

*Transforming
Lives Through
Jesus Christ*

SWORD POINTS

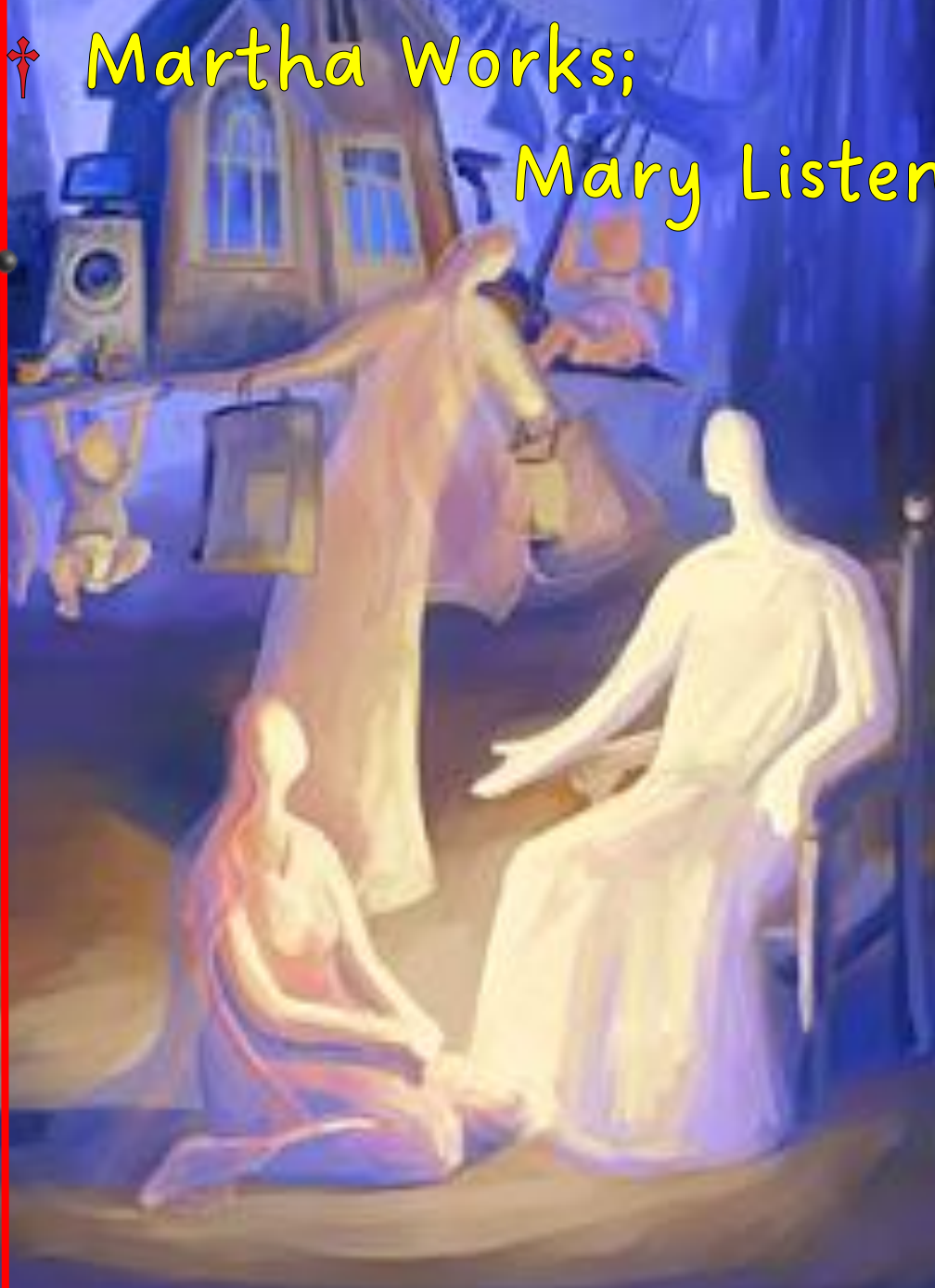
July 17, 2025

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(203) 775-9587



Martha Works; Mary Listens

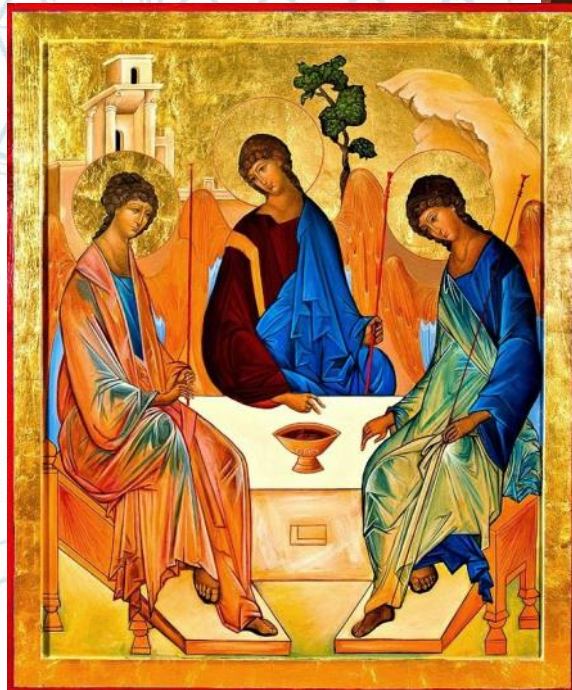


† Busy Is as Busy Doesn't

We're all so very *busy* despite all sorts and conditions of modern technology in our western culture that is supposed to encourage and allow more leisure time. Yet even our vacations are busy before, during, and after, to the point of exhaustion; and, in everyday life there is always so much more to be done. At home, at work, at Church - organize, plan, prepare, meet, discuss, re-organize, re-plan. Think: Christmas and Easter - oh the lists, the shopping, the food, the interminable interruptions of the other parts of life such as weddings, births, sickness, and those always inconvenient deaths. And, if you have children or teens at home, there are a thousand other things to do. Naturally we know that once everything settles down, we can get on with the business of the God and faith stuff. Well, except that as a volunteer, ministry participant, committee chair, or by just showing up on Sunday, God's business does get done, but where is the living in faith in all of that?

Yes, we try to do good work in God's name which is all well and fine as long as we remember to do what we do, and occasionally mention, that it is all in God's name. So, as soon as

Someday
IS NOT ON A CALENDAR



Cover Artwork:
"At the Home of
Martha and
Mary,"
by Ain Vares

time permits, we'll remember to trust in the mercy of God and give thanks, and declare the goodness of God's name, and be securely established and steadfast in the faith in the midst of all that the Marthas in our life.

Recently we saw a sign that said, "Someday is not on the calendar." Busy may accomplish earth-bound tasks in the life where someday never arrives. But being merely busy doesn't draw us closer to Christ. Let us choose the better part of the God-given life we have, a Mary-er life in faith.



“I have called you by name.” In his sermon on Wednesday, Fr. Nate preached on Mary Magdalene, and specifically about the way she was portrayed in *The Chosen*, Season 1, Episode 1. Click on the link above to watch the episode.

