



The Epistle

March 2017

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.com • stjamesotp@comcast.net

Lent: Preparing for Easter

The Rev. William Heisley

Praying the Stations of the Cross in Lent (traditionally on Wednesdays or Fridays) is a hallowed tradition of the Church. At St. James we will pray the Stations each Wednesday in Lent from

6:30 to 7:00 PM in the nave. This ancient, quiet liturgy is set in the context of a slow procession from one station to another, thus marking Jesus' walk to Golgotha. Your humble participation is requested.

Make a vow to prepare to renew your Baptismal promises this Easter, the celebration of Our Lord's Resurrection, by making a holy Lent, slower in pace, deeper in spirit, richer in faith.

From the Senior Warden Neal Cuthbert

Things to Think About in 2017

Still near the beginning of the year, it looks like 2017 will provide us with plenty to think about and consider. While most things are going really well – William is a wonderful addition and is loving being part of our community, the choir is sounding awesome, the finances are working fairly well – we have some big things to consider. As most of you know our Acorn 2020 process concluded with the submission of their report to the vestry, which in turn used its February meeting to discuss the report and make a series of recommendations. Those include:

Appointing 4 task forces to continue exploring key areas of work identified during the Acorn process. These areas include exploring partnerships to see if St. James can house a Tri-Faith Center of the Abrahamic faiths; enhance our partnership with our neighborhood churches; and explore two partnerships that might consider co-location, one with Holy Trinity and the other with the Spirit of St. Stevens. All of this work

is in its infancy, taking baby steps, exploring ideas and the relationships with the other people and institutions who represent them.

Acorn also recommended and the vestry is acting upon: doing a financial assessment and analysis of St. James' finances, and clarifying the possible use of all of our assets, including the endowment and building; and doing a thorough professional assessment of the condition of the building so we have hard and clear numbers concerning the costs of making the space safe, sound, accessible, and efficient.

Some of these activities, like the financial and building assessment will provide us with increased clarity on the condition of our condition, which will put us on sounder footing for making decisions moving forward. And the other activities are really about exploring possibilities for other dimensions of what life at St. James could include, whether it's partnering with other faiths or congregations, or adding fur-

ther breadth to our service activities. All of these things are exciting, needed, and about moving our community, small though energetic, into a new phase of its ongoing work in the world and in each of our lives.

Thank you for your part in it. We will be having a parish meeting Sunday, March 19, at 9, to have an open discussion about the actions of the vestry and hear and discuss any and all ideas, thoughts, or concerns. Blessings on us all during this journey.

April Epistle

Send articles for the April Epistle to Beth Harvey (stjamesotp@comcast.net and bhpens@mac.com) by Wednesday, March 22. Publication on March 29.



From the Junior Warden Ted Gerold

God's Work and Our Ministries

Greetings, Saint James Community

WOW! How quickly things can change! At the time of this writing, winter has returned. We've dodged the big snowfall, but the cold wind howls. Just a week ago we had record high temps, sunshine and short sleeves. I'm reminded that things can change quickly, and we have little real control, despite our best efforts and plans. This can understandably be a source of anxiety and frustration. However, it can also be a source of wonder, amazement and opportunity. My enthusiastic choice is the latter.

We have many challenges with our building and grounds, yet we continue to build our partnerships and enhance our ministries. While we are reaching out to our neighbors and the community, others are reaching out to us, offering great potential gifts and relationships. This is a very exciting time. Change is coming, along with many opportunities to contribute our time and talent to doing God's work and our ministries. Join me in embracing these fantastic opportunities offered by God.

We're expanding the Community Garden!! Nokomis East Neighborhood Association (NENA) approached us about partnering to expand our

garden. NENA would provide start-up funding, insurance, tools and sponsorship. SJOTP would provide land, water and stewardship. The neighborhood would provide gardeners and fellowship. Produce would be donated to the Minnehaha Food Shelf, used by gardeners and to fill other needs as identified. Look for a report on the kickoff meeting held February 28th at St James.

Further action on Acorn2020 initiatives dictates an upcoming inspection and assessment of our building and infrastructure. This professional assessment will include the physical structure along with plumbing, electrical and heat/ac systems. Engagement of this assessment is the task of the Property Committee, and it will be reported to the Vestry at the March meeting, and as progress dictates. The information will be used by the Vestry to guide their decisions about our path forward as a congregation. Opportunities for involvement in this effort include coordination and communication.

Mandala Montessori has the need and desire to upgrade the playground. We are partnering with them on the project, including removal of the climber, replacing the surface, and improved drainage along the build-

ing. Mandala is getting estimates and researching options. They are also doing a fundraiser and are anxious to move forward, so watch for developments. Opportunities for involvement in this effort include project leadership, communication, planning, and physical labor.

The Property Committee sponsors monthly project days, held each fourth Saturday 10am-1pm. Projects include grounds keeping, gardening, lighting, cleaning, or whatever is the current top priority. This is a great opportunity to spend a little time with fellow St. Jamesians and help out with needed work. Attendance fluctuates, and lunch is sometimes provided. It's also fun and fulfilling.

The Property Committee also meets monthly, each third Thursday 6:30-7:30 at St James in the lower level education wing. Join us; we welcome new members and visitors. There are always opportunities to get involved, to lead or support a project. There's no pressure, as we know that we'll never "get to the end of the list", and that's not our goal.

Despite our challenges, we continue to move forward together bravely, knowing that God is with us in our efforts. We also know that forward is our only direction.



Laptops! Donate Your Used Laptops to Haiti

Do you have (or does your company have) a used laptop computer to donate?

St. John's Episcopal Church in Linden Hills is collecting laptops for their partners in Gressier, Haiti.

If you can help, please contact Dianne Pizey at diannepizey@aol.com

Onè! Respe! (Honor! Respect!)

Recovery from Hurricane Matthew

by Ruth Anne Olson on behalf of the
Haiti Committee

Thanks to the generosity of friends, family and colleagues, our partnership raised more than \$10,000 to help Bigonet recover from the devastation of Hurricane Matthew in October. Following are notes from Louise Robinson and Kurt Hall's most-recent phone conversation with Bonne Nouvelle leaders Louis Noncent and Ceder Nelson.

The people of Bigonet are rebuilding their gardens. The tree seedlings started in November are growing tall. If planted in front of houses where they can be watered, some can be planted as early as March. Others must wait till the rainy season — maybe in May. Seedlings include avocado, mango, lime, cacao (chocolate), papaya and trees for the forest.

Some people have gardens near the river. To irrigate, they would usually make canals and divert water from the river. But the hurricane changed the landscape, so they now have to improvise. Knowing that they have only hand tools — machetes and hoes — Kurt and Louise commented that this is a lot of work. Louis replied, “It will give us strength. It is an example of what we can do, and it will make people happy.”

Louis explained that they have also used hurricane relief money to buy peanuts, which they have put into a deep hole, until they can be planted in April, May and June. They are especially pleased to have money from the St. James Haiti Fund as they were able to buy the peanuts when prices were low. The price has already doubled.

School lunches continue — two or three times a week, depending on the prices. Teachers report that the students are able to study better when they have lunch. Parents report that they aren't as worried about their children when they get home from

school. It's not possible to say how long Bonne Nouvelle will be able to continue the lunch program, as prices keep going up.

The community is also talking about using St. James hurricane relief funds to buy goats — to purchase pregnant nannies and to give the kids to other families.

When asked how they make these choices, Louis explained, “We must

choose. The importance is not how much, but the gesture ... creating things that will keep giving.”

Louis ended the conversation: “I say a big thank you for the good meeting we've had today. God keeps us alive and busy. Tell all that we give our hearts to them, and say ‘thank you’. Say ‘hi’ and give love to your families.”



Abrahamic Traditions Dinner March 15 Mount Zion Temple, St. Paul

Rebecca Hamblin

On February 14, following the report and recommendations of the Abrahamic Tri-Faith Center Sub-Group (part of ACORN/2020), the Vestry appointed a "Tri-Faith Center at St. James Task Force" to continue exploring the possibility of creating an Abrahamic tri-faith (Jewish, Muslim, and Christian) center at our current location.

As part of our ongoing mission of learning more and being in relationship with our Jewish and Muslim sisters and brothers, all are invited to the 9th Annual Dinner of Abrahamic Traditions from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 15 at Mount Zion Temple, 1300 Summit Avenue (at Hamline Avenue) in St. Paul. These dinners bring community members from different cultures, religions, and experi-

ences together to share the joy of friendship and universal values to learn the art of living together. The topic for this year's dinner is "How does our faith instruct us to respond to discrimination, bullying, and hate speech and action?" There will be keynote speakers from each of the three faith traditions and table discussion.

The dinner is free and open to the public but online RSVP is required. Child care is available. Please RSVP to minnesota@niagrafoundation.org.

If you have questions or would like to learn more about the dinner, please talk to Rebecca Hamblin at church or email me at hamblin.rebecca@comcast.net or call me at 612-616-0030.



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