



Sunday, December 8

*Advent Workshops during 8:30 & 9:30 Sunday School
All are welcome to us in the Youth Lounge for stories,
crafts, and games to prepare for the birth of our Savior!*

Saturday, December 14 at 5:00 pm

Annual CAROLS and DESSERT Concert
(no regular 5:00 pm worship)*

*A musical program of vocal and hand bell choirs,
instrumentalists, and audience carols. Stay for dessert.*

Sunday, December 15

8:30 am Worship, Children's Pop-Up Christmas Pageant
10:45 am Worship*

Saturday, December 21 – 5:00 pm Worship

Sunday, December 22 – 9:00 am Worship

Tuesday, December 24

Christmas Eve Services

3:00 pm Christmas Eve Family Worship

*5:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship**

7:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

11:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

Wednesday, December 25

Christmas Day – No Services

Saturday, December 28

5:00 pm Worship

Sunday, December 29

*9:00 am Worship *Livestream*



WORSHIP SCHEDULE: Saturday at 5:00 pm & Sunday at 8:30 & 10:45 am

LIVESTREAM: Sunday at 8:30 am on our Website or YouTube Channel.

From the Pastor

Entering Advent

Poor Advent. How many of us any more give this season its due? Perhaps we've forgotten how to make room, slow down, and wait in expectation. I'm not an Advent purist, though many of you know how much I love our blue Advent lights shining thought out the season inside and out.

Advent is a season of waiting, and the season waits patiently for us to pay attention to the riches it offers: while the world around us values more, faster, and busier, Advent invites us into another space, where less, slower, and quieter open for us opportunities to go deeper. Christmas may fill us, but Advent empties us.

Advent finds its beginnings in the northern hemisphere, where the nights are longer. Go outside on a cold, wintry night and you see the stars – it's the darkness that allows you to behold the vastness of the universe. Or stay inside and turn off the lights and your phones (especially your phones), light a candle or two and simply sit alone or together with your family. See what happens when you're not stimulated by constant images. This is experiencing Advent time.

Advent begins with the call to wait, watch, and stay awake. To sit, a read, wonder, and pray. But how do we do this amidst the demands of the season – the decorating, gathering, celebrating, performing, travelling, shopping, cooking? Keeping Advent isn't easy.

And it's not supposed to be. Following Jesus always put us at odds with our culture; following Jesus in fact means we constantly question the values of the world around us (no matter where one lives). This is the practice of Advent: to slow down enough to hear, to turn down the lights to see: who we are, whose we are, what we need, and where we're all going.

Advent can help us see where we're all at. Dietrich Bonhoeffer once wrote, "A prison cell like this is a good analogy for Advent. One waits, hopes, does this or that—ultimately negligible things—the door is locked and can only be opened from the outside." He wrote that in a letter from a prison cell he was thrown into by the Nazis in late 1943. To be a Christian is to confess we're all imprisoned in need of rescue, captives longing for a liberator. Advent is therefore our whole lives, one lived in constant waiting for Jesus to come to us now, and at the end time itself.

Advent brings us to this place, to remind us that Christmas at its core has nothing to do with what we do: Christmas comes to us, from the outside, as a gift. Ready or not, he comes to us. And it's a rescue mission. This is why Christmas is a celebration, and deserves proper preparation. And so we sing, "Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free."

– Pastor Peter

ST. JAMES STAFF

Peter Narum, Pastor	608-469-9625
Jerry Buss, Transitional Pastor	608-845-6922 ext. 227
Karen Kaehr	Parish Administrator
Renata Henry	Office Assistant
Susan Zimmer	Administrative Assistant
Barb Roberts	Card Ministry
Holly Parker	Director of Children & Family Ministries
Laura Smith	Director of Confirmation
Paulette Spoon	Adult Choir & Handbell Choir
Susan Bubolz	Youth Choir Director
Rhonda Chalone, Don DeBruin,	Accompanists
Jim Erickson, Carol Murphy	
Barb Rasmussen, R.N.	Parish Nurse/Visitation Coord.
Heather Pearl	Director, St. James Preschool
Holly Parker, Kari Poppen	St. James Preschool
Nicole Sudhoff, Kristin Wills & Stacy Zimmerman	

CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

Karen Breitnauer, President	608-209-3035
Rob Frederick, Vice President	608-280-1470
Christine Kemnitz, Secretary	608-886-6363
Kim Feller, Treasurer	608-206-4562
Dennis Beres	608-845-9305
Julie Murphy	608-345-8533
Mark Smith	608-214-2212
Rebecca Woolums	847-894-8344
Susan Martin-Zernicke	608-246-2025



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

Pastoral Call Committee

The Call Committee has been hard at work since their installation in early October. Our first task was to review the Ministry Site Profile (MSP), developed by the Transition Team. The profile was fine-tuned and submitted to the Synod. The Synod has approved the profile, and it is now on their website and available for review by interested and potential candidates.

The committee sought nominations for possible candidates from the congregation and submitted three names to the Synod. The Synod is responsible for reaching out to those individuals and determining availability and/or interest.

Recently, the committee's work has focused on crafting first interview questions. We will soon be ready to conduct a mock interview. The Synod has identified a pastor for this interview. This interview, like all first-round interviews, will be conducted virtually. The mock interview will give the committee a test run with our questions and technology and provide feedback that will help to prepare us for actual first-round interviews.

Need more information about our process? Please refer to the timeline by the Welcome Center. We will continue to post updates to our timeline there. The information includes a list of tasks involved in our process and a list of names of Call Committee members. Also, information regarding progress will be shared in weekly emails to the congregation and in the bulletin.

What's next? We prayerfully wait to receive names of potential candidates. We hope that will happen shortly after the first of the year.

- Bobbie Wang, Call Committee Chair
bwang799@gmail.com



Thank You for Sharing Your Abundant Joy

On behalf of the Stewardship Team, please know that all the ways you live out your stewardship is deeply appreciated. There is still time to return your response forms from our recent *Abundant Joy* stewardship emphasis. They can be mailed back to the church or put in the outside drop box or offering plate. Receiving them by December 1st would be helpful. Thank you!

Help Needed to Plan Farewell and Welcome Events

Over the next six to nine months, we anticipate Pastor Peter's retirement and the arrival of a new pastor. A team is being formed to help plan events for these two major occasions in the life of St. James. If you are interested in serving on this team, please send an email to Sue Zernicke at slzernic@wisc.edu. Thank you!



FREE

Come join us for dinner! Menu: pork loin, roasted potato medley, Caesar salad, rolls, assorted Christmas cookies, and beverages.

Community Meal

**WEDNESDAY
Dec 4 at 6:00 pm**

Children, Youth & Families



Advent Workshop on December 8th – During 8:30 & 9:30 Sunday School

All are welcome to join us in the Youth Lounge for stories, crafts and games to prepare for the birth of our Savior!

Annual Pop-Up Christmas Pageant on December 15 – During 8:30 Worship

The interactive format is fun for all generations and allows everyone in attendance to participate...or just sit back and enjoy...it's up to you! You can simply pick a prop when you arrive at church, proceed to the altar when your prop is called, then join in a traditional Christmas hymn before returning to your seat. The service will also feature special musical performances by St. James children & youth. Join us for intergenerational fellowship in the Dining Room after the service!

Contact Information

Acting and Speaking Roles - Katie at wallacek@verona.k12.wi.us

Vocalists & Instrumentalists - Paulette at spoonp@charter.net

Greeters and Prop Crew - Holly at hparker@stjamesverona.org

Ushers - Laura at confirmation@stjamesverona.org



Thank You CYF Volunteers!

