



The Window

The Newsletter of St. James' Episcopal Church in Fremont, CA
Called to serve in new and loving ways

March 2014

The Naming Of Our Sin

In a recent conversation with a young adult, she and I talked about how many people die as a result of violence. We talked about gang culture and a division between respecting life and disregarding life, and we talked about how numb society has become to news of death. We examined our own experiences of being treated as objects instead of human beings, and we wondered what causes people to move from innocence to acts that hurt and kill others. "This is what happens when we act like sin doesn't exist," she said. Her statement struck me enough that I've pondered it many times since that conversation months ago.

While I do think the move to violence is a complicated one that includes social, emotional and economic factors, I think my young friend was on to something. Our particular flavor of Christianity does tend to shy away from talk of sinfulness. We don't want to come across as judging or paternalistic. Self-examination is often painful. We are much more comfortable with the language of love than with the language of sin. But sometimes this can lead to excusing behavior that is inexcusable. Sometimes this can lead to our own dismissal of behavior that is hurtful and hurting, either to ourselves, to others or both. Sometimes it can lead to avoiding an opportunity to heal, transform, and move towards a more abundant way of living.

Sin is not the condition of a person who is inherently bad. Sin is the condition of someone who has acted or continues to act in ways that are in contradiction with God's desire for love. These actions can be extreme or they can be subtle. There isn't a person alive who is without sin, for not one of us has reached perfection. In fact, perfection isn't the goal, for avoidance of all sin is impossible – rather, the goal is the on-going self-examination and willingness to let God into the darker places so that God might bring grace to the places that need changing.

The key is, we don't go it alone. We travel the path of transformation with the powerful presence and help of God. As it is said in the Gospel according to John, "the light shines on inside the darkness, and it is a light that darkness cannot overcome" (John 1:5).

This Lenten season is an invitation for all of us to look at the darkness and invite God in. There is great freedom in naming our own sin. When we are able to look honestly and directly at the areas in our lives that are out of line, and then ask God to remove the shortcomings and defects of our character, we experience God's grace and a renewed life.

This self-examination is the work of an active Christian. It is woven into our common life with the general confession recited during Sunday services, and may be part of our personal lives when we lift up our sins to God in prayer or when we sit with another person for the purpose of confessing. Author Richard Rohr points out that "*Accountability and healing was so deemed necessary in the history of Christianity that it became an official and designated role in the community, and even a 'Sacrament.'*" *Someone had to be trained and prepared for the dumping, ventilating, releasing, and absolving that humans always need.*" (*Breathing Under Water*, page 43) The Church offers the Rite of Reconciliation to meet the need to "dump, ventilate, and release." If this is of interest to you, I can connect you with a priest with whom to confess, or I can hear your confession directly. If confession with another is not desirable, then spend some time in your prayer life giving over your darkness to the light of God. Through the act of opening up and letting God in, we become free of the weight that too often holds us down.

Lori

How Are You Using God's Gifts?

Everything we have is a gift from God. The gifts we have received are not ours alone. God gave them to us for the purpose of serving God and serving other people.

The Apostle Paul put it this way: "We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully." (Romans 12:6-8)

We all have something to give. Each of us has our own unique talents and abilities. What gifts do I have to share is a common question. What talents do I have to offer? We might not think we have any special talents, but helping and sharing doesn't mean you need to have a particular degree or specialized experience. Answering a phone in an office, helping cook or serve a meal at a homeless shelter, playing games with children at Vacation Bible School, or sweeping up the leaves in the church parking lot are examples of sharing yourself and your time. You can contribute money to a charity, be a friend to someone who is sick or lonely, or volunteer with a

local nonprofit organization (just make the effort to volunteer and you'll be amazed at what gifts you have to offer)! Sharing our gifts with others brings meaning and fulfillment to our lives in a way that wealth, power, and possessions can never match. Jesus said, "Give, and it will be given to you." (Luke 6:38)

In the *parable of the talents*, Jesus taught us to use our gifts wisely. The lesson of that parable is we must use our talents and abilities, as well as our wealth, in God's service. It does not matter whether we have been given great talents, abilities and wealth, or very little. What matters to God is whether we make good use of what we have been given, whether large or small.

The heart of Christian life is in serving and worshiping God and helping others. God has given each of us important gifts for those purposes. Like the three men in Jesus' *parable of the talents*, our gifts may be great or small. But no matter how great or small our talents, abilities and wealth, we are obligated to put them to good use. How are you using the gifts you have been given?

Gail Blalock
Stewardship Chair



IT'S DUCK RACE TIME AGAIN!

GET READY TO ENTER YOUR "ST. JAMES" DUCKS IN THE
ANNUAL "DUCKS for BUCKS" BENEFIT RACE
Saturday, April 26, 2014



Ash Wednesday Services March 5th

The Season of Lent begins with this most somber service where we are invited into a time of penitence, fasting and self-examination.

Please join us at one of the following services at St. James' on Ash Wednesday:

7:00 am in the Little Church
12:00 pm in the Little Church
7:00 pm in the Main Church

Lori



People Are Hungry: The Wealthiest Nation in the World?

Have you heard of the term food-insecurity? In direct opposition to the wealth of the United States of America, many people do not have enough to eat; they do not know where or when they will get their next meal, and/or the nutrition from that meal lacks nutrition and actually makes them obese. "That's crazy," you say. But is it?

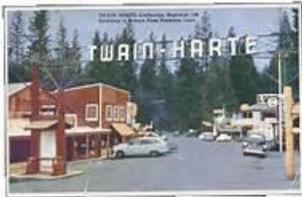
Our Lenten Evening Program tackles this disconcerting and painful topic. The Faith Formation Team will lead discussions and provoke you with snippets from the movie "A Place at the Table" for five consecutive Tuesday evenings. Be sure to sign up for the soup suppers in the Parish Hall – Soup, Bread and a Drink – we need volunteers for the food.

It is hard to imagine that infants and toddlers in food-insecure households are 30% more likely to have a history of hospitalization, are 90% more likely to have iron deficiency anemia, and are two-thirds more likely to be at risk for developmental delays. Is that any way to treat our kids?

As a church who's primary ritual is one of eating and drinking, and as a community who has made a past difference in impacting poverty, examining food-insecurity is an excellent topic for our Lenten exploration. March 11th, 18th and 25th, April 1st and 8th at 6:00 pm for soup – Those are Tuesday nights – Discussion should start about 6:30 pm - we should end about 8:00 pm.

From your Baptismal Covenant: Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being? Let's explore how attending to the hungry in our society fits in with our vows made at baptism.

Bruce Roberts



Men's Trip August 21st - 24th

Once again the planning begins for our annual trip to the mountains. This year we are trying out a new location. After six years at Arnold, we all thought a change of scenery is needed.

Currently, we are exploring Twain Harte, CA., which is on Hwy 108 east of Sonora. There are plenty of opportunities to hike, swim, fish, wine taste, golf and explore new parts of the Stanislaus National Forest.

If you are 21 or older and like the mountains, then set aside a few days to relax with fellow members at St James'.

There will be a sign up sheet posted in the Parish Hall starting in March and if you've attended in the past, then you'll be on the email list for the Men's Group trip. More information will be available after we decide on two or more homes to rent.

If you have any questions, please contact Gregg Feeney at (510) 795-1870 or you can email me at dgfeeney@comcast.net.

Gregg Feeney

Vestry Meeting February 2014

The vestry met on February 13th. This was our first meeting as a new vestry this year and much of our time was spent discussing some of the different ways we will be working. As mentioned in the January Window, we will be working in project-oriented teams rather than individual clusters. This will cause a few process changes.

Check Request Forms - If you are a member of a ministry team and request reimbursement for a purchase, place your completed form in the lower left mail slot, across from the copier. A team of vestry members very familiar with the budget and expense process will process all check requests.

Vestry Reports - In the past, ministry reports have been submitted through a respective cluster member, compiled and forwarded to all vestry members. These multiple reports to multiple people have often caused multiple issues. Going forward, all reports will be sent to the jrwarden@saintj.com who will compile the meeting agenda, financial report and all other ministry reports into a single document and forward to all vestry members.

During the vestry retreat we identified many new areas of ministry and areas of ministry that could use some attention. We focused on 14 of these ministries and conducted an exercise to help us prioritize where we will focus our attention first. The top 5 priorities were:

- New outreach efforts
- Congregational care team
- New fellowship events
- Stewardship
- Community garden

We are excited about the year ahead and the many opportunities we all have to be part of the ministry of St. James'.

Dave Nelsen
Junior Warden



Contemplative Practices

Contemplative Practices continues each Sunday morning at 9:30 am in EB1. Visit our web page by going to: saintj.com, under Ministries - Adult Faith Formation - Contemplative Practices, to find the tentative schedule and our list of resources for contemplative practices.

Janet Fischer

Financial Summary January 2014

Fund Balances	January 31, 2013	January 31, 2014
Operating Fund	\$ 38,564.74	\$ 41,681.83
Building Fund	\$ 58,046.93	\$ 42,157.64

Year to Date Summary Operating

Pledges Budgeted	\$ 20,301.84	\$ 19,937.17
Pledges Paid	\$ 17,972.50	\$ 16,875.00
Unpledged Contributions	\$ 245.00	\$ 385.00
Other Op Income*	\$ 836.41	\$ 719.14
Total Operating Income	\$ 19,053.91	\$ 17,979.14
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 21,060.27	\$ 27,092.08
Income less Expenses	\$ (2,006.36)	\$ (9,112.94)

*Includes
Fundraising

Endowment Distributions

The Endowment Fund balance on December 31, 2013 was \$162,217, an increase of \$31,000 from donations and earnings. Distributions were made at the annual meeting: \$3,146 to the Vestry (including earning by the Schader Fund); \$1,429 to the Memorial Garden; \$984 to the Little Church Fund. Distributions are based on the donations to the individual funds.

The current board members are Marnie Hartmann (chairperson), Sylvia Ma (secretary), Jan Brandt, Tom Blalock and Scott Whitaker. The board would like to thank Lynn Locher who serves as fund treasurer. We also continue to be grateful for the tremendous job Joan Roberts did to leave us so well organized, and continue to keep her in our thoughts and prayers.

Marnie Hartmann
Chairperson

Lunch Gathering a Picture of Good Friends and Food

Parishioners, families, and friends gathered for lunch on Sunday, February 16th, at Newark Buffet, to connect and chatter over endless culinary options, and commemorate Chinese New Year.

The restaurant was bustling with diners and everyone was able to fill their plates with just what they wanted-- no one left hungry! Attendance from our group reached 20 guests, showing again that this lunch spot appears to be a most popular destination.

The Available For Lunch ministry coordinates casual lunch gatherings during the year on Sundays. The invitation is always open to all parishioners, friends, neighbors, anyone who likes to enjoy a good meal and great fellowship.

If you know of a local restaurant (Fremont, Union City, Newark) where a Sunday lunch would be enjoyed, just let us know.

Sylvia Ma & Meg Amouroux
The Available for Lunch Ministry



Strengthening the Body: A pilot program for Congregational Development

St. James' was asked to be part of a new diocesan pilot program on congregational development. The team (Lauren Doherty, Lynn Locher, Dave Nelsen, Bruce Roberts, Mike Scrutton and Lori Walton) traveled to Grace Cathedral for our first of three gatherings where we learned useful and practical methods of leading congregations and communities.



The Wide Tent: Becoming Episcopal: Twenty or so people engaged in a four-week discussion on what it means to be an Episcopalian. With great curiosity and laughter, we engaged in topics such as the sacraments, history, social movements and worship.

Giving (Up) Water for Lent

On the morning of the baptism of Norene Sun, the mother of St. J Youth member Anthony Prickett, St. J Youth took some time to think about the significance of water in our Christian tradition—and the current drought in California. Contemplation of the implications of the promises of the baptismal covenant for caring for all those being affected by the drought led us eventually to brainstorm practical ways to conserve water. I will share below some of our group’s ideas. Maybe a number of us might be inspired to “give (up) water for Lent.”

After briefly studying the prayer over water in baptism to remind ourselves of the sacred meanings of water in our scriptures, we turned our attention to a 2008 documentary film, *Flow: For Love of Water*, to learn about water pollution in the U.S. We discovered through the research of Tyrone Fowlkes, a professor of Integrative Biology at UC-Berkeley, that pesticides and other chemical pollutants have contributed to a decline in 70% of the amphibian population. Eighty million pounds of atrazine (a chemical banned in the European Union in 2003 but sold to the U.S. by the Swiss company Syngenta) are used as a pesticide in the U.S. each year. The chemical finds its way into groundwater and drinking water and is known to disrupt hormonal development in frogs (turning males into females) and contribute to reproductive problems in humans (both men and women). We found out that many of the chemicals also enter into our bodies not only through drinking water (tap or bottled) but in the simple act of showering.

Our concern about water pollution grew as we read a February 18th Reuters article on the drought in California. Who is being affected by the drought? People in rural communities who may run out of drinking water or whose wells will become poisoned when contaminants become increasingly concentrated due to low levels of groundwater.

