

the st. james



RECTOR'S MESSAGE

January 2023
Volume 22 Number 1



Sunday Schedule

8 AM Holy Eucharist, Rite I
10 AM Holy Eucharist, Rite II
11:15 AM Coffee Hour
5:30 PM South Sudanese
Worship

104th Diocesan Convention
January 27-29, 2023
Hotel Roanoke Conference
Center

Sunday, January 29, 2023

There are no morning
worship services at St.
James. Please attend the
in-person Diocesan Eucharist
at 10 a.m. or join by
livestream,
www.youtube.com/dioswva

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Dear Saints of James,

The 12th day of Christmas is January 6th, celebrated as the Feast of the Epiphany, the day the Magi traveling from the East, arrived at the place where Jesus was born. This event signifies that the Incarnation (God coming in human flesh) also involves the announcement of salvation to "all nations." The Good News is not for a privileged group but for everyone, everywhere. While Christmas celebrates Christ's *coming* into the world, Epiphany celebrates *manifestation*, the ways in which the Incarnation is revealed to us.

Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn..
They shall bring gold and frankincense,
and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.
(Isaiah 60:3,6a)

In many Christian lands Epiphany is the most important feast of Christmas, especially in Latin countries, when the arrival of the Wise men is celebrated with festivities and gifts are exchanged to recall the gifts of the Magi. In Shakespeare's England, Twelfth Night was a momentous day with special entertainments arranged for that occasion. For most of us English speakers, this feast seems to have slipped away. St. James does not have a tradition of having a service on this Feast day, or a festive gathering with a King's Cake. The significance of the Magi and the Epiphany season that follows is totally lost in our culture as the stores are now filled with Valentines Day candies and cards. Yet the Feast of the Epiphany is an opportunity to open the last

(continued on page 2 ...)

St. James Episcopal Church

Clergy:

The Rev. Susan E. Bentley, Rector
The Rev. Dr. Robert T. Copenhaver,
Adjunct Pastoral Associate

Staff:

Mrs. Connie Bierly, Secretary
Mr. Andrew Cochran, Choir Director & Organist
Mrs. Donna Parks & Mr. Marshall Hudson, Sextons

The Connection:

Send copy to: stjames@rev.net

Internet Web Page:

www.stjamesroanoke.org
Gerald Gordon, Web Master
ggordonva@hotmail.com

The St. James Vestry:

Senior Warden, Avis Aheron
Junior Warden, Tim Buchholtz
† Clerk, TBA
† Treasurer, Kevin Shepherd
† Ass't. Treasurer, Avis Aheron
† Rec. Treasurer, Danny Fainter
Avis Aheron
Tim Buchholtz
Donna Frost
Jessica Price
Katie Rucker
Carla Spencer
Phil Wheeler
Dottie Wrabel
Lynn Wright
(† - Not Vestry members)

Standing Committees & Chairs

Finance: TBA
Property: Tim Buchholtz
Hospitality: Kim Laxton
Stewardship: TBA

* * * * *

Episcopal Church Women:
Dorothy Herndon

Daughters of the King:
Carla Spencer

Rector's Message continued. . .

Christmas present - a "showing forth", that presents us with the gift of the incarnation and invites us to unwrap the meaning of this, layer by layer. The gift of the incarnation is no glitzy present to be put on display. It is complex, intricate, and mysterious. It is like looking into a kaleidoscope and seeing the light blast through many shards of colored glass. It is like a piece of art that demands not only our examination but our participation in its purpose. How do we see God manifest in our daily lives, our relationships, and in the events of our world? In the final analysis, we discover this gift has not been given to us to keep, but to give away in great abundance, to bring light in the darkness, and hope in places of despair. Swiss physician and author, Paul Tournier writes about this gift of manifestation.

"God's intervention is also seen in those sudden, unexpected experiences, at times of utter despair, when all at once the mind is filled with the absolute certainty of God's love. It is like an unexpected signpost upon an uncertain road."

And the German poet Friedrich Ruckert wrote:

"Now the sun will rise as bright, as though no sorrow had fallen in the night. This sorrow fell on me alone, the sun, it shines on everyone. Do not wrap yourself

around the night, bathe it in eternal light. My tent is dark, the lamp is cold, bless the light, the Joy of the World!"

