



They Both Die at the End
by Adam Silvera
Monday, August 26 + 7:00 p.m.



Worship



Ordinary Time

The two central cycles of Christmas and Easter that focused on the person and work of Christ now give way to the implications of those events for the life of the church. **Our summer “Ordinary Time” – the time after Pentecost – calls us to proclaim, bear witness to, and live out God’s ongoing will for the world God so deeply loves.** The church knows and believes in its very bones that salvation is bound in and of a love for the world, not an escape from the world.

The Sundays after Pentecost return to gospel readings from Mark. There is no particular unifying theme to these readings, except that they portray Jesus’ ministry in Mark’s typical style: with urgency, focus, and a relentless drive forward to ensure that the kingdom of God comes among us. **What are the implications of this urgency and focus for the ministry of God’s people in our context today?**

Join us for worship in this anything-but-ordinary season as we explore this question – and more – together, gathered around word and meal, in the embodied community of the church, here and now.

– adapted from *Sundays & Seasons*



July 7

7th Sunday after Pentecost
9:30 a.m. (in person & [livestreamed](#))

July 14

8th Sunday after Pentecost
9:30 a.m. (in person & [livestreamed](#))
with special guest preacher
Karen Bielinski

July 28

10th Sunday after Pentecost
9:30 a.m. (in person & [livestreamed](#))

August 4

11th Sunday after Pentecost
9:30 a.m. (in person & [livestreamed](#))

August 11

12th Sunday after Pentecost
9:30 a.m. (in person & [livestreamed](#))

August 25

14th Sunday after Pentecost
9:30 a.m. (in person & [livestreamed](#))

September 1

15th Sunday after Pentecost
9:30 a.m. (in person & [livestreamed](#))
Labor Day Weekend



July 21
9th Sunday after Pentecost
9:30 a.m.
(in person & [livestreamed](#))

Commemoration of
Mary Magdalene,
Apostle to the Apostles



August 18
13th Sunday after Pentecost
9:30 a.m.
(in person & [livestreamed](#))
Feast of Mary,
Mother of Our Lord

Serving in Worship

Time:	9:30 a.m.	9:30 a.m.	9:30 a.m.	9:30 a.m.
Date:	July 7	July 14	July 21	July 28
Presiding Minister	Pr. Josh Evans	Pr. Josh Evans	Pr. Josh Evans	Pr. Josh Evans
Assisting Minister	Lindsay Stannard	Paula Schwab	Karen Bielinski	Lindsay Stannard
Minister of Music	Dan Foster	Dan Foster	Dan Foster	Dan Foster
Reader	Thaisa Beach	Melissa Savage	Lindsay Stannard	Karen Bielinski
Communion Assistant	Paula Schwab	Melissa Savage	Lindsay Stannard	Joy Pierle
Sacristan (Altar Guild)	Paula Schwab	Maggie Anderson	Paula Schwab	Maggie Anderson
Bread Baker	Sheryl Centanni	Sheryl Centanni	Sheryl Centanni	Sheryl Centanni
Usher	Kelly Conley	Kelly Conley	Kelly Conley	Kelly Conley
Livestream Tech	Shea Stannard	Jerry Schwab	Shea Stannard	Shea Stannard
Offering Counters	Emily Coppentrath & Lindsay Stannard	Judy Szesnat & Karen Bielinski	Jerry Schwab & Karen Seiz	Karen Bielinski & Lindsay Stannard
Coffee Hour Host(s)	Jerry Schwab	Karen Bielinski	OPEN	OPEN



