

Under the Steeple

ST. JAMES PARISH

Celebrating
175
YEARS

Hear ye, Hear ye.....

Check out pages 4 and 5 for all the details about the

175TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

SUNDAY, JULY 27, 2025

Hope to see you there!



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IT'S YOUR TURN!

On July 27, 2025, St. James, Cooperstown will observe 175 years of faith with a Mass celebrated with Bishop David Ricken and Bishop Frank Dewane, followed by a day of fun and fellowship. This is a joyful and historic event.

As I reflect on the humble beginnings of our church and all the sacrifices, work, and heart that have contributed over that time to our identity and history, I am grateful to all our ancestors who came before us, as well as to you, who have shaped the parish into what it is today. The parish has seen many changes, but it continues to be a beacon of hope, just as it was 175 years ago. This is an iconic church that was formed long before the creation of the Diocese of Green Bay.

Now it is our turn to continue the legacy the families that came before us founded and developed. We owe it to them, as well as to those who will live here after us to pass this beautiful church to the next generation of people seeking the love of Christ.

Both the church and rectory roofs are in great need of replacement. The last time this was done was in the mid 1980's. The current cost of this project will be around \$250,000. This is no small amount, but with your help and generosity and the

Lord's will, it is attainable.

How can you help?

- ◆ Perhaps you have \$250,000 you could give to cover the entire cost.
- ◆ Donate from your eligible IRA a tax-free gift of any amount. To do so, please consult your financial advisor or institution.
- ◆ Make a generous one-time contribution of \$25,000 - \$100,000 or any amount to assist with the cost.
- ◆ Remember St. James Church in your will or estate and name us as a beneficiary for any amount.
- ◆ Open a life-insurance policy and make the parish your beneficiary, which would benefit the parish for the next generation of the faithful.
- ◆ Transfer stock to the parish.

Additionally, the parish is always in need of support:

- ◆ The Cemetery requires funds to maintain its beauty now and in the future. It is a worthy investment of funds that is often overlooked.
- ◆ I am actively seeking support for air conditioning in the church, which would provide considerable relief in the hot, humid summer.

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NEW TRUSTEE ELECTED



Congratulations to Rick Knoflicek, who was elected as Parish Trustee on June 29. Rick will be married to his wife Lori for 49 years this coming October. They have 4 children: 3 sons and a daughter, 5 foreign exchange daughters, 13 grandchildren

and 1 great grandchild.

Rick is a farmer, having at one time milked cows, raising beef steers and cash crops. Rick and Lori have been members of St. James since December 1989. Rick served on the Finance Council for 6 years, and likes to help decorate the church for holidays. He has helped with cemetery clean ups and will continue doing that in the future. Thank you, Rick, for accepting this position.

“DOORWAYS TO HOPE” DAY PILGRIMAGE WITH FATHER BRIAN



On Wednesday, June 25, 2025, fifty people from St. James, St. Joseph, All Saints, St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, and Prince of Peace em-

barked on an exciting and spiritual journey. The Annual Pilgrimage Day 2025, “Doorways to Hope” was a huge success that took us to Appleton. The Pilgrimage Day has a ten-year history, and each trip is the exclusive brainstorm of Father Brian, who loves to arrange and embark on pilgrimages. Each is unique, and never the same.



Pilgrims explored Hearthstone Historic House which was the first home in Wisconsin to feature electric lights

and the phrase “Turn on the lights!” was coined.

Next, Mass was celebrated by Father Brian and Deacon Conrad Kiełtyka at



St. Pius X. Bishop Ricken designated St. Pius as a Pilgrim of Hope pilgrimage destination, where visitors could gain a plenary indulgence. St. Pius was also Father Brian’s first parish assignment and was also a pastorate of Fr. Ron Colombo. Deb Lyons

served as reader. A delicious pizza lunch from Stucs, along with a sampling of Fr. Jim’s Jugenheimer’s homemade ice cream followed the Mass.

After lunch, we so-journed to St. Joseph parish, where Brother Ray introduced us to the life of Blessed Solanus



Casey. If canonized, he will become the first United States-born man to become a saint. Blessed Solanus was born in Wisconsin and celebrated his first Mass at St. Joseph in Appleton. He was ordained a simplex priest and could only celebrate Mass privately and could not hear confessions. Blessed Solanus is the patron of disappointment and failure, but is renowned for his spiritual wisdom, healing, and mastery of the violin.



Mary Ozarowicz had a little fun playing the organ as pilgrims explored the church.



