

Enjoy the St. James April Journal



ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH
A joyful, inclusive community

St. James Community Journal April 2014

Dear St. James Members and Friends,

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

If you have comments about this month's Journal or items 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@stjamesf.org or (415) 751-1198 x2.

Thank you!
Rose and Erazm

Endings and Beginnings

by The Rev. John Kirkley, Rector



St. James is saying "good-bye" to a program that has inspired us for many years. The board of directors of the Community Learning Center at St. James (CLC) voted unanimously to wind up and dissolve the CLC as a separate non-profit entity. The vestry concurred with the decision at its March meeting.

Originally established as the vehicle for a capital campaign to build a new community center at St. James, the CLC also began to develop programs to serve the neighborhood. When the capital campaign was discontinued, those programs remained and met important community needs. The ASPIRE after-school program served children and families from Peabody Elementary School. When that program was closed due to licensing issues (we were unable to meet State of California space and credentialing requirements), Elia Pochron found a way to continue to serve Peabody families through her new business, Creative Canopy. The tutoring program the CLC operated at Roosevelt Middle School was picked up by the Richmond Neighborhood Center. "First Five" funding from the State of California made preschool education more widely accessible, diminishing the need for the CLC's Saturday Learning Time preschool program.

The CLC also promoted space usage at St. James by outside groups, and that continues under the auspices of the Church. Several Twelve Step groups, music instructors, and a preschool Spanish class meet weekly at St. James. The church is a popular concert venue, and we've developed a new relationship with Green Apple Books (we are hosting two more book events in May).

The CLC also oversaw a restricted fund for outreach ministry that has made grants to groups like Rebuilding

Together and the Client Assistance Fund of the California Counseling Institute. That fund has a balance of more than \$50,000 that will be transferred to St. James and designated for the same purpose. All of this is part of the legacy of the CLC.

I'm very grateful to the people who have served on the CLC board over the years, and especially to Ann Rieger-Matthews, who has served as chair of the board for many years. Ann has a heart for community service, and a vision of a church that serves people of all ages. She was instrumental in leading the CLC through a time of transition, and has helped us to gracefully conclude the CLC's work. As always, Erazm Pochron has provided terrific staff support overseeing programs and facilitating this transition.

It is important for us to celebrate the CLC's achievements and the many ways in which it has enriched our community. It is also important to recognize when the purposes for which a program exists are no longer necessary, or when a program no longer is able to meet that purpose. It became clear to the CLC board and to the vestry that St. James could engage in outreach ministry successfully without the added infrastructure and cost of a separate non-profit entity.

There is death, but there also is Resurrection. As we say in Godly Play, for every ending there is a beginning, and for every beginning there is an ending. What will outreach ministry look like in the future at St. James? That is a question we will be examining, appropriately enough, during Eastertide.

One possibility that we will explore is collaboration with the San Francisco Organizing Project/Peninsula Interfaith Action (SFOP/PIA). During the great fifty days of Easter, we will undertake a "listening campaign" with the assistance of SFOP/PIA. This is a series of small group conversations about the community needs and issues that are important to us. What keeps you awake at night? What do you care about? How are we being called to be instruments of God's kingdom of justice and peace? These are the sorts of questions we will be exploring.

The purpose of the listening campaign is to identify and prioritize the community needs and issues that are important to us, and to discern whether or not SFOP/PIA is an appropriate partner for us to work with in addressing those issues. Ann Rieger-Matthews will serve as our liaison with SFOP/PIA during the listening campaign.

Several member congregations of SFOP/PIA - Star of the Sea Catholic Church, Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, Congregation Sherith Israel, and St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church - have formed a working group to address the challenges facing elders in San Francisco. They are now in the research phase, identifying community needs and possible responses. One need that has emerged is "aging in place," partnering with resources like the San Francisco Village to help seniors stay in their homes. Our Senior Warden, Barbara Webb, attended their last meeting, and anyone concerned about issues of aging is invited to attend the next meeting of the working group on Tuesday, April 8, 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm at Congregation Sha'ar Zahav.

Through SFOP/PIA I've also begun to connect with a national campaign, Lifelines to Healing, that is focused on issues of gun violence, mass incarceration, health, and economic opportunity for boys and men of color. These are examples of the opportunities for interfaith collaboration on social justice issues available through SFOP/PIA.

St. James is blessed with several outreach ministries that meet human needs: Mothers Helping Mothers, St. Martin de Porres' soup kitchen, Rebuilding Together, and support for Episcopal Community Services. While these will continue, we also hope to find new ways to serve our community in partnership with our neighbors.

News from the Vestry

by *Barbara Webb, Senior Warden*



A lot has happened since my last article. (See Pastor John's article regarding the dissolving of the CLC and our proposed collaboration with the San Francisco Organizing Project/Peninsula Interfaith Action.) Joining with our neighbor congregations to advocate on social issues is an exciting opportunity. For example, several congregations are working on immigration, some are working on school and education issues, and a number of congregations in the Bayview area are working on gun violence. Many faiths with one agenda – social justice. I am looking forward to the listening campaign that St. James will undertake. I know that you will find it exciting. As John indicated, I have become involved in the Covenant of Care (issues facing elders).

Sunday, March 23, was Pie Sunday. As usual, the cooks of St James outdid themselves with the many wonderful pies, both savory and sweet. A gastronomic delight aptly summed up by Petrina Grube's "I Like Pie" t-shirt.

Table conversation was reflection on the Gospel Lesson of the Samaritan woman at the well. "Jesus said to her, 'Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.'"

Where do we find "living water"? What are we passionate about? What supports us in being in touch with this living water and what gets in the way? Every table agreed that the Community of St James is where we find "living water".

Archaeological Note: The well of Jacob, 100 feet deep and nine feet in diameter, is one of the few places in the life of Jesus that can be identified with some certainty. It lies at the foot of Mount Gerizim, which was, and still is, the center of Samaritan worship.

At the annual meeting in January a resolution to select members of the vestry and deanery by lot instead of ballot was discussed. After much discussion, the resolution was tabled. The resolution was brought forth on Pie Sunday, and, again, elicited much discussion. It was agreed once again to table the resolution and focus on getting people interested in serving on vestry. This will be done by explaining what the vestry does, improving the nomination process, and having a vestry education day later in the year.

I can personally say that I was one of those that had to be dragged kicking and screaming to serve on Vestry and I am so glad I did. I have served with 12, 11 as of this year, wonderful people. We have good discussions and have made some tough decisions and are still friends at the end of the meeting. It does require some time, but it is very, very rewarding. Thank you, Doreen Canton, for talking me into it. I also want to put a plug in for Deanery. If you want to know how the Diocese functions, this is the spot for you. Four meetings a year, a convention, and you get to visit the various churches. See Warren Wong for details.

Thank you, Bill Newlin, for the financial report. St. James will be applying for assessment relief again this year, half of what we applied for, and received, last year. This past year the endowment was invested in stocks and bonds and we have realized a gain of \$10,000. With the dissolution of the CLC, their monies will be transferred to St. James to be used for outreach ministry.

Other news:

- Leadership changes – Warren Wong is the new Chairman of the Finance Committee replacing Tom Matthews who resigned. Thank you, Warren, and thank you, Tom, for your diligence and hard work.

- Rebecca Nicolson is the new coordinator for the St. Martin de Porres ministry. Thank you, Rebecca.
- Katie Canton will be leaving her position as Youth Minister this summer. Thank you Katie for your many years of leadership and good luck on your career. We will begin the process of re-examining youth ministry at St. James and develop and plan to fill the position. Please let Pastor John know if you would like to participate in the re-visioning process.
- We need people to serve on the Stewardship Committee. This also is not the ogre that everyone thinks it is. Yes, you do have to ask people for money, but it is so much more. The purpose of the Stewardship Committee is to identify, cultivate, and nurture the resources needed for the church's mission. Fundraising and volunteer management -- if this calls to you, contact the Church office for a job description.
- The Vestry is planning a Music & Supper Club evening later this spring. Keep your ears tuned and calendars open.

Applying Buddha's Teachings

by Jana Silverman, MFT
California Counseling Institute



In my therapeutic work I see many people who are caught in suffering. They come for support in crisis or many years later, still struggling to heal. Often, they feel hopeless and afraid, uncertain about the future. I can't give them answers that will shield them from their reality, but I can help them look at their lives more deeply and the way they live their lives more fully.

When prince Siddhartha reached enlightenment, he saw in the Four Noble Truths a deep realization of the inevitability of affliction. He also saw how a deep understanding and acceptance of the inevitability of affliction provides the route for human transformation that can lead to liberation from affliction.

The first noble truth is that birth, old age, sickness, death, grief, pain, depression and agitation are afflictions. Those are inevitable events of life associated with the emotional reactions that arise in response to them.

The second noble truth is that responses to afflictions are driven by our thirst for a sense of pleasure and that they have emotional energy. The word thirst describes the physicality of our reaction to a painful situation. It is often so powerful that we feel overwhelmed and seek to dissipate the feelings through distraction, numbing or any number of defensive behaviors. These behaviors quickly become compulsive patterns that can lead to addictions.

The third noble truth is that of containment of that thirst, to let go of and refuse to dwell in the object of that thirst. In order to be mindful of our behavioral patterns we have to find stillness in a place of suffering. Usually we direct all our energy to avoid suffering, but in therapy we can learn to be with the feelings of grief or anguish that arise and honor them. First, we must properly harness our impulses to escape, knowing that the action that follows later will be peaceful and effective. Once we learn to contain our reaction we can learn to unhook ourselves from the habitual response.

The fourth noble truth describes the spiritual path that leads to a life that flows in a direction of purposeful action, also known as the Eightfold Path. The eight steps (right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right meditation) describe the wholehearted application of energy to all situations in life.

The teaching of the four noble truths does not discourage emotions but suggests that we do not have to

compound our suffering by clinging to things we cannot have, by trying to fit the world to our viewpoint so that we can feel safe, or by falling into compulsive patterns of avoidance behavior. In this way, we can use our energy to live wholeheartedly and connect with others deeply.

If you are struggling in crisis or need help to unhook from hurtful compulsive behavioral patterns, feel free to call the California Counseling Institute at 415-752-1702.

More Garrison Keilor on Episcopalians



Editor's Note: Thanks to Carole Jan Lee for these observations about Episcopalians from Garrison Keilor. This month's line-up has a couple that don't apply to St. James' parishioners, and some that don't happen in the San Francisco climate, but they still make you chuckle. Enjoy!

Episcopalians think that the Bible forbids them from crossing the aisle while passing the peace. (Definitely not true of St. James!)

Episcopalians drink coffee as if it were the Third Sacrament.

Episcopalians feel guilty for not staying to clean up after their own wedding reception in the Fellowship Hall.

Episcopalians are willing to pay up to one dollar for a meal at church.

Episcopalians still serve Jell-o in the proper liturgical color of the season and Episcopalians believe that it is OK to poke fun at themselves and never take themselves too seriously.

And finally, you know you are an Episcopalian when:

- It's 100 degrees, with 90% humidity, and you still have coffee after the service.
- You hear something really funny during the sermon and smile as loudly as you can.
- Donuts are a line item in the church budget, just like coffee.
- When you watch a Star Wars movie and they say, "May the force be with you," and you respond, "and also with you."

And lastly, it takes ten minutes to say good-bye.

Thoughts

by Rose Scarff



Editor's note: Since my thoughts lately have not been of the variety to share, I thought I would share this short piece I came across that really spoke to me. I hope you like it as much as I did. - Rose Scarff

The Rev. Matthew Zimmerman
from the Spring 2014 issue of The Anglican Digest

We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. - 2 Corinthians 10:5

"Watch your thoughts, they become words;
watch your words, they become actions;
watch your actions, they become habits;
watch your habits, they become character;
watch your character, for it become your destiny." - Frank Outlaw

We cannot stop the thoughts that come into our heads but we don't have to serve them tea. - Rumi

We do become our thoughts. We tend to forget that we are clay always being shaped and formed by unseen forces. Thoughts seem insignificant but they make and unmake worlds. Watchfulness is essential for our lives. We guard ourselves against outside forces with great care but forget about forces within us. Thoughts can unravel relationships and disassemble a work place.

The good news is we can choose to watch over our thoughts. As Rumi says we can't prevent them but we don't have to invite them in and give them a place at the table. We can let them go and choose to entertain thought that build relationships. Just something I've been thinking about.

APRIL CALENDAR

April 2, Wednesday	7 p.m. Lenten Program
April 3, Thursday	6:30 p.m. <i>Lectio Divina</i> group
April 6, Sunday	Services at 8 a.m. & 10 a.m. Mindfulness Meditation after 10:00 a.m. service
April 9, Wednesday	7 p.m. Lenten Program
April 12, Saturday	7:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast 9 a.m. Parish Work Day
April 13, Sunday	Service at 8 a.m. & 10 a.m. Service – Palm Sunday 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
April 16, Wednesday	7 p.m. Tenebrae Service
April 17, Thursday	7 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service
April 18, Friday	7 p.m. Good Friday Service
April 19, Saturday	6 p.m. The Great Vigil of Easter
April 20, Sunday	Services at 8 a.m. & 10 a.m. – Easter Sunday Easter Egg Hunt following 10 am service
April 26, Saturday	10 a.m. Women's Group meeting at Creative Canopy
April 27, Sunday	Services at 8 a.m. & 10 a.m. 9 a.m. Choir Practice
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

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