

# St. Andrew's Message

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**Worship   Learn   Serve**



## **Dates to Remember**

### **December 3**

**8:00 a.m.** Worship Service

**9:00 a.m.** Adult Education

**10:00 a.m.** Worship Service and Zoom

**11:00 a.m.** Confirmation

### **December 6**

**6:30 p.m.** Life Commission

### **December 7**

7:00 p.m. Memorial Committee

### **December 10**

**8:00 a.m.** Worship Service

**9:00 a.m.** Adult Education

**10:00 a.m.** Worship Service and Zoom

### **December 14**

**6:30 p.m.** Council Meeting & Dinner

### **December 17**

**9:00 a.m.** Adult Education

**10:00 a.m.** Worship/Pageant Service and Zoom

**11:00 a.m.** Christmas Brunch after Pageant

### **December 24**

**10:00 a.m.** Worship Service

**4:00 p.m.** Worship Service

**9:00 p.m.** Worship Service

### **December 31**

10:00 a.m. Worship Service

January 6

2:00 p.m. Ladies Bingo

## WORSHIP



December 2023

### Pastor's Message

We are living amid the largest and fastest transformation of religion in American history. In the last 25 years 40 million people have left their church. Jim David and Michael Graham bring clarity to this shift that

many of us have noticed in their recent book "The Great Dechurching." St. Andrew's is not immune from this shift. This fact hits awfully close to home when we realize those that have left their church are people we know and love, even our siblings, children and grandchildren.

Graham and David tackle the questions of; Why are they leaving? Where are they going? What would bring them back? The good news, is that there are lots of people interested in church, who think they should go to church and are willing to try. For a variety of reasons they chose to leave their church. We have such a great opportunity to be part of what God is doing by inviting and welcoming others to our community. We have a chance to make a difference in people's faith lives by showing them that authentic Christian community exists in this place. We have a calling as disciples to not only follow Christ, but encourage others to join the journey.

The good news is that the solution is within our grasp. The answer is simple, but not easy. Be the church.; authentically worship, lovingly serve, forgive with words and action, serve the needy, support those hurting and fight for justice. As we enter the Christmas season we need to be aware of the opportunity facing us. Christmas is a season where people are more willing to come to church-invite them. Ask your non-church-attending neighbor to come to church WITH YOU.

We will talk more about this book during our Bible study time in January. Our adult Bible study time will examine Scripture references and passages from "The Great Dechurching" to help us learn about this mass social movement. The church of Jesus has survived pandemic, politics, and wars by banding together and focusing on our mission.

May God Bless us in this work, Pastor Dave

### Council Notes

**Produce Sale** - Thank you to everyone who helped with the annual Thanksgiving produce sale on November 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>! It was very successful and netted a profit of \$2,261.

in addition to making new friends. Plus, these events build camaraderie as we get to know each other even better. Whether you shopped and/or worked at the sale, you are much appreciated!



**Financial Status** – As has been presented over the past several weeks, St. Andrew's needs your help. We are looking at a larger than expected deficit for the year. Please prayerfully consider giving a little extra for the remainder of the year and increasing your contributions for 2024. If we all step up, we will be helping St. Andrew's to continue to be the place that we all love. Thanks for your consideration.

**Holiday giving** – Thank you for the donations of turkeys and grocery store gift cards to support those needing help at Thanksgiving. We will again be collecting to help a family through the Holiday Angel program, Walmart gift cards for Jan Peek residents, and the Hour Children program at the Bedford Women's Prison. The members of St. Andrew's are always so generous and our neighbors are very appreciative.

**Thanksgiving Interfaith Service** – The Thanksgiving service hosted by St. Andrew's was led by clergy from the Interfaith Council and was very well attended. Thank you to the Life Commission and all who helped with the coffee hour following the service.

## LEARN

## Sunday School Update



The children continue to enjoy coming to Sunday School each week and learning about Jesus and his love for them. They are treated to Pastor Dave's children's sermon at the beginning of the service before heading off to class.

