

Advent and Christmas at Gustavus Adolphus

The season of Advent begins on Sunday, December 1. It is a season of waiting and hope as we wait for the coming of the Savior – both the second coming of Jesus and recalling how God sent his Son in the form of a baby born in Bethlehem. We invite you to worship with us each week and to take part in some special activities both at church and at home as outlined in this newsletter to enrich the meaning of this holy season. Here is a week-by-week schedule of our worship services for the month of December, as we celebrate Advent and Christmas together...

- **Sunday, December 1 ... First Sunday of Advent**
9:30 a.m. – Advent Worship
- **Sunday, December 8 ... Second Sunday of Advent**
9:30 a.m. – Advent Worship
- **Sunday, December 15 ... Third Sunday of Advent**
9:30 a.m. – Advent Worship featuring the Sunday School children presenting their Christmas program:
O Come, Let Us Adore Him
10:45 a.m. – Potluck Lunch for everyone
- **Sunday, December 22 ... Fourth Sunday of Advent**
9:30 a.m. – Advent Worship
4:00 p.m. – A Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols presented by the musicians of GA Church and the Northeast Chorale.
- **Tuesday, December 24 ... The Nativity of our Lord/Christmas Eve**
3:45 p.m. – Handbell Prelude by the Gustavus Bells
4:00 p.m. – Christmas Eve Worship
- **Wednesday, December 25 ... The Nativity of our Lord/Christmas Day**
9:30 a.m. – Christmas Day Worship
- **Sunday, December 29 ... The First Sunday of Christmas**
9:30 a.m. – Worship



Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs

Sunday, December 1

Join Joel Lurvey, our contemporary choir director, as he leads another session of singing after worship on Sunday, Dec. 1, in the sanctuary. Come prepared to participate and sing – and to be enriched!

Give a Good Gift this Advent: God's Global Barnyard at GA!

An animal can make a difference for a family in need. Animals provide food to eat, fertilizer to grow crops, and offspring to sell on the market. With one gift, you can help a family escape the cycle of hunger and poverty for good. Once again, GA is participating the ELCA Good Gifts appeal in Advent. There are variety of ways you can help:

- ♥ **Donate money:** You can take a coin box/piggy bank home. There will be some available in the Narthex at church. Collect your money during Advent and return the bank to church at Christmas time.
- ♥ **Help with noisy offerings** during worship this Advent season. Bring loose change to worship each Sunday.
- ♥ **Choose and buy your good gift:** Select an animal gift ornament from the decorated tree in the Narthex and pay for the good gift during collected offering during worship or mail a check to GA.

Give a good gift that grows the church, fights hunger, and transforms lives!

Bible and Brews

When: Tuesday, Dec. 17, at 6:30 p.m.

*Where: Sean and Jenny's,
1392 Buchanan Place NE,
Columbia Heights*

Join us on Tuesday, Dec. 17, as we discuss Scripture, current events, the Church, and of course. . . beer.

Bring your favorite libation to share with the group. (If you'd like to help our hosts by bringing a snack as well, please do!) This month we'll once again meet at the home of Jenny and Sean Tessmer. Hope to see you!



Group Meeting Schedule

Women of the ELCA (WELCA) –

Meeting on Tuesday, December 3, at 1:00 p.m. We will be addressing cards to our homebound members.

Quilters – Quilting session on Thursday, December 5, at 9:30 a.m.

Men's Breakfast – All men in the congregation are invited for breakfast, devotions, and conversation on Saturday, December 14, at 8:30 a.m.

NO Monday Night Book Group in December

Monday night Book Club will not meet in December. We will reconvene on Monday, January 13, at 7:00 p.m. Book yet to be decided. Questions? Book suggestions? See Andrea Carter.

Community Meal Update

We want to extend our thanks to Marino's Deli for providing the food for the October meal. The pasta and salad was enjoyed by all. There will be no December meal.

We resume meals in January. You are welcome to join us in the kitchen or around a table during the 2020 Community Meal dates. We do need volunteers, so please see if this might be something you would enjoy.



- Lynn Lurvey
Community Meal Coordinator
lllurvey@gmail.com

Quilters and Friends

Past and present quilters and friends are invited to our pot luck lunch on Thursday, December 5, at 11:30 a.m. Come and see what the quilters are working on!

