



# St. James Episcopal Church

## Messenger

[Visit our website](#)

*Our mission is to preach the Gospel, worship God,  
renew our hearts and minds, and serve others.*



A gentle reminder that our stewardship campaign is coming to a close and we are hoping to hear from you. Please make your pledge known or postmarked by December 31st to be included on your 2023 statement of giving. This will allow the Vestry to create a spending plan for St. James' Mission and Ministry for 2024. Thank you.

## Thoughts from a Deacon

### Thoughts From a Deacon 12/02/23

Jesus said, "...that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, not the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert;.....And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake." (from our Gospel according to Mark)

We cannot be ready or prepared for the birth of Christ; that's in the past. But we can prepare and wait for the future, for Christ's return. When? Where? We don't know and it doesn't matter. It's God's time, not ours. How do we get ready to wait?

It's hard enough to prepare for something we know is coming. Thanksgiving just passed and Christmas is a few weeks away. Every year they come at the same time, and even with the media world pushing us to get ready earlier and earlier, we still find ourselves running around and wishing we had more time for ourselves. But, again, it's God's time.

Let's say we know the date and it's December 25, 2023. What would you do in these few weeks? Forgive everyone, ask for forgiveness, pray more, give more? Would you re-organize, relook at your values, serve the least of these, let relationships grow? Would you now live your life the way God wants you



to? Father Jim said, "What are we looking forward to? Our goal is to be vigilant about our spiritual life as we are our physical life." Would you be ready? Could you wait these few weeks? For me, it will be very hard! I will try but I will also fail.

But you know what? It's all good. God's grace is not dependent on our actions. It is a result of the immensity of God's love. We are saved by God's grace, through Jesus Christ. This grace sets us free. Free to go out into the community and be "little Christs". Because of God's grace, we NEVER have to do, we ALWAYS get to do!!

This Advent, be ready to wait. When we wait, it means what we hope for has not yet come. We anticipate what has been promised, we believe it's on its way, but not here yet. We actively look for it, but we wait. While we wait, let's quietly, and boldly, experience the anticipation of God coming in the ordinary events of our lives. I know that God comes to us not once, but over and over.

Please take the time to look up Isaiah 9:2-7. You will recognize it. It's all about hope. Just like history, in today's world there is lots of gloom and distress, but don't see all that is wrong and broken around us. Don't hope we can fix it all. **INSTEAD** let Advent remind us to put our hope in God. The time will come when there will be happiness, joy, and salvation. In the meantime, wait for the many occasions and opportunities for the "lowly to be lifted up, the hungry fed, and to see God's mercy alive." Grace to you.

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The Reverend Jim Shumard, Priest-in-Charge, spoke at the "Getting to Know Father Jim Lunch and Learn" on Wednesday, December 6, 2023.

To view the Lunch and Learn VIDEO, [CLICK HERE.](#)





## THE GIVING TREE

Please pick one or more items from our "Giving Tree", buy the gift, wrap it, attach the tag to the package and place it in the narthex by Sunday, December 17. This year's recipients are the folks at Mountain View Nursing Home.



## Christmas Eve Services

**Advent 4 - 10:30am**





**Hymn Sing - 5:15pm**

**Holy Communion with  
Candlelight - 5:30pm**

## Christmas Potluck

Please join the St. James community after the 5:30pm service for good eats, fellowship, and Christmas spirit.

Ham, Turkey and drinks will be provided. Please bring a dish to share.

Look for the sign-up sheet in the Narthex or Parish Hall.

Contact Sam in the Office [HERE](#) to sign-up.



## CHRISTMAS FLOWERS



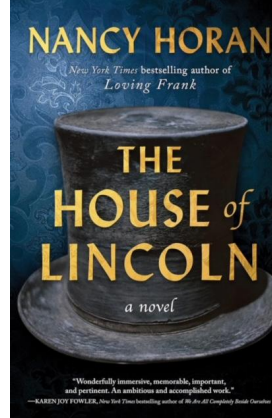
If you would like to make a donation for Christmas flowers in memory or in honor of someone, please send your donation to the church office by clicking [here](#), dropping your check in the offering plate on Sunday, or mailing to St. James, PO Box 69, Clayton, GA 30525.

Email the name(s) [here](#). Be sure to indicate whether you are giving in memory or in honor when submitting. Names received by December 18 will be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin.

## Fellowship

### St. James Book Club

This month we are reading *The House of Lincoln* by Nancy Horan. Everyone is invited to join us on Thursday, December 14th, 11:00am at 147 Village Lane for lunch and discussion. Contact Becky Callahan [HERE](#)



## Join us for lunch?

The Retirees will meet on Tuesday, January 2, at noon. Everyone is welcomed to join this lively bunch the first Tuesday of each month at Ishy's Grill in Clayton. Questions? Contact Roland Clemmons [here](#).

## December Celebrations

### Birthdays

- 1- Mary Flanigen
- 5- Allie Mosely
- 7- Ann Rice
- 12- Miles Keeny
- 13- Peggy Melton
- 14- Steve Bull
- 17- Ron Barden
- 17- Shannon Lemoine
- 20- Dick Metzgar
- 22- Wyatt Keeny
- 23- Martha Cantrill
- 26- Tom Burinski
- 26- Liz Hopper
- 29- Cade Klimasewski
- 29- Zoila Espinosa

### Anniversaries

- 15- Kathy and Marcus Booker
- 18- Bethany and Frank Weisser
- 26- Peggy and Easton Melton



## Follow Us on Facebook and Instagram

The St. James social media team is keeping our Facebook and Instagram channels updated with current information about St. James events, fun features about our parishioners and their good works, and inspirational thoughts and themes.

Shelley Urban and Nanette O'Hara are sharing social media duties, with an able assist from Ginny Heckel. Dustin Emhart also will be pitching in.

Find us on Facebook at [St. James Episcopal, Clayton, GA](#)

Follow us on Instagram at <https://www.instagram.com/saintjamesclayton/>

Content suggestions are welcome. We also need photos from any St. James activities current or past, or just photos of our beautiful church and gardens that you're willing to share. You can reach us by phone, text or email as follows:

Shelley:

Cell Phone (727)515-3501

Email – [HERE](#)

Nanette:

Cell Phone (813) 428-3182

Email- [HERE](#)

Ginny:

Cell Phone (706) 490-2867

Email- [HERE](#)

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Give Now



Click the icon to **like us** on Facebook or **follow us** on Instagram.



**Timeline for the Bi-Weekly Messenger:**

Articles received by Monday evening will be in the next Messenger. Please contact the **church office** if you have any questions.

St. James Episcopal Church | 706-782-6179 | 260 Warwoman Rd. Clayton, GA 30525 | [www.stjamesclayton.org](http://www.stjamesclayton.org) | email: [click here](#)

