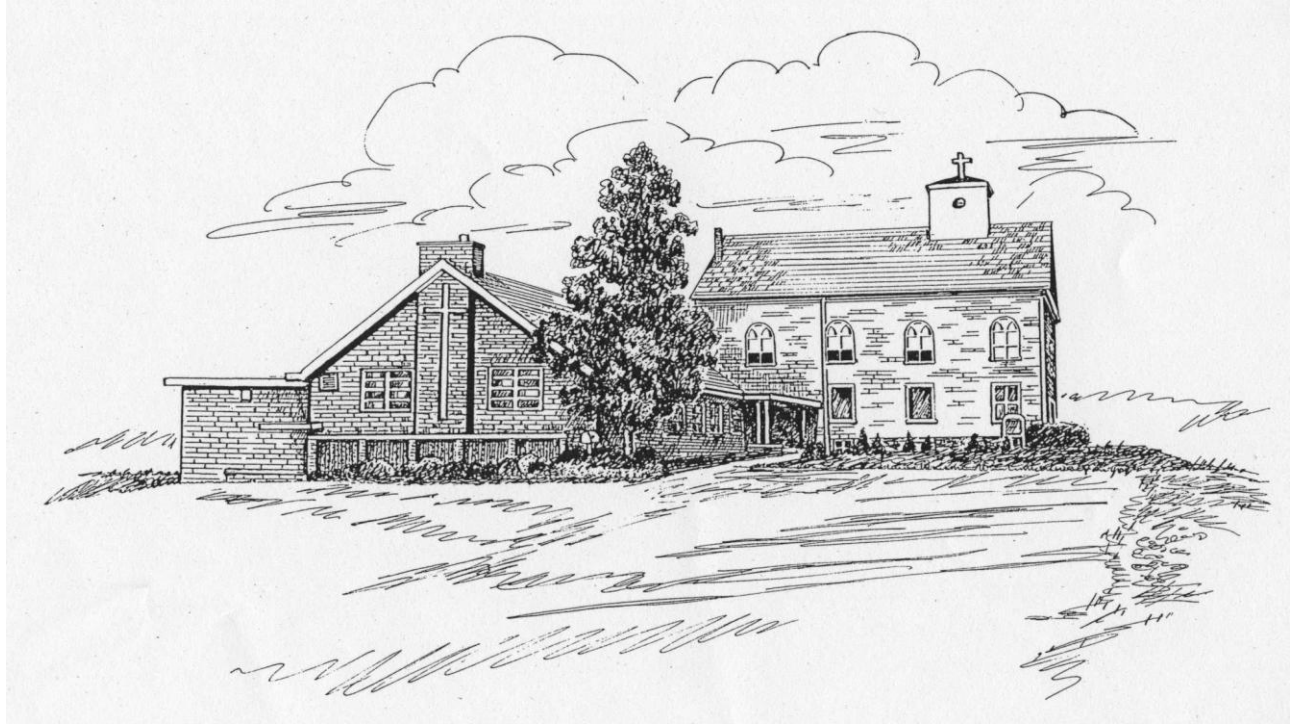


WISPS OF STRAW



St. James Lutheran Church Newsletter

September 2010

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*“Serving Christ in Word and Deed”
for 260 Years*

The Pastor's Letter

"⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. ⁴⁴All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. ⁴⁶Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." Acts 2:42-47 NIV

Dear Friends,

The last lesson on our wonderful week of VBS last month had the theme, "God's word is for everyone", and it used the passage from Acts that you find here. The genuine sense of community in worship, study, and caring for one another must have really made an impression on those outside the community of believers for we are told that the Lord added to their number daily.

Since Pam and I have been at St. James we have felt very welcomed and part of the church family. In talking with others who made this their church home they also related ways they felt welcomed and part of things here.

One of the great things I observed in VBS is how all the young folk who attended felt included and a part of things. There was definitely a sense of community and cooperation in our midst.

Sunday school is going to begin again, as well as other activities in the life of St. James.

There will be visitors, perhaps people we haven't seen in a while.

As we bear witness to our common faith in Jesus Christ as we "continue in the apostles teaching, fellowship, breaking of the bread, and prayer" let us make sure all are welcome. You never know, just by inviting someone to an activity, saying a warm hello, making sure those who aren't of our faith traditions can follow along and worship, could really make a positive difference in a persons' life.

Small gestures just as much as more major ones can really make an impact. I read in TV Guide many years ago in an article about the old Mr. Rodger's Neighborhood children's TV program about a woman who was very depressed even suicidal, who happened to turn her TV on and found herself watching the show for a bit, and she said that when Fred Rodgers looked out and said "Won't you be my friend?" she felt like he was talking to her and it was the turning point that began to place her on a better path.

