

St. James Lutheran Church Staff

Senior Pastor: Pastor David Lechelt

Associate Pastor: Pastor Jill Bergman

Director of Family Ministry: Shayna Anderson

Financial Coordinator: Lana Teigen

Director of Communications: Amanda Burns

Youth Leader: Ryan Walesch

Director of Music Ministry: Brian Halaas

Ringing Praise Bell Choir Director & Organist: Mary Brown

Worship Underground Leader: Gary Heil

Custodian: Mike Harasyn

Nursery Supervisor: Lauren Skalicky

Sunday Morning Custodian: Chris Knight

Reflecting the Light of Christ in Crystal

St. James Lutheran Church

6700 46th Place North

Crystal, MN 55428

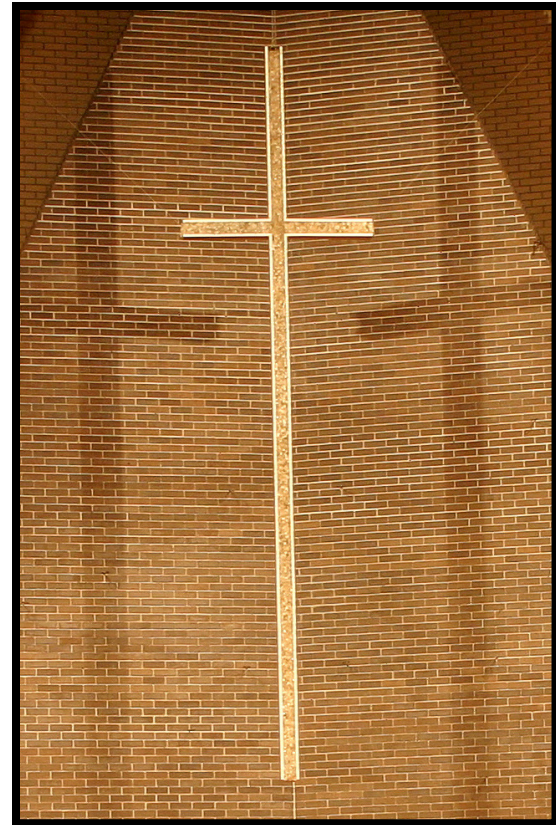
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Reflecting the Light



of Christ in Crystal

*St. James Lutheran Church
2009 Annual Report*

A Word from Pastor David Lechelt

I like “3s” and how can you not as a disciple of the Holy Trinity? So, here is my annual special 3 for thee:

1) *Centered in the Mission of Jesus Christ...* you have called me to join you in opening new doors. When 2009 began, our initial “getting to know each other” gave way to “let’s do something new.” A Council Retreat and Congregational Planning Day provided goals and a new mission statement: “Reflecting the Light of Christ in Crystal.”

We have already tasted the promise of new initiatives like Underground Worship, 9:57, and *Bonfire* cluster events and collaboration.

2) *Staffed to Lead and Support Your Vision...* Pastor Jill Bergman and her family joined us April 15 and it was the best tax day we’ve ever had. Her passion for our youth and their families, inspired biblical preaching, and a persistent vision of *you* as God’s ministers of Good News is exactly what we needed. Brian Halaas joined our staff in February as Choir Director and was promoted as Director of Music in September with additional responsibility of youth choir (*Jubilee*) direction and supervision of all music staff. I am delighted to see Brian grow with his gifts here at St. James and we are so glad to have him on board. Pastor Jill and Brian join a staff that loves to work together and faithfully serve our mission in Jesus Christ. In short, St. James is richly blessed through our staff leadership and support of your response to God’s calling today!

3) *Centered in the Mission of Jesus Christ...* yes, the third thing is the first thing. Your rally around the mission of Jesus Christ through our 2009 year-end financial drive was inspiring to me. And it tells me that we are ready to take the next steps and open the doors of St. James wider. 2009 ends with plans for an in-depth study of our mission field, asset mapping, and a joint plan for new mission in this new decade. I am very dedicated to us reaching out with the partnership of our neighboring congregations to a continually changing neighborhood. If we are to successfully open these St. James doors wider, we must do it together; every member is needed and every congregation is needed.

To this goal ten St. James members will immerse themselves in mission transformation training with members of First and House of Hope in January, 2010. We will share our stories, share our view of the field, open the treasure chests God has given to us, and bring our faith to this new road. We know that after the 3 Kings brought their treasure to Jesus that they returned home to their country by another road (check out Matthew 2: 1-12). To be sure, when you meet Jesus, you go home by another way, transformed!

I believe such transformation is our deepest hunger. 2009 was the year of preparation for this new journey. May we all now say, “let the new journey begin!”

I am so pleased to answer this call with you and to serve as one of your pastors!



A handwritten signature in black ink.

Pr. David C. Lechelt

Our Church will continue to proclaim Christ crucified and resurrected for the whole world. The foundation of our theology will continue to be justification by grace through faith. And we will continue to hold fast and be shaped by our biblical interpretive foundations of Law and Gospel.

I wish you God’s presence and peace in the new year and I look forward to our partnership in this great life changing work.

Bishop Craig E. Johnson
Minneapolis Area Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Mission

Being close to God's heart, when the people of God come the closest to grace upon grace, is what defines mission. It is, the Word made flesh. This past year has been thumping with the rhythms of God's heart in the life of the Minneapolis Area Synod. Congregations responded with generosity and compassion and abundance when the churchwide organization's budget cuts meant limits to new congregations, ethnic specific and renewing congregations. Mission sprouted up in newly identified leaders from Sudan and Liberia, Tanzania and Mexico. After nine years of preparation and hard work, Spirit of Joy, Buffalo, completed and is now worshipping in their first freshly-built worship space. In a new partnership with Luther Seminary, two teams of seminary students probed possible sites for new ministries in the southwest and north central parts of the synod. The year ended with a gathering of veteran mission developers and their on-the-ground counterparts—wisdom, energy and passion for the Gospel described the time together.

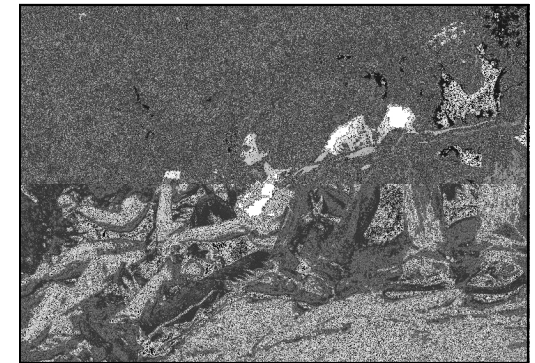
Being close to God's heart will define 2010 in its mission. First ring suburban congregations will band together to explore new ways to be the faithful people of God. Love of neighbor and its call to tear down barriers of race and economic disparity; gender and class; and sexuality will push communities into new relationships. Creating sustainable and designated revenue streams of mission funding will be the challenge of 2010. Emerging mission must be supported among seekers and probing young adults, among refugees from Somalia and southern Sudan. How can we dare to say no/not yet to Spanish-speaking evangelists passionate to start new mission in trailer parks near you and me? 2010 will shape covenant communities around these new and emerging mission sites. Will your congregation be a part of this movement of the Spirit? There is no better place to be than near that life-giving beat of God's heart!

Just as God provided manna in the wilderness for the faithful, God in 2009 provided manna of all kinds to the Lutheran faithful of urban Minneapolis:

- Nine new pastoral leaders to guide congregations into their futures. These new leaders are of great passion, creativity and energy who have much to offer our synod.
- Renewed spirit of congregational cooperation. In northeast Minneapolis, three congregations became one in order to be an even more powerful witness to Christ's presence. In north Minneapolis, a youth ministry cooperative has formed. In south Minneapolis, congregations that speak different languages are coming together for a neighborhood-to-neighborhood evangelism initiative.
- God rained down the courage and the conviction to our urban leaders to take on the challenge to lead our Church into becoming the multiracial Church that God intends us to be. God continues to feed the faithful.
- Presently, the Minneapolis Area Synod leads the nation in the number of candidates for ministry with 130-140 people going through this process.
- We will continue to foster encouragement to congregations that wish to start new missions. Already we are planning congregations in areas where there will no longer be an ELCA presence and strong united congregations are asking how they can help.

We give thanks for the manna which God continues to provide. We rejoice that God continues to supply pastors and rostered leaders for our Church across the nation. As this year unfolds and the U.S. economic recovery progresses, I ask for every blessing upon your congregation and I will continue to look for and seek a new day of revitalization with Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior.

Reflecting the Light of Christ



Reflecting the Light of Christ in Crystal

Blood Drive

St. James held two Memorial Blood Center blood drives in 2009. Thank you for saving a life!

Dinner At Your Door

St. James furnishes 27 drivers who spend 187 hours of their time delivering 874 meals for this worthy outreach ministry. Thanks to all who are willing to donate one and a half hours once a month to give to those who cannot cook for themselves.

We still have a need for more drivers. If you have a drivers license and can spare an hour and a half a month helping others, please sign up.

Judy Olsen: Site Coordinator/Caller

Global Health Ministries

This year Global Health Ministries has shipped nineteen 20 and 40 foot containers of medical supplies to developing countries. Some of the countries that they have shipped to are Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Cameroon, Liberia, Central African Republic, Ethiopia & India. Several people traveling to many different countries come to Global Health Ministries to fill suitcases with supplies to distribute to the needy. Global Health Ministries is truly helping the hands that heal.

Loaves & Fishes

St. James in partnership with House of Hope has served at River of Life Lutheran Church (22nd & Fremont Ave N) since 1984. Provided is a hot meal prepared and served with caring hands. These clients have their basic needs for food, dignity and respect met by the team. A total of 1,870 meals were provided at \$1.07 a meal by these two churches. There are seven other Loaves & Fishes sites in the Metro area. The number of clients rose 15% at all sites in 2008 and has continued to rise in 2009.

NEAR

NEAR stands for Northwest Suburban Emergency Assistance Response. This food shelf was created and named in May 1974 by the pastors of four churches: First Lutheran, St. James, Faith Lillac Way and St. Raphael's Catholic. From those early days the need has certainly risen. NEAR has seen as many as ten new clients each week in the past two years.

In 2009, NEAR provided a monthly average of 293 families (3,517 individuals) 23,875 pounds of food. NEAR distributes food to families once a month. Extra food is given out for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Easter baskets are given to the children. School supplies were given to 180 families with 424 students in September. Deliveries were also made to handicapped clients.

A Word from Bishop Craig E. Johnson, Minneapolis Area Synod, Evangelical Church in America

I have struggled this year on how to frame this report in a way that would be helpful to congregations. This year I have decided to give a straightforward assessment as to the present reality of our Church and look at our hope in the future which is always based upon the grace of God in Christ our Lord.

As I reflect upon 2009, I can't remember a more difficult year for our Church and/or our nation in my 36 years as an ordained minister. I feel like this year has been the "winter of our discontent."

The financial crisis that hit every one of us this year has indeed been felt in the offering plates across our synod. Benevolent giving to the important ministries of our Church like seminaries, colleges, missions, World Hunger, Disaster Response and many others have all experienced downturns. The Minneapolis Area Synod Executive Committee projects our income will be \$500,000 below budget in 2009. We are now in the hard process of balancing our budget and hope to keep important work of the Church intact like finding new pastors and rostered leaders, missions, Book of Faith Initiative, and support of mission and partnerships for congregations. We will use the necessary means to be fiscally responsible in these difficult times. Already our churchwide organization has taken deep personnel cuts that will be felt by ministries around the world.

