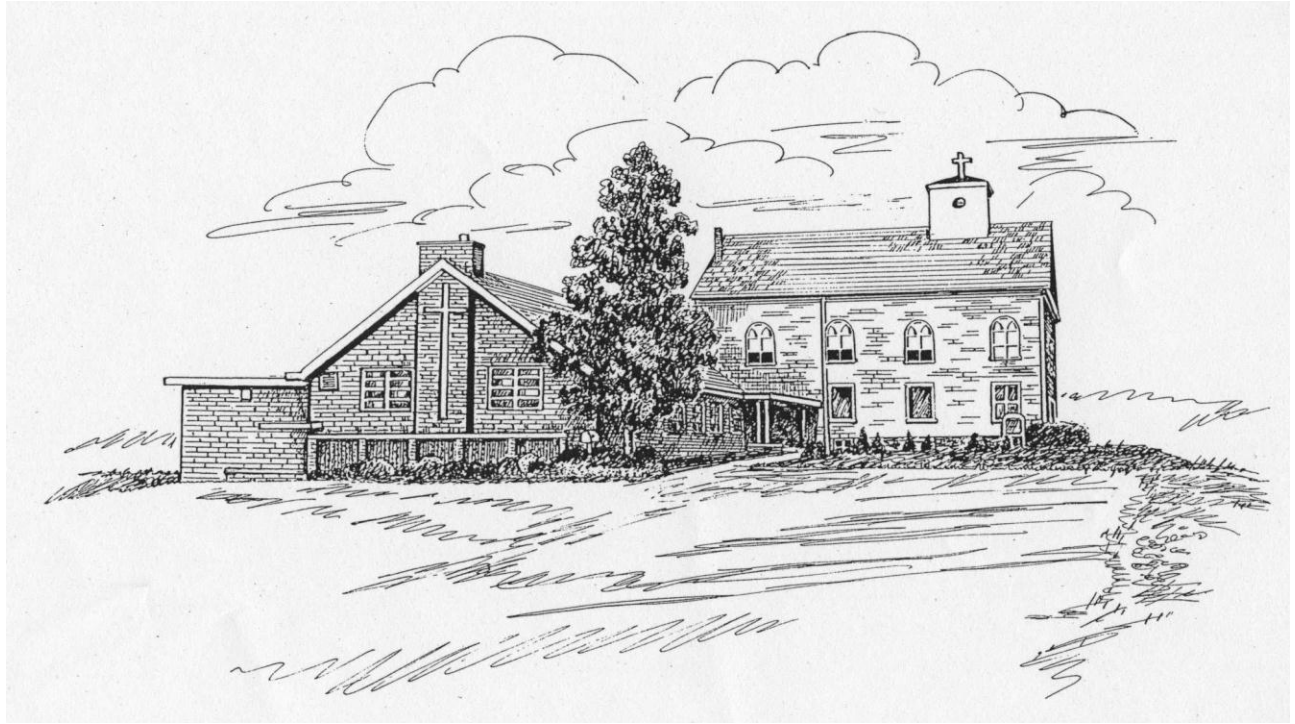


WISPS OF STRAW



St. James Lutheran Church Newsletter

September 2012

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

The Pastor's Letter

¹⁸Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ¹⁹Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ²⁰Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, ²¹so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land the LORD swore to give your ancestors, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth. Deuteronomy 11:18-21 NIV

1849 was a very significant year in the life of St. James. In the nation Zachary Taylor had just recently become president. Daniel Haines was governor of New Jersey, the last one to be elected by the New Jersey Legislature. This church was still located in Greenwich, as the township of Pohatcong wasn't established until 1881. But the real significance of this year in the history of Strawchurch is that Sophia Sharps (1805-1878) began the "Sabbath school", the forerunner of our current "Sunday school". When she and others began this ministry it was not a traditional ministry of the church as we accept it today. Early "Sabbath schools" were really rooted in evangelism, to children and families who were not closely connected with the church. For church members Christian education took place in the home. In fact, Martin Luther wanted the Small Catechism to be taught by the head of the household.

