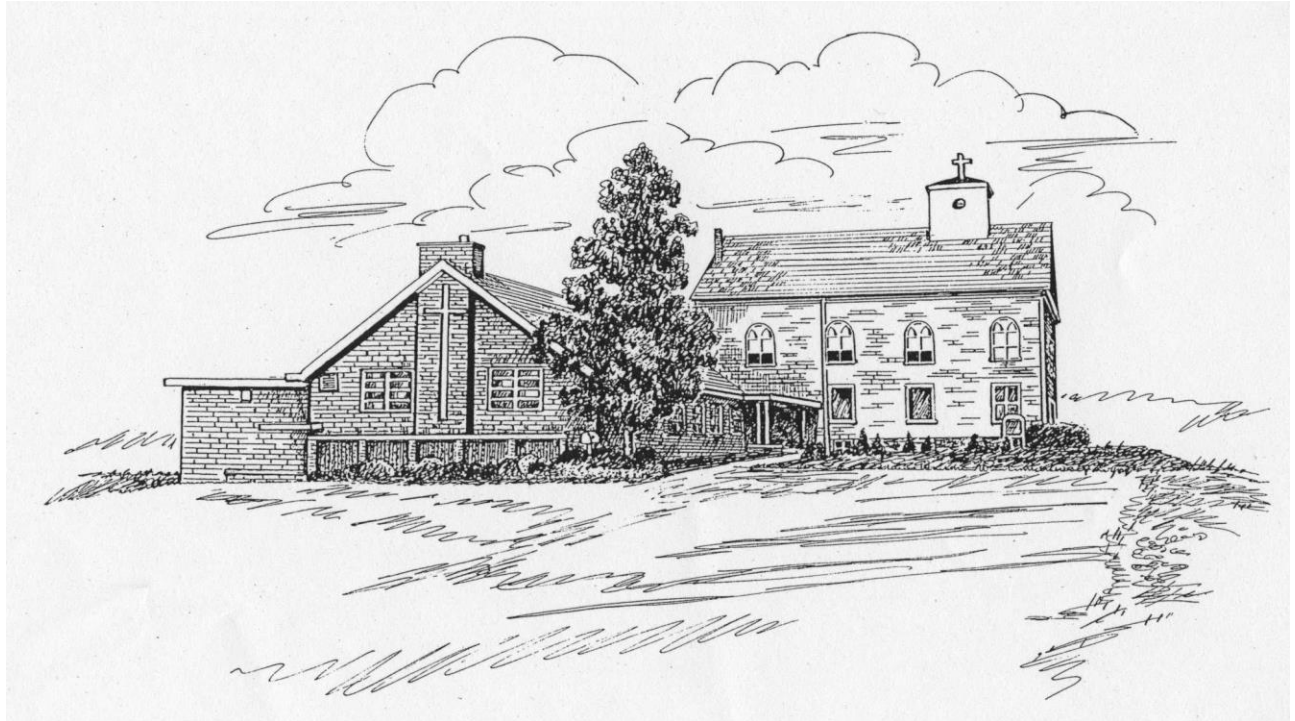


WISPS OF STRAW



St. James Lutheran Church Newsletter

January 2018

Pastor: The Rev. Bernard Kelly

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

From the Pastor's Desk

Looking Back and Looking Ahead

Over the last several years, I have taken the opportunity afforded by the January newsletter to pause for a moment and look back and look ahead with respect to the ministries, mission and state of the Church. I hope you find this helpful.

2017 was a very dynamic year for St. James. On January 4th, 2017 we had our first official meeting of the Shared Ministry Task Force. That initiated a process of discernment and conversation that culminated in the execution of our Shared Ministry Agreement with Grace and the calling of Deacon Karen Kelly to Grace. During 2017 there were several opportunities for the two churches to come together and do ministry together. For example, when we had our discussion on *The Shack* and then saw the movie together as well as our discussion of *The Screwtape Letters* and the movie, *Chocolat*. Also, our Wednesday Lenten Evening Devotions, our trip to the Lehigh Valley Harmonizers and of course catechism and Vacation Bible School. We found that when we did ministry together we could not only have greater participation but enjoyed meeting new people as well. Often, we found that some of the "new people" we met from the other church we have actually known for decades!

