

NEVERTHELESS

Newsletter of the Church of St. James the Less, a parish of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia
125 Beverly Road Ashland, VA 23005 (804) 798-6336; Internet: www.stjamestheless.com

April 2008

Happy Easter Everyone!

Easter was (and is) indeed a most joyous occasion at SJTL! I pray you and your family and friends are continuing to celebrate this joyful Eastertide. To continue in that spirit of celebration, Lee and I would like to invite you to an OPEN HOUSE at your rectory after the 10:00 service on April 6.

Over the last year and a half a lot of work has gone into refurbishing and updating the rectory. Contractors as well as many, many parishioners put a lot of hours into the project. As most of you are aware there was more work to be done than anticipated. New ductwork had to be installed in the house because the old ductwork would not allow the heating and cooling to work efficiently. A new HVAC system was installed along with new ductwork. A second HVAC system was also installed upstairs and for the first time the entire upstairs of the rectory has heat and air.

During the renovation of the kitchen it was discovered that some of the floor joists had rotted away. So new joists and sub floor were installed. A new kitchen layout was conceived and new cabinets were made by our own Harry Hassell. If you have ever seen the old kitchen you will not believe the change. Every room in the rectory has also received several coats of new paint and the wood floors were also refinished to a beautiful honey gloss. There is also a huge new walk-in closet upstairs. You not only can walk in it, but you could probably live in it too!

Though we live in the rectory as our home, it belongs to you and all the people of St. James the Less. We would love for you to come over to see all the marvelous things you and generations before have made possible by your gifts of time, talent and treasure. Please come by after the 10:00 service on April 6. There will be some light refreshments available and the house will be open for all to take a walk through. We will also have some before and after pictures of the kitchen.

We hope you will join come and see all the marvelous changes that have been made possible and celebrate. And I promise you won't fall through the kitchen floor!

Happy Easter,

Ed



Children's Ministry Update

In early March a small group* made up of several Sunday School teachers, parents of children, and vestry members was invited to meet with the clergy to envision the ministry of a part time Children's Ministry Director as part of the staff of St. James the Less; looking at all aspects of children's ministry-ministries to and with children-as well as the important ministry of children in the parish family and the community.

We began by asking ourselves what families with children are looking for in a parish like SJTL in 2008. (Acknowledging that in today's world denominational labels seem less important than they were for most of us, and that the world in which today's young families live and work is very different from that in which most of us grew up.) It quickly became apparent as we gave our own answers and heard reported feedback from families who have left the parish, that "children's ministries" are not only about children. They are also about supporting parents and providing opportunities for their spiritual growth and fellowship, with activities planned around their concerns and interests. Some members spoke of a growing disconnect between parents of children in the nursery and Sunday School with the rest of the congregation. Some also are looking for a form of Children's Worship (in addition to Sunday School) appropriate for children above nursery age through 2nd or 3rd grade. This would be held during the time of the readings and the sermon. They would return to the service at the time of the Peace to receive communion with their parents.

At our second meeting, our focus moved from a broad vision of children's ministries that would meet more of the needs of parents and children to what's not working well for us in the present. Among our greatest challenges are the dwindling size of Sunday School classes and a Sunday morning schedule that means that every special event in the life of the congregation (i.e. baptism receptions, special services, luncheons, picnics, etc.) cancels Sunday School for both children and adults. It then becomes an on again-off again affair. Teachers never know how long they will have for their classes as they are governed by the length of the service. This can vary by as much as 15 or 20 minutes, cutting the class time almost in half. **Please note that in all this it was continually emphasized that we have a truly dedicated and creative group of teachers whose ministry is appreciated by all of us.**

It seems that the perception is, true or not, that Children's Ministry is a low priority in the parish. This underlines the need for a person on the staff who, as "the face and heart of children's ministries", will work with the congregation and Rector to develop and grow this aspect of parish life. We will be looking for someone familiar with Episcopal worship and theology who has knowledge of, and experience with, the best available resources and programs for Christian formation of children, youth and adults. He or she will also need the ability to recruit and call forth the gifts of others, to be a bridge builder between generations, and to bring energy and vitality to Christian Formation at St. James the Less. The hope is to call a qualified person to this ministry sometime this summer.

Please keep this ministry and the *Visioning Group-Ed Tracy, Susan Hubbard, Kendra Shifflett, Dani Pettit, Laura Baker and Melissa Roberts in your prayers,

Barbara Blakemore, Facilitator

Christian Formation Calendar for April

Alleluia, Christ is Risen!
The Lord is Risen indeed. Alleluia!

Easter is a season of 50 days from the Day of Resurrection to the Day of Pentecost

Come join us as we learn and celebrate!
Classes for all ages begin immediately following the 10 o'clock service.

- March 30-Easter II Children and youth learn the story of Jesus' appearance in the Upper Room and receive the commission to pass on the Good News- John 20: 19-31 Thomas and faithful doubt.
- April 6-Easter III Luke 24:13-35-Mystery and surprise!- The disciples encounter Jesus on the road to Emmaus.
- April 13-Easter IV Jesus as the Good Shepherd. Psalm 23. God provides for our needs.
- April 20-Easter V Jesus shows us God's truth and God's way-John 14:1-14
- April 27-Easter VI Jesus' farewell to his disciples -John 14:15-21 Jesus prays for and encourages us to follow in his way.
- May 4-Easter VII John 17:1-11- We listen to Jesus pray for his friends and explore how we can pray for others

College News

Thanks to Kennan McVey for sharing her experiences in Guatemala in the Adult Ed. Class on March 9! And thanks to Kaitlyn Vernier for her wonderful DVD of our trip!

It's time again for Care Packages! The theme for this Spring's packages will be "Beach Party Time." Watch the bulletin board in the hall for ways you can help this Spring!

Could you use some help on a home or community job? RANDOLPH-Macon will be celebrating "Macon a Difference Day" on Saturday, April 26. R-MC is looking for opportunities to involve students in working for our community as volunteers. The way it works is that the College posts work opportunities including the job, how many students are requested for that job, whether it is a morning, afternoon or all day job, and location. Students and/or groups of students sign up do the posted jobs. Usually, the job requestor provides any necessary tools or materials and the students provide the labor. Jobs can include lawn work, outside maintenance chores like gutter cleaning, painting (inside or out), moving heavy items, garden tilling, etc. Jobs can be done for individuals or organizations. Give a student the opportunity to become a more of a part of our ASXLAND community by helping you out!

EALF will be having a movie night on Thursday, April 24. We will have pizza and watch the movie "The Kingdom of Heaven." The location is tentatively planned for the Upper Room. Watch your email for details!

Senior High News

As always we were busy in March; we attended the diocesan senior high gathering at Shrine Mont with 200 other young Episcopalians. We also hosted the annual Easter Egg Hunt. One evening we invited several "long time" parishioners to visit with us. Thanks to the extended Sanders family, Charlie, Sarah, Bill and Karen (Fritter), Mary Ann and Carl Harris, and Lyde Longaker for sharing their stories. We hope to do more of this in 2008 and ultimately record some of these memories for you to enjoy. On April 26th we'll participate in the American Cancer Relay for Life (see article) and the Tri-Cities Work Camp 20th year reunion.

We still have two places open for Work Camp 2008 in Petersburg – teens need to be rising 9th graders to participate. *We are in need of one male and one female to chaperone these youth.* The dates are July 20-26. If you feel called to this ministry, please contact Jane Jones at 798-6919.

Mark your calendars with the date for Senior High Service – May 4th.

+++++

Senior High Youth Service

May 4th, 10:00 AM

This year's senior high service is scheduled for May 4th. Please join us as we celebrate the youth of the parish. We are graduating 14 seniors this year who have participated in our youth group; many of these teens were baptized and confirmed at St. James the Less. Come sing a joyful noise!

Announcements:

"Carnival of Hope" Relay for Life: For the second year, the Senior Youth Group is sponsoring a team for the American Cancer Society fundraiser, Relay for Life. The theme this year is "Carnival of Hope". You may donate by writing a check to the American Cancer Society. You may also buy one or more luminaries for loved one(s) who have battled cancer. The luminaries will be lit at the relay event at Patrick Henry on April 26th when the teens will walk from noon to midnight. Look for the teens collecting donations on Sundays in April.

ECW: We are co-hosting the annual business meeting at Fork Church on Monday April 7. Be there at 10:00 a.m. with a covered dish.

PLEASE DON'T FORGET A.C.E.S.: Please continue to bring non-perishable food items and clothing in good condition to the A.C.E.S. basket in the Narthex or the A.C.E.S. boxes in the hallway. It is easy to forget, but your donations make a very big difference in the lives of some of our neighbors.

Thank you for all you have done!

Questions? Call Lee & Susan Chambers at 798-6647 or Sarah Sanders at 798-7435.

CARITAS Confusion: The CARITAS homeless program IS coming to St. James the Less in May. Originally, it was scheduled to be at St. Ann's for two weeks, one of which, St. James the Less would be hosting. But that has changed. It seems there was a schedule mixup at St. Ann's, and they are unable to house the guests the week of May 31-June 7. So the guests will be living in Brydon Hall here, and then move on to St. Ann's on the 7th of June. The meals, overnight, breakfasts, and lunches scheduling won't change, so there will be many churches covering that part of the program while it is at St. James the Less. Really the only issue for us is that Brydon Hall will be off-limits to the parish for the week of May 31-June 7.

Questions?

Don Bruce, Sandi Shirey, Sylvia Spagna.



Obstructive Sleep Apnea

Have you ever been told that you snore? Do you awaken in the morning with headaches or feeling unusually tired after a night's sleep? If so, you might have obstructive sleep apnea.

The Greek word "apnea" literally means "without breath". Obstructive sleep apnea is caused by a blockage of the airway, usually when the soft tissue in the back of the throat collapses and closes the airway during sleep. This causes pauses in breathing which last from a few seconds to a few minutes and may occur 5 to 30 or more times an hour. When the oxygen level in the blood drops to dangerous levels, it triggers the brain to disturb sleep. Normal breathing resumes, often with a loud snorting or snoring sound. Obstructive sleep apnea results in poor sleep quality that makes the sufferer tired during the day, often unable to perform properly during waking hours.

Sleep apnea is very common. It affects more than twelve million Americans. Risk factors including being male, overweight, and over age forty although anyone of any age can develop it. Untreated, the condition can cause high blood pressure, congestive heart failure, heart attacks, stroke, diabetes, loss of mental acuity and headaches. It also increases the chance of driving accidents or job-related injuries.

Fortunately, this condition can be diagnosed and treated. Sleep studies conducted by trained professionals are a good way to evaluate a person for this disorder. Medical treatment options include: lifestyle changes, such as weight loss and avoidance of sedatives such as alcohol or sleeping aids; mechanical breathing devices such as CPAP(continuous positive airway pressure) which gently blows air into the airway via a mask to keep them open during sleep; and surgery to widen breathing passages.

Effective treatment can improve quality of life significantly, so if you feel that you may have this condition, consult your health care provider.

--Bobbi Street



Church Spring Cleanup Day: Calling all able-bodied St. James members, WE NEED YOU! Saturday April 5, 8am – 12:00 noon. Spring is in the air and it's time to show your St. James pride and lend a helping hand to those who work so hard all year long to make our church home shine! Please take just a few hours from your busy schedule and join in on the FUN! There is a job for every age and ability. A sign up sheet will be displayed in the hallway and if there is something in particular you feel needs to be done or you would like to take upon yourself please note it on the sign up sheet or contact: Steve Thomas @ 752-6891, Tom Street @ 798-7030, or Bryan Cline @ 798-0915. Thank you.



Saint James the Less Free Clinic -- April 2008

The SJTL Free Clinic is something that did not exist in many of our minds two years ago. And yet many of the volunteers are now making a significant contribution of time and energy. So we thought we'd ask them how they feel about that! This month we are featuring the responses of some of our SJTL dental assistants to the following question:

Before the SJTL clinic opened over a year ago, I suspect you had never thought you would be acting as a dental assistant in the basement of your church. Would you be willing to share with us some thoughts on how this has impacted you?

