

St. James' E-pistle

Date of Sunday Service: August 12, 2018

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Pulpit Notes

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I would like to invite you - no, encourage you - to attend this year's Regional Council which is September 29 right here at St. James'.

I admit that one reason for this invitation is because we are the hosts, and it's always great for the host church to have good representation. However, the other reason is the theme. As you can see by the attached flyer and registration form, it's all about Climate Change.

I have to assume that St. James' parishioners are essentially on board with understanding the seriousness of human-impacted climate change. An extensive article in the New York Times Magazine chronicled how the science has been clear since the 1970s - the only thing that has changed is the understanding of how quickly things are changing. It's happening much faster than originally expected. We are no longer talking about possible dramatic changes to the landscape - we're talking about how much and how soon.

Understanding this is a moral and theologically important question because from earliest days, humans have known themselves to be called by God to be stewards of the earth. In Genesis, God tells people to tend the earth and all that is in it. We hold it in trust for God, and we are answerable to God for what we make of it. Just as surely, we are answerable to future generations for what we give them.

That's why we are particularly fortunate to have as our keynote speaker the Rev. Jeff Golliver. He is not only an Episcopal priest of the Diocese of New York, but is also environmental representative for the worldwide Anglican Communion at the United Nations. He has written and led retreats connecting spirituality to our environment. You will want to hear him.

Like many, I am not the best environmentalist. I do the basics - turn off lights, recycle (haphazardly), drive a pretty efficient car - but I suspect we need more than the basics. Maybe that needs to come from the government or industry, but maybe part of the answer needs to come from how we as individuals understand our relationship with creation.

Since I don't know as much as I need or should, I count this Regional Council as a golden opportunity. I hope that you, too, will join the Vestry and me as we learn the science and explore the theology. What would God have us do in this fraught situation? That is a question we all need to ask.

Grace and Peace,

Chuck +

Announcements

SUMMER PLEDGE APPEAL:

We are in full summer mode now, and that means travel. It also means it's easy to forget your pledge. This is your friendly reminder to keep up with your pledge, so your St. James' family can keep up with the work God has given us to do together. If you have yet to pledge for this year, it's never too late! God is good, and so is your partnership in the Jesus Movement.

We Need A Defibrillator!

When a group from St. James' went to the firehouse for CPR training, the teacher encouraged us to invest in a defibrillator for the church. We took note of it and felt it was a good idea.

However, there is no money in our budget for it. A defibrillator and wall-mount case runs roughly between \$1000 and \$1200. Would you be interested in contributing toward one? The parish has not yet set up a fund for a defibrillator, so don't start sending in checks just yet, but be prepared for a call. And if you have questions, don't hesitate to contact me and ask. These are some of the best ways to save a life in an emergency, so it's well worth considering.

Bible Study Takes A Break:

The Thursday morning Bible Study will be on summer break this month. We resume meeting on Thursday, September 6 at 11:00 AM.

Nursery School News:

Our Nursery School has a great reputation, and it shows in that the 3-year-olds class is now at capacity. We had to cut off registration for that class this week. There are still four slots in the 4-year-olds class, so if you know someone looking for a school, feel free to let them know about us. There will be an open house on Wednesday, August 15.

Between Service Classes:

The Between-Service Classes take a break in August but resume in September with a look at Church music. The first class of the new session is

September 16 - "Why Do We Have Music?"

September 23 - "Navigating The Hymnal 1982."

September 30 - "Greatest Hits of the Hymnal."

October 7 - "Other Hymnals: LEVAS and more."

October 14 - "Rock Stars of Church Music."

LECTOR Training:

The success of the Lay Reader Training has inspired us to offer a Lector Training session this Fall. Lectors are those who read lessons only - usually just the first (Old Testament) reading. This session will be a refresher for all current lectors, but also training for anyone interested in becoming a lector. **Tentative Date: Saturday, September 15, at 10 AM in the Wilks Room.** It is only between an hour and an hour-and-a-half, so it won't be much time out of your day.

REGIONAL COUNCIL AND POSSIBILITIES:

Below, you will find a flyer and registration form for Regional Council. We are encouraging ALL parishioners to attend if possible - and other churches have also encouraged their parishioners to come. Want it to be an event for all Episcopalians in the Hudson Valley. But hurry! The deadline is September 21. St. James' is hosting this year, so you know how to find it!

The Regional Council is an annual meeting of the Hudson Valley churches - especially Dutchess and Ulster County. Each parish has two delegates, but all Episcopalians in the region are encouraged to attend. See below for registration information.

ALSO: Clergy from the region this week discussed the idea of a smaller groups - Inter Parish Councils - meeting six months after the Regional Council. This would be a way for parishioners to discuss additional topics of interest and to keep relationships strong.

I WANT MY CHURCH TO GROW:

In April, the diocese hosted a workshop called "I Want My Church To Grow." It was so popular that they have decided to host another one in our region.

Right now, the *proposed* date for the event is November 3.

This is a workshop for everyone who loves God and their parish.

Topics for this include:

- Episcopalians Evangelize? Using Community Organizing Tools for Church Growth
- You Start with what You Have: Asset Based Congregational Development
- We Need More Money: Best Practices for Your Stewardship Campaign
- Everything Keeps Changing! Vestry 101 for the 21st Century

Save the Date!

Mid-Hudson Regional Council Meeting
Saturday, Sept. 29, 2018
9:30am-3pm at St. James Hyde Park



After our business meeting, we will engage with the topic
of **CLIMATE CHANGE**
and our role in caring for God's creation.

*Featuring keynote speaker, **the Rev. Jeff Golliver** and
Hudson River Playback Theatre, a group that fosters
change through storytelling, music and interactive
performance.*

The Rt. Rev. Andrew Dietsche will preach and preside
at Holy Eucharist. More information and registration
materials will follow soon.

The Mid-Hudson Regional Council
Saturday, September 29, 2018 - 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

*CLIMATE CHANGE:
Our role in caring for God's Creation*

St. James', Hyde Park

~ Registration Form ~

Parish: _____

City/Town: _____

Clergy Attending:

Voting Delegate(s):

Other Attendees:

Please complete this form and send it to:

The Episcopal Diocese of New York
The Mid-Hudson Regional Office
30 Pine Grove Avenue
Kingston, New York 12401

Please note that each parish, regardless of size, is entitled to two (2) voting delegates. All clergy are voting members. We welcome and encourage other members of your parish to attend **Deadline for registration is Friday, September 21st**. Cost is \$10.00 per participant – checks made payable to Diocese of New York

August 2018						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
12	13 Office Closed	14 NO VESTRY MEETING IN AUGUST	15 10 AM Morning Prayer 2 PM Hyde Park Assisted Living	16	17	18 8 AM Men's Breakfast Fr. Chuck on Vacation
19 Fr. Chuck on Vacation	20 Office Closed Fr. Chuck on Vacation	21 Fr. Chuck on Vacation	22 10 AM Morning Prayer Fr. Chuck on Vacation	23 Fr. Chuck on Vacation	24 Fr. Chuck on Vacation	25 Fr. Chuck on Vacation
26 Fr. Chuck on Vacation	27 Office Closed Fr. Chuck on Vacation	28 Fr. Chuck on Vacation	29 10 AM Morning Prayer Fr. Chuck on Vacation	30 Fr. Chuck on Vacation	31 Fr. Chuck on Vacation	
<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.diocesenyny.org/administration/for-clergy/liturgical-and-sacramental/diocesan-calendar-of-intercession/>

- 13 St. Stephen's Church (Woodlawn), Bronx
- 14 The Canon Theologian and Seminary Professors of the Diocese
- 15 St. Mary's Church, Mohegan Lake
- 16 Jack & Jill School at St. George's Church, Manhattan
- 17 The Diocesan Director of Communications
- 18 The Episcopal New Yorker Advisory Board

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): Patricia Holland, Jeffrey Thatcher, Mary Gabel, Gordon Mackenzie, Jim Matranga and Suzann Kinne
- Birthdays
(this coming week): G. Angela Henry and Vince Asher
- Acolytes: August 12: Braeden
August 19: Russell
- Altar Guild: August 12: Team III
August 19: Team III
- 8 a.m. Readers: August 12: Deb Belding and Sue DeLorenzo
August 19: Lucille Ogden and Jim Smyth
- 10 a.m. Readers: August 12: Russell Urban-Mead and Andy Hall
August 19: Wendy Urban-Mead and Nancy Montero
- Ushers: August 12: Maggie and Tom McNamara

August 19: Nancy Montero and Anna Marie Pitcher
Pledge Clerks: August 12: Doug Belding and Judy Douglass
August 19: Tanya Hall and Anna Marie Pitcher
Parish Cycle of Prayer: August 12: Janet Veith ,Georgia Verven; Stephen, Amanda, Trevor,
Travis and Troy Verven
August 19: Carol Vinall, Dick Wager, Laura Walsh, Dyan Wapnick
Coffee Hour Hosts: August 12: No Coffee Hour
August 19: No Coffee Hour

This Week's Lectionary

2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33
Psalm 130
Ephesians 4:25-5:2
John 6:35, 41-51

This Week's Hymns

Processional: 447 - The Christ Who Died But Rose Again
Sequence: L147 - Come Ye Disconsolate
Offertory: 335 - I Am The Bread of Life
Communion: Taizé: "Eat This Bread"
Recessional: 564 - He Who Would Valiant Be

Last Week's Sermon

Sermon Preached on Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

"What Feeds Life"

The last couple of weeks, we've been talking about power. We talked about how Power is neutral - it's just having the ability, the authority, and the means to act.

We talked about how even the smallest word - NO - has great power. We talked about how power can be used well or abused. How it can be stripped away and reclaimed.

All this is true. Power can do a lot. But what power **cannot** do is feed us.

So I ask you to consider the question: What **does** feed life?

This question may be at the heart of who we are because the majority of people around the world, and maybe some in this room, know what it's like to have no power, to have power stripped away - to be like Bathsheba. And if you think life was hard for her last week, it gets worse this week. Not only is her husband murdered, not only has her rapist claimed her as a wife, but now the prophet Nathan condemns David - not for what he did to HER but for what he did to Uriah. And the punishment will be that David's wives and descendants will suffer. Oh - and although it's not in today's reading, it IS in the very next verses - the child Bathsheba is carrying will die.

So how does someone live when life is so unjust and crushing? It can't just be having things go our way. It has to be more. What DOES feed life?

Again, this question is at the heart of things because even those of us who DO wield power discover soon enough - as David does - that power cannot feed us. It just makes us hungrier for more - the phrase "power hungry" exists for a reason. Power doesn't give us life, it doesn't give us the will to carry on, it doesn't give us meaning.

So again, what **Does** feed life?

The answer, of course, is Jesus. Though I'm no fan of the evangelist John's writing style - he beats you over the head with the point he's making - he's right about Jesus. **Jesus IS the bread of life.**

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells the crowds, You were looking for me because you got food. But that's just the kind of food that's here today and gone tomorrow. You talk about the manna in the wilderness - but that *disappeared* every day. And once the people of Israel made it to the promised land, it disappeared forever. Not even bread falling from heaven will feed you always. If you want something more eternal, something that will feed your soul even when times are hard, even when you have gained the world yet remain empty - then look to me.

That begs the question: **Why?** Why would Jesus be the bread that feeds life when nothing else can? Well, I wish today's passage gave us a simple answer, but this is John we're talking about, and even though he may beat you over the head with his point, he never comes to it quickly. But not to worry, it's a long passage that we'll revisit over the next couple of weeks.

Besides, you already know the answer yourselves. Jesus is the bread of life, Jesus feeds life, **because Jesus is the embodiment of God's love for us.** Jesus tells the crowd, if you eat of THIS bread, you'll never go hungry. Even the most casual reader knows he doesn't mean our bodies won't be hungry again. We know he means we will never hunger in our souls because to fully embrace God's love means our souls are full, are alive in a way that nothing else in this world can provide.

Of course, none of us have yet fully embraced God's love, have we? We still look to the other things - the earthly bread, the power - to give us meaning. If I just have more food, more money, more things, a bigger home, more ability to make people do what I want... but once our basic needs are met, more never helps.

They're all part of life in this world and necessary — but they do not feed life. Only the love that Jesus embodies can do that.

Fine, but **how** do I fully embrace God's love?

To which I say, figuring out how to embrace God's love is your life's work. Paul struggled with this all his life and knew it was a struggle for those he served. Even as he sat in prison, he tried to teach this to his followers in Ephesus. He said that embracing God's love requires **humility, gentleness, patience and unity in the Spirit**. Oh yeah, and **hope**, which is never unfounded.

So to have your life fed, to embrace God's love, I suggest a simple beginning. Go home and pray for humility, gentleness, patience, unity, and hope. Pray that you will be fed by the love Christ embodies. It's only a start, of course, but it's never too late to start. And then come back next week - and I promise, you'll hear more about the bread of Jesus - the one bread guaranteed to feed life. 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) 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?