



Open Doors

The Newsletter of St. James Episcopal Church

December 2012

FROM THE



It's hard to believe that three months have passed since I left to go on sabbatical. I began by traveling to Belfast, Northern Ireland, where I met

up with my father, who grew up there. We visited the street where he lived as a child, and saw where bombs fell during WWII. We walked past his old elementary school and had a tour of his high school. We spent time with family members, sharing memories. And we visited the ruins of the monastic site of Nendrum, close to where Dad was evacuated during the war, and saw the Titanic exhibition (where I found James Clinch Smith, whose memorial is in our church, on the passenger list).

I then flew to Israel, where I participated in the "Ways in the Wilderness" course through St. George's College, situated next to St. George's Cathedral (the Anglican/Episcopal Cathedral) in East Jerusalem, a predominately Palestinian area. The first couple of days were in Jerusalem – I shopped in the street leading to the Old City, discovering the joys of cheap falafel and fresh figs outside the tourist areas, walked through Hezekiah's tunnel (45 minutes alone

through knee deep water in total darkness except for my flashlight – this tunnel was built to provide water during an Assyrian siege in the 8th century B.C.!), and rediscovered my favorite holy space, in a courtyard on the roof of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, beside the Ethiopian Monastery. Then we set off into the desert, first west to the Trappist monastery Latroun (which had been vandalized with anti-Christian slogans the night before), then south to archaeological sites at Be'er Sheva (visited by Abraham, Jacob, Elijah and David) and Arad, staying in Bedouin tent camps (and riding camels)!



We then headed south to Eilat, on the shores of the Gulf of Aqaba, and crossed into Jordan. After the desert dust, it was an unexpected treat to go snorkeling on the coral reefs of the Red Sea. Then we went north to more desert – Wadi Rum and then Petra (where I rode horses and a sweet little gray donkey) – followed by Madaba, Machareus (where John the Baptist is said to have died), and Mt. Nebo. Our time in Jordan ended by the Jordan River, in one of the places where John the Baptist is thought to have baptized.

The last few days were spent closer to Jerusalem. We visited Qumran, where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found, Jericho (both the town and a cliff face monastery, which unfortunately had been robbed the night before), and the Judean desert. Unfortunately, the furor around the anti-Islam YouTube video limited our movements somewhat, due to security concerns.

Then I headed to England and my nephews for the bulk of my time away. This was much more prosaic, consumed with school drop offs and pickups, medical appointments, shopping (especially for ‘ice lollies’ with Gus) reading bedtime stories, craft projects, sitting on the sofa watching kids’ TV with the boys, and eating my brother’s excellent cooking! Lockie has now finished treatment for his brain tumor, and his last scan came back clear. Now it’s time to adjust back to ordinary life, as far as that is possible, given the side effect of the tumor and its treatment on his vision, hearing, balance, and endocrine system. Over the time I was there, it was wonderful to watch him get stronger and less tired, to begin eating again, to have his Hickman line removed, and go to school for longer and longer each day!

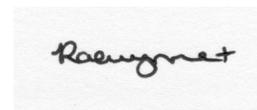
In between all that, I was able to do a six day

walking retreat along St. Oswald’s Way in Northumberland, once again spending time in reflection and prayer in the area where many early English Christian saints lived and worked.

Finally I flew back to the U.S. (On the night of the nor’easter – British Airways was of course the only airline still operating!) And spent a couple of weeks in Connecticut getting over jet lag and preparing to return to the parish.

I discovered many things while I was away, both about myself and about the church. Worshiping in so many different places – including a church that meets in a brew pub! – reminded me of how important our shared faith is, even though every congregation has its own unique identity and tradition. I loved it when people would come up and say, “Do I know you?” rather than “Are you a visitor?” or “We’d love to have you sing with us” instead of “Can you sing in our choir?” They’re nuances, but it felt like I was being seen as a person, not just someone to boost numbers! And I realized how much we assume about how things should be, and so easily get disappointed when others fail to live up to our expectations (even though they might not be aware of what those expectations are). Oh, and I learned that we Americans talk loudly, and sometimes need to remember to hush our voices!

