

St. James' E-pistle

September 11, 2015

Pulpit Notes

Brothers and Sisters:

What does ministry cost? I'm not talking about the buildings and the grounds - the overhead, as it were. We already discussed that a little (though I failed to mention the extensive insurance and tax burden).

But ministry itself. How much does it cost to have a priest? To run a Sunday School? To feed the hungry? To keep the altar guild supplied so we can worship?

First, it helps to know what our ministries - and our ministers - are.

The ministers of the church are easy: It's all of us. You may think I'm the minister, but I'm just a minister of the church. The catechism teaches that the first order of ministers of the church is the laity. Bishops, priests, and deacons are merely support staff - there to guide, support and encourage but never to take the place of the ministers.

Having said that, our paid ministers at St. James' include an organist who provides for the music. It includes our secretary who - among many other tasks - prepares our Sunday bulletins. It includes our Nursery School teachers who bring children from outside the parish just a little closer to Christ. And, of course, it includes me as rector. Our sexton is indirectly associated with our ministry in that he keeps the church clean, but you might consider that overhead.

Notice that I didn't include the deacons? That's because they are not paid. Their ministry is ordained but not vocational in the sense of it being a career.

There's no getting around that the most expensive piece of the paid staff puzzle is the rector. It simply costs a lot to have a full-time priest. I will not mention my salary specifically - it's fairly average - but it is by far the biggest chunk of the salary pie. And when I'm away, we have to budget for supply clergy.

When it comes to the paid ministers, we have to ask ourselves if their ministries are worth it. What, for example, does a priest even do? Is it of value?

Here is a partial list of my ministry here: Lead worship, preach, write newsletter, write weekly column, write/direct pageants and Graveyard Tours, teach confirmation classes, lead spiritual exercise classes, lead bible study, serve on ethics committee at Renaissance Rehabilitation, serve on Board of Ethics for the Town of Hyde Park, serve as convener of the Hyde Park Association of Churches, serve as Dean of the Northern Dutchess Deanery, serve on District Leadership Team for the Hyde Park School District. I work with the nursery school as its

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headmaster. I work with the youth group. And of course, I visit the sick and homebound and marry, bury and baptize. And yes, part of my expenses include continuing education, travel, and a discretionary fund for helping those in need.

Part of St. James' ministry costs are due to our affiliation with the Diocese of New York and the Episcopal Church. Just as we ask you to pledge, so does the Episcopal Church require the Diocese to pay an assessment, and so does the Diocese require the same of each parish. Our assessment is around \$7,000 and rising.

Here are some of our ministries: Altar guild and acolytes for regular Sunday worship, music for regular Sunday worship, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Inquirers Class, youth group, men's group, bible study, special classes, Hospitality, Outreach committee (which has worked the food pantry and shelter, provided food for holidays and gifts for Christmas), Community Garden, Nursery School, Fireside Chats, Graveyard Tours, E-pistle, website, digital bulletin.

All of these ministries come up to a total cost of about \$160,000. This is slightly less than half our total \$331,000 budget (the rest being buildings and grounds, etc.). Things being the way they are, we can only expect those costs to go up.

You are probably associated with some of the ministries we have here. Undoubtedly, you participate in these ministries because they are an outward expression of Christ's love - the love God gives us for no other reason than because God loves us. As you seek ways to manifest God's love, you look to Christ who fed, taught, forgave, and healed others.

That's a good place to look.

And it is a good thing for us to be involved in a wide variety of ministries that help us proclaim the Gospel - the Good News of the risen Christ - in thought, word and action.

It's important to me that we never think we have done our job as the Church just by writing a check. Ministry is by its very nature a fact-to-face proposition.

But you do need to know what these ministries cost. And each of us needs to ask ourselves if we feel it's worth supporting.

In Christ,

Chuck+

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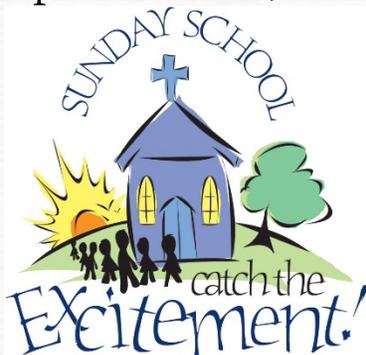
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The News of the Church

Sunday School Registration OPEN! We're also getting ready for Sunday School to start back up. A registration form for Sunday School is attached. This is a pdf form with fields that can be completed online and then printed out. Alternatively, you can print and complete by hand.

St. James' Sunday School Open House & Registration

September 13, 2015



Come and see your classroom, meet your teacher and register for the school year.

