

The St. James' Pilgrim

News for the Journey . . . October 2019

St. James' Episcopal Church • 11815 Seven Locks Road, Potomac, MD 20854-3340 • 301-762-8040 • www.stjamespotomac.org



Reflection from our Rector, the Rev. Meredith T. Heffner

Building Vision Initiative Announced to the Parish

At our last Quarterly State of the Parish Address I announced a new Building Vision Initiative.

This initiative emerged over the past year from the vestry's desire to find funds to cover our facilities expenses for the next 10 to 20 years. The goal here is to be able to worry less about our buildings, knowing we can care for them, and focus more on our mission, the work God calls us to do.

In considering the work there is to do around our property, your vestry also realized that there is some upgrading and revision that could be done. Building on past dreams, we began to wonder this: if money were not an issue, what would we do to make our space more welcoming, and more useful, for the work we do for God?

In order to allow everyone to weigh in, a Walking Guide has been made available to members of the congregation. It was developed by church consultant Jeff Hensley (see his biography on page 2) from the consulting firm *Generis*, and a Building Vision Committee made up of Jim Boyce, Jane Ireland, Suzanne Lin, Patrick O'Hare, Bob Quackenbush, Barry Thompson, and Phil Willems.

With this guide, we invited parishioners to prayerfully walk around our buildings—and dream—asking how God is experienced in this place, what might be changed, and how our spirit and mission are reflected here.

For those unable to take the tour, a photo slide show was made available by email from the church office.

We ask that all tours be completed by Sunday, October 6, when we will be joined after both services by Jeff Hensley, who will manage small group conversations facilitated by our vestry members. Each group will discuss what they saw on their tours, and their vision for our property. That afternoon, Jeff will meet with the Building Vision Committee, clergy and vestry to capture and organize what is shared.

Then on October 13, after both services, Jeff will share our findings—and we will have a vision for our property. Next steps will be up to your vestry, as we look at costs and determine what we can fund, outside of our normal operating budget. You will hear more about this at our Annual Meeting in November.

Please take a tour and be part of our dream!
May God bless us all—

Rev. Meredith



Community Sale Thank You!

Thank you to all who participated in making our Fall Community Sale happen! To our donors, helpers, and shoppers: Thank You!



Introducing Jeff Hensley

After interviewing a number of church consultants, the vestry recommended we hire Jeff Hensley from Generis Consulting to help with our Building Vision Initiative.



Jeff has over 15 years of experience building the fiscal capacity of nonprofits, churches and educational institutions. As a consultant he specializes in development assessments, interim staff management, and leadership coaching. He completed his undergraduate studies at Wheaton College (IL) and his graduate studies at Yale. Prior to entering the field of development, he taught theology at both graduate and undergraduate levels. A cradle Episcopalian, he especially enjoys working with Episcopal churches.

Jeff is fun and warm, and shares our enthusiasm for our Building Vision Initiative. We look forward to his leadership and guidance on October 6 and 13.

FaithTalk Resumes October 20

FaithTalk will not be held October 6 and 13. Instead, we invite everyone to be part of the Building Vision conversations. FaithTalk will resume on October 20, with chapter 9 of *Becoming a Healing Presence*.

Stewardship

Rev. Meredith T. Heffner

You should have received a letter by now announcing our annual stewardship campaign, along with an invitation to make a financial pledge to support our operations in 2020. The theme this year, *Planting Seeds for the Harvest*, reminds us that our financial gifts are the seeds that produce God's harvest—allowing us to further the mission and ministries at St. James' and ensuring the future work of our church. This includes more than just our operational costs. For example, over \$36,000 goes to mission and outreach.

In our letter we reflected on the exciting ways the seeds we have planted at St. James' have borne fruit over the past year. These include our new mental health ministries and building vision

The Bishop is Coming! Bring Food! All Saints Day, November 3

One 10:30 service with reception

Bishop Mariann will be with us on All Saints Day, when the congregation will be together for Confirmation and Baptism at the 10:30 service. So that we can all worship together, there will be no 8:00 service. Our fellowship hour will be more festive, so we invite your contributions of finger foods for the reception following the 10:30 service.



