

The Vine and Branches

SAINT JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH
DILLON, MONTANA

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Jan-Feb 2022

GREETINGS FROM FATHER DONNEL O'FLYNN WITH BLESSINGS TO ALL

January is a new beginning in any year. January 2022, however, will be an especially important new beginning for St. James. God willing, at the Annual Meeting, on January 23, the parish will elect two new members to join four who continue. This will give us a complete Vestry, and will be the final piece of the puzzle to show Bishop Stebbins that St. James is ready to be removed from "impaired" status. The congregation will then be free to move forward in the normal way, to tasks such as beginning the search process for a new rector.

Since the Annual Meeting is such an important step let me go over it in more detail.

According to the new bylaws, which we adopted at the Special Meeting on November 21, the Vestry is to be composed of six members. Two of them are elected each year to serve three-year terms. The two new members join the four members whose terms have not yet expired.

Once the six members are in place, at their first meeting, they organize themselves for their work in the coming year. They first choose one person out of the six to serve as Senior Warden, and another to serve as Junior Warden, for the next twelve months. Then the Vestry chooses two other persons to serve as Treasurer and Clerk for the next twelve months. The Treasurer and Clerk need not be elected Vestry members, but they may be if that seems best.

My prayer for St. James is that God will raise up committed persons to serve in these capacities. Thinking about who would be good for the various roles is something I have been doing with the current leaders for several months now. A full slate of duly-elected leaders would be a huge blessing for the parish.

Please take it very seriously if I or another parish leader invites you to serve in one of these roles. Any such invitation will come after thought and prayer, I assure you. Of course, in some cases it might be simply impossible to serve, for good reasons. But if you are invited to serve, and you can tweak your schedule a little, and summon courage to say yes, I can assure you that your reward will be great in heaven. For that matter, the congregation will be grateful too, and so will I.

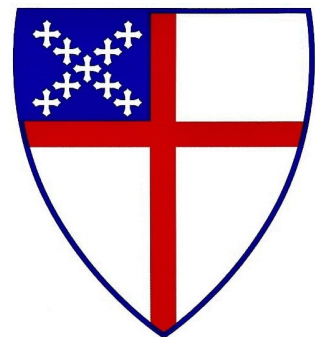
Let me say a word of thanks to the members who are currently serving. Lee Graves, Ellen Daugherty, Alyce Wassall, Deb Mathis and Kathryn Hatch have carried a heavy load. Tammie Rich-Worden has been excellent as Clerk Pro Tem for the past several months. They have been great to work with, but I think it is safe to say they will be happy to share the load.!

So please put the date of the Annual Meeting on your calendar. It will be Sunday, January 23 following 10am worship. I look forward to being there with you!

Did I mention, it will be an important new beginning for St. James?

Blessings to all,

Donnel+



Being the Senior Warden of a church like St. James Episcopal Church of Dillon is truly a gift. We have so many really gifted persons who are willing to share their skills with the congregation. It is likely a perpetually running clock which when started just runs so smoothly and productively. There are so many to thank, I hate to mention anyone in particular because YOU ALL are contributing to our success. Ellen has really taken off and is doing a great job as Parish Administrator and Junior Warden. Kathryn and Mary are keeping us in beautiful music at our Sunday service. Carol gives us an "award winning" Vine and Branches. And we have a very active Discernment Committee helping one of our members decide about becoming a deacon or priest. Kay and Sharon have put together a well-attended Adult Education program on Sunday afternoons at 4 PM. On the "off Sundays" several of us meet at the Dillon Brewery to visit and become more cohesive as a church family. Our vestry is amazing and keeps the church business aspect running smoothly. And we cannot forget Fr. Donnel O'Flynn who has given St. James several months of his retirement to become the church we once were and should be. It is such a pleasure to be a part of a church that makes such a difference in each and everyone's lives.

Thank you all and may the Christmas season give you peace and joy and may our New Year be the best one ever.

God bless,

Lee

Calendar of Regular Events

Worship, Sundays, 10:00 am:

Holy Eucharist, January 2, 23 & 30

Morning Prayer: all other Sundays.

