



WINTER MESSENGER

PASTOR'S CORNER

In late October, I traveled to Indiana for the first gathering of my Women Touched by Grace cohort. (Women Touched by Grace is a wholistic ministry for women clergy, a ministry born and facilitated through a community of Benedictine nuns.). The theme for our first gathering was "Women Building Community," and we spent much time reflecting on hospitality.

Hospitality is a deeply-biblical value: at the Oaks of Mamre, Abraham and Sarah welcomed three strangers, strangers who turned out to be God; Sodom was destroyed, not because of sexuality, but because of the brutal inhospitality that the locals showed to foreign visitors; Jesus compelled his disciples to depend upon the hospitality of strangers ("take no money, no change of clothes..."); and both the Torah and the Epistles call on God's people to extend hospitality.

Rooted in the Latin word *hospes*, which means both host and guest, hospitality invites us to be open and gracious in our encounters, trusting that we can come to know God through the stranger we meet, through the one to whom we show kindness, as well as through the one who shows kindness to us. Hospitality is risky: it makes us vulnerable, because true hospitality means showing up as our true selves and being open to strangers. The very stories of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany, are indeed stories based on hospitality: that Jesus was born in a manger as that was the room left in the household in Bethlehem, that Magi travelled hundreds of miles to honor the Christ child and Herod, that Jesus would offer himself for welcome or rejection, these all point to a God who chooses to draw near to us through hospitality.

Hospitality is a community-building endeavor – never a single Christian alone – and so we gather as a congregation for worship and fellowship, service and mutual support. How do you intend to take part in St. Luke's work of hospitality this winter and into 2024? And how might we together encounter Christ in our community – and through the strangers to whom we are open?

In Christ, Pr. Beth

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pastor's Corner	1
Advent Festival.....	2
Worship.....	3
Music Ministry.....	4
Children Ministry.....	5
Middle School Ministry.....	6
SLY.....	7
Adult Education.....	8
Council Report	9
Connect.....	10
Serve.....	11-14
In The News.....	15-16
Birthdays.....	17-19

St. Luke Lutheran Church
4595 SW California Street
Portland, OR 97219

Phone: 503-246-2325

E-mail:
office@stlukechurch.com



St. Luke
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Free and Open to the Public



Join us for annual holiday crafty fun at St Luke!

Advent Festival

SATURDAY

02

DECEMBER

**2:00-4:00 PM Fellowship Hall Lower Pkg Lot
St Luke Lutheran 4595 SW California St**

Enjoy Cookie Decorating and Hot Chocolate

Great for Families and Kids

**Kick off the season and spread holiday cheer by
visiting our craft stations! Make and take home
treasured keepsakes, handmade gifts, and holiday
decor to deck your home for the holidays.**

Best gift of all - we clean up the glitter!

WORSHIP

Special Sundays December—February

December 3—1st Sunday of Advent

December 10—Cantata Sunday at 10:30am—one service only

December 17—Nativity Play at 10:30am

December 24—10:30am service only—Rev. Gary Rhinesmith, preacher

Christmas Eve Services
3pm Family Service
5pm Band led Service
10:30pm Candlelighting Service

January 7—Epiphany

January 14—Peace & Justice Sunday

January 21—Benson & PLU

January 28—Annual Congregational Meeting. Worship only at 9:15am—meeting at 10:30am.

February 4—New Member Sunday

February 11—Transfiguration Sunday

February 18—Lent

Midweek Advent Services December 6, 13 & 20—Holden Evening Prayer at 6:30pm in Sanctuary

Midweek Lent Services February 14—Ash Wednesday
February 21 & 28

WORSHIP

There's a place for you here! We invite you to join us in a vibrant and deeply connected community. As an ELCA and Reconciling in Christ community, we affirm and celebrate the worth and dignity of all persons regardless of their gender identity, race or sexual orientation.



The **Modern Worship Service** (Sunday 9:15)

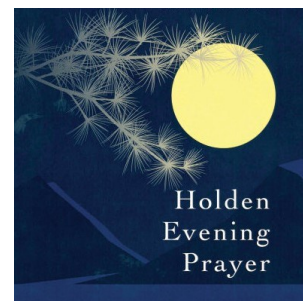
Traditional Worship Service (Sunday 10:30)

ABOUT WORSHIP AT ST. LUKE

Wednesday Holden Evening Prayer Services

Wednesdays, December 6, 13, 20 — 6:30-7pm.

Join us for Holden Evening Prayer. This lovely setting of vespers follows the traditional form while using contemporary and inclusive language. These services will also be live streamed on Facebook, YouTube, and the St. Luke website.



Christmas Eve Services—Sunday, December 24

All feature Holy Communion and Service of Candlelighting. The **3pm service** is children & family focused with children's sermon by the Maier Brothers. Our **5pm band-led service** also includes a blend of more contemporary-style songs. The **10:30pm service** features organ, choir and handbells.

Ash Wednesday Services—Wednesday, February 14, both include the imposition of Ashes as well as Holy Communion. These services launch us into the Lenten season of repentance leading to Holy Week and Easter.

