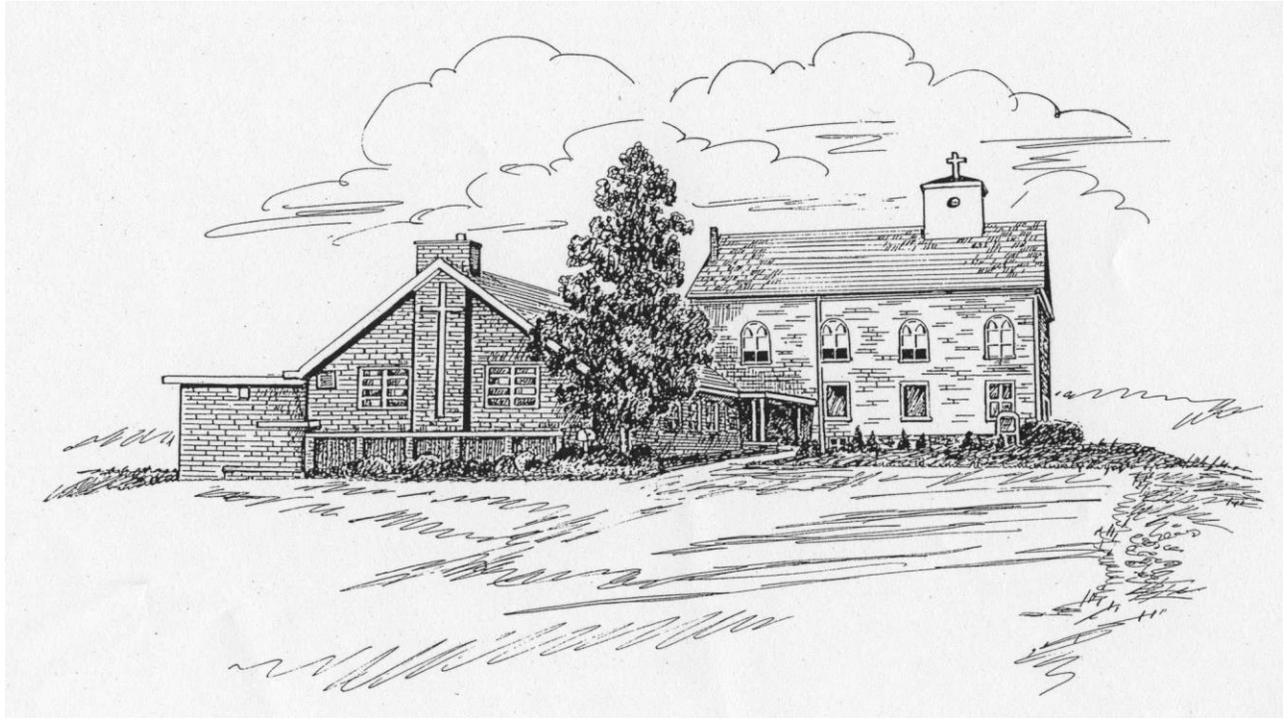


WISPS OF STRAW



St. James Lutheran Church Newsletter

August 2017

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

Pastor's Letter

Happy Anniversary!!

August 1, 2017 marks our one-year anniversary. For the last year we have worked together as pastor and congregation. Like any new relationship, there have been some times of joy and celebration and there have been some times of discord. Of course, this is to be expected in any new relationship as the parties negotiate the boundaries and expectations of the new relationship. Additionally, over the last year we have been trying to discern a path forward as we strive to fulfill our mission of sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with our community in the face of some significant challenges. This combination can lead to significant amount of stress.

Stress in relationships and communities can manifest in many ways - some ways are healthy and helpful and some ways are destructive and hurtful. We can see examples of this in many of our relationships. Imagine co-workers working late evenings, trying to meet an important deadline. They are reviewing and revising a critical part of their presentation. One of the workers is reading from a screen as a PowerPoint slide presentation advances. It is late at night and the final presentation will be made at an 8:00 am meeting the next day. The team is running through the slides quickly just to make sure all is in order. A slide comes up that says: "Our Strategy" and the reader says, "Our Strategery." All the co-workers burst into laughter. For several weeks, they use terms like "an adaptive *strategery*" or "our opponents' *strategery*." The joking is a healthy and productive way to deal with stress. Sporting teams in pursuit of a championship will often hold team meetings to refocus the team and allow for the healthy airing of differences, in order to preserve unity on the field.

