



St. James News

Equipping and Empowering Families and Students through Christ

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As you slow down and take time to read this Newsletter, chances are you are like the majority of people who struggle at times with the many distractions that come zooming by any given moment. With accessibility like we've never seen before, our minds are constantly flooded with what others think we need to know, let alone our own thoughts and wonderings.

Distractions can have a negative impact on our daily lives for sure. But they can also directly impact our time of Sabbath - our time of worship. **"But the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the Word, and it proves unfruitful." (Mark 4:19).** Have you ever walked out of worship and thought to yourself, "Why was I even here? I was so distracted!" Chances are, there are many more who way yay than nay when it comes to being distracted during worship. So, here are some helpful suggestions when preparing for worship. Not laws or rules, simply suggestions.

First, think about coming to worship a few minutes early. This will give you a few extra moments to sit and reflect upon your week and help transition from all the worldly goings-on in your life. These few extra moments of reflection can be aided by the prayers provided for you in the front cover of the hymnal, or maybe by reading a Psalm or the words of a hymn. Regardless of what you choose to do with those extra few moments, take some time to transition your focus to the soon gifts to be given through Word and Sacrament.

Second, maybe think of a specific part of the liturgy that you'd like to focus on that particular week. One of the side effects of the liturgy is that it's very easy to become complacent and simply go through the motions of worship. What a blessing it is to have the familiarity, but think of taking it a little deeper. What are we really confessing in the Creed? What are we really praying in the Lord's Prayer? What is Pastor really telling me in the Absolution? There's so much there to focus on! Choose one of them and pay particularly close attention to it each week.

Third, along the same lines of what was just noted, be intentional about participating in all of the liturgy. One of the criticism Lutherans hear is that our worship is boring and we just sit there as receivers. Well, first, boring is an attitude problem, and second, receivers we are. But that doesn't mean that it's a bad thing! Our Lord serves us during worship. That's why it's called Divine Service. But in that service - our time or worship together, we actually have a pretty interactive time. Be intentional about following along, learning the ropes so to say, and chances are your tendency to be distracted will decrease.

Fourth, as you take time to prepare for worship, consider reading the assigned readings ahead of time. It's good for you to be in the Word daily, and this can also serve to better familiarize yourself with the readings of the day. If you have a hymnal at home, you can find the lectionary (schedule of assigned readings) within or you can also pull up the lectionary on the Synods website.

Finally, our nave (where the people sit) is a beautifully adorned space. Further, the sanctuary (from the rail forward) is likewise a beautiful space. Contained within this place we gather are many images upon which you can focus. Take some time to ponder how the images that have been purposely placed within the space connect with what is going on as we worship together.

Distractions are all around us. Yes, some of them we cannot avoid. But, for the most part, we can be intentional about taking measures to reduce the amount of distraction we may have. **"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."** (Hebrews 12:1-2)

Maybe take some time to think about ways you can do that next week at worship. The Lord has much to offer you as He's gathered you to receive His precious gifts of grace and mercy through the blessing of Word and Sacrament

Our Church Records

Church Attendance

Sunday, November 3	129 & 136
Sunday, November 10	153 & 89
Sunday, November 17	127 & 160
Sunday, November 24	165 & 116

Communion Attendance

Sunday, November 3	170
Sunday, November 10	72
Sunday, November 17	92
Sunday, November 24	72

Marriage

Adam Fischer and Abigail Miller on November 9, 2019 with Pastor Loder officiating.

Funeral

James Burkett on November 12, 2019. He was called to his eternal rest November 5, 2019 at the age of 84 years, 6 months, and 28 days.

