



Open Doors

The Newsletter of St. James Episcopal Church

December 2014

FROM THE



RECTOR

Back in the seventh century, a major crisis arose in the English church. There were two major Christian traditions, the Roman tradition

introduced by missionaries from Rome including Augustine of Canterbury, our first Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Ionian tradition led by Celtic monks. One of the major differences was in the way they calculated the date of Easter – so while one group was feasting and celebrating the Resurrection, the other was still fasting for Lent – a major problem in the royal household, where the king and queen followed different traditions!

Sometimes we feel a little like those early English Christians – not so much about Easter (though we do celebrate it at a different time from our Orthodox brothers and sisters) but at Christmas. Everywhere we go, the sounds and sights of Christmas are present. But we are still in Advent. While most people around us celebrate in anticipation, the church's tradition is to spend this time waiting and preparing, and then begin our celebrating on Christmas Eve, and continue for the next twelve days. We are out of step.

But that may be a good thing. In a culture where there is constant pressure to be busy, to spend more money, to overindulge, Advent offers us permission to take a break from our busyness, to stop and pray, to rest in God. This year we are offering a booklet of daily encouragement for the Advent journey called *Living Well Through Advent*, available from the back of the church or the office. Just a few minutes each day will help you recenter your life in Christ during this busy time.

Blessings,

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 - December 28

9:30 a.m. Service of Lessons & Carols

Christmas 2 - January 4

Epiphany Brunch following the 9:30 a.m. service.

THE WARDENS' COLUMN

We don't know about everyone else, but we are amazed that we are in the last month of 2014, reviewing the new 2015 proposed budget, focusing on Thanksgiving festivities, and looking for strength to get Christmas plans and gift giving in place soon enough to actually enjoy the holiday season. AND prayerfully and joyfully experience Advent and the journey to Jesus' birth. We have known so many blessings and gifts in this past year as a parish, and some deep sadness. We have gained and we have lost. Luckily, withstanding this ebb and flow is made possible through our faith that God is guiding us along the path.

There are new projects and demands ahead of us in the New Year. There will certainly be new challenges. But, they will be joyful challenges. One of our goals is to continue "Walking the Way" with our Lord by making stewardship an integral part of our daily life as a parish, rather than simply a

function of fund raising. The three "Ts", Time, Talent, and Treasure, will help to transport us to this next level. We all have extraordinary demands on our time. Our talents are often stretched to the limit. And we all have restraints on our financial resources. Yet, we also have a remarkable guiding force and an abiding faith that God will ask all that we can give and then return our gifts tenfold by making us strong, determined, trusting, and generous.

In growing our parish, diversifying our community service, expanding our outreach to our neighbors, welcoming all who need to taste of the word and work, consolation and direction, inspiration and aspiration we are so privileged to know, we are truly "Walking the Way."

The theme for the 2014 Diocesan Convention was "**Walk in Love as Christ Loved Us**". Let us make this our first New Year's resolution. All the rest is just detail.

- Alex and Debbie

2015 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

Stewardship is about being grateful, responsible stewards of the gifts we receive from God. Our 2015 Stewardship campaign is drawing to a close. As of this printing we have received 56 pledges totaling \$138,942.00. Our target for this year is \$180,000. If you have not made a pledge yet, please do so as soon as possible so we can complete our budgeting plans for the coming year. If you do not have a pledge card, they are available in the back of the church, or in the office.

If you requested envelopes for 2015, they will be available in the back of the church starting in mid-December.

It is also possible to give online, using eGive. This can be accessed through the church website: www.stjamesstjames.org. You can use a credit card or have a payment automatically deducted from your bank. For more information, see www.egive-usa.com/about/makeagift.php.

If you made a pledge in 2014, please be sure to have all contributions for the year in by December 31, 2014, so that you may be properly credited for tax purposes.

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

This year's Christmas Luncheon will be held at Villa Sorrento Restaurant on Middle Country Road in St. James (corner of Astor Avenue) on Tuesday, December 2 at 12:30 p.m. All parishioners are invited to attend. The cost of the luncheon is \$30.00. Make your reservations with Fjeril Deal at 724-3720.

PICK-A-STAR

If you selected a star from the tree on November 30, please be sure to return your gift by December 14. Join Santa and your fellow parishioners on December 21 at 2 p.m. to deliver the gifts to the UCP homes. Contact Stephanie Coleman (751-4151 or ssc6263@gmail.com) for more information.

