



# Open Doors

The Newsletter of St. James Episcopal Church

---

November 2008

FROM THE



On Sunday, I went to watch one of our parish kids play soccer. The fields were packed, hundreds of kids all playing and parents and friends watching. It reminded me of an article I saw last week at [www.longislandpress.com](http://www.longislandpress.com) called "Soccer Moms vs. God." It was about the scheduling conflicts people have between soccer and religious practice.

Later in the week, I read the following: "Do you not know that in a race the runners all compete, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win it. Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable one. So I do not run aimlessly, nor do I box as though beating the air; but I punish my body and enslave it, so that after proclaiming to others I myself should not be disqualified."

It comes from 1 Corinthians 9, and as I read it, I wondered, what if instead of seeing soccer and faith as competing, we followed the Apostle Paul's lead in using athletics as a model for the Christian life? What if we thought about soccer as a model for our faith?

So start with the game. This is when the team gets together with a purpose: to win a game; a side benefit is getting to know other team members and getting encouraged. As Christians, we gather together every Sunday to worship God. We get to know one another and are encouraged in our faith. The game is an absolute priority. Coaches aren't happy when you skip out. Likewise, Sunday worship is our absolute priority as Christians. God isn't happy when we skip. And we let down the rest of the team as well.

Then there's practice. That's when you learn how to be a soccer player and together learn to be a team. And the expectation is that every player will show up. In church terms, the equivalent is those times we come together to learn how to be better Christians, and learn how to be part of the church. In other words, Christian education - Sunday School for kids and adult education for adults. We need to be learning and growing in our faith - this isn't an optional extra.

Finally, anyone serious about their sport will also train on their own, running and practicing kicking and shooting goals. As Christians, we need to read the Bible and pray on our own, growing our relationship with God.

Have a great game, and see you in church Sunday!

- Raewynne

## A WORD FROM THE WARDENS

What a wonderful day we had on October 18! The weather gave us that crisp fall air which made people really ready for the Harvest Festival. We had a very successful day financially ~ probably our second best Festival in recent history. The amount of work that goes into this day is tremendous! The work literally goes on for months before and our thanks go out to all the parishioners (and friends of parishioners) who help jam, bake, collect, price, print, carry, sort, transport, and the other million things that must be done to make this day happen. The money is good, but working together is what makes it so special.

We hope to see you at our new celebration ~ the All Saints' Parish Pot Luck Supper on November 1 at 5 p.m.

We are still awaiting final approval from the diocese on the sale of 493 North Country Road (the rental house across the street from the church). It has been a long ordeal but we hope that everything will be finalized this coming month. We will give you all of the details as soon as this happens.

Before every Vestry meeting we open with prayer. As part of this we pray for the parish family:

*Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and Earth, hear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

The members of the Vestry care deeply for

every member of this parish and work hard to make sure that we remain active and committed to the needs of all.

As November begins we enter the holiday season. We wish to all a blessed Thanksgiving. May you share this time with family and friends, enjoying fellowship and good fortune.

- Pat and Jeff

## “WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE”

Without question our country is in a time of serious economic adversity. However, it was recently said, “This is the greatest country on the face of the planet, because Americans have the fortitude to meet any challenge . . . **Don’t bet against the USA.**”

St. James is in the midst of its own economic adversity. But not only are we Americans, **we are also Christians!**

When some people face adversity, they complain and become bitter. They ask questions like, “Why does this have to happen to me? Why do I have to suffer this now? What have I done to deserve this?” But these questions have the power to dominate their thoughts. Such questions can overtake their vision, absorb their energy, and deprive them of the experiences the Lord wants them to receive. Rather than responding in this way, Christians should consider asking questions such as, “What am I to do? What am I to learn from this experience? What am I to change? Who am I to help? How can I remember my many blessings in times of trial?”

