

Join us for Zoom worship on **Ash Wednesday, February 17**, at 7:00 p.m. On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter with a day of fasting and repentance. Marking our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we die and return to the earth. At the same time, the dust traces the life-giving cross indelibly marked on our foreheads at baptism. While we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been reconciled to God through Christ. We humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean while we rejoice that “now is the day of salvation.” Returning to our baptismal call, we more intentionally bear the fruits of mercy and justice in the world.

The Zoom invitation will be included in the Saturday email on February 13. The meeting ID is 885 2788 3329. The passcode is 1509.

Wednesdays in Lent ... *Holden Evening Prayer*

We will continue our tradition of mid-week Lenten services on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. beginning on February 24 and continuing until the week before Holy Week. This year, however, we will be on Zoom, but we will use the familiar and much-loved *Holden Evening Prayer* as our liturgy. The Zoom invitation will be included in each Saturday's email beginning February 20; however, the recurring meeting ID is 886 9340 3297 with the passcode 1509.



A Note from Deacon Phil...



Most of you have probably heard about my ice skating accident by now. I was skating with my daughter and granddaughter on MLK Day, fell hard, and broke BOTH my left arm near the shoulder and my left wrist. I had them surgically repaired and am recuperating. They are both bad breaks and I have a lot of rehab ahead of me. I have worked my way back into doing my administrative and worship planning work (thank goodness we were already working remotely due to the pandemic). It will be little while until I am able to play the organ and piano again. Please keep me in your thoughts and prayers as I recover, and thanks to those of you who have already reached out to me!

Sunday Zoom Worship – 9:30 a.m. Every Sunday

See the Saturday email each week for Zoom invitation link, or contact Deacon Phil Holzman for call-in information. If you don't receive the Saturday email and would like to be included, contact Deacon Phil as well.



Transition Musings
Interim Pastor Susan Masters
February, 2021

Church Council 2021

Dee Kjera
James Hamilton
Jenny Parker
Curt Navratil
Beverly Prawalsky
Michelle Rinken
Derrick Watson
Wendy Bradshaw
Matthew Streed

Transition Team

Jenny Arneson
Hannah Rosebrock
Gary Anderson
Lynn Lurvey
Aaron Olson
Aaron Miller

While it's hard to acknowledge that we have been in this pandemic for almost one year, I also find reassurance in knowing that, here at GA, we pretty much have our pandemic routines down now, and we mostly know what we're doing. Our 2021 annual congregational meeting is successfully behind us, our newly elected Church Council is in place, and our Transition Team has been commissioned and is ready to begin its work. While the pandemic will no doubt continue to cause stress, I am nonetheless excited to imagine all that God is up to among us in 2021.

As we begin the work ahead of us, we must look back and say an enormous thank you to the people who have served on church council and lead us through a particularly challenging year. We are deeply indebted to **James Hamilton, Jenny Parker, Erik Peterson, Sarah Larson, Ed Huble, Cindy Bach, Dee Kjera, and Andrea Carter**, who served us on Council this past year. I simply could not have asked for better partners as we navigated the very choppy waters of going into lockdown and sorting out what our congregational life would look like for the foreseeable future. This extraordinary group of leaders made could have been an unbearable situation more humane, and for that, I say, "Thanks be to God."

I look forward to meeting with the new Council on February 18, when we will elect new officers and begin our work together. While Council will be focused primarily on conducting the business of the congregation, especially because we are in a season of transition I also plan to engage them in robust conversation and vision casting for the future of GA.

The congregation will be invited into very similar conversation and vision casting by the Transition Team. These are the folks who will help us unpack and address some of the areas of concern the congregation raised in the State of the Interim report last fall – concerns such as: the need to strengthen our conflict management skills, our communication process, our governance structures, and our financial situation. In the weeks ahead, there will be opportunities for you to share your thoughts on these important matters. The goal will be to help us become the healthiest congregation possible as well as prepare us to begin our call process, probably sometime in the late summer or early fall. Stay tuned for more information about this.

On February 17, we will have our Ash Wednesday service at 7:00 p.m. over Zoom. GA households should have received a Lenten mailing that included a small packet of ashes for you to use at home during that service. More instructions about that will be forthcoming. On Wednesday evenings throughout Lent, at

7:00 p.m. over Zoom, we will have *Holden Evening Prayer*, with a particular focus on finding joy, gratitude, and hope in a challenging time.

And finally, I know each of you joins me in continuing to pray for our dear deacon, Phil Holzman, as he recovers from a broken arm and wrist. I think we all knew how important his leadership is, but if there was any uncertainty, there is none now! Phil, we love you, we are so grateful for all the gifts you bring to this community of faith, and we pray for your complete healing.

As always, it is my honor to be your interim pastor – please do not hesitate to let me know how I can pastorally serve you.