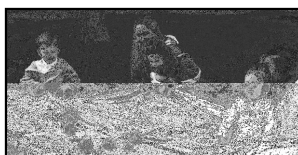
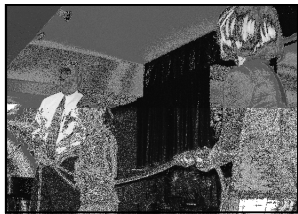
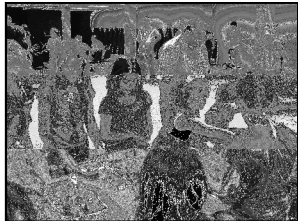
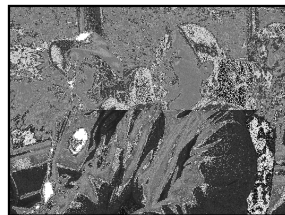
Leadership

The social statement "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust," which was passed by our Churchwide Assembly this summer, is deeply appreciated by most people. The difficulty came for some and a joy for others, when ministry policies were changed which made it possible for some congregations to call persons in publically accountable life-long monogamous same-sex relationships. This has been known as "local option" which means if a congregation believes that the best possible pastor or rostered leader happens to be homosexual in orientation and is in a committed relationship that person may be considered to be called by that particular congregation.

The vote was passed by a majority, but that also means that a little under a half of our voting members at assembly did not want this change. We have had tough votes before (i.e. women's ordination), but we have always been able to live together with our different opinions. At this time as congregations are dealing with the aftermath of this decision, I would speculate that 95% of our congregations will be able to live together with this kind of divergent opinion and 99% of the baptized in the Minneapolis Area Synod will be able to live together with this diversity of opinion. What that means is we will be able to respect the bound consciences of our neighbors on this leadership issue. What remains intact is our polity of congregational autonomy in choosing pastoral or lay rostered leaders. I am deeply grateful for that polity.

During these winters of discontent, I would encourage your patience, prayer, and openness to divergent opinions about difficult issues. I know there are faithful people on both sides of this issue and we rely upon God's strength during the most difficult of times and through conflict that could divide.

Reflecting the Light of Christ



Car Care Saturday

We continue to serve our neighbors by providing oil changes and maintenance checks for their vehicles. In both May and October, we serviced the vehicles of more than 40 families in need. Some return every six months and have become friends, while others find themselves newly on hard times. The people whom we help are so grateful; it makes Car Care a wonderful ministry.

Power of One

Volunteers from St. James, who truly care about children at our neighboring Forest Elementary School, volunteer on a one-on-one basis or work in the classroom helping students progress in reading and math. The assignments are given by the teachers and the volunteers help the student(s) for an hour. Scheduling the day, time and teacher, is coordinated by the Power of One liaison, Shayna Anderson, and the staff at Forest Elementary School. No special education is needed, just love for children and the desire to help! Anyone, young or older, can volunteer. There are 20 volunteers, but the need is great. Consider becoming a volunteer. Your reward is in the eyes and smiles of students when they accomplish another step toward success. We've been able to give not only our time, but gifts of school supplies and money to purchase whatever is needed. Our relationship with Forest Elementary staff and students is incredibly rewarding and enriching, and we look forward to the continued partnership.

Call the church office (763-537-3653) and talk with Shayna Anderson if you are interested in becoming a volunteer and for further information.

Lutefisk Dinner

The Lutefisk & Meatball Dinner held the Saturday before Thanksgiving was another huge success in 2009. From the humble beginnings of serving 100 people the first year, more than 450 hungry lutefisk and meatball lovers enjoyed the dinner this year (about 80% are non-members). To prepare and serve this great meal, many different groups of volunteers are needed. Preparations begin in late October and continue throughout November and include: preparing meatballs, white sauce, rice pudding, coleslaw and dressing, sauces, and peeling potatoes. Then there's the homemade lefse, requiring 200 pounds of potatoes to make 650 rounds of lefse. That's not even getting close to the preparation of the lutefisk. Other jobs are setting up, serving and cleaning up during and after the meal. In 2009, a group of women from First Lutheran Church volunteered to help the day of the dinner; what a huge help!

Mark your calendar for the next Lutefisk & Meatball Dinner on November 18, 2010, seatings at 4:00 & 5:30 p.m.!

Outreach Concert

In March 2009, the Outreach Team sponsored an Outreach Concert with music by St. James' Gary Heil and friends. Benefits from this concert went to fight area hunger. Non-perishable food items were also collected for the NEAR Food Shelf.

Street Dance

What fun for everyone at the third Annual Street dance in September! It was a beautiful night and well attended by many visitors as well as St. James' members. Young and old danced the night away to the music from a DJ. A photo booth, Bingo, face painting, cotton candy, popcorn, frozen treats, root beer floats, inflatables, snack walk and a silent basket auction ensured there was something for everyone!

Volunteers donated their time, talents, prizes and baskets, among other things. They truly made the street dance possible!

Feed My Starving Children

During 2009, St. James packaged more than 100,000 meals at Feed My Starving Children in Coon Rapids (at their Brooklyn Park location for the first half of 2009). All ages made this possible by signing up to package meals for a two hour period. Feed My Starving Children provides meals to children around the world, especially in third world countries. The meals are nutrient rich to help the children to grow up strong and healthy. The December event had more than 65 people from St. James in attendance. Way to go!

Fine Arts Committee

St. James began a Fine Arts Series on Christ the King Sunday, 2009. The first offering of the series was a Hymn Festival led by nationally known organ improviser Dr. David Cherwien. The St. James Choir, instrumentalist, and creative writers joined Dr. Cherwien in bringing well-loved hymns to life. It was an inspiring kick-off!

