

FEBRUARY 2023

ST JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH EPISTLE

A CONGREGATION
OF THE
EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF AMERICA

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ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

111 Peter Road, Southbury CT 06488

www.stjamesct.org

[@stjamesctlutheran](https://www.instagram.com/stjamesctlutheran)

203.264.6446

stjamesctlutheran@gmail.com

Our building is locked at all times for security.

Rev. Abigail Lilja Johnson, Pastor

(she/her/hers)

pastor@stjamesct.org

203-450-6454 (call or text)

CHURCH COUNCIL

Kathy Haddy	<i>President</i>
Linda Bedard	<i>Vice President</i>
Donna Peterson	<i>Secretary</i>
Jan Carnaroli	<i>Worship</i>
Liz Skinski	<i>Faith Formation</i>
Lucia Dressel	<i>Fellowship & Comm.</i>
Diane Mladjen	<i>Preschool</i>
Lynn Morrison	<i>Outreach & Evang.</i>
Tony Salvatore	<i>Finance & Properties</i>
Emilie Ulc	<i>Youth Rep.</i>
Rev. Abigail Johnson	

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

Genie Bisch	<i>Parish Admin. & Preschool Admin. Assistant</i>
Abigail Manville	<i>Media & Communications</i>
Leslie Broch	<i>Director, St. James Preschool</i>
Diane Peterson	<i>Organist</i>
Curt Haedke	<i>Financial Secretary</i>
Neil Johnson	<i>Treasurer</i>
Ellen Hubina	<i>Asst. Treasurer</i>

Please contact the office **before** dropping by should you require assistance.
If you desire use of the office space, please schedule time **outside** the
Parish Administrator's working hours. Thank you!



A WORD FROM PASTOR

"The Invitation to Church"

Poem written by Pastor Abby (Inspired by "The Invitation" by Shel Silverstein)

Recited at the 2022 Christmas Eve worship service at St. James

Come in, come in

All you weekly attendees, all you seasonal shows,
you snowbirds, you founders, you guests new in each row.
Come in for the reverence, the soothing and joyful play
Your clothes don't matter, we've got birds by the way!

Come in for the music, the stories, the taste
The joys and concerns, there is always room in this place.
For traditions that root us and newness which dances
For hope and forgiveness and 77th chances

Come in if it feels good and you can't explain why,
Come in if you're skeptical, desperate or shy
Come in no matter if you seek truth or folklore,
There's no innkeeper who will turn you away at the door.

We've got Mary the wisher and Joseph with dreams
We've got shepherds and angels and wise people entering the scene
And yes, we've got pretenders, and liars, and magic bean buyers
The Bible is stories of real people, complex, but requires
No certainty, no status, no frankincense or myrrh
No contracts, no subscriptions when life is a blur

Here there is mess, there is changes to make too
Church isn't perfect, like the faith God gave you.
It has its history, its challenge and flaw.
That's what happens when humans try to lock in, order and regulate awe.
Its no excuse for the pain that has been caused
This rushing, this stressing, we just need a pause.

(CONTINUED)



But you hope and prayer, there is such goodness here too
A community that joins, lifts and holds you
That is here for one purpose: to sing glory and serve
The Spirit that marches, whispers and maneuvers
To remind each other that Christ walked in our shoes
And cares about all of it, from the mundane to the big news.

But remember the invitation isn't just to the stable,
To this room, or this schedule and to eat at this table,
The invitation is to journey, each day and each night,
With the Divine alongside you with wisdom and sight.

So come in to the mystery, come in to love,
Come in because all this is here for you, sent from above.
You who are loved - you sinner and saint
For all that you are and all that you ain't

Hear this oh you dreamers...

The beauty of Christmas is that God doesn't ask you to aspire
Up the staircase of answers before we expire
Doesn't ask you to solve it or fix it yourself
Or get it together and put decorations on the shelf.

God.
Just.
Shows.
Up.

Comes simply, but here.
For you. For all.
Go share this love, far and near.
Merry Christmas. Amen.

Peace, Pastor Abby Johnson and Thule

OFFICE OF THE PASTOR

MEET PASTOR ABBY

Whether in celebration, grief, doubt, or curiosity of faith, she happy to meet with you at a time and place that suits you well.

Observes Sabbath Fridays & Saturdays. Please call for pastoral emergencies.



FIKA with PASTOR

In Swedish, "fika" refers to the cherished daily practice of a coffee break and sweets with a friend.

**Wednesdays
1:30 - 3:30 PM
at Starbucks,
Southbury**

Anyone is welcome to come for a warm mug and warm chat!



FROM HER BOOKSHELF

**My Grandmother's
Hands**
by Resmaa Menakem

*Racialized
Trauma and the
Pathway to
Mending Our
Hearts and
Bodies*



REPORTS & NEWS

WORD & SACRAMENTS

From January

No baptisms, funerals, or weddings

Developing liturgical season "Creative Worship" Sunday

Monthly worship service for residents at The Lutheran Home

PASTORAL CARE & COUNSEL

February

Developing New Members program

Ongoing spiritual guidance & support for individuals, families, ministry teams, & community

WIDER CHURCH & PUBLIC THEOLOGY

March

Organizing "Lent on the Road" with Southbury/Woodbury churches

CONTINUING EDUCATION

February 6-8

"Community Organizing for Climate Justice" online course

EPIPHANY

Jan. 6th - Feb. 21st

Discover & Connect

Epiphany is the season of introductions and "ah ha" moments. As the Wise Men travel to see and know the Messiah, we treasure that God sees and knows us deeply. In this time, we seek to foster curiosity, connection & compassion.



Liturgical Color:
Green

Season's Guest:
Rev. Linda Kraft - Jan. 22

Special Observances:
Feast of Epiphany, Jan. 6
Baptism of Our Lord, Jan. 8
Transfiguration, Feb. 19



LENT

Feb. 22nd - April 1st

Reflect & Repent

Lent is the season of penitence and reconciliation. For 40-days, Jesus retreated to the desert for solitude with God and so we too journey in thoughtful reflection for 40-days (excluding Sundays), confessing our sins and shortcomings, facing the brokenness of our world, and recommitting to live more faithfully.

Liturgical Color:
Purple

Season's Guest:
TBD

Special Observances:
Ash Wednesday, Feb. 22

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Join our planning meeting 1st Tuesdays @ 2:30PM



IN OUR WORSHIP

THE GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together; may include confession & forgiveness, baptisms.

THE WORD

God speaks to us in scripture, song preaching, and prayer.

THE MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of the Jesus Christ at an open table for all.

THE SENDING

Now fed and refreshed, God blesses us and sends us out into the world to serve.



ASH WEDNESDAY

February 22

6:00 PM

Service of Word & Holy Communion
with Imposition of Ashes



LENT ON THE ROAD

with Southbury &
Woodbury
Churches

During the Lenten season, let us journey together as people of the Christian faith from many traditions! Each week, a different church for a different worship service and simple supper. More information to come!

SERVING IN WORSHIP

LITURGY MEANS "THE WORK OF THE PEOPLE" IN GREEK

February 5

Altar Guild: Judy Katzmark
Ushers: Bob Morrison, Judy Lee
Lector: Lynn Morrison
Asst. Minister: Liz Skinski
Cantor: Lucia Dressel
Counters: Bob Morrison, Donna Peterson
Sunday School: Lauren Lyons, Barbara Manville

February 19

Altar Guild: Lynn Morrison
Ushers: Judy Katzmark, Jacque Matthew
Lector: Priscilla Terhune
Asst. Minister: Karen Lampiasi
Cantor: Liz Skinski
Counters: Steven Ulc, Catherine Ulc
Sunday School: Paulette Calderone, Janis Salvatore

February 26

Altar Guild: Paulette Calderone
Ushers: John Dressel, Jacque Matthew
Lector: Tammy Faulkner
Asst. Minister: Jan Salvatore
Cantor: Lynn Morrison
Counters: Diane Mladjen, Barbara Manville
Sunday School: Janice Mons, Ellen Hubina

February 12

Altar Guild: Paulette Calderone
Ushers: Gary Kline, Tony Salvatore
Lector: Mary Ewert
Asst. Minister: Lynn Morrison
Cantor: Karen Lampiasi
Counters: Gary Kline, Jacque Matthew
Sunday School: Mike Lyons, Jan Carnaroli

February 22: Ash Wednesday

Altar Guild:
Ushers:
Lector: Judy Katzmark
Asst. Minister:
Cantor: Lynn Morrison
Counters:
No Sunday School

CONTACT:

Cantors: Diane Peterson
Assistant Ministers: Liz Skinski
Sunday School: Lauren Lyons
Ushers: Jacque Matthew
Altar Guild: Paulette Calderone
Lectors: Judy Katzmark
Counters: Curt Haedke
Coffee Hour: Lynn Morrison

An Apple A Day



February is heart awareness month. We celebrate this month to increase awareness to the importance of a healthy heart and to encourage healthy habits that help reduce the risk of health disease.

