

St. James News

Equipping and Empowering Families and Students through Christ

Volume 70 Issue 2

April 2024

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A blessed Easter to you all. May the blessing of God's love for you shown through the sacrificial work of His Son give you much peace this Easter season.

In the last printing of the newsletter, you were informed of the process that has begun in reaching those on the membership list who have been absent for some time. While some may have questioned the process and the need for doing so, it's important to note that many have been quite supportive and thankful that this is being done. This unity and support within our community is a testament to the strength of our bond and our commitment to each other. It's been a blessing to see members returning to worship and some who have communicated that they have moved on to another church or area.

The overall conversation about membership is a challenging conversation as many have their own definition of what membership is. So, for clarity and being able to have the conversation on the same plane, membership in the church consists of regular, if not weekly, reception of the Word and Sacrament. Along with this nurturing of one's soul, membership also involves the regular study of God's Word outside of the worship setting as well as faithful support of the ministry. Bible study comes in various and sundry forms, the most available for you is Sunday morning between the services. Support for the church comes in various ways and abilities of time, talent, and treasure.

As I have tried to express to those who speak with me, the heart of this conversation is recognizing that this is a pastoral care matter. It is irresponsible of me to go through the motions of ministry, which in some cases has established a path of apathy. Apathy creates a segment of membership that many would call "fringe." Fringe membership is membership, mostly in name only. They may have been "core" members at one time, but over time, they have allowed other priorities to pull them from the regular reception of Word and Sacrament. As a result, the ability for pastoral care, which allows for a clear confession of faith to one's pastor, is not present, nor is there a dedication to caring for the soul as a Christian ought.

Why is this important? Consider two examples from our congregation's regular practice. The first is communion. As you know, the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod practices closed communion. This means that if someone is not a member of the church and does not have a relationship with the pastor or any other pastor of the

church, they are to refrain from partaking in the Sacrament unless they have received instruction or talked with the pastor.

This can be a challenge for families as there is a desire and sentimental attachment to participating together at the Lord's table. But it is good for Christians to remember the instruction of Paul on this matter. **"Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself."** (1 Corinthians 11:27-29) Your pastor cares about your soul. And sometimes, that means that you will be upset because what you thought good or felt is good is not necessarily so. As with all cases, talk with me!

A second example is catechesis or confirmation instruction. It has been common practice and belief that the faith formation of a child is the church's responsibility. Though there is a bit of truth to that, the broader truth is that, as a parent commits to in the baptism of their child, the father, especially being the spiritual leader of the household, is the main one responsible for ensuring that the child is brought up and nurtured in the faith. How apathy toward this responsibility has impacted the church is that our children know less and less of God's Word and have little to no desire to be in church. No amount of catechesis or reception of a confirmation certificate will fix that. Again, it's a matter of pastoral care and the soul.

There is a need to be honest about the way in which things have been done for generations that simply aren't working. Many will say something along the lines of "Well, these kids need to learn this and memorize that, just like I did." Well, how has that worked out? What is the First Commandment? What does this mean? Many of our "core" members wouldn't be able to recite the Catechism anymore. And sadly, apathy is ok with that.

But it's not okay. The church must be better at equipping her people. And yes, it starts with your pastor being willing to be forthright and honest about it—not always easy to hear, but necessary. And so here's the challenge that's going to be put out for all our families, especially families with confirmation-aged children: Be at church every week. Be in prayer every day. Be in God's Word every day. It's that simple. It's that necessary.

Our Church Records

Church Attendance

Sunday, January 28	70 & 226
Sunday, February 4	127 & 84
Sunday, February 11	110 & 124
Ash Wednesday	89
Sunday, February 18	112 & 105
Wednesday, February 21	48
Sunday, February 25	164 & 85
Wednesday, February 28	42
Sunday, March 3	101 & 97
Wednesday, March 6	50
Sunday, March 10	92 & 111
Wednesday, March 13	55
Sunday, March 17	96 & 135
Wednesday, March 20	52
Palm Sunday, March 24	192 & 108

Communion Attendance

Sunday, January 28	118
Sunday, February 18	184
Sunday, February 25	180
Sunday, March 10	159
Sunday, March 17	82
Palm Sunday, March 24	197

Transfer Out

David & Anita Power to Immanuel Lutheran Church, Brownton, MN.

Jennifer Power to Immanuel Lutheran Church, Brownton, MN.

Transfer In

Brittany DeGroot & Aurora Moorhouse from Zion Lutheran Church, Mayer, MN.

