

# Winter Chimes

Dec. 2017 - Feb. 2018

Quarterly News from St. James's Episcopal Church

VOL.7, No.1

## The Way of St. James Still Calls Pilgrims to Walk, Ride and Pray

The Reverend Dr. Mark Cooper

Consider having an adventure. Join our group to cycle and walk on the Portuguese Way of the Camino de Santiago (Way of St. James) next May. The Camino is an ancient tradition of stepping away from one's life for a period of time to reflect, to extend yourself in a physical effort, to make your way from a starting point on well-worn trails over a 1,000 years in the making and journey to the Cathedral of St. James in Santiago de Compostella, Spain.

Last May, our group biked for seven days starting in Leon, Spain. Previously, we had walked from Sarrio for six days in 2014. This year we will begin on the coast of northern Portugal, biking by the Atlantic Ocean for four days and then leaving the bikes to walk for five days into Spain. Our Camino in 2018 is from May 20 to May 29, and will begin in Porto, Portugal, which is accessible from most European airports as well as from New York. We stay one night in Porto and then we will be on the Camino. Pricing for the journey, excluding airfare, will be about \$1830 for an individual and \$3050 for a couple (depending on the exchange rate at the time of payment). This price covers breakfast every day and dinner for seven of our nights, plus bike rentals and hotels. Costs might be less, depending on how many people actually go on the trip.

A Camino is what you make of it. Some of us will begin the day in meditation and a practice of yoga, for those who are inter-

ested, and we will end the day in a time of meditation. During the day you have time to walk or bike with others or to find your own way for a time. Every mile, you will be in community with pilgrims from across time and across the world as they face toward the holy. We will share meals and good wine and we will see what happens.

A guide and friend we discovered last year, Michael Christiansen, will join us again. Michael has led trips on this route before. He says that the route is at a moderate level of difficulty. Our experience in the past would suggest that you should *please turn to page 11*

- Day 1. Porto - Esposende - Cycling - 49km
- Day 2. Esposende - Vila Praia de Ancora - Cycling - 43km
- Day 3. Vila Praia de Ancora - Baiona - Cycling - 46km
- Day 4. Baiona - Vigo - Cycling - 28km
- Day 5. Vigo - Redondela - Walking - 15km
- Day 6. Redondela - Pontevedra - Walking - 20km
- Day 7. Pontevedra - Caldas de Reis - Walking - 21 km
- Day 8. Caldas de Reis - Padrón - Walking - 19km
- Day 9. Padrón - Santiago de Compostela - Walking - 25 km

### What's inside...



Let's have cake...page 8



Christmas Chaos...page 12

Find us online all the time:





## Musically rich

Mark Whitmire, Director of Music  
Virginia Whitmire, Organist and Choir Director

**M**usic that still rings in our ears...  
**The Blessing of the Animals**



On Sunday, October 1, we celebrated the Feast of St. Francis with a service of Blessing of the Animals. The Cherub and Children's Choirs led the musical portion of the service.

### Bluegrass Mass



On Sunday, October 8, The West Gallery Choir and Guitar Ensemble presented our annual Bluegrass Mass. We were joined guest artists, Molly Sharp (fiddle) and Dennis Elliot (banjo and mandolin) on bluegrass standards and music by Mark Whitmire.

### Feast of St. James's

On Wednesday, October 25, we presented selections from The Sound of Music in the sanctuary. The event featured Antonia FD Vassar, Kristin Cox, Fran McDermott, Diane Wright, and Elizabeth Nance. We were especially pleased to have talented young singers Tyndall Hopper, Sarah Hopper, Liza Hopper, Caroline Hopper, Thomas Disharoon, Randy Trow, Rachel Page and Oliver Fisk



**U**pcoming Music Events you don't want to miss...

**December 3, 5:00 p.m.:** Advent Lessons and Carols

The Advent season is one of reflection and this service, bathed in candlelight and quietness, is the perfect setting to do just that. Please join the West Gallery and Youth Choirs as we listen to the recorded history of the Word, ponder his incarnation and consider his promised return.

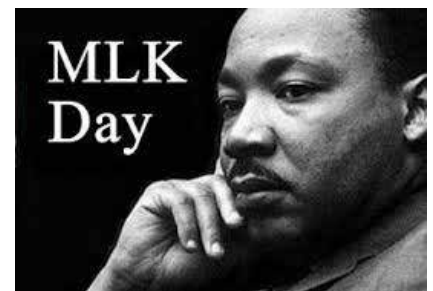
**December 24, Christmas Eve** at 10:30 p.m.: Handel's *Messiah*

On Christmas Eve, members of the Richmond Symphony will join the Parish Choir as they sing the first section of *Messiah*, the most successful and best known of Handel's oratorios. *Messiah* was composed in twenty-four days in August and September of 1741. The entire first section of *Messiah* deals with prophecy concerning the advent of the Messiah and the birth and life of Jesus, and the first five numbers are based on texts from the 40<sup>th</sup> chapter of Isaiah.

