

St. James' Journal

The Rev. Dr. Cathy L. Deats, Rector

April 2006

Ye blessed souls at rest, who ran this earthly race,
And now, from sin released, behold the Saviour's face,
God's praises sound, as in his sight with sweet delight, Ye do abound.

---*The Hymnal 1982, #625*



He came to St. James' church when he moved from Passaic to Hackettstown ten years ago. We don't know why he chose us – perhaps because he had been a member of another Episcopal Church, perhaps because he lived close by. Maybe it was our warm welcome, or the coffee. It certainly was not the sound of the music or the words of the sermon, at least not when he first arrived. But arrive he did, and he stayed, faithfully perched in “Episcopal no man's land” – the front row.

When I arrived at St. James', I was surprised to see the level of involvement Mr. Billington displayed as a Deaf man in a hearing community. He understood the service, with the help of others, through reading large print materials. I gave him a copy of my sermon before the service. Occasionally, I was able to simultaneously sign and say parts of the service. When our Deacon Candidate Sheila Shuford arrived, the sign language interpreters truly made the service come alive for Mr. Billington. Many of the congregation picked up the language of sign: “Our Father, who art in heaven...” “Praise God, from whom all blessings flow...” Communication became easier for us, and participation in our common life became easier for Mr. Billington. He came to breakfasts and dinners, classes and Bible study.

I always called him Mr. Billington. In the Deaf community, people do not call each other by the formal title of “Mr.” or “Ms.” For the Deaf, he was simply “Ed.” Fluent in ASL, he used some older signs; for ASL, like English, is a living language which changes over time. Even with his limited eyesight, he sang they hymns by mirroring the signs of the interpreter. He knew “the body of Christ, the bread of heaven” and “the blood of Christ, the cup of salvation.” Always he replied, “Amen! Amen!”

I loved to interpret for Ed. I had to sit quite close to him because of his vision loss. His eyes and face gave the animated feedback I needed to get the message across. If I fingerspelled a word I did not know, he fed me the sign. And he thanked me as if I had given him the world.

What did Ed teach me? He taught me that you can hear a song with your eyes; that communication with a Deaf person does not depend on fluency in sign language; that the sign of the peace in sign *is* peace. He taught me that while giving to others is a blessing, often the more surprising blessing comes my way – the smile despite fear and pain, the courage to face each day, the persistence in communication.

As we comforted each other with the fact that Mr. Billington was now with God and freed of all pain and limitation, I overheard someone say, “And now he can hear God welcome him, and hear music and the birds.” We were silent awhile. Then our Deacon Candidate said, “And God knows sign language too.”

To see wholeness through the eyes of grace is a blessing. We were blessed to have had Ed with us these past years, and he was blessed to have had us. We are all, as individuals, missing something – vision or hearing, mobility, math ability, sense of direction, loving parenting. And the grace of God draws us into this community, which is the body of Christ, where all are whole regardless of individual missing pieces.

Rest in peace, Ed.

In Christ's love,

Wardens' Words

Loss

We just lost Mr. Billington, a long-time member of our church. When Barbara and I first joined St. James', he walked the mile to church every week, and sat with Nancy Riley. From time to time, we would be driving through town and see him walking to Quick Chek to do his daily shopping. When Nancy passed away, Barbara and I "adopted" him and helped him through services as best we could. Over time, we started to pick him up and drive him to church. When Sheila joined us, she helped teach some sign language so we could better communicate with him, and of course St James' also provided an interpreter in recent years.

Mr. Billington spent a lot of time alone, in every sense of the word. He lived by himself. He had a hard time establishing relationships with his neighbors at his apartment complex. He was also isolated by his infirmities – he had suffered serious vision loss and could not hear. As a result, he was very difficult to communicate with.

But our community did reach out to him. I know that he treasured his time at St. James', where we try to live out our covenant and welcome everyone. He knew that he was welcomed here, and looked forward to his times at St James'. He enjoyed talking with our folks, signing with Cathy, Sheila, and the rest of our signing crew, and just spending time at worship and coffee hour.

We can only change the world one life at a time. Mr. Billington died alone, but he died as part of our community. We will miss him.

