



The Epistle

July 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

Grief. Let's talk about it.

How do you feel about what's been going on at St. James? Not, what do you think, but how do you feel?

I remember in the mid to late 20th century people made fun of others for being "touchy-feely." The implication was that facts are real and feelings are not. We need to get beyond emotions to the truth. Well, feelings are very real and very true, at least when we allow ourselves to deeply sense what is going on inside of us.

When I think about my feelings during the first half of 2019 in regards to our transition to whatever/wherever the Holy Spirit leads us as a Christian community, I must admit to being eager in this work and at the same time feeling trepidation. Will we make the right choice? Will our ministries, varied and rich as they are in spite of our small numbers, continue and increase in vibrancy? Will we grow in the mission of leading others to know and love Jesus who loves each of us?

Here's a second admission: I don't have a lot of attachment to St. James' property. When I think about what I'll miss when for one reason or another I am no longer on our campus with regularity, I think of people. I don't think of things. People. The real Church. Our wonderful, quirky community of striving Christians, playing and working and worshipping with each other the very best way we know how.

But I know that my feelings are not shared by everyone, especially by those who have a long and deep history with St. James. You have been through so many good and some troubled times in this place. You have a history that relishes tales of the first rector, the Pope of the Parkway. You have childhood Sunday School memories of Fidelia Cargill, a demanding and beloved institution. These and many more feelings are anchored in 3225 East Minnehaha Parkway, as they must be. Place shapes us.

However, although place shapes us, we have the power to choose the places in which we live and move and have our being, to choose the places in which we interact with others. Currently we talk about leaving our place and making another place ours. In that there will certainly be strong feelings of both exhilaration – something new is happening! – and dread – what is it going to be? – joy in remembering all the good things that St. James has been for us, and finally, grief. Grief at losing a part of our communal and individual lives that for some will be a small sadness, and for others will be a very difficult emotion to confront.

But we must confront all of our emotions, our feelings about what is going on so that we can give thanks for what will have been, so that we can be honest to ourselves in feeling the sadness that wells up in us, and so that we can finally move on to what is next, to whom we shall be next, to how God is seeking to inspire us for the continued holiness of our community.

**You have a history
that relishes tales.**

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Grief. Let's talk about it.

Continued from page 1

Talk about (your grief). ... to me. ... to each other.

Do not fear your grief. Talk about it. Talk to me. Talk to each other. Stay connected. Try to keep the grief you feel from becoming anger that might cause further pain. Instead, remember that each of us, members of the Body of Christ, the Church, are joined together in a mystical bond of love to support each other as we are loved and supported in the blessings of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

August Epistle

Submission Deadline:
July 29

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

Publication Date:
August 1

Comments or suggestions
are always welcome:

Content: Ruth Anne Olson

Design & Publication:
Beth Harvey

From Senior Warden Kerry Nelson Looking forward to serve

When I volunteered to take on the Senior Warden position as of July 1, 2019, I wasn't aware of the "writing requirements". I hope you will all bear with me as I find my voice. The first thing I would like to do as Senior Warden is to give a big thank you for our out-going Senior Warden, Ruth Anne Olson. When she took on the position in January, I'm sure she wasn't expecting the Big Mess and all that it entailed for the Parish. She has done a marvelous job working with Pat and Neal to keep things on track. Ruth Anne has agreed to continue leading the future of St. James exploration.

I also want to thank Tony Morley

for his service as Treasurer. During his tenure he reconvened the finance committee, participated in the peer audit of our books with the Diocese and did quite a bit of work to make sure everything is in good order before passing the torch to John Heintz, our new Treasurer.

With lots of changes in store for St. James the next half of 2019, I look to be transparent and available. My email is kerry1316@charter.net and phone number is 920-915-6429 if anyone has comments/questions/concerns. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as your Senior Warden.