Birthday blessings go out to these senior members in



December: Elisa Haag (2), Allan Uecker (3), Carol Zander (5), Kathryn Lutter (11), Kathy Dratz (15), Ruth Latzig (16), Marie Longfors (19), Syrellis Reek (24), Donna Munson (27), Helen Zander (28) **January:**

Clayton Helinske (2), Dennis Klammer (2), Nancy Diers (3), Ruth Oestreich (7), Erma Hechsel (12), Steven Comstock, SR (12), Merlyn Schmieg (13), Lois Engel (15), Rhonda Frey (15), Noreen Horsch (15), Wayne Diers (16), Lois Oltmann (23), Darlene Strohschein (24), Paulette Goepfert (27), Doris Schendel (30), Bruce Dahlin (31),

Lutheran Women's Missionary League

Pastor Loder led the Quarterly Bible Study, "I AM Trusting Thee Lord Jesus". Hymn verses were studied with scripture references to describe the full salvation we receive in Christ: "Thy grace and tender mercy," "cleansing in the crimson flood," and "Make me holy by

Thy blood." The group joined in singing all the verses of "I Am Trusting Thee Lord Jesus."

The Happy Mailbox committee reported sending 60 cards to friends in October. All members were encouraged to attend the Crow River Conference Fall Rally at Peace, Hutchinson, on October 19th. The fall LWML dinner will be held on November 3 from 11:00 to 1:00. All members will help by donating desserts, decorating, and serving; congregation youth members will assist with set up, serving and clean up. A Country Store will have crafts, canned and baked goods, greeting cards, and a selection of "Treasure from the Past", for the shopping pleasure of all.

Molly Loder was recognized as now serving on the National LWML Board of Directors Special Focus Ministries Department as a member of the committee on Young women. New member, Stacey Sparkman, was welcomed.

The last phrase of our theme hymn states emphatically: "I am trusting Thee forever and for all." Isaiah 26:3-4



Community Meal

Save the dates! Our next Free Community Meals will be held on Thursday, December 12, 2019, and January 9, 2020 at 5:30 pm. December's meal will be



a delicious ham dinner with all the fixings, and January we will be a pasta bar, yum!! We hope to see you all there to enjoy great food and fellowship. Be sure to invite your neighbors, friends and family.

Stewardship- An Article from LCMS

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

LCMS Stewardship Ministry

Newsletter Article – December 2019

Jesus, in His Sermon on the Mount, is teaching those who follow Him that worrying about the necessities of life is idolatry: worshipping a false god. This is because worry and anxiety show what we care about. Our anxiety reveals what we love and to what we're devoted. It reveals what we trust in.

This is why our Lord begins this section with an overarching principle: "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."

But you say: "I must eat and drink. I must have clothing to wear and have a home in which to dwell." Yes, all these things you need. And Jesus says that your Father in heaven will ensure that you have them. He demonstrates this with a simple argument.

Your Father in heaven feeds the birds of the air, who neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns. He clothes the lilies of the field, who neither toil nor spin but are arrayed more luxuriously than Solomon in all his glory. If, then, your Father in heaven feeds the birds and clothes the lilies, how will He not also feed and clothe you when you are worth more than they are?

For you know that you are worth more than them. You are worth infinitely more. You are worth the price of the eternal Son of God. Did the Son of God come down from heaven and become a lily? Did he descend and take on the form of a bird? No!

He came down from heaven and became a man: flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone. He is one of us, our brother. And what did He do when He became flesh to dwell among us? He gave His holy, precious blood and His innocent suffering and death, that you might be His own and live under Him in His kingdom forever.

God became man in Christ Jesus. He lived the life we failed to live, and He died the death we deserve because of it. He was raised again on the third day to overcome sin and death ... for us. He was crucified for our transgressions and raised for our justification. So, if your

Father in heaven has given His Son to die for us in order that we might live with Him eternally, how will He not also give us all things to support this body and life?

To be anxious about the necessities of life, to devote yourself to food and clothing, to care about this and find security in it, is to serve another god. It is to deny that you will live forever because Jesus, the Son of God is risen from the dead, lives and reigns for all eternity. It is to believe that God – who created you, redeemed you by the death and resurrection of His Son, and sanctifies you by His Spirit – will not keep His promises of sustaining you in this life.

Jesus says this: Seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness. God's kingdom is His rule among us. His rule among us comes when our Father in heaven gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead godly lives here in time and there in eternity. This is what we ask God to do for us in the prayer Jesus taught us.