**Bible Study (Guild Hall or by ZOOM),
every Wednesday at 9:30 am.**

**Contemplative Prayer (Guild Hall), 2nd and 4th
Wednesdays, January 9 and 23,
February 13 and 17 at 5:00 PM.**

**Annual Meeting Sunday 1/23/2022
following Holy Eucharist.**

**Vestry meeting Sunday 1/23/2022
following Annual Meeting.**

**Special Holy Eucharist service hosting
The Reverend Joan Yetter
1/30/2022 at 10 am.**

**Vestry meeting Sunday 2/20/2022
following Morning Prayer service.**

**Theology on Tap meetings will be
announced**



St. James will be hosting The Rev. Joan Yetter as a possible interim priest on Sunday, January 30, 2022. Holy Communion will be a 10 am. Please come and be a part of the excitement at St. James.

I'm happy to begin my ministry for our parish for the Episcopal Relief and Development. I thought I would begin with a short review of the history of this mission.

1938-Episcopalians raise funds to assist refugees fleeing from Europe.

1940-Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief is founded.

1943-The Bishop's Fund is allowed to directly reach out to Dioceses and Parishes.

1940's-1950's-Initial mission to assist refugees from WW11 expands to rebuilding missions, hospitals and churches. Also expands to humanitarian assistance worldwide.

1960's-1970's-New emphasis on Rehabilitation and Development work.

1980's-Expands development projects around the world.

1990's-Bishop's Fund oversees the management of recovery work following Hurricane Mitchell, rebuilding houses, a church and a school. This integrated approach becomes a core element of disaster relief work.

2000-The Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief is renamed Episcopal Relief and Development.

2003-Implements long term development programs and partnerships world wide.

Present-Shifts to long term programs through a network of partnerships to: alleviate hunger, improve food supply, create economic development, strengthen communities, promote health, fight disease, respond to disaster and rebuild communities. In 2004 the organization was present in 21 countries, touching the lives of 3 million people annually.

After 75 years, the Episcopal Relief and Development is saving lives and working to heal the hurting World.

If you would like to donate to ERD, please check out the website at:

<https://www.episcopalrelief.org/>

You can also designate an offering through St. James by noting "ERD" in the memo line of your check.

Kathryn Hatch, Chairman



Contemplative Prayer—what is it and how do I get involved?

The Contemplative Prayer group has been meeting for several months and I have found that it offers me an opportunity to grow in my prayer life. We meet at the Guild Hall on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 5 PM for about an hour. Kay Roach introduces the prayer form and continues to lead most evenings; however others have led the session.

We begin each time by checking in with one another about the previous week and asking if we have special prayer requests. The leader often shares a poem, a piece of music or an article that fits the moment and then the lights are dimmed, a candle may be lit and we sit in silence for 20 minutes. Individuals may share their experience after ending our silence, but this is optional. We conclude with a verbal prayer. For me, the experience is very peaceful and fulfilling.

The goal of Contemplative Prayer is to clear one's mind of the myriad of thoughts that we have each day and "to listen to the small quiet voice" that is in each of us.

Part of the success of the prayer is to choose a word (Jesus, Yahweh, live, peace etc.) and repeat it when one's mind begins to wander and to center one's thoughts again on the intention of the prayer; to keep one's mind and heart open to God.

In addition to experiencing a new and beautiful prayer form, I am grateful for the opportunity that Contemplative Prayer has given me to get to know others better. Please consider joining us.

Sharon Morehouse

STAND UP AND SING!!!!!!

As I write we are preparing for a marvelous Christmas carol sing at the church this afternoon. I'm also thinking about singing our thanks that we are about to embark on a brand new year—2022.

It's about time!!!

Although the pandemic is still with us, we have learned how to protect ourselves with vaccinations, masks, social distancing and just plain common sense. So, let's focus on how we can plan for a wonderful year. I can think of several ways:

Praise for the way the community of St. James has pulled together and made the best of the problems that confronted us in 2021. Let the past be the past.

Enjoy the *love* of our friends and family who have been with each of us as we faced issues and doubts we never thought we would encounter.

Personally, I am very *thankful* for our wonderful Bishop Marty Stebbins, who, with her knowledge and faith, is guiding us through very difficult and trying times.

So, every Sunday morning let's all stand up and belt out those hymns and thank God for all of his gifts and love.

Halleluiah!!!!

Carol Meacham, Editor

