

The January 2025 Epistle

A publication of St. James Lutheran Church,
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M E S S A G E
from the
M I N I S T E R

“Glory to God in the highest! And on earth...peace!”

Luke 2:14

Christmas isn't quite over yet. I encourage you to reflect one more time on the baby in the manger before the new year blitzes by us. We will find ourselves deep into 2025 before we know it.

On Christmas Eve we found the shepherds watching their flocks in the black of night. Goats, sheep, or other animals - the Scriptures don't really tell us who was all there - were finally starting to calm down. The shepherds discussed who would take the first shift - who would watch and who would sleep. When suddenly, standing before them -

a light appeared, then a voice with the light, then a person - but not a person - a messenger with news from God. The God who had been silent for centuries. The God who belonged - or so they were told - in the temple in Jerusalem, not on a hillside in Bethlehem.

A messenger - in light and in glory, in terror and in awe - stood before them with news of the Promised One - the one the prophets spoke of, the one who would save them.

Could it really be the Promised One?

- The One our hearts have longed for...
- The Hope of the nations...
- The Joy of every human heart...
- The One who would restore the world...
- The One who would bring justice for all people...

Tonight? Here? Could it be?

And suddenly, with the Messenger of Light, there came movement - swirling - growing - spanning the width of the sky - movement with song - echoes of glory and prisms of splendor - the glory of the LORD has been revealed - the Heavenly Hosts.

Not just angels as we may think of angels, but these were the members of the Divine Council including those who had died in faith looking forward to the Promised One who would be revealed when the fullness of time had come - Saints and Prophets of old. The very voices which echoed from the Scriptures which were read in the Jewish assembly for hundreds of years - the voices of Isaiah, Zechariah, Malachi, Deborah, Miriam, Ruth, and thousands of others - all present and joined together to sing a song of celebration to God. This was truly a *multitude of the heavenly host* praising God and saying, in one glorious and indescribable display of light and movement to declare,

“Glory to God in the highest! And on earth...peace!”

Peace on Earth

Why peace? Why, in the declaration of the angels at the announcement of the birth of the long-awaited-for, promised One - why was the declaration a declaration of Peace on earth?

Perhaps we know why without even speaking it. In all of our striving, in all our warring, in all of our struggle, in our pain, in all of the conflicting emotions we battle Every. Single. Day. - in all of our getting - we long for the peace only God can bring. *God, give us peace.*

Forgiveness and Humility

As we are taken with awe and wonder at the sight of the shepherds and the Heavenly Host, as we sing the words of our carols which point us to the hope of the Promised One birthed in the manger, may we remember the call to us - made in the declaration of the angels.

Peace on earth.

To participate in this call.

Perhaps apologies need to be made.

Perhaps forgiveness needs to be granted.

Perhaps pride needs to be swallowed.

Perhaps the kind word needs to be spoken.

Perhaps the step toward deeper peace you have been deferring needs to be taken today.

The deep peace we all long for comes through forgiveness and humility. Though these are nearly lost from the discourse of our public square and our private affairs, we have been called by the angels to be the kind of people who are doggedly committed to peace on earth in every possible way.

In our homes. In our families. In our communities. In our world.

Remember this: forgiveness and humility aren't going to win any awards, but they are the two rails on which the train of peace rolls into our lives.

From the humble manger comes the Prince of Peace, if we would stoop to find him there.

Prayer and Learning Group

From fall 2024 through Spring 2025, the Christian Education Committee with Bryce Hewlett host monthly prayer and learning groups for adults.

The sign up sheets for these groups are located in the Narthex. Contact the church office with any questions you may have.

We hope to see you there!

Dates: Wednesday, January 8th, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.
Thursday, January 9th, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

- What is the religion of Jesus like for those who have their back up against the wall?
- What is the response of people who may not frequently consider this experience?

Scripture Study: Matthew 5:1-12

Recommended Reading: *Jesus and the Disinherited* by Howard Thurman

P R E S I D E N T ' S M E S S A G E

Happy New Year St. James! I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas filled with family, friends and love. We had two Christmas Eve services here at St James—one at 4pm and one at 11pm. Both were very well attended. It was so nice to have an 11pm service again, as it is my personal favorite.

Although the Live Nativity was cancelled due to the inclement weather, it did not take away from the beauty of the holiday season. We hope for better weather next year so we may continue with this beautiful tradition.

We will continue celebrating the joy of the holiday season with an Epiphany service on January 6th. There will be desert at 6pm followed by a service at 7pm. I hope you all can attend.

