

# St. James Journal

Our Mission Statement:  
"We Proclaim and Practice Christ's Love"

December 2020  
[www.stjamesmc.org](http://www.stjamesmc.org)

## December Worship Schedule

Sunday at 9:00 AM  
Online worship  
Wednesday at 6:30 PM  
Holden Evening Prayer

*Online Sunday School will resume in January.  
If your family did not receive an Advent kit  
and would like one, please contact Pastor Jeni.*

## END OF THE YEAR GIFT:

We thank you for your support of the mission and ministry of St. James through this year.

We have been blessed this year to be able to continue to provide opportunities for worship and ministry because of your faithful giving.

In this season of giving, we ask for your continued support as we seek to share the Good News and continue the mission of St. James to Proclaim and Practice Christ's Love. Regular offerings, as well as year end gifts can be mailed to the Church, dropped off, or made online through our Simply Giving Program.

Offerings need to be postmarked by December 31 to be included on your 2020 statement of giving.

Thank you so very much for your continued generosity!

**Office Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday from 9-12. Pastors available other times by appointment.

## An Update from the Return to Worship Committee

Our Return to worship committee is a thoughtful, prayerful group that has spent much time analyzing data, collaborating with other congregations, and working to make the safest possible decisions for our congregation.

As such, we decided in November to step back from in-person worship due to the rising Covid case numbers in our community, the wide community spread, and the numbers of patients in the hospital. As our positive case rate in Cerro Gordo county remains around 20%, we will continue to offer online only worship through the end of the of the year.

This was a very difficult decision during this important, holy season, but one that we felt was necessary. Our building remains open to small meetings, but not to large gatherings. Office hours are Tuesday and Thursday from 9-12. Appointments with the pastors can be made at other times. If you would like to use the building for a meeting, please schedule that with Jill.

We reassess the situation periodically and communicate with you as changes are made.

In the meantime, we have a beautiful Christmas week planned for you, as well as other events planned for you through the month. More information about those events can be found in this Journal, on our website, and on our Facebook page.

Thank you for your continued patience and prayers through this time.

Return to Church Phase Committee:

Shawn Janssen  
Kim Ostrander  
Pastor Jeni  
Jere Merrill

Leonard Johnson  
Cheryl West  
Pastor Sid

Gary Lafrenz  
Nick West  
Jennifer Hansen

# St. James News

## WAYS TO SERVE!!



**CARE PACKAGES:** We are making care packages to be distributed to some of our congregation members the week of Christmas. We have received a Thrivent Action grant to purchase some supplies, but if you would like to make a donation, please contact Pastor Jeni for ideas. We also need people to DELIVER CARE PACKAGES. We will provide you with the care package and a list of a few names, and ask that you make a *contactless delivery*. If you are able to help spread some cheer this Christmas through this ministry, please contact Pastor Jeni.

**CAROLING:** Every year, we proclaim that famous quote from the movie “Elf” that “the best way to spread Christmas Cheer is singing loud for all to hear! While we aren’t able to do our traditional caroling this year, perhaps you and your family or friends would like to provide some music for some of our homebound members. If you are interested in sharing some Christmas carols in a safe way, please contact Pastor Jeni or Pastor Sid for the names of a few people you could visit.

**CALLING ALL READERS, SINGERS, AND MUSICIANS!** If you would like to read Scripture, play music, or sing special music for Christmas Eve or the Sunday after Christmas, OR if you would like to provide a musical devotion or poem for our Church Facebook page in December and January, please contact, Bill Grant, or one of the pastors! Some recording can be done at Church and some can be sent to us from your home.

**MITTEN BOX:** WELCA has placed a Mitten Box (in place of our usual mitten tree) outside the gym door for your donations of mittens, gloves, stocking hats, sweat pants, socks, and underwear for elementary children. Please bring your donations through this month. The donations will be delivered to elementary schools in January.



## Sunday School Christmas Program

Our annual Sunday School program will be **held on December 20** during our online worship service.

If you would like to provide special music or a reading for the program, please contact Pastors Jeni or Sid THIS WEEK.

We would love to record the music and readings at the Church by appointment beginning this Sunday, December 13. An e-mail regarding scheduling will go out this week. Please call or email one of the pastors to set up a time.

**BUILDING USE:** Rooms are available for meetings and other events on a limited basis. There is a COVID capacity limit posted on the doors of each room to ensure proper distancing is maintained during meetings. Please adhere to these guidelines. It is extremely important you contact Jill with the meeting date and time as cleaning will be needed following all events.

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**SIMPLY GIVING** is a great way to ensure your offering gets here even when you can’t so that the mission and ministry of St. James can continue. Simply Giving is our electronic giving program. Forms to have your offerings automatically deducted are available in the church office.  
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**ADVENT BOXES:** On our website, you will find items for a REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR . These are non-perishable food items you can collect during the Season of Advent and bring to Church by Christmas Eve. Just make a box or a grocery bag at home for your items, and put a new item in each day, or you can have weekly items, or even get them all at once! Help us feed hungry people in our community during this Season of Giving!

# St. James News

## GOD'S BLESSINGS TO THE NEWLY BAPTIZED!

Saylor Jaye Albrecht, daughter of Addie and William Albrecht, was baptized on November 29. Her sponsors are Sara and Kyle Peterson. God bless you, Saylor!

Thomas Allen LaVerne Hershey, son of Nathan and Brittany Hershey, was baptized on November 15. His baptismal sponsors are Stephenie & Connor Blankenship and Ashley & Andy Nordaas. God bless you, Thomas!

## OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY:

- To the family of Ruth O'Donnell
- To the family of Ruth Geilenfeld
- To the family of Carol Bartleson
- To the family of Maxine Rose
- To the family of Bruce Nolte
- To Marcia Menke and family at the death of her brother, Doug Owen
- To Leonard and Leslie Johnson and family at the death of Leonard's mother, Carroll.
- To Jay and Sandy Thede and family at the death of Jay's stepmother, Norma

Recently remembered in prayer: Gene Larsen, Mike Cervantes, Jim Patrick, Margaret Christensen

## THANK YOU

Thanks to the following for their volunteer work at St James:

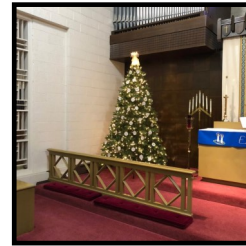
- Cleaning the scuppers at church and the rain gutters at the parsonage and trimming behind snow cone building: Don Priebe, Kevin Longcor, Sandy Thede, Nick West and Alexander Kenward.
- Installing the handicap cap parking signs: Nick West and Alexander Kenward.
- Putting up the outdoor Nativity set: Alf Larson, Don Priebe, Sandy Thede, Tom Yezak, Nick West.
- Jennifer Hanson for her support.

Thanks everyone!

Lou Cira

**THANK YOU** from the Hawkeye Harvest Foodbank for your generous gift of \$87.90.

## DECEMBER SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS



### **ADVENT ACTIVITIES FOR THE HOME:**

You will find many ideas for activities you can do as a family this Advent Season on our website ([www.stjamesmc.org](http://www.stjamesmc.org)). This includes daily devotions, a daily photo challenge, family activities, and more. Be sure to post or send pictures of some of the ways you are celebrating Advent in your home this year!

**HOLDEN EVENING PRAYER:** On Wednesdays, join us for Holden Evening Prayer. Sermons are from our Northeastern Iowa Synod Office bishop and staff. Holden Evening Prayer is posted at 6:30 each Wednesday and available all week.

### **CHRISTMAS WEEK**

**On Wednesday, December 23,** we invite you to join us for **DRIVE-THRU HOLY COMMUNION** between 6:30-7:30 PM. A luminary will light your path to communion and we will play Christmas music through the bell tower. You may want to take your picture by the beautifully decorated Church sign as you wait for communion.

**Christmas Eve Worship** will be held ***online at 5:00 PM*** and can be viewed any time that evening. As you watch, be sure to check in and share the service on your social media pages! And send us pictures of your Christmas worship space. We will have a service with lots of music, readings, and prayer as we celebrate the birth of Christ.

**Christmas Eve Candlelight Service:** At 9 PM on Christmas Eve, we will gather in the Church parking lot for a brief service. We will sing some songs and hear the Christmas story. We encourage you to bring your own candle (real or battery candle!) for "Silent Night." You can stay in your cars or bring a chair if the weather is nice and sit by your cars.

**On December 27,** join us for our traditional **SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS** at 9 AM!



## POINSETTIAS

Poinsettias are requested to beautify the sanctuary.

Poinsettias may be ordered through the church office for \$15.00 each.

**Orders with payment need to be turned in by noon on Tuesday, Dec. 15.**  
***You can also email the office this information and send in the payment or drop it off.***

I would like to provide \_\_\_\_\_(quantity) poinsettia(s)

My/Our Name\_\_\_\_\_

To be place in honor of \_\_\_\_\_

To be place in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Attached is \$ \_\_\_\_\_(\$15.00 each)

### ST. JAMES STAFF

## St. James Contact Information

**Pastor Jeni Bohls**  
pastorjeni@mchsi.com

**Interim Pastor Sid Bohls**  
sid.bohls@gmail.com

**Administrative Coordinator**  
**Jill Nonnweiler**  
stjamesofficemc@gmail.com

**Financial Secretary**  
**Mike Fitzgerald**  
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**Building Supervisor**  
**Jennifer Hansen**  
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**Worship & Music Coordinator**  
**Bill Grant**  
honeyguitar@msn.com

**Kitchen Coordinator**  
**Sherri Fitzgerald**  
sherrifitzgerald1965@gmail.com

**Choir Director**  
**Ashley McLaughlin**

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