BAKE A BATCH FOR THE FOOD PANTRY

Last year, we began a new program to bake cookies for the clients of the Food Pantry. It was a big success. We are doing it again!

During the month of December many of us enjoy baking cookies for our family and friends. This month, when you are doing your baking, why not bake a batch for the clients of the Smithtown Emergency Food Pantry, who would really appreciate a special treat during the Christmas season?

Cookies don't need to be fancy – they just have to taste good and travel well. This a great way to get the kids involved! You can use slice and bake dough, or your own favorite recipes. Cookies may be wrapped by the dozen and labeled as to type and whether there are nuts included.

You may bring the cookies to coffee hour on Sunday, or to the office during the week. They will be transported to the Food Pantry at the beginning of each week. If you are able to transport them, that would be a great help.

- Laurie Mannix

GRAVE BLANKET DECORATING

The Cemetery Committee invites all members and other interested parishioners to a grave blanket decorating party on Wednesday, December 3, beginning at 5:00 p.m. in Mills Hall. We have many blankets to decorate again this year, so many hands make light work. Pizza will be served once the decorating is done.

DIOCESAN TOY DRIVE NEEDS HELP

If you did not get a chance to participate in Pick-a-Star or Adopt-a-Family this year (or even if you did), we have been told that the toy drive organized by Episcopal Health Services is still in need of toys. They are looking to give gifts to over 1,000 children this year. If you would like to participate, please bring your donation of a new unwrapped toy for children aged 1 to 16 years to the office by December 7.

HOLIDAY MARKETPLACE AT ST. JAMES

During coffee hour on Sunday, December 14 we will be having a "Holiday Marketplace" featuring a variety of Christmas gift ideas. Members of the Crafts, Gold Elephant, Jam, and Jewelry groups will be offering their items for sale. Be sure to stop by and select some gifts for those on your Christmas list.

NEWS FROM GODLY PLAY

A Thanksgiving Prayer
by Miss Carol's class

We give thanks for
a good God and Jesus,
church and school,
moms and dads,
big brothers and little brothers,
big sisters and little sisters,
for family and friends that we love,
homes and food,
cats and dogs and fish,
for colors, orange, brown, red,
for everything God gave us.

Questions about Adam and Eve:
"Why did God put that tree in the garden?"
Annabelle

"God created people. Why didn't He make them so they wouldn't do bad things?"
Annabelle

"If Adam and Eve said they were sorry, would God forgive them and let them stay in the garden?"
Maggie

"Did Adam and Eve have belly buttons?"
Kerrick

And these wonderful words from Finn:
"I saw Jesus in him and her and her. You said Jesus lives in us so I saw Him in him and him and her and her."

And from Maggie:
"I held Jesus in my hand today."

Jesse's prayer:
"Thank You God for the wonderful things You gave us, for parents, for little brothers and big brothers, and for friends that we love. We pray that the sick will get better and we remember the people who died. They'll be in our hearts."

Finn's prayer:

"Thank You God. I love my family. I love my parents. I love my friends. I love everyone. Have a good day. Amen."

And then there's this from Kerrick:

Kerrick wanted to know how many square feet Noah's ark was. He looked in our bible and found out that the ark was 450 feet long and 75 feet wide. He went to the chalkboard and multiplied, impressed that the ark was 33,750 square feet. Of course, it was also 45 feet high.

- Carol Bluni

OUTREACH

The Smithtown Emergency Food Pantry currently needs donations of cereal, canned fruit, ravioli/meat dinners and potatoes/rice. Donations may be left in the cart in the hallway of the Christian Education building. If you see that the cart is getting full, please take a turn delivering the food to the Pantry. The Pantry, located at St. Thomas of Canterbury Church in Smithtown, is open from 9 a.m. to Noon, weekdays. Thank you to all who helped staff the Pantry during our month of September. St. James parishioners helped feed 209 families in September alone (479 adults + 278 children = 757 total). Thank you also to those who financially supported the Pantry by attending the 9th Annual Taste of Smithtown on November 13. It truly was an evening of fine food and wine tasting. So watch for news of this event next year! Many thanks to all who donated turkeys and/or the fixings to make the Pantry's Thanksgiving baskets a success this year. A lot of families in the area will have a wonderful Thanksgiving because of you.

