

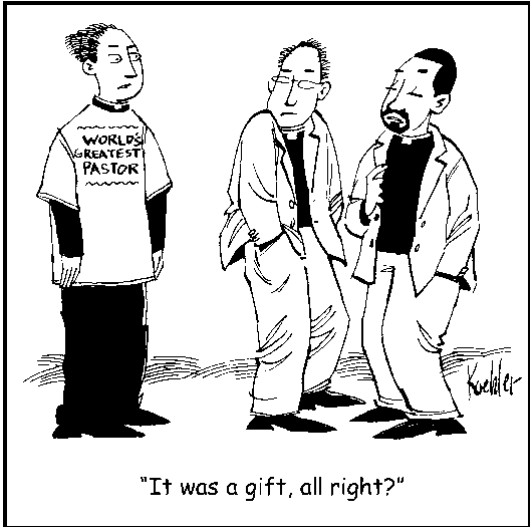


**Pastor's Musings**

How are you looking towards the new year? For some it creates anxiety. I sometimes think "What if..." then all kinds of negative things come into my mind. Before my son Aaron was born, I had an horrible dream that he was born as this black skeleton. Instead of making me more anxious I used it to comfort, bring peace to myself by thinking, no matter what happens it couldn't be that bad.



The Gospel is like that dream, not in a negative way, but it can give us peace about the future. Too often the Bible is seen as a future telling book. We may get that sense as we read Isaiah during Christmas. It seemed to foretell the coming of Jesus. Many Christians have read Revelations as a foretelling of the future, especially thinking the end-of-time is close.



The story of God's presence in our world, the Gospel, is simple, "God with us, Emmanuel." It brings to mind when my son Aaron was very young and had night terrors. What I did was hold him and let him cry until he calmed down and fell back to sleep. God can hold us especially when life becomes difficult or out of control. That is why I so often prayed with patients, saying, "God was born as we are born, lived as we live, laughed as we laugh, cried as we cry and, in the end, died as we will die." Emanuel.

Blessings and Happy New Year,  
Pastor Gordon

"HE WILL BE  
**GREAT**  
AND WILL  
BE CALLED  
THE SON OF THE  
MOST HIGH."  
LUKE 1:32





My sermon for the Fourth Sunday of Advent (Sunday morning) suggested that the biblical story of Jesus's birth did not have them staying in an "inn." Then I read the story of Jesus's birth at the Christmas Eve service and there it was "...there was no place for them in the inn." How come the discrepancy?

The reason is the two "T's" translation and tradition. The Greek word translated "inn" in Luke 2:7 is translated "guest room" in Luke 22:11. ("11 and say to the owner of the house, 'The teacher asks you, 'Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?')") Luke 2:7 is the only verse to describe Jesus's birth and over the centuries that one verse has been elaborated on. For example, the image of Mary riding on a donkey is not in the Bible however it has been around so long and is so familiar it is hard to not see it as being true. The birth story

and all the stories at Christmas are expanded from what is written. It is not to say we should not tell them for they can be helpful in a person's faith journey. There is a lot more that could be said and if you are interested here is a link to the article I read:

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1230&context=studiaantiqua#:~:text=Here%2C%20the%20term%20is%20rendered,as%20will%20be%20examined%20below>).

	<h2>Back Pack Needs</h2>	<p>We have 19 kids. there are 17 children in the BackPacks Program. Food and monetary donations are used to fill the backpacks. \$330 to \$350 is needed every two weeks to meet this need. Thanks to all who regularly support this ministry.</p>													
		<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Mac and cheese</td> <td>Kroger meals</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chef Boyardee meals</td> <td>Ramen Noodles, any kind</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Boxes of cereal</td> <td>Poptarts</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Oatmeal</td> <td>Fruit cups</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Boxed juices</td> <td>Yahoo chocolate milk</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Apple sauce</td> <td>Raisins</td> </tr> <tr> <td>"Hugs" Drink Barrels</td> <td>All single servings</td> </tr> </table>	Mac and cheese	Kroger meals	Chef Boyardee meals	Ramen Noodles, any kind	Boxes of cereal	Poptarts	Oatmeal	Fruit cups	Boxed juices	Yahoo chocolate milk	Apple sauce	Raisins	"Hugs" Drink Barrels
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**January**


7<sup>th</sup> Ellie Sander

14<sup>th</sup> Multiple readers

21<sup>st</sup> Flora Williams

28<sup>th</sup> Danny Snyder

JANUARY



BIRTHDAYS

9 <sup>th</sup>	Steven Straw
19 <sup>th</sup>	Kevin Dull
20 <sup>th</sup>	Blake Dull

