

the Spirit of St. James



St. James Lutheran Church, 1101 High Street, Pottstown, Pennsylvania, 19464 • (610) 326-2810 • DECEMBER 2008

OUR MISSION FOR ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH

***“We welcome all to receive God's love through Christ and
to share it with the world.”***

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Worship

8 and 10:45 a.m.

One service only at 10 a.m. on December 28th

Coffee Fellowship

9 a.m.

No coffee fellowship on December 28th

Adult Education Classes

9:30 a.m.

No classes on December 14th or 28th

Youth Choir Rehearsal

10 a.m.

No rehearsal on December 28th

Children's Church

10:45 a.m.

No Children's Church on December 28th



OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Thursday
8 a.m. – noon and 1 – 2:30 p.m.

Friday
CLOSED

TELEPHONE

610-326-2810

www.stjamespottstown.org

STAFF

Ministers

Each and Every Member of St. James

Pastor

The Rev. Peter Hutchinson

e-mail: pastorh@stjamespottstown.org

home 610-718-0313

Director of Discipleship

Suzanne Rigg

e-mail: rigg@thehill.org

office 610-326-2810

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Secretary

Darlene Jackson

e-mail: secretary@stjamespottstown.org

Director of Music Ministries

Sharon MacCabe

email: sharonbmaccabe@comcast.net

office: 610-326-2810

Custodian

Glenn Yerger

contact: 610-326-2810

Missionaries

Dr. Stephen & Becky Thorson

Kathmandu, Nepal

Newsletter Editor

Dawn Detweiler

newsletterstj@wi.rr.com

OFFICE NOTES

Master Calendar / Room Scheduling

All room reservations, including committee meetings and private gatherings, should be made with Darlene in the office. Please indicate to her any need for room rearrangement, (extra chairs, tables) so proper preparations can be made.

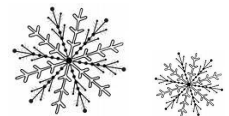
Newsletter Deadline for January 2009 Edition: December 15, 2008

Article submissions can be sent by e-mail to newsletterstj@stjamespottstown.org or placed in the "newsletter" mailbox the Sunday before the deadline. Also please note that articles may be edited for clarity and space conservation.

Altar Flowers, Eternal Light Bulletin Sponsorships

Please keep in mind that we offer sponsorship opportunities for altar flowers, the eternal light and the Sunday bulletin. **The cost of each sponsorship is \$15 for eternal light, \$30 for altar flowers, and \$15 for bulletins.** Sign up sheets are posted in Horn Hall for anyone interested. When signing up, please be as specific as possible with the information since that is what will be placed in the bulletin. Also, please make sure that your payment is clearly designated and is received on or before the date you have selected for a sponsorship. Envelopes are available in Horn Hall on the resource table. Cash or check payment can be placed in the offering or turned in to the office. Sponsoring any one of these items is an excellent way to honor or remember a significant person or event.

Snow Cancellations



Please watch for an announcement on WFMZ Channel 69 or by checking their website at wfmz.com (look for St. James ELC), listen to WPAZ radio (AM 1370), check St. James's website or call the church for a message regarding cancellations or changes in the Sunday morning schedule due to inclement weather.

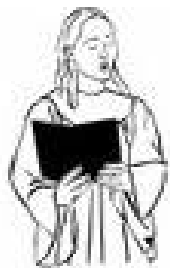
A Note From Pastor Hutchinson

“Oh, come, oh, come, Em-man-u-el,...And ransom captive Is-ra-el. That mourns in lone-ly ex-ile here. Until the Son of God appear.”

Recognize this? It's the first verse of the familiar Advent hymn. We will usher in the season of Advent by singing this song the first Sunday of that season. But have you ever wondered what the words mean?

The word “*Emmanuel*” means ‘*God with us*’ and is of course, taken from the Old Testament prophet Isaiah’s prediction of a Savior coming to rescue God’s people. So the song starts out with a plea that this prophecy be fulfilled and that God will send his salvation.

The words “*ransom captive Israel*” do not refer to the present day state of Israel, but to the people of God, who were in the days before Christ, called “Israel.” It was a name that God gave them, meaning “one who struggles with God”. At one point they had been carried off into captivity by their enemies; a consequence of their own actions against God. And so as they “*mourned in lonely exile,*” they waited and prayed for God to deliver them from their captives.



