

Do you plan on attending Christmas Eve Service?

Call or text, Betty @ 671-0090 or Tonia @ 656-9557

by Sunday December 20th

***We hope we can gather together
to celebrate the night Love Came Down!***

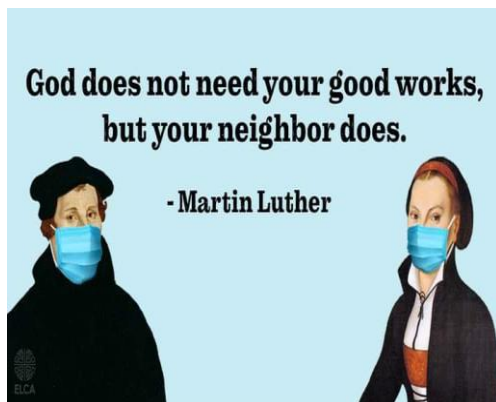
WELCOME to St. James Lutheran Church

**We are having in-church worship service this
Sunday December 13th @ 9:30am.**

We continue to be honoring the 3 W's.....

“WATCH” our physical distancing –

**We have designated every-other pew open in the sanctuary for us to sit in
to make sure we are still distanced properly.**



**“WEAR” masks for
the “Love of One Another”.....**

**We want you to wear your mask
PROPERLY
during the entire worship service.
This will allow us to sing quietly & safely.**

“WASH” and/or sanitize our hands

***Blessings to all of you, whether you are joining us in the house of God,
joining us by watching the FB Live service or in spirit and prayer.***

**Please, if you do not feel comfortable to attend in person,
you have the opportunity to watch FB Live
or a recorded version later in the day.**

We ask you to, if you wish.....

PRINT THE ATTACHED BULLETIN.....

to follow along with Sunday's Service.

*As you are worshipping from home,
you are invited to set aside a sacred space for worship.
Light a candle and set out your bread and wine.*



Worship Service - Streaming live or watch later!

[FB Search: Saint James Lutheran Church of Columbus, Montana](#)

**We appreciate hearing from all of you joining us online.
We would LOVE for you to share your insights or leave us a greeting.
We are blessed to count you among those who worship
at St. James Lutheran Church each Sunday morning.**

At-Home Advent Candles

We continue with the third Sunday of Advent, the season during which we journey to the manger. This is a time of waiting and preparing. (Not to mention decorating and Christmas shopping)

May the lighting of the candles increase your awareness of the Love which came down to us at the birth of the Christ Child.

May God bless you as you prepare your hearts for the arrival of God with us.

St. James Lutheran Church

205 E 1st Ave. N. Columbus, MT 59019

Leader: Pastor Tonia Fisher (406) 656-9557

Email: toniafisherclarkmt@gmail.com

Celebrating 100 years in 2020

December 13th, 2020 – 3rd Sunday of Advent

Worship Service of Blue Christmas



Our Mission: "We worship together, grow in faith, share our faith and serve with the love of God"

Welcome to Worship! We are glad you have joined St. James Lutheran Church

Prelude

I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD." Ps 122:1

Welcome

Announcements & Opportunities for Serving

Let us stand, as you are able, and prepare our hearts for worship

Third Sunday of Advent Litany

P: O God, we light the third candle of Advent.

C: We look to John, the one you sent, to point us to your light. The light will come into our world and enlighten everyone

P: Isaiah announced God's coming to a people exiled in a broken and parched God sent John the Baptizer to prepare the people for the coming of Jesus Christ, the true Light of the World. John called for people to repent of their sins and to live faithfully. He baptized with a cleansing water and proclaimed the new life which Christ, the one who would follow him, would bring. This Advent, we ask for God's mercy and a joyful new beginning.

C: Merciful God, we give thanks that you send messengers like John to call us to greater faith. We ask that in these days we prepare for you in prayer and acts of holy compassion. Forgive us and lead us to your light. Amen.

Advent Hymn: "He Came Down"

He came down that we may have joy; He came down that we may have joy;
He came down that we may have joy; Hallelujah forevermore.

Lighting of our 3rd Advent Candle - JOY

Advent Prayer:

Gracious God. Father of the Prince of Peace, help us to follow where your light shines. Hope is the destination of our faith and peace gives us the courage to start the journey. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen

Gathering Hymn: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

- Vs 1 O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel.
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, shall come to you, O Israel.
- Vs 2 O come, O Key of David, come, and open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, shall come to you, O Israel.
- Vs 3 O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer O sun of justice, now draw near,
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadow put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, shall come to you, O Israel.
- Vs 4 O come, O King of nations, come, O Cornerstone that binds in one;
Refresh the hearts that long for you; restore the broken, make us new.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, shall come to you, O Israel.

Prayer

Let us pray. and we say..... **Amen.**

A Reading from Isaiah 35:1-10

Prayer

Let us pray. and we say..... **Amen.**

A Reading from Psalm 146:5-10

A Reading from Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-9

Reflection

Reflection Hymn: "In the Bleak Midwinter"

- Vs 1 In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as Iron, water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter, long ago.
- Vs 2 Heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
Heav'n and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign;
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
The Lord....God almighty, Jesus Christ.
- Vs 3 What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
If I were a wise man, I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give him, give my heart.

Prayers of the People

A time of silence will follow each petition

Candle Lighting Litany

L: We light this candle to remember those who have been loved and lost. We pause to remember their name, their face,

their voice. We give thanks for the memory which binds them to us this time of year

All: May God's eternal love surround them and us.

(Pause for reflection)

L: We light this second candle to redeem the pain of loss: the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs, the loss of home, the

loss of health. To remember what has been lost to Coronavirus. As we gather up the pain of what used to be, we

offer it to you, O God, asking that into our open hands you will place the gift of peace.

All: Refresh, restore, renew us, O God, and lead us into your future.

(Pause for reflection)

L: We light this third candle to remember ourselves as Christmas approaches. We pause and remember the past

weeks, months and even years of down times. We honor the power of the emotions our memories stir. We

acknowledge the sadness, the hurts, the grief, the pain of reflecting on our own mortality.

All: Let us remember the light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it.

(Pause for Reflection)

L: We light the fourth candle to remember our faith and the gift of hope which God offers to us in Christ – God with us,

Emmanuel. We remember God who shares our life, promises us a place and time of no more pain and suffering.

All: Let us remember the One who shows the way and who goes with us into our tomorrows.
(Pause for Reflection)

Candle Service Hymn: “Jesus, Name above all Names”

Vs 1 Jesus, name above all names, beautiful Savior, glorious Lord,
Emmanuel, God is with us, blessed Redeemer, living Word.

Vs 2 Jesus, loving shepherd, Vine of the branches, Son of God,
Prince of Peace, Wonderful counselor, Lord of the universe, Light of the World.

Vs 3 Jesus, Way of Salvation, King of kings, Lord of Lords,
The way the truth, and the Life, Mighty creator, my Savior and friend.

A Commitment to Remember

In the rising of the sun and in its going down,
we remember them.

In the glowing of the wind and in the chill of winter,
we remember them.

In the opening of buds and in the rebirth of spring,
we remember them.

In the blueness of the sky and in the warmth of summer,
we remember them.

In the rustling of leaves and in the beauty of autumn,
we remember them.

In the beginning of the year and when it ends,
we remember them.

When we are weary and in need of strength,
we remember them.

When we are lost and sick at heart,
we remember them.

When we have joys, we yearn to share,
we remember them.

So long as we live, they too shall live,
for they are now a part of us, as we remember them.

Time for Reflection, Meditation & Personal Prayer

As you lift up the names of those who have died, losses you have experienced this year, or feelings of which you wish to let go, a candle will be lit.

Prayer of Assurance

Offering Prayer:

Generous God, you have created all which is, and you provide for us in every season. Bless all we offer and may, through these gifts, the world receives your blessing. In the name of Jesus, Emmanuel, we pray. Amen.

The Lord’s Prayer

Prayer

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of Your only Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

O Lord, support us all the day long of this troublous life, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then in your mercy, grant us a safe lodging and a holy rest, and peace at the last; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn of the Day: "It came Upon a Midnight Clear"

Vs 1 It came upon a midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold.
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all gracious king,"
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Vs 2 For lo! The days are hast'ning on, by prophets seen of old,
When with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient spendors fling,
And all the world give back the song which now the angels sing.

Benediction

Sending Hymn: "Go now in Peace"

Go now in peace, never be afraid. God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true. Know He will guide you in all you do.
Go now in love, and show you believe. Reach out to others so all the world can see.
God will be there watching from above. Go now in peace, in faith, and in love

Sending

The service is finished and now our service begins as **we go out to reflect God's love which has come down to us.**

*Music Published by Permission, CCLI #11445215
Worship Service recorded by Permission, CSPL #168651*

Montana Synod Advent/Christmas Devotion is available now! Equipping....For the Work of Ministry



Advent and Christmas Devotions 2020

These devotions have been written by leaders of congregations here in the Montana Synod to be a gift to all of us in the territory of northern Wyoming and Montana to help us reflect on God's love and presence and light that come to us even in dark times. Please look for the

themes of comfort, abundance and grace that are ours through Christ Jesus. A word of thanks to the Montana Synod Stewardship Task Force, and Synod staff for their leadership in this endeavor. And a sincere word of thanks to the rostered leaders who have written these devotions for us. A blessed Advent to you and a Merry Christmas. May you be equipped to experience God's hope and grace in these coming weeks.

[Download it here](#)

Wednesday December 9th: Pastor Tonia recorded.....



A “Word on Wednesday” –
“Fear Not – The Light Which Brings Peace”
Watch on St. James’ FB Page –

**Click on the picture to be directed to the church FB Page.

Welcome to a word on Wednesday.
We take a few minutes each Wednesday to hear from God’s Word.
Let God speak to you.
Bring up memories, bring out deep thoughts.
Reflect on how God speaks to our world today, to the situations
we are facing as individuals,
as a church, as a country, and as the world God so loves.

Or read the full Pastoral Letter below!

Welcome to a Word on Wednesday. This is the 2nd week of Advent, when the Church gathers in the present, to ponder the past, and to seek peace for the future.

The season of Advent is a time of waiting for what has come and is coming. During this time, as we journey toward the manger, we are faced with fears, such is life. We stand looking out on a great wilderness, fearing the unknown, feeling somewhat unsettled. On the second Sunday of Advent we lit the candle of Peace. A reading from Isaiah.

*Fear not, for I am with you,
do not be afraid, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you with My victorious right hand. (Isa 41:10)*

It is the hap happiest time of the year. Yet many fear this time of the year. It is uncertain, many are lonely, overwhelmed, stressed. This year our holidays are different. We are advised not to travel or to gather together in large groups. Many students have been going to school at home, so Christmas break is not quite as exciting as usual. Some are working to make this season special in spite of the situation, and are getting a little stressed.

Some of us have lost loved ones and this time of the year is not going to be the same without them. Many have loved ones in hospital, too many are sick with Covid. Some, well, some are having a Blue Christmas.

God speaks to our feelings of sorrow, depression, and confusion and tells us, “Fear not, for I am with you.” Love came down to a confused and lonely couple, out of their comfort zone, but trusting God who had told them to not be afraid. Love comes down to us as we face our blue Christmas – and shows us we are not alone. God upholds us and we are surrounded with the love of others.

Although we feel dismayed, especially this year, we are reminded we have a God in heaven who is with us. Through the Holy Spirit He strengthens us to face the day. To accept the love God has shown to us through the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ, and to reflect this love to others – especially during this season.

Maybe that is why Christmas is a season of giving. We are to give love. Do something for someone else so their Christmas will be special. We need to find innovative ways to be with those who are lonely, to give joy to others. Say yes to joining a service project, reach out, send cards to those in senior care facilities, give to others who have less – feel grateful for all you do have.

We are facing an uncertain time, but we can give those feelings of fear, sadness, isolation, loneliness and loss over to the Lord. For into these very real feelings, God says, “Fear not, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God.” God promises to strengthen us for this season, the rest of this Pandemic, and for all time. God says He will help us and uphold us.

Isaiah spoke to a people in exile, who had lost it all, and a promise was made, “unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

Love comes down and meets us as we struggle to stay healthy during a Pandemic, as we grieve not being able to gather with friends and family. Love comes down to show us the reason for the season, it’s to be a time of love - not - of over achieving.

Love comes down and meets us as we struggle to celebrate a season of giving when we feel like we have nothing left to give. To us God gives peace, saying, “Fear not for I am with you.”

Let us pray

Thank you, Lord, for giving to us Your love and Your peace. We give to You our sorrows, our feelings of loss and loneliness, and ask You to give us Your peace. Strengthen us for this Christmas Season, help us to give love to others. May we be filled with Your Spirit - to reflect Your love to those whose needs and hurts are greater than ours. Give us Your joy so we too may feel the wonderment of Christmas. Lord, cause Your peace to settle over our fears. Amen.



Happy December Anniversary

Steve & Cindy Smith 12/7; John & Arlene Mitchell 12/15;
Dan & Betty Ames 12/26; Don & Peggy Herzog 12/26;
Steve & Denise Cowan 12/28; Eric & Judy Bjorkman 12/30



Happy December Birthday

Pete Hegg 12/4; Dennis Gauthier 12/5; Sydne Wanner 12/6;
Maureen Hemphill 12/7; Nancy Stennerson 12/7;
Rusty Stennerson 12/8; Larry Goehner 12/14; Carrie Williams 12/14;
Peggy Herzog 12/23; Lisa Kem 12/29

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THOSE SERVING US

December 2020 Altar Guild: All share this month and take a Sunday

December 2020 Cleaner(s): Dennis & Merridy Gauthier and Leanne Sekora & Pat Lofing

December 2020 Gate Keepers: Donna Zeigler, Brian & Sheri Luepke,

Steve & Denise Cowan and Larry & Joy Goehner

December Song Leaders at Worship: Brian & Sheri Luepke and Larry & Joy Goehner

Musician(s): Marge Sunvold and Betty Ames

Get your Cookbooks!!

Get your 100th Anniversary etched mugs and wine glasses!!

ALL are for sale NOW! \$10 each

***Pick yours up at the church or let Pastor Tonia, Karen, Denise or Betty know
how many you would like to purchase!***

“Your faith in God’s mission for St. James is unshakeable.”

Thank you for your prayers and generosity. May the Lord bless you and give you peace.

Continued reminder of how to give your monthly tithe or offering to your church..

1. Mail your offering to the church at St. James Lutheran Church, PO Box 356, Columbus, MT, 59019
2. Take your envelope offering to Pastor Tonia’s parsonage and put in the designated box on her front porch.
3. Stop in at your bank and arrange a monthly auto pay transaction.
4. Give online through **Tithe.ly**, a giving app endorsed by the ELCA. Each transaction carries a small fee. Your gift is safe / secure and goes directly to your church or ministry. Plus, you’ll be able to track all your gifts, setup recurring, and more!

Tithe.ly (click on this blue “Tithe.ly” link – takes you directly to St. James’ account to sign-up)

Remember that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever (Hebrews 13:8).

For new prayer requests, please contact **Judy Bjorkman** at 321-2988, text or call or by email at jdbjorkman@hotmail.com

PLEASE KEEP IN PRAYER...

For those hospitalized, in nursing homes and homebound, and those battling cancer or other illnesses.

We offer new prayers for:

Eric Bjorkman as he recovers from surgery to relieve compartment syndrome caused by severe pancreatitis which has damaged his kidneys and lungs. Pray for complete healing for Eric and God's peace and strength for Judy, Gwen and Anders.

We offer continued prayers for:

God's loving presence to surround the residents & staff at Meadowlark Assisted Living and now at Beartooth Manor. Your continued healing God for Glenn Perry, Cindy Smith's nephew; Darlene Kelley, Denise Cowan's sister; Bill Strickland; Roger Mullin, Gary Lofing, Jenny Steffenson. We lift up those living with cancer: Delbert Goehner; Dennis Gauthier; Arvid Barnam, Les Lane and Jim Wilson.

All countries affected by the Coronavirus/Cofid-19 as they struggle to contain it and treat those who have contracted it. Please guide them; heal those who are afflicted with the virus; watch over their doctors, nurses and first responders; and halt its spread.

**Please pray for all of those who serve in our military domestically and overseas,
As well as their spouses and children at home.**

We asked for prayers.....

.....as Eric Bjorkman underwent emergency surgery Thursday (12/10) morning to relieve compartment syndrome caused by severe pancreatitis which has damaged his kidneys and lungs.

Please pray for his healing. This will be a long procedure. Eric is in a medically induced coma for the rest of this week and will spend several weeks in hospital as the surgeons try to relieve the pressure from the inflamed pancreas.

When there is new information, we will inform you. Please keep Eric, Judy, Gwen, and Anders in your prayers. Respect their space as they take time to deal with what has happened. Please, **do not** contact Judy for more information as she is busy dealing with this situation and tending to her family.

If you have a message for Judy, would like to bring them a meal, or help in any other way, please contact Pastor Tonia.



What can St. James do for this beautiful family to relieve some of the stress & obligations of December and life?

- ~ Purchase Gwen and Anders little gifts: magazines, small games, candy bars, movies, pj's, art projects, crafty items, age specific items (17 & 15) etc
- ~ Buy a gas card (Judy will have many trips to Billings)
- ~ Buy other gift cards i.e. IGA; McDonalds; Subway; etc.
- ~ **Call Pastor Tonia:** (406) 656-9557
 - To see when a meal is needed.
 - To see if Judy needs **US** to pick up groceries & items
 - To see if we can do anything at the house
 - To offer "anything" else you can think of that will help them at this time

~ Keep praying for Eric's healing & comfort, wisdom and skill for the doctors and compassion for all who continue to care for him. We pray for peace for Judy and the kids.

With our help, we hope that Judy and the kids will have extra time to be with Eric to help in his recovery and not have to worry about "things".

Bless each and every one of you!

REMINDERS.....



The "PIGGY" Bank and "BARNYARD" Bank Program will end **December 31st, 2020!** Will everyone who has a bank, please bring your change to the church before the end of the month.



Note: Put your coin in a plastic sandwich bag with your name

If you cannot get them to the church, please call Donna (406) 322-4452 and she will be happy to pick them up from you!



Thank you, Donna for starting this opportunity to help and Thank you all for taking this challenge!

The MISSION OFFERING for DECEMBER will benefit the ELCA Charities
i.e. World Hunger; World Relief; Freedom in Christ; Good Gifts

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST. JAMES THIS WEEK & BEYOND...

Tuesday December 15th:

***Bible Study @ 2:00pm @ the Church**

***B.Y.O.B.& B. - Bring your own Beverage, Bible & Book!**

We are reading and discussing the book, *Sitting at the Feet of Rabbi Jesus* by Ann Spangler and Lois Tverberg.



Wednesday December 16th:

Pastor Tonia will record.....

A "Word on Wednesday" – Watch on our FB page.

Sunday December 20th: 4th Sunday of Advent -

Donna Zeigler, LPA is preaching today!

Note: Bible Study will be cancelled for Tuesday 12/22 and Tuesday 12/29.

Wednesday December 23rd:

Pastor Tonia will record.....

A “Word on Wednesday” – Watch on our FB page

Thursday December 24th:

Christmas Eve Service

** a complete list of members attending, which service chosen & where you will be seated, will be sent prior to this service.



Friday December 25th: **Merry Christmas**

Sunday December 27th: **Festival of Lessons and Carols Service**
Church Council Meeting immediately after worship.

Coming in January – Zoom Socials



Pastor Tonia invites you to join her for a time of social zooming. There'll be no specific topic, just a time to visit.

There will be two zooms each week, each will last 40 minutes. Feel free to drop in when you can during that time and to leave when you must.

Fireside Chat – Wednesday's at 7 pm

Gather around, get comfy, sit back and discuss your day, the church, the weather.

It'll just be a time for free-flowing conversations.

Tea with Tonia – Friday's at 10 am

Pour a cuppa tea, coffee, or hot chocolate and come together for a comfy time to talk.

An invitation will arrive in your email each week, along with step by step instructions for those who are new to Zoom.

*Simple
Reminders...*



AMEN!