

The St. James Connector

September, 2011

St. James United Church of Christ,
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From our Pastor:

September is always an exciting time here at St. James. Many children and families are back after a summer respite, our choirs begin once again, other activities resume, and St. James is a very busy, exciting place to be in September!

As the kick-off to that excitement, September 11th is the opening day of Church School. As usual we have some very special activities planned!!! However, even more important than the fun and the food is that this is a time to worship the one who has given us life, and to teach our children about the faith that has and continues to shape our lives. Hopefully the fun part of the day will get us all excited about the part that is really important, the part that we all need so desperately!

Our community is richer and stronger when we're all active and involved. Make sure you're there on September 12th – and in the weeks that follow. Be an active part of this special community of faith – and know the blessing of that involvement. See you there!

Bob

From our Associate Pastor:

September brings the opening of school and Church School on September 11th. We have been blest with youth during the summer but not the large volume we usually have during the school year. Welcome back to all on the beginning of this new year!

As we greet one another let us share the good news of the blessing we have received from God which most often comes through the church we all have come to know and love. Let us show our love to newcomers by sharing a smile and hand of welcome to our first-time worshipers. As we nurture new friendships in our congregation, we not only move closer toward becoming the church that God calls us to be but we see the fruits of our efforts in the continued growth of our congregation and the growth of talents, and individual resources that new members bring with them.

Alva

Fall Church School Kickoff Sunday, September 11th.

Come and join us immediately following worship for fun and fellowship! There will be lunch, ice cream sundaes, a bounce house and more. It's time to start thinking about your favorite ice cream topping you know the one you are going to bring with you when you come to the Fall Church School Kick Off. Church School Classes will begin following the children's sermon that morning at approximately 10:30 a.m. and run for half an hour to open up the Fall Kick Off. Following worship and class we will all meet outside or in the assembly hall if weather is poor for all the festivities. This event is sponsored by the Board of Christian Ed. We look forward to seeing all of you on Sunday, September 11th.

Bisons Game

Thursday, September 1st at 6:05 pm.

We have been given 24 free tickets to the game. Please sign up if you are interested in a ticket or call the church office. They will be given out of a first come, first serve basis.

Choir & Family Night

On Wednesday, September 14th at 6 p.m. we will gather for Family Night and then the children will go on to choir rehearsal. The menu is pizza, salad, dessert and beverages. Please remember to sign up on the bulletin board or call the church office to let us know if you plan on attending. It helps when ordering the food to know how many to plan on. If you have any questions please feel free to speak with Karen Reinagel or Ciaran Krueger.

Server's

Our next meeting is Tuesday, September 27th at 1:00 p.m. in the Horton Lounge. All women of the church are welcome to attend.

Our Fall soup sale will be held on Saturday October 15th. Watch for the sign up sheet to donate food items and tell your friends so we can have another successful sale.

Sewing Mission

After a restful and rejuvenating summer, we welcome our group back for our first work session of the season. Our meeting will be Tuesday, September 13th at 9:30 a.m. in the Assembly Hall. We are in need of new members and would eagerly welcome you into our group.

Bring your lunch. A fabulous dessert will be provided by Helen Markus.

We look forward to seeing you on September 13th.

Please pick up your contributor's statements at the beginning of October.

Thank You, Barb Reuter

Bible Study

Studying the Bible together is a very basic and important part of our journey as we seek to grow in our faith. After a summer vacation, our Thursday morning Bible Study will resume starting Thursday September 9th. We meet from 10 - 11 a.m. We're starting with II John (a very short book) - and you are welcome to come and join us, on a regular basis if you can, or whenever you are available!

Bible Study

Please join us from 7 - 8 p.m. on September 9th and 16th for a review on "The Story", and how it came to being. God's story, our story and video by Joe Castillo. This is an opportunity to share the Bible.

Men's Breakfast

Men, please join the men of St. James for breakfast on October 16th at 9 a.m. before church. Pastor Eric Johns will be our speaker on the topic of the homeless. Bring a friend and sign up on the sign up sheet on the bulletin board.

Installation

Pat Minnick will be installed as pastor and teacher at St. John's UCC in Strykersville on Sept. 18th at 3:00 p.m. All are invited to attend.

Southtowns Cluster Dinner

Our Dinner this year will be held September 25th at Faith Boston. We will gather for appetizers at 5 p.m., dinner will be served at 6 p.m. and our program will begin at 7 p.m.

Our guest speaker will be Rev. Dr. Rita Root along with Rev. Marna Pritchard who is our new Area Representative.

Please sign up on the sign up sheet on the bulletin board.