One can only imagine what took place to get that program going back then. I am sure there was at least one church member who spoke the 1849 version of the saying, "we've never done it that way before". However it is obvious that Sophia Sharps and company persevered. Eventually Sunday school became a very important ministry of Strawchurch.

In fact I would argue that it became part of our "DNA" as a church, and something our church has been known for in the community. When Sundays were primarily a day of rest, and families bigger, we had a very large Sunday school. If you look at the pictures in the hall leading to the office the Sunday school packed a lot of children and adults into a very modest space.

Now here in the 21st century much has changed. Our very location is surrounded by a major four lane highway. Sunday is no longer the "day of rest" as stores and businesses are open for business and generally crowded. Youth activities such as sports claim Sunday as much as any other day of the week. Families tend to be smaller, and statistics tell us that marriage and families are happening later in life.

But there is still a need to tell the good news of Jesus to new generations. They need to know the fun of Vacation Bible School. They need to know songs of joy to sing to God, and have a Christmas pageant proclaiming Jesus's birth.

We have it in us, in our DNA to do that well. Let us support the ministry of our Sunday school any way we can. By God's spirit we can do this because that is who we are as the Strawchurch!

Your brother in Christ,
Pastor John

Sunday School Rally Day

Sunday, September 9, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.

Children, bring your grandparents along to Rally Day as a treat for them on their special day, Grandparents Day. We will be taking pictures of children with their grandparents to be mounted in a picture frame designed by the children, with the help of their grandparents. If grandparents cannot attend, we have people anxiously waiting to be adopted as grandparent for the morning.

We will be registering children for Sunday school, singing favorite Sunday school songs, and having a snack.

PLEASE JOIN US!

Rally Day Worship

In order to make Rally Day special for the entire St. James family, there will be an unusually uplifting musical program on that Sunday, September 9th. It will begin with an organ Prelude, and include hymns especially selected for the occasion.

Organist Scott Burzynski returns for this day, and soloist Kaitlyn McEnroe will lend her lovely voice as well.

Please make an effort to join your fellow worshippers for this service.

“Fifth Sunday” Service

Since September will have five Sundays, we will on September 30th have a brief service of Holy Communion at 11:30 am, after Sunday school.

Please consider taking part if for any reason you are unable to attend the regular services.

Sunday School Notes

Sunday school teachers for the new year are as follows:

Preschool	Sean LaCourte
Kindergarten & Grade 1	Nancy Carhart
Grades 2 & 3	Luann Beatty
Grade 4	Susanne LaCourte
Grades 5 & 6	Cortney Esposito
Grade 7 Confirmation	Steve Stocker

Substitute teachers are still needed for several classes as well as a co-teacher for the 7th grade Confirmation class. Please contact Sunday school superintendent Pamela Van Haneghan at 908-777-3068 or evangelvh316@aol.com to help in this important ministry.

August Strawchurch Market

The market on August 11th raised a total of \$198. Five vendor tables were sold at \$15 each, \$43 worth of donated items were sold, and the concession stand netted another \$70. Thanks to all who helped.

School Backpacks Effort

The Social Ministry Committee reports that they collected fifteen backpacks as well as a large amount of school supplies to benefit underprivileged children of our community.

Many thanks to all the Strawchurch donors who showed their concern and helped make a difference for these deserving students

Senior League Notes



The new season will begin with our first meeting at 6:00 pm on Wednesday, September 5th. Come out and join us for an evening of fellowship and good food.

Contact Carol Meixsell at 908-454-6734.

Subsequent meetings will be on the first Wednesday of each month unless otherwise announced. Watch the weekly bulletins.

Church and Youth Group Day at Raub Farms

Sunday, September 30th will be Church and Youth Group day at the Raub's Farm Markets Corn Maze. Cost is \$6.00 per person and tickets will be available for purchase after services on both Saturdays and Sundays.



ALL PROCEEDS WILL GO TO THE CHURCH, and the Church's Concession Stand will be there as well, so come out to enjoy the day and support our Church at the same time.

† In Memoriam †

On Tuesday, July 31st, Melvin Kehres went to be with the Lord and enjoy his eternal reward.



Mel was a long-time member of St. James who served on Council and was active in many aspects of our church's life. Most notable was his work with the Boy Scout Troop, but he was also for years our

audio consultant on the sound systems as well as a member of the Senior League.

An Army veteran who served during the Korean War as a radio repairman, Mel subsequently became a member of the Mecsey-Bishop American Legion Post in Stewartsville.

Our condolences go out to Edna, his wife of 59 years, and to his entire family. They are all in our prayers.

Food for Thought

It was only a kindly word,
A word that was softly spoken.
But not in vain,
For it eased the pain
Of a heart that was nearly broken.

Food Donations Needed

Please bring non-perishable, non-breakable food items to the barrels in front of Frey Hall, so that NORWESCAP can continue to supply the necessities of life to our less fortunate neighbors.

Western District NJ Synod ELCA News

In my role as dean of the Western District, I will be coordinating a fall assembly with the cluster counselors from the Northwest



and Central clusters. It will be held on October 7th at the Crossroads Camp and Retreat House which is actually located on the boundary of the

Western District. The time will be from 4:00 to 6:00 pm with dinner for those who wish to stay and have dinner fellowship. The program will be twofold. First we will hear from various sites where mission in the name of our Lord takes place in our district. Secondly we will have a forum to discuss the upcoming election of a new bishop for the New Jersey Synod next spring. Since Bishop Riley is retiring, we will be electing a new person to serve for the first time in about 20 years!

So it will be good to reflect on what has changed in the synod, what the needs might be, begin to think about the process, and even spend some time in corporate prayer for God's spirit to guide us to the person who is to be the next bishop of our synod.

Any number of people may come, and any cost involved will be announced in advance. Obviously I will be going, so if you might wish to ride with me, please let me know.

Pastor John

.....
**The good Lord didn't create anything
without a purpose, but mosquitoes come
close.**

Three Recent Baptisms

St. James continues to be blessed in receiving new young Christians into child membership.

On July 15th Olivia Gordon was baptized at Shells Lutheran Church in Pennsylvania. Since her mom, Courtney, has been having her rehabilitation and treatment closer to Shells, that church where her husband Matthew grew up became the place for Olivia's baptism. She was baptized jointly between St. James and Shells. Representing us at Shells were members Steve and Carolyn Stocker.

That same Sunday we had a baptism here at St. James as well, that of Andrea Dawn Schultz. Andrea's mom, Jacklyn Samples, is a niece of members Jaime and Diane McLain.



Uniquely, when it came time for prayers for the baptized we prayed for both Olivia and Andrea, and the folks at Shells prayed for both Olivia and Andrea as well.

At the Saturday service on August 4th we celebrated the baptism of Denton Goodin, whose mom Lindsay Goodin is a member along with her mom Penny Nace and Penny's husband Joe. Lindsay and her husband Aaron were married here in the fall of 2010. Aaron serves in the United States Army and is stationed at Fort Drum in northern New York State.

VBS 2012

From Monday July 16th thru Friday July 20th, under the direction of Vanessa Marciello and her daughters Ana and Lia, between 30 and 40 children were enrolled for a wonderful week of Vacation Bible School with the theme, "Everything is Possible with God". Skits, videos, enacted Bible lessons, games,



and snacks all helped reinforce that very positive biblical theme. We had a wonderful group of volunteers,

including members of our youth group, who helped in many ways during the week.

I am very grateful to God for everyone who had a hand in this great week. Please watch for the next Wisps of Straw for pictures and other comments on a great outreach ministry of our church!

Pastor John

Donate from your Smart Phone!

St. James Lutheran Church now offers a mobile version of our online giving page to make it easy for you to give anytime from your smart phone. Simply scan the image you see here using your phone's Quick Response (QR) code reader.



Well Done, Scouts

Two members of our own Boy Scout Troop 56 have completed the requirements for the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest level attainable in Scouting.

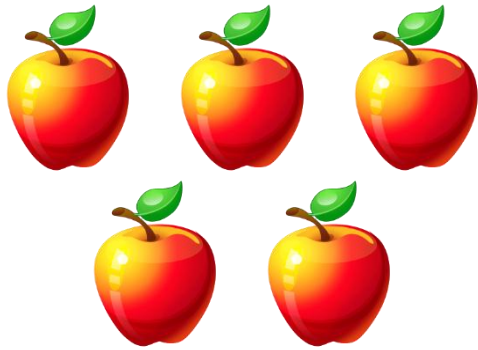
Christian Zurine's Eagle Scout project involved work for the NORWESCAP Food Bank. He created a lunch area for the employees and volunteers, upgraded the Thrift Shop access ramp, and built a wall to support food and equipment storage shelves. A surplus of \$100 from the money raised for the project was donated to the Food Bank. He also coordinated the building and installation of 14 raised beds for the Phillipsburg Garden Club.

John Fahey's project was to spearhead renovation of the food pantry at the United Presbyterian Church of Alpha. This included a new wall and flooring, building and installing shelving, hanging curtains and giving everything a fresh coat of paint. John also led a food drive at the Alpha Public School for the pantry.

As part of their leadership training, Eagle Scout candidates are responsible for raising all the funds and obtaining the materials needed for their projects.



The young men will receive their new ranks at Courts of Honor to be held in the near future. Congratulations, best wishes, and the thanks of the community to both.



**STRAW CHURCH
MARKET
FARMERS/FLEA
MARKET
& BAKE SALE**

2nd SATURDAY OF THE MONTH

7:00 am to 1:00 pm

September 8th, 2012 October 13th, 2012

November 10th, 2012

Reserve your space or donate your items to
the Church

\$15.00 first space

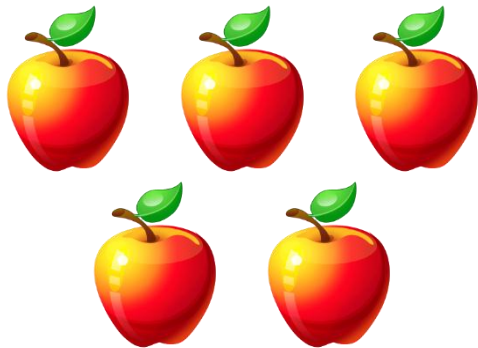
\$7.50 each additional space

Call 610-597-7473

BAKERS & VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Set up 6pm to 7 pm Friday night

6am to 7am Saturday morning



FUNDRAISING NEEDS

Bake Sale:

Volunteers are needed to bake and sell the baked goods on September 8th, October 13th, and November 10th. There are sign-up sheets in the lobby.

Straw Church Market:

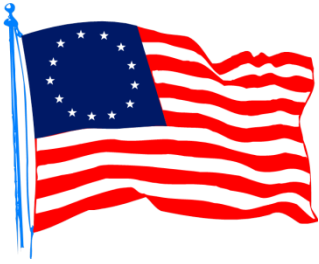
Volunteers are needed for set up / break down and to sell the items on September 8th, October 13th and November 10th. Sign-up sheets are in the lobby.

Corn Maze Concession Stand:

Volunteers are needed to run the concession stand at Raub's Farm Market on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays of each weekend from September 8th thru November 4th. This event has raised a lot of money for the Church in the past. We are also looking for people to bake cookies and cupcakes to sell. If you physically cannot help and would like to do something, you can donate money to help offset the cost of the items needed to make this a success. Please put the money in a separate envelope and mark it Concession Stand Money, and if you are writing a check please make it out to Jeffrey Raub. A sign-up sheet with the dates and times needed is located in the Frey Hall lobby.



