

St. James Newsletter

August 2026

From the Pastor

As I sit down to write this letter, like so many of my sermons lately, I really don't know where I'm going with it. However, there is this nagging thought in my head that wants to be shared.

Yesterday I made what I hope will be one of my last trips to Rantoul, Illinois. That's where my oldest brother's house is. As most of you are aware, Bill passed away in December, and he named me the executor of his estate. So, I have been responsible for his business, including getting his house ready to sell. Since December I have regularly been making the three-hour drive to Rantoul to search for important documents, make sure the heat was working, shovel the snow, check the mail, clean out the refrigerator, cancel the satellite TV account and the internet service and make sure that his now vacant house was secure.

In the process I also had the task of going through his things, searching for anything of value, both monetary and sentimental. There really was very little of either. Bill lived fairly simply and didn't spend money on "things," except for the 2,000 music CDs that lined the walls of his living room and a similar number of books that filled shelves in every other room in his house. When my other brothers and I met there a few weeks ago to take those things of his that we wanted, we actually took very little. Most of his "stuff" was left behind.

And that is what led to my trip to Rantoul this week. I was signing a contract with a company to clean out the rest of his belongings from the house to get it ready to sell.

As I walked among his possessions one more time, I was surprised by what I felt. First, I felt sad. I was surrounded by the things that were Bill's. I don't think Bill would have considered them especially valuable. But they were things that helped to define who he was. They represented the things that were important to him, the things that interested him, the things that brought him joy. And as I thought about those things headed to charities, or recycling, or the garbage, it made me sad. It is a little heartbreaking to realize that, in the end, much of one's stuff will end up in a dumpster.

But a moment later, my feelings of sadness turned into a sense of peace. As I looked at his Cubs shirts hanging in the closets and the dozen reading glasses next to every chair in the house and various electronic toys and his CDs and his books and the memorabilia from the places he lived and worked all around the world, I realized that all that was really just "stuff."

And none of that stuff was Bill. Instead, Bill lives on in my memories. His legacy lives on the things he taught me (like being a left-handed hitting catcher), and in the values he tried to instill in me and the world. For his stuff to end up in the dumpster does not diminish Bill in any way. His presence, in some way, lives on in and through me.

I suspect there is a lesson there somewhere for me as I begin a new chapter in my life. I will have to reflect on that.

I also suspect there is a lesson in that experience for you, my brothers and sisters in Christ at St. James and Calvary, as you consider what your future as congregations looks like. Perhaps it is a good time for you to look around and reflect on what things are really just “stuff,” and what you want to live on in and through you.

Peace,

Pastor Knowles



Rescue Mission Meal - August 12 – Christian Care Center

First, a big thanks goes to Mark Ridolfi, Julie Farmer, and others who will be participating more extensively in this blessed ministry. And, of course, a huge thanks goes to Ruth Anne and Bill Hartman for the magnificent job they’ve done leading its growth year after year.

And it will proceed as usual in August! We will buy the ham and needed supplies. If you would like to help, we need volunteers to serve and prepare crockpot beans and cheesy potatoes.

A sign-up sheet is on the info table in the narthex. Meet in the church kitchen on August 12 at 5:30 pm or bring prepared items before that time.

Thank you also to those who can bake a cake, brownies, or cookies for dessert.

School Kits

Our school kit drive is underway! Please help furnish our children worldwide with needed school supplies. Each Lutheran World Relief school kit contains:

- 4—70 sheet spiral bound notebooks – wide or college ruled
- 1—ruler—30 centimeters/12 inches
- 1—handheld pencil sharpener
- 1—pair blunt scissors
- 5—unsharpened pencils**
- 5—blue or black ballpoint ink pens (no gel ink)
- 1—box of 16 or 24 crayons
- 1—2 1/2-inch eraser



Please place items in the collection box under the information table near the upper entrance. Monetary donations to “School kits” are also welcome. Members of the St. James *Missions Team* will shop for you. Thank you!

Going Deeper: Spiritual Curiosity Energy Audits

As a part of looking toward the future as congregations in Rock Island and Moline, the bishop has asked the RIM congregations to work through a series of exercises that look at the energy that exists in our congregation from a spiritual, financial, human and missional perspective. The exercises provide an opportunity to reflect and discuss such things as why we are here and what energy do we have for the future. For St. James and Calvary, these "energy audits" provide a good start in thinking about how we see ourselves and our hopes for the future as we transition to a new pastor.



