

Enjoy the St. James Sept. Journal



## St. James Community Journal September 2014

Dear St. James Members and Friends,

Please enjoy reading the September St. James Journal. For our upcoming events please visit [www.stjamesf.org](http://www.stjamesf.org). If you have items for the next journal, please contact Rose Scarff. For more info about St. James please contact Erazm Pochron in the church office at [stjames@stjamesf.org](mailto:stjames@stjamesf.org) or (415) 751-1198 x2. Thank you!

--Rose and Erazm

### St. James Goes Solar

by The Rev. John Kirkley, Rector



At its August 24 meeting, the Vestry approved a proposal from **American Solar** to install a solar panel system at St. James. Earlier this year, the Vestry appointed Tom Matthews, Brad Drda, Brad Meikle, and Erazm Pochron to a Solar Power Task Force and charged them with responsibility for researching the feasibility of solar power at St. James, and soliciting and reviewing bids for a solar power installation. After reviewing many options and receiving three complete bids from contractors, the Task Force recommended American Solar and the Vestry concurred.

American Solar will be installing a 9.9 kW SunPower E20-327 commercial panel system on the apartment building at 4614-4616 California Street (which houses part of the Preschool, the California Counseling Institute, and the Rectory). There will be a total of 30 modules on the east and west facing slopes of the roof. Over a 25-year period the system will produce 96-99% of our energy usage and cover about 83% of our energy costs for the entire St. James campus (PG&E charges some fixed administrative costs that we cannot offset).

Frequently Asked Questions:

#### **Q. Why go solar?**

A. Some key benefits of the project include:

- Provide nearly 100% of our electricity from clean, renewable energy
- American Solar covers all system operating and maintenance costs for 10 years
- System installation warranty is for 10 years
- Solar panel warranty is 25 years for product and performance and includes replacement cost
- Hedge against the continued rise in PG&E electricity rates
- We can monitor the solar energy production from any internet connection

- Witnesses to the wider community our commitment to sustainability and care of creation, reducing fossil fuel dependency and climate change impacts
- SunPower, the manufacturer of the solar panels, is rated among the top three companies in the solar PV sector for socially responsible business practices by the Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition

**Q. How much will this cost?**

A. The total up-front cost to St. James is \$37,505. This includes a rebate of \$8,861 from the City of San Francisco's Go Solar program. The total up-front cost includes purchase and installation of the solar panel system, and a prepaid Power Purchasing Agreement (PPA) through American Solar's internal financing arm whereby we pre-pay for the electricity that is generated by the system for the 10 year term of the PPA. During that 10-year period, American Solar owns and operates the solar panel system. The PPA provides a 15% reduction in the overall cost of the project due to tax credits available by using solar power. At the end of the ten-year term we buyout American Solar at an additional cost of \$5,455. Thus, the total cost is \$42,960. Due to savings in electricity costs, the project basically pays for itself in about 11 years.

**Q. How will we pay for this?**

A. The Vestry has allocated \$10,000 from the Building Fund towards the project. Since the St. James Preschool and the California Counseling Institute are responsible for a percentage of our PG&E bill (per their lease agreements), they will contribute to the cost of the PPA as well. We estimate that amount to be approximately \$10,000 - \$15,000 over the 10-year term of the PPA. The balance of the cost, approximately \$20,000, will be covered by a small capital campaign early in 2015. In addition, American Solar operates a Solar Energy Affiliate program, whereby members of St. James Church and Preschool receive a \$500 discount for installing solar panel systems at their home or business, and St. James Church then receives a \$500 contribution from American Solar.

**Q. When will the solar panel system be installed?**

A. The permitting and Go Solar application process already are underway. Depending upon how quickly the paperwork is processed, installation will begin and will take approximately one week. We anticipate the completion of the project by November 2014.

**Q. Will this project affect the aesthetics of the property?**

A. The entire solar panel system will be located on the apartment building roof only, so there will be no change to the appearance of the office building or the church building. The apartment building is the best location in terms of aesthetic impact, energy production efficiency due to the slope of the roof, and ongoing maintenance (the roof is only three years old).

A parish meeting will be held on Sunday, September 21st at 11:30 a.m. to provide a more complete presentation of the project and how you can support it. Darren Malvin from American Solar will be with us to answer questions about the project and the Solar Energy Affiliate program. Please join us for this important presentation.

This is an exciting project that will benefit St. James and the planet for many years to come. It is an act of good stewardship of resources on the widest possible scale. On behalf of the Vestry, I want to thank Erazm Pochron, Brad Drda, Tom Matthews, and Brad Meikle for their wise counsel, expertise, and due diligence.

