



The Epistle

May 2019

The Episcopal Church of St. James on the Parkway

A community growing in Christ, called to worship, learn, and serve.

3225 East Minnehaha Parkway • Minneapolis, MN 55417 • 612-724-3425 • www.stjamesotp.org • stjamesotp@comcast.net

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1** The certain promise of life
- 2** Amendment, archives and options for the future
- 3**
 - A quiet month (thank heavens)
 - A shameless promotion
- 4** Palm Sunday and Easter photos
- 5** The Big Cleanup (Formerly The Big Mess)
- 6**
 - Financial Report
 - Fans installed (mostly working)
 - And much more.
- 7**
 - An invitation to St. Mark's
 - 3-Church Initiative: What's happening now?
- 8** Do you know who these people are?
- 10** Haiti: A potpourri
- 11**
 - The Giving Garden
 - What's coming up: May calendar
 - June *Epistle* deadline

From Fr. William Heisley

The certain promise of life

Without death there is only death. What an unhappy and unlikely conundrum.

Jesus had already entered Jerusalem on the back of a colt. He was asked about... things. What's going on? Part of his explanation, what must happen so that his mission on earth could be fulfilled, was this: *Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.* (John 12:24) Unless a seed is buried in the earth as if it were dead it cannot live. It would only be a seed. A hopeful thing, certainly. But still a lifeless bit that can only hope for life by passing through its death, its burial. Because without death there is only death.

That's what the Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday, Holy Week, the Triduum (Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday) and finally Easter are about. Jesus must walk every painful suffering step through the end of his life as a human so that he might die. And he must die so that he might be raised into a new life that changes everything. Changes us.

Throughout my decades of ministry I have accented worship in Holy Week, especially the Triduum. But people rarely understand. I remember back in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania, I came straight from my ordination into my first parish, a young solo pastor. They had never heard of the Triduum, but after a few years it was firmly ensconced as a beloved annual moment in parish life. Maundy Thursday, Jesus washes the disciples feet and feeds them his last supper. Good Friday, Jesus carries his crosses, is humiliated, and is murdered.

Holy Saturday, the Church gathers to watch and wait in the Great Vigil of Easter. It took a few years but gradually one person after another made the effort to attend all three days of liturgical worship. Many times I heard from them, saying that they had no idea how profoundly moving the whole experience would be.

Without death, there is only death. These people witnessed the truth that to walk with Jesus through his end to his beginning is to walk from the death of our lives into his life. The most profound nature of Easter is missed without the experience of the previous days.

The Church recognized this years ago and made a feeble effort to address the issue by changing Palm Sunday to Passion/Palm Sunday. The day's rites begin with the Palm Sunday story but quickly proceed to a reading of an entire version of the Passion story, from Matthew, Mark, or Luke, depending on the year.

I know. You're now thinking why didn't you tell me this sooner? Maybe I should have done so, but there is also this. Here in Eastertide we live in the joy of the Resurrection, but we also live through the deaths that still surround us. People, our climate, even perhaps fearing for the death of our congregation. But we have every day of our lives to die to sin and to rise to the new life that Jesus wins for us. Without death, there is only death. But with death there is the sure and certain promise of life, and life that is available in abundance through the Resurrected One.

+ To him be all praise and glory +

From Senior Warden Ruth Anne Olson

Amendment, archives and options for the future

From my place in the choir, during Communion each Sunday, I study the larger-than-life stained glass above our altar. “I am the vine. You are the branches,” Jesus says. I anchor you to the fundamentals of life and through me you receive what you need to thrive. What you do with that? What kind of fruit you bear? That’s up to you.

For sure, St. James bears lots of healthy fruit. We partner to provide fresh produce to our neighbors. We bring joy to families at Christmas. For

our partners in Haiti, we make daily life stronger and more confident, for this generation and the next. We demonstrate love and solidarity with local Muslims. And, maybe most important,

we lift the hearts and souls of one another

each Sunday and more, we lift the hearts and souls of one another.

