



Saint Thomas Lutheran Church News

December, 2018
XXXX, Issue 12

Advent 2018 – ELCA Mission:

Food, Hospitality, Communion, and Compassion

The Mission Committee has been quite concerned in recent months about refugees and their treatment. Care and compassion are the themes that recur in our conversations. And so, this year's midweek Advent services will pick up on those themes using materials from the ELCA World Hunger Appeal, which place them in an Advent context.

12/5	Food is Never Just Food
12/12	Hospitality and Neighbor
12/19	Communion and Inclusion

Join in worship on Sundays at 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. as well as on Wednesdays at noon and 7:00 p.m. Pitch-in luncheons will follow the noon services. We'll continue with the Haugen Vespers on Wednesdays.

From the Pastor ~

Christmas Dinner

Debbie Selk handed me a copy of the lyrics of a tune last month. It's Noel Paul Stookey's "Christmas Dinner," and I thought I'd share it with you as we look towards an Advent season focused on food, hospitality, communion, and compassion.

And it came to pass on a Christmas evening
While all the doors were shuttered tight
Outside standing, a lonely boy-child
Cold and shivering in the night.
And on this street every window
Save but one was gleaming bright
And to this window walked the boy-child
Peeking in saw candlelight.
Noel, Noel...

Through other windows he had looked at turkeys
And ducks and geese and cherry pies
But through this window saw a gray-haired lady
Table bare and tears in her eyes.
Into his coat reached the boy-child
Knowing well there was little there
He took from his pocket his own Christmas dinner
A bit of cheese, some bread to share
Noel, Noel...

His outstretched hands held the food and they trembled
As the door it opened wide
Said he "Would you share with me Christmas dinner?"
And gently said she "Come inside."
The gray-haired lady brought forth to the table
Some glasses to their last drop of wine
Said she "Here's a toast to everyone's Christmas,
And especially yours and mine!"

And it came to pass on that Christmas evening
While all the doors were shuttered tight
That in that town the happiest Christmas
Was shared by candlelight
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel...

Grace, peace, and holy joy,
Pastor Lyle

More Advent Food, Hospitality and Communion...

The December St. Thomas potluck is set for 12/2 following the 11 a.m. worship service. December's potluck is sponsored by Lutheran Campus Ministry so wear the cream and crimson and get to know all about an IU student. Bring a dish to share. In 2019 the monthly potlucks will shift to the third Sunday of the month.



Lively Older Lutherans (LOL) luncheons follow the noon Advent worship services.

Annual Advent Dinner and Family Project! All St. Thomas Members are invited to join with the Youth Group on December 2nd from 5:45 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. to eat together and make a Jesse Tree. Don't know what a Jesse Tree is? Come and find out! Last year was a great success - we look forward to seeing you there this year!

Advent Compassion...



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, Underwear, 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 distribute 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.



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 checks payable to: St. Thomas Lutheran Church with memo "Community Kitchen". There is a donation box provided on the table next to the "Greeting Tree".

MARK YOUR CALENDARS





Hanging of the Greens December 2 following 11:00 worship:
Please help decorate the sanctuary and narthex!
No experience required!

Our children will hang Chrismons on the Christmas tree December 9 during worship, both services.

Children's Christmas Program "Las Posadas" December 16, 11:00 service

Every year at Christmastime, in Mexico, other Latin American countries, and Hispanic communities in the United States, friends and neighbors gather together for Las Posadas (the inns). They follow Mary and Joseph from house to house as they knock on doors, finding no room anywhere. Voices join in singing the loveliest of Spanish Christmas carols. At the final door Mary and Joseph at last find accommodation, and they all follow them inside for a celebration. We, too, will follow Mary and Joseph this year as they go from inn to inn, singing the traditional villancicos, and proclaiming the wondrous message of Christ's birth.



