

SUMMER 2025
JULY - SEPTEMBER

ST JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH EPISTLE

A STORYTELLING
MAGAZINE SHARING
THE FAITH, HEART,
AND LIFE OF CHURCH

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Stories by

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Right Sized Boldness- Stewardship

50th Anniversary Celebration

New Faith-Formation Programs

Spotlight on Camp Calumet

And more...



Explore Faith - Embrace Community - Engage Justice

ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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Rev. Abigail Johnson, Pastor (she/her)

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203-450-6454

Mission

We affirm and spread the Word of God in all areas of life. We focus on nurturing, serving and uplifting our members and local community by practicing love in action as exemplified by Jesus Christ through our preschool and other outreach services.



Vision

We believe we are saved by God's grace through faith alone, proclaiming our faith in the Holy Trinity. As church, we manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ, by joining in prayer and action. We worship together as a community through reading of the Word, celebration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness and service. We see our shared Christian faith as an integral part of our daily lives and use the gifts of the Spirit for our lives together and for our callings in the world.

No matter what life puts on your path, come home to a place where folks know your face, greet you warmly, and support you at each step of the journey, as we love and serve God together!

CHURCH STAFF

Genie Bisch

*Parish
Administrator*

John Dressel

*Music
Director*

Abigail Manville

*Digital Coordinator,
volunteer*

Katherine Belonis

*Legal Consultation,
pro-bono*

PRESCHOOL STAFF

Danielle Christina

Teacher

Leslie Broch

Director & Head Teacher

Stephanie Kasmin

Teacher

A WORD FROM PASTOR



Dear Beloved Community,

Our faith compels us to speak when others are silenced. As ICE raids intensify and peaceful protest is met with militarized force, we lament, advocate, and act. As a church of the ELCA, we stand with these words of our churchwide body...

1. Faithful Action is our Witness

"Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." - Amos 5:24

In the face of injustice, we are not helpless. We are church together - embodying the hope of the Risen Christ. God calls us to pray, to show up, and to act.

2. God Calls Governments to Serve the Good of All

"Woe to those who make unjust laws to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed." - Isaiah 10:1-2a

Scripture and Lutheran teachings agree: government is meant to serve the public good. When it becomes a source of fear, it must be called to account. Raids that break apart families and military action that silences conscience violates this trust and suppresses free speech. We lift our voices for justice - to out of rebellion, but as participants in fostering a just society.

3. We Reject the Use of Force Against Peaceful Witness

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." - Matthew 5:9

The use of military force to suppress peaceful protests is not only dangerous - it weaponizes the role of government. As Lutherans, we believe in holding authority accountable to God's justice. Violence cannot be the answer to cries for compassion. We are called to advocate with others of good will for peace.

4. God Calls Us to Stand with Our Neighbors

"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it." - Hebrews 13:2

We are living through a moment of deep tension and division. As people marked with the cross of Christ, we lament the harm caused by escalating deportation raids and deepening fear. Yet in this pain, we remember God's call is clear - welcome the stranger, love your neighbor, and stand together.

This is a sacred call - not just political, but profoundly spiritual. God go with us.

Peace, Pastor Abby

Whether in celebration, grief, doubt, or curiosity of faith, Pastor is happy to arrange a meeting with you for care, counsel, and prayer. Home or hospital visits by your invitation and consent. Call cell directly with care emergencies. Observes Sabbath on Fri & Sat.

UPDATE ON DMIN

Starting my 2nd year in the Doctorate of Ministry program, specializing in Interfaith Studies, at United Lutheran Seminary, PA. The DMin program (24 credits with specialized project & dissertation, about 4 years) is an advanced professional degree designed to enhance the practice of ministry.

This summer, I'll begin my 3rd semester in the program with a week-long August intensive on the Philadelphia campus: **Global Christianity and Cultural Depictions of Jesus**. Throughout the fall semester, I'll be studying **Indigenous Religions**, in virtual course with other doctoral students.



CHURCH COUNCIL

The elected leaders of governance and administration

REPORTS & NEWS

As we step into a new program year at St. James, we extend our heartfelt thanks to the dedicated members of our Church Council who have completed their terms of service. With deep gratitude, we recognize: **Lynn Morrison**, for her faithful commitment through two three-year terms, **Lucia Dressel and Tony Salvatore**, for their devoted service during their three-year terms, and **Liz Skinski**, who has graciously agreed to continue for a second three-year term.

We also joyfully welcome the newly elected Council members who were affirmed by the Congregation at our Annual Meeting on June 1:

- Meghan Buchanan – three-year term
- Kevin Peterson – three-year term
- Steven Ulc – one-year term
- Frank Varanko – three-year term

Thank you to all who serve—past and present—for your leadership, faithfulness, and love for our church community.

At the June 1st Annual Meeting, the Congregation also adopted the following goals for the upcoming program year:

1. **Reduce the church mortgage principal** by \$150,000 by December 31, 2025
2. **Establish our RIC Milestones**, completing Steps 1–4 in the certification process with ReconcilingWorks
3. **Prayerfully and bravely explore our call to activism** on behalf of the marginalized and oppressed in our society

We look forward to the year ahead with hope, energy, and a shared commitment to God’s work through the ministry of St. James.

MEMBERS

- Kathy Haddy
- Bill Dreska
- Neil Johnson
- Ellen Hubina
- Curt Haedke
- Rev. Abby Johnson
- Jan Carnaroli
- Barbara Manville
- Liz Skinski
- Meghan Buchanan*
- Kevin Peterson*
- Steven Ulc*
- Frank Varanko*

Officer and liaison roles will be determined during the summer, as new members transition on and off the Council.

Details will be published in a future issue.

**Newly elected*



RENT OUR SPACE

1. Call the Main Office to request date
2. Fill out a rental request form
3. Return form for review 10 days out from event
4. Pay fee, deposit, and acquire insurance

MEMBERSHIP

To learn about formally joining our church, see Pastor Abby.
Next cycle opens in the fall

St. James Preschool

BY JENNY BEAUDEAN-WHITE & LESLIE BROCH

Enrollment open for Fall 2025

See stjamesct.org/preschool for details



With higher summer temps during the last weeks, the children of the St. James preschool have been engaging in a great assortment of activities that have made warm spring and summer days a time of discovery.

Parents were recently invited to stay after “drop off” to spend time with the children and learn more about their child’s interests. To kick off the day, the class combined sign language with song -- singing “We are family,” which included the words, “We play, we learn, we grow.” The discovery of communicating through sign connects the preschool to the St. James focus on inclusivity and love for all people.

To further encourage a sense of discovery, activities at the St. James Preschool also recently included a field trip to Flanders where the 3-year-olds had the opportunity to experience farm animals. They also watched plants growing in the classroom, interested to see the plants germinate and take hold. The 4-year-olds, meanwhile, were fascinated by the pond at Flanders, which offered an array of plants and bugs to discover. Encouraging this learning and curiosity is a big part of how we grow love and curiosity about God’s creation.



SUMMER LITURGICAL CALENDAR

ORDINARY TIME in SUMMER
June 29 - August 31
“Rest & Reflect”

9:30 am - Sanctuary

1st Mondays
East Hill Worship

Lutheran worship offered
to the residents of East
Hill at 3:00pm



July & August
Summer Sermon Series

“Holy Troublemakers &
Unconventional Saints”

Based in the book by Daneen Akers, summer worship will feature a sermon series that spotlights people of faith who rocked the religious boat on behalf of love and justice.

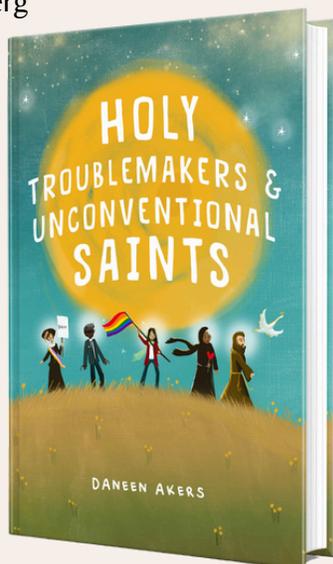
Each week, we'll intertwine the assigned scripture readings into biographies of bold and beautiful humans spreading God's love.

Kids coloring sheets and family follow up questions will be available each week, unique to each week.

A great book for your home library - check it out!

Saints include...

- Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg
- Gustavo Gutierrez
- Bayard Rustin
- Herb Montgomery
- Kaitlin Curtice
- Thich Nhat Hanh
- Maryam Molkara
- Rumi
- Valarie Kaur
- Rev. Wil Gafney



SEASON OF CREATION
Sept. 7 - Oct. 5
“All Creation Sings”

10:15am - Outside Chapel

Sun. Sept. 7
Rally Day

The kickoff of weekly faith-formation classes, and with Blessing of the School Year.



Sun. Sept. 28
Camp Calumet

Come learn about this St. James mission partner from its Associate Executive Director, Rev. Sara Anderson



Sun. Oct. 5
Feast of St. Francis

Bring your well-behaved pets
for Blessing of the Animals!



WORSHIP & MUSIC



Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed! During our Easter service in April, kids gathered to learn about how we practice resurrection together as church community all year long!



