Where is the joy in your life?

I have just come back from some refreshing time in India. My family and I had some time to visit with our families in the southern part of the country, renewing relationships and cultivating new ones. My brother-in-law, Josh and his wife, Rochelle, had a baby boy, Nathan and as you can imagine it was pure delight to hold him and enjoy the gift of his new life. It was joyful.

I also hope that you had time to refresh yourselves in the garden of this summer season; tending and nourishing those areas of your life that were beckoning for renewal and rest. Rest and play are important to our capacity for joy. Joy is deeper than happiness. Happiness is fleeting and of the moment, whereas joy is deep, and a muscle that is integral to who we are as beloved children of God.

Jesus says in the Gospel of John 10:10, “I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.” My friends, this is what Jesus desires for all who believe in the way, the truth and the life that is Jesus. Too often, I think our society pushes us to live in fear, and live lives of scarcity, always fearful of what is going to happen next, whereas the message of Jesus invites us to full life. I know I become more fearful when my day is not centered on through meditation. It is then that I become more anxious and more unmoored. I also become more anxious when I don’t work out or intentionally live into the joys of my life. The joy of spending time with Johanna and Dhruv, and our family and friends. Of taking time to bask in nature, and let the peace of God that passes all understanding come over me. These are the ways in which God has given us to dwell in Jesus. Practices that we see Jesus embodying throughout the Gospels.

These practices help us to cultivate the muscle of joy. It can become elusive or even dimmed, if we don’t make space for it. An abundant life is what we are called to live into, and while this type of life very necessarily means bearing our cross and following Jesus into the realities of our world, it also means settling into the joy that God has given us. We can do both. More often than not, followers of Jesus are given a false sense of the Christian life, where it is all about the Cross and the suffering therein, or on the other hand, there is the prosperity Gospel, where the Cross is thrown out. The Gospel of Jesus Christ offers the followers of Jesus the chance to follow in the transforming life of Jesus, an embodied full life, of joy, peace; but also of coming across the realities of injustice and oppression. Our world will always have injustice and we will be more equipped to engage if we re-charge our joy filled batteries.

My prayer is that during your week, you live into the fullness of following Jesus, knowing the cross that we are called to bear; but also the joy that is always there for us to revel in.

in peace,

Ranjit
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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New London CT 06320-6601
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Facebook: St James Episcopal Church
&
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News from our Deacon

Pollination is the transfer of pollen from a male anther to a female stigma. Although water and wind pollinate some plants, 87% are pollinated by birds and insects. The most common pollinators in Connecticut are bees, birds, bats, beetles, butterflies, moths and wasps.

This year I will be asking the parishes and parishioners in the SE Region to join the CT Department of Transportation and the CT Department of Environmental Protection to create a pollinator corridor through southeastern CT. This can be done by planting native trees, shrubs and flowers, providing nesting places, and cutting down on the use of pesticides, especially insecticides.

Deacon Ellen

News from our Senior Warden

On Sunday September 15th, the St. James Ministry Fair will once again take place in our parish hall. Many Individuals will proudly display their poster boards hoping to encourage others to join their various ministries or committees. With so many interesting things happening at St. James on a daily basis, the church continues to flourish with the help of our parishioners as well as with the aid of those within the community. Many Individuals find it hard to get involved in our parish life, for work, family, and school functions often take precedence over our church life.

Taking the time to do God’s work is not often on the minds of those with a hectic lifestyle. Ministries such as visiting the elderly or helping to feed the hungry require very little time or energy, but the rewards are endless! Many committees at St. James do not demand a great deal of time but will often help others in ways that one never thought possible.

So please pray about which ministry or committee at St. James you will join. Remember, you will truly be doing the work of God.

Faithfully,

Lori Sarkett
Sunday Schedule

Sunday, September 1—One Holy Eucharist at 9:00 AM in the Church.

Sunday, September 8—The parish picnic will be at Waterford Beach Park, Shelter #1 beginning at 12 Noon—Holy Eucharist and a picnic potluck lunch to follow.

Sunday, September 15—We return to the regular worship schedule (Rite I 8:00 AM, Rite II 10:00 AM and In the Celtic Tradition 5:00 PM). Church School kicks off the new year at 9:00 AM in the Church School classroom (main level of the parish hall). The Ministry Fair will be held after the 8:00 AM and 10 AM services in the parish hall. The Southeastern Region Gathering and Picnic is at Holy Advent Church, Clinton from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM.

Sunday, September 22—Rector’s Forum will be held in the parish hall after the 10:00 AM service.