May Epiphany blessings be shown forth to you, SEB+

St. James Cycle of Prayers

In January, we give thanks for the work of the Vestry. We pray that all Vestry members, wardens, and other vestry officers will be guided by God's grace in their deliberations and decisions throughout the coming year.

A special thank you to those who served on the 2022 Vestry:

- ✚ Chris Criscione
- ✚ Tim Buchholtz
- ✚ Gail Fields
- ✚ Jessica Price
- ✚ Carla Spencer
- ✚ Gina Wellford
- ✚ Phil Wheeler
- ✚ Dottie Wrabel
- ✚ Lynn Wright

TREASURERS' CORNER . . .

By Kevin Shepherd

Financials: November 2022
(These are Year-to-Date actual amounts not budgeted amounts)

Operating Income: \$157,812.54
Operating Expenses: \$182,739.62
Net (Loss) Operating Income:
(\$24,927.08)

VESTRY CORNER . .

Vestry News

Congratulations to the **new Vestry members** elected for 2023:

- ✚ Avis Aheron
- ✚ Donna Frost
- ✚ Katie Rucker








The Vestry Officers for 2023 are:

- ✚ Senior Warden, Avis Aheron
- ✚ Junior Warden, Tim Buchholtz
- ✚ Treasurer, Kevin Shepherd
- ✚ Assistant Treasurer, Avis Aheron
- ✚ Receiving Treasurer, Danny Fainter
- ✚ Clerk, TBA

OUTREACH NEWS...

The benevolence offering for January 15 goes to the Rescue Mission. With a mission statement of "*helping hurting people in Jesus' name,*" the *Rescue Mission of Roanoke is a comprehensive crisis intervention center for men, women, and children. They offer life-saving services aimed at transformation and restoration.*

Here is how donations helped in 2021:

-  104,428 – Meals Served
-  54,198 – Nights of safe shelter
-  14,959 – Manna Food Boxes Distributed
-  18,606 – Clothing & Furniture Help
-  8,856 – Clinic Patient Encounters
-  1,384 – Case Management Visits
-  30,886 – Volunteer Hours

To support this worthy organization, please make your check payable to St. James Episcopal Church, with Rescue Mission on the memo line of your check.

For more information, visit their website at: <https://rescuemission.net/>

WELL UPDATE . . .

We Have Filled the Well!

Our project to financially build a well through Episcopal Relief and Development, for a village in need of accessible, clean water, has been a success. As of last Sunday, we have surpassed our goal and filled the Well! In two and a half months, we have raised \$5,111.27, which will change the lives of an unknown number of adults and children. The additional funds above \$5,000.00 will be used for training and maintenance of the well. In 2023, ERD will be building wells in: Angola, Burundi and Zambia, Haiti, Cuba and Nicaragua. We will be celebrating this accomplishment and bless the funds to be sent to ERD, on Sunday, January 8th, at the 10 am service.

NEWS FROM BOYS HOME OF VIRGINIA . . .

This is the story about a boy named Ermias: Ermias is an 18-year-old from Maryland. He originally came to this country through an international adoption. His adoptive family sought the services of Boys Home after Ermias had issues with his current family situation. Ermias was a student for 3 years and was selected as president of the Boys Home Resident Council. He initially was enrolled in the Boys Home School for remediation and then attended the local high school. He graduated in 2013. Ermias has many interests and talents, particularly art, music and video. His artwork was selected for the 2011 Boys Home Christmas card and he has received recognition in local art contests. Ermias is interested in a possible vocation in music production through his future plans are sketchy.

ANNOUNCEMENTS ...

The 104th Diocesan Annual Convention

The 104th Annual Diocesan Council will be held January 27 to 29, 2023 at the Hotel Roanoke Conference Center. The St. James Delegates to Council this year are: Tim Buchholtz, Art Tatman, & the Rev. Susan Bentley, alternate Jessica Price. All members of St. James are invited to attend Council as a visitor; the theme is: *One in Mission, Proclaiming Jesus*. A livestream of the business sessions, Saturday morning

program, and Sunday morning worship will be available on the diocesan YouTube channel as a view-only option for those unable to attend. Specific information for the weekend schedule is found on the diocesan website, (<https://www.dioswva.org/governance/annual-Convention.html>).

Youth @ Convention

Plans are underway for the youth during the annual Diocesan Convention, Friday evening, January 27-29, through Sunday morning Eucharist. Registration is open for Youth@Convention 2023! All middle and high school youth are invited to join for a weekend of fun, fellowship, and worship, at St. John's Episcopal Church, Roanoke. The Y@C theme is "Expect the Unexpected. God is Our Constant." Get ready for the biggest event of the year with youth from across Southwestern Virginia. The **registration deadline is Wednesday, Jan. 11**. Please sign up soon to guarantee your t-shirt. We can't wait to unite for this homecoming of diocesan youth at our first event of the new year! Questions? Email us at youth@dioswva.org. Registration is on line: <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Youth-Convention-2023.html?soid=1101622110977&aid=1uZBATr5jf>, and the cost is \$110.00, (includes dinner Friday, 3 meals on Saturday, and breakfast Sunday.). Scholarships are available; see the Rector.

Sunday Worship - January 29th

On Sunday, January 29th, St. James will be joining the diocesan 10:00 am Convention Holy Eucharist, either in person at the Hotel Roanoke Conference Center, or by livestream. Bishop Mark will Preside and Preach. There will be no worship services at St. James that morning. The Diocesan Youtube channel will be streaming the service here:

<https://www.youtube.com/dioswva>, and this link will be provided in the E-Announcements.

Helping the Newest South Sudanese Family

A new family of South Sudanese refugees has just arrived in Roanoke, from the Kakuma Refugee Center- a Mother and 7 children. Here is information on items that we can help donate to assist in their settling into a new life in the Roanoke Valley. Family members are:

Jane Awot, age 43, Shoes 9, Tops-medium, Pants-8-10 petite, gloves & hat.

Stephen Watmon, age 27, Shoes 11, Shirts and Coat- XL; Pants-35R, Hat and gloves.

Stella Akwero, age 24, Shoes 10 1/2, Pants large-petite, tops & jacket-large, gloves & hat.

Vivian Akun, age 22, Shoes-5, Tops & jacket- medium, Pants-Medium petite, Hat & gloves.

James Opio, age 19, Shoes and soccer cleats 10 1/2, Shirts and Coats-Medium, Pants- 32 L, hat & gloves.

Goodwil Ochen, age 19, Shoes and soccer cleats 10 1/2, Shirts and Coats-Medium, Pants- 32 L, hat and gloves.

Angel Akello, age 16, Shoes-7, Top & jacket-Medium, Pants-Medium, Hat & gloves.

Trust Regina, age 11, Shoes-2Y, Top & jacket-Medium girls, Pants-Medium girls, Hat & Gloves.

Immaculate Amani, age 8, shoes 12Y, Top & jacket-small girls, Pants-small girls, Hat & gloves.

Household items include, twin bed sheets & blankets; curtains - 38"x60" (9 windows), 4'x5' (3 windows); lamps, television, school supplies, books, toys, games, table tennis net with paddles & balls.

Baptismal Dates for 2023

“Holy Baptism is especially appropriate at the Easter Vigil, on the Day of Pentecost, on All Saint’s Day or the Sunday after All Saint’s Day, the Feast of the Baptism of our Lord, (the first Sunday after Epiphany), and the visitation of the Bishop. It is recommended that, as far as possible,

baptisms be reserved for these occasions or when a bishop is present.” (*The Book of Common Prayer*, page 312.)

The Baptismal dates for St. James in 2023 are: The Baptism of our Lord, January 8; the Easter Vigil, April 8; the Day of Pentecost, May 28; and All Saints Sunday, November 5. If you would like to be Baptized or have a child you would like to be Baptized, contact the Rector.

2023 Episcopal Church Year Calendars

Our 2023 church year calendars are available for purchase. Calendars are \$3 if purchased from Altar Guild members or when purchased in the church office. Calendars are \$5 each if you’d prefer one mailed to you. Please make checks payable to St. James Episcopal Church with church calendar noted in the memo line.

Altar Flowers

It is time to sign up to give altar flowers for 2023. During the month of December, the Altar Flower chart will be in on the bulletin board by the kitchen, and you are invited to sign up for the Sundays that you wish to give flowers in 2023. Flowers each week are \$25.00, and checks can be made out to St. James Episcopal Church, with a memo of “flower fund” and left in the office, or put in the offering plate. If you know what dedication you would like for the

flowers, you can turn that in with your money. If you are not sure at this time, then you will need to leave the dedication information at the Church office, or email it to stjames@rev.net, by Tuesday, prior to the Sunday you will be giving flowers.

