



# ST. JAMES' JOURNAL

NOVEMBER 2015

REV. ARTHUR "GUY" FOUTS, PRIEST-IN-CHARGE

## St. James' Episcopal Church Diocese of Newark Hackettstown, New Jersey Stewardship Sunday Sermon October 11, 2015

Good Morning! It's a pleasure to be in front of you again to talk about Stewardship, a pleasure I last had 12 years ago. Before that last sermon on Stewardship, I was lucky to have Father Wayne Riley ask me to preach four times here. In one of those sermons I addressed the architectural style of St. James just before the Vestry chose to restore it to its Victorian Gothic Revival traditions. I still see and enjoy those changes today which include the wooden beams above us, now painted brown to emphasize the soaring nature of what was designed to be a little cathedral in wood. With the hope that this sermon will give a new color to Stewardship, I'd like to turn again to the history St. James' parish and its traditions this morning.



If there's one way to describe this parish and its history, I think it's a quote from Benjamin Disraeli: "The secret to success is constancy of purpose." Constancy is defined as "the quality of being unchanging or unwavering, as in purpose, love, or loyalty; firmness of mind; faithfulness." This parish and its little church has been unwavering in its effort to bring God's word to Hackettstown and the surrounding communities using the Episcopal Church's reliance on scripture, tradition and reason.

St. James' history for most of its first hundred years is detailed in a wonderful book, long out of print but is

available for reading at the Historical Society. *The Story of Hackettstown New Jersey, 1754-1955* by J. Harold Nunn tells us that our parish was organized on December 19, 1858. "The prospects were very encouraging and warranted the organization. A very eligible plot of ground, on Washington Street at the corner of Moore street, had already been secured, and a subscription begun for funds to erect a building."

Let's face it, there's no greater bet on the future, no greater act of stewardship and no better demonstration of constancy of purpose than to build a church and parish from scratch. Nothing makes this clearer than the fact that the United States was just coming out of a major economic recession in December of 1858. But in less than four months, the cornerstone out front was laid and the church building commenced. It was not without setbacks. That summer, a tornado struck town and destroyed the framing and the tower. It was all rebuilt and the church was dedicated that year.

Thereafter, despite the Civil War, several recessions, the Panic of 1873 and what's known as the Long Depression, the church continued. Through a constancy of purpose, the members of this church maintained building and parish without knowing what the future would bring. They prayed for God's grace with these words from the last Standard Edition of the 1789 Book of Common Prayer:

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift; Send down upon our Bishops, and other Clergy, and upon the Congregations committed to their charge, the healthful Spirit of thy grace; and, that they may truly please thee, pour upon them the continual dew of thy blessing.

Yet it was never easy. The church's second vicar quit because he wasn't being paid. The third vicar couldn't live on what he was paid so he erected a Parish Hall and started a private elementary school to supplement his pay. Yet the church held on until it was down to 12 communicants. Imagine the sadness and pain when in 1887 the parish was unable to meet the financial burden of maintaining this church. Nunn implies this was

attributable to the decline of Schooley's Mountain as a summer resort. Perhaps the wealthy Episcopalians who summered at the hotels and spas up Mountain Avenue and who attended Episcopal summer services at St. James or in the hotels themselves stopped giving generous gifts of the type given by wealthy hotel guests to Bethesda Episcopal Church in Saratoga Springs, New York. More likely it was caused by the "dwindling congregation." Whatever the cause, the church was sold, probably after a service of deconsecration and secularization. If that service was similar to the service used today, it acknowledged that, for many years, the building had been "hallowed by cherished memories" and prayers were offered that those who suffered a sense of loss would be comforted through the knowledge that God's presence was not tied to any place or building.

Even with such a service, think of the embarrassment, the loss and the desperation experienced by parishioners when what had been their church became a theater and music hall. Yet they persevered and through constancy of purpose, St. James' parish church services resumed in 1895. They were held behind the theater in what had been the Parish Hall. In 1896, Father William Mitcham became the full-time Vicar. Within three years, on the 40th anniversary of St. James Church - again showing a constancy of purpose - the parish raised the money necessary to buy back its church and parish hall. Nunn says "On Sunday, November 18, 1896, for the first time in 12 years, the bell in St. James' church tolled out the invitation to divine service." I like that phrase, "divine service." It has so many meanings, one of which is stewardship.

On April 30, 1900, St. James' church was "restored and purified." A newspaper account reported on that day. "With the sincere good wishes and hearty congratulations of a score of visiting priests and a large congregation, St. James' Episcopal Church was restored to its place among the churches of the diocese. The day and season were all that could be desired [when the bishop] stepped out ... to welcome the procession of ministers [and] looked down into as many happy faces as perhaps were ever gathered in the little church." As an aside, the text that morning was from Luke: "And he went into the temple and began to cast out them that sold therein and those that bought, saying unto them: 'It is written, my house is the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.'" So much for the reputation of theater managers. In any event, there aren't many changes left from the theater days, except the addition of the balcony.

