

St. James' E-pistle

February 27, 2015

Pulpit Notes

Brothers and Sisters:

I hope and pray that your Lent so far has been holy and blessed. Since last week's start to the season, we have had several tremendous Lenten Meditations, a men's breakfast, a youth group overnight, the first Lenten Breakfast, and the first session of our Lenten series, "A Gift of God: Relating to Those Who are Different From Us."

The Lenten series is led by Fr. Masud ibn Syedullah. Fr. Masud was raised in a Christian/Muslim family and shared some of his family history at our first session, laying out his interest in the important question of how we relate and appreciate those who are different. We enjoyed great food, fellowship and food for thought, not to mention an appreciation of the world around us.

I hope you will consider joining us for the second session next Wednesday at 6:00 pm. You will not regret it!

This Sunday, there is another aspect to our Lenten observation, and I hope you will be part of it. We will walk our first ever "Neighborhood Pilgrimage," right after the 10:00 a.m. service. There is no coffee hour in Lent, so we should start walking by 11:30 at the latest.

This is not a real pilgrimage in the sense of being a long journey to somewhere sacred. But it is a pilgrimage in the sense that it is a prayerful journey together in which we hope to come closer to God and our neighbor.

I've said it before, but it doesn't hurt to repeat that we are trying to get the church out of the church building and into the community. We will simply walk and pray. Mostly, our prayers will be directed at those who live or work in the neighborhoods we visit.

This week, we will walk the Bard Circle neighborhood just around the corner from the church. I chose this as our first neighborhood to walk because it is our neighborhood and because it is a short walk. Given that there's still snow on the ground and that many may be unsure if walking is for them, I felt this was most appropriate for the first time around. My commitment is that none of our walks will last more than an hour.

I want to assure you that the purpose of these booklets, quiet evenings, and pilgrimages is not to give us bragging rights for being busy. It is to give each of us space to step out of the daily world – our busy lives – and see the wondrous thing that God has done, and that God invites us to be partners in.

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I will continue to send out meditations each day via e-mail, and of course you can still pick up a meditation booklet. I encourage you to come to the next Lenten breakfast and the next Lenten quiet evening (Wednesday, March 4 at 6:00 pm). I encourage you to walk the way of the pilgrim with us on the Sundays in March. And most especially, I encourage you to look around you to see God at work, look in the eyes of your neighbor to see Christ reflected, and look within yourself not only to see your need for God's forgiveness but especially your capacity for God's love.

In Christ,

Chuck+

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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.diocesenyn.org> and click under "Beliefs and Practices."

March

- 1 Candidates to be ordained to the Diaconate
- 2 All Souls' Church, Manhattan
- 3 The Church of the Holy Apostles, Manhattan
- 4 St. Augustine's Church, Manhattan
- 5 St. Michael's Church, Manhattan
- 6 The Church of the Holy Nativity, The Bronx
- 7 St. Martha's Church, The Bronx

ALSO STILL PRAYING FOR ISRAEL AND GAZA:

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:

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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.
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

The News of the Church

Lenten Programs: Our second session of the quiet evenings is this Wednesday, March 4 at 6:00 pm. See the Pulpit Notes for more information.

Neighborhood Pilgrimage: This Sunday following the 10:00 am service is the first Neighborhood Pilgrimage. Please join us! See Pulpit Notes for more information.

Directory: We are preparing to publish a new directory. Some have had problems with the online forms, so we have hardcopy forms available for you to use on Sunday. Once the weather improves, Brian Rance will be available to take digital photographs.

Are You a Member? Each year, each congregation in the Episcopal Church is required to count and report its membership. Easy, right?

Wrong!

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There are three main categories of member: 1) Active member in good standing, 2) baptized member, and 3) inactive member. There is also "Non-member who is active." Add to this age: Anyone 16 or over is considered an adult for statistical purposes.

There are only a few ways to stop being a member: 1) die, 2) transfer out to another congregation, 3) formally separate yourself from the Episcopal Church. If you are a member and just quit going to church – say, for the next 30 years – you're still a member, just placed on the "Inactive" list.

And how do you become a member? Likewise, there are only a few ways: 1) get baptized in that congregation, 2) get confirmed in that congregation, 3) get received in that congregation (from another denomination that confirms with bishops in apostolic succession), or 4) transfer in from another Episcopal congregation.

One of the biggest problems with counting members is that people come and go, often not worrying about or even knowing about what makes a person "Official" as a member. Most people probably don't care. I confess, except for the statistical part, my primary feeling is that membership is 90% being there. But we are required by both church and state law to do the counting.

This is where it gets funny. We have a lot of active folks at St. James' who are technically not members (we think). We also have several inactive folks who technically are members. For example, we people have technically transferred out of St. James' yet pledge and attend. We have folks who have never belonged to St. James' yet pledge and attend, too.

We would like to clear up some of the mysteries.

So, we are asking you a favor. If you are not 100% sure that you were baptized, confirmed, received into the Episcopal Church at St. James', or that you definitely got a letter of transfer from your old parish into St. James', please contact the office to check.

We can contact your old church to arrange a letter of transfer. We can get you formally received into the Episcopal Church. Heck, we can get you confirmed or even baptized!

Whether you are a member or not will not affect your ability to worship, attend education or other events or receive pastoral care. It might technically affect your ability to vote and run for parish office, but otherwise, there is no penalty. It would simply make life easier for me, for the office, and for those who will follow us in generations to come.

So have a little mercy! And thanks.

Pledge Envelopes Awaiting You: Pledge envelopes have arrived! Please pick them up if you have not already done so.

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Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Ruth Blanding, John Bohlmann, Susie Buhalis, Jim and Sharyn Burke, Joann Clark, Michael Day, Dottie Drake, Linkin Ewalt, Steven Foote, Heather Francese, Jane Gagliardoto, Gloria Golden, Jack Gordy, Robert Guariglia, Harold Hall, Dalton K., Edie Kline, Barbara Knakal, Ashley Konyn, Lucy Lamonica, Rosemary Leuken, Doris Mack, Gordon Mackenzie, Virginia Mackenzie, Andrew Mendelson, Rev. Tim Millard, Clifford Plass, Gerald, Plass, Grace Plass, Linda Plass, Deborah Porach, John Robinson John Schoreder, Richard Secor, James Sheeky, Naomi Sleight, Debbie Stone, Tracy, Candace Vincent, Cassidy Way, Cliff Wells and Shawn Wheeler.

We pray for the repose of the soul of Judy Gausepohl, mother of Steven Gausepohl.

We pray for the repose of the soul of Paul Berini.

We pray for the repose of the soul of Lorraine Roberts.

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):	Tadgh O'Halloran, Stephanie Barkoe and Regina Ardini
Birthdays (next week):	Charlessa Thatcher, David Foote and Trayvyn Triola
Acolytes:	March 1: Jasime Thatcher, Jaylen Thatcher and Charlie Urban-Mead March 8: Nancy Montero, Kirstin Horn and Deirdre Mae Micker
Altar Guild:	March 1: Team Number II March 8: Team Number II
8 a.m. Readers:	March 1: Angela Henry and Grant Ferris

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10 a.m. Readers:	March 8: Debbie Belding and Sue DeLorenzo March 1: Wilma Tully and Sophie Ciferri March 8: Regina Ardini and Justin Bohlmann
Ushers:	March 1: Saira Shahani and Pat Keefe March 8: Nancy Montero and Anna Marie Pitcher
Pledge Clerks:	March 1: Deb and Doug Belding March 8: Janet Bright and Joanne Lown
Parish Cycle of Prayer:	March 1: Chris, Susan and Daniel McGlynn and Janet, Erin and Kaylene McKenney March 8: Bruce McIlravy, Anne Meisner and Dierdre Mae Micker
Coffee Hour Hosts:	March 1: Lenten Breakfast March 8: Lenten Breakfast

This Week's Lectionary

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

Psalm 22:22-30

Romans 4:13-25

Mark 8:31-38

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

**Sermon Preached on
First Sunday in Lent
(February 22, 2015)**

Alive in the Spirit

One of my colleagues told me yesterday that she was going to preach about Noah today. She said she figured what we have going on here in the Northeast weather-wise isn't a whole lot different from what Noah had.

Except that Noah had 40 days of rain, and we have ... snow. And subzero temperatures. And Noah got a rainbow promising that God would never again destroy the world by flood.

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Well, 40 days ago was January 13. It was already snowing by then. I want a SNOW-BOW! I don't know if it's any comfort to you to know that it might have rained a lot more than that for Moses, but back in biblical times, the number 40 just meant A WHOLE LOT.

So, when the Israelites wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, that meant they were wandering a long, long time. Maybe twice that.

And when Jesus was driven into the wilderness for forty day to be tempted by Satan, it meant he was out there for a long, long time. Maybe our 40 days of Lent isn't all that bad after all...

