

Vol. 71, No. 6

June 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](http://StJamesGettysburg.org)

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



## A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR LIBBY

The Apostle Paul opens his second letter to the Corinthians with a profound observation on the nature of suffering: “*The Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God*” (2 Corinthians 1:3-4). Paul was writing in the wake of a crisis in Asia so severe that he “*despaired of life itself.*” He knew what it felt like to be pushed beyond his ability to endure.

The last few months at St. James have felt similarly heavy. As of this article, we have lost nine individuals of our church family in just three weeks. Some of these saints were woven into the very fabric of St. James and the greater Gettysburg community for decades, leaving marks on our town and our hearts that will last for generations. These have been trying months—spiritually and emotionally—for the families in mourning, and for your pastors.

Death is a part of life I have, perhaps out of necessity, grown comfortable with. Growing up on a farm, the cycle of life and death is a daily reality, a natural rhythm of our human journey. As a child of older parents and grandparents, I spent much of my youth in nursing homes, visiting grandparents and their friends. I lost my aunt to esophageal cancer when I was only eight, and both of my maternal grandparents followed shortly after.

Because of these early experiences, I have learned to stand in that thin space where life meets its end. Yet, even with that lifelong familiarity, the sheer volume of loss we have experienced lately is a heavy weight. It is a privilege to be with people as they are in thin, holy spaces, crossing from this world to the next. I find comfort in giving comfort to those crossing over, through holding hands and prayers of commendation. As a new pastor, the balance between care for others and care of self is a difficult one, and one that while I will grow to manage, remains a challenge. Following such moments, I often find myself emotionally and physically drained, and needing sources of comfort myself.

When his second letter to Corinth was written, Paul's relationship with the Corinthians was tense. They had questioned his authority and were unimpressed by his physical weakness and many trials. By opening his letter with "*God of all comfort,*" Paul re-frames his suffering. He argues that his weaknesses are not a sign of God's abandonment, as the Corinthians suggested, but rather the very place where God's power and comfort are most visible.

The apostle Paul reminds those in Corinth that we should fall back on a *Father of Compassion and a God of all Comfort*, so we, in turn, can comfort others in their distress. The word for "comfort" here, (*paraklesis*) is translated to mean "to call alongside." Paul reminds us that God is a being we can call on to come alongside our suffering, to give us strength as we care for others.

As we continue to navigate this season of grief at St. James, let us remember that we are not called to carry this weight in isolation. Just as God is '*called alongside*' us in our deepest exhaustion, we are called alongside one another. Whether it is through a prayer, a shared meal, or simply sitting in silence with a grieving neighbor, we do so beside our Divine Comforter. As we do so, in our weakness and in our mourning, may we find that we are never abandoned, but rather held together by the God who is called alongside us.

With Love,  
Pastor Libby

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St. James has a ministry of people who create prayer shawls to give to family members at funerals. We are currently in great need of prayer shawls to give to grieving families. Prayer shawls can be knitted or crocheted. If you are interested in helping with this ministry, please contact the church office. We have a closet full of yarn that is available to use for the shawls.

Calling All  
Knitters !!



We are in need of  
Prayer Shawls !

## ST. JAMES BOOK MARKS

It's once again time for summer reading!! Find a cool, shady spot, or lounge in the sun, and enjoy one of these recent acquisitions from the St. James' book cart. Keep your mind active while your body relaxes.

### ***“Black Fatigue” by Mary-Frances Winters***

In her recent current affairs book “Black Fatigue,” author Mary-Frances Winters sums up her book’s premise with the following seven word subtitle: *“How Racism Erodes the Mind, Body and Spirit.”*

Every aspect of daily life in a nonwhite household is affected by living in a society in which racism becomes a decider and influencer. Ms. Winters lays out ways to combat this. She also investigates how non-black citizens can work against the seeming status quo. Ms. Winters is the founder and president of the Winters Group, Inc., a diversity, equity and inclusion consulting firm. This recent library purchase will be available on the book cart soon.

### ***“Who You Were Made to Be” by Joanna Gaines***

This gently rhymed and softly illustrated commentary on diversity, is a recent addition to our pre-school collection.

Author Joanna Gaines presents a group of children of varied races and genders tasked with the joyful project of designing individual hot air balloons. Each child approaches his/her balloon’s appearance very differently based upon preferences and background experiences. Our author emphasizes that each creation, although different, represents a life being the best it can be. In addition, Ms. Gaines adds that despite our differences, “All of us can be kind, compassionate, and gracious...helpful, considerate, and courageous.” Look for this fun and inspiring book on our book cart outside the library.

