

the Spirit of St. James



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

OUR VISION FOR ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH
"To Be, and to Become, a Worshiping, Caring, Teaching,
and Outreaching Congregation."

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Worship

8 and 10:45 a.m.

Coffee Fellowship

9 a.m.

Children's Church

10:45 a.m.

Adult Education Classes

9:30 a.m.

Holy Communion Weekly



OFFICE HOURS

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

Friday
8 a.m. – noon

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Each and Every Member of St. James

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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 February '08 Edition: January 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.

Weekly Bulletin Announcements the Website

Weekly bulletin announcements can be found on St. James' website under the section called News. Check it out for yourself at www.stjamespottstown.org.



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.

Reports Due



All year-end committee and other reports are due into the Church Office **by Sunday, January 6, 2008.**

Holiday Office Hours

The office **will be closed** on December 31, 2007 and January 1, 2008.

A Note From Pastor Hutchinson

“Where is the child who has been born King of the Jews? For we observed its star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.”

So said the wise men according to the Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 2. But did you ever wonder why they would have wanted to travel so far and face all the possible dangers of that day and of King Herod, just to come and see a little child?

The answer, of course, lies in the fact that they were **“wise men.”** That is to say that they had the wisdom to know that in this event of Christ’s coming and being born of a virgin woman named Mary, that something very special was going on.

What they came to learn further, was that God himself was actually coming into the world to renew and redeem it and that this Epiphany of God was to, once and for all, pass forth the wisdom of his love and grace to a world that tends to forget that love and grace are what make redemption and salvation possible.



That in this child, God comes to teach us to follow the path and way of the Lord, to lead us by his Spirit along that way, and through the same Jesus, even goes through death on a cross that all people might come to know and love the God who already knows and loves them.

And so they came,...to pay him homage. But the thing about being wise, is that you never are too old or smart to learn. And so, in their wisdom, the wise men came and learned even more about the God who joined with mankind that night in Bethlehem.

By coming to see and be with Jesus, they became even wiser than before!

I pray that your Christmas was blessed and that, in this season of Epiphany - in the year ahead - you are blessed with a desire to achieve the same wisdom too! Amen.

PASTOR

Bible Study with Pastor Starting February 5th and 7th

Lent is a season for personal self-reflection with a desire to grow closer to God through faith. One of the greatest gifts that Jesus gave to us to help us to become more spiritually healthy are *The Beatitudes*. We may have all heard about “*Blessed are the meek...*”, yet what do all those things really mean? During the season of Lent we will have a study on *the Beatitudes*, to help us better understand what Jesus meant by these sayings and what they mean for us today.

Our sessions will run, as always, on **Tuesday nights in the Adult Classroom** next to the church office and on **Thursday mornings at Sanatoga Retirement Village**. **Tuesday gatherings will be at 7 p.m.** starting February 5 (the night before Ash Wednesday) and **Thursday gatherings will be at 10 a.m.** (with coffee and doughnuts provided!) starting February 7 (the day after Ash Wednesday). The class will run up thru Holy Week, ending on March 18 and 20. All are welcomed and invited!

WORSHIP NOTES

Congregational Meeting

On **January 27, 2008 at 9:30 a.m.** a second part of the annual congregational meeting will be held for the approval of the annual reports. There **will be no Adult Education classes** that morning.



Wednesday LENTEN Worship

The season of Lent begins on **Ash Wednesday, February 6th**

For the Christian Church this penitential season 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 services will be held on February 6:

Early afternoon service – 2 p.m.
Evening service – 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. Worship begins at 7 p.m. with a soup supper preceding worship at 6 p.m.



We had a wonderful Christmas celebration at our December Rejoicing Spirits worship with almost 50 individuals in attendance. Special thanks to those who helped to make this evening special with the worship, music and fellowship.

