

THE GRAPEVINE

ST. JAMES PARISH • WILMINGTON, NC
WEEK OF MAY 9, 2021

THE REV. MICHAEL SINGER



WHO ARE WE?

I've been fortunate to visit some of the great churches in the United States and Western Europe. Each time I walk through a church door, I am mindful of those who have entered these doors before. I think of those who the world might think of as prestigious, the dignitaries of government and church, but I most often think of those whom the world may think of as ordinary.

I have in my mind a picture of the elderly couple helping each other climb the few steps leading to the main church door. He works so hard to do it by himself, she tries not to lean too heavily on him-but both realize they need each other to accomplish what seems to be a monumental task of opening the church door. Or there is the family; mother, and father with three children. Dad is carrying the smallest child. The oldest is a daughter, on the verge of adulthood, with her head hung down, arms crossed, thinking this is the last place she wants to be. There is the young couple, smiles beaming across their faces as they think how beautiful their wedding day will be in a couple of weeks. They almost bounce up the steps.

Lastly, there is a man of 45, who looks much older, this is because he has been struggling with alcoholism for so many years he can't remember. His addiction has cost him his family, his friends, his job. The only thing he has left is the love of God he has learned of in recovery. He admits he is powerless over alcohol; he has come to believe that a Power is greater than himself and he has made the decision to turn his will and life over to the

care of God. His practice of coming to church for regular weekly worship is the only way he can see to connect with God.

Christian community can be found in many forms and in many places. The Monday of Easter Week I returned to Mt. Lebanon Chapel to retrieve something I left at the Easter Vigil. The area around the chapel was surrounded by visitors. There was a young family I met and began talking with. Parents with two children. They mentioned they had visited the place often and always wanted to go inside. I took the time to retrieve what I needed and let them look around. I took a photo of them inside. Since the doors were open, others began to enter. There was an older woman, by herself, who walked up to the altar rail, bowed her head, as to say a prayer, and then left. What was supposed to be a brief retrieval ended up being a longer stay than I expected. They were pilgrims on a journey.

Over the months of my time here at St. James, I've spent the first three months worshipping outdoors at Mt. Lebanon Chapel. Some Sunday mornings were cold, and others were really cold, with wind and possibly a light rain. But I try to imagine what it must have been like in the 1830's, when the chapel was first built, as worshippers gathered in all kinds of weather at a place where they experienced community and God. At the time Mt. Lebanon first opened, the area surrounding would have been largely unsettled, very different than it is today.

During COVID, whether it was Faith at 5, or Worship at 4; groups of worshippers, primarily young people, have gathered on the front lawn of St. James or at Mt. Lebanon Chapel, again for Christian community and to worship God.

Although not perfect, and in one fashion or another, the church has always been around, worshipping in a variety of places by all sorts and conditions of people. I believe the church will always be around, in one fashion or another...at least until the day when Jesus returns.

I have profoundly enjoyed my brief time with you. It is near time for me to leave. I thank the wardens and vestry

CONTINUES INSIDE

ST. JAMES UPDATES

ONLINE RESOURCES CAN BE FOUND AT:

www.stjamesp.org/

IN OUR PRAYERS:

Mary Ann Furniss, Paula Haller, Jane Tatum,
Missy Wright

CONDOLENCES TO:

Barbara Lloyd on the passing of her stepmother, Sally
Brownell

Jeana Powell on the passing of her father, James
Shallcross

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.

SERVICE TIMES- SUNDAYS IN SUMMER

Join us for worship! We are hosting our services at the following times:

Online Worship

9:30 AM- Livestream from Mt. Lebanon Chapel

Mt. Lebanon Chapel- Outdoors Only

8:30 AM- Holy Eucharist - Rite II

9:30 AM- Holy Eucharist - Rite II

Downtown Campus

8:00 AM- Indoors- Holy Eucharist - Rite I

10:30 AM- Indoors- Holy Eucharist - Rite II

WE WILL, WITH GOD'S HELP

Tuesday, May 11, 2021 | 7:00 p.m. | Zoom

Join us for a discussion of what our community can do in our diocese to help grow our mission as Christians and Episcopalians. The Executive Council of the Diocese of East Carolina is looking for feedback from our parish. We invite you to participate in a time of conversation centered around "mission" and what that means for not just St. James but Eastern North Carolina. Have questions? Please reach out to the Rev. Michael Singer at Michael@stjamesp.org.

ST. JAMES VISION STATEMENT

To build community through ministries that strengthen our faith.

ST. JAMES MISSION STATEMENT

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

TODAY: CELEBRATING DEACON KITTY DAVIS

Sunday, May 9, 2021 | 10:15 a.m. | Mt. Lebanon Chapel

All are invited to join us for a long-overdue celebration of St. James' beloved Deacon, Kitty Davis. Please make plans to join us on Sunday, May 9th at Mt. Lebanon Chapel following the 9:30 a.m. service. We'll have a time of fellowship, socially distanced snacks, and time to thank Kitty for all of her kind and loving service.

Please note that in the event of inclement weather, the event will be moved to St. James Downtown following the 10:30 a.m. Service.

PENTECOST WITH REV. PHILLIP & MORE!

Sunday, May 23, 2021 | Mt. Lebanon Chapel & Downtown

All are invited to join us as we celebrate the birth of the Church! Pentecost Sunday, St. James' new Rector, the Rev. C. Phillip Craig, Jr. will be preaching at the 8:30 a.m. service at Mt. Lebanon Chapel and the 10:30 a.m. Service Downtown. At the 9:30 a.m. service at Mt. Lebanon Chapel, we are pleased to share in the sacrament of Baptism for two young souls and their families. To round out such a happy day, following both the 9:30 and the 10:30 am services we will be hosting a small celebration for the Church with a birthday themed snack and family friendly crafts. Have questions about Pentecost at St. James? Please reach out to Erin Becker at communications@stjamesp.org.

MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCE

Sunday, May 30, 2021 | Following 9:30 and 10:30 services

Memorial Day is a day in the United States for honoring and mourning the military personnel who have died in the performance of their military duties while serving in the United States Armed Forces. It is a time to pause and remember. At the conclusion of the 9:30 a.m. service at Mt. Lebanon and the 10:30 a.m. service at St. James, on Sunday, May 30, there will be a procession to the graveyards where a moment of silence will be observed, a prayer remembering those who gave the ultimate sacrifice, and Taps will be played (weather permitting). In the event of rain, these events will be held indoors at St. James Downtown. We hope that all will worship with us on this day.

Please note that the St. James Parish office will be closed on Monday, May 31, 2021.

JOIN THE WEDDING GUILD!

Looking for a way to get involved! There are plenty of opportunities to support ministries at St. James and in our community. Our Wedding Guild is looking for more members to help support this sacrament. Reach out to communications@stjamesp.org to learn more.

WHO ARE WE? - CONTINUED FROM COVER

who called me, as well as the wardens and vestry it was my pleasure to serve beside. Thank you to the parish staff, who have had to reinvent and reimagine a way of ministering during the time of COVID.

I shall keep you all, and your new rector, The Rev'd Phillip Craig and his family, in my prayers as you move forward. Be kind to them. Realize they may make a few missteps along the way. Be forgiving. My prayer also is that you all remain faithful, will attend worship on a regular basis, and be open to the Holy Spirit as God calls your new rector to walk with you on this journey through life imagining all that might be possible.

You have been entrusted as stewards of places that have meant so much to so many over the years, they still do today, and will be tomorrow. You have been entrusted to train and educate children, young people and adults to love Jesus and to be loving people, to be the hands and feet of Christ in a world that often fails to hear God's reconciling voice.

