

ST. ANDREW LUTHERAN CHURCH, BRISTOL, CT
1125 Stafford Ave., Bristol, CT

News Notes for the Week of November 26, 2023

Church Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Church Phone: 860.583.5809

The Rev. Les Swenson, Transition Pastor

Gwynne Hopko, Deacon, Minister of Music

Nicole Gergler, Church Administrator

St. Andrew Church's "Why" Statement...

To come together as a worshipping community, nourished by God's love so that we may reflect God's love to others.

Adopted April 2023

November 26, 2023 9:30 a.m.
Reign of Christ
Holy Communion

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

Sunday, November 26, 2023; Reign of Christ

Service of Holy Communion

(Sanctuary, YouTube, Facebook)

Facebook and YouTube:

<https://www.facebook.com/Standrewct/>;

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLSSna5Ti_WSwRJ_ySbMA3Q.

10:30 a.m. Coffee Hour

Monday, November 27, 2023

6:00 p.m. Bristol Chorale

Tuesday, November 28 2023

6:45 p.m. Handbell Choir

7:30 p.m. Voice Choir

Wednesday, November 29, 2023

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Bible Study

7:00 p.m. Four Church Collaboration Ministry Committee meeting at St. Andrew

Thursday, November 30, 2023

7:00 p.m. AA (Fellowship Hall)

7:00 p.m. Al Anon

Sunday, December 3, 2023; First Sunday of Advent

9:30 a.m. Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

27 Judd Street

Bristol, CT 860-589-7744

Website: <https://bristolzion.org/>

Facebook (for viewing the service online):

<https://www.facebook.com/Zion-Evangelical-Lutheran-Church-263980580955036>

A note on gratefulness in this time of Thanksgiving...

I've always wondered if St. Paul was a bit too sunny when he encouraged his friends of the church in Thessalonica who were struggling to live faithfully in the midst of a confusing and turbulent time to "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." (1 Thessalonians 5.16-18). Thanks in all circumstances? Really?

Then one day I was introduced to a Benedictine monk, David Steindl-Rast, who resides in a monastery in Austria and has spent decades of his life reflecting, writing and speaking about gratitude. He's even got a great website focused on this what has become a rather popular topic these days: gratefulness.org. It's worth a good look.

We hear it often that grateful people are healthier people. Scientific studies confirm it. Grateful people, we are told, live robust, resilient, more joyful lives. Maybe St. Paul was onto something.

Brother Steindl-Rast has a rather simple method for practicing gratefulness. He suggests three things: **Stop. Look. Go.**

Stop, he says, in the midst of all the rush and crazy busy-ness of your life. Stop and simply be present in the moment. It doesn't have to be long, your stop. A split second may be enough.

Stop and look, he invites. Take in the moment, the people, the memory, the promise, the beauty, the connectedness in that place where you are. To look is to behold, to take it all in. Listen attentively too in that moment, I would add...to the music in the winds, the chirping of the bright red cardinal in the backyard, the melancholy of the cello, the throbbing of your anxious heart, the nearly silent prayers and cries rising from the darkness.

And when you stop and look (and listen too) ask yourself: "what is, now, the opportunity of this given moment, only this moment, and the unique opportunity this moment gives? And that is where the beholding comes in. And if we really see what the opportunity is, we must, of course, not stop there, but we must do something with it: **Go**. Avail yourself of that opportunity."

And to those doubtful that we can give thanks in "all circumstances," Steindl-Rast provides wisdom: "...no, we can't be grateful for everything that befalls us. You can't be grateful for war in a given situation, or violence, or domestic violence or sickness...There are many things for which you cannot be grateful. But in every moment, you can be grateful. For instance, the opportunity to learn something from a very difficult experience — what to grow by it, or even to protest, to stand up and take a stand — that is a wonderful gift in a situation in which things are not the way they ought to be. So opportunity is really the key when people ask, "Can you be grateful for everything?" — no, not for everything, but **in** every moment." Could this be what St. Paul meant when he said, "be thankful **in** all circumstances?"

I invite you to rejoice these days in the One who opens the eyes of our hearts to see opportunities for gratitude even when things are not at all the way they ought to be, the One who frees us to rejoice always, who assures us that the cries of our prayers are heard, that our work in Jesus' name is not in vain, that the God of peace is with us always giving birth to a new creation, making all things new.