Bread of Life: Gather, Savor, Share: For 5-weeks in March and April, we joined with our Southbury-Woodbury ecumenical community for the 3rd annual “Lent on the Road,” a shared weekly worship and fellowship offering with over 100 neighbors!



Baptism

In April, we celebrated the baptism of Elora Lee Sutherland, with her parents Meghan Buchanan and Kyle Sutherland, godparents Chris and Joy Sutherland, and big sister Evie - welcome to the faith, beloved child of God!



Shabbat Shalom!

In May, Confirmation students worshipped God with the members of B’Nai Israel Southbury for their Friday Shabbat service, including a “step up” service of their peers.



STEWARDS of WORSHIP

Join the Worship Team to help plan the ministries of worship and praise, including music, altar guild, ushers, lectors, assistant minister, acolytes, and youth.

FAITH FORMATION

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Epic Australian Adventure:

An Unforgettable Journey with Jesus

AUGUST 4-8

Campers spend the mornings with other kids, PreK-Grade 5 in fun and faith. Grade 6-12 are welcome as CITs and volunteers are encouraged! A partnership program with UCC Southbury; this year held on their campus.

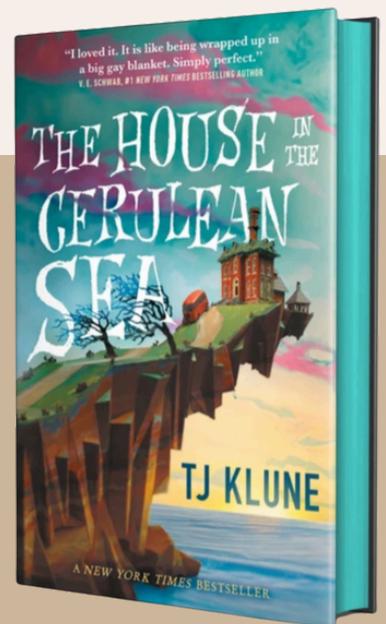
STEWARDS of LEARNING

Join the Faith-Formation Team to plan education programs for all ages!

ALL REGULAR CLASSES

On summer break

Resumes Rally Day,
Sunday Sept. 7



Part of St. James' RIC process
of education & affirmation

ALL-AGES SUMMER READ

The House on the Cerulean Sea

by TJ Klune

How do we recognize the Gospel in the world? Is it only in Christian things and religious spaces? Or, could this heartwarming, quirky young adult novel challenge us to explore beyond our assumptions - to see God's love in this story about acceptance, belonging, and the power of compassion and joy! See Pastor Abby. As you read, consider...



- **Dignity and Worth of All People:** The novel highlights the value and inherent dignity of every individual, especially those who are marginalized or misunderstood. Reflect on Genesis 1:27—how all are made in the image of God—and consider how we are called to see others as God sees them.
- **Grace and Redemption:** The story is centered around personal transformation. Linus, the protagonist, grows in empathy and love. Consider Ephesians 2:8–10 and the nature of grace—not earned, but given—and how we are called to extend grace to others.
- **Hospitality and Welcoming the Stranger:** The house on the island is a refuge for children considered dangerous by society. Read Romans 12:13 and Hebrews 13:2 - listen to the challenge posed to believers to practice hospitality and compassion for the outcast.
- **Judgment vs. Compassion:** The book critiques systems that judge without knowing. Jesus teaches in Matt 7:1-5 about the danger of judgment and the call to love before condemning. He reminds listeners, Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these siblings of mine, you did for me Matt 25:40 - consider how to practice this principle.
- **Thinking and Praying:** How does the book portray love and family, beyond traditional definitions? In what ways do the characters embody Christ-like compassion? What are the parallels between the magical children and how society treats the marginalized today? How can this story challenge us to extend mercy where there is fear or misunderstanding? How can the Church better affirm and embrace God's beloved LGBTQ+ people, like Arthur and Linus?

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you." - Matthew 7:7-8

Confirmation Reflections

BY ALEJANDRO ALVARADO AND ABBY LYONS, NEWLY CONFIRMED ST. J MEMBERS



We celebrate with Alejandro Alvarado, Abigail Lyons, Madeline Colasanto, Tessie Schreyer, Sara Gilchrist, and Anna Gilchrist in the completion of this program and public affirmation of their baptism!

During my time in confirmation class at St. James Church and the Lutheran Church in Oxford, I experienced a significant journey of faith and personal growth. The classes provided a deep dive into the teachings of the Lutheran faith, helping me understand the core beliefs and values that guide our congregation. I learned about the importance of grace, love, and forgiveness, which not only strengthened my relationship with God but also with others around me. Each lesson felt like a stepping stone, leading me toward a more profound understanding of what it means to be a Lutheran and a person of faith.

