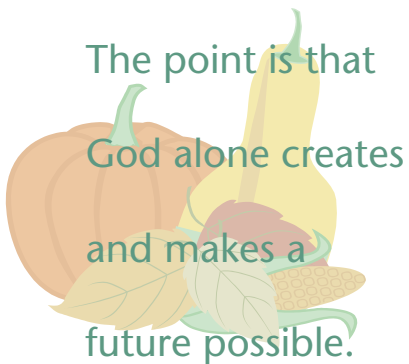


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“ The abundance  
before them is  
wonderful, but  
not the point.

The point is that  
God alone creates  
and makes a  
future possible.



# The St. James' Epistle

November 2011

## Count Yourself In

*The Rev. Brenda G. Husson, Rector*

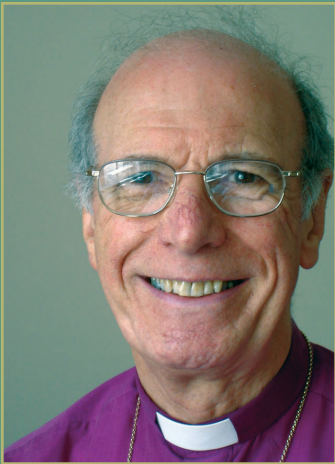
So it begins. Once we find ourselves in November, we have officially entered the “holiday season.” How each of us celebrates (or avoids celebrating) those holidays may vary, but the arrival of memories and expectations is inevitable. I suspect this is the case because Thanksgiving and Christmas have roots that extend deep into our childhoods, roots intertwined with our beliefs about what a family is or should be. And families are complicated.

Although still in the first weeks of our two-year Bible Project, our reading together has already had the salutary effect of upending assumptions about what the Bible says about any number of subjects. Indeed, some feel as if they are encountering God for the first time and, in significant ways, they are. Those new understandings are not always an occasion for delight, but they do help us realize that what we have been taught and even what we have fervently believed might bear revisiting. Taking a look at what the Bible says about this season’s iconic holidays may let us think about and experience them differently.

The Bible does not, of course, discuss Thanksgiving. The meal upon which the holiday is loosely based oc-

curred well after the Bible was compiled. However, Thanksgiving is a Holy Day in the Church calendar (a day set apart for special observance with Biblical lessons assigned for that observance) and the appointed lessons make for interesting reading (Deuteronomy 8:1-3, 6-10, 17-20; James 1:17-18, 21-27 and Matthew 6:25-33). Deuteronomy consists of Moses’ farewell addresses to the people he has led through the wilderness for the past forty years who are about to enter into the promised land. He emphasizes the need for the people to remember that they were sustained for those long years by the grace of God and that now, as they enter a land “flowing with milk and honey,” to hold fast to the truth that every good gift comes from God. The abundance before them is wonderful, but not the point. The point is that God alone creates and makes a future possible. The passage resonates well with the images of the pilgrims first “feast” (a meager meal by our standards), which was less about enjoying abundant food than giving thanks for the blessing of survival and having any food at all in their new land. James, writing to members of the early Christian communities makes much the same point. He emphasizes that “every good gift,” including our very lives, is a gift from God. He then exhorts his readers to live a life of service to others, for as their own lives

*continued on p. 4*



## A Visit from Bishop Gordon McMullan

... And a very special Adult Confirmation opportunity

The Rt. Rev. Gordon McMullan, retired Bishop of Down and Dromore (Belfast), Northern Ireland is visiting St. James' this November and into December. Bishop McMullan will preach on Sundays, lead the Bible Project reading groups on Wednesday and Thursday mornings, and preside at a service of adult Confirmation on Sunday, December 4 at the 6:00 p.m. service.

During the worst years of "the Troubles," Bishop McMullan devoted himself to reconciliation between Northern Ireland's Protestants and Roman Catholics. He became enfolded into the extended St. James' community in the late 1970s and early 1980s, during Bishop Rockwell's tenure as Rector here. The two established personal and faithful relationships, and St. James' has hosted Bishop McMullan annually since then.

