

SUNDAY SERVICES ONLINE ONLY DUE TO COVID-19

THE GRAPEVINE

ST. JAMES PARISH • WILMINGTON, NC

WEEK OF AUGUST 30, 2020

THE REV. JAY SIDEBOTHAM



A CHANGE OF SEASONS

The end of August always marks a change in seasons, driven in large part by a return to school, bringing with it resumption of other activities, including church programs. That shift happens in a particular, perplexing, and we hope unique way this year, as we contend with considerable coincident crises, having to do with health, economics, racism and injustice.

Back in March, when we shut down, I was sure that closures of schools church, businesses would be short-lived, an inconvenient interruption, maybe like that caused by a strong storm or a blizzard. Right now, that come-and-go blizzard seems to be more like a little ice age. The challenges we face will be with us for a while. So how do we face that future, even as the seasons change?

We move into that future not certain of what comes next, and that's a theme in the Bible. Abraham answered a call to move to the promised land. He went not knowing where he was going. Moses led the children of Israel through the wilderness, a short journey to Canaan that should have taken weeks but ended up taking 40 years. The disciple's saw Jesus ascend into heaven and were sent back to Jerusalem to pray for what comes next, waiting for Pentecost, not at all sure what that would be like or what would come next or who was out to get them.

It's a story that still gets told. In my journey of faith, I've been guided by the witness of the brothers at Holy

Cross Monastery. Several decades ago, as the system of apartheid was coming apart in South Africa, Desmond Tutu invited the brothers to come to South Africa. He believed that, thanks to St. Benedict, they knew something about building community. His country needed those lessons after generations lived without those models. The brothers answered the call, and left for South Africa without any idea what they were going to do there, except to say their prayers. They went and set up their rhythm of daily worship, trusting God would show them. After some time, their call was revealed. They were sent there to offer schooling for children who had no education and no way to pay for it. Guided by the Spirit, they made the commitment to offer a quality of schooling that would rival the most elite private institutions in the country.

On many levels, we are living out a similar story, finding ourselves in a season of change, not knowing what comes next. We are figuring out how to worship together safely, with no historical or liturgical precedent. We are using Zoom and Facebook and Youtube as instruments of ministry. We are learning how to offer pastoral care, how to attend to needs of the poor, how to navigate racial divides. We are searching for a new rector, forging ahead when many churches have postponed such searches. Our schools, and parents of school age children are trying to figure it out. Business people who see dramatic shifts in income are trying to figure it out. And you may have heard that we are having an election later this fall, which will for sure have great impact on all of our futures.

It calls us to faithfulness, to courage, to trust. And in this changing season, we are not only called to our own expressions of faithfulness. We are called to remember God's faithfulness. If that can be our focus, we'll get through all this. What emerges when we come out of this "ice age" will be a new normal, different than what was before, presenting new ways to live in relationship with God and with neighbor. In that regard, crises become adventures.

On a personal note, September brings a new season for me. This will be the last Grapevine article I write for a while, as

ST. JAMES UPDATES

SERVICES SUSPENDED FOR THE TIME BEING

ONLINE RESOURCES CAN BE FOUND AT:
www.stjamesp.org/covid19

IN OUR PRAYERS:

Bob Godley, Jocelyn Lynch

CONDOLENCES:

Bill and Lynn Calder on the death of Bill's mother,
Elizabeth Carrolton Calder (Betty).

The family and friends of Jean and Joe Rogers.

GIVING ONLINE

To help make it easier to donate and support St. James Parish, we'd like to include this QR code that will take you directly to our general donation page or if you prefer, you can visit: <https://onrealm.org/StJamesParish/-/give/pledge>



MORNING PRAYER CONTINUES

Monday-Friday | 8:00 - 8:30 a.m. | Zoom

Our Weekday Morning Prayer continues! Join us on weekday mornings at 8:00 am for Morning Prayer on our Zoom. You can now find copies of the readings and the link to the Zoom Meeting on our website.

PEOPLE COMPUTERS JESUS BIBLE STUDY

Join us for People Computers Jesus Bible Study (PCJBS). We are "meeting" Wednesday Mornings online. If you're interested in participating, reach out to Cookie at Cookie@stjamesp.org to learn how! This Bible Study is led by our St. James Youth Group! Now starting at 8:45a.m.

LABOR DAY HOURS

Our St. James Church Office will be Closed on Friday, September 4, 2020 and Monday, September 7th, 2020 in observance of Labor Day. St. James Day School will operate normal hours on Friday, September 4th but will be closed on Labor Day.

ST. JAMES MISSION STATEMENT

To welcome all to grow in love of God and neighbor.

JAY'S MESSAGE (Continued)

starting in September, I will join the staff of another church named St. James', this one in Manhattan. But as I engage with that community, I want to express deep gratitude for the privilege of serving in this fine community over the past few years. I want to share my admiration for the strong ministries of this congregation. I want to share my hope, my confidence that God has a wonderful new rector in store for you, who will lead you into a wonderful new future God has prepared for you.

So let me conclude with perhaps my favorite passage from scripture (Ephesians 2:8-10): By grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us. Amidst all the crises we face in this changing season, we cannot forget that we have been greatly graced, that we have been created in Christ Jesus to do good works. God has prepared them in advance for us. Blessings.

A RETURN TO SCHOOL

The sound of children's laughter and learning is heard once again at SJDS as we opened our school year on Monday, August 24! Please pray for our teachers and children as they re-engage with the Day School under the Safe Reopening Guidelines (see our page on www.stjamesp.org).

2020-2021 SJDS Teachers:

Toddlers: Joni Buckner, Jordan Hooper and Stephanie Burney (M)

Two's: Jan Bridgers, Courtney Easley, Stephanie Burney, J.K. Thomas and Patti Whitley

Three's: Joyce Cason, Shannon Leas and Sue Williams

Four's: Emmy Bullard and Mitzi Daughtry

Yoga: Marsha Bonner

HELP WANTED: LETTER WRITERS

In this time of social distancing, the Care Guild is unable to visit parishioners who are homebound or reside in care facilities. You can imagine how these residents look forward to receiving mail! If you are interested in helping us bring joy to some of our community members by writing a letter or two, please email Beth Souther at bethsoutherfish@gmail.com. She will assist you with next steps and help you choose a Letter Buddy or two.

ST. JAMES VISION STATEMENT

To build community through ministries that strengthen our faith.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH MOMENT

by Charlotte Davis

During this time of distancing from each other, I joined a small group of fellow parishioners to access and grow in my spiritual journey for eight weeks as offered by Renewal Works (RenewalWorks For Me). We each took a course online and met virtually as a group once a week on Zoom. The Rev. Jay Sidebotham was our faithful facilitator. We always started with prayer and scripture, Jay had leading questions that drew us into expressing our experiences and we concluded with assignments to pray for someone in the group during each coming week. What happened in those weeks, individually practicing different ways to take time and listen to God, then meeting on Zoom with the group to talk about our experiences was more powerful than I could have expected. I came to this wanting to grow deeper in relationship to God so that I felt His presence in my heart, in everything each day. I have felt that closeness at other times in my life but like any relationship, my relationship with God waxes and wanes and I really felt the need to feel God's loving presence again. I was missing the joy that comes from being close to God. Slowly, it came back over the weeks of practicing some disciplines and having the support of the group to be accountable. Attending the meetings on Zoom was a way to experience God's presence from others too. God worked on me through giving and accepting of love from each other. We met each other where we were in our individual searches and listened in a special way to each other. I was able to be vulnerable and talk about times in my life when I had experienced God in my life and listen to what others had experienced too. I found an intimacy and connection in this group that is what I search for in a church. So even in this time when we can't physically go to church, as I reflect now, I think we were a church to each other. Just as Jesus started with his small group of followers who dropped what they were doing to be with him, we took time to be with God and each other. I looked forward to the time to together each week. I was surprised at how intimate our meetings could be even though we were not physically present. Every week, I was assigned a member of the group to pray for during the week. That turned out to be a powerful part of the journey for me. I felt the love and support of those prayers and gave it back through mine. God was truly present in this small community and in my life. This time to examine and stretch myself spiritually with a supportive group felt like a gift from God to draw me closer to Him as I faced this time of staying at home in separation. This time of pandemic has felt like a very long season of Lent, like a time to change and go in a different direction. I appreciate so much the work that Renewal Works and my church is doing and recommend RenewalWorks for Me to others who want to grow in their spiritual journey.

WEEKLY PRAYERS OF LAMENT & REPENTANCE

All are welcome to join religious communities from all around Wilmington as we pray Prayers of Lament and Repentance on the Wilmington City Hall steps (102 N. 3rd Street) Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m.

MT. LEBANON CHAPEL GROUNDS MINISTRY

The Mt. Lebanon Chapel Volunteer Group is busy preparing the grounds for our return to in-person church services. For More information about joining this ministry, please reach out to Tom Hackler at 910-471-5075

ONLINE WORSHIP:

We're so grateful for our church family and are so pleased with your continued participation in our online services!

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP: 275 people watched last Sunday!

WEEKDAY MORNING PRAYER: 32 people joined for at least one morning this week!

VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR

Sundays | 10:00 a.m. | Zoom

Join us for Virtual Coffee Hour on Zoom! The fun starts Sundays at 10:00 a.m. Find the link on www.stjamesp.org.

QUIET REFLECTION AT LEBANON CHAPEL

Please note that the invitation for Quiet Reflection at Lebanon Chapel, scheduled for the first Saturday of September and October will be cancelled until further notice. While we wait to worship together in person again, we give thanks for the time when we can safely return.

LINK /RE-LINK YOUR HARRIS TEETER VIC CARD:

Help SJDS by linking or re-linking your Harris Teeter VIC card to our school! Each year SJDS gets funding from HT for the number of cards linked, and a portion of proceeds from the sale of HT brand items. The code for SJDS if 5264-the folks at the customer service desk can help you with this! Many thanks!

THE VESTRY IS EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE A RESTRUCTURING OF THE MINISTRIES AT ST. JAMES!

What does this mean? A new layer of leadership will be added to our current structure of ministries. The many ministries at St. James have been divided into 6 groups, called commissions. They are: Worship, Administration, Outreach, Congregational Care, Parish Life, and Faith Formation. We have co-chairs and one communicator assigned to each commission. The main goal of the co-chairs and communicators is to help each ministry see where they can help implement the St. James Strategic Plan, recently adopted by the vestry.

What are the benefits and how does this work? The co-chairs and communicators will help spread the good news about what's going on at St. James and let people know how they can get involved in the various activities. The commission leaders will work together to enhance parishioner participation and will help the ministries to be more collaborative. This new structure will give great support to our wonderful clergy and staff. We believe everyone will be more informed and feel a greater sense of community.

Where did the idea come from? Rev. Jim Hanisian, who has been a consultant for St. James in a few capacities over the last 2 years, introduced the plan to the vestry. He has implemented this plan in churches similar to St. James and it has proven very successful. Vestry members contacted representatives at these churches and heard only positive feedback.

Will the current ministries themselves, "change"? The co chairs and communicators are dedicated to encouraging each ministry within their commission. Whatever is already working beautifully will continue, with full support. If there is a ministry wanting any additional help, they will get it.

This is a work in progress, and will evolve as the co-chairs and communicators get on board with their own ideas. We feel it is the right path for St. James and will help us live into our mission statement, "To welcome all to grow in love of God and neighbor."

Commission Leaders are:

Administration Co-Chairs -

Wanda Copley wandacopley@aol.com
Greg Richardson oceanlod@bizec.rr.com
Communicator - Stewart Poisson esp@poissonnonlaw.com

Outreach Co-Chairs-

Alex Wynek Alexandra.wnek@sptech.com
Ashley Walton ashleyls@yahoo.com
Communicator - Rachel Colonna rcolonna85@gmail.com

Congregational Care Co-Chairs-

Jane Marr jmarr@intracoastalrealty.com
Cathy Roberson cathyroberson726@gmail.com
Communicator - Lizzie Hartman ewellons@gmail.com

Parish Life Co-Chairs-

Porter Young poyoung@ec.rr.com
Web Cowden web.cowden@mirimichigreen.com
Communicator - Kenan Drum kenanlee92@gmail.com

Worship Co-Chair -

Dawn Carter dawnbcarter@gmail.com
Todd Hinshaw thinshaw0625@gmail.com
Communicator - Mary Lyons Rouse marylyons.rouse@capefearacademy.org

Faith Formation Co-Chairs -

Barbara Whitesides whiteside6@me.com
Mandy Hackler mandyhackler@gmail.com
Communicator - Erin Trask erin.scott.trask@gmail.com

VESTRY

Senior Warden Steve Thomas | **Junior Warden** Florence Ellen Cowden
Treasurer Mike Brown | **Clerk** Diane MacAskill

Class 2020 | Bill Bivins | Florence Ellen Cowden | Stuart Hardy | Ed Whitesides

Class 2021 | Watson Barnes | Pem Jenkins | Jane Martin | Jim Spruill

Class 2022 | Caroline Cone | Berta Hamilton | Brian McMerty | Steve Thomas

25 S. Third Street | Wilmington, NC 28401

Visit us online: stjamesp.org

Facebook: [facebook.com/stjamesp](https://www.facebook.com/stjamesp)

Instagram: [@stjamesparish](https://www.instagram.com/stjamesparish)

Office: 910-763-1628

ST. JAMES PARISH

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Wilmington, NC 28401

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NEXT WEEK AT --- ST. JAMES PARISH --- ONLINE WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

MONDAY, AUGUST 31 - FRIDAY, SEPT. 4

MORNING PRAYER DURING QUARANTINE
8:00-8:30 AM | Zoom | Led by Jay Sidebotham

You can find the Morning Prayer linked on our website around 8:00 a.m. Please let Erin at communications@stjamesp.org know and she will help you get access to the video.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1

SACRED GROUND: A DISCUSSION OF FAITH
AND RACE
7:00 PM | Zoom

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2

PRAYERS OF LAMENT AND REPENTENCE
9:00 AM | Wilmington City Hall Steps

PCJ BIBLE STUDY

10:00 AM | Zoom | Led by our Youth Group
and with Youth Advisor support

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

MORNING WORSHIP

8:00 AM | YouTube | www.youtube.com/st-jamesparish

Sunday Morning Worship may be found several ways. The easiest will be through our email that will come on Saturday night. Simply click the image link to view the service.

EDITORIAL DEADLINES: The deadline for the September 1st e-blast and September 13th Grapevine is Friday, August 28th.