



## ***ST. JAMES UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST***

*135 Myrtle Avenue, Havertown, PA 19083*

*610-446-3036*

*www.stjamesucc.org*

# *Hilltop Views*

**OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2021**

## **THE PASTOR'S POST**

Fall Greetings to You, St. James!

I pray these nice, sunny days and cool Fall nights are finding each of you in a very blessed way. It has been a full and productive two months for our church and things continue to ebb and flow nicely. We have seen many changes within and around our church building, interior and exterior. Good change or "good trouble" as I've heard it referred to.

In August we started an outdoor landscaping project that has turned out to be a great decision for the face of our church edifice. We asked our regular groundskeeper to give us an estimate on removing the large bushes that were located directly in front of the church, which were now obstructing the view to the church.



Well, we got the estimate, and I told the groundskeeper how impressed I was by it and asked that he let me know when he would be able to remove the bushes so that I could take this information to the Consistory for discussion. Well to my surprise that conversation was not able to happen with the Consistory, because early one morning when I approached the church the bushes had already been removed. WHOA! What a shock and surprise! But it was beautiful and looked GREAT!

The curb appeal of the church had immediately begun to change. After the shock of the bushes being removed, the stumps being ground and the area being leveled, Cheryl Haley and I knew there had to be some low-growing beauty planted to replace the large over-grown bushes. Therefore, with the blessing of the grounds committee, AKA, Mrs. Kathy Pioggia 😊, we purchased many native plants and blooming flowers. Cheryl had the BRILLIANT idea to recruit some of the youth of our church to help us plant these shrubs and plants. It was a great day, and we had help from others such as Pearl, Mary and Ed! Thanks Y'all! It looks great!

Keeping with adding more beauty to this already beautiful church, LeAundra and I also spruced up the interior of the church to prepare for the upcoming Pastor Installation service. We updated the bulletin board in the stairway, brought wall-hangings from our home to put on the restroom walls and LeAundra enjoyed putting flowers and potpourri in the restrooms for beauty and freshness. We did this for the installation service in mind, but we also did it to give the church a fresh new look for us all to enjoy.

Some may wonder why I decided to take on the task of beautifying the church so extensively. Well, we have to remember the times we are in right now. With COVID still being a thorn in our side, church attendance all over the globe has taken a hit. People are leery about attending in-person worship, and some have decided to remain at home to worship. Therefore, in order to pique the interest of possible church seekers, we must have a prominent and very distinctive welcoming presence and it starts with our curb appeal. Therefore, I am thinking about our future and how we can draw people to the church. We have to be creative in creating spaces that help people feel welcomed to come into this place and once they get in here, they would want to stay. We have many neighbors and passers-by tell us how beautiful the church looks

and how welcoming it feels, with the bushes removed from hiding the church and adding the chairs and the bench on the huge church porch.

So yes, there is a method to my madness, because these COVID times call for desperate and creative measures. It is a lot different from pre-COVID times when people would come to church with no hesitation, and no thought about what the church grounds and building had to offer. Nowadays, people want to know that the church is clean, well-kept, are following CDC guidelines, staying COVID free and welcome them no matter who they are or what they've been through. So sadly, COVID has caused all



churches that want to offer places for God's people to physically worship together, to spruce up their environment and advertisement that says "We are here and you are welcome here. Come, be a part of our family." While outside watering our new plants or serving with the food

pantry, I have encountered three people who said they would be coming to worship and visit the church. We await these visitors and are excited to truly welcome them. One of these people was our own housekeeper, Maria. She says she loves the changes at the church and that it "feels so inviting." So come on Maria, we welcome you and your husband too!

Moreover, my pastoral installation took place on September 19<sup>th</sup> at 3 pm in the Sanctuary. We were blessed with great speakers, great music, singing, dancing and poetry. Along with St. James members, people from other congregations, and members of the PSEC Conference were in attendance, including our Conference Minister, Rev. Bill Worley. Mrs. Kathy Pioggia gave the charge to the church, and through the grace and miracle of technology, Rev. Dr. Alberta Wallace of Bomoseen, Vermont offered the charge to me as the newly installed Pastor. After the service, St. James' hospitality committee provided light refreshments outside under tents and canopies. A good time was had by all and it was a great time of safe and loving fellowship. I am forever grateful to all who participated in the service, and those who provided their servanthood outdoors afterwards. You ALL made that day one I will never forget. Thank you, St. James!

Also, during morning worship on September 19, my wife LeAundra, Wendy DeCroteau of Vermont, and myself became members of St. James. This was also a great honor and a heartfelt event. We also welcomed new member Kimberly Porsch to our St. James family earlier in the month of September. So we welcome all of our new members and Thank God for the growth to our church family and all the gifts these beautiful spirits bring to this sacred space.



Finally and again, my installation service was an absolute true blessing, and what made it even more special for me was the fact that six of my family members, including my mother, flew to Pennsylvania to be with Le and I on this special day. Our family stayed here with us for 5 days. We had a great time and I was overwhelmed to have all of them here with me. Thank you for being here, Family! We love you!

Of course, this is not all that has taken place over the last couple months, but these are some of the highlights. If you have not been able to visit our church or attend our worship, I invite you to please consider doing so. You won't be disappointed, and you will be welcomed with the open arms and loving hearts of our St. James family, because: "No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, YOU ARE WELCOMED HERE!"

Blessings to you all,  
-Pastor D



**WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY**  
**OCTOBER 3, 2021**  
**10:30 A.M.**

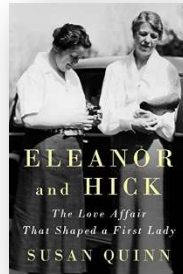
**Rev. Meagan McLeod**  
**officiating worship**

## BOOK CLUB

Normally the St. James Book Club meets the second Monday of each month. However, we switched it up a bit this October. We will meet on Monday, October 4. It's a long story but we felt that the book Eternal by Lisa Scottoline was too good for people to miss the discussion. The meeting will begin at 7 pm via Zoom. Then in November we will go back to our regular schedule. So, November will be on the 8th at 7 pm. Our book will be Eleanor and Hick by Susan Quinn.

If you are reading ahead, our next books are The Exiles by Christina Baker Kline followed by The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell by Robert Dugoni. Feel free to contact me at any time for more information. Even if you choose not to attend, you might enjoy reading the selections. Reading is good for the soul.

Joanne Morris  
610-742-8509



## CHURCH SCHOOL

Hi St. James families! We are settling into our new Fall routines downstairs in Children's Ministry.

We will be working our way through Genesis and Exodus in the Nursery and Sunday School over the next 8 weeks. Each lesson includes a Family Tips sheet to bring home to help you weave the discussion into your daily lives.

We are so excited to begin our new Youth Programming on October 10. We will be working with the kids each week to move through a curriculum based on connecting faith and justice. From the creators - "The curriculum is designed to help students in grades 6-12 actively engage the interaction of faith and justice and explore why our faith compels us towards justice."



As a reminder, our Family Pew is closed at this time. When you arrive for worship please come to the front to get your family's bag of activities and materials and then find your own pew to sit in together. We will take the children downstairs at dismissal. At the conclusion of worship you can go ahead and leave the bag right back up front and I will restock it for next week.

Since there is no Fellowship time, we will dismiss the children out the side doors of St. James at 11:45 each Sunday.

Thank you all for helping us work through any kinks as we resume in-person Children's Ministry programming. We are all enjoying being together again so much!

Best,  
Allison

## CONGREGATIONAL MEETING



We will hold our fall Congregational Meeting immediately following worship on Sunday, November 21. We will review and vote on our 2022 budget, and we will elect new members to our Consistory. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend (in person or via Facebook) this important meeting.

## CONSISTORY

The St. James Consistory will meet Wednesday, **October 20** and **November 17**, 6:30 p.m. via ZOOM.

