The Window

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. JAMES' EPISCOPAL CHURCH, FREMONT CALIFORNIA

DECEMBER 2024

Who Is My Neighbor?

Written by Nancy Castaneda

Who is my neighbor can be an interesting and sometimes complex topic depending on whom you are speaking to. For me, however, it is very simple… Everyone.

I often speak to other Christians about our beliefs and am often surprised by their narrow-mindedness. I'd like to share a story of a conversation I had with a woman who we affectionately call our 'moral compass.' She has great compassion and loves serving her church and community. One day we were chatting about a trip I took to Abu Dhabi. I was telling her how impressed I was by my visit to a mosque where after our tour, the women offered us tea and were willing to answer any questions we had and how they cleared up some misconceptions I had about the Muslim faith.

When relaying what I learned at the mosque to my friend, imagine my surprise when she said that the only way to God is through Jesus. She, who is so compassionate and morally centered. I said to her that I agreed the path for me is Jesus and that she and I were on the same path, but that I believe that just like there are many paths to the top of a mountain, there are many paths to God. In other words, all people are our neighbors no matter their path and we should not throw rocks at those on other paths. She didn't agree, but we are still friends as she is my neighbor.

In another encounter with my uncle who is a Seventh-day Adventist, he tried to convince me that only people who worship on Saturday will be admitted to heaven. I told him that the God I worship welcomes all people to heaven and in my belief he was putting God in a box. He didn't agree, but we are still close as no matter his belief, he is also my neighbor.

I have had so many encounters with people of diverse faiths, most of whom are very willing to share their beliefs with me and are generally interested to hear mine. I really enjoy these conversations as I feel they not only broaden my understanding of other faiths, but also deepen my own faith. I think the bottom line for me is that we don't have to agree to be neighbors.

In closing, I would like to invite all to be open to conversations (not debates) with your neighbors who share our path or are walking another path. And if someone on another path stumbles, offer them help without bias or judgment.

This year, the vestry has selected two themes to write on: How do we "go tell it on the mountain"? and "who are our neighbors?" This is another article in the series.

UPCOMING EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

Safe Parking Parish Forum | December 15 at 9:15am

We've completed our first two months of hosting cars for the City of Fremont Safe Parking Program. Our next turn is January 2025, and we could use volunteers to check people in and out.

Come to a parish forum on December 15 at 9:15am to learn more about the program and to hear the experiences of past volunteers. Participating in this important outreach is easier than you might think!

Zoom Coffee Hour for Advent!

Starting on Sunday, December 1st, and continuing the next three Sundays of Advent, we will be hosting an Advent coffee hour on Zoom after the 10:30am Service for those who have joined us online.

Register your interest and find the Zoom link on our parish website at saintj.com/coffee.

Feast of the Epiphany and Hand Anointing

Celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany on Sunday, January 5, and have your hands anointed for the work of 2025. There is big work to be done and as preparation, there will be hand anointing stations at the 8:00am and 10:30am services for those who wish to participate.

UPCOMING EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

VESTRY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Submitted by Charisma Pangilinan, Jr Warden

The Vestry met in person on November 21, 2024 with John Amouroux beginning with Opening Prayer.

Updates & Reminders

- Voted and accepted approval of the October 17 Vestry meeting minutes.
- Bruce, the Treasurer, reviewed the financial reports. Pledges are still down, now to 4.3%.
  - From the budget, our operating income is -$2,023.
  - Voted and accepted approval of the October financial reports.
- Voted and accepted approval of the October staff and ministry reports.

New and Continuing Business

- Recorded the email vote for $5000 to Mike Scrutton to purchase A/V equipment.
- Discussed, voted, and approved the reinvestment of the matured $100k CD.
- Voted and approved a disbursement from the Endowment fund.
- Further discussed land development ideas towards the long term goal of sustainable income streams.
- Brainstormed potential names for next year's new Vestry members.
  - We need three new members to maintain a full Vestry.
  - Agreed to reach out with invitations and a responsibilities sheet.
  - Vivienne Paratore, Peter Maina, and Nancy Castaneda are rolling off.

Reminders

- Nancy is assigned the newsletter for December, due November 20.
- Burtin is assigned the newsletter for January.
- The next Vestry meeting will be on Zoom on December 19, Burtin assigned prayers.
- January Vestry meeting will be on January 9.
- The Budget meeting will be on January 12.
- The Annual meeting will be on January 19.
- The Vestry retreat will be on February 7-8.

