



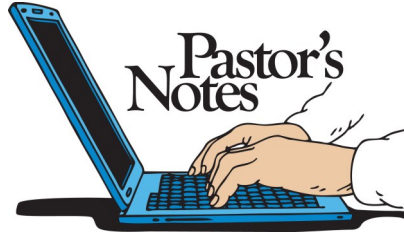
**Evangelical
Lutheran**
Church in America

St. John's News

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August

September



2024

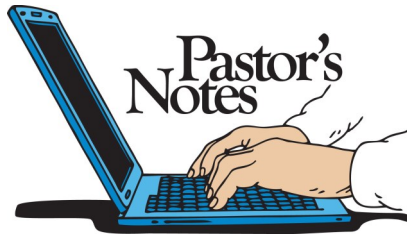
On September 12 a post appeared on the Altamont Community Facebook page remembering the eighth year anniversary of the “Bells for Burls” fundraiser to repair the carillon at St. John’s in memory of Mark “Burls” Burlingame. The post recalled how a lightning strike had silenced the carillon in 2017, and after a year of silence, they wanted them to ring again. The post generated several comments of people remarking how they appreciate hearing the music each day.

About a week later an adult and a child in a stroller were walking by the church building as the Carillon began playing at noon. Between the bell tones filling the parsonage, Courtney and I heard a child scream in delight. We were then treated to this young one dancing and clapping to the carillon's version of A Mighty Fortress Is Our God. When it finished playing the little one gave St. John’s a round of applause and they continued on their walk.

I shared this with you first because I hope you can picture the child dancing to the bells and it makes you smile. Then I want you to think about all the lives we touch with song through the carillon. Now think about the number of lives we have touched through worship, baptisms, weddings, funerals, potlucks, community events like Winterfest, and outside groups using the building such as Strong Bones.

St. John’s Lutheran Church is primarily a group of people who all believe in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We are not a historic building preservation society, an organization for the celebration of sacred music, or a social club. We are an organization that exists to share the good news that God loves everyone without limit, and our building is an essential tool in that mission.

Right now the Village Carpenter is working on repairing windows and worn wood siding, all to ensure that the church building continues to be a place where we can safely welcome people inside. The exterior of the parsonage side of the sanctuary is repaired and painted and looks beautiful, and they are beginning the south facing side now.



continued

This fall we will also use our building and its wonderful location to share God's love with the community. Trick-Or-Treater will take over the streets of Altamont on October 31, and I do mean take over! Each year we give out more than 1000 pieces of candy to what can only be described as "hordes" of trick-or-treaters. If you would like to help you can do so by donating a bag of candy to hand out that night or you can talk to Pastor Reimer and sign up to take a shift handing out the candy. It's a fun night where we meet a lot of great people. Each year there are churches who set up stands in Orsini Park (with permits and all) and hand out candy and pamphlets or "bible tracts" that portray God's love as conditional on one's behavior or morals. I've had trick-or-treaters share tracts that threaten children or their loved ones with eternal damnation for a select set of sins they are especially opposed to.

People of God, it is vital that we do not engage in conflict or do anything other than be gracious hosts to this congregation from outside the village. While I don't agree with them they are doing it out of heartfelt, albeit misguided, concern for their neighbors. It is also important that we provide another example of how to be the Church of Jesus Christ, a place where all sinners are welcomed, even me. A place where the truth (and if you don't believe me look it up in Romans 8) that nothing in heaven or earth, nothing anyone can say or do, no height too high, no depth too low, no sin too great to ever separate us from the love of God found in Christ Jesus our Lord. In addition to candy and a kind word it is our calling to share this love with all of God's people. On October 31 at trick-or-treat, when others visit our worship services for special occasions or just to check the church out, when people come inside for community events or share a meal. When we encounter people outside the church building, or outside Altamont, at all times and in all places we must share the Good News that you are God's beloved people.

If reading this has motivated you to share the love of God with new people, wonderful! Get to it...