Please notify the office if you are able to bring food, so we'll be properly prepared to greet the bishop and celebrate.

All Saints remembrances are being received now through October 27. Please use the form on page 11 in this issue to remember loved ones.

Interfaith Panel Discussion "Our Avraham – Abraham – Ibrahim" October 29, 7:30 p.m.

Gather to listen as Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Baha'i scholars talk about the role of this foundational figure in their religious traditions. Rev. Meredith will be presenting. Located at Congregation Har Shalom, 11510 Falls Road, Potomac.

initiative as well as our children and youth ministries, our music ministries, our mission and outreach ministries, and our membership and fellowship programs.

Senior Warden Barry Thompson has written a comprehensive article for this edition of *The Pilgrim* (page 4), detailing our current financial status and the importance of each pledge. I hope you will take time to read this excellent piece.

As we look ahead to where God is calling, we hope you will help us plant these seeds by making a pledge to St. James' by October 20.

If you have questions or would like to discuss your giving, please contact Rev. Meredith.



A Perspective on Stewardship

Barry Thompson, Senior Warden

As we begin our Annual Stewardship Campaign for 2020, it may be helpful to remember that the campaign supports the operating budget and to examine the recent history of stewardship at St. James', in order to make informed personal decisions about individual and family support of what God is calling us to do.

The operating budget addresses the "day-to-day" functioning of the parish and its many sub-elements, such as our Sunday services and Sunday School, personnel, insurance, mortgage, utilities, maintenance and minor repairs to our buildings, the activities of commissions (Missions and Outreach, for example), and our support to the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, D.C.

Large but unavoidable expenditures, such as repairing the parish hall ramp, repainting of the parish hall exterior, and resealing and restriping of the parking lots, have challenged us this year. Major repairs to our facilities (although programmed as best we can do so and proposed as line items in our annual budgets) generally have exceeded the capacity of yearly budgeting and often have been deferred, resulting in an unrelenting concern about the status and future of our facilities.

The current Building Visioning Plan is intended to develop a means by which to address facility needs for the next ten to twenty years and to allow St. James' to focus on its mission and vision, instead of facility issues.

Intentional and generous giving (pledges, plate, and designated donations) meets somewhat more than half of the parish's annual needs. The remainder comes from rentals and such sources as the fees paid by the St. James' Children's School for the use of church properties. When expenses have exceeded income (as has been the case in most years), additional funding from reserve or restricted funds has been required.

In the two-plus years since Rev. Meredith accepted the call to become Rector, St. James' has experienced renewed joy and sense of mission, increasing membership (especially families with children), and improvement in finances. Deficit operational budgeting has been all but eliminated.

For 2017, there were 82 pledges received, totaling \$355,655. For 2018, in response to a request that parishioners consider increasing their pledges by \$100 per month each, 105 pledging units contributed \$447,994.

For 2019, 114 individuals or families promised \$466,218. The average pledge for this year is \$4090. The median (the amount at which one-half of the number of pledges are less than that amount and one-half exceed that figure) for 2019 is slightly less than \$3000.

Of continuing concern is the fact that roughly 50 percent of donation dollars come from some ten pledges over the past several years. We lost (by death) one of our larger pledgers in 2018, and another has died this year. Fortunately, increases in numbers of pledges and in amount donated by other pledgers made up the loss in 2018.

Your donation is one expression of your commitment to St. James' and to God's work in our community—our parish community and the larger community, near and abroad. Your pledge is your promise to meet, insofar as personal, family, and professional circumstances may permit, your intended monetary support of our church and its activities.

Please prayerfully consider pledging for the upcoming year, perhaps using the statistical information above and in your stewardship packet to decide what amount is appropriate for you.

Annual Reports and Budgets Are Due...

Ministry leaders, please take note:

Budget requests Due October 24, 2019
Annual Reports Due October 31, 2019



Reflection from Astrid Crookshank, St. James' Children's School Director

St. James' Children's School Fall Events

The fall is a fun time for our families at the school, with the move up to new classes in early September, the many back-to-school events, and the seasonal changes and activities. We start the school year off with a bang with our biggest family event and fundraiser in the middle of October.

