Porcorio Perez Chavez was a 30-year-old male, who died in the Sonoran Desert on August 27th. May his soul rest in peace, and may his body rise in power.

I came across his oil stained body image on October 1st, and when I say oil stain, this was where his body stayed on the desert floor before someone from Customs and Border Patrol found him. This was one of the ways that our border mission trip offered witness in Tucson, Arizona when we traveled there from October 1st-8th.

This oil stained image has been etched on my soul. I can only think of how he must have died. Lonely, on the desert floor, wondering if anybody was going to get him, wondering if there was a God, and if there was a God, “Why would God allow me to die like this?” At least that’s what I would think. Maybe he was in a different emotional and spiritual place and experiencing something else altogether. I don’t know and don’t want to imprint my own spiritual questions onto him, and yet....

I do know that Porcorio was a Latin American man, a migrant, undocumented, and I also BELIEVE that he was made in the image of God. We do know that he walked nearly 30 miles across the desert. I share a portion of his story, of what I know of him; because in our contemporary American society, more often than not, we stereotype and place a group of people as lumps of people. That is degrading, because it only lifts a portion of the person. He was obviously a son, maybe a father to someone, maybe a partner or a spouse. Even now, I’m sure his absence is mourned by somebody.

Our tradition tells us that all people are valuable, and maybe this is especially true in dehumanizing systems. Systems that wear us down that make people commodities, or maybe even chattel. It’s on us as people of faith to be courageous and offer a bold, truthful story of people. To not allow a person to be erased, because of the way society has boxed them in.

The work that our border mission trip did in Arizona felt like Thomas touching the wounds of Jesus, in order to believe. Putting my hands in those wounds has made an impact on my life. There is something to be said of going somewhere and trying to understand what it means to walk in someone else’s feet. Not that we can ever truly experience what that may feel like; but it can sustain our commitment, as Jesus has called us to be his disciples. Once we offer solidarity to idea of another person’s experience, we can begin to have empathy for what a person may be going through. This Advent season, as we walk as people of faith, let’s vow not to turn the page when we see something that disturbs our conscience. Sit with it, asking ourselves what parts of the story made us feel uncomfortable and then ask the Holy Spirit to walk with you and let her lead you if you feel compelled to respond in faith.
The Net …

is the newsletter of St. James Church, New London, Connecticut. It is published six times a year for the information and edification of St. James members and friends.

Submissions are always welcome and should be submitted by the tenth of the month before publication. While your submission is always welcome, we would prefer to receive it by e-mail or memory stick in Microsoft Word format.

Please continue to forward your submissions to the church office or email them to: parishoffice@stjamesnl.org.

We also welcome your comments and suggestions. This is your newsletter.

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&
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Rector’s Report Cont’d

We are called not to look away from suffering, as Jesus said to his disciples, when he said, “Could you not stay awake with me for one hour?” My friends, as we enter into the Advent Season and walk with Jesus, I pray that we might remember that Jesus and his parents were also like migrants who were fleeing persecution and Jesus was born as a peasant in a filthy place. May we have the eyes to truly witness where Jesus was born and hopefully have eyes to “witness” that same creche scene happening even now all over the world.

Peace,

Ranjit

News from our Deacon

Some days I am overwhelmed with despair, despair over what we are doing to the planet we live on and despair over how cruel people are to each other. Despair over the fact that people do not seem to have any knowledge or concern about the impact their words and actions have on others.

In The Book of Joy, Bishop TuTu reminds us that bad news sells and so that is what we hear about. We do not hear about the love that is being shared every day, here in the United States and abroad.

As Christians we are asked to make the world more just for all people, not a select few that includes us. We need to ask what can be done to change the deplorable situations we hear about. God will provide the courage and the skills we need to accomplish God’s work. I know this from experience. My gift is to turn a vision into a reality. Talk to me if you need help discerning what to do and how to do it. Talk to other members of the parish that you see finding a way to make a difference as well.

The Rev. Margaret Bullit-Jonas said at the forum, Reality, Hope and Action in an Age of Climate Change that we do not have to have hope, we need to MAKE HOPE.

Take to heart the words that Ranjit ends his blessing with often, “May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you can really make a difference in this world so that you are able, with God’s grace, to do what others claim cannot be done.”

