



ST. JAMES UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

LIMERICK, PA

SEPTEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

St. James United Church of Christ in Limerick, PA is called to be disciples of Christ providing a caring, supportive, welcoming and inclusive community. We seek to faithfully spread the good news of Jesus Christ through generous mission, loving fellowship and curiosity about the Bible and our faith, with the help of God.

³⁰They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he did not want anyone to know, ³¹for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise." ³²But they did not understand the saying, and were afraid to ask him. Mark 9: 30-32

Dear St. James family,

One of the things we will be talking about in September is asking questions. In the Bible verses above, the disciples have questions for Jesus about what he said about being killed and rising but are afraid to ask. I wonder why they are afraid? Are they afraid that Jesus will scold them – accuse them of having no faith or understanding? Possibly, but at the same time, what he said is very important, and it's very important to have some understanding around something like Jesus' death and resurrection. I would have a lot of questions. "Are you talking about yourself here as the Son of Man?" "If so, when are you going to be delivered, and what does that mean?" "What do you mean you're going to be killed?" "What do you mean by raised?" and probably most important, "What are we going to do when you're gone?"

But rather than ask questions, the disciples make an assumption that one of them is going to have to take over, which is why they start talking about who the greatest is. For some reason, they don't seem to be aware of what the resurrection means or that the Holy Spirit will be with them to continue on with the ministry. It can be misconstrued to think that the disciples are just bragging. "Peter's the greatest at fishing." "John is the greatest at carpentry." But what they are actually discussing is who they think will be the best one to take over the ministry when Jesus is gone. The disciples are already making plans for Jesus' departure. They don't want to tell him that. If they had just asked him what they wanted to know, rather than be embarrassed, they could have gotten Jesus' reassurance. Instead of acting like they will be on their own soon, they could have shared deeply with Jesus about their fears and questions, and Jesus could have explained in more detail.

Some people believe that the Bible is the inerrant word of God and is not to be questioned. I was having a conversation with an internet stranger about it, and they just couldn't wrap their brains around the idea that parts of the Bible are "wrong." They see the Bible as being "factual" as opposed to "truthful." It's hard for some to see that there are parts of the Bible that simply don't apply to us 21st century people. We don't concern ourselves with wearing clothing with only one kind of thread (Leviticus 19:19) for instance. But some in the Church still believe that women should not speak in church and should be submissive to their husbands (1 Corinthians 14: 33-35) just because the Bible says so. It is time to get away from that mindset and start asking questions. What bothers you about the Bible? What questions do you have? Don't be afraid. The truth will set you free (John 8:32.)

With love in Christ, Pastor Beth

On **Sunday, September 8**, we will have Celebration Sunday! This is a time that we welcome back our folks from summer vacations and celebrate what we have to look forward to in the coming year. We will also dedicate our new piano and new paraments that day, so don't miss it!

On **Wednesday, September 11 at 1:00 via zoom**, Pastor Beth and Laura Walters will facilitate a discussion around Rob Bell's engaging and fascinating book, What is the Bible? We will meet for five weeks. Please get your own copy of the book and have Part One read for the first class. It's a VERY easy read, especially considering it's about the Bible. Come and see!

On **Sunday, September 15 at 3:00**, join us as we host the Swing Kings in our pavilion! The Swing Kings are a big band era band that plays hit songs from the Glenn Miller era to the 70's. State Rep. Joe Ciresi will be sponsoring this event. Light refreshments will be served.

On **Monday, September 16 at 1:00**, Pastor Beth will continue to facilitate a discussion on the Gospel of Mark. We are almost at the end, but it's never too late to come and join us! We will discuss the end of Jesus' life and ministry. Stay tuned for what's coming after we finish Mark!

Pastor Beth will be joining two town hall meetings on Zoom regarding the Keystone Project, in which questions will be taken about the possible merger of the four PA conferences. If you do not do Zoom and want to join, she will be happy to meet you at the church to do so. Pastor Beth will be attending the **September 17 at 10:30 am and October 24 at 6:30 pm** meetings. Let her know if you would like to watch with her.

On **Monday, September 23 at 7:00**, we will have our next line dancing party! Join us for fun with DJ Jim Dawson, who will teach beginner dances throughout the evening along with favorite dances for the more seasoned. Cover \$10/\$5 for church members/friends.

On **Sunday, September 29**, we will welcome Navixha Bagga, who will do a presentation of mindfulness following worship. Feel free to bring some lunch or grab something from the coffee and conversation table and join us in a positive conversation on mindfulness – what it is and how to be mindful. Navi will be doing an interactive workshop on mindfulness and ways we can work this into our daily lives. This will help tremendously as we live into the Way of Jesus. Come and see!

