

St. James Parish

Epistle



April 2022

Rector's Message

We have probably mused before, once or twice, about the gift of our Anglican-Episcopal tradition's liturgical year. The Church year begins, liturgically, in Advent and ends, the following year, at the outset of that Advent. During the course of any liturgical year, we go from waiting (Advent) to revelation (Epiphany) to wilderness and reflection (Lent) to resurrection (Easter) to Christ's departure (Ascension) to the coming of the Holy Spirit (Pentecost). After Pentecost we go through a long period of "ordinary time" that does not end until the beginning of a new Advent, another time of waiting, and thus the year begins again. Each liturgy has its own color and vibe. Yet, the liturgical year is not about fancy, beautifully colored vestments, rather, our church year gives us wonderful markers of the seasons of our lives, the challenges that we face, our times in the wilderness, and leads us to God in Christ. Our call to God, elicited by the rise and fall of our liturgy and the liturgical year, is to be made ever new, constantly transformed, brought to new life in the resurrected reality of Jesus.

April will bring us to the profound reality of all that we are not and what we struggle to be, as we mark Christ's entry into Jerusalem, His fulfilling of the prophetic wisdom that promised the coming of Messiah. Holy Week marches through Christ's final teachings with His disciples, His betrayal by Judas and being abandoned by His friends. Jesus faces judgment and crucifixion alone for it is only He who can set the captives free. We may be tempted to trash ourselves, to say, "It was my sin, my unworthiness that caused Jesus to be so shamefully and painfully treated." Yet, it is Christ who, pinned to the ugliness of the Cross, gathers us to Himself and makes the ultimate sacrifice out of love for us. Jesus does not spurn us, no, He blesses us, and makes this old world new again.

As he cries out from Calvary's Cross, "My God, my God, why have you left me alone?!" He embraces all of our fears, the battering we've taken during COVID, the darkness of our world, and acknowledges our pain and fear. Jesus, in humility and world-saving love, deigns to be us, once again, and saves us from ruin because He must have us for His own.

The rise and fall of the year will bring us – on April 17th this year, Resurrection Day – to the shattering awareness that, if Christ is for us, who can stand against us. Not the war in Ukraine, the abuse of children, the suicide of the forlorn, the rise of dictators, not all that life can throw against us – NOTHING of this world – can separate us from the love of God known to us in Jesus Christ our Lord. The wilderness, the waiting, the reflective year of blessing rises up to meet us and then is transformed by the worthiness, the hope-sprung-to-life that we find in the Resurrection of our Lord. We still have Holy Week to go through and, take it or leave it, we must give the devil his due. We cannot escape the pain of life; the Passionate suffering of Jesus will have its say. Jesus the Christ, nevertheless, triumphs once again and we hear the angel say, "He is not here! He is risen!!" God give us the grace to hold on, once more, as the year of our Church marks the blessed hope that only Christ's victory over death can bring. Jesus' obliteration of death tells us, always, there will be new day.

In Christ,
Fr. George+



Warden's Corner

When I was asked to serve as a member of Vestry, I was apprehensive to say the least; having never served on a Vestry I wasn't sure what I had to offer. I have learned so much since joining, but most importantly, that if you love the purpose behind what you're doing, fear should never stop you from moving forward. In reading the Lent Devotions in Henri J.M. Nouwen's *Drawn to the Cross*, I was moved by this passage from Romans 12:5-6 — *We, who are many are one body in Christ ... We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us.*

God has given the people of St James so many great gifts, and we are always being nudged forward by the Holy Spirit to use these gifts to their fullest. Nouwen talks about a community being like a large mosaic, each little piece seemingly insignificant, but when put together these pieces create a beautiful image in His name. What a simple and beautiful thought.

As you spend some reflective time this Lenten season, I encourage you to think about the wonderful gifts God has bestowed on you and how these gifts might be shared with our St James community and beyond. Time, resources, ideas; they are all needed and welcomed. Thank you for allowing me to serve as Co-Warden of our beautiful mosaic and thank you for showing up with your piece. If you ever have a question, concern, idea or would just like to chat, please reach out to me. I'd love to get to know you better.

Peace,
Kim Faubert, Vestry Co-Warden

Celebrating April Birthdays!

