

# St. John's Announcements

## March 9, 2025



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As well as being Lent I, today is being celebrated as Orthodox Sunday, a time to celebrate the liturgical arts. We are fortunate this year that Eastern Orthodox (Julian) Easter and Western (Gregorian) Easter are on the same day. It will be wonderful to have the entire Christian world celebrating at the same time. That also means that the whole Christian world is celebrating Lent I together. The Eastern Orthodox Church went through a period of iconoclasm especially in the early centuries of Islam. There was a group, including emperors, who felt that art that represented anything found on earth or heaven, was a violation of the commandment against idol worship. There were always Christians who loved praying through icons, paintings, and stained-glass windows. This tradition may go all the way back to Luke the Evangelist, himself. Eventually under the leadership of Empress Queen Theodora, the iconoclasts were defeated and icons and other art were again permitted in churches. The English church had its own issues with iconoclasts in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Puritans were also iconoclasts and smashed thousands of stained-glass windows and statues. They also defaced murals and other paintings. Priests, wardens, and sextons began burying, hiding, and plastering over pieces of liturgical art. We are still finding these in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Today we are blessing four of the five Tiffany stained-glass windows that came over from St. Mary's in Manchester. A big thanks to Randy Brown for overseeing this long project. We also give thanks to the dozens of people who over the years cared for, restored, moved, and moved again these beautiful pieces of liturgical art. I pray they will live on in peace here for decades to come. Blessings, *Marc*

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**  
St. Patrick's Dinner –  
3/15 @ 5:30pm

**Happy Anniversary!**  
Barbara & William Feldstein  
**Happy Birthday!**  
Bill Gutzmer  
Stephen Harshly  
Laura Jasak  
Francis Sabatini  
Marsha Hartlieb  
Michael Hall  
Maureen Toth

After dinner we will be discussing stewardship, led off by a greeting from Bishop Mello. Anyone interested in helping with cooking or decorating please contact Lois Valliere [lvalliere1@icloud.com](mailto:lvalliere1@icloud.com). Tickets will soon be available in the narthex after services.

**Dear Friends:** As many of you are aware, we had a “different” event at the 10 AM service last Sunday. During the middle of the service a person entered, went to the front of the church and sat down. Near the end of Communion they stood up, recited aloud the passage from Mark 12:30 about the Great Commandment and then departed. While we are not used to people from outside the parish suddenly engaging in our worship service like this, it is important that we recognize that at no time was there any threat – apparent, perceived or otherwise - to any parishioners. A person felt strongly moved to recite the Great Commandment – and we as an open and accepting Christian gathering gave them that opportunity. Our senior usher at the service politely inquired if the person wished to partake of Communion with us and every effort was made to make them feel welcome. There was no confrontation or conflict. Of this we should all be aware and pleased – everything was done as Christians should; we welcome all who come to our door. With the frequent instances of insecurity in our society today we must seek to achieve a delicate balance between openness and inclusiveness on one side, personal and parish security on the other. We cannot simply lock the doors to the church when services begin. Rather, we can continue to take appropriate steps to protect the most vulnerable among us. For example, it has been the policy at St. John’s for some time now to keep the doors to St. Mary’s Hall locked on Sundays while we have children in the classrooms. This policy will be enforced. The wardens and vestry will continue to review our other policies and procedures to be sure that we are doing everything appropriate in this regard moving forward. ***Yours in Christ, Skip Sutcliffe, Senior Warden***