

# St. James Parish

## Epistle



June 2021

### Rector's Message

*Out of the treasure of the heart the mouth speaks.*

A group of five of us has recently completed Project Resource, a conference/workshop on stewardship. I know, you must already be thinking, "Isn't it a little early in the year to be talking about stewardship? It's not even September yet, for cryin' out loud!" Project Resource has been a truly challenging and helpful journey through all the things that stewardship is, not simply finances and buildings. Stewardship is primarily about saying "thank you," no matter which way you look at stewardship. Stewardship is gratitude, an expression of who we are and how we feel about people, places, and things and how we connect to them and to God, above all else. I must confess, however, that I have recently suffered a bit from the "COVID blues." I made it through the worst part of the pandemic, lifted by the voices, thank you's, assistance, and love from St. James' people. Yet, as we began to pull out of the pandemic, maybe even tossing off the masks in public, I started feeling the fatigue, angst, fear of the future, and so much more that I had not really felt in the darkest days of COVID. We lost two wonderful people – Robert Henry and Peter Hufstader – in the last six weeks, have had old friends move away, and I continue to long to see all of your kind faces in church on Sundays, while completely understanding that many continue to feel less than comfortable with crowds indoors. Suffice it to say that your rector has felt a bit wrung out, as pastors do sometimes, even though we are loath to admit it. And I am a mere microcosm of the world as a whole, just plain tired from nearly 15 months of change, isolation from loved ones, etc., etc., etc.



Yet, recently, I have also begun to feel – even more than usual - this incredible sense of gratitude. Grateful for the opportunity to serve God in Christ from and in this place called St. James Parish. Filled to the brim with thankfulness for all of the blessings that have come to my family and me, as a result of coming to Farmington, generally, and to St. James, specifically. The Roberts have been loved, supported, and - here - we have felt the presence of Almighty God in a way that perhaps we never had before. I am blessed to steward the spiritual life, promise, and hope of St. James Parish. We are all so very lucky, so very blessed to have each other. When we come to 'The Peace' in the liturgy, and I look out over our congregation, I see – over the masks that have occluded faces – the eyes of blessing, love, and grace. Stewardship as an idea means that we acknowledge all that God, in victory, has wrought in us through Jesus Christ, has done to bless us in our lives, through this community, and in all of life.

Please don't worry about me. I am sharing all of this with you to let you know that I have felt your pain, shared your fear, and known your loss. We have been in all of this together and we are so very, very blessed to have each other, our community, our sanctuary, our place of blessing, healing, and grace. Thanks be to God.

In Christ,  
Fr. George+

## Warden's Corner

Prayer turns the attention from ourselves to God and helps us see His hand working in our lives. Lord, You give me reasons for a daily commitment to achieving a full and energetic life.

Allow the power of God to work within you because He is able to accomplish far more than we can dream. Lord, Your spirit empowers me. May I do Your Will and always give glory to You.

Spring is here and summer just around the corner. Mask mandates are being lifted and the signs of change are in the air.

We are looking for some volunteers to help with gardening, bush pruning and raking. Now that things have opened up a bit, we're hoping to have some parishioners come out and help. Stewardship is not just about donating money. Donating your time is stewardship .

Joyce Bettencourt and Jane Begin have volunteered their time to keep the memorial garden looking great for many years and it is greatly appreciated.

They now could use our help. I have already started working with them. Rototilling and replanting coming soon. We need more people to volunteer. If we get enough people, it can be as easy as everyone giving a few minutes a week and taking care of one bush, one flower patch. If you are willing to help, please contact Fr. George, Joyce, Kim, or myself. Thank you in advance.

The Vestry will be meeting one more time before recessing for the summer. If any parishioner has questions or concerns. please feel free to contact Fr. George Kim, or any Vestry member (we're all listed on the back cover of every *Epistle*). The vestry is here to represent the parishioners of this parish.

Lastly I want to mention that on May 17 a new sign was installed. If you haven't seen it, please take a peek the next time you visit. The sign was paid for by an anonymous donor. Whoever you are, we thank you. It is a gift we will never forget. God bless you!

