

The Way of St. J



St. James' Episcopal Church
Fremont, CA




Handbook



For Life

St. James' Episcopal Church
Fremont, California

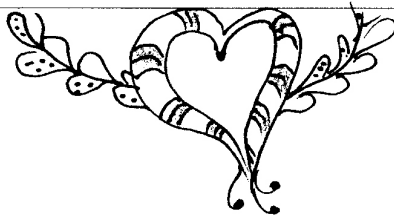


We LAUNCH prayers LIKE

Darts---For Friends, enemies, peace.

Maybe some WILL stick.

•Episcopal Haiku by Goodyear and Weissman



GROW YOUR FAITH

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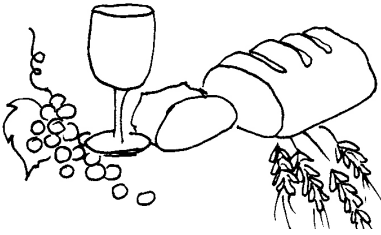
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GROW YOUR FAITH

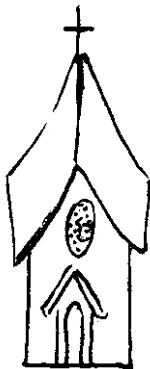
Worship



Worship services are our sacred gatherings to honor God, hear and contemplate scripture, and share Holy Communion. Worship is the core of our relationship with God and each other. St. James' gathers for worship services each Sunday at 8am (in the Little Church) and 10:30am (in the Big Church). A mid-week service is also held in the Little Church on Wednesdays at 10am.

Contemplative Practices

Meets every Sunday at 9:30am, in the Little Church, to practice guided meditation and silence. Anyone interested is welcome to attend.



Adult Faith Formation

Provides adults with various programs that educate us about our faith and our church traditions for the purpose of increasing our understanding of God, ourselves and our neighbors, and deepening our spiritual life and practice.

St. James' Choir

Leads the congregation in song, enhancing the liturgy of the word and table to create a spiritually transformative experience for the gathered assembly.



Lectors

Lectors are lay readers from the congregation who read the lessons each week during our services. The lectors follow a set schedule, and typically read at one service, once per month.

Acolytes

A ministry for children 8 years old and above, to assist with our Sunday morning worship services. Acolytes help carry the cross, and help with setting the altar for communion.

Sunday School

All children are welcome! They meet with our Children's Minister outside church at 10:15am and the children, 4 years to 7th grade, will re-join families in church for communion. Lessons and activities follow the church calendar and other Episcopal traditions. Our Children's Minister also coordinates an annual Vacation Bible School and other activities for our children.



Eucharistic Ministers

This is a group of lay ministers selected by the rector, to assist in worship by reading the prayers of the people and serve the chalice during communion.

Jai-Chi

This ancient Chinese activity is the practice of slow, rhythmic, meditative movements designed to help you find peace and calm. This no-cost drop-in class meets in the Parish Hall each Wednesday at 6:30pm for a one-hour session.

Sunday Book Studies

Our Faith Formation committee coordinates this series of Sunday morning classes, to read and discuss a book of faith, growth, or other topic of current interest relative to our spiritual lives. The group meets from 9:15-10:15am, in the Education Room. Check out our newsletter or Sunday bulletins for the latest offering. Books are often found at low-cost, and everyone is invited to attend some or all of a book's series of classes.



Tuesday Night Classes

Throughout the year, and most often times during the Lenten season, a faith-related series of classes is offered. Typically held around 7pm, with an optional shared meal beforehand, these classes are often clergy-led and allow attendees to grow and expand their faith and knowledge on a wide variety of subjects.

Annual Women's Day Retreat

A Saturday retreat in the spring, on campus, to strengthen friendships and to engage in various topics such as women in the Bible and personal spiritual journeys.

Women's Sitting Circle

A Friday morning gathering at 10:30am to meditate, pray, share, and be together in a circle of women.

Bible Study

For over 30 years, a dedicated group of parishioners has met at the home of the group's coordinator, for Bible Study at 6:00am on Tuesday mornings. This gathering has reformatted their schedule to meet on Thursday mornings at 7:00am. Check out the Weekly Email or call the office for the location.



MAKE FRIENDS

Available For Lunch

As a way to grow in fellowship and to get to know each other, at various times and at varying frequency each year, the Available for Lunch team coordinates a group lunch at a local restaurant. Attendees pay for their own meals. All ages are welcome to attend, and those joining together for a meal come away with new friends. Suggestions for lunch spots are always welcomed.

Parish Day Retreats

On occasion, the clergy and various ministries at St. James' seek to find ways to dive deeper into various subjects. A day-long retreat, typically on-campus, is a great way to generate a more focused look at a given subject. Subjects can range from long-range visioning, educational subjects, current events, identify our blessings, and more.



Men's Group

A monthly gathering of the men of the parish to share fellowship through breakfast and service projects and general cleanup on the campus of St. James'.

Saint James' Day Picnic

Each July, we celebrate the Feast Day of our Patron Saint, St. James. Often coordinated by the vestry with volunteers from throughout the parish, we celebrate with a festive worship service on Sunday morning, and follow it with a picnic full of games, activities, great food and conversation. The congregations of the Philippine Independent Church join us for this celebratory day.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Shrove Tuesday is the day in February or March, before Ash Wednesday, which starts the season of Lent on the church calendar. An annual tradition on this Tuesday each year is a Pancake Supper, prepared and hosted by the men of the parish. A long-time favorite event of many, this dinner brings the parish together for food and fellowship, and a mindful start to the Lenten season.

Foyer Dinner Groups

Foyer Groups are gatherings of 4 couples (or 8 people) who share a social dinner together. The purpose is to broaden and deepen the social connections of newer members of the parish, and help even “old-timers” get to know folks from the “other service.” The group meets for dinner 4 times a year, in each other’s homes, or at the parish. The purpose of Foyer Groups is not to have groups of friends sign up together, but to “mix it up.” It’s a fun way to get to know one another better, particularly the newer members of our wonderful community.

Flatlanders

For over 40 years, the weekend following Labor Day each year, women of the parish are invited to a beach side resort on Monterey Bay, for fellowship, food and fun. The group shares meals, prayers, games and walks on the beach. The group began as a healing ministry for the women of the church. Today it continues to be a place where you can feel God’s love – through prayer, song and fellowship.



Men’s Retreat

Each summer, a group of men from the parish head to the mountains for a multi-day retreat. They gather to hike, play golf, fish, swim, kayak, shoot pool, read, tell stories and eat good food. It’s a great time for new members to get to know your fellow parishioners better.

Las Posadas

This is a highlight of the Advent season. It is a re-enactment of the Holy Family seeking shelter for the birth of the Christ Child. We enjoy singing of seasonal songs and carols, hearing traditional music, piñatas for the kids, and sharing food and fellowship, and a traditional Mexican meal.



BE PART OF A TEAM

Welcoming Committee

Comprised of various groups who are intentional about welcoming visitors and inviting new members to St. James' to explore ways to be involved in life at our parish. This includes greeting people as they arrive for church, and integrating new members into the life of the parish through fellowship and discussions on the Episcopal Church.

Road Crew

A team responsible for all audio and visual setup for our various worship services and celebrations.

Altar Guild

Prepares the altar space in our churches for our sacred worship services, including Holy Communion, Funerals, Weddings, and special celebrations.



Ushers

Support Sunday worship and special services by ensuring each participant has worship materials, guides people in receiving Holy Communion, and assists in attending to the needs of the gathered assembly.

Coffee Hosts

Facilitates the preparation and clean-up of our coffee hour set-up each Sunday. Coffee hour is held between the two Sunday services at about 9am, and again after the 10:30 service.



The Memorial Garden & Columbarium Committee

Provides a consecrated and maintained place for the interment of ashes of St. James' members and their families inside the Little Church columbarium and outside in designated memorial garden areas. The Committee also maintains the remembrance garden with stone markers for beloved church members and their family members who are interred in other states or locations.

Ducks 4 Bucks

The Kiwanis Club in Fremont presents this fundraising activity each year. St. James' sells entries into this event, receiving money back from all tickets sold. Team members publicize the event, and share the great news when we have a winner!

The Newsletter Team

A team that communicates relevant, inspirational, spiritual and accessible information, via the newsletter "The Window". The newsletter is published, distributed, and posted online.

The Endowment Board

Manages the money of the St. James' Endowment Fund. It educates and informs the congregation about the endowment and how and why they can become members of the Shell Society (individuals who will provide funds to the endowment through their will or estate plan).

Deanery Representatives

Represent St. James' in our local deanery, a geographical grouping of six Episcopal churches. The deanery representatives also act on behalf of St. James' at the annual diocesan convention.

McCutcheon Concert Team

Since January 2004, St. James' has been host to a concert by renowned folk musician John McCutcheon, when he stops by "Club St. J" as part of his national tour. Team members sell tickets, coordinate with the artist and his crew, set up the stage, supply the crew dinner before the show, and more. The show attracts fans from all over the Bay Area.

The Stewardship Committee

Forms a liaison between the vestry and the congregation creating a climate where parishioners make financial giving to church as a meaningful part of their day-to-day lives. It helps the St. James' congregation to understand the purpose of giving time, talent and treasure, and functions to raise congregational consciousness about how the church runs operationally.



Greeters

Greeters help visitors feel welcome. This may involve directing them to the nursery or Sunday school room and introducing them with people currently staffing these areas. It may involve assisting in the use of our worship materials. The greeter is positioned next to the rector following the service to invite visitors to sign our guest book and join us in the Parish Hall for coffee.

SERVE OTHERS

Reception Committee

Provides a warm and welcoming atmosphere for family and friends following a funeral or memorial service. The committee works very closely with the rector to understand and meet the needs of the grieving survivors.

Sacred Space

Provides monthly lunches and other material support for the Sacred Space Ministry in Hayward, a disenfranchised population that gathers for weekly outdoor worship.

St. James' Cares

St. James' Cares is a resource for help, for our parishioners, supported by our parishioners. This ministry was piloted in the fall of 2014 and enjoyed a successful launch in 2015. We have approximately 40 volunteers to meet the needs of the community. Assistance can be requested by phone, email or through our website, for help with rides, meals, social visits, and more. We are currently using the website Lotsa Helping Hands to manage requests. Requests can be made via phone to the St. James' office, through email to the church or through the St. James' website.

Abode Sunrise Village Meals

Periodically provide nourishing dinner meals for the residents of Sunrise Village Emergency Shelter, an arm of Abode Services.



Abode Shoes

An annual collection of Payless Shoe gift cards presented to Abode Services. The gift cards are used for the children in shelters to purchase new shoes for the winter.

Hillside Visits

Hillside Senior Care Center is a residential care home in Fremont, for aging elders in a family-styled home like environment. Volunteers of all ages visit Hillside at Easter and Christmas, bringing music, stories, and personal visits to the homebound residents.

School Supplies Drive

We support Abode Services and Tri-City Volunteers with our School Supply Drive. Parishioners are asked to bring new school supplies to church to ensure they reach children in need prior to the start of the school year. Our goal is to help to make sure every child starting back at school has the supplies they need for a successful year.

Eucharistic Visitors

The ministry of the Lay Eucharistic Visitor is to provide the sacrament of Holy communion to those who are hospitalized, homebound, and in nursing homes. It is an extension of our Communion - some of the bread and wine that is blessed each Sunday is reserved each week to take to those who cannot be with us in worship.

Vacation Bible School

Also known as "VBS", this is an annual 5-day summer camp for kids held on our campus. It is for children not only affiliated with our parish, but is also available to those in our community. Extensive planning is done by our Children's minister and scores of volunteers, to provide a rich and meaningful day camp for kids, full of sacred stories, joyous camp music, snacks, outdoor games, and crafts.

Abode Kidz

We support the team at Sunrise Village Shelter by running their kids club for one night each month. The club meets twice a week to enable parents to attend a meeting and parenting classes/discussions. The most important thing we can offer them is our time to be interested and involved in what they are doing.

Homewarming

St. James' works with Abode Service, a local agency which helps secure permanent homes for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. St. James' helps by providing them with furniture, linens, kitchen supplies, a basket of pantry items, funds for deposit and moving assistance – all things that turn a new apartment into a home.



Sock Collection

Socks, along with hats and gloves, are collected for Sacred Space, our sister-congregation of disenfranchised residents in Hayward. They are distributed to the Sacred Space communities in Hayward and Oakland.



Illustrations by Nancy Svenson

October 2016

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