

St. James Parish

Epistle



October 2019

Rector's Message

You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. Matthew 5: 14-16

One of my favorite pictures (and moments) of my recent sabbatical is one that I took of a sunset on Holy Island, Lindisfarne, in Northumberland (northeast England). The photograph shows the sun setting over the ruins of the old priory (monastery), near the site where Aidan established the first religious community on the island in the 7th century. Aidan was a great proclaimer of the Good News of Jesus Christ, evangelizing the people of northeast England; Aidan did not speak their language



and always needed an interpreter. But Aidan was called to share the love and hope of Christ in a world that did not know Him and spent his entire adult life engaged in that work, that love, that hope.

The image of the sun setting may seem to be a message of waning, a decrease in power and intensity. But I believe that the combination of a brilliant, setting sun (the light of Christ that never truly fades) and the Priory (a place focused on growing the faith and knowledge of Christ) create a

wonderful connection to Matthew's Gospel. We are the lights of the world and are exhorted by the Crucified and Risen Christ to shine that light to all the world. During this stewardship season we will talk a lot about how our gifts and giving help our parish community to shine the light of Christ out onto the world. Shining the light of Christ also means becoming more comfortable in our journey with God in Jesus, tapping into and fostering our own inner light that is God's presence. Monks spend a lifetime learning how to pray and offering praise to God. We are not monks but our lights can shine as bright as any, if our hearts have the courage to seek, take chances, and grow in faith, love, and hope. Connecting with the created world can help us go deeper into Christ's light, as can community worship and praying together. Service and mission are an expression of our understanding that we have been given a light that needs to be shared.

I look forward to sharing the many twists and turns of my sabbatical as we move forward together. I am so overjoyed to be back among you. The light of Christ burns brightly in this place called St. James. We are a "city on a hill" in the darkness of a world that struggles with many, many things. We must not, however, keep the light inside our church or our hearts. We must shine our light before all and that takes time, learning, and a willingness to grow. Shall we go together on this journey?

In Christ, George+

To the family of St. James ...

Grace and peace to you. I am reminded that “For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.” Two wonderful things happened; First, Fr. George, along with his family, was blessed to enjoy a much-deserved three-month sabbatical leave, traveling to faraway places, seeing sights seldom seen, and to bask in rest, relaxation, renewal, and yes, to survive the rigors of driving on the left side of the road! Second, I was blessed to be with you here at St. James, to spend time with you in a setting of worship, prayer, home visits, hospital visits, workshops, bell-tolling, anticipating the myriad of hats worn, playing with the kids, and sometimes, to get lemonade.☺ To work with Sue in the office, the Altar Guild, the Lay worship team and readers, the Wardens and members of Vestry, Blake and the wonderful music, Rev Cindy in worship and her five workshops. As a parish, we prayed together, played together, sang together, laughed together, shared our stories together, and lived a piece of life together.

Well, the time has come to welcome Fr. George back from his sabbatical leave, and for me to bid farewell to you. As I leave, my fervent prayer is that the family of St. James will not forget to make a difference in someone's life. Write someone you love a letter. Give a soft answer. Seek out a forgotten friend. Dismiss suspicion and replace it with trust. Mend a quarrel. Encourage our youth. Gladden the heart of a child. Keep a promise. Find the time. Forego a grudge. Forgive an enemy. Reject envy. Examine your demands on others. Be kind, be gentle. Laugh a little and then laugh a little more. Express your gratitude. Go to church. Welcome a stranger. Speak your love. Speak it again. Speak it still once more.

Now, always remember ... “Go forth into the world in peace. Be of good cheer. Hold fast to that which is good, and true, and courageous. Love and serve our Lord. Be kindly affectionate one to another. May the blessing of God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, be with each and every one of you this day and for evermore.”

I remain faithfully yours God's peace,
Fr. Bob +
The Rev. Robert M. Stocksedale +

Blessing of the Animals: October 6th

On **Sunday, October 6th at 3 p.m.**, we will hold our annual Blessing of the Animals in honor of the Feast of St. Francis, whose statue looks over the patio portion of our memorial garden. St. Francis, the patron saint of animals, is said to have had a special affinity for animals; they seemed drawn to him. Someone once said that having a dog (I suppose we could say the same for cats and maybe other animals, too) is like having the Spirit of God, a piece of God, in our homes. Their unconditional love is said to mirror the egoless, selfless love that our Savior encouraged us to have toward one another. So, bring your dog, cat, fish, lizard, snake (*sigh*, if you must), and any of God's creatures, spiders probably excepted. We will have a short liturgy, immediately followed by a laying on of hands and blessing of your animal friend. If you have a large or sick animal that you cannot bring, let Fr. George know and he will come to you to give a blessing. Feel free to invite your neighbor(s) to bring their pet. If the weather is uncooperative, we will meet in the parish hall.