Deacon Ellen
Walking into St. James for the first time was quite intimidating for me. My life was in turmoil due to the fact that my mother was very ill and I had just lost my job. It had been years since I had attended a church service and felt it was time. It was uncomfortable as I was alone, didn't know anyone and unfamiliar with the surroundings. When the service was over, I proceeded to run out of the church as quickly as possible. An older woman with a British accent stopped me cold in my tracks and introduced herself as Millie Deurloo. She asked me to join her for coffee and conversation, but I said, “I was much too busy to stay for coffee, plus I had things to do”. (which wasn’t totally true!) Millie insisted that I join her and other parishioners in the parish hall for fellowship. She went out of her way to make me feel welcomed and as if I belonged at St. James, which was the very thing that I needed at the time.

Millie's invitation continued on for several Sunday's afterwards, and I eventually became good friends with her as well as with other parishioners here at St. James and became involved in the life of the church as well!

As I look back, I often think about Millie's invitation, and how it literally changed my life. Unfortunately, Millie died a few weeks ago but she will be remembered for her kindness and ability to welcome strangers as I once was years ago.

From Millie’s example, I now make it a habit to reach out to newcomers that I see at St. James and welcome them to have coffee and conversation with me after our Sunday service. It takes very little time to make someone feel welcomed, and the outcome could be life changing for you as well as for the other person. It certainly was for me and I will be forever in her debt!

Faithfully,

Lori Sarkett

**Sunday Schedule**

November 3—All Saints Sunday. Candles will be lit in remembrance of departed loved ones. Daylight Savings Time ends—turn clocks back one hour on Saturday evening.

November 10—Anglican Singers Evensong at 5:00 PM

December 8—St. Nicholas Bazaar after both morning services

December 15—Anglican Singers Lessons & Carols at 5:00 PM

December 22—Greening of the Church after the 10:00 AM service. A pizza party following the greening in the parish hall.

December 29—One Service—Lessons and Carols in the Church at 9:00 AM with a festive coffee hour after the service.
Thanksgiving Day—Thursday, November 28

9:00 AM, Holy Eucharist in the Church

Start your holiday off giving thanks to God for all our blessings!

Advent begins Sunday, December 1

“Give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light.”

from The Collect for the First Sunday of Advent, The Book of Common Prayer, p. 211

Congratulations

At the 235th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Church of Connecticut from October 26 to October 27 at the Hartford Convention Center where Hilda Ziegler, Deacon Ellen and Fr. Ranjit served as delegates from our parish. Fr. Ranjit K. Mathews was elected as a deputy from the clerical order to the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church to be held in Baltimore, Maryland from June 30th to July 9th, 2021.
Birthdays

November

7  Ellen Adams
13  Grace Barnum
16  George Shaw
22  Maryjane Connell
23  Ethelyn Wardwell
26  James Shores

December

1  Addy Lanz
5  Johanna Kuruvilla
6  Joan Jones
6  Elizabeth Ahnell
7  Ralph Anderson
9  Victoria Brennan
13  Nicholas Streeter
15  Carole Shores
19  Hilda Zeigler
22  Joy Hewitt
28  Martha Delancy

St. James Supper Group

Join fellow parishioners for dinner, fun and fellowship. We meet at a local restaurant for the fun of being together and trying new restaurants.

November Gathering: Friday, November 22nd at 6:00 PM
Langley’s Restaurant, located at the Great Neck Country Club, 28 Lamphere Road, Waterford.

December Gathering: New Year’s Eve (Tuesday, December 31st) at 6:00 PM
Steak Loft Restaurant, 27 Coogan Boulevard, Mystic

Please contact Lori Sarkett at (860-287-5500) or lorisarketthne@gmail.com for more information. Rides are available and encouraged!

St. James Book Club

On Wednesday November 20th at 6:00 PM, the book group will meet at the home of Laura Pinson, 901 Vauxhall Street Ext., Quaker Hill. The book “A Gentlemen in Moscow”, by Amor Towles will be discussed.

On Thursday December 19th at 6:00 PM, the book group will meet at the home of Sue Chojnacki, 175 Niantic River Road., Waterford. The book "Carnegie’s Maid", by Marie Benedict will be discussed.

