

# St. James' E-pistle

## Date of Sunday Service: July 28, 2019

### Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

#### Pulpit Notes

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

It is good to be home, and I am happy to report that the work we did in South Africa was effective and holy. But it wasn't always easy.

At one point during a talk I was giving, a participant asked a question that I decided was off task, so I foolishly gave it short shrift and hurried on to the next. Later on, it became clear to me that the participant had not felt heard, and after fretting about it for awhile, I went to her and apologized for not listening to her concern.

I'm not sure what she expected, but it seemed to surprise her, and she said she appreciated the apology. We then went on to have a fruitful discussion about her question which, it turns out, was incredibly germane. Ironically, later that day I gave a talk about troublesome people, including those like Nicodemus who initially were exasperating to Jesus. Nicodemus, a Pharisee, seemed not to grasp what Jesus needed him to understand — but his attraction to Jesus led him to change and grow. Evidence suggests that after the crucifixion, Nicodemus became a faithful follower.

Sometimes, we are the troublesome person, and it's by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit that we allow ourselves to change and grow. That moment in the Youth Leadership Programme was one of those times for me.

Can you think of a change-and-grow moment for you? A moment when you realized you had been operating from a faulty set of assumptions or biases? I assure you, you won't have to dig too deep to find one. The real question is, how did you respond? Did you double down on those assumptions or, like Nicodemus, question them and reset your life?

The clergy of our county had such a moment this Tuesday. We had a meeting with Bishop Shin where he showed how congregations in our region have been declining — not all, mind you, but enough. Some are actually growing. The difference — and the difference in dioceses that are actually growing — is that they have embraced evangelism. Not merely putting out signs announcing that visitors are welcome but full blown courses of action for going out into the community and bringing the gospel, for making the church a place that attracts people.

Bishop Shin gave both a sobering and hopeful message. Grow or die. He asked us if we were ready to jettison some of our old assumptions, our old ways of doing things and change from decline to growth. Again, he reminded us, many congregations have already died, and it is time for each to decide what they want to do. Will we recognize where we are going astray and change? There's plenty of potential for growth, he said, and that was hopeful. But he added a warning: If we say we

want to grow, we must commit to the work. It is disciplined work that has to be sustained over the long run, not some quick-fix program.

So there's your question: Do we want to Grow or Die? Are you willing to commit to the work of evangelism? Are you ready to do what it takes to make St. James' a voice of the gospel that will resonate throughout our community for years, decades, centuries to come?

None of us can do this by ourselves. Indeed, nobody can guarantee how long they individually will be around to see plans through. That's not important. What's important is that we collectively choose to live, choose to grow, choose to be the light of the world that Jesus calls us to be.

It is not easy work. But then, it wasn't easy for Nicodemus to hold his fellow Pharisees in his mind, those who had been brothers in the faith, and say, "I'm following Jesus."

Grace and Peace,

Chuck +

### Thought for your week:

**"May your choices reflect your hopes and not your fears."**

**— Nelson Mandela**

### Worship This Week:

Tuesday	6:30 PM	Evening Prayer (at the Chapel)
Wednesday	10 AM	Morning Prayer (Wilks Room)
Thursday	11 AM	No Bible Study This Week
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

### *RURAL AND MIGRANT MINISTRY: Request for School Supply Kits*

This year Rural and Migrant Ministry's Overnight Camp, is being held the week of August 12th - 18th at the Presbyterian Camp in Holmes, New York and is celebrating its 30th year of operation. The camp's theme is **PERSEVERE**.

In addition to the Overnight Camp, Rural and Migrant Ministry offers a variety of summer youth programs. Each of these programs makes a huge difference in the lives of the young people who attend, and often, these experiences are life-changing.

At the end of camp each camper receives a Back to School Supply Kit. Last year our parish family donated forty-two kits.

**Please prayerfully consider making a donation of a school kit.**

The kit should include:

- 4 composition notebooks (NO spiral notebooks)
- 4 sturdy (2) pocket folders
- 1 package of notebook paper
- 1 box of primary colored Crayola washable markers
- 1 24-count box of Crayola crayons
- 1 soft pencil envelope/case that includes 1 package (12) #2 pencils, 1 eraser, 1 pencil sharpener, 1 ruler, 3-6 bill point pens, 2 glue sticks, a pair of school scissors
- small package of construction paper

**OR if you would like us to do the shopping, please prayerfully consider making a cash donation.** Cash/Checks payable to St. James' Church, memo line - RMM school supplies. Special offering envelopes can be found in the pews.

**Deadline for donations: Sunday, August 4, 2019**

On behalf of the campers who will benefit from your donation: **THANK YOU!**

— Deacon Gail on behalf of the Outreach Committee

### *Bees! Or Not:*

You may have noticed what looks like a swarm of bees near the entrance of the Parish House. They look scary, don't they? However, they are what is called *Cicada Killers*, and unless you are a cicada, they are harmless to you. Only females can sting, and the only way that is likely to happen is if you grab one (or lean against one). It can be a nasty sting, of course, so you still want to exercise caution.

While the Vestry is looking into how to address these recurring bugs, I thought you might want to know a little bit about them. First of all, they are great pollinators, just like the endangered honey bees. Males have no stingers but are the more aggressive because they want to show off to the females. Even though there are a lot of them, they are solitary bugs which don't share a collective hive the way wasps and honey bees do. That also means, unlike wasps, they don't work together and can't "swarm" anyone. Cicada Killers can hang around for a couple of months but are generally gone as cooler weather approaches.

I am not sure what action the Vestry will take, but in the meantime I thought you should know that they don't pose a significant risk to your safety.

### *Wheelchair Wanted:*

Susan Gausepohl is looking for the short-term loan of a wheelchair. Her mom is coming for a week's visit in August and needs a wheelchair when out and about. If you know of anyone who has a wheelchair who isn't using it that she might be able to borrow for the week of 8/9-8/18, please contact Susan. Thanks!

### *Men's Breakfast:*

We missed Men's Breakfast last week because I was away. So let's have breakfast THIS SATURDAY! 8:00 AM at Cranberry's. I look forward to seeing the parish men!

### *Fireside Chat Coordinator Needed:*

**WE ARE STILL LOOKING FOR A COORDINATOR!** After nine years of phenomenal work coordinating our famous Fireside Chats, Sue DeLorenzo is stepping down to a well-deserved rest. The Chats, however, go on! In fact, speakers are already approaching us about ideas for talks! What we need now is a new coordinator. It would be a lie to say this doesn't require some serious work, but the foundation Sue has laid makes it a *much* more manageable — and enjoyable — job. So contact Fr. Chuck to claim your spot!

## July 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> Office Closed	<b>23</b> 6:30 Evening Prayer	<b>24</b> 10 AM Morning Prayer  2:00 PM. Hyde Park Assisted Living Eucharist	<b>25</b> 11 AM Bible Study	<b>26</b> FREE PRAYER FRIDAY	<b>27</b> 8 AM Men's Breakfast
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>

## August 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Office Closed	<b>30</b> 6:30 Evening Prayer	<b>31</b> 10 AM Morning Prayer	<b>1</b> NO BIBLE STUDY	<b>2</b> FREE PRAYER FRIDAY	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b> Unction	<b>5</b> Office Closed	<b>6</b> 2:00 PM. Hyde Park Assisted Living Eucharist  6:30 Evening Prayer	<b>7</b> 10 AM Morning Prayer	<b>8</b> NO BIBLE STUDY	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> Office Closed	<b>13</b> 6:30 Evening Prayer	<b>14</b> 10 AM Morning Prayer	<b>15</b> NO BIBLE STUDY	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 8 AM Men's Breakfast
<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> Office Closed	<b>20</b> 6:30 Evening Prayer	<b>21</b> NO Morning Prayer	<b>22</b> NO BIBLE STUDY	<b>23</b> FREE PRAYER FRIDAY	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 6:30 Evening Prayer	<b>28</b> NO Morning Prayer	<b>29</b> NO BIBLE STUDY	<b>30</b>	<b>31</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.</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/>

## July

- 28 Diocesan Budget Committee
- 29 The Diocesan Comptroller
- 30 All Saints' Church, Harrison
- 31 The Archivist and Historiographer of the Diocese

## August

- 1 Diocesan Accessibility Committee
- 2 Church of St. Andrew, Staten Island
- 3 St. Thomas' Church, New Windsor

## Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Ashley, Joe Baldwin, John Bohlmann, Justin Bohlmann, Helen Braun, Fr. Fred Cartier, Patty Caswell, Linkin Ewalt, Loretta Falzarano (sister of Donna Beyer), Heather Francese, Kathy Ganim, Karla Givison (Deb Belding's sister), John and Gloria Golden, Kathy Graff, Nick Granados-Kramer, Robert Guariglia, Clifford Hallmark (father of Alyssa Raugalis), Dalton K., Edith Kline, Lynne Koch, Ashley Konyn, Tedi Kramer, Hope Jennings, Rosemary Leuken, Lorraine, Joanne Lynn, Jim Lynn (Carol Bender's brother - facing surgery), Doris Mack, Margaret, Bruce McIlravy, 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.

*Please pray for healing for John Bohlmann and for Kathy Graff*

## 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.*

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|----------------------------------|--|
| Birthdays<br>(this past week):   | William Ardini, Barbara Hobens, Georgianna S. Pardee, Patricia Glancey, Barbara Soden, James Matranga and Nick Granados-Kramer |
| Birthdays<br>(this coming week): | Clifford Wells, David Wardell, Patricia Drake and Christian Schroder   |
| Acolytes:                        | July 28: Nancy Montero<br>August 4: TBA  |
| Altar Guild:                     | July 28: Team I<br>August 4: Team I  |

8 a.m. Readers:            July 28: TBA  
                                     August 4: TBA

10 a.m. Readers:         July 28: Russell Urban-Mead and Maggie McNamara  
                                     August 4: Wilma Tully and Justin Bohlmann

Ushers:                     July 28: Maggie McNamara and Tom McNamara  
                                     August 4: Jodi Triola and Susan Simpson

Pledge Clerks:            July 28: Andy Hall and Dean Caswell  
                                     August 4: Joanne Lown and Sue DeLorenzo

Parish Cycle of Prayer: July 28: Russell, Wendy, Kassie and Charlie Urban-Mead  
                                     August 4: Liz Van Wagner, Janet Veith

Coffee Hour Hosts:      July 28: Summer Break--No Coffee Hour  
                                     August 4: Summer Break--No Coffee Hour

## **This Week's Lectionary**

Hosea 1:2-10  
Psalm 85  
Colossians 2:6-15, (16-19)  
Luke 11:1-13

## **This Week's Hymns**

Processional: 654 - Day By Day  
Sequence: 475 - God Himself Is With Us  
Offertory: 470 - There's a Wideness in God's Mercy  
Communion: TAIZÉ 47 - In the Lord, I'll Be Ever Thankful  
Recessional: 612 - Gracious Spirit, Holy Ghost

## **Last Week's Sermon**

Sermon Preached on Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Where does one begin when we are witnessing the ethical and moral compass of our country being torn apart and thrown into a deep, dark hole? We begin with our faith as followers of Jesus Christ as we stand strong against the forces of evil with the powerful forces of love and hope and reconciliation. As followers of Jesus Christ we build up relationships; we do not tear them apart.

Can you imagine Jesus sitting here among us this morning, with tears rolling down his face, deeply disturbed about what he has witnessed and the language he has heard over these last weeks and months - the trauma that so many of God's children are experiencing, especially the most vulnerable among us.

He is probably thinking to himself, how can I get my followers here in 2019 to focus on the heavy lifting needed to build up God's kingdom; how can I get their attention? They sometimes don't even recognize me in their neighbors as we cross paths both near or across borders.

He's right. We are often distracted with our devices, with our everyday happenings. Sometimes we just feel overwhelmed and discouraged. I know I'm struggling with some of the actions take by our government and the rhetoric of our leaders. In fact, I'm mortified.

So, where do we begin? We begin with our faith and the teachings of Jesus Christ.

In last week's Gospel we heard some of Jesus' teachings: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself" and who exactly is your neighbor - Of course, it is everyone - every child of God is a neighbor to one another no matter where he or she comes from or what their beliefs are.

What happened to respecting the dignity of every human being, knowing that each human being has value and is interconnected to one another? What happened to welcoming the stranger in our midst, a practice that goes all the way back to Abraham? It has deep roots in our faith.

The drum beat of disrespect, fear and anger is getting louder and louder in our nation. Racism is alive and well and thriving. So is xenophobia, anti-semitism, Islamophobia, hate speeches, nativism and white supremacy rhetoric.

So where do we begin? We begin with our faith and the teachings of Jesus Christ.

We begin by coming together as a community of faith each Sunday to be nourished, strengthen and transformed by listening to the word of God, by praying together, by receiving the bread and wine and experiencing fellowship with each other.

By coming together we will be strengthened with Jesus' message of hope, reconciliation, love and justice and we will be invigorated in our ability to do our mission work Jesus has called us to do in the world.

In our Gospel this morning we get a glimpse of the importance of stepping back and listening to the teachings of Jesus before we head out to do the reconciling work Jesus wants us to do.

Jesus decides to stop by unexpectedly to see his good friends Mary and Martha. They live in Bethany just outside Jerusalem. It is known as a leper colony and a place for the homeless community .

A little background information: In Jesus' time, men were the landowners. Women were second class citizens; in fact, they were not even included in the census count that was taken annually by the authorities. In other words, the main role for a woman was to carry out the normal household duties.