Sunday School Schedule

Dec. 15: Children's Christmas Program Rehearsal 10:00 am - 12:00
Dec. 16: Children's Christmas Program at 11:00 worship service
Dec. 23, 30: No Sunday School classes

Youth Group Schedule

Dec. 2: Advent Family Dinner & Project: 5:45 pm - 7:30 pm
Dec. 16: Youth Group at STLC: 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

The Youth Group will have a get-together in early January over break. More information is coming!

Adult Forum Schedule

Dec. 2: Living the Questions
Dec. 9: John Stramiello - Grace & Hope Fellowship Prison Ministry

John Stramiello was born in Brooklyn and spent 38 years in Florida. He is married to Rev. Michelle Stramiello. Michelle is an ELCA pastor seeking her next call. John and Michelle reside in Broad Ripple. John is the chaplain of Grace and Hope Fellowship, which is a church plant in the Pendleton State Prison's Correctional Industrial Facility. It is a medium security facility which houses approximately 1,425 male offenders. John will be starting a Men's Bible Study with the goal of bringing in Word and Sacrament. He is finishing study through the ELCA TEEM Program in hopes of becoming ordained.

Dec. 16: Living the Questions
Dec. 23: No class
Dec. 30: No class

Spiritual Growth Group Schedule

STLC Euchre-ists will play Euchre following the 7:00 p.m. Midweek Advent service on December 19. Meet in rooms 16/17 and bring a snack to share. Don't know how to play? Join us and we'll teach you!

Christmas Eve Worship at 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

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 16.



We say goodbye to Choir Director, Chuck Prestinari

St. Thomas bids a sad but fond farewell to Chuck, who has served us with love and distinction over the past two-plus years. He will be missed.

Chuck writes:

The Book of Ecclesiastes states, "To everything there is a season..." In September, I was offered a new job opportunity. After much prayer and discernment, it was an opportunity which I felt called to accept. While I will be remaining in Bloomington, my last Sunday leading the choir at St. Thomas will be December 16, 2018.

I look toward my new responsibilities with excitement, and yet, I do so with heaviness of heart. I deeply cherish the faith community at St. Thomas and will greatly miss worshipping with you each week. You are devoted to hospitality, to worship, to service, and it has been a privilege to participate in the life of this church. I am grateful especially to the members of the choir, for their warmth and caring, for their laughter and joy, for their understanding and support, for their concern for our community, our country, and our world, for their deep dedication to leading worship each Sunday, for their love of singing, and for the sharing of their musical gifts throughout the year. To each and every one of you, my most heartfelt thanks, for your music, your service, and most of all, your friendship.

Thank you to Pastor Lyle for his guidance, his wisdom, and leadership, helping us grow to be better Christians. Thank you to Amy, Kaye, Susan, and Debbie for all the work they do to enhance the life of the church, so much of it unseen, unrecognized, unknown, but which is of vital importance to the quality of our worship and to the church's mission to serve. And thank you especially to Mike Powell, who gives so much of his time in order to ensure that the music with which we worship is always imbued with the truest devotion. I know that whoever is chosen to assist Mike in leading music at St. Thomas will be blessed by this wonderful community of faith, as I have. And I pray that he or she may be a blessing to St. Thomas -- leading, nurturing, challenging, and inspiring the church each and every week.

The hymn writer Brian Wren states,

"Christ is alive, and goes before us to show and share what love can do.

This is a day of new beginnings, our God is making all things new."

As we begin another church year, may Christ and the Spirit lead us and help us as we all explore new paths to love and to serve.

Peace and blessings,
Chuck Prestinari

From Nick and Naomi Sveholm:

The weather has turned cold here in Bratislava. The Christmas market opened last weekend, and all the stores have their displays out. The smell of wood smoke, which was in the air all winter in Tisovec, is here too, but mixed with coal and car exhaust. When I get to school in the morning it is usually still dark. On clear days, I can watch the sun rise from my classroom, but on gray days, I can open the blinds and enjoy fall colors without blinding half my students! The bus takes me from near our apartment, in a church-owned building just outside the old town, across the Danube to Petržalka, a neighborhood that, in the 1970s and 80s, was developed into the most densely populated tower block district in central Europe.