We have been blessed with many generous volunteers this fall and would like to take a moment to thank them. Although their lives are very busy, they allow the abundant joy they experience through Jesus to overflow into the lives of our children and youth and into the world! We are so grateful to each of the following volunteers:

Sunday School - Trisha Baneck, Janna Boehm, Brian Bradley, Nikki Bradley, Dan Bubolz, Brienne Carlson, Elizabeth Chizeck, Jillian Fose, JoEllen Graber, Landis Heitz, Tillie Heitz, Teresa Hoffman, Kendra Johnson, Megan Jones, Stefany Katzner, Vicki Kelly, Michelle Klingbeil, Julian Murphy, Danielle Nelson, Nicole Osten, Lori Rudy, Lizzy Smith, Sophie Smith, Barbara Thomas, Marisa Voelker, Kristin Wills, Cheryl Wilson, Rebecca Woolums. **Confirmation** - Karen Breitnauer, Joleen Rau, Laura Smith, Mark Smith **Youth Group** - Lindsay Amell, Jaydon Hillstead, Chloe Parker, Cody Parker, Emma Parker, Cindi Stampfli, Jackson Stampfli, Will Wallace

Join the fun! Volunteers are essential in providing quality faith formation opportunities for our children and youth. As a volunteer you can help fill young hearts with love and hope of Jesus...and in doing so, grow in your own faith as well! Here are some ways you can receive, grow and give with us:

- Sunday School - Lead or assist a story, craft or game station or supervise small groups as they rotate through stations. (1-2x/month)
- Confirmation - Lead or assist classes on Sunday mornings (1-2x/month)
- Youth Group - High schoolers are welcome to join the High School Mentorship Team, adults can donate food or supplies, or help supervise.
- Mission Trips - Coordinate or help coordinate a trip!
- Service Projects - If you have ideas or would like to lead a project, please let us know!
- Have other ideas or gifts to share? Please reach out!

To learn more or help, contact:

Holly Parker, Director of Children & Family Ministry - hparker@stjamesverona.org

Laura Smith, Director of Confirmation Ministry - confirmation@stjamesverona.org

Children, Youth & Families



Thank You Women of St. James

A big thank you to the Women of St. James for putting the Word of God in our children's hands. The time, energy and funds you generously give to help our children learn the stories of His love are greatly appreciated!



Thank You Club Connect

Thank you to our 5th & 6th Grade Club Connect students for cleaning up the Giving Garden. Your service is appreciated!

Nursery Supervisor Needed

We are still in need of a Nursery Supervisor for Sunday mornings from 8:15 am until 10:45 am. This is a paid position that could be split between two or more individuals and scheduling is flexible.

If you are 18 years or older and are interested in this position, please contact Paulette Spoon at spoonp@charter.net.

Sunday School Fall Highlights

We've had a blast exploring Bible stories and our faith through hands-on adventures, crafts, games and more!



CONGRATULATIONS!



Newly Confirmed on
October 27, 2024

2024-25 YOUTH GROUP SCHEDULE

Fun! Faith! Friends!

- 🌸 Open to all 4th-12th graders
- 🌸 Snacks provided!
- 🌸 Hosted by the St. James High School Mentorship Team
- 🌸 Friends welcome!
- 🌸 Third Wednesday of the month from October through May
- 🌸 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm

Save the Dates!

- OCTOBER 16TH
- NOVEMBER 20TH
- DECEMBER 18TH
- JANUARY 15TH
- FEBRUARY 19TH
- MARCH 19TH
- APRIL 16TH
- MAY 21ST

2024 Budget Update

St. James Lutheran Church Operating Budget Update thru October 31,2024:

	Oct YTD 2024 <u>Actual</u>	Oct YTD 2024 <u>Budget</u>	Favorable/ (Unfavorable) <u>Variance</u> %	Oct YTD 2023 <u>Actual</u>	Favorable/ (Unfavorable) <u>Variance</u> %
YTD Receipts	\$525,441	\$573,458	(\$48,017) -8.4%	\$566,681	(\$41,240) -7.3%
YTD Expenses	<u>\$572,854</u>	<u>\$609,060</u>	<u>\$36,206</u> +5.9%	<u>\$609,514</u>	<u>\$36,660</u> +6.0%
YTD Net (Loss)	<u>(\$47,413)</u>	<u>(\$35,602)</u>	<u>(\$11,811)</u>	<u>(\$42,833)</u>	<u>(\$4,580)</u>

Current State

The financials show that we are behind budget overall by (\$11,800) on a net basis through October. This also shows that our giving is running behind budget by -8.4% through October but that lower than budgeted expenses of +5.9% have helped to offset a significant part of the giving shortfall.

