

## ST. JAMES LUTHERAN MESSENGER SPECIAL EDITION

<sup>3</sup> *Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees.*

<sup>4</sup> *Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." (Isaiah 35)*

Out of an abundance of caution and out of concern for those among us and in our community whose health puts them a bit more at risk to the serious complications of COVID-19, the Church Council yesterday voted to suspend worship services and all activities (*with the exception of the Food Bank on March 17 and the Backman-Deal wedding on March 21*) through the end of March. We will reassess the situation at that point.

Your offering envelopes are designed so you can simply add a stamp and mail a check (no cash through the mail, please)! There is an explanation for the app Give Plus elsewhere in this newsletter if that would be easier. Remember that the congregation will have on-going expenses.

If the business shut-downs cause you hardship, call me and I will try to help you find whatever assistance is available.

Being God's people together means, ironically, that we should spend some time apart. Love calls us to do unheard of things from time to time. Hopefully no one in our congregation or in our extended family will be affected by this flu-like disease. Those affected often have relatively mild symptoms but some cases are more serious. We want everyone to be safe. So, again, wash your hands often.

Resources:

Center for Disease Control website ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov))

SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC): For general questions about COVID-19, the DHEC Care Line is here to help. Call [1-855-472-3432](tel:1-855-472-3432). Staff are answering calls from 8 a.m.-6 p.m. every day.

I am including in this newsletter a commentary on Psalm 23 written by the Rev. James Howell, Pastor of Myers Park Presbyterian Church in Charlotte that I think is a marvelous reflection on that Psalm of comfort for us to consider. Read it this Sunday for your personal devotions.

*Pastor Kevin*

---

### **Posting of the banns of marriage:**

*Kayte Backman and Andrew Deal* will be united in Holy Matrimony on Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup>. Before the days of marriage licenses, this would have been a time to voice objections. Now it is a time solely to rejoice in the love they have found and to offer our prayers for their happiness and success.



---

The Committee of 100 Dinner has been postponed from May 5<sup>th</sup> to the fall.

## The 23rd Psalm is a perennial favorite.

<sup>1</sup>And yet for all its familiarity, there may be some nuances to the Psalm we have missed, some reflections scholars might share to deepen our sense of the most comforting words ever composed.

Consider one four letter word in verse four: *thou*. The second-person pronoun "thou" is old English, a relic from the 1611 King James Version. The vast majority of the time we prefer modern translations of the Bible—but Christians cling to a 400-year-old translation of Psalm 23. Why is this? Could it be that elevated language, words with some lineage and dignity, are appropriate to the grandeur, the majesty, the immeasurable grace of God who is indeed our shepherd?

And here is a fascinating item: James Limburg points out that, in the original Hebrew of Psalm 23, there are exactly twenty six words before and after, "Thou art with me."<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the poet was boldly declaring that God being with us is at the very center of our lives.

God is *with* us. We are not alone down here. The whole Gospel is that God is *with* us. Jesus was called "Emmanuel," which means "God *with* us." John Wesley's dying words were, "The best of all is, God is *with* us." God doesn't shelter us from trouble. God doesn't magically manipulate everything to suit us. But the glorious *with* is unassailable, unchangeable, the only fact that matters.

This marvelous news draws our attention again to the *Thou*. For the first three verses of the Psalm, God is spoken of in the third person: "The Lord is my shepherd... *he* leads me... *he* restores my soul." But with the *Thou*, the third person shifts to second person: "for *Thou* art with me, *thy* rod... *thou* preparest a table..." Instead of talking *about* God, the Psalmist begins *to* talk to God; instead of God in the head, God is a friend in the heart. A conversation happens, a relationship grows. This is faith, the only true comfort.

If we genuinely and in the marrow of our being believe that God is with us, then the only logical consequence would be, "I shall not want."

We've read it, uttered it, delighted in it: but have we thought about it? Or lived it out in reality? I shall not want? Our whole life is about wanting: I want, I shop, I look, and when I have it, I want new stuff. In our consumer culture, I *shall* want, I shall always want. I shall never stop all my wanting because the mall entices me with ever new, shiny, unnecessary objects, and I am instructed from childhood on to want—and not merely to want, but to *have*.

I shall not want? "The Lord is my shepherd." If the Lord is the shepherd, then I am a sheep, and the reason sheep need a shepherd is simple: sheep nibble themselves lost.

Sheep are not brilliant creatures, and we cannot be flattered that the Psalm thinks of us as sheep. Leave a sheep without a shepherd, and he nibbles a bit of grass here, wanders over there for some more, sees a patch just past that rock; and before you know it the sheep is lost, or has fallen into a ravine, or been devoured by a wolf.

The Hebrew original is perhaps better translated, "I shall lack nothing," or "I shall lack no good thing." What do I lack? Well, I lack an iPhone or a house at the coast. I lack a fully-funded pension and I lack... We can fill in the blank endlessly.

