May 2026

Volume 25
Issue 5

The Voice of St. James

175 Years & Beyond

Thoughts from our Pastor

WORSHIP
Sundays
10 am
Live & via Zoom
&
Wednesday
7pm

Share the welcome.

Invite a friend.

Use below to connect to Zoom Link

I follow a Pastor Brandon. His words below are good words to ponder.

Jesus says: “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matt. 5:44).

Their response? “Yes, but Jesus said He came to bring a sword!” (Matt. 10:34).

Jesus says: “If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other also” (Matt. 5:39). Their response? “Yes, but Exodus says, ‘Eye for eye, tooth for tooth.’”

Jesus says: “Whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for me” (Matt. 25:40). Their response? “If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat” (2 Thess. 3:10).

Jesus says: “Let the one without sin cast the first stone” (John 8:7). Their response? Skip those

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verses and head straight to “But Jesus said, ‘Go and sin no more’” (John 8:11).

Do you see it? They’re trying to out scripture Jesus. To twist the Word until it bows to their legalistic ideology. To make Jesus obey their version of Christianity instead of the other way around.

Spoiler alert: it didn’t work with the Pharisees, and it doesn’t work now.

Remember Matthew 12? The Pharisees weaponized Scripture because Jesus healed on the Sabbath. Jesus replied: “If you had known what these words mean, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the Innocent” (Matt. 12:7). Translation? You missed the point, guys.

And Jesus Himself said: “These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life” (John 5:39–40). The Bible points to Him, not away from Him.

Paul backed Jesus up: “Avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless” (Titus 3:9).

Yet here we are—still hurling Bible verses at each other, even against Jesus Himself.

The Bible isn’t a bludgeon to use against Jesus

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when His words feel too inconvenient—or too “woke.” It’s a lamp to guide us to Him (Psm 119:105).

We don’t worship a book. We worship the Savior the book reveals. So let’s use the Bible the way it was meant to be used: to follow Jesus, not to fight Him.

Because if your theology contradicts Christ Himself, you’re not defending the faith. You’re opposing the One it’s built on. And if you find yourself constantly weaponizing Scripture to dodge love, mercy, and grace—then it’s time to check your heart.

You're fighting against love. Mercy. Grace. Forgiveness. You're fighting against the Gospel of Jesus. And ask if that’s really the kind of disciple, and person, you want to be.

Pastor Brandon

FAMILY & FRIENDS
GAME NIGHT

MAY 23 – 6:30PM

Ready for a good time?
Game Night is open to everyone.
Friends, family, and all ages. FREE
to attend, and snacks to share
are always welcome!

RSVP: BY MAY 17

DIAPER • DRIVE

St. James is partnering with Prevent Child Abuse–NJ to host a Diaper Drive for families in Atlantic County.

As a church family, we are coming together to help keep local babies safe, clean, and cared for by collecting **new, sealed packages of diapers** in any brand and any size. Every donation, large or small, will directly support caregivers who are working hard to provide for little ones during challenging times.

Thank you for giving generously and helping St. James and NJ-PAC, make a real difference in Atlantic County.

Our 2026 Pulling for Vets Fundraiser was yet again a tremendous success!

Through the generosity of our congregation, our donors, and all who supported through donations and ticket purchases, we were able to raise a total of **$3,438.80**.

This full amount will be presented as a check to **D.A.V. Chapter 66** in support of the vital work they do for our veterans.

We cannot begin to thank you enough for your continued help, kindness, and unwavering support. Your commitment makes a real difference, and we are deeply grateful.

We cannot wait for next year already, and hope to make it even bigger!

MAY Birthdays

1st - Margaret Rea
10th - Linda Kisby
17th - Dorcas Schellhas
18th - Sabrina Houck
18th - Brianna Tichy
20th - Claire Gilmore
21st - Hannah Johnson
25th - Steven Johnson
26th - Hannah Bonchi
31st - Waylon Houck

MAY Anniversaries

16th - Thomas & Judy Dunleavy
17th - Jim & Sue Valenti
25th - Steven & Jennifer Johnson

GROWING IN GOD'S word

Try this craft as a reminder that we need to continue to grow in God's Word.

