

St. James' E-pistle

September 4, 2015

Pulpit Notes

Brothers and Sisters:

Why does the church exist? What's its purpose?

I said it before, and I'll say it again: our purpose is *not* to make money.

To the best of my knowledge, nobody ever said, "Let's go to church so we can make (or give) money).

Our purpose is not to survive, though I've seen far too often where Christians near and far put all their energy into making sure the doors stay open.

As we consider our money and the financial needs of this parish, it's important to remember what that money is being raised to do. Last week, I talked about keeping the buildings operating, and how, though they consume a tremendous portion of the budget, they are important to the ministry we have been given at St. James'. The buildings are a tool of ministry. So is the money.

But they are *not* our purpose.

So, what is our purpose as Christians? As members of an Episcopal congregation in the Hudson Valley? Our purpose will be different here than in other parts of the state or world because our context is different. But there are many things we will have in common with all ministries everywhere. If I had to put down in bullet form those things that make up our purpose, I'd do something like this:

Teaching the Faith - both within the parish and beyond. Our faith involves not only how we understand our relationship with God in Christ, which is of vital importance, but how we understand our relationship with each other and with the world God has given us. The church's job is to teach that faith in Sunday School, Bible Study, Sermons, articles, and classes. We will never be able to have enough of these to do the job well, they are that important.

Worshipping - We worship using a Book of Common Prayer because it joins us with Anglicans around the world. Once, worshiping in India at a Tamil congregation, I understood absolutely nothing of the language. But the liturgy was so familiar that I had no problem fully participating and knowing, at the end, that I had been in the presence of God. Our worship is our work, and it is central to our being. Worship is not a solitary activity - it is by definition communal. That's why we have the worship space we call church.

St. James' E-pistle

September 4, 2015

Growing deeper in our relationship with God in Christ - This is an area we need much work on, but taking seriously our prayer, our meditation, our spiritual reading is important to our purpose. How can we love God if we do not know God? That's why we have prayer groups, local pilgrimages, a labyrinth, and Anglican rosaries.

Praying for ourselves and others - Each week in church, we have the Prayers of the People. It is a time when the church lifts up the regular, ongoing needs of the world as well as the needs, longings and celebration of all people. We pray together as the Body of Christ.

Being in fellowship - Fellowship with our local community of faith as well as the larger community of faith is important because it bonds us together. The church potluck or dinner or picnic or coffee hour may seem cliché, but they play an important role in making us a family of faith. After all, the family that eats together is a strong family. Long live the Lenten Breakfasts!

Listening and responding to the physical and spiritual needs of the community - The Body of Christ of necessity looks beyond itself, just as Christ himself did. We are moved by love given freely by God and implanted irrevocably in our minds and hearts. To see others suffer in body, mind or spirit is to suffer with them. The church is still learning how best and most appropriately to respond to the needs of the world. For example, we're learning that listening to people, asking them what they need now and long-term is far better than assuming we know what's best for them. We will make many mistakes, but to refuse to serve for fear of error is to abdicate our responsibility to each other.

Sharing our faith with actions AND with our own stories - Yes, we are called to evangelize. Sorry about that. But it does not mean banging on doors and asking people if they've found Jesus. It means learning how to watch for signs that someone is open to God. It means growing familiar, even comfortable enough with our story that we can naturally share it, because telling our own story is the best witness we can offer. And that, of course, means knowing our story. Not just the bible, but each of our own walks with God. More than you might think, people come to my office (or text or call or e-mail) and say, "I've got questions. I've got doubts. I am not sure what God is doing in my life." The church - the entire community of faith - is here to help us know ourselves and share our faith in word and actions.

Seeking Justice where there is none, with reconciliation our goal - The center of our faith is reconciliation with God. When others are unjustly imprisoned or discriminated against or abused, it is our obligation to stand up for them, offer not only moral support but physical remedy where possible. Our goal as a church is not to overthrow or defeat but to bind together those for whom the breach is too wide. Many would say it is a fool's errand. It might be. But our belief is that the arch of history bends toward justice - and the arch of true justice always bends toward reconciliation.

St. James' E-pistle

September 4, 2015

As a side note, that is one reason why the Episcopal Church will join other denominations this Sunday to participate in "Confession, Repentance and Commitment to End Racism Sunday." It is a new and interdenominational show of support for those who are belittled and abused - by individuals or by social norms - because of race.

