

# the Spirit of St. James



St. James Lutheran Church, 1101 High Street, Pottstown, Pennsylvania, 19464 • (610) 326-2810 • FEBRUARY 2009

OUR MISSION FOR ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

## In This Edition Look for...

Office Notes

*Page 2*

Pastor's Note

*Page 3*

Worship Notes

*Pages 4-6*

Discipleship, Fellowship and Service

*Pages 7, 8*

Thank You Notes

*Page 9*

Member News

*Page 10*

Church Council Bios

*Page 11, 12*



### **Worship**

8 and 10:45 a.m.

### **Coffee Fellowship**

9 a.m.

### **Adult Education and Confirmation Classes**

9:30 a.m.

### **Youth Choir Rehearsal**

10 a.m.



## OFFICE HOURS

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

**Friday**  
CLOSED

## **TELEPHONE**

610-326-2810

[www.stjamespottstown.org](http://www.stjamespottstown.org)

## STAFF

### **Ministers**

Each and Every Member of St. James

### **Pastor**

The Rev. Peter Hutchinson

e-mail: [pastorh@stjamespottstown.org](mailto:pastorh@stjamespottstown.org)

home 610-718-0313

### **Director of Discipleship**

Suzanne Rigg

e-mail: [srigg@thehill.org](mailto:srigg@thehill.org)

office 610-326-2810

home 610-970-4865

### **Secretary**

Darlene Jackson

e-mail: [secretary@stjamespottstown.org](mailto:secretary@stjamespottstown.org)

### **Director of Music Ministries**

Sharon MacCabe

email: [sharonbmaccabe@comcast.net](mailto: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](mailto:newsletterstj@wi.rr.com)

## OFFICE NOTES

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### **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 March 2009 Edition: February 15, 2009**

Article submissions can be sent by e-mail to [newsletterstj@stjamespottstown.org](mailto: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 and Bulletin Sponsorships**

Just a reminder that we do not put flowers on the altar during Lent (Sundays of March 1- April 5). Please feel free to sponsor the eternal light or the bulletins during that time. Sign up sheets are posted in Horn Hall for anyone interested. Remember that **no one is automatically reserved a date from the previous year**. You must request the date each year that you want to sponsor.

### **Snow Cancellations**

Please watch for an announcement on WFMZ Channel 69 or by checking their website at [wfmz.com](http://wfmz.com) (look for St. James ELC), listen to WPAZ radio (AM 1370), 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

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When I lived in central Pennsylvania for about four years, one day we went out to Punxsutawney to see where the famous Groundhog Day event takes place. The place looked nothing like what I had seen in the movie 'Groundhog Day' (which, by the way, is a riot) because the movie was filmed somewhere else. I also went out to Gobbler's Knob to see where Punxsutawney Phil is unveiled to maybe see his shadow each February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Since it was not that day, there really was nothing special about being there. But February 2<sup>nd</sup> has for some reason become special since much of North America stops to take note of it. We can be sure that each Groundhog Day every news channel will have reporters asking people what they think of the groundhog's prediction of winter's duration.

Of course the whole idea that whether a groundhog, or any creature for that matter, sees its shadow will help determine how much of winter remains is ridiculous. And yet what is not ridiculous is that this old German custom reminds us that human beings have a need to lift up and take part in regular events and rituals in their lives. It also might show that people have an innate wish and desire to have some foresight into the future.

Within the Christian church we don't celebrate days based on superstitions, but we do pause to note days that mark events in the life and history of our Savior, Jesus Christ. We mark those days regularly so that each year, after we celebrate Christmas (the birth of Christ); we celebrate Epiphany (Jesus being the revelation of God with us).

Then every year we pause on Ash Wednesday (to acknowledge the fact of our own mortality and sinfulness) which then ushers us into the season of Lent (a time of renewal and looking to grow closer to God and walking more in step with Jesus). And every year the Lenten season leads us to celebrate Easter (a day and season to mark the resurrection of Jesus and his promise to us of our own resurrection).

The difference between these and other dates in the Church Year and annual events like Groundhog Day, is that special days within the Church are not based on false ideas and old world traditions. Instead, they are rooted in the truth of what God in Christ has revealed and derived from the practices of the earliest followers of Jesus who understood that, through him, a new world of love, peace, hope, justice and righteousness would prevail. So while days for amusement happen in places like Punxsutawney and other North American locales, dates of importance happen within Christianity all over the world. That's because our faith is a world-wide response to the divine gift of foresight into our future beyond the winter of death.