But our “good” comes at a cost. For 2019, we’ve budgeted \$50,000 (nearly \$1,000 every week, as Kurt Hall pointed out in the January *Epistle*) just to maintain our building. That sum doesn’t repair our building; it certainly doesn’t restore it. That would cost more than \$2,000,000 according to the assessment commissioned by our vestry in 2016. And, about that 2019 budget? Don’t forget, its bottom-line for the year? A \$19,000 deficit—even before we figure out how

Amendment to ECMN’s Canon Law

Folks preparing for St. James Annual Meeting last January were disappointed to learn that Episcopal Church of Minnesota (ECMN) Canon Law explicitly denies use of absentee ballots in parish elections. So the vestry did a little research and met with ECMN staff to discuss the process for amending such a restrictive clause. On April 9, Jeanne LaBore and Fr. William volunteered to put pen-to-paper and now, with help from ECMN staff, are ready to propose an amendment which says, in part:

Whereas ECMN Canon 501 appears to prohibit parishes from absentee balloting; and whereas parish membership and current demographics often include a large number of members for whom required attendance poses a significant barrier to participation; and whereas the means to conduct secure absentee balloting is not overly burdensome;

Therefore be it resolved to add ECMN Canon 501.4d: Congregations may accept absentee ballots provided that the procedure for collecting and counting such ballots is explicitly laid out in the bylaws of that congregation.

The full resolution will go to the Central Mission Area Gathering for consideration at its meeting on May 4. If accepted, from there it will follow ECMN procedures toward a vote by representatives to ECMN’s statewide convention in September, 2019. If it moves forward as we expect, I hope that St. James own representatives to convention—Jinny Bouvette and Rosemary Caspar—will carry it to the convention floor for a vote. Then, of course, we’ll move to amend St. James by-laws accordingly.

Membership and Voting

Another task of the Vestry over recent months has been to make sure that everyone who wants to be a member of St. James is

officially recognized as such. Starting with the 162 individuals listed in the church Directory, Beth Harvey and I have been combing written and electronic archives, to identify people from whom we need more information to meet our parish by-laws’ definition of membership. In the coming weeks, Fr. William will contact each, to make sure no one is left out.

Future of St. James

Finally, as described in the April *Epistle*, the Vestry is examining received suggestions for the future of St. James, working to answer a common set of questions for each. Not surprisingly, it’s hard to do. What do we need to know? Where will we find the information? To jump start the process, at our April meeting the Vestry did a Round Robin—each of us answering the question for each option: “What would I want to know in order to make an informed decision about this option?” It was a useful exercise, which will help inform the particulars that we’ll bring to the parish in months to come.

to replace the furnace that died six weeks ago.

All that says to me, to many of St. James, that we need to find a new way to be the branches of Jesus' vine. We need to do so with love, hope and the power of our long-time braid—worship, learn and served. St. James has been in this process of examining possibilities for many years. 2019 allows us to become clear, very clear, about what each option has to offer and, finally—maybe soon—to stand together as a community to make hard choices.

to stand together as a community to make hard choices

Toward that end, Vestry discussion on April 9 focused on three big items. Two are ready for action; the third remains a bit of a muddle. (See box to the left)

I grew up on a farm, and know firsthand what every farmer and gardener knows: light, temperature, rainfall, soil nutrients and, yes—market factors—must go into every decision of what to plant where. What works over decades may thrive unchallenged for year to come. Or maybe not. Renewing the vigor of old plants may be as easy as adding new minerals to the soil or cutting down a tree grown too high and casting its shade too far. Or maybe not.

“I am the vine. You are the branches.”

Step by step. With care, transparency and love. Working together. We'll figure out how to bear the best fruit possible.

From the Junior Warden Pat Morley

A quiet month (thank heavens)

Aside from The Big Mess, property activity has been relatively quiet this past month. The prolific snowfall, that had me thinking about hauling snow out of the courtyard, was quickly settled by warm weather that fortunately made that unnecessary. There was some leaking but it was minor and short-lived.