Books are on reserve at the New London Public Library. Please bring your driver’s license and local library card to pick up the book. For more information about the book group, please contact Lori Sarkett at 860.287.5500 or lorisarketthne@gmail.com.
Church School

Children’s Choir Rehearsal is from 9:15 AM to 9:30 AM every Sunday

We will be singing at the 10 AM service on Sunday, November 10

Children outside building learning about creation

Bible Family Tree Lesson

Noah’s Ark Lesson
Each child made their own ark
Church School

We have a lot of exciting things going on so far this year! Our 2nd Halloween party will be celebrated with the Drop In Learning Center kids on Halloween. The students will be singing a special hymn during a 10 AM service soon. Additional plans are in the works for another carol sing and Christmas pageant, during the season of Advent.

Christian Formation Program

We will learn about The Episcopal Church during Advent and The Epiphany seasons, starting on Wednesday, December 4th at 6:00 PM. Worship is at 5:15 PM in Hallam Chapel. Bring your own dinner to the Parlor for 6:00 PM. Class begins at 6:15 PM. All you wanted to know about this Church we call home. Please see Deacon Ellen Adams or Fr. Ranjit for more details.

The Drop-In Learning Center

The children enjoyed the hospitality offered by the parishioners and church school students of St. James on Halloween. Festivities included a haunted tunnel, games, treats and a host of other activities. The creative theme was inspired by the children’s book, A Dark, Dark Tale by Ruth Brown.

We are working with the church school teachers to plan other events to bring together the Drop In Learning Center children and the Sunday School students.

Enjoy a blessed Christmas season and a happy and healthy 2020.
Benefit Concert
November 2, 7:30 PM

Evans Hall, Cummings Art Center, Connecticut College
270 Mohegan Ave., New London

Benefit concert for Music City Strings free violin lessons program.

Program includes:
Nabucco Overture -- Giuseppe Verdi
Petite Suite -- Claude Debussy (arr. Henri Büsser)
Joyeuse Marche -- Emmanuel Chabrier
Symphony No. 35 “Haffner” -- Wolfgang A. Mozart

Suggested donation: $10

The New London Community Orchestra runs a program of free violin, viola, and cello lessons for children at the Public Library of New London. Concert proceeds help pay the costs of teacher salaries and student materials for this program. Thank you!
The Anglican Singers

NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER SERVICES & A CABARET EVENING AT ST. JAMES

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Sunday, November 10, 2019
Evensong, 5:00 PM: at St. James

The Anglican Singers are pleased to be back at St. James for their service of choral evensong on Sunday, November 10, at 5 PM. The program will feature inspiring works of American and British composers Lee Hoiby, Herbert Murrill, Edward Bairstow, and Paul Spicer.

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Saturday, November 16, 2019
Gala Cabaret and Dinner, 6 PM: Parish Hall of St. James

MARK YOUR CALENDARS for Saturday, November 16, 6 PM, for the Singers’ gala cabaret evening at St. James, featuring a delectable meal accompanied by fine wines and other beverages, rollicking musical entertainment, and an enticing Silent Auction—all to raise money for our residency next summer at Worcester Cathedral, which overlooks the Severn River flowing past the ancient city of Worcester, England—our fifth such residency in the UK. Cabaret night will be a lot of fun and will promote a very good cause. Do plan to be with us!

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Sunday, December 15, 2019
Lessons and Carols, 5 PM: at St. James

On Sunday, December 15, the Singers will offer their annual Service of Lessons and Carols for Advent, in joyous anticipation of the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. The most popular event of our program year, this service, as customary, will feature a variety of carols and motets, congregational hymns and scriptural readings, after which there will be a reception in the parish hall. Please join us on the fifteenth.

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Saturday, December 21, 2019
A Christmas Concert, 4:30 PM: at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Westbrook

The Anglican Singers once again have been invited to offer a concert of Christmas carols and congregational hymns at the charming and historic St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Westbrook. This is an enjoyable sequence to our service of Lessons and Carols the preceding weekend, and in happy expectancy of the Christmas season to follow.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Carr Bingham
Secretary
Hats, Mittens and Scarves

It's not too late to contribute to the mission. We are collecting new or hand knitted items. The "final" collection day will be Sunday, November 24 to allow time to sort and bag the items to deliver in early December—but feel free to bring any items in all year. We also welcome monetary donations to help fill in the gaps we have! Thank you for your wonderful support and generosity.

