

The March VISITOR

A Publication of St. James Lutheran Church, ELCA

Note from the pastor



Can we talk love of God, love of St. James, and evangelism for a moment? Evangelism is the announcement of the gospel, the good news of Jesus. Evangelism takes all forms; actions, words, engagement in community, behaviors towards others, etc. Evangelism is a way of life, but it is a way of life that is lived for all to see. It is one of the outward expressions of our faith. We, really, cannot evangelize to ourselves, we must evangelize with, to, and amongst others.

Jesus did not say, “Share the gospel as you stay where you are.” He said, “Go” (Matthew 28:19). Go out of the walls of the church, out into the world, and share what good things God is doing in your life, and **through** your church, St. James, because evangelism is not about us, it is all about what God does.

I have heard many memories shared of St. James. There is a great contingent of folk at St. James that have been with St. James from the beginning or slightly after the inception of St. James. These stories are related with smiles as the memories evoke good feelings; friendships formed, families raised, faith being formed and nurtured, support from each other during rough times, and celebrations shared. A lot of hard work has gone into building this family of faith.

And, we must boldly follow the command to build the church and to spread the good news.

As some of you might remember, St. James Church Council met last June for a day retreat to review the church’s vision statement and to update new goals for the year. Speaking specifically on the topic of Evangelism, many wonderful ideas were brainstormed, but I would like to take this time to look at two of them:

Intentional Evangelism: Really invite someone to “Come and See” what God is doing through St. James.

To provide training to the congregation in Evangelism.

Why, you might ask, do we need training in Evangelizing, in order to invite others to come and see? Well, for one thing, because evangelism is not an option; it is a mandate by Jesus, and two, because it is not always a gift that we carry naturally but need to learn to cultivate. Just as we go to school to learn new skills, gain knowledge, and become empowered to do the work in a certain field, so do we need to learn evangelism skills.

The Church has changed over the years and so has society. Conversations that begin with “Remember back in the day when church was...” are destructive to evangelism. They keep us stuck in the past, and we need to become unstuck from that which is not reality anymore and look forward and envision new ways. And, while we look forward, we also need to look outward.

We may be fortunate enough to have the occasional person walk through our doors, but that does not often happen, and so we need to be intentional with our evangelism. An easy trick to begin thinking about being intentional with evangelism is to think of the last time someone asked

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

you how your weekend was; did you mention you went to church? Most times we simply speak of the social things we did or about the chores we accomplished. As an alternative, speak on something you picked up from the sermon, or about the great fellowship you shared, or your excitement over what is happening or will be happening soon at St. James (Lenten Mid-Week Services, Palm Sunday luncheon etc. New Beginning House, inspiring music during Worship.) When we engage in these conversations, we may not always change the mind of the other person regarding church, but it does change us.

St. James is important to each of us. We cherish the sense of family belonging that we share. We delight in learning new things, and we crave the spiritual growth we receive by being a part of this grand endeavor of being a Christian community. And, we know that we desire to keep this rich legacy of a family of faith growing.

On **Sunday, May 7**, Rev. David Sprang, Assistant to the Bishop and Director for Evangelical Mission will be preaching at St. James, and following worship will engage us in some workshops. This date has been chosen, of course, because of availability dates with Pastor Sprang, but also it is at a time that we hope will be free from other obligations for many of our members. It is before summer activities begin, it is before graduations, and it is during a somewhat down time for the congregation.

Yes, it is true that it is sometimes difficult to carve out extra time, but this is an endeavor that really needs to be congregation-wide. I cannot stress that enough. We have a passion for St. James and would love to see us grow and spread, and it takes the efforts of all of us, not just a few. Our Church Council and myself encourage you to mark this date on your calendar. It will be well-worth-your-time.

Further information will be shared as we get closer to this date. I look forward to this exciting time together as a congregation.

"Sometimes we get so caught up in trying to convince others that what we believe and that our interpretation of being Christian is correct that we forget to tell the simple truth: 'Jesus loves me, this I know; for the Bible tells me so.' You can never argue someone into faith. Loving them is a better way to give them a sighting of Christ."

Blessings always,
Pastor Martha



PUB THEOLOGY is a small group ministry that tackles questions of faith and life in an informal atmosphere.

This month meet at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, March 1st and 15th at **Grand River Marketplace**. 117 W. Louis Glick Highway, Jackson.

We have the pleasure of having other faith-denominations join us and the conversation is always lively and informative.