In comparison to the prior year, we can see that our giving is lower than the prior year by -7.3%, and that lower expenses than the prior year of +6.0% have helped to offset a significant part of the giving shortfall.

Future State

The church year giving history trends for higher giving levels in November and December to close out the year. This occurs as we enter the holiday season, for year-end tax deductions, and other personal reasons. November and December are very important giving months in the St. James church year and this year is no different as your generous contributions will fulfill a balanced budget to support the mission and vision here at St. James for 2024. Thank you very much for your support and if possible, please consider increasing your church giving by 5%-10% or more to end the year strong.

To illustrate, the following are the budgeted offering contributions to finish the 2024 year:

<u>General Fund Offering</u>	<u>2024 Actual</u>	<u>2024 Budget</u>	<u>2023 Actual</u>
September	\$36,938	\$48,000	\$35,991
October	\$52,341	\$45,000	\$35,354
November		\$52,000	\$39,740
December		\$73,000	\$85,865

As you can see, for November and December combined, the budgeted offerings are \$32,000 higher than the September and October total. This lines up with the historical giving pattern for our congregation as last year the November and December combined offerings totaled \$126,000, which was \$54,000 higher giving than September and October last year. Increased giving in November and December is important to live out our strong mission.

So, in the seasons of Thanksgiving, Stewardship Abundant Joy, and looking ahead to Christmas, please prayerfully consider your charitable giving to St. James in support of your ministries and for all that we Receive, Grow, and Give to and for one another. St. James accepts your gifts on-line by credit/debit card, checks, cash, direct EFT transfers for tax-free giving of RMD distributions, and whatever other form you choose for year-end tax planning and gifts from your heart. THANK YOU!

As Pastor Jerry and the Stewardship Team have introduced the 2025 Stewardship emphasis of Abundant Joy from 2 Corinthians 8:1-9, it also holds true in 2024, "...their abundant joy...overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part." (2 Corinthians 8:2)

With God's Grace and Joy,
Kim Feller, Treasurer

The Ottman Family Christmas Tree Farm has donated the two trees for our outside decorations on Main Street. You can go to their tree farm in Belleville to cut your own or buy one of their trees at the St. Andrews parking lot. Thank you!

From the Parish Nurse...

November and December are: Seasons for Thankfulness and Gratitude.

“...give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus...” 1 Thessalonians 5:18

November and December include All Saints Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas. All of these are to remind us to be thankful for specific blessings—and all blessings.

First, I want to thank everyone who helped make our Hope and Healing Dinner and Service so special and meaningful. A special thanks to the young people who helped in the “background.” Jack and Clara Cassidy, Jackson Stampfli, Will Wallace, Oliver Eckmayer and Keith Osten. Your efforts are much appreciated.

The holidays bring back so many memories. Those of us who have lost loved ones, we grieve, but also give thanks to God for the blessings that person experienced in life; the blessings the person was in our life, and the blessings we have knowing they are in heaven with our Lord.

In this season, you commonly hear, “I Want”!! We need to cultivate an attitude of gratitude!! We need to fix our focus beyond the temporary challenges of this earthly life. Cultivating this attitude in our life takes intentionality and that takes prayer and action. (Psalm 100:4) provides evidence that Gratitude is Powerful!

Giving to others this season doesn’t have to cost money. Give of yourself. Time and skills will be much appreciated. Others will be Thankful and you can have the Attitude of Gratitude in knowing you were there for them.

God Bless You,

2025-2026 Preschool Registration

Planning for the 2025-2026 school year has begun. We offer classes for 2 year olds, 3 year olds, and host the Verona Area School District Pre-K program (4 year olds). If you are a church member and are at all interested in enrolling your child in our preschool, you need to reach out to me. You will get a spot on our legacy list before new families start enrolling in February. Please email Heather at sjp@stjamesverona.org or call 608-845-6922.

- The St. James Men’s Group meets on the first Monday of each month at 6:00 pm at Paddy Mac’s in Verona.
- The Quilting Group meets the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at 9:00 am. Interested members are invited to attend.
- The Prayer Shawl Knitting Group meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month at 9:30 am.