Sue Chojnacki - Chair
860.440.3427

St. James Christmas “Giving” Tree

Our parish has always responded with extraordinary generosity and we are looking forward to once again sharing Christmas love with families in need.

The Christmas tree will be located in the church this year, near the double doors right before entering the parish hall and decorated with ornaments, each having a requested item for a particular family member along with his/her name, age and sizes where appropriate. Please select an ornament with a requested item that you will then purchase, wrap and label with the attached ornament.

Please take note of the special instructions for wrapping and labeling your gift.

All gifts or monetary donations may be brought to church through December 15, 2019.

Gifts will be distributed to the respective families during the week of Dec. 16, 2019.

If your gift happens to be in the form of a monetary, donation, please make sure all checks are payable to St. James with Christmas Wish List in the memo line.

Thank you all for your incredible support!!

The Christmas Giving Tree Committee

Socks for the Homeless Hospitality Center

Our holiday tradition continues with the annual gifting of new socks for the guests of the Homeless Hospitality Center on Christmas morning. We are requesting donations of new white socks (male and female). Our goal is to “gift” each guest with three (3) pairs of socks. They may be wrapped (please note on the outside of the package the size and if they are men’s or women’s—if unisex, no marking needed) or unwrapped. Please have all donations to the church by Sunday, December 15. If you would like to help with sorting and wrapping the socks, please contact Ellen in the parish office at 860.443.4989.
Christmas Memorial Poinsettias and Greenery

Now that Advent has arrived, we think of many tasks that have to be done in our own lives and in our Parish life. One of these takes place on Sunday, December 22 after the 10:00 AM service with the Greening of the Church. There are a number of ways that you can participate in this tradition, but one way is by giving memorial donations for friends and family or thanksgiving donations for the blessings in your life. These donations are used to purchase the Christmas decorations. The memorial envelope is attached but if you should mislay it, we will have more in the church or the parish office—the deadline for inclusion in the Christmas list is Sunday, December 15.

Thank you.

The Altar Guild of St. James

Volunteer for Flower Delivery to Shut-ins

If you would like to help brighten Christmas for members of our parish family who are homebound or in healthcare facilities, how about taking one of the poinsettia plants from our Christmas decorations to him/her? Select someone who is near to your home or office, and it won’t take much time at all!

A sign-up sheet can be found in the parish hall. Please put your name next to the name of the person to whom you’d like to take a plant.

Plants may be delivered immediately following the Christmas Day service or anytime during the week after Christmas Day.

Holiday Parish Office Hours

As we enter the holiday season, the parish office will observe the following holiday schedule:
Tuesday, December 24—Christmas Eve—parish office closes at 12:30 PM
Wednesday, December 25—Friday, December 27—office closed
Wednesday, January 1—New Year’s holiday—office closed
Jumble Shoppe News

Donations of transitional and cold weather clothing are in great demand. Bed linens and towels are big sales items and are always needed, as are small kitchen appliances and cook ware. Donations may be brought to the shop on Tuesdays and Saturdays from 10 to 1. For drop off at other times, please contact Dorothy Sieburg at 860.710.1649. Items left by the shop door are often ruined by weather or disturbed by passersby.

Volunteers are needed to set up for the St. Nicholas Fair on Friday, December 6 at 4:30 PM. A sign-up sheet is available on the buffet in the Parish Hall. Pizza will be served for all volunteers.

To date this year, money from sales at the shop has been distributed to over twenty local and international outreach programs. The Faith in Action Committee meets regularly to look at requests and make decisions about disbursement of funds. Suggestions for charitable causes may be brought to Fr. Ranjit or Dorothy for consideration.

Dorothy Sieburg - Manager

St. James Quilters

Our mission is to make quilts for the Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) Nurse Family Partnership (which cares for new mothers). The quilters have also been working on crafts to be sold at the St. Nicholas Fair (Christmas Bazaar) in conjunction with the Jumble Shoppe on Saturday, December 7 and Sunday, December 8 after both morning worship services.

