

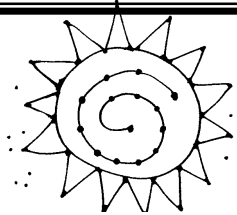


# ST. JAMES' JOURNAL

THE REV. DR. CATHY L. DEATS, RECTOR

SEPTEMBER 2009

## *What I did on my summer vacation by Cathy D.*



THE COMIC STRIP IS *NON SEQUITUR* BY WILEY. The teacher, seated behind her desk, asks the class, "So who would like to read their summer vacation report first?" and from the class comes a loud, "**Me, please!**" "Uh...Danae? Really?" is the teacher's reply. "Yes, ma'am! I really worked hard on it!" says little Danae. In the next panel we see the teacher waiting patiently at her desk as she hears "SQUEAK SQUEAK SQUEAK." Danae stands at the front of the class with a wagon overloaded with a huge stack of paper. Says the teacher, "Ah...a busy summer, I see..." "This is the unabridged version," replies Danae, "I'm sure it'll be cut down a bit for the film adaptation."

Looking back on my summer, I feel a little like Danae. If I had to write it all down, I would need a wagon to carry it.

A week in Tulare, California with Alex and Vanessa (our son and daughter-in-law). Spectacular, as always. My favorite times were hiking Yosemite Falls, bowling (my score: 58), and an afternoon in the pool with JD and Ginger (the Jack Russells) followed by a cookout.

Two weeks in Anaheim, California, as a Deputy to General Convention from the Diocese of Newark. My favorite times: doing the business of the church in such an *orderly* way (not always expedient or riveting), singing in the choir at liturgy (where thousands gathered), meeting new and old friends. There were downers too: the assisted hearing system was not the best, and there was so much paper to deal with (The next GC promises to have computer access in the House).

One week in Appalachia, working for Episcopal Appalachian Ministries. The joy of the work doubled as I worked on a team which dismantled a previously constructed short, steep ramp built for a child and replaced it with a deck and 24 foot ramp for a young teen. The heat and humidity, the struggle with allergies, all disappeared as we watched her zoom down the ramp and back up again – by herself.

And finally, a quiet break of several days to the beauty of nature in the Adirondacks, at the home of a clergy colleague. My favorite times: a visit to the garnet mine and a leisurely ride on a local bike trail. Even the day of rain was a blessing, keeping my husband and me indoors to read and talk and 'veg out.'

I wonder if Danae reflected on her summer, even as she wrote her report and later dragged it to school with her. I have learned a few things:

- when you are with people you love, weather doesn't matter
- the beauty of God's creation is a powerful healer
- if the frame is not level, nothing you add to it will ever be level
- sometimes when you think you are the giver, you are the receiver
- a picture really *is* worth a thousand words

I wonder what stories you all bring back from your summers, and how you might reflect on them. I look forward to hearing those stories, as we begin again to make new times together.

Faithfully yours,

## Wardens' Words

At the August vestry meeting, we received the good news that our budget and expenses are right on track. Unfortunately, that means the predicted \$24,000 deficit is right on track as well. The vestry constantly struggles with how to remedy this situation. At the meeting, we were "forced" to vote a bequest to be used in the general fund instead of being used for the new kitchen. On a positive note, we had our first rental of the new parish hall and things went very well. Future rentals are expected.

We have lots of exciting events coming up: Rummage Sale, Golf Outing, Tricky Tray, Parish Development Dinner and the Celebration of St. James' which includes a Murder Mystery Dinner. Please take advantage of all the opportunities to participate and give. We look forward to a busy and productive fall season.

*Dawn Modugno*  
Senior Warden

I thought I would use this space to provide a brief mid-year report on the finances of St. James'. Everyone is accustomed to hearing all about finances at the annual meeting in January, when the budget for the New Year is proposed. For most church members, they don't hear much more about the budget again until the next Annual Meeting (of course the Vestry and Finance Committee members deal with finances throughout the year).