Thank THANK THANK  
you! you you

SUNDAY SCHOOL  
APPRECIATION

JUNE 7, 2026

WE LOVE OUR TEACHERS!

THANK THANK thank

ST. JAMES SHARES ALBS

For 40 years, Sue Currens has been the “mother” of the choir albs, keeping track, mending, repairing, cleaning (or directing others how to clean their alb), and replacing as needed. Since the Covid -19 outbreak in 2020, the choir has not been wearing albs during worship and has determined that they do not expect to use them in the future. Many albs were old, worn, and no longer useable. Sue carefully went through them, and determined which ones could still be used, and which could be discarded. Our Assisting Ministers continue to wear albs for worship, and a number will be used for that purpose.

Via the Lower Susquehanna Synod’s electronic newsletter, St. James offered to share albs with other congregations. Three congregations contacted us and were able to find albs in sizes that will meet their needs. Ten albs went to St. John’s Lutheran Church (Fairfield, PA), *continued on p. 15*



## YOUNG AT HEART: KEEPING UP WITH THE KIDS

Adam Michael, Director of Youth & Family Ministry

Our St. James summer is filling up fast! It won't be long before kids are filling the pews for Snowball Mountain Challenge-themed Vacation Bible School, and headed off to Camp Nawakwa for confirmation camp and other summer faith exploration.

If you're looking for things for kids and their families to do around here, read about some of the events we have in store and check out the QR code below!

### **Family, Faith and Fun Nights, Summer**

**Thursday evenings @ 6pm, beginning 5/28:** We

are rebranding board game night so we can expand on the fun! This summer, get ready for water games, crafts, video game night, hide and seek in the church, and of course plenty of chances to test your wits and luck with board games. Pizza served every night! Email

[youth@stjamesgettysburg.org](mailto:youth@stjamesgettysburg.org) or text or call

Adam, 717-357-0441, to let us know if you're coming each week!



**St. James Summer Kickoff, June 14 @ 2 pm:** Families are invited to help start our summer off with a bang! Or a bounce, at least. We'll be at the Kehr Farm, 333 Fish and Game Road, Littlestown, for a barbeque hosted by the family of Matt and Heather Kehr. Bring a lawn chair and a side to share! We'll play lawn games and Mr. Adam will bring his wiffle ball equipment!

**Paint Ball, Wednesday June 24, time TBD:** All kids entering, currently in, or leaving middle or high school are welcome to join us for a paintball event at Wanna Play Paintball in Dillsburg. Kids will learn to stay tactical and work as a team while trying to eliminate their buddies! Bring long-sleeve clothing and a water bottle. The church will provide snacks and rental equipment.

**July and August events:** Check out our summer schedule on the youth calendar or sign up for middle school and high school events like a



ropes course, rock climbing, a trip to Washington DC, a Cunningham Falls hike and more! Use the QR code for signup.

Catch a glimpse of some of our spring youth activities below:



## VBS @ ST. JAMES

JUNE 8-12, 9 AM - 11:45 AM



SIGN UP HERE



SIGN UP FOR YOUTH



SIGN UP  
TO VOLUNTEER

## MUSIC NOTES

Jonathan Noel, Minister of Music



I do not have a green thumb, but I do my best to keep the trees, bushes, and plants on our property healthy and vibrant. Fortunately, my wife and I have people in our lives who can advise us on plant care, and we try to follow their advice. Last season I learned about the importance of pruning forsythia to encourage new growth and to thin out the parts that had become thick, tangled, and unsightly. I pruned them. At first, I was afraid to cut away branches of these beautiful plants. It took courage and trust to believe that the result would be better, healthier plants. This spring, they were indeed vibrant and beautiful.

There is an entire room at St. James filled with choir music. There are thousands of titles, the result of decades of acquiring new anthems and filing them away. When that room filled up years ago, additional filing cabinets were placed into various alcoves and closets to hold the overflow. This unwieldy assortment of music is akin to an overgrown garden. I decided that it is time to do some much-needed pruning to make way for future growth.

I am going through each piece of music one by one, weeding out those that have outlived their usefulness and reorganizing the useful ones into a more user-friendly collection. Much of this music goes back to a time before my predecessor, and even long before the fire of 1969. There are a lot of factors to consider, and the task is not easy. Like pruning, it can be scary and it takes some courage and trust. But I believe the result will be a useful collection of proven titles with adequate space for new music by authors and composers living and working today who have been inspired by the Spirit to speak to our own time.

