

ST. JAMES UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

LIMERICK, PA

APRIL 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.

²¹Then Peter came up and said to him, “Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?” ²²Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.” Matthew 18: 21-22

Dear St. James family,

In the above scripture, Jesus doesn't explain how to go about forgiving people, or ourselves. Some tips would have been nice.

But something I was thinking about recently is the idea that when we can accept what someone has done to us – *simply accept the fact of it* – that helps. And then to be at peace with the fact that that happened. When we cannot accept what someone has done to us, it will be very hard to be at peace or to forgive that person.

For example, I have a brother who is three years older than me. I'll call him Wayne. We were very close when we were young. Wayne taught me how to play wiffleball with the neighbor kids, he introduced me to my favorite singer, Billy Joel, he was the editor of the school paper and once went to the nationals in a debate tournament. I wanted to be just like Wayne, and emulated him, but often fell far short of his accomplishments. When Wayne went off to college, that was the last time I ever heard from him. I was 16. I thought for sure we would see each other for holidays and I didn't think much of it at first, but he never called, wrote or visited. I tried to reach out to him here and there, but we just didn't have much of a relationship. I held out hope for years, I kept trying to reach out to no avail. But when forty years went by, it finally hit me. We don't have a relationship. I was devastated. I didn't understand why. What did I do wrong? After much prayer and counseling, I finally learned to accept it, and made peace with it. It took more than forty years, but I finally accepted and made peace with the idea that we would never have a relationship again. And I forgave him.

Is that all it takes to forgive someone? No – there are many steps we can take to forgive someone – writing a letter you never send, focusing on self-care, acknowledging our feelings and more. People have written whole books on forgiveness, so there's obviously way more to say. But it occurred to me that accepting what happened, accepting that person's behavior who hurt us – *accepting that it happened, not excusing it* – is a good first step towards healing.

With love in Christ,

Pastor Beth

Good Friday Service—April 3

Please join us for our Good Friday service on Friday, April 3 at 7:00. We will use scripture, music and the stripping of the altar to tell the dramatic story of the crucifixion. If you need a ride to the service, please let Jay Smith or Pastor Beth know.

**Men's Breakfast—April 4**

The monthly men's breakfast will take place at 8:30.

**Easter Service—April 5**

Happy Easter! Join us for Easter service at 10:15 am. He is risen!

Pastor Beth on Vacation—April 6-20

Pastor Beth will be on vacation from April 6-20. Please call Laura Walters if you need anything while she is away. Rev. Frances Chester will be available for emergencies (except for April 14-16). Cindy Valerio will be the supply pastor on April 12 and Rev. Dennis Keen will preach on April 19.

POWER Interfaith Meeting—April 9

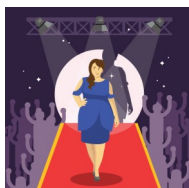
St. James is planning to host a POWER Interfaith meeting here in the sanctuary on April 9 at 6:30. Sara Melton is planning to invite members of other congregations to come and talk about what's happening in our state and how we can get involved. This will be a great opportunity for us to meet others who may be in the same boat as us, and give us the courage to do this important work. Any questions, see Laura Walters.

**Potluck Dinner—April 11**

Please join us for our potluck dinner at 5:00. It's always a great time for food and fellowship – especially dessert! Please join us and invite your friends!

**Consistory Meeting—April 21**

Consistory will meet Tuesday, April 21 at 7:00 due to Pastor Beth's vacation.

**Eastern Star Fashion Show and Luncheon—April 25**

Please join us in the Fellowship Hall on Saturday, April 25 for the Freeland Chapter #323 Order of the Eastern Star fashion show and luncheon starting at 11:00 am. Please see Diane Raspen by April 20 for reservations. It is \$20 per person to attend.

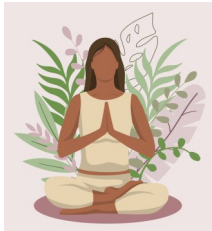
Congregational Meeting—April 26

There will be a congregational meeting on Sunday, April 26 after worship to discuss outdoor worship this year and also the possibility of having an electronic sign outside. Please plan to attend.



Rummage Sale—May 2

Change the date! Due to the Eastern Star fashion show, the date of the Rummage Sale has been moved to Saturday, May 2 from 8:00 am – 1:00 pm. Just more time to bring in all our stuff! **Set up will begin on Wednesday, April 29.** We would appreciate hand held goodies like cookies, cupcakes, brownies, etc to be donated. Also, if anyone would like to assist in the kitchens, we would welcome that, too!

**Meditation Class—May 3**

Join us after worship on Sunday, May 3 as we welcome Jennifer Bartholomew, who will be leading us in a meditation class, focusing on mindful breathing. Jennifer is a nurse who focuses on wholeness of the body, mind and spirit. This will be an introduction to the classes she will be leading for us in May. See the May newsletter for more details. Any questions, see Pastor Beth.

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 March 2026**

Dear Members and Friends of St. James UCC,

This is a brief summary of the actions and discussions from the St. James consistory meeting held on Tuesday, March 10th, 2026.

As always, the Consistory meeting began with a scripture reading and shared devotion lead by Pastor Beth. This time gives Consistory time and motivation to do the things God calls us to do for St. James UCC.

Following devotions, Pastor Beth introduced a guest, who explained some options for St. James to consider that might help reduce the escalating electric cost. The Consistory will review the suggestions in depth at the April meeting.

