



St. Thomas Lutheran Church News

December, 2013

XXXV, Issue No. 12

A Devotional Advent

During this Advent season, the Worship Committee and the Education Committee at St. Thomas have worked hard to create special devotional opportunities. They are inspired by programs called “Taking Faith Home” and “Faith Five,” both very fine and very simple approaches to making spiritual growth a regular part of home life.

The opportunities begin in earnest on Sunday, December 1st—the First Sunday of Advent. On that day, and on each successive Sunday, bulletin inserts will offer specific suggestions for making Advent a dedicated time for family devotions—no matter what the size of your household. These inserts are carefully and thoughtfully prepared, and our congregational leaders are confident that they will be a blessing to all.

The “Taking Faith Home Advent Dinner” is also set for the First Sunday of Advent. In order to encourage everyone to come, committee members have agreed to prepare all of the food, provide child care, and oversee the program. The committees have tried their best to anticipate and remove every possible barrier that might hinder folks from coming. Again, all families of whatever size are welcome. Festivities begin at 5:30 p.m.

That Sunday evening, we will return to a tradition we put on hold for a few years. We will make our own Advent Wreaths for use in family devotions at home. There will be additional devotional aids, with brief instructions for their use. And there are other activities planned for the youth.

I encourage all of you to make use of these materials and programs. I believe family devotional time is a very important part of our spiritual practice and growth in faith. And I hope that these new efforts will yield long-standing new or revitalized traditions of faith formation in your homes.

May this devotional season of Advent help to prepare us for the new birth of Christ in our hearts and our lives at Christmas. And may our devotional practices extend throughout this new liturgical year.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Lyle

From our Intern

Advent is one of my favorite times of the church year. I love the way church sanctuaries slowly change over the course of the weeks with the Advent wreath, blue paraments, hanging greens, and maybe even a nativity scene! Even if the weather is cold and snowy (as it often was in my hometown), the sanctuary always feels warm with love, hope, and joy.

My home congregation is named Immanuel Lutheran Church, so this time of year we usually sang what I considered to be our theme song, "O Come, O Come Emmanuel." It wasn't until my seminary years that I realized how much the theology of Emmanuel (God with us) is at the center of my faith. God is with us in many ways throughout our lifetimes. Christ promised to be present in baptism and holy communion. We see God alive in Scripture. And we feel the Spirit's movement around and through us as well.

Yet remembering Christ's promise to be with us whenever two or three are gathered can be particularly encouraging during Advent. Whether we are having a cup of hot chocolate with a friend, sharing a family meal, attending a holiday party, or volunteering at a local charity, Christ is with us. Though we wait until December 24th to celebrate his birth, we can reflect the whole month how Jesus is with us already now.

With the hope of the season,
Colleen Montgomery



Update on Internship Committee

The Internship Committee has been faithfully meeting monthly to help Colleen process her learning experiences at St. Thomas and LCM at IU. They have recently begun discussing her sermons and teaching style. If you have questions about this committee or if you would like offer feedback about Colleen, feel free to get in touch with one of the members.

Chair, Ashley Ahlbrand: Ashley.ahlbrand@gmail.com

John Isaacson

Julia Linstrom, LCM at IU Student

Mary Lou Nierzwicki: mlnierzwicki@yahoo.com

Sherry Richards, LCM Board Member and LCM mom: sherry8636@comcast.net

Dan Rademacher: daniel_rademacher_476@comcast.net



From our Youth Ministry

As we approach Christmas I notice St. Thomas has a flurry of activities and events going on throughout the Advent season. Of particular note and interest is the *Taking Faith Home Advent Dinner*. It is on Sunday, December 1st starting at 5:30pm and the youth group will be meeting in conjunction with it. The youth group specific part of the night comes in when we break out into smaller groups for different activities. While the adults learn about *FAITH5* the youth will be painting some of the windows on the west side of the sanctuary to resemble Christmas-themed stained glass. This is a tradition that has been absent of late, but we are bringing it back! See the fliers at the main entrance for more information.

Youth group members also have several other opportunities to be involved with the activities at St. Thomas this month. Hanging of the greens in the sanctuary on Sunday, December 8th following the late

worship service is a great chance for the youth to work in service with other members of St. Thomas. Youth group will also participate in our congregation's caroling event on Sunday, December 22 at 5:00 pm.

One final event to mention is actually in January, but will be fast approaching. It is the annual Ski Trip for our high school youth! As of now it is scheduled for January 3-5th and I have begun looking through our options. I will be in touch with each family of our high school aged youth to discuss the details as the event is planned.

