

Rev. Nancy Christensen
St. John's Lutheran Church, Atlanta, GA

Tell us a little about yourself and how you serve.

I am Nancy Christensen, and I live in Atlanta, Georgia, and serve as pastor at St. John's Lutheran Church near Emory University. I have been rostered in the ELCA, first as an Associate in Ministry, then as a Pastor of Word and Sacrament ministry since 1988, and have served in the South Carolina Synod and the Southeastern Synod throughout my career. I grew up in Atlanta, so I have never wandered too far from home!

What is your favorite Bible verse and why?

I have always been drawn to Hebrews 4:12: "Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart." God is real in my life, not usually in a sweet, sentimental, or comforting way, but more often challenging me, asking me to dig deep and to struggle with what faith looks like and means day in, and day out. God's "living and active" word meets me wherever I am and pushes me to grow.

Where have you seen God recently?

Every Thursday afternoon since the beginning of the pandemic, I have gathered on zoom with the littlest members of our church for Story Time. We talk about our lives, they show me their toys, and we read a story together. Some weeks we sing a song, and just before Christmas, Santa Rand from Nashville visited us and read The Night Before Christmas. No matter what is going on, and no matter how discouraged I might be feeling, these children bring light into my world every single week, and I feel God's presence in the most direct and tangible sense possible!

When/how have you been blessed by God's abundance?

I am a privileged, white, heterosexual woman who has known abundance far more than I have experienced scarcity. I'm blessed with good health, a happy marriage, amazing grown children along with their partners, a sweet dog and granddogs, a nice home, a wonderful church family, and food on my table. I try every day to be grateful for all of this, and at the same time to be mindful of my neighbors and to see God's abundance not as some special gift given only to me or others just like me. God's blessing is most evident when my bounty is shared, when community looks like opportunity and voice and resources for all.