



ST. JAMES' JOURNAL

DECEMBER 2015/JANUARY 2016

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

Dear Friends,

In 2006 a question was asked in South Carolina by some thoughtful clergy. I can do no better than to relay to you their question and answer.

"The Christmas story is a story of love,
hope, redemption and relationship.

So, what happened? How did it turn into
stuff, stress and debt?

*Somehow, we've traded the best story in
the world for the story of what's on sale.*

Enter Advent Conspiracy!

Worship Fully

It starts with Jesus. It ends with Jesus. This is the holistic approach God had in mind for Christmas. It's a season where we are called to put down our burdens and lift a song up to our God. It's a season where love wins, peace reigns, and a king is celebrated with each breath. It's the party of the year. Entering the story of Advent means entering this season with an overwhelming passion to worship Jesus to the fullest.

Spend Less

Spending less isn't a call to stop giving gifts; it's a call to stop spending money on gifts we won't remember in less than a year. America spends around \$600 billion during the Christmas season, and much of that is joyless and goes right onto a credit card. By spending wisely on gifts we free ourselves from the anxiety associated with debt so we can take in the season with a full heart.

Give More

The most powerful, memorable gift you can give to someone else is yourself. And nobody modeled this more than Jesus. So what does this look like for you? Tickets to a ball game or the theater? A movie night? The main point is simple: When it comes to spending time with those you love, it's all about quality, not quantity.

Love All

It all boils down to love. Love from a savior. Love to a neighbor in need. By spending just a little less on gifts we free up our resources to love as Jesus loves by giving to those who really need help. It's not that there's something wrong with the shopping mall—it's that the better story is about loving all."

May you be blessed as I was and am in reading and attempting to live into these thoughts. Our giving tree is a wonderful tradition!

Peace,

Guy+



The Tree of Giving

Advent begins the new year of our church calendar and 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 more than twenty years we have sponsored children from two or three local families who are struggling due to economic circumstance by buying gifts suggested on the Tree of Giving.

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 the children of three families and place candy canes with their gift suggestions on the Tree of Giving. 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 20th.

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 that 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

Can You Spot the Difference?

The Tree of Giving



The Sunday School children added beautiful hand-made angels to the Tree of Giving!

We Welcome the Newly Baptized!



*Emily Elizabeth
Soszynski*

Proud Parents are
Elizabeth and Vito
Soszynski



Christmas Day Morning Prayer

We will have a Morning Prayer service at 10 AM on Christmas Day. Please join us for this service if you can. It is a short service that gives us all an opportunity to offer our praise and thanks for the birth of Jesus. It starts the day off on a note of faith – the perfect way to counter all the commercialism that the season can bring! We'll gather in the Sanctuary, offer prayers for our families, our parish, and for the world around us. We'll pass the peace and blessings and then go off to celebrate the day with loved ones.

We look forward to seeing you on Christmas Day!

Youth Choir to Sing on Christmas Eve

Our Youth Choir will again sing (and sign!) this year at the 4:30 Christmas Eve service. They are bringing back one of their favorites "Go Tell It on the Mountain". They have been rehearsing during Sunday school and are doing really well! We will coordinate with the pageant in terms of final rehearsal close to Christmas Eve.

Greening of the Church-Wardens' Coffee Hour

The Altar Guild of St James' invites the congregation to join in the annual Greening of the Church on Sunday December 20th. Activity to begin at about 10:30 AM after the 9:00 AM service and Warden's coffee hour. No prior experience in decorating necessary. This is a great way to prepare our worship space and our hearts for Our Lord's coming. Depending on how many parishioners join in, work should be finished by 11:30AM.

Christmas Food Bag In-Gathering

Be on the look-out for food bags in the back of the church. These are for our Christmas in-gathering.. Please purchase some of the items on the attached list, place the food in the bag, and return to church before or by Sunday December 20. This is when the Sunday School will assemble them for distribution. This is a busy Sunday at church so getting the food in earlier is much appreciated.

Thanks for participating and helping!

Paul Bartkus

Vestry Highlights

- † Nominating Committee working on Vestry and Convention slate for annual meeting.
- † Budget is on track for completion in December.
- † Repairs on elevator and roof have been completed.
- † Sunday School working on Christmas Pageant.
- † Solutions to snow removal were discussed.
- † Bunco Game Night was a success.



