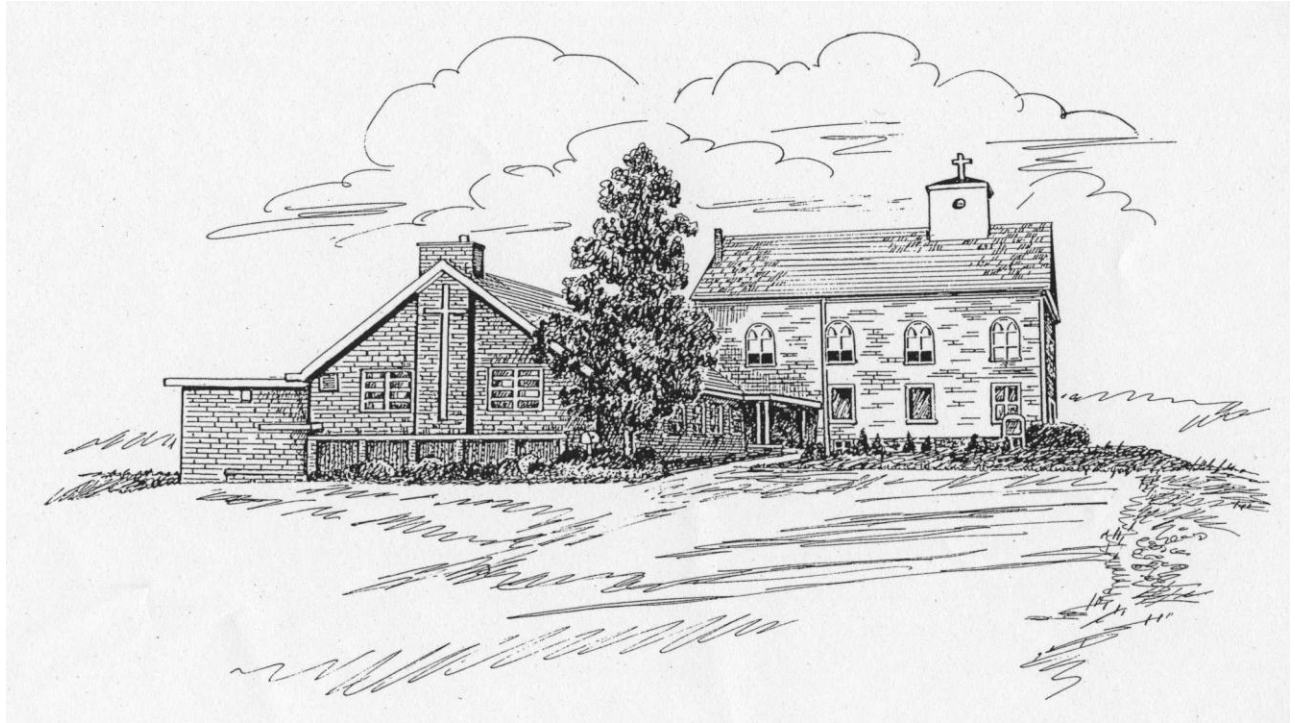


WISPS OF STRAW



St. James Lutheran Church Newsletter

September 2011

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*“Serving Christ in Word and Deed”
for over 260 Years*

The Pastor's Letter

For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness", made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. 2 Corinthians 4:5-7 NIV

Dear Friends,

When you think of the word treasure, what comes to your mind? Gold, silver, money, precious jewels? Whatever comes to our minds, we probably associate the word with something very valuable. So don't you find it interesting that the apostle Paul uses such a term to describe the good news about Jesus Christ? Such a description really elevates the gospel above many other things. I know that those who founded this church over

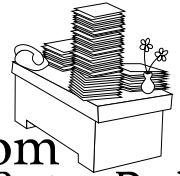
250 years ago must have thought so. The original settlers here were very poor. Some were "indentured servants", that is, in servitude to someone to pay for the land they wanted. Yet they were determined to have a church. Hence the term "straw church", a simple rough church building with a straw roof. When they needed guidance they were not too proud to ask for help and reach out to the best, Pastor Henry Melchior Muhlenberg. Pastor Muhlenberg became quite prominent as the "go to pastor" to help get things going in many of the churches in this area. In his journal he was taken aback by how poor the folk at our original church really were.

But they were also determined to strengthen and grow their church, and eventually Pastor Muhlenberg's son, Peter, became our first pastor. Then a fine church building was erected in the 1790's only to be replaced by the current structure in 1837. It's obvious they saw the gospel as a treasure to be shared.

Then forward to the work of Sophia Sharps, who was instrumental in establishing the Sunday school, which in its early days in this country was an outreach of the gospel to unchurched children. Her desire to see that children knew the gospel must have been very impressive for the window that graces the front of the church to be dedicated to her memory.

In 1960, the added wing of this church was again a witness that the treasure of the gospel to all people is so valuable that appropriate facilities be built.

Now here in the fall of 2011 we begin anew our Sunday school and our more seasonal life of worship and activity together. The question is, do we just see this as another cycle of worship, education, and fellowship, or do we really see it as bringing the treasure of good news about Jesus in our witness or to others in our community? I believe, with the rich heritage St. James has, previous generations did, many times sacrificially.



