

The monthly newsletter of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church Connecting us in community and in Christ

# January 2022

# **Bear Witness to the Light**

Imagine if you came into conscious being just as the sun rose over the horizon. All day you enjoy the glorious sunshine. Then, as the sun sinks to touch the horizon and in a few short minutes disappears, you panic wondering if you will ever feel its warmth again. How would you know that our local star makes the same journey every day? Ancient peoples paid attention to the sun and the moon and the ways these celestial bodies changed over time. They certainly had enough wisdom to know that the sun comes back every morning, even though they had no understanding of the mechanics of our solar system. It would have seemed like magic or divine action. The same was true for the sun's annual journey with the steadily shortening days of autumn (in the northern hemisphere anyway) and the turning point of the winter solstice when those days gradually began to grow longer.

It's no wonder that ceremonies and celebrations evolved to mark the solstice. It must have seemed miraculous to see that shift from darkness towards light. It is also no wonder that Christians found it appropriate to celebrate Christmas and Epiphany around the same time as those ancient pagan festivals of light. Jesus' birth was anticipated in Luke's Gospel by Zechariah as he sang, "By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." And Simeon proclaimed upon meeting the baby Jesus in the Temple, "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

Light and seasons may not seem all that miraculous to us anymore as our days are extended effortlessly by flipping a switch and the cell phone in our pocket has a handy flashlight. However, with a little effort we can appreciate the power of enlightenment. There are several stories about Jesus healing blind people in the Gospels. The entire ninth chapter of John is devoted to the healing of a man who was blind from birth and the events that followed. In that chapter we hear Jesus refer to himself as the "light of the world." We may read these stories as actual healing stories or as metaphors for spiritual enlightenment. Either way they are impressive and have implications for our personal faith.

Now imagine that you are a being who came into existence during the dark of night. How would you react to your first sunrise? Fear, joy, confusion, fascination, excitement? The Gospel story, from the birth of Jesus through his life and ministry and his death and resurrection, is the story of enlightenment. It is a movement from darkness into light. Jesus invites us to walk in the light. This is our calling as his followers. We constantly seek him, his wisdom, love, and guidance. We also seek to be enlighteners, those who bear the light of Christ into the world. In this dark time of year, it is good for us to remember this invitation and calling. Bear witness to God's light. The darker the time, the more important this ministry of witness is.

# A NOTE FROM WALTER WELLS



When I first came to St. Andrew's in 1976, I had no inkling that 45 years later I would be writing to you all to thank you for the wonderful celebration of my time as choir director here. So much has transpired in that time. Jeff pointed out that I have served four of the six rectors the parish has had! Five bishops, too. I have had the privilege and honour of serving God and God's people. There are so many people to thank: Don Hopkins for asking me if I would be interested in applying for the job, Jim Trost for bringing me on board, so many wonderful choir members, adults and youth, over those years. My thanks to Jeff and the vestry for the WALTER WELLS DAY proclamation, and particularly to Gwen Catchen for organizing it all, to Scott Strouse for the wonderful food at the reception, and to all of you for your contributions to the wonderful gift from the parish. I am especially grateful to my loving wife Molly for bearing with me and supporting me all these years.

I was asked by a parishioner what the next 45 years might bring! Well, one day at a time, but I hope that each day will bring increasing gratitude for all that I have been blessed with. I think of these words from the poet George Herbert:

Thou that hast given so much to me, Give one thing more, a grateful heart. Not thankful, when it pleaseth me; As if thy blessings had spare days: But such a heart, whose pulse may be Thy praise.

Gratitude is a great part of Grace for me. Know that my gratitude and love are yours always.

Walter

# COVID SAFETY PROTOCOLS

With the current surge in COVID infections due to the emergence of the highly contagious Omicron variant, we would like to remind everyone of the safety protocols in place at St. Andrew's and encourage you to follow them with extra vigilance at this time.

Masks must be worn in the building at all times.

Continue to observe **social distancing** – pews are taped to assist with this.

Use hand sanitizer before receiving communion.

No physical contact (except with family members) during the exchange of the Peace.

**Please sign in** with name, phone, and email each time you attend a service using the forms available at both the front and back entrances to the church.

If you are sick or have been exposed to COVID, please stay home and follow CDC guidelines for returning in person.

If you have attended a service and find out that you had COVID at the time, **please notify the office**. We will not share your identity but would encourage you to contact anyone you may have had close contact with. This will also help us as we continually reassess our response to the virus.

