

Interim's Corner

Living Lent

By Rev. Won-Jae Hur

Not having grown up in the church, I didn't know about Lent until high school. A classmate wouldn't eat meat because, he explained, "You should give up things for Lent." I had no idea why that should be the case. I am embarrassed to say that it wasn't until I actually went to seminary that I really learned the richness of this season and the grace of setting aside time for a more focused, intentional spiritual practice in preparation for Holy Week and Easter.

Lent has two aspects. It originated in the early church with candidates preparing for baptism. As the church initially baptized people only at the Easter Vigil, the candidates spent the prior weeks getting ready. The church later made this period into a forty-day season, recalling Christ's journey into the wilderness before beginning his public ministry. Hence, the season has a dual emphasis on remembrance of baptism and repentance.

The word "repentance" is probably not that popular today, either in the church or the broader society. For many, there may be an unpleasant association with guilt and punishment. It may be helpful to retrace its root meaning in the Scriptures. The Hebrew word for repent, *shub*, means "to turn" from something. The Greek equivalent is *metanoia*, which basically means "to change

"I invite you, therefore ... to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word."

(Book of Common Prayer)

Ash Wednesday February 17th



Eucharist and
Imposition of Ashes
12:00 noon and
7:00 p.m.
at St. James

*"Remember that you are
dust, and to dust
you shall return."*

one's mind." Repentance, then, has less to do with feeling guilty over wrongdoing than with changing one's vision. Its Biblical meaning is closer to our word "conversion."

Conversion means to change one's vision and one's way of life. It implies discriminating between what is essential in life and what is not, and living in a way that honors what matters most. Lent provides the opportunity for us to do just this. It is a season to set aside time for taking stock of where we are and how we live. We can create space to



Feasting on the Word

A Journey through the Gospel of Mark
Selected Thursdays 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Bi-weekly Scripture meditations
using the ancient art of *Lectio Divina*,

followed by dinner in the Parish Hall.

Join us this month on the 11th and the 25th

do this by taking on some basic practices, such as daily readings from Scripture and meditation, as well as by letting go of customary pleasures and habits. The practice of making sacrifices cultivates detachment, which in turn gives us the clarity to discern where we can make adjustments in our lives and how we can draw closer to God.

The work of conversion also has communal and social dimensions. The call to repentance applies to both the individual and the church. Lent is a time for reflecting on our corporate manner of life and responsibilities as church, society, nation, and world. It is a time for an in-depth look at how our world lives, at the root causes of suffering and injustice, and at how we can better follow Christ's call to serve and pursue justice. We make amends for our personal and corporate shortcomings and take concrete actions to change direction. Reflecting on and reengaging in the call to social justice, then, is an integral part of the spiritual discipline of the Lenten season.

One of my favorite authors, Martin L. Smith, calls Lent "a season for the spirit." Even if outwardly it seems like a trip into the desert, inwardly it is a time to replenish and renew our spirit. Like its original destination of baptism, it leads us back to the spring of life.



St. James Vestry 2010



John Harrison, Acting Senior Warden

Anne Purcell, Treasurer

Meg Bloomfield

Barbara Burgess

Karen Clopton

Carla Cooper

Mary Ann Faris

Carole Jan Lee

Ebe Metcalf

Hap Rhodehamel

Rose Scarff

Ira Simmons

Roger Wickstrom

From the (Acting) Senior Warden

By John Harrison

Acts 1: 23 and 26: "And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. . . . And they gave forth their lot; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." (*And that's the last that is reported about either of them¹ in the New Testament.*)

At the beginning of *Animal Crackers* Captain Spaulding,² the African Explorer, croons:

Hello, I must be going.

I cannot stay, I came to say, I must be going.

I'm glad I came, but just the same I must be going.

I'll stay a week or two, I'll stay the summer through,

But I am telling you, I must be going.

I'll do anything you say. In fact I'll even stay!

But I must be going.

If you haven't figured it out by now, this is not the typical maiden article from a newly elected Senior Warden. It is also my swan song in that capacity.

