

St. James Parish

Epistle



May 2024

Rector's Message

May is a month of flowers, growing warmth after winter and early spring and, this year, a time when we commemorate both our Lord's Ascension and Pentecost. Easter has awakened us again to the glorious Resurrection of our Lord and the blessing of new life in Christ. The Ascension marks that moment when Jesus blessed His disciples for a final time before ascending into heaven. Matthew has some version of this as does Mark, with very little in John. Luke essentially has two nearly matching Ascension stories, one in Luke and the other at the beginning of Acts (also written by Luke). The Ascension of our Lord commemorates the new reality that Christ's teachings, death, and resurrection have saved the world and now the Holy Spirit will sustain that world. Ascension marks that moment when we lost the physical presence of Jesus but gained Him as our advocate and intercessor to Almighty God. Jesus stands before God for us, stands up for us, and blesses us as we continue through this life.

Pentecost, of course, highlights the event in that room in Jerusalem when the Holy Spirit entered the remaining disciples, set them on fire, and moved them on the path of evangelism. They were now solely about sharing the Good News of Jesus, empowered for ministry by the Holy Spirit.

Pentecost, lest we think it was only for the disciples in a faraway time and place, is a rejoinder to all of us to seek God and open ourselves, constantly, to the power of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit stirs in us, too, when we least expect it. Jesus told Nicodemus in the third chapter of John's Gospel that the Spirit was mysterious, had Her own ways, and could not be controlled by us. But if our hearts are on fire for the love of God in Christ, the Spirit will find us and

kindle in us the flame of knowing, stoked by the embers of Christ's healing. Pentecost celebrates the reality of that Spirit which visited us when we were Baptized and will never actually leave us; we are marked, scarred in the best way, by the Spirit's coming; there is no getting away from it.

Most of you know that I was an actor in my previous life, as well as a director, writer, and teacher. I wrote a one-man show on the life of the Apostle Paul called *Beloved: A journey of faith*. I performed the work for many years. I had a run-in with the Holy Spirit each time I performed that show at the moment of Paul's conversion. When Paul let go of his fear, anger, his need to be right and to persecute, and embraced the reality that Jesus was the risen Lord, he was able to receive the Spirit and allow God's healing in his life to begin. The scripture tells us that in the moment he was baptized and received the Holy Spirit, something like scales fell from his eyes and he could see, both literally and spiritually.



Life can be hard, and we can often chase after the wrong thing that we think is the "right" thing. Jesus provides for the joy of the Spirit which He sends among us, yet we must be willing to open our hearts and, sometimes, to allow God the room in our lives to change those hearts. The Spirit humbles, moves, transforms, and guides us to a place that is infinitely closer to God. Christ has ascended and the Holy Spirit moves upon the face of the earth, as She did when the world was created. May the creative healing and holy love of God's Spirit be ours as we prepare for the work our Lord intends for us in this place, at this time.

In Christ,
Fr. George+

Merger News &

On Sunday, April 14, our parish gathered for a Special Meeting, to officially vote on what a merged parish, if we take that final step, would be called. We, along with St. Mark's Episcopal Church, New Britain, decided that three names would be put forward for vote: St. James and St. Mark's Episcopal Church; St. James Parish; and St. James Parish, doing business as St. James Episcopal Church, Farmington with St. Mark's Ministries of New Britain. There was much good conversation, lots of helpful questions, and then we voted by secret ballot. There were 4 votes for choice number 1, 23 for choice number 2, and 38 votes for choice number three, St. James Parish (doing business as St. James Episcopal Church with St. Mark's Ministries of New Britain).



Just a word about what it means to be St. James Parish, doing business as St. James Episcopal Church with St. Mark's Ministries of New Britain. We will corporately remain St. James Parish, which means we will not need to change our Federal ID number and tax information which is actually a pretty big deal. The process with the IRS to change our corporate name would be fraught, as it has been with merged parishes who have changed their name, with complications. We will not need to deal with those complications as our name, corporately, will not change.

We will be doing business as St. James Episcopal Church Farmington with St. Mark's Ministries of New Britain, but we are not yet sure how that will show up. On our website, eventually, and probably letterhead but possibly abbreviating it to St. James Episcopal Church or St. James Parish with St. Mark's Ministries. There is still much to work out, but I believe that this vote was a wonderful expression of welcome to our brothers and sisters at St. Mark's. I understand that changing our "name when we do business" is scary for some, feeling we have lost something. But have we? Rather, have we gained a great deal? First and foremost, we gain new members of our joined community. Second, a substantial boost to our invested funds will take place. Finally, a wonderful fund that has been a part of St. Mark's for nearly a century, the Smith Fund, will become a part of our joined parishes. The

Smith Fund is dedicated to mission and outreach to the parish and to the people of New Britain.

I hope that folks will come and talk to me, if they have fears, questions, even anger about what is happening. Christian life is about moving forward, finding new ways to embody and proclaim the Good News of Jesus. We believe, your Vestry and I, that this merger will broaden what we, as a parish, can do in the kingdom of God.

God protect, bless, and keep you,

Fr. George

VOTE on Parish Merger: May 5, 2024

On Sunday, May 5, 2024 immediately following the 10:15 service, a Special Parish Meeting will be held in the Parish Hall. If you wish to join us via Zoom, please let us know by Friday, May 3rd. Active Members will be permitted to vote via Zoom or in person, but not by proxy (sending in your vote any other way, such as via an email, letter, etc.). We realize that this is a momentous decision which no one enters into lightly. Our hope is that you have been reading updates via weekly e-flash, the Epistle newsletters, and the Sunday bulletins and feel properly informed to make your decision. Only voting members of St. James are eligible to participate in this special meeting and vote you will be asked to sign in at the time of the Meeting. Zoom info for the meeting is Meeting ID: 857 9109 1619 with Passcode: 573161



First Sunday Breakfast!

Find delicious food and fellowship at the *First Sunday Breakfasts* cooked by a great crew of men of the parish, led by John McBride: French toast, sausage, bacon, eggs, juice and coffee as good as Mom made. Gluten-free pancakes or muffins will also be available. **Join us on Sunday morning, May 5th, from 9 am–9:45 am for a wonderful time of food and fellowship!**



Warden's Corner

Spring is my favorite time of year (except for the pollen!). It is a time full of hope and growth as we transition from the dark, cold days of winter to the longer, brighter days of summer. At St. James, we are undergoing a similar transition from the sacrifices of Lent to the joy of Easter. And this year, we are also exploring a new (and hopeful) way for our church to transition and grow as we are in the process of a potential merger with St. Mark's of New Britain. While change is inevitably complicated, your vestry is excited and hopeful about this prospective merger. It is exciting to examine all the strengths of our parish as we look to the future, and we hope that this merger process will not only grow St. James but also infuse us with hopeful energy. If you have any questions about the potential merger, do not hesitate to reach out to Father George or any member of the vestry. For now, I hope you get a chance to enjoy these longer, brighter days and you are energized and hopeful for what spring (and beyond) will bring for our St. James community.

Blessings,
Kim Pereira, Co-Warden

Prayer Team

From time to time, the Prayer Team shares some of what they have found helpful, in the hopes that you may find it helpful, too.

Most of us have had the experience of another person sharing with us a painful life situation. We ask ourselves what a helpful response could be, or even if we should respond at all. Perhaps we can consider the following as a kind of "underlying principle" to guide us...

*The most important hour is always the present.
The most significant person is precisely the one sitting across from you right now.*

The most necessary work is always love.

Meister Eckhart

Outreach Corner

Gifts of Love

Please remember our continuing Outreach mission for Gifts of Love. We collect containers of peanut butter and jelly which are used by Gifts of Love in their Weekend Backpack Program. These backpacks are filled with peanut butter, jelly, snacks, drinks and other food items. The packs are then distributed to over 350 students living with food insecurity in the Greater Hartford area. The collection basket is in the bookcase in the area at the top of the stairs between the sanctuary and the church hall. It is important to note that PB&J must be in unbreakable, non-glass containers.

Join the St. James Heelers!

The Connecticut Foodshare Walk Against Hunger will take place on Saturday, May 4th at Dunkin Park in Hartford. St James will have a team, The St James Heelers. Everyone from the parish is invited to participate in this fun, family-oriented event. If there are any questions, please call Kathy Bullard at 860-673-6444.

Check in starts at 8 am (you don't have to arrive that early); the walk program starts at 9:30 am; and the walk steps off at 10 am. The route is 1.5 miles and you will walk with our team members and hundreds of other walkers. The route starts and ends at Dunkin Park.

Team participants are encouraged to raise funds for the walk. All in-person walkers over age 16 are required to register. Invite friends and family to join the St James Heelers by walking with us or by donating. If you are unable to join us on walk day you can support us by donating online.



To join the team so you can walk:

1. Go to ctfoodshare.org. At the top of the page is a bar asking you to join us in the walk against hunger; click on REGISTER.
2. On the next page, to register to walk, click on REGISTER. On the next page you click JOIN A TEAM. On the next page type in *St James Heelers* and this will bring you to the page to register.

To make a donation only to support our team

1. Go to ctfoodshare.org. At the top of the page is a bar asking you to join us in the walk against hunger; click on REGISTER.
2. On the next page click on DONATE NOW. The team you want to type in is *St James Heelers*.

Super Fantastic Pasta Supper & a Dominican Republic mission update

On May 4th, from 5–7 pm, in the Parish Hall, the St. James Dominican Republic Mission Team will host a *Super Fantastic Pasta Supper*. Spaghetti and meatballs with a salad, bread, and dessert will be offered, either in person or to pick up (call the church office or email Sue Deming before Friday, May 3rd at 2 for pick-up orders). All money raised will go toward our mission to the Dominican Republic, as we prepare to take a team this June!

Update on our mission trip to the DR for June 20–28: we are partnering with De La Gracia, a mission church of the Episcopal Diocese of the Dominican Republic. They have been worshipping as a congregation for over 20 years, first in a house, then a store, and now in a small pavilion/shelter with no walls and one light



bulb. Their dream is to have their own church building in which to worship, minister to the community, and as a place of meeting for community

events. The people of De La Gracia, in spite of having an annual mean income of less than \$1,000, have raised nearly \$10,000 toward their dream! They are dedicated, loving, and joyful people of God and so excited that their dream is in sight!

The Episcopal Diocese of the DR has approved the building of a church in the De La Gracia community. In April the Church of the Redeemer (Sarasota) presented the Diocese with a check for \$37,000 to begin phase one of the building and committed to funding their portion of the project. St. John's (Tampa) another partner, has committed nearly \$24,000 for De La Gracia. Our Vestry has committed \$10,000, through our Dominican Fund, for the project as well, along with planned commitment to raise at least another \$10,000 in 2025. The monies going to this project are raised and designated for the DR. Except for what is given by Outreach for our DR mission, operating funds are not used to support this mission. This June's Mission Team of 14 youth and adults will do a variety of projects that may involve work on Phase 1 of the new church build. If ground has not been broken by the time our Team arrives, we will work to complete a security wall around the church lot, paint in the

San Jose (Episcopal) School in Boca Chica, host a Bible Camp for the children of the De La Gracia community, and various other tasks. Please see Fr. George for more information and/or to learn how you can support our ongoing ministry with our brothers and sisters in Christ in the DR.

Church School News

Church school will be held on the following Sundays: May 5th, May 12th, and May 19th. There will be no church school on May 26th, Memorial Day weekend. This month in church school we will continue studying members of the early Christian church through reading the Acts of the Apostles. We will especially look at how Paul (Saul), Barnabas, and Dorcas (Tabitha) played roles in that infant church.

Paul, whose original name was Saul, threatened the followers of Christ. He was converted by the power of the Holy Spirit. Conversion means changing from one way of believing and acting to a radically different life. Sharing Paul's story will lay the foundation for understanding the power of God in Christ to change people and will continue to develop in our children a forgiving and open spirit toward persons whose lives are changed by the Gospel.

Barnabas, an early Christian leader, was a person willing to give up his possessions to help the poor. He helped to raise money for feeding the poor and the hungry. He became a companion of Paul and encouraged the Church leaders to accept non-Jewish members.

Dorcas, also known as Tabitha, is the story of an early Christian woman who did good works and deeds of charity. She gave her time as well as her money to provide clothing for those in need. At her death, the community sorrowfully showed Peter the clothing she had made for others. After praying, Peter raised her from the dead.

Thank you to our May lead teachers and assistants: Joyce Bettencourt, Brigitte Cadigan, Maggie Ososki and Debbi Wagner. We are still in need of assistants for May 5th and May 19th. If you can help on either of these dates, please sign up through this link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0949AEA-F23A3F94-20232023>

Faith & Fries

We usually come together on the 4th Tuesday of every month, so we are next gathering on Tuesday, May 28th, from 7–8:30 pm at Puente American-Latino Pub at 81 South Main Street in Unionville. You can 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 to the conversation! Call the church with questions or more information on *Faith & Fries*!



Thy Kingdom Come

Thy Kingdom Come (TKC) is a ministry that began in the Church of England about eight years ago. In the last few years, TKC has grown to a global experience engaged in by parishes and churches around the world. TKC focuses prayer during the time between the Ascension of our Lord (Thursday, May 9th) and Pentecost (Sunday, May 19th). There are several facets to TKC but first and foremost, it encourages us, between Ascension and Pentecost, to say the Lord's Prayer with intentionality and new purpose. We are asked, during TKC, to pray for five people in our lives who have not yet received the Good News of Jesus in their lives or are struggling with their



faith or belief in Christ. So, we say the Lord's Prayer, thinking of our five people. We pray each day, at least once, for each of our five people of focus. We are also encouraged, as we say the Lord's

Prayer over the 10-day period of TKC, to seek renewal and closer relationship in our own journey with Christ. The primary goal of TKC is to deepen our lives of prayer as individuals and communities, and to pray for folks who do not know the goodness of Christ to come to know Him in some way and the profound blessing of learning trust and faith in His risen life.

We will kick off *Thy Kingdom Come* this year, on Ascension (again, Thursday, May 9th), at 11 am with the Celebration of Holy Eucharist in the Melissa Jane Inrig Chapel. Incense will be briefly and lightly used (apologies in advance for those who are bothered by it) at the beginning of the

service. Folks are encouraged to remain after the service, for a few minutes or longer, and begin praying for your five people (see above) and saying the Lord's Prayer. We will say a novena for Ascension after the service, as well. At that service and beginning the Sunday before, we will have special Prayer Journals available for people to use from Ascension to Pentecost. Please take one. You can find more information about *Thy Kingdom Come* at their website, including videos, etc. <https://www.thykingdomcome.global>. Please contact the parish office if you would like a printed Prayer Journal mailed to you.

Ascension Evensong

On Saturday, May 11th, at 6 p.m., we will commemorate the Ascension of our Lord with Choral Evensong which has become something of a tradition at St. James. Evensong is a traditional



sung service of Evening Prayer, sometimes called vespers, with a few spoken prayers and some

congregational singing. Evensong is a holy, sacred service that sings typically spoken prayers, such as the Song of Simeon and the Creed, a blessed way to close the day. Our amazing choir, with the support of our wonderful Director of Music, Blake Hansen, will sing again this year with guest singers.

Please join us for this meaningful time of prayer and praise to Almighty God in Evensong and stay for a festive reception immediately following the service. All are welcome and please invite friends and neighbors, too.

Pentecost Sunday picnic Sunday, May 19th!

Join us on Sunday the 19th for the celebration of the Feast of Pentecost. The 10:15 am service, weather permitting, will be outdoors on the church lawn. After the service, a picnic with hamburgers, hotdogs, and sides will be available. A sign up will be available soon so that you can bring a side or dessert to share. Tradition has it that we wear something red, in honor of the coming of the Holy Spirit! Come join us!



Minutes of the Vestry of St. James: March 14, 2024

Present: Fr. George Roberts, EJ Ososki, Carol Kirkwood, Kathy Bullard, Bob Sudell, Bonnie Sudell, Skip Mason, Mary Lansing, Deb Butler, and Chris Butler. **Absent:** Kim Pereira and Jim Wilkie

Meeting called to order 7:02pm

Minutes of February 15, 2024 Vestry Meeting

Skip moved to accept the 02/15/2024 minutes as submitted. Seconded by Chris.

Discussion – 2 corrections to note.

- Under Building and Grounds section applying for a State of CT grant not a diocesan grant
- Under Building and Grounds section Preston Williams not Preston Walker

Unanimous vote to accept the February 15, 2024, minutes as amended with corrections noted above.

Ministry Reports

Finance/Treasurer's Report – February 2024

Summary of Report by EJ Ososki

- Our current year's pledges are a little behind by about \$9K. We are still waiting for some of our large pledges to come in. We typically spread those over the year once we receive them. It's not atypical for these pledges to come in a few months after the start of the year.
- Our overall income is behind by \$4,370. The expenses are being driven by the usual offenders, heating oil and snow removal.
- We also purchased an AED which hit the February expense.
- Overall, we are running \$8k unfavorable to the budget. It is still early into the budget year.

Motion made by Bob to accept the February 2024 financial report as submitted with a second by Skip.

Questions / Discussion

- During January Father George noted the biggest snowstorm of January came on Sunday of Annual Meeting with plowing needed throughout and due to several events of icing, multiple salting was needed in January and February.
- The AED (automate external defibrillator) was purchased.

Unanimous vote to accept the February 2024 financial report as submitted.

St James Building and Grounds

Bob presented quotes from Morin Paving and Maglieri for paving.

Motion made by Bob to have Morin do the paving of rectory driveway (\$8,960), seconded by Skip.

Discussion/Questions

- Prices for both quotes were similar.
- Morin has been reliable, has a good reputation, and can do the project at the earliest convenience.
- Money for paving the driveway at the Rectory is included in the budget.

Unanimous vote to have Morin pave the driveway at the Rectory.

Bob presented quotes received by Morin Paving, Maglieri, and Incorporated Industries for church parking lot reconstruction, sidewalks from sacristy to the front of church, front sidewalk (drive leading from road sidewalk to church) and rework drains to tie into catch basins.

Motion made by Bob to replace front walkways with a second by Skip.

Discussion/Questions

- Many questions arose concerning the drainage and catch basins, more information is needed to have answers.
- The monies would come from Legacy Fund which is invested for capital expenses only. ECCT does not count capital expenses against the operating budget.

Bob amended the motion to table replacement of front walkway with a second by Skip until more information can be obtained.

Unanimous vote to table replacement of front walkway for more information.

Bob presented info on new doors.

- Exterior doors needing replacing – door at the top of the stairs leading to mailbox, patio door, kitchen exit door, fire escape door, sacristy storm door, and back door to parking lot (with auto opener).
- Preston Williams, who does restoration and remodeling work, is submitting an estimate for doors.
- Application for \$50K grant through State of CT Homeland Security for houses of worship has been submitted. If awarded, the money from the grant would cover the 2 doors downstairs.

- The two interior doors in hallway outside the Chapel that lead down to the parish hall and up to the church offices are not commercial doors and would need to be sturdier.

Other areas to obtain quotes for in future are roof for parish and windows in parish hall and classrooms.

Dominican Republic Mission update and background

- \$90-100K from Church of the Redeemer Sarasota, Florida church has been secured with a parishioner who is a member of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers donating \$500K.
- St James has \$8K in Dominican Republic fund. More fundraising will continue.

Fr George moved that St James donate up to \$10K for the building of De La Gracia church in Boca Chica DR with a second by Bob.

Discussion/Questions -none

Unanimous vote to carry motion.

Merger Reports

Property

- At the end of March will be meeting to finalize their work.

Canonical

- Bylaws completed; going through final review – last step, answer questions for ECCT Standing Committee.

Finance

- Met on 3/14/2024. Trustees put in writing that a merger will not impact Smith Fund.
- Keep invested funds separate for now which is fine with ECCT. Can decide later if we choose to combine.

Mission

- Working on questions for report to ECCT Standing Committee

Old Business

- Recap of combined Vestry meeting held on March 8, 2024.
- Sunday April 14, 2024, Vote on NAME for merged parish – each parish will vote at their respective places of worship. Information on the NAME Vote has been sent out over several weeks via email and published in the weekly Sunday bulletins.

Merger Vote – May 5, 2024

- **Sunday MAY 5, 2024, a Special Parish meeting will be held following the 10:15am service for the MERGER VOTE.**

- Reports will be submitted to the ECCT Standing Committee by the end of May.

New Business

M & T credit card

Bonnie made a motion for St James to apply for a credit card at M & T Bank with a second by Mary.

Discussions/Questions – None

Unanimous vote motion carries

Dominican Republic Mission Trip Fundraiser

- Saturday May 4th Pasta Dinner Fundraiser
- Those going on the Mission trip in June will also be selling candy bars.

Motion made by Skip to hold fundraisers of a Pasta Dinner and Candy Bar Sale for DR Mission Trip, seconded by Kathy.

Discussion / Questions - none

Unanimous vote - motion carries

Rectory Info

- A new puppy has arrived at the Rectory and an invisible fence will be put in place. The Roberts have a reputable company installing it, first contacting Call Before You Dig (CBYD).

Bob made a motion to adjourn. Skip seconded.

Unanimous vote to adjourn.

Adjourned at 9:05pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Carol Kirkwood, Clerk

Celebrating May birthdays!

<i>Bob Stanek</i>	<i>Elizabeth Hillemeir</i>
<i>Nancy Thompson</i>	<i>Chris Newton</i>
<i>Lindsay Hillemeir</i>	<i>Gisli Ingimarsson</i>
<i>Spencer Rice</i>	<i>Mary Lansing</i>
<i>Gina Pines</i>	<i>Betsy Bailey</i>
<i>Chloe Roberts</i>	<i>Gunni Propiescus</i>
<i>George Cadigan</i>	<i>Carol Kirkwood</i>
<i>John McBride</i>	<i>MJ Greaves</i>
<i>Mia Stein</i>	<i>Brian Bullard</i>
<i>Sarah Newton</i>	<i>Sonia Mason</i>
<i>EJ Ososki</i>	<i>Tom Mason</i>
<i>Evan Wahl</i>	<i>Jake Lapointe</i>
<i>Vanessa Reynolds</i>	<i>Olivia Lathrop</i>
<i>Madeleine Sullivan</i>	<i>Victoria Lathrop</i>
<i>Libby Chambers</i>	<i>Jane Johansen</i>

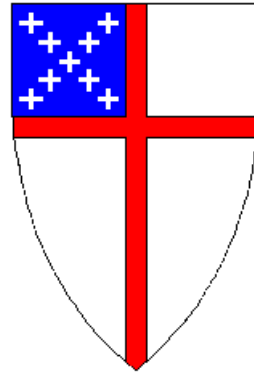


St. James Parish

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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	<i>Rector</i>	Kathy Bullard & Kim Pereira, <i>Wardens</i>		
Blake Hansen	<i>Director of Music</i>	EJ Ososki, <i>Treasurer</i>		
Susan Deming	<i>Parish Administrator</i>	Jerry Hess, <i>Asst. Treasurer</i>		
Ray Smith	<i>Sexton</i>	Carol Kirkwood, <i>Parish Clerk</i>		
Kim McLaurin	<i>Nursery Supervisor</i>			
		2024	VESTRY 2025	2026
		Kathy Bullard Bonnie Sudell Robert Sudell	Mary Lansing Skip Mason Kim Pereira	Chris Butler Deb Butler Jim Wilkie

St. James Parish

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