



An inviting safe community for all

St James Weekly — week of December 20, 2020

St James Episcopal Church
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The Rev Diane M Murray, Rector
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Please contact Amma Diane with any pastoral care or other needs.

Weekly Schedule

Bible Study—Sundays at 8:45AM

12/20: Bible Study on Galatians - final chapter
12/27: We'll spend time looking at the traditions of the Christmas Season.
1/3: Our Christmas Season discussion we continue as we begin to look at Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging in our own lives and through the lens of the Bible.
1/10-2/14: Discussion of book "Passionate for Justice: Ida B Wells as Prophet for Our Time" by Catherine Meeks & Nibs Stroupe (contact Amma Diane if you'd like a copy of the book). (This weekly book discussion will also be offered at 10AM on Mondays during the same time period.)
To participate from any phone, dial 1-312-626-6799
When prompted for Meeting ID, enter 580 876 932 #
When prompted for Participant ID, press #
When prompted for Password, enter 0 # [number zero]
By compute or other device: go.mysjec.com/biblestudy

UPDATED! Worship—Sundays at 10AM

Participate LIVE or view at any time after:
go.mysjec.com/facebook or go.mysjec.com/youtube
12/20: Fourth Sunday of Advent
12/27: First Sunday after Christmas
1/3: Epiphany Sunday
1/10: The Baptism of Our Lord
1/17: Remembering Martin Luther King Jr.

Mid-Week Worship—Wednesdays at 4PM

To participate from any phone, dial 1-312-626-6799
When prompted for Meeting ID, enter 670 567 006 #
When prompted for Participant ID, press #
When prompted for Password, enter 0 # [number zero]
By computer or other device: go.mysjec.com/wednesday

Morning Prayer—Fridays at 6:30AM

To participate from any phone, dial 1-571-317-3122
When prompted for Access Code, enter 780 162 197 #
If prompted for Audio Pin, enter #
By computer or other device: go.mysjec.com/friday

If you experience trouble with your internet connection for our weekday services or bible study, try turning off your camera and just using audio to see if that helps.

Race conversation continues 12/20 at 11AM

Becoming Beloved Community: Join us at to continue discussing how we grow as a community of reconcilers, justice-makers, and healers who share a passion for the dream of God.
To participate from any phone, dial 1-312-626-6799
When prompted for Meeting ID, enter 865 7336 7198 #
When prompted for Participant ID, press #
When prompted for Password, enter 0 # [number zero]
By computer or other device: go.mysjec.com/beloved

Blue Christmas service 12/20 at 4PM

Blue Christmas services are typically held on/near the Winter Solstice—the longest night of the year. This special service honors the different types of grief, loss, and pain we or others are experiencing in this season, and helps us look toward the hope of Jesus Christ. If you like, have an Advent wreath or any five candles on hand to light at the indicated times as you view the service.
Participate LIVE or view at any time after:
go.mysjec.com/facebook or go.mysjec.com/youtube

Christmas Eve Worship 12/24 at 4PM

We'll joyfully celebrate Christ's birth with a special Christmas Eve Worship service starting at 4PM. If you like, have a candle or other symbolic light on hand to light at the indicated times as you view the service.
Participate LIVE or view at any time after:
go.mysjec.com/facebook or go.mysjec.com/youtube

Christmas Morning Prayer 12/25 at 6:30AM

NOTE: This will be our only service on Christmas Day.
To participate from any phone, dial 1-571-317-3122
When prompted for Access Code, enter 780 162 197 #
If prompted for Audio Pin, enter #
By computer or other device: go.mysjec.com/Friday

Thanks for your support!

We appreciate your continued financial support while we are being the church in this different way. Checks can be mailed to or dropped off at the church. You can also set up payments through your bank (most offer this for free) or donate online at mysjec.com/donate . We know that these are difficult times for some, and we understand if you are unable to support the church financially. Please contact Amma Diane if you need help connecting to assistance or resources. **Our special offering for the month of December goes to the Rector's discretionary fund, supporting those in need in our community—please label gifts accordingly.**

NEW! [Have you checked out our Sunday and Holy Day Worship service videos lately?](#)

