



The Epistle

December 2017

The Episcopal Church of St. James on the Parkway

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

Learn about *Reviving* SISTERHOOD on December 3rd

Please plan to join us at 9:00 AM in Chapel Hall on December 3 for a presentation from the founder and executive director of Reviving the Islamic Sisterhood for Empowerment (RISE). Nausheena Hussain has been a member of the team of individuals that has been meeting to discuss the possibility of a tri-faith community involving the St. James parish, and she was one of the Masters of Ceremonies for the July 4 This is America event. In this session, we will take a pause from our long-term planning and focus on developing our relationship, and learn more about the wonderful work that RISE has done.



Women account for 50% of the population but are grossly underrepresented in politics, the business sector, and in their communities leadership. Upon closer look, Muslim women are often hidden, lost or completely absent. And when Muslim women step up into leadership positions, they face a triple barrier with gender inequity, racial bias, and religious discrimination. This session examines how Muslim women are challenging the narrative, creating change, and transforming their communities.



Nausheena Hussain



Devoted to the Love of Christ

The Rev. William Heisley

I am struck by the reality as I sit to write this that Advent is for us who are devoted to the love of Christ for a tired world to be ever more about the end of things and beginning of things. The Church Year has ended and the calendar year is nearly over and we are reminded that old things become new.

I write this because I need to hear it, to read it, to live into it.

The Tri-Faith Interfaith event that we hosted on the 4th of July was a stunning time. What was old was becoming new as long held misunderstanding and long felt hopes met together. Muslims and Jews are not fearsome people but are rather "people of the book," just like Christians. That misunderstanding, along with so many others, began to melt away in the

St. James neighborhood as we held up for all to see the beauty of sharing our mutual respect and love for one another and for our traditions. And seen this event was!

This Sunday, the First Sunday of Advent, is the point in the year at which we stop and say that we need to let go of old misunderstandings and fill our spirits with new hopes and dreams. When we gather at 9 AM in the Chapel Hall this week that will be our continuing purpose.

Advent is not about marking delineations between people, not about underlining the sinful divisions that rise across our nation ever more forcefully. It's about finally saying, no, shouting, that all that divides us is wrong. It is evil. Now, for something new.

I woke this morning to the news that yet another respected person in our culture has been charged with misconduct and has been discharged from his position. I felt terrible. For a moment. And then it hit me: We have been longing for, working for, praying for a visitation from God that "would tear open the heavens... so that the mountains would quake at (God's) presence." This quotation from Isaiah (64:1) will be read in churches across the land this Sunday, December 3. Let its reading be a part of our ongoing, devout prayer.

And let us hear clearly the final words of the same passage, words that will echo through all of us as they are proclaimed this week: "Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people." (Isaiah 64:9)

From the Senior Warden Neal Cuthbert

Spirit-filled, Reflecting Time of Year

My deepest and best-est (I know that's not a word but for some reason it feels very heartfelt today!) wishes to everyone in the St. James community in hopes that you have a blessed, hope-filled and loving holiday. This is an emotional, spirit-filled, reflective and reflecting time of year. Because of this, as well as this being one of my last *Epistles*, there are a couple of messages I want to talk about. The first (and you'll notice a theme with some of the other articles in this *Epistle*) is to talk a little about what it's been like to be Senior Warden and why it's been a treat. The second is a reminder of how important it is in the midst of our Advent season for us as a community to look to each other and participate in our stewardship campaign to support all of the amazing things that happen because of the life of this parish of people.

First message:

What does the Senior Warden do? There are descriptions of the role provided by the Episcopal Church, but practically the Senior Warden is the Officer who works most closely with the Priest. For me this has meant regular (and fun) meetings with William to discuss a wide variety of concerns, observations, and issues. These can range from news from and about the diocese to the well-being of individual parishioners as well as William. The two of us also plan the agendas for the monthly vestry meetings and plan and lead our annual retreat. I also work closely with Ted, our junior warden, to plan and think through all of the needs and issues of our campus. With our treasurer, Kerry, I work to frame up a budget for the upcoming year for the vestry's approval. And certainly there are various odds and ends that come up all the time, sometimes from Beth, our amazing Officer Manager, but also

from the many areas touched on by the life of our parish. These past few years there has also been other duties including working with the Acorn 2020 process, the resulting workgroups, and of course the several transitions we've had with staff and our Priest. If that sounds like a lot, it's not really, because each comes with a gift of being carried to me by a member of our parish. And that just makes it fun and interesting and a joy.

