

January 27, 2021



ST. JOHN'S  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

## Your Midweek Update

Grace to you and peace from our Epiphany Lord Jesus Christ!

The Epiphany season is about the light of Jesus going out into the world, touching more and more lives. In the Gospel lesson for Sunday, [Mark 1:14-20](#), Jesus called Andrew and Simon Peter, as well as James and John (two sets of brothers, all of whom were fishermen) to follow him. It was a new beginning for them, and we are told that "immediately" they left their fishing nets behind to follow Jesus and start fishing for people.

We may find it difficult to make big decisions in life. It's very easy to procrastinate and put off such decisions because we are fearful or dislike change. But the call of Jesus comes to us today just as it did to Andrew, Simon Peter, James, and John: "Follow me." The [sermon](#) from Sunday reminds us that repentance is more than mere sorrow over sin. Led by the Holy Spirit, true repentance means to walk in a new direction in life. That is our daily calling as we follow Jesus: dying to sin and rising to new life in him who loves us and gave his life for us.

Pastor Meehan

From the Pastor's Desk - [January 2021](#)

Visit our Online Calendar

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## Update on Maritza Guerra

A sincere thank you to St. John's Prayer Team and all who participated in the Prayer Vigil for Maritza Guerra, Director of St. John's Early Childhood Education Center, which took place on Sunday evening, January 24. Prayers for God's healing mercy on Maritza, who has been hospitalized for more than a month due to complications from COVID-19, as well as prayers for her family and friends, medical team, and other needs was a great blessing to everyone.

There is a good news update on Maritza's condition: on Sunday afternoon of this week (January 24), Maritza was removed from the ventilator that she's been on since January 15, and is now breathing on her own. Although she remains in fragile health, this is a huge step forward, and we give thanks and praise to the Lord for this great gift. Please continue to pray for Maritza in the days to come! Thank you, members and friends of St. John's, for your generous contributions that have already been given to help the Guerra family in time of need. Because of Maritza's lengthy hospital stay, a GoFundMe account has been established to help defray medical expenses. Anyone who wishes is welcome to contribute to this at [GoFundMe](#). Thank you for your care and support.

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## Evening Songs and Prayer Tonight

Evening Songs and Prayer is an online devotional offered by St. John's on **Wednesday evenings (tonight, January 27) at 7:30**. Join us this evening for a virtual time of prayer and hymn singing, led by St. John's Director of Music, Susan Gobien, and her husband, Jurgen. Evening Songs and Prayer is available on [SJLC Facebook](#). Click [here](#) for a copy of the bulletin.

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## Doing Good This Week – Hypothermia Shelter

This week, as part of *Serving Jesus-Living in Community* 2021, we are assisting St. Mark's Lutheran Church with supporting a Hypothermia Shelter. Because of the pandemic, Fairfax County has set up several 24/7 hypothermia shelters throughout the County and is staffing them with non-profit groups. St. Mark's is supporting the one being run by FACETS, the non-profit group that we have helped in the past. The shelter is located on Route 7 in Tyson's Corner. St. John's part is providing enough food, beverages, and various supplies to support the homeless guests for two full days starting with **dinner Wednesday, January 27 through lunch on Friday, January 29.**

Thanks to everyone from our congregation who has helped with the needed bagged breakfasts, lunches, and snacks. Thank you also to all those who have contributed to raise funds so that we can pay local restaurants to prepare individually packaged dinners. This is a win-win for both those in need and local businesses affected by the pandemic.

This requires several thousand dollars to support approximately 65+ people at this shelter for 2 days. Donations are still welcome, and you can donate directly through CCB ([Church Community Builder](#)). Be sure to click on the Hypothermia Fund in the dropdown menu. Also, a big thank you to those who have helped with baking at home, assembling bagged food, shopping for supplies, and transporting the food. Questions? Please contact Christy Hoins. Thank you!!

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## God's Open House: Diversity and Community

We live in an exciting and diverse community that sometimes feels intimidating to understand. Various cultures have value systems, and needs that are deep, meaningful, and distinct. If we can learn more about how others view the world, we can understand in a whole new way how to truly love our neighbors as ourselves. God has designed our communities to depend on one



another. Understanding more how this design works can only draw us closer to the Lord and to one another.

The Salaam Isa (Peace of Jesus) Mission Society has designed a digital event to do exactly this. Register for "God's Open House: Diversity and Community" on **Sunday, January 31, 7:00-8:30PM**. and learn how you might be challenged in faith to understand your neighbors better and grow spiritually, as well. [Register here](#). There is a \$20 registration fee to provide an honorarium for the speakers, and **you must register by January 30**.

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## Students for Life Presentation

The Northern Virginia Chapter of Lutherans for Life will present a virtual talk by Kristan Hawkins, President of Students for Life of America (SFLA) on Saturday, February 6 at 9:00AM. Since joining SFLA in 2006, Ms. Hawkins has aggressively grown a disparate group of a few dozen small teams into a thriving organization that has recruited, trained, mobilized and supported more than 100,000 students in a nationwide network of more than 1200 teams in middle schools, high schools and colleges. Join us to learn how they achieved such dramatic growth and why they are convinced they can end abortion in their lifetime. To register, send your name and email to [Dennis Kruse](#) (703) 232-6667.

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## Volunteers Needed to Support Worship Services

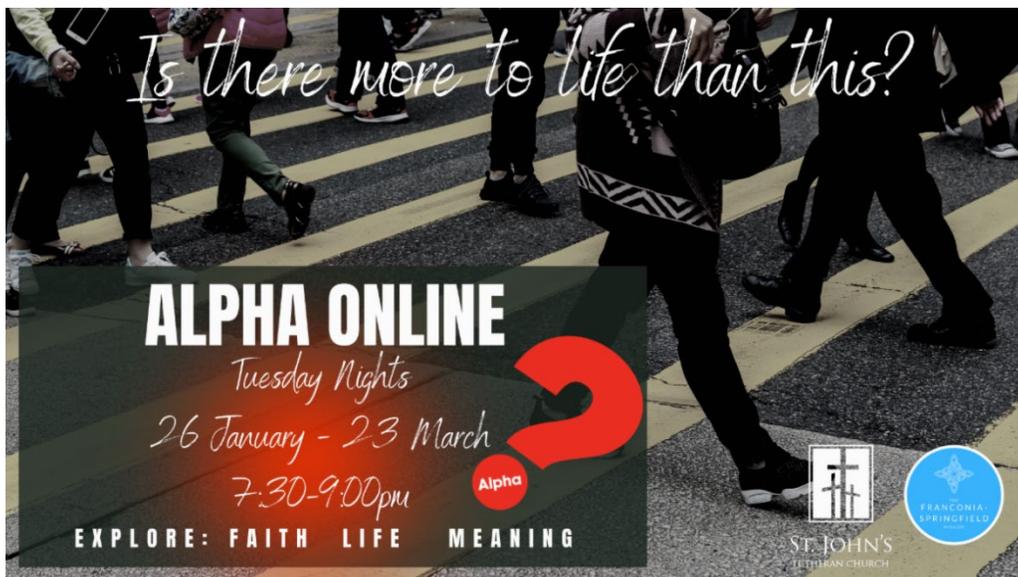
Concerning worship services during the COVID pandemic, St. John's relies on volunteers to help ensure the health and safety of in-person attendees and to assist with online streaming of services. Volunteers are assigned to the following teams:

- **Check-In Team:** Team members greet worshippers on arrival, confirm their registration and health status, and take temperatures.
- **Narthex Guides:** Team members are present to answer questions and assist worshippers with COVID measures at St. John's.

- **Audio-Visual (AV) Team:** Team members operate the audio-visual equipment that allows St. John's to stream services online.
- **Cleaning Team:** Team members assist with cleaning and sanitizing the sanctuary following the service.

***We are in need of additional volunteers for all of our worship support teams.***

Participation requires only a few extra minutes of time on Sunday, and families are welcome to participate together. If you are interested in volunteering or have questions about worship support, please contact [Andrew Ehlers](mailto:Andrew.Ehlers@stjohns.org) (703-539-8767). Thank you.



**Is there more to life than mere existence?**

**Do you have questions about God, purpose, or meaning?**

**What is life really all about?**

St. John's is partnering with [The Franconia-Springfield Mission](http://www.franconia-springfield.org) to offer the Alpha Course Online which seeks to help people answer those questions.

Alpha is a 9-week VIRTUAL Zoom course that will help participants wrestle with those questions and discover answers. Come and eat together (virtually), watch a video, and discuss the video in a small group. The Alpha Course Online is your opportunity to ask questions about life, faith, and meaning in a safe space, and to belong to a loving community. Alpha is a series of sessions exploring the Christian faith. The Franconia-Springfield Mission and St. John's Lutheran Church are partnering to run this Alpha Course together online on Tuesday nights from 7:30-9pm. If you are searching or curious, we'd love to have you join us.

We would also love for you to invite your friends or family who are questioning or searching. You may share our [SJLC's Page](#) with them or send them a direct link to the [REGISTRATION PAGE](#).

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## Serving Jesus – Living in Community 2021

Each year during the Epiphany season, St. John's engages in a month-long focus of learning and growing in sharing our faith. Called "Serving Jesus – Living in Community" (Being SJLC), this year our focus will be "What Does Being SJLC Mean?" Especially in light of COVID-19, what does serving Jesus and living in community look like? What's different in our lives as disciples of Jesus because of this? This is what we will be exploring each week from **Sunday, January 17** through **Sunday, February 7**. Weekly themes, based on the appointed Gospel lessons, are as follows:

- **January 17** – "Called to Faith" ([John 1:43-51](#))
- **January 24** – "Called to Repentance" ([Mark 1:14-20](#))
- **January 31** – Called to Listen" ([Mark 1:21-28](#))
- **February 7** – "Called to Live" ([Mark 1:29-39](#))

In early February, you are invited to join a Zoom meeting to consider four questions:

- Why do we exist as a congregation?
- What would be lost in our community, in our area, in our world, if we ceased to be?
- What purposes and principles must we protect as central to our identity?
- What are we willing to let go of so the mission will continue?

There will be four Zoom meeting spaces reserved, and this is open to all who want to join in. Times and dates are as follows:

- **Thursday, February 4 from 7:30-9:30PM**
- **Saturday, February 6 from 2:00-4:00PM**
- **Monday, February 8 from 8:00-10:00PM**
- **Thursday, February 11 from 10:00AM-12:00 Noon**

Please contact [Jan Swicord](#), Equipping Team, with any questions and to register.

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## **In-Person Registration for Worship Services and Holy Communion as well as Links for Viewing Worship Services, Educational Opportunities, Bulletins, and Virginia COVID-19 Restrictions**

- Registration for [in-person worship](#) services. Just click on the date you want to register for on the pop-up calendar.
- Registration for [Holy Communion](#) held on Wednesdays at noon.
- [Facebook Live](#) for viewing live services or educational opportunities as well as those previously recorded.
- [YouTube](#) for viewing church services
- [Click here](#) and scroll down for the bulletins
- [Virginia COVID-19 Restrictions](#) effective November 19, 2020

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-STAY CONNECTED-

