

Advent and Christmas at Gustavus Adolphus

The season of Advent began on November 28. We are in the midst of this 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 have added some elements to our weekly worship services which we hope will make the Sundays meaningful, including some music written by our very own Pastor Susan and Deacon Phil.

On Sunday, December 12 (Advent 3) we will have our annual Christmas Pageant, which will again look a little different due to the ongoing pandemic. But we will continue as best we can. Those who will participate in the Pageant will have dress rehearsal on Saturday, December 11, at 12 noon. *We need volunteers to help us assemble the stage before dress rehearsal on Saturday the 11th at 11 a.m. Please come and help us!*

Help decorate the church for Christmas Eve on Sunday, December 19, immediately following the worship service, from 10:45-12 noon. Make an ornament or two to hang on the tree, hang garland, or put up the candelabras; there will activities for all ages. All are welcome!



We will hold our traditional Christmas Eve service on Friday, December 24, at 4:00 p.m. which will include music by the Gustavus Bells, a Quartet, and our Senior Choir (but not a handbell prelude this year). The Christmas Eve service will be available in-person in the Sanctuary and on Zoom.

Pastor Susan and Deacon Phil will record a spoken and musical Christmas message which will be posted online (Facebook and YouTube, most likely) for Christmas Day. Stay tuned for more details on that.

We hope you will have a blessed Advent and Christmas season and that you will participate in the worship life of our congregation as much as you are able – whether in person or online. Come, Lord Jesus!

Give a Good Gift this Advent: ELCA Good Gifts Tree in the Narthex



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 is a tree in the Narthex with a variety of ELCA Good Gifts ornaments on it. Select a gift ornament from the tree in the Narthex and pay for the good gift by placing your check in the offering plate or mailing it to the office. You keep the ornament to place on your tree at home as a reminder of the gift you gave.



Church News

Available in the Narthex at Church: 2022 Offering Envelopes and Calendars

2022 Offering Envelopes are available for those members of GA who use them.

Please pick yours up as soon as possible – either on a Sunday morning or during the day on a Wednesday.



2022 Calendars from our friends at Washburn-McReavy are also available for those who enjoy having them. You may also pick up a calendar or two at your earliest convenience.

Gustavus Bells STILL Need One More Ringer



Do you read music? Are you interested in ringing handbells? No experience necessary – we'll teach you. We really could use one more ringer to fill out the bell choir for this season. If you're interested in ringing and read music, please contact Deacon Phil Holzman.

Rehearsals are held on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. Masks required.

Virtual Choristers Christmas Singing Session – December 15

All young people in elementary and middle school are invited to join Deacon Phil on Zoom for 20 minutes of singing some Christmas carols, and maybe a few other favorites, on Wednesday, December 15, at 6:00 p.m. The Zoom link will be shared in the Saturday email the week before, but here's the meeting ID now: 837 1962 8304, with the usual passcode of 1509. Hope to see a good group of singers on the 15th!



Quilting Session for December

The GA Quilters will meet at the church on Thursday, December 2, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. All are welcome to join us! The January quilting session will be Thursday, January 6.

Women of the ELCA (WELCA) Meeting

All women of the congregation are invited to this meeting on Tuesday, December 7, at 1:00 p.m. In addition to getting reacquainted after a long hiatus, we will be addressing Christmas cards to our homebound members. We hope to see you on the 7th.

Men's Breakfast

Men in the congregation of all ages are invited to church for breakfast, devotions, and fellowship on Saturday, December 11, at 8:00 a.m. in the church kitchen/fireside room. This is our special Christmas Scandinavian Smorgasbord Breakfast. Please join us!

Keep Our Prayer List Current

Remember our new Prayer List policy is that names remain on the list for only six weeks. After that they drop off unless the person contacts Deacon Phil to have their name put back on the list. This way our list remains more current and fresh. Thank you for your understanding.

Storytime on Sunday Mornings

All are welcome Sundays at 9 a.m. on Zoom. We have a rotating cast of characters reading stories and building community where God is at the center. We welcome new readers, so if you'd enjoy reading the occasional children's book on Zoom for our youngest GA friends, please email Nicole Navratil (nicoleknavrtil@gmail.com). Please join us Sundays from 9:00-9:25 a.m. The link will be shared each Saturday in the weekly email. Feel free to come listen anytime you are free!



Come Help With Two More "Church Project Wednesdays"

The Property Committee is sponsoring "Church Project Wednesdays" from 5:00-7:00 p.m. Wednesday evenings, December 1 and 15. We will have a list of projects to do. Joan Mitchell will be there to assist you in dusting or painting or sorting or washing windows. We have some areas that need more attention than our weekly cleaning allows. Come and spend a half hour or a couple hours with us on Wednesdays. Thanks to those who have come and helped so far. Come and bless the church with your presence!



Hat, Mitten and Scarf Drive

We collected A LOT of hats, mittens and scarves last year and never had a chance to deliver them to local elementary schools. Well, the schools can use them now, so the quilters will deliver them to Waite Park, Pillsbury, and Sheridan schools before winter break. That means we won't have our annual drive this coming January. We plan to resume the drive later.

Coffee Hour is Back!

Join us for a cup of coffee or juice and a cookie or two every Sunday after the service. We are meeting downstairs (more room to distance ourselves). Sit down for a spell or grab a cup to go.

We need a few people to sign up as hosts. We're keeping it simple with compostable cups and easy to eat treats. Very manageable for a couple of people.



There's a sign-up sheet in the Narthex. Questions? Talk to Gary Arvidson or Mary Larson - we're at church most Sundays.

Gustavus Adolphus Executive Committee Contact Information

Matthew Streed, President matthewstreed@gmail.com
Derrick Watson, Vice-President dwmn2012@gmail.com
Dee Kjera, Secretary deekjera@gmail.com
Michelle Rinken, Treasurer michellekathleen@msn.com



Transition Musings

by Interim Pastor Susan Masters

What Advent Invites Us Into

The liturgical calendar reminds us that, from time to time, as followers of Jesus, we believe things and behave in ways that cause the world to wonder about us: We mark our foreheads with ashen crosses on Ash Wednesday, then spend the seven weeks of Lent reviewing our sins and spring cleaning our hearts before God. We baptize people in holy bath waters and claim them for God. We mark every worship service with a meal of bread and wine.

And I would argue that, liturgically speaking, nothing sets us apart from the rest of the world quite like Advent does. Because we live in a time when our culture has abandoned any effort to connect Christmas to anything remotely resembling the birth of the Christ child, observing the season of Advent is increasingly one of the most radical, counter-cultural things a Christian can do.

Because the very nature of Advent is to gently - but firmly - force us to slow down as we await the coming of the Christ child. Any woman who has ever been pregnant likely remembers those final weeks of waiting, when you're so big and bulky, and every internal organ is being compressed by this whole other human being who has taken up residence inside your belly. It's not usually a time of running marathons, or painting the outside of your house. As birth draws near, with the preparations complete, there is no choice but to wait, wait, wait until that which has so long been anticipated finally arrives.

And this is exactly what Advent does to us - it forces us to hunker down and move into the darkness of the coming winter - while we wait – for the Christ Child.

Here at GA, it feels like all we have done is wait – for your new settled pastor, for this pandemic to stop upending our lives, for racial justice I believe we could collectively write a book about what waiting looks like. And especially after such a difficult almost two years, who could blame anyone for wanting to fast forward through Advent and get to the part where the Christ Child is born and the party begins? With its gift buying, and lights, and music – oh the glorious Christmas music! – and all the joy. Our world needs a little joy right now.

Dear ones, PLEASE engage in Christmas joy! You've earned it! AND, as you do, please don't allow yourself to get SO sucked into all the noise and the lights and the shopping that you miss Advent all together. Dare to be counter-cultural, dare to control the seasonal reins and stay grounded in Advent. Dare to live as though you truly believe that the party hasn't fully started yet. And that we're still pregnant - the baby is yet to come. Church, I welcome you into the holy darkness and quiet of Advent. I welcome you into the waiting. I welcome you into the anticipation of a coming Child who will bring with him a different way to be human family together. And I welcome you to join us for worship on Sundays throughout Advent as we wait together.



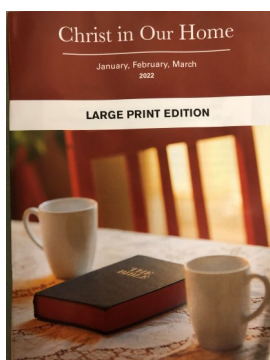
Big News from Luther Park

Joel Legred, Executive Director, Retiring;

Leah McDougall to Become Executive Director



According to *Luther Park ECHOES from the Point* newsletter Fall/Winter edition, Joel Legred, executive director for 34 years at Luther Park, has decided to retire. "After battling COVID-19, Joel realized life is short and he has a few more goals he'd like to accomplish." GA Church has a long relationship with Luther Park, being a charter member congregation. Luther Park has announced that Leah McDougall, associate director, has been named the new executive director. Joel has agreed to stay on staff as emeritus director for one year as a transition time. We invite you to read all about this online at lutherparkdanbury.com or by picking up a paper copy of their newsletter from the literature rack across from the elevator in the narthex at church. We wish Joel well in his retirement and have appreciated his relationship with GA over the years!



"Christ in Our Home"

Devotionals for the New Year Available

There's lots to find in the narthex at church this month! In addition to the 2022 offering envelopes and calendars – and the ELCA Good Gifts tree – those who enjoy and appreciate the ELCA's devotionals, *Christ in Our Home*, will find the first quarter 2022 devotional books available there as well. Please feel free to take a copy for your use. There are small, regular-sized print books and large-print books as well.



Thank You, Bisping Boys!

Did you notice how well-manicured the church lawn was kept all summer long? We can thank Aaron, Brandon, and Brock Bisping for that! Thank you so much for your hard work all summer long. And thanks to mom and dad, Adrienne and Paul, for getting the boys to church each week and for your support and help as well.

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.

Sunday Zoom Worship –

9:30 a.m. Every Sunday

for those who choose not to worship in person

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.

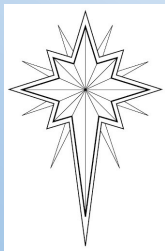


We wish everyone a blessed Advent season
and a very Merry Christmas!

The Staff of Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church

Pastor Susan Masters
Joel Lurvey

Deacon Phil Holzman
Zachary Copa
Linda Lindahl



Christmas Eve Worship

December 24 – 4:00 p.m.

Live in the Sanctuary and on Zoom

Zoom Meeting ID: 813 9385 5835

(Passcode: 1509)



Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church

A Reconciling in Christ Congregation

Church Phone: 612-789-7256

Sunday Worship at 9:30 a.m.

Church Staff ...

The Rev. Susan Masters, Interim Pastor (Ext. 10)
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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

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

Joel Lurvey, Contemporary Choir Director
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Linda Lindahl, Church Custodian



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

Ways You Can Give to GA Church (besides bringing your offerings on Sunday morning to worship):

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

Matthew Streed, President
Derrick Watson, Vice-President
Dee Kjera, Secretary
Michelle Rinken, Treasurer
At-Large Members:

Wendy Bradshaw
James Hamilton
Curt Navratil
Jenny Parker
Beverly Prawalsky