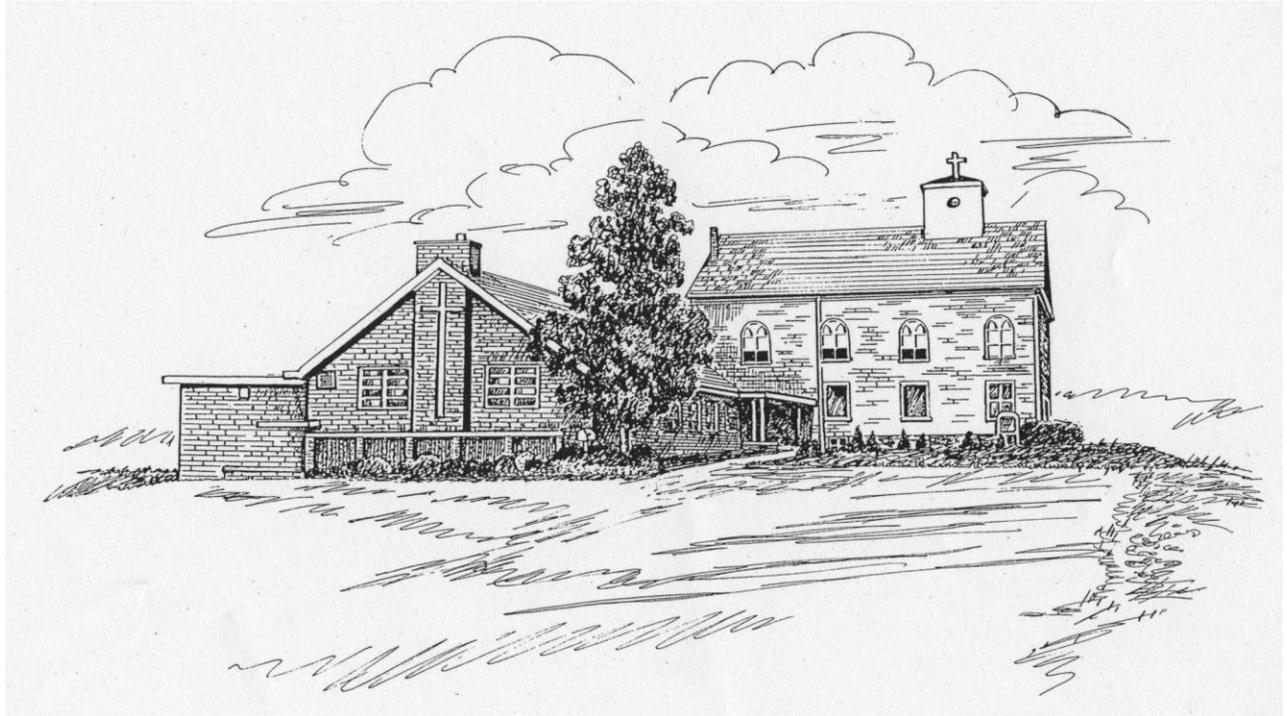


# *WISPS OF STRAW*



## *St. James Lutheran Church Newsletter*

*June 2017*

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

# *Pastor's Letter*

## *A Work In Progress*

In May, Karen and I celebrated our 35<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary with a trip to Williamsburg, Virginia. We are so grateful to God for sustaining and nurturing our marriage and grateful to the congregation for affording me vacation time. In thinking about our trip and my article for the newsletter, I marvel at the "coincidence" (aka God-spot) that *we chose* to go to Williamsburg, or more accurately, I marvel that the Holy Spirit led us there because God had something to show me.

Every morning, we would get up, drive over and park at the Visitor Center and then walk to the Colonial City. At the outset of the walk is a 500' bridge. Embedded in that bridge are little plaques. At each end of the bridge, the plaque is compass-shaped and is divided in half. The half that points to the Colonial City says:

*WALK BACK IN TIME / YOU ARE LEAVING THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY*

And on the half pointing toward the Visitor's Center, it says:

*DEMOCRACY, A WORK IN PROGRESS / YOU HAVE RETURNED TO THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY.*

All along the bridge are little plaques with a date and information relative to that date. As you walk "back in time" the dates get earlier and as you walk toward the Visitor Center, the dates get later. On the way to the Colonial City the plaques say things like:

*1980's / FROM THIS DATE YOUR BRAIN IS YOUR PERSONAL COMPUTER*

*1865 / FROM THIS DATE YOU KNOW PEOPLE WHO OWN OTHER PEOPLE*

The final plaque on the Colonial City-bound side says:

*1776 / FROM THIS POINT YOU ARE A SUBJECT OF HIS MAJESTY THE KING*

One morning, something occurred to me. As I walked over the bridge, "going back in time" I really thought about how different life must have been. I got to the "1776" plaque and I paused. Karen noticed that I had stopped and in response to her quizzical look, I said, "1776, from this date you are a subject of his majesty the King." I took about two more steps off the bridge and continued, "1750, from this date there is no St. James Lutheran Church."

Over the last several weeks I have been struck by how the Colonial Williamsburg story is parallel to the St. James story. I am convinced that this is why the Holy Spirit led Karen and me to Williamsburg. Please allow me to share five links in those parallel stories with you.

Link #1: Revitalizing Church and Community: Once upon a time, Williamsburg was the capital city of the Virginia Colony. In that capital city was a church, Bruton Parish Church, a congregation of the Church of England. After the capital was moved to Richmond, Williamsburg became a sleepy little town. However, Rev. Dr. W. A. R. Goodwin worked to complete a capital campaign and restore the 1711 church building in time for the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Church of England in Virginia. Rev. Dr. Goodwin saw how the restoration of the church building also revitalized the congregation, and desired to revitalize the community through a similar restoration process.

***So, I wonder: will the renovations that we have undertaken here at St. James also serve as a catalyst for revitalization of the congregation and community?***

Link #2: Vision + Commitment = Sacrifice: In his work for the restoration of Bruton Parish Church, Goodwin came in contact with many philanthropists, among them John D. Rockefeller, Jr. and his wife, Abby Aldrich Rockefeller. The Rockefellers saw the benefit to society of this restoration project and undertook it as one of their signature philanthropic projects. The Rockefellers as well as others donated a significant amount of money to the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. These early donors had such a commitment to the vision of the "living museum" they were willing to make sacrifices. When we think of the Rockefellers of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, we tend to think in terms of unlimited wealth. But the Rockefellers could have chosen to not support this vision in the way they did. They could have instead donated money to any of their many philanthropic endeavors or kept the money for their own use. However, God inspired them to support the Williamsburg restoration.

***In the same way, the farmers and tradesmen of the mid 18<sup>th</sup>-century were inspired by God to build a church here, atop a hill in what would become Pohatcong Township, NJ for the sake of the Gospel.***

Link #3: Things Change: As time went on, the focus of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation changed. Originally, it was established to help future generations better understand appreciate the struggles and sacrifices of those early patriots. More recently, the Foundation's focus is on interpreting and highlighting the struggles of the "other half" of the population: those who were enslaved during the colonial era. The foundation still works to help visitors understand that the blessings of democracy did not come without sacrifice and that those freedoms still need to be protected. However, as the Foundation continues to share that message, it is also more attentive to sharing the experiences of those of African descent.

***Times have changed for St. James, too. Once upon a time we could count on Christian loyalty to fill the pews. Those days are over. Fewer and fewer people engage with the life of a congregation simply as a matter of course.***

Link #4: Continuing and Expanding Support is Critical" John D. Rockefeller, Jr. died in 1960, twelve years after his wife. Their initial support of the Colonial Williamsburg vision, while substantial, would only carry the work of the foundation so far. As much as the Rockefellers wanted to impact future generations, their ability to do that decreases over time. Pretty soon, Karen and I will begin receiving notecards and return address labels from the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. Included with these gifts will be a request for financial support. The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation works very hard to attract visitors to the Colonial City. The foundation seeks to broaden its financial base. The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation can no longer depend on philanthropic largesse. If the Foundation wants to continue to impact lives well into the future it **MUST** get more and more people to commit to the vision and be willing to make sacrificial financial gifts.

***So too, St. James cannot depend on the generosity of those saints who have gone before us. Those of us who want to ensure that we will continue to proclaim the Gospel well into the future **MUST** take the responsibility of making regular, sacrificial financial gifts.***

Link #5: The final plaque on the return to the Visitors' Center says:

NOW / YOUR NAME HERE / WHAT DIFFERENCE WILL YOU MAKE?