Not able to join us in-person? Worship with us online! Our 10:30am service is livestreamed on Facebook and saved on YouTube and Facebook. Access St. Luke's Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/StLukeLuth> or via our website: www.stlukechurch.com. For full participation online, you will want your bulletin! Download the Weekly Update and Worship Bulletin: www.stlukechurch.com.

WORSHIP CONTINUED

Our **2023 First Communion Retreat** on Sept 9 was a wonderful time! Much thanks to our Gary Rhinesmith & Susan Tremper, lesson leads; and to our bread baker teachers Marilyn Simmons and Maira Chin!



Marilyn Simons & Maira Chin



Maira Chin & Becky Tuttle

MUSIC MINISTRY—GERRY BRENES

Holden Evening Prayer: Finding Peace Midweek

Starting **November 29th at 6:30 pm**, we invite you to join us every Wednesday leading up to Christmas for our Holden Evening Prayer service in the sanctuary. It's a quiet and comforting space where we gather, reflect, and find solace in music, creating a midweek haven of peace.

Journey to Bethlehem: Music and Scripture Join Hands

December 10th at 10:30 am marks the date for 'Journey to Bethlehem,' a service that fuses music and scripture beautifully. This isn't just another event – it's a heartfelt expression of the advent season, featuring music groups, including our vibrant St. Luke youth. Be ready for a celebration resonating with the Christmas spirit.

Unleash Your Musical Spirit this Christmas

Ever thought about being a part of our musical family? Whether you're a shower singer, a budding instrumentalist, or a bell enthusiast, our Music Director, Gerry Brenes, would love to include your talents in our Christmas celebrations. Your unique musical flair will add a special touch to our festive moments.

Youth Musicians: Join Our Modern Worship Experience!

Calling all middle and high school-aged musicians! We're on the lookout for enthusiastic individuals to lead our modern worship services on Sundays and special occasions. Your energy and musicality will set the tone for these services, making them engaging and inspiring for everyone.

Get Ready for Lent and Easter: Dive into Our Music Program

As we look ahead to January and February, our focus turns toward preparing for the Lent and Easter seasons. It's a great time to jump into our music program if you're seeking a seasonal commitment. Together, we'll weave melodies that capture the essence of these sacred times.

This Christmas, let's come together in song, embracing the music that speaks to our hearts and ignites the festive cheer. For more details or to express your interest in joining our musical journey, reach out to Music Director Gerry Brenes at Gerry@stlukechurch.com.

MUSIC DATES

Holden Evening Prayer

Wednesdays, December 6, 13, 20 from 6:30pm to 7pm in Sanctuary

Journey to Bethlehem

Sunday, December 10, 10:30am—one service only



EDUCATION—CHILDREN’S MINISTRY - KIM WEBER



Join us Sunday mornings!

9:30-9:45 Children’s Church: Experience a shortened lesson during the sermon. Children return for communion.

10:30 Godly Play Hour: Bible stories, community building time, service projects, crafts, and return to the circle for feast time.

No Classes: **Sun, Dec 10 and 17**

Dec 10: Families join in **10:30 worship** to enjoy and participate in enjoying the songs of the season

Dec 17: Kids lead! **10:30** worship children are invited to join in our children’s nativity play

Dec 24: See our Christmas Eve schedule. 3 pm is our Family Service



Saturday, December 2, 2-4 pm Advent Festival –
See our Flyer for More Details

Come over to St Luke for holiday crafting and hot chocolate Saturday, Dec 2, from 2-4 pm. This fun, beloved traditional "Advent Festival" always is the first weekend in December. This event is free and open to all - great especially for kids as our crafts are simple so many can enjoy rotating through completing several projects. Kick off the season with crafting items that can be enjoyed in your homes or gifted to someone you love: decorating cedar branches, decorating advent candles, gum drop snowflakes, giftbag decorating (and more)!

Sunday, December 17, 10:30 Children’s Nativity – Children who wish to participate are welcome to join either at our Saturday, December 16 run through or as walk-ins the day of.



Thanks Lisa Sickler and Team!

Open Hours: 10:15-11:30 Sunday mornings

Drop off: Ages Birth – Age 5.

Nursery will be CLOSED: Christmas Eve and New Year’s Eve

Looking Back!

Thank you to everyone who helped with our Fall Festival.



MIDDLE SCHOOL MINISTRIES

Seeking to Immerse Middle Schoolers in the Love of God.

Looking forward!

Our 10:30am Sunday Gatherings in Lower Shalom are: **Dec. 3, Jan. 7, 14, 21 and Feb 4, 11, 18, 25**

December Service Projects with SLY

- Shopping – **Wednesday, Dec. 6 at 6:30.**
- **Saturday, Dec. 16** – service at NEFP, then reader/leader training for Nativity Sunday.
- December Fun Event – overnight with SLY and Multnomah Presbyterian – **Friday, Dec. 8 into Saturday, Dec. 9.**
- Our Winter Retreat is **Saturday-Sunday, Jan 27-28, 2024** at St. Luke! Mark your calendars accordingly and [sign up!](#)

Parent support signup – thanks for signing up and making our retreat possible: [sign up!](#)

Looking Back!