The Senior Warden is often referred to as the Rector's Warden,³ because under normal circumstances the Senior Warden is appointed by the Rector. However, in this transition period St. James does not have a Rector, but is liturgically guided by Won-Jae Hur, our Interim. Under the Canons an Interim is responsible for carrying out sacramental and liturgical functions, but the Rector's normal responsibility of handling the day-to-day administration of the church, including personnel matters and the like, is assumed by the Vestry.

At the brief organizational meeting of the St. James Vestry for 2010 that followed the Annual Parish Meeting, the Vestry had to face a task it had not had in recent memory: the election of a Senior Warden. Better than half of the Vestry was newly elected; several of the new members had never served on any Vestry. We were all somewhat tired from the meeting that had preceded our assembly, and the day was getting long in the tooth. None of us wanted to do anything precipitous, and it was clear to all of us that a proper decision could not be reached without time to reflect carefully on the important issue of selecting

¹ Unlike Justus or Matthias, I will not be disappearing from public ken at the conclusion of this brief term. I have one year left on my regular Vestry term and will be active in that capacity. Even afterwards I plan to be active in matters where I think my participation will add value, and to be heard on matters where my ruminations will advance the discussion.

² If you don't get the reference, you're no fan of the Marx Brothers or Groucho.

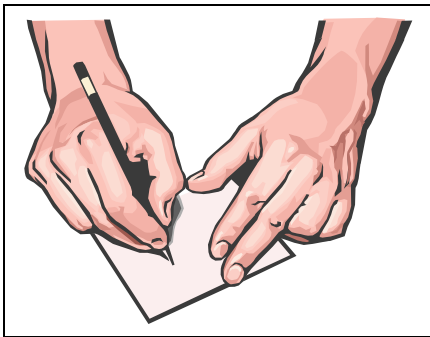
³ Using that vernacular, the Junior Warden, elected by the Vestry, is the People's Warden.

the best person to be Senior Warden for 2010. However, church Canons require that St. James have a Senior Warden in place.

To ensure that St. James had the position filled during the contemplative period we all wanted, I volunteered to serve briefly as Acting Senior Warden, subject to the understanding I am not a candidate for the position long-term. I will resign as Senior Warden at the Vestry retreat, January 29-31, whereupon the Vestry will need to elect a Senior Warden to serve for the remainder of 2010.

Please pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance and support of the Vestry members as they make this important decision.

Hello, it's an honor to be asked to serve as your Senior Warden. Goodbye, it's been a great run!



Thanks and Love

By Louise Jones

Happy New Year
to my St. James
family!

It was a great joy
to receive the

lovely Christmas card signed with so many of your names. Tears came to my eyes as I read it. Thanks to all you lovely people, from my heart.

I still pray for those on the Prayer List, and for the parish in the transition time.

Stay well, and God bless you all with peace and love.
PRAY.



CLC Transition Committee Update

By Carla Cooper

The CLC Transition Committee continues its work to determine next steps in handling the funds raised through the CLC Capital Campaign. Formed following the decision in July to halt fundraising for a new Community Learning Center facility at St. James, the Committee is composed of CLC and St. James Vestry members Anne Purcell, Bethany Baugh, Claudia Lewis, Ebe Metcalf, Judy Spain, and Carla Cooper.

*Lent is coming? It's almost here?
Quick – let's eat pancakes!*



Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
February 16th at 6:30 p.m.
in the Parish Hall

Bring the family and join the feast!

Our latest developments include the following:

- We have redirected gifts made to the Mary Moore Gaines Tribute Fund according to the donors' wishes. (The donations to the Tribute Fund were all made in 2009, and it was important to the donors that those monies be distributed in the same tax year.)
- We have contacted donors to the general CLC Capital Campaign to explain next steps and ask how they would like their donations directed. We are still waiting to hear from a handful of people! If you are a Capital Campaign donor and did not get a letter from us, please let Erazm in the St. James office know (415-751-1198), or tell any Committee member.
- We are reviewing the records of donations and expenses to the Campaign, to ensure accuracy. Many volunteers and several accountants worked on the Campaign over its duration, and we believe a review is prudent. It is our aim to provide a summary of the income and expenses that will demonstrate the transparency of our process, while preserving the confidentiality of individual donors.

