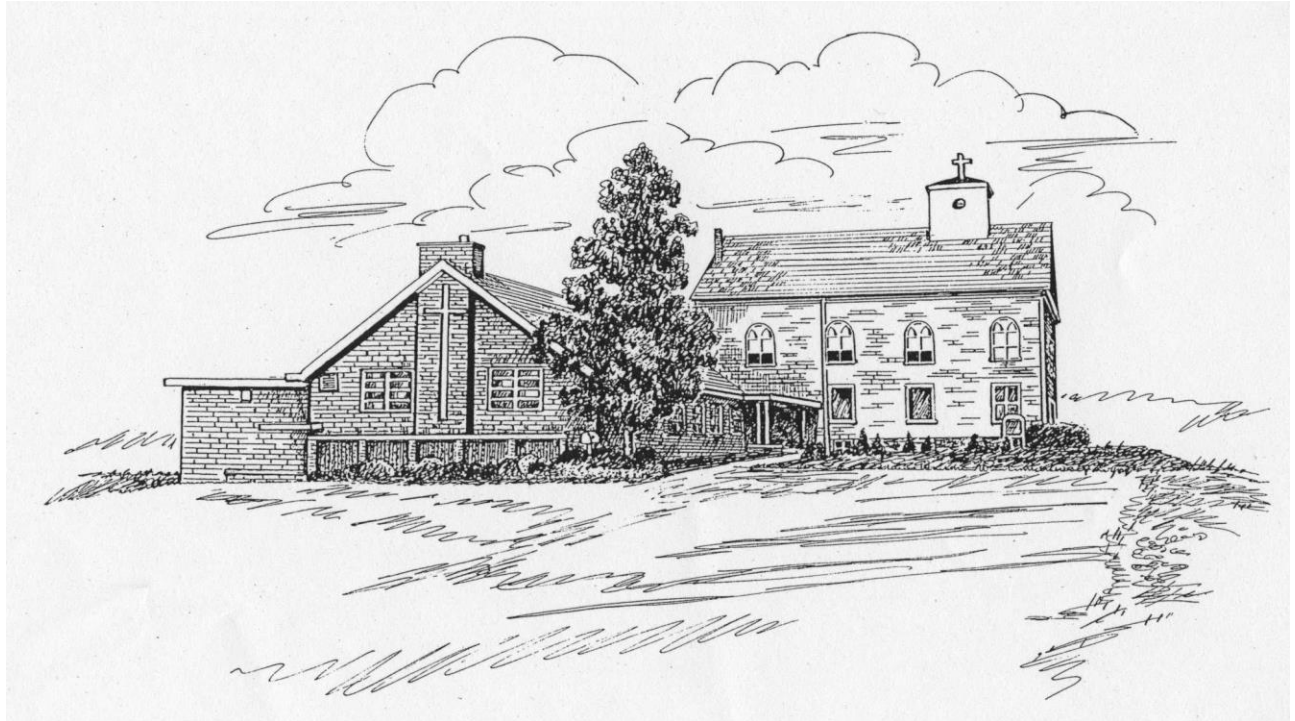


WISPS OF STRAW



St. James Lutheran Church Newsletter

October 2017

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*“Serving Christ in Word and Deed”
more than 265 Years*

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

As you know, St. James has been involved in both discussions with Grace Lutheran Church and a process of discerning God's will for the congregation. The culmination of both the discussions and the discernment was the congregational meeting which was held immediately following the worship service on Sunday, October 8th. This meeting was duly announced, called, and executed. There was discussion on the proposal for St. James to enter into the Shared Ministry Agreement that has been distributed to both St. James and Grace congregations. There was a vote, the results of which were 44 in favor of, and 23 opposed to, entering into the Shared Ministry Agreement.