Now if a TV show can have that impact, how much more of an impact can all of us have if we be open to whatever way big or small we make sure someone is included, someone is warmly welcomed or spoken to, someone is helped with a small task, in short whatever the Holy Spirit nudges us to do.

As your pastor, what you have done has really meant a lot to me. Together let us take that Christ centered spirit of welcome to others. It will certainly mean a lot to them as well.

Your brother in Christ,

Pr. John

Vacation Bible School

Another great VBS is in the books. The children spent five days on a High Seas Expedition to exotic locales, while exploring God's love as illustrated by different biblical texts. The staff and their assisting volunteers are to be congratulated on a job well done, and all the young people who attended deserve applause for their participation as well. We have to also thank the parents for seeing to this part of their children's Christian formation.



Thanks to Barbara Wynston for these photos.

As a reminder, Sunday School classes are starting again on September 19th at 10:00 am.

Adult Bible Study Begins

One of the most important parts of our walk with the Lord both individually and together is the study of God's Word. Starting the 19th of this month during the Sunday school hour, and at 7:00 pm Wednesdays we will be studying the Gospel According to St. Matthew. After praying about it I thought Matthew would be a good choice since it will be the primary gospel we will be reading in worship beginning with Advent of this year.

The schedule for Bible Study will be as follows: On the Wednesdays the Senior Fellowship meets, Bible Study will not meet, nor on the Sunday preceding the Senior Fellowship meeting so that each group will be on the same lesson. So for example, if you miss a Sunday, you can make it up the following Wednesday, or if you miss a Wednesday but are able to come on the preceding Sunday you'll be able to make it up also. All sessions will be held in the Pastor's Study. Here is a tentative schedule at least through October:

September 19th (Sunday School hour) and September 22nd, 7:00 pm: Introduction to Matthew, Chapter 1 and possibly 2

September 26th (Sunday School hour) and September 29th, 7:00 pm: Chapters 2 and 3

October 3rd and October 6th - No Class, Senior Fellowship

October 10th (Sunday School hour) and October 13th, 7:00 pm: Chapter 4

October 17th (Sunday School hour) and October 20th, 7:00 pm: Chapter 5

October 24th (Sunday School Hour) and October 27th, 7:00 pm: Chapter 6

October 31st and November 3rd - No class



Please join me as you are able as together we study Matthew's gospel.

Pr. John

Youth Groups Forming

On September 12th, a sign up list was made for those interested in either a Junior High or Senior High Youth Group. Very shortly there will be a meeting for both groups. Please watch in the bulletin, website, or in your own e-mails for the dates and time.

8th Grade Confirmation Class

Those who will be eligible for Confirmation this year are invited to meet with Pastor John and Pam from 6:00 to 7:30 pm on Thursday, September 30th for their first class. More information to follow



Upcoming Scripture Lessons and Sermon Topics

September 26th, the 18th Sunday after Pentecost: Luke 16:91-31

Sermon Title: "Faith: Just a label or life changing?"

The interesting thing about the rich man is not that he did not believe, he did; it just never made a difference in how he lived his life, with Lazarus just outside his door.

October 3rd, the 19th Sunday after Pentecost: Habbakuk 1:1-14, 2:1-4

Sermon Title: "When Life doesn't make sense"

When we follow Our Lord and bad things happen around us, what do we do?

October 10th, the 20th Sunday after Pentecost: 2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15c

Sermon Title: "Do it God's Way"

Are we willing to take God's directions at all times?

October 17th, the 21st Sunday after Pentecost: Luke 18:1-8

Sermon Title: "Don't Give Up"

Living in faith also means never giving up in prayer or seeking the Lord.

October 24th, the 22nd Sunday after Pentecost: Luke 18:9-14

Sermon Title: "The Way Down is the Way Up"

Trying to impress God is not the key to spiritual life

October 31st, Reformation Sunday: Romans 3:19-28

Sermon Title "Back to the Future"

The Reformation revisited is a key to the vitality of the church in the future.



New Jersey Synod News

We rejoice with those persons being ordained on September 19th at St. Paul, East Windsor, at 4:00 p.m. They, and their congregations of call, are:

Agnes Bryant Gbardoe, Elect Saints, Hamilton

Jocelyn Johnston, Zion, Barnegat Light

Elizabeth Carolyn Nees, St. Paul, Millville.

Pastors Ramon A. Collazo, Santa Isabel, Elizabeth, and Robert Weber, Grace, Phillipsburg, who were ordained in other synods this summer, will be introduced at the service.

Please keep all of these persons and their families in your prayers.

