

# ST. JAMES UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

LIMERICK, PA

## MARCH 2026 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.

<sup>38</sup> For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Romans 8:38-39*

Dear St. James family,

Last month we had a really good sermon chat around the idea that God loves each and every one of us no matter what. It doesn't matter what we've said or what we've done. We are loved unconditionally, meaning no conditions. None. This doesn't always go over well with folks. "What about people like Hitler? How could God love Hitler?!?" I explained during the sermon chat that God loves all God's creation and cannot help but love what God created. I used the parable of the vineyard owner who hired people throughout the day and paid them all the same as an example of how God is generous in love. I told them the Anne LaMott saying, "You know you have made God into your own image when God hates all the same people you do."

The idea of God loving Hitler doesn't seem like justice, does it? Let's remember that the Way of Jesus is completely the opposite of how we live today. The first shall be last and the last shall be first. Meaning the poor and marginalized are first, and the wealthy and privileged would have to wait in line. That is not to say we are not all accepted, but that God's justice is one of mercy and compassion for all people, that all people thrive, not just some. Our idea of justice revolves around punishment.

I read a story from Greg Carey's book called *Sinners: Jesus and His Earliest Followers* that may demonstrate what this could look like. Carey relates the story of Brian, who lived in a home where his father routinely threatened his mother with a shotgun to her head and says, "If you say one more word, I will blow your head off." So one day, Brian was fighting with his sister over the last bowl of cereal, and he grabbed his dad's gun, put it to the back of her head and said, "If you take one bite, I will blow your head off." She took a bite. Brian was twelve years old. (Continued on page 2...)

(Continued from page 1...) Brian ended up in a group home. He kept to himself for the first couple of months, to the point of showing no emotion. The staff was waiting for him to bring up what brought him there himself. That didn't happen. So one day a staff member took him fishing, and he said, "Brian, I think you're a neat kid. I'm enjoying being with you." And Brian said, "If you knew why I was here, you wouldn't say that." And the staff member said, "I know why you're here." Brian was startled, and said, "You do?" and the staff member said, "Of course I do. We all know why you're here." To quote Carey, "Confronted with such unconditional acceptance and blessing, Brian began to sob...His salvation...came through blessing."

Would Hitler accept such blessing? Who knows? But let us let God worry about that.

Grace with conditions is not grace.

This is how good our God is. Not a God who condemns, but a God of mercy and compassion who loves us.

I will end with the lyrics to a song called *Good*, by Matthew West and AJ Pruis.

I'm good at always falling down  
 You're good at never giving up  
 I'm good at getting turned around  
 You're good at saying I'm still loved  
 And I was wrecked by mercy  
 The day I understood  
 I'm not loved because I'm worthy  
 I'm loved because You're good.

With love in Christ,  
 Pastor Beth

## MATTHEW KONCHEL OFFERS ESTATE PLANNING HELP MARCH 8

Please join us after worship on Sunday, March 8 and meet Matthew Konchel, an attorney who specializes in estate planning. The following is from Matthew: When thinking of "estate planning," most people only think of having a will when (not IF) they die. What I have to remind those people is that estate planning is really about dealing with what you own and control, to include YOU. So, ask yourself, "WHO is going to take care of YOU when you are unable to do so?" Do those people know what to do? And do they have the legal authority to do it? Are you SURE? I say, don't just assume that they do or hope that they do. KNOW that they do. Consequently, this presentation is for anyone who wants to learn how to ensure that both YOU and the people you love are taken care of when life throws a curveball at you. Learn how to avoid the mistakes many people make with DIY or online wills; how to eliminate or substantially reduce estate/inheritance taxes; how to avoid probate & save



**ESTATE PLANNING**

money; how to prevent your kids from being placed into foster care in the event of your passing; how to protect your assets from creditors; how to protect the interest of your children after your death. Learn how to “solve problems BEFORE they become problems” and much, much more. And know that estate planning offers a great opportunity to strengthen your family bonds through open conversations about your wishes,

## DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ON MARCH 8

Daylight saving time begins at 2:00am, Sunday, March 8th. Don't forget to *set your clocks forward one hour Saturday night!*



## ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING ON MARCH 15



One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is a Special Mission Offering of the United Church of Christ that supports partners worldwide with ministries that fund health, education, and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries, and both international and domestic disaster response. We will be having this Missions Offering on March 15th.

## GIRL SCOUT SUNDAY ON MARCH 15

Join us for service on Sunday, March 15 for Girl Scout Sunday where we will be joined by our local Girl Scout troop!