We reviewed our baptismal covenant: “Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?” “Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?” And we asked which of our other “neighbors” are being affected by the drought: the farmers, the farm workers who cannot find work, the cattle being sold off ranches, people with respiratory problems exacerbated by dry conditions, and many people at different levels in the healthcare system: when ponds and creeks become dry, potential disease-carrying mosquitos breed in the stagnant pools. Only the mosquitos seem to be on the up-and-up with less rain and snow!

So what can we do? How can we live out our baptismal faith through the drought? We can continue to learn and understand how our state is being affected by the drought and we can pray for those enduring hardship. And we can also do our part to conserve water. St. J Youth talked about the following simple measures we can take at home:

- Put a brick or a bottle filled with sand and water in the toilet tank to decrease the volume of water used with each flush.
- Replace toilets with a two-flush system.
- Don’t run the water while applying soap and shampoo in the shower.
- Put a bucket under the faucet while adjusting water for a shower and use that water to water the garden or flush the toilet. (Keep the bucket between the shower and the toilet.)
- If you’re taking a bath, stop the drain first and then adjust the water temperature.
- Use the dishwasher with full loads; you will use less water than washing by hand.
- Minimize rinsing dishes before putting them in the dishwasher. (Beth tells me I can just scrape my dishes!)

Continued from page 6 ~ Giving (Up) Water for Lent

Do the dishes “the British way” by plunging and scrubbing them in hot, soapy water and putting them directly on the rack or, if you have to rinse, by rinsing in a basin rather than under the faucet.

After one week of meeting with the Youth, I have become aware that I am using more water than I need—I fill my glass full and only drink half; I fill the tub full for a bath and then lose a lot as it drains out around the drain-stop halfway up the tub; I just can’t get away from rinsing my dishes before they go into the dishwasher (Sorry, Beth! 30 years of this!) ...but I find that I can use less water to rinse them!

Lent is a time of simplification of our lives to open up our resources and ourselves to deeper communion with God and one another. In praying and caring for the earth and all those who depend on the earth’s resources, we may, as the Bishop told us during his visit, give voice to the voiceless. I invite the parish with the Youth and with me to reduce our use of water and engage in creative re-use around our homes and gardens. May every gallon saved be a gallon and a petition for another in need. In giving (up) water for Lent, we give out of faith rooted in our baptismal covenant, offering prayer for the voiceless in which we call upon the saving help of “the spring of water gushing up to eternal life” (John 4:14).

Rev. Stephanie Green



Easter At Hillside Senior Center

We’re doing it again!!

The residents at the Hillside Senior Care Center have enjoyed the beautiful little flower pots in the past but this year we are going to take little Wiggle bunnies. The cost is \$5 each.

Please keep a watch for more details in the Sunday news and the weekly email for the date of our visit to the Hillside Senior Care Center.

Thanks for continued love and support to the wonderful Hillside Residents.

Sandra Motley

Prayer Requests

To add someone to the “Special Prayers” list, please complete a pew card and place it in the offering plate OR call/email the Church Office. After six weeks, names are removed from the list. Please renew your request as needed.

Thank you



THE MODERN SYMBOL OF THE WAY

The Rev. Dr. John T. Baker, friend, former parishioner, former Interim priest at St. James', walked the Camino de Santiago last year in May, 2013. (Still one of the most splendid walking routes in Europe; it runs almost 500 miles across northern Spain to the supposed tomb of St. James, Sant lago.)

While John has travelled many adventurous paths over the world in the past years this walk was especially inspiring for him. This Inspiration and insight he wishes to share* with the community of St. James', Fremont...we are named for the martyr James and the scallop seashell is our symbol. The Camino de Santiago, an Ancient Path, also called The Way of St. James or St. James' Way. So called as it is believed the tomb of St. James is at Santiago de Compostela (the desination of the walk).

The scallop shell, often found on the shores in Galicia, has long been the symbol of the Camino de Santiago. Two versions of the most common myth about the origin of the symbol concern the death of St. James, who was martyred by beheading in Jerusalem in 44 CE. According to Spanish legends, he had spent time preaching the gospel in Spain, but returned to Judaea upon seeing a vision of the Virgin Mary on the bank of the Ebro River.

Version 1: After James' death, his disciples shipped his body to the Iberian Peninsula to be buried in what is now Santiago. Off the coast of Spain, a heavy storm hit the ship, and the body was lost to the ocean. After some time, however, it washed ashore undamaged, covered in Scallops.

