

GOD'S GIFTS

2017



St. James Lutheran Church
God's work. Our hands.

FAYETTEVILLE, NC

1424 Morganton Rd | Fayetteville, NC 28305
(910) 484-8052 | www.saintjamesfay.org

Worship and Music Ministry: \$12,300

Mission objective: Provide opportunities for worship experiences for people of all ages that are passionate, relevant, kinesthetic and engage all the senses

- Develop music leadership plan
- Form a team to develop worship arts
- Upgrade sound and video recording system
- Structural enhancement to sanctuary and chancel
- Addition of in-sanctuary toddler care area
- Increase keyboard database by 100 hymns/songs
- Special Musical Performance offerings for community

Christian Education & Youth Ministry Initiatives: \$8,700

- Explore the inner spirit of creativity and passion
- Inspire youth to deepen their spiritual journey
- Sponsor more young people for Summer Camp, Mission trips and other faith-forming adventures. Begin funding for 2018 Youth Gathering in Houston.
- Cultivate practices for supporting young people in establishing purpose that partner in God's purposes
- Establish education ministry for entire congregation, celebrate 500th Reformation Anniversary, and continue to connect our young people

Fellowship Ministry: \$1,000

- Catered dinner for Bishop Timothy Smith's visit on 15 January, 2017
- Spring Fest/Fling in May 2017
- Quarterly Fellowship Events/Dinners

Social Ministry: \$1,000

- The Gift of life – host an annual blood drive
- Quarterly nursing home visits and or St. James members (shut-ins) by conducting 'sing-a-long'
- Increase involvement in feeding God's children by:
 - Habitat for humanity, serving breakfast
 - Operation Inasmuch, soup 'n bowls fundraiser
 - Love Lunches at Salvation Army
 - Distributing Food to the needy
 - Annual Crop Walk

General Operations of the Congregation and Facilities Maintenance: \$20,000

To keep up with fixed costs – Utilities, Mortgage, property insurance, etc.

- Staff and personnel
- Important routine property maintenance (We have old HVAC units for sanctuary which are no longer able to be repaired. Estimates for replacement are \$70,000. Carpet in lower classroom area is quite old, and is in desperate need of replacement. The increase allows for some monies to be set aside for these future replacements.)
- Basic maintenance around entire Church property-Lawn and Grounds, Snow Removal, etc.
- Other ministry areas: Stewardship, Evangelism, Communication, etc.

Remember that our Lord Jesus said, "More blessings come from giving than from receiving." Acts 20:35

GOD'S GIFTS 2017

Living and giving with a grateful heart...

What Is Stewardship?

Maybe we can begin by thinking about what stewardship is not: Stewardship is not simply about money. It is not a fundraising program. It is not about being rich or being poor. It is not a new fad or environmental word.

Stewardship is a way of life, a faith-filled response to God who has been good and generous to us throughout our lives. By recognizing God's gifts to us, caring for them, and sharing them generously with others, we demonstrate that we truly appreciate all that the Lord has given us.

In living our lives as good stewards of God's many and varied graces, we follow the example set by Jesus, the perfect steward, and imitate his way of life. True love, devotion, and gratitude to God make us eager to cultivate and share our many gifts of time, talent, and treasure with others. Carried out in action, this life-long commitment affords each of us a wonderful opportunity to strengthen and grow in our personal relationship with the Lord.

In a pastoral letter on stewardship entitled Stewardship: A Disciple's Response, one pastor focuses on our discipleship with Jesus Christ, which ultimately leads to the practice of stewardship. The author writes, "Disciples who practice stewardship recognize God as the origin of life, the giver of freedom, the source of all they have and are and will be."

There will, of course, be obstacles and challenges along our journey of generosity. Today, in our secular culture, we are sometimes encouraged to be self-centered rather than God-centered. But we be encouraged by Paul's words to the Romans:

We know that God is always at work for the good of everyone who loves him. (Romans 8:28 CEV).

Eager to move forward, the congregation council and the stewardship team have taken the initiative to chart a course for St. James in 2017. Our key strategies (core values) are in the areas of:

- 1) Worship and Music (together we offer God praise and thanks)
- 2) Christian Education (faith formation among all ages)
- 3) Fellowship Ministry (knowing each other is key in being disciples together)
- 4) Social Ministry (our outreach into the community and world)
- 5) General Operations (Other Ministries, Facilities Maintenance, Staffing, Overhead, etc.)

