

St. James' E-pistle

October 28, 2016

Pulpit Notes

*"Today salvation has come to this house...
For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost."*

Brothers and Sisters:

I have always loved the story of Zacchaeus, and not just because he is a short guy! What I love about this story is that he has such a desire to see Jesus. Desire is one of those words that I think speaks to our longing for God. Zacchaeus was to see him so badly that he puts all pride out the window.

He doesn't care if people ignore him because of his height. He doesn't care if others might mock him for climbing that tree. He doesn't care that he's a bit of an outcast because of his profession. And when Jesus calls him down - to the scandal of the good folks - he doesn't care about their tut-tutting. In fact, he offers to answer all their complaints by refunding whatever was ill-gotten.

Desire for God. That's what salvation looks like.

We have that desire for God - and it's our mission to cultivate it continuously. That's why I've been emphasizing studying our bible more! That's why I preached last week about Renewal Works - a program to look deeply at our congregation and see how we can increase our desire - as well as knowledge, wisdom and faith.

And that's why we are going to approach Stewardship a little differently this year. Stewardship is what we do with what God puts in our trust - but the desire for God shapes what we do! To get a better sense of this, we will have three Stewardship meetings, and all members will be invited to one of them. At these meetings, we share with you what the Vestry has been talking about in terms of our way forward in faith, but we'll also get your input into how we as a congregation can learn more intentionally, worship more meaningfully, and act more effectively. We will give space and time for all of us to consider what it means to desire god, and what it means for all of us to love and serve God.

These meetings will take place on November 11, 19, and December 9 (7:00 PM each) at the Chapel.

Watch your mail for an invitation and please RSVP that you will attend! This is how we move ahead as a parish in our collective desire for God. We may be little - but so was Zacchaeus - and as he shows, when desire is strong enough, size means nothing.

Grace and Peace,

Chuck+

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The News of the Church

DONATE YOUR iPad! Please consider donating your old iPad - or any old tablet that can read a PDF file - to St. James'. We would like to have three or four tablets so we can download the digital bulletin onto them and let guests (or parishioners, of course) use them. This is especially helpful to those who are unfamiliar with the liturgy and all the books we use. You should erase everything on it, of course - all we need is a PDF reader and a browser (to download the information). Thanks!

Looking for More Bible Verses (Thanks - and want More!): Many thanks to all of you who have offered your favorite bible verses! We are looking for more for couple of scripturally based projects. Send them in!

Pageant Sign Up Sheet: Believe it or not, we are already making plans for the 2017 Epiphany Pageant. The Pageant will be held on Friday, January 6 at 7:00 PM. But we need actors! So look for a signup sheet in the Narthex starting this Sunday. We have speaking roles, non-speaking roles, and stage crew positions. All ages are welcome and encouraged!

Diocesan Convention: Please pray for the Episcopal Diocese of New York and our delegates as we gather in convention on November 4 and 5. We will vote on Bishop Dietsche's "Strategic Plan" which was devised by three committees which focused on: a) Governance Church Structures, b) Financial Matters, and c) Congregations. Each of these affects our congregation, so it is important that we pray for wisdom and fortitude.

FDR High School's Fall Drama, Radium Girls, will be performed on November 4 & 5 at 7PM. Directed by Margaret Hassett, Radium Girls is a stunning drama based on real life events during the 1920s following the story of Grace Fryer and other factory workers as they fight for their day in court after being mistreated by their employer.

Tickets are \$5. They can be purchased at the door, at The Shipping Place (near Stop N Shop in Hyde Park) or at Julian's Deli (on 9G near the high school), or online at <http://radiumgirlsfdr.weebly.com/>

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NOTE: There will also be a free, open dress rehearsal at 4 PM on Nov 3 at the high school auditorium. For senior citizens ONLY.

Christ Church 250th: Christ Church in Poughkeepsie is celebrating its 250th Anniversary! Presiding Bishop Michael Curry will preach at their Sunday worship and then be guest of honor at a special luncheon at the Grandview on November 13. They have invited neighboring parishes to send representation and process in their Sunday service with a parish banner. Indeed, St. Paul's, Poughkeepsie, is closing its doors altogether that day and worshipping with Christ Church. If anyone from St. James' would like to represent us, please let me know! We can use our own bicentennial banner. If you would like to attend the luncheon, tickets are \$60 each and can be obtained by calling Christ Church (845-452-8220). Reservations must be made by November 4.