Time:	9:30 a.m.	9:30 a.m.	9:30 a.m.	9:30 a.m.
Date:	August 4	August 11	August 18	August 25
Presiding Minister	Pr. Josh Evans	Pr. Josh Evans	Pr. Josh Evans	Pr. Josh Evans
Assisting Minister	Paula Schwab	Karen Bielinski	Lindsay Stannard	Paula Schwab
Minister of Music	Dan Foster	Dan Foster	Dan Foster	Dan Foster
Reader	Thaisa Beach	Melissa Savage	Karen Bielinski	Lindsay Stannard
Communion Assistant	Karen Bielinski	Melissa Savage	Gilda Fake	Joy Pierle
Sacristan (Altar Guild)	Paula Schwab	Maggie Anderson	Gilda Fake	Paula Schwab
Bread Baker	Sheryl Centanni	Sheryl Centanni	Sheryl Centanni	Sheryl Centanni
Usher	Kelly Conley	Kelly Conley	Kelly Conley	Kelly Conley
Livestream Tech	Shea Stannard	Jerry Schwab	Shea Stannard	Shea Stannard
Offering Counters	Emily Coppentrath & Karen Bielinski	Gilda Fake & Karen Bielinski	Jerry Schwab & Karen Seiz	Judy Szesnat & Lindsay Stannard
Coffee Hour Host(s)	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN



Let there be light!
Thanks to Dan Foster for his diligent work in upgrading our sanctuary lighting with hand-built, custom sconces.

WE NEED YOU!

There's a **role for everyone** in Sunday worship, and we're always eager to welcome new volunteers. Whether you want to be front-and-center as an assisting minister or behind-the-scenes on altar guild, we've got a role for you! Training is available. Contact [Pr. Josh](#) for details.

Can't make your scheduled date?

Please contact **BOTH** [Maggie](#) **AND** [Pr. Josh](#).

Help us prepare the September/October schedule.

Please alert us of any dates you are **NOT** available **by August 15** so that we can accommodate your schedule.



Upcoming Events & Opportunities



Berry Festival at Good Shepherd

Saturday, July 13

4:00-6:00 p.m.

510 Albany Shaker Rd.
Loudonville

Support our ministry partners at Good Shepherd and enjoy strawberries, blueberries, and black raspberries over biscuits topped with either vanilla ice cream or whipped cream, along with some great fellowship.

A free-will offering will be taken to support the ministries of Good Shepherd. For more information, contact Danny Patrick (518.477.5355).



Visit to The Clark
Saturday, August 10

Take a day trip to Williamstown, MA, to visit [The Clark Art Institute](#). We will meet at noon to grab lunch together in the museum café, followed by a 1:15 private group tour.

[Sign up online](#)

or on the bulletin board in the kitchen, and prepay online or by cash or check (payable to St. John's, attention to Pastor Josh Evans).

Brewed Theology

Wednesday, August 14

6:30 p.m.

The Warbler Brewery
155 Delaware Ave., Delmar



"What's special about a church building?" asks Brian Bantum [in a recent article](#). Join us for good conversation, coupled with delicious local brews (soft drinks also available), as we dive into this very question.

Read the article(s) [here](#) in advance. (They're short.)



Albany Maritime Ministry

Welcoming seafarers along the Hudson River in New York's Capital District

1500 Western Ave., Albany, NY 12203 USA
phone: 518.446-2648 website: www.AlbanyMM.us



Sundaes on Sunday

At the Albany Maritime Ministry
109 Smith Blvd. Albany, New York
August 25th from 1-3

Perhaps you have heard of the Albany Maritime Ministry, but don't know much about it. You and your friends are invited to an Open House on August 25th. You will be able to:

1. Visit the William Hempel Seafarers Center
2. Get a tour of the Port (If Security permits)
3. See a ship if there is one in port
4. Talk to staff and meet our Chaplains
5. Learn about Christmas at Sea
6. Learn about being a volunteer
7. Make your own Sundae

There is no need to make a reservation but mark the date on your calendar and come to the Open House. Hope to see you on the 25th of August and enjoy some time together.



Welcome New(ish) Bookkeeper Judy Carlson!

