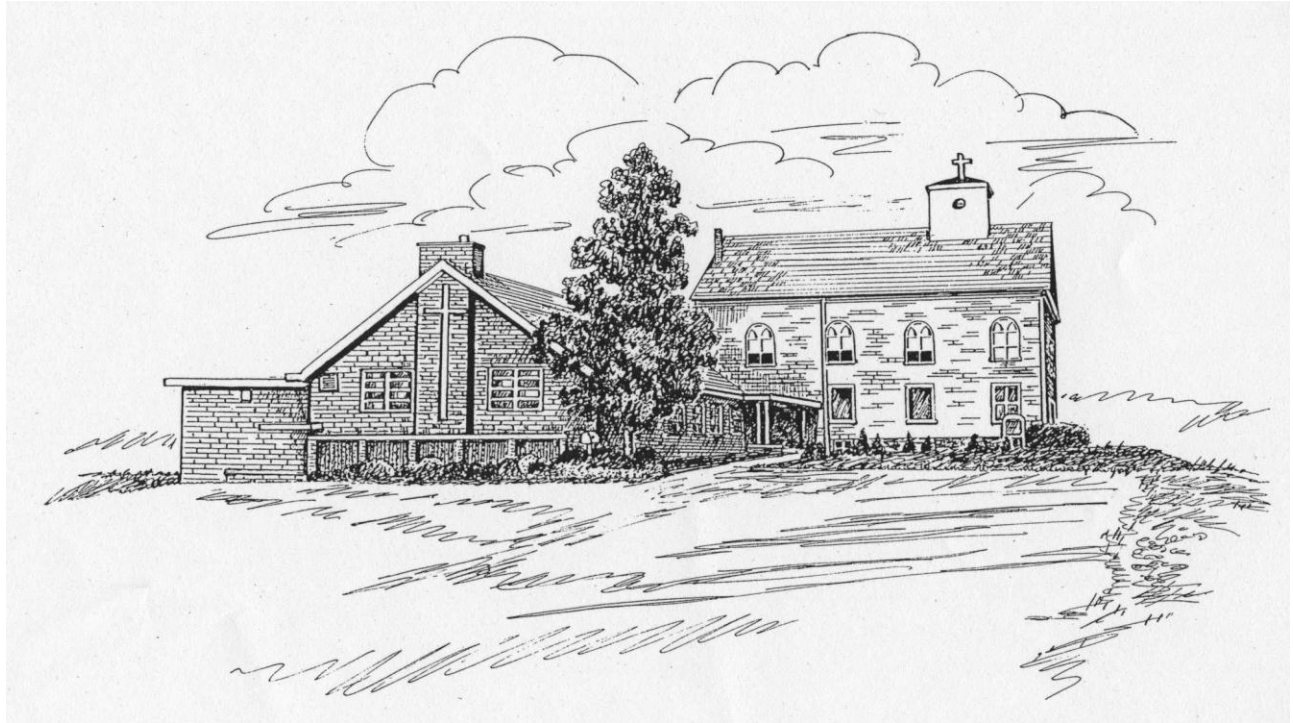


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St. James Lutheran Church Newsletter

January 2011

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*“Serving Christ in Word and Deed”
for over 260 Years*

The Pastor's Letter

Dear Friends,

It's hard to believe a new year has begun. With the New Year comes the chance to begin things differently, or even to make resolutions. The unfortunate thing about doing that, however, is that more than likely we won't follow through. Yet there is one thing we can do each day and that is to ask for God's help and partnership for the new day. God will most certainly do it, even if we don't feel his presence. Luther calls it "returning to our baptism" when we begin the day by putting God first. When we "return to our baptism" is it the declaration of our belonging God, and being a "child of God" and inheritor of God's kingdom.

It should also encourage us to do so, because we know our baptism was not based on our good deeds or how much prayer or how "spiritual" we are. It is God's love for us, sealed by the death and resurrection of Jesus, which gives us that intimate title of "children of God".

This especially important when things do not go well, or we honestly know we don't live up to what God expects of us. In fact when Luther thought the Devil was harassing him, he would cry out, "I am baptized!"

St John in one of his letters sums this up beautifully:

*See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!
And that is what we are! I John 3:1*

No one can really know what a year will bring. For some of you reading this there are already huge challenges looming in situations you face. While reacting to these things in various ways emotionally will naturally happen, keep the perspective of to whom you belong. A hymn says it best:

*"Children of the Heavenly Father
Safely in his bosom gather
Nestling bird or star in heaven
Such a refuge ne'er was given"*

May God's best be yours in 2011.

Your brother in Christ,

Pr. John



Phillipsburg Area Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service

On Sunday afternoon, November 21st, St. James had the pleasure of hosting the Phillipsburg Ministerial Fellowship Ecumenical Service of Thanksgiving. An inspirational series of readings and lessons by clergy from several surrounding churches of different traditions cast a truly Christian light on the holiday that exemplifies all that is good about our great country. In the spirit of the day, the Offering taken up was for the benefit of NORWESCAP's programs serving our needy neighbors.

The Worship Service was followed by a dinner in the Ed Frey Memorial Hall. We thank all the people who worked to make this event happen, as well as those who made it worthwhile by their attendance and participation.



