



The Eagle

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

September/October 2024

From the Pastor

It's been an exciting *and packed* summer at St. John's!

Back in June, we welcomed Bishop Lee Miller as our guest preacher for Pride Sunday, and then several of us took to the streets – *literally!* – to march in the Capital Pride Parade to bear witness to God's extravagant love for all people. In July, we enjoyed our second annual "Lutheran Night" at the Tri-City ValleyCats (*Vamos Gatos!*), and we welcomed Mother Grace Ferris for a special faith formation event with our fellow Albany-area Lutherans. More recently, we also enjoyed the music of Spencer LaJoye at a small listening concert at the chapel, and Albany Lutherans Together experienced the amazing collection at The Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, MA.

Often we assume (clearly *incorrectly*) that summer is the "slump" of the church year. *Not so at St. John's!* Our life together in these summer months has been *vibrant*, and for this, I am grateful.

The very pages of this newsletter are a testament to that. Even as we were preparing this edition, trying to cram in all the content and photos we wanted to include, it occurred to us:

No matter how "small" our congregation is, St. John's is still involved in a BIG way – and it's what continues to make us *relevant*.

That's not just a buzzword I throw around lightly either. Around the time I graduated college, I landed in a fairly new (at the time) United Methodist church plant in Chicago. Every week, as the pastor or another worship leader welcomed folks to the service, they would remind us of our community's core values (which, I would propose, are also *our* core values).

We are *bold* in our proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ that tears down the walls that divide us; *inclusive* because of that good news; and *relevant* in the way we live our faith in our "Monday through Friday" lives.

On the one hand, it's *all* about what we do on Sundays – and it's also *not just* what we do on Sundays. Through Word and Sacrament, we are *filled* with God's grace *one day* out of the week *in order to embody that grace* for the people around us *every day* of the week.

This fall at St. John's, we've got lots of unique worship opportunities coming up, all kicking off with Rally Day on September 8. Then come back in the middle of the week for Lunch Bunch or Faith on Tap to connect with each other *outside* of the pews.

I'm excited to continue living this meaningful *and relevant* faith with you all – in Sunday worship *and beyond*.

~ Pastor Josh

See inside for all the opportunities to be *relevant* as a faith community ... then come join us!



Our Mission: Worship God. Serve Faithfully. Reach Out.

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Street Address: 303 Sand Creek Road, Albany, NY 12205
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 5085, Albany, NY 12205





Rally Day Worship on Sunday, September 8

Welcome back to *worship* this fall! A celebratory "Rally Day" worship service will be held on Sunday, September 8, from 9:30-10:30 am. This special service will include music from our newly returned and much-loved **St. John's Collegium** and a special **backpack / back-to-school blessing** for all ages! Join us as we "Rally back to regular!"



Welcome Back BBQ on Sunday, September 8

Welcome back to *community* at St. John's this fall! Please join us on Sunday, September 8, from 11 am to 12 pm (following worship service) for a special **Potluck BBQ**. A signup sheet for bringing salads, side dishes, beverages and desserts is on the bulletin board in the kitchen. And of course, we'll have ice cream sundaes, too!



Narrative Liturgy on Sunday, September 15

Ever wonder why we do what we do every Sunday? Join us on Sunday, September 15, at 9:30 am for a **Narrative Liturgy of Holy Communion**. This is an opportunity to deepen our awareness of what takes place in the familiar four-fold pattern of Sunday worship – Gathering, Word, Meal, and Sending.



Pr. Kate Drefke: Guest Preacher September 22



We'll welcome **Pastor Kate Drefke** as our **Guest Preacher and Presider** at our worship service on

Sunday, September 22, 9:30 am.

She and Pr. Josh will be doing a "pulpit swap" that day, so Pr. Josh will be at her two churches: Faith Lutheran Church in Troy, NY, and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Poestenkill, NY. We look forward to seeing you soon, Pr. Kate!

Outdoor Eucharist & Blessing of Animals: October 6

Join us for a special **OUTDOOR** worship service on Sunday, October 6, at 9:30 am as we celebrate and give thanks for all God's creatures.

