

Summer, 2022

The Network



St. James' Episcopal Church

2584 Main Street, P.O. Box 206, Glastonbury, CT 06033

Service Schedule

Sundays

10:00 am Rite II Holy Eucharist *in church and on our YouTube channel* Look for the link in our Wednesday e-blast.

Church School does not meet during the summer. Look for messages from Dan Aramini and Mitchell Chester for September start-up information.

On the cover:

Church School teachers Dan Aramini and Mitchell Chester with our recent high school graduate, Catherine Chester, at Heads Up Hartford.

Save the Date: Sunday, July 24, *Feast Day of Saint James*
Ice Cream Social after the service!

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.



Life Together

Dear Siblings in Christ,

It is a blessing for me to be invited to write this column during this “in between” time here at St. James’. Our previous Rector has accepted a new call in Christ’s service. It will likely be at least 9 months or longer before we think about calling a “Priest in Charge” who may or may not eventually be called as our Rector. During this “in between” time, our parish is under the able leadership of Debbie O’Donnell, our Senior Warden, and our Vestry. With the approval of the Vestry, I have been asked to serve as “long-term Supply Clergy” on a very limited basis (most Sundays and the equivalent of 1 full day per week) to plan and provide for celebration of the Holy Eucharist on Sundays, pastoral care to the congregation and clergy support to the office staff and lay leadership.

During this time, there are two basic paths we can take: The easy way is that we can passively sit on the sidelines, lament that we don’t have a Rector, and wait for the call of a Priest in Charge. And in Jesus inimitable style, He offers us a better way: To look on this time as a necessary period of self-reflection, developing and praying about our dreams for the future, and understanding what seems like a long interim period as a necessary period of development and growth.

As a priest who has a special interest in congregational development, one of my favorite movies is *Sister Act*. (If you haven’t seen it or don’t remember it, make it a spiritual exercise to make a bowl of popcorn and watch it.) As the nightclub singer Deloris Van Cartier, having witnessed a gang-style murder, has to go underground in a witness protection program, Whoopi Goldberg is begrudgingly transformed into

Sister Mary Clarence in a Roman Catholic convent. Against the better judgment (and comfort level) of a stern Mother Superior, she turns lemons to lemonade. With wit and humor, she transforms a dying inner-city church into a life-giving, radically welcoming beehive of activity. Yes, the pews were now full, but not because they focused on drawing new members in. The pews were full because the community for the first time, saw the light of Christ in that place where it had been dull and dark before. It was suddenly inviting to a community seeking a joyous place of welcome, hope and healing.

My prayer is that during this time we will not focus on “church growth” as “the problem” or as a goal. When you think about it, at its heart, that focus is really self-centered, not Jesus- centered. I pray that we will walk lightly, not take ourselves and the habits to which we have become accustomed too seriously, and instead open ourselves, our souls and our bodies to the perfect freedom that is life in the Spirit. Let’s make room for the light of Christ to shine through us and everything we do.

In the words of Sister Mary Clarence, **WE CAN ROCK THIS PLACE!**

Your brother in Christ,

Don



June 5 good-byes to Jeanne Kowalsky, the Rev. Denise Cabana, & Jodi Lussier

Update from the **Building a Beloved Community** Team

Vision: *That the world become a Beloved Community in which all people are treated with justice, respect, compassion, and kindness.*

St. James' First Sacred Ground Circle

Recently, 16 parishioners formed St. James' first *Sacred Ground* Circle and completed the eleven sessions of the *Sacred Ground* curriculum. Lively circle discussions offered valuable insight into the history of racism as we faithfully confronted our individual and white culture's continuing role in perpetuating racism. During the final session, participants shared observations and reflections from our time together such as, "I didn't realize I was ignorant of so much," "*Sacred Ground* opened our "senses to what we're blind to," "We are very tribal," and "We have a long way to go." Participants identified next steps and actions to take as individuals, circle participants, and in our own congregation. Many thoughts were offered, and the Circle looks forward to sharing them with you.

Sacred Ground is part of Becoming Beloved Community, the Episcopal Church's long-term commitment to racial healing, reconciliation and justice in our personal lives, our ministries and in our society. *Sacred Ground* is built around a powerful curriculum of documentary film and readings that focus on Indigenous, Black, Latino, and Asian/Pacific American histories as they intersect with European American histories. The Building a Beloved Community Team looks forward to offering future opportunities for others to participate in a second *Sacred Ground* Circle.

Some Historical Facts about Slavery in Connecticut and Glastonbury

- Slaves first arrived in Connecticut around 1639.
- Connecticut legalized slavery in 1650.
- The first documented evidence of enslaved people in Glastonbury was in 1712.
- By 1774 Glastonbury had 79 African Americans (4% of the population), and 64 were listed as slaves.

Ice Cream Sundae Social

In the church calendar, the holy day for St. James the Apostle is July 25th. In celebration of St. James and our cherished namesake parish, we are planning an Ice Cream Sundae Social on Sunday, July 24th immediately following the 10 a.m. church service. The sundaes will feature Shady Glen ice cream, a choice of sauces, whipped cream and assorted toppings.

There will be a sign-up sheet in the atrium which will include a menu of potential ingredients so you can build a sundae and help us to plan this occasion and purchase the most popular selections. If you would like to join the team of volunteers helping with this event, please contact Valerie at ValerieHues@gmail.com. We truly hope that you will join us for this fun mid-summer social gathering.



River East Resettlement Alliance (RERA) Update

Great news! RERA has accepted a Syrian refugee family! They are a wonderful family of five, with a set of beautiful triplet seventeen year old girls. On May 24, RERA moved them into the apartment we had rented in Manchester. Over the last month, they have settled in very well. They are all taking English classes and having tutoring. Our various committees are helping them with things such as healthcare appointments, getting them ready for school in the fall, helping them obtain their DSS benefits and work on their financial planning, resume creation and employment searches, grocery shopping, transportation, and so much more. The family is so grateful and they are anxious to get to work and school as soon as possible.

Previously, we thought we would be working with IRIS – the Resettlement Agency here in CT – to settle an Afghan refugee family. But IRIS was successful in resettling all of the CT Afghan refugees families before needing RERA's help. Therefore, we began looking for other opportunities to settle a family and through a conversation and a coincidence, we were connected to this family who was looking for a place to live near South Windsor. We had a match! It is a true blessing that we found each other.

St. James' RERA Members:

Lisa Gleason
Amy Haynes
Amy Korber

Spring Fling Tag Sale Update

A heartfelt thank you to all the volunteers and donors who helped make the Spring Fling Tag Sale a success. Together we raised over \$5,600 to be allocated between the parish general fund and Faith in Action ministry. Over the summer we hope to raise additional funds by 1) offering selected leftover "treasures" to a consignment shop and 2) taking many of the remaining items to an area auction house.

With the leftover "tag sale" items, we paid it forward by donating them to other area nonprofits (e.g., Second Chance Shop, Goodwill, Glastonbury Historical Society, etc.). Again, thank you so much for all your hard work and generosity!

-Valerie



Faith in Action: Food Pantry Ministry

With so many food insecure families struggling to put food on their tables due to rapidly rising food prices, we are hoping to re-energize our food pantry ministry this summer.

- We will begin collecting unexpired non-perishable food items in the atrium for an entire month and taking the donations to a food pantry during the third week of each month to meet the end of the month demand.
- Currently all donations are taken to the Manna Food Pantry program sponsored by Hands on Hartford, a social service nonprofit organization that serves Hartford's most economically-challenged residents. Their pantry is a full-service shopping model food pantry, allowing clients to choose food that will suit their families' needs and tastes, minimizing food waste and maximizing nutritional value. Donations of unexpired food are essential to their program's operations. Some suggested items include peanut butter & jelly, canned fruit & vegetables (especially fruit in light syrup or water), canned soups and stews (especially light or low sodium varieties), pasta & sauce, canned tuna in water, rice and canned beans.
- As you do the weekly food shopping for your family, please consider adding an item or two for our food pantry ministry to your cart to support our brothers and sisters in Christ.

“Part-Time is Plenty”- Thriving Without Full-Time Clergy

By now you probably have heard someone in the church talking about this book. Maybe you've even read it. Some of us have attended small group discussions focused on specific ideas from it. Even if you don't really know anything other than the title, the fact that you're reading this in the St. James' Network means you've got a stake in what's going on here. Even though it's summertime in New England and many of us plan to be “out and about” and often not in church on Sunday, it's actually a good time to give this whole part-time clergy thing some thought.

I'm priest's kid (Dad was an Episcopal Church Rector for about 20 years in a small town in Westchester County, NY), so I grew up going to church EVERY Sunday, regardless of the time of year, or the weather or what else was going on. The world and the mainline churches have changed a lot since the 1960s and 70s. Even over the 20 plus years I've been attending St. James', things have significantly changed. Currently, we find ourselves at a very interesting time. After quite a bit of internal and external analysis, our church budget does not look like it can sustain a full-time priest in the coming years. (A full-time Rector's compensation package, stipulated by the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut, is by far the largest part of our budget.) That does not mean, however, that we cannot build and sustain a fully-functioning, vibrant and visible church. It's going to take some work and what one might call a “paradigm shift” (a fundamental change in approach or underlying assumptions).

The summer is a great time to read a new book, and if you haven't had a chance, get your hands on this one and check it out. In order for the strategy described in the book to work, a re-education program needs to be conducted for our leaders, for the congregation, and possibly even for the candidates we consider for our part-time priest position. St. James' has the talent. One of our goals will be to tap into “the latent gifts that laypeople haven't had a chance to use but will flourish more fully when they do”. The book's author writes “That's what laypeople do in vital congregations with part-time clergy: they move into roles they find meaningful, rewarding and fun. They spread their wings in ministries long seen off-limits to laypeople...the emphasis is on enabling laypeople to delight more daringly in doing what they love in a ministry context.”

It's not all fun and games, of course, but what I want to emphasize is the opportunities St. James' will be offering to its laypeople that may not have been done before.

Have a great summer and use some of your free time to think about what you might like to try out. We will be very forgiving, even if you have to try a few different things before you find your “calling”.

Thanks for taking a few minutes to read this.

Don Gardner

Vestry Member (and Minister of Light Bulbs ☺)

Contact Information

P.O. Box 206, Glastonbury, Connecticut 06033 ♦ 860-633-8333

Website ♦ www.stjamesglastonbury.org

Facebook ♦ www.facebook.com/StJamesGlastonbury

The Episcopal Church in Connecticut

www.ctdiocese.org

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Ian T. Douglas, Diocesan Bishop

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

St. James' Clergy

The Rev. Don Hamer, *Priest Associate*

revdon2016@gmail.com

Music Ministry

James R. Barry, Minister of Music

dirmusic@stjamesgl.org

Office

Dawn Hardwick, Parish Administrator

Joanna Rivera-Bremmer, Bookkeeper

parishadmin@stjamesgl.org

bookkeeper@stjamesgl.org

Vestry Officers

Debbie O'Donnell, Senior Warden

Mitch Chester, Junior Warden

Bob Dugger, Treasurer

Cheryl Turner, Clerk

deborahodonnell@cox.net

mrchester4@hotmail.com

rcd49@aol.com

jacquesapn@cox.net

Summer Office Hours:

*Tuesdays - Thursdays, 9:00 am -2:00 pm,
(in the church, email, telephone)*

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.