## **Prayer Concerns**

### Ongoing Need for Prayer

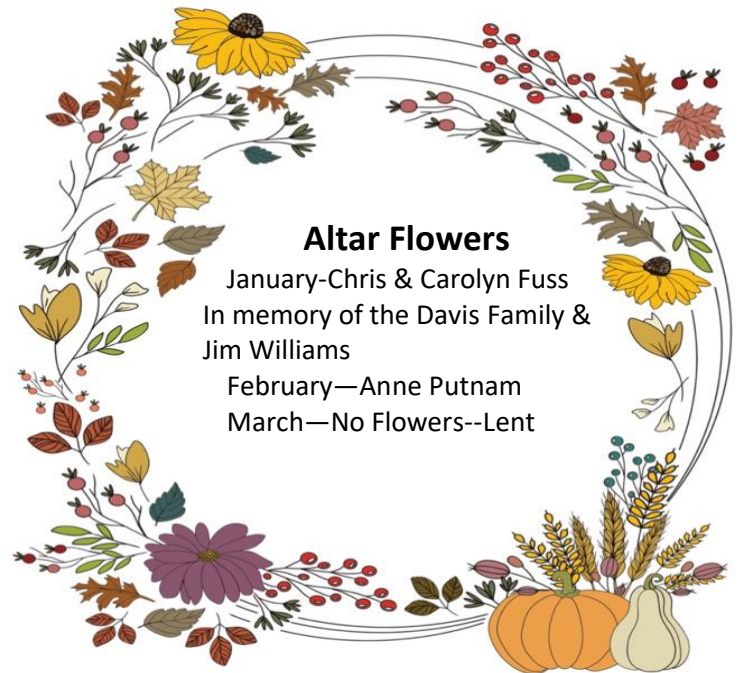
*Norma Turak, Cecilia Shott, Jean Geiser, Betty Diehl, Gillian Taylor, Charlotte Shifflett (Danny's aunt), Inez Johnson (Becky and Debbie's aunt), and Susan Zirges (friend of Sherie & Paul).*

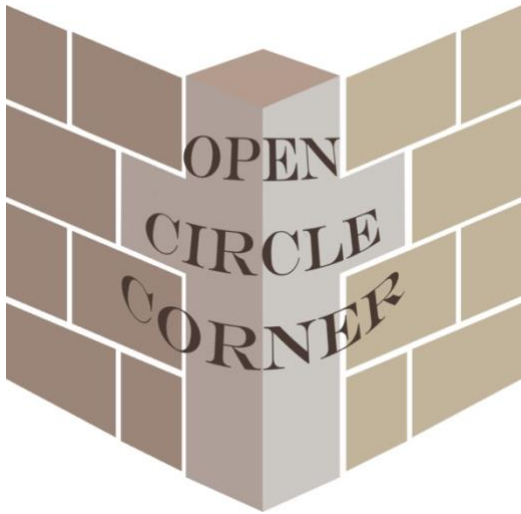
### Prayer Request for

*Zeby (Ellen & Charles' grandson), Charles, Ellen, Claire, Pastor Stewart, and Loretta Whiting (Sherie's mother).*

## **Community Conversations**

- January flowers will be given by Chris & Carolyn Fuss In memory of the Davis Family & Jim Williams
- Choir practice every Tuesday at 6pm at Betty Bartley's home.
- Men's Group meets every Friday at 9:00 am.
- January 5<sup>th</sup> Take down the Christmas Decorations. 10:30 after Men's Group.
- January 9<sup>th</sup> Open Circle meets at 1pm at St. James. Sherie is our hostess.
- January 9<sup>th</sup> Council meeting at 7pm in Fellowship Hall.
- January 28<sup>th</sup> Reports for our Annual Report are due to Anne.
- For prayer concerns, contact Pastor Gordon.
- Council Person of the Month
  - January—Joyce Dull





**On December 5th**, we wrapped up our 2023 year with a strictly social gathering at the Hometown Grill in Staunton. As our hostess, Cindy did it all. She made our reservation, read a devotion, led us in prayer, and distributed a gift to each of our ladies.

There were 13 in attendance. Clockwise around the table, beginning at 7 o'clock – Margie Lambert, Bambi Straw, Sherie Whiting-Rohal, Ellie Sander, Becky Dick, Debbie Snyder, Betty Bartley, Joyce Dull, Flora Williams, Anne Putnam, Ellen McDonald, Ruth Foreman, and Cindy Wright. The buffet was delicious. The service was great. Yet, the fellowship was the best part of all!



