

# St. James' E-pistle

## Date of Sunday Service: October 14, 2018

### Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost

#### Pulpit Notes

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

There was an article in *The Atlantic* recently that talked about how weary people are of the political climate in the United States. Not that the political climate in this country has ever been anything but fractious or even explosive. We seem to be a country that barely tolerates itself.

Beyond the national scene, people seem weary of our cultural moment. In faith, people have grown tired of figuring out whether God exists or not, whether God loves us or not, whether God really demands service of us. It seems overwhelming, and so we retreat into apathy.

Trust me. Been there, done that.

Weariness is a sign that the struggle for the Kingdom of God is real, and that it is eternal. As long as there are people, there will be those who fight against what we as Christians understand to be the Will of God. There will be those who neither trust in God's love nor in the dignity and respect due each and every person.

Weariness is understandable, and I recommend occasional sabbaticals from the world. A break from social media, a full stop on television news, a rest from newspapers or radio. Jesus modeled this for us repeatedly in the scriptures by withdrawing from the crowds, not to mention from the religious leaders who opposed him at every step. Even from his disciples. He retreated and spent time alone with God, the maker and lover of us all.

If it's good for Jesus, you can be darn sure it's good for us. That is, after all, the whole point of our weekly gathering — to withdraw from the world, to support each other, to spend time focused on God's healing and empowering love. This is your haven, your place of rest.

And yet, we retreat not to become apathetic but to renew, to find encouragement and guidance in our daily struggle to find God and to live in holy community. Again, this is nothing new.

Saint Paul was writing to Timothy in a time of trouble. Nero was persecuting Christians, and Paul himself was in prison. He was tired, and he feared the church itself would grow weary of preaching the gospel when so many opposed it. And so he wrote:

*"In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: **2** proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. **3** For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, **4** and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander*

*away to myths. 5 As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.”*

— (2 Timothy 4:1-5)

“Be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable.” Now there’s a reminder that, frankly, the time is never going to be perfect to live out the gospel. There will always be hurdles to caring for “the least of these” as Jesus admonishes us. There will always be stumbling blocks to gathering together in Christ’s name. There will always be things that cry more loudly for our attention than the still small voice that is God’s. Yet we are called to be evangelists - bringers of Good News in our words and actions.

People may not listen to the truth — we see it in the news every day. We see it in our lives every day. Proclaim it with words and example anyway. You are a Christian, baptized into ministry, and not an easy one. Trust that God walks with us in all things. Rest when you need it, but in the end, as Saint Paul says, “do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.”

Grace and Peace,

Chuck +

# You are invited!

To a  
Newcomers Reception

On Thursday  
November 8, 2018

6:30 PM

At  
St. James'

(The Wilks Room, first door on the left in the Parish House)

This is a time for newer parishioners who have been here for not a year or less to meet “more seasoned” parishioners, to learn what’s available to do, to discover ways to be involved or find resources you need. There’s even a facility tour if you want.

Please RSVP at 845-229-2820  
or to [stjamesoffice@stjameshydepark.org](mailto:stjamesoffice@stjameshydepark.org).  
Got questions? Just ask!

## Announcements

### *A SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT THIS YEAR'S GRAVEYARD TOURS*

#### **GRAVEYARD TOURS FOCUS ON FIRST WORLD WAR**

This year, the St. James Historic Graveyard Tours will be focused on the First World War. I am serving as the "director," which means I've been recruiting and working with the actors to get them ready to perform. I am also a historian who teaches about WWI. In case you are fuzzy on the larger context, forgot stuff that you learned in school, and would like some handy links for getting yourself ready for your graveyard tour, here are two sources that I like a lot, and that maybe you will find interesting. - Wendy Urban-Mead

On the US involvement in the war:

[https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/united\\_states\\_of\\_america](https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/united_states_of_america)

An easy-to-follow 12 minute video provides a refresher on the causes of the war:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PbwH1ZBnYds>

#### *Between Service Classes Continue:*

The Final Session of our series on CHURCH MUSIC has been postponed. There's a lot going on at St. James' and we need just a little more time to get it together. Check back here to find out when the final session will be.

~~**September 16** - "Why Do We Have Music?"~~

~~**September 23** - "Navigating The Hymnal 1982."~~

~~**September 30** - "Other Hymnals: LEVAS and more."~~

~~**October 7** - "Greatest Hits of the Hymnal."~~

**POSTPONED** - "Rock Stars of Church Music."

#### *Men's Breakfast:*

We meet once again at Cranberry's on Saturday, October 20, at 8:00 AM. If you have any church-y projects you'd like to pursue, share it with the gang!

### *SAFE CHURCH Training:*

The Diocese of New York requires SAFE CHURCH training for all clergy and employees of any congregation. It is also **required** for all Lay Eucharistic Visitors. Bishop Dietsche *expects* it of ALL Vestry members, Sunday School teachers, or any volunteers who work with children in any capacity. Bishop Dietsche **encourages** it for all parish volunteers and any parishioner who wants to be further educated. There are two ways to take this training. One is in person: There is a SAFE CHURCH training session on Friday, November 2 at the Cathedral from 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM - I (Fr. Chuck), am attending this to keep my certification up to date. If you want to join me, please let me know as soon as possible. There is a \$30 fee, but I will cover the cost if you choose to go there.

The second way to take the training is online. See me to register, as I am the administrator for it. There are several 15-20 minute classes that you must take and pass a test for it to register. After you have completed all the courses, you will receive a printout certificate.

### *Free To A Good Home:*

Clarence and Joann Clark have two beautiful handmade Amish rocking horses that once belonged to their grown daughters. The young women have flown the nest, and it's time to let these functional art pieces delight new children.



So if you have kids in the toddler range who would enjoy the simple pleasures, let them (or the church) know! They can bring them to church this Sunday.

*LECTOR Training November 17:*

If you are a current Lector or would like to become one - and we would love for EVERYONE to join this ministry - the rescheduled Lector Training Session is set for Saturday, November 17 at 10:00 AM. Please see me (Fr. Chuck) if you would like to attend the training. All current lectors are encouraged to attend since “tune ups” are always helpful.

*Update: Haiti Earthquake and the New York Haiti Project.*

With all the news surrounding the earthquake and tsunami in Indonesia and most recently Hurricane Michael that hit our country this week, you might have missed the news of the earthquake that hit Haiti on Saturday night, October 6th at approximately 8:11 pm. I was in touch with Father Sam Owen and this is what he reported to the New York Haiti Project partners: “On Saturday night Haiti experienced another earthquake. This one measured 5.9 on the Richter scale and was centered in the north of the country near Port de Paix. Father Phanord told me that they felt the shaking in Bondeau and in Matel, but they had no damage or injuries. Please pray for our brothers and sisters in the north.”

In the narthex of the church, there is a picture of the children on opening day in front of their new school building in Matel. Father Sam Owen wrote the following upon his return from Matel in September.

“Sending Love from Matel -

Three New York Episcopalians traveled to Haiti to participate in the opening and dedication of the new building for St. Luke’s Episcopal Church and School in Matel. A fourth Episcopalian joined us from Florida, bringing with her school supplies for the new school year, including backpacks. On Sunday we worshipped in Matel, which is about thirty minutes west of where we stayed in Bondeau. The new building for St. Luke’s was recently completed. The school has expanded to serve grads K-5. Seventy-five children are enrolled for the coming school year. That Sunday almost one hundred of us praised God and celebrated the beautiful new structure. The building converts from three classrooms into a large worship space. Two large bi-fold panels separating the classrooms can be retracted to open up a larger space, making the building flexible and multi purpose.

Nearly every child in Haiti realizes that education is the best path out of poverty and they take their studies very seriously. I spoke with some of the parents, too. One man named Gasner was clearing the brush to create the playground and soccer field for the school. He and his brother Laurent told me that God sent us to help them, and they welcome us and need us. They were effusive in expressing their gratitude. They hope to get a clinic someday because there is no healthcare available in the area.

One of my objectives on this trip was to capture enough video footage to make a short film. We recorded many beautiful scenes and people and conversations. I learned about the hopes and

dreams of the children. I talked with three teenage boys. One wants to be an obstetrician. One wants to be a priest. One wants to be a big shot musician (that's a rough translation - he actually said *gros garçon et musicien* so he can make lots of money and help his family.”

The Outreach Committee gives a huge shout out to each of you who supported our partnership with the New York Haiti Project during the Easter season. With your support we raised \$1,772.31 to support the work of the New York Haiti Project: THANK YOU!

October 2018						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
14  3:00 PM "New York Lamentation" (White Plains)	15 Office Closed	16  7 PM Vestry	17 10 AM Morning Prayer  2 PM Hyde Park Assisted Living	18  11 AM Bible Study	19  GRAVEYARD TOURS!	20 8 AM Men's Breakfast  GRAVEYARD TOURS!
21  12 noon Community Garden Blessing	22 Office Closed	23	24 10 AM Morning Prayer	25  11 AM Bible Study	26	27
28	29 Office Closed	30	31 10 AM Morning Prayer  All Hallows' Eve	1 All Saints Day  11 AM Bible Study	2 Safe Church Training (Cathedral)	3
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 St. Philip's Church, Manhattan
- 15 Acolytes of the Diocese
- 16 Church of the Good Shepherd, Granite Springs
- 17 Church of St. Ignatius of Antioch, Manhattan
- 18 St. Luke's Church, Beacon
- 19 Hospital Chaplains of the Diocese
- 20 Christian Formation Commission of the Diocese

## Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Ashley, John Bohlmann, Helen Braun, Darlene Calgagni, Mariel Carter, Joanne Clark, Linkin Ewalt, Loretta Falzarano (sister of Donna Beyer), Heather Francese, Kathy Ganim, Brian Ganter (deployed to Afghanistan), Karla Givison (Deb Belding's sister), Gloria Golden, Robert Guariglia, Harold Hall, Dalton K., Edie Kline, Ashley Konyn, Tedi Kramer, Hope Jennings, Rosemary Leuken, Carl Levine, Joanne Lynn, Jim Lynn (Carol Bender's brother - facing surgery), Doris Mack, Margaret, Andrew Mendelson, Beth and Ginero Milano, Lillian Peralta, Mary Bowers Peters (stroke), Grace Plass, Deborah Porach, John Robinson, Rob Robinson, Jason Rodino (serving in Afghanistan), 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): Peter Matranga, Dot Craft and Sharon O'Brien

Birthdays  
(this coming week): Jasmine Thatcher and Beverly L. Tas

Acolytes:  
October 14: Nancy Montero and Jaylen Thatcher  
October 21: Riley Hall - Amelia McNamara

Altar Guild: October 14: Team I

	October 21: Team II
8 a.m. Readers:	October 14: Lucille Ogden and Lynne Koch October 21: Shannon Butler and Grant Ferris
10 a.m. Readers:	October 14: Eric Zavadil and Bobbie Wells October 21: Russell Urban-Mead and Maggie McNamara
Ushers:	October 14: Patty Drake and Bobbie Wells October 21: Maggie and Tom McNamara
Pledge Clerks:	October 14: Doug Belding and Judy Douglass October 21: Tanya Hall and Anna Marie Pitcher
Parish Cycle of Prayer:	October 14: Clarence, Joann, Anna and Catherine Clark, Donna Coffman-Tracy October 21: Gwen Cookingham, Kathleen Craft, Charlotte DeGroff; Sue DeLorenzo, Stephanie Dieckler
Coffee Hour Hosts:	October 14: Jodi Triola and Mike Fenwick October 21: Deirdre Mae Micker, Wendy and Russell Urban-Mead

## **This Week's Lectionary**

Job 23:1-9, 16-17  
 Psalm 22:1-15  
 Hebrews 4:12-16  
 Mark 10:17-31

## **This Week's Hymns**

Processional: 655 - O Jesus I have Promised  
 Sequence: 583 - God of Mercy, God of Grace  
 Offertory: Come Share this Feast of Love  
 Communion: Taizé: Live In Charity  
 Recessional: 711 - Seek Ye First The Kingdom of God

## **Last Week's Sermon**

Sermon Preached on Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

## *"Power"*

The lessons today are hard. They are all about power, who gets it, how we use it, and how we survive when we are not the ones with it.

Maybe you're not seeing these issues, but they jumped out at me the moment I read these scripture passages, so let me explain myself.