St. James will be hosting a mobile mammogram unit in October from Reading Hospital! More information will be given in the October newsletter.

On **Friday, October 4 at 7:00**, we will welcome pianist Nina Siniakova to St. James for a wonderful concert of jazz and standards. More details in the October newsletter. She will also be playing for us in worship on September 29 as a preview. We are in for a treat!

On **Wednesday, October 23 at 6:45**, we will welcome Dr. Greg Carey from Lancaster Theological Seminary (Pastor Beth's alma mater.) Dr. Carey will be discussing the very important topic of Christian Nationalism. This will be a very timely discussion that you won't want to miss. More details in the October newsletter.

A Message from the Pastoral Relations Committee....

The Pastoral Relations Committee is an important standing committee at St. James UCC which, you may not hear about frequently. This committee, often addressed as the PRC, is charged with the task of supporting healthy relationships between our pastor and the congregation to enhance the effectiveness and ministry of St. James. The goal is to promote faithful, shared ministry between the pastor and the congregation.

The purpose of the PRC is twofold. First, the PRC works to support our pastor's leadership by interpreting roles, functions, boundaries and needs of the pastor to the congregation. Secondly, the Pastoral Relations Committee serves as an advisory group to the pastor, sharing ideas, expectations, and concerns of the congregation with the pastor. The main goal is to promote healthy communication within the whole congregation while working in a context of confidentiality, support, and honesty with the pastor.

Those serving on the Pastoral Relations Committee today are the same five members who served on the Search Committee, but the time has come to refresh and offer the opportunity to other members of the St. James UCC congregation. The PRC meets quarterly unless something comes up and needs to be addressed between regularly scheduled meetings.

If you are interested and would like to serve on the PRC, please contact Laura Walters or Pastor Beth for more information and scheduling. We are looking for at least three new people to do God's work and help with the continuing ministry of St. James UCC.

Let Us Talk.....

So often, the terms diversity and inclusion are used to suggest what the church is or should be, but we seldom take or make the time to come together to share our own understandings, to question and talk about why and how diversity and inclusion are important to our church.

We know the early church was and the church of today continues to be a blend of different generations, different economic backgrounds, different personalities, and different races who come together in fellowship, prayer and worship, to listen and to do what God has called us to do.

Like you and I, these are the people who make up the church. Diversity is not something new and in fact, it is founded in biblical principles such as Galatians 3:28 that says, "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." Diversity is so much more than race.

When we embrace diversity, we build unity and no longer accept racism, sexism, classism, or other forms of discrimination. When we thrive on openness, acceptance and enable all people to be active participants in the life of the church and community, we celebrate inclusiveness.

We invite everyone to participate in a meaningful discussion focused on diversity, inclusiveness, and ONA. This is an opportunity to share your thoughts and ask questions as together we embrace diversity, continue to grow a culture of love and respect and together, learn more about what all this means for St. James UCC.

On Saturday, October 12 t., Rev. Bill Worley, PSEC minister, will join us for food and fellowship followed by a meaningful discussion on diversity, inclusion and what it means to be Open and Affirming. Join us for a Potluck Dinner and an interesting discussion! Do not miss this opportunity for St. James UCC to learn together!

Submitted by Laura Walters

Women's Fellowship 2024 Schedule

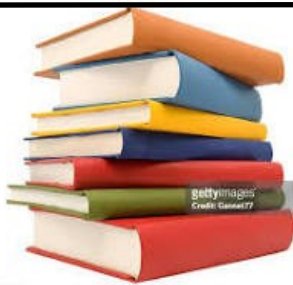
September 16	Monday Dinner Out at SpringFord Diner, 5 pm
October 22	Boscov's Day Fund Raiser (see below)
October 26	Saturday Fall Rummage Sale
November 23	Saturday Fill Stockings for Salvation Army, 10 am
December TBD	Christmas Tea

Save the Date—October 22, 2024

Join us in participation of Boscov's *Friends Helping Friends* event.

Sell a ticket giving the recipient 10% to 25% off purchases at Boscov's on October 22, 2024. Tickets for the event can be obtained with a \$5 donation. Tickets are available prior to October 22 and at the store on October 22. We are looking for your help by selling tickets prior to the event or to volunteer to man the table in the store on October 22. Your participation will help make this a profitable fundraiser for St. James! See Donna Serina to obtain tickets.

Please **save the tabs** from your soda cans for Keira Serina. The tabs will be collected to benefit the Ronald McDonald House of Philadelphia. A **jar** for this is on the table in the narthex.



Spiritual Library -The Little Free Library—Have you visited the Spiritual Library lately? We have added additional books and there is now a binder with categories and books listed under each one.

Also visit the Little Library outside for casual reading.

- * Volunteers are needed to read Scripture during the service, see Charlotte Fiedler
- * The church is in need of used highchairs or booster seats, see Charlotte Fiedler
- * The worship committee is seeking new members, see Charlotte Fiedler
- * You can provide or sponsor altar flowers to honor someone or an event, see Sandy Koenig or Mae Mogel, altar guild volunteers for September.

Potluck Dinner September 14 at 5 pm. Please sign up in the narthex.

End of Summer Time Change

beginning September 8th, worship will again begin at 10:15 am.

For our friends Heather Yates, Melissa Moore, Sang Hi Crater and others who are in long term care or unable to leave their homes. We pray for comfort, peace, healing, and companionship for each of them.

For our friends Dan S, Priscilla M, Daran B, Barb G, Shirley, Van S, Ken M, Brian S, Cheryl, Jim S, Alison L, Jackie, Dee L, Betsy R, Ginny T, JC, Paul M, Amy D, Barb M, Christine J, Barb G, Jean S, Michelle, Paul M, Bonnie, BJ, Ric F, Linda S, John K, Tabby, Karen, Phil, Dodie S, Carol T, Kork M, Don G, and all cancer survivors, we pray for treatment where it is possible and release from suffering where it is needed.

For our friends Jay S, Millie A, Pete M, Sherry K, John B, Michale S, Judy, Franklin R, Lorraine R, Shaun, Marion H, Brian, Kenny B, Mary Lou B, Sonny B, Cathy M and others with ongoing health concerns and challenging life circumstances. May they be reassured of God's presence through the support of our congregation.

Prayers for all veterans that are still suffering from PTSD and all other side effects from their service in the military.

Lord, we come to you with praise and thanksgiving. We thank you for the healing of many and pray for all who are still struggling with medical issues. We pray for comfort for those who have lost loved ones and friends. Fill them with your comfort and peace. We pray for all who are being affected with wars that peace may be found. We pray that you continue to guide and walk with us through our greatest needs. Help us to spread our love to all we meet. We pray for wholeness and healing of mind, body and spirit upon us all. We pray this in Jesus' name, Amen.

Please note that we will remove names on the prayer list after one month, except for homebound and hospitalized members. Let us know if you would like to add or renew a request by contacting Charlotte Fiedler by phone or email.

PRAYING FOR OUR FELLOW MEMBERS OF ST. JAMES

Initiated by St. James Prayer Team, each Sunday two church families are being included in the Sunday worship prayer time. You are invited to include these members and their families in your prayers throughout that week.

September 1 —Gregory Borneman and Ruth Borneman

September 8— Staci Bosi and Janet Brandel

September 22— Kevin Brightbill and Russell and Barbara Brightbill

September 29—Rugene Caldwell and Jennifer Clarke

CALENDAR SEPTEMBER 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Worship service 9:30 am	2	3	4	5	6	7 Men's breakfast 8:30 am
8 Worship service 10:15 am Communion and Celebration Sun- day, dedication of piano and new paraments	9 Gospel of Mark hybrid Bible study 1pm	10 Consistory meeting 7 pm	11 Midweek zoom book study 1pm (1/5)	12	13	14 Fellowship Din- ner 5 pm
15 Worship service 10:15 am, with Dennis Keen Swing Kings 3 pm in the pavilion	16 Bible study 1pm Women's Fel- lowship Dinner out at SpringFord diner 5pm	17	18 Midweek zoom book study 1pm (2/5)	19	20	21
22 Worship service 10:15 am	23 Bible study 1pm Line Dancing 7—10 pm	24	25 Midweek zoom book study 1pm (3/5)	26	27	28
29 Worship service 9:30 am, mindful- ness workshop	30 Bible study 1pm					



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

2 Ken Raspen, Sr.
10 Millie Alderfer
20 Tony Nuccitelli
23 Jennifer Clarke
26 Donna Serina



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2024 CONSISTORY

Richard Fiedler, President
Bob Walters, V. President
Kristen Serina, Secretary
Cindy Valerio
Ken Raspen
Jay Smith
Susan Myers
Laura Walters

Officers:

Tom Mogel, Financial Sec.
Margie Schweitzer, Historian
Jay Smith, Treasurer

Materials for the October Newsletter are due to the office on September 23rd, 2024.

CONTACT THE CHURCH

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