To wrap up I want to remind all the families that our Sunday school classes will be on winter break from December 22nd through January 5th. Classes will resume during the education hour on Sunday, January 12th. I hope everyone has a joyous season spreading the hope it brings!

With Peace,
Karl Teskey



SCS Christmas Program

Kari Beth Hartig and Catharine Rademacher are teaming up to share the joy of Christmas with St. Thomas this December. The Sunday School children and Godly Play children will present SILENT NIGHT: STILLE NACHT, the true story surrounding the creation of the song Silent Night. The story takes us back to Oberndorf, Austria in 1818.

Songs included: "Joy to the World", "Oh Come, All Ye Faithful", "Away in a Manger", and of course, "Silent Night". The first verse will be sung in German and the congregation will join the children for verse 2.

*This performance will take place Sunday, December 15 during the 11:00 service in lieu of the sermon.



Advent Service and Posada

On Sunday, December 15 at 4:00 pm the Worship Committee of St. Thomas will sponsor a very special program featuring the St. Thomas Adult Choir, and Guests from the Latin American Colonial Music Seminar and

IU Jacobs School of Music with Juan Carlos Zamudio, Director.

Come and experience the magic of the Latin American posada tradition, and celebrate with a handmade piñata! The service will feature an eclectic mix of music from various cultures and traditions, and will culminate with a feast and celebration of the Advent season.



Advent Worship at St. Thomas

The season of Advent is a time full of hope and expectation. The Sunday and Wednesday worship services are shaped around the theme of Promise & Fulfillment. Each Sunday at late service there will be a special element designed to connect with children.

Sundays: 8:30am, 11:00 am

December 1: Promises Unfulfilled

December 8: Preparation for Promises

December 15: Promises Regularly Restore (with Christmas pageant at 11am)

December 22: Unpredictable Promises

Wednesdays: 12 noon, 7:00 pm

December 4: Covenant Fulfilled

December 11: Prophetic Fulfillment

December 18: The Coming of Christ



Lunch following the noon Wednesday Services

The St. Thomas L.O.L. (Lively Older Lutherans) will meet in Community Hall following the noon Advent Services on December 4, 11, 18, for lunch and conversation. There is a food signup sheet in the narthex. If you have any questions please e-mail me (janewarner@comcast.com) or telephone me 988-8160. The L.O.L are looking forward to you 'Younger Folk' joining us for lunch and conversation.



Mark Your Calendar

Dec 1 "Taking Faith Home" Advent Dinner 5:30 pm

Dec 8 Hanging of the Greens after 11:00 Service

Dec 15 Hanging of the Chrismons at both Services

Children's Christmas Pageant at 11:00

Choir's Advent Service and Posada at 4:00 pm

Dec 22 Christmas Caroling at 5:00 pm

Dec 24 Christmas Eve Worship at 4:00 pm and 8:00 pm

Dec 29 One Service at 9:30 am

Jan 5 Epiphany of Our Lord (*return to two services*)



December Adult Forum Schedule

December 1, Culture of Conversation, Sanctuary: Join Pastor Lyle for an open conversation about the ministries and missions of St. Thomas. Feel free to bring questions and/or concerns.

December 8: Open for Spiritual Growth Group Meetings

December 15: The congregational council is hosting a second adult forum in the conference room on St. Thomas's proposed Phase II renovation plan and capital campaign. There will be an update on the recent meeting of the capital campaign steering committee and information on the upcoming feasibility study to be conducted by Jeff Knauer, our representative from the Kirby Smith firm. There will also be time for further discussion of some of the details of the proposed renovations.

Education programming will be on winter break December 22, 29, and January 5.

The Greeting Tree

The "greeting tree" will be in the narthex throughout the Advent/Christmas season. This tree offers you the opportunity to hang an Advent/Christmas greeting to members and friends of the St. Thomas community without the expense of buying cards and stamps. You may choose from cards provided on the table or provide your own from home.

Money thus saved may be given as a donation to Community Kitchen in the form of cash or check. Please make check payable to: St. Thomas Lutheran Church with memo "Community Kitchen". There is a donation box provided on the table next to the "greeting tree".



