

# The MESSENGER

ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH



DECEMBER 2020



Advent is a time of preparation for the coming of the Christ child and for the second coming of Christ. It is the four Sundays before Christmas and the beginning of the new church year. We sometimes want to rush this time instead of preparing our hearts for Jesus.

## ADVENT STUDY

Marilyn Witt will be offering a study called "the Journey, Walking the road to Bethlehem". There are books available at church and cost \$10.95. It begins on Wednesday, Dec. 2 at 3 PM on Zoom and runs 5 weeks.

Zoom is a part of our life together now. Several of us can help you learn to use it. If you only have a desktop, you may not have a camera. They are only about \$20. You may also use your smart phone.

## BISHOP'S VISITATION December 13th



Bishop Jennifer Baskerville Burrows will be joining us for worship on ZOOM December 13<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM. She will be leading morning prayer and joining us after the service for conversation. Please join her for her annual visitation. She will meet with the Bishop's committee separately.

## OUR SYMPATHIES

Vivian Simpson died on November 10<sup>th</sup> of Covid. She was such a good friend to all of us and will be greatly missed. Please keep Terri and Rick in your prayers, as well as her sister, Imogene and the whole Loveless family. They were unable to hold her services due to their own quarantines and illness.

## FUNERAL SERVICE

Saturday, December 12<sup>th</sup>

1:00 PM

Family and church family only

There is no visitation

**ONLINE SERVICES CONTINUE**

**JOIN US ON ZOOM**

If you don't have the internet, you may call this number to be included by phone only. Long distance charges could occur if you are on a land line.

1-646-558-8656

CODE 3051252961#

You are sent an email link each week for our services. Check your junk mail folder if it's not in your inbox. If you are not getting it, please contact Pat Carter, 465-0029 or elganpat@gmail.com



**IN PERSON SERVICES WEEK BY WEEK**

It is not anticipated that we will be able to have in person worship through the Christmas Season. This is sad for all of us but we will still have services online.

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**DECEMBER SCHEDULE**

**EUCHARIST** DEC. 6, 20 AND 24<sup>TH</sup>

Father Jeff Bessler

**MORNING PRAYER**

12/13 **BISHOP JENNIFER**, 12/27 Pat C

Deacon Barry Cramer DEC 13<sup>TH</sup> AND 24<sup>TH</sup>.

**BISHOP'S COMMITTEE MEETING**

The next meeting of the BC will be on Wednesday, at 6:30 PM, December 9<sup>th</sup>  
We will be meeting on Zoom.

**THANK YOU**

Thank you very much for your generosity with the Thanksgiving baskets. If you gave cash donations, we have excess to use for Christmas hams. We were able to buy additional items such as eggs, milk, peanut butter & bread. Sonny and Carolyn.

**CHRISTMAS FOOD MINISTRY**

We have received 10 names from Westminster again for this Christmas. Respond to the email sent by Carolyn Shupert or to Sonny.

We need:

- 10 hams
- 10 of each of the following
- 5 pound bag of potatoes
- Canned Sweet potatoes
- 20 cans of peas
- 20 cans of corn
- 10 cans baked beans
- 10 macaroni and cheese
- Dinner rolls
- Butter
- Cake mix
- Icing
- Soup beans
- Cornbread mix
- Peanut Butter

## **SEARCH FOR A PRIEST CONTINUES**

The first step in this process is finished. The three Holy Conversations were held in October and November. Jen Phelps and Brendan O'Sullivan Hale led us through discussions on our personal histories with St. James, helped us face our hurts and disappointments, and put those behind us. And then we tried to discern who we are as a people of God.

We are grateful for all who participated in this process, and the information shared during zoom meetings and/or response to the written questions you received. You may contact the Search Committee anytime you have a question or input to this process. Their contact information is in the Parish Membership Directory

Now we are ready for the work of creating a Profile. The committee will meet regularly this month to move forward and collect information that can be used for the Profile. What is a "Parish Profile?" It gives us an overview of our church, its membership, vision and activities. It must be interesting, honest and visual. Informal photos of people and various activities will be included. You may be asked to help collect some things, as this will be a team effort with the search committee guiding the process.

We all have thoughts on what/who we "want" in the search for a priest. But the Holy Spirit will guide that person to us and send us the right priest to serve our "needs", as we strengthen our spiritual life and grow in our commitment to serve others. Let us continue this journey in Faith, Hope, and Patience.

The Search Committee,

Marilyn Witt  
Carolyn Shupert  
Sonny Carter  
Cindy Bullard  
John Thompson

## **RETURN PLEDGE CARDS DECEMBER 15**

Marilyn Witt sent out stewardship letters in November. Please return the attached pledge to the church or to Terri Clark by December 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **THANK YOU**

Thanks to Rosie Hua for making a guest performance during the prerecorded music from organist, Sam Hua for this first Sunday of Advent.



## FROM MARILYN WITT, SR. WARDEN

### The hymns of Advent are the deepest cry of our hearts.

Of all the liturgical seasons in the Christian year, the four Sundays in Advent are the most musical. I used to not pay much attention to the hymns during Advent. I was just looking forward to the beautiful Christmas carols that I love.

Then I began reading the words and discovered these are hymns of yearning and wonder. Some are ancient verses reflecting prophecy and biblical imagery expressing a longing for the Messiah. Others are poetic and theologically profound. All reflect the emotion of the 18<sup>th</sup>-century French hymn:

*O come, divine Messiah!*

*The world in silence waits the day*

*When hope shall sing its triumph,*

*And sadness flee away.*

*Dear Savior, haste*

*Come, come to earth*

*Dispel the night and show your face*

*And bid us hail the dawn of grace*

Then there is "Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord". This morning we were so wonderfully surprised and delighted to hear this hymn beautifully sung by Rosie and played by Sam. Isn't it fitting that even before Jesus began his ministry, people were preparing for his coming. John the Baptist preached about the arrival of the kingdom, and baptized those who were willing. Read Scripture: Matthew 3: 1-12.

I am reminded of the musical Godspell, which opens with John the Baptist singing the lyrics, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." Soon, he is joined by the rest of the cast, who sing in joyous unison about the coming of the Christ. I think that if we all pursued Jesus with the same energy and love as the disciples in Godspell, the world would be a better place.

*Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Fill every valley Bring all mountains low. Go up to a mountain and shout with a loud voice. Say to all people, Here is your God.*

How about, "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot." Ah! Now that will be running through your head the rest of the day. This is a classic, well known and well loved, African-American spiritual. There are some that say this was written by "Wallis Willis, a Choctaw freedman in Oklahoma, who was inspired to write the song when viewing the Red River." Others believe it was an old song sung by slaves. Couldn't it be both?

*Swing low, sweet chariot, Coming for to carry me home. Swing low, sweet chariot, Coming for to carry me home. I looked over Jordan, and what did I see, Coming for to carry me home. A band of angels coming after me, Coming for to carry me home. O,*

When I was a little girl, my vision of a chariot was Cinderella and her beautiful pumpkin coach. I think a lovely way to arrive to heaven. More Advent hymns later. Marilyn



## Christmas Eve Service

DECEMBER 24 AT 6:30 PM  
ZOOM SERVICE

*HOLY EUCHARIST with Father Jeff Bessler*

*You will receive the link by email and it will be on our Facebook page*

*YES, church is different this year but WE are still the church. We still long to worship together in any form that takes. Please join our service and still enjoy the music and liturgy of the season. You may join by telephone if you do not have internet in your home. Just dial the number and you will be a part of the Zoom meeting.*