Senior League – “Fellowship over Fifty”

The first regular meeting of the season was given over to an evening of barbecue, “catching up” after the summer, and an enjoyable game of gift-swapping. That is one of the few activities in which “Thou shalt not steal” is legitimately suspended!



This is great for your sweet tooth.



It's just what I always wanted!



I need this more than you do.



Stop, thief!

Join us on Wednesday, October 6th, at 6:00 pm for our next meeting, which will be a covered-dish affair for Pastor Appreciation Night. Please RSVP to Carol Meixsell at 908-454-6734 if you plan to attend, and bring a covered dish to share.

Regular meetings will continue on the first Wednesday of every month unless otherwise announced.

Junior Choir Practice

Junior Choir practice will begin on Sunday, October 24th, at 11:00 to 11:30 am (immediately after Sunday School. Contact Holly Chemidlin at 908-859-8280 for any questions.

† *In Memoriam* †

Since our last newsletter, the Church Triumphant has gained three members who will be missed by the St. James Family. Our prayers and condolences go out to their families and friends.

Madeline "Jane" Raub went to be with her Lord on July 22nd, surrounded by her family. Jane was active on Council, and the fruits of her labors will remain for us to see and enjoy for years to come. She was a member of the committee that purchased our present organ, and was instrumental in the refurbishment and reinstallation of our carillon bells. Jane's eye for both beauty and tradition is shown by her involvement in getting the "Alpha & Omega" restored over the altar during the church repainting. Even in her later years, she continued to give of herself by helping in the kitchen at every Vacation Bible School.

William J. Grube left us to join the Saints in heaven on August 26th. After a long battle with cancer, he succumbed at home with his family by his side. A well-loved man with numerous interests, one of his favorite activities was assisting each year in setting up the Easton Peace Candle.

Carolyn M. "Carol" Freer was called to her eternal reward on September 5th. After waging a valiant fight against cancer, she passed surrounded by her family. Along with her family a long time member of St. James, Carol had in the past assisted with the Vacation Bible School program.

Stewardship

In the pantry of Aunt Nan's farmhouse was an old coffee grinder that she used as a "storehouse" for her offering to God. Out of every dollar she received for things sold off her farm, she immediately put the Lord's portion into that coffee grinder.

If anyone had a right to renege on that practice of giving out of one's gross, not merely net income, it would have been this widow with a run-down farm and five children to raise. But she did not. Aunt Nan proved not by mere words, but by the way she handled money that Jesus Christ held the supreme place in her heart and house.

The money in Aunt Nan's coffee grinder wasn't only her gift, it was a family gift. The children helped on the farm and had a personal investment in the contents of that coffee grinder. On Sundays, each one of them had an offering for their Lord. Aunt Nan knew that children learn by doing, and she acted on this principle.

"Aunt Nan's coffee grinder plan" has worked better in supporting local churches and missionary work, and in influencing young people to give of their time and talent, than many other plans, movements, suppers and sales have.

Let us learn from the fine example of Aunt Nan! Set aside a coffee grinder or something else in the house to serve as a storehouse for your family's offering to God. Our young people will learn the principles of stewardship by their active participation, and we will have a more Christ-like America, and a more Christ-like world.

From "Stewardship"; submitted by Liz Kolba

Fund Raising Efforts

We are engaged in several ongoing as well as new endeavors to help provide much-needed income for your church. Please keep the following programs in mind.

Every weekend from now until Halloween, we are staffing a concession stand at Raub's Farm Market Corn Maze. The farm is at 1459 Tatamy Road in Palmer Twp., PA. Come to join in some family fun and sample the refreshments offered.

Pancake and sausage breakfasts are held on the first Saturday of every month, from 7:00 am to 12:00 noon in the Ed Frey Memorial Hall. Cost is \$8.00 for adults and children 10 and over, \$5.00 under 10 years.

Old cell phones (working or not), used inkjet and laser cartridges can be dropped into the containers available outside the Ed Frey Memorial Hall. Business donations welcome. We are working toward purchasing a DVD projector with money raised from these donations.

We have Mums for sale at \$4.00 each, or 3 for \$11.00. They can be ordered until September 25th, with pickup at the church on September 26th. Choose from purple, yellow, red, orange, or white, and include a check with your order.

Hoagie Sale. Simply purchase tickets at St. James for \$6.00 each for a hoagie from Gino's sandwich shop in Phillipsburg. Take your ticket(s) to Gino's and order your custom-made sandwich. For each ticket the church earns \$2.00.

Shop Rite Gift Cards are available at the office or after Worship. St. James receives \$5.00 for every \$100 in cards purchased, at no cost to you.

