

The St. James Connector

MMAY, 2009

St. James United Church of Christ
76 Main Street, Hamburg, NY 14075
716-649-6171

Robert Matlack, Pastor
Alva Looze, Associate Pastor

Christina Shrewsbury, Director of Music
Karen Reinagel, CE Director

St James e-mail: stjamesucc@choiceonemail.com, Website -www.saintjamesucc.com

Edited by Charlotte Lujan

Confirmation **Sunday/Pentecost - May** **31st**

Confirmation is always a very special time. We recall the vows that their parents took at the time they were baptized, and now these seven young people stand before as adult Christians, ready to make their own commitment of faith.

St. James Scholarship **Applications**

Scholarship applications for the St. James Scholarship Fund are available in the rack outside the office door.

The St. James Scholarship is awarded to members of St. James who are continuing their education past High School. Students are eligible for a maximum of four years. Applications for either of these scholarships must be filled out and returned to the church office by June 1st in order to be considered.

Have You Noticed our new **windows?**

Recently Mike Zoerb, Horst Kirsten and Don Pfister installed new windows on the basement level of our sanctuary building - in the Assembly Hall, Kitchen, Boiler Room and Stage. These windows not only look great, but they are much more energy efficient, something we'll appreciate through many winters to come.

When you think back, it means that with the exception of the sanctuary windows, we've replaced all of the windows in our building over the last two and ½ years. This project has been funded by your donations to our Capital Fund Drive, and of course a very special thank you to Mike, Horst and Don for making it possible through their commitment and hard work!

Spring Plant Exchange!!

Does your garden need a makeover? Do you want to start a "Victory Garden" and grow some of your own vegetables? Do you have an overgrown flower bed needing thinning? Do you want to do it cheaply?

Then join in the St. James Plant Exchange after church services Saturday May 30th and Sunday, May 31st.

Bring some plants and take some new ones home. Divide some of your own overgrown perennials or indoor plants. Start some new ones from seed. If you bought six tomato plants and only need three, bring them to the plant exchange. Go home with a new hosta, different plants or a new herb.

If you bring at least two plants, you can pay \$5.00 to join the exchange and take home as many plants as you brought. Plants can be purchased if you have nothing to bring.

All proceeds will go to St. James and Youth House landscaping.

Mother's Day Plant Sale

Don't forget that our Church and Ministry Committee will be sponsoring a Mother's Day Hanging Basket Plant Sale which will take place after the Saturday and Sunday services outside the Lounge. There will be several varieties to choose from. The prices will be \$20 per hanging basket and proceeds will go to the St. James Scholarship Fund.

SERVER'S YOU ARE INVITED TO THE SERVER'S TEA

Our Server's Tea has become an annual event. All ladies from the church are invited to bring a friend. Please sign up on the bulletin board. The program will be given by Maryann Reichard on her recent trip to Africa.

Date: May 26th

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Place: Church Lounge

SEWING MISSION

Our next meeting will be May 12th in the Assembly Hall at 9:30 a.m. Bring a sandwich and dessert will be provided. We plan to go to Heidi's Hideaway Restaurant in June. Additional information will be available later in May. Please plan to join us.

Family Night

We are taking a break until September. I hope everyone has a safe and healthy spring and summer. A special thanks to all who helped this year.
Peace, Karen

Christian Education Staff Appreciation Luncheon

Sunday, May 3rd following worship in the Assembly Hall Place settings are provided for this event and everyone is invited

MENU:

Assorted Cold Cut Platter & rolls
Salads by the Board of Christian Education,

A variety of dishes provided by folks from the congregation,
Desserts by the Church Council,
and Beverages.

If you are a member of the CE staff you are invited to attend this event in your honor. Be sure to set the date aside and attend! Don't forget to Sign-up to attend.

This is the day set aside to honor our Christian Education Staff. Everyone is welcome to attend. Christina Shrewsbury is planing musical entertainment for the luncheon.