Your Father in heaven knows what you need – food and clothing, house and home, etc. – and He promises to give it to you. Chief of the things you need is His grace and mercy in His Son, Jesus Christ. So, seek after that. Those who seek will find. And all the necessities of life, our Lord says, will be added to you.

St. James Lutheran Church & School Summary of Receipts & Disbursements August 2019 - October 2019

Receipts

Operating Offerings & Donations	\$254,201
Donor Restricted Donations	\$10,573
Missions Donations	\$11,430
Tuition & Other Receipts	\$79,460
Total Receipts	\$ 355,663

Disbursements

Compensation & Benefits	\$163,447
Property Maintenance Costs	34,815
Administrative Expenses	6,632
Program Expenses	32,676
Missions Disbursements	12,505
Total Disbursements	\$ 250,075

Excess Income/(Expense)	\$ 105,588
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Outstanding Loans

Installment Loan - CAB	47,538
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Our Parish Nurse

BLESSED HOLIDAYS TO EVERYONE!

JOY, SIMPLICITY, SWEET, HOLY, TRADITIONS, REMEMBERANCES, HYMNS, GIFTS, FOOD, FAMILY, FRIENDS, SNOW, ANGELS, STARS, TREES, LIGHTS, DECORATIONS- THESE ARE SOME OF THE MANY THINGS THAT COME TO MIND IN THE UPCOMING SEASON.

I have one question for you- What must you DO or HAVE in order to have a Christmas to remember? That answer will be different for each of us. Whether we have little or much, our answer should not be hard to determine. Just maybe, we know what we should answer, but truthfully, is that your real answer? Obviously, I can not answer for you, I pose the question for you to think about. In the "busyness" of this time of year, it will be good to think about the real meaning of CHRISTMAS. Who are you going to remember? Think about? Pray about? Is there someone you haven't called or written to in a long time, even though you intended to? Maybe the time is now, before it is too late, and we wish we had. Oh, the Joy that can be in our hearts as we think, remember and celebrate the greatest gift we have been given. The gift of our dear Lord and Savior!

What was the BEST Christmas you can remember? What made it the best? A childhood times? A recent Christmas with family? A church service that brought you to tears. Share that with someone you are close to, maybe that will offer an opportunity to share the joy of this special season.

Are you choosing happiness or sadness this time of year? I hope you can choose happiness. If not, please check-in with someone you trust to talk about your reasons for sadness. For sure, all is not roses and many people have health issues, financial issues, relationships issues and other kinds of issues in their lives. It does help to have someone to share these issues with- none of us needs to carry them alone- remember the hymn- "take it to the Lord in Prayer"? Some may say, "but you don't know what I have to deal with" that is true, however, I do know that sharing it with an "earthly friend" as well as our "heavenly friend" often lightens the weight of the issue. I have found that speaking my concerns to a trusted friend has often given me a greater insight and often the answer to my concern. Let us go into the Holiday season with a lighter heart and a lighter load of concern.

How about the New Year? What will it bring? None of us knows, but hopefully we will have a positive attitude

and be ready to look to the "good" and not focus on the "bad".

I hope you do not find yourself "all stressed out" in a small booklet called BREAKING FREE FROM STRESS, the author Linda Mintle, Ph.D. talks about how to find peace when life's pressures overwhelm you. It is an easy to read and understand booklet, it might be helpful if you would like to borrow it. You might get your own copy, as it is a THRIVENT FINANCIAL FOR LUTHERANS publication. It does not claim to counsel or treat, just offers some interesting information that can be helpful.

Wishing you a healthy, happy and blessed Christmas and New Year!

Blessings for your fall!

Darlene



THE LUTHERAN HOUR

Hear The Lutheran Hour each Sunday at 12:30 PM on KDUZ-1260 Hutchinson or at 7:30 AM on KRWC-1360 Buffalo.

The Lutheran Hour may also be heard at 6:05 AM Sunday mornings on WCCO -830. The Lutheran Hour is our church's witness in the public marketplace. We can sponsor broadcasts on KDUZ in memory of loved ones or in honor of special occasions.