Baptisms

Bryer Rocky Solberg son of Austin Solberg & Alaina Butcher-Hirsch on February 10, 2024 by Pastor Loder. His sponsors are Ethan Jaskowiak & Cassandra Butcher.

Waylon Jerry Walter son of Tyler Walter & Cassandra Butcher on February 10, 2024 by Pastor Loder.



Hear the Good News of the Gospel on the Lutheran Hour each Sunday at 9:00 am on KDUZ 1260 AM Radio.

During the month of April, you will hear the following program topics:

April 7

"Raise the Flag"

Learn how the followers of Christ are raising God's flag in the world.
(Acts 1:1-11)

April 14

"Breathe In, Breathe Out"

The Holy Spirit breathes life into the Church and the Church breathes that life out to the world, with the love of Christ.
(Acts 2:42-47)

April 21

"More Than He Bargained For"

(Acts 3:6)

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

LCMS Stewardship Ministry

April 2024

Whose Is It Anyway?

If you have ever bought or sold a house, you are acquainted with the concept of a “title search.” Before you can sell your house, and before anyone else will feel comfortable putting down the money to buy it, you have to prove that you really own it. So a title company looks through the public records to ensure that you bought it from the person who really owned it, who bought it from the person who really owned it before that, all the way back to the earliest records of your state, including when your state was only a territory or colony of England.

Peak into a preschool classroom during playtime and you’ll see a simplified version of this. A child starts playing with a ball, but another child says, “That’s mine: I had it first.”

You can’t understand the Seventh Commandment without understanding this concept of ownership or title. As the Small Catechism puts it:

You shall not steal. What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbor’s money or possessions, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his possessions and income.

Your neighbor’s possessions are his: you don’t have a right to take them. And likewise, your possessions are yours. Ownership and property rights are foundational to any functioning society.

But there is something deeper to know about ownership, and that is the question of who has the title and ownership to you? Paul says, “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price” (1 Cor. 6:19–20).

If you yourself are owned by God, then of course everything that you own, you really only possess by God’s leave: all of it, at bottom, belongs to Him since you belong to Him. For you were bought with the blood of Christ.

This notion is the foundation of all Christian stewardship. It all belongs to God. It should all be used for things that bring honor to His name, blessings to our neighbors and the extension of His kingdom.



At St. James, we believe prayer is powerful and effective! Each name on our Prayer list is someone with a story, who needs to feel God's presence, and it's an honor to be able to lift them up in prayer.

When we receive a name for the prayer list, it stays on the list for one month. A name can always be taken off sooner or added back if requested.

If a requester wants a name to stay on the prayer list longer than a month, we'll gladly keep them on. Please let the church office know.



SPECIAL DAYS IN APRIL



President Barb opened our February meeting with devotions "Don't Be That Monkey". Guard yourselves from earthly wants and temptations and remain faithful with God's help. Following a brief business meeting we listened to our speaker, Joel Landskroener, Executive Director at Mayer Lutheran High School. He stressed the importance of receiving a Christian education and preparing the next generation of Christian leaders. He spoke of upcoming changes of what and what cannot be taught in public schools mandated by the state. Lutheran schools are not subject to these requirements and continue to offer a well-rounded Christ centered education. Birthday and table prayer songs followed with lunch and fellowship.

Members and guests met at 5:30 on March 4th for our annual work night. Fellowship kitchen cleaning and construction of Easter favors for Care Center residents were the evening's projects. Vicar Speckhard led the group in the table prayer followed by subs, salads and sweets. Teresa handed out small tea lights and instructed all to light their little Gospel lights. The devotional message was not to be LITTLE Gospel lights but to be BIG Gospel lights as we witness our faith all around the neighborhood.

President Barb conducted the business meeting. Plans were discussed for the Saturday, April 6th 10 AM baby shower for the Speckhard family. All women of St. James are invited. Please consider giving cash in lieu of gifts.

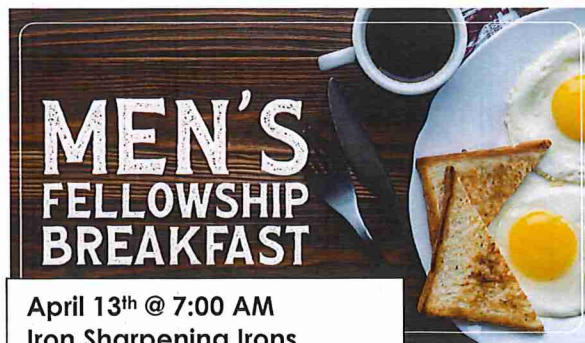
The Zone Spring Rally will be April 13th at Bethlehem, Middleville with RSVP by April 7th. Registration at 8:30, program 9:15, topic "Strong Marriages". Gifts from the Heart are food shelf items, religious books and paper products. The MN South District Convention will be June 20-22 in Mankato. Gifts from the Heart are child to adult size new or gently used shoes and socks and quilts. Baskets for the silent auction are also welcome.

Birthdays for March and April were recognized, and the birthday song sung.

"For it is you who lights my lamp: the Lord my God lightens my darkness." Psalm 18:28

April: John George (1), Jason Rasmussen (2), Adam Koosman (3), Mildred Yager (3), Kelly Gruenhagen (4), Nora Gustafson (4), Randall Whitton (4), Braelynn Long (6), Lyle Oestreich (6), Jacob Pehl (7), Anastasia Cardinal (9), Henrick Kilpela (9), Mya Zillmer (10), Cassey Glessing (11), Nora Morrisette (11), Terry Stoll (11), Emma Dickens (13), Wayne Klammer (13), Lane Sparkman (13), Clara Nikko (14), Carolyn Stoll (15), Christine Koosman (16), Amy Gabbert (17), Kevin Gruenhagen (18), Trevor Oestreich (18), Ronald Wiebel (18), Danielle Buttenhoff (19), Carter Stueven (19), Thea Wagner (20), Carolyn Wackler (21), Carol Moorhead (22), Vernon Rasmussen (22), Chelsea Wagner (23), Hadley Diers (25), Breckon Long (25), Taylor Smida (25), Katherine Miller (26), Rowan Salmela (26), John Zander (26), Elise Luchsinger (28), James Wackler (28), Gregory Baumann (29), Norma Koosman (29), Sophie Salmela (29).

4/8 James & Carolyn Wackler
4/9 Andrew & Suzanne Koosman
4/10 Alex & Stephanie Hennen
4/10 Tyler & Kelli Miller
4/13 Greg & Cathy Birkholz
4/16 Jeremy & Mindy Stoll
4/17 Mark & Amy Burau
4/17 Michael & Jill Kittock
4/24 Mark & Becky Leaf
4/24 Jim & Christine Yukel
4/25 Wayne & Patricia Diers



April 13th @ 7:00 AM
Iron Sharpening Irons
Breakfast in the Fellowship
Hall. All men are welcome.

Class of 2024

This year we would like to recognize the graduating class of 2024 in our May newsletter. Please submit a picture, the school you are graduating from and your future plans to Michelle at secretary@stjameshl.org by April 19th.

Confirmation

Confirmation students that will be getting confirmed on May 5th, please submit your name and confirmation verse to Michelle at secretary@stjameshl.org so it can be featured in our May newsletter.

Thank You!

To Craig Brose and Brose Farms for the years of taking care of our snowplowing. We are very grateful for your services Thank you!!

✝ Bible Trivia ✝

See answers below

1. What act promoted the writing of Psalm 51, a prayer for mercy?
2. Name the great-grandmother of David.
3. How many people did Jesus personally raise from the dead?
4. Where did Jesus send the demons from the two demon-possessed men in Gadarenes?
5. Which book in the NT says, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church."?

Answers: 1. David's adultery with Bathsheba (and/or the arranged death of Uriah). 2. Ruth (Matthew 1:5-7). 3. 3 (Matthew 9:23-35, Luke 7:11-15, John 11:43-44), 4. Into a herd of swine (Matthew 8:31). 5. Ephesians 5:25.

2nd Annual

GARAGE
SALE

April 26 & 27



DO YOU LIKE TO PLAY IN THE SNOW? If so and have some free time to help St. James is looking for someone that would like to take care of the snowplowing next season. If you or someone you know would like to help out with this task, please contact Mark Burau or Jeremy Cardinal.

Monthly Financial Report

Direct your
Thrivent Choice
Dollars
Today!



St. James Lutheran Church
Monthly Financial Summary
February 2024

	Year-to Date	
	Actual	Budget
Receipts		
Offerings & Donations	389,281	364,758
Tuition & Other Receipts	196,710	143,752
Mission Receipts	5,523	11,667
Total Receipts	591,514	577,678
Expenses		
Salaries - Church & School	369,753	353,765
Benefits/Payroll Taxes/Mileage Administration & Program Expenses	104,917	107,779
Utilities/Maintenance & Repair	88,664	89,521
Mission Disbursements	59,894	63,944
	1,000	4,813
Total Expenses	651,821	630,515
Net Receipts/Expenses	(60,308)	(52,837)

**** This report excludes the insurance proceeds for fire damage and related payments for repairs ****

Looking for an easy way to support and strengthen St. James Lutheran Church & School? Participate in Thrivent Choice.

