

FROM PASTOR NORM:

“Like trees walking”

*“Jesus took the blind man [at Bethsaida] by the hand and led him out of the village; and when Jesus had put saliva on his eyes and laid his hands on him, Jesus asked him ‘**Can you see anything?**’ and the man looked up and said, ‘**I can see people, but they look like trees walking.**”* [Mark 8:23-24]

The month of August will be the tenth month that I have served St. James Lutheran as an interim minister. After this much time, I have a fairly good idea what is happening at St. James and what is not happening at St. James. I have noticed that St. James Lutheran seems to have no vision for the future and without a vision most of the congregation’s ministry is looking backward not forward and the work of the church council and church committees becomes more maintenance-minded verses mission-minded.

So, what is the value of having a congregational vision? Like the blind man at Bethsaida, congregations without a vision for the future have trouble seeing clearly to react to our rapidly changing world. In a congregation, visioning is the process of painting a picture of the future that the member will want to create and experience. The vision provides the interpretive framework for each ministry within the congregation. Having a vision helps in the equipping of members for their primary job to build up the body of Christ. That is what a vision can do; it changes the way people think and act inspiring them with a future they want to move towards.

So how does a congregation create a vision? Honestly, it is not hard. It takes time of course; it takes commitment of course, because it requires the need to talk and listen to ALL members about what they see St. James Lutheran mission is now, in the future, and how to fulfill those missions.

Let me share with you why St. James Lutheran needs a vision. I noticed at last year’s Children Christmas Program that St. James has a lot of children in the ages that attend Sunday School, but I have also noticed that only a small percentage of those children at that Program are attending Sunday School.

What is wrong?

Well, I am thinking that the long-standing Lutheran tradition of having Sunday being the primary day for Christian education is not working in our busy world. Sport club for youth plays a part of the problem because they use Sunday for games, plus many young families have reserved Sunday for their family activities which painfully **no longer includes** Sunday mornings at church.

So how does St. James’ Christian Education Committee address this problem?

Well, maybe the answer is to move the Christian education stuff to another day – such as Wednesday. You already have an after-school program called **Live on Love** on Wednesday so just enhance that program with Bible stories, videos, and a teaching moment of God’s love revealed to us through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. I am also thinking that if St. James can sell the idea of a congregational meal on Wednesday evening for young family’s convenience – this could be a **Win-Win** change in mission. - just a thought!

Having a vision for the future helps congregations solve congregational problems and paints a picture for the future. Without a congregational vision for the future, the working of the church becomes much like the blind man from Bethsaida sight *“like trees walking”* lacking clarity of focus and direction.

Pastor Norm



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 20th of the month. The church office is open M-TH 8:00 AM-12-noon.



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.

Thank you to the many VBS volunteers!

Thank you to the volunteers who sit in the office when the secretary is gone.

Thank you to those who arranged a beautiful worship service at Wilder Park.

Thank you Laney B. for loving to fold and stuff bulletins each week.

Thank you to those who care for the parsonage inside and out. It is a beautiful home.

Thank you for the gift of patience and discernment as we wait...

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.



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 the first and fourth Sundays of the month. During public worship, communion will be distributed at the communion rail with the option of taking communion in the pew if a member so desires. Thank you for joining us in creative means as we continue to worship!

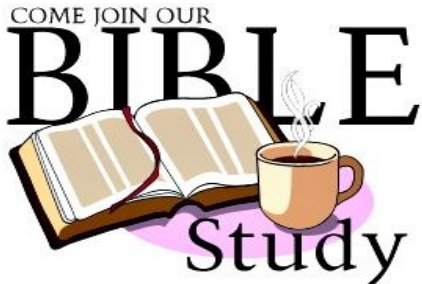
**St. James Visiting Committee for
July & August 2022**

**Syd Brinkman, Deb Blockhus,
Shirley Wubbena, Robin Morton**

Illness is 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 prefer-
ence is. You may wish to call or send
a note to them.

THOSE NEEDING PRAYER

Sally Beltz, Rev. Paul and Eileen Schaedig, Joseph Thorne, Audrey Freesemann, BJ Foster, and Matthew Anderson.



The W-ELCA August meeting will be held on Thursday, August 4th at 9:30 a.m. in the Parish Hall. Connie Wix will guide the Bible Study and furnish treats. The Gather magazine is used for the Bible study and if you do not receive one, Syd will furnish you with a copy of the study. Please take note the Gather now has 2 months in the 6 issues so you will receive 6 issues instead of 10-12 issues as before.

Fabric is needed to begin making more quilts in the fall. The 95 quilts that were made and sent emptied the cupboards. Cotton fabric is preferred.

HARVEST FESTIVAL: The Harvest Festival will soon be here on Tuesday September 20th. A Come and Go meal will consist of BBQ Beef Sandwich, sides and dessert. More information to come! Thank you for your support of the ministries of St. James W-ELCA.

The July & August Visiting List is printed for you in the first column of this page. Those who enjoy home visits continues to grow while those who are able to visit dwindles. If you would like to spend sometime visiting, **PLEASE** contact the church office or Bonnie Dralle. You've touched their lives in ways you'll never know!

Stay Cool!!! Blessings Bonnie Dralle, President



Syd and Randy Brinkman will be traveling to Columbus, OH August 8-12 as voting members to the Churchwide Assembly. The Assembly is the primary decision-making body of the church. The members hear reports and review the work of the churchwide officers, receive and consider proposals from synod assemblies, elect leaders establish church policy, worship together, adopt a budget and other matters. The office will remain open the usual hours with volunteers in the office.



June	Year to date
Income	
\$9,439.59	\$80,762.95
Expense	
\$10,185.44	\$80,554.66



From the Church Council

At the May meeting of the church council Pastor Norm suggested to the council that we approve an appeal to some volunteer members to reach out to our homebound people and take Communion to them once a month following our communion service in church. Pr. Norm and a helper do in-home communion visits but he felt that the regularly scheduled communion with those members would be very beneficial. **Eucharistic Training Sessions will be held Saturday, Aug. 20 at 10:00 and Sunday, Aug. 21 at 10:15 both in the Parish Hall.**

Council President Report

Summer is slipping away so we need to take time to enjoy these last weeks of vacation before school and other activities kick in again. It's been a busy summer at St. James with wrapping up our Christmas Cheer project, Allison Days food stand, Community VBS & Wilder Park service just to name a few things. We have a member on a mission trip as I'm writing this in partnership with St. Peter's in Greene. All these activities give us opportunities to share our faith with others.

The Education Committee is meeting soon to plan curriculum for Sunday School and other youth activities for fall. We have struggled to get kids back to Sunday school and our committee will be thinking outside the box to encourage more children to take part in our programs. Please share your ideas on what you would like to see happen for your family. A big project we're planning for will be held on Sunday September 11 - 'GOD'S WORK - OUR HANDS' Sunday where we will go out in the community to be the church. **We are looking for a leader** for this important and special day as well as projects we can help with throughout our community either in homes or public spaces.

There are many people to thank for special things they do for our congregation and a couple I would like to recognize are Ted K. for taking care of the parsonage lawn this season and also Noreen Wiegmann

& Fawn Wiebke for the wonderful job they do in spreading our events and photos on social media where people can see what's happening at St. James. Of course we're thankful to P Norm for continuing to challenge and lead us as we wait for a full-time pastor. There are many more names to mention but I wanted to bring those names up in this newsletter.

Enjoy the end of summer and make plans for events coming up at St. James this fall!



Minutes from St. James Church Council Meeting

Date: July 13, 2022

From: Dana Uhlenhopp

President Deb McWhirter called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm. Present: Pastor Bauer, Deb McWhirter, Dana Uhlenhopp, Ted Koester, Denny Wiegmann, Scott Bruns, Mystie Hummel, Jason Shaull, Jeremy Idler & Mindy Pecha, Financial Administrator. Agenda was reviewed. Motion by Denny W. to approve, second by Jason Shaull.

Pastor Norm's Report:

Pastor Norm gave his monthly report to the council. He reported that 27 children attended VBS from grades 1st – 6th at St. James along with 4 Riverside counselors, 2 adult and 2 student helpers; 4 kitchen helpers and 2 VBS Leaders. Trinity Reformed had 13 children ages PreK – Kindergarten with 3 adult helpers, 2 student helpers, 1 kitchen helper and 1 VBS Leader.

Also, Taylor Salge has accepted the role of VBS leader for St. James in 2023 and Kelli Wubbena has agreed to be our Sunday School Superintendent beginning this fall. We appreciate both of these ladies stepping up into these important leadership roles at St. James. Thanks to both from Pastor Norm and the Council.

Pastor also gave his regular monthly report on worship services and other visits/events for the month. The council also reviewed and approved his Accounts Allowance Report with Denny W. making the motion and Jason Shaull seconding this.

Treasurer's Report:

Mindy reviewed the monthly and YTD financials with the Council. Monthly income was \$9,439 with expenses being \$10,185 so a slight deficit for June.

YTD, our deficit is \$208 so basically at break even for our budgeted numbers. Motion by Scott Bruns to approve, second by Dana U.

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Denny W. and second by Jason Shaull to approve this report.

Standing Committee Reports:

Education – report on VBS. Also, after church on August 7th a meeting will be scheduled by this committee to review the upcoming Sunday School year.

Evangelism – A walking taco meal was held before the VBS program.

St. James will be holding our church service at Wilder's Park on Sunday, July 17th with a light lunch to follow.

On Sept 11th, there will be no church service as our members are planning to work on "God's Work, Our Hands". This will include working in the community on various projects to help our community and members who may need help with manual projects. We are looking for volunteers to help. Plans are to meet at the church at 9:00 and we hope to conclude between 11:00 – 12:00 with a lunch to follow.

Property - Denny W. gave an update on the recently approved parsonage remodeling project. Several members met w/ a rep from Harken Lumber.

Stewardship & Finance; Worship & Music; Youth Ministry – nothing to report

Old Business:

Call committee update. Ted Koester informed the Council about the conversation he had with Pastor Steve Bracket from the NE Iowa Synod. There are currently 30 vacancies + 4 add'l ones soon in our Synod. Struggles continue to find enough people to fill all the openings.

Parsonage updates – see above in committee reports

Training for home communions & volunteer list – Pastor Norm plans to train members of our congregation in August. Still looking for volunteers.

New Business:

Review and update the Committee lists for 2022. Deb will work with Syd and get these updated.

Ideas for "God's Work, Our Hands" for Sunday, Sept. 11th.

No meeting in August (unless necessary)

Motion to adjourn by Scott Bruns, second by Jeremy Idler.