## FOOD PANTRY

Wednesdays: **Oct. 6 & 13** (9:00-11:00 AM), **Oct 27** (6:00-7:00 PM)  
Wednesdays: **Nov. 3 & 10** (9:00-11:00 AM), **Nov 24** (6:00-7:00 PM)

We are currently in need of juices and shelf-stable milk. At this time we have plenty of breakfast foods and pastas. But the staples (canned veggies and fruit, spaghetti sauce, tuna, peanut butter, etc.) are always appreciated, as well as toiletries. 😊



We are planning to purchase \$20 Giant gift cards to be given to each family during November as added Thanksgiving assistance. We will also accept frozen turkeys in November for our families.

Want to learn more about the food pantry? Just give me a call or drop an email, 610-585-4955, [kirk@bohemaassociates.com](mailto:kirk@bohemaassociates.com).

Kirk Gosweiler

## NEIGHBORS IN NEED

In 2021, Neighbors in Need “Unfailing Love” is focused on supporting organizations and projects that are serving homeless and immigrant neighbors or communities. One-third of NIN funds support Council for American Indian Ministry. The balance is used by the UCC’s Justice and Witness Ministries to provide funding grants to UCC churches and organizations leading justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects in their communities. This offering will be received on **Sunday, October 3**, World Communion Sunday. Thank you for your generosity.



## SAM'S KITCHEN

Our meal at the Life Center of Eastern Delaware County, 63<sup>rd</sup> and Market Streets in Upper Darby, will be prepared and delivered on **Wednesday, November 10**. Contact Ed Hart at 610-449-3728 or [hart.edwardm@gmail.com](mailto:hart.edwardm@gmail.com) if you can help with meal preparation. The Covid 19 practice continues, in that we deliver our food to the Life Center, where the meal is served by the staff to the thirty Life Center residents, but not to non-residents. So no serving is actually done by our St. James folks.



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!

### OCTOBER

7 – Nancy Benkert  
11 – Thelia George  
15 – Dave Winters  
18 – Laura Hart  
24 – Lisa Baglione  
24 – Lisa Purcell  
29 – Christel Abbadusky

### NOVEMBER

2 – Charlie McKenzie-Smith  
13 – Lois Winsness



*“Today you are You; that is truer than true.  
There is no one alive who is Youer than You.”*

– **Dr. Seuss**



As a group of frogs was traveling through the woods, two of them fell into a deep pit. When the other frogs crowded around the pit and saw how deep it was, they told the two frogs that there was no hope left for them. However, the two frogs decided to ignore what the others were saying and they proceeded to try and jump out of the pit. Despite their efforts, the group of frogs at the top of the pit were still saying that they should just give up. That they would never make it out. Eventually, one of the frogs took heed to what the others were saying and he gave up, falling down to his death. The other frog continued to jump as hard as he could. Again, the crowd of frogs yelled at him to stop the pain and just die. He jumped even harder and finally made it out. When he got out, the other frogs said, “Did you not hear us?” The frog explained to them that he was deaf. He thought they were encouraging him the entire time.

People’s words can have a big effect on other’s lives. Think about what you say before it comes out of your mouth. It might just be the difference between life and death.

## AUTUMN PRAYER

O God of Creation, you have blessed us with the changing of the seasons. As we embrace these autumn months, may the earlier setting of the sun remind us to take time to rest. May the crunch of the leaves beneath our feet remind us of the brevity of this earthly life. May the steam of our breath in the cool air remind us that it is you who gives us your breath of life. May the scurrying of the squirrels and the migration of the birds remind us that you call us to follow your will. We praise you for your goodness forever and ever. Amen.

*Franciscan Sisters*



**THE REV. DR. DIONNE BOYCE**

[PastorD@stjamesucc.org](mailto:PastorD@stjamesucc.org)

816-716-9388.

Virtual and Physical Office hours:

Tuesday thru Friday 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Sunday 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

John Callahan, Director of Music

Allison Fineberg, Director of Children's Ministries

Andrea Angiulo, Nursery

Ailene Dunlap, Secretary

Church Office 610-446-3036

[www.stjamesucc.org](http://www.stjamesucc.org)

## For the children . . .



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