There are ways you can stay connected to your GA family during this time when we are not able to gather in person. The activities listed on this page can help you do just that. If you have any questions about any of these activities or ministries, contact the person leading that particular ministry or contact Pastor Susan or Deacon Phil (their contact information is listed on the back page of this newsletter).

Quilters to Meet March 4

The Quilters will meet on Thursday, March 4 – 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon. **Don't forget your mask!**

NO Virtual GA Choristers Meeting This Month

There will be no GA Choristers meeting this month due to Deacon Phil's injury (he can't play the piano yet!). We may or may not meet in March depending on Phil's rehab progress. Stay tuned to next month's *Gazette* for news on that. Thanks for your understanding!

Join us for GA Family Storytime Live on Zoom Sundays at 9 a.m.

Let's stay connected through a regular virtual story time for youth or those young at heart. We have several adults and families with children attending. We read stories live on zoom at 9 a.m. before church on Sundays and we always have time for show and tell at the end. You can also watch the replays of the book reading on Facebook. The zoom link is in every Saturday email blast.



Readers Wanted

Please join us in recording some beloved short stories for Lent and Easter. This would require a short commitment of reading the story over Zoom with Kari while she records you. Most stories can be read in about 10 minutes. Here are some of the stories we are considering reading. Take a look and email Kari.m.l.navratil@gmail.com if you are interested in reading one of the stories over Zoom. We will work with your schedule for the recording. The recording will be posted on Facebook.

- **A Gospel Story of Easter** (Matthew 21-28 in the Bible)
- **A Lesson of Faith** (Margaret Gatty, adapted by Frances J. Olcott)
- **The Loveliest Rose in the World** (Hans Christian Andersen, adapted by Frances J. Olcott)
- **The Nightingales and the Rose** (Oscar Wilde)
- **The Ragman** (Walter Wangerin, Jr.)
- **The Selfish Giant** (Oscar Wilde)
- **The Tale of Three Trees** (Traditional Folk Tale)
- **What Was In Jeremy's Egg?** (Ida Mae Kempel)

Update and book recommendations from the Racial Justice Committee

The Racial Justice Committee would like to thank everyone who attended our Wednesday evening discussions during Advent! We are taking a short break from planning programming for the congregation while the Transition Team begins its work (we encourage everyone to respond to invitations from them!). If you are interested to continue learning about racial justice and related issues in the meantime, please see below for some book recommendations from committee members.

Book recommendation: *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism* by Robin DiAngelo

Recommended by Kari Navratil

White Fragility is a very interesting book. I enjoyed it because it helped me understand more about what it means to be white and concepts like white fragility, which the author coined to describe any defensive reactions that a white person might have when talking about race. I hadn't really thought much about this before. It has made me more sensitive to my own reactions. I like that it was written by a white person because she understands where I am coming from. If you do read it, I would love to hear your thoughts about it and decompress some of the topics in it with you.

Book recommendation: *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You* by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi

Recommended by Amanda Hakemian

Stamped is described as a "remix" of *Stamped from the Beginning*, Kendi's award-winning 2016 book tracing the history of racist ideas in America. It is aimed at middle and high school aged readers, but is an engaging read for adults too, and would be an excellent choice for adolescents and parents to read and discuss together. If you're interested to learn more, check out this NPR interview with the authors: <https://n.pr/2MLBEfi>

Book recommendation: *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson.

Recommended by Gary Anderson

This book tells the story of the Great Migration of six million African-Americans from the South to the North and West between 1915 and 1970. The book follows the struggles of three different families as they leave the South for New York, Chicago and Los Angeles. It was eye opening for me as it challenged a lot of the myths about the education levels, work ethic and family stability of those who migrated for safety and economic opportunity, compared to those families already living outside the South. Their stories helped me to understand the roots of the current state of racial inequity in the US, as well as the underlying anger and resentment caused by decades of segregation and discrimination. I wasn't able to put this book down.

And finally, Cheryl Johnson has many book, movie and podcast recommendations to share:

Sula by Toni Morrison - this book cracked me open making me not only want to be a better person but actually made me more forgiving. Then one is ready for *Django Unchained* by Quentin Tarantino, this made me sick but ready to deliver supplies to protesters after curfew. *I Am Not Your Negro* a documentary about James Baldwin helped me see a need for black nationalism; then the film *Get Out* by Jordan Peele--it's so fun finding the monster in this movie. The *Hateful Eight* by Quentin Tarantino--I have to wear headphone when I watch this, it's so horrible I don't want anyone hearing those words but it drives home the point of how nasty this country is. Then end on an up beat Howard Thurman's *Jesus and the Disinherited*, this may be a way out of the hell we created for ourselves through "the religion of Jesus." Michael Moore's new podcast "Rumble" with Dr. Cornel West (Episode #135) if a person is considering socialism. And also Rev. Sekou helps us to figure out how to protest nonviolently. Happy protesting, enjoy! "Ending fascism has never been more enjoyable." -- Michael Moore.

Book Club News

When you receive this edition of the *Gazette*, Monday Night Book Club will have already met on Monday, February 8. There's a good chance, however, that we will continue our conversation of Howard Thurman's *Jesus and the Disinherited* on subsequent Mondays. Watch GA's Saturday email blast for book club news or email Andrea Carter at andreaLcart@gmail.com. It's great reading weather!



Thank you, Dan; Welcome, Zach

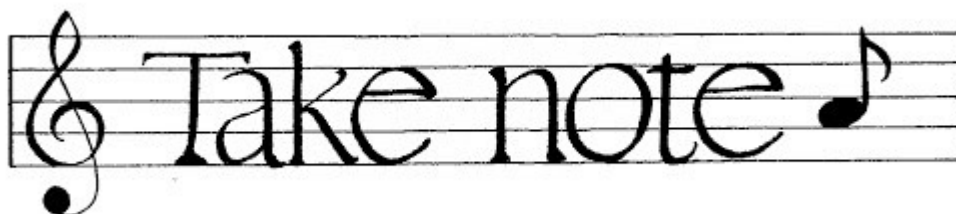


Dan Hager has served as our Finance Manager for the past several years and has decided to step down. He is not leaving GA Church, just stepping down from this position. We want to thank Dan for his faithful service these past several years. We now want to welcome Zachary Copa as our new Finance Manager. Zach is a business/accounting student at the University of Minnesota and is excited to take on this position at GA.

We hope to take an opportunity in worship in the coming weeks to officially thank Dan and welcome Zach.

Furlough Fund Money Available

GA's Furlough Fund is still available to provide monetary assistance to help members/associate members who are in financial need due to circumstances related to the Covid-19 pandemic (you do not necessarily need to be furloughed). Members/associate members can apply for a grant of \$250.00. This gift does not need to be paid back. If you or a member/associate member are in need of this, please contact the church office. Your request is confidential.



All Are Welcome...Our Mission Statement

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 socioeconomic backgrounds. We strive to be an evermore welcoming community. Following the example of Christ, we extend a most heartfelt welcome to all.

Monthly Financial Report

	December 2020 Actual	December 2020 YTD	December 202 YTD	December 2019 YTD
		Includes PPP Loan	Without PPP Loan	
Income	\$23,477.11	\$350,433.00	\$308,508.52	\$325,315.36
	<u>\$35,310.62</u>	<u>\$321,409.21</u>	<u>\$321,409.21</u>	<u>\$343,270.02</u>
	<\$11,833.51>	\$ 29,023.79	<\$ 12,900.69>	<\$ 17,954.66>

Thank you for your generosity in December! An insurance bill as well as fourth quarter payments to our Mission Partners resulted in larger expenses in December. The absence of in-person Christmas services affected December giving; however, members gave generously despite being physically apart. The PPP loan continues to make a difference in GA's financial outlook. The congregation voted to adopt the 2021 budget of \$325,079 at January's annual meeting. Thank you to our Council and Finance Team for your work proposing 2021's budget. This is my final *Gazette* article as GA's Treasurer. It was a pleasure serving GA in this capacity.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Carter

Next Finance Meeting via Zoom: Thursday, February 11, at 6:00 p.m.
March Zoom Finance Meeting: March 11, at 6:00 p.m.

Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church

A Reconciling in Christ Congregation

Church Phone: 612-789-7256

Sunday Zoom Worship at 9:30 a.m.

Church Staff ...

The Rev. Susan Masters, Interim Pastor (Ext. 10)
pastorsusan@gachurchmpls.org
Cell phone (for pastoral emergencies): 612-327-7454

Deacon Phil Holzman, Minister of Word & Service (Ext. 11)
(Worship & Music, Parish Administration)
philh@gachurchmpls.org
Cell phone (for texts/calls): 320-304-1774

Zach Copa, Finance Manager (Ext. 14)
zachc@gachurchmpls.org

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

Linda Lindahl, Church Custodian



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

Ways You Can Give to GA During This Time When We Are Apart



1) Mail your offering to GA:
1509 27th Avenue NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418

2) Give electronically at our website,
www.gachurchmpls.org. Just click on the
"Donate" button on any page.

3) Sign up to give electronically through our
"Simply Giving" program. Email GA's Finance
Manager, Zach Copa, for details. Zach can also
help you if you are interested in learning how to
contribute stock donations.

Gustavus Adolphus Church Council

Note: Officers will be elected at the council's
meeting on February 18.

Wendy Bradshaw	Beverly Prawalsky
James Hamilton	Michelle Rinken
Dee Kjera	Matthew Streed
Curt Navratil	Derrick Watson
Jenny Parker	