Immediately following the 10:00 service.

September 11 Ceremony: The annual September 11 remembrance ceremony will take place at 7:00 pm on Friday, September 11 at the Hackett Hill Park/Paul Tegtmeier Memorial. You are all cordially invited and encouraged to be part of it.

Quarterly Service: On Sunday, September 13, the 8:00 AM service will be held at the chapel. It is found at 10 E. Market Street.

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Garden Harvest Blessing this Sunday: This Sunday, September 13 following the 10:00 AM Eucharist, we will gather at the Community Garden for a blessing of the harvest, the garden, its volunteers, and those it feeds. We'll pray for anew fence, too! Join us.

Outreach Meeting: All Invited! You are invited to attend the first Outreach Meeting of the Fall on Wednesday, September 16 at 6:30 PM. We gather in the Wilks Room. See you then!

GRAVEYARD TOUR TICKETS ARE ON SALE: You can now purchase Graveyard Tour tickets by visiting our website: www.stjameshydepark.org Encourage your friends, colleagues and families to get their tickets, too! We hope that sending people directly to the church's website will make the purchasing process easier.

Tour Guides and Crew Needed! We've had a good response for our TOUR GUIDES and CREW, especially considering that so many are on vacation! But we still need more volunteers. Please stop by and have a look at the clip boards for our needs. Or call Bobbie Wells to see how you can help.

Actors begin rehearsal THIS Saturday, September 12 at 6:00 PM.

Tour guides will have a training session Saturday, September 19, at 5:00 PM.

Please make every effort to attend, but see Fr. Chuck if this time is impossible for you

BIBLE STUDY STARTING! Next Thursday at 11:00 AM the weekly daytime bible study will begin its fall season. We hope you will consider this great way to get together but more importantly to learn what's in that bible of yours. Our faith is grounded on what's in those books, so it is incumbent upon each Christian to know - to understand - what is really there. Do not depend on television or the internet for your biblical insights.

Pledge Clerk Wanted: We are looking for a Pledge Clerk to work with one of our experienced clerks. We'll show you the ropes. You would serve about once a month.

WEEDERS WANTED: Thank you to everyone who volunteered to take a garden or path assignment for weeding in an effort to "put our best foot forward." We still need 3 or 4 more volunteers. You will choose a garden or path to adopt and be responsible for its weeding and

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upkeep throughout the year. You will be able to work on it on your own schedule (There will be no designated work days, just whenever it fits in with you.) It probably should only need your attention three of four times a year (if that). Bring a friend. If you can help fill that schedule, please call Sue DeLorenzo at 266-3196 or Carol Vinehall at 849-1914. We'd really appreciate your help. Thanks again.

Episcopal Relief and Development will be highlighted in September 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!

Wellness Fair: Being held on **Saturday, October 4th** from 12-6 p.m. at the Hyde Park Farmers' Market. Please see attached flier.

Get Your Coffee Hour On! Would you like to clear out your cupboard of cookies? Feel like baking a cake or a sheet of brownies? Find a good 'buy one, get one free' deal on baked goods at stop n shop? If you can donate some goodies and place them on the table in the parish hall before church, you too can be a coffee hour volunteer-- that's all it takes! So please, fill up all those empty slots thru December on the clipboard in the narthex & we'll handle the rest. P.S. Of course, if you feel called to get more involved, just ask Saira or any other coffee team member how you can help!

Take Some Business Cards: Share your church with your friends and neighbors with a St. James' Business Card. You never know when you have the opportunity to help someone find their way to God.

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."

- 13 St. John's Church, Wilmot, New Rochelle
- 14 On Holy Cross Day we pray for the faith to take up our cross daily.
- 15 The Church of St. James the Less, Scarsdale
- 16 St. Mark's Church, Yonkers
- 17 Grace Church, Millbrook

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18 St. Margaret's Church, Staatsburg
19 St. John's Church, Monticello

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,

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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, Sharyn Burke, Joann Clark, Michael Day, Dottie Drake, Ross Eames, Jr., Linkin Ewalt, Steven Foote, Heather Francese, 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, 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):	Remo Valdatta, Pat Keefe, Fred Champion and Edith Kline
Birthdays (next week):	Kathy Graff, Stephen Gaulin, Marcia Valdatta, Laurel Ardini, Bill Holland, Stephen Burkhardt and Franklin Santos
Acolytes:	September 13: TBA September 20: TBA
Altar Guild:	September 13: Team Number III September 20: Team Number III
8 a.m. Readers:	September 13: Angela Henry and Lynne Koch September 20: Deb Belding and Jim Smyth
10 a.m. Readers:	September 13: Donna Beyer and Judy Douglass