Church school news



It was great to see so many new and returning children this September! Our teachers are excited to work with the kids and set off on a spiritual journey as a class. **PARENTS: Church School begins at 10 a.m., please try to have your children here for the beginning of class.** Reminder to complete an enrollment form if you have not yet done so. As always, we invite any parish member to come visit our classrooms and share with our youth!

Julia Grieco

Youth Ministry News

Welcome back everyone! We had so much fun at our Back to School Bowling Night. However, October is my favorite month and I am so excited to have some fun fall activities planned for our Youth Group! Our Youth Event this month will be Apple Picking (specific details TBA). Our theme this month for our Church School Classes will be Spirituality and Forming a Culture of Us. We will be also looking ahead to the upcoming months planning a Youth Sunday and a service project!

We are also looking to continue our confirmation mentorship program into this church school year, with a few fellowship events throughout the year. Also, we are always looking for chaperones for our events and projects so if adults are interested in either of these opportunities, please contact me or email me, and I will put you on the list!

Amelia (Moffat) Steele

First Sunday Breakfast on 2nd Sunday in October

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 Sunday, October 13th** as we joyfully re-gather after a summer apart!

Safe Church training offered here at St James this fall!

On Saturday, November 2nd, 9:00–11:30 a.m., we will host a hybrid Basic Safe Church Training which all teachers, Vestry members, and anyone working with children or shut in adults in a church context should have. The way the training now works is that you go online in the weeks leading up to the training and do a relatively simple training. The 2.5-hour training on November 2nd, which includes light refreshments, completes the training. To register, please go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/comprehensive-hybrid-safe-church-training-farmington-registration-64195878601> and/or see Julia Grieco, if you have questions. Registration typically fills up fast for these sessions.



In addition, recertification classes are available this fall. Check the Diocesan website for availability (<https://www.episcopalct.org/Find-Resources/General-Parish-Operations/Safe-Church-Resources/Safe-Church-Training-Schedule/>). These are a good option for those whose current Safe Church certification has not yet expired, but will in the next few months.

St James' 3rd Annual Fall Fair: Saturday, October 5th, 9 am–4 pm

It's only a week away now, and we're hoping for great weather and a chance to see all of you at the Fair!

There will be regional artisans displaying a variety of unique items (Holiday shopping, anyone?), a Raffle Table, an awesome Bake Sale, Mums and Pumpkins; and the Luncheon Café will be open, serving Ev's famous grilled cheese and tomato soup, sandwiches, assorted desserts, coffee, and cold drinks.

Parking: Workers are encouraged to park on Mountain Rd in front of the church, if possible, so that customers and handicapped can park directly behind the building. The Police Dept. is allowing parking on the church side of Mountain Rd. for this event. The upper lot in back is reserved for artisans. There is also general parking at the Library, and in the front and rear of Noah Wallace School.

Raffle Table: Have you brought in your new or unused, bid-attracting- item for the Raffle Table? Contact Sheila Church. If you have an item and missed the September 22nd deadline, you must contact Sheila asap.

Bake Sale: Sign up located on the parish hall ramp board to indicate what you will bake. See the suggested items on the list or contact Dona Waugh asap The building will be open to receive Bake Sale items from 4–7 p.m. on Thursday, October 3rd, and Friday, October 4th. Or come Thursday or Friday, 9 a.m.–2 p.m., during parish office hours. We ask you **not** to bring items on Saturday morning during the Fair!

Luncheon Café: Sign up in the narthex to donate suggested pantry items or Stop and Shop Cards. Collection Box is under the sign-up sheet. Items must be received by Sunday, September 29th.

Questions about working at the Fair? Contact Donna Paye,

THANK YOU, EVERYONE!

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.

Church by the Pond this fall

On **Saturday, November 2nd**, St. James will once again participate in Church by the Pond in Hartford's Bushnell Park. Here are some ways you can be involved in this important ministry:

- Sign up to make a financial donation to purchase the personal care and cool-weather items needed for the kits. We will be assembling the kits this month, containing items such as lip balm, hand lotion, and mylar blankets. A sign-up sheet will be in the narthex after the Fall Fair. Make your check payable to *St. James Parish* with "Church by the Pond" in the memo line and include in the offering plate or mail or drop off at the church office.
- Drop off new, unopened individual-sized toiletries from your travels in the blue bin that will be placed in the narthex after the Fall Fair. We'll give these "hotel goodies" to Christ Church Cathedral to hand out to guests at their soup kitchen.
- Sign up to attend Church by the Pond on November 2nd at 2 p.m., worship in Bushnell Park, and hand out the toiletry kits. This is a family-friendly event. The sign-up sheet will be in the narthex after the Fall Fair. Join us in this opportunity to worship and to serve others.



Please contact Jessica Watkin with any questions!

Prayer Team

From time to time, the Prayer Team offers something that we have found helpful, in the hope that you will find it helpful, too.

As we consider the power of prayer, let's consider this quote from *Christian Healing Rediscovered* by Roy Lawrence: "The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:7) We do not keep the peace of God. The peace of God keeps us. To be within God's ring of peace is to be in contact with God's power and love and joy. It is a place of creativity, a place of healing. Let God's own peace do God's own work.

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

Always available, always confidential

Armen Slusarz
Carol Kirkwood
Donna Paye
Pat Clark

Coming soon — Sharing the Feast: Thanksgiving Basket Project

St James Parish will once again work with the Town of Farmington to supply families in need with food to prepare their Thanksgiving meals. A poster with the list of Thanksgiving foods will be in the narthex in late October. Please sign up for one or more items. Non-perishable foods may be left in the box labeled Thanksgiving Meals. All items must be delivered to St James by Sunday, November 24th. Thank you for your continuing generosity!

Who is Jesus to me, really? meets What is healing?

Last year we launched a two-year program of asking ourselves the question: *Who is Jesus to me, really?* One of the ways that we explored this question was through Bible Study. Last year we moved through Matthew's Gospel and are currently nearing the end of our exploration of Luke. What we've discovered so far is the complexity of the Gospel witness, how different they sometimes are (one from the other), and what a gracious and loving God we have in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Beginning in late October, we will launch our study of Mark's Gospel, using NT Wright again (*For Everyone—Mark*), to help guide us. **For most of October we'll complete our deep dive into Luke's Gospel. Please join us in this encounter with God's story of Christ through Luke, meeting between the Sunday services.**

On Sunday, October 27th, following the 10:15 service, Fr. George will share stories and the spiritual essence of his sabbatical (maybe with some input from his family☺). Please plan to come. This will be the first of several conversations that will take place around the what sabbatical means for all of us, moving forward, and a time for the parish to share with Fr. George what happened, in the parish's continuing life, while he was away.

Another strand of our exploration of *Who is Jesus to me, really?* will help us confront and discuss the area of healing. Healing is something we normally consider mystical and in the realm of evangelicals. But remember, healing takes many forms. We are going to have a number of speakers, beginning with The Reverend Tom Furrer, Priest in Charge at Trinity, Wethersfield, who will talk to us about healing ministry, his work at the Kateri Clinic in Nigeria, and how mission and healing intersect. We will later welcome a physician among us to discuss his experiences of healing and how both his vocation as a doctor and faith as a Christian intersect. More to come ...



Finally, we will be launching, on the second Monday of every month, a new opportunity to engage in dialogue that we are calling ***Faith and Fries: Exploring Questions and Mysteries***. The name may change, but the idea is moving forward. During our *RenewalWorks* explorations in 2018, one suggestion for community connection, being more engaged Christians in our own town, was to begin a faith-based conversation somewhere in the community. **Beginning on Monday, November 11th at 7 pm at the Wood 'n Tap in Farmington**, and the second Monday of each month thereafter, we will hold a casual, open, anyone-is-invited conversation on the mysteries and questions of faith. The



format will be a question or subject area (let's say, what do we think healing means to us as 21st century humans?) and folks will be encouraged to share, ask questions, voice concerns, etc. The Fries, in the *Faith and Fries*, means folks are welcome to have a drink, get something to eat, relax, and engage in meaningful dialogue. We hope that folks in the parish will not only come and take advantage of this, but will also invite neighbors, friends, people who maybe are "spiritual but not religious," and whomsoever you choose. Sound like fun?

The Rev. Susan Gibson, pastor of First Church of Christ, Congregational in Farmington and Fr. George are in conversation about furthering our dialogue on faith and race, possibly in the context of healing, during Lent 2020. Stay tuned for more information!