The vision for this series began with our St. James Endowment Committee. Endowment Fund seed money supported an invitation to share the Worship Center and our very fine Holtkamp organ. Connie Blom, Nancy Lohmann, Deanna Loken, and Pr. David met to organize the Hymn Festival and to make some plans for the future. Cantor Rev. Marilyn Witte will return on May 16, 2010 to join poet Susan Palo Cherwien. The serigraphs of John August Swanson will also be on display at St. James through February, 2010, courtesy of the Carter Avenue Frame Shop in St. Paul. The offering of the good news of Jesus Christ in the fine arts is already expanding at St. James!

Thank you for your support of the St. James Fine Arts Series. If you have ideas or would like to plan future events, please contact a committee member.

-The Fine Arts Committee

A Word from Joel Anderson, Council President

A new year, a new decade, and a new life are upon us. Much has changed in our community, our country, and our world over the past year and past decade. Think for a moment what your life was like ten years ago. Think of all the change that has occurred in your life over that time. Has it all been good? My guess is we have all experienced change that we wish could have turned out better, and we have likely experienced change that has been very difficult for us.

The good news for us is one thing in our lives has not changed, and never will: God's abiding love. I love how His love is illustrated in the story of "Footprints": A man was walking along a beach with the Lord, creating two sets of footprints, as scenes of his life flashed across the sky. When they came to the final scene of his life, he looked back and noticed there was only one set of footprints during the most difficult times of his life, and he wondered why the Lord would leave him when he needed him most. The Lord replied by saying 'My precious, precious child, I love you and would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering, when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you.'

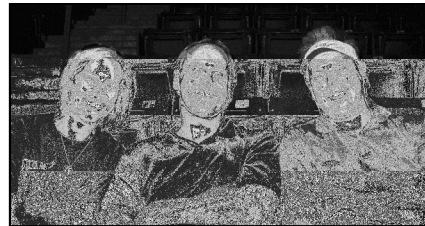
St. James has gone through much change in a short period. I'm thankful for the strong faith in our St. James community and our willingness to let God carry us during our time of change. I think we've even realized that some change is good, and we can grow stronger from it. Our faith in God has been evident to me in the many works that the people of St. James do for the community around us. I'm so proud to be a part of St. James.

I'm also very excited about the pastoral leadership and great staff we have here at St. James. The council and staff are committed to continuing the initiatives approved in 2009: 1) Welcoming visitors, embracing new members, and reaching out to in-actives; 2) Partnering with other churches; 3) Building relationships; 4) Growing disciples of Christ through faith formation; and 5) Realizing and releasing our gifts and talents. Everyone at St. James is needed to make these goals a reality. How will you help St. James at this important stage of its life?

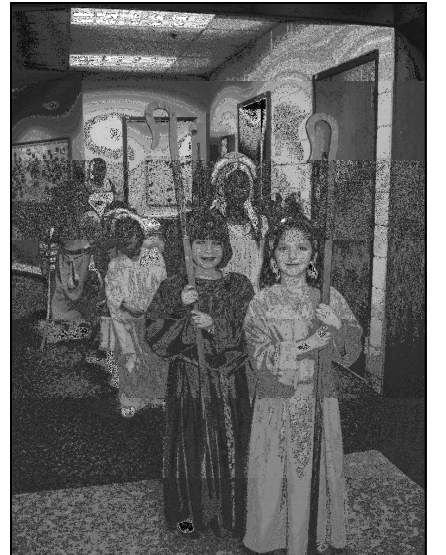
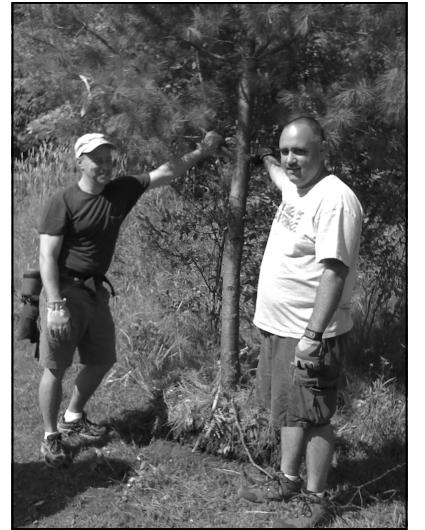
Now is the time for us to put our feet back in the sand, to allow our faith to grow, and to share that faith with our neighbors. Everything is in place, and we are ready. With God's help, let's go and do it together. As a wise man once said, your reward will be great in heaven!

*God Bless,
Joel Anderson*

Reflecting the Light of Christ



Reflecting the Light of Christ



A Word from Pastor Jill Bergman

Nine months and counting! I have been serving Jesus in the midst of St. James for nine months in January 2010 and I am happy to report that Jesus has been at work here, too. I have been so blessed to witness the action of the Holy Spirit all over the place and I'm really excited to share with you what I've noticed.

Let me tell you about our children's education program, called 9:57. Each week since September our children ages 0-8th grade have met to learn about God. I hear them singing their praise, I hear them asking their questions, and I feel their joy as they come to a place where they are loved and valued.



Let me tell you about our Confirmation program. Most Wednesdays we start by singing our praise and faith. Then we pray, play, and learn about the history of our adopted family in the Old Testament. Our praise has been immeasurably enriched with volunteer Brian Spranger, his guitar, and members of the Youth Band. Our learning has been expanded with our adult volunteers who lead our small groups, Delilah LeGeros and Jen Roth, and our Sunday morning program, Andrea Nelson and Maria Weiland. A HUGE addition to our Confirmation program has been our collaboration with other area Confirmation programs in a network we call *Wildfire*. The first Wednesday of each month we join with the other churches for an activity that we couldn't do alone. In this way we see how Christ is alive among us, making us into the Body of Christ *together*.

Let me tell you about our Senior High Youth program. Our youth have been very busy volunteering, painting the youth room, and generally hanging out. They went on a trip in August to Grand Marais, MN where they camped and volunteered in Duluth, a National Forest, and in Grand Marais. Ask them about worship on Eagle Mountain. We even had some other hikers join us for communion! They are currently planning their summer 2010 mission trip to Toronto with 3 other *Wildfire* congregations. They see how this world is a better place because they are in it, because God created them! What a blessing!

Let me tell you about our brand new Young Adult Ministry. Our Youth Director, Ryan Walesch is heading up a new ministry to people ages 18-???. It's focus is fellowship and building an outreach to people at this highly transitional stage of their lives.

Let me tell you about our Contextual Education students. We have two students who are in their first year at Luther Seminary who have agreed to partner with our congregation for two years as they study to be pastors. During this partnership we will give them a church home to practice their emerging ministry skills while we will benefit from their insights and energy. Already they are sharing their praying, writing, and teaching skills with us and giving us great ideas for strengthening our programs.

Yes, Jesus has been, and continues to be, at work here. If I've seen all of this in just nine months, just imagine where we'll be next year!

In Christ,

 Pastor Jill Bergman

2009 Membership Statistics

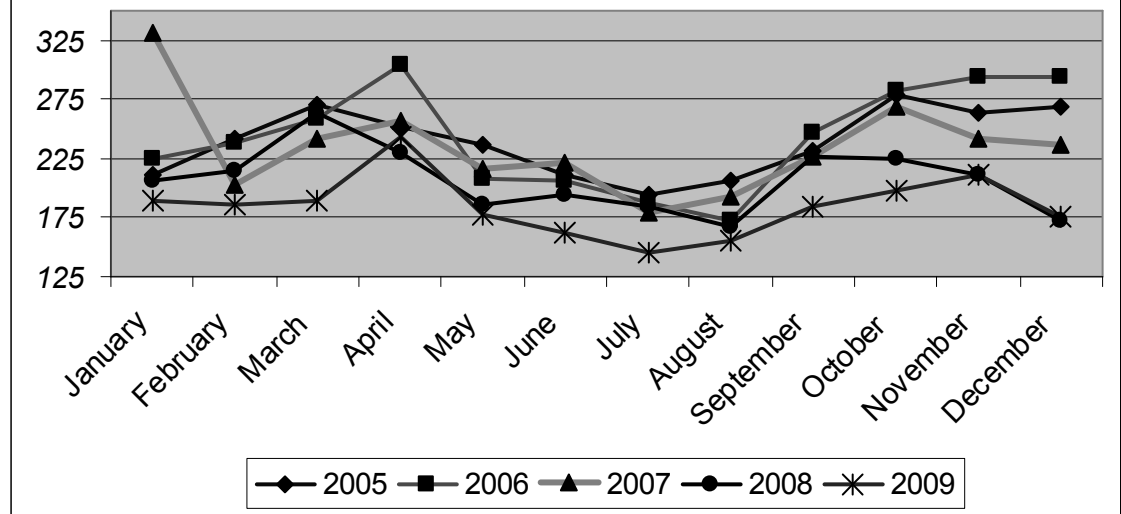
Baptisms 8 Confirmed 9
 Weddings 2 Funerals 10

Membership Numbers

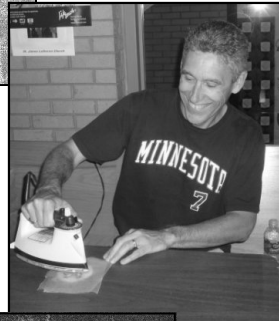
Year	Baptized Members	Confirmed Members
2009	1157*	857*
2008	1428	1015
2007	1418	1024
2006	1422	1031
2005	1452	1043

* Statistical adjustment made in 2009 to reflect more accurate membership.

Average Worship Attendance



Reflecting the Light of Christ



Faith Formation: Family Ministry

Sunday School/9:57

As we closed another season of Sunday school in May, we were looking at dramatic changes for the way we presented Sunday school in the Fall of 2009. Many things needed to change, and they did: Instead of one hour in a classroom, time is now 20 minutes in a classroom or 'small group'. Instead of a brief opening outside the classrooms, we now have dynamic large group openings in Wold Hall, complete with our new projector and screen! We open with music, announcements and a presentation by one of the adult leaders. Instead of calling it "Sunday School", we now call it "9:57" – which is not only the time we begin, but also our theme verse from Luke 9:57, "Someone said to Jesus, 'I will follow you wherever you go'." Our dream is for all children to become followers of Jesus and to walk with him daily. It is SO GOOD to hear children say they LOVE coming to church on Sunday mornings!

Day Camp

What a BLAST Day Camp was! Held the last week of June, 27 children, three counselors from Luther Park in Danbury, WI and a slew of young adult volunteers spent the week singing, playing, eating and praising God! It felt like we had gone away to Luther Park for a week, with all of the energy and joy flowing through the building. Yet, we never had to leave the neighborhood!

Camp was offered free of charge to families. We only asked for a free-will donation if families were able to give. We plan to continue to offer day camp at no cost to families!

Because our week in 2009 went so well, Luther Park counselors will be back at St. James in the summer of 2010. Mark June 27 through July 1 on your calendars now!

Children's Christmas Program

One never knows what will happen when it comes to performance time, but we always know that it will be meaningful, cute and filled with the Spirit of the Season. On a chilly December afternoon, we gave "Glory to God in the Highest" through music and reflections read or memorized by the children. I can't think of a better way to celebrate the Season! Thank you to everyone who contributed in some way to make the program a fun event for all.

There are some wonderful events planned for the New Year...Looking forward to ministry in 2010!

Shayna Anderson
Director of Family Ministry
Shayna Anderson

Faith Formation: Middle School Youth

Some of the most memorable events for the St. James Middle School Youth in 2009 were:

- Playing “Sardines” with Pastor David
- Bowling
- Having a campfire in the church parking lot (along with the Day Camp group)
- Packaging meals at Feed My Starving Children
- Attending the Lutheran Night at the Twins game
- The Agape Event
- Playing kickball
- The NEAR food drive collection
- Joining 9:57 on Sunday mornings
- Helping with the Lutefisk Dinner
- Cleaning cars (and sometimes helping with the oil) at Car Care Saturday
- Volunteering at Community Emergency Services (CES)
- Moonlight Madness (an all-night collection of activities around the Metro)
- Going to ValleyScare
- And of course, confirmation!