The Vision Team has suggested that we work through these various audits during coffee/fellowship time following worship on the Sundays in August and September. We will begin discussions on Sunday, August 2. The worksheets that will guide the August 2 discussions are available in the narthex, by the name tags.

The more people who participate and share their thoughts, the more helpful they will be in guiding our congregations in the pastoral transition and beyond as we seek to be faithful to our call as children of God. Please plan to participate.

39th Anniversary of Pastor Knowles' Ordination – July 19 at Calvary



Surprise! That was the reaction of Pastor Knowles when he walked into Calvary's Erlander Hall following the joint service with St. James on July 19.

A large turnout of worshippers helped him celebrate the 39th anniversary of his ordination. While the attendees enjoyed cake, fruit, and a meat and cheese tray, Pastor told the story of his chaotic ordination day.

Pastor's first call was to a two-point parish, like St James and Calvary are forming now. His experience will get us off to a good start.

Congratulations on 39 years of outstanding service, Pastor Knowles!

Trish Myers' Recognition - July 12

On Sunday, July 12, St. James recognized retiring Office Administrator Trish Myers during the worship service and fellowship hour.

During announcements, Pastor Knowles started by thanking her for nine years of outstanding service to St. James. His lead-in to Trish's speech reminded her of the chaos preceding and continuing with her first day.

Trish remembered that the answer to her question, "When do I start?" was answered with, "Tomorrow." She recalled having to learn everything from scratch: we were in between pastors; and no documentation, passwords, or one-on-one teaching were available. To further complicate her first day, a wedding at St. James was coming up that week!

Trish was presented with a plaque recognizing her service. A reception followed the service. She was showered with many cards, hugs, and well wishes.

We love you, Trish, and we pray for your happy, healthy retirement!



Your St. James family salutes you for your distinguished service of 9 years — yes, with a smile in your heart and on your face. You have brought so much goodwill to yourself and to St. James. Hallelujah! Your dedication has been exemplary, and we are deeply blessed by your passion and careful attention. St. James is richer because of your service.

God Bless

Vacation Bible School - July 20-24 - Salem Lutheran Church, Moline

During the week of July 20-24, at Salem Lutheran in Moline, Meadow and Forrest Weipert joined 79 other children and youth from at least three different churches – and possibly some unchurched – for a week of fun and fascination while “Exploring the Nature of God.” It was a big success!

Against the backdrop of a life-like rainforest setting, the children got to see a hermit crab, a snake, a frog, and a spider while learning how "God is our creator," "God knows everything," "God is our refuge," "God is love," and "God is forever!" The kids learned these themes through games, crafts, snacks and songs.

It was wonderful working together as a team and combining kids! A huge thank you goes to Sally Patterson, the youth director, for all her hard work with not only the children but also the 21 adult volunteers! She did an impressive job!

It was a wonderful week that has been talked about for days in my personal household, and we are excited and hopeful for next year! God Bless!

Bethany C. Weipert



Adopt-a-Highway Cleanup



On Saturday, July 25, eight St. James members met at Mel McKay Park in

Rock Island to brave the heat and humidity in the summer highway cleanup. A big thanks goes to Dave Renneke; T.Y. Stone and son; Steve Wieland; and Chip, Tim, Brett, and Terrill Johnson!

Baptism - Sunday, August 9

Josephine Diab, granddaughter of Carolyn Ohlsen, will be baptized at our worship service on August 9. Please join us for the reception following the service.



Joint Service on August 16

To continue our journey as a joint parish with Calvary Lutheran Church, Moline, St. James will host Calvary at our joint worship service on August 16 at 8:30 am.

Fellowship will follow at 9:30.



Rummage Sale 2026



Plans are proceeding for our Rummage and Bake Sale, scheduled for September 18-19.

The Bride's Room is now available to store donated items.

Volunteers are needed to make this event as successful as last year's. Please contact any member of the Welcoming Team to volunteer or get further details.

Thank you ,

The Welcoming Team:

Bethany, Rhea, Judy Fox,
Tina, and Luanne

Vespers at Jenny Lind Chapel in Andover

There is one more Vespers service at the [Jenny Lind Chapel](#) in Andover, IL. The Sunday evening worship service is on August 30 at 7:00 pm, with Pastor Randy Willers officiating and bringing the message.

The summer series of four services have been conducted by area pastors and congregations. There has been a variety of music, typically accompanied by someone playing the Chapel's electronic keyboard.

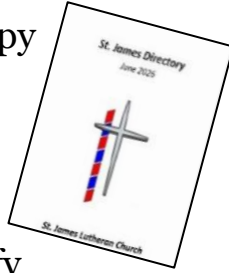


June 7, 2026

June 2026 Church Directories

If you haven't gotten your copy of the June 2026 St. James directory, please contact the church office.

I'm working to develop a regular, timely process to notify you of changes in membership information, of which there are already some! -- Luanne



The 1968 directory is available!

Take a page out of St. James' history – well, actually 20 pages – of delightfully nostalgic pictures of the St. James membership and activities, and roster information of 1967-68.

I counted at least 12 people in that directory who are current members.

The directory is available in both hardcopy and digital form. If you're interested, please contact the office to get your copy. Being one of the 12 members mentioned above, I will even give you "who's who" tidbits suitable to you individually.

Thanks go to Bill and Jo Kempf for supplying their original copy, and to Dave Renneke for digitizing it. -- Luanne



BEINKE, Glenn/Louise
Lynette, Luanne, *Janna
2807 211/2 Ave. 786-5990

Meetings

- Energy Audits discussions:
August 2, 9, 23, and 30 during Fellowship Hour
- Welcoming Team
August 5 at 6:00 pm
- Vision Team
August 10 at 3:00 pm
Meet at St. James
- Stewardship/Finance Team
August 17 at 4:00 pm via Zoom
- RIM
August 20 at 6:30 pm



No Bible Studies Currently

Both the Monday morning and Tuesday night Bible Studies led by Pastor Knowles will not be held in August.

They will resume in September.

Women's Circle and Café Women's Bible Study

These groups will not be meeting during the summer but will resume in September.

Quilters

Tentatively, the St. James Quilters will meet on Saturday, August 15, at 1:00 pm. Watch the Sunday announcements for further updates.



Little African Library

We have begun a new little borrowing library. There are books by missionaries and family members to the Augustana mission field in Tanganyika such as Eleanor Anderson (*The Zamzam Story*) and her father Elmer Danielson and other family members, the Simonsons, and a compiled book of stories by women missionaries. Eleanor and her husband Carl Anderson were members of St. James for a number of years.

There are two books by Leymah Gbowee who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011; for fun reading, books in the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency book series; and a few books for travel.

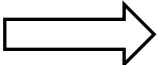
To check out one of these books, please sign the card in the book and leave it in the needlepoint folder. You can predict when you may return it, in case someone else would also like to read it.

If you have questions or suggestions, text - Ruth Anne Hartman 309-738-4663. If you have another book to add to the library, we would like that.

Our Little African Missions Library

Missionaries

- **Miracle at Sea** The Sinking of the Zamzam and Our Family's Astounding Rescue – by Eleanor Anderson
- **Forty Years with Christ in Tanzania 1928 – 1968** – by Elmer R. Danielson
- **Faith in the Middle** The Zamzam story for children – by Luella Faith Holwerda
- **Touched by the African Soul** – Stories from women missionaries in Tanzania – compiled by Gloria Cunningham and Lois Okerstrom
- **Marie's Memoirs – Farmer's Daughter in Africa** – by Marie Benson
- **Gathering Memories – A Journey of Faith** – by Juliet Anderson Moris
- **Among the Maasai** A Memoir – by Juliet Cutler
- **The Cross Under the Acacia Tree** The Story of David & Eunice Simonson's Epic Mission in Africa – by Jim Klobuchar

Continued on next page 

Our Little African Missions Library (continued)

Memoir of a Nobel Peace Prize Awardee 2011

Mighty Be Our Powers How Sisterhood, Prayer, and Sex Changed a Nation at War – by Leymah Gbowee with Carol Mithers

*New: **Rise, Girl, Rise: Our Sister-Friend Journey, Together for All** – by Gloria Steinem and Leymah Gbowee

Book Series by Alexander McCall Smith

- **The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency** (1)
- **Tears of the Giraffe** (2)
- **Morality for Beautiful Girls** (3)
- **The Kalahari Typing School for Men** (4)
- **The House of Unexpected Sisters** (18)
- **The Great Hippopotamus Hotel** (25)

Travel

- **Spectrum Guide to Tanzania**
- **Swahili Phrasebook** by Martin Benjamin, Charles Mironka, and Anne Geoghegan
- **Tanzania** by Mary Fitzpatrick
- **Field Guide to Trees & Shrubs of East Africa**



PLEASE NOTE: Pastor will never send email messages asking for money, gift cards, or the like from church members or anyone else. If you receive any suspicious messages that supposedly came from him, check that the email address is stjamespastor3@gmail.com.

In the July 14 scam attempt on our members, Jerry Johansen caught that the email address on the messages was pastordonknowles@gmail.com, not the correct one. Good catch, Jerry!



AMERICAN SCANDINAVIAN ASSOCIATION AT AUGUSTANA - 2026

Kräftskiva

Celebrate Summer Swedish Style!



1

SOCIAL HOUR



5:00 PM

Socializing & punch

2

DINNER



5:30 PM

Dinner Served

3

BREW BY THE SLOUGH



Brew by the Slough
Gerber Center
3435 9½ Ave
Rock Island, IL 61201

*Weather permitting,
we'll be on the patio!*



Traditional
crayfish



Swedish
meatballs



Shrimp

Celebrate summer Swedish style...

For our annual *Kräftskiva* (Crayfish Party) on Saturday, August 15, 2026. Enjoy an evening of Swedish food, fellowship, and tradition as we celebrate the end of summer with family and friends — just like they do in Scandinavia! The menu will feature traditional Swedish favorites, including crayfish, meatballs, shrimp, salad, and all the trimmings.

Whether you're a longtime ASA member or attending for the first time, we hope you'll join us for a *lobster-ly* good time with our favorite crustaceans!

RESERVATION FORM

Name: _____
Adults × \$24 = \$ _____
Children (12 and under) × \$12 = \$ _____
Total Enclosed: \$ _____
Email: _____
Phone: _____

COST

Adults: **\$24**
Children (12 and under): **\$12**



RESERVATIONS

Please make checks payable to "ASA" and mail your reservation and payment to:

Kimberly La Palm
5025 Kesler Rd NW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52405

— OR —

Email:
kimberlylapalm@augustana.edu

**RESERVATIONS
DUE AUGUST 5, 2026**



CALVARY/RIM CHURCHES – WHAT’S GOIN’ ON?

Fundraiser for Christian Care August 30, 4:00 pm

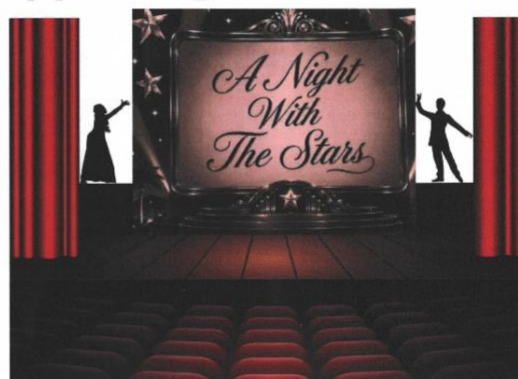
First Lutheran is inviting all NIS churches to attend its fundraiser for Christian Care on August 30 at 4:00 pm at [Skellington Manor Event Center](#), 420 18th St, Rock Island.

The program is dinner and a live show featuring some of old Hollywood’s greatest stars!

The event includes dinner catered by Bridges Catering, and the material is fun for the entire family. It will consist of four scripts from the Burns and Allen Show and a brand new written live event script.

Tickets are \$55.00 each, with all proceeds going to Christian Care.

Join us for an evening of
laughter & goodwill all
supporting Christian Care!



PRESENTED BY:

**First Lutheran Church in Rock Island
(Fundraiser for Christian Care)
Skellington Manor Event Center
Rock Island, IL 61201**

**WHEN: Sunday, August 30, 2026
Doors open at 3:00 pm with show at 4:00 pm**

Program includes dinner provided by Bridges Catering,
featuring some of old Hollywoods greatest stars:

George Burns and Gracie Allen
Jack Benny
Fred Astaire
Mickey Rooney

Tickets are limited and must be purchased in advance from [this website](#). (You’ll see the above image on the first page, but just scroll down.)