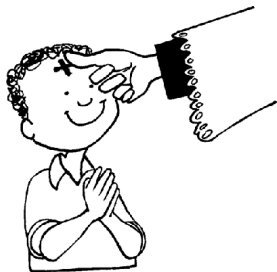
So enjoy the silliness of Groundhog Day and any other such secular days. But please take more seriously the annual days within the Church that are lifted up for us to follow and participate in. They are not there for superstitious reasons. They are there to help remind us of Christ's presence in our lives and to help us grow in faith for his prediction of our forgiveness and our life with God, now and in the future.

**PASTOR**

# WORSHIP NOTES

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## Ash Wednesday LENTEN Worship



The season of Lent begins on  
**Ash Wednesday, February 25<sup>th</sup>**

For the Christian Church Lent is a penitential season and Ash Wednesday is our 'day of atonement' on which we most deliberately reflect upon our own sinfulness and our need for forgiveness, which we receive through Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

**Two worship services will be held on  
February 25<sup>th</sup>**

**Early afternoon worship – 2 p.m.  
Evening worship – 7 p.m.**

As part of those services, we will offer the long held Christian tradition of **imposition of ashes**. Worshipers come forward to receive the ashes, and the words of our own mortality will be spoken by the pastor. There will also be **Holy Communion at both services**.

**Worship continues on Wednesday  
nights throughout the season of Lent.**

## Please Consider Joining the Lenten Hospitality Team

Do you like making people feel at home? Or are you someone who likes to help behind the scene? If so, please consider joining the Lenten Hospitality Team. This team will **be responsible for the set up and clean up of our Lenten Soup Suppers. No special skills are required except for a willingness to help.** A full description of the responsibilities of the team is available in Horn Hall next to the sign up sheet or by contacting Suzanne Rigg. If you are interested in serving on this team please sign up in Horn Hall or contact Suzanne at 610-326-2810 or [srigg@thehill.org](mailto:srigg@thehill.org).



**Next Rejoicing Spirits worship  
at St. James  
Wednesday, February 11, 2009  
7 p.m.  
All are welcome!**

Please remember that even though Rejoicing Spirits is dedicated to sharing God's Word and spreading his love to our brothers and sisters with developmental disabilities it is also open to everyone in the community. If you have not had a chance to come and worship with us, give it a try and see for yourself the love and joy that is shared among all who attend.

## Third Sunday Offering February Recipient

### Seminary Sunday - February 15, 2009

This month's Third Sunday Offering will go to The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (LTSP). On February 15<sup>th</sup> Rev. Ellen Anderson will be preaching, presiding and bringing us information on the seminary.

The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia is a learning and worshipping community of teachers and students centered in the Gospel of the crucified and risen Christ, firmly committed to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, with an intentional openness to enrichment from other traditions. Their mission states:

***The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, a school of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, is committed to preparing ordained and lay ministers of the Word as leaders for the mission of the Church in the world.***

The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia is committed to developing and nurturing leaders solidly rooted in Scripture, formed by prayer, imbued with missionary zeal, and able to mobilize the people of God to tackle the difficult task of renewing the church in our day. This month please consider giving to LTSP and their mission of providing leaders for the Church.

### 2009 Third Sunday Offering Schedule

MARCH - Cluster Outreach Center  
APRIL - Visiting Nurse Association  
MAY - Volunteer Home Care  
JUNE - Salvation Army  
JULY - School supplies for children (Cluster Outreach Center)  
AUGUST - Global Mission  
SEPTEMBER - Lutheran World Relief  
OCTOBER - Cluster Outreach Center  
NOVEMBER - Open to allow for offering for current need, i.e. hurricane relief.  
DECEMBER - ELCA World Hunger

## Women of the ELCA Upper MontCo Bible Study

The next WELCA Upper Montgomery Conference Bible Study will be held at Augustus Lutheran Church, Trappe, on **Tuesday, February 3, 2009, at 10 a.m. with coffee at 9:30.** The leader will be Fran Ivarsen presenting *Daniel: Thrown to the Lions (Daniel 6:26b)*.