Pastor Jill is working hard to plan a fun-filled 2010 for these great young people. You’ll have to wait and see what she has up her sleeve!

Praising God through Worship

Altar Guild

The Altar Guild continued to prepare the worship center for worship each Sunday by changing the altar paraments, preparing communion, and setting up flowers. During 2009, the altar guild also purchased the new paschal candle near the baptismal font. With help from Pastor David, new split chalices and patens were made for communion. The altar guild also donated gifts and gift certificates to Home Free.

Worship Assistant

On a consistent basis, there are more than 30 people who serve as communion assistants, more than 35 who serve as lectors, 12 who serve as assisting ministers, three as sacristans and nine as regular greeters.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who is so willing to take an active part in the hospitality and worship of St. James.

If you are interested in serving in this capacity, please sign up on the bulletin board outside the church office. All are welcome to participate by serving in worship.

Summer Worship

From Memorial Day through Labor Day, St. James changed its worship times. The Evangelical Lutheran Worship service was at 9:00 a.m. and an outdoor worship service was held at 6:00 p.m. A meal was prepared and served at 5:30 p.m. prior to the evening worship.

Worship Underground

In September the second service made the move downstairs to Wold Hall. A projector and large screen had been newly installed and allowed for participation through a PowerPoint presentation rather than a bulletin. This service coined “Worship Underground” was led musically by Gary Heil. Pastor David Lechelt & Pastor Jill Bergman rotated preaching at this service.

Thanksgiving Eve Worship

Thanksgiving Eve brought a unique opportunity to join our other Bonfire churches for a joint worship service. St. James held the service complete with a joint choir. Offering during this service went to the NEAR Food Shelf.

The Sound of Music at St. James

Ringling Praise Handbell Choir

Our faithful ringers had another active year in 2009. In addition to providing special music and/or accompanying the choir, congregational hymns, and other instrumentalists at the ELW worship service at least once a month from January—May and from September—December, Ringing Praise participated in the annual April Spring Ring concert at Elim Lutheran in Robbinsdale.

We have many handbells who would like to get acquainted with more ringers, since these bells are not getting a chance to ring. Our weekly rehearsals are held Tuesday evenings at 6:30 in the balcony. Please contact Mary Brown to find out about the ringing opportunities and the really good food at our parties!

The St. James Choir

The St. James Choir has seen growth in the past year as the group continues to fill an important leadership role during worship. In addition to offering anthems, the choir has contributed unique verse settings and liturgical leadership.

After the successful collaboration with neighborhood choirs for a Thanksgiving Eve service, the choir looks forward to future collaborative possibilities.

Second Sunday Singers

After the success of a Summer Choir, the Second Sunday Singers also formed in 2009. On the second Sunday of each month, any members of the congregation are invited to quickly rehearse a simple anthem at 8:15 a.m. to be presented that same Sunday during worship at 8:45 a.m.. Accommodating to people's complicated schedules, it has been an exciting way to welcome members into music ministry at St. James.

Youth Choir (Jubilee Singers)

The St. James Youth Choir was formed in 2009. The group now known as the Jubilee Singers rehearses weekly on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. Offering an anthem once a month, this group of youth in grades 5 through 8 has been a welcome addition to both Sunday services.

Faith Formation: Senior High

2009 was another wonderful year for the St. James youth. One very memorable event(s) was the Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) drive that the youth along with all generations of the church participated in. A challenge was made to package 100,000 meals in 2009 and with monthly outings to FMSC we exceeded our goal by 13,000 meals, saving many, many children all over the world from dying of starvation. Something the entire congregation should be very proud of.

We, of course, did many of the usual events as well. From lock-ins to car care, bake sales to Valley Scare, movie nights, bowling and the ever-loved lutefisk dinner. (Clothespins for your nose optional) the year was packed.

Our summer trip this year to the north shore was unlike any trip I have ever gone on. Having our base camp located in Grand Marais, we planted trees in a state park, helped a men's shelter in Duluth, (we learned many lessons there) dug a drainage ditch and weeded flower boxes at the Cook County Community Center. We also visited a national historic landmark in Grand Portage and climbed to the highest point in Minnesota to have the most scenic worship service I have ever had. Some things were very hard, but we all banded together to get the job done no matter how difficult physically and mentally the task was. Special thanks to Pastor Jill, Brian and Thea Spranger and of course Cookie (aka Joe London) for helping me make that trip a memorable one.

With 2009 behind us now, I wonder where all the time went. I will have many fond memories, but look forward to 2010 with equal enthusiasm. Upcoming plans and trips will undoubtedly make 2010 another great year to remember. As always, I thank you for the opportunity to work with your youth. May God bless each and every one of them!

Sincerely,

Ryan

Ryan Walesch

Faith Formation: Adults

Mary Circle

The Mary Circle continued to meet the third Wednesday of each month at 12:30 p.m. in the Peter & Paul room for Bible study with Pastor David Lechelt or Pastor Jill Bergman. All women are welcome to join this circle!

In December the Mary Circle had their annual Women's Christmas Brunch with the theme *The Presence of Christmas*. Ann Zemke of Crocus Lane Quilts provided the entertainment with her wide knowledge of quilting, while Gary Heil walked around and played his guitar. Mary Brown also provided the music for some Christmas carols.

Rebecca Circle

The Rebecca Circle meets September through May on the third Wednesday of the month at 9:30 a.m. in the church library. Pastor Jill or Pastor David lead a Bible study each month. Currently the group is following *Lutheran Women Today*. In addition to the Bible study, the Rebecca Circle provides fellowship, friendship, coffee and treats. There are currently 10-12 members, but new members are always welcome!

