

From St. James' with Love

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SEPTEMBER 2009

The Rev. Sandra K. Curtis, Rector

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FROM MOTHER C

Why does God seem to hear our prayer at a deeply personal level sometimes, and at other times, appear to not hear us when we call? In talking with others, I realize that this is an area of spiritual life with which many people struggle. When we are in difficult situations, there are times when it is hard to hang by that thread that we perceive connects us to God. Sometimes we wonder how we can go on. We feel like giving up, and falling into despair, wonder, "Where is God?"

I do not presume to have the answer to this difficult question, but there are some thoughts to consider. Sometimes things do not work out as we would want, or as we believe they should, but that does not mean our God has deserted us or refused to hear our prayer. It may take the passage of time, but often we are able to look back at a particular situation and realize that God was present all along, watching over us or those we love.

A friend of mine told me how his father wanted to own the bookstore for a particular college. Joe's father had asked everyone in the family to pray for this to happen. It seemed perfect, and Joe's father had the resources to make this a successful business venture. Well, Joe's father did not get the contract for the bookstore, and he was greatly disappointed. He felt that God had let him down. A few years later the college closed its doors, and the family realized that their father would have lost most of his investment had he been there and involved in the circumstances when it happened. Joe's father became grateful that his prayers had not been answered as he had wished. It would have been a disaster.

Sometimes it is better that we do not get what we desire. Even though we do not get what we want, and how we want it, we still need to consider the possibility that God is at work, watching over us, easing our pain or the pain (spiritual, physical, and psychological) of those we love, healing us, helping us find new direction, and bringing about changes in circumstances.

Most of us have been through situations we would rather have passed by in our lives. We have wondered how anything good could possibly come of what was happening to us and those we love. Yet, God has this way of taking those situations and helping us find some good. Though we do not understand it at the time, we look back and realize how we have been helped to overcome, how we have become stronger, or how our prayers have helped someone else hold on.

We must accept that there are times when there is no answer. A nurse at a local hospital once told me an interesting story about an experience on her shift. She explained to me that it had been a difficult evening on the wing, and that many people were grumbling. Even the staff wasn't getting along. She stepped in to check on an elderly lady (102), a woman who "spoke in decibels." This elderly lady was explaining to the nurse that she couldn't understand why she was living so long. Her friends were gone. Most of her family was gone. She said, "So I asked God about it." At that point, the entire wing fell silent. One assumes they all wanted to hear what God had said. The nurse inquired, "And what did God say?" The lady replied, "God told me it was none of my business! ---- So, I guess there is some reason why I'm still here."

I believe God does hear our prayer - even if it does not appear that way to us at a specific time. God has a far broader picture than we do. There are things we will never fully understand. Even so, we need to keep praying. That thread is strong enough to hold us. We need to be a people of prayer. When we pray for others, we carry them in our arms to the arms of Jesus Christ. Prayer is not something of the past; it is not an "abracadabra," but a vital part of our life in this Christian community.

PRAYER CORNER

We ask all at St. James Church to keep the following people in their prayers.

Cecil	Roxie	Jim	Amy	Bev
Adrienne	Angel	John	Charlene	Anissa
Pat	David	Shannon	Carolyn	Hal
Helen	Betty	Greg	Mary	Sue
Carl	The Howard family	Lori	Jessica	Charles
Kay	Ted	Patty	Bill	Candy
June	Teralin	Patty	Mike	Gayle
Crocker	Adam	Nancy	Alice	Betsy
Gene	Linda	Georgia	Kathy	Deb
Richard	Kali	Peter	Cora	Michele
Hunter	Doug	Maria	Lee	Bob
McKennah	Barb	Tom	Julie	

The Church of Kisima in Kenya Trinity Church in Canaseraga Those who suffer with addictions
Those who serve our country in the military, especially Vance, Forrest, Zac and Grayson.
(Please let Mother C. know how people on the prayer list are doing.)