Remember that life is short, and we have too little time to gladden the hearts of those who travel the way with us. So be swift to love. Make haste to be kind and may the blessing of God Almighty: Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with you now and always. ~ Rev. Michael Singer

ST. JAMES STRATEGIC PLAN ~ CONCLUSION

The Strategic Planning Group has now shared with members of St. James Parish the recommendations we have offered to the Vestry, strategies which call upon us all to fulfill anew the historic mission of our nearly 300-year-old church – arguably one of the great old churches in America.

We have called upon our parish to “seek excellence”; to “seize the moment” of opportunity; and, importantly, “to be true to ourselves,” not a copy of another church.

We believe that these strategies are true to our historic mission:

- energized worship
- enhanced ministries
- fully utilized campus
- increased financial support
- sincere welcome for others to join us.

We believe too that these strategies call for growth, not for change. CS Lewis reminds us of the difference: “Change is not progress unless the core remains unchanged. A small oak grows into a big oak: if it became a beech, that would not be growth, but mere change.” Our “core” is solid, and from it Saint James will grow.

We who worship at a great old church or, say, attend a great old college or university understand that with their history and traditions they are grounded in paradox: We want them to be excellent, real leaders – at the same time that we want them to be exactly the way they have always been.

We understand that. And we believe we can preserve the historic mission and values of St. James and still be ambitious for its future. With God's will and hard work, we can do both.

THURSDAY NIGHT: WALK IN LOVE

May 13, 2021 | 7:00 p.m. | Zoom

Join a small group on Thursday evenings on Zoom as we look at take a journey through The Book of Common Prayer, the Christian life, and basic beliefs of our faith, guided by two Episcopal priests - Scott Gunn and Melody Wilson Shobe. Contact Rev. Cheryl at cheryl@stjamesp.org for more information.

WEEKDAY MORNING PRAYER CONTINUES

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

Looking for a great way to start your day? We've got you covered. Join us on Zoom for a time of prayer, fellowship, and a little music.

ST. JAMES STORY TIME CONTINUES

Each Sunday | St. James YouTube

Enjoy Story Time on our St. James Website, YouTube and Social Media pages through Pentecost. You can find our new videos each Sunday at: stjamesp.org/blog/bible-time/.

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY: THE PATH

May 12, 2021 | 11:00 a.m. | Zoom

Join us as we read through The Path. We'll walk in the footsteps of faithful men and women who have done their best to follow God's call. Follow the path of God's love all the way from the beginning to the end, from Adam's creation to John's revelation. Have questions? Please reach out to Rev. Cheryl at Cheryl@stjamesp.org.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH MOMENT

by Charlotte Davis

I have been surprisingly resilient during more than a year alone during this pandemic but I can't take all the credit. God was helping me. The birds still sang and I filled the feeders, ordered more books on birds and got out my binoculars. I enjoyed art and music and reading. On Zoom I took courses, went to church, attended lectures, had meetings, and attended many events and had meaningful discussions. All with no travel requirements or geographic boundaries. I loved staying up late and sleeping in mornings with no alarm clocks. I contemplated the green leaves and blue sky from my hammock and I saw God in everything. On walks I was reassured by just watching the seasons change and I enjoyed waving to neighbors. I celebrated what continued unaffected but grieved the losses.

In scripture I found new understanding and the Psalms seemed more relative than ever in these times too. I was delighted find advanced Bible studies taught by bible scholars.

Every day I found things that made me smile or laugh. I watched children playing and enjoyed the company of my dog. A friendship formed with someone in December after meeting at a Zoom retreat hosted by the Washington National Cathedral. Using Zoom we have continued to meet. So much laughter and encouragement as we enjoy our time together. We each look forward to this each week.

Joining a Centering Prayer group each week on Zoom has added so much with new ways to go deeper within myself to be open to God. I discovered the value of just being still, trusting in God. I began studying the wisdom of the christian mystics and contemplatives who have experienced a spiritual awakening. So much to learn from them.

Steadily, God has led to me still waters, filled me with hope and given me a new way of seeing during this time when the world seemed to be in the shadow of death from COVID and so much violence and division. I see a new way emerging, new possibilities and hope for the better. I trust God.

MEN'S DAY OUT AT ORTON CAMP

Saturday, May 15, 2021 | 4:00 -7:00 p.m | Orton Camp

The men of St. James Parish are invited to Orton Camp Located at 5366 River Rd (Highway 133) in Winnabow, for a day of fellowship, fun, and dinner. Drop in as you're able! We're excited to see you. Everyone is invited to bring one guest to join! There will be games, grilling, ribs, bonfire, fellowship, and worship. This is an opportunity for all adult men (21 years and above) of St. James Parish to come together in a safe way outdoors at Orton Camp. You can register online. Have questions? Please reach out to David Sprunt at david.sprunt@ec.rr.com.

MEALS ON WHEELS IS COMING!

Sunday, May 30, 2021

Meals and Wheels is an important part of St. James' outreach. It is also a vital service to our community. Sunday, May 30th is an opportunity to serve. We need cooks, packers, additional food items, and drivers. Please volunteer for this opportunity to serve. Masks are required for drivers. Contact Missy Pretlow (missypretlow@gmail.com). Thank you for your participation.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT: WOMEN'S GROUP

Next Meeting May 19, 2021 | 8:15 p.m. | Zoom

It's been too long since we have been able to catch up over dinner, after Faith Formation class or coffee hour! Are you ready to make new friends, build community, pray and encourage? All women (Age 21 and up) are invited to join a new group meeting via zoom! Join us every other week as we walk through life together! Have questions contact Leslie Jarrett (Leslie.H.Jarrett@gmail.com) or Michelle Gray (michelle.gray@nhcs.net).

ST. JAMES SILENT AUCTION RECAP

Each year, St. James Parish Youth Group hosts the Silent Auction and Spaghetti Dinner to raise funds for their outreach activities and mission work at Glory Ridge. This year, in response to the pandemic, we offered an online edition! All proceeds from our St. James Silent Auction help people who are facing great needs or whose homes are in need of repair or improvements. These situations are in New Hanover County, in Madison County (where Glory Ridge is located), and throughout our world. Together, the St. James community has raised over **\$8,000** to support the ministry and out reach of our wonderful young people. Thank you so much for your generous donations.

ST. JAMES PARISH

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NEXT WEEK AT ST. JAMES

MONDAY- FRIDAY, MAY 10-14

MORNING PRAYER
8:00-8:30 AM | Zoom | Led
by laity and clergy.

MONDAY, MAY 10

VESTRY MEETING
5:15 - 7:00 PM | Great Hall

FELLOWSHIP AA
7:00 PM | Lippitt Room

TUESDAY, MAY 11

EDUCATION FOR
MINISTRY
9:00-11:30 AM | Great Hall

WE WILL, WITH GOD'S HELP
7:00 PM | Zoom

WEDNESDAY, MAY 12

PCJ BIBLE STUDY
7:30 AM | Zoom | Led by our
Youth Group and with Youth
Advisor support

BIBLE STUDY: THE PATH
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Zoom

EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY
6:00-8:30 PM | Zoom

THURSDAY, MAY 13

WALK IN LOVE
7:00 PM | Zoom

SUNDAY, MAY 16

HOLY EUCHARIST RITE I
8:00 AM | St. James Parish

HOLY EUCHARIST RITE II
8:30 AM | Outdoors Mt. Lebanon
Chapel BYOS*

HOLY EUCHARIST RITE II
9:30 AM | Outdoors Mt. Lebanon
Chapel BYOS*

ONLINE RITE II LIVE STREAM
9:30 AM | St. James Parish Website
or Facebook

HOLY EUCHARIST RITE II
10:30 AM | St. James Parish

YOUTH GROUP
6:00 PM | Outdoors Mt. Lebanon
Chapel BYOS*

***BYOS:** Bring Your Own Supplies- Please bring your own masks, chairs, picnic blankets, etc.

EDITORIAL DEADLINES: The deadline for the May 18th e-blast is Friday, May 14th.