Shortly after the meeting was adjourned, the consequences of that vote were questioned. The question was caused in part by the assumption that a 2/3 majority was required for passage. Because we needed some impartial guidance and interpretation we contacted Bishop Tracie Bartholomew, who referred the matter to Rev. Chris Boerger, Secretary of the ELCA. Rev. Boerger clarified that unless the congregation had previously decided (by way of a congregational vote) that the matter required a 2/3 vote, then only a simple majority was required. The language in the Shared Ministry Agreement document referring to a 2/3 majority ("Terms of Agreement" section, number 6) refers to what will be required for additional congregations to be permitted to join the agreement established between St. James and Grace. Further, Rev. Boerger clarified that changing the terms of a call does not constitute a call vote and therefore again, only a simple majority is required.

What does all this mean?

It means that St. James has approved its entry into the Shared Ministry Agreement with Grace Lutheran Church. Grace had a congregational meeting Sunday, October 15th at which the Shared Ministry Agreement was approved, and they voted to extend a call to Deacon Karen Kelly. Now, we the Council, will begin to take the steps to move into this exciting new reality.

This has been a stressful, and at times painful, process for some persons. There has been frustration, fear and division surrounding this process. However, speaking only in terms of that division, hurt and pain, now we can borrow from Paul's personal plan in Philippians 3: "forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, [let us] press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus." That heavenly call is the mission God has given us: proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ to all who need to hear it. We, the Council of St. James, are committed to working with the Council of Grace, and the members of each congregation to ensure that we capitalize on this opportunity and enhance the Christian witness to Phillipsburg and the surrounding area. We encourage each of you to be a part of this important work for the sake of the Gospel.

We thank you all for your commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, your devotion to St. James and your patience and engagement with this matter.

Yours in Christ,

The St. James Council

† In Memoriam †



Elizabeth Babcock, the mother of Robert (Bob) Babcock, passed to her eternal reward on September 21st, her 93rd birthday. As a member of St. James for over sixty years, Betty served on Council, as Financial

Secretary, and as a Sunday School teacher. Our condolences to and prayers for Bob, his brothers Fred and Howard, and their families.

A Sound Improvement

Thanks to a generous donor, St. James now has a new and vastly improved sound system in the church.



Matched and optimally located speakers with new amplification gear now provide a much better listening experience in all the pews, as well as a more pleasing appearance.



Financial Snapshot

September	Income	\$10,264.11
	Expenses	11,604.40
	Net	-1,340.29
Year to date	Income	\$119,368.50
	Expenses	146,279.90
	Net	-26,911.40

Blessing of the Animals

Joining the congregation at this outdoor worship on Sunday, October 1st were about a half dozen four-legged participants. They seemed to enjoy the experience as much as their owners, for whom the change of scene was surely interesting!

Our thanks to Drake Rental on Hwy 22 who provided the tent for the occasion, and to all the volunteers who participated in setting up and taking down the paraphernalia needed to make it happen.



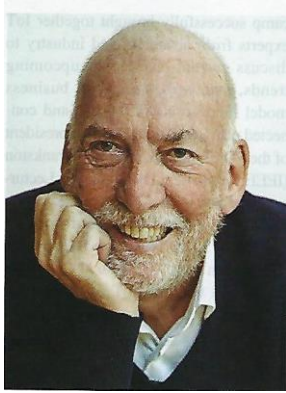
VBS Wrap-up

We had a great time during VBS in July! About 30 kids, aged 2 to 12, spent the week together. Through craft, song, food, and play, we learned about how God is with us wherever we go! WOW, GOD! It was great to learn about all of the amazing creations we have, thanks to God, including us! Thank you so much to everyone who donated, volunteered, attended, prayed for, visited, built for, or helped in any way to make such a mammoth dream a reality. Thanks to the generosity of both the St. James and Grace congregations, Thrivent Financial, and a Panera Bread - hosted fund-raiser, we were able for the fourth year running to make VBS a free event for every family, and that is such a fantastic blessing to have.



Separated at Birth?

It's not who you think. This is a Dutch engineer, Kees Immink, whose expertise was responsible for a key technology that made possible the CD, DVD, and later Blue Ray. Today, the roughly 500 billion discs in use worldwide are a testament to his genius.



Social Ministry Update



The gloves, hats, and scarfs collection is currently in progress. They will go to Norwescap for distribution to local families in need.

The bake sale in conjunction with the Community Day/Yard sale was a success. Approx. \$250 was made from the bake sale alone. A display table was presented, with all of Social Ministry's activities throughout the year. We were pleasantly surprised by all the positive comments made to us about the projects we engage in.



We continue to collect food for Norwescap as well as lap blankets for the Care Centers, and are still working on the sleeping mats for "Project Homeless Connect".



In early November Social Ministry will begin collecting food items to complete a Thanksgiving meal or meals.

Last year we supported two needy families.

Once again in December we will be doing two or three projects helping local less-fortunate families to have a better holiday. These will be announced at the end of November and early December.

Social Ministry will represent Saint James Lutheran Church in January 2018 at the "Project Homeless Connect" program. This program is sponsored by Warren County and held at Mercy Hall on South Main Street in Phillipsburg. We will be handing out the hygiene kits collected this summer to the homeless. This is a day when all non-profits gather together to offer their services and provide essentials for the homeless. They will be able to come in and get haircuts, coats, bags of food, blankets and sleeping mats, hygiene kits etc. This event is usually held the third week of January.

Social Ministry Chair, Sharon Risko

Sophia Sharps Window

We had good news on October 2nd when the board of the Warren County Conservancy Trust voted to recommend full funding of our grant request for 75% of the cost to restore the window. The final decision will have to be made by the Board of Freeholders at their November meeting, but our request is a small fraction of the total Conservancy budget this year, so we are hopeful that the Freeholders will go along with the recommendation.

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God Himself does not propose to judge a man until he is dead, so why should you?

Straw Church Community Day / Yard and Bake Sale, , October 14th

Thanks to the efforts of about 36 members, and the donation of "treasures" no longer needed by them and a good many more, we were able to raise over \$1500 toward defraying some of the costs of sending some of our youth to the ELCA Triennial gathering in Houston next summer. This is in addition to \$245 previously raised by a mums sale. Thanks to all who took part in this event. Kudos to Pastor Kelly who put himself in harm's way with repeated drops into the Dunk Tank!



Events at St. James

Tuesdays	7-9 pm	AA Meetings (lower level, Frey Hall)
Wednesdays	10pm	Bible Study, Book of 1 Peter
Wednesdays,	7-9 pm	Boy Scouts
Wednesdays 7-8 PM		Sweet Hour of Prayer in the sanctuary
Sunday,	6 pm	Catechism at Pastor's house
Tuesday, Oct. 17 th	7-8:30pm	Church Council

Events at Grace

Friday, October 27 th @ 6:30 pm	Halloween movie night for kids; with snacks
The movie that we will be showing is "Hokus Pokus".	
Saturday, Nov. 11 th @ 7:30 pm	Bunco night with light snacks.
Saturday, December 9 th @ 2:00	Caroling at the Phillipsburg Care Center
Saturday, December 9 th @ 7:00 pm	Christmas wine and cheese social

Worship Leaders Schedule October

Day/Date	Special	Communion Set-up/Clean up	Greeters	Lector	Liturgist	Ushers
Oct. Sun. 1		Marlie Raspe	Carol Steible Lois Steible	Karoline Avard	Jamie McLain	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble
Sat. 7		Kelly Perna		Mark Aloise	Cindy Aloise	
Sun. 8		Marlie Raspe	Dave & Charlotte Morris	Bob Babcock	Steve Stocker	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble
Sat. 14	Yard Sale	Sue Miller		Rick Brunsell	Kelly Perna	
Sun. 15		Marlie Raspe	Janet Bray	Karen Kelly	Polly Sue Newbold	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble
Sat. 21		Marian Martin		Cindy Aloise	Holly Chemidlin	
Sun. 22		Marlie Raspe	George & Chris Scherer	Jamie McLain	Ralph Avard	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble
Sat. 28	Reformation					
Sun. 29	Reformation		Carol Steible Lois Steible	Steve Stocker	Karen Kelly	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble