



STEEPLE NOTES

Newsletter for the family and friends of St. James' Episcopal Church

The Rt. Rev. Clifton Daniel 3rd, Bishop Provisional

The Rev. Timothy L. Steeves, Rector

Parish Office: 610-269-1774 Rector's Private Line: 610-873-1065

www.stjameschurch.ws email: sjeparishoffice@verizon.net

October 2013

*My help comes from the LORD, * the maker of heaven and earth. ~ Psalm 121:2*

From the Rector's Desk...

About three years ago, I embarked on a project to re-read all the works of literature which I had read in high school and college. I recommend it. In my youth, when I first met Captain Ahab, Hester Prynne, Lord and Lady Macbeth, Achilles and "Lord Jim", I felt like the author of Psalm 139: ***Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.***

Now, as I encounter these works again with almost half a century of life experience behind me (he said with a shudder!), the words on the page literally come alive with insight and meaning woefully unavailable to me in my younger days. All the works are vaguely familiar, and as I work through them its like visiting an old neighborhood and noticing things I had once overlooked. All the works, and especially the characters, which once seemed so exotic, and even alien, now seem like old friends which I wish I had gotten to know better when I was younger. It's almost like a reunion, and perhaps it's no accident that I'm coming up on my 50th high school reunion in a few months. But don't take my word for any of this, listen to what the poet T.S. Eliot says in *Four Quartets*: ***"We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time."***

I can still remember why it was that I began this unusual "reclamation" project. (My wife believes that all this is some kind of an odd "mid-life crisis" – but at least it cheaper than buying a bright red BMW convertible). I was reading some essays by the French writer Simone Weil, when an essay about the *Iliad* caught my eye. Weil was discussing how the *Iliad* was essentially a poem about "force". ***The true hero, the true subject, the center of the Iliad, is force. Force as man's instrument, force as man's master, force before which human flesh shrinks back. The human soul, in this poem, is shown always in its relation to force: swept away, blinded by the force it thinks it can direct, bent under the pressure of the force to which it is subjected.***

This passage sent me back to the *Iliad* to see how many other wonderful insights I had overlooked when I was a freshman in college! When Weil speaks of "force", she means much more than the physical force of battle so prevalent in the *Iliad*. There is also the force of pride, as when Achilles' wounded pride sends him sulking in his camp during the first chapters of the epic. There is the force of the gods, all of whom have their "favorites" and who can't seem to keep from meddling in the affairs of humans. There's the force of "glory", that longed-for immortality that comes only to those who acquit themselves so well in battle that they gain the attention of the bards.

Most of all, there's the force of destiny: a succession of events which are inevitable, even necessary. In the *Iliad*, the destiny of the hero Achilles is to die gloriously in battle at a young age and thus win that immortality which comes to those remembered forever in the songs and stories passed on from generation to generation. At one point Achilles rejects his destiny and vows to return home and live a long life in quiet anonymity, but the death of his friend and comrade Patroclus spurs him back into the fray where he eventually dies at the hand of Paris (of all people). Achilles may question his destiny, and even resist and reject his destiny – but in the end, its force is too great, and he cannot overcome it. It lays hold of him and shapes his future.

(See Rector, continued on page 6)

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP...WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Everything on earth was made by God, or was made by people from things God first made. God makes everything. We people can't make anything by ourselves. We always have to start with things God made for us. In fact, God made us too. He gave us our bodies, our souls and our brains. That means that everything and everyone on earth belongs to God, not to us. But God is not selfish. He wants us to use His things to help His people. He asks only that we use them in a right way.

Stewardship means being careful to use rightly the things that another person has trusted us with.

Christian means doing things the way Jesus did. Christian also means to act and think as Jesus taught us.

So, Christian Stewardship means that we remember that everything belongs to God. In thanksgiving we must try to use his things in the way Jesus would want us to. How can we do this? It's not as hard as you may think. God makes time. So we must try not to waste time. We try to use it the right way. We plan time to give our bodies enough rest, time for work, time to relax and play, time to study and learn things we need to know, and most important of all, time for God, because all time is His. We must pray and learn about God. Sometimes we do this alone and sometimes with others.

