



Advent Begins Sunday, December 3!

See the flyer later in this mailing for details about our Advent schedule of services and events.

One date to note is that the 4th Sunday of Advent also falls on Christmas Eve. We will celebrate Advent IV at 9:30 a.m. and Christmas Eve at 4:00 p.m. with very different worship services.

Welcome, New Members!

We were excited to welcome a group of new members into our congregation on Sunday, November 19. Most of these new members are already quite active in the ministries of our church, and we look forward to getting to know them better in the coming weeks and months. We hope to publish shorts "bios" of these folks in the January newsletter; not all of them were ready in time for this month's issue.

We welcome the following new members of GA Church:

- ◆ Joel Cable
- ◆ Jennifer Creadick
- ◆ Sarah and Ian Coen-Frei – and Leonora
- ◆ Laura and Josh Koletar
- ◆ Lucinda "Lucy" and Jason Oakes – and Clara and Wilson
- ◆ LuAnn Streed



New Members Are Joining

Nativity Set Display in the Narthex at Church

During the season of Advent and Epiphany, we would like to decorate the narthex with nativity sets. If you have a nativity set that you are willing to loan the church from December 3 thru January 7, 2024, please bring the set to church on Sunday, December 3.



Truth & Healing Movement

Visit the Minneapolis Institute of Arts for "In Our Hands: Native Photography, 1890 to Now" for a great opportunity to learn more about our Indigenous neighbors through the lens of Native photographers. This exhibit runs through January 14, 2024, and "... traces the intersecting histories of photography and diverse Indigenous cultures from the Rio Grande to the Arctic Circle."



From Pastor Ian

Siblings in Christ,

As we reflect on the recent Thanksgiving festivities, it becomes evident that we've swiftly transitioned into the Christmas season. In our household, the tree is already adorned, garlands draped, and the windows aglow with lights. While some of these preparations stem from practical considerations—long-lasting memories of bundling up against the cold to string lights as a child—there's a deeper reason. The warmth of a house adorned with twinkling lights can bring comfort as daylight disappears, and the nights lengthen. Soon, we will gather at church with lit candles on Christmas Eve, joyously commemorating the birth of Jesus.



Between the joyous aftermath of Thanksgiving and the exuberance of Christmas lies the blessed season of Advent—a brief interlude of waiting and watching. Advent provides us with the precious space to anticipate the Christmas joy while simultaneously looking forward to God's imminent presence, poised to breathe life into our weary world.

In addition to Advent gracing us with what I believe is the most beautiful liturgical color (Blue!), it gifts us with the opportunity to lift our voices in song, resonating with familiar and beloved hymns. From "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus" (ELW 254) to "Joy to the World" (ELW 267) and "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (ELW 257), our spirits are uplifted. Among these, one hymn that has occupied my thoughts in this preparatory season is "Unexpected and Mysterious" (ELW 258). Penned in 2002, this hymn eloquently captures the incomprehensible nature of God's entrance into the world through Jesus.

*"We are called to ponder mystery and await the coming Christ,
To embody God's compassion for each fragile human life.
God is with us in our longing to bring healing to the earth,
While we watch with joy and wonder for the promised savior's birth."*

This hymn resonates with the paradoxical essence of our faith and worship. As we eagerly await the celebration of Jesus' birth at Christmas—the divine incarnation—we also acknowledge that God is already present with us amid the world's trials and tribulations. Christmas is celebrated not only as the anticipation of a future promise but also as a recognition of the present reality.

This Advent, my prayer is that we discover ways to experience God's presence amidst the hustle and bustle. May our anticipation of Jesus' arrival in the manger coexist with the acknowledgment of God journeying beside us in our waking and sleeping moments. Through this recognition in Advent, may our celebration of Jesus' birth kindle a fresh and enduring joy.

-pr. Ian





*GA's WELCA Group Will Meet
Tuesday, December 5, at 1:00 p.m.
We will address Christmas cards to homebound members.
All women are invited to attend. Bring a treat to share.*



**Men's "Christmas" Breakfast
Saturday, December 9, 8:00 a.m.**

All men in the congregation are invited to attend the Men's Breakfast in December for the group's annual Christmas breakfast. There will be lots of good food and time for good conversation as well. The coffee is on by 8:00 a.m. Come join us!

