

The MESSENGER

ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH

stjamesnewcastle.com

JULY 2023



Where strangers become family

JULY SCHEDULE

BC Meeting July 12 6:30pm
DOK meeting July 19
noon lunch 1230 mtg
PICNIC July 30

SERVICES

July 2 Eucharist
July 9 Morning Prayer
July 16 Eucharist
July 23 Morning Prayer
July 30 Eucharist



Peggy Jent has volunteered to organize a church yard sale if there is any interest in having one. Please talk to her if you have things to donate.

BACK TO SCHOOL FESTIVAL IN JULY

Once again, St. James will be collecting toothbrushes to give out to Henry County students at this annual event. If you want to participate, bring in brushes by July 20th. NEED 2 VOLUNTEERS TO HAND OUT THE TOOTHBRUSHES TO THE KIDS on July 24th.

FOOD PANTRY

Just a reminder to bring food to donate to the food pantry if you can.

NEW ALTAR GUILD CHANGES

Cindy Bullard has accepted a call to be the new Altar Guild director. She replaces Carolyn Shupert and we want to express our appreciation to Carolyn for her years of service. If you would like to learn to work with the Altar Guild, talk to Cindy.

THERE IS AN ALTAR GUILD MEETING WITH FATHER BROWN ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 5TH AT NOON



ST. JAMES DAY CELEBRATION

There will be a special lunch following the Eucharist on July 30th. Please bring your favorite dish to share. Hamburgers and hotdogs will be provided.

RAINTREE SQUARE SERVICES

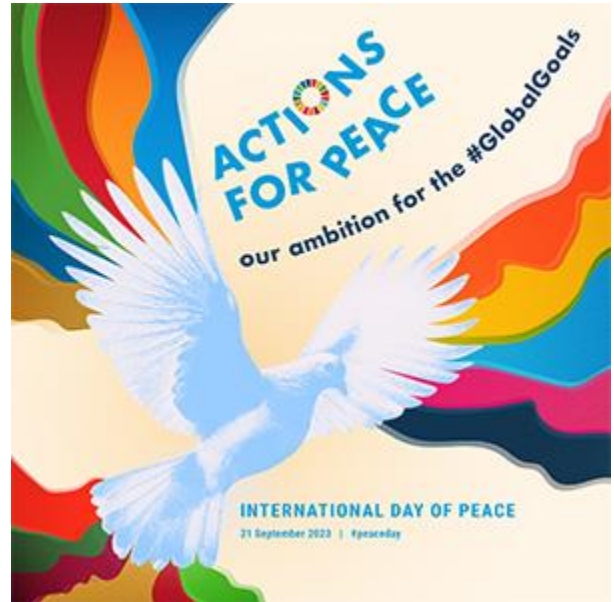
There is a sign up schedule for the remaining months of 2023. Cindy B has asked to no longer be the chairman of this ministry. If you feel interested in helping, please talk to Marilyn or Pat. The next one is August 6th.

SEE HOW OUR GARDEN GROWS!!

We have lots of tomatoes growing, along with peppers, squash, potatoes



PEACE DAY PLANS



The 2023 theme is ACTIONS FOR PEACE

I met with Penny Sitler from First Friends Meeting in June and we have a vision for this years Peace Walk to be something different. We are looking into reserving the downtown park to hold a Peace Festival. We want to promote peace and love as a path to non violence with music, speakers, vendors, etc. What we really need right now is people to work on the committee with us. Please contact me if you are interested in planning a party. Pat Carter



July 2023

A call to care!

As we begin the month of July, I'd like us to reflect a bit on the gospel reading for the 5th Sunday after Pentecost, which is the first Sunday in July. Jesus addressing his disciples in chapter 10 of Mathew, says to them, *"Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple — truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward."* (Matthew 10:40-42)

Over the last week, the supreme court has made three significant rulings on affirmative action, issues affecting same-sex marriages, and student loan forgiveness that have been received with variant emotions across the country. Regardless of the emotions expressed, one thing stands out; we are more disintegrated and broken as a nation than ever before. It is sad to imagine that while some people celebrate the SCOTUS ruling on these issues, others are deeply concerned about their lives, freedoms, and future based on the same ruling. I'm sure the authors of our Pledge of Allegiance did not have this state of the nation in mind when they wrote, "... one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all".

In the Gospel passage above, Jesus tells his disciples that whoever welcomes them will, in turn, be welcoming Jesus and, by extension, God. We all would like to imagine that if Jesus showed up at our doorstep, we would welcome him. We think we would recognize him immediately, and we would ask him to come in with joy. We would go out of our way to find and fix a meal for him and ensure he is as comfortable as possible. We would then sit at his feet in silence to learn from him and open our hands for a blessing when he rises to leave.

Well, what if Jesus has been coming to our doorsteps all along, and because of our divisive politics, we have failed to recognize him? What if Jesus came to our doorstep disguised as one from a different racial, sexual, social, or religious background than we are accustomed to? What if we have been shutting Jesus off by the way we have been so selfish to notice the pains of other people?

If there's anything we can learn as people of God, it is for everybody to love everybody. We know from scripture that when we love, care, and invite others, we also invite Jesus. Jesus becomes the host and not a guest anymore. When we empathize with others and refuse to celebrate their downfall, we are guaranteed a reward by Jesus. The reward doesn't need to be a material possession; it can take any form; one thing we know about God is that he keeps his word.

Blessed month, people of God.

Fr. Brown Mujete