

# The Pious Press

St. John's Episcopal Church, Wilson, NY

January 2025

*Pastor Susan...*

## **A Truly Unnatural Act**

*(reprinted from an article Pastor Susan wrote for Church Acts several decades ago!)*

One of the great pleasures of life is sharing something important with someone who needs it. Someone needs a good mechanic and you know just whom to recommend. A harried motorist asks you for directions and you know just how to direct them. It's not only helpful to them, it's satisfying for you. Telling friends about a book or movie that will delight them is in itself delightful. We all know this.

That being the case, why are we all so afraid of "the e-word?" You know what I'm talking about: evangelism. I believe it is the most natural thing in the world, one of life's great pleasures and we constantly evangelize for all sorts of things. I know Buffalo evangelists, who love the city and tell me just where to find its treasures. I know Honda evangelists, who are pleased to tell any car shopper what a good and reliable car Honda makes. I know restaurant evangelists, who are eager to tell me where to get a wonderful meal for a good price. My life is full of evangelists and it would be a lot poorer if it weren't. How else does a stranger to the city learn the ropes, if someone isn't willing to share his or her own experience?

Christian evangelism is not grabbing people by the lapels and demanding to know if they've been saved. That is Christian bullying. The two shouldn't be confused. If you want to share the good news about your favorite restaurant, you don't grab people off the street and bully them. You suggest it to your friends when you are going out together for a meal; you tell people who are expressing their hunger and wondering where to go. It is the most natural thing in the world. You know what, when, how and with whom it is appropriate to share, because you have been doing such sharing all your life.

What is unnatural is that many Christians have come to feel that this doesn't apply to religion. When it comes to religion, they fear they are invading a person's privacy if they offer their own experiences and learning. We don't feel that way about recommending a good doctor, an able accountant, a good cleaning service. Privacy doesn't come into such recommendations although the state of your body, bank account, and home are very personal matters.

We feel we are doing someone a favor when we make such recommendations. But we fear being perceived as a fanatic if we tell someone our positive experiences with Christianity.

How can we overcome this unnatural timidity? We can't honestly or effectively share the Gospel until we have experienced it as good news ourselves. Do you feel good about your church, your religion? What specifically have you found helpful? As we begin to recognize these things and put them into words for ourselves, we become more aware of opportunities to share them with others and become more comfortable doing so. And if we don't recognize what's good about our religion, we have more important things to do than evangelism... like finding out what we have been missing!

Take the word of this natural born evangelist: there is good news to be heard in the Episcopal Church.

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Many thanks to all who helped make our Advent and Christmas so lovely! It's a busy time of the year for the Altar Guild, flower arranger, musician, readers, Parish Administrator and all who pitched in to decorate, or bring food and gifts. Thank you for making it meaningful!

You will have noticed the new wall-mounted television in the Parish Hall... Many thanks to the anonymous donors! We are brainstorming ideas for using it: your ideas are welcome!

*Sr. Warden Report...*

As we welcome 2025, we have so much to be grateful for and so much to look forward to.

First and foremost, I would like to thank Lucy Kraatz, the outgoing Sr Warden, for all she did this past year. Your hard work is certainly appreciated.

With new faces in the pews, I would like to let everyone know our kitchen is a commercial kitchen and can be rented on a per day basis. If you or anyone you know may be interested in using it, please let us know or call the church and we'll get them the information they need.

Wishing everyone a happy, healthy and safe New Year!!

Jane Hamilton  
Sr. Warden



**Birthdays....**

<i>Priscilla Moot</i>	<i>1/10</i>
<i>John Carney, III</i>	<i>1/21</i>
<i>Jared Carney</i>	<i>1/28</i>

**Anniversary...**

<i>Doug &amp; Susan Keppy</i>	<i>1/27</i>
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**Vestry Report – December 2024...**

*The following was discussed at our last meeting:*

- *Applied to the Village of Wilson to reserve the gazebo at Martin Park for 9/11/25 (Remembrance Service) and 10/4/25 (Pet Blessing Service).*
- *Pastor Susan sent an email to the Standing Committee to offer the Catholics use of our church. Pending approval.*
- *A thank you note will be written to the donors of the new tv in the parish hall. Discussed ways we can use it in the future: Zoom meetings; The Chosen (portrayal of the Gospels); I PowerPoint presentations; SJC Moms Group during Shrove Tuesday dinner; etc.*
- *Our Christmas donation to the Wilson Food Pantry was very appreciated. They are well stocked and we won't have to collect any items for the month of January.*
- *Card was passed around to sign for Jerilyn Carney.*
- *Fair Share: Our fair share for 2025 is \$4,850 which is more than twice what we paid this last year. We have options: get it reduced; write a letter explaining what we can pay; wait to see how we are doing. Priscilla Moot mentioned that since we have received two good size grants from the Diocese in the past that we should pay the full share on time. If we fall short we can deal with that when it comes as we are in a better financial position.*
- *The candle lady will be using the kitchen through the month of January.*
- *The piano in the sanctuary needs tuning.*
- *Potential person to clean will not be able to do it. The search is still on.*

- *Boxes were delivered for the ABCD group by Cindy Harrington. ABCD (Agricultural Behavior Children Development (migrant workers that stay through the winter months).*
- *SJC Moms Group did a lot of outreaches this year.*
- *Next Vestry meeting will be on 1/16/25.*

*Jennifer Farwell-Puskas  
Clerk of Vestry*

**Treasurer's Report...**

**November YTD 2024**

Income:	\$37,572.48
Expense:	<u>-\$31,472.67</u>
Total Income:	\$ 6,099.81
Dividends & Interest:	+\$ 2,380.17
Total Net Income:	\$ 8,479.98

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Matty, Zack, Brian, Priscilla & John, Arlen, Lilianna, Eloise, Joan, Debbie, Joann, Theresa, Laura, Maria and Deloris, Ron, Craig, Ann, Jayne, Jenny Elise's Fritz, Chip's Chappy. Pray for the families of Kacee & Jonathan, Adam & Becky, Tom & Kelli. Pray for Father Isaac's Medical Mission to Africa. Pray for our Diocesan Partnership, as we chart our future course; and for our Roman Catholic neighbors who are facing church closings. Pray for the people of Ukraine and the Middle East. Pray for those affected by the terrible crash in New Orleans. Give thanks for John Frank's recovery, and Priscilla Eodice's release from hospital.



**SJC Moms Group... Priscilla Moot**

A busy month of outreach for SJC Moms Group!

Moms collected for a personal friends daughter, Arlen, 7 years old who just had amputations three weeks ago and awaiting skin grafting after Christmas.

Arlen was diagnosed with a rare genetic blood disease and last year she went in for a blood transfusion and chemo to basically clean and wipe away everything and start over. But when she went into septic shock and got some sort of infection in September her tissue was dying very rapidly and unfortunately, so much of it died so fast they couldn't save her feet. Santa's float delivered her gifts from friends and the community. The moms decided to buy treats and crafts not only for Arlen but also her two siblings.



Thank you to everyone who participated in the cookie exchange! We had 15 bakers including SJC Moms and ladies of St. John's. SJC Moms donated homemade cookies to the Seniors at the Wilson Food Pantry. I've tried them all! They are all delicious!



Mr. & Mrs. Santa Claus visited the children's group. It was magical as Mrs. Claus led us in Jingle Bells, Santa came down the stairs. Mrs. Clause read to the children; it was quite like never before! Many of the children talked with Santa on his lap. Everyone got their candy cane and Mrs. Claus

made a holiday pin for all the children. Thank you to Richard and Barbara Miller for the magical moments for the children.



Here is a note from SJC Moms Group Coordinator, Megan Schmitt...

I wanted to share our thank you note from the YWCA. With funds from our groups treasury, we were able to gift 13 items to the local YWCA Domestic Violence Shelters. The YWCA staff reached out to me and were extremely grateful for the donations, stating they have needed some of the items for a decade!

We purchased and gifted about \$230 worth of items including: Android phone charger; children's sensory tent; fidget toys; glue sticks; fuzzy socks; women's leggings; sheet set; iPhone fast charger; pack and play crib sheet set; silverware set; baby gate; bath towel set; white noise machine.

The moms also made holiday swags at their last meeting before Christmas. Many thanks to Vicki Jancef for teaching them how and offering her expertise !



*Childcare Volunteers  
(Missing Jennifer Farwell-Puskas)*



**St. John's Episcopal Church  
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**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**