Christian Stewardship also means caring for our bodies and using our strength in God's way. It means keeping healthy by following doctor's orders, eating the right foods, getting enough rest, enough exercise and recreation, and not doing things that will hurt your health. But that's not enough...we must also use our strength as Jesus wants us to. God wants us to use our strength to carry out our responsibilities to our families, to our employers and to our community. But how do we use our strength to help God? Jesus told us the answer. *He said "whatever you do to any other person, you are doing to me."* Jesus lives in all people. When we help another person, or do a nice thing for another person, we really do it for Jesus.

...as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me." Matthew 23:40

So, the way to use our strength for God is to use it to help others. We all know people who could use a little help. Or we can give our strength back to God by doing some work for His church.

Christian Stewardship also means using our money as Jesus would want us to. Jesus said that we are supposed to pay our taxes and he also said we are to pay what we owe to people or to businesses. The Bible tells us that we should give money to help people in need. And, of course, some of the money God helps us earn should go to God's church.

We have seen that Christian Stewardship means many things. They are all important. At the end of every day we should stop and ask ourselves: Did I use in God's way...the time God gave me, the health God gave me, the strength God gave me, the money God gave me, the things God gave me? Did I remember to thank God today... for my health and strength, for my time and abilities, for my money and things?

"It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." Galatians 2:20

This is what we mean by Christian Stewardship

2014 CALENDARS

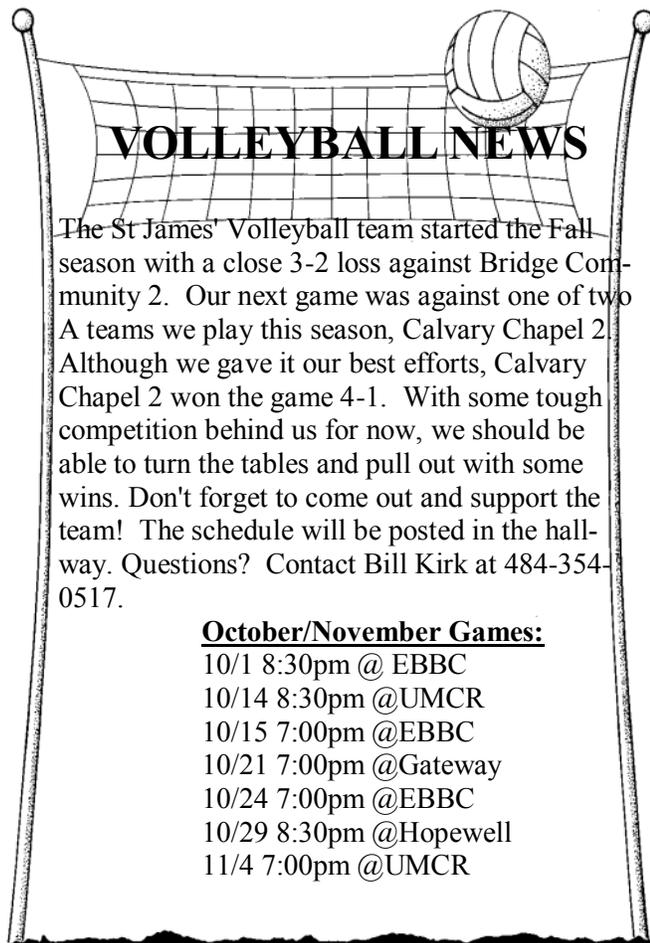
Don't know what to do with all those free calendars? Donate them to the Thrift Shop. Please drop the calendars in the box by the bulletin board.

WEDNESDAY MEDITATION GROUP

The group meets each Wednesday at 9:30am in the Chapel. Just show up or contact Joan Wylie for more information at joanwylie@gmail.com

OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEETING, OCTOBER 6TH

Please join us for an outreach meeting on Sunday, October 6th during coffee hour in Bartholomew Hall. This is a non-committal meeting to talk about outreach ideas and opportunities. As we say at the end of the services on Sundays "our service here has ended, now our service in the world begins"!



VOLLEYBALL NEWS

The St James' Volleyball team started the Fall season with a close 3-2 loss against Bridge Community 2. Our next game was against one of two A teams we play this season, Calvary Chapel 2. Although we gave it our best efforts, Calvary Chapel 2 won the game 4-1. With some tough competition behind us for now, we should be able to turn the tables and pull out with some wins. Don't forget to come out and support the team! The schedule will be posted in the hallway. Questions? Contact Bill Kirk at 484-354-0517.

October/November Games:
 10/1 8:30pm @ EBBC
 10/14 8:30pm @UMCR
 10/15 7:00pm @EBBC
 10/21 7:00pm @Gateway
 10/24 7:00pm @EBBC
 10/29 8:30pm @Hopewell
 11/4 7:00pm @UMCR



One, two, three...and they're off! We are officially back to school and rolling along. The first day went off without a hitch (more tears from parents than from children as usual). We are back to our wonderfully fun schedules—arts and crafts, circle time, center time, and playground. We've been quite busy making friends and getting to know our new teachers.

We have a very full school this year, and the kids, as always, are a joy. We are blessed with wonderful teachers and assistants and they have made the pre-school transition so easy for our students and their families. This year we are very fortunate to have four student interns from West Chester University joining us in our classrooms to help out with the kids and learn from our teachers. Our PTO has been busy recruiting new members and kicking off our big fundraiser for the year to earn money for field trips, extra programs, and supplies for our classrooms and the playground. Everyone at St. James has been hard at work to continue the success of our program to benefit our community's children.

We are looking forward to lots of exciting events in October, such as Fire Prevention and Safety, including a visit from Minquas Fire Company, and of course, our annual Halloween Parade and Parties at the end of the month! Our youngest classes are looking forward to their field trip to Highland Orchards for a hayride and to visit the pumpkin patch. What fun! We will bring our best smiles for picture day and can't wait to show our parents just how cute we are!

Our Fall Outgrown Sale is October 5 from 8 am until noon in the Parish Hall. Come on out for great bargains on baby and children's clothing and equipment, toys, books, games, videos, maternity clothing and much more. It's not too early to start that Christmas shopping for children and grandchildren—many items are brand new or like new. You won't want to miss it! The proceeds of the sale go to benefit St. James Pre-school PTO.

Registration for the 2012/13 (can you believe it?) school year will be here before we know it! Registration for new families will begin in early December. If you would like to schedule a tour and learn more about our programs, please don't hesitate to call us at 610-269-0525.

*Happy Pumpkin Time! Enjoy the fun of fall!
 Suzanne Diodato and Johanna Uggla*



**THE DATE HAS CHANGED
 NOVEMBER 30, 2013
 Father Tim's
 Retirement Brunch**

We're having a parish brunch on
Saturday, November 30,
at the Downingtown Country Club
to mark
Father Tim's Retirement
 We start at 11:00 a.m. and party until 3:00 p.m.
 (and children are welcome).
 Further details will be announced soon,
 but for now . . . mark your calendars!

(Rector, Continued from page 1)

How can we even begin to account for, or even note, all the things which shape and mould the content and quality of our lives? Our lives are shaped and moulded by many forces which we cannot control or even see – this is the wisdom of the Greeks. But they are also shaped by loving hands which gently guide us, protect us and nurture us – this is the wisdom of the Hebrews.

We will be hearing readings from the great Hebrew Prophet Jeremiah from now until Advent. While Jeremiah is often thought of as a “Prophet of Lamentation” (as it happens, the rarely-used English word “*Jeremiad*” which means “a lamentation of doleful complaint”, is derived from the proper name of this prophet), the real theme of the book declares some of the purest and powerful expressions of hope found in the Bible.

One of these is found in Jeremiah 18, when God invites the prophet to come to the potter’s workshop to gain some insight of God at work in the world: ***The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: “Come, go down to the potter’s house, and there I will let you hear my words.” So I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was working at his wheel. The vessel he was making clay was spoiled in the potter’s hand, so he reworked it into another vessel, as it seemed good to him.*** In many ways, Jeremiah’s powerful image of God as the potter who shapes our future seems to resonate with the experience of Achilles. But there’s a difference, and it turns out to be a big one.

While God certainly has a plan for us – a formative desire that we humans, created as we were in God’s own image, should become the instruments of God’s presence and purpose in the world, that plan is not inalterably fixed in a course of pre-determined events which can never change. The “good news” of this passage, and perhaps of the whole Bible, is that God can change his mind!

The image of God as the potter who shapes our future continues with this passage: ***Then the word of the Lord came to me: “Can I not do with you, O House of Israel, just as this potter has done? Just like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in my hand, O House of Israel. At one moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck it up and break it down and destroy it. But if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will change my mind about the disaster that I intended to bring on it.”***

God calls us to obey his commandments, but God does not force us to submit to his will. Even though we sin, even though we sin almost all the time, and even though our sin spirals downward from foolishness, to stupidly, to evil itself, we are not beyond hope. In the “Prayer of Humble Access” we hear these words: ***We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy.*** Repentance, atonement and the amendment of life will be met by God with mercy, forgiveness and restoration. This is the essence of the covenant we have with God, a sort of “doorway of God’s grace” which always remains open.

When Charles Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* in 1843, that doorway of grace turns out to be the gift of the final ghost which Ebenezer Scrooge encounters, the Ghost of Christmas Future: ***Before I draw near to that stone to which you point, answer me one question. Are these the shadows of things what Will be, or are they the shadows of things that May be, only? ... Why show me this if I am past all hope? Good spirit, your nature intercedes for me, and pities me. Assure me that I may change the shadows you have shown me, by an altered life!***

We have a choice, and because of that, we have life, a life that God wants only to shape and mold with loving hands. One of the great joys of Saint James’ is our pre-school. And one of my personal joys is the opportunity to worship with the children and their teachers during our chapel services. I am always struck by the hands of the teachers: Gentle hands which help the children as they line up to return to their classroom, protecting hands which keep the children from danger as they cross the parking lot to the playground, loving hands which comfort a child in distress, wise hands which teach the children to draw and to write and to pray.

I watch the teachers shaping and molding these dear children, I think of that day so long ago when God asked Jeremiah to come with him to the potter’s house.

God bless, Tim

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT STEEPLE NOTES IS OCTOBER 10th
Please submit to sjcparrishoffice@verizon.net

October Birthdays

Carol Ryan	October 1	Mark MacDonald	October 15
Christopher Voltz	October 1	Cathy Tsakeris	October 18
Kathy Fredericksen	October 2	Cameron Wallace	October 18
James Halpin II	October 3	Marge Hess	October 19
Finn Hudecheck	October 4	Russ Robinson	October 19
Tom Gillespie	October 5	Hannah Craig	October 20
John Landis	October 5	Cathy Weisser	October 20
Charlene Miller	October 6	Logan Mea	October 21
Zachery Voltz	October 6	Mitchell Ingram	October 22
Jeanne Davis	October 7	Becky Leister	October 22
Jack Edmonds	October 8	Ryan Vasko	October 23
Joseph Voltz	October 8	Christine Deitcher	October 24
Matt Kerr	October 9	Chris Lovell	October 24
Breese McIlvaine	October 9	Henry Benson	October 25
Cathy Renzulli	October 9	Bobbie Roberts	October 25
Essi Brink	October 10	Nicholas Johnson Jr.	October 26
Jayne Wolf	October 12	Josh Gray	October 28
Joey Miller	October 13	Nicholas Johnson	October 28
Julie Butler	October 14	Herb Anderson	October 29
Rick Easterling	October 14	Ryan Barger	October 31
Nathaniel Healy	October 14		

BOOK CLUB NEWS

The Book Club meets at Panera Bread in Exton (*the Giant shopping center on Swedesford Road*) the third Friday of each month at 11am. We will be reading the following books:

- Oct. 18 is The Light Between Oceans
- Nov. 15 is The Aviator's Wife
- No meeting in December.

New members are always welcomed. Contact Peg Leister at kenapeg@aol.com for more information.

The October Altar Flowers are offered in loving memory of

October 6

Mary & Lee Heston

October 13

Hugh P. Feeley

Earl F. Petrie

October 20

Marcia Chambers Wells

Dob and Dianne Wagner

October 27

Bill McIlvaine & Elizabeth Downing Smith

Eunice & Raymond Hildebeitel

If you would like to offer the Sunday Altar Flowers in memory of or in thanksgiving of a loved one please fill in the date you would like in the Altar Gild Flower Book locate on the table by the main entrance..

Envelopes for payment are next to the book.

HUDSON L. VOLTZ, ESQUIRE
JANET J. SATTERTHWAITE, ESQUIRE

JOY L. VALANIA, ESQUIRE
HEIDI T. NOVINO, PARALEGAL

HUDSON L. VOLTZ, P.C. ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Small Business ~ Family Law ~ Estate Planning & Probate ~ Real Estate Law
THE LAIRD PROFESSIONAL BUILDING 610-518-9500
110 HOPEWELL ROAD, SUITE 200 Fax 610-518-5316
DOWNTOWN, PA 19335-1047 E-mail: voltzlaw@comcast.net

Mr. Voltz is a member, serving the St. James' Community for Real Estate, Family, Business and Estate matters for the past 20 years

Annual Stewardship Pledge Campaign

Stewardship Sunday ~ October 20, 2013

Service and Brunch Schedule

7:45am	Holy Eucharist Rite I
9:00am	Holy Eucharist Rite II with contemporary music <i>Nursery care will be available 9am to 12am</i>
10:00am	Everyone is invited to our Stewardship Brunch in Bartholomew Hall
10:00am	Sunday School, J2A and Rite 13 Classes
11:00am	Holy Eucharist Rite II, traditional choir music

Join Vestry members and fellow parishioners in making your 2014 Pledge to St. James'

God has given us a mission and has challenged us to commit our hearts in faith to show the love of Jesus Christ within our community. Because we believe in the future of our church and want to be a part of its success, we will endeavor to give to the Annual Stewardship Pledge Campaign

Sunday Service Schedule

7:45am	Holy Eucharist, Rite I
9:00am	Holy Eucharist, Rite II, Contemporary Music <i>Nursery care during the 9am and 11am service</i>
10:00am	Fellowship and Coffee Hour in Bartholomew Hall
10:00am	Christian Education Classes
11:00am	Holy Eucharist, Rite II Traditional Music

Rector
The Rev. Timothy L. Steeves
 timsteeves@verizon.net

Parish Administrator/Bookkeeper
 Luann McIlvaine
 sjcparishoffice@verizon.net

Christian Education Coordinator
 Charlene Miller
 sjcsundayschool2@verizon.net

Church website:
 www.stjameschurch.ws

Parish Office
 610-269-1774
 Monday : 10am - 3pm
 Tuesday – Thursday: 9:00am – 3:00pm
 Closed Friday

Thrift Shop
 610-873-7812
 Monday - Thursday: 10:00am – 3:00pm
 1st & 3rd Saturdays each month: 9am - 1pm

St. James Preschool
 610-269-0525
 www.stjamespreschool.com

Lord's Pantry of Downingtown
 610-873-1149
 141 E. Lancaster Ave
 Downingtown, 19335

Vestry Members - Term 2014
 Ron Meacham Home: 610-269-9352
 Alison Pierce Home: 610-466-9384
 Bob Yuninger Home: 610-380-7941
 Dick McConnell Home: 610-524-2447
 Janice Keller Home: 610-524-5222

Vestry Members - Term 2015
 Rich Carango Home: 610-518-0399
 Brooke Giffi Home: 610-594-2712
 Nancy Cianfrani Home: 484-341-8051
 Judy Benne Home: 610-286-6141

Vestry Members - Term 2016
 Matt Ryan Cell: 610-209-2849
 Tim Gemmell Home: 610-431-7174
 Bruce Shipley Home: 215-368-0542
 Matt Wagner Home: 610-873-2419
 Tricia DeBlander Home: 703-403-9003



HOSPITALIZATION REMINDER

It is important to notify Father Tim or the parish administrator (610-269-1774) when you or a family member is in the hospital. Due to privacy laws, hospitals are no longer able to give the church that information. **Please let us know when you are in the hospital.** Private messages may be left for Father Tim at 610-873-1065. After hours pastoral emergencies: 610-306-7059.

Do you need help with meals? Our Ministry of Meals can help. Contact Father Tim, the parish office or Mandy Watson at 610-518-0399.