However today, when in the church we mention the word ‘Israel’, it means the people of God. In fact in Christian-talk, the new Israel is not a political entity in the Middle East, but the people of God within the Christian Church all over the world, wherever it may be. Those people (or we) are not held captive by enemies, but by the effects of sin and our separation from God, which ultimately causes our death. And so we long for and pray for a Savior who can free us from the consequences of our own actions and give us salvation.

At the end of the hymn, the chorus rings out “***Rejoice! Rejoice! Em-man-u-el. Shall come to you, O Is-ra-el***”. Those words lift us up from the serious and somber tone to one of hopeful expectation. Because when we sing “***Until the Son of God ap-pear***” we remind ourselves of the Advent message. That God has sent, and will send, and through the Spirit is presently sending himself into the world in the Savior Jesus Christ.

As the celebration of Christmas approaches, some will be joyful, but it also will be for many a time of mournfulness. Yet no matter what our attitude, we can rejoice in knowing that the God who entered the world so many years ago, has not gone home. Through his Son he remains near to us, to rescue us from mournfulness; from our sins; and from death, every day of our lives.

Rejoice!

Pastor

WORSHIP NOTES



Wine or grape juice at Holy Communion?

The Lutheran Church teaches that Jesus Christ is present at Holy Communion and his true presence includes being part of both the bread and the wine. We use bread and wine because that is what Jesus used when he instituted the Lord's Supper.

However, many churches, like ours, also provide grape juice during Communion. And while years ago and in some denominations grape juice may have been popular, a return to proper Lutheran teaching emphasizes the use of the wine. Juice is permitted for those who find it necessary because of problems with alcohol or medication.

We do not wish to inhibit people's participation in the communal experience of the Sacrament. So, if you cannot take wine, please feel free to take a glass of juice. But we encourage you (and all children!) to receive Christ in the wine. If a small amount is preferred, then simply ask the Chalice Bearer for "a little bit, please". For a little bit of Jesus goes a long, long way. Amen.

-Pastor Hutchinson

Christmas Caroling December 21st



On December 21st we will be Christmas caroling to our homebound members from 2-3:30 p.m. followed by hot chocolate, cookies and fellowship at the church. Please sign up in Horn Hall if you would like to participate.

Decorating the Church December 21st

Please stay after the 10:45 a.m. worship that day if you would like to help decorated the church for Christmas.

Nativity of Our Lord Christmas Eve Worship with Holy Communion

December 24, 2008

Worship at 3 and 9 p.m.



One worship service on December 28th
at 10 a.m.

Third Sunday Offering

December Recipient: ELCA World Hunger

ELCA World Hunger improves the lives of people in need in the United States and around the world by:

- providing immediate **relief** for people affected by chronic hunger and poverty;
- assisting whole communities through long-term, sustainable **development** to help alleviate chronic hunger and poverty
- **advocating** for justice by changing laws and systems
- **educating** members of the ELCA in awareness of issues relating to hunger, poverty and justice

ELCA World Hunger works with a host of trusted partners, notably Lutheran World Relief and the Lutheran World Federation, and builds on long-term relationships to do this work efficiently and effectively. Funded entirely by gifts to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal, ELCA World Hunger operates with lean administration costs under ten percent.

All money raised by the World Hunger Appeal comes through specially designated offerings and donations from ELCA members, congregations, and friends. ELCA World Hunger receives no benevolence (general budget money from general ELCA member offerings). Please prayerfully consider giving this month to support this very important ministry of our denomination.

Offerings for 2008



All offerings and contributions to be accounted for in 2008 will need to be in the office by Sunday, December 28, 2008. Anything received after that will be accounted for in 2009.



We will be celebrating the birth of our Savior at the next Rejoicing Spirits worship on Wednesday, **December 10 at 7 p.m.** We will begin with a **Christmas hymn sing and some special music from a local boy scout troupe**, followed by worship celebrating the nativity of our Lord, and ending with a **festive fellowship time**. This should be a special night for all. If you have not yet had the chance to worship with us, come and join us as we celebrate God's gift of Jesus coming to us. All are invited. All are welcomed.

