



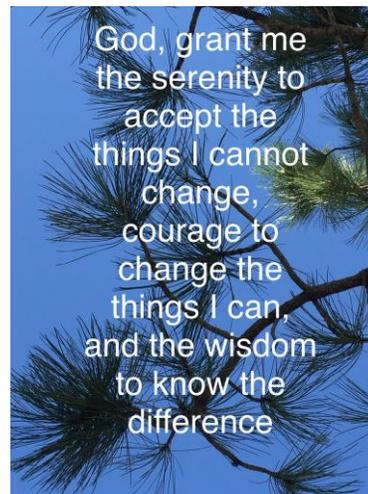
## PJ's NEWS WINTER 2024

We know, not a very original title!  
We are open to naming suggestions.

At the Annual Meeting in February your Vestry committed to find new ways to communicate with parishioners. We decided to try a quarterly update.

Each quarter we will report on:

- Parish News
- Financial status
- Future Planning
- Other Topics



### **First, a Message from our Senior Warden**

Hello Friends, Happy Spring. It's come to the Vestry's attention that some of you want to know why we still do not have permanent priest. Well, allow me to explain again why that has not been possible to date, and tell you how we hope to proceed in the future.

The Diocese Standing Committee approved our request to use \$100K from the sale of Meyers Hall to cover our expected Operating Budget deficits over the next 2+ years. These funds are only sufficient to keep our doors open and allows us to hire a supply priest almost every Sunday for Holy Eucharist.

The good news is that we are expecting other money from a trust fund given by one of our deceased parishioners (see Yvonne Ferris Trust below) that may allow us to consider hiring a part-time priest in addition to covering our budget shortfalls in future year. We will disclose that amount once these funds are distributed by the trust manager, Edward Jones, and begin discussions with you on our options.

To get a jump on considering options the Vestry has started the search process and is hoping to identify a retired priest who would love to become our part time religious leader. So please pray for our success.

Below I compiled some tips for staying positive.

Peace and Blessings,  
*Gordon Goode O'Suilleabhain*

It's important to stay positive during unsettling times, like those currently at St. PJ's. Here are a few tips that may help

1. Practice gratitude: Take time to appreciate the good things in your life and focus on the positive aspects.
2. Stay connected: Reach out to friends and family for support and connection. Talking to loved ones can help boost your mood. A good cup of hot chocolate is fun.
3. Engage in self-care: Take care of yourself by getting enough sleep, eating well, and exercising regularly. Self-care activities like meditation, yoga, or relaxation techniques can also help reduce stress.
4. Limit news consumption: Stay informed but avoid constantly watching or reading negative news. Take breaks from the news to protect your mental health. This is important...
5. Focus on what you can control: Instead of worrying about things beyond your control, focus on what you can do to improve your situation or outlook.

Remember, it's normal to feel unsettled during challenging times, but practicing positivity and self-care can help you navigate through them.

We will grow in God's eyes. Don't give up the faith

## **PARISH NEWS**

New Office Manager – Cherlyn Marvin has agreed to take on the Office Manager responsibilities at PJ's, in addition to her responsibilities as our bookkeeper and webmaster. She has dug right into her new assignment; bulletin, weekly updates, Lenten meditations, etc. are getting done on time with format and content changes she has suggested. Please give Cherlyn your full support.

Father Will Reller and Father Albert Daviou – We are so blessed to have two wonderful Supply Priests leading our Sunday Worship services. We have had a priest every

Sunday since the beginning of March. So many parishioners have told us how much they appreciate having more frequent holy eucharist services. And we have heard inspiring sermons from both Fathers Will and Albert.

Office Space Rental – Donna is leasing office space for her counseling practice, Sweet Grass.

Garden Room Rental – we had our first rental of the Garden Room in mid-March for a baby shower. We offer this room for rent for up to three hours, for a maximum of 50 guests, for \$275 plus a refundable \$100 security deposit. You can view our rental form on our website at <https://www.stpjschurch.org/facility-rental>.

If you have a friend or neighbor planning a party, please mention that our beautiful garden room is available to rent evenings and weekends.

Yvonne Ferris Trust – Yvonne Ferris is a former parishioner. She established a charitable trust to help sustain institutions important to her. Her trust proceeds are to be shared by

- Iowa State University Foundation
- Lakeview Village Foundation
- Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center
- Christ Episcopal Church in Rockville Maryland
- St. Philip and James Episcopal Church

Yvonne stipulated that the proceed from this be used by PJs for 1) General Religious Purposes 2) Charitable Works 3) Literacy and Educational Purposes and 4) Columbarium Maintenance.

