

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

News Notes for the Week of November 5, 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

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**November 5, 2023 9:30 a.m.**  
**All Saints Sunday**  
**Holy Communion**



**THIS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5...**  
**ALL SAINTS SUNDAY!**

This Sunday, November 5, we gather together to sing, pray and give God thanks for **all** the saints!

When St. Paul opened many of his letters to the churches that he knew so well with the greeting "To all the saints and faithful ones of..."

he was reminding them, and us, that all the baptized people, claimed as God's beloved and called to be living witnesses of God's love, are indeed saints.

Yes, we are all saints! You and me. (And, yes, as Martin Luther so clearly reminded us — not only saints but sinners too. Flawed but forgiven sinners, and broken, stumbling, but yet beloved saints at once we are.)

The tradition of the Church invites us on All Saints Day to remember those whose lives have been a blessing to us and who have died and gone before us. And that we do with thanksgiving in song and prayer. The bells will ring at the mention of their names in our worship. And our hearts, still tinged with grief but yet full of gratitude, will beat an extra beat or two as we hear their names.

So as we worship this week, let us give thanks to God for **all** the saints ... *for the saints who have gone before us, for the saints still among us, and for the saints of God still to come. Give thanks for the examples of faithful living that the saints have given us as they navigated the stormy waters of life, and also for the faithful acts of service we are empowered by God's Holy Spirit to do in our own seas. We give thanks, too, for the fullness of eternal life in which the saints of God who have gone before us now*

*partake and which we have yet to fully enjoy.* (This italicized paragraph is from Sundays and Seasons, a worship guide from Augsburg-Fortress Press.)

## **THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR**

### **Sunday, November 5, 2023; All Saints Sunday (remember to turn your clocks back)**

Service of Holy Communion

(Sanctuary, YouTube, Facebook)

Facebook and YouTube:

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

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLSSna5Ti\\_WSwRJ\\_ySbMA3Q](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLSSna5Ti_WSwRJ_ySbMA3Q).

10:30 a.m. Coffee Hour

### **Monday, November 6, 2023**

6:00 p.m. Bristol Chorale

### **Tuesday, November 7, 2023**

No Choir or Handbell Practice

### **Wednesday, November 8, 2023**

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Bible Study

### **Thursday, November 9, 2023**

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

7:00 p.m. Al Anon

### **Sunday, November 12, 2023; 24th Sunday after Pentecost**

9:30 a.m. Service of Holy Communion (Sanctuary, YouTube, Facebook)

10:30 a.m. Coffee Hour

Dear Friends,

It's Monday morning when I'm writing this and the glow and joy of yesterday's festive Reformation celebration is still ringing within me. And it will for days to come!.

What a splendid day it was ... the church filled with expectant worshippers from our four Bristol/Plainville congregations plus more guests, glorious music reminding us that full throated singing from deep within us is a gift of our Reformation heritage, a fine sermon inviting us to know that God dwells gracefully with us in the midst of uncertainty and of inevitable and necessary change, and, of course, a most delightful "coffee hour" that was indeed a generous feast of good company, lively conversation and scrumptious treats.

On my way home yesterday as I thought about our time together, I thought of the slogan on official state signs that I think still welcome people into Maine: "The Way Life Should Be." It is my hope and prayer that our very positive experience of our four congregations worshipping together as one will be the way that will shape our days into the future. I fervently want to believe that this emerging oneness is the way life should be for us.

Yes, there are challenges, questions and anxieties to face. Whatever losses we might experience along the way, I am confident that the gains that result from our joining together will far outweigh the losses. After yesterday and all our other gatherings over the last three months, I keep asking, "How can we not be better together?"

So, grateful for yesterday and for all who contributed to making it such a splendid, joyous day, let us at the same time keep leaning with trust into new tomorrows of God's making — tomorrows filled with surprise, wonder and unseen opportunity and with the certainty of God's guiding hand and unfailing love and wisdom.

Your partner along the way,  
Les Swenson, Transition Pastor

P.S. If you weren't able to attend Sunday's Reformation worship, I encourage you take a look at it, if you can, on St. Andrew's Facebook page ( look for: Saint Andrew Lutheran Church of Bristol CT) or on YouTube (again, look for St Andrew...). There is also a nice gallery of photos from the day on Facebook. It will give you a good taste of a great day. And thanks to our video team for all their tremendous work!



## **A Summary of our Hopes and Expectations and More for Shared Ministry**

At the Collaborative Ministry Committee meeting on Wednesday evening, November 1, representatives from the four Lutheran congregations of Bristol/Plainville shared the results of their October congregational conversations focused on their "Hopes, Expectations and the Possible Roadblocks" to further steps in shared, collaborative ministry.

After reviewing the summaries from each congregation, the Collaboration Committee discussed further possible steps and developments in shared ministry. (Since the meeting was held after this edition of the NewsNotes was prepared, a summary of the meeting will appear in next week's edition.)

St. Andrew's representatives on the Four Church Committee include Karen Biernat, Arlene Creswell, Owen VanBrocklin and Pastor Swenson. Pastor Steven Wilco, Associate to the Bishop for New England Synod, is facilitating the continuing Committee efforts.

Here is a summary of our lively, thoughtful congregational conversations on October 15 that were presented to the Collaborative Committee. Thanks to Karen Biernat for her fine work writing this recap.

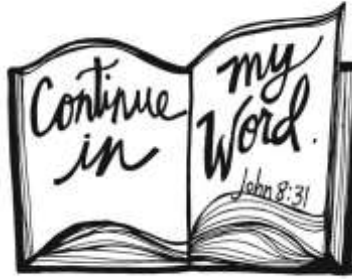
### **Hopes and Possible Roadblocks to Collaboration/ Merger with Area Lutheran Churches**

#### **Hopes**

- 1. That merging/collaborating churches are encouraged to carry their strengths to a unified entity**
- 2. That financial disclosure of willing churches would show that at a minimum a 3 to 1 merger is financially feasible while maintaining Meals for Neighbors ministry**
- 3. That a merged church would provide more opportunities to grow including Saturday Service, Confirmation, Youth Group, etc.**
- 4. That a merged church would provide financial security and new energy and would include a strong music program, Sunday School, Confirmation, Parish Life**
- 5. That we would keep our SAELC building**

#### **Possible Roadblocks**

- 1. All four churches have their own identity/building/history**
- 2. That many are not willing to give up their building**
- 3. That high energy is required for the process and that the timeline may be too fast for some and too slow for others**
- 4. That there is a lack of clarity of vision**
- 5. That society is changing and there is lower church attendance**



## **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.



## **Yes, we are all called!**

In this time of change and uncertainty, we are called to be a strong and brave witness to the certainty of God's presence and promise to one another, to the world and to the community that surrounds us. We are called to be Church, the living, vibrant body of Christ!

In the coming weeks you will be hearing more of this theme as we move toward our Stewardship Sunday on November 19, the day on which we will all offer our estimates of financial giving to help strengthen and grow the ministry of St. Andrew Church in 2024.

In the meantime, watch for letters, listen attentively to temple talks, and pray thoughtfully over how you will respond to this invitation to build up the ministry of this congregation and the whole church in the year ahead.

And watch for the displays at the front entrance and in the fellowship hall that will soon invite you to write down the names of people you know who are offering their gifts to enrich the lives of others and gracing them with the love of God. And with that name tell us how the people you name are living out their calling. Celebrate the gifts of one another! Rejoice and give thanks for our many callings that serve one purpose!

### **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 late March (date TBD). Please start going through items you may want to donate. No big items please.

Drop offs will begin early February.

Main contact is Dawn Stitham, [dstitham@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://prudencecrandall.org/donate) or see the Bristol Interfaith Coalition Facebook page.





BSA Troop 1425 is hosting a



# Holiday Wreath Sale!

## 16" Double-Face Balsam Fir Wreath

Plain Wreath **\$25**

With Bow **\$27**

Taking orders until **November 16**

Local Delivery end of November  
around Thanksgiving



**Local from Bethany Farm & Nursery  
in Woodbridge, CT**



### Payment options:

- \*Cash
- \*Check to BSA Troop 1425
- \*Venmo



Please add order details to Venmo comments

### How to Order:

Fill out an order form from your local scout or email  
troop1425committee@gmail.com with order details

**Thank You For Your Support!**







## **Time Change this Sunday! Fall Back!**

### **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, 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](mailto: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.*

Dear Friends,

It appears as if someone has been hacking into my email accounts and a couple people from the congregation have falsely received emails from me requesting their help (e.g., to pick up gift cards for me) or for them to meet me at the church. If you receive a similar request it would be wise to give me a call. I am working on how to resolve the problem.

Thanks.

Pastor Swenson