Disorders of the heart and blood vessels accounted for more than one in three deaths in the US according to

the American Heart Association. Heart disease affects all income levels but disproportionately affects low and middle income level households 30 percent more. Heart disease is still the number one cause of death in the US, more than 600,000 American a year.

You can take an active role in reducing your risk for heart disease by eating a healthy diet, engaging in physical activity and lowering your cholesterol and blood pressure.

Heart Healthy Tips:

- Be more physically active(30 minutes a day, 5 days a week)
- Maintain a healthy weight(even 5-10 percent weight loss makes a difference)
- Eat a nutritious /heart healthy diet, i.e. Mediterranean Diet
- Quit smoking
- Reduce stress
- Get 7-8 hours of quality sleep
- Track your heart health statistics

The first Friday in February is designated for wearing RED to celebrate American Heart Health

February is
Heart Health
Awareness Month





Faith Formation

Bible Study

Wednesdays @ 7:00 - 8:00 PM, on Zoom

A casual conversation on Sunday's assigned readings and time for prayer. Come as you are, no preparation needed.

Midweek Meditation

Wednesdays @ 12:30 PM, Phone call

Original 2-minute guided meditations recorded by Pastor Abby; subscribe on our website homepage or listen on the podcast

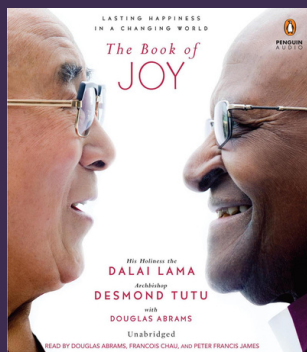
Adult Forum

Sundays @ 9:00 - 10:00 AM,
in the Prayer Chapel

Studies of books, scripture, or social issues where faith and the world meet.

This Epiphany and Lent

The Book of Joy by His Holiness Dalai Lama
& Archbishop Desmond TuTu



Podcast: A Steadfast Branch

A weekly podcast for all ages, listen for free online or on Spotify. Faith-formation offerings such as sermons, devotionals, kids chats, blessings, meditations, and interviews with the wider church community





FAITH FORMATION... FOR KIDS!

Youth & Family Ministry Team
1st Tuesdays, 7:00 PM

SUNDAY SCHOOL

**Sundays 10:30
AM
Grades PreK-5**

Dismissed mid-worship for a brief lesson and activity - art, music, storytelling, games, and more - in the Fellowship Hall with rotating teachers.

CONFIRMATION

**TBD
Grades 6-8**

A deeper study in Lutheran tradition and Christian faith in affirmation of baptism.
If you're interested, see teacher Lynn Morrison to enroll.

YOUTH GROUP

**2nd Sunday of
the month
@Rotating
hosting church
Grades 6-12**

February 12th, 4:00 PM
This month hosted by Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, in Monroe CT

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



An introductory planning group met on January 26 to brainstorm and begin planning for vacation bible school 2023! VBS is currently being planned for July 24-28th - if you couldn't make the meeting, but would like to be involved please let us know! It takes a village and we will need teachers, behind the scenes help, music, crafts, science, games, etc. Please tell us where you would best like your gifts to be used! You do not have to commit for all of VBS if part works better - just let us know. Contact Lauren Lyons 203-982-8415 or yafm@stjamesct.org. VBS planning meetings will be held at church the 4th Thursday of each month at 7pm - all are welcome!

ST JAMES YOUTH AND FAMILIES

yafm@stjamesct.org

"Creating an environment where open minds and open hearts can see, hear, and feel the love of God."

A small but mighty group is working hard to continue youth and family programming this year. Thanks to all who are helping with teaching Sunday school during services. Some upcoming events to get on your calendar include:

Feb 11th - Help stock the food bank and sledding/hike (weather permitting!) Meet at the church at 11:15am

Feb 21st - Pancake Dinner at St James, roughly 6:30pm

Feb 25th - Eagle Viewing at Shepaug Dam, 11am-12:30pm. We have a wonderful morning scheduled at the Shepaug Eagle Observation Deck. The Southbury Audubon will be there as well with owls and hawks! We will follow with hot chocolate and cookies at the Deck. Contact Lynn Morrison (edgelake@aol.com, or 203-426-7749) for further details.

