

St. James Parish

WITH ST. MARK'S MINISTRIES

Epistle



JUNE 2026

Rector's Message

*And with the faith and love God's given, springing
from the hope we know*

*We will pray the joy you live in,
is the strength that now you show.*

From the song *Friends* by Michael W. Smith

I first heard Michael W. Smith's song *Friends* at our annual closing ceremony, circa 1984, for the YMCA Camp (Seagull) I worked at as a counselor during my college summers. A young man named Jim Briggs – amazing voice – sang Smith's sentimental piece about the end of chapters, as people leave us, but remain a part of our lives, memories, and continue to bless us, by the grace of God, in that way. We are at the threshold of such a parting, as Sue Deming prepares to retire on June 26th.

I first met the indomitable Mrs. Deming when I came here for my first interview in the dark of winter 2012. Inexplicably, your Vestry recommended in May of that year that I be offered the call as rector of St. James and it is hard to put into words how blessed my family and I have been ever since! When I first mounted the stairs, as your priest, to the second floor of our parish building on June 20, 2012, as I have done hundreds of times since, Sue was there to greet me. She arrived here as an employee of St. James in 2010, two years before me, so she can claim seniority. There has never been a time, for me at St. James, when Sue Deming was not here, Parish Administrator extraordinaire. I have sung her praises for very close to 14 years AND she has been a blessing to us since the very beginning of her 16 years as Administrator. It has

been a truly wonderful run. So, I will sing her lauds and kudos at least one final time ...

Sue Deming has been the very epitome of up-to-her-job for 16 years, as Parish Administrator! Organized in every way, she has kept your sometimes absent-minded Rector grounded (God help us now 😊) with reminders, nudges, and prompts that have made my ministry and work here infinitely easier. Sue has managed a menagerie of tasks so very well all these years and always with the utmost professionalism, attention to detail, and with a dash of class for good measure. Sue has also taken the time and care to get to know the people in our parish, particularly folks working with and through the office, helping us all work so much better together. Even her frightening reminders that, impossibly, there was yet another deadline for an *Epistle* - when the previous one seemingly went out only the day before (it didn't, of course) - gave me cause to smile. Sue has been a colleague of the highest caliber and, at the very same time, a friend of immense value, someone that I trust implicitly, a truly rare combination. I could, of course, go on for quite a while ...

Susan Deming is one of those people who is truly irreplaceable and, yet we know the office show must go on ... and of course, it will. And we will miss her terribly. Join us on Saturday, June 27th, at 5 pm to say an earnest farewell to our dear Sue, to wish her well, to shout "Godspeed!", while living in the comfort that she will only be as far

[continued on next page]

[Rector's Message continued]

away as Unionville. Sue, I am personally very grateful for your service to this parish, and I know that I do not speak for myself alone. You leave a wonderful legacy. May God bless you and keep you – you and dear Steve – and enjoy all that retirement has to offer.

In Christ, Fr. George+

Friends

[Verse 1]

Packing up the dreams God planted
In the fertile soil of you
I can't believe the hopes He's granted
Means a chapter of your life is through

[Pre-Chorus]

But we'll keep you close as always
It won't even seem you've gone
'Cause our hearts in big and small ways
Will keep the love that keeps us strong

[Chorus]

And friends are friends forever
If the Lord's the Lord of them
And a friend will not say never
'Cause the welcome will not end
Though it's hard to let you go
In the Father's hands we know
That a lifetime's not too long
To live as friends

[Verse 2]

And with the faith and love God's given
Springing from the hope we know
We will pray the joy you live in
Is the strength that now you show

[Pre-Chorus and Chorus repeat]

Friends © Michael and Debbie Smith, 1983

The Michael W Smith Project

MEADOWGREEN MUSIC COMPANY ASCAP

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YmBm-ApOD-8>



Women's Ministry

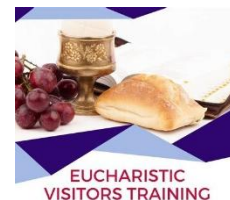
Tuesday, June 2nd, 10 am, Coffee at Daily Grind. Ladies, come join together with your friends at the Daily Grind in Unionville. Great food and wonderful coffee with your church friends.

Thursday, June 4th, 7 pm, Book Club with Tracey. this month's book is *Reading Twice*, by Mitch Albom. Per the New York Times review: In *Reading Twice*, America's favorite storyteller, Mitch Albom, is at the top of his powers. A love story that is enchanting, probing, and clairvoyant in matters of the heart, *Reading Twice* will make you think, weep, and overflow with love from beginning to end. For more info, please see or email Tracey Roberts.

