

The Shepherd's Voice



From The Pastor

The Book of James

The letter of James is often neglected. Many people think this letter — with only two references to Jesus — pales in comparison to such luminaries as Paul and John. In 1522 Luther called James “an epistle of straw.”

James is not a book that should be among the first read by a new Christian. It is better to turn them toward Paul and Romans and Philippians and Galatians. James must be read only when one is already clear about the Gospel.

James is addressing a Christian congregation. He employs the term “brother” nineteen times and sister” once (2:15). These people have already heard the Gospel. They have heard that faith and new life is the gift of God, which comes from outside a person (1:18, 21). This faith is in a specific person, Jesus Christ (2:1), who is returning on the Last Day (5:8). Until He returns, we are called to live together as God’s people in community together in a way that reflects our faith (the focus of the letter). Living as if this faith does not affect our thinking and behavior toward others results in condemnation on the Last Day (5:5). Therefore, we are to throw ourselves on God’s mercy (4:8-10).

A key idea in the book is friendship. “Adulterers! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God” (James 4:4). Never one to mince words, James exclaims that every Christian has a choice: we can choose either to be friends of the world or friends of God; but we cannot select both because each leads to very different, and indeed irreconcilable, ways of life. The friends of God are “quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger” (1:19). They promise “to care for orphans and widows in their (cont’d on page 5)

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(The Book of James — cont'd from page 1) distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the (cont'd from page 1) world” (1:27). Friendship with the world breeds “envy and selfish ambition” and “disorder and wickedness of every kind” (3:16), while friendship with God is characterized by peace, gentleness, mercy, and righteousness (3:17). Abraham is the only person called God’s friend in James (2:23)

James is easy to understand but difficult to live out. In the 108 verses there are 59 imperative verbs.

Author: James (1:1) is the half-brother of our Lord (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3; Galatians 1:19) who became a Christian after Easter (1 Corinthians 15:7). He was considered one of the pillars of the church (Galatians 2:9) and led the first church council (Acts 15).

Date of Writing: The Book of James is probably the oldest book of the New Testament, written perhaps as early as 45 AD, before the first council of Jerusalem in 50. James was martyred in approximately 62, according to the historian Josephus.

— *Pastor Simpson*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Welcome to our New Administrative Assistant

The new Administrative Assistant in the Church Office at GSLC is
Linda Williamson
Please introduce yourself and make her feel welcome.

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SPRING CHURCH WORKERS CONFERENCE

Monday and Tuesday, **March 17-18, 2025**

Host: Redeemer Lutheran Church in Claremore

Guest Speaker: Rev. Harrison Goodman, from Higher Things

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James: A Manual for Maturity

What is the foremost wisdom book in the New Testament that we're going to begin studying this month? That would be **James**. "Not James!" you lament. "Didn't Martin Luther famously call James an epistle of straw?" You continue your protest. "Why, James only mentions Jesus two times—just *two times*! I'm with Luther," you say, "Compared to the likes of Paul and John, James is a theological lightweight!"

Not so fast. James has much to teach us about God's grace and our Spirit-empowered response. From the first to the last verse of his book, this half-brother of Jesus gives us one of the most practical pictures of the Christian faith in all the Bible. **James insists that we are saved by faith alone; but saving faith is never alone.** Faithfulness does not stop with a profession of faith but is a ticket to a life of continued transformation and service. To underscore this theme, James employs the word "mature" seven times in his five-chapter letter.

I'm calling this schedule, therefore, **James: A Practical Manual for Maturity**. The lineup of messages for each midweek Lenten worship is as follows:

March	5	Ash Wednesday 7:00 pm	Profiting From Your Problems (James 1:1–12)
	12	Midweek of Lent 1 7:00p	Feeding Your Faith (James 1:17–25)
	19	Midweek of Lent 2 7:00p	Believing Better (James 2:14–26)
	26	Midweek of Lent 3 7:00p	Taming Your Tongue (James 3:1–18)
April	2	Midweek of Lent 4 7:00p	Facing Your Future (James 4:13–17)
	9	Midweek of Lent 5 7:00p	Practicing Patience (James 5:7–11)
	17	Maundy Thursday 7:00p	
	18	Good Friday 7:00p	
	20	The Resurrection of Our Lord	Sunrise Service 7:00a Celebration Service 10:30a

Here is the plan for our Wednesday night topical study: Midweek Services during Lent are at 7:00 pm

James Among the Bible's Wisdom Books - (Ash Wednesday)

James: An Overview, Part 1 (Midweek of Lent 1)

James: An Overview, Part 2 (Midweek of Lent 2)

James and Paul (Midweek of Lent 3)

Liberty and Justice for All (James 2:1–13) (Midweek of Lent 4)

Wisdom from Above (James 4:1–12) (Midweek of Lent 5)

I invite you to be a part of these opportunities so that, together, we **mature** in our Christian faith. What an awesome way to begin the new year!

