

# St. James' E-pistle

## Date of Sunday Service: July 8, 2018

### Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

#### Pulpit Notes

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I missed a lot while I was away through nearly all of June. I missed two Sundays - where I heard you even sang together as part of the sermon. I missed planning meetings - and nearly missed the Luau!

One other thing I missed was a Vigil last Saturday that took place across the country and throughout our region by churches of every conceivable denomination. The vigil was a Christian response to the separation of children from their parents seeking asylum at the southern border. I felt bad missing the Vigil, especially since I had gotten home from South Africa the night before. Jet lag and the time difference kept me out of things, however, and I slept while others prayed.

Since St. James' was only modestly represented at these vigils (we DID have a few members of the parish take part, and for that I am thankful) - I feel it my obligation to let you know my thoughts on the separation of children and the faith community's response.

To be brief, I stand with all those who protest these separation. It is, and can only be seen by Christians, as reprehensible. There are theological and practical reasons for this. Firstly, there is nothing in scripture to justify the hostile response these refugees receive. There is no scriptural justification for closing the borders the way we do in modern society. Indeed, scripture anticipated immigrants and refugees (from war, famine, and poverty) - and commanded that the faithful welcome them and treat them with kindness and hospitality.

If one is to actually follow Christ, one must see all those crossing our borders - regardless of "legal" status - as brothers and sisters in need, a need we ignore at peril to our souls.

On a practical level, these immigrants and refugees do not pose a threat to us. Studies have repeatedly shown that immigrants tend to be LESS inclined toward violence than home-bred citizens. Terrorism - with a few obvious exceptions - has been predominantly perpetrated by natural citizens. Communities are safer when they include immigrants.

Moreover, immigrants (including refugees) contribute far more to our society than they take. Indeed, undocumented immigrants can't take much since they aren't eligible for things like Welfare or Medicaid. They take jobs nobody else wants. It's automation and off-shoring that eliminates the good-paying jobs.

As Christians, we are called to put ourselves in the shoes of those who risk life, limb, and imprisonment in order to come here. Why would they do such a thing? Why would they risk the lives of their children to make such a tortuous journey with such uncertain prospects? It's not because they think there's easy money here. The days are over of people coming from Central and

South America just for some quick work to send home. Especially Mexico sees very few of its citizens cross the border for a better life.

Those who come here are mostly from countries where it is too dangerous to stay. Where their lives, and those of their families have been threatened, or where a family member has already been harmed. Nobody undertakes such journeys lightly. As Christians, then, we are called upon to consider their desperation in the midst of our relative comfort. This is precisely the time to ask ourselves not only what Jesus would do, but what does Jesus expect of us as individuals and as a nation.

In short, while I was unable to attend the Vigil or any of the protests against separating immigrant children from their parents, I fully support this movement and urge you to do so. In today's news (Thursday), it was noted that while the president has changed his mind about separating families, no children have as yet actually been reunited with their parents. I can hope and pray that by the time you read this, that will have changed. But as with many things run by human beings, if someone isn't standing over their shoulders, it is likely that the families will remain separated, languishing in fear and depression within the confines of chain-link cages.

We are better than that. More importantly, we are commanded by Christ to do better. After all, these are not "illegals." They are our family.

Grace and Peace,

Chuck +

#### *A WORD ABOUT SOUTH AFRICA:*

It does not seem fair to travel so far without giving at least a brief report about my activities in South Africa.

As most of you know, I traveled there in the second half of June with Fr. Masud ibn Syedullah to help facilitate a program called the Volmoed Youth Leadership Programme (Volmoed is the name of the center it is held at). The 9-week program builds up leaders who are led by their faith to make a better society.

Fr. Masud's and my role was to lead a retreat for the young people called "Agents of Peace in a Time of Fear." It focused on giving the participants tools to listen to those they disagree with, to see Christ in those who are on the opposite side of many issues, and to bring positive responses to negative situations.

We spent a couple of days in Cape Town where we met with Third Order Franciscans (Fr. Masud is a Third Order member) and learned a bit about the political and religious climate of South Africa today.

We then traveled to Volmoed where we first spent a couple of days simply getting to know the kids. Two Sunday's ago, we were called upon to take services for a priest who had an emergency. We

went to St. Andrew's Church in a town called Hawston where Fr. Masud celebrated, and I preached. It was a joy and an honor.

During the time of the retreat, we helped teach skills ranging from meditation, meditative singing, but also ways to truly hear the person we disagree with - to understand where they are coming from, and the be able to repeat back to them what they are saying. Listening is one of the most difficult but useful skills we can learn.

We used some examples from our American context because we were not familiar enough with the South African context. For example, we showed a documentary about how widows of firefighters killed in 9/11 took their tragedy and turned it into something positive. We also showed a movie about an evangelical pastor who was challenged to reexamine his pro-gun stance by the mother of a son killed by a random shooting. This documentary had a profound effect on the young people who simply could not grasp the gun debate here.

We were taken to a city called Hermanus which represented many of the challenges facing South Africa. They include gentrification (wealthy people buying up large parts of the city, making them very nice but very unaffordable for the original inhabitants), a growing wealth gap, a lingering racism, drug abuse, and poverty. As we learned, their problems look a lot like our problems, so in the end, even our American examples made sense to the kids.

On our last day, we were scheduled to meet with Archbishop Desmond Tutu, but he was not feeling well that day and stayed home. Though it was a disappointment, we enjoyed the tremendous hospitality of one of South Africa's preeminent theologians, John de Gruchy. And just for fun, the last thing we did before heading back to the airport and home was go whale watching. Most of the kids had never been on a boat before, so the experience was both exciting and - as it turns out - nauseating for many of them. I will forever hold in my mind the image of them leaning over the side of the boat!

In short, it was a quick trip. Too quick. The landscape was stunningly beautiful. There was horrendous poverty with tin-shack villages containing hundreds of thousands of people. There was also great wealth. They are addressing the centuries of abuse and segregation as best as they can, and progress is being made. Given the opportunity, I'd definitely go back - and I bet you'd love it there, too.

If you have any questions about the trip, please feel free to ask me!

**A PLEDGE PLEA: Thanks to those of you who responded to the plea for new pledges! We really appreciate it. If you have not pledged yet, please do so. And if you already pledged but can increase yours a little, it will go a long way to making our ministry here move forward. God is good, and so is your partnership in the Jesus Movement.**

## Announcements

### *Music This Summer:*

Every year, our choir takes a break during the summer. That doesn't mean, however, that music is any less important in the hot months, just that there are opportunities to try a couple of new things. Glenn May, our music minister, has asked if we might have a few instrumentalists play here and there during worship. My answer was, of course! So wait and see what new music comes our way.

Another summer change we're trying is re-introducing a little Taizé music. You will notice Sunday that there is a Taizé song for the Communion Hymn. Taizé is known for its brevity - just one or two lines - but also for being repeated over and over. So, the song will be sung throughout communion; don't worry, you'll know when it ends. In another twist, for July, we will use that same song every week for communion. The idea is that you won't even need to think about it by the second week, and you'll be able to come up to communion still singing. If it doesn't work, hey, it's just for the summer.

### *LAY READER Training:*

As promised, there will be a training session for all Lay Readers, currently licensed and those who would like to be, for **Saturday, July 28 at 9:00 AM**. It will last no more than three hours and explore all the areas that are important to fulfilling this ministry. If you can't make this date but still want to get licensed (or renew your license) Fr. Chuck will set an alternate date for September. Please note: according to diocesan rules, all lay readers who bear the chalice must be licensed. This class should fulfill requirements for licensing.

### *Acolyte Training:*

An acolyte training session will take place on **Sunday, July 22 at 11:30 AM**. This is not a long training session, especially in this heat, but it is important for new acolytes. It is also good for "old" acolytes to get a refresher course, so please come if you are at all available! If that date doesn't work, please let Fr. Chuck know. If *you* would like to become an acolyte, please let him know.