The meeting adjourned, and John closed the meeting with Compline.

The vestry meets via Zoom in the odd months (January, March, etc.) and meets in-person in the parish hall during the even months (February, April, etc).

WAYS WE ARE CHURCH TOGETHER

LITURGY & WORSHIP

WORSHIP AT CHURCH

We offer two services on Sunday morning at 8:00am and 10:30am. Coffee and light snacks following each service. Join us for worship and fellowship!

SUNDAY WORSHIP LIVESTREAM

If you cannot attend church in person, you can join our 10:30am service live-streamed on Sundays at **saintj.com**. The service can be joined at any time on Sunday from 10:30am or watched during the week on our **YouTube channel**.

WEDNESDAY 10:00AM SERVICE

Celebrate the Liturgy of the Word with prayers and sermon discussion in real time on Zoom. Join us! The link can be found under "Upcoming Events" on the right side of our **website**.

Online Worship Resources | Link

Follow us on Social Media!

FACEBOOK INSTAGRAM

Find Links to service & sermon audio/video here:

YOUTUBE APPLE SPOTIFY TUNEIN

LEARNING

SCRIPTURE/BIBLE STUDIES

Monday | 11:00am on Zoom

Join with others to catch up and wrestle with some of the sacred texts of the Bible. We meet every Monday on Zoom. Everyone is welcome. Email lori@saintj.com for the Zoom link or find it alongside more information on our parish **website**.

Wednesday | 11:00am on Zoom

Join us for Bible Study at 11:00am held on Zoom and facilitated by Rev. Lori, who will send out a link to a short video and discussion questions. Email Rev. Lori at lori@saintj.com to be added to the list.

FELLOWSHIP

SUNDAY COFFEE HOUR

Coffee Hour is held after each service on Sunday mornings. Come over to the Parish Hall after worship and join us for a cup of coffee, light refreshments, and good conversation. Everyone is welcome!

*Zoom links for all of our offerings can be found on our parish website, **saintj.com**. Look for the calendar of events on the right side of our home page. If something is not listed, email the leader and they will make sure you have what you need.*

Sunday's service and sermons are also online on iTunes, Spotify, TuneIn, and Youtube. Go to our website for online worship resources. Like us on Facebook and Instagram! We also have a YouTube page & Twitter feed.

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRIES

Summer Sunday School | Current Events

Sunday School, for children aged 4 to 6th grade, meets during the 10:30 AM Service and children return to church to join their families for the Eucharist. Sign up for our Annual Advent Evening on December 8th in the Parish Hall and for the Sunday School kids Advent afternoon preceding it HERE. This afternoon runs from 1:30-5 PM and includes crafts, movie, games, and snacks for our Sunday School children.

Episcopal Youth Fremont

Episcopal Youth Fremont (EYF) is for 6th-12th graders from St. James' and St. Anne's Episcopal Churches in Fremont. We will meet next on Sunday, December 15th from 6-8 PM. Please message Jan at jan@saintj.com if you'd like more info about EYF activities. Preparation for confirmation in 2025 for students in 8th grade and above will take place primarily through youth group meetings.

Any questions about our programs for children or youth?
Email our Children & Youth Minister Jan Scrutton at jan@saintj.com.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY | December 2024

Fund Balances	10/31/2023	10/31/2024
Operating Fund	56,976.62	58,878.74
Building Fund	95,545.29	96,034.35
Special Interest funds	651,286.01	722,474.96
Pledges Budgeted	287,278.33	331,442.50
Pledges Paid	300,162.22	317,089.49
Unpledged Contributions	8,081.00	8,650.00
Other Operating Income	13,839.84	16,662.30
Total Operating Income	322,083.06	342,401.79
Total Operating Expenses	326,199.33	344,425.04
Income Less Expenses	-4,116.27	-2,023.25

Seasonal Book Study

Advent in Plain Sight

Let's experience the beauty of the seasons of Advent and Christmas together by looking for the holy in our midst through ordinary objects, coming to recognize how God works in all of creation.

We will be reading the book *Advent in Plain Sight* by Jill Duffield and meeting weekly to discuss the reflections and our own responses.

Meetings will be on Zoom on Tuesday evenings from 7:00pm to 8:00pm, beginning on Tuesday, November 26th (then December 3rd, 10th, and 17th, then January 7th and 14th).

Pick up a Reading Guide that doubles as a book mark near the entrance of the church. There will be readings between each of our gatherings.

Purchase a book in advance at your local bookstore or online store. If cost is an issue, talk to Rev. Lori.

Advent Meditation | Eckhart

Submitted by Brian Cochran

Here's an Advent and Christmas meditation, for women and men alike:

"We are all meant to be mothers of God. What good is it to me if this eternal birth of the divine Son takes place unceasingly, but does not take place within myself? And, what good is it to me if Mary is full of grace if I am not also full of grace? What good is it to me for the Creator to give birth to his Son if I do not also give birth to him in my time and my culture? This, then, is the fullness of time: When the Son of Man is begotten in us."

– Meister Eckhart, OP, 1260-1328
(shalem.org 12/12/21 in Anita Davidson's essay)

More on this from Rev. Matthew Fox, PhD, who helped the world learn again about Meister Eckhart.

Advent Season Worship Bulletin

Pick up a worship bulletin if you would like a guide to help you pray with us during Sunday Worship!

Available on Sundays on the table near the front door of the church, or ask an usher for one.

Worship bulletins are designed by parishioner John Wagas in collaboration with Rev. Lori Walton and Jennifer Ravera, our Music Director.

Campus Beautification & Work Party

Submitted by Laura Winter

A group of parishioners worked hard one Saturday morning in November cleaning St. James' campus.

The number one job was to clear all the buildings' gutters. Lots of debris was removed in preparation for the coming rains. In addition, Scott checked the roof leak over the Nursery.

Another focus was spreading the wood chip piles in the front park and clearing out the never-ending ivy accumulation by the education building.

St James' is fortunate to have a large campus to enjoy, which means a commitment to upkeep. Work parties are held on Saturday mornings 4-6 times each year, with different tasks addressed each time. All are welcome to come by and pitch in – for an hour, or all morning.

Those who attend are invited to go for pizza lunch afterward; it's a nice fellowship time to wind down. Look for future notices and come join us!

LEFT COLUMN

Top: Meg and Gregg lowering the wood chip pile

Middle: Bob working in the Memorial Garden

Bottom: Byron and Ron removing ivy

RIGHT COLUMN

Top: Scott checking the roof of the Big Church

Left: Helen clearing the open field along Thornton Ave.