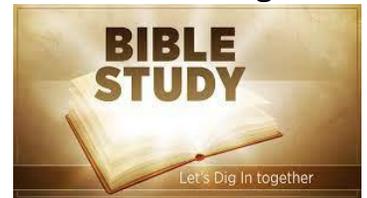
Karen Young	Nina Hayes
Donna Wilkie	Ruth Torrence
Kathy Roach	Eric Johansen
Susan Brockman	Arthur Phinney
Story Cadigan	Wyatt Chambers
Sarah Brame	Judy Reardon
Katrina Mason	Joseph Watkin



An Invitation to Bible Study

I would like to invite you to joyfully join a small group of pilgrims on the journey of better understanding "The mystery of faith". For the past 2 years I have participated with a few who have been gathering by Zoom under the leadership of Fr. George for Bible Study on Sundays after the 10:15 a.m. service.

By consensus we choose which Scriptures to study and attending every Sunday is not mandatory! It is a safe space where we read the scriptures, discuss the readings by utilizing a Study Guide and exchange ideas, as we explore the "Word of God. The Guide is just that, a guide, to keep us on track, however, we can deviate from it, as the Spirit moves us. As Fr. George says: "There's no wrong answer." We're all at different stages of our faith journey.



We are grateful to have parishioner Mimi Hostetter, who helps put the readings into historical perspective. This leads to a better understanding of the time period in discussion. I think we're all enhanced by the fellowship with other Christians who believe in God's word, as it makes us stronger and strengthens our faith.

Personally, I feel blessed to have another venue for worshiping God and am renewed and refreshed on a weekly basis. So, please, pray and consider joining us, no pressure!

Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard a man reading Isaiah, the prophet. Do you understand what you are reading? Philip asked. How can I, he said, unless someone explains it to me? So, he invited Philip to come and sit with him. Acts 8:30-31

Anna Whilby

Note: we continue to use Zoom Meeting ID: 810 0898 0546; Passcode: 062552 to join us Sundays at noon. All are welcome!

From the Deacon's bench

Two processions entered Jerusalem on a spring day in the year 30. It was the beginning of the week of Passover, the most sacred week in the Jewish year. In the centuries since, Christians have celebrated this day as Palm Sunday, the first day of Holy Week, with its climax on Good Friday and Easter, it the most sacred week in the Christian year.

Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan, in their book *The Last Week*, tell us that one was a peasant procession, the other an imperial procession. The procession of Roman governor Pontius Pilate and his accompanying military force coming into the city from the west provided a military deterrent during the festival.

On the east side of the city, another parade was being planned for the arrival of one who would hopefully be a different kind of ruler. Jesus sent his disciples to get a colt, which we assume was a small donkey. When the colt has been secured, Jesus rides it down the steep road from the Mount of Olives to the Golden Gate of the city, with a crowd of his supporters shouting “Hosanna!” — a Hebrew word that mixes praise to God with a prayer that God will save his people and do it soon. They spread their cloaks on the colt and cut branches from the surrounding fields — actions that were done only in the presence of royalty. Trust me: They weren't laying down cloaks and branches for Pilate.

When we're waving those palm branches, one of the things we should remember is that *Jesus was intentionally setting up a comparison between the violent and powerful image of the empire and the peaceful and grace-filled image of the kingdom of God.* The symbolism of a ruler riding on a donkey would not have been lost on those putting their cloaks in the road. This king is not a conquering hero who uses weapons of mass destruction, but one who will break the power of military might with humility, justice and a “peace” for all the nations.

Jesus' parade is thus an intentional parable and statement of contrast. If Pilate's procession embodied power, violence and the glory of the empire that ruled the world, Jesus' procession embodied the kind of kingdom that God was ushering in through Jesus' ministry of healing, his

message of good news and, ultimately, his sacrificial death on a Roman cross.

We may admire Jesus, but we're not necessarily ready to follow him down that road of suffering, sacrifice and servanthood that ultimately leads to the redemption of the world. Some of those same folks who were waving branches on Sunday were gone by Friday, having abandoned Jesus to the powers of the temple and the empire.

The question we must ask is whether we sometimes do the same thing when following Christ. Following Jesus means sharing his story, even though we might risk being ignored or even rejected.

We must remember that the wonderful message of Jesus brings hope and wholeness to the world through his obedience and submission to God. After all, as Paul tells us “at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Two processions entered Jerusalem on that spring day 2000 years ago. The same question faces those who are faithful to Jesus today. Which procession are we in? Which procession do we want to be in? This is the question of Holy Week.