There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board and space to indicate what you would like to bring.

If you are interested in helping honor those involved with our CE program please check "would like to help" on the sign-up sheet. We can always use a hand setting-up, cleaning-up, putting the food out or making coffee, drinks or rolling meat for platters. It's a nice way to get involved and thank the people who have volunteered their time and talent to nurture our children and help guide them on their lifelong faith journey.

Note to Youth:

If you are a youth and interested in more information regarding the New York Conference, please see Karen or Donna. The Conference is at Silver Bay, June 5th through 7th. Also, General Synod is in Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 26th through 30th for any youth interested.

MUSIC NEWS

Many thanks to the choirs at St. James ...Cherub, Youth, and Chancel Choir, for the beautiful and outstanding music they provided during worship throughout the Lenten season and at Easter Your time in extra rehearsals was much appreciated by everyone.

The cherub and Youth choirs are planning the annual Ice Cream social for Wednesday, June 3. More details will be forthcoming about the time and location. Please mark your calendar now for this special evening!

May rehearsals:

Wednesday, May 6, 13, 20
Rehearsal, 7pm Cherubs
7:30 Youth

Sunday May 3, 10 17. 24

Chancel Choir

9:15 am Warmup

11am Rehearsal

Sunday, May 31, Special Music
Sunday Anyone may participate,
just see Christina about your musical selection for worship

The Cherub and Youth choirs will be singing on May 17th, so mark your calendar again

Best wishes
Christina. Music Director

Good Friday Service

Our Good Friday Service this year was a joint effort between St. James and Hamburg Presbyterian. It was a very meaningful service and thanks go out to all who participated. The choirs did a fine job as did the participants. I am happy to say it was well-attended.

Dunkirk Work Weekend

The WAY (Western Area Youth) Work Weekend is scheduled for May 15th - 17th. If you are interested in attending and helping get the camp spruced up for the beginning of the season speak to Karen. Cost for this event is \$20.00 for each youth and St. James Youth Fund pays for \$10.00 of the cost and \$10.00 for Advisors. Forms are available outside the CE office. Deadline to register is May 8th, which means Karen must have you money & registration by May 1st.

CIA News

Ebenezer United Church of Christ hosts Voices of Mercy Concert

The Ebenezer United Church of Christ 630 Main St., West Seneca, will be hosting the Voices of Mercy from St. Luke's Mission of Mercy on May 6, 7:00 p.m. These talented musicians and composers, whom are part of St. Luke's Mission, will be sharing their music. Please join us as they give praise and glory to God as they worship Him in song. There will be a free will offering taken up for the group.

WYNCIC Annual Spring Meeting

Our Annual Spring meeting will be held May 3rd at Amherst Community Church. Music will feature "Strike the Rock", an upbeat, contemporary Christian musical group sponsored by St. Peter's UCC.

Also featured will be Hassan Al Mufti, a classical contemporary pianist.

Members and confirmands will be attending after the Teacher's Recognition Luncheon. If you would like to come along, please see Alva or Bob.

Character Council Of Hamburg, Inc

May - Honor

Honor is respecting others because of the higher authorities they represent.

To demonstrate honor in my life, I will...

Respect my leaders

Treat others with dignity.

Use good manners.

Not be sarcastic.

Remember that "all people are created equal".

Dunkirk Camping News

It's not too late to register for camp. The fee is a little more but worth it. The St. James Scholarship is still available based on half off the Early Bird rate. Get a registration form, complete it, make out a check to Dunkirk Conference Center and give it to Karen.

Family Camp is 7/12 - 7/18

Family Camp 7/19 - 7/5

Family Camp 7/26 - 8/1

Other camps are available as listed in April's newsletter.

If you have questions, stop in or call the church office.

Paula Pfister CE Scholarships

Graduating High School Seniors who have served in the Christian Ed Program during their high school years, including their senior year, are eligible to apply for this scholarship. Applications have been mailed out to those who qualify and must be completed and submitted for approval NO LATER THAN JUNE 1st. The Board of Christian Ed will review the applications on Tuesday, June 2nd so be sure to get your application in on time.

Christian Ed Staff Reviews and Help Wanted Season

It is the time of year when the Board of Christian Ed is calling our CE staff to ask if they will return in the fall. Be on the lookout for board members who are asking to talk to you and get your input about our CE program.

If you haven't taught before or worked within our program, please consider joining us to help work with the wonderful families of St. James. You may speak with any Board member or Karen for information.

United Church Manor News

The United Church Manor at 50 North Ave., West Seneca is a subsidized apartment housing for folks 62 years of age and older. They have a short waiting list in an

affordable
community.

apartment

Karen Reinagel. More information will be in our summer edition of the newsletter.

Dunkirk Day

Church Worship and Picnic

Our theme this year is "Jesus Walks With Me". Mark your calendars for Sunday, June 14th and plan to attend our annual church picnic and worship service at the conference center grounds.

The service begins at 11 a.m. with the picnic immediately following. We are hoping to be able to team up with First Congregational UCC from Angola to celebrate and worship together in song, prayer and praise of our Lord!

Please plan to join us as we complete our church school program and begin our summer schedule. Check next month's newsletter for last minute details and be sure to sign up on the bulletin board to attend. Directions will be available near the church office and bulletin board.

Vacation Bible School at Hamburg Presbyterian Church

Once again St. James and Hamburg Pres and hopefully St. Matthews are teaming up to bring a great VBS program to you. We are excited at this year's plans which are till in the planning stages but hope to have a week long morning program in mid to late August. Volunteers are needed in the kitchen, bake, help with the program, donate supplies, paper products, etc. If you are interested, please sign up on the bulletin board or talk with

Volunteer

The dictionary's explanation of volunteer is "To offer to enter into any service of one's own free will."

How does the church exist without volunteers? We can start with those who help in the office, teachers, musicians, singers, choral groups, and communion helpers. Those who help maintain our buildings inside, outside, and do repairs. Those who send cards, visit the shut-ins and those in nursing facilities. Those volunteers who start new programming in the congregation. The list could go on and on and without the volunteers our church would be a sorry sight.

God bless and thank you to all our wonderful volunteers.

Burgerfest Youth Fund Raising Event, Saturday, July 18th

Plans are under way for the Youth to host a variety of events during the Burgerfest, July 18th. We are hoping to expand on last year's festivities and sell some of the same items such as popcorn, birch beer, freeze pops, theme basket raffles tickets to name a few of the items. We are looking for theme basket donations or items to put in baskets.

Please bring in all donations in by Sunday, July 5th. If you would like to help volunteer on that day, or plan and make up baskets, speak with Karen or Donna. Last year we had a great time and a wonderful group of volunteers. We are also in need of a pop up tent for shade the day of the event. Look for more details in the newsletter and Sunday bulletins.

United Church Home News

The United Church Home has developed a new mission! It is a program for Homeless Youth that require some assistance who for some reason are currently estranged from their families. They are currently looking for a site. It is a two phase project, the first phase being housing where the young people can remain up to eighteen months, and the next step would be apartments into which they could move, if they are ready and able to be on their own (18-21).

There is a wish list on the bulletin board.

THANK YOU FROM ROSWELL PARK

From Roswell Park Chaplin Beth Lenegan:

On behalf of the families of flight 3407 and the staff of Continental Airlines, I would like to thank you for your donations of prayers shawls. As the Red Cross lead Chaplain it was heartwarming

to see how quickly you responded to our call for needed prayer shawls. Families were very appreciative of this tangible gift along with the words of prayer. It has been estimated that over 400 shawls were distributed during the week after the crash. Please share with your staff and members of your congregation the appreciation I send.

Thank you!

Thanks to everyone who helped with the Rummage Sale and Lasertron event.