The MARCH Bible Study will be held on **Tuesday, March 3, 2009,** at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Pennsburg, with Ginger Miller presenting *Esther: Two Queens in Persia (Esther 2:17a)*.

**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 24<sup>th</sup> 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.



## Musical Talent to Share

God has gifted each of us in different ways and for some of us that means we have been given the opportunity to learn to play an instrument. If you are someone who plays an instrument we would ask that you please consider using that talent for the glory of God. **We are looking for instrumentalist to help with some special music being planned for Lent.** If you can share your talent for this occasion please contact either Sharon MacCabe or Suzanne Rigg.

## Sunday Morning Adult Education Opportunities

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

### Opening the Book of Faith It is not too late to join!

*Opening the Book of Faith* is an invitation to experience the Bible as a book of faith. This course introduces practical methods and approaches to studying Scripture, and then reinforces the basics of scriptural interpretation with 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. The course 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.

## New Daily Devotionals Available On-Line

The Stewardship Committee is pleased to announce that **available through our website are two links to two excellent daily devotional resources.** The first is from ELCA Pastor Kerry Nelson, pastor at Covenant Lutheran Church in Houston, TX. The second link will connect you to Lutheran Hour Ministries sponsored by the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. **To access these devotions, log on to our website: [www.stjamespottstown.org](http://www.stjamespottstown.org) and go to resources and click on links.** There you will find the links to these two devotions and other items that you may find of interest.

### TREASURER'S REPORT

	<u>Dec-2008</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
-		
Income	\$53,894.78	\$289,391.06
Expenses	<u>28,607.49</u>	<u>294,197.40</u>
Net Income	\$25,287.29	(\$4,806.34)
<u>Regular Envelopes</u>		
Received	\$28,536.50	\$216,907.06
Needed*	<u>19,498.94</u>	<u>233,987.32</u>
Over (Under)	\$9,037.56	(\$17,080.26)
<u>Third Sunday Offering</u>		
Collected	\$334.00	ELCA World Hunger
<u>Capital Campaign</u>		
	<u>Dec-2008</u>	<u>Total Campaign</u>
Income	\$10,861.00	\$298,123.24

\*Amount required to balance the budget.

# DISCIPLESHIP and FELLOWSHIP and SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

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## Blood Pressure Checks

Stay well! Blood Pressure checks will be **February 1<sup>st</sup>** after the 8 and 10:45 a.m. worship services.

## 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. This month it will be held **February 11<sup>th</sup>**. Help is needed at different times between 8:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Contact Jean Drauschak at 610-323-1792.

## Community Meal

This month, volunteers are **needed February 26<sup>th</sup>** to provide desserts, cook, set up and clean up. For more information, please call Susan Cameron at 610-718-9926. St. James will also be sponsoring the community meal in April, June, August and October.

## Bowling Fellowship February 21 3-5 p.m.



The Stewardship Committee is sponsoring a bowling fellowship **at Jay Lanes on February 21<sup>st</sup> from 3-5 p.m.** The cost is \$9 per person which includes two games and shoe rental. Please **sign up in Horn Hall by February 8<sup>th</sup>** if you plan to participate.

## Hoagie Sale for Super Bowl Sunday February 1, 2009

Thanks to all who bought hoagies from the confirmation class and youth. Those hoagies **will be available to be picked up after the 8 and 10:45 a.m. worship service on February 1.** A few hoagies will be available to purchase if you did not have a chance to order any.

## Souper Bowl of Caring



February 1, 2009

The Souper Bowl of Caring is a national movement of congregations, schools, community organizations and compassionate individuals caring for others on Super Bowl weekend. Souper Bowl of Caring equips and mobilizes youth to positively impact their communities by collecting money or food on or near football's Super Bowl weekend. A hundred percent of the collections are donated directly to the charity of each group's choice.

