



The Epistle

December 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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Don't Come to St. James on Sunday, December 8th!

How often do you get a notice from a congregation telling you not to come? This is one. On Sunday, December 8th, the people of St. James will worship at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 1895 Laurel Ave. St. Paul, MN 55104

7:45 am – Worship (Book of Common Prayer) with Communion

9:00 am – Worship (Alternative Liturgy) with Communion, St. Mary's Music Group

11:00 am – Worship (Book of Common Prayer) with Communion, organ and piano, and the St. Mary's Magnificat Choir

St. Mary's will worship in their normal style so that we can understand them better as a faith community. This will be an important day, since we are actively engaged in conversations with St. Mary's (along with St. Luke's) about a possible consolidation of our congregations.

And please understand that this invitation is not about whether or not you plan to come with us, should we consolidate with St. Mary's. It's about ALL of us being welcomed by a neighboring Episcopal community. So join us!

From Fr. William Heisley

The gift of rebirth

Winter gets a bad rap. Long faces as the days lengthen betray dark attitudes about what is happening to the earth. Off-handed comments about how cold weather is coming much earlier than is necessary betray a chilling of hope. Images of darkness beckon us to search for the evil that lurks in the shadows. This is winter.

Recently I read something written by a woman who has a very different way of thinking about, feeling about, winter. I think of it as a wholistic Christian way. (I'd tell you who the writer is and where I read it and I'd quote the piece, if I could remember/find it. Sorry.) Her perspective on winter is not that it is isolating and ominous,

Winter is God's way of slowing the world

but rather that it is God's way of slowing the world – slowing us – for a time of reflection, rest, and recreation. Winter, in her view, is a gift to the natural world and therefore a gift to each of us.

I have never been able to voice such ideas. But they resonate deeply in me. I am often seen as a human aberration in that I love

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The gift of rebirth

Continued from page 1

winter. I love that I have good reason to be inside and to read and to cook comfort food. I love that the nights are long and the depth of the darkness is often so great that a myriad of stars sparkle in contrast to the heavenly sphere. But this author's ideas are a gift to us.

I had a friend in college who loathed winter. He even hated autumn because it indicated that winter was coming and they both said death to him. (He became a Baptist pastor.) But winter is not about death. At least

... cycles of God's beautiful creation

it's not only about death. It's about the cycles of God's beautiful creation: birth, childhood, youth, adulthood, being a senior, death, and...rebirth. Our northern hemisphere cycles remind us of God's participation in our human cycles and in all of our living in palpable ways. And it is beautiful.

Winter can be very difficult for some people, it is true. I am always sad to hear stories about seasonal affect disorder because I understand that this is a huge problem. And I am always delighted to hear that people handle their difficulty with light boxes, and other therapies. I'm not saying that winter should be easy for or liked by everyone. I'm only saying that we live in a world of cycles and that God is intimately involved in them.

The Church lives deeply immersed in cycles also. We now enter into the beginning of the Church Year, Advent. We long for the coming of the infant Jesus, for the rebirth of light, for the promise of warmth and growth. All over again, just like every year, we start at the beginning of the cycle and it becomes for us a cycle that gives life.

St. James is deeply immersed in this

cycle, too, but this year in a unique way. We begin our new Church Year not knowing where we will end it. We long for the coming of the infant Jesus to bless and guide us in our pilgrimage to a destination off the Parkway. We pray for enlightenment every step of the way that will take us to wherever. And we have a profound longing for the warmth of welcome as we become a new people, growing in Christ with others.

It's about becoming. We are becoming.

Winter gets a bad rap. Embrace it – in whatever way works for you – as an expression of God's love for creation, for each of us, and for St. James on the Parkway. It's all about becoming. We are becoming.

Transitions

What to say?

By Ruth Anne Olson,
Transition Coordinator

News that St. James is closing is out-and-about. And, with increasing frequency, we're all faced with the question of what to say when people ask what's going on. As we each figure out our answers, there's one fact to be clear about. "We'll close our building on June 30, but not our community. In fact, we're working hard to make sure that the mission, ministries and people of St. James continue."

Beyond that, there's so much we can each talk about. Depending on the circumstances, our own feelings may be paramount. "St. James has been so much a part of my family's life. I'm devastated to think we have to give up the beauty of the Parkway." "In reality, the mood at St. James is up-beat and fun-filled. We're all working on this together, and in many ways, we're loving it." "Day by day, I don't know how I feel. So often we're all laughing and loving our work together. Then, from nowhere, I'm fighting back tears." "Anyone who's ever had any responsibility for our building feels, most of all, an enormous sense of relief."

