

James 1:13-27, To the 12 tribes

1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,

To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations:

Greetings.

Trials and Temptations

2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, [a] whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4 Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. 6 But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. 7 That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. 8 Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

9 Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position. 10 But the rich should take pride in their humiliation—since they will pass away like a wild flower. 11 For

the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich will fade away even while they go about their business.

12 Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

13 When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; 14 but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

16 Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. 17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. 18 He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.



Listening and Doing

19 My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, 20 because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. 21 Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. 23 Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror

24 and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. 25 But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

26 Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. 27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Pastor Stahl's Weekly Message of Faith



Hello, Everyone!

The weather has been warmer, Summer is just about here! Congratulations to all of the graduates this Spring. It is a brand new world that they are about to enter. I graduated from Unity High School in 1981, 45 years ago. (Man, am I old!) As the old saying goes, if I knew then what I know now.....

It is the same for everyone. When you graduate, you think you have all the answers, your life is planned out, and then things change. You have new experiences, meet new people, have different jobs, etc. You get married, have a family, you might even go back to your high school reunion. Some people you recognize right away, others you don't have a clue who they are. Name tags with high school yearbook photos help!

The point is that we all change, but God never changes. The author of Hebrews proclaims, "Jesus Christ is the Same, yesterday, today, and forever." (Hebrews 13:8) Our lives, our friends, our jobs may change, but Jesus Is Always the Same.

John Wesley was all set as a minister in the Church of England. He had been to seminary, had been ordained a minister, but never felt a personal knowledge of Jesus. He went "very unwillingly" to a Bible study in London. He felt during the Bible study that Jesus was Speaking to him personally about how much he was loved by God. He felt Jesus coming into his heart, and his heart was "strangely

warmed." Wesley then began to preach about this heart felt change in his life, but nobody in the churches he preached at was interested. They preferred to sleep in the pew on Sunday mornings. One time, a farmer released a bull out of his pasture to attack Wesley! Wesley never gave up, he ended up preaching in an open field (the bull was not invited) and 10,000 people came out to hear the Gospel. Wesley never gave up, even though he could have many times.

The point is that we should never give up, because God Has something new in store for us, just around the corner. One night Wesley was walking home from a church meeting. It was late at night, and he was robbed at knife point. Wesley gave him what little money he had, then said to the robber, "Remember son. The Blood of Jesus Christ Cleanses us from all sin." The robber ran off into the night. Many years later, Wesley was speaking at a church. He was shaking hands with people after the service and a man came up to him. "Reverend Wesley, you don't remember me, but I robbed you at knife point 20 years ago. I want to apologize, sir. You told me about Jesus, and I have turned my life around. I owe it all to you, Sir." Wesley replied, "No, son. Not me, but the Father in Heaven. Remember, the Blood of Jesus Cleanses us from all sin."

God Bless all of you!

Pastor Jeff Stahl
Countryside and Ogden
United Methodist Churches

2026 Agriculture Scholars celebrated at luncheon

Thirty High School Seniors Receive \$2,500 to Pursue Ag Careers

A total of \$75,000 of scholarships were awarded to 30 high school seniors. Each scholar receives \$2,500 from FCI to pursue a degree within the field of agriculture. 25 of the students attended the recognition program.

This marks the 22nd year of the Farm Credit agriculture scholarship program, which has awarded over \$938,500 to 566 students in central and southern Illinois since 2004. Scholarship selections are based on participation and leadership contributions within school and community organizations, a genuine passion for farming and/or agriculture, and a commitment to pursuing an agriculture-related career.

"Farm Credit Illinois is proud to invest in these remarkable young leaders who will shape the future of agriculture and rural America," says Kelly Hunt, FCI's chief executive officer. "Their passion and talent are inspiring,

and we look forward to the meaningful impact they will make as they pursue continued education."

2026 FCI Agriculture Scholars are:

- Alex Barnard of Foolsland (Champaign County) will graduate from Gibson City-Melvin-Sibley High School and attend the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to study agricultural leadership, education, and communications. Alex's parents are Angie and Matt Barnard.

- Riley Behrends of Clifton (Iroquois County) will graduate from Clifton Central High School and attend Joliet Junior College to study agriculture business. Riley's parents are Alan and Jessica Behrends.

- Rye Bliler of Taylorville (Christian County) will graduate from Taylorville High School and attend Lake Land College to study agriculture produc-

tion. Rye's parents are Nate and Elizabeth Bliler.

- Brody Brown of Decatur (Macon County) will graduate from Warrensburg-Latham High School and attend Illinois Central College in the diesel technician program. Brody's parents are Matthew and Melanie Brown.

- Helen Butcher of Modesto (Macoupin County) will graduate from Northwestern High School and attend Lincoln Land Community College to study agronomy. Helen's parents are Nicholas and Stacy Butcher.

- Haven Cash of Clay City (Clay County) will graduate from North Clay High School and attend Lake Land College in the agriculture transfer program. Haven's parents are Dustin and Lisa Cash.

- Eric Cooper of Mount Pulaski (Logan County) will graduate from Mount Pu-

laski High School and plans to study agribusiness or animal science. Eric's parents are Tanya and Scott Cooper.

- Brooklyn Diel of

See **SCHOLARS** on page 6

Venus and Jupiter meet

You can do me a favor this week and early into next. I'll get a few calls and email asking me what those two bright objects are in the western sky after sundown. Just tell them the brighter one is Venus and the next brightest is Jupiter. I told you last week the pair are approaching each other and they meet next week. Saturday and Sunday evening the two planets will sit side by side. They are closest on Tuesday at 1.5 degrees separation. Now I realize they look close – they aren't. Jupiter is about five times

In the night sky

By David Leake



farther away. Venus appears brighter because it's closer and because it's covered by highly reflective sulfuric acid clouds. The clouds reflect about ¾ of the light the planet receives from the Sun. Above and right of the planetary pair are the stars Cas-

tor and Pollux marking the heads of the Gemini Twins constellation. To the lower right is the planet Mercury. We'll tell you about Mercury next week. Keep watching the planets as they separate with Venus gaining altitude and Jupiter headed sunward.

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OSF Peace Meal Menu

Here is the Sidney, Homer, Philo, Tolono, Sadorus, and Pesotum Peace Meal menu for Thursday, June 4 through Wednesday, June 10.

Thursday, 6/4/26 - Asian chicken cranberry tossed salad, raspberry vinaigrette, carrots, chips, strawberry fluff, and a half pint of milk.

Friday, 6/5/26 - Tenderloin, tator tots, green beans, fruit cup, wheat bread served with butter or margarine, and a half pint of milk.

Saturday, 6/6/26 - Ham salad, fancy bean salad, potato salad, fruit cup, wheat bread served with butter or margarine, and a half pint of milk.

Sunday, 6/7/26 - OSF Peace Meal is closed.

Monday, 6/8/26 - Chicken fried steak with gravy, corn, broccoli, fruit cup, and a half pint of milk.

Tuesday, 6/9/26 - Spaghetti with meat sauce, asparagus, peach cobbler, bread stick, and a half pint of milk.

Wednesday, 6/10/26 - OSF Peace Meal is closed.

OSF Peace Meal provides seniors, age 60 and older, with a nutritious lunch Monday through Saturday and are closed on Sunday and Wednesday. There is a suggested donation of \$4.00 for each meal, however, no senior will be denied a meal because of an inability to financially contribute. The Illinois Link Card is an accepted form of payment. For more information, please go to <https://www.osfhealthcare.org/osf-peace-meal/> or call 1-309-665-5900.

The Homer Peace Meal congregate site is at the Homer Village Hall located at 500 East Second Street. It is currently carry-out only. For reservations, please call 1-309-665-5900. Home delivery in southern Champaign County is currently available in Sidney, Homer, Philo, Tolono, Sadorus, and Pesotum.

Menu substitutions may occur due to global supply chain shortages, but a nutritious meal is still guaranteed.

The OSF Peace Meal menu is submitted for the OSF Peace Meal Senior Nutrition Program by Ann Rhoton.