

THE REV. DR. CATHY L. DEATS, RECTOR

May 2013



At St. James', as in most churches, we have a beautiful book of our stories. It is red with a golden cross on the front and gold coating on the edges of the pages. It is the Gospel Book. It has a different story every week of the year for three years. On the Feast of the Pentecost, the story we tell is not from the gospel story book.

It is from another book, written by Luke, one of the authors of the stories in the gospel book. The book, called the Acts of the Apostles, tells the stories of the disciples after the resurrection of their Lord and teacher, Jesus.

This book of stories of the disciples and the infant church begins with Luke reminding the readers of Jesus' resurrection and his disappearance from their sight in the ascension. This small group of disciples seemed convinced that their teacher had been the Messiah, but they must have also struggled with the reality of their position in the culture. They were gathered in Jerusalem for the Jewish holy day of Shavuot, the Feast of Weeks. It was an agricultural festival celebrating the first fruits of the early spring harvest. By the time the disciples were gathering in the upper room that day, the festival had come to focus on the celebration of God's creation of His people and the gift of the Torah on Mount Sinai. This helps us to remember that the disciples were Jewish people with a long tradition of worship and practice which had very little to do with their new identity as people of the Way. Jesus, their rabbi, was himself a Jewish man raised in a Jewish family and culture. Those who followed the Way, later to be called Christians, were themselves a very small sect of first century Judaism.

So imagine the disciples, gathered together in one place, not only because that is what Christians do, but to give each other support, to be able to retell the stories of their following Jesus, the miracles, the healings, his death, his promises. I imagine that they were trying to bolster each others' faith as they searched their memories for clues as to what the future held. Sure, Jesus had promised to be with them until the end of the ages, and then after his death and resurrection, he appeared to them a few times. These appearances were always unexpected and he never really looked like himself. Often, the disciples did not recognize him at all. And then one day he went up a mountain and disappeared into a cloud, never to be seen in bodily form again.

I imagine that that gathering in Jerusalem at *Shavuot* was a gathering of people still excited about having followed the Messiah, but also full of doubt and questions about what they were to do now that he was gone. I imagine that it may have been like 1963, when this country lost John F. Kennedy to an assassin's bullet. Our country had experienced an inspired leader and the United States was never the same again. In 1965, we lost Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement seemed to falter. The death of a leader, even an inspired leader, can cause a movement to falter, to weaken, or even to die. The exception may be in the source of the inspiration of the leader.

Even before he was crucified, Jesus told the disciples that he would send a Comforter, an Advocate, a Spirit to help them carry on. This spirit of truth would fill them and guide them and remind them of all that Jesus had done and taught so that they could bring to a starving world hope and healing and the power of love. And so on that day they gathered mostly because it was the tradition, the custom. They were all in the same place at the same time, most likely telling the stories of faith or at least comparing notes of their experiences with Jesus. Then the Holy Spirit came with a sound "like the rush of a violent wind."

Jesus had told the disciples about the wind: "The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes

Rector...Continued from page (1)

from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." Jesus gave the disciples the power of the wind.

Wind is one of the most promising forms of renewable energy, but it can be difficult to catch. One of the problems is that the best winds don't tend to move at ground level. Instead, they do their blowing *six miles up in the air, at the height of the jet stream*. At that level, the winds are stronger and blow more consistently, carrying up to a hundred times more energy. Wind towers cannot get us close enough — the tallest wind tower to date is just over 200 meters in height.

It seems that if you want to catch the wind, you have to put yourself where the wind is blowing. The disciples might have been feeling uninspired with their leader dead and gone, resurrection notwithstanding. Yet here they were, gathered together in a worshipping and remembering and storytelling place, simply being faithful to what Jesus had taught them. Love one another, as I have loved you. Seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you; give and it shall be given to you.

The heritage of John F. Kennedy lived on in the Peace Corps, the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, and the work of others, including his own children. The work of Martin Luther King is carried on as we continue to reject violence, to seek justice, and respect the dignity of every human being. To the extent that these leaders' work was inspired by something bigger than themselves alone, their work did not die with them.

Jesus' work was not just inspired by God, it was God's work. And when the disciples needed more than stories and gathering and teaching, they were sent the Holy Spirit, in the form of the rushing wind and the life-giving breath.

What happened immediately after the Holy Spirit wind rushed through the place where the disciples were? They "began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability." On Pentecost, the apostles were chattering away in the native languages of the Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Romans, Cretans, Arabs and others — in these diverse languages, they were "speaking about God's deeds of power." The apostles had been given a gift of communication by the Holy Spirit of God so that they could tell people about the good news of Jesus in a clear and compelling way. This is our task even today. We have the same Holy Spirit blowing all around us. How do we put ourselves in the path of that powerful wind? How do we catch the energy of that wind and put it to work today? The evidence that the disciples had caught the wind was their ability to communicate to all kinds of people. We can communicate in words that most can hear, in the language of sign that some can understand, with technology to help others hear. We can tell our story: there are many today who dismiss the practice of faith; our challenge is to point out what God is doing in our churches, our communities, this nation, the world.

But the miracle of Pentecost was not only a miracle of speech. It was a miracle of hearing as well. We can put ourselves in the place where listening is more important than speaking, and understanding is more important than being right. When people who have been in conflict come together, when unexpected healing happens, when warring people make peace, these are all miracles of hearing. It is the evidence of the Spirit's work that tells us of the presence of the wind and its energy.

Poet Christina Rossetti knew this, and expressed it in her poem *Who Has Seen the Wind*?

Who has seen the wind? Neither I nor you: But when the leaves hang trembling The wind is passing thro'.

Who has seen the wind? Neither you nor I: But when the trees bow down their heads The wind is passing by.

May the Spirit's work in this place be as obvious to all who see us as the evidence of the wind was to Christina Rossetti.

Cathy +



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From the Wardens

I recently read that the really tough truth is that "the church of the future will not look like the church of the past". Thank God! We live in very different world now and change we must if we expect to draw more folks into our family.

Within our inner circle of Episcopalians, we welcome diversity. In our inner circle "All are Welcome." The problem is the circle is small and seems to be getting smaller. We are a vibrant community and I truly believe that we do "welcome all," but who knows this but us?

Until I found St. James' and became a part of this family that "all" meant everyone but me. I always believed that being a lesbian meant that I would never be welcomed in any church. Having an inter-racial niece and nephew was enough to keep the doors closed in many southern churches but being gay...forget about it!

My point is we want to be a welcoming church but in my humble opinion we need to shout from the roof-tops YES! YOU ARE WELCOME! You are welcome if you are lesbian, you are welcome if you are gay, your are welcome if there are two mommies or two daddies, you are welcome if you're a single parent, you are welcome if you are an inter-racial family, you are welcome if you are transgender, if you are single or divorced, if your opinion on abortion differs from mine, you are welcome if your politics are different than mine. Jesus didn't assume because he told a few people that God loved them that everyone automatically knew; he went out into the world and preached over and over again that God loves us all. He sent his disciples out to share the Good News and that is now *our* job; we must help our community understand what "ALL" really means. We have to be specific, direct, and leave no doubt that "ALL" really does mean YOU!

I hope that you will support the Clergy, Wardens and Vestry as we move forward in making St. James' a place where all know they are welcome.

BELIEVE OUT LOUD

and invite a friend to church

Fundraising Committee

Remember to place your orders for gift cards. Orders are due May 12th. In addition to gift cards to celebrate occasions like Father's Day and graduations, this program offers us the opportunity to contribute to St. James' in purchases we make every day: trips to Wal-Mart or the pharmacy. The purchase of gas cards through this program could potentially earn St. James' significant income and the cards are used the same as cash. For your convenience there is a binder in the parish hall with a list of all cards that are available.

Thank you for continued support in all our fundraising efforts.

Invite a friend to Church!

Barbara

Vestry Hi-Lites From the April Meeting

- Vestry discussed an upcoming proposal from Amberjack (a solar company referred to us from GreenFaith) with great info from Joe Wargo, who has a home with solar panels. The proposal will present us with parameters of a solar energy system for St. James'.
- Continued work on the generation of income for the mortgage, including reduced interest rate and plans for lease of space.
- Very positive feedback from Bishop about his visit to St. James' April 7.
- Conversation about developing "elevator speeches," ways to express our experience of St. James' in 2-3 minutes (see website for examples from our Annual Meeting) so that when someone mentions church or asks us about our faith community, we are prepared.

Barbara

Golf Outing



The 5th Annual Golf Outing is May 20! As in the previous couple of years, it will be at Farmstead Golf Club in Newton, starting with registration at noon, golf at 1 PM and dinner to follow. Our golf outing has grown each year, and this event is shaping

up as better than before.

The cost per player is \$125 which includes lunch, golf (with cart) and the awards dinner that follows. For dinner only, the price to join the fun is \$30.

If you don't golf or can't join us for dinner, there are other ways that you can help with this fundraiser. Tee sponsorships are available to parishioners for \$50. For commercial sponsors, the price is \$100. The Golf Outing committee is also busy soliciting for tee sponsors as well as prizes from local merchants. In the past, many local restaurants have donated gift certificates. Other golf courses have donated free rounds of golf. Merchants in the area have sponsored tees. If you do business with a merchant in the area and they know you are from St. James', let the Golf Outing committee know and we will follow-up with them.

Registration and sponsorship flyers can be found in the Narthex and in the Great Hall, as well as on our website. Contact Dan Miller, Phyllis & Paul Bartkus, Meg Critchley or Pete Gartelmann for more information.

Dan Miller

WE FEED PEOPLE: FIRST COMMUNION CLASS **BAKES BREAD**

On a beautiful Saturday morning, sisters Anna, Sarah and Stephanie Salameh gathered to bake bread for the First Communion celebration of Anna on May 5th. We spent some time in the sanctuary, with mom Pam and dad Ramsey looking on, talking about communion and why Jesus taught us to share in the breaking of the bread. Then we baked the flat bread and marked it with a cross. We hope you enjoy it!

Praying the Box

O God of peace, you have taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be our strength: By the might of your Spirit lift us, we pray, to your presence, where we may be still and know that you are God; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever.

With this prayer we start the service, each Tuesday night from 6:45 - 7:00 pm, when we gather to "pray the box." Boxes for your praver concerns are located at the rear of the church and in the Great Hall. Cards for you to enter your requests are in pew racks as well as near the boxes. Please use the cards to lift up requests for prayer, including thanksgivings (some of our first thanksgivings might be for restored power!), and put them in the boxes or in the offering plates on Sunday.

Each Tuesday evening, the cards are gathered and you are invited to gather in the Chapel for prayer. Rod Perez-Vega leads us in an evening prayer service and we lift up all the prayer intentions from the boxes. Please think about making this a regular part of your prayer life if you are able.

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J will be the focus of our celebration on Sunday, May 26th. We recognize our music leaders: Senior Choir, Children's Choir, Bell Choir, and staff leaders Pam Laura and Louise Olshan. While musicians take a break in summer, think about the musical contributions 7 you can make with voice and instrument – see 7 Pam Laura to arrange to share your gifts!



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St. James' Episcopal Church Hackettstown

Weis Markets Added To Gift Cards Fundraiser



This month we added Weis Markets to our grocery gift card fundraiser. Back in Lent we conducted a survey to see if there was sufficient interest in buying Weis Markets cards and the results indicated that we

would just make the entry point for orders. So we will now offer them for sale on the same schedule as the ShopRite cards. Orders are taken on the last Sunday of the month. You can order the cards by emailing: <u>pbartkus@verizon.net</u> or by seeing Paul Bartkus in church. Cards are distributed on the first Sunday of the month (Family Breakfast Sunday). Both cards will be available in denominations of 25, 50 and 100 dollars. Payment can be made as orders are taken or when the cards are received.

Our gift card program has been very successful. The money raised is used for our parish's outreach ministries and the church's general operating budget. Each year we raise more than \$3000 through their sales.

With the addition of Weis Markets, we are hoping to increase that amount. When you buy a card, you get the full purchase value that you paid. We get 5% of the sales made. For every \$100 in cards sold, we get \$5. In order to make \$3000 a year, we need to sell \$5000 in cards each month.

There are currently about 19 families who purchase cards. If five or six more families joined in, we might be able to clear \$4000 a year! That would take total sales of \$80,000 for the year. It may look like a huge number, but it might not be. Remember how to eat an elephant? It is one bite at a time. We could reach this number, one card at a time, and save the bites for chocolate.

Thanks for your support and keep chewing.

Paul Barktus



WE FEED PEOPLE: GRACE HOUSE ON THE MOUNTAIN IS OUR DESTINATION FOR HOME REPAIR Construction

Applications for Episcopal Appalachian f 俞 Ministries' Work Camp are due June 1! We ð 龠 depart for EAM on Saturday, July 20 and return ð ß Saturday, July 27. Special skills not required, ß just a willingness to learn, openness to ð 俞 construction work, and desire to learn about ð £ being disciples from the fellow disciples we r ß meet in the Appalachian region of southwestern ð ß Virginia. Please request an application from **a** ð and submit completed applications to A ð cathydeats@comcast.net Applications were **A** 郃 sent to all participants from last year, so check ß 龠 your email! **i**r

Yarn Twisters



The Yarn Twisters has not met for a while, but we are still working on our projects individually and the items are adding up. My thanks to all who continue to knit and crochet. There is quite a collection of yarn in the storage bins which is available to

all. Anyone interested in joining the group is welcome to contact me at 908-684-3566 or email me at <u>frlbailey1@comcast.net</u>. I am hopeful that we can meet a few times over the summer as schedules allow.

The following items can be collected during the year. There is a blue plastic barrel in the Great Hall for donations:

•Unscented, hypoallergenic hand lotion (2-4 oz bottles)

- Sealed packages of holiday sweets
- •Books or activities like Sudoku, word searches, or playing cards
- ♦ Facial tissue
- Microwave popcorn
- •Chewing gum

Thank you,

Línda Míller



Bell Choir "Notes"

The St. James' Multi-Generational Bell Choir will be playing at the 10:00 services on May 12 and on May 26, which is Choir Recognition Sunday.

On May 12 the choir will be playing an arrangement of *Ode to Joy*. This piece was requested by Ellen Infante and I was pleased to be able to find an arrangement that works for our choir.

On May 26 the choir will be playing *Joyful Praise*. This piece is a lot of fun to play and hopefully will be fun to listen to also. Many different bell playing techniques are used. See if you can identify the different sounds that the bells can make while we play this piece.

As we approach the end the 2012-2013 school year and program year for the church, I want to thank each and every ringer for their dedication and commitment to the Bell Choir. They are a tremendous group to work with. The Bell Choir members for this program year are David Bernauer, Scott Carson, Meredith Firmin, Drew Lacouture, Pam Laura, Brian Nolan, Chika Okove, Sam Olshan, Marge Schafetz, Amelia Vitalos and Helen Wise. Thank you also to the Bell Choir college students, Katie Lacouture, Sylvia Okoye and Tina Okoye for their help during the year. And thank you also to our Christmas helpers, Steven Bernauer and Lori Mattison. While we work hard and focus on preparing music for worship services, we also laugh together and support each other.

We anxiously await the return of Helen Wise to the choir. We pray for a complete healing for her.

We send our best wishes to Bell Choir members Brian Nolan and Meredith Firmin as they are to be married on June 2. May God's blessings be with you both throughout your lives as husband and wife.

Too early to think about the fall? Not really. Much of my preparation for the fall, both as organist and Bell Choir Director, will be done during the summer.

Looking for a fun activity while being with a wonderful group of people? Look no further than the St. James' Multi-Generational Bell Choir. If you might be interested in joining with us this fall, why not stop by during a rehearsal on April 28, May 12 or May 19 and see what is involved in ringing. We are always looking for additional ringers. We own three octaves of bells and sometimes we can only use two or two and one-half of the octaves because of the number of ringers available. So occasionally there are bells that are just waiting to get out of their storage boxes and into the sunshine and ring! Maybe you can help free these bells!

If you have questions about the time commitment or any other questions about being a member of the Bell Choir, just call me at 732-807-3211 or 201-826-0394 or email me at <u>lolshan@ccm.edu</u>

Louíse Olshan

WE FEED PEOPLE: PLANNING FOR THE SUMMER BACKPACK PROGRAM



The leaders of the Summer Backpack Program are gathering on Thursday, May 9, at 6 PM to make plans for the SBP which begins on June 29th. This year, United Way will remain our main funder, but they are unable to provide volunteers. This means we will need to gather even more help and brainstorm ways to secure food economically and find more sources of funds. You are welcome to join us if you have ideas!

For Weekly Announcements and what's happening at St. James' visit our webpage: <u>http://stjameshackettstown.org</u> Check out the new calendar! Sign up for email news!

YANKEE TRIP SET FOR JULY – SIGN UP THIS MONTH!



Saturday July 13th at 1:05 pm Yankees vs the Minnesota Twins. The cost is \$45.00 per person which includes transportation, tickets and Yankee cap. The price may vary depending on the number of people attending. Please sign up **no later than May 31st**. Payment is due at time of sign-up. Sign-up sheet will be in the Great Hall, or see Scott Carson or contact him at carson92@verizon.net or 908-797-2107.



CALLING ALL GRADUATES – We honor all our graduates, from Middle School to High School, college to any type of educational program. Please be sure your name is included for our June 9 celebration. Please submit names to the church office at <u>stjames214@comcast.net</u> no later than May 15!

Journal Deadlines

please mark your calendars for upcoming issues:

uper	Jining issues:
May 26	JUNE EDITION
June 30	JULY /AUGUST
	EDITION



THE CELEBRATION AND BLESSING of the marriage of Meredith Firmin and Brian Nolan is Sunday, June 2 at 1 PM at St. James'. Brian and Meredith will be honored at a festive coffee hour on Sunday, May 26th. The coffee hour is presented by the Nolan family in honor of the couple. We join in celebrating their life together!



PUBLISHER TRAINING – Learn Microsoft Publisher from our resident expert and Journal Editor, Rod Perez-Vega. Saturday, May 11, from 9 AM to 11 AM he will teach us the ins and outs and

show us how to produce not only the Journal but other valuable documents for all sorts of things from flyers to special communications. Coffee and bagels will be waiting for you! If you have your own laptop, please bring it to the class.





You are invited to an

Education for Ministry

OPEN HOUSE

if you want to see what EFM is like, join us for an Open House Session

Tuesday, May $7^{th} - 7$ PM to 9:30 PM

try the study, fellowship and food of EFM at St. James'! RSVP <u>emalejko@comcast.net</u>

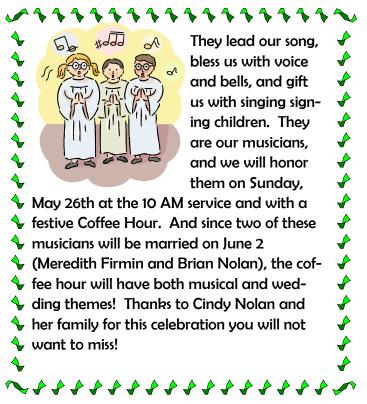
What exactly do we do in EFM? We dig deeper into the Christian faith, studying the Bible,

Church history and theological ideas and reflect on connecting faith with life experiences.

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CHILDREN'S SABBATH on THE FEAST OF THE PENTECOST

The Holy Spirit's energy and life blessing the church is what the Pentecost is all about today. The Easter season comes to a close, and we remember that we are empowered to be God's messengers in the world. We will wrap up the Sunday School year with our Children's Sabbath on Sunday, May 19th at the 10 AM service. Come and watch the Holy Spirit blow through St. James' – and don't forget to wear RED, the symbol of the fire of the Spirit!





PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE meets on Wednesday, May 8 at 7 PM to plan the season after Pentecost, which stretches from Trinity Sunday (May 26) to Christ the King Sunday (November 24). This season includes Summer Worship, so come with your ideas to this meeting of leaders of all committees as we coordinate our various ministries.



Life at St. James'





Committed to Worship and Building community





In Christ's Name

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ST. JAMES' JOURNAL

May 2013

St. James' Staff & Vestry		
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