Annual Meeting – Part 1

Please plan to attend part one of the annual meeting **between services on Sunday, December 14 at 9:30 a.m.** The agenda includes **the election of Council members and adoption of the 2009 budget**. There will be no adult Sunday School classes this day. Because of the changes to the bylaws, there will not be a separate mailing notice for this meeting, so mark your calendar now! **Part 2 of the annual meeting will be held on January 25, 2009 at 9:30 a.m.**

New Adult Education Opportunity

Opening the Book of Faith Coming in January 2009

Opening the Book of Faith is an invitation to experience the Bible as a book of faith. This class provides an introduction to the Bible and Lutheran perspectives that guide the understanding of Scripture. The seven-session course introduces practical methods and approaches to studying Scripture, and then reinforces the basics of scriptural interpretation with four integrated studies that build biblical fluency.

Both individuals new to studying the Bible and long time students of the Bible are encouraged to join in this class. *Opening the Book of Faith* is a course being offered not only here at St. James but in ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) congregations across the nation. **The course begins on January 4 in the Blue Room at 9:30.** Start 2009 off with a commitment to learn more on the Bible and come join us in January for this class.



Sunday Morning Adult Education Opportunities

All adult education classes
are at 9:30 a.m.

Hallelujah: The Bible and Handel's Messiah

This class explores the Scriptural texts of George Frederic Handel's most famous work "Messiah" focusing on the Advent texts of this great piece of music. In addition to studying the biblical text we will also listen to portions of the Messiah. The focus for each remaining week is as follows:

December 7 – *For Unto Us a Child is Born*
December 14 – *No Class – Congregational Meeting*
December 21 – *Glory to God in the Highest*

The class meets in the Blue Room

Seasons of the Spirit

This is a lectionary-based Bible study that shapes and transforms lives. Each week as a class the group will take an in-depth look at the Bible readings heard that week in worship while discovering and learning to share God's Word. The class teaches, inspires and involves its members in prayer and spiritual growth. **The class will meet weekly in the Adult Study classroom on the ground floor.** Individuals can join this class anytime. **Due to the congregational meeting there is not class on December 14th.**

DISCIPLESHIP and FELLOWSHIP and SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Reports Due

All year-end committee and other reports are due into the Church Office **by Sunday, January 4, 2009.**

Salvation Army Community Lunch

Each second Wednesday of the month a group of volunteers from St. James prepares and serves the community lunch at the Salvation Army. Help is needed at different times between 8:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Contact Jean Drauschak at 610-323-1792.

Blood Drive

January 4, 2009 is a time when you can unselfishly give to your neighbor when they are in dire need. You can donate part of yourself by giving blood between 2 - 7 p.m. when Miller Keystone will be at St. James. To make an appointment please contact Ellen Ibach at 610-323-4477.

Blood Pressure Checks

Stay well! Blood Pressure checks will be **December 7th** after the 8 and 10:45 a.m. worship services.

CROP Walk

The final numbers are in for the CROP Walk. **St. James raised \$591.** Thanks to our special fund raiser, Earl Moyer, who on his own raised that much. A job well done! Thank you also all who supported the walk through your donations. Next year's date for the walk is October 11, 2009.



Holiday Concert

December 14 at 3 p.m.

The Boyertown Area Choral Association, under the direction of Peg Lamb, will perform a Holiday Concert at St. James Lutheran Church on **Sunday, December 14 at 3 p.m.** Refreshments and fellowship will follow the concert. All are invited to come and bring family and friends! If you would like to be a patron for the concert or provide refreshments, please contact Janis Lunn, 610-367-8762.

Spaghetti Dinner Update

The Work Mission Team wishes to thank everyone who attended our Spaghetti Dinner on November 7th. You helped make this another success.

We served 201 people and raised over \$1,600 for next years work mission We also get some matching funds from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans which will increase the total raised.

The 50/50 door ticket was won by Ms. Shirley Minnello. She is a co-worker of one of our members and received \$107.50

Again thanks to all those who helped stage this dinner, as your support make this event happen. Hope to see everyone at the next dinner in April.

-St. James Work Mission

Team

TOPS Has Relocated

TOPS (Taking Off Pounds Sensibly) has relocated and is no longer meeting on Thursday nights at St. James. The Blue Room is now available on Thursday nights for meetings or other gatherings.

Cluster Outreach Center Holiday Food Baskets

In November we will be collecting items for the Holiday Food baskets that the Cluster assembles and gives to families in need. **Below are the items being collected for the baskets:**

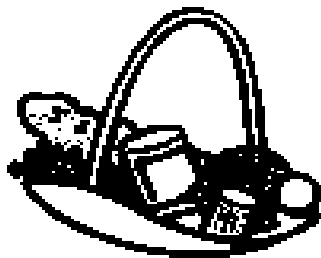
Boxed mashed potatoes, canned turkey gravy, boxed stuffing mix, canned corn, canned green beans, canned sweet potatoes/yams, brown sugar, little marshmallows, mushroom soup, coffee, cranberry sauce, and hot chocolate.

If you would like to donate any of these items, **please place them in the specially marked Holiday Food basket in Horn Hall by December 14.**

The Cluster is also wishing for gift cards to purchase perishables such as milk, eggs, butter or turkeys. If you would like to **donate any certificate or cards, please give your donation to Suzanne Rigg by December 14.**

Donations of frozen turkeys may be made after December 14 and before December 18.

Other food items for the Cluster can be placed in the basket located **by the lower level mailboxes found at the bottom of the stairs** closest to the parking lot.



Hoagie Sale for Super Bowl Sunday February 1, 2009

The confirmation class and youth will be making and selling hoagies for Super Bowl Sunday, February 1, 2009. Orders will begin to be taken at the end of December and for the first three weeks of January. All hoagies will be Italian hoagies with or without onions. Please look for more information, including cost and how you can order your hoagies, in January's newsletter and in the bulletin on Sunday mornings in the upcoming weeks.

Fair Trade and The Lutheran World Relief Coffee Project

As we head into the holiday season, a time of traditional family food celebrations, it is only appropriate to say thank you to the many who have purchased fair trade items over the last year and in turn, have been apart of a committed effort to support small-scale farmers. To date St. James has sold close to \$600 of fairly traded coffee, chocolates and other foods. Purchasing fairly traded items plays a critical role in helping to sustain a just system of trade that allows small-scale farmers to stay on their land, support their families, plan for the future, and care for the environment.

Thanks again for your support and remember, buying a fairly traded item as a gift for Christmas not only benefits the receiver of the gift, but goes a long way in supporting small farmers all over the world.

Women of the ELCA Upper MontCo Bible Study

The next WELCA Upper Montgomery Conference Bible Study will be held at St. John's Lutheran Church, Sumneytown, on **Tuesday, December 2, 2008, at 10 a.m. with coffee at 9:30.**

The leader will be Linda Eiss, presenting *Daniel: Keeping the Faith (Daniel 2:20)*.

The January Bible Study will be held at, on **Tuesday, January 6, 2009**, at Manatawny Manor, Pottstown with Sr. Jane Roeper presenting *Daniel: Trail by Fire (Daniel 3:17)*.

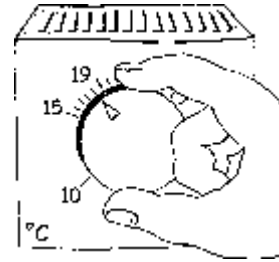
All women are invited to participate in these Bible Studies based on the theme *The Hidden Hand of God: A study of wisdom in Ruth, Daniel & Esther*. This is the 24th year of meeting and sharing together. Bring your friends! We welcome inter-denominational viewpoints.

If you would like to attend, please contact Grace Schafer or Mary Arnt for carpooling

Salvation Army Bell Ringing

A St. James tradition continues as we once again help The Salvation Army with their **bell ringing and kettle collection**.

St. James will be ringing the bell at the kettle collection located at the Boscov's entrance (closest to Sears) of the Coventry Mall on **Saturday, December 20th from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.** Please sign up in **Horn Hall** to volunteer a half hour to an hour of your time to help provide for the needs of others



Please Practice Conservation

As we all know, the costs associated with heating and other utilities have risen dramatically in the past few years. At St. James we are blessed with wonderful facilities that are utilized greatly on Sunday and throughout the week. Please accept this as a reminder to be "conservation conscious" while you are here. This means turning off lights in rooms that are not in use and/or when leaving the building; returning thermostats to the settings that were in place when you entered the room. If for some reason the setting was not what it should have been, please make sure that heat settings are no higher than 64 degrees and cooling settings no lower than 76 degrees.