**January 14, 5:00 p.m.** Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Even-song

The choirs of St. James's will join the Concert Choir of Norfolk State University, one of the premiere African-American ensembles in the country, for

a service in celebration of the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The choirs will be led by their new conductor Dr. Harlan Zackery. Dr. Carl W. Haywood – pre-eminent organist, conductor, and composer – will return as our guest organist for the service





# From the Rector's Desk

## Open Hearts

*The Rev. Dr. John McCard,  
Rector*

**T**his past week I attended my first Diocesan Convention. The theme of annual convention was "All Hearts are Open." This simple phrase comes from a prayer called the Collect for Purity (see above) that is said each week at the beginning of Holy Eucharist. The prayer invites us to radically open to God's love. As I listened to inspiring stories about various ministries in the Diocese of Virginia that are opening hearts to God's transformative love, I found myself profoundly grateful to the members of St. James's for the way that you have opened your hearts to my family. While the past few months have been full of numerous transitions for us, I have continued to feel that the Holy Spirit was at work in bringing us here to be part of this wonderful church family. And it has been a gift in my life and ministry to have been called to serve as your rector.

At the same time, I feel that the wonderfully rich fullness of our hearts shouldn't stop at our church doors. At St. James's, we have been entrusted with a great mission to bring hope and healing to those in need. When I speak of people in need, I am not necessarily talking about our outreach programs and ministry. According to recent Gallup polling, there are over 40% of Americans that are unchurched. Your neighbors, your friends, and other people you meet in your daily life probably don't have a regular church home and they may, without our knowing it, be living "lives of quiet desperation."

Our church has probably never had a better opportunity for evangelism to

those who are searching for purpose and meaning in their lives. Now more than ever God is calling us to open our hearts to those around us. When I hear that call in my own life, I am reminded of the Magi who went searching for the baby Jesus. They travelled through dangerous lands, met a terrible tyrant, but when they arrived at Jesus' home they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.

In that wonderful encounter with Christ, their hearts were open; open to new possibilities, open to finding a new purpose for their lives, and finally open to God's healing power and all-encompassing love. In the upcoming Advent and Christmas seasons, we are called to open our hearts to those around us. Take this time to invite someone you know to St. James's. Let them know that you have found something worth sharing, a community of faithful Christians who are ready to open their hearts and share God's love with our broken world.

With every good blessing, I am  
Yours in Christ,

**Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## Advent, Christmas, Epiphany

### Worship

Sunday, December 3

7:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist  
9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist  
11:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist  
5:00 p.m. Advent Lessons  
and Carols

Sunday, December 10

7:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist  
9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist  
11:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Sunday, December 17

7:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist  
10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist  
11:00 a.m. Advent Music Forum  
5:00 p.m. Christmas  
Pageant

Monday, December 18

7:00 p.m. Our Christmas  
Hope

Sunday, December 24

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist  
4:00 p.m. Family Eucharist  
6:00 p.m. Festival Eucharist  
10:30 p.m. *Messiah*  
11:00 p.m. Festival Eucharist

Monday, December 25

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Sunday, December 31

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist  
10:00 a.m. Lessons and  
Carols

Sunday, January 14

5:00 p.m. Dr. Martin  
Luther King, Jr.  
Evensong

Wednesday, January 17

7:00 p.m. Installation of Rev.  
Dr. John McCard as  
14<sup>th</sup> Rector of  
St. James's

### Office Closed

December 22, noon - January 2, 2018  
Reopening January 3, 2018



*The Rev. Carmen Germino,  
Associate Rector*

## Sabbathing

**S**o much is happening in the next three months! By the time your next Quarterly Chimes arrives, we will have observed three different seasons of the church year (Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany) and will have begun a fourth (Lent). In the next three months, we will experience many of the very best St. James's events: Advent Lessons & Carols, the Christmas Pageant, the MLK Evensong, CARITAS shelter week, Mardi Gras for Missions, Ash Wednesday, WomanKind, plus this year we'll also throw in a new rector installation! I get excited and exhausted just thinking about it all.

In the midst of all of these wonderful and important church events, we also have plenty of other responsibilities that vie for our attention. Our families, friends, and work colleagues count on us, plus many of us also share our time and talent with worthy community organizations outside the church. Is it any wonder most of us look and feel tired most days? Is it any wonder we feel constantly behind on our to-do lists and stressed out about it? If only there was something we could do about this situation...