**“Adversity is the diamond dust with which heaven polishes its jewels.”**

The Parish of St. James is alive in Christ, in its Christian ministries of Hospitality, Worship, and Outreach. Over the last few months we have repeatedly listened to the stories of the Old Testament in which God calls his people to act on his behalf. God calls, and provides what is needed for success to those who are faithful.

Last year we at St. James answered His call by pledging \$155,294. Due to the adversity of the economic times and rising fuel costs, this proved to be a deficit amount for the vision we had planned at St. James. For 2009 our goal needs to be \$185,000. This is the amount to meet the current actual expenses plus inflation for the coming year. This is an **18% increase**. That sounds like a lot, but with an average pledge of ~ \$1700/yr. in 2008, **this is an average increase of \$6/wk. for 2009**. This is what we need to do to answer His call at St. James. **We hope you can do more**, so St. James can do more to further feed the hungry, heal the sick, and spread the good news of the Gospel. Please take a moment to complete a 2009 Pledge card, and return it to the church by Sunday, November 2 (or as soon as possible thereafter), at which time it will be presented in the offertory.

**God calls us to be His stewards. And with God, all things are possible.**

Faithfully,  
*The Stewardship Committee*  
*Chris Mauro, Edna Rousseau, Jack Schultheis, Ron Tebbutt, Raewynne Whiteley*  
- Rector

## HOW TO GIVE

*If you have many possessions, make your gift from them in proportion; if few, do not be afraid to give according to the little you have.”*  
*Tobit 4:8*

The Sunday school teacher told her class she had a gift for each of them. Then, into each pair of outstretched fourth-grade hands, she placed 10 shiny dimes. “Count them,” she instructed the children. “Put one dime in one hand and all of the other dimes in your other hand. Now look at your hands. The nine dimes you may put in your pocket. They are yours to keep and spend in any way you like. The other dime is your tithe. It is the part of the gift I want you to return to God by putting it in the offering plate in church.”

Years later, one of those students recalled: “I never forgot those dimes, not the one I put in the offering plate or the nine I kept. One tenth sounds like a lot until you look at the ninety percent God wants you to keep.”

What about those of us who would like to tithe, but find ten percent a big jump? Here are a few suggestions:

- \* Begin with thanksgiving. In your prayers take time to list the things for which you are thankful. Write them down.
- \* Start giving where you can. Decide how much you want to give today, this week, this month.
- \* Set a giving goal. Most people find it helpful to set a goal that is a percentage of their income. This way, you can adjust the absolute dollar amount as your circumstances change.
- \* Set a time by which you want to achieve your goal.
- \* Examine your expenditures. Are there things you can do without in order to

accomplish your goal?

\* Give to God first. This is the most important part of the plan. Write the check or set the cash aside as soon as you receive money. Don't wait until Sunday!

Remember, this gift empowers God's work in the world.

\* When you give offerings, take a few moments to remember all that God has given you during the past week. Giving is an exchange of gifts and thanksgiving. Take time to enjoy both.

### EXCITING NEWS

Thanks to a generous donation, we will be able to undertake the much-needed repair/restoration of one of our treasured stained glass windows. The James and Ann Clinch memorial window, designed by Stanford White and crafted by the LaFarge studio, was removed in mid October and will be returned by the end of November—in time for the Advent/Christmas season. Although this window was removed and entirely re-leaded in the not-so-distant past, some of the work was poorly done and the window supports have loosened. These loose window supports allowed a gradual bulging of some of the window sections. This bulging, which in some areas is severe, has caused some of the individual stained glass pieces to break and others to loosen.

The Church has contracted with the J & R Lamb Studio, in New Jersey, to repair and restore this window. The window will be flattened, broken glass will be repaired or replaced, loose glass will be re-puttied or re-leaded, and the window will be re-hung in its frame using round rolled steel support bars. The J& R Lamb Studio provides a lifetime

guarantee against any and all defects related to workmanship or craftsmanship.

If you have any questions about this work or would like to make a contribution to the fund being established to undertake future window repair/restoration work, please speak to any member of the Window Committee: Donna Austin-Chair, Tony Bastin, Barbara LoPresto, Bob Scott.

*- Pat Westlake, Jeff Smith  
and the Vestry*

### THANK YOU BOOK NOOK VOLUNTEERS

A hearty THANK YOU to all of the volunteers who mad the Book Nook segment of the Harvest Festival such a great success again this year.

In the weeks before the big event, Donna Austin, Stephanie Coleman, Debbie LaMano, and Brenda Mazzo dealt with the sorting of all the donated books. As always, Laurie Mannix kept us informed of the donations as they came in and we were able to move the books to the Guild Room in a timely manner and keep the lobby of the Education building reasonably presentable. We send a big thanks to Pat Kregler and the women of the Guild for generously agreeing to share their room with the Book Nook and for clearing out half of it for our use. It made a tremendous difference when it came time to move the books to Mills Hall – there were no stairs up which the cartons of books had to be carried! And now we can collect and sort books all year long without being in anyone's way.

On the Tuesday before the Festival, the books were moved to Mills Hall, tables were brought

up from the basement of the Parish House, a crew picked up thirteen borrowed tables, and volunteers began to set up the tables and display the books. We thank our neighboring parish, St. Thomas of Canterbury, for generously lending us their tables – all of their tables – and we express special appreciation to their Parish Administrator, Jill, for her efforts on our behalf, and her great cooperation in getting us access to their church basement when it was convenient for us. Ken LeCluse volunteered his time, truck and trailer to pick up the borrowed tables and Tony and Joan Mercep provided the hard labor to get them up the stairs and into the trailer. When the caravan arrived back at St. James, Tim Brady, Leslie Price, Art Gureck, Art Strassle, and Jack Schultheis were hard at work moving tables and books while waiting for the borrowed tables to arrive and Arlyne Gureck was hard at work unpacking boxes of books and making an attractive display of them. Other volunteers who helped set up Mills Hall on other nights also deserve our thanks: Louise and Ernie Harders, Pat Westlake, Les and Joan Bengtson, and Arlyne Gureck's sister, Pam Kruth. Pam donates books to us each year, purchases books from us each year, volunteers to help with set-up each year, and we give her special recognition and thanks for her involvement because she is not a member of our parish. Ernie Harders deserves a special award for his excellent set-up of the children's books. This is always a difficult task because of the variety of shapes and sizes of the books, but Ernie had a plan for the display and he worked on those four tables until his plan became a reality – a very, very satisfactory reality. We are making him the 'responsible person' for the display of the children's books next year. Yeah, Ernie!! Because the Book Nook was open on both Friday and Saturday again this year, we had only three days to move and set up the books

and it could not have been done as well as it was without the help and good cheer of all of these volunteers.

Other volunteers helped by working on the days of the sale – keeping the tables neat, helping shoppers find particular books, and working with our cashier to add up, bag, and carry books. We thank Marge Cobb, who worked all day both days as our cashier, Abby Coleman, who was an excellent errand-runner, Arlyne Gureck, Theresa Euler, Karen Noack, Sandy Redfield, Joan Bengtson, Ernie and Louise Harders, Hank and Eileen Hull, and June Davies, who all volunteered for a few hours so that many hands made light work. Thanks also to Barbara Bastin, who heeded our call for brown paper bags and brought us a fat handful. Two new volunteers helped us on Friday morning, and we would like to say thanks to both David Gable and Bob Modr. David called a few days before the Festival and volunteered himself and Bob. On Friday morning we put them to work carrying our big sign out to the front of the church property and securing it in place with tent pegs. They also hung our Book Nook banner over the door of Mills Hall, and, on Friday they made coffee for us all. Thanks, guys! Another thanks to Karen Noack for discovering where our Book Nook signs were stored and bringing them to Mills Hall for us.

The clean-up work on Saturday afternoon went smoothly by seemed to take forever. In fact, it went on until 7:15 that evening. We are very grateful to everyone who helped with this truly difficult task. Clean-up comes at the end of two very long days for the Book Nook volunteers and everyone is tired and wants to get home as soon as possible. We thank Joan and Les Bengtson, Dara Linthwaite, Bob Saunders, Theresa Euler, and Mary Jane DeVito, who worked and worked carefully

packing books to be saved either for our own use or to be donated to area libraries. We also thank our young volunteers, Abby Coleman and Alexandra and Kristina Euler, who made countless trips to the dumpster with boxes of books and then folded and returned a majority of tables to their proper location. A truly heartfelt thanks goes to Tony and George, who both stayed with Stephanie and me to the bitter end. They are our heroes!!

Each year, those who volunteer to work on the Book Nook contribute in many ways and it is this group effort that makes a successful Book Nook possible. We recognize, appreciate, and thank every single person who helps to make it happen.

Please remember to save your books for us. We will accept donations at any time. Just place your bag/box of donated books in the lobby of the Education building, under the coat rack. Thank you.

*- Donna Austin & Stephanie Coleman  
Co-Chairs of the Book Nook.*

## **THANKSGIVING SERVICES**

St. James will again participate with members of other churches and temples in the Community Interfaith Thanksgiving service on Wednesday, November 28. The service will be held at 7 P.M. at Temple Beth Sholom on Edgewood Avenue in Smithtown. Raewynne will be preaching.

This year's Thanksgiving Day combined Holy Eucharist will be celebrated at All Souls' Stony Brook, at 10 a.m. Raewynne will once again be preaching.

## **OUTREACH**

November is St. James' month to serve at the Smithtown Emergency Food Pantry, located in the parish house a St. Thomas of Canterbury Episcopal Church in Smithtown. The pantry is open from 9 a.m. - Noon. A sign-up sheet is in Mills Hall. If you are a new parishioner, partner with an old-timer, who will be happy to show you the procedure. With the current economic situation, more and more people will be needing the pantry. Food donations may be placed in the cart in the Christian Education building. Canned meat, fish, juice, and peanut butter are always needed. Before your work day, check the hamper. There will probably be some food you can take with you.

Disbursement of outreach money has been on hold recently due to the deficit in the St. James budget. Since the Harvest Festival, the Vestry decided a second check for \$750 (for the year) should be sent to Protestant Campus Ministry.

Bread for the World's Annual Dinner was held in Mills Hall on October 19. Our parishioners set up, served, and provided beverages and desserts. The Outreach Committee and Vestry hope to be able to donate \$750 to Bread for the World before the end of 2008.

Habitat for Humanity celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Suffolk County on October 15. Again, the Outreach Committee and Vestry hope to be able to donate a second \$500 (for the year) to Habitat before the end of 2008.

*- Sue Krall*

## SAVE THE DATE

The annual Epiphany Brunch will be held on Sunday, January 11, following the 10 a.m. service. This year it will be a "Pot Luck" Brunch, with the champagne punch (and other beverages) being provided by the Vestry. Everyone is encouraged to put this date on the calendar and join in the festivities.

- Pat Westlake

## VESTRY ELECTIONS AND ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

St. James' Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 1. On that day there will be one service, at 9 a.m., followed by the meeting.

The following Vestry positions are open:

Warden - the completion of Pat Westlake's second term. Wardens may be nominated for three consecutive terms of two years each.

Vestry - Edna Rousseau, completing her second term.

George Krall, completing his second term.

Charlie Kreussling, completing an unexpired term.

Vestry members may be nominated for two consecutive terms of three years each.

George Krall is the Chair of the Nominating Committee. Please speak with him if you are interested in running for one of these positions, or are interested in nominating someone.

- Pat Westlake

## NEWS OF THE PARISH FAMILY

On November 2 we will Baptize Elaina Payton Wall, daughter of William and Jacquelyn Wall, granddaughter of Kurt and Diane Rettig. We welcome her into the St. James Parish family.

Chris Fritz would like to thank all those who sent cards and condolences for the recent passing of her husband, Carl.

Gloria Scibilia has moved to a senior residence in Connecticut. Her new address is 3106 Aslar Village, Wallingford CT 06492. We wish her happiness as she makes new friends in her new home

At the end of October, Carol and Dan Maybee moved into their new home in St. Augustine. Their new address is 597 Christina Drive, St. Augustine FL 32086. Be sure to give them a call if you are down that way. Their phone is (904) 794-4449. We wish them much happiness as they settle in to this new phase of their lives.

Nancy Caponegro is one talented and prolific quilter! She had eight pieces on exhibit at the Smithtown Stitchers QE XIII quilt show on the last weekend of October. Among the awards she won was *1<sup>st</sup> Place - Wearables* for her jacket and pants ensemble, *2<sup>nd</sup> Place - Show Challenge* quilt, and *Exceptional Merit* for her Oriental Charm tote. Congratulations, Nancy!

## NOVEMBER CALENDAR

- 1 All Saints' Celebration  
& Pot luck Dinner 5 p.m.
- 2 Wall Baptism 10 a.m.  
Commitment Sunday
- 3 Stewardship Committee 7 p.m.
- 4 **Election Day** - office closed  
Yoga class 3:30 p.m.  
Recovery group 7:30 p.m.
- 6 Bible study 10 a.m.  
Yoga class 3:30 P.M.  
Choir rehearsal 8 p.m.
- 10 Finance Committee 7:30 p.m.
- 11 **Veterans' Day**  
Yoga class 3:30 p.m.  
Recovery group 7:30 p.m.
- 12 One-Stroke Painting Class  
7 p.m. - Mills Hall
- 13 Bible study 10 a.m.  
Yoga class 3:30 p.m.  
Choir rehearsal 8 p.m.
- 14 & 15 Diocesan Convention
- 17 Vestry meeting 7:30 p.m.
- 18 Yoga class 3:30 p.m.  
Recovery group 7:30 p.m.  
Suffolk Archdeaconry mtg.
- 20 Bible study 10 a.m.  
Yoga class 3:30 p.m.  
Choir rehearsal 8 p.m.
- 25 Yoga class 3:30 p.m.  
Recovery group 7:30 p.m.
- 26 Community Thanksgiving  
Service 7 p.m. - Temple  
Beth Sholom, Smithtown
- 27 **Thanksgiving Day**  
Holy Eucharist 10 a.m. - All  
Souls', Stony Brook
- 28 Office closed
- 30 Advent wreath making 9 a.m.

## NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Donna Austin  
Eileen Hull  
Edna Rousseau  
Carole Peters  
John Euler  
Pat Westlake  
Tony Bastin  
Kristina Euler  
June Davies  
Michael C. Neyssen  
Josh Citron

## NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Chris & Anita Sequino  
Bob & Marty Scott  
James & Edie DeFilippis

Please note: This newsletter is being made available by email to all parishioners and friends for whom we have addresses. If you would like to be added to our email list, please send your address to [stjamesc@optonline.net](mailto:stjamesc@optonline.net).

## What's Happening with Our Economy?

### Introduction

To say that the world has been gripped by a financial crisis is to state the obvious. What is not obvious is how this crisis occurred and what should be done to remedy it...As Christians, what are we to make of this perplexing and troubling set of circumstances, and how should we respond in the face of such uncertainty?...

## What Happened?

In brief, the money pipeline is apparently clogged. Credit has become largely unavailable or expensive. Lenders and investors are reluctant to lend their capital when they believe there is a high risk that it will not be returned. Borrowing and lending sustains economic growth, and when the flow of money begins to sputter, the economy is bound to slow down or even contract. Hence the fear of losing financial solvency, which in turn reinforces tight credit.

