

## MINISTRIES AND ACTIVITIES

October 25, 2007

*Presented by Durinda and Steve Dalton*

The ministries and activities of our Saint James Lutheran church are so vast that it is difficult to know where to begin. Our ministry to children and their families through our Christian education programs is a good place to start.

Our SAINT JAMES SUNDAY SCHOOL was established in 1924. By the first Easter the Sunday School board was planning to give sixty-five paper crosses to the children. The first children's Christmas program also took place in that same year. Each summer the children looked forward to the annual Sunday School picnic. They piled into trucks and were driven to neighboring beaches. In 1965 that outing was changed to the family picnic we enjoy every September now at Moriches Park. Sue Gloisten retired from the Sunday school as Superintendent in 1997 after faithfully serving for 30 years.

In 1949 it was decided to suspend Sunday School for the summer months, but the children had to attend church to maintain their attendance record. We fill the summer void with VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL, or VBS as its known. For one week each summer, the children of the community receive Christian education while having lots of fun.

After completing Sunday School, Christian education continues with confirmation. The first confirmation class of eight young people was confirmed on April 5<sup>th</sup>, 1925. Students can recall how Pastor Mital held Confirmation classes in his home and expected the Confirmands to memorize the entire small catechism and they had to publicly present an oral report affirming their faith. Today, the confirmation ministry continues to confirm 30-40 young people per year.

The youth ministry of Saint James Lutheran church has a long tradition, from the days of Walther league through the present. Youth ministry has seen its peaks and valleys over the years. Building off of the confirmation program our current youth ministry builds on the idea that the church is the second home for many young people. This active group of young people is engaged in weekly bible studies and meetings, mission trips, local mission work and myriad other ways of sharing the love of Christ.

The SAINT JAMES LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL was founded in 1969 under the direction of Helen Hoppe and Diane Germain. It began in September with a class of four year olds and met once a week. Three-year-old classes have been added along with morning and afternoon classes. The Preschool's reputation is well established and will soon celebrate 40 years of loving service to the families of the community. Currently our director is Diane Prudente and the teaching staff includes several people who have served for more than 20 years.

Lutherans are proud of their musical heritage and voices and instrumentalists enrich our services. The first mention of an organ to enhance our WORSHIP MUSIC PROGRAM is recorded in the minutes of the March 26, 1924 meeting of the Ladies Aid Society. As early as 1933 a trumpeter played Christmas carols at the church. Chancel choirs, teen choirs, children's choirs, bell choirs, and brass choirs have been part of the worship music at Saint James Lutheran Church. Choirs continue to meet weekly under the direction of Don Reinertsen.

The QUILTING tradition historically dates back to 1926. Currently the PIECEMAKERS of Saint James Lutheran Church have made friendship quilts, baby quilts for a women's shelter, various wall hangings for individuals and the sanctuary, and comfort quilts, sharing the Gospel of Christ's love with the sick and hospitalized. Since 1977 the Piecemakers have completed a quilt to raise funds at the annual fair.

Our CRAFT FAIR was originally a two-day summer fair during the 20s and 30s. Now instead of a summer event, we host a one-day fall Holiday Crafts Fair. The present craft fair features the skill of the quilters, the expertise of the bakers, and the culinary talents of the soup makers. The crafts, which were originally made by the church members, are now brought and sold by vendors.

The ALTAR GUILD began in the new church in 1928. They made altar linens and cared for the worship elements. The Altar guild remains a very active part of our worship community. Their commitment and weekly devotion to cleaning and caring for the Altar of the Lord is a testament to the faith of this community.

At the first meeting of the LADIES AID SOCIETY in January 1924, fifteen women met at the home of Mrs. Denker. Their fund raising efforts were so successful they gave \$3000 to the building fund by August 1927. They made sure the kitchen was well equipped. It is no surprise that when the remodeling was taking place in 1963, the Ladies Aid Society raised the funds to completely equip the large new

professional kitchen, and they did it in record time. The Ladies Aid Society remained active into the 1980s, at which point the demands placed by the changing roles of women in society diminished their membership and they disbanded.

Following the ideals of the Ladies Aid Society, a very active ministry in our church evolved and took on new life in the form of the SOCIAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE. Once again social, charitable, and fund raising activities have encouraged membership participation at St. James Lutheran Church as we reach out to others with Christ's love. The Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) is also part of our committee, and St. James women host a mini-retreat every October.

For many years St. James Lutheran Church has sponsored Boy Scout troop 301, many of our young men have been active in the troop all the way to receiving their Eagle badge. The boy scouts continue to serve and represent the spirit of St James Lutheran Church.

To speak of all that happens at St. James Lutheran church would be an impossible task in this short amount of time. For many their involvement with St James Lutheran church happens in short snippets of time during each week. However, if you were to be in the building on a daily basis, you would hear the doors opening and closing constantly. Cars pull in and out of the driveway all day long and children are heard laughing, singing and playing each and everyday.

However, there is nothing like coming to church when a worship service has already begun. As you walk down second avenue you can hear the organ playing, you hear the people of God singing and you see the twinkle of the candelabras through the stained glass. This is the hub of the ministry and activity of St. James Lutheran Church, when God's people gather to hear the Word and feast on His sacrament. When you hear and see that happening your feet move faster so you can get inside, not because you are late but rather, because you don't want to miss a moment of being with this wonderful community of God called, St James Lutheran Church. Please join us in praying a pray of thanksgiving to God for all that he has given to us...