The MUSH Tree

During this joyous time of giving and sharing God's love for us, the Youth of St. Thomas would like to provide a service to others in need. In the Narthex there is a MUSH Tree. The acronym stands for Mittens, Under-wear, Socks, and Hats. It is our hope that the St. Thomas congregation will help us decorate the tree with MUSH, in children's sizes. The items will be given to Monroe County United Ministries to disburse to children enrolled in their preschool, and to families receiving emergency relief.

Simply hang your gift on the tree, or place underneath it. There is no need to gift wrap the items. There will also be a box to receive new and gently used winter coats for young children. These will be donated to MCUM Head Start.



Poinsettias for Christmas

Order your poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. A sign-up sheet is posted in the narthex, with envelopes for your donation. Choose from among several colors -Red, White, or Marble -- or order one of each. The cost is \$15.00 and the plants may be taken home after the 8:00 p.m. service on Christmas Eve. The deadline to order is Sunday, December 22.



Holiday Gift Giving Ideas

Please consider including a mission-related item in your giving this season - there are so many different ways to do this. Here are just a few:

1. Give a fair trade gift from the mission holiday sale in the narthex, Dec 1 and 8.
2. Give a Kiva gift micro loan from their website.
3. Give a Lutheran World Relief gift from their website.

For questions on how to do any of these, contact the church office or Shari at 219-7521.

Renewable Energy Budgeting at St. Thomas:

At the congregational meeting on Sunday, November 17, the proposed budget was adopted with one amendment. The 2014 budget now includes a new income line for solar Renewable Energy Credits (RECs), which St. Thomas will begin receiving next year in quarterly payments for production by our solar array. Ohio utility companies are required to produce 12 percent of their electricity by 2024 from renewable energy. This obligation may be met by purchasing Renewable Energy Credits. For more information on this program, see http://www.dsireusa.org/incentives/incentive.cfm?Incentive_Code=OH14R&re=0&ee=0 In addition, the electricity expense line for the 2014 budget is \$2000. In recent years, STLC's annual electricity cost has been near \$5,000 for using about 50,000 kilowatt hours (kwh). We anticipate that our new solar array will produce 35,000 kwh annually, comparable to the amount of power used by three or four typical homes. Our actual electricity cost for 2014 may be less than the budgeted \$2000, after the cumulative effects of solar energy, LED sanctuary lights, and thermostat settings for heating and cooling.



Feasibility Study Approved

The St. Thomas congregational council has approved a contract for an initial feasibility study for our proposed capital campaign in association with Phase II of our renovation project. The study will be conducted by Jeff Knauer of Kirby Smith. Jeff will be meeting with a congregational steering committee in early December and in January will be visiting St. Thomas to conduct a financial feasibility study and to meet with members of the congregation. More information will be available in the January newsletter, in weekly bulletins by mid-December, and in the narthex where the Phase II plans are on display.



A message from Lay Care Visitors

As the holiday season draws near, the loss of a loved one during the past year may cause some unexpected emotions. Spending the first holidays without that special someone can be difficult. We encourage those of you who have lost someone close to you, or anyone who is having a difficult time, to contact a Lay Care Visitor to share your concerns and feelings. The bulletin board in the front hallway provides contact information.



Creating an Unbroken Circle of Care

The Lay Care Visitor ministry at St. Thomas is participating in a program of the Center for Congregations called "Creating an Unbroken Circle of Care in Your Congregation." This four-part education program is designed to help congregational teams create a comprehensive caring ministry for members experiencing illness, end of life, death and grief. The program explores ideas and specific tools to use in shaping a caring ministry plan for congregations to move from a crisis-response approach to a proactive and organized approach to congregational care.

Facilitators from Duke University and Project Compassion lead the program, beginning in fall of 2013 and extending to the spring of 2014. We have a team of five who are engaging in the set of workshops, with the intention of further expanding the caring ministries here at St. Thomas. Team members are Kathleen Boggess, Susan Colston, Helen Ingersoll, Margrethe O'Connor, and Pastor McKee.

Please remember to check the Lay Care Ministry bulletin board outside the church office for updates on designated care-givers for each month. And please keep this ministry in your prayers.



ELCA to disburse \$1 million for Philippines typhoon relief

The ELCA is providing \$1 million to support immediate relief for survivors of Typhoon Haiyan, which struck the Philippines November. 8. The funds are being disbursed through Lutheran Disaster Response to Lutheran World Relief.

"We are showing up," said the Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, ELCA presiding bishop. "Lutheran Disaster Response, working through Lutheran World Relief, is meeting the immediate needs of people affected by this storm. This means that our entire church is on the ground in the Philippines, and we will stay there until the work is done. We are a church that does God's work with our hands," she said.