Our goal is to deliver the information on dollars and donor's wishes to the CLC Board and Vestry in the first quarter of 2010. However, if we meet hurdles, we will take the time needed to address concerns.

Please let any Committee member know if you have questions. Our contact information is in the St. James directory, or Erazm can pass along any question or message.



Highlights From the Parish Profile

By Jan Vennari

Rector Search Committee Co-Chair

At the Annual Meeting on January 10, the Rector Search Committee presented key information from the nearly completed Parish Profile. The Parish Profile is the document that describes who we are as a parish, what we're like, what we're looking for in a new rector—and also, very importantly, why. It reflects the insights and discussions we've had with the parish community through town hall meetings, the online survey, and individual discussions—as well as collaboration and discernment by the Search Committee members.

Our high-level summary statement is this:

We seek a rector who is an energetic, inspiring and vibrant spiritual leader for our strong and inclusive Episcopal parish.

We seek someone who will help us:

- ***Grow our membership to reflect the rich diversity of our neighborhood and San Francisco.***
- ***Develop vibrant and inspiring programs for all ages.***
- ***Renew a sense of vitality and joy so that it abounds in our congregation.***
- ***Keep a sense of humor—for the fun it represents, as well as a sign of grace and humility.***

In support of this, we view our overall strengths as a parish to include:

- Strong lay leadership
- Strong sense of community
- Diversity of religious backgrounds, culture, race, sexual orientation, political perspectives, economic means, geography
- Strong desire for spiritual growth and renewal
- Openness and welcome to newcomers
- Mission and outreach to the community

Our overall challenges are summarized as follows:

- Attract and maintain new members
- Improve our financial base
- Refurbish our existing plant
- Develop closer relationships with our partners (Preschool, CLC, CCI)
- Develop an inspiring adult education program
- Increase Sunday liturgy and program attendance
- Find a renewed sense of vitality and mission

The Parish Profile goes on to further define who we're looking for with the following six attributes. Although not shown here, we explain why these each of qualities important to us by referring to the parish strengths and challenges listed above.

1. We seek a dynamic rector who relates to persons of all ages and backgrounds, and who can help us draw people into St. James.
2. We seek a rector skilled at preaching, who can lead us in provocative and meaningful adult education.
3. We seek a rector who relates to children of all ages—who embraces their youthfulness and can inspire the spirit within them.
4. We seek a rector who has a strong spiritual presence and prayer life, and who can impart that spirituality to us.
5. We seek a rector with strong managerial skills who can provide leadership and direction; who can delegate, and can work well with strong lay leaders and staff; who – recognizing his or her own limitations – will utilize outside resources and/or staff as required to meet congregational needs.
6. We seek a collaborative rector who works well with the leadership of our partners and associates in the St. James Preschool, Community Learning Center, and the California Counseling Institute.

The Parish Profile also includes in-depth information about the day-to-day life at St. James, parish facts and figures, and a colorful recap of our history, as well as information

“Music of the Heart”

*A Benefit Concert for the
Community Learning Center at St. James*

Sunday February 14 at 5:00 p.m.



Fred Goff
Tomoko Goto
Alex Keitel
Peter Krag
Paul McCurdy
Ed Wilcox
and
the SF-STEP
Wire Choir

**Music to celebrate Valentine's Day
and Chinese New Year!**

***Suggested admission donation \$10
Seniors and children free***

about San Francisco and the Richmond District for potential out-of-area candidates.

When the Parish Profile is complete, it will be posted to the St. James website so everyone can read it.

The next steps for the Search Committee, with approximate times, are to:

- Develop our application packet (January)
- Complete Church Deployment Office forms for the diocese (January)
- Post the Parish Profile on our website, simultaneously with diocesan outreach (January)
- Accept applications (February-March)
- Screen and interview candidates (April-May)
- Determine final candidates for recommendation to vestry (June-July)

As always, please contact any committee member if you have any questions.



Your Rector Search Committee

Please contact any member if you have questions, opinions, or information to share!

