Beloved people of St. John’s,

With the season of Advent, we are beginning again. Advent is the church’s new year, and it is always a season of longing, new life that is not yet materialized, and hope. The ancients thought of Advent as a time of “already and not yet”–Jesus has already been born, the Christ is among us, hallelujah! And, the reign of God has not yet fully arrived. The Beloved Community is still only hinted at. As followers of the Way of Jesus, we are still learning how to live into God’s purpose for ourselves and the world.

Our task is always to discern the new life that God’s Spirit is already bringing about among us, and then to cooperate with what God is up to. This task was at the heart of the focus groups we conducted in September. For those of you who participated in these groups or otherwise communicated your thoughts to me, I can’t thank you enough. Likewise, I am eternally grateful to the team who helped conduct these groups and listen deeply to you. Though we are still discerning and exploring what you said, there were two clear themes that emerged: (1) we are a community that is hungry to go deeper–deeper into experiencing and learning about faith, and deeper into connecting with one another; and (2) we are a community that is hungry to make a difference in the world precisely because of who we are in Christ.

In the coming months, we will be experimenting with small ways to live into these desires. We will have pilot projects, opportunities to try and reflect, and creative room to lean into the Spirit’s invitations. Throughout that process, we’ll be communicating what we are learning with you.

So in this time of hopeful waiting, let us rejoice, even in the midst of uncertainty and transition. Let us trust the living God whose capacity to love, to heal, and to create new life—in us and through us—knows no bounds.

Faithfully,

Lisa
Our Way Forward: Living into God’s Purpose for Ourselves and the World

Dear St. John’s community,

We have continued to maintain a strong stewardship campaign this year. We offer our heartfelt thanks to all who have already pledged! We are well ahead of where we were this time last year, but still need those who haven’t yet pledged to contribute so that we can further strengthen our programs, deepen our engagement with the Way of Love, secure a new Minister for Children, Youth & Families, and reach out for the healing of God’s world. If you haven’t yet had the chance to read this year’s talks by parishioners sharing their deep feelings about St. John’s, please click on the links below to read them now.

Jane Gilgun  
Steve Schewe  
Mark Lindberg  
Sue Everson-Rose  
Shelly Gill-Murray  
Ryan Curl & Kari Rusch-Curl

If you didn’t receive a pledge card and would like to have one, please contact Rachel in the office. You may pledge online, instead; just click here. There you will find a variety of options for payment methods and timing.

Please let us hear from you soon. St. John’s has a long history of balanced budgets. Since our budget is based on pledges, the Stewardship Committee will be making follow up calls in the first two weeks of December to those from whom we haven’t heard.

Gratefully,
Dick Howard and Kay Kramer  
Stewardship Committee co-chairs
Advent at St. John’s

**Wreath Sales**
*December 1st until they are gone*
St. John’s Pilgrims will still be selling wreaths for all your decorating needs. We will sell wreaths between the services!

**Advent Intergenerational Event**
*December 1st, 10am*
Advent is a time of waiting and preparing as we make our homes and hearts ready to celebrate Jesus’ birth. One of the most visible ways that we do this is through the use of an Advent wreath. All ages are welcome as we prepare for Advent by making traditional Advent wreaths. Be sure and bring a ring if you have one from previous years.

**TRUST’s Wreath (Tree in our case) of Love**
*due back December 8th*
TRUST Wreath of Love program has been providing gifts for residents of a nursing home in our community since 1985. The colorful cards were all chosen, thank you! Please bring the gifts back to St. John’s, all wrapped and beautiful, by Sunday, December 8th.

**Advent Sales for Haiti**
*December 1, 8, 15, and 22, 10am*
On Sundays in Advent, between 10 and 11, stop by the Haiti table in the gallery to purchase cards for your loved ones and to support our partner school, St Philippe et St Jacques in Gressier. The cards have beautiful photos of children and adults in Haiti, as well as some of the teachers at St Philippe et St Jacques. Make a donation of any amount to our Haiti partnership and you can send a beautiful card to your loved ones. What better gift than to educate a child and pay a teacher!

