



UPDATE FROM THE CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL ON COVID-19

June 18, 2020

The last few months have brought a lot of uncertainty. We went from living our daily routines to living in a worldwide pandemic. Life, as many of us knew it, came to an abrupt halt to help “flatten the curve.” Most days have been met with some level of uncertainty (frustration, worry, concern) while the information on COVID-19 remains overwhelming and ever-changing.

When St. James temporarily closed its doors on March 15 due to the pandemic, we quickly pivoted to meet members in some capacity during these trying times. We started weekly, pre-recorded services as well as daily devotionals, available online and distributed via email/social media. While this does not replace in-person worship, we have received positive feedback from these efforts of staying connected.

Reopening St. James has been a monthly topic for the Congregational Council (Council). We recently sent out a survey to get a pulse on your thoughts, comments and concerns. Thank you to everyone who has already filled out the survey. In our June 18th Council meeting we spent most of our time discussing the results and how to apply it to resume in-person services.

We asked. You answered. And the survey* says...

More than half who responded feel comfortable returning to in-person worship within the next 3-6 months. An overwhelming majority stated they would like to continue the offerings of daily devotionals and live/pre-recorded services even when we resume in-person services. We will plan to continue these efforts after reopening.

Comfort returning to in-person worship

60% of members **would be comfortable** returning to worship in-person within 3 to 6 months.
30% of members **will not be comfortable** returning to worship in-person until a vaccine is available.

“I’m susceptible to severe illness from the virus due to age, so I need to be very cautious. Your wonderful pre-recorded online worship services have been my lifeline and I am most grateful. When in-person worship resumes, please find a way to continue providing online worship for those of us who cannot attend in person. Thank you!” – Anonymous comment from a member

When we resume worship services in our facility, what will you most likely attend?

36% of members said they would be most likely to **attend in-person** (in our facility) services.
28% of respondents said they would be most likely to **attend online** (pre-recorded) service.

“I hope we can resume a combination of in person and online worship very soon. It’s helpful to us to get back to some semblance of normal, whatever that will be! What our church is doing to help us continue to worship and the daily devotions have been inspiring and uplifting. Thanks for doing this for us!” – Anonymous comment from a member

What online programming would you like to see offered in the coming months?

48% of members said they would like an online option for Bible study, mediation, and/or evening prayer.

We will continue to look for ways for members to engage with our pastors and other members online during this time. Possible opportunities include mid-week informal connections via Zoom. Stay tuned!

If you would still like to fill out the survey visit: <http://survey.constantcontact.com/survey/a07eh44sdumkao0wczy/start>

What will in-person services look like?

Services will not look like they did pre-pandemic. Masks, social distancing, limited attendance, no congregational singing, and shorter services are all items under consideration for the safety of members. Please know we are approaching the reopening cautiously and thoughtfully. The Council is also taking guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), and an ecumenical document entitled “Resuming Care-Filled Worship and Sacramental Life during a Pandemic.” Additionally, with so many businesses and churches reopening we can learn from their successes and shortcomings.

Next Steps

The survey results have been helpful in initial planning. There is a lot of information to sort through and make decisions specific for our congregation. After careful consideration of all the factors, and with your safety at the center, the St. James Council passed a motion to target a reopening for mid-September 2020. As reopening will require many decisions and many people, we are forming a “Reopening Task Force. If you are interested in serving on this, please contact Pastor Kurt at kbillings@stjamesverona.org.

Over the next few months the Council, along with the Reopening Task Force, will focus on creating guidelines and a plan to reopen St. James for worship. While our target to reopen is mid-September 2020, please know this date could change at any time given Wisconsin COVID-19 results and direction from local/national health organizations. The Council will continue to provide updates for the congregation as they become available.

Are you interested in watching the pre-recorded weekly services or reading the daily devotional? Visit St. James Lutheran Verona’s homepage (stjamesverona.org) today. We ask that you continue to keep the Council in your prayers as we seek to discern the best way forward for our congregation. And, as always, we thank you for your ongoing financial support of our mission and ministry during this time.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church

Phone: 608.845.6922 www.stjamesverona.org Fax: 608.845.6903

Worship

Saturday - 5:00 pm • Sunday - 8:30 am & 10:45 am

Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday — 8 am to 4 pm
Wednesday — 8 am to 12 noon

Staff

Kurt Billings, Pastor	Cell: 235-8122
Peter Narum, Pastor	Cell: 469-9625
Michelle Lichty	Parish Administrator
Barb Roberts	Office Assistant
Susan Zimmer	Office Assistant
Holly Parker	Director of Parish Education Ministries
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
Lynn Hauski, Holly Parker,	St. James Preschool
Lori Rudy Kristin Wills & Stacy Zimmerman	

