

St. James Parish

Epistle



January 2019

Rector's Message

*For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples;
but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you.
Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you ... [Isaiah 60:2-3]*

Take in the verse of Isaiah above. Isaiah is the great prophet of hope and promise ... or so I have always seen him to be. We see the rise, fall, and promised rise again in the great exilic prophet's vision of Israel's present and future life. The great strength of the prophetic voice is that it does not turn away from the ugliness and darkness that can cloud our present time or that could be the future, if we don't turn another way. Isaiah is ready to "get real," if hip people still say such things, with the people of Israel.

But the promise of Isaiah is often colored, for Christians, with a hope beyond Israel's return from exile. The season of Epiphany and beyond, between Christmas and Lent, shows forth the promise of the Christ-child, God enfleshed in Jesus, the Son of God. The three kings followed a sign, a star, to where the promised "king" was residing. And they brought gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, to honor the person Jesus was foretold to be: a monarch of men and women, a savior for His people. The chosen people of Israel were in a time of deep darkness that covered the earth as they knew it: poverty, occupation, violence, and not much hope for change. Messiah would come and reinstitute the glory of Israel, or so the prophecies seemed to say. But the world would discover that Jesus was so much more than some earthly king, as he carried with Him the promise of God's complete and total salvation. The Epiphany is often seen to be representative of God's revealing of His glory to the gentiles, thereby including non-Jews in the promise of salvation. Jesus' coming means, ultimately, that "they all gather together, they come to you [God]," and all receive the promise of light in darkness, grace in pain, and hope in doubt for all time.

I love playing the little game with our youngest members each year, during Advent and Christmas, as we look for the three wisemen, "hidden in plain sight" around the church. The children excitedly tell me, "Father George, there was one here, and one there, and one over there!" They point to the symbols of those who come, seeking the promised Messiah, Jesus, the Christ; the one who is revealed to us, as Epiphany breaks out among us. May we follow the little fingers that point the way to those who remind us where Jesus is waiting. He waits to be discovered in a manger, in a room, on a Cross, in a tomb, or in a locked room, after He has risen from the dead. He longs to be found by us in our sorrow, pain, moments of depression or disillusion...when we are without hope. Let us follow, excitedly and hurriedly, to see the One who has come among us. He is here, ready and waiting, for us to uncover the secrets that he hides in plain sight. Jesus does not hide the reality that He has come because, always, He loves us so very much. The secret is out. The truth of Christ has been revealed and God points the way: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son ..."

In Christ, George+

Warden's Corner

Happy New Year to you all. My prayers go out to you all for a blessed 2019.

Should old acquaintance be forgot, and never brought to mind?

I have always contemplated the meaning of this song and have wondered, if my interpretation is correct, would you ever want to forget the things that shape your year? So I decided to dig a little deeper online to find the the intended meaning of this traditional song verse that rings in the New Year.

After reading through a few articles on the topic, I found that in its most simple meaning the lyric translates to a casual bidding farewell of an occasion or function. Another uncommon phrase from this song, "In the days of auld lang syne," marks clarification to the other. "In the days of auld lang syne" is another way of saying *Once upon a time*. It is also interpreted as a way of recognizing "longstanding friendships" according to Wikipedia. In the absence of translation for one piece of this song, the meaning and understanding vanishes entirely.

It is interesting that we use this phrase to end one year and welcome another. Perhaps it is best to think of it in the way the original song writer and author would have used it, as a beginning or a tale to tell. The year has now gone and so a new story has been born, one to learn and grow from. And less we forget the idea of toasting longstanding friendships which is always such a wonderful thing.

I tend to want to be an optimist. In my story the good will be told, but it is the difficult times that we can reflect on; how those times made us stronger, personally, for others and in our faith. What it all boils down to is that we are all so blessed with our families, homes, health, faith, friendships ... whatever it is that fills your year with joy.

There have been things for us all that have made us sad or have been difficult in this past year, but we will always be able to navigate because of our faith and each other; that is something to be thankful for. I think this year when the song begins, I will be reminded of the positive and say that I toast you all for our friendship, our faith journey together and say that at the end (or beginning perhaps) of my *once upon a time* I have been blessed to start another year with you.