Well, I have good news for you! There is actually something we can do to help us navigate our busy and complicated lives. It is a gift that God gave us a long, long time ago. We've had it since the beginning. I'd say we've had it since day one, but it's actually more like day seven.

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation

*Genesis 2:1-3*

The biblical concept of Sabbath is God's gift to us, but it is one that we habitually ignore and undervalue. What might happen if we began to truly take this gift seriously? How might our lives and families and activities be deepened if we allowed ourselves the opportunity to press pause on a regular basis? After all, Moses didn't receive ten suggestions from God on Mount Sinai. He received ten commandments, and guess what number four is?

Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy.

*Exodus 20:8*

During Jesus's time, adherence to the commandment about Sabbath had become an idol. The religious authorities in Judaism had become so strict that they had forgotten Sabbath was a gift from God for the benefit of human flourishing. It had become a contest to see who could observe Sabbath the best. Now, it seems the pendulum has swung too far in the opposite direction.

Jewish theologian Ellen Bernstein explains that Sabbath is not just for our benefit. She writes, "Each individual creature is deemed good and everything together is pronounced very good, but the whole of creation at rest is called holy. A day of utter rest and peace [...] Shabbat offers a profound and necessary respite for humans and all of creation." Our world needs us to slow down, for the good of ourselves and our descendants.

So as you avail yourself of the many, many good activities and events you will read about in these pages, consider also planning to avail yourself of some Sabbath time: rest, recreation, prayer, silence, study, and worship. It's healthy for us and it's healthy for our planet.

Faithfully,

*Carmen*

P.S. I'm writing to you about Sabbath because it is a message I desperately need to remember as well. Let's try to hold each other accountable, shall we?





The Rev. Hilary Streever,  
Associate Rector

## Waiting

Is it really December already? Again, the year has flown by. Despite the Advent call to wait – wait for the coming of Christ – this month seems to wait for no one. Before we know it, the holy days will be upon us. How can we use the precious time we have to prepare our hearts for Christ?

In earlier days, Advent was a five-week penitential season like Lent. (Now it's "semi-penitential.") Fasting is the norm for penitential seasons, but not to self-flagellate. When one fasts, not only does one experience physical purification, one's soul is also purified. When one is that hungry and exhausted, time slows down. Suddenly the unimportant "stuff" in life falls away: one is physically, emotionally and spiritually incapable of giving attention to anything that is not of the utmost importance.

Only the priorities remain.

Physical hunger is replaced with spiritual hunger. Suddenly it becomes clearer to me how I can prepare for the coming of Christ. I must ask myself the question, "What priorities remain?" There are many good choices for how to spend my time, my money, my attention – but what are my priorities? More importantly, do my priorities match up with God's priorities?

The past few months at St. James's, we've explored this question through a number of speakers in our adult formation offerings: from our summer read of Jerusalem Greer's *At Home in*

*This Life* and her presentation at the Parish Retreat, to Mark Cooper's short course on the NYT Bestseller *Essentialism: The Disciplined Pursuit of Less* by Greg McKeown, to the recent parenting forum with counselor Ashley Soukup on restructuring family priorities. We are drowning in things to do to the point where we can forget why we're choosing – or worse, exhaustedly acquiescing – to do too much.

But God did not form humans to be slaves; God made humans in God's image. God's priority is love. Wholeness. Relationship. We can take for granted that Jesus was born in a manger, forgetting the true wonder that God chose to become human. God chose to be vulnerable. In that choice is revealed God's priority of Reconciliation and Healing – at any cost.

We have planned lots of opportunities for you to take advantage of during Advent: the **Windows to the Soul: Praying with Icons** retreat with the Rev. Dr. Vienna Cobb Anderson, part of which will be at the VMFA; the Christian Journey series **Living the Joy of God** led by the Rev. Dr. Bob Friend; the **Advent Fair for All Ages** where you can build an advent wreath and find devotional materials for use at home; the first-ever **Alternative Gifts Fair** where you can donate to ministries in a loved one's name, purchase gift certificates towards a St. James's mission trip, retreat, or pilgrimage, or purchase

Wait for the LORD;  
be strong, and let your heart take courage;  
wait for the LORD!

*Psalm 27:14*

fair trade products; the **Advent Grief Group** and **Our Christmas Hope** worship service for those who mourn during this time; and everyone's favorite, **Music for Advent** with Richard Rumble and The Advent Apostles of Soul band.

We have planned lots of opportunities, but if attending one less program here means more time spent in holiness with loved ones and God, I would rather you do that.

Ask yourself: what priorities remain? Are they aligned with God's?

Grace and peace,

*Hilary*

NEW!

### **Alternative Gifts Fair**

Michaux House Parlors  
Sunday, December 10  
10:15 a.m.

- \* Donate in honor of a loved one to selected ministries
  - \* Gift Certificates to St. James's Mission Trips, Pilgrimages & Retreats
  - \* Fair Trade products
- Checks and cash only, please.



Mary Beth Abplanalp,  
Director of Youth and  
Young Adult Ministry

### Are you a Godbearer?

I must confess that when I first started working at an Episcopal Church in 2011, I was incredibly uncomfortable with my new job title – Youth Minister. What? I'm not a minister. I haven't been to seminary. I'm just a former teacher who grew up as an acolyte, sang in the choir, and enjoyed going to an Episcopal summer camp. Despite my discomfort, the church had already printed my business cards, so the title stuck, and rightfully so.

It seems that God is actually quite fond of calling unlikely suspects to carry out his missions in the world. I learned in the book *The Godbearing Life* by Dean & Foster, that the Eastern Orthodox tradition calls Mary theotokos, or "Godbearer," because she (quite literally) brought God into the world. I can't imagine Mary, a teenage girl engaged to be married, was at first very comfortable with her new title and role either! Fortunately, Mary had the Angel Gabriel to comfort her – "Be not afraid for you have found favor with God."

Young people – inexperienced, insecure, improbable choices by all accounts – figure prominently among God's "chosen." Timothy, a young Godbearer we meet in scripture, was sent to help the church in Corinth. His ministry encountered problems (just like any ministry does at some point). His mentor Paul helped him and offered these encouraging words regarding Timothy's effectiveness as a young person in ministry:

Don't let anyone put you down because you're young. Teach believers with your life: by word, by demeanor, by love, by faith, by integrity. Stay at your post reading Scripture, giving counsel, teaching. And that special gift of ministry you were given when the leaders of the church laid hands on you and prayed – keep that dusted off and in use. (*1 Timothy 4:12-14*).

God calls each of us, including young people, to be "Godbearers" through whom God may enter this world again and again. All teenagers, including Mary and Timothy, need faithful mentors – like the Angel Gabriel and Paul – to represent the gospel, shore up their faith, and to guide them in mission.

I am now humbled by my job title and enriched by the opportunity to walk alongside youth on their faith journeys. I encourage – even challenge – you to join me in my imperfect attempt to be a Godbearer, mentor, or friend to a young person in your life.

Love ya! Mean it!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Beth".

### WHAT IS SECOND QUARTER?

A ministry for the second quarter of life, where young adults, in their early twenties to early forties, are inspired to play together as a faith community, grow spiritually, and serve as Christ's hands in this world.

We've changed our name and we're taking a new approach. Take a look.

[www.doers.org/faith-formation/young-adults/](http://www.doers.org/faith-formation/young-adults/)



Becky Page  
Director of Children's Ministries

## Practicing a Family Sabbath

**N**ow, if you've read Carmen's article already, you'll know the fourth commandment. This idea of keeping a Sabbath works just as well for families as it does for each of us individually.

In the busyness of our days – to-do lists, meetings, appointments, and other worthwhile activities – that simple commandment can be hard to keep. At our parish retreat to Shrine Mont in October our keynote speaker, Jerusalem Greer, shared ideas about practicing mini-Sabbaths. Not as a one more thing to accomplish, but as a way of pausing, reflecting, and appreciating everything in our lives. She suggested that perhaps in this practice can we create moments of stillness where we can meet God.

A twenty-four hour Sabbath seems daunting. But what if we could practice Sabbath for one, three or five minutes every day? I could probably find one minute in my day. Can you?

Here are ten one minute Sabbath practice's that I found in Traci Smith's book Faithful Families. (It has lots of other great ideas for practicing faith at home with your family. I'll gladly share my copy with anyone who is interested.) I'm planning to try these at home with my family. Perhaps you will too.

1. Sit in a comfortable position and breathe deeply in and out. As you breathe in say to yourself "I am breathing in God's love" as you breathe out say "I am breathing out worry and fear."

2. Write down (or say) three things for which you are grateful.
3. Close your eyes and think about the ocean, a sunset, or another beautiful place in nature.
4. Go outside and look up at the sky. Notice if there are stars or if it's cloudy. Take a deep breath.
5. Read a Psalm. (You may be able to read Psalm 117 more than once while Psalm 119 may take you a month of one minute Sabbaths.)
6. Take one minute to tidy up a space inside or outside. Notice if the tidy space helps you to feel calmer.
7. Stretch as high as you can and then scrunch down as low as you can. Repeat for one minute.
8. Set your timer for one minute and close your eyes. Count how many sounds you hear.
9. Squeeze your hands into a fist, then relax them. Repeat for one minute.
10. Put your hand over your heart. Close your eyes. Listen and feel your heartbeat.

I pray that in these moments of quiet and stillness you will find God. He is always there if we take the time to listen.