Congregational Council

Elise Taft, President	437-7954
Dennis Beres, Vice President	845-9305
Mark Krebsbach, Treasurer	438-6424
Jim Ruder, Secretary	212-6742
Desiree Canto	646-599-7021
John Walker	845-8732
Susan Martin-Zernicke	

Treasurer's Report

Respectfully Submitted by Mark Krebsbach, Treasurer

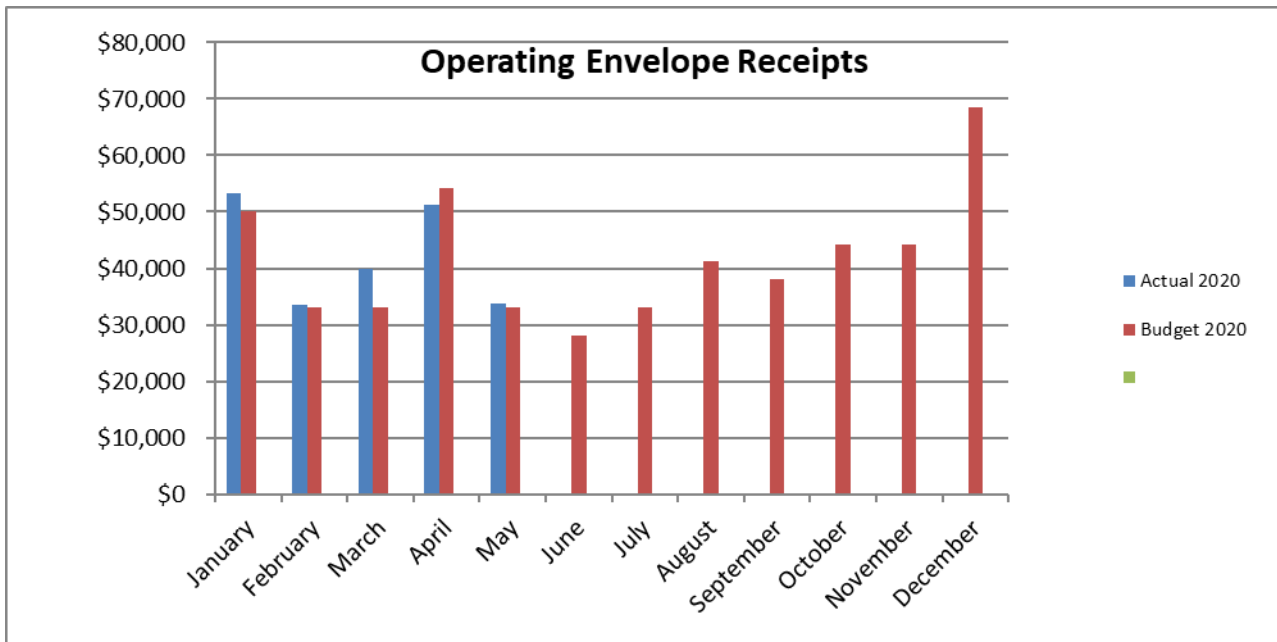
General Fund

The 2020 General Fund Budget of \$671,955 was approved by the Congregation at the semi-annual meeting on February 2, 2020. This represents a 11.9% increase from 2019 actual receipts and a 4.4% increase from the 2019 budgeted amounts. The 2020 budget will be funded by both the General and Seeds to Branches Funds during the year. The 2020 budget includes \$501,300 from Operating Envelopes /EFT and \$141,924 from the Seeds to Branches Fund.

<u>Year to Date Receipts</u>	<u>Actual</u>	vs. <u>Budget</u>	<i>Increase (Decrease) from Budget</i>	
Offering Envelopes	\$211,697	\$203,865	\$ 7,832	3.8%
Seeds Fund Transfer	\$ 59,135	\$ 59,135		
Other Receipts	<u>\$ 4,775</u>	<u>\$ 11,238</u>	<u>\$ (6,463)</u>	
Total	\$275,607	\$274,238	\$ 1,369	0.5%

A heart filled thank you to our Members for their continued support of St James. As we all adjust to our new normal in this unprecedented time, it is truly inspiring to see our Members' continued support of our Church. I also want to take this opportunity to thank the St James staff for all their hard work over the past few months. The staff in my opinion have seamlessly transitioned into their expanded virtual roles. Thank you so much for your continued flexibility and creativity.

The following shows the 2020 Operating Envelope Receipts in comparison to the Budget:



MARY CIRCLE SUGAR SCRUB ONLINE SALE STARTING IN JULY!

