



St. James News

Equipping and Empowering Families and Students through Christ

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CHURCH@STJAMESHL.ORG
320-543-2766

Pastor – Reverend Mark Loder
web site: www.stjameshl.org - revloder@gmail.com

SCHOOL@STJAMESHL.ORG
320-543-2630

From The Desk Of *Pastor Mark Loder*

“Amen!” This response may not seem to be much, but it is an important proclamation of the Church. The **“Amen”** is the congregation’s. So good and important is this response that many pastors have been taught and teach that they are to leave it for the people and not take it from them. What does this mean? Simply that the congregation is engaged in every word being proclaimed and spoken during the service, responding at appropriate times with **“Amen!”**

Recall what you learned from your Catechism concerning the **“Amen”** at the end of the Lord’s Prayer: “What is meant by the word ‘Amen’? That I should be certain that these petitions are acceptable to our Father in heaven, and heard; for He Himself has commanded us so to pray, and has promised to hear us. **Amen, Amen,** that is, yea, yea, it shall be so.” In other words, the congregation, in her response of **“Amen,”** is saying, “Yes! I believe it. It is true!”

All are encouraged to recognize the blessings of God’s Divine Service through Word and Sacrament and join in unison in proclaiming the receptions of such. At various times throughout the service, the **“Amen”** is included and encouraged. At the very start of gathering as the body of Christ, you are invited, in remembrance of your baptism, to make the sign of the cross in the name of the Triune God. After doing so, the congregation says **“Amen.”** This is followed by Confession and Absolution. Upon hearing the gracious words of your Lord, “I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit, the congregation again says, **“Amen.”**

Those are just a couple of examples, but be encouraged to take a moment to look through the order of service and take note of the times where you, in unison, joyfully proclaim **“Amen”** in recognition of the truth you’ve just heard. A couple of places to note that aren’t as obvious are the proclamations before and after the sermon. “Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you from God our Father, and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.” The congregation responds, **“Amen!”** Those aren’t empty words spoken by the pastor to fill time. They are a blessing that’s been handed down since the time of the apostle Paul. They are words of promise and blessing to you. The same is true of the words following the reception of the Lord’s Supper. As you are dismissed, you hear the words, “Now this true body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus strengthen and preserve you in body soul unto life everlasting. Depart + in peace.” Recognizing the blessed gift of forgiveness of sin and strengthened faith, you respond at the rail, **“Amen!”** One other appropriate time for you to respond is after prayer. Any time the congregation joins in prayer or the pastor, in the stead of Christ, prays for the congregation, the response of the people is **“Amen!”**

Many good and blessed gifts are given to you while here at church. While it may be easy to simply go through the motions and guide along until the end of our time together, it’s good, right, and salutary that as one’s in the presence of God and receiving His gifts to be engaged and participate in His service. The liturgy of the church is a conduit that connects you with the first Christians as the Church was born and grew. As you regularly come together and join the generations of Christians who have come and gone before you, there’s joy in receiving God’s gifts. The most simplest way for you to acknowledge such reception is with a regular and bold proclamation of **“Amen!”**

Our Church Records

Church Attendance

Sunday, March 2	136 & 98
Mid-Week, March 5	99
Sunday, March 9	64 & 69
Mid-Week, March 12	58
Sunday, March 16	198
Mid-Week, March 19	51
Sunday, March 23	96 & 104
Sunday, March 30	66 & 109

Communion Attendance

Sunday, March 2	140
Sunday, March 9	146
Sunday, March 16	126
Sunday, March 23	125
Sunday, March 30	90

Baptism

Asher Trobiani son of Paul Trobiani and Christina Steelman, on March 23, 2025, by Pastor Loder. His sponsors are Steve and Pam Halverson.

Lucas Trobiani infant son of Paul and Sarah Trobiani, on March 23, 2025, by Pastor Loder. His sponsors are Benjamin & Stephanie Halverson.

Norma Marie Wurm infant daughter of Jake and Gabby Wurm, on March 30, 2025, by Pastor Loder. Her sponsors are Lauryn Cottrell, Nicole Logeais, and Tom Logeais.

Received by Profession of Faith

Alan & Teija Hendrickson along with their children Clayton, Mason, Sofianna, Aubrey, Wesley, Lillian, by Profession of Faith.

✝ ***Bible Trivia*** ✝

See answers below

1. Who said, "Whom will ye that I release unto you?"
2. What happened immediately before the veil in the temple of Jerusalem was torn in two?
3. What was Judas' blood money later used to buy, as prophesied in Zechariah?
4. What were the names of the two men who came to get the body of Jesus after he was crucified?
5. Who first entered the tomb of Jesus after Mary reported that he had risen?

Answers: 1. Pilate (Matthew 27:17) 2. Jesus died (Matthew 27:51) 3. A potter's field (Matthew 27:7) 4. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (John 19:38-39) 5. Peter (Luke 24:12)

Spring Concert



By all the
**St. James Lutheran
Church and School Choirs
Along with the School Band**
Sunday, April 27
At 2:00 PM in the Church



3rd Annual Garage Sale

Will be held on April 25th & 26th

All items will be greatly appreciated except the following

Cribs, Mattresses of any kind, home medical equipment, and VHS tapes.

Volunteers are in need for setting up and take down if you are interested, please contact Kelly Gruenhagen @ 612-978-1445. All proceeds will go to St. James Lutheran School.

Class of 2025

Graduates....we would like to recognize you in our May newsletter. Please submit a picture, the school you are graduating from and your future plans to Michelle at secretary@stjameshl.org by April 18th.

confirmation



Confirmation will be held on Sunday, May 4th at our 10:30 worship service. All students who are getting confirmed please submit your name and confirmation verse to Michelle at secretary@stjameshl.org so it can be featured in our May newsletter.

Monthly Financial Report

St. James Lutheran Church
Monthly Financial Summary
February 2025

	Year-to Date	
	Actual	Budget
Receipts		
Offerings & Donations	379,937	380,771
Tuition & Other Receipts	301,677	208,918
Mission Receipts	8,125	5,833
Total Receipts	689,742	595,522
Expenses		
Salaries - Church & School	366,661	368,008
Benefits/Payroll Taxes/Mileage	93,481	104,815
Administration & Program Expenses	67,681	56,204
Utilities/Maintenance & Repair	184,695	112,957
Mission Disbursements	2,235	671
Total Expenses	714,753	642,655
Net Receipts/Expenses	(25,011)	(47,132)

Spring
IS IN
THE
air



Hear the Good News of the Gospel on the Lutheran hour each Sunday at 9:00 am on KDUZ 1260 AM Radio.

During the month of April, you will hear the following topics:

April 6

"Better Than I Deserve!"

Jesus didn't deserve to die on a cross, but He died and rose again in order to give us better than we deserve. (John 12:1-11)

April 13

"In the Middle"

In Jesus, God showed up smack in the middle of life with forgiveness, love, and a promise never to leave us. (John 19:18)

April 20

"A Risen Christ and a Clean Room"

The risen Christ has folded Death up and put it in its place. Now Christ invites you to trust in Him and find place and purpose in His new creation. (John 20:5-7)

April 27

"Through Locked Doors"

When Jesus shows up, it's no longer "us vs. them," because Jesus is for everyone, even if everyone is not yet for Jesus. (John 20:19)



April: John George (1), Marcus Linder (2), Jason Rasmussen (2), Adam Koosman (3), Mildred Yager (3), Kelly Gruenhagen (4), Randall Whitton (4), Braelynn Long (6), Lyle Oestreich (6), Jacob Pehl (7), Holly Miller (8), Anastasia Cardinal (9), Henrik Kilpela (9) Molly Lanars (9), Ryan Jones (10), Mya Zillmer (10), Cassey Glessing (11), Nora Morrisette (11), Steve Borg (13), Emma Dickens (13), Lane Sparkman (13), Clara Nikko (14), Brittany DeGroot (15), Bethany Kozitka (15), Carolyn Stoll (15), Christine Koosman (16), Asher Trobiani (16), Amy Gabbert (17), Carson Remer (17), Laci Borg (18), Kevin Gruenhagen (18), Trevor Oestreich (18), Carter Stueven (19), Thea Wagner (20), Carolyn Wackler (21), Drew Burau (22), Kelli Burau (22), Carol Moorhead (22), Vernon Rasmussen (22), Karla Marschel (23), Chelsea Wagner (23), Hadley Diers (25), Brecken Long (25), Taylor Smida (25), Katherine Koch (26), Katherine Miller (26), Rowan Salmela (26), John Zander (26), Elise Luchsinger (28), James Wackler (28), Gregory Baumann (29), Norma Koosman (29), Sophie Salmela (29), Delight Kobow (30).



4/4 Alan & Teija Hendrickson
 4/8 James & Carolyn Wackler
 4/9 Andrew & Suzanne Koosman
 4/10 Alex & Stephanie Hennen
 4/10 Tyler & Kelli Miller
 4/13 Greg & Cathy Birkholz
 4/17 Mark & Amy Burau
 4/17 Michael & Jill Kittock
 4/23 Shane & Kayti Heber
 4/24 Mark & Rebecca Leaf
 4/24 Jim & Christine Yukel
 4/25 Wayne & Patricia Diers
 4/29 Kevin & Brita Gummerus

Will members and guests met on March 3rd at 5:30 for our annual work night cleaning and organizing the Fellowship kitchen, making Easter favors for the Howard Lake Care Center and the Lodge residents and auditing the books. A delicious sub lunch and vising was enjoyed followed by a brief business meeting. The LWML Spring Zone meeting will be held April 26th in Atwater. Registration is open for the National LWML Convention in Omaha, Nebraska June 26-29. Reminder to sign up for the July 11th tour to Church Basement Ladies play in Plymouth. March birthdays were recognized. The evening closed with devotions by Marge, "Life is Like a Dishtowel".

Our next meeting is April 7th, 7PM. A guest speaker from the Lutheran Church Charities K-9 Comfort Dog Ministry will give us more information of this national human-care ministry embracing the unique, calming nature and skills of purebred Golden Retrievers. Come meet Gideon Comfort Dog and his handler from St. Michael's Lutheran Church in Bloomington, MN. Gideon serves every day in the community to bring comfort to all those affected from disasters, crisis, suffering pain or loss and much more. ALL ARE WELCOME!!





There's more than just sitting at a desk and doing assignments that happens in a typical school day. Here's some of what's been happening at St. James Lutheran School during the month of March.

If you happen to be in the building at the right time, you may hear familiar melodies like Hot Cross Buns, Gently Sleep, or Merrily We Roll Along, because the third graders are practicing their fingering and breathing techniques as they learn to play the recorder.

The first graders put on their plays, "The Bremen Town Musicians", and "Coyote in the Rock" for the preschool and kindergarten classes. In science, the first graders have been learning about all the systems in the human body and the amazing way God has created all of them to work together. Soon you can see a display of the class's silhouettes complete with the organs and bones in their proper places in the body.

The eighth-grade class put on a play they wrote, entitled "The TeleTime Machine" for the preschool, kindergarten and first grade classes.

Seventh and eighth graders practiced debating skills recently. The topic was whether the Industrial Revolution was good or bad. The class was divided and assigned which side to prove was correct. After time to build their respective arguments, the debate was held. Mr. Baumann then determined which side had presented their case more convincingly. The winner? The group who spoke about the downside of the Industrial Revolution.

Sophie Salmela, St. James alumna, visited our school on Friday the 21st to share information about agriculture. As a dairy ambassador, she along with 6th grader Kennedy Sparkman and 4th grader Harper Salmela, who are also dairy ambassadors, shared

their knowledge of cows and the dairy industry with preschoolers. Sophie also spoke with first graders about agriculture and its importance for us all.

The preschool was visited by Dr. Gina Young, mother to Harvey, Addy, and Mia Young, and a dentist. She shared information about what dentists do and how to best take care of our teeth.

Preschoolers, Kindergarteners, second and third graders learned about Brazil and heard a story read in Portuguese, the national language of Brazil, by Katia who was visiting friends here in Howard Lake.

The staff is learning new things, as well: how to implement a new testing program for the students. This will provide teachers not only information about how the student is doing in math and reading, but also ways to help the student achieve even more success. There is also a science component to these tests that we will implement later.

The March Madness challenge this year used the Rock, Paper, Scissors game with a twist. Students and staff who wished to participate each got a string of beads to wear. If you had beads, you could challenge anyone else who had beads to a match of Rock, Paper, Scissors. The winner of the match got all of the other people's beads. Once you lost your beads, you could no longer challenge or be challenged. Friday, the 21st was the finale. The two people that still had beads for the final showdown were Amelia Nowak and Odin Johnson. And the champion is: Odin Johnson in seventh grade!

Dates to keep in mind for April:
April 2 6:00 p.m. PTL Meeting
April 4 4 th Grade visits the Science Museum
April 5 Lutheran School Spelling Bee
April 6 Grades 3&4 Choir 10:30
April 10 K-8 Grade attend Orchestra Hall
April 11 2 Hour late Start
April 13 Palm Sunday All Choirs sing at the Beginning of both services
April 17 Grade 1 st & 2 nd visit the Oliver Kelly Farm
April 18 Good Friday-No School
April 21 Easter Monday- No School
April 25-26 St. James Garage Sale in the gym
April 27 2:00 PM Spring Concert by all school choirs

Vicar Totenhagen's Corner

Jesus says in Matthew 4:4, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’” St. Paul also writes in 2 Timothy 3:16-17, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” These, and many other passages, show us just how necessary the Word of God is for the Christian life. It is by hearing the Word that we are converted, and it is by hearing the Word that we are kept and strengthened in the faith. In the God-breathed words of Scripture, we find Jesus, who is the only way, truth, and life. So we should regularly place ourselves in the Word, so that the words of our Lord may take root in our hearts and minds.

Yet, we must be aware that all translations of the Bible are not created equal. Some translations are simply better or worse than others, and there are many differences which make Bible translations different from one another. Most of these differences are of little consequence, but there are translation choices which can greatly impact how a Christian understands a passage of the Bible, sometimes in harmful ways. There are two things which impact how good or bad a translation is: 1) what New Testament manuscripts are prioritized for translation, and 2) what translation theory is being used.

Regarding #1, we might sometimes have it in our minds that the Bible has almost always been a whole complete book like we have it today. But that is not the case. The Bible is made up of 66 ‘books,’ which are now compiled together into one book, what we know as the Bible. We do not have any of the original copies of these books, since they did not stand the test of time or use. But we do have thousands of manuscript copies of the New Testament writings. Some of these are mere fragments of a chapter, others are complete books or letters, while a few others contain the whole New Testament or close to it in one volume. The sheer size of literary evidence of the

New Testament far exceeds that of any ancient secular work. Yet, despite the great quantity of New Testament manuscripts, around 90% of the Bible is firmly established. As for the remaining 10%, many of the differences are insignificant and do not impact the interpretation of the Bible at all. They might include a different verb tense, an omission of the article or a pronoun, or a different title for Jesus (one manuscript might say “Jesus Christ,” while another manuscript might say “Christ Jesus,” and yet another might just say “Jesus”).

Since all of these ancient manuscripts were copied by the hands of scribes, there will naturally be scribal mistakes, and other times there are obvious purposeful changes made to the text. In order to address differences found between manuscripts, a science called “Textual Criticism” developed. The goal of Textual Criticism is to determine why and how changes entered into the manuscripts, and to then determine what was likely the original reading. In order to do this, scholars compare and contrast thousands of manuscripts and then make choices on what readings they think are original.

All major New Testament manuscripts fit into groups called ‘texttypes.’ The most important of which are called the Byzantine texttype and the Alexandrian texttype. Although the Byzantine texttype contains over 90% of all available Greek New Testament manuscripts with a high level of uniformity, modern text-critical scholars overwhelmingly favor the Alexandrian texttype. They do this because of a set of rules which they developed and then applied to the Bible, such as “The shorter reading is always preferred.” Yet, this was not always so. For over a thousand years, the Christian church relied on and favored the Byzantine texttype. It is what St. Jerome used when he made the Latin Vulgate, it is what Martin Luther used for his German Bible, and it is what King James used for his Authorized Version. Today, most English translations are made using the theories of modern text-critical scholarship. The result of this is a form of the Bible that has never before existed in the history of the Christian church. Regarding #2, different Bible committees have different theories on how translation should be done. Some groups favor being literal, while others lean more towards paraphrasing for the sake of modern readability. These differences on translation theory is

why Bibles such as the ESV, NIV, RSV, NRSV, NASB, NET, etc. all have different wording, even though they are all based on the same modern text-critical version of the Bible.

Another important consideration is the effect of American consumerism and business models. Many companies which publish Bibles seek to make more profit, and one way to do that is to create and advertise brand new translations of the Bible. This is how the English Standard Version came about, since it was an update and rebranding of the RSV. The ESV is especially important for us to consider, since it is the translation our Synod's publishing house has depended on for a few decades now. Unfortunately, the ESV underwent revisions in 2002, 2007, 2011, 2016, and it will now undergo another revision in 2025. This new revision includes 68-word edits, along with numerous changes to editorial notes. Because of how unstable and rapidly changing the ESV is, sometimes the translation in the lectionary book will be different from the ESV in your pews, which will be different from the ESV in your home, depending on what year and version is being used. Repetition is the mother of all learning. One of the great benefits of using the same liturgy throughout one's lifetime is that the words of the liturgy will stick with you even when your memory fades. The same goes for children who will quickly learn through repetition. Likewise, a great benefit of using the same Bible for a long time is that memorization becomes easier. However, if your preferred translation changes or is replaced every few years, the goal of biblical memorization becomes harder and harder, often only leading to confusion.

Because of this, Christians would greatly benefit from using more stable translations that do not regularly (if ever) change. Besides stability, there is also the question of what original language manuscripts are used for the translation, as well as what translation theory is used. When these things are taken into account, the King James Version probably ranks as the best choice. Yet, the language used by the King James Version can be difficult to use for many modern Americans, since much of its language can be archaic and hard to follow. Therefore, the New King James Version is a good choice for modern Christians. The NKJV prioritizes the same Greek manuscripts as the KJV, but it

updates the translation into more modern English. This makes it a reliable Bible for both churchly and personal use.

For the reasons of 1) reliability of manuscript sources, 2) faithfulness of translation, and 3) stability of the translation, St. James will be moving away from the English Standard Version towards the New King James Version.

The Lutheran Witness Subscriptions Due

Members who wish to receive **The Lutheran Witness** Magazine must pay the subscription price of \$25.00 to the church office before May 31, 2025. A box will be placed in the narthex for those who would like to make their payment when attending services.

Please complete the form below and bring to the church office with your payment made out to St. James to receive or renew **The Lutheran Witness**

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