

There seems to be something rather special about the New Year. For me it is not so much about parties and but rather it is a time of hope and new beginnings

The New Year fills me with optimism and enthusiasm for what may lie ahead. It is as if opening to the first page of the calendar allows us to set aside the challenges, disappointments and hurts of the past year and look forward to a new beginning. It is in fact what our past month of Advent and Christmas has been about. Maybe that is why the church calendar always begins approximately a month before our standard secular calendar. It gives us a little bit of a head start to plan and prepare for this new beginning. I once again spent this past Advent in a time of active prayer and meditation discerning what I feel God has called me (and us) to do and who God has called me (and us) to be. Once again, the Spirit has spoken to me in a powerful way and I look forward to sharing with you this journey.

This year I encourage each of us to consider our individual and personal role and to actively participate in the growth and sustainability of the St James community of faith. This may include planning and/or growing a ministry, reaching out to those in need, inviting friends and family to St James, reaching out to former members or your unchurched neighbors to visit us, encouraging generous giving, and sharing your St James story in the community.

The reality is that St James needs and more importantly calls you to be an active part in its important role in the community and it cannot do it without you. Just as Christ could not carry on his ministry without his disciples, St James cannot carry on without your active participation in spreading the good news. This approach to ministry more closely reflects the way Christ's own ministry was carried out in a way that will create wonderful opportunities for all to participate each according to their individual gifts of time, energy, talent, treasure and other resources as they are able in various and appropriate ministries.

As we speak of gifts, Jan 6 is Epiphany a time when the wise men brought gifts to the baby Jesus. I so much enjoy the whole idea of Epiphany and all the symbolism that goes with it. First, there was the arrival of the wise men on Epiphany, Jan 6. They traveled across what was then the entire world on faith, following a star to a place where, when they arrived, they were struck by a vision of hope and love so simple and yet so profound it changed their life. During this season of Epiphany, we too are invited to come to that place where our lives may be changed forever.

We also in the first week of Epiphany celebrate the baptism of Jesus Christ. It is in that very same baptism that we too are baptized and called to be disciples each of us according to our gifts and abilities.

This is for me an exciting time. A time when the world so desperately needs to see hope, so desperately needs to see the love of Jesus. We are called to be the face of Christ, to be that light for the world to see. I think to myself "what an overwhelming task" but I realize that we do not go alone nor are we expected to do it all. We go knowing that God stands before us and behind us, that God will give us the words to speak and the strength to do God's will each according to our gifts and abilities. We are called to reach out to change the life of one person, who will change the life of one person, who will change the world.

Remember that whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are surrounded by God's unconditional love, boundless mercy, and unending grace. There is a place for you here in at St James.

May this Epiphany season fill you and us with hope, recognizing our call to be disciples.

Happy New Year!! Take care and be well, Peace
Ken

Church Council Members needed:

If you would like to learn more about the workings of the church, please consider becoming a Church Council member. We are looking for 3 people to fill vacancies at the end of January. If you are interested, please let Don Robertson or any council member know.

Annual Meeting Information:

Please have your Annual reports to Kim LaDuke (church Secretary) by Sunday, January 11th. To be sure it is printed and distributed by January 18th.

The St. James Annual meeting will take place on Sunday, January 25th immediately following worship.

Adventures in Faith

Adventures in Faith are in full swing again. The class is held right after the Children's time during worship. The teacher will take the kids downstairs, have a lesson, craft and snack. If you are interested in helping with this program please see Sue Tews.

Also, Please do not forget Adventures In Faith is still collecting cans and bottles for our adopted children. Please leave them in the garage, by the back door or contact Don or Betty Robertson and they will pick them up



K.I.D.S. in Distress

We will be collecting pants/jeans for Kids in Distress for the month of January. Please bring in size 3 - 10. We will be doing a specific item each month for a while. You can still donate clothing, new or gently used, anytime and the old shoe drive is ongoing. Thanks for your support. See Bev Kulman for more details.

The Unexpected

On October 26th the furnace on the Parsonage had a major malfunction and it was determined that it could not be fixed. After 25 plus years of trouble free service, it needed to be replaced. Quotes were obtained and a new furnace was installed on October 31st just prior to the recent cold weather. This hit our budget with an unexpected cost of \$2740.00. If anyone has any ideas how to minimize this impact, please contact one of our council members. Thank you.

Recycling at St. James

In an effort to be more intentional about our stewardship role in God's creation, please use our new recycling bins downstairs for both plastic and paper. The bin for plastics is in the kitchen (water bottles, plastic silverware, containers, communion cups, etc.) There is a bin for paper in the basement office near the copier, and a small blue bin in the foyer for bulletins and miscellaneous paper.

Welcome!
2015!



Prayers for

Ellen Grimnes, Barb & Joe Tocco, Sue, David, Joe and Carmela, Doris Sues, Karen Marie, Mary, Barbara, June, Anne Enders, Leo Solomon, Paul Veryser, Tom and Sandy A & family, Carlene Kaniski, Erin, Sue, Carol, Kerry, Kenny Murphy, Scott, Erin and Charlie, Jeremy, Brian, Jerry and family, Tommy T, Gepi, David P and family

For those

- in recovery and those struggling with addiction
- imprisoned and those responsible for their care
- homeless, hungry and abused
- having difficulty in their relationships
- facing financial hardships and issues with employment
- home caregivers
- those in the armed forces, for protection and peace
- traveling mercies for those on geographic and spiritual journeys
- our own personal transformation

Communion Elders for January

Kim LaDuke- Preparing
Kim LaDuke- Serving
Jerry Lindke - Serving

Ushers & Greeters and Liturgists for January

Please consider signing up.

Scripture Readings for January

Sunday, Jan. 4

*Jer 31:7-14 or Sir 24:1-12
*Ps 147:12-20 or Wis of Sol 10:15-21
*Eph 1:3-14
*Jn 1: (1-9), 10-18

Another Road

Sunday, Jan. 18

*1 Sam 3:1-10 (11-20)
*Ps 139: 1-6, 13-18
*1 Cor 6: 12-20
*Jn 1:43-51

Known and Loved

Sunday, Jan. 11

*Gen 1:1-5
*Ps 1:29
*Acts 19: 1-7
*Mk 1: 4-11

Defining Moments

Sunday, Jan. 25

*Jonah 3: 1-5, 10
*Ps 62: 5-12
*1 Cor 7: 29-31
*Mk 1: 14-20

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