



Open Doors

The Newsletter of St. James Episcopal Church

January 2011

F R O M T H E



When I was a child, someone said to me that beginnings are what matters. If you get the beginning right, everything else will just follow along.

Now I'm a little older, and know that it's not quite as simple as all that. We can all think of times when we have begun with the best intentions, but then suddenly, somehow, things have all fallen in a heap around us. Even the best of beginnings can fail.

But on the other hand, there is a grain of truth in the saying. Because if you don't begin well, it's difficult, if not impossible, to ever catch up. It's true for athletes, who, if they miss the start of a race even by a tenth of a second, have almost no hope of ever catching up. It's true of our days – that feeling of having got out of the wrong side of bed so that whatever we do all day is somehow tainted with disaster. And it's true with stories, whether they are on TV or in books, or the real life ones told round a fire on Christmas afternoon. If you miss the beginning, there's every chance that you'll never catch up again. We need the beginnings to make sense of the rest.

Beginnings are important things. They matter. And that's why the gospel of John begins the way it does, not with the story of the baby in the manger, but way back at the beginning of time. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and that life was the light of all people...And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth..."

Without this beginning, Jesus is just another baby, one that, granted, grows up to do amazing things, but a baby nevertheless. But with this beginning, we come to understand Jesus differently. With this beginning, Jesus is presented as the vital link between God and us, the way we can come to know who God is, and what God is like.

As Christians we are called to follow Christ. We are called to live lives that themselves act out who this God really is: a God overflowing with grace and truth. So grace and truth become woven together into the fabric of our lives. That's the beginning of the story of Jesus, and the beginning of our faith.

This week has been the beginning of a New Year. And it's an opportunity to make a new beginning in our faith as well, a New Year's resolution to live as much as we can like Christ, full of grace and truth. Because that's the promise of the gospel of John, that Christ is the Word not only come to dwell among us, but to dwell in us by His Spirit, grace and truth woven together into the fabric of our lives.

Raeugnet

WORDS FROM THE WARDENS

*"A Happy New Year! Grant that I
May bring no tear to any eye
When this New Year in time shall end
let it be said I've played the friend,
Have lived and loved and labored here,
and made of it a happy year."*

- Edgar Guest

Let us look forward to a year where we will be together, worship together, work together, play together, and where our journey will lead us to greater spiritual growth.

A journey is not made without preparation; and growth doesn't happen without proper nutrition.

If you haven't noticed, over the past year the Rector, Wardens, and Vestry have been on a journey of sorts. A pilgrimage, if you will, to discern Christ's call for our ministry here at St. James. His call as we have heard it has manifested itself in what might now be seen as the familiar slogan of "Growing in Faith..., Building Relationships in Christ, and Serving Each Other and the

Community." But these words are meant to be more than just a slogan. They are a road map for our journey. And we are on our way! Things are changing. And while we have a "map" we certainly have not been where we are going, so sometimes it may seem unfamiliar. We may become scared. But we are a people of faith! We have faith that God will provide, and that Jesus will lead us to the Kingdom of Heaven. We also must remember to have faith in each other.

This is not going to be a short journey. This is a journey of a lifetime! So, how do we sustain ourselves on such a long trip? What are the nutrients we need to grow? The answer is PRAYER! We ask you to make a resolution this New Year for spend time each day in prayer. Pray for our Church. Pray for our vision of the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth. Pray for our leadership. Pray for each other. And then we need to share those prayers. This is our journey and Christ is our guide.

Peace and blessings,
Pat and Chris

**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
AND ELECTION OF VESTRY**

Please make your plans to attend the Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 6, 2011. The meeting will take place immediately following the 9:30 a.m. service. There will be only **one service** that day, and it will be held in Mills Hall. The Wardens and members of the Vestry will serve Brunch.

The annual budget will be presented and there will be reports from the Rector and various chairpersons of committees. If you are the chair of a committee, or leader of a group or ministry, written reports must be submitted by January 31st.

The Nominating Committee will present candidates for the positions of Warden (1 position) and Vestry (3 positions). Nominations may also be made from the floor.

- Pat Westlake

SKI TRIP

Our annual ski trip is coming up early in March. We expect it to cost a maximum of \$69 for adult skiing or snowboarding (includes beginner lift ticket, equipment rental, and lesson), \$90 with an all mountain lift ticket, and \$90 for kids, plus the cost of helmet rental. If we get 15 or more participants the price should come down significantly. Please email the Rector (stjamesrector@optonline.net) if you are interested.

**THE BISHOP IS COMING!
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Mark your calendars now! The bishop will be visiting St. James Church on Wednesday, May 18, 2011 at 7 p.m. He will celebrate the Eucharist and preach. The money from the open plate offering will be for the Bishop's discretionary fund. Prior to the visitation, he will meet with the Vestry on Wednesday, May 11 at 7 p.m. More information will be available as we get closer to May.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Thank you to the members of the altar guild and other parishioners who did a wonderful job of beautifying the church for the Christmas services.