# TREASURER'S REPORT, Julie Kwasnica, Treasurer

# November 2021

	November	Year-to-Date	% of Budget	2021 BUDGET
Parishioner Contributions *	\$ 23,171	\$ 413,463	90%	\$ 460,288
Total Operating Income	\$ 24,832	\$ 437,719	90%	\$ 487,488
Total Operating Expense	\$ 39,843	\$ 448,580	89%	\$ 506,242
Surplus (Deficit)	\$ (14,711)	\$ (10,861)		\$ (18,754)

\*Includes pledges, plate offerings, and special holiday offerings.

# **VESTRY UPDATE**, Kevin Lowe, Clerk of the Vestry

# December 2021

The vestry met on Tuesday, December 14, remotely, using Zoom. Financially the church continued to run a deficit in the month of November and crossed into the red for the year to date; however we are approximately where we had budgeted to be at this point in the year. The vestry continues to invite all parishioners to prayerfully discern their financial stewardship for the coming year and return their 2022 pledge if they have not done so already.

At the meeting, the vestry adopted the 2022 parish budget as presented by Finance Committee. In addition, vestry appointed Pam Ferguson, Anthony Grillo, and Beth Jones to positions as stewards of Parishioners' Ministry, and appointed Amy Pritchett to a seat on the Community Cafe Board of Directors.

The vestry also discussed plans for Christmas Eve services and the continued challenges of engaging the parish community and parish life under pandemic conditions. Although the possibility of a Zoom Annual Meeting was discussed (as was held last year), the vestry decided to hold the parish Annual Meeting in person, in the nave of the church, immediately after the 10am service on January 30.

Vestry meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month and are always open to all parishioners. Please contact me (kevinlowe33@gmail.com) for the Zoom link prior to the meeting if you would like to attend. Approved vestry minutes are available on our website ("Clergy, Staff & Vestry" under the "About Us" tab).

# Vestry Election Update

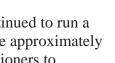
As described in last month's newsletter, we had intended to hold the vestry election online using the same platform we did last year. However, because this year's candidates are running unopposed (see pages 5-6 for biographies of the candidates), we will hold the election in person, by acclamation, during the Annual Meeting.

# **2022 Annual Meeting**

Sunday, January 30 Immediately following the 10 a.m. service in the Church

A Zoom link will be available for those who are not able to attend in person.

There will be a short break between the 10 a.m. service and the Annual Meeting.



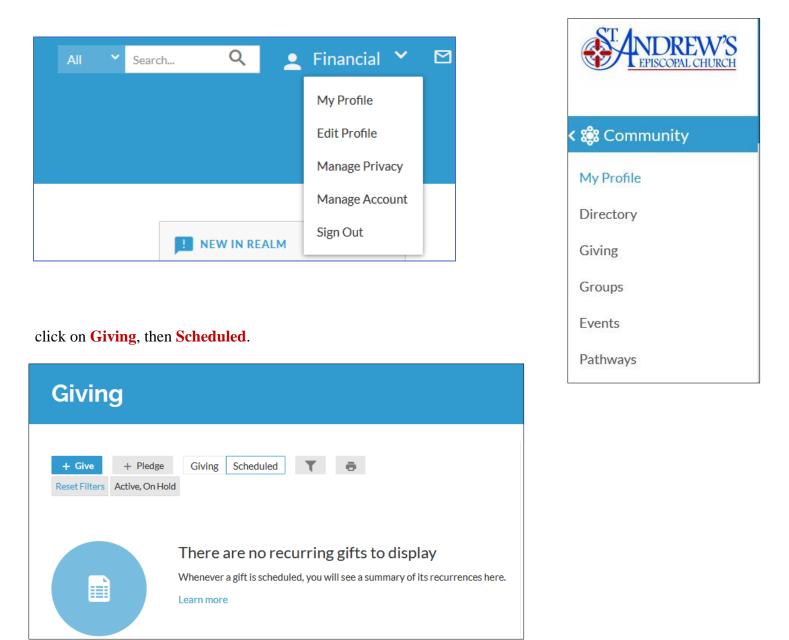




## From the Financial Secretary Online Giving for 2022

Thank you to all our parishioners who pledged online. Pledging online does not automatically set up an online payment schedule, however, you would have been given the opportunity to do so when you pledged. If you do not know if you set up a payment schedule and would like to do so or would like to confirm you have set up a payment schedule, just log into Realm at <u>https://onrealm.org/StAndrewsC/SignIn</u>.

