

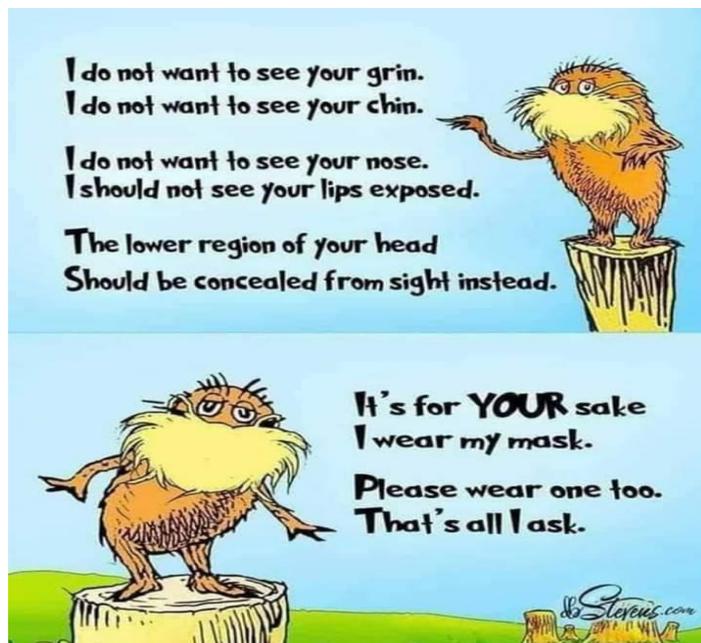
WELCOME to St. James Lutheran Church

**We are having in-church worship service this
Sunday December 20th @ 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.***

facebook



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 fourth 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 20th, 2020 – 4th Sunday of Advent

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

GATHERING

Fourth Sunday of Advent Litany

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

C: We hear your angel Gabriel and witness the faith of Mary. Fill us with your grace and light.

P: Mary was a young, strong, spiritual woman. Even though her life was not easy, she heard God's voice and said yes. Her song was a prayer which would uplift those who were downtrodden. Her lyrics shattered the proud and called the world to change. She would bear within her the promised child, Jesus, the Light of the World. This Advent, we respond to God's beckoning to us as well.

C: Revealing God, visit us and fill us with your Spirit. Bring your good news to life within us. Give us courage to carry your light into the injustices and shadows of this world. Amen.

Advent Hymn: "He Came Down"

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

Lighting of our 4th Advent Candle - LOVE

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.

Confession & Forgiveness

Loving and forgiving God, we confess we are held captive by sin. In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray. We have not welcomed the stranger; we have not loved our neighbor; we have not been Christ to one another. Restore us, O God. Wake us up and turn us from our sin. Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.

Assurance of God's Love

Gathering Hymn: "Joy to the World"

- Vs 1 Joy to the world, the Lord has come! Let earth receive her king;
Let ev'ry heart, prepare him room, and heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and heav'n and nature sing.
- Vs 2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains, repeat the sounding joy
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
- Vs 3 No more let sin and sorrow grow nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make, his blessings flow, far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.
- Vs 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove,
The glories of, his righteousness, and wonders of his love,
And wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.

Prayer of the Day:

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WORD

Hear the 1st Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-11,16

¹Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." ³Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is

with you.” ⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. ⁷Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?” ⁸Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; ⁹and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. ¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

Word of Wisdom, Word of God. **THANKS BE TO GOD.**

Hear the 2nd Reading: Romans 16: 25-27

²⁵Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—²⁷to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

Word of Wisdom, Word of God. **THANKS BE TO GOD.**

Please stand, as you are able, for the Gospel.

The Holy Gospel according to Luke: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Hear the reading of the Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” ³⁴Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” ³⁵The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of the Lord: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Special Music: “The Annunciation and Magnificat” from Holden Evening Prayer

Larry Goehner, Betty Ames and Congregation

The Annunciation Luke 1: 26-28, 30-32, 38

Sung by Larry & Betty

“An angel went from God to a town called Nazareth to a woman whose name was Mary.

The angel said to her, “Rejoice, O highly favored, for God is with you.

You shall bear a child, and his name shall be Jesus, the Chosen One of God Most High.”

And Mary said, “I am the servant of my God, I live to do your will.”

Hymn for Reflection: "Hear I Am, Lord"

Vs 1 "I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in deepest sin my hand will save.

I, who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?"

Refrain: Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.

Vs 2 "I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them. They turn away.

I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?"

Back to Refrain:

Vs 3 "I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them. My hand will save.

Finest bread I will provide, till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?"

Back to Refrain:

Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven. He is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Passing of the Peace

MEAL

....we thank you for your faithfulness to St. James in sharing your tithes and offerings and allowing us to do God's work with our hands.

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.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise ...**

we join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might, heav'n and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Words of Institution

Mystery of our Faith. **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

The Lord's Prayer

Invitation to Communion

Communion will look a little different during our season of Covid-19.

It will still be the Lord's supper.

As you worship from home, you are invited to eat your bread and drink your wine when invited to the table.