Blessings,

*Becky*

... for Children

### The Christmas Story Retold at the Pageant December 17, 5:00 PM



Mark your calendars for the St. James's Christmas Pageant Sunday, December 17 at 5:00 p.m. All children age 3 through 5<sup>th</sup> grade are encouraged to participate. On-line sign up will be available. Please contact [bpage@doers.org](mailto:bpage@doers.org) to volunteer to help.





# Fall Featured Welcomes, B



We held the Blessing of the Animals for the Feast of St. James's. Children and Cherub Choirs sang our service music.



The first full schedule Sunday in September, we welcomed new rector John McCard and his family to our parish family. He preached, he celebrated, he greeted, and he had his cake, too!



(Above clockwise from top) We held the Feast of St. James's all over our campus, with two reception sites and six dining rooms. Almost 500 parishioners heard John McCard's remarks before we were visited by Maria and the Von Trapp family!



The annual Parish Picnic by the river was another chance for us to gather, celebrate, and get to know John McCard. Our own Boy Scout Troop 400 cooked the pig in a pit again and served a fantastic supper with Dutch oven cobblers.



(Above) Johnny Townsend and Rev. Hilary Streever led the second hike in our Nature Walk series at Dutch Gap.



# Blessings, Retreats and More



of St. Francis in the sanctuary this year, and the music and anthems.



At the Shrine Mont Retreat, Jerusalem Greer (top right) led us through choosing what's best for this time in our family life, and we repeated our morning 5K, led by pirate Rob Reed.



(Below) September included our Servant Ministry Celebration with lay leaders, ministry partners and parishioners mingling as well as door prizes including lunch with the rector.



(Above) The project:HOMES service weekend had a team rehabbing an exterior deck and entrance for a disadvantaged Richmonder.



(Above) A dozen high schoolers and adult leaders attended the PYM Senior High Retreat weekend at Shrine Mont for worship, fellowship and discipleship.

(Right) We took time in October to thank Thom Blair for his service as Interim Rector with a reception and special choral chant..



# Service



Nancy Warman,  
Director of Servant Ministry

## Let Your Light Shine

**L**et your light shine through winter season ministry!

**Christmas Giving Tree Ministry**  
**\*Return unwrapped gifts no later than Sunday morning, December 10.**

A long tradition at St. James's, the Giving Tree ministry offers church members an opportunity to provide gifts to children and senior citizens served by Peter Paul Development Center and/or to provide monetary gifts to my in-house emergency outreach fund to assist families in crisis and in need of housing stability. Wish list ornaments with instructions are available in the Narthex and in the Michaux House first floor hallway. Be sure to check out your wish list with the volunteer who is present. Please make every effort to return your gifts to Michaux House no later than the morning of December 10 so that volunteers have sufficient time to organize all family packages. Please wrap the presents for adults, but leave the children's gifts unwrapped so that parents can do the honors (wrapping paper welcome!). For questions, please contact lay leaders Katie Morris (morriskatier@gmail.com/615-2161) or Donna Ellis (donnaellis5@verizon.net/282-1926).

**CARITAS Ministry**  
**\*Intake is nightly until December 15 and Shelter Week runs January 20-27.**

Two volunteers are needed each night (4:30-6:00) during CARITAS Intake to welcome our CARITAS

male guests, provide hospitality, and secure the building upon departure. If you can participate with this ministry, please sign up on <http://bit.ly/2017HelpIntake> or contact lay leader Steve McCoy at [Steve.McCoy@PatientFirst.com](mailto:Steve.McCoy@PatientFirst.com) or 370-1041.

Mark your calendars now for the joyful buzz of CARITAS Shelter Week, January 20-27, when many doers are on hand to provide nightly shelter, meals, laundry service, showers, and entertainment for families with children of all ages! Our space is filled with giggles and whispers, laughter and tears, warmth and love, and rich with God's spirit. Sign-up sheets will be available in the Narthex or you may contact lay leaders Erin Jewett (ebsjewett@comcast.net /399-8662) or Carrie Acey (linovet@verizon.net/475-9544).

**goodChoice Mentoring Ministry**  
**\*Additional Volunteers are needed.**

St. James's has a team of volunteers serving as mentors to community residents who want to be educated about how to manage their financial matters and be able to grow out of debt to self-sufficiency. A component of the Strengthening Families Initiative of Goodwill Industries, goodChoice pairs mentors with individuals who have completed a day-long financial education program before entering a workforce program. Mentors offer support and guidance in creating a budget, working through debt, and balancing a check book. The good news – more

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*Be present and hear the needs of others. Pray for all in need. Give gifts that will warm hearts and bring joy. Love abundantly. Give generously. Give hope to those who are without it. Serve faithfully so that Christ's presence and love is known by many throughout this winter season.*

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folks are requesting this program! Therefore, more volunteers are needed to provide mentoring. We would love to have you join our team NOW! If you are available or would like additional information, please contact lay leader David Sealey (dsealey@comcast.net/874-8909).