# ENDOWMENT FUND UPDATES

The Endowment committee has updated how our congregation fund is handled within the new policy adopted by the congregation in November 2025.

## **Funds as of the end of the first quarter 2026:**

**Retained Worship and Music subaccount:** \$5,000 for organ repair and maintenance

**Retained Youth subaccount:** \$66,360 (based on an application received for ongoing determination of youth facility needs)

**Current subaccount amounts:** Ministry Catalyst Fund: \$20,138, Mission: \$21,621 (Subsequently that committee has awarded \$18,000 to outside groups, based on requests/recommendations made by congregation members), and Property: \$21,067. The fund total is \$1,455,484.

Pastor's Discretionary Fund- will receive 5% of annual dividends and specific amounts and use reported to the Executive Committee.

An application was received from a congregation member on behalf of Camp Nawakwa for \$5,000 to purchase of a golf cart for use by camp maintenance. The Endowment committee felt strongly that this request should have been more appropriately requested from the Mission Fund, as that money is used for needs beyond St. James.

There was extensive discussion on whether the request met the definition of the Ministry Catalyst Fund, which is that the fund's accumulated dividends are intended for projects that provide resources and support that align with the St. James Mission, Vision, and strategy. The committee also expressed concern that the Ministry Catalyst Fund may begin to be seen as a community source of grant money, as opposed to providing resources for new ministry or mission programs within St. James. By a narrow vote, the committee agreed to provide Nawakwa with the money as a one time grant, for the purpose of purchasing a golf cart.

*Continued on page 16*

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednes

**1**  
Church Office Closed  
6:30pm Property  
Committee, Library

**2**  
1 – 4 pm Church  
Office Closed  
5:30pm ELC Staff  
Meeting, Zoom  
7pm Evangelism &  
Fellowship, Library

**3**

# JUNE 2026

**7**  
**8:15am** Worship  
**9:30am** Sunday  
School Teacher  
Appreciation &  
Fellowship  
**Creation Care**  
**Recycling Collection**  
**10:45am** Worship

**8**  
Church Office Closed  
1pm Executive,  
Library  
2pm Personnel,  
Library  
6:30 pm Common  
Ground

**9**  
1-4pm Church Office  
Closed  
5:30pm ELC  
Governance, Library

**10**

**14**  
**8:15am** Worship,  
Martin Luther Choir  
Sings  
**9:30 am** Adult  
Sunday School  
**10:45am** Worship

**15**  
Church Office Closed

**16**  
1-4pm Church Office  
Closed  
7pm Creation Care  
Taskforce, Zoom  
7pm Social Ministry,  
Library

**17**  
11am Sustain  
Small Group  
6:30pm Coun  
Library

**21**  
**8:15am** Worship  
**9:30 am** Adult  
Sunday School  
**10:45am** Worship

**22**  
Church Office Closed  
7pm World Outreach

**23**  
10am Stephen  
Ministry Group  
1-4pm Church Office  
Closed  
4:30pm Gettysburg  
CARES, Library  
7pm Rayna's  
Readers, Music Rm.

**24**

**28**  
**8:15am** Worship,  
Martin Luther Choir  
Sings  
**9:30 am** Adult  
Sunday School  
**10:45am** Worship

**29**  
Church Office Closed

**30**  
1-4 pm Church  
Office Closed

VBS @ ST. JAM

AA: Mon-Sa  
AIAnon: Mo  
Rainbow Ro  
Rainbow Ro  
Rainbow Ro

Monday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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**4**  
 10am Bible Study,  
 Gathering Area  
 12pm Library  
 Committee, Library

**5**

**6**  
**5:30pm** Worship  
 Creation Care Recycling Collection

**SYNOD ASSEMBLY, JUNE 5-6**

**11**  
 10am Bible Study,  
 Gathering Area  
 1pm History &  
 Archives, Gathering  
 Area

**12**  
 1:30pm Prison  
 Society, Music Room

**13**  
**5:30pm** Worship

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8-12**

**18**  
 10am Bible Study,  
 Gathering Area  
 12pm Library  
 Committee, Library

**19**

**20**  
**5:30pm** Worship

**25**  
 10am Bible Study,  
 Gathering Area

**26**

**27**  
**5:30pm** Worship

- Troop 79: Tues, 6:30PM, upstairs level  
 Cub Scout Pack: Thurs, 7PM dining room

at Noon, Wed at 7:30AM, Fri. at 7:30AM, & Fri at 7PM, Music Room  
 on at 7PM, Rm .204      Lust Recovery: Wed 6:30PM, Rm. 204  
 use Silver Triangle Group—2nd and 4th Tues. @ 1 pm, Rm. 303  
 use All Identities Group—3rd Tuesday @5 pm, Rm. 303  
 use Teen Group - 2nd & 4th Sunday at 1pm, Rm. 303

# COUNCIL CORNER, MAY 20 MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

## En Bloc Agenda: Approved

- Approval of Minutes from April 15, 2026
- Acceptance of Treasurer's Report, Church Financials & ELC Financials
- Acceptance of New Members via baptism – Simone Marie Sumser (May 10, 2026), Chase and Alexis Drechsler (May 24, 2026).

