

## Carols & Dessert Concert

**Saturday, December 18, at 5:00 pm**

The annual St. James Christmas concert, Carols and Dessert, will take place on Saturday, December 18, at 5 p.m., in the St. James sanctuary. We often associate songs and shouts of “Alleluia” with the Easter season, but the songs of Christmas are filled with Alleluias as well – proclaimed loudly in praise by the angels and sung quietly as lullabies to our newborn Savior. Celebrate the Advent and Christmas season by joining us for a musical program shared by our Holiday and youth vocal choirs, adult and youth handbell choirs, soloists, and instrumentalists. There will

also be audience carols. Please join us after the concert for fellowship and dessert. We hope you can attend with family and friends. Masks will be required. The concert will also be live streamed on the St. James YouTube channel.

### Upcoming Worship Schedule

#### December 19

8:30 and 10:45 am

“Lessons and Carols”

#### December 24 Christmas Eve

2:30 pm and 3:30 pm

Family Worship Services

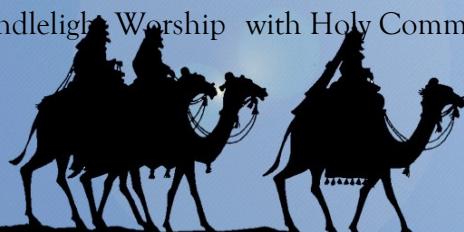
5:00 pm

Candlelight Worship

*Livestreamed service*

7:00 pm and 10:00 pm

Candlelight Worship with Holy Communion



#### December 25

No Saturday worship service.

#### December 26

10:00 am worship with Holy Communion.

*Reminder: No Sunday School or Confirmation classes*

#### January 1

No Saturday worship service

#### January 2

10:00 am worship

*Reminder: No Sunday School or Confirmation classes*

*Masks are required at all worship services.*

IN-PERSON WORSHIP: SATURDAY AT 5:00 PM & Sunday at 8:30 & 10:45 am

8:30 am is LIVESTREAMED ON OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Communion Served on the 2nd & 4th Sundays of the Month.

Phone: 608.845.6922

[www.stjamesverona.org](http://www.stjamesverona.org)

Fax: 608.845.6903

# FROM THE PASTOR

## "It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas, Everywhere you go..."

So sings Bing Crosby (or Micheal Buble) in the classic Christmas song. And, in all honesty, it starts to look like Christmas earlier and earlier every year. The decorations in the stores seem to come out before Halloween, the Christmas music is played before Thanksgiving, and we are in full Christmas mode before Advent has even started. As a society, it is safe to say that we do not like to wait. And yet the disciplines of Advent focus on waiting, watching, preparing, and hoping.

In the devotional Watch For The Light, the authors write: "Though Advent has been observed for centuries, most people today acknowledge it only with a blank look. For the vast majority of us, December flies by in a flurry of activities, and what is called "the holiday season" turns out to be the most stressful time of the year. Even we who genuinely love Christmas lose sight of its point. How many of us, content with familiar traditions and feelings of goodwill, forget the dank stable, the cold night, the closed door of the inn? We miss the essence of Christmas unless we become, in the words of Eberhard Arnold, 'mindful of how Christ's birth took place.' Once we do we will sense immediately that Advent marks something momentous: God's coming into our midst. That coming is not just something that happened in the past. It is a recurring possibility here and now."

Advent reminds us not to rush things. Instead, Advent encourages us to take a breath, sit back, and try and remember what it is exactly that we are looking for, longing for, hoping for. As we do, we discover again that what we truly wait for is God's presence among us – to make us less fearful, more hopeful, and at peace. May you rediscover God's presence in your life this Advent season, for only then will it truly look a lot like Christmas.

– Pastor Kurt



### ST. JAMES STAFF

|                                 |                                         |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Kurt Billings, Pastor           | Cell: 235-8122                          |
| Peter Narum, Pastor             | Cell: 469-9625                          |
| Michelle Lichtry                | Parish Administrator                    |
| Barb Roberts                    | Office Assistant                        |
| Susan Zimmer                    | Office Assistant                        |
| Grace Parker                    | Office Assistant                        |
| Barb Roberts                    | Card Ministry                           |
| Holly Parker                    | Director of Parish Education Ministries |
| Bailey Green                    | Youth Director                          |
| Paulette Spoon                  | Adult Choir & Handbell Choir            |
| Susan Bubolz                    | Youth Choir Director                    |
| Rhonda Chalone,                 |                                         |
| Alex Ford & Jim Erickson        | Accompanists                            |
| Barb Rasmussen, R.N.            | Parish Nurse/Visitation Coord.          |
| Heather Pearl                   | Director, St. James Preschool           |
| Holly Parker, Lori Rudy         | St. James Preschool                     |
| Kristin Wills & Stacy Zimmerman |                                         |

### CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

|                           |              |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| Allison Heil President    | 608-527-2353 |
| Susan Martin-Zernicke, VP | 608-246-2025 |
| Mark Krebsbach, Treasurer | 608-438-6424 |
| Jim Ruder, Secretary      | 608-212-6742 |
| Jon Baldock               | 608-480-4091 |
| Desiree Canto             | 646-599-7021 |
| Christine Kemnitz         | 608-886-6363 |
| Julie Murphy              | 608-345-8533 |
| John Walker               | 608-845-8732 |

**Congratulations to our 2021 Confirmands  
who Affirmed their Baptismal Promise on October 31st**



*Back Row:* Patrick Alt, Zachariah Mahaffey, Nathan Heil, Clayton Streiff, Emma Parker, Chloe Parker, Pastor Kurt Billings, Pastor Peter Narum, Cody Parker, Jaydon Hillstead, Julian Murphy, Caleb Hallmark, Patrick Lindsey

*Front Row:* Ian O'Connell, Jackson Umhoefer, Alaina Smith, Addison Edge, Claire Sommers, William Wallace, Jackson Stampfli, Brady Geier, Lindsay Amell

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## Budget Update

2021 General Budget through November 2021



| <u>Year to Date Receipts</u> | <u>Actual</u> | vs. | <u>Budget</u> | <u>Amount (under) budget</u> |
|------------------------------|---------------|-----|---------------|------------------------------|
| Offering Envelopes           | \$437,410     |     | \$466,000     |                              |
| Seeds Fund Transfer          | 130,097       |     | 130,097       |                              |
| PPP Fund Transfer            | 27,500        |     | 27,500        |                              |
| Other Receipts               | \$ 9,526      |     | \$ 10,801     |                              |
| Total                        | \$604,533     |     | \$634,398     | \$(29,865) (4.7%)            |

In keeping with the season of joy and generosity, we ask that you consider an increase to your yearend general budget offerings. Thank you all for your generous gifts of time and money to St. James. Happy wishes for this Advent season!

## Who decorates the church for Advent and Christmas?

Quite a lot of people, actually. A dedicated crew decorates the trees in the Sanctuary, and all around the church. When our live tree arrives, Choir members hang the lights and decorate it. The outside trees and lights are trimmed by Mark Giesfelt and other members. Mark also puts the lights on our wreath above the Main Entrance. The wreath was donated by Miller & Sons and the Verona Fire Department hangs it high above the canopy. Thank you to our amazing Volunteers!



Karen Weiland, Diane Maurer, Bobbie Wang, and Carla Poast smile  
after completing the decorating process.



## What are the Ornaments on our Christmas Trees?

**Chrismons.** In our chancel area during Advent and Christmas we have two Christmas trees. While the white lights are familiar, the ornaments are probably not the ones you have at home. They are called “Chrismons,” short for “Christ Monograms.” Frances Kipps Spencer came up with the idea of making and using Chrismons rather than traditional ornaments, and they were first used in 1957 at her church, Ascension Lutheran in Danville, Virginia.

The designs are monograms and symbols related in some way to Jesus, all made in white and gold, colors related to purity and majesty. The symbols can be wonderful teaching tools, and include various cross shapes, the Trinity, the Star of David, the butterfly, and others intermingled with gold and white balls. From the start Chrismon decorations were meant to be seen as a ministry, and the patterns and assembly instructions have been shared around the globe and are in use by many churches of all denominations.

Symbols have been used for centuries as teaching tools. In the early church, a simple fish outline was a code for Christians (the five letters in the Greek word for fish is an acronym for “Jesus Christ, God’s Son, Savior”). Evergreens are used during this season, symbolizing the eternal life Jesus brings. The white lights remind us of stars, but are symbolic of Jesus as the Light of the world. The Chrismon symbols help us better understand the story of Jesus’ birth, and help us connect Christmas to the prophecy and hopes of people of Israel, and deepen our understanding of who this child was, and is, for all humankind.

## Why are the tree lights blue?

The Season of Advent began on Sunday, November 28 and lasts until Christmas Eve. Blue lights represent the Advent Season. On Christmas, we the lights will be white to signify the change to the Christmas Season which lasts until Epiphany: January 6, 2022. You will notice that the Paraments (cloths on the lectern and pulpit) in the Church are blue as are the Advent Candles in the Advent Wreath in keeping with the season.



## Coming up in Sunday School...

### Sunday School Movie Day on December 19

During 8:30 & 9:30 Sunday School times

We'll have a showing of ( ) on the "big screen" in the Activity Center. All are welcome!

**\*No Sunday School December 26 & January 2; Class Resumes January 9\***

### Youth Group December 15

Youth Group will be meeting again on Wednesday, December 15, from 6:00 to 7:30 pm for our annual Christmas Party! Join us for a hot chocolate, a pasta bar, a gingerbread house building competition judged by our very own baking expert Pastor Peter, and the movie "Elf" on the big screen. Friends are always welcome. Hope to see you all there!

### Confirmation Christmas Party on December 19

Our annual Confirmation Christmas Party will take place on Sunday, December 19th, from 9:30 to 10:30 am in the Dining Room! This year, we will celebrate with a waffle bar with all the fixings. To make this event happen, we would like everyone to bring a topping to add to the waffle bar (fruit, syrup, whipped cream, sprinkles, chocolate syrup, etc.) to share with each other.

We will also have a "White Elephant" gift exchange, where you are invited to bring a silly, random gift from home to exchange with Confirmation friends.

Attached is a sign-up link for parent volunteers for this event, as well as for other future events. We need parents to volunteer to help set up, chaperone, serve food, and clean up for all of our events in order for them to be successful. All of your help does not go unnoticed, and it is extremely appreciated! Here is the link: <https://signup.com/go/Bxhzfgt>

Hope to see you all there as we celebrate the holiday season together!



### Sunday School Class Schedule

8:30 (following the Children's Sermon) 9:30: Ages 3-Kindergarten

9:30-9:45: Music Time for all students

9:30-10:30: PreK-6th Grade

### Confirmation Class Schedule

9:30-10:30 in the Luther Room

## Get Involved with Children, Youth & Family Ministries!

St. James Children, Youth & Family programs are always in need of volunteers of all ages and especially encourage multi-generational opportunities. Ways to help include:

- ★ Sunday School - station leader or assistant, crew leader or assistant, substitute
- ★ Confirmation - assistant or substitute teacher or mentor
- ★ Middle School Youth Group
- ★ High School Mission Trip/Youth Gathering Leader
- ★

### Other Ways to Support Youth at St. James

Are you called to help children, youth and families, but not sure if these options fit with your talents? We have several other ways you can get involved. Maybe cooking, baking, donating supplies or something else is speaking to you. Please consider supporting CYF in a way that feels comfortable to you.

*Email Bailey Green at [bgreen@stjamesverona.org](mailto:bgreen@stjamesverona.org)*

*if interested in helping with Confirmation and middle or high school youth ministry.*

**Email Holly Parker - [hparker@stjamesverona.org](mailto:hparker@stjamesverona.org)**

**if interested in helping with Sunday School & Children's Ministry**

**We thank you for your prayerful consideration!**

**A glance at some Sunday School fun & learning...**



## Looking Ahead...

### 2021 Women of St. James Bake Sale & Luncheon - Thank You for the Support!

When the Women of St. James Board met in mid-September to plan for the 2021 Bake Sale & Luncheon Event, we wanted to have an in-person event, but there were still many safety questions to face with our population so we made the decision to repeat our drive-thru and limited bake sales items format that was successful in 2020.'

