



# St. James and St. Paul's River's Edge

St. James and St. Paul's Lutheran Churches

Dear Friends in Christ,

Greetings in the name of our crucified and risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

As we come to the month of September, we tend to look forward to fall and the coming school year, and all that is associated with it. Though COVID-19 may appear to "cramp our style" so to speak, there are a lot of exciting things to look forward to in our congregations. Sunday worship services are as follows: St. Paul's at 8:00 a.m. (Holy Communion is offered on the second and fourth Sundays of the month, and if there is a fifth Sunday of the month); St. James at 10:30 (Holy Communion is offered every Sunday). St. James's Sunday worship service can be heard over SMASH Country 92.9; as well, the service is streamed on Facebook. At St. James weekly Wednesday evening worship services resume as well. Those services are at 5:30 with Holy Communion on the Wednesdays following the second and fourth Sundays of the month.

Also, Confirmation and Sunday School classes resume in September. As those very important classes resume for the Christian upbringing of our children, here's a little bit about these important happenings:

- At St. James, beginning September 13, Sunday School is for age four thru eighth grade. The class structure will be adjusted this year to comply with CDC COVID-19 guidelines. Please bear with our staff as they work to make Sunday School a safe and edifying experience for our children.
- St. James and St. Paul's Confirmation is for those in 6th thru 8th grade. Confirmation will take on a different look this year as well. Tentatively, those classes are scheduled to be held on Saturdays.

As well, adults kindly consider taking the time to be in God's Word in addition to our regular worship services:

- At St. James on Sunday mornings prior to the worship service, Fred Gregar will again lead the Bible Study. Fred will kick off the year on Sunday, September 13 with the study of a DVD series: *Yeshua: The Promise, The Land, The Messiah*.
- I will be offering a Thursday afternoon Bible Study (1:30-3:00), as we continue in the Old Testament Book of Leviticus.
- At St. James, typically on the second Saturday of the month, is our Breakfast Bible Study (8:00-10:00). Presently we are studying the Book of Revelation.
- At St. James, typically on the third Monday of the month, the ladies get together for a Bible study. The time is 6:00 p.m.
- At St. Paul's, adult Sunday School is offered following the worship service. The class is led by Deb Winters.

There are of course other ways to be involved in our congregations, such as the quilters and Lutheran Laymen's League at St. James, and St. Paul's Ladies Aid/LWML.

Sunday, September 13, is the day we formally kick-off the upcoming year with the installation of the Sunday School staff and Bible class leaders. Do kindly note the calendar for more detailed information for the days and times of all the educational and fellowship offerings of our congregations.

In closing, as we worship together as church families, we are reminded that God's Word never falls to the ground ineffective but always accomplishes its purposes (Isaiah 55:10-11). Thanks be to God!

In His Service,

Pastor Erdman

*"But with a man who belongs to an everlasting kingdom all is well and it is fitting that he should dance through life forevermore." Martin Luther (1543)*

# St. Paul's News and Notes

Hey, Everybody!

It's a busy time of year if you're a gardener/canner like me. Just before starting this article I took 10 jars of homemade V-8 tomato juice out of the canner. The Lord has really blessed our garden and we thank Him daily! A healthy garden keeps a person busy weeding, harvesting and then preparing or preserving the bounty. For Jim and I it's been like a healing balm and sense of things being normal as in the past. I'm sure we're not the only ones who yearn to see and feel that way again. We'll talk about that later.

It's also a busy time of year for those of you getting kids ready for school (at all levels). If you haven't started yet, please pray for the opening up of our schools. We need prayer for the health and safety of teachers, staff, students, bus drivers, etc. Among our grandchildren it seems each school district has a different type of plan.

Lord willing, we'll be starting up Sunday morning Bible Class here by the end of September. I'm previewing some different materials with the goal of finding a study that will prepare us spiritually for what is happening in our world today and also the future. We've been doing a study on understanding the basics of every book in the Bible. It's been such a blessing and we're closing in on the end of the New Testament.

On the September calendar I see that the 7<sup>th</sup> is Labor Day (have fun!), 11<sup>th</sup> Patriot Day, 13<sup>th</sup> Grandparents' Day (does anyone really celebrate that?) and on the 22<sup>nd</sup> the first official day of fall!