† *This Week at St. Paul's*

- | | | |
|--------------|------------|--|
| Thu, Jul 17 | - 9:30 am | - Iron Sharpens Iron Discussion Group, Guild Room |
| Sat, Jul 19 | - 7:30 am | - John 21:12 Group, Theo's Downtown Diner, New Milford |
| | - 8:00 am | - Men's Prayer Breakfast, Crocker Hall |
| | - 10:00 am | - St. Paul's Quilters, Crocker Hall |
| Sun, Jul 20 | | The 6th Sunday after Pentecost |
| | - 8:00 am | - Traditional Holy Communion (YouTube Live) |
| | - 9:30 am | - Adult Class, Guild Room |
| | - 10:30 am | - Contemporary Holy Communion (YouTube Live) |
| Mon, Jul 21 | - 7:00 pm | - Men's Bible Study, Crocker Hall (YouTube Live) |
| Tues, Jul 22 | - 9:30 am | - Ladies Tuesday AM Bible Study, Guild Room |
| Wed, Jul 23 | - 10:00 am | - Holy Communion & Healing (YouTube Live) |
| | 11 to Noon | - Drive-Thru Food Collection #138 |
| | - 11:30 am | - Summer Reading Group, Guild Room |
| | - 7:00 pm | - Ladies Evening Zoom Bible Study (Zoom) |
| Thu, Jul 24 | - 9:30 am | - Iron Sharpens Iron Discussion Group, Guild Room |
| | - 6:00 pm | - Young Women's Night Out, Maggie McFlys |
| | - 7:00 pm | - Finance Committee, Guild Room |
| Sat, Jul 26 | - 7:30 am | - John 21:12 Group, Theo's Downtown Diner, New Milford |
| | - 8:00 am | - Men's Prayer Breakfast, Crocker Hall |
| | - 1:00 pm | - Young Men & Dad's Cookout, Chris Buck's |
| Sun, Jul 27 | | The 7th Sunday after Pentecost |
| | - 8:00 am | - Traditional Holy Communion (YouTube Live) |
| | - 9:30 am | - Adult Class, Guild Room |
| | - 10:30 am | - Contemporary Holy Communion (YouTube Live) |

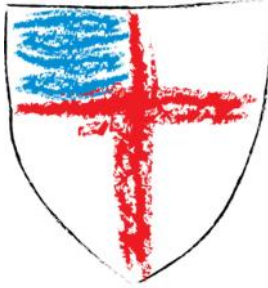
Check our website daily for schedule updates.

★ **THIS WEEK** ★



The Priest-in-Charge WEEKLY

Fr. Nate, our Priest-in-Charge is distributing a weekly e-mail to communicate things directly from his desk to yours. **Connection, communication, and care** are among the highest priorities of his new ministry, and he wants to make sure there are regular touch points between us. If you would like to receive "*The Priest-in-Charge Weekly*" and **already receive weekly e-mails from St. Paul's**, you don't have to do anything - you're already included on the list! If you would like to receive "*The Priest-in-Charge Weekly*" and **DO NOT receive weekly e-mails from St. Paul's**, or if you want to opt out, write Fr. Nate at priest@saintpaulsbrookfield.com and let him know.



† **Ih-pis-kuh-puh l / Dik-shuh-ner-ee**

(Episcopal Dictionary)



† **Absolution**

/ ab-suh-loo-shuhn /

Absolution - The formal act by a bishop or priest of pronouncing God's forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ. The absolution of sins reflects the ministry of reconciliation committed by Christ to the church. Absolution may be pronounced following private confession of sins, as provided for by the two forms for The Reconciliation of a Penitent in the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) (pp. 447-452). Absolution may also be pronounced following a general confession of sin in the Holy Eucharist, the Daily Offices, the Ash Wednesday service, and the Penitential Order. The BCP provides that a deacon or layperson may make a "Declaration of Forgiveness" by God of the penitent's sins after private confession and that a deacon or layperson may pray for God's forgiveness following the general confession in the Daily Offices.



† Transforming Stewardship

“...I am a minister in accordance with God’s stewardship given to me to bring to completion for you the word of God.”
Colossians 1:25

Believe it or not, we are all called to evangelize - to continuously grow in our knowledge and relationship with Jesus and to share it with others. We may not be called to evangelize like St. Paul, but we should look for opportunities to share our Faith with those closest to us, like our family and friends.



† This Date on the Church Calendar

Tuesday, July 22nd

St. Mary Magdalene

Mary Magdalene is mentioned in the Gospels as being among the women of Galilee who followed Jesus and His disciples, and who was present at His Crucifixion and Burial, and who went to the tomb on Easter Sunday to anoint His body. She was the first to see the Risen Lord, and to announce His Resurrection to the apostles. Accordingly, she is referred to in early Christian writings as "the apostle to the apostles."

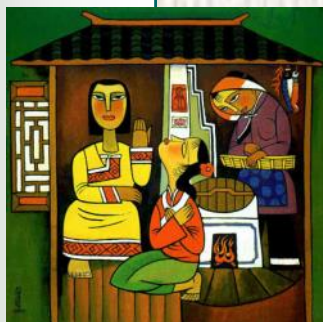
Mary Magdalene, Mary of Bethany (sister of Martha and Lazarus), and the unnamed penitent woman who anointed Jesus's feet (Luke 7:36-48) are sometimes supposed to be the same woman. From this, plus the statement that Jesus had cast seven demons out of her (Luke 8:2), has risen the tradition that she had been a prostitute before she met Jesus.

Because of the assumption that Mary Magdalene had been a spectacular



What do you think about Sunday’s Gospel reading?

1. Who do you relate to more - Mary or Martha?
2. Why does Jesus think Mary has made a good choice? What is his point?
3. What is Martha's problem?
4. Should we try to balance the Mary and Martha activities in our lives?



sinner, and also perhaps because she is described as weeping at the tomb of Jesus on the Resurrection morning, she is often portrayed in art as weeping, or with eyes red from having wept. From this appearance we derive the English word "maudlin", meaning "effusively or tearfully sentimental." There is a Magdalen College at Oxford, and a Magdalene College at Cambridge (different spelling), both pronounced "Maudlin."

† **Christ, Our Everything**

[Amos 8:1-12](#) - [Psalm 52](#) - [Colossians 1:15-28](#) - [Luke 10:38-42](#)

We pride ourselves on our independence and how we have made our lives secure. We are well insured, have excellent health coverage, fine pension programs, and good jobs. Yet there is a thirst at the center of our being. When in solitude, we ask the meaningful questions of life, and those questions always seem to hang in an answerless silence. Our problem is that we have allowed our search for security to crowd out God - the One with the answers. We have made ourselves deaf to the Word of God.

Real living comes not from the things we possess or consume, but from the source of life - God. As he spoke creation into being, God speaks life into our lives. Jesus is the Word of God.

St. Paul presents us with an amazingly complete summary of who Jesus really is in his letter to the Colossians. Here is his catalog of attributes:

Image of the invisible God: As the image of God, Jesus is the revelation of God's nature to the world.

Firstborn of all creation: Jesus being the firstborn of all creation does not mean that he was created first, for he is uncreated, but rather that he is the primogenitor or heir of all things.

Creator of all things: Because Jesus was the Creator, all things were created by him and for him - everything belongs to him.

Sustainer of all things: Jesus as the incarnate Son of God also is the One who keeps all creation in existence.

Head of the Church: Christ is the head of the Church because it does his work in this world according to his will.

The beginning: As the Son of God and the Creator, Jesus Christ is the Alpha, the beginning of all things, because he is before anything was.

Victor over death: By defeating death through the Resurrection, Jesus lives eternally and therefore is the Omega - the Last.

Temple of God: Because Jesus is the Incarnation of God, he is the dwelling place of God, which is God's

Temple - the Temple in Jerusalem was no longer needed and has never been rebuilt.