In 2017, we began recruiting, training and assigning volunteers to assist with worship leadership. We now have a strong core of greeters, lecturers, liturgists, and offering counters. In 2018, we will seek additional volunteers for altar guild and ushering. These ministries are crucial as we seek to invite, welcome and retain visitors and move toward ever greater worship excellence. We also began participating in the Creating Congregational Cultures of Generosity, a series of workshops presented by the Lake Institute, part of the Lilly School of Philanthropy of Indiana University. Our hope is to develop a culture of generosity at St. James. Another major undertaking that we initiated in 2017 was participation in the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston, TX. We will be sending four youth: **Kim Eaton, Andrew Hardenbergh, Gigi Holman, and George Moser**. Additionally, Karen and I will be attending as adult participants. Three adults and three youth from Grace will also be attending, and so this is another example of Grace and St. James working together for the sake of mission.

We said goodbye to some of beloved brothers and sisters in Christ during 2017. We entrusted to Christ's care: **Anna Lanning, Paul Miller, Betty Babcock**, and former members June Gabrielli and John Loveatz. But we worship a God before whom the generations rise up as well as fall away and so, we not only give thanks to God for the former generations, but the upcoming ones as well. In 2017, we had one baptism, **Noah Larimer**, and four young persons, **Kim Eaton, Nate Galusha, Gigi Holman and Emma Raub** affirm their faith and in so doing commit to assume the responsibilities of church members. We also rejoiced that two of our young members: **Michael Eaton and Ellie Galusha** received their first Holy Communion.

So, this is the look back. What lies ahead? Karen and I hope that 2018 will be a year of enhanced and expanded ministry. Karen will be taking the lead for Christian Education, Social Ministry, lay visitation, youth, and fellowship ministries. I will be taking the lead in the worship, leadership, evangelism and stewardship ministries. But we need YOUR help. The key to a vibrant and active congregation is the commitment, involvement and support of the congregational members. St. James Lutheran Church has not only been planted and sustained by God, it *is being equipped* by God to bring the Gospel to Phillipsburg and the surrounding area. Let's work together in this God-given mission!

Pastor Kelly

Notice of Annual Congregational Meeting

Notice is hereby given of the annual meeting to be held Sunday, January 21, 2018 *immediately following the 8:45 am worship service.*

Among the Agenda Items will be:

Approval of the 2018 Spending Plan

Election of Council Members (nominations should be forwarded to Janet Bray, Council secretary)

Annual Reaffirmation of the Shared Ministry Agreement

Development of a plan for the sexton's house.

Acceptance of the annual reports to the congregation

Those desiring to have other items placed on the agenda should contact in writing Jamie McLain, Council president or Janet Bray, Council secretary

A Note of Thanks

Karen and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members who have encouraged us, supported and guided us and prayed for us over the last year. We also want to thank you for your very generous gift, presented to us at the Christmas Eve service. We so appreciate your kindness and generosity. We look forward to not only continuing our work with you, but continuing to get to know each of you better and having you get to know us.

Thank you again for all your love.

Pastor and Deacon Kelly

† In Memoriam †



Member John J. Loveatz, Sr. joined the Church Triumphant on Thursday, December 14th. A local business man, John also served the community as a member of the Alpha Fire Company. We offer the prayers of the cogregation for his family and friends.

Shared Ministry Report

Our Shared Ministry with Grace officially began on November 15th. So far, the relationship has been very beneficial to both congregations. Grace enjoyed consistent worship leadership with Pr. & Deacon Kelly. The youth of both congregations worked together on St. James' Holiday Vendor Fair and making luminary kits. Both of these events will support the trip to the ELCA Youth Gathering later this year. St. James has received two payments from Grace (one for a half month since the Agreement began mid-month). The Shared Ministry Committee has been established and has had their first meeting. Serving on the Committee are: **Bob Babcock, Janet Bray and Holly Chemidlin** from St. James and **Joe Fassl, Jen Fischer and Patti Martino** from Grace.

Annual Reports are Now Due!!

Ministry leaders are reminded that your Committee's annual report is now due. Please get your report to Carol Steible as soon as possible for inclusion in the Bulletin of Annual Reports. Carol needs to have all reports by **January 15th**.

Are You Called to Serve?

By Deacon Karen Kelly

Have you ever felt the Holy Spirit nudge you when you see the list of homebound members or hear that that one of your brothers or sisters has suffered a setback and could use a visit? Do you hear that voice saying, "You should go visit." Perhaps you act on it and actually call or visit, or perhaps, like so many of us, you think, "I would, but I wouldn't know what to say or do" Perhaps the thought of making the visit or call makes you feel uneasy or anxious. Yet, we are called to love and care for one another. Jesus tells us:

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. (John 13:34) and:

Whatever you did for the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me. (Matthew 25:40).

Whether you are someone new to visitation or a 'seasoned veteran' who has been or is currently involved with visitation, you are invited to come out for a workshop at Grace in which we will discuss the theology behind visitation, along with the 'nuts and bolts' or 'how-tos' necessary for this important ministry. Included will be discussions about Stephen Ministry and Eucharistic ministry. Come and let us help you discern whether or not this ministry is for you. If you already know that it is, come and share your experiences and thoughts and possibly pick up some new 'tools' to help you.

WHEN: Saturday, January 20th

TIME: 9-12 (continental breakfast provided)

WHERE: Grace Lutheran Church

FACILITATOR: Deacon Karen Kelly

Here is a message written by DaySpring co-founder, Roy Lessin.
We hope it will encourage you today.

Just think,
you're here not by chance,
but by God's choosing.
His hand formed you
and made you
the person you are.
He compares you to no one else—
you are one of a kind.
You lack nothing
that His grace can't give you.
He has allowed you to be here
at this time in history
to fulfill His special purpose
for this generation.

Submitted by Liz Kolba

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The Bread of Life never gets stale.



**The people of Grace Lutheran Church
Phillipsburg, New Jersey
Request that you join them in praise and thanksgiving to God
At
The installation of their Deacon
Karen B. Kelly
In service of Holy Communion
Sunday, January 28th, 2018
Two o'clock in the afternoon
Rostered leaders are invited to process. The color of the day is green.
Please Join Us For This Joyous Celebration
A Reception will follow in Luther Hall immediately after the service.**

Please join us for this important, joyous celebration and be a part of this historical event. Bishop Bartholomew will be the installing officer, Rev. Dr. Nelson Rivera of Moravian Seminary will be preaching, and we will celebrate the Shared Ministry Agreement with St. James. Following the Installation we will have a fellowship meal catered by Marianna's where there will be time to greet our guests and visitors, make new connections and continue the celebration. Please watch your mail for your invitation and be sure to R.S.V.P.

Fastnacht Generosity Party- February 13th, 2018



Let us thank you for your generosity and explore the dynamics of becoming a generous culture. We'll have donuts and other goodies, fellowship and fun, and we will choose a Generosity Project for St. James to participate in! So, come on out and join in the fun. Please RSVP to Deacon Karen Kelly (kbak58@comcast.net) or by calling the church office.

Looking Ahead to Lent

Easter is very early this year (it will be on April 1st), so Lent begins very soon. Ash Wednesday will be on February 14th. Once again, we will be having Lenten Evening Devotions in conjunction with Grace. Last year, those who attended the Lenten Evening Devotions had a great time of light food (soup and salad), fellowship and the deepening of our relationship with Jesus.



Youth Trip Lehigh Valley Phantoms & Movie



Hey St. James Youth!

We have the opportunity to attend a Lehigh Valley Phantoms (ice hockey) game against the Hershey Bears on **Friday,**

February 9th at 7:00 pm. Then, we will hang around in the PPL Center to watch the movie Soul Surfer. It should be a great game between the Phantoms and the rival Bears. The Phantoms are 4th (21-10-2) in the league (out of 15) and the Bears (15-6-1) are #10.

As for the movie, "Soul Surfer" is the inspiring true story of teen surfer Bethany Hamilton, who lost her arm in a shark attack and courageously overcame all odds to become a champion again, through her sheer determination and unwavering faith. In the wake of this life-changing event that took her arm and nearly her life, Bethany's feisty determination and steadfast beliefs spur her toward an adventurous comeback that gives her the grit to turn her loss into a gift for others.



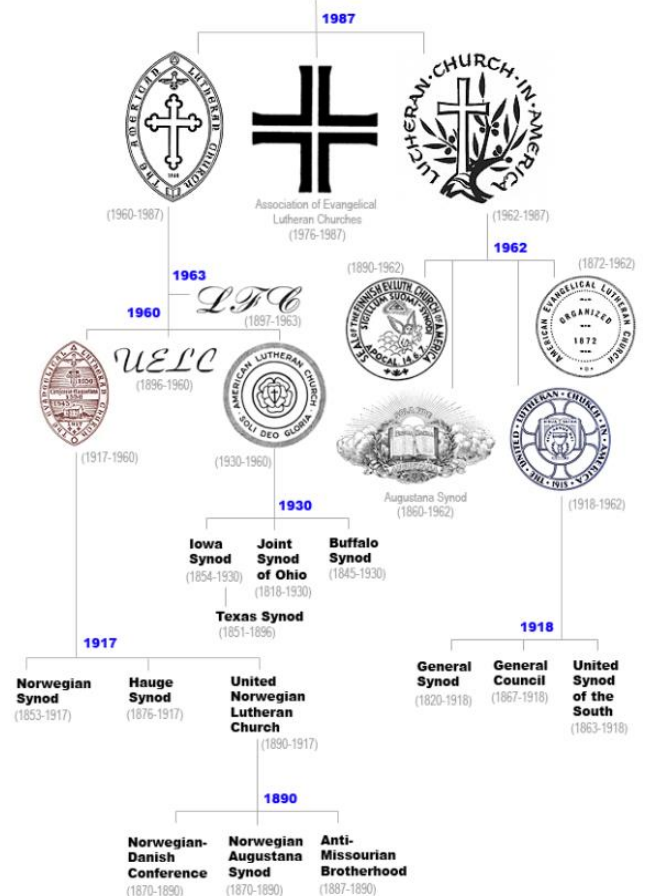
We need to secure tickets (\$20/person) by January 20th, so if you are interested in going, you need to let Deacon Karen Kelly (kbak58@comcast.net or 215-872-0949) know **BEFORE January 20th.**

Origins of the ELCA

Have you ever wondered how the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America came to be? Here, from the Archives section of the ELCA web site, is a snapshot of how, at least over the past hundred years or so, numerous largely ethnic or regional churches slowly came together to form the denomination of which St. James is now a part.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



* * * * *

We're all invited to heaven, but we must RSVP!

Worship Leaders Schedule

January

| Day/Date | Special | Communion Set-up/Clean up | Greeters | Lector | Liturgist | Ushers | Counters |
|----------|---------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Sat. 13 | MLK, Jr. Weekend | Marion Martin | | Mark Aloise | Cindy Aloise | | |
| Sun. 14 | MLK, Jr. Weekend | Marlie Raspe | Janet Bray | Karen Kelly | Jamie McLain | Harvey Walters Ron Knoble | Dave Morris Shirley Johnson |
| Sat. 20 | | Holly Chemidilin | | Rick Brunsell | Lexi Rosetti | | |
| Sun. 21 | | Marlie Raspe | George & Chris Scherer | Polly Sue Newbold | Ralph Avard | Harvey Walters Ron Knoble | Steve Stocker Bob Babcock |
| Sat. 27 | | Sue Miller | | Kelly Perna | Sue Miller | | |
| Sun. 28 | | Marlie Raspe | Carol Steible Lois Steible | Bob Babcock | Steve Stocker | Harvey Walters Ron Knoble | Charlotte Morris Janice Youpa |

February

| Day/Date | Special | Communion Set-up/Clean up | Greeters | Lector | Liturgist | Ushers | Counters |
|----------|------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Sat. 3 | | Kelly Perna | | Holly Chemidilin | Cindy Aloise | | |
| Sun. 4 | Boy Scouts | Maly Raspe (S) | Charlotte & Dave Morris | Marly Raspe | Karen Kelly | Harvey Walters Ron Knoble | Janice Youpa Lois Steible |
| Sat. 10 | | Marion Martin | | Mark Aloise | Lexi Rosetti | | |
| Sun. 11 | | Marly Raspe (S) | Janet Bray | Karen Kelly | Jamie McLain | Harvey Walters Ron Knoble | Dave Morris Shirley Johnson |
| Wed. 14 | Ash Wed. | Holly Chemidilin | George & Chris Scherer | Jamie McLain | Ralph Avard | Harvey Walters Ron Knoble | |
| Sat. 17 | | Sue Miller | | Cindy Aloise | Sue Miller | | |
| Sun. 18 | | Marly Raspe (S) | Carol Steible Lois Steible | Ralph Avard | Polly Sue Newbold | Harvey Walters Ron Knoble | Steve Stocker Bob Babcock |
| Sat. 24 | | Kelly Perna | | Rick Brunsell | Kelly Perna | | |
| Sun. 25 | | Marly Raspe (S) | Charlotte & Dave Morris | Polly Sue Newbold | Steve Stocker | Harvey Walters Ron Knoble | Charlotte Morris Janice Youpa |

In the event that you are unable to serve on your assigned date, please remember to find a replacement and notify the office of the change.

Craft Vendor Fair & Church Decoration Party