**Silent Auction and Raffle! Friday, October 18
6:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the parish hall
Tickets on Sale October 6 and 13, parish hall**

We would like to extend a warm welcome to all St. James' members to join us at our twenty-first **Silent Auction on Friday, October 18 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the parish hall.** We will have a full dinner and many fabulous items for Auction and raffle, with proceeds supporting our playground renovations this year.

Dinner tickets are \$20 and include a full buffet dinner and one drink (beer/wine/soda). Bid numbers can be assigned that evening or any day that week by calling the school.

We have some of our favorite items up for auction including theaters, restaurants and local activities for the whole family. We have 3 raffle items this year that include a \$500 Costco Gift Card, a \$500 Great Wolf Lodge gift card, and a Gaylord Resort "ICE!" National Harbor sculpture exhibit package for the whole family.

Raffle tickets will be ready and on sale for parishioners during fellowship hour Sundays, October 6 and 13. Ms. Marisol will have details on each item and how to purchase tickets.

For anyone who cannot attend the Friday evening event and would like a chance to bid, bid sheets will be available in the school lobby for preview bidding the week before the auction. Everyone is welcome to view the actual items in the parish hall and place bids between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. on October 18.

We appreciate everyone's support of the school and hope many of you will join us for this fun event!

Halloween FunFest and School Costume Parade

After the auction is over we look forward to the fun of Halloween, both at the Trunk or Treating at the church Halloween FunFest Saturday, October 26, and at our own Halloween Parade on the 31st. Everyone is welcome to come take a peek at our adorable children delighting in their costumes. The parade is at 4:00 p.m. in the school driveway circle.

November: Scholastic Book Fair and Thanksgiving

In November we quickly transition to Book Fair and Thanksgiving. We will have the **Scholastic Book Fair in the school lobby from November 12 to 15.** Interested in getting a jump on some holiday gift shopping? Please drop by any time that week during school hours. All proceeds are taken in books and curriculum materials for the classrooms.

Then all of our families will once again celebrate Thanksgiving together with the teachers at our lunches in each of the preschool classrooms on Wednesday, November 27, the day before Thanksgiving. This is definitely an extreme potluck event, where there is always plenty of good food and fun with our children. Thanksgiving also starts our projects to serve our community, with a Manna Food Collection and the Bishop Walker school project.

The children at St. James' have already begun practicing for the Christmas Show on December 11, so it's not just the department stores that start Christmas before we ever get to Halloween!

Happy fall everyone! Hopefully we can all take a few moments, here and there, to slow down as the cooler season arrives, and reflect on the joys of the moment. For as much as we plan and prepare months ahead, it's today that really counts!

St. James' Episcopal Church Annual Hayride and Bonfire



At Butler's Orchard, Saturday, October 12

Arrive by 6:15 p.m. for 6:30 p.m. hayride

Sign up now!

Reserve your spot by signing up at <https://tinyurl.com/Hayride2019>.

We will begin with a 40-minute hayride followed by a two-hour bonfire. Please dress warmly and bring lawn chairs or blankets. You are welcome to bring food and camping accessories to cook on the bonfire. Due to the late time, we suggest that you eat dinner ahead of time.

Suggested donation: \$10 per person

(includes hayride, bonfire, Butler's Orchard apple). Make checks payable to St. James' Episcopal Church with "Hayride/Bonfire" in the memo line.

Time and Location: Please arrive at the Butler's Orchard Market **no later than 6:15 p.m.** For their safety, children should remain in vehicles until we're invited to caravan up to our group spot. We will board our wagons promptly and the hayride will begin at 6:30. Please don't be late!

Butler's Orchard is at 22222 Davis Mill Rd, Germantown, MD 20876.

*We hope you and your family can join us.
Questions? Offline RSVPs? Contact Dawn Iype
or the parish office, office@stjamesptomac.org*



Mental Health Ministries Report

By the Rev. James S. Isaacs

The Mental Health Ministries are moving forward this year.

There is a Mental Health Ministries Leaders' Group that meets monthly to carry out the Mental Health Ministries initiatives, with a working group assigned to each initiative.

