

The Vine and Branches

SAINT JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH
DILLON, MONTANA

stjamesdillon@live.com

406-683-2735

July Aug 2021

GREETINGS FROM FATHER DONNEL O'FLYNN:

For my article this time I'd like to give an update on important administrative matters at St. James. Behind the scenes, good, patient, basic work is occurring.

For starters, the annual audit of St. James' finances is nearing completion. An annual audit based on a "Manual of Business Methods in Church Affairs" is required for every congregation of the Episcopal Church. This year the team performing the audit is led by Barb Hagen, the chief administrator of the diocese of Montana. Everyone who meets Barb comes away impressed by her cheerful good sense and vast experience. She and her colleague Manny Hoag came to Dillon on June 2 to review documents in person.

As I write, their report is still in draft form and has not yet been reviewed by the vestry. Still, some highlights can be shared. The bottom line is the assertion that the parish's financial statements as prepared for the recent Annual Meeting, "present fairly, in all material respects...the financial position of the congregation at December 31, 2020." This is standard boilerplate language for audits, and even kind of dull to read. However, in financial matters, "dull" and "standard" are exactly what is wanted! I congratulate everyone involved for making the 2020 audit eye-glazing. Once it is in final form and has been reviewed by the vestry I am committed to making it available to anyone who wishes to read it themselves. The draft does go on to make a number of procedural recommendations. They are straightforward and sensible, and most are of a minor nature. Some however are more far-reaching and will require further work, such as: making an inventory of parish belongings; reviewing parish bylaws; setting up an investment policy statement; and completing a parish accounting policy manual. I will urge the vestry to make specific plans to address all the recommendations. I believe they are ready and willing to do this. Transparent

business methods help congregations have confidence in themselves, which then gives strength to our proclamation of the love of God in Christ. So, dull though they are, they matter.

Another administrative item I am pleased about is now having a group of trained laypersons to assist the priest at celebrations of Holy Eucharist. They are essentially the same ones who lead Morning Prayer when there is no communion, in which role they are called "Worship Leaders." The new wrinkle is that now five are also licensed as "Eucharistic Ministers," who will vest and administer the chalice at communion. (As I write, we still do not have permission to share the common cup due to pandemic concerns. However, that may change in the not-too-distant future.)

Last but far from least, we can now resume singing in worship. Bishop Stebbins writes, "Congregations that wish to have congregational singing may begin to. Masks are optional, but are encouraged when singing is happening." I will work three hymns into services when I am in town. My laptop has a set of pre-recorded organ accompaniments for the hymns in the 1982 hymnal. On Pentecost (May 23) I experimented with playing some over the speaker system, and was basically pleased with the result. For now this is a workable way to support congregational singing. I look forward to doing this with you in worship more in weeks to come.

Donnel

SAVE the DATE:

Sunday July 25 several churches in Dillon will offer an ecumenical worship service at Depot Park and St James will participate. We hope everyone will support this joint effort. But PLEASE NOTE—the time is the same as our regular service, namely 10 am. However we will still have our usual fourth Sunday potluck afterwards at St James at 11 am

EPISCOPAL RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT

Episcopal Relief & Development (ERD) programs alleviate hunger and improve food supply, create economic opportunities, strengthen communities, promote health, fight disease, respond to disasters and rebuild communities. ERD follows an integrated model, implemented through a global network of partnerships.

If you would like to donate to ERD, please check out the website at:
<https://www.episcopalrelief.org/> You can designate an offering through St. James by noting "ERD" in the memo line of your check.

Kathryn Hatch



Dates to Remember

JULY:

7/4 and 11 Morning Prayer: 10 am
7/4, 11, 25 Theology on Tap, The Brewery 4 PM
7/18 Holy Eucharist: 10 am
7/18 Vestry Meeting: 11 am
7/18 "Religious Addiction" led by Lee Graves at the Brewery 4 PM
7/25 Ecumenical Service at Depot Park with pot luck to follow in Guild Hall 10 am

AUGUST:

8/1, 8, 29 Morning Prayer: 10 am
8/1, 8, 22, 29 Theology on Tap, The Brewery 4 PM
8/15, 22: Holy Eucharist 10 am
8/15: Vestry meeting 11 am
8/15 "The Season of Creation" led by Fr. Donnel O'Flynn at the Brewery 4 PM.
8/22 Potluck luncheon after service

We have several openings for the donation of altar flowers:

July 11, July 18,

September 19,

October 31,

November 7 and 28.