Although the bilingual section of the Evangelical Lyceum of Bratislava is in a concrete tower block itself, it's a very old school. It was founded in the 17th Century, and includes a number of Slovak luminaries among its alumni, most famously pioneer of the Slovak literary language Ľudovít Štúr. The bilingual high school has around 330 students in five grades (the equivalent of 9-13 in the U.S. system). I am teaching first year English-language literature (which is an intensive course that teaches entering students to read and write/talk about many different genres of writing). I also teach fourth year grammar and literature, for a total of about 20 hours of classroom time per week. With the first years I'm reading a simplified version of Huckleberry Finn right now, and with the fourth years I'll be starting *Lord of the Flies* next week.

Someone warned me when we left Tisovec that Bratislava students might have more of a sense of entitlement than students from the small towns of central Slovakia. I certainly haven't found that to be the case. My impression is that Lyceum students are down-to-earth, happy and thankful for the opportunity to study where they do, and thankful for the various American lectors who have been teaching at the school since the 1990s. Just this week, they (the students, not the administrators!) organized a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner, a gracious gesture to make us feel a little more at home at a time when a lot of U.S. citizens abroad are missing family. And I'm thankful for my students too!



We celebrated the baptism of our newest addition, Oscar Peregrin Sveholm, on November 11. Nick's parents joined us for the service.



Welcome Vera Cecelia Zamudio Johnson, 9 lbs. 5 ozs., 21¾ ins. long. Proud parents are Juan Carlos Zamudio (our former choir director) and Evelyn Johnson, now living in Toledo, Spain.

Please feel free to email the happy threesome. Their email is: zamudiojc@gmail.com. I know they would love to hear from you!

LOOK » ONE SERVICE ONLY on Sunday, **December 30 at 9:30 AM**

A Letter From a Beth Shalom Member

November 1, 2018

Dear Reverend McKee:

Thank you so much for your kind remarks at the Interfaith Memorial Gathering (following the murders at Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) at Beth Shalom Tuesday evening. You and Rabbi Besser both commented on what the St. Thomas Lutheran Church did for us after the neo-Nazi firebombing of Beth Shalom on August 15, 1983, about three weeks before Rosh Hashanah. Our building was destroyed, but our precious Torah scrolls miraculously survived.

After the gathering, I commended Rabbi Besser on a superb program, but I also suggested that he did not explain adequately what the Lutherans did for us 25 years ago. I realize that neither he nor you were here at the time, but I was here. The purpose of this letter is to add a few further details.

Immediately after the fire, Rev. Ron Gilthvedt literally turned over the church to us. We did not just conduct our high Holy Day services there during the year our building was being repaired and expanded. We also conducted Shabbat services there every Friday evening and Saturday morning, we celebrated festival services there, we had bar and bat mitzvah celebrations there, and we had many other activities there.

In your comments, you indicated that you had sold the property to us. You did indeed...By 1970 the late Sherwin Mizell of our group had learned that the 1 1/2 acre section (of your property) was available. Our group had been fiddling for years with the idea of a building, and the idea had been voted down at least twice. The fact that the land was available prompted a small group of us to meet one evening at the home of Mitch and Judy Novit. We decided to move ahead without the approval of a majority of our members. We each donated some money, persuaded several others to do the same, and bought the land. As late George Lewis of our group said: "If you build it, they will come." The building opened in 1971.

The magnificent sanctuary in which we gathered on Tuesday was added during the expansion after the firebombing. It was the way we chose to respond to that despicable act.

I believe that the gather on Tuesday was the largest ever in our building. It exceeded that of our recent Kol Nidre services at the beginning of Yom Kippur, and the funeral years ago of Albert Wertheim, one of our prominent members. I regret that no everyone could be seated.

It never fails to bring tears to my eyes when I recall what the Lutherans did for us at that terrible time 35 years ago. You demonstrated the true meaning of love and friendship.

