

From the Rector

Do not be afraid!

This week's Gospels highlight this divine reassurance. At our 8:00 service, we'll hear the story from the Gospel of Matthew, highlighting the word of God given to Joseph in a dream, telling him not to be afraid to take Mary as his wife, because the child she carries is holy. And at 10:00, at our service of Advent Lessons & Carols, we will hear the story of the annunciation, from the Gospel of Luke, in which the archangel, Gabriel, visits the Virgin Mary and brings her the good news that she will bear a son, who will save the world.

For an ordinary Jewish couple in first century Palestine, news like this would be inconceivable. Mary had many reasons to be afraid-- an encounter with a divine being, the news that she is miraculously pregnant at a very inconvenient time, and the knowledge that such a miracle could bring with it suspicion, scandal, or punishment. This was hardly a greeting card event. And Joseph, too, had a lot at stake. What would others in the community think? What might happen to his own social standing?

And yet, the angel's response to Joseph and Mary is the same as the divine word to people throughout the Gospels-- "Do not be afraid!" Over and over, we are told by angels and by Jesus not to be afraid of the things taking place, because God is with us. We are called to put our trust in God and embrace the twists and turns and surprises of life.

What fears are holding us back, today? Where might God be doing something new and amazing, even if it doesn't seem like the ideal or what we might have planned? Joseph and Mary's story is proof that we don't need the fairy tale, and we don't need the conventional "good life" to be able to live fully, happily, and faithfully.

So as we await the birth of Jesus this Christmas, let's pray for God's help in putting aside our fears and our own expectations, that we might embrace God's plan and all its miraculous surprises.

Faithfully,
Mother Terry+

Do you have a question about church, liturgy, Anglicanism, etc.? Is there something you've always wanted to ask but thought you should already know? Send those questions to Mother Terry at terry.dirbas@sjs.net. All questions will remain anonymous.

Parish Christmas Party – this Sunday!

On Sunday, after our service of Advent Lessons and Carols, we'll have a simple Christmas celebration at coffee hour in the Trendell Lounge. The focus isn't so much on food—though you are most welcome to bring a treat to share!—but rather on being together before the holidays. It's a chance to say “Merry Christmas” to those you might not see on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. Michael Dirk will play the piano and lead us in some Christmas caroling. Please join us for this time of fun and fellowship!

Christmas Flower Dedications

Every Christmas St John's is adorned with beautiful flowers, especially poinsettias, and fine music. We are collecting flower dedications - a wonderful way to celebrate the birth of Jesus and remember loved ones. Please send in your special flower dedications (the exact wording for your dedication) ASAP, which can be memorials or thanksgivings, to the office by **December 20th (Tues)**. This will allow us time to add all the flower dedications to the Christmas leaflet. Email is best, but you can also call it in.

Special Vestry – Sunday, January 8 after the 10 a.m. service

We will hold a brief special vestry meeting on January 8 after worship. The purpose of this meeting is to approve

minor changes to our bylaws to bring them into compliance with the canons of the diocese. The proposed amendments will be circulated prior to the meeting. Pending subsequent approval of the bishop and diocesan council, changes would take effect following our annual vestry meeting in February.

Outreach Survey

Our new Outreach Committee had a great second meeting last week. We are in the process of brainstorming events and activities for 2023, and we would like your input! We would be so grateful if you would complete our survey (<https://forms.office.com/r/LZPVyIAyqp>) and share your thoughts with us about service and about community engagement.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, January 3, at 7pm on Zoom.

Christmas Decorating December 23, 10am

Join us on Friday Dec 23 to decorate the church in time for Christmas. It will be great fun and there will be yummy festive treats!

Christmas Pageant December 24, 4 p.m.

This year at our Christmas Eve family service, we will witness the Christmas story told by our young people. This is a very simple pageant, with no lines to memorize. Children are invited to arrive

at 3:30 to put on a costume. **If you have children or grandchildren who will be with you for the holidays, please consider bringing them to be part of this experience!** For more information, contact Mother Terry.

SJS chorister winter activities

Sat Dec 17 7:30pm Christ Church Cathedral: Musica Intima *Winter Patterns* (Jaime, Danny)

Sun Dec 18 3pm WestVan United: Musica Intima *Winter Patterns* (Jaime, Danny)
<https://www.musicaintima.org/winter-patterns>

Dec 22 8pm St James Community Square: Musica Intima *Ding Dong* (Jaime, Danny)
<https://www.musicaintima.org/ding>

SJS Prayer List

If you request that someone's name be added to the prayer list, please keep in touch with us. At the end of each month, all names will be removed, so you will need to add the names again at the end of each month. Please also let us know if you want someone removed from the list. Email the office (church@sjs.net) anytime! Thank you.

Greeting volunteers needed at the 10am service

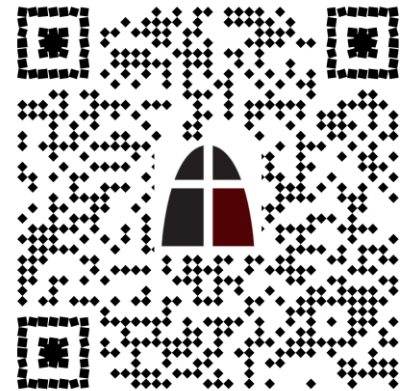
We could use several more greeters! Please contact the office (church@sjs.net) for more details if you are interested in greeting on Sunday mornings.

WNM items for Homeless Needed

Thank you so much for your kind donations! We are quite well stocked at the moment. We always need proteins for the packets: Boost and Ensure, and especially tuna and chicken cans. Since it is still winter, we are especially interested in socks, and other winter items like coats and boots.

Financial Support - Stewardship

If you would like to make a financial contribution to help support the worship and ministry of St. John's Shaughnessy, please do! You can use this QR code (point your phone's camera at it) and it



will take you to the donation page of our website. If you have recently made a contribution online or by cheque, thank you so very much! If you currently give by Pre-Authorized Donation, thank you! Our church has been affected by COVID-19 in many ways and financial giving is certainly one.

If you would like to give via monthly Pre-Authorized Donations (easy to change and easy to cancel), please contact Cynthia in the office (church@sjs.net or 604-731-4966). If you would like to give to the church using a credit card, please use the DONATE button on our website (Canada Helps on top of page one, and Paypal on the bottom of page one). Cheques may be mailed or dropped through the church mail slot.

ST. JOHN'S, SHAUGHNESSY STAFF AND LEADERSHIP

Please contact the parish office if you would like to be added to our mailing list, so that we may let you know about upcoming events.

Clergy and Staff

The Reverend Terry Shields Dirbas, Rector terry.dirbas@sjs.net

The Reverend James Hwang, Curate

The Reverend Dr. Marilyn Hames, Honorary Assisting Priest

The Reverend Karin Fulcher, Deacon

The Reverend Pitman Potter, Deacon

Michael Dirk, Music Director

organist@sjs.net

Jaime Yoon, Interim Choir Director

jaime.yoon@sjsparish.net

Cynthia Jutras, Interim Parish Administrator

church.office@sjs.net

Trustees

Judith Downes, Rector's Warden

Maggie Sanders, People's Warden

Mike Dezell, Property Trustee

Donald Wood, Treasurer



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