Wedding Bells

On Saturday, November 20th, St. James was privileged to witness and bless the marriage of Lindsey Motto and Aaron Goodin. Tracey Philhower was Maid of Honor and Wayne Baker was Best Man. Parents of the bride, Thomas Motto and Penny Nace, are both members of St. James. The groom is on active duty with the U.S. Army. Our prayers and best wishes go to the happy couple, as well as our thanks for serving the country.

Thank You

Dear Friends,

Pam and I again would like to thank you for all the cards, gifts, and especially the offering that was taken up for us a Christmas time. It was very thoughtful, and we are very grateful. We look forward to being in partnership in ministry with you in 2011.

Our Love and Prayers,

Pr. John and Pam Van Haneghan

1910 Sunday School Christmas Pageant



The Christmas Pageant returned to its traditional format this year, with the events of the first Christmas being told in song and story. As is evident in these pictures, and was even more so to those in attendance, the children put their hearts into the production.

Of course, one of the principal benefits of these annual productions is to help keep the youth of our congregation focused on the real meaning of Christmas, and for this effort we have to thank all the parents and volunteers who make them possible each year. Thanks also to Barbara Wynston for the fine photographic record she keeps of them.

Acolytes Meeting

Any students who are interested in serving as acolytes are requested to come to a brief meeting at 11:00 am on Sunday, January 30th (after Sunday School).

Looking Ahead

This year, Ash Wednesday falls fairly late, on March 9th. Information on Lenten observances as well as those for Holy Week and Easter will be forthcoming.

Senior League – “Fellowship over Fifty”

In what has become something of an annual event, Ed Saultz and his group regaled our December gathering with a collection of standard and Irish Christmas songs, performed as only he can do them. As much as our spirits were lifted by the music, our tummies were warmed by an excellent meal of cold-weather comfort food.



The next meeting will be on Wednesday evening, February 2nd, at 6:00 pm. There will be a spaghetti dinner. Please contact to Carol Meixsell at 908-454-67 if you plan to attend.

† In Memoriam †

Kathryn L. Stocker, 90, of Pohatcong Twp., mother of Steve Stocker, passed to her eternal reward on Sunday, November 21st. She generously volunteered her time for various activities at St. James, and conducted the VBS at her home during the time the current Sunday School facilities were being built.

Nettie L. Sisonick, 95, of Phillipsburg and formerly of Pohatcong Twp., went to be with her Lord on Thursday, January 6th. A long time active member of St. James, she taught Sunday School and worked at VBS for a number of years.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all the friends and families of these new members of the Church Triumphant.

Congregational Meeting

A covered dish brunch at 11:00 am will precede the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 23rd. Important information will be presented and discussed, and it is important that as many members as possible attend. Full details will be in the mail.

Offering Envelopes

If you have not yet picked up your 2011 offering envelopes, they are available outside Frey Hall. If you are making donations for multiple weeks, please combine them in one envelope.

Ongoing Fund Raisers

Pancake and sausage breakfasts are held on the first Saturday of every month, from 7:00 am to 12:00 noon in the Ed Frey Memorial Hall. Cost is \$8.00 for adults and children 10 and over, \$5.00 under 10 years.

Old cell phones (working or not), used inkjet and laser cartridges can be dropped into the containers available outside the Ed Frey Memorial Hall. Business donations welcome. We are working toward purchasing a DVD projector with money raised from these donations.

Hoagie Sale. Simply purchase tickets at St. James for \$6.00 each for a hoagie from Gino's sandwich shop in Phillipsburg. Take your ticket(s) to Gino's and order your custom-made sandwich. For each ticket the church earns \$2.00.

Shop Rite Gift Cards are available at the office or after Worship. St. James receives \$5.00 for every \$100 in cards purchased, at no cost to you.

Recipes: We need your recipes. Enter them at www.typensave.com. Group log-in is *strawchurch* and the password is *recipe*. Recipe books will be available for purchased once we have collected 250 recipes.

Sermon Discussion Begins on January 9th

Have you ever wanted to ask the Pastor about something he said in the sermon, or wanted to explore the Bible readings in a bit more depth that at worship?



Starting January 9th that opportunity will be available to you after worship and during the Sunday School Hour in

Pastor's office on Sundays. You are welcome to come every Sunday or on a one time basis, if you can't come every week. If you wish to bring your Bible, you are welcome to do so.

So after Sunday worship, get your refreshments after service, then join the pastor to reflect, comment, or bring questions concerning the sermon or the scriptures behind them.

Can't sleep? Try counting your blessings.

Confirmation Class

Our 8th Grade confirmation class is evidently being well prepared for full membership in St. James. As an example of active participation in parish life, they set up and decorated the lovely Christmas Tree that graced our sanctuary for the holidays.



Cubs Spaghetti Supper

Cub Scout Pack 56 will be holding a spaghetti supper from 4 to 8 pm on Saturday, January 29th, in the Ed Frey Memorial Hall.

Youth Group Continues!

Last October Pam and I began having monthly youth group meetings at Church. We divided the group into a "Junior High Group" (grades 6-8th) and a "Senior High Youth Group" (grades 9-12th). Last month we had a joint Christmas party with both groups. Usually the Junior High group meets on the first Sunday of the month from 6-8 pm, and the Senior High Group on the third Sunday of the month at the same time. We expect to continue these monthly meetings until the summer months. We invite all youth of either age group to come or contact us for more information. Below are some pictures from previous youth group meetings. - *Pr. John*



Two teams faced off in a lively balloon game. Looks like they could have used shin guards!



Trip to the Raub Farm corn maze



Youth Group Christmas Party