

# St. James Parish

WITH ST. MARK'S MINISTRIES

## Epistle



MAY 2026

### Rector's Message

#### *The Road to Emmaus*

On our last day in the Dominican Republic, our team gathered for a devotion before breakfast, as had become our custom during our week on our recent mission trip. I simply read Luke 24 which recounts Jesus coming, unrecognized, into the midst of two of His disciples as they walked away from Jerusalem toward the village of Emmaus. As I read Luke 24, with the rest of the team listening, I couldn't help but think about the story's two themes, maybe two among many:

Christ walks with us, teaches us, and keeps company with us. And Christ reveals Himself to us so that we can see Him as He truly is which is risen, alive to continue to be in relationship with us and teach us. He is, too, present in the sacramental life of the Church and the world. The people of La Caleta, the Dominican Republic – the people of De La Gracia and their extended community – are economically poor, by Western standards. They live, mostly, without retirement benefits, sometimes with little work, bereft of financial security, and living with a shorter life expectancy and less “quality of life” than we have, by and large.

Yet, Christ is revealed in the Christians of De La Gracia. He walks with them and they know it, are much more aware of God's presence and practical effect on their lives than most Christians in the Western world. There is a sense of community there, in the people of De La Gracia, as people call out to each other at the store, greet folks that they meet and know

so warmly, and bear up under the weight of material absence that most of us would not be able to cope with at all. The death of Jesus is very real to them and the possibility, the hope and love of Spirit that Christ's Resurrected life reveals, is amazingly present to them, as well. They feel Christ's wounds in their body, and they experience His grace in their lives. Christ is revealed to them in each other and in the life of the Church, as surely as He walked amongst the two disciples on the day of Resurrection, as they made their way to Emmaus.



On the evening of the consecration of De La Gracia, we processed around the neighborhood in which the new church is located, waving to people as we went by, and most of them waved back. Some of the ladies of the church were walking

on the periphery of more than 100 of us, processing with music, with little flags waving, inviting people from the neighborhood to join us. We walked the streets away from the church and then through the neighborhood and back again, and when we entered the church for the service to begin, singing and clapping, Christ's Risen body, His resurrected love and hope, was upon us. I suppose I am trying to communicate that Christ is with us, walking the way with us, seeking to reveal Himself to us in the Eucharist, the music we sing, the people we love along the way, and knowing that the death in the world around us cannot hold back the tide of Christ's redeeming work. We are still in Eastertide and, while we are, let us remember to say, “Alleluia!”

In Christ, Fr. George+

## Warden's Corner

I remember Christmas Eve in 1968. My family gathered around the TV as the Apollo 8 astronauts, the first people to orbit the moon, conducted a live broadcast. We were transfixed by the images we saw, including the famous view of the Earth from the moon. That image was stunning, and has long remained symbolic of the beauty and grandeur of God's creation.

This month, we returned to space exploration with the journey of Artemis II as it traveled around the moon and returned safely to Earth. During the mission, Pilot Victor Glover reflected his sense of awe when he said "When I read the Bible, I see all the amazing things that were done for us who were created", "Earth was created to give us a place to live in the universe, in the cosmos. In all of the emptiness, we have this oasis, this beautiful place where we get to exist together".

It has been over 50 years since we last ventured to the moon. In that time, amazing technological advances have revealed a universe far more vast and complex than had ever been imagined. These revelations expand the scale of creation to a point that is almost impossible to grasp. The more we discover, the more it becomes evident that the creation of the universe was not random. If we believe that God created the universe, it means he created every nuanced aspect of it. It was created with intention and order and truly reflects God's magnificence. God



has endowed mankind with this incredible gift along with the intellect and curiosity to explore and study the heavens and have an ever-increasing appreciation for

his glory. I can only hope that humanity will carry the profound responsibility for the good stewardship of God's great gift.

The planned Artemis missions are very exciting. The children who are watching from home will have a front row seat as we travel to the moon and beyond. Hopefully they will be inspired to be the innovators, scientists, and explorers who will push the bounds of future exploration of God's glorious creation.

*Kathy Bullard, Co-Warden*

## First Sunday Breakfast

Find delicious food and fellowship at the *First Sunday Breakfasts* cooked by a great crew of men of the parish: pancakes, 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 3<sup>rd</sup>, 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 9<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 am**, all men of the parish are invited to join us for a time of conversation and good food at the



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

## Faith & Fries!

On **Tuesday, May 26<sup>th</sup> from 7–8:30 pm**, you are invited to join us for *Faith and Fries* at Puente American-Latino Pub at 81 Main Street in Unionville. Come for dinner, have a drink or snack, whatever is comfortable for you.

We invite all to come as they are able and please, feel free to invite a friend, neighbor, or co-worker! We will discuss a bit about what it means to live into the wonder and mystery of life in a sometimes-weary world, specifically through a poem by the iconic martyr of the contemporary church, Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Please join us, lots of fun and community conversation to be had. Call the church with questions.



## AN update on our DR Mission Trip

Your Mission Team acquitted itself well on our recent trip to the Dominican Republic, April 10<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup>. Your Team spent the week working hard, getting the church property in La Caleta ready for the consecration of the Church building and sanctuary on April 17<sup>th</sup>. The Team did much hard work, including lots and lots and lots of painting of the exterior and interior of the church and cleaning up the interior. Meanwhile, three members of our team worked at another



location to make two chairs and a kneeler for the acolytes and deacons, which turned out very beautifully.

Your Team Members

– Dona Waugh, Stephen Hard, Oliver Cadigan, Amy Greaves, Sophie Greaves, Chandler Howard, Bonnie Sudell, Bob Sudell, and Tracey Roberts deserve so much credit. It was my great pleasure to be with them, working with them, praying with them, and being moved by their dedication and faith to the God's mercy and love through this work. They deserve your heartfelt appreciation. Thank you to our Dominican Development Group partners, particularly Miquea Santivil and Mike Abraham, who were working with us most of the week, and to Fr. Isaac Pringle, his family, and the entire community of Iglesia De La Gracia. We are so grateful for the support of St. James Parish, who donated most of the funds used to make this project possible, the completion of De La Gracia, more than \$30,000 over the last three years. I am humbled that everyone, by the grace of God and His love in Christ, make this ministry possible. More photos and stories to come!

*Fr. George*

## Sunday Bible study

We've begun a Bible study on the books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon, using a study guide from the Ignatius Bible Study series (available in the parish office for \$10). The three books are connected as part of the "wisdom literature" of the Old Testament. Bible study begins Sundays at 12:30 pm via Zoom with Meeting ID: 815 4332 7235; Passcode: 982548.

## Mulching Party–Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 9 am

It is that time of year to do a little weeding and a lot of mulching. Anyone who wants to bring a shovel, rake, wheelbarrow, work gloves, and a little grit, come join Skip and Linda Mason for a little down-home fun at the church! We will make a lovely day of it and get the job done – meaning mulching and all of that. No RSVP, just show up and bring your joy and GRIT. Rain or shine.



## 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.

## Women's Ministry

**Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> at 9am, Women's Ministry Breakfast** Join your women friends for breakfast and get to know, Mariana Serrano, a most amazing life coach that our Anna Whilby will be introducing us to. Mariana is a public health practitioner, facilitator, consultant and the visionary founder of The Cadence of Social Impact. The focus of this pioneering enterprise is to empower communities by building resources and supporting community-led initiatives. Please send an email to [1delshire@gmail.com](mailto:1delshire@gmail.com) if you are planning to come and what you will bring. We are hoping to have a good turn out – the more, the better! If you need a ride, please let me know and we can make this work.

**Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm, Chocolate Bingo Party** yum! Who doesn't like chocolate! Add Bingo to it and it sounds like fun...stay tuned for more info in May. Save the date.

**Saturday, June 27<sup>th</sup> at 11:30am, Walking in Creation** bring a picnic lunch and blanket-join us in Elizabeth's Park to see the roses and enjoy each other's company. Save the date.

As the school year ends and we will soon be approaching the summer months, I would ask if any of our women have an activity they'd like to be seen offered for next program year, September 2026 through June 2027, please discuss or send ideas to Linda Mason at [1delshire@gmail.com](mailto:1delshire@gmail.com). We've had a great year and there is no doubt next year will be the same!

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

## Prayer Team

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

The following has been printed in this space at least once, if not twice, before. For those who begin their day with *Forward Day by Day*, it will be recognized as the prayer appearing inside the back cover of each issue. I think it speaks to all who seek to live as disciples of Christ in the world...

*O God: Give me strength to live another day. Let me not turn coward before its difficulties or prove recreant to its duties. Let me not lose faith in other people. Keep me sweet and sound of heart, in spite of ingratitude, treachery, or meanness. Preserve me from minding little stings or giving them. Help me to keep my heart clean, and to live so honestly and fearlessly that no outward failure can dishearten me or take away the joy of conscious integrity. Open wide the eyes of my soul that I may see good in all things. Grant me this day some new vision of thy truth. Inspire me with a spirit of joy and gladness and make me the cup of strength to suffering souls. In the name of the strong Deliverer, our only Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen*

Phillips Brooks

Phillips Brooks (1835-1893), was an American Episcopal priest and renowned preacher. Rector of Holy Trinity, Philadelphia, and Trinity Church in Boston, he became Bishop of Massachusetts in 1891. He authored the lyrics to the Christmas hymn, *O Little Town of Bethlehem*.

## Feast of the Ascension, May 14<sup>th</sup>

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 (May 24<sup>th</sup>). *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.

## Ascension Day Service

**On Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, at 11 am we will celebrate Holy Eucharist** in the Melissa Jane Inrig Memorial Chapel (here at 3 Mountain Road), where light incense will be used. We’ll then 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 16<sup>th</sup>, 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 16<sup>th</sup>, 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 with a few guest singers, including some from Miss Porter’s School, something we have hoped to bring to fruition for a good while and are very excited about!



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, May 24<sup>th</sup>!

Sunday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, 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, and ice cream in a time of celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit. Please sign up to bring a side dish and/or to help with set-up and clean-up.

## Celebrating May birthdays!

Bob Stanek  
Nancy Thompson  
Lindsay Hillemeir  
Spencer Rice  
Gina Pines  
Chloe Roberts  
George Cadigan  
John McBride  
Sarah Newton  
EJ Ososki  
Vanessa Reynolds  
Elizabeth Hillemeir  
Chris Newton

Gisli Ingimarsson  
Mary Lansing  
Betsy Bailey  
Gunni Propiescus  
Carol Kirkwood  
MJ Greaves  
Brian Bullard  
Sonia Mason  
Tom Mason  
Jake Lapointe  
Olivia Lathrop  
Victoria Lathrop  
Jane Johansen



## Pastoral Care Ministry

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

## Save the Date: Safety Committee

In an effort to provide the safest environment possible for everyone in our parish we are starting a Safety Committee. This committee will work together to develop a Church Safety Plan which will include response to violent events, fire and evacuation safety, first aid, and other topics. Everyone with an interest in improving the safety of our church, or a background in safety-related fields is invited to come to the **first meeting on Monday, June 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm**. If you have any questions, please call Kathy Bullard at 860-673-6444.

## Summary Minutes of Vestry Meeting of March 19, 2026

**Present:** Fr. George Roberts, Linda Mason, Doug McDowell, Molly Sherman, Bonnie Sudell, and Michael Slusarz.

**Meeting called to Order:** 6:35 pm.

In accordance with Section 11.03 Quorum of the Bylaws of St. James Parish, Farmington (as adopted at a meeting of the Parish 10/27/24) and Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, we were unable to conduct business as we did not have the required quorum of six (6). We chose to continue the meeting to present information, and in accordance with Section 11.04 Majority Vote and Section 11.05 Electronic polling of Vestry for time-sensitive matters not requiring discussion, Fr. George will email all Vestry members to approve reports and motions deemed necessary.

### Minutes of 2/19/26 Meeting

The minutes, sent in advance to all Vestry members, will be voted on electronically.

### Ministry Reports

*Finance/Treasurer's Report, February 2026 – EJ*  
Summary of EJ's Report

- Total income \$78,000 vs. budgeted \$66,000, driven by pledge income
- Total expenses \$84,000 vs. budgeted \$75,000, due to timing of heating oil payments, snow removal costs, facility supplies, diocesan contribution, and audit fees (typically incurred later in the year)

The Finance/Treasurer's Report will be voted on electronically.

### *DR – quick update*

The team will take prayer books, crafts, egg hunt materials, and lessons for the mini Bible school. Many envelopes have been taken and returned from the kiosk in the parish hall, including two \$1,000 donations. The church of De La Gracia will be consecrated Friday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, while the team is there.

### *St. Mark's Ministries – budget approval*

The budget, which has already been approved by the St. Mark's Ministries committee, will be voted on electronically.

## Old Business

### *Keyholders*

The schedule through August of 2026 of Vestry members responsible for locking doors on Sundays was distributed. Vestry members were reminded to contact others if they need to swap dates.

### *"Final" job description for parish administrator*

The document was reviewed and we will start looking for candidates next week. The committee will start working on a job description for a proposed bookkeeper.

### *Town Hall Feedback*

Feedback was generally positive. A parishioner sent correspondence to the Vestry regarding the manner in which power to the kitchen island was accomplished. The electrician will be contacted to see if there are alternative ways to provide electricity to the location. It was noted that the 1<sup>st</sup> quote for our proposed lift has been received.

## New Business

### *Vestry Retreat of February 21<sup>st</sup>*

It was agreed that we need to look at opportunities for growth. Some ideas included having a dinner for new families looking for a church, sending a postcard or flyer to the community asking for input, and possibly adding an additional worship opportunity on Sunday evening.

### *New patio/memorial garden norms – common area use or no*

While we acknowledge that this is a sacred space, we have always used this area, and the Vestry felt that we should continue to do so.

### *Building and Grounds leadership/co-leadership*

We need to establish chairs for this committee and have regular meetings. Our sexton also needs to have a clear chain of command. Fr. George will contact members of B&G.

The Vestry recommended that quotes from Revival Chimney and Masonry on the chimneys in both the library and parish hall in the amount of \$17,200 be approved. Fr. George will email all Vestry members tomorrow.

Doug motioned to adjourn. Linda seconded. As there was consensus, the meeting was adjourned at 8:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bonnie F. Sudell, Clerk

## St. James Parish

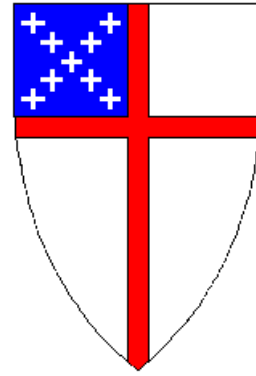
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### MISSION STATEMENT:

*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

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

#### OFFICERS

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

#### VESTRY

**2027**  
Kathy Bullard  
Doug McDowell  
Molly Sherman

**2028**  
Linda Mason  
Ed Preneta  
David Tompkins

**2029**  
David Hrdlicka  
Carol Kirkwood  
Michael Slusarz

## St. James Parish

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