Well, with the commitment and action by way too many volunteers to name here, we are thankful and thrilled to report that this year's event was even more successful than last year. The funds raised are to support the Women of St. James mission of providing funding to church and community programs that benefit women, children, and families. The event raised over \$3,500 again this year and with the additional Thrivent donation that comes from members who invest in Thrivent of \$1,000, a total of more than \$4,500 is available for many worthy causes. Examples include supporting the Badger Prairie Needs Network, sponsoring several families at Christmas as selected by the VASD social workers, purchasing Bibles for the St. James Youth - 3-year olds, 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, and Confirmation student Bibles, contributing to the annual Women's Retreat, and providing High School scholarships to two graduating seniors.

In addition to over 120 lunches of the baked pineapple ham with beans, applesauce, and a choice of homemade apple or pumpkin pie or cherry topped cheesecake for dessert, the bake sale items were a huge hit as we sold out of krumkake, lefse, pfefferneusse, and whole pies after offering the extras to the congregation at the church services last weekend. We also received monetary donations in support of the annual fundraiser and donations of homemade pies for the lunch and the bake sale. THANK YOU for supporting the Women of St. James mission of providing funding to church and community programs that benefit women, children, and families.



### Thanksgiving & Christmas Collection for BPNN Update

Badger Prairie Needs Network anticipated providing 400 Thanksgiving baskets and 400 Christmas baskets. Instead of collecting food this year, we were asked to donate to the pantry directly as they can purchase food in bulk at low cost. Thanks to your generous contribution, we were able to donate \$4,766.

### New Members received in October



On Sunday, October 17, we welcomed new members: Ryan & Paula Witt, Aria, Vada; Steve & Lee Anne Kramer, Myron & Lou Ann Earsley, Wanda Martinelli, John Volker, and Gretchen & John Cassidy, Jack, Clara. Earlier this year we welcomed Peggy Papenfus and Jean Hoffman (not pictured).

## From the Parish Nurse...

As I am writing this, Christmas is just a few weeks away. I will not be spending the Christmas holidays with my biological family, but look forward to spending the time with my St. James family. Book club, singing in the Christmas choir, preparing for Carols and Deserts, the Childrens' Pageant, and Christmas Eve services are open to all of us.

# Blood Pressure Checks



Checks will be held on January 9 after the 8:30 service in the church office. All are welcome to come!

Winter and Christmas time can be a time of noted depression and SAD, (seasonal affective disorder). We need to be aware. Be sure to get your normal hours sleep and get up at your regular time. Get dressed every day, eat well. Call your friends, get outside for fresh air and a little walk. A good routine is very important to your physical, mental, and emotional health. There is even a special lamp therapy called the "Happy Lamp". They have been shown to enhance your mental strength and boost your energy. They are 100% UV-free.

Set out bird feeders and if you are unable put one out, adhere one with suction cups to your window. Be sure to put stickers on the window also, so the birds don't bang into the glass. I hope some of these suggestions will be helpful.

I Wish All of You a Wonderful Winter Season and a Very Blessed Christmas!!

Barbara Rasmussen, RN, Parish Nurse Certified

St. James Book Group – February 5, 2022

Led by Pastor Kurt, the group will be discussing, The Whole Language: The Power of Extravagant Tenderness by Gregory Boyle.

Boyle's moving stories challenge our ideas about God and about people, providing a window into a world filled with fellowship, compassion, and fewer barriers. Bursting with encouragement, humor, and hope, *The Whole Language* invites us to treat others—and ourselves—with acceptance and tenderness.

The book is for sale at the Welcome Center for \$15. Please join us!

# Christmas Poinsettia Garden



S t . J a m e s  
members and  
friends of are  
invited to help adorn our chancel  
area with poinsettias for Christmas or  
to make a special donation to the  
Pastor's Fund (monies used to assist  
those in need). If you wish, the plant  
or the Pastor's Fund donation may be  
given in memory or honor of a loved  
one. Your plant may be taken home  
following the 10:00 pm service on  
Christmas Eve or the following  
week .The plants are \$17.

We are also accepting donations to the Pastor's Fund which may be made in any amount and either can be given in memory or honor of a loved one.

Please complete the form below and send or drop off at St. James. Please designate either poinsettia or The Pastor's Fund in your check memo.

Poinsettia

Gift to the Pastor's Fund

Given by:

(Name of Donor or Donors)

In honor of

In memory of

(Name of Person or Persons)

# Saint JAMES PRE SCHOOL



Verona Area  
**PreK**  
Partnership in Early Learning

## Preschool News

**Bucky Books-** Thank you to everyone who ordered a Bucky Book from the preschool. We raised about \$300.

**Birthday Party Bags-** Thank you to everyone who donated a Birthday Party Bag for the BPNN. We collected 100 bags which will be able to supply at least 3 months' worth of birthday smiles! Thank you for making a difference.

**Mask Update-** Preschool kids, staff and visitors will continue to be required to wear masks while children are present at school. It is very important to us to keep our littles safe and healthy as much as we possibly can.



In October, we hosted our annual Trick-or-Treat event in a safe capacity for our students and their siblings. We handed out Halloween “treats” to over 100 kids. It is always one of our favorite events and was so fun to see the kids in their costumes.

In December, we will be hosting a Family Zoom Holiday Party for preschool families. We will be dancing, listening to stories and playing Bingo. We are excited for our event.



With it being the season of thanksgiving I want to take the time to say “Thank You” to all of the St. James community for your support of the preschool program.



# Sunday School Helpers Needed!

We have more than 300 slots to fill for the rest of the school year.

No experience necessary, all are welcome.

**Sunday School Families are encouraged to sign up for a minimum of two spots.**

Please use our simple electronic sign-up on SignUp.com.

Simply scan the code below, visit the St. James website or contact Holly at [hparker@stjamesverona.org](mailto:hparker@stjamesverona.org) for more details!

**SIGN UP TODAY!!**



**Great Opportunities for High School, Students, Parent, Grandparents and Other Members!**



# PARISH NOTES

If you have someone that you would like to add to this prayer list please email ([office@stjamesverona.org](mailto:office@stjamesverona.org)) or call the church office (845-6922) or fill out a form which can be found at the Welcome Center at St. James.



**W**e remember our members in our prayers, especially Monica Pechan, Joanne Prange, Lorlene Pulver & Charles Reuter.

We also remember Ben (nephew of Sue Zimmer), Nancy Gerry (mother of Angie Rahn), Jessica Hansen-Kriesel (great-niece of Doug Wolf), Jim Dustin Olmschenk (nephew of Nancy Steinemann), Sharon Schwinn (sister of Mary Moldenhauer) Dave Wolf (nephew of Doug Wolf), and friends Ben, John, Judy, Lynn, Susan Kennedy, Debbie Loughrin, Pat Stillwell, and Pat Vollenweider.

**S**acrament of Christian Baptism: Emma Lynn Schroeder, daughter of Kyle & Robyn (Reed) Schroeder, on November 21, 2021 and Olivia Ann Schambow, daughter of Benjamin & Julia (Burns) Schambow, on December 12, 2021.

**C**hristian Sympathy is extended to the family of Amy Thurow as they mourn the death of her mother, Norma Purvis and to the family of Brent Sorbet as they mourn the death of his father, George.

**U**nited in Christian Marriage: Danielle Londo & Alex Ford, on October 30, 2021.

**In Residence:** Four Winds - Zelma Danna; Noel Manor—Dutch & Dee Becker, Lorena Gerbitz, Dale & Audrey Hagen, James Hatch, Dick Herfel, Ellen & Lloyd Hornbacher, Harriet Instefjord, Audrey Kunstmann, Marilyn Le Moine, Chuck & Marilyn Roum, & Jim Schumann. Oakwood West — Lorine Kahl. Willow Pointe - Betty Burgenske, Kay Hankins, and Charles Reuter.

**Serving in the Military:** Wyatt Breitnauer, Hannah Tordoff, Judy Watters, Evan Spoon and Bryan Tordoff.

Verona, WI 53593-1492

427 South Main Street



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