

The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 25, 2024

The Holy Communion

10:00am



St James Lutheran Church

104 Union Street South

PO Box 684

Concord, North Carolina 28026

704-786-0166

www.sjnc.net

Welcome to St. James Lutheran Church

Maybe you need forgiveness, or maybe you need to forgive ... Maybe you're tired and you need a little space to breathe ... Maybe you're trying church for the first time, or maybe you're trying church for the last time... Maybe you've spent your whole life wondering if God really loves you... Maybe you're lonely... Maybe you're sick... Maybe you came here looking for a miracle... Maybe you came here looking for another church but got disoriented and came here instead, and now it's too late to get up and walk out... Maybe, with God, there are no accidents... Maybe, with God, there is hope and healing and miraculous companionship... Maybe, with God, there is space to breathe and forgiveness on top of forgiveness... Maybe, with God, there is love... Maybe, with God here in our midst, we will hear those words that still split open the heavens, "You are my son! You are my daughter! You are my beloved. You. In you I am well pleased!" Maybe this is why we gather together, week after week after week, here at St. James.

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome in this place - not just by the Saints at St. James, but by the God who revealed himself in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, our brother, and our friend.

Welcome to St. James.

If you are comfortable doing so, please introduce yourself to Pastor Bill. If you have visited with us a number of times and think you might want to "make it official," please speak to Pastor Bill. If you have any questions, please feel free to speak to the person next to you or to an usher.

Restrooms are located on the first and second floor of the Education Building. A nursery is available for children up to and including five years of age on the first floor of the education building. An usher will be happy to help you find them.

If you're visiting or if you have been here for 99 years (and are willing to do so), please sign a pew pad.

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St James Lutheran Church:
Growing in Christ through Worship, Learning, Fellowship and Service.

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Welcome / Prelude

Please stand.

THE INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

THE BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen.**

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Please sit or kneel, as able.
Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P Most merciful God,

C we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. **Amen**

P Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

THE ENTRANCE HYMN: For the Beauty of the Earth



1 For the beau - ty of the earth, for the beau - ty of the skies,
 2 For the won - der of each hour of the day and of the night,
 3 For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de - light,
 4 For the joy of hu - man love, broth - er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,
 5 For your - self, best gift di - vine to the world so free - ly giv'n;



for the love which from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies:
 hill and vale and tree and flow'r, sun and moon and stars of light:
 for the mys - tic har - mo - ny link - ing sense to sound and sight:
 friends on earth and friends a - bove; for all gen - tle thoughts and mild:
 a - gent of God's grand de - sign, peace on earth and joy in heav'n:



Refrain

Christ, our Lord, to you we raise this our sac - ri - fice of praise.

THE APOSTOLIC GREETING

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
C **And also with you.**

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

P God of all creation, you reach out to call people of all nations to your kingdom. As you gather disciples from near and far, count us also among those who boldly confess your Son Jesus Christ as Lord.
C **Amen**

Please sit.

THE FIRST READING: Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18

¹Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. ^{2a}And Joshua said to all the people, ¹⁴“Now therefore revere the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. ¹⁵Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

¹⁶Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods; ¹⁷for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in

our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; ¹⁸and the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God.”

A The Word of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

THE SECOND READING: Ephesians 6:10-20

¹⁰Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. ¹⁵As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. ¹⁶With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. ¹⁹Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

A The Word of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand.

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

THE GOSPEL

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 6th chapter.
C Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said,] ⁵⁶ “Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷ Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.” ⁵⁹ He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

⁶⁰ When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?” ⁶¹ But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you? ⁶² Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? ⁶³ It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ⁶⁴ But among you there are some who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. ⁶⁵ And he said, “For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.”

⁶⁶ Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. ⁶⁷ So Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?” ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”

P The Gospel of the Lord.
C Praise to you, O Christ.

THE SERMON

Please stand.

THE HYMN OF THE DAY: O Jesus I Have Promised



1 O Je - sus, I have prom - ised to serve you to the end;
2 Oh, let me feel you near me; the world is ev - er near.
3 Oh, let me hear you speak - ing in ac - cents clear and still
4 O Je - sus, you have prom - ised to all who fol - low you

re - main for - ev - er near me, my mas - ter and my friend.
I see the sights that daz - zle, the tempt - ing sounds I hear.
a - bove the storms of pas - sion, the mur - murs of self - will.
that where you are in glo - ry your ser - vant shall be too.

I shall not fear the bat - tle if you are by my side,
My foes are ev - er near me, a - round me and with - in;
Now speak to re - as - sure me, to has - ten or con - trol;
And Je - sus, I have prom - ised to serve you to the end;

nor wan - der from the path - way if you will be my guide.
 but, Je - sus, then draw near - er to shield my soul from sin.
 now speak and make me lis - ten, O Guard - ian of my soul.
 oh, give me grace to fol - low, my mas - ter and my friend.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

**C I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Please sit or kneel, as able.

THE PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A In peace, let us pray to the Lord, saying, "Lord, have mercy"

A For the holy Church of God, that it may be filled with truth and love, and be found without fault at the day of your coming, we pray to you, O Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

A For all bishops, pastors and deacons that they may speak the good news of Jesus Christ, and for all the holy people that may hear and live it willingly, we pray to you, O Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

A For all who fear God and believe in you, Lord Christ, that our divisions may cease, and that all may be one as you and the Father are one, we pray to you, O Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

A For the mission of the Church, that in faithful witness it may preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth. For those who do not yet believe, and for those who have lost their faith, that they may receive the light of the Gospel, we pray to you, O Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

A For the peace of the world, that a spirit of respect and forbearance may grow among nations and peoples. For those in positions of public trust that they may serve justice, and promote the dignity and freedom of every person, we pray to you, O Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

A For all who live and work in this community. For a blessing upon all human labor, and for the right use of the riches of creation, that the world may be freed from poverty, famine, and disaster, we pray to you, O Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

A For the poor, the persecuted, the sick, and all who suffer; for refugees, prisoners, and all who are in danger; that they may be relieved and protected, we pray to you, O Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

A For this congregation, for those who are present, and for those who are absent, that we may be delivered from hardness of heart, and show forth your glory in all that we do, we pray to you, O Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

A For our enemies and those who wish us harm, and for all whom we have injured or offended, we pray to you, O Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

A For all who have died in the communion of your Church, and those whose faith is known to you alone, that, with all the saints, they may have rest in that place where there is no pain or grief, but life eternal, we pray to you, O Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

A Rejoicing in the fellowship of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, and all our life to Christ our God.

C **To you, O Lord our God.**

P For yours is the majesty, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

THE PEACE

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

Please sit.

THE OFFERING

THE ANTHEM

Please stand.

THE OFFERTORY

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right spir -
it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take
not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re-store to me the
joy of your sal-va - tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir - it.

THE OFFERTORY PRAYER

A Let us pray.

A Blessed are you,

C **O Lord our God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

THE COMMUNION RITE

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

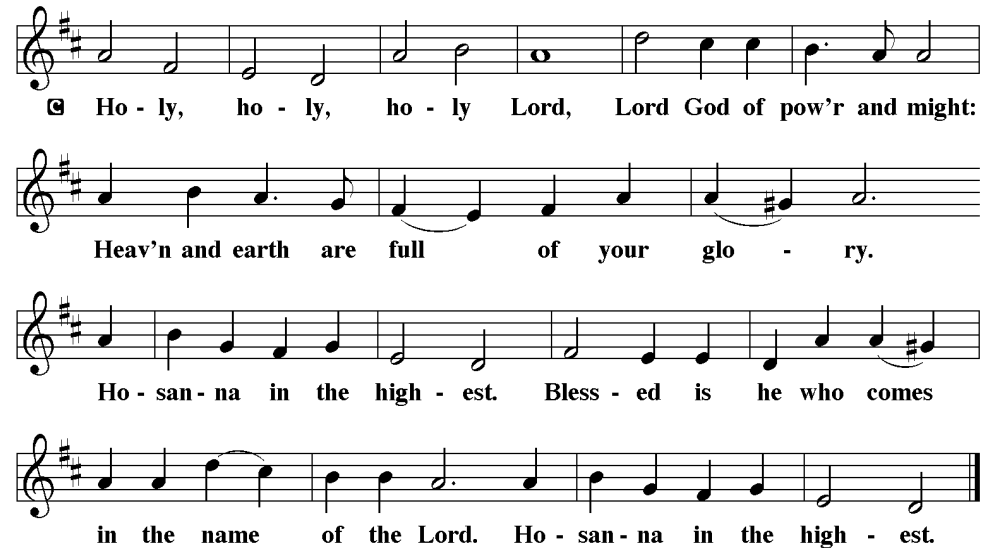
P Lift up your hearts.

C **We lift them to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

P It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might:
Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

P Holy, mighty and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

Pour out your Holy Spirit, that by this Holy Communion we may know the unity we share with all your people in the body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C **Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those**

**who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**



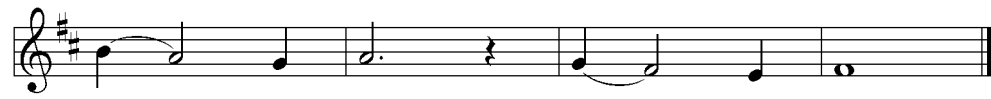
C Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;



grant us peace, grant us peace.

Please sit.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Q: What is the Sacrament of the Altar?

A: Instituted by Christ himself, it is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, given to us Christians to eat and to drink.

Q: What is the benefit of such eating and drinking?

A: We are told in the words “for you” and “for the forgiveness of sins.” By these words the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given to us in the sacrament, for where there is forgiveness of sins, there are also life and salvation.

-Luther’s Small Catechism Part V

Jesus bids all the baptized to feast at his table. Please come by way of the center aisle and return by the side aisle. If you need help figuring out where to and when to go, an usher or fellow worshiper will help you. At one time we too were confused. For those unable to partake of wine, white grape juice is available. If you are unable to come to the altar, the pastor will bring communion to you at your seat. Please advise an usher.

Please stand.

THE POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C Amen

THE POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

P Let us pray.

P We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life; and we pray that in your mercy you would strengthen us, through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen

THE BENEDICTION

P Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

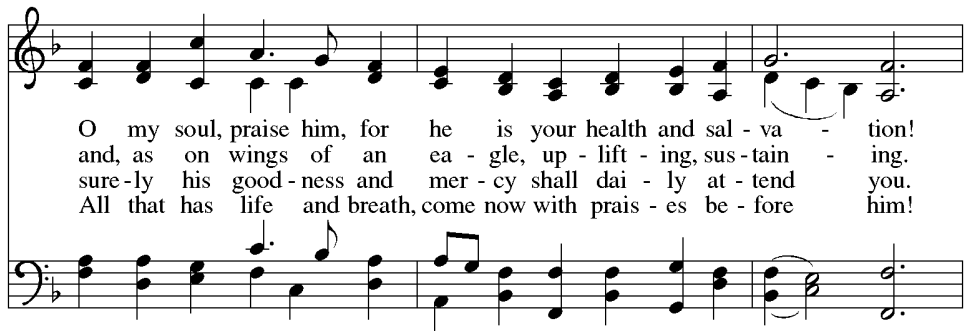
C Amen

THE SENDING HYMN: Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

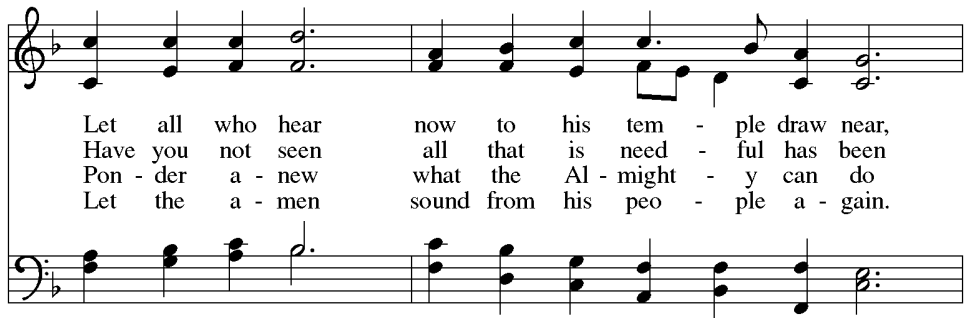


1 Praise to the Lord, the Al-might-y, the King of cre-a-tion!
2 Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things is won-drous-ly reign-ing
3 Praise to the Lord, who will pros-per your work and de-fend you;
4 Praise to the Lord! Oh, let all that is in me a-dore him!

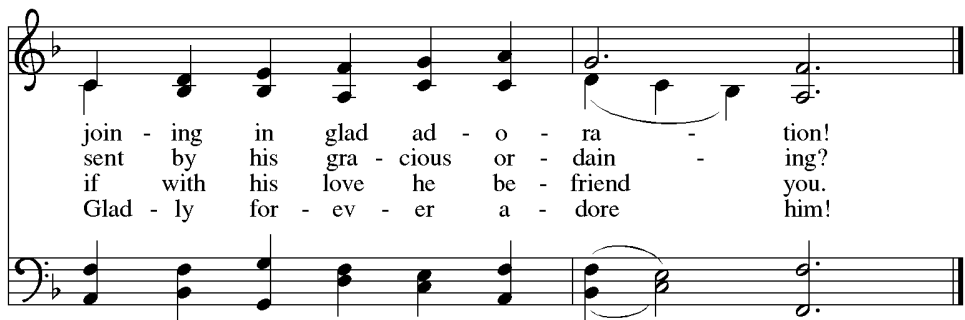




O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and sal - va - tion!
 and, as on wings of an ea - gle, up - lift - ing, sus - tain - ing.
 sure - ly his good - ness and mer - cy shall dai - ly at - tend you.
 All that has life and breath, come now with prais - es be - fore him!



Let all who hear now to his tem - ple draw near,
 Have you not seen all that is need - ful has been
 Pon - der a - new what the Al - might - y can do
 Let the a - men sound from his peo - ple a - gain.

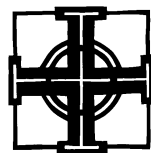


join - ing in glad ad - o - ra - tion!
 sent by his gra - cious or - dain - ing?
 if with his love he be - friend you.
 Glad - ly for - ev - er a - dore him!

THE DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.



FALL FELLOWSHIP GATHERING

Join us for the St. James Lutheran Church Fall Fellowship Gathering at our all-congregation picnic on **Sunday, September 8** at the home of Kenny & Annette Propst.

Fall Gathering starts at 12:30pm; Smoke House BBQ Lunch at 1:00pm.

Rain location - St. James Fellowship Hall

Please RSVP by SEPT 1. to help us plan. Scan code below or email info@sjnc.net.



Picnic RSVP

KID'S NIGHT OUT!

All kid's ages 4+ are invited to join us for Kid's Night Out on **Friday, September 20 at 6:00pm!** We'll have Pizza, popcorn, a movie and craft! Be sure to register to help with planning. If you can volunteer, please let us know! info@sjnc.net



Kid's Night RSVP

COTTAGE MEETINGS

St. James is excited to announce the start of Cottage Meetings. These meetings are meant to bring members together in small groups with Pastor Bill. We are asking for volunteers who can host a small gathering. Dates are being discussed, but we ask if you are interested, please send LeeAnn Miller an email. This is a great way to get to know members, the Pastor and fellowship.

WELCA Save-the-Date

Save the date for **Saturday, October 5, 2024**, for the NC Women of the ELCA Cabarrus/Stanly Fall Conference gathering! Program will include food, fellowship, offerings, and special program. Registration is \$10. Contact Gretchen Walker for more information. **Registration Coming Soon!**

BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK

Aug. 25 Audrey Baker, Scott Benson, Will King
Aug. 26 Noah Hardister
Aug. 27 Abigail Bestler, Lily Kartheiser
Aug. 29 Miles Hinson, Eva Horton, Marcia Klauss
Aug. 30 Carson Crainshaw, James Hughes, Huntter Huss III,
Donna Sloop
Aug. 31 Conner Gale

CHURCH CALENDAR THIS WEEK

Sunday, Aug. 25 9:00 am Parish Summertime Choir
9:30 am Children's Sunday School
10:00 am Worship

Monday, Aug. 26 10:30 am Quilting

Wednesday, Aug. 28 6:00 pm VBS Recap & Fall Planning Meeting
(Flex Room)

Sunday Sept. 1 9:00 am Parish Choir
9:30 am Children's Sunday School
10:00 am Worship
RSVP for Fall Fellowship Gathering

FALL EVENTS FOR KIDS OF ALL AGES (that means 0-99+)

September 8: Fall Fellowship Gathering – Picnic Lunch
September 20: Kids Night; movie and pizza
October 13: CROP Walk
October 27: Trunk or Treat
November 24: *Short* Thanksgiving Worship followed by a Pie Party
December 1: Advent Tree Lighting (Well, technically it is a Christmas Tree)
December 8: Bethlehem at the Farm

*Bethlehem at the Farm requires many volunteers.
Be on the lookout for more information.*

ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

Lector/Intercessor: Margaret Garrison
Communion Assistant: Anne Hodges
Ushers: Mark Murphy, Jimmy Harris,
Jeff Jones, Jeff Gilbert, Chip Popovici, Phil Tesh
Videographer: LeeAnn Miller
Greeter: Gretchen Walker
Building Supervisor: Kim Haberman

PRAYER LIST

Tom Grady; Tom Ridenhour; Noah Clifton; Angie Buchanan; Jo Eng; Sheril Rominger (friend of the Marlow's); Linda Jones (family members of Barbara & Dale Merrell); Mary Dorothy White (friend of Patsy Black); Bruce Coffey (friend of Mark Murphy); Tim Gibson (friend of Deb Black).

ALTAR FLOWERS

The altar flowers for today are given to the glory of God and in memory of Bill and Eva
Readling by Ann Readling.

AUGUST COUNCIL SUMMARY

Church attendance in the last two weeks has shown improvement, signifying that when children are involved, parents bring them. Finances are in line with budget projections. Bell Tower roofing is going well with a change order to handle newly discovered minor repairs. While applicants for our church musician have been many, most have been from distant states. One applicant has been interviewed by Pastor and the interview team. The applicant has an extensive resume. Additional discussions are taking place about a possible interim position. Wi-Fi installation is proceeding well. Office staff have their secure network running. Nominating Committee is seeking potential council members for next year. Budget Committee has established their timeline for budget prep. Christian Education Committee shared their monthly activities for youth and children. The work to develop a church vision and understanding our core values continues to excite and expand the thinking of the council members. This will be an on-going effort.

HEY! DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE?

St. James has begun a search for a part-time Office Assistant. The Office Assistant is the first point of contact for St. James Lutheran Church members and its guests. This position is a crucial one, providing exceptional customer service and ensuring smooth operations in our front office. This position will work no more than 12 hours per week. If you know someone, please send them to our website for more information.