### Confirmation for Adults: Dec. 4, 6:00 p.m.

In our tradition, baptized is baptized. It doesn't matter whether you were an infant or a senior citizen, and it doesn't matter whether it happened in a cathedral or in a creek. Reassuring as this may be, it's easy to feel disconnected from one's own baptism. Many of us have no memory of our baptism. Others were baptized in the context of a tradition or denomination that they've moved away from. And still others have spent enough

time away from the life of the Church to lose track of a sense of baptismal identity.

If you are interested in exploring the possibility of reclaiming that baptismal identity, you may wish to consider being confirmed or received, or reaffirming your baptismal vows at the 6 p.m. service on Sunday, December 4. The Rt. Rev. Gordon McMullan, longtime friend of this parish and retired Bishop of Down and Dromore, Northern Ireland, will preside. Please contact the Rev. Will Peyton to learn more.

## Parish Register

### Funerals

Harry Parkin Saunders  
Jeanne Ursula Schmidt  
Mary Grafton Filley  
McVickar  
Nancy Davison Berry

## Bishop James Tengatenga to Speak

Thursday, November 3, 6:30 p.m.

*Patrick Kidd, PIM-Africa Committee Chair*

Please join us the evening of **Thursday, November 3** to welcome back to St. James' the Rt. Rev. James Tengatenga, Bishop of the Diocese of Southern Malawi.

Bishop James comes to us having recently been part of the celebrations marking the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the creation of the Province of Central Africa. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams, was also present to mark that occasion and we look forward to Bishop James offering his perspective on this and other developments within his Diocese. The evening will commence at 6:30 p.m. with a talk by Bishop James, followed by a brief presentation and discussion led by missionaries who traveled to Malawi this summer. Sponsored by Partners In Mission - Africa, the evening is open to everyone who is already familiar with our partnership with the Diocese of Southern Malawi, as well as those who may be interested in becoming involved. For further information, please contact Patrick Kidd at [patrick.kidd@rosewoodhotels.com](mailto:patrick.kidd@rosewoodhotels.com) or by calling 212-439-1562.



# Hope, Effort, Perseverance, and Faith

## A Note from Holcombe Green, Stewardship Committee Chair

A few weeks ago, we began The Bible Project. If you have read either of my previous stewardship communications, then you know that I am especially excited about this project for our church. I want to continue to refer to it as I again seek your support for our Church home.

I found myself getting quickly to the story of Noah and the Ark when I started my own reading. I find the story of Noah to be one of the triumph of someone with an original (and out of favor) idea, and of the rewards of hope, effort, perseverance and faith. It is also, of course, the source of the rainbow covenant. I love this about the story — that it establishes the two-way relationship between God and all of us and that this relationship rewards the faith, hope, and efforts of Noah (while admittedly also ending quite badly for really everyone else). Walter Brueggemann expresses a similar idea in *The Bible Makes Sense*: “God is not a static object or a passive entity, but, on the contrary, a dynamic covenant partner who in faithful compassion can act in various ways to renew and transform.”

We have not experienced globally devastating floods, but — as was the case with Noah — many more are suffering than are comfortable. In a time of continuing economic uncertainty, of ever-increasing invective in our political and civil discourse, and of conflict and hardship around the world, I look to St. James’ and to our readings as a source of hopefulness and of the possibility of a brighter future.

My hope as Stewardship Chair is that we will see our relationship with St. James’ and our parish as a dynamic covenant amongst us all to continue to allow our parish to offer the ministries about which we all care so deeply. And so I ask, once again, for you to search your hearts and prayerfully consider either a new gift to our church or an increase to your current gift.