Father Mitcham was here until 1927. In those years,

he was instrumental in the construction of Lady Chapel and what we call today the Mitcham House, the installation of chimes in the belfry, and the rebuilding and enlargement of the Parish hall. All those were financed by the church, another proof of St. James' constancy of purpose. Yet it was not all happiness and light. Witness this window to your left that memorializes the Mitcham's loss of a child.

We are the spiritual heirs to the founders of St. James. We are the spiritual heirs to the congregants who had their church sold. We are the spiritual heirs of Father William Mitcham and those priests and congregants who followed. And being their heirs, we have a responsibility to both them and those who follow us. We must be constant of purpose and that purpose must include the preservation and improvement of what we have, so that it can be passed on to future generations of congregants. Note I said improvement. A church and its congregation are not meant to be put in a metaphorical jar and pickled. That's not preservation. That's not stewardship. That's to be placed on a shelf and forgotten.

What is stewardship? It comes from the Greek word *oikonomos* [oy-kon-om'-os] that means not the owner of the house but the person to whom the owner delegates the responsibility to manage it and its expenses. Stewardship is not just giving money to a church, for that turns the concept upside down. It's God who gives us our time, talent and treasure and, as stewards, we manage it and use it in ways that we know, through God's grace, will please God. In this way, we give our time, talent and treasure back to God so that our work with God's gifts will endure and prosper beyond our lifetimes. As the Psalm read today says:

So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom ...  
Show your servants your works and your splendor to their children.  
May the graciousness of the LORD our God be upon us;  
prosper the work of our hands; prosper our handiwork.

Stewardship is the physical proof of constancy of purpose. Look at us. We've survived the worst recession since the 1930's. We've dealt with a lot of difficult issues and yet here we are. We're not broke. In fact, I'm told we're sustaining ourselves. We have a terrific interim priest who will leave us in a position to grow and prosper. I know I feel a new enthusiasm in us. From 1857 to today, we've dealt with challenges and

come back stronger. Our constancy of purpose has been, with God’s help, the key to our survival and success. And we’re not done yet - as faithful stewards, we can expect today and in the future an abundant and full life in St. James’ Parish.

So, prayerfully and carefully consider the blessings of time, talent and treasure God has given you. Then freely return a portion of them to St. James as God leads you.

**John A. McKinney, Jr.**

Editors note: This sermon was delivered by long-time St. James’ member John A. McKinney, Jr. at both the 8 AM and 10 AM services on October 11, 2015. We thank him for his work and presentation on Stewardship.

**VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS**

- † Bob DeSilva from Fulton Financial attended to give an accounting of our funds.
- † Nominating Committee formed.
- † Our new organist, Dmitry Nikolaev starts November 1st.

**NEW PRESIDING BISHOP**

Sunday, November 1

Installation of the Rt. Rev. Michael Bruce Curry as Presiding Bishop

The Holy Eucharist with the Installation of the 27th Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church, Bishop Michael Bruce Curry, will occur on Sunday, November 1 at 12 noon Eastern at Washington National Cathedral. He replaces the Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, 26th Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church.

Please keep them in your prayers as they both enter new stages of their ministry!

**FUNDRAISING REPORT**

The St. James’ FRC meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month. Our next meeting is November 11th at 6:00 PM in the Mitcham House.

Our Scrip Pro Gift Card Program continues throughout the year with orders being due the 2nd Sunday of each month. The next order date is November 8th. We are able to raise several hundred dollars a year with this program. The Holidays are fast approaching and you may want to get a start on your Holiday shopping.

We have a contact who sells items for St. James’ on eBay! Please contact Barbara Olesen at [olesen@comcast.net](mailto:olesen@comcast.net) or (908)797-0515 if you have something to donate that you feel is sellable online.

We will again sell See’s Candies this year for Christmas. These are fine chocolates and come in a variety of options. Orders will be taken beginning November 1<sup>st</sup>. Last orders will be due on Sunday November 22<sup>nd</sup> so that we have time to order and receive these freshly made chocolates by the middle of December.

The Fundraising Committee will now be overseeing the “Ink Recycling” Program which Linda Miller has managed for almost 10 years. If there is anyone who is interested in handling this for us (maybe a youth member of the congregation), please let Barbara Olesen know.

Thanks for your support in our fundraising efforts!  
St. James’ Fundraising Committee

**INK CARTRIDGE RECYCLING/  
FUNDRAISING PROGRAM**

We are looking for a volunteer to handle the Ink Cartridge Recycling Program. This would be an excellent idea for a youth in our Parish or someone who is retired. Please see Barbara Olesen if you are interested in taking on this fundraising ministry!

## November Fellowship Dinner

Mark your calendars: November 21 from 6:00 to 8:00.

We will hold our Stewardship -Thank You- Fellowship Dinner in the Parish Hall to celebrate being part of our St. James' family. Part of stewardship is caring for each other and sharing our association with St. James' and this evening will provide such an opportunity.

Look for announcements about sign-up sheets (salads, sides and entrees) for our Pot-Luck meal. Drinks (Soda, water, wine, coffee and tea) will be provided.

This is a family-friendly event and children are invited! Activities for kids will be available. Our entertainment will feature a spirited take-off combining the *Match Game* and *Family Feud*. This is intended to be a low-keyed and fun event. No one will be pressured to make any commitment of time, talent or treasure. Just come and enjoy one another's company. It is an opportunity to get together before the holidays to celebrate each other. The more the merrier. AND: There will be prizes!!

Transportation can be arranged for those who wish it.

This will also be the time to bring your pledge card and place in the basket provided. The basket and pledge envelopes will be presented at the altar the next morning.

We are planning this to be our last stewardship event in preparation for next year, so come and have fun!



## Thank You, LORD!

**For Weekly Announcements and what's happening at St. James' visit our webpage:**  
**[stjameshackettstown.org](http://stjameshackettstown.org)**  
**Check out the new calendar!**  
**Sign up for email news!**

## Christophany

My name is Emilia Quelly. I am in 7th grade and go to school at Warren Hills Middle School. Last weekend I went to a "retreat" called Christophany. I had such a good time and when we got our treat bags I saw that I got notes from all of you. It warmed my heart to see that all of you love and care about me. The messages that I saw were so sweet and when I first saw them they made me cry happy tears. I am so glad to be a part of this church family. I have been in this church since I was about 5 months old. Our church has been through a lot and I feel safe and comfortable with everyone at our church. Some churches are not very close but I am glad ours is.

At Christophany we did a lot including playing games, singing, and doing talks. A part that sort of annoyed me was that we were not allowed to know what time it was. Whenever we asked what time it was the answer would either be "God's Time" or "Half Past Jesus and a Quarter to Christ". That made me so irritated. We also had serious time where we walked a labyrinth. We also wrote down what we didn't like about ourselves and burned them. After that we had a healing service and a party to lighten the mood.

Thank you again for your support and love. I love all of you and God Bless All Of You!!!!

### Journal Deadline

December/January EDITION:

November 28th

## Meet Our New Organist

Please say “hello” to Dmitry Nikolaev as he begins Sunday, November 1st as our new organist! Welcome to St. James, Dmitry!



## St. Fiacre’s Maintenance Morning

On Saturday, October 17, volunteers met to clean up the gardens on the St. James’ property. The day was sunny and crisp, which facilitated our work. Perennial plants were cut back, wilted blooms were dead-headed and much-needed weeding was done. We also pruned several shrubs before our morning ended.

Many thanks to the St. James’ gardeners who help to keep our property looking so lovely. Your participation once again gave credence to our slogan that “many hands make light work.” The work of your many hands was much appreciated.



FYI: St. Fiacre, the patron of our garden group, was a 7th century Irish monk who was a renowned herbalist and gardener of medicinal plants.

Phyllis Bartkus

## BUNCO NIGHT – NOVEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup>

Please join us on Saturday, November 7th at 5:30 for BUNCO night. **BYOP!** Bring your own *pizza!* Salad and soft drinks provided.

Hope to see you there!

Kathy Lacouture



## October Maintenance Morning

Saturday morning, October 17th was a brisk and sunny. Our intrepid crew of 9 met in the Parish Hall, had some coffee and goodies and reviewed the list of jobs. By noon all were accomplished and the crew was disbanded until when needed next time.

Our jobs were divided among inside and outside tasks. The St. Fiacre’s group tended the gardens and prepped them for winter (read more about this from Phyllis). Up on the roof of the Parish Hall, an accumulation of leaves were blown off the roof and out of the gutters, the drains were cleared and the air handler filters were changed. Work was begun on fixing the sanctuary door hook. Inside, ceiling tiles were replaced in the Mitcham kitchen and an access hole needed by our plumber was closed up with sheet rock. The window air conditioning units were removed and stored until next year. The thermostats were reprogrammed for building usage during the winter. Pews in the sanctuary were examined and where needed nails were reset. Finally, some painting materials were organized in the basement.

We assessed the need for future building repairs. The halls and doors of the Parish Hall and parts of Mitcham are in need of a coat of paint. Bids from professionals are needed to accomplish some repairs involving exterior painting at levels that are not safe for our crew, and trimming upper tree branches along our back fence. We will also need some advice to help reduce condensation from the A/C ducts which stains the ceiling tiles in the hallway of the Parish Hall.

Thank you all for helping keep our corner of Hackettstown up to snuff.

Paul Bartkus

## Garrison Keillor on Episcopalians ...

### An essay:

We make fun of Episcopalians for their blandness, their excessive calm, their fear of giving offense, their lack of speed and also for their secret fondness for macaroni and cheese. But nobody sings like them.

If you were to ask an audience in Des Moines, a relatively Episcopalianless place, to sing along on the chorus of "Michael Row the Boat Ashore," they will look daggers at you as if you had asked them to strip to their underwear. But if you do this among Episcopalians, they'd smile and row that boat ashore and up on the beach! ...And down the road!

Many Episcopalians are bred from childhood to sing in four-part harmony, a talent that comes from sitting on the lap of someone singing alto or tenor or bass and hearing the harmonic intervals by putting your little head against that person's rib cage. It's natural for Episcopalians to sing in harmony. We are too modest to be soloists, too worldly to sing in unison.

When you're singing in the key of C and you slide into the A7th and D7th chords, all two hundred of you, it's an emotionally fulfilling moment. By our joining in harmony, we somehow promise that we will not forsake each other.

I do believe this, people: Episcopalians, who love to sing in four-part harmony are the sort of people you could call up when you're in deep distress. If you are dying, they will comfort you. If you are lonely, they'll talk to you. And if you are hungry, they'll give you tuna salad!

**Episcopalians** believe in prayer, but would practically die if asked to pray out loud.

**Episcopalians** like to sing, except when confronted with a new hymn or a hymn with more than four stanzas.

**Episcopalians** believe their Rectors will visit them in the hospital, even if they don't notify them that they are there.

**Episcopalians** usually follow the official liturgy and will feel it is their way of suffering for their sins.

**Episcopalians** believe in miracles and even expect miracles, especially during their stewardship visitation programs or when passing the plate.

**Episcopalians** feel that applauding for their children's choirs will not make the kids too proud and conceited.

**Episcopalians** think that the Bible forbids them from crossing the aisle while passing the peace.

**Episcopalians** drink coffee as if it were the Third Sacrament.

**Episcopalians** feel guilty for not staying to clean up after their own wedding reception in the Fellowship Hall.

**Episcopalians** are willing to pay up to one dollar for a meal at church.

**Episcopalians** still serve Jell-O in the proper liturgical color of the season and Episcopalians believe that it is OK to poke fun at themselves and never take themselves too seriously.

And finally, you know you are a Episcopalian when:  
-It's 100 degrees, with 90% humidity, and you still have coffee after the service.

-You hear something really funny during the sermon and smile as loudly as you can.

-Donuts are a line item in the church budget, just like coffee.

- When you watch a Star Wars movie and they say, "May the Force be with you," and you respond, "and also with you."

- And lastly, it takes ten minutes to say good-bye . . . .

(NOTE: Garrison Keillor attends St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church in St. Paul, Minnesota)

Editors note: Thanks to Pat Hawkins who submitted this to the St. James' Journal!

*"We, the vestry of St. James' Episcopal Church, Hackettstown, recognizing our role as good stewards, affirm our commitment to its mission and ministry by making a pledge of our time, talent, and treasure for the year 2016."*

# BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

## SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2015



### **BREAKFAST CLEANUP HELPERS NEEDED!**

Looking for volunteers to help with Family Breakfast Cleanup after Coffee Hour on the first Sunday of each month – no experience needed! See Peter Quelly at Family Breakfast if you are able to help.

### **SHOP-RITE & WEIS GIFT CARDS**

Order forms for gift cards will be distributed the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month. The order forms must be returned by the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month and the gift cards will be distributed after the 8:00 AM and 10:00 AM services on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month. See Paul Bartkus if you have any questions.

# ST. JAMES' JOURNAL

NOVEMBER 2015

## St. James' Staff & Vestry

Priest in Charge	Rev. Arthur "Guy" Fouts
Rector Emeritus:	The Rev. Clarence Sickles
Parish Administrator:	Julie Mills
Organist	Dmitry Nikolaev
Sexton:	Pauline Volkert

### Vestry

Senior Warden:	David Lacouture
Junior Warden:	Barbara Olesen

Paul Bartkus	Peter Quelly	Bill Critchley
Nancy Miller	Chris Krauss	Claudia Scala
	Chika Okoye	Janice Cipriani

Vestry Clerk:	Claudia Scala
Treasurer:	Janice Cipriani
Bookkeeper:	Claudia Scala

### Barbara Olesen, Editor

All Journal submissions  
should be sent to:

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