December 1

"Enough with the Self-Talk" We are not always who we say we are. What you say to yourself about yourself may or may not be what's true. Dr. Michael Zeigler says, "Enough with the self-talk!" Who does God say you are? You'll find that you are worse than you thought, and yet, more loved than you could ever imagine. (Luke 18:9-14)

December 8

"God's Yes" Loved and Sent Series - "If we say that God's purpose is simply to take our souls to heaven when we die, we might miss God's bigger 'yes' ... God's 'yes' to putting bodies and souls back together again in the resurrection; God's 'yes' to creation as He intended it to be." (Romans 8:18-39)

December 15

"Love Is Enough" Loved and Sent Series - God shows us a different kind of love. It's love for the world that is not of this world, love that is focused outward, love that gives without requiring anything in return. (Matthew 22:35-40)

December 22

"Christmas" (Matthew 1:18-25)

December 29

"Dreams" (Jeremiah 23:24)

A Word from Vicar Thompson

Advent is upon us. Advent is a wonderful time of reflection and preparation for the celebration of the first coming of our Lord Jesus. Jesus humbled Himself to be born in an animal trough, in a small insignificant town in an insignificant province on the outskirts of the Roman Empire. By all rights the Creator of Universe deserved better. Should He not have been born in the Imperial Roman palace? Should He not have been born with royal silks and lice free sheets to cover Him? Should not gold, frankincense and myrrh have been daily luxuries rather than once-in-a-lifetime gifts? Jesus should have grown up in comfort, with the finest goods that mankind could develop at His disposal. However, even if He did have all of that, would the extreme wealth and comfort of the Roman Emperors have been enough for the King of the Universe? No. It couldn't be. And yet, despite all the other places Jesus could have been born it was in Bethlehem, among livestock saliva and the smell of animal manure in the air.

No other noble, king, or wealthy person in history could or can humble themselves the way Christ did. No one else can replicate just how big of a change this is. Before Jesus was incarnate, He was among the angels and resided in God the Father's glory, which would make even the most luxurious and loyal servants of our world look like a one-star hotel in comparison. Furthermore, the Lord of the Universe makes Himself the adopted son of a carpenter. At best Joseph owned his own business and had other workers but Jesus was still going to work for a living, at least until His ministry started. He who created all things put His own hands to the saw, the file, the hammer and He sweats like you and me.

When Jesus enters Jerusalem, He receives a reaction from the crowd that more befits a King and Creator. They shout, "**Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!**" (John 12:13b) Now this is more like it. But at the end of week Jesus will be abandoned by this crowd and killed by His own creation. It is a brutal form of irony. The King and Creator of Life is killed by the ones whom He gave life to.

But we forget that all this humiliation was done for us. Jesus came not to enjoy what little we have to offer or to command armies or to establish earthly kingdoms. No, He came to liberate us, to wage a one God war on all the forces of the devil and of darkness. And He won that war by His blood.

Yet before we get to Holy Week and what happens there let us pause and remember how Jesus started His earthly journey. He started like any and all of us, trusting our parents to take care of us. In this way, we truly have a high priest who can sympathize with our weaknesses and vulnerabilities (Hebrews 4:15).

Have a blessed Advent, Christmas and New Year!

Vicar Thompson

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" (Luke 2: 14)





Third and Fourth Grade Highlights

November was busy month...hardly a week passed without additional activities planned. December promises to be equally busy...keep an eye on the school newsletter for further information.

Some curricular highlights of life in the Third and Fourth Grade classroom include:

- Language Arts- a good portion of the morning routine includes "The Daily Five", which focuses on Language Arts. The five focus points of "The Daily Five" include: listening to reading, reading to someone, reading to self, word work (phonics, spelling, grammar, etc.), and working on writing.
- Math- Math instruction composes a large portion of the afternoon. The students typically receive grade appropriate instruction and practice, and then break into smaller groups to work on skills individually that support their math strengths and reinforce areas that need additional practice. Technology enables this differentiation of instruction...each day includes time spent utilizing developmentally appropriate math software.
- Social Studies- This year's curriculum studies the United States and its regional areas. Currently, the

Northeast States are being explored. About 10 minutes a day also focuses on current events.