Questions? Contact Storm Marie Baca at phone number 309-203-7381 or email stormmarie.baca@gmail.com.

Calvary is collecting pet food during August!

[Quad City Animal Welfare Center](#) needs wet and dry kitten food, especially Purina Fancy Feast Wet Cat Food and Kitten Dry Food, as they’re overwhelmed with kittens! Purina Cat Chow and Purina Dog/Puppy Chow would be helpful too. A box is set up in the narthex near the school supply box for donations. Monetary donations (specify “pet food”) will be accepted as well. Thank you!



**PET FOOD
COLLECTION**

Assisting on Sunday – August 2026

Sunday	Lector	Counters	Sound Booth
August 2	Bob Ryden	Stacy Miles Tina Wieland	Mike Olinski
August 9	Jerry Johansen	Todd Gann Rhea Frank-Cottingham	Bob Ryden
August 16	Ruth Anne Hartman	Dave Renneke Abbi Wieland	Dave Renneke
August 23	Rhea Frank-Cottingham	Ruth Anne Hartman Gary Wolber	Jerry Johansen
August 30	Terrill Johnson	Bill Kempf Jerry Johansen	Dave Renneke

August

Birthdays

Angela Ridolfi	8/2
Louanne Chambers	8/3
Lucas Owens	8/6
Ethan Pressly	8/9
Sandy Ridolfi	8/9
Doris Ross	8/12
Jon McGuire	8/14
Tricia Barron	8/15
Jeff Christenson	8/16
Adam Stire	8/16
William Trotter	8/16
Mya Johnson	8/19
Forrest Weipert	8/19
Antoinreth Uwimana	8/20
Amy Bower	8/21
Mark Ridolfi	8/21
Nancy Wolber	8/23
Suzanne Christenson	8/25
Josephine Grindle	8/25
Gracie Ryden	8/25
Bukuru Stire	8/25
Butoyi Stire	8/25



Anniversaries

Deb & Michael Nessler	8/7
Linda & Bob Ryden	8/9
Virginia & Jim Pirch	8/11
Jan & Doug Nelson	8/19
Don & Mary Knowles	8/27

- ◆ Terri Warren
- ◆ Brad Hubbard



August 2026						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 8:30a Worship (SJ) 9:30a Fellowship and #1 Energy Audit 10:30a Worship (AS)	3	4 6:30p Boy Scouts	5 9:30a Worship Service (AS) 6:00p Welcoming Team 7:00p Bible Study (AS)	6	7 Office Closed	8
9 8:30a Worship (SJ) 9:30a Fellowship and #2 Energy Audit 10:30a Worship (AS)	10 10:30a Retired Pastors 3:00p Vision Team at St. James	11 6:30p Boy Scouts	12 9:30a Worship Service (AS) 5:30p Rescue Mission Meal 7:00p Bible Study (AS)	13	14 Office Closed	15 1:00p Quilters 
16 8:30a Joint Worship at St. James 9:30a Fellowship 10:30a Worship (AS)	17 4:00p Stewardship/ Finance Team via Zoom	18 6:30p Boy Scouts	19 9:30a Worship Service (AS) 7:00p Bible Study (AS)	20 6:30p RIM meeting at St. James	21 Office Closed	22
23 8:30a Worship (SJ) 9:30a Fellowship and #3 Energy Audit 10:30a Worship (AS)	24	25 6:30p Boy Scouts	26 9:30a Worship Service (AS) 7:00p Bible Study (AS)	27	28 Office Closed	29
30 8:30a Worship (SJ) 9:30a Fellowship and #4 Energy Audit 10:30a Worship (AS) 4:00p Christian Care Fundraiser 7:00p Vespers JLC, Pastor Randy Willers	31					

St. James on the Web

stjamesri.org



309-786-0503

saintjamesri@gmail.com

At our website you will find
single-click links to

[Facebook](#)

and St. James photos

[Flickr photos](#)

St. James is a Reconciling in Christ Congregation

In our awareness that we are all broken people, we rejoice in God's abundant grace. Therefore, we welcome all who are seeking God's love and forgiveness regardless of national origin or ancestry, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, abilities, beliefs, political views, financial resources, or family status.

There will always be a place for you at St. James.

For more information check out [Reconciling Works](#).



St. James Lutheran Church
3145 31st Ave
Rock Island, IL 61201

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE