



The Window

The Newsletter* of St. James' Episcopal Church in Fremont, CA
CALLED TO SERVE IN NEW AND LOVING WAYS.

December 2011

Oh, December

The month of December brings with it much complication, doesn't it? Not necessarily *bad* complications, but situations and environments that can be less than simple and have many layers: family gatherings, travel plans, Christmas shopping and gift giving. Whenever I begin to feel a little overwhelmed or distracted by this final month of the year, I try to bring to mind the journey of the Holy Family culminating in the birth of Jesus.

Imagine it for just a moment – Joseph, strong and capable, carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders, yet knowing by now that his purpose is of utmost importance and forward he must go. And so he walks, long distances from Nazareth to Bethlehem, through darkness and light, towards a newness yet unknown.

And Mary, determined yet afraid, asked to bear her child outside the comfort and safety of her home. With Joseph, and yet alone and solitary in the task ahead of her. Trusting that all will be well and knowing that God is watching over her.

Finally, a homeless couple bedded down in a barn to give birth to God into a world still dark. This story, too, is complicated and with many layers, but beneath all of it is the simplicity of one thing – God Is. No matter the threats, no matter the obstacles, no matter the distractions, God Is, then and now.

We are blessed to have many options this Advent and Christmas. We can engage in consumerism that benefits the world rather than depletes it – consider buying green, sustainable, or from the independently owned small business. We can be with family despite the often-experienced tension – remember to look each person in the eyes and honor the sacred in them. We can go long distances and still feel connected – bring to mind and say a prayer for those who are not physically with you. And, wherever we may be, we can bless the night of Christmas with the celebration of Emmanuel, the baby Jesus, God incarnate.

Blessed December.

Lori

Glory to God

It must have been quite a sight –
to see the angels, to look at the star,
to behold the Child.

It must have been quite a sight –
to see him flee to Egypt,
to observe Him talking to the elders,
to watch Him use a carpenter's tool.

It must have been quite a sight –
to observe His miracles,
to view His crucifixion,
to witness His resurrection.

And it must have been quite a sight
for him to see the reward
of His birth, His life, His suffering,
and His triumph being fulfilled
through the lives, the love
and the praises of His people
this Christmas season.

*(taken off of a Christmas Card, author
unknown)*

A Season of Giving

There is an art to gift giving. To select the perfect gift, you have to know what the recipient needs or wants. You also like to choose a gift that will be appreciated and have some long lasting value. There is no disputing that Christmas giving has become a very big business; a strong holiday selling season often means the difference between a good and a bad year for retailers. I love giving gifts, but about now, December 1st, I'm starting to get a little harried as I look at my Christmas list and realize how much is left to do! In the shopping frenzy that lasts from the opening of the Christmas buying season to the closing hours of Christmas Eve, it's easy to forget what all the fuss is for. Gift giving is probably the most well know of all Christmas traditions in our culture. While a good deal of focus is placed upon purchasing just the right gift, it is also a time to experience the joy of giving to others.

After Jesus was born, wise men came and presented gifts to him. We read in Matthew that after Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him." On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.

Just as the wise men gave expensive gifts to the Holy Child without hope of anything in return, we can do the same by giving gifts to those in need, to those less fortunate. A gift is not always something that is purchased -- it may be a gift of friendship, of care and concern, a telephone call, an invitation to dinner, a connection that says "I'm thinking of you." We have the ability to redirect the festivities of the Christmas holidays to reflect the true meaning of the day - Jesus' birth in Bethlehem. There are many opportunities within St. James' Church and within our surrounding community. We don't need to look very far.

The giving of gifts is a wonderful expression of the love and good will that surrounds the Christmas season. Ultimately, gift giving at Christmas should be done in remembrance of the greatest gift of all -- Jesus Christ the Son, the gift of the Father. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

Christ was a gift from God to the world, bringing in turn the gift of redemption and everlasting life. Let friendship, hope, charity, and love fill our hearts this Christmas Season.

Gail Blalock, Stewardship Chair

Recycling at St James'

St. James' is now offering a *recycling assistance program* for specific recyclable items. This program is to assist our members in helping to keep hazardous waste and chemicals out of the environment and keep us as good stewards of our world.

As in the Book of Common Prayer form IV, Prayers of the People:

"Give us all a reverence for the earth as your own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to your honor and glory."

Batteries: All small batteries, 9 V, C, D, A, AA, AAA and watch batteries can be brought into the church and deposited in the receptacle in front of the office. Please place the *batteries only* (no bags or other holders) in the receptacle.

Fluorescent light bulbs (including CFL's): All Fluorescent light bulbs contain mercury, one of the most hazardous chemicals to avoid getting in our water supply. Please bring in light bulbs on Sundays or Wednesdays only and find Brad Hoffman or Gary Gearheart and we will collect them from you. We need to request this due to the hazard of the mercury and danger of the glass. These items will not be left at the church but recycled immediately.

Printer cartridges and some laser printer cartridges: This program is being restarted and the church will be getting paid some money for recycling these cartridges. All printer cartridges that can 'fit into the palm of you hand' can be placed in the receptacle in front of the office. We are requesting printer cartridges only, no containers, plastic bags, cardboard or other holders; cartridges only. This will help us with the processing of these items. A list of the laser cartridges accepted will be next to the receptacle.

Thank you for your assistance in being stewards of our planet:

Brad Hoffman and Gary Gearhart
The CC & SM cluster.



Hillside Senior Care Center

The Giving Trees made their first appearance on Sunday, November 13th. Because so many gift tags were taken, we were able to put the remaining tags on a single tree. Wrapped gifts can be returned any time but PLEASE no later than Sunday, December 4th.

All are welcome to come to Hillside on Friday, December 9th, to deliver the gifts, and sing a few Christmas Carols.

For answers to questions or more information, call Alice Johnson, 792-4169 or Sandra Motley, 656-4224.

Sandra Motley

Military Family Support A Potential New Ministry

As a Blue Star Mom (having had a child in active duty, who is now a disabled veteran) and as the former Chaplain for the Alameda County Blue Star Moms, I recognize the importance of faith communities reaching out to the families of the National Guard, Reserves, and Active Duty. If you have a family member in active duty or is a veteran, or if you are simply interested in assisting military families, I invite you to be a part of an exploratory group to discern how we at St. James' might shape a ministry to support those who are impacted most directly by war.

This group will pray, study and discern, using the book *Welcome Them Home, Help Them Heal*. Pastoral care and ministry with service members returning from war. We will brainstorm where St. James' is being led with this potential new ministry. The first meeting is scheduled my home on January 4th. Note that this date may be changed depending upon your responses and schedules.

If interested and/or have any questions, please email me at evallecillomiller@yahoo.com or call me at 510-793-5344 (home) or 510-432-8851 (cell).

Elaine Vallecillo-Miller

Angelina JV Miller, USMC (retired)

MUSIC AT ST. JAMES'

CHRISTMAS MUSIC PROGRAM



My name is Jennifer Carini and I am the new music director at St. James'. I have felt very welcomed by all of the parishioners at St. James' and feel blessed to be a part of your loving community! I

look forward to making music with you for many years to come.

Christmas is almost upon us, and we will have wonderful music for Christmas Eve. At the 4:00pm Children's Service, music that is familiar and accessible to all will be sung. Please bring your little ones and join us for this special service.

We will have Christmas carols and special instrumental and choral selections during the 10:30pm Christmas caroling, right before the 11:00pm Christmas Eve service. Please make sure to come early to sing your favorite carols. The festivities continue during the 11:00pm service, with wonderful Service Music, carols, solos, instrumental interludes, and anthems.

We have four guest musicians joining us for Christmas Eve this year. We will have a recorder trio providing our special instrumental music. Along with our own Alison Saichek, Christopher Aguirre and Joseph Rodriguez will join us and play recorders. These are not the recorders your children play in elementary school, but actual recorders in different lengths, each with its own unique timbre and range. I think you will enjoy our recorder trio.

In addition Carol Bamba and Rose Tahaafe, will be our guest soloists on one of our choir anthems, "Gesu Bambino" by Pietro Yon. Carol and Rose will also sing with the choir on all of our other selections.

I look forward to a blessed Advent and Christmas season with all of you!

Sincerely,
Jennifer Carini

Cursillo Corner

Upcoming Events



Welcome back to Cursillo Corner. We will be trying to keep you up to date on Cursillo happenings for both the San Francisco/San Mateo Cursillo and the East Bay Anglican Cursillo groups going forward. Many of you in our congregation have experienced and enjoyed a Cursillo weekend and I would like to invite you to renew your ongoing experience and support Cursillo in general and future candidates. Please contact Gary Gearheart or Lea Marie Lucas to be placed on a list of Cursillistas.

Cursillo is a Spanish word meaning short course. A 'Cursillo en Cristiandad' is a short course in Christian living. As a movement, Cursillo had its origin in the late 1940's on the island of Majorca, Spain. It was developed as a means of reviving Christian commitment. What this means to us is that we want to revive our Christian commitment to our own Faith community. Cursillo is not a replacement of your faith community.

The following are scheduled Cursillo weekends as of this writing

Men's Weekend February 9-12, 2012

Women's Weekend February 23-26, 2012

Men's Weekend May 17-20, 2012

Women's Weekend June 7-10, 2012

If you would like to inquire about a Cursillo Weekend for yourself or someone you know, please contact Gary or Lea at ggg1944@yahoo.com or 510-894-1496

Gary Gearheart
Social Ministries/Congregational Care

PLEDGE CARDS

Pledge Cards may be turned in to the Church Office or placed in the Sunday collection plate. If you didn't receive a pledge card or have misplaced yours, please contact the Office (797-1492) and one will be sent to you.

Take Note of these December Events

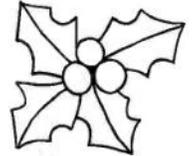
Las Posadas, Sunday December 4



With song and laughter, with story-telling and fellowship, help us welcome Mary and Joseph as they seek shelter for the birth of Christ. We begin in the Main Church at 5:00pm. We have limited seating for this event, so sign-up in advance in the parish hall, or call the office.

Church Greening and Potluck Lunch, Sunday December 18

In preparation for Christmas, we “green” the church in the traditional manner of poinsettias and pine. Join us immediately following the 10:30 service. Bring something light to share with others for lunch.



Christmas Eve Services, Saturday December 24

4:00pm Family Service with “Ad Hoc” Children’s Pageant and Communion

All children welcome! No rehearsals necessary, no line-memorization required! All kids who would like to participate in our “Ad Hoc” pageant simply need to be at church **by 3:45**. Meet in the parish hall for costuming, and process in our pageant to create the Holy Nativity Scene.

10:30pm Traditional Christmas Carol Hymn-singing

This is your chance to sing the beloved Christmas hymns you’ve waited all year to sing!

11:00pm Festive Christmas Service with Holy Communion

As the hour approaches midnight, we will celebrate the birth of Christ with this traditional and festive Christmas Service with full choir and Holy Eucharist.



Christmas Day, Sunday December 25

Begin this holy day with a service of Holy Communion in the Main Church at 10:00am.

1st Sunday after Christmas, Sunday January 1

We will celebrate this marking of the Christmas Season and the beginning of a new calendar year with our usual two services at 8:00am and 10:30am.

Quest for the Living God: Mapping Frontiers in the Theology of God

By Elizabeth Johnson (Continuum 2007);
Reviewed by John Maloney

This book, written by Sister Elizabeth Johnson, a noted theology professor and former chair of the American Theological Society, is a fascinating, inspirational, and thought-provoking examination of different areas of Christian life. The mystery of the living God is glimpsed anew in contemporary experiences of groups of people struggling to live out their faith today. As stated in the introduction, *Quest* is intended for "...a broad audience of thinking seeking, committed adults as nourishment for their adult faith."

The insights about the living God, developed by various Christian groups through their experiences during the past fifty years, are presented in eight different theological developments: transcendence, political, liberation, feminist/womanist, Black, Latino/Latina, interreligious, and ecological theologies. In addition, the last chapter, "Trinity: The Living God of Love," discusses the Trinity as the very heart of Christian ideas of God and how contemporary systematic theology, enriched by biblical and historical studies, is initiating a renewal of insight in the practical meaning of the Trinity in our contemporary world.

Someone reading this book can gain a deeper appreciation of what previous generations of Christians believed. As Johnson has written in her response to a negative critique of her book by a Catholic bishops' committee, "Each concept of God in the book is a biblical insight lifted up, newly recognized, and freshly received by some group of faithful people in the church, an insight which sheds new light on the revealed self-giving love of God and the divine plan of salvation."

This book and many more are currently available in the St. James' Parish Library located in the entranceway by the church office.



Monday, January 16th: John McCutcheon concert
Saturday, January 21st: Food and Fellowship
Dinner
Sunday, January 22nd: Annual Meeting

Financial Summary October 31, 2011

Fund Balances	<u>10/31/2010</u>	<u>10/31/2011</u>
Operating Fund	\$ 36,642	\$ 65,289
Building Fund	25,969	35,582

Year To Date Summary Operating

	<u>10/31/2010</u>	<u>10/31/2011</u>
Pledges Budgeted	\$ 191,583	\$ 194,942
Pledges Paid	176,387	186,246
Unpledged Contributions	3,557	7,102
Other Op Income*	<u>14,409</u>	<u>14,257</u>
Total Operating Income	<u>194,853</u>	<u>207,606</u>
Total Operating Expenses	<u>195,391</u>	<u>194,080</u>
Income less Expenses	(\$538)	\$13,256

*Includes Fundraising



The Book Shelf

Book reviews by
Janet Fischer



The Animal Manifesto

Six Reasons for Expanding Our Compassion Footprint

by Marc Bekoff. (New World Library, 2010)

A few months ago I wrote a short review of Karen Armstrong's *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life*. This book takes the virtue of compassion a step further and applies it to animals.

We love our animals. We love our cats and our dogs and our birds and our rabbits. We bring them to church on the Feast of St. Francis for a blessing. We know instinctively that they are sentient – sentience is “the ability to feel, perceive, or be conscious” – and therefore experience themselves as individual beings, and can experience suffering as well as contentment. But for some, it can be hard to extend that same understanding to animals that don't live in our house. At the other extreme, animals are often romanticized and injected with human qualities that they don't possess.

Bekoff's book outlines six reasons why all animals should be respected for the sentient beings they are, and deserve care and compassion in their own right,

not based on their perceived usefulness to humans. Don't worry; if you are a meat eater (as I am, although I think not for long) you will still enjoy this book. The goal is compassion, which can be done in many ways and on many levels, and the reduction of suffering. “Humans will act on behalf of animal welfare when we expand our moral circle to include them at all times, not just when it's convenient...” Bekoff responds to the question of why one should expend effort on behalf of animals when there are people who are suffering: “Many people around the world who work for animals also work selflessly for people. Caring for animals doesn't mean caring less for humans. Indeed, a major message of this book is that compassion begets compassion.” So, here are the six points of the Animal Manifesto:

Reason 1: All animals share the earth and we must coexist. This includes leaving space and resources for other species to thrive, as well as treating each one as their species requires. In other words, don't try to keep a chimpanzee in your home. It's bad for both of you.

Reason 2: Animals think and feel. “Well, duh,” you might say. But many people do not acknowledge this; they only view animals as useful for their own purposes and therefore cannot acknowledge that they think and feel. Research continues to show how intelligent animals really are: they make friends, they have individual personalities, they hold grudges, they forgive, and they chose to help others at cost to themselves.

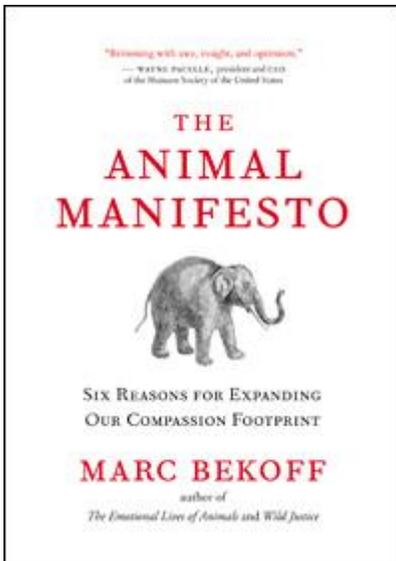
Reason 3: Animals have and deserve compassion. Bekoff recounts numerous incidents where an animal has put him/herself out for another animal or a person. A rat in a cage will refuse to push a lever for food when it sees that pushing the lever shocks a rat in another cage. Heaven only knows what they think of us.

Reason 4: Connection breeds caring, alienation breeds disrespect. “While we may not all agree on what constitutes dignity, we all know when we lose it, and so do our fellow animals.”

Reason 5: Our world is not compassionate to animals. I won't go into details here, but in this chapter Bekoff recounts the lives of animals in laboratories, circuses and zoos.

Reason 6: Acting compassionately helps all beings and our world. It's not a matter of either/or. Bekoff writes, “We need to replace ‘mindlessness’ with ‘mindfulness’ in our interactions with animals and Earth. If we do, nothing will be lost and much will be gained. We can never be too generous or too kind.”

Sounds like something Jesus would do.



The Journey of the Magi

T.S. Eliot

A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For the journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.'
And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,
Lying down in the melting snow.
There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
And running away, and wanting their liquor and women,
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:
A hard time we had of it.

At the end we preferred to travel all night,
Sleeping in snatches,
With the voices singing in our ears, saying
That this was all folly.
Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;
With a running stream and a water-mill beating the
darkness,
And three trees on the low sky,
And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.
Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the
lintel,
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,
And feet kicking the empty wine-skins,
But there was no information, and so we continued
And arrived at evening, not a moment too soon
Finding the place; it was (you may say) satisfactory
All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for
Birth or Death?
There was a Birth, certainly,
We had evidence and no doubt.
I had seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like
Death, our death,
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death.

This poem was written in 1927, and is believed to reflect Eliot's own journey from agnosticism to faith.

John McCutcheon to Sing for St. James'

2012 will be the ninth year in a row that St. James' has hosted Fremont's John McCutcheon Concert. Over these years I've noticed some things that you might have noticed yourself, but hadn't put into conscious thought.

The first is John's incredible energy. When he sings to us, this will be his fourth show in a string of 21 before he heads for home. He always appears refreshed and eager to sing for us.

Second, he is a treasure of stories, both sung and said. If one looks at folk songs as stories, John McCutcheon is a Master Storyteller. And he tells real said stories as well.

Third, he can play many musical instruments and play them well. As Johnny Cash said about John, "The most impressive instrumentalist I've ever heard."

Fourth, and this is an ability that probably goes along with his ability to tell a story; he can take a story as cold as a newspaper column and give it life and emotion to make you remember the story.

So every year that John has sung at St. James' for the couple of hours or so that he is here, I wait for the new story, the take on the news that I didn't get, and his reminders that we're all in this together and that we should treat each other that way.

Put on your listening (and singing) shoes and prepare for the January 16, 2012, Martin Luther King Monday John McCutcheon Concert. It will start at 7:30 PM in The Big Church. Refreshments will be available. We'll have our now famous Prize Drawing during the intermission.

Tell your friends about John. We know they will have a great time at the concert. What do they need to know? He can sing, he can play, he can entertain and educate at the same time, his concert entertains children as well as adults, his heart and his soul are with the people.

Ticket prices: donation \$25 for adults, \$15 for children 5 to 12 years, under 5 for free. A bargain at any price.

Prize drawing tickets: one measly dollar each, 6 for five bucks. Prizes – fabulous, stay tuned for details.

Bruce Roberts

LIVE IN CONCERT



World Renowned, Grammy-Nominated

Folk Singer / Songwriter

John McCutcheon

Monday, January 16, 2012 7:30 P.M.