Happy New Year!
Cathie Martin, Co-Warden

Join us for worship on New Year's Day *Feast of the Holy Name*

On **Tuesday, January 1st, at 11 a.m.** in the chapel we will celebrate the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus with Eucharist. Please join us for this day that marks the beginning of our new year, but celebrates Jesus, the Christ. A short reflection will precede the celebration of Holy Communion, with prayers for healing following. Come lay your challenges and joys at the feet of our Savior.



First Sunday Breakfasts

Find delicious food and fellowship at the ***First Sunday Breakfasts*** cooked by a great crew of men of the parish, led by John McBride: pancakes, waffles, sausage, bacon, eggs, breads, juice and coffee as good as Mom made. The menu may change from one month to the next – [come join us in the Parish Hall at 9 a.m. on the first Sunday of January, the 6th](#) as we joyfully gather in fellowship!

Movie Night!

On **Saturday, January 12th, at 6 p.m.** we will have our second Movie Night of the formation year, with a showcasing of the movie, *Risen*. Bring dinner (we will supply the popcorn, drinks, and dessert) and join us for a showing of the film. *Risen* follows the crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus through the eyes of a Roman Tribune, a soldier stationed in Jerusalem during the last days of Christ. The film is imaginative and provocative, with truly mesmerizing performances from Joseph Fiennes (*Shakespeare in Love*, *The Handmaid's Tale*), as Clavius, the Tribune; Peter Firth (*Equus*, *The Hunt for Red October*, and many, many plays); and Tom Felton (Drago from the Harry Potter series). Join us for a time of stimulating entertainment and conversation after. Let us know if you need a ride!!! **We will be watching on our brand new entertainment system!**



Change of time for Wednesday service

Beginning on Wednesday, January 9th, we are moving the 10 a.m. weekly service to Noon. We have tried a few different times over the last 10 years and are hoping that folks can come to this brief service of prayer and Holy Communion, with Prayers for Healing. Receiving the Eucharist during the week, and slowing down for a time of prayer and reflection, can be a great boost to your week either once in a while, or on a regular basis. Come, when you are able, and join us!

Thank you for participating in the Christmas Angel Tree Ministry!

Armen and I would like to extend a heartfelt **THANK YOU** to those that supported the Christmas Angel Tree project which benefited the Adopt-A-Family programs at both the Friendship Service Center AND the Farmington Community Services. We adopted approximately 60 individuals – children and adults included. Parishioners were asked to select one or more ornaments from the Angel Tree, purchase an appropriate Christmas gift, and return the gift to the Parish Hall. Approximately 45 individuals/families participated in this ministry and your kindness and donations are very much appreciated.



Thank You!

Sheila Church & Armen Michalak-Slusarz

Church school updates

Welcome 2019! We welcome all children to join us for our First Sunday adventures in the church school wing. On the First Sunday of each month, all the church school grades gather together to learn a Bible story or work on a project. All are welcome!

Reminder that Sparks the friendly Dragon Coin Bank is "hungry" to donate to those in need. Please have your children bring loose change to feed the Dragon. Once Sparks is full, we will have the classrooms decide where to send the donation.



Please come learn about God and take a journey with your class!

Julia Grieco

Youth Ministry Updates



We had such an amazing December! We made Advent Wreaths, celebrated all together at the Youth Christmas Party, and spent time in fellowship at Lake Compounce Holiday Lights!

Looking forward to January, we are inviting all youth to participate in the MLK Day of Service on January 21st. "Each year, on the third Monday in January, the MLK Day of Service is observed as a "day on, not a day off." MLK Day of Service is intended to empower individuals, strengthen communities, bridge barriers, create solutions to social problems, and move us closer to Dr. King's vision of a 'Beloved Community.'" We are still in the planning stages of this event, but more information will be provided very soon! As always, if you have any questions, please let me know or email me at amy.siyouthminister@gmail.com.