Thank you to everyone who took part in our Fall Retreat! It was awesome! From serving families through NEFP to bouncing through DEFY to leading worship and learning about...

Thank you to everyone who took part in our shared service and fun day with SLY! The Tualatin National Wildlife Refuge has offered us a standing invitation to return and volunteer any time!

Thank you to everyone who assisted with Youth-led Worship!



Middle School Ministries



Fall Retreat



Tualatin National Wildlife Refuge & fun at Langer's.



Seeking Caring Adults-Christ Kin in our intergenerational Middle School Ministry. Do you want to impact their faith lives of our young people? Do you want to build the church of the future? This year students will sign up for Christ Kin, and we will have intergenerational opportunities for you. To learn more contact Pr. Beth at pastorbeth@stlukechurch.com.

HIGHSCHOOL MINISTRIES—EMILY BRABHAM

Formation Co Op

St. Luke has been selected as one of ten congregations nationwide to participate in the **Formation Co Op**. The mission of the Co Op is to root young people in a lifelong and transformative faith in Jesus that is experienced through life-giving communities. The Formation Co-Op is a unique partnership between the ELCA and the ELCA Youth Ministry Network, funded by the Lilly Endowment's "Strengthening Congregational Ministries with Youth Initiative."

We had a weekend training and have been hosting listening sessions around the topic of youth ministry. If you haven't yet been asked to participate in one, there will be future opportunities! Our two staff representatives, Pr. Beth Brashear and Emily Brabham will be receiving additional training at the ELCA Youth Ministry Network's Extravaganza in New Orleans in January. After January we move into the next phase of the Formation Co Op – bold ex-



perimentation! Based on what we gather from our listening sessions we will begin to experiment with youth ministry to see what new and fresh ways of doing things can accomplish. Your continued prayers and support are appreciated!

The Gathering



Our 8-12 grade youth are preparing to attend the Gathering in New Orleans in July 2024. The theme is "Created To Be" and it is slated to be "a life changing faith formation event of the ELCA." Teens will be preparing through fundraisers, service events, and social events. More information about the experience is available at <https://www.elca.church/gathering>.

SLY High School Ministries (9th—12th Grades)
Vermont House

Youth-Led Worship

November 12, 2023 we had youth led worship at the 10:30 service. During that time teens shared their experiences of faith and service. If you missed it, it's available on our live stream. <https://youtu.be/yQLcYT-KWYw>

Emily Brabham, Director of Service Ministries

emily@stlukechurch.com



Bowling with Mending Wings

ADULT EDUCATION

Opportunities for Bible Study and Group Devotions – as a Church community and as people of faith, our ministries and lives are steeped in the stories of God that ground us and give us our identity! We invite you to take part in the studies that fit your schedule and spirit!

Sunday Morning Parent Group

This is a great opportunity to sit still, enjoy coffee, share discussions, and build meaningful friendships. For parents of littles to parents with kids in college to parents who are empty nesters. A Sunday morning ministry held at the same time as 10:30 youth classes, carefully built into our Sunday morning schedule, to give you options for worship at 9:15 followed by drop off classes for youth and nursery. Parents Group meets December, 3, 10, 17 and January 7, 14, 21, 28 and February 4, 11, 18, 25 in Upper Shalom. Continued thanks to coordinator and facilitator Jodi Swigart!

Women's Chronological Bible Studies Every Tuesday at 8am – ZOOM.

All are welcome! Ever wonder how things in the Bible fit together? We are "chronologically" reading the Bible, with the aid of different annotated Bibles and the combined wisdom and life experiences of the dozen or so women who attend each week. We just made it into the New Testament and are chronologically comparing the accounts of Jesus's ministry in the four gospels. Join in and we will share the reading list! Contact Joan Snyder (VanderWeele) if you have any questions (vanderweele@comcast.net).

Meeting ID: 501 766 676 Password: 378366

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/501766676?pwd=N1RKSTRTRU96NDdzeE9Ga2ZDeUpMQTo9>

Women of St. Luke Gather Magazine Studies

The Gather Bible study groups will meet during the following dates and times. Questions; contact Marilyn Hudson at (503)780-7248

2nd Sunday - 6:30pm - 8pm (in person @ St. Luke)

2nd Monday - 9:30am - 11am (in person @ St. Luke)

2nd Tuesday - 1:30pm - 3pm (rotates @ members' homes)

Men's Bible Studies

Every Tuesday at 8am The Tuesday morning Men's Bible Study is taking a respite from book study and through Advent will be previewing the upcoming Sunday Gospel and Readings. In the new year we will identify and take up a new theological author to review and critique. We have not yet determined whom we will be studying. For more information please contact Jim Steele at jfsteele@comcast.net.

Friday Men's Breakfast Bible Study: 7am at Miller's Homestead Restaurant. Join us to study the appointed Bible readings for the coming Sunday. BYOB (Bring your own Bible).

Contact Mark Dustan (503) 703-1872.