But it is more to ask "What do I lack?" in the sense of "What really matters that I do not have?" What, at the hour of death, would I dare not lack? The answers aren't iPhones or vacation houses. Jesus spoke with the rich young ruler (Luke 18:18-30), who claimed to be good, and had plenty of stuff. What did Jesus say? "One thing you still lack."

We don't lack lots of things: we lack just *one*. The one thing we lack is intimacy with God. The one and only thing that can cause us to say, "I shall not want," or "I lack no good thing," is God. Nothing else. Just the Lord who is a good shepherd to his<sub>2</sub>sheep.

God is our satisfaction. God is good enough. Or, to be truer, God exceeds whatever we may think we desire.

If "Thou art with me" is the focal point of the Psalm, and if "I shall not want" is the beginning of a new life of being satisfied with God, then the end of our life with God is this: "I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Why do we want stuff like iPhones and vacation homes? Is it sheer coveting? I don't think so. We want communication devices because we long to connect. We want a house, or a better house, because no matter how far we travel, no matter how happy or sad our nuclear family might have been, we carry inside a yearning for home. In our mobile society, we may be clueless about where that might be, or if it really exists. But we still want, above all else, to go home.

Perhaps T.S. Eliot was right: "The end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time."<sup>3</sup> Or consider this: if you are lucky, you have fond memories of summertime junkets to the home of your grandparents. For me, it was a house that is factually small, but as a child it was large in love, in special treats, in cousins and fun. It was another home, one without problems or homework or chores, a special place of a more unconditional kind of love.

Does God give us such places in our memory so that we will learn to desire the home for which God destines us when this life is over?

Isaac Watts often recast Psalms into slightly different language. His metric version of the 23rd Psalm is eloquent, elegant, and moving: "The sure provisions of my God attend me all my days; O may Your House be my abode, and all my work be praise. There would I find a settled rest, while others go and come; no more a stranger or a guest, but like a child at home."<sup>4</sup>

Like a child at home. Yes, some children bear the misfortune of a home that is more warfare than peace, more division than love. But the fact that we recoil at the idea of any child anywhere not enjoying peace and love at home is evidence that God has wired into our hearts a keen sense of a proper destiny, which looks like me as a boy at my grandmother's table or on my grandfather's lap.

Various happenings in our life strike us as urgent. They make us anxious, or perhaps we have some fun or face trials. But it is all a preparation for a grand home-coming, when we will "find a settled rest... no more a stranger or a guest, but like a child at home." Or as the Psalmist sang, "And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (23:6).





## ***Make Easter Donations Easy by Giving with Your Smartphone!***

You can support the church from anywhere at any time, including Easter, even if you forget to bring cash or your checkbook. Simply use the GivePlus Mobile app to give with your smartphone.

- Download the FREE app on your smartphone.
- Make one-time or recurring donations using your debit/credit card or checking/savings account.
- Log in or donate as a guest.
- Securely and conveniently manage donations using Touch ID/Fingerprint, PIN or password.

*To give through the app, search your phone's app store for "GivePlus Mobile" or contact the church office.*



## ***Make Easter Donations Easy by Giving with Your Smartphone!***

You can support the church from anywhere at any time, including Easter, even if you forget to bring cash or your checkbook. Simply use the GivePlus Mobile app to give with your smartphone.

- Download the FREE app on your smartphone.
- Make one-time or recurring donations using your debit/credit card or checking/savings account.
- Log in or donate as a guest.
- Securely and conveniently manage donations using Touch ID/Fingerprint, PIN or password.

*To give through the app, search your phone's app store for "GivePlus Mobile" or contact the church office.*

**VANCO**

# FOR OUR PRAYERS

## Friends & Relatives of Church Members

**John Chisolm Jr.–**

Friend of Hollis Family

**Boyd Shorter**

Father of Gwen Freeman

**Sylvia Worley–**

Sister of Gail Long

**Holley Sheppard–**

Family of Laney Strickland

**Gene Crumpton–**

Uncle of Janet Taylor & Mike Crumpton

**Sandy Martin–**

Friend of Jane & Russell Taylor

**Emma Snelgrove–**

Mother of Cheryl Austin

**Lanell Hicks–**

Mother of Miranda West

**Samantha Molnar–**

Sister of Carolyn Steele

**John Hotaling -**

Brother of Mary Browder

**Taylor Armstrong -**

Grandson of Jimmy & Katrina Shealy

**Kenn White–**

Friend of Carin Seward

*Continue to remember  
those who have illnesses  
or needs in their lives.*



*The Guardian Angel Prayer Group is asking for all of its members and the members of St. James to please say an extra prayer for our community and country.*

**Prayer request will be posted for 30 days .**

Should you need to place someone back on the list, **Please resubmit a new prayer request form.**

*Thank you,  
St. James Office*



### Members

Bob Koch

Kathy Goings

Vickie Johnson

Harold Roland

Holly Kyzer

Von Goff

Chuck Backman

### Shut-ins

Jackie Metz

Dollie Pounds

Anna Ree Roland

Kathleen Smith

Alice Raffa

Retha Slice

Virginia Hall

Lance Steadman

Cynthia Lopez

### **Military**

**Joseph Brown–**

Grandson of Kathryn Kyzer

**Ryan Caulder–**

Son of Mot Caulder

**Aaron Frazier–**

Grandson of Jean Frazier

**Daniel Herb–**

Son in law of Mot Caulder

**Jeremy Jolly–**

Grandson of Hazel Bachman

**Wayne Watkins–**

Nephew of S. Jeffords

**David Supowit–**

Son in Law of Kathleen McLean

**Levi Dane Kyzer—**

Grandson of Holly Kyzer

If you have an active Military family member that you would like St. James to send them a Care Package please get with Myra Weeks and let her know.





## WORSHIP LEADERS Coming up at St. James

**ALL SERVICES AND  
ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN CANCELLED THROUGH THE  
MONTH OF MARCH**

St. James is looking for Someone to cut and maintain the grass . If you have interest in helping out please speak with Bill Hogan or Luke Roland. If you have a lot of free time on your hands and enjoy working outside come on down!!



**We need some cleaning products! If you would like to donate that would be AMAZING. Please drop off items in the church office.**

- Concentrated Bleach
- Peroxide Spray
- Lysol Wipes
- Baking Soda

We can always use cleaning supplies and if you have any extra Brooms, Mops or general items you don't use and would like to donate please do.

**It's that time of year where the germs are awful!** There are bottles of Sanitizers in the Narthex and throughout the church. Please use them if you have sniffles and coughs. **See below for some helpful tips...**

- *Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.*
- *Avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth.*
- *Stay home when sick.*
- *Cough or sneeze into your elbow or use a tissue and put it in the trash **immediately**.*
- *Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.*
- *Avoid contact with sick people.*
- *Get your flu shot.*



**03/01**  
Brandon  
Crumpton  
Joretta Martin

**03/03**  
Keith O'Quinn

**03/04**  
Margaret Roland

**03/05**  
Trevor Davis

**03/13**  
Kip Duke

**3/17**  
Midge Lane

**03/18**  
Zackary Bond

**03/22**  
Debra Lindler

**03/23**  
Jeremy Joyner

**03/26**  
Kathleen Bishop

**03/27**  
Nancy Spanko

**03/29**  
Connor Schmitz

**03/30**  
Timothy Lee

**If your name was left off this month's list, please call or email the church office so we may add it to the list.**

*Easter Lilies  
To  
Adorn The Sanctuary*



The beauty of lilies symbolizes the joy of Easter worship. You are invited to purchase a lily to honor or memorialize a loved one or to give glory to God.

If you would like to purchase a Lily, please complete the form below and place it in the offering plate, or bring it by the church office.

The deadline for orders is April 08.

The cost is \$12 per plant. Make checks payable to St. James Lutheran Church.

---

---

***Lily Purchase Form***  
**Please write legibly for the office.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of plants I'd like to purchase: \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ And/Or \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please check this box  if you **do not** wish to take your flowers home with you after the service. It will be delivered to a sick or shut-in member or friend of our church to brighten their day.

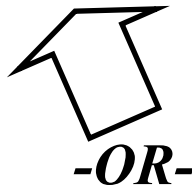
**St. James  
Lutheran Church**  
(803) 359-2122  
1358 South Lake Drive  
Lexington, SC 29073

[pastor.kevin@stjameslex.com](mailto:pastor.kevin@stjameslex.com)  
[office@stjameslex.com](mailto:office@stjameslex.com)

Visit us on the web at  
[www.stjameslex.com](http://www.stjameslex.com)

**Facebook:**

Friends of St James  
[https://www.facebook.com/  
groups/StJamesRedBank](https://www.facebook.com/groups/StJamesRedBank)



March 17th Food Pantry will be a drive through from 10-11am. Please be patient and have your documents available. We are respectfully asking for everyone to please stay in their car. If you have any questions you can call St. James at 359-2122. Location will be on the fellowship hall side of the church 1358 S. Lake Drive Lexington, SC 29073



**Pastor**  
Kevin Ogilvie, PhD.

**Music Director**  
Sharon Witherell

**Secretary**  
Sharon Summers



**Service Schedule**  
**Sunday**  
**Adult Sunday School**  
9:15AM  
**Worship Service**  
10:30AM

*If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please contact St. James  
Lutheran Church office at 803-359-2122*