**DAN (Doers Action Network)**  
**\*If you need assistance or would like to offer assistance call Harry Warner.**

In recent months, "doer" DAN team members have built a wheelchair ramp, organized medical transport and presence for someone going to and coming home from the hospital, and helped clean and de-clutter a home! Each of these services was provided to one of our own St. James's church families! Volunteer efforts were provided because an individual had physical handicaps, had no family available to assist, and had limited or no financial resources to hire out services.

DAN provides the opportunity for church members to take care of church members. We are family to one another! Volunteers serve on an "on call" basis and, at the time of need, can determine if one can be available. We would love to add additional members to our team! If you are interested in serving, please contact lay leader Harry Warner at [hhwarner@msn.com](mailto:hhwarner@msn.com)/357-8157.

*Nancy Warman*



# With Our Gratitude

A regular feature of the quarterly Chimes where we thank lay leaders and parishioners who have been exemplary Doers recently.

**W**henver you call or visit the church offices in the Parish House, you will be greeted with a warm smile in large part thanks to our Parish House volunteers. Half a dozen stalwarts regularly sit behind our reception desk to offer welcome, information and guidance to all visitors, parishioners and others. Serving for three or four hours in a morning or afternoon, they answer the door and the phones, as well as assist with some light office tasks and generally spread cheerfulness as they lighten the staff's responsibilities.

We'd like to thank

- ❖ Martha Booker
- ❖ Betty Brown
- ❖ Priscilla Cabell
- ❖ Donna Ellis
- ❖ Jo Miller
- ❖ Robin Price
- ❖ Chaimie Valentine and
- ❖ Sally Watters

for their lively help and gracious assistance.

If you would like to join these ranks, simply call Emily Thrower at 355-1779, extension 312. We'd love to have you in the office.

*Camino, continued from cover*

train enough before we leave so that you could walk at least 10 miles on a trail and can ride up to 40 miles on a bike. We will work together to find times and places to train. Michael has confirmed that our trip would qualify for a Pilgrim's Certificate at the end of the trip.

As in the past, St. James's will work with the company CaminoWays, whose service has been consistently excellent. We will stay in hotels along the route, carrying our daily needs while CaminoWays transports our luggage from hotel to hotel.

Looking for a challenge, a chance to reflect on your life's past and future, a way to deepen your relationship with God? Come with us in May. You will have stories to tell when we finish.

For more information contact Mark Cooper at markcooper1966@gmail.com or by phone 703-980-0130.



St. James's will again host WomanKind 2018, an engaging, two-day women's program on February 23-24.

In a period of fracture and discord, both local and guest speakers contribute to this year's poignant and timely theme, "*Lift Up Your Hearts! The Transformative Power of Word and Table*." All women are invited to participate as WomanKind 2018 discusses what it means for all to be welcome at God's table. Participants will explore both the rituals and traditions of Holy Eucharist, Word and Table, and how connecting inclusively with each other and God

equips us to live with faith, grace and compassion.

Since 2004, the Episcopal Church Women have hosted WomanKind every other year, creating a safe space for women to explore topics of faith in a supportive, encouraging environment. Although WomanKind is led in the Christian tradition, this event invites all participants of any faith to search within and with each other for a deeper understanding of what it means to lift up our hearts together, being transformed by communion with each other in our shared words and food.

Friday evening features **Word** offered by The Rev. Nichelle R. Guidry from Trinity United Church of Christ on the South side of Chicago. She is the creator of *shepreaches*, a virtual community and professional development organization that aspires to uplift African-American millennial women in ministry. Guidry is author of Curating a World: Sermonic Words from a Young Woman Who Preaches.

Saturday morning, Sara Miles brings attendees directly to **Table**. Miles is an author whose books include Take This Bread: A Radical Conversion; Jesus Freak: Feeding Healing Raising the Dead; and City of God: Faith in the Streets. She served as Director of Ministry at St. Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church in San Francisco for ten years, and is the founder and director of The Food Pantry. Sara speaks, preaches, teaches and leads workshops around the world. Check womankindrichmond.com for workshop leaders and schedule.



## Blessings of Chaos

by Debbie Lickey, Executive Director, St. James's Children's Center



One of my absolute favorite days of the year is when the Board of St. James's Children's Center hosts our annual Christmas pizza party. The morning is filled with excited young children (and teachers) who parade down to the Parkinson Room in our pajamas. What waits there is absolute magic and mayhem.

The board members stand poised with stacks of pizza, drinks, and cookies, children sing Christmas carols and just when you think it couldn't get better than that, Tom Horton escorts Santa and Mrs. Claus into the hall! Santa has a special present for each child as they sit on his lap.

That is when the real chaos begins, board members armed with screwdrivers, scissors and batteries go about the process of setting up toys for 50+ children! But what a joyful chaos it is. I see the sparkle of childhood come alive in all the faces of the adults who participate in this

joyful event as we all put aside our usual day-to-day responsibilities and stresses.

As a mom, when my children were growing up, I remember the feeling of conflict between the absolute chaos of Christmas morning and my need to clean up as we went along.

I'm not sure why I thought the house should look any way except chaotic on that morning. After a few years of this my outspoken daughter, Danielle, said, "Mom, Santa has already been here, you don't have to keep the house clean anymore!" That opened my eyes to the absurdity of worrying about what the house looked like.

That lesson began a process of re-thinking the balance between the chaos of a family and a need to please others. I'd like to say that the lesson stuck with me and I was a model of balancing my

need for order and the ability to cherish every moment of my children's precious time in my home. However, my now adult children would be quick to remind me of the mad woman who took over my body as I tried to convince family members to care as much as I did about cleaning the house for an event.

At the Children's Center the teachers are aware of the need for this balance at all times, but especially during the holi-



day season. Some of our children come from chaotic environments and their need for structure, routine and calm is a priority. We also know that all children need that sense of structure in order to stay regulated in a healthy manner.

As you go through this lovely season of celebration I hope that you are able to embrace both the chaos and the calm that comes from extra time with family and loved ones.



## Sacred Spaces

by Harry Moore

### Michaux House Kitchen

We've just experienced a glorious Feast, The Taste of St. James's and before you blink, Mardi Gras will be here. Between all of these "major" events, Wednesday night dinners are served, the hospitality team is constantly working to make special occasions meaningful, Food Force Teams are preparing meals for outreach every month, Bible Studies meet and break bread together, and the Youth Group prepares Palm Sunday breakfast. The list goes on and on.

Rarely does a week pass by that the kitchen is not the source of nourishment and fellowship. What comes through those doors to bring the parish together in so many ways is nothing short of amazing. The food is so good,



*Fried oysters at the Mardi Gras for Missions are just one of the delectable results made in the Michaux House Kitchen.*

we often find ourselves shaking our heads thinking "How did they do that? How could they possibly pull that off?" The answer, of course, is through the care and love of those who experience the kitchen. Let us give thanks for our many blessings!

## Again, Our Christmas Hope Lightens Us

Have you ever been at a rowdy party with lots of noise, laughter and bonhomie on every side when you suddenly realized you were not having a good time? In fact, you might have felt quite somber, even depressed and lonely. For many different reasons, this is how many people feel during the Christmas holidays. Precisely when we think we should be feeling joy and happiness, we feel grief instead. We might have lost a loved one during the previous year and this is the first Christmas without them. It may be a relationship with someone we cared about has failed, or we may be confused or sad for reasons we cannot even articulate. It is made worse because it comes at a time when others are "Ho-Ho-Hoing" their way through the season. Much of our culture during this season dissipates the meaning of the biblical message – "God has become human and has come to dwell with us."

This is why, once again, we are offering a service of **OUR CHRISTMAS HOPE** on December 18. It will be an opportunity to acknowledge the pain and grief in our lives – even at a time of seeming giddiness in the culture – which will bring the love of God into our lives in a meaningful way. The service will be contemplative as we celebrate the true meaning of the season – "a light has shined in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it." I hope that many of you will come and take part in this liturgy for the health of our souls.

*Rev. Dr. Bob Friend*

## Earthly Matters

by Monica Lewis  
Stewards of the Earth Committee

### Intentional Gift Giving

It is pure delight to receive a gift that is just right: "Someone thought of me. They know me." That is a special feeling. Sometimes, the feeling of recognition is not immediate; an item might turn out to be more practical and essential than ever could have been imagined at first. That, too, can engender profound gratitude. In both cases, the gift giver was thoughtful and intentional.

On Sunday, December 10, we have a unique opportunity at the Alternatives Gift Fair in the Michaux House to purchase gifts that support our ministries and that can deepen our faith. Beautiful decorative objects will be available – the Children's Center crosses and the fair trade crafts of One Little World, which supports artisans from all around the world – to name just two of our partners. The gift of an experience will also be available: starting this year, you will be able to purchase a voucher that can go towards the cost of a retreat or a mission trip, including the Parish Retreat at Shrine Mont. Imagine giving a simple envelope that enables the recipient to draw closer to God and to our faith community. You can invest in spiritual growth and ensure that these experiences happen rather than leave them to chance later in the calendar year when there might not be enough time or money.