Dec. Serving Schedule	Assisting Minister	Lector	Sacristan	Transportation
December 1	Carlotta Rosebrock	Joan Mitchell	Aaron Bisping	James Hamilton
December 8	Andrea Carter	Gary Anderson	Joan Mitchell	Joel Lurvey
December 15	Amanda Hakemian	(None needed)	Brandon Bisping	Pat Lynch
December 22	Joel Lurvey	Adrienne Bisping	Brock Bisping	Brian Hendrickson
December 24	Derrick Watson	Kim Huseonica	Kathy Schuette	
December 25	Hannah Rosebrock	Carlotta Rosebrock	(None needed)	
December 29	Carlotta Rosebrock	Lynette Paulson	Aaron Bisping	Pat Lynch

Our Congregation's

Vision Statement

(The congregation adopted this vision statement at the annual meeting of the congregation on January 24, 2016.)

God in Christ loves us; therefore, through the Holy Spirit we will:

Do justice

- We **hope** for our community and all of God's creation
- We feed the poor and comfort the afflicted
- We welcome and **respect** our neighbor and the stranger

Love kindness

- We **love** and care for our congregation and our community
- We practice **forgiveness** locally and globally
- We strive for **compassion** and **acceptance**

Walk humbly with our God

- We find **joy** in creation
- We desire to grow in **spirituality**
- We delight in liturgical worship and creative expression

We are all children of God. Jesus calls us by name. With the Holy Spirit, we seek to live out God's grace.

Our Congregation's

Core Values

(These values were adopted by the congregation in 2010, just before our current mission statement was written.)

Love

Joy

Hope

Compassion

Spirituality

Forgiveness

Acceptance

Respect

Sacred Space Update

Our New Ministry with 4th-12 Graders

This fall the 4th-12th graders have experienced a labyrinth, had a tour of Hillside Chapel with Washburn-McReavy, and had a visit from a Mississippi Watershed Management Organization Water Steward. We are learning that in life and death there are spaces that are sacred and we need to be good stewards of these spaces.

In December we will be focusing on Advent. The word "Advent" is derived from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "coming." O come, O come Emmanuel (in Hebrew *Immanu* means "with us" and *el* means God). We invite you to attend the Advent Festival, a sacred time, on Saturday, December 7 from 10:00 a.m. to noon. This is an event designed to reflect on the season of waiting. The activities for this event are tied to waiting: bread rising, paint drying, leather tooling, bird feeding, ornament making, hymn singing. The 4th-12th grade students will also be helping during the potluck and the December 15 worship service. Come to the Advent Festival, with an added bonus of lunch. All ages are welcome.

Sunday School Program/Potluck – December 15

Help Assemble the Stage – December 8

Rehearsal for Students – December 14

One of our Advent traditions at GA is the Sunday School Christmas program. The children will present the message in worship on Sunday, December 15. A congregational potluck lunch will follow worship that day. Dessert will be provided. Everyone attending should provide a main dish, appetizer, or salad.

We will also decorate the Christmas tree in the sanctuary during the potluck lunch on the 15th. Don't miss out on the fun!

Parents of Sunday School students are reminded that rehearsal for the program will be held on Saturday, December 14, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.. Lunch will be provided before we finish at 11:30. If you have questions, contact Jenny Parker.



**HELP
NEEDED**

Leading up to the Sunday School program, we need some help! We need to put our new stage in place again. That needs to happen after worship on December 8. It would be great if some of the folks who helped assemble the stage in August could help again...please! If you can help with the stage assembly, let Phil Holzman know.

Thank You!

One of our Mission Partners found a way to give back to GA recently. A group of young people from Northeast Middle School spent a few hours doing fall clean-up (raking, etc.) on the church property in preparation for winter. They bagged many bags of leaves that the city took away! Thank you to the kids and their leaders to who took the time to help us look nice for the winter!

Recent Baptism



We received Thomas Arthur Nordling into the family of Christ and into the congregation of Gustavus Adolphus Church through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism on November 24. Thomas is the son of Brooke and Eric Nordling. We pray God's richest blessings on Thomas, his parents and sponsors.

Prayers of Christian Sympathy

We learned of the death of longtime GA member Gerald Dunphy on November 22. At Gerald's request, a private, family-only service will be held sometime in the new year. We extend our sympathy as a congregation to his family and friends at this time of loss.

"Seeing White" Podcast

The Congregational Life Committee is offering a monthly education series. *Scene on Radio* is a podcast that tells stories exploring human experience and American society. We are exploring their award winning series "Seeing White." What does it mean to be white in America? When did humans start to distinguish based on race? How has America constructed its society based on race? How have we adapted?