New Sign

Over the summer we added a new sign over our Parking Lot Entrance welcoming everyone to St. James. This sign was given in memory of Jim Landes who always welcomed people here. So as you see this sign, feel welcomed, welcome others and remember Jim.

Dunkirk Walk-A-Thon

The date this year is Saturday, September 17th, rain or shine. Check in between 10 and 11 a.m. The walk will begin at 11 a.m. You may obtain pledge sheets in the Christian Ed office or next to the Christian Ed Bulletin Display. This is the 3rd annual Dunkirk-Walk-A-Thon! You may obtain more information by emailing: walk4dcc@yahoo.com. Mike Hanes is the chairperson of this event. Legacy has agreed to match any funds we raise for The Dunkirk-Walk-A-Thon so be sure and let Karen Reinagel in the Christian Ed Office know what you've raised so we can get those matching funds. Last year a group of walkers went to Dunkirk and walked together. Please let the Christian Ed office know if you plan on walking so we can support each other.

Flu Clinic

The Flu Clinic will be held on Thursday, October 13th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Both Flu and Pneumonia shots will be given by the Visiting Nurse Association. No appointment will be necessary. Walk-ins are welcome and most insurances are accepted.

Food Pantry:

Sept. 4 Dry, canned milk
Sept. 11 Cake, muffin, bread mixes
Sept. 18 Canned vegetables and fruit
Sept. 25 Instant potatoes, pasta

Need School Supplies?

The St. James Youth Group has some binders/notebooks from Northrup/Gruman. We would like to help students with a back to school fund raising project. If you need a notebook/binder just visit the bulletin board area and help yourself. Leave a donation in the envelope and take what you need! Your donation will support the St. James Youth Program! Thank you!

Family Movie Night Under The Stars

Join us on Friday, Sept. 23rd at dusk. Mark your calendar to attend our 1st ever Under The Stars Outdoor Movie Night. *(If weather is poor we will view the movie in the lounge).* The evening will be like a drive-in movie from days gone by. We will have a screen set up in the church parking lot and we will be watching a family movie (TBA). Popcorn and drinks will be provided and everyone is invited to bring a snack to share, along with a lawn chair. Sign up on bulletin board if you plan to attend.

A Note to Parents and church members :

If you are someone who would be willing to donate your time and talents to help with the youth program please speak to Karen Reinagel. This can be anything from teaching church school, volunteering to run a youth activity or to chaperoning an event or providing transportation to events.

Major Property Projects

You can see that half of our parking lot was resurfaced over the summer - and that is a great step forward that we can all enjoy! We are also working on having some repair work done on the church chimney and the bell tower. Those are the most immediate needs - and all that we can afford at the moment.

Beyond that we would like to finish resurfacing the parking lot, and there is well over \$100,000 of additional masonry work that is needed to get the exterior of our building back in tiptop shape. We will be working on plans as to how we might go about that (in several phases). In the meantime, if you can give something extra to our Major Property Fund, that will help to get us started!

Bob

Legacy Report

One of the major goals of our Legacy Funds is to provide funding for worthwhile ministries and causes outside of our congregation. The following organizations received Grants from our Legacy Funds. Each was first requested by our Social Concerns Committee, then recommended by our Legacy Committee, and finally approved by our Church Council

- Love in the Name of Christ, Gowanda - \$500
- United Church of Christ, Local Church Ministries - for our UCC Military Chaplains to help serve our military and their families - \$1,000
- Habitat for Humanity, Buffalo - \$2,500
- Churches In Action - \$2,000
- United Church of Christ Wider Church Ministries - special overseas Missionary support - \$1,000
- The New Way UCC, Iglesia Unida De Cristo, the new Hispanic UCC congregation in Buffalo - \$1,000

Good News

Congratulations to Ciaran Kreuger on being named Artistic Director of the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus!

Through song, the Chorus has endeavored to entertain and enlighten, create harmony and celebrate personal and community pride. Founded in 2001, BGMC has grown to more than 70 vocalists and has received numerous accolades for both it's artistic quality and community service, including the prestigious Buffalo and Erie County Arts Council Award in 2008 for exceptional contributions to the arts and cultural community in Western New York and the Empire State Pride Agenda Award for Community Service in 2005.

The BGMC has performed on the Kleinhans Music Hall stage with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra on two occasions, once for a subscription concert in 2004 and another as a benefit for the Orchestra and Buffalo's Olmsted Parks Conservancy in 2006 and was asked to sing in the Viva Vivaldi Series created by Mary Louise Nanna, founder and conductor of Ars Nova. The Chorus performs several full length concerts and appears at numerous fundraisers and community events across WNY each year.