- ◆ Since November 15 our Sunday and Holy Day Worship services have taken place at our “high altar” (*the built-in marble altar up the steps in the Chancel area*). Watching our Worship services now gives a special close-up view that we don’t often get from 40+ feet away in the Sanctuary.
- ◆ The Rev Deacon Jerry Molitor has been with us since late September, gaining practical experience with Amma Diane, our Vestry, and our congregation and participating in much of our schedule as he prepares for ordination as a priest. Jerry has been assisting with our Sunday and Holy Day Worship services, which included preaching for our 11/8 service. You’ll see Jerry preaching again on 12/20, 12/27, 1/18, and other dates in 2021.
- ◆ Some of you shared in mid-Fall that you’ve had some difficulty with hearing audio. There has been some improvement with audio since the beginning of Advent, but we’ve been looking to make it better. We’re pleased to announce that we have purchased new equipment to supplement our existing sound system, including the ability to broadcast/record audio directly from our sound system into the camera. (This will also benefit us after we’re back in the building.) You’ll hear the new audio starting with our Christmas Eve Worship service. Our gratitude to Pat Hanson for his time researching and installing all of this for us!
- ◆ We continue to include on-screen all the words and song lyrics you need to follow and participate in our Sunday and Holy Day Worship services. This gives a similar user-friendly (and guest-friendly) experience to the comprehensive bulletins we use in person. Our gratitude to Tony Karl for his time editing these Worship services.

[Photos needed for directory by 12/27](#)

Our next special delivery to all households around mid-January will include our 2020 Annual Reports as well as an updated St James directory. We’d also like photos of everybody to include on photo pages we’ll include with this directory—we haven’t done this in several years. Photos can be of individuals, couples, or households and can be any style as long as faces are clearly visible. Please send your photos to Amma Diane by email (dianemarie.murray@gmail.com) or text message (920.860.5152). You can also call her if you have a photo that she can scan for you. If you have updated contact info (address, phones, email) please share that with Amma Diane. Please share your photos and other updates with Amma Diane by December 27.

[Annual Report info needed by 12/27](#)

If you have info to include in our 2020 Annual Report (to be distributed in January 2021), please email it to info@mysjec.com by December 27. (If you cannot email a report, you can mail it to the church by December 27—please make sure to indicate it is for the Annual Report.

[Vestry Notes—updated 12/18](#)

- ◆ **NEW!** Security-Luebke Roofing began replacement of our Sanctuary roof the week of 12/14. Here’s a picture!



- ◆ THANK YOU to everybody who has made your financial pledge for 2021. Pledges help us to plan for the year ahead; if you haven’t returned yours yet, please return it to the church or contact our Church Treasurer, Peggy Turnbull.
- ◆ **UPDATED!** **Manitowoc County COVID-19 total positive cases was at 5,717 as of December 18 (up from 5,417 on December 11), with 49 deaths. New cases in our county are decreasing, but remain high. Regional hospitals are experiencing a high load. Local and state health departments continue to urge making use of proper precautions and limiting non-essential travel and interaction.**

[Vestry gratitudes](#)

- ◆ All those finding ways to safely continue to serve our community, including Eleanor Agnew, Liz Gordon, Ron Hansen, Mike Laughrin, Sharon Laughrin, Judy Lavicka, and Anne Schuette for regularly delivering Meals On Wheels.
- ◆ All those lifting up our church, community, and world in prayer, including the worship leaders and participants in our weekly Wednesday afternoon and Friday morning services.
- ◆ All those helping make the holidays a more special time, including Karleen Cole and Anne Schuette for coordinating our Salvation Army adopt-a-family collection and all those who donated.
- ◆ All those showing care, lending a helping hand, checking in, and keeping in touch with each other throughout the pandemic, including by calls, emails, texts, cards, letters, and distanced visits.
- ◆ All those helping our church connect with others more through technology, video, and social media, including Glenn Davidowich, Mary Green, Tony Karl, Pat Hanson, Jerry Molitor, and Amma Diane Murray.
- ◆ All those contributing to our way of life in this time of pandemic, especially health care workers, first responders, and essential workers.

[A note and invitation from Amma Diane](#)

Dear friends,

We've had good conversations during our Becoming Beloved Community discussion series. There has been a desire by those who have participated in these conversations—and by others in our St James Community—to move deeper into some more education on racial reconciliation, gender equality, etc.

We will be offering, to all in the congregation who are interested to join, a book read and discussion that should



help us as individuals and as a faith community explore how race and gender affect our lives and what we might do to help address the issues facing us, our communities, our country, and the world. This book read and ensuing conversations will be a whole St James Church undertaking, but broken down into small groups for discussion. People will not be forced to participate, but I am encouraging

people to take part. There will be group offerings at different times and days so people can choose what in this schedule might work best for them. We will read this book together starting **the week of January 10 through the week of February 14, 2021.**

The book we will be readings is, *Passionate for Justice: Ida B. Wells as Prophet for Our Time* by Catherine Meeks and Nibs Stroupe. The book is not a biography of Ida Wells but is rather a tool for us to learn how we can get to reconciliation and actually become a beloved community. The authors and Ida are people from faith communities and encouragers of faith communities to Become Beloved Communities, so I believe this can help us on our journey. We are on a journey, and we are not all in the same place on that journey, so this process will help us to grow and learn and journey together.

If you have not heard of Ida, her story is quite remarkable in many ways. This book is written with her story in mind but dealing with our current context. Meeks and Stroupe argue Wells's life spans a pivotal intersection of racial and gender oppression within American history—which launches their examination of present-day white supremacy. While the biography section is brief, the subsequent analysis is deeply moving. This book is a guide for the current state of affairs in American culture, enlivened by the historical perspective of Wells' search for justice.

Meeks, a black woman, is the retired Professor of Socio-Cultural Studies at Wesleyan College and the Director of the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing. Stroupe, a white man, and child of white supremacy is a retired pastor of Oakhurst Presbyterian Church and a nationally recognized leader in the multicultural and racial justice ministry. The authors have dedicated themselves to working, writing, and developing ministries oriented

toward justice, equity, and mercy.

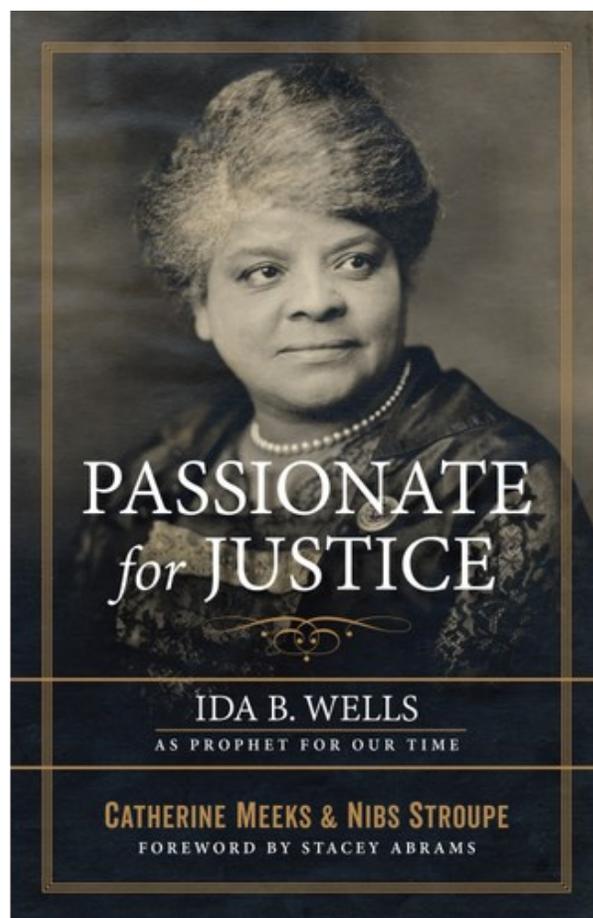
This is a fairly short book (160 pages) and not difficult to read. There are discussion questions at the end of each chapter so group conversations can be guided by those questions. We will read and discuss one chapter a week.

Here are the ways to participate in this book read running the week of January 10 the week of February 15:

1. Sundays at 8:45AM during bible study, with Amma Diane facilitating.
2. Mondays at 10:00AM, with Joan Estes facilitating.
3. The Vestry will be reading this as a group, with Amma Diane facilitating.
4. For people who cannot join either group 1 or 2, you will be able to participate in the discussion by one-on-one phone conversations, which Amma Diane will coordinate. Let her know if you'd like this option.

Amma Diane will cover the cost of the books (paperback is what's available) and see that people get them (with some help to be sure). If people want to contribute to the cost (\$15) of the book they are welcome to, but Amma does do not want the cost to be a reason people do not participate. The book is also available in Kindle and Nook format (about \$11.99) and audiobooks, Audible \$9.78 or 1 credit if you are a member, also on Apple Books and Kobo. The authors read the audiobook.

I hope you'll accept the invitation to join us in this all-church book read! Let me know if you have any questions or concerns.



Support our community through CARElink

Manitowoc area faith communities have come together to create CARElink, a program that provides participating churches a referral system for people that are seeking financial assistance. This was birthed out of needs identified by the Manitowoc Ecumenical Ministry Group, in which Nick Doszkewycz represents St James. CARElink is a collaboration of congregations seeking a structured means of distributing monies for social service purposes.

The local Salvation Army provides professional staff to interview clients referred by participating congregations, utilizing the human services information networks to determine each client's legitimate need. CARElink funds are used to address these needs on a case-by-case basis. Clients may also be assisted through already-established Salvation Army channels or in collaboration with other community agencies. Financial assistance will be disbursed under current Salvation Army guidelines.