If you have not paid for your flowers in 2022, or cannot remember if you paid, please contact Danny Fainter who can check our records.

Wednesday Evening Bible Study

The weekday Bible Study, led by Bob Canova, continues to meet on Wednesday nights at 7 pm. in the Conference Room on the lower level of the Parish House. All are invited to participate; For more information contact John Whitcomb, 563-1708 or Bob Canova, 540-819-7255 (mobile), bob.canova@cox.net.

Round Hill School Supply Collection

It is time for our annual back to school collection of classroom supplies for Round Hill Elementary School, our local neighborhood school. You can help support our partnership with the students, teachers and staff by picking up some needed items, and leaving them in the Round Hill box in the Parish Hall. This collection is part of a larger valley wide project sponsored by Congregations in Action (CIA).

Following is the list of what is needed:

- ✚ New underwear and new or gently used short and long pants, girls and boys sizes 4,5,6
- ✚ Glue sticks (large size .77 oz)
- ✚ 8 or 10 or 16 or 24 crayons
- ✚ pink erasers
- ✚ #2 pencils
- ✚ children's scissors
- ✚ small dry erase markers
- ✚ marbled composition books
- ✚ Ziplock bags (sandwich, quart, & gallon size)
- ✚ baby wipes
- ✚ hand sanitizer

Treat of the Week Donations

Thank you to those who have donated to our weekly coffee hour, "your lucky day" event. Please continue your contributions. Items welcomed include gift cards, food items, specialty baskets, holiday themed items, and small practical gifts. The proceeds from your ticket donation, go to the Building Fund for property repairs and replacements. Karen Martin welcomes your Treat of the Week donations.

Forward Day By Day

Forward Day By Day devotionals for November, December, and January are still available for pick up at St. James in the Parish Hall. In addition, the February, March, April issue is also available. The devotionals are \$1; there is a collection jar in the Parish Hall. Feel free to share Forward Day by

Day with family, friends and neighbors, or other Saints of James who may not be getting to Church.

Little Free Pantry

Our Little Free Pantry continues to be well used and appreciated. Please continue to stock our pantry with non-perishable foods in **unopened** containers, personal care items and paper goods.

Two ways to help fundraise for St. James:

(1) Kroger. For your Kroger grocery purchases to be credited towards St. James fundraising efforts, you will need to register online with Kroger (www.kroger.com/communityrewards). St. James' exclusive community rewards organization number is VM990. If you need assistance with signing up, please contact Avis Aheron (avisaheron@hotmail.com or 540-580-9203). It will take just a few minutes to sign you up, and St. James will receive a check based on the percentage of sales, split among participating organizations.

(2) AmazonSmile. If you do any online shopping through Amazon, St. James could be receiving a percentage of your purchases. Simply log on at www.smile.amazon.com, designate St. James as your charity of choice and let the shopping begin. If you have any questions about setting this up, please

contact: Avis Aheron (540-580-9203).

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS...

January 1	Marjorie Taylore Price
January 1	Nelson Walla
January 4	John Bird
January 5	Carla Spencer
January 8	John Whitcomb
January 14	Sarah Perry
January 16	Lynn Wright
January 16	Pam Reilly
January 17	Ian Johnstone
January 19	Doug Tuggle
January 20	Gina Wellford
January 24	William Ostrom
January 25	Grace Aheron
January 25	Sara Ostrom
January 25	Evan Lee Miller
January 26	Katie George
January 26	Darryl Perry
January 30	Brittany Frost
January 30	Tom Orville
January 30	Julio Morant

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES...

January 1	Sharon & Jerry Miller
January 14	Pam & Wayne Reilly
January 17	John & Pat Whitcomb

NOTES OF THANKS...

In this season of gift giving, and mindful of the Magi that arrived at the village of Bethlehem to honor the Christ Child with their gifts, I am touched by your very generous Christmas staff gift. Thank you does not seem to adequately express my appreciation, but it comes

from a grateful heart and your gift brings awe and wonder to my spirit. Ministry with you continues to bless me and deepen my understanding of being one in Christ. May the Spirit of Christmas bless you in the New Year.