What you need:

- Small terra cotta pot and plate
- Acrylic paints (various colors)
- Paper plate
- Potting soil (enough to fill the pot)
- Small inside plant or packet of seeds
- Newspaper or paper
- Paintbrush
- Cup of water
- Permanent black marker

What you do:

1. Spread some newspaper out on a table for your working area.
2. Squeeze the paint colors that you wish to use onto your paper plate.
3. Paint designs on the pot and plate.
4. When the pot is dry, take the black marker and on the top part of the pot write: Growing in God's Word.
5. Pour a small amount of potting soil into the bottom of the pot. With adults help, place your plant into the pot and surround your plant with the rest of the soil. If planting seeds, follow the packet instructions.
6. Water your plant so the soil is moist. Check your plant everyday and keep the soil moist.
7. Enjoy watching your plant grow, and remember that you too, need care as you grow in God's Word.

2 Peter 3:18 NIV
But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

May Worship Volunteers

Volunteers are needed to help support our in-person worship. We could not do it without your help! If you are willing and able, you can sign up in the narthex or let Pastor Pam or Amanda know.

ALTAR GUILD

3rd - Betty Pollock & Rose Jones
10th - Betty Pollock & Rose Jones
17th - Betty Pollock & Rose Jones
24th - Betty Pollock & Rose Jones
31st - Betty Pollock & Rose Jones

LAY READERS

3rd - Sally Costa
10th - Michael Hozik
17th - Judy May
24th - Jim Valenti
31st - Mario Triboletti

Communion ASSISTANTS

3rd - Volunteers Needed
10th - Volunteers Needed
17th - Volunteers Needed
24th - Volunteers Needed
31st - Volunteers Needed

HAPPY
Mother's Day
Lord,
thank you for the women
who have loved us,
prayed for us
and walked with us
in faith.

MAY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3 8:45am Mother's Day Breakfast 9am Sunday School 10am Worship	4	5 7pm Choir Rehearsal	6 7pm Evening Devotions	7	8	9
10 9am Sunday School 10am Worship	11	12 7pm Choir Rehearsal	13 1pm God's Stitchers 7pm Evening Devotions	14	15	16 5:30pm Dine Out Night at Bonefish Grill
17 9am Sunday School 10am Worship	18 7pm Council	19 7pm Outreach 7pm Choir Rehearsal	20 7pm Evening Devotions	21	22	23 6:30pm Family & Friends Game Night
24 Pentecost Sunday 9am Sunday School 10am Worship w/ St. James Choir	25	26	27 1pm God's Stitchers 7pm Evening Devotions	28	29	30
31 9am Sunday School 10am Worship with Bryan Stites					***AA Groups*** Tue - 7pm Wed - 7pm (Women only) Fri - 8 pm Sat - 6:30pm Sun - 7:30pm	

Our Annual Blueberry Sale is almost here!

Keep an eye out, ordering will begin soon. Proceeds from this year's sale will help offset the cost of our 2027 *Pulling for Vets* dinner and continue our support of the Disabled American Veterans. Your participation makes a real impact, and we're grateful for every purchase.

Pride in the Park

June 20th 11am - 3pm

St. James will be a part of Atlantic County's Pride in the Park

You can volunteers to greet people who may visit our table and to hand out goodies. If you are interested in helping, please sign up in the narthex.

Sponsored By: Atlantic County Council of Education Associates

Located at: Lincoln Memorial Park 5125 Harding Highway, Mays Landing

Pentecost Sunday

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name,
He will teach you all things, and remind you of all that I said to you.
John 14:26, NASB

May 24th

with St. James Choir

Looking ahead...

Items for Migrant Workers – May & June
Sound blocking ear plugs – either disposable or non disposable, Toiletries – Travel Size Shampoo and Conditioner, Soap, Deodorant, Razors, Wet Wipes, Hygiene Products, Combs, Electrolyte powder

School Supply Collection - July - Markers and colored pencils for students in need.

