

The St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church Newsletter

February 2010

“The Witness”

Issue 1

Schedule of Events at a Glance

Sunday, February 14

Worship 8:00 & 10:45 am
Sunday School 9:15 am
Congregational Meeting

Wednesday, February 17

Ash Wednesday

Lenten Service @ Covenant
Presbyterian Church
Noon
Worship/Holy Communion
@ St. James 7:30 pm

Sunday, February 21

Celebration Sunday

Wednesday, February 24

Lenten Service @ Covenant
Presbyterian Church
Noon
Simple Supper 6:00 pm
Worship 7:00 pm

Sunday, February 28

Prayers For Healing

Wednesday reminds us that we are about to begin the six week journey of Lent. We look forward to the coming of spring... We prepare for the celebration of Easter... In both cases, we find ourselves waiting patiently, knowing that the longed-for time will come. Along the way there are days of darkness, and times of introspection. Even so, each day brings us closer to that for which we yearn, so that the times of waiting and preparation are filled with hope. And, in the end, we find that our celebration is even more joyful because of the long journey. Therefore, as I do each year, I invite you to join with the family of St. James as we gather for Lenten worship and fellowship, and prepare for the joy that Easter will bring...

+The solemn liturgy of Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent. It will be held at 7:30 pm on February 17 at St. James. The service begins with a penitential order of confession. The congregation is admonished to *“remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”* As those words are spoken, all who wish may also have a cross of ashes traced on their forehead. We will also share the body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

+Starting on Ash Wednesday, and continuing each Wednesday during Lent, the traditional

ecumenical Noonday “Lenten Luncheon” services will be offered. These services, which begin promptly at 12:00 noon, are sponsored by the Ligonier Valley Association of Churches. Following the 30 minute service, a luncheon will be served at the host church. The first three services will be hosted by the folks at Covenant Presbyterian Church, and the latter three will be held at Calvary United Methodist Church. Please check the article elsewhere in this newsletter for more information on the theme and speakers for this year.

+On Wednesday evenings, beginning on February 24 and continuing through March 24, our St. James mid-week devotional services will be held from 7:00 to 7:30 pm. Members of the Worship and Music Committee have decided that we will offer an “encore” of the series of Lenten dramas titled “The Temptations of Jesus,” which were presented about 6 years ago.

+The “Simple Soup Suppers” will be offered at St. James each Wednesday, preceding the evening devotional services. Members take turns preparing a soup and salad meal which is shared from 6:00 until 6:50 pm. You are welcome to join us for this simple meal prior to the service, or just arrive in time for worship at 7:00 pm.
(continued on next page)

Pastor’s Words

Dear Friends in Christ:

The rather severe bout of winter weather which we’ve experienced in recent weeks has everyone longing for the coming of spring. The warm breezes of April and the fragrance of Easter flowers will certainly be welcome this year! But, as Punxsutawney Phil reminded us last week, we still have six more weeks of winter. Likewise, the coming of Ash

+Once again, daily Lenten devotions will be available to you by internet. These prayers are written by the youth of the congregation, and will be sent to your computer at home or work each morning. Check a separate article in this newsletter for more information to assist you in signing up to be on the e-mail list.

Jesus invites us to take up the cross and follow him. Join with us on this year's Lenten journey. Walk with Jesus, that his presence may enrich your life!

Blessings, *Pastor Paul*

Lenten Fish Fry

Our sister congregation, Faith Lutheran Church, New Florence, will again be sponsoring their annual series of Lenten Fish Fry meals on Fridays evenings during Lent. The dinners begin on Friday, February 19, and continue through Friday, March 26. Hours are 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm, and the cost is \$8.50 for adults and \$5.00 for children under 12 years. Combo meals will be available for an additional 50 cents. We have not received a copy of their menu as of this writing, but once it arrives, we will make copies available at the church information desk. Faith Lutheran Church is located at 6810 Route 22 East, New Florence – between Route 259 and Route 56. Their phone number is 724-676-2240.

“Simple Soup Suppers”

These have become a Lenten tradition at St. James. They are held on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall here at St. James. They will be followed by a half-hour devotional service, which begins at 7:00 pm. The suppers begin on Wednesday, February 24. A sign-up list for folks to host each supper has been posted at the information desk. Please join in this time of Lenten fellowship.

Noonday Community Lenten Services

The annual series of Community Noonday Lenten Services and Luncheons, sponsored by the Ligonier Valley Association of Churches, begins on February 17, Ash Wednesday, and continue for six Wednesdays. The first three will be held at Covenant Presbyterian Church, and the remaining three will be held at Calvary United Methodist Church. The speakers for these services will be:

February 17, P. McCracken

February 24, A. Kovacs

March 3, J. Simons

March 10, to be determined

March 17, to be determined

March 24, to be determined

Each service will be followed by the traditional Lenten luncheon. The theme for this year's series is “From Fear to Faith: The Story of the Prodigal Son.” Please support the services with your attendance.

Pancake Supper

Tuesday, February 16

5:30 pm to 7:00 pm

St. Michael's of the Valley Episcopal Church, Rector

\$8.00 – Adult

\$4.00 – Child

Pancakes, sausage, applesauce, choice of delicious syrups and beverages will be served.

Proceeds to benefit summer mission trip to Agua Viva Children's Home in Guatemala
What is Shrove Tuesday? In the Middle Ages, Shrove Tuesday or Pancake Day was a day of celebration as well as atonement since it is the last day before Lent. Pancakes are eaten on this day because they contain fat, butter and eggs, which were forbidden from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday.

Note: To be ‘shriven’ is the ancient term for receiving forgiveness of one's sins after making a private confession.

