The Window

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

JANUARY 2025

Who Is My Neighbor?

Written by Burtin Hart

Because God imbued us with free will, just who one believes one's neighbor is depends on whose philosophies you have taken as your own truth over the course of your life, based on your education and culture (or subculture)—in short, your milieu.
We (the Ferris/Hart clan contingent in Fremont) have very good relationships with our closest neighbors, e.g., those with whom we have nurtured friendships over the years or who have lived or still live on our own street (or in some cases a few streets distant), and who happen to have different faith-traditions than ours.

We have been friends with the (Roman-Catholic) family directly adjacent to our west for 30 years. They (in particular, the husband, who, like me had once been a steelworker before college) have over the years invited me over so often (sometimes when, technically, I was supposed to be doing some chore) that if for some reason my wife, Elizabeth, was unable to find me, she'd either telephone or knock on the door of their home first. When one of their daughters married, we were among the family friends invited to the wedding. When my buddy, Vince, passed away, his family invited me to give one of the readings at his memorial service. They rely on me to keep an eye on their home when they are away (now more frequently since Vince's passing, since their children moved away and Marie travels to see them).

I fairly frequently make cold-brew decaf coffee, and when I brew a batch, I give one of the bottles to Marie. Marie lit a candle to Vince for me during Mass, marking the year since Vince's passing.

For some years after some of our Asian-Indian Muslim neighbors moved in about 15 years ago, we developed friendships with two couples in particular, Reyez and Farah (adjacent to our north), and Aslam and Nazia (adjacent to our east). We got to know each other better (unfortunately) only after the 2019 Christchurch mass shootings, at the candlelight vigil for the victims that was held at Lake Elizabeth. First, one and then the other of them saw us at the vigil, and we all formed into a group that was then joined by other neighbors. All of our relationships changed after that, for the better. We exchange produce and gardening tips from/about our gardens, and we occasionally share dishes we have prepared. It's sad that we didn't get to know them better earlier and that it took a horrible tragedy for us to "get comfortable" with one another, but it did happen and the neighborhood improved because of it.

One set of neighbors (a Jewish/Roman-Catholic couple, Bryna and James), who moved to Livermore after their two sons earned Bachelor's degrees, still

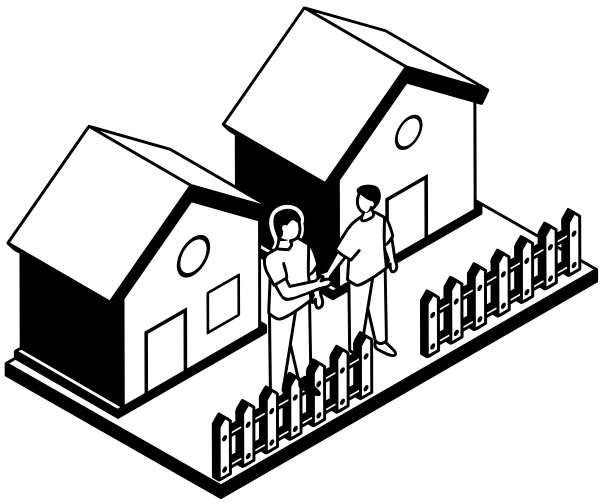
(Cont. on Page 2)

Who Is My Neighbor? *(continued)*

invites us to their home for certain festivities like graduation ceremonies, their Passover seder, or other notable events, despite the fact that all of our children are grown and have their own private lives. Interestingly, one of their sons, Elijah, who lives in Newark with his partner, Valerie, still comes over fairly regularly for supper (particularly if we are having certain pork dishes) since his mother holds to Reform Judaism and gave up eating pork as a Bat Mitzvah commitment that she has steadfastly maintained. Elijah makes note that he made no such commitment and we all get along just fine (in fact, Bryna admits that she misses bacon, but a commitment is a commitment). James and I are known to take long walks whenever we can find the time to do so.

Episcopalians generally tend to be of the mindset that we exist in a commonality of neighbors (varying basically in degree only by geographical position) and that, in particular, anyone in real need is your neighbor, regardless of their milieu or ethnicity (or "race" as some see it, despite that there is only one extant species of h. sapiens on Earth), age, religion, citizenship, or other socially defined category or categories—including sexual orientation. We also accept that God gave us "reason" to be able to discern clues about just what type of "help" those "others" we encounter in life—irrespective of their faith tradition—actually need from us when and if they ask for it—or, more Christ-like—if or/and when we perceive they need our help without asking for it (for example offering to them the Blessing Bags St. James' makes available for distribution, or guiding them to services for the unhoused like Abode Services, or to other services like dealing with substance abuse or mental health), simply because—given that we "believe" in God and Jesus' guidance—it is the correct action to take to be an actual "help," in other words, through compassion for your fellow human beings and all of God's creatures.

Nonetheless, it is also a fact of life that there are others who will try unfairly, or even cynically (or due to some other human failing) to take advantage of our good intentions, and it is up to us to be aware of their actions—to be good stewards of ourselves—in order to work at discerning their intentions when we are deciding the course of action we should take to, in fact, be of actual "help" to them—or/and to ourselves generally—by knowing when to say "No, you may not do that!" for the greater good. And that, sometimes, is a very hard thing to do—but it is the right thing to do to be a follower of Jesus Christ and a good neighbor. I leave it to you to discern what matters most in who you decide to call "neighbor."



VESTRY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Submitted by Charisma Pagilinan, Jr Warden

The Vestry met in person on December 19, 2024 on Zoom with Burtin Hart beginning with Opening prayer at 7:01pm.

Monthly Business

- Voted and accepted approval of the November 21 Vestry meeting minutes.
- Bruce, the Treasurer, reviewed the financial reports. Pledges are now up, 0.2%, by ~$14,800. Voted and accepted approval of the November financial reports.
- Voted and accepted approval of the November staff and ministry reports.

New and Continuing Business

- Voted and approved the 2025 Housing Allowance (the amount Rev. Lori will designate for her housing maintenance).
- Voted and approved a new Endowment Board member and chair: Jan Brandt
- Voted and approved reimbursement to the Blessing Bag ministry for $436.
- Discussed potential new Vestry members for 2025.
  - We need at least 1 more to meet the minimum. Ideally, we'd have 3 new members to again be at full capacity.
- Discussed preliminary numbers for the 2025 Budget.
  - As of the meeting, 18 previous pledges have not yet been submitted.
- Discussed funding options for a second clergy person. We may or may not receive a salary allowance with a new curate but regardless, the suggestion was to pursue plans for a second clergy, including having a job description ready for both options of a part time and full time clergy.
- Charisma gave an update on the Safe Parking program. St. James' is set to host in January.
  - There will be 15 participants parking.

Reminders

- Burtin is assigned the newsletter for January, due December 20. *See article on Page 1*.
- Vivienne is assigned the newsletter for February, due January 20.
- The next Vestry meeting will be in person on January 9, Barbara assigned prayers.
- 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 February Vestry meeting will be on February 20.

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 and Burtin led us in 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 in TK- 6th grade, meets weekly during the 10:30AM service. The children gather in church and head to the Sunday School classroom when the service begins and returning during the Peace to participate in the Eucharist with their families. A registration form for all under 18's which includes a media release and opportunity to share any relevant information can be found **HERE**. This is for the 2024-25 school year and all families are encouraged to complete it.

Episcopal Youth Fremont

Episcopal Youth Fremont (EYF) is a youth group for 6th – 12th graders based at St. James' which meets during the school year.

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

FINANCIAL SUMMARY | November 2024

Fund Balances	11/30/2023	11/30/2024
Operating Fund	66,437.44	75,711.37
Building Fund	95,580.44	95,911.42
Special Interest funds	654,908.95	717,887.05
Pledges Budgeted	316,006.17	364,586.75
Pledges Paid	339,101.21	365,187.39
Unpledged Contributions	8,807.49	9,370.00
Other Operating Income	15,479.17	19,080.15
Total Operating Income	363,387.87	393,637.54
Total Operating Expenses	358,043.32	378,838.15
Income Less Expenses	5,344.55	14,799.39

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 JANUARY

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, Emma and those in our families and communities

For Those Expecting Children
Franklin & Brittany

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

For Those Who Need Healing & Comfort
Ron, Julie, Gail, Linda, Barry, David, Elaine, Kit, Margaret, Karla, Mandy, Dee, Paul, José, Barbara, Albert, Amanda, John, Lorena, Leticia, James, Katie, Charity, Marge, Claudette, Bill, Lynate, Becky, Nancy, Patty

For Those Who Have Passed Away
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 FEBRUARY. *We welcome your comments, essays, poems, photos, book reviews, newsworthy items, and any group activity information.*

Email your submissions to newsletter@saintj.com by January 20, 2025

BIRTHDAYS
JANUARY

1	Esther Maina (Wothaya)
2	Chelsea Drescher
3	Lida Gilyaneh
5	Laura Winter
6	Tom Blalock
10	Caylyn Ramsamy
13	Katie Cunningham
14	Richard Kostick
15	Avis Gonzales
17	Serafina Singh
19	Frankie McLeod
	Katie Porter
20	Bud Ekren
	Stephanie (Casas) Velichko
22	Lily Davis
25	Lori Walton
26	Byron Bader
28	Maggie Shalar
29	Olivia Carini
31	Keira Westra

ANNIVERSARIES

25	George Siegmann III & Penelope Siegmann

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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