The Window

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

June 2018

A Prophetic Witness

On May 20, the Christian Church celebrated the Feast of Pentecost, the "Birthday of the Church," in which we bring to mind our essential unity as the Body of Christ and our charge as followers of Jesus to proclaim the Good News to the world. The coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost equipped Jesus' disciples to leave their locked room in Jerusalem, where they huddled in fear of arrest, and boldly preach the resurrection of Christ to the many Jews gathered for the festival from all parts of the Mediterranean world. Through the power of the Spirit they were able to speak and be understood by everyone, regardless of their native language. The Holy Spirit comes upon each of us at Baptism, enabling us to witness to our faith through our words and actions. At Confirmation, the seven gifts of the Spirit - wisdom, understanding, prudence, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear (awe) of the Lord - help us to live our faith as mature Christians.

One of the most difficult responsibilities of the followers of Jesus is to speak out against injustice wherever it occurs, particularly when it involves structural injustice created and supported by political and socio-economic systems that privilege some groups at the expense of others. The covenant between God and the Israelites is unique in the ancient world in its emphasis on the just treatment of the poor and marginalized. Brave Old Testament prophets did not hesitate to call out sin and injustice in their societies. Consider this from the prophet Amos regarding economic injustice:

> Hear this, you that trample on the needy,
> and bring to ruin the poor of the land,
> saying, "When will the new moon be over
> so that we may sell grain;
> and the sabbath,
> so that we may offer wheat for sale?
> We will make the ephah small and the shekel great,
> and practice deceit with false balances,
> buying the poor for silver
> and the needy for a pair of sandals,
> and selling the sweepings of the wheat."
> The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob:
> Surely I will never forget any of their deeds. (Amos 8:4-7)

The institutional Church has a vitally important responsibility to call out sin embedded in our human-created structures, particularly when it has been complicit in such sin, whether overtly or through silence. During Lent, a large group of Christian leaders in the US issued a document, "A Confession of Faith in a Time of Crisis." These leaders, among them our own Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, are deeply concerned about certain trends in American society, involving racism, misogyny, anti-Semitism, and xenophobia, among other sins. These attitudes are particularly heinous when perpetrated and supported by some who consider themselves Christians, using rather tortured interpretations of Scripture that run absolutely counter to the "love command" of Jesus: "Love one another, as I have loved you," (John 12:34). They believe it is past time for the Church to stand in prophetic witness against such sinful attitudes. This document, an expression of the "Reclaiming Jesus" movement, is an important declaration for our time and an example of the Holy Spirit at work in the Church. The full document, list of signatories, and other resources are on our web site: http://reclaimingjesus.org. I urge you to make time to read and consider it carefully.

Rev. Anna Horen

Why is Regular Worship Important to Me?

As a “born and raised” Episcopalian, regular worship with the family was important. The three of us went along with Mom on most Sundays.

However, teenage, college and career activities took their toll on my attendance at regular Sunday worship. I thought though I would always be able to commune with Christ on hikes and visits to the beach and believed he would always be near if I needed his support. Most Sundays became classroom, or work days, or just quiet days from a hectic world. Eventually I felt something was missing, and finally realized that I needed to update my spiritual profile. Certainly not on Facebook, but with my community at St. James’.

Last year I began a new journey of reaffirmation which would lead to a better understanding of Church and Christ's teachings. Although I have attended St. James’ for the past 30 years, I took a big step and signed membership papers. Wow! It really was a big day for me! I felt suddenly more like a real active Church member and found new interest in regular worship.

Photo by: Bruce Roberts

Regular worship requires listening closely to all parts of the service:

- Collects and Prayers of the People
  (as we pray for all those in need and the greater
  community of Christ)
- Epistles and Psalms
- Gospels and Sermons
- Choir

I must say the sermons now have a greater meaning for me. I love the scholarly sermons because they present the history of Christ and his teachings, as well as the quiet homilies about life. I remember when Reverend Lori asked us to pray for the people in Aleppo, Syria....this is when I knew I had my “worship” place.

This might be a very simple response as to why regular worship is important to me, but worship definitely leaves me with thoughts of being a better person, loving all my brothers and sisters, and opening my heart. The dismissal prayer encourages me to "rejoice in the power of the spirit as we go forth and do good works."

Finally, without regular worship where would I hear all of that and "praise God from whom all blessings flow...."

Sally Morgan
Vestry Member

Our Presiding Bishop Michael Curry and other Christian faith leaders are signatories to this important declaration for our time. The full document, list of signatories, and other resources are on the web site: http://reclaimingjesus.org/

Reclaiming Jesus

A Confession of Faith in a Time of Crisis

We are living through perilous and polarizing times as a nation, with a dangerous crisis of moral and political leadership at the highest levels of our government and in our churches. We believe the soul of the nation and the integrity of faith are now at stake.

It is time to be followers of Jesus before anything else—nationality, political party, race, ethnicity, gender, geography. Our identity in Christ precedes every other identity.

When politics undermines our theology, we must examine that politics. The church's role is to change the world through the life and love of Jesus Christ. The government's role is to serve the common good by protecting justice and peace. When that role is undermined by political leadership, faith leaders must stand up and speak out. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state."

It is often the duty of Christian leaders, especially elders, to speak the truth in love to our churches and to name and warn against temptations, racial and cultural captivities, false doctrines, and political idolatries—and even our complicity in them. We do so here with humility, prayer, and a deep dependency on the grace and Holy Spirit of God.

Jesus is Lord. That is our foundational confession. If Jesus is Lord, then Caesar was not—nor any other political ruler since. We pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). Our faith is personal but never private, meant not only for heaven but for this earth.

Applying what "Jesus is Lord" means today is the message we commend as elders to our churches. We pray that we, as followers of Jesus, will find the depth of faith to match the danger of our political crisis.

The present crisis calls us to go deeper—deeper into our relationship to God; into our relationships with each other, especially across racial, ethnic, and national lines; and into our relationships with the most vulnerable, who are at greatest risk.

We need to recover the power of confessing our faith. Lament, repent, and then repair. If Jesus is Lord, there is always space for grace. We believe it is time to speak and to act in faith and conscience, not because of politics, but because we are disciples of Jesus Christ—to whom be all authority, honor, and glory. He is the light in our darkness. "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12).

Signed: *Bishop Carroll A. Baltimore, Rev. Dr. Peter Borgdorff, Dr. Amos Brown, Rev. Dr. Walter Brueggemann, Dr. Tony Campolo, Dr. Iva Carruthers, Bishop Michael Curry, Rev. Dr. James Forbes, Rev. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, Dr. Cynthia Hale, Rev. Dr. Richard Hamm, Rev. Dr. Joel Hunter, Rev. Dr. Jo Anne Lyon, Bishop Vashti McKenzie, Rev. Dr. Otis Moss, Jr., Dr. John Perkins, Bishop Lawrence Reddick, Fr. Richard Rohr, Dr. Ron Sider, Rev. Jim Wallis, Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins, Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner, Bishop Will Willimon*

I. WE BELIEVE each human being is made in God's image and likeness. Racial bigotry is a brutal denial of the image of God in some of the children of God.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT the resurgence of white nationalism and racism in our nation on many fronts, including the highest levels of political leadership. We reject white supremacy and commit ourselves to help dismantle the systems and structures that perpetuate white preference and advantage. Any doctrines or political strategies that use racist resentments, fears, or language must be named as public sin.

II. WE BELIEVE we are one body. In Christ, there is to be no oppression based on race, gender, identity, or class.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT misogyny, the mistreatment, violent abuse, sexual harassment, and assault of women being further revealed in our culture and politics, including in our churches, and the oppression of any other child of God.

III. WE BELIEVE how we treat the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the stranger, the sick, and the prisoner is how we treat Christ himself.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT the language and policies of political leaders who would debase and abandon the most vulnerable children of God. We strongly deplore the growing attacks on immigrants and refugees; we won't accept the neglect of the well-being of low-income families and children.

IV. WE BELIEVE that truth is morally central to our personal and public lives. Jesus promises, "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32).

THEREFORE, WE REJECT the practice and pattern of lying that is invading our political and civil life. The normalization of lying presents a profound moral danger to the fabric of society.

V. WE BELIEVE that Christ's way of leadership is servanthood, not domination. We support democracy, not because we believe in human perfection, but because we do not.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT any moves toward autocratic political leadership and authoritarian rule. We believe authoritarian political leadership is a theological danger threatening democracy and the common good—and we will resist it.

VI. WE BELIEVE Jesus when he tells us to go into all nations making disciples. Our churches and our nations are part of an international community whose interests always surpass national boundaries. We in turn should love and serve the world and all its inhabitants rather than to seek first narrow nationalistic prerogatives.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT "America first" as a theological heresy for followers of Christ. While we share a patriotic love for our country, we reject xenophobic or ethnic nationalism that places one nation over others as a political goal.

Full statement and resources available at ReclaimingJesus.org.

Keeping Our Churches Safe

You may be aware that clergy, staff members, lay leadership, Sunday School teachers, and others in positions of responsibility have been asked once again to complete online training in recognizing, reporting, and safeguarding against suspected abuse of children and adults. It is diocesan policy that such people undergo initial and ongoing training at regular intervals.

The statistics are staggering: 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys experience molestation or other forms of abuse before age 18. Children are not the only targets; physically and developmentally challenged adults, and the elderly are frequent targets. The #MeToo and #Time's Up movements have also raised awareness of the particular exploitation many women experience in their professional lives by those who have power over their careers. Sadly, it also happens within the institutional church; recently, Episcopal clergywomen have spoken out about sexual harassment and abuse at the hands of other clergy and even their congregants. (See one priest's story, written by a seminary classmate of mine, here: https://houseofdeputies.org/2018/03/13/standing-with-todays-canaanite-women.) As a result, the issue of the harassment and abuse of women clergy will be raised at General Convention in July. Women clergy in other denominations have spoken out as well.

Though some would like to dismiss efforts to raise awareness of these heart-breaking statistics and stories as "political correctness" or a feminist fad, I can assure you, they are not. I have personally experienced a gathering of women on the subject, and all of us had at least one story of sexual harassment or abuse to tell. Women and younger children are not the only ones affected nor is harassment or abuse always sexual in nature. Cyberbullying is an epidemic among our young people, with several recent cases of suicide in the news caused by teens driven to the breaking point by what was being said about them on social media.

Rape is a tragic feature of life on college campuses. Men have such experiences as well, and are even less likely to talk about them than women or children due to gender stereotyping.

When harassment and abuse happens in a parish or church-sponsored environment, the effects are particularly damaging. People in a church community understandingly have more trust in each other and in their clergy than in other environments. The power imbalance that exists between clergy, lay staff, lay leadership and the congregation they serve makes any kind of exploitation even more traumatic. The feelings of hurt and betrayal are magnified and can cause people to lose their faith altogether.

For this reason, it is essential that everyone be aware of the scope of the problem, and take note of anything suspicious. Clergy, like teachers, doctors, and others in helping professions, are mandated reporters, and if something has raised suspicions, we need to know. Those in leadership or other positions of responsibility, while not mandated reporters, have a moral responsibility to be aware of who is at risk and know what to do if abuse is suspected. The training takes time and the subject matter is disturbing, but it is necessary and important.

In addition, a task force formed at the 2015 General Convention has produced two new statements of policy for the protection of children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Our diocese will be bringing these to our attention soon.

As the saying goes, sunlight is the best disinfectant. Surfacing these unpleasant subjects is the first step in making our parishes, schools, and other communities a safe place. Please know that we are doing our part at St. James'.

Rev. Anna Horen

Sacred Space

Sacred Space is a ministry of the Southern Alameda County Deanery. St. James' along with the other parishes in our Deanery provide a short worship service and lunch to the homeless and hungry who meet in Cannery Park, Hayward, every Sunday afternoon at 1:00pm. St. James' provides lunch on the 4th Sunday of each month, rain or shine. We also contribute toiletries, socks, coats, and whatever else may be needed throughout the year.

I particularly want to thank the anonymous person/s who have left bags of travel-sized toiletries for us to give out. These items are greatly appreciated! The signup sheet for July-December is now posted in the Parish Hall. I would love to see some new names on the list! It is a small thing to purchase a case of water, or some cookies, or chips, or fruit cups. And if you're really ambitious, you could volunteer to prepare sandwiches as well. Team up with a friend! St. James' has been a great supporter of this ministry over the years, and I thank you!

Janet Fischer

Estate Planning June 10th

The St. James' Endowment Board is organizing an ESTATE PLANNING SEMINAR at St. James' on Sunday, June 10th, 12:30-2:30 pm. We will begin with time for fellowship and a light lunch. We encourage you to attend and invite your family and friends to learn more about wills, probate, inheritance taxes, asset protection, trusts or estate planning.

The event will also provide an opportunity to ask questions and discuss these topics with an estate planning lawyer who may be available for help creating or updating wills, trusts or other estate plans.

Please contact a member of the Endowment Board for more information or sign up in the Parish Hall to attend.

For information to include St. James' in your estate plans, joining the St. James' Shell Society or learning more about the St. James' Endowment Fund, contact a member of the St. James' Endowment Board.

Cathy Knotts
Endowment Board

Register for VBS (Vacation Bible School) by June 6th (children and volunteers) to guarantee your space and t-shirt! For more info see the church website or email our Children's Minister, Jan Scrutton at jan@saintj.com .

Fund Balances		4/30/2017		4/30/2018
Operating Fund	$	55,972.78	$	71,885.02
Building Fund	$	34,095.11	$	34,399.89
Pledges Budgeted	$	99,578.66	$	108,388.00
Pledges Paid	$	98,219.23	$	123,442.86
Unpledged Contributions	$	3,920.60	$	1,490.00
Other Op Income	$	7,084.41	$	7,464.70
Total Operating Income	$	109,224.24	$	132,397.56
Total Operating Expenses	$	102,682.98	$	110,104.06
Income less Expenses	$	6,541.26	$	22,293.50

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Upcoming book Discussion using *Whole: Restoring What Is Broken in Me, You, and The Entire World by,* Steve Wiens. Available in paperback or e-book from your favorite book seller. Meeting in the **Education Room Sundays, 9:15am-10:15am, July 29 - Aug. 26.** Contact Janet Fischer with any questions at jfischer@saintj.com.

About the book: " Look around, and you'll notice: The world is covered with jagged edges. People and places are broken all around us. We were made for better than this: We were made to be whole, and wholly human, to tend a world that is wholly humane. We were made in the image of God. This book is a quest to recover that image in ourselves and our neighbors, to help us all become human and humane again. For Christians who lament the brokenness in themselves, their neighbors, and the world around them, *Whole* offers a rallying cry to pursue wholeness together."

If you would like to find out more on the book go to: https://stevewiens.com/whole/

Janet Fischer

"DUCKS FOR BUCKS" MEMORIES

Photos by: Bruce Roberts

St. James' Prayer List

Most Holy God we pray :

For Those In The Military: Scott, Jarrod, 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, Matthew, Johnny

For Those Who Need Guidance and Direction: Robert, Kenny

For Those Who Need Comfort and Healing: Ron Carol, Gail, Julie, Midge, Mary, Mike, Jay, James, Brenda, Omar, Betty, Megan, Ellison, Peter, Don, Hevdall Family

For Those Who Have Passed Away: Carson, Sadako, Jeff, Nailah, Darlene, Ray

To add someone to the "Special Prayers" list, please complete a pew card and place in the Sunday 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

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

June Birthdays

6/02 Callie Patton
6/03 Charlie Paratore
6/04 Dorothy Balderston
Mary (Kitty) Reed
Nancy Castaneda
6/05 Ivy Sankar
6/08 Patty Lacy
6/09 Bob Doherty
6/14 Christopher Jones
6/16 Bruce Prickett
6/20 Timothy Prickett
6/22 Tim Spencer
Mark Locher
6/23 Ian Kalitta
6/25 Sylvia Clayton
Robert Lovellette
6/26 Greg Miller
6/27 Marlene E. Benedict
6/28 George Vlastelica
Pat Vlastelica
6/29 Julie Guzior
6/30 Emma Feeney

June Anniversaries

6/04 Craig & Julie Gentner
6/22 Charles & Judy Peeler
6/24 Keith & Sherea Westra
6/25 James & Frankie McLeod
6/27 John & Joan Kimber
6/30 Alberto & Marie Verdin

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

Email your submission to newsletter@saintj.com by: **June 15th**

SAINT JAMES' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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WEB: http://saintj.com

WORSHIP TIMES
SUNDAY SERVICES: 8:00AM & 10:30AM
CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICES: SUNDAY 9:15-10:00AM
SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:15AM
WEDNESDAY EUCHARIST 10:00AM

OFFICE HOURS
MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY: 8:30AM TO 12:30PM

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