## SERMON CHAT MARCH 22



Please plan to stay after worship on January 18th as our sermon chat is coming back! Anyone who would like will be given a piece of paper and a pencil to jot down notes or questions on the scripture and the sermon, to be discussed after worship. Our discussions have been meaningful and a lot of fun – hope to see you there!

## KYM DUNLEAVY OFFERS SOUND BATH MARCH 29

What on earth is a sound bath, you might ask? No, you won't need a towel! LOL A sound bath is a spiritual experience where we are immersed in the sounds of crystal sound bowls. I will show you an example of Kym's work in worship so you will have an idea. Kym will play for a half hour after worship, a great way to enter the drama of Holy Week. It's a very relaxing experience, and the acoustics in our sanctuary are perfect for this. Please see more below from Kym. Kym is a Master Crystal Sound Bowl Healer devoted to helping others rest, realign, and reconnect with their highest selves. Through the powerful frequencies of crystal singing bowls, she creates immersive sound journeys that gently clear stagnant energy, balance the chakras, and restore harmony to mind, body, and spirit.

With a grounded yet intuitive presence, Kym weaves intention, vibration, and sacred space into each session—guiding clients into deep relaxation, energetic renewal, and inner clarity. Her work is heart-centered and transformational, offering a sanctuary where healing unfolds naturally and the nervous system can truly reset.



**GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE APRIL 3 AT 7:00**

We hope everyone will join us for our Good Friday service on April 3 at 7:00. Witness the drama of the crucifixion through scripture, the stripping of the altar and more. Witnessing the sadness of Good Friday will only make Easter Sunday all the more joyful and meaningful!

**SPRING RUMMAGE SALE APRIL 25; 8AM—1PM**

The spring rummage sale is just around the Corner; Donations can be brought in on Sundays or by appointment ([office@stjames-ucc.org](mailto:office@stjames-ucc.org)).

**PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

Your Pastoral Relations Committee serves as a liaison between Pastor Beth and the congregation. Good communication in a congregation is VERY important. You are encouraged to speak to Pastor Beth directly with any concerns. However, if you would prefer, please approach a member of the committee - Sue Myers, Hannah Iannozzi, Ken Raspen, Donna Earnshaw and Kevin Brightbill.

**CONSISTORY UPDATE FROM FEBRUARY**

Dear Members and Friends of St. James UCC,

The consistory wishes to provide an update on the recent activities and ongoing initiatives discussed at the St. James consistory meeting held on Tuesday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

The meeting began with a shared devotion and prayer. Following this, the monthly financial reports and the minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and accepted as presented. Pastor Beth then provided her monthly report. Additionally, several church committees submitted brief activity updates, which were distributed to all consistory members.

**Old Business**

The status of the lease renewal for Grace and Peace was discussed; the lease document has been prepared and is ready for signing. Limerick Township has signed an agreement to use our facilities for various weekly summer camps. They contracted for several weeks in 2025 and have requested additional camp weeks for 2026. This partnership offers St. James an excellent opportunity to share our facility and engage with the community.

**New Initiatives**

As a follow-up to previous discussions, a sub-committee was established to research digital signs. Bob Walters and Marilyn Jorgensen will collaborate on this task, reaching out to other churches to learn about their experiences and the benefits they gained from installing digital signs. They will also consult with Limerick Township regarding relevant rules and ordinances for signage. Bob and Marilyn are expected to present their findings to the consistory in April. In compliance with requirements, the bylaws are being reviewed to replace any instances of "Pennsylvania Southeast Conference" with "Keystone Conference." No other changes or additions to the bylaws are necessary at this time.

The need for additional money counters to assist Lisa Kahudic, Financial Secretary, after worship was discussed. We will ask Cindy Valerio, who has experience in this area, to be coordinator, recruiting and providing training information for volunteers. A signup sheet will be posted in the narthex for anyone interested.

The meeting was adjourned and closed with everyone joining together in the Lord's  
(continued on next page)

...Prayer. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM.

As always, we encourage open communication and invite you to reach out with any questions or suggestions. Thank you for your continued faithfulness and commitment to St James UCC and the consistory.

We are grateful for everyone's participation and support.

The Consistory

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### PRAYER CONCERNS

For our friends Rugene Caldwell, 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 Steve, Kile, Millie A, Steve R, Kile S, John R, Rob W, Michael, Scott, Judy R, Bonnie, Ruth Ann W, Vickie K, Debarah B, Daran B, Barb G, Shirley, Van S, Ken M, Cheryl, Jim S, Alison L, Jackie, Dee L, Betsy R, Ginny T, JC, Paul M, Barb M, Christine J, Barb G, Jean S, Paul M, Bonnie, BJ, Linda S, John K, 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 Gus G, Todd B, Franklin R, Sherry K, Laura M, Dianne S, Wendel K, Marion H, Mary Lou B, 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 thank you for the healing you have given many, not only on our prayer list but beyond. We ask that you continue to heal those that are still struggling with health issues, concerns and fears. Continue to be with those that have lost loved ones, comfort them and give them peace. We ask healing for our country as well as those who are enduring wars. Lord, we give you thanksgiving for all your many blessings, many we take for granted. Continue to walk and guide us through our greatest needs. We pray for wholeness and healing of mind, body and spirit upon us all. In Jesus' name we pray. 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 Sandy Koenig or Charlotte Fiedler by phone or email.

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### 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.

March 1—Beth Eustis & Richard and Charlotte Fiedler

March 8—Kristen, Emily, and Jack Focht & Charles Grisdale

March 15—Donald Grisdale & Charles and Marion Hentz

March 22—Jenna, Colin, and Marcie Homa & Hannah, Peter, and Evelyn Iannozzi

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Worship with Rev. Beth Eustis 10:15 Followed by Sara Melton from Power Interfaith	2 Girl Scouts 5:30 Scouts 7:00	3	4 Midweek Study 1:00	5 <i>Chosen</i> 1:00	6	7
8 Worship with Rev. Beth Eustis 10:15 Followed by Matthew Konchel Presents	9 Scouts 7:00	10 Consistory Meeting 7:00	11 Midweek Study 1:00	12 <i>Chosen</i> 1:00	13 Set up for Potluck	14 Potluck Dinner 5:00
15 Worship with Rev. Beth Eustis 10:15— Girl Scout Sunday	16 Girl Scouts 5:30 Scouts 7:00	17 Boy Scout Committee Meeting 7-9pm	18 Midweek Study 1:00	19 <i>Chosen</i> 1:00	20 *Newsletter Submissions Due	21
22 Worship with Rev. Beth Eustis 10:15 Followed by Sermon Chat	23 Scouts 7:00	24	25 Midweek Study 1:00	26 <i>Chosen</i> 1:00	27	28
29 Worship with Rev. Beth Eustis 10:15 Followed by Kym Dunleavy Soundbath	30 Scouts 7:00	31				



### March Birthdays

- 4 Amy Sarfert
- 5 Cindy Valerio
- 6 Jenna Homa
- 8 Diane Raspen
- 21 Evelyn Phelen
- 23 Violet Terbush
- 24 Richard Fiedler
- 26 Charlotte Fiedler
- 31 Patty Dalina



### March Anniversaries

None this month

### 2026 CONSISTORY

Laura Walters, President  
 Sue Meyers, Vice. President  
 Kristen Serina, Secretary  
 Jay Smith  
 Marilyn Jorgensen  
 Bob Walters  
 Susan Myers  
 Paul Meyers  
 Donna Serina

#### Officers:

Lisa Kahudic, Financial Sec.  
 Jay Smith, Treasurer  
 Tom Mogel, Sexton

### **\*CONTACT THE CHURCH\***

321 S. Limerick Rd. Limerick, PA 19468  
[www.stjames-ucc.org](http://www.stjames-ucc.org)

**Rev. Beth Eustis** (610) 457-3603 or [pastor@stjames-ucc.org](mailto:pastor@stjames-ucc.org)

*Pastor Beth would love to hear your questions and comments. Please email to make an appointment.*

*Sabbath will be observed on Tuesdays and Saturdays.*

**Donna Pinto**, Minister of Music (610) 792-1679 [music@stjames-ucc.org](mailto:music@stjames-ucc.org)

**Hannah Iannozzi**, Church Administrator, Communications, and Events  
 (610) 489-0990 [office@stjames-ucc.org](mailto:office@stjames-ucc.org) *Office hours by appointment*

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[www.facebook.com/stjamesucc](http://www.facebook.com/stjamesucc)

**\*\*Materials for the April 2026 Newsletter are due to the office on March 20th, 2026.\*\***

## UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

“Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.”

-Luke 6:27

“Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them, humanity cannot survive.”

-Dalai Lama

“There is no greater power in Heaven or on Earth than pure, unconditional love.”

-Wayne Dyer



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