New Adult Education Class

The Seven Deadly Sins of White Christian Nationalism. Hear the call to overcome today's culture of hate and bring healing and hope into our life together. While right-wing conservative dare to call themselves Christians as they tear down equality and justice, commit horrific acts of violence, and fan the flames of fascism in America, Carter Heyward issues a call to action for Christians to truly hear God's message of peace and love.

This is a book study group and will be facilitated by Cathy Spofford.

Starts on **Monday, January 8 from 7-8:15pm** and continues every other week. Class dates are **January 8 & 22, February 5 & 19, March 4 & 18 and April 1.**

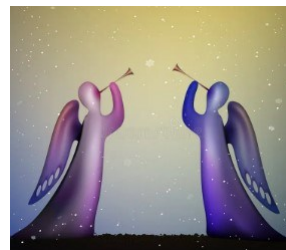
The class will be offered over Zoom (link will be provided prior to class). Book is available on Amazon in Kindle, paperback, and hardcover as well as Annie Bloom's in Multnomah Village. For more information please contact Dean Gustafson at deangustafson@mac.com.

Table Talk with Rev. Mark Brocker Theologian in Resident:

Saturday, January 27, 11am in Conference Room
Tuesday, January 30, 7pm on Zoom
Saturday, February 24, 11am in Conference Room
Tuesday, February 27, 7pm on Zoom
Topics to be determined—Rev. Brocker encourages to propose potential topics. Please send your ideas to Raingard Kuhse at raingard@stlukechurch.com.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81535026421?pwd=UE5MRUpDWIEweWlyMmlEblJ5d2dEQTo9#success>

Meeting ID: 815 3502 6421
Password: 738081



COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S REPORT - BY CINDY GIBBON

Dear St. Luke Family,

Each year when Advent arrives, I'm eager to hear again the beloved scriptures and carols that tell the story of Christ coming into our world. As our world grows darker, in so many ways, I need to be reminded that Christ's light still shines in the darkness and will never be overcome.

As we celebrate this blessed season, there's plenty of activity going on at St. Luke to wrap up the year and prepare for the Annual Meeting on January 28. Here are some highlights:



Council is evaluating the report of the **Capital Needs Assessment** Team and preparing to bring you priorities and recommendations based on the team's evaluation of the condition of all our capital assets. Stewardship Committee has just completed our **annual stewardship drive**. **If you haven't yet pledged, there's still time!**

The **Nominating Committee is still working to fill some key positions**, including President-Elect, Co-Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair. Do you have the skills to do one of these jobs? Step forward and let committee chair Amy Jockers or Pastor Patti know. And if the nominating committee calls, just say yes!

Council has been working on **necessary changes to our Constitution and By Laws**. We'll share those by November 28 and vote on them at the Annual Meeting.

Dawn Juliano has announced her retirement, and **Pepper Rehm will be stepping in as Bookkeeper and Payroll Specialist**. We are fortunate to have such a multi-talented staff at St. Luke! Pepper will also continue as our virtual worship producer and web coordinator.

As is not uncommon, **we are coming to the end of 2023 with a significant shortfall in giving** needed to cover our budget. The deficit stands at **about \$124,000**. Most pledges are up-to-date. The primary issue is with our unpledged giving. Please consider a year-end gift, if you are able.

I want to close with a few words about my personal situation. Some of you know that I was recently diagnosed with mantle cell lymphoma and have begun treatment. I am fortunate that the disease is considered "indolent" in my case and is very treatable. My physical energy is still low, but I'm very much engaged in my work as Council president, so I have decided to serve out my term, rather than turning the gavel over early to president-elect Rob Skinner. Rob has agreed to be physically present where I can't, and I am so grateful for his support. If you have any concerns about this decision, please let me know. I want to hear from you.

In the name of Emmanuel, God with us,

Cindy Gibbon
Council President

CONNECT

Advent Festival Community Event

Come join us **Saturday, December 2 from 2-4pm** in the Fellowship Hall for Food, Dessert, Advent Fun & Craft Booths. Fun and Fellowship guaranteed.

Wednesday Church Night—6pm, Dec. 6, Jan. 3 & Feb. 7

We share a meal followed by a service of prayer at 6:30pm. For December 6, chefs are Leanne Van Horn & Amy Jockers—programing Holden Eve Prayer. January 3, chef is Kim Weber—programing Filipino American.

Holden Evening Prayer

Wednesdays, December 6, 13, 20 - 6:30-7pm join us for Holden Evening Prayer. This lovely setting of vespers follows the traditional form while using contemporary and inclusive language. We meet in the Sanctuary.

FAB (Fifty And Beyond)

The planning team welcomes any suggestions for day trips and coffee hour activities. Please contact one of the seven team members with any ideas you might have, or better yet, to say you might be interested in joining our team! The current members are: Carol Greene, Dan Gott, Dale Vaughan, Ellie Moe, Louise Nuss, Marsha Swantz, and Nancy Feldman.

FAB Holiday Outing to Pittock Mansion and Luncheon

On Wednesday, December 6, the Fifty and Beyond fellowship group will enjoy a tour of the holiday decorated Pittock Mansion followed with lunch at Sandovals Café. We will meet at the church at 9:30am for bus rides. RSVP required no later than noon on Friday, December 1. Please call the church office at 503-246-2325.

