



ST. JAMES' JOURNAL

THE REV. DR. CATHY L. DEATS, RECTOR DECEMBER 2010 JANUARY 2011

From Our Rector

The Episcopal Handbook (*Morehouse Publishing, 2008*) is a compendium of articles, both serious and tongue-in-cheek. You can learn *Why you won't get sick sharing the communion cup*, *The Seven Funniest Bible Stories*, *How to Respond When Someone Sits in Your Pew*, or *How to Receive Communion*. One of my favorites is *How to Pass the Plate*, which says (among other things) "Do not attempt to make change from the plate if your offering is in cash." It goes on to explain that "the offering is a practice that goes back to Old Testament times, linking money and personal finance directly to one's identity as a child of God."

We are in the season of giving. In church life, the practical realities make October and November the time when you are asked not only to give of your time and talent, but to make a pledge – a promise – of money. The practical reality is that this is budget time, when finance committees and vestries throughout The Episcopal Church plan for the calendar year ahead. In American life, this is the season of Thanksgiving, a time to give thanks in prayer, in gatherings of family and friends, and in gifts – usually food – to people in need. The practical reality is that we are entering the winter season, when food pantries need to stock up to keep up with hungry families. And, in a season of inextricably linked cultural-religious customs and traditions, Christmas is a major season of giving. The practical reality is that however we have distorted the season and our motivations for giving, the gift we are to celebrate is the gift of Jesus Christ.

Paul had a lot to say about giving to those who follow Jesus Christ. In the First Letter to Timothy, he says of the followers of Jesus, "They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, *so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.*"

In other words, we should give not only to do good for others but also because it's necessary for our own spiritual well-being. It is part of the way we love God with all our heart, soul and mind. We should be generous because it is one of the things that make us, the givers, spiritually healthy.

Generosity is a spiritual discipline, which means it is a practice that helps us deepen our faith. We *need* to give. So yes, the church asks for your money. And it also asks you to pray, read the Bible, confess your sins, do good deeds and attend worship. All these things are good for our souls and help us go deeper into our faith.

How Much Money Should I Put Into the Offering Plate? is another article in The Episcopal Handbook. It talks about stewardship and pledging, and notes that "few people know (or care) how much money you put in...that is between God and ourselves." And it imparts to us some wisdom: "the main reason for giving to a church has less to do with paying bills and much more to do with cultivating generous hearts."

May our own giving bring us life that *really is* life.

Yours in Christ,



Warden's Words

Thanksgiving is now behind us and this year's holiday was a joyous time for our family. We were blessed with a full house as all three of our children were home for the weekend! In addition, my brother who lives out of state surprised us with a Thanksgiving appearance! It was truly a great weekend as we spent time with our extended family and friends, catching up and reminiscing about old times. I'm grateful for our time together and feel God has generously provided our family with many reasons to be thankful this holiday season.

Here at St. James', we are currently in the middle of the annual Stewardship season and this year the focus is on "time and talent". The leadership of the church is trying to get more people involved in the activities and/or committees which is important for several reasons. First, people take more of an "ownership" in any organization in which they are more actively involved. In addition, new people bring in fresh ideas, which is always welcome. Finally, getting new people involved allows those who've been doing it for a while to take a break, preventing them from burning out.

Everyone has a unique set of skills and experience and I'm confident that most (if not all!) can be put to good use at St. James'. The time commitment varies but many require only a few hours per month. If you have any questions about helping out in a specific area, please feel free to contact me. If I can't answer your questions, I'll get you in contact with the person who can!

Greg Malejko

Senior Warden

Notes from the Junior Warden

Soon we will celebrate Christmas and I hope that everyone will get exactly what they are hoping for. Over the last few years, this holiday has changed for me. Until I arrived at St. James', I was totally into the commercialization of Christmas, never giving a second thought to what was the reason for the season. Never once can I remember going to a midnight service or even to church on Christmas Day. Today, I look at things quite differently. I give thanks that I am a part of this wonderful family at St. James' and that I have learned to embrace the true meaning of Christmas.

My wish this Christmas is that each and every one of us finds the thing that we are passionate about, the thing that makes us happy, the ministry that God has made us for and that we are able to embrace as our gift to the world.

It is however the season of giving and I am sure you are thinking what can I give to St. James'? Our stewardship package is filled with the many ways that are available for you to give. Please take another look and let us know where you would like to serve. The list is not endless, but it does offer over 25 ways to get involved with our community.

On Sunday, the 19th, Greg and I will host coffee hour and all of us will prepare our Sanctuary for the birth of Jesus. Please join us in worship and in the greening of the church. It is always a special Sunday at St. James' and you will not want to miss it.

Backing up just a little, I want to thank the folks who helped read the names of our fallen soldiers on Veteran's Day. It is a very emotional day for me and I am thankful that so many of you are there to show your support for our soldiers. Please continue to remember them in your prayers, along with their loved ones. It is a difficult time of year if you have lost someone but it is also hard for these men and women serving overseas to be so far from their families.

Invite a friend to church!

Barbara

Vestry Hi-lites from the November Meeting

- Innisbrook Fundraiser netted \$292 and Roberta Brandt raised \$140 with her Longabarger sale.
- The Vestry voted to maintain St. James' pledge to the Diocese at the tithe, 10%.
- An email "newsletter" is being managed by Linda Ayres. It is a way to let those on our email list know of upcoming events.
- The Vestry received with gratitude a donation of a full-sized freezer for the kitchen from Martha Travostino.
- Maintenance Morning accomplished all its tasks, including ventilation for the basement and a shelter for the lawn equipment.

Seaman's Church Institute (SCI) Visit

Be sure to be with us on Sunday, December 12, when we will welcome Ms. Paige Sato, Program Director of "Christmas at Sea" and The Rev. Megan Sanders, Chaplain at Port Newark and Tri-State Church Coordinator, to bring the mission of Seaman's Church Institute (SCI) to life for us at St. James'. Paige and Megan will host a roundtable forum from 9 to 9:30 a.m. and another following the 10 a.m. service in the Great Hall where all the items will be on display for all to see.

The St. James' Yarn Twisters and residents of Heath Village and The House of The Good Shepherd have been very busy the last few months knitting and crocheting many caps, scarves, and vests to make sure that the mariners have something to keep them warm during the winter months as they are out at sea.

We are also still collecting the following items to include in the package. There is a box covered in red and white Christmas paper located in the Parish Hall for items:

- Unscented, Hypoallergenic Hand Lotion (2-4 oz. bottles)
- Sealed Packages of Holiday Sweets
- Books or Activities like Sudoku, word searches, or playing cards
- Facial Tissue
- Microwave Popcorn
- Chewing Gum
- Handmade Christmas Cards
- Gently used men's coats
- National Geographic magazines

All items must be in new and unused condition and in their original packaging. We cannot accept items that are used or unsealed.

Linda Miller

Sunday School News

Sunday School meets in the Parish Hall during the 10AM service every Sunday except for Family Sunday (the first Sunday of the month). All children from Pre-K (age 4) up to 5th grade are welcome to attend. Godly Play lessons are taught to the children, which include a story, craft, and a feast.

Pam Laura has been working with the children for several weeks to prepare a special song for the Christmas season. The children will be singing "Go Tell It on the Mountain" at the Story of the Nativity through the Arts Program on Sunday, December 5, at 5pm. The program is at the Port Morris United Methodist church in Port Morris. They will also be singing this same piece at St. James' 4:30pm Christmas Eve Service on Friday, December 24th.

Also, the Sunday School coordinators have created a Google group to help inform parents and anyone else who's interested about upcoming Sunday School events. You can join the group from the Google group website by searching for "St. James Sunday School". More information is posted on the Sunday School bulletin board in the Church hall.

We are always looking for more volunteers help teach and assist with the classes. If you are interested, please contact one of the coordinators.

Sunday School Schedule

- December 5th Family Sunday – Youth Group performs real story of Santa during service
- December 12th Advent Lesson
- December 19th Prepare Christmas baskets with food for needy families
- December 26th No Class

Alicia LaForge and Jenn Howlin

Sign seen in front of Grace Episcopal Church, Nutley: "TITHE IF YOU LOVE JESUS...ANYONE CAN HONK!"

Your stewardship materials include a great description of how to decide how much to give financially...check the information again, paying special attention to the "modern tithe" of 5%. If you have not already completed your pledge card, please take a moment to prayerfully consider your pledge to St. James' in 2011. Every pledge (regardless of size) is important – that is why it is so helpful to think of giving financially in proportion to our incomes. The Vestry has committed a tithe of our income to the Diocese as a faithful, as well as sacrificial, pledge. They are to be commended for making St. James' one of 44 churches in the Diocese who made their pledge on time (December 1). There are more than 100 churches in the Diocese. Please help them plan for next year by completing your pledge card this week. Extra packets can be found in the narthex.

Adult Choir News

Ah! Our first Anthem Choir member has arrived and we are so pleased! Look for this special person singing an anthem with us soon (we're keeping their identity a secret for now!). There is still plenty of time for some more of you special folks to join the Anthem Choir, too. We are working on Advent and Christmas music, looking towards Advent Lessons and Carols during the 10am service on the Sunday before Christmas and, of course, the culmination of our Advent season, Christmas Eve!

We sing at both the 7pm and 11pm Christmas Eve services and would love to have enough singers so some of you, at least, might not have to sing both services.

Please consider lending your voice during the upcoming Advent or Christmas season! Remember, the Anthem Choir wears no robes, sits in the pews until it is time to sing and then returns to the pews after, will always sing downstairs, does require attendance at Thursday evening rehearsals and pre-service rehearsal on Sunday mornings, helps us better worship God and enhance the overall worship experience for the rest of the congregation.

So, it is never too late to join! Try it! We think you'll like it! Thursday evenings at 7:30 in the church.

Upcoming Events to Remember:

Sunday, Dec. 12: Traditional Lessons and Carols at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Montclair. Time: 5pm. Light supper (free) provided afterwards. Our own Bell Choir will be participating.

Sunday, Jan. 9: Sussex County Oratorio Society's Holiday Concert "Buon Natale! Christmas Italian Style". Time: 3:30pm at the Presbyterian Church in Newton.

Help is needed at House of the Good Shepherd:

St James' provides an assistant to the Rev Jeannette Hile for her Sunday afternoon Chapel Morning Prayer Services. You do not have to be a Lay Eucharistic Minister to participate and you would do a service every 4th Sunday (when there are 4 people on the schedule). Services are at 2pm. If you would like to participate, please let Pam Laura know and she will get your name to Russ Worthington who coordinates this ministry for the Rev. Jeannette.

Youth Choir News

The Youth Choir has been hard at work on their piece for Port Morris and Christmas Eve. This year, they are singing "Go Tell It on the Mountain" and will be signing the song as well as singing it! They are so enthusiastic with the refrain of this song – just wait until you hear it!!

Youth Choir Important Dates to Remember:

Sunday, Dec. 5 AFTER the 10am service – Youth Choir has a quick rehearsal immediately after church.

Sunday, Dec. 5 at 4:15 – The Youth Choir arrives at Port Morris United Methodist Church for the annual Story of the Nativity Through the Arts Program. Families may leave after they have performed, if necessary, but they are singing late in the program. So, figure 6pm before you can leave. Our Youth Choir is always a hit at Port Morris so don't miss it this year!

Friday, Dec. 24 (Christmas Eve) 4:00 pm rehearsal, service at 4:30pm – Youth Choir sings "Go Tell It on the Mountain" during the offering collection.

Pam Laura
Director

A Reflection from Edwin Sumner

This is a reflection from Sunday, October 31, after reading Rod Perez-Vega's reflection "title" in November's Journal.

Ed was ordained to the priesthood November 2, 1957, at Trinity Cathedral in Trenton (Diocese of NJ) and has been a priest 53 years.

"My priesthood is dear to me, because it is God's sacred gift. I enjoy the privilege of the altar, and it is privilege! It never grows old. It is "ministerial priesthood," meaning that Christ, the Great High Priest in heaven, is the true celebrant of every Eucharist on earth and the earthly priest at the altar is his vehicle for sacramental ministry to his people. He ministers through us.

Rod had spoken of holy fear, a.k.a. AWE. The privilege of priesthood is truly AWESOME. Cathy was, as usual, gracious in her ministry to me yesterday, P.T.L.! (i.e., Praise the Lord!)"

Warm regards, Edwin+

Bell Choir "Notes"

The St. James' Multi-Generational Bell Choir is gearing up a busy Advent and Christmas season.

On Sunday, December 5, the Bell Choir will participate in the 10:00 service with a beautiful arrangement of *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*, arranged by Sandra Eithun. At 5:00 that same day, some members of the Bell Choir, along with the Youth Choir and the St. James' Players will participate in the 9th annual Christmas through the Arts program at Port Morris United Methodist Church. St. James' members are invited to attend the program which offers a quiet time to focus on the reason for the season.

On Sunday, December 12, at 5:00, the Bell Choir will participate in the Service of Lessons and Carols at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Montclair. Again everyone is invited to attend and reflect on the message of God's love for us. The service is followed by a delicious soup supper that you won't want to miss.

Christmas Eve will find a few ringers joining with the organ for an Introit on *Carol of the Bells* at all three services. The piece is arranged for organ by Lani Smith and I have adapted it for bells and organ. The Bell Choir will also participate in the 7:00 service ringing *On That Quiet Christmas Night*, based on the hymns Silent Night and Away in a Manger. This piece is arranged by Bill Ingram. I want to thank all the members of the Bell Choir – David Bernauer, Jim and Roberta Brandt, Meredith Firmin, Katie Lacouture, Pam Laura, Dawn Modugno, Brian Nolan, Chika Okoye, Sam Olshan and Helen Wise - for their dedicated service at this busy time. And, I hope that the music the choir provides enhances the worship experience, not only at St. James', but also at the other venues where the bells are ringing.

The Bell Choir will take a well-deserved rest at the beginning of January. Listen in church for an announcement when the choir will begin rehearsals.

Best wishes to all the members of St. James' for a peaceful Advent, a very Merry Christmas and a blessed, healthy and happy New Year.

Louise Olshan
Director

Goodbye to Linda Murray

It is with regret that we announce that Ms. Linda Murray resigned her position as Parish Administrator of St. James' on November 5. Linda served St. James' with dedication and distinction for the past ten years. We are sorry that there was no opportunity to bid farewell in a manner to honor her service to us. We pray God's blessings on Linda's journey, and on ours.

Our New Parish Administrator!

On November 30, our Rector Cathy sent out the email notice welcoming Ms. Frances Keefe to St. James' as Parish Administrator! The notice stated that "she comes to us with extensive experience as a church administrator for the Roman Catholic church. I know you will find her a very accomplished worker and a delight to work with. She loves to travel, especially to go whitewater rafting. In very short order, Frances will know the welcome that St. James' is known for." As Cathy asked, give her a warm hello when you are next in the office. Her hours are 9 am to noon, Monday to Friday.



Many thanks are due to those who kept the office operating during the transition: Linda Ayres, Dawn Modugno, and Barbara White. Others went beyond the call of their regular duties, especially Treasurer Penn Pixley, Bookkeeper Ellen Infante, and Counters Coordinator Janice Cipriani. Many others of you volunteered to help, and as we organize the office work, rest assured you may be called upon yet!

What in the World?

St. James' folks will remember the coffee hours we hosted at the shop, What in the World, a wonderful place to get gifts and benefit the world and the environment. While we are not having an event there this season, we want to remind you of Al and Vicki Kopacka's love for and commitment to St. James'. You are invited to their fair trade shop for a great choice of seasonal gifts: alpaca clothing, mittens, and scarves; Russian ornaments including "nesting dolls"; jewelry from India and Mexico; stained glass and much more. What in the World is located at 229 Main Street in Hackettstown, and Al and Vicki will be glad to greet friends from St. James'.

Fundraising

Don't forget to order your poinsettias, wreaths and pine roping for decorating this year! We have had a great year and a full report will be available in the annual report in January. Thank you for all you have given to the fundraising effort. We could not do it without you!

Merry Christmas

Barbara

THE GIVING TREE

Advent marks the season of anticipation and preparation. We begin a new church year and get ready to retell the story of the miracle of the birth of Jesus, of a poor family struggling to find a place to rest, of the wonderful gift given to us, and later, the gifts brought by the Magi to honor the baby Jesus. And so, we prepare to celebrate our greatest gift by sharing presents with our families.

At St. James', we have a tradition of preparation and giving. Our congregation portions out a bit of their time and treasure to share in giving to some who would find it difficult to provide gifts for their children at Christmas. For roughly the past fifteen years, we have sponsored children from two or three local families who are struggling due to economic circumstance by buying gifts suggested on the Giving Tree. Families are selected through the school nurses at local schools. The families' identities are anonymous and the nurses work with the parents to develop a wish list of toys and clothing, which we transform from wishes to gifts.

This year we will support seven children and place 63 candy canes on the Giving Tree. We hope you will visit the tree, located in the upper lobby of the Moore St. entrance, and take a tag to help a child. Complete directions are provided at the tree. The children of the Sunday School will replace each tag with an angel. Gifts are due at St. James' on the Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 19th.

Although we do not get to see the children's reaction as they open their presents, we do get feedback from the nurses who tell us how grateful the parents are and that we have made a difference for those families by helping them have a Christmas. One they didn't expect to have. Each year this ministry reminds us to give thanks for our many blessings, by giving a blessing to someone else.

Paul Bartkus, Coordinator



Message from our School Friends -

We have received a letter from Robin Gibbon, School Nurse at Willow Grove School in Hackettstown, thanking us for our participation in the Giving Tree. She says, "This year the family that you are sponsoring...never thought they would ever be in this position. When I informed the mom...that St. James' would sponsor her family for the holidays, she could not believe it and was overcome with such emotion. She said that now she could buy oil to heat their home for the winter! From the bottom of my heart...thank you!"

Caroling!

Old-fashioned Christmas caroling: Gather at the church at 3 PM on Saturday, December 18th. We will travel to the homes of St. James' parishioners who cannot get to church, then return to the Mitcham House for hot chocolate and cookies. Children especially welcome! We expect to be finished by approximately 5 PM. Please contact the church office to sign up so we can have transportation for all! stjames214@comcast.net 908.852.3968

Greening of the Church

The Altar Guild cordially invites all members of the congregation to the Greening of the Church on Sunday, December 19, 2010 after the Wardens' Coffee. Come for the eggnog and the holiday treats! Come for the fellowship and the schmoozing! Come and help make St James' Church ready to celebrate Our Savior's birth.

Christmas Worship Schedule:

Christmas Eve, Friday, December 24

- 4:30 PM The Holy Eucharist – especially for families with children
 7:00 PM The Holy Eucharist
 11:00 PM The Holy Eucharist – traditional Midnight Mass

All services are choral and each is enhanced by the musical talents of one or more of the following musical groups: St. James' Adult Choir, Children's Choir, and Multi-Generational Bell Choir

Christmas Day, Saturday, December 25

- The Feast of the Incarnation of our Lord
 10:00 AM The Holy Eucharist

Confirmation Class for 2011 is Forming

Confirmation will be May 7, 2011 at Trinity Cathedral in Newark. Classes will begin in February. If you are interested in being Confirmed or Received (especially adults not confirmed in The Episcopal Church), please speak with Cathy Deats or call the office.

Youth Group News

The Youth Group has been building fellowship and doing service all around us! They entertained the Sunday School children with a Hallowe'en party, helped package food for needy families for Thanksgiving, and on December 5 to celebrate the Feast of St. Nicholas, they will help us to know *Who is the Real Santa Claus?* Youth meet on the second and fourth Sundays at 10 AM in the Mitcham House with leaders Rod Perez-Vega and Lori Pursel. The season ahead holds a study and discussion of bullying, preparation for the 30 Hour Famine and Soup-er Bowl Sunday.

Come join us!

Rod, Lori, and the Gang

Fugitive Safe Surrender

Fugitive Safe Surrender is a program designed to help people who have outstanding warrants for arrest to come forward and clear their status. On November 4, Rector Cathy Deats joined other Salvation Army volunteers and served coffee, snacks and lunch to the more than 800 people who presented themselves on that day. One person was overheard to say, "I feel so much relief, like a burden has been lifted!" The people who came forward were offered various resolutions to their problem: reduced fines, payment plans and restitution. It was cold and rainy, but warmth was found in the tent where coffee was served that day.



Successful year for Backpack Program in Hackettstown

By Jocelynn Thomas

Warren Reporter – Published: Monday, November 01, 2010, 9:36 AM – Updated: Monday, November 01, 2010, 9:37 AM

HACKETTSTOWN — The end of the school year can mean many things to a child; excitement for summertime, swimming, play and vacation. But to many families in the community, the last ring of the school bell symbolizes an added financial burden of providing food for hungry mouths.

Considering the success of the school year Backpack Program, which provided meals to 52 children this past year, the partnership between The Warren County United Way and St. James' Episcopal Church continued its momentum throughout the summer months.

Says Rev. Cathy Deats of St. James, "There was no good reason that the students we had helped to feed during the school year should be hungry simply because school was out." So she and church members approached Sarah Brelvi of The United Way to come up with a solution, which ended up driving 100 percent fundraising in support of this mission. While Rev. Deats was away on sabbatical, The United Way of Warren County along with the congregation and other community volunteers were busy organizing, fundraising, purchasing and packing healthy food and snacks, which provided 230 individual meals to grateful recipients.

Brelvi noted, "As this was the church body's sabbatical mission project, it was also one of the first times that United Way was able to build upon an existing program that is a standalone campaign program in the areas of self-education, health and sufficiency."

The program continues to branch, expand and by making new connections, strengthen community support and touch individual lives on a daily basis.

Rev. Deats finds the work of feeding children very rewarding, and she and the volunteers "get a special connection when they help people in their community."

Programs such as this provide perspective and awareness of the reality that hunger and poverty could be living next door. Says Deats: "This is a clear demonstration that while a clergy leader may hold a vision of mission, the work of feeding people in many ways is the work of everyone in the community."

Now that school is back in session, fall enrollment is currently underway at Hatchery Hill and Willow Grove Elementary Schools. Anyone who believes they may qualify for this program is encouraged to reach out to school administration for information regarding application. All correspondence is kept strictly confidential. For the fall Backpack Program, United Way continues to be among the funders for NORWESCAP, which provides and delivers food to St. James' Episcopal Church for volunteers

to pack and drop off at the schools for the children to take home, utilize and return for refills the following week. The goal is to provide nutritious food for children to consume on the weekends, when school meals are unavailable.

The generous contributions of numerous individuals and businesses, both time and financial, enabled the successful launch of this undertaking. One such force was Paul Bartkus, a member of St. James' who is heavily involved in community outreach and a devoted organizer of the Backpack Program. Bartkus oversaw the program's accountability with detailed record keeping, meal planning, and overall enthusiastic support and volunteerism.

There is another account of a massage therapist at the local Farmer's Market who donated all her tips to the summer feeding program. Countless other individuals demonstrate how indeed "many hands make light work."

Organizers give thanks to Skylands Community Bank, Warren County Library, Jack's Scissor Wiz, Mama's & Café Baci, Hackettstown Farmers' Market and Walgreens for their ongoing support and cooperation in facilitating this mission.

There are many ways individuals can help. Volunteers are always welcome to package the bags at St. James' following church service on Sundays. Additional help is needed to pick up and deliver the food, or if you cannot donate time, a financial contribution is certainly appreciated and put to good use. Backpack Program food items in need include grape jelly, peanut butter, macaroni & cheese (microwave containers), 100% fruit juice boxes, variety pack cereal (individual serving boxes), cereal bars, instant breakfast drink mix, tuna fish (packed in water), mayonnaise, bread, pudding cups, fruit cups, soup (microwave containers or can), applesauce cups, fruit snacks and fresh fruit. To join the volunteers who deliver on Wednesdays, contact St. James' at 908.852.3968 or stjames214@comcast.net. For more information, call Sarah Brelvi at 908-835-3550 or email sbrelvi@unitedwayofwc.org.

Father Sickles' Anniversary

On the Feast of St. Andrew, November 30th, The Rev Clarence Sickles celebrated the 62nd anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

Fr. Sickles, Rector Emeritus of St. James', was Rector from 1953 to 1965 and was instrumental in the creation of Heath Village in 1966, where he now makes his home with his wife, Jean. Jean spent her career serving the elderly as well as serving as partner in ministry with Clarence.

PICTURE PAGE

HOME FOR THANKSGIVING



The Okoyes home from college.

FEEDING THE 800



Barbara White and Layne Manginelli take a break from feeding 800 at The Salvation Army on Thanksgiving.

ON HIS WAY - DEPLOYMENT TIME