Reminder: Bible & Brews

Taking a Break until January

Bible & Brews will take a break in December and gather again beginning in the New Year. Blessings on the brews you drink and the scripture you read until then. Thank you!

We're Collecting Items for Northeast Middle School

During Advent, we will be collecting the following items for the Northeast Middle School. You can bring your items to church and place them in the baskets in the Narthex during the four Sundays of Advent. We are looking for donations of:

- ♥ Chapstick
- ♥ Deodorant
- ♥ Sharpened pencils
- ♥ Black athletic socks for boys and girls – size small thru xl
- ♥ Facial tissue
- ♥ Basic white t-shirts (small thru xl)
- ♥ Dark-colored sweatpants (all sizes...unisex)



Quilt Sale

GA Quilters are having a fundraiser for The Closet at the Northeast Middle School. If you are looking for a last-minute gift, one might catch your eye. We will be in the Fellowship Hall after the Church service on December 10 and the 17th. Here's a picture of the quilts that are available.

Notes & Thoughts from Deacon Phil

Lessons & Carols on December 17 –

You're invited to attend a GA tradition on Sunday, December 17, at 4:00 p.m. – A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. This service of music and readings will be presented by the Northeast Chorale and the GA Choir. Hear prophetic readings about the coming of the Messiah, hear anthems presented by the combined choir, and sing some beloved Christmas carols at the culmination of the service. A fellowship reception will follow in fellowship hall. See (and share) the flyer included in this mailing.

**THIS
DEACON
LOVES YOU**



Handbell Prelude on Christmas Eve –

It's been a few years (since before the pandemic, actually), but our Gustavus Bells handbell choir is excited to announce that they will be returning to the tradition of playing an extended, 15-minute prelude of Christmas music on Christmas Eve. Come early (at 3:45) and plan to sit quietly and enjoy the magic of handbell music as you prepare to worship on Christmas Eve.

GA Choristers –

The "new" GA Choristers choir made its debut in worship on November 19. Five of the seven singers were present that morning. They sang two anthems and were enthusiastically received by the congregation. A reminder that the Choristers practice the first three Wednesdays of each month at 6:00 p.m. and sing in worship on the 3rd Sunday of the month. We would welcome additional singers in grades 1-5 to join us. Thanks to Adrienne B. for taking a video of the kids singing from which this screenshot was lifted.

Blessings of the Season –

As we enter the season of Advent and move toward the celebration of Christmas, let me add my good wishes to all of you for a blessed and festive holiday season! ~ Deacon Phil

All Are Welcome

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.



Advent at GA

December 3 (Week 1):

Adult Education Opportunity with Bryant Kumlin

Topic: *Christmas Traditions*

Meet downstairs in the Faith room after worship (about 10:45)

December 10 (Week 2):

Christmas pageant during worship.

Congregational potluck following pageant.

December 17 (Week 3):

Cookie potluck & exchange during congregational meeting.

Join us in the Fellowship Hall after worship (about 10:45).

Bring cookies to share.

Bring extra cookies to swap with others after the meeting.

Lessons & Carols at 4:00.

December 24 (Week 4):

Advent service in the morning

Bell Choir Concert 3:45

Family Christmas Eve service at 4:00

Prayer List

As the body of Christ and a family of believers, let us pray for each other.

- ♥ *Paul & Sharon Banitt – Carlotta Rosebrock requests prayers for her parents, as her father has ongoing health issues, and her mother is his caregiver in the home.*
- ♥ *Rodney Christopherson*
- ♥ *Pam Evangelist – Pam would like prayers for her as she is living with Parkinsons.*
- ♥ *Linda Lindahl – Prayers for continuing health concerns.*
- ♥ *Darlene McQuarrie – Upcoming surgery and recovery.*
- ♥ *Robbie Murphy – Pat Lynch would like prayers for her sister who is experiencing several health challenges.*
- ♥ *Jean Rosebrock – Prayers for Jean as she experiences declining health.*
- ♥ *Alex and Ann Schwartz (Nicole Navratil's parents) – Prayers for Nicole's parents: Alex, for healing and Ann for managing his care.*
- ♥ *Mary Nelson Yunker – Prayers for Mary following a recent fall.*
- ♥ *Doug – Ongoing health issues.*
- ♥ *Sarah – James Hamilton would like prayers for his daughter who is facing a health challenge.*
- ♥ *Amy and Bret – Ongoing health issues.*



To have someone's name included on the prayer list, contact our volunteer prayer coordinator, Jean Jenson, at mplsjean@yahoo.com or Pastor Ian, or Deacon Phil.