FAB Coffee Hour & Presentation

On January 24, FAB will gather in the Fellowship Hall for a morning Coffee Hour and presentation (speaker as yet to be determined). Further information will be provided via Daily Devotion & Weekly Press.

FAB Looking Back

On November 15, FAB group visited the Oregon Historical Society in Downtown Portland to view the current exhibit "Our Unfinished Past: the Oregon Historical Society at 125." Afterwards, we enjoyed lunch (and the river view) at South Waterfront's The Old Spaghetti Factory. And on October 18th, FAB group visited the Nordic Northwest Center on SW Oleson Rd. Thirteen of us enjoyed breakfast at Broder Soder's before taking a short stroll to visit Ole Bolle, the giant troll who was recently constructed by the Danish recycle artist Thomas Dambo.

Breast Cancer Support Group

Our past meeting held on October 20, we shared our journeys. Members read poems and passages of their experiences. Wherever you find yourself on the breast cancer journey, we hope that you will join us for both information and connection with others who themselves know the journey. For more information, contact Gerry Foote at peaceleaves@comcast.net or call Gerry at 503-706-8736 for the next meeting dates.

The Good Words Book Group

We meet every third Sunday of the month at 9:15am in the Library. Join the **GOOD WORDS BOOK GROUP** to discuss favorite books. Our books are chosen by group members, and our future selections are:

January 21—Cold Sassy Tree by Olive Ann Burns

February 18—A Fault in Our Stars by John Green

March 17—Tom Lake by Ann Patchett

April 21—Remarkably Bright Creatures by Shelby Van Pelt

May 19—Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus

For more information please contact Caryl Walker at cawpdx@icloud.com

Visio Divina – connecting with God through sacred images – Wednesday, Dec. 13 at 12:45 at the University of Portland's Chapel of Christ the Teacher. Join Pr. Beth and other St. Luke members for an Advent special Visio Divina, drawing from glorious images in the St. John's Bible and facilitated by Dr. Karen Eifler at the University of Portland. Visio Divina is a contemplative practice known to center, comfort and challenge people in their faith journeys. To carpool, contact Pr. Beth at pastorbeth@stlukechurch.com or 503-246-2325.

CONNECT DATES

Advent Festival

Saturday, December 2nd,
2-4pm in Fellowship Hall.

Wednesday Church Night

December 6, January 3 &
February 7 at 6:00pm in
Fellowship Hall.

Holden Evening Prayer

Wednesdays, December 6,
13 & 20 at 6:30-7pm in
Sanctuary.

FAB Planning Mtg

Wednesday, December 27,
January 31 & February 28
at 10-11:30am in Confer-
ence Room.

FAB Pittock Mansion Visit & Lunch

Wednesday, December 6,
9:30 to 2:30pm

Visio Divina

Wednesday, December 13
at 12:45pm—University of
Portland's Chapel of
Christ the Teacher

Breast Cancer Support Group

Contact Gerry Foote for
next date.

Good Words Book Group

9:15am in Library. Janu-
ary 21, February 18, March
17, April 21 & May 19

CONNECT CONTINUED

Tidings of Comfort and Joy: An Advent in the Making

Sundays in Advent: December 10, 17 & Saturday, 23– 4pm to 4:30pm on Zoom.

Faith can be a comfort and a struggle. It is, if we let it, always making something new of us. Faith pushes us to question what we think we know. It pulls us beyond who we think we are.

Join facilitator Sheri Brown this Advent as she leads us through readings, body movement, contemplation and conversation to discover what faith is making of you this Advent season ... and to practice making a few gifts for the world in response. Our Advent of Making will be a season of making peace, making hope, making comfort, and making joy.

There will be NO stitching, knitting, painting, or woodworking involved, except in a metaphorical sense. Gifts will be crafted with the tools each participant brings to the sessions – a willing body, an open heart, a curious mind, and oh yes, a hunger to grow in awareness of and appreciation for God's goodness and grace. For more information please [click here](#) and [register here](#).

"Be not just hearers of the word," counsels James 1:22, "but also makers of the word."

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84858090697?pwd=V3dudnpjVlQ3OU8rNzk4ZU1XVC8zUT09>

Meeting ID: 848 5809 0697

Passcode: 958617



SERVE

Lay Visitation Ministry—Join us in visiting those of our congregation at home!

Those in our congregation who cannot attend in person services still want to feel connected. As Lay Visitation Ministers, we bring the church to others in their home. We visit, bring church news and just chat with people from our congregation who are home bound. We bring a smile, a friendly face, a touch of God's love and if they would like, communion. We are looking for a few friendly faces to join us so that everyone in our congregation can stay connected. It takes only a couple hours a month to visit. We try to visit twice a month and it may be someone you already know! If you don't know them, you will make a new friend very quickly and bring the friendship of St Luke to whomever you visit. It's simple, it's fun and it is valuable to you as well as those you visit.

Please contact Tammy Witcosky at tamo58@gmail.com to learn how to become involved.

