



# The Epistle

January 2020

The Episcopal Church of St. James on the Parkway

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

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## January is BUSY at St. James! Heads up from Fr. William

Here are events coming in January. Every one of them is important. So don't hibernate. Get in on the action!

### Epiphany Pageant

January 5 at 10:30 AM. Be sure to be part of this long-standing tradition at St. James—this one the last-ever on the Parkway.

### St. Luke's Visits St. James

On Sunday, January 12, St. Luke's Episcopal Church will not celebrate a liturgy at their building. Instead they will come to St. James. We expect a crowd of people eager to gather with us in the name of Jesus. Our adult forum will prepare us for meetings with candidates for Bishop of the Episcopal Church of Minnesota as described below. Our 8:00 and 10:30 AM liturgies will be conducted exactly as normal, and we will share enhanced coffee hours. The purpose of this visit is for the people of St. Luke's to learn more about us as our consolidation conversations proceed.

### St. Mary's Visits St. James

On Sunday, January 19, the people of St. Mary's Episcopal Church will worship with us at St. James. During Adult forum we'll discuss what we learned from meetings with Bishop candidates the prior week, and with our representatives to Convention who will cast our votes for Bishop on Saturday, January 25. Again, coffee hours will be enhanced, and we expect to be able to welcome a number of people. This is another Sunday not to be missed! As with St. Luke's visit, this visit is for the people of St. Mary's to learn more about us as our conversations proceed.

### Consolidation Team Meets

St. James' Consolidation Team will meet on Tuesday, January 7. On Saturday, January 11

it meets jointly with St. Luke's Team and on Thursday, January 16 with St. Mary's Team.

### Candidates for Tenth Bishop of Minnesota Take a Road Trip

The candidates for our Tenth Bishop, The Rev. Canon Abbott Bailey, and The Very Rev. Craig Loya, will begin their week of travels through the Episcopal Church in Minnesota with a great opportunity for you to meet them. On Monday, January 13, at 1:00 PM they will be at St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, 2300 Hamline Ave. N., Roseville. You are invited!

Then, on Friday, January 17 they will be at St. Mark's Cathedral at 6:00 PM. And again... you are invited!

During their week in Minnesota they will traverse the state. For their full schedule go to [MNBishopSearch.org](http://MNBishopSearch.org). There you can also learn lots more about these two excellent candidates.

### A New Bishop Is Elected

On Saturday, January 25 delegates to the ECMN Convention will convene at St. Mark's Cathedral. St. James three will be Rosemary Caspar, Katie Mytty, and Debbi Ramos. By the end of the meeting—at who knows what time?!?!—we will likely have our next bishop!

### Annual Meeting

At 9:00 AM on Sunday, January 26 the people of St. James will meet in our 2020 Annual Meeting. Members will be elected to the Vestry, 2019 ministries celebrated, and, as always, a report will be given on the progress of our consolidation efforts. If your baptism is registered at St. James and you have received Holy Communion at least 3 times in 2019 you have a vote. Exercise it!



## Join us for the St. James Epiphany Pageant – Sun., January 5: 10:30 AM

### “To Follow a Star”

Change is all around us. How do we as individuals, and as a community, try to embrace it?

To “live in what is unseen...” (Saint John Henry Newman)

To “let the lights we kindle shine forth for the world.” (Jewish prayerbook)

To “take it head on and welcome it.” (Pageant cast)

To “arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.” (T.S. Eliot)

“Just when the night becomes its darkest

And we cannot see our path....

Is when the angels rush in

Their hands full of stars.” (Ann Weems)

Join us!!

From Fr. William Heisley

## Finding Christmas lost

In early December Victor and I attended the Guthrie Theater’s production of Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*. I was excited because this would be Victor’s first time, and it would be the awakening of a long time Advent tradition for me when I lived in Philadelphia’s environs. Every year I spent an evening at the Annenberg Center being wowed by Christmas.