## The Ordination of a Priest

by **Doreen Canton**



I had the great pleasure of attending the ordination of Jane Mitchell Weston to the priesthood on June 21st, 2014 at The Cathedral of St. Philip in Atlanta. As some of you will remember, Jane attended St. James for about 10 years before moving to Atlanta with her husband Hal early in 2009. While at St. James, Jane was an active member of the parish, participating in many programs and committees and serving on Vestry. Although Jane came from a Southern Baptist tradition, she enjoyed exploring the Episcopal tradition and started to realize she might have a vocation. That led her to take a number of classes at CDSP in Berkeley. Moving to Atlanta, Jane continued to explore her calling and became involved in the Diocese of Atlanta. She attended Seminary at the Candler School of Theology, Emory University, in Atlanta, graduating this spring.

St. Phillips is a beautiful cathedral and we had a wonderful service celebrated by The Right Reverend Robert C. Wright, with a great sermon delivered by The Right Reverend Keith Whitmore. We even had a very loud thunder clap during the consecration of the priests. The service was conducted in both English and Spanish and many of Jane's family, including her mother and aunts, were present to witness this special occasion. Also present were close friends from her law school days, Ray and Mary Munoz, former St. James members who now live in Phoenix Arizona, and me and my husband, Lu. Closer to home were priests and members of her sponsoring parish, All Saints, and the Senior Warden and members of Jane's new Parish, St. Simons, located in Conyers about 20 miles from the city of Atlanta.

For those of you who know Jane, you will remember her graciousness and her excellent party and planning skills. In true Jane fashion, she helped her friends who traveled from various parts of the country find accommodation and car pools and hosted us for meals at her house, including a big party on Saturday evening. She was supported by Hal, her aunts, friends and neighbors. Needless to say a great time was had by all.

Jane will be visiting St. James on Sunday October 19th. She would love to see old friends and make new ones, so mark your calendar to visit with Jane on that day.

## News from the Vestry

by **Barbara Webb, Senior Warden**



Your Vestry met on Sunday, August 24 to discuss a very full agenda. One thing we are doing this year is "Check-In." How has your month gone, do you have issues that you're dealing with. Because the Vestry did not meet in July, everyone had more "check-in" than usual. The fellowship was wonderful and much needed. It was good to hear about everyone's summer. Hard to believe that summer is almost gone; September is upon us.

The Solar Task Force has completed their study of the feasibility of St James going solar. Erazm Pochron gave an outstanding presentation of their report. The Vestry voted to go ahead with the project using the company recommended, and also approved the cost. See Rector John Kirkley's article above. A Parish meeting will be held on September 21 to inform everyone and hopefully answer all questions.

Doreen Canton is this year's Stewardship Chair. The theme is "You Belong Here" from Ephesians 2:19-22. Doreen wants all of you involved. Many of you have been asked and have agreed to do different tasks i.e. hosting dinners, working on the pledge packet (writing, layout, graphics). Thank you. The more people there are to do the small tasks, the easier it will be. The initial Fellowship dinners will take place on the weekends in October. We plan to have dinners throughout the year. More news and sign-ups will follow. Remember Stewardship is giving of your time and talent to the Church. The pledge campaign is only one part of that.

The Christian Education committee has several things planned including (1) a six session series for adults starting September 24 titled "I'm New to the Episcopal Church", (2) bringing back the sermon chat after the 10 o'clock service, (3) once a month Spiritual Direction class, (4) an Advent series focusing on prayer.

Remember when The Youth Group did some of the services during the year? Under their new leader [Sarah Montoya](#), they will be doing three services this year – one Sunday each during Advent, Lent and Pentecost. This is exciting. The Youth have such a different refreshing approach to worship and what it means to be a part of the St James community and God's plan.

Pastor John Kirkley has been asked by the San Francisco Organizing Project if he would join a group of clergy, both Muslim and Christian, and go to Ferguson, MO to counsel, and witness for justice in that troubled community. John, you take our prayers with you.

Upcoming dates to remember–

**Sept. 7** – Vestry/Deanery Day. In the Parish Hall during coffee hour. Learn what the Vestry does. What is the Deanery? Past and present members will tell you their experiences.

**Sept. 14** – Prop 47 briefing. Prop 47 which will be on the ballot in November, is a sentencing reform measure that also will redirect state funding from prisons to schools, mental health services and drug rehab. The briefing will be held from 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 a.m. The briefing is in conjunction with the San Francisco Organizing Project. They will provide a speaker from the Prop 47 campaign. See my article elsewhere in the journal on SFOP.

