

**St. James Lutheran Church**  
111 Peter Road  
Southbury, CT 06488

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APRIL, 2020

# THE EPISTLE

*"Be doers of the word, and not hearers only." James 1:22*

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## Holy Week & Easter

### ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH

111 Peter Road, Southbury, CT 06488

203.264.6446

[www.stjamesct.org](http://www.stjamesct.org)

email: [stjames@snet.net](mailto:stjames@snet.net)

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### THE ST. JAMES PRESCHOOL

Leslie Broch, Director

203.264.6448



Evangelical Lutheran Church  
in America

God's work. Our hands.

St. James Church is handicapped accessible and family friendly.

# ✠ ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH ✠

www.stjamesct.org

email: stjames@snet.net

The Rev Paul D. Sinnott, Interim Pastor

Pastor: 860.868.4040

Church: 203.264.6446

Ministers: The People of St. James

Sunday School & Bible Study	9am
Sunday Worship with Holy Communion	10:15am
Saturday Worship with Holy Communion	5pm
Summer Worship with Holy Communion (June, July, August)	9:30am

Coffee and Fellowship follows Sunday Worship; Please Sign-Up!!

## CHURCH COUNCIL

Linda Bedard	Fun & Fellowship, Y&FM	203.267.1066
Karen Furr	Outreach, Fall Fest, Y&FM	203.267.1481
Ryan Furr	Younger Person Representative	203.267.1481
Diane Iannini	Health & Wellness, PreSchool Board	203.240.4438
Judy Katzmark	Council President	203.264.4980
Denise Kuo	Council Secretary	203.405.1137
Karen Lampiasi	Worship & Music, James Ministries	203.586.1492
Richard Manville	Treasurer	203.232.8099
Jacque Matthew	Stewardship, Parish Support, Y&FM	203.233.9581
Tim Peterson	Council Vice-President	203.442.3705
Steve Ulc	Outreach, Green Team, Y&FM	203.262.6526

## STAFF & MINISTRIES

Genie Bisch	Parish Secy., Preschool Admin. Asst.	203.264.6446
	M,T,Th 2-4:30pm; Fri. 8:00-10:45am	
Leslie Broch	Director, St. James PreSchool	203.264.6448
John Dressel	Director of Music	203.758.8963
Tammy Faulkner	Coordinator, Youth&Family Ministries	203.267.6097
Gail Fay	Assistant Treasurer	\$\$ 203.264.1362
Erwin Weissmann	Financial Secretary	\$\$ 203.264.7563

The Due Date for the May, 2020 Epistle is April 15<sup>th</sup>.

Please send submissions to Genie Bisch (stjames@snet.net).

Thank You.



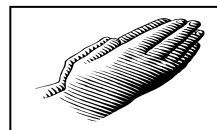
## In Our Prayers



Karen Huber	Arlene Ascenzo	Kay West
Mildred Minervini	Ginny Pucillo	Ramona Cummings
Emileo Alvarado	Kelsey Gerber	Charlie Costello
Ryan DeRidder	Marilyn Balla	Katie D'Antonio
Steffi Spath	Robert Kohler	Darice Peruch
Elsa Bowen	Richard Bowen	Diane Duffy
Fred Wuensch	Janet Benzell	Mickey Campanile
Richard Prisco	Vinnie Carbone	Sue Bormolini
Margaret Greenman	Lucy Dee	Karl Faulkner
Vicky Manville	Stanley Ulc	Rose Danieli
Margaret Butts	Angel Guel	Andrew Hubina
Bruce Burns	Gabi Adler	Henri Bigelow
Nicole Peterson	Peter Adler	Julie Johnson
Beth Alvarado	Neil Chaudry	



Please also keep Matt Cheatham, Wilson Owens, Timothy Elwell, Seth Lash, Stephen Danek, and all those who serve in the military, in your prayers.



We also pray for All the Saints, especially Marie McClain, Gloria Rapp, Ellen Savickas, Rebecca Scalera and all those who mourn the loss of a loved one.

We also pray for all suffering during this time with this malady, those who shelter, those who toil in healthcare and service to others at great risk, and those who have no one else but us to pray for them.

**“Please don’t forget your church during this crisis.**

You can mail your offering to 111 Peter Road, and the mail is collected daily. We are doing our best to provide care and concern for all of our members from the youngest to the elderly and home bound.