But year after year, we still mark off a 40-day period and fast. Well, except on Sundays - at breakfast. But otherwise, we fast. We wear purple, we quit saying certain words, we begin worship with the penitential order. We even start the season with ashes and a reminder that we are going to die. Why?

Obviously, to remind us. To remind us that we human beings aren't perfect, or even really all that great. We discriminate against each other, we kill each other, we use each other for personal gain. We do unspeakable things to each other and often justify it by saying it was "for God." We treat this beautiful planet - this singular Garden of Eden - like our own personal dumping ground, sucking out everything useful and destroying whatever gets in our way.

These 40 Days remind us that we are not God in other ways. They remind us that no matter how rich or poor we are, we will die. They remind us that no matter how strong or good looking we are, some day our bodies will fail us - maybe all at once, maybe bit by bit over a course of years. But they will fail.

Even Jesus' body would fail.

But Peter, in his epistle, reminds us that Jesus "was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit."

Peter reminds us that we, too, will be made alive in the spirit through Christ's incredible love for us.

When Jesus went into the wilderness to be tempted, to figure out what sort of ministry he would have, we're pretty sure he was figuring out what would bring us closer to God. Would it be safety? Security? Power?

None of those things can bring you closer to God. They're all about the body, and he knew, as do we, that the body is of this world. It will fail. It is dust. What does not fail is the Spirit.

This season of Lent is to remind us where to put our trust. It is to remind us that while the body fails, Christ has already reconciled us through his death and resurrection, and if we hold fast to him, death has no power.

Reminding us of who we are, and who God is - that's the task of Lent ... and the promise of Easter.

We may die, and all things may pass away, but we will remain alive in the spirit. Amen.



Saturday, March 7, 2015 1-3PM

ROSENDALE THEATER: 408 Main St, Rosendale, New York 12472

In 2012, young people from the Hudson Valley's Youth Arts Group joined with award-winning documentary filmmaker Robin Romano to create a short documentary about undocumented students yearning for the Dream Act in NY State. After Romano unexpectedly passed away in 2013, filmmaker Ilene Cutler jumped in to help bring the film to completion.

DREAMers Among US examines the need for the Dream Act and the lives of the students who have not been able to continue their education. These youth and several others learned film-making skills in order to tell their compelling story in this moving 20-minute documentary.

The Hudson Valley Premiere will take place from 1-3pm on March 7th in the Rosendale Theatre. The screening will be followed by a Q&A with the young creators and film subjects, and a reception with refreshments at the Creative Co-Op.

PLEASE JOIN US!

GET TICKETS NOW AT: Hudson Valley: <http://dreamersamonghudsonvalley.bpt.me>

Visit US on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/events/792572287504501/>

**or call Rural & Migrant Ministry 845-485-8627
For ticket reservations**



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY FAITH BUILD UPDATE

Our parish family through our Outreach Committee made a commitment to support the building of a new Habitat for Humanity house at 125 Garden Street in Poughkeepsie. We joined other churches in Dutchess County by each making a pledge of \$1,000. Together with the \$30,000 Habitat grant, our pledges would provide affordable housing for a family.

Last year many of us participated in the 2014 Habitat for Humanity's Lenten calendar raising slightly more than \$500 to help us towards fulfilling our pledge. This year we have created our own St. James' Church - 2015 Lenten calendar. The Outreach Committee is hoping to raise the remainder owed on our pledge through this Lenten calendar. The calendars are waiting for you to pick up; they can be found in the narthex of the church.

HELP is desperately needed in order for the house to be completed by Sunday, March 15th. Can you help? or do you know someone that can help? The following is a list of needs:

- *taping
- *installation of kitchen cabinets
- *installation of flooring
- *installation of front and back decks
- *painting

This house, the future home of Stephanie and her three children, was blessed on Friday, August 8th. Since then many, many hours of labor have been put into making this Faith Build a reality including the equity hours put in by Stephanie herself.

However, the final push to complete this house needs some knowledgeable leader workers and helpers! Please contact Maureen Lashlee at the Habitat for Humanity office, 5 Catharine Street in Poughkeepsie. The telephone number is 845-475-9336.

Habitat builds homes for families who are currently living in substandard housing conditions. Families must meet certain criteria in order to be eligible to become part of Habitat for Humanity's housing program.

Please keep this Faith Build Project in your prayers that it will be completed by March 15th; thus providing Stephanie and her young family a new home.

If you have any questions, please contact Joanne Lown or Deacon Gail.

Deacon Gail
on behalf of St. James' Outreach Committee