In recent weeks I've said, or heard others say, all of the above. Bottom line is that we all have our own feelings. And sometimes we'll share those with friends and colleagues who ask about St. James.

Or maybe our feelings are irrelevant to a conversation. Maybe the situation calls for some version of the explanation: "We'll likely consolidate with another Episcopal church. That'll mean leaving our building but taking with us the people, ministries, traditions, puppets and candlesticks of St. James. For lots of reasons, not everyone will choose to be part of that. But the chance to make ourselves and others stronger, really does feel like a chance for re-birth."

Each conversation presents its own opportunity to share your perspective on what we're involved in. But, for me, I enter into each with a sense of pride for who we are and what we mean to one another. We all know that a church is more than its building. The people of St. James are living evidence — of real people, in real time, figuring out what that means.

From Senior Warden Kerry Nelson

Advent celebrations and opportunities

Advent begins the new year for the Episcopal Church. It's a time of celebration, community, family and love. There is plenty of that visible around St. James. Over 40 of us attended the 10 am service at St. Luke's on November 17th. Our amazing St. James choir blended their voices with the choir at St. Luke's to fill the church with song and praise. We were able to experience the service and partake in their coffee hour. Everyone was friendly and welcoming. On November 24th a large group of the parish met to have a conversation about everyone's impressions of St. Luke. The group included both those who attended the November 17th service as well as those who didn't. Ideas were shared, questions were answered, and everyone participated. Next up is visiting St. Mary's on December 8th. This will be followed by another parish conversation on December 15th. Please plan on participating as you are able.

Meanwhile the St. James Consolidation Team is busy preparing for their first meeting with St. Luke's team. Be sure to follow their progress as reported in the Transition Updates. If you are not receiving the updates let me know as we can provide paper copies if needed. Please contact any member of the team with any questions, comments or concerns.

November 24th was also Stewardship Sunday. Thank you to Mary Nease for organizing our campaign this year. Through a series of speakers, we learned some interesting stories of St. James past. We celebrated with a yummy cake at coffee hour. Thank you to all who have returned their 2020 pledge cards. If you have not received one and would like to pledge, please let me know and I will get one mailed to you. Once the pledges are tallied, John Heintz (Treasurer) will be finalizing our budget for 2020. This budget will then be presented to the Vestry in December for their discussion and approval.

Lots going on at St. James in December. Don't forget to sign up for the Holiday Adopt a Family. The lists went up on Sunday and several spots were filled but there are plenty left. Let's make their Christmas special by giving from our hearts. All gifts need to be back to the church by December 15th. Thank you to Anne Scheible for spearheading this project. Contact Anne if you have any questions.

I am thankful for all of my St. James family. We came to St. James due to location but stayed because of all of you.

Happy Holidays!!

Adult Forum Every Sunday different in December

by Tony Morley

Adult Forum is the usually informal time (9:30-10:25) between services Sunday mornings when grown-ups sit for conversation (sometimes pretty serious) with one other. What with Advent and Christmas on our minds, this month offers a varied menu.

Dec. 1 — 1 Advent: What sort of season is this now? How does it fit with "the holidays" and Christmas? Discussion led by Tony Morley.

Dec. 8 — 2 Advent: No church at St. James today. All are invited and urged to worship at St. Mary's in St. Paul. See details on page 1.

Dec. 15 — 3 Advent: Instead of Adult Forum, a Parish Conversation about the visit to St. Mary's in St. Paul the week before. Senior Warden Kerry Nelson will lead.

Dec. 22 — 4 Advent: For all adults and youth alike! Come early to color stars for the Epiphany Pageant right after New Year. It's kind of like painting Peace Flags in September— fun, of course, but in a different season.

Dec. 29 — 1 Christmas: No Adult Forum or other "special" this Sunday after Christmas. Just keep on celebrating the Nativity once again.

December Epistle

Submission Deadline:
December 23

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

Publication Date:
January 2

Comments or suggestions
are always welcome:

Content: Ruth Anne Olson
Design & Publication:
Beth Harvey

From the Treasurer John Heintz

Financial Report: October 31, 2019

Through October, our budget is roughly where we expected it to be in total. Pledge payments were about \$3,300 below budget, while other income was about \$700 over budget.

Total expenses ran about \$2,700 lower than budget. All expenses relating to the Big Mess have now been paid, as well as the replacement of the furnace that heats the space our Mandala school tenant occupies. Result: an end-of-October operating

deficit of \$25,514, essentially right on our budget estimates.