David Olesen

Making a Difference

On the Sunday after the 30 Hour Famine, our Youth Group talked about what it means to really be hungry and how we are all fortunate enough to have no idea how that feels. Some of the kids said they were "starving" only a few hours into the 30 hour fast. They were surprised to learn that of the most basic elements in life, food comes fourth after air, water and sleep. Yet for them, or any of us, to give up food for over a day seems like a major sacrifice. But in fact, if you are working, learning or playing, it isn't really so hard.

During the Famine we played a game called "TRIBE". Our group was divided into 2 "tribes" who competed in different activities to earn food, water and health credits. Some of the kids were assigned a sickness or disability during the activity. They were challenged to lead a blindfolded teammate, run with a splinted leg or carry a backpack of heavy books while they tried to earn enough food or water cards to feed their group. This was to help them realize what many people go through each day just to survive.

Obviously, none of us can imagine what it is really like to search for food every day or feel hungry all of the time. I do know the kids felt good about doing something for someone else. I am also certain that they appreciated our dinner of soup and bread. Thank you to Eileen Malejko for making the soup and for everyone who contributed to World Vision. Hopefully we have helped make a difference for some people who really are hungry.

Dawn Modugno



Vestry Highlights

From the March Vestry Meeting

- Two educational forums were well attended: Bishops in the Episcopal Church, and The Book of Common Prayer.
- New pew cushions have arrived. The Convent of St. John Baptist will receive our old cushions for donation to other churches. It is likely they will end up in Louisiana, where they will be used by churches who suffered losses in Hurricane Katrina
- There will be a joint meeting of the Finance Committee and Vestry April 6 at 7 pm. The agenda will be financing the building project and reviewing our investment goals.
- In special meetings (March 5 and 12), the vestry reviewed estimates and awarded a contract to Nick Bencivengo for repair / replacement of the church front steps and



Jesus Christ is Risen Today

Dates to Remember in April

- April 2 Family Breakfast
- April 5 Coffee and Conversation Adult Confirmation Mitcham House 7:30 PM
- April 8 Maintenance Morning 9:00 AM - NOON
- April 8 Altar Guild Morning
- April 9 Palm Sunday Continental Breakfast between services

HOLY WEEK SERVICES (see page 4)

- April 14 Good Friday / Church Office Closed
- April 17 Easter Monday / Church Office Closed
- April 21 - 22 Spring Rummage Sale and Bake Sale
- April 27 Vestry Meeting Mitcham House 7:30 PM
- April 29 Open Altar Guild Meeting 9:30 – 11:30 AM

Coming in May

- May 6 Confirmation
- May 18 Columbarium Presentation 7:30 PM (see page 7)

Easter Food Baskets Once again this year, St. James’ will be providing food baskets to needy families in our community. Non-perishable food donations should be received no later than April 9th. Donations can be dropped off in the Parish Hall on Sunday mornings, or in the church office Monday to NOON. Questions? Speak with Jerry Sheard. *Please note: you may also donate Shoprite Cards for the baskets!*

Easter Flower Offering envelopes are available in the back of the church. Envelopes may be placed in the offering plate or mailed to the office. All envelopes must be received no later than Sunday, April 9th.

Cleanup of Grounds and Sanctuary

**Saturday April 8
9:00 AM to 12:00 NOON**

Have you missed the comraderie of a good morning of physical work around St. James’? Now that spring has nearly arrived, our first cleanup / light maintenance morning has been scheduled! Join us for all or part of the time – great coffee, great people, some fun, and work gets done. Some gardening work, grounds cleanup, and cleaning and polishing in the church are on the to-do list.



**Coffee and Conversation about “where I fit in” in the Episcopal Church
Wednesday, April 5, 7:30 PM
in the Mitcham House**

If you are relatively new to our community, or we do not have a record of your confirming church, we would like to invite you to a conversation about what it means to participate in an Episcopal community. People have varied expressions of their faith, and so we invite you to join the adults being confirmed or received into the church this year. Also present will be folks in our community who have lived out their faith at St. James’ for more than a few years. Together we will have coffee and conversation about how and where we “fit in” in our lives.

Please let the church office know you will be with us (908.852.3968).

If you are unable to join us for this conversation, I hope you will let me know you would like to hear more about confirmation and membership in the Episcopal Church in the future.

For Weekly Announcements and what’s happening now at St. James’, go to our Webpage:

<http://saint.james.church.home.comcast.net>

Russ Worthington, Webmaster

May Journal articles due Monday, April 24

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Holy Week Services:

Wednesday	April 12	Tenebrae	7:30 PM
Maundy Thursday	April 13	The Holy Eucharist	7:30 PM
Maundy Thursday	April 13-14	Nightwatch Vigil	9 PM to 12 NOON
		<i>Sign up sheet in the Narthex</i>	
Good Friday	April 14	Good Friday Ecumenical Service	12 NOON
		<i>(Hackettstown Community Service)</i>	
		Stations of the Cross	7:30 PM
Holy Saturday	April 15	Prayer	10:00 AM
Easter Eve	April 15	The Great Vigil of Easter	7:30 PM
Easter Day	April 16	Celebration of the Resurrection	8 AM and 10 AM



Volunteers are needed for various lay ministries during Holy Week. Please call the office if you are available or speak with the Rector.

"Could you not watch with me one brief hour?"

The vigil we keep following the Maundy Thursday Eucharist is an especially holy time for the church. Following the Last Supper Eucharist, the reserved sacrament is brought to the Lady Chapel. We strip the altar bare to symbolize the abandonment of Jesus by his disciples and the stripping of Jesus by the soldiers prior to his crucifixion. During the night until noon on Friday, we heed our Lord's words to watch with him. In the garden, which is our chapel, we ask that someone always be present. This is a very powerful and moving time of prayer as we meditate on Jesus' death and its meaning for us today. You may sign up for a time using the signup sheet in the church narthex.



Lenten Quiet Morning with Jim Warnke

All who attended the Quiet Morning with The Rev. James Warnke came away with a great sense of peace and some tools to use in personal devotion. We learned various methods of meditation, including walking meditation, breathwork and gestures to help us to pray. Father Jim is the Curate at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Englewood and has a private practice of psychotherapy. Over a light lunch, we agreed on the importance of inner silence and committed ourselves to the spiritual practice we had learned. When Jim returns to lead another morning, don't miss it!

Good Friday for Kids?

Would you like your children to experience the Good Friday story in a way they can better understand? Join The Rev. Mary Lou Howson, Sheila Shuford and four other storytellers at the Panther Valley Ecumenical Church (Route 517, Allamuchy) as they guide the children through the events in the last week of Jesus' life. Bring a brown bag lunch; drinks and a craft will be supplied for the children. Friday, April 14 at Noon.

Altar Guild

The congregation will be using new bobeches during this year's Easter Vigil Service. (For the now-thoroughly confused, bobeches are the things that stop the wax from dripping on your hands when holding a lighted candle!) The reusable, one-piece plastic cup-style holders are designed to fit the individual candles securely and catch the wax drippings. We hope that replacing the old, ill-fitting cardboard candleholders will protect the new carpet, new cushions and Easter Vigil participants from wax stains and burns.

General cleaning in preparation for Easter will be held Saturday, April 8 at 10 AM. All teams will meet Holy Saturday, April 15 at 10 AM to arrange Easter flowers and set up for Easter services.

Meg Critchley

Open Altar Guild Meeting - Carol Homer of the Diocese of Newark Altar Guild, will be our guest on **Saturday, April 29th, from 9:30 to 11:30 am** in the church. Carol is a very talented and experienced needle artist, expert at repair and re-cycling of altar linens. She will give us the AGBT (Altar Guild Basic Training) which all members need from time to time. If you would like to join us for this day without officially joining the Altar Guild, you are welcome!

The St. James' 2006 30 Hour Famine for hunger relief (sponsored by World Vision) raised a total of **\$1282 !!**

Thank you for supporting our young people who participated: Sylvia, Tina and Ricky Okoye, Amy Modugno, Matthew Malejko, Charlie Thieringer, Katie Lacouture and Brian Rolstad. Okoye friends Sierra Agens and Catherine Organes also participated. Word has just been received from World Vision that our contributions have been **DOUBLED** by special grants! This means that St. James' contributions saved the lives of **SEVEN** children this year. Bless you, those who hungered and those who gave.