With gratitude,
Les Swenson, Transitional Pastor



A Thanksgiving Prayer. Wherever you gather this Thanksgiving or however many join together around your table for this day in the midst of this challenging and turbulent time, may there be a quiet song in your heart and a note of gratitude on your lips. *"Praise the Lord! O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever."* (Psalm 100.1)

Gracious God,
for the blessings of yesterday,
the gifts of today
and the promise of all that is yet to be;
for the gifts of the earth, of community,
of family and friends distant and near;
for the blessings of this table,
signs of your generosity and love,
we offer our prayers of gratitude and thanksgiving today.
May we who are blessed with much
be granted a deep hunger to serve and feed those
who have little and whose yearnings for life run deep.
Amen.



With Gratitude and Invitation...

- Thanks to all who have submitted their estimate of giving cards to support and build the ministry of St. Andrew Church for 2024. We are a generous people!
- And thanks for all who have not yet submitted their estimates of giving but will soon. Every gift is important to the life of the church as we lean into a new year. If you need a card, they will be available this Sunday morning, or call the church office and ask Nicole to send you one.
- And our gratitude to Arlene Creswell who has faithfully and competently led our "We are called!" efforts over the past weeks, despite her broken foot and fashionable walking boot!

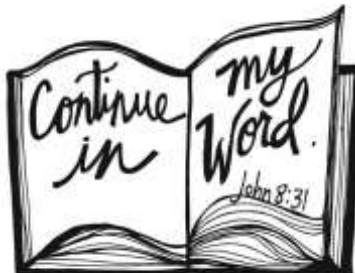


LOOKING AHEAD TO THE NEW BEGINNINGS OF ADVENT... SHARED WORSHIP AT ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH, DECEMBER 3

Our four Lutheran congregations of the Bristol area will worship as one to mark the beginning of the new church year, the First Sunday in Advent, December 3, at Zion Lutheran Church, 27 Judd St., Bristol, 9:30 a.m. Circle the date and anticipate a day of giving thanks for this new season of life together, a season of anticipation, longing and hope for the coming of Christ.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA DONATIONS

If you would like to donate a poinsettia plant to help adorn the altar area for Christmas, please fill out the form that will appear in this Sunday's worship bulletins or call Nicole in the church office. Cost will be \$20 per plant. If you would like to give the plant in honor or in memory of someone please note that as well. Thanks.



BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday Nights at St. Andrew Church, Live from 7-8 p.m. ...

Come build community at our weekly Bible study on the *parables of Jesus*. Come in person Wednesday night, 7-8 pm, in the fellowship hall or phone in. No questions are out of bounds and snacks are provided. The Prodigal Son, Great Banquet, Pearl of Great Price, and Vineyard and Laborers are all discussed soon to be met by others. Please invite your friends. Questions, call Matt Stojanov for more information (203) 768-7194.

CHILDREN'S STORY TIME

Children ages 2-12 are invited to join adult leaders in our Sunday School room from the first lesson through the sermon to learn about the day's lessons and gospel and enjoy related activities and song. In lieu of CBST on the fourth Sundays of the month, children will remain in the sanctuary and hear a Children's Message.

Please contact Britt Elise Lynch if you have questions, wish to participate as a helper or leader, or would like more information.

4-CHURCH CONFIRMATION - KICK-OFF EVENT Dec 11th

Students enrolled in grades 6, 7 & 8 are invited to come (and bring their parents) to a kickoff gathering on Monday Dec 11th at Gloria Dei from 630-8p.

Come meet the leaders, review the curriculum, meet other young people, and have some fun!

Classes begin Jan 8th, and pre-registration is required. Contact Pr Swenson, Arlene Creswell or the church office for details.

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR



On Sunday November 26th, December 10th and December 17th, St. Andrew will be having a mini Christmas Bazaar following Sunday service. It will be held in the Fellowship Hall. There are new and hand crafted items to chose from.

All Items are pre-boxed and ready to go. They are perfect gifts for teachers, friends and neighbors.

GROCERY CART CHALLENGE:

Do you have a favorite holiday food? Some canned cranberry or package of stuffing or cherry pie filling for that favorite dessert? You can't forget those canned green beans, crunchy onions and mushroom soup. Green bean casserole!

What about that cup of peppermint hot cocoa and cookie at Christmas.

When you are going shopping please remember your neighbors.

ST. PAULY SHED

The shed continues to help us and others. Clothes are being donated to other churches for clothing ministries, some clothes generate income for us to financially support food banks.

Your donations of clothes are vital to our outreach. Thank you

YES! THERE WILL BE A TAG SALE.



There will be a tag sale on Friday and Saturday, March 22 and 23, 2024. Please start going through items you may want to donate. No big items please.

Drop offs will begin in January.

Main contact is Dawn Stitham, dstitham@gmail.com or Robin Landrette at 860 582.7807.



Join Us for the Annual Bristol Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

We will come together as a community of many faiths, joined in our gratitude for each other and for the blessings we share. Our 2023 theme is **GRATITUDE.**

Wednesday, November 22, 2023 7:30 p.m.

**Saint Joseph's Church,
33 Queen Street, Bristol, CT
(also live streamed on our Facebook page)**

Organized by Bristol Interfaith Coalition

For more information, visit our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/BristolInterfaithCoalition/> or email

BristolInterfaith@gmail.com

A collection will be taken for Prudence Crandall Center. The Center is a leader in reducing the devastating impacts of domestic violence in the lives of survivors, their children, and our communities.

Services include: emergency shelter, 24/7 crisis hotline, supportive housing and more.

For information on how to make a monetary or supply donation, visit prudencecrandall.org/donate or see the Bristol Interfaith Coalition Facebook page.

PRAYERS

We offer prayers of thanksgiving and supplication for:

- those known to us in need of healing: Bill Murtha, Arthur Potz, Jim Prior, Callum Rescsanski, Paul Rescsanski, Charles Schissler, Steven Siecienski, Johanna Tessman, Carole Wedler, Marge Pearson, Anna Zurell, Susan Provenzano, Tracey Simpson, Donna Ouellette, Michael Positano, Larry Holyst, Denise Holyst, Robert Gergler, Karen Schumann, Roy Zurell, and all those in nursing homes and the homebound: Nancy Denehy, Marie Ouellette and Jean Wentland.

We strive to keep the prayer lists updated both during worship and in our weekly announcements. If you have people or concerns that you would like to add to our communal prayer, please email churchoffice@standrewct.org, or leave a comment on our Sunday worship live feed. We will keep any requests made on for a month and then remove them.

*If you have pastoral needs or concerns, please feel free to call our transition pastor.
The Rev. Les Swenson can be reached at 860.857.9362.*



**A gift was given, to the Glory of God,
In memory of:**

Trudi Wedler

By:

**Louis and Joan Usala
Ken and Barbara Soden**



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 Noreen Simmons	22 Timothy Beauregard
4 Matthew Stojanov	23 Gerald Beaudoin
5 Krista Rescsanski	23 Mark Voight
9 Sierra Narvesen	24 Ruth Vontell
9 Julieanne Voight	25 Tessa Segreve
13 Ashley Provenzano	25 Steven Siecienski
13 Barbara Soden	26 Jenny Culin
18 Jennifer Alling	27 Gabriel Ricciardella
18 Gwynne Hopko	27 Joan Usala
19 Donna Stockman	28 Kathy Golden
20 Eric Neuman	

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

3 Julia Biernat	15 Cora Neumann
3 Kristen Pratt	17 Luke Adam
3 Noelle Sonstrom	18 Kim Wagner
5 Richard Killiany	20 Emily Gdovin
5 Rachel Tessman	21 James Hein
9 Kathy Dahlberg	21 Emily Hopko
13 Stephen Adam	23 Timothy Treacy
13 Ivy Nadeau	25 Jonathan Nelson
14 Leana Gleicher	26 Jamie Nadeau
15 Rachel Beauregard	28 Jacob Rindfleisch
	30 Paul Martin

The November 26, 2023 bulletin can be found here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Rz9FI2YOf-NrxlITQrJiTUIHMZKhE2Zp/view?usp=sharing>