## Committee Reports:

- **Endowment Fund Committee:** Youth funding will be carried forward (\$66,350) but will not accrue dividends. The committee also was asked to approve \$5,000 for a golf cart for Camp Nawakwa.
- **Braband Organ Scholarship Program Policy:** \$29,200 was approved for continuing education.
- Other Committee Updates are available in SharePoint.

## Unfinished Business:

- **Youth and Community Visioning Update:** Discussions continue. A search for a new architect has begun. A "Minute for Mission" will be presented at a future church service, with a Q&A following during the Sunday School hour.
- **CARES Update:** The board continues to plan for the 2026-2027 year, including new office space for the CARES staff.

## New Business

- **Council Election Results:** Debra Baker, Kristine Scott, Mark Withrow and Denise Wood were (re)elected to Council. Gabbi Scavitto will serve a second term as youth representative.
- **Council Officers** – President, Vice-President and Secretary will be elected at the June meeting.
- **PRIDE Update:** St. James will participate in the Pride Walk May 29, and the RIC Committee will sponsor the St. James booth at the Rec Park on May 30. A poster of the cross will be available at the booth, upon which people can affix their thumbprints as a sign of recognition.



## **Good for Church/Good for God/Good for Council**

- We thank the pastors for their dedication to pastoral care. And we thank Pastor Libby for all her work while Pastor Andrew is in Egypt.
- We currently are under budget, and weekly offerings are on the increase.
- VBS is coming up soon, and more volunteers would be appreciated.

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 @ 6:30 PM in the Church Library**

## WORSHIP PREVIEWS

### JUNE 6TH & 7TH: 2ND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST 882

Though Jesus was a devout Jew who practiced his faith, he was criticized for eating with tax collectors and sinners—the religiously nonobservant. Jesus criticizes the self-righteous and reminds us that mercy is to be at the heart of our religious practices. God continues to be made known in those on the margins of society, like Matthew the tax collector and the hemorrhaging woman. As we gather each Lord's day we receive the healing that makes us well and sends us forth to be signs of God's mercy for the world.

**Preacher:** Pastor Andrew Geib

**Readings:** Hosea 5:15–6:6      Romans 4:13–25  
Psalm 50:7–15      Matthew 9:9–13, 18–26

**Fellowship, hosted by the Sunday School Appreciation and Worship and Music Committees**

### JUNE 13TH & 14TH: 3RD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Moses tells the Israelites that they are called to be a priestly kingdom and a holy people. Jesus sends out the disciples as laborers into the harvest. In baptism we too are anointed for ministry, sharing God's compassion with our needy world. From the Lord's table we go forth to proclaim the good news, to heal the sick, and to share our bread with the hungry.

**Preacher:** Pastor Libby Baker-Mikesell

**Readings:** Exodus 19:2–8a      Romans 5:1–8  
Psalm 100      Matthew 9:35—10:8 [9–23]

## JUNE 20TH & 21ST: 4TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST 883

God does not promise that the path of the disciple will be easy. Jeremiah feels the pain of rejection from those who do not want to hear what he has to say. Jesus declares that his words may bring stark division. Even so, we need not be afraid for God accounts for each hair on our heads. Though we may experience rejection, frustration, division, and death, God's grace and love make us a new creation each day. Marked with the cross and filled with holy food, we are sent from worship to witness to Christ in the world.

**Preacher:** Bishop Stephen Herr

**Readings:** Jeremiah 20:7-13      Romans 6:1b-11  
Psalm 69:7-10 [11-15] 16-18      Matthew 10:24-39

## JUNE 27TH & 28TH: 5TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

The welcome of baptism is for all God's children. This baptismal gift sets us free from the power of sin and death. In today's gospel, Christ promises that the disciple who gives a cup of cold water to the little ones serves Christ himself. From worship we are sent on our baptismal mission: to serve the little ones of this world and to be a sign of God's merciful welcome.