So that's our purpose - or at least as much as I can put into just a few words. That's why we have a congregation at all. Because we cannot do these things on our own. We cannot know God, we cannot worship, we cannot learn well, we cannot support each other in faith seek justice outside of the community of faith. Certainly, we can't do it as well alone as together.

God's joy is that God's people come together lifting up their hearts to heaven and their hands to each other.

That's why we are here. That's what we are supporting.

In Christ,

Chuck+

St. James' E-pistle

September 4, 2015

The News of the Church

Last Summer Sunday Service: This Sunday is the last Summer service using the service booklet. Starting next week, we return to the usual Rite II with service music.

Sunday School Registration OPEN! We're also getting ready for Sunday School to start back up. Registration forms for Sunday School will be available at church, so pick on up this week!

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

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.

Tour Guides and Actors will start rehearsals in early September, so please sign up now!

Actors Needed: All but one role has at least one actor now! We need the following:

1 Rev. John McVickar - a younger man (mid-20s, early 30s would be ideal but can go older). First rector of St. James'. **We have one actor for this role and need another!**

2 Catherine Carl - almost any age can work (20s - 90s. She lived a long time). Richard's daughter. **We have one actor for this role and need another!**

3 Emma Victoria Pitkin Marshal - 50-70ish woman. Poetess of Hyde Park. **We have one actor for this role and need another!**

St. James' E-pistle

September 4, 2015

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 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.

Got Oil? St. James' is a partner with the Dutchess County Interfaith Counsel which has an agreement with Love Efron Oil to reduce oil costs. Because of the collective size of the organization, we get a reduced rate for oil. We recently received word from Love Efron that they would now like to extend these discounts to all members, volunteers, and employees of the member churches. While this is undoubtedly an effort to attract new customers, discounts also apply to current customers.

We don't act as promoters of any business, but if this is something that can save you a little money because of your association with St. James', we are happy to be of use. I believe you need to contact Love Efron directly and mention your relationship with St. James'. If you do so, please contact Fr. Chuck to let him know how it works out.

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.

St. James' E-pistle

September 4, 2015

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."

- 6 St. Edmund's Church, The Bronx
- 7 The Church of the Ascension, Staten Island
- 8 The Church of the Holy Communion, Mahopac
- 9 All Saints' Church, Valley Cottage
- 10 On the feast day for Alexander Crummell we pray for those who work to break down barriers among the races.
- 11 Victims of the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, 2001 and for the Chaplains for Disaster Relief
- 12 On the feast day for John Henry Hobar we pray for new life in the Episcopal Church.
- 13 St. John's Church, Wilmot, New Rochelle

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:

St. James' E-pistle

September 4, 2015

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, 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.

St. James' E-pistle

September 4, 2015

Birthdays (this past week):	Laura Seagren, Annabeth Gausepohl, Patty Caswell, Kristin Cotton, Christopher Dingee, Sara Dingee and Laura Kinne
Birthdays (next week):	Remo Valdatta, Pat Keefe, Fred Champion and Edith Kline
Acolytes:	September 6: Jaylen Thatcher September 13: TBA
Altar Guild:	September 6: Team Number II September 13: Team Number III
8 a.m. Readers:	September 6: Deb Belding and Sue DeLorenzo September 13: Angela Henry and Lynne Koch
10 a.m. Readers:	September 6: Regina Ardini and Paul O'Halloran September 13: Donna Beyer and Judy Douglass
Ushers:	September 6: Bill and Regina Ardini September 13: Saira Shahani and Pat Keefe
Pledge Clerks:	September 6: Janet Bright and Joanne Lown September 13: Paul Littlefield and Deb Belding
Parish Cycle of Prayer:	September 6: Robin Bohlmann; Justin, Danielle & Emerson Bohlmann and Janet Bright September 13: St. James' Nursery School and Kurt, Meg, Alexandra, Aaron and Bryanna Burkhardt
Coffee Hour Hosts:	September 6: Audrey Horne; Deb and Doug Belding September 13: Jodi Triola, Ross & Connie Eames and Pat Rooney

This Week's Lectionary

Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23

Psalm 125

James 2:1-10, 11-13, 14-17

Mark 7:24-37

St. James' E-pistle

September 4, 2015

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

Sermon Preached on
Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
(August 30, 2015)

We had a guest preacher last week, so no sermon is printed this week.

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**