Go to your Profile,



If you have not set up scheduled giving, then you can click on the + **Give** to set up your pledge payment or other regular payments to St. Andrews.

Giving	How much would you like to give?					
+ Give + Pledge Giving Scheduled T	\$ 25.00		ting Pledges - 2022		+ Another Fund	
Reset Filters Year to date Nondeductible No giving history for the selected filters	EVERY WEEK	GIVE ONCE EVERY 2 WEEKS	EVERY MONTH	GIVE MULTIPL TWICE A MONTH	E TIMES EVERY 3 MONTHS	
Individual contributions display here. You can review and print them as receipts at any time.	Start date			Can	• +End	

Those who do not use Realm, but would like to set up scheduled giving can do so at St. Andrew's website under <u>Give</u> or use the following link: <u>https://onrealm.org/StAndrewsC/Give</u>

If you have questions, please contact Mary Andrew @ financesc@standrewsc.org

## **VESTRY NOMINEES**

We are pleased to announce that the following four parishioners have accepted nominations to run for the four vestry positions that will be open in January 2022: Julie Breuninger, Carolyn Donaldson, Sharon Rovansek, and Fran Stevenson. They will be elected by acclamation at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 30.

Their photos and bios appear below.

#### JULIE BREUNINGER



My husband Jamie and I moved to State College in June of 2019. From the beginning we knew that St. Andrews would be our church home and began attending services and moved our membership from Christ Church Cathedral, Indianapolis.

I did not grow up in the church but began a search for a spiritual place of belonging in my teens. I found the love of Christ in the Church of the Loving Shepherd in West Chester, Pennsylvania when I was 19. I was baptized at 24 and confirmed at 30. My husband and I have made the Church a central part of our home and both of our children sang in the cathedral choirs in Indianapolis. We were very involved in outreach at the Cathedral which had a large homeless mission and many opportunities to serve the church and community.

I have served on the vestry at both the Cathedral and at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Woodland, California when we lived there.

My passions are for music, outreach, and evangelism. I believe in evangelism – to bring people in the door of the church and help them find a home. We need to listen to newcomers, learn their story and connect them with current members. The best way to get connected is to find a place to serve. Jamie and I are so pleased that St. Andrews believes so strongly in outreach. Through volunteering we develop friendships, experience fellowship

and belonging. People are happiest when they are giving to a cause and purpose greater than themselves. Before the lockdown I was able to attend services regularly and had just started to get my feet wet in joining in different activities. I have done overnights and cooked dinner for Out of the Cold, attended Movie Night, rung the bell at Meyer Dairy, participated in book group and other activities and services.

I am a trained counselor; good at listening and connecting people to others with similar interests and visions. I would love to use my talents to help members engage in activities and projects that help them to serve God through the community and those around them.

#### **CAROLYN DONALDSON**

With a strong belief in public media and making connections with the community, Carolyn Donaldson is proudly serving as Community Engagement Manager at WPSU Penn State. A faith-driven person who joined St. Andrews in 2018, Carolyn served as a news anchor for CBS-affiliate WTAJ-TV for more than 20 years and serves on several boards including Mount Aloysius College, Central PA Festival of the Arts, and AAUW State College.



#### SHARON ROVANSEK



Greetings all! I moved to Port Matilda 16 years ago with my husband, Ron, and three sons, Abe, Dave and Jack. We quickly found St. Andrew's and have felt it to be our church home ever since. Ron and I were received into the Episcopal Church, and my children were confirmed here, and they truly loved serving as acolytes, making friends, and participating in the programs.

I have been a long-time volunteer with the Community Cafe, have been a Rite-13 leader where we were able to take the youth on wonderful trip to Oregon, have led the Film Ministry, and have worked in the library and archives.

I have also served on Vestry once before, my last year as Junior Warden, working with three different rectors (Fathers Richard, Doug, and now Jeff). During that stint, there were many things accomplished that I was proud of, but

the most fun I ever had on Vestry was driving around State College looking for a stolen U-Haul with Sandy Schwartz.

