



The Window

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

January 2014

A New Look for Faith Formation

Starting in January, adult faith formation has a new format and focus. Our goal is to offer better opportunities for more in-depth study and discussion of issues of faith and life. The 45-60 minutes we have between services on Sunday gives us limited opportunity to do this. So, we're trying something different! **Faith formation is moving to Tuesday evenings, 6:30-8pm.** Classes will be on a specific topic for a specific length of time based on the liturgical year. There will be a week or more between blocks of classes. You are welcome to drop in for one or all classes in a block, or attend those blocks that specifically appeal to you. You are also welcome to "BYOB": bring your own bag supper if you wish. We will meet in room EB1.

- Season of Epiphany: in preparation for the Bishop's visit to St. James' on Feb. 23, class will be on Episcopal Church history, faith, and the Bible, led by Lori+. This will be required for those seeking confirmation or reception into the church, but all are welcome. Classes will be 1/21, 1/28, 2/11 and 2/18.
- Season of Lent: we'll have our traditional soup suppers. The content is still under discussion but our intent is that the focus of the class will be on racism.
- Season of Easter: classes will likely focus on economic justice.

What about Sundays? **Beginning February 2,** the time between services will be dedicated to the practice of meditation. Many people have

expressed a desire to cultivate the contemplative aspect of their spiritual life, and this is an opportunity to do so. Different facilitators will give instruction in a type of meditation or prayer for about 5-10 minutes, and then we'll spend 20 minutes in actual practice. Each type will be practiced for 2-4 weeks, and then we'll move on to the next. We will have the opportunity to practice centering prayer, guided meditation, the Anglican rosary, the labyrinth, praying with icons, lectio divina, and other types of prayer and meditation. We will meet in EB1 or in the Little Church.

On the first Sunday of each month there will be a special discussion group for parents, godparents and grandparents on faith and family life, led by Stephanie+ in EB1. (See Stephanie's article this month for more information.) On these Sundays, the meditation group will meet in the Little Church. This begins **January 5.**

Our hope is that this arrangement will meet the needs of more people and encourage greater participation in faith formation offerings. Also, if you are interested in becoming part of the Faith Formation ministry team, please talk to Bruce Roberts, EJ Hilliard, Janet Fischer, Alison Saichek, or Lori+. Thank you!

Janet Fischer

On behalf of the Faith Formation team

The Meaning of Stewardship

“In everything give thanks, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” (1 Thess. 5:18)

The Widow’s offering in Luke 21: 1-4 (and the parallel version in Mark 12:41-44) says that Jesus was sitting in the temple opposite the place where the offerings were put; he was watching as people put their money into the temple treasury. He had just warned the disciples about the Pharisees, criticizing them for being ostentatious in their dress and manner. Even their religion was superficial rather than substantial: “They devour widows’ houses and for a show make lengthy prayers” (Luke 20:47). Jesus then observed one of those poor widows putting her copper coins into the temple treasury; the comparison he made drove home this point: *It’s not how much you give, but why you give. It’s not how many empty prayers you spin, but how much you trust God.*

Christian stewardship is rooted in the belief and acceptance that everything comes from God and everything belongs to God. We are called to give and to be careful and wise stewards of all the resources with which God has blessed us throughout our lives. If we are grateful Christians, we will be giving Christians. As I write this in the middle of December, I’m concerned because there are only 82 pledges so far for 2014, when we had almost 100 a year ago. I’m asking myself, “Where are the rest of the pledges?” and “Why are some people afraid to pledge?”

Faith, I do have faith that the people of St. James’ will come through. I know that by the time the newsletter is printed, more pledges will have come in. But I do wonder why a small percentage of our Parish does not pledge. Is it the fear of making a commitment? A pledge may be modified at any time should your economic circumstances change, so that shouldn’t keep you from making a commitment with

God. Is it uncertainty? Not knowing or feeling uncomfortable in writing a dollar amount on a pledge form can be overwhelming, but, as was said above, it’s not how much you give, but *why* you give. You could write \$1 (a dollar) a month on the form and then add the words *will give more as I am able.*

You will have made a contract, a commitment between you and God to support God’s mission and ministry in the world through St. James’. It’s that simple, and you will be surprised at how you will experience the grace of God in new ways and how your spiritual life will be enriched. If you haven’t already, fill out and return your pledge form today. Trust God.

God, give us faith like that of the widow to give our hearts to you.

Gail Blalock, Stewardship Chair

Financial Summary November 2013		
Fund Balances	<u>11/30/2012</u>	<u>11/30/2013</u>
Operating Fund	\$ 74,947	\$ 39,778
Building Fund	\$ 11,574	\$ 36,929
Year To Date Summary Operating		
Pledges Budgeted	\$ 217,076	\$ 223,320
Pledges Paid	\$ 201,486	\$ 212,046
Unpledged Contributions	\$ 5,064	\$ 4,980
Other Op Income*	<u>\$ 15,787</u>	<u>\$ 19,717</u>
Total Operating Income	<u>\$ 222,337</u>	<u>\$ 236,743</u>
Total Operating Expenses	<u>\$ 220,709</u>	<u>\$ 237,764</u>
Income less Expenses	\$ 1,627	\$ (1,021)
*Includes Fundraising		

Christmas Visit to Hillside Senior Care

St James' visit to Hillside Senior Care on Dec. 5th was a lively event! It was led by none other than Santa and Mrs. Claus (aka, Bob and Lauren Doherty).

The front desk staff put the Wreath, made by our Sunday school, in a place where everyone could see it. The 6am Bible Study group donated a basket full of small notepads, pens, little snacks and other goodies for the staff's Break Room. The Hillside community contributed a box of See's chocolates. Sinful but oh so good!

Byron Bader came with his Keyboard and his granddaughter, Gabby. Did you know Byron plays "by ear"? Byron played while Santa and his elves were giving out the Snow Globes and then he played Happy Birthday to resident Verna, and she just beamed. It was great to have Bob Bynum join us. He just kept on the move trying to capture all the activities and talk to the residents.

We did bring our song sheets and Bud Pearson signaled it was time to put our vocal chords to work, and he led us through a round of familiar holiday songs.

Thank you to the other elves who joined us: Avis Gonzales, Mary Morkved, Jan Pearson, Ruth Poole and Jack and Connie Rux. A Huge thank you to the St James' community for your generous help in making this annual event so joyful to individuals with many limitations.

Hillside Committee: Lauren Doherty, Alice Johnson, Sandra Motley

Sandra Motley



Photos by Bob Bynum

Los Posadas



Photos by Bob Bynum

The next issue of *The Window* is in February. We welcome your **comments, essays, poems, photos, cartoons, newsworthy items of interest, art work, any group activity information and reviews.**

Email your submission to newsletter@saintj.com
February Issue Deadline: January 15th

Where In Our World Answered

The answer to where the photo from last month was taken is in the Little Church, a church of many secrets. Stand in the middle of the nave facing the altar. Look up where the chancel meets the nave in the dimness near the ceiling. There it is. But why is it there? Who braved the heights to place it there? Is it one of the Little Church's ongoing secrets? Or can someone help us out? What does it mean, or what did it mean to the person/people who placed it there?

Bruce Roberts



Photo by Bruce Roberts



- ★ January 12: Budget Meeting at 9:15 AM in EB1
- ★ January 12: Baptism at the 10:30 AM Service
- ★ January 19: Single Service at 10:00 AM followed by the Annual Meeting

★ *Adult Faith Formation Class - The Wide Tent: Becoming Episcopal*

★ A series of four gatherings on Episcopal Theology and Worship - Tuesday, January 21th, 28th and Tuesday, February 11th and 18th from 6:30-8:00 PM

★ *The Right Reverend Marc Andrus Visits*

★ *St. James'* February 23rd, at both the 8:00 and 10:30 AM services



Coffee Hour

Our coffee hours after the two Sunday services are great times to socialize and periodically to celebrate special occasions, such as significant birthdays, wedding anniversaries, holidays and the like. However, providing food has become expensive and places an undue burden on Parish Life staff. Consequently at the last Vestry meeting, it was decided that:

- Parish Life will only provide drinks, i.e. regular and decaf coffee, hot water for tea and chocolate, and fruit juices;
- Similar to this year, a sign-up calendar will be posted for groups or individuals wishing to volunteer to bring in refreshments;
- Parish Life cluster will not ask parishioners or groups to sign up. Please expect that some Sunday coffee hours will only have beverages.

So Parish Life encourages all to sign up to host at some time and by doing so would eliminate duplicate efforts. However, we also encourage individuals to pair up, to not feel overwhelmed providing the refreshments. Please feel free to contact Bob Bynum or Ralph Locher if you have any questions.

Parish Life Cluster

Greetings from your Greeter Team

The purpose of the St. James' Greeter Team is to greet visitors and guests who are joining us for the first time. Our job is especially important after the service when we have the opportunity to invite our guests for a cup of coffee or to show them the Little Church and perhaps the Memorial Garden. We also invite them to sign the guest book and of course introduce them to members of our congregation.

Our presence there at the entrance is also tempting for many of us who are eager to catch up with friends. Staying in touch with members within the St. James' community is always important. However the primary purpose of the greeter/s is to **Greet New People** and help make their experience at St. James' as pleasant and as comfortable as possible.

Please extend your own personal greeting to unfamiliar folks and be willing to offer a guiding hand with service details as appropriate.

From the non-clergy people at the entrance, your Greeter Team: Adrienne Farrell, Alice Johnson, Dave Nelsen, Gregg Feeney, Jan Pearson, Jeanne Morris and Scott Whitaker.

Vestry Report

The Vestry of St. James' met on the second Thursday in December to discuss the work of the parish. We had a chance to discuss the second phase of renovation of the Little Church with Sylvia Ma and Jim Cunningham, and approved the work to start in the middle of December for the seismic retrofitting of the area under the floor. The Rev. Stephanie Green, our Children, Teen and Family Minister, joined us and gave a report on the work she has been doing with Sunday School and St J Youth, and her aspirations for 2014. A large amount of the evening was given over to our discussion of the 2014

budget, which is well under way and will be presented ahead of the Parish Annual Meeting in January.

Visitors are always welcome at Vestry meetings, and do remember that four new members will be elected at the Annual Meeting. All members of St. James' are eligible to serve on the Vestry; for more information, speak to Rev. Lori or to one of the current members listed on the back page of The Window.

Mike Scrutton, Junior Warden

The Big Day is Almost Here!

January 20 is just a geologic eye-blink away. So what's all the hoopla about? It's about John McCutcheon coming to St. James' to sing for us.

What defines John McCutcheon? What do you expect when you sit in your chair waiting for him to (literally) bound onto the stage? What I expect: fun stories, singable melodies, memorable songs, great musicianship – in short, a memorable performance. But the definition of John? In my view it is the mind that dreams up “Christmas in the Trenches” based on an inspired, soldier-driven cease-fire in WWI. And it's the person who traveled to Fresno from the East Coast this past summer to participate in the naming and honoring of the 28 “unnamed farm workers” who died in a 1948 plane crash – “Deportees.”

I'm impressed by John McCutcheon the man. And that is why I'll be at the concert. Of course I've been at the concert now for 10 years, 2014 will be the eleventh. Doesn't his music get old, you ask? With over 35 albums, mostly songs of his own writing and still going strong, John's repertoire continually expands. His shows change every performance. He will sing 14 times in Northern California in January – a different show every time. I say that by way of showing that his performance at St. James' will be different from past years. The only part that might seem the same is the part where he invites us to request our favorites. Yes, we request some of the same songs – because we love 'em.

But a great show cannot be dreamed. One must attend. Tickets can be bought after Sunday services in the Parish Hall, cash, check or credit, \$25 for adults, \$15 for children, under 5 for free. For those who buy tickets one drawing ticket will be given for each McCutcheon ticket sold. Additional drawing tickets can be purchased for a dollar each or 6 for \$5 and multiples thereof. So what's in the drawing? What I have seen so far are special vases, good deal gift certificates, mounted photographs and more. See for yourself in the Parish Hall.

An important note: A portion of the proceeds from the concert will be donated to Abode Services. Abode works tirelessly to stop the cycle of homelessness in our communities. Support Abode Services by supporting the John McCutcheon Concert!

John McCutcheon Concert, 7:30 PM, January 20, Martin Luther King Monday at St. James', the Club

Saint J for one night a year. If you are reading this online, go to events@saintj.com. Want to know more about six-time Grammy nominated John McCutcheon? see www.folkmusic.com.

Bruce Roberts



Photo by Bruce Roberts

Program Notes: Children's, Teen and Family Ministries

By The Rev. Stephanie Green

For Parents, Godparents and Grandparents: A new come-when-you-can group will meet from 9:15-10:15 on the first Sunday of every month in EB1. The group is designed for parents, godparents, and grandparents of children and youth and will be facilitated by the Rev. Stephanie Green. We invite people at all different stages of parenting and guiding children and youth to share fresh perspectives, wondering, wisdom and stories from home and the road. While grown-ups meet, youth from the parish will take turns (two per Sunday) hosting Sunday School children for fun and games in the Youth Space (EB2). Nursery attendant Nonie Aluzzi will also be present to escort children to bathrooms and seek out parents next-door when necessary. Children are welcome to bring games from home to share.

On **January 5**, all are invited for an overview of the Sunday School and Sunday morning Youth faith formation program for the remainder of the program year (January through early June, 2014). We will also talk about plans forming for fellowship and learning over the summer. This will be a chance to meet each other and ask questions about the developing curriculum for children and youth

Sundays in other winter and spring months will be dedicated to topics involving faith and family life:

February 2 (Feast of the Presentation/Candlemas): When Jesus was presented by his parents at the Temple, Simeon called him “a light to the Gentiles and the glory of [God’s] people, Israel.” How are our children light to us? How do children reveal to us something of “the glory of God”?

March 2 (Lent): For centuries in the Church, Lent has been a time for preparation for baptism. What are the choices about sacraments that we are making with and for our children? How is sacramental worship entering into our children’s understanding of Church and of God?

April 6 (Earth Day is on April 22): How are we teaching our children to care for our environment and cultivate a sense of care for the earth? How are we practicing care? How is our concern for land, air, and water along with the creatures of the earth tied to an understanding of the interconnection of all life and the Trinity?

May 4 (looking toward Pentecost): Children and God-Talk: What kinds of questions about God, life, death, and life-beyond-death are the children and youth you know asking? Do you find yourself searching for language to explain? Children are learning all sorts of ways to use language through childhood. What does it mean to give them language about God, too? And how are we learning from their language about God?

June 1 (almost Summer Vacation!): Work and Play: The Montessori Method, which informs our Sunday School, is founded upon the premise that a child’s play is a child’s work. How do we make and take the time to play with our children—and balance that with our own work at home and in the world? What does playing (for youth, translate to “hanging”) with our children teach us about holy attention, revelation, and grace?

We look forward to this time for getting to know one another, sharing about the children in our lives, and learning the way that the Spirit is moving through our families and our homes!



SAINT JAMES' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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WORSHIP TIMES

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

OFFICE HOURS

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

STAFF

The Rev. Lori Walton, Rector lori@saintj.com
The Rev. Ken Parris, Deacon . deaconken@saintj.com
The Rev. Stephanie Green, Children, Teen & Family .
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Al Casas, Bud Spalding
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

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