Following this, the monthly financial reports and the minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and accepted as presented. Pastor Beth provided her monthly report of activities, visits and actions followed by updates and reports from Missions and Endowment Committees. In addition, Property Manager, Ken Raspen reported that he has been working with Sanatoga water, checking the water conditioner and UV filter as part of the investigation into the sulfur odor from the water. Ken will provide an additional update in April.

Old business reviewed include the update that the lease renewal for Grace and Peace is signed and executed, and the deposit and contract for Limerick Township Summer Camps has been received.

The Keystone Conference requested all Pennsylvania UCC churches to edit their By Laws and Constitution to reflect the change from Pennsylvania Southeast Conference to Keystone Conference. Although the changes are minor, a congregational vote is required. On April 26, we will have a brief meeting after worship to vote and approve the change. Printed copies

will be available two weeks before for your review.

Bob Walters reported that he went to Limerick Township regarding rules and guidelines for a digital sign. He was told that most vendors usually complete the application for the permit. He was provided with the names of 2 local vendors. Bob will contact them and schedule time with the vendors so they can collect the information and submit an estimate. Marilyn will follow up with some local churches asking them for vendor referrals, what their church's goal was for adding a digital sign, and what benefits they found once the sign was installed.

The meeting was adjourned and closed with everyone joining together in the Lord's Prayer. Pastor Beth will be on vacation the first two weeks of April, therefore, the next Consistory meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 21st. at 7 PM.

If you have questions or concerns about the Consistory, please contact Laura Walters.

Separation of Church and State: Part Two

The idea that churches should not pay taxes dates back to medieval England. Churches were thought of as divine entities and their property should be dedicated to God.

This idea was carried to colonial America. Churches were often funded by Colonial governments which ended in 1833.

The Tariff Act of 1894 re-established an income tax. The first exemption from taxes was written into law.

The Revenue Act of 1913 re-established the income tax and reinstated tax exemption for religious institutions, solidifying their tax-exempt status. The government

Recognized the public benefits provided to communities by churches.

In 1954, the Johnson Act prohibited non-profit organizations, which included churches, from endorsing or opposing political candidates in order to maintain separation

of church and state. No money acquired through tax deductions should be used to support any political party or cause.

In the Supreme Court ruling in *Walz v. Tax Commission of the City of New York*, the court reasoned that taxing churches would create more government involvement and that tax exemption was constitutional since it was given to, a broad class of non-profit charitable organizations. Churches were seen as beneficial and a stabilizing influence in community life. The work of the church should not be inhibited by property taxes or the hazard of loss of that property for non-payment of taxes. -Sue Myers



CHORAL CONCERT

The Wayne Oratorio Society will present "The Seasons" by Franz Joseph Haydn. Mark and Donna Pinto will be singing in the choir for this light-hearted, fun, secular oratorio. You'll want to arrive by 7:00 to get a parking spot in the adjoining SEPTA lot, and get a good seat in the church.

The address is at the top of the next page.





Sat. April 18th & Sun. 19th, 2026, 7:30 p.m.
Wayne Presbyterian Church
125 E. Lancaster Ave. Wayne, PA 19087
Free concert (free-will offering taken)



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.

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.

April 5— Happy Easter!

April 12—Lisa Kahudic and Wendel & Sandy Koenig

April 19—Eric Kramer and Linda Kramer

April 26—Sherry Kulp and Phil & Joanne Levering



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 Midweek Study 1:00pm	2	3 Good Friday	4 Men's Breakfast 8:30am
5 HAPPY EASTER! Worship with Rev. Beth Eustis 10:15	6 Girl Scouts 5:30 Scouts 7:00	7	8	9	10 Set up for Potluck	11 Potluck Dinner 5:30pm
12 Worship with Cindy Valerio 10:15	13 Scouts 7:00	14	15	16	17	18
19 Worship with Rev. Keen 10:15	20 Girl Scouts 5:30 Scouts 7:00	21 Consistory Meeting 7:00 pm	22	23	24	25
26 Worship with Rev. Beth Eustis 10:15 Followed by Congregational Meeting	27 Scouts 7:00	28	29 Set up for the rummage sale	30 Rummage sale set up continues		



April Birthdays

- 2—Bob Walters
- 8—Kristen Serina
- 12—Diane Phelen;
Michael Terbush
- 17—Melissa Moore
- 26—Lisa Kahudic



April Anniversaries

- 21—Paul and Betty Meyers
- 24—Jay and Gail Smith

2026 CONSISTORY

- Laura Walters, President
- Sue Myers, Vice. President
- Kristen Serina, Secretary
- Jay Smith
- Marilyn Jorgensen
- Bob Walters
- 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

Rev. Beth Eustis (610) 457-3603 or pastor@stjames-ucc.org

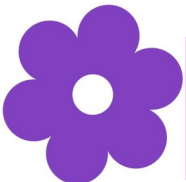
Pastor Beth would love to hear your questions and comments. Please email to make an appointment.

Sabbath will be observed on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

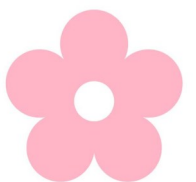
Donna Pinto, Minister of Music (610) 792-1679 music@stjames-ucc.org


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

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www.facebook.com/stjamesucc



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





“No matter how long
the winter, spring is
sure to follow.”
-Proverb

“The day the Lord created
hope was probably the same
day he created Spring.”
-Bern Williams

“Life isn't about waiting
for the storm to pass;
it's about learning to
dance in the rain.”
-Vivian Greene

“April hath put a spirit of
youth in everything.”
-William Shakespeare

“After every storm the
sun will smile; for
every problem there is
a solution.”
-Paul Fleming



Submitted by
Hannah Iannozzi

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Limerick, PA 19468