#### **FRAN STEVENSON**

Fran Stevenson lives in Stormstown with her husband Richard. Fran grew up in the Philadelphia/South Jersey area and she and Dick moved to Centre County in 1969. Fran is a "cradle" Episcopalian, although attended Friends school growing up, and has attended St. Andrews since 1974. Fran graduated from Penn State in Business Administration and the Central Atlantic School of Trust at Bucknell University. Her career has been in banking and investments; retiring from Trust Services at Kish Bank. At one time Fran enjoyed working with St Andrews Youth Education and for the past three years has been a member of the Finance Committee.



## **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

# **CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS**

## Welcoming new and familiar faces with CDC protocols in place

# Thank you and Staying Safe

We are welcoming new and familiar faces to our Nursery and Godly Play classrooms. Everyone is thrilled to see our children coming back to St. Andrew's! Thank you to all of our families for the help and participation in our Christmas Eve Family Service and pageant.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church follows the guidelines that are recommended by the Center for Disease Control. These guidelines help us to provide classes that are safe for our children, youth, leaders, and **all** parishioners.

#### **CDC guidelines for <u>Communities of Faith</u>:**

- Masks should be worn indoors by all individuals (age 2 and older).
- Children, volunteers, and staff should stay home when they have signs of any infectious illness.

#### Additional precautions in classrooms:

- Sanitizer
- Disinfecting Wipes
- Washing Hands
- Safe Distancing
- Disinfecting Surfaces

If you have any questions, please contact me! Respectfully and Gratefully -Robin Bastress <u>children@standrewsc.org</u>. 814-404-3812



# **Opening & Growing our Programs for Children** Your help is needed!

<u>Our Nursery</u> will remain open on the 2nd floor. This program operates as our infant through two-year-old classroom. We are blessed to have a wonderful nursery attendant, Maggie Bond. Each week, we need a volunteer to assist Maggie. With a group of volunteers, we can make it possible to have a rotating schedule. We will share the sign-up with anyone interested in helping in the nursery. Please contact Robin, if you are interested: <u>children@standrewsc.org</u>.

<u>Our Godly Play classroom</u> will reopen on the 3rd floor, serving children from age three years old to elementary age. Story Tellers and Greeters are needed for this program. Our story tellers are experienced in Godly Play traditions, but our greeters need no experience (just a caring heart and a smile). If you are interested in being a greeter for Godly Play, please contact Robin: <u>children@standrewsc.org</u>.

<u>Our Rising Youth</u> meet in the Library (Room 324) on the 3rd floor. These students are our middle school group. They meet every Sunday and have volunteered for many projects that have served our church and community. Some of our Rising Youth also serve as acolytes for St. Andrew's. We have been blessed with volunteers who help with and participate in our projects. Please contact Robin, if you are interested in joining our group: <u>children@standrewsc.org</u>.

Please write an email or call, if you need any more information about our programs. With Appreciation, Robin Bastress <u>children@standrewsc.org</u>. 814-404-3812

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

# ACOLYTE TRAINING: Youth and adults are invited!

**ALL church members,** ages 5th grade and up, are invited to serve as acolytes. The service of our acolytes is an important part of our worship.

Father Jeff and Deacon Joe will offer training sessions for those interested after the 10 am service. Acolytes serve at least once a month. For more information, please contact Robin at <u>children@standrewsc.org</u>

# THE BISHOP IS COMING ... AGAIN!

Sunday, January 16 5 p.m. Church





That's right, she was just here in early December. So, why is Bishop Audrey Scanlan coming again? Well, back in December she wasn't able to attend the 5:00 service. That's why she arranged to be with us at the casual Sunday afternoon service on January 16. There will be no reception this time around. She just wanted to see the folks who worship at that time. She will celebrate and preach at 5:00 only.

# SAFEGUARDING GOD'S CHILDREN

Sunday, January 21 11:30 a.m. Room 325

St. Andrew's has been training and teaching SGC since 2001 to all who frequently or regularly work with children. Many others such as staff and clergy and those with keys to the church are required to take the training. Changes in both state laws and church policies now require that this training be renewed every 3 years either by doing so online or retaking the initial class.

We will be offering a SAFEGUARDING GOD'S CHILDREN training class on January 23rd, 2022, at 11:30AM (immediately following church). We will continue to require masks, and those who are required to take this class have been notified. The class is in ROOM #325 of the Trost Wing and light refreshments will be served. All church members with any interest in this training are welcome to attend. Those needing to do renewals are also welcome if they do not wish to renew online.

With thanks to all, Barb Downs and Rich Marini

## **OUTREACH**

# **IHS WISHING WELL AT MEYER DAIRY**



Thank you to all parishioners who helped Interfaith Human Services by ringing the bells for the Wishing Well at Meyer Dairy and to everyone who made a donation. IHS recently announced, "It is with the utmost gratitude we can announce that the IHS Wishing Well Campaign raised over \$41,000 this year. This is about \$1,000 more than last year. As these trying times continue to challenge us all, our donors, volunteer ringers, and sponsors have once again blessed us."

## PARISHIONERS' MINISTRY

Our Parishioners' Ministry has been going here at St. Andrew's since the 1950s. Six stewards serve to administer funds that are allocated to assist anyone with financial needs—parishioners and non-parishioner members of our community. When we went to the austerity budget in 2020, we stopped funding this ministry through the parish budget. It now depends solely on your donations given directly to support Parishioners' Ministry. You have been generous in giving to keep this ministry viable. They had a busy fall and early winter due to the expiration of the moratorium on evictions and the lag in government money to help tenants and landlords. So, we are asking once again if you would donate to help us respond to needs in our community. Please mark your gift specifically for "Parishioners' Ministry."

We would also like to acknowledge the two stewards who have just stepped down and the new stewards who are taking their place. Marion Schwartz steps down after having served for several three-year terms, the last five years as chief steward. Don Hopkins also decided that 18 years was enough to serve as both a PM steward and the treasurer of the group. Both Marion and Don have done a wonderful and faithful job in this quiet but important ministry. Starting new three-year terms on the first of the year we welcome new stewards Anthony Grillo and Beth Jones and welcome back Pam Ferguson who just finished serving the final year of an unexpired term.

#### NOTEWORTHY

## Kate Freeman to Receive Honorary Degree from University of Chicago



The University of Chicago will present honorary degrees to four distinguished scholars at its Convocation ceremony in June 2022, in recognition of their significant contributions to their fields of study.

Katherine H. Freeman, a world-renowned organic biogeochemist, will receive the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Science. Freeman studies ancient organic molecules and their stable isotopes—work that has given fundamental insights into the study of climate change over millions of years

The Evan Pugh University Professor of Geosciences and Chemistry at Pennsylvania State University, Freeman's development of the paleo-carbon dioxide proxy record has had wide-ranging implications for the study of climate change. She also contributed to the invention of compound-specific stable isotope analysis and continues to develop new measurement techniques that will allow deeper understanding of ancient molecular structure than ever before. As a leader in molecular isotope paleontology, she has studied areas ranging from the earliest recognized life on Earth to modern biological processes.

Freeman is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, and a fellow of the Geological Society of America, the Geochemical Society, the American Academy of Microbiology and the American Geophysical Union. She is also a recipient of the Alfred Treibs Award from the Geochemical Society, the highest honor in organic geochemistry; the Arthur L. Day Medal from the Geological Society of America; and the 2020 Nemmers Prize in Earth Sciences from Northwestern University.

Congratulations, Kate!

# **GROUPS, MINISTRIES, & COMMITTEES**

This is not a comprehensive listing; regularly scheduled meetings and events are included only if they submitted an item for publication. For complete and updated listings, please check your Sunday bulletin or weekly email

#### **KNITTING MINISTRY**

Sunday, January 9, 11:15 a.m. Via Zoom ONLY

Knitting Ministry will meet on Sunday, January 9, 11:15 - 12:15 via Zoom. Join us! Settle down with your needles and yarn in front of your computer camera and log on! We knit cozy, useful items for Knitting4Peace (News and patterns at https://www.knitting4peace.org/).

If you would like to come, please email <u>anne.hoag@gmail.com</u> and she will send you a Zoom invitation link. Mark your calendars for the second Sunday of each month through June 2021.

For more information contact Anne Hoag, <u>anne.hoag@gmail.com</u>



Items made by the Knitting Ministry in 2020.

#### **BOOK CLUB**

Tuesday, January 25, 7 p.m. Room 324 (Library)

At their January meeting, the Book Group will discuss *Me Talk Pretty One Day* by David Sedaris.

This is a collection of humorous essays including stories about the author's family, attempts to learn French, and his experiences with speech therapy and teaching language and writing. There is still plenty of time to read the book and newcomers and visitors are always welcome.



# ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT ST. ANDREW'S \* 2021

Last year in 2020, virtually all our celebrations and activities were, well, virtual.

In 2021, we were still facing limitations imposed by COVID and beginning to see the impact of the new Omicron variant. We were able to enjoy most of our Advent and Christmas traditions in person, however, with continued safety protocols (masking, distancing,) a largely vaccinated congregation, and livestream options where possible for those not comfortable attending.

**Visit from St. Nicholas** – St. Nicholas made his visit during the 10 a.m. service on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent again this year. He joined Bishop Scanlan during her Children's Sermon in which she shared ways to recognize a bishop and made the connection that she and St. Nicholas, as a bishop, too, had that in common. The church school children decorated chocolate Santas with a mitre, crozier, cope, and ring to reinforce the lesson and sent one to Bishop Scanlan for Christmas. She shared a picture on Facebook with this comment, "Fav Christmas gift!! Thanks, St. Andrew's State College and Robin Bastress!!"

#### Link to Sunday, December 5, service: <u>https://youtu.be/LeULmZKkM0Q</u>





Compassionate Life - gathered in person in 2021 for their annual Christmas party and white elephant gift

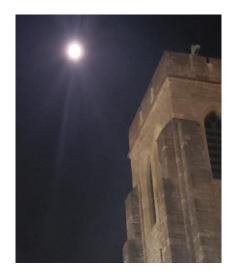
exchange.



**Lessons and Carols** – We were back in our beautiful, candlelit church in 2021 for the Service of Lessons and Carols. The adult choir, joined by several youth choir members and Gwen Catchen, our organist, provided beautiful music for the service. Our guest readers were there to read in person. After the service, we had a chance to socialize on the front lawn and enjoy a cup of hot cider by the fire on a crisp, clear winter night.

Link to service: <u>https://youtu.be/IwZGZAXPP-c</u>





**Christmas Eve Worship** – Last year our Christmas Eve worship was one pre-recorded service. This year, we were able to offer two in-person services, the family service with Nativity at 5 p.m. and the Solemn Eucharist at 8 p.m. preceded by the Musical Prelude. Both services were livestreamed and Bishop Scanlan had once again approved the distribution of pre-consecrated communion for at home worship.

Christmas Eve Service Link (Family Service): <u>https://youtu.be/TFpEqgqxqtY</u> Christmas Eve Service (Musical Prelude and Solemn Eucharist): <u>https://youtu.be/SdxwMUGcKIA</u>



**Nativity Pageant** – The pageant took place live and in person this year during our Family Service on Christmas Eve. All your traditional favorites - the camel, the manger scene, the costumes worn by generations of children, the flock of sheep that give a deeper understanding to just what a difficult job "shepherd" is - combined with the spontaneity of a live performance for a moving presentation.





# JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

#### 1 Michelle McNutt

- 1 Anne Ayer
- 1 Theresa Johnson-Pritchett
- 1 Nico Diaz
- 2 Richard Porter
- 3 Esther Wall
- 4 Jack Selzer
- 6 Ainsley Paulsen
- 7 Dana Tilghman
- 7 Christie Alter
- 8 Elisa Edgar
- 9 Melanie Foster
- 12 Melody Chisholm

13 Frank Pugliese23 Da13 Madi Christopher24 Gra13 Madeline Johnson24 Sus13 Erica Wells26 Da14 Alison Jaenicke26 Da15 Jim Frego-Bliek26 Na16 Abraham Rovansek28 Mi17 Dale Gericke27 Shi18 Teri Smith28 Ru19 Marybeth Hoffman29 Ela21 Diane Dillon30 Lat23 Sue Stephenson31 Bet

23 Daniel Foster
24 Gretchen Schrock-Jacobson
24 Susan Dawson
26 Darla Lindberg
26 David Spencer
26 Navy Cozad
28 Mike Hickner
27 Shirley Leopold
28 Ruth Packard
29 Elaine Meder-Wilgus
30 Laurel Zydney
31 Beth Jones

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!** If you have a January birthday and don't see your name listed, we probably do not have that information in our records. Please contact the office – we may be missing other information, too.

# **Those For Whom We Pray**

Sandy, Dick, Molly, Teri, Mavis, Joan, Don, Jane, Beth, Kevin, Diane, Frank, Robbie, Sara, Vicki, David, Jordan, Jean, Max, Greg, Kelley, Ainsley, Emily, Zach, Stephen, Dave, Ellie

**Those in the Armed Forces and First Responders** Zach, Christie, Matt

# SAINT ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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