From
the Pastors Desk

It is our turn to "step up to the plate" in whatever way we can to ensure others know and we can affirm that no more valuable treasure can be shared than Jesus Christ. As Paul also affirms, we are "common clay pots", fallible and imperfect. But that should not stop us from seeking and sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. What we have here is not just words; it is life abundant for all, treasure that money cannot buy.

Then maybe a hundred years later, in that future day, St. James members will know that we, their predecessors, valued the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ crucified, dead, risen, and coming again as precious treasure.

Your brother in Christ,

Pr. John

Pastor John, Along With Members of the 300th Muhlenberg Celebration, Visits Muhlenberg's Church and a Muhlenberg Exhibit at Ursinus College, Collegeville, Pa.

Augustus Lutheran Church in Trappe, PA was Pastor Henry Melchior Muhlenberg's church. The committee (Pastor John included) got to see the original church which was built in 1740. It is a very simple building with box pews, an upstairs gallery, and winding stairs to a pulpit that overlooks the entire congregation. Pastor John had the privilege of being able to stand in that pulpit and see the view Pastor Muhlenberg had when he looked out over the congregation.



**THE LEGACY of
HENRY MELCHIOR
MUHLENBERG**

Then it was off to The Berman Museum of Art at Ursinus College in nearby Collegeville, Pa. From now to December 18th, the museum is holding an exhibition entitled "Pastors and Patriots: The Muhlenberg Family of Pennsylvania". The exhibit contains pictures and possessions of the Muhlenberg family starting with

Henry Muhlenberg to his famous sons and grandchildren. Of particular interest to St. James is a large portrait of John Peter Muhlenberg, our first official pastor, in his army uniform, along with two pistols he owned.

If you have an interest in seeing the exhibit at the Berman, please see pastor for more information, since it has a limited run.

Youth Group News

The combined youth group met on August 14th at Barbara Wrede's home for a pool picnic party. It rained but we got together anyway. We made our own personal pizzas for our snack and played games; the favorite for the day was rhythm. We also started working on our large flag for Sunday School Rally day. Look for it on Rally Day and write the name of a person you know who is in the service, firefighter, police etc.

Some of the youth helped out at VBS. Thank you for all who helped. You know who are.

We hope to have a game booth at the Stewartville Community Day September 24th, 1:00 to 6:00 pm.



Junior High (6th, 7th, 8th) and Senior High (9th, 10th, 11th, 12th) Tentative Schedule

All Youth Group meetings are from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at St. James Church unless noted.

September	11 th	Combined group - Sunday School Rally day; after Sunday School plan games for Stewartville Community Day
	18 th	Combined youth group - lunch and laser tag
	24 th	Stewartville Community Day booth (1:00 to 6:00 pm)
	25 th	Rain date for Community Day booth
October	2 nd	Junior High
	16 th	Senior High
	23 rd	Corn maze at Raub's farm after Sunday school
November	6 th	Junior High
	20 th	Senior High
December	11 th	Combined youth group Christmas party

Sunday School Kickoff



Rally Day
September 11, 2011
A Salute To Our Service Men and Women

Your Family Is Invited To Join us in
Saluting our Service Men and Women
as we kick off Sunday School 2011-2012
St. James Lutheran Church
September 11, 2011
10:00 am

Please Bring a Donation for the Food Pantry
YOU WILL GET YOUR GROUP VBS PHOTO AT RALLY DAY!!!
HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

New Arrival!

New St. James members Matthew and Courtney Gordon welcomed the birth of a daughter, Olivia Catherine, on Monday, August 22nd. Olivia weighed 7 lbs. 6oz. Congratulations and best wishes to the happy parents.



The Chuckle Corner

**As found in actual church bulletins,
announcements, and newsletters**

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of all those things not worth keeping around the house. Don't forget to bring your husbands.

Adult Bible Study

Begins on Thursday, September 22nd

We will again meet in the pastor's office at 7:00 pm to resume our study on the gospel of Matthew. We will begin with Matthew 12, then move on with a goal to finish Matthew before the new lectionary cycle starts the first week of advent. Matthew was offered this year not only to enhance personal bible study, but to add depth to the lessons from Matthew that are part of this lectionary cycle that is used in worship. All are welcome to come whenever they can make it. A short time is always taken for review before we look at the new passages for the week, so that everyone will be able to fit into the discussion. God's word always has something new to teach us no matter how many times we've read a particular book or passage.

Senior League Notes

Our regular monthly schedule is again under way.

The second meeting will be held in the Ed Frey Hall on Monday, October 5th.

Please call Carol Meixsell at

908-454-6734 if you plan to attend, and watch the Weekly Bulletin for program details.



.....
Be ye fishers of men.

You catch them - He'll clean them.

† In Memoriam †

Since our last newsletter, the Church Triumphant has gained three members who will be missed by all of us at St. James. Our prayers and condolences go out to their families and friends.