Amy Moffat, Youth Minister

Confirmation Corner

Confirmation class for the month of January will be January 13th from 12–2 p.m. January's lessons will focus on an overview of the Bible and how it is put together. Additionally, we will closely examine several versions of the Lord's Prayer, followed by a Prayer Lab where youth can explore different ways to pray. See you all there and please see me with any questions!

Amy Moffat, Youth Minister

Looking beyond ourselves: Farmington Food Pantry month!

The Farmington Food Pantry is a division of the Farmington Department of Social Services. All food recipients follow an application process and food is distributed only once a month to each client.

St. James parishioners provide for the months of January and June as an ongoing project of the Outreach Committee. Food and monetary contributions may, of course, be

made any time of the year. If you wish to make a monetary contribution, write the check out to *St. James with Farmington Food Pantry* in the note section. Please consider buying double many of the staples that are regulars on your shopping list and bring in the duplicates to the narthex and place them in the box labeled **Farmington Food Pantry**. Watch bulletins and e-flashes for specific items that are needed. Please be generous. And if you are interested in helping with this ministry, please let Fr. George know



Adult Formation opportunities

On Sundays, between the services, we are working with the question, "Who is Jesus to me, really?" by exploring Matthew's Gospel with N. T. Wright's *For Everyone*. Each Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. in the library, we repeat our Sunday program for those who are not able to be with us Sundays.

Outreach Ministry update!

The Outreach Committee met in late November to decide on Budget disbursement of \$5,912. Those present and those that sent pre-meeting emails unanimously voted on the following:

- ▶ Friendship Service Center - \$1,200
- ▶ Operation Fuel – \$500
- ▶ Episcopal Diocese of the DR - Dominican Development Group - \$1,000
- ▶ American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem –\$500 earlier this year
- ▶ Traveler's Aid Fund – \$400
- ▶ Gifts of Love - \$500
- ▶ Your Place at St. Monica's –\$450 earlier this year
- ▶ Days for Girls - \$500
- ▶ Virginia Theological Seminary - \$200
- ▶ Bishop's Fund for Children - \$250
- ▶ Connecticut Council for Interreligious Understanding - \$100
- ▶ Mass on the Grass - \$300
- ▶ Food for the Poor - \$400
- ▶ Heads Up Hartford - \$300
- ▶ New Life II - \$250



Dates already set forth for 2019 are as follows. Please put these dates on your calendar and more information for each event will follow in future *Epistles*:

- ▶ Church by the Pond – provide toiletries - 5/4/19 and 11/2/19
- ▶ Walk Against Hunger for the Friendship Service Center – 5/4/19 (will coordinate with Church by the Pond)

Last but not least, there will be an Outreach Committee Meeting tentatively scheduled for Sunday February 10th at 9 a.m., between the two services, in the Library. This will not be a long meeting. The major goal of this meeting is to review and reflect back over Outreach in 2018 and lay out our Outreach goals for 2019. I invite anyone interested in Outreach at St. James to join us at this meeting. If you are unable to attend but have something to contribute, please contact me.

Sheila Church

Celebrating January birthdays!

Anna Bongiorno
Erik Ososki
Peter Wack
Andrew Martin
Evan Chekas
Eli Johansen

Your birthday always comes
as we start another year.
January is your month
your special day is here.
It's the middle of the winter
most days are cold and dreary,
so here's a birthday wish for you
that your day is bright and cheery!
902G ©104 DRS

Todd Root
Marcia Thomas
Barbara Preneta
David Geuser
Regan Kelly

Emergency Closing Info



In the event of an emergency, most often weather-related, parish closing information will be available on WTIC-AM 1080 radio and on WFSB-3 and WVIT-30 television stations. Whenever possible, a notice (e-flash) will be sent and the website updated as well.

Save the Date: Candlemas

Feast of the Presentation of our Lord: Friday, February 1st

On Friday, the 1st of February, at noon, we will celebrate the Feast of the Presentation of our Lord in the Temple. The feast has been celebrated since at least the beginning of the 4th Century, where it is referenced by bishops in sermons of the day that have survived. In 1887, the diary of a nun named



Egeria, who made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 381 AD, refers to the liturgy of the Presentation in Jerusalem. The feast is often called Candlemas, because light is an important part of the readings, and candles are often blessed and used at the service. The feast was once referred to as the Feast of the Purification of Mary. In Luke 2:22–40, Mary and Joseph take the infant Jesus to the Temple, 40 days after His birth, so that Mary may be ritually purified. Jewish custom at the time was that women were ritually unclean after giving birth and would be purified 40 days after the birth.