Our meetings are on the second and fourth Thursday of the month from 10:00 TO 2:00 PM. New members are always welcome, you do not need to know how to quilt our experienced quilters will gladly teach you. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mary Chartier at 860.443.0590.

Margaret Murallo, member

Fall Clean Up

At this year’s fall clean up we accomplished all our goals. The weather was beautiful and we were able to change one flag and unfurl the other. We cleaned outside the church, weeded and trimmed the shrubbery. Inside we cleaned the pews, kneelers, woodwork and cushions. I would like to thank Martha and Ralph Anderson, Dave Higgins, John Umland, Sue Chojnacki, Anna Shaw, Laura Jean Brewster, Mark Enoch, Caleb Sieburg, Betty Chapman, Tonya Royal, Lori Sarkett and Diane Theis. Thank you for all your help, it was greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

Walter Chojnacki,
Chair, Buildings & Grounds
Hello brethren at St. James.

I’m writing you this email just to thank you for your lovely support of the wooden school building of two classes at Philip Betts Secondary school. We are at the beginning of this area in Rural Goma where we built a primary school that had been serving the local community in educating young children. Now it was the time to implement secondary school. Our vision is to furthering it until we have 6 classes and a head master Office, on God timing.

Also, Caludaline my wife asked me to share her work she is doing amongst children in other places where there is a great need. This school of her charity has 400 pupils both primary and secondary school for orphans, vulnerable children and those who are fatherless children out of rape, there are also children whose parents are poor and could not study if this school was by there. It is called Hope school. Those who finish there in primary school they pursue secondary in there and now it the first ones who started in this Hope primary school are now in S4 offering nutrition as section or option.

There are programme being offered mainly, education, day meals, porridge, uniforms, school books, pens, crayons, sport and medication and nutritional center for malnourished children. But also in Rural areas, Claudaline is working with vulnerable women and those who are survivors of rape. Through her God is operating miracles in providing agro pastoral project and the in the city women are under tailoring training for alleviating poverty in order to promote self reliance.

This programme is making impact to serve life of many and give Hope to the hopeless. Praise Jesus.

Thank you for your prayers.

+Desire

*This is what $500 did for the children of Goma.
Our journey began in the dark and ended in the light, began with death and ended in rebirth, began in hell and ended in heaven. At 5:00 am, dark even in sunny Arizona, we awoke to prepare for a walk in the desert to plant crosses for the dead.

At the Tucson Samaritans’ parking lot, (The Samaritans are a volunteer group assisting immigrants coming to the US through the AZ desert) we met Alvaro Enciso, a cultural anthropologist from Peru who once worked in DC for the Federal Government. He refers to himself as a “one-time bureaucrat.” Alvaro is also an artist. About 8 years ago, a map showing thousands of red dots marking relatively recent human deaths in the Sonoran Desert horrified him. Alvaro immediately, intuitively saw dinner tables where there would forever be an empty place; mothers who would never know for sure what had happened to their sons, daughters or grandchildren; wives who would never again greet their husbands in the evening. At St. James, we’d say Alvaro saw Jesus in these lost souls.

Alvaro was compelled to find a way to signify the humanity of those who had died in the Sonoran Desert. Initially, he did not want to attach such a widely-recognized Christian symbol to his purpose, but he did settle on the cross after researching its history as a symbol in other civilizations. This research satisfied his desire that the marker be inclusive, that it represent the widest understanding of what it means to be human. Then he set about creating an appropriate design. Each cross is brightly colored to be seen against the sand, and each is lodged in its hole with a pile of rocks at the foot. Each cross also bears a red dot recalling the GPS dots on the map; a second symbol is also attached, which, when possible, is unique to the person though information about these anonymous pilgrims is scarce; often beads—sometimes rosary beads—are hung at the top of the cross.

