



St. Luke's Vine

DRIVE THRU BREAKFAST & KIDS VISIT WITH SANTA

Saturday, December 5
9 am—10am

Drive thru pancake & biscuit breakfast by LMM.
Mr. and Mrs. Clause will be in the activity building. Please bring your camera to take pictures with Santa. Children will receive a gift bag and treats.



Blue Christmas – Thur Dec 17th, 7pm

Join us for our quieter, prayerful Blue Christmas service of hope in the midst of turmoil, grief, stress and unknowns. Share your burdens with God, remembering the Christ who came to our world.

St Luke's Lutheran Church
11020 NC Hwy 801
Mt Ulla, NC 28125

(Postage)

Christmas Eve worship – Thur Dec 24, 5pm

An outdoor, informal, nativity and caroling service for Christmas Eve. The story of Christmas with our Kingdom Kids portraying Mary, Joseph, angels and shepherds. Our manger with animals. Singing carols around fire rings with hot chocolate and coffee. In the yard in back between the sanctuary, shelter and fellowship hall. With special guest musicians, some of the kids of 77Southbound Youth Bluegrass.

(Address Label)

Other Holiday Plans & Events

Christmas Poinsettias Order yours by using the envelopes available with bulletins. Flowers are \$11 each, and orders must be received by Dec 6.

Thanksgiving worship this year will be an at home service/devotion and "Blessing Pumpkin" project rather than a service at the church. *Pumpkins and worship/devotion package are available today and through the week.*

Social Ministry's Christmas Ministry

Thank You to all for donating money or gifts for our families in need locally and in Ashe County. Christmas Ministry gifts need to be brought to the church by December 6. We will wrap gifts if you don't wrap them. They will be delivered to the mountains on Saturday, December 12.

Advent/Christmas

Our Advent and Christmas season at St Luke's is usually filled with many special events, musical specials, children's programs and more. Alas, those events typically require quite a few people, often rehearsing and practicing and singing, riding in cars to go caroling, etc. So this year our plans include fewer events, and combining some things together. We give thanks to God for creative minds and flexible attitudes.

Advent Devotions booklets are available in both the sanctuary (back window ledges) and in the Fellowship Hall (table). Find one that would be best for you or your household this year.

Friends and Relatives on our Prayer List



We thought it might be helpful if all of us know the relationship to our congregation of the people on our prayer list. We ask that as names need to be added or removed, you contact the church office.

Mina Angus	<i>relative of the Stanleys</i>	Jerry Overcash	<i>cousin of Bonnie Russell</i>
Joy Barnette	<i>friend of Betty Massey</i>	Laurie Parrish	<i>sister of Mark Parrish</i>
Martha Ann Barringer	<i>friend of Sandy Arrowood</i>	Tim Peede	<i>bro-in-law of Debbie Clary</i>
Wilma Davis	<i>aunt of Gail K. & Linda P.</i>	Diane Rivers	<i>friend of Alice Weaver</i>
Don Killian	<i>cousin of David Arrowood</i>	Doris Strickland	<i>mother of Debbie Clary</i>
Karen Knox	<i>friend of Lori Corriher</i>	Ron Turbyfill	<i>friend of Jennifer Perrell</i>
David Lentz	<i>relative of Eleanor Ijames</i>	Michael Walker	<i>cousin of David Arrowood</i>
Danny Marsh	<i>father of Angie Connelly</i>	Kim Watkins	<i>friend of Alice Weaver</i>
Cindy Morgan	<i>dau. of Reid & Margaret</i>	April Weaver	<i>wife of Jonathan Weaver</i>
Jeanette Morris	<i>sister of Gerald Graham</i>	Cindy Webb	<i>sister of Kathy Webb</i>

Members and Friends Serving in the Military

Eric Corriher	<i>husband of Dana Corriher</i>	Vince Price	<i>nephew of David Arrowood</i>
Jon Faust	<i>son of Margaret Faust</i>	David Terry	<i>son of Beverly Terry</i>

Thank You's received....

The US Dept of Commerce-Census Bureau shares their thanks to St Luke's for allowing them to use our classrooms for census training this year after they lost the use of other facilities due to COVID.

Family Crisis Council thanks St Luke's for supporting their ministries of care. They have provided 3444 service nights to 129 at-risk women and children, counseling sessions, support groups, and more.

