

## Easter 2008 - April

*Dear St. James Friends,*

*Last week I found myself “living into Holy Week” so thoroughly-- through the Palm Procession, the Passion Story, the Supper, the Crucifixion, and all the drama and stories of Salvation History at the Easter Vigil--I was afraid when the time came for the “gear to shift” I’d not be able to say a whole-hearted, “Alleluia, Christ is risen!” As it turned out, the process of Holy Week did its gracious work in me, and I think this Easter was the most heart-felt “Alleluia!” I’ve ever said.*

*I hope you also are noticing some new life springing forth in your lives, perhaps in places where something else had grown stale and died. When it happens, that’s resurrection! Sometimes resurrection is like Spring. It comes to us just a little at a time.*

*So, as we anticipate the budding and leafing of the trees, let’s watch for those little signs of resurrection in our lives as individuals, families and parish community. It is in the dying and rising processes of our particular lives that Christ’s Resurrection is truly and deeply experienced. ‘Looking forward to these Great 50 Days of Easter with you and to proclaiming “Alleluia! Christ is risen!” and hearing you affirm, “The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!”*

*In the Light of the Resurrection and the Peace of Christ, Francie*

### **You are in our prayers!**

Each member of the Vestry will be praying for ten parishioners throughout the year. You will soon be contacted by that vestry member to ask if you have any prayer requests or if there is anything you wish to share about your life at St. James--dreams, hopes, reflections, needs. Please feel free to contact that vestry member at any time. If you have not been contacted by the end of April please let the rector or any vestry member know.

### **Congregational Development Grant – help wanted!**

"Forming Ourselves, Shaping the Future". In 2007 the Vestry applied for and won a \$4800 grant for spiritual development from the Diocese with the help of interim rector Mark Hatch, Music and Arts Chairperson Charlene Peet, and Doreen Hutchinson, currently Senior Warden. Aimed at purchasing resources for an adult Christian Formation Library, alternative music books and resources for younger Christian

formation, it has already jump-started our newly inaugurated 'Artist of the Month' program.

The Christian Formation Library is now being assembled on the second floor "lobby". Shelving, lighting, and seating are being put together. ***We are seeking a volunteer with library skills to organize the books and a checkout system. Are you that person?***

### **Senior Warden's Corner**

Over the last two months, your new Vestry has been focused on the Mission of St. James. We spent six hours with Bill Coyne and another three hours at the Vestry / Warden's Day, having crucial conversations about Mission.

Our conclusions to date:

- We (all of us) need to own the mission.
- The mission needs to answer the question, "What is God calling St. James to do?"
- The mission must drive our decision-making.
- The mission needs to be dynamic.

This next year we hope to have some conversations with many of you. We see this year as one of transition: spending a lot of directed energy, having some measurable outcomes and laying foundations for future work.

Each month in Tidings, I will be sharing with you this year's concrete goals and activities connected to our current mission. *"The Mission of St. James is to invite, sustain and restore people to unity With God through Christ."* You will see it everywhere: bulletins, Tidings, mailings and the directory. We want to make our mission come alive!

The Vestry and I would love your feedback, thoughts and ideas.

-- Doreen Hutchinson, Sr. Warden

### **April Artist of the Month: Peter Raifstanger** **In Celebration of the Art of Carpentry**

Our risen Lord, before beginning his ministry, was known as one skilled at the "plane and the lathe". So during Eastertide it seems very appropriate to celebrate Peter Raifstanger, a skilled carpenter in our midst, as St. James Artist of the Month.

Peter is a lifelong member of St. James and is currently network administrator at Salisbury School. Although he is no longer a working carpenter, his artistry and skill are generously woven into the very fiber of our facility and parish life. Here are but three examples: It was Peter who designed and constructed the portable stable that forms the set for the Christmas Pageant. It was Peter who designed and crafted the special platform that allows the organ console to be easily moved to various locations in the chancel. But it is the marvelous glass doors that open from the Tower Room into the Narthex, which Peter both designed and created, that are the most constant reminders of his incredible skill and devotion to our parish. Because these doors can be secured, it is possible to throw open the great door to the streets and open the view of our sanctuary and chancel to those who would wander into the Tower Room at times when the church would otherwise be closed.

