

St. James' E-pistle

June 17, 2016

Pulpit Notes

Brothers and Sisters:

I've only been back from vacation (and a conference) for a week, but my goodness has a lot been going on. The conference itself - on bringing the Gospel to the world through electronic media - has me still plotting and planning.

Then we had the funeral for Allelu Kurten. It was one of the biggest funerals I have officiated, and the spirit was one of fondness, sadness, but most predominantly joy. She had a way of bringing joy to ever situation, and this was no different.

Then on Sunday, we honored the work of our Sunday School teachers and recognized the progress of our Sunday School students (as well as our acolytes). Thanks again for all you do!

Sadly, we also joined our fellow Americans in receiving the news of the horrible shootings in Orlando, Florida. I have already written about it, so you don't need any more words other than a reminder to lift the victims up in prayer - and hold them in prayer continuously.

Although we prayed for the victims in church last Sunday, we will be more intentional about it this Sunday, using prayers distributed by the national church to pray for an end to (or at least a reduction of) violence.

Speaking of this Sunday, not only is it Fathers Day, but it is the first Sunday of our summer service booklet at the 10:00 AM service.

PARENTS! Since we have no Sunday School during the summer, I thought this would be a good time to re-introduce Childrens Sermons. So, my plan is to have a childrens sermon every Sunday at the 10:00 AM service. Granted, our number of children is small, but it only takes a few to make a good lesson. And what better day to start then on Fathers Day? Join us this Sunday and see what's going to happen!

Grace and Peace,
Fr. Chuck

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 If we are not engaged in the community, then we are withdrawn - which is not the example our Lord showed.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 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":

St. James' E-pistle

June 17, 2016

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

What I Learned About Christianity and the Internet

As I mentioned to you in last week's sermon, my first days back from vacation were spent at a conference on using the electronic revolution for the good of the Gospel. It covered, among many topics, how to get the Good News out to the world, how to be a pastoral presence, and how to have effective Christian education online.

These are real things. Last Sunday, two people told me after church that they decided to give St. James' a try after visiting our website and reading what we're about. Last night, and not for the first time, I conducted pre-marital counseling from hundreds of miles away via video chat. In the past weeks, I have been doing some pastoral counseling via text message (because that's what the person needed).

As I said Sunday, I will reiterate today - we need to be part of this, because that's where God's people are. So, here's what I'm asking of you:

- I. Check out, maybe even bookmark some of these Christian websites. They are good and wholesome and healthy places to learn more about living in the world as a follower of Christ:
 - 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)
- II. Consider becoming an administrator/content provider in one of the following:
 - A St. James' Blog (We have a couple potential writers, but need an admin)
 - A Twitter/Snapchat/Instagram expert who can regularly post church functions both before and as they happen. (This could include important points that take place during worship).
 - A Learning Page. A separate website that provides links and commentary to many faith learning resources, AND provides original content from St. James' for learning. We'll start small.
 - Even our Facebook Page could use updating and regular posting of pictures from any and ALL parish events.

If you are up for any of this, We Want You!
Your work will make us a better Church!

Grace and Peace,
Chuck+

St. James' E-pistle

June 17, 2016

The News of the Church

Men's Breakfast: The monthly Men's Breakfast will be THIS SATURDAY, June 18 at 8:00 AM. We take over a couple of tables at Cranberry's and are always looking for more men to join us. Usually we eat and share in fellowship but we also share the news of the church and sometimes plan a work project here and there.

Vestry Meeting: The Vestry meets this Tuesday, June 21 at 7:00 PM.

Parish Picnic: It's been a long time since we've had a good old fashioned Parish Picnic, but one is in the works now! Mark your calendars for Sunday, August 28. More details to come, but start practicing your grilling!

Join the 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.

Pledge Envelopes: If you pledged but have not yet received your pledge envelopes, you can do so on Sunday. You can also pick up your 2015 statement of giving (helpful for taxes).

Please Pledge! If you haven't yet pledged for 2016, it's not too late. We would like 100% participation this year in pledging, no matter the amount.

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."

- 19 St. John's Church, Fountain Square, Larchmont
- 20 The Church of the Good Shepherd, Granite Springs
- 21 St. John's Church, Pleasantville
- 22 St. Alban's Church, Staten Island
- 23 Integrity USA
- 24 Community of St. John Baptist
- 25 Diocesan LGBT Concerns Committee

St. James' E-pistle

June 17, 2016

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.

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.

St. James' E-pistle

June 17, 2016

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, George Dahlgren, Michael Day, Dee, Dottie Drake, Ross Eames, Jr., Linkin Ewalt, Steven Foote, Heather Francese, Jack Gordy, Robert Guariglia, Harold Hall, Dalton K., Edie Kline, Ashley Konyn, Allelu Kurten, Rosemary Leuken, Joanne Lynn, Doris Mack, Gordon Mackenzie, Virginia Mackenzie, Andrew Mendelson, Rev. Tim Millard, Charles Pardee (husband of Sally), Clifford Plass, Gerald Plass, Grace Plass, Linda Plass, Deborah Porach, John Robinson, Rob Robinson (brother of Mary Gabel), John Ross, Richard Secor, James Sheeky, Naomi Sleight, Marguerite Spratt, Janice Syedullah, Tracy, Candace Vincent, Cassidy Way, Cliff Wells and Shawn Wheeler.

Pray for safe travel for all who are on the road this vacation season.

Pray for our high school graduates: Bryana Burkhardt and Dalton Slegel

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):

Anna Marie Pitcher

Birthdays
(this coming week):

Charles L. Pardee IV, Chris Mackenzie and David Triola

Acolytes:

June 19: Nancy, Kirstin and Deirdre Mae

June 26: Russell, John Beyer and Anna

Altar Guild:

June 19: Team Number III

June 26: Team Number I

8 a.m. Readers:

June 19: Angela Henry and Sue DeLorenzo

St. James' E-pistle

June 17, 2016

	June 26: Debbie Belding and Jim Smyth
10 a.m. Readers:	June 19: Patty Caswell and Judy Douglass
	June 26: Donna Beyer and Justin Bohlmann
Ushers:	June 19: Judy Douglass and Vince Asher
	June 26: Donna and John Beyer
Pledge Clerks:	June 19: Tanya Hall and Anna Marie Pitcher
	June 26: Paul Littlefield and Dean Caswell
Parish Cycle of Prayer:	June 19: Charlessa, Geoff, Jasmine and Jaylen Thatcher; Jodi, Dave, Taylor and Travyn Triola
	June 26: Georgia Verven; Laura Walsh
Coffee Hour Hosts:	June 19: No Coffee Hour
	June 26: No Coffee Hour

This Week's Lectionary

1 Kings 19:1-4, (5-7), 8-15a

Psalm 42

Galatians 3:23-29

Luke 8:26-39

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

Sermon Preached on
Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
(June 12, 2016)

"Keeping Up"

Today is Recognition Sunday.

As the name says, it's all about recognizing the learning & teaching that goes on here. To be an effective Christian, you have to keep up with learning - all ages! You have to keep up with scripture. Have to keep up with Justice and servanthood issues. Social movements. You have to keep up with the world so you can bring the gospel to those who need it - and that's everyone.

St. James' E-pistle

June 17, 2016

Recognition Sunday is where we recognize high school seniors, too - going off to college - and boy, if ever there's a place where you have to keep up, it's college! But that's okay because what they'll be learning in college is mostly how to keep up in an ever-changing world.

Education is all about keeping up

Even priests have to keep up. Even we have to keep learning. In fact, just this past week, I was in school. We were learning how to use the Internet, especially social media - to be a more effective church. You know, FaceBook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Vimeo. Blogs, video logs, podcasts - not to mention e-mail and text messages are all part of ministry today.

Churches are using video conferencing and online learning. One church we encountered has an online bible study because parishioners have too hard a time making it in person. Another church has online meditations and prayer requests and videos teaching about God - all available for the world to see. We already put our entire service on PDF so you can worship without turning pages or switching from book to book. (Ironically, not today). Then there's YouTube. Did you know we already have a St. James' YouTube channel? You can watch our fireside chats and listen to sermons on YouTube. And with a little more work, we can have our services broadcast live for anyone who can't make it to church on a Sunday. Cool, huh?

And there is so much more. Ever hear of Episcopal Cafe? Google it. Ever hear of GrowChristians? Look it up. How about Inward/Outward? All online ministries with great articles, prayers and hints for how to be a Christian today.

Now, you might say people spend too much time on computers already, so why encourage it? The answer is, this is where the people are, and our Lord commanded us to go out into the world where the people are to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. If the world is online, that's where the Gospel needs to be. We are called to do as Jesus himself did, and in today's gospel it says, "He went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God." If we say we don't want to be part of the computer generation, that doesn't mean people will stop living online - it just means they won't hear or experience the Gospel from us.

Or to put it another way, I recently read a prayer (online) that I'd like to share with you:

Christ Has No Online Presence but Yours

Christ has no online presence but yours,
No blog, no Facebook page but yours,
Yours are the tweets through which love touches this world,
Yours are the posts through which the Gospel is shared,
Yours are the updates through which hope is revealed.
Christ has no online presence but yours,
No blog, no Facebook page but yours.

(by Meredith Gould)

If people are online - then so is Christ. You as an individual can proclaim Christ's love, and I hope and pray you do: it is the responsibility of the church to do so.

Episcopalians in general have been late to the game, but we *have* made some strides over the years. It's only been fifteen years since St. James' created its first website. When was the last time you looked? We have a Facebook page, too. If you have Facebook, have you liked our page?

These are the portals through which most people who are interested in a church go these days - without a website - a *good* website - you're sunk.

So I have a quick exercise for you: take out your cellphones. I know, I normally tell you to keep them out of sight, but today is different. If you have a smartphone, get online and open up the St.

St. James' E-pistle

June 17, 2016

James' website. Next, go to the "Ministries" drop down file and tell me what the first ministry listed is. Now, you *could* tell me by raising your hand. Or you could text me or tweet me at @ckramer61.

So you see, Sunday school students are not the only ones who need to learn, who need to keep up with the world. We *all* are, and if we want to speak to an increasingly tech-savvy world, it will be with the help of technology. Telling our story in the old way will not be heard.

In short... I - we - need your help. We need someone who can put lots and lots of pictures and events on Facebook - sort of a Facebook curator. We need a Twitter teacher who is willing to post church events and faithful reflections. We need bloggers and movie makers and people who can code.

None of this takes away from what we do here. One of the interesting ironies about young people today is that they actually *like* many of the traditions we share. They appreciate that we preach God's love, that life is eternal, that we seek justice and reconciliation for all. It's just that in order for people to know about these things, it requires an online presence.

There's a lot I don't understand about the Internet, but I do understand this: as a parish, we have an obligation to get out in to world. If we don't, we will turn our back on the work given us - and we will turn our back on our neighbors.

But if we stick our necks out, challenge ourselves, take a leap of faith, it will lead us - and those whose lives we touch - toward the land of promise. Amen.