

Vol. 70, No. 3

March 2026

The Messenger

“We respond to God’s abundant grace by being hearers, proclaimers, and doers of the Word.”



St. James Lutheran Church

109 York Street | P.O. Box 4596

Gettysburg, PA 17325-4596

717-334-2012 | StJamesGettysburg.org

A congregation of the ELCA, and a Reconciling in Christ Congregation.



A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR LIBBY

As I write this, St. James Lutheran Church has just finished making and distributing over 1,900 dozen fastnachts to the greater Gettysburg community. The kitchen is clean, the fastnachts are (almost) all sold, and the supplies are tucked away until next year. A special thank you to the entire Smith family for their tireless dedication to this yearly endeavor and to the wonderful volunteers who make this event possible.

I will admit that when I arrive for my yearly overnight shift, I do so slightly wary. I know we are embarking on a long season of waiting, watching, and intensive pastoral care. I know the coming weeks will be emotionally and physically demanding. Yet I still arrive in the kitchen with my coffee, excited to spend those early morning hours with my St. James family.

In his book *The Five Love Languages*, Gary Chapman identifies five ways people give and receive love: Words of Affirmation, Quality Time, Receiving Gifts, Acts of Service, and Physical Touch. While I value them all, I often wish there were a sixth category for "shared fellowship and food-oriented service." Something holy happens during fastnacht weekend. Despite the hours on their feet and the weight of sleeplessness, our St. James family finds a way to persevere, bound by the common good and the community that arises from serving others. It is a feeling that is inherently biblical; as the writer of Acts tells us, the early followers of Jesus "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42).

Now March finds us in the middle of the Lenten season—a time of dreary days and slightly warmer evenings, of midweek services and soup dinners. We anxiously anticipate the return of spring and longer days. At the same time, we wait and watch as the world feels further divided, where words are rarely spoken out of love for neighbor, and trust grows increasingly scarce. It makes our spaces of community and fellowship feel all the more precious.

Writer and nature-lover Jean Hersey once said of March, "In March winter is holding back and spring is pulling forward. Something holds

and something pulls inside of us too." It is my hope that in this season of Lenten reflection, that same "something" pulls inside of us here at St. James—a pull toward intentional community and the chance to see Christ in our neighbor.

May we continue to create spaces for the common good where we see each other not as "other," but as siblings in Christ. May we work together, honoring and respecting each other in word and deed. And in doing so, may we also devote ourselves to the teaching of Christ, to fellowship, and to the breaking of bread together.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Libby Baker-Mikesell

MID WEEK LENTEN WORSHIP SERVICES

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples.

~ John 13:34-35

These words from Jesus come to us on Maundy Thursday – the night Jesus is denied, betrayed, arrested, and abandoned before going to the cross. *To love one another* is the mark of the Christian – that which shows who Christians are, that which describes their life. This Lent we hear what it means for those in our family of faith at St. James to "love one another."

Message Theme


Lenten

Mid-Week Worship Services

February 25	Tom Uhlig
March 4	Sherri Alms
March 11	Sam Dunlop
March 18	Bob Cook
March 25	Alana Anderson
April 1	Pastoral Dialog

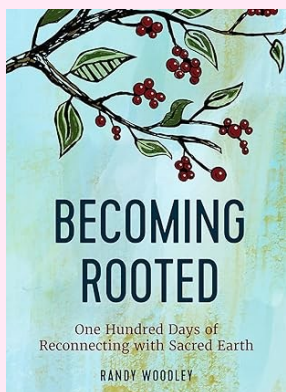
(no dinner; worship at 7pm)

Wednesdays
Dinner at 5:15pm
Unfailing Light
Worship at 6:30pm



ST. JAMES BOOK MARKS

This month's featured library selections include titles for adult and youth readers. Look for these titles in the coming weeks!



“Becoming Rooted” by Randy Woodley

As we make our way through this Lenten season, the church's Creation Care Committee asks us to consider its theme of “Reconnecting With Nature.” Author, activist, and Cherokee descendent Randy Woodley has put together a small but mighty collection called “Becoming Rooted,” which invites a reader to explore 100 days of an “indigenous worldview” of sacred earth. Mr. Woody has divided his volume into ten themed units, each consisting of ten short

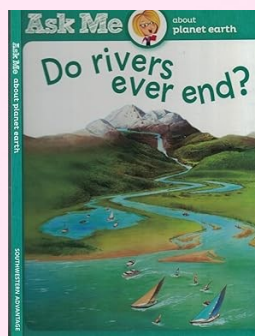
meditations, wise sayings, and suggestions for action. These can be read in any order, a few or many, to help view the world in different, better ways. This new library acquisition will initially be on our book cart to browse or check out. It will eventually be placed in library section 3 (Devotional).