It's a role that's not a burden but an amazing way of getting a bird's eye view of the broad life of our parish. It's a view that everyone on the vestry gets as well, which is why I'd highly

recommend vestry service to anyone who is even slightly interested.

Second message:

Our stewardship campaign. Pledge letters and forms are on their way to you and will be followed by calls of appreciation and reminder for your support of and participation in the St. James community. This is a remarkable place in all of our lives so please consider your annual pledge, send it in or bring it to church on December 17th, and help us meet our goal so we can have another remarkable year!!!

Nominating Committee Active

Ruth Anne Olson, Chair

St. James' Nominating Committee is excited by the opportunities and varied talents we see waiting in the wings for upcoming 2018 elections. And we invite everyone engaged in St. James to look into your hearts to ponder this kind of service to the parish.

In this *Epistle* Neal Cuthbert and Ted Gerold have described the duties and rewards of being senior and junior warden. Open senior and junior wardens positions will each serve one-year terms 2018-2019.

In addition, we have openings for vestry members, officers and convention delegates:

The Vestry is St. James six-member board of directors. It meets once a month and works best when it includes people with a range of experience of the parish—old-timers and newcomers. Mary Nease, Deb Ramos, Karen Alexander and Katie Mytty currently serve on the Vestry and plan to complete

terms to expire in 2019 or 2020.

Two vestry member positions are open, for three-year terms 2018-2021.

Officers include clerk and treasurer—who respectively record the proceedings of the Vestry and maintain financial records of the parish. Clerk and treasurer positions are open for one-year terms 2018-2019.

Lay delegates represent St. James at the annual convention of the Episcopal Church of Minnesota (ECMN)—in 2018, September 14 and 15 in Mankato. Delegate and alternate positions are open for three-year terms, 2018-2021.

For more information, please contact any member of the committee. Neal Cuthbert, ncuthbert7634@gmail.com; Ted Gerold, tedgerold@yahoo.com; Ruth Anne Olson, olson248@gmail.com; or Anne Scheible, anebillscheible@gmail.com.

From the Junior Warden Ted Gerold

Building Assessment and a New Junior Warden

The assessment of the building and infrastructure continues. The vestry will have a draft report from MacDonald & Mack Architects in the last week of November. A representative from the firm will attend the December 14th vestry meeting to answer questions. A final report will be provided to the congregation, and there will be a congregational meeting to allow parishioners to ask questions and offer comments. At the St. James annual meeting in January, the final report will be presented to the congregation, and new vestry members will be elected. The newly commissioned vestry will carry on the work of addressing the recommendations from the assessment.

A *Vestry Resource Guide* provided by the Episcopal Church Foundation offers some sample vestry job descriptions. In addition to general vestry commitments and responsibilities, these are some suggested responsibilities

of the junior warden:

- Work with the rector and senior warden to provide leadership to the vestry and congregation.
- Demonstrate a consistently positive attitude that seeks to solve problems, recognize accomplishments and give thanks for those things that build community and further the mission of the Church.
- Where the junior warden is responsible for property maintenance:
 - Understand property maintenance needs
 - Be able to work with service providers and to motivate congregants to take responsibility for maintenance work
 - Establish and oversee seasonal maintenance, periodic safety checks, and a process for obtaining contractor services as needed
 - Chair or work with the chair of a maintenance committee

Specific job descriptions and responsibilities should be discussed with prospective junior warden candidates, and candidates should ask questions and express concerns. An agreement should be established regarding the scope and expectations of the position. These suggestions offer a starting point for the junior warden position.