In February, we welcomed Judy Carlson as St. John's bookkeeper to help ease the workload of then-treasurer Joy Pierle (for whose faithful work these past many years we give *much* thanks!). In her role, Judy coordinates staff payroll, handles all bill payments and check requests, and prepares monthly financial reports for council. She has also been hard at work transitioning our books from PowerChurch to Aplos, a newer and more modern accounting platform designed for churches and non-profits.

Judy comes to us with a background of many years in financial services, focusing on financial planning, compliance, supervision, and investments. She is also a member of First Lutheran Church in Albany, where she serves on council as (you guessed it) their treasurer.

Contact Judy at

bookkeeper@stjohnsalbany.org.



Eagle Deadline

Submissions for the September/October edition of *The Eagle* are due by **August 19**.

[Submit your announcement\(s\) online](#) or contact the church office.

Sign up to bring treats to share (homemade or store-bought are equally welcome!), make coffee, and help with set-up or clean-up – following the 9:30 a.m. liturgy every Sunday.

Summer Coffee Hour Hosts



Sign up online for [July & August](#) or on the bulletin board at church.



Nurture your spirituality with daily devotions

Pick up a copy of the July/August edition of *The Upper Room* at church or [read online](#).

Want us to mail you a copy? Contact [Maggie](#).



Miss a Sunday?

[Download our FREE app](#) for quick links to previous livestreamed worship services, as well as our sermon blog and podcast! Search for **Church Center** wherever you download apps on your smartphone and look for the icon above.

You can also access the online directory, update your contact info, set up secure online giving, and view upcoming events.

Around St. John's...

SPRING CLEANING



Thanks to our many volunteers for giving the chapel a little TLC on June 2 after worship!



Capital Area Council of Churches

May 6, 2024

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
PO Box 5085
Albany, NY 12205

Dear St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church:

On behalf of the Capital Area Council of Churches (CACC), I would like to thank you for the very generous gift of \$12,250.00 that your congregation gave in 2023 to support the work of the CACC and the Emergency Overflow Shelter. Because of your generous donation, we are able to continue serving the Capital Region through our ecumenical programs and help house and feed unhoused men in our area during the harsh winter months.

One of the challenges of an organization like ours is the ability to generate the resources to support the day-to-day operations that support all of our activities throughout the Capital Region. Directed fundraising efforts, such as for the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., scholarship, the Emergency Overflow Shelter, and the CROP Walk benefit those activities directly, but do not address the operations that support them. An additional expense to the CACC operations budget this year is the upcoming move of the office and shelter due to the sale of our current building.

We appreciate your continued support for the Capital Area Council of Churches; we ask that your community please consider if it is possible to make an additional donation towards the operations budget. This donation would help cover the expenses of the upcoming relocation of our shelter and office, as well as other expenses incurred through our regular ecumenical events. We understand that this extra "ask" may not be possible; any giving, including your prayers, is a blessing.

As we move through our 83rd year, we are grateful for ecumenical networks that have grown in the Capital District. We thank you very much for being part of it.

May God bless you and yours!

Gratefully,

Peter Crasto-Donnelly
Peter Crasto-Donnelly
President

Bruce B. France
Bruce B. France
Executive Director

WALK of HOSPICE '24

Thanks to everyone who made a pledge for my walk, it was a huge success! They raised over \$10,000 on the day of the walk and \$151,000 overall. I look forward to next year!

Thank you
again,
JACKIE

THANK you

...and beyond!



Pride



Church Office Hours

10 AM – 4 PM

Monday

Pastor Josh Evans (10 AM – 4 PM)

Maggie Anderson (12 – 4 PM)

Tuesday – Thursday

Pastor Josh Evans

Friday

Maggie Anderson

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



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office@stjohnsalbany.org



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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

pastorjosh@stjohnsalbany.org

Dan Foster

Director of Music

danfoster@stjohnsalbany.org

Maggie Anderson

Community Care Coordinator

parishsec@stjohnsalbany.org