Our next Rejoicing Sprits worship will be on **Wednesday, January 9, 2008 at 7 p.m.**

Please help us to continue to get the word out to those who would benefit from Rejoicing Spirits. Rejoicing Spirits is dedicated to sharing God's Word and spreading his love to our brothers and sisters with developmental disabilities, yet it is also open to everyone in the community. We hope you will consider joining us in the new year.

Altar Flowers, Eternal Light and Bulletin Sponsorships

The cost of each sponsorship is \$15 for eternal light, \$40 for altar flowers, and \$15 for bulletins. Envelopes are available in Horn Hall on the resource table. Cash or check payment can be placed in offering or turned in to the office.

Sign up sheets are posted in Horn Hall for anyone interested. You must re-sign up for 2008 as no one is automatically reserved a date from the previous year.

Just a reminder that we do not put flowers on the altar during Lent (Sundays of February 10 – March 16). Please feel free to sponsor the eternal light or the bulletins during that time.

Come to a Pre-Lent Potluck Dinner Monday, February 4 at 6 p.m.

Come out for a night of fellowship and food when each of us will have the opportunity to learn about the Lutheran Rosary, a tool one can use for prayer during the season of Lent. All present will have the chance to **make their own prayer beads and will receive a copy of *Praying the Small Catechism with Beads to use with as devotions for Lent.***

Please **sign up in Horn Hall** if you plan to attend so that beads can be provided for all. Please read on to learn more about the Lutheran Rosary.

Introducing the Lutheran Rosary

Since when do Lutherans have prayer beads?

Whether praying using prayer beads or not, the idea of the "Lutheran Rosary" for Lent is to help people ease into the spiritual discipline of prayer. The Lutheran Rosary was published on the ELCA website as a prayer tool during the season of Lent. The bead set has one bead for each day during lent, and a large bead that marks each Sunday of Lent. In 2005, John Longworth, a seminarian at Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (LTSP), and his wife, Sara Longworth developed a set of prayers to use with the Lutheran Rosary. The series of prayers focus on the main themes of the Small Catechism. John introduced this concept to his fellow classmates during a Christian Education course with great interest. Eventually seminarians and local Lutherans were requesting sets of pre-made beads and the booklet for teaching and personal prayer purposes.

Didn't the Reformation get rid of all the relics and penitential objects?

Yes, however, prayer beads are none of these things. Just as the Reformers retained crucifixes, stained glass, altars, fonts and the sacramental elements to involve the senses in worship, the beads provide a way to involve the physical body in the act of praying. It is the work of Christ, the graciousness of God and our trust in God's promises that brings us to eternal life, not the objects. Even so, everyday people like pastors, teachers and parents and everyday things, like water, bread and wine, can be a means of grace to build our trust in Jesus Christ.

Ok, so why the Small Catechism?

1. The structure for the beads was intended as a devotional for Lent. The seven part structure and the seven large beads correspond to days of Lent and Sundays in Lent. The Small Catechism is built around seven sections, the Commandments, Creed, Lord's Prayer, Baptism, Confession, Holy Communion and Daily Prayer. The beads offered a convenient structure to meditate on these themes year round.
2. Secondly, the catechism isn't just for confirmands, new members and parents of the newly baptized. It was meant as a teaching tool for all the members of Christian families. Martin Luther advised that members of a household re-read the catechism until they knew it by heart and could then move into the Large Catechism to further their learning.
3. Finally, the core of Christian experience is the life of the church, the place where the gospel is proclaimed and the sacraments administered. The Small Catechism is grounded in the language and acts of community worship that bind us together as Brothers and Sisters.