Version 2: After James' death his body was mysteriously transported by a crewless ship back to the Iberian Peninsula to be buried in what is now Santiago. As the ship approached land, a wedding was taking place on shore. The young groom was on horseback, and on seeing the ship approaching, his horse got spooked, and horse and rider plunged into the sea. Through miraculous intervention, the horse and rider emerged from the water alive, covered in seashells.

The scallop shell also acts as a metaphor. The grooves in the shell, which meet at a single point, represent the various routes pilgrims traveled, eventually arriving at a single destination: the tomb of James in Santiago de Compostela. The shell is also a metaphor for the pilgrim: As the waves of the ocean wash scallop shells up onto the shores of Galicia, God's hand also guides the pilgrims to Santiago.

From the Pyrenees to Compostela
Information about the Ancient Path gathered from the Internet
Nancy Svenson January 2014

**ALERT! MARCH 16th, Sunday at the 8:00 am and 10:30 am service - hear parishioners talk about John Baker's own experience and how he'd like to share it with others.*

Nancy Svenson



ST. JAMES' PRAYER LIST
Most Holy God, we pray for:

Those In The Military: Scott, Jarrod, Bryan, Megan, Erica, Theresa, Mark, Tim, Louis, Military Children of ACBSM, the families and Marines of Dark Horse Battalion, Caitlin, Emily, Robin, Adam, Dave, Shawn, Ethan, Paul, Darren

Those Who Need Guidance and Direction: Kenny, Robert, Heather, Josephine, Carrol, Deja, Paul, Rhonda, Thomas

Those Who Need Comfort and Healing: Barry, Ruby, Fiona, Madison, Clayton, Sam, Bill, Regina, Miranda, the Amouroux Family, Nonnie, the Benedict Family, Pamela, the Roberts Family, the Harrison Family, Bruce, Jean and Family, Ray, Nantege, the Nabbaale and Lubwama Families

Families Expecting Children: Hoa and Erik, Allison and Patrick, Alyise and Manny, Polly and Luke

Those Who Have Passed Away: Bud, Gregory, Joan, Gerry, Monte, Otis, Erios



March Birthdays

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Dwarka Sankar | 20 Laura Castaneda |
| 2 Penny Trant | 21 Debbie Fuller |
| 3 Emily Locher | 24 Alice Johnson |
| 7 Kimberley Maxey | 25 Janet Fischer |
| 8 Jan Scrutton | Pat Spencer |
| 12 Wayne Kimmel | Ian Perry |
| 14 Jennifer Carini | 26 Pat Spalding |
| 15 Kelly Lowe | 28 Deja Singh |



March Anniversaries

- | |
|------------------------------|
| 13 Jack and Connie Rux |
| 25 Paul and Nancy Svenson |
| 30 Bob and Roberta Tomkinson |

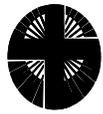
The next issue of *The Window* is **April 2014**. We welcome your **comments, essays, poems, photos, cartoons, newsworthy stories or other items of interest, art work, group activity information and reviews.**

PLEASE NOTE NEW EMAIL ADDRESS
newsletter@saintj.com

Deadline for Submissions: March 15th

Please note: If your birthday or anniversary is incorrect or your name(s) is not listed, please email the appropriate information to admin@saintj.com

Thank you!!



SAINT JAMES'
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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PO Box 457
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TEL (510) 797-1492

WORSHIP TIMES

SUNDAY SERVICES 8:00AM & 10:30AM
SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:15AM
YOUTH GROUP SECOND SUNDAY 6:30PM-8:00PM
CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICES: SUNDAY 9:15AM-10:15AM
WEDNESDAY EUCHARIST 10:00AM

OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY: 9:00AM -1:00PM

STAFF

The Rev. Lori Walton.....lori@saintj.com
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ST. JAMES' VESTRY

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Meg Amouroux
Bob Bynum
Nancy Castaneda
Karen Koonze
Ralph Locher
Elaine Vallecillo-Miller
Bev Mosier
Alison Saichek

Vestry Clerk: *Elizabeth Hart*

Other Important Coordinators

Eucharistic Ministers & Lectors: *Janet Fischer*
Altar Guild: *Ruth Poole*
Ushers: *Burtin Hart*

The Window Staff

Ralph Locher
Marilyn Rose
Jack Rux
Penny Trant
Laura Winter

The Window newsletter@saintj.com