

**May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.**

**Romans 15:13**

**St. James Lutheran Church has been an important part of my life and has taught me a lot about being a Christian. I have many great memories of church from my childhood. The ones that stick out the most are the Christmas Pageant and Sunday School. These two things were very important to me as a young kid, so I will be focusing on them here.**

**Sunday School was a big part of my younger years going to church. It taught me many bible stories about being honest, kind, and that God always loves me. Also, it helped me know how to bond with people I did not know, and it gave me something to look forward to on Sunday mornings. We did arts and crafts, watched bible cartoons, and did small science experiments. It was all very fun. And we got popcorn with the cartoons. The science experiments were always great, and the arts and crafts stuff usually were somewhat good looking. Also, during Sunday school, I met a bunch of people that did not go to my school who I bonded with. Although we weren't the best of friends, everyone was still kind and caring.**

**I always looked forward to the Christmas Pageant because it reminded me of the Christmas season. The Christmas Pageant was always great every time we did it. I remember being the donkey and standing there doing a mediocre job of singing Christmas carols. I remember the Charlie Brown Christmas version we did until we stopped (probably due to copyright stuff if I had to guess). And Mrs. Wieggers always worked hard and made it fun. I remember always running to the back of the church to get sugar cookies after the Pageant.**

**All of my memories from St. James had a greater meaning. God will always forgive us, and I was taught how we are supposed to spread the word of the Lord. This is what church means to me.**

**Ernst Henry Matkov**