

St. James' E-pistle

Date of Sunday Service: January 14, 2018

Second Sunday after the Epiphany

Bible Verse

"Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'"

- 1 Samuel 3:10

Pulpit Notes

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

If you were at church last week, you might have heard me talking about how we keep our doors open, and how that makes a difference in people's lives. Well wouldn't you know it, this week, I got another example of it. A couple of weeks ago, we found a coat in the church that had been left in a pew. We put it in the sacristy, but nobody claimed it. This Thursday, a woman came to the church looking for it. As we talked, she said she had been having a bad day and just needed a place to sit and pray. Apparently, in addition to leaving her coat, she also left behind her worries.

I felt like God was talking to me through her, and offered a little prayer of thanks for being so clear.

If only it were that easy to hear God all the time! In reality, listening to God is never easy. Sometimes it feels like you're one of those scientists with SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence). You listen and listen and hear nothing. Yet God actually does reach out more than ET. Those who listen often do get a hint, maybe even a loud and clear message.

Rather than fancy astronomical equipment, however, what most of us need to listen - and hear - is practice. As much as we think we are paying attention, the vast majority of people simply do not make the time. I can tell in my life when I'm not making the time, putting in the effort to hear. I feel dry inside - like things just don't matter. And then, of course, the busy-ness of the world swoops in and wants to claim my attention.

What the story of Samuel tells us is that listening can work - and we still have the capacity to do it! Even in our loud, brash world, it is possible to make time. Here's one way I do it - I just lie in bed in the dark and look at the ceiling (well, if it were light and I had my glasses on, I'd see it). Sometimes I lie there because I can't sleep, sometimes it's because I wake up for no reason at all - but it is time when nothing else in the world is demanding my time - so rather than picking up the iPad, I just listen.

On occasion, I hear what I need. On occasion, I fall back asleep (which is a good thing, too). Either way, I figure I'm getting what I need.

So why not try lying in bed and listening. And if God should whisper your name, say, "Speak Lord, for your servant is listening."

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What God says - well, who knows? It might be easy or hard. You'll never know unless you first make yourself available.

Grace and Peace,

Chuck +

HAVE YOU PLEDGED?

As the Vestry works on the Budget to be approved at the Annual Meeting this month, I ask you to review whether or not you have pledged. If you forgot, it's never too late! If you've never pledged before and don't know how to, Vestry members, Wardens or I will be happy to help. Pledging is a vital part of our life together, making us all partners in the great ministry Christ has given us.

Announcements

Between-Service Class Resumes:

As always, classes take place in the Wilks Room from 9:15 to 9:45. This week's miracle: **The Healing of the Bleeding Woman.**

Men's Breakfast:

Saturday, January 20, 8:00 AM at Cranberry's. We'll discuss the CPR course, which is tentatively scheduled for February. Be aware that due to class size limitation, this session will be limited to members of the Men's Group. We will explore further CPR courses in the future.

Annual Meeting Announced:

This is third notice of the Annual Meeting of St. James' Parish in Hyde Park. The meeting will take place on **Sunday, January 28** immediately following a **9:00 AM** Holy Eucharist. The Annual Meeting is a meeting of the entire parish where reports of the year's activities are given and a vision and plan for the future is laid out. Members of the Vestry are also elected at the Annual Meeting. Eligible voters are those members of St. James' who are at least 18 years old and have been faithful in worship and giving over the past twelve months.

Inquirers Class This Week:

We begin an exploration of the scriptures. Next class, **Wednesday, January 17**, will be a look at the New Testament. Class begins at 7:00 PM. All are welcome to join us for one session - or for the entire series!

Are You Getting the Episcopal New Yorker?

If you're not receiving the *Episcopal New Yorker*, the quarterly magazine of our Diocese, email Andrew Gary at agary@diocesenyc.org with your name, mailing address, and the name of the congregation where you are a member. You'll receive the newspaper four times per year. It's that simple to keep up on news of the Diocese and read Engaging yet challenging articles about our faith.

Become An Acolyte:

Whatever your age, if you want to become an acolyte, we will make a place for you. If you attend Sunday School, we will work to make sure you don't miss too much!

PLEASE JOIN US!!!
Buses will be leaving from NYC, Westchester, New Paltz, Rochester, Lyons, Riverhead, and Roslyn.
For more information, please visit our website:
www.ruralmigrantministry.org
or
farmworkersny.org

P.S. The implementation of our Mission is made possible by your support. Please consider making a Donation.

***** **DONATE NOW** *****

We appreciate each and every one of you who has already given! Thank you for helping us to support New York State Farmworkers!

Farmworker Fair Labor Human Rights Hearing

SAVE THE DATE!

Join the Justice for Farmworkers Legislative
Campaign on
January 17, 2018 at 10 AM at the Legislative
Office Building (LOB) WELL at the Albany
State Capitol for

*A Farmworker Fair Labor Hearing:
An Inquiry into the Ethical Treatment of Farmworkers in the State of New York*

For more information email: JoseChapaFW@gmail.com



Co-Sponsored by Rural & Migrant Ministry (RMM)
RMM works for the creation of a just and rural New York State by:
Nurturing leadership, Standing with the disenfranchised and
Changing unjust systems and structures.





A
New York
Lamentation

A Play About Slavery in New York

Presented by

The Episcopal Diocese of New York
As it observes a *Year Of Lamentation* for
the Church's culpability in the
enslavement of God's children

Performances

January 21, Christ Church, Staten Island

March 4, Christ Church, Poughkeepsie

September 23, St. Philip's, Harlem

October 14, St. Bartholemew's, White Plains

All performances begin at 3:00 PM

January 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
7 Unction	8 Office Closed 6 PM Women's Group (at Coppola's)	9	10 10 AM Morning Prayer 7:00 PM Inquirers	11 11 AM Bible Study 3:30 PM Reading Adventures 7:00 PM Fireside Chat	12	13
14	15 Office Closed	16 7 PM Vestry	17 10 AM Morning Prayer 2 PM HP Assisted Living Eucharist 7:00 PM Inquirers FARMWORKER HEARING	18 11 AM Bible Study 3:30 PM Reading Adventures 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	19	20 8:00 AM Men's Breakfast
21 3 PM "New York Lamen- tation" 3 pm Youth Group	22 Office Closed	23	24 10 AM Morning Prayer 7:00 PM Inquirers	25 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	26	27
28 9:00 AM Eucharist/ ANNUAL MEETING	29	30	31 10 AM Morning Prayer 7:00 PM Inquirers			

Sundays:

Holy Eucharist Rite I is at 8:00 AM

Holy Eucharist Rite II (with music) is at 10:00 AM. Sunday School and nursery are available at 10:00 AM.

Between Service Classes on Sundays are from 9:15 to 9:45 in the Wilks Room.

Diocesan Cycle of Prayer:

Please pray for these diocesan ministries this week. If you want to check out the entire year's calendar for intercession, it's simple to find - go to

<https://www.diocesen.org/administration/for-clergy/liturgical-and-sacramental/diocesan-calendar-of-intercession/>

- 14 Grace Church - Middletown
- 15 The Diocesan Task Force Against Human Trafficking
- 16 Union of Black Episcopalians - Diocese of New York Chapter
- 17 The Church of the Resurrection - Manhattan
- 18 Iglesia San Andres - Yonkers
- 19 St. Andrew's Church - Brewster (part of the Harlem Valley Ministry)
- 20 The Campus and Young Adult Missioner for Northern New York City

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

John Bohlmann, Helen Braun, Mariel Carter, Linkin Ewalt, Loretta Falzarano (sister of Donna Beyer), Heather Francese, Kathy Ganim, Karla Givison (Deb Belding's sister), Robert Guariglia, Harold Hall, Dalton K., Edie Kline, Ashley Konyn, Tedi Kramer, Hope Jennings, Rosemary Leuken, Joanne Lynn, Doris Mack, Gordon Mackenzie, Virginia Mackenzie, Andrew Mendelson, Beth and Ginerio Milano, Grace Plass, Deborah Porach, John Robinson, Rob Robinson, Jason Rodino (serving in Afghanistan), Pat Rooney, John Ross, James Sheeky, Naomi Sleight, Carl Smith, Marguerite Spratt, Janice Syedullah, Tracy, Georgia Verven, Candace Vincent, Cassidy Way, Cliff Wells and Shawn Wheeler.

Schedules

A Note about Schedules: The names you see below are those listed on their respective schedules. There are often times when, due to sickness or travel, substitutes are asked to fill in or trade positions. This will probably NOT be reflected in the lists below—so, if there is an inconsistency between what you see here and what you see on Sunday, that is all right.

Birthdays
(this past week): John Golden, Sanjana Shahani, Ryan Seagren and Chris Granados-Kramer

Birthdays
(this coming week): Jodi Triola, Brian O'Leary, Craig M. Slegel and Joan Oetjen

Acolytes:
January 14: Deirdre Mae Micker and Bill Fenwick
January 21: Kirstin Horn and Amelia McNamara

Altar Guild:
January 14: Team I
January 21: Team I

8 a.m. Readers:	January 14: Debbie Belding and Grant Ferris January 21: Julett Butler and Sue DeLorenzo
10 a.m. Readers:	January 14: Wendy Urban-Mead and Mike Fenwick January 21: Russell Urban-Mead and Nancy Montero
Ushers:	January 14: Patty Drake and Bobbie Wells January 21: Nancy Montero and Anna Marie Pitcher
Pledge Clerks:	January 14: Doug Belding and Judy Douglass January 21: Tanya Hall and Anna Marie Pitcher
Parish Cycle of Prayer:	January 14: Andy, Tanya, Braeden and Riley Hall January 21: Liz Handman, Franklin Santos, Bela Quines and Chris Santos and Angela Henry
Coffee Hour Hosts:	January 14: Jodi Triola and Mike Fenwick January 21: Deirdre Mae Micker, Wendy and Russell Urban-Mead

This Week's Lectionary

1 Samuel 3:1-20
Psalm 139:1-5, 12-17
1 Corinthians 6:12-20
John 1:43-51

This Week's Hymns

Processional: 497 - How Bright Appears the Morning Star
Sequence: 439 - What Wondrous Love Is This
Offertory: "Here I Am Lord"
Communion: 16 (LEVAS) - You Are Near
Recessional: 7 - Christ Whose Glory Fills the Skies

Last Week's Sermon

Sermon Preached on First Sunday after the Epiphany (January 7, 2018)

"Open For All"

One thing I love about our church is that it is open all day (locked at night, sure, because of insurance...). I've talked about this - finding notes from people who are thankful that we were open so they could pray - or simply sit and think. Take a look at the messages in the guest book some

day. You'll see little notes like, "I was baptized here," or "My grandfather was senior warden for years."

Admittedly, being open has led to the occasional weirdness. For about a year after 9/11, you may remember that we kept our doors unlocked day and night so a traumatized community could pray when it needed. One day, our altar guild head, Marilyn Brown came into the sacristy and said, "I don't want to alarm you, but there's a naked man sleeping not the pew. You might want to have a word with him." (After this incident, some wanted us to lock our doors all the time. Our compromise was to lock it at night, which is what we do today).

But the good done by being open is incalculable: it tells the world that we are always here for anyone - for everyone. This is our mission; it's what Christ called us to. From the visitation by the Magi to his baptism, the church - if it's doing its job - stands as a sign that God's love is for **all**.

I mention both the Magi and Christ's baptism because because **yesterday** was the Feast of the Epiphany when the Magi visited, and normally, with such a big feast, if it doesn't happen on Sunday, and if you don't have a special liturgy for it, you can celebrate it on the closest Sunday. But **today** is the Feast of the Baptism of Christ, and it can't be displaced.

Fortunately, that visit by foreign sages which celebrated Christ as the embodiment of God's love not just for a chosen people but for ALL humanity ... it has a strong bond with the Baptism of Christ, in which God voices pleasure with Jesus and his mission - a ministry which we see through the Gospels as one of making God's love known to all - of opening it up beyond all boundaries.

That doesn't mean that this openness of Christ pleased everyone. Just as some people (like our insurance company) thought St. James' openness was inappropriate, so did many in Jesus' day think his openness was too much.

They hated his welcome of sinners, his welcome of foreigners, his care for the sick and the poor. They wanted to be not only **exclusive** but **self-serving**, and he did not allow it. Jesus preached God's power, authority, and majesty - but always in the context of God's remarkable love for all humanity.

This call to openness has caused the church a lot of trouble over the years. Not just the doors of the building. But whom we let in. There was a time when the church wasn't sure it would allow people of color to be baptized, let alone be priests. There was a time when divorced people were denied communion, let alone ordination. There was a time when baptized and confirmed women could not speak openly in church, let preach the gospel. There was a time when gays would be shut out, not only of ordained ministry but of every sacrament.

Our church has struggled over the years to figure out who is worthy of which sacraments, and who should be shut out. And while it's never that simple, I'm sure our ongoing deliberations are of great interest to our Lord who called us to love our neighbor as ourselves.

One current discussion in the church with regard to our openness is the question of who may receive Holy Communion. We consider ourselves a very open church because we allow all baptized Christians to receive at our altar. But many question whether that is quite as open as God intends. They argue that the requirement to be baptized shuts out some who, though unbaptized, are drawn to communion (by the brilliant preaching, surely :-). Should we deny them that powerful grace on a

technicality? Is it not possible that God is drawing a person to God through the very act of receiving Christ's Body and Blood?

I admit, I'm conflicted. Though I would never want to stand between Christ and a person drawn to him, how can communion and baptism be separated? Why would you *want* to receive communion if you were not committed to being part of the Body of Christ (which is expressed in baptism)? On the other hand, while the two sacraments go hand-in-hand, who's to say which should come first? Or if it's important.

What I **do** know is that it has never occurred to me to ask someone at the altar rail whether they are baptized.

And that God is always calling us to God - not just the "faithful", not just the Christians, not just the "good people", nor those who have gone through the right steps. Everyone - always. You. Me. Right now.

So, whether we're celebrating the Epiphany with the visit of the Magi or the Baptism of Christ, the message is consistent : Through Christ, we understand that God's love is for all and therefore we - the Body of Christ - are open for all. This building is just one sign of our openness - as a church and as the people of God - here and everywhere - today and always. Amen."

NOTE: Audio recordings of some sermons are now available on St. James' website, www.stjameshydepark.org Look under "Worship"