



# eTower



A weekly email publication for the community of St. James Church in College Hill

## Message of the Moment

### Merry Christmas

Rejoice! Once again the angels and a multitude of the heavenly host are praising God and singing "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace to God's people on earth!"

Greetings to God's beloved people at Christmas! In this confusing time of cheer and fear, here are a few things to keep in mind:



**God proved through the birth of Jesus that there is nothing in life we can't overcome with God.** You can think of many hardships Jesus endured while he was living among us. He was left behind after a family trip to Jerusalem. He was betrayed by one of his closest friends. He faced hungry crowds, endured torture, and was even put to death on a cross. This information is hard to take. It is painful to know about the suffering of people, especially those we love. However, when you face the ramifications of a worldwide pandemic, worry about the consequences of climate change, or feel discouraged by financial downturns, remember that "this too shall pass." There is life on the other side of all horrible experiences. Jesus, the child whose birth we celebrate, has shown us that nothing but God and eternal life last forever. By the grace of God, we live again and forever. We wouldn't know this if Jesus (God) had not been born of a humble, human mother. Thank God for the Incarnation we celebrate.

**Everyone is adopted into kinship with Jesus.** Everyone is a brother or sister of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Not only does this

mean that we, personally, are beloved and counted as members of the family of God; it means that every single person was created in the image of God. When we look into the faces of our loved ones, we see the divinity of God alive in them. When we see people who are suffering due to natural disasters, violence, poverty, sickness and isolation, or because they are hungry and unhoused, we also behold the siblings of Jesus. If you look into their eyes, you will know your kinship with them. As we are remembering the life of Jesus among us, we can't forget the rest of the family. We are called to remember the second great commandment: love your neighbor as you love yourself.

**The gift of Jesus is that he loved everyone.** The life of Jesus taught us that he was not concerned with material possessions. No one who came to the table to eat a meal with Jesus was ever turned away – unless they wanted to keep others from the table. He felt compassion for the rich young man who could not give away everything he owned to come and follow him. He wept with his friends who were grieving over the death of their brother. He raised to life again the child of a faithful Roman soldier. He healed outcasts from society and saw them reincorporated into the community. He had pity on the souls who did not know what they were doing when they crucified the man whose birth we celebrate each year on December 25.

This year (if you are able, and if you can be safe), celebrate the divine kinship we share by gathering with people you love and reveling in it. Have patience with people the way Jesus was patient with sinners, tax collectors, prostitutes, and centurions. See the value in individuals, not the value of material possessions. Rejoice as Joseph and Mary rejoiced in the stable among the animals and the angels. A miracle has happened. God came, in the birth of Jesus, to live among us. We have been given this gift, the key, to be able to begin to apprehend the love of God. Take that into your heart, ponder it, and share it with everyone you meet this Christmas. AMEN.

God bless you,  
Mother Dawn+

## First Things First

**We are worshiping at three services Christmas Eve.** The first is at 4 p.m. with a staffed nursery. The second is at 7 p.m., and the third — with incense — is at 11 p.m. The 7 p.m. Christmas Eve service will be live-streamed on our YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/c/StJamesWichita>. The video will be available to watch at your convenience on our YouTube channel and our website.

We will worship at **10 a.m. Christmas Day**. There is no 5:30 p.m.

service Saturday.

**On the First Sunday after Christmas**, a cellist from the Wichita Symphony Orchestra and members of music director and organist Marlene Hallstrom's family will join us for worship at 10 a.m.

## Readings This Week



Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

[Click here to go to the Lectionary Page](#)

[Click here for a free PDF download of the Book of Common Prayer](#)

**Lessons appointed for the First Sunday after Christmas:**

[Isaiah 61:10-62:3](#)

[Galations 3:23-25; 4:4-7](#)

[John 1:1-18](#)

[Psalm 147](#)

## Calendar

Click here to view our  
current calendar of events

Calendar

## Parish News and Updates

If you would like to contribute toward a gift for **Curate Dillon Green's ordination**, please write a check to the church with "Dillon's ordination" in the memo line. His ordination is at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 8, at Grace Episcopal Cathedral in Topeka. Masks are required.

**Our annual meeting** will be at 10:30 a.m. Sunday, Jan. 23. Services that day will be at 9:30 a.m.

## Children and Youth

The next Children's Sunday school and Children's Chapel will be Jan. 2 starting at 9:30 a.m. upstairs in the children's area. We are learning about John the Baptist. Ages preschool to fifth grade are welcome to join. You can read more about our children's programs at: <https://stjameswichita.org/learn/children/>. For questions or comments, please contact Chelsea at [formation@stjameswichita.org](mailto:formation@stjameswichita.org) or 683-5686.

We are in need of **nursery volunteers**. Please consider joining this fruitful ministry. [Please click here to email Chelsea.](#)

## Outreach

**St. James Outreach Committee** sincerely thanks the congregation for generous help with all our projects and for caring about service to our community. In spite of COVID, this congregation has displayed kindness and dedication to serving others. We wish you all a blessed Christmas!

**The Christmas Project** was a huge success because of your caring and commitment to service. Twenty-two large food baskets accompanied by gift cards of \$25 and \$50 for each person were delivered to families served by Breakthrough ESS, St. Francis Ministries, or Kansas Children's Service League. **Seventy-five people** were helped by your gifts. Thank you to the **food and gift card donors**. Thank you to **Jose for sorting the food and gifts**. Thank you to the **Youth Group for assembling the baskets**. Thank you to **Matthew Kroecker** for helping load delivery cars. Thank you to the **drivers who delivered the baskets**. And thank you to **Mary Druding**, who again master-minded this beautiful project.

St. James parishioners have shown their compassion for **Afghan refugees** by contributing \$1,050 this fall to **Episcopal Migration**

**Ministries.** EMM is one of the main agencies nationwide helping with refugee settlement.

## Prayer

### Parish Prayers for the Week of Dec. 26

**In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer:** Pray for our Full Communion Partner, the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar, India.

**In the World Council of Churches Cycle of Prayer:** Pray for the people of Ghana and Nigeria.

**In the Kansas Cycle of Prayer:** Pray for Calvary, Yates Center

**Pray for those serving in the military:** Will Corkins, J. David Anderson-Lusk and Maureen Tanner.

**Pray for those who have died:** Ann Lusk (mother of Luree Lusk), Gretchen Waite, George Armantrout, Brad Woods, Hugh Auchterlonie, Carl Brink, Ruth Elrick, Margery (Pat) Evans, Betty Robinson, Margaret Sandlin, Everett (Ev) Stephenson and Marcia Thudium.

**Pray for those who are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness or any other adversity:** Ann Elizabeth and Glenna, Denise, Pat, Marilyn, Sue, Buck, Pam, Danny, Brad G., David, Darwin, Jim T., Sage, Gary, Ian, Mary (niece of Kate Miller), Helen, Laura, Jean, Marge, Dal, Jayne, Betty, Gus, Bob, Joe, Jerry, Larry, Mary, George, Carly, Tom, Cindy, Cathy, Kam, all people with COVID-19, and all health care workers.

**Our Parish Prayer List:** All members of our parish community are asked to pray for each person on our prayer list. To share your prayers of thanksgiving (births, weddings, new jobs, anniversaries, etc.), to notify us that someone you love is serving in the military, to share that you or someone you love is suffering, or to tell us of a death, please call 316-683-5686 or email [office@stjameswichita.org](mailto:office@stjameswichita.org).

**If your prayers have been answered,  
we would love to rejoice with you.  
Please let us know so your name may be removed  
from our list of people most urgently in need. Thank you.**

## Let Us Pray

Merry Christmas!

May a hurting world find peace and healing on this holy day.

The word peace, or versions of the word, is used in all but one New Testament book. It seems the angels had it right when they declared, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" They were declaring God's desire for right, harmonious relationships between all people and nations. Peace

also describes friendliness, freedom from attack, order, and a sense of rest and contentment. This kind of peace is often hard to find, for individuals and for governments, but the message of Christmas reminds us that Jesus came into the world as the Prince of Peace.

Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, My Peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid". ~ John 14:27

A Christmas Prayer by Robert Louis Stevenson:  
Loving Father, Help us remember the birth of Jesus,  
that we may share in the song of the angels,  
the gladness of the shepherds,  
and worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.  
May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

## Helpful Links

[View Last Week's Service](#)

[Contribute to St. James Church](#)

[Parish Leadership](#)



**Whoever you are and  
wherever you find yourself  
on your journey of faith,  
you are welcome here.**



St. James  
Episcopal Church  
CELEBRATING  
  
YEARS  
1920-2020  
A COMMUNION  
OF SAINTS

## Get in Touch with St. James Episcopal Church



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