

St. James' E-pistle

Date of Sunday Service: July 30, 2017

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Bible Verse

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

- Romans 8:28

Pulpit Notes

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Last Wednesday, I was down in Poughkeepsie running some church errands down by Barnes & Noble (yes, I was in collar), when someone ran up to me and asked, "Are you from St. James'?" That's always a little startling, especially so far away from the church, but I cautiously said, "Yes."

She said, "I just wanted to tell you how much I love your Graveyard Tours. I go every year. I'm a teacher, and I tell all my students and their families to go. They're so educational and entertaining!" She went on for a while, but you get the idea.

This is important because it's a sign of just how big an impact the Graveyard Tours have on our community. They are more than a fundraiser - although let's be serious; **this is our biggest fundraiser of the year, netting more than \$8,000 last year alone!** The Graveyard Tours change people beyond our walls and are therefore a significant part of our **ministry**.

But they need you! Right now, two of the biggest roles in the Graveyard Tours are unfilled, and without them, we may not be able to pull this thing off. What are those roles? Not actors - we have them. Not script writers - scripts are all written. Director? - got that covered. Advertising? - Nope, though we can always use more.

What we need are:

1. A Tour Guide Coordinator
2. A Parking Attendant Coordinator

Not the most glamorous positions, perhaps, but so essential to making the Tours run. We have found that parking is a serious issue because there's so much coming and going. While we can get high school students to park cars, we need and **adult** to coordinate and direct them.

And while we are blessed with many wonderful volunteer tour guides, they need someone to coordinate them, too.

Coordination means securing the needed people, scheduling them, and being on site to make sure they have what they need. I can't pretend these are easy jobs. Both require time and footwork. But

they ARE immensely satisfying because coordinators know just how much they are contributing to the financial health of the parish as well as the spiritual and educational ministry of this church.

So I am asking you - yes you - to step forward to offer your skill, your time, your commitment. If you're uncertain, the first step is to pray. Pray hard!

The second step - if you still aren't convinced - is to talk with me. I am convinced you are the person we need. And while the job is demanding, I'm convinced you can do it.

What we offer in these Graveyard Tours is more than entertainment. It's more than money. It is a chance to encounter the divine through the voices of those who have come before. And yeah, to get in a laugh or two. But isn't that what we're all about?

So, step forward and become a part of this amazing thing.

Grace and Peace,

Chuck +

Did you know?

...why we baptize? We have a baptism this Sunday, so it's a good time to come and experience what it's all about. But very quickly, we baptize to help people become part of the Body of Christ. This is not "fire insurance" that grants instant access to heaven (and out of hell). It is not a way to ensure that someone will take care of your kids if you die. Rather, like all sacraments, it is a sign of grace - in this case the grace of recognizing and embracing how much God loves you. We say it is a cleansing from sin, but when we acknowledge that sin is essentially allowing ourselves to be separated from God, we see that baptism is a sign that we believe no gap can separate us because God's love is boundless. We baptize so we can publicly acknowledge a new member - and remind ourselves why we fell in love, too.

Announcements

This Week's Summer Adult Forum:

We got off to a great start for the Summer Adult Forum with an introduction to the Sacraments, starting with Baptism. THIS Sunday, July 30 (from 9:15 to 9:45 AM) in the Wilkes Room, the session will be on Reconciliation.

RURAL AND MIGRANT MINISTRY: Request for School Supply Kits

Rural and Migrant Ministry will again be offering a variety of summer youth programs. These programs include day camps, a leadership academy, residential programs, an overnight leadership camp and high school and college internships. These programs make a huge difference in the lives of our young people. These programs can also be life-changing. This year's theme is Challenges. Fr. Richard Witt, Executive Director of Rural and Migrant Ministry writes:

“I am finding it most difficult to write to you about our Summer Youth Programs. This is one of the most critical appeals I have written during my twenty-five years at Rural and Migrant Ministry.

The pressure upon the children of our programs and their families is tremendous during these tumultuous times. Children are spending time and energy doing things I believe they should not be doing: worrying about the disappearance of their parents and about their own safety. Our children are looking about them and they are seeing people being detained and deported: they are seeing families being torn apart. They are going to school wondering what they will come home to, and for many, while they are at school, they are facing increased bullying.

These difficult realities are not just impinging upon the immigrant children of our programs, but all of our rural children. The healthcare that is protecting them is in jeopardy. The programs that provide resources to their families: to develop training, to nourish them through school meals and to protect them from pesticides in the fields and toxins from rural factories are all under threat.”

So what is RMM doing about all of this? What we have always done: we are standing with our young people through a variety of summer programs and providing resources and nurturing as they live into facing their challenges. We are working hard to help our youth build skills, emotional strength and resiliency, to not just trudge forward, but to thrive. Our summer programs focus on being effective, creative and having fun.

(Frankly, one great sadness is that children are being denied the opportunity to just be children.)”

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 ball point pens, 2 glue sticks, a pair of school scissors and a 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 narthex of the church.

Deadline for donations: Sunday, August 6, 2017.

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

August 2017						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30	31 Office Closed	1	2 10 AM Morning Prayer 10 AM Nursery School Open House	3 11 AM Bible Study	4	5
6 Unction	7 Office Closed	8	9 10 AM Morning Prayer	10 11 AM Bible Study	11	12
13	10 Office Closed	15	16 10 AM Morning Prayer	17 11 AM Bible Study	18	15 8 AM Men's Breakfast
20 Sarah Rodeo's last day at St. James'	21 Office Closed	22	23 10 AM Morning Prayer	24 11 AM Bible Study	25	26

27	28 Office Closed	29	30 10 AM Morning Prayer	31 11 AM Bible Study		
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/>

July

- 30** Trustees of the Diocese
- 31** Diocesan Accessibility Committee August

August

- 1** Lay Readers of the Diocese
- 2** St. Luke's Church, Katonah
- 3** All Saints' Church, Staten Island
- 4** The Canon for Transition Ministry and Congregations Seeking New Clergy Leadership
- 5** Christ Church, Sparkill

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Ruth Blanding, John Bohlmann, Helen Braun, Susie Buhalis, Mariel Carter, Dee, Linkin Ewalt, Loretta Falzarano (sister of Donna Beyer), Steven Foote, Heather Francese, Kathy Ganim, Karla Givison (Deb Belding's sister), Robert Guariglia, Harold Hall, Cath Holywell (priest in the Church of England and Indaba partner who worshiped with St. James' - undergoing heart surgery), Dalton K., Edie Kline, Ashley Konyon, Barbara Kubiak (Mother of Donna Tracy-Coffman), Rosemary Leuken, Joanne Lynn, Doris Mack, Gordon Mackenzie, Virginia Mackenzie, Andrew Mendelson, Grace Plass, Deborah Porach, John Robinson, Rob Robinson, Jason Rodino (serving in Afghanistan), John Ross, Richard Secor, Sharon Secor (recovering from heart surgery), James

Sheeky, Naomi Sleight, Patricia (sister of Barbara Slegel), 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): Barbara Hobens, Georgianna S. Pardee, Patricia Glancey, Barbara Soden, James Matranga, Clarence W. Clark, Nick Granados-Kramer, Clifford Wells, David Wardell and Patricia Drake

Birthdays
(this coming week): Christian Schroder

Acolytes:
July 30: Team 2
August 6: Team 3

Altar Guild:
July 30: Team I
August 6: Team I

8 a.m. Readers:
July 30: Debbie Belding and Sue DeLorenzo
August 6: Debbie Belding and Jim Smyth

10 a.m. Readers:
July 30: Wendy Urban-Mead and Nancy Montero
August 6: Russell Urban-Mead and Andy Hall

Ushers:
July 30: Nancy Montero, Anna Marie Pitcher
August 6: Andrew and Tonya Hall

Pledge Clerks:
July 30: Joanne Lown and Tanya Hall
August 6: Doug Belding and Judy Douglass

Parish Cycle of Prayer:
July 30: Jodi, Dave, Taylor and Travyn Triola, Wilma Tully
August 6: Russell, Wendy, Kassie and Charlie Urban-Mead, Liz Van Wagner

Coffee Hour Hosts:
July 30: Summer Schedule--No Coffee Hour
August 6: Summer Schedule--No Coffee Hour

This Week's Lectionary

Genesis 29:15-28
Psalm 105:1-11, 45b

Romans 8:26-39
Matthew 13:31-33,44-52

This Week's Hymns

Processional: 499 - Lord God, You Now Have Set Your Servant Free
Sequence: 297 - Descend, O Spirit, Purging Flame
Offertory: 296 - We Know that Christ Is Raised and Dies No More
Communion: 447 - The Christ Who Died But Rose Again
Recessional: 684 - O For a Closer Walk with God

Last Week's Sermon

Sermon Preached on Seventh Sunday after Pentecost (July 23, 2017)

Head Up Anyway

I finally saw the *Wonder Woman* movie yesterday: For the most part, it's your typical superhero movie. But there are a few key differences.

A) The superhero is a woman

B) it's set in World War I. Most are either set in World War II or in modern times. (This may be because this year marks 100th anniversary of the US entrance in it)

C) the lesson Wonder Woman learns is that her super powers will never end War, Hate, or Violence. Those things will always be there: but so will love. The trick is to see love in the midst of it all. It did not perhaps change the course of human events as she had once expected, but it did change her.

This seemed to be a theme of several post World War I parables - seeing good beyond the present horror.

One of the most famous perhaps was the story of the old man who planted trees. There are variations of this story, but the one I heard was of a traumatized young veteran who was revisiting the scenes of his most horrifying battles in the War. At one of them, he sees an old man digging holes with a stick and planting acorns, one after the other after the other.

He asks the man, who looked to be a hundred - why he was doing it since it was clear that he'd never live to see them grow. The man said, "Oh, I can already see them growing (tapping head) up here. And when the trees catch up with what I see, they will bring joy to many others." Then he went on planting.

That is a major part of our calling as followers of Christ - to see Hope, life, and love in the midst of despair, death, and hate.

That is, to see God in the midst of everything else.

Of course, this calling was one God gave us even before Christ. Just look at Jacob in today's Old Testament reading. He was on the run, fleeing the wrath of his brother Esau from whom he had stolen his father's blessing. Jacob didn't know what to do or if he would live. But in the midst of this fear and anguish, he had a dream in which he saw the angels of God ascending and descending on a ladder to heaven. When he awoke, he understood that God was in his midst - that God was ALWAYS in his midst - and this changed his journey and life forever.

The Apostle Paul knew hard times, too. But he also had a keen awareness of God's presence - and of the future joy to come. That's why he thought of the pain and anguish as meaningless when compared to his relationship with God - which not only appeared in his head but in his heart. They filled his soul.

The same is true in Jesus' parable today of the farmer whose crops were sabotaged by an unnamed enemy by sowing weeds among them. He did not despair when he realized what had happened. Instead, he saw the future crops and knew that life would still prevail - without him having to destroy good and bad plants alike. He knew that the weeds would eventually be made known and removed.

Like the farmer planting trees, this farmer could see the good crops already - all they had to do was catch up.

And Jesus understood that we too can see the Kingdom of God already - despite the evil, the hate, the violence and greed around us. It is already here.

But here's the catch: in order to *see*, we have to *look*, and in order to look, we have to keep our heads up.

Even when things are bad, we keep our heads up anyway. Only so can we see. Otherwise we'll see nothing - like the young World War I veteran who only saw devastation. We keep our heads up and look around so we can see the kingdom even when we have a rock for a pillow. We keep our heads up so we can see even when weeds are all over the crops. Otherwise, we succumb to despair and hate.

But, like Wonder Woman, like that old man who planted trees, like Jacob, like Paul, like the farmer in Jesus' parable, if we keep our heads up, if we look, we **will** see that God is with us. It may not change the course of human events (though it may), but it **WILL** change us. And that is enough.

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