The relief funds will provide for the distribution of cooking utensils, shelter repair kits and debris removal.

According to the United Nations, at least 9 million people are affected and more than 600,000 are displaced from their homes as a result of the storm. Widespread destruction has complicated relief efforts, leaving thousands stranded in at least eight regions of the country.

Financial gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response will be used *100 percent* to support relief efforts for all survivors impacted by the typhoon. Information about Lutheran Disaster Response is available at www.ELCA.org/typhoon. Lutheran World Relief is an independent Lutheran agency that works with community-based partners.



Memorials

On Reformation Sunday, October 20, 2013 we dedicated the new red chasuble and stole, woven by Suzanne Halvorson, and given to the glory of God and in memory of Wayne Selk.



New to our Prayer Garden is a small statue of "The Lion and Lamb" given by Maren and Chris Foley to the glory of God and in loving memory of Maren's brother.

December Birthdays

- 2 Curt Knudsen
- 3 John Harder, Jamie Crouch
- 4 Chris Ogan
- 8 Kem Hawkins
- 12 Vicki Polansky
- 14 Edwin Caldwell
- 15 Carol Seaman
- 17 Jean Brown
- 19 Allison Ohslund, David Rohlfing
Catharine Rademacher
- 21 Andrew Eichmiller
- 24 Carolyn Delap, Carol Nicholas
- 29 Katie Anderson,
- 30 Betty Smith, Christiaan Hajos
- 31 Mark Braun, Kent Unger



Wedding Anniversaries

- | | |
|----------------------|----------|
| Jim & Kay Eagleman | 38 years |
| Nick & Naomi Sveholm | 5 years |
| Matt & Tiffany Shupe | 17 years |

Welcome New Members

Tom and Jane VanHeuvelen, both are Ph.D. students attending IU.

Address: 1701 S Maxwell (01)

Email: tvanheuvelen@gmail.com

Matt and Molly Beatty, native Minnesotans. Matt works at IU and Molly works at the public library.
Address: 1250 W. Adams Hill Cir, #203

MCUM Food Needs for December

- Canned Fruit
- Pudding Mix
- 1-2 lbs bags of flour
- 1-2 lbs bags of sugar
- Baking mixes

Non-food items:

- Laundry Detergent
- Diapers sizes 4, 5, 6



Shalom Community Center Presents:

Sylvia & Friends Sing for Shalom
Sunday December 8, 2013 2 pm

A program of holiday music featuring two – time Grammy winner Sylvia McNair

First United Methodist Church
\$30.00 General Admission

\$20.00 for students and children

Tickets available at the door, Buskirk

Chumley box office or online at

www.BCTboxoffice.com

Proceeds Benefit the Shalom
Community Center



*A blessed Christmas and Christ filled New Year to All.
from the Staff*

Pr. Lyle McKee, Colleen Montgomery, Karl Teskey, Aaron Sunstein,
Juan Carlos Zamudio, Kari Hertig, Kaye Hill, Susan Krieg, and Debbie Selk

Volunteer Schedule December 2013 -- January 2014

DECEMBER 1 DECEMBER 8 DECEMBER 15 DECEMBER 22 DECEMBER 24 DECEMBER 29 January 5 JAUNUARY 12

8:30 8:30 8:30 8:30 4:00 PM 9:30 AM

DEACON	David Rohlfing	Gail Seegert	David Rohlfing	Gail Seegert	C Montgomery	C Montgomery	Kathleen Boggess	Gary Ingersoll
LECTOR	Gail Seegert	Mike Laros	Kay Isaacson	David Ellies	Carol Seaman	Barb Unger	David Rohlfing	Dale Ludwig
ACOLYTE	L Rademacher	G Wheeler	Nina Daleke	Joel Arnold	Natalie Shupe	R Bourkland	Nick May	A Goldsworthy
SERVER	ML Nierzwicki	Barb Unger	Judy Bush	Gene Laughman	K Boggess	Kay Isaacson	Jean Brown	Shirley Mingee
USHERS	J/M Doering	C/S Retrievi	G/G Laughman	F/ML Nierzwicki	D/D Nixon	D/S Arnold	J/M Doering	L/U Coyne
GREETERS	L/U Coyne	B/R Wheeler	Mary Sasse	R/J Brown	G/G Laughman	M/C Braun	Shirley Mingee	David Ellies
NURSERY	Pauline Caldwell	Tiffany Shupe	Misty White	Susan Krieg		P Caldwell	Tiffany Shupe	Misty White
CRUCIFER								