***This is a really, really, really good question for EACH of us at St. James.***

# *Will You Pray With Me?*

*By P. Kelly*

**Thriving congregations have a thriving intentional prayer ministry.** Prayer is the bedrock on which all ministry is built, and the stream from which all ministry drinks. I heard a sermon a few weeks ago about establishing a prayer ministry in a church. The pastor invited the congregation to join together in prayer in four ways:

1. To have a few persons gather at the altar for five minutes **before each worship service** to intentionally pray that God will: bless and guide all the worship leaders; open the ears and heart of all those worshipping; accept the gifts that will be offered and bless them for holy use.
2. To have the worship leaders (musicians, liturgists, lectors, and pastor) gather in the pastor's office for five minutes before each worship service to pray that God will: be with the worship leaders and guide them; be with the congregation and guide them; embolden all our witness.
3. Come together on a weekly basis, separate from worship to offer a time of community prayer. This might be very early on a weekday morning to provide a prayer-place for commuters or at lunch time one day each week to provide a prayer-place in the middle of the day.
4. Have persons commit to be PPWs: Private Prayer Warriors would commit to pray **daily** for the church's prayer list (both the published list and private prayer requests).

I thought that seemed like a really good idea. So, now I invite each of you: will you come pray with me? Let me know if YOU are willing to participate in an intentional prayer ministry and we will work out the details together.

*"Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving. At the same time pray for us as well that God will open to us a door for the word, that we may declare the mystery of Christ..." Col. 4:2-3*

## *Servants in the Lord's House*

In response to God's gracious gifts, we offer ourselves to God's service. In gratitude, we commit to care for all that God has entrusted to us. In joy and love we care for these gifts. Among these gifts are God's altar and the tithes and offerings we receive.

The proper and devoted care of God's altar and the items used in worship goes back **thousands of years**. It is a loving act of gratitude to care for the paraments, the altar linens, communion vessels and other items used in the worship of Jesus Christ. Since we believe that Christ is bodily present in our communion, care for these things is like caring for Jesus' own body. Would you be willing to come to an altar guild training session to learn the proper care and placement of these worship items? There will be two sessions, the first will be **Saturday, July 15<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 pm**. The second will be the next day, **Sunday, July 16<sup>th</sup> following worship**. After this, we will develop an altar care schedule so that pairs of trained persons can work together to set up for communion, clean up after communion and generally care for the altar items. Please RSVP to Carol in the church office.

We are also seeking pairs of people to serve as offering counters. Currently, we have three persons who process the offerings. Typically, a church our size should have four teams of two, or eight persons. Persons who might be sensing a nudge by the Holy Spirit to count offerings should be persons who are: detail oriented, accurate, trustworthy, and discrete. If you are such a person and would be willing to learn how to process the offerings at St. James, please let Carol know. We will be scheduling offering counters' training shortly, and you will be notified.

## Got Psalms?

Will you share your favorite Psalm verse with the VBS staff? We are making little Psalm verse cards for the VBS participants to take home. Please let Pr. Kelly know your favorite verse from Psalms by Friday, July 17<sup>th</sup>.

## Congratulations Graduates!!

We will recognize and ask God to bless anyone who graduated (high school, college or graduate school) this year in worship on Saturday, June 24<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, June 25<sup>th</sup>. Please let the office know by Tuesday, June 20<sup>th</sup>.



## BBQ Chicken Dinners



It's almost time for the annual sale of our famous take-outs. Full details and order forms are on a separate attachment sent with the e-mailed newsletters, and an extra page at the back of the print version. Don't delay, they have a way of selling out!

## Ice Cream Social

Join our friends from Grace Lutheran Church at 7:00 pm Fridays through August at Castlegate (Rte. 57 next to Piazza Farms) for a good time and some of the best ice cream around.



## Sophia Sharps Window Restoration Update

Realizing the importance and necessity to restore this 138 year - old historic stained glass window, our church is reapplying for a grant from the county. The total restoration cost will be approximately \$36,000. Assuming our application is approved, the Warren County Grant would cover 75% (\$27,000) of the cost and the remaining \$9,000 will be the responsibility of St. James Lutheran Church.



Currently \$5,000 has already been raised in the window fund. We would need \$4,000 more to complete this project without using general fund dollars. Please consider donating to this project

The window is bulging and if not repaired it could break, making it unsalvageable. If you want someone to show you the window issues or explain anything please contact a Historical Committee member - Luann Beatty, George Scherer, Ken Kutzman, Craig Steible, Dave Morris or Charlotte Morris.