# For the Future, For All the Saints

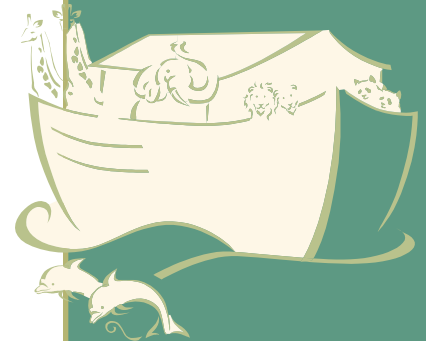
## St. James’ Capital Campaign

*John Trammell, Capital Campaign Steering Committee member*

At its most powerful, St. James’ is a gathering of like-minded people who have, over time, formed a family. Think about it. Each Sunday we break bread together, and we learn a little bit more about each other and our faith. We celebrate the milestones of baptisms, confirmations, weddings. We comfort those in trouble and mourn for those who have passed. We share in our collective setbacks and triumphs. We do it all to a background of wonderful music and singing.

We do all of this in a beautiful home; a sanctuary in which to practice our faith, and a place in which to find peace and solitude. This is a church that has stood the test of time, and one that we want to be here for our children and grandchildren and more.

As with any large family, we have a range of personalities—from our quirky in-laws to those among us gifted at pastoral care; from our wise and patient grandparents to our



Gracious and loving God,  
thank you for all your  
blessings. Teach us to be  
generous with our treasures.

Support us as we build  
for future generations. Fill  
us with joy as our hearts  
grow in faith. Encourage  
us to use our talents to the  
fullest. Grant us wisdom as  
we seek to know your will.  
Help us actively share the  
love of Jesus Christ with  
each other, our city and  
the world; through Jesus  
Christ Our Lord. Amen.

*continued on p. 4*

*Count Yourself In, continued from p. 1*

are a gift from God, the repayment of that gift is to offer care to others. Matthew adds Jesus' words reminding his hearers that they have no need for anxiety, because they (and we) are precious to God. Jesus tells his hearers to set aside worries about what to wear or eat and instead focus on seeking God's kingdom.

Given the images of platters overflowing with food set upon a table crowded with family and friends that connote Thanksgiving for most of us, it is worth considering the far different images presented by these Biblical passages. They speak of and to communities forged by the experience of God's grace, rather than familial relationships. These passages state that the response to those good gifts is not to sit groaning after having eaten too much, but to embody God's blessing in and for the world and so enlarge the community that knows God's gracious provision.

Perhaps these weeks will be a time of food and friends and family for you. Perhaps not. Either way, all of us are invited into the community of faith, and the feast set before us: God's abundant and embracing love.

*For All the Saints, continued from p. 3*

youngest angels, practically vibrating with energy in the pews. We even have a range of musical talent, from our outstanding choir to yours truly, softly singing off-key and one note behind, with members of my family nudging me if I get too loud.

As a family, we know deep down that it is important for us to share our talents selflessly for the benefit of the whole. We also know there are times when we need to step up and lead rather than follow. This is one of those times.

What I am asking for today is that this family step up and lead not only in the support of this "home," but in support of the larger, more deep-seeded mission that the St. James' "family" represents to the wider world: our city, the nation and the wider world. St. James' represents a bright beacon in the Kingdom of God.

Leadership requires sacrifice. To continue to be that bright beacon requires sacrifice. It is not just about this physical place, or even about this parish community caring for itself and others. It is about a call to do more.

Through the capital campaign, we all have an opportunity to express how we feel about each other and our community—our family—and the positive impact we can make on the city and the wider world. The best way to preserve and protect what we have at St. James' is to continue to grow.

Don't wait to be asked. Call or e-mail Brenda or any Vestry Member, go online to [www.stjames.org](http://www.stjames.org), write a note. Let us know the total amount you would like to pledge over the next five years. It's entirely up to you how and when you pay it.

Over the next six weeks, we all have the opportunity and the responsibility to make sure that future generations are as fortunate and blessed as we are here today.



## Parish Life at St. James'



### Fall Parish Luncheon

Wednesday, November 9, 12:00 p.m.

*Susanne Blackstock, Parish Life Committee Chair*

The Parish Life Committee and Partners in Mission - Children are pleased to announce a Fall Luncheon with guest speaker, Elizabeth Gaynes, Executive Director of The Osborne Association. Liz is a lawyer and nationally-recognized expert on the impact of incarceration and reentry on children and families. Luncheon admission is \$25/person and friends are welcome. Register online at [www.stjames.org](http://www.stjames.org) or contact Grace Beacham at 212-774-4231.