The wow factor was just as great this year. The production is absolutely stunning in every way. But seeing it started me thinking about what Christmas is/was/shall be/should be/can be. Yes, I know that there is movement in Dickens’ novella and in its play adaptations as the merciless, cruel Mr. Scrooge becomes the arbiter of grace for his family and for his city – and for us. But what does it say about our Christmases? About my Christmas?

I remember with great clarity Christmas moments of some 60 years ago. Gifts received. Snow falling. A wood fire heating and cheering the

house throughout the season. I remember “O Holy Night” sung every year by our church choir. And Christmas evening spent at our paternal grandparents’ farmhouse with my father’s five siblings, their spouses, and 19 of us grandchildren. And my grandmother putting small dishes of too little food on the table that always, some how, miraculously, became more than enough.

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**... too-little food that,  
miraculously became  
more than enough.**

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But then there was college. New traditions, including singing in the Muhlenberg College Choir for Christmas Lessons and Carols. And after college, working, traditions diminishing somewhat, becoming vestiges of their origins. Seminary brought work and lots of it at

Christmas. And parish ministry, well, the same. The first years were fun. But the fun seemed to decrease a little each year as I learned that all the new faces I saw on Christmas Eve were not making themselves eligible for evangelism and that I would not be seen again until 365 days later.

And the stories. The stories that we tell over and over about the animals and the shepherds and the angels and the inn and more, lost any sense of enchantment, any power to enthrall me. I began to feel empty about Christmas. I know people who feel lots more alienated from the holiday than I do. But the fact remains: many of us have lost Christmas.

If I’m lucky, you will be reading this during the twelve days of Christmas. It is dated for January 1st, the 8th day of the Feast. So how has Christmas been for you? Really? Too much? Too little? Of what? Gifts?

continued on page 3

## Finding Christmas lost

Continued from page 1

Money? Time? Family? Friends?  
Depression? Love?

### So how has Christmas been for you?

I think it's all about expectations. My expectations carried from childhood into adulthood were very high. It was to be the most wonderful time of the year. Today it's only a good time. But I think Thanksgiving is pretty

wonderful, too. And I feel like driving through the woods and by the horse farms near my house always makes for a wonderful day. And I love a day with friends on the lake. Love it. Maybe all of this is about differing expectations. I expect Christmastide to be magical and it turns out to be just okay.

But I've been working at changing my expectations. Instead of fretting about what is now, about how unwonderful a time, a place, a season, a holiday is, I try to focus on the moment. This moment. This time when I get a surprise hug from behind at church. Or this time when I sense that just like always, the people of St. James are faithful and full of life and we are fun.

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**... focus on the moment.  
This moment.**

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All of these things, in this moment. I now allow myself to smile, to even laugh, giving thanks to God for the great now. It is wonderful. It is truly magical. It is the power and the love and the beauty of God in Christ coming to us and living in us.

Maybe I need to set my expectations higher. Maybe I should expect Jesus the Incarnate One to make every moment shine with his glory. I bet He will.

## Service

# Take the 33 cent challenge

by Anne Scheible

"The man who removes a mountain begins by carrying away small stones." – Chinese proverb

Sometimes when I read the newspaper, the world's problems seem so overwhelming that I think there is nothing that can be done to solve them. When I start to feel that way, I remember this Chinese proverb about removing a mountain. It helps me to realize that I need to focus on the small steps that I can do that make a difference.

Small steps taken regularly do bring change – that's what the 33 Cent Challenge is all about. Perhaps we can't eliminate world hunger, but maybe we could alleviate hunger in our own neighborhood. Furthermore, what if we could do that with small, nearly painless steps. In today's economy 33 cents won't buy much – not even a cup of plain black coffee. But if we commit to setting aside 33 cents a day for a month that's \$10 and after twelve months that adds up to \$120. So, the

Minnehaha Food Shelf is asking you to consider making a recurring donation, online of \$10 per month. This provides stable funding for the food shelf so that it can better serve its clients in the Nokomis neighborhood. Plus, it's super easy to do. Just get online and go to the website

– [www.minnehaha.org/foodshelf.html](http://www.minnehaha.org/foodshelf.html). Hit the button marked "Donate" and go from there.