God's Peace and Love,
Sue+

Dear Saints of James,

Thank you so very much for the Christmas gift. You are always the most generous, gracious group of people I know. It is a true pleasure to work with you! All of you are counted among my many blessings daily.

Best wishes for a healthy, happy 2023!

Thanks again. The gift is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Connie

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1 New Year's Day</p> <p><u>2:30 PM</u> AA</p>	<p>2 New Year's Day Observed</p> <p><u>5:30 PM</u> Women's NA</p>	<p>3</p> <p><u>6:30 PM</u> AA</p>	<p>4</p> <p><u>7:00 PM</u> Bible Study</p>	<p>5</p> <p><u>3:30 PM</u> Service Dogs <u>6:30 PM</u> AA</p>	<p>6</p> <p><u>5:00 PM</u> Service Dogs</p>	<p>7</p> <p><u>9:30 AM</u> AA</p>
<p>8</p> <p><u>2:30 PM</u> AA</p>	<p>9</p> <p><u>5:30 PM</u> Women's NA</p>	<p>10</p> <p><u>6:30 PM</u> AA</p>	<p>11</p> <p><u>6:30 PM</u> Little Church Social Club <u>7:00 PM</u> Bible Study</p>	<p>12</p> <p><u>3:30 PM</u> Service Dogs <u>6:30 PM</u> AA</p>	<p>13</p> <p><u>5:00 PM</u> Service Dogs</p>	<p>14</p> <p><u>9:30 AM</u> AA</p>
<p>15</p> <p><u>2:30 PM</u> AA <u>12:00 PM</u> Vestry</p>	<p>16 Martin Luther King Jr.</p> <p><u>5:30 PM</u> Women's NA</p>	<p>17</p> <p><u>6:30 PM</u> AA</p>	<p>18</p> <p><u>7:00 PM</u> Bible Study</p>	<p>19</p> <p><u>3:30 PM</u> Service Dogs <u>6:30 PM</u> AA</p>	<p>20</p> <p><u>5:30 PM</u> Down Syndrome Support Group</p>	<p>21</p> <p><u>9:30 AM</u> AA</p>
<p>22</p> <p><u>2:30 PM</u> AA</p>	<p>23</p> <p><u>5:30 PM</u> Women's NA</p>	<p>24</p> <p><u>6:30 PM</u> AA</p>	<p>25</p> <p><u>6:30 PM</u> Little Church Social Club <u>7:00 PM</u> Bible Study</p>	<p>26</p> <p><u>3:30 PM</u> Service Dogs <u>6:30 PM</u> AA</p>	<p>27 104th Annual Convention</p> <p><u>5:00 PM</u> Service Dogs</p>	<p>28 104th Annual Convention</p> <p><u>9:30 AM</u> AA</p>
<p>29 104th Annual Convention</p> <p><u>2:30 PM</u> AA</p>	<p>30</p> <p><u>5:30 PM</u> Women's NA</p>	<p>31</p> <p><u>6:30 PM</u> AA</p>				

