

# THE MESSENGER

ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

## CHRISTMAS THROUGH NEW EYES

In 2023 the Altar Guild realized the nativity St. Michael's had been using for so many years had reached a point where it was beyond repair. Lydia Dreher began an all-out search to find a replacement, to no avail. But it is our good fortune that we have an amazing artist in our community, and the Altar Guild agreed to commission Marty Pyle to create a new creche that summer. Marty worked over a year to sculpt our new holy family figures.

Our new creche was funded in part by generous donations from David Dreher and Gary Richards in memory of their wives, both of whom were longstanding members of the Altar Guild.

The holy family figures were unveiled and dedicated in early December and their presence graced the altar from Advent through Epiphany.



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## PREPARING FOR CHRISTMAS

Preparing for Sunday is similar to preparing for company in your home and each week the Altar Guild makes sure the Church is ready for worship.

Each season of the year brings its own set of colors, celebrations, and customs.





CHRISTMAS EVE--Family Service





CHRISTMAS EVE--Family Service





**CHRISTMAS EVE--10:00 p.m. Service**





**CRECHES AND NATIVITIES (on display in the Garden Room)**





# CRECHES AND NATIVITIES



# Let's Connect (through Realm)

## GET TO KNOW REALM

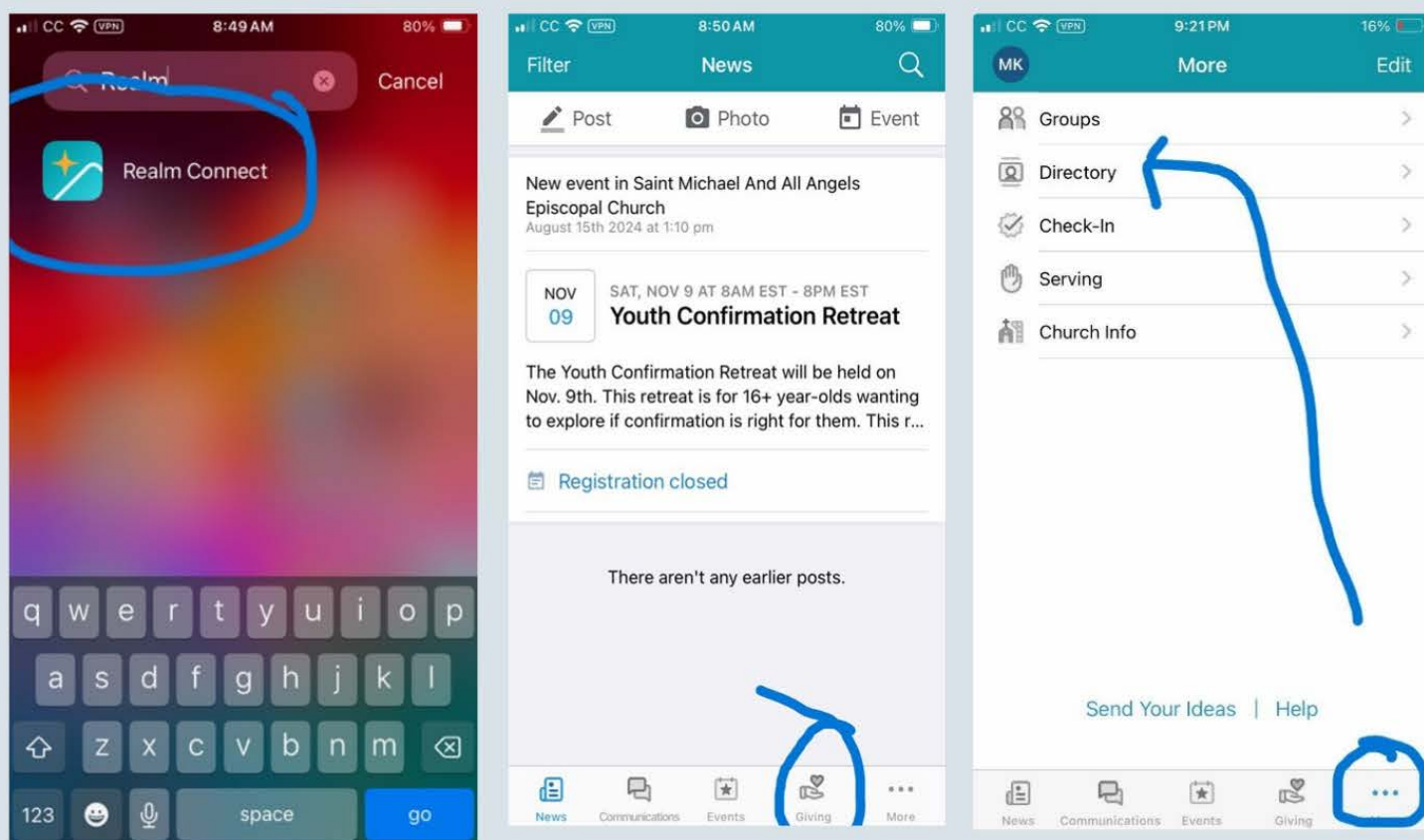
by Margareta Knopik

After much anticipation and preparation, the REALM app is now live and available for anyone who has a smartphone. (It can also be accessed on a tablet or desktop computer.)

The purpose is to enhance communication among and between members of Saint Michael's and generally make it easier to find those random pieces of information we need such as "I wonder what events are coming up" or "Have I made my pledge payment this month?" Right now, the church directory has been populated (check to make sure your information is correct) and the personal financial information is current. As time goes by, the site will become more robust and our hope is that it will enhance our interactions with each other due to ease of reaching out.

Vestry member Erik Coon has been instrumental in getting this up and running.

Below are some screenshot pictures to help get you started.



Take some time and explore this new tool. Let's connect! 😊



# VESTRY DEVOTION: DECEMBER

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## A DECEMBER VESTRY DEVOTION