Thanks to Horst and Don and all who helped paint the classrooms and moving furniture so the floors could be scrubbed and polished. They look great!

Christian Ed

Disaster Response Team

News

While we slowly prepare for the disaster that will happen “some place else”, we have had quite a disaster here in Binghamton, New York. So much of our disaster training is around property damage and helping people recover from the loss and that disruption in their lives. Ours is just the shock of something that cant happen here

The American Civic Center where 14 people died is two properties down from the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Binghamton. There were about 60 people learning in the building at the time. The center provides classes for immigrants to learn English and information to gain citizenship into the United States of America. Most there were students, but some were community volunteers sharing their time and talent.

The First Congregational United Church of Christ held a healing service as did another city church. Saturday, First Congregational was open all afternoon, with members present, for people to use and pray.

Not much Disaster Response outreach for our network to do here except hold the people who are caught up in this tragedy in our prayers. It must be a terrible thing to be so distraught that you feel you must go out and kill people you don't know. It surely is a terrible thing to be the object of such madness.

May we be reminded that no one can know when a disaster will occur, but we can help our churches and members

prepare for such an event. It is the call we have accepted.

Clare Price Coordinator,
New York Conference

News Article

Did anyone see the article in the Buffalo News on April 12th? Our very own Peter Fenn was featured. Peter is organizing a golf tournament for amputees. The article is posted on our bulletin board. Congratulations Peter!!

Historical Church Tours

Three church tours are planned in support of the Religious Arts Center. They are May 7th, June 3rd and July 7th. The morning begins at Fox Run at 8:30 for Continental Breakfast, lunch at a prominent restaurant, a tour of three well - known churches, and return at 3:30. There is a flyer on our bulletin board. Please speak with Alva if you are interested. The fee is \$40 for the day.

FOOD PANTRY

May 3 - pasta/pasta dinners
May 10 - canned/dry soups
May 17 - peanut butter/meat products
May 24 - canned juice/mixes
May 31 - dry milk

What you Plant

If you plant honesty, you will
reap trust

If you plant goodness, you will
reap friends

If you plant humility, you will
reap greatness

If you plant perseverance, you
will reap contentment

If you plant consideration, you
will reap perspective

If you plant hard work, you will
reap success

If you plant forgiveness, you
will reap reconciliation

If you plant faith in GOD, you
will reap a harvest
So, be careful what you plant
now; it will determine what you
will reap later.

Reflection by Talitha Arnold, Senior Minister of the United Church of Santa Fe, NM Holy Stubbornness

Isaiah 50:4-9a

**But the Lord God will help me,
therefore I feel no disgrace,
therefore I have set my face like
flint.**

Stubbornness gets a bad rap in the Bible. In Exodus, God bemoans the Israelites as "a stiff-necked people" for their continual unfaithfulness. In Deuteronomy, parents have the right to stone a stubborn son for his obstinacy. In Proverbs, a seductive woman is marked not only by her lustful looks, but also

her stubbornness.

Stubbornness doesn't fare much better in our time. "Inflexible" and "rigid" are some of the nicer synonyms, along with "pig-headedness," "bullheadedness," and being like a Missouri mule.

But for Isaiah's Servant of God, stubbornness is a strength. Despite the abuse of his tormentors, "I did not run away." Ridiculed and afflicted, insulted and despised, he still has a choice. "I have set my face like flint," he affirms. Therefore, "I feel no disgrace. I shall not be shamed." Jesus called on that same holy stubbornness when he "set his face to Jerusalem," where he would face down Pilate, Herod, Caiphas, the angry crowd, and even death itself.

Despised, rejected, led like a sheep to the slaughter. Like Isaiah's Servant, he was all that and more. But also faithfully stubborn "Keep your hand on the plow," the old Spiritual sings. "Keep your eyes on the prize. Hold on, hold on."

Because he did, we can, too.

Powerful God, thank you for the gift of holy stubbornness... help me to set my face to you like flint. Amen.