In April the Rebecca Circle had their annual Spring Luncheon. This apron themed luncheon entitled *In Praise of Aprons or Tie One On* was complete with the history of aprons, a style show and an apron parade!

Adult Education

Every Sunday between services you will find faithful seekers in the Peter and Paul room ready to dig into God's Word, engaging speakers and presenters, reading the latest books regarding the Christian journey, and simply asking the core questions of God's gift of faith. If you haven't checked out Adult Education on Sunday mornings at St. James, please do; it's always engaging, full of laughter, and supportive of "growing with the questions."

Speakers for 2009 included Dr. Darrell Jodock of Gustavus, Rev. Don Rudrud of Community Emergency Services, Rev. Jonathan Buuck of the James Company, Ahmad Fahmy on Islamic beliefs and practices, and Terri Endres, Director of Making A World of Difference. Our very own Roland Smith also inspired us with "The Life and Times of Martin Luther."

Pr. David led studies of ELCA social statements on Human Sexuality and *Peace Not Walls* (regarding peace initiatives in the Middle East). We opened the *Book of Faith* with an 8 week study of the Book of Genesis, asking historical-social questions to ones of devotion and life application.

John Shelby Spong's autobiography and the popular book regarding the Trinity and the gift of grace, *The Shack*, were also fertile ground for bringing our faith to life today.

Men's Group

Let it be made known throughout the land that 2009 was the year that the Men of St. James began gathering for breakfast and the enjoyment of one another's company! This third Saturday of

Property Committee Accomplishments

The Property Committee helps maintain the church's grounds, including the building structure and its environment.

This year we completed/sponsored the following:

- Spring and Fall Clean Up Days: clean windows (inside and outside), change furnace filters and clean duct work, check emergency lights, clean light fixtures and replace light bulbs, yard work (planting, weeding, sidewalk edging, etc.)
- New projector and screen for Wold Hall
- New outdoor sign electrical work
- Maintain the heating and cooling systems
- Kononia & Montessori area: replaced 10 single pane glass windows for double pane, installed new window blinds, replaced furnaces, retiled the bathroom floors

The Property Committee would like to thank all those who helped fund and volunteer hours toward keeping our facilities welcoming to others.

Endowment Fund

Endowment Funds provide a legacy for the continuation of Christ's ministry in this community for the years to come. St. James Lutheran Church has four endowment funds. They are:

- The Ruth Lund Scholarship Fund. This fund provides scholarships for qualified St. James members, interns, and contextual education students attending a seminary. This fund was created by a gift from Neilan Lund, a former St. James member, in memory of his wife Ruth. This year St. James received a \$10,000 gift to this fund from his estate. This gift, together with the donations he made during his lifetime, exceeds \$40,000!
- The Children's Education Ministries Fund. This fund was created by gifts of almost \$15,000 from a St. James family. It provides money to purchase new and innovative material for educational programs for our children. It provides funds to supplement and not supplant the existing budget.
- The St. James Endowment Fund. Donations to this fund, unless otherwise specified, are divided equally between a Capital Account and a Benevolent Account. Income from this fund is used for selected Capital projects and Benevolent purposes.
- The Una Lamb Endowment Fund. This fund was created from memorial gifts. Its primary purpose is to support programs such as Child In Our Hands and Ministry of Parenting, and to provide monies to welcome Children and Youth.

Since their inception, these funds have provided over \$27,800 for scholarships, educational material, capital projects, and community outreach. Contributions to these funds are always welcome.

The Endowment Committee is responsible for the overall administration of the endowment funds. During 2009, it also:

- Sponsored the initial Fine Arts concert with Dr. David Cherwien in November. A second Fine Arts concert is scheduled for May 2010 with Marilyn Witte, former St. James pastor.
- Arranged for a Thrivent Financial Workshop on Charitable Giving: How to Make a Difference by Giving Back.

God has you in his will; Do you have St. James in your will?

Library

From January through June, the library continued their "Collections" program. Thank you to all who shared their interests, passions and pictures. 2009 topics included: bears, dolls, vintage toys, wedding pictures, fishing gear and pictures, hats and gloves, beautiful baby photo contest, stuffed animals, aprons and cookbooks, trophies and awards, pictures of mothers, Bibles, and graduation pictures.

In spring and fall, the library staffed a Book Give Away table at Car Care Saturday.

Through June, Sunday School classes came to the library for story time and the opportunity to check out books. With the new schedule this is no longer possible. Teachers are encouraged to schedule time for their class to come to the library.

The goal of the Summer Reading Club is to encourage children to continue to read throughout the summer. This year's theme was A Sweet Treat for Summer Readers. Those completing the requirements received 1/2 Price Book Store gift cards and ice cream sundaes.

The library donated \$1,000 to the church budget.

The library continues to add new books by request, by donations from members and from new purchases. Money raised by selling Scandinavian Calendars will be used to purchase new books.

In November, the library purchased a new computer and can now offer online access to the library catalogue through the St. James website "Get Involved" icon.

In December, the library hosted a tea featuring a reading of the book *Esther's Gift* by Jan Karon and Esther's renowned Marmalade Cake.

Please use your St. James library.

Office Helpers

A wonderful group of helpers gathered each Friday morning to assemble a total of 11,885 bulletins during 2009. This group also gladly stapled the NEAR flyers to the grocery bags, assembled the Annual Report and funeral bulletins, along with anything else that was asked of them.

A total of 5,520 Herald newsletters were assembled and driven to the bulk mail center in Minneapolis during 2009.

Nancy Lohmann was gracious enough to continue to proofread the bulletins and Pews News each week and the Herald each month.

Thanks to everyone who helped make St. James run smoothly in 2009. We couldn't do it without you!

Holiday Craft Fair

Over 25 local artists gathered at St. James in November to sell their hand-made items. The proceeds from the sale of vendor spaces and concessions goes to the Senior High Mission Trip Fund.

