

# St. James' E-pistle

## July 1, 2016

### Pulpit Notes

Brothers and Sisters:

As you are undoubtedly aware, this weekend is the run-up to Independence Day on Monday. Like most of you, I am looking forward to the parade, cooking out, and fireworks. The events surrounding the Declaration of Independence, which we celebrate, touched many in this parish directly, some in favor of independence and others not so much.

In a way, the recent and rather shocking decision of the United Kingdom to leave the European Union (the quaintly named "Brexit") vaguely reminds us of this country's struggle more than 200 years ago to break away from the UK. Clearly, they are not at all the same, but many have spoken of it as declaring their independence or "taking back the country."

But what is this Independence, of which everyone keeps talking? This holiday weekend gives us a great opportunity to think about it.

To understand Independence, first we have to consider dependence. Dependence means needing others to do things for you. You need them for essential work to be done, for money, even for permission to do things. Dependent means others do for you.

So Independent means not dependent. You don't need anyone else. You don't need their labor, their funding or their rules. You come and go as you please.

That sounds appealing, doesn't it?

But it's also not really Christian. You see, Christians believe that we are all dependent on God. We can't create life by ourselves. We can't make the plants grow. We can't gain eternal life on our own. Without God, nothing happens, nothing exists, nothing makes sense.

True, our Dependence is only in reference to our relationship with God. With each other, it's different. And yet, Independence may not be the best thing for us then, either. If nobody needs anyone else, there is a tendency to isolate ourselves from each other. And as the saying goes, "No man is an island." The go-it-alone, me first mentality is foreign to Jesus.

Rather, Christians embrace Interdependence. What that means is that we need each other, we depend on each other, we help each other. In Jesus' words, we are to love God with our entire being and love our neighbors as ourselves. That's a concept well worth celebrating and living.

Now, you could rightly argue that the American Declaration of Independence was simply about severing political ties, one country from another. That is completely true, and we've done all right for ourselves. But even in the realm of sovereign nations, Interdependence is

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really what makes things work. That's why there was an EU in the first place, and a UN, and NATO, and any number of other international cooperation organizations. None of us stands - or can stand - alone. It's tempting, but it doesn't work.

And on a spiritual level, it can't work. We are designed by God to need each other - and frankly, despite the inconveniences of having to work around the needs and demands of others - embracing that need for each other makes life more fun.

Grace and Peace,

Chuck+

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### Wanted: Treasurer

Our current Treasurer, Jim Smyth has let the Vestry know he will need to step down from that position in the near future. He is kindly staying on until we can find a replacement, but he has also let us know that it won't last forever.

We need a new treasurer!

Are you the person for the job? Here is a job description taken from our By-laws and informed by the diocesan and national church canons. Take a look. If you might be interested but have questions, please feel free to contact one of our wardens. Just asking will not commit you to anything, but it might help you make an informed decision.

Thanks! We appreciate everyone's help in making St. James' a place of vibrant worship, gracious outreach to those in need, and fiscal responsibility.

### Treasurer Duties:

"The treasurer shall:

1. Keep full and accurate accounts of all funds and moneys.
2. Keep records of all disbursements in a computer at the Parish House that shall be the property of the vestry.
3. Collect or receive all moneys payable to the church corporation and receipt in its name for all subscriptions, gifts, legacies and other payments to the corporation.
4. Be adequately bonded, as provided in Title I, Canon 7. All funds and moneys shall be subject to the order and direction of the vestry and shall be kept by the treasurer in a manner to be identified and preserved as the property of St James' Church at Hyde Park, New York.
5. At all times comply with the provisions of Title I, Canon 7 with respect to the care of funds and the keeping of the treasurer and such other person or persons as shall be designated by the vestry.
6. Make written reports for the meetings of the vestry as requested by the vestry.
7. Keep the corporation's buildings and contents insured against fire and other customary hazards and shall take out public liability insurance on the corporation's premises and on its mother vehicles, if any, and shall secure and maintain such other kinds of insurance as from time to time may be reasonably required, all pursuant to the direction of, and in amounts fixed by the vestry.

In case of the absence or disability of the treasurer, the presiding officer may appoint a treasurer pro tem.

The fiscal year shall begin January 1. All accounts of the parish shall be audited annually by an independent certified public accountant.

*NOTE: If you would like a copy of Title I, Canon 7 of the Episcopal Church's Constitution and Canons, we have copies on file in the office, and are happy to get you one.*

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### The News of the Church

**Worship Walks:** A Holy Hike, a 2-Hour Pilgrimage .... Whatever you want to call it, On **Saturday, July 2**, at 10:00 AM. Fr. Chuck will lead the Worship Walk. This week's walk will take place at the Vanderbilt Loop. WE WILL GATHER IN ST. JAMES' PARKING LOT AT 10:00 AM and travel to Vanderbilt together. If you have any questions about this short and simple Trek with the Trinity, please see Fr. Chuck.

**Field Trip Rhinebeck Jewish Center:** St. James' Bible Study group invites you to join them on a "Field Trip" to the Rhinebeck Jewish Center which was recently featured in the Northern Dutchess News. We will visit with Rabbi Hecht, view their new windows, and in general enjoy the company of fellow children of God from a different tradition. The date for this trip is **Thursday, July 21**, leaving St. James' parking lot at 10:30 AM. Please let Fr. Chuck know if you would like to join us!

**VBS Day:** Just as we did last year, we are planning a Vacation Bible School Day! We are currently planning for Saturday, July 30 (with a conclusion on **Sunday, July 31**). Volunteers and students wanted! Look here and in church for information!

**Cathedral Field Trip:** The Youth of the Parish invite you to join them on a tour of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City, **Saturday, August 20**. Everyone needs to know their cathedral, and this magnificent building is ours. See the cathedral as few do. We are opening this trip up to everyone - especially children and youth of the parish (and their friends).

**Remember Your Pledge this Summer:** Each summer we send out a reminder to keep the church in your sights during those long hot days. This is true not only for attendance and prayers but for pledging. Thanks!

**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!

**Acolyte Festival:** Save the date - **Saturday, October 22** - for the Diocesan Youth Acolyte Festival! It's a full day of mostly meeting other youth, learning a few tricks of the trade, and in general having a great time. We're looking for all youth and a few adults to make the trip

**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.

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**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":

<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)

## **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.diocesenyc.org> and click under "Beliefs and Practices."

- 3 Trustees of the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine
- 4 All from the Diocese Who Serve in the U.S. Military
- 5 The Cathedral School
- 6 Diocesan Deputies to General Convention
- 7 Church of South India Congregation of the Hudson Valley, Briarcliff Manor
- 8 The Church of the Good Shepherd, Greenwood Lake
- 9 Clergy Serving as Deans

### **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**

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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.

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

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# Worship Walks:

## Celebrating God in Creation

### Schedule

All walks start at 10:00 am and will take place in either Ulster or northern Dutchess county

Sat, Jun 4 on the Rail Trail  
(Michelle Meech)

Thu, Jun 9 (Matthew Wright)

Sat, Jun 18 (Susan Auchincloss)

Thu, Jun 23 TBA

Sat, Jul 2 TBA

Thu, Jul 7 on the Rail Train in Stone Ridge (Alison Quin)

Sat, Jul 16 (Susan Auchincloss)

Thu, Jul 21 on the Rail Trail in Stone Ridge (Alison Quin)

Sat Jul 30 (Matthew Wright)

Thu, Aug 4 at Mohonk Preserve (Jeanne Person)

Sat, Aug 13 (Br Peter Rostron)

Thu, Aug 18 (Susan Auchincloss)

Sat, Aug 27 (Matthew Wright)

Thu, Sep 1 on the Poet's Walk (Michelle Meech)

*Leadership schedule  
subject to change*

FOR UP TO DATE  
SCHEDULE INFORMATION  
INCLUDING LOCATIONS  
AND DETAILS OF HIKES  
VISIT:

[www.stjohnskingston.org](http://www.stjohnskingston.org)

CHOOSE Worship Walks FROM  
THE MENU ON THE LEFT



All of creation is evidence of God's unbounded love and is glorious in its very being. By **Celebrating God in Creation**, Worship Walks reminds us that God is the Source of all life and reconnects us to the splendor of all that is holy.

Each Worship Walk is a short 1-2 mile hike lasting approximately 2 hours and is a worship service throughout led by an Episcopal priest. Alternating between *Thursday and Saturday mornings*, **Worship Walks** is an opportunity to reconnect with nature and to connect more deeply with one another, including those from area parishes.

Join us as we celebrate God in creation.

THE  
*Episcopal*  
CHURCH



*welcomes you*

Worship Leadership: The Rev. Susan Auchincloss from Trinity, Saugerties; The Rev. Chuck Kramer from St James, Hyde Park; The Rev. Alison Quin from Christ the King, Stone Ridge; The Rev. Jeanne Person from the Episcopal Diocese of New York; Br. Peter Rostron from Holy Cross Monastery, West Park; The Rev. Matthew Wright from St Gregory's, Woodstock. Organizer: The Rev. Michelle Meech, St John's, Kingston

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Let me recommend a Webinar for everyone who cares about being a positive influence in the world. The Conspiracy for God Conference (Shortened to Conspire) is an annual conference of the Center for Action and Contemplation. While the conference is in New Mexico, a live Webcast will take place at St. John's Church in Cornwall. More information is below. If you would like to learn more about the Center or the Conference, you can go to <https://cac.org/events/conferences/conspire-2016-overview/>

Everything belongs, including you!!!

### **CONSPIRE 2016**

**Via Live Webcast**

*Friday, July 15 – Sunday 17, 2016*

People have good reasons to be angry and afraid.

'Racism, poverty, climate change, and so many other injustices are causing real suffering. **But** – we cannot fight violence with violence. Only the **contemplative mind** has the ability to hold light and dark together; only unitive consciousness allows transformation at the deepest levels.'

*–Fr. Richard Rohr*

The **CONSPIRE 2016** conference brings together teachers who show us what is possible with our participation: reconciliation, healing, and wholeness.

Join Fr. Richard Rohr, Christena Cleveland, James Alison, and Mirabai Starr via live webcast at St. John's Episcopal Church, Cornwall.

**Please register by July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

Cost: a suggested donation of \$25 for refreshments

Please contact us at:

[admin@stjohnscornwall.org](mailto:admin@stjohnscornwall.org)

with your name, email, and phone number

Checks made payable to St. John's Episcopal Church, Memo: CONSPIRE 2016

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**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, Jack Gordy, Robert Guariglia, Harold Hall, Dalton K., Edie Kline, Ashley Konyn, Rosemary Leuken, Paul Littlefield,

Joanne Lynn, Doris Mack, Gordon Mackenzie, Virginia Mackenzie, Andrew Mendelson, Rev. Tim Millard, Charles Pardee (husband of Sally), Clifford Plass, Grace Plass, Linda Plass, Deborah Porach, John Robinson, Rob Robinson (brother of Mary Gabel), John Ross, Richard Secor, James Sheeky, Naomi Sleight, Ann Smith, Marguerite Spratt, Janice Syedullah, Tracy, Candace Vincent, Cassidy Way, Cliff Wells and Shawn Wheeler.

