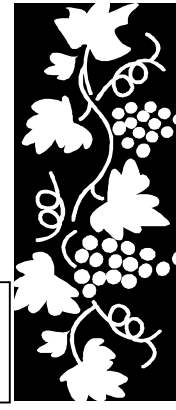




The Vine and Branches

SAINT JAMES EPISCOPAL
CHURCH
DILLON, MONTANA



stjamesdillon@live.com 406-683-2735

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Luke: *They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened us to the Scriptures?"*

This quotation is taken from the gospel reading for Easter III: Luke 24:13-35. While the two disciples were returning home the third day after the crucifixion of Jesus, they were commiserating with each other over the fact that Jesus, the one they hoped would be the warrior Messiah who would save them from domination by the Romans, had been killed and their hopes dashed. And, thus far, they had not seen him on the third day.

25 Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! 26 Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" 27 Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As Jesus opened to them the Scriptures, showing them the true meaning, teaching them that Scripture spoke of him, their hearts burned with the fire of the Holy Spirit! (Remember that Jesus was referring to the Jewish Scripture. The New Testament was not written until years after the Ascension of Jesus).

We still read those same scriptures day in and day out, week in and week out. We listen to them every Sunday in the Liturgy of the Word. Do our hearts burn within us?

There are several ways to read and study the Bible. We can read it as history, what happened long years ago about people in far countries. We can study scripture for a moral lesson. We can read them as isolated teachings bound together by editors into an arrangement to aid us in our reading. There are different layers of meaning in scripture, and to arrive near to the spiritual meaning, we need to take time to dig deeper. We may think we "get it" after a quick reading, but that is almost never the case. Studying God's Word is like digging for gold. It's there, but seldom jumps into our arms.

Personally, I like to start the day reading and meditating on scripture. It is helpful to select the passage the day before. There is the daily lectionary in the BCP, pp. 934-1001. Many people follow that reading plan. Others like to read one book at a time, which is my current way of praying.

A few suggestions I would offer for praying the scripture: (1) Always begin with prayer for the help of the Holy Spirit. Without the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we are apt to be led astray. (2) Read the passage slowly several times. Notice what seems to grab your attention. Compare it with another translation. (3) What challenges you in the passage? Ask questions and listen or search for answers. It's helpful to have a Bible with cross-references which can throw light on the current verse. (4) What is the context? Who is speaking? What has happened right before? (5) Do other passages of scripture come to mind? Or a hymn? For example, I recently discovered that verses 3-4 of the hymn "*How firm a foundation*" are based on Isaiah 43:1-3. The scripture and hymn helped me through a hard time I was experiencing. (6) Close your eyes and sink into the scripture. Listen with your whole being to what the Word is saying to you. Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance. Afterwards, I conclude with the Lord's Prayer and ask for the intercessions of one or two of the saints. (Maybe the gospel writer, one of the apostles, St. Paul, or the Blessed Virgin Mary, by praying the *Hail, Mary.*)

We all have access to the most valuable, sacred words ever written. The world desperately needs the love of Christ incarnate in our lives today. One way to grow in that sacred love is to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest the Holy Scriptures and allow our hearts to burn with the fire of the Holy Spirit like the two disciples on the road to Emmaus.

Jane+

VESTRY NEWS RELEASE

The Vestry approved funds to replace lights in the Guild Hall with LED bulbs. Adult Education will resume on May 7th with the movie "*Kingdom of Heaven*"

SEARCH COMMITTEE

The Search Committee zoomed with Brandon Worth regarding the search, especially with the question:

"Why would you come to Dillon, MT?" We are going to tell you!

He was inspiring.

Kathryn Hatch, Senior Warden

ALTAR GUILD NEWS

The altar guild is a very busy group. However, we could use some more members. I would like to encourage you to consider joining us. It is a very rewarding endeavor of making sure all the accoutrements for the services are maintained and ready for use. There is a rotating schedule so no one has to be in charge every week.

Many members of our congregation generously provide the flowers on the altar each week. There are some Sundays that are open for someone to donate the flowers. You have several options to procure the flowers. Both Stephens floral and Wildwood have new owners who can provide and deliver the arrangements. Some donors purchase their flowers from Safeway.

Please contact me if you are interested in joining the Altar Guild and/or donating altar flowers.

Jane Howard

406-683-2807

grampa1234@yahoo.com

ENERGY NEWS

On Saturday, August 15, 2023, Caleb Koebble and the Reverend Connie Campbell-Pearson presented an inspiring and informative 4-hour seminar on behalf of Montana Interfaith Power and Light. There were 6 St. James members in attendance, 1 Methodist member, along with Caleb, the director of MT IPL, and Connie, deacon for the Bozeman area.

The first 2 hours were devoted to a slide presentation with conversation about climate change, the effects seen round the world, carbon footprints and the Episcopal Church's position and call to action on each of these concerns.

After breaking for lunch, we looked at ways to compute St. James' carbon footprint, and set up a site for St. James on sustainedislandhome.org. We entered information such as energy and water bills for the past two years, as well as other data. We have a tentative carbon footprint that will help us develop a plan and ultimately lower our consumption and operating costs. The site is amazing and along with computing carbon footprints, it has a great number of ideas on how to lower our impact on the earth and in the process lower bills. An added bonus to the seminar is that as members of St. James, we can log in, set up our own accounts, and find our carbon footprint and ways to lower it.

The final part of the sessions was spent going around the Guild Hall, sacristy and church with a special devise on Caleb's iPad. It allowed us to check the insulation in the walls and ceilings, look for drafts around doors and windows, and visually we checked for insulation on exposed water and gas pipes.

Our next step will be forming the *Creation Care Team*, which will produce a plan for St. James. There are things that are relatively simple and inexpensive to do right away, but using the information from the presentation and the report, [Design & Repair Manual](#), conducted by Kreg Jones Architecture in 2012, will be invaluable. Caleb will also be available for any questions or concerns that may arise as we plan for the future at St. James. Please consider joining the team! All ideas are needed.

It is hoped that Caleb will come back to Dillon and perhaps do the seminar for other churches in our area and if he does, I strongly encourage you to participate. It was 4-hours well spent!

Sharon Morehouse

COFFEE HOUR

As many of you know, we have resumed our coffee hour after the Sunday services. As in the past, there is a sign-up sheet on the wall by the kitchen door. Please feel free to sign up to host coffee hour one Sunday.

**The "job description" follows:
Make coffee, set up the table with dishes, napkins, utensils, etc. Then clean up when it is over. People should feel free to bring something, but there are cookies and cheese and crackers available if no one brings anything.**



Calendar of Events

Worship: Sundays, 10:00 am:

Holy Eucharist led by Rev. Jane Shipp: 5/7, 5/28, 6/11,
6/25/2023

Morning Prayer all other Sundays.

Contemplative Prayer:
2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 5:00 PM in the Guild Hall
5/10, 5/24, 6/14, 6/28 2023

Theology on Tap Sundays at 3:00 at The Brewery

SPRING

Spring officially arrived over a month ago. But it seems like Mother Nature didn't get the memo! We even had snow on Earth Day. Not that we don't need the moisture, but enough is enough.

I always look forward to spring with its beautiful flowers, wonderful weather (not too hot, not too cold - like Goldilocks' porridge; just right).

It's the time for new beginnings. High schools and colleges have their commencement exercises heralding the students as they embark on a new chapter in their lives. There is freshness in the air, outdoor activities resume, travel doesn't depend on the weather and all is good.

Renewal is a word I associate with spring. Nature is renewed, our spirits are renewed and the doldrums of winter are put on a back shelf along with our heavy coats, sweaters and snow boots.

What about church? We can shout out "Alleluia" once again which always delights me. It's time for visitors to join our worship. Most of them are travelers making just a quick stop in Dillon, others staying for a week or two. They are all welcome and I always look forward to seeing those who visit every year.

It's a wonderful season and always worth the wait.

Carol

"For as the earth brings forth its shoots and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations."

Isaiah 61:11NRSV