This year the Souper Bowl of Caring comes to **St. James as our youth will be collecting cash donations and canned goods** on February 1<sup>st</sup> to help support The Pottstown Outreach Cluster. **Thrivent Financial for Lutherans will provide a supplement of \$1 for every \$3 raised up to \$250.**

## Scholarship Fund Applications Available

A \$1000 a year scholarship is available to be given to youth as monies for college or post high school education. Allocation of the scholarship money will be dependent on the number of approved candidates as determined by the Scholarship Committee. Applications are available from the office and **must be submitted completed no later that March 15, 2009.**

The following criteria will be considered when granting these scholarships:

- \* Applicant must be an active member of St. James for a minimum of one year.
- \* Applicant must be active in St. James' ministries.
- \* Applicant must be a graduating Senior of their high school and are eligible to receive scholarship monies up to five years from their high school graduation date.
- \* Applicant must graduate with a minimum 2.5 GPA or its equivalent.
- \* Applicant must be accepted into or participating in a recognized program of studies (ex. college, junior college, community college, nursing school, trade school, etc.)
- \* Applicant must have a satisfactory record of school citizenship and attendance.
- \* Applicant may apply more than once for this scholarship if they met the above criterion.

If you have any questions about this exciting program, please contact the office for further details. **Don't forget to make the March 15th deadline.**



## Relay for Life

The Pottstown Relay for Life will be on **May 30 & 31, 2009.** This will be the 5th year that St. James has had a team and will be participating in the event. The Relay for Life is sponsored by the American Cancer Society. The event is 24 hours long and if you just happened to stop by, you would think it is a carnival or a big party, and you would be right. It has the makings of a big party - lots of food, things to do for everyone, entertainment and good fun.

But the reason for this wonderful event is to raise money for the American Cancer Society. There are few people who have not been affected by cancer - either by family, friends, co-workers, or neighbors. Ted & I personally lost 3 friends to cancer in 2008 - Barry Trate, Larry Kehler, and Larry Pankau. It is the memory of these men that keeps us working hard with our team members to raise money.

Since 2005, St. James Relay team has raised \$51,665. We were the 11th highest team out of 137 teams, raising \$14, 886.00 last year.

Much thanks goes to you, members of St. James, who support us throughout the year by buying nutrolls, peanut butter cups, and supporting us through monetary contributions.

Please contact me if you are interested in the Relay in any capacity.

Pat Baer

## THANK YOU NOTES

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Thank you **to the congregation** from the staff for the gift cards. We appreciate your thoughtfulness and generosity.

Thank you to **Joe Mittura** for his ongoing support in the area of computer technology and for his recent work with our website.

Thank you to all **who came out to donate at our last blood drive**. Your efforts help us to help the community we live in.  
Blessings,  
Marge Fegley and Ellen Ibach

Thank you to the person or persons who cleaned up for me after the coffee fellowships on January 4<sup>th</sup> and 11. It was a pleasant surprise for me to find it was done.  
Suzanne Rigg

Thank you. Because of you, the Pottstown CROP Walk raised a generous \$7907! We had well over 100 walkers this year representing 18 different churches/synagogues/organizations. Thanks to you our own Pottstown Cluster will receive \$1581.40. The remaining will be used to help overcome poverty around the world.  
Sincerely,  
Leigh Chancler  
Chair of the Pottstown CROP Walk

Dear Brother and Sisters in Christ,  
Thank you so much for your generous donation to The Salvation Army of Greater Pottstown. The benevolence of area residents such as you helps to make our ministry a success.  
In gratitude,  
Major Mary Francis  
Commanding Officer

Dear Friends at St. James,  
Today as Elena and I were leaving church, as the wreaths were hung and the candles were set in anticipation of the Christmas eve service and all that is CHRISTMAS...we left St James with our newest of ornaments. One that reminds us and shines with thoughts of our newest family; that of St James. Though the gift of this ornament was given anonymously, we thank you who ever you are for thinking of us and inviting us into your home, life, and spirit. Thank you for reaching out to us as you and all of St James has done and for extending open arms. We are most comfortable here. THANK YOU.  
The Giraldi's  
Nancy-Sam-Elena-Annah and Thomas

Dear friends of Haiti Mission Society,  
We appreciate your contribution to House of Faith orphanage last year. We appreciate all that you have done to help with sponsorship, education, food, clothing, medical and construction projects.  
Again, we say thanks to all of you who have made House of Faith a success.  
Love,  
Mom Barb Richter

Dear St. James,

I want to take this opportunity to extend a warm and sincere thanks to St. James for your participation in The Salvation Army of Greater Pottstown's Angel Tree Program. Your contributions make this ministry a success. We recognize and appreciate all that you've done this season. May God's light always shine brightly on you and yours.  
Blessings,  
Frank Chesney  
Community Case Manager  
The Salvation Army