To quote Peter: "I guess I'm drawn to carpentry because this is one way my soul has found to experience the creative process. I am also a very pragmatic person so when the thing I create (the Narthex glass doors, for example) can be put to a very specific use, then that seems to feed me even further."

Photographs of other examples of Peter's carpentry will be mounted on a collage and shown in the Great Hall during April. – The Music and Arts Committee

### **April 23 – EfM open house at Trinity Episcopal, Lime Rock, CT**

A number of St. James parishioners are enrolled in Education for Ministry classes which meet on Sunday afternoons, alternating monthly between St. James' and Christ Church, Sheffield. For those of us who cannot meet on Sundays, Trinity/Lime Rock has classes on Wednesdays from 3-5 pm. There will be an open house there at 3:00 on Wednesday April 23 for all those interested in finding out more about these in-depth classes in biblical history and theological thinking. For more information contact Sally Brooke at 528-9590.

### **May 4: Prayer Shawl Ministry – a new beginning**

The Circle of St. Anne Knitting Ministry is looking for hands to “knit one, purl two”. Since we all lead busy lives we will have only one organizational meeting, on Sunday May 4 at 7 p.m. Instructions are simple, lessons will be available, and fellowship is a must! Leave a message with Pat Poulos (528-9921) if you would like to join this ministry.

### **How about a little “Fresh Air” for you?**

Many families in the Berkshires, including some of our parishioners, have hosted children from New York City for several weeks in the summer, through the Fresh Air Fund. If you would be interested in participating, visit their website: [www.freshair.org](http://www.freshair.org), or call 800-367-0003.

### **Gratitude Corner**

Many of us were deeply moved by the extraordinary watercolor "Christ on the Cross" by Martha Platt, which she shared with us for exhibit at the back of the church on Good Friday. Thank you, Martha. -- The Music and Arts Committee

### **March 6 Vestry Meeting notes**

Present: The Rev. Francie Hills, Doreen Hutchinson, Doug Happ, Dick Kelly, Dindy Anderson, Nancy Cobden, Tom Doyle Margaret Layton, Pat Poulos. Absent: Tom Farnam

**Retreat Follow-up:** Doreen led the vestry through a review of a summary map of our mission, goals and strategies.

***“Invite People to Unity with God through Christ”***

- **Demographics** (Nancy Cobden)

We may need to spend a little money for more info but population is decreasing, demographic growth is retirees and some minorities.

- **Ads with Spiritual Message** (Lee Cheek)  
Kathy Clausen, Elizabeth Holland, Francie and Lee are working on a Shopper's Guide ad targeted toward retired, unchurched baby-boomers based on one of Francie's blessings.

*“Sustain People to Unity with God through Christ”*

- **Properties Committee** (Doug Happ)  
A list of responsibilities and goals for a properties committee was distributed and names for members are being solicited.

- **Kitchen** (Dick Kelly)  
Dick has spoken with most of the parishioners who took part in the post-service prayer in November asking God what God wants us to do with our kitchen. Financial support has been offered and grant possibilities exist for this becoming a larger mission for St. James.

- **Outside Groups Coordinator** (Francie)  
George Raymond has agreed to act as coordinator for any outside group that seeks to use the facilities of St. James. The first issue is determining policies for receptions held after events. George will be asked to contact the diocese for any policies regarding alcohol liabilities. One-day liability policies are available for around \$125. This charge may need to be added to rental fee if it is determined to be necessary or recommended by the diocese. Doug will contact our cleaning service to get a price for cleanup after a reception serving food.