Youth Group

On Feb. 24-25th, 8 members of St. James' Youth Group participated in the 30 Hour Famine. These hungry teenagers collected over \$1200 for World Vision to use for World Hunger. The following Sunday, they also hosted coffee hour.

We continue to meet every 2nd and 4th Sunday during the 10 o'clock service. Last month we talked about hunger, how important food is to us and what real hunger is. We also talked about advertising and how misleading it can sometimes be. This month we will talk about the material expectations of teenagers.

Questions, comments, ideas? See *Dawn Modugno*

Junior Youth Group

Junior youth group will be meeting on:

- April 9 filling Easter baskets
- April 23 Core for Living
- April 23 A talk about special mothers...

Lori Pursel

Dayne Goes to School

Last week our golden retriever puppy, Dayne went back to the Seeing Eye for training. Most of you have seen Dayne in church and around the Parish Hall. Dayne was very well behaved and will hopefully make a great Seeing Eye dog. I got him when he was two months old. I trained Dayne to do basic commands and gave him lots of love. Now he will be taught how to guide a blind person through all surroundings in life. We miss Dayne a lot but know he will have a good home and life. He will do well and be a success. We will be getting our next puppy to raise after Easter.

Amy Modugno



Sunday School

Thanks to the families who sent in another round of snack. Attendance has been very consistent this year, and that means we have had a need to replenish the snacks sent in the fall. That is a good thing! Our Godly Play Lessons for the lenten season have been challenging for the students but they seemed to have retained a great deal from week to week.

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| April 2 | Family Sunday No Sunday school |
| April 9 | Palm Sunday |
| | (We will walk with congregation around block then go back to Parish Hall and do Lesson 35 Jesus the King) |
| April 16 | Enrichment Lesson the Crosses |
| April 30 | Mother's Day gifts |
| May 7 | Family Sunday No Sunday School |
| May 14 | Mother's Day No Sunday School |

Kathy Lacouture

Hackettstown Cub Scout Pack 164 was recently awarded the **"Golden Hanger"** by NJ CARES for collecting the most coats in the Youth Division during their annual coat drive last December. The Pack collected and delivered over 600 coats, which was a record!

On behalf of Den 3, Drew and Dave Lacouture would like to thank the members of St. James' Church for donating over 60 coats. Some of the men's coats collected were donated to the Seamen's Church Institute.

Thanks again

Calling all Graduates We will honor graduates on Sunday, June 18th



Please contact the church office if there is a graduate in your family – 8th grade, High School, College, Professional School or other program. Our church family would like to celebrate graduation milestones with your family. Coffee Hour on that day will be hosted by the Education for Ministry (EFM) Class, which has two graduates who have completed the four-year program this year.

Scholarships to graduates

Each year, the vestry makes a monetary gift to each of our high school graduates. The amount of the gift varies from year to year, as the source of these funds is the contributions received for Spiritual Bouquets (remembrance of one's friends and family each week). If you would like to honor our graduates with a contribution to this fund, please make your donation payable to St. James' and mark it "Graduates."

Parish Forum on the Book of Common Prayer

On Sunday March 19, Russ Worthington led a forum on the Book of Common Prayer in St. James' Parish Hall following coffee hour. The confirmation class of adults and youths were in attendance in addition to other interested people. My own confirmation is many years behind me. I was very hard of hearing at the time and gained very little from classes. I have used the flip system, search until you find, over the years. Russ showed us that the Book of Common Prayer is a history book, a book of prayers, church calendar and Bible. He explained that our current prayer book is from 1979 and it returns the focus to the Eucharist. Russ pointed out that there are prayers and blessings as old as 6th Century BCE and as modern as the 20th.

Russ said the book is central to life as an Episcopalian and stated, "We pray what we believe and we believe what we pray." Outside the formal services it was interesting for me to learn more about the Psalter. Russ said it is a collection of prayers and hymns that sum up the whole of human life and the ancient hymnbook of the Jews. The handout provided gave me a road map through The Book of Common Prayer, which allows me to know where to find what I need. For those who missed the class, do you know the meaning of amen? Russ told us it is a Hebrew word, giving assent at the end of prayers, a note of affirmation. Ask Russ what the connection between "amen" and "word" is!

Sheila Shuford

Bell Choir "Notes"

The Bell Choir is enjoying a slightly easier few months, with less playing in the spring.