Reconciler of all things: Through his death on the cross of Calvary, Jesus took on our sin and gave us his righteousness so that we through faith in his sacrifice can be reconciled to God - and, along with us, all creation.

High Priest: Jesus is also our High Priest in that he presents the faithful to God.

Our hope: Jesus is the promised hope - he is our Savior and through faith in him we can realize the promise of being God's people and of God being faithful to us - eternally.

St. Paul's catalogue of Jesus' attributes demonstrates that Jesus is God and there is no other. No one else manifests all these attributes. No man, no angel, not even God the Father. No one but Jesus fulfills the categories of being divine and human, human and sinless, sinless and sin-bearer, necessary for our salvation.

But there is even more. St. Paul's catalog of attributes also demonstrates that Jesus is sovereign over every aspect of this life in this world. And because of that he eliminates the dualism between the spiritual and the natural and the sacred and the secular. There is no compartmentalization in the life and ministry of Jesus, so there can be no legitimate compartmentalization in the lives of his followers.

Look It Up: John 14:6-7

Think About It: Jesus is the only way to the Father. To know God, we must know Jesus as he has revealed himself.
- by The Rev. Dr. Chuck Alley, *The Living Church*, 2025



*Risen with Christ |
Fr. Lawrence Lew,
O.P./Flickr*

In today's world, much between Mary and feet of the Lord to learn, the details of providing have their places, and as and followers) and need to pray for balance the two in ways



is often made of the contrast Martha - one who sits at the and one who is consumed by hospitality. Both, of course, faithful disciples (students stewards (caretakers), we guidance and grace to pleasing to our Provider.



LOVE BEYOND RISING WATERS

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responding to

FLOODING IN TEXAS

FLASH FLOODS IN TEXAS HILL COUNTRY. PLEASE HELP.

Dozens are dead and dozens remain missing following the recent flash flooding in Texas Hill Country. Episcopal Relief & Development is working with the Diocese of West Texas to provide support in the coming days and weeks. Many in Kerrville, in their diocese and across Texas have personal connections to the missing campers and staff members impacted by this devastating crisis. As the scope of the disaster continues to unfold, we need your help. Please make an urgent tax-deductible donation to Episcopal Relief & Development today.





Responding to Flash Floods in Texas

Texas Flash Flood Relief: 014076

\$

0.00

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PRAY FOR TEXAS



Samaritan's Purse
INTERNATIONAL RELIEF

Take note

by Kirsten Peterson, Organist & Choirmaster

Greetings!

For our 8:00 service this Sunday, we'll be singing the ever-popular "Blessed Assurance," one of the most popular gospel hymns ever written. Don't worry...if you are not at the early service, you'll still get a chance to hear the song as the organ prelude. I'm happy to share with you today some information about the song as well as its 19th century creators: Frances Jane van Alstyne and Mrs. J. F. Knapp...better known as Fanny Crosby and Phoebe P. Knapp.

Let's begin with some fun facts about Fanny and Phoebe:



The hardest part about summarizing the life **Fanny Crosby** (1820-1915) is deciding what to leave out! There is SO much significance to the life and work of this blind poet and hymn writer, also known as "The Queen of Gospel Song Writers" and the "Mother of Modern Congregational Singing in America." She did write over 8,000, after all. I know that many of you are familiar with her work, but did you know she is local to our area? She was born over the state line in Brewster, NY, and died in Bridgeport (where she is buried at Mountain Grove Cemetery...as is P.T. Barnum. Maybe we should take a field trip?). Before moving to New York City where she was both student and educator at the New York Institute of the Blind, she resided for a time in both North Salem as well as Ridgefield. Her famous relatives include the Revolutionary War spy Enoch Crosby and singer/actor Bing Crosby. She was the first woman to address a joint session of Congress in support of educating the blind. And she was never bitter about her blindness declaring that if she had vision, she may not have been able to write the hymns that she did. "When I get to heaven the first face that shall ever gladden my sight will be that of my Savior."

When in Ridgefield, she became introduced to the Methodist Church and never looked back. It was as a parishioner of John Street Methodist Episcopal Church in Manhattan she became acquainted with Phoebe Palmer.

Phoebe Palmer Knapp (1839-1908) was born in New York City and grew up in a devout Methodist family. After her marriage to Joseph Fairchild Knapp (at the age of 16!), she and her husband attended John Street Methodist Episcopal Church. Since Phoebe was a musician, her husband had an organ installed in their Manhattan home. Did I mention he was a co-founder and president of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, so he was wealthy? Phoebe and Fanny collaborated on more than one occasion, and while many of her tunes have fallen out of use, Phoebe was reported to have written over 500 melodies in addition to other works. Phoebe's mother, the Methodist evangelist Phoebe Worrall Palmer, penned many hymns herself to which she encouraged her daughter to compose tunes, and since Mrs. Palmer edited a monthly magazine called *A Guide to Holiness* that included a new

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

Choir Notes

hymn in each edition, Phoebe's tunes at least saw some publication, including "Blessed Assurance" which was published in this magazine in 1873.

The story of "Blessed Assurance" is a well-documented one that goes something like this: Fanny was in Phoebe's home one afternoon, and Phoebe was playing a tune on the piano that she had just composed. She asked Fanny what it said to her, to which Fanny replied "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!" Within a few hours, she'd written the three verses that we sing today. I like this story because it reveals two things. First, the tune and text were meant to go together. Second, the tune actually came first, and inspired the words. Fanny Crosby is reported to have used pre-existing tunes on more than one occasion as motivation for her texts. The words of this song are poetic and beautiful, but they just seem to reach a little bit higher because of the music that supports them, right?

The role of women in 19th century worship was a limited one, and the success of Fanny Crosby, in particular should not be taken for granted. As hymnologist C. Michael Hawn states, 'One of the only ways for a woman to claim the authority to be heard was by direct personal revelation from God. Fanny Crosby readily claimed God's personal revelation as a source for her hymns; her personal revelation then became a communal inspiration as Christians throughout the world sang her hymns and confirmed her faith experience as their own.'

In 2015, the actress Cicely Tyson (1924-2021) was a recipient of the Kennedy Center Honors. As part of her tribute, the gospel singer CeCe Winans (b. 1964) gave a moving performance of "Blessed Assurance" which I share with you here. As the presenter explains, the song was one that had deep personal meaning for Ms. Tyson. And as you'll hear, the song is difficult to sing without putting all you have into it. I'll be listening for you on Sunday!

Peace and blessings, Kirsten



Phoebe Palmer Knapp





† Ancient Christian Writers

A reading from a sermon of Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome (604)..

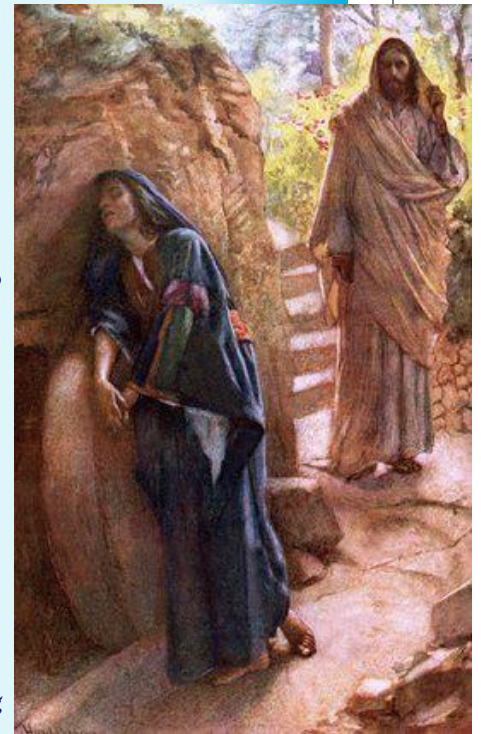
When Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and did not find the Lord's body, she thought it had been taken away and so informed the disciples. After they came and saw the tomb, they too believed what Mary had told them. The text then says: "The disciples went back home," and adds "but Mary wept and remained standing outside the tomb."

We should reflect on Mary's attitude and the great love she felt for Christ, for though the disciples had left the tomb, she remained. She was still seeking the one she had not found, and while she sought she wept; burning with the fire of love, she longed for him whom she thought had been taken away. And so it happened that the woman who stayed behind to seek Christ was the only one to see him.. For perseverance is essential to any good deed, as the voice of truth tells us: "Whoever perseveres to the end will be saved."

At first she sought but did not find, but when she persevered it happened that she found what she was looking for. When our desires are not satisfied, they grow stronger, and becoming stronger they take hold of their object. Holy desires likewise grow with anticipation, and if they do not grow that are not really desires. Anyone who succeeds in attaining the truth has burned with such a love. As David says: "My soul has thirsted for the living God; when shall I come and appear before the face of God?" And so also in the Song of Songs the Church says: "I was wounded by love;" and again: "My soul is melted with love."

"Woman, why are you weeping? Whom do you seek?" She is asked why she is sorrowing so that her desire might be strengthened; for when she mentions whom she is seeking, her love is kindled all the more ardently.

Jesus says to her: "Mary." Jesus is not recognized when he call her "Woman;" so he calls her by name, as though he were saying: "Recognize me as I recognize you; for I do not know you as I know others; I know you as yourself." And so Mary, once again addressed by name, recognizes who is speaking. She immediately calls him "rabboni," that is to say, "teacher," because the one whom she sought outwardly was the one who inwardly taught her to keep on searching.



† *Art in the Christian Tradition*

Christ in the House of Martha and Mary,

Painting by Jan Brueghel the Younger (1601-1678) and Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640),
Oil on panel, painted in 1628,
© National Gallery Ireland, Dublin

Hospitality is a key theme throughout the Gospels. Jesus himself extended hospitality to many, welcoming the outsider, sharing meals with sinners, and embracing the poor and the broken. He also accepted the hospitality of others, revealing that God is not only the host but also the guest. In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus is welcomed into the home of two sisters, Mary and Martha, who each offer him hospitality in different ways. Mary chooses to sit at his feet, listening intently to his words, while Martha busies herself with preparing an elaborate meal. From a human perspective, Martha's actions seem entirely reasonable; after all, it is customary to offer drinks and maybe some nibbles when a guest enters our home.

But Jesus gently challenges this perspective. When Martha complains about Mary's apparent inactivity, Jesus defends Mary's choice. He reminds Martha that while service is good, it must not come at the cost of stillness, presence, and deep listening. In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus often stands up for those who are judged or misunderstood, and here again, he upholds Mary's posture of quiet attentiveness. The parable of the Good Samaritan, which precedes this passage, shows that love of God can mean practical action; but Sunday's reading reminds us that it can also mean sitting in silence and listening. True hospitality is not only about 'doing' for the Lord - it is also about simply 'being' with Him.

Christ in the House of Martha and Mary, painted in 1628 by Jan Brueghel the Younger and Peter Paul Rubens, is a beautiful example of artistic collaboration between two of the Flemish Baroque era's most celebrated painters. The landscape and exquisite still-life details (fruit, silverware, flowers) were executed by Brueghel, renowned for his intricate renderings of nature and domestic abundance. The expressive figures of Christ, Martha, and Mary are attributed to Rubens, whose dynamic and emotive style animates the theological heart of the scene. Their collaboration follows a family tradition: Rubens had previously painted figures for works by Jan Brueghel the Elder, and after his death in 1625, Rubens continued this partnership with Brueghel's son (Brueghel the Younger).

While the Gospel of Luke typically inspired interior settings for this story, this painting is unusual in placing the scene outdoors, under a tranquil blue sky. Two scenes are depicted: the arrival of Jesus on the left two thirds of the painting and then what happens after he has arrived, on the right, where we see Martha in the kitchen. In the background, we see the Château de Mariemont, Summer residence of the Spanish regents Albert and Isabella, for whom both Rubens and Brueghel worked as court painters. The presence of the château suggests the work may have been intended for an aristocratic patron.





✝ Helping Our Neighbors

Here is an update about St. Paul's ongoing food-related ministries serving our community:

Drive Thru Food Collection - occurs every other Wednesday from 11 am - noon. We have now held 137 food drives since April 22, 2020! Last time we delivered food to the F.A.I.T.H. Food Pantry of Sandy Hook & Newtown and the Jericho Partnership in Danbury.

Our next food collection, will be Wednesday, July 23rd and will support the F.A.I.T.H. Food Pantry of Sandy Hook & Newtown, and the Jericho Food Pantry in Danbury.

Thank you all for your ongoing generosity and to the many volunteers who have helped to load the vehicles and deliver food to the pantries.

Next Drive-Thru Food Collection Wednesday July 23rd



*Help us,
Help others!*

11 am to Noon

If you would like to request Altar flowers for a particular Sunday in Memory of a friend or loved one, please fill out the flower chart or envelope located in the back of the church or send an email request to dszen@yahoo.com or contact David Szen.



† Thought for Reflection

- from Fr. John Morrison



"No human word is even remotely adequate to convey the mysterious and furious longing of Jesus for you and me to live in his smile and long on his words."

Brennan Manning, *The Furious Longing of God*, p. 65

Phishing Scams - Don't fall for them! Please do not respond to any message from clergy or St. Paul's by email or any other method of communication that asks you to purchase something (often a gift card) or asks for a "favor." Delete these messages, do not reply, do not click links in the messages, mark them as Spam or Junk. If there is any doubt about the veracity of a text or email, contact Fr. Nate by e-mail at priest@saintpaulsbrookfield.com or the office (dszen@yahoo.com).



SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE

DONATE TODAY!

This summer we are joining with **Jericho Partnership** for a **School Supply Drive**. There are supply lists in the back in the church with specific items that Jericho has requested. You don't need to get the whole list, but anything you are able to contribute will help! Donations need to be dropped off in the basket in the back of the church **by July 27**.

Any questions, please reach out to Kagan at **(203) 856-2230**.



† Wednesday Morning Healing Service

Our mid-week Wednesday morning 10 am Holy Eucharist with healing prayer, now has about 50 worshippers weekly.. With live music and a brief homily, this service is just what you need to sustain you through the week. Come join us and check it out or watch on YouTube Live.

Greeters Needed

Greeting people in a warm way makes them feel good about their presence in church.

At St. Paul's, we are always looking for people who feel called to serve in this important ministry.

If you are interested in becoming a greeter, please contact Pam Szen (prszen@gmail.com) or David Szen.



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Into faithful stewardship.

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THE Episcopal CHURCH



||| A THIRD OF US

† Praying for the 1/3 of our world that are still unreached with the Gospel.