In Hebrews, the author notes that we are all made just a little lower than angels, and that God has put power in our hands. Over the centuries, many Christians have seen this as permission to abuse others since they are all placed in submission under us. We see that at play today - which is why we have to address power. And the best place to start is with our Old Testament reading.

The book of Job is a long, difficult book to read because the author sets up the primary struggle in the first couple of chapters, resolves everything in the 42nd chapter. Everything in between is essentially Job's friends trying to get him to confess to whatever it is he did wrong to get God so mad at him, and Job insisting he did nothing wrong. It also consists of him staying that though he is innocent, he will curse God.

It is a book about power. God gives Satan power over Job to torment him in every conceivable way without killing him. Job has all power taken from him and is put in a position of weakness. This story is about what it's like when all the power is stacked against you - unjustly. How do you maintain your humanity? How do you persevere?

Interestingly, the whole point of that book was to show that people who suffer do NOT deserve it. Bad things simply happen to good people sometimes. This is actually an important point for our society because even today in our supposed Christian society we regularly use people's misfortunes or differences as excuses to abuse them. I don't think I need to elaborate for you. That's why in this week's Epistle, I wrote, "One can not claim to follow Christ and still laugh at the misfortunes of the weak and powerless."

But where power really comes to the fore today is in the gospel. Here we have two examples of what it means to be weak and abused by society at large. What Jesus does seems to us to be rather tame, but for people then, it was something on the verge of outrageous, and we miss Jesus' power when we gloss over it.

First comes the question of divorce by the Pharisees. For some reason - we don't get the background - they come to Jesus and ask him what he thinks about divorce. The Pharisees are all about following the letter of the law. They also are constantly trying to trip him up because he always points to the spirit rather than the letter. And he's a challenge to their authority. Their question is whether or not it is **LAWFUL** for a man to divorce his wife. They all know the law which says that a man must write a certificate of divorce for his wife before he kicks her out.

Now, here's an important detail you need to know. Women were not actually allowed to divorce their husbands. At most, they could ask their husband to divorce them. What you also need to know is that being divorced for a woman was close to a death sentence if they didn't have a supportive family to take them back. With no means of support, they couldn't live long. That was the world.

This is all about power then, and so is Jesus' answer. He tells them that they are all into the law because their hearts are too hard to know God's intent. Because God's intent for marriage is not a business contract where one person purchases the other and owns them — which is how marriage WAS viewed. Rather, it is a relationship of love intended to be a sign of how God loves us and we love God. This changes the power structure of marriage entirely. The two are one - there is no superior or inferior.

But Jesus isn't done. He then says that's why we don't divorce. But did you notice that he says a man who divorces his wife OR a woman who divorces her husband? He just threw in something that the law didn't allow, and I bet you it sent a shock down the spine of every man there. A woman divorce a man? What kind of revolutionary is Jesus anyway?

Well, if there were any doubt, he pushed the envelope just a little further when people were bringing their children to Jesus for blessings and the disciples started yelling at them. But Jesus said, let them come. And furthermore, if you don't enter the Kingdom of Heaven as a little child, you don't enter.

Why is this an assault on power? Because if any group was seen as lower than women, it was children. They were considered barely human at that point in their lives. They had to be cared for, but they had little value until they got old enough to work. Oh sure, people loved their children, but they loved their cattle, too. What Jesus was pointing to was the need to love them as God's beloved children. What Jesus was pointing to was the need for US with power to let go of that power in order to approach God.

Jesus lived in a time where power was what mattered. So did Job. And in both, the point they are making is that the power is fleeting, abusive, and a lousy way to come closer to God. You can rule the world but lose your soul. You can rule over a woman or a child but lose the very essence of what it means to be a child of God.

There is power in the world, and there are times we are required to wield it.

But Jesus and Job teach us that power is not for ourselves. It is to do whatever task God has put before us but always with the welfare of ALL God's children and all God's creation in mind. And when the task is done, God calls us to lay it down; it's not ours to keep and to the extent we think it is, we drive ourselves away from God.

So I simply point out that God calls us to approach as children. Weak and powerless but, despite what society says, very loved indeed.

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](http://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?*