The Multi-Generational Bell Choir joined with the Senior Choir to present the Introit on March 26 and will do the same on April 2. Since the Senior Choir has been starting the service each Sunday in Lent with the Introit, hopefully the sound from the two groups together will give the congregation another way to experience the words and music. Many thanks to the Senior Choir members and director Pam Laura for their patience while we worked through the more free-flowing tempo of the chant. It was a challenge for the Bell Choir to prepare such a piece and also to work with another group.

We are very pleased to welcome Diana Clark as a new member of the choir. She is trying us out to see what we do and how we do it. We look forward to having her with us.

We have also started to prepare a piece for Choir Recognition Sunday in June. The rhythm is interesting with the bass bells and treble bells playing quite different rhythm patterns. It should be very beautiful when we get it all together and a challenge to the choir to concentrate on their own rhythm. I hope we can have some fun preparing this piece.

Louise Olshan



Confirmation / Reception news

Were you confirmed in another church and want to become a member of the Episcopal Church? Depending upon the church in which you were confirmed, you can be confirmed as an Episcopalian or received into the Episcopal Church. Please speak to the Rector if you have questions. Consider also joining us for a conversation about what it means to be confirmed / received as an adult in the Episcopal Church. Wednesday, April 5, at 7:30 in the Mitcham House. Coffee and dessert will be served.

For its service project, the Confirmation Class will visit Bluestone Farm, a center for environmental / spiritual studies operated by the Sisters of the Community of the Holy Spirit. The Sisters created this center in 2004, with the assistance of Sister Miriam of Genesis Farm in Blairstown. The students will learn about the work of the center (they grow their own organic food and tap the maple trees on their land) and assist in readying the land for the growing season.

Check out this very special place at
www.chssisters.org

Deaf Awareness at Belvidere High School

On March 13, I traveled to Belvidere, NJ, to teach two high school classes. Ronnie Bernhard, who is a professional interpreter, accompanied me. I spoke to two Junior classes taught by Mr. Siu and Mr. Sence. The classes are health and physical education and the students had been learning about disabilities with a focus on relationships, communication and interpersonal skills. There were about 25 students in each class.

I told the students that the disability of deafness is not that a person can't hear; it is because a person can't communicate with the majority of the world. The basis of the Deaf Community is communication. We discussed many aspects of hearing loss and communication. The classes were full of good questions. Students seemed to relate well to the question of what would happen in their lives if they lost their hearing. I taught some basic signing and finger spelling. The students were amazed to learn that a baby of six months can learn to sign and that the way children learn to speak is because they can hear!

Belvidere is an interesting Victorian town set around a town square and surrounded by rolling hills of farms. It was an interesting trip for me to a new area and to a new world of high school students.

Sheila Shuford



Our Deacon Candidate **Sheila Shuford** was recently elected president of Garden State ALDA (Association of Late-Deafened Adults)! Way to go, Sheila! When asked what she plans for her administration, she was heard to say, "I take office on April first. I'm waiting to see if this is a joke or not!" All kidding aside (nearly impossible with Sheila!), we know she will be a great leader for this growing group!

Celebrating Creative Congregations

Seven members of St. James' converged upon Celebrating Creative Congregations on a Saturday in March: Cathy Deats, Elmer Danté, Ellen Infante, Barbara and David Olesen, Barbara White and Russ Worthington. We learned about Benedictine Spirituality, The Welcoming Church, How to know what your community needs, Stewardship, Campus Ministry, Mary, Mother of God, and ESL. We taught Bibliodrama (Cathy Deats) and Communications and your Budget (David Olesen and Russ Worthington). It was a great day to meet others in the Diocese and realize what a rich store of talent there is among our churches

Building Project Update

The Request for Proposal (RFP) for our building project has been published. Our architect is supervising the bidding process, and will have a walk-through for potential bidders on Tuesday, April 4 at 3:00 pm. Bids are due April 20.

We extend to the entire parish an invitation to pray for this big step in our journey to welcome all people into our worship and fellowship space. The Prayer Ministry is already on the job; please join them in praying for guidance and wisdom as the Vestry and Finance Committee make important choices for our future.

Episcopal Appalachian Ministries (EAM) Trip Applications available from church office - Trip dates: July 29 - August 5, 2006

SAVE THE DATE:

Columbarium Presentation

Save the date, **Thursday, May 18, 7:30 pm**, to hear a presentation from the Creter Vault Company. Creter builds columbaria (niches for the interment of ashes) in churches, chapels and even outdoors. This gives people an opportunity to choose their church as a final resting place. In preparation for the meeting, Bill Robertson, representative of Creter, will photograph our chapel and bring models on May 18th. This is not just for vestry – all are welcome to attend.

The Annual Picnic will be held on **June 4** at Independence Field of Dreams Recreation Center. We will hold our 10:00 AM worship service outdoors, followed by our annual picnic. Watch for further details,

Fundraising Committee News

The Fundraising Committee has been scouring the Internet and the Diocese for creative ways to supplement our budget. Take a look at what they have done so far:

Spaghetti Dinner on Friday, March 31

By publication date, you will know of its success! Until then you may have heard our ads on WRNJ Radio and seen flyers all over town.

Cash for Cartridges and Cell Phones!

Not sure what to do with your used printer cartridges and old cell phones? Bring them along to the Parish Hall, deposit them in the container provided and they will be collected, packaged up and sent off for recycling. We will earn points for all the cartridges we return which eventually can be turned into cash for St. James. Ask family and co-workers to give you their used cartridges and cell phones – almost all brands are accepted.

For all Online Shoppers

For any of you who are “online shoppers” there is an easy way to shop online **and** donate money to St. James. Just log onto **“iGive.com”** and follow the instructions for setting up your account (all free of charge). Each time you shop online, a percentage from your purchases will be sent to St. James. There are over 654 shops in The Mall – Lands’ End, Neiman Marcus, JC Penney, Hallmark and many, many more.

When asked for your “cause”, please enter **“St. James’ Episcopal Church (NJ)”** – the “NJ” is very important, as there are several other churches with the same name and even listed with the same street name.

Domino’s Pizza Discount Cards

Cards are still available - \$10 gives you up to \$200 savings (buy one pizza, get one free).

Mother’s Day Corsages

It’s not too early to think about lovely corsages for the special women in your life. See special flyer available after Easter!

Sam’s Club on Saturday, May 13

Visit St. James’ at Sam’s Club, Saturday, May 13th for a smorgasbord of sales and good will – bake sale, Domino’s cards, Mother’s Day corsages!

Stay tuned for an auction-type event in the fall, as well as the ever-amazing Spring Rummage and Bake Sale on April 21-22!

While some Fundraising activities are more profitable than others, remember our goal is to involve our communities, at work and in our neighborhoods, in the work we have been given to do here. So stewardship is how we show our commitment to God and the St. James’ body of Christ; fundraising is how we not only generate funds, but also educate and spread the excitement about our mission and ministry in the larger world. It is part of our evangelism and we hope you will be encouragers of others to support us!

**St. James' Annual
Spring Rummage
and Bake Sale**

**Friday April 21 & Saturday April 22
9 AM to 4 PM**

Donations of new or gently used items are very much appreciated (no books or electronics, please).

In addition, we need help with the following:

- ❖ donation of baked goods,
- ❖ teams for set up and pack up of the sale merchandise,
- ❖ teams to help sell at the rummage and bake sale and
- ❖ teams to put up and take down signs around town.

Let us know how you can be a part of this important event! All proceeds will support the ministry and mission of St. James'

Contact Barbara White (732-644-7499) or Barbara Olesen (908-850-5645) to volunteer or see sign-up sheet in the Parish Hall.

St James' Staff & Vestry

Rector:	The Rev. Dr. Cathy L. Deats
Deacon Postulant Intern	Sheila Shuford
Rector Emeritus:	The Rev. Clarence Sickles
Sr. Warden:	David Olesen
Jr. Warden:	Dawn Modugno
Treasurer:	Penn Pixley
Parish Administrator:	Linda Murray
Music Director:	Pam Laura
Organist:	Louise Olshan
Sexton:	Pauline Volkert
Vestry:	Candy Norris Brewster
	Cheryl Crisp
	Jane Eager
	Ellen Infante
	Tom Kimpland
	David Lacouture
	Dan Miller
	Jerry Sheard
	Russ Worthington

