

The MESSENGER

ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH

stjamesnewcastle.com

JANUARY 2022



RAINTREE SQUARE SERVICE

Our next Sunday afternoon service is January 2nd at 2:00pm. Cindy Bullard will be leading with Marilyn Witt playing music. You are encouraged to attend and help with readings and singing. Our sing along in December was well attended and enjoyed by all.

BISHOP'S COMMITTEE MEETING

The next meeting of the **BC HAS BEEN CHANGED** TO Wednesday, January 19th at 6:30 PM. Zoom is an option if you can't attend in person.

DOK MEETING

The next meeting will be on **WEDNESDAY, January 19th** at noon for lunch, 12:30 for our meeting.

ANNUAL MEETING JANUARY 30

Our annual meeting will be on Sunday, January 30th, after church. It will be followed by a pitch-in lunch.

PLEASE HAVE ALL REPORTS TURNED IN BY JANUARY 23rd.

COVID GUIDELINES

Remember that these rules can change from week to week according to what is happening in our community.

We are not requiring masks at this time. We are singing.

PLEASE CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN A 6 FT SOCIAL DISTANCE INSIDE THE SANCTUARY AND AT COFFEE HOUR.

It is so easy to get comfortable and forget that we are still needing to protect each other. Be responsible for your own health and take a step back if you feel too close. Wear a mask if you are NOT vaccinated.



NEW YEAR'S EVE SERVICE

Father Brown will be leading a special service on New Year's Eve at 6:00 PM, Friday, December 31st. This is new for us so come and worship as we pray for 2022.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

We had a wonderful Christmas evening service with 60 in attendance. The Wiltsche family sang Silent Night in German and Rosie Hua sang 2 special songs before the service. Thank you for sharing your gifts with us! If you missed it, there is a recording on our Facebook page.

THANK YOU

The church doesn't run itself. Thank you to all the people behind the scenes making sure things get done. You know who you are, even if others don't. Please know that you are appreciated. We do what we do for God's glory, not our own.

We had 2 successful food basket giveaways. We will be doing a similar project in the spring and in the late summer since people need help all year. Thank you to Karen Shields for taking on this responsibility.

CONGRATULATIONS

David and Diane Steele have been in Germany the last month welcoming their first grandchild into the world. **Congrats!**

BACKGROUND CHECKS

If you are an employee of the church or in any supervisory volunteer position, ie Bishop's Committee or teacher, you will be required to apply for a background check through the Diocese of Indianapolis. This is something that has been required for some time but we have been noncompliant. We are in the process of updating everyone's completion of Safeguarding God's Children also. The background check is \$24. If you can't cover the cost, please talk to Marilyn Witt, senior warden.

BROWN'S OFFICE HOURS

Remember that Brown is in New Castle one day each week from 11-3. That day may be different depending on need. If you would like to make an appointment, you may email him at mujetebg@gmail.com or call him at 765- 967-1174.

RACISM UNPACKED

The Diocese of Indianapolis has been offering a class called Sacred Ground over the last year. It is about addressing racism in your own life and in your communities as the Episcopal Church in America faces their involvement in slavery and racism. I finally decided to take the 11 week course. The premise is that unless you are an ANTIracist, you are a racist. I have struggled with that because I know that I am NOT a racist. I do have bias and prejudice as all people do about things or people who are different from us. We studied the history of how the "white" race was created to hold power over all "others". It started with the Pilgrims and Native Americans, progressing to Africans, Latinix, and Asians and the laws that were created that kept "whites" in power and held back all other 'races'. The Episcopal Church was very involved in the slave industry and we are now trying to learn how to repent (or turn around) and make up for our past sins. As a church, St. James has made efforts in the recent past to work with Bethany Church on MLK events and on our Peace Day events. A black priest in my group, Mother Andrea, asked if we developed relationships between individuals of both churches after the events and I realized that we had not. There is a group in New Castle that is working on this very thing and is something that St. James could be a part of. The Diocese wants us to study and learn as a church and be part of the solution to the problem of racism. If you are interested in this, let me know. We can't do everything to fix it but we can do something. Pat Carter

December 2021 - Monthly Encouragement from Rev. Brown Mujete

'Time to Move'

On Friday, December 31, 2021, at midnight, we usher in the year of our Lord, 2022. It's time to move on and embrace God's blessings for the new year. It's time to dream, wish, pray, hope, aspire, embrace, listen, learn, lean, trust, and wait. It's time to start again, and this time, beginning with God.

Numbers 9:17-18 (NIV)

¹⁷ Whenever the cloud lifted from above the tent, the Israelites set out; wherever the cloud settled, the Israelites encamped. ¹⁸ At the Lord's command, the Israelites set out, and at his command, they encamped. They remained in camp as long as the cloud stayed over the tabernacle.

When the cloud lifts, it is time to move. When the son of man shows up, it won't matter that you've been at that pool of Bethesda for thirty-eight years; it is time to move. When Jesus shows up, it doesn't matter that you have been working on that job for a long time and that you have no plan B; it is time to move. It doesn't matter whether you are ready or not; when the cloud lifts, The Israelites knew it was time for one thing; move.

The tragedy of this walk of life is for the cloud to lift, and we fail to move because we are comfortable where we are at. Imagine failing to move because you are afraid of venturing into the unknown, yet you can choose to entrust the unknown into the hands of the known God. See, the comfort zone is comfortable yet stagnant, and nothing grows there, but moving should be normalized for a child of God. We must be in sync with God, that when He moves, we move. [Hebrews 11:8]

Friends, God won't start you on a journey that He knows not the end; he always has an end in mind. In the same breath, God won't bring a thing to an end unless He has something **better** in store. When He allows the brook to dry up, he has some ravens on standby ready to dispatch the meat and the bread. When you are let go at your place of work, it is because something else is upon God's sleeve. When you are betrayed,

accused, heartbroken, shaken, sick, bereaved, infected, affected, broke, homeless, abused, enslaved, oppressed, castigated, etcetera, God's at work. Listen, we have been called not to fit in but to stand out. We have been called to grow and to bear fruit. Remember that growth is uncomfortable. Yeah, it is painful, and it is personal.



Growth demands sacrifices in life.

Sometimes growth will demand that you “leave some groups, sometimes you have to block some numbers. Sometimes like Abraham, moving will demand that you make an audacious decision to leave some people behind because there are places in life that you can’t go with a crowd [Genesis 22:5].

Friends, as we move to 2022, I call your attention to the truth that the journey of faith is a call to **obedience. How far we go in this walk of life is determined by how **faithful** we obey God’s **instructions**, whether it makes sense or not. I would rather do it afraid than not do it because I was afraid. (Does that make sense?)**

Listen, friends, we are where we are for a purpose and a season. When the purpose has been accomplished and the season is over, it is time to move. It is time to step out of God's way and allow Him to carry out His purposes for the next phase of our lives.