And now if you began but quickly confronted the reality that this is a much easier idea to agree to in the abstract but much more difficult to enact in detail may I make a humble suggestion. On Sunday September 29, 2024 we will have a special worship service to celebrate Agnes Armstrong and her 50 years of ministry at St. John's as our Director of Music. The worship service will feature seven musicians in addition to Agnes on the organ, choir, and a reception with food and fellowship to follow. Invite a friend to join you on this wonderful day, ask someone to come back and celebrate with us, or find someone in Stewarts on your way to worship that day and tell them to follow you to St. John's.

Agnes Armstrong's 50th anniversary as St. John's organist

On September 29, we will celebrate Agnes' 50th anniversary as St. John's organist and choir director. We are grateful and blessed to have been gifted with Agnes' talent, creativity, and community as she continues to serve as our Director of Music.

In this season we have been singing a hymn composed by Agnes, "Praise the Lord from the Heav'ns." Agnes has contributed the story of the hymn, below.

THE ALBANY TRICENTENNIAL HYMN, 1986

How This Hymn Came To Be

PRAISE THE LORD FROM THE HEAV'NS

Text: Agnes Armstrong, Psalm 148, paraphrased

Tune: Agnes Armstrong, ALTAMONT

All hymns consist of two parts: a text and a tune. The text is usually known by its opening words, in this case, "Praise the Lord from the heav'ns". Hymn tunes have names of their own, frequently reflecting the name of a country, city, town, or other place, such as ALTAMONT.

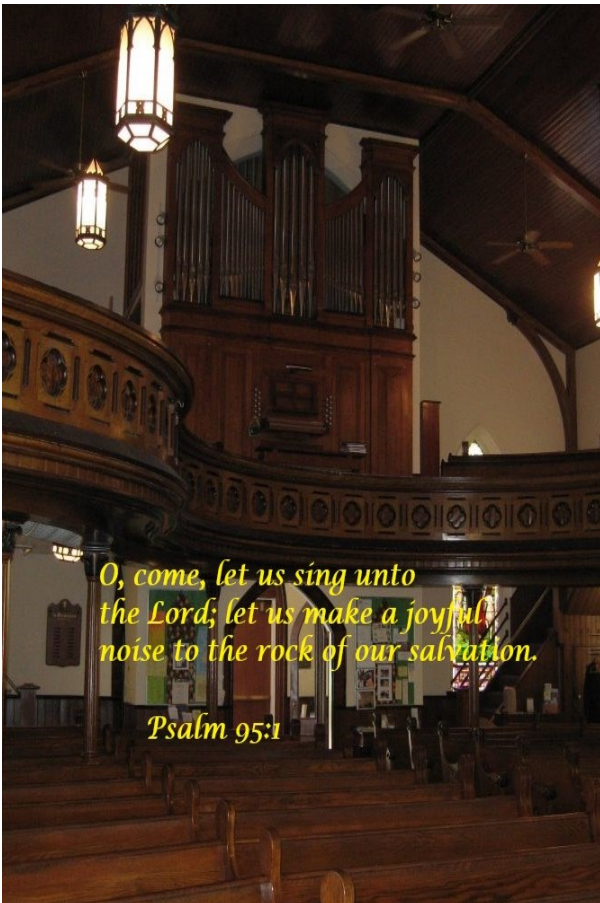
So it was in 1985 that I set out to write this hymn. That year saw the creation by the City of Albany of an official Tricentennial Commission, to organize an ambitious year-long celebration of the 300th anniversary of the City Charter, undertaken by dozens of appointed committees with several thousand volunteers and city workers. Albany is the oldest established city in the United States, having held its charter since July 22, 1686, when Governor Thomas Dongan, representing the British crown, granted a charter recognizing Albany as a city.

The Committee of Religious Organizations had put out a call for entries in a contest for an official city hymn to be used during the Tricentennial year. Composers should be residents of the tri-city area. The hymn was to be 3 or 4 stanzas long, with text based on Psalm 33, 29, or 148; scored for congregation and choral singing with organ accompaniment; between 3 and 5 minutes long; additional instrumental parts were deemed acceptable; and the deadline for submissions was January 15, 1986. A cash prize of \$500 (\$1400 value in 2024) was offered, to be awarded at the Interfaith Choral Festival in May. The work was to be copyrighted and released for use in the premiere by the Tricentennial Commission, after which the rights reverted to the

composer. More than 30 entries were received, so I was surprised and honored to be announced the winner.

