



Open Doors

The Newsletter of St. James Episcopal Church

December 2008

FROM THE



Last Friday, I was horrified to hear the news of a Wal-Mart employee who was crushed to death in the rush to get Black Friday bargains not far from here in

Valley Stream. It's one of those things that we assume only ever happens in other places, not to people like us. And it's easy to condemn those who were involved.

But imagine it. You're worried, not just about your retirement income, but whether you'll have a job next week. Your children have given you a three page list of things they want for Christmas, and then there's the rest of the family. And the store advertises an incredibly discounted flat panel TV that could cover the whole family. So you head out after Thanksgiving and by 9 p.m. are lined up outside the door of the store, hoping to be one of the lucky few to get that TV.

By 5am the crowd outside the store is huge. You're near the front. Suddenly the glass in the store doors shatters, and you're pushed forward, into the store. And you run for the TV. Only afterwards do you discover that one of the employees was killed in the crush.

It's so easy to get caught up in the season. Thanksgiving is barely over, and already

we're well on the way to Christmas, with all the pressures of family, gifts, and parties. In the midst of it, it's sometimes hard to remember that at the heart of it all is the wondrous story of the gift of Jesus Christ, God with us.

Sometimes the pressure of it all feels overwhelming. We need a break, a time to refocus, to remember who it is that we celebrate. A few minutes here. A quiet moment there. To remember the coming of Christ.*

Last night, I joined with members of our parish as we lit our Advent candles and read Scripture and prayed. I was with friends. One belongs to another Episcopal church in Connecticut. The other has no church affiliation that I'm aware of. But we stood, and lit a candle, and read and prayed. And it was a time of quiet, and a time of blessing.

So join us. Take some time out. Worship, read, pray. And allow God to speak to you this Advent.

Raewynne

*Some people have tried to do something constructive to help people of faith celebrate Christmas. Check out the Advent Conspiracy at <http://www.adventconspiracy.org/>

A WORD FROM THE WARDENS

On the First Sunday in Advent our Christian Formation and Education Committee gave each family a booklet with weekly devotions and reflections. As they say, “the purpose of our Advent study is to pause during these hectic days – to deliberately create space in our lives – for a spiritual journey on our way to celebrating Christ’s birth.”

On this same day, the children – and some adults – made Advent wreaths. We hope that these are used in your home along with the devotions and reflections.

If you are searching for some true Christmas Spirit this season, join us in services and activities where we gather as a parish family to celebrate together. Adopt-a-Family and Pick-a-Star gifts will be brought to church on December 7. The Women of St. James will gather for a luncheon on December 9 (and we do know that MEN have attended and survived!). The Youth Group will be delivering the Pick-a-Star gifts on December 14. December 21 will be the Greening of the Church following the 10 a.m. service, and later in the day we will go Christmas caroling to shut-ins.

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day will be true celebrations - BUT - Christmas does not end then December 28 will have special Lessons and Carols at both services and our annual Epiphany Brunch is scheduled for January 4.

The four candles of the Advent Wreath represent Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. This is our wish for you and your loved ones, and for our church. May we all have Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love this Advent season, This Christmas, and in the coming year.

- Pat and Jeff

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Advent 4 - December 21

8 a.m. - Holy Eucharist, Rite I
10:00 a.m. - Holy Eucharist Rite II

Christmas Eve - December 24

**5:30 p.m. - Celebration Family Eucharist
with Living Nativity**
**9 p.m. - Celebration Holy Eucharist
with Chancel Choir**

Christmas Day - December 25

10 a.m. - Holy Eucharist

Christmas 1 - December 28

8 a.m. & 10 a.m.
Lessons & Carols at both services

GRAVE BLANKET DECORATING

Join the members of the Cemetery Committee on Wednesday, December 3 at 5 p.m. as we decorate the grave blankets which have been ordered for the cemetery. Pizza and refreshments will be provided in Mills Hall and Christmas music will be played as we work.

ADOPT-A-FAMILY

If you signed up to shop for a gift for the members of our “adopted” families this year, please return your wrapped gifts on Sunday, December 7, so they may be sorted and prepared for delivery. Thanks again to Donna Guinaw and Claudette Plaschka for doing such a great job of organizing this outreach project.

PICK-A-STAR

Also due on Sunday, December 7 are the gifts for our disabled neighbors and parish shut-ins that were selected in our Pick-a-Star outreach. It is expected that the gifts will be delivered on December 14 by members of our YPF, Santa, and any parishioner that wants to come along. Thanks to Stephanie Coleman and Sue Krall for overseeing this wonderful effort.

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

Everyone is invited to join the members of the Lunch Bunch as they enjoy their annual Christmas Luncheon on Tuesday, December 9th. The luncheon will be held at Vintage Steak House, 433 North Country Road at Noon. Contact Fjeril Deal (724-3720) or Pat Kregler (883-113) to make your reservation. The cost is \$25 per person. All are welcome!

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Come raise your voice in song as we go Christmas caroling to homebound parishioners and local nursing homes on Sunday, December 21. We will meet in the Mills Hall parking lot at 4:30 p.m. and car pool to the homes. Following the caroling we will enjoy some refreshments. All parishioners are invited to share in spreading some Christmas cheer to our neighbors.

GIFT BOOK IDEAS

For Adults:

“Well Seasoned Living - Winter: A Guided Journal for Increasing Your Enjoyment of Everyday Life.” By Vicki Kessler and MaraBeth Soneson. ACTA Publications, \$19.95 ISBN 978-0-8794-6358-8.

“Grace’s Window: Entering the Seasons of Prayer.” By Suzanne Guthrie. Forward by Mary C. Earle. Morehouse Pub. \$18. ISBN 978-0-8192-2325-8.

“A Gracious Rain: A Devotional Commentary on the Prayers of the Church Year.” By Richard H. Schmidt. Morehouse Pub. \$16. ISBN 978-0-8192-2326-5.

“Seven Sacred Pauses: Living Mindfully Through the Hours of the Day.” By Macrina Wiederkehr. Sorin Books. \$18.95. ISBN 978-1-933495-10-1.

“The One Year Lifeverse Devotional.” By Jay K. Payleitner. Tyndale House, \$14.99.

“Words for Silence: A Year of Contemplative Meditations.” By Gregory Fruehwirth. Paraclete Press, \$21.95. ISBN 978-55725-601-0.

“Daily Prayer and Purpose: Calendar 2009.” Forward Movement Pub., \$15.

“An Affair of the Heart: A Biblical and Franciscan Journey.” By Patricia Jordan. Morehouse Pub., \$20. ISBN 978-0-85244-690-4.

“Let Nothing Disturb You: A Journey to the Center of the Soul with Teresa of Avila.” Edited by John Kirvan. Ave Maria Press, \$9.95. ISBN 1-59471-152-6.

“Together and Apart: A Memoir of the Religious Life.” By Ellen Stephen. Morehouse, \$18. ISBN 978-0-8192-2315-9.

“Conversations With St. Francis.” By James C. Howell. Abingdon Press, \$13. ISBN 978-0-6876-5049-1.

“Welcome to the Wisdom of the World.” By Joan Chittister. Eerdmans Pub, \$20. ISBN 978-0-8028-2894-1.

For Children:

“The Gift of the Christmas Cookie: Sharing the True Meaning of Jesus’ Birth.” By Dandi Daley Mackall, illustrated by Deborah Chabrian. ZonderKidz, \$16.99. ISBN 978-0310713289.

“The Story of Jesus as Told in the Donkeys’ Tales.” By Adele Bibb Colvin, illustrated by Peyton Hamilton Carmichael. Pelican Pub., \$15.95. ISBN 978-1589806276.

“The Beginner’s Bible: The Very First Christmas.” ZonderKidz, \$1.99. ISBN 978-0310718260.

“On That Christmas Night.” By Tim Dowley. Candle Books, \$17.99. ISBN 978-0825473760.

“Jotham’s Journey: A Storybook for Advent.” By Arnold Ytreeide. Kregel Pub., \$10.99. ISBN 978-0825441745.

“We Believe in Christmas.” By Karen Kingsbury, illustrated by Daniel J. Brown. ZonderKidz, \$16.99. ISBN 978-0310712121.

“Tell Me About Heaven.” By Randy Alcorn, illustrated by Ron DiCianni. Crossway Books, \$19.99. ISBN 978-1581348538.

“Hunter Brown and the Secret of the Shadow.” By Christopher Miller and Allan Miller. Warner Press, \$13.99. ISBN 978-1593173289.

“A Very Marley Christmas.” By John Grogan, illustrated by Richard Cowdrey. Harper-Collins, \$16.99. ISBN 978-0061372926.

“Step Into the Bible: 100 Bible Stories for Family Devotions.” By Ruth Graham. Zondervan, \$14.99. ISBN 978-0310714101.

“The Jesus Storybook Bible: Every Story Whispers His Name.” By Sally Lloyd-Jones, illustrated by Jago. ZonderKidz, \$16.99. ISBN 978-0310708254.

“Sweet Dreams Princess: God’s Little Princess Bedtime Bible Stories, Devotions, & Prayers.” By Sheila Walsh. Thomas Nelson Pub. \$16.99. ISBN 978-1400312979.

“Goodnight Warrior: God’s Mighty Warrior Bedtime Bible Stories, Devotions, & Prayers.” By Sheila Walsh. Thomas Nelson Pub. \$16.99. ISBN 978-1400312986.

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CHRISTIAN FORMATION & EDUCATION

During Advent, the Adult Christian Education class will study several segments from “Pausing on the Road to Bethlehem: A Spiritual Journey through Advent.” Through this study, we seek to pause – deliberately creating space in our lives – for a spiritual journey on our way to celebrating Christ’s birth. Each week will focus on a passage of Scripture, an activity related to the biblical passage, and a form of prayer that we can also apply during the week. Join us at 9 a.m. in the Webster room.

Also available in the narthex is a thoughtful meditation, “Reclaiming Christmas: Seeking an Alternative” for your personal reading, as well as devotional booklets designed for the whole family to use at home on each Sunday evening of Advent. While the booklet complements and builds on our Sunday morning Advent studies, you will still find the booklet meaningful even if you are unable to attend the Sunday morning studies. Each Sunday evening, at 7:30 p.m., you are encouraged to light a candle on your Advent wreath and gather your family around it. (If you don’t have an Advent wreath, purple candles are available in the narthex for \$1 each. After reading the Scripture for the week, take some time to reflect on it and discuss it; then pray together. It is our hope that you will find comfort, focus, and strength in the fact that our entire parish family is joined in common prayer at that moment.

On December 28, please join us in Mills Hall for an intergenerational Christian education gathering. Sharing hot cider and old-fashioned doughnuts, we will talk together about the favorite gift we received – and the favorite gift that we gave, as well as any steps that we

took and are taking to bring peace, meaning, and focus to the Christmas season.

An Advent Prayer

God of grace, of beginnings and endings and everything in between, be our guide on this journey as we hike the road to Bethlehem. Be with us in the chaos of traveling and in the quiet moments when we pause to ponder. Grant us your shalom, so that we may truly rejoice in the good news that has been told to us, the good news of Jesus Christ. Amen.

- Kathy Sides

OUTREACH

In November a second check for \$750 was sent to Protestant Campus Ministry at Stony Brook University for 2008. The Vestry hopes to be able to donate a second check for \$500 to Habitat and one for \$750 to Bread for the World before the end of December.

At Halloween, our children collected over \$35 for UNICEF. God bless you for thinking of other children around the world.

While talking to Warden, Pat Westlake, she reminded me to mention that Outreach is not just giving money away. It is also getting involved on a personal level to help others. Getting involved can be within our church because many of these “ministries” within our church reach out to others: teaching Sunday school; singing in the choir; serving on the Vestry, the Altar Guild, as Lay Eucharistic Minister, as an usher, greeter, acolyte, or a reader; helping the youth group or at a booth at the Harvest Festival; sorting, pricing, making jam, creating crafts to sell, etc. If you are new to St. James Church, think about how you can join in and serve our parish. It is in

working together that you truly get to know one another and make friends.

Lately our lessons and sermons have been about being servants, using our talents, and acting as witnesses for Christ. Raewynne reminded us that we are already members of the Kingdom of Heaven and Jesus wants us to serve others; when we serve others, we actually serve Jesus. What ministries do you know of that serve outside our church. Especially this past month, the Food Pantry comes to mind.

November, our month to serve the Smithtown Emergency Food Pantry, was a busy month. More people than ever need food. Usually two parishioners serve each day, but in November St. James some days had three or four people working steadily all morning. About 65 baskets and turkeys were given out for Thanksgiving. Thank you to all who volunteered to help. You made an important difference in a lot of people's lives!

There are other ministries beyond our parish that reach out to others. In December we have the opportunity to Adopt-a-Family, actually two families, and buy basic necessities as Christmas gifts. We also are purchasing Pick-a-Star gifts for our developmentally disabled neighbors. On December 14 our young people will accompany Santa as he delivers the Pick-a-Star gifts you shopped for and wrapped. Although the recipients are always delighted, the real "gift" goes to those who participated.

Some other ministries have been going on for years. Did you know Ken LeCluse has been on the Board of Directors of Habitat for Humanity since its inception twenty years ago in Suffolk County? His expertise in construction has been invaluable to Habitat. Not an expert in construction? George Krall

could be made use of too. Since George taught high school Spanish for many years, now in retirement he interviews Spanish-speaking applicants for Habitat houses and acts as a go-between for Habitat and applicants who know little English. Can you imagine what a good day George has when he calls someone to tell them they have been chosen to get a Habitat Home?!

Many of you heard our son, Daniel, speak about volunteering in New Orleans after hurricane Katrina. He drove down "just to help out." God works in ways we can not always imagine. Here was a young, strong guy with some time on his hands. After eighteen months of volunteering, he had led volunteer groups that gutted hundreds of moldy homes around New Orleans, had written a grant proposal to Episcopal Relief and Development, who sent half a million dollars to the Diocese of Louisiana to begin a re-build program, and today the diocese has rebuilt 39+ houses so far ...

Most of us don't have 18 months to give away. Think small. What do you enjoy doing? What are your talents? Who could use some help from you? Believe it or not, the rewards usually greatly outweigh your efforts. Just by uttering the V-word (volunteer), our son has acquired friends all over New Orleans, has been given Saints football tickets, has been invited to crawfish bashes and has found many paid jobs. What he has received is as great or greater than the help he gave others. Think about it. What can *you* do?

- Sue Krall

SALE OF 493 NORTH COUNTRY RD.

In April 2006 the Vestry voted to place the land across the street up for sale. The land consists of two lots: a small house on 1.1 acres and an undeveloped lot of 4.2 acres. At that time we attempted to sell it on our own. In December 2007 we contracted with Remax Beyond of St. James to handle the sale.

We agreed on a price in February 2008, and in April went to contract for the sale of the house on 1.1 acres. During the title search we became aware Cornelia Stewart Butler bequeathed a small portion of that land to the church in 1915. According to her will, the land was to be utilized as a "Public Park" and at such a time it was not so used, it would revert back to her heirs. Ron Davies, acting as attorney for the church, located all eleven of the heirs and had each heir deed back to the church their respective Right of Re-Verter. There was also an encroachment by a neighbor and a boundary line agreement had to be obtained.

According to the Canons of the Diocese, we needed to obtain approval from the Standing Committee and the Bishop. We then had to secure the signature of a Supreme Court Justice on the Order authorizing the sale.

All of this was accomplished in August 2008. At that time we contacted the purchaser and requested a closing date. The purchaser asked to change the conditions of the sale – stating that so much time had elapsed, economic conditions had changed, and home sale prices were down. The purchaser requested a change in the price, and that the church hold the mortgage. The Vestry held a special meeting on a Saturday morning in September at which time Ron Davies went over all of our possible options, including

going into litigation to retain the down payment. Ron had contacted the Chancellor of the Diocese, who assured him that the Diocese would approve of us holding a mortgage.

The Vestry voted to make a counter offer to the purchaser. We would accept \$360,000 for the house. There would be a payment of \$130,000 at closing, with the church holding a mortgage of \$230,000 for 3 years at a rate of 8.5%. For the three years the purchaser will be making only mortgage interest payments, with the \$230,000 due at the end of 3 years.

The purchaser agreed to our conditions. At this point we had to have another appraisal done of the home, go back to the Standing Committee to have them approve the new sale and conditions, gain the Bishop's approval, and go to the Supreme Court for their approval.

The closing on 493 North Country Road took place on Tuesday, November 25. The profit from the sale has been deposited in the Major Maintenance Fund.

It has been quite an ordeal, and we thank Ron Davies for his expertise, his tenacity, his diligence, and for his sense of humor in getting us through this.

- Pat Westlake

HARVEST FESTIVAL

I wanted to send out a BIG THANK YOU to all the merchants who donated to our Harvest Festival. When you shop at any one of them, PLEASE say THANK YOU to them for their donation. Here is a list of merchants who donated:

Henry Farm Inn
 Energy Fitness
 Martha Clara Vineyards
 Costco Liquorium
 Three Black Sheep
 Rosebud Boutique
 St. James Pasta
 Cool Beanz
 Julie's Home & Garden
 Mercep Butchers
 St. James Jewelry
 Eddie's Power Equipment
 Sivana Salon
 Hart & Co.
 Tru Salon
 Audiovox
 DunRite Pools

Restaurants
 Vintage Steak House
 Mosaic
 Kitchen a Bistro
 Feels Good Café
 Casa Buono
 Tic Toc Café

Peter, George, and I want to thank everyone who participated in the raffles, and also want to congratulate everyone who won. We had a great year with selling all of them, and a great day at the Harvest Festival, as well as a great team! Thank you!

- Debbie LaMano

2008 HARVEST FESTIVAL STATEMENT OF PROFIT & LOSS

Booth	Revenue	Expenses	Profit
Auction	\$432.00	-	\$432.00
Baked Goods	\$508.20	-	\$508.20
Book Nook	\$1,687.50	-	\$1,687.50
Bottle Table	\$144.89	-	\$144.89
Children's	\$64.00	\$43.38	\$20.62
Cider & Coffee			
	\$112.90	-	\$112.90
Crafts	\$378.50	-	\$378.50
Gold Eleph.	\$723.80	-	\$723.80
Farmer's Mkt.	\$372.30	-	\$372.30
Jam	\$1,825.75	\$415.28	\$1,410.47
Jewelry	\$762.55	-	\$762.55
Lunch	\$644.05	\$70.70	\$573.35
Raffle	\$1,706.00	-	\$1,666.00
Total	\$9,362.44	\$569.36	\$8,793.08
Misc. Exp.		\$9.00	
Total	\$9,362.44	\$578.36	\$8,784.08

- Charlie Kreussling
 Festival Treasurer

THANKS FOR DONATIONS

Thank you to all who donated their no longer worn jewelry for sale at the Harvest Festival. Your generosity enabled the table to have their most successful year yet. The Committee is very grateful.

- Polly Neyssen

**CREATIVE GIFT IDEAS
FROM THE LONG ISLAND COUNCIL
OF CHURCHES**

Not sure what to get the guy who has everything? Or someone who may not have it all but already has more than will fit in his or her home? Here are some opportunities to do good while honoring someone you love:

*A gift of \$25 to the LICC will pay for a staff person to help a client find a job.

A gift of \$30 will pay for a worship service our chaplains conduct at the Jail or Juvenile Detention Center.

*A gift of \$50 will pay for the staff time and contents to provide one bag of groceries to a family struggling to make ends meet.

*A gift of \$60 will pay for the staff time to prepare client lists, set appointments, purchase and stack the food, package and give one Christmas Food Basket to a family in dire straits.

*A gift of \$75 will cover the cost of staff time to help one household get housing assistance to pay rent or mortgage for a month.

*A gift of \$500 will pay for an interfaith education program at a local school

To encourage this sort of creative, alternative giving, Marie Zupka-Ludder, the Associate for Congregational Resourcing at the Presbytery of Long Island, recommends these Web sites:
<http://www.adventconspiracy.org>

FOR THIS, WE ARE THANKFUL

On Sunday, November 23rd, we spent several minutes reflecting on that for which we are thankful. Each parishioner (adult and child) at both services were asked to fill out a card, which was then read at the part of the service which is usually reserved for the Prayers of the People. We have listed below many of

the thanksgivings in the two categories considered:

In my life, I give thanks for ...

God's love, family - husband, wife, aunt, grandparents, parents, children; home, my church, friends; Good health, shelter and adequate income, reliable transportation; The gifts of God's grace in my life; My job; Freedoms; My life and the people who have been there for me; The strength and ability to help others; The birds; The gifts God has given me of food, water, shelter, clothing, freedom, and peace; The blue skies, clean air and green grass I enjoy daily; The people who care for me at the caring center; For all the goodness of life, for life itself; work I enjoy, a warm home; my country, my good fortune to have been gratified in a meaningful career; love and acceptance from my family and friends – even though they know my faults; my puppy; being able to help others less fortunate than ourselves; books; our many blessings; ability to work and serve others; for the services my son receives from UCP, for my daughter's engagement, for my son's communication device, the jobs my children have; health, wealth, a happy home and a good job; my cat (s), friends and colleagues; the world; education; toys, my room, plants; neighbors, the kindness of strangers, my dog; living in this country at this time; all the joy in the world; all nice people; The grace of God, support from family and friends, loving children and grandchildren; My wonderful daughters and six raucous grandchildren; living in America;; water, heat, electricity; the mercy of God's love and forgiveness each and every day.

Here at St. James, I give thanks for ...

The community of our parish – the spiritual support that we receive from each other; fellowship, worship; the children who come to Sunday school; a wonderful church family of

friends; a beautiful historic place to worship God through Jesus Christ; many caring people; Raewynne's sermons; my freedom to worship, God's love and grace, this wonderful parish; a structure in place for worthwhile charitable giving, Christian learning; Sunday school; my Sunday school teachers; the spirit of Christ which enters me during service and stays with me most of the week, the leadership and insight of our priest, Raewynne; everybody is here to pray for you; an opportunity to give back, an opportunity to grow spiritually; the religious and social life associated with the parish; the people who are the church, the goodness and kindness to me through the years since 1961; my faith; God, the sense of community and caring, the structured opportunities to support and help others; a parish community where Jesus Christ is the focus of our worship and service to others; the wonderful people of this congregation who prayed for me and my wife during our time of sickness; a generosity of spirit; our rector, our parish community, our religious faith; friendships; the warm and welcoming congregation; my brothers and sisters in Christ; all of the friends who are like family. You have helped to raise my children to be kind and compassionate. St. James is part of the fabric of our lives; the love evidenced; community of service; coffee hour; music; a beautiful church in which to hear the word of the Lord; our family at church, those with so many gifts who share those gifts; the wonderful friendships formed in sharing "giving experiences"; God; an immensely loving and forgiving fellowship and a body of Christ that is active and healthy and involved, both within our family and to the outside world; the beautiful windows, those in the parish who contribute to the life of the parish; the choir; being part of God's family; my spiritual home and the inspiration I find.

REPORT ON THE 142ND DIOCESAN CONVENTION November 14 & 15, 2008

The Convention was convened promptly at 9:30 a.m. with prayer and opening remarks by Bishop Walker.

After the announcement of parishes that were delinquent with submission of delegate certificates, parochial reports, and/or audits, the Agenda for the Convention was proposed and passed, and the first ballot for elective offices was cast. Throughout the remainder of the day, ballot results were announced as they became available and additional ballots were cast, if needed, for elections that had no majority winner on the first ballot.

While the ballots were being counted, the Rev. Cannon Elizabeth Geitz, Canon for Ministry Development and Deployment in the Diocese of New Jersey, made a presentation on Evangelism. Canon Geitz was an interesting and very effective speaker. Author of *Fireweed Evangelism: Christian Hospitality in a Multi-Faith World*, she spoke briefly about the negative connotations often connected with the word evangelism and about an evangelism that places an emphasis on hospitality. Quoting from Isaiah 54:2, "enlarge the limits of your home, spread wide the curtains of your tent...", Canon Geitz briefly outlined our Christian imperative to welcome those who are unwelcome in other settings and also to be mindful of how we treat each other – those already in our tent.

Following this presentation, voting took place on the three Resolutions and six Propositions submitted for Convention approval.

Resolutions adopted:

1. To establish the First Sunday of Lent as

Episcopal Relief and Development Sunday.

2. To recognize the 50th anniversary of the George Mercer Jr. Memorial School of Theology and its vision for the highest standards in theological education in order to empower God's ministry in each of us.
3. To develop, within one year, a Revised Plan for Latino/Hispanic Ministry in the Diocese of Long Island.

Propositions adopted:

1. To amend Title III, Canon 1, by eliminating Section V – Pre-Convention Meetings. Because I attend these meetings when I am a delegate and find them to be very helpful, I spoke against approving this proposition. There was discussion and a “friendly” amendment to this proposition was suggested. Since it was obvious that a great deal of time might be spent working out the details, voting on this proposition and/or the suggested amendment was postponed until Saturday, when it could be presented to Convention in written form. On Saturday, the original proposition and the suggested amendment were both withdrawn from consideration and an entirely new proposition was put forth proposing to make the Pre-Convention meetings optional in each Archdeaconry – to be determined at the Archdeaconry meeting held after each Convention. This new proposition was adopted.
2. To amend Title V, Canon 2, Section IV. This was a “housekeeping” amendment to bring our Diocesan Canons into conformity with National Canons as related to the form and content of parochial reports.
3. To amend Title V, Canon 3, Section III. This was another “housekeeping” amendment relating to the annual audit each parish must submit to the Diocese. After changes to eliminate the word “certificate” all three times it appears in Section III, this proposition was adopted.
4. To amend Title VI, Canon 1, Section II (c). Relating to removal and vacancies in the Standing Committee. There was active discussion of many elements of this proposition. The final approved proposition reads (in part) “Any member of the Standing Committee may be removed, **with** (“or without” was removed) cause, by a majority vote of the members of the Diocesan Council and a majority vote of the members of the Standing Committee. If vacancies on the Standing Committee occur (“through death or resignation” was removed) they shall be filled by persons elected by the majority vote of the remaining members of the Standing Committee and the person or persons elected shall serve in the unexpired terms until successors shall have been duly elected by the next Diocesan Convention.”
5. To amend Title X, Canon 1, Section 1 and Section 5. Section 1 no longer requires publishing proposed amendments in the Pre-Convention Journal. Section 5 allows for new amendments to take effect immediately. This was also a “housekeeping” amendment.
6. To amend the Rules of Order, Part III, Rule 1 (d), (ix). This was also a “housekeeping” amendment to include elections to both the Diocesan Review Committee and the Board of Directors of FCS during the Diocesan Convention.

The Board of Episcopal Charities distributed a copy of their Annual Report to all Convention Delegates.

Our Bishop gave his Address to the Convention using new technology – a Teleprompter! It was nice to see Bishop Walker in good spirits, looking well, and executing his duties capably.

After noonday prayer and a break for lunch, Tim Vanover from The Church Pension Group made a presentation about the *Church-wide Healthcare Feasibility Study* that has been underway for the past year. Detailing the current situation, cost projections based on the current situation, and the benefits derived from implementing a church-wide healthcare plan, Mr. Vanover strongly recommends that a church-wide plan be adopted.

Since I was so impressed with Canon Geitz's earlier presentation on *Evangelism*, I attended her afternoon breakout session where material from her above-mentioned book was used to begin to explore various motivations for evangelism and some key components of church growth and cohesion, heritage and vision. I am going to suggest to our Vestry that they consider starting a program to establish a successful hospitality program at St. James using the exercises and workshops for congregations that are carefully detailed in *Fireweed Evangelism*.

When Convention reconvened, Bishop Walker made his appointments. Both our Rector and Kathy Sides were appointed to serve on the Commission on Ministry.

Bishop Ottley preached at the Evening Prayer service and then Convention was in recess until Saturday. Both Raewynne and I attended the banquet that evening, along with Sue Krall. The size of the room was good, the food was O.K., the service was terrible.

At the Saturday morning Eucharist the homily was delivered by the Right Rev. Prince G. Singh, the new Bishop of Rochester.

When Convention reconvened, Diocesan Treasurer, Ron Cole, gave his report, and Frank Ellis, Vice-Chair of the Department of Budget, presented the 2009 Diocesan Budget. The proposed budget was adopted without any change.

This was followed by a very detailed presentation by members of the Joint Oversight Committee and the Search/Nominating Committee regarding our search for a Bishop Coadjutor for our Diocese. Various committees spoke on various aspects of the search: Rev. Peter Casparian (chair, JOC) on the compensation package, Donna Jones (vice-chair JOC) on the step-by-step process, Fred Miller (chair, S/NC) on search details and upcoming dates for various activities. Mr. Miller informed us that recommendations for 140 candidates worldwide were received; September 30th was the deadline for nominations; 51 accurately completed applications were received; 30 of these applicants had phone interviews and follow-ups of references; in-person interviews have begun. When the slate of candidates is presented for consideration (probably 3 - 5 candidates) the work of the Search/Nominating Committee is done and the focus will shift to the Transition Committee. This Committee has already been hard at work and plans to conduct five walkabouts (to introduce candidates to congregations) between February 21st and 24th 2009, where everyone will have an opportunity to meet and question the candidates. There will be one walk-about session in each Archdeaconry and one for youth delegates. On March 21st, the election

will take place at the Cathedral of the Incarnation.

Three young people from our Diocese spoke about the International Episcopal Youth Event that was held in San Antonio, Texas this year. Thirteen from our Diocese attended.

