

St. James' Journal

December 2024/January 2025

Rev. Wayne Sherrer – Priest-in-Charge



Dear Friends in Christ

“O come, o come, Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel”

This traditional Advent song asks for the coming of Emmanuel, a name which means “God with us.” In it we ask that Israel and us might be free from captivity. The captivity of ancient Israel was clear. Their political leaders had been killed and most of the population had been taken far from their homeland to the kingdom of Babylon. The enslavement of their ancestors by the Pharaoh in Egypt was also clear. In both circumstances, God acted to free the descendants of Abraham from physical locations and hostile, foreign rulers. God brought the people out of Egypt and out of Babylonia and back to the Promised Land.

Our situation is different. We have not been captured and taken to a foreign land. We are not literal slaves. And yet, we are captives who long for freedom. Our captivity takes many forms. Some of us are captives of our ambition for power, status or wealth. We can never know the comfort of satisfaction or truly appreciate the blessings that we have received. Some of us are captives of our debts, always scrambling to stay one step ahead of financial ruin. Some of us are captives of unrealistic expectations other people have of us or that we have placed upon ourselves. Some of us are captives of guilt with accusations that we are unlovable and beyond help. Some of us are captives of fear, always expecting the worst as each new day unfolds.

For all of us, there is the hope and promise of Emmanuel. The angels on that first Christmas told the shepherds not to be afraid, for they were the bearers of good news. Jesus taught the people that they need not be

anxious about tomorrow, for God knows what humans need for survival. Jesus taught that God is merciful and ready to forgive all our offenses. The hope of Advent was fulfilled in Christmas. God is with us and will always be with us. Jesus said “The truth will set you free.” The truth is that even death cannot separate us from God’s abiding love for us. You have been sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ’s own forever. Believing in that divine promise has the power to free us from the captivity of every fear and into the welcoming arms of the God who loves us. For centuries, that promise has freed the hearts and minds of Christians and brought them peace.

Peace,
Fr Wayne



Christmas Services

Christmas Eve

4:30pm

Holy Eucharist Service

5:30pm-7:00pm

Stations of the Creche

Between services the church will be open for people who wish to come by the manger and to visit the Chapel and columbarium.

7:00pm

Holy Eucharist Service

Christmas Day

9:00am

Holy Eucharist Service

Merry Christmas

Death in Our Parish Family

Rachel Elizabeth Aron



Rachel E. Aron, 87 of Hackettstown New Jersey, passed away peacefully on Saturday, November 9th, 2024, after a long illness. Rachel was born in Thongsbridge, Yorkshire, ENGLAND to Lilly and Ernest Jessop on December 27th, 1936.

Rachael attended Honley Grammar School-Class of 1954. It was there she played tennis and was adept at Long Jumping. It was at Honley School that she met the “Love of her Life”, Michael A. Aron when she noticed his fancy socks! They attended Huddersfield Town local Football Club games and are still lifelong fans.

After graduation from Honley Grammar school, she attended Avery Hill Teacher Training College in London and earned her teaching degree. She worked in Holmfirth as a teacher in the Dobbs School until she and Michael got married on April 16, 1960. They moved to Wendover, Buckinghamshire, England to accommodate Michael’s job in the Royal Air Force (RAF) as an Education Officer.

Rachel and Michael later settled in Bishopston, Wales UK and lived there from 1961 to 1973. It was there that they raised their 2 sons, Richard Michael Charles Aron and Andrew Edward James Aron. They then moved to Monmouth, Wales, UK for Michael’s job with United States Pharmaceutical Company Parke Davis from 1973-1978. Rachel and Michael then called Winchester, Hampshire, England home from 1978-1984.

Rachel and Michael moved to the United States in 1984 after Michael had an opportunity to transfer with Warner Lambert Pharmaceutical Company in Morris Plains NJ. They settled in Long Valley, NJ, then relocated to Flemington, NJ and finally settled in Heath Village- Hackettstown, New Jersey. Rachel was very active in the local chapter of the Daughters of the British Empire, the Long Valley Women’s Club, the Altar Guild for St. James Episcopal Church, and served for 2 years as President of the Heath Village Women’s Club. Rachel loved photography and won quite a few awards. She was also an accomplished pianist and was the pianist for the Friendship Center Childcare and also

for various functions at Heath Village Senior Living Community. Rachel adored her family, especially ALL her 7 Grandchildren and Great Grand Cats Oscar and Lilly and Great Grand Dog Max.

Rachel is survived by her husband, Michael, her son, Richard and his wife Lesley of Winchester, England and their grandchildren Michael, Rebecca and Jonathan, her son Andrew and his wife Mary Ann of Selbyville, Delaware and their grandchildren Emily, Matthew, Joshua and Hannah.

In Lieu of Flowers, contributions in Rachel’s memory may be made to:

Alzheimer's Association:

<https://alzfdn.org/donate/>

Peace Aging Care Experts, LLC 1 Mill Ridge

Lane Suite 102 Chester, NJ 07930

www.peaceagingcare.com

A Church Funeral Service was held on Monday, November 18, 2024 from 10:30 – 11:30 am at St. James Episcopal Church 214 Washington Street Hackettstown, NJ 07480.

Tree of Giving 2024

This year’s St James’ Tree of Giving will provide gifts for two families with total of 6 children ranging in age from age 12 to infants, thanks to our contacts at the two local elementary schools. The list of gift options will be available via email again this year with instructions on page 2 of the email.

Thank you in advance for your participation and if you prefer, monetary donations are accepted to St James’ Mission Strategy during the entire month of December. Each year those donations are used to purchase gifts or gift cards for each family.

The gift list will be posted on 11/25, on the same day that the Tree of Giving “arrives” in the lower level of the Parish Hall.

The wrapped gifts will be due on 12/15 so they can be distributed to the families/

Please contact me with any questions: Kathy Lacouture : 908-310-0451/lockwood88@comcast.net

From Mission Strategy Committee

Stewardship Sermon

Pam Laura

October 20, 2024

Good morning! Today is Stewardship Kickoff Sunday. On this Sunday, the Stewardship Chair (that's me), or other member of our congregation, comes before you and talks about what this place, our church home, St. James,' means to them, and why they give what they can of their treasure, time, and talent. Soon you will get your pledge packet. In that packet is a brief letter from me about Stewardship and how it has two parts: treasure, and time and talent.

The treasure part is obvious. We need to fund our life as a parish: pay our priest, our organist, our parish administrator, our mortgage, and our sexton; keep the lights on; keep us warm in the winter and comfortable in the summer; put flowers on the altar; make wine and wafers available for communion; maintain our buildings and grounds; purchase supplies for Sunday school, for the office, for the Altar; provide the bulletin inserts for the weekly readings and psalm; decorate the church for Christmas, Palm Sunday, and Easter. Income also helps fund outreach ministries within our communities, within our diocese, and globally. If we had no income, we really wouldn't have a church, at least not the one we have today. It's like we say every Sunday when the offering is brought to the altar and given to God: "All things come of thee, O Lord, and of thine own have we given thee."

The time and talent part may be, for many of us, more challenging than sending in money. Life nowadays can be so busy! If you have young or school-age children you know what your family schedule can be like! Sometimes, it's like a miracle

that you get to church on a Sunday at all! Even if you don't have children or your children are grown, you may still be working, or you do a lot of traveling, or volunteering, or are involved in various organizations or activities. Finding time to do something at church, besides just getting there every Sunday, often falls to the bottom of the list. But, that same prayer we say when we give our offering applies to our time and talent, too.

On the back of your pledge card is a table listing all the opportunities needing your time and talent. Generally speaking, the Worship & Ministry category needs your time during church, or for a short time right after church. Some of the items in the Ministry & Fellowship group, such as Coffee Hour, Sunday School, and Backpack are also Sunday-only opportunities. The groups under the Governance category usually meet only once a month. Vestry and Finance committee are monthly meetings. Fundraising, Audit, and Stewardship groups may meet more frequently, but only over the course of a limited period of time. There are even some groups, such as Yarn Twisters, or St. Fiacre's Guild (gardening), that you can engage in on your own time. While I was writing this part of my talk, several phrases kept popping into my head: "it takes a village...", "many hands make light work," "the more, the merrier," and, to borrow from the NFL, "It takes all of us." I think that last one really sums it up nicely!

Baby Shower for Jesus

Our Baby Shower for Jesus collects donations of diapers, formula, baby food, wipes and toiletry items for North Porch Center for Women and Infants. North Porch fills the gap in emergency situations here in Hacketts-town and other north Jersey locations when needy families are displaced or have shortfalls in their budget. Our collection continues through the Advent and Christmas seasons until Epiphany, when the gifts will be blessed and then taken to North Porch.

Upcoming Events

December 1	Sunday School
“	Christmas Food Drive Starts
“	Tree of Giving Starts
“	Baby Shower for Jesus Starts
December 10	Special Events Meeting 7PM
“	Epiphany Dinner Planning
December 12	Finance Committee Meeting 6 PM
December 15	Sunday School 9AM
“	Christmas Food Bag Collection Due
“	Tree of Giving Gifts Due
December 19	Vestry Meeting 6:30 PM
December 22	Greening of the Church/Wardens Coffee Hour
December 24	Christmas Eve Services 4:30 & 7 PM Stations of the Creche 5:30-7PM
December 25	Christmas Day Service 9 AM
December 29	Lessons and Carols /Morning Prayer
January 5	Degreening of the Church
“	Baby Shower for Jesus items due
January 11	Epiphany Dinner
January 18	Parish Life Meeting 1 PM
January 23	Finance Committee Meeting 6 PM

SAVE THE DATE:



The 2025 Epiphany Dinner will be held on January 11th in Snyder Hall. Details to follow.

If you would like to help with planning of the dinner, the Special Events Committee will be meeting on Tuesday, 12/10 at 7 pm in Snyder Hall.

Volunteers will be needed for set up, planning of the program (includes entertainment), preparing the main course, and cleaning up.

Submitted by,
Kathy Lacouture

December Birthdays

12/08	Bill Critchley
12/09	Alicia LaForge
12/10	Nicholas Soszynski
12/13	Katherine Maier
12/14	Barbara Olesen
12/20	Matt Miele
12/20	David Heistand
12/24	Chris Barber
12/31	Sarah Hubert
12-31	Anina Barber

January Birthdays

01/01	Pete Huryk
01/03	Ronald Cipriani
01/04	Peter Hubert
01/04	Julianna Fox
01/09	Jocelyn Brooks
01/11	Rev. Edwin Sumner
01/11	Jewels Quelly
01/14	Kathy Hannigan
01/15	Joseph Merchak
01/18	Lisa Brooks
01/21	Janice Cipriani
01/29	Timothy Maier



End of year consideration

Those of you who successfully reached the age of 70.5 years have the opportunity to make tax-free charitable donations to St. James' from an IRA. Such contributions will count as part of your required minimum distribution for the year, yet the amount will not count as taxable income or affect the portion of your Social Security benefits which are subject to taxation. To qualify, such donations must be made directly from your IRA to the church.

Seamen's Church Institute Christmas at Sea Donation

Thank you to all who knitted items for the Seamen's Church Institute including Heath Village Needle Workers, Millie Sherrer, and Linda Miller in SC, and all who donated snack-sized candy and toiletries. Our items were delivered by Paul and myself to Port Newark on Nov. 4 and greatly appreciated by the director there.

Phyllis Bartkus

P.S.
We donated 24 scarves, 24 hats 2 vests, and 8 neck warmers!



Local Share

Our partnership with Local Share was a blessing to the families in our Summer Backpack program. We were pleased to welcome Local Share back to the lawn of St. James' on November 14 for a distribution of fresh produce to the general public. Several children from the middle school were thrilled by the opportunity to augment their family larder. Thank you to the Local Share volunteers and to the St. James' members who assisted.



February 2025
Journal Articles Due
Sunday, January 26th

St. James' Episcopal Church Holiday Food In-Gathering List 2024

At St. James' we feed people. For the holidays, we collect food for local families that are food insecure so that they might enjoy a Christmas family meal.

The following suggested food list includes container sizes to assure uniform food bags and costs. **(No glass jars, please).**

Please purchase items from this list and return them to the porch of Mitcham House during the week of **Dec. 8th** or to the church by **Dec. 15th**. There will be a plastic tub on the porch for your food bags.

Call Paul Bartkus at 201-213-3595 if you have questions.

Thank you for your help, and **Merry Christmas.**

Kraft Mac & Cheese	7.25 oz. Box
Chicken Noodle Soup	10.5 oz. Can
College Inn Stock	32 oz. Box
Canned Southern Yams	15 oz. Can
Tuna Fish	5 oz. Can
Golden White Kernal Corn	15 oz, Can
Green Beans	14.25 oz. Can
Hunt's Traditional Pasta Sauce	24 oz. Can
Instant Mashed Potatoes	13.3 oz. Box
Spaghetti	1 lb. Box
Turkey Gravy	10.5 oz. Can
Stuffing Mix	6 oz. Box
Jellied Cranberry Sauce	14 oz. Can
Cheerios Cereal	8.9 oz Box



[St. James' Episcopal Church Hackettstown](#)

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St. James' Staff & Vestry

Priest-in-Charge: The Rev. Wayne Sherrer
Parish Administrator: Rosalia Caamano
Organist: Dmitry Nikolaev
Sexton: Pauline Volkert

Vestry

Senior Warden: Marvin Walker
Junior Warden: David Olesen

Jayne Mutascio Nona Wolosin
Janice Cipriani Ruth Najemian
Millie Quelly David Lacouture

Vestry Clerk: Pam Laura
Treasurer: Janice Cipriani
Bookkeeper: Barbara Olesen
Sunday School: Alicia LaForge
SS Assistants: Helen LaForge, Millie Quelly

Barbara Olesen, Editor

All Journal submissions
should be sent to:

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