Prayer and Spiritual Life

Hildegard of Bingen lived in Germany 350 years before Luther. She was "tithed" by her parents to an abbey age of 7 and lived as a nun/Abbess for the rest of her life. Overcoming the gender bias of her era she was an artist, composer, playwright, preacher, scientist and mystic theologian. She wrote, painted and taught of a very sensory experience with God. Here is one description she has of the Holy Spirit from her book "Scivias" (short for "Scito vias Domini," "know the ways of the Lord,").

"I, the fiery life of divine essence, am aflame beyond the beauty of the meadows. I gleam in the waters. I burn in the sun, moon, and stars. With every breeze, as with invisible life that contains everything, I awaken everything to life. I am the breeze that nurtures all things green. I encourage blossoms to flourish with ripening fruits. I am the rain coming from the dew that causes the grasses to laugh with the joy of life."

OFFERINGS AND FINANCE

OFFERINGS AND ATTENDANCE FOR SEPTEMBER

	Current	Benevolence	Worship
Oct. 4	\$5,838.00	\$25.40	
Oct. 11	\$402.30	\$25.00	(rained out)
Oct. 18	\$5,034.00	\$225.00	
Oct. 25	\$1,163.37	\$74.23	(rained out)

TREASURER'S REPORT

	Current	Benevolence	Restricted	Total
Beginning Balance 10/1/20	\$26,717.99	\$269.83	\$135,627.15	\$162,614.97
Receipts October 2020	\$12,437.67	\$349.63	\$14,110.00	\$26,897.30
Charges/Fees October 2020	(\$18.86)	\$0.00	(\$62.50)	(\$81.36)
Transfers October 2020	(\$1,880.54)	\$1,880.54	(\$400.00)	(\$400.00)
Disbursements October 2020	(\$16,866.03)	(\$2,500.00)	(\$732.81)	(\$20,098.84)
Ending Balance 10/31/20	\$20,390.23	\$0.00	\$148,541.84	\$168,932.07

2021 Financial Plan for Ministry/Budget

Below is the summary version of our proposed financial plan. A detailed version of the budget is available on request in the church office. Minimal changes from 2020. Some staff positions are currently unfilled.

SUMMARY		
Current Fund		
Budgeted Expenses By Category		
	2020	2021
Finance	\$130,281	\$131,850
Pastor, Administration, Office, Insurance, etc.		
Worship & Music	\$25,408	\$25,000
Music staff & ministry, altar guild, resources, licenses, online streaming, instruments, etc		
Property	\$48,991	\$48,991
Utilities, maintenance, supplies, sexton, etc.		
Christian Education	\$18,572	\$18,572
Sunday School, VBS, resources Youth director & ministry, Kingdom Kids director & ministry, discipleship		
Stewardship	\$850	\$850
Directory, blanket ministry, events, resources		
Social/Outreach	\$2,700	\$2700
Resources, local agencies support, discretionary & bereavement funds, etc.		
Evangelism	\$2,000	\$2000
Resources, missions support, website, softball, promotional materials, etc.		
Fellowship	\$600	\$600
Events and activities		
Youth	\$5,500	\$5,500
Retreats, resources, fellowship, etc.		
TOTAL	\$234,902	\$236,063

Does not include mortgage (now paid off), Benevolence, value of items and services donated

Current Fund Offerings Received	
2016	\$170,000
2018	\$191,000
2020 (estimated)	\$200,000

Does **not** include offerings dedicated for

- Restricted/directed donations, Capital Campaign (for mortgage), Benevolence for Synod/ELCA Missions
- Special gifts & fundraising (Ingathering, Fish Fry, etc),

Online/Recorded Worship

Our weekly services live-streamed each week, and may be viewed on our website and on our YouTube channel. Prior services are available on our website for about 2 weeks. A more complete list of prior services can be viewed on our YouTube channel.

“Searching for Director of Musical Youth Secretaries”

No, that’s not quite right... “Searching for Secretary of Youth Musicians” Hmm... Maybe “Searching for Youth Ministry Administrative Musician”. Well, that’s closer, perhaps. By now ya’ll know we are struggling a bit with having three staff positions that need and deserve dedicated attention. (1) MS/HS Youth leader, (2) organist/pianist/choir director and (3) church secretary/administrator. It does raise the curious possibility and opportunity – could any of those positions be combined in some creative way? Would someone have the skills and passion to help with more than one? Is there some other way of approaching our ministry needs, maybe some combination of part-time cross-generational+youth+family discipleship and relationships and part-time church admin? If you may know someone (*including that person in the mirror*) that is capable, creative and has a passion to serve and see others grow in any one or more of these positions, please encourage them to contact Pastor Scott.

Council and Leadership Section

Nov 8 Congregation Council meeting

Council accepted Treasurers reports.

No actions were requested by any committees

Minor status updates on some 2018 and 2019 Ingathering projects (railings waiting to be powder coated, security lighting installation being arranged)

Council reviewed and accepted the proposed 2021 budget.

Discussed worship start time and decided to put it on the ballot for the Annual Congregation Meeting.

Reviewed the ELCA’s recommended text for continual resolutions with regards to congregation meetings. Motions were made to add continual resolutions to our Constitution to allow meetings to be held by remote communication.

Discussed Council Nominations and approved allowing absent voting members to submit nominations by phone or email.

A motion was made to create a Continual Resolution for the 2020 Annual Congregational Meeting to allow absentee voting on Congregation Council Members, Worship Start Time, and the 2021 budget if no amendments are made.

Next meeting will be December 20

Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday Dec 6.

For this year only, we are working to enable online participation and the option for voting members to request an absentee ballot, which must be returned prior to the December 6 meeting. The meeting topics and ballot include the 2021 Budget/Financial Plan for Ministry, 2021 Congregation Council Elections, and Worship Start Time preference (9:30am or 10:30am). Summary version of the 2021 Financial Plan/Budget is included in this newsletter. If you will not be present on Dec 6 for the annual meeting, and wish receive an absentee ballot, request one from the church office by Fri Nov 27, or pick one up by Wed Dec 2. Return the completed ballot prior to the service on Dec 6. Place your completed ballot in an envelope with your name written on the outside of the envelop but **not** written on the ballot.

DECEMBER 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
		1	2 8-10:30 am Walk in Gym 7:00 pm Chancel Choir 7-8 pm ZOOM Bible Study w/Bishop	3 10 am Pastor's Study Group ZOOM or in person	4 8-10:30 am Walk in Gym	5 9-10am Drive Thru Breakfast with Santa	
2 nd Sunday of Advent 9:30 am – Worship Annual Cong Meeting 10:30 am – Adult Sunday School	6	7 8-10:30 am Walk in Gym	8	9 8-10:30 am Walk in Gym 7:00 pm Chancel Choir 7-8 pm ZOOM Bible Study w/Bishop	10 10 am Pastor's Study Group ZOOM or in person	11 8-10:30 am Walk in Gym	12 Deliver gifts to Ashe County
3 rd Sunday of Advent 9:30 am – Worship 10:30 am – Adult Sunday School 6:60-7:30pm – Kingdom Kids Evening - SLY fun & fellowship outing	13	14 8-10:30 am Walk in Gym	15 Newsletter article Deadline	16 8-10:30 am Walk in Gym 7:00 pm Chancel Choir 7-8 pm ZOOM Bible Study w/Bishop	17 10 am Pastor's Study Group ZOOM or in person 7pm Blue Christmas	18 8-10:30 am Walk in Gym	19
4 th Sunday of Advent 9:30 am – Worship 10:30 am – Adult Sunday School 1:30-6:00 pm – Blood Drive	20	21 8-10:30 am Walk in Gym	22	23 8-10:30 am Walk in Gym 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	24 5pm Christmas Eve Worship	25 Christmas Day Church Office Closed	26
1 st Sunday of Christmas 9:30 am – Worship 10:30 am – Adult Sunday School	27	28 8-10:30 am Walk in Gym	29	30 8-10:30 am Walk in Gym	31		

DISCIPLESHIP

SLY – Dec 13 session will be fellowship/fun event offsite. Location TBD. No meeting Dec 27 due to Christmas holiday.

KingdomKids – Dec 13 session 6:30-7:30pm. No meeting Dec 27 due to Christmas holiday.

“Children’s Church” Our younger children gather for Bible story & activity for a portion of our worship, and then join us again for prayers and communion. *Please share your time and faith joining the rotating team to lead our kids.*

Adult Sunday School is gathering every Sunday after worship at 10:30am in the Fellowship Hall.

Prayer & Spiritual Direction Group

Prayer and Spiritual Direction group is on hold during this time.

Thurs Study Group – “Revelation”

Thursday study group is continuing its exploration of the Book of Revelation. Pastor Scott lead this study. Join us Thursdays at 10am via Zoom *and in person* at the church. Drop in as you can. We are in Chapter 20. We are nearing the end. Slowly. Probably only take another few months. Our next topic is expected to be Christian Mystics over the Millenia.

2020 Ingathering

Our ingathering take-away meal served 70+, about 20 folks attended the outdoor devotional, and St Luke’s received \$6095 in donations on the night of the event with additional contributions still arriving. Proceeds are dedicated to uncompleted/partially funded projects such as the smoke/fire alarm system for the sanctuary building. Thank you again to our ladies and men that prepared the wonderful meal.

Fall Fish Fry & Yard Sale

The “second Saturday” of the fall Yard Sale generated an additional \$750 in sales, for a total of nearly \$4000. Combined with the Fish Fry donations the entire event brought in nearly \$12,000. What an amazing result when folks could not even come in to sit down and eat!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

Steve Massey 12
Kathy Holt 14
Patrick Williams 16
Tyler Poteat 17
Robbie Graham 19
Jon Faust 19
Carol Parrish 21
Linda Clodfelter 22
Jan Goforth 23
Becky Edwards 24
Rose Bolick 25
Savannah Morgan 25
Payton Holt 28

BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARIES

Darren Pruett 8
Leanne Stanley 14
Kennedy Clawson 17
Nancy Harris 27
Betty Massey 30

Pastor's Message — Advent, Already-and-Not-Yet, And Us

Advent is the season of looking forward to the coming of Jesus.

But he already came, 2000 years ago. But he will come again, just as we proclaim in our worship

“Christ has come, Christ has died, Christ will come again”

It's almost like a science fiction movie with two time streams, one in the past, one in the future, that run at the same time. Sound confusing? Don't feel bad. That's we call that “the mystery of our faith”

It ends up being part of our “living in hope” in the midst of the moment.

This fall-going-into-Advent of 2020 that seems particularly real. We live in hope in the middle of the strange and challenging year of COVID. Or, maybe, 2 years of COVID. Don't know yet.

It seems that every single worship service, every special event, every tradition is changed, tweaked, adjusted, replaced, modified, DIFFERENT. It certainly seems that way to me. I do like variety, but this is getting exhausting, on occasion. Other times a bit fun.

But then also consider that we still have 2000 years of rhythms and patterns. In the middle of the changes and challenges we still have The Word of God. We are still children of the promise. We can realize that our worship and events are different than they were 100yrs ago, and different than they will be 100yrs from now, and that's OK.

I'm so proud and encouraged by you, the folks of St Luke's, that have been able to walk through all of this and respond “Well, we've never done that before, but I think it can work. OK, lets do it.” Some stuff we like and will want to keep. Some stuff we won't and will want to change back. In the in-between time, we will just keep doing what we can, try and be faithful, give the blessing of mercy and grace, live in Hope, and look to the future with an eye on the past.

Parsonage Plans—A Path to Decisions

There have been various conversations as to what to do with the parsonage. It is important to remember, keeping the parsonage, no matter what the use, will require some type of upfitting. Listed below are some options:

Upfit to today's codes and standards for future parsonage use.

Use it as a meeting space for community events and activities.

Have it become an extension of our church campus ministries such as youth, Sunday school, and other groups.

Rent out the space for non-church usage and it be available to the community that provides the church a source of income.

Rent to a family.

Other options that do not require any type of upfitting include selling the house and having it moved off of the property or tearing down the structure with the option to build something in the future that may better suit our needs as a congregation.

I challenge each of you to view this in a different way. Let's ask the question how we envision using that structure in 5-10 years. In order for the congregation, not council, to decide the future of the parsonage, we must first decide what role it will play. Once we can agree on our long range plan, we can have a clear path and develop a usage plan that outlines what is in store for our congregation. As several weeks have passed since our congregational discussion regarding the parsonage, I'm asking that you as a congregation prayerfully consider out next course of action and how we move forward.

Yours in Christ

Mark Parrish, Chair of Congregation Council

ELCA Good Gifts—Start your holiday shopping now

Wondering how to make a positive impact in the world right now? With ELCA Good Gifts, you can choose from 50 charitable gifts to give in honor of friends and loved ones. Each one of these gifts makes a real impact in the world, sharing the love of Christ—one goat, water well or school uniform at a time. Start your holiday shopping now and order free, customized cards for each gift you give.

goodgifts.elca.org

Imagine.... Something in this space

A child's artwork

A poem a member wrote

A joyful writeup of something fun we did as a congregation or small group over the past month

Something you're looking forward to doing , or want to be doing, and would love to have other folks from StLukes join you (might be imagination only until after COVID, but then again, might not...). An invitation into fun and relationship building.

A short faith-statement, seasonal devotional, call to action ...

This could be any of those, or more. That's up to you....