Deacon Doug Engwall



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-NC

Church School

Church school has been very busy this past month. We are learning about the many times leading up to the crucifixion when Jesus performed miracles that upset the Pharisees. We heard Jesus tell us what He calls Himself ... Life of the World, Bread of Life, the True Vine, the Good Shepherd; we heard the stories of multiplying the loaves and fishes, curing the blind man and raising Lazarus from the dead. The children recreate these stories through retelling and acting them out. They are also working on an Easter banner/mural to share with the congregation. We are very thankful for the weekly assistance of Olivia Roberts and Elle Lansing. The banner is taking great shape with the parental help of Rebecca McFarland, Maggie Ososki, and Maina Rice. Church school is also offered via ZOOM for any children who might not be able to attend in person.

Faith & Fries returns!!

Some of you remember that in late 2019, we launched a new ministry – in partnership with First Church, Congregational, Farmington - called *Faith and Fries*. The sole goal of *Faith and Fries* was (and is) to give folks a casual platform for discussing how faith and the world/life intersect. We had our first gathering in November of 2019 and were just getting momentum when COVID came along and we had to back away for a (long) time. Now, we hope to reboot *Faith and Fries*, but it needs to be on a different night as Taprock and many other restaurants are closed on Mondays. Due to a lot of factors, **we have selected the 4th Tuesday in every month to gather at Taprock Beer Bar and Refuge at 81 South Main Street, Unionville. Hoping that all goes well, we will meet on Tuesday, April 26th, from 7–8:30 pm.** You can come for dinner, have a drink or snack, whatever is comfortable for you. To stir up gentle, generous, and free conversation, we will use the *Ten Big Questions* developed by podcaster Kelly Corrigan. Please consider joining us in March or sometime this Spring!



Annual Easter Egg Hunt 2022!

We are so very excited, for the first time since Easter 2019, to be able to do an Easter egg hunt in our traditional way: on Easter Sunday, right after the 10:15 service. Any child (feel free to invite friends and neighbors to join you!) who wishes to participate in the Egg Hunt is asked to go down to the parish hall right after service ends. We will – in as organized a fashion as is possible – allow the youngest children to go first to the upper lawn (infant up to kindergarten age), and shortly thereafter, our 1st to 5th graders will go a-hunting for eggs on the main lawn. Please bring a basket for your child's eggs, if you can, though we will have a few extra. Older children (and parents) in the Hunt are encouraged to help - and be generous with - their younger, perhaps not quite as quick just yet, Egg hunting companions. There will be plenty of eggs for everyone. We ask, after the Egg Hunt is over, for the children to please bring the plastic eggs back into the parish hall and into our bin for the egg and children take the candy they have taken from inside the shell home with them. There will be cake and other goodies inside for your enjoyment before you get away to other Easter activities.



Prayer Team

From time to time, the Prayer Team shares something of what has been helpful to us, in the hope that you may find it helpful, too. This is a prayer that speaks to the task of allowing our mind, eyes, and heart to be opened, and filled with the goodness of God ...

*Grant me, O Lord
to know what is worth knowing,
to love what is worth loving,
and to value what is precious in Your sight.
Do not let me judge by what I see,
or pass sentence according to what I hear,
but rather to search out,
and do, what pleases you.*

~ Thomas a Kempis

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

Pat Clark
Carol Kirkwood
Donna Paye

Holy Week Schedule

Holy Week, which begins on April 10th with Palm Sunday, is the most important week of our liturgical year. Often called “Passion Week,” the week following the Sunday of Palms should bring us to a fuller and deeper understanding and appreciation of how much God loves us and sacrificed for us. As Christians Holy Week accelerates our reflections on the Passion and death of Jesus, even as we prepare for Easter. I encourage you to participate in as many services as is possible for you and your family during the course of the week.



Sunday, April 10th, Palm Sunday/Passion Sunday – We are so very excited and blessed to be able to engage Palm Sunday in a more traditional way this year. At 8 am we will gather on the steps, weather permitting, for the Liturgy of the Palms. Our traditional Palm Sunday procession, weather permitting, will begin at 9:45 am at the corner of Mountain Rd and High St., in concert with our neighbors from First Church, Congregational. All are encouraged to participate but, if you have mobility issues, please feel free to wait for us in the church; we will arrive at the doors around 10 am.



Wednesday, April 13th at 7 p.m. Tenebrae – Tenebrae literally means ‘darkness’ or ‘shadows’ in Latin. We present a series of wonderful readings as 7 candles are extinguished one at a time, until even the “Christ” candle is hidden, as if in the tomb. Tenebrae prepares us for the coming three days of Holy Week.