A wide range of consequences stem from this financial crisis:

- businesses can't make payroll
- companies cut production
- consumers can't get loans
- the stockmarket dropped
- banks are weakened
- federal, state and even national governments have financial problems

## What Should Be Done?

...Recovering will be difficult and perhaps prolonged, and much will be required of us both as individuals and as members of the civil community...In making the decisions and taking the actions that are required of us in the weeks and months ahead, there are three biblical and theological themes that should be kept in mind: the poor, stewardship, and vocation.

## The Poor

In any economic downturn or recession, the poor, unfortunately, are usually the first to suffer and the last to recover. Their livelihood is always precarious at best, making them more vulnerable to volatile financial gyrations. Consequently, there is a collective responsibility to address both their short-term and long-term needs. Practically, this requires assistance in meeting such immediate needs as food, clothing, shelter, and healthcare, especially for the unemployed. In addition, providing opportunities for learning better job skills are also needed so improved employment will make them less vulnerable in the future. Soup kitchens, food and clothing banks, and temporary shelters are certainly needed and should be supported, but they are not long-term solutions.

Whether the best solutions for meeting these short-term and long-term needs reside in the private or public sector, or some combination of both, is open to legitimate disagreement and debate. As Christians, we can and should participate in these debates even when we are not of one accord. But we should also keep in mind that our purpose for debating is not to support a particular political party or ideology but to bear a faithful witness to Jesus Christ in how we express a love for neighbors who are in need. As the gospel makes clear, such love is not sentimentality but a genuine regard for the physical, social, and personal welfare of others...

## Stewardship

God has called human beings to be the stewards of creation—to develop and use its resources in a prudent and responsible manner. Part of this stewardship entails economic ordering and financial management. Faithfully exercising this calling requires that attention be directed toward such ordinary concerns as work, investment, charitable contributions, and

taxation in order to meet basic needs. As Christians, we can argue over whether such stewardship is best exercised primarily in the private or public sectors, in free or regulated markets, within limited or expansive governments. But again, the purpose of our arguing must be kept fully in mind: to fulfill God's calling. In our debates over how best to respond to the financial crisis, the issue is really not money per se, but how it is best used both to meet the needs of individuals and to promote the common good of the civil community. What should not be lost in the unfolding drama of the financial crisis is its ultimately supportive role in the mundane activities of economic exchange through which we help one another make a living, raise families, and the like. And through these seemingly common and mundane activities, do we not nonetheless exhibit a deep love for neighbors, both near and far?

## Vocation

Practically, we exhibit this love of neighbor in economic exchanges through our vocations. Every Christian has a vocation. A few are called to ordained ministry, but the vast majority of Christians are called to secular vocations. It is as bankers and factory workers, as politicians and public servants, and as parents and spouses that we are called to bear witness to and be followers of Jesus Christ. It is also through these vocations that the ministry of Christ's church in the world is performed. Consequently, since there is no such thing as a part-time Christian, all Christians are full-time ministers in and to the world.

It is important to remember that in being an employee or an employer, in investing or managing investments, in making laws and administering public policies, we are also performing a ministry in Christ's name. More to the point, in attempting to formulate a fitting response to the financial crisis, it is important that we keep in mind our vocations as a calling to ministry. It is through our vocations that we exhibit a love of neighbors who are our families, friends, colleagues, fellow citizens, and strangers scattered across a global economy. It is not only on Sunday morning when we gather for worship and in Sunday school that we are Christians. Rather, it is in the activities of daily life, in those places where financial policies and practices are set, and where their consequences are felt with greatest intensity that we also bear our most conspicuous witness to Jesus Christ.

Excerpted from "In the News: What's Happening with Our Economy" by *Brent Waters*, professor of *Christian social ethics* and director of the *Jerre L. and Mary Joy Stead Center for Ethics and Values* at *Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary* in *Evanston, Illinois*. 2008 *The Thoughtful Christian*

Copies of the full article available at the back of the church.