Did you know that the Episcopal Diocese of LI pledged \$40,000 for each of the next three years (total of \$120,000 from 2015-2017) to make up the reduction from Nassau County to support the operation of the Freeport Food Pantry? In October alone, 1700 people were helped at the Freeport Pantry, which covers a wide geographic area. The Long Island Council of Churches and many individuals are very grateful to our Episcopal Diocese.

Thank you to anyone who participated in Camp DeWolfe's Service Saturdays during September and October!

In October, Bread for the World held its Annual Fellowship Dinner, honoring churches who participated in the 2014 Offering of Letters. St. James sent 251 letters this year to the U.S. Congress, urging them to provide adequate funding for programs that address hunger and lift people out of poverty. St. James Church also contributed \$250 of our 2014 outreach budget to Bread for the World to help with their expenses. Thanks go to Sandy Grigoletto for being our Bread for the World coordinator.

Protestant Campus Ministry students are again collecting toiletries for women transitioning from domestic violence. Please place your donations in the basket at the back of the church.

Thank you to all who donated to the Children's Toy Drive through Episcopal Health Services. This outreach will surely bring many smiles this Christmas!

If you would like to knit or crochet hats or scarves for the Seamen's Church Institute's Christmas at Sea Program, see Raewynne for patterns. Our hats and scarves warm seamen from around the world.

Habitat for Humanity of Suffolk sponsors holiday programs for Christmas. If you would like to help, go to www.habitat.suffolk.org or call 631-422-4828. Want to give a Christmas gift in honor of someone that will benefit Habitat? A box of nails is \$10; a contribution to their land fund is \$50; a window is \$75; a front door is \$100; a stack of sheetrock is \$250. This is giving the gift of a dream. Checks may be sent to 643 Middle Country Road, Middle Island, New York 11953. If you would like to participate in St. James' next Habitat workday, contact Ken LeCluse. A lot of homeowners are grateful to be "home for the holidays" thanks to Habitat of Suffolk!

Episcopal Relief and Development is celebrating 75 years of Healing a Hurting World. And the challenges grow daily. Robert Radtke, President of ER&D, says the Ebola outbreak spans more than five West African countries and is the worst in the disease's history, killing more people in the last eight months than it has in the last 40 years combined. Episcopal Relief and Development is working alongside the African Diocese of Bo in Sierra Leone and the Episcopal Church of Liberia to provide much needed support to the West African people. But ER&D can't do it alone. They need our emergency donations. ER&D and their partners in Africa are distributing disinfectants, face masks, gloves, and gowns to under-resourced hospitals in affected communities, as well as delivering sanitation supplies to private homes. Through local partners, special hand-washing stations have been installed in vulnerable areas, hygiene instructions have been translated into 15 local dialects, and food and cooking supplies have been distributed to quarantined communities, helping uninfected individuals to remain strong and healthy. As ER&D struggles to help contain the epidemic, they are also looking ahead to when the outbreak

has subsided. The people of the region will require ongoing support if they are to rebuild communities that have been devastated by the disease. If you contribute before December 31 2014, a group of generous donors will match your gift. You can contribute online at www.episcopalrelief.org/matching-gift or checks may be sent to Episcopal Relief and Development, P.O. Box 7058, Merriemfield, VA 22116-7058. Please continue to pray for all the lives that have been ravaged by the deadly Ebola virus. ER&D thanks you for helping them Heal a Hurting World.

Now that it is time to celebrate Advent and Christmas, two of our favorite outreach projects at St. James begin: Adopt-a-Family and Pick-a-Star. Watch the Sunday bulletin for due dates for the gifts we hope you will choose to give. See Donna Guinaw for information about Adopt-a-Family.

The Pick-a-Star tree will be up in Mills Hall on Sunday, November 30. Suggested gifts to buy are on the stars. Then join in the fun when we and Santa deliver our gifts to our UCP neighbors on Sunday, December 21 at 2 p.m. Santa says this is his favorite day of the year! For more information, see Stephanie Coleman.