Furry, feathered, and scaly critters of all kinds are welcome to join us and receive a special blessing in recognition of their companionship in our lives. NOTE: All pets and animals (on leashes, in kennels, etc.) are welcome with the supervision of their humans. Photos of beloved pets and stuffed animals are also most welcome! In the event of rain, worship will move inside; pets are still welcome! Worship with us **OUTSIDE** at 303 Sand Creek Road, Albany. (There will be no livestream this week.)



Celebrate Reformation Sunday on October 27

Rooted in the past and growing into the future, the church must always be reformed in order to live out the love of Christ in an ever-changing world.

During worship on Reformation Sunday, October 27, at 9:30 am, we will 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. ***Don't forget to wear RED!***



Sunday School, Sept. 8: God's Work, Our Hands

Calling kids of all ages and their families! Join us on Sunday, September 8, 10:45-11:45 am for a special Welcome Back to Sunday School gathering: "God's Work, Our Hands."

Together, we'll make homemade cards and flower arrangements (using our special St. John's mason jars) to deliver to our members who are homebound as a special way to let them know we're thinking about them. We'll also have a potluck lunch and ice cream sundaes! Don't forget to join us for worship at 9:30 am for a special backpack/ back to school blessing!



Join Sunday School on Sept. 29, Oct. 13 & 27

Kids of all ages and their families are invited to join us for a simple Sunday School lesson following worship. No registration needed; just show up and be led by ...

September 29: Paige Pierle

October 13: Karisa Centanni

October 27: Paige Pierle



Saint John's Collegium ~ from Dan Foster

"David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers with instruments of musick, psalteries and harps and cymbals, sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy." ~ 1 Chronicles 15:16

Dear Congregation of Saint John's ~ I know you're as thrilled as we are that choir will resume on Sunday, September 8.

As Christians, we can trace our sung faith back at least as far as our roots in ancient Judaism: in Solomon's Temple (completed in the 10th century B.C.), the Levites – musicians and shleppers in the Temple – stood on opposite staircases to sing The Psalms, just as we do in the Summer when we chant in alternation – Sand Creek Road side/Saint John's Cemetery side, and when the choir is in session – Choir/Full; Choir/Full. Thousands of years later, it's still among our greatest joys to Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing (Psalm 100:2), and to lead our congregation in worship, for "He who sings prays twice."

In the coming months, we will reintroduce each member of Saint John's Collegium, starting with this season's High School Choral Apprentice, MAURA LANDER:



Maura developed a passion for singing and musical theater at the ripe old age of 11. Now 17 (one year younger than her friend Mikayla Malenfant), she has just begun her senior year at Averill Park High School. Like Mikayla, she hopes to attend the Crane School of Music to pursue a career in music education. She's been studying with me for over a year and is very excited to be a part of a fine church choir where she will learn a great many things about ensemble singing, best practices for sacred choir formation and development, a depth of repertoire that one can't access in high school choir, and the importance of music and worship.

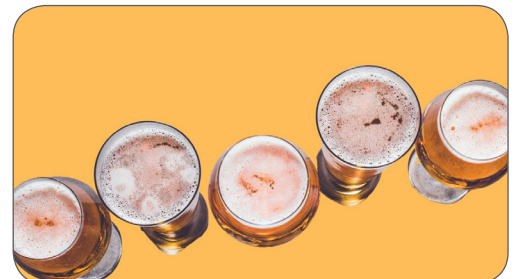
We are always delighted to offer the richness and depth of the very best sacred music in praise of God to our small but lovely church.

Yours in Christ ~ Dan Foster, Director of Music

Faith on Tap: September 4 & October 2, 6:30-8 pm

Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit (LCHS) & St. John's invite you to join us for good conversation and delicious local brews (soft drinks also available) at the Warbler Brewery (155 Delaware Ave. in Delmar). Faith on Tap is held on first Wednesdays – September 4 and October 2 – 6:30-8:00 pm.

BYO dinner from a local restaurant (there are three in the same strip as Warbler). Come tap into some great times of fellowship with your good friends from LCHS & St. John's ... and maybe make some new ones!





Join Us for Lunch Bunch: September 12 @ Noon

Have lunch with your St. John's community at the Colonie Diner on Thursday, September 12, from 12:00–1:30 pm. No RSVP required; just show up around noon, and we'll grab a table together. All are invited! Colonie Diner is located at 1890 Central Ave. in Albany.



Lunch Bunch
Sept. 12 @ Noon

Food & Faith: Cornerstone Campus Ministry: Oct. 1

Serve a meal and worship with Cornerstone Campus Ministry at UAlbany (1400 Washington Ave., CC375) on Tuesday, October 1. The details:

- St. John's provides food for 25-30 students (plus any St. John's folks who are eating), including the main course, sides/salad, and dessert. Cornerstone provides beverages, plates, glasses, and silverware. Vegan and vegetarian options are encouraged.
- Dinner is served in CC375 from 6:00-6:45 pm. We begin with prayer and then serve buffet-style and eat like a big family around our table in the community room.
- During the meal, folks are asked to make introductions, and we encourage conversation; it's a great opportunity for us to get to know the students and for them to get to know us, their congregational partners.
- Then at 6:45, St. John's leads approx. 30 minutes of interactive worship/devotions/reflection, etc.
- At 7:15 we clean up and are out the door by 7:30.



Help is needed to provide food, help serve, and plan devotions. If you can lend a hand, contact [Pr. Josh](#).

Happy Birthday to our Members!

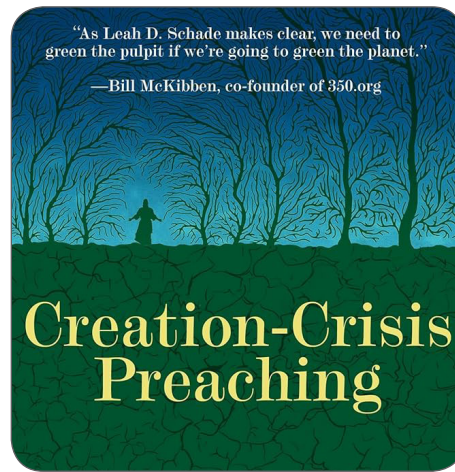
September 3	Barbara Ableman
September 9	Mary Anderson
September 20	Edward Wacksman
September 27	Karen Bielinski
September 27	Nick Klapp
October 1	Tracy Baldwin
October 3	Teri Rogers
October 7	Sheryl Centanni
October 11	Mikayla Malenfant
October 12	Dick Rendert
October 13	Reagan Coppentrath
October 25	Jackie Campbell
October 30	Thaisa Beach

"Birthdays are nature's way of telling us to eat more cake."
~ Author Unknown



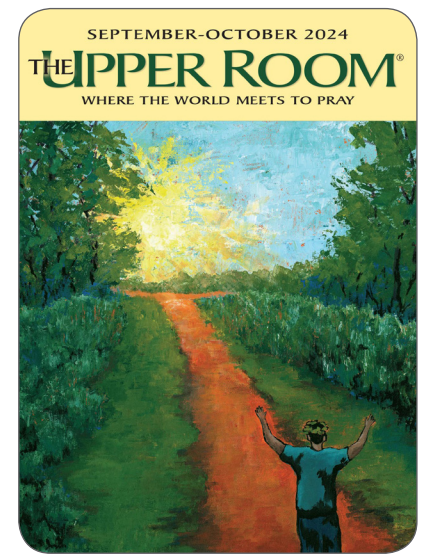
First Lutheran Book Club

Join us for First Lutheran Book Club on Monday, September 23, at 6:30 pm via Zoom. This month's book: *Creation-Crisis Preaching: Ecology, Theology, and the Pulpit* by Leah Schade. Join via Zoom: firstlutheranalbany.org/zoom



Your Daily Devotions

Pick up a the September-October 2024 edition of The Upper Room at church or [read online](#). Want us to mail you a copy? Contact [Maggie](#).



This issue marks the first time we've shared Birthdays in *The Eagle*. If you prefer *not* to have your birthday shared, please contact [Pr. Josh](#). If we missed your birthday, we apologize! Please let us know if you'd like it shared in the next issue. We look forward to having one more way to celebrate our members each month!



Thank You's!

Our special thanks this month for ...

- Everyone who provided refreshments following summer worship.
- A huge shout-out to all who donated school supplies for our July/August Albany Lutherans Together (ALT) collection for Delaware Community & Giffen Memorial Schools in Albany. Thanks for your support!



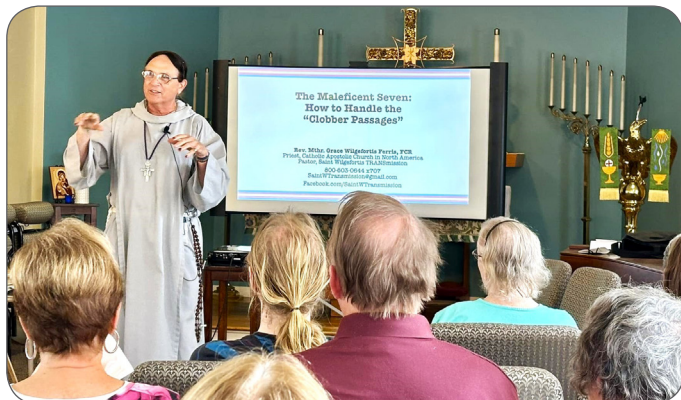
Coffee Hour Hosts Needed

One of the marvelous things we value about being in community with one another is our weekly fellowship opportunity over coffee (or tea, juice, etc.) and treats following the liturgy every Sunday. Providing treats for coffee hour is a simple way to volunteer and help foster a sense of community at St. John's. Please sign up online on our [SignUpGenius](#) page or on the bulletin board in the kitchen. Thank you!



Mother Grace Ferris Was Here July 28

Along with Albany Lutherans Together, we were proud to host Mother Grace Ferris on July 28 as she presented "The Maleficent Seven: How to Handle the Clobber Passages." Click [here](#) to view her presentation. *Thanks to all of you who attended, and we encourage you to watch it if you haven't yet.*



In Our Prayers

For whom or what shall we pray?

- For our congregational partners in Albany Lutherans Together: First Lutheran Church, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, and Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit (LCHS).
- For an end to gun violence in the city of Albany and beyond.
- A Prayer for Responsible Citizenship: Lord God, you call your people to honor those in authority. Help us elect trustworthy leaders, participate in wise decisions for our common life, and serve our neighbors in local communities.

Prayer requests are in *The Eagle* so our 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, or schedule a time to meet using calendly.com/revjoshevens.** If you would like communion brought to you, let us know that as well.

Collecting 2025 Calendars



We are collecting 2025 calendars for Rehabilitation Support Services clients, who use them to track appointments, meds, etc. Please place in the Chapel.

Please Help with ALT Collections



The CACC Emergency Homeless Overflow Shelter is getting ready to open in their new home and welcome guests this winter. Through September and October, ALT churches are collecting paper products (plates, cups, bowls, paper towels, and toilet tissue) and laundry detergent to get them stocked up and ready to open. Drop items off at St. John's and we'll deliver them!