Community Table

Continues to serve a growing population of those experiencing food insecurity in SW Portland and the greater Portland metro area. If you would like to help with Community Table, please contact Emily Brabham. Community Table is the **last Saturday of the month from 2-3pm**. Please share with neighbors in need! **Emily Brabham at emi-ly@stlukechurch.com**.



T. & R. Witcosky, Cathy S. &



Giving Tree will run from **November 26 – December 17**. This year we are continuing to support Letty Owings and Lutheran Community Services Northwest (refugees). Pick up a tag off the tree and return it with one clothing item and one fun item. The expectation is to spend no more than \$35-\$50 per tag. Gifts will be given to Letty Owings and LCSNW the week of December 17. Please get your gifts in by **December 17!**



SERVE

Social Concerns Update

Fall Highlights (September, October, November meetings)

The Committee conveys our thanks to Ken Peirce for coordinating *Christmas in September* to gather donated food and hygiene supplies for Northeast Emergency Food Program. Over 1,000 lbs. was collected and shared with those in need in the Portland metropolitan area and beyond.

This fall, we reviewed and discussed a number of local agencies/community needs and made these allocations:

- \$1000 - St. Luke Mini Food Pantry for food purchases
- \$500 - SW Portland Faith Coalition events focused on Pathways to Housing Justice
- \$3,000 - Maplewood Helping Hands—food gift cards for local elementary school children and families
- \$1,000 - Johnson Family Memorial Scholarship—scholarship support for Black students
- \$1,500 - House of Zion, Woodburn. SLY Christmas ministry gifts
- \$250 - Bread for the World annual gift
- \$1,000 - Interfaith Chapel at Emmanuel Hospital in Portland – chapel renovation project
- \$500 - Lutheran Disaster Relief for Maui
- \$800 – West Women’s and Children’s gift cards
- \$5,000 – Rent/resettlement funds for the Idriss Mohammad refugee family. (June 2023)

A new sewing machine for use by the Priceless Quilters was requested by Julie Gaudette and approved by the Trust Committee. Cost - \$500.

Laura Golino de Lovato, executive director, Northwest Pilot Project, presented a Sunday Table Talk in September.

In September we also notified the congregation of the Benson Family Foundation grant process in December, inviting nominations of 501c3 nonprofits. 13 nominations were received. Those nominated nonprofits were then invited to submit tiered proposals, with levels of \$1,000; \$2,500; and \$5,000 by November 15. We also agreed that the 28 nonprofits receiving Benson grants in June would be invited/reminded to submit similar tiered proposals.

In September, Michael Ford visited Letty Owings Center in NE Portland to join others in celebrating the recently completed remodel. LOC has 29 beds for women with their babies/children who are in recovery from drug/alcohol addiction. Since its creation in 1989, over a thousand families have recovered their lives at Letty Owings Center and hundreds of babies have been born drug-free.

St. Luke has supported LOC for over 30 years.



Fall 2023 Refugee Family Update

The Nasiri family father was accepted into the welding program at PCC.

The Al Masri family’s son, wife and four children arrived 10/15/23, with assistance from Jim and Maripat Hensel. The Al Masri family we have been sponsoring for several years was approved for a home mortgage.

The Idriss Mohammad family was introduced to the Social Concerns Committee at our November meeting by Yuen and Jane Chan, who have served as the primary contacts for this ethnically Kurdish family of six from Syria. (see photo below).



By unanimous vote in November, we recommended that Church Council accept the Idriss Mohammad family for ongoing sponsorship by our congregation.

The Christmas wreath purchase/distribution will continue again this year through Mujeres Luchedores Progresistas. 35 wreaths will be made available on the first Sunday of December at \$40 each, with all funds going to MLP. Coordinated by Laure Patrick. Sign-up on link at daily announcements.

The Committee will allocate available Benson Family Foundation grant funds at our December 5 meeting, with grant notification and payment completed before the end of the calendar year. Details to follow in 2023 St. Luke Lutheran Church Annual Report.

With profound gratitude to our St. Luke congregation for your continuing generous giving in support of our Social Concerns Mission Outreach.

– Social Concerns Committee

SERVE

Communion Help - Table Setup, Cleaning, or Assisting/Serving Sign-Ups

Would you like to contribute to the communion service by serving during the services? If so, we would greatly appreciate your help! Please click [here](#) to sign up for a service (or more) that works for you.

Another way to support the communion service is by preparing the table. You can help by setting the table and/or cleaning afterward. If you're interested in lending a hand, please click [here](#) to sign up for a Sunday (or Sundays) after a service of your choice.

If you have any questions or need further assistance, please feel free to contact Melody at Melody.Drangstveit@gmail.com or by phone at (503) 312-7785.

Thank you for your willingness to contribute and make the communion service a meaningful experience for all. Your support is greatly appreciated!



Christmas in September by Ken Peirce

We had another wonderful outpouring of love and support for our neighbors at NEFP. We gathered 1020 pounds of food and personal hygiene items.

Thank you to Emily, David Medford, and Dan Gott for loading the van for me and making it easy to deliver.