The Better Space Task Force moved forward with their improvements including lighting up-grades that make our Gallery and Narthex much more welcoming.

CenterPoint Energy's plan to replace the gas line from the street to the church will be part of The Big Mess coordination due to the need to get into basement areas. The end result will be a single meter on the

outside of the building that can be read from the alley.

The Property Committee will be meeting to begin the process of reviewing options for replacing the furnace in Chapel Hall, an expensive proposition no matter how we look at it. In recent months, the heating units on the wall in that space have been adequate to the task.

Spring grounds-work will very likely commence in May, weather permitting. The 4th Saturday of the month is a holiday weekend so we will likely bump it up a week to May 18. Keep an ear and eye out for an announcement to that effect.

Peace be with you. All Praises to Jesus.



A shameless promotion

You've heard her sing solos and descants on Sundays at St. James. Come hear Jane Hoffmann belt out a smokin' jazz rendition of "I Love Paris" in the new production, *LOVE is Alive & Kickin'*. Thirty musical seniors sing rock and pop songs, as well as relate their personal stories, about the many sides of love. It's an experience you won't want to miss!

**Alive & Kickin presents:
LOVE is Alive & Kickin**

June 7 – 16, 2019

Bloomington Center for the Arts—
Schneider Theater
1800 W. Old Shakopee Road,
Bloomington, MN 55431

Tickets: 952-563-8575
or AliveandKickinMN.org

Admission: Adults \$34,
Seniors/Students \$30

Palm Sunday and Easter





The Big Cleanup (Formerly The Big Mess)

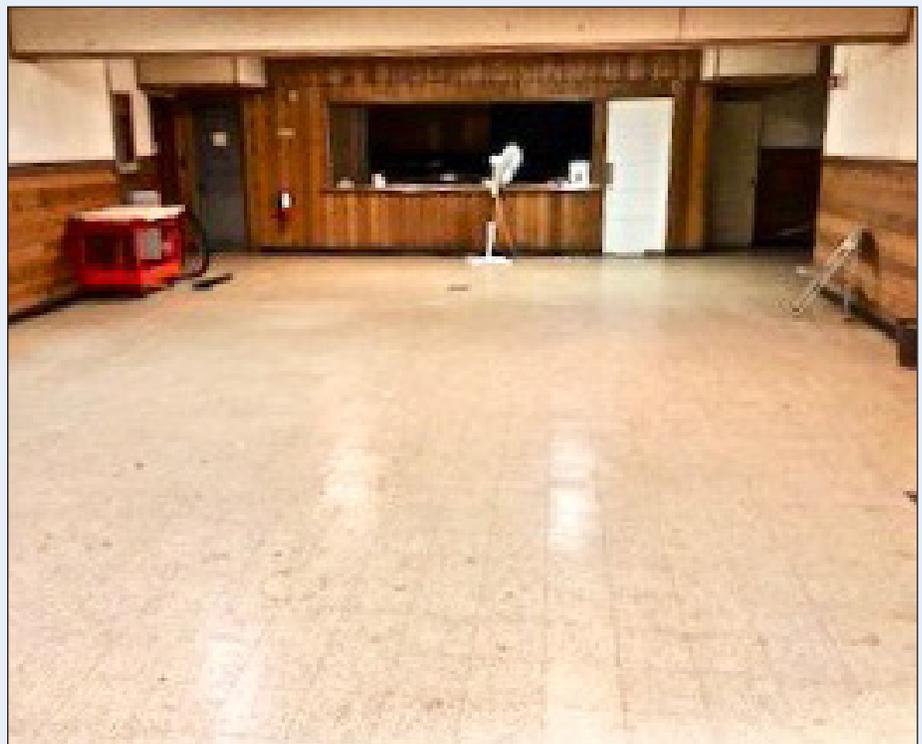
By Neal Cuthbert, Project Manager

Background: On March 13, a city sewerage line two blocks east of St. James became blocked, — causing back-up to flow through drains and other openings into our basement, and sending 2-4" of raw sewage throughout our lower level. Thankfully, none of this effects church services and other activities—which continue normally.