November was a month full of life transitions in our congregation. We said goodbye to a long-time, faithful member of the congregation, welcomed two children into the family of God through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, and welcomed a group of new members. Through all these transitions, we know that God is faithful and God is good.

Baptisms:

Melody Beth Meuwissen

Child of Alyssa and Joshua Meuwissen

Sister to Karla and Lydia

Born June 14, 2023 ~ Baptized November 12, 2023

Calvin James Huble

Child of Julie and Paul Huble

Born April 21, 2022 ~ Baptized November 26, 2023



Annette Hazel Parker

Passed away October 19, 2023

Memorial Service held at GA Church November 11, 2023

Interment at Fort Snelling National Cemetery November 13, 2023

Church Council Report

Submitted by Jenny Arneson, Council President

As this year comes to a close, the council is earnestly preparing for 2024; our primary task is ensuring we have a balanced budget.

We see so much potential in GA's future:

- After several years, we have a full settled staff that includes a full time pastor and deacon. This is a blessing that most churches of our size do not get to enjoy.
- We see increased trends in giving, including a positive response to our requests for special giving in November.
- We have early indicators of increased giving trends for 2024.
- Our *Life Together* capital appeal will provide the necessary funds to make needed building repairs.
- We have a strong stewardship plan in place.

Yet, we need to allow time for these investments to grow. We also recognize that we lost a revenue stream with the English Language school renters moving out. While we take the time to reset financially, our council advises making short term reductions in the 2024 budget.

Volunteer Opportunities & Thank You's

- Thank you to our Finance committee: Kristin Tangen, Dan Hager, Andrea Carter, Gary Anderson, Wendy Bradshaw, Zach Copa, Deacon Phil and Pastor Ian. Their work is essential as we close our books for 2023 and make plans for 2024.
- There are lots of opportunities during Advent to engage at GA. Learn about Christmas traditions, join us for the traditional Christmas pageant and potluck, or share some cookies! We will see you at GA during Advent!

Gustavus Adolphus Executive Committee Contact Information:

Jenny Arneson, presidentarneson.jenny@gmail.com
Matt Streed, vice-president.....matthewstreed@gmail.com
Dee Kjera, secretary.....deekjera@gmail.com
Kristin Tangen, treasurerksnobeck@gmail.com



Just A Reminder

On Sunday mornings, as we are now contributing to our capital fund, we ask that you clearly note any designations between our General Fund and the *Life Together* Appeal on your checks or envelopes. Thank you.



Special Congregational Meeting!

What: A special meeting to:

- Review and approve changes to the church constitution. (A required second vote will take place at the annual meeting on January 28, 2024.)
- Hear from the Property committee about building repair and improvement projects happening right now and funded by the Life Together Capital Appeal.

When: Sunday, December 17, 10:45 a.m.

Where: The Fellowship Hall at GA

The Real Fun: Congregational Life is hosting a cookie pot luck & exchange at the same time in the same place! We will do our business while eating cookies.

Can I attend on-line? You can't exchange cookies on-line, so we hope to see you in-person! If you would like to join us on-line, please reach out to Phil. We will be meeting in the fellowship hall, but will make arrangements for anyone who wants to join us on-line.

What constitutional changes are being proposed? Many of the changes do not modify the meaning or purpose of the clause. Language has been altered for clarity, precision, to have more inclusive language, to reflect current understandings, consistency with other ELCA documents, conformance with state law, or as an editorial change. The most significant change includes allowing members to participate in congregational meetings via online methods.

Where can I see the changes? You may find a printout in the church narthex.





*A Festival of Nine
Lessons and Carols*

*Sunday, December 17
4 p.m.*

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)

Note from the Treasurer

Merry (almost) Christmas!

We're still showing a deficit, but I know that there have been numerous people doubling their giving for one month (those gifts will be reflected next month).

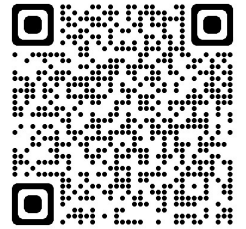
We also had a call to raise money to plow the other parking lot, and we raised that money within a week!!!

The sanctuary just got painted from the capital appeal funds and we're on to the next thing on the list.