The 2025 Annual Meeting will be January 26th this year following the service. I hope all of you that can attend will do so.

Now that 2025 is upon us we can begin to look forward to continued growth and love here at St. James. Although we can't know exactly what the future holds for us, we can be certain that God will be at our side guiding us and loving us every step of the way.

Angie



Property Committee Update:

The capital improvements are progressing. The concrete work has been completed. Because it is “new” concrete, we will not salt it this year, so there may be periodic closure to these sidewalks, which may require you to use a different entrance.

We will be starting a fundraiser soon. Thank you for your support.

Any questions you might have, please feel free to contact our committee chairs:

Fritz Voss (563) 370-0884

Steve Miller (563) 340-6680

CHRISTIAN E D U C A T I O N

Special thanks to everyone who helped with the Christmas Eve busy bags for the kids!

Christian Ed. is looking for volunteers to help assist with Children's Church on Saturdays and Sundays in 2025. For questions or for more information, please contact **Angie Schmidt at 563-570-6354.**

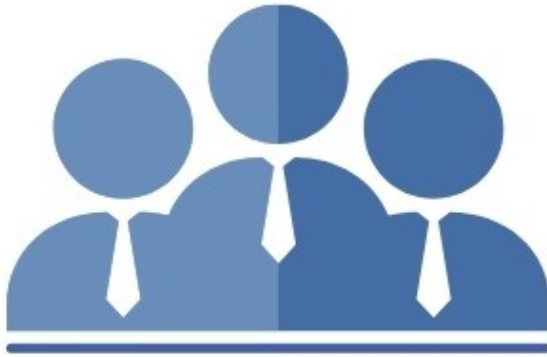


WELCA NEWS



SARAH CIRCLE

Sarah Circle will meet January 21st, 2025 at 1:00pm at St. James with Maggie Bayliss as our Hostess and Pat Larson as our Lesson Leader.



St James GANG

Our first meeting of the year will be on Thursday, January 16th, 2025 in the Fellowship Hall.

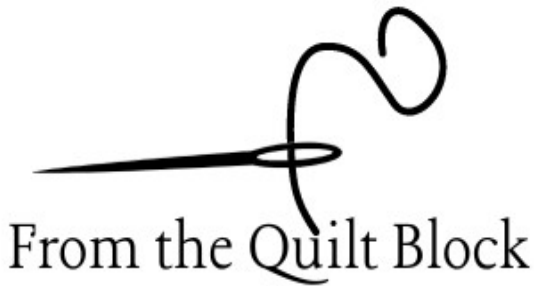
Meet at 11:30AM—bring your own lunch!

Guest speaker TBA at a later date.

Dessert and beverages will be provided, as usual.

See you all there!

-St. James GANG.



From the Quilt Block

The quilters did not meet in November and December.

The quilt raffle/silent auction was a great success—Thank you all for your participation!

The final total for the quilt auction was \$417.

We are having fewer donations of fabric, which makes it necessary to look for sales and purchase fabric, as well as batting to make our quilts. The prices have greatly increased for batting and shipping, so if you hear of or see any fabric that is looking for a home, please think of the St. James quilters and donate as you are able.

Thank you again for your support of the Quilt Ministry at St. James!

Quilters will meet **January 28th, 2025 at 12:00-4:00PM** at St. James.

Quilt Raffle Winners:

“Pick-up Sticks” - Maggie SonQuilst

“Framed 16 Patch” – Judy Larson

“Autumn Hodge-Podge” – Janet Brakel

“Polka_Dot Roses” – Carolyn Ackerman

“My Flower Gargen” - Sue Miller

“Daisy Fields” – Clair South

Pieces be with you

Shirley Richlen

REMINDER!

**Deadline for February Epistle Articles
is Friday, January 24th.**

Council Votes

Approval of the November 17, 2024
Council Meeting Minutes

No motions were approved at this
council meeting.

From the Congregation

Sending thanks and love for all the cards, calls, food, prayers, and caring thoughts for my Birthday and the Holidays. Also, for the goody bag for Christmas and the children's wishes. I miss you all!

God Bless,

Frieda Houldsworth

To my fellow parishioners:

I want to thank you for all of the prayers, thoughts and remembrances I received during my recovery after a hospital stay. It has meant SO much! I have never felt alone. Even when the hours felt long, I felt I was held in loving support. I will never forget!

Carol Leacox

MONDAY MORNING FELLOWSHIP

Monday Morning Fellowship is a group that gets together twice a month via ZOOM to chat and catch up on what is going on in each other's lives.

It is a wonderful way to get to know each other more intimately.

Everyone is welcome to join us!

We meet on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month from 9:30 to 10:30 AM. The Zoom link is sent out to the church email list on the Friday before the meeting.

Come join us! We look forward to seeing you!

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at

563-349-6727

or maggieb@bayliss.us

Annual Congregational Meeting

**Sunday, January 26th
10:15AM**

This is a meeting where we recall everything that has been done in the church over the past year.

- New Council members will be voted in.
- Each committee will share their report from 2024.

**Members:
please plan to
attend this
meeting!**

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

1/5 KATHY MANTHE

1/8 STEVE MILLER I

1/10 NICK MALLI

1/11 TERRY MARTENS

1/15 BRANDON SPEIDEL

1/16 SHARON CORKEN

1/16 WRIGLEY HEWLETT

1/16 SHIRLEY WAIT

1/19 BARBARA JACKSON

1/21 LEO SOUTHWELL

1/26 KELLAN BILEDDO

1/28 BRADLEY MALLI

1/28 KAREN MARTIN

1/31 SUSAN MILLER

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

1/19 SHERRY & LYNN GERMANIO



Epiphany Service:

Monday,
January 6th

Desserts at 6:00pm

Service at 7:00pm





Prayers for Healing and Support

Congregational Members

Lynn Chamberlain, **Bev** Chappen, **Sherry** Germanio,
Sandy Henry, **Jeff** Hicks, **Frieda** Houldsworth, **John** Leder,
LaVonne Mienke, **Jeanne** Peters, **Maggie** Bayliss,
Minhon Ridenour,

Family and Friends

Addie (Diana Worley's co-worker's daughter), **Barry** (cousin of Ellen Hogbin), **Carol** (friend of Joleen & Erik Bakken), **Connie** (friend of Maggie Bayliss), **Danica** (Friend of Deb Crooks), **Dotty** (friend of Joleen & Erik Bakken), **Donna** (Ed Arp's sister), **Drew** (Pat Larson's friend), **Grant** (grandson of Carol Leacox), **Hattie** (Frieda's sister), **Jason** (Lynn Chamberlain & Sherry Germanio's son), **Jerry** (friend of Joleen & Erik Bakken), **Joann** (Frieda's sister-in-law), **Jon** (Joleen Bakken's nephew), **Julia** (Keegan's girlfriend), **Konnor** (Bert Leder's grandson), **Mark** (friend of Jason Forari), **Michelle** (friend of Joleen & Erik Bakken),
Michelle (friend of Jason & Melissa Forari),
Phil (Steve Miller and Pat Sorensen's brother),
Russ (friend of Steve & Sue Miller, husband to Chris),
Ruthann (Justina Pessein's mom), **Theo** (Great Nephew to Kathy Melby & Lora Gwin), **Wally** (Frieda's nephew)

Military Personnel

Anthony Karasek (Judy Larson's great nephew)
Lt. Col. **Brandon** Sandoval USAF (Pat Larson's grandson)
CPT **Eli** Smith (Jerry and Myrna Mattly's grandson)
Nathan Pearson USAF (Jenna & Kane Schmidt's friend)
Samantha Richard (friend of Larson family)

If you have anyone who needs to be taken off or added, please notify the church office.

January 2025 Worship Assistants

Date	Assisting Minister	Acolyte	Usher	Usher	Altar Guild	Altar Guild	Kids Team
1/5/25	Tom Sladky	Lennox Abel	Fritz Voss	Judy Larson	Shirley Richlen	Pat Larson	Angie & Maddie
1/6/25 Ephipany	Jason Forari		Melissa Forari	Ana Forari			Not Needed
1/12/25	Diana Worley / Janet Brakel	Rilynne	Kelly Crooks	Ron Mekalson	Shirley Richlen	Pat Larson	Kim
1/19/25	Ann Larson	Carter	Diana Worley	Darryl Worley	Mary Meumann	Terry Martens	
1/26/25	Pat Larson	Edi	Caroline Hicks	Shirley Richlen	Mary Meumann	Terry Martens	Janet

*Please Note: If you find you cannot serve on the date/time scheduled, please arrange for your replacement, then **call or email;**
Janet Brakel at 708-207-5515 or jbrakel@ameritech.net
 to advise the name of your replacement.
 We appreciate your gracious cooperation.
 Thanks!*