Referral is not a guarantee of assistance. The Salvation Army case manager keeps careful records of each contact, and client history information. This program is especially helpful with many area clergy being part-time, serving multiple locations, or living outside Manitowoc.

Several local faith groups are already participants. St James is planning to covenant with the CARElink program starting in 2021. The Vestry will include \$500 in our 2021 operating budget and are hoping we can raise at least another \$500 toward CARElink through donations. If you would like to help support this program, please make your check payable to St James and indicate "CARElink" in the memo. Thanks!

We've received \$200 in donations so far—thanks! We're still hoping for another \$300+ in donations to send when we covenant in January.

Scrip upcoming order dates 1/10, 2/14, 3/14

Scrip can still be purchased while we are apart by calling Tammy McVeigh to place your order and mailing a check to St James. Your scrip will be delivered to you when it comes. Scrip is a way for you to purchase store gift cards for your own use or to give as gifts. The card user gets full value for the amount and St James receives a percent (varies with retailer). The money St James receives goes into our Outreach Fund. Contact Amma Diane or Tammy if you need an order form.

CARES Act charitable giving benefits

The CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act, signed into law on March 27, includes several provisions that benefit charitable giving. Beginning in 2020, individuals can deduct up to \$300 in charitable contributions from their gross income even if they do not itemize deductions. For 2020, the cap on itemized deductions for cash contributions is lifted, from 60% up to 100% of their income, a significant tax savings for anyone able to contribute larger amounts. Gifts of appreciated securities, and gifts to a donor advised fund or supporting organization, do not qualify for these benefits. These benefits are intended to encourage people to continue to support non-profit organizations, including churches, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

UPDATED! Prayers for the Week

Healing, Comfort & Strength: Karen & Bob, Bonnie, Andrew, Brenden, Steve & Marybeth, Virginia, Tom, Mary, Carol, Elizabeth, Vanessa, Terry, Debbie, Bonnie, Don & Beth, Faith, Susie, Marty & Nancy, Peggy, Joe Mike, Chip, Jim, Bill, Steven, Billy, Len & Margaret, Hugh, Geri, Candace, Ray, Joan, Jane, Mollie, Liese, Lori, Sharon, Toby's father Walter, Chris, Mary, Peter, Stephen, Mary, Chris's sister Vicki, Randy & Cindy, Mike, Grace, Charlie, Edie, the family & friends of Deena, Liz, Shelley, Barbara

Guidance & Discernment: Tim, Guy & Mary, Kurt, Ronald, Alison, Margaret, Frankie, Brian & Lisa, Johnathon, Ginny & Karen, Annie & Tom, Kim, Lishane, Mary, Kevin, Cherity,

Those Serving in the Military: Jordan, Daniel, Ian, Logan, Keaton.

Additional Prayers we offer include: For Peace in our world... for the people of Ukraine, Israel, Gaza, Sudan, and missionary families. In the Diocesan cycle of prayer, we pray for ecumenical relationships, especially the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Moravian Church. In the Anglican cycle of prayer, we pray for mission agencies and their ministry throughout the Anglican Communion, including the Mothers' Union around the world. For people living with mental illness. For Painting Pathways Clubhouse. Hope House families. The men of The Haven. We pray for those working in government in our cities, state, country and the world. We pray for our neighborhood. For the people around the world affected by the coronavirus pandemic. Pray for an end to racism and social injustice in our country and around the world. Pray for people around the world dealing with severe weather and related damage, injury and deaths.

We offer thanks for: Diane our Rector, Tammy and Chris, our Wardens, our Vestry and other ministry leaders, staff and every person in this congregation. Bishop Matthew Gunter and his wife Leslie and family. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry and his wife, Sharon. Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby. For our companion Diocese of Masvingo in Zimbabwe and their Bishop The Right Reverend Godfrey and his wife Albertina.

We Pray for the Departed: Tom & Audrey, Audrey & Clayton, Pat, Myrna, Cindy, Joe, Paul, Clarence, Allen, Deena

Milestones

We pray for those celebrating milestones:

Anniversaries: 12/13 Cindy & Randy Hronek; 12/18 Jack & Ruby Gunderson.

Birthdays: 12/2 Todd Reckelberg; 12/4 Chris Couris; 12/11 Wyatt Franz; 12/11 Geri Walker; 12/14 Grace Valli; 12/20 Nancy Sim; 12/25 Sharon Meany; 12/27 Patrick Byrd; 12/28 Mary Kaufmann.

If you would like your prayer requests to be included on our list, or to add a milestone, please contact Amma Diane Murray by phone (920-860-5152) or email (dianemarie.murray@gmail.com).