In my personal experience, I've found these things to be important and useful:

- Recognition of issues and priorities
- Communication
- Requesting assistance
- Delegating
- Accepting limitations

I have also always felt a great sense of support from the congregation and from God. I trust that this support will also be there for the new junior warden, whoever he or she may be.

Service at St. James

by Anne Scheible

Holiday Food Drive

Although we completed our Fall Food Drive just a couple of weeks ago, the Minnehaha Food Shelf is in need of both food and cash to get through this holiday season. Please bring in cash, canned goods and shelf stable items to help with this need.

First Nations Kitchen

Sunday, January 7th is our first dinner at First Nations Kitchen. The volunteer sign-up sheet is on the door to the Chapel Hall. First Nations Kitchen is located at All Saints Episcopal Church at 3044 Longfellow Ave. Every Sunday evening they serve

a community meal using healthy and indigenous foods. Contact Anne Scheible if you have questions at 612-619-9692.

Families Moving Forward

We now have a time for the volunteer training for "Families Moving Forward." The training will be January 13, 2018 from 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Reminder: "Families Moving Forward" is the hosting program for families needing emergency housing sponsored by Beacon Interfaith. Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church has hosted families for several years and has invited our church and Minnehaha United Methodist Church to join them for 2018.



January 7, 2018 volunteering at First Nations Kitchen dinner, 3044 Longfellow Ave.

January 10, 2018 will be the Food Shelf Pasta Dinner Fundraiser From 5:00 – 7:00 PM at Minnehaha United Methodist Church

April 1 – April 8, 2018 – We will be helping Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church with hosting "Families Moving Forward".



A New Home for ECMN

From the Bishop's Blog, November 28, 2017

The Rt. Rev. Brian N. Prior
Bishop, Episcopal Church in Minnesota

There's something about "new" that most people find satisfying. Even if it is only "new to you" there's something that brings a sense of enthusiasm. Sometimes it isn't material goods, but going to a new restaurant, theater, or hiking trail that can generate just as much excitement. And often, the anticipation of something new coming our way is as thrilling as the actual thing itself.

I love the season of Advent. The anticipation, the expectation, the hope of this time of year, feeds my soul. Personally, I like to ease into it. No Christmas lights the day after Halloween for me. Rather, I like living in the space of waiting, watching and wondering, because it causes me to ponder and reflect on that which I am hoping is coming. Too much pre-Christmas, for me spoils both the anticipation, and frankly takes a little awe and wonder out of Christmas. Honestly, I have

been seduced by immediate gratification, like most of us, which is why, in part, I really try to appreciate the spiritual discipline of waiting which Advent provides for us.

In many respects, I have been living in an Advent space for the last six months. And I know I am not the only one, because almost every encounter I have with someone in ECMN in recent times includes, "Are we there yet?"

During these conversations, for my own psyche, I have leaned heavily on my Advent disciplines – even if it was only September or October. I have tried to embrace the waiting, watching, wondering about what the new "there" will be like for us. Well, I could not be more pleased to tell you that we are now there – our new ECMN Offices on Broadway and Emerson in North Minneapolis!

As I previously mentioned, there is a lot of excitement for our "new" space. Yet the excitement goes far beyond the newness, to all the possibilities of what the Spirit will manifest in this new space. Beyond the offices of the Bishop and Missioners, we will have multiple new gathering spaces

that will accommodate from 6 to 100, office space for partners and a completely remodeled Sammy's Cafe – one of our favorite caterers! As well, we are fortunate to have over 70 off street parking spaces and all of this within minutes from both I-94 and downtown Minneapolis.

However, as exciting as new can be, there always comes a time of adjusting and living into one's new reality. It was clear that the "new" Messiah that folks were anticipating was different than what most had imagined. And yet, as we can all attest to now, this changed not only their lives, but the world, in ways far beyond what anyone could have expected. While we do not have messianic expectations for our new space, we do have great hopes that it, too, will be a space, a container, where God's mission will be engaged, the Kingdom of God will come near and transformation will take place.

Stay tuned for the upcoming Blessing of the Building and Open House!

Onè! Respe! (Honor! Respect!)

Moving Forward in Friendship

By Ruth Anne Olson on behalf of the Haiti Committee

Visitors from Bonne Nouvelle.

In last month's Epistle the Haiti Committee had just learned that the U. S. Embassy in Port au Prince had stamped "Denied" on the visa applications submitted by four Bonne Nouvellians whose Minnesota visit we were expecting in November. We'd invested time, money and dreams in the process; we were disappointed, even angry, to be stopped in our tracks.

But we're delighted to say that in the weeks since—with lots of discussion within each of our communities, and several phone conversations across our communities—St. Jamesians and Bonne Nouvellians have developed Plan B.

And, briefly here it is. Some of the visas from earlier Bonne Nouvelle visits in 2013 and 2015 are still valid, plus BN's new priest already has a valid U.S. visa. So—since "new" visitors couldn't come in November, we'll host "return" visitors in February or March. It'll be a shorter visit than usual, and activities will be a little different—designed to deepen relationships rather than to introduce them to life in Minnesota.

In the past weeks we've learned how wonderful it can be when good friends face problems and move forward together. As Bonne Nouvelle's principal Louis Noncent said in a recent phone conversation: "Sometimes when you have a problem, you have to make yourself happy too. It was a good experience for those who applied (and who were denied). The interview gave them hope. Life is patience. Pray with us to continue the relationship. All still have smiles."

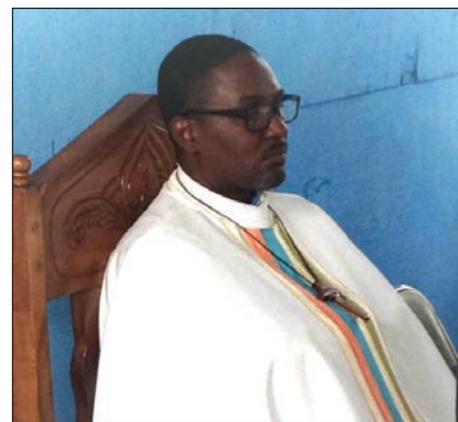
Watch for more details as we plan this visit.

More Good News.

We've recently learned that the many talents of Bonne Nouvelle's principal, Louis Noncent, have been newly recognized in his recent appointment to work with a department that controls all 52 schools in the area. We don't fully understand the structures involved, but Louis' new responsibilities mean that Bonne Nouvelle teacher Luckner

Demosthenes has been promoted to assistant principal of Bonne Nouvelle School. St. Jamesians who remember Luckner when he visited Minnesota in 2015 will also be delighted to hear that Luckner and his wife Rasier Maïva have a new baby.

On behalf of St. James, we've extended blessings and greetings to all.



Our Friends at L'Eglise de Bonne Nouvelle

Here are 3 photos sent to us by Per Sonley, the priest of our sister congregation in Haiti. They were taken at the parish's annual anniversary

celebration just a few weeks ago. Continue to pray for Bonne Nouvelle and to give your financial support!

Financial Report

by Kerry Durkin, Treasurer

St. James continued to experience favorable operating results through October 2017. Total income is favorable due to favorable pledged income.

Expenses have also been favorable to budget, mainly as a result of not having filled the Director of Formation position. Other variances are mostly timing differences.

The outcome is a net surplus which is favorable to budget by '\$10,700. Here is a summary of the YTD October results, showing all amounts rounded to the nearest \$100.

	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Variance Fav. / (Unfav.)
Pledged Income	\$ 107,900	\$ 104,000	\$ 3,900
Other Income	58,100	59,400	(1,300)
Total Income	166,000	163,400	2,600
Expenses	154,000	162,100	8,100
Net Surplus	\$ 12,000	\$ 1,300	\$ 10,700

Look at St. James' Website!

Work is now happening, slowly but surely, on St. James' web presence. Go to StJamesotp.org to see it.

Warning: Don't expect great things, because change is incremental. But do let Fr. Heisley know if you think of something that should be added or changed.



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