**Preacher:** Pastor Libby Baker-Mikesell

**Readings:** Jeremiah 28:5-9      Romans 6:12-23  
Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18      Matthew 10:40-42

## BLESSING OF THE QUILTS

Many thanks to all of the St. James Piecemakers who were able to collectively create 50 quilts over the fall and winter seasons! The quilts were blessed on Mother's Day-May 10, 2026. In addition, thank you to all of the folks who helped fold and box the 50 quilts in May. The quilts have traveled to Mechanicsburg, and will be distributed to those in need by Lutheran World Relief. Each person who helped with this effort is greatly appreciated.



## ALBS ( CONTINUED FROM P. 4 )

14 went to Trinity Lutheran Church (Taneytown, MD), and 6 went to Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church (Ephrata, PA).

In addition, members of the Schola Cantorum of Music Gettysburg were offered albs as well. This choir annually sings solemn vespers on the first Sunday of Advent. Members wear their own albs and several usually have to borrow one from their own church or the seminary. Three singers, including a member of St, James, were glad to receive an alb. In total, 33 albs will continue to be used! Thank you, St. James, for sharing!

**TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALLGAME...**  
**CATCH A GAME THIS SUMMER IF YOU CAN**



**ST. JAMES  
SOFTBALL**

ALL GAMES  
START AT 6:30

TUESDAY 05/19/26	VS BARLOW	@ FIRST BAPTIST
TUESDAY 05/26/26	VS FELLOWSHIP BAPTIST	@ FIRST BAPTIST
MONDAY 06/01/26	VS CALVARY COMMUNITY	@ FIRST BAPTIST
MONDAY 06/8/26	VS FREEDOM VALLEY	@ FREEDOM VALLEY
WEDNESDAY 06/17/26	VS 4SQUARE	@ FIRST BAPTIST
WEDNESDAY 06/24/26	VS ST. FRANCIS	@ FIRST BAPTIST
THURSDAY 07/02/26	VS FIRST BAPTIST	@ FIRST BAPTIST
MONDAY 07/06/26	VS EVANGELICAL HOLINESS	@ FIRST BAPTIST
TUESDAY 07/14/26	VS KEYMAR	@ FIRST BAPTIST
MONDAY 07/20/26	VS BARLOW	@ FIRST BAPTIST
WEDNESDAY 07/29/26	VS FELLOWSHIP BAPTIST	@ FIRST BAPTIST

**ENDOWMENT FUND ( CONTINUED FROM P. 8 )**

The committee wishes to help our congregation understand that suggestions for funds to outside groups should be directed to the Mission Fund committee, who traditionally make awards once a year. Generally, awards to the same organization are not repeated. Grant applications for funds from the Ministry Catalyst Fund are accepted quarterly, as noted on the application which is found on the St. James website.

# PARISH RECORDS

## 50+ Wedding Anniversaries

June 5	Fritz & Faith Foltz	66 years
June 7	Dick & Ruth Jean Unger	74 years
June 7	Jeff & Debbie Snyder	51 years
June 8	Tom & Barbara Vossler	58 years
June 14	Sam & Lyn Isenberger	51 years
June 15	Tom & Deborah Altemose	52 years
June 16	Jim & Rachel Hawkins	53 years
June 16	Wayne & Sue Hill	53 years
June 17	Richard & Susan Henry	59 years
June 20	Daniel & Mary Folkemer	56 years
June 27	Jim & Susan Roach	56 years
June 28	Dick & Greta Englund	68 years
June 28	Carl & Debby Mintz	51 years
June 29	Ed & Doris Groft	63 years

## Deaths

March 25	Louise Clare
April 18	Gloria Burr
May 3	Susan Krick-Everhart
May 15	Treva Shank

## Baptisms

May 10	Simone Sumser
May 24	Chase and Alexis Drechsler



# Relay For Life

## Fundraiser

Friday June 19 (All Day)

Gettysburg Hoss's

\*Grab a ticket from the bulletin board at St. James, a portion of your bill will benefit Relay for Life



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*

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**202 Julie Albert**

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**203 Adam Michael, off on Fridays**

*Director of Youth & Family Ministry*

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*Associate Pastor*

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**206 Pr. Andrew R. Geib, off on Fridays**

*Lead Pastor*

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**207 Jonathan Noel, off on Fridays**

*Minister of Music*

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**215 Todd Izydorski, off on Fridays**

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*St. James*

Lutheran Church, ELCA

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PLACE  
POSTAGE  
HERE

LABEL