

The Messenger...

July-August, 2019

A publication of St. James on the Lake Episcopal Church

An orthodox parish that welcomes everyone!

Rector: Fr. Randy Melton

10707 CR 4022, Kemp, Texas 75143

(903) 498-8080

stjamesonthelake.org

Fr. Randy's Rambling Ruminations:



HOPE AND HEALING HAPPEN... EVEN WHEN THEY DON'T

Some thoughts on the phrase: "Nothing is impossible with God" (Luke 1:37): It's a key line in Gabriel's message to Mary, obviously referring to her unique and surprising pregnancy by God's initiative, as well as Mary's elder cousin Elizabeth's unexpected and extraordinary pregnancy well past her childbearing years (two miraculous events from both ends of the age spectrum). But most of the time when we use that phrase, we think of God's capacity to dramatically change the status of our poor health or negative personal circumstances, when we've had no success in doing so ourselves. God certainly can do this, and sometimes does. But I'm reminded of Paul's heartfelt plea to God on 3 different occasions to remove whatever that thorn was in his side (2 Corinthians 12:7-10). It never happened, but God does the impossible anyway. The Lord tells Paul that his (God's) grace is sufficient for him (Paul), and that God's strength is made perfect through Paul's weakness. God seems to want that "thorn" to be perceived as a kind of spiritual "gift." The Lord's ways are always mysterious, surprising and unexpected.

Bishop N.T. Wright writes in *Simply Good News*: "*Jesus doesn't explain why there is suffering, illness, and death in the world. He brings healing and hope. He doesn't allow the problem of evil to be the subject of a seminar. He allows evil to do its worst to him. He exhausts it, drains its power, and emerges with new life.*" Jesus brings healing and hope, but not always in the way we expect or desire. Suffering is a hard thing to bear; it even seems impossible to bear at times.

But God can overcome the impossible. Sometimes we're healed of our physical or emotional malady, or our painful situation. But more often God provides the grace that changes something in us that gives us the courage, strength and perseverance to overcome the strain of the issue or circumstance that grieves us. As difficult as it is to understand, and even harder to appreciate, the hardship itself very often becomes the catalyst for closer communion with God. And that's really the whole point of life, isn't it?

Fr. Randy+



**Did You Know 2021 will be
St. James' 50th anniversary?
Put on your Thinking Caps
about
How we might CELEBRATE !!!**



**Cultivating a Parish-Wide Garden of Evangelism
As a Way of Life**

*If you have the opportunity to befriend non-Christians,
focus on things that will draw them close, not the things that will drive them away.*

*Make sure that when you leave a person,
he or she is closer to Jesus than when you first met him.*

As was stated in the last newsletter, the vestry is developing a plan for St. James to engage in several evangelism initiatives over the next year to help us cultivate a growing awareness and increased comfort level in learning how to share our faith more effectively as a way of life. Here is a review of the offerings we currently have on the table.

- Evangelism 101 class on "The 9 Arts of Spiritual Conversations" (This class is currently running through the summer on Thursdays at 1 PM.
- Praise & Worship with catered Barbecue and guest speaker tentatively scheduled for Sunday, November 17, at 5 PM. OPEN INVITATION to friends and neighbors!
- 2020 Parish-wide REVIVAL; Tentatively 2nd weekend of February (7th-9th). OPEN INVITATION! (Prayer preparation to precede it).
- Carrie Headington, our Canon for Diocesan Evangelism, will come and share teaching on "Sharing Our Faith as a Way of Life" (either in Lent or Easter of 2020)
- Overall--Cultivating a mindfulness/awareness of God's presence everywhere at all times--Learning to see how God is at work in our life and the lives of others--Looking for God rather than negativity.

Safeguarding God's Children and Sexual Harassment Prevention Training

Required for Some / Available to ALL

I remember when this training was implemented in the Diocese of Dallas some 30 years ago. Our Suffragan Bishop, Bruce MacPherson, was instrumental in making it a Church-wide requirement for the Episcopal Church. Its purpose is to minimize, and hopefully prevent, the prevalence of sexual scandals in our church that have been experienced in many other parts of Christ's Body. Protecting children and eliminating sexual harassment are uppermost concerns.

This training is required for those involved in some forms of parish ministry not only for the protection of children and adults from potential sexual abuse or harassment, but to protect those who are in ministry roles from being in situations where they may be falsely accused. Like it or not, this is our reality in today's world. As a priest, I'm required to retake the training every 5 years. And if I change dioceses, it's required again, even if I just completed it. Background checks are also required for all priests and for those working with children in Sunday School or nursery settings. Not only that, but the training helps us to recognize the signs when something is not right that might put a child or adult at risk, and how to go about reporting it. This can be useful to know in settings outside of the Church, as well as within.

Fortunately, the training modules can be completed at home on your computer, like a defensive driving course. But for those who choose not to do it that way, I will be teaching the required content sometime toward the end of August at a day and time to be determined. It may take two afternoons because 7 hours of instruction are required. I want to give those who have not completed the training via computer the opportunity to do so. If you find the technology too difficult, there are people willing to assist you. I'll hook you up with one of them if you ask.

All vestry, key-holders, Sunday school and nursery ministry workers are required to complete the training. *Note: There are no nursery/Sunday school ministers scheduled on the ministry schedule for the rest of the summer since there are not at least two people currently trained. Sunday school/nursery require two people at all times. When we have an adequate number trained, we will reschedule.* Those who still need to complete this will receive an email from me in the next week or so. Anyone who is NOT required to complete the training, and would like to do it, please contact Bonnie Dill, and she'll set you up with the computer link. Please know that requiring this training of you is not personal in any way. We all have to do it depending on our access to vulnerable people. If you have questions or concerns, please contact Bonnie or me.

--Fr. Randy+

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T.E.A.C.H. (Theological Education After Church)

T.E.A.C.H. continues to meet during the summer on Sunday mornings after Church during food and fellowship, starting around 10:30 and lasting till about 11. Paul Lasiter leads the class and we are currently examining the Gospel of St. John!

EVANGELISM 101 CLASS: Thursdays at 1 PM

Make a Friend / Be a Friend / Bring a Friend to Christ

THE 9 ARTS OF SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS: Walking Alongside People Who Believe Differently... is a study about sharing Jesus' love through relational evangelism (with our ears, eyes and hearts as much as our mouth). Topics covered in this book include noticing, praying, listening, asking questions, loving, welcoming, facilitating, serving together, and sharing. The last chapter title kind of summarizes the book's goal: **FROM CUPS OF COLD WATER TO RIVERS OF LIVING WATER. It's not too late to be a part of our personal explorations. Come join us!**

See the remaining topics & dates below:

June 27:	Praying	August 1:	NO Class
July 4:	NO CLASS	August 8:	Welcoming
July 11:	Listening	August 15:	Facilitating
July 18:	Asking Questions	August 22:	Serving Together
July 25:	Loving	August 29:	Sharing our Faith

"Evangelism is to so present Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, that all people shall come to put their trust in God through Him, to accept Him as their Savior and serve Him as their King in the fellowship of the Church."
-William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury (1942-44)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THESE AWESOME UPCOMING EVENTS IN THE FALL!

Starts in September: **ALPHA Class for Inquirer's and Refresher Course**

September 13, Friday—**ANNUAL FISH FRY** benefiting the St. James' Sharecropper's Community Garden!

October 5, Saturday—**BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS and Hot Dog Cookout** behind the church by the picnic tables!

October 14, Monday—**ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT** benefiting Christmas children's gifts.

November 3, Sunday—**ALL SAINTS SUNDAY**, a major baptismal feast in which we celebrate the Communion of Saints. Our Necrology of faithful departed loved ones is remembered at the altar!