Did you know that United Cerebral Palsy of Suffolk is one of 80 affiliates that make up UCP nationally? In Suffolk County, UCP began almost 65 years ago, fighting to improve and expand the lives of children with disabilities. Their mission is for a life without limits and giving each person a chance to achieve as much as they are capable of achieving. Today UCP provides a range of programs and services to over 3,500 children and adults each year. UCP has fought to better the lives of those with disabilities while advocating for new forms of healthcare that allows individuals to live

longer, better lives. UCP of Suffolk is very proud of their health center that offers state-of-the-art, accessible dentistry and expert medical professionals. Now that it has helped extend lives, UCP is determined to make those lives worthwhile. There are a multitude of programs for those with cerebral palsy and all other developmental disabilities, including a children's center for infancy through age 21, adult day programs for those over 21, work programs to assist people in learning skills and placing them in jobs, and 24/7 care to over 200 adults and children in 31 group homes. We at St. James Church are privileged to deliver Christmas gifts to 5 of those nearby homes. Employers have found UCP individuals make great, enthusiastic employees, and frequently come back to UCP for more workers. As a not-for-profit organization, most of UCP's funding comes from the state, and that can be challenging when the state has financial issues. Several large fundraisers are held each year to help offset the cost of their programs. Contributions from individuals help too. UCP spends 92 cents of every dollar on programs and services. Checks made out to "United Cerebral Palsy Association of Greater Suffolk, Inc." may be sent to 250 Marcus Blvd., Hauppauge, NY 11788. UCP's extensive services are available to anyone with a disability at any age. Family members who are looking for guidance or want to enroll a relative in one of the programs can contact UCP at 631-232-011 or go to www.ucp-suffolk.org for more information.

Looking to give meaningful Christmas gifts this year? How about the following: A share of a heifer for \$50; a share of a goat or sheep for \$10; honeybees or a share of fish for \$30; a flock of chicks, ducks, or geese or a share of a llama for \$20. Go to www.heifer.org/gift or call toll free 1-855-748-6437. Episcopal Relief and Development has Gifts for Life: a share of

fruit trees for \$35; clean water for \$35 per person or \$215 per family; tuition, books, uniforms and school supplies for a child affected by AIDS for \$80; seed for 50 trees for \$50; care of a mom and her newborn for \$50; an insecticide-treated net and training to prevent malaria for \$12 each. Micro credit loans, literacy and vocational training, and financial education are also available as gifts.

Go to www.episcopalrelief.org/giftsforlife or call 1-855-312-4325.

Your outreach as an individual and our outreach as a parish matter. Share your blessings this Advent and Christmas and enjoy many blessings in return!

- Sue Krall

SERMON FROM THANKSGIVING SERVICE, NOVEMBER 25

Good evening,

The story from Luke 17 is about the 10 men who met Jesus on his way to Jerusalem. The men had leprosy and asked Jesus to have pity on them. Jesus told them to show themselves to the priests. This meant they were cured. There was only 1 man who came back to thank Jesus. Jesus asked, "What happened to the other 9 men?"

Let us be like the 1 man and not the other 9 men. Thank Jesus for all he has done for us. Thank Jesus for tonight, for each other and for our families. (pause)

HAPPY THANKSGIVING

AMEN.

- Ariel Rung
age 9

THINGS FOR WHICH WE ARE THANKFUL

On Sunday, November 23, we once again were asked to take a few moments to think about those things for which we are thankful this year. Here are a few of them:

In my life I give thanks for:

My job
Friends
My family
My home
My faith
The skill of my surgeon
The love and help given to me by
 family and friends
Being comfortable
My cat
Jesus
Grandma
Good health
My ability to help others
The love of God that I feel every day
My husband
My children
Good food
Peace
Birdsong
The community of faith
Freedom of association
Generosity of spirit
My god children
The birth of baby Sarah
The gift of pilgrimage
The way the Lord always seems to be
 there for me when I need Him
The earth that is still sustaining us
Many blessings
My pets
My parents
My dogs & bird
My recovery
Autumn weather
School
The beauty of nature
The warmth of the sun

Rainbows
Imagination
My grandchildren
Dance
Having enough and sometimes even
 more than enough
My wife
My husband
God's salvation
A new chance to be thankful every
 day
Peace and security in this land
Beauty in the created word, and in
 art, story, and song
My yoga practice and students to
 teach
Nourishing food to eat
My students
My garden, when it grows

Here at St. James I am thankful for:

Sunday school
Good friends and fellowship
Weekday service
God's presence
Music
My church family
The students of Godly Play, their
 eagerness to learn, and their
 faith and spirituality
The Altar Guild who makes our
 church so beautiful
Our Bible studies and our book
 group
The community of saints
Coffee hour
Friendly people
The amazing love and faithfulness
 we all share
A caring community
God making everybody
A place to worship and celebrate
 God with other believers
34 years of coming to church and
 church activities