Prayers During Lent

Youth from St. James have again written prayers that will be emailed along with a Bible verse to members and friends each of the 40 days of Lent, which begins February 17. We hope that the thoughts that they share will encourage you to take a few moments for personal reflection. If you're interested in receiving the prayers, please email the Poerschke Family.



A Word About Easter flowers

As this newsletter goes into the mail, our florist still has no advance information on prices and availability of Easter flowers. Yet, by the time our March newsletter is published, the deadline for orders will likely be upon us. Information and order forms will be made available in the Sunday bulletins as soon as possible. If you would like to place Easter flower orders, but will not be present for worship in the coming weeks, please contact the church office by telephone.

In Response to the Earthquake in Haiti

The profits from the Pork Chop Dinner in January are being sent to Lutheran Disaster Response, along with individual donations from church members. After expenses, the net amount from the dinner is \$862.00. Other donations to date total \$765.00. Thus, we will be sending in a total of \$1,627.00 this week. The need for contributions to the ongoing recovery will continue for months and even years, so the door is certainly still open for more donations. We will provide occasional updates on the work of Lutheran Disaster Response and Lutheran World Relief in Haiti.

Congregational Council Officers for 2010

Officers were elected at the Meeting of the Council on Thursday, January 14. Those elected are; K. Smith, President;

P. Benning, Vice-President; L. Whitsel, Secretary; and R. Davies, Treasurer. We are grateful that God has blessed us with these gifted and willing leaders!



2010 Council Members

The St. James Congregation Council members for 2010 have been elected and installed. Those newly elected are R. Flickinger, J. Shawley, and J. Springer. Elected to a second term is C. Carnahan. P. Benning, R. Davies, W. Dunn, K. George, B. Gohn, J. Gohn, K. Smith, and L. Whitsel are all continuing to serve terms to which they were previously elected. We offer our thanks to L. Luptak, C. Lynn, and S. Pollock, who have completed their terms of service on Council. The stewardship of your time and talents for the glory of God and the building of St. James are very much appreciated.



“Souper Bowl of Caring”

On Sunday, February 7, a record was set, as the largest audience in history tuned in to football’s Super Bowl to watch the New Orleans Saints and the Indianapolis Colts compete for the NFL championship. However, the real “champions” of the day are the faithful folks in churches around the nation who shared their blessings with those in need by contributing to the annual “Souper Bowl of Caring.” Over the last 20 years, more than \$60 million has been given to feeding programs through this effort! The soup kettles were once again set out at St. James, and although the bad weather made for rather “slim” attendance on that Sunday, our members gave \$220.00!

We will keep the kettles out for several more Sundays, to receive the gifts of those who missed worship on “Souper Bowl Sunday.” And, for the many folks who receive this newsletter but do not get out for worship, will also be glad to receive any donations that are sent by mail! All contributions will be turned over to the Ligonier Valley Food Pantry. Last year’s collection totaled \$461.00. Let’s see if we can top \$500.00 this year! Thanks for your generous support!

Family, Friends & Fun at Seven Springs

A trip to Seven Springs is being organized for Sunday, February 28. SIGN - UP sheets with very specific details are in the back of the sanctuary. Skiing, tubing and snowboarding are all available. If you want to go to 7-Springs but are not interested in snow activities, please review the information on the sign up sheet. Interest for other activities will be gauged. This outing is NOT limited to St. James members. Please pass the word to family and friends. If you would like an electronic copy of the sign up sheet, please call K. George or M. Davies.

New tables for the fellowship hall

In response to a recent appeal, members of St. James have contributed enough money to buy six new lightweight plastic tables for the fellowship hall. These have been purchased and are now in place. We will continue to replace the old tables as funds become available. We are now on the way to our seventh table, and will be happy to receive additional donations for this project. Thank you for your on-going support of this effort!



Special Thanks

Thank you from Bethlen Home

Dear Members of St. James,
On behalf of Bethlen Home we would like to take this opportunity to say thanks to the members of the congregation for their wonderful support they give to us each year as a service project for the holiday season. The gifts you have collected are wonderful and will bring much joy to our residents this holiday season. No matter what age we are we still feel like a child inside when it comes Christmas morning and look forward to opening that gift. Thanks, for making that possible for our residents. Thank you for sharing the true spirit of Christmas. May you be blessed with a healthy, happy joyous holiday season.

Sincerely,
S. A. Humbertson
Activity Director Bethlen Home

Thank you from The Salvation Army

Dear Members of St. James Lutheran Church,
Thank you for helping to ring the bell during our Red Kettle Campaign. Thank you also, for the toy donation. You helped to brighten Christmas for 200 children.
God bless you,
M. Neiderhiser

Thank you from Trinity Lutheran Church

Dear Friends, I would like to send our sincere gratitude from Trinity Lutheran Church for your involvement with our 2009 Christmas Wish List Ministry. Many thanks go out to all the Pastors, congregation members and goodhearted souls who gave. We were able to fulfill 611 of the near 700 lists received (hopefully next year we can provide more gifts with your help). Our elves, Rudy, Dean, Andraya, Orien and Emanuel persistently delivered packages from the 16th all the way up to Christmas Eve. Children all over the North Side were happy the morning of the 25th, finding toys, clothes and much deserved Christmas gifts under their trees. This would not have been possible without your help. We are already geared up for the 2010 Christmas Wish List Program, and look forward to your participation.
In Christ's Love,
R. McBride
Program Director

Dorcas Class

Dorcas Class' monthly gatherings will begin again after a winter hiatus on Tuesday, March 2nd. We meet the first Tuesday of the month at 1:30 pm in the fellowship hall for about an hour and a half. Women of all ages are welcome – encouraged – to attend. We meet for fellowship, food and conversation. For more information see N.Rorabaugh or K. Poerschke.