From the Jr. Warden Pat Morley

Watch for the butterflies

As mentioned last month one silver lining of "The Big Clean-Up" of "The Big Mess" was the presence of large dumpsters in back that allowed us to get rid of a lot of junk that had accumulated over the years. Alas, even that, however, did not finish the job and we still have items that need to go. We will be hiring out that final (we hope) cleaning in preparation for the last stage of "The Big Clean-Up", the removal of asbestos in the basement in August.

We still have not heard the specific date of Centrepont Energy's plan to replace the gas line from the street to the church but it will be happening soon. There will be no disruption to Sunday Church services, and only marginal and brief disruption during the week it occurs.

Summer outdoor work will continue, weather permitting, on July 27. Our June work day was brief

but productive in that we got all the screens on the windows and made a few other small repairs around the church, and some weeding was done in the alley areas. Much thanks to Vince Nelson, Jim Larson, and Kurt Hall for that ministry and stewardship.

It should be noted that the milkweed in the alley was NOT weeded and appears to be doing well. Expect the Monarchs to find St. James this summer.

Lastly, we currently have one estimate in hand from heating/cooling contractors for Chapel Hall furnace replacement and pump repair in the Education Wing heating system for \$9,191. I anticipate at least two more coming and the Property Committee will be conferring on a recommendation of action (or inaction) to the Vestry at the July meeting.

Making the difficult decision to withdraw

By Mary Nease, on behalf of St. James
3-Church Team

Last week, the 3-Church team, with the support of the vestry, made the difficult decision to end St. James' participation in the ongoing talks working towards a shared Christian campus. The purpose of this article is to share more detail about this decision.

Over the past 18 months, St. James has been exploring the idea of sharing a campus with Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church and Living Table United Church of Christ. That exploration began under the leadership of former senior warden Louis Hoffman, and continued with the 3-Church team of Stacey Athorn, Jeanne LaBore, William Heisley, and Mary Nease.

Our discernment accelerated over the past year with shared worship services at each of the three churches, a shared meal at Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church, and opportunities to serve together through Nokomis Serves. A small group of representatives from each church began meeting monthly to share goals and aspirations for a shared campus.

On June 1, we opened our doors or a tour of our three respective campuses. The purpose of this tour was to simply see where we each live and get to know the three congregations. On June 16th, the St. James congregation came together for an informal Q&A session with the vestry, which highlighted an aspiration that our future path provides opportunities to grow our congregation and expand our ministry.

Also, in June, the representatives from all three churches came together and engaged a consultant who specializes in multi-church collaborations to coach us and provide us with research, best practices, and assessment toward a shared campus. St. James participated in a survey of our respective space needs and goals and a candid assessment of each church's campus and respective offerings.

Based on all these inputs, the 3-Church representatives from St. James concluded that the three churches had fundamental differences in goals, strategies and timing that we could not overcome. St. James goals are simple – a shared campus that honors each church's worship traditions, with potential for shared resources and opportunities to grow. Here are the fundamental differences.

Shared campus that honors each church's worship traditions: Our 3-Church partners required a covenant or commitment to a prescribed form of shared worship that did not honor Episcopal liturgy. The multi-church consultant's research also underscored shared worship as a critical factor in the success of shared campuses. We were not comfortable committing St. James to a covenant that prescribed a certain form of shared worship, which may also impact shared education.

Shared resources: The consultant's space assessment concluded that the only viable campus option was the 50th Street site of Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church. Living Table is ready and eager to make the move. St. James is exploring several other options and needs to consider our relationship with Man-

dala. We are on a different timeline, and our commitment to explore other options was frustrating the other two churches' eagerness to move forward. They are well down the path, and we did not wish to hold them back.

Opportunities to grow: We do not see the shared campus path as a way in which to grow our congregation and expand our ministry. The consultant's research on multi-church collaboration showed that the more homogenous the different church groups are, the less likely they are to grow as individual congregations. While our three churches are different denominations, we serve like-minded Christians, and worshipping as three distinct and separate "churches" inside one building would likely not bring us growth and might contribute to our decline.