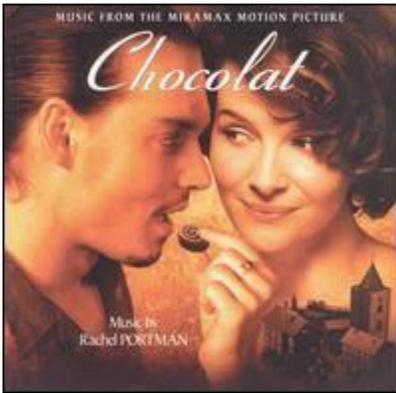
On the other hand, some ways of dealing with stress are destructive and hurtful. When a parent comes home from a stressful job and lashes out in anger or with criticism in the home that parent is responding to stress in unhealthy and hurtful ways. Likewise, the person who avoids dealing with a stressful situation through avoidance, self-medication, hyper-activity, or spending excessive time on social media or watching television is, in all likelihood, making the situation worse. The problem is complicated by the fact that stress not only builds up over time, it is also highly infectious. More often than not, stress is caused by anxiety. Anxiety is the combination of fear plus worry.

So, what to do? Well, some would suggest that we follow the advice we see on T-shirts or posters: "Stay Calm and Keep:...shopping/dancing/singing/cheering." I suggest we remember what Jesus said, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?" And then Jesus reminds us that God, who cares even for the ravens, cares so much more for us. The Christian is called to respond to stress, fear, anxiety, pain, disappointment, loss, insult, persecution and any other negative stimulus with trust in God born of faith. When I am able to do this, I find that peace and joy that God offers. As we celebrate our first year together, I hope, that in some small way, I have modeled this to each of you. Happy anniversary!

P.S. Thank you for all the love you have given Karen and me over the last year! Here's to many, many more years!

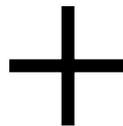
Movie & Conversation

(Note the corrected dates!!)



With the success of our two book discussions, Pr. & Deacon Kelly have decided to expand our artistic repertoire into the cinematic arts. So, on **Monday, August 14th**, at 7:00 pm, the curtain will go up on the acclaimed film, *Chocolat*. This film stars Johnny Depp, Juliette Binoche, Dame Judi Dench and Alfred Molina. This wonderful British romantic comedy has deep theological and moral implications. It was nominated for 5 Academy Awards (Best Picture, Best Actress, Best Supporting Actress (Dench won), Best Screenplay, Best Original Music). It won 4 Golden Globes and 8 British Academy of Film and Television Arts awards. Snacks will be provided for the show!

Then, the following week on Monday, **August 21st**, we will reconvene to discuss the theological, moral, and relational issues highlighted in the film. The film is rated PG-13, so it would be better if younger children were left with a sitter. Both the film and the discussion will be open to members of St. James and Grace and anyone they invite! This would be a wonderful non-threatening way to engage someone you know with the church. The location for the showing of the film and the discussion will be revealed later. Please sign up in the narthex of either church!



Youth in 8th through 12th Grades..(and the 'rents) please sign-up for the Pool Party and ELCA Youth Gathering Information meeting on Sunday, August 13th, 2:00-4:00 pm. We need to know how many folks to expect! Besides all the fun, food, and fellowship of an ordinary pool party, we will begin planning for the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston, Texas! Sign-up in the narthex of the church!

“STRAW CHURCH: PRIDE IN OUR PAST, STRENGTH IN OUR PRESENT,
LAYING A FOUNDATION FOR OUR FUTURE”

Who Moved my Chalices?

(A play on the book: "Who Moved my Cheese?"

We wanted everyone to know about a few small changes we are making in how we set up our altar, because we know (as the book "Who Moved My Cheese?" describes) sometimes unexpected changes can be stressful. Beginning sometime in August, the Altar Guild will only put the ceramic chalice and *paten* (plate) on the altar. These will be covered with a veil. The pewter chalices will be on a table near the flag. That table will serve as a *credence table*, and the pewter chalices will be brought over to the altar after the opening communion liturgy. This is being done because in discussion with the Altar Guild, it was decided that the altar looks very cluttered prior to and after communion with the ceramic chalice and paten, the missal, altar candles AND the pewter chalices. Also, very soon, we will begin using white linen purificators instead of the burgundy towels to wipe the chalices. The purificators will be washed and pressed each week by Altar Guild volunteers.

