



To Grow, Heal, and Serve

Week of December 7, 2025

[Website](#)

[Worship on Youtube](#)

[Centering Prayer](#)

[Calendar](#)

Ways to Grow

Children's Church at Both Services in December

St. John's has the happy problem of an overflowing Children's Church! To give each child more personal attention and ease the load on adult volunteers, we will experiment with offering Children's Church at both the 9:00 and 11:15 services on December 7, 14, and 21. We'll see how this goes, then make a decision about continuing (or not) in January.

Advent Series: Prophets

This year's Advent series will focus on the prophets of the Old Testament: what a prophet is, who the prophets were, what they said to ancient Israel, and how they speak to us today. We'll begin each evening with Holden Evening Prayer, a short sung liturgy that's especially appropriate for Advent. Gia and David will lead this series on Wednesday evenings, December 10 and 17, at 7:00 pm in Kilbourne Hall. Childcare is available by advance request; please let Gia or David know as soon as possible if you need it.

Christmas Pageant

Do you have a kiddo who'd like to be cast in our Christmas Pageant? Please bring them to our rehearsal on Sunday, December 14th, at 10:15 am between the services in the Kilbourne Hall. If you'd like your kid to be in the pageant but can't make it on Dec 14th, please let David Burman know at davidb@stjohnsworthington.org. The pageant itself will be part of the 4:00 pm service on Christmas Eve, Wednesday, Dec 24th.

Ways to Serve

Blessing Bags

Join us in a meaningful act of service as we come together in an Advent intergenerational event to assemble Blessing Bags for those in need. We will meet in Kilbourne Hall on December 7 during coffee hour between services. This initiative reflects the heart of St. John's mission: to grow, heal, and serve with God's wisdom, love, and joy. Each Blessing bag contains necessities such as deodorant, toothbrush and toothpaste, socks and hand warmers, body and alcohol wipes, adhesive bandages, and a snack and bottle of water.

□ **Recommended Reading:** *Shoemaker Martin* by Leo Tolstoy

To deepen the spiritual connection behind this outreach, we encourage participants to read this short story and share it with any young people in their lives. A summary will be shared during the event to highlight how its message inspired our church to create the Blessing Bags.

□ **Want to Support?**

St. John's has received wonderful feedback from many of you who participated in our last Blessing Bags event. Your enthusiasm and support have been deeply appreciated! Because of this, we're excited to share that we hope to make this a regular outreach opportunity in our church calendar. If you'd like to contribute financially toward the supplies for the bags, please make a donation to St. John's with "Blessing Bags" in the memo. For any questions, please contact Melissa Stanton at 614-519-5194.

Let's come together in love and service this Advent season!

Friendship Dinner, December 11, at 6:00pm

Come join your Worthington neighbors for good food and conversation. As an early Christmas gift, Ted Dziemianowicz and Bob Hays have decided to cook and take charge of the December Friendship Dinner. Thank you for the break. Ted and Bob will be serving Tossed Salad, along with a surprise for the main course and dessert. We will also have our allergen / vegan/ vegetarian alternative menu. Please support Ted and Bob as you have supported me in the past. Ted and Bob need 9 volunteers to prep food, set up, serve, and clean. A Sign-up sheet is in the atrium. If you have any questions, email jbross53@gmail.com or text me at **(847) 254-1821**.

~ John Ross

Vestry, Set, Go: Vestry 101 + Q & A

As Julie Andrews might say, let's start at the very beginning: the Vestry is the elected governing body of our parish, responsible for managing its finances, property, and general administration in partnership with the rector. But what does that really mean? What are decisions Vestry actually makes? How do Vestry members get chosen, and why do we have wardens?

Please join us for a fun and informative conversation about St. John's governing body - and why YOU might be right for it - on Sunday, December 14, during our Adult Formation hour. We'll start by breaking Vestry down, hear from some current Vestry members, and even have a pop quiz at the end - with prizes! We hope you'll join us!



Sacred Stitches

Sacred Stitches will not be meeting in December 2025 or January 2026. Jocelyn and I figure we will all be busy during the holidays. We will meet again February 5, 2026.

Please join us then for tea and talk, and bring your knit, crochet, or any needlework projects, at any level from beginner to expert, to work on together. Hopefully this will introduce or expand your skills in these areas while providing items for the Giving Tree, baptisms, and other charitable causes. Our Rector Gia Hayes-Martin has volunteered to show us how to read a charted pattern at the February 5th meeting! Meetings are held on the first Thursday of every month at 1:00 p.m. in the atrium. Hope to see you then.

Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas!
Bonnie Ross
Jocelyn Lieberfarb

Food Pantries

Sincere thanks to the people of St. John's who have been so generous recently with donations to our Food Pantries. Food pantries experienced higher than usual demand during the weeks of the government shutdown and SNAP uncertainties. Thank you for helping keep the pantry shelves stocked!

In Advent, we prepare our hearts and minds to receive God's perfect gift to us, His Son Jesus. As our hearts overflow with thanks and joy and love, may we open our hearts to God's children who need a helping hand at Christmas, giving gifts and serving as Christ's heart and hands and feet in the world. In sharing our gifts, we share the love of Immanuel, God with us.

- Have fun creating a Food Pantry Advent Calendar – pick up a guide on the atrium table for a great way to observe Advent and help a family. Bring completed boxes to the atrium any time from Christmas Eve through January 4.
- If you host a party during the holidays, invite your guests to bring a Food Pantry donation. Bring the donations to church or deliver them to a Food Pantry of your choice.
- Help our pantries prepare hundreds of Christmas dinner baskets by adding a “Christmas Dinner” donation to your regular food donations each week. Possible items include canned corn, green beans, sweet potatoes, stuffing mix, spices, flour,

sugar, gravy, chicken broth, cornbread or hot roll mix, cranberry sauce, canned pumpkin, evaporated milk, pie shells, nuts, mashed potato mix, gingerbread mix, Christmas cookies or candy, turkey cooking bags, and aluminum foil.

Your own Christmas celebration will be more meaningful when you know you have helped others enjoy a festive holiday dinner and healthy meals in December as well.

December 7 – tuna, body wash & a Christmas dinner item

14 – spaghetti sauce, baby wipes & a Christmas dinner item

21 – canned fruit, toilet paper & a Christmas dinner item

28 – oatmeal, cereal, pet food

Mary Bailey

Around St. John's

Celtic Service for Advent, December 7

Please join us in St. John's beautiful atrium at 4 pm Sunday, December 7, for our Advent worship service. Our theme is "Waiting and Listening" as we contemplate the coming of Christ into our lives. This is a quiet, contemplative service based on the *Iona Abbey Worship Book* which lasts about 40 minutes and includes music, meditation, and a Celtic view of the meaning of Christmas. A time of hospitality and fellowship follows our service. We will be happy to see you there!

The Celtic Fellowship

Volunteers Needed for Greening of the Church – Sunday, December 21

Dear St. John's Congregation,

We hope you are enjoying a peaceful Advent season. As we prepare our worship space for Christmas, we invite all members of the congregation to take part in the Greening of the Church on Sunday, December 21, immediately following the 11:15 a.m. service.

Everyone is welcome—many hands make light (and joyful!) work. If you are able to help, please sign up on the sheet in the atrium.

We will also be taking down the Christmas decorations on Tuesday, January 6th at 10:00 a.m., and we are seeking volunteers for this as well. Your help is greatly appreciated for both dates.

Thank you in advance for your time and enthusiasm as we ready our church for the season.

Warm regards,
Altar Guild & Flower Guild
St. John's Church

Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree!

Our Parish Family Christmas Tree will be decorated on December 21st!

As we continue a tradition that started last year, everyone is invited to adorn our tree with a special ornament. The ornament can be handmade, store bought, old, or new. Choose or make one that represents you, your family, or has a special sentiment that you wish to share.

The ornaments can be placed on the tree when the Nave is decorated for Christmas services on December 21st. Feel free to retrieve your ornament before the tree is taken down on January 6th. If your ornament is left on the tree, it will be carefully stored for use again next year. These ornaments will remind us of special times with family and friends for years to come. The new ornaments that we add each year will warmly illustrate our growth with God's love.



Christmas Flowers

The Altar Guild is asking the congregation for donations for Christmas Flowers. These donations can be in Thanksgiving for someone, in Memory of someone, or in Honor of someone. There are envelopes in pews marked "Christmas Flowers" where donations may be placed and put in the offertory plate. There will be a sheet in the Atrium for you to sign and include with your donation if you have a specific request. These requests will be included in a bulletin after Christmas. We ask all donations be made by December 21, 2025. Any Questions may be directed to Donna Somerville (614)208-8573

SJEEC News and Updates

Last month, we spent so much time celebrating what we are thankful for and I am definitely thankful for each of you. This month, we will be inviting families to join us in a journey around the world to see how the holidays are celebrated by people near and far. Each class will be traveling to Mexico, France and the North Pole. Each class will also be learning about the traditions of a country in each of their classrooms. We have one class going to Germany, one going to England, one going to Israel and one going to Polynesia!

Enrollment will open up for the 2026-2027 school year in January. If you know families considering which preschool might be best for their child, please share a little bit about what makes St. John's so unique. Established in 1964, we are the oldest preschool in Worthington. We are also the only preschool in Old Worthington offering weekly Spanish classes to our three, four and five year olds. We believe in

nurturing the whole child and incorporating the arts is an essential part of doing this. For this reason, we have art classes weekly and yoga and music classes bi-weekly for all age groups. And of course, please share your personal experiences. Your personal stories say the most about the high quality programs we provide. Thank you!

Important dates to remember:

January 5th: Enrollment Opens at 7:00 a.m. for Current Families

January 12th: Enrollment Opens at 7:00 a.m. for Alumni Families

January 14th: Enrollment Opens at 7:00 a.m. to the Public

January 19th: No School

Thank you for being a part of our St. John's family, Carrie

Singles Dining Out

Singles Dining Out will take a break from dining out in December, since it's a busy month and there will be an Advent series on the prophets of the Old Testament on Wednesday nights. Our January Singles Dining Out adventure will find us at the Whitney House on Wednesday, January 21, at 6:00 pm. Mark your calendar now and watch for more details in mid-December. ~Mary Bailey

Newsletter Submission

Are you looking to submit an article for the newsletter? Click the link below! Deadlines for the articles are due by Tuesdays at 12 noon and can be sent in no earlier than Monday of the same week.

Submit Here

Flowers

Donna and David Hissrich are giving the flowers in thanksgiving for the life of her birth mother Gertrude Murphy.

Readings for this Sunday

Isaiah 11:1-10
Romans 15:4-13
Matthew 3:1-12
Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

Readings for Next Sunday

Isaiah 35:1-10
James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11
Psalm 146:4-9

Click here for the Lectionary page

Centering Prayer – Mondays, 1:00 pm. Click this **Zoom link** (Meeting ID: 865 0593 1410; Passcode: 922699; +13017158592,,86505931410#,,, *922699#). If you are interested, contact Teri Foley-Nelson, at **foleynelson1@sbcglobal.net**.

Do You Have Family or Friends Who You Want Included on the Weekly Prayer List? If so, please contact the office at **Bellao@stjohnsworthington.org** or 614-846-5180, with their first names. Names will remain on the list for three weeks unless there are additional instructions. If you want longer term prayer by the intercessory prayer group, please contact Jo Pascoe at 614-306-7983 and leave a message or send email to **twopas@aol.com**.

Pastoral Care Concerns - If you have a pastoral care concern, please contact one of the clergy. Gia may be reached at 614-846-5180, ext. 302, 220-219-1880, or **GiaHM@StJohnsWorthington.org**. David may be reached at 614-846-5180, ext. 308, 220-219-1880 or, or **DavidB@stjohnsworthington.org**. 220 area code is a local number.

People for whom prayers have been asked

And we pray for:

Julia
Jeff
Dorothy
Chris
Todd
Susan
Ed
Beverly
Elizabeth
Dale
Andrea
Kyle
Arik
Wendy
Pam
Frank
Keith
Paul
Michelle
Manny
Bonnie
Daniel
Annette
Jean
Marilyn
Nina
Jeanne
David
Mary

Melissa
Brenda
Jerry
Carol
Tonya

For our service men and women and all first responders

(Allow time for others to pray)

For those who are unemployed or underemployed

(Allow time for others to pray)

For all who experience fear or exclusion

(Allow time for others to pray)

For those in prison or bondage – in body or spirit

(Allow time for others to pray)

For peace and for all those who suffer from war, including the people of Ukraine, Sudan, Afghanistan, Armenia, Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, and all places of conflict in the world.

Parish Cycle of Prayer

Star Blackford
Susie Bonnell
Stacy and Stephen Bretherton and family

Diocesan Cycle of Prayer

Church of the Advent, Cincinnati
Minority Empowerment Initiative Trust

We Give Thanks

For the people of St. John's and for their ministries

The Departed

Notes:

St. John's has two separate prayer lists.

To add names to the "public" prayer list as seen above, please call the church office at **614-846-5180**, or send an email to **Bellao@stjohnsworthington.org**. Names added to that sheet will remain on the prayer list for three weeks, or shorter if requested. Last names are not used. If you wish prayers to be continued, simply list the name on the prayer list again. Of course, you may always add names aloud during the prayers of the people.

There is also a "private" intercessory prayer group staffed by several volunteers from within the parish. To have your prayer request included on the prayer chain, please contact Jo Pascoe at **614-306-7983** or send email to **twopas@aol.com**.

St. John's Episcopal Church | 700 High Street | Worthington, OH 43085 US

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