Blessings,  
Jim Wilkie, Co-Warden

## Summer Worship Schedule

We will continue with single Sunday worship service at 9:30 a.m. throughout the summer. This service is held for in-person attendance and available online as well. It will be held outdoors on the parish front lawn when weather permits, otherwise in the church. NO nursery or childcare will be available during the summer. Weekday services continue: Morning Prayer on Monday at 9 a.m., Evening Prayer on Wednesday at 5 p.m., and Compline on Friday at 7:30 p.m. (Fridays Compline is Facebook livestreamed only).



## Confirmation Special Service



Please join us on **Sunday, June 13<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm** (outdoors, weather permitting) for a special service for our Confirmands. They have worked so hard this year preparing for their Confirmation, the date of which is still TBD by the Diocese.

All members of our St. James community are invited to attend and there will be light refreshments afterwards to celebrate a year of hard work by our youth.

If you cannot attend, please congratulate our four confirmands who deserve so much recognition!

Lindsay Hillemeir  
Kevin Ives  
Lila Manton  
Ben Martin



## From the Deacon's bench

*This little light of mine.*

Recently my interest in astronomy has me spending summer evenings staring at the sky. The summer skies are warmer but I also love the cold winter nights when I can see the Pleiades. This star cluster, one of God's wonders, is mentioned seven times in the Bible. For example, in Job 38:31: "Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades, Or loose the cords of Orion?" Each culture has a different name for the "seven sisters". The Japanese call the star cluster Subaru, and you'll find that symbol as the emblem of the car by the same name.

Often, I just use binoculars to view the skies and the Pleiades are a great object to view this way. However, since childhood, I yearned to view the moons of Jupiter and the rings of Saturn. My parents gave me my first telescope for Christmas when I was twelve, but it fell short of my viewing goals. For most of my life I did not have the funds to spend on a decent telescope. Now the mortgage is paid, and the kids are doing fine. Last year I finally bought a serious telescope large enough to view deep sky objects.

Most people might think that the main task of a telescope is to magnify small objects to make them larger. More importantly a good telescope serves as a bucket to collect enough light to see faint objects. The human eye has a retina about the size of a quarter. Not a very big bucket. Our eyes function very well in a lighted environment, but they fail to locate dim objects in the night sky.

Many telescopes use a mirror to collect the light which is then focused to an eyepiece for magnification. My new reflecting telescope has an 8" mirror, within my budget and ability to set up without help. I felt like a kid again, setting up my new scope to view Saturn's rings for the first time. Sure, I had seen plenty of pictures of Saturn, but there's joy in observing with your own eyes. For the same reason, most of us love to travel and see beautiful places rather than just look at pictures.

To view distant stars and planets, we need to collect an abundance of light. If this is true of distant stars, it's also true of our own souls. To see the state of our souls, we need gather in the light of God, and plenty of light at that. The more light we let in, the more we can examine the

condition of our spiritual lives. Fortunately, the Word of God is both the mirror we hold up, and the light by which we see our soul reflection. "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path," says the Psalmist (119:105).

We could look at this visual theology another way by suggesting that, since the function of a mirror is to gather and reflect light, we should turn our attention to our soul mirrors and check the magnification factor. In astronomy, the more we see the more we know. The same is true of us: The more divine light we let in, the more likely we are to see ourselves as we truly are, and less as we think we are. The more light we gather into our



souls, the more we will see our gifts as well as our blemishes. Perhaps we need to polish our soul mirrors with prayer and worship.

In any event, if we want to be found by God, if we want to be focal points of God's presence, we need to open up to his vast light. Then this light, reflecting in us, will foster a fitting relationship with God and others. Time for us to start polishing our mirrors to reflect that light into a world so much in need of it.

*Doug Engwall, Deacon*

## Prayer Team

From time to time, the Prayer Team shares something of what has been helpful to us, in the hope you might find it helpful too.

*Prayer is putting oneself in the hands of God, and listening to His voice in the depths of our hearts.*

*Mother Teresa*

**St. James Prayer Team ...**  
**Praying together for you**  
*Always available, always confidential*

Pat Clark  
Carol Kirkwood  
Donna Paye

## Bible Study: Letter to the Hebrews

Beginning Sunday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, the St. James Bible Study will be up again, this time looking at the Letter to the Hebrews (New Testament). We will use the NT Wright *For Everyone* study guide which are being shipped and should be available sometime next week. A donation of \$9 to cover the cost would be appreciated and we will let you know when the books arrive. The Letter to the Hebrews was chosen by the Study Group as our next Biblical adventure; all are not only welcome but encouraged to join us at 11:15 a.m. beginning on June 6<sup>th</sup>. If you don't have a Bible and are struggling to get one, please let Fr. George know and we will remedy that issue straight away for you! Hebrews is a truly different kind of letter and should be fun to explore. Please feel free to invite your neighbors, friends, coworkers and any and all who might be interested in a lively study leading to a more open and fundamental understanding of God's will for our lives via Scripture.

## Friendship Service Center re-opens for volunteers

Friendship Service Center is open for volunteers who wish to help out in the Soup Kitchen. **Our day has been changed to the third Tuesday of each month.** FSC recommends that only those who have received both their 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> vaccines volunteer. Three to four volunteers are needed each month. You should plan to arrive 9:15–9:30 am; the shift ends at 1 pm. A sign up sheet is



posted in the Narthex. The new procedure for volunteers is to park in the lot behind the Soup Kitchen and enter through the 241 Arch Street door where your temperature will be taken prior to entering the kitchen.

Thank you for helping with this mission project. Please contact Linda Larkin with questions: [llarkin101@comcast.net](mailto:llarkin101@comcast.net) or 860 404-2240.

## Join us for garden clean-up day!

On **Saturday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, from 9–11:30 a.m.**, we are calling for volunteers to help clean up the Memorial Garden area at the front of our church facility. Weeds, undergrowth, etc. have become a challenge in recent years and unattended for much of the period of the pandemic. We need the parish's help to make our front lawn space, the first thing that many folks see when they come to St. James or drive by it, look nice and inviting. A few hours with many hands can accomplish a lot. Bring gloves, if you have them, and a small spade/hand shovel, and a can-do attitude. Please contact the church if you have questions. Please place June 12<sup>th</sup>, 9 a.m. on your family calendar and come out to lend us a hand!! It is up to all of us!!



## Farmington Food Pantry June Collection

Every year the St. James family has committed to providing non-perishable food items, household items and cash to the Farmington Food Pantry for the months of January and June. The Farmington Food Pantry and the 200+ local families that it currently serves depend greatly on these donations. Each month the pantry provides deserving families with 7,000+ pounds of non-perishable items.

All clients are pre-qualified through Farmington Social Services (FSS). Clients may shop at the Food Pantry twice a month, making an appointment through FSS. The St. James Outreach Ministry thanks you for your generous and continued support of the Farmington Food Pantry.

**During this time of COVID-19 the Pantry is NOT accepting food donations, but instead is asking for monetary donations which then are used to purchase food through Foodshare or in bulk for their clients each month.** Please mail in your checks made out to *St. James Parish with Food Pantry* in the note and we will gather the funds together for a single larger donation to the Pantry in this time of special need.

## Minutes of the Vestry of St. James: April 22, 2021

Present via Zoom: Fr. George Roberts, Carol Kirkwood, EJ Ososki, Kim Pereira, Jim Wilkie, Mimi Hostetter, Robyn Shover, Tom Nelson, Foster White, Kimberly Faubert, Maina Rice, Anna Whilby

Absent: None

Meeting called to order 7:02 pm

Minutes of March 18, 2021 Vestry Meeting  
Foster moved to accept the minutes. Kim P. seconded. Unanimous vote to accept the minutes.

### Ministry Reports

#### *Finance/Treasurer's report – March 2021*

Mimi moved to accept the report. Foster seconded.

#### Discussion

Budget continues to be “doing well” on par. Expenses up a bit in Feb snow removal. History has been that it has ironed out as Winter passes. No concerns noted at this time. Rental money is at \$2000 budget was budgeted at \$300. Miss Porter's using space for better COVID procedures. Pledge income 7,000 ahead  
Invested funds are over the million-dollar amount for first time, currently at 1,059,000.  
Unanimous vote to accept the financial report.

#### *St James Sign Update*

Sign is being made at Sign Pro and looking at a mid to end of May installation.

#### *Capital Campaign Project Feasibility Update*

- Meeting with Kemper architect firm to look at costs for various types of elevator as discussed in last meeting. Construction cost estimates with various contractors being gathered. Surveyor engineer will also be giving input.
- Elevator location - stair area leading from church to Parish hall and library. Also looking at bringing restrooms up to code for accessibility and any other areas pertaining to better accessibility.
- In next 2 months should have completed feasibility study. After costs estimates are in for all feasibility projects, next step would be meeting with a Capital Campaign consultant to determine what would be advisable and get a better sense of what we could raise, while looking at options of how to get there. The Parish will be involved as they will be presented with information and will have opportunities for input along the way.

#### *Stewardship Project Resource*

Kim reported on training project. Training started on April 18<sup>th</sup> for 6 sessions. There are 5 from parish involved with the online course: Kim Pereira, Fr. George, Anna Whilby, Linda Larkin, and Mimi Hostetter. After 1<sup>st</sup> session “exciting with really good info” being presented and discussed.

Youth Ministry - evolving role for Youth Minister – There is a shift in decrease of youth in high school as of next school year 2021–22. In Fall of 2022 more youth will be middle schoolers and younger. Discussions in progress with Amy about changing focus to shifting her role to being Children/Family focus starting in Fall 2022. This would allow for more focus on offering increased social programs to more. Amy is on board and all would still be within her current role of hours and compensation.

### New Business

#### *Fall Fair*

Change for Fall Fair October 2021 – Some ideas are to hold all of it outside / have outside games / sell items like baked goods, mums, pumpkins, apples, etc. Fall Fair to resume once safe to do so.

#### *Participation in Faith Behind Bars*

Back in December, several people joined in for the Smart Justice Initiative and a lively conversation about advocacy for people who were coming out of prison and for justice in sentencing, etc. Faith Behind Bars & Beyond is an ongoing conversation around faith and life for people who are incarcerated and those who are being or will be released. Learn more about how to get involved.

*St Mark's New Britain* – Will be closing and is looking at other parishes to partner with. They have 3 in mind, 1 being St James. Fr George supporting as sees fit given this is a very tough situation for any parish to deal with.

#### *2021–2022 Christian Spiritual Practices*

##### *Ideas to consider:*

- What program might we use, be involved in, and how.... Possibilities:
  - Engage in a series on race with other clergy and community members. Trinity Tariffville using Finding ‘Sacred Ground’ – an Episcopal Church 10-part film-based dialogue series on Race and Faith.

Fall 2021/Spring 2022 Faith Traditions - series on different faiths (Fr. George and Mimi currently discussing).

- Recap of Spiritual Practices held over this past year with all being held online with various presenters.

### Old Business

*Evangelism:* Conversation on

- Who are we as a Church / Parish?
  - Inclusive community
  - People supporting each other – networking, supportive caring parish.
  - Community
  - Nurture spiritual growth
  - Something for everyone – myriad of opportunities
  - Many ways to get needs met.
  - Inclusiveness of all people shown with baptisms held as part of service with all participating.
- St James Church is always Open – offering a peaceful place to “get away.”
- Found safe ways to offer in person church services.
  - Who is missing?
  - Branch out for diversity
  - Church switches / exchanges i.e., 1 Sunday a quarter have youth switch or parishioners or clergy.
- Next meeting will discuss *Who do we Wish to Be?*

Date for June meeting will stay on Thursday, June 17<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm

Jim made a motion to adjourn. Foster seconded. Unanimous vote to adjourn.

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

Respectfully submitted

*Carol*

Carol Kirkwood, *Clerk*

## Celebrating June birthdays!

*Matt Brockman  
Bruce Brown  
Olivia Paré  
Owen Wahl  
Wendy Ives  
Josh Martin  
Sarah Torrence  
Ed Preneta  
Rocco Guglielmo  
Joey Guglielmo  
Rocco Guglielmo  
Tracey Roberts  
Gideon Pereira  
Lisa Solomon  
Mark Riemer  
Carmen Propiescus*



## Gifts to Food for the Poor & AFEDJ

Your Vestry responded to a request by Fr. George to make two gifts, through Outreach funds, to two American not-for-profits who work internationally, acknowledging crisis situations in Haiti, Columbia, and Israel-Palestine. \$500 was allocated for Food for the Poor to give aid in Columbia, where violence has created urgent shortages of food and medical supplies, and in Haiti, where the pandemic has been particularly acute. Another \$500 was allotted for The American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East to lend aid to the one functioning hospital in Gaza, Ahli Arab Hospital. Fr. George matched the two \$500 gifts from the Rector's Discretionary Fund, so that \$1,000 has been sent to each organization. **Thank you to St. James for the generosity of our people.**

## Ekklesia Contemporary Ballet presents *BODY and LAND*: Friday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, 6 p.m.

Come celebrate your incarnation within The Incarnation of the beauty of God's Creation! Ekklesia Contemporary Ballet, a Christian dance company, working in partnership with Church of the Holy Trinity, Middletown, will present **BODY and LAND**, a new work exploring the connection of our vulnerable bodies to the vulnerable body of the earth. For tickets and more Events, visit Ekklesia Contemporary Ballet at <https://www.ekklesiaballet.org/events-3>



Ekklesia Contemporary Ballet is a professional dance company comprised of artist-theologians whose goal is to create spaces where art and faith can flourish. Ekklesia's diverse repertory utilizes a full spectrum of emotional and physical vocabulary while addressing issues such as poverty, inequality, and human suffering.

In furtherance of our mission, we are committed to maintaining and enhancing our status as:

- A company with an academy that provides first rate instruction for professional and recreational dancers.
- A company that attracts dancers and choreographers who want to explore how their art can be used to advocate inclusion for those pushed to the margins of society.
- A company whose artists are passionate about creating work which manifests love and healing into the world.
- A company committed to providing affordable, small and intimate performances which create safe spaces to hold meaningful discussions with our audiences.
- A company who collaborates with other organizations who have similar values and missions.

Ekklesia Contemporary Ballet embraces diversity, equity and inclusion. We recognize our responsibility as a faith based community to provide an open, welcoming environment where students, artists, staff, trustees and volunteers of all backgrounds can collaboratively learn, work, and grow. Diversity, equity and inclusion are vital to achieving our mission and values. We recognize how too often we encounter division and exclusion

in society. Our aim is to create an atmosphere of security where one can gain understanding and compassion for those of whom they differ. Therefore, the aim of our work is not only to be open to all persons but to affirm the worth and dignity of all.

### Your photo in print or on our 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 Parish

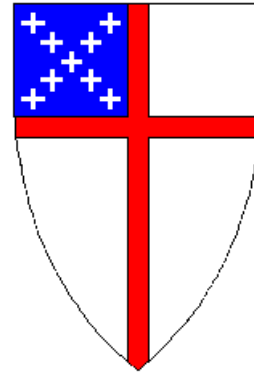
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### MISSION STATEMENT:

*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
The Rev. Doug Engwall	Deacon
Amelia (Amy) Steele	Youth Minister
Blake Hansen	Director of Music
Susan Deming	Parish Administrator
Kelly Nauss	Sexton
Laura Vacca	Nursery Supervisor

#### OFFICERS

Kim Pereira & Jim Wilkie, Wardens  
EJ Ososki, Treasurer  
Jerry Hess, Asst. Treasurer  
Carol Kirkwood, Parish Clerk

#### VESTRY

**2021**  
Mimi Hostetter  
Kim Pereira  
Robyn Shover

**2022**  
Thomas Nelson  
Foster White  
James Wilkie

**2023**  
Kim Faubert  
Maina Rice  
Anna Whilby

## St. James Parish

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**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

