



The July 2026 Epistle

A publication of St. James Lutheran Church,

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MESSAGE
from the
VICAR

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you!

Last Sunday we read the final segment of our three-week series in Matthew 10. Jesus sent the 12 disciples out to share *the good news of the kingdom* and instructed them on what to do when they run into opposition to his message.

Early in the discourse Jesus said to his disciples, "*The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.*" The scarcity mentioned in this description is not in the harvest but in the laborers. Jesus is saying: **There are people in the world who want to be blessed by receiving the good news. We need more people to go and bring it to them!**

Often this line is applied to the context of vocational Christian workers like pastors and missionaries - and it should be applied to that context because we need more pastors and missionaries. But the work of sharing the good news of the kingdom is not relegated to professional Christian workers alone. **The call to spread the good news is for all the baptized.** You and I are co-laborers with Christ in the fields of God's mercy. We are bringing the good news to the world and as St. Paul said in Romans, *how beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good news!*

So my question is - Where are my people at? Where are the laborers who will bring the harvest in? Where are the people who have been so deeply affected by the good news brought to them, that they want to bring that good news to others?

Maybe it's because of the opposition that we don't immediately jump to the work of being a laborer in the fields with Christ. **There is opposition.** Jesus says, *"I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves."* It certainly may take some tenacity, ambition, and courage to invite someone to church or serve someone in need. But before we feel the pressure to muster up more courage that we have in this moment, it helps to remember God doesn't ask for more than we can give. Spreading the good news takes two simple things - **eyes to see where God is already working around us** and **faithfulness to join God there.**

When we go out, it isn't like trying to start a fire in the woods without a match. The spark and the fuel are already there. God is alive and active in the world. We simply join God in the work God is already doing around us. Doesn't it feel good to know we aren't left on our own? Our efforts are simply a response of faithfulness to walk in the steps God has outlined for us.

Isn't it reassuring to remember that God does the heavy lifting as the good news is spread throughout the world? I pray we all look for opportunities to invite our friends, neighbors, and colleagues to church and look for ways to love our neighbors by doing works of mercy in whatever way we can. God goes before us. And God does the heavy lifting.

I pray that God will abundantly bless you so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

Vicar Bryce Hewlett, SAM

SUMMER KIDS CLUB!

The next Summer Kids Club for elementary children at St. James is scheduled for Wednesday, July 8th from 6-8pm. We will only hold the event if enough kids are interested, so please let Bryce know if you plan to send your kids! You can call or text him at (563) 279-4584.

P R E S I D E N T ' S M E S S A G E

Happy July, St. James!

We are finally in the beautiful month of July! As the days are longer and the nights are warmer, may your heart also be filled with light. This is a season of growth — not only for the fields and gardens but for our souls as well.

July reminds us that freedom is both a gift and a responsibility. Just as the fireworks of Independence Day illuminate the night, let our lives shine with kindness, truth, and compassion. Let us remember that true liberty is not found in doing whatever we please, but in choosing what is good, just, and loving.

In these summer days, I encourage you to pause and notice the blessings that we are provided with — the shade of a tree, the fragrance of blooming flowers, the taste of a cool lemonade, and the quiet moments when your spirit feels at rest. These are gentle reminders that God's mercies are new every day.

May this month be for you a time of renewal and joy. Walk in faith, speak words that heal, and let your actions be a testimony of grace. May we all be steadfast in hope, knowing that the One who began a good work in us will follow with us through completion.

Be good. Do good. God bless,

Madeline Schmidt



Sarah Circle will meet **Tuesday, July 14th at 1PM**. Marilyn Pieart is the hostess. We are waiting for a volunteer for the lesson leader.



St James GANG

The St. James GANG will be meeting on July 16th at 11:30 a.m. There will be a sign-up sheet in the narthex on Sunday, July 13th.

We will be having a very special person to entertain us and answer questions we may have of him. Come and be well informed!

As usual, we will be meeting in Fellowship Hall and bringing our own lunch. Dessert and beverages provided. You won't want to miss this one!

Pat Larson 563-343-2142



July 2025

Four St. James Quilters met June 23rd and finished 3 quilts.

If you have Tuesday afternoons free and want to help people survive, we are looking for people to help assemble quilts.

If you have a sewing machine and can sew a straight seam, when there are kits in the narthex to be sewn, pick one up and choose how you want to sew the strips together then sew seven ½ inch seams. That is all.

Quilters will not meet in July.