One Night Only

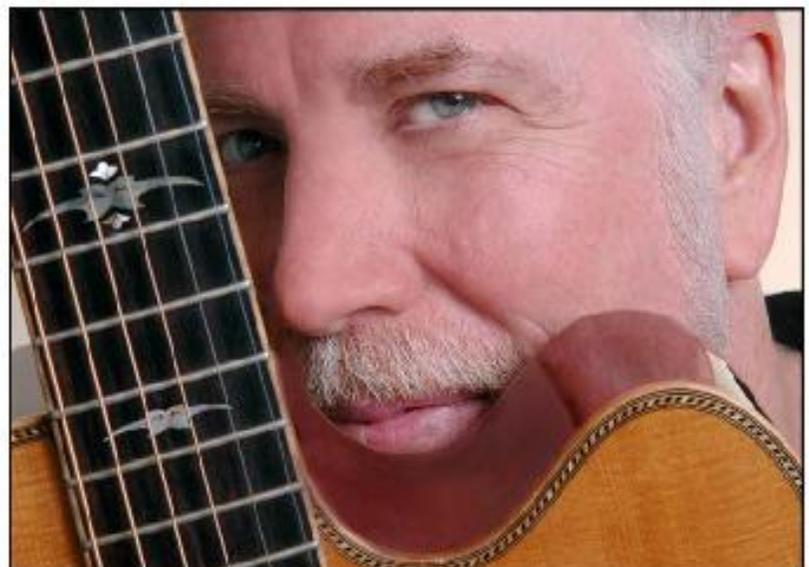
St. James' Episcopal Church
(Thornton Ave. at Cabrillo Terrace, Fremont)

Tickets on Sale November 27, 2011

Suggested Donation:
\$25 Adult, \$15 Child (12 & under)
Children under age 5 admitted free

MasterCard, Visa, Cash or Check

For information or to purchase tickets,
contact St. James' Episcopal Church at
510-797-1492 or events@saintj.com





St. James' Prayer List

Most Holy God, we pray for...

For Those In The

Military: Scott, Jarrod, Bryan, Megan, Erica, Theresa, Mark, Tim, Louis,

Emily, Military Children of ACBSM, the families and Marines of Dark Horse Battalion, Darren, Caitlin, Emily, Robin, Robert

For Those Who Need Guidance and

Direction: Kenny, Angelina

For Those Suffering Economic

Hardship: John

For Those Who Need Comfort and

Strength: Bobbi

Families Expecting Children: Darline

For Those Who Need Continued

Healing: Brad, Florinne, David, William, June, Jody, Adrienne, David, Ann-Helen, Diane, Veronica, Joyce, Steven, Marge, Judy, Betty, Kenneth

For Those Who Have Passed

Away: Kevin, Joan, Wyni, Eleanor



December Birthday Celebrations

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Courtney Whitehouse | 20 Sylvia Ma |
| 2 John Kimber | 21 Ray Hedvall |
| 6 Paul Svenson | Chris Perry |
| 8 Genore Schaaf | Jill Buono |
| 9 Merry Creed | 22 Bud Spalding |
| 11 Joyce Bowman | Karen Koonze |
| Pegeen Perry | 25 Mary Williamson |
| 17 Barbara Gifford | 30 Bob Tomkinson |
| 18 Rick Wilcoxon | Gary Newbrough |
| 19 Kelsey Peterson | Cynthia Fisher |
| Doris Cailliet Brunzie | 31 Marlene Benedict |
| Adrian Madsen | Brad Hoffman |
| Donald Razzolini | |

December Anniversaries



- 4 Ken and Penny Trant

The next issue of *The Window** (aka *The St. James, Literary Review*) is in January. We welcome your **comments, essays, poems, photos, cartoons, newsworthy items of interest, art work, any group activity information and reviews.**

Email your submission to window@saintj.com by:
January Deadline: December 15th

Please note: If your birthday 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



SAINT JAMES' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

OFFICE HOURS
8:30 AM - 12:30 PM
TUESDAY-FRIDAY
TEL: (510) 797-1492

Thornton Avenue at Cabrillo Terrace
PO Box 457
Fremont, CA 94537-0457
www.saintj.com

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Other Important Coordinators

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Acolytes:
Eucharistic Ministers & Lectors:
Janet Fischer
Ushers: Burtin Hart

The Window Editorial Staff

Ralph Locher
Marilyn Rose
Penny Trant
Laura Winter



For the most recent St. James' calendar, Go to:
www.saintj.com

The Vestry of St. James'

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Brad Hoffman
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Clerk

Elizabeth Hart



SUNDAY SERVICES AT
8:00 AM & 10:30 AM

FAITH FORMATION SUNDAY AT 9:15-10:15 AM

SUNDAY SCHOOL AT 10:15-11:15 AM

YOUTH GROUP SECOND SUNDAY AT 6:30 -8:30 PM

WEDNESDAY EUCHARIST AT 10:00 AM