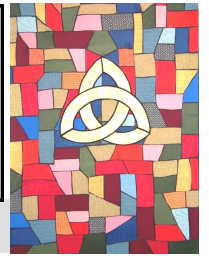




St. James' Notes



April 2020



Empowered by the Holy Spirit to be faithful disciples of Jesus, St. James' serves as a beacon of God's love and as a caring Christian family for the community, the nation and the world by seeking to restore all to unity with God and one another and by proclaiming the Good News through worship, witness, education, fellowship and service.

St. James' Episcopal Church at Mount Vernon
A parish church in the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia and member of the worldwide Anglican Communion.

Dear People of St. James',

This is surely a strange time that we are living through. A time of enforced separation, a time of worry for our health, concern for our loved ones, and anxiety for our finances. It is as strange for me as it must be for you, to be apart for so long while so much is happening.



We have been taking a Lenten fast from Holy Eucharist, from worshipping together in person. Yet we continue to be the faithful community of St. James'... we continue to pray for one another and to find ways to praise God.

I'm finding that this is a curious time of grace, filled with opportunities:

- to reach out and connect with one another, old friends and new, to check in and see how we can be helpful.
- to try new things, new ways of worship, new ways of being in community.
- to draw closer to the other churches in our region through Sunday Morning Prayer, and to draw closer to Christians everywhere through the beautiful online worship of the Washington National Cathedral.

At St. James' we are ready to open our doors as soon as we are permitted, ready to welcome all in joyful reunion. But I believe that we are now receiving lessons and gifts that will shape our future. Thanks be to God who uses all things to draw us towards his Kingdom.

See the back page of this newsletter for our Holy Week and Easter observances. Fear not, Easter is coming, and we will rejoice!

In Christ,
Charles+

God Sightings!

During this time of enforced separation, how have you experienced God's presence? Where have you seen or experienced Jesus's care and compassion? How have you been inspired to love your neighbor? Right now there are so many opportunities to reach out to one another, to care for one another. Let us know (office@stjamesmv.org) so we can give thanks and celebrate God's goodness together.



St. James' Episcopal Church at Mount Vernon

The Diocese of Virginia

The Rt. Rev. Susan E. Goff
Bishop Suffragan &
Ecclesiastical Authority

The Rt. Rev. Jennifer
Brooke-Davidson
Assistant Bishop

The Rev. Charles F. Brock
Rector

Staff

Jenny Kennedy
Parish Administrator

Alan Moser
Director of Music

Vestry

Diana Courtney (2020)
Sr. Warden, Christian Education

Chris Marbaker (2022)
Jr. Warden, Plant & Property

Mckayla Braden (2022)
Mission & Outreach

Mary Bramley (2023)
Administration & Finance

James Eustis (2023)
Evangelism & Publicity

Mary Jane Van den Berg (2021)
Parish Activities

Andy Wormser (2023)
Fundraising

Mike Morgan
Treasurer

Susan Clark
Register

Trustees

Peg Iber
Lib Mueller
Ray Smith

Spring Yard Sale, Postponed

We have decided to postpone the May 2 Yard Sale until authorities are confident that going out in crowds is safe again.

In the meantime, you should sort, clean, label, price your items so they are ready for the sale, maybe in late summer or early fall. There is price list on the Church website (www.StJamesMV.org) under Events, Yard Sale, or you can contact the church office to have one emailed to you.



Sorting through your closets, drawers, toy chests, attics, garages is a perfect activity while being stuck at home. Items we can sell: household, tools, toys, games, vintage, books, smaller furniture, sports, jewelry, crafts. No clothes, shoes.

Please - clean, test (attach a note regarding the condition), and price your items prior to bringing them. We'll arrange tables in the gallery.

Contact Marghe Bowker, Laurie do Carmo, Cheryl Viani if you have questions.

Marghe Bowker
(703) 799-1567
marghebowker@gmail.com

Cheryl Viani
(703) 360-8799
mandcviani@cox.net

Laurie do Carmo
(703) 780-8054
wdocarmo1@verixon.net

THANKS!

From Administration & Finance

Friends of St. James',

Well, March did not turn out the way anyone thought it would. Some days, the news looks bleaker and bleaker. However, what we see on the news is not always the case. We as a community have come together to support each other and support our neighbors. While we cannot still make food for Rising Hope, gift cards have been delivered. Though we cannot see each other face to face, text messages, emails, phone calls and Facebook have kept us in touch. We are staying indoors not because we are worried we might get sick, but worried of who we may pass it to. We are still thriving and I look forward to what the future holds. I am hopeful that everything will not go back to normal in a few weeks, but that neighbors loving each other as ourselves becomes the new normal.

I wanted to update everyone on the status of the sabbatical grant that was sent out in a previous newsletter. After a few weeks of thought and deep conversations, Father Charles has decided to continue to pursue the grant to support his sabbatical. It has definitely been exciting working alongside him and Chris Marbaker as we ran ideas past each other, rewrote draft after draft to see a final product that I am proud to be submitted. In the coming months, a sabbatical committee will be formed to work through what a sabbatical means for St. James' and or plan moving forward once April 2021 arrives. If you have any questions at all, please reach out to Charles, Chris or me.

Thank you. God Bless everyone. I look forward to seeing you all in person!

Mary Bramley

From the Senior Warden

Lent is a Season for Healing



Lent is a season for healing. The Cambridge English Dictionary has two definitions for healing: *The process of becoming well again, especially after a cut or other injury, or of making someone well again.* I think this is probably the first thing that most people think of when we hear the word “healing”, especially these days when the coronavirus, COVID-19, pervades every aspect of our lives. The second definition is *the process in which a bad situation or painful emotion ends or improves.* I believe that we are starting to see this type of healing emerge from the current pandemic. There is a greater sense of unity across the country. Our staunch political divisions that were on a continual ramp up are now fading into the background. Divisions due to race, ethnicity, religious beliefs are all waning in the shadow of the virus. Households are remembering, or perhaps for the first time learning, what it is like to work, cook, laugh and play together. Americans are now working together to champion this one cause of overcoming the pandemic.

Moreover, the world is coming together in support of one another. If you haven't yet seen the video of the Germans singing the Italian national anthem in solidarity for Italy, I would encourage you to do so. It is a video that shows the beauty that arises when we work to build each other up rather than tear each other down (see Ephesians 4:29). I am praying for healing on a daily basis. Not only for those that are grieving losses, not only for those experiencing sickness, but for all the hearts here and around the world that need some softening towards others. “And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28); God is working through this virus and helping us to heal ourselves internally. Take this time to reflect on any hardness in your heart that is preventing you from fully worshiping the God as we were designed to do (see Isaiah 43:20-21). I am praying for your health and safety during this time, but I am more importantly praying for your healing, in all definitions of the word.



In Christ,

Diana Courtney

Balcony singing in Italy: <https://tinyurl.com/vperaf4>

Germans sing Italian national anthem: <https://tinyurl.com/sle47wk>

Birthdays & Anniversaries



- 1 Eliot Tucker
- 11 Ellen Cleary
- 13 Muriel Sue Kerr
- 16 Mary Bramley
- 16 Pat Rowell
- 22 Henry Eustis
- 23 Justin Iber
- 25 Phil Trott
- 27 Isabel Spann
- 27 Lucas Thompson



April 6, 1980
Bob & Mary Blair

April 27, 2013
Celso & Antonia Rodriguez

Mission & Outreach

I have been thinking for a while about what to write for this newsletter. All kinds of things come to mind, but it's difficult to actually put words on paper because I have so many emotions. And because everything we hear on the news and think about now is about the coronavirus. For me, reaching out has meant a lot more of writing my friends and family and calling them, more than I ever have since I retired! Yikes, it's almost like working again. No, it's actually fun and joyful talking with so many folks and wishing everyone well.

Mark and I have been walking every day too, and that is fun. Not only the pups and our waistlines have benefited, but spiritually we have too! We have seen so many neighbors who actually take the time to talk from the appropriate distance away. And, oh the flowers and trees are so gorgeous! We are blessed to be in a beautiful part of the country and have had such nice weather in March. We definitely have time now "to smell the roses!"

So what about the St. James' Mission and Outreach? I would like to urge you to remember to send in your pledge to church either online at our website through our myEoffering or mail a check. Please remember to include a check for our first mission of the quarter, *Episcopal Relief and Development* if you have not already.

Please help us continue to support *Rising Hope*. See the article in the side bar from the Mount Vernon Gazette that outlines their need and how you can help. You can donate directly to Rising Hope online by visiting their website at RisingHopeUMC.org. This is a true challenge now for St. James', as we are not cooking any meals for their clients this month. When you are shopping for yourselves, please remember Rising Hope. Buy food stuffs and drop it off at the church in the morning while Jenny is there. Whatever you can give will be greatly appreciated. Rising Hope's patrons are those in our community who have the very least and need our help the most. If you have the opportunity please remind all your neighbors, club members and school friends that the patrons of Rising Hope are waiting now for our support.

Thanks to all for what you do. Missing everyone.

Mckayla Braden



Mount Vernon Gazette
March 26, 2020

RISING HOPE IN GREAT NEED

During this COVID 19 Virus epidemic, Rising Hope Mission Church, at 8220 Russell Road, Alexandria, needs your support now more than ever. They are balancing the need to keep the staff safe and socially distanced from those coming with need. Yet still hundreds of families depend on the food pantry because the jobs they have do not pay enough to feed their families. Now their jobs are in jeopardy and many have already started to lose their service jobs. The demand for food from the pantry will increase as employees are laid-off and furloughed. This hits low-wage, hourly paid workers who have no resources to get over this period the most. Rising Hope serves nearly 300 families a week with its food pantry. The food they supply provides for more than 200,000 meals a year in our community. The demand is only going to get worse.

Rising Hope Needs:

- ❖ An increase in food pantry donations from all sources.
- ❖ Paper bags to pre-bag the groceries to limit contact.
- ❖ Volunteers to bag food. (You do not have to come into contact with those coming for food).
- ❖ Volunteers to deliver food to shut-ins. (You can leave at their door)
- ❖ Volunteers for the hypothermia shelter.
- ❖ Financial denotations always give the most flexibility. They need extra supplies and extra hours for custodial staff to do a deeper cleaning.

Donate at www.risinghopeumc.org.
From the March 26, 2020 edition of
the Mount Vernon Gazette.

Choir Notes

Dear St. James' friends,

When I wrote briefly about three hymn writers that we celebrated in February, I never would have thought that I might be returning to one of them in April. But I find myself drawn back to George Herbert - poet, priest, musician, member of parliament, orator, and scholar, to mention a few of the accomplishments of his too-short life (1593-1633).



Last summer, I was privileged to attend a choral course at Cambridge University. On our first day of seminars, we sat in the chapel of Trinity College - coincidentally, Herbert's own college - and were led in discussion by the Rev. Dr. Malcolm Guite. I don't think it is a mere coincidence that he, like George Herbert, is a poet, priest, musician and scholar. He serves as chaplain of Girton College, Cambridge. According to his Wikipedia biography, "as an academic, Guite describes the focus of his research interests as "the interface between theology and the arts, more specifically Theology and Literature" and 'special interests in Coleridge and C. S. Lewis' as well as J.R.R. Tolkien and British poets."

This Lent, I have been receiving daily devotions from Malcolm Guite. During the week, he has been sharing sonnets he has written in response to George Herbert's poem, "Prayer", in his new collection of poems, "After Prayer." I find that this one, "Heaven in Ordinary," particularly demands sharing at this time. I hope you enjoy it. If you want to know more about Malcolm Guite, let me know, or look him up via the Internet (try <https://malcolmguite.wordpress.com>.)

Heaven in Ordinary

*Because high heaven made itself so low
That I might glimpse it through a stable door,
Or hear it bless me through a hammer blow,
And call me through the voices of the poor,
Unbidden now, its hidden light breaks through
Amidst the clutter of the every day,
Illuminating things I thought I knew,
Whose dark glass brightens, even as I pray.*

*Then this world's walls no longer stay my eyes,
A veil is lifted likewise from my heart,
The moment holds me in its strange surprise,
The gates of paradise are drawn apart,
I see his tree, with blossom on its bough,
And nothing can be ordinary now.*

May we continue to receive the blessings of inspired poets and songwriters who, in nurturing each other's creativity, nurture us.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Alan



We Now Have Online Giving!

Church is closed and you're staying indoors, keeping your social distance. So how are you going to make your weekly and monthly gifts to support the church? Well, we're glad you asked! St. James' now is able to receive on-line donations right from the church website: www.stjamesmv.org



St. James' has partnered with myEoffering in order to provide you with the convenience of online contribution. Online contribution refers to a process much like online bill pay, whereby donors opt to have their financial contributions to the church withdrawn directly from their credit, debit, checking, or savings account in lieu of bringing cash or paper checks each Sunday.

Many people are worried about the security of their financial data. Know that myEoffering observes strict security measures. They have passed all the required tests to be fully compliant with the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards. This means that they are using the latest technologies available to protect against would-be data thieves. They process electronic donations for many churches in the United States, including many of our neighboring churches.

myEoffering has designed a secure, web-based platform in which donors may privately and prayerfully make one-time or recurring donations. Prayerful consideration of giving to God first enables you to witness a powerful sense of stewardship. You can customize a completely individual method of giving, based on how and when you receive your income - whether it be bi-weekly, monthly, or semi-monthly. By setting up recurring donations to be automatically debited from your account, it allows the church to better plan budgets and expenditures and provides a more accurate financial forecast. It also enables you to stay on the path of your contribution goals by ensuring that even if you are unable to attend church on a particular Sunday, you needn't worry about remembering to make that contribution the following week. With more consistent stewardship, our church is able to focus more on the ministry of God.

Finally, as a way for you to symbolically present your myEoffering at the altar during a Sunday morning service, you will find in the pews myEoffering slips for you to place in the plate during the Offertory when the ushers take up the collection.

It is easy to register and use, and is immediately available by visiting the church website: www.stjamesmv.org. When you sign in, please consider these three things:

- 1) Please consider paying for the fees associated with your payment. An ACH bank fee is only 30cents, less than the cost of first class stamp. You can also donate by credit card, but in addition to the 30 cent transaction fee, there is a charge of 2.75%, which takes a significant part of your gift.
- 2) There may be a several-day delay between when you make a donation and when the church receives it. For example, if you donate \$100 pledge donation on March 29, it may not hit our bank until April 1 or beyond. You may want to schedule your monthly donations earlier in each month.
- 3) If you make a donation on-line for a specific purpose, please follow-up with a phone call or email to the church office to let us know, so we can handle it correctly.

Keeping up your financial support of the church is critical during this time when we are not able to gather. Mailing your checks to the church is encouraged, but we hope that on-line giving will be an easy alternative. Just click the new "Give Now" button on our web site.

When you register for myEoffering, please do not hesitate to call them for assistance at (800) 393-3330. If you have any questions or problems, do not hesitate to contact me, Mike Morgan, at (703) 298-7559.

Thanks, and hope to see you real soon!

Mike Morgan

From the Fundraising Vestry Person

The COVID-19/coronavirus has brought changes for us all - my family included. I'm working from home. My husband is still working outside. But our life has become much more family focused. We're walking the dogs more often. Having nice, unhurried dinners. Talking with far-away family more often. We miss our Sunday mornings with the 8am crew and seeing the 10:15ers come in for adult forum or choir practice, but we know those will return soon enough. We're working hard to ensure our community stays intact through these troubled times - greeting neighbors while out walking the dogs, checking in on friends who may need a bit of help, chatting over yard work to watch each others' yard awakening in the spring. We took the time Sunday morning to celebrate morning prayer with our St. James' family and the other Episcopal churches in our area. What a blessing it is to have the technology to make it easy to worship together during this Lenten season and through Easter.



If you'll indulge me a moment of church business, I'm the vestry member responsible for fundraising. Some of the ideas I've discussed with other parishioners include a cookout to go with the spring yard sale and a fall pig roast. However, since the church is closed for physical gatherings, I'd welcome any ideas you may have for virtual fundraising - especially ideas that could involve members of our community outside the St. James' family. If you have thoughts, please email me at: andywormser@gmail.com.

I send peace to you all that we may make it through this pandemic both healthy and happy - and I'm so looking forward to our first Sunday back together!

Andy Wormser

Bulletin Board

SAVE THE DATE - Shrine Mont

Our annual parish retreat at Shrine Mont in the beautiful, majestic mountains of Virginia will be the weekend of July 3-5. Yes, we will get to spend July 4th in the mountains! Sign up on the poster in the gallery. More information to follow.



Book Club

St. James' Book Club will have an email discussion on the April book *Botany of Desire* by Michael Pollan. On April 9, look for an email from Marghe Bowker and have your comments and questions ready. Questions? Call Lib Mueller at (703) 360-0561. The Thursday, May 14, luncheon will be at Lib's house. We will discuss books for next reading year—so bring your suggestions. Join us!



Postponed



These activities were postponed. Please look for new dates to be announced soon.

- Spaghetti Fundraising Dinner
- Learn How to Pray with the Daughters of the King
- All Church Work Day
- Spring Yard Sale



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Fear not, Easter is coming, and we will rejoice!

During this time of separation, we will together observe Holy Week and Easter using several online resources. Be sure to check the St. James' website for videos and web links @ www.stjamesmv.org.

Palm Sunday, April 5

Video message from Fr. Charles.

10:00am Online Morning Prayer with local Episcopal Churches.

11:15am Online Holy Eucharist at the Washington National Cathedral.

Maundy Thursday, April 9

Video message from Fr. Charles, with guidance for observing Maundy Thursday at home.

7:00pm Online Holy Eucharist with Stripping of the Altar at the Washington National Cathedral.

Good Friday, April 10

Video walk-through of St. James' Stations of the Cross, with guidance for observing Good Friday at home.

Noon Solemn Liturgy of Good Friday at the Washington National Cathedral.

Easter Sunday, April 12

Video message from Fr. Charles.

10:45am Online Morning Prayer with local Episcopal Churches.

11:15am Online Easter Day Festive Holy Eucharist at the Washington National Cathedral.