If you have any questions about the 33 Cent Challenge contact me by email at: [annebillscheible@gmail.com](mailto:annebillscheible@gmail.com)

## Minnehaha Food Shelf: Take the Challenge!



Your donation of 33 cents a day—\$10 per month—to support the Minnehaha Food Shelf will help us fight food insecurity in our neighborhood. Donate today at [www.minnehaha.org/foodshelf.html](http://www.minnehaha.org/foodshelf.html). Or scan the QR code below.



From Senior Warden Kerry Nelson

# Looking to the future while celebrating our history and traditions

As we turn the page of the calendar to 2020, we find members of St. James on the Parkway looking to the future while celebrating our history and traditions. For those who attended services during Advent, you were witness to the Advent Dance performed by a multigenerational troupe. Each week was a delight to see who would be participating. Thank you, Louise Robinson, for continuing the tradition. December 22nd saw the production of a multitude of stars in preparation for the annual Epiphany pageant. Though the number is small the production is sure to be mighty.

Many of you are struggling with the thought of leaving our building on the Parkway. Some were baptized here, some married and many have been worshipping at St. James for more than 30 years. As someone who is new to St. James (2 years now), I can appreciate the loss you are all experiencing, but being married to our Sexton,

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## being married to our Sexton ... has showed me the decaying of our worship space

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Vince Nelson, has also showed me the decaying of our worship space. Vince, Pat Morley and Beth Harvey receive almost daily contacts regarding loss of power, no heat, fire alarms ringing, ice, water leaks ... you name it, these three have seen it. They quietly go about fixing what they can themselves or contacting someone else when needed, trying their best to keep the building operational until the keys are turned over to ECMN. Hearing about the building issues on a daily basis has only reinforced our decision made to move forward in consolidation with St. Luke's or St. Mary's. We are grateful for their dedication to keeping our worship space safe and comfortable.

The consolidation process is moving along. We will be welcoming members from St. Luke's on January 12th to worship with us at St. James and from St. Mary's on January 19th. Please be sure to show them a warm St. James welcome. Besides the worship exchanges, the Consolidation Team will be meeting with each of the other

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## Please be sure to show them a warm St. James welcome

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teams in January as well as contacting corresponding members to discuss specific topics. For example, Rosemary Caspar met with the Education Director at St. Luke's to discuss their programs and ours. Each member of our team is responsible for certain areas – worship, music, property, service, governance, finance and education – and will work with those from St. Luke's and St. Mary's to learn as much as possible about what is done at their respective churches. Many of us have visited the two

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## team will provide you with the nuts and bolts of what goes on at each parish

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churches and have opinions about those experiences but the team also wants to provide you with the nuts and bolts of what goes on at each parish. Everyone needs as much information as possible in order to decide where to continue their worship and service after June 30th. Please reach out to one of the team members with any questions, comments or concerns. We welcome all input.

I feel very blessed to be a part of the St. James family and wish all of you a happy and healthy 2020 filled with love and respect for those around us.



## February Epistle

**Submission Deadline:**  
**January 28**

**Send submissions to:**  
**Ruth Anne Olson**  
**olson248@gmail.com**

**Publication Date:**  
**February 1**

**Comments or suggestions**  
**are always welcome:**

**Content: Ruth Anne Olson**  
**Design & Publication:**  
**Beth Harvey**

## Adult Forum

# Our part in selecting a new Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Minnesota

by Tony Morley

Adult Forum is the usually informal time (9:30-10:25 AM) between services Sunday mornings when grown-ups sit for conversation (sometimes pretty serious) with each other. With several major events coming up, January offers a varied menu.

**Jan. 5 — 2 Christmas:** Epiphany Pageant at 10:30 AM today. No formal Adult Forum topic.

**Jan. 12 — 1 Epiphany:** We'll talk about candidates and issues in the upcoming election (Jan. 25) of a new Episcopal bishop for Minnesota. Open meetings in the Twin Cities will hear the candidates in person and ask them questions on the 13th and 17th. We will discuss what to ask and what to listen for. Parishioners from St. Luke's will worship with St. James this Sunday, and we'll invite them to visit Adult Forum too. Tony Morley will lead discussion.

**Jan. 19 — 2 Epiphany:** This Sunday will continue pre-election discussion of choosing a new bishop on Jan. 25. People who heard the candidates during the week before, may report their impressions. Also, parishioners from St. Mary's may be present, specially invited to worship with us this Sunday. Tony Morley will lead discussion.

**Jan. 26 — 3 Epiphany:** Annual Parish Meeting for St. James today, starting at 9:00 AM. No Adult Forum.

From the Treasurer John Heintz

## Financial Report: November 30, 2019

Through November, our budget is in somewhat better shape than we expected. Pledge payments were about \$7 thousand below budget, while other income was about \$12 thousand above budget.

Total expenses ran \$6,400 lower than budget. Result: an end-of-November operating deficit of \$17,779, about \$11,000 better than expected.

Our cash reserves have dropped since the beginning of the year, as expected when we budgeted an operating deficit. But they are sufficient to carry us through the end of the year and to accommodate the Vestry's spending plans through June 30th, absent any unforeseen problems. Think warm thoughts to keep utility bills down and keep those pledges up to date to help us finish the year on budget.

	YTD Budget	YTD Actual	over / (under)
<b>Pledged Income</b>	\$107,982	\$100,792	(\$7,190)
<b>Other Income</b>	\$57,627	\$69,466	\$11,839
<b>Total Income</b>	\$165,609	\$170,258	\$4,649
<b>Expenses</b>	\$194,431	\$188,037	(\$6,394)
<b>Net</b>	(\$28,822)	(\$17,779)	(\$11,043)

**Non-budget Restricted Funds:** The Balance Sheet also shows the following restricted-fund balances: Mary Anderson Better Space: \$112; Haiti Fund \$10,808; Tri-Faith Grant \$2,789 (this grant will be closed out and liquidated in December's financial statement); Piotrowski Music, \$693; Piotrowski Altar \$1,754; Priest's Discretionary \$121.

Onè! Respe! (Honor! Respect!)

# What does it take to build a church in Haiti?

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

## It clearly takes faith.

In March 2018 our friends in Bigonet told us they were ready to build a new church. For more than eight years Bonne Nouvellians had been worshipping in a hovel—scrap plywood, tarps, sheets of tin and crumbling cement block. All the while, people came to church. Dressed to the nines! Filled with praise. Filling the air with music, joy and ..... yes, faith.

## It takes patience.

Since earthquake destroyed their church in 2010, each month Bonne Nouvelle has taken a special collection for re-construction. Yearly cash incomes averaging less than \$500—it took eight years to collect enough gourde to pay an engineer to come up the mountain and approve a building site. Then it took months for people to carry rocks from the river—to stabilize the hillside and build the foundation.

No one asks when the church will be finished. Everyone does what they can, when they can. Patient that, someday, it will be complete.

## It takes trust.

Bonne Nouvelle's leaders trust themselves, trust that people will show up when needed. The men, offering time and muscle without pay, who dug 4-5 feet deep into mountain rock—and then hefted rebar 20 feet into the air. The women who bend over charcoal fires, cooking lunch for the workers. The people who each Sunday convert this construction site back into a place of worship. They trust one another.



They also trust the people of St. James. I've lost track of the number of MoneyGrams we've sent in 2019. \$500. \$1,000. One big boost of \$3,000. Haiti Committee treasurer Kurt Hall can tell you exactly where it came from. And the people of Bonne Nouvelle tell us exactly where it's gone. Rebar, cement, washed sand, and more. Every dollar is spent, every dollar is accounted for.

## It takes imagination.

Imagining a future. Imagining a friendship. Imagining how our futures can continue to weave us together—even in the midst of St. James uncertainties of where our own church will be six months from now.

All that and more is what it takes to build a church in Haiti. All that

and more is the opportunity that Sue Maas and Steve Scofield offer in the GoFundMe website they created, to help build the church in Bigonet. As I write, 22 people have contributed. The total for now is \$737. That's a ways from Sue and Steve's goal of \$5,000, but every contribution moves it closer. We purposely aim this appeal outside of St. James—inviting our own community, not to give money, but to spread the word wherever you can. Maybe you know someone who has \$10, \$20. Maybe \$100. Maybe you'd be willing to [click here](#) and send them the link. The people of Bonne Nouvelle have seemingly-unshakeable faith and patience. Trust and imagination. Who do you know who'd like to be part of that?

## Transitions

# Dancing and weaving. Collective and individual.

By Ruth Anne Olson,  
Transition Coordinator

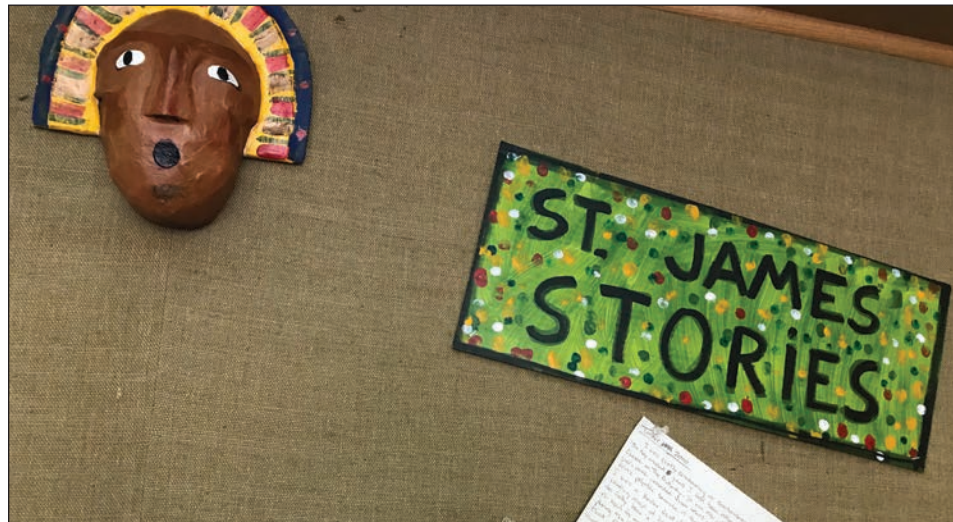
Our recent advent dancers led me to the image of St. James as a community of dancers—weaving our hands and bodies through the collective and individual decisions we face in this year ahead.

Consolidation offers a vibrant collective focus, “to create a path whereby St. James will sustain its mission and create its future—taking to the consolidated parish, not only some of our people, but also some of our ministries, partnerships, traditions, governance and artifacts.”

Elsewhere in this *Epistle* is lots of information about formal collective consolidation activities that you’ll want to be part of. But in the meantime, I urge you to strike out on your own. Take a look at St. Luke’s and St. Mary’s websites. (St. Mary’s: <https://saintmarysepiscopal.org> St. Luke’s: <https://www.st-lukes.net/>) Look especially at their calendars of activities, offering opportunities for each of us to participate in their lives. Tony and I recently went to St. Mary’s Thursday evening contemplative service. And Cliff and Liz Athorn have gone to activities at St. Luke’s. I know of several St. James folks planning to worship at one or both, “on their own”—to see what it’s like when no one’s primed for a visit.

Questions, reactions or ideas? Please be in touch with our Consolidation Team. Cliff Athorn, [cathorn6@gmail.com](mailto:cathorn6@gmail.com); Rosemary Caspar, [rlcaspar@gmail.com](mailto:rlcaspar@gmail.com); Tony Morley, [ajm.tony@gmail.com](mailto:ajm.tony@gmail.com); and Fr. William Heisley [wheisley@mac.com](mailto:wheisley@mac.com).

We’re also finding for ways to take care of one another, for no matter how



vigorously we look at the bright side, we all acknowledge that closing our building is hard work that inevitably, bring sadness and loss.

To share our past, collectively, Neal Cuthbert has created a space in the narthex for photos, drawings, and written word. As I write this, it’s looking pretty bare. So, please post your stories and memories. Invite friends and family once part of St. James to add to it. Bring them to church when you come on Sunday, or mail them to St. James (3225 East Minnehaha Parkway, Minneapolis 55417) marking the envelope “Stories”. Or email them to me, and I’ll make sure they’re added [olson248@gmail.com](mailto:olson248@gmail.com).

In the weeks to come, watch for ideas (and requests for help) from Louis Hoffman, Host Extraordinaire! He’s volunteered to organize a spring-time celebration gala—date to be announced! Or better yet, email him with your own notions: [hoffman.louis@comcast.net](mailto:hoffman.louis@comcast.net).

Collective opportunities to take care of each other abound. So, too, do the individual. Ask someone at coffee

hour—“What do you think of all this?” or “What do you think your family might do after June 30?” Keep the Consolidation Team in your prayers. Thank them for their work, or let them know what you’re thinking.

Finally, transitions involve property and finance. The individual and collective came together in our recent successful stewardship drive. Soon to come is Kerry and Vince Nelson’s offer to take inventory of our property—memorial benches, altar supplies, office equipment, etc. Let them know if you can help [kjnven@gmail.com](mailto:kjnven@gmail.com). Maybe think ahead to an eventual garage sale of items unlikely to find a home in a newly consolidated parish.

We’ve learned that the Episcopal Church of Minnesota’s (ECMN) Standing Committee and Trustees have recently developed a Property Committee that will be instrumental in decisions about St. James property and endowment. So far we know little about how they’ll be willing to engage us in that process but, on our end, we’ll continue to strive for a participatory and transparent process with them.



## Sunday Schedule

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

**1/1** 7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal: Sanctuary  
**1/5** See Sunday Schedule  
 10:30 AM **Epiphany Pageant**, Sanctuary  
**1/7** 7:00 PM Consolidation Team: Gallery  
**1/8** 7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal: Sanctuary  
**1/11** 7:00 PM Joint Consolidation Teams —  
 St. James & St. Luke's: at St. Luke's  
**1/12** **St. Luke's visits St. James**  
 See Sunday Schedule

**1/13** Bishop Candidate Road Trip  
 1:00 PM St. Christopher's, 2300 Hamline Ave N,  
 Roseville  
 6:30 PM St. Paul's, Duluth (Also live streamed  
 on ECMN Facebook page)  
**1/14** 7:00 PM Vestry Meeting: Gallery  
**1/15** 7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal: Sanctuary  
**1/16** 6:30 PM Yarn Crafters, Gallery  
 7:00 PM Joint Consolidation Teams —  
 St. James & St. Mary's: at St. Mary's  
**1/17** 6:00 PM Bishop Candidate Road Trip,  
 St. Mark's Cathedral (Also live streamed  
 on ECMN Facebook page)  
**1/18** 11:15 AM Food Shelf, At-Taqwa Mosque,  
 1608 Como Avenue, St. Paul.  
**1/19** **St. Mary's visits St. James**  
 See Sunday Schedule  
**1/22** 7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal: Sanctuary  
**1/25** 10:00 AM Building Work Day  
 ECMN Convention convenes to elect Bishop X  
**1/26** 9:00 AM **Annual Meeting**, Sanctuary  
 See Sunday Schedule  
 1:30 PM Laughing Waters Friends Meeting: Gallery  
**1/27** 7:00 PM Haiti Committee Meeting, Office  
**1/29** 7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal: Sanctuary



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A Community Growing in Christ,  
 Called to Worship, Learn, and Serve.