Community Picnic - September 12, 12-3pm Cookout, ice cream, games and more with our local community.

Our Altar Flower Memorial Program offers a meaningful way to honor loved ones while helping provide the flowers that brighten our altar each week.

If you'd like to donate altar flowers, please review the available dates below and place the completed form in the offering plate.

On Sundays when both vases are open, you may choose to sponsor one or both.

The following dates are still available:

Both Vases ($40):
May 10, June 14, August 23,
October 11, November 29

One Vase ($20):
May 17, August 16

ALTAR FLOWER SIGNUP

Please note the available Sunday you would like to donate altar flowers.

Please see the list of available dates on the next page.

DATE: Sunday, _____

The Altar flowers should be dedicated as follows:

In Memory/Honor/Celebration/Thanksgiving of:

_____

_____

By_____

PLEASE CIRCLE BELOW IF YOU ARE DONATING ONE VASE AT $20 OR TWO VASES FOR $40.

The cost of the flowers is $20/vase, or $40 for both.

You will be billed at the time of your scheduled donation.

Please remit your check payable to: *St. James Lutheran Church, 1341 Mays Landing Road, Folsom, NJ 08037.*

Would you like to continue your donation for 2027?

___YES ___NO

If you checked yes, we will automatically add you to our schedule for 2027.

Please Pray for:

Dolores Fiori, Laura Librizzi, Claire Gilmore, Diane Eby, Winnie Ziegler, Hannah Bonchi, Margaret Rea, Jennifer Johnson, Rita Ricca, Mario Triboletti, Gillian Lee Phillips, Betty Haines, Dan P., Dorcas Schellhas, Ed Shine Bette Jackson, Maggie Rider, Marlene Triggian, Bob & Ellie Frietag, Christina Spahn, Tom Dixon, George Cappucio, Arlene Calletta, Mike Fountas, Nick Pobletti, Bill Link, Sophie Stites, Chip Stewart, Arlene Deptula, Thomas Rose, Linda Slater, Octavia Marie, Lisa 'Ambrosia, Chenza Cerrato, Charlie Patton, Ed Marinelli, RoseAnn Lucca, Mia Arrison, Carol Ann Conner, Will Longtin, Patricia Dudley, Peggy Bucceri, Rita Sarro, Robert DelRoss, John Thame, Gaelen Houck, Rosie Ranier, Paul Morris, Corenne Hickey, Walter Meinke, Tennile Limbaugh, Chick Kisby, Carol Kaplan, Emily Shemansky, Alex McKee, Scott & Lisa, Sharon Rossiter, Justin Stewart, Sean Bennett, Yuri Zaitsev.

and For the NJ SYNOD, Bishop Compton and staff, and ELCA Bishop Curry, and its ministries.

Bonefish Grill

1709 Deptford Center Road,
Deptford, NJ 08096

www.bonefishgrill.com

facebook.com/bonefishgrill

May 16th

We will dine at 5:30 pm

Carpool from Church at 4:45 pm

Name:_____

Number of Guests:_____

Phone Number/Email:_____

_____

Please RSVP no later than May 10th!

CLERGY AND STAFF

Pastor Pamela Werner — C 609-335-3083
Laffinggal@comcast.net — O 609-561-4488
Office Administrator - Amanda Dilks — C 609-204-5516
O 609-561-4488
stjameslutheran@folsom.comcastbiz.net

Office Hours - Wednesdays & Thursdays
9:30 AM - 1:00 PM
All other times by appointment

CHURCH COUNCIL

Jayne Carmen - President
Colleen Kase - Secretary
Bryan Stites
Judy May - Vice Pres.
Patti Zellers
Mario Triboletti

Worship - Sundays 10 am
Live and Via Zoom
Link on www.stjamesfolsom.org

Our Mission

Welcoming all people to abide in Christ,
to experience God's love, and
to do God's work in the world around us.

St. James Lutheran Church
1341 Mays Landing Rd.
Folsom, NJ 08037

Visit our Website at www.stjamesfolsom.org