Nancy Chamlee, Chief Technologist / Imaging, MRMC Mechanicsville

You are right! I will never forget my first night there, watching Chip assist Dr. Rowe and they were pulling teeth right there in the church basement and seeing the blood [here at church] was a shock to one who has seen blood and never been bothered by it in my work at MRMC. Once I got past that, I was blown away by the opportunity we had to help people. I never realized the huge need for all care but especially dental. We move our schedules through pretty quickly and at the end of the night it is overwhelming, the feeling of accomplishment. Most often I cannot sleep well that night due to thinking of all we did during the night and the patients sharing their stories with you. We are so blessed to have this opportunity, ALL of us!

Phyllis Theroux, Writer and Writing Coach

I've never been a dental assistant before and so I'd never had the opportunity to gaze down at someone's face for a prolonged period of time while the dentist works on his or her teeth. What I see moves me. Our patients are poor and their faces reflect their lives which are full of undeserved hardship. But they are also beautiful faces, reflecting humility, stoicism, sorrow, bravery and gratitude - that there is a place where they are treated as precious in the sight of the Lord. I am filled with compassion and admiration.

Devon Ericksen, High School Senior

It's not every day that I get to help fill someone's cavity, or help extract a tooth, or match tooth color for their dentures. I like how it's in the basement of the church because it is incredible to me what motivated people can do with such a small space. I never would have imagined putting a dental and medical clinic in the place where we used to play foosball and have confirmation class, but there it is, helping so many people.

I always enjoy it when a patient gets their dentures for the first time and gets to see how they look with their new smile. They'll just sit there in the dental chair smiling at themselves in the mirror.

Being a dental assistant is a very rewarding experience, and I encourage anybody that's interested to try it out. It's so action-packed that it reminds me of being Robin to Batman the dentist.

-- Julie Ericksen

If you are interested in making an ongoing pledge to the clinic or have any questions about making a donation, you can call our Board president, Lee Chambers at 798-6647 or send us a note with your intention. Checks can be placed in the collection plate payable to "Saint James the Less Free Clinic" or mailed to us at "Saint James the Less Free Clinic, PO Box 117, Ashland, VA 23005". Thank you.

If you would like to call the clinic for an appointment, a question, or to determine eligibility for services, please call 798-8890 to leave a message and we will call you back.

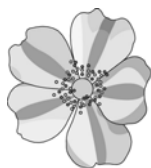


APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Pat Jordan, Robbie Hooley, Parke Pleasants
2 Don Jones, Rosemary Jones, Ted Gillette, Katherine Ellithorpe
3 Janet Taylor
5 Denton Baker, Taylor Green, Tyler Green, Henry Shifflett
6 Ted Schubert
8 Linda Ray, George Spagna
9 Ron Hopkins, Nicole Mau, Matt Sorrentino, Joshua Sanders
11 John Nix
12 Rachel Hoar
13 Stewart Dishman
16 Mary Friedman, Bethany Callis
17 Beth Schubert, Kendra Shifflett
18 Betty Tharrington, Yancey Jones, Kristina Raney
19 Bill Blakemore, Bob Brown, Marcia Hill,
Rebecca Cauthorne, Daniel Williams, Ragan Bowman
20 Bobbi Street, Madeleine Alderman, Luke Sorrentino
21 Jillian Callis
22 Steve Pace, Dani Petitt
26 Sally Walton
29 Karla Batten
30 Elizabeth Cardaropoli

O God, our times are in your hand: Look with favor, we pray, on your servant *N.* as *he* begins another year. Grant that *he* may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen *his* trust in your goodness all the days of *his* life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

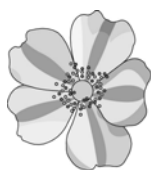
If your birthday has not been included, please contact the church office at 798-6336 so that it may be added to the list.



TRANSITIONS:

Transferred in: Robert, Katherine, Sarah and Thomas Suydam
William, Susan and Katie Johnston
Brenda and Olivia Baker

Died: Dolores Andrews Kerr (March 23, 2008)
Stuart Ling (March 24, 2008)



Our Prayers Are Invited...

In this parish, we offer prayer for healing: BOB May, PAM Gillette; for the homebound: JOYCE Jeffers, NANCY Bugge & JOYCE Baublitz; for those serving in the military: PAUL Gilman, PATRICK Raney, ROBERT May Jr., TRENT Chelette, BRAYDEN Pleasants, CHRIS Abaire & WILL Howe.