Sunday, October 13—The Rt. Rev. Jeffrey Rowthorn and his wife, Anne will lead a forum after the 10 AM service in the parish hall.

Sunday, October 20—a Green Forum titled "Reality, Hope and Action in the Age of Climate Change will be held in the parish hall from 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM.

Sunday, October 27—Morning Prayer at 8:00 AM in the Church and Holy Eucharist at 11:00 AM in Hartford (Annual Convention). Additional information to come nearer the time.

Parish Office Hours

Our regular office schedule will resume on Monday, September 9. The parish office being open to the public from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM and 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM. The staff lunch break is from 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM.

Church School

The summer has flown by! The church school teachers have enjoyed the summer break and hope that all of our families have as well!

The year ahead is full of wonderful adventures! With new lessons and refreshers, singing and activities. We are anxiously awaiting the exciting journey we are soon to begin!

We look forward to seeing everyone at the church service and picnic on Sunday, September 8th at Waterford beach. We will start the new school year on Sunday, September 15th at 9:00 AM! Until then, we pray that everyone had a safe and happy summer vacation and have a great start to the school year!

Robin, Gena & Johanna
Christian Formation—Fall
Come One, Come All!

Our fall program kicks off on Wednesday, September 11. The evening begins in the Hallam Chapel at 5:00 PM with worship. We then move to the Parlor to enjoy a potluck supper together at 6:00 PM and the book discussion begins at 6:30 PM. You are welcome for one or all of the evening events.

We will study The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World by Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu. Chapter titles include: Perspective, Humility, Humor, Acceptance, Forgiveness, Gratitude, Compassion and Generosity. This book has been a #1 bestseller on the New York Times book list.

Please contact Ellen in the parish office if you would like a book ordered.

Fall Clean Up

Please join fellow parishioners on Saturday, September 21 for our annual Fall Parish Clean Up Day. We'll begin at 9:00 AM—yes, there will be coffee brewed and some goodies to eat both in the morning and at noon time. We anticipate finishing around noon—then we will enjoy fellowship and lunch together!

A sign up sheet will be in the parish hall. We need everyone's support to make our Church and our grounds an attractive and welcoming worship place!

Respectfully submitted,

Walter Chojnacki,
Chair, Buildings & Grounds

St. James Book Club

The St. James Book Group meets at the La Luna Restaurant (located at the Holiday Inn) at 6:00 PM. Meals and appetizers are available and pricing ranges from $5-$30 depending on the selection.

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.

On Thursday September 26th at 6:00 PM, the book group will meet in the parlor at St. James, where there will be a presentation by author and parishioner Robert Kim Bingham. Mr. Bingham will discuss his book Courageous Dissent", which is based on the life of his father, Hiram Bingham IV. Copies of the book are available through Mr. Bingham or Lori Sarkett. Price is $20.00.

“The Hidden Life of Trees” by Peter Wohlleben will be discussed at the La Luna restaurant on Thursday October 24th at 6:00 PM.
Birthdays

September

5  Marilyn Percy
6  Eleanor Godfrey
6  Effie McCarthy
8  Evelyn Peyton
9  Elizabeth Rottinghaus
10 Kristine Bath
10 Sheila Saari
16 Katherine Brighty
16 Roxanne Steed
17 Nancy Vogel
19 Edward Jausz
19 Ronald Steed
21 Beverly Skeffington
21 Lori Sarkett

October

1  Edwin Ivey
2  Gerald Miller
2  Michael Spence
3  Pat Lee
6  Edna Miskell
8  Patricia Lang
9  Charles Kepner
10 Joan Robinson
11 Frederic Smith
12 Marilyn Monagas
13 Ethel Harrington
16 Joanna Norris
20 Dorothy Sieburg
21 John Brewster
21 Donald Dunning
22 Alma Peterson
23 Edwin Rottinghaus
25 John Russell
27 Cara Scognamiglio
29 Keith Carter
31 Sarah Jarrett

St. James Supper Group

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

September Gathering: The Supper Group will be supporting the parish picnic at Waterford Park on Sunday, September 8 at 12:00 noon.

October Gathering—Rebeka Fresh Pasta Restaurant, 135 Boston Post Road, East Lyme. Dinner is on Friday, October 25 at 6:00 PM. Please contact Lori Sarkett at 860.287.5500 for more information.

Stitchers in Prayer Ministry

Prayer squares are located in a basket placed at both entrances to the church on Sunday mornings. They are available for you to have or to bring to someone that may need or want one.