I had a great daily devotion that really made me "think" recently. It was based on 1 Corinthians 2:16: "For who has known the mind of the Lord that he might instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." Through the Holy Spirit we can begin to know God's thoughts, talk with Him, and expect answers to our prayers. Are you spending enough time with Christ to have his very mind in you? A close relationship with Christ comes only from spending time consistently in His Word. As a result according to Philippians 2:5ff we can have the same attitude of our Savior!

Pray and ask God to show you truth in the midst of confusing information. Ask for his help in finding joy in your daily life. No one knows if we'll ever have the "normalcy" that we felt previous to 2020, but we need to be effective as Christians for the sake of our families and those we come in contact with.

Also, if you aren't praying about the upcoming election...start! There's more at stake than I have space to write about in this column.

I pray that you will evaluate your relationship with Christ. Have you accepted Him as your personal Savior? Being right with God makes all the difference in being right with everything else.

Until next month, take care and may God hold you safely in the palm of His hand!

Deb

## Bible Readings for September

1<sup>st</sup> 1Co 1:1-2:16

2<sup>nd</sup> 1Co 5:1-6:20

3<sup>rd</sup> 1Co 7:1-40

4<sup>th</sup> 1Co 8:1-9:27

5<sup>th</sup> 1Co 10:1-33

6<sup>th</sup> Come to the Lord's House

7<sup>th</sup> 1Co 11:1-12:31

8<sup>th</sup> 1Co 13:1-14:40

9<sup>th</sup> 1Co 15:1-58

10<sup>th</sup> 1Co 16:1-24

11<sup>th</sup> 2Co 1:1-2:17

12<sup>th</sup> 2Co 3:1-4:18

13<sup>th</sup> Come to the Lord's House

14<sup>th</sup> 2Co 5:1-21

15<sup>th</sup> 2Co 6:1-7:16

16<sup>th</sup> 2Co 8:1-9:15

17<sup>th</sup> 2Co 10:1-11:33

18<sup>th</sup> 2Co 12:1-13:14

19<sup>th</sup> Gal 1:1-2:21

20<sup>th</sup> Come to the Lord's House

21<sup>st</sup> Gal 3:1-29

22<sup>nd</sup> Gal 4:1-31

23<sup>rd</sup> Gal 5:1-6:18

24<sup>th</sup> Eph 1:1-23

25<sup>th</sup> Eph 2:1-22

26<sup>th</sup> Eph 3:1-21

27<sup>th</sup> Come to the Lord's House

28<sup>th</sup> Eph 4:1-32

29<sup>th</sup> Eph 5:1-6:24

30<sup>th</sup> Php 1:1-30



## Birthdays/Anniversaries Please any dates that are wrong please let me know. Also if you see a name that needs to be taken off. God Blessing Cathy

### St. Paul's Birthdays

2nd-Andrew Martinson  
6th-Chris Draper  
11th-Dawn Baumgart  
29th-Brant Murray  
30th-Therese Huebner

### St. James Birthdays

1st-Jacob Nokovic  
3rd-Sullivan Elliot-Bell  
Zach Webber  
6th-Nathan Raether  
8th-Jameson Oens

11th-DeAnna Winters  
12th-Sue McMurray  
Adam Smelcer  
14th-Lynne Oens  
15th-Micah Ebert

16th-Travis Brooks  
Jennifer Kosinski  
21st-Laurie Dykstra  
22nd-Ashley Matson  
23rd-Rosie Balsiger  
Rhiannon Mach  
24th-Courtney Nugent  
25th-Megan Wesolek  
28th-John Oens  
29th-Joey Dushek, Brett Jump

### St. Paul's Anniversaries

9th-Glenn & Sue Bennett  
12th-Tom & Diana Martinson  
13th-Bill & Gail Herms  
25th-Joseph & Jaime Miller

### St. James Anniversaries

14th-Dave & Bonnie Hess  
16th-Jason & Lisa Smelcer

19th-Dick & Edna  
Jensen



**\* Please Note we have new \*  
Office Hours  
9am to 2pm  
Monday-Thursday  
Thank You**

**OFFICIAL ACTS  
August 2020**

**St. James:- Baptism  
Bentley Blake Bloomer**

**St. Paul's:-None**



**“Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:39**

During these uncertain times, there is one thing we CAN count on and that is the love of Jesus Christ!

Do you want to connect with Jesus and are you searching for ways to find strength and hope especially during these troubled times? Please join us at 6PM the third Monday each month for a thought-provoking Bible Study especially selected for women.