I am very thankful for this time away. As well as allowing me to travel and spend time with my family, it gave me time to rest, reflect, and prepare for the next stage of our life together as people of faith. Thank you!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Raewynnet". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored, slightly textured background.

CHRISTMAS AT ST. JAMES

Christmas Eve - December 24

- 5:30 p.m. Family service with Nativity pageant and Eucharist
- 9:00 p.m. Traditional candlelit Christmas Eve Eucharist with music for the season

Christmas Day - December 25

- 9:30 a.m. Christmas Eucharist

Christmas 1 - January 30

- 9:30 a.m. Service of Lessons and Carols with Holy Eucharist

THE WARDENS' COLUMN

“We cannot conceive how the Divine Spirit dwelled within the created and human spirit of Jesus.... What we can understand is that our own...existence is...but a faint image of the Divine Incarnation itself – the same theme in a very minor key.”

~ C.S. Lewis, *Miracles*

We would like to wish you and your family Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love this holiday season.

God's Blessings,
Debbie & Chris

THANK YOU, FATHER GABLE

We thank Father Gable for the time he spent with us during Raewynne's sabbatical. It is always a pleasure to have him with us, and we enjoy his baking, as well. We look forward to having him worship with us whenever he has a free Sunday.

“PREPARE YE THE WAY”

On Sunday, December 9 at 5 p.m., the Rector will present a program called “Prepare Ye the Way”. Each Advent, we read of John the Baptist's cry in the wilderness to prepare for the coming of Christ. The Rector will draw on her experiences in the deserts and wilderness of Israel and Jordan, along with photographs, to explore how these dry places can be places where we encounter God more richly.

2013 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

Stewardship is about being grateful, responsible stewards of the gifts we receive from God. The tradition of giving back to God and to the church comes from the Biblical practice of “tithing,” which means to give back a tenth of our earnings to God (Numbers 18:26). The Episcopal Church sees stewardship as more than simply contributing money to the church; it's also about contributing time and talents, and volunteering for ministry and mission. It's about reaching out to build relationships from a perspective of abundance instead of scarcity.

But of course, there is a financial dimension. Our 2013 Stewardship campaign is drawing to a close. As of this printing, we have received 52 pledges totaling \$116,380. Our target for the year is \$170,536. If you have not made a pledge yet, please do so as soon as possible, so that we may get started on budgeting plans for the coming year. If you do not have a card, they are available in the back of the church, or you may call the parish office.

If you made a pledge in 2012, please be sure to have all contributions for the year in by December 31, 2012, so that you may be properly credited for tax purposes.

GUESS WHAT IS NEW AT ST. JAMES?

Automatic & Online Giving

Do you have any of your bills set up on an automatic payment plan? Do you automatically put money into your savings or retirement account from each paycheck? eGive allows you to do this with your church giving as well. Create a "My eGive" account and you'll be guided to create a profile and set up regular, recurring contributions. If you would like, you can set up a one time donation as well. Online giving is safe, secure, and 100% free. It's a great way to be intentional about honoring God and being generous.

See our web page at www.stjamesstjames.org and click on the eGive button to sign up today. You can use a credit card or have a payment automatically debited from your bank. For more information see <http://www.egive-usa.com/about/makeagift.php>

- Katy Sacher

ANNUAL MEETING & VESTRY NOMINATIONS

It's that time of year again, as we begin to prepare for the annual meeting and the election of new Wardens and Vestry members. It's easy to imagine that the Vestry is the board of directors of the church. But it's not as simple as that.

While a Vestry has legal and fiscal responsibilities, the primary responsibilities (as defined by church law) are to share with the Rector in promoting the spiritual welfare of the parish and to aid the Rector in the institution, conduct, and development of the program of the Church both within and without the parish.