We want to make sure that people using our facilities are comfortable in both summer and winter, however we need to be diligent to be sure that we are not wasting energy when people are not utilizing the building.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact the property committee.

MEMBER NEWS



Baptisms

We welcome to the Lord's family:

Gavin Andrew Tilling, son of Jill Seasholtz Waltz and Evan Tilling.

Cassandra Evonne Groff, daughter of Stephanie and Charles Groff.

December Birthdays

1 – Alyssa Stein, Justin Stine; 2 – Ken Garner, Betsy Jerdon; 3 – Derek Olock; 4 – Ronald Reynier; 5 – Garnet Nye Jr; 9 – Annmarie Binsfeld; 10 – Kaitlyn Eisenhard; 11 – Joyce Bilger, Pam Irwin; 12 – Greg Hutchinson, Bill Jackson; 13 – David Hartzman; 15 – Amy Lapreziosa, Lois Welsh; 16 – Ronald Reynier, Jr.; 18 – Linda Neiman; 22 – Ashley Rose; 24 – John Richard, Robert Richard; 25 – Joe Ann Hillegass; 26 – Dottie Smith; 27 – Diane Mitchell, Gavin Wert; 28 – Sherry Clancy, Jessica Mitchell; 29 – Janis Lunn; 31 – Pat Baer



Thank You Notes

Thanks to the many individuals who made our Reformation Sunday celebration a success. Special thanks to the musicians, the kitchen help and all the cooks who provided the wonderful food.

Dear Rejoicing Spirits Crew,
Thank you so much for your support of our first RS worship service at New Hanover! It meant so much to all of us. As we grow and support the community it is a true blessing to know that we can always count on you for your support, advice, and to make a happy noise with us!

Rejoice always,
Deb Peters
Michelle Macluckie
and the RS team at New Hanover

Deepest Sympathies

To Bob Frable upon the death of his daughter, Diane Hayes.

To Lois Welsh upon the death of her son and Sandra Olock upon the death of her brother..

To Bob Clouser, upon the death of his wife, Gen.

To Millie Casner, upon the death of her brother.

COUNCIL NEWS

Council Member Contact

If at anytime you have a question, concern, or suggestion that might help the church, contact one of the following elected Council members.

Ron Schafer - President 610-326-4814
Email: ronslibrary@comcast.net

Pat Baer - Vice President 610-326-8598
Email: pattedbaer@verizon.net

Vickie Kirsten - Secretary 484-300-4915
Email: vjkirsten@comcast.net

Sherry Clancy - Treasurer 610-323-5977
Email: srclancy@comcast.net

Barbara Ungerman 610-718-9368
Email: bungerman@comcast.net

Mike Lunn 610-367-8762
Email: lunns2@dejazzd.com

Jim Irwin 323-1511
Email: jei1013hotmail.com

Scott Strichik 610-327-3108
Email: sstrichik@verizon.net

Mary Arnt 610-323-6176

David Hartzman 610-909-5806
Email: Crittersdad1949@aol.com

Tracie Rheel 610-323-7051
Email: trheel@comcast.net

Chipper Meadowcroft 610-327-0458
Email: meadow1135@hotmail.com

Carol Keller 610-326-1013
Email: shanek550@aol.com

TREASURER'S REPORT		
	<u>Oct-2008</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Income	\$16,864.84	\$210,220.56
Expenses	<u>22,069.08</u>	<u>242,803.19</u>
Net Income	(\$5,204.24)	(\$32,582.63)
<i>Regular Envelopes</i>		
Received	\$14,543.00	\$169,141.70
Needed*	<u>19,498.94</u>	<u>194,989.43</u>
Over (Under)	(\$4,955.94)	(\$25,847.73)
<i>Third Sunday Offering</i>		
Collected	\$260.00	Pottstown Cluster
<i>Capital Campaign</i>		
		<u>Total Campaign</u>
Income	<u>Oct-2008</u>	<u>Oct-2008</u>
	\$10,439.00	\$281,904.84

*Amount required to balance the budget.