



CONNECTIONS

ST. LUKE'S LUTHERAN CHURCH - December 2024

*Members of St. Luke's Lutheran Church, in response to Christ's love,
reach out in service to each other, the community, and the world.*

Dickens of a Village: Friday, December 6, 5:15 PM

- See details inside

Christmas Tree Decorating: Friday, December 13 at 5:00 PM

- Pizza to follow at Greg & Jackie Wajerski's

Children's Christmas Pageant: Sunday, December 15 9:00 AM

Blue Christmas Service: Sunday, December 15 5:00 PM

- See details inside

Pajama Vespers: Thursday, December 19, 6:30PM

Service of Lessons & Carols: Sunday, December 22, 9:00 AM

Christmas Eve: Tuesday, December 24

- 4:00 PM Interactive Family Worship with Carols and Candles
- 10:00 PM Candlelight worship with St. Luke's Voices

Christmas Day: Wednesday, December 25

- Worship at 10:00AM

Please come and celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Believe *Noel*
HOLY * Peace
Christ HOPE
Wish FAMILY LOVE
JOY Faith

GREETINGS FROM PASTOR MONTE

It's probably rare for a person to say that they enjoyed a stewardship campaign, but I can honestly say that I did—especially those great videos! If you missed worship any of the weeks from mid-Oct to mid-Nov, you should check out the videos on our website—I guarantee they will warm your heart!
(slchurch.org/Giving/Faith-Stories)

A big thank you to everyone who has responded to the pledge campaign and really took to heart the question—what can I bring? We do not take for granted the many gifts you all bring to this congregation—from your prayers to your musical abilities, from your delicious cooking to your warm smiles, from your generous outreach to your great ideas. Thank you for ALL that you bring!

It strikes me that this is a good question to bring into the Advent season—what can I bring to Jesus? It's a question that Christina Rossetti asked in the final stanza to her poem ***A Christmas Carol***, which we know as the song ***In the Bleak Midwinter***.

What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would give a lamb;
If I were a wise man, I would do my part;
Yet what I can, I give him: give my heart.

I pray that we all find ways to give Jesus our whole hearts this Advent and in the year to come. And please join me in prayer that everyone who walks through our doors these coming weeks feels God's love.

Bringing hope and gratitude,

Pastor Monte

pastor@slchurch.org



FROM OUR MUSIC DIRECTOR

December is the most wonderful month of the year for enjoying music of all kinds. The worship services at St. Luke's will be enriched and inspired with musical expressions as we await Christ's coming during the season of Advent and by celebrating his birth on Christmas. Through many different forms, we look forward to hearing the choir, handbells, instruments and the voices of children in the month of December.

The choir of St Luke's and the Handbell Choir playing Joy to the World, will present the Service of Lessons and Carols on December 22nd at the 9 a.m. worship service. This service, which includes narrations of prophecy, congregational carols and special anthems by the choir will be a meaningful and reflective service.

We all know how frenzied and hectic all of the preparations and plans go along with this time of year, but the opportunity to experience the calming presence of music can bring solace and peace to our souls. It can indeed be a time of prayer and reverence as we experience God with us, Emmanuel.

May God bless you,

Carol Peterson, Music Director

Advent devotions

This year, Advent Devotion books are available at the Welcome Center for you to take home and use. You can also sign up here:

<https://www.livingcompass.org/advent> (Scroll down a fair amount) for the same devotions delivered each day by email.



SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Our Sunday School children will present their pageant
"The Case of the Reluctant Innkeeper"
at the 9:00 a.m. worship service on
Sunday, December 15, 2024

- All preschool through 5th grade students are a part of the program.
- Parents should refer to emails from Lynda VanDien Lvandien@gmail.com 414-378-9933 (Text or call) or the CONNECTED weekly email for updates, songs to practice at home, and what your child(ren) should wear for the program.
- There are **three rehearsals** that students need to attend:
 - Saturday, December 7th - 9AM - 11AM
 - Saturday, December 14th - ALL 9AM – 10:30AM
 - Saturday, December 14th – 10:30-11:00 Speaking Parts
- Sunday School IS in session on December 8.
- No Sunday School December 1 (Advent Breakfast), 22 or Dec 29
- Sunday School classes resume January 5.

PAJAMA VESPERS



Gather around the Christmas tree for evening Vespers **Thursday, December 19, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.** Children (and adults) are invited to attend in their pajamas and snuggle on the lap of a loved adult. Together we will hear the Christmas story, do an activity, sing carols and celebrate Jesus' birth.

The angel said unto them, "Do not be afraid; for see--I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord." Luke 2: 1

BLUE CHRISTMAS



Christmas can be a difficult season, whether it is due to the recent death of a loved one, illness, or just the weight of memories that accumulate like snowflakes. If you need a break from the "merry merry," join us on **Dec 15 at 5 pm** as we gather for a reflective service of hope and healing. Feel free to invite friends or family.

DECEMBER CONFIRMATION & SYNERGY

Dec 4—Both Confirmation AND SYNERGY (note this is a FIRST Wednesday, not the usual dates!) will work together to assemble Christmas gift bags for residents of Felmers-Cheney. This is a service project with Breaking the Chains Ministry, and Pastor David Rebey will be there to lead us and share a little about their work. It will be a meaningful and fun evening—don't miss it!

Dec 11—Confirmation—Regular Learning Night "Is believing in Jesus really the only way to get to heaven?"

Dec 18—Both Confirmation and Synergy—in lieu of our regular Christmas parties, we will join with the church for the First Annual Scavenger Hunt! (see details elsewhere—we do need you to sign up to make sure we have enough cars and drivers!)



Are You a Caregiver in Need of Support?

We meet on the **2nd Monday of the month at 2:30 PM**. We meet in the Upper Fellowship Hall and welcome all to join us. Next date is December 9.

WINGS

WINGS has traditionally given cookies to the homebound and elderly members of our church family. If you, or a church member you know, would find joy in receiving some cookies this year, please contact Julie Ohlert at 414-529-0531 by December 5.



Director of Youth and Family Ministries Search

The search team (Nate Keller, Robin Gross, Diane Beutin, Melissa Enriquez, and Pastor Monte) has begun meeting and is working on updating the current job description. We will be posting the job in early January and will seek your help in spreading the news and recruiting applicants!

For now, we would love to hear from YOU (especially parents and young people!) about priorities in our search. What is most important to you in our next Director of Youth and Family Ministries? Reach out to any of the team members to share your thoughts. And please pray for the team and the search, that God brings the right person to lead St. Luke's youth. Thank you!



Mt. Meru Coffee Project

Consider purchasing coffee for your holiday gatherings, or gifting, from the Mr. Meru Coffee Project. The Mt. Meru Coffee Project is celebrating its 25-year anniversary of ministry in partnership with the coffee farmers in Tanzania. Through its Fair-trade purchases, it has grown over the years and has an impact on almost 1000 farmers and their surrounding

communities. St. Luke's has been a part of this ministry for 24 years. We use the coffee in all our fellowship gatherings. The coffee comes in regular or decaf, flavored, single serve K-cups, and Perfect Pot pouches, and sampler packs. Coffee is available on the shelves in the Gathering Space or see Todd Beutin for ordering.



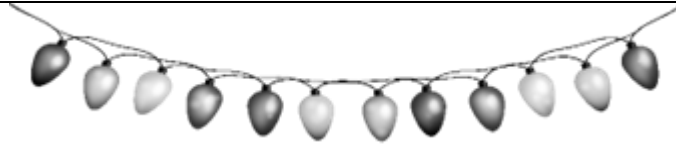
Join us after worship

Upper Fellowship Hall -- While the children are in Sunday school!

Dec 1: Advent Breakfast

Dec 8, 15 and 22: We're watching "Christmas with The Chosen: Holy Night" together, in three installments. "Christmas with The Chosen: Holy Night" blends *The Messengers* and *The Shepherd* into one special remastered and re-scored story. Join us in the Upper Fellowship Hall to watch together.

Dec 29: No Class



Dickens of a Village!

Everyone is invited to join the caroling in Greendale Village on Friday, December 6.

We meet at St. Luke's at 5:15 p.m. (song books are provided) and we carol for about an hour. Then we head to dinner at The Hideaway, 9643 S 76th Street in Franklin. It is lots of fun and all voices are welcome!



New This Year: Scavenger Hunt!

Wednesday, Dec 18, 6: 00 PM

Fun for All Ages! Join us for the first Annual Christmas Scavenger Hunt! Teams will have a list of items to find/do from all over town, and then we'll come back for cookies, hot cocoa and showing off your scavenger hunt photos. **We need**

to know how many are coming so we can assign teams and have enough cars/drivers. Sign up at the Welcome Center!

Let's DECORATE!

Dec 13, 5 pm. Come help us make the sanctuary festive for Christmas as we put up the tree! Tasks for all ages—many hands make light work!

Then come for pizza afterwards at the Wajerski's.



Poinsettias

Once again our Sanctuary will be vividly decorated with poinsettias that have been placed in honor, memory or thanksgiving by members of the congregation.

Deadline for ordering is December 8. You can use the bulletin inserts or call the church office. Each plant will cost \$12 again this year.

Ladies Retreat

Deeper Friendships - Deeper Faith

Make plans to attend our first St. Luke's Ladies Retreat! We are so excited to offer this special opportunity to "go deep" with friendships and faith - all while having fun with time to relax too!

The retreat starts at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, January 30, 2025 and ends at 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, February 1, 2025. It will be held at the Siena Retreat Center located along beautiful Lake Michigan in Racine.

All meals, beverages and snacks will be provided. Each participant has a private bedroom and bath with linens and towels included. Join us for a wine/chocolate/cheese tasting, pub trivia, a service project, a workshop led by Pastor Perrie from Gethsemane in Brookfield, and a craft project to bring home.

The cost is \$195 for the full retreat and \$95 if you only want to attend on Saturday. Registrations must include payment (cash, check or Venmo). Registrations close on January 5, 2025.

Registration forms will be in our Church Office, Gathering Space, and on our website at www.slchurch.org.

St. Luke's ladies...we hope to see you all at the retreat!

Outreach of the Month: December

Our outreach for December is to make sure area children have some presents to look forward to. The Giving Tree is in the Gathering Space, and you can take a name off the tree, with gift suggestions on it. Feel free to join with another family to buy gifts for your child. Gifts should be wrapped and need to be back by Dec 15.

Outreach Ideas for 2025

We are working on filling out our Outreach calendar for 2025. If you have ideas or suggestions for groups we could highlight and partner with, please reach out to the office. Thank you!



♥♥♥♥ Caught Big-Hearted ♥♥♥♥♥

Thanks to ...

Tim Clough for finding and delivering a table to our new patio.

Carol Van Ryzin for organizing and refreshing our library (did you know we had a library?? Downstairs by the elevator). Watch for a coming book area in the Gathering Space, where we can highlight some of the great resources available.

Todd Sneed, the Binder Family, Rhylee Neu, Tim Clough, Julie Ohlert, Pat Larsen and Mary Van Ryzin for helping on the Fall Clean Up Day.

Everyone who helped host a table at the Ministry Fair!

John Noggle, who faithfully delivers our food pantry donations and encourages us to keep it up.

Vicki Jensen, who spearheaded the Seniors' Lunch and Learn, and Beth Koehler, Lisa Dettloff and Dave Jensen, who helped, along with others who donated food.

Todd and Diane Beutin, Gail Stark, Pat Larsen, Janet Schoba, Catherine Sendek, Sandy Hutchison, who have helped with several cleaning projects around the church, especially the sacristy.



Community Bulletin Board

You may have noticed some changes to the bulletin boards in the entry to the sanctuary. If you have upcoming community events that you would like to highlight for our congregation, or a business or services that you would like to let the congregation know about, or perhaps sports or theater events you would like to invite the congregation to, you can place posters, business cards, or flyers in the NEW mail slot for review next to the stained glass cross. Thank you!



Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, January 26, 2025

10:15 AM Following worship

Place: Sanctuary

You may be getting an email from the office requesting a report for inclusion in our Annual Report. The sooner we get them, the easier our process is in compiling the report. Thank you for your attention to this in a busy month!

CHURCH FINANCIALS

Month	Monthly Budgeted Amount	Monthly Actual Receipts	Monthly Analysis	Year-to-date Budgeted Amount	Year-to-Date Receipts	Year-to-Date Analysis
October, 2024	\$35,000	\$30,954	Deficit \$4,046	\$350,000	\$329,556	Behind \$20,444

We prayerfully ask that you keep your pledge up-to-date as we move through the church year. As always, we give thanks and praise to God from whom all blessings flow.

You can now GIVE ONLINE, by scanning the QR code.