Vestry Highlights June 2009

- Approved a gift of \$1,000.00 to Deacon Tom Williams in recognition of his service and as a farewell gift as he leaves us to begin his new life in Florida.
- The 2008 Audit Report has been completed.
- A \$100.00 gift certificate to the “Union Block Italian Bistro” was sent to Mike Kubrich to thank him for all the hours he spent repairing our elevator.
- Coffee hours will continue during the renovation project.
- Nick Forenz gave an updated report on the renovation project. It is progressing very well.
- The water heater vent has been put in.
- The Taylor Foundation request has been sent.

August 2009

- St. James received a gift of \$1000.00 from the Louise Shoemaker estate. The Vestry placed the gift in the Undercroft Fund in her name.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School has continued throughout the summer. Our sincere thanks to Lin Bretherton who prepares each Sunday no matter how many children come. Please remember that she is here every Sunday and has wonderful plans for your children and grandchildren. We love having the children here, and from all we see and hear, they love being here. Now that school will be starting again, we hope that you will make every effort to have your children and grandchildren attend on a regular basis. Also, remember we have a beautiful new room for the children’s Sunday School!

SUNDAY SCHOOL TREASURE BOX

The Sunday School is still collecting items for a Treasure Box. Treasures are offered for birthdays, bringing a friend, memorizing a Bible verse, as a welcome or farewell, etc. We could use a new supply of treasures if anyone would like to help.

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

Our prayers are with **Ted and Sue Dykas**, whose grandson **David Cassell** died Sunday, August 30, 2009.

Our prayers are also with **Jean Knap Worthington**, whose husband **Major David P. Worthington** died August 8, 2009, at the Bath VA Hospital and was buried August 22, 2009, with military honors at the Bath VA Cemetery.

The Rev. Thomas and Nancy Williams address is 1416 Turkey Creek Drive, NE, Palm Bay, Florida 32905.

Congratulations to **Dan Herrick**, a 2009 graduate of Haverling Central School of Bath, NY. Dan is the son of John and Darlene Herrick and hopes to soon enter the United States Air Force.

Congratulations to **Diana and Audrey Derr** who were honored at the Annual Russell O. Cutshall recognition dinner at Hammondspport Central School. Both students have been on the Honor or High Honor Roll during the 2008-2009 school year, and Diana is also a member of the National Honor Society.

Linda Grillo, secretary for the Business Department at Alfred State College, was recently honored for her twenty years of service. Congratulations, Linda.

Mother C has a new granddaughter (Audrey Elizabeth Curtis), born July 29, 2009, to Walker and Renee Curtis of San Diego, CA.

Our sincere thanks to **Jim and Linda Grillo** for mowing the lawn all summer.

Patty Forenz held a Pampered Chef party at her home on August 17. It was so successful that St. James received \$1200 worth of free items for our kitchen! Thank you, Patty.

Leah Nichiporuk held a **RUMMAGE SALE** in August on Lake Street across from her house. We didn't have as much rummage this year, but we still made almost \$700! Thank you Leah and everyone who helped - and everyone who donated items.

CHOIR

Do you like to sing? If you do, and are willing to offer your musical abilities to God, the choir meets every Sunday at 8:00 AM to prepare for the service of Holy Eucharist. If you are interested, please stop by the organ after church on Sunday, and let Ellie know you would like to help with the choir. It is clear every Sunday how much the choir adds to, and enhances, our morning service. We hope you will join us.

THE PIANO AT ST. JAMES'

We have raised \$15,771, leaving a balance needed of \$4,229. If you have a love of music and want to help with this project, there are several ways you can do this: opportunities to honor people, give thanks to God for something wonderful in your life, and memorials. If you simply love music and want to donate toward the piano, it would be deeply appreciated.

UNDERCROFT RENOVATION

One begins to believe that this is actually going to happen. It has been hard living with the dirt and the darkness, but we are thankful for the distance we have traveled. A few highlights!

The back rooms have their new sheet rock and paint, and the old ragged carpet has been replaced with ceramic tile. The rooms in the back of the Undercroft are close to finished, and the Food Pantry is already using their new space.

The new entrance by the Food Pantry should soon be finished. This will make it quickly accessible to those who come there, and will make the delivery of the cases of food much easier.