The Chair of Miscellaneous Business presented four resolutions:

1. The 2009 Base Diocesan Compensation increase of 5.94% was adopted.
2. A courtesy resolution sending greetings and prayers to Nancy Signore was adopted.
3. The establishment of a regulation to have a report on the activities of Diocesan Youth Ministries at the yearly Diocesan Convention was adopted.
4. A statement against racial violence in the Diocese was adopted and a written affirmation of this statement will be sent to the Suffolk County Executive and Suffolk County Legislature.

The Rev. John Madden gave his Response to the Bishop's Address.

Minutes from the 141st Convention were approved.

Dates for the next Convention are November 13 & 14, 2009.

Following Noonday and Closing Prayers, the Convention was declared to be in RECESS until March 21st, at which time it will reconvene to elect a new Bishop for this Diocese.

*- Donna J. Austin
Convention Delegate*

**EPIPHANY BRUNCH
SUNDAY, JANUARY 4, 2009
(new date)**

You are invited to attend the Epiphany Brunch on Sunday, January 4, 2009 following the 10 a.m. service. Sign up sheets will be available in the rear of the church or at coffee hour.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The meeting will be held Sunday, February 1, 2009. On that day we will have one service at 9 a.m. and the meeting will directly follow. There will be a brunch provided by the Vestry.

There will be reports from various committees, and the 2009 budget will be presented. There will also be time for discussion of church service times and Christian Education.

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

Warden - the completion of Pat Westlake's second term. Warden's 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.

Also at this meeting, a delegate and an alternate to the Diocesan Convention will be appointed by the Vestry. Again, speak to George if you are interested in these positions.

- Pat Westlake

DECEMBER CALENDAR

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|----|---|----|--|
| 1 | Buildings & Grounds meeting
7 p.m. | | |
| 2 | Yoga class 5:30 p.m.
Recovery Group 7:30 p.m. | | |
| 3 | Grave blanket decorating 5
p.m | | |
| 4 | Bible study 10 a.m.
Choir rehearsal 8 p.m. | | |
| 6 | St. James Chamber of
Commerce Christmas Tree
lighting 4 p.m. | | |
| 7 | Adopt-a-Family & Pick-a-Star
gifts due | | |
| 8 | Finance Committee 7:30 p.m.
Stewardship Committee | | |
| 9 | Christmas Luncheon - Noon
at Vintage Steak House
Yoga class 5:30 p.m.
Recovery Group 7:30 p.m. | | |
| 11 | Bible study 10 a.m.
Yoga class 3:30 p.m.
Choir rehearsal 8 p.m. | | |
| 14 | Pick-a-Star gift delivery | | |
| 15 | Vestry meeting 7:30 p.m. | | |
| 16 | Yoga class 5:30 p.m.
C.F.E. meeting 7 p.m.
Recovery Group 7:30 p.m. | | |
| 18 | Bible study 10 a.m.
Yoga class 3:30 p.m.
Choir rehearsal 8 p.m. | | |
| 21 | Greening of the Church 11:15
a.m. | | |
| | | 23 | Christmas Caroling 4:30 p.m.
Yoga 5:30 p.m.
Recovery Group 7:30 p.m. |
| | | 24 | Christmas Eve
Family Eucharist 5:30 p.m.
Celebration Holy Eucharist
9 p.m. |
| | | 25 | Christmas Day
Holy Eucharist 10 a.m. |
| | | 26 | St. Stephen's Day - office
closed |
| | | 28 | Christmas I - Christmas coffee
hour 9 a.m.
Lessons & Carols at both
services |
| | | 30 | Yoga 5:30 p.m.
Recovery Group 7:30 p.m. |
| | | 31 | New Year's Eve |

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Tony Knapp
Florence Clark
Paulette Schiff
Betty Toop
Marty Scott
Julia White
Kathy Mauro
Robert Bennett
Kathy Sides
Pat Pawelko
Jade Plaschka
Bob Scott
Pat Martinsen
Les Bengtson
Laurie Mannix
Ron Davies
Sara Celano
Donna Wachter

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Willy & Nancy Rasmussen
Peter & Claudette Plaschka

CHRISTMAS MEMORIALS

If you are receiving this issue of *Open Doors* in the mail, you will find an envelope for Christmas memorials. If you are reading it online, please fill in the information below and mail it to the office. Your gift will be used by the Altar Guild to decorate the church of the Christmas season. Please return your information with your donation by Sunday, December 14, so your memorials may be included in the Christmas Eve bulletins.

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**Offering for Christmas Memorial
Flowers and Greens**

Given by: _____

In memory of _____

In thanksgiving for _____

Amount _____

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