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Ushers:	September 20: Wilma Tully and Nancy Montero September 13: Saira Shahani and Pat Keefe
Pledge Clerks:	September 20: Nancy Montero and Anna Marie Pitcher September 13: Paul Littlefield and Deb Belding September 20: Tanya Hall and Anna Marie Pitcher
Parish Cycle of Prayer:	September 13: St. James' Nursery School and Kurt, Meg, Alexandra, Aaron and Bryanna Burkhardt September 20: Dean and Patty Caswell and Kathy and Fred Champion
Coffee Hour Hosts:	September 13: Jodi Triola, Ross & Connie Eames and Pat Rooney September 20: Deirdre Mae Micker

This Week's Lectionary

Proverbs 1:20-33

Psalm 19

James 3:1-12

Mark 8:27-38

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

Sermon Preached on
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
(September 6, 2015)

"Sowing Injustice"

I'm delighted to be back home - it was a good week making sure both boys were launched out into the world. But it was also an informative week - at least for me - in several non-child-related areas.

A few days ago, literally on my first day back in the office, I (along with every other priest in the country) received an e-mail from the Presiding Bishop's office informing us that the Episcopal Church had been invited by the African Methodist Episcopal Church to join them in

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participating in "Confession, Repentance, and Commitment to End Racism Sunday" - which is today.

The flurry of messages around the country was fast and furious and basically came down to: Great Concept but why only a few days' notice? Bishop Dietsche finally jumped in and said to clergy in our diocese that, while the invitation came late for a variety of reasons, it is sincere, and the need for it is great - so if September 6 didn't work, we could pick another date to confess, repent and commit ourselves to ending racism.

Given the tensions we are experiencing in our country - police shooting unarmed blacks, police being shot, church burnings... now seems like a good time for confession, repentance and a commitment to end racism. They are, of course, just the most recent events in a centuries-long history of racial injustice.

Oh, and for what it's worth, this date is important not only in the African Methodist Episcopal Church but in our church as well. It is the Feast Day of Alexander Crummel, one of the first black Episcopal priests, a vocal abolitionist, a founder of black Episcopal Churches and a highly accomplished missionary. The first Sunday in September is also Union of Black Episcopalians Sunday.

I'm betting most of us did not know that.

Part of the problem in our society is that most of us don't know very much about people who are different than us. We don't know their struggles or the challenges they face - and frankly, we often don't care.

For example,

Did you know 64% want a wall?

Did you know that George Takei has just come out with a musical called "Allegiance" which will open on Broadway in November? If you don't know who George Takei is, he was Mr. Sulu on the original Star Trek TV show. Now approaching 80, he wrote the musical about his Japanese American family's time in an internment camp during World War II. If you get a chance to see it, I would recommend it. If nothing else, it shows that the impact of that blatant racism is still reverberating today.

But what came as a personal shock to me this week is something that truly shows how long the hand of injustice is.

When Liz and I were on vacation last week, one of the little side trips we made was to the Erie Canal Museum in Chittenango, which also just happens to be the birthplace of L. Frank Baum, author of the famous Wizard of Oz. Most everything seems to be Oz-themed in Chittenango. The curator of the museum said this was misplaced because Baum was also responsible for genocide of native Americans.

Being a huge Oz fan since childhood, I had to investigate and learned that in 1890, shortly after Sitting Bull was murdered and then again after the massacre of native Americans at Wounded Knee, Baum wrote two editorials basically saying, "We have nearly wiped the once great Indian out - we might as well finish the job and exterminate them."

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In my research, I turned up countless articles, letters and other quotes from heroes of mine talking about how native Americans were subhuman and would be best put down like rabid dogs.

It was shocking to me, that's for sure, but there's no escaping the fact that someone I thought highly of - a person generally considered open and loving - said this horrible thing.

This leads us directly to Jesus in today's gospel, doesn't it? Because in today's gospel, Jesus comes pretty close to the same language.

The Syrophenician woman whose daughter is possessed by a demon - however we are to understand that today - comes to Jesus and begs for his help. Jesus says, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs."

There is simply no way to get around this being a racial slur. Dogs are dirty in ancient Israel, and Israelites - despite their fabled hospitality to all foreigners - considered virtually all gentiles to be dogs.

So what's going on? Is Jesus racist?

It is almost impossible to know what motivated his statement. Jesus has held up gentiles as paragons of virtue in other places in the gospels, but here, he is harsh, readily reflecting his culture's bias.

But the woman - who apparently is familiar with this type of put down - is not deterred. She comes back at him with, "Yes, but even the dogs under the table get scraps - help me."

Perhaps what happens next is the most important lesson of this gospel passage. It's NOT that Jesus uttered a racial slur, reflecting his culture's bias, but that when she responded to his slur, he listened to her.

He listened to her.

You and I - whether we are of European, Native American, Latino, African, or Asian descent - you and I cannot help the backgrounds we were born into. Neither can we help the biases we were raised with, and having been raised in a run-down inner city context, I know I was raised with lots of biases.

If, like me, you were raised in the dominant culture, you probably don't even see many of those struggles, the injustices that are visited upon brothers and sisters on a daily basis. In the same way, there's a good likelihood that the original readers of today's gospel never gave the term "dog" a second thought. Sure she's a dog. She's Syrophenician. What's the big deal?

We can't escape who we are or the system into which we were raised. And of course, a system of injustice is far too large for any of us to change overnight. Abuse of native Americans has been going on for hundreds of years and continues today - just recently, the government was reported to be in negotiations with a Canadian company to that wants to buy land on a reservation - in violation of treaties we signed, of course.

Abuse of people of African descent has been going on for hundreds of years and continues today, as we know far too well.

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And even if we think of the internment of Japanese Americans as a war-time aberration, we can't escape the fact that Asians have been at times forcibly segregated from the rest of society since the 19th century.

This doesn't even address our treatment of Latinos in our country.

Or the poor about whom James and Proverbs speak, and who we are commended throughout scripture to serve. Instead, we generally tell them they're lazy parasites.

Nor can we escape the fact that abuse of others is not limited to race. Injustice has been visited upon our poor brothers and sisters. It has been visited upon our gay brothers and sisters for centuries, and it's been in the news this week via the Kentucky county clerk Kim Davis who refused to issue marriage licenses to gay couples.

As I say, I do not believe we can escape the biases we are raised with.

BUT, like Jesus, we can transcend them. And, like him, the best way we can do that is to start listening. It is so easy to let people know what WE think they should do - but the best, most loving, most honest, most Christian thing we can do is listen.

Our reading from Proverbs says, "Whoever sows injustice will reap calamity." Unfortunately, it doesn't say who that calamity will affect, and it's often not the one who sows the injustice. We have seen the calamity in our black brothers and sisters, in our native American brothers and sisters, in our Latino brothers and sisters, in our Asian brothers and sisters and in our gay brothers and sisters - among many, many others.

It is up to us, now, to listen. To truly hear their stories, their complaints and their accusations. Without that, how can we, like Jesus, act in a new way? James, in his epistle, says that we are a church not just of belief, but of action. If we do not reach out in love, what are we hear for? This is the founding lesson of our very congregation.

The second part of today's gospel has something important for us. A deaf man is brought to Jesus to have his ears opened. We have been deaf to our brothers and sister too long.

So on this day in which Black Episcopalians and members of African Methodist Episcopal Church invite us to confession, repentance, and commitment - let us ask Jesus to utter "Ephphatha" and open our ears. While we're at it, let us ask him to open our eyes. And most importantly, let us ask that he might open our hearts.

Amen.

St. James' Episcopal Church
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2015 - 2016 SUNDAY SCHOOL REGISTRATION FORM

Child's Full Name _____

Name Child Prefers to be called _____

Date of Birth _____ Grade Entering _____

Mother's Name _____

Father's Name _____

Full Address _____

(If parents live apart, please give address at which the child lives most of the time and indicate which parent is at that address.)

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

E-mail address: _____ May we send e-mail notices to you? Yes / No

Has your child attended St. James Sunday School before? Yes / No

Are you members of the church? Yes / No Has your child been baptized? Yes / No

Will you be attending church while your child is in Sunday School? Yes / No

If not, emergency contact info:

At what phone can we reach you in case of emergency? _____

Additional emergency contact name _____

phone number _____

relationship to child _____

Are there any restrictions/conditions your child has, or is there any information the teacher should know in order to make Sunday School a more positive experience for your child? Yes / No

If yes, please explain.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions, problems, suggestions you or your child might have regarding Sunday School.

Date _____ Parent's Signature _____

Hyde Park Wellness Fair



To benefit the Hyde Park Community Garden

**Sunday, October 4 from 12-6 pm
Rain or Shine**

At the Hyde Park Food Festival

**(on Rte. 9 in Hyde Park where the Farmer's Market is -
the parking lot where Hyde Park Motors used to be)**

Free Admission!

Vendors! Food! Music!

~ Vendor space \$20/table ~

**For further information
call 229-2820 or 229-0153**