**Sept. 21** – Parish meeting to discuss the solar project

**Sept. 28** – Parish picnic. Mountain Lake Park

**Oct. 4** – Legacy Society dinner

**October** – Stewardship dinners

**Oct. 17** - Art Show

Reminder, all vestry meetings are open to members of the congregation should you wish to attend. Approved copies of the [minutes and the financial report will now be posted online](#).

## Junior Warden Report

*by Doreen Canton*



Join us for a morning of fun and companionship as the intrepid members of St. James gather on **Saturday, September 13th, 2014 starting at 9 a.m.** to repair, clean and to catalog the contents of our church, as part of

our disaster preparedness plan. We will be compiling our work day list, so if you notice something that needs attention please let Doreen or [Erazm](#) know so we can add it to our list. If you are unable to be present on the 13th, there are many small jobs that can be done outside our work morning; please let me know your availability and I can delegate a task to you. Thank you in anticipation of a great turnout.

The disaster preparedness committee is once again up and running, having a very productive first meeting on August 25th. We were able to identify our primary goal and some critical areas that we need to pay immediate attention to. We are hoping to accomplish a lot of the church inventory as part of our next work day. If you are interested in joining this small but dedicated group, please let Doreen know. Our next meeting is scheduled for September 22nd at 7 pm.

## Aloneness

**by Elaine Chan-Scherer, LCSW  
California Counseling Institute**



I just came back from a vacation in a country whose language is totally foreign to me. It took effort to communicate, but I knew that I didn't know the language and so I needed help. I knew I had to reach out and that my comprehension and understanding was limited.

I had also been thinking about a dear friend who has been feeling lonely and isolated. My belief is that we are both alone and connected. We are each an individual being with our own thoughts and feelings, but we are also connected to each other and to Life itself. What if Life is actively trying to engage us and it is a matter of our being able to understand Life's language?

Life is speaking to us all the time. The problem may arise if you assume you understand the language of Life, and you actually don't. Life speaks to us in ways that are more accessible if you slow down, pause, and notice. Our American culture is increasingly less and less attuned to subtleties. We look at something, deal with it, and then are on to the next thing (akin to clicking on a new link on the computer).

So many of the articles we write from CCI deal with pausing. I think of each of my colleagues and can name the ways that they pause in their day-to-day lives. If you don't do this already, try going out to any place (in nature or on your sidewalk, or even in your bathroom). Stop, notice how your breath enters and exits your body without your having to make it happen. Do this for a minute. Then let your senses take in something in your surroundings. It is easier to do this in nature, because there is always movement, always change, always active engagement.

I subscribe to a poetry email from Panhala. Recently, a David Whyte poem was posted and I shared it with the staff at CCI. They all liked it, and perhaps you will too:

### **Everything Is Waiting For You**

(After Derek Mahon)

Your great mistake is to act the drama  
as if you were alone. As if life  
were a progressive and cunning crime  
with no witness to the tiny hidden  
transgressions. To feel abandoned is to deny  
the intimacy of your surroundings. Surely,  
even you, at times, have felt the grand array;  
the swelling presence, and the chorus, crowding

out your solo voice. You must note  
the way the soap dish enables you,  
or the window latch grants you freedom.  
Alertness is the hidden discipline of familiarity.  
The stairs are your mentor of things  
to come, the doors have always been there  
to frighten you and invite you,  
and the tiny speaker in the phone  
is your dream-ladder to divinity.

Put down the weight of your aloneness and ease into  
the conversation. The kettle is singing  
even as it pours you a drink, the cooking pots  
have left their arrogant aloofness and  
seen the good in you at last. All the birds  
and creatures of the world are unutterably  
themselves. Everything is waiting for you.

~ David Whyte ~

Notice your favorite ways of "easing into the conversation." How do you receive what Life is offering?

*California Counseling Institute has served the Episcopal Diocese for over 20 years, as well as San Francisco Presbyterian and Methodist churches by acting as a resource for psychotherapy to Bay Area Ministers and their parishioners. Our experienced therapists believe that the healing process is best achieved through the integration of psychotherapy and spirituality. CCI is a non-profit Institute, dedicated to providing therapy to people of all income levels, and can provide therapy to low-income clients by supplementing their cost through the Client Assistance Fund. [www.californiacounseling.org](http://www.californiacounseling.org)*

## **SFOP/PIA/COVENANT OF CARE/LIFELINES TO HEALING**

**by Barbara Webb, Senior Warden**



For the last several months, St. James has been talking about SFOP, PIA, Covenant of Care, Lifelines to Healing. What are they? Who are they?