Would you like to honor your loved ones as a memorial, give thanks for a special person or significant event in your life (birthday, anniversary, graduation, etc.) or simply give thanks to God? One way you can do this is by providing an offering for the flowers, wine, bread, and candles that are on the altar each week. The names and purpose of the offering will be written in the Sunday bulletin on your requested date.

Contributions of \$35 are suggested, but donations of any amount, small or large, are appreciated and will be acknowledged equally in the bulletin. Forms are available in the rear of the church, or you can complete the form below, making the check payable to St. James Altar Guild.

Your name and home phone: _____

Requested date: _____

Purpose: Memorial, Thanksgiving,
Graduation, Anniversary, Birthday, etc.

Name(s) of your loved ones: _____

BIBLE STUDY - A TASTE OF WONDERFUL FOOD

On Tuesday, January 4, “A Taste of Bible Study” convened by the fireplace in Mills Hall. We shared our first experiences of Bible Study and the hesitations we had in “jumping in.” For many of us, a friend’s invitation, participation in a short Advent or Lenten program, or serving on a committee that embedded Bible study into its work gave us our first “taste.” The “food” turned out to be so good, to have such unexpected and wonderful flavor combinations, and to bring us into the fellowship of such interesting people (historical and contemporary), that the Bible study has – often despite ourselves – become part of our regular lives.

We then studied Matthew 2:12-23. As often happens in Bible study, our discussion was far-ranging, animated and reflective as we learned and explored together. How odd that God called Joseph back into Egypt (the land from which the Israelites had been happy to escape centuries before!). How intriguing that God revealed Jesus’ birth to wise men (sorcerers), people on the spiritual fringes of society, whom God had told the Israelites to avoid. How realistic to see the tragic repercussion of Herod’s rage when he realized he had been deceived (the part left out of the lectionary reading). Somehow we also touched on denominational traditions, encouraging spiritual leadership in young people, and the essence of Christianity as being transformed into disciples of Christ.

Bible studies resume the week of January 9, continuing our study of the Gospel of Matthew. *No experience is necessary, and you are warmly invited to attend the group that works for you.* Evening groups meet on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 7:15 to 8:45 p.m. The Tuesday group rotates locations (announced regularly in “This Week at St.

James”), and the Wednesday group meets at the Rectory. In addition, the Tuesday morning group resumes the week of January 16, meeting at 10 a.m. in the Webster Room.

- *Kathy Sides*

LUNCH BUNCH

The Lunch Bunch will meet on Tuesday, January 25, 12:30 p.m. (note new time) at La Cucina Restaurant, Village Center, 61A Route 111, Smithtown (in the Uncle Giuseppe shopping center. All are welcome to join in the fun and fellowship. Contact Fjeril Deal at 724-3720 to sign up.

- *Fjeril Deal*

NEWS OF THE PARISH FAMILY

We have a budding poet in our parish! Thomas Mauro, age 8, recently had his poem “Snow,” published in the TBR newspapers. We print it here, with permission.

Snow is white
It’s very bright.
Snow is cold
It’s fun to hold.
I love snow all winter long
With snow you can’t go wrong!

Keep up the good work, Thomas!

Lauren Tarantino, a senior at Ward Melville High School, capped off a very good fall sports season by being appointed to the All-Long Island field hockey team. Congratulations, Lauren!

Our prayers and sympathy go out to:

- * George and Sue Krall upon the recent death of George's father, Paul;
- * Diane and Kurt Rettig, upon the death of Diane's mother, Ann Burns, early in December;
- * Nancy Rasmussen upon the death of her husband, Bill on December 18th. His funeral service was held at St. James on January 3rd;
- * Mother Paulette Schiff and her husband, Walter, and family upon the death of her mother, Sophy Toppin, who died on January 3rd at the age of 90. Her funeral service will be on Saturday, January 8th at Noon, at the First Presbyterian Church of Levittown, 474 Wantagh Avenue, Levittown, where she served as organist and choir director for 41 years.
- * former parishioner, Elizabeth Peters Wasilewicz, whose father, Ronald Peters, died on November 27th, for whom a burial service will be held at St. James on February 15th.
- * former parishioner, Jean Matheson, on the death of her husband, John in November.

All had been in failing health in recent months.

ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE

Perhaps someone some time has said to you that you shouldn't hide your light under a bushel. Or told you to set your house in order. Maybe you only survived a certain situation by the skin of your teeth. Perhaps it's time you listened to the still small voice within.

All those everyday phrases come from one source – a book whose four hundredth

anniversary we celebrate this coming year, the King James Bible – or the Authorised Version as it's sometimes called. It wasn't the first Bible in English by any means. But for all sorts of reasons it got into the bloodstream of the people of this country. The language it was written in wasn't ever quite the sort of language people spoke in their daily lives, even four hundred years ago. But its rhythms are exceptionally memorable, and its stories can still move and even shock us.

Things move on, but it's good for us to have some long-lasting furniture in our minds, words and images that have something a bit mysterious about them that carry important experiences for us that we can't find words of our own for. And when we try to make sense of our lives and of who we really are, it helps to have a strongly-defined story, a big picture of some kind in the background. As the King James Bible took hold of the imaginations of millions of people in the English-speaking world, it gave them just that – a big picture, a story in which their lives made sense.

It was the story of a world broken and out of control – but still a world God loved fiercely; the story of God promising to be there for the people he had made, in good times and bad; of his promise being kept in the most dramatic way you could think of, when God himself lives a human life in Jesus Christ. And woven into all this were the records of how individuals – very like us in their confusions and failings – had got caught up in this great story of God's promises, and how it had changed them. So reading the King James Bible told you that your life story was set within the biggest of pictures, the story of the whole universe.

Four hundred years on, that can feel quite remote. You may be the sort of person who feels that you can make sense of your own

story on your own terms. Or you may feel that there's only one big story and that's about money and whether I've got a job tomorrow or whether my children can afford higher education.

But the trouble is that we so often don't have the kind of big picture that simply tells us that we matter, never mind what happens, that tells us there is something quite outside ourselves that can eventually make sense of things – even if, like some of the writers of the Bible, especially the Psalms, there are moments where all we can do is shout out in protest.

Whether you're a Christian or belong to another religion, or whether you have nothing you'd want to call a religion at all, some kind of big picture matters. If we're really going to talk about a 'big society' that'll need a big picture, a picture of what human beings are really like and why they're so unique and precious. This year's anniversary is a chance to stop and think about the big picture – and to celebrate the astonishing contribution made by that book four hundred years ago.

May the New Year be a time to discover something of this vision in your life; a time to discover more of the meaning of another of the King James Bible's great words – the 'loving kindness' we all need to give and to receive. A very happy New Year to you all.

- *Rowan Williams*

LONG ISLAND GRAND ULTREYA

Come one, come all to the Grand Ultreya at the Cathedral of the Incarnation, Garden City, Saturday, January 22, 2011, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The theme of the day is "Let our hands be your hands." The Rt. Rev. Lawrence Provenzano will be the celebrant at a Holy Eucharist in the Cathedral at 9:30, followed by fellowship, music, workshops, and a luncheon in the Cathedral House. Bishop Larry has graciously agreed to spend the entire day with us. All Cursillistas, and their family and friends are invited to join us for a Spirit-filled day. You do not need to have made your Cursillo weekend to attend this Grand Ultreya. Please join us to share the love of Christ. Car pools are being formed. For further information, please call Wylie Hunt at 751-5618.

- *Wylie Hunt*

JANUARY CALENDAR

- 1 **New Year's Day**
- 2 **2 Christmas**
Holy Eucharist I 8:00 a.m.
Holy Eucharist II 9:30 a.m.
Epiphany Brunch
- 3 Food addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 4 C.F.E. Parish meeting 7:15 p.m.
Recovery group 7:30 p.m.
- 5 Knitting group 10:30 a.m.
- 6 Choir rehearsal 7:30 p.m.
N.A. meeting 7:30 p.m.
- 7 Food addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 9 **1 Epiphany**
Holy Eucharist I 8:00 a.m.
Holy Eucharist II 9:30 a.m.
with Sunday school
- 10 Food addiction group 7:30 p.m.

- 11 Bible study 7:15 p.m.
Recovery group 7:30 p.m.
- 12 Knitting group 7:30 p.m.
- 13 Choir rehearsal 7:30 p.m.
- 14 Food addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 16 **2 Epiphany**
Holy Eucharist I 8:00 a.m.
Holy Eucharist II 9:30 a.m.
with Sunday school
- 17 Food addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 18 Bible study 10 a.m.
Bible study 7:15 p.m.
Recovery group 7:30 p.m.
Smithtown book club 7:30 p.m.
- 19 Knitting group 10:30 a.m.
- 20 Choir rehearsal 7:30 p.m.
N.A. meeting 7:30 p.m.
- 21 Food addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 22 Toastmasters 9:30 a.m.
- 23 **3 Epiphany**
Holy Eucharist I 8:00 a.m.
Holy Eucharist II 9:30 a.m.
with Sunday school
Parish Life meeting 11:15 a.m.
- 24 Vestry meeting 7:30 p.m.
Food addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 25 Bible study 10 a.m.
Bible study 7:15 p.m.
Recovery group 7:30 p.m.
- 26 Knitting group 10:30 a.m.
- 27 Choir rehearsal 7:30 p.m.
- 28 Food addiction group 7:30 p.m.
- 29 Toastmasters group 9:30 a.m.
- 30 **4 Epiphany**
Holy Eucharist I 8:00 a.m.
Holy Eucharist II 9:30 a.m.
with Sunday school

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Jerilyn Glogg
Donald Scott
Felicia Van Praagh
Polly Neyssen
Marjorie Cobb
Bill Bataller
Lily Pryor
Brian Noack
Matt Petschauer
Melanie Cozzolino

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Ian & Felicia Van Praagh