The potential to achieve our goals through a shared campus with Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church and Living Table United Church of Christ is not supported by our discernment nor the consultant's research. We were honored to be a part of the discernment, we learned much in the process, and we enjoyed the pleasure of becoming acquainted with our neighbors and Christian companions. We look forward to continued collaboration in shared service through Nokomis Serves, including Families Moving Forward and other activities.

If you have further questions, please reach out to any of St. James 3-Church representatives, Stacey Athorn, Jeanne LaBore, William Heisley, and Mary Nease.

Moving with care into the future

By Project Manager Ruth Anne Olson

We can't afford our building. While no one has voted to make that judgment official, the handwriting is on the wall. (See Futures Packet on our website <http://stjamesotp.org/wordpress/future-of-st-james/>)

Where will we take our resources — our talents, time and money; our property and the artifacts that mean so much to so many; our love for one another and for God's message in Christ? Where will those resources do the most good, for our own souls and for lives of peace and justice in creation?

Palm Sunday 2016 and Acorn 2020 offered possibilities that stretched our ways of seeing our place in the world. Might our future lie in partnership with African-American parish Holy Trinity? Nope — they'd already signed a purchase agreement for a building in St. Paul. Maybe with All Saints? Nope — they, understandably, are committed to focus on their native roots. Maybe an Abrahamic Tri-Faith Center?

each exploration brought new knowledge

Nope. Maybe a shared campus at Lake Nokomis Lutheran? Again, nope! Each exploration brought us new knowledge and new friends. But none would work as a future home for the community of St. James.

And so our focus narrows, and now we look for a home with Episcopal parishes much like ourselves. Maybe with St. Luke's Episcopal Church (45th and Colfax, east of Lake Harriet) — an option in active play among clergy and lay leadership of both their church and ours. Maybe it's with St. Matthews (Carter Avenue in St. Paul, near U of M campus) — where curiosity takes Max Athorn, to check it out and see what he thinks. Or maybe it's St. Mary's? Messiah? St. Paul's? Or some other Twin Cities Episcopal church about which you or another member of St. James will commit to learning more?

An idea a bit further afield is that maybe we'd best not invest in anyone's building, but gather to worship in a coffee shop or library. Or — an option that must always be on the table — maybe simple dissolution would be best for all.

With publication of this *Epistle*, I don the hat as project manager of St. James Transition. My commitment

ever-closer to a lasting decision

is to bring order and discipline to explorations in which you're eager to invest time and energy. I'll support our collective urge to use our resources with compassion. I'll manage multiple channels of communication so that everyone has an opportunity to hear and be heard. And, yes, I'll prod us ever-closer to a lasting decision. Let me know what you think, how you want to help. Contact info: olson248@gmail.com 612-377-5717

Service

Summer Opportunities

By Anne Scheible

If you are looking for ways to serve your community this summer, there are a wide variety of opportunities.

1. Tools for School is a program through Simpson Housing Services that provides school supplies to children experiencing homelessness. We will be assigned students on July 12th so keep an eye on sales of school supplies. I know it seems crazy but the best selection and prices are usually in July.

2. Giving Garden work days are an easy way to help us provide fresh produce to the Minnehaha Food Shelf. Work days are scheduled for July 13, August 10, and September 13. They run from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Come even if you can't stay the whole time. Any help is appreciated. Bring work gloves.

3. Minnehaha Food Shelf is asking for food donations that are geared for children that are home from school for the summer. They are

looking for healthy snacks and nutritious food that's easy for children to prepare for lunches.

4. Families Moving Forward will be at Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church August 4 through 10 with set-up during the week of July 29th. Volunteers are needed for set-up, meal prep and activities. Contact Ginny Rudloff at 612-751-5214 or at her email address: vrudloff02@gmail.com or contact Anne Scheible at email address: annebillscheible@gmail.com

Onè! Respe! (Honor! Respect!)