This season, when you draw up your list, look it over and ask God to inspire you to make choices that are perfectly suited for each person. Consider, too, whether the gift would please our God who creates and sustains all of our resources. We can help lessen the clutter and burden of "too much stuff" by opting to give gifts that are truly meaningful.

# Stewardship



Suzanne Hall  
Director of Stewardship and  
Development

## Your Gift is Pure Grace



*On October 29, the pledges returned so far were blessed on the altar. The Annual Giving campaign needs your pledge.*

In this season of thankfulness and with a keen awareness of our many blessings, we include St. James's. God has bestowed upon us extraordinary blessings. God's grace guides us to share those blessings with our church. When we give, we discover that we are a part of something bigger than ourselves.

Together, our congregation has built a church that ministers not only to each of us but to many who are in need of a 12-step program, financial aid, nurturing child care for needy families, and contributions throughout the city and the world.

This year's Annual Giving campaign continues with a goal of an additional \$600,000 and a total of 700 pledges. To witness the generous sharing by hundreds and hundreds of our parishioners is a humbling demonstration of faith, and quite beautiful. Our church needs faithful support from every member to thrive. Thank you!

Peace and abundant blessings,

*Suzanne*

## Financial Peace University Returns January 10

Since beginning as Stewardship Assistant a year and a half ago, I have come to appreciate even more deeply the role that being a responsible steward of God's gifts means in building the Kingdom and strengthening my life. Earlier this year I was fortunate enough to attend the Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University with my fiancé, Andrea. We've been together for over five years, ever since we met in college,



and have been engaged for two. We've had ups and downs during that time, and figuring out what we want to do in a wedding has been a fun part of our life lately. However, that fun comes with the significantly less fun part of trying to pay for those cool wedding ideas, and Financial Peace University has been invaluable for this. The nine week class was incredibly educational, and gave us practical financial management techniques to help us budget and make decisions about managing our money. With our wedding looming, and other recent financial issues, the lessons we learned from Financial Peace provided solid planning tools. Now, things don't feel overwhelming. The instructors were extremely knowledgeable on the topic, with inspirational stories of their own.

Thomas Pugh, Stewardship Assistant



# The Interview

**T**he Chimes caught up with David Seeley, who has recently become the lay leader for Goodwill's goodChoice mentoring program that assists people to overcome financial challenges in their life.

**C:** What can you tell me about the goals of the ministry of goodChoice?

**DS:** The main focus is to educate the mentee about how they manage their money. The toolbox consists of a budget, avoiding and reducing of debt, establishing emergency day fund, and establishing financial goals from short to long term. They need to address the "want" versus "need" question during their daily spending.

**C:** How did you become involved?

**DS:** I became involved several years ago during a ministry fair at St. Catherine's when the church was off site due to the Richmond Bike Race. Since retirement, I have focused on developing my own financial knowledge and I wanted to share my learning with those that needed assistance.



*Dave Seeley,  
goodChoice ministry leader*

**C:** Who are the clients you serve?

**DS:** They are typically middle aged men close or near to retirement. Some couples have also been coached.

**C:** What results are desired for the clients you mentor?

**DS:** To develop a conservative spending philosophy of available income. I communicate skills to help facilitate that mentality, which encompasses food

purchases, transportation, recreational habits, utility usage, good banking practices, just to name a few.

**C:** How do you experience those results? Any stories you can share?

**DS:** I have developed some new friends which stay in touch. They share their success stories, ask for advice on current financial challenges, seek help in redefining their financial goals, make a change in employment or housing status or develop computer skills and usage from public library resources.

**C:** How can others be involved?

**DS:** After a required minimal training interview with the Goodwill coordinator, basically consisting of reviewing handout documents and required documentation of session outcomes. You offer your contact information. Potential candidates call and set up the initial meeting location. This usually is a public library or restaurant. Sessions are typically one to two hours in duration.

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## Holy Wandering: Labyrinths as Contemplative Prayer and Pilgrimage

**L**abyrinths were first created in European medieval cathedrals as a way for Christians unable to travel to the Holy Land to have a profoundly holy experience of sacred pilgrimage following Christ. You are invited to join parishioner and trained spiritual director Fontaine Williamson at this contemplative and quiet retreat, closing with an intimate Eucharist. Our path begins Friday evening March 9 and continues Saturday morning and afternoon, March 10. Cost: \$25; Learn more at [www.doers.org](http://www.doers.org) and register online at <http://bit.ly/2018LentRetreat> by February 28, 2018.

If you have questions, please contact Fontaine Williamson, [gogotaine@gmail.com](mailto:gogotaine@gmail.com) or Hilary Streever, 355-1779, ext. 317 or [hstreever@doers.org](mailto:hstreever@doers.org).



*The ancient labyrinth at Chartres Cathedral has been walked by thousands of pilgrims across centuries.*



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