Our group events are open to any woman in our St James Parish. If you have any questions or ideas for our ministry, please talk to any of us: Kathy Bullard, Deb Butler, Gabriela Henry, Linda Mason, Tracey Roberts, Molly Sherman, Nancy Thompson, Anna Whilby.

Pastoral Care Ministry

The Pastoral Care Group had another great gathering, with the leadership Carolyn McGaughey and Carol Merrill on the challenges of grief and being pastorally present. On **Saturday, June 13th, 9:30 – 11:30 am**, we will have our first Eucharistic Visitor Training. EV training must be done in person, so please try to be present if you are interested in taking Holy Eucharist to folks in a pastoral situation. We will discuss Eucharistic importance, its central nature to what we do as Episcopal-Anglican Christians, etc. Contact Fr. George if you have questions.



Warden's Corner

I want to share the wonderful outcomes of our mission work feeding the hungry in New Britain, but I want to start with the reason why we do this. A quick google search found over 2,000 references in the Bible regarding helping people less fortunate than ourselves. Bright Hope, whose mission is to bring Hope to the extreme poor (those living on less than \$3 a day), tried to narrow it down to the top 20, but had difficulty doing even that. My top three includes;

John 3:16-18. This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

Jesus Feeds the 5,000 (Matthew 14:13-21): When a large crowd followed him to a remote place, Jesus had compassion on them and, using only five loaves and two fish from a boy, fed over 5,000 people, with 12 baskets of leftovers.

Jesus Feeds the 4,000 (Mark 8:1-9): After three days with no food, Jesus fed a crowd of 4,000 with seven loaves and a few small fish to prevent them from fainting on their journey home.

Our food pantry and Thursday Morning Mingle follow the words of Jesus by providing food, comfort and friendship to our brothers and sisters who are less fortunate than us. As Cheryl Rusczyk pointed out in her annual report, our food pantry helped over 10,500 people in 2025. That is over 200 individuals per week who received over 52,000 pounds of food, which is over 1,000 pounds of food every week.

The Thursday Morning Mingle was offered for 20 weeks during this past winter. Our incredible volunteers served over 2,500 individuals, as well as provided comfort, caring, and support each and every week.

As we move forward in our mission, serving our neighbors near and far in Christ's name, we plan to continue our efforts with both our food pantry and the Thursday Morning Mingle, as well as provide funding to New Britain organizations who also support the poor and needy.

We can always use more volunteers to help out in both the food pantry and on Thursday mornings. It is truly doing God's work.

Dave Tompkins, Co-Warden

Summer Worship Schedule

We will hold a single Sunday worship service at 9:30 a.m. throughout the summer beginning June 21st. This service is open to in-person attendance and available online as well. Nursery childcare will be available for the service during the summer. Morning Prayer will continue to be livestreamed on Facebook Mondays at 9:30 am during the summer and the Wednesday 11:30 am Holy Eucharist service will continue throughout the summer except during Fr. George's vacation – watch for updates.



Men's Breakfast

On Saturday, June 13th at 7:30 am, all men of the parish are invited to join us for a time of conversation and good food at the



Crazy Pancake, 17 Whiting Street, in Plainville. Come as you are. Everyone is responsible for his own breakfast but let Fr. George know if that is a challenge, as there is assistance available. Fr. George will be away this month but please gather and enjoy the company of your fellow St. James guys!

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.

Faith & Fries!

On Tuesday, June 23rd, from 7–8:30 pm, you are invited to join us for *Faith and Fries* at Puente American-Latino Pub at 81 Main Street in Unionville. Come for dinner, have a drink or snack, whatever is comfortable for you. We invite all to come as they are able and please, feel free to invite a friend, neighbor, or co-worker! How do we deal with doubts that we



have re: our faith? What helps us when we feel the church fails us, culture/society is in disarray, and there seem to be few answers? Exploring the opening monologue of David Hare's 1990 play *Racing Demon*, which examined the Church of England, we will seek conversation and, maybe, a few insights. The play was part of a trilogy of plays that explored English culture, politics, etc. This conversation is not just for theatre lovers, we assure you, but should be fun and informative. Call the church with questions.

Safety Committee Meeting

In an effort to provide the safest environment possible for everyone in our parish, we are starting a Safety Committee. This committee will work together to develop a Church Safety Plan which will include responses to violent events, fire and evacuation safety, first aid, and other topics. Everyone with an interest in improving the safety of our church, or a background in safety-related fields, is invited to come to the first meeting on **Monday, June 8th at 6:30 pm** in the parish hall.