Benevolence Opportunity

Food Bank. In the current economy, the need for food is greater than ever. Please help the NORWESCAP Food Bank provide for our less fortunate community members by donating canned or other non-perishable food items. Donations should be left in the barrels outside the Ed Frey Memorial Hall.

Looking Ahead



Advent begins on November 28th. We will need families to volunteer to light the Advent Wreath each Saturday and Sunday.

Adult volunteers are needed for candle lighting, serving as ushers, etc. for both Christmas Eve services. Assisting Ministers will be needed for both services as well. Anyone interested in helping to fold bulletins for Christmas Eve services, please let Beth know. This would be a great opportunity for scouts to earn service hours.

St. James Cookbook

With all the good food that magically appears at every church function, there certainly must be a lot of great recipes around in this congregation. Here is a chance to get "fifteen minutes of fame" and help St. James at the same time. Contribute them to the St. James Cookbook by sending them to <http://www.typensave.com>. User ID is "strawchurch" and password, "recipe". We need 200 recipes by November 13th to make this a success and so far have less than 20. If you do not have internet access, recipes may be submitted to the church office.

A Milestone for Pastor Gaeta

By God's Grace

The Rev. Dr. Jane S. Gaeta

will celebrate Twenty Five Years
of Ordination to the Ministry of Word and Sacraments

October 24, 2010

9:00 AM Holy Eucharist - St. Mary's Episcopal Church
340 North Lehigh Ave. Wind Gap, PA 18091

11:00 AM Holy Eucharist - St. Joseph's Episcopal Church
1440 Verona Ave. Pen Argyl, PA 18072

12:30 PM Luncheon at St. Mary's

The honor of your prayers and presence are joyfully requested

Clergy: red stoles

*Kindly RSVP for Luncheon:
610-419-9422 or JSLGaeta@aol.com*

Celebrating Our Faith Together

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the United Methodist Church rejoice in our Full Communion Agreement. A festival to mark this milestone will be held on:

Saturday, October 9th

Calvary Korean United Methodist Church
572 Ryders Lane, East Brunswick, NJ

Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar, Presiding (Greater New Jersey Conference, UMC)
Bishop E. Roy Riley Jr, Preaching (New Jersey Synod, ELCA)

9:45 am Registration Opens

10:30 am Festival Liturgy

12:00 noon Lunch (\$10 per person donation)

1:00 pm Presentation: Rev. Dr. Timothy J. Wengert (Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia)

1:45pm Presentation: Rev. Dr. Kadi Billman (Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago)

2:45pm Closing Prayers



Scouting News

Friendly's Fundraiser Please come out and support our Cub Scout Pack 56 on Tuesday, September 21st from 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. at the



Friendly's in Phillipsburg, NJ. Come enjoy dinner and ice cream and help support the Cub Scouts at the same time.

The Cub Scout Popcorn Sale is now going on. If you are interested in purchasing, please contact Tracy Snyder at 908-454-4008.

Cub Scout sign-ups are taking place right now. If your son is interested, please contact Tracy Snyder 908-454-4008.

A Call to Action

It is amazing how many local people, not members of St. James, are impressed with what care is evidently given to a church building of its age. Truly, we are blessed in both our physical plant and in our members' devotion to it. We have a history that is unique among almost all the churches in our area.

We are also blessed with a very dedicated cadre of people who spend a large fraction of their free time tending to the needs of our church. Ask yourself if you could not spare a few hours a month to devote to your church home. You will find the effort proving to be its own reward.

Contact any member of the Church Council or the secretary to find out what opportunities exist for more involvement in building the future of St. James.



ELCA News

CHICAGO (ELCA) -- The Rev. Gail W. Cromack returned Sept. 13 to Peace Lutheran Church, San Bruno, Calif., for the first time since last week's explosion and fire in a neighborhood there. The church building was not damaged and members are safe, she said. It is located about one block from the explosion site.

"It's absolutely devastating. The neighborhood looks like a war zone," Cromack told the ELCA News Service. Nearly 40 homes were destroyed in the explosion and fire. One Peace member's home was damaged, she said.

Local police are using the Peace church building as a command center. Members of Peace worshiped Sept. 12th at Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church in South San Francisco. It's unclear whether Peace Lutheran Church will be able to hold services in San Bruno this coming weekend, Cromack said, adding that several area congregations have offered worship space for members.

Nancy Nielsen, deputy director, Lutheran Social Services of Northern California, San Francisco, said the agency, working as a Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) affiliate, will assist the congregation and connect it with various resources as needed. LDR is a collaborative ministry of the ELCA and The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

"Our role is to be the church. We are helping them plan for the weeks ahead," Nielsen said. She said they have discussed possibly bringing in people who lived through and recovered from a much bigger fire in 1991, known as the Oakland Hills fire, to talk with members in the coming weeks.