Cordially,
Joseph M. Belth

IT'S A CELEBRATION !

What do each of the following have in common?

3 pastors...1 interim pastor...25 youth coordinators/associate pastors...8 campus pastors/lay leaders...2 interns...1 office assistant...24 choir directors...19 organists

= They all worked with Kaye Hill during her tenure as Secretary/Parish Administrator at St. Thomas!

Please join us on Saturday, January 26 as we express our gratitude to Kaye for her service to St. Thomas. There will be food, laughter, fellowship and shared memories. Perhaps, even a story or two. We look forward to seeing you there.



PLEASE JOIN IN CELEBRATING

Kaye Hill's 32 Years of Service

as the St. Thomas Lutheran Church Secretary/ Parish Administrator

SATURDAY, JANUARY 26, 2019

5:00 ~ 7:00 P.M.

Meal catered by Schnitzelbank

\$10.00 age 10 ~ adult

\$5.00 age 5 ~ 9

Children ages 4 and under eat free

Please R.S.V.P. to the following by January 7th

Betty Smith smithg@indiana.edu (email)
812-339-4733 (home)

or Gayl Laughman g.a.laugh@comcast.net (email)
812-332-3352 (home)



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30
ONE SERVICE ONLY
AT 9:30 A.M.

Worship at 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

As we celebrate the birth of our Lord,
Let us share with others the love Christ came
to bring.

From the Staff of
St. Thomas Lutheran Church

Pr. Lyle McKee, Amy Balcam, Mike Powell,
Charles Prestinari, Melissa de Graaf, Kaye Hill,
Susan Krieg, and Debbie Selk



Wedding Anniversaries

Jim & Kay Eagleman	43 years
Matt & Tiffany Shupe	22 years
Nick & Naomi Sveholm	10 years

December Birthdays

4 Chris Ogan
9 Mike Witt, Rita Pavolka
12 Vicki Polansky
14 Edwin Caldwell
15 Carol Seaman
17 Jean Brown
19 David Rohlfig,
Catharine Rademacher
21 Andrew Eichmiller
25 Josh Ratzburg
27 Eliza Iversen, Tom Strentz
29 Katie Anderson, Ellen Mills
30 Chris Arterberry, Betty Smith,
Elaina Iversen, Philip Sveholm
31 Mark Braun, Kent Unger

MCUM

Food Needs for December

Canned meats, Canned fruit
Cereal (esp. S/M boxes)
Baking mixes
Macaroni and cheese

Non-food items:

Kleenex, Laundry detergent, Lotion,
All-purpose cleaners, Diapers sizes 4,
5, 6

Wanted: people interested in promoting STLC Creation Care efforts throughout the year.

The STLC Creation Care committee is looking for members to brainstorm ideas of how we can individually reduce our carbon footprint. For example, as a requirement for receiving the grant funds to put solar panels on our roof, Task of the Month energy conservation activities were promoted. Members at that time benefitted from the experience but new members within the past five years did not participate. If you want to join the discussion, contact Kathleen Boggess (812-361-7332 or email to Kboggess44@gmail.com).