You can mail a check (with "Sophia Sharp window" in the memo line), put it in the offering plate or give it to a Historical Committee member.

\* \* \* \* \*

*God promises a safe landing,  
not a calm passage.*

# VBS Time Nears!

Only a few weeks remain until our joint Vacation Bible School with Grace Lutheran (Monday, July 17<sup>th</sup> through Friday the 21<sup>st</sup>, from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon at St. James).

Thanks to all who participated in the fundraiser at Panera Bread. It resulted in \$1705 in sales, yielding \$341 for the VBS. Thanks also to Panera for their generosity again this year.

Below is a list of supplies that will be needed for VBS. Please consider to what extent you can contribute some of these to help defray the costs of VBS, thus helping us to keep it a free program for the children of our community. If you have any questions, contact Karoline Avard at [luv2writeksa@gmail.com](mailto:luv2writeksa@gmail.com).

## Snacks

- Ziploc Bags (100+) –
- 9 oz Plastic Cups (50+) –
- Gummy Worms (50+) –
- Goldfish (9 Lbs) –
- Animal Crackers (9 Lbs) –
- Chex (or similar, 9 Lbs) –
- Small Pretzel Sticks (750+) –
- Mini Marshmallows (400+) –
- Regular Marshmallows (150+) –
- 6" flour Tortillas (50+) –
- Mozzarella Sticks (50+) –
- Squeeze Bottles of Marinara Sauce (100 oz)
- Condiment Cups with Lids (100+) –
- Bags of Ice –
- Graham Crackers (60+) –
- Whipped Topping (e.g. Cool Whip, 4 cans) –
- Chocolate Chips (semi-sweet, 1 large bag) –
- Cinnamon Sugar Tortilla Chips (300+) –
- Raspberries (150+) –
- Blueberries (200+) –
- Blackberries (30+) –
- Vanilla Gogurt sticks (50+)



## Games

- 3 oz Plastic Cups (150) –
- L or XL buckets (6) –
- Rolls of Crepe Paper (5+ rolls, any color) –
- Brightly Colored Marbles (20+) –
- Hula Hoops (5, can be returned) –
- Hula Hoops (5, can be returned) –
- Ping Pong Ball –
- Large Sponges (5) –
- Large Sponges (5) –

## Crafts

- Fiberfill –
- Thick yarn (Red or Purple) –
- Colored Cellophane –
- Medium Weight Cardstock –
- Plunger (can be returned) –
- Plunger (can be returned) –
- Leaf blower (can be returned) –

## Decorations

- Pompoms (no preferred size/color) –
- Pompoms (no preferred size/color) –
- Paper Plates (Asst. Colors and Sizes) –
- Paper Plates (Asst. Colors and Sizes) –
- Empty Paint Cans –
- PVC Pipe Pieces

# Straw Church Tour

Sunday, July 9<sup>th</sup>, at 2:00 pm

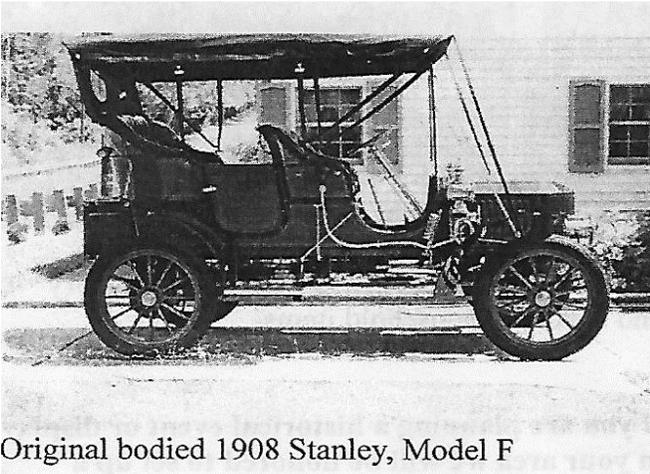
The Historical Committee has arranged a tour of the Earle Eckel Museum, at 451 Rte. 57 in Washington. Located  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile east of Warren County Community College, it commemorates and displays the accomplishments of this early 20<sup>th</sup> century local entrepreneur. He was a friend of Thomas Edison, who spent a lot of time in the New Village area.

In 1918 Mr. Eckel obtained the Stanley Motor Carriage dealership to sell these steam powered vehicles. At that time, steam was a serious competitor to the gasoline engine for motor vehicle propulsion.

Although best known for his involvement with autogiro aircraft, he also sold and raced Indian motorcycles, operated nine gas stations in the area, powered his estate with a home-built hydroelectric plant, and kept busy with many more interesting concepts.

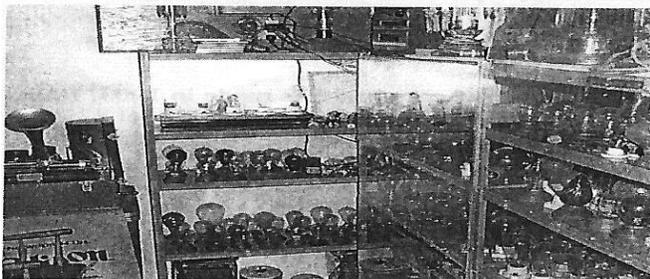
This tour will be given by Earle's grandson Donald Eckel in his building that contains lots of real cool old stuff, including several restored "steamer" vehicles.

Parking may be a challenge but we will make it work. A sign-up sheet is in the Frey Hall lobby. For questions or more information see or call Charlotte or Dave Morris, 908-859-0723.

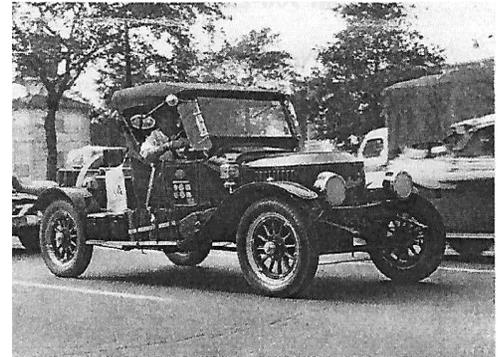


Original bodied 1908 Stanley, Model F

Thomas Edison Memorabilia with many one of kind items.

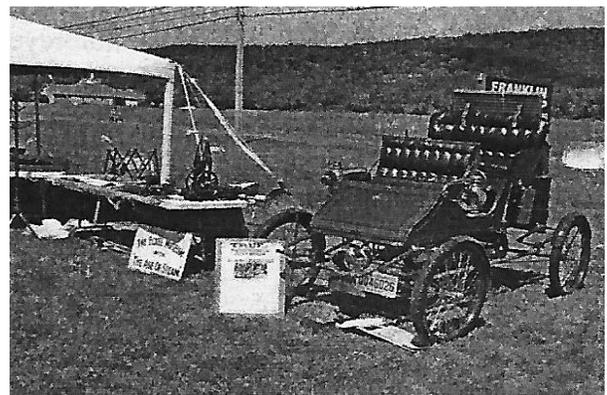


Many other items of interest from local history and historical household items-



Earle Eckel's 1914 Roadster

He drove this car for over 50 years before it was sold- and put over 145,000 miles on the odometer!



## *Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation)*

On Pentecost Sunday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, four young people affirmed their baptisms and became confirmed as full members of St. James Lutheran Church.

Our proud new members, shown below with Pastor and Karen Kelly, are (l to r) Nate Galusha, Kim Eaton, Gigi Holman, and Emma Raub. Congratulations to them, and thanks to all who have encouraged and guided them through this stage of their Christian formation.



## *Worship Leaders Schedule June & July*

	Date	Special	Greeters	Lector	Liturgist	Ushers
<b>June</b>	11	Trinity	Dave & Charlotte Morris	Steve Stocker	Ralph Avard	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble
	18	Father's Day	Lois Steible Carol Steible	Marlie Raspe	Polly Sue Newbold	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble
	25	Graduate Recognition	Janet Bray	Bob Babcock	Steve Stocker	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble
<b>July</b>	2	4 <sup>th</sup> of July W/E	George & Chris Scherer	Karoline Avard	Jamie McLain	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble
	9		Dave & Charlotte Morris	Karen Kelly	Dan Gulick	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble
	16		Lois Steible Carol Steible	Jamie McLain	Karen Kelly	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble
	23		Janet Bray	Ralph Avard	Polly Sue Newbold	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble
	30		George & Chris Scherer	Dan Gulick	Ralph Avard	Harvey Walters Ron Knoble