We welcome all needle crafters who feel a calling and would like to join us in making prayer shawls, lap robes and/or prayer squares. We are considering making and providing baby blankets to all newly baptized infants here at St. James. All ideas are welcome!

Please contact Pat King or Deanna Bossdorf if you would like additional information or stop by and visit with us at our table during the Ministry Fair on Sunday, September 15.
Faith in Action Mission Trip

As most of you know, Faith in Action means just that: living out our Baptismal promises in our daily lives. Two of these promises ask us to “strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being” and to “seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?” At the moment, the recent increase in Central Americans seeking asylum in the U.S. has created serious concern at our southern border. Many of us ask ourselves what we can do to help these neighbors.

Over the past few years, members of The Faith in Action Team have been assisting immigrant families in CT. Up close and personal, we have heard their stories and learned what obstacles they face in trying to secure a safe and healthy life. This prompted the Faith in Action Team to propose to the Vestry that some of us travel to the AZ/Mexico border to witness, pray with these immigrants and assist non-profits in the area which work with them—we wish to be present for them. The Vestry approved and supported this trip at its July meeting. This will be a mission trip, like those made to Ecuador in the past, and sponsored by St. James.

So what would Jesus do? I like to think he tells us outright in the gospel of Matthew. “Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me…Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” (Matthew: 25: 34-36, 40 NRSV)

If you would like to support this trip—money collected will go directly to the needs of immigrants awaiting entry—you can send a check to St. James Episcopal Church writing in the memo line “Border trip.” Send it to the church at 76 Federal Street, New London or leave it with Ellen at the parish office.

Stef Brandon
Border Trip Team

Hats, Mittens and Scarves

It's hard to believe that it is that time of year again that we have to start thinking of cold weather. The annual Hats, Mittens and Scarves mission has been a year round mission as many knitters have been very busy and I am really thankful for their hard work. But we always need more! We will be collecting items at any time but in October there will be a special basket at coffee hour to collect new store bought items or handmade items. We collect for the elementary schools in New London and Covenant Shelter. However, in the past few years we have been joyfully able to provide items to the families at Christmas, the homeless shelter, drop in learning center and several other special requests. If you are unable to shop, please consider a donation and we will shop for you! In advance, thank you for you support and generosity. Your warmth will keep others warm this winter.

Sue Chojnacki - Chair
860.440.3427
The Anglican Singers

OPENING SERVICE OF 2019–2020 SEASON
Sunday, September 22, 2019
St. Mary Star of the Sea Church, New London
5:00 PM

The Anglican Singers are pleased to announce the opening service of their 2019–2020 season will be sung-evening-prayer on Sunday, September 22nd, 5:00 PM, at St. Mary Star of the Sea Church, 10 Huntington Street in New London—three blocks south of St. James.

St. James and St. Mary’s have long enjoyed a close relationship—one which was cemented in 1983 when the two churches partnered to co-found The Covenant Shelter of New London, a homeless shelter established to welcome single men, single women, and families. To this day, both parishes remain actively involved in the continuing work of the Shelter, with the rector of St. James and the pastor of St. Mary’s serving as board members ex officio, and with parishioner representation from each church.

It will be a joy to share our service with the communicants of St. Mary’s and to sing in that marvelous space. Please join us.

Looking ahead, the Singers’ first service of evensong at St. James will take place on Sunday, November 10th, 5:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Carr Bingham
Secretary

St. James Adult Choir

Do you like to sing? Now’s the perfect time to join the St. James Choir!

Our choir provides music for 10:00 AM Sunday services, from September to June, as well as special services such as Ash Wednesday and Easter Vigil. We rehearse on Sundays after church, from noon to 1:00 PM, with one rehearsal per month on Monday evening instead, from 7:00 to 9:00 PM. We also get together at 9:00 a.m. every Sunday to polish the music for the 10:00 AM service. Our rehearsal schedule gives us time to learn the beautiful anthems and hymns that we offer to the congregation.

If you’re interested in finding out more about the choir, please get in touch with our director Will Cooper—you can speak with him at church (or the picnic), or email him at wilhelm.fassbinder@gmail.com.

Our choir season for this year begins at 9:00 AM on Sunday, September 15, when we’ll prepare music for the 10:00 AM service that day. That would be a great time to join, but we welcome new singers at any time!
Painting and Touring in southwestern France

1 Roxanne and Deb exploring the village of Calvignac

Roxanne Steed and Deb Downes were privileged to spend an idyllic extended stay in France in early summer. Fr. Ranjit asked if they would share them with the parish and they readily agreed. However, their experiences, while similar, were different and so you will see that they have expressed their thoughts individually, conversational style below. They hope you will enjoy this and would love to answer any questions you may have anytime – because it was that special.