- Science- Life Science is the current unit. After Christmas, Earth Science will be studied.
- Religion- Daily integration of our faith is certainly one of the blessings of a Christian education. The work of the Holy Spirit in our daily spiritual walk is supported by instruction Bible history. The Exodus is the current Biblical focus.

Saint James School (particularly through the accreditation process) consciously makes efforts to meet and exceed national educational standards. The small class sizes and multi-age classrooms enable these standards to not only be met, but to be exceeded! Your ongoing Spiritual and financial support of Saint James Lutheran School is so VERY much appreciated. Feel free to contact the school office if you'd like to schedule a visit to witness firsthand the blessing a Lutheran Christian education!

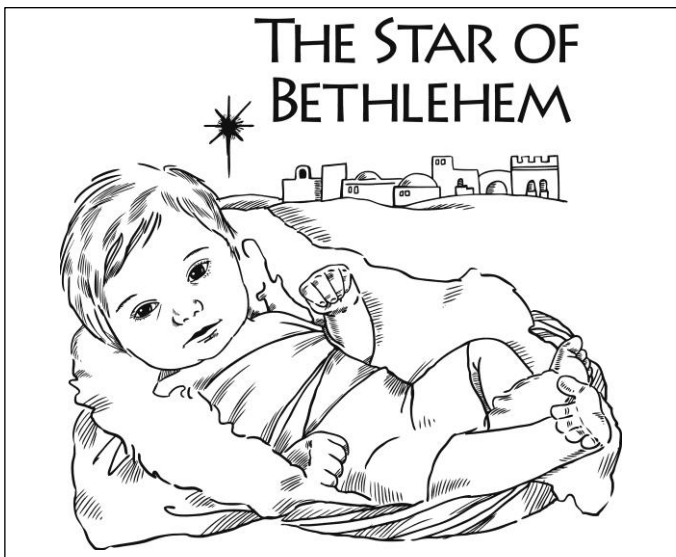
Upcoming events at

St. James include:

- ~ Dec. 19th Christmas Program
- ~ Dec. 23rd- Jan. 1st Christmas Break
- ~ Jan. 16th End of 2nd Quarter
- ~ Jan. 17th No School- Teacher Workshop
- ~ Jan. 20th No School- MLK Day
- ~ Jan. 27th -29th Thanksgiving
- ~ Jan. 26th- 31st National Lutheran Schools Week
- ~ Jan. 27th Jumping in January

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Have you ever told your child, "Listen to me?" Through His Word, God calls us to listen to Him too. In the Bible, God tells us how to live as His children. He tells us how to be helpers and serve one another in love. And He tells us the best news of all - the Good News of Jesus' birth, death and resurrection. Your child is influenced by what adults say about God and Jesus. Let your child see you reading the Bible and hear you praying to our heavenly Father in Jesus' name. Let them see you making it a priority to attend church and Sunday School each week. We are to love the Lord our God with all our hearts and minds. Putting God first in our lives at



Christmas is especially important if we want our children to learn and feel the love of God. What an important lesson for our children to learn and for us to be reminded of this Christmas.

The Sunday School children will share their message of Christmas at the 10:30 AM worship service on Sunday, December 22.

May the love of God's gift of a Savior be in your heart this Christmas season and throughout the year.



St. James Lutheran

Advent & Christmas Schedule

Sunday Worship

At 8:00 AM and 10:30 AM, Sunday School at 9:15 AM

Midweek Advent Worship Wednesdays

December 4, 11, & 18 at 1:45 & 7:00 PM

Children's Christmas Program

Grades PK-8

Thursday, December 19 at 6:30 PM

Sunday School

Sunday, December 22 at 10:30 AM

Christmas Eve, December 24

Christmas Eve Service & Communion at 4:15 PM

Lessons, Carols & Communion at 7:30 PM

Christmas Day, December 25

Divine Service at 9:00 AM

Come let us
Adore
Him