*Between Service Classes:*

On the **Sundays of July** we have a series on the 7 Deadly Sins.

Starting in **September**, we look at church music - What it is in its various forms. What's different about it from other music? How do we make best use of it?

*Youth Group:*

**Sunday, July 22 at 3:00 PM!** Hope you can come. We are putting up a banner in the front yard.



**2018**  
**Episcop**Palians  
in the **PARK**

**SATURDAY • JULY 14<sup>th</sup> • 1-4PM**

**St. Andrew & St. Luke Episcopal Church**  
**850 Wolcott Avenue • Beacon, NY**

**Episcopalians in the Park is back!**

Join us for another fun-filled day of food, games,  
and music as we get to know our fellow Episcopalians.

*Please bring a side dish to share and something to drink.*

**RSVP:**

email [nysesurrection@gmail.com](mailto:nysesurrection@gmail.com)  
or call Rev. Jan at 435-764-7643

# July 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8 <b>VBS!</b>  Between Service Class	9 Office Closed	10	11 10 AM Morning Prayer	12	13	14  Episcopalians in the Park
15  Between Service Class	16 Office Closed	17   7 PM Vestry	18 10 AM Morning Prayer  2 PM Hyde Park Assisted Living	19	20	21 8 AM Men's Breakfast
22 Between Service Class  Acolyte Class  Youth Group	23 Office Closed	24	25 10 AM Morning Prayer	26	27	28  Lay Reader Class
29 Between Service Class	30 Office Closed	31	10 AM Morning Prayer			

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

- 8 The Episcopal Church's House of Deputies
- 9 The Assisting Bishops of New York
- 10 The General Theological Seminary
- 11 St. Philip's Nursery School, Garrison
- 12 St. John's Church, New City
- 13 The Canon for Congregational Vitality
- 14 Diocesan Congregational Development Commission

## 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, 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), Pat Rooney, 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): None

Birthdays  
(this coming week): Taylor Triola, Rick Schroeder, David R. Bender and William Ardini

Acolytes:  
July 8: TBA  
July 15: TBA

Altar Guild: July 8: Team III  
July 15: Team I

8 a.m. Readers: July 8: Deb Belding and Grant Ferris  
July 15: Lucille Ogden and Sue DeLorenzo

10 a.m. Readers: July 8: Patty Caswell and Maggie McNamara  
July 15: Russell Urban-Mead and Mike Fenwick

Ushers: July 8: Maggie and Tom McNamara  
July 15: Nancy Montero and Anna Marie Pitcher

Pledge Clerks: July 8: Doug Belding and Judy Douglass  
July 15: Tanya Hall and Anna Marie Pitcher

Parish Cycle of Prayer: July 8: Randy and Barbara Soden, Marguerite Spratt, Gully Stanford  
July 15: Audrey Stenger, Bev Tas

Coffee Hour Hosts: July 8: No Coffee Hour  
July 15: No Coffee Hour

## **This Week's Lectionary**

2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10  
Psalm 48  
2 Corinthians 12:2-10  
Mark 6:1-13

## **This Week's Hymns**

Processional: LEVAS 109 - What a Friend We Have in Jesus  
Sequence: 439 -What Wondrous Love is This  
Offertory: 657 - Love Divine  
Communion: Taizé (insert) - "Nothing Can Trouble"  
Recessional: LEVAS 226 - Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory

## **Last Week's Sermon**

Sermon Preached on Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

*"Who Touched Me?"*

# Who has touched you in your lifetime. Take just a moment to think about that. Who has touched you - and how?

That's the question Jesus asked of a crowd of people - Who touched me? But maybe he was asking it of us, too. Who has touched me?

Being human, he didn't know everything - he knew *himself* and knew that something had happened. He knew someone had touched him in a different way - and it surprised him a bit. This touch wasn't just jostling - it was a touch of faith and hope. And yes, he was touched by her faith.

This is right after he'd been asked to heal Jairus' daughter - and that may have surprised him a bit, too, because Jairus (one of the temple stiff) is going way out of his way for a daughter. This daughter was not marriageable yet, girls were not overly valued (nor were children) - so it might seem surprising that he loved her so much.

You could be forgiven for saying that Jesus was touched by Jairus' love. Yes, I know it's a different type of touch - but they call it touching for a reason. When you are emotionally touched, you feel it physically just as well as when you're physically touched. Certainly for Jesus, body and soul are bound together so tightly that they are much the same.

Scripture shows a long list of people who have touched each other in wondrous ways. The love that David and Jonathan had for each other touches us because their abiding friendship surpassed all boundaries.

The effort Paul went to in his efforts to raise funds for the church in Jerusalem - a church he did not found, was touching and new to most of the people. I mean, who raises money for people you've never met and who live far far away?

Who has touched you?

I can tell you that in this last month, I have been touched by many people in a lot of surprising ways. Remember how at the beginning of the month I was in North Carolina at a CREDO conference? Then a week later I was in Virginia for the preaching residency? And how this past week-and-a-half I was in South Africa working with a youth leadership program?

At each of these, I was moved powerfully and have tried to share some of that with you - how I have been impressed with and encouraged by wisdom, courage, love, and passion of the young priests in our church. How I was lifted by great preaching, and supported by the love of my peer group over the past year.

And now, how I have been touched by the sheer joy and passion of these young South African - kids I call them because they're about the same ages as my kids. Now, don't worry, I'm not going to just give you a report and show you a slide show (well, I *would* have, but I couldn't get it to work right. Technology ...).

But I *will* share that in the week-plus that we spent with them, these kids slipped us into their community without hesitation and without missing a beat. Like we'd been with them from the

beginning. Which was something because they'd already been together six weeks by the time we got there.

They are learning how to be leaders guided by faith in a country troubled by lingering racial inequality, the echoes of 300 years of colonialism, slavery, and segregation. How to be leaders guided by faith in a country with a deep and growing wealth gap. How to be leaders guided by faith in a country that feels like it's in constant transition because even as they learn how to be a democracy all over again, refugees are flowing in from several other countries.

Yet the joy, the love, the compassion flowing from these kids - and from the program leaders, some of whom spend time in prison during the apartheid era right alongside Mandela - was overpowering. In a crowd of problems, you could feel touched by the faith and hope of people you might think had no right to feel it.

That's why it was such a joy to work with them. They came from all over South Africa - (and one from Korea just to add to the mix) - speaking a variety of languages from Afrikaans, Xhosa, Zulu, Sotho ... and of course, English. They shared deeply about the pain in their life: of domestic abuse, drug dealers and gang violence, poverty and privilege....

Fr. Masud - whom many of you know - and I went there to lead a unit on being Agents of Peace in a society that is not always open to peace. A society, in fact, that sometimes actively works to divide people. Our biggest problem was that the examples we had of being agents of peace all came from the US. We had a film of 9/11 survivors healing from their anguish by helping others. A film of an evangelical pastor struggling with his church's support of guns in the face of gun violence. Of the Muslim/Christian divide we see here (a problem Christians in South Africa just don't have).

But for the most part, the universal principles of seeking Christ in the neighbor, of listening to the one you disagree with are the same. So it worked pretty well. And frankly, many of the problems facing South Africa are the same ones we face.

So yes, we hope we touched them, and we know we were touched by them. On our last morning, they sat Fr. Masud and me down and gathered around - they gave us some gifts and then sang us a song - a well-known South African peace song called "Ukuthula."

Don't worry, I won't sing it. But its first line (in the English translation) goes:

"Peace, in this world of sin, (Hallelujah) the blood of Jesus brings."

That touches me. So back to our original question: Who has touched you? What has touched you? Spend some time with that question this week, and you will be that much closer to the heart of Jesus. 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?*