

# The April 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

*Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love.*

**Joel 2:13**

## **Return to the Lord Your God**

During this season of Lent, I pray we will give ourselves permission to take an honest look at our lives and deal truthfully with what we find. A sober look may do us good, and I pray we do not miss the opportunity. Several of our readings during this season emphasize the theme of *repentance*. To repent means 1) to turn away from the things in our lives that distract us and rob us of the true life we have in Jesus Christ and 2) to *return to the Lord your God, for God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love.*

Returning to God is sometimes a **big** task and sometimes a **small** task. So how do we do it?

## **Big Ways**

We all have appetites in ourselves that rob us of the life God intends for us. If there is something in us that is destroying us, we must take drastic action to eliminate it from our lives.

During this season of Lent, first pray for God's help to show you what big things there might be in your life that you would ordinarily skip over. Many of us also have loved ones, friends, and neighbors who are suffering because some of these big appetites are wreaking havoc in their lives. Pray for them too. Pray that they would find freedom in Christ.

### **Small Ways**

In the thousands of small ways we are distracted every day, we return to God by giving God our undivided attention. These are small moments of prayer that can happen hundreds of times each day. In these moments I encourage you to bow your head for just a few seconds and pray a simple prayer. Here are two prayers that might help you: *God, I return to you. Renew my heart and my mind. Or, God, I give you my heart. Transform me in your grace.* Small, moment-by-moment prayers like this grow into Redwoods over the course of a lifetime.

### **Opportunities in the Weeks Ahead**

Please take note of some special opportunities to pray, learn, and dialogue together in the weeks to come. These are special events for worship and learning so I want to bring them to your attention even though they are announced elsewhere in the *Epistle* and our announcements at our services.

**April 2 & April 9** - Midweek Lenten meals and services.  
Meals @ 5:45 and Evening Prayer  
Services @ 7:00 p.m.

**April 9 @ 2:00 p.m. & April 10 @ 6:00 p.m.** Adult Prayer and Learning Groups. This month's book is *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster. Please sign-up in the Narthex.

**April 13 @ 10:15 a.m.** - Coffee and Conversation

### **SPECIAL: Holy Week**

Details for the special Vigils and Services for Holy Week are listed elsewhere in this *Epistle*. Please note that there are special observances each night between Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday.

- Vigils on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Saturday will be simple services centered on readings, prayers, and meditative songs.
- Services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday will be in the classic style we have grown to love over the years.
- All Vigils and Services will be held in the Nave. Children are always welcome, but some children will find the somber atmosphere difficult to sit through. Bringing them along is up to your discretion.

May God bless you in your Lenten practice in the weeks to come. I look forward to seeing you on Easter!



Bryce Hewlett, SAM

## **April Adult Prayer & Learning Group**

**April: A Trellis for the Christian Life: Spiritual Disciplines**

Date: April 9, 2025 at 2:00 p.m., April 10, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

- Do spiritual disciplines border on works-based righteousness?
- What is the point of discipline when the big picture is love?

Resource Study: Philippians 3

Recommended Reading: *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster

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

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Happy April, St. James!

Spring and Lent are two of my favorite seasons. It is a season of thought, prayer, and transformation. The grass is turning green, plants are starting to bloom, and it is finally getting warmer!

Like both seasons, St. James should also follow in the season of change and growth. Over the past year and a half, we have seen a tremendous growth in members, which is a wonderful sight to see. We have grown the amount of services that are provided, one on Saturday nights and one on Sunday mornings. While the services might look very different from one another, both of these services follow Lutheran theology with communion, prayer, and worship. By providing two services, attendance and membership can increase due to the availability people have to attend church. Whichever service one attends should not matter, what should matter is that they are learning from that service and applying it to their everyday lives.

It is important for all of us to realize that everyone at St. James is a family. While we are diverse in our everyday lives, we all follow the same Lutheran beliefs and practices. We should all look out for each other and help each other, as a family would. St. James is full of committees and groups that are formed to help one another and the church as a whole. It is also a great way to meet others that you might not have known before.

Let us all continue through this season of Lent with a happy heart and caring minds.

Peace and Love,

*Madeline Schmidt*

madelineschmidt2016@gmail.com

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## **Lenten Meal Schedule**

**4/2** - Site Committee and Christian Education

**4/9**- Fellowship/Food Pantry and Council



WELCA NEWS



The next meeting of Sarah Circle is Tuesday, April 29th at Church at 1:00 PM.

*\*The date has changed in honor of Holy Week.*

We are studying “Faithfulness” and the focus verses are Mark 5:21-43.

All women are welcome to join us (we also have dessert!)

Shirley Richlen is the hostess, and Marilyn Pieart is the lesson leader.





## St James GANG

The St James G.A.N.G. will meet on April 24th in the Fellowship Hall at 11:30 a.m.

- Bring your own lunch and dessert and beverages will be provided.

Be sure to let us know if you will be attending - email Pat Larson at [bettlarspr@mchsi.com](mailto:bettlarspr@mchsi.com)

All are welcome to come - Bring a friend!

GANG stands for Golden Agers Noontime Gathering!

Pat Larson  
563-343-2142



## From the Quilt Block

St. James Quilters met in January and finished 2 quilts.

For Lent we, as a congregation, are collecting Personal Care Kits. So far, we have collected 10 whole kits and many parts for more. Thank you for your continued support.

**The items that are the least donated are towels and nail clippers.** Nail clippers, sometimes, are the hardest to find or else they are way overpriced—Shop for the bargain. Walmart and Dollar General have been the best places to find towels at reasonable prices so far.

Quilters will meet on *April 22nd from Noon to 4.*

When the world gives you scraps, make a quilt!!!

Pieces be with you,

**Shirley Richlen (563) 949-6545**

Personal Care Kits items:

- 1 light weight bath towel (20"x40" to 27"x52"), Dark color recommended.
- 2 or 3 bath-size bars of soap (equaling 8-9 oz.) any brand in original packaging.
- 1 Adult size toothbrush in original packaging. Multi packs are accepted.
- 1 nail clipper.
- 1 **sturdy** comb (no picks)<sub>10</sub>

# MUFFINS



with



# MOM

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Sunday, May 11th

*Following the 9 a.m. service*

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**Join us on Sunday, May 11th after the service to celebrate all the moms!**

There will be muffins, juice, milk and coffee!

Contact Dee Worley at [ddworley54@gmail.com](mailto:ddworley54@gmail.com) or Jason Forari at [jmforari@msn.com](mailto:jmforari@msn.com) if you have any questions.



St. James invites all kids to join the Palm Sunday Procession on **Sunday, April 13th.**

- Meet in the narthex at *8:50 AM* to receive your palms.
- Then follow Bryce as you enter the sanctuary waving your palm branches in remembrance of the triumphal day Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey as the people shouted, “Hosanna in the highest.”



## Fellowship Committee

Fellowship is hosting Easter Brunch at *10 a.m. on Easter Sunday, April 20th.*

On the menu: Donuts, Cream Cheese and Bagels, Fruit, Breakfast Casseroles, Coffee, Juice and Milk.

There is a sign up sheet located in the Narthex to let them know how many people will be there. If you are planning on attending, please sign up or email the church office at [stjamesbett@gmail.com](mailto:stjamesbett@gmail.com) so they know how much food to provide!

If you have any questions, contact **Dee Worley** at [ddworley54@gmail.com](mailto:ddworley54@gmail.com) or **Jason Forari** at [jmforari@msn.com](mailto:jmforari@msn.com).

# HOLY WEEK

SPECIAL SERVICE TIMES

**April 13th-19th**

<b>PALM SUNDAY</b>	9AM-10AM Service
<b>Holy Monday Holy Tuesday Holy Wednesday</b>	7PM Vigil
<b>Maundy Thursday</b>	7PM Service
<b>Good Friday</b>	12PM Stations of the Cross <i>(self-guided)</i>  7PM Service
<b>Easter Vigil</b> <i>Saturday</i>	7PM Service



# EASTER SUNDAY

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<b>Service</b>	<b>9AM-10AM</b>
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<b>Brunch</b>	10:00AM
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	10:00AM
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<b>Easter Egg Hunt</b>	10:30AM
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	10:30AM
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<b>Service</b>	<b>11AM-12PM</b>
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## *Social Ministry News*

Social Ministry will serve the meal at Zion on Monday, May 26th!

If you would like to get involved with making or serving the meal, contact **Judy Larson at 563-340-7902.**

Social Ministry is hosting a Blood Drive on *May 5th from 2:30-5:30 p.m.* at St. James. Contact **Janene Anderson at (563) 370-8710 or Frieda Houldsworth at (563) 355-1628** for more details!

The annual Rummage Sale is *May 19th-23rd*. If you would like to help set-up or volunteer, please contact **Judy Larson at 563-340-7902.**



# Check us out online!

## YouTube Livestream

We livestream our services on YouTube each week to help us worship together and stay connected even when we are not at full health or out of town!

### Youtube Link:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzjqGF4g\\_QWtn\\_I2SqL5Q](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzjqGF4g_QWtn_I2SqL5Q)

### Youtube Channel QR Code:



## Sermon Podcast on Spotify!

If you missed a Sunday, click the link below or scan the QR code & listen to the Sermon on Spotify

*Please contact the church office if you need assistance accessing it!*

### Spotify Link:

<https://open.spotify.com/show/2bmzh6HFSREErSkUX5mlX?si=zG2ldhASSyCDYZi5QhDc1w>

### Spotify Channel QR Code:



## REMINDER!

**Deadline for May Epistle Articles  
is Friday, April 25th.**

## **APRIL BIRTHDAYS**

4/3 REESE WENDELL

4/4 HEATHER HOGBIN

4/5 KELLY CROOKS

4/5 JEFF HICKS

4/5 ROBERTA LEDER

4/6 MYRNA MATTLY

4/18 ANN LARSON

4/18 EDITH SOUTHWELL

4/20 PAUL BRAKEL

4/26 ANNA FORARI

4/27 DOUGLAS LARSON

4/30 NOA HEWLETT

4/30 MEL OSWALD

## **APRIL ANNIVERSARIES**

4/9 CAROLINE & JEFF HICKS

4/12 SUSIE & STEVE MILLER I

# Prayers for Healing and Support

## Congregational Members

**Ed** Arp, **Lynn** Chamberlain, **Bev** Chappen, **Sherry** Germanio,  
**Sandy** Henry, **Frieda** Houldsworth, **John** Leder,  
**LaVonne** Mienke, **Maggie** Bayliss, **Minhon** Ridenour

## Family and Friends

**Barry** (cousin of Ellen Hogbin), **Carol** (friend of Joleen & Erik Bakken), **Cathy** (friend of Deb Crooks), **Connie** (friend of Maggie Bayliss), **Dotty** (friend of Joleen & Erik Bakken),  
**Donna** (Ed Arp's sister), **Drew** (Pat Larson's friend),  
**Hattie** (Frieda's sister)  
**Jason** (Lynn Chamberlain & Sherry Germanio's son),  
**Joe** (Janene's son-in-law), **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), **Stan** (relative of Frtiz Voss),  
**Wally** (Frieda's nephew), **Young Family—especially Emmett, their son** (friends of Diana Worley)

## 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.*

# April 2025 Worship Assistants

	Date	Assisting Minister	Acolyte	Usher	Usher	Altar Guild	Altar Guild
	<b>Lenten Wed - 4/2/25</b>	Not Needed	Not Needed	Ryan Martin	Not Needed	Not Needed	Not Needed
	<b>4/6/25</b>	Caroline Hicks	Jude Hewlett	Darryl Worley	Diana Worley	Marilyn Pieart	Diana Worley
	<b>Lenten Wed - 4/9/25</b>	Not Needed	Not Needed	Ryan Martin	Not Needed	Not Needed	Not Needed
	<b>Palm Sunday - 4/13/25 7pm</b>	Janet Brakel	Rilynne and Carter	Jerry Nichols	Yvonne Nichols	Pat Larson	Mary Meumann
	<b>Holy Monday - 4/14/25 7pm</b>	Not Needed	Not Needed	Not Needed	Not Needed	Not Needed	Not Needed
	<b>Holy Tuesday - 4/15/25 7pm</b>	Not Needed	Not Needed	Not Needed	Not Needed	Not Needed	Not Needed
	<b>Holy Wednesday - 4/16/25 7pm</b>	Not Needed	Not Needed	Not Needed	Not Needed	Not Needed	Not Needed
	<b>Maundy Thurs 4/17/25 7pm</b>	Shirley Richlen	Jude & Dex Hewlett	Caroline Hicks	Diana Worley	Mary Meumann	Pat Larson
	<b>Good Friday - 4/18/25 7pm</b>	Janet Brakel	Not Needed	Ryan Martin	Ellen Hogbin	Jason Forari	Not Needed
	<b>Easter Vigil - 4/19/25 7pm</b>	Not Needed	Not Needed	Not Needed	Not Needed	Not Needed	Not Needed
	<b>Easter - 4/20/25 9am - Processional</b>	Diana Worley / Mary Meumann	Edi Southwell & Velvet Collison	Ron Mekalson	Kelly Crooks	Pat Larson	Mary Meumann
	<b>Easter - 4/20/25 11am - Processional</b>	Caroline Hicks/ Jason Forari Reader	Jude and Dex Hewlett	Melissa Forari	Ana Forari	Clean up Monday	Clean up Monday
	<b>4/27/25</b>	Tom Sladky	Velvet Collison	Fritz Voss	Judy Larson	Mary Meumann	Diana Worley

*Please Note: If you find you cannot serve on the date/time scheduled, please arrange for your replacement, then **call or email your scheduler** to advise the name of your replacement. Your gracious cooperation is very much appreciated! Thanks!*

### **Schedulers**

**Altar Guild:** Mary Meumann (563)355-7138;  
[marybusdrvr@gmail.com](mailto:marybusdrvr@gmail.com)

**Ushers & Assisting Ministers:**  
Janet Brakel (708)207-5515;  
[jbrakel@ameritech.net](mailto:jbrakel@ameritech.net)

**Children's Team:** Kim Hewlett (856)296-1023;  
[kimhewlett18@gmail.com](mailto:kimhewlett18@gmail.com)

**Counters:** Maddie Schmidt (563)570-6354;  
[madelineschmidt2016@gmail.com](mailto:madelineschmidt2016@gmail.com)

**Acolytes:** Maddie Schmidt (563)570-6354;  
[madelineschmidt2016@gmail.com](mailto:madelineschmidt2016@gmail.com)