This year, the initiatives that are coming are:

- **Mental Health First Aid training:** this is being offered at no cost to the participants on Saturday, October 5 from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the Undercroft. Must register for the limited spots online—for the link, see the emails sent out to the parish last week, or the events calendar on www.stjamespotomac.org.
- **Affinity Groups:** One of the important ways that people with mental health issues can be supported is through fellowship and supportive community. To further build a safe community where mental health issues can be

discussed and supported, limited-time affinity groups are being formed. (More information to come about that soon.)

- **Mental Health Praise Service:** while we recognize the importance of support from mental health professionals and medications, we also acknowledge that God is the source of our strength and our companion. So, we will have a worship service where we praise God and touch on issues of mental health
- **Finding out what other congregations are doing:** another task force is researching what other congregations are doing to address mental health issues to see if there are initiatives or partnerships that would also be a good fit for us at St. James'.

Thank you to all of the people who are a part of the Mental Health Ministries Leaders' Group! Each month's *Pilgrim* newsletter will have further updates on the Mental Health Ministries.

Weaving God's Promise: Sunday School

The 2019-2020 Sunday School year kicked off Sunday, September 15 with a new curriculum and 19 children in attendance. Parent volunteers taught the Junior and Senior classes, while our devoted, regular volunteer teachers, Emily Roegner and Maureen Schiavone along with our Director, Marisol Castro, taught the K-first grade and Pre-K classes. We had two Sunday School Senior students help lead chapel.

Prior to the start of the Sunday School year, Rev. Meredith hosted a conference call and two in-person meetings for parents to stress our need for parent volunteers to help teach each Sunday. An online-signup form outlining the lessons for each Sunday and where volunteers are needed was created and emailed to parents of all children on three separate occasions prior to September 15. In

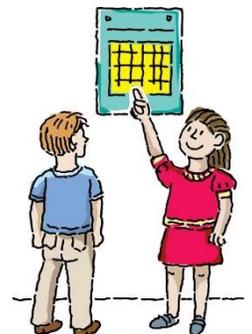
addition Rev. Meredith shared the need at our parent meeting during Rally Day on September 8.

This semester we will be participating in **Children's Sabbath on October 27**, visiting with the Bishop on Nov 3, the Christmas pageant on Dec 24, and will sprinkle in a service project along the way.

We are in great need of volunteer teachers each Sunday. If any parishioners or vestry members are interested in volunteering once or twice this semester, please let me or Rev. Meredith know.

Thank you,

Lindsay Ragheb, Vestry Liaison



ST. JAMES' EPISCOPAL CHURCH
warmly invites you to our

HALLOWEEN FUNFEST

Saturday, October 26

5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Rain or Shine! Featuring:

Trunk-or-Treat, Games for Kids
Spooky Organ Music Concert (6:30 p.m.)



Bring the whole family! Creative costumes encouraged!

We need your help to make it a big success again! Please sign up to host a treat-filled trunk, run a game, or help with logistics:

<http://tinyurl.com/funfest19>

Vestry Highlights: Meeting of September 17, 2019

Barry Thompson, Sr. Warden

The Vestry met September 17, 2019, with Rev. Meredith presiding. Ken Van Valkenburgh's opening reflection reminded us that, in all circumstances, God is in control. He will shepherd us through trials and tribulations. We should not "drown in our own quicksand."

Following the usual summer lag in pledge payments, the Treasurer asked that parishioners catch up.

The Building Visioning Plan (\$12,000) is underway. The parking lots have had cracks filled, the lots sealed and re-striped (\$7000). The last payment (\$9000+) on the renovated parish hall ramp will be made next month. Painting of the parish hall exterior (\$43,000+) will start soon.

Commission reports

Christian Education (Lindsay Ragheb): Sunday School kicked off September 15 with increased enrollment over last year. The exciting new curriculum involves parent participation, essential to its success. Volunteers are most welcome. Plans for Children's Sabbath, Bishop Mariann's visit, and the Christmas pageant were outlined. Rev. Meredith reminded us of the "incredible gift that we give our children" on Sunday mornings.

Missions and Outreach (Wendy Hicks): Reassessment will be made of the "fit" between current M&O commitments and the mission and vision of St. James' and its congregation. Funds will be made available to the Mental Health/Mental Wellness Initiative leaders for innovation. Additional funding (\$1500) has been provided Bon Samaritain parish and school in Haiti, due to increased enrollment at the school. Increased communication to our congregation regarding M&O projects was discussed/encouraged.

Pastoral Care (Rev. Meredith for Carolyn Ragland): The Lay Eucharistic Visitors program will be re-energized/expanded in October.

Rector's report (Rev. Meredith Heffner): The Building Visioning Plan includes parishioner tours

of our facilities until October 5, facilitated sessions for parishioner input on Sunday, October 6 (after both services), and feedback with prioritization of needs and wants on Sunday, October 13. Consultant Jeff Hensley will guide the activities both Sundays.

Assistant Rector's report (Rev. James Isaacs): The first of several Mental Health Training sessions will be held on Saturday, October 5, with the focus of this session being the identification of, and assistance with, concerns of our youth. James announced three new initiatives, each with a working group: time-limited affinity groups, research into what other faith communities are doing, and a praise service with a theme of Mental Health and Wellness (to be held at a time other than the scheduled Sunday services at St. James').

Junior Warden (Sarah Hnatov): Sarah reminded us of the Community Sale, "Letting Go, Spreading Joy," on September 28.

Senior Warden (Barry Thompson): Barry presented updates on the flooding of our neighbor Scotland AME Zion Church (services currently being held off-site), Grounds and Gardens Committee (forming under the Facilities Commission), and development of plans for parishioner response to fire and natural disasters.

Other business

The Vestry Nominating Committee continues to seek members willing to serve. The slate must be fixed by October.

Rev. Meredith proposed, and the Vestry concurred, that one service (10:30) be held for the **Bishop's visit, Sunday, November 3**. The Worship Commission will be consulted before a formal announcement is made. The Bishop will meet with the Vestry at 9:15 a.m. the same day.

Todd Thomas' ordination to the clergy will be held Sunday, December 15, at St. James'.

Diocesan Convention is scheduled for January 24-26, 2020.

Youth Group Happenings

By Rachele Donnelly, Youth Ministries Director

It's officially Fall, which means cooler temperatures, pumpkin-spice-everything, and the return of Youth Group. On September 8, we officially bounced back into the new program year, with a fun outing at Sky Zone trampoline park. Teaming up with St. Francis Episcopal-Potomac's youth group, the teens had a great time climbing various obstacles, playing dodge ball and jumping their hearts out. We finished the evening getting to know each other better over pizza and cupcakes. The following Sunday was spent painting kindness rocks and making para-cord bracelets, which we planned to donate. Laughter was in abundance throughout the evening. The night ended with the hilarious, live-action game of Hungry, Hungry, (Human) Hippos.

On Sunday, September 22, the St. James' and St. Francis' groups gathered once again for our first joint service project. The youth filled gift bags

for the first responders of Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department, located near the intersection of River and Seven Locks Roads. The bags included flashlights, hand-sanitizer, chocolate, coffee, snacks, customer cups, kindness rocks and more. After dinner, we traveled to the station where we delivered the bags and toured the house. The 30+ first responders at station 10 (Home of the River Rats-swift water rescuers) were incredibly gracious as they excitedly showed us the trucks and equipment, and shared stories. As an unexpected bonus, we got to see an old youth group friend, now-volunteer paramedic, Antonia. By the end of the night it was hard to tell who was more excited, the kids or the adults.

The youth extend their sincere thanks to all those who serve our communities and our nation, in both a volunteer and professional capacity.



Youth at the Cabin John Volunteer Fire Department

The Osage Indian Nation and the FBI: Book Club, October 27

Killers of the Flower Moon, by David Grann, is the selection for the St. James' Book Club's discussion on Sunday, October 27, at 6:45 p.m. in the parish hall. *Time* magazine called this one of the best books of 2017.

Grann relates the 1920s harrowing changes taking place among the Osage Indian Nation of Oklahoma in the 1920s. After being forced from several homelands, the Osage had settled in the late nineteenth century in an unoccupied area of the state, chosen precisely because it was rocky, sterile, and utterly unfit for cultivation. Continuing the library summary, "No white man would covet this land; Osage people would be happy."

Then oil was discovered below the Osage territory, speedily attracting prospectors wielding staggering sums and turning many Osage into some of the richest people in the world. The true crime mystery of the book develops the story of what happened next. Why did the Osage begin to

die one by one? Why was Mollie Burkhart losing family members? What part did Tom White, an ex-Texas Ranger play in this mystery? The FBI—did it do its job? J. Edgar Hoover reshaped the practices of the fledgling bureau, gaining prestige for the investigatory prowess. One review states that the author relays the humanity, evil, and heroism of the people involved.

All are welcome to this casual, group-led discussion, usually ending by 8:15 p.m. All opinions are freely expressed, with most participants offering to others and gaining for themselves fresh insights and new outlooks. What will the value systems of this historical episode—and its results—teach us about today's world? Come offer **your** thoughts.

The book selection for the November 24 discussion is *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens.

Feed My Sheep: St. James' at Shepherd's Table, October 30

St. James' helps set up and serve the evening meal at Shepherd's Table in Silver Spring on the fifth Wednesday of the month—four to five times each year.

You are invited to sign up for the 4:30 or 6:30 p.m. shifts (or both!). The staff at Shepherd's Table give guidance and supervision to those preparing and serving the meal, so it's easy for newcomers to join in and feel productive.

You must register and sign up online to participate. Instructions for creating an electronic account at Shepherd's Table are provided below. We have a limited number of slots so we encourage you to sign up by October 25. Youth age 13 and up can serve. Wear closed-toe shoes and a full-length shirt.

Shepherd's Table is located at 8206 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910, on the right (southbound) side between a fire station and the Progress Place building, just before a railroad underpass.

How to sign up to serve at Shepherd's Table

1. The user weblink for St. James' is: **vhub.at/stjameschurch**. On the weblink, click Create Account.
2. You will be prompted to create a username and password. Optional: select any affiliations that pertain to you. This will not limit your volunteering options.
3. Fill out your profile: name, address, email address, emergency contact.
4. On the confirmation page, click "next" and you'll see the calendar with available shifts.
5. Add yourself to the shift of your choice.



If you don't have access to the Internet or an email address, please contact the Shepherd's Table Volunteer Coordinator: 301-585-6463, extension 9.

Lunch & Learn November 5: Promoting Good Balance and Preventing Falls

On Tuesday, November 5, in the undercroft, Lunch & Learn will host Lynn Isackson as she presents "Promoting Good Balance and Preventing Falls." Lynn Isackson is a retired occupational therapist. She teaches a seven-week fall prevention program and co-leads a Bone Builders exercise program, both sponsored by the county.

Experienced in teaching this topic, she will begin her program at 12:30. Social time for this monthly event begins at 11:30 a.m., followed by the buffet style lunch at noon. Program time is 12:30 to approximately 1:30. To attend any of the L & L programs only, one need not make a reservation. To reserve the \$10 lunch before the program, please contact Sarah Padgett.

Lunch & Learn usually numbers 20-25, which leaves plenty of room around the tables for other congregants, neighbors, friends, relatives, etc. Although attended mostly by the retirees in the congregation, even if you are younger than "retirement" age, you are welcome! Casual, friendly, easy to get to, with inexpensive complete lunch available... how's our sales promotion sounding? We hope to see you on November 5.

Being Intentional About Security and Safety

Barry Thompson, Sr. Warden

Procedures for increased security for our buildings during Sunday services have been implemented. Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) are positioned in the church, the undercroft and the parish hall. Refresher sessions for AED use will be offered to staff, ushers, and interested others. Dates and times to be announced. First Aid kits are available in the narthex of the church, the church office, the undercroft kitchen, and the parish hall kitchen.

Attention is now being directed to fire safety and response to severe weather. Diagrams for emergency exit from the buildings are posted but need review and perhaps updating. Special circumstances (parishioners using wheel chairs and with other physical limitations) require designation of appropriate exits. Diagrams and procedures will be submitted to the Facilities Commission and the Montgomery County Fire Marshal for approval. Consideration will be given to designation of locations and procedures for response to severe weather and plans for response developed by our vestry subcommittee on security and safety, in coordination with staff and the Facilities Commission.

All Saints' Remembrances: Sunday November 3, 2019

On All Saints' Sunday If you would like to have a family member remembered in the service (we'll have one service at 10:30 a.m.), please fill out this form and return it to the office no later than **Sunday, October 27**. You may also send your remembrance to the office via email, to office@stjamespotomac.org.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY. During services we will read aloud the names of those who have died in the past year; we will list in the bulletin the submitted names of all who have died in previous years.

Your name: _____ Phone or Email: _____

In Memory of: _____ Check box if this person died within the past year

_____ _____

Relationship of person(s) to you: _____

News from St. James' Children's School

Classroom Spotlight: Happy Fall from the Twos Room!

By Dana Stafford

There is just something undeniably wonderful about the fall season. The weather changing and becoming crisp. The smell of pumpkin bread baking in the oven.

As each leaf turns from green to golden brown, yellow, red, and orange, children watch with wonder as they fall to the ground. October, in particular, brings many fun activities as the children plan their costumes and wait for Halloween night and all the fun festivities fall has to offer.



Who's Behind that Pumpkin Face?

One of our favorite activities anticipated by many is the Two's guessing game, "Who's Behind That Pumpkin Face?" For years, we have done this activity and it is loved by young and old alike. We have a big piece of orange paper with a smiling pumpkin face drawn on it. We have a "Pumpkin" guest come into the room with the pumpkin drawing covering their face. We sing a song as we walk them in the room; *"Who's behind that pumpkin face? Nobody knows but me. Who's behind that pumpkin face, Nobody knows but me. And I'm not telling, you will have to guess. And if your guess is right, I will answer: yes."*

The children look at the person and guess who is behind the pumpkin face based on observing them, but not actually seeing the person's face. They must look at other attributes to make a guess (shoes, jewelry, hair, clothing). Sometimes the "pumpkin" will say, "Hello." Then the children make a guess based on the person's voice.

Each day, one or two people are our "pumpkins." Usually the pumpkin face is a teacher from another room, an administrator and sometimes even a parent or sibling. This is an event that other teachers enjoy as well. The children love singing the song, guessing who it is and sometimes being surprised by who is behind the pumpkin face. We look forward to this fun fall activity every year!

Calendar of Events

- Sundays 10:30 a.m.:** Sunday School, childcare
- Wednesdays 6:30 a.m.:** Men's Prayer Breakfast
- Thursdays 10:00 am. Rector's Bible Study**
- Oct. 6, SU: Building Vision Reflections
- Oct. 12: SA: Hayride and Bonfire, Butler's Orchard
- Oct. 13, SU: Building Vision Reflections
- Oct. 16, W: Visit to Potomac Valley Nursing Home
- Oct. 18, F: SJCS Silent Auction / Raffle
- Oct. 20, SU: Stewardship pledges due for 2020, FaithTalk resumes
- Oct. 24, TH: Bbudget requests Due
- Oct. 26, SA: Halloween FunFest and Truck or Treat
- Oct. 27: SU: Children's Sabbath, Book Club
- Oct. 29: TU: Interfaith Panel Discussion at Congregation Har Shalom
- Oct 30, W: St. James' at Shepherd's Table, Silver Spring
- Oct. 29, TU: Newsletter submission deadline, November 7 *Pilgrim*
- Oct. 31, TH: SJCS Costume Parade; Annual reports due
- Nov. 3, SU: All Saints: one 10:30 service with Bishop, Confirmation, Baptism; Daylight Saving Time ends
- Nov. 5: TU: Lunch & Learn
- Nov. 6, W: Visit to Manor Care Nursing Home
- Nov. 12-15: Scholastic Book Fair, SJCS
- Nov. 17, SU: Annual Parish Meeting

Annual Parish Meeting: Sunday, November 17

Our 2019 **Annual Parish Meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m.** in the parish hall. Adults and youth are encouraged to attend. We will elect our 2020 vestry candidates and diocesan delegates and alternates.

Eligible voters are baptized parishioners in good standing, at least 16 years of age, and contributors to the parish. Please contact the parish office if you are unsure about your eligibility to vote.