Outreach Corner

Farmington Food Pantry

The need continues to be enormous at food pantries across the country. St James Parish continues to support The Farmington Food Pantry which serves those with food insecurity right here in our own community. In **January and June of each year, St James takes the responsibility to “step up” our collection of nonperishable food items for the pantry.** Summer brings increased use, as children are out of school, and need all their meals at home. The grey collection bin marked “Farmington Food Pantry” will be in the narthex of the church. Monetary donations are also greatly appreciated. Simply make out your check to *St James Parish* and include “Food Pantry” on the note line. Thank you so much for your continuing generous support of the Farmington Food Pantry!!

Foodshare Walk Against Hunger

On Saturday, April 25th, eighteen *St James Heelers* joined hundreds of others in the 2026 Walk Against Hunger. In addition to being Connecticut's largest anti-hunger event, the Walk also seeks to raise awareness about the continuing issue of food insecurity in our communities. Foodshare mobilizes community partners, supporters and volunteers to distribute very needed food to individuals and families. They do this by supplying food to a network of over 650 partner agencies and programs like soup kitchens, food pantries, and shelters.

Thank you to everyone at St James Parish for your continued enthusiastic support! This year our team raised \$2,180, and the entire event raised over \$500,000 for CT Foodshare. The love of God was truly at work through the caring and generosity of all who contributed, walked or cheered on our *St James Heelers*.



Summary Minutes of Vestry Meeting of April 20, 2026

Present: Fr. George Roberts, Kathy Bullard, Dave Hrdlicka, Carol Kirkwood, Linda Mason, Doug McDowell, EJ Ososki, Ed Preneta, Molly Sherman via Zoom, Bonnie Sudell, Michael Slusarz, and Dave Tompkins.

Meeting called to Order: 6:33 pm.

Minutes of 3/19/26 Meeting

Linda made a motion to accept the minutes. Dave T. seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

Ministry Reports

Finance/Treasurer's Report – March 2026 – EJ Summary of EJ's Report

- Income is \$12,000 ahead of plan, driven primarily by pledge income being \$11,000 ahead
- Overall expenses are \$10,000 over budget, primarily driven by snow removal and heating costs associated with the snowy and cold winter. The expenses were partially offset by our youth minister budget and rectory repairs not yet incurred.

Carol motioned to accept the report. Dave T seconded it. There was general discussion on snow removal costs, both at the church and the rectory. The motion passed unanimously.

DR – roundup

The temple was consecrated April 17th and is almost complete. The mission was successful.

Elevator/Lift project – David Hrdlicka

The plan is to have three level accessibility to address mobility issues. Our two options are:

- A platform lift that would be enclosed by walls
- An enclosed cab, commonly known as a LULA lift

The committee will continue to investigate, being sensitive to noise and speed issues.

Parish administrator position

The position was posted on the ECCT website and indeed.com. Father George will review the 136 applications, then the volunteer committee will review the preselected candidates. Father will then interview the strongest candidates.

Bookkeeper position

The position will be posted on the ECCT website and in the *Yankee Flyer*.

Old Business

Keyholders – progress

Lock all doors except the main if meetings are in progress. If the sanctuary is being used, leave the door at the top of the stairs unlocked also. Bruna, as well as other tenants (AA, Scouts, etc.) have keys to the main door.

B&G leadership/co-leadership

Michael had agreed to take the lead, but had questions on responsibilities and priorities. It was agreed that B&G was responsible for general maintenance and repairs, separate from the responsibilities and goals of the Capital Campaign committee. Michael will not be the point person to facilitate/initiate repairs. Skip and Bob have done this in the past. However, the Vestry wishes B&G to have regular meetings so that issues/progress is reported.

Weeding/Mulching

A weeding and mulching party will be organized soon.

New Business

Conversation around Vestry February retreat

There was discussion of developing a five year plan, both for discipleship and growth, including a strategic plan for our physical plant. This plan would most likely be developed after our possible capital campaign.

Growth: where do we go from here and doubling down on discipleship

The question was raised as to whether or not we should hire a consultant. It was generally agreed that we need to have a strategic planning session to develop goals and objectives, with regular meetings to assess our progress and ensure that parties are taking responsibility and following through on goals.

Ed will work on a report for the next meeting, based on our parochial report data and other sources. We will set a date for the strategic planning meeting at our next Vestry meeting, with Father to develop an agenda.

Stewardship team

Our next campaign starts in November and ends in early December. We need to evaluate the current custom of sending out five postcards,

among other things. Let Father know if you are willing to lead this campaign as we need to start working on it in early summer. Carol volunteered to help but doesn't want to lead.