Giselle Bosc

bosc@pacbell.net (415) 751-2842

Ann Rieger Matthews

reigermatthews@pacbell.net (415) 759-8131

Louise Newlin

nvnc.id.vides.nvnc.ne.vides@gmail.com
(415) 242-5224

Carol Overman

windgoddess_sf@yahoo.com (415) 812-9494

Elia Pochron

eliapochron@gmail.com (415) 221-5004

Judy Spain

jespain@aol.com (415) 387-5093

Elizabeth Sturcken

esturcken@edf.org (415) 440-4955

Jan Vennari

jdvennari@comcast.net (415) 664-3139

Roger Wickstrom

rogewick@hotmail.com (415) 386-1628



Aspirations

Tending the Temple

By Jon Owens

The Bible describes our bodies as temples, and we are to keep them holy. For me, this passage has always been about how well we treat ourselves physically. So many Americans tend to avoid exercise and healthy eating, not thinking about the long-term risks of what they may be doing to themselves. That is why, as someone who works for one of the largest health and fitness organizations in the country, I feel compelled to talk to you this month about diet.

Now, don't get me wrong, I do not claim to be a dietician or an expert on the subject. I also am not going to tell you that I am perfect when it comes to eating. I am one of the first to go for the sugary pastries at coffee hour. (Maybe we could have a conversation at St. James about how can we provide healthier treats at coffee hour. I enjoy coffee hour, and it has always been sacred in the Episcopal Church; some say it should be revered as the Eighth Sacrament.)

The presentation I am going to make is called the "soda-free summer campaign." Let's take a look at what we tend to drink. I myself sometimes look for every excuse to drink something other than water. Juice (usually from some concentrate) and soda are typical beverages for me. I am pretty good about drinking non-fat milk as an alternative.

Sugar that is not burned by the body for energy converts to fat, which can lead to obesity. Since 1980 obesity rates in the US have doubled, and since 1990 the rates have jumped in all 50 states. Over the past 30 years, obesity in children has increased 16%. Studies show that soda is the largest source of added sugars for children. The average consumption of sugary drinks has become close to 575 ml per day. On average, people now consume more soda than milk on any given day.

In 1993 beverage-makers began to add fructose to their drinks, without displacing other energy substances (sugars). In 1996, a study determined that overall daily calorie intake was usually higher when an energy (sugar)-containing beverage was consumed at lunch. By 1999, the average person was consuming 2604 calories a day, compared to the recommended 2,000 daily calorie intake recommended by the FDA. In 2001, studies showed that for each additional serving of sweetened beverage consumed over 1.5 years, the risk of overweight increased 60%.

To sum up: the average person consumes half a pound a sugar a day – roughly 26 teaspoons. A cinnamon roll contains 14 teaspoons of sugar by itself, a soda usually 17 teaspoons. Those two alone give you more than half a pound. Now think, if you were to eat more than that ... you might just end up consuming a pound of sugar in a day.

What dietary choices can you make to reduce sugar intake? Try to limit added sugar as much as possible. Eat fresh whole foods, including fruits and vegetables, and stay away from processed foods – which is hard, I know, if you are single like me and load up on TV dinners. Drink water, skim milk, or unsweetened tea (there goes my southern-style living), and avoid sugary drinks. It is okay to splurge once in a while! The key is moderation. Last but not least, get at least 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity every day.

Remember, if the only change you make is drinking one less soda per day, you could lose up to 25 pounds in a year! If my body is indeed a temple of God, I know I want it looking great.



COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER ONGOING CLASSES AND EVENTS

For Children and Youth

Saturday Learning Time

Call 415-751-1199 for information.

Kindermusik and Advanced Kindermusik

Contact Dee Dee Lawton at 415-561-9754.

ASPIRE After School Program

Call 415-751-1199 for information.

Suzuki Music Lessons

Call 415-412-6723 for information.

Youth Empowering Youth (Homework Help Center)

Call 751-1199 to volunteer.

For Adults

“Always Active” Senior Exercise

Mondays 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. in the Parish Hall.
Wednesdays 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. in the Parish Hall.

Buddhist Meditation

Wednesdays 7:30 – 9:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall.

Overeaters Anonymous

Sundays 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. in the Caldwell Room.
Tuesdays 7:30 – 9:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall.

Debtors Anonymous

Tuesdays 6:00 – 7:00 in the Caldwell Room.

Spirituality at CCI

By Meg Bloomfield, Managing Director
California Counseling Institute

*This being human is a guest house.
every morning a new arrival.*

*A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.*

*Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if there're a crowd of sorrows
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture.*

*Still treat each guest honorably,
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.*

*The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them in.*

*Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent as a guide from beyond.*

- Rumi

Every Wednesday at noon, we have a staff meeting at the California Counseling Institute. We sit in a rough circle around the perimeter of Room 1, and before we discuss anything we have a five-minute meditation. It can be a meditation led by visualization, a poem, a piece of prose, or simply a breathing exercise. Whatever is spoken, we relax, focus our thoughts, still our minds, and calm our spirits. We simply be.

When that is done, when we are all fully present together in the room, we have a brief check-in. We share our roses and thorns; we share pieces of the fabric of our lives, the rips, the mended parts. Then we discuss business, the business of money, daily tasks of running the business, and the business based on hurt and pain. At its core, this is the business of healing. We have had many disagreements, many discussions, many hurtful things said and healed. We trust each other to work through the hard part of working together, to rest and relax in the easy part of working together. Through all of this, we try to move towards consensus, to let the healing happen. We stay open to it. That takes trust and love. There is much wisdom in that room, and truth. We try to keep ourselves open to that and learn from it.

Most of all, we nurture each other's spirits. It is in our mission to "aid in the healing transformation ... through the

integration of psychotherapy and spirituality." What does that mean?

Do we spend all that time in the therapy rooms praying? Most times, anything but.

I have a confession to make. I have never had therapy. I work with eight therapists, and I don't know what exactly happens in the rooms. I imagine that what we do during our staff meetings happens during therapy. I know each therapist listens to the speaker, hears the truth in what each person says, and helps them navigate the path to understanding and enlightenment. They have talked about creating a sacred space, where spiritually healing moments happen. That space where there is room for the infinite moment when the therapist and client share understanding, and the healing starts. I see it happen every week in our staff meetings, and I believe them.

Sacred Moments, Sacred Spaces

*They are everywhere
These moments that we
Sometimes take for granted
... and then we don't.
Suddenly, just like that,
The moment is real
And holds us,
Touches us, let us in,
Lets us grow,
Fills us with sorrow,
Joy, laughter,
Pain, shadow,
possibility, despair.*

*We can't escape them,
These sacred moments,
When we breathe, really breathe,
Drop down, into our lives,
Into our hearts,
Into the hearts of those
With whom we face the dark and the light,
Those whom we love.*

*We are there with them
As we rejoin ourselves,
In the most sacred of spaces,
The open heart.*

- Julie Terraciano





A Week of the Best Laid Plans

By Barbara Burgess

There's an old joke: "Tell God your plans, and God laughs." We can all relate to that joke. We plan, we make lists, we make reservations, we consult, we schedule, we leave nothing to chance, and then God laughs. A case in point: one Sunday this past Advent season, Won-Jae wished Mom and me a peaceful week. The following is what ensued that week.

Sunday: I go to buy a new car charger for my cell phone, and ten minutes later I lose the cell phone.

Monday evening: Mom comes home to find the Christmas tree which I had cut down in the mud and rain on Saturday, and which we had diligently decorated all weekend, fallen over and lying in the middle of the living room floor.

Tuesday: I attempt to change tree-stands by myself, and throw my back out.

Wednesday: Two of my cats get sick and I end up taking them to the veterinarian, which costs Mom \$200.

Thursday: I go to arrange greenery at church. The greens from the previous week have broken down and smell like sulfur. A job that usually takes about ninety minutes ends up taking me nearly 2 ½ hours.

Friday: We go to a winter Celtic concert at Old First Church. I plan just to buy one or two CDs, and buy four.

Saturday: We plan only to go to Whole Foods, then return home and begin setting up for our Christmas party. We go to Whole Foods, we go to the butcher, and we go to the bakery for rolls.

Sunday: We plan to go to church, then finish last-minute prep for the party. We end up doing last-minute prep we didn't get done the night before.

*SUPPORT the CLC!
SUPPORT our local musicians!
COME AND ENJOY the*

A – Z Concerts
by the St. James Chamber Players
Monthly on Mondays,
January through May

*World-class music played by world-class musicians
from the San Francisco Symphony,
SF Ballet Orchestra, and SF Opera Orchestra,
donating their time and talent
to raise funds for the Community Learning Center!*



NEXT DATE: February 22 7:00 p.m. in the Nave

To *SUPPORT* and *ENJOY* this wonderful opportunity:

- Show up! We need more parishioners there!
- Volunteer to help with publicity or set-up! Contact Ed Wilcox at 415-412-6723

Like I said, "Tell God your plans and God laughs." Whoever came up with that saying, I think, was just really disgusted with God at that particular moment and was trying to make light of it. I've found recently, though, that as a society we're perhaps too attached to our plans. We use calendars in our homes, in the office, and in some cases even on our phones in order to make plans and coordinate schedules. Yet even with all of this planning, our lives still go awry. What do you do then?

I am reminded of a well known piece of inspirational writing, which has been commercialized over the years but which at its heart, I think, is a message about what to do when you tell God your plans and God laughs.

Last night I had a dream. I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord. Across the sky flashed scenes from my life. For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand: one belonged to me, the other to the Lord.

After the last scene of my life flashed before me, I looked back at the footprints in the sand. I noticed that at many times along the path of my life, especially at the very lowest and saddest times, there was only one set of footprints.

This really troubled me, so I asked the Lord about it. "Lord, you said once I decided to follow you, You'd walk with me all the way. But I noticed that during the saddest and most troublesome times of my life, there was only one set of footprints. I don't understand why, when I needed You the most, You would leave me."

The Lord replied, "My son, my precious child, I love you and I would never leave you. During your times of suffering, when you could see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you."



Thoughts While Shaving

By Ray Muñoz

Let me put last Christmas to rest. As always, for me, it was too long, too demanding ... and too much. I think I went through some of it in a holding pattern, just waiting for it to end.

Oh, I enjoyed the family stuff and singing in the choir, but frankly it was tiring. Everything except for one beautiful gathering that made me want to relax and reflect: "A Solstice Service: Moving into the Light." This was a slow, pensive, sensitive and deeply satisfying gathering.

One prayer from that service: *God of mercy, hear our prayer for ourselves and for our families who live with painful memories of loss and painful present experiences. We ask for strength for today, courage for tomorrow, and peace for the future....*



Another: Lord, we give you our feelings of loss and sadness, and we pray for those we love who have died. We pray that everyone might find new life with you, and that we will remember your promises of courage and comfort, which you have given each of us....

How lovely it was for me, in the chiaroscuro of the darkened cathedral, not only to take part in a common prayer but also to go inside to the raw places and once again acknowledge the hurt, and then to spread the calming salve of forgiveness. It's in the past, I said. Let it go, I said....

The final prayer makes me smile with relief and want to breathe deeply every time I pray it. See what it does for you:

Lord, it is night. The night is stillness. Let us be still in the presence of God. It is night after a long day. What has been done has been done; what has not been done has not been done; let it be....

These prayers were written by folks who have or have had the feelings and problems that you and I have or have had. Just plain ol' people like you and me.

I may not have received a blast of insight and grace, but I know that I got a nudge. I hope you did too.

Shalom



The Grace of Roots

By Elizabeth Nelson

Near the back door of my office building on Sutter Street is a strong old tree, taller and thicker than most street-trees in San Francisco, shading the sidewalk and curb with branches that reach past the roofs of nearby houses. Whenever I walk up that block, I find myself trying to look in two directions at once: up, to admire the tree, and down, to make sure I don't trip. The sidewalk-slabs around the tree are – well, let's say they're not even footing any more. Some bulge a little, some tilt outright, a few are cracked completely apart.

It's the roots, of course. One reason the tree has grown so well is that its roots take their mission seriously. They want water and nutrients to feed the tree; they'll grow in any direction to look for them, and they're unconcerned about what they break or push out of the way in the process. They're not loud, or toxic, or violent. They're just incredibly alive and incredibly persistent, and they won't take "I'm solid concrete and I was here first" for an answer. The roots dig deep, and they dig all around ... and the tree grows strong and tall.

