

St. James Parish

Epistle



Summer 2022

Rector's Message

I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to walk with Jesus ... in Him there is no darkness.

Hymnal 1982, #490

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world." He also called us to be, in Matthew's Gospel, the light of the world, too. Yet, there is so much darkness and bitterness, distrust and division, angst and confusion in the world that a conversation around light seemed to be in order. We have an alarmingly consistent tendency, as humans living in the world, to feed the darkness. Our darkness could be equated to the pull of a black hole, darkness that can be our worst common denominator: a bleak worldview. Black holes, scientists have discovered, have enormous gravitational pull and suck in all that comes into their relentless path. The sun, however, the light of our solar system, has an amazing gravitational attraction, too. Darkness and light tend to pull us with all of their respective and substantial power, one vying for supremacy then the other attempting to take over. Jesus calls us to His light all the time while the Evil One beckons us to give sway to his persuasive influence and control.

Our world can seem incredibly dark. The aftermath following the recent overturning of Roe v. Wade by the Supreme Court of the United States highlights how our worst impulses can drive us apart. People have taken to Facebook and Twitter attacking not only the Court but anyone who agrees with their decision in often hate-filled and withering posts. Others, conversely, celebrate while lambasting and vilifying any who disagree with the Court's decision. I am not saying people should not take positions on important issues in

the world but imagine what would happen – no matter our position on anything – if we decided to be guided by the Light of Christ instead of talking heads, political provocateurs, or instruments of darkness? How might the Light of Jesus free us from the gloom and doomsday feeling that negative news cycles tend to instill in us?

"Clear sun of righteousness shine on my path and show me the joy of Jesus" sings the hymn above. The joy of Christ and the hope – the Light - that His love offers is truly what the church and life with God is truly about. The world is a harsh place but there are people of the Light out there; not everyone is bent on the destruction of the other, indifferent to suffering, or unable to speak across difference to a brother or sister with whom they disagree. The gravitational pull of the darkness is real and it is pernicious; the forces of darkness would love to see us continue to tear each other

apart. If the "star of my life is Jesus" then I need to walk in that ever-shining light of blessing that I may be a blessing in God's world. War, brutality and abuse, violence of all kinds, unkind words, casual indifference, and self-righteousness are all different shades of darkness.

Patience, hope, courage, kindness, and blessing are all pathways to the Light that is Jesus. Let us be pulled by the gravity of the Son, pulled into the fiery goodness of

God's saving grace and purpose for the world. "In him there is no darkness at all," our song continues. Run from the darkness but, if you find yourselves enveloped by it, light a candle of hope, and watch the light shine even in the darkest corners of our minds, hearts or world.

In Christ,
Fr. George+



Warden's Corner

The Summer is upon us, and people are planning their vacations and summer activities.

During the summer St James goes to one service at 9:30 Sunday mornings through Labor Day weekend. Vestry is on break until September. Work on repairs and restoration of the wood dormers above the kitchen and rear entrance should be complete by the time you read this. Also, Vestry has settled on a new, more automated video system for improved use and ease as well as quality. That installation we hope will start soon to be complete by fall.

I would like to thank the following people who gave their time on Saturday, June 4th to clean up the memorial and surrounding gardens:

Joyce Bettencourt, Kathy Bullard, Abby & Paul Crawford, Jim Fox, Skip & Linda Mason, Kathy & Chris Roach, Foster White, and Donna Wilkie. I hope I haven't missed anyone. Thank you!

Wishing everyone a happy and safe summer. Time to take those family vacations which were on hold due to Covid.

I'd like to share this summer prayer which I found on Xavier University's website.

A Summer Prayer [Author Unknown]

Long warm days ...

The pace of life slows ...

A time for picnics and rest in the shade ...

Lord, help me rest awhile in the cooling shade of your presence ...

Slow down my restless heart and fill me with gentle compassion for all your people ...

Peace to all,

Jim Wilkie, Vestry Co-Warden

St. James Day!!

Please join us and celebrate our patron saint, James, the Greater. **On Sunday, July 17th, following our 9:30 service, we will hold a simple brunch in the parish hall.** People are encouraged to bring "brunchy food" to share (pastries, egg casseroles, muffins, etc.) that morning. We have missed times of celebration such as these over

the last two+ years, so let's come together, share some good food, and enjoy!! Coffee and juice will be available.



Summer Worship Schedule

We hold a single Sunday worship service at 9:30 a.m. throughout the summer. This service is open to in-person attendance and available online as well. Nursery childcare is available during the summer. Weekday services continue: Morning Prayer on Monday at 9:30 a.m., Evening Prayer on Wednesday at 5 p.m., and Compline on Friday at 7:30 p.m. (Fridays Compline is Facebook livestreamed only).

NEW worship opportunity from Deacon Doug:

Compline will be sung on Sunday evenings beginning in August. The sung office of Compline holds a special place in my heart. After my move to Connecticut in 1975, I joined the Congregational church, singing in the choir and serving as a supply organist. I felt a strong sense of community in this church, but there was no spiritual connection. My soul found its nourishment after joining the Compline Choir at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in New Britain during the 1990's. The music director, Leslie Martin, had sung in the Compline Choir at another St. Mark's, the cathedral in Seattle, where night prayer continues to draw large congregations, as well online viewers. When Mr. Martin moved back to Seattle, my soul went into a spiritual withdrawal when it could no longer find expression in this beautiful liturgy. I began searching for an Episcopal Church in the Hartford area and, one Sunday morning at St. John's in West Hartford, my soul found a home. After confirmation and a period of discernment, I sought ordination to the diaconate in 2007 and now have the honor of serving at St. James in Farmington.



My hope has been to start singing the Compline office once again through the online presence nurtured by Fr. George. **I invite you to join me online on Sunday evenings at 9 pm to listen to or join me in singing this beautiful Office.** The text of the Compline service appears in the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer* starting on page 127. The music of the Compline service will be made available on the St. James website for anyone wishing to sing along. Of course, we won't hear each other, but we will be together in spirit.

Knitting into the Mystery

Knitting into the Mystery by Susan Jorgensen and Susan Izard is a book about knitting prayer shawls. Susan Izard's name may be familiar as she lives in West Hartford and has been active in the Spiritual Life Center. Along with personal stories, the authors emphasize the spiritual importance of knitting prayer shawls, an activity that I have found spiritually rewarding. I hope I can convince a few other people to join in this activity for both the creation of these shawls and the spiritual growth that this activity provides.

A Prayer Shawl Ministry is about the creation of a knitted or crocheted shawl for those who are in need either because of an illness or are suffering a life crisis. This ministry is not unique to St. James but an active ministry in many Episcopal churches and in other faith traditions.

At St James the shawls have been created prayerfully over the past ten to twelve years by a number of parishioners. In the beginning the shawls were disbursed by either the rector or by a parishioner who requested one for a specific individual. This latter method of distribution is in effect as the shawls are in a basket in the Narthex so that anyone may take one for someone they know might benefit from wrapping themselves up in a shawl that has been prayed over as it was created. The recipients need not be parishioners; in fact I know of one that was given by a parishioner to his neighbor who had lost his job and as a result the family was in distress. Another went to a woman, not a St. James parishioner who had unexpectedly lost her husband. Recently one went to someone undergoing chemo, again not a St James parishioner, but a friend of one. I was told by the parishioner who gave that shawl that it offered a great deal of comfort to the recipient.

Distributing shawls in this manner has meant that we need more shawls. So, **this is a call to knitters to get out your needles and yarn, dust off the directions and start knitting.**

If you need directions or suggestions for yarn purchasing, please e-mail me at mimih@sbcglobal.net. Also, if you are working on a shawl, please let me know, so that I have some idea of how many are being constructed. **If there**



is any interest in having a *Sit & Knit* on a Saturday morning with coffee and a bagel, that can be worked out; just let me know. Lastly, if anyone would like to learn how to either knit or crochet, I am happy to give lessons and would welcome more creative people into this ministry.

Thanks in advance for your commitment to our ministry.

Blessings!
Mimi Hostetter

Fall Fair Alert!

It's baaaack! The Fall Fair, that is! After a two year hiatus due to Covid, we are stepping out, and making plans for the **4th Annual Fall Fair**. In true news fashion, here's the scoop:

When: Saturday, October 22, 2022, from 9 am to 4 pm. Save the date!

Who: The parish and the surrounding community.

What: Regional crafters, St. James Cafe (offering lunch, beverages, & snacks), Raffle Table, Bake Sale (*all homemade*), Mums



Where: St. James Parish, indoors and outdoors.

Why: All proceeds support our Outreach Ministries, and it is a great way to extend our hospitality to the community as we invite them to share the day with us.

Faith & Fries!

We now gather on the 4th Tuesday of every month at **Five Corners Bistro & Craft Bar**, 354 Colt Hwy (Rt. 6) in Farmington. **We next convene on Tuesday, August 23rd, from 7–8:30 pm.** You can come for dinner, have a drink or snack, whatever is comfortable for you. We will be exploring what do we believe? What tests our belief? 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!*

From the Deacon's Bench

Be the wheat.

I recently returned from vacation to a pile of mail covering my dining room table. Most of the mail was junk but the neighbor who house sat for us had no way of judging this. In fact, I would have been concerned if he had decided to throw some of it out. How could he tell good mail from junk or, in the parable of the Sower, wheat from weeds? In this parable from Matthew's gospel, Jesus tells of an enemy who mixed in some weeds in a field of wheat. How do you tell the weeds from the wheat before harvest time? Senders of weed mail go to great lengths to pretend to be wheat. I particularly like envelopes addressed in fake script. Or the mail that appears to be from the government. Sometimes we get mail addressed to Luigi Engwall. Those letters should automatically go into the weed pile, since Luigi is our dog. I show him the envelopes to make sure he's okay about it.

Of course, snail mail isn't the only kind that needs weeding. My email is 90% weeds. I don't know how those pesky things got in my wheat field. I suppose most of these weeds got planted when I ordered something online. Some of these weeds are downright nasty. Like the ones who pretend to be my bank. Many have fake websites that are quite convincing.

Or, to put this in the language of Jesus, we're going to have to put up with the weeds among the wheat, the false among the true, the sinners among the saints. The problem is not that we can't spot the fakes, the phonies. With some effort, we can. It's just that it's a real hassle trying to get rid of them. Ever look across a field of wheat? You can see the weeds quite clearly. But getting rid of them is another matter. Jesus' remarkable advice when discussing how to deal with the weeds in the field is to let them be. They'll be taken care of on harvest day.

Jesus says the "wheat" is the children of God; the "weeds" are the fake children of God, the ones pretending to be wheat, as though by growing up smack in the middle of a wheat field they'll be mistaken for wheat. Jesus says they are the "children of the evil one."

The good news is that Jesus describes this field, which is the "world", as a field of wheat, not as a field of weeds. When Jesus sees the world, he

looks out across not a field of weeds in which there is wheat growing, but a field of wheat in which there are weeds growing. This is encouraging news for people of faith. It's so easy to be discouraged and to believe that evil is all around us, about to overwhelm us. In fact, Jesus reminds us that there are more of the faithful, more of those who have not given in to hatred and fear, than we sometimes realize. Yes, the "children of evil" exist, and they do damage to the crop, but they exist in a field that is predominantly a field of wheat, not weeds.

That aside, weeds are out there. Some are easy to spot: the killers who maim and destroy the innocent, the greedy who grab and dash with the savings and retirement plans of those who worked so hard for so many years, and the wicked who prey upon children by gaining their trust and then misusing it. But some weeds masquerade as wheat. They look "religious," but their actions range from misguided to despicable. Like the preacher in Florida who gets attention by burning the Quran, or the pastor who shows up at funerals

to denounce gays, or the people who describe themselves as people of faith but do incredibly stupid and sometimes evil things. But what does Jesus ask us to do? Can we defend against weeds?

Remarkably, Jesus doesn't offer a grand plan for getting rid of the weeds that plague the field of

wheat. There's no protocol for waging war on weeds. There are no rules of engagement about marching into a field of wheat to root out the weeds. In fact, Jesus says that we should go about our business. Our job is to be wheat, not weeds. Rooting up weeds is not part of our job description. Of course, we need to speak truth to power and recognize evil when we find it. If you see something, say something, as we are asked to do to assure our safety and that of our neighbors. We'd like to rain down hellfire and brimstone ourselves, but Jesus counsels us otherwise. **Be the wheat:** The best advice is to grow tall and strong and crowd out the weeds. Let your influence shade out or deprive the weeds of sunlight and water they need to survive. Don't be a stalk of wheat in a field by yourself. Grow with others in a community of wheat. God has a plan. We can trust the plan. **Be the wheat.**

Doug Engwall, Deacon



Bibles in the pews

The Vestry and I have decided to replace the lectionary bulletin inserts with Bibles (NRSV) in the pew racks, beginning this fall. There are a number of reasons for this transition. First, the inserts have become more expensive in the last year. Second, and more importantly, the idea of moving to scripture references *in the Bible*, as opposed to an insert, is an outgrowth of the *RenewalWorks* workshops and spiritual surveys we engaged in as a congregation. We, as Episcopalians, sometimes struggle with Scripture and we are certainly not alone. We read from Scripture every Sunday – the Old and New Testament, a Psalm, and the Gospel – but we may rarely engage that Scripture beyond the sermon or the readings themselves. Holding our pew Bibles and looking up passages in them may seem a bit intimidating at first, but in the end, we hope it will make us more aware of the blessings that the Bible has for us beyond Sunday mornings.

Utilizing passages from the Bible will be a work in progress and we will start simply. The Lector will

announce, for example, “A reading from the book of Genesis, Chapter 25, verses 10 to 14, found on page 104 in your pew Bible.” Page numbers will also be noted in your bulletin.

Going forward, the service bulletin will contain the opening Collect for the day that we pray together and the Psalm, along with the usual notations for hymns and announcements. So, we won’t be adding an extra thing for you to juggle, merely replacing inserts with Bibles.

We understand that a change like this might be daunting and we are not at all deaf to your concerns. You always have a voice; please let yourself be heard, whether you like the idea or are challenged by it, please call Fr. George or drop by for a chat. The door is always open!

Celebrating July & August birthdays!

Amelia Mason
Charlotte Paré
Jessica Watkin
Alexis Palais
Jane Torrence
Alda Debboli
Huckabee Cadigan
Joan Sussler
Kaye Robertson
Roland Therrien
Maryalice Widness
Linda Larkin
Emma Kate Johansen
Sally Levin
Drue Pines
Alec Hansen
Helga Schramma
Holden Grieco
Dona Waugh
Neil Clark
Tom Nelson
Ian Manton



Michael Rosenthal
Grant Manton
Sadie Greaves
Michael Pines
David Hadlow
Phil Schenck
Alissa Buth
Maggie Ososki
Bert Geuser
Annemarie Lucas
Geoff Manton
Charlotte Buth
Christine Bogino
Oliver Cadigan
Vivian Lane
George Roberts
Abby Crawford
Skip Mason
Susan Pollard
Barbara Hess
Matt Roach

Minutes of the Vestry of St. James: May 19, 2022

Present via Zoom: Fr. George Roberts, Carol Kirkwood, Jim Wilkie, Kim Faubert, Tom Nelson, Kathy Bullard, Bob Sudell, Bonnie Sudell.

Absent: Foster White, Maina Rice, EJ Ososki, Anna Whilby

Meeting called to order 7:03pm

Minutes of April 21, 2022, Vestry Meeting

Bob moved to accept the minutes. Seconded by Kim. Unanimous vote to accept the minutes.

Ministry Reports

Finance/Treasurer's report – April 2022

Summary of Report via email from EJ

- Overall, we are \$3k favorable to our budget now which puts us in good shape.

Motion made by Jim to accept the April financial report as submitted with a second from Bonnie. Unanimous vote to accept the April financial report.

Church School Formation

- Meeting held May 11th to discuss church school for next year.
- Suggestion – hold church school event(s) on the half day that kids are off due to teacher's professional day(s).
- In Fall looking at 2 groups
 - Middle School – consider meeting Sunday evening with possible dinner offered.
 - Younger Kids – meet Sunday morning and middle schoolers could help out
- There are some confirmands for next year – looking into combining with another church
- Over 2022 Summer – consider a few activities such as Mini-Golf for youth.

Audiovisual System

- Donor has graciously offered to pay for the system along with up to \$2,000 previously approved from the Memorial Fund.
- Camera can be set to zone in on up to 10 areas (i.e., lectern, altar, pulpit, choir, etc.)
- Would not require weekly set up - permanently fixed. Lay person could easily operate
- Easier streaming – better resolution – can be used outdoors – has add on features

Diocesan Bishop Election

- Election for the 16th Diocesan Bishop of the Episcopal Church in CT is taking place Saturday May 21, 2022. 5 candidates on the ballot
- Attending are Fr. George, Deacon Doug and delegates Michele Briganti and Tracey Roberts who all have voting privileges.

New Business

Leadership – *One Body Many Caring Hearts* – Tricia Jones

<https://www.ecfvp.org/vestry-papers/article/922/one-body-many-caring-hearts>

Pastoral care is provided when a faithful person is truly present in a listening, compassionate, non-controlling manner to an individual or group for the purpose of consciously or unconsciously representing God to them and seeking to respond to their spiritual needs. – [Community of Hope International](#)

Discussion of Leadership methodology – *Pastoral Care and Loving Hearts*

- Pastoral Care examples – flower delivery ministry, Stephen's ministry, Parish Nurses ministry, Trained Pastoral Care Leaders
- Pastoral Presence – How can we be present to those in our parish especially older parishioners?
- A church with energy that looks inside and outside the church thrives. Take care of each other tends to radiate inward and outward.
- Equip each other for ministry we want to engage in. How can Vestry be better equipped? And then others on the parish?
- Need caring hearts – tools – formation
- Don't go out to do something just for sake of doing – needs to be meaning and overall helps St James nourish itself. How do we make it work? How much time is needed?
- Discipleship – engage each other more; can include discipleship class to help.
- Soul-Searching – Decide who we are. What do we like about ourselves. Share it!
- We often assume people know of ministry opportunities – but do they? Need to explain ministries and what they entail – engage with others what do they like - do their likes match up to a ministry they may not have thought of being part of.

- Fr George redoing St James Ministry Guide – what is it – who leads it – how can a person get involved. Kim suggested putting Guide into a Welcome packet – giving people opportunities to examine St James and what it has to offer or could be offering.

Potential Craft Fair October 2022- really hoping and praying it happens

- Looking at October 22, 2022 to hold fair at St James
- People are already helping and taking lead on Vendors / Bake Sale / Food -Lunch for Sale
- Raffle is open for people to take on
- Bonnie is willing to help post flyer on various social media sites

Old Business

Building and Grounds

- Repair to siding at back of church to start May 23rd anticipated to take 2 days
- Steps at church front entrance mortar to be fixed week of May 16th.

Kim made a motion to adjourn. Bob seconded. Unanimous vote to adjourn. Adjourned at 8:46pm

Respectfully Submitted

Carol

Carol Kirkwood, Clerk

Notes from the Parish Office

The parish office keeps summer hours of Monday–Thursday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.



This *Epistle* carries us through the summer. **Please note the submission deadline for the very-important September *Epistle* is Wednesday,**

August 25th and will include much fall programming information.

The parish office will soon mail pledge statements for the first half-year's contributions. Take the time to review your statement, and if you are not current on your pledge, please make every effort to catch up. It's important to stay as up-to-date as possible on your pledge donations throughout the summer as parish bills still need paying despite our stay-cations and travels. Thank you so much for your continued generosity!

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.

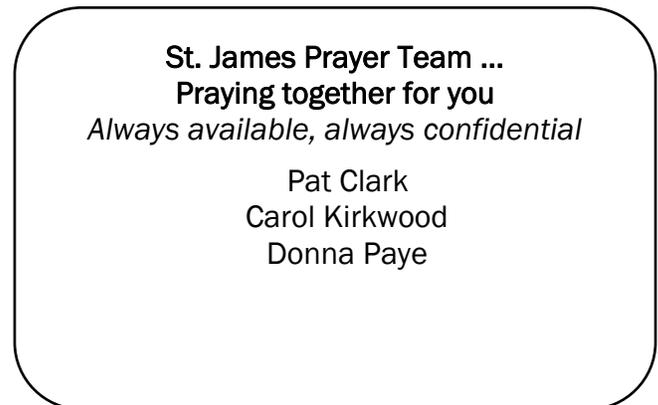
Prayer Team

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.

I find that deep prayer rises up from the well of the heart, and that the following is true:

Pay attention to the things that bring a tear to your eye, or a lump to your throat ... they are signs that the Holy is drawing near.

Frederick Buechner



Sunday morning Bible Study

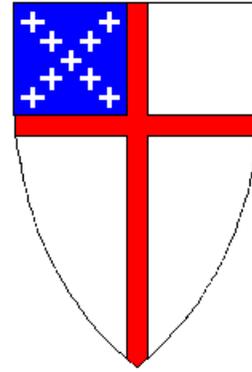
The Bible study group is engaged in an exploration of the Book of Exodus. Study guides by Mitchell Kim are available in the office. \$12 is asked for your copy, simply reach out to Fr. George. **As always, all are welcome!** Note: we continue to use Zoom with Meeting ID: 810 0898 0546 and Passcode: 062552 to join us Sundays at 11:15 a.m. during the summer.

St. James Parish

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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

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