Patriots in our Straw Church Cemetery



The struggle for our nation to be independent of foreign rule became a conflict involving every local community and family. So it was from 1775 to 1783 in the area surrounding Straw Church. Difficult decisions had to be made by each individual as to which side they would support, based on family safety, economic condition, loyalty to the King of England (who commanded the most powerful fighting force on earth), or desire for the new idea of self-rule government. Small pockets of loyalists (to the king) and rebels developed everywhere. Tavern and family dinner talk turned to convincing friends and neighbors as to which side would be in their best future interest. The consequences of being on the losing side when the war was over could be a disaster for one's future. The odds were certainly in favor of the King of England early in this disagreement. Over two hundred years later we, at least in this country, don't know much about those on the losing side but some of the winners are buried in the old "Straw Church" Cemetery.

Here is what we know from our attempt to identify them. There is a plaque on the wall to the left of the old main cemetery entrance. It was presented in 1934 by the Peggy Warne Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R.) in memory of eleven soldiers buried in "Straw" Cemetery. There is also an individual D.A.R. plaque at the grave of one John Metz within the cemetery. This brought the "old" total to twelve patriots.

A short explanation of the D.A.R. - this organization of women was founded in 1890. The only requirement for membership is to prove that you are directly descended from a patriot of the American Revolution. The definition of "patriot" includes both military service and a number of support roles a person may have provided during this conflict. Due to the strictly maintained membership requirements, the D.A.R. has become the major "keeper of the list" of American Revolutionary patriots. As a result of ongoing research the master national list continues to grow. The latest most accurate and complete D.A.R. list we can find for "Straw Church Cemetery" now contains 25 names.

Our goal is to locate, acknowledge, and honor these American heroes, and if possible find out more about them. We are in the very early stages of this new wave of research. The opportunity to find more information is endless, especially on the internet or through research trips to museums and libraries. Maybe you can focus on one name (adopt a patriot) and find all you can about that one person? If you are interested in helping in any way with this patriotic project, contact Dave or Charlotte Morris at dhmcs22@yahoo.com or 908-859-0723.

Our most pressing need is to find the location of five graves within the cemetery. Time is erasing the memory and even the inscriptions. The following page contains the names and dates of the known patriot burials, including those whose grave locations within the cemetery are as yet unknown.

Known Grave Locations

Abraham Arndt	1759-1845	John Metz	1758-1824
Valentine Beidelman	1734-1804	William Nyce	1738-1805
Bolsar Carpenter	1749-1821	Jacob Reese	1761-1829
Jacob Carpenter	1761-1821	Philip Sager	1754-1837
Philip Fine	1744-1810	Peter Sharp	1751-1827
John Howell	1766-1848	Isaac Shipman	1766-1852
Godfrey Kline	1743-1845	Mathias Shipman	1727-1812
John Leffler	1762-1845	Peter Sinclair	1722-1785
Andrew Melick	1729-1820	Jacob Welch	1746-1799
Henry Melick	1759-1851	Jacob Young	1756-1843

Grave Locations Unknown

Adam Albright, Jr.	Dates unknown	Amos Hixson	1753-1836
John Beemer	1763-1795	Benjamin Hoff	1740-1796
Johannes Feit	1714-1790		



Seminary breaks ground on museum

The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, one of the leaders in the Gettysburg Seminary Ridge Museum, began a \$13 million rehabilitation of Schmucker Hall April 25.

Built in 1832, the campus building was the center of the Union lines and last ditch stand on July 1, 1863, as well as a field hospital for more than 600 soldiers. Archeological finds on the site have included letters to wounded soldiers, medicinal containers and 19th century seminary artifacts.

Considered by many to be the most important Civil War building not in the public trust, the hall will open as a museum next spring, in time for the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg in July. The museum will help bring to life the battle, care for the wounded and human suffering, and moral, civic and spiritual debates of the Civil War era. The project also includes a historic walking path on the 52-acre campus.

Other partners on the museum project include the Adams County Historical Society and the Seminary Ridge Historic Preservation Foundation. Major funding comes from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Federal Highway Administration, Commonwealth Cornerstone Group, PNC Bank and others.

Michael Cooper-White (right), president of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, and Brandon James, Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod vice president and Seminary Ridge Historic Preservation Foundation trustee, hold a shovel on groundbreaking day, with a geothermal well-drilling rig and the chapel behind them.



MATT FUNKE/LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AT PHILADELPHIA