We have been advised by Edward Jones that the funds from this trust are expected to be distributed in mid to late April.



New Loretto Heights Community – no new residents have moved into what is expected to be 800 new homes. There will be a combination of apartments, town homes, and single-family homes. On a recent visit to the sales office, we were advised that folks will start moving in during this summer/fall. We hope to distribute and post flyers about PJs, will investigate a direct mailing, and may even have to knock on doors. At least a few of the expected 2500 new residents will be drawn to our wonderful church!

## **FINANCIAL STATUS**

Revenue/Expenses - For January & February our income is tracking slightly below the first 2 monthly average in our 2024 Budget, and our expenses are higher. We will have a better sense of how close we are to our budget when more months have passed.

Quarterly Pledge Reports – these reports will be mailed in early April.

## **FUTURE PLANNING**

The Bishop is Coming – The Bishop is Coming! – Mark your calendars, Bishop Kym will be here on May 12<sup>th</sup> (Mother's Day). She will be our celebrant that Sunday. The Vestry will be meeting with the bishop's staff ahead of her visit to plan for the day's events.

Parking Lots – We have begun taking bids from asphalt contractors. Given the extensive deterioration of both of our parking lots, we are asking each bidder to



recommend what preparatory work should be done in advance of placing a new asphalt surface. The bids will also include replacing curb stops and re-striping parking spaces.

How to Use Trust Funds – We do not know the amount we will receive from the trust. Will it be enough to cover our operating fund deficits in future year(s) (how long) if we stay with supply priests. How would that change if we consider hiring a part-

time priest? Will either of these options be more advantageous to growing the size of our congregation? Lots to consider and discuss! Whatever we decide, we owe it to Yvonne Ferris to honor her wishes and spend the funds wisely.

## **OTHER TOPICS**

### Easter Season Thank You



A big thank you to everyone that helped plan and participate in all the services and events during the Easter season. At the risk of forgetting someone.... thank you to the choir, altar servers, ushers, lectors, cooks, easter egg stuffers/hiders, and anyone else who helped. A special thanks you to Joanna for her tireless work on Altar Guild, for Steven's special music ministry, and for Kathleen who so lovingly guides our children in Sunday School.

### Advocacy

We have all heard the saying - Give a person a fish, and you feed him/her for a day. Teach a person to fish, and you feed him/her for a lifetime". But perhaps as

important is making sure that all people have equal access to a fishing pole. We can do this by using our voice to advocate for laws and policies that would create a just and compassionate world.

At times in my life, I have embraced the call for advocacy, but I must admit to frustration and doubt as to whether my voice makes a difference. Serving food at a soup kitchen was often way more satisfying; and certainly, easier than getting a law changed!

Recently, however, I became more energized for advocacy when I discovered and joined the Episcopal Public Policy Network (EPPN). The EPPN sends me weekly action alerts that highlight legislation, offer information about the Church's position, and provides easy ways to act. I find the information EPPN provides to be thorough, well balanced, based on gospel values, and clearly rooted in our baptismal call to strive for justice and peace.

EPPN makes advocacy easy. Using your contact information, they identify your members of Congress. They provide sample letters on issues, pending legislation, etc. which you may edit and/or personalize. And with one click your letter reaches your representative. It couldn't be easier!



So, if you haven't yet discovered EPPN I encourage you to check out their website and join at

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/office-government-relations/eppn-sign-up/>. .....Craig

## **By St. Philip and St. James Vestry**

Gordon Goode-O'Suilleabhain  
Sally Aigner  
David Deng  
Craig Siracusa

Tom Branch  
Katie Branch  
Victoria Siracusa  
Rae Garrett

**THE DASH**  
By Linda Ellis

I read of a man who stood to speak at the funeral of a friend.  
He referred to the dates on the tombstone from the  
beginning... to the end.

He noted that first came the date of birth and spoke of the  
following date with tears, but he said what mattered most of  
all was the dash between those years.

For that dash represents all the time they spent alive on earth  
and now only those who loved them know what that little line  
is worth.

For it matters not, how much we own, the cars... the house...  
the cash. What matters is how we live and love and how we  
spend our dash.

So, think about this long and hard; are there things you'd like  
to change? For you never know how much time is left that  
still can be rearranged.

To be less quick to anger and show appreciation more and  
love the people in our lives like we've never loved before.

If we treat each other with respect and more often wear a  
smile... remembering that this special dash might only last a  
little while.

So, when your eulogy is being read, with your life's actions to  
rehash, would you be proud of the things they say about how  
you lived your dash?