That morning our first cross was for Porcario, a young man whose body had been found only a couple of days earlier. We drove for about an hour into the desert, rocking over deep, suspension-bending washes. Then we slugged through ankle-twisting rocks and sand, carefully negotiating the plentiful jumping cholla cacti, so named because the slightest breath of air causes a thorny chunk to find a new home on one’s shoe or pant leg. Midst the surprisingly plentiful vegetation, we searched for the mesquite tree where Porcario had died. We found it: the still-moist body fluids where Porcario had lain revealed the outline of his body. Stunned into silence, we remained so for the entire ceremony, except when Alvaro gave a few directions about digging the hole for the salmony pink cross to mark this man’s life and death, and again when Alvaro eulogized Porcario, offering the few facts he had learned from immigration records. (Through DNA testing the government is able sometimes to return the remains to families in Central America.) At the end, we all had the privilege of piling on rocks at the foot, saying our own prayers and listening to Will’s quiet blessing. We all wept.
Racial Reconciliation Working Group

I heard a great conversation about anger on NPR Sunday. The panel talked about how we all have different things that trigger our anger based on our experiences. I think this is true about fear and sadness as well.

The impact of a remark we make to someone else may be taken differently than we intended. When someone’s reaction is different than we expect it to be, we need to talk it out with the other person rather than allow our relationship to dissolve from a lack of understanding another’s perspective.

We also have the responsibility to learn as much as we can about how other groups of people experience life differently. I was painfully aware of this the other day when a friend of mine got stopped by the police. She put her hands on the dashboard and told the policeman when and where she was reaching for her license. As a person of color, she could not afford to express her feelings, she had to concentrate on surviving the experience. As a white person, I would be free to be angry or carefree in the same situation.

The sin of racism is alive and well today and it is our responsibility as Christians to do everything we can to dismantle it.

Deacon Ellen
Caring for Creation

The committee sends a big thank you to everyone who attended and helped with the October 20 forum, "Reality, Hope and Action in an Age of Climate Change." We welcome any feedback about the event.

We’re hoping to have another fundraiser this Christmas season for the solar panel project. Please look for announcements about an eco-friendly item we’ll be offering for sale that will make great gifts!

We’re also working with Deacon Ellen on getting a pollinator project going, and hope other members of the congregation will join us. Watch for updates.

We will be meeting at 5:30 PM on November 14 and December 12 in the parlor. Newcomers welcome! For information, contact Judy Benson at: moss153@att.net.

Please remember the environment this Christmas!

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Benson, chair

Farewell dear friends

Michael Hatt
Stephen “Steve” Todd Anderson
Amelia “Millie” Deurloo

Memorials

Each Sunday we adorn the Altar with flowers (greenery during the season of Advent), light a Sanctuary Candle, and consume bread and wine. An Altar flower donation is $45; Sanctuary Candle $5; and, Communion Wine or Communion Wafers, $10. You may donate as a memorial honoring someone deceased, or as a thank-offering to celebrate a birthday, anniversary or other special event in your life. Contact the parish office or an Altar Guild member for more information.

News From Our Pledge Secretary

Is your current (2019) pledge up to date? Please make sure that your 2019 contributions are caught up as we approach the busy holiday season. Taxable contributions cannot be made for 2019 after December 31, 2019.

Greg Rice,
Pledge Secretary
At the September Vestry meeting, Deacon Ellen reported that a grant was applied for through The National Episcopal Church in the Fall of 2017. The United Thank Offering Grant of $7,000 was received in the summer of 2018 to train youth in this area. The training was held this summer 2019 for 3 days with 28 students participating from 6 towns and 7 schools. The students were very honest and open about their concerns and issues they had experienced at their schools, including racial discrimination, sexual harassment, and drug use. In moving forward, the committee would like to support the students in making the school administrations aware of these issues by having a School Safety Council at their schools including students, parents, and staff. The students felt that their significant needs, issues and experiences were not being addressed by the people that can make the changes. There is about $350.00 left of the grant, which could be used for quarterly events.

A motion was made and passed that The Fidelity Charitable Donor-Advised Fund Grant of $250.00 be given to the Arizona-Mexico Border Mission to aid them in getting and distributing the supplies to the immigrants through the three Episcopal shelters in that general area.

The job description for the Assistant Priest was accepted and voted on by the Vestry. The Personnel Committee along with Fr. Ranjit will interview the candidates.

The Budget Committee will be meeting in October and November to set the budget for the 2020 year.

It was announced that the Vestry Retreat will be held on September 28th at the Incarnation Center in Ivoryton, CT. The facilitator will be Dr. John Thatamanil, Assistant Professor of Theology and World Religions at Union Theological Seminary in New York. He will focus on politics and the work that we as a parish engage in as to our mission statement. When does public work become politics?