We look forward to the congregation's support – prayers, people, and dollars – to put this plan into action. All gifts are from God, including money and our material possessions. We have a responsibility to share our gifts with our family and with others in need. As Christian stewards, we are called to return in thanksgiving a proportionate gift, which reflects the many blessings we have received.

FOCUS OF GOD'S GIFTS 2017

What did 2016 Gifts Provide?

Our gifts in 2016 have accomplished some of what we had hoped for: a wonderful VBS program, 7 youth attending summer camp, our ministry to OIAM and other social ministry agencies, God's Work Our Hands Sunday ministries, the adult choir's Easter cantata, etc. Gifts were used to keep our day-to-day operations so we would be staffed and positioned to effectively carry out work as a congregation. But we fell short in areas of worship enhancement, broader support for Christian Education, property maintenance, and mission support to the larger church. For 2017, our ministry visions will require an increase in new funding.

A primary objective of **God's Gifts 2017** Stewardship Appeal is to increase offerings so what was begun will continue.

Implementation of our Strategic Plan to Strengthen On-going Ministries

To assure the key focus areas of our Strategic Plan become more than words on paper, the congregation council will support the various ministry teams as they create new, exciting, effective and specific action plans. Through recruiting, appointing, and training new team members, the congregation council can empower each team to focus on their area of ministry.

Obviously, we have to be able to fund the basic operational costs of the congregation: utilities, staffing, overhead costs, etc. But, God's call to us is more than that. We are called into ministry with one another, with the community, and the world. Our efforts through **God's Gifts 2017** will provide appropriate support for ministry teams to be creative and energetic.

The mid-October Newsletter provides additional information and answer the questions about our Stewardship Campaign, specific goals, spending plan etc. Please pray about our congregation's mission and ministry together. Pray about your financial participation for 2017. Pray about your response to the letter from the Pastor and Council President, which will ask you to consider increasing your offering for the coming year.

Be ready to complete your **"Statement of Intent"** and place it in the offering on Commitment Sunday, November 13, or you can mail your **"Statement of Intent"** directly to the church office.

Together, we are called to reach out with the gospel of hope and mercy to one another and to our greater community. The Lord blesses us, Saint James and, the world through the joy of service and love. Thank you for being part of this exciting congregation.

Bring your full tithe to the Temple treasury so there will be ample provisions in my Temple. Test me in this and see if I don't open up heaven itself to you and pour out blessings beyond your wildest dreams. Malachi 3:10.

Called to be generous stewards of God's love,

*We...Love and praise God through worship
Provide Christian Education
Create Christian bonds through fellowship
Engage in outreach to our community*

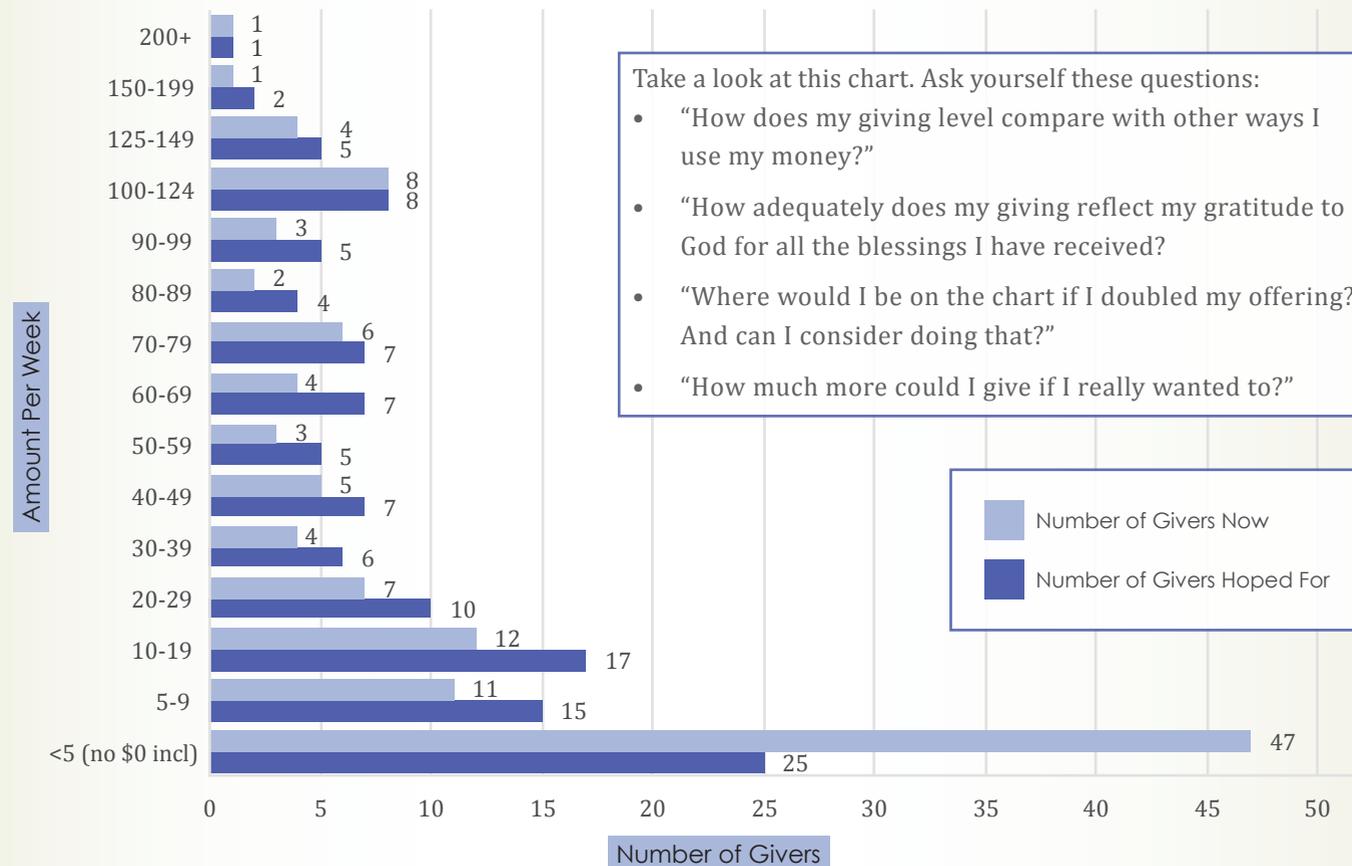
While our core values statement is relatively new, it describes what has been happening for 80 years. Generation after generation people from all walks of life, coming together as St. James Church, have discovered God's Gifts.

We join together in worship; engage in learning from the Scriptures and each other; respond to people in need; strive to make our community and world a better place; and, open our arms and hearts to all people, welcoming them so they may participate in **God's Gifts**.

To many people Saint James is like home, not like an institution. One person said, "They're excited to see me." People feel welcome!

There's high energy here, having fun and being serious at the same time. Sermons give hope and address what people are facing today, talking about real issues...what people are going through in life.

St. James Lutheran Church Giving



Saint James has had its hand in everything out there: food pantry, Operation INASMUCH, homeless programs, and other caring ministries. We find and create opportunities to make a difference in people's lives.

Most people have no idea how much is going on around here. Stuff is happening for everybody. With a wide diversity of age and experience Saint James is multi-generational. People are engaged with each other and with ministry. – Sharon M., new member of St. James

Finding life in Jesus Christ is truly God's Gift to each one of us and to our congregation. In response to this gift, we look forward to the coming year and strive to prepare as best we can to follow our calling to be God's servants in the world. Our challenge is to gather together

sufficient financial resources to keep on kindling the flame of faith in the life if this congregation and in the lives of others in our community.

Each of you must make up your own mind about how much to give. But don't feel sorry that you must give and don't feel that you are forced to give. **God loves people who love to give. 2 Corinthians 9:7 (CEV)**

Plans For 2017

Our focus next year is to strengthen the on-going ministries of our congregation. Our goal is to increase giving by \$43,000 or more in new offerings throughout this year. Here's how these new offerings will be invested.

Continued on back...

APPEAL GOAL

Increase Annual Offerings in 2017...

Your joyful participation will help reach our goal:

\$43,000 In New Gifts in 2017