We've been meeting with insurance people, contractors, Mandala staff, and each other to get things cleaned up and ship-shape.

St. James has an active claim with the Church Insurance Company and with the City of Minneapolis. The insurance company has been great but we have a \$50,000 financial cap with them, so in order to do all the work needed to be done, we have to receive a settlement from the City.

While we're waiting to hear about that claim, we have taken some next steps. The sewage has been cleaned out, the basement disinfected, and this week three dumpsters of furniture, Mandala



Caption for photo. Furniture, Mandala supplies, and other items — now gone.

supplies, and other basement items were removed.

We hope to hear from the City in the next few weeks so we can begin to demo out the contaminated

basement flooring, paneling and kitchen cabinets, which will be the next phase of work.

We'll keep you posted on the big mess cleanup!!

From the Treasurer Tony Morley

Financial Report: March 31, 2019

As the first quarter ended, pledge payments continued below budget, and non-pledge income was much the same. Total expenses were well above budget, due to property and cold-weather costs. We still ended the quarter with an operating surplus, but \$7,000 less than the budget called for. Here are the numbers through March:

	YTD Budget	YTD Actual	over / (under)
Pledged Income	50,064	48,089	(1,975)
Other Income	16,340	15,387	(953)
Total Income	66,404	63,475	(2,928)
Expenses	53,178	57,427	(4,249)
Net	13,226	6,048	(7,178)

Non-budget Restricted Funds: Non-budget restricted balances on March 31 totaled \$16,595, as follows: Mary Anderson Better Space \$1,674; Piotrowski-Music \$693; Piotrowski-Altar \$1,754; Haiti \$8,668; Tri-Faith \$3,882; Priest's Discretion \$146.

Better Space Task Force

Fans installed (mostly working)... and much more

By Louis Hoffman

New Better Space Task Force-funded ceiling fans were installed on Friday, April 26 just in time for what I really, truly hope is winter's dying gasp. There's an issue with wiring in one motor that affects the light in that fan that will be addressed soon. But, as far as Adult Forum and coffee hour are concerned, bring on the heat! The Gallery will be air-cooled!

The cove lights in the Nave are all working. Not so with the Narthex. The ballasts and bulbs are of an older type that aren't easy to get. So a decision needs to be made as to whether to make a possibly larger than needed purchase of supplies or consider changing to LED fixtures at about the same cost.

These two seemingly small projects (I shift from news to opinion) are an illustration of the challenges of our building's age and condition. Things that seem like simple matters



20th century technology comes to the Gallery. Notice what's wrong on the sign?

sometimes get complicated quickly, and that typically costs money.

Look for the east light on the outdoor sign and flagpole lights to be working again. Assuming there aren't more surprises. There will be updated informational signs on the bottom of the front sign. And look for the return of our history gallery with updated pictures and the wall of rectors

returning to the Gallery.

You may have noticed two high top tables in the very back of the Nave near the Haiti Corner. Thank you to Mary Nease for her generosity and good taste. These are yet another option offered to you for enjoying your coffee, conversation, and tasty treats after church.



Abrahamic Tri-Faith Exploration

An invitation to St. Mark's

By Ruth Anne Olson

Since 2015, St. James has been involved with the Niagara Foundation. Executive Director Tolga Misirli spoke to a lively session of our Adult Forum. The Rev. Dawnlynn Greeney, Aileen Johnson, Casey & Dan McGuire, Tony Morley, Ruth Anne Olson, and Anne & Harlan Sween, were participants in their 3-Faiths@1-Table program. And several others in the parish have attended their Iftar dinners during Ramadan.

In May, we're all invited to Niagara's 15th Annual Dialogue and Friendship Dinner, this year to be held at Saint Mark's.

Thursday, May 16th 7 – 10 PM,
Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral
519 Oak Grove Street in Minneapolis

Keynote Speaker: Gayatri Narayanan

Dinner (halal, kosher & vegetarian available)
Table Conversations

The event is free and open to the public,
however online RSVP's required.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdbOuVvEw16BG2pVI4QSGi3U7ouvkhMDJp9ChNp4w6bMpQyJg/viewform>

3-Church Initiative

What's happening now?

By Stacey Athorn

April marked the third meeting of the expanded 3-church committee. The Episcopal Church of St. James on the Parkway, Lake Nokomis Lutheran and Living Table United Church of Christ each have four representatives on the committee, including each worship leader, totaling a group of twelve. St. James has been represented by William Heisley, Stacey Athorn, Jeanne LaBore, and this month we welcome Mary Nease to our team. The expanded committee meets regularly, the 3rd Monday of each month. The St. James contingent will also begin meeting regularly to make sure we are on the

same page about what we are bringing to the large group and also to communicate back to the St. James congregation more thoroughly.

At our April Meeting, we were joined by consultant David Raymond (<http://churchfuture.com>). Mr. Raymond has helped many churches through various types of transition. The committee is exploring the possibility of hiring him (at an hourly rate) to help facilitate our discussions, both as a committee, and potentially as independent religious communities.

We have started planning a 3-church tour, tentatively scheduled for Saturday, June 1st. The idea is that we would

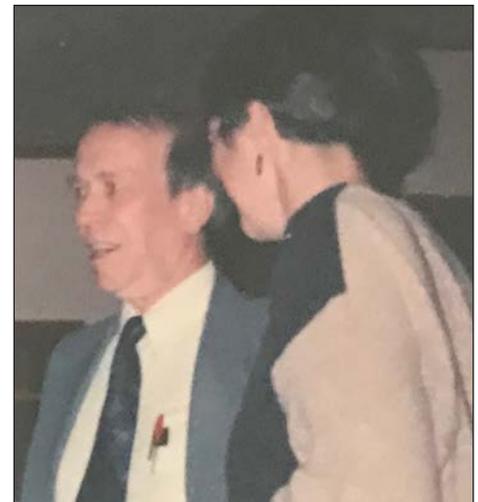
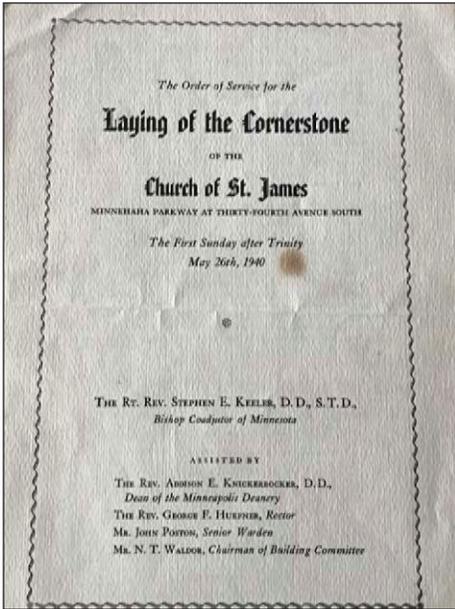
meet at Living Table at 10 AM, travel to St. James by 11 AM and then Lake Nokomis at 12 noon. At each site, a knowledgeable church member would give a brief tour of the awesomeness of that site, drawing particular attention to aspects of the site that are representative of the church's identity. After touring all three sites, we would spend some time greeting each other and enjoying refreshments.

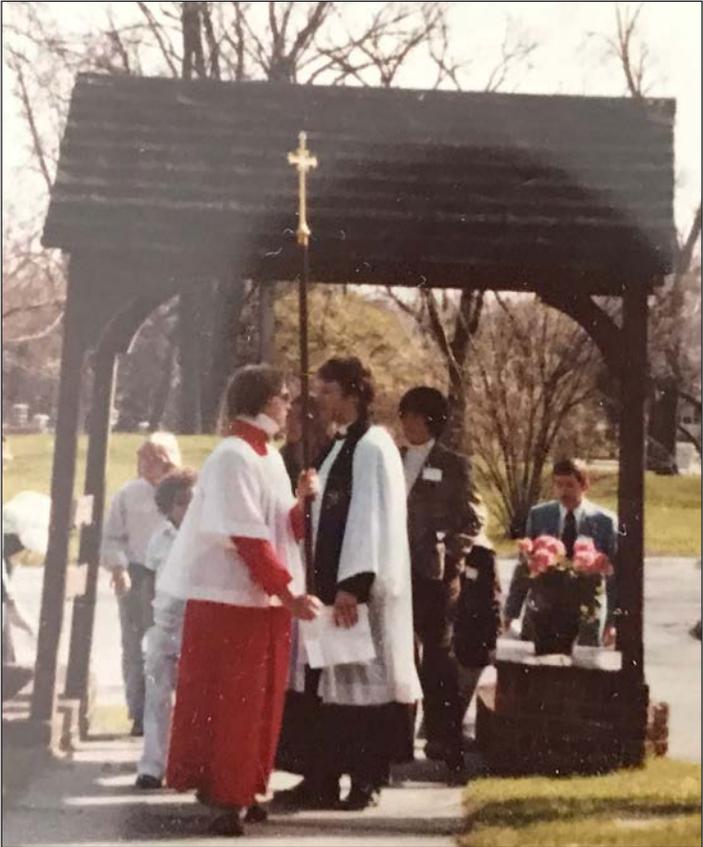
In the near future, we will be presenting you with a survey. This survey will provide some context and information about the concept of a "shared campus" model, and ask for your feedback and ideas.

A Trip Down Memory Lane

Do you know who these people are?

These albums and photos were recently found. Some meticulously labeled; some not so much; many not at all. See Louis Hoffman if you're willing to sort, identify, and devise a way to make them accessible.





Onè! Respe! (Honor! Respect!)

A potpourri of events

By Ruth Anne Olson, on behalf of the St. James Haiti Committee

We started the month with a phone visit with Bonne Nouvelle's principal Louis Noncent—asking him to catch us up regarding Haiti's deep economic and security issues of recent months. He said that citizen demonstrations have abated, but inflation gets worse by the day. Prices have doubled, and the people of Bigonet are having trouble

... (Louis) "Since I was born, I have never seen anything like this."

paying even-for rice. "Since I was born, I have never seen anything like this."

Families who previously have been able to pay school tuition for their children, now must save their money for food. The result: since January, Bonne Nouvelle has been unable to pay all its teacher salaries. When Trinity Lutheran Church in Hovland, Minnesota, participants in our partnership since 2012, learned of this need, they quickly dipped into a small nest egg, covering Bonne Nouvelle's current \$500 deficit. Good news, for sure!

Our Haiti Committee Co-Chair, Louise Robinson, has spent long tedious hours completing on-line U.S. State Department Forms DS-160. This is the first step required on behalf of the four Bonne Nouvellians whom St. James has been hoping to host in Minnesota in October. But, immigration policies have changed hugely since we first did this process in 2013. That year our friends waited one month before being granted a mandatory interview. Wait-times now increase almost daily—looking now to be nine months or more. We'll do our best, but it's discouraging at best.

... it's discouraging at best

Readers may recall that St. James unsuccessfully sought to apply to the Episcopal Church United Thank Offering for a substantial sum of money to help Bonne Nouvelle build a new church. After the initial crush of failure, Louis quickly came back with his usual words of faith and commitment, saying, "The plan for a new church for us will never change." Within days he sent photos of people starting the bone-breaking work of digging a foundation. "These are truly the "Mesaje di Kris/Christ's Messengers," said Louis. As this *Epistle*

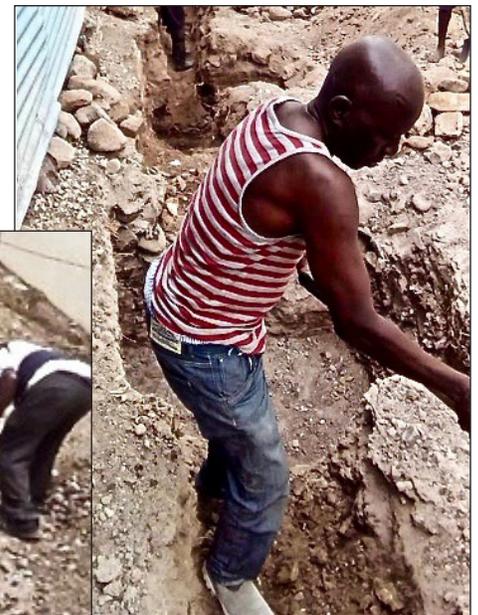
"Little by little the birds make their nest."

goes to press, we've learned that during their Lenten Coin Drive, Trinity

Lutheran raised \$1,100 for Bonne Nouvelle's new church construction. Haitian proverb: Piti piti zwazo fè nich li. Little by little the birds make their nest.

We tried to explain St. James' Big Mess to Louis. Knowing that Bigonet's sanitary system consists most often of open fields, occasionally of outhouses, and rarely, if ever, of a flush toilet it was tough to find words that would mean something to him. To imagine 2-4" of raw sewage throughout our base-ment? He did his best, finally saying, "I'm so sorry! I always tell people there are problem in all the world—everywhere—not only in Haiti."

Finally, And be sure to watch your mail boxes, as St. James begins our annual pledge drive to support teacher salaries in Bonne Nouvelle.



Bonne Nouvelle begins construction on a new church.



The Giving Garden

Vegetables from the garden are donated to the Minnehaha Food Shelf and other local food shelves.

2019 Work Days (10:00 AM – Noon)

- April 6
- May 4 – Spring Planting
- May 11
- June 8
- July 13
- August 10
- September 13
- October 12 – Final Clean-Up

Location:

St. James on the Parkway Episcopal Church,
3225 East Minnehaha Parkway
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55417

Want to volunteer?

Contact: vena.giving.garden@gmail.com



- 5/18** 10:00 AM Building Work Day: Gather in the Gallery
Tentative Date
- 5/19** See Sunday Schedule
- 5/20** 4:30 PM 3-Church Initiative Planning:
Lake Nokomis Lutheran
- 5/22** 7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal: Sanctuary
- 5/26** See Sunday Schedule
1:30 PM Laughing Waters Friends Meeting: Gallery
- 5/30** 7:00 PM Haiti Committee: Office
- 5/31** 7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal: Sanctuary

Sunday Schedule

- 8:00 AM Worship: Sanctuary
- 8:45 AM Coffee & Conversation: Gallery
- 9:30 AM Adult Forum: Gallery
- 10:00 AM Choir Rehearsal: Choir Room
- 10:15 AM PrayGround for kids and youth of all ages:
Sanctuary
- 10:30 AM Worship: Sanctuary
- 11:45 AM Coffee & Conversation: Gallery

- 5/1** 7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal: Sanctuary
- 5/5** See Sunday Schedule
- 5/8** 7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal: Sanctuary
- 5/12** See Sunday Schedule
- 5/14** 7:00 PM Vestry Meeting, Gallery
- 5/15** 7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal: Sanctuary
- 5/18** 11:15 AM Food Shelf, At-Taqwa Mosque,
1608 Como Avenue, St. Paul
(Info: olson248@gmail.com)

June Epistle

Submission Deadline: May 28

Send submissions to:

Ruth Anne Olson olson248@gmail.com

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Comments or suggestions are always welcome:

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