“Do Rivers Ever End?” from Planet Earth

This Ask Me children's book, is packed with dozens of questions your child might bombard you with concerning the natural world.

Questions such as: *Why are rain forests wet?* or, *Can a desert be hot or cold?* Filled with cartoons and colorful, clever illustrations of all kinds, this book appeals to grades 2-5, but will also be appreciated by all ages for its amazing

collection of science trivia. This recent purchase can be found on our book cart or in the St. James library with children's B level books.



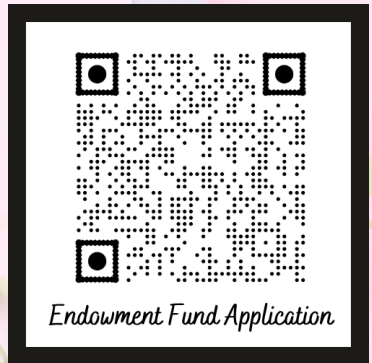
ENDOWMENT FUND GRANT APPLICATION

Catalyst: *a person or thing that precipitates/moves/causes/sends something to happen*

St. James has established a Ministry Catalyst Fund within the Endowment Fund for use by individuals, groups, or committees to “make something happen.” The Endowment Committee invites you to consider applying for a grant from this fund. Do you have an idea for a new outreach within our community? A proposal for a different way to invite people into a current mission or ministry? A dream for something you’ve always thought the church should try? This is your chance to put it into words and make plans. Visions can often be held back by a lack of funding. Together, our congregation made the decision to formulate a way to provide the financial backing that mission planning needs.

The use of the money needs to be within the vision and mission of St. James. Applications will be received quarterly and can be submitted electronically or via hard copy (request a hard copy from the church office). You can scan the QR code to access the application. The first application deadline is April 20, 2026.

Questions? Speak to any of these members of the Endowment Committee: Beth Becker, Lucinda Bringman (Chair), Ernie Kranias, Cara Russo, or Carol Widerman.





YOUNG AT HEART: KEEPING UP WITH THE KIDS

Adam Michael, Director of Youth & Family Ministry

Hey y'all! I just wanted to say thank you to everyone who showed up and balled out for another amazing year making Fastnachts !

We are extremely blessed to have so many kids, parents and grandparents who want to see our youth programs thrive. We are especially emboldened by the many people who have no skin in the game beyond seeing Christ's important work continue, and a desire to see a strong, community-driven church continue long after they are gone.

I feel overwhelming gratitude when I think of the number of people looking to nurture, protect and empower our kids without our "littles" even realizing it. When I reflect back on my childhood, I realize that no matter where I went, I was never without my St. James family. They were present on athletic fields, in classrooms, on school trips, in grocery stores - you name it. If we were ever in danger, they would have been the first to step in and help us find our way home. When you finally wake up to see God's network all around you, it's an incredible sight.

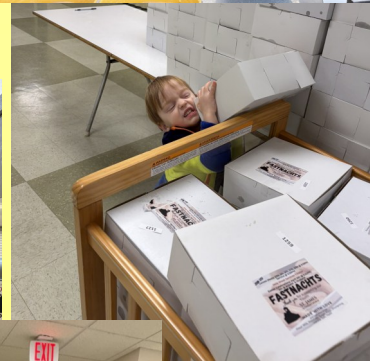
Keep being you, St. James! We love y'all!

Adam Michael
Youth and Family Director
St. James Lutheran Church





Some of Our Fastnacht
Volunteers —
Hard at Work !!



MUSIC NOTES

Jonathan Noel, Minister of Music



The Offertory is the stanza that we sing as gifts of bread, wine, and offerings are presented at the altar as preparations are made for the Holy Meal. During this Lenten season, we are singing the fourth stanza of the familiar hymn by Isaac Watts, “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross.”

***Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were a present far too small;
love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.***

Legend has it that one Sunday afternoon the young Isaac Watts (1674-1748) was complaining about the singing in church. The custom in the Church of England at the time was for psalms to be intoned by a cantor and repeated back by the congregation. This was not done with much heart. His father, who was the pastor, retorted, "I'd like to see you write something better!" Isaac went to his room and several hours later emerged with his first hymn, which was enthusiastically received during the service that same evening. He went on to write more than six hundred hymns and is often called "the father of English hymnody."

“When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” has been paired with several different tunes over the ages. In the United States it is almost always sung to the tune “Hamburg” by 19th century American composer, Lowell Mason. Mason wrote 1600 hymn tunes, was a church choir director, the president of Boston's Handel and Haydn Society, and a leading figure in music education.

Watts based the hymn on Galatians 6:14, “*May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*” Although intended as a communion hymn, I hope you will find the text of the hymn to be a wonderful prompt for reflection and meditation on the meaning of the cross during this Lenten season.

Palm Sunday

FESTIVAL SERVICES

Mar. 28 @ 5:30 p.m.

Mar. 29 @ 8:15 a.m.

& 10:45 a.m.



St. James Lutheran Church
109 York Street | Gettysburg

MARTIN SING IN WORSHIP
LUTHER CHOIR
2nd Sunday & 4th Sunday
@ 8:15AM Worship
Rehearse Morning of
@ 7:55am



ST. JAMES CHOIR
SING EACH SUNDAY
@ 10:45 AM WORSHIP
REHEARSE THURS. @ 7PM

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

1 2ND SUNDAY IN LENT

8:15am Worship
9:30am Fellowship & Sunday School
Creation Care
Recycling Collection
10:45am Worship
5pm MS Youth Group
6:30pm HS Youth Grp

8 3RD SUNDAY IN LENT

8:15am Worship,
Martin Luther Choir
Sings
9:30am Sunday
School
10:45am Worship
5pm MS Youth Group
6:30pm HS Youth Grp

15 4TH SUNDAY IN LENT

8:15am Worship
9:30am Sunday
School, Yth. Ministry
(Rm. 301)
10:45am Worship
5pm MS Youth Group
6:30pm HS Youth Grp

22 5TH SUNDAY IN LENT

8:15am Worship,
Martin Luther Choir
Sings
9:30am Sunday
School
10:45am Worship
5pm MS Youth Group
6:30pm HS Youth Grp

29 PALM SUNDAY

8:15am Worship
9:30am Sunday
School
10:45am Worship
5pm MS Youth Group
6:30pm HS Youth Grp

2

Church Office Closed
9:30am Quilting, Rm. 309
3 pm Book Club, Library
3:20pm Youth Group
Grades 4-5
6:30pm Property, Library
6:30pm Common Ground,
Music Rm

9

Church Office Closed
9:30am Quilting, Rm. 309
1pm Executive, Library
2pm Personnel, Library
3 pm Book Club, Library
3:20pm Youth Group
Grades 4-5

16

Church Office Closed
9:30am Quilting, Rm. 309
3 pm Book Club, Library
3:20pm Youth Group
Grades 4-5

23

Church Office Closed
9:30am Quilting, Rm. 309
3 pm Book Club, Library
3:20pm Youth Group
Grades 4-5
7pm World Outreach,
Zoom

30

Church Office Closed
9:30am Quilting, Rm. 309
3 pm Book Club, Library
3:20pm Youth Grp Grades
4-5

3

1 – 4pm Office Closed
for Staff Meeting
5:30pm ELC Staff
Meeting, Zoom
6pm, Worship & Music,
Zoom
7pm Evangelism
& Fellowship, Library

10

1 – 4pm Office Closed
for Staff Meeting
5:30pm ELC
Governance, Library

17

1 – 4 pm Office Closed
for Staff Meeting
7pm Creation Care
Taskforce, Zoom

24

10am Stephen Ministry
Group, Rm. 300
1 – 4 pm Office Closed
for Staff Meeting
4:30pm Gettysburg
CARES, Library
7pm Rayna's Readers,
Music Rm.

31

1 – 4 pm Office Closed
for Staff Meeting
7pm Stations of The
Cross Holy Week
Worship

4

6:45am
Breakf
9:30am
3:20pm
5:15pm
6:30pm

11

6:45am
Breakf
9:30am
3:20pm
5:15pm
6:30pm

18

6:45am
Breakf
9:30am
11am S
Group
3:20pm
5:15pm
6:30pm
Counci

25

6:45am
Breakf
9:30am
3:20pm
5:15pm
6:30pm

AA: Mon-
AIAnon: I

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
n MS & HS ast n Child Care Chapel n K-3 Youth Group n Lenten Meal n Lenten Worship	5 10am Bible Study, Gathering Area 12pm Library Committee, Library 7pm Choir Practice, Music Room	6	7 5:30pm Worship
n MS & HS ast n Child Care Chapel n K-3 Youth Group n Lenten Meal n Lenten Worship	12 10am Bible Study, Gathering Area 1pm History & Archives, Gathering Area 7pm Choir Practice, Music Room	13 1:30pm Prison Society, Music Room	14 5:30pm Worship
n MS & HS ast n Child Care Chapel Sustainability Small n K-3 Youth Group n Lenten Meal n Lenten Worship , following worship	19 10am Bible Study, Gathering Area 12pm Library Committee, Library 7pm Choir Practice, Music Room	20	21 5:30pm Worship
n MS & HS ast n Child Care Chapel n K-3 Youth Group n Lenten Meal n Lenten Worship	26 10am Bible Study, Gathering Area 7pm Choir Practice, Music Room	27	28 5:30pm Worship

