

St. James Parish

WITH ST. MARK'S MINISTRIES

Epistle



MAY 2025

Rector's Message

O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic your Name is in all the earth! ... When I look at Your heavens, the work of Your fingers ... what are human beings that You are mindful of them, mortals that You care for them?? Yet, you have made them a little lower than the angels, and crowned them with glory and honor ... Psalm 8:1, 3, 4

Christ is risen! Alleluia!! We proclaim with full-throated assurance on Easter Sunday that God has overwhelmed death and raised the Son of Man to life. Death cannot hold the Holy One who offered His body and blood at Calvary, died on that cross, and was buried. "The right man is," as Martin Luther penned in A Mighty Fortress is our God, "on our side," and we are reborn in the fullness of life with God in Christ, now that death has been vanquished and our sins have been buried in the earth, left in the tomb where they belong.

As spring unfolds and the beauty of the azaleas, daffodils, and leafing trees tell their story, I am made more aware than ever how blessed we are. Who are we, that the Lord of heaven and earth would not only give much power to the human race but would love us beyond all telling? David wrote in Psalm 8 that God, in His mercy and love, made us "a little lower than the angels," and has taken us entirely to Himself. How can it be? I don't suspect there is any perfect theological answer for why God loves us the way God does but as evidenced by His intervening in human history in Christ, God does love us. What love is this?? What hope is this?! God made us for Himself and loves us in a way that proves His love true. We need only look at the wounded feet and wrists of Christ, put our fingers into His side,

and look into the face of God's own Son to know that we are loved, loved, and loved some more.

Easter celebrates – and rightly so – the immeasurable miracle of Christ's Resurrection and His coming to His disciples. Did he come to them only so they would believe and not lose heart? They were shattered, to be sure; yes, they were lost and broken men and women who huddled together, with no plan for the future. Jesus had been murdered, placed dead in the tomb, and life as they had imagined it was over. Jesus definitely came to them in that locked room after His Resurrection so that they would know and believe that all He had told them and done in His living years were real. Yet, Jesus breathed His peace on them as an act of love and mercy, offered them the grace of the living God as a balm for now, in their pain, and for the challenges to come. God's love offers us a knowing: we are loved by the Creator of all things and His mercy heals our broken hearts and calls us back from the angry, hate-filled, hopeless paths we go down in this life. Christ is here and embracing His love this Easter and beyond, will change our broken hearts into whole ones, new hearts for a needy world. Christ lives! God in Christ loves us! Alleluia 😊

In Christ,
Fr. George+

Warden's Corner

Some people may ask, "Why does a church need to have an Outreach Ministry at all?" It would be easy to attend church, have our own spiritual needs met, and not worry about the needs of others. If we read and understand Scripture, we acknowledge that we are called to spread the love of Jesus and to help others who are disadvantaged or in need. Jesus's teachings and actions show us that the way to serve God is to serve others. Churches must also put this basic truth into action. We cannot only look inward and concentrate on our own spiritual fulfillment. We need to look outside of ourselves, and to show our compassion and love to those in need. It is important to know that the love and light of God is evident everywhere we go. People really do see God's love through us.

St. James Parish has a long history of Outreach Ministry. The Vestry has supported Outreach activities by committing 2% of our yearly pledge income to Outreach. We donate to multiple organizations in the area and in the world. Through funding and missions, we support the building of a church in the Dominican Republic. Additionally, there are many ongoing outreach activities: Church by the Pond, Walk Against Hunger, Thanksgiving Baskets, and Angel Giving Tree, as well as collections for Farmington Food Pantry and Gifts of Love. Also, there are volunteer opportunities to help our St. Mark's Ministries Food Pantry in New Britain. All these activities and programs are long-standing and firmly in our comfort zone. Are we too comfortable with what we are doing for others? Is our Outreach program all that it could be?

After services on May 4th, we will have a meeting of the Outreach Ministry. All members of the Church who have an interest in outreach, and would like to maximize our outreach activities, are asked to attend. Our church has many new people, with new ideas and energy. It would be great if newcomers come and help us invigorate our outreach efforts with new perspectives. At this meeting we will review what we're currently doing and hopefully determine if changes need to be made to optimize our ministry. Please think about helping St. James Outreach Ministry step out of our "comfort zone". Help us make sure we are answering the call to spread the love of Christ and serve others as Jesus asked us to.

Sincerely in Christ, *Kathy Bullard*, Co-Warden

Church School update

Thank you for encouraging your children to attend Church School! The last few weeks have been very exciting as Easter Sunday approached. The children made palm crosses on Palm Sunday, and we had lots of discussions surrounding the important days surrounding Easter. They learned about parables doing fun skits and art activities. One Sunday, Joyce told a story about Jesus being a Jew, and on that day we reenacted a little Seder with the children. Joyce brought all of the fixings and the children prepared the food themselves and later enjoyed tasting it! We have been reflecting on Jesus's life, death and resurrection, and dyed colorful Easter



eggs with some of our Church School families. Easter Sunday was wonderful as always with so many children filling their baskets during a beautiful (yet windy) egg hunt. Thanks to our group

of women who sat filling eggs for hours, and to Maina Rice and family with other teens for helping with the hiding of them.

Please continue to check the bulletin for important announcements and planned events. We look forward to having a little party with the children to celebrate the end of Church School season. As always, thank you to all the volunteers who have been so generous with their time in helping. We have a few slots open if anyone would like to help before the season comes to an end. Please check our SignupGenius link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0E48ADA82EA7FF2-50798626-church>

If you have questions or want to hear more about what volunteering would be like, please contact Brigitte Cadigan.

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. This will be our last *Breakfast* for the program year so please **join us on Sunday morning, May 4th, from 9 am–9:45 am** for a wonderful time of food and fellowship! And we'll see you again in the Fall!

Men's Breakfast

On Saturday, May 10th, at 8 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. We plan on making this a monthly gathering, to be determined by the group, and a time for conversation and growth in the Christian life.

St. James community workday

On Saturday, May 17th, beginning at 8:30 am, all who are able are invited to join us in clearing the east side of the building of growth and vegetation (it has become overgrown) and paving the way for seeding grass and starting, we pray, a prayer garden on that side of the church building. Bring your tools, especially chain saws, if you have them, rakes, shovels, etc. Please wear gloves and long pants and sleeves for your protection.



Faith & Fries!

We usually come together on the 4th Tuesday of each month at **Puente American-Latino Pub at 81 South Main Street in Unionville. We will gather on Tuesday, May 27th, from 7–8:30 pm.** 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! Call the church with questions.



Celebrating May birthdays!

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



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.

Prayer Team

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

Well, today the temperature reads 78 degrees, and suddenly it's Spring! Soon it will be time to work in the garden: planting, feeding, watering and weeding. Often, we hear the metaphor of a garden being used to describe the condition of our hearts, a place where seeds of love, faith, and kindness can be nurtured. Consider this prayer, then, from Mason Caldwell as you work in your garden. And may the garden of your heart produce abundant fruit.

Growth in Gardens & Hearts

Holy Father, we come before You with grateful hearts, seeking Your divine touch upon our gardens and our souls. May seeds of love, kindness, and faith flourish within us, nurturing our spirits and the earth around us. Help us to cultivate patience and understanding, allowing growth to blossom in every corner of our lives. In Your grace, may we bear fruit that glorifies Your name. Amen.

In Christ,
The Prayer Team:
Pat Clark, Carol Kirkwood, Donna Paye

Church Directory

The Church Directory has 85 submissions of photos and demographics as people saw fit, and an inclusion of our staff page. Thank you to all the many people that worked with me on getting me info, proofing, reworking things, etc. We are all so blessed to have each other! The better news is that the finished project will soon be available to you as a PDF or hard paper copy in May (fingers crossed all goes well). Thank you, Church Family, for being a part of this project and making it happen!



– Linda Mason

From the Welcoming Committee

The Welcoming Committee is still looking for Welcomers who would like to welcome newcomers to church services on Sunday mornings. When starting, you will be buddied up with an experienced Welcomer to show you the way. The commitment is only as you are able. It is a rewarding experience to be able to welcome someone new and to set a positive tone that can really make a large difference for a new person coming to our church for the first time. Thank you to all our current Welcomers for sharing your Christian Love as you welcome newcomers; each of you is a gift of joy. For questions or to get involved in this ministry, please speak to Linda Mason.

Therefore welcome one another, just as Christ has also welcomed you, to the glory of God.
Romans 15:7

Women's Ministry

The Woman's Ministry will be offering the following to the women of the parish, for questions/more information please see Kathy Bullard, Deb Butler, Gabriela Henry, Linda Mason, Tracey Roberts, Molly Sherman, Nancy Thompson, or Anna Whilby.



- **Wednesday, May 14th, 7 pm**, Craft Group, come meet at the church to discuss and plan projects such as baking, stitching, crochets, card making, etc. to be made and given to shut-ins and Prudence Crandall Center.
- **Tuesday, May 20th, 10 am**, Coffee, a time for gathering with your woman friends for a bit of coffee and chatting. Please meet at Daily Grind, 17 Depot Place, Unionville.
- **Wednesday, June 18th, 7 pm**, Book Club, come hang out with your woman friends at the church, bring a snack and discuss great reads. The first book selected is *Breakfast with Buddah*. For questions, please speak to Tracey Roberts.
- **Saturday, June 21st, 9 am**, Potluck Prayer Breakfast Bring a yummy breakfast food and join your woman folk in a time of breakfast, prayer, and gathering.

Dominican Republic mission update

Our Dominican Mission Team has now sent four missions to the Dominican Republic. We have a core group of people who are committed to our ministry in the DR and each trip some new folks join us! We should also say we learn more about humility, authentic worship, love and hope in Jesus from the good people of the Dominican Republic than they ever learn from us by a long distance. We take on projects that the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of the Dominican Republic, The Rt. Rev. Moises Quezada Mota, has vetted and prioritized. We are not telling them what we are going to do, rather they are asking us to



partner with them, which is an important ministry distinction.

In the summer of 2023, our Dominican Mission Team first journeyed to

Boca Chica, in the Dominican Republic, to begin assisting the community of De La Gracia, where the median income is less than \$1,000 US a year, to build a church. This was to be our third mission trip to the DR. De La Gracia has been meeting as a church community for at least 20 years and, because of their commitment to have a permanent place to worship, have managed to save approximately \$10,000 toward the project. Over the last two years, St. James has donated more than \$27,000 toward the project and we traveled back to Boca Chica last summer to begin the construction of a retaining wall around the property, a requirement for the churches in the DR. We collaborated with the community to host a Bible School for more than 100 children each of the last two summers. Two partner churches (Redeemer, Sarasota and St. John's, Tampa) have contributed money and resources to seeing the dream of De La Gracia come to fruition.



Construction began last fall on the church building itself and continues this spring (see photos). Our hope is that the church building will be completed this summer. Our Mission Team will return to De La Gracia in June of this year to

either build pews for the new church or to help with painting and other needs.

Currently, we have two asks from the good people of St. James toward our current project in the Dominican Republic. First, we are running our envelope fundraiser again for this summer's mission to the Dominican Republic. On the parish hall kiosk are envelopes labeled \$1 to \$100. Please take one (or two), place the designated amount in the envelope, and put it in the offering plate or bring it (or mail it) to the parish office. Two years ago when we did this same fundraiser, we raised a little under \$2,000. Our goal this year is to raise \$5,000 (!) which we can only do if every envelope is taken. Will you help us? If you have questions about our mission to the Dominican Republic, please see Fr. George.

Second, each summer we help host a Bible School in the community of Del La Gracia, with us providing the crafts and logistical support and Dominican teachers

leading the lessons. We are seeking material donations for Bible School (please see the display down in the parish hall that has suggested items that you can purchase/donate and a "wish list"). We need pipe cleaners, "pompoms," pony beads, googly eyes of all sizes, jumbo colored wood craft sticks, yarns of many colors, pencils, Q-tips, and lots of crayons. All



these items will be used to make crafts at Bible School, which the kids really love. Please see Tracey Roberts for ideas or with questions.

Stay tuned for updates on our ongoing mission in the Dominican Republic.



Feast of the Ascension, May 29th

Jesus tells His disciples, in what we call The Great Commission (Matthew 28): "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I commanded. And remember, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Then Jesus ascends into heaven. Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again. The Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ to be at the right hand of God opens up the way for us to receive and channel the Holy Spirit, to see Christ's resurrection blessing, and allow His continuing life among us to take hold.

Beginning on Ascension Day, we will once again use *Thy Kingdom Come* as a way of engaging Christ in this time before Pentecost (June 8th). *Thy Kingdom Come* arrives from the United Kingdom, inviting us, in the 10 days between Ascension and Pentecost, to take up a life of prayer. We will have prayer journals and novenas to pray for 10 days. The basic way that *Thy Kingdom Come* works is you make a pledge to pray for five people in your life that either don't know the saving love and grace of Jesus in



their lives or are struggling with their faith (known only to you, but you can write their names in the journals we will make available). You will use the Lord's Prayer as a major way to pray.

On Thursday, May 29th, at 11 am we will celebrate Holy Eucharist in the Melissa Jane Inrig Memorial Chapel (here at 3 Mountain Road) and begin to pray for the community and those who have not yet truly met or engaged with Jesus as savior. Everyone present, and all in the parish, will be welcome after that time to begin praying for folks in their lives and intentionally for the world to know Jesus. You may, over the next 9 days, pray the novena (a series of nine prayers for special intentions).

On Saturday, May 31st, at 6 pm, we will host a special Ascension Choral Evensong in the church followed by a festive reception in the parish hall.

Ascension Evensong

On Saturday, May 31st, 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.

Save the Date for Sound Healing

Kelvin Young returns on Saturday, June 7th with a Sound Healing program.

Pentecost Sunday, June 8th!

Sunday, June 8th we commemorate the Feast of Pentecost or Whitsunday (white Sunday). Pentecost is the final high feast day before the fall and follows the coming of the Holy Spirit upon Christ's praying disciples. The Holy Spirit was promised by Jesus, before His crucifixion, as a gift to strengthen and bless the disciples in their continuing life and ministry with God and we all claim that inbreaking Spirit, too. We will complete our time of intentional prayer (after the Ascension) and will celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit and enjoy a St. James Picnic, with hamburgers, hotdogs, etc. in a time of celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit.



Minutes of the Vestry Meeting of March 20, 2025

Present: Fr. George Roberts, Kathy Bullard, Stephen Hard via Zoom, Linda Mason, Skip Mason, Doug McDowell, EJ Ososki, Ed Preneta, Molly Sherman, Bonnie Sudell, and Bob Sudell. **Absent:** Dave Tompkins.

Minutes of 2/20/2025 Meeting

Bob made a motion to accept the minutes. Linda seconded it. It was clarified that the icon of St. Mark was a gift from Bishop Laura, not the tubular chimes. The minutes were so amended.

Ministry Reports

Finance/Treasurer's Report – Feb. 2025 – EJ

Bob made a motion to accept the report. Skip seconded it. There was conversation regarding the timing of pledges, copier expenses, and diocesan contributions skewing the report but EJ commented that it is early in the year and we are in an acceptable position at this time. The motion passed unanimously.

Building and Grounds – Bob

Bob presented a quote of \$15,880 for rectory repairs and made a motion to approve. Skip seconded it. We have \$10,000 already budgeted and would need \$6,000 more. After some discussion as to the specifics, the motion passed unanimously.

Bob made a motion to replace the railings at the door to the mailbox at St. James for \$1,500. Skip seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

Bob made a motion to repave the rear parking lot for \$28,300. Skip seconded it. EJ recommended that repaving be a capital project, as expensing it would affect our income for 2025. The motion was withdrawn.

Chorus Angelicus Update – Father George

Fr. George provided additional details on the possibility of this youth choir, actually three (3) choral groups, looking to relocate from Torrington to St. James over the summer. Their season starts in late August/early September and runs nine (9) months. There are about thirty-five (35) members, not counting some adults participating in their Christmas and spring concerts. They rehearse Monday and Thursday evenings from 5 to 6:30 pm and would need the sanctuary, the choir room and the parish hall for rehearsals. It is anticipated that one Thursday a

month they might need the large classroom upstairs. Close to their big concerts they would rehearse in the sanctuary on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings. They will need space for their robes, and seven (7) file cabinets, housing their huge music library. They have been paying \$600 per month, but Father suggested that we ask \$650-\$700 per month and offer a one-year contract. The Vestry had no objections.

Old Business

Newcomers' Dinner – Sunday, April 27th at 5 p.m. The Vestry will host this event and Kathy, Bonnie, Molly, and Stephen will coordinate.

New Business

Vestry Retreat – Additional Sharing
Bonnie shared the handout of ideas and comments that were generated at the retreat. The Vestry felt that positive things are already developing and that we need to focus on how to take our energy and newness and positive excitement forward. We need to ask ourselves why we want people here, what are the goals for our parish, and why do we want to connect with people in the community.

The way of discipleship and the way of the cross – being church in challenging times

We were reminded that there are people who are really struggling now for a variety of reasons. We look to have a forum in the future on a Sunday between the two services to address this issue.

Lighting in the church (dim) and bulbs in hallway
It was suggested that all lighting throughout the facility should be evaluated as part of a proposed capital campaign.

Capital Campaign – committee work – consultancy (May goals?)

The Vestry brainstormed ideas for a capital campaign. Bob, Linda, Stephen, and Kathy volunteered to be on the committee to vet the items on the list, prioritize them and get cost estimates. After their research we will engage a consultant to help us determine what we can reasonably raise in a campaign.

Bob motioned to adjourn. Skip seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted
Bonnie Sudell, Clerk

St. James Parish

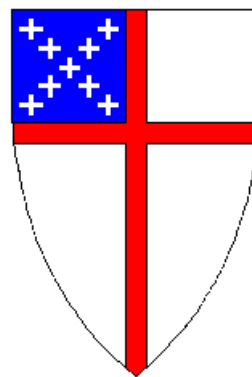
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Website: www.stjamesfarmington.org



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>
Blake Hansen	<i>Director of Music</i>
Brigitte Cadigan	<i>Children & Family Ministries</i>
Susan Deming	<i>Parish Administrator</i>
Cheryl Rusczyk	<i>Admin., St. Mark's Ministries</i>
Ray Smith	<i>Sexton</i>
Kim McLaurin	<i>Nursery Supervisor</i>

OFFICERS

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

VESTRY

2026
Stephen Hard
Skip Mason
Robert Sudell

2027
Kathy Bullard
Doug McDowell
Molly Sherman

2028
Linda Mason
Ed Preneta
David Tompkins

St. James Parish

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

May