Harvest Sunday continues on the first Sunday of each month and we ask the rest of the congregation to share their non-perishable food to help those less fortunate than us. The next Harvest Sunday is December 3<sup>rd</sup> so let's make it a big day!

The children were treated to a special Advent lesson on November 19<sup>th</sup> by Cyndi and Ellie Clark after which they received this year's take-home Advent activity.

Rehearsals for the annual Christmas pageant will begin on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. The children will be presenting "One Starry Night" during the 10 AM service on Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>. There will be a rehearsal for about an hour immediately following Sunday School on Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>. And a dress rehearsal will take place on Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM and pizza will be served. It's important that everyone attend as we need to practice the songs for the pageant.

We welcome your questions, suggestions, and concerns so please reach out to me at [914-715-9546](tel:914-715-9546) or via e-mail. And we are always eager for even more teachers and helpers to join us in sharing our faith with the children. It is so rewarding and you always get back more than you give.

Have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy 2024! We look forward to seeing all the children each week in Sunday School!

God Bless,

Sue Epting, Sunday School Coordinator

## Celebrations



## December Birthdays

Thomas DiRusso, Jr, 12/1

Daniele Racanelli 12/3

Madison Delgado 12/4

Janis Zaeh 12/4

Karen Conlon 12/5

Shane Muller 12/5

Sonja Letizia 12/6

Jason Singh 12/6

Colton Knapp 12/6

Vincent Kennedy 12/7

Susan Frising 12/8

Paul Miller 12/9

Travis Stern 12/9

Erin Ehlke 12/11

William O'Brien II 12/13

Carolyn Hamm 12/17

Joseph Polizzi 12/18

Patrick Gallagher 12/19

Nolah Stringham 12/23

Jesus 12/25

Mike Epting 12/26

Singh Michael 12/26

Hayley Cooper 12/26

Genie Muller 12/27

Emma Bianchimano 12/27

Alex Worsley 12/28

Dennis Alfieri 12/29

Joanna Falcone 12/30

John Cote 12/30

Breanna Vo 12/30

# Happy Anniversary

4 Gemma & Scott Reinkraut  
8 Lynette & Chris Van Tongeren  
22 Brenda & Joseph Middleton

## Financial

### Envelop Update

We've been ordering 130 boxes of 65 preprinted envelopes. We analyzed the envelope usage and found out fewer than 10% of the envelopes are being used. So to reduce the waste and save some money, we made some changes. For 2024, we only ordered 25 full boxes of 65 envelopes, and we ordered 50 boxes of 20 undated envelopes plus special envelopes for initial envelope offering, Ash Wednesday, Easter and Christmas.

We will assign 2024 envelopes based on our givers' envelope usage. Those who did not take their 2023 envelope boxes or only give online will not be assigned 2024 envelopes. Those who give in-person infrequently will be assigned the smaller envelope box. And those who give in-person frequently will be assigned a full box. As a result of this, everyone assigned envelopes will get a new envelope number. If you are not assigned envelopes, but would like to make an occasional in-person donation, you can use the blue pew envelopes.

If you were not assigned a box of envelopes and would like one, or if you were assigned the smaller box and would like the full box, please let us know by emailing the office. We have extras. The 2024 boxes will be available for pickup some time in December.

## YEAR-TO-DATE FINANCIAL SUMMARY -

OCTOBER

	2023	2022	Difference
Contributions	\$ 147,900	\$ 144,600	\$ 3,300
Rental Income	36,500	9,800	26,700
Other Income	9,200	12,700	(3,500)
Total Income	193,600	167,100	26,500
Expenses ( <i>Budget-\$230,000</i> )	220,200	216,600	3,600
<b>Deficit</b>	<b>\$ (26,600)</b>	<b>\$ (49,500)</b>	<b>\$ 22,900</b>

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### St. Andrew's Lutheran Church

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