MARCH 2026

-Sat at Noon, Wed at 7:30AM, Fri. at 7:30AM, & Fri at 7PM, Music Room
 Mon at 7PM, Rm 204 Lust Recovery: Wed 6:30PM, Rm 204

- Gettysburg Choral Society: Mon @ 6:30 pm, Music Rm (Worship Space -1st Mon. of the month)
- Troop 79: Tues, 6:30PM, upstairs level
 Cub Scout Pack: Thurs, 7PM dining room

WORSHIP PREVIEWS

FEB. 28TH & MARCH 1ST: 2ND SUNDAY IN LENT

882

During Lent we journey with all those around the world who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil. In today's gospel Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born of water and Spirit. At the font we are given a new birth as children of God. As God made a covenant with Abraham, in baptism God promises to raise us up with Christ to new life. From worship we are sent forth to proclaim God's love for all the world.

Preacher: Pastor Libby Baker-Mikesell

Readings: Genesis 12:1-4a Romans 4:1-5, 13-17
Psalm 121 John 3:1-17

Fellowship, hosted by the Adult Discussion Group and the Creation Care Taskforce

MARCH 7TH & 8TH: 3RD SUNDAY IN LENT

In today's gospel the Samaritan woman asks Jesus for water, an image of our thirst for God. Jesus offers living water, a sign of God's grace flowing from the waters of baptism. The early church used this gospel and those of the next two Sundays to deepen baptismal reflection during the final days of preparation before baptism at Easter. As we journey to the resurrection feast, Christ comes among us in word, bath, and meal—offering us the life-giving water of God's mercy and forgiveness.

Preacher: Pastor Libby Baker-Mikesell

Readings: Exodus 17:1-7 Romans 5:1-11
Psalm 95 John 4:5-42

MARCH 14TH & 15TH: 4TH SUNDAY IN LENT

Baptism is sometimes called enlightenment. The gospel for this Sunday is the story of the man born blind healed by Christ. "I was blind, now I see," declares the man. In baptism God opens our eyes to see the truth of who we are: God's beloved children. As David was anointed king of Israel, in baptism God anoints our head with oil, and calls us to bear witness to the light of Christ in our daily lives.

COUNCIL CORNER, FEBRUARY 18 MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

En Bloc Agenda: Approved


- Approval of Minutes from January 21, 2026
- Approval of Revised Minutes from November 19, 2025
- Acceptance of Treasurer's Report
- Church and ELC Financials: Financials from 2022, 2023 & 2024 were reviewed by a certified public accounting firm.
- Acceptance of New Members— Via affirmation of faith: Kevin Senn; William Horgan; Jim Hawkins; Rachel Hawkins; Jan Renn; Don Schmitz; Matt, Renata and Teddy Provance; John Sanders; Beth Sanders; and Nathan Sanders

Committee Reports:

- **Finance Committee** – A motion to renovate two unused rooms in the ELC was tabled until more information on costs can be gathered.
- **Other Committee Updates:** Katy Clowney will look into where on the St. James website information on the Reconciling in Christ committee information can be presented for increased visibility.

New Business

- **Resolution to establish bank account for Pastor Discretionary Fund Policy 4.70.1** - Pursuant to a council discussion at the November 2025 meeting, a bank account will be opened at ACNB for use by the two pastors and funded by Endowment monies (currently \$2,469.00).
- **C.A.R.E.S. Update** -the Council discussed ongoing concerns regarding the cold-weather shelter.
- **Real Estate Tax Assessment Update**- an appeal was filed Feb. 6, 2026, regarding a tax assessment by the Borough following St. James' decision to be the permanent cold-weather shelter provider; a hearing will be scheduled for a date in October 2026, and the church will not pay any assessment until a decision can be reached.
- **Youth and Community Visioning Conversation**- According to Pastor Andrew, some exciting things are in the works regarding our youth groups and the community at large. Discussions will continue.

- 
- **Open call for other new business** -Council members will help provide soup and bread for the March 18 Lenten dinner, prior to worship services.

Good for Church/Good for God/Good for Council

- The Valentine's Day Benefit Concert in the worship space was wonderful, and St. James is blessed with so much talent! The free will offering benefitted the Early Learning Center.
- Thanks to Mark Withrow for his Feb. 14 quarterly report to the congregation at all three services.
- Thanks to the Smith family and of all the volunteers who made this year's Fastnacht sale a huge success; Over 1,900 dozen were sold, with proceeds funding youth workcamp for the summer of 2026.
- Kudos to Adam Noel, who organized the stellar choir that performed at the Ash Wednesday service. Adam also pulled together a volunteer group from Gettysburg College, who helped keep the Fastnacht operations going, in its last few hours.
- There is discussion about the Congregational Covenant that was introduced recently.
- Thanks in advance for all the work the pastors and church staff will be doing during the very-busy Lenten season.
- Pastor Libby and Dr. Gil Waldkoenig are teaching a class, "World Church Administration," at ULS.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 18 following Lenten worship

Dietrich Bonhoeffer Lenten Series

As people of faith, we ask ourselves deep questions about what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. Who are we called to be within the space where our civic life and faith intersect? Dietrich Bonhoeffer's writings invite us into this struggle as we determine our next best step in a broken and imperfect world. In this series we experience Bonhoeffer's call to go deeply into the question of who Christ is for us as we seek to love our neighbors. Based on a rich curriculum offered to congregations from LAMPa (Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania) and written by Dr. Lori Brandt Hale of Augsburg University and the President of the International Bonhoeffer Society, this study will cover 4 modules -

Lesson 1: *Dietrich Bonhoeffer's life*, Lesson 2: *It's About the Neighbor*, Lesson 3: *Faith is Worldly*, and Lesson 4: *Taking a Stand*.

Consider joining us for this BROWN BAG LUNCH SERIES as we allow Bonhoeffer's words to encourage a deepening of our own journey of discipleship and faithfulness. Please contact Amy Duncan (duncan744@verizon.net), group facilitator and St. James member, with any questions you might have about this series.



Lenten Lunch & Learn

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Curriculum provided by LAMPa

**Discussion facilitated by
Amy Duncan**

March 1, 8, 15 and 22

12:15 - 1:30 p.m.

St. James Library

Please bring a packed lunch

Meet Todd –St. James’ New Building Superintendent

We are delighted to welcome Todd Izydorski to the St. James Church family! Joining us as our new Building Superintendent, Todd brings a wealth of experience to his new role at St. James. Todd officially joined the staff at St. James in November of 2025 (part time initially), and he then became the full time Building Superintendent in January 2026, after Tom Bender retired. Todd is a member at St. James, and shares his musical talents at services on occasion. Todd is responsible for many of the “behind the scenes tasks” that keep things at St. James running smoothly, and for maintaining our buildings. Whether you see Todd working throughout the church or following a weekend service, please take a moment to say hello and offer a warm St. James welcome, if you haven’t already had the chance to become acquainted.

Born and raised in Arizona, Todd recently retired from the Department of Defense after 27 years of service. He enjoys playing music with his best friend Gretchen in the band *The Sunflowers*, and spending time with his border collie puppy, Smooch.





Holy Week

Worship 7 p.m. each evening

O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?

TUES Mar. 31 - Stations of the Cross
WED April 1 - Pastoral Dialog
THU April 2 - Maundy Thursday
FRI April 3 - Good Friday



PARISH RECORDS

50+ Wedding Anniversaries

March 31 Eugene & Nancy Riffle 69 years

New Members—Received February 15

- Valentina and Leo Cucuzza
- Kevin Senn and William Horgan
- Jim and Rachel Hawkins
- Jan Renn and Don Schmitz
- Matt, Renata, and Teddy Provance
- John, Beth, and Nathan Sanders





VISITING ST. JAMES OR CALLING (717-334-2012)

Office Hours:

Monday—office closed

Tuesday—Friday, 9:00 a.m.—3:30 p.m.

Wednesdays until 5:30 pm

201 Katy Clowney

Church Administrator

kclowney@StJamesGettysburg.org

202 Julie Albert

Administrative Coordinator

jalbert@StJamesGettysburg.org

203 Adam Michael, off on Fridays

Director of Youth & Family Ministry

youth@StJamesGettysburg.org

205 Pr. Libby Baker-Mikesell, off on Fridays

Associate Pastor

lbakermikesell@StJamesGettysburg.org

206 Pr. Andrew R. Geib, off on Fridays

Lead Pastor

ageib@StJamesGettysburg.org

207 Jonathan Noel, off on Fridays

Minister of Music

jnoel@StJamesGettysburg.org

215 Todd Izydorski, off on Fridays

Building Superintendent

sexton@StJamesGettysburg.org





St. James

Lutheran Church, ELCA

P.O. Box 4596

Gettysburg, PA 17325-4596

PLACE
POSTAGE
HERE

LABEL