THE FOOD PANTRY would like to give our costume jewelry in May for Mother's Day. If you have jewelry you no longer wear why not give it to someone who would use it. There is a basket for the Food Pantry in the narthex under the table.



Fat Tuesday or **Shrove "Tuesday"** occurs on the Tuesday prior to Ash Wednesday. It officially ends Epiphany and is the vigil for the starting of Lent. Shrove Tuesday has become the last day for celebration and feasting before the period of fasting during the Lenten season. The name "Shrove Tuesday" is derived from the word "shrive", which means to confess and receive absolution. The name indicates a period of cleansing during which a person brings their lusts and appetites under control. Shrove Tuesday began during the Middle Ages when food such as meats, fats, eggs, milk, and fish were regarded as restricted during Lent. To keep such food from being wasted, many families would have big feasts on Shrove Tuesday so that those foods did

not spoil during the 40 days of Lent. The English tradition of eating pancakes on Shrove Tuesday came about as a way to use as much milk, fats, and eggs as possible before Ash Wednesday began. The term "Fat Tuesday" came from France for the same reason, hence *Mardi Gras*.

Join us on February 28 from 5:30 – 7:30 for as some of the men of the congregation cook:

- Pancakes
- Bacon
- Sausage/Turkey Sausage
- Apple Sauce
- Choice of beverages

Join us as we begin this exciting journey into Lent together as a congregation. There is a signup sheet in the narthex for you to add you name to and the number you will be bringing. This will help us determine how much sausage and bacon to purchase. If you will not be in church before that date call the church office at 517-782-8297 and we will be happy to write you in. Hope to see you there!



WE WILL WORSHIP this month with the residents of **Summit Park Assisted Living** on March 26th at 2:00 pm.



MID-WEEK LENTEN SERVICES :

Please plan to join us for mid-week Lenten services on Wednesdays March 8th through April 5th.

The night begins with a soup dinner at 6:00 pm and Worship is at 7:00pm.

If you can bring soup please signup in the narthex.



JOIN the JOURNEY! through Holy Week



For years St. James has celebrated Holy Week in pretty much the same way. The Worship and Music Committee thought it was time for you to *feel* the journey through Holy Week so we've made a few changes. There will be five stops along our road to the empty tomb and we invite you to **Join the Journey!**

PRAISE At **10am on Palm Sunday, April 9th**, we will enter the sanctuary celebrating in the traditional style of Palm Sunday without the Passion part of worship...that will come later. We will be full of joy and praise as we usher Jesus into our community but, that's only the beginning. To get to the next part of the story you will want to *Join the Journey* to...

WITNESS At **7pm on Maundy Thursday, April 13th**, we will continue the journey with humility as our feet are washed and we commune with our Lord at His Last Supper. That will lead us to the next part of the story as our journey continues with...

CRUCIFY At **7pm on Good Friday, April 14th**, we will hear the end of the Passion experiencing the death of Jesus. It will end with a somber exit into the Narthex leaving the "tomb" as we gather with a whispered Lord's Prayer. Our journey then continues as we keep...

VIGIL At **7pm on Holy Easter, April 15th**, we will gather to mourn and keep vigil for our Lord. In the Narthex, just outside the "tomb," we will tell stories about our beloved with reflections, prayers and Taize music. There will not be a wine and cheese reception because our journey is not yet finished. Our journey continues when we...

CELEBRATE At **10am on Easter, April 16th**, we will begin at the Columbarium then process to the Narthex where we will affirm our baptism. Then our journey will conclude with joyous Alleluia's as we find the empty tomb!

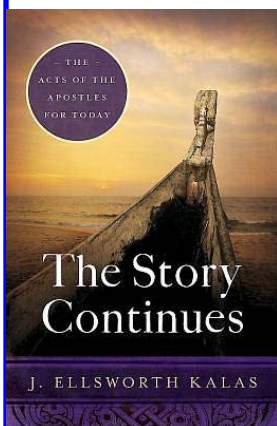
Come to Holy Week

and

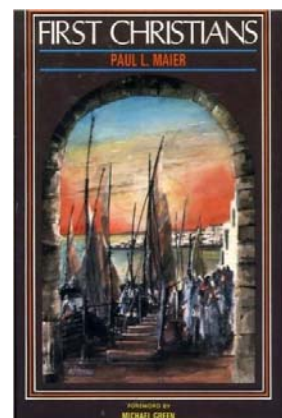
Join the Journey!

THURSDAY STUDY GROUP

On Thursday, March 2 at 1:30 PM, the Thursday Study Group will continue their study of the book of Acts and the first Christians. This month we will be following St. Paul on his Second Missionary



Journey. We will be meeting many of the people that were so important to the spread of Christianity: Silas, Timothy, Lydia, Jason, Aquila and Priscilla. This is where in Acts, Luke begins to refer to 'we' instead of writing in the third person and because of that we know that Luke also joined Paul's band of missionaries. Paul always began by preaching in the synagogues but when they didn't listen he moved on to the Gentiles and on this trip placed seeds of the kingdom in Europe. Susan is using The Story Continues by J. Ellsworth Kalas, First Christians by Paul L. Maier and several other books including independent research.



DINING OUT



Join our Dining Out group on **Thursday, March 16th** at **Alpha Coney Island**, Jackson Crossing, 1188 Jackson Crossing, Jackson, MI 49202, (517) 787-6290

We have fun and fellowship and want you to join us! It's also another way for you to check out a new restaurant.

IMMANUEL FOOD PANTRY

Thank you everyone for another Great Job Serving God's People at the Immanuel Food Pantry - We served 252 families and 8 Immanuel workers. The quantities in the bread and cake room were not as much as usual, but surely more than enough in the main distribution room that everyone was served very well. St. James had a variety table that included toys for children and all items were greatly appreciated.



Today was Cassie's first day working on our team and did a super job. Also, want to remember to thank Morris and Nancy for their every Friday Pick up of items from Polly's and delivery to Immanuel, you are both a couple of saints!

And as always - thanks so much to the continued week in and week out efforts by the Immanuel Crew - Was good to have Kirk for our meat man as always.....

God's blessings to each of you,

DeAnna and Becky

REFUGEE HOUSE NEWS

The URM Home is now physically ready for the boys. We have passed the certification which was the last state inspection/certification we needed to pass.

Samaritas is in the process of hiring staff and working on the tasks needed to get the boys here in Jackson.

We will be setting up some informational meetings regarding volunteer opportunities at the home. We will be working with Samaritas to determine where volunteers can be of assistance at the house with the boys and what training is needed to be a volunteer. I am sure the house will have ongoing needs and we will determine where the volunteers can be of assistance.

Thank You to everyone for their support. Please continue your prayers for the home including safe travel for the boys as they work their way to Jackson Michigan.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact Karen Dale at datadog23@gmail.com

LITTLE DRESSES FOR AFRICA MEET MARCH 2ND AT 10:00 AM

Bring cutting mats and rotary cutters. All are invited. You do not have to be able to sew to help out. There is plenty to do for everyone.

Last year we made 200+ dresses we hope to top that this year but we need your help.

LITTLE DRESSES FOR AFRICA IS STILL ACCEPTING DONATIONS OF PILLOW-CASES AND/OR MATERIAL AND /OR BOYS SHORTS. We will be collecting these items indefinitely. Place your donations in the wicker basket labeled Little Dresses



NOISY OFFERING: Thank you for your Noisy Offering on Sunday, February 19th. We are able to donate \$43.87 to The Little Dresses for Africa project.

Our next Noisy Offering will be on **Sunday, March 19th** and will be designated to the John George Home Project.

Don't forget to bring your loose change to church with you!



- 03/01 Maggie Mae Stebing
- 03/02 Teri Swihart
- 03/08 Jeanne Thomas
- 03/10 Jessica MacDonald
- 03/13 Carol Mueller
- 03/24 Sue Walker
- 03/25 Sara Tackett



03/21 Jeff & Rae Anne Tolonen (8)
03/22 Tim & Emily Ernst (3)

FORTH ANNUAL EASTER BRUNCH

Fellowship is hosting an Easter Brunch on Palm Sunday, April 9th immediately following Worship.

Fellowship will provide a ham and cheesy potatoes.

Please sign up to bring a dish to share and stay with us after the service for a time of fellowship and prayer.