### **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):	Lucille Ogden
Birthdays (this coming week):	Brooke Schroder, Liz Handman and Paul Littlefield
Acolytes:	July 3: Bryanna Burkhardt July 10: Russell Urban-Mead
Altar Guild:	July 3: Team Number I July 10: Team Number II
8 a.m. Readers:	July 3: Lucille Ogden and Jim Smyth July 10: Debbie Belding and Thomas Finnigan
10 a.m. Readers:	July 3: Patty Caswell and Wendy Urban-Mead July 10: Regina Ardini and Deirdre Mae Micker
Ushers:	July 3: Dean Caswell and Austin Horn July 10: Bill and Regina Ardini
Pledge Clerks:	July 3: Doug Belding and Judy Douglass

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Parish Cycle of Prayer: July 10: Joanne Lown and Janet Bright  
July 3: Brian, Joanna, Julianna and Matthew Zocchi; Eric and Tammy Zavadil  
July 10: TBA

Coffee Hour Hosts: July 3: No Coffee Hour  
July 10: No Coffee Hour

### **This Week's Lectionary**

Isaiah 66:10-14

Psalm 66:1-8

Galatians 6:(1-6)7-16

Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

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

Sermon Preached on  
Sixth Sunday after Pentecost  
(June 26, 2016)

"Eyes Forward"

I think we can best understand today's Gospel with a little experiment. First, have a volunteer walk forward while looking back. Now, walk with eyes focused forward on the cross. Okay, which way worked better? Exactly. It's like my driver's education teacher used to tell us: wherever you focus your eyes, that's where you will go. So, when you're driving a 2,000 pound car - keep your eyes forward! This concept of keeping your eyes forward was important to Jesus, too. Because Jesus had a hard job ahead, and he needed helpers he could depend on. That's why, when one guy said he'd follow, Jesus said, "foxes have holes and birds have nest, but not us. We have nothing. Can you deal with that?" One guy to whom Jesus said "Follow me" wanted to. But he said "First, let me go and bury my father." This seems reasonable, right? What kind of heartless person wouldn't let a guy bury his father first.

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The problem is, the way this is written (in the Greek, that is), the father probably isn't dead yet. Or even sick! What he's probably saying is more like: "I'd love to follow - and I will - after dad's gone, of course, because he needs me now." In other words, never.

You gotta worry about this guy being on an important mission if he's always looking back and wondering if he should have stayed with dad.

Now, at this moment, you might say to yourself, "Wait a minute, what about Elisha: he went back to his parents."

And so he did. AND Elijah allowed it.

BUT there's a big difference... He went back to burn his plow and sacrifice the oxen - to sever ties. From this point on, he would be focused on service to God alone.

If only that potential disciple could have thought back to Elisha and been like him.

But wait... The next fellow Jesus talks to does sound a lot like Elisha. He comes up to Jesus and says, "I will follow you, but first let me say goodbye to my family." And once again, Jesus seems kind of harsh. "Whoever puts his hand to the wheel and looks back is not fit for the kingdom of God."

What's going on? In a word, motivation. Jesus sees this guy's offer for what it is: He sounds like that famous moment with Elisha maybe because he sees himself as the next Elisha. In other words, he's having delusions of grandeur. He already sees himself as the new super-prophet.

So with this one little passage, we learn some very important things about following Jesus:

1. It's hard.
2. You have to stay focused on what your mission is - you can't keep looking back.
3. It's not about personal gain, whether in fame or fortune. If you're in it to look good, this is the wrong job.

Now, who is Jesus talking about when he says, "Follow me"? Sounds like maybe it's just apostles or missionaries or ... I don't know, priests these days? Nope. He's talking about all of us. Following Jesus in any capacity is hard, not for the faint of heart. If you're following faithfully, you don't get wealthy from it, you don't get famous from it, and you don't get sidetracked.

But you do come closer to the kingdom of God with every step. Not that there aren't confusions and complication and mistakes along the way. Look at how badly the disciples messed up at the beginning of the gospel - wanting to destroy people just because they didn't believe them. But Jesus taught them better, and they learned.

And maybe that's the biggest lesson of all. If you keep your eyes and heart focused on Jesus, you won't go too far astray. And if you do forget and get lost, you can regain your bearings. Just look to Jesus because he will always be there to see. Amen.