Capital Campaign Update

- The work on the bell tower is completed.
- Interior painting is almost completed.
- Refinishing the floors is scheduled for this month.
- The elevator work is scheduled to begin this month.
- Work around the parking lot is completed with the replanting of trees.
- Total dollar amount given to date: \$116,039.63

TREASURER'S REPORT

	<u>Oct-2007</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Income	\$ 19,901.83	\$ 227,452.74
Expenses	<u>18,646.41</u>	<u>223,942.98</u>
Net Income	\$1,255.42	\$3,509.76

Regular Envelopes

Received	\$16,897.75	\$180,047.25
Needed*	<u>19,780.31</u>	<u>197,803.13</u>
Over (Under)	(\$2,882.56)	(\$17,755.88)

Third Sunday Offering

Collected	\$316.25
Beneficiary	Pottstown Cluster

*Each month includes \$14,729 actual pledged and an additional \$5,051 needed to balance the budget.

Third Sunday Offering

January Recipient:
Manatawny Manor

Manatawny Manor is a part of Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries and offers a range of retirement services such as assisted living, and skilled nursing and rehabilitative care. Manatawny Manor also cares for residents with dementia-related illnesses in two secure settings-The Horizons Community in the Assisted Living Center and The Milestones Community in the Nursing Care Center. Finally, Manatawny Manor offers Adult Day Services. St. James connections to Manatawny Manor are varied. We have members who currently are residents there. We also have members who are employed there or who volunteer their time to assist and connect with the residents or in the operating of Manatawny Manor.

Your gift will help Manatawny Manor to provide the extras that make life more enjoyable and fulfilling for their residents.

Third Sunday Offering Schedule

JANUARY - Manatawny Manor
 FEBRUARY – Lutheran Theological Seminary (Seminary Sunday)
 MARCH - Cluster Outreach Center
 APRIL - Visiting Nurse Association
 MAY – Volunteer Home Care
 JUNE - Salvation Army
 JULY – School supplies for children (Cluster Outreach Center)
 AUGUST – Missionaries (Dr. Stephen and Mrs. Becky Thorson, WMPL)
 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

DISCIPLESHIP and FELLOWSHIP and SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Salvation Army Community Lunch 2nd Wednesday of Month

Volunteers are needed at different times between 8:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to help with cooking, serving and cleanup. Please consider helping those in need. For additional information please contact Jean Drauschak at 610-323-1792.

Women of the ELCA Upper Montgomery Conference Bible Study

The next WELCA Upper Montgomery Conference Bible Study will be held at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Pennsburg on January 8th at 10 a.m. with coffee at 9:30. The leader will be Ginger Miller presenting *Follow Your Heart and Find the Heart of God*.

The February Bible Study will be held at Augustus Lutheran Church, Trappe on February 5th, with Janet Luyben presenting *Mercy Made Real- Disciples as Forgiveness*.

All women are invited to participate in these Bible Studies based on the theme Blessed to follow: The Beatitudes as a Compass for Discipleship. This is the 23rd 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.

Christians, Muslims and Jews – Sharing Jerusalem A Special Adult Forum

Christians, Muslims and Jews – Sharing Jerusalem: An Overview of Their History Together is a special adult forum that will be held on **Sunday, January 6 at 9:30 a.m. and lead by Rev. David Johnson.**

Rev. Johnson served as Representative of the Lutheran World Federation and Director of its World Service programs in Jerusalem and the West Bank. He also served as a mission pastor in Cairo, Egypt and currently serves as a member of the Leadership Council of Churches for Middle East Peace, an ecumenical advocacy agency in Washington D.C. **No other adult classes will meet that morning.**

Lutheran Questions, Lutheran Answers: Exploring Christian Faith New Adult Class Starts January 13th

Lutherans often have questions about Lutheran theology and beliefs that are basic to the Christian faith itself. This class will take a look at some of those questions in regards to Lutheran History and Heritage, the Bible, God, Jesus Christ, Humanity, the Holy Spirit, Salvation, the Church, Worship, Sacraments, Christian Life, Reign of God and Polity. The study is based on a book by the same title written by Martin Marty, a distinguished Lutheran historian and theologian. **Please join us on the 13th in the Blue Room at 9:30 a.m.**



Reserve your appointment time for the pictorial directory

Olan Mills will be at St. James on Friday, January 24 and Saturday, January 26 to take photographs for our new pictorial directory. Reservations can be made at the sign-up location in Horn Hall. Each family/household participating will receive a complimentary directory and an 8 x 10 Color Portrait. Additional Olan Mills portraits will be available for purchase. Family members who are not members of St. James are welcome to be photographed with their spouse/family.