The afternoon continued with a visit to the newly-restored St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception church in Menasha. We prayed mid-

afternoon prayer and Father Brian celebrated the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick for all who requested it, while Deacon Conrad offered a powerful reflection on healing. That was followed by time to pray, join several guided tours, see the choir loft, or explore the church on your own.

Pilgrims enjoyed an awesome shopping spree at St. Patrick’s Gifts and Books, located within the Northland



Mall. Some likely had to take out loans after the experience. Patty at St. Patrick’s welcomed us all with cookies, water, and a little packet containing a Pope Leo prayer, Our Lady of Fatima booklet, pen, and breath mint. Never in the history of these trips has our group been hosted with such graciousness and generosity than our visit to St. Patrick’s!

I received a Fontanini fishing pond as a gracious surprise gift, and also bought a Fontanini olive oil press.

The evening culminated with supper and fellowship at Good Company, where no one went hungry. The owners greeted us and told us a little about the history of the building and about their supernatural residents.



Continued on page 3

Pilgrimage...Continued

It was a wonderful day of prayer, learning, fellowship, and fun. There was good spirit, energy, and laughter all day long. It was a way for people to get to know each other and



even form new friendships. To say the least, if you missed it, you missed out. It was a long, full day, but the blessings of the trip are still being counted. A special thank you to Jeff Meulemans from Lamer's who served as our generous and capable driver. The day was far more than anyone was expecting.



Next year's pilgrimage will fill up even faster than this one. The 2026 theme and destination is already being planned in my head. Each year it is different and unique, but equally enjoyable and impressive.

Until next year, the memories will remain alive in our hearts. Mark your calendar for Thursday, June 25, 2026.

MEET KATHY HERLACHE, NEW PARISH SECRETARY

"It's a loooooong winter in Wisconsin!" says Kathy Herlache, who has taken over the secretarial position at St. James as of July 1. When

this church position opened up, it seemed like a perfect fit for her with the part time hours and close proximity to church. She retired from Northern Group after 15 years with them. You may remember Northern Group from their generosity with Fun Night

donations for many years. Prior to that, she worked for the Green Bay School District for 15 years.

Kathy has been married to Brian for nearly 40 years. They built a retirement home on 6 acres close to St. James about 23 years ago after their four children were grown and gone. They have been parish members since that time. Kathy previously taught 4th grade Religious Education, was a Trustee, chaired the annual fundraiser, was a lector at Mass, and is currently a choir member. Her favorite pastimes

are flower gardening, painting antique window frames, reading and enjoying bonfires.

As Kathy begins this new challenge, she looks forward to working with Father Brian, the trustees and council members...making their load a bit lighter. Her office is just inside the front of the parish office building on the first floor as you enter. She is available Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 9:00am - 1:00pm. Stop in and introduce yourself!

FAREWELL NOTE FROM TRUSTEE JANE HERTEL

I have had the privilege of being a trustee for the past 6 years. It's been rewarding and informative along with an opportunity to see how our parish operates. A few highlights of the past 6 years are: preparing for Fr Santy's arrival, the One by One Campaign, installation of the lift, entry improvement on the south west corner, painting of the church windows, parking lot regraded/repaved, exiting of Fr Santy and arrival of Fr Brian. So much is happening at our church.

Thanks for the opportunity to serve you and please consider volunteering - we need you!

Bereavement Ministry

- | | |
|----------|---|
| July 20 | 12:00-2:00pm; St James Parish Hall or via zoom
Topic: What to Say to Someone Who is Grieving |
| Sept. 14 | 12:00-2:00pm St James Parish Hall or via zoom
Topic: Helping a Child Grieve and Grow |

For more information contact Tom Bekkers: 920-660-8066

**LUMEN CHRISTI FARM EVENTS**

Rosary Community Nights: July 9 (Patriotic Rosary) and July 23 (Nature Rosary). Join them on these two nights from 6:30pm-8:30pm for an optional picnic, a living rosary with music, many fun farm activities and a social.

Farm Days and Overnight Stays: Starting mid-July the Farm will be opening on Fridays and Saturdays for visitors to spend a day at the farm or to stay overnight in their unique sheep wagon and yurt tent. For more information and to register, go to <http://LumenChristiFarm.org>.

Celebrating 175 YEARS

HAPPY DEMISEMISEPTCENTENNIAL ST. JAMES CHURCH!

by Jean Schleis

An anniversary of 175 years is certainly significant, but there is no common word used to describe such a milestone. Some sources indicate that the word demisemipseptcentennial literally means one-half (demi-) × one-half (semi-) × seven (sept-) × 100 years (centennial.) For our purposes at St. James, we have avoided using this difficult word.

There is a certain magic that fills the air when a church community gets together to celebrate a momentous occasion. You'll feel that sense of significance when everyone gath-

ers to mark the Feastday of St. James the Greater on the 175th anniversary of the church's founding.

Preparation for this historic day began more than a year ago, when a committee of ten people formed to begin brainstorming on what the occasion would entail. July 27, 2025 was the date chosen because it is the closest Sunday to the Feast of St. James the Greater, (July 25.) After much discussion, a biblical theme from the Book of Psalms, Chapter 126, Verse 3 was chosen:

**"The Lord has done great things for us;
we are filled with joy."**

PARKING

The parking lot will be left open for vehicles, with extra parking along the cemetery driveways. If you intend to stay the entire afternoon, please park away from pedestrian traffic for safety. Carpool if possible, and follow the directions of the parking attendants.

Guided by this verse, the group planned three key components to mark the occasion:

**SPIRITUAL
HISTORICAL
CELEBRATORY**

SPIRITUAL COMPONENT

The day would begin with Mass. Along with parishioners, guests of honor were chosen and invited. Bishop David Ricken and Bishop Frank Dewane will concelebrate the Mass, with Father Brian Belongia, Father Santy Turiano Jr., Father Bill

O'Brien and Father Dennis Ryan as co-celebrants. Deacon Dan Gray and Sister Helen Plum will also participate. A 10:00am Mass time was chosen, and a decision was made

CLERGY PLAQUE

In the past 175 years, forty dedicated individuals have served as pastoral leaders at St. James. Their names are engraved on a plaque that will be displayed permanently in the church.

to celebrate the Mass inside the church rather than in the cemetery.

The committee chose to pursue a spiritual initiative with a booklet entitled "Voices of Faith" wherein parishioner's original prayers would be com-

PRAYER BOOKLET

Parishioners wrote prayers that have now been compiled into the "Voices of Faith" booklet. Get your free copy and be sure to save it for future generations.

pared. Teaching materials were distributed, and Faith Formation students were encouraged to participate. The prayers were submitted forming a treasury of personal devotions from parishioners who lived in the year 2025. The booklets will be distributed for free as a keepsake for generations to come. This project was made possible

PARISHIONER INTERVIEWS

Over 30 individuals have documented their experiences at St. James on video. They include individuals, couples, and some young people who are making an impact at St. James. Choose the segments you wish to view on a large TV set up in the parish hall at any time during the afternoon.

through a grant from the Catholic Foundation for the Diocese of Green Bay.

HISTORICAL COMPONENT

Be sure to browse the historical photos and artifacts in the parish hall and under the smaller tent outside.

An Amazing Cemetery Race is planned for about 2:00 in the afternoon. Participants of all ages will be given clues directing them to 12 headstones in the cemetery. At each location, they will decipher clues and answer questions

based on the headstone information. Each stop will offer a clue leading to the next location. Every participant/team that correctly completes the race will have their name entered into a drawing for cash prizes.

A look back at the past 175 years of national, state and church history was compiled and documented on poster boards. They will be on display at the celebration.

Children were invited to step back in time by memorizing Prayers and Principles of the Catholic Faith. Monthly prizes for completion were awarded, and there will be more prizes given out on July 27.

CELEBRATORY COMPONENT

SOUVENIRS

- 175th theme logo magnets
- 2025 calendar magnets
- Engraved ink pens
- Can koozies
- Voices of Faith booklets

Family friendly festivities are planned for the afternoon. A huge tent will be set up with tables and chairs for eating and relaxation. (Or, feel free to bring a lawn chair from home.) DeGrand's Family Restaurant will be selling grilled hamburgers, brats, hot dogs and chicken with accompaniments. Beer, soda, hard seltzers, and water will also be sold. The Mark Jirikovec Band will be playing their old-time polka hits starting at noon, and a hard surface floor will be laid out for dancing. Giving a nod to the Irish heritage of St. James Parish, dancers from the Heritage Irish Dance Academy will be up front while the band takes a break at around 2:30. The talented and costumed young people will perform to a variety of traditional Irish dances as well as more contemporary Irish tunes.

Over 30 parishioners have documented their lives and expe-

riences at St. James on video. They include individuals, couples, and some young people who are making an impact at St. James. You will be able to select the segment you wish to view on a large TV set up in the parish hall. This activity correlates to the interviews that were recorded for the 150th church anniversary.

MARK JIRIKOVEC BAND and IRISH DANCERS

The band will be on stage under the big tent all afternoon. A hard surface floor will be set up for dancing. And be sure to catch the Irish Dancers who will perform for about a half hour.