For the entire month of July, Mary Circle will hold its annual fundraiser sale to support DAIS (Domestic Abuse Intervention Services). St. James is a partner congregation, meaning that our church contributes emergency funding to women who need services as a result of being in abusive relationships. For the fourth year in a row, we will be selling handmade sugar scrubs made with either lavender-peppermint or lemon essential oils, coconut oil, avocado/grapeseed oil, and cane sugar for \$10.00. The sale will be held online. *You can purchase your scrub by writing a check addressed to "St. James Lutheran Church" for \$10.00 and indicate lavender-peppermint or lemon. Please note on the check it is for Mary Circle Fundraiser.* You will receive your choice of fragrance UNTIL one is sold out. We will then deliver the other fragrance to you. Both are wonderful! If you are in the immediate Verona area, your scrub will be delivered to you by members of Mary Circle, once the check is received. Otherwise, you can pick it up at Karen Lee-Wahl's house by emailing Karen at karenleewahl@gmail.com to arrange a pick-up time. Deadline is August 1.

Mail your \$10 check and name/address for delivery to:

St. James Lutheran Church

Attn: Mary Circle

427 S. Main St.

Verona, WI 53593

Don't forget to indicate lavender-peppermint or lemon fragrance.

YOUTH DIRECTOR, CINDI STAMPFLI RESIGNS

Dear St. James Members,

I hope this month's Jottings finds you well. It has been the most unusual spring. I know we have all faced new challenges during this time of uncertainty. My biggest challenges were homeschooling, trying to help more with our family business, and trying to find new ways to connect while socially distancing. During this time, I decided to step back from my position as Director of Youth Ministry at St. James. Although I am no longer on staff, I will continue to volunteer with youth activities as I have done in the past.

I have truly appreciated everyone's support and enthusiasm this last year. It was an exciting year filled with new experiences as well as personal and spiritual growth. With a joyful heart, I have been able to receive, grow, and give with the families of St. James. It has been a blessing to work alongside the amazing staff who continues to hustle behind the scenes. I have a new appreciation for each of their talents and their dedication to the church and community. I look forward to continuing to support them and be supported by them. I also have amazing respect for all of the volunteers giving their time and talents in so many ways. It would be impossible to thrive without each of you.

I really look forward to the days when we can safely gather together. I look forward to seeing you soon!



Parish Notes



We remember in our prayers – **Members of St. James:** Jack Bisek, Judy Borgwardt, Cheryl Holley, Harriet Instefjord, Lorine Kahl, Ed Kindschi, Sharon Marquardt, Monica Pechan, Lorlene Pulver, Jim & Candy Nerge, Charles & Ruby Reuter, Ernie Stuber, Cookie Thompson, and Doug Wahl. **Friends of St. James:** Sandra Aschbrenner, Jack Callahan, Jennifer, Amber Hagen, Susan Kennedy, Kathy Kolpaneau, Steve K., and Mark. **Relatives of Members:** Helen Abplanalp (mother of Chuck Abplanalp), Don & Georgi Anderson (parents of Jackie Johnson), John Bittrich (father of Elise Taft), Ady Clemens (cousin of Chery Vroman), Cheri Elkins (mother of Matthew Palm), Lyn Elver (sister of Lorlene Pulver), Bruce Fleury (uncle of Mike Piché), Debbie Giesfeldt (cousin of Mark Giesfeldt), Brad Haferman (brother-in-law of Sandy Saether), Barb Hanson (sister of John Volker), Bob Johnson (brother of Bruce Johnson), Hillary Knobloch (niece of Sandy Saether), Justin Mabe (nephew of Robin Clisso), Al Miller (brother-in-law of Cookie Thompson), Sally Mueller (sister of Susan Mueller), Michael Palm (nephew of Mathew Palm), Heidi & Pat Prochnow (parents of Erin Jacobson), Steve Reuschlein (brother of Rick Reuschlein), Jamie Sachtjen (niece of Sue Zimmer), Dorothy Scheeler (mother of Zach Scheeler), Tom Severson (father of Rebekah Jonjak), and Julie Wiegel (cousin of Barb Rasmussen).

In Residence: **Four Winds** - Zelma Danna; **Noel Manor**—Dutch & Dee Becker, Lorena Gerbitz, Dale & Audrey Hagen, James Hatch, Audrey Kunstmann, Marilyn Le Moine, Maureen Rand, Chuck & Marilyn Roum, Jim Schumann, Ernest Stuber, Bob Syvrud, & Cookie Thompson; **Oakwood West** – Lorine Kahl. **Willow Pointe** - Betty Burgenske, Charles & Ruby Reuter.

Serving in the Military: Craig Montry, Harry Zimmer, Donovan Mabe, Judy Watters, TJ Becker, Wyatt Bretnauer, Nicole, Andrew Zenz, Evan Spoon, Hannah Tordoff, Bryan Tordoff, Casey Biggins, Casey Pulver, David Pulver, and Shandra Pulver.

Sacrament of Christian Baptism: Emmett Michael Fose and Charlotte Elizabeth Fose, children of Nathan & Jillian (Descourouez) Fose on June 12, 2020.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

427 South Main Street
Verona, WI 53593-1492