Formation, in the Christian context, says that we are constantly trying to be formed into whoever it is God is calling us to be. Study and experience - in community - are truly indispensable ways of coming to know God in Christ more fully and deeply. We strongly encourage you to get involved in some way in adult formation this year. If you have ideas about a program that might bring us into contact with God, please let Fr. George know.

Summary of Vestry Minutes – August 29, 2019

Present: Cathie Martin, Todd Root, Michael Slusarz, Mimi Hostetter, Rebecca McFarland, Dona Waugh, Jessica Watkin, Kim Pereira. Plus guests Foster White and John Smith.

FAMILY PROMISE

We welcomed Foster White (St. James parishioner) to our meeting. Foster observed at First Church of Christ (FCCC) when they served as a host church for Family Promise in August. Summary from Foster's remarks:

- The issue with homelessness is paramount. The Family Promise organization seems well-organized. Family Promise provides bedding and transportation
- The commitment to be a host church is huge. Currently each host church hosts one week four times per year. The guests arrive on Sunday afternoon, leave each day at 6 am, come back each day at 6 pm. The host church provides a meal. Foster's observation is that too much food was produced and there was food waste. The host church provides one male and one female "host" overnight and Safe Church training is required for those hosts
- Foster observed that FCCC provided basic set-up like lamp, small table, access to a TV for the children. It is a major process to find the volunteers to stay overnight and bring the food. The host church also provides breakfast.
- Foster suggests that St. James could get involved as a support congregation, not a host – this is in line with what Vestry has previously agreed upon

MOTION (Todd) to get more info from FCCC and from Family Promise on becoming a "support church," Kim seconded, the motion carried unanimously.

MINUTES FROM JUNE

MOTION (Mimi) to approve the minutes, Todd seconded, the motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Rectory repairs

- An A/C replaced at the start of the summer with new 10,000 BTU A/C, John bought it and had it installed.
- John has done other work on toilet, disposal, going to fix shower door when part comes in.
- We are grateful to John, Michael, and Skip who work on the landscaping, house, church, etc.
- Tree work and cleaning up the yard needs to be done. A tree service will remove overgrown bushes against the house that are damaging the house, prune the dogwood in the winter, raise the canopy and do some general tree pruning, all of this for \$1,000.
- There is also a large limb that hangs over the roof and the power lines to the house; removal needed, cost is \$300.
- Some big upkeep projects need to be done with deck (rotten stairs, power-washing, railing not to code, no toe boards on the steps, needs railing at the top. This is maybe \$400 of materials. Parishioners are willing to do the labor (John and Jamie).

MOTION (Todd) to approve a \$1500 increase to the budget for the Rectory to take care of the tree work, Cathie seconded, the motion carried unanimously.

At a future meeting we will set aside time to discuss other plant needs. Vestry agrees to reach out to the buildings and grounds committee to make a written list with priorities so that we can vote on projects and budget appropriately to take care of our properties.

NEW BUSINESS

Diocesan Regional Wardens Ministry

Todd is part of this group, which holds a Summit 2–3 times a year. About 30 Wardens from our Region will attend on Tuesday, September 24th. Can they have use of the parish hall and the kitchen for their potluck and meeting? Boy Scouts will be asked to move for the evening to accommodate the Wardens. We agreed by general consensus that this was fine.

OLD BUSINESS

Rev. Cindy Maybeck workshops are about to begin. There are both paper and digital sign-ups. Vestry confirmed who is “hosting” each workshop. We will make a colorful flyer to be handed out at church school to advertise the 9/21 family-focused workshop.

Mimi reported on the **Living History tour on 9/28**. There will be a 3 pm start. The tour will visit Noah Wallace School, the Village Store, the Historical Society in Unionville (they are ready for us and will give a presentation), Christ Church in Avon (where we will visit the Memorial Garden, finish back at church in time for the welcome-back dinner.

Dona reported on the **Welcome Back Dinner on 9/28**. There will be a 5 pm start. The budget is based on assumption of 80 guests. 19 people have signed up for the tour and we assume those will all attend the dinner.

WARDENS' THOUGHTS

- Next Vestry meeting is Thursday, September 19th
- Fall Fair is October 10/5 – find a way to get involved
- Safe Church training is 11/2. St. James is hosting! Participants must complete online portion of training before the in-person training. Sign up soon as the training will fill with folks from other parishes.

