

St. James' E-pistle

July 24, 2015

Pulpit Notes

Brothers and Sisters:

I hope you are enjoying a restful summer. I realize there are always things to do, but stepping outside into the sun (especially when the humidity is low!) can do wonders for the soul. This is the world God gifted us with, and whenever we can reconnect with it a little, we are better off.

Having said that, I know many of you are off on adventures and missions for to good of others. Last week we had our Vacation Bible Fun Day which touched kids beyond our parish! In just over a week, we'll be sending a couple of our young people to Bridge Builders work camp (and perhaps more next year!). Please pray for them in their mission. Some are getting ready to set off for or return to college. And then there are all the summer projects we all want to get done. There may even be vacation.

In the midst of this, our church carries on. Sure, with the choir on break and the quieter summer service, it might look like we're resting, but a lot is happening just under the surface.

For example, the Vestry is working on a Stewardship program that will help us understand our role in this great work God has given us - and how we are all called to be a part of it. We are exploring new ways to help us all pay our pledges more conveniently and evenly. This is important especially in the summer when pledges typically dry up, and the bills start to look more and more difficult to pay. In fact, it would be helpful if you had a look at your pledge to see if you're up to date!

Other planning that's going on includes plans for the Diocesan Convention on November 14. We always send a delegate and an alternate along with the clergy to represent St. James'. If you are interested in being considered as a delegate, please contact me as soon as possible - we have to certify our delegate and alternate by September 14.

But wait, there's more! We are busily preparing for this Fall's Graveyard Tours! Scripts are being written, acting groups are being contacted, auditions are being set up. Preference is always given to parishioners, so if you want to be an actor, a tour guide, a parker or anything else in the tours, please let me know as soon as possible. I'll put you in touch with the right people.

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Then there's the planning we're doing for a new crew of acolytes. Yes, we're looking for you! I'll be holding a series of acolyte training sessions in August and September, so if you are interested, we want you!

So enjoy your summer, but always remember that under that quiet facade, there's a lot of growing going on. And rejoice.

In Christ,

Chuck+

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The News of the Church

The Community Garden: The Community Garden needs some more plastic bags for Friday's Food Pantry clients. A bin is in the Narthex, so please remember to bring them in on Sundays.

Also: We now offer fresh flowers with vases each Friday. If you have small vases in good condition that you would like to donate, that would be great! Please put them in a bag marked "Community Garden" in the narthex.

Opportunities to Extend our Mission Hands: Over the next several months, we are being given the opportunity to extend our mission hands out into our community and beyond. Please prayerfully consider these donation opportunities.

Rural and Migrant Ministry is looking for donations of school kits to be given to the children and youth that attend their summer camp programs. A list of what is needed will be in the narthex beginning Sunday, July 19th. Donations will be accepted through Sunday, August 9th.

Rebuild the Churches Fund: Bishop Dietsche has asked each parish of our Diocese to join him in contributing to the rebuilding of the seven African-American churches that burned recently. We will hold this special collection on Sunday, August 30th.

Then in September the work of Episcopal Relief and Development will be highlighted with a special collection honoring their 75th Anniversary celebration being held on Sunday, September 27th.

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

ACTORS WANTED! The Graveyard Tours are Coming, and we need actors! We are looking within the parish first because we have the best actors! And this year, you want to be involved because it will be powerful.

For 2015, we have seven characters:

- 1 Dr. Samuel Bard - a middle-aged, stately man. Primary founder of the parish.
- 2 Rev. John McVickar - a younger man (mid-20s, early 30s would be ideal but can go older). First rector of St. James'.

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- 3 John Germond - a 40-50ish man. Ideally can play organ. Organist/choir director for 35 years.
- 4 Ellen Roosevelt - athletic woman early 20s. Winner of 3rd US Open.
- 5 Richard Jenkins - between 40-70 man. Former slave, first sexton of St. James'.
- 6 Catherine Carl - almost any age can work (20s - 90s. She lived a long time). Richard's daughter.
- 7 Emma Victoria Pitkin Marshal - 50-70ish woman. Poetess of Hyde Park.

We are also looking for tour guides - it will be a little different this year, and will have special training with Fr. Chuck. Please see Fr. Chuck if you would like to act.