We **WILL** now partake the body of Christ **with Pastor.**

We **WILL** now partake the blood of Christ **with Pastor.**

Prayer after Communion..... and we say: **Amen**

SENDING

Blessing..... and we say: **Amen.**

Sending Hymn: "What Child Is This"

- Vs 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!
- Vs 2 Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here, the silent Word is pleading,
Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!
- Vs 3 So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh, come, peasant, king, to own him,
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, Raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!

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 16th: Pastor Tonia recorded.....



A “Word on Wednesday” –

“Be Not Afraid – The Light Which Brings Joy”
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. We are in the Season of Advent, as the Church gathers in the present to ponder the past and hope for the future. 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 3rd Sunday of Advent, the candle of Joy was lit. Today we hear from Matthew.

Joseph, Son of David, do not be afraid to wed Mary (Mt 1:20)

Joseph had just found out Mary, his betrothed was with child. What to do? She must have been unfaithful, bringing dishonor upon both of their families. He could have her stoned. At least he should divorce her, for only a divorce could end an engagement, as it was as binding as a marriage.

His life had been planned, he had a trade, he’d found the perfect, he thought, bride. After their marriage, they’d start a family. Now this. Joseph was a righteous man. He was **unwilling** to publicly disgrace Mary. With compassion he tried to find a way to end their engagement without humiliating her. Now, ... what a dilemma, it was like being thrown out into the wilderness.

As he tosses and turns, an angel appears to him in a dream, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to embrace Mary as your wife, for the One conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”

He accepted what was, as something which should be, even though he may not have fully understood it. Knowing he would have to face judgement; he would be in a place where he could protect Mary and the child from ridicule. It would not be easy, but it would be right and it would be worth it.

Following the strange message, with conviction, Joseph follows these instructions and takes Mary as his wife, to love. He takes the child he names Jesus, as his son, thereby fulfilling prophesy, grafting Jesus into Joseph's royal family tree.

Often in life we are placed in situations where we are not sure **there is** a right answer. Who to honor? Who to protect? Which way will upset the fewest number of people? One feels like there is no way to win and they just hope to get through it.

We can look back on decisions we were forced to make. We can see some of our current struggles, and we know, like it or not, there will be more pop quizzes in the future. **Restless** nights. Decision fatigue.

And God comes to remind us, although sorrow endures for the night, joy comes in the morning. God tells us to not be afraid. Born as a child in a manger, love came down and lived as a human, to show us how to live, how to weigh decisions - choosing to love God and one another. This is how we make our decisions. Putting our own ego on the back burner to follow God's plan for our lives and for the world God so loves.

Joseph gives us such a wonderful example of selfless love. Of listening to God's leading and trusting God for protection along the way. Even when it doesn't really make sense on the face of it. Can we trust God to lead us by the wisdom of God's Word? By the example of Christ's life?

As we look out on our wildernesses, as we wrestle with our decisions, may we listen to God's voice and let the joy of the Lord be our strength so we can persevere and witness to the love of God. Let yourself hear from God and receive for yourself God's joy. Fear not.

Let us pray

Lord, help us to turn to You when we are conflicted. Thank You for caring for us and the dilemmas we face, for coming to us and telling us to not be afraid. Help us to listen and to hear, to follow Your instructions as received in the hearing of Your word, the lives of Your Saints, and the still small voice we hear as we turn to You for guidance. Lord, bring joy into our weary world. Amen.

I bid you Peace

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



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

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.”

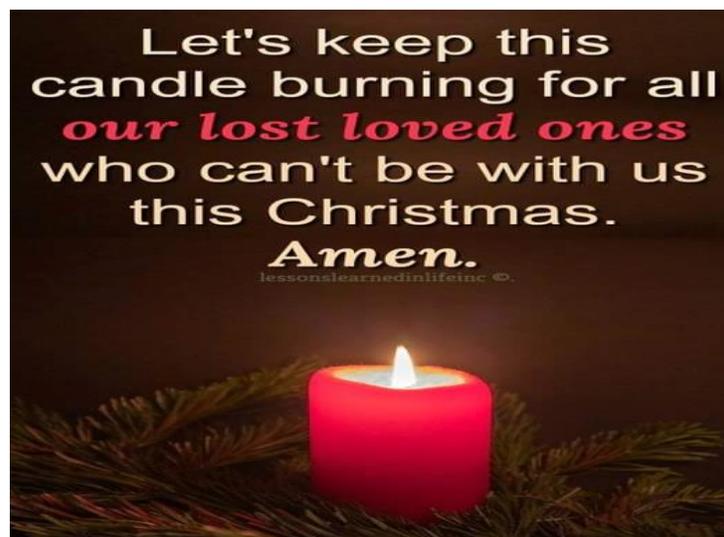
Thank you for your prayers and generosity. May the Lord bless you and give you peace.

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:

Please pray for Roger Mullin as he is undergoing medical concerns. We also pray for peace and comfort for Leslie.

We offer continued prayers for:

Eric Bjorkman. We pray for wisdom and compassion for his surgeons and those who minister to him in the ICU. We also pray for comfort, peace, and wisdom for Judy, Gwen and Anders during this time.

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; 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.**

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 you 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...

Note: *Bible Study is cancelled for 12/22/20 & 12/29/20

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:



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...

**Holidays might be
different this year, but we
still have each other, love
in our hearts, smiles on
our faces and so much
to thank God for.**

Amen