SFOP (San Francisco Organizing Project) and PIA (Peninsula Interfaith Agency) are members of the PICO National Network and PICO California. PICO is one of the largest community-based efforts in the United States working in 150 cities and towns and 17 states. Its members consist of one thousand congregations from 40 different denominations and faiths. PICO was founded in 1972 under the leadership of Father John Baumann, a Jesuit priest who had learned community organizing in Chicago. PICO California's mission is to bring the voices and concerns of regular Californians to the statewide policy arena. PICO California is made up of 19 congregation based community organizations representing 350 congregations and 450,000 families across the state.

SFOP and PIA have now merged giving both organizations more strength and forming a broader based constituency able to influence public officials to make better decisions about important issues that affect us all –

health care, affordable housing, high quality education, immigrant integration, neighborhood safety, equitable economic opportunity, care and support of the elderly.

I have become involved with the Covenant of Care which researches and advocates regarding issues concerning the care and support of seniors. Our Rector, the Rev. John Kirkley has become involved with Lifelines to Healing that is focused on issues of gun violence, mass incarceration, health, and economic opportunity for boys and men of color.

Let me tell you about the Covenant of Care. COC originally consisted of Congregation Sherith Israel, Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, Star of the Sea Catholic Church, and St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church. In November 2013 they met with Supervisors David Campos and David Chiu and all agreed to and signed the San Francisco Public Covenant of Care:

Today, we people of faith, along with our civil leaders, join in covenant to make San Francisco a City for All in which:

- Everyone has access to healthcare
- Our elders have the necessary services and support to live with dignity security, and peace.

Since this meeting, St. James Episcopal Church and Trinity St. Peters Episcopal Church have joined the COC. Some recent and ongoing work:

- Gave input to the SF LGBT Aging Policy Task Force before it released its report and recommendation in March 2014.
- Worked with other advocates to successfully get SF an exemption from the 10% Medi-Cal rate cut to Adult Day Care Health Care. Our thanks go to Senator Mark Leno for his help working with the California Dept. of Health and Human Services.
- Successfully advocated on behalf of and lent support to an ordinance sponsored by Supervisor David Campos and passed by the Board of Supervisors in June, 2014 which closes the loophole in the Employer Spending Requirement of the Health Care Security Ordinance (HCSO) by January 2017 so that every penny set aside for employees' health care will actually be spent on health care.
- Met with the Institute on Aging, San Francisco Village, On Lok and continue to reach out to meet those whom we can learn from and partner with to fulfill our Public Covenant of Care.

One of the next big challenges that PICO, and by extension PICO California and SFOP/COC, faces is the injustice and many problems caused by the U.S. Supreme Court decision handed down on June 30 which weakens the collective bargaining power of Caregivers and Home Health Workers and seriously jeopardizes the ability of seniors and people with disabilities to get the reliable care they need to remain at home. Numerous non-partisan and multi-cultural faith based organizations strongly condemned the decision.

For further information on PICO's stand regarding the Supreme Court's decision or any questions about PICO go to [www.piconetwork.org](http://www.piconetwork.org). For information about SFOP go to [www.sfop.org](http://www.sfop.org) or talk to me, to Rev. John Kirkley or Anne Rieger-Matthews.

## The Parable of the Sower

by Mary Balmana



*Editor's note: This is a shortened version of the sermon Mary gave on July 13th. Next month we will share Elizabeth Nelson's sermon given on July 27th.*

The Parable of the Sower is found in all 3 synoptic gospels; it is the first of seven "Kingdom" parables. In the previous chapter 12, Matthew narrates Jesus' conflicts with the Pharisees, who are now plotting to destroy him and accuse him of working for Satan. By the end of Chapter 12 Jesus (*Matthew 12:46-50*) appears to be at odds even with his own family. Why is Jesus encountering so much hostility? So many disregard his message and discredit his ministry. The parable of the sower also probes the mystery of mixed responses to Jesus and his ministry.

Jesus teaches from a boat at sea; however the teaching refers to the earth using the images of seeds and soil. Jesus clearly explains what each element in the parable represents. But it also raises some challenging questions: Who qualifies as good soil? Since soil cannot change itself, is there any hope for the hardened, rocky and thorny soil?

It would appear at first glance from Jesus' interpretation of the parable, that where the seeds fall determines the fate of the harvest, that it is a one shot deal. Those seeds that fall on the hardened ground are eaten by the birds with no chance of growth. The seed that falls on ground under which there is stone, can grow, but quickly withers due to lack of nourishment. Then, there are those that are cast upon ground which is fertile, but grow among bramble and branches, to be choked by thorns. The Gospel this week and the Isaiah reading suggest the Word of God is an experience. And listening is the key to that experience "Let Anyone who has ears--Listen!"

I would like to challenge you to break down each component of the Gospel:

This is an invitation to examine "where is God speaking to me today?" In my research, one theologian suggests we vacillate between all four states of the four soils. Consider the following: When have you heard God's word and it made no sense, or you failed to hear the message? When have you realized that while you thought you heard God speaking, you doubted and questioned and dismissed it as being improbable, illogical or wrong instead of exploring and discerning for the possibilities? When have you struggled to hear God's word but there were too many distractions (work, TV, cell phones, email, social media, relationships) that did not allow for quiet time to apply what you desire the most; to have a close relationship with God that informs and shapes what you do and the person you are?

Then there are the times that are grace filled where there is no doubt that what we hear—expressed through the Gospel, sometimes through the voice of others in our lives that there it is the voice of God speaking directly to us and we are one with the Spirit and act accordingly.

I am reminded that in my life at St. James I have had the opportunity to grow and flex my spiritual muscles. Sometimes I take a back seat and show up, it's all I can do to get in my car and come to church on Sundays after a 50 hour work week where I mix in yoga and strength training in the wee hours of the morning. Sometimes I physically cannot do more than that.

It has been ten years since my divorce; when I first separated I could barely drag myself to church. But I did and

every Sunday I made myself receive the laying on of hands and prayers in the side chapel by the Healing Team. I did not know whether it would work or not, but slowly through the years I found myself in a place that I could never have imagined. Some of the healing and work was passive, I am certain fertile seeds fell to the wayside because of my grief, disappointment and anger I could not hear or receive....not at that time.

Slowly I started to get involved, Flower guild, Lectio Divina, and the Liturgy Committee where I individually partook and participated—usually tired, but once I showed up, I could not help but be energized by being with others who are committed to sharing their gifts and faith and who care about me.

Through the years I have relearned to care for myself—physically, mentally and spiritually. I been challenged with the bramble and thorns of work demands, family issues, and distractions. However, without explaining why, I faithfully participated and sought healing and prayers through the Healing Ministry Team. On occasion, I have been called to lay hands on those who seek healing. Again, I am surprised at how when I give of myself, I in turn am blessed with compassionate and healing grace.

I invite you to consider that God, through Jesus, is a generous sower—the gospel demonstrates generosity in sowing seeds in all soil conditions, at all times of our lives without discrimination. It is an extravagant use of a commodity that in Jesus' time was hard to fathom, throwing good seed among any place other than fertile soil. But the Kingdom does not discriminate and the yield is magnanimous—thirty to 100 fold, something unheard of in His time.

Lutheran minister Karoline Lewis writes "in the end, it is the promise that in those grace-filled times when everything seems to come together, when what you have heard from, and about God, what your life tells you, what your community affirms, is THE fruit you bear as unique as what you hear. It is not how much fruit you harvest. Rather, it is how God's word has taken hold in you. The parable is not about who hears God's word best; rather it is about what the hearing creates in each of you."

I invite you to reflect on your soil and the fruit it bears and consider sharing what you know or what concerns you have with the community of St. James. One opportunity to actively listen and share is through our "Season of Listening." We DO want to hear and get to know you better. –The promise of the gospel is that the fruit bears thirty, sixty and a hundredfold! A kingdom greater than we alone could not possibly realize or imagine, but together as a community can build.

Blessings and grace to all of you: "let all of you who hear—Listen AND share."

## SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

September 4, Thursday	6:30 p.m. <i>Lectio Divina</i> group
September 7, Sunday	Services at 8 a.m. & 10 a.m. Mindfulness Meditation after 10:00 a.m. service
September 13, Saturday	7:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast
September 14, Sunday	Service at 8 a.m. & 10 a.m. Service 9 a.m. Choir Practice St. James serves at Martin de Porres House of Hospitality Prop. 47 Briefing after 10:00 a.m. service
September 18, Thursday	6:30 p.m. <i>Lectio Divina</i> group
September 21, Sunday	Services at 8 a.m. & 10 a.m. Noon – Vestry Meeting – Caldwell Room
September 27, Saturday	10 a.m. Women's Group meeting at Creative Canopy
September 28, Sunday	Services at 8 a.m. & 10 a.m. 9 a.m. Choir Practice 11:30 a.m. St. James Picnic in Mountain Lake Park
Every Tuesday	7:30 a.m. Morning Prayer & Meditation
Every Wednesday	6:30 p.m. Evening Prayer & Meditation 7:30 p.m. Buddhist Meditation in Caldwell Room

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The St. James Community Journal is a monthly publication on behalf of:

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