November 10, Sunday—**KAIROS CLOSING**. Paul Lasiter is heading this one up and many St. James folks will be participating.

November 17, Sunday—**PRAISE AND WORSHIP with catered BARBECUE!**

December 1—**BISHOP SUMNER'S ANNUAL VISITATION** at St. James!

Fr. Randy Taking Some Summer Vacation Time

I will be out of the office From Monday, July 1st through Monday, July 8th, and from Monday, July 29th through Monday August 5th (NO Wednesday Noon Mass & NO Thursday class either week). Fr. Peter Getz will be the supply priest on July 7th and August 4th. The wardens will have a contact number for an area priest who will help cover for a pastoral emergency.

And finally...

Summer is a time for fun...so there's this...

"HOW TO COMMEMORATE ELVIS' DEATH"

(Nativity date: January 8, 1935 - Dormition date: August 16, 1977)

(NOTE: In case it's not obvious, this is SATIRE)--[Taylor Golden—Enjoy!]

QUESTION: "Father, how will you observe the day that Elvis died?" Have you scheduled a special Mass to honor your Patron Saint?" Here is my pastoral response to this uninformed priest who needs to hear words of truth for the good of his soul:

Dear Unholy and Irreverent Father Clueless,

Thank you for your inquiry as to the proper way to commemorate the Feast of the Dormition of Blessed Elvis. First, I awake several hours predawn to burn incense at my personal Elvis shrine, with hundreds of prostrations and gyrating hip motions as well as multiple kisses of the icon of St. Elvis the Gyrator. Obviously a day of strict fasting, the only foods consumed are deep fried peanut butter, jelly & banana sandwiches and anything chicken fried or dripping with grease--as much as you can eat. Then force yourself to eat more. It is a holy non-stop meal. Thick milk shakes are allowed, but green vegetables or fruits of any kind are frowned upon.

The ever holier, ever blessedder Elvis radio station on Sirius plays 24 hour music of the King, allowing all worshipers to be in a state of blissful ignorance (uh, I mean peace) throughout this most holy day. For the poor who can't afford a subscription to Sirius, a simple recording (LP, CD or MP3) played over and over with inspirational songs like Love Me Tender, Peace in the Valley, or even Blue Suede Shoes, will suffice.

Every Elvis worshiper is required to make a pilgrimage to Graceland at least once in their lifetime if at all possible and always pray facing the South. The Dormition of Blessed Elvis is a particularly appropriate time to make such a pilgrimage and thousands do so every year. Many witness to the fact that they see apparitions of the Holy Rock and Roller peaking from behind the curtains as they pass by his gravesite near the pool. Of those who have touched the water at the time of the sightings, many have testified to deep and profound healings that make them feel all shook up as they shiver all over, and even cause their left legs to uncontrollably shake (an undeniable sign that one has received the spirit of Elvis). Masses of people are baptized in the guitar shaped swimming pool at Heartbreak Hotel, filled with vibrating waters that tremor in ceaseless unchained melodies of Elvismania. The Hotel itself has non-stop Elvis music that can be heard in every room as well, which is Graceland on earth to all true believers.

Of course, while one is not required to purchase a 1950's model pink cadillac as that would be prohibitive to most people's pocketbooks, it is certainly considered an act of ultimate adoration to do so. However, many lifetime blessings can be experienced by anyone who at least has one's picture taken next to a 1950's model pink cadillac. Carrying that picture in one's wallet along with a picture of Blessed Elvis supposedly assures one of receiving auditory revelations from the King Himself (mostly key lines from one of his 31 movies). A truly undeniable act of poetic sacrificial love & mercy is when one DOES purchase a 1950's model pink cadillac and gives it away to one less fortunate than oneself. There is, of course, no greater act of love than that for a true Elvis fan. Just the thought of such an act of kindness makes my eyes moisten & a lump form in my throat. A moment please, to regain my composure.

In honor of Elvis, every true fan is required this day to sing at least 3 Elvis songs in the shower, at a "bare" minimum. Though not required, they are encouraged to profess their love publicly as well by singing at the workplace, grocery store, hospitals, nursing homes and wherever else they can spread the love through his music.

All of this said, my personal favorite feast day is January 8, the Nativity of Blessed Elvis. It is not nearly as low key as this celebration. That's the one where all the stops are pulled, lit up Elvis trees decorate homes, and gifts are exchanged, usually Elvis recordings. Nothing is more sacred of course than an Elvis recording. Regarding a special mass, there is none today. As mentioned, this is a fairly low-key celebration. The required aforementioned fast, along with the listening and singing of Elvis songs all day & night, provide all that is needed for a spiritual communion with the man from Tupelo, Mississippi, who was and is larger than life itself.

I hope this has been a meaningful and rewarding explanation to your noble question. If you are interested in further information, I can get you in touch with one of the many Churches of Elvis, where actual Elvis impersonators who channel the spirit of Elvis, serve as pastor, much to the delight of their congregants. Many are so filled with his spirit that you would swear that it's St. Elvis himself! All hymnody is taken from Elvis' 3 timeless Gospel Grammy Recordings.

If you too would like to receive the spirit of Elvis, it's as easy as listening the entire day to the whole catalogue of Elvis music. You can't help falling in love. You'll be hooked for life! But wise men say that those with suspicious minds will never be able to itch like a man on a fuzzy tree. And that, my friend, is to live in the ghetto of life. So it's now or never! Take a step in faith outside of your comfort zone and follow that dream wherever that dream will lead!

But if you don't respond to this invitation, this message might as well return to sender. I'll be crying in the chapel because I'll know that you are the devil in disguise, and that now and then, there's a fool such as you. But there's no need to be lonesome tonight. I hope and pray you never forget to remember to forget all your prejudices, and that you will look to St. Elvis this day and say, "I want you, I need you, I love you...more and more." Your good luck charm happens when you can't help falling in love with the King of Creole.

In his ever hunk of burning love,
Fr. Randy+

UPCOMING REGULAR EVENTS TO MARK ON THE CALENDAR!

Sunday Morning Healing Prayers (8:30 - 8:45 AM Sundays)

Men's Group Reunion, 8 AM Tuesday

Women's Group Reunion, 9 AM, 1st & 3rd Tuesday

Weekly Intercessory Prayer Group, 4 PM, Tuesday

Vestry Meeting, 6PM, 3rd Tuesday, July 16, August 20

Healing Eucharist, Noon Wednesdays (Except for May 8-moved to May 9)

Daughters of the King, 4:30 PM, Last Wednesday, July 31, August 28

Evening Prayer and Fellowship: 6 PM, Last Wednesday, July 31, August 28

Women's Group Reunion, 11:30AM Thursday at the church

9 Arts of Spiritual Conversation Class: 1PM, Thursday

Men's Bible Study, 6PM Thursdays (**OFF FOR SUMMER**)

Angel Food, 7:45 AM, Saturday, July 20 and August 24

Office Hours & Contact Information

Monday: Fr. Randy's Day off

Tuesday-Friday: 10 AM - 1 PM

Saturday: Office Closed

Sunday: 8 AM-11:30 AM

NOTE: Fr. Randy is in the church at many other times as well, but these are simply scheduled times he plans to be in the office, though there may be exceptions due to outside appointments or pastoral needs. If you don't see his car, it's because he often parks in the back near the shade. Appointments may certainly be made at other times as necessary.

FR. RANDY'S EMAIL: soulman4jc@gmail.com; **FR. RANDY'S CELL:** (830) 481-8290

CHURCH PHONE: (903) 498-8080; **CHURCH WEBSITE:** www.stjamesonthelake.org

JULY BIRTHDAYS...

3	Sandy Scott	14	Lonnie Striplin
4	Bruce Mayo	17	Richetta Gowan
6	Ann Cavan	17	Shirley Green
7	Vicki Vieux	20	Debbie DeRosa
9	Mary Lynn Loomis	25	Bari Hart
9	Harold Weems	26	Dot Irwin
10	Bonnie Dill	30	Ess Brimer
13	Carroll Morriss		

JULY ANNIVERSARIES...

7	Dewey and Erin Haley	30	Paul and Sunny Lasiter
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JULY MEMORIALS...

1	Arthur J. Miller	17	Khedron Reeves
2	Art Langeloh	17	Jack Huffman
5	Dorise Benthall	18	Edgar Fyke
7	Babe Waldrep	25	Henry Richardson
7	Dot Cavan	26	Bill Irion
8	Beverly Adams	28	H. J. Cavan
12	Susie Collins		

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS...

1	JoAnne Tuttle	15	Barbara Austin
6	Hannah Gowan	18	Dawn Striplin
9	Tina Wage	29	Denise Waldrep
10	Jim Dill	29	Jerry Morriss
11	Valerie Stacy	29	Rosemary Blaase
11	Randy Melton		

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES...

2	Marshall and Nancy Barton	11	Phillip and Kelley Boughton
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AUGUST MEMORIALS...

1	Burke Stanard	17	Lois Olsen	26	A.P. Waldrep
1	Helen Hedden	20	Joyce Hankins	27	Al Olsen
6	Buzzy Hale	21	Ola Stout	27	Denise Denton
8	Ryland Bradley	22	O.D. Hankins	28	Jack Moffitt
12	Lena Wilcox	23	Barbara Acquisto	28	Dennis Lane
14	Ed Corbett	23	Dale Holt		

SUNDAY MORNING MINISTRIES JULY...

Remember, it will be up to you to get a replacement if you cannot fulfill your obligation.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Greeters</i>	<i>Altar Guild</i>	<i>Acolyte</i>	<i>Prayers</i>	<i>Lesson Reader</i>	<i>Chalice</i>	<i>Coffee Hour</i>	<i>DOK Prayers</i>	<i>Fred</i>
7	DeLois and Karen	Sandy and Tina	1-Kelley 2-Mike	Marian	Bari	Bill and Gail	Nancy B. Marilyn Shirley G	Sunny	Paul
14	Mike and Wendy	Sandy and Tina	1-Tissy 2-Paul	Carol	Marian	Bill and DeLois	Annette Karen Lorna	Willene	Bonnie
21	Marian and Ray	DeLois and Claire	1-Sandy 2-Tissy	Bill	Annette	Tina and Paul	Sunny Kitty Meridel	Martha	Carol
28	Marvin and Stephanie	DeLois and Claire	1- Carol 2-Art	Paul	Bob	Paul and Tina	Gail Deanna Barbara	Lorna	Linda

SUNDAY MORNING MINISTRIES AUGUST...

<i>Date</i>	<i>Greeters</i>	<i>Altar Guild</i>	<i>Acolyte</i>	<i>Prayers</i>	<i>Lesson Reader</i>	<i>Chalice</i>	<i>Coffee Hour</i>	<i>DOK Prayers</i>	<i>Fred</i>
4	Bob and Annette	Linda and Peggy	1- Kelley 2-Paul	Art	Sunny	Bill and DeLois	Susan D Patsy Rita D	Tina	Bonnie
11	Terry D and Susan D	Linda and Peggy	1-Carol 2-Art	Kelley	Marvin	Gail and Bill	Marian Judy Gloria	DeLois	Paul
18	Charlie and Rita D	Susan D and Kitty	1-Tissy 2-Kelley	Marian	Karen	Tina and Paul	Dot I. O'Connor Isabelle Claire	Carol	Vicki
25	Phillip and Kelley	Susan D and Kitty	1-Sandy 2-Mike	Carol	Jeff	Paul and DeLois	Nancy B. Marilyn Shirley G	Linda	Vicki

*A Dabba,
Dabba,
Dabba...*