Thrivent Choice provides an online giving platform where you can make personal donations. And Thrivent pays the processing fees, so 100% of your donation goes to help make an impact at St. James Lutheran.

Eligible Thrivent clients with membership can set this up at thrivent.com/directnow to learn more. Or call **800- 847-4836** and say "Thrivent Choice" after the prompt. You can also contact your Thrivent advisor.

If you previously made a donation or directed Choice Dollars to St. James Lutheran, we thank you for your support!

**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED**

Counting Committee is looking for volunteers to help with counting offering. They are looking for a committee to count the 3rd week of every month. A committee consist of 3 people once of month. Counting offering usually only take 30-35 minutes. Please contact John Zander or the church office if interested.

WORSHIP SERVICE INFORMATION – APRIL 2024

Elders: 8:00 AM Dean Koosman and Jeff Diers
10:30 AM Tom Johnson and Bill Wickesberg

Ushers: 10:30 AM Mark Diers, Jeff Diers, Al Montgomery, Peter Zander, Chris Zander, Jeff Kilpela, Mike Sparkman

Altar Guild: Heather Zimmerman and Sonia Lee
Video Camera: Jeff Schmiegl

Sunday, April 7, 2024

Color: White
Liturgy: Pg. 167
Lessons: Ezek. 37:1-14, 1 John 5:4-10, John 20:19-31
Sermon: Vicar Speckhard
Sermon Text: John 20:19-31
Hymns: 487, 720 (470, 481, 488) 482
Organist: Molly Loder
Choir: 8:00 3rd & 4th Grade Choir

Sunday, April 21, 2024

Color: White
Liturgy: Pg. 167
Lessons: Is. 40:25-31, 1 Peter 2:11-20, John 16:16-22
Sermon: Vicar Speckhard
Sermon Text: John 16:16-22
Hymns: 727, 483 (484, 818, 468) 482
Organist: Vicar Speckhard
Choir: 8:00 Kindergarten

Sunday, April 14, 2024








Color: White
Liturgy: Pg. 167
Lessons: Ezek. 34:11-16, 1 Peter 2:21-25, John 10:11-16
Sermon: Pastor Loder
Sermon Text: John 10:11-16
Hymns: 709, 710 (740, 711, 653) 735
Organist: Nancy Butterfass
Choir: 10:00 1st & 2nd Choir

Sunday, April 28, 2024

Color: White
Liturgy: Pg. 167
Lessons: Is. 12:1-6, James 1:16-21, John 16:5-15
Sermon: Pastor Loder
Sermon Text: John 16:5-15
Hymns: 502, 768 (809, 726, 816) 729
Organist: Molly Loder
Choir: 10:30 Handchimes

April

2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>7 Second Sunday of Easter 8:00 Divine Service 9:15 Bible Study/Sunday School 10:30 Divine Service</p>	<p>1 7:00 L WML 7:30 Trustees Meeting</p> 	<p>2 7:00 School Board</p>	<p>3 8:20 Chapel 5:00 Public School Confirmation 6:00 PTL Meeting 7:00 Women's Bible Study 8:00 Worship Choir</p>	<p>4 1:30 Sarah Bible Study</p>	<p>5 </p>	<p>6 10:00 Speckhard's Baby Shower</p> 
<p>14 Third Sunday of Easter 8:00 Divine Service 9:15 Bible Study/Sunday School 10:30 Divine Service</p>	<p>15 </p>	<p>16 7:00 Leadership Council</p>	<p>17 8:20 Chapel 5:00 Public School Confirmation 7:00 Women's Bible Study 8:00 Worship Choir</p>	<p>18 1:30 Sarah Bible Study</p>	<p>19 Newsletter Article Due</p> 	<p>20 </p>
<p>21 Fourth Sunday of Easter 8:00 Divine Service 9:15 Bible Study/Sunday School 10:30 Divine Service</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24 8:20 Chapel 5:00 Public School Confirmation 7:00 Women's Bible Study 8:00 Worship Choir</p>	<p>25 </p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>
<p>28 Fifth Sunday of Easter 8:00 Divine Service 9:15 Bible Study/Sunday School 10:30 Divine Service 2:00 Spring Concert/Art Expo</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>				



Buffet Brunch

Saturday, April 6

*10:30 AM in the school
for Baby Speckhard*

Cash or gift cards would be appreciated in lieu of gifts

All the women of St. James are

St. James Lutheran Church and School

1000 Seventh Avenue – PO Box 680

Howard Lake, MN 55349



Blessings to: