

Advent and Christmas, 2020

The Network



St. James' Episcopal Church

2584 Main Street, P.O. Box 206, Glastonbury, CT

Service Schedule

Sundays 9:00 am Morning Prayer

Monday-Saturday 9:00 am Morning Devotions

All services are on the Internet through Zoom and Facebook Live platforms. Check the Wednesday e-blast for the site link and password information.

November 26 9:00 am **Special Thanksgiving Day Worship, on Zoom and Facebook Live.** Join us to give Thanks to God for all the blessings so freely given to us before you begin your day. Use the Zoom Worship Link sent in the weekly e-blast.

November 29 9:00 am ***Advent Lessons and Carols***

Sunday, December 13 In addition to the 9:00 am service, we will hold an **11:15** Family Drive-In/Lawn Church service

Thursday,

Christmas Eve 4:30 pm Christmas Eve Service (including) *Pageant*
9:00 pm Christmas Eve Service

Friday,

Christmas Day 9:00 am Christmas Day Service

January 6 **Twelfth Night, Epiphany**

January 31 Annual Meeting

St. James' Vision

We are a Christian community committed to our individual faith journeys through learning, sharing and listening to God and one another. We live this faith through hospitality and acceptance, challenging ourselves and one another to join God in God's mission in our neighborhoods and the world.

Sunday morning Bible Study

...meets every Sunday on Zoom at 10:00 am with Clint Dixon.

Look for internet details/Zoom address in the Wednesday e-blast.



Sunday,
November
8th
outside!
at
11:15

Baptism of
Addison Wright
at the
September
11:15
Family Service



Rector's Ramblings

How on earth did it get to be the end of November already! For a year so many of us thought would never end, it suddenly is coming to an end pretty fast, or at least it seems so to me. Perhaps because there is so much to do before it does in fact end. Not only are we all figuring out how to celebrate the holidays safely this year with family and friends, we are also figuring out how to do church for Christmas, celebrate 12th Night and do a virtual annual meeting in January!

And, I am planning for my sabbatical in 2021. I think some of you will remember that you very graciously approved and supported my taking a sabbatical in 2020 but I postponed it for a year. That turned out to be a good decision because as we all know, things shut down in March of this year, so I would not have been able to do anything I had planned. Now, of course I am not sure if I will be able to do anything this time, either, but I am hopeful that come April and May, things will be better. I have put together a great team to help things run smoothly while I am away. Oh, yes, I will be away March 1st- June 6th. The team and the areas they will help with are:

Worship: Fred Faulkner and Valerie Huestis

Faith in Action: Nancy Connell and Debbie O'Donnell

Organization, Keeping in Touch with Parishioners: Debbie O'Donnell, Dorris Manganelli, Judy Knowlton

Christian Ed, Fellowship (Adult and Youth): Erin Perrelli and Mitch Chester

The Rev. Don Hamer will be the clergy person with you while I am away, which is great because many of you know Don, and Fred worked with him at Trinity, Hartford. And of course you will have your amazing Vestry and staff available to handle what ever comes up.

What I will be doing is still in flux due to the unknown of the pandemic. My hope is that in March I will spend a week at Holy Cross Monastery, in April, Doug and I will do a part of the Civil Rights Trail, and in May, Doug and I and a few family members and friends will do a 95 mile hike in the Highlands of Scotland. All, of course, is dependent on our being able to travel, safely.

Between now and the end of February, there is much to do and lots happening. My prayer is that you will all stay connected to this amazing community of St. James' Church throughout our physical separation, that you will continue to join us for Worship on Sundays and perhaps even occasionally during the week, that you will join us for Christmas services and 12th Night and our Annual Meeting and that you will stay connected while I am gone. We are the Episcopal Church here in Glastonbury and we are only such if you stay with us because you, in fact, are the Church.

Peace, Denise+



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On Wednesday, November 4th, St. James' held a virtual **Celtic Vespers**, a non-denominational candlelight service featuring prayers and music of Ireland, Scotland, England, and Wales. Christianity flourished throughout the British Isles for many centuries emphasizing a sense of God and the saints as a continuing, personal and helpful presence. Women often held positions of authority. Love of nature, the wild and elemental were reminders of God's gifts. Vespers or evening prayer is deemed "Celtic" by the spirit of the liturgy rather than any formal form. The Celtic Vespers service, steeped in tradition, invites the congregation to enter into a place of prayer, reflection and peace and offers participants an opportunity to light a candle in remembrance. Our service began with *Tar a Thighearna* (Come, Lord, come thou Being) and continued with readings, General Thanksgiving, and communal prayers of intercession and healing. Interspersed throughout the service were hymns plus Celtic music performed by Wild Notes (Kasha Breau - harp, John Kalinowski - concertina and Mickey Koth - flute). We anticipate offering Celtic Vespers services again in the new year.

Our tradition of **Advent Lessons and Carols** continues on Sunday, **November 29**, at 9:00 a.m. This virtual service on Advent I will include readings and music in anticipation of the coming of Christ. Pre-recorded music will be provided by the St. James' choirs and guest choirs, including selections from our 2018 service. Please join us that morning as we begin Advent and the new church year.

Book Group

The Thursday morning book group begins a new book, *Love is the Way, Holding on to Hope in Troubling Times*, by Bishop Michael Curry on November 19. We meet on Zoom at 10:00 am on every other Thursday. Everyone is welcome! The Zoom link will go out the Wednesday before each gathering.

By popular demand, we will have a **December outdoor service** on December 13th at 11:15. Please sign up by December 10th. If you are driving, be there by 10:45; if you are sitting in a chair, by 11:00. Bring masks and bulletins.

December 13th OUTDOOR Service 11:15

Please



Halloween
activities for Youth!



Lunch in the Park, Hartford



Church by the Pond,

aka, "Lunch in the Park" here at St. James' is an "ecclesia ministry" (in that it is a church without walls) of Christ Church Cathedral. Every Saturday throughout the year, regardless of the weather, a service is held at 2 p.m. in an open space near the carousel in Bushnell Park in Hartford. The service is open to all and often includes people who aren't comfortable worshipping in a traditional church service. From 20-60 people, many of them homeless and living in shelters, gather for the service. They come to hear God's word and most seem to feel the comfort of liturgies learned as children. The celebrants at the service are Episcopal and Lutheran clergy from the greater Hartford area who preach and share the good news of Jesus Christ's love. Immediately following the service, bag lunches prepared by a church or community group are distributed to the participants.

On October 24, St. James' prepared over 100 sandwiches and created over 50 bag lunches containing two sandwiches, chips, cookies, and water. In 2021 we will be participating in this ministry on two dates, May 1st and September 25th. Please consider joining us next year in this rewarding ministry!

ECCT Annual Convention 2020

This year's Annual Convention was held from October 14 through October 18. Because of the pandemic, all proceedings were held online via Zoom. The Reverend Denise, Becky Lee, and Caryl Donovan represented St. James'.

At sessions held on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, the convention considered one "Big Question" each day. Delegates met in breakout groups to discuss the topic after which the entire convention re-gathered to summarize our conversations. As a result, groups have been formed to initiate action on of each of the given daily topics.

Wednesday's "Big Question" focused on what ECCT and its members can do to address the issue of *wealth inequality*. Thursday's "Big Question" asked, which of the pandemic *changes* we have already made and will KEEP to encourage a continuing culture of discovery in parishes. The topic of Friday's "Big Question" was, how parishes can educate themselves about the reality of *systemic racism, white supremacy and anti-Black bias*, and how parishes will be compelled to take action as followers of Jesus.

The Convention business meeting was held on Saturday and included the Bishop's Address, elections, and voting on resolutions. On Sunday, a diocesan-wide worship service was held. You are invited to join any of the action groups on the Big Questions. You are welcome to contact Becky Lee or Caryl Donovan and we will be happy to give you more information. As your Parish representatives, we thank you for your prayers and support during this year's convention. –Becky Lee

Musical Musings - Jim Barry

In the past few months, I have learned a lot about Zoom, PowerPoint, and audio editing. Preparing music for virtual services has been a challenge and a joy. I am grateful to the O'Donnells who have been our recording singers these past few months while we observe restrictions on group singing.

Moving forward, our choir joined with three other Glastonbury choirs to collaborate on a hymn for Thanksgiving week. Each person, while listening to a master track, recorded their own voice and submitted that recording to be combined into a full, finished product. United in song, the choirs had the opportunity to offer their musical gifts despite not being able to gather in-person. The process will be used in the coming months by our own choir as we continue to present pre-recorded music during our virtual services.

During this down time for the choir, the music library underwent a thorough review. Thanks to Valerie Huestis who spent hours checking each file and comparing it with our Excel catalogue spreadsheet. Nearly 1200 items were reviewed, so that when the choir returns, our choir library will be updated and ready.



I am writing to ask that if you have not yet turned in your 2021 pledge to please consider making a pledge for next year. I know that many of you feel disconnected from St. James right now, it has been a long time since we have gathered together in our Sacred space and we don't know when we will be able to do so again. But I do know that we will, one day, do so again. And how that looks and what we are as church depends on you and your generous pledge. At the time I am writing this, we have 62 pledges for a total of \$158,762. Last year we had 91 pledges for \$222,202 and that was a tough budget year. So, again, I am asking, if you have pledged in the past and have not yet pledged for 2021, please consider making a pledge, help us to be the church God is inviting us to be.

Denise+

Christmas Pageant

This year's Christmas Pageant will be done on Zoom. We have several of our young folks already signed up to participate. If you are a not so young person who has participated in past pageants and would like to again this year, please let Denise or Clair know as soon as possible so we can be sure we have parts for all!

Dear Friends,

I just want to thank you all for the love, prayers cards, amazing fruit arrangement sent on behalf of the Vestry, parishioners and staff, and support you have given to me for the loss of my mom. I know many of you have lost a parent and know that this is a particularly difficult loss no matter the age or their stage in life. My mom was a wonderful mom, her life was her family and she taught me much about what it means to be family and was formative in my priesthood. The grief is eased a bit by you and your support and I do not have the words to express my deep appreciation for each and every one of you.

Love & Peace,

Denise+

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The Episcopal Church in Connecticut

www.ctdiocese.org

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The Rt. Rev. Dr. J. Laura Ahrens, Bishop Suffragan

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Office Hours: *The church is closed at this time.*

Pastoral Emergency: Call the church office (860-633-8333) and dial 4 any time during the message. Your call will be routed to the clergyperson on call.