Fundraising Report

The St. James' FRC meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month. Our next meeting is December 16th 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 December 13. This will be the last order before Christmas. Please consider doing your Holiday gift shopping by giving and using gift cards. **QUICK CHEK AND SPEEDWAY GAS ARE NOW AVAILABLE!**

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

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!

Have a joyous Christmas!

St. James' Fundraising Committee

Thanksgiving Sunday School Food Bag In-Gathering

The Sunday School, with your help, packed 21 Thanksgiving food bags for families in need. Each bag contained an assortment of vegetables, breakfast cereal, canned tuna and chicken, pasta fixings, snacks, juices and deserts. Of course, peanut butter and jelly were included. Sturdy re-usable shopping bags were provided by Mission Strategy (thanks to those who participate in buying gift cards) and they were packed to the tippy-top by the kids. Special thanks to Miss Alicia, Miss Jennifer, Miss Jeanette and Miss Emilia, who supervised food placement and packing. Each bag also contained a \$25 "Turkey Card" with the cutest turkey Thanksgiving cards made by the kids. (The tradition of Turkey Cards began when we razed the old parish hall and did not have a freezer to store frozen turkeys). This year saw a spontaneous reintroduction of frozen turkeys, as two arrived as a bonus for two families to celebrate a Thanksgiving meal

Thank you all!

Paul Bartkus, Mission Strategy

SHOP-RITE & WEIS GIFT CARDS

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



Stewardship Fellowship Dinner

On November 21st St. James' held its first Fellowship-Stewardship-In-Gathering Dinner. The evening featured a delicious food buffet, assembled from home-cooked pot-luck contributions of entrees, sides and dessert. (As Rachael Ray says, "Yummo.") After dinner we began a friendly competition with a Pete Huryk production of The Family Feud Match Game. One team emerged victorious and was awarded St. James' Flashlight Key Chains. Then the center-piece (with the theme of Thanks) from each table was given to one team member through a drawing. The much anticipated drawing for the car, albeit a mini-subcompact-Lilliputian model, was won by Cynthia Nolan. Wonder: is she getting better gas mileage than Father Guy?

A basket was available at the door for people to hand-in their pledges, which were then presented at our church's altar the next day.

Children in attendance enjoyed craft activities and got a balloon of their color choice (and a replacement for those that got away and found their way to the ceiling).

It was a fun evening with great food, fellowship and good-natured fun. Thank you to all who participated by planning the event (Kathy, Claudia, Gerri, Pete, and Paul), preparing the food, creating the great game (Pete, et. al.) and by attending. And a special thank you to Pauline who cares for our space and chased those errant balloons! In a season of thanks, we celebrate and give thanks for one another.

Phyllis Bartkus

Journal Deadline

February EDITION:

January 31st



Mark Your Calendar

Boar's Head—Epiphany Dinner

Our annual dinner will be held on January 9th,

Watch for more details in the days ahead!

**For Weekly Announcements and
what's happening at St. James' visit
our webpage:**

**stjameshackettstown.org
Check out the new calendar!
Sign up for email news!**



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!



Malawi Project

Save your empty prescription bottles for
Malawi

During the month of December

Molly Szpakowski is a resident of Hackettstown and a sophomore at Morris Catholic High School and she is collecting empty prescription bottles to send to the country of Malawi, which is one of the poorest nations on earth. While we in the USA throw away perfectly good prescription containers, medical pharmacies and hospitals in Malawi have nothing but torn pieces of paper for wrapping medicine. Please remember that these containers will help families, not only keep their medicine clean, but more importantly out of the reach of small children. Please remove all labels and personal identification, and place in the large box in the Great Hall. There is a flyer on the front of the box, so you will see it. Linda Miller will be picking up the bottles and delivering to Molly. If you have any questions, please contact Molly (contact information on the enclosed bulletin flyer) or Linda Miller at 908-684-3566. **This project will only run until the end of December 2015.** Thank you.



Yarn Twisters

Smiles will abound when the seafarers open their Ditty bags at Christmas and find beautiful knitted or crocheted caps, scarves, and neck warmers that the Elves at St. James have once again completed. Thanks to Louise Olshan, Phyllis Bartkus, and Pat Taylor (a.k.a. "Yarn Twisters") for their hard work throughout the year and to the person(s) who donated toiletry items. I am very appreciative of your continued support in this important ministry. Also thanks to Jerry Sheard for delivering our knitted and crocheted items to the Seamen's Church Institute at Port Newark during the month of December.

Yarn can be found in the bins located in the closet in the Great Hall and patterns can be downloaded from the SCI website at: www.seamenschurch.org/christmas-at-sea if you need any information, please get in touch with me at frlbailey1@comcast.net or call me at 908-684-3566. I would love to see some new people onboard in the Yarn Twisters, it is so important to continue this group, so please contact me if you would like to join the Yarn Twisters. Winter is the perfect time to snuggle up and knit or crochet an item for next year's shipment!

SCI is no longer accepting coats, so if you have coats to donate, please ask in the office as to where you can donate them.

I would like to wish everyone a very happy Holiday Season.

Thank you,
Linda Miller



Episcopalians, evangelism and Presiding Bishop Michael Curry

Posted by Mark Beckwith on November 5, 2015



[The Most Rev. Michael Curry preaching at his Installation service in Washington National Cathedral. CYNTHIA BLACK PHOTO](#)

It was an imagined Jeopardy question, posed by the Most Rev. Michael Curry in his remarkable sermon on Sunday, when he was installed as the 27th Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church. “Name two words that begin with E that are never used at the same time.”. Answer: Evangelism and Episcopalians.

I remember another sermon by another bishop colleague who said that for Episcopalians evangelism tends to involve bringing a small aquarium filled with water down to the beach and waiting for the fish to jump in. A passive enterprise in this bishop’s example, or an absent one, in Presiding Bishop Curry’s.

Presiding Bishop Curry went on to outline a way of evangelism that is congruent with our rich Anglican tradition, and that is also aligned with the Gospel: “A way of evangelism that is as much about listening and learning from the story of who God is in another person’s life as it is about sharing our own story... A way of evangelism that is really about helping others find their way to a relationship with God *without trying to control the outcome.*” (Italics mine.) “A way of evangelism that is authentic to us.”

For nearly four hundred years, evangelism in the Western Church has carried the spoken or unspoken inference that Christians are bringing God to places and people where God is not present. We have tried to control the outcome. Presiding Bishop Curry’s evangelism is one that honors our heritage, and at the same time respects the dignity, giftedness and blessing of every human being. His evangelism seeks to lift up the presence of God in the exchange between the one who witnesses and the one who receives the witness – so that both are transformed.

We have work to do, he said repeatedly. Indeed. I am drawn to Presiding Bishop Curry’s vision of evangelism. As I am drawn to his joy and passion – and eloquence. And I have been drawn more deeply into the genius of the Episcopal Church, having spent a weekend in worship – on Saturday at the “vigil” service at the DC Armory hosted by the Union of Black Episcopalians (and which prominently featured many from the Diocese of Newark, including preacher Sandye Wilson, Rector of St. Andrew’s and Holy Communion in South Orange); and the All Saints Day celebration in the National Cathedral, which passed the symbolic torch of leadership from Katharine Jefferts Schori to Michael Curry. There was pomp and circumstance galore, fielding the full range of our ethnic and ecclesiastical diversity – and all offered to the glory of God.

Liturgy literally means “work of the people.” The work we did in worship this weekend was to be as honest and open as we can be about who and where we are – and then submit to the symbols and substance of the liturgy which have the capacity to take us to a place of hope and freedom. We did a lot of work this weekend. A lot of good work. Those who were there in person – and those who watched live-streaming or video; we all were moved.

The worship grounds and guides us. And then, as Presiding Bishop Curry preached, worship sends us out into the world – as empowered followers of Jesus, to join with God in transforming the world’s nightmare into God’s dream.

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St. James' Staff & Vestry

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Rector Emeritus:	The Rev. Clarence Sickles
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Sexton:	Pauline Volkert

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	Chika Okoye	Janice Cipriani

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