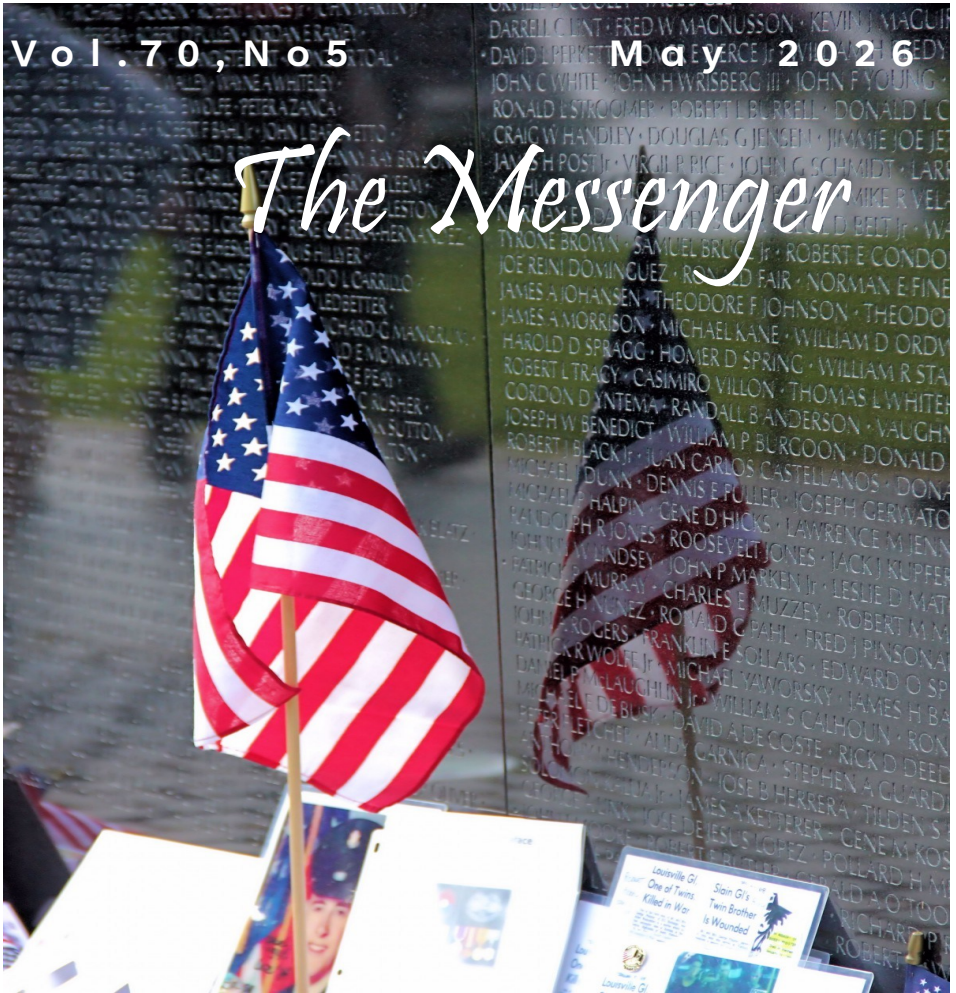


Vol. 70, No 5

May 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 ANDREW

[Jesus said to the disciples:] “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. I am the way and the truth and the life... Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do...”

-John 14

The rabbis have a good bit to say about *truth*. Ancient Midrash views *truth* – *emet* in the Hebrew – as a divine foundational attribute that must be combined with mercy and humility, that is involved both in the formation of a person’s character and in the restoration of the world. A belief so significant, the sages understand *truth* as “*the seal of God*” – the final letters of the three words that conclude the account of creation in Genesis, *bara Elohim la'asot* (“God created to do”) spelling *emet* (“truth”). That God created creation (humanity included), quite literally, “to do” truth.



For much of my life, the church universal has been in a state of decline. Statistics show that the ELCA (that would be us) has been losing members since its formation back in 1988. Though, this isn’t just a Lutheran problem. In general, people across the United States have become increasingly less interested in things of religion over the past 50+ years.