Linda motioned to adjourn. Dave H seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Bonnie F. Sudell, Clerk

Congratulations to Jacob Lapointe

On May 31st, St. James parishioner Jacob Lapointe will be awarded the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest achievement in the Scouting America program. Scouts achieving this rank must exemplify the virtues of service, leadership, and duty to God. As part of his rank achievement, Jacob led an Eagle Project that involved the design and construction of wall-mounted storage racks and customized adjustable shelving for the music department at the Westminster Presbyterian Church in West Hartford. His project totaled 119 hours with contributions from 13 other scouts, friends, and family members. Jacob is a member of Troop 163 in West Hartford.

Celebrating June birthdays!

Matt Brockman

Olivia Paré

Wendy Ives

Ed Preneta

Rocco Guglielmo

Joey Guglielmo

Tracey Roberts

Gideon Pereira

Lisa Solomon

Mark Riemer

Carmen Propiescus

Bruce Brown

Sarah Torrence



Retirement Celebration for Sue Deming

After many years of faithful service to St. James, our Parish Administrator, Sue Deming, will soon be retiring! We are deeply grateful for the dedication she has shown as she helped to support the mission and the daily life of our



wonderful church. Sue's retirement party is on Saturday, June 27th at 5 pm. RSVP by Monday, June 15th. We sincerely apologize for the mix-up with the days of the week. Please note the correct dates/days and please do not forget to RSVP! We hope you will join us as we wish Sue many blessings and happiness in her retirement.

Meals for Neighbors

St. James and Bristol Pride combine to serve up a hearty meatloaf dinner for our neighbors in Bristol on the third Monday of every odd month. Our clients were very grateful. Thanks to all who contributed!



St James' 8th Annual Fall Craft Fair

Saturday, September 12th, 9 am–3 pm

Once again, we are holding our very well attended gathering of **local artisans, crafters and vendors** exhibiting their wares for your personal and gift shopping opportunities. (Early Christmas shopping anyone?)

We also will have a ***Baked Goods Table*** offering delectables baked by our own talented members.

Our very popular ***Teacup Raffle*** continues this year, where there will be a ***Raffle Table*** displaying our many valuable items for your chance to try your luck. Take part in our drawing to see what you may win!

Tickets are \$1 each, or Twelve tickets for \$10 or ***THIRTY*** tickets for \$20!

Last, but not least, grilled ***Hamburgers & Hotdogs*** for lunch!

**AND SOMETHING NEW FOR 2026!!
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT
ON OUR CHURCH STEPS!**

**4 PIECE JAZZ COMBO & VOCALIST
11 am–2 pm**

Our vendors will have their booths set up outside, as well as inside. We have many reservations already and we anticipate another terrific event this year just like last year!

We invite our entire congregation to come out and enjoy this annual fall event and welcome the surrounding community to our parish home.

For further details you may contact Dave Schueler (Event Coordinator) at 571.594.9336 or dwschueler@gmail.com.

**HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!
BRING YOUR FRIENDS!**



St. James Parish

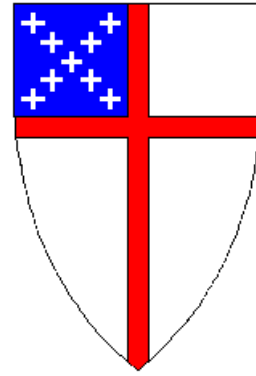
3 Mountain Road
Farmington, Connecticut 06032

Phone: 860-677-1564

Fax: 860-677-8219

Email: st.james.church@sbcglobal.net

Website: www.stjamesfarmington.org



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	<i>Rector</i>
Lee Febos	<i>Clergy Intern</i>
Blake Hansen	<i>Director of Music</i>
Susan Deming	<i>Parish Administrator</i>
Cheryl Rusczyk	<i>Admin., St. Mark's Ministries</i>
Brian Spooner	<i>Bookkeeper</i>
Ray Smith	<i>Sexton</i>
Kim McLaurin	<i>Nursery Supervisor</i>

OFFICERS

Kathy Bullard & David Tompkins, *Wardens*
EJ Ososki, *Treasurer*
Jerry Hess, *Asst. Treasurer*
Bonnie Sudell, *Parish Clerk*

VESTRY

2028

Linda Mason
Ed Preneta
David Tompkins

2029

David Hrdlicka
Carol Kirkwood
Michael Slusarz

St. James Parish

3 MOUNTAIN ROAD
FARMINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06032

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