**On December 12<sup>th</sup>**, our Quilt Group met for the second time. This day, we wasted no time and went right to work. We already have 2 small comforters tied, 2 being sown, 1 being cut, and 1 being placed. YEAH!

**On December 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>**, Anne joined Pastor Gordon in visiting our ladies who are no longer able to attend worship and/or our Open Circle Meetings. She delivered fruit baskets on behalf of our whole group.



#### **Upcoming Events:**

**January 9<sup>th</sup>** – 1pm. Open Circle meets at St. James. Sherie is our hostess. In the event that Sherie is still on the west coast, Anne will serve as hostess.

**January 23<sup>rd</sup>** – 1 pm. Quilt Group meets at St. James.

All ladies of St. James belong to our Circle. Please consider joining us for meetings and events.

Advent	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
Baptism of our Lord 1/7/2024	Genesis 1:1-5	Psalm 29	Acts 19:1-7	Mark 1:4-11
A Sunday of Christmas 1/14/2024	A Service of Christmas, Lessons and Carols			
Third Sunday after Epiphany 1/21/2024	Jonah 3:1-5, 10	Psalm 62:5-12	1 Corinthians 7:29-31	Mark 1:14-20
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany 1/28/2024	Deuteronomy 18:15-20	Psalm 111	1 Corinthians 8:1- 13	Mark 1:21-28

### St. James Church Business

St. James Lutheran Church  
Council Meeting  
December 12, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

**Council Members Present:** Joyce Dull, Ivan Diehl, Gene Giltner, Anne Putnam, and Pastor Putnam

**Council Members Absent:** Lynda Diehl and Paul Rohal

**Visitors Present:** None

**Call to Order:** Gene Giltner, President, called the meeting to order.

Pastor Gordon opened the meeting with a devotion describing the forgiveness of sins. Our "Advent Attitude" is one of repentance and thankfulness for God's forgiving grace.

The **Minutes** for the November 14<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting were presented. A motion was made by Joyce and seconded by Ivan to approve the minutes. The motion carried.

The **Minutes** for the December 3<sup>rd</sup> Congregational Meeting were presented. A motion was made by Joyce and seconded by Ivan to approve the minutes. The motion carried.

The **Financial Report** for November was presented. A motion was made by Ivan and seconded by Joyce to accept the report. Gene suggested a change in the graph for the Roof Campaign Fund going forward. The motion carried.

**Pastor's Report:** Pastor Gordon reported that he will be updating the St. James website by converting the platform from Wix to Weebly, a more user-friendly option. He is still researching our Face Book account to be able to gain access and update information there. He reported that he continues to visit our shut-ins. Pastor Gordon also reminded every one of the Putnam Open House on 12/17. The congregation is invited.

**Correspondence:** None

**Committee Reports:**

- Property Committee: In Paul's absence, Joyce reported that the following actions were taken in the past month.
  - Crack in the Youth/Adult Classroom was sealed with caulking.

- Outside flood lights on the southeast entrance were replaced with LEDs.
- Kitchen exhaust fan was removed, cleaned, painted, and reinstalled
  - Looks nice, but still inefficient.
- Being unable to locate a protective cover for the carbon monoxide monitor, no further action will be taken.
- Plan to change all locks except the main entrance. Current locks are too worn to rekey.
- Key lockbox will be installed after locks are replaced.
- The vents directing airflow on congregation are configured correctly.
- While we are making good headway, there are still several issues that need attention and more continue to be identified.
- Stewardship & Finance: Anne reported that the audit will be completed in the last week of January.
- Social Ministry & Evangelism: Joyce reported that there are 19 children in the BackPacks Program. She also reported that the net profit from the Oyster Dinner was \$2,025.
- Worship, Music, & Altar: Pastor Gordon reported that we will be using the Holden Evening prayer during the Advent Service on 12/20. Also, the date for the Cantata has been set for 1/14.
- Constitution and By-Laws Committee: No report.

#### **Unfinished Business:**

- Secure the building and make sure the lights are turned off on Sundays after church.
  - December = Lynda
  - January = Joyce
- The changes to the keyholders for the Safe Deposit Box and signers on the bank accounts at DuPont Community Credit Union are pending.

#### **New Business:**

- Committee Reports will be due on 1/28 for inclusion in the Annual Report.
- A Congregational Meeting will be held on 2/18 to vote on the Annual Report.
- Begin planning for the July Fourth fireworks to protect our property and cemetery. Also, the possibility of a fundraising opportunity.

**Next Council Meeting** – Tuesday, January 9th in the Fellowship Hall.

With no further business, Gene moved to adjourn the meeting. We closed with The Lord's Prayer at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Anne Putnam*

Anne Putnam, Secretary

St. James Lutheran Church Financial Report  
November 2023

<b>DCCU Checking Acct Bal as of 11/1/2023:</b>	<b>\$ 1,845.32</b>
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<b>Receipts Deposited:</b>	November 2023	Year to Date
Record of Contributions	\$ 2,860.00	\$ 41,108.00
Loose Offering	199.00	1,428.43
*Property Improvement Fund	235.00	2,065.00
*Social Ministry	30.00	330.00
*Louis Dixey, Jr. Fund	-	1,000.00
*Transfer from Raymond James Acct	7,858.37	15,814.13
*Transfer from DCCU Savings Acct	-	2,000.00
Benevolence	-	3,000.00
Other Special Appeals	-	1,010.91
Dividend/Interest Income	0.46	6.39
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$ 11,182.83</b>	<b>\$ 67,762.86</b>

<b>Disbursed:</b>		
Rev. Putnam - Monthly Compensation	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 13,750.00
2 Services @ \$200	400.00	5,650.00
94 Miles @ \$0.66/mile	90.42	1,190.94
Rev. Trost		
2 Services @ \$200	400.00	4,375.00
48 Miles @ \$0.66/mile	31.68	352.53
Musician - 0 Services	-	1,250.00
Supply Pastor	-	200.00
Mileage	-	7.92
Worship Supplies	-	
- Art Supplies	11.99	131.89
- Annual Bulletin Service	-	398.00
- Church Year Calendars	-	11.97
- Communion Supplies	-	120.30
- Copy Paper	-	95.98
- Toner	-	29.53
- Directory	-	21.00
- Offering Envelopes	-	-
- Postage	-	236.61
- Web Page Renewal	-	-
- Flowers (Easter)	-	313.90
Hannah Pingel, Pianist - 4 Services	500.00	5,000.00
Betty Bartley, Pianist	-	250.00
Glenda Strickler - Sexton	200.00	2,050.00
Cleaning Supplies	24.18	74.71
Christmas Gifts	-	500.00
Bank Safe Deposit Box	-	40.00
Fuel Oil	-	3,146.26
Electricity	104.07	1,184.00
Benevolence	-	3,400.00
Repairs & Maintenance	-	1,238.90
Fire & Liability Insurance	412.40	4,163.48
HomeComing Expenses	-	179.51
*Transfer to Raymond James Account	550.00	6,643.77
*Transfer to DCCU Savings Account	-	-
*Transfer to Social Ministry	30.00	330.00
*Pavillion	-	6,164.62
*New Roof on Sunday School	6,800.00	6,800.00
*Special Appeals	-	200.00
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$ 10,804.74</b>	<b>\$ 69,500.82</b>

<b>DCCU Checking Acct Bal as of 11/30/2023:</b>	<b>\$ 2,223.41</b>
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**St. James Lutheran Church Financial Report**  
November 2023

	11/1/2023			11/30/2023
	<u>Beg Balance</u>	<u>Deposits</u>	<u>Withdrawals</u>	<u>End Balance</u>
Dividend/Interest Income				
<b>DCCU Savings Acct Bal as of 11/30/2023:</b>	\$ 1,005.21	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,005.21

<b>Raymond James Investment Account</b>	11/1/2023			11/30/2023
	<u>Beg Balance</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Withdrawals</u>	<u>End Balance</u>
<b>Detail of St. James Fund Designations:</b>				
Property Committee Fund	\$ 38,263.59	285.00	8,102.00	30,446.59
Youth Account	2,208.46			2,208.46
James Williams Memorial	264.88			264.88
Linda Diehl Memorial	2,670.55		41.37	2,629.18
Non-Designated Funds	6,735.53			9,489.48
Accrued Int. & Dividends & Change in Value		2,753.95		
<b>Balance as of 11/30/2023</b>	\$ 50,143.01	\$ 3,038.95	\$ 8,143.37	45,038.59

<b>Operating Budget Barometer</b>	Nov Receipts	Nov Disbursements	Over (Under)
	\$3,059.46	\$3,424.74	(\$365.28)
*Does not include transfers into or out of the DCCU or RJ accounts or the Property Fund, which is a pass-through to the RJ account.	YTD Receipts	YTD Disbursements	Over (Under)
	\$46,553.73	\$48,133.06	(\$1,579.33)