Our first Women's Bible Study will be held on Monday, September 21 at 6PM. Due to Covid 19 we WILL be following the precautionary means available to us using masks, hand sanitizers and social distancing. If you have any questions please contact me at 608 548-0214 or email me at [jumpriver52@yahoo.com](mailto:jumpriver52@yahoo.com).

We have a wonderful time sharing how God has worked in our lives, but mostly, you will find a community of women who want to know God—and His Word—and live differently because of Him.

I look forward to seeing everyone soon! Debby Ennis

### Walking Trail Update

Some years ago the Vision Committee at St James voted on a long range goal of a walking trail. Thrivent helped with funding and after approximately 15 years it became a reality in July . Many thanks to a great number of men + 3 woman that showed up to work. We won't list names for fear of omitting someone's name but thanks must go out to the equipment operators & their equipment that made the job much easier-Joey Awe, Fred Fisher, John & Clayton Oens.

Please take a look at the project but remember it is just a start and we always need more help. If you are wondering what we need, here are a few suggestions.

1. Physical labor to groom & brush the areas.
2. Donations-lawn ornaments, bird houses, bird feeders (large fill capacity that don't need frequent refilling & food), garbage cans, flower planters, perennials ( for shape esp.) and cash donations. Any items in excess will be given to next years rummage sale. Items can be used or new.
3. Use the trail-the more the trail is used the easier it will become for walking. We have 4 benches & other items waiting to be mounted so please come fish, read a book & above all appreciate what God has created for us.

Any questions-please ask-Sharon



# Reaching Up, Reaching Out, Reaching In With the Lord

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A DEVOTIONAL MESSAGE FROM LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES – "Level Ground"

*Psalm 26:11-12 - But as for me, I shall walk in my integrity; redeem me, and be gracious to me. My foot stands on level ground; in the great assembly I will bless the LORD.*

At the time of this writing, churches are beginning to open after being closed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Assemblies, great and small, are permitted once again to gather as brothers and sisters in Christ to bless the Lord who redeemed them. Still, in worship or apart from it, many people may feel that they are not really standing on level ground. Everything seems to be shifting underfoot, from society-wide issues of global pandemic fears and political conflicts to trouble that strikes closer to home—loss of home and employment, family strife or the illness of loved ones. We may make every personal effort to walk in integrity, as the Lord wants us to do, but we cannot find that level ground. With the psalmist we plead, "Redeem me, and be gracious to me!"

Only one man has truly walked with integrity, the God-Man Jesus Christ. "He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in His mouth. When He was reviled, He did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but continued entrusting Himself to Him who judges justly" (1 Peter 2:22-23). The ground was not always level beneath our Lord's feet as He faced hatred, rejection, and unbelief. On the night He was betrayed, Jesus pleaded with His Father for redemption and grace, asking that the terrible of cup of suffering and death, the cup of God's wrath against sin, might be removed from Him.

Yet Jesus also asked that His Father's will would be done, and so it was. The ground shifted beneath the Savior's feet as He was betrayed and arrested, tried and unjustly condemned to death. There was likely very little level ground at Golgotha where Jesus was nailed to the cross. Although He had walked through His entire life in innocence and integrity, Jesus bore our sins in His body on the cross. He was punished for our lack of integrity, our hatred and selfishness, pride and jealousy—every sin of thought, word, and action. In our place, He drained the cup of God's wrath against sin.

Taken down from the cross, Jesus' body was laid in the tomb. On the third day, the first Easter morning, the ground shifted as never before. Jesus was raised bodily from death and His victory over death is our victory. The redemption for which we pray was accomplished. By God's grace, through faith in Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven, the burden of guilt lifted. Because Jesus lives, we too have new life in His Name. United with Him in Baptism, we have been buried with Him and raised to walk—*with integrity!*—in newness of life.

At the foot of the cross, we find the level ground we seek, level ground that can be found nowhere else. We may not always be able to assemble with our fellow believers to worship, but one day we will stand before God's throne in the great assembly of all the redeemed to bless the Lord who saved us!

**THE PRAYER:** Lord Jesus, when the ground seems to shift beneath our feet, turn our hearts and minds to the promises of Your Word, and hold us securely in Your hand. Amen.

This Daily Devotion was written by Dr. Carol Geisler.

*Randy Randall, Lutheran Hour Ministries Ambassador for St. James Lutheran Church*