Servant List - March 2017–April 2017

	March 5	March 12	March 19	March 26
Greeter(s)	Jim & Edna Souder	Becky Stevick	Jeanne Thomas	Chuck Thor
Ushers	Ken Zebarah & Chuck Thor	John Reynolds & Roy Kelly	Jim Souder & Joyce Anderson	Neil & Melinda Robb
Acolyte	Help Needed	Help Needed	Help Needed	Help Needed
Assisting Minister	Pat Reynolds	Pat Reynolds	Deb Schroeder	Laura Trombley
Reader	Pat Reynolds	Mary Palleson	JoAnne Gaffney	Chris Zebarah
Projectionist	Help Needed	Help Needed	Help Needed	Help Needed
Fellowship Time	Roy & Lois Kelly	Pam Thomas & Barbara Asp	DeAnna McMillin	Bill & Joyce Anderson
Counters	Mike King & Pat Reynolds	Jim Souder & Mike King	Kristi Laird & Sara Tackett	Karen Dale & Rae Anne Tolonen
Altar Care	Pat Reynolds	Pat Reynolds	Pat Reynolds	Pat Reynolds

	April 2	April 9	April 16	April 23	April 30
Greeter(s)	Rae Anne Tolonen	Joyce & Bill Anderson	Karlynn Blank	Nancy DeGryse	DeAnna McMillin
Ushers	Ken Zebarah & Chuck Thor	John Reynolds & Roy Kelly	Jim Souder & Joyce Anderson	Neil & Melina Robb	Zen Zebarah & Chuck Thor
Acolyte	Help Needed	Help Needed	Help Needed	Help Needed	Help Needed
Assisting Minister	Susan Thornton	DeAnna McMillin	Laura Trombley	Deb Schroeder	Pat Reynolds
Reader	Laura Trombley	Becky Stevick	Help Needed	Help Needed	Help Needed
Projectionist	Help Needed	Help Needed	Help Needed	Help Needed	Help Needed
Fellowship Time	Rae Anne Tolonen & Ida Anderson	Roy & Lois Kelly	John & Pat Reynolds	DeAnna McMillin	Neil & Melinda Robb
Counters	Mike King & Pat Reynolds	Jim Souder & Mike King	Kristi Laird & Sara Tackett	Karen Dale & Rae Anne Tolonen	Mike King & Pat Reynolds
Altar Care	Pam Thomas	Pam Thomas	Pam Thomas	Pam Thomas	Pam Thomas



St James Lutheran March 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	1 2:00 pm – Bridge Club 7:00 pm – Ash Wednesday Community Service	2 10:00 am – Little Dresses for Africa	3	4
5 9:00 am – Children’s Sun- day School 10:00 am- Worship	6	7 9:00 am – Men’s Break- fast 11:45 am – Fellowship Meeting at Cracker Barrel 7:00 pm – Pub Theology	8 6:00 – pm Soup Supper 7:00 pm – Len- ten Service 7:30 pm – Choir Practice	9	10	11 9:00 AM – Immanuel Food pantry
12 9:00 am – Children’s Sun- day School 10:00 am- Worship	13 9:00 am – Prayer Shawl Knitting Group 5:30 pm – Worship and Music Meeting 7:00 pm – Church Council	14 9:00 am – Men’s Break- fast	8 6:00 – pm Soup Supper 7:00 pm – Len- ten Service 7:30 pm – Choir Practice	16 6:00 pm – Din- ing Out @ Al- pha Coney Is- land	17	18
19 Noisy Offering 9:00 am – Children’s Sun- day School 10:00 am- Worship	20 Newsletter Deadline 1:00 – pm Life Changes	21 9:00 am – Men’s Break- fast 7:00 pm – Pub Theology	8 6:00 – pm Soup Supper 7:00 pm – Len- ten Service 7:30 pm – Choir Practice	23	24	25
26 9:00 am – Children’s Sun- day School 10:00 am- Worship 2:00 pm – Summit Park Worship Ser- vice	27 9:00 am – Women’s Breakfast @ Denny’s	28 9:00 am – Men’s Break- fast	8 6:00 – pm Soup Supper 7:00 pm – Len- ten Service 7:30 pm – Choir Practice	30	31	1

2017



*ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH
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Email: st.jameslutheran@comcast.net
Website: www.stjameslutheran.net*

“We are a grace-centered family of faith that seeks to know Christ and make Him known.”

Worship with us:

Sundays at 10:00 a.m. – Worship Service with Holy Communion, Childcare Provided

Staff Listing:

Pastor

Jim Skrocki
JoAnne Gaffney
Tim Ernst
Kathy Krafft
Jan Lehman and Robin Vogel
Pam Thomas

Martha Porter-Reid
Parish Administrator
Organist
Choir Director
Technology Supervisor
Nursery Attendant
Custodians
Newsletter

Email: Pastor: pastor.stjameslutheran.jackson@gmail.com
Office: stjameslutheran.jackson@gmail.com

Website: stjameslutheran.com



St. James Lutheran Church