Although Jesus and his disciples arrived unexpectedly, Mary and Martha greeted them warmly. As you would expect, Martha started running around preparing food, setting the table and carrying out the normal duties that society expected of her.

However, Mary did the unexpected. She sat at the feet of Jesus with the other disciples to listen to what Jesus was teaching. Mary went against the norm of the day. She joined the disciples who were men - that was a no no. Mary felt it was so important to hear Jesus' message that she was willing to risk everything by breaking with the norm. In fact, Jesus defended Mary's right to go against the cultural expectations of the day.

You can imagine without Mary's help, how quickly Martha got distracted. I think many of us can relate to what Martha was experiencing and the frustrations she was feeling. In speaking with Martha, Jesus talked about focusing on what was important at the moment - giving him the opportunity while he was visiting to do some teaching before they reached Jerusalem. Jesus wanted his disciples to be prepared to move forward into the world after his death.

This Gospel message sometimes gets conveyed as an either or situation. I don't agree with that premise. It is not. Providing hospitality and listening are both equally important.

However, by letting Mary sit and listen, Jesus was tryin to convey to each of us, no matter what the norms of the day are, how important it is to take time out of our busy schedules to be silent, to put down our devices and to shake off our many distractions. By doing so we might hear an unexpected voice that will move us to action. Isn't that what we do each week when we come together and participate in our weekly services. Each of our services, be they on Sunday or Tuesday evening or Wednesday morning, provide us with the opportunity to be refreshed and to be revitalized in our faith so we can go forth to do the work Christ has waiting for us.

We as a faith community have our work cut out for us. Jesus is counting on us to spread his message of hope and love and justice and reconciliation out into our communities, our nation and the world.

One of the issues facing us as a community of faith is how to respond to racial slurs. Racism is alive and well in our country. We cannot remain silent. Too many of our neighbors have been and will continue to be affected by racial and bigoted remarks. Racism takes many forms - our criminal justice system stands out among them.

As Bryan Stevenson, Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery, Alabama, states, "Millions of African people were brought to America in chains, enslaved by a narrative of racial difference that was crafted to justify captivity and domination. Involuntary servitude was banned by the Thirteenth Amendment to the US Constitution, but nothing was done to confront the ideology of white supremacy. Slavery didn't end in 1865; it just evolved."

Recently heard the voice of a young black woman living in New York: "I am no stranger to people telling me to go back to my country. It is a very common racial slur."

So where do we begin. We begin with our faith and the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Our Diocese, along with other Dioceses in the Episcopal Church, is addressing racism and its impact upon our history through the Committee on Reparations. Last year we examined it through

the lens of the Year of Lamentations. This year, which is currently still evolving is the Year of Apology. As you are aware, Father Chuck is a member of the committee. He has addressed the issue of racism numerous times through his play on Lamentations and various presentations, including our Fireside Chats.

This week tears kept coming to my eyes as I heard bigoted, racial slurs directed at four women of color, three of whom were born in this country and one who escaped the horrors of Somalia and entered our country as a refugee. This is not the first time and it won't be the last time we hear these slurs unless we stand up and speak out. How can one human being treat other human beings like that. To me, it's beyond comprehension.

As I struggled with the rhetoric this week, I wondered how these types of disrespectful language was affecting and has affected the behavior of our young people.

What I don't understand is why more of our leaders, especially our faith leaders, do not speak out against the disrespectful and hateful language of the President. I believe by remaining silent that they are complicit in systemic racism. What is holding them back? This is not a political issue. It is a human rights issue that calls on all of us, every one of us, no matter what our faith beliefs are, to respect the dignity of each person we encounter.

Did you know that the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission on Anti-Discrimination Laws says: "Examples of potentially unlawful conduct include insults, taunts or ethnic epithets, such as making fun of a person's foreign accent or comments like 'Go back to where you came from' whether made by supervisors or co-workers."

Racism goes against all that we stand for as followers of Jesus Christ.

Each of us through our baptismal covenant promises with God's help to seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as yourself and to strive for justice and peace among all people, and to respect the dignity of every human being.

As Presiding Bishop Michael Curry states, "We are the Episcopal Branch of the Jesus Movement and that our way is the Way of Love." As Bishop Curry says, "Love has the power to change lives and to change the world."

So, where do we begin. We begin with our faith community and the teachings of Jesus Christ. Jesus is waiting for our response. What will it be?

Let us pray: A reading from Ephesians 3:17-19

"I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge - that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God."  
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?*