RS: Hi I’m Roxanne and I am a professional artist and teacher. Every year I offer a painting trip abroad with instruction and touring. I always love doing these trips because it gets us out of the normal environment of the studio and allows us to engage in a different culture which is good for the artist's (or anyone’s) soul. I taught two back-to-back classes during the month of June, and as luck would have it, my dear friend, Deb Downes, came with us to the second session.

DD: I'm Deb. I have been taking painting lessons from Roxanne ever since she became my choir buddy at St. James. I’d always wanted to paint and God somehow put her next to me. I had been gifted with watercolor materials and it was providence that Roxanne had just started her new studio classes in watercolor journaling. Her recent trips had been to Ireland and I said to her once : “If you ever go to France, I’m there.” Well, here we are.

RS: When I plan overseas trips, I work with a friend, Lisa Statkus, who arranges educational art retreats. I am hired on as a teacher. Lisa has been going to this area for the last six years at least and she had located a beautifully restored chateau in a tiny village called Calvignac in the Lot region in southwest France. Our group of 11 included people from different parts of the USA, with different histories and backgrounds, most having some painting experience but one without any experience.

2 Our residence in Calvignac called La Riviere (the River)

DD: Since I had lived in France for two years (many years ago), I was thrilled to be going back to my second country, but also thrilled to meet all these women (and one husband) from different parts of the US. The chateau was incredible (insert picture), but little did we know what special and wonderful days awaited us. Each day we had art instruction from Roxanne for three to four hours. All of us were at different levels in our art journeys but she was able to get us all working together at our own pace. We also spent time each day traveling to nearby sites to enjoy the history, the architecture, countryside, daily living, the food, and of course sketching and painting.

RS: Lisa and I really worked well with each other in coming up with a very balanced program of art and touring each day. I really loved having the time to work with people one-on-one so the groups are intentionally kept small so I can do this. As a teacher, one of the things that I love is being able to build their skill levels so that by the end of the 10 days they can paint a portrait of Monet and come away with technical painting skills for life.

3 The group with their portraits of Monet

DD: In addition to the time spent under instruction and painting pleine air, we were struck by our group’s ability to come together over conversation about family, children, life issues (and no politics), which brought a certain spirituality to our gathering on a daily basis. For example, the husband who attended the program (and the only non-painter) busied himself by coming up with nightly questions for the group to answer individually, each of the ten nights we were together.
Questions ranged from “what was your favorite thing you did today” or “what did you learn about yourself from Roxanne?”; all leading up to the last night’s question. That night we all were given names of another in the group and were asked to say something about that person that we learned about them during our 10 days together. It was amazing how easy and insightful each person’s comments were. And it was like a gift to the recipient’s ear at each turn. We truly felt blessed to be in each other’s company.

RS: Some of the other trips that we took that were really special included Cordes sur Ciel, a medieval town on a mountaintop, which was historically fascinating, but also of great interest because of a little old blind man who still produces this medieval and unique (and at one time very expensive) blue pigment from the Woad plant (a “royal” blue used to dye fabric to wrap Egyptian mummies).

DD: Another highlight was the open-air market in the city of Cahors. There was an abundance of color, scents, smells, and tastes that tickled all our senses. A calm atmosphere belied the undercurrent of activity as we all made our small purchases for our plein-air picnic and painting session that afternoon down by the Lot river and the Pont Valentré, a bridge dating to circa 1350 CE, and our day’s subject.

RS: One of the programs that Lisa had scheduled for us consisted of an invitation by a local neighbor for the group to attend the Fête de Musique and potluck in a teeny, tiny village nearby. This is an annual, nationwide event which takes place in towns and villages across France on the summer solstice. At 8 pm everyone across the entire nation sings Ode to Joy. I knew the program would be nice but I didn’t realize it was going to be one of the highlights of our visit. Six women sang a program which included French, Macedonian, and other folk tunes, plus “Moon River” (in English!) among others. Their enthusiasm was contagious and spilled over into the potluck dinner where we all attempted to mingle using “Franglish”, and where Deb’s translation skills were put to good use! The real joy came after singing “Ode to Joy” when the women brought out more sheet music for all to use. Deb and I joined the singing and then our fellow artists followed! By the time the raindrops began to fall, we had developed a strong feeling of community with these lovely people through music and sharing.