–*Pastor Simpson*

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
is turning 75 in 2025!!



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

75th Anniversary Celebration

November 16, 2025

“Led and Fed by The Good Shepherd for 75 years”



Upcoming Congregational Events
To Support the
75th Anniversary Celebration of GSLC
On November 16, 2025

- 1. March 2nd — “Shrove Tuesday” Pancake Dinner on the Sunday preceding Ash Wednesday (3/5/2025) after late service, followed by the movie “Amazing Grace”**

- 2. March 16th St. Patrick's Dinner.**

- 3. Time capsule for 100th Anniversary Celebration, including:
“Messages from ALL Members”**

- 4. Plant a tree**

- 5. Thanks to Everyone from the 75th Anniversary Committee:
Connie Grant, Chr, Jackie Dusavitch, Paula Anderson, Marian Stanfill, Jim Tanner,
Gwen Madden, Marilyn Alsip, Marguerite Christman, Pastor Simpson**

- 6. Charter Member, Laurine Goode-Schulz granddaughters: Melissa Cappi & Michelle Smith will be working with the Committee.**

Grant Awarded for 'Children in Worship Initiative' To Concordia Seminary (STL)

From: Concordia Seminary, Fall/Winter 2024, page 22

By Dr. Samuel Eatherton

Concordia Seminary (in STL) has received a \$762,497 grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. to help establish the Children in Worship Initiative, a new program that will accentuate the pivotal role worship serves in faith formation for children. The primary emphasis of this program will be educating church leaders in the theology and practice of faith formation and providing them with resources to guide children in the spiritual growth, especially through the church's worship.

"With our church body's heritage of teaching children in its churches and schools, the Seminary is poised to offer learning opportunities that focus on the spiritual formation of our children through worship and singing," said Dr. Sam Eatherton, kantor and the Kreft Professor for Music Arts at the Seminary and the grant's project director.

Funding for this grant has been made available through Lilly Endowment's Nurturing Children Through Worship and Prayer Initiative, a national initiative designed to help Christian congregations more fully and intentionally engage children in intergenerational corporate worship and prayer practices.

Blue Heat Blazes to Victory: GSLS Student Wins Big at Central OK Grand Prix Derby!



Yukon, OK — *The cheers were loud, and the excitement was electric* as Good Shepherd Lutheran School's own **Alexander Williamson**, a second-year Fox with **Trail Life Troop OK-4077**, raced to an unforgettable victory at the **2025 Central OK Grand Prix Derby**. Against a field of fierce competition from across the Oklahoma City metro, Alexander's car, aptly named "**Blue Heat**", sped past the finish line to claim **first place in the Fox Patrol division**.

But this victory wasn't just about speed—it was about determination, teamwork, and a spirit of perseverance that embodies what Trail Life USA stands for.

From Setback to Champion: Alexander's Road to Victory

Last year, Alexander's derby journey ended in disappointment when his car didn't even cross the finish line. This year? A complete turnaround. His new car, **a sleek blue-and-gold design with fiery flames**, didn't just finish—it *dominated* the heats.





The win wasn't without a few bumps along the road, though. At the official weigh-in, *Blue Heat* tipped the scales at 0.1 oz over the 5.0 oz weight limit, forcing Alexander and his team to make some quick adjustments—literally shaving off excess weight with a Dremel tool right before the race!

His hard work and persistence paid off. When his name was called for the **first-place trophy** during the awards ceremony, the entire troop was both surprised and proud of his stunning achievement.



More Than Just Racing: Brotherhood and Fun for All

Alexander, one of the original three founding members of Troop OK-4077 along with Ashton O'Ryan and Tre Williams, wasn't the only Trailman making waves at the event. A total of **eight Trailmen from Troop OK-4077** participated in this year's derby, including fellow founding member **Ashton O'Ryan**. Though Tre is currently on hiatus from the troop, Ashton—now a first-year Hawk—competed strongly, overcoming technical difficulties when his car was accidentally run backward. Judges quickly rectified the error, allowing him a fair rerun with adjusted times. The Derby featured more than just classic Pinewood racing. Trailmen were able to compete in:

-  **Fastest Car Awards**
-  **Best Design Awards**
-  **Outlaw Races** (for more creatively modified cars)
-  **LEGO Car Races** (a crowd favorite)

In total, there were **81 heats** in the classic race category, with each car running **four heats** to determine final placements.






Trail Life Troop OK-4077: More Than a Club—A Brotherhood



Troop OK-4077 is more than just pinewood cars and racing—it's a place for boys to grow in **leadership, character, and faith**. The troop meets every Monday at 5:30 PM following the Good Shepherd Lutheran School calendar (excluding holidays). Boys learn skills across **seven key branches** that focus on personal growth, outdoor adventure, citizenship, and faith-building.

In addition to their weekly meetings, the troop hosts exciting adventures and service projects, including:

-  A **March campout** in the **Wichita Mountains** (March 7–9) – *Guests are welcome!*
-  A visit to the **Oklahoma Farm-to-Table Festival** during spring break
-  The **Tradin' at the Ranch Campout** this April

Boys interested in adventure, fun, and fellowship can visit any Monday night troop meeting or contact the troop leadership at **405-831-7358**. Parents can also learn more by visiting the **Trail Life USA website** and searching for **Troop OK-4077** in Midwest City.

And for the girls? **American Heritage Girls Troop OK4077** meets at the same time and even participated in this year's derby event!

A Message from the Troop: "Join the Adventure!"

"Alexander's win is a testament to the perseverance and brotherhood we foster here at **Troop OK-4077**," says **Taylor Williamson**, *Troop Ministry Liaison* and Alexander's father. "It's not just about winning races but about building skills, facing challenges head-on, and growing into strong, capable young men."

Whether it's racing cars, hiking trails, launching soda bottle rockets, or camping under the stars, there's always something exciting happening with Trail Life Troop OK-4077. The troop encourages all boys at **Good Shepherd Lutheran School** to come see what the adventure is all about!



► Congratulations, Alexander—and onward to the next adventure, Troop OK-4077! ►

Plant Them and Find Out

February 19, 2025

1 Corinthians 15:21-26, 30-42 - *For as by a man came death, by a Man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his*

own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at His coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ... But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as He has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable.



There is a problem in my house every spring when we get out the seeds for the garden. We grow a lot of Vietnamese plants, and somehow, every year, we lose the labels. And so we stare at a handful of seeds and wonder: Which ones are the green pumpkins? Which are the bitter melons? How about the pennywort or the lotus?

We can't predict the plant from the way the seed looks. A bright green lotus plant looks nothing like the dark nutty seed we throw into the pond. The seed for the pumpkins and the seed for the baseball bat-shaped gourds look exactly the same. And a tiny seed can produce a huge plant. About the only thing we can do is to plant them and find out.

And it's like that for human beings, too, isn't it? We know that when Christ comes back, He will raise us from the dead with resurrection bodies like His own; and we know that we will reflect His glory. But how exactly we will look, or what life will be like for us in God's kingdom—well, again it's a case of "plant them and find out."

Jesus knows; He loves us, and He had that far-off vision of final glory in mind when He gave Himself into death for our sake. He died and rose to bring us to that life; and He has assured us that it will be wonderful. We will be with Him forever—and as for the rest—well, we'll have to wait and see.

WE PRAY: Dear Savior, we know that, when You plant us, You will also raise us, and we will be with You. That's enough for now. Help us to trust in You through this whole process. Amen.

This Daily Devotion was written by Dr. Kari Vo.

Reflection Questions:

1. Did you ever plant a mystery seed?
2. If so, what did it turn out to be?
3. What do you wonder most about your future life in God's kingdom?



Design, Deluge & Dilemma, a free presentation by Dr. Jonathan Sarfati

Sunday, March 30, 2025 at 6pm in Harrah OK

Dr Sarfati from Creation Ministries International demonstrates how the Gospel message is rooted in the book of Genesis and provides evidence to support the reliability of the Bible's record of origins. Hear why this issue is vitally important if we are to make a difference in our families and communities. The event is held at 6 pm at First Baptist Church, 2185 Church Ave in Harrah. (Presentation is about one hour long with additional Q&A time.) Attendance is free and all are welcome. Creation resources will be available before and after the presentation.

About Dr Jonathan Sarfati

Jonathan is regarded as one of the world's leading Christian apologists. He is the author of some of the biggest-selling Bible/science creationist books which are regarded as key-stone books in the defense of a six-day, straightforward understanding of Genesis—both scientifically and theologically. (From the Creation Ministries International website creation.com)

Lutheran Women in Mission 41st Biennial Convention



41ST BIENNIAL CONVENTION
Omaha, Nebraska | June 26–29, 2025

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Online registration for
the 2025 LWML Convention

opens March 1!

Why should you go to the Convention?

The national gathering of Lutheran Women in Mission is powerful! You have experienced the sisterhood and community locally. This is your opportunity to experience it on a magnified scale. Last biennium, we had over 3,000 attendees! Hear speakers share their experiences working in the mission field, join friends for Karaoke Night, check out the Exhibit Hall, participate in Mission Service Activities, and so much more!

Join our brothers and sisters in Christ traveling by charter coach from Oklahoma! Leaves Wednesday, June 25, 2025, from Oklahoma City and picks up more passengers in Tulsa and arrives in Omaha, NE Wednesday evening. All arrangements will be made once you sign up with Mary Tucker, OK District Bus Chairman at mrytckr@gmail.com. \$100 deposit needed by March 15th. Total bus cost is \$160 per passenger based on 50 passengers.

Ya'll COME!!!

March 2025



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

3/20 Jeff & Lynn
Cunningham



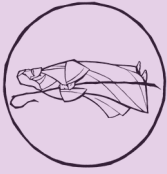
HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

3/1 Royce Junghanns
3/8 David Alsip
3/11 Ruth Allsebrooke
3/12 Brenda Williamson
3/13 Delores Helberg
3/16 Emmanuel Calfe
3/18 Karen Trahms
3/19 John Ashford
3/25 Linda Williamson
3/26 Elizabeth Norton
3/28 Linda Murphy







Baptismal Anniversaries!

3/1 Mike Norton
3/6 Avery McNair
3/7 Bob Striegel
3/1 Matthew McNair
3/16 Sheila Striegel
3/16 Wesley Ray
3/17 Cindy Simpson
3/20 Lynnice Hamlin
3/20 Clarice Christ
3/21 Elizabeth Norton
3/21 Emmanuel Calfe
3/25 Gwen Madden



MARCH



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2 8:00a Worship w/Communion 9:15a Bible study 10:30a Worship w/Communion TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD	3 5:30p TL Boys & AH Girls 6:15p Bell Choir	4 10:30a Staff mtg 1:00p TABS (Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study) 6:00p Elders 6:30p Homeschool BB 7:00p LWML	5 9:15a P-2 Chapel 10:00a DS Chapel 5:00p Confirmation 5:30p Fellowship Meal 6:00p Bible Study 7:00p Worship ASH WEDNESDAY	6 6:00a TAMBS — (Thursday AM Bible Study) 6:00p Choir Practice 6:30p Homeschool BB	7 6:00a WEBS — Week End(ing) BS	8
9 8:00a Worship 9:15a Bible study 10:30a Worship 11:30a Parish Ed mtg DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS	10 5:30p TL Boys & AH Girls 6:15p Bell Choir	11 10:30a Staff mtg 1:00p TABS (Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study) 6:00-9:00p DAR 6:30p Homeschool BB	12 9:15a P-2 Chapel 10:00a DS Chapel 5:00p Confirmation 5:30p Fellowship Meal 6:00p Bible Study 7:00p Worship MIDWEEK OF LENT 1	13 6:00a TAMBS — (Thursday AM Bible Study) 9:00a Mary Circle Bible Study 6:00p Choir Practice 6:30p Homeschool BB	14 6:00a WEBS — Week End(ing) BS	
16^w 8:00a Worship w/Communion 9:15a Bible study 10:30a Worship w/Communion 12p St. Patrick's Dinner followed by Electronic Dart game	17 5:30p TL Boys & AH Girls 6:15p Bell Choir ST. PATRICK'S DAY	18 10:30a Staff mtg 1:00p TABS (Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study) 4:00p Parochial Ed mtg 6:30p Homeschool BB	19 9:15a P-2 Chapel 10:00a DS Chapel 5:00p Confirmation 5:30p Fellowship Meal 6:00p Bible Study 7:00p Worship MIDWEEK OF LENT 2	20 6:00a TAMBS — (Thursday AM Bible Study) 6:00p Choir Practice 6:30p Homeschool BB	21 6:00a WEBS — Week End(ing) BS	22
23 8:00a Worship 9:15a Bible study 10:30a Worship 12:00a Council	24 5:30p TL Boys & AH Girls 6:15p Bell Choir	25 10:30a Staff mtg 1:00p TABS (Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study) 6:30p Homeschool BB THE ANNUNCIATION OF	26 9:15a P-2 Chapel 10:00a DS Chapel 5:00p Confirmation 5:30p Fellowship Meal 6:00p Bible Study 7:00p Worship MIDWEEK OF LENT 3	27 6:00a TAMBS — (Thursday AM Bible Study) 9:00a Mary Circle Quilting 6:00p Choir Practice 6:30p Homeschool BB	28 6:00a WEBS — Week End(ing) BS	29
30 8:00a Worship 9:15a Bible study 10:30a Worship	31 5:30p TL Boys & AH Girls 6:15p Bell Choir	Ministry Support through tithes, offerings, and donations can be given by either PayPal or credit or debit card. To access go to www.gs/cmwcc.com scroll down to "Help Our Cause" and click on "Donate Now."	 REMEMBER GOOD SHEPHERD IN YOUR WILL	 Go to www.gs/cmwcc.com click on the "Play Video" arrow.	 SUBMISSION DEADLINES Weekly Bulletin 12pm on Thursdays Monthly Newsletter 20 th of every month	 LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES every Sunday at 9:00a on KQCV (800AM), or on XM's Family Talk Radio 170, or online at www.lutheranhour.org