# MEMBER and COUNCIL NEWS

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## Baptisms



We welcome to the Lord's family:

*Noah Robert Benedetto, son of Robert and Kyle Benedetto.*

## February Birthdays

2 – Heather Levan; 3 – Karen Hall, Kay Kalbach, Justin Strichik; 5 – Jaclyn Bealer, Shirley Reidnauer; 6 – Jim Geiger; 7 – Howard Snyder; 9 – Chipper Meadowcroft; 10 – Marian Rex, Lee Weil; 11 – Nancy Clements; 13 – Marge Fegley; 14 – Maggie Rothenberger, Emily Rose; 15 – Alexis Yashin; 18 – Kimberly Mittura; 19 – Dana Clancy, Debbie Fisher, Bret Neiman; 20 – Nicole Bealer, Brett Hoffman; 21 – Lyni Clements; Betty Johnson; 25 – Elena Giraldi; Virginia Reber; 26 - Don Detweiler, Andrew O'Connell, Nelda Reynier; 28 – Page Faith; Fay Saylor; 29 – Emily Jerdon, Wendy Cocci



## Deepest Sympathies

To family and friends  
of Mildred Miller.

**New Council Member Bios  
on next page**

## 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

**Julie Hauck** 610-385-7308  
Email: jlynne65@ptd.net

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

**Cyndi Krasley** 484-945-0165

**Laurie O'Connell** 610-323-5787  
Email: rloconnelljr@comcast.net

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

**Candy Koons** 610-327-0458  
Email: itp494@aol.com

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

## Meet our 2009 Church Council Members

PRESIDENT OF THE CONGREGATION, **PAT BAER** is a life-long member of St. James. She worked for GE/Lockheed Martin for 31 years, retiring in 2002. She now spends her time volunteering at Pottstown Memorial Hospital and at St. James as the captain of the Relay for Life team, chair of the Personnel Committee, member of the Chancel Choir, Altar Guild and the Endowment Committee and as counter. She has previously served six years on church council and nine years on the Southeast Pennsylvania Synod's Candidacy Committee. Together with her husband Ted, she has been on nine work mission trips. They share their home with their cats, Tillie and Jake. Her hobbies include reading, photography and sewing.

VICE-PRESIDENT, **CYNDI KRASLEY** her husband Rob reside in Stowe. She has two sons, David and Justin, and two stepchildren, Chelle' and Chris. She also has four wonderful grandchildren. Cyndi is a hair stylist and also works at the Philadelphia Premium Outlets Center. She enjoys being active at St. James and in her spare time enjoys walking, reading and knitting.

SECRETARY, **BARBARA UNGERMAN** grew up in Oreland (just outside of Philadelphia), graduated from Millersville and 10 days later married John. They have two married daughters and one grandson and one granddaughter. Barbara taught preschool prior to moving to Pottstown in 2000. She currently works one day a week for John and two days a week at Generations Quilt Shop. When not working, you can find her at her sewing machine, in the garden or traveling. At St. James she serves on the Altar Guild, is a worship assistant, and a member of the Relay for Life and Work Mission teams.

TREASURER, **SHERRY ROHN CLANCY** is a Lehigh Valley native and lifelong Lutheran. Sherry graduated from Wilson Area HS in Easton. She earned degrees in chemistry from Moravian College and Lehigh University. After ten years with Occidental Chemical, she is now a stay-at-home mom with two daughters, Dana and Eden, three dogs, and three cats. Since joining in 1999, her best memories at St. James were the girls' baptisms, her 2001 wedding, and the 2000 Haiti Mission Trip. She and husband Don serve together on the Endowment Committee. Sherry also serves on the Finance Committees, and plays in the handbell choir. Someday, she hopes to have time again to read, garden, and research genealogy.

**JULIE HAUCK** is a life long Lutheran and grew up in Levittown, PA. She is a graduate of West Chester University with a BA in social work. She is employed with Kencrest Services and works with adults with developmental disabilities. Her hobbies include motorcycling, traveling, reading and volunteering with the Cat Angel Network. Julie lives in Douglassville with her husband Chris and their three cats.