Many worries, yet much to celebrate

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

Despite our obvious differences, the communities of St. James on the Parkway in Minneapolis and Bonne Nouvelle in Bigonet, Haiti, share much in common. Right now, that includes uncertainty about lots of things – politics, buildings, and whether our four prospective travelers will be allowed to come visit us in the fall. Two years ago, our friends' travel visa applications were denied; needless to say, the U.S. government hasn't gotten any more welcoming to black- and brown-skinned folks since then.

And our Haitian friends have other ongoing challenges, including soaring inflation that makes it even harder than usual for families to afford basic necessities like food and fuel – and contributes to unrest in the street.

Yet while we worry, hope, and pray, there is plenty to celebrate, too:

- With support from our co-partners at Trinity Lutheran in Hovland, our Bonne Nouvelle friends are making slow but steady progress on a new church building, to replace their church that was destroyed in the 2010 earthquake.
- The Bonne Nouvelle school year came to another successful close, with the joyous and time-honored kindergarten graduation celebration that several St. Jamesians have enjoyed in person in the past. (If you'd like to see video from that ceremony, please ask a Haiti Committee member!)
- Finally, thanks to YOU, we're able to slightly increase the amount of money St. James sends to help support teacher salaries at Bonne Nouvelle! In the midst of our own parish's financial worries, St. James members pledged nearly \$1,100 more than last year during the May fund drive! The Haiti Committee collected 24 pledges totaling \$11,581, including one new pledge.

This speaks volumes about our strength and dedication as a parish, despite our small size and the big questions we're facing about physical space. Thank you to every individual and household affirming or reaffirming your commitment to this uniquely wonderful partnership!

Stay tuned for updates about the planned 2020 visit to Minnesota from a new Bonne Nouvelle delegation – and photos from the July 5 & 6 art sale in Hovland, where our Trinity friends will sell metal, stone, and paper machè artwork from Haiti!



From the Treasurer Tony Morley

Financial Report: May 31, 2019

Five months into the year, pledge payments and other income were both below budget, and expenses continued higher than budget. Result: an end-of-May operating deficit of about \$3,700, instead of a hoped-for surplus on that date. Seasonal corrections and added payments from the Dahl endowment will smooth out that problem somewhat. But an unexpected need to replace a furnace may make it worse. It looks likely that the cash reserve to cover a deficit will be further eroded by year-end. The best help will be for members to bring their pledges up to date. Here are the numbers.

	YTD Budget	YTD Actual	over / (under)
Pledged Income	63,616	61,731	(1,885)
Other Income	30,593	27,326	(3,267)
Total Income	94,209	89,057	(5,152)
Expenses	89,074	92,720	(3,646)
Net	5,135	(3,663)	(8,798)

Non-budget Restricted Funds: Non-budget restricted balances on May 31 totaled \$20,475, as follows: Mary Anderson Better Space \$112; Piotrowski-Music \$693; Piotrowski-Altar \$1,754; Haiti \$14,232; Tri-Faith \$3,638; Priest's Discretion \$46.



Sunday Schedule

8:00 AM Worship: Sanctuary
8:45 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

7/7 See Sunday Schedule

7/9 7:00 PM Vestry Meeting, Gallery

7/14 See Sunday Schedule

7/18 6:30 PM Yarn Crafters, Gallery
(Info: Debbier582002@yahoo.com)

7/20 11:15 AM Food Shelf, At-Taqwa Mosque,
1608 Como Avenue, St. Paul
(Info: olson248@gmail.com)

7/21 See Sunday Schedule

9:30 AM Open Conversation on the future of St.
James: Gallery

7/27 10:00 AM Building Work Day: Gather in the Gallery

7/28 See Sunday Schedule

1:30 PM Laughing Waters Friends Meeting: Gallery