While coming to the Temple, Mary encounters the old seer Simeon, who takes the baby Jesus into his arms and celebrates that he has at long last seen the Messiah. His beautiful *Song of Simeon* (BCP, 135) gives us a glimpse into who Jesus will be. Mary is warned that her heart will be pierced to, foreshadowing Jesus' death.

Candlemas is a celebration of Simeon's recognition of Jesus, and of Anna's, and Jesus' entrance into the community of people who would ultimately become his followers and disciples.

God our Father, source of all light, today you revealed to the aged Simeon your light which enlightens the nations. Fill our hearts with the light of faith, that we who bear see these candles may walk in the path of goodness, and come to the Light that shines forever, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The service begins with us all processing with candles into the church together. People are encouraged to bring candles that they might use in the coming year; they will be blessed later on. As we move through the season after Epiphany and await the beginning of Lent, recognizing and celebrating our Lord, who is the light of the world, seems most fitting.

Your picture in a brochure or on the website?

St. James Parish uses candid photos of various church activities on our website and in publications (like this *Epistle*). If you prefer that your photo NOT be displayed, please contact the parish office; we maintain a list of members whose likeness is not to be shared.



St. James Prayer Team ... Praying together for you

Always available, always confidential

Armen Slusarz
Carol Kirkwood
Donna Paye
Pat Clark

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH
SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 2019 AT 11:30 A.M.
(childcare available)

We can't be a Church without an Annual Meeting. This is not because our by-laws require a meeting, but because God calls the church into community, and a community gets formed when it gathers. A group becomes a community when people come to know and trust and appreciate each other, when they work together for a common good cause, and, usually, when they share a meal together. We are a church, so we have a place where we come to worship Almighty God (so we need to paint and heat the buildings and mow and shovel the grounds). We have a God-given job to do (so we have to discern and support our mission). We have ordained clergy and we belong to a Diocese (so we have to support them and decide how much support to give).

Once a year we assemble to make decisions about these things. **This year's Annual Meeting is at 11:30 a.m. on January 27th.** Between the end of the 10:15 a.m. service and the meeting, you are invited to break bread and other good things together at lunch. At the meeting, we will:



- Honor and thank our elected representatives who are retiring from the Vestry and elect officers and new Vestry members,
- Celebrate the recipients of the *Order of the Fisherman*, those who have given extraordinary service to the parish during the past year,
- Hear the financial state of the parish and vote to accept the financial report from last year and the budget proposed by the Vestry for the year ahead,
- Receive reports from all the ministries of the parish with time for questions and discussion.
- Express our ideas, questions, comments, appreciations, concerns, and hopes.

This last is perhaps the most important part of the Annual Meeting: taking counsel together. Parishes that conduct their business in “parking lot” conversations are not very healthy, because matters that affect the whole congregation are discussed and decided by a few and rumors are rife and some people feel like outsiders. Parishes that discuss their concerns together build a strong basis for their common life and can do great things because they trust each other.

A place is prepared for you at this meeting.
If you are not there, you will be missed.
Please, plan to come; we need you.

Note: According to our bylaws, those eligible to vote at the Annual Meeting are “adult communicants (16 and over) who for at least six months prior to the meeting shall have been faithful attendants at the services of the Church and the Parish, unless for good cause prevented, faithful contributors to its support, and faithful in working praying and giving for the spread of the kingdom of God.

REMINDER: Please submit your reports to the Parish Office by Monday, January 7th for inclusion in the St. James Annual Report.

Summary of Vestry Minutes – November 19, 2018

In attendance: Julia Grieco, Rebecca McFarland, Bill Raymond, John Smith, Jessica Watkin, EJ Ososki, Fr. George Roberts. (Absent: Todd Root, Michael Slusarz, Dona Waugh, Chris Roach, Cathie Martin)

MINUTES

October 2018 minutes: Bill moved to accept, Julia and John seconded, unanimous vote to accept.

MINISTRY REPORTS

Finance/Treasurer's report

EJ notes: Overall, we are doing well. One highlight I'd like to point out is the craft fair raised \$4,129 which is about \$600 more than we budgeted. Another favorable development is we had a large pledge contribution (\$4K) come through that was held up in a processing error. Expenses are below budget, driven by the typical items.

John moved to accept the financial report, Jessica seconded, unanimous vote to accept.

Resolution for Rector's housing

The following resolution is before the Vestry.

"Resolution of the Vestry Meeting of 11/19/18: Whereas the Rev. George Roberts is employed as a minister of the Gospel by St. James Episcopal Church, Farmington, CT, which although providing a residence for him does not provide the full cost of maintaining and furnishing such a residence, the vestry resolves that of the total compensation of \$103,150 to be paid to the Rev. Roberts during 2019, that \$7,200 be designated a parsonage allowance within the meaning of that term as used in Section 107 of the IRS Code of 1986 as amended, but in any event until further notice the parsonage allowance shall be \$600 per month."

EJ further noted that as we do not yet have Fr. George's 2019 salary, the \$600 figure is an estimate, and suggested that we accept as written for now, and amend as necessary once we have an approved 2019 budget.

John moved to accept, Rebecca seconded, unanimous vote to accept.

Outreach

Outreach met 11/18 to allocate ~\$5,900 total. Jessica noted that Outreach is grateful for Vestry's commitment to increasing Outreach budget and hopes that will continue.

OLD BUSINESS

Stewardship

Stewardship dinner was November 10th. Kudos to Dona Waugh and company for their work. Having it earlier in the month, having childcare, children's activities, music, etc. all helped contribute to the success of the event. Fr. George has heard a lot of positives.

Lilly Grant and preparation

Fr. Robert (Bob) Stocksdales will be with us while Fr. George is on Sabbatical. He is more than a "supply" priest as he will do pastoral care and emergencies.

Major dates/timeline for us to be aware of:

- June 23: 9 am breakfast; 10 am liturgy; Fr. George preaches, Fr. Bob celebrates Eucharist; Fr. George and family depart.
- June Vestry meeting: will be the last planning session for us.
- Mid to late August: the working group for the workshops meet with Cindy Maybeck for planning
- September 8: Celebration Sunday; Cindy Maybeck preaches; Fr. Bob celebrates Eucharist; Cindy available to talk to interested folks about workshops and storytelling.

- Tentative dates for workshops with Cindy Maybeck: September 10, 18, 26 (Tue., Wed., Thur. so that people with a standing commitment aren't shut out) from 6:30-8:00 pm; September 14, 21 (both Saturdays), 10:00-11:30 am.
- Saturday September 28: 2 pm living history tour organized by Bill Church; liturgy of welcome and Fr. George returns; Cindy preaches; celebratory dinner.
- Sunday September 29, Fr. Bob preaches; Fr. George celebrates Eucharist

Reflection on Scripture and prayer for any meeting or gathering

Vestry members are asked to consider how this can help us in our ministries or how we see it helping in other ministries? Does not need to be a long reading, it could be a single verse, and then give people a chance to reflect or share. Fr. George: "We need not to fall into the cultural trap that we have 'business to attend to.' We need to soak ourselves a little bit in the Good News of Jesus."

What are the next steps with *RenewalWorks*?

- Focus on Scripture: using the Bible more with the kids in church school instead of a printout, beginning meetings with Scripture as above, Bible study, making sure everyone has a Bible (we've been collecting versions and want to display them and have people come check them out), we have started putting the next week's readings into the e-flash.
- We had talked about putting Bibles in the pews, but we didn't decide to proceed. We are in the process of replacing about 50 prayer books, Altar Guild has taken that on, might ask people to do dedications, we could put Bibles in the pews as part of that project.

NEW BUSINESS

Sunday for Racial Reconciliation, Sunday, February 10

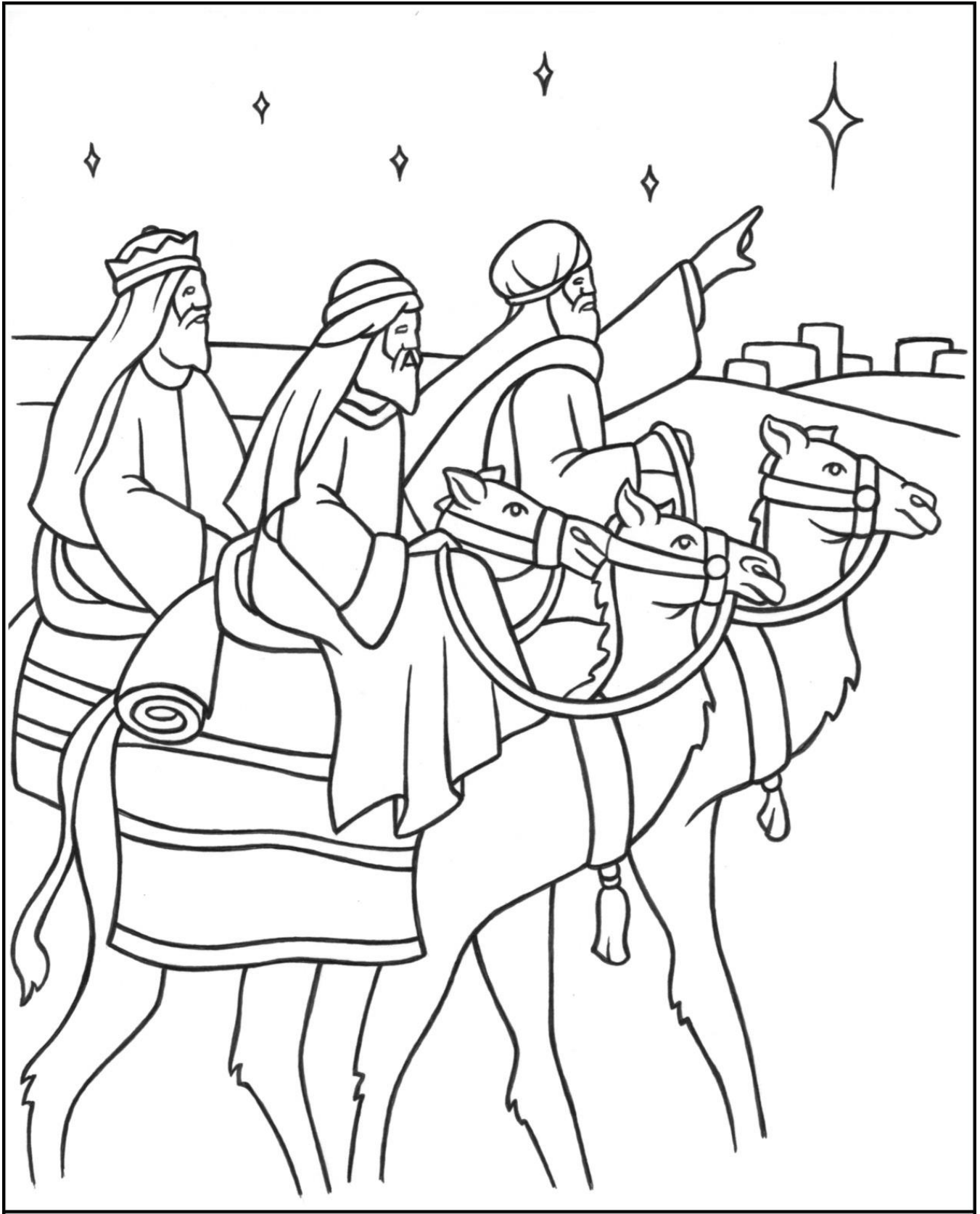
This was a Resolution of Convention. Every church in the Diocese will focus in some way on the need for racial reconciliation, ECCT voted to do this, there will be resources, liturgies, etc. that we can use. Vestry feels it is important to talk about the here and now and why racial reconciliation is relevant today in our community. Fr. George notes that it is important that we keep focused on the Gospel. What does racial reconciliation mean in the context of being a child of God?

RECTOR'S THOUGHTS

- Bible study continues Sundays between the services & Wednesdays at 6:30 pm; all welcome.
- Fr. George away December 11th–15th: emergency coverage clergy will be on call for pastoral care emergencies, no Sunday involved.
- Next Vestry meeting, Monday, December 17th at 7 pm, Evening Prayer at 6:30. First pass at the budget will be our primary focus.
- Christmas services: Christmas Eve 4 pm and 10:30 pm; Christmas Day, 10 am.
- Annual Meeting: Sunday, January 27th
- Vestry retreat: Friday February 1st–Saturday February 2nd, Camp Washington, 6 pm start.

We closed in prayer and adjourned at 9:14 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cathie Martin, Co-Warden



January 2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 11:00 Feast of the Holy Lord service Parish office closed	2	3 10:30 Eucharist at Touchpoints 6:30 Hartford Power Squadron	4	5
6 HE 8:00 & 10:15 9:00 <i>First Sunday Breakfast</i> ; Adult formation: <i>Who is Jesus to me, really?</i> 10:00 Nursery; Church School	7 Annual Report submission deadline	8	9 HE 12:00 6:30 Adult Formation: <i>Who is Jesus to me, really?</i> 7:30 Adult choir rehearsal	10 6:30 Hartford Power Squadron	11 6:30 AA	12 6:00 Movie Night: <i>Risen</i> 
13 HE 8:00 & 10:15 9:00 Adult formation: <i>Who is Jesus to me, really?</i> 10:00 Nursery; Church School 10:30 Amberwoods Ministry 11:30 Coffee Hour 12:00 Confirmation	14	15 6:30 Boy Scouts	16 HE 12:00 6:30 Adult Formation: <i>Who is Jesus to me, really?</i> 7:30 Adult choir rehearsal	17	18 6:30 AA	19 9:00 Fifth Annual MLK Day of Service food packing event
20 HE 8:00 & 10:15 9:00 Adult formation: <i>Who is Jesus to me, really?</i> 10:00 Nursery; Church School 11:30 Coffee Hour	21 Parish office closed in observance of MLK Jr. Day 6:30 Evening Prayer 7:00 Vestry	22 February Epistle submission deadline 6:30 Boy Scouts	23 HE 12:00 6:30 Adult Formation: <i>Who is Jesus to me, really?</i> 7:30 Adult choir rehearsal	24 9:30 Prep/serve lunch at Friendship Service Center	25 6:30 AA	26
27 HE 8:00 & 10:15 9:00 Adult formation: <i>Who is Jesus to me, really?</i> 10:00 Nursery, Church School 11:30 Annual Meeting	28	29 6:30 Boy Scouts	30 HE 12:00 6:30 Adult Formation: <i>Who is Jesus to me, really?</i> 7:30 Adult choir rehearsal	31	6:30 AA	

St. James Parish

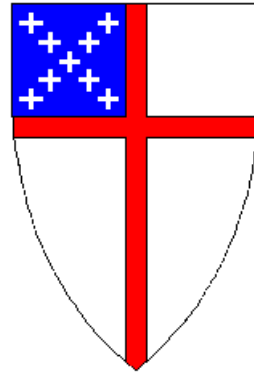
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MISSION STATEMENT:

*We welcome all to worship and nurture spiritual growth through faith, grace and reason.
We reach out to those in need as a caring community
and live Christ's teaching to love one another.*

STAFF

The Rev. George C. Roberts	Rector
Amelia (Amy) Moffat	Youth Minister
Blake Hansen	Director of Music
Susan Deming	Parish Administrator
Kelly Nauss	Sexton
Laura Vacca	Nursery Supervisor

OFFICERS

Cathie Martin & John Smith, Wardens
EJ Ososki, Treasurer
Jerry Hess, Asst. Treasurer
Jessica Watkin, Parish Clerk

VESTRY

2018

Bill Raymond
Chris Roach
John Smith

2019

Cathie Martin
Michael Slusarz
Todd Root

2020

Julia Grieco
Rebecca McFarland
Dona Waugh

St. James Parish

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