I am so incredibly grateful for the generosity that everyone has shown in the last few months and I know we can keep it going!

We know there are members who give gifts in stocks and end-of-year gifts as well, and if you do, let us know so we can plan ahead =)

If you are able to update your giving you can scan the QR code below, go to GA's website or email me (ksnobeck@gmail.com) and I'm more than happy to help! QR code is also on the slips of papers in the pew pockets in the sanctuary.



Thank you again for your support and for creating community where God is at the center.

Kristin

October Financials

| | Oct | Oct | | Oct | | Oct |
|-----------|---------------------|--------------|--|---------------------|--|--------------------|
| | 2023 YTD | 2023 YTD | | 2022 YTD | | 2023 vs 2022 |
| | Actual | Budget | | Actual | | YTD Actual |
| Income | \$279,840.05 | \$294,324.18 | | \$247,689.98 | | \$32,150.07 |
| Expense | \$294,905.87 | \$294,324.12 | | \$259,277.47 | | \$35,628.40 |
| Inc - Exp | -\$15,065.82 | \$0.06 | | -\$11,587.49 | | -\$3,478.33 |

The figures above represent our income/expenses through October 31, 2023.

October 2023 YTD Actual Income of \$279,840.05 represents 95% of our budgeted \$294,324.18.

October 2023 YTD Expenses of \$294,905.87 represents 100% of our budgeted \$294,324.12.

The -\$15,065.82 difference constitutes our YTD deficit.

As compared to last year, YTD our income is up \$32,150.07 and our expenses are up \$35,628.40.

Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church, Minneapolis ... December 2023

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|---|---|---|---------------------|-----|---|
| 28 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| Advent I 9:30am - Worship 10:45am - Adult Education 10:45am - Confirmation Class 10:45am - Sunday School | 1pm - Grief Group | 1pm - WELCA Mtg. 6:30pm - Northeast Chorale | 10am - Coffee Hour 6pm - Contemp. Group 6pm - GA Choristers 6:30pm - Gustavus Bells 7:30pm - GA Choir | 9:30am - Quilters | | 8am - Men's Breakfast 9:30pm - Pageant Rehearsal |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| Advent II 9:30am - Worship 10:45am - Cong. Potluck | 1pm - Grief Group 6:30pm - Social Ministry Comm. | 6:30pm - NE Chorale/GA Choir | 10am - Coffee Hour 6pm - Contemp. Group 6pm - GA Choristers 6:30pm - Gustavus Bells | 6pm - Finance Comm. | | |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| Advent III 9:30am - Worship 10:45am - Cong. Mtg. & Cookies 10:45am - Sunday School 4pm - Lessons & Carols | 1pm - Grief Group | 6pm - Church Council | 10am - Coffee Hour 6pm - GA Choristers 6:30pm - Gustavus Bells 7:30pm - GA Choir | | | |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| Advent IV/Christmas Eve 9:30am - Worship 4pm - Worship | Christmas Day | 10am - Coffee Hour 11am - Meals on Wheels Delivery | | | | |
| 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Christmas I 9:30am - Worship | | | | | | |

A publication of

Gustavus Adolphus

LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Minneapolis, MN 55418

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Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church

A Reconciling in Christ Congregation

Church Phone: 612-789-7256

Fax Number: 612-789-1334

Bldg. Hours: Mon., Wed., Thurs. – 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Website: www.gachurchmpls.org

Sunday Worship at 9:30 a.m.

Church Staff ...

Pastor Ian Coen-Frei, Minister of Word & Sacrament (Ext. 10)
pastorian@gachurchmpls.org
For Pastoral Care: 612-888-3701

Deacon Phil Holzman, Minister of Word & Service (Ext. 11)
(Worship & Music, Parish Administration)
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Zachary Copa, Finance Manager (Ext. 14)
zachc@gachurchmpls.org

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

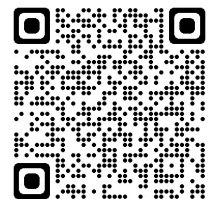
Analisa Hillman, Church Custodian



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

Ways You Can Support 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. Click

on the **Donate** button on any page. **Or scan QR code above!**

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

Jenny Arneson, president
Matt Streed, vice-president
Dee Kjera, secretary
Kristin Tangen, treasurer



At-large Members:

Wendy Bradshaw
Beverly Prawalsky

Kathy Schuette