As you are able, please help us keep being the hands of Christ.”



## What We Do in Worship: And Why!

**OFFERING:** In the Offering, we gather the gifts that God's people present in gratitude to the Lord during the Worship Service. In the Offering, we return to God a portion of the treasures He has first given us!

**OFFERTORY:** The OFFERTORY is sung as the offering is brought forward and presented before the altar. During the singing of the Offertory, the altar is prepared for the celebration the Eucharist, Holy Communion.

"What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord...I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all His people, in the courts of the house of the Lord, in your midst, O Jerusalem." Psalm 116:12-13, 17-19

**SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT:** The SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT is the celebration of the Sacrament of the Altar. The Sacrament was instituted by Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. The Sacrament is to be celebrated by all Christians until Christ comes again on the Last Day. Because Jesus instituted the Sacrament of the Altar, those in the faith come to the altar (the table) to receive the body and blood of Jesus under the forms of bread and wine.

In the LORD'S SUPPER, Christ comes to be with His holy people and to give forgiveness, life and salvation. The Service of the Sacrament begins with the Preface (an ancient dialogue or conversation between the pastor and the people). The first part of the Preface does not change. But it introduces the parts which do change for each season of the Church year, or the Festival Days. At the close of the Preface, the pastor says, "Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven..." Our worship is not limited by time or by space. Every time we worship, we join the angelic choirs and saints of every age in their ongoing heavenly worship of the Lamb of God who was slain.

"The Lord be with your spirit." 2 Timothy 4:22

A Word from Pastor Paul

April 2020

"Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we have hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience." Romans 8

Friends in Christ:

When we clergy are ordained to the ministry, we are admonished by the bishop never to give "illusory hope" in our interactions with our parishioners, colleagues or anyone else. This is more difficult a task than you might imagine at first glance. Placed in our hands are holy things: water, wine, bread, the scriptures, the forgiveness of sins and the retention of sins. These things are not things that belong to us, but we are stewards of them. And we use these things as best we know how to edify and lift up our people in good times and bad times.

This is unquestionably a bad time. Not perhaps the worst of times, as Charles Dickens might say, but the worst time in my memory. And we have no timetable as to when things will get better. This bad time makes it impossible to do a lot of the things that bring us comfort: control over our time, our vocation, our purpose. It threatens our livelihood and disrupts routines and makes us prickly and crabby and imprisons us under "house arrest." Or if our vocation is one that compels us to leave our house and family, what are the consequences? Could we be the source of someone's demise or the fountain of blessing? For what do we hope?

Well, I am not in possession of a magic wand or a crystal ball or Harry Potter's owl.

And I will not delude you with projections about the economy or the healthcare system or even when we will celebrate Easter. There is no playbook for this. We get to respond as best we know how with the tools at hand.

The only tools I have on hand that provide any solace at all are the promises of Jesus. Jesus told his disciples (and anyone else willing to listen) that he would use his gifts not to perform magic, but to heal, bring hearing and sight and insight. And then he would go on the long journey to Jerusalem to suffer, die, and then to rise again, making way for all of us to join him both on the journey and in the

Resurrection. This is not, from Jesus, illusory hope. And it's what we can "hang our hat on," so to speak. Jesus promises to be with us, "even to the end of the age." And Jesus is with us even now, as we make this Lenten journey of trust. So we trust in God's promises, and they are not illusory. They are real.

As Luther said (and I quoted last week) "I ask God to mercifully protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine and take it. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance inflict and pollute others as a result of my negligence...If my neighbor needs me I shall not avoid person or place but go freely." May we reasonably help in this way, neighbor to neighbor, with songs of thanksgiving for what we have received and willingly share our gifts of "non-illusory hope" as best we know how. You are God's blessings,

*Pastor Paul*

The Rev Paul D. Sinnott, Interim Pastor  
St James Lutheran Church, Southbury  
New England Synod, ELCA  
God's work; Our hands

### **Let's Look Ahead and SAVE THE DATE!**

September 13<sup>th</sup> is our time to celebrate 50 years of St. James. Bishop Hazelwood will join us at morning services and in the afternoon we will gather at the Heritage Hotel to share a meal, meet and greet old and new members and friends, and look back at our accomplishments and forward to our shining future.

Please join us for this celebration!



## **AN APPLE A DAY:**

Our lives are changing as I am writing this article.

Covid 19 has been declared a pandemic. Of the 330 million people in the US, the estimate is about 60-70 percent of Americans will have some form of the illness. The complications and death rates rise from .2-3 percent the older you are. Being over age sixty or having preexisting diseases appears to impose greater risk of severe illness.

The virus is spread easily through droplet infection which means it can travel through the air with a cough or a sneeze. The virus also lives for two to three days on hard surfaces. There is not enough evidence yet to know if you can be reinfected once you are recovered from a Covid 19 infection. The symptoms most frequently reported are fever, cough, sore throat, malaise and shortness of breath. If you have shortness of breath please see your provider.

To keep your risk low: Avoid public areas/transit where there will be more human contact; Keep a personal distance to six feet (minimize droplet infection); Cleanse all hard surfaces such as computers, phones, door knobs, with a bleach or comparable disinfectant ; cover your own coughs in your elbow sleeve; wash your hands with soap and water or alcohol based gel frequently; refrain from touching your face with your hands.

If you do become sick stay at home with plenty of fluids and analgesics.

If you have shortness of breath please see your provider.

It matters not - my hand in Thine,  
Thy light upon my face,  
Thy boundless strength when I am weak,  
Thy love and saving grace!

I only ask, loose not my hand,  
Grip fast my soul, and be  
My GUIDING LIGHT upon the path  
Till, blind no more, I see!!

Martha Snell Nicholson



All services will be audio, available the evening before the celebration including

**Sunday, April 5, 2020:** Palm / Passion Sunday;

**Thursday, April 9, 2020:** Maundy Thursday

**Friday, April 10, 2020:** Good Friday

**Sunday, April 12, 2020:** Easter Sunday /  
The Resurrection of Our Lord

**As controls are lifted we will begin to bring back our regular programs and events and will update our Church calendar.**

## **The First Day of Spring 2020 Bishop Hazelwood**

Around the year 4500 BCE, ancient people in the Middle East discovered that the plant growing on the edges of waterways had multiple uses. Among them were clothes, shelter, food, baskets...and later on, paper. The papyrus plants gave birth to writing many years later. We benefited from the move from oral tradition to written tradition as stories, poems, songs, got put onto scrolls..... in what later became the Bible.

What people frequently wrote about were their observations of a world in chaos and the yearning for order. From Homer's *The Odyssey* to Jeremiah and Luke, ancient people wrote about a world around them rattling with conflicts and uncertainties. Collective anxiety and depression were present in the writings dating back to, well, the beginning of writing...dare I say, the beginning of human consciousness.

What we are experiencing today, therefore, is on one level, not new. In a globally interconnected world, however, everything is amplified. Cable News, Facebook, Texting, and E-mail allow us to share our collective anxiety and possibly to intensify it. The purpose of this letter is to offer an antidote.....not to the Coronavirus itself, but a remedy for the escalation of collective anxiety.

Ancient writings from around the world, including the oldest narratives of the Hebrew Bible, make clear that the loss of shared values and meaning in culture cause people to suffer both psychologically and spiritually. True today, as back then, is the realization that a growing sense of despair and deep uncertainty about the future of the world is a dominant theme of life.

That's my starting point:

- Life is Difficult.
- Life has Suffering.
- Life is Not Fair.

Our way forward begins with an honest acknowledgment of that reality. The real reason the cross is the central symbol of the Christian faith is the honest reminder that suffering is the wound we all carry as humans. We are meaning-seeking people keenly aware that loss, grief, fear, and the termination of life, surround us.

## The First Day of Spring 2020 Bishop Hazelwood

Facing this reality is Step One in our Twelve Step Program of Life. We begin here because it is true.

Our knee jerk reaction to this truth is to attempt to exercise some semblance of control over the unfolding events that remind us of our frailty. How else can one explain the excessive purchases of toilet paper? People are attempting to control one small aspect of life in a world run amuck. Truth be told, our attempts at control, while they may bring us temporary relief, do not address the underlying angst of these days.

"But, Bishop, tell me what does? What brings relief?"

Ah, the desire for the *quick fix*..... the *easy answer*..... the *magic pill*. We live in the age of the *quick fix* as one Rabbi reminded us years ago. There must be an answer. As if on some secret gnostic quest for the hidden truth, we are all looking for the one thing that will bring relief to this angst and pain we are experiencing. I'll come back to this, but first, I offer an observation about Holy Communion. In the last week, the anxiety drive within our tradition (Lutheran movement of Christianity) is centering around Holy Communion. Suddenly, all across the country, ELCA Lutheran clergy in particular (but also a few lay people) are clamoring for a *quick fix* to our dilemma around the Sacrament of Holy Communion. There is a sense in these online diatribes that there must be an immediate solution.

While thoughtful conversations around communion and emerging new understandings of community are legitimate topics for reading, writing and reflection, let's do that together, but not as a *quick fix*. Instead, I'm most intrigued by the way this topic has sucked up all the oxygen in the room. Instead of congregations focusing their energy on building intentional communities of connectedness (see below for more), there is a headlong dive into "*we need to get communion out to people NOW.*" And yet, do we not also believe that the "Word" is a Means of Grace as well?

In New England, I have been discouraging our churches from practicing any of the proposed ideas around Holy Communion.



## God's Global Barnyard:

A reminder that the mission project of the SCS for the months of March and April is the ELCA World Hunger Project through God's Global Barnyard. The kids have come up with their goal to earn \$175 with the help of the congregation:

- **10 chicks (\$10) - 1 rooster (\$15) - Honeybees (\$20)**

- **1 pig (\$30) - 1 goat (\$50)**

- **1 set seeds and gardening tools (\$50)**

We have raised \$51.71 toward Gods' global barnyard! We are aware that in these times, funding for world hunger relief will be ever more critical in the months to come. We encourage you to continue to find ways to contribute toward the global barnyard efforts even while we are not meeting in person. Contributions can be made to the church with the memo: Global Barnyard/ELCA world hunger.

Dear Lord, as his new day is born  
I give it to Thy hand,  
Content to walk by faith what paths  
I cannot understand.

Whatever coming days may bring  
Of bitter loss, or gain,  
Or every crown of happiness;  
Should sorrow come, or pain,

Or, Lord, if all unknown to me  
Thine angel hovers near  
To bear me to that farther shore  
Before another year



## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

### Southbury Food Bank Collection

We have temporarily moved the rice bin into a heavy duty Tupperware that will be located on the bench outside the old pastor's office. The food bank has critical needs at this time. Thanks for your continued support!

**THANK YOU!!!** : For all who participated in the Dipalmas Fundraiser to support the preschool scholarship fund. \$200 was raised to support families who need assistance covering the cost of preschool education. The Julios fundraiser scheduled for March 30<sup>th</sup> will be cancelled for another date. Thank you!!!

### Social Isolation is SOOOO Hard!

Please know we think about and miss you all daily. Imagine how hard it is for those in nursing homes who cannot get any visitors now!!!! We are taking a collection of cheery thoughts for our local nursing home residents. Cards, kid's artwork, anything uplifting would be great! You can send them to Kaitlyn Furr, 124 Southwoods Terrace, Southbury or Lauren Lyons, 1133 Kettletown Rd, Southbury. We will make sure they get to any local nursing homes that will take them! Be safe. Stay well. In faith. Lauren Lyons



### HOMEFRONT DAY – MAY 3rd

Postponed at this time. More info to come as we know more in the coming weeks.

### The First Day of Spring 2020 Bishop Hazelwood

These include, but are not limited to: Drive-Thru Communion, Virtual Communion, and Amazon Drone Delivery of Communion. While I understand the drive, I'm also keenly aware that in the church, we tend to bless a practice too quickly. Questions arise for me:

- After this is all done, will we normalize a regular online communion practice, later adding virtual baptisms?
  - Will clergy of the near future opt-out of in-person communion visits because, well, it's more convenient via Zoom?
  - And what of those, mostly older, who do not have internet access or comfort with digital tools? Instead, I've been encouraging two acts that will serve us better in this immediate and temporary situation. These two areas of focus are not *quick-fix* solutions, but they may address the underlying anxiety our people are experiencing in these times, namely a loss of community and a loss of meaning. Humanity is community. We are nothing, if we do not have each other. Knowing and believing this as a core value, some of our pastors have quickly moved toward shepherding or small group models. This Ancient/Future Church practice has all of the congregation divided into 3-4 households with one leader charged with contacting them twice a week. The leader stays in touch as they embody the Holy Spirit's glue in our temporarily disconnected body. As needs arise, that leader reports back to the Pastor. This is not new. Jethro advised Moses in this way some 3,000 years ago. But in our time, a time of extreme loneliness (even before Covid19 sent us all to our rooms), people are yearning for community.
  - Could these groups schedule periodic Zoom chats or conference calls?
  - Could lay people pray for one another?
  - Could lay people attend to the fundamental core values of our faith?
- The early church was known not for its elaborate rationalizing of peculiar communion practices, but rather for its care for the widow, the orphan, and the dispossessed.

## The First Day of Spring 2020 Bishop Hazelwood

Congregations focusing their energy on establishing this kind of care community would be living and dynamic sacraments. Is this not what Martin Luther highlighted in the confessions "mutual conversation and consolation of the brethren" as a kind of Means of Grace or sacramental participation in the life of God?

Humans are meaning-seeking creatures. Lutherans value Word and Sacrament, but in recent years and recent days, they have fallen prey to that ancient foil of dualism. In this case, we have divided Word from Sacrament as if they are two separate Means of Grace. I've seen scribblings in various Facebook posts as people reactively clamor to get the wafers delivered by any means necessary. What about the Word? Is not the Word also a form of Grace? Do we not still hold to the hope of a kick-ass Law/Gospel sermon? Could that not be delivered in writing, on YouTube, or even in a Pastoral visit with a member via Facetime? Meaning-seeking creatures are hungry for words, stories, and vignettes that remind them of the central antidote to despair, namely hope.

In these days of despair, as in the days of past despair, we find ways to move toward hope. That is the work of the Holy Spirit. She is a hope-driven being. Friends, this has been the way humans have made it through 10,000 years of civilization. Reading about some of the less than competent Kings of the Old Testament is a potent reminder that things have gone wrong in the past, and yet, hope prevailed.

Jesus the Christ presents the ultimate hope..... not because of some magic salvific formula that includes testimonials of devotion, but because he is the center of life. The Hope of the Cross and Resurrection, is that life has lasting and robust hope.

We are in 'temporary' times. Let's gain some perspective here. This, too, shall pass. We have been here before, albeit not quite in this way. We are not at the end. I am wondering if it might be the beginning of something quite hopeful. I'll write about that in my next letter.



**COMMUNITY  
OUTREACH**

### **EARTH DAY 2020 – How to celebrate our earth amid the Convid19 crisis: A few simple ways we can reduce our impact on the environment this Earth Day:**

- \* Clean up some trash when you are out on your walk! Be sure to wear gloves and wash your hands immediately after coming home.
- \* Change your bulbs - Replacing one regular light bulb with a compact florescent light bulb will save 150 pounds of carbon dioxide per year.
- \* Try your hand at compost. Non-meat and dairy food scraps decompose into wonderful soil when given time and a protected place. Coffee grounds are a wonderful addition.
- \* Recycle – you can save 2400 pounds of carbon dioxide by recycling half of your household waste.
- \* Move your thermostat up 2 degrees in the summer and down 2 degrees in the winter can save 2000 pounds of carbon dioxide per year.
- \* Plant a tree – each tree can absorb one ton of carbon dioxide over its lifetime.
- \* Turn off electronic devices when not using them.
- \* Purchase Lutheran World Relief or Equal Exchange Fair Trade Coffee. A portion of all coffee sales through the LWR Coffee Project supports LWR partners and projects overseas. Talk to Lauren if interested.



# April

**St. James Church**  
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
*God's work. Our hands.*



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<i>Holy Communion is offered at all worship services</i>		<b>FIELD GOODS</b> delivered Tuesdays usually before 11am	1	2	3	4
5 Palm Sunday	6	7	8	9	10	1
12 Easter	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 Easter 2	20	21	22	23	24	25
26 Easter 3	27	28	29 10-2pm Upper Rm 9:30-noon: SFB 8pm: AA	30		
						<b>2020</b>

As controls are lifted we will begin to bring back our regular programs and events.