

St. James' E-pistle

Date of Sunday Service: January 26, 2020

Third Sunday after the Epiphany

Pulpit Notes

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

This will be a short message. Tomorrow, we have our annual meeting. There are some truly powerful annual reports for you to hear and/or read. I will fill you in on as much as I can with my rather longer report.

All I want to do with this message is impress upon you the importance of the Annual Meeting and your part in it. This is where we decide who we are and in what manner we want to follow and serve Jesus Christ. That is no little thing.

So please make every effort to be part of this. Thank you.

Grace and Peace,

Chuck +

Thought for your week:

“It takes courage to grow up and turn out to be who we are. We face surprises. And disappointments. The crucial fact is that we are different from anybody we know and admire... It takes all one’s courage to be the person one is, fulfilling one’s odd and unique possibilities.”

— M.C. Richards, *Opening Our Moral Eye*

Worship This Week:

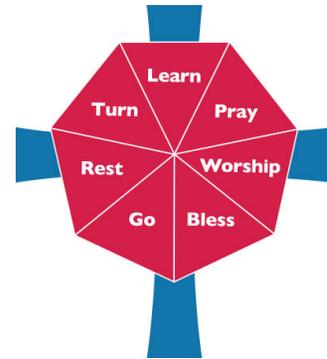
Tuesday	6:30 PM	Evening Prayer (at the Chapel)
Wednesday	10 AM	Morning Prayer (Wilks Room)
Thursday	11 AM	Bible Study
Sunday	8 AM	Eucharist Rite I
	10 AM	Eucharist Rite II

If you have anything to add to the E-pistle, please contact either Fr. Chuck, Dyan in the Parish Office, or Brian Rance. The deadline for submissions is Wednesday evening. Thanks!

Announcements

No Between-Service Class This Week:

THE WAY OF LOVE classes continue NEXT **Sunday, February 2** with the first half of “**BLESS**”. This is the final step of the 7-step Way of Love. Each session lasts from **9:15 - 9:45 AM** in the Wilks Room.



Inquirers Class This Sunday:

Following the Annual Meeting, we WILL have our Confirmation Class. The theme today: **Old Testament**. Please join us if you want to be confirmed, received into the Episcopal Church, or would like to reaffirm your faith. OR if you'd just like to sit in on a class for the fun of it!

Next Fireside Chat: Music and Abolitionists:

Mark your calendars for the next Chat: **February 6:** *Oh Freedom, Sweet Freedom: Music and Abolitionist History*. The speaker is Peter Bunten, Chair of the Mid-Hudson Antislavery History Project

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING:

The Annual Meeting of St James' Episcopal Church, Hyde Park will take place on **Sunday, January 26, 2020**. The day will start with a **9:00 AM** Eucharist, then continue with the business portion of the meeting. At the meeting, we will approve the 2020 budget and will elect a new vestry. There will be a continental breakfast through the hard work of Dean Caswell and Doug Belding.

QUALIFIED VOTERS: According to our by-laws, “Persons of the ages of eighteen years or more belonging to the parish, who have been baptized and are regular attendants of its worship and contributors to its support for at least twelve months prior to an annual election or a special meeting

of the corporation at which they are in attendance, shall be qualified voters thereat.” Polls must be open for at least one hour and will be open before each service. Also, according to our by-laws, “If for good cause, a voter is unable to attend the Annual Meeting, he/she may, within ten days of the election, secure an absentee ballot from the rector. To be counted, the ballot must be returned to the rector prior to the closing of the polls.”

January 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 9 AM Joint Service & Annual Meeting	27 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	28 6:30 PM Evening Prayer	29 10 AM Morning Prayer	30	31	
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.						

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.diocesenyny.org/administration/for-clergy/liturgical-and-sacramental/diocesan-calendar-of-intercession/>

January

- 26** Grace Church (City Island), Bronx
- 27** The Rt. Rev. Catherine S. Roskam, Retired Bishop Suffragan of New York, on the anniversary of her consecration
- 28** St. John’s Church, New City
- 29** Episcopal Asian Supper Table
- 30** The Canon for Ministry
- 31** Diocesan Commission on Ministry

February

1 The Rt. Rev. Andrew ML Dietsche, on the eve of the anniversary of his installation as the 16th Bishop of New York.

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Vince Asher, Ashley, Joe Baldwin, John Bohlmann, Justin Bohlmann, Fr. Fred Cartier, Patty Caswell, Sue Dingee, Loretta Falzarano (sister of Donna Beyer), Heather Francese, Karla Givison (Deb Belding's sister), John and Gloria Golden, Kathy Graff, Robert Guariglia, Clifford Hallmark (father of Alyssa Raugalis), Dalton K., Edith Kline, Ashley Konyn, Ruth Kramer (Fr. Chuck's aunt) — life threatening heart attack with poor prognosis, Hope Jennings, Rosemary Leuken, Lorraine, Joanne Lynn, Jim Lynn (Carol Bender's brother - facing surgery), Doris Mack, Margaret, Andrew Mendelson, Beth and Ginero Milano, Lillian Peralta, Grace Plass, Deborah Porach, John Robinson, Rob Robinson, Jason Rodino (deployed to the Middle East), John Ross, Hank Schroeder, 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):	Craig M. Slegel, Joan Oetjen, Isabela Handman Quines and Alix Ciferri
Birthdays (this coming week):	Diane Plass, Beth Matranga, Thomas McNamara, Daniel Matranga and Deirdre Mae Micker
Acolytes:	January 26: Emily Glancey and Braeden Hall February 2: Riley Hall and Jaylen Thatcher
Altar Guild:	January 26: Team II February 2: Team II
8 a.m. Readers:	January 26: Lucille Ogden and Jim Smyth February 2: Debbie Belding and Irene Kipp
10 a.m. Readers:	January 26: Russell Urban-Mead/Justin Bohlmann February 2: Jim Oppenheimer-Crawford/Bobbie Wells
Ushers:	January 26: Judy Douglass and Vince Asher February 2: Patty Drake and Lillian Peralta
Pledge Clerks:	January 26: Andy Hall and Dean Caswell

February 2: Joanne Lown and Sue DeLorenzo

Parish Cycle of Prayer: January 26: Kim Illuminate, Hope Jennings, Jada Jennings and Peter Khan
February 2: Jack, Suzann, Brian and Faith Kinne, Morgan Kinne, Milena Jewel and Abby Jewel

Coffee Hour Hosts: January 26: Annual Meeting (Breakfast)
February 2: Audrey Horne, Eric Zavadil

This Week's Lectionary

Isaiah 9:1-4
Psalm 27:1, 5-13
1 Corinthians 1:10-18
Matthew 4:12-23

This Week's Hymns

Processional: 661 — They Cast their nets in Galilee
Sequence: 550 — Jesus calls us o'er the tumult
Offertory: TBA
Communion: 653 — Dear Lord and Father of mankind
Recessional: L72 — Just a closer walk with thee

Last Week's Sermon

Sermon Preached on Second Sunday after the Epiphany

"Come and See"

There are times when three little words can have immense power.

I love you — whose heart isn't filled by those words?

I miss you — words with longing and affection.

Of course, it works in the opposite direction as well. There's an ad on TV that talks about three dreaded words — *You have cancer*.

But then there are these three words: *You Got this* — words of encouragement, support, and hope.

Sometimes three little words can say far more than a thousand.

In today's gospel, we see three little words that seem so innocuous yet turn out to have depth and power change lives back then and still impact us to this day.

Those three words? Come and See.

The way Jesus says them, they are words of hospitality but at the same time they're words of urgency, and proof, and direction.

Here's what I mean:

We already know that in John's gospel, John the Baptist understands his baptizing to be an announcement to the world that Jesus is here, that the work of God's redeeming power has officially begun. You never even actually see him baptize Jesus — you might get a suggestion that he did, but maybe not — what we mainly see is an announcement. "Behold the lamb of God!" And in John, Jesus isn't driven out into the wilderness — his work starts right then and there.

So there John is, baptizing and telling the world about Jesus when Jesus walks by. It may seem odd that two of John's disciples just up and leave him to follow Jesus, but that is, in fact, what John is encouraging. My work is done, he's saying. Here is the man himself. Go to him.