Tricentennial activities were held every month throughout 1986, including festivals and other celebratory events of all sorts in and around the city. Especially notable were the restoration of the Dutch carillon bells in the City Hall tower, the arrival of tall ships, sporting competitions, and a spectacular Charter Day parade with fireworks. The Altamont Fair even designated August 17th as Tricentennial of Albany Day.

One hundred years earlier, a four-day Bicentennial Celebration of the City of Albany had taken place from July 18th to the 22nd. Sunday, July 18th was Devotional Day with “memorial and historical sermons in the churches” The hymn for that occasion has the text “Ancient of Days” written by Episcopal Bishop William Croswell Doane (1832-1913) and set to a tune composed by English organist John Albert Jeffery (1855-1929). Both men were serving at the Cathedral of All Saints in Albany at that time. Since that hymn tune came to be known as ALBANY, where Mr. Jeffery was living, I decided to name my hymn tune after the place where I was living: ALTAMONT.



*O, come, let us sing unto
the Lord; let us make a joyful
noise to the rock of our salvation.*

Psalm 95:1

The Interfaith Choral Festival was held on May 3, and featured massed choirs from the city churches, their combined voices numbering 300 or more. I was asked to play the organ for the premiere performance of the hymn, and provide a festival arrangement for the occasion, including brass and tympani. Following that performance, I gave the Council of Churches rights for the rest of the year, and the hymn was used in churches throughout the area. I have never asked compensation for its use. It has since been published in the Empire State Hymnbook, by the Organ Historical Society.

Pastor Eric Reimer's 15th anniversary for Ordination

On September 8 we celebrated the 15th anniversary of Pastor Reimer's ordination. We had a festive coffee hour in his honor. While he has served multiple congregations during the time he has been called to serve, we are grateful he is now with our congregation.

Congratulations, Pastor Reimer!





Council and Committees Update (August and September)

Reminders and news:

As of July's treasurer, report we have paid back 15.78% of the \$51,000 loan. We had agreed to try to pay ourselves back half of this money over the course of 3 years.

The Village Carpenter has begun work on our rotting windowsill project. Look at the Parsonage side of the church to see the transformation!

We held our ice cream social in the park again this year on August 22. It was a beautiful summer evening to be eating ice cream in the park. Our first visitors were traveling through from PA and one of our last visitors was from Connecticut! It was nice to see children stop on their bike rides for ice cream and then get their parents so they could enjoy an ice cream treat too!

Josiah put together a slide show of pictures from Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Youth Gathering in New Orleans. He did an excellent job presenting to the congregation.

We have had the joy of celebrating special milestones.

At coffee hour on 9/8 we celebrated Pastor Eric's 15th year anniversary of ordination.

And at the finalizing of this newsletter still looking forward to Coffee hour 9/29, Celebrating Aggie's 50th year with us.

Ways you can help with our mission:

Our little food pantry is helping families in need in the area. Food and dollar donations are welcome. Popular items are peanut butter, cereal, macaroni, and cheese mixes. The cost to keep it filled is between \$50 and \$100. If you want to contribute money, please put it in a pew envelope marked little food pantry.

We have been supporting the Synder children since both their parents died. Their birthdays are coming up, if you want to contribute money or gift cards, please put in a pew envelope marked Synder family.

Pick up a green bag and label, found in the basement to the left as you go in the side door, to contribute your bottles to our Klink account. Klink is a program with Hannaford. Bottles donated will go towards our youth program.

It was with deep sadness that we faced the terrible and shocking news of Pat Miller's death. Pat served our church as office administrator for many years. We would like to make a newsletter dedicated to Pat that shares our individual memories of her. If you have a brief thought or longer, we love to read it. Please share your memories with Linda.zell@stjohnsaltamont.org.

Blessings, Linda Zell, Council President



Women's Fellowship

LCW happenings

LCW met in September and collected hygiene products for the Caring Closet

We meet again October 17th at 5:30. Please join us! Bring a dish to pass.

In October we are collecting items for our kitchen. Examples:

paper products cups, bowls, plates,

towels

sponges

hand soap

dish soap

take home containers

storage bags

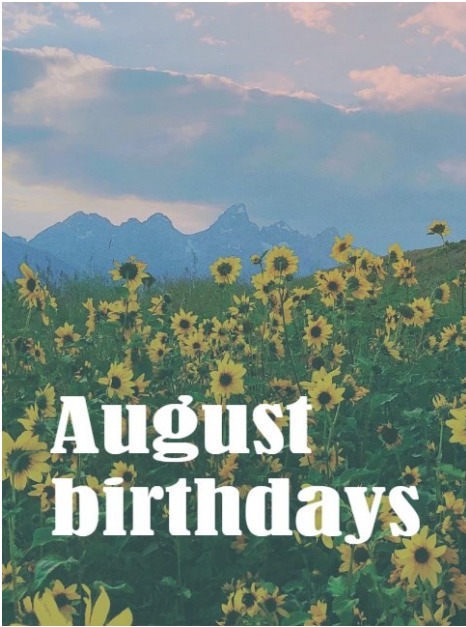
etc

*Blessings,
Linda Zell,
Member*

Awards from the Altamont Fair

Lois Uhl won blue ribbons for her plant entries and Linda Devenpeck was honored with a best of fair award for her work at the little schoolhouse.





- 1 Sara Johnson
- 2 Matthew McCabe
- 4 Julianna Peek
- 7 Alyssa Gaige
- 9 Don Snyder
- 11 Karen Williams
- 12 Sarah Frick
- 17 Joyce Donato
- 26 Brad Grant
- 17 Danielle Peck
- 20 Allison Grant
- 21 John Jewell
- 21 Tyler Grant
- 21 Johnny Catalfamo
- 23 Richard Peek
- 24 Elaine Van De Carr



- 1 Ron Clough
- 2 Kyle Williams
- 3 Evan Alban
- 3 Mark Dean
- 6 Dean Johnson
- 8 Ethan Connolly
- 8 Faith McCoy
- 9 Violet Armstrong
- 13 Sarah Jones
- 13 Daniel Choiniere
- 13 Debby Romano
- 16 Natalie Grant
- 16 Matthew Hudson
- 16 Kate O'Donnell
- 17 Greg Peck
- 19 Camilla Armstrong
- 19 Carla Stefan
- 20 Laura Caruso
- 21 Norma Holt
- 21 Jim Lemmerman
- 24 Brian Gibbs
- 27 Kristen Teuscher
- 27 Barbara Armstrong
- 30 Zachary Connolly
- 30 Barbara White
- 30 Iris Chevalier
- 30 Olivia G. DiBartolomeo



AUGUST

8/10/1991- Greg & Lisa Peck

SEPTEMBER

9/14/1985- Dan & Linda Hitt

9/24/1988 - Brad & Jana Grant

If you have a change of phone number/address/email address or would like to be added to the birthday or anniversary list(s), please call 518-861-8862.



FOOD PANTRY NEEDS

Guilderland Food Pantry

- spaghetti sauce (cans preferred)
- baked beans
- scalloped potatoes
- tuna
- any canned fruit (except applesauce)

Altamont Food Pantry

- Broth (any kind: beef, chicken, vegetable)
- Mac and Cheese
- Pasta
- Salad Dressing
- Soup (especially hearty soup like Progresso and Chunky, Cream of Chicken, Ramen Noodles)
- Coffee and Tea
- Peanut Butter
- Tuna
- Crackers
- Gluten-free items such as pasta
- Dog and Cat Food
- Shampoo
- Deodorant
- Sanitary Napkins and Tampons
- Laundry Detergent
- Tall Kitchen Garbage Bags
- Household Cleaners

St. John's Little Food Pantry

- snack foods
- individual mac/cheese
- basic canned goods (veggies, chili & soup)
- breakfast cereal
- razors
- soap
- shampoo
- toothpaste
- floss
- deodorant
- menstruation products

WELCOME

Welcome to St. John's Lutheran Church, a faith community united in love, filled with hope, and open to the power and gentleness of a holy spirit within us. We invite you to be part of the St. John's faith community. You are welcome at worship, in Sunday church school, at Fellowship events, at Bible Study and prayer gatherings. Together we can share our faith stories and continue on our spiritual journeys.



Thank you, Lord for:

Return Service requested

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