



From St. James' With Love

January 2024

Newsletter



**St. James Vision Statement:**

God asks us to make His love visible in our lives and community. . .  
let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth. (1 John 3:18)

## Rowans' Cup

Rowan's Cup is more than a mere beautiful object, it is being transformed into a vessel by which I experience the love song of God.

As I quietly sit in His presence, I notice the uniqueness of the cup and begin to accept myself, and the many different ways that my spiritual path has unfolded in my life. In the silence of the moment, I am reminded that all of us are created out of God's love. I am reminded that all of us are beauty set to the music of life. That we are all precious creations of God meant to be a light of love to a transforming world.

My moments with Rowan's Cup remind me that even though today I may not feel awe, or gratitude or compassion towards myself, I am anchored in the belief that God loves me more than I can ever imagine. Through turning to Christ and thanking him for crafting me for the person I am, I have the confidence to be the love song for others this day.

Love,

Craig+

## Prayer List

Charlie D, Linda G, Jim G, Luke A, Evelyn A, Kimberly J, Nancy S, Midge, Ray K, Tony, Kathy, Jan L, Laverne & Patsy, Patty F, Betty K, Ashlyn, Rachael D, Rebecca H, Alicia, Lindsey, Jon L, Ami C, Raymond S, Winnie, Brian, Elizabeth, Randy, Rick, Cooper, Edda, Michelle R, John R, John P, David R, Jen, Heidi B, Doug, Brianna, Tim, Carol B, Karen, Dan, Carter W, Rev. Gary, Charlie D, Newman family, those who mourn, students and teachers, 1 st responders, the Food Pantry, those suffering from addiction, those in the military, St. James Vestry

# Beautiful St James





## January Lay Schedule

Date	Chalice	Acolyte	Reader	Ushers
01/7	Karen Derr	Leah Nichiporuk	Luanne Graulich	Marietta & Jim Piersons
01/14	Jim Grillo	Karen Derr	Stella Pulver	Linda Hacker & Jim Derr
1/21	Nick Forenz	Jim Grillo	Linda Hacker	Charlie & Janetmarie Skinner
1/28 <b>Annual Meeting</b>	Jim Grillo	Leah Nichiporuk	Kris Packard	Marilyn Dowdie Linda Grillo



## January Readings

Date	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading
01/07	Genesis 1:1-5	Ps 29	Acts 19: 1-7
01/14	1 Sam. 3:1-20	Ps 139: 1-5, 12-17	1 Cor. 6:12-20
01/21	Jonah 3:1-5, 10	Ps. 62:6-14	1 Cor. 7: 29-31
01/28	Deut. 18:15-20	Ps. 111	1 Cor. 8:1-13



*To love another person  
Is to see the face of God.  
Victor Hugo, "Les Miserables"*

**From the Book Hazelden Daily Meditations for counselors**

We experience God through other people. He comes to Us in the caring ways we see them. They wish for us only what is best for us, and they help us grow.

Have I let people experience God through their love for me?  
Have I suppressed my feelings, my good qualities? Today, help me to love another unconditionally; only then can I know God

B.G.

Morristown, N.J.



## St. James hosts Athletes' Dinner

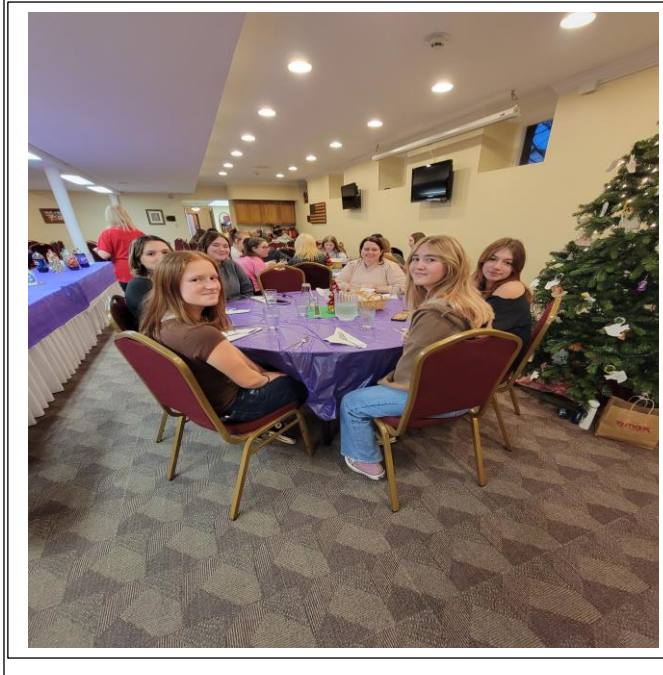
*By Karen Derr*

*The people of St. James welcomed over 75 students and coaches on December 15th to an Athletes' Dinner. Students came with their teams to enjoy a lasagna dinner and the hospitality offered by St. James. We were also pleased that three school administrators joined us. Events like this allow us to open the church to people in the community, particularly teens, and share the love and joy of our faith community. The students were well-mannered and very appreciative. Father Craig enjoyed the opportunity to chat with each team.*

Many thanks to all those who donated supplies, set-up the dining room, prepped food, served food, cleaned up, and did dishes. It's always nice to know that the people of St. James will help out with our many endeavors.