Here's the thing, though: the spectacular efficiency of those roots may also be putting the tree at risk. Recently someone's come along and spray-painted a little target onto every slab of pavement near the tree that's bulged, tilted, or cracked. Maybe they've been marked so that some genius sidewalk engineer can figure out a way to re-pave that patch; or maybe they've been marked to help justify a property owner's petition to have the tree cut down. It happens often in the city: we like to *plant* trees, we tolerate them while they're spindly and need propping up, but let one start to get some height and fullness and somebody will decide it's a nuisance. Too much shade, too many leaves being shed, branches growing every which way ... and those damn roots.

"May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith," Paul wrote to the Ephesians, "as you are being rooted and grounded in love." *Rooted and grounded in love*. Who wouldn't want that? Who couldn't grow and bear fruit in amazing ways, putting roots into that kind of ground? Think about Jesus, rooted so profoundly in the



love of his *Abba* in Heaven that he became a Tree of Life to everyone he met – feeding, sheltering, breathing freshness into the very air around him. *Rooted and grounded in love*. Think about it!

Think about *all* of it. Think about the way that Jesus' roots, feeding God's love to him and everyone who gathered around him, also tore up the foundations of the society he lived in. Think about the endless attempts made to prune him or pave around him, until finally the pruners and pavers got so frustrated that they cut him down.

Roots have consequences. And they don't come with guarantees.

So, should we avoid putting down roots of our own? Not for a second. Being *rooted and grounded in love* is exactly the grace that it sounds like, consequences and all. Dig deep, soak it up, grow and bear fruit for all you're worth; be fed, be food. If you end up quietly cracking open some pavement in the process – well, maybe that will create some more growing room for you and for others ... or maybe the powers-that-be will decide you're enough of a nuisance to get the axe. If that happens, you still lived a life *rooted and grounded in love*, a life that added fruit and freshness to the world every day you lived it.

And again, think about Jesus. Turns out, that Tree's roots were too deep to let it stay dead for long. Think about the fruit and the freshness of that Tree since it got cut down, and let the grace of roots take root in you. No guarantees; just faith – faith in Jesus the Tree of Life, growing always and forever out of the ground of Love.



CALENDAR

- Jan. 29-31 St. James Vestry Retreat. Keep them in your prayers!
- Feb. 7 10 a.m. Community Eucharist (child-friendly liturgy)
- Feb. 11 *Lectio Divina*: Journey through the Gospel of Mark (See p.1)
- Feb. 14 “Music of the Heart” Concert, 5:00 p.m. (See p. 4)
- Feb. 16 Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, 6:30 p.m. (See p. 3)
- Feb. 17 Ash Wednesday – Services at Noon and 7:00 p.m. (See p. 1)
- Feb. 22 St. James Chamber Players “A-Z” Concert Series, 7:30 p.m. (See p. 8)
- Feb. 25 *Lectio Divina*: Journey through the Gospel of Mark (See p. 1)
- Feb. 28 The Night Shift – St. James Youth Service, 5:00 p.m.
-

**The St. James Community Journal is a monthly publication of
the Community Center at St. James, whose partners include:**

St. James Episcopal Church

Rev. Won-Jae Hur, Interim Rector
4620 California Street
San Francisco, CA 94118
415.751.1198
fax 415.751.1545
stjames@stjamesf.org
www.stjamesf.org

St. James Preschool

Roger Setterfield, Head of School
4620 California Street
San Francisco, CA 94118
415.752.8258
rsetterfield@stjamesf.org
www.stjamespreschoolsf.org

**The Community Learning Center
at St. James**

4620 California Street
San Francisco, CA 94118
415.751.1199
www.clcstjames.org

The California Counseling Institute

Elaine Chan-Scherer,
Executive Director
4614 California Street
San Francisco, CA 94118
415.752.1702
ccpsyche@earthlink.net
<http://californiacounseling.org>

**We welcome your articles
on or before the 15th
of the month.**

Submit articles to:
elizabethn@ifcs.org

Editor:

Elizabeth Nelson

Distribution:

Andrew Hom, Elizabeth Nelson,
Erazm Pochron, and Judy Spain