

# Christmas at St. James'



## Celebrate the Birth of Christ!

### Christmas Eve

**6:00 PM**  
Family Service

**10:00 PM**  
Candlelight Service

### Christmas Day

**10:00 AM**  
Quiet Communion

(at St. James' Chapel,  
10 E. Market St.)

### **St. James' Episcopal Church**

4526 Albany Post Road  
Hyde Park, NY 12538  
[www.stjameshydepark.org](http://www.stjameshydepark.org)  
845-229-2820

# St. James' E-pistle

## Date of Sunday Service: December 24, 2017

### Fourth Sunday of Advent (Christmas Eve)

#### *Bible Verse*

*"Your love, O Lord, for ever will I sing; from age to age my mouth will proclaim your faithfulness.  
For I am persuaded that your love is established for ever; you have set your faithfulness firmly in the heavens."  
- Psalm 89:1-2*

#### **Pulpit Notes**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Merry Christmas! Or should I say, Blessed Nativity! For us as Christians this holiday has surprisingly little to do with Santa or Chestnuts roasting over an open fire, or jingle bells. For us, it is all about the birth of Jesus.

And actually, the power of this holy day isn't in the birth of Jesus. It's in the Incarnation of God. That's why in the Church, it's known as the Feast of the Incarnation. God became one of us. We celebrate the birth because it is so integral to the human experience. Without the birth, there is no Incarnation. Without the Incarnation, there teaching, healing, feeding by Jesus, nor is there the crucifixion and resurrection.

We only have two very limited, and somewhat conflicting accounts of Jesus' birth, so we can't really say what actually happened. But the early church understood that the exact details were far less important than the fact of God becoming one of us.

So let's celebrate this great act of humility on God's part - it is such an important part of our faith - but let's do so remembering that the Nativity, like every birth in every family, is just the beginning.

Grace and Peace,

Chuck +

## Pledge Cards, Year-End Gifts and Planned Giving:

Once again, I am thankful for those of you who have turned in your pledge cards, and I encourage everyone else to do so. If you need a card, you can print this one below or pick one up in the church office.

There are other ways you can contribute to the ministry of the church, and we have not given them the attention they deserve. First, in addition to your annual pledge, you can make a one-time, year-end gift to the church which may help with your taxes. Second, you can put the church in your will as you plan for the future. Talk with your lawyer about how you can do it. Ours is an endless, eternal ministry and requires long-term planning. Thank you again for making this church a part of your ministry. We need each other if we are to be the Beloved Community.

## Announcements

### *No Between-Service Class for Two SUNDAYS:*

We are taking a break for two weeks due to the Christmas/New Year's holidays. We'll start back up on January 7. As always, classes take place in the Wilks Room from 9:15 to 9:45.

### *Annual Meeting Announced:*

Notice is given 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 Christmas Break:*

There will be no Inquirers Class this Wednesday, December 27. We resume classes on January 3

### *Christmas Services:*

Join us for any or all of three Christmas services this year! **Christmas Eve**, we have a **6:00 PM Family Service** with blessing of the crèche. At **10:00 PM** we have our **candlelight Christmas Eve service**. Beautiful music will punctuate both. On **Christmas Day at 10:00 AM** at the Chapel, we will have our simple Christmas morning service.

*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!

*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](mailto: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.

# **Fireside Chat**

## **“OLIN DOWS: LOCAL ARTIST”**

**Creator of the Murals in the Hyde Park Post Office**



**JANUARY 11, 2018**

**(snow date: Jan. 18)**

**7 PM**

**ST. JAMES' CHAPEL**

**10 East Market Street, Hyde Park**

**(across from the Post Office)**

**Presenter: William “Chip” Holman**

**William Holman Gallery, NYC**



*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

# December 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
24 <b>4 Advent</b>  6 & 10 PM Christmas Eve	25 Office Closed  10 AM Christmas @ Chapel	26	27 10 AM Morning Prayer	28 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	29	30

**The Churches of the Diocese of New York** have been asked to be part of this Farmworker Fair Labor Human Rights Hearing on January 17. The hope is that each church will send one clergy person and two parishioners. Please let Fr. Chuck know if you are interested in participating.

## 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: [JoseChapaJFW@gmail.com](mailto:JoseChapaJFW@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.



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

- 24 St. Mary's Church, Tuxedo Park
- 25 Church of the Incarnation, Manhattan
- 26 The Day School at Christ & St. Stephen's, Manhattan
- 27 St. John's in the Village, Manhattan
- 28 Incarnation Conference Center and Camp
- 29 St. John's Church, Arden
- 30 St. John's Church (Tuckahoe), Yonkers

## 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, 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): Aldona Raugalis, Christopher McGlynn, Joanne Lown, Randy Soden, Stephen Foote and Madeline Glancey

Birthdays  
(this coming week): Gloria Golden, Marguerite Spratt and Valerie Gaulin