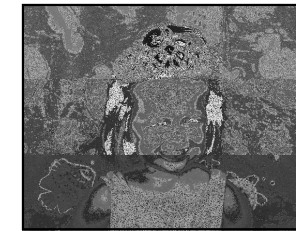
Young Adult Group

A group for young adults (ages 18-??) was formed in late 2009. This group has a social event each month. The group went to the Acme Comedy Club and had a holiday party in 2009. Watch for exciting events for the coming year. If you are out of high school but are too young for the Over 55's- this group is for you!

the month gathering was usually three tables strong with plenty to talk about and plenty of coffee to whet your whistle. And over breakfast you could count on hearing that there are more tables to be filled, more eggs to crack, and a heartfelt desire to have men of all ages come and join this fellowship.

Roland Smith was St. James' representative for a regional gathering of men at First of Crystal on November 8. Men of St. James joined a dinner gathering of 100 men of our area, telling jokes, breaking garlic bread together, and delving into God's Word with Dr. Bob Albers around the theme of "Stress and the Male Faith." We learned of Jesus' example, the invitation to trust, and the calling God has given to be Men of Faith. It was an inspiring evening and the men of St. James look forward to hosting a regional gathering at St. James in 2010.

The Men's Group decided at their December meeting to give their monthly donations to summer camp scholarships in support of the faith development of our elementary aged youth.



Fellowship, Prayer & Support

Over 55's

St. James congregational members who are 55 years “young” meet the fourth Monday of each month. The members gather for fellowship, programs, entertainment, trips, potlucks, picnics or plays. Individual members plan the monthly programs. The annual dues are \$5 per person. The group votes on which charity to donate monies to in the community. New members are always welcome.

Quilting

Twice a month, the St. James quilters gather to make quilts for overseas and local charities. More than 200 large and baby quilts are made each year, in addition to many lap robes for hospice and nursing homes. Quilts are also for sale at any time by contacting the church office. Proceeds go toward buying supplies for more quilts. In 2009 quilts were donated to Home Free, NEAR, Loaves & Fishes, North Ridge Care Center, Ambassador Good Samaritan Nursing Home, and Harbor Lights.

Fabric is available for volunteers to use to sew and donate tops, which the quilters will complete and distribute. Donations of fabric, yarn, sheets (new and used), blankets and antique satin drapes are welcome. Volunteers are also invited to join the quilters on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month between 9:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

“Shawls...symbolic of an inclusive, unconditionally loving God.” Have you ever wondered what a prayer looks like? It is the soft, warm, loving embrace of a prayer shawl wrapped around a recipient's shoulders. St. James has been involved in the Prayer Shawl Ministry since December 2002. Faithful knitters, crochet-ers, and those delivering the shawls have been touching many lives through this loving ministry of craft and prayer. The group meets the first Thursday of each month at 10:00 a.m. and the third Thursday at 7:00 p.m. in the Library. All skill levels are welcome to attend.

During 2009, 13 shawls were delivered to those in need of comfort and solace.

Contact Linda Judge (763-533-4081; judgetlinda@msn.com) or Sandy Johnson (763-557-9858; sandyymm@yahoo.com) for more information.

Prayer Line

Caring people, praying for people! Prayer requests are made by calling the church office (763-537-3653) during business hours, talking with one of the pastors, or by calling Sandy Johnson (763-557-9858) in the evening and on weekends. Your prayer requests are given to dedicated pray-ers on the Prayer Line via telephone or email. The requests are then held in prayer by the Prayer Line.

In 2009, St. James had 36 compassionate pray-ers and welcome anyone who wishes to join. There isn't any training, just love and concern for your neighbor. For further information call the church office or Sandy Johnson.

Grief Support Group

In December, Chaplin Alexandra George offered a Holiday Grief Support Group for those who have lost loved ones. The morning and evening sessions were well attended; you can expect another session sometime during 2010.

Celebrating St. James

Marketing Team

The marketing team had a very busy and eventful year in 2009. The team of six volunteers accomplished the following:

- Redesigned website (by Amanda Burns)
- Updated bus bench design (by James Graham) for 47th & Douglas Drive.
- Outdoor sign on the corner of 47th & Hampshire
- Church photo directory
- Hosted a technology class about Facebook & Twitter
- Street Dance promotion with new yard signs and newspaper advertising

Archives

The mission of the St. James Archives committee is to research, collect, and organize the historical records and materials meaningful to St. James

The five panels from the Koinonia room were wrapped in muslin for protection and are stored in archives. A gift of past Vacation Bible School projects was received. Some of them were used in the Archives centerpiece at the Stewardship dinner in November.

Funeral Lunches

Lunches were provided following ten funerals as a form of hospitality to families in time of need during 2009. Members are called and asked to furnish salads or cakes for meals following funerals or memorial services. Others are needed to help on the day of the service to set up, prepare food, serve and clean up. Volunteers are needed to help with this ministry.

At this time, three people are calling to ask for food donations. Two or three more volunteers are needed to alternate for this responsibility. More help is also needed to help set up, serve and clean up on the day of the service. Please contact the church office if you would like to serve in this important ministry.

Page Turners Book Club

“A book is like a garden carried in the pocket” (Chinese proverb). The Page Turners Book Club meets the first Tuesday of each month in the Peter & Paul room, from 7-9 p.m. It is an open book club, so new members are welcome at any time, as well as one-time “drop-ins” for certain book discussion. The book choices cover a wide range of interest, both fiction and nonfiction. Good books, good discussion, lots of laughs and great refreshments! Book lovers of all ages, middle school and up, men and women, are always welcome. Watch the *Pews News* and *Herald* for the current book choice each month.

Meet & Eat

Meet & Eat continued to be a huge success in 2009. Thanks to Ron and Carol Olson for preparing delicious meals each Wednesday evening. A special thanks goes to Marlene McGuire for helping set up Wold Hall each week, and to Joe London, Stan Charging and others who helped prepare meals when Ron and Carol were unavailable.