Right: Rainer headed to the next patch of weeds

Vocations Conference at St. Dorothy's Rest

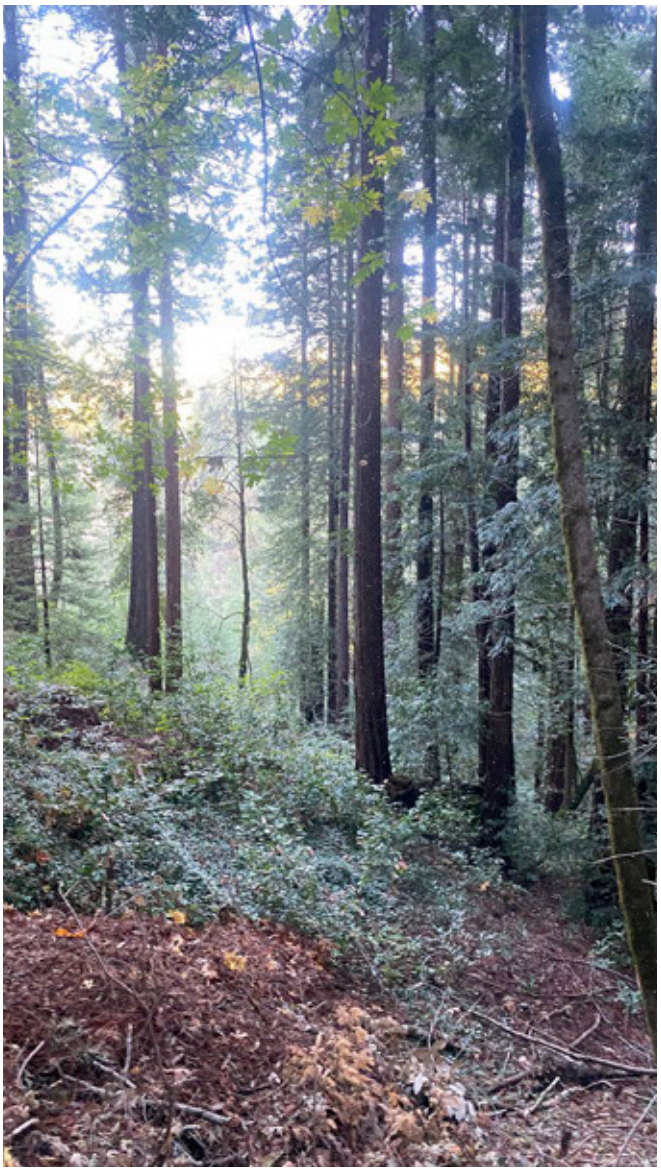
Submitted by John Wagas

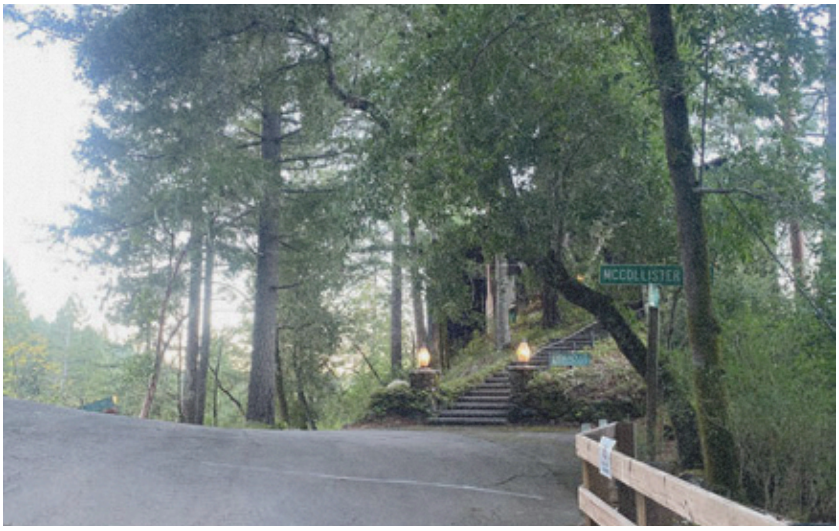
For those who do not yet know, I have been in the formal discernment process for Holy Orders (specifically, priesthood) in the Episcopal Diocese of California for nearly two years. It has been a blessed time of engaging in prayer, relationship, service, meditation, ritual, listening, conversation, and discernment.

At this stage in the process, I am a Nominee for Postulancy; to be made a Postulant is to move forward in the discernment process, allowing me to attend seminary and begin training for ordained ministry.

From November 15 to 16, I spent time in communal prayer and discernment at St. Dorothy's Rest retreat center with fellow nominees, members of the diocesan Commission on Ministry, our Vocation's Director Travis Stevens, our Canon for Formation Amy Cook, and Bishop Austin.

Please keep me in your prayers as I continue to discern God's call for my vocation — updates to come soon!





ALWAYS AT SAINT JAMES'

PARISH CALENDAR

Access the online parish calendar **here.**

DIOCESAN NEWSLETTER

The Episcopal Diocese of California, or DioCal, publishes a weekly newsletter every Thursday via email which you can receive by signing up on their website **HERE**.

For more information on diocesan events, staff, offerings, and resources, visit **www.diocal.org**.

BLESSING BAGS FOR DISTRUBITION

Let us remember those who have no shelter. Our Blessing Bags are available for you to give away. Each bag contains toiletries, water, food, socks, and a mask. We're using reusable cloth bags that can also serve as a backpack. **Please note we are not taking donations other than monetary donations.** This allows us to purchase what we need and to be consistent with what we are offering.

Blessing Bags are available to pick up during office hours, Wednesdays & Thursdays between 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM, in the parish office hallway.

Occasionally we have people visit church to ask for assistance. It is helpful to have gift cards we can give out with blessing bags when appropriate. If you'd like to donate a card, we ask for $25 cards for gas, Safeway, Target, Walmart, or Lucky. They can be given to the wardens, clergy, or put in the office.

MORNING CHAIR EXERCISE CLASS | ZOOM

Tuesdays | 10:00AM – 11:00 AM

Join Sylvia Ma for a weekly Zoom class on chair exercises on Breathing/Qi Gong and Tai Chi/ Hsing I movements. No experience is necessary. If you are interested, email Sylvia at **hsiehtinghsueh@yahoo.com**. The link will also be found on the parish website's calendar.

NEWS FOR DECEMBER

PARISH PRAYER LIST

For Those in the Military
Jarrod, Megan, Theresa, Mark, Tim, Caitlin, Emily, Robin, Dave, Shawn, Ethan, Paul, Matthew, Johnny, Johnathan, Darren, Robert

For Healthcare Workers and Chaplains
Evelyn, Jeff, Brian, Josephine, Mary, Polly, Alice, Bozena, Angela, Darcia, Mary, Tammy, Mana, Natalie, Dr Jonathan, Megan, Gerald, Amber

For Teachers, Principals, School Staff
Jennifer, Monique, Toni, Jill, Sherea, Esther, Peter, Vivienne, Margaret, Stephen, Tim, Jason, Jeannie, Lucia, Travis, Jasmine, and those in our families and communities

For Those Expecting Children
Franklin & Brittany, Doug & Brionna

For Those Who Need Solace, Strength, & Guidance
David, Maria, Derek, the Finale family, Crystal, the Cambra family

For Those Who Need Healing & Comfort
Ron, Julie, Gail, Linda, Barry, David, Elaine, Kit, Margaret, Karla, Mandy, Tim, Simon, Dee, Paul, José, Barbara, Albert, Amanda, John, Lorena, Leticia

For Those Who Have Passed Away
Rodney, Cathy, Ron, Julie, Craig

To add someone to the "Special Prayers" list, please call or email the Church Office. After six weeks, names are removed. Please renew request(s) as needed.

The next issue of The Window is in January 2025 We welcome your comments, essays, poems, photos, newsworthy items, and any group activity information.

Email your submissions to newsletter@saintj.com by December 20, 2024.

BIRTHDAYS
DECEMBER

1	Sue Lambert
	Cassandra Locher
2	Logan Bennett
	John Kimber
4	Rose Hoffman
	Alex Locher
6	Paul Svenson
11	Mary Frances Leopold
18	John Butterfield
	Elaine Vallecillo-Miller
20	Sylvia Ma
21	Jill Buono
22	Karen Koonze
	Bud Spalding Jr.
29	Reena Davis
31	Philippa Spencer

ANNIVERSARIES
DECEMBER

None this month

ADDRESS *Thornton Avenue at Cabrillo Terrace, Fremont CA*

MAILING *PO Box 457 Fremont, CA 94537-0457*

WEBSITE *www.saintj.com* **TELEPHONE** *(510) 797-1492*

OFFICE HOURS *Wednesdays & Thursdays* | *10:00am – 1:00pm*

Called to serve, in new and loving ways.

PARISH STAFF

The Rev. Lori Walton | *Rector*.....**lori@saintj.com**
Karla Koon | *Seminarian*.....**karla@saintj.com**
Jan Scrutton | *Children and Youth Minister*.....**jan@saintj.com**
Jennifer Ravera | *Music Director*.....**music@saintj.com**
Ron Cook | *Office Administrator*.....**admin@saintj.com**
Bruce Roberts | *Treasurer*.....**treasurer@saintj.com**

VESTRY MEMBERS

Senior Warden
Vivienne Paratore | srwarden@saintj.com

Junior Warden
Charisma Pangilinan | jrwarden@saintj.com

John Amouroux
Nancy Castaneda
Gregg Feeney
Burtin Hart
Matt Hurley
Kaethe Langs
Peter Maina
Marcus Pun
Ann Saponara
Barbara Vacchieri

Vestry Clerk **Elizabeth Hart**

CONVENTION DELEGATES

Mary Frances Leopold
Mike Scrutton
Ken Trant
John Wagas

Alternate to Convention **Jim McConnell**

Contact Us: **stjdeanery@saintj.com**

WORSHIP TIMES

Sunday Services:
In-Person | 8:00am and 10:30am

Live-streamed | 10:30am with recording

Wednesday Service:
Online/Zoom | 10:00am

IMPORTANT COORDINATORS

Eucharistic Ministers & Lectors
George Siegmann

Eucharistic Visitors
The Rev. Lori Walton

Ushers
Burtin Hart

Facilities ***facilities@saintj.com***

The Window Newsletter Staff
Laura Winter
John Wagas **Gregg Feeney**
Brian Cochran