**Our mailing address is:
St. Thomas Lutheran Church
3800 East Third Street
Bloomington, IN 47401
www.stlconline.org**

**Unsubscribe from this list or
update your preferences by
emailing:
kayehill@stlconline.org**

December 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 10:00 Choir rehearsal
2 Worship@ 8:30 & 11:00 Education Hour 9:45a 9:45 Living the Questions 9:45 Parent's Café 12:30 Hanging of the Greens 12:30 Potluck 2:30 Bach Cantata 5:30 Advent Dinner	3 Community Band 7 p	4 6:30 LuMIN Board 6:30 Worship Committee	5 9:30 Friday Musicale Board 12 Noon Worship Lunch following 7:00 PM Worship	6 7:00 Choir rehearsal	7	8 10:00 Choir rehearsal
9 Worship@ 8:30 & 11:00 Education Hour 9:45a 9:45 Adult Forum: John Stramiello 9:45 Women's Bible Study 9:45 Parent's Café 4:45 Advent Choir Concert	10 4:00 Disaster Preparation Community Band 7 p	11 1:00 SIREN 7:00 Book of Faith-Acts	12 12 Noon Worship Lunch following 7:00 PM Worship	13 7:00 Choir rehearsal	14 6:00 PM Recital	15 10:00-12 Children's Christmas Program Rehearsal
16 Worship@ 8:30 & 11:00 9:45 Living the Questions 9:45 Parent's Café Children's Program @ 11:00 worship 2:30 recital 5:30 Youth Group	17 5:30 Community Band Christmas Party	18	19 12 Noon Worship Lunch following 7:00 PM Worship 7:45 Euchre-ists	20 7:00 Choir rehearsal	21	22
23 Worship@ 8:30 & 11:00 No Education Classes	24  4:00 Worship 8:00 Worship	25 Merry Christmas Church Office Closed	26 Church Office Closed	27 Church Office Closed	28 Church Office Closed	29
30 One Worship @ 9:30	31					

DECEMBER 2018 VOLUNTEERS

	Dec 2*	Dec 9	Dec 16*	Dec 23	Dec 24	Dec 30
	8:30 AM	8:30 AM	8:30 AM	8:30 AM	4:00 PM	9:30 AM
ASST MINISTER	Sonja Dorr Binder	Amy Balcam	David Rohlfing	Natalie Schacht	Kris Stewart	Lindsey Smith
LECTOR	Matt Marsh	John Bush	Pauline Caldwell	Mary Lou Nierzwicki	Peter Iversen	Karen Rohlfing
ACOLYTE	Audrey Knipstein	Matthew Schacht	Irene Fogleman	Max Arterberry	Kenna Dimick	Molly Wyatt
SERVER	Mary Sasse	Karlyn Grise	Martha Selk	John Bush	Judy Bush	Charlene Braun
USHERS	D/D Nixon	J/M Doering	G/G Laughman	Lynn & Ute Coyne	F/ML Nierzwicki	D/D Nixon
GREETERS	David Ellies	C/S Arterberry	Mary Sasse	Sonja Dorr Binder	Kari Esarey	D/L Newkirk
CRUCIFER						
FLOWERS	T/M Smith	Debbie Witt				Kent/Barb Unger
BREAD/WINE	Mary Sasse	D/S Arnold	G Moehlmann			Victoria Hoppes
COUNCIL CO	Frank Nierzwicki	Dawn Bakken	Ashley Ahlbrand			
	Tim Smith	G Moehlmann	Ronna Papesh	Ronna Papesh		Ashley Ahlbrand
ALTAR GUILD	Ute Coyne	Shirley Mingee	Gail Seegert	Jean Brown	Cindy Gallien	Jean Brown
	Jan Sinn	Susan Lehr	Carole Kirsch	Pauline Caldwell	Mary Sasse	Charlene Braun
	Dec 2	Dec 9*	Dec 16	Dec 23*	Dec 24*	Dec 30
	11:00 AM	11:00 AM	11:00 AM	11:00 AM	8:00 PM	
ASST MINISTER	Gail Seegert	Lyman Hitchcock	Lindsey Smith	Natalie Schacht	Robin Hershberger	
LECTOR	G Moehlmann	Ashley Ahlbrand	Mary Smith	Sandy Arnold	Margaret Harter	
ACOLYTE	Nina Daleke	Noah Smith	Koral Dimick	Sophia Watters	Leah Knipstein	
SERVER	David Daleke	Sandy Arnold	Lyman Hitchcock	Betty Smith	Mitchell Knipstein	
USHERS	Dean Arnold	P/L May	Kaye Hill	D/K Rohlfing	J/M Doering	
GREETER	J/B Smith	T/J Garl	Ruth Rives	G Moehlmann	Kaye Hill	
CRUCIFER					Mitchell Knipstein	