Through PIM-Children, the Osborne Association has developed a deep relationship with St. James' Church. Parishioner-volunteers accompany the children on visits to see

their parents in prison and participate in various other activities: apple picking, mural painting, gingerbread house decorating, etc., building relationships that transform all of our lives. The Parish Life Committee has further enhanced the relationship between Osborne and St. James' through its "Share the Joy" program, which collects Christmas gifts for Osborne's children.

## The Second Time Around Thrift Sale

Friday, November 18, 9:30 - 4:00 p.m.

Thanks to the parish and our neighborhood friends, St. James' has organized a string of successful thrift sales to help those in need in the five boroughs. We want this fall's Second Time Around Sale to take the cake! We're now collecting gently used clothing for men, women and children (designer clothing and jewelry is especially appreciated), shoes, bric-a-brac, houseware items, linens, and children's books. We also need large, sturdy plastic shopping bags to help us be as "green" as possible on the day of the sale. Please do not deliver furniture or other large items without calling first. For more information or to sign-up to volunteer, contact Grace Beacham, [gbeacham@stjames.org](mailto:gbeacham@stjames.org) or 212-774-4231.

## Christmas Flowers

The flowers and decorations that grace our church during the Christmas season are traditionally given in memory of and in thanksgiving for beloved relatives and friends. These contributions also help support the work of the Altar Guild, which relies entirely on your generosity not only to fund the weekly and festival flowers, but also to purchase and care for the altar linens, silver vessels, needlepoint kneelers and cushions, clergy vestments and altar frontals used in our services, as well as the wine and wafers used in the celebration of Holy Eucharist. If you wish to make a gift to contribute to the Guild's ministry, you may donate online at [www.stjames.org/worship/altar.html](http://www.stjames.org/worship/altar.html) or pick up a form at the Parish House reception desk. The names of those honored by your gift must be received by Monday, December 7 in order to be listed in the Christmas leaflet. For more information, contact Missy Condo at [condoda116@aol.com](mailto:condoda116@aol.com) or 212.628-3339.



## Serving and Listening with Compassion

An Invitation from Pastoral Care

*Rachel McPherson, Pastoral Care Committee Chair*

Chances are you know someone in our parish who serves as a Pastoral Care volunteer. You may see a familiar face while receiving healing prayers after the 9:10, 11:15 a.m., or 6:00 p.m. services, or notice the lay Eucharistic ministers who come forward each week to carry out the communion boxes that go to members who are hospitalized or homebound. You may even be that special someone who always seems to pay attention to who is sick or in the hospital. It is possible that you are one of the many in our parish whose Stephen Ministry training has enriched and nourished caring relationships within and well beyond the St. James' community. Maybe you have even been on the receiving end of Stephen Ministry, lay Eucharistic visits, a concerned phone call, or a healing prayer. Have you ever been touched by the warm feeling of caring for another?

Regardless of formal ministries, trainings, or committee memberships, at some point each and every one of us shows up to deliver some form of care and service to

*continued on p. 6*



## Welcome Chris Dickler

St. James' welcomed a new Director of Communications last month. Chris is responsible for producing *The Epistle*, managing the St. James' website (more to come on that front!) and making sure St. James' members and friends are in the loop and have a voice. Chris joins St. James' from the Washington, D.C., area, where she worked in non-profit communications and earned an MFA in Creative Writing and Publishing Arts. Email her at [cdickler@stjames.org](mailto:cdickler@stjames.org) or call 212-774-4244.

## St. Jamesians

### 20s & 30s Brunch

Sun. Nov. 20, 12:30 p.m.

The group for parishioners in their 20s & 30s, called the St. Jamesians, meets monthly at coffee hour following the 11:15 a.m. service to go out for a no-host brunch in the neighborhood. This is a great event for both newcomers and regulars. No RSVP required; come as you are.

*Serving and Listening With Compassion, continued from p. 5*

others. Whether we are parents, friends, children, or neighbors, each of us will be asked to lend a hand for a loved one at some point, whether once in a while or every day. As we seek to embody the love of Christ for others, how can we also take care of ourselves, and acknowledge and develop our gifts as listeners and healers?

This year, the St. James' Pastoral Care Committee plans to offer a variety of educational opportunities and fellowship events to support the skills we need in order to show up in the best way for our families, friends, fellow parishioners, and even strangers. The first of these events will be a group reflection on "compassionate witnessing," listening to ourselves and others with compassion.

The program will take place from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. on December 6, and will be led by parishioner Janet Scott, a member of the Pastoral Care Committee and a St. James' healing prayer minister. This will be a time for parishioners to gain insights and inspiration and to receive affirmation of their experiences in listening with compassion. Short readings, prayers, scripture and a role-play presented by a few parishioners will help us to expand our scope and thinking.

At this and all Pastoral Committee programs in the coming year, we welcome our current servants, committee members, and all parishioners who are curious about pastoral care. These programs are offered not only for active members of our lay pastoral ministries, but to the entire parish, and especially to you who would like to replenish your soul and deepen your journey of service. To learn more about lay pastoral ministries at St. James', contact Associate Rector Will Peyton at [wpeyton@stjames.org](mailto:wpeyton@stjames.org) or 212-774-4255.

## Youth at St. James'



### Youth Host Friday Dinner

Friday, November 11, 5:30-9:00 p.m.

7th -12th Graders are in charge of St. James' Friday Dinner Program on the second Friday of every month, during the school year. Volunteers cook dinner, serve guests and wash dishes at this seated, three-course meal for 90 homeless guests. Friends are welcome. RSVP to Ryan Fleenor, and meet in the Parish House kitchen. If you have never served before, we'll teach you everything you need to know!



### Confirmation Retreat

Saturday-Sunday, November 12-13

Members of the 8th grade Confirmation Class will spend the night at Incarnation Center in Connecticut, exploring the baptismal vows they will reaffirm in June. That, a ropes course, and a great time. Register with Ryan Fleenor at [rfleenor@stjames.org](mailto:rfleenor@stjames.org).

### Confirmation Parents Dinner

Thursday, November 17, 6:30 p.m.

A dinner for parents of 8th graders currently participating in the St. James' Confirmation program. Register with Ryan Fleenor at [rfleenor@stjames.org](mailto:rfleenor@stjames.org). An especially great occasion to welcome Kate Salisbury back from maternity leave!



## Children & Families Ministry

### Family Friday Bingo Night

Friday, November 4, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Back by popular demand! Bring your family and friends for a great evening of bingo, pizza and the fun of being with others in the St. James' community. The cost is \$5 per person, with a maximum of \$20 per family. For more information contact Susanne Blackstock, [sblackstock@verizon.net](mailto:sblackstock@verizon.net) or Sue Bennett, [suebennett@nyc.rr.com](mailto:suebennett@nyc.rr.com).

### Communion Awareness for Parents and Young Children

Saturday, November 5, 10:30 a.m.

All baptized Christians, of absolutely any age, are welcome—and encouraged!—to receive communion at St. James'. Parents choose when their children should begin to participate, and we will help you and your children to be comfortable with communion when you are ready to have them join in. Led by the Rev. Craig Townsend, Vicar, and Vicki Hall, Director of Children's and Family Ministries, Communion Awareness is an hour-long conversation with hands-on practice, so that all of your questions, and your children's questions, can be addressed. For more information, contact Vicki Hall at 212.774-4232 or [vhall@stjames.org](mailto:vhall@stjames.org).

### Annual Christmas Pageant Registration

Sunday, December 11, 4:00 p.m. **\*\*Register by Monday, November 28\*\***

This year's Christmas pageant, under the direction of Kate Salisbury, will be an "En promenade"- style production in which the audience will experience the journey of Joseph and Mary and the birth of the baby Jesus in new and surprising ways! We will give the audience the chance to meet the shepherds, the animals, the kings and all of the participants in the pageant in places they never expected. The children's choirs will provide musical leadership for the pageant. Members of the choirs are also invited to request one of the parts listed for the appropriate age group. All children ages four and older are invited to participate. You know your child best; how will he or she get the most out of this event — through audience, actor or musical participation?