Summer Youth Conference: I strongly encourage any young people (rising 6th graders to rising college Freshmen) to attend the Summer Youth Conference at Incarnation Camp Center this summer. The dates are August 16-22. More information is on a flier below. I have financial aid for anyone interested. Again, I strongly urge this!

Take Some Business Cards: We have created some Business Cards for St. James' Church, and we want you to take them. These cards have our service times and contact information for the church office, but no personal names. Carry them around with you because you never know when you might have a conversation that leads you to talk about Christ and your church. If you have a card with you, you can simply give it to them and let them know it has all the information they might want to get started exploring St. James'. When we run out, we can always get more, so please take a handful this Sunday!

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Notes from the Garden:

June 2015

June turned out to be a pretty cool and rainy month by most standards.

We did however start our vegetable donations for this season.

Early crops such as lettuce, kale, collards, Swiss chard, and bok choy were distributed to 64 families during the month.

Thanks go to Patty & Dean Caswell who were there on the 12th to help distribute the vegetables along with Earth to Table founder, Joe Baldwin.

We held our first of hopefully additional Wellness Fair fundraisers on Saturday, June 19. With the help of our Culinary Institute work study students, and great music provided by the "Plan Bee's" we did manage to raise more monies for the garden!

Please enjoy the pictures from that event as well as what the garden is looking like early in summer.

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We love visitors, so please stop by and see for yourselves how special this old baseball field has become!

Happy July! Deb



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

July

- 26 The Metropolitan Hospital Chaplaincy, Manhattan
- 27 On the feast day for William Reed Huntington, Priest, we pray for an increased ecumenical spirit.
- 28 Incarnation Center, Ivoryton, Connecticut
- 29 Metropolitan Japanese Ministry
- 30 Trinity Conference Center, West Cornwall, Connecticut
- 31 All couples in the diocese and those who work in ministries for healthy relationships

August

- 1 The staff of the Episcopal Diocese of New York

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.

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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

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Ruth Blanding, John Bohlmann, Susie Buhalis, Jim And Sharyn Burke,
Joann Clark, Michael Day, Dottie Drake, Ross Eames, Jr., Linkin Ewalt,
Steven Foote, Heather Francese, Jane Gagliardoto, Jack Gordy, Robert
Guariglia, Harold Hall, Dalton K., Edie Kline, Barbara Knakal, Ashley
Konyn, 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, Richard Secor, James Sheeky,
Naomi Sleight, Tracy, Candace Vincent, Cassidy Way, Cliff Wells and
Shawn Wheeler.

*Please pray for the repose of the soul of Tracy Gansemer, the sister of
Bev O'Halloran.*

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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):	David Bender, Bill Ardini, Sally Pardee and Barbara Soden
Birthdays (next week):	Nick Granados-Kramer, Cliff Wells, David Wardell, Patty Drake and Christian Schroeder
Acolytes:	July 26: Kirstin Horn August 2: Amelia McNamara
Altar Guild:	July 26: Team Number II August 2: Team Number III
8 a.m. Readers:	July 26: Deb Belding and Sue DeLorenzo August 2: Angela Henry and Jim Smyth
10 a.m. Readers:	July 26: Russell Urban-Mead and Deirdre Mae Micker August 2: Donna Beyer and Nancy Montero
Ushers:	July 26: Saira Shahani and Pat Keefe August 2: Nancy Montero and Anna Marie Pitcher
Pledge Clerks:	July 26: Doug Belding and Dean Caswell August 2: Paul Littlefield and Deb Belding
Parish Cycle of Prayer:	July 26: Chris and Dave Wardell and Linda Way August 2: Pat Weber and Cliff & Bobbie Wells
Coffee Hour Hosts:	July 26: No Coffee Hour August 2: No Coffee Hour

This Week's Lectionary

2 Samuel 11:1-15

Psalm 14

Ephesians 3:14-21

John 6:1-21

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

Sermon Preached on Eighth Sunday after Pentecost (July 19, 2015)

"It's a Wonderful Life"

It's really good to be home. I have been hearing already about what good hands I left you in - lots of good things about Alyssa's sermon. In fact, someone was going on and on about her sermon, about how great it was, until they finally stopped and said, "Don't worry, you're good, too." Oh well. Anyway, I got home and read today's gospel, and you know what the very first thing was that popped into my head? A Christmas movie. To be specific, that classic movie, "It's a Wonderful Life". I know, it's not the right season, but on the other hand, there's never really a wrong time for it because it speaks to the human condition.

If you've never seen "It's a Wonderful Life," you need to. It's the story of a young guy named George Bailey who has big plans for his life. Only, every time something good is about to happen, every time he's about to catch a break or get the rest he needs, the people around him need him more. And he responds.

I remember this when I feel sorry for myself. Would George Bailey feel sorry for himself? George always did more for people than anyone else. But I don't need to go to the film. Just look around the parish, and you'll find people who keep giving. Yesterday's VBFD was put on by volunteers who made it happen with tons of work (I was not the last to leave). Every Vestry meeting, I feel like I grumble, but then I remember that every member is a volunteer and most are coming after a day at work). Same with every ministry here. Plus the other work for the good of the community that all do.

It is never ending, isn't it? It always will be, and there will always always, always be demands on your time.

Jesus experiences this in today's gospel - and our passage actually leaves out a few things. Let's set the stage.

The twelve apostles had been on their first mission trip, preaching repentance and healing the sick. They got back excited but exhausted, so Jesus wants to take them to a quiet place to rest. It didn't work. People saw where they were going and took a short cut to get there.

Now, notice the gap? There are a lot of verses missing, and in those missing verses, Jesus teaches the crowd all day, then feeds the 5,000, then walks on water (calming down his freaked out disciples) and only then gets to the other side where they are finally supposed to get some

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rest...only to have a large crowd descend upon them seeking healing. And so he heals the sick. It just never ends, does it?

What does this passage say to us other than Jesus' life was just as overwhelming as ours? (Which is no small thing, by the way). Should we just keep plugging along like he did, till we drop?

That's not what it says. Remember, he DID know the value of rest and did find the time to get away. When he sent the disciples ahead in the boat, he went off to pray by himself. That time alone win God built him up, rested him, strengthened him. The one real fault in George Bailey is that he never rested - or so it seemed - and it nearly killed him.

Moreover, Jesus depended on others, particularly his disciples. Remember, they had just returned from a preaching mission on their own. This is all the more important for us. As Paul says in today's letter to the Ephesians, we are the building together. Jesus is the chief cornerstone, but we make up the building/body together. Certainly, George Bailey discovered that he needed the help of others. We do not have to do everything by ourselves.

But he also found reserves of strength when he thought he had none. As can we. God gives us the tenacity to do what needs to be done when we look to God

One more bit of wisdom from our lessons today... prioritize. Jesus did not heal every person everywhere. He had compassion but did not go looking for people to heal. In "It's a Wonderful Life", George Bailey is a lot like Jesus - he doesn't go looking for the problems, but they always find him, and they are life and death matters! I'm thinking we are generally a lot more like King David in this area, often making work for ourselves that is not helpful. In today's reading from 2 Samuel, God didn't ask David to build a fancy temple. David just decided to do it - maybe because he liked to build, maybe to make himself look more important. Whatever the reason, he was solving a problem that didn't exist. Sound familiar? Perhaps a lesson is to not look for the problems - there are plenty already.

With these little lessons in mind, what might be the most important thing for us to take away from the Gospel according to George Bailey? How about this:

The calls on our attention will never cease. But if we find enough rest and depend on each other, if we make Christ's love our cornerstone, if we prioritize, we will find those moments that make it all worthwhile.

Think about it. What are the scenes that you remember when you think about "It's A Wonderful Life,"? I remember George dancing with Mary at the graduation party. Their non-honeymoon. Zuzu's petals. The joyous ending where everyone in town steps up to save George, and Clarence the Angel gets his wings. Most of all, I remember the joy and love. And that's the point. That's what makes it a wonderful life. That's what makes our lives wonderful too, the joy and love we share in Christ. Amen.

Join us for the 2014

SUMMER YOUTH CONFERENCE



Open to youth entering grades six through first year of college. For more information, email us at: NYYouthConference@yahoo.com

Summer Youth Conference is a spiritual retreat for teens in a summer camp setting. We come together for a week to worship, play, and sing. Our days consist of a theme-related morning program with discussion groups, daily services, swimming, boating, and sports. Our evenings are full of activities like a dance, talent show, and campfire. At the end, we return home a little different than when we arrived; stronger for the love and friendship we've added to our lives. Please join us for the week, and make friendships that can last a lifetime!



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Ivoryton, CT

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