

Enjoy the St. James Oct. Journal



St. James Community Journal

October 2013

Dear St. James Members and Friends,

Please enjoy reading our October edition of the St. James Community Journal. For our upcoming events please view the News and Events page or the Calendar on our website www.stjamessf.org.

If you have comments about this month's Journal or items (especially pictures!) that you'd like to contribute for the next journal please contact Rose Scarff. For more information about St. James please contact Erazm Pochron in the church office at stjames@stjamessf.org.

Thank you!
Rose and Erazm

It is ALL Gift

By Rev. John Kirkley



"What is the best present you ever received?"

This is the question I asked our preschool children at chapel before telling the Creation story (Genesis 1:1-2:3). "Race cars" was a popular answer, although one little girl opined that her bed was definitely the best! How to decide when we've received so many good gifts?

Some gifts are so huge that we don't even notice them. They simply become part of the background of our experience. We take them for granted. Things like light. Water. Flowers. Time. Butterflies. People. God made them all and said, "This is good. This is very good." But we forget.

And so the last of the great gifts of creation was rest: One day each week to rest and to remember all of the other great gifts. The seventh day allows us to pause and breath, and notice again all these wonderful and amazing gifts that sustain and enhance each moment of life.

"Which of these gifts is the most important?" "All of them!" exclaimed another little girl. She is right. Each of the great gifts of creation is really inseparable from the others, inextricably linked in a vast web of being.

I'm not sure I can name the best present I ever received. But when I'm awake I realize that it is ALL gift. Everything necessary for life is massively antecedent to my birth. I have been given everything I need. It is good – very good – and, yet, this realization is so overwhelming, so humbling, that I very rarely allow myself to be fully conscious of it.

How mysterious is the grace that would make me the beneficiary of such large gifts! How much more mysterious is the grace whereby I receive not only the gift, but also the Giver: God's self-giving in Christ Jesus. It is an astonishing thing to encounter God's yearning for us – for you and for me – taking flesh, reaching out, embracing us in a deathless love.

In this way, God fulfills the promise to bring creation to its fulfillment. In the gift of Christ Jesus, all the great gifts find their center and their completion. Our destiny – that for which we were given this fortunate human birth – is to realize this gift of Christ in ourselves, so share in God's love forever.

"Which one of these gifts is especially for you?" One wise little theologian quietly said, "The Light," reminding me of the words of St. Paul: "For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of the darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. 4:6) The same God who is Creator is also Savior: God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God. The light released in the primordial flaring forth that birthed a cosmos shines in our hearts "so that the life of Jesus may be made visible in our mortal flesh." (2 Cor. 4:11b)

"The Light" is especially for you, as four year-olds can tell you, if you bother to ask them. But we forget. So we are given the seventh day to remember:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness could not overcome it." (John 1:1-5)

It is ALL gift. Remember, give thanks, and let the light shine in you. That is why we are here.

Update from the Jr. Warden

by Tom Matthews



Greetings!

Parish Work Day – September

Just a short note (with a long list) of the accomplishments from our Parish Work Day in September. A big thanks to all who helped! If you'd like to help but missed this one, just let me know -- happy to have you provide some time to take a couple of things off the list. Otherwise, join us at our next Parish Work Day.

The accomplishments:

Church

- Washed Church exterior: east side of church from the stairs by SJPS entrance to California Street, front of Church, west side of church. The north side and east side down the alley had been washed in March.
- Remarked pew markings on floor.
- Cleaned / tidied up balcony/loft.
- Plaques added in front entry area.
- Fixed hook on Church front door.
- Installed new spray nozzle in sacristy

- Fixed remaining kneelers - including those in balcony.

Flats/Office

- Washed exterior side and front of flats.
- Washed exterior of office building.
- Installed door bell.
- Putting the furnace door of the flats back on its hinges.

Parish Hall

- Replaced men's room door vent.
- Fixed men's room door hinges.
- Cleaned vents in both bathrooms.
- Ledges dusted (including baseboards on stairs)/tables washed / counters and cabinets wiped down. Fridge and freezer also cleaned.
- Fixed coffee maker.
- Fixed hinges on exterior door to Parish Hall.
- Cleaned furnace room of debris and items.
- Overall tidying up.

By the way, a couple of reminders:

- Please do not store anything in the furnace room -- we get periodic fire inspections and our fire marshall is not happy when things are found in there.
- Please only throw toilet paper down the toilets. We have recently experienced a backup in our Parish Hall toilets again. The lines have been cleared, but we need your help to keep them flowing.

A special thanks to the following folks who helped for our September Parish Work Day:

Charlie Gregg, JJ Harrison, John Harrison, Nelson Huey, Noreen Huey, Vince Jang, John Kirkley, Anne Madden, Ann Rieger Matthews, Tom Matthews, Nancy Newmeyer, Ryszard Pochron, Eleanor Scott, Barbara Webb.

Recent repairs/maintenance:

- Sidewalk repairs completed.
- Pressure valve installed on incoming water to Church/Parish Hall -- to come up to code and prevent the banging pipes in the woman's room.

If you notice something needs fixing or have any questions -- just let me know. I'm in church most Sundays, but feel to call me or drop an email (contact info in the Parish Directory).

News from the Vestry

By Barbara Webb, Senior Warden



There is new energy in the air at St. James. Godly Play has started and lots of new programs and exciting things are ramping up. Elsewhere in this Journal, or in future editions, there will be articles on the Music Program, Christian Education, Shepherding/Welcome Committee, and news from the Junior Warden.

We had an awesome workday on Sept. 14. Lots of things were accomplished. The next workday will be Dec. 7. Please come.

Since my last article, St. James representatives – Fr. John; Tom Matthews, Finance Chair; Bill Newlin, Treasurer; and I – met with the Assessment Appeals Board. Tom and Bill had put together a comprehensive package

explaining our appeal. We were able to answer all their questions. We all feel it went well and are confident the appeal will be granted. By the time this Journal is published, we should know the outcome.

St. James has received a final disbursement from the Elizabeth Stewart estate. Elizabeth Stewart was a long time member of St. James from the 1950's/1960's. Tom Matthews told me that she is the one that established the prayer group and healing ministry at St James. Because St. James parishioners did what we do best, making everyone welcome, Elizabeth remembered us and for the last 5 years, we have been receiving generous disbursements from her estate. Thank you, Elizabeth.

Pledge cards and a Guide to Giving will be in your mailboxes the first weeks of October. Your vestry has already pledged. Join us by completing (and returning) the pledge cards as soon as you can, to enable us to get a more accurate picture for the upcoming 2014 budget. Included in the packet will be a Parishioner Information Update Form for you to complete. Please do so.

Some upcoming events to look forward to –

- Blessing of the animals on October 6, always fun
- A 90 minute presentation covering Simple Techniques for Enhancing Your Positive Experience of Life on October 9. Brian Esty and Roslyn Whitney. There are flyers on the table in the Narthex.
- Parish Retreat the first weekend of November. Elia Pochron and her committee have lots and lots of fun things planned.
- Family movie night in November, date to be announced later

In and Out

*by Meg Bloomfield, Managing Director
California Counseling Institute*



Where the ocean meets the shore, without effort,
one wave flows in as ebbs out. A
seagull lands on a rock, as another takes flight.
In the playground, girls are jumping rope.
Eyes and hands following the up, the down,
the around of the turning rope.
Building up the courage.
Waiting for the moment.
Entering.
Joining the beat, the rhythm, the groove.
Playing with the possibilities within the form.
After a while, sensing the next moment.
It's time... to exit, move on,
make space for what's to come.
The in-breath becomes the out-breath.
Summer graciously comes to its end,
while Fall waits with patient longing to begin.
To everything there is a season.
–Tina Smelser, MFT, September 2013

Tina recently wrote this for our mid-September Wednesday staff meeting meditation. We were saying farewell to our intern, Melanie Mitchell, who just completed a year with us, and welcome to our newest intern, Anna Halwell,

recently from CIIS, who has just started her first year with us, although she is about mid-way in earning the 3,000 hours she needs to licensing qualification. Saying farewell to our interns is always a bittersweet time for us; Melanie has been a vigorous and energetic presence in our clinical and staff meetings and she will be missed. Yet, and of course, we look forward to Anna bringing her own voice to our meetings, as well as her humour. Look for her on our website's staff page.

Seasons always bring us change, and this year has been no exception. We lost Lulu (Elaine's toy poodle and our unofficial 8th therapist) in the spring, and we had a sand tray session to process it. We have a new look to our website, designed by our gifted 2nd year intern, Lily Sloane. Over the summer months, most of us took some type of vacation or a few days' off. Summer months are generally slow at CCI, yet this summer seems to have flown by. We are ready for autumn and all the changes and energy it brings us. People are back from their own vacations, kids are back in school, or off to school (some of us are newly empty nesters), we return to our routines, hopefully with new perspectives, energy and focus.

The Spirit at Work

by Rose Scarff, Editor



Just as I was planning to write about all the good things our Christian Education committee is planning for us in the coming year, I received the following email from Roger Wickstrom (which he has given me permission to share with you) to other members of the team after their meeting:

"Good morning, all,

I thought to share the reading from today's Forward Day by Day booklet as I found it very relevant (...even a reflection of the Spirit's movement...) of the ongoing work and planning our team and community is focusing on.

Meditating on the reading from Psalms, Psalm 78: 1-39..but especially the first few verses..the author writes:

'I've read a lot of news articles, sociological studies, and blog posts that claim institutional Christianity is dying, that mainline churches are hemorrhaging young people, and that this decline is past the point of no return. I hear that young people are fed up with the church of their elders, and that older adults won't adapt to the changing world of youth. We have a failure to communicate.'

'While I do think church as we know it is changing, I also see plenty of positive intergenerational work and communication happening - and I'm in the center of some of it. One of my favorite parts of church is the relationships I have with people of all ages; in my faith community I have friends who are four and forty and eighty-four, and I'm a better person for it. I think when we are willing to communicate God's good work between and among generations, we are building a richer and more whole community than we could ever hope to achieve by selling relevance to any particular group.'

I personally appreciated these words of insight...hope and encouragement. Something good to keep running and planning with."

St. James' Christian Education Committee is newly formed under the leadership of Petrina Grube. It is not only concerned with our Children's Ministry and Youth Education, but also with planning various adult education opportunities throughout the year as well. Look for upcoming conversations with parishioners of all ages. They will

be looking at what works, what needs to change, and ideas for future programs. Your feedback and suggestions will be very helpful for future planning. As the author of the meditation (which Roger shared) says, it is the relationships we build with people of all ages that helps us build better community.

Our Parish Retreat at Bishop's Ranch is coming up the first week end in November. I don't think we have a better example of intergenerational communication and fun than our Retreat. If you have never attended, please plan to do so this year and experience the Spirit at work!

OCTOBER CALENDAR

October 3, Thursday	6:30 p.m. <i>Lectio Divina</i> group
October 6, Sunday	Services at 8 a.m. & 10 a.m. – St Francis Sunday with blessing of the animals at 10 a.m. Mindfulness Meditation after 10:00 a.m. service
October 13, Sunday	Service at 8 a.m. & 10 a.m. Service 9 a.m. Choir Practice St. James serves at Martin de Porres House of Hospitality 7 – 9 p.m. The Way of Christ Study Group
October 17, Thursday	6:30 p.m. <i>Lectio Divina</i> group
October 19, Saturday	7:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast-Keeping Faith in a Competitive World
October 20, Sunday	Services at 8 a.m. & 10 a.m.
October 27, Sunday	Services at 8 a.m. & 10 a.m. 9 a.m. Choir Practice
November 1-3	Parish Retreat at Bishop's Ranch
Every Tuesday	7:30 a.m. Morning Prayer & Meditation
Every Wednesday	6:30 p.m. Evening Prayer & Meditation 7:30 p.m. Buddhist Meditation in Caldwell Room

The St. James Community Journal is a monthly publication on behalf of:

St. James Episcopal Church
The Reverend John Kirkley, Rector
4620 California Street
San Francisco, CA 94118
415.751.1198
stjames@stjamesssf.org
www.stjamesssf.org

St. James Preschool
Roger Setterfield, Head of School
4620 California Street
San Francisco, CA 94118
415.752.8258
rsetterfield@stjamesssf.org
www.stjamespreschoolsf.org

**Community Learning Center
at St. James**
4620 California Street
San Francisco, CA 94118
415.751.1199
clc@stjamesssf.org
www.clcstjames.org

The California Counseling Institute
Elaine Chan-Scherer, Executive Dir.
Meg Bloomfield, Managing Dir.
4614 California Street
San Francisco, CA 94118
415.752.1702
ccipsyche@earthlink.net
<http://californiacounseling.org>

We welcome your articles
on or before the 15th
of the month.
Please send submissions
to Rose Scarff at
Rose.Scarff@gmail.com

Editor:
Rose Scarff

Production:
Rose Scarff
and Erazm Pochron,
Andrew Hom *in spiritu*