Graveyard Tour Wrap-Up Meeting: On Friday, November 18, at 7:00 PM the Graveyard Committee will hold its wrap-up meeting at which it will debrief this past, successful, season and start making plans for next year.

Hyde Park Thanksgiving Dinner: The second annual "Hyde Park Thanksgiving Dinner - A Community Shares Appreciation" is November 20!

The Hyde Park Thanksgiving Dinner is a community event made possible by joint efforts of local volunteers and donors (local church leaders and parishioners, residents, organizations and businesses) contributing their time, resources and money.

The inaugural dinner last year was a great success with around +/- 130 people participated in the dinner.

Tickets for this year's dinner (at \$10 per person) are available at Cranberry's at Tilley Hall and Earthgoods Market starting October 10th.

Everyone is welcome!

Tickets are limited. Please get your tickets early in case they sold out!

The Dinner is still looking for more volunteers. You can learn more, and you can sign up to volunteer at www.comservhp.com.

Community Thanksgiving Service: The Annual Community Thanksgiving Service will take place this year on Tuesday, November 22 at 7:00 PM. The location is Regina Coeli, and

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the preacher is Rev. Jay Cookingham of the Bridge Builders Community Church. We hope to have a large representation from St. James'!

Newcomers Reception: Been at St. James' for a year or less? If so, you're invited to a Newcomers Reception on Friday, December 2 at 7:00 pm. This reception gives you a chance to meet more established parishioners, ask questions, and have a chance to learn what opportunities are available to get involved. Ask Fr. Chuck or a Vestry member for more information.

The Bishop is Coming! Mark your calendars. On Sunday, December 4, Bishop Allen Shin will come to St. James' to confirm, receive, reaffirm faith and preach. Please be on hand to welcome our Suffragan Bishop and show him real St. James' hospitality!

Committees That Can Use Your Help

Stewardship: The Stewardship Committee is a group that helps coordinate our fall pledge drive as well as keep the concept of Christian Stewardship in our consciousness throughout the year. Never a large committee, the group of typically three members has been quite helpful. However, this year two of the three members have had to leave the group; one to become a Sunday School teacher, and the other because she has to leave the parish for the next few years.

So listen to your heart. Is God calling you to this ministry? Though it is not a heavy burden, the impact of the committee is huge on the ministry of St. James'.

Churchyard Committee: Our churchyard committee wants you. The committee oversees one of the most historic graveyards in the region, and is responsible for making sure it is kept up. It handles the sale and digging of graves as well. If you value our churchyard and want it to continue to be a source of comfort whose loved ones rest here as well as historical interest to those who visit, please join our committee. If you're interested, you can contact Carol Vinall at vinehall3@aol.com.

Episcopal Election Toolkit Available: It is the official position of the Episcopal Church to encourage all eligible members to vote in every election. We see it not only as part of our civic duty but as part of our collective life of faith. If we are not engaged in the community, then we are withdrawn - which is not the example our Lord showed.

To encourage enthusiastic and informed participation in the election process, the Episcopal Church has published an Election "Toolkit" with information such as what representatives are

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up for election, who your officials are, and what the issues of the day are. It includes the Episcopal Church's official position on several issues, which may be helpful in your deliberations.

The most important thing in the church's eyes, however, is that we all go out and vote! Here's a link to the "Toolkit":

<http://advocacy.episcopalchurch.org/episcopal/EpiscopaliansVote>

Spiritual / educational websites to deepen your faith:

- Acts 8 Movement
- GrowChristians
- Episcopal Cafe (a favorite)
- The Slate Project (not affiliated with Slate magazine)
- Virtual Abbey
- Second Life Church (gives you a virtual church experience if you're into that sort of thing. Fun to look at maybe).
- Inward/Outward (daily meditations sent to your e-mail)
- "Edge of Enclosure" (weekly lectionary-based blog post)
- The Celtic Christian Tradition (via Facebook)
- Anne Lamott (via Facebook)
- Jan Richardson - <http://paintedprayerbook.com> (Especially good for those grieving or interested in women's spirituality.)

The News of the Diocese

Diocesan Cycle of Prayer: Please pray for these diocesan ministries this week. If you want to check out the entire year's calendar for intercession, it's simple to find - go to <http://www.diocesen.org> and click under "Beliefs and Practices."

October

30 All Souls' Church, Manhattan

31 The Church of Saints John, Paul & Clement, Mount Vernon

November

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- 1 (All Saints' Day), Regeneration Church, Pine Plains
- 2 Diocesan Convention Planning Committee
- 3 St. Andrew's Church, Bronx
- 4 Inspector of Elections of Diocesan Convention
- 5 Clergy and Lay Deputies to Diocesan Convention

Praying For Peace Everywhere:

Let us continue to light a candle for peace in the Holy Land - and everywhere. Prayer is our most potent antidote to hatred.

1. Candle for Peace

Please also light a candle on Fridays - holy to both faiths - for Peace

Let us Light Candles for Peace

Two mothers, one plea:

Now, more than ever, during these days of so much crying,
on the day that is sacred to both our religions, Friday, Sabbath Eve

Let us light a candle in every home - for peace:

A candle to illuminate our future, face to face,

A candle across borders, beyond fear.

From our family homes and houses of worship

Let us light each other up,

Let these candles be a lighthouse to our spirit

Until we all arrive at the sanctuary of peace.

2. The Mothers Prayer:

God of Life:

You who heals the broken hearted, binding up our wounds.

Please hear this prayer of mothers.

You did not create us to kill each other

Nor to live in fear or rage or hatred in your world. You created us so that we allow each other to sustain Your Name in this world:

Your name is Life, your name is Peace.

For these I weep, my eye sheds water:

For our children crying in the night,

For parents holding infants, despair and darkness in their hearts.

For a gate that is closing – who will rise to open it before the day is gone?

With my tears and with my constant prayers, With the tears of all women deeply pained at these harsh times

I raise my hands to you in supplication: Please God have mercy on us.

Hear our voice that we not despair That we will witness life with each other, That we have

mercy one for another, That we share sorrow one with the other, That we hope, together, one for another.

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Inscribe our lives in the book of Life
For Your sake, our God of Life Let us choose Life.
For You are Peace, Your world is Peace and all that is Yours is Peace,
May this be your will
And let us say Amen.

Sheikha Ibtisam Mahameed and Rabba Tamar Elad-Appelbaum
English Translation Amichai Lau-Lavie

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Ruth Blanding, John Bohlmann, Helen Braun, Susie Buhalis, Mariel Carter, Joann Clark, Michael Day, Dee, Dottie Drake, Ross Eames, Jr., Linkin Ewalt, Steven Foote, Heather Francese, Kathy Ganim, Jack Gordy, Robert Guariglia, Harold Hall, Dalton K., Edie Kline, Ashley Konyn, Rosemary Leuken, Joanne Lynn, Doris Mack, Gordon Mackenzie, Virginia Mackenzie, Andrew Mendelson, Rev. Tim Millard, Charles Pardee, Clifford Plass, Grace Plass, Linda Plass, Deborah Porach, John Robinson, Rob Robinson, Jason Rodino (serving in Afghanistan), John Ross, Richard Secor, James Sheeky, Naomi Sleight, Marguerite Spratt, Janice Syedullah, Tracy, Candace Vincent, Cassidy Way, Cliff Wells and Shawn Wheeler.

Thanksgiving for the healthy birth of Andrew Daniel Raugalis to Daniel, Alyssa and Aldona!

Schedules

A Note about Schedules: The names you see below are those listed on their respective schedules. There are often times when, due to sickness or travel, substitutes are asked to fill in or trade positions. This will probably NOT be reflected in the lists below—so, if there is an inconsistency between what you see here and what you see on Sunday, that is alright.

Birthdays
(this past week): Grant Ferris, Rebecca Foote and Andrew V. Hall

Birthdays
(this coming week): Michael Fenwick, Sue Fenwick, Sophie Ciferri and Sue DeLorenzo

Acolytes:
October 30: Team 2 (Russell)
November 6: Team 3

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Altar Guild:	October 30: Team I November 6: Team I
8 a.m. Readers:	October 30: Debbie Belding and Lynne Koch November 6: Lucille Ogden and Grant Ferris
10 a.m. Readers:	October 30: Wilma Tully and Bobbie Wells November 6: Patty Caswell and Nancy Montero
Ushers:	October 30: Patty Drake and Pat Keefe November 6: Nancy Montero and Anna Marie Pitcher
Pledge Clerks:	October 30: Joanne Lown and Charlessa Thatcher November 6: Doug Belding and Judy Douglass
Parish Cycle of Prayer:	October 30: Ann Dingee, Sue Dingee, Chris, Sue and Sara Dingee November 6: TBA
Coffee Hour Hosts:	October 30: Barbara Slegel and the Choir November 6: Audrey Horne, Charlessa Thatcher and Eric Zivadel

This Week's Lectionary

Isaiah 1:10-18

Psalm 32:1-8

2 Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12

Luke 19:1-10

This Week's Hymns

Processional: 287 For All The Saints

Sequence: 652 Dear Lord and father of mankind forgive our foolish ways

Offertory: Anthem, "Shall We Gather At The River"

Communion: 711 Seek Ye First

Recessional: 493 O for a thousand tongues to sing

NOTE: Audio recordings of some sermons are now available on St. James' website, www.stjameshydepark.org Look under "Worship"

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Sermon Preached on
Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost
(October 23, 2016)

"What Church is For"

What is church for? That's a question that's been occupying a lot of the Episcopal Church's attention lately. Especially in the Diocese of New York where we've been working on a Strategic Plan to guide us for the coming years. Deacon Gail has been serving on the Strategic Planning Committee for some time now and has been doing dramatic work. But one of the first questions that I think they had to come to terms with was - What is Church from?

If you read today's gospel, you might think it has something to teach us about that.

Well, sort of.

Yes, Jesus tells a parable about two men who go to the temple to pray. And yes, church is a great place to pray.

Now, one man talks to God about how great he - the man, not God - is. The other begs God for mercy because he - the man, not God - is such a miserable sinner.

Of course, the point of the parable is that we are to approach life humbly, not with a "We're number one" attitude.

So it tells us about ourselves as individuals. But just because it takes place in a place of worship doesn't mean it tells us what church is for.

Because church isn't a place where we come to bask in the glow of our own goodness.

Neither is it a place where we just come to be "justified" - that is, where we have God say, "That's all right...I love you anyway."

Don't get me wrong, that's a good thing, and the church is an important part in that message. And that's one reason we keep this building open during the day. But that's not what church is for.

The function of the church is two-fold:

1. It is to worship God. To come together and praise God in God's presence.

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2. The second function of church is Formation. What's formation? It is learning how to be Christ's disciples in the world. There are at least three areas of formation, and they are all important.

 Scripture. The bible is our story. It is what we are all about. If we don't know our story, how can we possibly know the depths of our faith and how can we possibly share that faith?

 Prayer. We see the disciples asking Jesus to teach them how to pray - they're not talking about worship at church. They're talking about the rest of their lives - how do we connect with God one on one - I mean really connect, not just enjoy a nice walk in the woods or beautiful music.

 Action. We need to learn how to act out our faith. Not just in outreach, which is important, but in all our interactions with everyone and everything. You might call this stewardship because stewardship is all about what we do with what has been placed in our care.

As I said, we've been called upon at the diocesan level to focus on what it means to be the church. Of course, we need to do this on an ongoing basis anyway, but now we'll take a more deliberate look at our role as the church. We'll do this by increasing our attention to scripture, especially for us adults. We'll see it in our Stewardship programming. We'll see it in Adult education forums. We have been asked by the bishop to be part of a long-term program called Renewal Works which requires a team of nine members to commit to a series of workshops. More on that later but don't be surprised if you're asked to join that team.

Worship and formation. They help us grow within and without, so that we are strong in God's love and so that our lives outside these walls bring Christ's Good News to a world that needs it even now.

So those men who came to the temple to pray - they could do that anywhere. Jesus just placed them in the temple because it's a good place to pray. The function of the church is more. It's deeper. It's not private. It's us. Amen.