



St. James Episcopal Church

405 East Main Street

Batavia, NY 14020

(585) 343-6802

saint.james2@outlook.com



Photo credit: Lilo Townsend

**Newsletter for the month of
September, 2020**

To feed and be fed in the Love and Works of Jesus Christ

*Mother Bonnie Morris, Rector
Deacon Diana Leiker, Archdeacon
Barb King, Parish Administrator*

Dear Friends,

In mid-August I took 10 wonderful days off. As I could not travel, I decided to tackle a big project—restoring the woodwork in one of the rooms of my house to its original pre-painted state. My hands, arms and shoulders could tell you about 80 plus years of layered paint on that beautiful oak. I have found that it is often much easier to make something new than it is to fix something old, but many old things are worth the work. In the hours and hours that I used heat, chemicals, and good-old elbow grease to the problem at hand a crafty person could have re-trimmed the room twice or three times over. But speed is not the point—investment, love and affection are. The beauty of the woodgrain, the smooth softness of the newly sanded surface is a treasure, worth the work to restore and to enjoy for years to come.

Old things (houses, family, friends, churches) have deep meaning for us and are vital to our lives and are worth the time and effort that it may take to keep them fresh, vital, and invigorated. We are looking to restore, refinish, and even reimagine our beloved St. James. 205 years young, it does show some signs of age and wear, but its beauty, value and sturdy comfort are undeniable. Some work is easy to do—fixing this or that, some is more substantial—looking forward to the future, figuring out how to thrive, serve and worship in a time of pandemic. Of course, I'm using a metaphor of fixing a room or a building, but I'm really talking about the **spiritual St. James—its people, its work and its presence in the community.**

We exist as a people of God separate from any tangible thing. If we had no building, we would not cease to exist, if we had no pews we would not cease to worship. The work we are called to do is about living the Gospel and finding our truth and direction in the love of God. That is something worth having, sustaining and putting effort into! I thank God daily that any task given to me is not given to me alone, that we are partners in this wonderful work we are given to do.

**In the love of Christ,
Mother Bonnie+**

Diakonia Musings

If you have ever read the book of Jonah, you will remember that God told Jonah to take a message to Nineveh. Jonah did not think twice about going in the opposite direction, towards the town of Tarshish! Why did he run from God and not want to deliver the message? Simply put, Jonah did not like the people of Nineveh and did not think they deserved God's mercy or love. He was not going to be part of their resurrection from sin to life! So Jonah thought he could run from God and not do as he was called to do. In his own mind, Jonah was the judge of what should happen to the city, not God.

While on a boat with men who prayed to a multitude of Gods, Jonah was asked why he brought the storm to them, what had he done? Jonah knew it was because he had tried to run from God, but his stubbornness kept him from finding any empathy or sympathy within his heart for the families of Nineveh. He even thought it would be better to be dead than help "those people" of a sinful city. After all, if the Ninevites were saved, that meant the God of Jonah loved them as much as Jonah and his own people. It sounds a lot like the Prodigal Son's brother.

It is easy to find ourselves thinking that God should do as we want, because of course, we are the righteous ones who work hard at doing the right things. We are the ones who think God has our backs, as long as we worship Him with praise and song. Really?

It took three days in the belly of a fish and almost dying again, before Jonah could look inward and admit that his thinking was not God's thinking. While in the fish, he praised and thanked God, but then as soon as he was spit out onto the land, Jonah went right back to justifying his own agenda. He even made a booth for himself to sit and watch the city of Nineveh to see what happened to it after he warned them of their impending doom. Wanting the city to perish but knowing God is merciful, he waited. Jonah just could not grasp that all human life has value and is created in God's image and it is up to God to give people second chances.

The people of Nineveh listened to God's message of impending doom delivered by Jonah after God asked a second time for him to tell the city. Nineveh repented and was spared. This really made Jonah mad. No matter how many times God saved Jonah, he continued to have a selfish attitude that was so ingrained, he said time and again, he would rather die than change.

I am sure that each of us can identify a pocket of people that we just don't like. My challenge for us is to look around our communities and identify "those people" that we think do not deserve mercy and love, those that we know do not match up to our own judgmental standards of what is right and what is wrong, good and bad, lovable or not, righteous or not.

Then look inside your heart. Is it hardened to the point of not changing even for God, like Jonah? Or will we celebrate after we deliver a message of love, when those that we judge as unworthy and of no value as human beings, experience the love, mercy, and grace of our God that loves them too. How much sweeter if we are changed in the process.

Deacon Diana

Warden's Report

I would like to report on two things that we have been working on recently. First, Harold Odell, Bill Sofia, Dave Lange and myself have been collaborating with Crossroads house on a long-term lease for the use of the Rectory. The COVID-19 shut down put us behind in our efforts to get a quick agreement back in the spring. Lawyers and courts weren't working, both our Vestry and the Crossroads House Board we meeting virtually, both of us were developing plans to reopen of respective facilities, and neither group could do anything in the Rectory to get it ready for the transfer. Now things have begun to move forward, not at lightening speed, but movement nonetheless. Our lawyer, working pro bono, is putting together the final lease, CRH will be going in and clearing the Rectory out so they can start work as soon as an agreement is signed. We just wanted to assure members that we are making progress and this will get done.

Second, Stewardship Campaign 2021 will begin a month earlier this year. Material will go out the last week of September with intake in mid-October. This will give us valuable income information before budget formulation in November. Prior to this it was done the other way around, which deprived the Finance Team of pledge information it sorely needed.

Jim Neider & Judy Essig, Wardens

ECW Update

The ECW Board has continued to be in communication throughout the summer regarding the eventual reopening of the Thrift Store. Several people have been cleaning, sorting and restocking now that the area has been professionally cleaned. More discussion will be taking place at our September 1st meeting at 5:30 PM, tentatively planned to be held at St. James (outside) with COVID-19 precautions in place.

Several cheesecakes and cake layers leftover from Fish Fries, have been sold to cover the costs of ingredients. Other fundraising efforts will also be discussed at the next meeting. The ECW Board meetings are open to all women of the church.

Safety Committee

We have spent our time this summer preparing for our outdoor services to be conducted in a safe manner, following the guidelines of the Department of Health, CDC and the Bishop. We have also worked with Just in Time Cleaning Service to prepare parts of our building for re-opening.

Church School

I am pleased to announce that Deacon Diana and Cathy Judkins are working with others in our deanery for a **Deanery-wide Christian Education program!** The thought is to send lessons in a box home to kids. It has been used by other denominations and over the summer with some of the Episcopal churches in our diocese including virtual church camp. Can you help in this fun and important project? Please contact Deacon Diana Leiker at dllart@aol.com, or Cathy Judkins at cathyjudkins@gmail.com

Property Committee Report

Progress continues toward our goal of reaching a 'State of Good Repair' at St. James.

Pro-Seal and Paving has filled cracks, sealed and re-stripped our east parking lot.

Also, Preserve-A-Stone Masonry Restoration and Waterproofing has begun working on this year's masonry repair priorities for the church. They are:

- Repair and re-pointing of the north (main) chimney, including replacement of the concrete cap

- Filling the exterior vertical joints and repairing spalled cast stone around the perimeter of stained glass window located at the south end of the nave

- Repair and re-pointing of the west chimney, including replacement of the concrete cap

- Renovation of the southeast entrance interior, including exterior masonry repair

- Repair of the southeast buttress, located to the right of the south entrance to the nave

In addition, A to Z General Contracting will be replacing and extending downspouts, installing anti-siphon strips, and checking and replacing roof heat tapes, as required.

Turner Landscaping will be removing two dead white ash trees, located at the north end of the east parking lot, and also the copper beach tree, located near the southwest entrance to the nave. Dead limbs will be removed from three mature maple trees located in the front of the church. Two very generous donations have been received from parishioners to help defray the cost of this work. We are grateful to those individuals who spotted the safety hazards presented by these trees and stepped up to financially assist with the necessary remediation work.

Many thanks, also, to everyone who has contributed to Bricks and Mortar.

Dave Lange
Property Committee Chair

Upcoming events

NATIONAL PIEROGI DAY – Who knew that October 8 is National Pierogi Day? The answer is – Missi did! So, guess what? We are holding a Drive-Through Only Pierogi Dinner on Thursday, October 8. Missi is already getting busy in the kitchen and if you were able to join us last year, you will know what a great meal it is.

PRE-THANKSGIVING PIE SALE & BASKET RAFFLE – Plan to get your Thanksgiving Pies from the talented bakers of St. James on Saturday, November 21. We will take pre-orders as in the past. For the Basket Raffle, you will be able to purchase chances and walk-through the Parish Hall to drop in your tickets. Plan to wear your mask and when you are done, pick up your pies and leave, so that others can have a chance to come in, as we will need to control the flow to maintain social distancing.

CHERRY PIE SALE just in time for Washington's Birthday will be held on Friday, February 12 and Saturday, February 13. Logistics yet to be finalized.

Please mark these dates on your calendar!

To help offset the costs of these events, donations of the following would be greatly appreciated:

- By September 15 for the Pierogi Dinner: kielbasa, sauerkraut, apples (only need two bags), flour, white sugar, canola oil.
- By November 1 for the Pie Sales and Basket Raffle: canned pumpkin (not the pumpkin pie filling, just regular old pumpkin), evaporated milk, apples, cherry pie filling, Crisco, flour, sugar. And, all sorts of items for baskets – seasonal décor, small kitchen/home appliances, pamper items, things for pets, themed dinner fixings, sweet and savory treats, toddler books/toys, etc.
- And, of course, a few good folks to help with each event!

Thank you for joining in the fun! If you have questions, please feel free to reach out to Missi Smith or Dorian Ely.

Thrift Store Update

Several volunteers have been working to prepare for a reopening of the Thrift Store in the near future. We are currently accepting donations of clean, gently used (or new) clothes, household items in good condition, and small appliances in working order. We are not accepting large furniture or electronics at this time. Items can be placed in the basement by the Thrift Store door. Please do not leave items outside the back parking lot entrance. To minimize sorting for our workers please don't donate something that is not wearable, usable or is missing parts. Again, please **NO ELECTRONICS!**

Scholastic Book Project Sponsored by Jenna Essig

I am excited to start my first year as a teacher at York Central School District! This school year will look significantly different than previous years. Students need to have all of their own materials, as sharing is difficult to do due to COVID-19. Because of COVID the students will not have access to the school's library. I do not want my students to have limited access to books as reading is essential. Wouldn't it be nice if ALL of the students in the 9th grade class could receive one free book every month?!

Here's the idea I'd like to try this year:

Scholastic has books every month that are \$2. I would LOVE for each of my students to be able to bring home one new book each month during the school year from September to June. By selecting the \$2 books, that's only \$20 per child.

Would you be interested in sponsoring a child at York? \$20 will support one child for the entire academic year, but donations in any amount will be gratefully accepted.

Please make your checks out to Scholastic Book Club, and note in the memo line "York Book Project". You can put it in the offering plate, mail it to the church or mail it to me directly.

If you have any questions, please call/text me at 585-300-7578. My address is 8673 North Road, Churchville, NY 14428. I know this year is VERY different and any help is appreciated!

Jenna Essig

Hey You In That Pew!!!

It has been so much fun to read the little bios sent in by our members and to become better acquainted with the people we have been used to seeing in a pew on Sunday mornings.

Our congregation has a wide age-range and groups of long-established friends rarely have a chance to intermingle with newer members. Reading your brief stories brings us so much closer to each other in Spirit and helps us realize the little things we have in common, no matter what our ages.

If you have not yet turned in some casual information about yourself to help people get to know the “YOU within the pew”, it would mean so much if you would consider doing so. You can write something yourself or you can turn in a few sentences which can be edited into a cohesive whole. Name, family, career, hobbies, bucket-list items all qualify.

Please send a short document to Dawn at musdmark@aol.com, call her at 585 547-2372, or contact her to arrange a helpful interview by one of our “Communications Reporters”.

You will be seeing more bios next month.

Thank you,^[1]_{SEP}**Your St. James Internal Communications Team**

St. James Episcopal Church
405 East Main Street
Batavia, NY 14020

Check out our website and Facebook for online worship opportunities

Everyone is Welcome!

The Rev. Bonnie F. Morris, Rector
rector.stjames@outlook.com
The Rev. Deacon Diana Leiker, dllart@aol.com

Choir Director: Dillon Hirsch, Organist: David Lange
Administrator: Barbara King, Bookkeeper: Sherry Garigen

Wardens:

Warden: Jim Neider, (585) 409-8891, jmaneider@outlook.com
Warden: Judy Essig, (585) 820-2615, jessig@gvboces.org

Vestry:

Diane Cox, Amy Celentano, Bonnie Dvoroznak,
Dorian Ely, Barbara King, Dean Perry,
Harold Odell, Barbara Pierce, Bill Sofia
Clerk of the Vestry: Cathy Judkins
Treasurers: Peter Mark and Keith Price

Office Phone: 585-343-6802

Website: www.stjamesbatavia.org

Email: saint.james2@outlook.com

Like us on Facebook at St. James Episcopal Church Batavia