- **Adult Spiritual Formation** (Francie)  
Confirmation, reception, reaffirmation class is beginning Sunday March 9.

- **Spiritual Enrichment for Vestry**  
The new directory was divided up into groups of parishioners that each vestry member will pray for and contact in their own way. Chaplains were assigned for the following meetings: April—Doug Happ; May—Nancy Cobden.

**Congregational Development Grant Follow-up** (Francie)  
Library relocation on the second floor lobby is taking shape. There is room for two chairs; the shelves will need some adaptation and more lighting is needed. A checkout system and basic organization is needed. The former location is now a classroom for 3-5 year olds. Dindy Anderson, Darra Happ, Audrey Raifstanger and Francie are evaluating materials for church school education. Lee Cheek will write a brief report for *Tidings* about the grant.

**Treasurer's Report:** Dick Kelly devised a way for the report to appear on one legal size page. He pointed out that month-to-month reports do not accurately reflect the financial picture since funds and withdrawals occur at irregular intervals over several months. We will be looking at the report quarterly. **Funds:** The vestry must look at the whole financial picture to provide guidance about how certain funds, such as the Beatty Fund, are used. This will take some time to discern. Each month we will be educated on one of the funds.

**Vestry Liaisons with Ministry Groups:** A list of ministry groups were reviewed and several members of the vestry agreed to be liaisons for those groups without leadership or representation in the vestry. This is an ongoing process this year.

**Community Development Grant Follow-up:** The vestry decided to invite John Hockridge, Diocesan Fund Chairman, to our April vestry meeting to help us understand

the parish's role in sponsoring low-interest loans for social justice projects through the diocese.

Addendum: During the executive meeting, Feb. 28, a conference call was convened. Margaret Layton was elected vestry delegate to Diocesan Convention and Dindy Anderson was elected vestry alternate.

Submitted by Lee Cheek, Clerk of the Vestry

### **Books & Bread revised book list for 2008**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Book Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Host</b>	<b>Host Tel.</b>	<b>Discussion Leader</b>
March 12	The Welsh Girl	Peter Ho Davies	Smith	644-0018	Helen Bray-Garretson
April 9	The Last Town on Earth	Thomas Mullen	Raymond/Hastings	528-5251	Pam Drumm
May 14	The House of Gun	Nadine Gordimer	Katz	528-9432	Martha Katz
June 11	Blood Done Sign My Name	Timothy Tyson	Peet	258-4166	Frank Garretson
July 9	Leaving Church: A Memoir of Faith	Barbara Brown Taylor	Anderson	274-3854	Ted Cobden

Sept. 10	Kim	Rudyard Kipling	Whitfield	528-3366	Peg Whitfield
Oct. 8	The Uncommon Reader	Alan Bennett	Garretson	229-3656	Valerie Smith
Nov. 12	A Thousand Splendid Suns	Khaled Hosseini	Emery	528-2188	Charlene Peet

(The February 13 meeting was cancelled due to bad weather and rescheduled for July 9.)

### **April Birthdays and Anniversaries**

**Birthdays:** 2<sup>nd</sup> – John Doelman; 3<sup>rd</sup> – Joyce Garrett; 4<sup>th</sup> – Ken Frye, Julia Bray-Garretson, Michael Smith, Daniel Smith, Brendan Farnam; 5<sup>th</sup> – Darra Happ; 8<sup>th</sup> – Audrey Raifstanger; 9<sup>th</sup> – Jackson Happ; 12<sup>th</sup> – Tommy Woolard; 15<sup>th</sup> – Michael Houlihan, Pat Poulos; 18<sup>th</sup> – Maria Kelly, Garrett Happ; 25<sup>th</sup> – Juliet Emery; 28<sup>th</sup> – Dutch Pinkston, Lisa Farnam.

**Anniversary:** 22<sup>nd</sup> – Ada Hastings and George Raymond

## **The Berkshire Servant Leadership Center: Spring Schedule 2008**

(To register for any of the listed classes please email the Rev. Jennifer E. Gregg at [jgregg@ststephenspittsfield.org](mailto:jgregg@ststephenspittsfield.org))

### **Servant Leadership I: Foundations for Growth and Transformation**

- **Tuesdays:** *Beg. April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008; 9:30 – 11:30am, St. Stephen's, Episcopal Church*
- **Tuesdays:** *Beg. April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008: 6:30 – 8:30pm, Christ Church/Trinity Lutheran., Sheffield*
- **Wednesdays:** *Beg. April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2008; 6:30-8:30am, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church*
- **Saturdays:** *April 5<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 9:00-3:30pm, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church*  
*Intensive Introduction to Servant Leadership I. We will complete at least 3 classes per session.*

Servant leadership is a paradoxical term that illuminates the true nature of genuine leadership at every level of life (workplace, community, family, church and world) and also brings us to the very heart of Christian discipleship, the way of Jesus. Servant leadership, as a radical redefinition of power and the nature of leadership, offers a compelling model for contemporary Christian living and a spiritual path that connects faith with daily life. In this course, we explore central themes of servant leadership — communion, community, compassion, call, money and power — and their interrelatedness, providing a context for spiritual practice and introduction to other Core classes.

*Suggested Donation \$25.00*

**“Wit”:** **A Play by Margaret Edson.** Directed By: Bruce T. MacDonald, Produced By: Myphing Link

April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008; 7:00pm St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Auditorium

“Wit”, is about a university professor of English who is dying of ovarian cancer. As she copes with her life-threatening cancer she assesses her own life through the intricacies of the English language, especially the use of wit and the metaphysical poetry of John Donne. All proceeds will benefit Heifer International. *Tickets: \$15.00*

### **Writing the Sacred: Journaling, Psalm Writing & Poem-Making Workshop with Ray McGinnis**

*April 21<sup>st</sup>, 200; 6-9pm St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Guild Room Suggested Donation: \$15*

Ray McGinnis is a poet and psalm enthusiast and has written in journals all his life. He has taught over 7000 people how to write prayers, poetry and autobiographies, all the while guiding them to bring their whole heart and mind into the process. Using his book *Writing the Sacred*, come join Ray as he guides participants to create their own sacred writings. All skill levels welcome.

**Quiet Day: “On the Road to Emmaus”** Led by The Rev. Hannah Anderson, April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2008; St. Helena’s Chapel; 10-1:00pm. *Suggested Donation: \$15*

**Money: From Cultural Addiction to Spiritual Freedom** Led by: Dr. Ruth Anderson, Director of School of Servant Leadership, Greensboro, NC *May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at St. Helena’s, Lenox, MA, 10:00 – 3 p.m. Suggested Donation: \$15*

*“To be dependent on ourselves, our own wealth, our own skills, our own goodness, the approval of others, that is dependence and bondage. To be dependent on God, absolutely dependent, that is independence. Dependence on God is the only independence. Insecurity in God is the only security.”* –Richard Rohr, Ministry of Money retreat.

This one-day workshop will be an introduction to a larger ten-week class scheduled to be held this fall. During this workshop we will begin to step back and examine our relationships with money and how our patterns of earning, spending and giving away money offer an intriguing insight into our minds, hearts and acts of service. With the use of Lynne Twist’s book *The Soul of Money: Reclaiming the Wealth of our Inner Resources* and other resources, participants will be introduced to some of the cultural messages of scarcity and guilt around money and what happens when we shift towards experiences of sufficiency, freedom, and purpose in relationship to resources. Checks can be made payable to St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church; please put in memo: Servant Leadership.

-- The Berkshire Servant Leadership Center, c/o St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, 67 East St., Pittsfield, MA 01201. 413-448-8276



*Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief. Do justly, now. Love mercy, now. Walk humbly, now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it. -- The Talmud*

