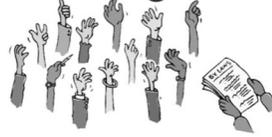


Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, January 26

Every member of the congregation is encouraged to attend the annual meeting of the congregation after worship on Sunday, January 26. We will hear and read report from staff and groups within the congregation, learn about steps in the interim process, elect members to the Church Council, and take action on the church budget for 2020. This is a very important meeting that takes place each January; we need the participation of all our members. Please plan to join us.

Congregational Meeting



Preparing Our Children for Holy Communion

In the ELCA, there are no age requirements for when someone can receive the bread and wine from our Lord's table. As with Baptism, we do not believe that someone must first understand what Holy Communion means before they can receive (in which case, none of us would be able to receive...!). And one of our greatest joys as a community of faith is to invite our children to join us at the table as soon as possible. To that end, if your child (of any age) is not currently receiving Communion, please talk with Pastor Susan (612-789-7256, ext. 10, or pastorsusan@gachurchmpls.org) so that, together, we can make a plan to prepare them to begin receiving as soon as possible. (And, of course, if you are an adult who is interested in beginning to receive, please see Pastor Susan.)



New Members

If you have been dating Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church and are now ready to take the plunge (become a member), please contact the office (612-789-7256) and tell us the good news! Pastor Susan will hold a new member class on **Sunday, January 19** (10:45 – 11:30), and we will then receive new members on **Sunday, January 26**, during the worship service. If you are interested in joining GA but this timeline doesn't work for you, still let her know – we'll be receiving new members throughout the year. (And whether you're a member or not, we're glad you're here!)



Deadline for Annual Reports

Persons preparing reports for their group or committee are asked to submit those reports to Phil Holzman no later than January 15. Reports submitted in Microsoft Word format are best. Talk to Phil if you have questions. You can email the reports to him at church: philh@gachurchmpls.org.

Psalms, Hymns, and

Spiritual Songs

Sunday, January 5

Join Joel Lurvey, our contemporary choir director, as he leads another session of singing after worship on Sunday, Jan. 5, in the sanctuary. Come prepared to participate and sing – and to be enriched!

Offering Envelopes for 2020

Offering envelopes for the new year will be out in the Narthex on Sunday, January 5. Again this year, in order to keep costs down, we have made a conscious effort to consolidate the number of boxes we ordered. We realize that that many people use the yellow pew envelopes, Simply Giving, other methods of online giving, or just put a check in the offering plate. Not everyone uses our envelope boxes anymore. Those who do use boxes will again notice that their box number will have changed for 2020 to reflect the consolidation of numbers. Please pick up your box of envelopes in the Narthex as soon as you can in the new year. We do not mail envelope boxes.

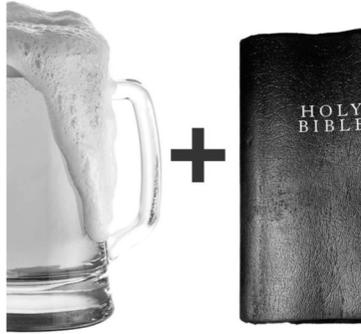
Bible and Brews

When: Tuesday, Jan. 21, at 6:30 p.m.

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

Join us on Tuesday, Jan. 21, 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

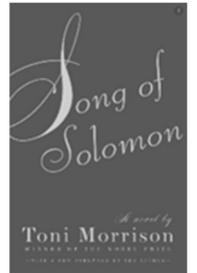
Women of the ELCA (WELCA) – No January meeting.

Quilters – No quilting this month.

Men's Breakfast – All men in the congregation are invited for breakfast, devotions, and conversation on Saturday, January 11, at 8:30 a.m.

Monday Night Book Group Meets on January 13

Join us on Monday, January 13, to discuss *Song of Solomon* by Toni Morrison. In this Nobel Prize winning novel, follow the life of Milkman Dead from the rustbelt to the place of his family's origins. We will discuss the entirety of the novel on the 13th. Join us at 7:00 p.m. in the Fireside Room at GA whether you've read the book or not! It's good reading weather! Please join us.



Confirmation at GA

When we baptize children at GA, the congregation commits to helping their parents raise them in the Christian faith. One of the most important ways we do that is to provide Confirmation for our youth. After a couple hiccups, our current program will launch in January. This year, we have six students (four first-year, one second-year, and one third-year) who will meet with Pastor Susan twice a month (2nd Sunday and 4th Saturday) to talk about their faith in general and the Old Testament in particular (next year we will cover the New Testament, and the following year, the Small Catechism). In keeping with GA tradition, we will have the Rite of Confirmation on **Sunday, May 31** (also the Day of Pentecost), during our worship service. Pastor Susan welcomes all adults who would like to join us for Confirmation classes – either one time to present a particular topic, or as an ongoing co-teacher. Please let her know of your interest (pastorsusan@gachurchmpls.org or 612-789-7256).



Sunday School and Frolic Schedule for January

A reminder to Sunday School and Frolic families: Classes resume on Sunday, January 12. There will be no Sunday School or Frolic classes on the day of the annual congregational meeting (January 26). There are plans in the works, however, to provide child care during the annual meeting. Stay tuned for more details on that.

Jan. Serving Schedule	Assisting Minister	Lector	Sacristan	Transportation
January 5	Amanda Hakemian	Hannah Rosebrock	Kathy Schuette	James Hamilton
January 12	Hannah Rosebrock	Joan Mitchell	Kathy Schuette	Joel Lurvey
January 19	Andrea Carter	Carlotta Rosebrock	Kathy Schuette	Pat Lynch
January 26	Joel Lurvey	Lynette Paulson	Kathy Schuette	Brian Hendrickson

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

January is a Great Time to Join a Choir

Choirs resume rehearsals in January after a Christmas break. It will soon be time to start working on music for Lent and Easter. If you've been thinking about becoming part of one of our choirs, now is a great time of year to go for it! Rehearsals resume as follows in January for our groups:

- ♪ Contemporary Choir – January 8 at 6:30 p.m.
- ♪ GA Choristers – January 15 at 6:00 p.m.
- ♪ Gustavus Bells – January 15 at 6:30 p.m.
- ♪ Senior Choir – January 15 at 7:30 p.m.



If you're interested in joining a choir, get in touch with Deacon Phil Holzman by phone or e-mail (see back page of newsletter).

Selecting Mission Partners for 2020

We have begun the process of selecting our Mission Partners for 2020. GA will support these partners throughout 2020 by distributing a portion of our annual income to these partners, collecting additional offerings, volunteering, and staying informed of their work. Members can nominate non-profit organizations through January 12. You can use the form included in this mailing to make your nomination. Additional nomination forms can be found in the Narthex. Turn in a hard copy of your nomination to the church office or in the offering plate. Alternatively, you can email your nomination to philh@gachurchmpls.org. The congregation will vote for the organizations for which GA will partner at the annual meeting or by mail in early February.

Sign up for Sheridan Story in January!

Through out the school year, sign up to distribute food to kids at Waite Park experiencing food scarcity. It's easy to help, but you do need some daytime availability. You can go anytime between 10-3, primarily on Fridays. Sign up on the church bulletin board, where further instructions are posted.



Annual Winter Gear Collection

Does it feel like winter has been going on forever? And we know there is still more to come. Our congregation has collected hats, scarves, mittens and gloves for local schools for many years. We do this in January because not all families can afford to replace lost items. (And children do lose things.) Or maybe a child has been wearing less than adequate gloves or never did get a hat. The staff at Waite Park, Sheridan and Pillsbury are so appreciative. Please bring in warm hats, mittens, gloves, ear muffs, and scarves and place them in the collection box in the Narthex. There's still a lot of winter to get through.

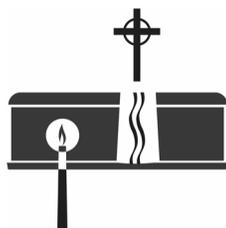
Did You Lose a Set of Keys?

Someone left this set of keys behind in the church kitchen at the Advent event on Dec. 7. If they belong to you, rest assured they are safe in Phil Holzman’s desk drawer at church. Contact Phil to get them back at your earliest convenience in the new year.



In Loving Memory

We learned of the death of GA member June Mondeng on December 7. June had been a resident of Crestview for some time. A memorial service will be planned for some time in June 2020. We extend our sympathy as a congregation to June’s family and friends at this time of loss.



Healing From Religious Trauma Group

This group is specifically tailored for the LGBTQIA+ community but is open to people of all identities. The purpose of the group is to provide mutual aid and support for individuals that have been injured by faith, spirituality, religion, or fundamentalism – including experiences with conversion therapy or upbringing which has negatively impacted their mental health. The group will provide a safe environment for the LGBTQIA+ community members to discuss specific issues related to religious trauma and/or abuse and then receive support and feedback by peers and the co-therapy team.

Sessions will have up to 8-10 members and will be held on Wednesday afternoons from 4:00-5:30 p.m. from January 22 until May at Justus Behavioral Health Clinic – 1000 University Avenue, Suite 20, Saint Paul 55104. The cost is \$25 per person per group session. Most insurance is accepted and sliding scale fees are available. For information, call Ly at 612-373-2433 or e-mail Ruby at ruby.levine@justushealth.org to schedule a client intake or to ask questions.



November Financial Report

	November 2019	November 2019 YTD	November 2019 YTD
Income	\$20,933	\$288,773	\$304,540
Expenses	<u>22,396</u>	<u>307,913</u>	<u>306,993</u>
Income-Exp.	<\$ 1,463>	<\$ 19,140>	<\$ 2,453>

- November’s deficit of \$1,462 increased our year-to-date deficit to \$19,140.
- 2020 Budget Process Update: A revised budget will be presented to Church Council again in December, with a final budget presented for approval in January.
- Next Finance Committee Meeting: Thursday, January 9, at 6:00 p.m.

– Gary Anderson, Treasurer

Transition Musings - January 2020

Interim Pastor Susan Masters

As I wrap up my first couple months at GA, I have been grateful for the soft landing that the holidays have imposed upon us. The busyness of Thanksgiving and Christmas made it virtually impossible to launch into our interim work right away – which, in turn, allowed extra time to get to know GA – both people and your ways – a little better. I'm so very grateful for every person who has emailed or stopped by to say hello, for everyone who has worn a name tag on Sundays, and for the warm welcome I've received every Sunday and at every meeting I've attended. Thank you!

And now, as we move into the new year, it's time to roll up our sleeves and begin our interim work in earnest. While much of January will find me focused on our annual meeting, I will also launch us into the first phase of our transition work together. Two specific things will happen right away:

1. I will establish an information table (Interim Central, of sorts) in the narthex, where we will locate sign-up sheets, reports, and any other information pertinent to our transition work. Please plan to check it regularly.
2. I will begin facilitating focus groups which will:
 - be available to everyone, member or friend, who considers GA to be their church home;
 - be scheduled on a variety of days and times throughout January and February;
 - be offered as small groups (4-6 people) and large groups (10-12 people) or as one-to-one conversations;
 - last between 1.5 – 2 hours each meeting time;
 - aim to elicit participants' thoughts about a variety of topics related to GA's past, present, and future.

The information gathered at these groups will ultimately be compiled into a report that will be shared with the congregation later in the winter and will inform the next step of our work together.

Friends, we are gearing up to move full steam ahead into our time of interim work together. And I am both honored and excited to be invited to walk alongside you on this journey of discerning where and how God is leading GA into the future. Such a journey will assuredly require that we look at some difficult moments in our past, ask some hard, even uncomfortable questions, and dream with bold imagination about all that God wants to do with, through, and for us for the sake of the world. I hope you'll commit to being present at GA in this time, sharing your thoughts, and listening to others as they share.

And, as always, do not hesitate to reach out (pastorsusan@gachurchmpls.org or 612-789-7256, ext. 10) if you have questions or concerns about any of our ministry together.

Blessings,
Pastor Susan Masters

“Seeing White” Podcast Series Continues

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, January 12, at 10:45 in the Faith Room**, when we will listen to Part 4 of the series. There is no preparation required and it does not matter if you have missed previous episodes. Sean Tessmer and Amanda Hakemian will facilitate. If you are unable to attend, or would like to listen to previous episodes, here is the link to the series: <https://www.sceneonradio.org/seeing-white/>

A Note of Thanks from Open Door Learning Center, One of our Mission Partners

Dear GA congregation,

Happy Winter to you, from Christian and Seth at the Open Door Learning Center – Northeast!

It is over two years since Open Door - Northeast moved into the education wing of Gustavus Adolphus, and we want to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude for the warmth and welcome you've shown us. We are consistently blown away by your generosity towards the school, not only by welcoming us to use this space, but also with financial support as a GA Mission Partner. In addition to \$2000 in 2018, we have received \$1730 in donations in 2019, which includes a special donation from the Deborah Circle. We cannot say how grateful we are to you all for this continued support!

We can report that since we moved here in November 2017, the school has provided 316 members of the community with 34,754 hours of education! Many of our students in that time have reached important goals, such as passing their driving test, obtaining employment, or becoming naturalized citizens. With your support, we are able to provide this valuable service completely free to those who need it most. Your donations have also allowed us to purchase and incorporate new and reliable technology at our site such as tablets and Chromebooks to facilitate enhanced teaching practices, and digital literacy.

We look forward to continuing to fight the cycle of poverty by opening the doors to employment, navigating systems in the US, helping students advocate for themselves and their families, and dismantling the isolation that keeps many people in poverty.

Thank you for providing a friendly and safe space for our school, this partnership truly has a tremendous positive impact in the lives of our students.

Sincerely,

Christian and Seth

Nominating Committee

It's that time of year...with the annual congregational meeting right around the corner, we're looking for nominees to fill some open spots on the Church Council. 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.



Around the Synod

Saturday, February 8 @ 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM (site TBD) - EcoFaith Network Power-Up: Determining Our

Collective Path Forward: Interested GA members are invited to join folks from other congregations across our synod to engage in conversation about creation care, to identify common environmental issues to galvanize around, and move forward with collective, concrete action. If you would like to represent GA at this event, talk with Pastor Susan, who will direct you on how to register.

Saturday, February 22 @ 8:30 AM – 12:30 PM @ St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Eden Prairie: Tool Kit and

Conference Assemblies: GA members are invited to join members from other congregations in our synod for a morning of connection and learning. We will attend two (out of a dozen+) workshops offering practical tips for churches (on finances, creation care, mission, how to lead meetings, mission, etc.) The day will conclude with some conversation with Bishop Ann Svennungsen and conference meetings (GA is part of the North/Northeast Minneapolis Conference). If you would like to attend, please let Pastor Susan know.

Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church, Minneapolis ... January 2020

Sun.	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29 9:30am - Worship 10:45am - Sing-Along 2pm - Women's AA	30 Epiphany	31 New Year's Day	1 New Year's Day	2 7pm - NA	3	4
5 9:30am - Worship 10:45am - Sing-Along 2pm - Women's AA	6 Epiphany	7 6:30pm - Contemp. Choir	8 6:30pm - Contemp. Choir	9 6pm - Finance Committee 7pm - NA	10 7pm - AA	11 8:30am - Men's Breakfast
12 9:30am - Worship 10:45am - "Seeing White" 10:45am - Confirmation 10:45am - Frolic 10:45am - Sunday School 2pm - Women's AA	13 7pm - Book Discussion	14 5:30pm - Property	15 6pm - Choristers 6:30pm - Contemp. Choir 6:30pm - Gustavus Bells 7:30pm - Senior Choir	16 6:30pm - Church Council 7pm - NA	17	18
19 9:30am - Worship 10:45am - Frolic 10:45am - New Member 10:45am - Sunday School 2pm - Women's AA	20 Milk Day Offices Closed	21 6:30pm - Bible & Brews	22 6pm - Choristers 6:30pm - Contemp. Choir 6:30pm - Gustavus Bells 7:30pm - Senior Choir	23 7pm - NA	24	25 9am - Confirmation 6pm - Community Meal
26 9:30am - Worship 10:45am - Cong. Meeting 2pm - Women's AA	27 7pm - Cong. Life	28	29 6:30pm - Contemp. Choir 6:30pm - Gustavus Bells 7:30pm - Senior Choir	30 7pm - NA	31	1

A publication of

Gustavus Adolphus

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God's Mission for GA Church...
...to build community where God is at the center.

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