

# St. James'



# Journal

*The Rev. Dr. Cathy L. Deats, Rector*

*February 2006*



I love optical illusions. They remind me that things are not always the way they appear. Have you ever seen the vase / profile illusion? It was made famous by the Danish psychologist Edgar John Rubin (1886-1951) in 1915. It is an illusion in which the foreground and background can be reversed by focusing on one image or the other.

The happenings of the past two weeks around here have unfolded for me like this illusion. Friday night at 6:30 was set as the time for the ripping up of old carpet in the church, to make way for the new and to save \$2500 in labor and disposal costs. At 3:30, one man and his teen-aged son arrived with razor knives and began the job. They were joined at 4:30 by another couple. By 6:30, virtually all the carpet had been removed and rolled. But there was no lack of work as another dozen people loaded carpet into a waiting trailer, pried tackless strips free and cut new molding. I came across one man lying on his side beneath the altar rail riser, pulling tacks from the wood with pliers. Now that's what I call prayer!

The work wrapped up at 10:00 pm, and as I stood at the door with my hand on the light switch, the sanctuary came into focus. Ready for worship – chairs replaced, altar set, the bare floors clean. The scene shifted to another from just a few hours ago: fat sandwiches, cold soda and cookies laid out on the altar (reverently covered with a red and white checkered tablecloth). Now that's what I call Eucharist!

I walked back into the world of the vase / profile illusion the next Sunday, when another gathering of people assembled to remove the pews to allow the carpet crew to refinish the floors beneath them. As the nave moved from "church" to "playhouse" (for it is in our history that the church was for a time a playhouse) the children dashed about, enjoying the echoing sound of footsteps and laughter. We harnessed their energy by lining them up on the balcony stairs to get pew cushions out of the way. Again the table was set, this time with pizza and cold drinks. Now that's what I call liturgy!

The following Sunday: the job to replace the pews on the newly refinished floor seemed straightforward. Our administrator had thought to number the pews (before removal!) and to construct an accompanying chart. When they were all lined up, though, something was not quite right. It seems that we had assumed the ends of the pews were all the same size; it was not so. After those adjustments were made, the empty chapel revealed a floor that was not quite flat and damaged enough to need new underlayment. We stood silently in the chapel, formulating a plan: get truck, get wood, make new floor. Now that's what I call prayer!

And so today the carpet is laid. I stand at the back door, looking over the work. The church has a sacramental beauty, made up of carpet fiber and paint, hands that work and bless, and the prayers of all who prayed in this place, as far back as 1859. There is the echo of laughter, the sweat of toil, and the faintest scent of pizza in the air.

As my eyes float from vase to profile, I see a place of beauty and energy and the hearts and actions of the faithful, which make up this community.

God is truly honored in this place.

Faithfully yours,

*Now  
that's what I  
call prayer!  
...Eucharist!  
...Liturgy!*

## A Letter to Paul

Thank you Paul.

Paul Bartkus was largely responsible for “drafting” me into my current ministry as Junior Warden. He has served as an excellent mentor, patiently tolerating my idiosyncrasies as we worked together on a number of challenging projects. I, in turn, tried to retain some semblance of equanimity while listening to yet another painful performance from his repertoire of bad jokes.

It is an understatement to say that we have served together during a challenging time in our church history. Paul has done much to faithfully serve St. James’ as a centered and calming leader. He has worked long hours in many capacities. I will not attempt to list them all, but I learned much while working with him on the Finance Committee, the Vestry, and the Capital Campaign Committee.

He has loomed large in our efforts to improve our financial health and the vibrancy and faith of our community. Our congregation is strong and close-knit, with a growing commitment of time, talent, and treasure. He has taken a special interest in ensuring that we adopted and maintained a number of diocesan best practices – I think this has helped us run a very tight ship over this past year. All of us at St. James’ worked to make this happen, but Paul set the tone and provided an example and guidance.

It’s all about leadership, and Paul has stepped up and given his best to St. James’. I am grateful and honored to have had the opportunity to work with him over the past few years. In some ways I now feel like the young boy on the prairie, watching Shane ride off in the distance.....”Come BACK Paul!!!”

He is a tough act to follow. Thank you Paul.

Peace,  
*David*

## Vestry Highlights

From the January 19 meeting

- Penn Pixley reviewed the financial condition of St. James’ at year-end, and had good news to report: expenses came in below \$450 of budget (owing to the good work of the Finance Committee; the budget shortfall from 2005 was resolved with \$7990 from the Capital Improvement fund (which must be repaid) and \$5,000 from cash in our operating fund. We begin January 2006 with a balance \$5,000 less than January 2005).
- Plans for the Annual Meeting were finalized: worship and meeting in parish hall, due to installation of carpet in the church. There will be a PowerPoint presentation developed by Russ Worthington so people may follow reports more easily.
- The vestry retreat, February 10-11 was outlined.
- Report of a meeting with architect Art Johnsen (*see page 3*)

## X-Warden’s Words

As the retiring Senior Warden, I would like to thank the congregation for the support, cooperation, and participation that they have demonstrated during my term. I am especially thankful that I had the opportunity to work closely with Cathy and David as we planned for the mission and ministry of our Church.

David and I shared a quirky simpatico that was expressed in good humor and amazingly congruent visions. We once showed-up at a diocese Warden Training wearing almost identical clothes. We didn’t realize it until we there. Needless to say, it caused us to get a little good-natured ribbing. The car rides back and forth to trainings with David allowed us time to talk and share what we considered to be our parish’s strengths and challenges. I will miss these rides. I am confident, however, that David and Dawn will continue to exhibit strong leadership and support for Cathy.

The Annual Meeting is proof positive that we are headed in the right direction. The presentations by Greg and David (for Penn) were indicative of the thoughtful and careful analysis and attention that is being paid to our parish investments and structures. I have also been especially impressed with the make-up of our Vestry. Thank you to the folks leaving the Vestry and welcome to those joining. We can look forward to this group being active participants in all aspects of our parish life.

Finally, I wish to thank Cathy, our priest, for her leadership, energy, passion for her ministry and the pastoral care she provides. Oh, David, Shane’s not going anywhere.

*Paul*



## St. James' Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of St. James' Episcopal Church was held Sunday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> in the Parish Hall where we also worshipped (the church was in the midst of floor refinishing and carpet replacement). There was a review of the year 2005 in picture and music with a video CD, Warden, Vestry and Delegate elections, and the presentation of the budget for 2006.

### Report of the Nominating Committee

**For Senior Warden:** David Olesen

**For Junior Warden:** Dawn Modugno

**For the Vestry:** Cheryl Crisp  
Tom Kimpland  
David Lacouture  
Jerry Sheard

**For Delegate to Diocesan Convention:**  
Patti Worthington

**For Alternate Delegate to Diocesan Convention:**  
Jerry Sheard

If you missed the meeting and would like a copy of the Annual Report and/or your own copy of the CD, *St. James' Journey 2005*, please contact the office. Copies are also available in the Narthex.

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*Thank you Cathy, Paul, David and Greg\* for the most enjoyable Annual Meeting I've ever attended. Please make the Parish Hall, this one and the new one to come, the ongoing location for the Annual Meeting and the preceding 9:00 worship service. The energy and spirit in the room was wonderful.*

*All of you helped generate that energy and spirit with your annual reports, Penn's included.\*\* I think that transparency is the operative word throughout all that you communicated to us today. Along with your skills, the integrity and passion for what you do, your collective senses of humor are equally awesome.*

*Thank you,  
Phyllis*

\*Greg Malejko, Finance Committee Chairperson

\*\*Treasurer Pen Pixley's report, read in his absence.



## Building Project Update

Our successful "Open Doors" Capital Campaign continues to collect pledges and accrue earnings. Our goal of \$275,000 was met and exceeded. With pledges of \$ 297,849 over the three years (beginning in 2005), we have collected \$182,268 as of January 2006. The faithfulness of all who have pledged is awesome! *(Remember, if you are new to our community and missed out on the opportunity to pledge, please request information and a pledge card from the office.)*

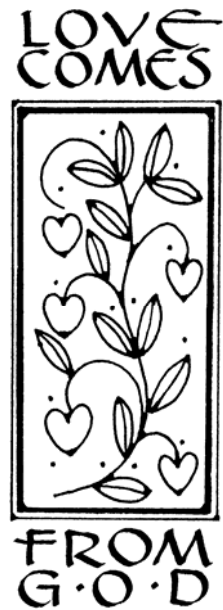
Our building project is moving from vision to specifications as Art Johnsen continues to detail the drawing set, which should be complete in the next few weeks. At that point, we will be ready to advertise for bids, which will give us a definitive look at the cost of the Parish Hall project, along with possible construction phasing options.