The Vestry terms of Fred Smith, Eleanor Godfrey, & Stephanie Brandon will be complete at the end of this year. Please submit prospective names to Fr. Ranjit, or a member of the vestry.

The Caring for Creation Committee announced that on Oct. 20 from 2 - 3:30 PM in St. James Parish Hall, a forum will be held in conjunction with the IREJN, titled. "Reality, Hope and Action in the Age of Climate Change."

At the October Vestry Meeting, much time was spent discussing ways to help the balance the 2020 budget, without a withdrawing large percentage taken from the endowment. The Stewardship Committee will pay an important role in this process in emphasizing the needs of the parish and the monies needed to achieve the goals that have been set.

The insurance company has already disbursed to St James, $116,000 for damage to the organ chamber due to a leak, leaving an outstanding balance of $29,000 that is being held by the insurance company. A motion as made to make a counter offer of $20,000 to the insurance company to settle/close the account.

Ann Burdick,
Parish Clerk
We have entered the time of year when our Vestry begins to address the related issues of budget development and stewardship for 2020.

The Budget Committee has had the first of three meetings and has presented a first-cut draft budget to the Vestry. This draft budget shows a significant challenge for 2020: we will have to withdraw more than $200,000 from our investment account (known as the Endowment) to balance the budget. This is an increase of more than $30,000 over our budgeted 2019 withdrawal.

This is a significant amount, almost seven percent of the Endowment value. In past years, we have been able to stay within, or close to, a 5% withdrawal, an amount considered “acceptable” for many years. Details of past years financial performance can be found in the parish annual reports, available on our website.

If you look at past years financial statements, you will see that the amount needed from the Endowment to balance the budget has been increasing steadily. For example, in 2015 only $68,000 was needed, about one-third of what we are facing in 2020. In contrast, the amount received from Pledges has not changed over that same period, holding steady at about $180,000. If these numbers hold for the duration of the budget development process, 2020 will mark the first year that the amount needed from the Endowment exceeds the amount expected from Pledges.

The Budget Committee and the Vestry will continue to look for ways to reduce the budget before it is adopted in December. Separately, the Stewardship Committee will be contacting you about pledging in 2020. I hope the information above will help you understand the parish financial needs as you consider your pledge.

Op Rev = operating revenue
Op Exp = operating expenditures
Fr Endw = from Endowment

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Respectfully,
Jerry Miller, Treasurer

St. James’ Mission Statement
We are a forward looking, multi-cultural and inclusive faith community, proclaiming and doing Christ’s work of love and justice in the greater New London area and the world.
This report covers from January 1, 2019 to September 30, 2019.

Total Income:
Budgeted Amount: $199,125
Actual Amount: $196,704
Amount Actual is Under Budget: $2,421

The primary contributor to this is Pledge Income, which is $4,276 under the budgeted amount.

Total Expenses:
Budgeted Amount: $327,784
Actual Amount: $336,780
Amount Actual is Over Budget: $8,996

The primary contributor to this Plant Maintenance and Operations, which is $11,691 over the budgeted amount.

Net Ordinary Income:
Total Income: $196,704
Total Expenses: $336,780
Net Ordinary Income: -$140,076
Endowment Income Applied: $128,664
Net Income: -$11,412

Summary: As of September 30, 2019, we are $11,412 behind where we expected to be, based on our 2019 budget.

Investment Summary:
Balance 12/31/2018: $3,233,467
Balance 09/30/2019: $3,532,700
Total Value Change: $299,233
Withdrawal 5%: $128,664
Change Pre-Withdrawal: $427,897

Summary: Our pre-withdrawal investment value has increased by $427,897, about 13.2%, through September 30, 2019. After factoring in the 5% withdrawal, our investments are up $299,233, about 9.2% through September.

Respectfully submitted,

Gerald F. Miller, Treasurer
Schedule for Christmas Celebrations

Christmas Eve, Tuesday, December 24
5:00 PM Children’s Pageant & Festive Holy Eucharist with Christmas Music
10:45 PM Choral Prelude
11:00 PM Festive Choral Eucharist

Christmas Day, Wednesday, December 25
9:00 AM Holy Eucharist (with music)

First Sunday after Christmas, December 29
9:00 AM Lessons and Carols