BOUNCE HOUSES & GAMES

Two bounce houses will be set up on the lawn in front of the rectory. One for the younger kids and one for those a bit older. Free all afternoon!

Or enjoy a variety of lawn games like giant jenga or cornhole. Challenge your friends for friendly competition.

A beautiful hand-crafted stained glass picture depicting a cross will be raffled off. It was crafted by a parishioner especially for this 175th celebration.

A photo booth is always fun. Attendees are encouraged to take their own photos using our props for a souvenir picture. We hope to have a QR code set up for you to upload photos to St. James Parish website for all to see if you wish.

No celebration would be complete without cake and ice cream. Father Brian will be cutting cake in the parish hall kitchen at about 12:30. Listen for the announcement!

PHOTO BOOTH

Memorable snapshots can be taken at our interactive set. Use the props and backdrops to frame an unforgettable photo. And, keep an eye out for Pope Leo XIV to have your picture taken with him!

The Mass and festivities are open to the public, so invite your family, friends and neighbors. This church celebration represents more than just an event on the calendar; it is a time to give thanks to God for past blessings and to look forward with hope for the future. We cordially invite you to join us.

For the latest information about the event, follow us on Facebook and check our Sunday church bulletin.

MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK

To volunteer means to freely offer up your time and service to help. At church, we often think volunteering means participating in ministries, singing in the choir, being a member of a committee, teaching, fundraising, etc. This is true, but St. James parishioners have taken volunteering to another level this past year. July 1st marks one year since Fr. Brian became the Pastor at our parish. In preparation for his arrival, and for the upcoming celebration of 175 years of faith, volunteers have generously given their time, talents, and treasures for numerous projects.

Worth noting is that some projects were done by contractors, but many volunteers were needed to get the bids, permits, designs, approvals, details, follow-ups, etc. to take the projects to fruition. In addition, many volunteers donated hours, skills, money, and supplies to make these projects successful. We are grateful for all volunteers and donors! Let us recognize our accomplishments from this past year (and those we may have missed.)

- ♥ Repaired and paved the parking lot; installed new cement sidewalks around church
- ♥ Completed the Father Ron memorial garden; added white stone around the rectory
- ♥ Updated the stairwell near choir/sacristy and basement, including epoxy finish
- ♥ Installed a lift in church and outside handrails
- ♥ Prepared rectory in preparation for Fr. Brian's arrival
- ♥ Cleaned rectory basement and attic; held garage sale

- ♥ Trimmed shrubs; added bark around trees and outdoor altar
- ♥ Added concrete curbing; prepped landscaping areas
- ♥ Removed trees in cemetery and front lawn
- ♥ Added landscaping weed barrier and stone
- ♥ Replaced screens in steeple; removed debris
- ♥ Cleaned along CTH R roadside; planted grass to make the ditch the proper width
- ♥ Built wood covers for outlets by altar; added shelves in sacristy
- ♥ Cleaned cemetery; lifted, cleaned, and repaired headstones
- ♥ Scraped and painted outside trim on windows and doors
- ♥ Trenched water to back of church and cemetery
- ♥ Painted lift, entrance, parish hall, and altar tops
- ♥ Added pullies for hanging banners in church
- ♥ Repainted Enter/Exit signs and outside altar
- ♥ Cleaned carpets and church proper
- ♥ Planned 175 year parish celebration
- ♥ Installed air conditioning in rectory
- ♥ Moved Sacred Heart of Jesus statue
- ♥ Cleaned kitchen and supply closet
- ♥ Returned tabernacle to back altar
- ♥ Removed deck from garage roof
- ♥ Repaired roof leaks in buildings
- ♥ Repaired outdoor benches



1986 TIME CAPSULE DISCOVERED



April 15, Tuesday of Holy Week, was a surprising day for Fr. Brian and a few parishioners. We decided to look behind the opening of the back altar beneath the crucifix, in hopes to place the tabernacle into the space it once occupied prior to the church's remodel in 1986.

Many original wooden pieces from the

church were found stored in the back of the altar. With a little finagling, the wooden pieces were repositioned or removed, along with a cardboard box labelled "SEALED MAY 1ST 1986...DO NOT OPEN TILL MAY 1ST 2086." After identifying this box as a time capsule from 1986, it was properly returned (unopened) behind the altar.

It was wonderful to find such a hidden treasure, and even more exciting to be able to return the tabernacle back to its original position.



FALL FUNDRAISER

SUNDAY, SEPT. 7, 2025

Raffle Carry Out Booyah Bake Sale

Pick up raffle tickets after Mass
July 19/20 or 26/27; and return by
Tues., September 2
Drawing at the end of 8:00 Mass
September 7

YOUTH MINISTRY SUMMER MISSION TRIPS

The Youth Ministry's Summer Mission trip is taking place July 12-20th in Lake Charles, Louisiana. Please pray for this group of young adults and youth, along with their adult chaperones for safe travels and a successful week being the hands and feet of Jesus. We will be praying to St. Joseph the Worker all week for his intercession. Travel with us on Facebook as we will post our activities regularly on One Degree Youth Ministry, All Saints, and St. James Facebook pages. Feel free to leave an encouraging message, which we will share with the group and/or leave a prayer intention that we can pray for — we welcome it all.

The second summer trip is to the Steubenville Youth/Young Adult Conference in St. Paul, Minnesota. This trip is July 25-27th and is held at the University of St. Thomas

campus. It is a weekend that evangelizes, equips and empowers youth and young adults to become radical, joyful disciples. There are keynote speakers, praise and worship and lots of high energy. We are teaming up with St. Peter the Fisherman Parish from Two Rivers.

Thank you for all your financial support preparing for these upcoming trips by attending our brat frys, purchasing Seroogy's candy bars or helping with the second collection that took place earlier this year.



It's Your Turn...continued from page 1

- ◆ The church interior is in need of painting, repair, and updating.
- ◆ There are a number of liturgical items (items used for Mass) such as a metal ceremonial book of the gospels, 6 – 8 candlestands, or a set of copes (garments priests and deacons wear for processions and devotionals.)
- ◆ You could donate next year's songbooks that are always replaced at the end of November, or consider donating next year's altar candles, or even the Paschal Candle.
- ◆ You could donate towards future landscaping needs and upkeep.
- ◆ Moreover the religious education program is always in need of support to catechize our children.

Perhaps you could donate the amount to cover this year's Fun and Faith?

We need your ongoing support to maintain regular, everyday upkeep and operations. I challenge all parishioners to consider a 10% increase in your regular sacrificial giving. That means if you gave \$500 to the parish this past year, please consider \$550 for 2025-2026.

Perhaps it is more convenient for you to donate your sacrificial giving electronically. We have the opportunity available and it is simple to set up. This method ensures your contributions will be given even when you cannot attend Mass here on Sundays.

It is our right and duty to contribute to

the needs of the parish. It is only by the grace of God and the generosity of all of us, and those who came before, that our beautiful and historic Church lives on in Cooperstown, Wisconsin.

Be proud of your church. Promote your church, and support it, not only with your treasure, time, and talent, but by word of mouth. Do not presume that other people know that we are here or that they are welcome here. Invite them to visit our church with you. Your participation, promotion, and enthusiasm for your parish can go a long way in welcoming new parishioners to carry the legacy of this church for the next twenty-five years.

God bless you,
Father Brian



CONTRIBUTION FORM

Please inform us if you would like more information about any of the ideas mentioned in Father Brian's article about how you can support St. James Parish financially. Options might be donating toward a specific liturgical item in memory of a family member, signing up for electronic sacrificial giving, donating from an eligible IRA, donating stock, or any other possibilities. Contact:

Fr. Brian Belongia: 920-272-8172 or
fatherbriansjcsjk2024@gmail.com

Parish Office: 920-863-2585 or
office@stjamescooperstown.org

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Please contact me about the following:

Mail or drop off this form at the parish office. Thank you!



UNDER THE STEEPLE



ST. JAMES PARISH
COOPERSTOWN

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ♦ July 14-18 Fun & Faith
- ♦ July 20 Grief Group
- ♦ July 27 St. James 175th Anniversary
- ♦ September 7 Fall Fundraiser
- ♦ September 10 Faith Formation Begins
- ♦ September 14 Grief Group
- ♦ September 28 Priesthood Sunday



- ♦ Pastor: Fr. Brian Belongia
Phone: 920-272-8172
Email: fatherbrian.sjcsjk2024@gmail.com
- ♦ Deacon: Dan Gray: 920-246-4155
- ♦ Telephone: Office: 920-863-2585
Fax: 920-863-5445
- ♦ Mass Schedule:
Saturday 7:30pm
Sunday 8:00am; Live streamed on Facebook
Weekday Mass: Tuesday, 8:00am, Live streamed
- ♦ Faith Formation: Wednesday evenings
September thru April
Grades 1 - 6: 6:00 - 7:15pm
Grades 7 - 11: 7:30 - 8:45pm