The filing cabinets in the office have been painted black and tucked under the staircase. Ellie is especially happy to have the handles back on so that she no longer has to tip the files to get them open! New and refurbished furniture makes it more comfortable for everyone. It is wonderful to have a beautiful, clean, open space in which to have our church activities and do our work.

We have also replaced the linoleum in the bathrooms with ceramic tile. We plan on putting up new mirrors, and for our new mothers, a changing table!

The old cold and hot air furnace plenums have been replaced with new ones that are the size needed for the correct flow of heat and cold air. This should make our furnace and heating more efficient.

All places where water was seeping in the foundation and causing damage have been repaired. Any rotted or broken boards in the floors or walls have been replaced or repaired. And the main room's framing is ready for the new sheet rock that will replace the old paneling. The old tile floor will be replaced with new carpet.

We have found more rotted boards in the kitchen wall and floor on one side of the kitchen. They have been repaired. A ceramic tile floor will replace the old tile, and we will all enjoy using the new stainless refrigerator and freezer. We were lucky to have our professional stainless stovetop and ovens. That has been reconditioned and will work like new.

Several of you have given numerous hours to make this possible. We were estimating that you have probably saved us \$40,000 - \$50,000. There have been many Saturday work days. Nick Forenz has kept the project organized and moving forward. In addition to our regular Saturday volunteers, Doug Frey has been working during the week volunteering countless hours as he helps Tom Pietch.

This has turned into a huge project, and despite our careful planning, has run over approximately \$12,000 in costs. We thank everyone who has contributed, and is contributing, toward this. With your continuing support, we hope to be able to completely pay for this project by the time it is finished this fall.

Be sure to stop in each week and see the progress as you come to Coffee Hour. We thank all of you for putting up with the mess and confusion. Just remember, when it is finished, it will be beautiful - a wonderful place to gather and do our work in the name of the Lord.

•••There are copies of Jerry Lange's book "The Windows and Sanctuary of St. James' Episcopal Church" available for \$10.00. If you want a copy or copies, please contact Sandy+

•••If you care to give altar flowers in memory of a loved one, the cost is \$24.00. Please let Sandy+ know of your wishes.

We thank everyone who has kept up their pledges during the summer. The bills continued to come, and we appreciate your concern for St. James that has made it possible for us to meet our obligations.

REMINDER: The **TALENTS DAY** is still postponed. When the renovation is completed, we will schedule a Sunday for you to bring in your "talents." Hope everyone is working on it. We've seen some really clever ideas so far.

12TH ANNUAL RED CROSS ECUMENICAL PROGRESSIVE DINNER

Friday, September 11, 2009
Sponsored by the churches of Hammondspport

Adult \$12.00
Senior \$10.00
Youth (4-11) \$5.00
Ages 3 and under - Free

5:00-6:30 pm Appetizers at St. Gabriel's Church Hosted by St. James
5:30-7:00 pm Salad at the Presbyterian Church
6:00-7:30 pm Main Course at the Methodist Church
6:30-8:00 pm Dessert at St. Gabriel's Church

All proceeds to benefit the Greater Steuben Chapter American Red Cross

CALENDARS through OCTOBER are in this newsletter, but please remember, there may be changes which can be found by going to our website.

ST. JAMES CHURCH WELCOMES YOU!

Sunday School - 52 weeks a year!

HOLY EUCHARIST

SUNDAY AT 9:00 A.M.

Vestry and Delegates to Convention

Wardens: Barbara Brayer - first year, James Grillo - second year

Vestry: Tom Noteware, Leah Nichiporuk, Karen Derr - 1st year

Mary White, Floyd French, Jan Smith - 2nd year

Ted Dykas, Bob Hunn, Nick Forenz - 3rd year

Delegates to Convention: Charles Skinner -1st year, Betty Frey - 2nd, Thaddeus Dykas - 3rd

Alternate Delegate: Leah Nichiporuk

Clerk of the Vestry: Betty Frey

Treasurer: Karen Derr

Pledge Clerk: Barbara Brayer

Choir Director and Organist: Elenor Boutwell

Christian Education: Lin Bretherton

Rector: The Rev. Sandra K. Curtis, MS Ed., M Div.

CHECK OUR WEBSITE: www.stjames14840.org