by Erik Coon

Matthew 3: 1-6

As I write this, we are deep into the Advent season, more than halfway through. This time of year, Advent specifically, has been very special to me for a long, long time. It gives us a chance to pause, to reflect, and to hear the call from John to prepare the way, but in our context. The people living in the in-between time, waiting for Christ's return, whatever that looks like.

I will never forget one of the first Advent readings we ever had, the first time we did Advent as a family--with my 18-month-old brother screaming and jumping--was this bit in Matthew. In fact, my parents, to get us kids to listen would say "Prepare the way of the Lord!" really loudly, practically yelling, and we had to yell back "make his paths straight!"

I joke with my parents that it is their fault that I am an Episcopalian, and that I blame them for my love of liturgy and the *Book of Common Prayer*, because whether they knew it or not, they were teaching me to fall in love with repetition and contemplation, and for a 6 year old, they made it pretty fun and engaging since we didn't really ever yell or raise our voices in my home.

This constant repetition bored a hole into my brain as a kid. Probably due to the repetitive nature of knowing that Advent came every year, and knowing that John would call to us every December to prepare and repent.

As a child, this verse got me thinking about road construction, very literally. The machines, the work, the labor, the signs announcing the construction... I haven't thought about that in a very long time.

And this Advent I remembered this thought and laughed at how accurate this is to the work of justice, equality, and nurturing a faith community. It is work. Sure it doesn't take bulldozers and jackhammers, but it is work and it is ongoing, always, within us, and also outside the walls of this community.

And so, I will leave you with a couple thoughts that I have pondered often, and still do to this day.





## **ANNUAL MEETING**


**January 23, 2025**

**6:00 pm - 9:00 pm**

**Spencer Hall**

- **Potluck and Conversation**
- **2025 Budget Information**
- **Approve New Vestry Members**
- **Approve Convocation Delegates**

**Call 913-236-8600 if you need a ride.**



**"Society is a conversation scored for many voices. But it is precisely in and through that conversation that we become conjoint authors of our collective future."**

**— Rabbi Jonathan Sacks**