Pieces be with you,
Shirley Richlen



Social Ministry News

The rummage/ bake/ plant sale went really well. We made over \$2100.00. Many thanks to all who contributed in any way. The people from Camp Courageous were willing to take all we had left over, for which we were very grateful. They even were able to take some of our old very heavy tables, and chairs. Some of our proceeds are being used to purchase 10 more of the new tables. We also were able to purchase 10 box fans for Casi to

distribute to the needy. We had a salad/ dessert supper on Monday the 15th. We always have "show and tell" to brag about the treasures we purchased. It was a very fun evening. Many stories to share.

This rummage sale is our only source of income for the community outreach we do. This includes serving 6 Churches United meals at Zion Lutheran Church, purchasing fans, giving tree expenses, and much more. We are very blessed, and exhausted!! But we're looking forward to next year! It is a busy week, exhausting, but filled with good fellowship and laughs!

The next Zion meal is July 27th. Currently we are looking for people to help with serving the Zion meals! It takes less than an hour. It is very fulfilling and they are so grateful for whatever we serve! If you would like to volunteer, please contact Judy Larson at 563-340-7902!

Bingo is July 16th at Bettendorf Health Care. The residents win prizes such as small stuffed animals (Beanie Baby size), and quarters. We enjoy calling the numbers for them and they are always happy to see us!

Our meetings are at 4:00 p.m. on the first Monday of every month – please consider joining us and thanks for your continued support!

The next meeting is July 6th at 4:00 p.m. in the conference room.



**Friday, July 17th
Outreach Event
7:30-9:00 p.m.
Ice Cream Social at
Veteran's Memorial Park**

St. James Lutheran Church will host an Ice Cream Social at the Bettendorf Community Band Summer Concert Series on Friday July 17th.
7:30pm - 9:00pm
FREE admission for concert goers

Join in serving or come enjoy the music! Volunteers are needed to scoop ice cream, pour lemonade, and bake pies. Sign-up sheet is in the Narthex.

Contact Carolyn Ackerman with any questions at (563) 296-0084.

**Wednesday, July 29th
Young Adult Gathering
6:00-8:00 p.m.**

Gathering will be held at Devil's Glenn Park, Shelter 3, Bettendorf. Join us for a potluck followed by a short time of prayer and worship! Contact the office at 563-355-4161 for more details.



**SATURDAY
JULY 25TH**

**5:30-10:00 P.M.
ST. JAMES' FEAST DAY
CELEBRATION**

VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK

In place of Saturday Service.

Service at 6:00 p.m.

Potluck at 6:30 p.m.

**Contact Justina Pessein with
questions at
(563)940-3782.**

July 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6/28	6/29	6/30	1	2	3	4
9AM Worship 11AM Dixon Service			6-8PM Food Pantry	9-11AM Food Pantry 11AM Service at BHCC		No worship due to holiday 4th of July
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
9AM Worship	4PM Social Ministry Mtg. 6PM Adult Ed. Social Statement		6-8PM Food Pantry	9-11AM Food Pantry 11AM Service at BHCC		8AM Men's Prayer Breakfast 5PM Worship
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9AM Worship 10AM Coffee & Convo. 10AM Finance Mtg.		4PM Property Mtg. 6PM Christian Ed. Mtg.	6-8PM Food Pantry	9-11AM Food Pantry 11:30AM GANG 2:30PM BINGO at BHCC	7:30-9PM Outreach Event	5PM Worship
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9AM Worship 10AM Council Mtg.		1PM Sarah Circle	6-8PM Food Pantry	9-11AM Food Pantry 11AM Service at BHCC		5:30PM St. James' Name Day Celebration @ Veterans Memorial Park
26	27	28	29	30	31	8/1
9AM Worship	6PM Adult Ed. Social Statement	NO Quilting	6-8PM Food Pantry 6-8PM Young Adult Gathering Devil's Glenn Park, Shelter 3	9-11AM Food Pantry		5PM Worship



St. James Property Committee Update

The new sound system is nearly completed. Thanks to Steve Abel and others for getting this new system installed.

We are seeking a second bid on roofing (the flat roof areas only). The first bid from Sterling is \$71,600.00. This is something that will need to be done in the future, so we want to get an idea of the cost now so that we can start planning for this larger expense.

The first HVAC water treatment has been completed.

Social Ministry has offered to purchase six new white tables. We will be ordering these from Sam's to match the tables we already have.

We have received no further communication from Iowa American Water regarding the overage we were charged for.

Saturday evening service – power strips are not allowed as per the Bettendorf Fire Department inspection. PLEASE be sure ALL doors are locked when you leave the building. We are considering looking at some sort of security system.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, July 28th .

SUMMER OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULT EDUCATION

*Jesus said, "Go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'
For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."*

Matthew 9:13

During the month of July, come explore two significant statements on social teachings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). These gatherings will review the documents and provide time for reflection and conversation. Our goal is to deepen our understanding of these issues and how countless lives are impacted by them, so we can more deeply learn mercy and compassion for ourselves and our neighbors.

Copies of these statements can be found online and in the Connections Corner in the Narthex.

Monday, July 6th at 6:00 p.m. - *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (c. 2009, updated 2025)

Monday, July 27th at 6:00 p.m. - *Abortion* (c. 1991)

Trusting God to Meet us in the Hard Work of Discernment

The ELCA teaches that faith is active in love (Gal. 5:6), and love seeks justice in public relationships and social structures (Amos 5:24). In grateful response to God's grace, our church supports members' daily vocations, encourages learning and moral discernment, develops social teaching and policy, and bears public witness. In these efforts the ELCA seeks God's guidance amid the ambiguity of social life. We seek to welcome diverse gifts and perspectives in using resources that help us to talk and act well together.

Social teaching is our church's official teaching and policy. It also provides guidance for moral discernment and action for individuals in the ELCA. These statements address significant social issues (such as racism or genetics) and institutions (such as healthcare or economic life) and are adopted by a two-thirds Churchwide Assembly vote.

July Worship Assistants

<u>Date</u>	<u>Assisting Minister</u>	<u>Reader</u>	<u>Acolyte</u>	<u>Usher</u>	<u>Usher</u>
<u>7/5/26</u>	Pat Larson	Shirley Richlen	Needed	Fritz Voss	Judy Larson
<u>7/12/26</u>	Tom Sladky	Judy Larson	Jude Hewlett	Jerry Nichols	Yvonne Nichols
<u>7/19/26</u>	Ellen Hogbin	Judie Brooks	Jude Hewlett	Pat Larson	Shirley Richlen
<u>7/26/26</u>	Justina Pessein	Kaylee Pessein	Eli Pessein	Ron Mekalson	Kelly Crooks

Altar Guild: July 4 Pat Larson
 July 11 Shirley Richlen & Judie Brooks
 July 18 Shirley Richlen & Judie Brooks
 July 25 Marilyn Pieart & Diana Worley

*Please Note: If you find you cannot serve on the date/time scheduled, please arrange for your replacement, then **call or email your scheduler** to advise the name of your replacement. Your gracious cooperation is very much appreciated! Thanks!*



Proverbs 27:17
*Iron sharpens iron,
 and one man
 sharpens another.*

JULY BIRTHDAYS

7/8 SHELBY MILLER

7/9 WAYLON MANTHE

7/11 MADDIE SCHMIDT

7/13 ERIC ANDERSON

7/13 LINDSAY MILLER

7/18 MARILYN PIEART

7/26 SHERRY GERMANIO

7/26 SHIRLEY NIEWALD

7/29 MASON ANDERSON

7/29 MAKENNA ANDERSON

7/29 STEVE PIEART

7/30 JANENE ANDERSON

JULY ANNIVERSARIES

7/22 ERIK & JOLEEN BAKKEN

7/31 JASON & MELISSA FORARI

Prayers for Healing and Support

Congregational Members

Ed Arp, **Bev** Chappen, **Maxine** Duhm, **Sandy** Henry,
Frieda Houldsworth, **Jeryl** Krumbholz, **Jim** Krumbholz,
LaVonne Mienke, **Shirley** Niewald

Family and Friends

Amanda (friend of Melissa), **Annette & Rick** (Steve & Sue Miller & Pat Sorenson's sister & brother-in-law), **Brenda** (Friend of Janene Anderson), **Donna** (Ed Arp's sister), **Drew** (Pat Larson's friend), **Emmett** (friend of Diana Worley), **Hattie** (Frieda's sister),
Jason (Sherry Germanio's son), **Karen** (Shirley's Aunt), **Larry** (family of Doug Larson), **Lylah** (friend of Noa),
Mark (friend of Jason Forari), **Michelle** (friend of Joleen & Erik Bakken),
Pat (Judy Larson's Sister-in-Law), **Paul & Joanne** (family of Pat Larson),
Phil (Steve Miller and Pat Sorensen's brother),
Sloane (friend of Deb Crooks),
Stacy (Fritz' son's cousin), **Steve** (friend of Pat Larson),
Wally (Frieda's nephew)

Those Whose Duty it is to Protect Others

Anthony Karasek (Judy Larson's great nephew)
LT. **Chris** Tribble USN (Erik & Joleen Bakken's friend).
CPT **Eli** Smith (Jerry and Myrna Mattly's grandson)
Nathan Pearson USAF (Jenna & Kane Schmidt's friend)
Tyler McLaughlin, First Responder (Family of Pat Larson)

*If you need to add or remove someone from
the prayer list, please contact the church office.*