We are still evaluating financing options going forward. In an ideal world, we would use the Snyder Fund income to pay for a mortgage, but that is not possible at this time. Our operating finances are improving, but we have a ways to go (and a need to continue growing the congregation) before we can allocate dollars to a monthly mortgage payment. We will continue to examine financing alternatives as we evaluate the upcoming bids – we've done a lot of good work so far, and will continue to move forward and see this project through.

*David Olesen / Cathy Deats*

## Dates to Remember

February 2 -	Confirmation informational meeting after Chapel 7 PM
February 5	Souper Bowl of Caring Family Breakfast between services
February 8	Parish Life Committee Meeting 7:30 PM
February 9	Fundraising Committee Meeting Mitcham House 7:30 PM
February 10 - 11	Vestry Retreat/Kirkridge
February 13 - 19	Rector's Vacation
February 20	Church Office Closed/President's Day
February 23	Vestry Meeting/Mitcham House/7:30 PM
February 24 -25	30 Hour Famine
February 25	Fellowship Dinner Parish Hall 6:30 PM
February 26	Parish Forum Parish Hall 11:30 AM
March 1	Ash Wednesday 7 AM, 12 PM, 7:30 PM
March 5	Family Breakfast between services



## Remember the Souper Bowl of Caring February 5

On **February 5**, the Youth Group will be collecting money at the end of church for "**Souper Bowl of Caring**." This money goes to the Mission Strategy Committee and will be sent to the Community Soup Kitchen of Morristown. It is held at Church of the Redeemer but sponsored and supported by many Christian and Jewish congregations from the Morris/Sussex/Warren areas.

## Mission Strategy:

I am in receipt of a thank you note from the Allamuchy school nurse. In it she thanks the St. James' congregation for the gifts that were provided to the children of an Allamuchy family. I am always touched by how carefully the gifts are prepared and wrapped. Often more items are included than were requested or a person takes more than one gift tag. The success of this outreach is dependent on the generosity of our congregation. Thank you, all who participated. .

Paul Bartkus

## A Rose by Any Other Name ...

Here at St. James', our Worship Committee functions as not only the liturgical advisory group to the Rector, but also as the coordinating arm for all our parish programs and events. We are therefore incorporating the new title "Parish Life" to better describe our work.



What is it like to be hungry? Youth of the parish will again fast for 30 hours in order to learn about hungry people around the world, experience a small "taste" of hunger, complete a service project for our community, and have some fun too. The Parish Hall is the scene of the action, beginning Friday February 24 at 8:00 pm.

Teens and chaperones will have fasted from 12 noon that day and continue to fast together throughout their activities, until 6:00 pm Saturday. Then they will be served a soup supper. You can help by pledging support to them. Their individual goals will be \$120. Please watch for the young people at coffee hour and breakfast!

... and what better way to break a fast than to enjoy a fellowship dinner! With soup bowls cleared away, the parish hall will be transformed into a place of food, fun and fellowship.

**Save this date  
Saturday, February 25  
for a Fellowship Dinner  
6:30 pm in the Parish Hall**

How blessed we are to be able to hear the call of the hungry and respond to their needs **and** celebrate our many blessings on the same day!



## Confirmation, Reception and Re-Affirmation

Confirmation class is forming with an exciting and varied schedule. Those who wish to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation should contact the office immediately, and make plans to attend the opening informational setting on Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 pm in the Chapel (regular chapel service at 7:00, meeting begins at 7:40).

Confirmation is the sacramental rite in which the candidates "express a mature commitment to Christ, and receive strength from the Holy Spirit through prayer and the laying on of hands by a bishop" (BCP, p. 860).

We also welcome adults who wish to be received into the Episcopal Church and those who wish to reaffirm their baptismal vows when the Bishop is with us on May 6. Those who were baptized at an early age and those baptized as adults without laying on of hands by a bishop may wish to make a mature public affirmation of their faith, recommit themselves to the responsibilities of their baptism, and receive laying on of hands by a bishop (BCP, p. 412). Adults baptized with the laying on of hands by a bishop are considered to be confirmed.

Those who have returned from a time of religious inactivity to an active practice of faith may publicly reaffirm their baptismal vows. Others who have experienced a renewal of faith or desire to renew their Christian commitment may also reaffirm their baptismal vows. Reaffirmation may be repeated, depending on the pastoral needs of the person.

Please speak to the Rector regarding Reception or Reaffirmation, or if you have further questions about Confirmation.

## Deaf Ministry News

On December 28<sup>th</sup>, Sheila Shuford presented a workshop to the entire student body at the Franklin Township School. In honor of "Abilities Day," the school invited her to talk about communication for deaf and hard of hearing people. Sheila taught the children finger spelling and a few signs, and helped the students (and teachers) understand about communicating with people with hearing loss. Cathy Deats was interpreter for Sheila. Sheila motivated the children to learn sign by telling them they could share secrets with their friends without anyone knowing what they were saying!



## Junior Youth Group

Junior Youth Group started up again this year with our first meeting 1/15. We ended up combining class with the Senior Youths and Dawn Modugno did a wonderful lesson on making decisions. Our next meeting is 1/29 we will be talking about serving the needy, givers vs. takers and acts of kindness. In February we will be meeting on 2/12 and 2/26 and talking about "Is He for Real" and "Giving God His Props". We may assist the Sunday school classes delivering valentines to the elderly if not enough of them come on February 12. We have two meetings for March coming up and a special one planned in April about mothers. If anyone has any questions, comments or concerns I can be reached on my cell #908-619-0925 or email: [turtlefanatic@earthlink.net](mailto:turtlefanatic@earthlink.net).

The children are wonderful and I really enjoy spending time with them. Thank you.

*Lori Pursel*



## Senior Youth Group

Youth Group continues to meet every 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month. We switched Sundays in January due to the holidays and Annual Parish meeting. Check the bulletin board in the parish hall for updates. Looking ahead to February, we will again participate in the 30 HOUR FAMINE. This will be from Fri., Feb. 24-Sat. Feb. 25. All Junior and Senior Youth are invited to come and may bring a friend. We will have games, Bible Study and service work to do. Questions and comments: *Dawn Modugno* 852-2862

## Sunday School News

The Sunday School students will be delivering Valentine cheer to the residents of House of Good Shepherd on February 12th. Cards made by students in late January will be hand delivered that day. If any Sunday School Parents would like to join us for that event, please simply come to the Parish Hall that AM by 10:00 AM and we will caravan over to H.G.S. It brings a mid-winter "lift" to all of us!

Lessons continue the remainder of the month, with Lenten themes beginning by the last Sunday in February.

February 5	Family Sunday No Sunday school
February 12	Deliver cards to House of Good Shepherds
February 19	Holy Baptism lesson 44
February 26	Lent Puzzle Lesson 31
March 5	Family Sunday No Sunday school

*Kathy Lacouture*

## The Greening of the Church

The Greening of the Church 2005 began as a blessed time together, a perfect blend of good food and fellowship. The Wardens' Coffee was a sumptuous spread of delicious baked goods and other holiday treats accompanied by coffee, tea, and eggnog. In previous years, I merely helped out during the "Greening," able to pick and choose what task appealed to me. This year as chairperson of the Altar Guild, I discovered I was the "expert," the decision-maker, the go-to-guy regarding the wreaths, bows, roping, and where to put all this stuff. It was a humbling experience. I never knew there were so many ways to say, "I haven't a clue." There are so many people who helped with their efforts and advice; I feel they need to be recognized. To each of these wonderful people and everyone else who worked so hard, my sincerest thanks.

1. Phyllis Bartkus and Barbara Olesen who made the Wardens' Coffee so memorable.
2. Linda and Dan Miller who were able to breathe life into our vintage silk poinsettias for one last time.
3. Barbara White who steamed all the wrinkles out of the bows and never singed her eyebrows.
4. Pat and David Taylor who managed to secure these bows to a never-ending pile of evergreen wreaths and never complained about sticky fingers.
5. Tom Modugno who fearlessly made all those trips up and down a 10 foot+ ladder and never seemed to mind the endless directions from those of us with two feet firmly on the ground.
6. Ed Modugno Jr. who finally figured out how to secure the candelabras to the pews. I just hope he's around next year to save the mechanically challenged of us the time and embarrassment.
7. Dawn Modugno who mad a 1st Century Nativity scene fit on a 20th century card table.
8. Pat Taylor who donated handmade cross-stitch ornaments for the Giving Tree
9. Sal Cortino who reminded me that the Infant Jesus doesn't arrive in the manger until late on Christmas Eve. Sal and I are still debating if this is an Italian or Irish tradition!

But regardless of which ethnic group claims the tradition of the empty manger that waits for the Christ Child until Christmas Day, God has given the world a gift of love in a baby...a gift of life in Our Savior.

*Meg Critchley*



## Bring a friend (or family) to Family Breakfast

Statistics show that the way most people come to attend a church is through the invitation of another. Anyone who witnessed the Annual Meeting, the removal of carpet and pews (or replacement of the same!), or attended a family breakfast could not miss the warmth and welcome of St. James', and the feeling of family people find here. Let's share that: invite a friend or neighbor to breakfast at St. James' on Family Sunday (the first Sunday of every month – next date: February 3, at 9:00 am). They can enjoy the great food, meet some people and join in our worship (8:00 or 10:00). In our world today, full of packed schedules, work stress and competing demands on us, most folks are seeking a place of peace and harmony, as well as fun and caring. We can be the ones to carry the message that St. James' is a place like this

## Looking for An Oasis In Your Busy Week?

Each Thursday at 7:00 pm, we gather in the chapel in the quiet of the evening to worship God. We celebrate the Holy Eucharist, with prayers for healing always available. Occasionally, it is instead a service of Compline (end of day prayers) or Evening Prayer. Please consider attending this simple, quiet service to recharge your batteries mid-week.

## Hackettstown Clergy Support ESL

The Hackettstown Clergy Association has granted \$1,000, (about a third of their assets!) to the ESL program at St. James'. They were happy to support this ministry, which is so important to the town, as well as the people it serves. The HCA fund is fed by donations from the Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service and the Good Friday Service each year



Dave & Phyllis Heistand, ESL instructor Paula Roselli congratulate Wanda Michalik, a brand new US citizen!

## Senior Choir News

Senior. Choir rehearsals will continue to be held on WEDNESDAY evenings at 7:30 through the month of February! We will be changing back to our usual Thursday evening schedule starting March 2, 2006.

We welcome two new members to the Senior Choir, Scott and Karri Reyes, who carry on the singing tradition here at St James' that started with Dale Reyes, then passed to Scott's sister Chrissy Reyes. Their son Zander, who sings in our Children's Choir, is already carrying the tradition even further! We are thrilled to have them!

## Children's Choir News:

We are planning on having the Children's Choir sing again at Easter and then again probably in May! Rehearsal day will be changing from Wednesdays to either Tuesdays or Thursdays or even Fridays based on what works best for the group as I have a commitment on Monday and Wednesday evenings from 6-7:30 starting in March. I'll be talking to all current singers and their parents to see which day works best!

We will be starting rehearsals a few weeks earlier than usual, though, so we can take some time to teach our young singers some music "basics" like identifying a quarter note, how to figure out the number of beats in a measure, what are "beats" anyway! Music notation is really like a secret code and we're going to learn some of the decoding tricks!

Rehearsals will start up the week of February 13<sup>th</sup>. Look for the new day and/or time in your bulletins in the next couple of weeks!

If you are between the ages of 3 ½ and 12 and would like to join our choir, please see Pam Laura any Sunday after church or give her a call at 908-850-8086. We'd love to have you come join our fun!!

*Pam Laura*

## Celebrating Creative Congregations March 18 at NJIT in Newark

Celebrating Creative Congregations is an amazing collection workshops to help you in ministry, including praying with children, nuts and bolts of church growth, preserving parish records, Jesus and Buddha, caring for your church, bibliodrama...more than 80 workshops! Sponsored by the Diocese of Newark, it is in its 6<sup>th</sup> year. Plan to attend on Saturday, March 18 at NJIT in Newark. Contact the church office if you would like to share a ride.

Workshops are held from 9:30 to 3:15 and range

## Bell Choir "Notes"

The Multi-Generational Bell Choir will **begin rehearsals on January 29**, after the Coffee Hour following the 10:00 service. Choir members who would like to hear the "report back" from the Diocesan Convention are asked to attend the session after the 8:00 service.

The choir was unable to rehearse on January 15 and 22 because of the work in the church on the floors and the rugs, but it is certainly worth the delay in practicing to have the "new" floors and carpeting.

The choir will be preparing music for a Sunday in February as well as for the Lenten and Easter seasons.

Thanks to the "wedge" built by Ed Modugno, Pam Laura, my husband Sam and I were able to move the music filing cabinets against the shelves and we can now set up three tables for the choir. That means not only is there more room for each ringer to place their bells, but there is room for more ringers.

Come join us and see what fun rehearsals can be! You do not need to read music to ring bells!

*Louise Olshan*



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March 1

7:00 AM	Holy Eucharist and the Imposition of Ashes
12:00 NOON	Holy Eucharist and the Imposition of Ashes
7:30 PM	Holy Eucharist and the Imposition of Ashes (with music)

from "Enacting the Gospel" and "All About the Altar Guild" to "Prison Ministry" and "All about Deacons." Folks from St. James' are presenting four workshops: Cathy Deats (*Bibliodrama*), Sheila Shuford (*Making your Services Heard*), members of the Capital Campaign Team (*Capital Plan or Pain?*), Russ Worthington and David Olesen (*Communications and your Budget*). Flyers are available in the church narthex and Mitcham House, or request one from the church office.



## Meet Fred Jones

Fred Jones grew up in Philadelphia and served in the Combat Infantry in WWII. He met his wife, Nancy, in April of 1951 in his hometown. Fred worked for Frankford Arsenal in Philadelphia and was transferred to Picatinny Arsenal in 1977 as a contracts specialist. They settled in the Diamond Hill section of Mansfield as a result of the transfer.

Fred and Nancy moved to the House of the Good Shepard in 1990. He has been active at the "House" from Day One. He works with the Garden Committee and was responsible for the rocking chairs placed outside in the front of the retirement community.

Fred retired in 1984 to take care of Nancy when she had her first stroke. He lost his beloved wife in February of 1998. To him, she was everything. Fred showed me her wedding portrait, and I can see why Fred sees her as beautiful, both inside and out.

Fred is active at St James as a lay reader and helps out whenever and wherever he can. In addition, he assists the Chaplain at House of the Good Shepard.

Fred was recently featured in the advertising brochure for House of the Good Shepard (you can see a copy of the article in the parish hall). He has a married daughter who lives in South Carolina.

The last vacation Fred and Nancy took brought them to California. While touring around the Lake Louise area, they were taken by helicopter up to the Rockies in Canada to walk around the ski slopes. Ask him about it!

**March Journal articles  
due Monday, February 20, 2006**

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## Meet Meg Critchley

Meg grew up Irish Catholic in a Catholic High School in Cedar Grove, NJ. She attended nursing school at Christ Hospital in Jersey City. She worked for 18 years in pediatrics and OB-GYN at St Clares in Denville.

Meg's second husband was Jewish and she converted to Judaism. Her children were initially brought up Jewish, but Meg and children eventually went back to the Roman Catholic Church.

Meg married Bill Critchley on July 10, 1999. Bill was Episcopalian and she joined the church as well. Between them, they have seven children, and usually there are three of them in college at the same time! Both Kevin and Audrey were baptized at St James.

Meg wound up getting her English degree from Sussex County Community College. When Bill retired, she went back to nursing at Heath Village.

Meg is active in the church and has just taken the position of head of the Altar Guild. She has also helped the CARES group with meals for those in our parish in need of food. She loves to garden and has an adopted greyhound.

Mikvah, what's that? Ask Meg, as she has participated in this Jewish ritual.

*Roving Reporter and Photographer Barbara Olesen*



Paul, Warden Emeritus, and Phyllis Bartkus