I suspect there are a variety of reasons for this decline: clergy scandals, a loss in institutional trust, moral disagreements, a rise in volatile political discourse, etc. At the heart of it all – people who claim to follow Jesus, not actually following Jesus. Those who Jesus poignantly deems *hypocrites* (*hupokritēs*) – *stage actors, pretenders, ones who wear a mask, dissemblers... those who say*

one thing but do another... As author John Fugelsang describes in his book *Separation of Church and Hate* (our current Thursday morning Bible study): *“It’s not the miracles driving people away from religion, it’s the Christians who don’t live by Jesus’ words about how we’re supposed to treat each other... You don’t get to hide behind a book you don’t truly follow to hurt a people Jesus commands you to love.”*

As we gather together for worship on the first weekend of the month, we hear Jesus remind his disciples that *He is the way the truth and the life*, that *the one who believes in Him will also do the works that he does*. In other words, being a disciple isn’t simply believing in Jesus, but living as Jesus lived – teaching about God’s boundless sacrificial love and embodying it, practicing forgiveness and humility, caring for the sick and those who suffer, giving of what we have to those in need, welcoming those that the world excludes, giving our lives for the lives of others.

After decades of church decline, recent research points towards a possible religious resurgence in America. That church attendance is “ticking up” across traditions – especially in those that are authentically living into who Jesus calls them to be, those who “lift up the lowly and reach the poor in spirit.” Here at St. James, we have heard this again and again from those new members we have gained over the past year. That what attracted them to St. James is our authentic witness.

As we move through this Easter season, let us be a people created to do *truth*, in all things and all times pointing to the one who is the *truth*, doing all we can to do the works that he did.

~Pastor Andrew Geib



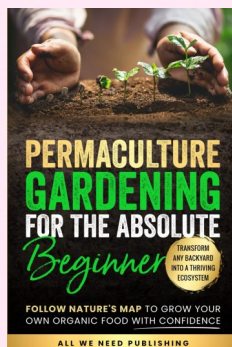
ST. JAMES BOOK MARKS

As spring approaches and temperatures warm, this month's featured titles focus on outdoor practices, and the ocean and beach.

“Permaculture Gardening for the Absolute Beginner”

by Josie Beckham

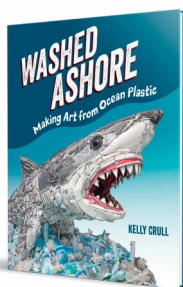
Ask St. James member Debby Luquette about the subject of permaculture and watch her grin as she shares her enthusiasm for this ancient, natural way to garden. Using many components ready to hand, permaculture allows each gardener to develop his or her own available space with a system that allows nature to take care of itself while able to create flourishing organic produce.



St. James Creation Care Task Force has recently added this title to help encourage us to try these ecological gardening tips and techniques in this current growing season. This book is now available for check out from the library book cart.

“Washed Ashore” by artist and photographer Kelly Crull

This is certainly one of the most stunning picture books I have ever seen. Written for ages 6-10, Ms. Crull presents fourteen of her colorful sea creature sculptures, created from beach sea trash, while also introducing us to the habits and character of each one.



This fantastic little book also includes trash pick-up games, collection tips, and hints on making an ocean trash artwork (a perfect beach vacation souvenir). Dazzle your senses while increasing plastic pollution awareness with “Washed Ashore,” currently on the library book cart.

**VBS
2026**

**JUNE
8-12**

ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH
109 YORK STREET
GETTYSBURG, PA
9AM - 11:45AM



Christ
Evangelical Lutheran
Church



St. James
Lutheran
Church

VBS 2026

**VBS
2026**

SIGN UP HERE



SIGN UP FOR YOUTH



SIGN UP
TO VOLUNTEER

GET READY

to **MOVE**

VBS is June 8 - 12





YOUNG AT HEART: KEEPING UP WITH THE KIDS

Adam Michael, Director of Youth & Family Ministry

When a sea turtle sees a plastic shopping bag floating through the ocean, from below the surface it can appear to be a jellyfish, part of a nutritious diet.

But plastic can cause blockages in the intestines and cause internal bleeding within the gentle sea dweller.

St. James member and 11th grade student Isabella DiCamppli wanted others to be able to envision what the turtle sees while crafting a project made entirely of recycled materials for her 3D art class.

Using several dozen plastic bags, an old coat hanger, and yarn scraps, DiCamppli created a life-sized jellyfish entirely from recycled material. In April, she took second place in the Recycled Art contest at the Adams County Arts Council.

“Plastic bags have always made me sad. We use reusable bags at my house, and unless we go to a place where I have so much I can’t hold it in my arms, I will not take a plastic bag,” DiCamppli said expressing her frustration of how carelessly people sometimes discard plastic.

“If you ever drive by the Aldi and Giant, there are trees and bushes covered in plastic bags because people don’t care,” she said. “It gets into the ocean and there are now microplastics in everything we eat and drink.”

DiCamppli spent more than a week shredding plastic bags, using the strands to make plastic yarn. The plastic yarn is then chained together when she is working her crochet magic to create her project. According to DiCamppli, plastic thread is more resistant than yarn, which created more headaches and wrist pain than she had assumed. “Thicker yarn is more aggressive on people’s wrists,” she said. “But if you made it too thin, it would rip immediately.”

DiCamppli was proud that the finished project prevented several dozen bags from making their way to a landfill. Just one row of knots in the widest section of the jellyfish required nine bags to complete.



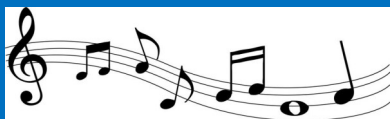
DiCampli said she sometimes struggles with confidence that her art will be appreciated by others. “It’s wonderful that my art is being seen and people actually like it,” she said. “All the wrist pain that I have is worth it.”

Artwork by other classmates included cardboard sculptures, a plastic bottle fish, and a corset made out of aluminum cans. “It really helped you think about how many things you can use to make into art,” DiCampli said.



MUSIC NOTES

Jonathan Noel, Minister of Music



You may have noticed over the past several weeks that I have played music by JS Bach as postludes to worship. Many of you have expressed how much you enjoyed hearing these pieces. Others may have wondered, “Why is Jonathan playing Bach every week?” There is a set of Eight Short Preludes and Fugues formerly attributed to Bach that are excellent teaching pieces for students. I studied these as a student, I used them with my own students, and when my son recently signed up for organ lessons at college, his teacher gave him a copy of them. It had been some time since I had visited these pieces, and I thought that they might thematically tie together the Sundays in Lent. Since the tradition at St. James is for the congregation to sit for postludes, I try to keep them short. So, during the season of Lent, I played these preludes in order, leaving out the fugues. Now in the Easter Season, I am working my way through the fugues as well.

The set is commonly called the “Eight Short Preludes and Fugues,” or the “Eight Little Preludes and Fugues” to distinguish them from the often much-longer, large-scale preludes and fugues of Bach. The authorship has long been in question and scholars have considered other composers as the true author of these pieces such as Bach’s student Johann Ludwig Krebs, or one of Bach’s own sons. More recently the pre-eminent Bach scholar Peter Williams concluded that the most likely composer is Johann Caspar Ferdinand Fischer of Bohemia.

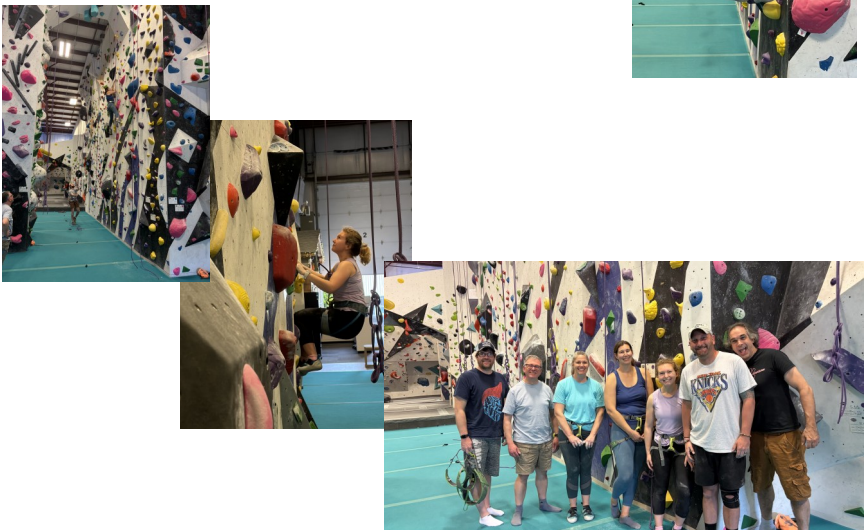
No matter who wrote them, they are excellent for self-study and for teaching, and concise enough to make them practical to use in worship. Each movement carries with it an emotional impact that adds an appropriate punctuation mark to the end of each liturgy. I hope you have enjoyed hearing the Eight Short Preludes and Fugues as much as I have enjoyed playing them.