Our friendships and St. James'
wonderful family and
leadership
Prayerful community
A place to learn and grow
The people and love we find here for
all
Our choir and organist
All of us and our desire to keep God
in our lives
My Lord Jesus
My priest
Walking the way with Jesus
Miss Carol and her knowledge and
love
The music
Our beautiful church
Our elders and our children
Faithful and generous giving
Support as we walk the way
The chance to worship in peace and
to give back
New beginnings
The Holy Spirit
Teachers from Sunday school
A strong faith community
The beauty of the liturgy

ANNUAL MEETING & VESTRY NOMINATIONS

It's that time of the year again, as we begin to prepare for the Annual Meeting and the election of new Wardens and Vestry members. We are looking for mature and prayerful Christians to share in the work of leadership.

On Sunday, February 1, 2015, 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 a 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 (?) each for a three year term
- *Youth delegate (1) age 18 and younger

Please speak with Debbie LaMano (774-4271 or dlamano67@gmail.com) if you are interested in learning more.

NEWS OF THE PARISH FAMILY

Our parish family is growing! In the last few months we welcomed the following new babies into our midst:

* James Andrews - September 9 who lives with Mom and Dad, Kathleen and James, in Smithtown. He will be baptized on November 30.

*Madison Beirne - September 28 who lives with Mom and Dad, Laura and Tim, in Stony Brook

*Jack Harrington - November 3 who lives with Mom and Dad, Sarah and Jack, in Stony Brook

*Sarah Lawrence Rios - November 20 who lives with Mom and Dad, Paige and Robert, and big sister, Maggie in Connecticut

We are still anticipating additional births in the coming months. Congratulations to all the happy families!

DO YOU NEED CLEANING HELP?

Whether it is a one-time pre-holiday need, ongoing housecleaning or office cleaning, Patty Prentiss will do a thorough job. You can contact Patty at 371-7227.

DECEMBER CALENDAR

- 1 Food Addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 2 Holy Eucharist 9:30 a.m.
Christmas Luncheon 12:30 p.m.
Book study group 7:00 p.m.
Recovery group 7:30 p.m.
- 3 Knitters' group 11:30 a.m.
Grave blanket decorating 5:00 pm
- 4 N.A. meeting 7:30 p.m.
- 5 Nursery school movie night 7 p.m.
Food addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 7 **Holy Eucharist I 8:00 a.m.**
Holy Eucharist II 9:30 a.m.
with Baptism
Children's Formation classes
Choir rehearsal 11:15 a.m.
Mills Hall rental 1 - 4 p.m.
- 8 Food addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 9 Holy Eucharist 9:30 a.m.
Recovery group 7:30 p.m.
- 10 Knitters' group 11:30 a.m.
Yoga class 3:30 p.m.
- 12 Mills Hall rental 6 - 9 p.m.
Food addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 13 Mills Hall rental 1 p.m.
- 14 **Holy Eucharist I 8:00 a.m.**
Holy Eucharist II 9:30 a.m.
Children's Formation classes
St. James Marketplace 10:45 a.m.
Choir rehearsal 11:15 a.m.
Piano recital 4:30 p.m.
- 15 Food addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 16 Book study group 7:00 p.m.
Recovery group 7:30 p.m.
- 17 Knitters' group 11:30 a.m.
Yoga class 3:30 p.m.
- 18 N.A. meeting 7:30 p.m.

- 19 Food addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 21 **Holy Eucharist I 8:00 a.m.**
Holy Eucharist II 9:30 a.m.
Children's Formation classes
Choir rehearsal 11:15 a.m.
Pick-a-Star gift delivery 2:00 p.m.
- 22 Food addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 23 Recovery group 7:30 p.m.
- 24 **Christmas Eve**
Family Eucharist 5:30 p.m.
Christmas Eve Eucharist 9 p.m.
- 25 **Christmas Day**
Holy Eucharist 9:30 a.m.
- 26 Office closed
Food addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 27 Mills Hall rental
- 28 **Holy Eucharist I 8:00 a.m.**
Holy Eucharist II 9:30 a.m.
Children's Formation classes
- 29 Food addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 30 Recovery group 7:30 p.m.
- 32 **New Year's Eve**

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

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

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Peter & Claudette Plaschka