Thursday, April 14th at 7 p.m., Maundy Thursday – Maundy is from the Latin *maunde, mande,* and *mandatum,* meaning “an order.” On the night before Jesus died He said to His disciples, “a new commandment I give to you, that you love one another” (John 13:34). Anyone who wishes has the opportunity to keep vigil with Jesus for an hour overnight in the sanctuary where a station is set for the Blessed Sacrament. You may also keep vigil from home for an hour.



Friday, April 15th at 11:30 a.m. and 7 p.m., Good Friday – our mid-day service will be an intimate, contemplative service with short readings, Taizé music, and much time for reflection. At the 7 p.m. service we will observe the Veneration of the Cross, and taking of Holy Eucharist from the Reserved Sacrament, honoring Jesus as He lays dark in the tomb. For a fleeting moment, we feel outside the reach of Jesus, who is taken from us and placed into the ground, away from us. The low point of Holy Week, as Jesus dies on the Cross.



Saturday, April 16th at 7:30 p.m., The Great Easter Vigil – we celebrate Jesus’ passing over from death to life, from darkness to light in a wonderful service called The Great Vigil of Easter, beginning at twilight.



Easter Sunday, April 17th at our usual times (8 and 10:15 a.m.) – Jesus is risen indeed! Joy abounds as we celebrate with uplifting music.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Easter Memorial Fund

God conquered death on Easter. Christ’s rising from the tomb makes all the difference in the world because it trumpets the Good News that we matter, that we will always matter, that God is with us in life and in death. Easter is, then, a particularly appropriate time to remember loved ones who have died by giving flowers in their memory. Any contribution is welcome, a gift of **\$35** or more is asked to cover the expense of the Easter flowers.



Names of memorials and gifts received by Monday, April 11th will be listed in the Easter bulletins, and we will pray for those remembered throughout the Paschal season. Please use the form below to designate your gift. Make checks payable to *St. James Parish* marked “Easter Flowers”. Thank you for your generosity.

Please print the information as you prefer it be listed in the Easter bulletins.

In memory of _____

OR

In thanksgiving for _____

Given by _____

Minutes of the Vestry of St. James: February 17, 2022

Present via Zoom: Fr. George Roberts, EJ Ososki, Carol Kirkwood, Kim Faubert, Tom Nelson, Foster White, Maina Rice, Anna Whilby, Kathy Bullard, Bob Sudell, Bonnie Sudell.

Absent: Jim Wilkie

Meeting called to order 7:05pm

Minutes of January 20, 2022, Vestry Meeting

Foster moved to accept the minutes. Seconded by Anna. Unanimous vote to accept the minutes.

Ministry Reports

Finance/Treasurer's report – January 2022

Summary of Report via EJ Ososki

- Income is close to budget and expenses are about \$1K under budget. Motion made by Bonnie to accept the January Financial report as presented. Seconded by Kim F.

Unanimous vote to accept the financial report.

Stewardship

- As of 02/17/2022 now at 82 pledges received - totaling \$276,618. After Annual Meeting, a few upped their pledge. Amount now at approx. 5K more.

New Business

Welcome to New Vestry Members

- Bob Sudell / Bonnie Sudell / Kathy Bullard Motion made by Anna to affirm Jim Wilkie and Kim Faubert be co-wardens of Vestry 2022. Second by Tom. Motion approved with unanimous vote.

Vestry Retreat decompression – thoughts, ideas, needs

- Thanks to Rev. Canon Rebekah Hatch for her presentations and engaging exercises and to Fr George for the opportunity and logistics of the day.
- Two web links that sparked the day's conversations can be found at the following links ["The Small Church as Icon" by Jen Fulton](#) and ["Not Fancy, but Faithful"](#), a podcast created by the Small Churches Big Impact Collective –Rebekah is part of a group of small church pastors that created the podcasts.
- Many liked how we discussed and shared amongst each other – especially with exercise where all had the same questions to answer and discuss with a small group

then share among the larger group. This type of exercise sparked energy and commonalities amongst all. We discussed how such an exercise could be used at coffee hours and other gatherings.

2023 Sesquicentennial (150th year) Committee

- Fr. George has a task group comprised of a group of parishioners who had their first meeting February 7th to start planning for the Sesquicentennial. Next meeting is planned for March.
- By April/May a calendar of events for 2022 should be completed.
- Lots of ideas came out of the initial meeting – commemorative Christmas ornaments, All Souls Day luminaires, Foster is connecting with ECCT for archives, celebrations to name a few.
- Vestry discussed some ideas such as extending invites to the Town. Maina offered to get flyers to neighbors when the time comes.
- Vestry will receive notes from task force meetings with opportunities to assist.
- Anna asked if there is available funding from the diocese for such a special occasion or Go Fund me campaign etc. Various resources will be investigated. More to come on the topic.

Natural Fund for Sacred Spaces – Grant possibility

- Fr George and Kim Pereira working on letter of intent to pursue a grant that is available for small churches for capital campaigns such as the ADA / accessibility project that has been explored over the past year.
- The grant awards up to \$100K with parish matching \$100K for a total of \$200K. Have 3 years to raise the money. Money can also be given out in increments of \$25K with match of \$25K.
- Letter of Intent is first step and is due on March 7th. In April we find out if the proposal was accepted or not.

Vestry Papers: Ministry of Invitation and We have what they seek

To be discussed at next meeting March 17th

- <https://www.ecfvp.org/vestry-papers/article/584/a-ministry-of-invitation>

- <https://www.ecfvp.org/blogs/3941/we-have-what-they-seek>
- Engagement with wider community – Evangelism - Welcome

Approval of 2021 Parochial Report

Motion made by Bonnie to accept the parochial report with amendments as discussed. Foster seconded. Motion approved with unanimous vote.

Masks and distancing in church going forward

- 2/23/2022 Vestry email - Considering having masks be optional in church after March 1st. Church school would wear when in class for now. Suggestion to have balcony as an area where masks are required.

Old Business

Bibles replacing inserts

- As part of Renewal Works Survey that several parishioners participated in by completing surveys and/or being on Renewal Works committee, high on the list of suggestions was having Bibles in pews.
- The Bibles would replace the inserts of readings now in the bulletin. This will give people opportunities to use the Bible more. It will also help in expenses as inserts have jumped from \$300/year to \$800.
- There are sample Bibles for Vestry and parishioners to check out in the Narthex to see what font is easiest and provide feedback to Fr. George.

Need to replace siding above kitchen (potential that gutters would also need to be rehung)

- As you come in back door look to right at kitchen area; there is rot at the siding gutter area and water is getting in
- Jim Wilkie and John Smith are working on getting bids. Uncertain until siding is pulled off how extensive damage may be.

Addendum per email to Vestry on 2/23/2022 regarding internet speed

- Parish Administrator contacted Comcast to see how internet issues could be improved. There is a higher (best) upload speed that Comcast offers which would give an increase of 15 mbps. We would go from current plan of 200/20 mbps at \$217.56 monthly to 600/35mbps for \$249.93/month with an installation fee.

- Vestry feels that it is worth a try to see if we have improvements noted.

Rector's and Warden's Thoughts

- **Next Vestry meeting, March 17th at 7 pm** (do we want to come together in person? Or should we go forward with Zoom for now? (We could do a hybrid, but it's best if we are all doing the same thing)
- **Chili fundraiser**, Shrove Tuesday, March 1st, 5–7 pm
- **Ash Wednesday**, March 2nd, services at noon and 7 pm, Holy Eucharist, imposition of ashes (which will be made available during the day, as well)

Kathy made a motion to adjourn. EJ seconded. Unanimous vote to adjourn. Adjourned at 9:22pm

Respectfully Submitted

Carol

Carol Kirkwood, Clerk

Your picture in a brochure 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.

Conversations on World Religions & Faith

This Spring, we plan to continue our series on World Religions. Planning discussions with scholars and members of the Islam faith are still in progress. Stay tuned for details as we firm up a date and content.

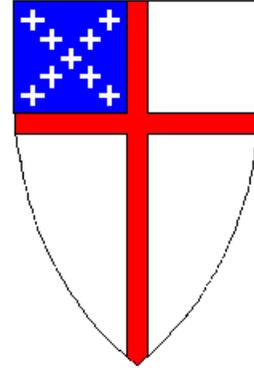


St. James Parish

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>
The Rev. Douglas Engwall	<i>Deacon</i>
Blake Hansen	<i>Director of Music</i>
Susan Deming	<i>Parish Administrator</i>
Anthony Nauss	<i>Sexton</i>
Laura Vacca	<i>Nursery Supervisor</i>

OFFICERS

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

2022

Thomas Nelson
Foster White
James Wilkie

VESTRY 2023

Kim Faubert
Maina Rice
Anna Whilby

2024

Kathy Bullard
Bonnie Sudell
Robert Sudell

St. James Parish

3 MOUNTAIN ROAD
FARMINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06032

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

