

JANUARY HAPPENINGS 2015

St. James Episcopal Church, Amesbury

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Reflections from Fr. John

Dear St. James Family,

Thank you all so much for the tremendously warm welcome you have given me since my arrival in Amesbury, it has been a wonderful blessing! Moving, while fun, can also be stressful and your very warm welcome has made the process all the much easier.

I would like to take this opportunity to tell you all a little more about myself. I am fondly referred to as a cradle Episcopalian. I was born on St. Patrick's Day and grew up in Larchmont, New York, a suburb of NYC. Church has always been an important part of my life. I was very involved in the Church in which I attended growing up, St. John's in Larchmont. I was a member of the junior choir, I acolyted and participated in youth group. Since I

was very young, I have always felt that God was possibly calling me to ordained ministry. This call became increasingly apparent to me during my senior year at Elmira College where I did my undergraduate studies. Although I majored in theatre and history at Elmira, I felt God was calling me to something else. After discussing my thoughts and feelings with Father Donald Matthews, the Rector of the Church I attended while in college, he offered to bring me onto his staff for a year to begin discerning God's call. I worked at Grace Church the following year after graduating college and I entered seminary in the fall of 2003.

I attended The General Theological Seminary in NYC where I earned my Master of Divinity Degree. One requirement at General is to participate in a field placement where Seminarians find a position at a Church during their second and third years. I felt very at home at Christ and St. Stephen's Church where coincidentally, I happened to have been baptized in 1980. After graduating from General in 2006, I decided I wanted to continue my schooling and pursue a Master of Theology Degree. I attended Duke Divinity School the following fall where I majored in Church History and minored in Biblical Studies and Christian Education. While I was planning to concentrate primarily on the Reformation, I ended up taking a class and falling in love with the Baptismal liturgies and practices of the

Early Church. I ended up studying the Sacrament of Baptism in depth and wrote my thesis on the Origins of Anointing at Baptism. During my time at Duke I was Ordained to the Diaconate.

After completing my degree at Duke, I moved to Connecticut where I began my first position as the Assistant Rector of St. Matthew's Church located in Wilton. After my first four months at St. Matthew's, I was Ordained to the Priesthood at the Cathedral in Hartford. Since then, I have served parishes in Gainesville, FL and Newtown, CT. I was serving as the Assistant to the Rector in Newtown during the tragic shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School and we had parishioners who lost a child during this horrific event. Sometimes when events like these happen, questions arise as to why God would allow such an awful event to occur? Where was God in all of this? There was a true sense in the community that God was with us and His presence was very tangible. One way God manifested Himself was by showing us that while we cannot take away the pain of this event we can stand with one another letting each other know we are not alone and offering our support and love and presence to each other, especially to those directly affected by the terrible tragedy of that day.

While looking for my next call, I was blessed to come across the opening at St. James the last day the search committee

was accepting names. Since the very beginning of this process, I have felt strongly that this is where God is calling me.

Our Senior Warden Joan Miller said to me at one point, she thought St. James would be a great place for a first time Rector. I could not agree more and am excited and thrilled to continue my ministry among all of you!

I look forward to meeting and getting to know you in the coming weeks and to beginning our journey together! Please know that you are all in my daily thoughts and prayers.

Yours in Christ,
Father John



The Feast of the Epiphany January 4th at 10am

Join us on Sunday, January 4th as we celebrate The Feast of the Epiphany with

three visitors from the East joining us during the sermon. They are traveling so can only stay for a few moments but are intrigued to meet everyone. We welcome the children to join them when they appear at the Altar steps. In celebration of their visit, we will have a Three King's Cake during our hospitality hour.

Vestry Meeting



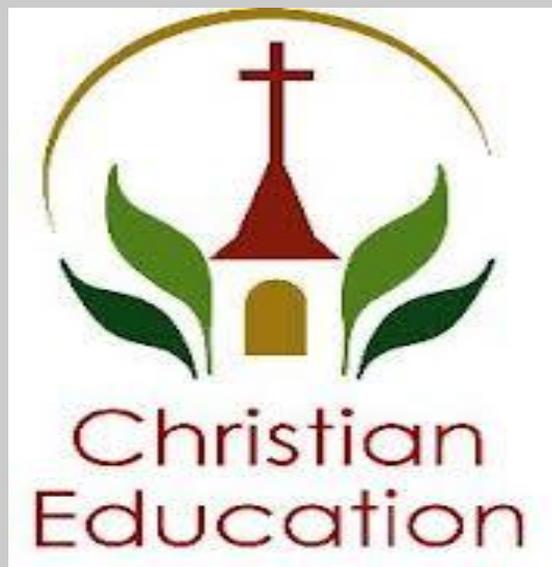
The January Vestry Meeting will be held on Tuesday the 13th at 7pm in the Nickerson Library. All are invited to listen and observe.

Annual Meeting



this very ordinary way--helps strengthen us as a parish and renew us as individuals.

Could you help host a Coffee Hour? Just one Sunday every so often and share in the hosting with another parish member! Please talk with Kelly Bennett, our Hospitality Chair, about how and when you can help.



Godly Play Classes

There will be no Godly Play classes on January 18th due to the holiday weekend.

Toys & Collections

In honoring Saint Nicholas's mission our youth collected toys and raised \$125.00 for Toys 4 Tots. They also gave out fresh baked cookies and hot cocoa during the Santa Parade. After a successful mission we celebrated with wonderful fellowship during our annual Christmas party.

Youth Group Event - Building the Dream

Join young people from across the diocese in a cross-cultural exchange to showcase youth-led justice-

seeking efforts in the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Oscar Romero, César Chávez, Rigoberta Menchú, Jesus Christ, and other freedom-fighters.

This event is for middle-and high-school students and also young adults. If you are interested in attending, please RSVP to Jenn Collins by Sunday, January 11th for planning purposes.

The Building the Dream event will be held on Saturday, January 17th from 3:00pm to 7:00pm at San Lucas/Saint Luke Church in Chelsea, MA. Co-sponsored by the diocesan Hispanic Ministries.

Nursery Care

A new reservation system has been set up for our Nursery Care during the 10am service. Please send Jenn Collins at stjames.christianed@verizon.net an e-mail reservation request by the Thursday before the Sunday you will need nursery care. We will be sure the nursery is open and staffed!



Church Fair Committee Update

Yes, it's time to start planning for the 2015 Church Fair! Mark your calendars now: the next Amesbury Village of Church Fairs will be held on Saturday, November 7, 2015.

The 2014 Church Fair raised almost \$3,000 for St. James' youth ministries. The economy clearly affected how much we raised, particularly through the raffle. Two of our raffle items were won by people who had said they could only afford to purchase one ticket.

But despite unseasonably cold weather, we were able to welcome several hundred people to our parish hall - and we fed lots of them lunch. (Special thanks to Andy Harlow for heading up the Kitchen!) Our new "Fashion Accessories" section was a fabulous success. And there were far fewer leftover "Trinkets and Treasures" than in past years.

The Church Fair Committee will regroup during Coffee Hour on Sunday, January 18th to discuss what went well, what we want to change, and how often we are going to get together for "crafting" in upcoming months.

Please join us! If you can't make the meeting, but want to be involved, please contact Committee co-chairs Dawn Schmidt (dlschmidt2003@yahoo.com) or Liz Iacobucci (liz@iacobucci.net).



January Food Donations

During the next few months of colder weather, ONT is in need of instant oatmeal, hearty soups, pasta sauce, pasta and peanut butter.

Also, personal items such as deodorant, mouthwash, toothpaste, toothbrush, etc., are always in need.

Click [here](#) to view ONT's website.

Let us give thanks for God's many blessings to us.

QUICK LINKS

[St. James
Website!](#)

[Episcopal
Diocese of
Massachusetts](#)

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Blessings and Peace to All!

The Rev. John Satula