William L. Trauger, Sr., went to his eternal reward on July 29th. Bill was a native of Phillipsburg who served his country in the Army during World War II. A devoted member of St. James, he truly enjoyed serving us as an usher for many years and could be seen performing these duties at church almost every weekend.

Jane Carolyn Buck added her lovely voice, which graced the St. James choir for many years, to the Heavenly Choir on August 9th. Although she was not in the area during her final years, Jane continued to love her church after having contributed many of her talents to St. James during her lifetime. A long-time Sunday school teacher, her patience in guiding and instructing the youngest children was amazing. Jane also served our younger members as a Den Mother for the Cub Scouts, and still found time to serve the larger community as a volunteer for Meals on Wheels.

Geraldine B. Taylor went to be with her Lord on August 25th. A devoted wife and mother who shared almost all activities with her late husband, Geraldine remained an active member of St. James until very recently.

ELCA Disaster Response Aids Hurricane Victims

Thanks to the generous response of members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, ELCA Disaster Response distributed emergency grants totaling \$71,000 in the wake of Hurricane Irene. The hurricane impacted a number of U.S. states as it steamrolled from Puerto Rico to the border of Canada.

The Rev. Kevin A. Massey, director of ELCA Disaster response, said two grants in the amount of \$25,000 each were sent to Lutheran Care of New York and Lutheran Social Ministries of New Jersey. An additional \$21,000 grant was sent to Church World Service for Hurricane Irene's victims.



"With strong winds and heavy rain, Irene left a trail of devastation," said the Rev. Daniel Rift, director of ELCA World Hunger and Disaster Appeal. "Communities have experienced historic flooding and millions are without power; trees, debris and floodwaters cover roads, making travel hazardous or even impossible. Rivers in these areas have not yet crested, so we won't know the full extent of the damage from Irene for days or even weeks."

"We are learning more and more every day," said Massey of Irene's impact. "We are now in the stage of determining how best we can serve the victims of this hurricane. We have been in communication with locals in the affected areas, both to confirm their capacity and ability to respond as needed and to discuss emerging needs or shortfalls of resources."

Flooding records for 26 rivers were broken: eight in New Jersey, 14 in New York and four in Vermont. An estimated 3.5 million households (affecting approximately 9 million people) were under mandatory evacuation orders. Irene will be the 10th U.S. disaster in 2011 costing more than \$1 billion, breaking the annual record of such costly catastrophes dating from 1980. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an estimated 40 people died as a result of the storm.

"Through ELCA Disaster Response, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America stands ready to respond in all areas affected," said Rift. "We work hand-in-hand with our congregations who are experts at outreach in their communities -- and they are already taking action. In Delaware and Pennsylvania, ELCA members are providing meals and coordinating clean-up efforts."

One hundred percent of gifts to ELCA Disaster Response designated for "U.S. Hurricane Relief" will be used to help families whose lives and livelihoods have been impacted by this disaster. Gifts may be contributed at www.ELCA.org/hurricane. Gifts may also be made by calling 800-638-3522, or by mail to ELCA Disaster Response, 39330 Treasury Center, Chicago, IL 60694-9300. Please write "U.S. Hurricane Relief" on your check's memo line.

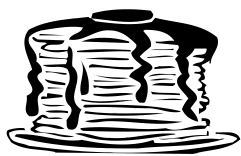
ELCA Disaster Response stands ready to help disaster victims at all times. At St. James, continuing gifts to this Christian outreach can be made by designating a recurring donation through our electronic giving system.

Corn Maze Time

In what we hope and expect will be an ongoing tradition, Raub Farms will again be hosting a corn maze on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from September 10th through November 6th. St. James will be operating a concession stand for food and beverages on Saturdays and Sundays, and will be in need of volunteers to staff it. Please contact the church office or Steve Stocker (908-454-1265) if you can help.



St. James Breakfasts



Don't forget to come out for the Omelet and Pancake Breakfasts held on the first Saturday of each month, from 7:00 am to 12:00 noon, in the Ed Frey Hall. Omelets can be had with various combinations of add-ins, and they are DELICIOUS! You'll be satisfying your hunger while helping support your church - an unbeatable combination. Cost is only \$8.00 for adults and children 10 and over, \$5.00 under 10 years, and includes omelet and/or pancakes; sausages or scrapple; as well as a juice and coffee bar

Lutheran History in America

(From ELCA's timeline, 'Our History in Context'.)

The first Lutheran ordained in America

Justus Falckner was born in Germany and educated at Halle (where Henry Melchior Muhlenberg later studied, also). He came to the new world in 1700 as an attorney and surveyor, having left Germany to avoid the military.

When he arrived in Pennsylvania Falckner made the acquaintance of Swedish missionaries, who three years later recommended him to the Dutch congregation in New York. Ordained by the Swedes on November 24, 1703, Falckner was the first Lutheran to be ordained in America.

Falckner's parish grew in area and in numbers as he continued to serve faithfully. His flock ultimately was composed not only of Dutch and Germans but also of Black and American Indian people.

Falckner was also known for authoring treatises on doctrine and the hymn "Rise, O children of salvation" (LBW #182), as well as founding New Hanover Lutheran Church in New Hanover, Pennsylvania.