



The Epistle

October 2019

The Episcopal Church of St. James on the Parkway

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

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From Fr. William Heisley

The Way of Love

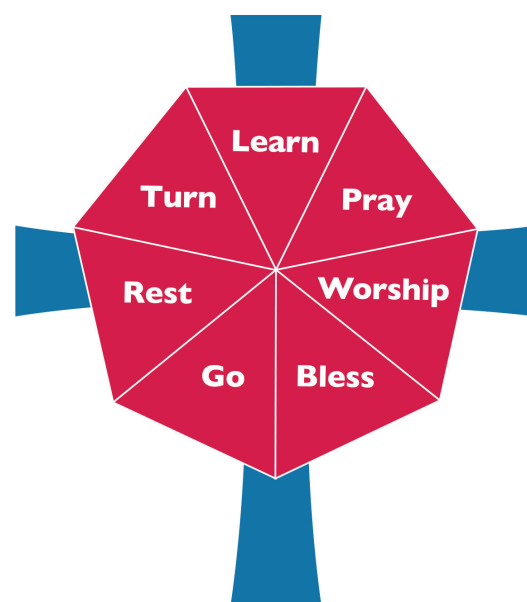
You would think that we would know how to love. That’s pretty much a topic that underlies everything that we are as Christians. And yet, we need to constantly learn and relearn how love can be practiced.

At the 2019 Convention of the Episcopal Church in Minnesota on September 13 and 14 your lay delegates, Jinny Bouvette, Rosemary Caspar, and Debbi Ramos, joined me to learn more about love. Our Presiding Bishop, Michael Curry, has asked us to delve deeply into the Way of Love as the way of living for all Christians. To that end, during our next five Sunday morning adult forums (9:30 AM in the Gallery) I will assist Tony Morley in leading discussions about each of the movements of the Way of Love: Turn, Learn, Pray, Worship, Bless, Go, Rest. These are practices of a Jesus-Centered life. Go to episcopal-church.org and click on the Way of Love to see a beautiful video in which Bishop Curry introduces the topic.

Then, practice. Take up your Cross as a blessing. Take up your Bible as comfort. Take up your Community and Family as holy opportunities.

As your Transition Priest I feel called to walk with you on the Way of Love through the difficulties that each of us faces as St. James seeks the guidance of the Holy Spirit for our future. This is not an easy road to follow. But if we think about how we might walk on the Way of Love during our transition we will be blessed to bless each other and the Church in the process.

First, it is incumbent on each of us, everyone in their own way, to turn from our



THE WAY OF LOVE *Practices for Jesus-Centered Life*

desires to maintain things as they are. Wise people have well said that maintaining the status quo means dying. That is true more than ever for churches. We are called to turn to peer into the heart of the Spirit to truly see God at work in our midst.

Second, we must continue to learn. St. James has been exploring the idea of transitioning to something new in many ways for many years. Now we have narrowed our investigations to several ideas that seem to hold high interest among us and that promise to be life giving. Foremost is the idea of consolidating with another Episcopal congregation. Our recent straw

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The Way of Love

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poll/survey shows that many of us have been very serious in this learning and that we all need to continue to learn about our friends and neighbors in other congregations.

Third, in all of this each of us must remain grounded in prayer. As Bishop Curry says, our prayer does not need to take up much time (if it does, so much the better!) but it should take up a central role in our daily living. Set aside a bit of quiet time when it seems best for you, to simply be silent, to let God speak, to listen, to let thoughts wash over your consciousness, and to give thanks for the breath that you are breathing.

Fourth, join a faith community in gathering around the table set forth by Jesus every Sunday morning. In eating and drinking together we worship the living God coming to us in the person of Jesus the Christ as we can in no other way. Eat and drink and be nourished by food that will carry us through every step of our journey together.

Fifth, bless all whom you meet. Smile and be polite, certainly. But more: see the face of the Christ whom you have met in worship in the face of all humanity. Bless others with your understanding and graciousness, even in the depths of our current anxiety, and thereby encourage them in their living. They will be blessed by God through you.

Sixth, go into your life boldly. Times of transition wear us down. But know that going into our transitions with the bold confidence that we are following the Way of Love will supply all of the energy that we need. And our transition will bear fruit for the building of God's Kingdom, giving us excitement to learn what God is going to do next.

Seventh, and last, but not least, rest. Our bodies, our minds, and our spirits, all of us needs rest to rebuild, to refresh, to renew us for our Return.

I hope that you will consider these movements of the love of Christ in us and through us as the great privilege of being God's faithful in this time, in each of our places, and wherever the power of the Spirit might carry us.

Walk in the Way of Love.

From Senior Warden Kerry Nelson “Engaged” is the word for us all

September is always an exciting month. It's full of change – new school year, cooler weather, football! It also is the start of new things at St. James.

The choir returned on September 8th which brings joy to all of us. We are so fortunate to hear such wonderful music and voices each week.

