The Window

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

JUNE 2025

You Are The Light of The World

by Barbara Vacchieri

This is a tough one to even get started, partly because of the world we live in today. No sunshine and roses, that's for sure. So we have to find our own light.

I have always looked to the light in my darkest times, not an easy feat whatsoever. I know I talk about my mother and grandmother a lot, but these two women are my heroes. Knowing what I know now about their struggles in life, it humbles me to say I've lived a life of perpetual light because of them.

These ladies have never shown me their darkness but always have shown me the light of God. I think we all have God's light in us. I see people who are too scared to share too much light for fear of judgment. I am not one of those people.

I find myself in a place where I can share my light with no judgment. Church for one, but where my shine really comes out bright is my job. I am blessed with a job that has a lot of God's light and innocence.

As a campus monitor at a local elementary school, I work daily among God's children; after all, they are the light of the world. I find myself being selfless when it comes to shining and sharing my light with them. I want to pass on what my two heroes shared with me.

These children will see the real world soon enough. It's no wonder I am so exhausted when I come home from work. Sharing and receiving that much light is both exhausting and a blessing.

I pray all the time that God will always shine his light on this world.

Image by Bro. Martin Erspamer, OSB

UPCOMING EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

Holy Hikes' Summer Solstice Service at Church of the Wildwood

Friday, June 20th – Meet at 12:20pm

Come join Holy Hikes and help create a living liturgy at a Summer Solstice Service among the redwoods. **Meet at *Canyon Meadow Staging Area* in Redwood Regional Park, Oakland, CA.** From there it's a fifteen-minute walk (1/2 mile) along the flat, paved Stream Trail to the location of the old Church of the Wildwood at what is now named Old Church Picnic Area. (See the walk **HERE**.) There is seating available during the service. The service opens with the Prayer to the Seven Directions and has space to create ritual together. You may help create this liturgy. If you play an instrument that's portable, bring your instrument and a song to share. If there is a short reading or poem that is fitting for the solstice service that you would like to share, please bring it. There will be time for offering intercessions and thanksgivings as well as time for silent meditation. All are welcome to attend. In 2025, ***Holy Hikes–San Francisco Bay Area*** is offering four gatherings aligned with the Spring Equinox, Summer Solstice, Autumn Equinox, and Winter Solstice.

Building Trust as a Diocesan Community - Videos & Zoom Gathering

We will have an event every three weeks to explore one of the values by watching the videos together, talking in small groups, and sharing how we see ourselves in these values in preparation for the Strategic Vision in October at our Diocesan Convention. Find the dates & register for these sessions with Bishop Austin and Canon Sierra **HERE**.

Summer Family Night

Sunday, June 22nd

The whole church family is invited to our Summer Family Evening on June 22nd. Think of it as all-age summer camp in an evening with dinner included! **Please mail jan@saintj.com with any questions or to sign up for the event.**

Feast of Pentecost

June 8th

It is the tradition of the church to share our languages during worship on this day. If you speak a language other than English, **please contact Rev. Lori by May 25th.** Thank you!

VESTRY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Submitted by John Amouroux, Junior Warden

This in-person meeting was called to order at 7:00pm. Rev. Lori offered the Opening Prayer.

Monthly Business

- Oral Communications:
  - The work of vestry sign-ups were refinalized.
  - We discussed Karla's passing.
- The vestry approved the April 16 vestry meeting minutes.
- The vestry reviewed and accepted the April financial reports.
- The vestry accepted the April staff and ministry reports.

New & Continuing Business

- Lori debriefed the vestry on the Easter reception.
- The vestry voted to approve the City of Fremont camp scholarship for $750 from SI children's community.
- Lori updated the vestry on the status of the part-time associate rector recruitment efforts.
- We discussed organization for the Feast of St. James' on July 27.

Reminders

- Kaethe has the newsletter article for July, due June 20.
- The next vestry meeting is on June 10 on Zoom (Kaethe has prayers).

The meeting adjourned, and Emily 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 SPOTIFY

APPLE 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 return 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 an 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' that 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 | APRIL 2025

Fund Balances	4/30/2024	4/30/2025
Operating Fund	73,563.54	58,421.16
Building Fund	95,759.68	125,254.88
Special Interest Funds	690,735.43	715,148.84
Pledges Budgeted	132,577.00	124,987.32
Pledges Paid	142,484.82	127,185.04
Unpledged Contributions	3,555.00	7,394.95
Other Operating Income	6,629.32	8,811.09
Total Operating Income	152,669.14	143,391.08
Total Operating Expenses	140,198.490	145,921.91
Income Less Expenses	12,470.65	(2530.83)

You are the Light of the World

by Bev Mosier

Editor's note: This article was incomplete in the May issue. It is printed in its entirety here:

You are the light of the world… No one lights a lamp, then puts it under a basket. The lamp is put on the lampstand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see the good that you do and give glory to your Father in heaven. **- Matthew 5:14-16**

These words of Jesus' are clear, but the mandate isn't easy, because we are only human. We get caught up in the here and now, and sometime stumble around in darkness because of our own limitations.

When I taught middle school, I sometimes used the game "Would You Rather…?" to promote interaction. Players drew cards from a deck with two (both unappealing) options. They "had to" choose one. Lively conversations usually ensued. But there was one question all middle schoolers agreed upon. It would be worse to have a large zit on the end of their nose than to walk around in shoes that caused blisters for a week.

Self-conscious avoidance of the kind of humiliation large, visible pimples cause for hormonal teenagers won over a healthier avoidance of physical pain every time. Still for adults, fear of what others might think can be such a powerful deterrent that we fail to stand up against injustice, live out a gospel of love, or even let people know what we believe, if so doing means potentially being criticized. Instead, we hide our light under a basket to "protect" ourselves from perceived judgment.

So many other mindsets and emotions can also block us from the light. Obsessive anger, greed, depression, self-doubt, self-absorption, and so on, all restrict how much light we ourselves can take in and, therefore, how much we can spread to others.

Jesus said, "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**

In fact, a lightbulb cannot illuminate a room by itself. It has to be plugged into a source. Jesus said if we follow him, he will be our source. We can both receive and share light, if we can take our focus off our own issues and focus on Jesus, instead. We need to be open to him, learn from him, commune with him in prayer, and allow his divine light to fill us. Then our countenance reflects the joy and peace from above, regardless of our circumstances. Then we naturally reach out more, become kinder and more generous, and do good in the world. In the process, we bring glory back to him.

Image by Bro. Martin Erspamer, OSB

The True Meaning of John 3:16

by Brian Cochran

"For God loved the world in this way, that he gave a uniquely born son in order that everyone committing to him may not die but rather have life perpetual."
- John 3:16

After years of studying, translating, and meditating on the Gospel of John, I offer this reflection on its most famous verse.

Propelled by the Jewish discovery that Divinity permeates the universe, Jesus became an enlightened being. And he went out into the wide world to spread the good news that we all can become enlightened (see John 1:1-18).

Some parts of this verse, a favorite of many, are simple yet profound. Others parts need some discussion. The first two verbs declare God's actions, loving and giving. Who does he love? The world. What does he give? The only or unique son. How is it that Jesus is the son of God? By his realization that God has loved him from the beginning of time. Now some of these ideas may sound more Buddhist or Hindu to our ears. But in reality they are very Jewish, very Christian, too.

The fact of existence is a profound mystery, a wondrous miracle. Moses recognized this at the burning bush. Jesus saw it at his baptism and in his wilderness wanderings. And he calls everyone to enjoy the glory of existence. We are not to live in fear and misery but in peace and joy and love.

The middle verb of the verse is πιστεύων είς (pisteuōn eis), usually translated "believing in." I have translated it "committing to" following CK Barrett who says when the verb is combined with "into" (είς) that it means both assenting to something and allegiance to it. In the Nicene Creed which we say every Sunday in church, we say, "We believe in one God," "We believe in one Lord," and "We believe in the Holy Spirit," and also, "We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church." What we are really saying is, "We commit to following God in three persons and upholding the gathering of his followers."

What does that commitment consist of? Faith, hope, and love in the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in the midst of this wicked world. Faith or believing in, as I said in the previous paragraph, means commitment to the promises and demands of God as presented in the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament. Hope, in a more robust definition than merely a warm feeling of optimism, means (1) having a goal of becoming enlightened as Jesus was enlightened,
(2) trusting that we can achieve that goal, and
(3) pushing through all obstacles to achieve that goal (see Brené Brown). An essential expression of this hope is praying to receive the Holy Spirit (see John 14:12-20; 15:7, 16; and 16:20-24), asking, requesting, and trusting that the Holy Spirit of God will reveal God's unconditional love to us in our hearts and souls (John 14:23; Romans 5:1-5). Jennifer leads us in singing this prayer sometimes in Latin: "Veni Sancte Spiritu!" Experiencing God's love shining in our hearts is one example of the fruit we will produce when we commit to God, the Father, Son, and Spirit (John 15:1-5, 8, 16). Jesus experienced this love and then extended it to others (John 13:1; 15:9-13). And so, as a result of receiving God's love, our cup overflows with love for others.

(continued on next page)

John 3:16 (*continued*)

This is life perpetual. It is not "pie in the sky by and by" but right now, here. If we live an empty life, a life not filled with God's love, we will be filled with the fear of death (Hebrews 2:15). We will be dead, not alive. This is serious. We are not living in faith, or in hope, or in love. We will be consumed by our fear, anxiety, and depression, all very real feelings that afflict us in this uncertain world to be sure. But if we commit to Jesus as our Ultimate Guide, our Lord, we will follow his way of faith and hope as antidotes of fear and death, into unconditional love (ἀγαπε, agape) from God and to one another. The creative relationship with God and others is a never-ending source of joy, and sometimes grief, but always more love, more life.

Notes: CK Barrett, *The Gospel of St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text*, 2d edition, 1978, p. 164.

Brené Brown, *The Gifts of Imperfection*, Guidepost #3, Cultivating a Spirit of Resilience, 2010.

Image by Bro. Martin Erspamer, OSB

"Oneness"

Thich Nhat Hanh

Submitted by John Wagas

The moment I die,
I will try to come back to you
as quickly as possible.
I promise it will not take long.
Isn't it true
I am already with you,
as I die each moment?
I come back to you
in every moment.
Just look,
feel my presence.
If you want to cry,
please cry.
And know that I will cry with you.
The tears you shed
will heal us both.
Your tears are mine.
The earth I tread this morning
transcends history.
Spring and Winter are both present in the moment.
The young leaf and the dead leaf are really one.
My feet touch deathlessness,
and my feet are yours.
Walk with me now.
Let us enter the dimension of oneness
and see the cherry tree blossom in Winter.
Why should we talk about death?
I don't need to die
to be back with you.

ALWAYS AT SAINT JAMES'

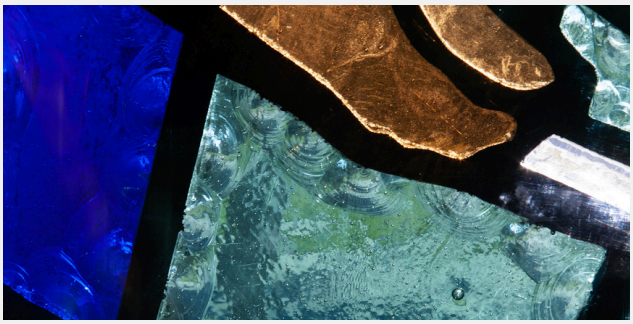
PARISH CALENDAR

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 the diocesan website **HERE**.

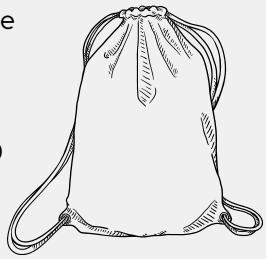
For more information on diocesan events, staff, offerings, and resources, visit **www.diocal.org**.



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 – 11:00AM

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 JUNE

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

For Those Who Need Solace, Strength, & Guidance
David, Derek, Lynn, Marilyn, Tom, Katie, Joanna, Sawyer's parents, Nick & family, David & Sylvia, the Miller family

For Those Who Need Healing & Comfort
Ron, Julie, Gail, Linda, Barry, David, Elaine, Margaret, Karla, Mandy, John, Ralph, Don, Frankie, Diane, Kithy, Bob, Erin, Sawyer, Jan, Karl, Gil, José, Paul, Albert, Barbara, John W., John, Leonard

For Those Who Have Passed Away
Shige, Barbara, Bernie, Janet, Alvin, Gill, Patricia, Karla, Gail Violet

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 July. *We welcome your comments, essays, poems, photos, book reviews, newsworthy items, and any group activity information.*

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

BIRTHDAYS

Parishioner Milestones Update:

The birthday and anniversary lists will **no longer appear** in *The Window*.

If you enjoy sending a card, email or text to people to celebrate their milestone, past issues with the information remain available on the parish website.

ANNIVERSARIES

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**
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
Charisma Pangilinan | srwarden@saintj.com

Junior Warden
John Amouroux | jrwarden@saintj.com

Emily Dunn
Gregg Feeney
Burtin Hart
Matt Hurley
Kaethe Langs
Paula McKinney
Katie Porter
Marcus Pun
Bev Mosier
Barbara Vacchieri

Vestry Clerk **Elizabeth Hart**

CONVENTION DELEGATES

Bev Mosier
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**
Barbara Milligan **Brian Cochran**