Please submit a family photo.

With a new pastor arriving in 2025, there’s an easy way to help him or her to learn the names and faces of the congregation. The database used at St. James has a place to upload a family photo for every household in the congregation. Whether you are a family of one or of ten, will you please submit a family photo so that we can support our new pastor in this way?

These do not need to be professional portraits. A picture taken with a smartphone of whomever makes up your household is all that’s needed. If by chance you had a family picture taken for Christmas, please send it in, but any photo will work. Please also include the names of who is in the photo. Please email your photo to [Renata](mailto:Renata@stjamesverona.org) at rhenry@stjamesverona.org by January 15, 2025.

If you prefer to have someone take your photo, we will be offering times when someone will be taking photos at church. Please send an email stating that you’d like a photo taken at church. Thank you.



Chloe Circle
Makes Lefse



Chloe Circle members and family volunteers took over the kitchen to make lefse for the St. James Bake Sale and luncheon which was held on November 23. Thanks to all for their support!



Mary Circle Pfefferneusse Baking

Mary Circle had their Pfefferneusse Baking Day on Friday, November 15 in preparation for the Annual St. James Bake Sale and Luncheon. One hundred bags of pfefferneusse – half with ground walnuts and half without nuts were made. Thanks to Tony Wang and John Walker for “manning” the oven and being honorary Mary Circle members for the day.

Buildings & Grounds

We are looking for dedicated volunteers to join our team. If you have a passion for keeping St. James welcoming and beautiful, please contact Mark Smith at msmith1411@gmail.com or sign-up at the Welcome Center. No experience necessary. Thank you!

PARISH NOTES

If you have someone that you would like to add to this prayer list please email (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.

We remember our members in our prayers, especially, Loretta Docken, Anna, Charlene, Ed, Helen Granquist, Audrey Huseth, Marilyn, Monica Pechan, Mandy Marcum, Judy and Andrew, Jackie Bisek, Jay Wilson, Orin and Pat Strand, and Larry Yeske.



We also remember Bruce and Pearlene (brother and sister-in-law of Karen Wolf), Dorothy (mother of Sue Zernicke), Larry Hamm (father of Christine Kemnitz), Dustin Olmschenk (nephew of Nancy Steinemann), Marty Pulver (brother of Renata Henry), Sharon Schwinn (sister of Mary Moldenhauer), Mary Volker, (sister of John Volker), Dave Wolf (nephew of Doug Wolf), Archer Yob (great-nephew of Renata Henry), Marsha Zahasky (sister of Mary Walker), Dan Fetherston (brother of Rick Fetherston), Lori Deegan (mother of Bryan Deegan) and Gail Rafferty (sister of Cheryl Vroman), Erica Poast (Carl and Joe Poast daughter-in-law) and friends, Sam, Ina, Carolyn, Camille, Dennis, Joe, and Susan Kennedy.

Sacrament of Christian Baptism: Bennett Averill Fose, son of Nathan and Jillian Fose on November 10, 2024; Levi William Tuohy, son of Ryan and Meghan Tuohy, November 10, 2024.

Christian Sympathy is extended to the families of Rocco Ceniti, Amanda Spencer, Marilyn LeMoine, Audrey Hagen, Becky Frederick

as they mourn the death of her father Neil Dobberpuhl, Vince Reed as they mourn the death of his daughter-in-law Lynn, Pastor Peter Narum as they mourn the death of his mother Jeanne and Laura Smith as they mourn the death of her father Dennis Eschmann.

In Residence: Four Winds – Candy Nerge. **Noel Manor** – Dick and Helen Dignan, Dale Hagen, Lloyd Hornbacher, Carol and Jim Path, Peggy Papenfus, Chuck and Marilyn Roum, John Scharer, Jim Schumann, and Charles and Gloria Widish.

Serving in the Military: Ron Rasmussen, Gavin Bazala, Wyatt Breitnauer, Bryan and Hannah Tordoff, Evan Spoon, Jake Storch, Cyrus Pechan, and Kelsey Sweet.

Verona, WI 53593-1492

427 South Main Street



NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MADISON WI
Permit # 4013