A host of roles are available (including some you might not expect!). Adult group leaders are also vital to the success of our performance. Rehearsals will be held Saturdays, December 3 and 10. Dress rehearsal will be held on Sunday, Dec. 11 at 2:30.

Full details and registration are available online at [www.stjames.org/families](http://www.stjames.org/families), or you may fill out a form at the church. For more information, contact Vicki Hall at 212-774-4232 or [vhall@stjames.org](mailto:vhall@stjames.org). If you have questions about choir, contact Christopher Jennings at 212-774-4204 or [cjennings@stjames.org](mailto:cjennings@stjames.org).



## Thanksgiving Service

St. James' traditional Thanksgiving Eve Eucharist will be held on Wed. Nov. 23 at 6:00 p.m. Take a break from basting and baking to give thanks with St. James'.



THE EPISTLE  
St. James' Church

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## November at St. James'

### Sunday Worship Schedule

8:00, 9:10, 11:15 a.m., 6:00 p.m.

### Weekday Worship Schedule

Wednesdays, 8:00 a.m.

- 1 TUE 12:00 p.m.  
All Saints' Day Eucharist
- 3 THU 6:30 p.m.  
Bishop Tenganena Talk
- 4 FRI 6:00 p.m.  
Family Friday Bingo Night
- 5 SAT 10:30 a.m.  
Communion Awareness
- 6 SUN First Sunday Food Drive
- 9 WED 1:00 p.m.  
Fall Parish Luncheon
- 11 FRI Youth Host Fri. Dinner
- 13 SUN 1:00 p.m.  
Shelter Host Training
- 18 FRI The Second Time Around  
Thrift Sale

### And save these December dates:

- 1 Advent Wreath-making
- 4 Christmas Boutique
- 9 Youth Host Fri. Dinner
- 10 Gingerbread House Workshop
- 11 Annual Christmas Pageant  
Shelter Host Training
- 13 All Parish Carol Sing  
Festive Parish Supper
- 14 "Share the Joy" deadline

Visit the "Calendar" link at  
[www.stjames.org](http://www.stjames.org) for a complete and  
up-to-date listing of events and activities.

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Director of Communications  
[epistle@stjames.org](mailto:epistle@stjames.org)

St. James' Church is a community that actively shares the love of Jesus Christ with each other, our city and the world.

## The Bible Project in November

We're reading the Bible together as a parish, week by week, from beginning to end over two years—join us! Readings are due the Sunday listed and discussed in reading groups the following week:

- Nov 6 – Exodus 2-13; The Rev. Canon Patricia S. Mitchell, Canon for Christian Formation, Diocese of New York, "Reading the Bible as a Family"
- Nov 13 – Exodus 14-19; The Rev. Craig Townsend, Vicar, "The Burning Bush and the Escape from Egypt"
- Nov 20 – Exodus 20; The Rev. Craig Townsend, Vicar, "Exploring the Ten Commandments"
- Nov 27 – Exodus 21-Leviticus 15; Dr. Nicole Ruane, Adjunct Lecturer in Religion, Northeastern University, "An Introduction to Biblical Law"

For children and families interested in the Bible, Children's and Families Ministry Director Vicki Hall suggests: *Miss Lea's Bible Stories for Children*, Rosemary Lea. Published by Zagat Survey; *The Children's Illustrated Bible*, Selina Hastings. Published by Dorling Kindersley; *The Illustrated Family Bible*, Claude-Bernard Costecalde. Published by Dorling Kindersley; and—one that she always uses these days—*Children of God Storybook Bible*, by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. "I can hear Bp. Tutu telling each of the 50 stories in this book—his wisdom, compassion and sense of humor shine throughout," she promises. "Every story shows how God works through history and ends with a short prayer."

For more information about these books, and about the Bible Project in general, go to [thebibleproject.net](http://thebibleproject.net) or [thebibleproject.stjames.org](http://thebibleproject.stjames.org).