So they go and literally follow him. Now, I don't know about you, but this looks kind of comical to me. Jesus is walking along minding his business when these two come up behind him and literally follow him. How long were they there before he noticed? It doesn't say — might be a few seconds, might be an hour. However long it is, they don't say *anything* to Jesus until he turns around and asks, "What are you looking for?"

I'm not sure what profound answer *you* might have come up with to such an open ended question, but these two couldn't think of anything deeper than, "Teacher, where are you staying?"

And that's when he says it: Come and See.

At first blush, so simple and straight forward. Come and See.

But even on the surface, these are words of hospitality. Again, think about how *you* would have responded to a question like that. Two strangers come up behind you and say, "Where are you staying?" I know, I know, different times, different culture, but still, this isn't your typical opening line.

But this is Jesus we're talking about, and he sees these two for who they are. He knows what they seek on a level deeper than they themselves understand. It's probably not much different from what you yourselves seek in this life:

Love. Purpose. Connection with the divine. A better understanding of what it's all about.

Instead of answering their request with, "None of your business," which might be more common here and now, he says, "Come and See." And they spend the day with him. They listen to him. They watch him. Because it's later afternoon, they eat with him. Everything about this invitation is the embodiment of hospitality, which is highly prized in that culture.

But there's urgency in Jesus' words, too. They ask him, "where are you staying," and he has no time to question their motives any more than he has time to explain it. He's on the move, and if they want to talk with him, they better start moving, too. In this gospel, the work has begun, and you need to keep up.

Which leads to the next purpose of those three little words. Proof. While it doesn't actually say *what* Jesus does after he takes the two home with him, it's clear that he makes a huge impression on them in his speech and actions. That's why they go find Simon and say, "We have found the Messiah!" And in later days, when John the Baptist wants to know for sure if Jesus is the messiah, what does Jesus say? Tell John what you see. If you want to know how God can touch you — come and see for yourself. This is as true today as it was then.

But once you have seen, once you have experienced the presence of the divine, once you have understood the love that God has for you — you don't get to sink back into your old life. "Come and See" is an instruction — it's modeling how to live.

Throughout his ministry, Jesus doesn't just talk, he acts. And he doesn't just act, he teaches. What he says and does, his followers are to do as well. If you follow him and see him feed the hungry — you do the same. If you follow him and see him forgive — you do, too. If you follow him and see him rest — you rest.

Come and see what he does. How he feeds, heals, prays, celebrates, sacrifices, dies — and rises to new life. This is not just an invitation — this is our life.

So, my brothers and sisters, hear Jesus saying those three little words: Come and see. He is saying them to you. Amen.

A WORD ABOUT RECORDED SERMONS:

Most weeks, I upload a recorded copy of the sermon onto my Facebook page as well as St. James' YouTube channel. I have not yet figured out how to upload them to the St. James' Facebook page but am working on it.

You can also listen to sermons by going to YouTube (www.youtube.com) and searching for "St. James Episcopal Church, Hyde Park, NY". There, you will not only find sermons, but also videos of the Fireside Chats and other videos of interest. You can subscribe to that page, and then when new content is uploaded, you will receive a notification.

SERMON VALUATION FORM

It is not necessary to take notes during the sermon. Rather, you can take some time afterwards to recollect the sermon and its effect on you. Give yourself a few minutes for each of the questions. If you choose to share this with the preacher, it can be a powerful aid to better preaching - but this is not a form to be handed to the preacher and forgotten. It is an aid for you, so you can speak directly with the preacher and answer follow-up questions.

1. WHAT ARE YOU STILL HEARING?

That is, without evaluating it, what are the words or phrases from the sermon that are still echoing in your ears? Are there any "ear worms"?

2. WHERE MIGHT THIS BE LEADING?

As a listener, where does this sermon lead you? What does it invite you to? What are the next steps in your faith that might arise from this sermon?

3. HOW DOES THIS SERMON "PLAY"?

That is, how is it organized or ordered? What steps has the preacher taken you through? What structure did you notice in this sermon? What has it asked you to do?

4. HOW MIGHT THIS SERMON "GROW"?

That is, what suggestions would you have to hone the message of this sermon, to make it more engaging, inspiring, logical, fleshed out... No sermon is ever entirely done; its themes will be revisited over time. What would help the next time be more compelling?