

# St. James' E-pistle

## Date of Sunday Service: May 13, 2018

### Seventh Sunday of Easter

#### Pulpit Notes

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

You can tell summer is coming. You can tell because the second you walk into the grocery store, you are bombarded with barbecue, cookout, and picnic paraphernalia.

As you go further in, you will inevitably be confronted with more fruits and vegetables than you know what to do with. Go a little further, and you'll run into the meat (as well as fish and chicken). Move through the rest of the store and you see the forgettable items - stuff you need but don't get too excited about.

Finally, at the checkout, there's the chocolate (and the magazines you browse but never buy).

If you look at a lot of grocery stores, you'll realize that most have a very similar layout. And there is a reason for that. Studies have shown that this layout encourages loyalty and more purchasing.

You get a "theme" for your shopping when you enter - right now it's picnics. Then you get to some serious food - fruits and vegetables - before you get to the real meat of your shopping (where all the money is made). The stuff in between? It's orderly, but it's not as important which order because you're already on a roll. BUT, chocolate (which you might not buy ordinarily) is always at the end - you're killing time in line and see that chocolate and figure, "Why not?"

Funny thing is, that same sense of order could almost be applied to a sermon. Bear with me now.

Even though each sermon is unique, they all have a sense of order that is recognizable. Like the seasonal stuff at the entrance of the store, sermons have a "hook" which is intended to draw the audience in. It might be a joke or a personal story, but its purpose is to set the tone and theme for the rest of the sermon.

Then come the veggies. This is usually a point where you typically draw a connection with the scriptures, often setting the context so it makes sense. Like veggies, it's important stuff, crucial to a healthy understanding, but not the main course.

The "meat" of the sermon is when the preacher makes the connection with the daily life of the listeners. How does all of this apply to my life, and what do I do with it?

Here's where the analogy almost breaks down. Because while the grocery store has forgettable aisles of stuff that you might need but aren't exactly inspired by, every preacher hopes that every word he or she speaks touches the heart. Reality is, not every word is memorable. A preaching professor of mine once told us that the beginning and ending are crucial - but you could read from the phone book in the middle, and some people wouldn't notice.

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Then we get to the end. As the preaching professor said, this is where you have a chance to say something that will be remembered. It has to catch people's ears - like the chocolate and magazines catch your eye at the checkout. It's a moment where you are encouraged to do something - buy the candy bar - or change some aspect of your life.

I mention this sense of order so that this Sunday, when you listen to the sermon, you'll think of it as a trip through the grocery store. You'll be looking for the theme, the veggies, the meat and the checkout. This might be a good method of seeing the order in preaching and thereby getting more out of it.

Because I would like everyone to get more out of sermons, I'm including a tool in this Epistle that you can print out and use for every sermon you listen to. It's just four brief questions that provide food for any listener. I have been using it in a preaching course over the past year, listening to a variety of my colleagues, so it's been road tested. It's called a Sermon Valuation Form.

This week, I encourage you to bring your Sermon Valuation Form and fill it out. If you want to share your thoughts with me afterward, I invite you to! If you just want to use it for your own edification, that's great, too. Either way, I hope you are able to get more out of every sermon you listen to.

Grace and Peace,

Chuck +

## 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?*

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*

## Announcements

### *Mothers Day Tea:*

The Mother's Day Tea is upon us! On **May 12**, the Tea will make its annual return, delighting mothers and others who love the high tea scene.

### *BECOME A LAY READER*

Want to serve God and your church? There are many ways, but one pressing need is for lay readers during Sunday worship. Some training is required, but it is a task that is possible and open to all. While we encourage new lay readers at both services, there is a special need at the 10:00 AM. Please see Father Chuck.

### *Men's Breakfast*

As always, the men's breakfast will be the third Saturday of the month, **May 19**. Cranberry's, 8:00 AM. See you then!

### *CPR Class*

**Saturday, May 26 at 10:00 AM**, the Men's Group is sponsoring a CPR class. **It is open to all.** Cost for the class is \$20 per participant. There is a limit of 12 for the class, so sign up soon!

### *Between Service Classes*

This **Sunday, May 13**, we begin a 3-part series on prayer. Following that, in June, we'll have a series on African Christians who made a difference. Following that is a series on the 7 Deadly Sins which begin in July. Then, come Fall, we are looking at a quick guide to church music - what it is in its various forms, what's different about it from other music, and how to make best use of it.

### *Youth Group*

The Youth Group meets Sunday, **May 20 at 3:00 PM** in the Wilks Room. Weather Permitting, we are going on a hike! Bring a friend!

## *Continuing Inquirers*

The Continuing Inquirers class has had to be postponed yet again due to scheduling difficulties. By common agreement, the next class will now be **June 6, 7:00 PM** in the Wilks Room. If you'd like to learn more, please join us! This month's topic: The Creeds.

## *A PLEDGE PLEA*

**If you have not pledged yet, please do so. Letters will go out next week from the Vestry to remind you about your pledge. Please help!**



***A Liturgy of Lamentation***

*A Liturgy to commemorate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the ongoing work of repentance, reparation, and reconciliation to which Christ calls us all.*

*Performances by Alicia Waller, Theresa Thompson, Paul Winter, Reggie Wilson, Tonika Custalow, and William Randolph*

*Speakers: The Rev. Canon Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas; The Rt. Rev. Andrew Dietsche, a member of the diocesan youth, and 'Richard Jenkins' (former slave)*

May 17, 7:00 PM  
Cathedral of St. John the Divine

*For information:  
Email: [diocesanrepcommittee@gmail.com](mailto:diocesanrepcommittee@gmail.com)  
Facebook: @Ednyreparationscommittee*

On Thursday, May 17, the anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s visit to the Cathedral, the Diocese of New York offers a special liturgy as a part of their Year of Lamentation, the first stage of a three-year period of study, observation, and work to understand and address the diocese's past role in the slavery era and the ongoing injustice associated with it today.

### **Performers include**

- Paul Winter (world famous soprano saxophonist and founder of the Paul Winter consort)
- Alicia Waller (renowned classical soprano and cultural connector)
- Theresa Thomason (International Gospel, jazz and cultural singer)
- Reggie Wilson (Choreographer, Fist and Heel Performance Group)
- Tonika Custalow
- Vissi Dance Theatre
- The Diocesan Festival Choir, William E. Randolph and acclaimed singer and director Jeannine Otis.

### **Speakers include**

- The Very Rev. Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas (Dean of Episcopal Divinity School at Union Theological Seminary, Professor of Theology at Union and Canon Theologian at Washington National Cathedral)
- The Rt. Rev. Andrew ML Dietsche (Bishop of New York)
- **“Richard Jenkins”** (a formerly enslaved 18th Century Episcopalian who helped build and then served as sexton for **St. James’, Hyde Park**, played by actor Brockton Pierce)

**NOTE - OUR OWN RICHARD JENKINS!**

### **Diocesan Festival Choir**

There will be a rehearsal for the Diocesan Festival Choir on Saturday, May 12, from 12 noon to 2 p.m. at the Church of the Intercession, Broadway at 155th Street. For more information, please contact Bill Randolph [brmusicintercession@gmail.com](mailto:brmusicintercession@gmail.com).

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May 2018						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6 <b>Unction</b>	7 <b>Office Closed</b>  7:30 PM Choir Practice	8	9 10 AM Morning Prayer	10 <b>ASCENSION DAY</b> 11 AM Bible Study	11	12  Mothers Day Tea
13	14 <b>Office Closed</b>  7:30 PM Choir Practice  6 PM Women's Group	15  <b>7 PM Vestry</b>	16 10 AM Morning Prayer  2 PM Eucharist at HP Assisted Living  7:00 PM Continuing Inquirers	17 11 AM Bible Study  <b>7 PM LITURGY OF LAMENTATION (AT CATHEDRAL)</b>	18  11 AM Free Prayer Friday @ Cranberry's	19 8 AM Men's Breakfast  4 PM Graveyard Tour Meeting
20  <b>PENTECOST</b> 3 pm Youth Group	21 <b>Office Closed</b>  7:30 PM Choir Practice	22	23 10 AM Morning Prayer  7 PM Outreach	24 11 AM Bible Study - AT HOLY CROSS MONASTERY	25 11 AM Free Prayer Friday @ Cranberry's	26 10 AM Men's Group CPR training
27	28  7:30 PM Choir Practice	29	30 10 AM Morning Prayer	31 11 AM Bible Study	<b>June 1</b> 11 AM Free Prayer Friday @ Cranberry's	<b>2</b>
<p>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.</p>						

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

- 13 St. James' Church, Manhattan
- 14 Church of the Ascension, Mount Vernon
- 15 With gratitude for the ministry of the Rt. Rev. Mary D. Glasspool on the anniversary of her consecration as Bishop.
- 16 Saint Thomas Church, Manhattan
- 17 With gratitude for the ministry of the Rt. Rev. Allen K. Shin on the anniversary of his consecration as Bishop.
- 18 The Diocesan Church Attorney
- 19 Guild of St. Ives

## Please keep the following people in your prayers:

John Bohlmann, Helen Braun, Mariel Carter, Joann Clark (recovery from surgery), 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, Joanne Lynn, Jim Lynn (Carol Bender's brother - facing surgery), Doris Mack, Andrew Mendelson, Beth and Ginerio Milano, Lillian Peralta, Mary Bowers Peters (stroke), 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.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Virginia Mackenzie

## 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): Erika Seagren and Rebecca Gausepohl

Birthdays  
(this coming week): Walter Edgar Koch, M.D., Brian Kinne and Morgan Kinne

Acolytes: May 13: Kirstin Horn and Amelia McNamara

	May 20: Russell Urban-Mead and Braeden Hall
Altar Guild:	May 13: Team II May 20: Team III
8 a.m. Readers:	May 13: Lucille Ogden and Jim Smyth May 20: Debbie Belding and Thomas Finnigan
10 a.m. Readers:	May 13: Patty Caswell and Justin Bohlmann May 20: Russell Urban-Mead and Barbara Slegel
Ushers:	May 13: Dean Caswell and Audrey Horne May 20: Andrew and Tanya Hall
Pledge Clerks:	May 13: Doug Belding and Judy Douglass May 20: Tanya Hall and Anna Marie Pitcher
Parish Cycle of Prayer:	May 13: Clifford Plass and Christy Plass, Linda Plass May 20: Sally Pardee, Lillian Peralta and Anna Marie Pitcher
Coffee Hour Hosts:	May 13: Jodi Triola and Mike Fenwick May 20: Deirdre Mae Micker, Wendy and Russell Urban-Mead

## **This Week's Lectionary**

Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

Psalm 1

1 John 5:9-13

John 17:6-19

## **This Week's Hymns**

Processional: LEVAS 41 - Christ has risen (sing 3X)

Sequence: 693 - Just As I Am

Offertory: "Speak, O Lord"

Communion: 306 - Come Risen Lord, be our guest

Recessional: LEVAS 136 - I have decided to follow Jesus

## **Last Week's Sermon**

Sermon Preached on Sixth Sunday of Easter (May 6, 2018)

## "Abide"

I realize that the word "abide" only appears once in this week's lessons, and it was used repeatedly last week. But I want to focus on it anyway for a few reasons.

First, the lessons from this week simply build on last week's lessons, and they use the word "abide" a lot. Second, that single word, "abide", has power in it worthy of reflection regardless of the number of times it's mentioned. Third, I just spent a week with my extended family, abiding with them, so I want to unpack the meaning of the word in *that* context.

And finally, abiding is at the heart of who we are as Christians. We need to sit down with it - to let it sink deep into our hearts.

Let me start by talking about my family. My grandfather had a saying. (Maybe I've shared it with you before) He always said, "Kramers get along fine with each other ... at a distance of 500 miles." We certainly have spread out across the country, but last week, we were all crammed together in close quarters for several days - just family alone, there were 42. And we all got along fine. (Sure, it was a funeral, and everyone was on good behavior, but funerals are fraught times when some of the worst behaviors come out. They didn't.)

One thing that pleased me was that our kids - cousins who rarely ever see each other - spent all night together just talking. And at the end, they decided they wanted to get together more often.

And the kicker? Some of my siblings even talked about the idea of us all moving together as we begin retiring. Create sort of a "Kramer Compound."

You probably know, the word "abide" has three primary meanings. One is simply to live with or dwell with someone. The second, almost always used in the negative, is "to tolerate something unpleasant" - as in, "I can't abide the smell of Limburger cheese." And third is to obey or act in accordance with something: "I abide by the rules."

Contemplating my siblings living together engaged all three senses of the word. To start, abiding WITH each other is both exciting and, frankly, troubling. The last time all six of us lived under the same roof, I was 12. In the last 45 years, we have lived separate lives. We like each other and cooperate on difficult matters pretty well, but what would it be like to be around each other *all the time*? Would big brothers still want me to be little brother? To abide with each other, you have to let each person be themselves.

And that can be tricky because abiding with someone also means *abiding* them - putting up with the things you don't like. I don't have to work too hard to come up with things about my siblings I'd have to abide. One has a temper. Another dithers. Another is too particular about too many things. You get the idea. To abide with each other means to learn how to put up with each other.

AND it means to have common standards that you agree to abide by. Who does what chores? Who pays what bills? How loud can you be? If you're in the same household, you have to have rules - or you can't survive.

It's called being in relationship, and it is hard work. Spouses, parents, children, college roommates, close friends all, to some degree, know this.

Abiding means that you can't just walk away. They have become part of you in a way that isn't disposable.

That's what Jesus was saying when it came to us and God. Without abiding in him - and him in us - it's like a branch without the vine it came from - we bear no fruit. We can do nothing good. But TO abide in his love - to have his love inside us and to surround ourselves with Christ so that we are also in him - means commitment.

It means to be aware of God's presence all the time - to really LIVE with Christ so that there is nothing you do where you aren't doing it in light of your relationship with God. Every waking moment, somewhere in your heart, God is there; Jesus is in you and you in him. You wake up and say the daily Office. You sit at table and offer thanks. You face a difficult customer and pray for them.

It also means that every day, every moment, you are abiding by the agreed-upon rules. To love God, to love your neighbor as yourself, to worship God, to seek justice, to feed the hungry, to welcome the alien, to care for the poor. These are God's rules, and to abide in Christ's love, to abide with Christ means to abide by them.

And of course, it means to abide the things we don't like - which often means abiding the other children of God. Yes, we have to put up with one another even when we annoy the heck out of each other. That's what it means to be family.

And the word ABIDE is all about family. We can not think of this faith, the ministry of Jesus Christ, the calling to which each of us has responded - without thinking of that word family. Because that is what God taught us in sending Christ and then in sending the Holy Spirit - to all people, Jew and Gentile. If we abide in God's love, we are family.

Now, I don't seriously believe all my siblings will move in together someday. I doubt there's a common location on this earth that we could all agree on. But the fact that we would even consider it means that we DO abide - in each others' hearts. And that sort of abiding, living in each other, does not require physical presence. We are always together. We always love each other.

That's what Jesus asks for us. So as we abide in Christ's love, let us also abide with each other. 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.