The work of the Vestry is God's work, and the Vestry are spiritual leaders in the parish. We are looking for mature and prayerful Christians to share in this work of leadership. Is God calling you?

On Sunday, February 3, 2013, St. James will hold its Annual Parish Meeting. All parishioners are encouraged to attend. There will be updates from the Rector and various chairpersons of committees, and the annual budget will be presented. The meeting will take place in Mills Hall immediately following the 9:30 a.m. service. At this meeting, nominations will be submitted and elections held for the following positions:

- *Warden (1) for a two-year term
- *Vestry persons (3) each for a three year term
- *Clerk of the Vestry (1) does not have to be a Vestry member
- *Youth delegate (1) age 18 and younger

Please talk with Debbie LaMano (584-3545 or dlamano67@gmail.com) if you are interested in learning more.

OUTREACH

The Smithtown Emergency Food Pantry thanks everyone who generously donated turkeys and other food to make Thanksgiving a true celebration for many others in our area. Pat Westlake reports that 140 families were given turkey dinners and 90 more turkeys are ready to be given out for Christmas! Right now the pantry especially needs cereal, peanut butter, jelly, chunky soup, and juice. This month of December is St. James Church's month to serve at the pantry. Thank you to all who have signed up to serve. Three people are needed each day. Check the sign-up sheet in Mills Hall to fill in where you might be needed. And if

our food cart at church has food in it, take it along when you go to serve.

Protestant Campus Ministry at Stony Brook University will be receiving a \$4,000 grant from Episcopal Charities of L.I. for 2012. Thank you to St. James and Caroline Churches for sponsoring the grant application, which was submitted last spring. This money will allow PCM's Chaplain, the Rev. Brenda Ford, to continue to work expanded part-time hours and to receive health insurance. Thank you to all who also donated to this ministry on your own during 2012. Without the generosity of St. James Church and its parishioners, PCM would have a much more limited presence on campus. Students are still collecting toiletries for women transitioning from domestic violence. Toiletries may be placed in the basket in the narthex.

Habitat for Humanity has a "Cars for Homes" program. You can donate your old car to help build homes. Go to www.carsforhomes.org or call 877-277-4344 for more information.

Pick-a-Star (wrapped with star attached) are due back at church on Sunday, December 9. Thank you to all who are shopping for our developmentally disabled neighbors and home-bound parishioners. Please deliver your gifts to the home bound at your convenience before Christmas. Santa will deliver the other gifts on the afternoon of December 15 and invites you to join the fun! Questions? Call Stephanie Coleman at 751-4151.

Adopt-a-Family gifts (wrapped and tagged) are also due back at church on Sunday, December 9. Thank you to all who signed up to shop for the three-person family we were given this year. Questions? Call Donna Guinaw at 269-4276 or Claudette Plaschka at 543-4944.

Also, **Episcopal Community Services** is distributing additional gifts to hurricane victims: unwrapped toys, children's clothes, and adult toiletries will be gratefully accepted. Please bring in by Tuesday, December 11th.

Episcopal Relief and Development: Want to give a cow, or a goat, or a pig to someone for Christmas? How about clean water, a community garden, or vitamins and medicine? Go to www.episcopalrelief.org/giftsforlife or phone 1-855-312-HEAL. Your gifts are fully tax deductible.

- Sue Krall

HURRICANE SANDY

The Episcopal Church continues to do remarkable work in the wake of Hurricane Sandy. If you would like to help out, here are some ways to do it.

Give money: The Diocese of Long Island has a special fund set up to help aid victims from the recent hurricane. Your donations are a blessing and allow us to fulfill our mission in supporting the people and communities within Brooklyn, Queens, Nassau, and Suffolk. You can donate by clicking on the banner headline at our diocesan website, <http://www.dioceselongisland.org>, or if you don't have web access, send a check made out to the church with 'hurricane relief' in the memo line, and we will pass it on.

Episcopal Relief and Development is another reliable way to donate to the victims of Sandy. Checks with 'superstorm Sandy' on the memo line may be sent to :
Episcopal Relief and Development
P.O. Box 7058
Merriemfield VA 22116-7058

If you donate before December 31, 2012, you can double your impact: some generous donors have agreed to match all gifts made to ER&D up to \$300,000. Every dollar you give will be matched to their Global Needs Fund.

Donate items: the following items are currently needed.

*Groceries: Bottled water, Parmalat, Similac, infant formula, cold cereal, juices, small bottles of cooking oil, canned soups, fresh fruit.

*Toiletries: Toilet paper, soap, deodorant, mouthwash, toothpaste, Pampers (sizes 2, 5, 6), adult diapers (extra large).

*School supplies: Pens, pencils, notebooks, backpacks, markers, folders, etc.

*New clothing: Underwear for adult men and women, socks (for all ages), gloves, scarves, hats, sweaters, coats (gently used are welcome).

*Gifts for Christmas: Toys for Children – all ages (if battery is needed, please include), clothing for children, personal care products for adults (in a pretty gift bag will be nice); body wash, shaving stuff, etc.

*Cleaning supplies: Contractor garbage bags, cleaning supplies (sponges, laundry soap, dish soap, vinegar, hydrogen peroxide, Mold-X), Tyvek worksuits, rubber work gloves, P100 particle respirator masks, hard bristle brooms, flat shovels, long handled squeegees, rubber suits, rubber boots, 3M masks, heavy duty contractor bags, wheel barrows, headlamps, work gloves, Simple Green, paper towels, string mops and industrial mop buckets.

Other: Flashlights and batteries, candles, generators, and gasoline.

Please bring them to church: we can get them to distribution locations. Or you can buy them online and have them shipped directly (especially if you have an Amazon Prime account and can get the shipping free!);

<http://www.amazon.com/registry/wedding/32TAA123PJR42>.

Volunteer: Are you interested in forming a parish team to help with recovery? Please talk with the Rector.

Our diocese is also partnering with Occupy Sandy; you can volunteer as an individual with them. Go to <http://interoccupy.net/occupysandy/> for more information.

We have also received this from our Bishop's wife, Jeanne Provenzano:

Dear friends,

I am writing to invite you and any others you may know, who are seeking for a way to respond to the suffering caused by Hurricane Sandy, a way of assisting the process of healing. Our diocesan hospital, St. John's Hospital in Far Rockaway, Queens is in the epicenter of the disaster of the storm. The hospital remained intact and in operation during and following the storm. It has served the community of Far Rockaway all this time under the most difficult circumstances.

One of the challenges that the hospital community faced then and continues to face, is that many of the hospital's employees are amongst those most seriously affected by the ravages of the storm. Many of the hospital's employees have lost their homes and belongings. In an effort to ease some of this trauma and suffering, Mother Cecily Broderick, the Vice President for Pastoral Care at St. John's Hospital, has instituted a method of serving these employees, called "The Company Store." The hospital has been the recipient of many new donated items to aid those affected by the storm. Hospital employees are given the opportunity to fill out a form requesting

items they are in need of.

What is needed to fulfill this request are volunteers to come to the hospital and gather the items for each of these requests. I spent an afternoon at the hospital last week doing this work. There continues to be a need for volunteers to assist with this process. Ideally, it would be good to have two volunteers at a time doing this work. The supplies are kept in a storage facility used by the hospital. There isn't much room for too many people to be there at once.

If you, or someone you know, could volunteer for a couple of hours a week, it would be greatly appreciated and needed. Please let me know of your availability and I can begin to put together a schedule of visits to St. Johns. This effort is envisioned to be a short term one – lasting only as long as the need is there.

I know that this is a terribly busy time of year for all of us. The people and staff at St. John's are appreciative of any service you can give! I look forward to hearing from all of you, and wish you and your family a blessed Advent season.

Warmly,
Jean Provenzano

VOICES OF GODLY PLAY

Our Thanksgiving Prayer

For sunlight and life and everything living,
For food and water, land, grass and trees,
For our church and Godly Play,
For God and Jesus,
For life,
For my family and my friends,
For my Nana, I love her tonight,
For my house,
For Spiderman,
We give You thanks, O God.
Amen.

- Carol Bluni

ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Pat Pawelko has been unable to return from the Thanksgiving holiday, which she enjoyed with her sister in Illinois. She fell on Thanksgiving (after dinner) & fractured a bone in her left foot. Fortunately, surgery was avoided, but she has been outfitted with a large, black air boot & stunning, matching aluminum crutches for six months. She will be unable to drive upon return home, particularly as her "clutch" foot cannot be used & the boot won't fit in the clutch area anyway. She would like to attend church & functions, so that she can fellowship with the brethren & still remember names & faces. If you would be so kind as to offer transportation assistance, that would be most gratefully accepted. She is also available for adoption at holiday celebrations & any other occasion you can create. Please contact Pat Pawelko on her cell phone #631-327-5863 or email: pjp2cor517@optimum.net or calicocatcreations@yahoo.com. Please note that rural Illinois has very few cell towers, so email communication may work best. Thank you!

- Pat Pawelko

NEWS OF THE PARISH FAMILY

Alec Douglass was inducted into the Music Honor Society at Mt. Sinai High School recently. This talented young man is active in both instrumental and vocal groups. Congratulations, Alec!

Newsday has been featuring our parishioners in November. Pat Westlake was shown holding open the door of an empty freezer at the Food Pantry on November 17, and Dara Linthwaite was featured in an article on the Dickens Festival on November 25. If you haven't seen the photos, we have them in the C.E. building.

DECEMBER CALENDAR

- 2 **Holy Eucharist Rite I 8:00 a.m.**
Holy Eucharist Rite II 9:30 a.m.
with Children's Formation
- 3 Food Addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 4 Holy Eucharist 9:30 a.m.
Christmas Luncheon 12:30 p.m.
Grave blanket decorating 4:30 p.m.
Bible Study 7:15 p.m.
Recovery group 7:30 p.m.
- 5 Knitters' group 10:30 a.m.
Yoga class 5:30 p.m.
Finance Committee 7:30 p.m.
- 6 Choir Christmas caroling at Central Islip Library 6:30 p.m.
N.A. meeting 7:30 p.m.
- 7 Challenger Christmas party - Mills Hall rental 6:30 - 9:30 p.m.
Food Addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 9 **Holy Eucharist Rite I 8:00 a.m.**
Holy Eucharist Rite II 9:30 a.m.
with Children's Formation
Parish Life Committee 11 a.m.
"Prepare Ye the Way" 5 p.m.
- 10 Food Addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 11 Holy Eucharist 9:30 a.m.
Recovery group 7:30 p.m.
- 12 Knitters' group 10:30 a.m.
Yoga class 5:30 p.m.
- 13 Choir rehearsal 7:30 p.m.
- 14 Food addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 16 **Holy Eucharist Rite I 8:00 a.m.**
Holy Eucharist Rite II 9:30 a.m.
with Children's Formation
Chrismon tree
Choir rehearsal 11 a.m.
Pick-a-Star gift delivery 2 p.m.
- 17 Vestry meeting 7:30 p.m.
Food Addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 18 Holy Eucharist 9:30 a.m.
Recovery group 7:30 p.m.
- 19 Knitters' group 10:30 a.m.
Yoga class 5:30 p.m.
- 20 Choir rehearsal 7:30 p.m.
N.A. meeting 7:30 p.m.
- 21 Food Addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 23 **Holy Eucharist Rite I 8:00 a.m.**
Holy Eucharist Rite II 9:30 a.m.
with Children's Formation
The "Greening of the Church" 10:45 a.m.
Choir rehearsal 11 a.m.
- 24 **Christmas Eve**
Family service with nativity pageant 5:30 p.m.
Candlelit Christmas Eve Eucharist with seasonal music
- 25 **Christmas Day**
Holy Eucharist 9:30 a.m.
- 26 Office closed
- 28 Food addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 30 **Christmas 1 Service of Lessons and Carols with Holy Eucharist 9:30 a.m.**
- 31 **New Year's Eve**

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Amy Jeffrey
Marty Scott
Julia White
Kathy Mauro
Robert Bennett
Jane Bellasai
Kathy Sides
Pat Pawelko
Jade Plaschka
Bob Scott
Pat Martinsen
Shirley Huenlich
Les Bengtson
Laurie Mannix
Ron Davies
Bill Reisenauer

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Peter & Claudette Plaschka

THE PRESIDING BISHOP'S ADVENT MESSAGE

**“What is it that you are most
waiting for?”**

In the liturgical calendar, Advent is the season leading up to Christmas. The first Sunday of Advent is December 2.

As you prepare for the season of Advent, I would commend two questions to your musings and your prayer and your meditation: What is it that you are most waiting for? And, how are you going to wait this year?

I'm struck this particular season by the waiting of several women in Christian history. Mary obviously, waiting for the birth of the Promised One in her part of the

world, a child born for the whole world.

Also Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptizer, who comes before Jesus. Elizabeth has been promised a child in her old age, these are both very unexpected births, they are waiting.

And I'm struck particularly this year by Elizabeth of Hungary, a saint of the Church who lived in the thirteenth century, who was betrothed as a child herself, married at 14, a mother of three by the time her husband died when she was 20. She spent her life giving it away, giving it away both physically through her means and through her presence and her healing. She was an icon of generosity.

What is it you wait for this year? Is it an opportunity to meet the surprising around you? Is it an opportunity to reflect on what is most needed in your heart and in the world around you? How are you going to wait for that gift? Are you going to wait actively? Engaged? Honing your desire? Stroking the passion within you for that dream? Are you going to wait for a dream that will bless the whole world?

That's what Christians wait for in the season of Advent – of the coming of the Prince of Peace, the one who will reign with justice over this world. I believe that's what the world most needs, this year and every year.

May your season of waiting be fruitful and blessed. May it be filled with surprise and a willingness to engage that surprise.

A blessed Advent,
The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori
Presiding Bishop and Primate

CAMP DE WOLFE

Camp DeWolfe will be hosting its new Winter Camp for all 4th to 8th graders who can't wait until summer camp. Activities, worship, games, arts, returning staff, fun and maybe even some snow! This weekend will be a great retreat for returning campers, interested first time campers, and anyone who loves camp! Bring your friends. Youth groups welcome too!

Friday, January 25th, 6 p.m. - Sunday, January 27th, 1 p.m. Youth ages 10 - 14 years old. Only \$125 per camper, all inclusive.

Register at www.campdewolfe.org by December 15th.

For questions call (631) 929-4325.

- Emma Tees

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS AND GREENS

Each year, members of the Altar Guild, along with other parishioners, do a beautiful job of decorating our church for the Christmas season. You can share in this by honoring your loved ones as a memorial, giving thanks for a special person or significant event in your life, or simply by giving thanks to God by providing an offering to help defray the cost of the decorations. The names and purpose of the offering will be acknowledged in the bulletins for the Christmas services. Contributions of any amount are appreciated.

You may participate by filling in the form below, enclosing a check (payable to St. James Church) and mailing it to the office, or by using one of the envelopes which can be found in the back of the church. Please return your request by Sunday, December 16th, so that it may be included in the bulletins.

Offering for Christmas Flowers & Greens

Given by _____

In memory of: _____

In thanksgiving for: _____

Amount _____