2026 STAFF RETREAT

After a busy Lenten season and Holy week, the St. James' staff participated in a day long retreat on Tuesday, April 14. The day included rock climbing at Warehouse ROCKS in Hanover, PA and lunch at The Atland House in Abbottstown. Staff (literally) climbed to new heights, moved a little out of their comfort zone, and encouraged each other.



Thank you St. James for providing a fun day for staff to bond and connect, outside of the office!



Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

W

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

3 5th SUN. OF EASTER

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

10 6th SUN. OF EASTER

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

17 7th SUN. OF EASTER

8:15am Worship
9:30am Sunday School
Council Elections
10:45am Worship
5pm MS Youth Group
6:30pm HS Yth. Group

24 PENTECOST

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

31 HOLY TRINITY

8:15am Worship
10:45am Worship
5pm MS Youth Group
6:30pm HS Youth Group

4

Church Office Closed
9:30am Quilting, Rm. 309
3:20pm Yth. Grp. Gr. 4-5
5:30pm Endowment Fund,
Zoom
6:30pm Property Committee,
Library
6:30pm, Common Ground,
Music Room

11

Church Office Closed
9:30am Quilting, Rm. 309
1pm Executive
2pm Personnel
3:20pm Yth. Grp. Grades 4-5

18

Church Office Closed
9:30am Quilting, Rm. 309
3:20pm Yth. Grp. Gr. 4-5

25 MEMORIAL DAY

**Church Office Closed
ELC Closed**



5

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

12

1-4 pm Church Office
Closed
5:30pm ELC
Governance, Library
7:30pm GCCA Concert -
Neave Trio

19

1-4 pm Church Office
Closed
7pm Creation Care
Taskforce, Zoom

26

10am Stephen Ministry
Group, Room 300
1-4 pm Church Office
Closed
4:30pm Gettysburg
CARES
7pm Rayna's Readers,
Music Rm.

6

6:45am MS
9:30am Chi
3:20pm K-3

13

6:45am MS
9:30am Chi
3:20pm K-3

20

6:45am MS
9:30am Chi
11am Susta
Group, Libr
3:20pm K-3
6:30pm Cou

27

6:45am MS
9:30am Chi
3:20pm K-3

Rainbow Rose Silver Triangle Group—2nd and 4th Tues.
Rainbow Rose All Identities Group—3rd Tuesday @5 pm
Rainbow Rose Teen Group - 2nd & 4th Sunday at 1pm, R

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Music Room

& HS Breakfast
Eld Care Chapel
Youth Group

7
10am Bible Study,
Gathering Area
12pm Library Committee,
Library
7pm Choir Practice, Music
Room

1

8
1:30pm Prison
Society

2

5:30pm Worship
Creation Care Recycling
Collection

9

5:30pm Worship

MAY 2026

& HS Breakfast
Eld Care Chapel
Youth Group

14
10am Bible Study,
Gathering Area
1pm History & Archives,
Gathering Area
7pm Choir Practice, Music
Room

15

16

5:30pm Worship
Council Elections

& HS Breakfast
Eld Care Chapel
Inability Small
Library
Youth Group
Council, Library

21
10am Bible Study,
Gathering Area
12pm Library Committee,
Library
7pm Choir Practice, Music
Room

22

23

5:30pm Worship

& HS Breakfast
Eld Care Chapel
Youth Group

28
10am Bible Study,
Gathering Area
7pm Choir Practice, Music
Room

29

30

5:30pm Worship

- 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

@ 1 pm, Rm. 303
, Rm. 303
m. 303

WORSHIP PREVIEWS

MAY 2ND & 3RD: FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

As we continue to celebrate the fifty days of Easter, today's gospel includes Jesus' promise that he goes to prepare a place for his followers in his Father's house. Our baptism commissions us to share Jesus' mission in the world. As 1 Peter reminds us, we are a holy people, called to proclaim the one who called us out of darkness into light. In words and deeds we bear witness to the risen Christ—our way, our truth, our life.

Preacher: Pastor Andrew Geib

Readings: Acts 7:55-60 1 Peter 2:2-10
Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16 John 14:1-14

Fellowship, hosted by the Exploring Faith Sunday School Class and the Youth Ministry Committee

MAY 9TH AND 10TH: SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Jesus does not abandon his followers. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus comes to abide with his disciples of every generation. As Pentecost draws near, we are reminded that the risen Christ dwells in us as the Spirit of truth. We receive this Spirit in baptism and pray that in our gathering around the Lord's table the Spirit will transform us to be the body of the risen Christ in the world.

Preacher: Pastor Libby Baker-Mikesell

Readings: Acts 17:22-31 1 Peter 3:13-22
Psalm 66:8-20 John 14:15-21

MAY 16TH AND 17TH: SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

In these days between Ascension and Pentecost, we gather with the disciples in the upper room, waiting for the Spirit to transform the church around the world. In today's gospel Jesus prays for his followers and for their mission in his name. Amid religious, social, and economic divisions, we seek the unity that Jesus had with his Father. Made one in baptism, we go forth to live our faith in the world, eager for the unity that God intends for the whole human family.

Preacher: Pastor Andrew Geib

Readings: Acts 1:6-14 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11
Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35 John 17:1-11

MAY 23RD AND 24TH: DAY OF PENTECOST

Pentecost derives its name from the Jewish festival celebrating the harvest and the giving of the law on Mount Sinai fifty days after Passover. Fifty days after Easter, we celebrate the Holy Spirit as God's presence within and among us. In Acts the Spirit arrives in rushing wind and flame, bringing God's presence to all people. Paul reminds us that though we each have different capacities, we are unified in the Spirit that equips us with these gifts. Jesus breathes the Holy Spirit on his disciples, empowering them to forgive sin. We celebrate that we too are given the breath of the Holy Spirit and sent out to proclaim God's redeeming love to all the world.

Preacher: Pastor Libby Baker-Mikesell

Readings: Acts 2:1-21 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b John 20:19-23

MAY 30TH AND 31ST: THE HOLY TRINITY

Though the word *trinity* is not found in the scriptures, today's second reading includes the apostolic greeting that begins the liturgy: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. In the gospel Jesus sends his disciples forth to baptize in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. More than a doctrine, the Trinity expresses the heart of our faith: we have experienced the God of creation made known in Jesus Christ and with us always through the Holy Spirit. We celebrate the mystery of the Holy Trinity in word and sacrament, as we profess the creed, and as we are sent into the world to bear witness to our faith.

Preacher: Pastor Gil Waldkoenig

Readings: Genesis 1:1—2:4a 2 Corinthians 13:11-13
Psalm 8 Matthew 28:16-20

COUNCIL CORNER, APRIL 15 MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

En Bloc Agenda: Approved

- Approval of Minutes from March 18, 2026
- Acceptance of Treasurer's Report, Church Financials & ELC Financials

Committee Reports:

Mission Fund Committee 2026 Allocation Request – Council approved the committee's list for recommendations: \$4000 to the ELCA Global Mission Fund Brian Palmer Memorial, \$4000 to the Evelyn Cassell Early Learning Center in Liberia, \$5000 to the Adams County Habitat for Humanity, \$5000 to Unidos por Adams /PGL.

Other Committee Updates: The Landscaping Committee has been working on the property this spring, including creating a garden for the ELC to allow the children to plant and grow cherry tomatoes.

Unfinished Business:


Youth and Community Visioning Update: The committee met on April 17. The funding request to the Endowment Committee has been submitted.

C.A.R.E.S. Update: The cold-weather-shelter season has closed, and the C.A.R.E.S. board met for a three-hour visioning meeting for the 2026-27 season. The Gettysburg C.A.R.E.S. resource center anticipates moving from the Slentz House to a newly acquired property on Chambersburg St. for the 2026/2027 season.

New Business:

Slentz House: Prior to its being used as the C.A.R.E.S. resource center, the Slentz House was used by the ULS for student housing. Since the house is being vacated by C.A.R.E.S., a motion was made to find and approve an occupant to live in the property, so that it doesn't stand vacant. The motion was seconded and adopted by council.

Council Elections: At the April 25-26 church services, the St. James congregation will have the opportunity to nominate people to fill the 4 Council seats that will be open this year; service term is three years. Four congregants have expressed interest and have submitted their bios, which will be posted on a bulletin board May 3; Gabbi



Scavitto will run again for Youth representative. The election is scheduled for May 16-17 at all services.

Church Document Archives: Leon Pisano, who has been part of the ongoing archiving of St. James paperwork, provided an update of the process; the committee, chaired by David Flesner, works on documents three hours a month. Under consideration is a software program to start digitizing documents and, perhaps, a student intern to help. Mark Withrow and Debra Baker will attend the next Archives committee meeting.

Good for Church/Good for God/Good for Council

- The April 12 service and picnic at Camp Nawakwa was a success; 136 were in attendance. There was discussion to perhaps make this an annual event on the first Sunday after Easter.
- The pastoral staff has been busy during the past few weeks, with many visits and a lot of support for family members.
- Thanks to the staff, pastors (including Pastor Foltz), and all congregant speakers for a reflective Lenten season, Holy Week and Easter weekend. The initial use of the Holden service was well received and will continue next year.
- A coffee reception will be held May 3 between services for seminary field worker Lorie Burke-Garcia, who will be leaving this assignment at the end of her ULS spring semester.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 20 at 6:30 pm



ST. JAMES QUILTING

From the Lutheran World Relief website:

“Making Lutheran World Relief Mission Quilts is a tangible way to express love to our neighbors in need. Quilts can be used as warm bedding, simple tents or floor coverings. Each one reflects God's loving presence in a world rife with suffering.”

Natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, and wild fires occur frequently both here and abroad. We become aware of the heartache and displacement of individuals during times of war and famine, but we just don't always know how to help.

At St. James a group of ladies found a way to do their part in helping others. Under the leadership of Joan Wise and Margie Keyser, a quilt ministry was begun circa 2003. These early quilters sewed and knotted 2 sheets and a layer of batting together to create beautiful quilts to send to Lutheran World Relief (LWR). By 2013, 793 quilts had been made, blessed, and shipped for distribution by LWR volunteers.

Today, the St. James Piecemakers (sponsored by our World Outreach Committee) are continuing this vital ministry, either at church or from their homes. Most recently, our goal has been to assemble 80 quilts per year. We have been blessed and give thanks to the many folks who have gifted cotton fabrics and sheets to this ministry after cleaning out their “stash.” Because of these donors, we have been able to add colorful pieced quilt tops to our repertoire.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT - not all the Piecemakers sew: some cut squares; many help lay out the various patterns; everyone helps with assembly, pinning, and knotting. We have grown into a welcoming group of women who enjoy each others' company and like to laugh! All are welcome to join us on Mondays from 9:30 to 11:30.

Fifty beautiful quilts will be blessed on Mother's Day, May 10, 2026. They will then be sent to waiting hands providing "warmth, shelter and a tangible gift of love to our neighbors in need" around the world.

JOIN US AT PRIDE!

This year, **Gettysburg PRIDE is on May 29 and 30.** The PRIDE Festival is a joyful, family friendly celebration primarily taking place at the Gettysburg Rec Park on Sat. May 30 from 11:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. It's a great chance to show and tell the community about our welcoming congregation—and it's easy and fun to participate! Here are just two of the ways you can engage:

Participate in the Pride kick-off walk on Friday evening! Beginning at Gettysburg Middle School on Friday, 5/29 at 6 pm, the walk proceeds up to the square on the sidewalk, and returns to the middle school. We'll walk behind our St. James welcome banner, and you can also bring your own handheld American and PRIDE flags.

Join us at the St. James tent! Be part of the team that greets people and lets them know where St. James is located; wear your St. James t-shirt if you'd like! Greet passersby and have a little chat; you'll learn more about another human being and feel great! People can make a memory of the day at our photo booth, and we'll have treats for people and dogs, as well as information about St. James and especially our youth programs.

We know it's a busy weekend but we would love it if you could join us for an hour or two, anytime between noon and 7:00 p.m. Sign up for the kick-off walk and to welcome people at the St. James tent at <https://bit.ly/3OrKTBV>

Have questions? Want to sign up? Talk to Ron Couchman, Jim Flanagan, Shirley Armstrong, Baird Tipson, Deb Smith, Judy Leslie, Denise Wood, or any other member of the RIC Committee.

PARISH RECORDS

50+ Wedding Anniversaries

May 14 Barry & Donna Bixler 65 years
May 22 Jerry & Sandra Mills 61 years

Deaths

April 8 Elaine Swanson
April 10 Jean Sixeas
April 15 Roy Keefer
April 19 Jack Crist
April 19 Dave Crowner

Baptisms

April 19 Madeline Witherow



Congratulations Confirmands!

Savannah Munsee
Morgan Smith
Thomas Urai-Thang
Trudy Harnish

May 24, 2026





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

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203 Adam Michael, off on Fridays

Director of Youth & Family Ministry

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205 Pr. Libby Baker-Mikesell, off on Fridays

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

Building Superintendent

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St. James

Lutheran Church, ELCA

P.O. Box 4596

Gettysburg, PA 17325-4596

PLACE
POSTAGE
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LABEL