Our cash balance has fallen almost \$50 thousand since the beginning of the fiscal year, and it looks likely that the cash reserve to cover a deficit will be further eroded by year-end. Think warm thoughts to keep utility bills down and keep those pledges up to date to help us finish the year close to our budget.

	YTD Budget	YTD Actual	over / (under)
Pledged Income	\$98,668	\$95,340	(\$3,328)
Other Income	\$53,759	\$54,460	\$701
Total Income	\$152,427	\$149,800	(\$2,627)
Expenses	\$178,048	\$175,314	(\$2,734)
Net	(\$25,621)	(\$25,514)	(\$107)

The Dahl Fund balance stands at \$352,313.

Non-budget Restricted Funds: Non-budget restricted balances on September 30 totaled \$21,827, as follows: Mary Anderson Better Space \$112; Piotrowski-Music \$693; Piotrowski-Altar \$1,754; Haiti \$15,509; Tri-Faith \$3,638; Priest's Discretion \$121.

Peace flags in December?

Well, not quite. But at 9:30 on Sunday, December 22, adults and youth will gather in the Gallery to decorate the stars and other handouts that are part of our Pageant tradition, created by Louise Robinson and Liz Athorn. Then join the congregation on January 5 and enjoy the Pageant.

The Advent Dance lives.

It's a new season with a long-lived tradition at St. James. Thanks to Louise Robinson and folks young and old, our 10:30 worship will, once again, begin with the Advent Dance. It's graced this season at St. James for decades. Advent 2019 is no exception.

Who we are. Who we've been.

Check out our display spaces.

In the Gallery, Beth Harvey and Neal Cuthbert have mounted a display of photos — some very old and some very new. St. James has a long and distinguished history. Enjoy.

And in the Narthex, Neal is mounting a space that is ours to fill. Words. Photos. Cartoons. Your memories of St. James. A handful of words or a five-page essay. Add your own. Invite people who've moved away. It's all ours; let's make it sing.



Onè! Respe! (Honor! Respect!)

A different kind of ‘ask’.

Please circulate this link!

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

As you know, the focus of our decade-long partnership with the parish of Bonne Nouvelle in Bigonet, Haiti, has always supported Bonne Nouvelle School. Known for academic excellence and for welcoming all children in the area, regardless of their families’ ability to pay tuition, the school was the community’s first and biggest priority following the devastating 2010 earthquake. Support from St. James helped enable Bonne Nouvellians to not only rebuild the school but, over the next few years, add several new grades.

That hasn’t changed: wherever St. James’s upcoming transition takes us, the Haiti Committee remains

committed to helping the school continue to survive and thrive.

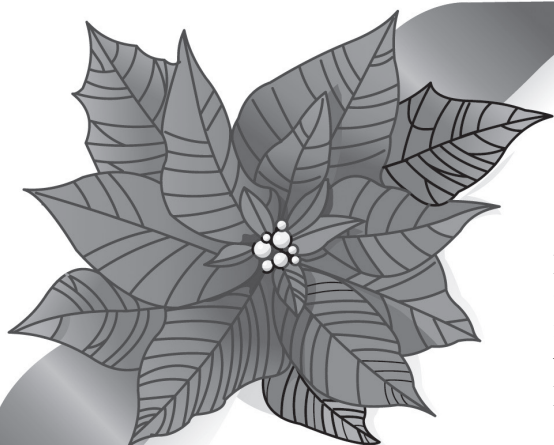
Meanwhile, Bonne Nouvellians have painstakingly planned, saved, and slowly begun rebuilding the community’s center: Bonne Nouvelle Church, reduced to rubble in 2010. They’ve gradually started work on a building that, like its predecessor, will serve as so much more than a place of worship. A new building, constructed with local skill and pride, will renew our friends’ confidence to do what they’ve done before: to model the transformational power of listening to and learning from one another, to recommit themselves to God’s Beloved Community.

Financial support for this endeavor is outside the boundaries of our parish partnership, focused – by mutual agree-

ment – on supporting the school.

We’re hoping that, rather than giving money to the church reconstruction, St. Jamesians can advance this effort by marshaling the support of friends, neighbors, and family members.

Simply put, please share this online fundraiser with folks in your circle of family and friends who might be moved to give. \$6 buys one rebar (reinforcing bar). \$12 buys four spools of wire. \$25 buys one bag of washed sand. \$50 buys seven bags of cement, and \$100 buys four bags of gravel. Please circulate the link, <https://charity.gofundme.com/o/en/campaign/help-community-rebuild-in-bigonet-haiti>, by email and on social media with like-minded friends during Advent and in the new year. Thank you!



Christmas Flowers

Our Christmas decorations depend on the generosity of our parishioners. In order to be printed in the bulletin, dedications are due in the office by Monday, December 16. The recommended cost for the poinsettias is \$20 per pot—any amount is welcome. Make your check to St. James and mark “Christmas flowers” in the memo line. Attach it to the form below. (You may submit a name for remembrance whether or not you make a donation!)

In memory of... _____

In thanksgiving for... _____

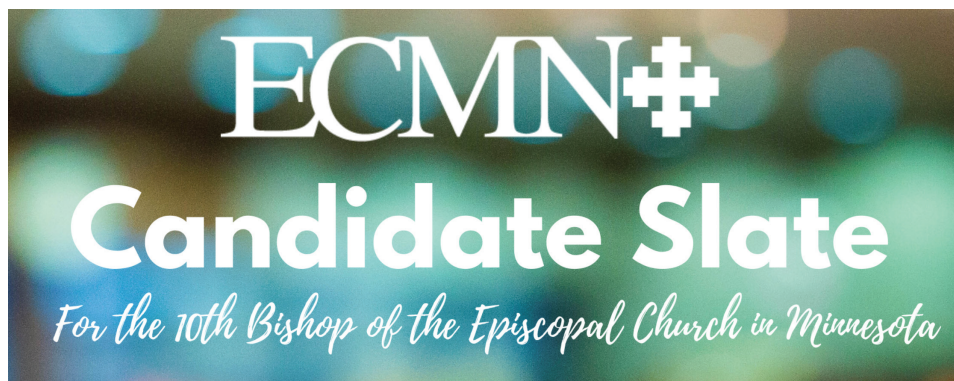
From... _____

Candidates for Bishop: Episcopal Church in Minnesota

Trusting in the guidance of the Holy Spirit and with great enthusiasm, the Standing Committee presents the Rev. Canon Abbott Bailey and The Very Rev. Craig Loya as the slate of candidates for the 10th Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Minnesota. We believe their manner of life, experiences, gifts and sense of call to this sacred responsibility are well suited to the bold and creative call expressed in the ECMN Profile.

The Rev. Susan Moss, former Rector of St. James and Chair of ECMN's Search Committee explains, "Over the past 10 months, with great care, the Search Committee reviewed many qualified applicants in a rigorous and Spirit-led discernment process. These two candidates soared to the top. It is with great confidence and excitement that we present Canon Bailey and Dean Loya."

For information about a petition process that allows for additional candidates, the link is: <https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#all/FMfcgx-wGBmzWrTcQJtbphcddslbCqbd>



The Rev. Canon Abbott Bailey



The Very Rev. Craig Loya

What does this mean for St. James?

As our duly-elected delegates Jinny Bouvette, Rosemary Caspar and Debra Ramos will, on January 25, 2020 cast ballots for our new Bishop. Before that date, we have multiple opportunities to learn more about these candidates and to offer to our delegates information to shape their votes.

First among our many opportunities is to click here for information about both the candidates. The link is: <https://mnbishopsearch.org>

Second is an opportunity to attend a forum — to hear from each candidate:

Forums to Meet the Candidates

January 13

1:00 PM, St. Christopher's, Roseville

6:30 PM, St. Paul's, Duluth

January 14

6:00 PM, Mahanomen, White Earth

January 15

6:00 PM, Bishop Whipple Mission, St. Cornelia's, Morton

January 16

6:00 PM, The Inn at Shattuck-St. Mary's, Faribault

January 17

6:00 PM, St. Mark's Cathedral, Minneapolis



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

12/1 See Sunday Schedule

12/8 **No Sunday Worship at St. James**

**Worship at 7:45 AM, 9:00 AM, or 11:00 AM at
 St. Mary's Episcopal Church,
 1895 Laurel Ave
 St. Paul, MN 55104**

12/10 7:00 PM Vestry Meeting: Gallery
 7:00 PM Haiti Committee: Office

12/11 7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal: Sanctuary

12/15 See Sunday Schedule

12/18 7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal: Sanctuary

12/19 6:30 PM Yarn Crafters, Gallery
 (Info: Debbier582002@yahoo.com)

12/22 See Sunday Schedule
 1:30 PM Laughing Waters Friends Meeting:
 Gallery

12/24 7:00 PM Christmas Eve: Holy Eucharist

12/25 10:30 AM Christmas Day: Eucharist

12/28 10:00 AM Building Work Day

12/29 See Sunday Schedule



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