The past year has been very difficult in Haiti. Protests against government corruption and rising prices, particularly of gasoline, have escalated to the point that some roads are permanently blocked, and people are finding it hard to obtain food, medicine and other necessities. In Gressier, as in most of the country, schools have mostly been closed due to safety concerns. St Philippe et St Jacques has been closed, but our partner priest, Markendy Jean, and Principal Michel Ellissant are hoping to open at least for the upper class that needs to take the national exam this year.

In this difficult situation, we have decided that it is our ethical responsibility to keep paying the teachers. It is not their fault that they are not working, and they have no other source of income. Most of them have children of their own to feed. Hopefully, the situation in Haiti will calm down, and school can resume soon.

**Come shop with us and support our partners and friends in Haiti. As an added incentive, an anonymous donor has pledged a $2000 matching grant.**

**Service of Loss and Remembrance**
*December 8th, 4pm*
Life inevitably brings sorrow. The holidays can be particularly poignant times for those who mourn many kinds of loss—deaths of loved ones, loss of faith, or even the ache of what we so yearned for but never had. At St. John’s, we gather for a simple annual service of prayer and music, to mourn our losses and to receive the comfort of God’s love. A reception follows in the parish hall. All are welcome.

**Conversations from the Heart**
*December 14th, 12:30pm*
As the calendar turns to December, we prepare for the advent of the Light. How do we embrace the darkness that is the essential harbinger to the Sacred Light? Please join us for Conversations from the Heart for these topics and more, Saturday, from 12:30-2:00pm in the library. For more information, please contact Nancy Herbst.

**Greening of the Church**
*December 15th, 12pm*
We will be “Greening the Church” Sunday after the 11am service. This is an event for all ages, and we would like to encourage everyone to come and help. Please bring your friends - many hands make light work! Treats provided.
Advent at St. John’s continued

**Advent Lessons & Carols**  December 15th, 4pm
Join us to hear the stories of God’s healing work in the world from creation through the birth of Jesus, to sing beloved Advent carols, and sink more deeply into the spirit of longing and hope at the heart of Advent. If you are interested in participating as a reader, please contact [Rex McKee](mailto:rex.mckee@stjohnsmuncie.org) as soon as possible.

**Christmas Lunch Bunch**  December 16th, 12pm
We invite all who are available to join us for a delicious lunch prepared by the staff. Our special guests will be Emily Peterson, bringing her mom and dad, Ann and Bill Crews. Jay Hornbacher will also join us to read from his new book, *A Letter from Saint Nicholas*. Chad will keep us in the spirit with Christmas carol singing - a joyous time for the Advent season! Contact [Barb Risken](mailto:barb.risken@stjohnsmuncie.org) with questions.

**Christmas Cookie Coffee Hour**  December 22nd, 10:00am
Do you have a favorite holiday cookie or treat? Bring a plate to share for this fun coffee hour the Sunday before Christmas! St. John’s will provide the coffee and juice.

**Christmas Pageant**  December 24th, 3pm
All children are invited to come participate in St. John’s Christmas Pageant service with Eucharist on Christmas Eve. There is NO REHEARSAL required for this! Our Rector Lisa will lead the children through a Godly Play style Christmas story. Please arrive early, by 2:15pm, and come to the parish hall to get a costume. Alternatively, your child is invited to come already dressed in an animal costume of your own. All animals are welcome at Jesus’ stable—including unicorns and dinosaurs.
Adult Forums

What helps us grow and be nourished spiritually? How do we connect the dots between Sunday morning and daily life? Come to the Adult Forum to discuss the Way of Love spiritual practices, and learn more about St. John’s and our neighbors.

NO Adult Forum
Sunday, December 1st  Advent Intergenerational Event

TURN: Where are you actually headed? Where is evidence of God's love and God's reign?
Sunday, December 8th
The Way of Love definition of "Turn" is to "pause, listen, and choose to follow Jesus."
Although it is the first practice of the way of love, it in some ways is the most important, the most profound, and perhaps also the most difficult. What does it mean to "follow Jesus"? How can we orient ourselves, and everything in our lives, toward the love of God in Christ? We'll discuss what helps, and what honestly gets in the way, of this.

Loss, Hope and the Way of Love
Sunday, December 15th
Part of Advent is being honest about disappointment, loss, and pain. We can't get to the place of hoping and waiting for God to come among us until we admit where we are and what is missing in our lives. Our experiences of loss are as varied as we are. How does God comfort us with the promise of hope and a future? How can we trust in God's healing and God's reconciliation even when our loss is profound?

NO Adult Forum
Sunday, December 22nd  Christmas Cookie Coffee Hour

NO Adult Forum
Sunday, December 29th  New Year's weekend

Brown Bag Eucharist
Tuesdays, 12:15pm in the Chapel
(NO Brown Bag Eucharist on 12/24 or 12/31)
We offer a weekly Eucharist in which you are invited to bring your lunch – at 12:15pm every Tuesday in the Chapel. During this service, during the liturgy of the Word, we eat our lunches, have a lively conversation about scripture, offer our prayers verbally to God, and then continue with the liturgy of the table. We conclude by 12:50 so people can get back to work.
Service of Loss and Remembrance

Sunday, December 8 at 4pm
St. John’s Episcopal Church

A simple service of reflection, prayer and music for those who grieve losses of any kind

Musicians Greg Nelson & Chad Smith play music of Rameau, Schubert, Mendelssohn and Prokofiev.

St. John’s Episcopal Church
The holidays can be particularly poignant times for those who mourn many kinds of loss—deaths of loved ones, loss of faith, or even the ache of what we so yearned for but never had. At St. John’s, we gather for a simple annual service of prayer and music to mourn our losses and to receive the comfort of God’s love.

www.stjohns-mpls.org (612) 922-0396
4201 Sheridan Ave S | Linden Hills | Minneapolis
Our Saviour’s Shelter Meal

Please consider supporting our Shelter Meal Ministry during this season of giving. We will again cook and serve a wonderful meal for guests at Our Saviour’s Housing Shelter (2219 Chicago Avenue S Minneapolis, MN 55404). Please take a moment to see if you might be able to help!

Meal Prep - 3-6pm: Come to St. John’s and help prepare salad, meal, etc. (3-4 people needed).

OR Deliver & Serve - 5:45-8pm: Come to St. John’s and transport, deliver, and serve the food to guests at the shelter (5-6 people needed). Show your commitment by signing up on the chart pad in the hallway outside the Parish Hall. Thank you!
If you have questions, please contact Caron Stebinger.

Affordable Housing Workday

Our work days are the second Saturday of every month, and you don’t have to be a skilled crane operator or carpenter to participate. Usually our job is to help ‘turn over’ apartments – interior painting and cleaning so a new family can move in. So, if you can paint, clean or do light repairs, we have a job for you. Our work days are from 8:30am to 3pm - the day starts with coffee, juice, and treats. We are treated to a terrific lunch and each other’s company for the day.
If you can come one Saturday a year or every month, we will put you to work. Please contact John Corlett to sign up.
December Music News

Cellist Greg Nelson plays          9am & 11am Sunday, December 1st
Greg joins our Service Musicians during 9am and 11am Sunday services on December 1st, bringing 2 selections to play – including Mendelssohn’s Song Without Words, Op. 109.

Festival Choir practice for Christmas Eve continues    7pm Wednesdays, December 4, 11, 18
St. John’s Festival Choir prepares anthems to sing on Christmas Eve – Tuesday, December 24th, during 6pm and 11pm services. Festival Choir practice is held from 7 until 9pm on Wednesdays, October 20th, December 4th, 11th, and 18th. All are welcome to sing (Middle school age and up. Childcare is provided!! If you’d like to join the choir, contact Chad.

Clarinetist Shelagh McLeod plays           9am & 11am Sunday, December 8th
Shelagh brings two selections to play – including Carol from Gerald Finzi’s Five Bagatelles.

Cellist Greg Nelson, Service of Loss & Remembrance        4pm Sunday, December 8th
Greg Nelson and Chad Smith play music of Rameau, Schubert, Mendelssohn and Prokofiev.

Wendy, Doug, Andy & Chad         9am & 11am Sunday, December 15th
Reprising the Magnificat and Nunc dimittis from last season’s Advent Celtic Evening Prayer services, the ensemble brings adaptations of Robert Burns songs for the 3rd Sunday in Advent.