Cham

Country: Cambodia | Population: 258,000 | Language: Western Cham | Main Religion: Islam | Evangelical: 0.01%

For almost a millennium, the Cham ruled the Champa Kingdom - a fusion of Malayo-Polynesian and Indian cultures - in south-central Vietnam. In 1471, Champa was conquered by the Vietnamese, and most nobles and freemen escaped to Cambodia. The Cham thrived in Cambodia until the civil war began in 1969 and the Khmer Rouge began targeting the Western Cham for being Muslims. Hundreds of thousands died. Today, they often work as farmers, fishermen, boat builders, and shopkeepers, but most are extremely poor. Most Cham homes are simple, sparse, and have a feeling of impermanence. They often have enough food to eat but have very few possessions. Ask God to raise up and equip faithful Christians to reach the Cham. Praise Him for a Cham Bible. Pray that He would strengthen and grow the tiny Cham church. Pray for believers to share the Gospel and help meet their practical needs.





Israel - Walking in Jesus' Footsteps



✠ Mamre ✨

This Site Is Holy Ground

Mamre, refers to an ancient religious site originally focused on a single holy tree, growing "since time immemorial" at Hebron in the Judean Mountains about 20 miles south of Jerusalem. It is known from the biblical story that we will read this Sunday of Abraham and the three visitors [Genesis 18:1-8]. The tree under which he had pitched his tent is known as the oak or terebinth of Mamre. Modern scholars have identified three sites near Hebron which, in different historical periods, have been successively known as Mamre: Khirbet Nimra (a little excavated Persian and Hellenistic period site), Ramat el-Khalil (the best known site), and Khirbet es-Sibte. The last one contained an old oak tree identified by a relatively new tradition as the Oak of Mamre, which has collapsed in 2019, and is on the grounds of a Russian Orthodox monastery.

Jewish-Roman historian Josephus, as well as Christian and Jewish sources from the Byzantine period, locate Mamre at the site later renamed in Arabic as Ramat el-Khalil, which means "The Height of the Sanctuary of the Friend," 2 ½ miles north of historical Hebron and approximately halfway between that city and Halhul. Herod the Great apparently initiated the Jewish identification of the site with Mamre, by erecting there a monumental enclosure. It was one of the three most important "fairs" or market places in Judea, where the fair was held next to the venerated tree, accompanied by an interdenominational festival joined in time by Jews, pagans, and Christians. This prompted Emperor Constantine the Great to unsuccessfully attempt at putting a stop to this practice by erecting a Christian basilica there.

Mamre is the site where Abraham pitched the tents for his camp, built an altar (Genesis 13:18), and was brought divine tidings, in the guise of three angels, of Sarah's pregnancy (Genesis 18:1-15).

Genesis 13:18 has Abraham settling by 'the great trees of Mamre'. The original Hebrew tradition appears, to judge from a textual variation conserved in the Septuagint, to have referred to a single great oak tree, which Josephus called Ogyges. Mamre may have been an Amorite, a tribal chieftain after whom a grove of trees was named. Genesis connected it with Hebron or a place nearby that city. Mamre has frequently been associated with the Cave of the Patriarchs. According to one scholar, there is considerable confusion in the Biblical narrative concerning not only Mamre, but also Machpelah, Hebron and Kiryat Arba, all four of which are aligned repeatedly. In Genesis, Mamre is also identified with Hebron itself (Genesis 23:19, 25:27). The Christian tradition of identifying a ruined site surrounded by walls and called in Arabic Rāmet el-Ḥalīl ('Hill of the Friend', meaning: "the friend of God", i.e. Abraham), with the Old Testament Mamre, goes back to the earliest Christian pilgrims in the

*Abraham's
Tomb in
Cave of the
Patriarchs.*



(Continued on page 19)

Holy Land Trip Update

Many of you have thoughtfully asked about our pilgrimage to the Holy Land that was supposed to leave on July 1st.

We have moved our dates to September by which times the situation is expected to significantly have calmed down.

(Continued from page 18)

Mamre

4th century CE, and connects to a tradition from the time of Herod (1st century BCE).

Mamre in the Bible (Abraham and the Abrahamic Covenant)

1. God's covenant with Abraham (Abram) begins with a call to leave his country and relatives and go to the land of Israel. The first part of the covenant included the land of Israel (Canaan), and that through Abraham all the families of the earth would be blessed. Genesis 12:1-4

2. Abraham obeyed God and went to the land of Israel, known at that time as Canaan. Genesis 12:5-9

3. God confirms His covenant with Abraham that He would give all the land of Israel. Genesis 12:7-8

4. From Bethel, Abraham traveled south to the Negev area, then lived in Egypt for a while. Genesis 12:9-10

5. When the famine was over, Abraham moved back to the Negev. After Lot and Abraham separated, because of the size of their herds of livestock, Abraham settled and lived in the place called, "The Oaks of Mamre." This would be where Abraham first established his dwelling place in Israel. The Negev is the southern area of Israel. Genesis 13:1 Genesis 13:18: Then Abram moved his tent and came and lived by the oaks (great trees) of Mamre, which are in Hebron; and there he built an altar to the Lord. 6. It was at the oaks, or great trees of Mamre, that God's covenant with Abraham, which would affect the entire world, would be carried out. It's an amazing and unique event that is the most important covenant in the Bible. The covenant established that all humanity would be saved by grace through faith. Genesis 15:1-6 7. God ratifies the covenant with Abraham at Mamre. Genesis 15:7-16

Abraham's Oak in 1912.

8. Interestingly, instead of both parties walking through the midst of the dead animals, only God walks through them. In ancient times, walking through the animals ratified a covenant and meant that if any party broke the agreement, then they would wind up like the dead animals. Just God walked through the dead animal because the covenant was based upon God's faithfulness and not subject to mankind's efforts. Genesis 15:17-21

9. In an attempt to fulfill God's promise of having a son, Sarah's handmaiden, Hagar, gave birth to Ismael at the Oaks of Mamre. Genesis 16:15-16

10. God repeats and affirms His covenant with Abraham at the Oaks of Mamre and institutes circumcision as a mark of the covenant. Genesis 17:1-10

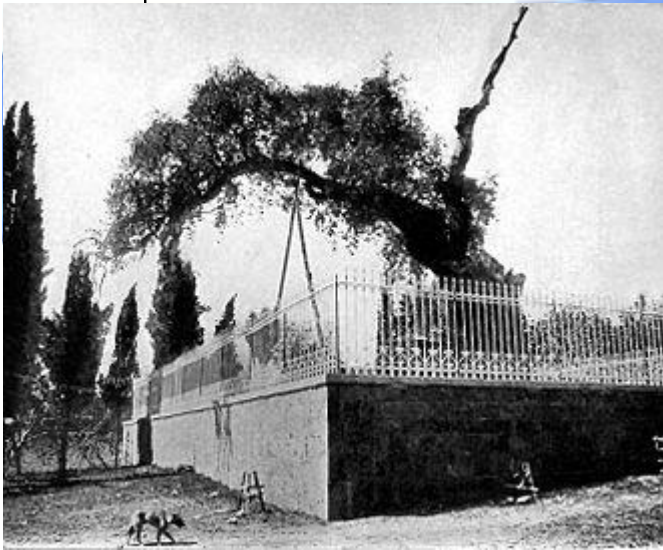
11. God appeared to Abraham at the Oaks of Mamre in the form of three angels and confirmed the promise of a son from Abraham and Sarah. Genesis 18:1-3

12. From Mamre, God pronounced the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah to Abraham because of their extreme wickedness. Genesis 18:16-21

13. From Mamre, Abraham went to look down upon the Jordan Valley and witness the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding area. Genesis 19:27-29

14. Later Abraham moved a little farther south and lived in Beersheba. It was here, twenty-five years after the initial promise to Abraham and Sarah that they would have a son, Isaac was born. Genesis 21:1-2

While there have been tensions in the past between Israelis and Arabs, the Oaks of Mamre are protected by Israeli forces, and around 250,000 tourists visit Hebron and this area annually. The evidence that this is the place where Abraham met with God is extremely strong. With this being the case, this site is holy ground because God was here and met face to face with Abraham.



Abraham's Tomb in Cave of the Patriarchs.

† Saints of God

Thursday, July 17th

William White,
Bishop, 1836

Before the American Revolution, there were no bishops in the colonies (partly because the British government was reluctant to give the colonies the kind of autonomy that this would have implied, and partly because many of the colonists were violently opposed to their presence). After the Revolution, the establishment of an American episcopate became imperative. Samuel Seabury was the first American to be consecrated, in 1784, and in 1787 William White and Samuel Provoost, having been elected to the bishoprics of Pennsylvania and New York respectively, sailed to England and were consecrated bishops on February 4 by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop of York, the Bishop of Bath and Wells, and the Bishop of Peterborough.

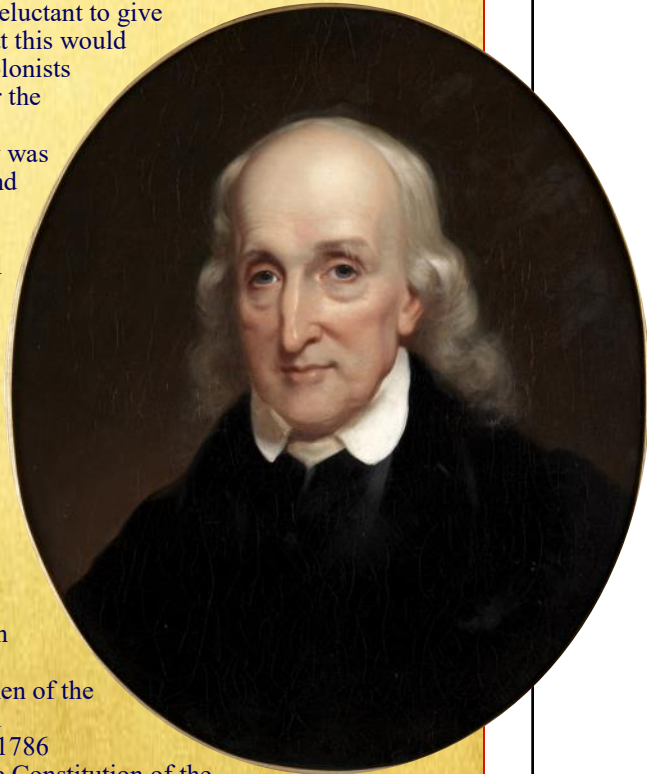
William White was born in Philadelphia on March 24, 1747, and was educated at the college of that city, graduating in 1765. In 1770 he went to England, where he was ordained as a deacon on December 23, and as a priest on April 25, 1772.

Upon his return home, he became assistant minister of Christ and St. Peter's from 1772 to 1779, and rector from that year until his death on July 17, 1836. He also served as chaplain of the Continental Congress from 1777 to 1789, and then of the United States Senate until 1800. He was chosen unanimously as first Bishop of Pennsylvania in 1786

Bishop White was largely responsible for the Constitution of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. At his suggestion, the system of church government was established more or less as we have it today. Only a bishop can ordain a deacon or priest, and only bishops (normally at least three) can consecrate a bishop. When a bishop dies or retires, a new bishop is elected by a convention in his diocese, in which clergy sit in the upper house and lay delegates (elected by the vestries of the local congregations) sit in the lower house, and a majority in each house is required to elect. (Afterwards, a majority of bishops and a majority of Standing Committees (each diocese has an elected Standing Committee) are required to confirm.) National business is conducted by the General Convention, which meets every three years and consists for voting purposes of three Houses: Bishops, Clerical Deputies, and Lay Deputies. A majority of each is required to pass a measure. (All the Deputies meet and debate together and are called the House of Deputies, but Lay and Clerical Deputies vote separately whenever any deputy so requests--in other words, whenever it might make a difference.) In all this, the Episcopal Church undertakes to follow, as nearly as modern circumstances permit, the government of the early church as attested back at least to the second and third centuries.

He was the Presiding Bishop at its organizing General Convention in 1789, and again from 1795 until his death in Philadelphia on July 17, 1836.

He was a theologian of significant ability, and among his protégés, in whose formation he had a large hand, were many leaders of a new generation such as John Henry Hobart, Jackson Kemper, and William Augustus Muhlenberg. White's gifts of statesmanship and reconciling moderation steered the American Church through the first decades of its independent life.





ANDY GULLAHORN & JILL PHILLIPS

Fri., Sept. 12, 2025 | 7:30 P.M.

Tickets \$30

www.communitycoffeehouse.org



Community Coffeehouse | 7 Madison Ave. | Danbury, CT 06810 | (203) 748-4972

† St. Martha

Jesus probably traveled to Jerusalem three times a year, throughout his life. He would have taken the safest route, through the Jordan river valley and up the eastern side of the Mount of Olives. Bethany would have been his last stop. He would wait here for Sunrise and the spectacular view of the Temple at dawn. It would seem that he visited the home of Lazarus, Mary and Martha to rest the night.

As his fame grew, Lazarus' family would look forward to these arrivals. Martha wants to anticipate his every need. She seems overwrought and stuffy in this scene. She doesn't appear to be saint-material. However, of the three people in the family, she is the one who shows the greatest growth. When her brother dies she is the one who states, "I have come to believe..." Because of this, Martha is the only one of three who is honored by a universal feast day.



Name Tags - Remember how awkward you felt when you first came to St. Paul's because you didn't know anyone or when you visit a different church? Name tags help. So, please be courteous to your fellow parishioners, to newcomers, and guests by extending a warm welcome to them and by wearing your name tag. And remember to wear them to coffee hour as well.

† Sunday School Info!

ATTN: PARENTS OF ALL SUNDAY SCHOOL STUDENTS:

During the summer: **NURSERY SERVICE** will be provided during the 10:30 service each Sunday for children through age 4. Parents, please fetch your child from the nursery during announcement time so they and the nursery caregiver can return to the worship service for Communion.



COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

Jul 20th 8 am - Thomas's
Jul 27th 8 am - Tim Huber
Aug 3rd 8 am - Bennett's

10:30 am - Pam Koniecki
10:30 am - Raegan LaBrake
10:30 am - Monique Gordon



**COFFEE HOUR
HOSTS NEEDED**

Contact Mary Allen at
203-775-6633 or
chamla@charter.net





Fill in the _____

your _____."
Colossians 1:21 NIV

"Once you were alienated
 from God and were enemies
 in your minds because of

† Who Would Wash the Dishes?

Luke 10:38-42

Martha is distracted by her many tasks because truth is without her they won't get done. Luke doesn't tell us what the many tasks are, but we can imagine they have something to do with a house full of freeloaders. Not the Lord,

mind you. Martha was happy to have Jesus over for a visit. It was all those fisher folk and tax collectors who came with him. Food has to be prepared. The table has to be set. The good silverware has to be polished and counted - because you can't trust Galileans not to walk off with a fork or three. At any rate there are things to be done and Martha is the only one doing them. It may be that Martha is often distracted by many tasks, but if that's the case maybe Mary spends a lot of time sitting and not helping. That is not the point of the story, but what



if everyone chose the better part? Who would wash the dishes? So if Mary was listening closely to Jesus she might hear him say, "I came not to be served but to serve" and get up and help her sister. And then maybe Martha might have a chance to hear Jesus say, "do not be anxious about your life..." and sit down at the feet of Jesus.

THE
Episcopal
CHURCH



July 20, 2025 – Pentecost 6 (C)
The Feast of St. James, Apostle and Martyr

On July 25, the Church celebrates the Feast of St. James, apostle and martyr.

This James is often styled “St. James the Greater,” to distinguish him from the other Apostle of the same name and from James, “the brother of our Lord.” Along with his brother John, James was called by Jesus at the Sea of Galilee as they mended nets with their father, Zebedee, and his hired hands. St. James is named regularly during major events in the Gospels, witnessing the Transfiguration of Christ (Matthew 17; Mark 9; Luke 9), the raising of Jairus’ daughter (Mark 5, Matthew 9; Luke 8), and Jesus’ agony in the garden (Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22).

For all this honor, though, James also receives correction from Jesus on more than one occasion. He and his brother are given the nickname “Sons of Thunder,” or *Boanerges*, for their zealous and temperamental dispositions. For example, when Samaritan villagers refused to welcome Jesus, the brothers eagerly asked whether he would have them call down fire from heaven to destroy the town. The Lord rebukes them and instead moves on to another village (Luke 9). The Gospels record the brothers (or perhaps their mother) asking the Lord to place them at his right and left hands in his kingdom, which also results in admonishment (Matthew 20), and James is among the apostles who fall asleep in the garden while Jesus prays (Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22).



*St. James the Greater,
Altarpiece of Mount San
Martino; Carlo Crivelli, c.
1480.*

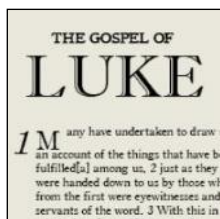
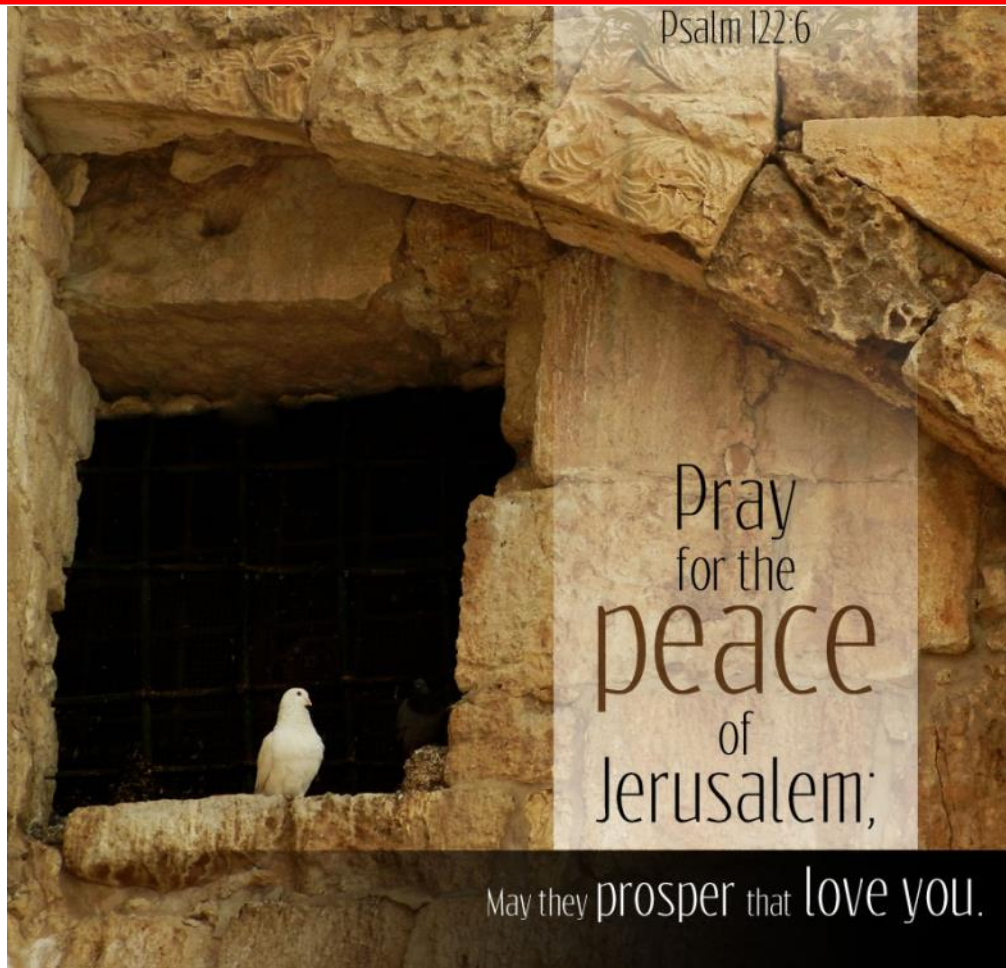
Still, James’ dedication to Jesus is without question, as he is understood to be the first of the twelve to die for him. As the Acts of the Apostles records, “About that time Herod the King laid violent hands upon some who belonged to the Church. He killed James the brother of John with the sword” (Acts 12:1–2).

Holy Women, Holy Men explains the veneration of and devotion to St. James following his death: “According to an old tradition, the body of James was taken to Compostela, Spain, which has been a shrine for pilgrims for centuries” (p. 484). His name was translated from the Hebrew *Ya’akov* to the Spanish Iago; thus, “Saint James” becomes “Santo Iago,” or “Santiago.” Santiago de Compostela was an extraordinarily popular destination for pilgrimages, leading to the development of the Camino de Santiago, a route across the countryside, marked by the fisherman’s symbol of a scallop shell.

Collect for the Feast of St. James

O gracious God, we remember before you today your servant and apostle James, first among the Twelve to suffer martyrdom for the Name of Jesus Christ; and we pray that you will pour out upon the leaders of your Church that spirit of self-denying service by which alone they may have true authority among your people; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

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Our Men meet weekly study on Monday nights. They are currently dissecting the Gospel of Luke. Join them each Monday night at 7 pm in Crocker Hall. All the studies are available live on YouTube.

† **Ladies Wed Evening Bible Study**

All women are invited to join the Ladies Wednesday Evening Bible Study for our new study of the book of Ephesians. Every Wednesday evening, 7-8 pm by Zoom.

This letter includes many praises and prayers to God for his saving love and gifts to the church. We look forward to studying and sharing our questions and experiences together. Please join us as we receive God's Word (3:17) "that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love."





Mary Beth Durkin & John Saver celebrate today. Mike Kirner blows out candles on Sunday. Have a blessed day everyone!

RFB 

Presents

COFFEE WITH JESUS

Entrance Exam



When we get to heaven, Jesus, is there like a test or some questions we have to get right to be allowed entry?



The entrance exam is answered here in this life, Kevin. Why would a holy God allow a sinful mortal into heaven?



Not by anything we did, Jesus, but only because you loved us and died for us.



You aced the test, Kevin.



©Radio Free Babylon® All rights reserved. All the lowercase gods require sacrifice. Blood usually. They're harsh taskmasters. Our God sacrificed his own blood. He invites us to call him Father. You can't win his love by your good deeds. Do the good things you do please him? Of course, just as any parent is pleased by that. But he loved you before you ever came to him. You're not going to be abandoned by your Father. He's not going to make acceptance a difficult thing to achieve. Only believe.

† This Sunday's Readings

(Click on the red links for the readings)

Choosing the Better Part

Genesis 18:1-10a

In our Hebrew scripture the Lord appears to Abraham and promises that he and Sarah will have a son. As often seen in biblical narratives, the Lord's presence is disguised, this time in one of three visitors. Abraham may suspect God's nearness, but he also generously fulfills his duty of hospitality to strangers.

Psalms 15

The psalm describes the virtues of one who is worthy to worship the Lord.

Colossians 1:15-28

This lesson exalts in the primacy of Christ, who is the image of the invisible God in whom all things find meaning and coherence. All the fullness of deity was pleased to dwell in Christ, who provides headship to the living body of the church. In the mystery of God's plan, Gentiles, too, share in the hope of glory. For this ministry to non-Jews Paul has been especially appointed. The sufferings he experiences in his work are a way of filling out the redemptive activity of Christ through his body, the church. The result is that those who once were strangers to God and living in sin may now be reconciled through Christ's sacrifice and grow toward their maturity in his body.

Luke 10:38-42

The gospel is the story of Martha and Mary and their different attitudes toward life and the Lord's presence. Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem and his death. The little narrative focuses on Martha and indicates how good works without a response to the Lord may only lead to anxiety and to missing what is essential.



Luke 10:38-42

If we really do desire that God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven, then we need to ask, "Who is doing the chores in heaven?" And if the answer is, "No one," then the second best answer for here on earth would be, "Everyone."



† Sermon Shorts

"The Christ Hymn (Pt. 1): Image of God, Maker of All, Lord of Lords." To replay all our sermons, audio and videos follow this link for the [Sunday Sermons](#). Check out our [Sermon Archives](#) as well.



† Your Prayers Are Requested For...

It is such an intimate time when praying for the health and well being of others and such a privilege. Like Martha, we have much to do; like Mary, we listen to the Lord's voice. From the complexity of our lives, let us lift our voices, as we pray for...

.....Ed Licence, Gail Winkley, and other parishioners convalescing in extended care facilities.

.....[St. Paul's](#), Riverside; [St. Andrew the Apostle](#), Rocky Hill; [Christ Church](#), Roxbury.

.....Revival at St. Paul's and the greater Danbury area.

.....Wardens, treasurers, clerks & all vestry members; elected delegates.

.....For the Peace of Jerusalem. - *Psalm 122:6*

.....Clayton Ferry, Barbara Hock, Jim Megura, Peter Scalzo, Sr., Peter Scalzo, Jr., Doris, Karen, Beverly Hall, Roger,

Cynthia, Valerie, Heidi Pinheiro, Dale Mitchell, Ruth, Blake, Nick Marcalus, Cliff, Evelyn Kirner, Jane Sedor, Jim Beck, Larry Wanzer, George Stowell, Bob Finn, Paul Kovacs, Barbara Stowell, Susan Morrison, Elana and Veronika continued healing.

.....the people of [Ukraine](#); the people of the [Republic of Panama](#); the people of [the Comoros](#); the bishop, clergy and laity of the Diocese of Newala - The Anglican Church of Tanzania; and our sister and brother members of the [Hungarian Reformed Church in America](#).

.....For the Church: that our deeds of hospitality and service may reveal for us a glimpse of the face of God.

.....[F.A.I.T.H. Food Pantry](#), Sandy Hook & Newtown, the recipient of our food basket collections for the month of July.

.....Our missionaries, Will & Becky McLaughlin and their family, and their ministry in Cambodia; and for all missionaries: that God will inspire the message that they offer, help them to recognize how they can best serve their communities, and sustain them in times of loneliness.

.....For all who are busy about work and progress: that God will free us from overworking, help us find the life-giving balance, and recognize the relationships which bring us life

.....[Fairfield County Bank](#), a banking partner of the Jericho Partnership.

.....[Our parish](#).

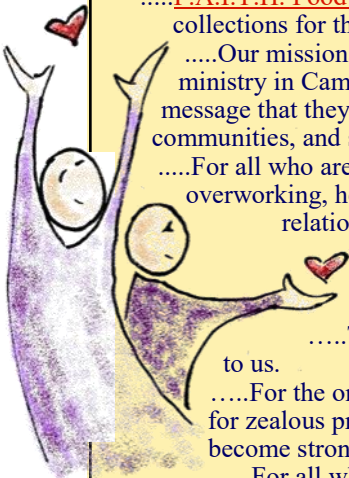
.....That we have the courage to share our faith with those closest to us.

.....For the one third of humanity that does not have access to the gospel, for zealous preachers of the word, that by the Holy Spirit, they that they would become strong in their faith, grow in numbers and be a light to those around them.

.....For all who live a life of service, particularly those who care for the sick, assist travelers, or serve in public safety: that they may offer their service joyfully and be renewed by God's love

.....For the at-risk in human trafficking that they would be seen, supported and able to see the truth of their belovedness; that they may walk in it.

.....[Peace Among the Nations](#).



Bethany

Discovering Bethany, the village where Lazarus and his sisters Mary & Martha lived.





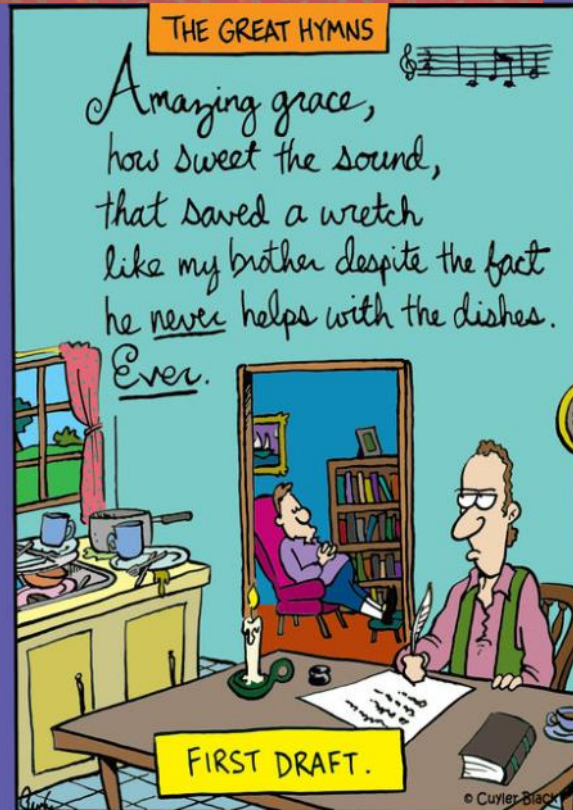
Just For the Joy of It!

(And Christian Fellowship)

Random Fact of the Week!

Did you know ... that Martha and Mary may have belonged to a Jewish sect called the Essenes?

Why it's unusual: The Essenes were known for their communal living, devotion to purity, and care for the poor and sick. They often lived in diaconal centers - places of service and healing. Bethany, where Martha and Mary lived, is believed by some scholars to have been one such center. While Scripture doesn't explicitly say they were Essenes, the historical context and their acts of hospitality and devotion suggest it's possible. **What it means:** If true, this would place Martha and Mary in a spiritually rich and socially active community, which adds depth to their roles in the Gospels. It also reframes Martha's service and Mary's devotion as expressions of a shared spiritual discipline rather than contrasting personalities.



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Watch us on YouTube

Ecclesiasticus 43:27 - We could say more but could never say enough; let the final word be: 'He is the all.' - 30 -