If you would like to donate on any of those dates, please call

Jane Howard at 683-2807.

She will order the arrangements from either Stephens Floral or Wildwood Floral. You will be billed directly by them.

However, if you would like to purchase the flowers from Safeway, please let Jane know.

WELCOME ONE AND ALL!!!!!!

Everyone is invited to Bible Study. It is led by Father O'Flynn every Wednesday morning at 9:30 in the Guild Hall. Scripture from the Lectionary for the upcoming Sunday is the basis for the study. The lessons will be provided.

It's a great way to dive into the teachings before they are read on Sunday and gives some background for the sermon. The format makes it easy to attend when you can.

We always have a good time with lively discussions and fellowship. Hope to see you there!

If you can't participate in person, you can attend by Zoom. Just let us know beforehand.



"*Topic du Jour*" starts Sunday July 18th at 4PM at The Brewery. It will be held on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month (alternating with "*Theology on Tap*"). *Topic du Jour* is a laid back way to have discussions on a variety of topics with your St. James friends.

The following are the scheduled topics:

7/18/2021: "*Religious Addiction*" led by Lee Graves

8/1/2021: Open

8/15/2021: "*The Season of Creation*" led by Fr. Donnel O'Flynn

9/12/2021: Open

9/19/2021: Open

10/3/2021: Open

We are looking for volunteers to "host" an open week. Hosts can choose a topic of their own or one from the list below. If you are willing to help out, please contact Kay Roach,

keroachcpa@gmail.com or 206-321-7649

Ideas for discussion:

Bin Laden
Concept of Heaven and Hell
Dead Sea Scrolls
Flood stories - Why so many?
Gospel of Thomas
Heresy-Is it necessary?
Is God a puppeteer?
Judaism
Meaning of Salvation
Metaphor in religion- Is it necessary?
Mormonism
Native American Spirituality
Non-canonical gospels
Problems of Biblical Law
Situational Ethics
What is a Christian?
What is prayer? Does it work and why?
What problems do we have with religion and accepted belief?
Who or What is Jesus?
Xian types-Evangelical, Fund, etc.

Thanks to Lee Graves and Fr. Donnel O'Flynn for helping in planning this discussion series. It should be very interesting!!!

HOW MANY HATS ARE ON YOUR HAT RACK?

The other day I was thinking about how our lives have changed over the last year and a half. The lack of socialization, loss of employment, loss of friends and loved ones have made this one of the most difficult periods of time for all of humanity. As things begin to go back to normal, most of us are re-evaluating our lives and trying to determine how to return to some of our past activities with all of the new restraints.

I wear several hats so to speak: home, family, church and volunteer organizations. It seems that some of these require more than one hat. Family dynamics can often be challenging, with parents, siblings, children and extended family members—all to be handled with different approaches etc.

My volunteer work includes St. James Episcopal Church, the hospital and our fine art gallery, all of them I enjoy immensely and they are very rewarding. So, I am wondering how many hats do you wear? Have they been collecting dust at the back of your hat rack this past year and a half? It's definitely time to break them out and see if they are still of interest to you.

Most importantly, I am thinking of our church. When you filled out your pledge card (*it's not too late to do so*) did you notice the section where you can indicate an interest in our activities? They include; Vestry member, Worship Leader, Lector, Acolyte, Altar Guild, Sunday School Teacher or Greeter. Perhaps you have a suggestion about another area where you would like to participate.

As you consider your current options, is there room on your hat rack for another hat? If so, please consider what you could do to enhance the activities here at St. James.

Carol Meacham, Editor