SERVER SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY 2023

Jan 1			
8 AM	<i>Lector and Chalcist—Tim Buchholtz</i>		
10 AM	Crucifer Thomas Rucker	Ushers	Kevin Shepherd, Madde Shepherd
	Acolyte Peyton Morant-Frost	Coffee	Doris & Larry Mattox, Joyce Brown
	Chalcist 1 Katie Rucker	Nursery	-----
		Tellers	Gerald Gordon, Michael Kennedy
	Lector 1 Michael Bentley	Altar Guild	Boots Ingram, Odell James, Karen Martin, Debbie Williams
	Lector 2 Sabrina Mattox		
	Prayers Donna Frost		
Jan 8			
8 AM	<i>Lector—Phil Wheeler; Chalcist—Bill Barksdale</i>		
10 AM	Crucifer Jordyn Price	Ushers	Jim & Mary McGlothlin
	Acolyte Grant Rucker	Coffee	Chris & JoAnn Criscione, Linda Bryant
	T Bearer -----	Nursery	-----
		Tellers	Arby Frost, Katie Rucker
	Chalcist Art Tatman	Altar Guild	Danny Fainter, Gail Fields, Joan Gurniak
	Lector 1 JoAnn Criscione		
	Lector 2 Jackie Leonard		
	Prayers Jessica Price		
Jan 15			
8 AM	<i>Lector—Bill Barksdale; Chalcist—Tim Buchholtz</i>		
10 AM	Crucifer Yuri Malick	Ushers	Michael Kennedy, Thomas Rucker
	Acolyte Roman Malick	Coffee	Danny Fainter, Gerald Gordon, Gail Fields
	T Bearer -----	Nursery	-----
		Tellers	Larry Mattox, Jim McGlothlin
	Chalcist Lawton Kasey	Altar Guild	Linda Bryant, Dorothy Herndon, Sharon Miller, JoAnn Criscione
	Lector 1 Lynn Wright		
	Lector 2 Maile Armstrong		
	Prayers Chris Criscione		
Jan 22			
8 AM	<i>Lector and Chalcist—Tim Buchholtz</i>		
10 AM	Crucifer Madde Shepherd	Ushers	Chris & JoAnn Criscione
	Acolyte Madalyn Linkous	Coffee	Beth & Steve Wiegandt
	T Bearer -----	Nursery	-----
		Tellers	Maile Armstrong, Donna Frost
	Chalcist Kevin Shepherd	Altar Guild	Lawton Kasey, Betsy Briggs, Katie Rucker
	Lector 1 Phil Hoblra		
	Lector 2 Jessica Price		
	Prayers Art Tatman		
Jan 29 *No services at St. James, due to Diocesan Convention. St. James members are welcome to attend the Sunday morning Diocesan Holy Eucharist, at 10:00 a.m., at the Hotel Roanoke Conference Center, or watch the service on YouTube.			
Feb 5			
8 AM	<i>Lector—Phil Wheeler; Chalcist—Bill Barksdale</i>		
10 AM	Crucifer Zenon Malick	Ushers	Michael Bentley, Madalyn Linkous
	Acolyte Mercedes Malick	Coffee	Kevin & Kim Laxton
	T Bearer -----	Nursery	-----
		Tellers	Gerald Gordon, Michael Kennedy
	Chalcist Katie Rucker	Altar Guild	Boots Ingram, Odell James, Karen Martin, Debbie Williams
	Lector 1 Donna Frost		
	Lector 2 Chris Criscione		
	Prayers Carla Spencer		

Note: If you can't meet your scheduled time please find a substitute and let the Office know.

Darkness makes us rethink

Somewhere along the line, the woman I once adored left me. I was her star, her joy, her best companion, her confidante, her only child. My mother and I were more like sisters, more like friends, than we were like mother and daughter. She told me everything. I lied to her only once.

When my stepfather didn't want me to start dating, I told them both that I was going to a movie with girlfriends and then met the boy on a corner somewhere. She figured it all out, however, and instead of cutting me out of the warm circle of her trust, let my stepfather know in no uncertain terms that insisting on unnatural absolutes was exactly what would "make a liar out of me." After that the rule became that boys were to come to the house first for the regular parental review. And she and I went back to telling one another the truth. About everything.

I expected we would have long and happy years together. I actually planned for them. When my stepfather died, leaving her a relatively young widow, I was sure we'd go places together now, and celebrate everything together, and work together on the projects that had become my concentration.

But, little by little, the relationship began to go awry. She got testy and irritated. She didn't do the things she promised she would. I'd squeeze in a trip to take her to the bank and when we got there she didn't have her bank book. Then one day, she began accusing me of making phone calls to her—and hanging up when she answered. We were strangers now.

It was years before they began to call it "Alzheimer's disease." By then I was full of anger. After that, I was full of guilt. She lived for twenty-eight years with the disease, and so did I. It was a long, dark time but, I began to realize later, it was not a useless time.

Darkness is that period of life when nothing seems to be going as expected. We find ourselves derailed in our journey to our dreams, not only by things we didn't foresee but by things we simply could not have imagined. Darkness comes and envelops us. It also makes us look at life all over again. Whatever we once took for granted, darkness makes us rethink, reevaluate, relinquish.

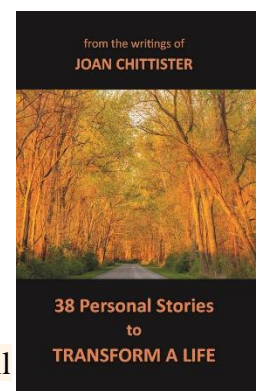
The value of a dark time is that it insists that we become new, even to ourselves. I was no longer the darling daughter of a doting mother. I was alone in the world, at best, abandoned for nothing I could imagine. It was time to find within myself the resources that the once unalterable refuge of motherhood had provided. I began to redefine myself, to feel the strength that comes with knowing that you are enough for you.

Darkness is a time of beginning again. We are forced to determine a new way of being in the world. It is a frightening time—but a liberating time as well. It gives us the opportunity to make new choices about life, about relationships, about our dreams and our plans. It tells us that the old world has passed away and the new one is of our making.

In a busy world, we seldom get the luxury of reviewing where we are. We simply get up every morning and go on. Yesterday becomes today and every day thereafter. It is a very spiritual time. It is a time that challenges us to recreate ourselves in the image of the Spirit who calls us to become everything we can be. The darkness that blocks us from becoming is the very womb of a new life.

The message in the darkness did not come immediately. But if we can possibly learn to trust darkness, to understand that life is a pattern of starts and stops, of celebrating the past, of coming to terms with the present, of believing the future to be kind, then we can come to understand that the dark parts are only those closing down moments, like flowers at night, till the sun shines once more.

—from [*38 Personal Stories to Transform a Life*](#), by Joan Chittister



*The 2022 Christmas Poinsettias were given
To the Glory of God by~*

The white poinsettias on the altar are given by:

Joyce Brown in thanksgiving for my St. James family and my family here and in England; and by Doris and Larry Mattox in thanksgiving for our mom, Joyce and our children and grandchildren: Deidre, Billy, Bryan, Amanda, Cole, Will, Brayden and Eva.

The red poinsettias are given by:

Maile S. Armstrong in loving memory of The Rev. Robert and Jane A. Sheeran.

Michael and Susan Bentley in thanksgiving for Eleanor Park Allred, our first grandchild.

Linda Bryant in loving memory of my son Peter Schuyler.

Andy Cochran in loving memory of John and Mable Cochran.

Andy Cochran in loving memory of Frank and Lucy Cochran, Milton and Zella Kirkland.

Andy Cochran in loving memory of Mimi Copenhaver.

Robert T. Copenhaver in loving memory of Mimi Kidd Copenhaver.

Danny Fainter in loving memory of stepfather - Clyde F. Dudley.

Gail Fields in loving memory of daughter Deena, and in thanksgiving for Kevin and Madde.

Donna and Arby Frost in thanksgiving for Gail Dubicki, Robert Zastrow, Linda Peoples, Charlene Barr.

From the family in loving memory of Olivia Paige Goldberg.

Gerald Gordon and Danny Fainter in loving memory of Inez Gordon, Annie Dudley and Jesse Fainter.

Dorothy Herndon in loving memory of Bob Herndon and Betsy Herndon Clark.

Odell James in loving memory of Bill James.

Sabrina Mattox in memory of Elder Patricia Griggs, Eliza Holland Tyree, Frances Hughes Mattox, Elder Mattox, Alexandria Tyree and Calvin Tyree.

Dennis and Barbara Plunkett in loving memory of our loving son David, and in thanksgiving for all our loved ones.

Katie Rucker and Michael Kennedy in loving memory of Glenda Kiser Kennedy.

Kevin and Madde Shephard in loving memory of sister and aunt Deena and Madde's mother Missy.

Cam Srpan in loving memory of John and Charlotte Beckwith.

Cam Srpan in loving memory of Bill and Sharon Capps.

Art Tatman in loving memory of Ida Alsip.

Art Tatman in loving memory of Eddie and Alma Tatman.

Phil Wheeler in loving memory of my lovely wife Judy and Andrew Bryson Odenthal.

*A Donation was made to the Glory of God for the
St. James Endowment Fund by:*

Susan Bentley in loving memory of the enslaved people who worked on the Howell Plantation in Georgia.

Susan E. Bentley in thanksgiving for all The Saints of James, the St. James staff.

Ann Bird in loving memory of Robert Harold Bird.

Ann Bird in thanksgiving for John, Beth, Kevin, Amber and Hunter.

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Pam and Wayne Reilly in thanksgiving for our two sons Steve and Pete and their families.

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Lynn Wright in loving memory of my husband, Robert James Wright.

Lynn Wright in thanksgiving for my grandchildren Spencer Brian Smith and Alana and Sophia Smith, and their parents Brian and Rachelle Smith.