March 26th - Pretzel making at Saint James, 9am

ALL are welcome to join!!!!

If you have interest in helping with any of the YAFM programming please contact Lauren Lyons lyonsden1133@yahoo.com or Liz Skinski liz.skinski@earthlink.net





Hi Everybody,

First...thank you all so very much for your cards, prayers, emails, etc. The support has been wonderful.

Just wanted to update you all on Tim. He was discharged from the hospital this morning and is now at Mid-Nebraska Lutheran Home in Newman Grove. They accepted his admission, and the therapists there are optimistic that they can help him be more functional, perhaps even walking to some degree. Right now, his stay is open-ended...when they checked with insurance, there weren't any time limits (although we all know that can change).

He seems to be in a good mood today...has been texting me (since they moved him and I will see him after lunch) about the trip...when he left the hospital, when he hit highway 32 near us, what routes they took, etc. All of which I take as a good sign. His language skills continue to improve, as does his engagement with people in the room. We still have a long way to go with movement, as he has very little voluntary movement on his left, but he continues to have reflex movement, and there has been some voluntary with his hip and his arm. He will be getting therapy every day, about an hour, during his stay at MNLH.

He has enjoyed getting mail, so thank you all! Please let Pastor Abby and the St. James family also know how much we appreciate their prayers.

His new address is Mid-Nebraska Lutheran Home, PO Box 459, Newman Grove, NE 68758. I don't remember what room he is in.

**Thanks again for everything,
Elizabeth and Tim**



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 for pickup at church or online <https://stjamesct.org/outreach-and-ministries/parish-life/gustafson-fund/> and must be submitted by March 15th

Fellowship Team

Meets 3rd Tuesday @ 4PM via Zoom, See Barbara Manville

Coffee Hour

Sundays @ 11:30am in Entrance Hall

Our warm thanks to all who helped share their goodies at Coffee Fellowship for the month of January: Karen Lampiasi, Judy Katzmark, Jenifer Beaudéan-White, Lynn Morrison, Jacque Matthews - Men's Fellowship. Sign up for February, and bring in something tasty!



Ladies' Fellowship Group

Meets 2nd Tuesday @ 1pm in Fellowship Hall

St. James Woman's Fellowship met in January with 8 ladies around the table. We ate, conversed, and discussed plans for the near future including the goal of creating at least 25 Health Care kits to be sent to Lutheran World Relief in March.

This preparation included reviewing our current supply of items accumulated for this purpose. We find ourselves short of the following: Towels – size 20X40 or 27X52, Combs (no rat tails, if possible), and Nail Clippers. A basket will be placed in the Narthex for those who would like to assist us in this project by donating items.

Also, we decided to celebrate in February as our meeting date falls on Valentine's Day so join us at Leo's at 1 PM as we share a meal and fellowship.



PANCAKE SUPPER

Mardi Gras is French for "Fat Tuesday," and is traditionally celebrated on Shrove Tuesday, before Ash Wednesday, following the Christian liturgical calendar.

Historically, on this day, people were meant to use "all the fats in the home before Lent in preparation for fasting and abstinence," says Britannica. Christians would binge on all the rich, fatty foods, such as meat, eggs and cheese, in their home prior to the period of Lenten fasting.

Today, these customs are not the primary focus of Mardi Gras. Instead, Mardi Gras in the U.S. is known for its parades, king cakes and beads of green, purple and gold.

DAY	TIME	Fellowship Youth&Families
FEB 21	6PM	

Come Join Us!

Contact Barbara Manville with questions
bamnville16@charter.net

ST JAMES PRESCHOOL

203-264-6448

stjameslutheranpreschool@gmail.com

Leslie Broch, Director



Snow and ice are central to so many of our winter days at the preschool...from science experiments, artistic endeavors, math concepts and lots of literacy exploration, our days are full of engaging activities and materials.

Hopefully the children will have some good snow to play in. It brings them so much joy!



STORYTIME

WITH PASTOR ABBY

Celebrate Black
History Month with
"This Jazz Man" by
Karen Ehrhardt

OPEN HOUSE

FEB 25TH
10AM - 1PM

OUTREACH MINISTRIES

God's work, our hands



Meals Ministry

James Ministries

Since February, 2022, our James Ministry - Meals Ministry, has delivered 37 meals to members of our faith family. There are 12 people on our Meals Ministry Team. We THANK them for their love and care to fellow members. It is always such a help when a delivered, cooked casserole appears at the door! A real blessing! If anyone would like to join our team, please contact Lynn Morrison (edgelake@aol.com or 203-426-7749).

Lutheran World Relief

Health Care Kits

Ladies' Fellowship is preparing to put together 25 kits for March. This preparation included reviewing our current supply of items accumulated for this purpose. We find ourselves short of the following: Towels – size 20X40 or 27X52, Combs (no rat tails, if possible), and Nail Clippers. A basket will be placed in the Narthex for those who would like to assist us in this project by donating items.

Don't forget the rice shelf!

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. Also welcome are personal care items such as toothpaste and soup. Many thanks to those 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). 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 11:15-12:30
pm. Call (203)721-0377 to
make other
arrangements.

February – YAFM
March –
April –
May –

Parish Support

Financial Team & Property Team meets together 3rd Thursday @ 7PM

Financial Report

Stewardship

The Apostle Paul wrote, "And God will supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

We have God's promise that we can trust Him for our future.

As God's people, our thinking should change from "How much money am I going to give" to "How much of God's money am I going to keep?"

By God's grace, we understand that all that we are and have are gifts from God, so our giving is merely returning a portion of what He has entrusted to us. May God grant each of us to give faithfully and generously.

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

Saint James Lutheran Church 2022 Monthly Budget to Actual As Of December 31, 2022						
	Operating Income			Mortgage Income		
Month	Budget	Actual	Diff	Budget	Actual	Diff
Jan	16,000.00	34,435.33	18,435.33	2,228.33	1,673.75	(554.58)
Feb	16,000.00	9,267.33	(6,732.67)	2,228.33	1,843.75	(384.58)
Mar	16,000.00	9,627.33	(6,372.67)	2,228.33	2,003.75	(224.58)
Apr	16,000.00	14,579.33	(1,420.67)	2,228.33	3,937.75	1,709.42
May	16,000.00	39,709.33	23,709.33	2,228.33	1,978.75	(249.58)
Jun	16,000.00	6,909.33	(9,090.67)	2,228.33	1,858.75	(369.58)
Jul	16,000.00	11,815.70	(4,184.30)	2,228.33	1,668.75	(559.58)
Aug	16,000.00	12,724.33	(3,275.67)	2,228.33	2,228.75	0.42
Sep	16,000.00	9,439.33	(6,560.67)	2,228.33	1,838.75	(389.58)
Oct	16,000.00	17,053.33	1,053.33	2,228.33	2,173.75	(54.58)
Nov	16,000.00	10,384.33	(5,615.67)	2,228.33	2,627.95	399.62
Dec	16,000.00	16,826.33	826.33	2,228.33	1,968.75	(259.58)
Total	\$ 192,000.00	\$ 192,771.33	\$ 771.33	\$ 26,740.00	\$ 25,803.20	\$ (936.80)
Last Year Operating Income - January 1st, 2021 to Dec 31, 2021					\$ 201,887.82	
Last Year Mortgage Income - January 1st, 2021 to Dec 31, 2021					\$ 30,678.00	

Current Fund Amounts



\$21,138.03
Bell Tower



\$1,897.00
Organ



\$805.00
Organ & Music



\$0
Landscaping

In Our Prayers

Jordyn Neeb
Rich Neeb
Nicole Keller
Brian Mons
Janet Benzell

Caroline Kaiger
Becky Lilja
Mike Kolodziej
Jean Kolodziej
Tim Peterson

Diana Larson
Paul Meberg
Ed Mueller
Alejandro Alvarado
John Raslear
Chris Salvatore

Please also keep Tim Peterson and all those who serve in the military, in your prayers.

We also give thanks for all the saints, especially Christine Granskog, Julie Johnson, Grace Warren, LaRayne Rogers, Eleanor Sydlo, Ezekiel Kelly, Joan Supp, Judy Staskiewicz, Steve Mattson, Andrew Gardner, Dennis Tino, Norma Jean Tino, Lucille Chayt, and Lou Miller

Prayer List Updates:

The prayer list is edited by request and the full list was reset following All Saints Sunday. To add to the prayer list or request a name remain on the list, please see Pastor Abby or Liz Skinski.

Prayer alerts are sent via email by Pastor Abby; subscribe on our website. If you wish to receive alerts by phone call or text, please see Karen Lampiasi to be added to the list.

Please join us for Worship on Sunday mornings at 10:15 am for worship at 111 Peter Road, Southbury, CT. Masks are optional; we ask all to review CDC and CT guidelines to make appropriate choices for your household.