

## St. James Lutheran Church Mission Statement

~To connect people to God and one another, welcoming all and changing lives!~

Happy New Year! We continue this chilly month with our Advent, Christmas and Epiphany Theme: *From Generation to Generation*. This Epiphany we focus on how we can keep seeking... keep seeking ways to deepen our faith, grow our love for God's justice and grace, and pour out God's love to the world. As we move into the season of Epiphany, we are reminded of the journey of the magi. We are told in Matthew 2 that they came to pay him homage and brought 3 gifts, hence how we got the thought that there may have only been 3 magi. Guided by a star, they embarked on a long and uncertain journey to find the newborn King. Their search was not just for a ruler, but for hope, for truth, and for a deeper understanding of the Messiah and God's plan for all creation.

Every new year we enter an unfamiliar path, and an unpredictable journey begins. No matter how you embrace the new year, the magi can inspire each of us to listen for God's guidance, even when the path is unclear. Despite the hardships of their journey, the magi encourage us to keep moving forward in faith, trusting that God is with us each step along the way. Their gifts serve as a reminder of who we worship and foreshadows the life of Christ: The gold is symbolic of Jesus the King and God's Kingdom to come; The frankincense was used to honor God in worship, honoring Jesus as the Son of God; The myrrh was used as a spice to help embalm and anoint the dead, foreshadowing Christ's death for our sake and for the salvation of the world.

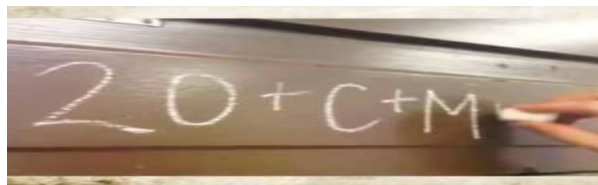
The magi's journey and gifts inspire us to think about the places we are called to follow God, offering him the best gifts we can- our worship and our hearts and love poured out for the world!

Where might God lead us this new year? In the midst of all of life's unknowns, what a beautiful gift of surrender to follow God's light and to trust that no matter where the journey leads us, God will be our guide. No matter how you embrace this new year and season, may you always remember God is with you and you are not alone.

Let us pray (this was one of my narrations in the Christmas with Wartburg program back in December): Surprising and astonishing God, open our hearts to the radiant hope found in the manger. Open our minds to the miraculous way the angels bring us your tidings of peace. Journey with us as we follow your marvelous light that guides us to your stable of grace. Amen.

Peace,

Pastor Rebecca



### Epiphany Home Blessings: 20 + C + M + B + 25

Pastor Rebecca would like to offer you the opportunity for a home blessing for the New Year. Pastor would come to each of your homes at a time you've reserved in the morning/afternoons of Jan. 8 & 9. She would join you in a brief visit (~15 minutes) and together offer an Epiphany home blessing. Please call the church office to set up a time if you so desire.



The St James church office would appreciate announcements for the bulletin by Weds. morning for the weeks printing. Articles for the months newsletter are due by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. The church office is open M-TH 8:00 AM-12-noon.



Currently St. James is holding public worship via YouTube, and Dumont cable channel 1004. If you need assistance accessing worship virtually, please call the church office. Worship with Holy Communion will occur each Sunday of the month.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES WILL RESUME JAN. 5th. CONFIRMATION CLASSES RESUME JANUARY 15th AT 6:30 PM.**



It takes many people to keep this congregation running smoothly and efficiently. Thank you to the many members who have given of their gifts. It makes our worship services special and inviting to attend. Your service shows in our communities as a witness to mission and it is appreciated.

Many thanks to Jay Doeden for placing floral arrangements in our worship space. Spectacular!

Thanks to those who participated in the Christmas Eve service. You rock!

Thanks to those who see what needs to be done and just do it!



#### ALLISON CARE CENTER WORSHIP

Worship with Holy Communion at the Allison Care Center is held on the 2nd Thursday of each month @ 9:15 A.M. Thanks to all who lead this service.

**St. James Visiting Committee for  
Jan. & Feb. 2025**

**Linda Thoreson, Robin Morton,  
Kathleen Fisher, Syd Brinkman**

Illness and COVID are an ongoing concern at Care Centers and Asst. Living facilities. Please call first to know what the policy is. Call those homebound members to see what their preference is. You may wish to call or send a note to them.



The January Bible study will be held on **Wednesday, January 8th**. Bonnie will have the Bible study lesson and serve coffee/treat. Study lesson can be picked up from Syd.

Visiting for Jan/Feb are: Linda Thoreson, Kathleen Fisher, Robin Morton and Syd Brinkman.

The 2025 W-ELCA Yearbook is available on the foyer table printed in green. Please check to see if you have responsibilities during the year.

Sewing will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 21 and Wednesday, Jan. 22. Please come and cut, tie or sew. Enjoy time spent together making quilts for LWR.

Thank you to the women of St. James for making 2024 a great year.  
Bonnie Dralle, Chairperson

**THOSE NEEDING PRAYERS**

Travis Terry, Jeff Dreier, Dale Thorne, Deb Steere,  
Kent Gulick and Sylvia Schrage



November end

	Monthly	YTD
Income	\$17,105.96	\$148,006.42
Expense	\$12,784.29	\$160,707.73

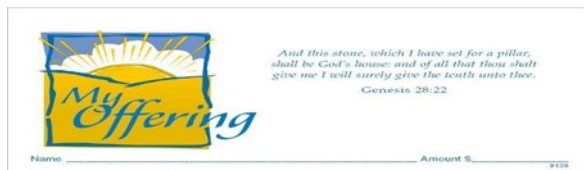


**FOOD & FELLOWSHIP**

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO PREPARE WEDNESDAY NIGHT MEALS IN 2025. GRAB YOUR COMMITTEE MEMBERS, FAMILY, FRIENDS, ANYONE - PICK A DATE AND MAKE WHATEVER YOU'D LIKE TO SERVE.** All costs can be paid - just need to prepare and serve food from 5:00 - 6:15 p.m. There are plenty of people to be helpers - menus are available for quantities. **PLEASE CONSIDER HELPING US KEEP THIS WONDERFUL OUT-REACH GOING!**



**St. James will hold its Annual Meeting Sunday, Jan. 19 immediately following worship. If you serve as chair of a committee, please have your reports to the office by Sunday, Jan. 12 so that the report book can be assembled. Thank you!**



OFFERING ENVELOPES FOR 2025 CAN NOW BE PICKED UP FROM THE FOYER TABLE. **Numbers can change each year so please do not use old envelopes.** If you'd like a box of offering envelopes and didn't receive one, please contact the church office. Thank you.



**DON'T FORGET TO RE-JOIN YOUR FRIENDS WEDNESDAY NIGHTS FOR FOOD AND FELLOWSHIP SERVING BEGINNING Jan. 8 5:15-6:15 PM**

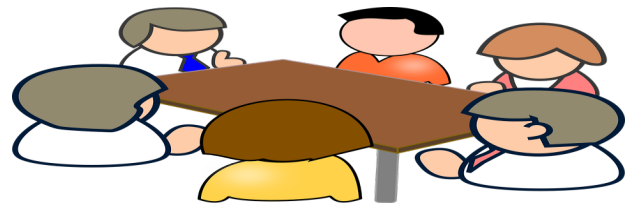
**Christ In Our Home devotional booklets are now available on the narthex table or the church office.**



The mission of St. James Lutheran Church is to connect people to God and one another, welcoming all and changing lives!

Your support of the capital campaign will not only help us "Raise the Roof" but help us continue to live out our mission. We have enclosed an envelope for gifts that you are invited to place in the mail or in the offering plate on Sunday. More envelopes are available for pick-up in the church office. All donations are tax deductible. Thank you for your generosity.

*Please see the back to learn more about giving options.*



## St. James Council Meeting Minutes – December 11, 2024

Meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Jim Davies. Present: Danny Bohlen, Taylor Salge, Aimee Deuell, Leslie Groen, Jason Shaull, Amanda Wehran, Financial Administrator Mindy Pecha and Pastor Rebecca Baird. Devotions given by Jim Davies and Pastor Rebecca. Motioned by Leslie, second by Danny to approve the agenda. All ayes. Motion carried.

### REPORTS:

Treasurer's report was provided by Mindy Pecha. November income was \$17,105.96 with \$6,800 for the Raise the Roof campaign and total expenses of \$12,784.29. Motioned by Leslie, second by Jim to approve the Treasurer's report. All ayes. Motion carried.

Secretary's Report: November minutes were reviewed. Motioned by Pastor Rebecca, second by Jason to approve the Secretary's report. All ayes. Motion carried.

### Standing Committee Reports:

Stewardship and Finance: Met on December 5<sup>th</sup> went through the 2024 budget and proposed a budget for



2025 to be presented at the annual meeting.

Property Committee: Mentioned the lattice around the bell tower will need repair or replacement and Randy will work on quotes. The council discussed if smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors in the basement.

Education/Youth Ministry: The Children's Program will take place on December 15<sup>th</sup> with fellowship to follow and Luther League will lead the Christmas Eve Candlelight service.

Evangelism – They are hosting fellowship again following the Sunday School's Christmas program.

Worship & Music – They are planning and Lessons in Carols service for December 29<sup>th</sup>.

Nominating Committee – Scott Bruns shared the names of church members who agreed to be nominated for the six open Church Council positions in 2025 and those who agreed to be nominated for the Nominating Committee in 2025. The council thanked him and the Nominating Committee for the great job they did to fill the council in 2025.

Pastor's Report: Pastor will be officiating the Care Center worship on December 12<sup>th</sup> and attended the WELCA Advent program @ Elm Springs. Pastor also attended Robin Morton's piano recital and participated in Christmas at Wartburg again this year. Pastor shared the church potluck went well with approximately 40 participants and Pastor hopes it can be a tradition that continues to grow. In addition, she is participating in a Synod team of women and continued with visits and calls.

Old Business: Pastor Rebecca shared the Worship and Music Committee discussed Communion at the rail and we will be giving it a try in late January.

New Business: Pastor Rebecca discussed the December 29<sup>th</sup> Lessons in Carols service and church council members volunteered to read throughout the service. Motioned by Taylor, second by Aimee to approve the following ballot for 2025. All ayes. Motion carried:

Ballot for Council:

3-year term: Andrew Morton, Kiley Shear, Ted Koester, Robin Lursen

2-year term: John Endelman

1 year term: Alyssa Endelman

Ballot for Nominating Committee:

Lisa Beadle, Jon Uhlenhopp, Deb McWhirter, Karla Schmidt, Mystie Hummel and Jason Shaull

Ballot for Church Council Treasurer:

Danny Bohlen

Motioned by Leslie, second by Jason to approve the following new member requests to join: Andrea and Billy (Madison and William, children) Klingenberg, Karlie and Cody (Luke, child) Nederhoff and Kelly Wubben. All ayes. Motion carried. The committee wrote thank-you notes to church members for the work they do for St. James. Jim discussed the need for a long-range planning committee and further discussions will be held with the new council members in January.

Motioned to adjourn made by Jason, second by Aimee. Meeting adjourned 6:31 p.m. Next meeting will be held January 22, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.