There is certainly good news, The offerings so far this year have exceeded the budget by about 10% and the year-to-date expenses are a few percent lower than the budgeted amount. So, the church's finances are tracking the budget very closely. However, our financial advisors made some changes to the Snyder Memorial Fund portfolio late last year and earlier this year when financial markets were in turmoil. This was necessary to lower the overall risk of the portfolio and it resulted in reduced income generation, as higher yielding investments were replaced with more stable (but lower yielding) investments. The net result is the Foundation Fund Income will be reduced by about \$15,000 this year, which will leave an overall budget shortfall of nearly \$44,000.

Clearly, having a shortfall of this magnitude is unsustainable as we go forward.

As the 2010 budget is being developed over the next several months, the St. James' leadership would welcome any suggestions or recommendations. The dates and times of the Finance Committee meetings will be announced and all are welcome to attend and share their ideas and concerns.

*Greg Malejko*  
Junior Warden

## Vestry Hi-Lites from the August meeting

- The Vestry voted to designate a recent \$1,500 bequest to the General Fund rather than the Kitchen Fund, due to the budget shortfall.
- Building Use Guidelines discussion of rental of the Great Hall centered on issues of whether to provide smoking areas outdoors, serving of alcoholic beverages at functions, and fees. Final draft will be delivered to Vestry for approval.
- The Sunday School classes will be meeting in the Great Hall. Provisions have been made for storage of materials and an Open House on Homecoming Sunday.

## Thank you to all the saints of St. James'

Today, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, is Andrew's birthday. It is a perfect time to express my thanks for the many good people at St. James' who made Andrew's service in celebration of his life possible. Cathy patiently listened to me and my strange requests for a service that would honor who he was in life. It was not an Episcopal service of Rite one or two. It was the right service for Andrew. Cathy arranged the inclusion of the poem "Sigvaldr, (Andrew), a Splendid Man".

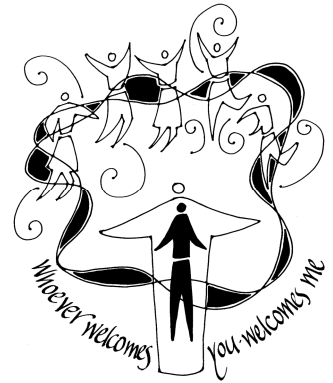
My thanks to the choir who gave their time and heart to the rendition of "Steal Away". Their voices made sure Andrew did not steal away unmourned. Thank you to Brian and Jeanette Nolan for their "Journey Beyond Death". Thank you to the lady saints who set up and prepared all that delicious and consoling food. Thank you to whoever the kind soul was who arranged the music tapes of Monty Python and others that Andrew really enjoyed. Thank you to Deacons, The Rev. Jeanette Hile and The Rev. Tom Smith. Thank you to all who attended for your ministry of presence. Thanks to the many who sent me cards and notes. Special thanks to Linda Murray who coped so graciously with writing thank you notes to those who donated in Andrew's memory to the Deaf Ministry. Special thanks to the Vestry of St. James' for the gift of Andrew's resting place in the columbium. Thank you to the people who hug and comfort me when they see me still. You are my saints.

*Sheila Shuford Deacon*



## Dates to Remember in September

September 6	Return to two services 8:00 AM & 10:00 AM
September 12	Rummage Sale • 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
September 13	Sunday School Registration Youth Group Meets • Mitcham House • 10:00 AM
September 14	Return to Regular Office Hours • 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM, Monday to Friday
September 15	EFM Classes Begin • Mitcham House
September 16	District 1 Mtg - 7:00 PM
September 17	Tricky Tray Committee Meeting • 7:00 PM
September 20	Homecoming Sunday • Sunday School Registration • Family Breakfast
September 21	Golf Outing • Minebrook Country Club
September 24	Vestry Meeting • Mitcham House • 7:30 PM
September 27	Web Design/Brainstorming • 11:30 AM
September 27	Sunday School Classes Begin/Parish Hall • 10:00 AM
September 30	Parish Development Dinner



## Homecoming Sunday – September 20<sup>th</sup> – Services at 8 and 10 AM –

### Share Family Breakfast at 9:00 AM

Protestant churches call it “Rally Day” but we call it “Homecoming” – the time we mark as a return to the program life of our community after the summer Sabbath. Rest, relaxation, vacation, suspension of meetings and obligations are some of the marks of a summer break for both families and churches. Homecoming is a joyous celebration of the re-gathering of community, which has been re-energized! Look around this Journal for all the signs of ministry re-born. Perhaps you are ready for a change, or to try something new. Think outside the box; there are lots of opportunities to serve and to grow.

## Maintenance Morning – Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup> –9 AM to Noon

Indoor and outdoor work – gutter cleaning, removing screens and air conditioners, gardening, kitchen organization and more!

Come for all or part of the time – coffee served.

## Web Design Brainstorming – Sunday, September 27<sup>th</sup>

11:30 AM – 12:30 PM in the Great Hall

Grab your coffee or cold drink and join us!

Sponsored by the Publicity Committee.

## Save the Date – Hackettstown Community Day – Saturday, October 3

The third annual Community Day, held at the Lowe’s on Mountain Ave, will again be the site for the St. Francis’ Day Blessing of the Animals and St. James’ bake sale. Sponsored by the Hackettstown Police Department and Lowe’s, the day of fun, food and exhibits is from 12 to 5, rain or shine!

## District One

**Q:** What is District One?

**A:** It is St. James’ and nine other parishes in northwest New Jersey in the Diocese of Newark, which is divided into ten districts. Districts gather regularly to share ideas, ministry and worship. **On Wednesday, September 16<sup>th</sup>,** St. James’ will host District One clergy and lay representatives (each church sends representatives, including youth reps). The meeting begins at 7:00 pm and adjourns by 9:00 pm. You are welcome to come and meet our neighbors and learn about what we are doing together in ministry.

## You’re Invited !

**We welcome folks to attend our  
golf outing dinner on  
Monday, September 21<sup>st</sup> at**



Minebrook Golf Club on Schooley’s Mountain Road in Hackettstown. We will have a buffet dinner (featuring prime rib, chicken Marsala, vegetable lasagna), a cash bar and fun entertainment, starting at about 5:30 PM. This is a great value at \$30. A similar outing is charging \$55 for dinner.

**Please come and share in the fun** as we award the money from a 50/50 drawing, raffle and tournament prizes. This will be a fun occasion to share fellowship, and celebrate St. James’ 150th anniversary. No golf experience is needed and you don’t have to bring any equipment, as we will supply the forks, knives and plates. See a member of the committee to sign up.

*Dan Miller*



## Sunday School News

Yes, it's that time of year once again: "Back to School" and that means Sunday School will start this month as well! Sunday School is available on Sunday mornings during the 10 AM service for children in Pre-K (Age 4) up to 5<sup>th</sup> grade. This year we will meet in the newly completed Open Doors Parish Hall and we will have more room to split into two classes and do some upcoming projects. Godly Play lessons will be taught by Miss Kathy and Miss Marie every Sunday except for Family Sunday (the first Sunday of the month).

On September 20<sup>th</sup>, Homecoming Sunday, registration will take place and the teachers will be on hand to share materials from Godly Play. Please stop by at the Parish Hall to register your children and see what we do each Sunday.

Then on September 27<sup>th</sup> at 10 am, we will hold our first lesson. Juice and snack donations will be needed. We are also looking for volunteers to assist one Sunday per month. Please call Kathy Lacouture (908.850.9214) or see me on the 20<sup>th</sup> if you can lend a hand once a month for an hour and a half.

### LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU IN SEPTEMBER!!!!

*Kathy Lacouture*  
Sunday School Coordinator

## Youth Group

Youth group will start again on Sept. 13th. All youth grades 6-12 are welcome. We meet in the Mitcham House on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month, during the 10 o'clock service. There is a 40-minute discussion-based lesson and then we join the congregation for Eucharist. Come join the fun.

Watch the Youth Group bulletin board for topics and meeting changes. Hope everyone had a great summer and we are looking forward to seeing you all. We would like other church members to take a turn leading a lesson this year. The group is a lot of fun and the lesson plans are very simple.

Please help support this ministry. There is a sign up sheet on the Youth Group bulletin board or see *Dawn Modugno* or *Lori Pursel*.

### Food Request for September

*I am very thankful for all of your church's support at the Lord's Pantry. For September, we could use **pasta, rice mixes, instant potatoes and potato mixes.***

*Many thanks, as always,  
Blessings,  
Sandy at the Pantry*

## Choir Notes

It seems like just a short while ago that we were starting up 9:00 am services and now they're gone! The Adult Choir has already met this change head-on with their first rehearsal on August 27! We continue to rehearse on Thursday evenings at 7:30 pm in the church and, as always, stand ready to welcome any interested folks with open arms, ready smiles and your very own hymnal. Do you have to "read music"? No! Most of our singers learn by ear and they do a fine job as you can hear every Sunday. Do you have to be able to match pitches or sing on pitch? Well, yes, but if you aren't sure if you can do that we can help you find out. We would particularly love to have some basses to fill out that great bottom part as well as another alto or two as Jiying Zhao is taking a sabbatical to work on a project with her daughter. We'll miss her and hope she won't be a stranger on Sunday mornings!



Deacon Jeanette Heil and I have been talking about doing something with her choir at House of the Good Shepherd this year. We're in the very early stages of talking but we both think it would be fun. So look, and listen, for more on that!

Remember, you don't have to commit to every Sunday. I just like to know who will be around on any given Sunday so that I can plan music accordingly. So think about joining your Adult Choir!! We think you'll be hooked!

I've not forgotten about our Youth Choir. We will again be taking Youth Choir into the Sunday School classes as we get into October so we can prepare for Advent and Christmas. Look for more specifics in the October Journal!

Lastly, I want to thank Louise for providing another summer of themed preludes and postludes, which featured works by Handel, Purcell, Haydn, Mendelssohn and Schubert! I hope you all had a chance to read about her themes in the front of the summer liturgical booklet. Louise puts a good amount of time and energy into researching her summer themes and it is a treat for us to be able to receive that musical knowledge. Thank you, Louise!

*Pam*

Bell Choir "Notes" on page 5



## EAM

As the van was being packed, the workers headed for Appalachia kissed families goodbye and prayed for safe travel as the Rector sprinkled their trusty transport with holy water. Barbara White, Sylvia Okoye, Matthew Malejko, Katie Lacouture and Cathy Deats worked on a variety of projects in southwest Virginia for Episcopal Appalachian Ministries. Katie's team put a new tin roof on a house and Cathy and Sylvia built a 24-foot ramp to provide more freedom for a young teenager. Matt worked with the oldest of the workers (two men, each 80+) and a homeowner who was a retired (disabled) carpenter "who had every tool ever made!" EAM provides services for Appalachian families throughout the year, and for three weeks each summer, gathers people from around the northeast and mid-west to join in service to make the homes of local residents warm, safe and dry.

After each days' work, the teams gathered to reflect on their experiences. The community life in the mountains and "hollers" of Appalachia is very different from our lives in northwestern New Jersey. All the workers agreed that they really bonded with the families they worked with and learned new things about generosity and dedication to family.

The thirty workers ranged in age from fifteen to eighty-plus. St. James' has sponsored groups to EAM for the past eight years. Matthew, Barbara, Katie and Sylvia are all workers with two or more trips under their tool belts. Barbara is a member of the Vestry, Matthew and Katie are students at Hackettstown High School, and Sylvia is a freshman at Wheaton College in Massachusetts. All three teens are active members of the St. James' Youth Group.

All are hoping to return to workcamp next year!  
*Cathy*



EAM 2009: Matthew Malejko, Katie Lacouture, Cathy Deats, Sylvia Okoye, Barbara White

## My Summer "Vacation"

Work camp, in the heat and humidity of Virginia. Do I know how to have a good time or what! Actually, it was a great time! This was my second trip and I loved it just as much as I did the first. The work is rewarding and so very much appreciated. These are good people having a tough time, living in an area that has been in recession for too too many years. The poverty is heartbreaking to see. But these are strong and faithful people who believe that God will provide and things will get better. And each year, God sends a few other faithful people, from all over the country, down to help out and things do get better. What's not to love about being a part of that!

I wish you could all go and see for yourselves, it is the best. Many thanks to Cathy who started these trips so many years ago. What a great mission. Looking forward to next year!

*Barbara White*

EAM this summer was so much fun! The best part of the trip was meeting everyone at Grace House. Getting to know and spend time with all the other kids was amazing. Another great part for me was finishing our project. My group was tinning a roof and siding the top section of a house. The not-so-great part was sitting around at the job site sometimes. In my group, there were seven workers and only two ladders, so not everyone could be busy all at once. In the end I had an amazing time and I can not wait to go back next year!

*Katie Lacouture*



## Bell Choir "Notes"

Bell Choir will begin rehearsals on September 13 after the Coffee Hour following the 10:00 service. There will be no rehearsal on September 20 so members can attend the presentation by The Rev. Deacon Jacques Girard.

The choir is going to jump into the Advent and Christmas seasons and begin preparing music for the Christmas through the Arts service and for the Lessons and Carols service at St. Luke's in Montclair.

I am ecstatic that all the Bell Choir members will be returning in the fall, except for Sylvia and Tina Okoye who are off to college. I also anticipate that there will be some new people joining or rejoining us this fall.

Looking for something interesting and different to do this fall? Why not give Bell Choir a try! Please call me (732-807-3211) if you might be interested.

*Louise Olshan*



## Fundraising

Summer is over and it is time for the fundraising committee to gear up for our fall fundraisers. First, we have our **rummage sale** planned for Saturday, September 12th from 9 am-3 pm. We are planning to have items for sale on the front lawn of the Mitcham House and in the Parish Hall. We will set up on Friday evening beginning around 5:30 pm. There will be a sign up sheet for Friday and Saturday in the Parish Hall during coffee hour. Please come as you are able and give us a helping hand. If you have donations, please drop them off anytime this week. You can leave items in the Parish Hall or if no one is in the office, leave them on the front porch and we will bring them in.

### The Golf Outing

This is a new event for us and we have a very dedicated committee that has worked very hard on this event. Even if you do not golf, please consider having dinner with us. Ask any one of the committee members for details: Dan Miller, Meg Critchley, Paul Bartkus or Barbara White. Russ will be on the golf course taking pictures all day and will present a slide show of this event during the dinner. There should be plenty to laugh at! If you have not signed up and would like to attend, please contact me or one of the other members of the committee. There is still time.

On Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, we will be **Blessing the Animals** and holding a **bake sale** at the Hackettstown Community Day. If you would like to bake some goodies for this event, please add your name to the list in the parish hall.

In addition, we have our fall **"What in the World"** fundraiser coming in November and a Gift Wrapping fundraiser coming soon. Keep your eyes and ears open for these events.

### Tricky Tray

I think we can call this our "Fourth Annual Tricky Tray". This is such a huge event for St. James'. This event alone has raised close to forty thousand dollars for us. That is huge and it is all because of you. Your continued support for this event is what makes it successful. We now have a following in the "tricky tray world". People are asking when and where. When will tickets be available? Well, the when is October 24th and the where is the Budd Lake Firehouse in Budd Lake. Some of the comments that I have heard are; you have such great baskets, they look so nice, it is organized and runs smoothly. Even the baked goods are getting a reputation! It is all very exciting. It is a reflection of the time and talent, the generosity and good will that comes from this community of St. James'.

This year we are again asking you to please donate a basket or make a monetary gift so that we can create a

basket or make a monetary gift so that we can create a basket for you. On the letter that was sent to each of you, there is listed many great ideas but the ideas for baskets are never-ending. Please just let Barbara Olesen, Anne Dutton, Ellen Infante or Barbara White know if you are able to make a basket. This year we will putting baskets together in the Parish Hall. If you have a creative spirit and would like to help out, just stop by any time you see us working on them. We have a lot of fun assembling the baskets and, well, you know how they turn out. If you have ribbons and bows or empty baskets that you would like to donate, please drop them off at the church any time. Once again, thank you for your support. We look forward to hearing from you.

*Barbara White*

### Not Only for Experts!

A unique foursome has signed up for the St. James' Episcopal Church Golf Outing Monday, September 21<sup>st</sup>. None of the four has experience playing golf! "We want to support the church, and have fun at the same time," said Dawn Modugno, Senior Warden of St. James'. And while the four women do want to have fun, they also don't want to be embarrassed or hold up the play of the game. So they got together last week at the Farmview Golf Center in Hackettstown. Carrying giant buckets of balls, they lined up on the putting green and in the driving stalls to take a lesson from golf pro Ron Young. "We learned a lot about the basics; Ron is a very good teacher," said Linda Connors Murray. Linda Miller, who arranged the lesson, wanted to be prepared for the outing, which has a 1 pm shotgun start at the Mine Brook Golf Club in Hackettstown. Cathy Deats, Rector of St. James', rounds out the foursome. "I am looking forward to trying my hand at golf in this setting which is so much like our church, welcoming and open to people with all sorts of gifts." The event is part of the St. James' 150th celebration and benefits the mission and ministry of St. James'.

*From St. James' Media Press Release*



Dawn Modugno learns the basics from Ron Young and Linda Miller improves her skills in preparation for the St. James' Golf Outing.

## Parish Development

**Q:** What has four committees, lots of energy, and works to grow St. James'?

**A:** Our process of Parish Development, led by the people of St. James' under the direction of Mr. Peter Saros.

In this our 150<sup>th</sup> year, we have consciously been working to share who we are (a community of welcome, dedicated to worship of and service to God) with others. The Memorial Day Parade was great fun and the float an accurate picture of who we are (young and older, diverse, involved in the community, joyous and energetic); our day of Dedication of the Open Doors Parish Hall was magnificent; and we continue to feed people with our dinners, food for the hungry in our community, and bread for the spirit in worship.

We have *not* been working feverishly over the summer! That is the way of Sabbath rest. So we have new found energy to bring the 150<sup>th</sup> to its culminating celebration on November 7 and 8, with a very special dinner and visit from Bishop Mark Beckwith. **Our next Parish Development Dinner is Wednesday, September 30, from 6:30 to 8:30 pm in our own Great Hall.** It is pot luck, with your delicious dishes shared around our committee tables.

Our committees are four in number, and the descriptions follow here. Choose one to be involved with, at the level you can manage. If you served on a committee and want to change to another, contact the coordinator. Or just come to dinner, and join in then. You will definitely have good conversation and leave with the energy that comes from connections with people who love St. James' and love God. (*Note: Coordinators are lead contact persons; in the workings of the committees, different people take leadership roles for various projects.*)

**Promotion / Publicity Committee** produces the material on the campaign. It also covers media coverage and communication within the parish. It may also publish a brochure of the various ministries of the church and may include a history. Coordinator: Paula Van Clef

**Special Events Committee** assists in the work of the Special Event (the big dinner). They also will plan and implement a series of events throughout the anniversary. They pick the location, negotiate the deal and work out the details. Coordinator: *Barbara White*

**Host / Hostess Committee** sends out the invitation to the Special Event and other events. Then, they call all the members of the congregation to see who is coming. In their calls, they try to assist those who need assistance in attending the event. Any pastoral issues that are discovered are forwarded to the appropriate persons. On

the night of the event they are the greeters and make nametags. Coordinator: *Eileen Malejko*

**Ministry Committee** is the soul of the campaign. They write a collect for the campaign that is read during the Sunday services. They may plan a Bible study, a vigil, a special service.

In some churches they have members write about what the church means to them, or how the church helps them in their daily life, and how it helps them in their spiritual development. Coordinator: *Phyllis Heistand*

*Cathy*

### Reflections wanted for 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Journal / Anthology - "What St. James' Means to Me"

The reflections will commemorate our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Each reflection can be about one to three paragraphs long. **They are due by September 20th.**

Email reflections to [pdheistand@comcast.net](mailto:pdheistand@comcast.net) or drop them off at the church office

As the busy fall season begins again, please find the time to think about, then share what St. James' means to you.

*The Ministry Committee*



## A Kitchen Update

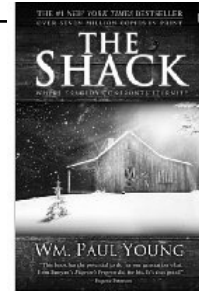
The kitchen committee has been working very hard these last couple of months designing our new kitchen. In addition to obtaining quotes for appliances, we have also been choosing flooring and picking out cabinets and countertops. The flooring and cabinets should be installed in the next few weeks. As far as appliances go, we have received 3 quotes: refrigerators (double door reach in type) averaging \$2500, gas stoves/ranges (6-burner) averaging \$2500, sinks at \$780, dishwashers at \$3300. These quotes are for new and used equipment. In addition, the required hood for our kitchen is currently running about \$1400 a foot and we will need approximately 4-6 feet. We continue to search for appliances that will keep our cost down, so if you know of a restaurant that is closing or auctions for restaurant equipment, please let us know.

We still have long way to go but the kitchen is taking shape and I know in God's good time, and with your help, we will soon be smelling the pancakes and sausage drifting through the parish hall. MMMMMmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm.

If you would like to join us in this project, you can contact me at 908-798-0928 or speak with Dawn Modugno.

*Barbara White*

## Read it! . . . and read it again



“THE SHACK” BY WILLIAM PAUL YOUNG, is a **must read** book. It is a man’s journey with his struggle to cope with life and death, and everything in between. I started reading from the Forward and continued to the very end. The book pulls you into this interesting story and in the process, it made me do a lot of thinking and rethinking. I had to stop reading it so that I could absorb how I was looking at something that I would normally take for granted. Some of these topics include structured religion, God, Jesus and The Holy Spirit....which most people don’t think of at all, and how it works in the scheme of things.

The book draws you in and takes you for the roller coaster ride of your life...all the way to the end of the book. **A MUST READ BOOK.**

*Ellen Infante*

WHEN MY SISTER JOYCE CAME TO VISIT THIS PAST MAY, SHE WAS ADAMANT THAT I READ THE SHACK. While visiting with friends after church that Sunday, Rev. Abby Hamilton also suggested that we read it. However, Abby advised us to read it twice....once to read it and the second time for theology. The next day was my birthday and sure enough, Joyce gave me a copy of The Shack.

I started to read it that night "just because" and sat up until I finished it. I could not put it down! There were so many things to ponder and to find someone to discuss them with. Joyce and I have had many, many discussions on parts of the book and have agreed that one of us is wrong in our interpretation and of course, it is not me! Although Joyce says it isn't her either!!

The nice thing about the book is that it makes you think and sometimes about things you don't want to think about. It is also nice in that the book doesn't give you answers to life's questions. If anything, it gave me more questions.

My second "reading" was actually listening to the taped reading of the book while Russ and I made a trip to New York. Abby was right and the second reading made me reflect on things I had grown up with as "gospel truth". How different perspectives can be as we grow older.

I am about to embark on my third reading of The Shack. It is just one of those books that you get something out of each and every time you read it. For those Internet persons who like to discuss things, there is a website where readers discuss the book, chapter by chapter. For those who have read The Shack, did he or didn't he?????

*Patti Worthington*

WHEN ELLEN LENT ME A COPY OF THE SHACK, I was drawn into the story from the first few pages. And I began to say “Yes!” again and again as new insights were revealed. It’s the story of the author’s best friend, Mack. The story rings true in what happens to Mack and his family, and for me, a deeper truth in what happens when Mack revisits the shack four years later. What he discovers there is an encounter with God. As Mack struggles and questions where was God in a world filled with such “unspeakable pain”, I found passage after passage that made me stop and realize I’d never thought of parts of the Gospel or theology in this way.

I passed The Shack on to Dave and we haven’t stopped talking about it. I’ve never read a better explanation and demonstration of the Trinity. This is a gift of a book and definitely one to give to yourself.

*Phyllis Heistand*

### THE SHACK – A LITTLE RUMINATION

I’m a reader and I read all the time – just can’t stop. And though they are books I really enjoy, I don’t often come across books that knock me for a loop, get me thinking about them all the time, or get me looking at world and life so differently that I’m just filled with wonder. Two books, one after the other, have hit me in the last month or so. One is The Wisdom Jesus and then, Ellen loaned Phyllis The Shack. My, my, my.

When the book came to me, I, too, roared through it (not at one sitting like Ellen and Patti, but really fast). I felt a little anxious knowing that there would be great and deep pain in the story and I often get all empathetic with characters’ experiences. But I left that feeling behind as I joined this Mack on his path to getting closer to God, Jesus, and the Spirit. His wrestling with questions and concerns were some of my own. And, I finished the book feeling so light, and fresh, and open, and seeing my little part of the world with very new eyes. And, yes, we will be reading it again to take a closer look. I even bought a special little notebook to jot down some things that strike me. I don’t think I’ve ever done that before.

So I join with others in exhorting you to pick this one up, even if you don’t read a book very often. Make the time for yourself for this one.

*Dave Heistand*



## Before we say good-by to summer . . . a look back

**Summer Afternoon Worship with cookout,**  
(actually with cook-in, thanks to one of those many rainy days)  
picnic, potluck, music and fun on July 26



Dave Heistand on guitar,  
Diana Grant and Jim Taylor  
on the beat, Amy, Katie,  
Tina, -, Sylvia and Rickie  
smiling, tables of happy  
eaters and plenteous food!



and a few more from EAM



Barbara's team, Matt taking a break,  
Sylvia at work, Cathy holding on



**Inside St. James' September Journal**

Rectors Letter • Wardens' Words



Rummage Sale September 12  
 Homecoming Sunday September 20  
 Parish Development • Parish Life



1<sup>st</sup> Annual Golf Outing  
 Minebrook Golf Course in Hackettstown  
 September 21  
 Calendars  
 And much more!

**St James' Staff & Vestry**

Rector: The Rev. Dr. Cathy L. Deats  
 Deacon The Rev. Sheila Shuford  
 Rector Emeritus: The Rev. Clarence Sickles  
 Sr. Warden: Dawn Modugno  
 Jr. Warden: Greg Malejko  
 Treasurer: Penn Pixley  
 Parish Administrator: Linda Murray  
 Music Director: Pam Laura  
 Organist: Louise Olshan  
 Sexton: Pauline Volkert

**Vestry:**

Richard Ames	Ron Cipriani
Paula Van Clef	DJ Hoffman
David Lacouture	Brian Nolan
Martha Travostino	Barbara White
Russ Worthington	

