



# *The Vine and Branches*

SAINT JAMES EPISCOPAL  
CHURCH  
DILLON, MONTANA



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*January/February 2025 Issue*

## **Letter from Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe on the U.S. presidential election:**

November 6, 2024

Office of Public Affairs

Dear People of God in the Episcopal Church,

Early this morning, we learned that President Trump has been elected to another term as president of the United States. I pray that he will govern wisely and justly.

Regardless of our political allegiance, we must remember that God has called us in The Episcopal Church to seek and serve Christ in all persons. No matter the party in power, we are one church, and we will continue to fulfill our baptismal covenant by proclaiming in word and example the Good News of God in Christ, striving for justice and peace among all people, and protecting the dignity of every human being.

We commit to working with the new administration to advance policies that follow the teachings of Jesus by supporting the most vulnerable among us. Through Episcopal Migration Ministries, we abide by God's command to welcome the stranger, and since 1988, we have resettled more than 100,000 refugees through a bipartisan program with a strong record of success. We urge President Trump and members of Congress to exercise compassion toward the immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees we serve and to know that, at every turn, we will stand for the dignity and human rights of all of God's people.

We are Christians who support the dignity, safety and equality of women and LGBTQ+ people as an expression of our faith. I pray that President Trump and his administration will do the same.

In the coming months, I ask us all to be agents of peace and reconciliation in our communities, both in person and online. As people of faith, we can work and pray for peace and unity among God's people whether we are joyful, hurting or afraid. Especially now, when we know of efforts by domestic terrorists and foreign adversaries to undermine our trust in institutions and in one another, we can combat the misinformation and fear by which the Enemy seeks to divide us from one another.

I give thanks for all the ministries in dioceses and congregations across the church that are tangible expressions of our belief in God of compassion and mercy. In every season, this is the work that God has set before us.

*The Most Rev. Sean W. Rowe*

Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church



## ADVENT

We whose hearts are heaving seek the joy of your presence. We are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light. +Henri Nouwen

We are deep in Advent by the third week of December. Advent is the beginning of the liturgical New Year and our cycle of prayer and readings begin again on the first Sunday in advent. The Great Circle of Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and once again back to Advent.

Advent is known as ~~h~~ittle Lent and has traditionally been a time of repentance. A time to prepare us for God coming down to us. Emanuel, God is With Us.

Advent literally means ~~a~~rrival+. It is easy in our culture to rush through Advent. We can feel eager, frazzled, excited, joyful and lonely all in the same day. If we can take the time to truly appreciate Advent, we can sense that Advent marks something momentous: God~~s~~ coming into our midst. It is not something that happened in the past, it is happening now. God~~s~~ presence among us and that presence is with us if we are experiencing the season as one of joy and happiness or if it~~s~~ a season for us that reminds us of loss or sadness. In either circumstance we are to be reminded that God is with us.

There are resources for Advent reflections or study online at the Center for Action and Contemplation, a [https:// cac.org/](https://cac.org/) ; the Episcopal Church <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/lectionary/> - where you can also find the readings for each Sunday ; Wisdom Waypoints , <https://wisdomwaypoints.org/> and other sites.

A catch up on Deacon School- we continue to the first weekend of the month - zoom or in person. Our academic classes are now through Bexley Seabury Seminary online- which is a change from the first two years. Sharon Morehouse continues to be on my mentor team - along with an academic advisor for Bexley Seabury from Georgia; Archdeacon Dorcie Dvarishkis and former Archdeacon Roxanne Klingensmith. The process has been rewarding and the hoops many but for good reason. If any of you are considering pursuing the diaconate- don~~o~~q hesitate to reach out to the Diocese.

We are a small but devoted community at St. James and I hope we continue to add practices - there is a faithful group that meets for Contemplative Prayer twice monthly and I hope we can pursue Compline or Evening Prayer during Lent this year.

*Blessings to us all at St. James during this Advent Season, and on into Christmas and Epiphany.*

*Mary Ann Nicholas*

## **Calendar of Events**

**Worship: Sundays, 10:00 am**

Holy Eucharist led by Rev. Theresa Kelley-Bergmann on second and fourth Sundays each month.

1/12, 1/26, 2/9, 2/23 2025

Morning Prayer will be held all other Sundays.

Contemplative Prayer 2nd and 4th Wednesdays:

Jan. 8 and 22. Feb. 12 and 26.

5:30 PM in the Guild Hall.

Annual Meeting with potluck luncheon: Sunday 1/26/2025 after service.

Adult Education:

We will be discussing the book "The Universal Christ" by Richard Rohr.

These discussions are held after our church service. Feel free to attend even if you have not read the book. Our discussions seem to cover many facets of our spiritual lives.

Theology on Tap Sundays at 3:00 PM at the Brewery

*Notes from our Senior Warden  
Kathryn Hatch*



*"Come, let us walk in the light of the world."*

It is with joy we welcome Rev. Theresa Kelley-Bergmann as our priest at St. James, starting in January. Theresa will be coming here 6 days a week per month, two Sundays and one day during the week. Theresa has been our supply priest for at least a year and is already a part of the St. James family (as is her husband, Bernd).

The Annual Meeting is Sunday, January 26, 2025.  
Please come and see how St. James has progressed this past year.

*Kathryn*

**Lee Graves offers these sayings for your contemplation.....**

Your life as a Christian should make non-believers question their disbelief in God.

"Split a piece of wood and I am there. Lift a stone and you will find me."

*Gospel of Thomas*

## ***EUCCHARISTIC VISITS***

For those of you who may have a friend or relative that would like to receive Eucharist, St. James can accommodate those people who aren't able to attend church in person.

We have a lovely traveling Eucharist kit, donated by the late Edith Boothby. It is a lovely addition to our church and allows Eucharist to be set up and administered gracefully and with reverence.

Please let me or a vestry member know if you are aware of someone that would like to have a visit and/or be administered Eucharist.

*Mary Ann Nicholas*  
406-660-0339



## **THE FOOD BANK UPDATE:**

We continue to collect non-perishable items for the Food Bank. This is an ongoing ministry of St. James.

There are totes in the Narthex where you can drop off your contributions at any time. These will be blessed by Rev. Theresa on the 4th Sunday of each month and delivered to the Food Bank.

The Food Bank was started by St. James and organized by the late Millie Brown. Due to the unfortunate increase of people in need, it has now grown to the point where there are 2 different times that the recipients can pick-up their items.



## *EXCESS*

On my recent trip to Europe, one word kept coming to mind: *EXCESS*.

We spent a lot of time visiting cathedrals and castles. I have never seen so much gold, silver and jewels in both the buildings and their décor as well as the elaborate clothing. Each place had such a common feeling of *EXCESS* that I found it difficult to appreciate the history of the buildings and the times in which they were first inhabited and used. Most are still in use today.

Considering the poverty prevalent in these medieval cities, I find it shocking that such grandiose settings were necessary, other than to make the inhabitants feel horribly inadequate, if that's the right word.

World leaders today are also known for extravagant lifestyles with luxurious cars, homes, clothing, hobbies and perks we probably aren't aware of. Perhaps it is just the name of the game. *EXCESS*.

This made me think about Stewardship. There are many ways Stewardship is an integral part of our spiritual life. Over the years I have experienced a form of stewardship that I find "over the top" as in *EXCESS*. One church I visited published a bulletin each Sunday naming the "big spenders" in the parish based on the size of their ads in the bulletin. This is similar to the ostentatious examples I saw on my trip. The basic meaning of Stewardship is to offer what we can to improve or continue our means of worship and belonging. It isn't based just on the monetary value, but also on what we can offer in terms of faith, healing, love, friendship and simply caring for one another.

However, to clarify, there are things that the church needs help with, particularly when it comes to repair and maintenance of the physical building. Contributions are welcome and often of critical importance. There is a listing of some of those items in the church office.

In this new year, let's look forward to sharing ourselves and continuing the wonderful sense of being a welcoming part of our community.

*Carol Meacham, Editor*