**CAROL KELLER** is a lifelong member of St. James. Married to Harry for 38 years, they have a son, a daughter, and 2 granddaughters. She has been the office manager for Foot & Ankle Health Group for 19 years. At St. James Carol is co-chairperson of our Capital Campaign, vice-president of WELCA, a member of our Relay for Life team and a member of the Stewardship Committee. She also serves as a greeter, usher, chalice bearer, and Sunday School teacher. In her spare time she enjoys reading, cooking, and baking.

**VICKIE KIRSTEN** was born and raised in Baltimore Md. She received a Bachelor's in Science Degree in Nursing from Widener University, where she also met Justin and were married after graduation. Vickie received a Master's Degree in Science from Rutgers University and is currently practicing in Havertown, Pa as a certified nurse practitioner. She is an adjunct professor at Temple University and Thomas Jefferson University. Vickie has two sons, Kyle and Evan. She enjoys scrapbooking, card making, gardening and swimming. She also enjoys being an active member of St. James Lutheran Church.

**CANDY KOONS** is a life-long member of St. James. She was born and raised in Pottstown. After graduating from Brandywine College with an Associate Degree in Accounting she resided in Wilmington, Delaware for two years before returning to Pottstown. Candy is employed as the comptroller at Gale Nurseries, Inc. in Gwynedd, PA. She has one daughter, Amy. At St. James she currently serves as a leader for Children's Church and delivers flowers to shut-ins. In her free time she enjoys reading, traveling, walking and sewing.

**MIKE LUNN** was born in Toledo, Ohio and raised in Pottstown. He is a graduate of Pottstown High School and received a B.S. and M.ED. He holds degrees from West Chester University and completed additional graduate work and Penn State University. In 1960 he joined the U.S. Marine Corps. And served as a Communication and Artillery Officer, attaining the rank of Major. With his wife Janis they have three children and four grandchildren. Mike joined St. James in 1955 and serves on the Property and Personnel Committees. Retired from the Boyertown School Area School District, he has been on all but three of the St. James mission trips. Mike enjoys reading, outdoor activities and traveling.

**LAURIE O'CONNELL** has been a member of St. James since age 4. She graduated from Pottstown High School and received her paralegal degree from Widener University. She is currently working for a law firm in Lionville. She is married to Rob and they have two grown sons, Michael and Andrew. At St. James, she is a member of the Chancel Choir, Bell Choir, Altar Guild, Worship and Music team, Relay for Life team and serves as a lector and chalice bearer. She previously served three years on Church Council, was a member of the Christian Education Committee and a Sunday School teacher. She enjoys singing and reading and is a passionate Phillies, Eagles, Penn State and Villanova fan.

**TRACIE RHEEL** was born and raised in Pottstown, and was baptized and confirmed here at St. James. She is a graduate of Pottsgrove High School and Bucknell University. Tracie returned to St. James in 2003, and she currently serves on the Stewardship Committee, the Relay for Life team, captains a counting team & supports Rejoicing Spirits the 2nd Wednesday of every month! She has been part of the Work Mission Team for the last 4 years. Her hobbies include cooking and reading.

**RON SCHAFER** was born and raised in Lehighton where he was graduated from Lehighton High School. He majored in library science and English at Kutztown State Teachers College (now Kutztown University) and did graduate work at Temple University. After serving for 37 years as a teacher of English and as librarian at Pottsgrove High School, Ron retired in 1995. Ron and Grace are the parents of three sons and are grandparents to two granddaughters and a grandson. Ron's pastimes include reading, walking, and traveling. At St. James, Ron completed a two-year tenure as president of the congregation. He serves as a lector, courier, and a counter.

**SCOTT STRICHIK** was born in Mount Pleasant, southeast of Pittsburgh. His family moved to Blue Bell when he was 8. He graduated from Wissahickon High School and earned his Bachelor's degree in Business Administration/Accounting from Delaware Valley College in Doylestown. Scott works at Roselon Industries in Quakertown where he recently became Controller. He lives in Upper Pottsgrove with his wife Kim and their two sons Nathan and Justin and his daughter Natalie. Scott enjoys reading history books, playing ice hockey, skiing, camping and cooking, especially when he has Nathan's help. At Saint James, Scott has been a soundboard technician, a counting team captain and serves on the Endowment committee.