WELCA News

The next Women of the ELCA Gathering will be Monday, January 20, 2008 at 7 p.m. in Horn Hall.

SCRIP News

Now available at the SCRIP table are gift cards for Walmart valued at \$25.

SCRIP is available every Sunday from the end of the first service to the beginning of the second. Let's continue last year's course and support this program, helping to feed those who are hungry with the proceeds.

Bus Trip To Sight and Sound Theatre February 20, 2008 "Daniel and the Lion's Den"

Earl and Helen Moyer wish to extend an invitation to the members and friends of St. James Church to join them on a bus trip on February 20 to the Sight and Sound Millennium Theatre for the presentation of "Daniel and the Lion's Den." The group will depart from Kmart, 2200 East High Street at 8:30 a.m. and from Boyertown Plaza at 9:00 a.m. Lunch will be at the Willow Valley Resort at 11:15 a.m., followed by the show at 1:00 p.m. at the Strausburg location.

The bus should arrive back in Pottstown by 5 p.m. The complete cost including taxes and tips is \$74.50/person. For reservations please call 610-970-5450.

Blood Pressure Checks

Stay well! Blood Pressure checks will be **January 6th** after the 8 a.m. worship and again prior to the 10:45 a.m. service.

Blood Drive

January 7, 2008 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 here at St. James. If you are unable to give, please send a friend or neighbor. Call Marge Fegley at 610-323-3936 to make an appointment.

Thank You Notes

Thank you to all who helped to decorate the church for Christmas.

Thank you to all who helped to bring some joy to our shut-ins by Christmas Caroling on December 23.

Thank you to those who helped with the Salvation Army kettle collection and bell ringing at Boscov's in December.

Thank you to all who donated gifts and made the Christmas Angel program a success.

We greatly appreciate Pastor Hutchinson's visits and prayers while Barry was in the hospital. Thanks, also, to the congregation for the cards, well wishes and the continuing prayers.

Barry and Jane Trate

Thank you for the flowers. They are beautiful! I displayed them in the lobby for everyone to enjoy.

Jay Neiffer

Pastor and Debbie thank everyone for their cards and gifts during the Christmas season.

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, 2008.**

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.**

MEMBER NEWS

New Members Being Received February 3

We will be receiving individuals into membership on Transfiguration Sunday, February 3. Please contact Pastor or Suzanne if you have been worshipping at St. James and would like to become a member, or if you know of someone who would like to join.

January Birthdays

1 – Candy Koons; **2** – Suzanne Rigg; **3** – Kirk Detweiler, Pam Evans; **4** – Annette Renn; **5** – Susan Cameron; **6** – Bob Wagner; **8** – Kerri Smith; **9** – William Heil, Bradley Mazurek; **10** – Ginny Kerr, David Miller, Jr. ; **11** – George Neiffer; **13** – Susan Cocci, Janet Kenney, Nathan Strichik; **14** – Esther Garner, Jack Gunter, Daniel Hutchinson, Bill Mauger; **16** – Kristin Mitchell; **17** – Willard Bickel; **18** – Dawn Detweiler; **20** – Pete Compton, Ray Henninger; **23** – Velma James; **24** – Ron Fritz; **27** – Jack Dilks, Irene Dilks; **28** – Melinda Mace, Avigal Taylor; **30** – Mindy DuVal, Larry Kehler, Chrissy Lamberton; **31** – Austin Rothenberger, Rose Wagner

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 610-326-4814
Email: ronslibrary@aol.com

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