Jon, at NEFP was surprised and delighted with our gifts, and thanked P. Beth and the Middle Schoolers for their volunteering last Saturday.



Benson Family Foundation & Pacific Lutheran University Sunday - January 21, 2024

We give thanks for how, over the years, the Benson Foundation has provided the financial assistance to allow over 50+ students connected with St. Luke to attend Lutheran universities and seminaries, and additional funds have served nonprofits from across our region. The Benson Foundation has partnered most closely with Pacific Lutheran University, and on **January 21** we celebrate their ministries that serve to provide our young people with a solid, education. Join us at worship and for a reception to honor these ministry partners.

Community Advocacy Updates

Mini Pantry—Community and St. Luke Members' Support Continues

The St. Luke Mini Pantry is available 24/7 for our neighbors in need. We have been seeing extensive use and we appreciate the support from members and from neighbors who provide items – the food matters whether it's a single can of tuna or, an entire case of packaged oatmeal. This form of hospitality is sustainable for ministry and outreach when we pull our resources together.



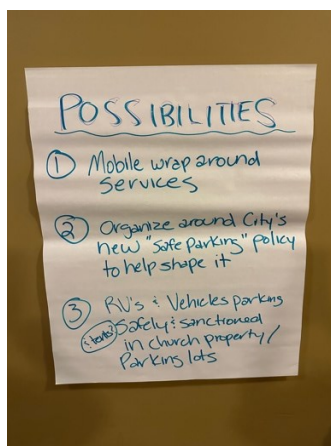
If you have an interest and some time to determine how we gather and process the food that goes into this brightly colored, small, but mighty pantry for 2024, email Maripat Hensel, henselresearch@gmail.com to be part of a brief Zoom gathering on Sat. Dec. 16th at 10am. Note: If that date will not work for you, a one-to-one meeting is also possible by phone or online.

Pathways toward Housing Justice and SW Faith Coalition Group support for 2024



HOUSING
JUSTICE

The next Housing Justice meeting will be on Wednesday, January 24, 2024. This gathering will be the follow-up session to the Fall workshops that examined assets and defined the possibilities for what could be done by the SW Portland community through 2024. Do you want to learn more about this work and the workshop identified possibilities? Teams are forming to research and report back when we meet again. Funding support for the two Fall 2023 workshops was provided by St. Luke Social Concerns and donations of socks and refreshments were made by St. Luke members. Along with this effort, the City of Portland plans to expand the Multnomah Safe Rest Village. Details are currently being examined and listening sessions have recently been held at nearby neighborhood associations and at the Multnomah Art Center. To find out more, contact Maripat Hensel, henselresearch@gmail.com.



IN THE NEWS



Stewardship Ministry—Grateful Generosity by Craig Christensen—Chair

Stewardship is the way that we use all our resources — time, talents, possessions, and money — to love God and our neighbor. The Parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37 exemplifies this type of stewardship. The Samaritan gave generously of his time, his possessions, and his money. He took a detour from his own travels just to help a hurting man, who was more of an enemy than a friend. Stewardship transforms God's commandment to "love our neighbors as ourselves" from a religious expression into a way of life.

At this time of year, our St. Luke Stewardship Ministry focuses on financial planning for 2024 to ensure support for all ministry, staff, facilities, and programs. On October 8th we launched St. Luke's 2024 Financial Appeal Campaign, entitled "Grateful Generosity". St. Luke is blessed by generous, faithful givers who provide the means for us to fulfill our mission. We show our generosity by returning a financial Statement of Intent which identifies our estimate of giving for 2024. This allows our leadership to confidently plan for 2024 ministry!

On Sundays November 12th and 19th, we received and blessed Statement of Intent cards during our morning worship services. We will continue receiving Statement of Intent cards through December. You can bring your card to the church office, mail in the card, or fill out the card on the St. Luke website [here](#).

Last year we challenged our congregation to return 150 Statements of Intent. And we received 180! This year we have set a target to receive 200 Statements of Intent. Until 2024 we'll be tracking the number of Statements of Intent returned. You'll notice a chart in the narthex showing our progress to 200 cards returned. We know with your participation we will reach our goal!

Thank you for all you do to bless this congregation and for considering how we can grow in generosity in the coming year.



In gratitude to God and in thanksgiving for the ministry of St. Luke Lutheran Church's on-going ministry, I/we intend to give the following offering for 2024:

☐ \$_____ weekly ☐ \$_____ monthly ☐ \$_____ in total for the year on another schedule.

☐ I will contribute with an amount unknown at this time.

I/we understand that this offering may be adjusted if necessary by notifying a pastor.

Please check all that apply:

☐ This commitment is an increase in generosity

☐ I currently contribute through electronic giving and will adjust our current giving level to reflect this new intent

☐ I will set up electronic giving to reflect this new intent by 2024

Name _____ Email _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Signature _____

Date _____

IN THE NEWS

Parking Update- From Council

Change is inevitable, and not always easy, but usually provides opportunities for growth. Portland is changing, and our neighborhood around St. Luke is certainly growing! Most of you have noticed the apartment complex “growing” just to the east of the church parking lot. We will have new neighbors living here beginning next summer, and there will be more tenants than parking spaces. During the week, St. Luke has some unused parking space and Council has recommended that, if needed, we can offer this to some of the apartment tenants for a reasonable monthly fee.