FLOWERS		B/R Wheeler	Carol Seaman	D/S Arnold				
BREAD/WINE	K/B Unger	J/B Smith	Beverly Lingvai	M O'Connor	G/G Laughman	J/S Halvorson	Mary Sasse	J/R Steele
COUNCIL CO	Karen Rohlfing	Liz Gaskins	Maren Foley	Jamie Crouch	Dawn Bakken	John Bush	Karen Rohlfing	Jamie Crouch
	Tim Climis	Ruth Rives	Dennis Baurle	Dawn Bakken			Maren Foley	Dawn Bakken
ALTAR GUILD	Jean Brown	Bev Lingvai	Barb Unger	Cindy Gallien	B Smith/S Mingee	Mary Sasse	Gail Seegert	Barb Unger
	Charlene Wheeler	P Caldwell	Marilyn Harder	C Wheeler	Mary Sasse	Jean Brown	Betty Smith	Carole Kirsch

DECEMBER 1 DECEMBER 8 DECEMBER 15 DECEMBER 22 DECEMBER 24 January 5 JAUNUARY 12

11:00 AM 11:00 11:00 11:00 8:00 PM

DEACON	Betty Smith	Betty Smith	Sarah Climis	L Hitchcock	C Montgomery	ONE SERVICE ONLY AT 9:30 AM	L Hitchcock	Julia Bourkland
LECTOR	Haley Garl	Deb Moore	Sandy Arnold	Stephanie Biehn	Chris Ogan		David Daleke	M O'Connor
ACOLYTE	Nick May	M Bourkland	Bailey Arnold	L Rademacher	Zach May		Katcha Papesh	M Bourkland
SERVER	M O'Connor	S Biehn	Deb Owens	Gary Ingersoll	Charles Sweet		Sandy Arnold	Katie Anderson
USHERS	McDonald/Ohslund	D/S Arnold	P/L May	D Owens/K Hill	C/S Ritrievi		Baurle/Filiatrault	McDonald/Ohslund
GREETER	Katie Anderson	C/M Foley	Karen Blaisdell	Jane Warner	S/M Eichmiller		J/M Hajos	J/R Steele
NURSERY	Jane Warner	Jamie Crouch	Lauren Wright	Vicki Polansky		Cindy Ohslund	Jane Warner	
CRUCIFER					Charles Sweet			



MONTH of DECEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1 Worship @ 8:30 & 11 Edu Hour @ 9:45 Culture of Conversation Taking Faith Home 5:30 pm</p>	<p>2 Bible study 1pm Community Band 7:00</p>	<p>3 U Club Yoga 10:00 Worship Co 6:30 Mission Co 6:45</p>	<p>4 Advent Worship noon & 7 pm</p>	<p>5 Finance Co 7 Youth Musicians 6:00 Choir Rehearsal 7:00</p>	<p>6 Laetare Music Group 7pm</p>	<p>7 Property Co 10:00</p>
<p>8 Worship @ 8:30 & 11 Edu Hour @ 9:45 Iona Group 9:45 Locavores 9:45 Cong Council 12:30 Student recital 7:30 pm</p>	<p>9 Intern Co 7:00 pm Community Band 7:00</p>	<p>10 U Club Yoga 10:00</p>	<p>11 Advent Worship noon & 7 pm</p>	<p>12 Youth Musicians 6:00 Choir Rehearsal 7:00</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14 SCS Children 11- 1pm</p>
<p>15 Worship @ 8:30 & 11 Edu Hour @ 9:45 SCS Program @11:00 Choir Program @ 4:00 p</p>	<p>16 Bible study 1 pm Book of Faith 7 pm Community Band 7pm</p>	<p>17 U Club Yoga 10:00</p>	<p>18 Advent Worship noon & 7 pm</p>	<p>19 Youth Musicians 6:00 Choir Rehearsal 7:00</p>	<p>20 Student Recital 7:00 pm</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22 Worship @ 8:30 & 11 Edu Hour @ 9:45 Recital 3:00 pm</p>	<p>23 Community Band 7:00</p>	<p>24  Services at 4 pm & 8 pm</p>	<p>25 MERRY CHRISTMAS</p>	<p>26 CHURCH</p>	<p>27 OFFICE</p>	<p>28 CLOSED</p>
<p>29 Worship @ 9:30 am</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31 U Club Yoga 10:00</p>				