SEPTEMBER 2024 ~ Worship Services at 9:30 am

Date	September 1	September 8	September 15	September 22	September 29
Presiding Minister	N/A	Pr. Josh Evans	Pr. Josh Evans	Pr. Kate Drefke	Pr. Josh Evans
Assisting Minister	Karen Bielinski	Lindsay Stannard	Paula Schwab	Karen Bielinski	Paula Schwab
Minister of Music	Dan Foster	Dan Foster	Dan Foster	Dan Foster	Dan Foster
Reader	Thaisa Beach	Avery Heaney	Lindsay Stannard	Melissa Savage	Karen Bielinski
Communion Assist.	N/A	Karen Bielinski	Joy Pierle	Melissa Savage	Gilda Fake
Sacristan (Altar Gld.)	N/A	Linda Davis	Maggie Anderson	Maggie Anderson	Gilda Fake
Bread Baker	N/A	Sheryl Centanni	Sheryl Centanni	Sheryl Centanni	Sheryl Centanni
Usher	Kelly Conley	Kelly Conley	Kelly Conley	Kelly Conley	Kelly Conley
Livestream Tech	Jerry Schwab	Shea Stannard	Shea Stannard	Shea Stannard	Jerry Schwab
Offering Counters	Emily Coppenrath Jerry Schwab	Karen Bielinski Shea Stannard	Jerry Schwab Karen Seiz	Linda Davis Lindsay Stannard	Gilda Fake Judy Szesnat

OCTOBER 2024 ~ Worship Services at 9:30 am

Date	October 6	October 13	October 20	October 27
Presiding Minister	Pr. Josh Evans	Pr. Josh Evans	Pr. Josh Evans	Pr. Josh Evans
Assisting Minister	OPEN	Karen Bielinski	Paula Schwab	Lindsay Stannard
Minister of Music	Dan Foster	Dan Foster	Dan Foster	Dan Foster
Reader	Thaisa Beach	Avery Heaney	Lindsay Stannard	Thaisa Beach
Communion Assist.	Paula Schwab	Lindsay Stannard	Gilda Fake	Karen Bielinski
Sacristan (Altar Gld.)	Paula Schwab	Linda Davis	Gilda Fake	Maggie Anderson
Bread Baker	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
Usher	Kelly Conley	Kelly Conley	Kelly Conley	Kelly Conley
Livestream Tech	N/A (Outdoors)	Shea Stannard	Shea Stannard	Shea Stannard
Offering Counters	Emily Coppenrath Lindsay Stannard	Karen Bielinski Shea Stannard	Jerry Schwab Karen Seiz	Linda Davis Lindsay Stannard

“To gather with God’s people in united adoration of the Father is as necessary to the Christian life as prayer.”
~ Martin Luther

We Need Your Help to Make Worship Happen!

We truly do 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 Sunday, September 15, 10:45-11:45 am; read more in the article below ...** or **contact Pr. Josh** if you’d like more details. **Can’t make your scheduled date?** Please contact BOTH **Maggie** AND **Pr. Josh**. **Help us prepare the November/December schedule.** Please alert us of any dates you are NOT available by **October 15** so we can accommodate your schedule.



Adult Forum on September 15: “Worship Volunteers 101”

Join us for a special Adult Forum: **“Worship Volunteers 101”** on Sunday, **September 15, from 10:45-11:45 am.** You’ll learn more about how YOU can be an indispensable part of our worship together! *We do need YOU to make worship happen.*



We enjoyed "Lutheran Night" at the Tri-City ValleyCats game on July 7.



Council Members were installed on July 21. (Standing, left to right): Pastor Josh Evans, Lindsay Stannard (president), Melissa Savage (treasurer), Joy Pierle (assistant treasurer), Jerry Schwab (vice president), Staren Bielinski (secretary). (Not pictured): Emily Copenrath (at large).



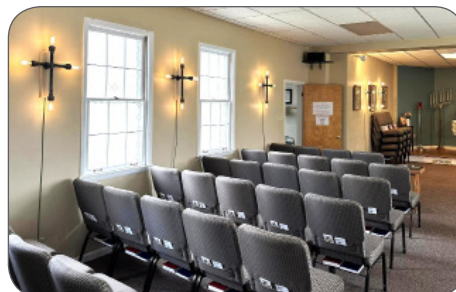
On August 7, St. John's welcomed queer indie singer-songwriter Spencer LaJoye for a small listening concert. It was a joy to open our space for this free community event and we hope to have similar opportunities soon.



We celebrated two special Birthdays July 14. Virginia Radley (left) turned 100 & Ruth Klee (right) turned 95!



On August 10, Albany Lutherans Together visited The Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Mass. and enjoyed a private group tour.



Let there be light! Check out our beautiful new wall sconces. Thanks to our multi-talented director of music, Dan Foster, for his skill and time designing and building all nine of them (from scratch!).

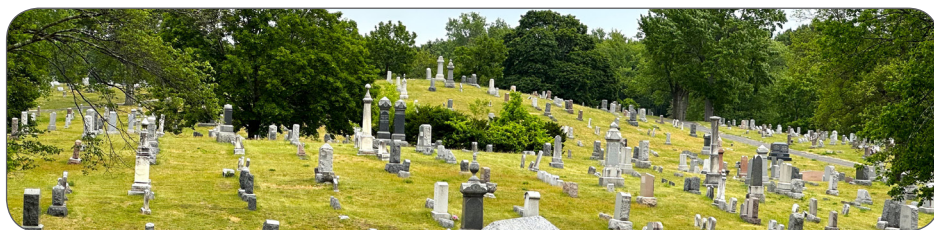


St. John's Cemetery Updates

This is just a reminder: **All summer decorations must be removed from gravesites at St. John's Cemetery by Tuesday, October 1.**

We have contracted with a company to digitize our cemetery records. Lazarus Cemetery Mapping took new aerial shots via drone to capture new cemetery maps and will be scanning all our paper ledgers to create an easily searchable database. The project should hopefully be completed by late February or early March 2025.

Did you know...? St. John's Cemetery and Chapel are "home" to much history. In 1873 the congregation bought 20 acres of land on Sand Creek Road for cemetery purposes. The cemetery was dedicated in the spring of 1874, a chapel was built at its entrance and a branch Sunday School was organized. Services were conducted in St. John's Chapel, beginning in the Spring of 1881. The bell, which for years tolled in the chapel belfry, summoning worshipers and Sunday School students, is now permanently mounted in a rear portion of the cemetery.



Worship at St. John's

Worship in-person: 303 Sand Creek Road in Albany or online: [youtube.com/@StJohnsAlbany](https://www.youtube.com/@StJohnsAlbany)

Watching online? Let us know you're here through "[Online Worship Attendance](#)" page.

Follow along with the liturgy: stjohnsalbany.org/bulletin (link updated weekly by Friday)



Miss a Sunday? [Download our FREE app](#) for quick links to livestreamed worship services, as well as our sermon blog and podcast.

Newcomers: Get connected ... with our [Get Connected page](#).

[Support our ministry](#) with a secure online gift.

Visit our website for all you need: stjohnsalbany.org.

Stay Connected!

Facebook: facebook.com/StJohnsAlbany

Website: stjohnsalbany.org

YouTube: youtube.com/@StJohnsAlbany

Email: office@stjohnsalbany.org



Eagle Deadline

Please note: Submissions for the November 2024 edition of *The Eagle* are due by **October 21**. [Submit your announcement\(s\) online](#) or contact the church office. Thanks for staying connected!

Church Staff & Leaders

The Rev. Josh Evans
Pastor

pastorjosh@stjohnsalbany.org

Dan Foster

Director of Music
danfoster@stjohnsalbany.org

Maggie Anderson

Community Care Coordinator
(Parish Secretary)
parishsec@stjohnsalbany.org

Paige Pierle

Sunday School Teacher
ppierle@nycap.rr.com OR
sundayschool@stjohnsalbany.org

Lindsay Stannard

Council President
lindsaymstannard@gmail.com

Please feel free to reach out to your church staff at any time! We want to connect with YOU.

Church Office Hours

Monday

Pastor Josh Evans
10 AM – 4 PM
Maggie Anderson
12 PM – 4 PM

Tuesday – Thursday

Pastor Josh Evans
10 AM – 4 PM

Friday

Maggie Anderson
10 AM – 4 PM

Please call ahead before you go to ensure someone is in the office.



Contact Our Council

See page 7 for a photo from our Council Installation on July 21. You can email St. John's Council at council@stjohnsalbany.org and your message will be sent to all of our Council members.