One person who profoundly impacted my journey was Mrs. Morrison, one of our confirmation teachers at both churches. Her passion for sharing God's word and her genuine care for each of us made the classes engaging and insightful. Lynn encouraged us to ask questions, explore our doubts, and share our thoughts openly. Another person that had an impact during my journey is my Grandmother, Tammy. Her guidance helped me discover my own faith in a way that felt personal and meaningful. I am incredibly thankful for her support and wisdom, which have inspired me to grow not just as a member of the church, but also as a compassionate and understanding individual. Last but definitely not least, my mother has played a vital role in my spiritual journey, constantly encouraging me to follow the path of God. She taught me that God is always present, whether during our best days or our worst moments, reminding me that his love never wavers. One of the most valuable lessons she shared is that while God may not always give us what we want, He always provides what we truly need. It's up to us to recognize and make the most of those blessings.

Thank you, Nonni, Lynn and Mom. I am incredibly grateful for your influences, as it has strengthened my belief and commitment to living a life rooted in faith. – Alejandro Alvarado

In confirmation I learned more about the old testament, which I hadn't really explored too much in Sunday School before that. When we went to B'nai I got to learn a little more about the Jewish faith (even if I didn't understand anything they were saying!) And of course we loved Mrs. Morrison's cookies and Mr. Johnson's munchkins. – Abby Lyons

FELLOWSHIP



Strawberries

BY CAROL NADASEN, ST. J MEMBER

A wooden quart basket of roundish, fresh-picked Michigan strawberries is what I set on the table, just out of reach of my toddler. Berries the size of a grape, with some of their light green stems still attached. Fully red, plump and shiny, in season... we could smell them.

Jackie was on her way to being a good talker. She was waiting for me to put away the groceries and start lunch. I couldn't wait to share those strawberries with her!

"Sawbwy?" she squeaked from knee-high.

I noticed she was looking at them, and repeated back, "Strawberries?"

"Yes, please!" she excitedly squeaked, words as fully formed as those berries.

This memory stokes the mom-glow even today. How could I not share some with her right then? In a moment, we were past the language and on to sharing sweet, delicious berries.

Isn't this just like our Heavenly Father, to put the mouth-watering berries on the table, waiting with joy for us to ask, so He can share them with us? The promises He sets before us in His word are so high, delicious to the Spirit within, and just out of reach. Freedom. Oneness. Partaking of the divine nature. Having the mind of Christ, discernment. knowing the love of God which is in Christ Jesus...*

He gives a glimpse of something wonderful, and that is exactly what He is bringing us into next. The promise is not meant to feed the self-confidence: "now I get it, and I'll just run with it on my own". We're not made to take the whole quart of berries and enjoy them alone.

The glimpse is always something of the remarkable oneness Jesus described in the "last will and testament" of His high priestly prayer in John 17: Oneness with Him and with each other, love so otherworldly, the world will take notice and know that God sent Him.

"I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me." John 17: 20-23.

Once we get through the concerns of the day in prayer, aren't the heart's deepest pleas of this nature? God provides a glimpse in an "eternal moment" of quiet. Then soul, mind and spirit respond and begin to plea for "that, for which we have been laid hold of" (Philippians 3:12). Please! Please! We pray... as if He didn't intend to share this, too.

What joy and peace there is, when the pleas become "yes, please!" and "thank you!" He is worthy of such confidence. "For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes; therefore also through Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us." (2 Corinthians 1:20).

“Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!” - Psalm 133:1



55th Anniversary of St. James: In May, we gathered at the Heritage Hotel for lunch to reflect on the past 5 decades of ministry in this community, honor our history, and celebrate where God is calling us into the future!

Summer Events

1

Summer Campfires

Sundays, July 27 & August 24 - See Pastor
Gather around the campfire to share stories of the summer and thoughts on the 1st half of our all ages summer read.

2

Camp Calumet Sunday

Sunday, September 29 - See Jan Carnaroli
Boom Chicka Boom - let's eat! Celebrating our mission partner and welcoming the Associate Executive Director, Rev. Sara Anderson.



STEWARDS of FELLOWSHIP

All events are organized by **willing volunteers** who feel so led to jump in and coordinate one.

OUTREACH



Let's Be Encouragers

BY MARYLEE SIEGLE, ST. J MEMBER

Isn't it wonderful when the Bible and its message speaks to us in everyday life! This is what happened to me early in my years. Here is the powerful verse that jumped out at me.... "Therefore, encourage one another and build each other up, just as (in fact) you are doing " (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

As a teacher and principal of 2 elementary schools, and later as a dyslexia tutor and seminar coordinator, these words rang loud and clear. For 20 years in our California church, I organized and led dozens of workshops of support and help to the needy and forlorn ...how God touches our lives on relevant issues in today's world.

Later this Encourager's mode took on a more worldwide love, especially for UNICEF and desperate children and families in different countries. Today the focus also includes educating needy children in Haiti --- more outreach

BUT, let's expand this one more step! Let's be **ENCOURAGERS** every day to our families, neighbors, churches and strangers..... outreach to all with a nod, a prayer, a smile, a handout, a listening ear and heart.

God encourages us and sets this task in front of us. Let's do it! Pass it along to the hurting world, encouraging others. The job is to uplift, support, and strengthen steps of faith through positive words and actions. God bless **ENCOURAGERS!**



3 grand kids.... Abby, Gabriel and Elizabeth, "reaching out" for UNICEF

Thank you church, neighbors and friends for your generosity & ENCOURAGEMENT!

The UNICE DRIVE 2024 collected \$10,070 in 2024. Please keep an eye out in October for the start of Unicef 2025!

“Therefore, encourage one another and build each other up, just as (in fact) you are doing ” - 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Spring Review



Dorothy Day House received hot meals in April, May and June, prepared by our Men's Fellowship Group, and sandwiches in April, prepared by many youth and families (above).

Homefront received the help of multiple St. James volunteers on their local build day in May.

Mission Endowment Fund allocated \$4419.40 to several community-building organizations in May, such as:

- 4 mission partners
- 2 educational grants
- Southbury Food Bank
- Zion Children's Fund Haiti
- St. James Historical Beautification Team
- Safe Haven
- ELCA World Hunger
- ELCA Lutheran Disaster Relief
- Habitat for Humanity
- St. James PreK Scholarship
- Homefront



GIVE TO ONGOING DRIVES!

Rice - Medical Equipment - Clothing

Summer Service

1

Boom Chicka Move

June - August - See *Jan Carnaroli*
Fundraiser for Camp Calumet. Register on their website and log your summer movement miles

2

Sandwich Making

Mon. July 21 - See *Meghan Colasanto*
Help the youth make sandwiches for the Dorothy Day House.

3

Hot Meal Prep

Mon. July 22 & Aug. 26 - See *Bill Siegle*
Assist the Men's Fellowship Group in preparing a hot meal, to be served at the Dorothy Day House

4

Letters to Campers

July - August - See *Lauren Lyons*
Send a letter to one of our youth while at camp!
Camp Calumet
Attn: [Camper's Name]
PO Box 236
West Ossipee, NH 03890

STEWARDS of OUTREACH

All projects are organized by **willing volunteers**, who feel so led to jump in and coordinate one.

If there is a cause close to your heart, bring it to St. James so we can join you in support and service!



OUTREACH SEASONAL SPOTLIGHT: Camp Calumet

BY JAN CARNAROLI, ST. JAMES AMBASSADOR

In early July 1902, John Calvin Bucher, an instructor at Peekskill Military Academy, brought a group of students to camp on land he had purchased on the north shore of Lake Ossipee, New Hampshire. This three-week outdoor experience marked the beginning of what is now Calumet Lutheran Camp & Conference Center. Long before that, the land was used by the Ossipee Indians, a subgroup of the Pequawkets of the Eastern Abenaki, who revered the lake as "The Smile of the Great Spirit." Though they did not settle directly at the current Calumet site, they visited often to hunt and fish, respecting the land as a shared gift from the Great Spirit. European settlers later imposed boundaries and claimed ownership through royal charters, disregarding the Indigenous understanding of shared stewardship. Though there were some skirmishes, the Indigenous people—devastated by the plague of 1617—were largely displaced, with many forced into Canada. Historian Jeremy Belknap reflected the European mindset of the time, calling the epidemic "divine providence" that cleared the way for settlers.

Later, President Grover Cleveland used the Lake Ossipee site for hunting and fishing, building the first permanent structure there. In 1902, John Calvin Bucher founded Camp Ossipee for Boys on this land—one of the earliest private boys' camps in the U.S., second only to Rothrock's camp in Pennsylvania. Despite limited records, we know Ossipee served affluent families and laid the groundwork for what would eventually become Calumet Lutheran Camp. John Calvin Bucher, the founder of Camp Ossipee, was a dignified figure and skilled administrator who managed the camp's operations but remained largely uninvolved in its day-to-day life. He assembled a high-caliber staff from elite universities and marketed the camp to the sons of prominent families, emphasizing both physical activity and moral character. Campers earned the prestigious "O" not just through sports and skills, but more importantly through conduct, manners, and citizenship. The camp offered wilderness adventures, mountain hikes, and peaceful canoe trips on undeveloped Lake Ossipee. In 1938, after 36 years, Bucher sold the camp to Robert C. Callard of Camp Calumet, marking the end of Ossipee's era and the beginning of a new chapter in the site's storied history.

Camp Calumet was founded in 1925 by Robert "Chubby" Callard in Canaan, New Hampshire, during a national boom in summer camping. Like Camp Ossipee, Calumet was a private boys' camp focused on building physical strength and moral character, with a philosophy rooted in discipline, fellowship, and personal growth—much like the Boy Scouts. Many Calumet traditions, such as its cheer and songs, trace back to its early days "on the hill" overlooking Crystal Lake. Emphasizing crafts more than Ossipee, Calumet became known for its boat shop and legends like the "Green Jello Monster." After the devastating hurricane of 1938 destroyed the Canaan site, Callard purchased the Ossipee property from Bucher, and in 1939, Calumet began its next chapter in Freedom,

NH. The move to Lake Ossipee proved to be a blessing for Camp Calumet, offering a flatter, more functional landscape and better sailing conditions than the original Canaan site. With help from co-director Ferrin “Doc” Ellsworth, founder Robert “Chubby” Callard oversaw the camp’s expansion, building new cabins, showers, craft spaces, and the famous “Bug House” nature center. Local builder Harold Ross constructed much of the new infrastructure using Calumet’s own timber. World War II brought challenges, including food shortages, a shortage of college-age counselors, and limited transportation—but Calumet adapted, famously flying 106 campers from New York to Boston in 1945. When Chubby retired in 1943, he left Calumet in Doc’s capable hands, ensuring the camp’s mission would carry on through wartime and beyond.

In June 1945, Calumet became the first camp to fly campers from New York to Boston, a novelty that continued for several years and helped ease wartime rail congestion. After the war, trains returned as the primary travel method, now equipped with air conditioning. In 1947, Calumet narrowly escaped destruction when massive forest fires swept through the region, but was saved by caretaker Harold Ross’s quick action. Calumet celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1950 with great fanfare, honoring its traditions in sports, especially baseball, and the beloved Blue and Gray team competitions. Camp life was also enriched by weekly editions of the Calumet Call, chaperoned socials with nearby girls’ camps, and cherished trips into town. Though some traditions faded, many endured—and new ones, like the sailing awards program with its ranks of crew to admiral, took root during the camp’s prosperous postwar years.

From 1946 to 1956, Camp Calumet for Boys thrived—its “golden decade”—with full enrollment, expanded crafts programs, and constant improvement under Doc Ellsworth’s leadership. By the late 1950s, the Ellsworths prepared for retirement and sold the camp in 1959 to New England Lutheran Camp, Inc., which began Camp Calumet Lutheran in 1960 as a Christian outdoor ministry. Though Doc was skeptical of the nonprofit model and co-ed camping, he stayed on the first year to support the transition, helping preserve key traditions. In 1962, Calumet became part of the Lutheran Church in America’s New England Synod, and over the decade, leadership changed hands multiple times. The camp structure shifted to color-coded units, and a formal Christian education program was integrated, led by chaplains, teachers, and eventually counselors.

In the 1960s, Camp Calumet transitioned from an exclusive boys’ camp to an inclusive, not-for-profit ministry open to all backgrounds—a shift made possible through generous donations of time, money, and labor. New property was acquired in 1964, leading to the start of Calumet’s family camping program in 1965, expanding the camp’s reach. In 1970, Don “D-Guy” Johnson became camp director at just 23, ushering in decades of dynamic growth. Volunteer-driven projects like the dining hall expansion showed the power of community support. Throughout the ’70s and beyond, Calumet added co-ed leadership training, restructured camper units, and strengthened its commitment to inclusion—especially through groundbreaking special needs programs that remain a cornerstone of Calumet’s mission today.

Calumet has grown from a summer camp for children into a vibrant, year-round ministry serving people of all ages and backgrounds. Programs like the Special Needs and Urban Day Camps, the 1985 opening of the Conference Center, and the launch of VBS outreach in 2004 reflect its commitment to inclusivity and service. Now operating under Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of New England, Calumet hosts thousands annually through its diverse offerings—retreats, family programs, and more. A major capital campaign enabled continued expansion, and leadership transitions have ensured steady growth. Celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2009, Calumet remains deeply rooted in its mission, promising that each new season will be its best yet—continuing to shape lives, just as it has for generations.

Camp Calumet Lutheran has been a cherished part of many St. James families’ lives, with connections reaching back to the 1960s. Nestled peacefully on the shore of Lake Ossipee, Calumet offers a place of renewal, connection, and growth for people of all ages. It’s a wonderful setting to reunite with old friends, make new ones, and experience God’s love in a deeply meaningful way. If you ever have the opportunity, I warmly encourage you to visit Calumet—you’ll be grateful you did.

Check out the Boom Chicka News: <https://mail.aol.com/d/folders/58/messages/ALTxfBm0jc5aFmIRwlqsJu8ij8>

The history is a condensed version, the original was written by: BY REV. RICK DACEY, STAFF ALUMNI

STEWARDSHIP



Healing God's Earth

*One Small Farm's Journey of Stewardship
Through Regenerative Agriculture*

BY BARBARA MANVILLE, ST. J MEMBER

When we think about farming, we often picture rows of crops, tractors plowing the land, and food being grown to feed the world. But not all farming is the same—and some methods can actually damage the soil, pollute water, and release carbon into the atmosphere. That's where regenerative agriculture comes in—not just as a science, but as a sacred act.

So, What Is Regenerative Agriculture?

Regenerative agriculture is a way of farming that gives back to the land instead of just taking from it. It's rooted in the understanding that the Earth is not a resource to exploit, but a living system to care for. This method works with nature, not against it, to grow food in ways that heal soil, restore biodiversity, and bring balance back to ecosystems. It's a form of gratitude—returning life to the soil that gives us life. In healing the land, we begin to heal ourselves, and we remember our role not as dominators of the Earth, but as stewards and participants in the cycle of life.

Why Does This Matter?

For generations, conventional farming methods—like repeated tilling and synthetic fertilizers—have gradually depleted the vitality of the land. The soil loses its richness, water no longer sinks deep, and the natural rhythms of creation are disrupted.

Regenerative agriculture restores the Earth's ability to breathe and absorb - it teaches us something deeper: that healing begins by humbling ourselves before creation and learning again to live in right relationship—with the land, with the animals, and with one another.

Flat Hill Farm – Southbury, CT

At Flat Hill Farm, our journey toward regenerative agriculture began in 2022 with pasture-raised poultry—and a deep desire to care for our land with more intention. Our small herd of beef cattle and laying hens had long been part of our rhythm, but we began to see how traditional grazing methods were wearing down the pastures rather than renewing them.

"The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." - Genesis 2:15



In seeking out a better way, we found not just a method, but a calling.

In 2024, we joined a soil health program led by the American Farmland Trust (AFT) and the National Rural Conservation Service (NRCS). Alongside ten other farms in Connecticut and Massachusetts, we began shaping a long-term plan—not just for productivity, but for regeneration, for healing, and for honoring the land that sustains us.

Every day, we move our poultry in mobile shelters to fresh pasture, allowing the land to rest and renew. Our cattle now graze rotationally—moving from paddock to paddock—so that no piece of land is overused. This practice reflects a spiritual truth: rest is not a luxury, it is a necessity. The land, like the soul, needs Sabbath.



Today, we raise pastured chicken, turkey, and beef. Our pork isn't on pasture yet—but we're learning. Our animals are cared for with dignity, fed local non-GMO feed, and harvested humanely. We believe every creature plays a role in the larger harmony of our ecosystem. By aligning our farm practices with these values, we step into the sacred work of co-creation—where food becomes more than sustenance; it becomes blessing.

Final Thoughts

Regenerative agriculture isn't just a trend—it's a return. A return to balance, to relationship, to honoring the Earth as a living, breathing gift. It's a spiritual invitation to live with more humility, more gratitude, and more care.

It is:

- Better for the Earth
- Better for farmers
- Better for us

As consumers, we can be part of this movement. By supporting local farms that care for the land, by learning more, and by sharing these stories, we help shape a future rooted in reverence. The future of food—and of farming—can be abundant, sustainable, and a blessing.



"The righteous care for the needs of their animals." - Proverbs 12:10

STEWARDSHIP

noun

the careful and responsible management of all things entrusted into our care by God

Right-Sized Boldness

If God is so large, why do we ask so small? Maybe we're afraid He won't answer or expect He will answer in ways we can't control. Asking is a vulnerable thing to do. Maybe we ask small because we know how we are. However, let's not ascribe to God the things we know of each other. As Jesus' siblings in the Kingdom of God, we have the wealthiest Father, whose joy it is to supply every need, and regularly says, "Ask."

It's Jesus' idea to ask large: "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. ...These things I have spoken to you so that My joy be in you, and that your joy be made full. This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you." (John 15: 7-11)

Asking, receiving, and bearing fruit are inseparable and the Father is glorified by this! What is glory, except that God is seen for who He is? We, all together, are asking our God and Father how we can pay off the \$391,000 mortgage... in this economy! The largeness of our asking is not so much the money, but that He be seen for who He is. "...that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me..." (John 17:23).

How will we pay it off? We can't imagine! In this earthly task, though, we can know Him better, see Him more in each other, and grow in love. Once a year, we can make a large payment on the principal and re-amortize the loan. Today, thanks to \$75,000 in generous matching gifts, we have the chance to double that amount, making a \$150,000 payment by year's end. This will reduce our monthly payment by about \$1,000! Then we will have some exciting decisions to make together! How will we proceed? We'll discover it together, one faithful step at a time. Our uncertainty may rest in His sovereignty.

It is with confidence in God's faithfulness that we boldly ask. When He answers, and we are surprised, perhaps our surprise is actually delight in how He answered: "...that My joy be in you and your joy be made full." Let's dream together before the Lord about the ministry, outreach, and facility improvements that will be possible when this debt is reduced! All of our dreams, from young and old, form the whole.

Father, we know Your storehouses are full. As we seek You to match the \$75,000 this year, be glorified in our giving and praying. Jesus, you said apart from You, we can do nothing. Help our unbelief. Multiply each gift, stir up love and vision among us and form us like clay in Your masterful hands. We want to see Your glory!

In Jesus' name, Amen.

St. James Mortgage Campaign Committee:

Carol Nadasen, Bill Siegle, Curt Haedke, Kathy Haddy, Ellen Hubina, and Lynn & Bob Morrison

*If you would like to join the campaign, please let Curt know!

BY PASTOR & LUCIA DRESSEL,
STEWARDSHIP LIAISON TO COUNCIL

All good things in life are gifts from God - from the people we love, to the place we call home, the air we breathe, and the passions we possess. Giving thanks and taking care of all these gifts are acts of glorifying God! They are also bold statements of commitment to lean into our identity as followers of Jesus.

Rather than viewing stewardship strictly as a fundraising event, a call for volunteers, or confined to one ministry team, let us expand our understanding of stewardship to embrace the care we already exhibit in all areas of ministry - just look at that long list of types of stewardship!

How do we take care of the gifts God has given us? How does the stewardship we practice reflect our mission and support our community's growth and well-being? How can our church celebrate and grow in our call to be stewards of *all* that God loves?

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve...”

- Mark 10:45

FINANCIAL

Care of money to achieve goals and maintain long-term financial health

RELATIONAL

Care and cultivation relationships with one another and community

MISSION

Care and attention to our unique call & vision

PROPERTY

Care of our building, facilities, and belongings

GENERATIONAL

Care of knowledge and resources for the benefit of future generations

INCLUSIVITY

Care of an environment that is welcoming, affirming, and supportive of diversity

SPIRITUAL

Care of faithful exploration, connection to God, and each other

TIME & TALENTS

Care of schedules, energy, and volunteer needs

ENVIRONMENTAL

Care and celebration of the earth

SEASONAL SPOTLIGHT ENVIRONMENTAL

“Season of Creation”
Sept. 7 - Oct. 5

Camp Calumet
Sunday

Worship in the St. James
Outdoor Chapel

Summer
Campfires

CHURCH LIFE AT A GLANCE

WEEKLY

SUNDAY	09:00 AM	CONFIRMATION
*SUNDAY	*09:30 AM	*SUMMER WORSHIP
SUNDAY	10:15 AM	REGULAR WORSHIP
SUNDAY	10:30 AM	SUNDAY SCHOOL
MON - FRI	9AM-12PM	BUILDING IS STAFFED
MONDAY	11:00 AM	BIBLE/BOOK STUDY
TUESDAY	12:00 PM	MEDITATION
WEDNESDAY	1-3 PM	FIKA @ AM COFFEE

MONTHLY

1ST WED.	07:00 PM	WORSHIP TEAM OR FAITH-FORMATION TEAM
2ND TUES.	01:00 PM	WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP GROUP JAMES MINISTRY CARE TEAM
2ND SAT.	09:30 AM	MEN'S FELLOWSHIP GROUP
3RD TUES.	01:00 PM	EVANGELISM TEAM
3RD WED.	07:00 PM	FINANCE TEAM
3RD THURS.	07:00 PM	PRESCHOOL BOARD
4TH TUES.	11:00 AM	DDH HOT MEAL PREP
4TH WED.	07:00 PM	COUNCIL

QUARTERLY

MISSION PARTNER SPOTLIGHT	EPISTLE ISSUE
STEWARDSHIP SPOTLIGHT	DDH SANDWICH MAKING

ANNUALLY

JANUARY	CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: BUDGET
MARCH	GUSTAFSON SCHOLARSHIP
MAY & NOV.	MISSION ENDOWMENT FUND GIVING
JUNE	N.E. SYNOD ASSEMBLY
JUNE	CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: MINISTRY
JULY	VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL, WITH UCC

See church calendar on our website for updates and specifics