On September 15th, we unanimously approved a change to the St. James bylaws allowing for absentee voting for any parish-wide items.

We also had a terrific turnout of parishioners creating some wonderful new peace flags. Thank you to Neal and Louise for all the supplies and inspiration. It was my first experience seeing how the flags were created and I loved the different interpretations. What creative minds at St. James! I was given some flags to take home and have them displayed on our front porch to share with our neighbors.

September was also busy with transition work. The straw poll was sent out with over 50 responses. Thank you to the working group for the development of the poll, the tallying of the results and the work plan to be presented to the Vestry October 8th. More information to come, so please read your emails from St. James. If you don't use e-mail, be sure to let Beth know and she can mail you all the communications. We want everyone to be informed.

The word for this school year is ENGAGED. We all need to be engaged in what is happening at St. James. There is so much going on and everyone is welcome to participate.

Any questions, comments, concerns – email me at kerry1316@charter.net or call me at 920-915-6429.

November Epistle

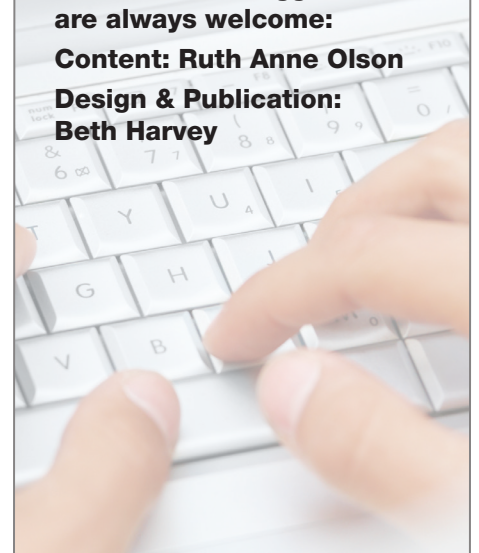
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Send submissions to:
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olson248@gmail.com

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November 1

Comments or suggestions
are always welcome:

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What do you most want to strengthen?

By Ruth Anne Olson, Transition Coordinator

Our recent straw poll showed strong interest in merging or consolidating with another Episcopal parish. You'll see more about that as our Vestry develops a parish work plan. But a basic question is, "What in the world would that mean?"

First, let's start with the label. Fr. William has long favored the word consolidation over merger. To consolidate means to unite two things, into a single stronger, effective and more robust whole. It's a good word; let's go with it.

**Consolidation is ...
honoring, strengthening,
preserving and, together,
creating something
stronger.**

St. Luke's and St. Mary's were highest on our collective responses on the straw poll. Frankly, it's actually fun to think of consolidation with either

of them. Identifying objects — things like puppets, peace flags, vestments, even the Piotrowski bench—and planning how they could become one with similar artifacts of the other. Focusing on what's special about our music and making it whole with what's special to others. Creating bylaws that are true to the individuality of each consolidating-parish.

Consolidation is much more than simply being welcomed into a new place. It's a coming together of two peoples. It's honoring, strengthening, preserving and, together, creating some-thing stronger.

On October 8, the Vestry will develop a work plan, which likely will include steps toward consolidation. Importantly, this will be a plan for the work of the Vestry; it will be, instead a plan for the work of the Parish. As such, it will require your help—your ideas—your time.

So please, between now and then, think about what you want to do for St. James in our next life. Are you passionate about preserving and strengthening our worship? Our adult forum? Children's education? Our partnership

with Bonne Nouvelle? Our social life as a community? Some other aspect of St. James that's central to your love of who we are?

Then commit yourself to 5, 6, 7 hours in the upcoming months to shaping how those aspects of our lives can be mutually strengthened with others. Maybe with St. Luke's? Maybe with St. Mary's?

On October 8 the vestry also will commit to a timeline—a date on which they will hand responsibility for our building and grounds to the Episcopal Church of Minnesota (aka the Diocese). Soon after Easter, in April 2020—7 months from now? At the end of December 2020—15 months from now? A date in between? How much time do you think we need to get the job done? How long do you want to commit to the work of St. James where we are now?

Talk to or email Fr. William, Sr. Warden Kerry Nelson or other members of the vestry. Talk to or email me olson248@gmail.com. Please, before October 8, please tell us where your heart leads you.

Adult Forum

Rules of the road for The Way of Love

By Tony Morley

Sunday morning Adult Forum will probe the possibilities opened up by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's "rule of life for the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement."

Curry urges seven practices for parishioners to weave together as a fabric of ongoing spiritual growth.

The seven were a theme for reflection at the ECMN convention in September. One-by-one, Adult Forum at St. James is delving into them this fall. The conversation looks for meanings and challenges behind Curry's seven shorthand titles: Turn, Learn, Pray, Worship, Bless, Go, Rest.

To see Bp. Curry online and hear a 20-minute discussion of

each practice, go to wayoflove@episcopalchurch.org then choose the segment you want from "season 1" or "season 2".

Adult Forum meets Sunday mornings in the Gallery, 9:30-10:25 — with coffee and more, and discussion led by Fr. Heisley and Tony Morley. This focus on The Way of Love will continue through November 3.

Onè! Respe! (Honor! Respect!)

Our Haitian family — firmly in our corner

By Sue Maas, on behalf of
the St. James Haiti Committee

Despite continued political unrest and an inflation rate in Haiti of over 19 percent – for food, it's a staggering 22 percent – Bonne Nouvelle School is open and students are returning for the year. Students slated to take the national exam this year started in September; the rest were scheduled to begin in October. As principal Louis Noncent explained in our September phone call, "it's difficult for parents to have students be ready for school. [It's] difficult to get uniforms, books . . . all of this."

Teachers are doubly burdened, Louis added. "It's hard for everybody; worse for the teachers. They have kids too." Since the beginning of our partnership a decade ago, we've witnessed this community's extraordinary commitment to education, so it's not surprising that staff, students, and families are defying the odds to begin another school year.

In fact, in the midst of all this uncertainty, they've added a part-time music teacher! One spark for all this was a gift to Bonne Nouvelle from The Kenwood Retirement Community in Minneapolis. Spearheaded by one of their residents who is a retired music teacher, The Kenwood sent a keyboard and a classroom-set of recorders. The new instructor, who will work with students in grades 5 through 8, expressed hopes for drums. Special thanks to Haiti Committee cochair Louise Robinson and her husband Neal Cuthbert for finding and purchasing a drum kit. And as the *Epistle* goes to press, the Haiti Committee is working on buying a used set of conga drums to send along with the kit when our long-time interpreter, Roulío Lundy, brings

Bonne Nouvelle's Madame Miti
2009 – age 109

a truck to Haiti by boat later this fall.

By continuing to expand, bit by bit, Bonne Nouvelle School, and through their steady progress on building a new church (see Ruth Anne Olson's September *Epistle* update), our friends are showing us yet again how to move forward with confidence and joy in times of doubt.

While Louis was sad and a bit shaken to learn details of St. James' upcoming transition, with the many question marks – including our partnership's future – around that process, he reminded us that "God is the one who knows everything. He will guide us to the right way."

Finally, we've learned that Bonne Nouvelle's very longtime member, Madame Miti, has died. St. James first met her in 2009, when Louise, Ruth Anne and Regina Williams were visiting Bigonet — and saw her riding her donkey to church. Madame Miti was then 109 years old. About her extraordinarily life, Louis said, "She was still on her feet at 110 and 114. Maybe recently, for three months, her legs were not able to work."

We are lucky to have our Haitian family in our corner. Let's continue keeping them in our prayers as they faithfully keep us in theirs.



Bishop Search

To meet the candidates

In June 2020, St. James convention delegates Debra Ramos and Rosemary Caspar will cast ballots for the election of a new Bishop for the Episcopal Church of Minnesota (ECMN).

At September's ECMN Convention, Debra took a screen shot of the schedule for the Candidate Road Trip—opportunities in January for all of us to engage in this process. Take a look, and mark your calendars to attend one or more of these meetings. Let's back Debra and Rosemary toward informed decisions.



Bishop Candidate Road Trip

Monday, January 13

- Forum
St. Christopher's, Roseville
1:00 – 3:00 PM
- Forum
St. Paul's, Duluth
6:00 – 8:00 PM

Tuesday, January 14

- Forum
Shooting Star Casino, Mahnommen
6:00 – 8:00 PM

Wednesday, January 15

- Forum
St. John's, Mankato
6:00 – 8:00 PM

Thursday, January 16

- Forum
The Inn at Shattuck, Faribault
6:00 – 8:00 PM

Friday, January 17

- Forum
St. Mark's Cathedral, Minneapolis
6:00 – 8:00 PM

ECMN Bishop Search Prayer

God of light and life, you have faithfully guided the people of the Episcopal Church in Minnesota since the very beginning. You have raised up hard-working and entrepreneurial leaders, blessed us with racial and cultural diversity, deepened our faith, given us the courage to stand with neighbors who are struggling, and increased our awareness of your presence and activity. Help us to trust your Holy Spirit as we open our minds and hearts to discern the leader who can help us participate in your preferred and promised future. In the name of Jesus, the one who came to share our place and free us from everything that keeps us from your love so we can live for others. Amen.



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

10/2 7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal: Sanctuary
10/6 See Sunday Schedule
10/8 7:00 PM Vestry Meeting: Gallery
10/9 7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal: Sanctuary
10/13 See Sunday Schedule
10/16 7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal: Sanctuary
10/17 6:30 PM Yarn Crafters, Gallery
(Info: Debbier582002@yahoo.com)
10/20 See Sunday Schedule
10/23 7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal: Sanctuary
10/26 10:00 AM Building Work Day
10/27 See Sunday Schedule
1:30 PM Laughing Waters Friends Meeting:
Gallery
10/30 7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal: Sanctuary



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