We have scheduled another dinner for the winter sports teams on January 24<sup>th</sup>. The sign-up sheet will be on the bulletin board in the Undercroft.

# Pictures from the athlete's dinner sponsored by St James Church





**Thank You to Everyone  
Who made the athletes dinner possible**



# Thoughts about Christmas

The celebration of December 25 as the birth of Jesus of Nazareth began in Rome. Records discovered in the twentieth century pinpoint the first celebration within a few years before 336.

The situation in Rome was curious because the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus Christ seems to be consciously selected to occur parallel to the pagan birthday of the Invincible Sun, a significant celebration at that time. To this observance, the church contrasted the birth of Jesus of Nazareth in the stable of Bethlehem with the pagan festival.

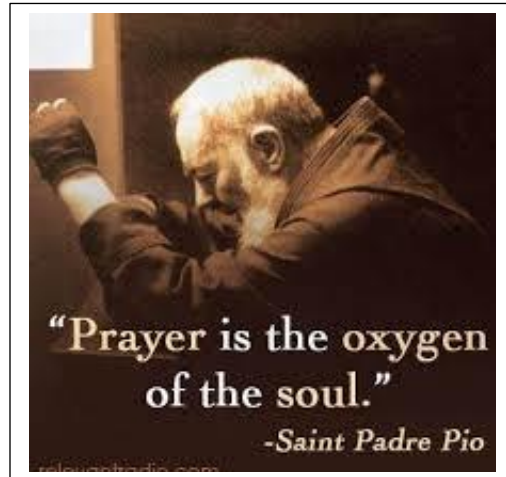
However, I suspect there is more to the story. Did you realize that the twenty-second of December is the darkest day of the year and if you count three days later, we celebrate Jesus' birth as the new light coming into a dark world.

What strikes me are the parallels between Christmas and Jesus crucifixion and resurrection. For example, the dimmest day of the year is December 22<sup>nd</sup> and Jesus crucifixion is the dimmest day in the Christian faith.

Another parallel is the three days between December 22 and Christ's birth. The number of days corresponds exactly to the same number of days in which Jesus' body laid in the tomb.

The next parallel is discovered when we view Jesus' birth as the moment in which God breaks into a broken world and changes everything. The past is healed and a new beginning and new birth for all of humanity is at hand. When we compare this with Jesus' resurrection, similar themes of new life, wholeness and healing are self-evident. How fitting that Easter is always in the spring where we experience new births and new life so abundantly.

To this day, Christmas season remains a time for recalling the birth of the light of the world in the ministry of Christ. The Christmas season is a time for us to rededicate ourselves to be the light in the world for others.



### **Compline Service every Monday evening at 8:30 PM**

We have compline every Monday night at 8:30PM. A 10–12-minute service of prayer, Scripture, music, and much more. Zoom address is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83857418968>



**First Friday Fellowship** - Our next monthly singalong will be on Friday evening, **January 5, 2024**, starting at **7pm**. (Location and details for upcoming and future meetings can be found on our website at [FFFship.com](http://FFFship.com)). Currently there are several folks bringing guitars, keyboard, drums, flute, stand-up bass, electric bass, piano and maracas. Also bring your hands to clap, feet to stomp and voices to make a 'joyful noise' that the Bible says God loves to hear from His people (Ps100:1).

# Mission Committee

The Mission Committee is looking forward to another year of giving. We continue to bless the Safe House with quarterly donations of hygiene products and sweat pants and shirts, as well as the Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry with quarterly donations of hygiene and laundry products as well as cake/brownie mixes and frosting. We will continue participating in Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child, both with online and physical shoeboxes. For those desiring to do physical shoeboxes, the website "[Blessingsinashoebox.com](http://Blessingsinashoebox.com)" has a wealth of ideas. Some of the things can be made or purchased throughout the year. The collection of shoeboxes is usually the third week in November.

We are quick to respond to misfortunes locally, nationally and internationally. We especially like to help local causes. Committee members Luanne Graulich, Leah Nichiporuk, Janetmarie Skinner, Kris Packard, Donna Noteware, Mary White and Carol Bidwell will be happy to take suggestions for needs we might be able to meet.

We want to thank Sue Pietrzak and Joan Rogerson for organizing the Christmas Bazaar which provided much needed funds for mission and outreach.

## Christmas Families

This year we adopted 3 families for Christmas with a total of 8 children. Thanks to Donna Noteware for organizing the Angel Tree as a meaningful way for us to volunteer to donate. Once again, the congregation was incredibly generous, sharing joy with the families and helping to lighten their load. Father Craig helped with the pick-up time with the families, blessing one baby and starting a pastoral relationship with one of the moms. We are blessed!



### November Statistics

Households served	40
Adults	53
Children	33
Seniors	<u>19</u>
Total	105

- The overall numbers of people served is up since October
- 54 Thanksgiving bags were packed and distributed
- St James donated 125 11oz cans of coffee
- Beth will be meeting with 41 Lake Street Seniors to coordinate food deliveries.

**Hymn Stories**  
**O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee**  
***Author*—Washington Gladden**  
***Composer*—H. Percy Smith**

This hymn, published in 1879, comes from a period of religious history in this country when there was much emphasis given to the social implications of the Gospel. The Civil War had ended and our country was in the throes of a great industrial revolution. As is often true in such times, the individual is exploited for the cause of economic progress. Many of our country's clergy became enthusiastic champions of the cause of social justice. One of the recognized leaders of the social gospel movement was Washington Gladden. Known until his death as one of America's most distinguished liberal clergymen.

Gladden spent much of his time fighting such political groups as the corrupt Tweed Ring. He was instrumental in the conviction that put the Tammany boss himself behind bars for fifteen years. In 1883 he arbitrated the Telegraphers strike and the following year the Hocking Valley Coal Strike.

Throughout his life Gladden was the object of bitter criticism from many leaders of the business world as well as from the conservative clergy. Two interesting original stanzas of this hymn no longer are included in church hymnals. They reflect Gladden's feelings toward those he felt were his oppressors.

**O Master let me walk with Thee before the taunting Pharisee;  
Help me to bear the sting of spite, the hate of men who hide thy light.**

**The sore distrust of souls sincere who cannot read Thy judgments clear,  
The dullness of the multitude who dimly guess that Thou art good.**

**This Video was sent to me and I thought it worth seeing. It is profound in so many ways. Fr Craig. Just click on it.**



SevenWonders.mp4

or on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3wYfUEbMs8>

### **From the spiritual diary of Father Craig**

One meaning of the word responsible is a duty delegated to someone by another authority in which they are accountable. This implies both a legal and moral obligation as well as someone sitting in the seat of judgement. I believe our faith in Christ shifts the tone of the word responsible from the context of judgement to love. A love that is **at-one-with** us. A form of (**atonement**). Christ is always at one with us in both peaceful and turbulent times.

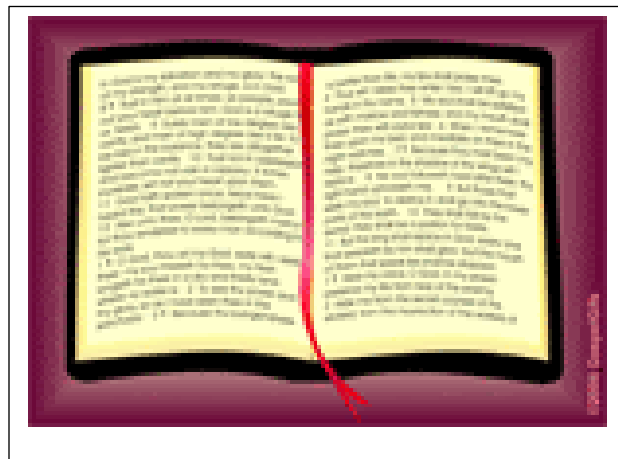
Applying similar creative word play to the word responsibility, we can reframe our understanding. **Responsibility** in the context of Christian faith is the ability to **respond** rooted in an intimate relationship with Christ. Responsibility contextualized by our faith always focuses on the betterment of others.

When our thinking and feelings shift from responsibility as duty to the ability to respond in love, responsibility takes on new meaning. Now responsibility's spiritual dimension emerges as our ability to intimately and gratefully respond to a gracious and loving Father. Amen

# Read the Bible in a Year

By Tom Bidwell

I would like to encourage our parishioners to consider reading the Bible through in the upcoming year 2024, starting on January 1st. I plan to hand out reading guides at the service this Sunday to each person. We will also be singing a song during Communion called '[The Word Was Made Flesh](#)' from John 1:14. Also there are some extra copies in the back of the church by the front door. Here is a link to a downloadable PDF on our website:



[http://www.stjames14840.org/Bible\\_OneYear.pdf](http://www.stjames14840.org/Bible_OneYear.pdf)