Acolytes:  
December 24: Team 2  
December 31: Team 3

Altar Guild:	December 24: TBA December 31: Team III
8 a.m. Readers:	December 24: Lucille Ogden and Julett Butler December 31: Deb Belding and Thomas Finnigan
10 a.m. Readers:	December 24: Patty Caswell and Andy Hall December 31: TBA
Ushers:	December 24: Bill and Regina Ardini December 31: Andrew and Tonya Hall
Pledge Clerks:	December 24: Andy Hall and Dean Caswell December 31: Doug Belding and Judy Douglass
Parish Cycle of Prayer:	December 24: Mary Jo Garlo and Peter Francese, Valerie, Steve and Kasey Gaulin and Steve, Susan, Rebecca, Annabeth and Andrew Gausepohl December 31: Gary and Suzanne Glancey, Michael, Patty, Madeline and Emily Glancey, John and Gloria Golden and Kathy Graff
Coffee Hour Hosts:	December 24: Brian Rance, Saira Shahani December 31: The Choir

## **This Week's Lectionary**

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16  
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26  
Romans 16:25-27  
Luke 1:26-38

## **This Week's Hymns**

Processional: 56 - O Come, O Come Emmanuel (verses: 1, 6,7,8)  
Sequence: 265 - The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came  
Offertory: "Prepare Thyself, Zion"  
Communion: 66 - Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus  
Recessional: 107 - Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

## **Last Week's Sermon**

Sermon Preached on Third Sunday of Advent (December 17, 2017)

*“Less Mild, More Wild”*

As you know, today, we lit a pink candle instead of purple. And you probably remember that that’s because today is Gaudete Sunday, and that Gaudete means “Rejoice,” *and* that that means in the midst of the heavier contemplation of Advent, we should lighten up a bit, right?

That’s why we use pink - it’s lighter than purple.

That’s also the reason for the lessons emphasize rejoicing: Isaiah says, **“I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God.”**

Paul tells the Thessalonians, **“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”**

And of course, Mary says to her cousin Elizabeth, **“My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.”**

Yessir, what could be more joyful than two expectant moms coming together to celebrate their impending motherhood? It’s sweet.

Only... you might notice in the lessons today - including the one with those two moms - that there’s something a little more ... wild.

What I mean is, even in the midst of all this rejoicing, there’s an edge; there’s something deeper, darker going on. They’re all rejoicing - well, not John the Baptist, who’s *always* wild and not exactly the rejoicing type - in the midst of injustice and uncertainty. Whether Isaiah, Paul, or Mary, **their rejoicing is about a *coming justice not current good times*.**

Isaiah is proclaiming relief to a people in exile. Mary is proclaiming relief not only to a people oppressed by the Romans, but also to the poor, oppressed by their own wealthy neighbors. Paul is proclaiming relief to new Christians who suffer persecution for their religion.

They are *all* speaking prophetically. And like nearly all the major prophets, none of them expected to be proclaiming God’s salvation. Isaiah felt he was too unclean - *until the angel touched a burning coal to his lips*. Mary argued she was just an unmarried virgin *until the angel assured her*. And Paul had wanted nothing to do with Jesus at the start *until he was knocked to the ground and blinded*.

But there they were, plucked out of their normal lives to do something extraordinary, something their neighbors were not looking for or, we might add, necessarily open to. They were proclaiming God’s promise never to forget the oppressed, the abused, the poor, the broken-hearted, the lonely, the grieving, the hungry, the imprisoned....

Lets us not forget that also they proclaimed the vengeance of the lord - that those who oppressed or ignored the suffering would pay a dear price.

**The surprise in this** for me is Mary because we regularly portray her as submissive and meek. Well, there is nothing meek and mild about the Magnificat. It’s a little more Isaiah-y, a little more John the Baptist-y. Dangerous. Wild. When she says, “the rich he has sent away empty,” about all you can say is, “Yes ma’am.”

So rejoicing - it's not putting on a fake smile and pretending nothing is wrong. It's proclaiming that things *can* and *will* change because God is good. Because God loves us. Because God has promised, in the end, to bring us to glory.

But God has also called each of us, like Isaiah, or Mary, or Paul to proclaim truth, justice, righteousness in *our* time, in the midst of our particular oppressions of the day. And trust me, every generation knows injustice and oppression.

One example in modern America would be the #MeToo movement. Mostly women coming forward to name mostly men who have sexually harassed, exploited, or abused them.

This is no small thing. Just as it was frightening and dangerous to stand up to the powerful in, say, Mary's day (especially for a woman), so today, it has been dangerous and frightening for all these women to come forward. You've seen in the news how they have been vilified: "If it really happened, why did she wait so long?" "She's just looking for her 15 minutes of fame." "Somebody probably paid her to come forward."

Yet even after the first few who came forward against rich and powerful people, even after they were abused all over again, they continued to come forward, exposing just how widespread and deep a problem we have.

One can not underestimate the courage this took.

But there is and must be an element of rejoicing even in this. Because these (mostly) women have publicly heard what they already knew - they are not alone. They are finally able to speak. They are finally being listened to. Things *may* yet change for the better.

And if things can change for the better in terms of how we treat each other sexually, maybe they can change in how we treat each other across the divide of wealth, where those who have do not despise or condescend to the poor but see them as equal partners. Or in how we treat those of a different culture, or skin color, or religion.

It is God's will that all injustice cease, and that divine love reign among all God's children.

We are not there yet. We may never get there. But every time another person screws their courage to the sticking place and steps forward to proclaim God's will, God's dream for us, there is reason to rejoice.

So let us burn that pink candle today. But let's do so remembering that there is nothing in the least mild about it. Amen.

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