



# ST. JAMES' JOURNAL

DECEMBER 2017/JANUARY 2018

Rev. Robert "Bob" Solon—Supply Priest



## This Month in Stewardship

I'm Thankful For -

YOU!

Recently the Sunday School kids constructed a poster board presentation of the things that they were thankful for at Thanksgiving. It was the weekend that followed when we accomplished a lot. We had the in-gathering of food that the kids packed into bags for families in need. We held our stewardship/fellowship party where we gathered in our stewardship pledges of time, talent and treasure and when the Huryk family led us in a rousing Family Feud/Match Game (yes, a car was awarded). And, we then presented our pledges at the altar as our acts of stewardship. It was a busy week. As I reflect on all we accomplished, I am thankful for you, our parish family, who step up and put stewardship in the actions of discipleship. Your pledges are your commitment to our mission and ministries and the life of our parish through worship, good works and fellowship. Thank you.

Now we are in the season of Advent. It is a time when we are urged to take a breath, wait and anticipate the celebration of the gift that is with us always. I understand that in some traditions the meditative breath practice starts not with breathing in but with exhaling a breath out. While many people say to take a deep breath in and then to exhale with a sigh, starting with breathing out is the opposite. This

requires mindfulness and a bit of concentration. It is counterintuitive, but give it a try. This year I am thinking of Advent as a time of breathing out, emptying out my lungs, creating space and then being more able to take breath in. Again, try this, it works. When I exhale with the intention of waiting to inhale, that breath in seems more satisfying. It fills the void and boy it feels good!

This Advent, as I exhale, I will think of that emptying as a metaphor for the waiting and yearning to be filled again with the joy that comes with Christmas. Join me.

Thanks for reading,

Paul Bartkus



## Christmas Services

- 12/24 **One Morning Service at 9AM**  
Advent Lessons and Carols  
-Sign up for readings  
Wardens Coffee Hour  
Greening of the Church
- 12/24 Christmas Eve—4:30, 7:00 and 11:00 PM
- 12/25 Christmas Day—One Service at 10:00 AM
- 12/31 8 and 10 AM Services with Music  
Christmas Lessons and Carols

## ATTENTION

It is not too late!

If you have not yet submitted your pledge of time, talent and treasure for 2018, it is not too late. Pledge packets or cards are available in the back of church. Then can be returned by mail or by placing in the collection plate on Sunday.

Please see Paul or Barbara, if you have any questions.

Thanks,  
Paul

### Christmas Altar Flowers

The Congregation can help defray the cost of wreaths and poinsettias this Christmas. There are envelopes for donations for these altar flowers in the back of Church. This is also a way to remember loved ones and departed family and friends during this season.



Pick up a food bag for the less fortunate this Christmas. Due back to church by 12/17...thanks!

## The Tree of Giving 2017



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 those who are facing difficulty providing gifts for their children at Christmas. For more than 20 years we have sponsored children from local families who are struggling due to economic circumstance by buying gifts suggested on the Tree of Giving.

Families are selected through counselors and school nurses at local schools and are anonymous to us. A wish list of toys and clothing is developed with help from parents and school staff and then we transform those wishes to gifts.

This year we will support five children from two families. Candy canes with gifts tags have been hung on the Tree of Giving as of November 26<sup>th</sup>. We hope you will visit the tree, located in the upper lobby of the Moore Street entrance, and choose a tag to support these children. Complete directions are available by the tree and on the gift tag. The children of Sunday School will replace each tag with an angel.

**GIFTS ARE DUE ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup> –THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT.**

Although we do not get to see the children's reactions as they open their presents, we do hear from the school staff who tell us how grateful the parents are and that we have made a difference for the families. Each year this ministry reminds us to give thanks for our many blessings, by giving a blessing to someone else.

Paul Bartkus, Coordinator Emeritus

Edited by Kathy Lacouture

FOR UNTO US  
*a child is born,*  
**unto us a son is given:**  
*and the government shall be upon his shoulder:*  
*and his name shall be called*  
**★WONDERFUL★**  
**COUNSELLOR,**  
**THE MIGHTY GOD,**  
*The everlasting Father,*  
**THE PRINCE OF PEACE.**  
**Isaiah 9:6**

**Upcoming Events**

- 12/13 Special Events Meeting 7 PM
- 12/17 Tree of Giving Gifts returned
- Christmas Food Bags returned
- 12/21 Vestry Meeting 7 PM
- 12/24 One Service in the Morning 9 AM
- Advent Lessons and Carols
- Greening of the Church
- Wardens Coffee Hour
- 4:30 PM Christmas Eve Service
- 7:00 PM Christmas Eve Service
- 11:00 PM Christmas Eve Service
- 12/25 Christmas Day service 10:00 AM
- 12/31 8 & 10 AM services with Christmas Lessons and Carols
- 1/6 Epiphany Dinner 5:30 PM-Watch for details.

**Fundraising Report**

**Gertrude Hawk**—Thanks for your support! Our profit from this fundraiser was \$272.84!

Shop with Scrip-We were able to earn \$426.88 from gift card sales for December. Thanks to all who were able to purchase these!

**Amazon Smile**—We continue to earn money from Amazon through the Amazon Smile program which donates a portion of eligible purchases to St. James'. If you use Amazon, especially for holiday shopping, please sign up and tell family and friends to help support us. Sign up at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com).

**Rummage Sale**—Let's plan on a Rummage Sale next Spring! We are beginning to get donations of gently used items. Please contact Barbara Olesen if you need help moving packed items to the basement.

Thanks for helping to raise funds for the mission and ministry of St. James'!

**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!**

**Journal Deadline**

February Edition

January 28th

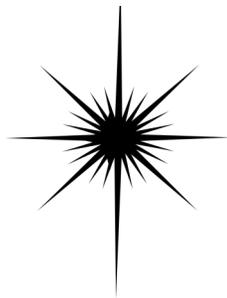


## Yarn Twisters

Although we didn't have any socks in our box of goodies that Jerry Sheard delivered to SCI, (thank you Jerry) we did have a whole big box stuffed full of scarves, hats, neck warmers and vests! Many thanks to the Needle Workers of Heath Village, as without their help we would not be able to send as many items to keep the seamen warm and cozy as they work on the freighters that bring just about all of us products we use in our daily life. I am already working on items for next year.

All patterns and information can be found on the SCI website at [www.seamenschurch.org/christmas-at-sea](http://www.seamenschurch.org/christmas-at-sea). This also gives an idea of what colors can and cannot be used, no tassels or fringes. If you would like to knit/crochet for SCI and need more information, please contact me at [f1lbailey1@comcast.net](mailto:f1lbailey1@comcast.net) or call me at 908-684-3566.

Have a wonderful Holiday Season,



## Youth Choir at Port Morris

On Sunday, Dec. 3 our very own Youth Choir, known to the Port Morris UMC folks as "the singing and signing children's choir of St. James' Episcopal Church, once again participated in the "Story of the Nativity through the Arts" program. This is probably our 10<sup>th</sup> appearance at this program, which is in its 15<sup>th</sup> year. They sang and signed 'Away in the Manger' and did a wonderful job! Our singers/signers were Emma Martin (solo), Jackson Martin, Helen LaForge (solo) and Henry LaForge. We were missing the Nolan's who were unable to attend but we'll see and hear them, as well as Millie Quelly, at our 4:30 Christmas Eve service! Special thanks to Alicia LaForge for stepping in to help the children with their signing while I played the piano! Here is a picture of the children signing the final word of the song!

Pam



### 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.

## In-gathering Stewardship Dinner

November 17 was another memorable night of food, fellowship, and fun. It was also a time when people could hand in their pledge cards which were brought to the altar the next

morning. Our pot luck dinner was filled with a wonderful variety of dishes which were delicious.



Once again Pete and Gerri Huryk came up from Maryland, accompanied by grandchildren Luke and Emmy. Pete hosted another night of his famous Match Game/Family Feud. We so appreciate the Huryks being with us again and all of the time and preparation they always take for this special evening.

Thank you to all who attended our annual event and for providing such a great selection of foods.



The Special Events Committee



Sunday School packs food baskets for Thanksgiving!



Sunday School is Thankful for.....



**NEW YEAR PRAYER:**

Thank You Lord for giving me  
 The brand new year ahead.  
 Help me live the way I should  
 As each new day I tread.  
 Give me gentle wisdom  
 That I might help a friend,  
 Give me strength and courage  
 So a shoulder I might lend.  
 The year ahead is empty,  
 Help me fill it with good things  
 Each new day filled with joy  
 And happiness it brings.  
 Amen.

*The Daily Bible Verses*  
<http://thedailyverses.blogspot.com> - [www.facebook.com/thedailybibleverses](http://www.facebook.com/thedailybibleverses)

# Sunday School Celebrates Halloween!



# Kids Game Night!



# Making Advent Wreaths!



# Youth Movie Night!



The world's darkness and Advent light  
Posted by Mark Beckwith on December 06, 2017

[The Bishop's Blog: Signs of God's Grace](#)

Growing up I was afraid of the dark. For me, the 19th century Scottish poem, “from ghosties and ghoulies and long-legged beasties, and things that go bump in the night, good Lord deliver us”, was not all that helpful, because the mere mention of ghosties and ghoulies gave credence to their existence. To ask the Good Lord to deliver them was not much consolation: I just wanted to make sure they weren’t there in the first place. So I would occasionally (no, regularly) check under my bed or in the closet for monsters, ogres or escaped serial killers before I dared to turn out the light. When I was old enough to babysit for my younger sisters, there were more than a few times I would wake up the oldest of them to keep watch with me.

Darkness raises real fear. Over the years, I have gotten better at abiding the darkness. A segment of Night Prayer from the New Zealand Prayer Book has helped: “let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives rest in you.”

Yet the darkness of the world continues to press in – especially this time of the year when the northern hemisphere has shorter days and longer nights. And especially this particularly year because, well, you name it – there is missile mongering with North Korea, climate change (if not approaching catastrophe), vicious insults and actions taken against a racial or religious minority across the world (with a seemingly growing permission to do so); regular public displays of moral emptiness, if not depravity; an expanding inventory of sexual assaults and mass shootings, and on and on and on.

There is a lot of darkness.

Advent greets the darkness. And greets it with light. Not much light; it is a flicker really, compared to the world’s darkness. And yet, as the writer of John’s Gospel has written, “the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it” (John 1:5).

That Advent light may not be much, but it is real. It is hope and promise – even peace. We have been given that light – it is planted in each and every one of us, and we have been commissioned to trust that light and to use that light to do at least two things: to join our embedded light with the light of others – and then bring that growing light and shine it into the world’s darkness.

There are forces and voices that would say this divine light is not real. Or it is too small, or not effective. Or that we are wasting our time. Those forces and voices would point us to other, more dramatic light – produced by Disney or Madison Avenue or the shiny object of yet another unrealistic political promise. Those expressions of light can be entertaining or even creative, but mostly they are distracting. Distracting us from the darkness.

We are asked to look into a particular corner of the darkness, in the confidence that we are accompanied by Christ’s light. Look into the darkness. Stare it down. We have enough light to do so.

And that light will not go away. And it will make a difference.

# CALENDAR

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## St. James' Staff & Vestry

Supply Priest	Rev. Robert Solon
Rector Emeritus:	The Rev. Clarence Sickles
Parish Administrator:	Julie Mills
Organist	Dmitry Nikolaev
Sexton:	Pauline Volkert

## Vestry

Senior Warden:	Paul Bartkus
Junior Warden:	Barbara Olesen

Peter Quelly	Claudia Scala	Janice Cipriani
Nancy Miller	Chris Krauss	Kathy Erwood-Lacouture
Pam Laura	Sam Wood	Karina Hernandez

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

## Barbara Olesen, Editor

All Journal submissions  
should be sent to:

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& [olesen@comcast.net](mailto:olesen@comcast.net)

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