

The St. James'

# Pilgrim

"News for the Journey . . ."

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[www.stjamespotomac.org](http://www.stjamespotomac.org)

## Clergy Corner with The Rev. Catharine T. Gibson

### *Stewardship, Proportional Giving, and Pledging to the Church*

"Stewardship" is not a fancy name for giving money to the church. Stewardship is our response to God's providence. It's our relationship to what God has provided for our use—our bodies, our energy, and our things. From the beginning, the book of Genesis relates, humanity's vocation or purpose has been to love God, to love one another, and to manage and take care of God's creation. Stewardship is that "managing" and "taking care of" part of our vocation.



#### **Proportional Giving**

Whatever we give represents some proportion of what we have, so what exactly is "proportional" giving?

It is the intentional, thoughtful selection of just what proportion of our wealth we intend to return to God.

Returning thanks to God through a portion of our material wealth is not the same as purchasing goods and services. It is not transactional in nature—it is not an attempt to buy God's favor or buy Sunday School or buy Christian fellowship. Those things are not for sale; they are freely offered as part of the abundance of God's love for us all.

Proportional giving can be spiritually enriching. We grow in faith as we offer ourselves and the things that we value to God.

I hope each St. James' household will prayerfully consider increasing the proportion of the wealth entrusted to them they are able to offer to God through a pledge to the church.

We have each been given the care and management of a human life. "Our" lives are presented to us as a package deal; they come bundled up with a body, a soul, a place in the world, and some family. How we manage and care for our lives is our stewardship of our lives. We have stewardship of our bodies, our souls, our material circumstances, and our relationships.

Sooner or later, we realize that having stewardship—having the responsibility to care for and manage our lives—is not the same as having complete control over either our lives or the circumstances in which we live them. A steward is someone who cares for and manages something that does not ultimately belong to him or her.

Also sooner or later, we recognize this life in all its complexity as a gift. How we respond to this recognition is the moral issue at the heart of stewardship. When the recognition dawns upon us that all of our lives are gifts freely given from God, we can respond with delight and gratitude, or we can respond with fear and greed. We can open our hearts and hands, and share ourselves generously and lovingly, or we can try to protect, defend, and fortify ourselves against loss. Most of the time, most of us make responses that fall somewhere in between.

In caring for and managing our lives, we all have the responsibility to determine how we will use the money and material goods that God has put at our disposal. Scripture and

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our Christian tradition have a fair bit to say about what an appropriate response to God's gifts might be, and money is one of Jesus' favorite topics. Material giving as a joyful and grateful response to God's gifts to us is an important spiritual discipline.

It's up to each of us to determine what proportion of the goods at our disposal we will give back to God. The question for many of us is, "what proportion?"

Depending on where you read in scripture, the suggested donation amount may range from ten percent (most of the Hebrew Bible) to one hundred percent (the gospels and the book of Acts). If ten percent of your wealth feels like too big of a chunk to give away, try starting with a smaller fraction. You could look at how much you're giving now, what percent that is of your resources, and round that up a percent.

As St. James' looks forward to a renewal of ministry with a new rector, I encourage you to consider a renewal of your own commitment to God's mission here. I encourage you to consider increasing the proportion of your wealth that you pledge to the church.

*Catharine***Questions About Pledging**

**What is a pledge?** A pledge is a promise to contribute a certain amount of money to the church in the coming year.

**Why should I pledge?** Making a pledge is a way of responding with thanks to God for the material blessings in your life and affirming your support of the works of the church. Annual pledges support the day-to-day operation of the church. The church plans its staffing and ministries for the year based on pledged income. The church cannot make plans without knowing how much income to expect.

**How is pledging different from putting money in the collection plate?** "Loose plate" giving—money put in the collection plate not in fulfillment of a formal pledge for the year—is "icing on the cake" for the church. It is certainly welcome but cannot be used as a basis for advance planning.

**Does everyone pledge?** The great majority of our active parishioners pledge, as do the clergy. Our goal is for every household to show support for the work of the church by pledging.

**How much should I pledge?** For first time pledgers, the act of pledging may be more important than the amount, because it reflects a personal commitment to the life of the church. "Proportional giving" is a way of giving that starts from the question, "how has God blessed me?" rather than, "what does the church need?" Then the decision is made to return a proportion (or percent) of our material blessings to God in gratitude. The Biblical standard is the tithe, or ten percent.

**How do I make and fulfill a pledge?** Pledge cards are available from the church office and are often available in the Narthex. They are provided to all parish households in the fall. Complete and sign the card, and return it in the collection plate or to the church office. Pledges are also accepted online. Look for "Giving to St. James" on the front page of the church website.

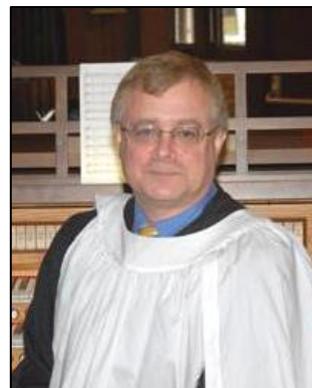
**Are my contributions tax-deductible?** Yes. Pledges to the church are tax-deductible to the extent of the law. You will receive statements detailing your pledge fulfillment and your other gifts to the church, such as for altar flowers or fundraisers.

**Can the church accept non-cash gifts and/or electronic payments?** Yes. The church can accept stocks and similar financial instruments. Note on your pledge card how you would like to fulfill your pledge, and we will get in touch with you to work out the details. Setting up an automatic funds transfer from your bank account to the church's bank account is quite easy. For instructions, please ask the church office.

## Music History with Newton Lewis

### *More than Meets the Ear*

Warning! Some may find this article totally boring. But to me, I never cease to be amazed by the music of J.S. Bach. I never cease to be amazed by the underlying planning of his music and the care he took in creating his music. While he wrote secular music as well, it should never be forgotten that God and church are the heart and soul of his music. Everything he did was for the greater glory of God.



J.S. Bach made five compilations of his own hymn-based organ works. On one level they are all recipe books, presenting organists with a wealth of ideas of what they might do with hymns, preludes, or fugue subjects. A close inspection of Bach's music will reveal that almost no two pieces approach the musical problems and issues in exactly the same way. The collection called the *Orgelbuechlein* ("Little Organ Book") is made up of chorale preludes. Their liturgical intent is clear: they were played to introduce the hymn about to be sung. But for the others containing rather lengthy hymn-based works, the intent is not so clear. In our time they make perfect preludes or postludes. But that is not what they did for preludes and postludes in Bach's time. A prelude was an improvised free form composition played on full organ. After the service the organist played or improvised a fugue also on full organ. Then there is the collection called *Klavieruebung III* ("Keyboard Practice, Part III"). This is by far the most intentional and organized of his collections. Today we often speak of spirituality in terms of how we feel. Bach's music is certainly filled with spirit and feeling. But today I would like to take a little adventure in how Bach expressed his faith at the level of how he constructed *Klavieruebung III*. So by analogy, instead of looking at the beauty of the edifice, we'll look at the engineering.

The basic overall structure is a series of hymn settings surrounded by a prelude at the beginning and a fugue at the end. The prelude and fugue are probably the most well known portions as they are the often played "St. Anne" Prelude and Fugue, so called because the fugue theme resembles the English tune "St. Anne" ("O God, our help in ages past"). The similarity is most probably sheer coincidence. It's been theorized that what this collection might represent is a Bach organ recital. A prelude and a fugue filled with several hymn-based settings. Perhaps all the hymn-based settings that Bach wrote were intended for recitals. This collection may well have come about as an idealized version of an organ dedication recital he gave at one his sons' church in Dresden in 1736.

One of the underlying organizational principles of this collection is the number three, theologically: the Trinity. The opening prelude is in E flat major which has three flats. The composition is an interplay of three themes representing God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. A portion of the third theme even appears on the page like flickering flames representing the Holy Spirit.

The prelude and fugue envelop three sections: the hymns from Luther's reformed liturgy, the hymns that are based on the six pillars of Lutheran doctrine, and then four duets.

There are nine hymns in the first section. The Kyrie comprises the hymns "God the Father, Have Mercy on Us," "Christ Have Mercy on Us," and "God, the Holy Ghost, Have Mercy on Us." There are two sets of these hymns: one for manuals and pedals and one for keyboard alone. Interestingly, the meters of the manual versions, all multiples of three, progressively expand. The first is 6/8, the next 9/8, and lastly 12/8. The next three settings are of the hymn for the Lutheran Gloria. All three are trios. The first is in the key of F major, the second in G major, the third in A major. The reason for this is that F major to A major creates the harmonic interval of a third.

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## Music History

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The section dealing with the catechism, or the six pillars of Lutheran doctrine, has twelve settings that correspond to the number of disciples. As in the liturgy section, these six hymns all have two versions: one for manuals and pedal and one for manuals alone. The hymns are the Lutheran hymns based on or associated with 1) the 10 commandments, 2) the Creed, 3) the Lord's Prayer, 4) Baptism, 5) Penitence, and 6) Eucharist.

By way of a few structural examples in individual pieces: the manual version of the hymn for the 10 commandments is a fughetta (a little fugue). The theme Bach derives from the hymn is ten beats long and it appears in the piece ten times! The large setting of "Our Father" is 91 measures long. In Bach's time, the number 7 signified prayer and the number 13 signified sin.  $7 \times 13 = 91$ . Structurally this represents the sinner and the need for prayer.

The third section consists of four duets. Might this be a reference to the four Gospels?

The collection finally closes with the great St. Anne Fugue, an audience favorite for at least three centuries. The fugue is, like the prelude, in three flats. Bach takes the fugue theme and presents it in three different fugue styles. God the Father is represented by the "old style," in the Palestrina choral style of the late Renaissance. God the Son is represented by a new, more instrumental, style. And finally the last section, a dance fugue represents God the Holy Ghost. The number of bars in each section is a multiple of nine ( $3 \times 3$ ). The sections have 36, 45, and 36 measures respectively. The relation between 36 and 45 reflects the 'golden ratio' used by Greek builders and architects ever since to create pleasingly proportioned buildings. Bach uses this ratio frequently in deciding at what measure to have a musically pivotal moment at which a new theme suddenly appears.

All totaled, there are 27 movements in the whole collection which is of course  $3 \times 3 \times 3$ .

I have heard the collection live in its entirety twice. The second time I brought my score with me and followed. At one point I almost burst out laughing because I couldn't believe the mind was capable of such a creation. I also recently discovered a YouTube video of the whole collection. I believe it's played in Japan on an excellent German baroque sounding organ probably in a concert hall. A choir sings each hymn before the organ settings (so much for all this mathematical symmetry). If you read music, it scrolls and shows you the main hymn melody. It also shows you how the accompaniment derived from the melody. And being YouTube, you can break it up into small convenient listening segments.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFW9wU8Ht3U>

The next time you hear me playing a Bach piece in church, you can rest assured that there is much more than meets the ear.

## The Flowering of the Church for Easter

Remember how much fun we had at the Greening of the Church last December? Working with fresh flowers is even better! Come at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 15, if you would like to find out! We'll hang Easter wreaths, do floral decorations for the windows and outside pots, prepare the flowered cross with greens so that all can add cut flowers on Easter, and put together the ever-popular Easter garden in front of the altar. Your enthusiasm and hard work will be rewarded by tips and materials so you can prepare a small arrangement for your home. If you know you can come, please inform the office so we can plan accordingly. If you can't commit that far ahead, come anyway. Bring a lunch; water will be provided.



## Services for Holy Week and Easter at St. James'

### **Palm Sunday, and Brunch, April 9**

Services 8:00 and 10:30 a.m., Brunch at noon

Procession with palms and a dramatic reading of the Passion of Christ.  
Join us in the parish hall for brunch to support our youth on their summer workcamp trip.

### **Maundy Thursday Potluck Supper April 13**

6:30 p.m. in the parish hall with Foot Washing  
Followed by Stripping of the Altar in the church

Gather in the parish hall for a potluck supper and the foot-washing liturgy, then process to the church for the stripping of the altar.

**Please bring a main dish, salad, or dessert to share for the meal.**

### **Good Friday Vigil and Liturgy, April 14**

Noon and 7:30 p.m.

Liturgy and Vigil, noon to 3:00 p.m. (come and go as able)  
Good Friday Liturgy, 7:30 p.m.

### **Easter Sunday Services and Egg Hunt, April 16**

Services 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.

Brass, bells, and a glorious celebration of the Resurrection of Our Lord! Join us for Holy Eucharist at both services and a Children's Easter Egg Hunt after the 10:30 service.



# Girls Just Wanna Have Fun (at church)!

Back by popular demand!

**Who:** Women of St. James' (age 21 and up)

**What:** Friday Fun Night

**Where:** Undercroft (lower level of church)

**When:** Friday, April 28, 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

If you joined us for the slumber party, you know how much fun we can have together—so let's do it again! If you missed the slumber party, here's your chance to join the fun!

It's a no muss, no fuss kind of evening. We'll hang out, we'll talk, we'll play games, we'll eat, we'll drink, we'll party the night away.

Please bring your favorite beverage and/or snack to share.

Have a favorite game? Feel free to bring that, too!

RSVPs appreciated but not required to: [welcome@stjamespotomac.org](mailto:welcome@stjamespotomac.org)

We hope to see you there!

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## Shepherd's Table Thank You!

Thank you to those who came to serve on Wednesday, March 29. Five or so people, not with the St. James' group, also showed up. We had 176 diners at the new Shepherd's Table facility.

Our volunteers were: Rachele Donnelly, Lisa and Tom Goodkind, Matt and Joseph Hnatov, Jerry and Alice Morrison, Ethan Nayback, Mary Miers, Charlie Padgett, Bob and Mary Quackenbush, Len and Kate Whistler; Janet, Alex, Leeza McUlsky and a group of Leeza's friends.

Thanks,  
*Tom Goodkind*



## Maundy Thursday Potluck Supper

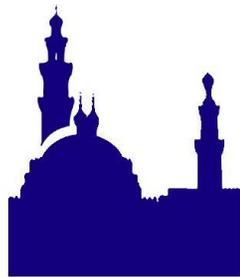
**With Foot Washing Liturgy  
followed by Stripping of the Altar**

We'll be serving one another in many ways on Thursday, April 13. We invite you to contribute a main dish, salad or dessert as you choose. Please bring your contributions to the meal to the parish hall before the service but no sooner than 6:00 p.m.

The service and meal begin at 6:30 p.m. in the parish hall. We'll have the foot-washing liturgy (foot washing is optional), then process to the church for the stripping of the altar.

## Good Friday Offering, April 14

**Support Mission in the  
Holy Land**



On Good Friday, offerings are invited from across The Episcopal Church to support the four dioceses in the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East. Funds are used to promote peace and mutual understanding through pastoral care, healthcare and educational programs throughout the region. To learn more about our Church's work in the Middle East please visit [www.episcopalchurch.org/goodfridayoffering](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/goodfridayoffering).

*Jesus said, "Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you."*  
(John 12:29)

## Easter Flowers and Music Envelopes— Your Chance to Rejoice, Honor, Remember

Easter Flowers are a beautiful opportunity to express your joy, to honor someone, or to remember departed friends and family. As always, we will have some flowers or plants to send home for those who can't attend church.

**We'll accept flower and/or music offerings through Monday, April 10.** Please use the envelopes in the pew for your donation and your dedication will be printed in the Easter Sunday bulletins. Please print very clearly on the envelope or send **email to the office, at [office@stjamespotomac.org](mailto:office@stjamespotomac.org)**. Please indicate whether it is in honor or in memory of your loved ones.

## Bring Fresh Cut Flowers on Easter for the Flowered Cross

We encourage everyone to bring fresh cut flowers on Easter Sunday. Arrive early for any of our services and add your flowers to a special "flowered cross." We will begin this decorating as we gather for the 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. services. It's a lot easier for you and the flower guild if your flower stems are not more than four to six inches long. Flowers will be available at church but it is a special experience to choose your own if you have that option.

The flowered cross symbolizes the Resurrection and new life. As both adults and children bring in flowers, we symbolically participate in the new life that begins at Easter through Christ's resurrection. At the end of our 8:00 and 10:30 a.m. Easter services, we process this cross out of the church and place it on the church's front steps for all the community to see.



## Lunch and Learn, Tuesday, May 2 Sugarloaf: The Singular History of a Singular Mountain

This presentation on May 2 for the Lunch and Learn group will be about “Sugarloaf Mountain, a private oasis of natural beauty and scenic vistas that is open to the public, nearly becoming Camp David. [It] was almost topped with a modernistic structure designed by one of America’s most famous architects, Frank Lloyd Wright, that instead ended up as a New York City landmark. This extensively illustrated talk explores these and other historical oddities of this tiny mountain that sits all by itself just over the Montgomery County line in Frederick County.” (From the Montgomery County Historical Society’s Speakers Bureau.)

The presenter, Ralph Buglass, is a retired communications professional who has presented at Lunch and Learn in the last year or two about one- and two-room schoolhouses in the county, as well as mills of Montgomery County. He was well received then; you do not want to miss hearing him again. To attend the presentation only, arrive in the undercroft at 12:30 p.m. To enjoy the entire event, make a reservation with Sarah Padgett for the \$10.00 lunch and arrive at 11:30 a.m. The event will conclude around 1:30 p.m.

The steering committee would like thank all those who assist at the end of the day in returning the undercroft to order. Everything, be it one small thing, or as big as stacking chairs, helps the mostly senior age group get the necessary work done. We are grateful!

### Photo at right:

Visit and Dinner with The Rev. André Wildaine,  
Priest-in-Charge of our Partner Parish in Haiti.

Père Wildaine celebrated at both of our morning  
services on Sunday, April 2, and then answered  
questions in the parish hall.

## Book Club April 23 *The Paris Wife*, by Paula McLain

Twenty-eight year old Hadley meets Ernest—Hemingway, that is—and the sparks fly. How well do these newlyweds deal with life in 1920’s Paris? What does life in that time and that place have as messages for us now? Ambition, deception, betrayal are all present in this tale of the young Hemingways living life in the fast lane. Hadley is finding her own voice and self as Ernest is delving into what will become *The Sun Also Rises*. As part of “the Lost Generation,” the couple moves in circles that include Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound, and F. Scott Fitzgerald. Some have recommended rereading Hemingway’s *The Sun Also Rises*, as well as *Mrs. Hemingway*, by Naomi Wood, a novel based on letters and other papers from the four wives of Hemingway. The discussion should prove to be a lively one, which, honestly, most of them are. And YOU are most welcome. Meeting in the parish hall library at 6:45 p.m., Sunday, April 23, the group usually disbands around 8:30.

The book selected for May 28’s discussion is *A Gentleman In Moscow*, by Amor Towles. Library waiting lists of this book prompt a recommendation to get on the list now. Recommendations for future selections are always welcome; what have you read recently that would be a good one for discussion?

