

ST JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH EPISTLE

A CONGREGATION OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CHURCH OF AMERICA

IN THIS ISSUE:

A Letter from Pastor Abby

An Apple a Day

Outreach and Ministries

Forward Leadership

Youth and Families Ministries

Gustafson Fund

Get Involved

Bishop Eaton on Mental Health

Serving in Worship

In our Prayers

February Calendar



ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.stjamesct.org

stjamesctlutheran@gmail.com

203.264.6446

Abigail Johnson, Pastor

Office Hours: Mondays 10AM - 12PM and Wednesdays 1PM – 3PM

pastor@stjamesct.org 413-455-6940 (9AM-6PM or emergencies)

Days Off: Friday & Saturday

CHURCH COUNCIL

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Linda Bedard | <i>Council Vice-President</i> |
| Emilie Ulc | <i>Younger Person Representative</i> |
| Karen Furr | <i>Council Member</i> |
| Jan Carnaroli | <i>Council Member</i> |
| Judy Katzmark | <i>Council President</i> |
| Karen Lampiasi | <i>Council Member</i> |
| Neil Johnson | <i>Treasurer</i> |
| Jacque Matthew | <i>Council Member</i> |
| Lynn Morrison | <i>Council Member</i> |
| Jeff Nadasen | <i>Council Secretary/Council Member</i> |
| Kathy Haddy | <i>Council Member</i> |

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Genie Bisch | <i>Parish Sec., Preschool Admin. Asst.</i> <i>T,Th 9-12pm; Fri. 2:30-5pm</i> |
| Leslie Broch | <i>Director, St. James PreSchool</i> |
| Diane Peterson | <i>Director of Music</i> |
| Tammy Faulkner | <i>Coordinator, Youth & Family</i> |
| Gail Fay | <i>Assistant Treasurer \$\$</i> |
| Curt Haedke | <i>Financial Secretary \$\$</i> |

ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH

111 Peter Road, Southbury, CT 06488

203.264.6446

www.stjamesct.org

stjamesctlutheran@gmail.com

ST. JAMES PRESCHOOL

Leslie Broch, Director

203.264.6448

stjameslutheranpreschool@gmail.com

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, we ask that those in attendance please practice social distancing and wear masks in church. Communion is served individually in service and the Peace is shared from a distance.

In addition, Church service is held at St James on Sunday mornings at 10:15 am 111 Peter Road. Drive in Church will remain an option on 88.5 FM.

The due date for the February 2022 Epistle is February 15th.

Please send submissions via the form on our epistle page (stjamesct.org/epistles) Thank you



A WORD FROM PASTOR ABBY

Snowy greetings, beloved community of St. James,

Winter lingers long in the small town of Jericho, Vermont. Snow piles up in smooth, uneven drifts. Chickadees sound their recognizable call and tap light prints long the ground. Wind, so cold and sharp it whistles the birch trees, freezes both the river and time itself. But if you step inside the old, red mill along the river, you'll find it warm and converted into the Snowflake Bentley Museum. A local farmer and town celebrity from the late 1800's, Wilson A. Bentley was the first to photograph a single snow crystal, capturing the fleeting beauty and uniqueness of a snowflake. Just like people, Bentley observed "no two are ever alike." He affectionately became known as "Snowflake Bentley" and lived out his life in Jericho; welcoming, embracing and loving each passing winter.

I recall wearing my pjs inside out and putting a wooden spoon under my pillow as a child; any superstitious trick to bring about more snow and days off from school to play in the powder. Winter has its faithful fans but for many, it can justifiably be a hard season. The temperature drop, the slippery roads, the constant shoveling, can all be real hurdles to embracing and loving this season as Snowflake Bentley did. And yet, wintering is good for the soul. It is a season when all nature pauses and restores. It is also a respite for our bodies and a peaceful state of mind. Winter calls us to do what author Katherine May calls, "deeply unfashionable things: slowing down, resting, retreating." What if we lived into the seasons with nature? Alongside and learning from it instead of pushing to compensate for it?

If the Spirit moves like wind, I think She dresses like snowflakes. Gentle, serene, stirring yet delicate. Sometimes arriving as a blizzard in our lives and sometimes a flurry; able to make time stand still and our busy selves turn inward, back to where God winters with us.

PEACE & GRATITUDE,

PASTOR ABBY JOHNSON ... AND THULE, THE ST. JAMES GREETER PUP

P.S. For a bit of wintering insight, I encourage you to listen to the episode "Katherine May: How Wintering Replenishes" of the podcast, "On Being with Krista Tippett" found online or on Spotify.

An Apple A Day



February, a Month to Celebrate Heart Health

A healthy lifestyle, especially when you start young goes a long way to preventing cardiovascular disease. Eating healthy, mostly fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low fat dairy, poultry fish and nuts while limiting your red meat and refined sugars.

Walking is a form of aerobic exercise and one of the easiest ways to increase physical activity, maintaining a healthy weight and improving your heart. Physical activity increases your heart rate, strengthens your heart, increases circulation through your body, bringing oxygen and nutrients to your heart and other organs. At least 30 minutes a day, five days a week is recommended.

Quit smoking and stay away from second hand smoke. Cigarette smoking greatly increases your risk for heart disease. If you smoke, quitting will reduce your risk for heart disease. There are maybe programs available if needed for quitting.

Control your cholesterol and blood pressure. High blood pressure is one of the leading causes of heart attacks and strokes. It's called the "silent killer". It causes damage to blood vessels ultimately causing serious organ disease. Cholesterol contributes to the plaque that can clog or block blood vessels. Both hypertension and cholesterol are easily controlled with diet and medications.

Drink alcohol, only in moderation. Moderate drinking is one drink per day for women, two drinks per day for men. Excessive alcohol drinking can lead to the development of chronic or serious diseases including high blood pressure, breast cancer, dementia and mental health issues.

Manage your physical and mental stress. Studies have shown increased levels of stress increase cortisol which leads to higher levels of blood cholesterol, blood sugar and blood pressure. Find healthy ways to reduce or cope with your particular life stress. Meditation, yoga, exercise or counseling are a few ideas.

OUTREACH AND MINISTRIES

God's work, our hands



Help Us Fill Up the Food Bank

The food bank often struggles during the cold winter months, please be sure to continue to provide donations of boxed rice so we can keep the shelf well stocked. Many thanks to the following families for signing up to help with getting our rice donations to the Southbury Food Bank (88 Main Street South, in the same complex as the Rathskeller Restaurant). There are a few open months – contact Lauren Lyons if you are able to help. You will drop the rice outside the food bank and their staff will stock the shelf. Mask required please.

Food Bank Stocking Hours:

2nd Saturday of @ month from 11:30-12:30 pm

Call (203)721-0377 to make other arrangements.

January – Lyons

February –

March - Morrisons

April -

May -

June -

July -

August-

September -

October -

November -

December –

Belated Thanks!

Many thanks for the generous outpouring of gently used coats, blankets, hats and mittens for all ages that were distributed to the less fortunate in greater Danbury in December

James Ministry/Women's Fellowship

here at St. James are collecting items for Health Kits, to be shipped to Lutheran Relief. Needed items, only, at this time are: (no toothbrushes or toothpaste, please): **COMBS** (small, not with "tail") **NAIL CLIPPERS, TOWELS** (small bath size - any color), **BAR SOAP**. We are hoping to collect these items within the next 4 weeks. Items may be placed in the box, marked LUTHERAN RELIEF, in the Gathering Room. Questions: Marion Allen (1-203-258-9087) or Lynn Morrison (203-426-7749) Thank you for caring, and sharing!

Dorothy Day Hospitality House

The Dorothy Day hospitality house is asking for donations for their guests. Barbara Manville will pick up items from church on Sundays to deliver. Items include:

New men's workboots, Men's adult ski jackets, Canned goods and pasta, Hams -- canned or other, Individual sized toiletries, Disposable razors and shaving cream, Washcloths, Dishwashing Liquid, Paper Towels and napkins, Heavy duty potholders, Fresh fruit, Cookies, Bottled water, Individually Wrapped Snacks, Sweatpants and sweatshirts/hoodies, Men's jeans and shirts, Men's non winter jackets, Men's footwear, New men's and women's underwear, Warm adult winter gloves -- no Dollar Store gloves please.

http://www.dorothydaydanbury.org/Wish_List.html

Forward Leadership

A Forward Leadership Community is an initiative through the New England Synod for congregations who seek to strengthen their sense of mission, are willing to experiment, innovate, and explore how to be church in the 21st century. Forward is a year-long collaborative learning model developed to equip teams of clergy and lay leaders with the skill and strategies to create short and long term goals based on their unique context and to implement the changes needed to attain those goals. This is called a "community" rather than a program because all our learning is done in an atmosphere of mutual support and collaboration.

With all New England Lutheran churches receiving a new pastor, St. James will participate in Forward Leadership through the 2022 year. Each month, members of our "Away Team" will attend a Saturday-long seminar on different topics – ranging from adaptive and technical change, crucial conversations, finding your why, leadership styles, hospitality, community engagement. Following, our "Away Team" will meet with our "Home Team" to educate them and brainstorm how these new insights could be implemented at St. James. This year in the program is about absorbing and processing. As we move beyond, these tools and resources will help us to reach goals and respond to the movement of the Spirit in years to come.

As the St. James community, you can look forward to the monthly updates and activities planned by our "Home Team" throughout the year. This is a wonderful opportunity for us all to be creative and imagine, to strengthen and grow, to stay alert and open to where God is calling us and equipping us in the future as church together.

Peace & gratitude,

Pastor Abby Johnson

Away Team – Kathleen Haddy, Tammy Faulkner, Meghan Colasanto, Lynn Morrison

Home Team – Barbara Manville, Jan Carnaroli, TBD

PRESCHOOL

The Preschool is a busy and vibrant place! Our open house is tentatively scheduled for February 26th from 10am-noon, by appointment. Contact Leslie Broch for more details, saintjameslutheranpreschool@gmail.com or 203-264-6448. Please let families or friends you know in the area about our wonderful program. There are trifold flyers available with more detailed information. Contact Lauren Lyons, Pastor Abby or Tammy Faulkner for more details.

FEB 26

10am-12Pm



Come Hike with Us!

St James YAFM is doing their best to stay socially connected from a safe distance in this challenging time. We are still meeting monthly to hike (socially distanced and weather permitting). All are welcome!

Please contact Lauren Lyons
lyonsden1133@yahoo.com 203-982-8415 or
Tammy Faulkner syjamesyafm@gmail.com if
interested. Meet at 10am

Feb 26 – Southford Falls
March 19 – Fairfield Hills



SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday 9:00am to 10:00am

ADULT FORUM

Sunday 9:00am to 10:00am

CONFIRMATION CLASS

Sunday 6:30pm to 8:00 pm

In-Person biweekly @ Immanuel Church,
Oxford

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday 7:00pm to 8:00 pm

Please join us Wednesday evenings
at 7pm for bible study, and 8pm for
prayer.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83375037969pwd=Ly9LaFlLKzBJSjQ1bGlvdC96WlYwUT09>

You can dial in using: +1 646 558
8656 US

Meeting ID: 833 7503 7969
Passcode: 110997

Rev. T. A. Gustafson

Educational Aid Fund

The Rev. T. A. Gustafson Educational Aid Fund supports active confirmed members of St. James to pursue higher education. Awards are based on future promise, participation in St. James and financial need. Application forms are available from Pastor Abby or Priscilla Terhune or online <https://stjamesct.org/outreach-and-ministries/parish-life/gustafson-fund/> and must be submitted by March 15, 2022.

WHAT IS ONREALM?

OnRealm is the Church's online giving platform. Members are able to set up automatic contributions, check their latest giving, update their address and household information and more. Links to give online can be found on our website. In the upcoming months, we will also be using realm to send out group updates, keep track of parish records such as baptisms, and more! Contact Curt Haedke for more information.

HELP WANTED!

St James Church has a growing number of members and friends who would love to join us for worship, but could use a ride. YOU can help! If you are willing to help with a "transportation ministry" - which would simply be helping get out friends to Sunday Worship, please contact Karen Lampiasi (203-586-1492)

A new ministry has been developing at Saint James over the past several months—a Eucharistic Lay Ministry. Members of our congregation are trained to bring the gifts of God's word and sacramental meal to those who are unable to be present in public worship. This ministry provides us with at least two blessings. Eucharistic Ministers provide a means for the sick, homebound, or imprisoned to participate in the worship of the whole assembly; it also reminds those gathered publicly to recognize our oneness with our sisters and brothers who are absent.

Currently we have six members available and willing to bring communion to you and your loved ones, whether in your home, hospital, residential nursing home, or even outdoors in your garden. Given the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic, we especially recognize the need to keep one another as safe as possible; all precautions are taken to be sure those visited feel comfortable.

If you would like a communion visit from Pastor Abby or one of our lay ministers, please contact the church office (203-264- 6446 or stjamesctlutheran@gmail.com) or Liz Skinski 203- 267-5742 or liz.skinski@earthlink.net).

If you think you might be interested in participating in this special ministry and bringing communion to others, please reach out to Pastor Abby or Liz Skinski as well.

What a blessing and opportunity this is to remember our connection with one another and our Lord, Jesus Christ.

“Bear one
another’s
burdens,
and in this
way you will
fulfill the law
of Christ

Galatians
6:2 NRSV


Bishop Eaton on Mental Health

Since the global pandemic was declared in March 2020, many of us have endured extended emotional and psychological anguish. That experience may be dramatically worsened by the ugly realities of racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia or poverty. Our anguish has taken the form of sadness in isolation, anxiety in uncertainty, grief over loss, stress over economic challenges and worry over events beyond our control — including the tremendous impact of the crisis on our children. This pandemic threatens our mental health just as much as our physical health. For millions of us adults living in the United States, receiving the vaccine and the hope it brings has alleviated our unease, sorrow and grief.

This past year has provided some of us with a deeper understanding of and empathy for the ongoing mental health challenges endured by our neighbors, friends and family. During Mental Health Awareness Month, especially, our church intentionally recognizes the anguish our siblings in Christ experience daily — pandemic or no — and the fear many of them feel about sharing their stories.

As a church we also acknowledge the true depths of these invisible illnesses. Our children, neighbors and friends grappling with mental health issues need to know that God does not love them any less. They need to hear that they, too, are embraced by God’s unfathomable love.





Our church cautions against judgmental words and actions that might suggest to someone that their faith is not strong enough or that their outlook on life would improve if they would change certain behaviors. Praying, socializing and exercising are great activities that can help someone get out of a slump or move past a painful episode. But this is not always the solution for moderate or severe depression, bipolar depression, anxiety or even grief. Telling someone they aren't doing enough to be happy creates a sense of stigma that they are not living "correctly." We need to listen so that our words of care and compassion

guide others to the help they need. We need to support people in their struggles, walking side by side in partnership with them through the good days and the bad. Dear church, God loves us all. No matter how we are grappling, we are not alone; God is with us. Throughout May and beyond, we must seek ways to erase the stigma surrounding mental illness and continually love everyone compassionately as a child of God. We must embrace the benefits of therapy and encourage the use of medication when necessary in supporting and sustaining mental health and wellness. We must also work to ensure access to affordable mental health care for all people, especially those living in poverty or in historically marginalized communities.

Our faith teaches that caring for health is a shared endeavor. Being the body of Christ means carrying one another's burdens; it also means placing our burdens in God's hands and admitting to a caring person close to us that we need help. This is true no matter how great or small our anguish may be.

In Christ,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

"The Body of Christ and Mental Illness"

<https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Messages/Mental-Illness>

Suicide Prevention

<https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Messages/Suicide-Prevention>

Lutheran Suicide Prevention Ministry

<https://suicidepreventionministry.org>

SERVING IN WORSHIP

PRAYER CHAPLAINS, LECTORS, CANTORS,
COUNTERS

February 6th

Lector: *Barbara Manville*

Chaplain: *Liz Skinski*

Cantor: *Neil Johnson*

Counters: *Neil Johnson, Diane Mladjen*

February 13th

Lector: Beth Alvarado

Chaplain:

Cantor: Lucia Dressel

Counters: Bob Morrison, Jacque
Matthew, Steven Ulc

February 20th

Lector: Curt Haedke

Chaplain: Lynn Morrison

Cantor: Liz Skinski

Counters: Gary Kline, Catherine Ulc

February 27th

Lector: Diane Mladjen

Chaplain: Janice Salvatore

Cantor: Karen Lampiasi

Counters: Neil Johnson, Diane Mladjen

CONTACT:

Lectors: Tammy
Faulkner

Counters: Curt
Haedke

Cantors: Diane
Peterson

Prayer Chaplains: Liz
Skinski



In Our Prayers

Frank Haddy
Doris Schoppmann
Diane Defazio
Karen Huber
Gisella Bachelie
Peter Adler
Gabi Adler
Edward
Marie Salvatore
Marilyn Balla

Mary Skinski
Gloria Trede
Janet Benzell
Stanley Ulc
Brian Mons
Rachel Nessel
Dottie McGinnis
James Brady
Rose Danieli
Ellen DiBenedetto

Charlie Costello
Conrad & Meg
Issac & Mike
Ethan Nessel
John Richardson
Arlene Richardson
Hannah Neeb
Rich Neeb
Steve Ulc
Mary Dunn

Please also keep Scott Newdeck, Wilson Owens, Timothy Elwell, Seth Lash, Stephen Danek, Timothy Peterson, and all those who serve in the military, in your prayers

We also pray for All the Saints, especially Mykola Majorczak, Angela Decortin, Lynn Dalderone, Jeff Tinley, Rosemary Martin, Khloe Robinson, Fred Weunsch, and Vicky Gibb, and all those who mourn the loss of a loved one.

Please join us for Worship on Sunday mornings at 9 am for Sunday School and at 10:15 am for worship at 111 Peter Road, Southbury, CT. The appropriate safety protocols are in place and will be adhered to. Drive in church continues as an option

Your offering may be mailed to 111 Peter Road and the mail is collected daily or your donation may be made online. As you are able, please continue to help us be the hands of Christ.



February 2022

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|---|---|---|----------------------------|---|
| Holy Communion is offered at all worship services in one kind only. | | 1 9-12pm Office Open 12pm NVC Bible 5:30 Mutual ministry | 2 1-3pm Pastor in Office 7pm Bible Study 7pm AA 8pm Prayer | 3 9-12pm Office Open 7:30pm YAFM Meeting | 4 2:30-5pm Office Open | 5 9am Small Parish Room |
| 6 9am Faith Formation 10:15am Worship | 7 10-12pm Pastor in Office 7pm AA | 8 9-12pm Office Open 12pm NVC Bible 1pm James Ministries | 9 1-3pm Pastor in Office 7pm Bible Study 7pm AA 8pm Prayer | 10 9-12pm Office Open 7pm Parish Support Meeting | 11 2:30-5pm Office Open | 12 11:30am Rice Shelf Restock Forward Leadership Seminar |
| 13 9am Faith Formation 10:15am Worship 4pm Girl Scouts | 14 10-12pm Pastor in Office 7pm AA | 15 9-12pm Office Open 12pm NVC Bible Epistle Contributions Due | 16 1-3pm Pastor in Office 7pm Bible Study 7pm AA 8pm Prayer | 17 9-12pm Office Open 7pm Council Meeting | 18 2:30-5pm Office Open | 19 |
| 20 9am Faith Formation 10:15am Worship 4pm Girl Scouts | 21 10-12pm Pastor in Office 7pm AA | 22 9-12pm Office Open 12pm NVC Bible | 23 1-3pm Pastor in Office 7pm Bible Study 7pm AA 8pm Prayer | 24 9-12 Office Open 7pm Preschool Board Meeting 7pm Forward Leadership | 25 2:30-5pm Office Open | 26 10 am YAFM hike Fairfield Hill 1am Preschool Open House |
| 27 9am Faith Formation 10:15am Worship 4pm Girl Scouts | 28 10-12pm Pastor in Office 7pm AA | | | | | |

Regular calendar updates on website
<https://stjamesct.org/calendar/>

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

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