

THE GRAPEVINE

ST. JAMES PARISH • WILMINGTON, NC
WEEK OF JANUARY 10, 2021

THE REV. MICHAEL SINGER



WHAT ARE YOUR DREAMS?

The New Year is upon us. For each of us, some of our dreams for 2020 were realized but for the rest of us, we're hoping that 2021 will bring the fulfillment of those dreams.

Several years ago, Time magazine published an interesting article about sleep. We don't really know why we need sleep. For all that we know about the human body these days, even scientists do not know the exact reason for sleep. Yes, supposedly it helps with weight loss and it no doubt should recharge our body's batteries, but it seems there may be more to it than that.

I daresay we sleep so we can dream. Yes, dreams, those strange story lines that bounce along our brain waves, that seem so real and then when we awaken, reality itself seems like a dream world.

Matthew 1:18-25 is about a dream, not Mary's dream, but the dream of Joseph. In fact, the story of the angel Gabriel appearing to the Virgin Mary appears in only one gospel, the gospel according to Luke. In Matthew's gospel, the angel appears not to Mary at all, but to Joseph.

Joseph dreamed something wonderful, about how God would enter the world. God would be born to his wife, as farfetched as that was to understand. Joseph had some serious trusting in God to do! But Joseph had to trust someone else, too. Joseph had to trust Mary.

I know Mary was his wife, and surely Joseph must have loved Mary. But, still, this took trust to an entirely

different level! And this, this is why Joseph's dream is so important - Joseph dreamed of the salvation of the world. And for Joseph, the way of salvation meant placing his trust completely in someone else.

That is the lesson for us, too. Like Joseph, we too are to place our trust in God and let Him lead the way. We trust that God is working through our loved ones and let Him have control. We trust that God is working in our lives, and then surrender, totally and completely in faith and love.

No doubt we all got at least one thing on our Christmas list, but I ask, "What did you give for Christmas this year?" I'm sure we have some wonderful gift givers at St. James, but in the coming year, considering a gift that has the perfect price tag - free for the taking.

The greatest gift you can give this year is to believe in someone's dreams. Have faith in their decisions. Trust God to lead the way to something wonderful. Believe in the dreams of the person you love. Believe in the dreams of your children. Believe in the dreams of your hero, your leader, your friend. Believe in their dreams!

Sleep comfortably this season. Work on building relationships so that you may awaken to realize that someone believes in your dreams too.

ST. JAMES UPDATES

INDOOR SERVICES SUSPENDED FOR THE TIME BEING

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

IN OUR PRAYERS:

Emily Bridgman, Elizabeth Willetts Owens,
Michael Stovall, Vic Venters

CONDOLENCES TO:

Ginny Crowder on the death of her mother, Margaret Boylston
Patty Cullen on the death of her husband, Mark Cullen
Jane Martin on the death of her brother-in-law, Jerry Herritage.

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

Our Stewardship Campaign for 2021 wrapped up on Dec. 28th as planned with a total of 304 pledges totaling \$1,162,901 (roughly \$222,009 under our approved 2021 Budget goal of \$1,385,000). Even though the drive is complete, it is not too late to make or increase a pledge to St. James to help us meet our Vision & Mission! Please finalize your pledge today through the church office or online.

PLEDGING & GIVING ONLINE

To donate and support St. James Parish, visit: <https://onrealm.org/StJamesParish/give/pledge>. You can visit stjamesp.org/stewardship for a video with step-by-step instructions for pledging online.

FIRST MEALS ON WHEELS OF 2021

St. James will be delivering hot meals to elderly shut-ins again this month. Please join us and help out with this vital ministry, especially during the time of this pandemic. We need volunteers to drive and deliver meals and volunteers to provide tangerines and Chips Ahoy cookies. We also need one early riser to help us pack the meals. Please contact Molly Roush at (910)471-1690 or email her at mollyroush@hotmail.com.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY HOURS

January 18, 2021 | ALL DAY

Both the St. James Parish Office and St. James Day School will be closed on Monday, January 18 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

ST. JAMES VISION STATEMENT

To build community through ministries that strengthen our faith.

SERVICE TIMES

Our in-person services take place outdoors, two at Mt. Lebanon Chapel and one at our Downtown Campus. As we move further into winter, we will be adjusting our Sunday service times in the hopes that the outdoor services will be warmer and have better lighting for attendees. We are hosting our outdoor services at the following times:

Mt. Lebanon Chapel

9:30 AM - Holy Eucharist - Rite II

10:30 AM - Holy Eucharist - Rite II (Livestreamed)

Downtown Campus

4:00 PM - Winter Worship

A THANK YOU FOR OUR CHURCH FAMILY

The staff and clergy of St. James extend a heartfelt thank you for the lovely Christmas cards, snacks and gifts received during the Advent and Christmas season. We are grateful for these generous expressions of affection and we're sincerely appreciative of such a warm parish family. May the spirit of Christmas be with us all throughout the new year.

ST. JAMES DAY SCHOOL REGISTRATION

Registration for the Day School opens online on Monday, January 11, 2021 for currently enrolled students, siblings of currently enrolled students, children of parishioners and siblings of previously enrolled students. Registration for all others opens on Tuesday, January 19, 2021.

SACRED GROUND INFO SESSION

Tuesday, January 12 } 7:00 p.m. | Zoom

Sacred Ground is a race dialogue series designed for these times. It is focused on the challenges that swirl around issues of race and racism, as well as the difficult but respectful and transformative dialogue we need to have with each other about them. It invites participants to walk back through history in order to peel away the layers that brought us to today, and to do so in a personal way, reflecting on family histories and stories, as well as important narratives that shape the collective American story. It holds the vision of beloved community as a guiding star - where all people are honored and protected and nurtured as beloved children of God, where we weep at one another's pain and seek one another's flourishing. We'll be meeting each Tuesday night from 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. for 10 sessions of discussion based on assigned readings and videos. Questions? Reach out to Ginny Woodruff at ginny@vcwoodruff.com.

ST. JAMES MISSION STATEMENT

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

SPIRITUAL GROWTH MOMENT

by Ginny Woodruff

After a year so often filled with fear, anxiety, and sadness as our lives have been upended by the pandemic, deep political divide, and continuing systemic racism, it was with hope for joy in the midst that many of us embraced the traditions of the season of Christmas, perhaps even earlier than in recent years, while otherwise faithfully observing Advent. For me, a live Christmas tree is one of those traditions that provides a sense of comfort and joy. As each ornament is placed, I am filled with memories of the friend or family member who gave me the ornament or of the trip from which the ornament was a memento. Once decorated, the tree serves as a reminder of blessings of family and the faith that supports me, thus creating a place of comfort and peace. But, in the nature of 2020 as a year that “keeps on giving,” one morning, a couple of weeks after decorating the tree, Ron returned from pickle ball to note an abundance of small black bugs all over the floor of the family room and quickly shared “happy” news with me. After continuous vacuuming, frantically contacting the exterminator (these bugs strongly resemble ticks), and “Googling,” we were forced to face the reality of “Christmas tree aphids” (one Googled article stated the chance of this “gift” as being 1/170,000. There was to be no enjoyment of the “coziness” of a room lit by a tree abundantly sharing little black bugs!

After a brief effort to replace the infected tree, I was forced to acknowledge that this was the tree with which I had to make peace. Deliberation was done, decorations were removed and the lighted tree was wrestled to its new location in the courtyard. Though now unadorned by special ornaments and no longer sharing its aroma inside the house, it remained visibly part of the family room. New weatherproof ornaments were provide thru Amazon and the tree was ready for the arrival of grandchildren. I now recognize that the “gift” I was given was the opportunity to be creative in finding a new way to experience a tradition that means so much to me. It was a “gift” not unlike many we have received this year – opportunities to find new and creative ways to continue deeply important traditions of faith and our lives. For example, over the years we have tried a number of times to offer Morning Prayer in the Chapel at St. James during the week. A number of us have officiated and have more often than not been the only attendee, occasionally joined by one or two others.

Once our COVID isolation was established, Jay began offering Morning Prayer each day online (with Erin’s assistance) and Cheryl has continued to facilitate this offering thru Zoom with a continuing daily participation of between 20 and 30, including St. James parishioners and new friends and family members from NY, SC, and Alabama. It has become a new spiritual practice for many and a way to for us to gather as a community in this time of pandemic to share a liturgy of worship we love. And it may well become a new tradition beyond the pandemic, a way to offer worship in community no matter where one is located.

As a member of the Search Committee, I am hopeful that the timing of this year of great challenges and the resulting creative new ways of “being Church” during a pandemic will open our hearts and minds to embrace the vision and gifts of a new Rector later this year. I look forward with excitement to being together again inside St. James and Lebanon Chapel with each of you and the opportunities for growth and new life for our Parish through spirit-filled leadership and vision of our new Rector. May the grace of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit be with us as we continue in this search process. I ask your continued prayers for the discernment of the candidates and your Search Committee. Thank you.

BLESSING BAGS - A HELP HUB PROJECT

Join us in supporting Help Hub and neighbors in need by donating Blessing Bags. Please pack gallon ZipLock, or other clear plastic bags, with supplies. The completed bags should be brought to the Harrelson Center. For a list of what to include, please visit our website.

CALLING ALL PARISHIONERS: COME READ

We are in need of more Lectors to read during our Sunday services. If you are interested in reading at one of our services, please reach out to Suzanne at Coordinator@stjamesp.org.

PARENTS INVITED ~ FACEBOOK GROUP

You’re invited to join us on Facebook. We’re building a group to share family fun activities, faith-building tools, stories, kid moments, and more! If you are interested in joining, please email Erin at communications@stjamesp.org and she’ll help you get connected.

PARTICIPATE IN OUR USHER MINISTRY

We are in need of more ushers to help us follow our COVID-19 protocol and to help direct parishioners and newcomers alike! If you are interested in serving as an usher, please reach out to Lee White at lwhite@turnbulllumber.com.

ST. JAMES PARISH

25 S. Third Street
Wilmington, NC 28401

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Priest-In-Charge The Rev. Michael Singer

Associate Rector The Rev. Chris Hamby | **Associate Rector** The Rev. Cheryl Brainard

Organist/Choirmaster John Sullivan

Facilities Administrator Bill McKenzie | **Parish Coordinator** Suzanne Adams

Finance Administrator Maria Holloper

Youth Minister Cookie Cantwell | **Children's Ministries** Shannon Lockamy

Day School Director Amy Taylor | **Communications Director** Erin Becker

Registrar Marybeth Tallman | **Property & Maintenance Manager** Wes Clewis

Sexton Joey Dobson

VESTRY

Senior Warden Steve Thomas

Junior Warden Jane Martin

Treasurer Mike Brown | **Clerk** Diane MacAskill

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

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

Class 2023 | Kay Dougherty | Tom Hackler | Leslie Jarrett | Al Marr

25 S. Third Street | Wilmington, NC 28401

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Office: 910-763-1628