We meet monthly and will next meet on **Sunday, December 8, at 10:45 in the Faith Room**. There is no preparation required and it does not matter if you miss a month. Join us in the Faith Room as we listen to episodes together. Episodes are under 45 minutes. Sean Tessmer and Amanda Hakemian will facilitate.



This series is designed to continue the educational work we started last spring with the YWCA facilitated racial justice workshops. If you would like to listen to the podcast we listened to in November, here is the link:

<https://www.sceneonradio.org/episode-32-how-race-was-made-seeing-white-part-2/>

We meet the second Sunday of each month.

October Financial Report

	October 2019	October 2019 YTD	October 2018 YTD
Income	\$23,867	\$267,836	\$271,863
Expenses	<u>24,353</u>	<u>285,517</u>	<u>277,481</u>
Income-Exp.	<\$ 486>	<\$ 17,681>	<\$ 5,555>

- We need everyone's support of our mission in order to end the year on a strong note. October's deficit of \$486 increased our year-to-date deficit to \$17,681.
- 2020 Budget Process Update: A revised budget worksheet was presented to Church Council on November 21. A revised budget will be presented to Church Council again in December, with a final budget presented for approval in January.
- On November 19, a withdrawal request of \$2,000 was submitted to the ELCA Foundation to use these funds from GA's Endowment Fund to support our Mission Partners.
- Next Finance Committee Meeting: Thursday, December 12, at 6:00 p.m.

— Gary Anderson, Treasurer

Transition Musings

December, 2019

Interim Pastor Susan Masters

Friends, by the time you receive this newsletter, I will have been your interim pastor at Gustavus Adolphus for a month. My time with you has been lovely, and I am so grateful for your kind and warm welcome – thank you! I am grateful for your patience as I continue to learn names and learn the ways of GA.

Interim ministry is my calling (12 interim calls since 1995), and I am quite passionate about it. I love the challenge of joining alongside a congregation in transition and helping them discern where and how God is calling them next. And while I hope I bring some skills to the table, without exception each call I've served has also taught me much - about hope, tenacity, faithfulness, and God's abundant goodness. I can already tell that my call to GA will be no different, and I look forward to learning from you.

I am deeply committed to transparency as, together, we help you prepare to call your next settled pastor. To that end, each month I will use this column to update the congregation about where we are in the interim process. A couple weeks ago, I devoted an entire sermon to how I typically lead in a time of interim. (Please contact me if you'd like to see a full copy of that sermon: pastorsusan@gachurchmpls.org or 612 789-7256). Below is a summary of the key points of that sermon.

In the months ahead, I will:

- spend time getting to know you, learning your names, and learning the “lay of the land” at GA (which will, ideally, include lots of cups of coffee and informal conversations together);
- convene a number of focus groups at which I will ask folks' opinion about a wide range of topics relevant to GA (I'd like to hear from everyone – please plan to sign up for a group or one-to-one meeting when dates are available);
- conduct a simple analysis of your financial and membership records over the past 15-20 years;
- present a report of all my findings to the congregation, along with my best assessment of GA's areas of strength and struggle, and how God might be leading us into the future;
- with council's help, convene a Transition Team to help me lead us through the next phase of our work together - a time to address the issues raised in the focus groups and financial/membership analysis;
- help to convene a Call Committee to identify and recommend your next settled pastor.

Because of the busyness of the next few months (holidays, annual meeting, Lent, Easter), this timeline will be subject to change, depending on what's going on around us and, of course, the leading of the Holy Spirit. Please stay tuned to this newsletter, the bulletin, our Facebook page, and the weekly email to stay in the loop about what's happening next.

I have been called at 75% - or 30 hours per week. I will prioritize Word and Sacrament (what I do on Sunday mornings), pastoral care, and the interim process before us. I will be in the office – or somewhere on behalf of GA – on Sundays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Please stop by to visit! (Just be sure to CALL FIRST to make sure I'm not off campus at a meeting or doing home visits.)

Friends, it is truly my honor to serve as your interim pastor – I look forward to partnering with you in ministry.

Blessings,

Pastor Susan Masters

612-327-7454 (for emergencies that cannot wait until I am in the office)

Have You Seen the Beautiful Painting in the Narthex?

Thanks to Cindy and Jon Stoewer for loaning us “Celebration,” a serigraph by John August Swanson. Jon’s late parents, Faye and Bill, who were also members of GA, owned the painting. Jon recently hung the painting on the south wall of the Narthex, next to the large stained-glass window. Next time you’re in the building, take the time to look at and enjoy this piece of artwork. To help us all appreciate this piece of art, here is a reflection on “Celebration” shared by Gertrud Mueller Nelson, an artist and lecturer on Myth and Ritual, written in 1991...

Do you hear the faint sounds of music? The distant thump of bass notes in your ears? Fear nothing. Want for nothing. Here is freedom; so follow it. Climb the slope. Scoop lights from the starry night. Step out of darkness and squinting, enter where candle-flame makes every color glow. The rhythm of the music grows and swells and echoes the drumbeat of your heart. Hypnotic this.

The cadence gets inside your body. Repetition of some haunting tonal pattern throbs behind your eyes. Enter the dance of life. Join hands and close the broken circle. You’ll catch the cadence. The movement is regular as pulse.

Step-pause. Slide-pause. Step-pause. Turn-and-glide-and-step-pause. Halting. Stepping. Gliding. Turning.

The eyes adjust to candle flames lapping at shadows thrown against the walls. Horn and harp play off each other. Flute and lute make rivers of sound. The pool of patterns under foot turns liquid. In the flicker of flames and repeated patterns, the spirits swim into our memory, the holy ancestors come to join us. A violin bleats and shudders and the humbling repetition of our steps become like those of every circle, dervish, reel, horah that have laced together generations.

The drumming of feet reaches far beyond the glowing circle It reaches to embrace the dark landscape and the jeweled sky. The sound pulls everything to the holy center. And there we pray.

Poinsettias for Christmas

If you wish to make a contribution to the poinsettia garden for our Christmas services, please return an envelope with your contribution (in any amount) and dedication no later than Sunday, December 15. If you’ve misplaced the envelope mailed with last month’s “Gazette,” there are additional envelopes in the literature rack near the elevator in the Narthex at church for you to use.

Coming in January

In January, we will again be collecting hats, scarves, gloves and mittens for local school children. Keep a lookout for good deals as you do your Christmas shopping. Please remember that we need warm mittens; the little fleece gloves are just not warm enough for little fingers.



Nominating Committee

It’s that time of year...with the annual congregational meeting approaching in January, we’re looking for nominees to fill some open spots on the Church Council. This is an important way for members to serve our congregation in a leadership role.

Members of this year’s Nominating Committee are Gary Anderson, Ed Huble, and Sean Tessmer. If you are interested in serving on the Church Council, or know of someone who might be a good candidate, we invite you to speak to Gary, Ed, or Sean. Please note that under the terms of our new constitution and bylaws, terms of service on Church Council are now two years.

Name Tags on Sunday Mornings

From Pastor Susan and Church Council: To deepen our welcome to all - newcomers and long-timers alike - who join us for worship, we will begin using name tags on Sunday mornings. We are grateful for your cooperation and willingness to put on a name tag (which will likely be some sort of sticky label) when you arrive for church. Thank you!

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols Sunday, December 22 4 pm.

Presented by the Northeast Chorale and the
musicians of Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church

Directed by Phil Holzman

Freewill offering received
(*\$10 suggested donation*)

At Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church
1509 27th Avenue NE, Minneapolis (27th & Johnson)



A publication of

Gustavus Adolphus

LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Minneapolis, MN 55418

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Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church

Church Phone: 612-789-7256

Website: www.gachurchmpls.org

E-mail: info@gachurchmpls.org

Sunday Worship at 9:30 a.m.

Church Staff ...

The Rev. Susan Masters, Interim Pastor (Ext. 10)
pastorsusan@gachurchmpls.org

Deacon Phil Holzman, Minister of Word & Service (Ext. 11)
(Worship & Music, Parish Administration)
philh@gachurchmpls.org

Dan Hager, Finance Manager (Ext. 14)
danh@gachurchmpls.org

Joel Lurvey, Contemporary Choir Director
joel.lurvey@gmail.com



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

All Are Welcome Here!

Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church proclaims that the Gospel is God's gift to all people, to be shared unconditionally. We rejoice in the manner in which diversity has enriched, nurtured and challenged the life and ministry we share in Christ. We know that the world is often an unloving place and that the experience of alienation is all too common. Because Christ reconciles us, we welcome people of all ages, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, gender identities, physical and mental abilities, educational levels, and socio-economic backgrounds. We strive to be an evermore welcoming community. Following the example of Christ, we extend a most heartfelt welcome to all. Gustavus Adolphus is a Reconciling in Christ congregation.



Gustavus Adolphus Church Council

Jenny Parker, President
Sarah Larson, Vice-President
Amanda Hakemian, Secretary
Gary Anderson, Treasurer
Cindy Bach Andrea Carter Ed Huble
Erik Peterson Sean Tessmer