So, how can you help? Here are three important volunteer opportunities:

1. Volunteer to serve in the Altar Guild rotation. This will mean that you come before the service to set up, or remain after the service to clean up the altar. Think of this as either setting up or cleaning up the Lord's Table. What a wonderful holy service! If you are interested in serving in the Altar Guild rotation, please notify Pr. Kelly or the church office so arrangements can be made for your training. The more volunteers we have, the less frequently any one volunteer has to serve. This is a great opportunity for couples to serve together.
2. Turn a fair linen into purificators and or corporals. This sounds like magic but all it really takes is the magic of sewing. We have a large fair linen (altar cloth) that is too big for our altar. A person talented with scissors, needle and thread could cut the fair linen into smaller linens and finish off the edges, and ideally embroider crosses on the smaller linens. A purificator is a small linen, folded in thirds and then in thirds again and is used to cover, and also to wipe a chalice. A corporal is a large square linen that is placed on top of the fair linen and under the chalice and paten. If you are willing to turn a fair linen into corporals and purificators, please let Janice Youpa, Carol Meixsell or Liz Kolba know. We will make sure you have all the measurements. The embroidery could be done by another volunteer after the linens are sized.
3. Volunteer to wash and press the altar linens as needed. This could be a great service for someone who still is able to wash and iron, but is unable to come to church any more. We would drop the soiled linens off to you and then pick them up again before the next Sunday. If you would be willing to wash and press the linens (hopefully we would get a couple of volunteers) just let Pr. Kelly or the Church office know. We will provide instructions for the washing and pressing.

Breakfast News

Congratulations to everyone who has ever worked for, donated to, eaten at, visited, taken pictures, wished well, prayed for, run a bake sale during, or made a grocery run in the middle of a busy morning for the St. James monthly breakfast! Today marks SEVEN YEARS since we first started this incredible community event, and WOW, has it grown!

We started out with just pancakes and sausage. Now, we offer a full menu of made to order omelets, 5 different kinds of eggs besides omelets, 3 kinds of French toast, 3 kinds of pancakes, 3 kinds of toast, 2 kinds of breakfast meat, hashbrowns, a full beverage bar, and even hot sauce for the more daring folks! What started out as effectively an emergency budgetary stopgap has grown into a massive community event where, as Dad likes to say, if you didn't know anyone when you came in, you'd know everyone by the time you leave!



The Straw Church Breakfast has contributed approximately \$60,000 to our church budget over the last seven years, and between that and the fantastic Saturday morning family this event has fostered, we could not be more grateful to have needed this outlet, because look what it has become!

Karoline Aard

Prayer List Update

In answer to several questions, this is Baby Blake, who has been on our congregation's prayer list.



Please continue to keep this brave, beautiful child, and the Blake family, in your own prayers as well.

Pastor's New Schedule

Just a note for your information. Beginning in September, Pastor Kelly's day off will change from Wednesdays to Fridays. It had been Fridays for 19 years, then Miss Maddie came along and it changed to Wednesdays. Now that Miss Maddie's schedule has changed, Pr. Kelly can go back to having Fridays off!



* * * * *

God doesn't call the qualified,
He qualifies the called.

Hey! You 7th & 8th Graders!!

You've heard about it! You've dreamed about it! Now it is **YOUR** chance to experience all the wild wonders of Catechism with the Kellys! Last year 8 young people (4 from St. James and 4 from Grace) got together each week at the Parsonage for dinner, conversation and catechism class with Pastor and Deacon Kelly. Everyone took turns providing a part of the meal (salad, bread, entrée, dessert). We would share highs and lows for the week. We would take turns "praying in and praying out." We would sit around and eat and share our lives and learn about our faith. Barney and Winston (the Kellys' dogs) would hang out, just hoping to be fed from the table, but we *never* fed them from the table (just let PK continue to think that!). Linus, the cat would usually greet us at the door and then leave us alone. We grew closer to each other, and we *definitely grew in our faith*.

And now we pass the torch to you, the current 7th and 8th graders of St. James and Grace. Continue the tradition of "St. Grames" catechism. An initial event to get to know each other, get to know the program, and get a free meal will be held at **Sunday, September 17th, 6:00 pm**. The location is to be determined. A parent should come to this initial meeting so we are all on the same page. Please call the church office to confirm that you will be able to attend.

Save the Date

We are planning a special worship service for **Sunday, October 1st**. Weather permitting we will have an outdoor service with a special Blessing of the Animals.



Make sure to mark your calendar (and have your pets mark their calendars as well). All pets will be welcome to come (and stay with their owners) during the service.

BBQ Chicken Another Success

Once again our intrepid grill team came through! Thanks to their hard work and all who bought the dinners, \$2000 was raised for St. James.

Vacation Bible School

This year's VBS was as well received, as ever. Our thanks to all the volunteers who gave of their time, all those who donated supplies, and of course all the parents who sent their children to learn about the love of God.

Next month's Wisps of Straw will have a complete wrapup article with photos.

Got "Treasures"? – Yard Sale & Fun Day

On **Saturday, October 14th**, from **8:00 am-2:00 pm**, **St James Youth** will be hosting a Yard Sale and Fun Day. We are looking for donations of no longer needed "treasures" that other treasure-seekers might say, "This is perfect!" and buy it. The Yard Sale will also have a Bake Table and food available and the funds raised from the Yard Sale, Bake Table and food sales will go to help defray the cost of the youth trip to Houston in 2018 for the Triennial ELCA Youth Gathering. Keep your eyes and ears open for more details about when and where to drop off donated items.



Additionally, we are planning to combine the Yard Sale with a Community Fun Day with all sorts of activities for children young and old. It is anticipated that Boy Scout Troop 56 will partner with us.

If you are willing to: help plan, price yard sale items, help set up, work the yard sale, bake, work the fun events, clean up, advertise, deliver purchased items the buyers can't transport themselves, work the food concessions, recruit others, or anything else, please contact: Sue Agans, Janet Bray, Charlotte Morris or Karen Kelly.

Worship Leaders Schedule August & September

	Day/Date	Special	Greeters	Lector	Liturgist	Ushers
Aug.	Sun. 13 th		Lois Steible Carol Steible	Bob Babcock	Karen Kelly	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble
	Sun. 20 th		Janet Bray	Marlie Raspe	Steve Stocker	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble
	Sun. 27 th		George & Chris Scherer	Karoline Avard	Jamie McLain	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble
Sept.	Sun. 3 rd	Labor Day Weekend	Dave & Charlotte Morris	Ralph Avard	Dan Gulick	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble
	Sun. 10 th		Lois Steible Carol Steible	Karen Kelly	Karen Kelly	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble
	Sun. 17 th		Janet Bray	Jamie McClain	Polly Sue Newbold	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble
	Sun. 24 th		George & Chris Scherer	Polly Sue Newbold	Steve Stocker	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble

Luther and Lutheranism

Martin Luther (1483-1546)



Martin Luther was eight years old when Christopher Columbus set sail from Europe and landed in the Western Hemisphere. Luther was a young monk and priest when Michaelangelo was painting the Sistine Chapel in Rome. A few years later, he was a junior faculty member at a new university in small-town Germany, intently studying the Scriptures, "captivated with an extraordinary ardor for understanding Paul in the Epistle to the Romans."

In these days Luther was tormented by the demand for righteousness before God. "I did not love, yes, I hated the righteous God who punishes sinners, and secretly, if not blasphemously, certainly murmuring greatly, I was angry with God." Then, in the midst of that struggle with God, the message of the Scriptures became clear, like a long-shut door opening wide. When he realized that a "merciful God justifies us by faith. I felt that I was altogether born again and had entered paradise itself through open gates."

What Luther discovered is the freedom of Christians trusting God's mercy in Christ. As he later wrote, "Faith is God's work in us. It changes us and makes us to be born anew of God. This faith is a living, busy, active, mighty thing. It is impossible for it not to be doing good works incessantly. Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace, so sure and certain that believers would stake their lives on it a thousand times."

This discovery set Luther's life on a new course — both his own life and his public service as a preacher and teacher. When a church-endorsed sales team came to the Wittenberg area in October, 1517, Luther was concerned that the promotion and sale of indulgences undermined the promise of God's unreserved mercy in Jesus and the faith that trusts that promise. His **95 Theses** or **Disputation on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences** became the first of a life-long stream of books, sermons, letters, essays, even hymns in which he expressed his confidence in this life-giving promise from God, the Gospel, and its liberating implications for all of life in church and society.

From the ELCA web site "ELCA Teaching".