4 Village Fête de Musique sing-a-long
RS and DD: We are both still trying to process everything we experienced because it was so special.

RS: After a month of being in France, I reconfirmed how much I LOVE teaching. I was surprised to find that I have developed my ear for the language after struggling with it for years. I was giddy with delight at how Deb’s language came back to her and people were asking her, “where in France do you come from?”.

DD: For me this was a trip with so many gifts. I got to spend time (10 whole days!) learning from Roxanne [thanks for going to France this time!], meeting people who I hope will be a part of my life for a good long time, revisiting my younger self, and sharing all this with David for eight days following the workshop the last eight days.

RS and DD: Our interactions with the locals in Calvignac, the wonderful musicians and villagers at the Fête de Musique, our landlord, and our new painter friends gave us a renewed sense of optimism, faith in humanity, and hope for the future. By sloughing off the outside world and embracing our new community, we were able to build relationships with people from different backgrounds and languages and find beauty in unexpected places. By “filling our well” we can now bring these things back to our everyday lives and share them with others.

Our common takeaway is that we feel a renewed optimism and faith in humanity and hope for the future because we sloughed off the outside world and focused on building interpersonal relationships – reminding us that that is what is important.
Racial Reconciliation Working Group

St. James received funding from United Thank Offering to offer high school students in southeastern CT anti-racism training. We knew from conversations with teenagers that they experience or observe racial discrimination at school and that these incidents are not resolved in a meaningful way.

Twenty-seven young people from six area high schools gathered together in late July and early August to share the issues that concern them and learn ways to support each other when there is racial tension at their school. One of our community partners, Hearing Youth Voices, provided the training. When we needed a bigger space to hold the training at the last minute, All Souls let us use their facilities.

The best thing about the training was seeing how quickly the participants bonded with each other and how willing they were to share their experiences and concerns. The worst thing about the training was to realize that the students do not have anyone to report racial discrimination or sexual harassment to at school. This adds to their stress level.

Having been a school teacher for 35 years, I understand how much is expected of our schools’ staff. I also know that the relationship between student and teacher affects learning. Sacrificing the time it takes to build community will not help our students. Not feeling safe or cared for distracts their ability to focus. We need to find a balance between offering our students support and giving them the education they need to become productive, healthy adults.

Deacon Ellen

The Writers Group

Do you have a writing project you don't make time for? Do you like to journal? Do you simply enjoy writing poetry? If so, please join the St. James Writers Group.

Our group is 'no pressure'. It's a time to make a commitment with yourself to write. We don't share work or critique each other. We just sit quietly and write and write.

We meet on Mondays from 6:30 - 8:00 PM. Upcoming sessions are: September 9th & 23rd; and October 7th & 28th. Members of the community are welcome to join us. Bring a friend!

Questions? Contact Emma Palzerereae, emmapalzererae@gmail.com

Emma Palzere-Rae
Be Well Productions
860.961.6067
Caring for Creation Committee

SAVE THE DATE for a Green Forum titled "Reality, Hope and Action in the Age of Climate Change" from 2 to 3:30 PM on Sunday Oct. 20. Building off our successful forum last year on the wind power project, the committee is again working with the Inter-religious Eco-Justice Network to bring a great group of speakers for discussion of this important topic. Panelists will be: the Rev. Margaret Bullit-Jonas, missioner for creation care for the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts and the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ; Juliana Barrett, coastal habitat specialist for Connecticut Sea Grant; and Jameelah Muhammed, board member of the IREJN. A fourth panelist may be added. The Rev. Ranjit K. Mathews will be the moderator.

The forum is a chance to start talking honestly about climate change. Instead of staying stuck in a state of paralysis and denial, how can we face reality while still finding hope and a sense of purpose to take action? Panelists will talk about their involvement with climate change issues, how they stay engaged and their vision for the future. Admission is free, but registration is requested at: Reality, Hope, and Action in a Age of Climate Change https://www.eventbrite.com/e/reality-hope-and-action-in-a-age-of-climate-change-tickets-64581622371.

Thank you to everyone who supported our veggie sales this summer! We raised $301 to add to the funds from the veggie sales last summer and the solar lantern sales in the winter towards rooftop solar panels for the Parish Hall. Thus far we have raised $1412 towards this project.

New members are always welcome to join the Caring for Creation Committee. We will meet at 6:00 PM, September 12 and October 10 in the parlor. For information, contact Judy Benson, chairwoman, at: moss153@att.net.

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Benson

Social Media Committee

The Social Media Committee is committed to spreading the word of our parish's good works and engaging our community in The Jesus Movement. And it is working! Some of our posts have gone viral and have been seen by over 35,000 people!

Social Media works best when people engage with our posts by liking, commenting and sharing. You are a critical part of our success!

Our committee meets quarterly; if you would like to be part of our planning and strategizing, please contact me at emmapalzererae@gmail.com.

Thanks!

Respectfully submitted,
Emma Palzere-Rae
It has been a busy summer thus far. In addition to providing food for our clients we have been busy planning several educational offerings in regards to medical care and insurance. Representatives from the Blue Cross/Blue Shield Insurance Company have come on several occasions to provide information about the various types of health care options, benefits, cost and the process of enrollment. Dr. Stephen Smith and Nurse Practitioner, Natalie Gurarrin, from the Community Health Center at Shaw’s Cove spoke to individuals about what they provide for healthcare services and answered client questions.

Our food pantry has been more progressive than we thought in regards to the use of single-use plastic bags. Over two years ago we discontinued purchasing and using plastic bags. This decision was multi-fold but mostly to save money on non-food item purchases and partly for the environment. The majority of clients adapted quickly to our new policy about reusable bags or other containers to pack their groceries. From time to time we have individuals that either forget to bring their bags or a new client that is in need of bags. Fortunately, we have had some donated reusable bags on hand but always welcome more for issuing emergency food items.

Many thanks to the St. James Supper Group for holding another baseball fundraiser in our honor. At this point, we are unaware of the total but look forward to using it to purchase food items that are difficult to keep in stock.

Volunteers are always welcome and needed on Tuesday mornings, especially at 8:00 AM at the Lord’s Pantry to unload the truck. Please email mima 961@sbcglobal.net or call 860.608.5975 for additional information and volunteer availability.

Thank you.

Eleanor Godfrey,
Manager

The Jumble Shoppe has reopened from the summer break and has a fine assortment of clothes to bridge from summer to fall. Donations of transitional and cool weather clothing are now being accepted. 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.

To date this year, money from sales at the shop has been distributed to 18 different 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. Please visit the Jumble Shoppe display at the Mission Fair on Sunday, September 15 for full information about all the missions and charitable causes supported by Jumble Shoppe sales.

Dorothy Sieburg - Manager
Centering Prayer (meditation)

A Centering Prayer Meditation group will be offered again this fall beginning on Saturday, September 14 in the Hallam Chapel from 8:30 to 10:00 AM.

Centering Prayer is a method of silent prayer that prepares us to receive the gift of contemplative prayer, prayer in which we experience God's presence within us.

Contemplativeoutreach.org is a wonderful website to look deeper into this practice of meditation.

Sincerely,

Nancy Higgins

The Diocese of Goma

Many parishioners have asked where is Goma located? These two maps help us visualize where our companion diocese is located. Please keep them in your daily prayers.
The Cross and the Lynching Tree Book Review

Although I've known about The Cross and the Lynching Tree for a few years, I have not felt emotionally strong enough to read it until now. I don't think I ever really began to understand the depths of white supremacy in the evangelical church until the Black Lives Matter movement started. African-Americans like author James Cone, who grew up in Jim Crow-era Arkansas, are all too familiar with white christians who did not see the paradox of going to a lynching Saturday night and a worship service Sunday morning. We are all the good guys in our own perspectives. This blind spot is why we need Cone’s African-American perspective to show us what we in the majority are blinded to by our fragile egos.

James Cone was not just a survivor of the Jim Crow south but also a theologian who had wrestled all his life with following the same Galilean prophet that his oppressors did. Part of healing involves an honest recounting of the injury. In Cone’s book, this means not only encountering several lynched individuals, but also looking at the white christian leaders who remained silent in this era, particularly, Reinhold Niebuhr. Niebuhr’s reaction to lynching, “give it time to exhaust itself,” strongly contrasts with Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who visited the US via Union Seminary before the Nazi takeover of Germany. Niebuhr did not spend much time with his fellow African Americans, whereas Bonhoeffer attended an historic black church while in New York City and witnessed racism firsthand. This is one of Cone’s key points; empathy is strongest when experienced, rather than philosophized about.

The answer to Cone’s struggle of worshipping the same god as those who participated in his people’s oppression is that Cone did not worship the same God. Rather, Cone knew that God identified with the lynched. Which god we choose to worship influences how we live out our faith. As regards the lynching of Christ on a cross, Cone wrote that he clings to the cross "because I have seen with my own eyes how that symbol empowered black people to stand up and become agents of change for their freedom." I am energized by Cone’s book. I feel like one of the travelers on the Emmaus Road, who did not recognize Jesus after the crucifixion. I have mostly felt despair about the systemic white supremacy in our country. Cone has surprised me and opened my eyes, like Jesus did when he spoke to the disciples who were on their way to Emmaus. Yes, racism is intractable in this country, and empowering to many white christians right now. Some white christians refuse to repent and refuse to listen to the cries of their brothers and sisters who are not white. Jesus, who died for white supremacists too, will open the oppressors’ eyes. In the meantime, I can share a hope that miracles will happen in those hardened white hearts, like it has in mine--even mine.

The full review can be found at John Umland’s blog, umbl0g.blogspot.com.
Remembering 400 Years of Enslavement

As I was in India for some time away, I received this daily mail from Richard Rohr, which is a part of his daily reflections. In this mail, he lifts up the writings of the theologian, Howard Thurman. As we acknowledge the 400 years that enslaved Africans were brought to the shores of our country, I found Thurman’s reflection particularly powerful and palpably provocative. I hope you also find it meaningful for our collective faith journey.

“I can count on the fingers of one hand the number of times that I have heard a sermon on the meaning of religion, of Christianity, to the man who stands with his back against the wall. . . . the poor, the disinherited, the dispossessed. What does our religion say to them? The issue is . . . what religion offers to meet their own needs. The search for an answer to this question is perhaps the most important religious quest of modern life.

In the fall of 1935 I was serving as chairman of a delegation sent on a pilgrimage of friendship from the students of America to the students of India, Burma, and Ceylon. [On this trip Thurman also met and visited with Gandhi.] It was at a meeting in Ceylon that the whole crucial issue was pointed up to me in a way that I can never forget. . . . I was invited by the principal to have coffee. . . .

He said to me, “What are you doing over here? I know what the newspapers say . . . but that is not my question. What are you doing over here? This is what I mean. “More than three hundred years ago your forefathers were taken from the western coast of Africa as slaves. The people who dealt in the slave traffic were Christians. One of your famous Christian hymn writers, Sir John Newton, made his money from the sale of slaves to the New World. He is the man who wrote ‘How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds’ and ‘Amazing Grace’—there may be others, but these are the only ones I know. The name of one of the famous British slave vessels was ‘Jesus.’

“The men who bought the slaves were Christians. Christian ministers, quoting the Christian apostle Paul, gave the sanction of religion to the system of slavery. Some seventy years or more ago you were freed by a man [Abraham Lincoln] who was not a professing Christian, but was rather the spearhead of certain political, social, and economic forces, the significance of which he himself did not understand. During all the period since then you have lived in a Christian nation in which you are segregated, lynched, and burned. Even in the church, I understand, there is segregation. One of my students who went to your country sent me a clipping telling about a Christian church in which the regular Sunday worship was interrupted so that many could join a mob against one of your fellows. When he had been caught and done to death, they came back to resume their worship of their Christian God.

“I am a Hindu. I do not understand. Here you are in my country, staying deep within the Christian faith and tradition. I do not wish to seem rude to you. But, sir, I think you are a traitor to all the darker peoples of the earth. I am wondering what you, an intelligent man, can say in defense of your position?”

Ranjit
Buildings and Grounds
Summer Projects


Future projects include plaster repair and painting projects within sections of the Church and Hallam Chapel.
Vestry Highlights

Fr. Ranjit reviewed the proposal for the addition of a quarter time priest. The salary for a quarter time priest would be $20,756.28. The executive committee would design a letter of agreement that included travel expenses, vacation and other concerns. They would present the draft contract to the vestry for approval. After much discussion, the vestry proposed that we make a three year commitment for a quarter time priest with a review after each year. At the time of the review, the vestry would be able to terminate the contract, hire a new candidate or end the position all together. The stewardship committee will ask the parish to support it through their pledges. If the money was not raised by pledges, the money would come from the Endowment account. A motion was made to approve a year to year commitment for a quarter time priest. Motion was passed.

Mr. Tom Clark (Guest) passed out Southeast Connecticut Regional Interfaith Council Information (On file). A motion was made that the Vestry authorizes Fr. Ranjit to represent our interest in moving forward with other religious organizations with the proposal from Tom Clark dated June 14, 2019. Motion was passed unanimously.

Information passed out regarding the Wind Power Initiative. Judy Benson has attended the first two Wind Power Initiative meetings; however Dave Downes has volunteered to be the representative from St James to this organization. A motion was made that the vestry of St. James Episcopal Church expresses its support for this regional group organized by the Connecticut Coalition on Climate and Jobs working toward agreements with the developers of the offshore wind industry in New London.

The Vestry also commits to create and fund a youth cultural center, involving local non-profits maintain active representation on the group and to commit resources and public support where appropriate. Motion passed.

Information regarding the Arizona-Mexico Trip was sent out via email (On file) People from St. James who volunteer on this mission trip would be working in shelters and distributing supplies directed by established organizations already there. A motion was made to authorize this Arizona/Mexico Mission trip. A motion was also made that the Vestry support this border mission with a contribution of $2000 to help people making the trip defray costs and to help buy items that may be of use to the immigrants crossing the border. Both motions passed. A member from the Faith in Action Committee will document and account for how the $2000 was spent.

Fr. Ranjit passed out his draft press release of the Caged Holy Family Display (On File) A motion was made for a vote of confidence that the Vestry endorse this letter. Motion passed.

Fr. Ranjit informed the Vestry that the auditors, by way of the ECCT policy, communicated to him to write a check to an organization and not to an individual to distribute his discretionary funds, and then to also have written documentation. He said that he has in the past given money to people who have preached and traveled to St. James from his discretionary fund, but as a best practice in the 2020 budget this should be changed to be reflected as a line item. It was decided for Fr. Ranjit to write up a letter that designates certain expenditures as appropriate for Rector’s fund purpose.

There was no meeting in August, and the next vestry meeting will be held on September 3rd, at 6:00 PM. All are welcome to attend.
Dear friends,

On Saturday, September 28th, our Vestry will go on an all day retreat at the Incarnation Center in Ivoryton.

We are privileged to have Dr. John Thatamamil of Union Theological Seminary in New York City serve as our retreat leader.

Here is his short bio: John J. Thatamanil is Associate Professor of Theology and World Religions at Union Theological Seminary in New York. He has taught a wide variety of courses in the areas of comparative theology, theologies of religious diversity, Hindu-Christian dialogue, Buddhist-Christian dialogue, the theology of Paul Tillich, process theology, and most recently ecotheology. He is the author of The Immanent Divine: God, Creation, and the Human Predicament. An East-West Conversation (Fortress Press, 2006). He has recently completed his second book, Circling the Elephant: A Comparative Theology of Religious Diversity. (Fordham University Press, Spring 2020) which explores Christian approaches to religious diversity. Thatamanil routinely works to bring theology into public conversation by publishing blogs and Op-Eds in a variety of venues on topics such as ecotheology and American gun violence. He has published in The Los Angeles Times and The Washington Post and also publishes online at Counterpoint Blog (See https://www.counterpointknowledge.org/tag/john-thatamanil/) and the Australian Broadcast Company’s Religion and Ethics page.

If you are interested in taking part in this Vestry retreat please do let me or one of our Wadens know.

In Christ,

Ranjit

Memorials

Each Sunday we adorn the Altar with flowers, 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.

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.
Parish Financials

ST JAMES CHURCH
TREASURER’S REPORT
August 6, 2019

This report covers from January 1, 2019 to June 30, 2019.

Total Income:
Budgeted Amount: $132,750
Actual Amount: $139,557
Amount Actual is Over Budget: $6,807

The primary contributor to this is Plate and Special Offerings, which is $4,179 over the budgeted amount.

Total Expenses:
Budgeted Amount: $218,523
Actual Amount: $231,419
Amount Actual is Over Budget: $12,986

The primary contributor to this Plant Maintenance and Operations, which is $14,530 over the budgeted amount.

Net Ordinary Income:
Total Income: $139,557
Total Expenses: $231,419
Net Ordinary Income: -$91,862
Endowment Income Applied: $85,776
Net Income: -$6,086

Summary: As of June 30, 2019, we are $6,086 behind where we expected to be, based on our 2019 budget.

Investment Summary:
Balance 12/31/2018: $3,233,467
Balance 06/30/2019: $3,532,908
Total Value Change: $299,441
Withdrawal 5%: $85,776
Change Pre-Withdrawal: $385,217

Summary: Our pre-withdrawal investment value has increased by $385,217, about 11.9%, through June 30, 2019. After factoring in the 5% withdrawal, our investments are up $299,441, about 9.2% through June.

Respectfully submitted,
Gerald F. Miller, Treasurer
Postmaster: Time Sensitive Material, please deliver immediately.
CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED.

Parish Ministry Fair
Sunday, September 15