Karen Touris

Youth Planning Meeting

TBA....keep your eyes open for more information in the weekly bulletin. Anyone interested in helping to plan event or work with the youth program are invited to attend.

As always be on the lookout in the bulletin, on the bulletin boards, on flyers and mailings for information regarding youth events that we are planning.

Youth House and Property

Did you know that the youth of St. James are responsible for maintaining and raising funds for the care and operation of the Youth House? We'd like to give a special thank you to anyone that has supported them by financial means, maintaining the lawn, shoveling snow, donating paper recycling items, donating clothing to the St. Pauly's clothing shed, bringing plastic bottles and cans so the youth can return them for the deposit money or supporting any of our many fund-raisers. Volunteers are always welcome to help the Youth with various projects. We have a special group of youth at St. James and your continued support of their efforts warms the heart and helps them pay the bills. Speak to Karen Reinagel if you would like more information!

A Visit to Southern Wineries

If you are interested in doing a Southern Wine Tour, Dave Reichard has graciously volunteered to set it up for us on a Sunday afternoon. It looks like October 9th is a free Sunday. Transportation will be provided and the cost is about \$50. Please leave your name with the church office if you are interested.

Thanks

Thank you for the Reifler Scholarship funds which will help me pursue my Master's Degree at Mercyhurst College in Erie, Pa.
Chad Los Schumacher

The congregation of St. James always has helped me through my most difficult times. Thank you for helping me achieve my degree with the Riefler Scholarship.
Cory Los Schumacher

Thanks to Butch Meyer and his committee for a great new sign at the back of the church.

Community Crop Walk Sunday, October 16th

You can make a difference! You can help feed hungry people. You can help to stock food pantries. You can help provide disaster relief. You can help to provide tools. You can help to shelter refugees.

JOIN THE CROP WALK! Our Church School Children walked in the spring and will be donating their pledges to the community CROP walk.

Walkers will step out all over Western NY this fall! One-quarter of the dollars raised in the CROP Walk will return to communities in WNY for local hunger programs. CROP walks help to support food pantries, Meals on Wheels, meal sites and Food For All in WNY.

Pledge information will be posted near the bulletin board during the month of September up to the day of the CROP Walk. Talk to Karen if you need more information. Remember if you walk please turn your collected donations to the church office so we can keep track of who walked and what they raised.

Summer Church School and Child Care

A special thank you to all who volunteered to help with the summer Christian Ed program. The children enjoyed the activities that were provided for them during the summer months. The following is a list of people who volunteered during the summer months; Robin Lindstrom, Gay Lynn Nelson, Karen Touris, Patty and Sara Jensen, Veronica Pigeon, Dawn Berlin, Vicky Loretto, Hannah Vail and Karen Reinagel. To the parents that brought their children to church during the summer months thank you for sharing them with us.

Dunkirk Conference Center

What a great year to attend camp, the weather was great. We had over 25 campers (some went to more than 1 camp) attend various camps over the summer and legacy gave out over \$3,000.00 in scholarship money. We also had a few campers that brought a friend along with them. There are many opportunities available at Dunkirk Conference Center and I hope when next year's camping season rolls around you will take the time to check out what is going on at Dunkirk. If your interested in learning more about the camping experience at Dunkirk you can always speak to Emily Jensen, Bryce or Brady Reinagel, Spencer Rubeck, Kimberlyn, Luke or Andrew Mumm, Hayley, Drew or Maddy Loretto, Matthew Touris, Madeline or Eliza Vail, Erin Berlin, Dylan Dunham, Joshua or Samantha Waryk, Jason, Eric or Sarah Stuhr, since they know first hand what it's all about.

Vacation Bible School

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped with this year's VBS; Pastor Alva, Karen Reinagel, Patty Jensen, Jenny Mumm, Margaret Stuhr, Bea Young, Dee Fuller, Nick & Philip Reinagel, David Banks, A special thank you to the youth who volunteered Drew & Madison Loretto, Bryce Reinagel, Luke & Andrew Mumm, Sara Jensen,

We had a great week learning about Haiti and we raised \$440.00 to send H2O filter kits to Haiti. If anyone would like to add to that total please make out your check payable to St. James and write on the envelope "Helping Hands for Haiti"

Registry:

Deaths:

Susanne L. Wiltberger
Born: December 16, 1971
Died: June 23, 2011
Service: June 27, 2011

Baptisms:

Ryleigh Jean Schneider
Born: April 2, 2011
Baptized: June 26th, 2011
Parent: Cali Schneider

Tyler Scott Thompson
Born: January 3, 2010
Baptized: June 26, 2011
Parents: Amy & Christopher
Thompson

Christina Michelle Lasalle
Born: June 3, 2011
Baptized: July 24, 2011
Parents: Angela & Jon Lasalle

Wedding:

Eric John Rupp & Keara Ann
Lapare Vacanti
Married: July 9, 2011

Diabetes Classes

This spring Veronica Pigeon and Charlotte Cialone received training regarding diabetes to bring back to St. James. We have a series of classes prepared to bring up-to-date information to diabetics, those who know a diabetic, or those who want to learn more about diabetes.

This will be a six week course, each week covering a different aspect of diabetes. Each class will be about one hour. It is our plan to share this information in October after church.

Please contact the church office or Charlotte Cialone at 649-8493 if you are interested in joining us.

Many Thanks!

Thank you seems so inadequate at times like these. So many of the people at St James did so much for us when our daughter and sister, Sue Wiltberger, passed away. Charley called Alva from Sue's apartment when we learned she had died and she was there within minutes. She helped us make the decisions we were unprepared to be making. Alva and Bob continued to check in to see how we were coping with those difficult first days. Alva's words at Sue's memorial were thoughtful and touching because she's not only a great minister but also was Sue's friend. Many people remarked on how nice it was to have a minister who really knew Sue.

Butch and his crew set up and took down the tables and chairs for Sue's luncheon and made sure everything running smoothly. Charlotte took care of ordering the luncheon fare and my dear Server friends baked and presented the food so Sue's family could spend time with her guests. They even divided the sandwiches like Jesus with the loaves and fishes when it was obvious that the family had underestimated the number of people who would come. I would also like to take this time to thank the Servers group who welcomed Sue to their group with open hearts even though she was quite a bit under the usual age for our group. Sue and I both appreciate the time each of you spent visiting with her and making her feel welcome. She enjoyed all of you!!

Our thanks also go to the many congregation members who have sent cards, called us, donated to HEART and kept us all in yours prayers. It's made a difficult road a little less bumpy.
(cont'd next column)

Near the end of Sue's luncheon, one of our friends remarked that we were certainly lucky to have such a caring, compassionate church family. We're more than lucky Thank you all so very much, – we are truly blessed!!
Helen & Charley Markus
Don & Diane Wiltberger
Michael Wiltberger & Holly Batal

Youth Fund-Raising

Our Youth have many ongoing fund raisers which we hope you will support during the year.

Can & Bottle Drive

If you would like to donate your empty cans and plastic bottles just leave them on the front porch of the Youth House. Please do not leave them by the back door and please no glass.

St. Pauly's Textile

If you have clothing, shoes, sneakers, belts, purses, blankets, sheets, pillowcases, drapes and stuffed toys you are looking for a place to donate, consider putting them in the St. Pauly's shed.. Please **NO** rags, fabric scraps, pillows, toys or household goods, please put clothing in plastic bags.

Abitibi Paper Recycling

Along with our other fund-raising efforts the youth will continue to operate the Abitibi Paper Recycling program at St. James. Please remember to place your paper items in the Abitibi Paper Retriever located at the rear of the St. James Parking Lot. Items that can be place in the Retriever are; newspaper, magazines, shopping catalogs, office and school papers and mail. Please do not put plastic, glass, metals or trash in the container.



St. James
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Thou Art With Me

A reflection by Martin B. Copenhaver, Senior Pastor, Wellesley Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Wellesley, Massachusetts

Excerpt from Psalm 23: "I fear no evil, for thou art with me."

Every parent knows what it is like to be awakened in the middle of the night by the cries of a child who has had a nightmare. Sometimes the fears are easily quelled: "Daddy, I think there are bears in my closet." "No, there are no bears." "How do you know?" "I'll turn on the light and you'll see."

Other times, however, the fears expressed are not those confined to childhood: "Mommy, I'm afraid of being alone." "Daddy, does *everyone* die?" We stumble through our responses. On such occasions we become painfully aware of the limits of words. We are relieved when the child says, "Just stay with me," relieved to learn that the child is not looking for magic words, but for the gift of presence. We are able to respond easily: "Yes, yes, of course I will stay with you."

But then there is one more question: "Will you stay with me no matter what?" Then it is your turn to sense the stir of fear and to feel tears appear in your own eyes because you know that, although you can stay with the child tonight and, if need be, for many nights in the future, there will come a time, perhaps a night much darker than the child has ever experienced, when she will cry out and you will not be there.

This psalm, with its assurance of God's continued presence no matter what a day may hold, was written for that parent and that child: "I fear no evil, for thou art with me."

Prayer: God, I am so grateful that there is no road I might take that I must travel alone. Amen.