



The Vine and Branches

SAINT JAMES EPISCOPAL
CHURCH
DILLON, MONTANA



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Rector:

Rev. Theresa Kelley-Bergmann

September/October 2025 Issue

Greetings from Reverend Theresa.....

The late comedian Robin Williams once listed these top 10 reasons to be an Episcopalian:

- 10) No snake handling.
- 9) You can believe in dinosaurs.
- 8) Male and female God created them; male and female we ordain them.
- 7) You don't have to check your brains at the door.
- 6) Pew aerobics.
- 5) Church year is color-coded.
- 4) Free wine on Sunday.
- 3) All of the pageantry - none of the guilt.
- 2) You don't have to know how to swim to be baptized.

And the Number One reason to be an Episcopalian:

- 1) No matter what you believe, there's bound to be at least one other Episcopalian who agrees with you.

Good for a laugh, right? Robin Williams was an Episcopalian who used his comedic wit to define what it meant to be Episcopalian. But seriously, how do we talk about and describe our tradition with folks who may not be familiar with a "liturgical" church, or any church denomination for that matter? Especially if we tend to use church jargon and overly long explanations.

It takes practice and intentionality to be proficient in sharing our story in a way that invites curiosity and welcomes questions.

Therefore, dear people of St. James, I have an exercise for you. It is borrowed directly from *The Episcopal Way*, Book 1 by authors Law and Spillers.

Try to complete the following sentences:

- Being an Episcopalian is ...
- Being an Episcopalian is not ...
- Belonging to the Episcopal Church is ...
- Belonging to the Episcopal Church is not...

Two conditions to complete this exercise:

1. Use everyday language, no jargon except the word "Jesus"
2. No sentence longer than 140 characters.

Enjoy! Try out your completed sentences with others!

Peace

WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH WHAT GOD HAS GIVEN US?

Each morning, the veil of night lifts, and we are summoned once more into the theater of time, not by our own volition, but by the quiet mercy of God. Breath returns. Light spills across the earth. The hours unfurl like parchment awaiting inscription. These are not accidents of biology or chance. They are sacred endowments: time, talent, and treasure, bestowed by the One who formed galaxies and knits the soul in secret.

Time, that most elusive of gifts, is both fleeting and infinite. It is the medium through which eternity brushes against mortality. “So teach us to count our days,” the Psalmist pleads, “that we may gain a wise heart” (Psalm 90:12). To live without reverence for time is to squander the divine invitation to participate in the unfolding of grace. Each moment is a chalice, empty until filled with prayer, compassion, or holy labor.

Talent is the second inheritance, less a possession than a calling. It is the fingerprint of the Spirit upon our uniqueness, the echo of divine creativity within our hands and minds. Paul writes, “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good” (1 Corinthians 12:7). Whether we speak, sing, mend, teach, or listen with tenderness, our gifts are not ornaments for self adornment, but instruments for healing.

Treasure, even the material, is not exempt from sanctity. Jesus declares, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:21). The question is not how much we possess, but whether our possessions possess us. Do our expenditures mirror our convictions? Do our offerings reflect the gratitude that wells up from knowing we are sustained by grace?

Gratitude, then, is the soul’s response to abundance. It is not a sentiment, but a posture, a way of being that recognizes every breath, every gift, every dollar as a thread in the tapestry of divine generosity. It is the single mother donating from her modest paycheck. The teenager sharing lunch with a classmate in need. The anonymous donor covering a stranger’s medical bill. These are not grand gestures, but sacred echoes of grace: quiet, deliberate, and holy.

To live gratefully is to live deliberately. It is to return what we have received, not out of obligation, but out of reverence. For in the returning, the gift is not diminished. It is transfigured.

Bernd Bergmann

Calendar of Events

Worship: Sundays, 10:00 am

Holy Eucharist led by Rev. Theresa Kelley-Bergmann on second and fourth Sundays each month.

9/14, 9/28, 10/12, 10/26.

Morning Prayer will be held all other Sundays.

Contemplative Prayer 2nd and 4th Wednesdays:

9/10, 9/24, 10/8, 10/22.

5:00 PM in the Guild Hall.

Vestry meetings are held on the 4th Sunday of each month: 9/28, 10/26.

Pot Luck luncheons after the services will be on on the second Sunday of each month: 9/14, 10/12.

Ingathering of donations for the Food Bank will be blessed on the 4th Sunday of each month: 9/28, 10/26.

Weekday fellowship at Sweetwater coffee: Fridays at 10 am.

Bible Study group: Fridays in the Guild Hall. Bring a bag lunch and join us at noon.

Join Lee on Sundays at 3 PM at the Beaverhead Brewery for "Theology on Tap".

Adult Education program: We will view the movie "The Brothers Karamazov" on 9/21/2025 following the service.

SAVE THE DATE! "A Memoir & Mini-Retreat: Deepening our Experience of God's Story, through reflecting on One Woman's Story".

A discussion based on the book "Boundless" by Carolyn Dawn Flynn. She will be here at St. James to share her story on Wednesday 10/1/2025 from 2:30 to 4:30 PM in the Guild Hall.

*Notes from our Senior Warden
Kathryn Hatch*



"God, you are my hope. When I feel overwhelmed, help me trust in your love and grace. Guide me and give me strength to face whatever comes my way."

As summer ends St. James is looking at a busy fall. The author Carol Dawn Flynn will be coming on 10/1 to discuss her book "Boundless". It was long-listed for the 2021 Memoir Prize.

We are going to represent St. James at Western's Student Welcome in early September.

Ellen and I are going to the convention in October. There are some interesting resolutions to discuss.

We will be resuming Adult Education with the movie "The Brothers Karamazov" on 9/21/2025.

The Vestry continues to work hard doing church business. I feel blessed to be part of this team.

Kathryn

Good news!!!

We now have audio and visual assisted devices for those who need them. They include special earpieces for the hearing impaired. There are also lights that clip on the prayer books and hymnals.

Plus, there are now binders that contain both the Morning Prayer and Holy Eucharist services in large print.

EUCCHARISTIC VISITS

For those of you who may have a friend or relative that would like to receive Eucharist, St. James can accommodate those people who aren't able to attend church in person.

We have a lovely traveling Eucharist kit, donated by the late Edith Boothby. It is a lovely addition to our church and allows Eucharist to be set up and administered gracefully and with reverence.

Please let me or a vestry member know if you are aware of someone that would like to have a visit and/or be administered Eucharist.

Also, we have an ongoing prayer list. Please advise Rev. Theresa when to add or remove a name:

"For all who are impacted by war and strife around the world.

For the victims and families who suffer acts of violence.

For Brent, Alyce, Martha, Brooke, Alma, Kim G. Mel Mark, Deb Mathis, Melissa, Oliver and Wally."

Rev. Theresa
1-406-491-2332

THE FOOD BANK UPDATE:

We continue to collect non-perishable items for the Food Bank. This is an ongoing ministry of St. James.

There are totes in the Narthex where you can drop off your contributions at any time. These will be blessed by Rev. Theresa on the 4th Sunday of each month and delivered to the Food Bank. Monetary donations are also appreciated.

The Food Bank was started by St. James and organized by the late Millie Brown. Due to the unfortunate increase of people in need, it has now grown to the point where there are 2 different times that the recipients can pick-up their items.



SAVE THE DATE!

**The Diocese is sponsoring a Memoir and Mini-Retreat:
*Deepening our Experience of God's Story, through reflecting on One Woman's Story.***

Meet "Boundless": A Road Trip to Rejuvenation author, Carolyn Dawn Flynn.

It is a Becoming-of-Age Story

"This story is set at the intersection where the youthful coming-of-age narrative collides with the vanishing horizon of middle age - that's why I call it a becoming-of-age story. As I seek to revive my dreams, I must protect the hopes and dreams of my twins. The true test comes when every part of my identity as mother and journalist is stripped from me. As I am consumed with panic attacks and thoughts of ending my life, I discover that you can do the True Self no harm and then begin to find the path to reinvention."

We suggest that you read the book, "Boundless", prior to the event. Debbie at the Bookstore can obtain copies for you.

It will be held here at St. James on Wednesday 10/1/2025 from 2:30 to 4:30 PM.

Refreshments
Opening Meditation
Presentation
Conversation

Some Food for thought...

"That's what I consider true generosity: You give your all, and yet you always feel as if it costs you nothing.

Simone de Beauvoir

Our Peace Candle.....

I'm sure you have noticed the single candle in front of the lectern. This is our Peace Candle. To the left of it there is a dish with smaller candles.

We light one to honor all of our military personnel; active duty, currently deployed, retired/veteran, living, deceased, in any branch of the service.

So, when you are returning to your pew after receiving Holy Communion (or any time during Morning Prayer), please light one to honor our military personnel.

I find this hymn, #820, very enlightening and want to share it with you. Reverend Theresa chose it a few Sundays ago.

It is a meditative refrain from Taize based on a saying attributed to Teresa of Avila.

"Nothing can trouble; nothing can frighten. Those who seek God shall never go wanting. God alone fills us."

St. James is a VERY busy parish...

We've all done a lot of brainstorming the past few years. We have compiled information for the search for a priest (several times), updating our website and planning our various activities.

The other day several of us were discussing all we offer here at St. James and I was really pleased at the number of programs we have, despite being a small parish. It's because all of our members actively participate.

Let's review some of them:

- 1) Our weekly coffee hour after church. It's amazing how interesting it is and the range of topics we discuss is really wonderful.
- 2) The Contemplative Prayer program twice a month has grown to be a very significant time of prayer and reflection.
- 3) Friday's coffee hour is at 10 at Sweetwater. This has turned into quite a discussion group. We have Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians and others. Our topics are quite wide-ranging and enlightening.
- 4) Bible study on Friday at noon in the Guild Hall. We discuss the scriptures for the upcoming Sunday. We often use different versions of the bible. Again, we have some very interesting sessions. The part I find appealing is that I am familiar with the passages and that makes them more interesting when they are read during the service on Sunday.
- 5) Of course, Theology on Tap at the Brewery 3 PM on Sundays is always a fun time to exchange ideas.
- 6) Adult Education has included many different topics and types of presentations. These include books, movies, videos, music, etc. The next session will be the presentation of the movie "The Brothers Karamazov" on Sunday 9/21/2025 at 11 am following our worship service. Please note: We are always looking for new ideas for our Adult Education program. Just let Rev. Theresa know if you have any suggestions.
- 7) St. James started the Food Pantry many years ago and we still participate by having "Food Pantry" Sunday when you can bring in non-perishable items and/or a monetary contribution.
- 8) We have started a pot luck luncheon the 2nd Sunday of each month to foster our message of shared prayers and friendship.

Isn't it great that a small parish can provide so many programs? There should be something that appeals to everyone.

Carol