Children’s Choirs sing & Chime Choir play         9am & 11am Sunday, December 15th
St. John’s Children’s Choirs sing during the 9am service on Sunday, December 15th. St. John’s Chime Choir plays during the 11am service on Sunday, December 15th.

Advent Lessons and Carols           4pm Sunday, December 15th
St. John’s Service Musicians lead The People’s Song in a traditional festival of Advent scripture and music – including a variety of beloved hymns and vocal/instrumental music.

NO Wednesday Children’s or Chime Choir and Dinner December 18th, 25th, January 1st

Cellist Hannah McLeod plays          9am & 11am Sunday, December 22nd
Hannah brings two selections to play – including Howard Blake’s Walking in the Air from The Snowman.

St. John’s Youth Jazz Ensemble plays Christmas Eve     3pm, Tuesday, December 24th
St. John’s Youth musicians, under the direction of master musician Erik Jacobson, play jazzy holiday favorites during our 3pm Christmas Eve service!

Festival Choir sings on Christmas Eve           6pm & 11pm Tuesday, December 24th
St. John’s Festival Choir sings Sir David Willcock’s classic setting of Ding dong! Merrily on High!, K. Lee Scott’s setting of Hush, my Dear One (A Welsh Carol), and Mack Wilberg’s setting of Still, Still, Still. Musician Richard joins us at the keyboard! Carol singing precedes each service.

One Music service on Christmas Day           10am Wednesday, December 25th
St. John’s Service Musicians lead the People’s Song during our one music service at 10am. Carol singing precedes the service.

One Music service on The First Sunday after Christmas    10am Sunday, December 29th
St. John’s Service Musicians lead the People’s Song during our one music service at 10am. Carol singing precedes the service.

Cast Photo from “Wow & Flutter”
BIG Thanks & Gratitude goes to:

- Soprano **Aliese Hoese**, mezzo **Julia Woodring**, tenor **Eli Aaron**, and bass **Simon Hoehn** for their special musical contribution to our 9am and 11am All Saints’ services on Sunday, November 3rd.

- St. John’s **Festival Choir** for their special musical contribution to our 9am and 11am All Saints’ services on Sunday, November 3rd.

- **Aliese Hoese** and her spectacular **Recital: “Wow & Flutter”** on November 9th.

- Musician **Andy Vaaler** for his special musical contribution to our 9am and 11am services on Sunday, November 17th.

- St. John’s **Children’s Choirs & Chime Choir** for their special musical contributions to our 9am and 11am services on service on Sundays, November 17th and 24th.

- **Wendy Smith, Jodi** and **Allie Bosacker** for their fine teaching & care-filled leadership of Wednesday evening Children’s Choirs, Chime Choir, and Children’s Activities.

- **Nancy Herbst, Vickie Madsen, Ivy Booth, and Jenny Lindberg** for their good work preparing Wednesday Choir dinners!

- St. John’s **9am & 11am Service Musicians** for their faithful service and participation - leading The People’s Song Sunday mornings through November!
Welcome to St. John’s!
Interim Minister for Children, Youth and Families

We are pleased to welcome Amy McGrew as our new Interim Minister for Children, Youth and Families. Amy is an associate at InterServe Ministries, an organization whose role is to serve alongside congregations as they experience times of transition and change in their children's and youth ministry leadership staff. Amy’s expertise will help us in two primary ways. First, she is responsible for the maintenance of our robust children's and youth programming, so that it continues uninterrupted during this time. Second, she is here to help the church in its transition—to discern, evaluate, and strategize for the future of the children's and youth ministry program, including the search process for a new Minister for Children, Youth and Family. We are already at work to discern the right process and timeline for conducting this search, and you’ll get more information about that soon.

Amy has had a life-long commitment to investing in students and their leaders. Amy has been on staff in small to mega churches—in children’s, middle school, high school and college-age ministries. She has worked on staff with non-profits who come alongside students and leaders in children's and youth ministry. She has her M.A. in Youth Ministry from Asbury Theological Seminary. Currently Amy is multi-careering as a freelance speaker and consultant, retail pharmacy technician, and an interim youth/children’s director with InterServe Ministries in churches of various denominations. For fun, she volunteers as a Spiritual Director providing opportunities to notice and respond to God’s invitations in the midst of everyday life. Amy is an avid learner and traveler, and a fan of hammocks, sheep and Korean TV shows.

Please make time to introduce yourself to Amy, welcome her to St. John’s, and show her the warmth and hospitality which are core to our identity as followers of Jesus’ Way of Love. We are excited she is here with us!

Lisa

For more on Children, Youth, & Families at St. John’s, contact: Amy McGrew
Children, Youth & Family News

**Sunday School**
St. John’s Sunday School will meet on **December 8th and 15th**. Join everyone for the **Advent Intergenerational Event** on December 1st and the **Christmas Cookie Coffee Hour** on December 22nd.

**Christmas Pageant, Tuesday, December 24th**
All children are invited to come participate in St. John’s Christmas pageant service with Eucharist on Christmas Eve. There is NO REHEARSAL required for this! Our Rector Lisa will lead the children through a Godly Play style Christmas story. Please arrive early, by 2:15pm, and come to the parish hall to get a costume. Alternatively, your child is invited to come already dressed in an animal costume of your own. All animals are welcome at Jesus' stable - including unicorns and dinosaurs.

**Youth Group (6th-7th Grade)**
**Sunday, December 8th**, meet at the Escape Room at 6:15pm pick up there at 7:45pm
**Escape Room TBD**
The cost is $25 per person (scholarships available). We will be put into an escape room with one mission: get out! To do so, you’ll need to work together to solve a series of different clues, puzzles and mysteries before your time is up. When you enter a room, you’ll be transported to a new world. You will have one hour to live inside a story as it unfolds around you.

**Pilgrimage (8th-9th Grade)**
**Sunday, December 1st, between the services**
Wreath Sales wrap up! We had a great first week of sales, only a few boxes left. We will sell, tidy up, and celebrate another successful year of our wreath fundraiser.

**Sunday, December 8th, meet at the Escape Room at 6:15pm pick up there at 7:45pm**
**Escape Room TBD**
The cost is $25 per person (scholarships available). We will be put into an escape room with one mission: get out! To do so, you’ll need to work together to solve a series of different clues, puzzles and mysteries before your time is up. When you enter a room, you’ll be transported to a new world. You will have one hour to live inside a story as it unfolds around you.

**Confirmation (10th-11th Grade)**
**Saturday, December 7th, 2:00pm**
We will meet at church at 2 pm, for a scavenger hunt, followed by pizza and indoor games! We will wrap up around 10:00pm.

**Sunday, December 22nd, 10:10am**
Grab some cookies from the Christmas Cookie coffee hour and then head down to the Confirmation meeting room (under the library). Our topic will be "End Times, Apocalypse, Last Battles, and Judgment Day: four theories plus yours about how it all ends."

**Sunday, December 15th, 6:00-8:00pm**
Advent Party! More information will be emailed to you about this event.
Open to all youth 6th -12th grade.
Update on Centennial Fund for Social Justice

Part of St. John’s “Keeping Faith” 2017 capital campaign included tithing 10% of the funds raised for a special Centennial Fund for Social Justice. The Fund – and how it is dispersed – is designed to open a new chapter in St. John’s social justice work. With roughly $2 million in total capital campaign pledges, the Centennial Fund should have approximately $200,000 to use, once all pledges are paid.

Over the summer and into the fall, the Centennial Fund team has been active on several fronts. After the youth-led grantmaking group identified Marlene’s Place (Bridge for Homeless Youth) and Sisterhood Boutique (Pillsbury United Communities) for the Centennial Fund’s first grants, the Fund team recently awarded a grant to Circle of the Beloved (COTB), the Episcopal Service Corps program in Minnesota.

Consistent with the team’s desire to fund programs that build or deepen relationships in the community, the team worked with the leadership of COTB to arrange for one of their young adults participating in this year’s COTB cohort to carry out his/her service with First Nations Kitchen (FNK), a longtime community recipient of St. John’s volunteer time.

In many respects, the COTB/FNK grant embodies the spirit of the Centennial Fund idea. Discussions with COTB leadership enabled the team to better understand the vision and plans for the program, which is only three years old (in Minnesota) and has a new executive director. In the process of connecting COTB leadership with FNK, team members were reminded of the deep and significant relationship that St. John’s had in helping to get the FNK ministry off the ground over ten years ago. St. John’s Justice & Service team created a written covenant with FNK that memorializes the partnership, which can serve as a model for new partnerships through the Centennial Fund.

The Centennial Fund team has also been working hard to put the building blocks in place to make the Youth-led Grantmaking program a regular option for St. John’s youth, especially high school juniors and seniors. That includes helping create meaningful and practical volunteer opportunities with the initial grantees, and sharing information about the experience with what will hopefully be the next class of the Youth-led Grantmaking team (which is planned to begin in fall 2020).

Learn more about the Centennial Fund and the opportunities it has to open doors to new ways of engaging with social justice efforts by contacting co-chairs Brigitte Parenteau or Mark Lindberg. You can also read about the Fund’s history on St. John’s website under the “Justice & Service” tab.

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**Funding principles include:**

- Be consistent with St. John’s mission
- Be relational, not transactional
- Be directed locally
- Fund programs and projects over organizations and individuals
- Prioritize ongoing over one-time giving opportunities
Christmas at St. John’s

**CHRISTMAS EVE – December 24**

3:00 pm  —  Christmas Pageant with Eucharist

*Join us for Carol singing before the 6:00 & 11:00 services.*

6:00 pm*  —  Festival Eucharist with Choir

11:00 pm  —  Festival Eucharist with Choir

*(with incense)*

**CHRISTMAS DAY — December 25 – 10:00 am — Festival Eucharist**

*(with Carol singing before the service)*

**CHRISTMAS I — December 29 – 8:00 & 10:00* am — Holy Eucharist**

**NOTE DIFFERENT SERVICE TIMES**

*childcare provided

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**Christmas Flowers**

If you would like to make a donation towards the Christmas flowers, please contact Rachel in the church office, or complete a flowers envelope in the pews and place it in the offering plate by **Monday, December 16th.**
Deacon's Reflections

Fragments can be apparent as the diverse life experiences that we try in desperation to knit together to create meaning in our lives. We weave our stories into quilts of squares, the fabric of our spiritual journeys, the scripts for our spiritual autobiographies. Jesus told the disciples, “Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost.”

Our attention spans are short and we are so task oriented we have become fragmented; we are challenged with putting ourselves and our souls back together again. Jesus invites us to gather up the fragments, for bread, even in fragments, is always about sustenance. It is made to be torn apart, broken, shared, and gathered yet again.

You know what time it is, it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; The night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light;

This Advent, may we patiently gather up our spiritual fragments, and as a beloved community, may we experience love, peace and justice...and welcome, in good time, Emmanuel.

For years, I have been following the works Advent Conspiracy, to worship more fully, to spend less, to give more and to love all. Check it out here.

Rex McKee
Candidates for the 10th Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Minnesota

The Standing Committee of the Episcopal Church in Minnesota has received and approved a slate of two candidates for the 10th Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Minnesota. These candidates will stand for election on Saturday, January 25th, 2020.

The Rev. Canon Abbott Bailey  
Canon to the Ordinary  
Diocese of California

The Very Reverend Craig Loya  
Dean, Trinity Cathedral  
Omaha, Nebraska

Save the Date for the Bishop Candidate Road Trip

- January 13: 1pm Forum, St. Christopher’s, Roseville
- January 13: 6:30pm Forum, St. Paul’s, Duluth
- January 14: 6pm Forum, Mahnomen, White Earth
- January 15: 6pm Forum & Conversation, Bishop Whipple Mission/St. Cornelia’s Church, Morton
- January 16: 6pm Forum, The Inn at Shattuck-St. Mary’s, Faribault
- January 17: 6pm Closing Celebration & Forum, St. Mark’s Cathedral

Learn More and Engage

Find more information about these candidates and the Bishop Candidate Road Trip happening in January at: mnbishopsearch.org

Financial Statement of Activities - October 2019

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* Please note that these numbers include additional principal payments for our Wells Fargo loan, which were paid out of our Keeping Faith Capital Campaign dedicated account. For accounting purposes that amount is reflected here.
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<td>11:00am Yoga 12:00pm Spirit Grp 5:15pm Choir Dinner 6:00pm Children Choirs 7:00pm Chime Choir 7:00pm Festival Choir</td>
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