MOTION (Kim) to adjourn, Michael seconded, the motion carried unanimously.

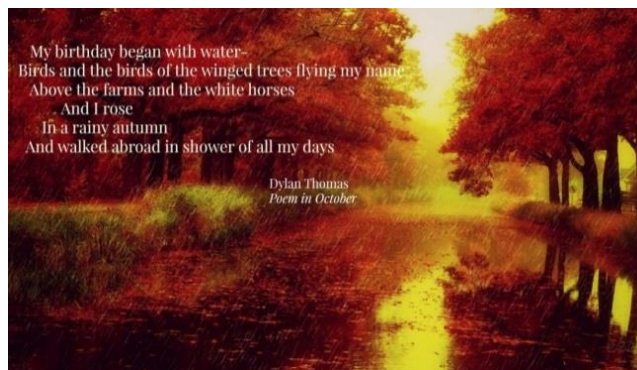
We closed in prayer and adjourned at 9:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Watkin, Clerk

Celebrating October birthdays!

John Reeve
Grier Torrence
Ben Martin
Andrea Harris
Gigja Ingimarsdottir
Amelia Tuttle
Olivia Roberts
Bev Poggio
Helga Schramma
Babs Findlay-Doskos



Joe Lansing
Pat Hadlow
Ed Carpenter
Carolyn Ives
Michael Slusarz
Colt Propiescus
Robert Perry
Erwin Schramma
Emma Buth

October 2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 6:30 Boy Scout	2 12:00 HE 7:30 Adult choir rehearsal	3 10:30 Convalescent Home Ministry at Touchpoints 7:00 Vestry (makeup)	4 6:30 AA	5 9 am–4 pm <i>Fall Fair</i>
6 HE 8:00 & 10:15 9:00 Adult Formation: Luke 10:00 Nursery; Church School 11:30 Coffee Hour	7	8 6:30 Boy Scouts	9 12:00 HE 7:30 Adult choir rehearsal	10	11 6:30 AA	12
13 HE 8:00 & 10:15 9:00 <i>First Sunday Breakfast</i> ; Adult Formation: Luke 10:00 Nursery; Church School 10:30 Amberwoods Ministry 11:30 Coffee Hour	14 Parish office closed in observance of Columbus Day	15 November Epistle submission deadline 6:30 Boy Scouts	16 12:00 HE 7:30 Adult choir rehearsal	17 9:30 Prep & serve lunch at Friendship Service Center 6:30 Evening Prayer 7:00 Vestry	18 6:30 AA	19
20 HE 8:00 & 10:15 9:00 Adult Formation: Luke 10:00 Nursery; Church School 11:30 Coffee Hour	21	22 6:30 Boy Scouts	23 12:00 HE 7:30 Adult choir rehearsal	24	25 6:30 AA	26 8:00 ECCT Annual Convention in Hartford
27 HE 8:00 & 10:15 9:00 Adult Formation: Luke 10:00 Nursery, Church School 11:30 Coffee Hour; Sabbatical Sharing	28	29 6:30 Boy Scouts	30 12:00 HE 7:30 Adult choir rehearsal	31 	Nov. 1	2 9:00 Hybrid Safe Church Training 2:00 Church by the Pond, Bushnell Park, Hartford

View the entire calendar of events at our webpage: www.stjamesfarmington.org upcoming events.

St. James Parish

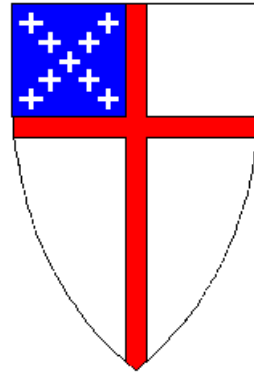
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MISSION STATEMENT:

*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		OFFICERS		
The Rev. George C. Roberts	Rector	Cathie Martin & Todd Root, Wardens		
Amelia (Amy) Steele	Youth Minister	EJ Ososki, Treasurer		
Blake Hansen	Director of Music	Jerry Hess, Asst. Treasurer		
Susan Deming	Parish Administrator	Jessica Watkin, Parish Clerk		
Kelly Nauss	Sexton			
Laura Vacca	Nursery Supervisor			
		2019	VESTRY 2020	2021
		Cathie Martin	Julia Grieco	Mimi Hostetter
		Michael Slusarz	Rebecca McFarland	Kim Pereira
		Todd Root	Dona Waugh	Robyn Shover

St. James Parish

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