This will require creating permits to be used by all vehicles parked at St. Luke. We will be providing parking permits at no cost to all St. Luke members and guests.

Cars “belonging” to the apartment residents will not be allowed to park in the church lot on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings, and we will only be leasing out the spaces in the lower lot.

This will require us having a list of cars (and license plate numbers) of all church member and employee vehicles, so we can check prior to issuing any warnings!

We will start this process in the spring and roll out over several months, to give everyone some time to adjust. More details to follow. We will be making announcements at both services as the parking issue grows closer, and there will be plenty of time to ask questions. We will also have an information table set up in the narthex several weeks before we begin to roll passes out. Our goal is to keep this as simple and seamless as possible....thank you in advance for your patience and help!!



New Hire for St. Luke's Bookkeeper and Payroll Specialist

We welcome **Pepper Rehm** (they/them) St. Luke's Bookkeeper & Payroll Specialist. Some of you may already know Pepper who is currently serving as our part-time Virtual Worship Producer & Website Coordinator. With the additional responsibilities of Bookkeeper & Payroll Specialist, they will be a full-time staff member.

Dawn Juliano, our current Bookkeeper & Payroll Specialist, announced her desire to retire from the position several months ago. We are grateful that she agreed to stay on until we found someone to take over the position. She is currently onboarding Pepper over the course of the advent season.

Please join me in thanking Dawn for her dedicated service to St. Luke and welcoming Pepper in this new position.



SPRING Messenger Deadline: February 10, 2024

Are you a ministry area lead whose St. Luke ministry is missing from this Messenger -- or would you like to share more information about your ministry area in future Messengers? Send your verbiage in an email addressed to: raingard@stlukechurch.com by February 10.



December 2023 BIRTHDAYS!

12/01	Sean	Meurisse	12/14	Nathan	Selander
12/01	Krag	Petterson	12/15	June	Bremmer
12/01	Lee	Sickler	12/18	Connor	Haynes
12/02	Megan	Ellertson	12/18	Alexander	King
12/02	Debbie	Elsner	12/18	Lauren	Patrick
12/02	John	Jessen	12/18	Elmer	Skurdahl
12/03	Matthew	Harvieux	12/19	Vic	Wolf
12/03	Diana	Paladichuk	12/20	Grant	Babb
12/03	Taylor	Roth	12/20	Chuck	Farr
12/04	Kristin	Bialobok	12/20	Geoff	Frasier
12/05	Virginia	Schweitzer	12/20	Rina	Harvieux
12/06	Frances	Crandall	12/20	Mark	Wood
12/06	Mary	Davis	12/21	Jaden	Flicker
12/06	Marjorie	Nuss	12/21	Allison	Stanley
12/07	Judy	Bayley	12/22	Everett	Keller
12/07	Katherine	LeBlanc	12/22	Erika	Orchard
12/07	Jennifer	Novack	12/22	Laurel	Skinner
12/07	Lauren	Swigart	12/23	ZoÃ«	Burch
12/08	Grant	Andersen	12/23	Noah	Grabe
12/08	Kelty	Brookhyser	12/23	Dave	Scheele
12/08	Carol	Greene	12/23	Beverly	Skinner
12/08	Christine	Patrick	12/24	Madupe	Adibonou
12/09	Clara	Watson	12/24	Rosaline	Adibonou
12/10	Ashley	Lindsay	12/24	Carol	Cryder
12/10	Susan	Westin	12/24	Owen	Schlechter
12/10	Vivian	Wood	12/26	Tamara	Witcosky
12/11	Anne	Dubberke	12/26	Zachary	Zuckerman
12/12	Kristin	Holmberg	12/27	Claire	Arthur
12/12	Carrie	Laurence	12/27	Kasey	Flicker
12/12	Gabriel	Novack	12/27	Dan	Hibbett
12/12	Isaac	Peter	12/27	Jeff	Munson
12/12	Catherine	Skinner	12/27	Nancy	Scheele
12/12	Ronald	Witcosky	12/27	Tanner	Watts
12/13	Andrew	Meuser	12/30	Travis	Eddy
12/13	Matthew	Schobert	12/31	Yatta	Hohnbaum
12/13	Ilse	Walters	12/31	Jeremy	Nuss
12/14	Maira	Chin			
12/14	Stephanie	Halvorson			



January 2024 BIRTHDAYS!

01/01	Brandon	Burt	01/17	Elliot	Nuss
01/01	Soren	Holmberg	01/18	Jack	Chesnutt
01/01	Joseph	Lairson	01/18	Leah	Gresia
01/01	Luke	Patrick	01/18	Nathaniel	Montplaisir
01/01	Laura	Votava	01/19	Rachel	Marsh
01/02	Jonah	Cunningham-Parmeter	01/19	Gloria	Miniszewski
01/02	Joan	Frazer	01/20	Roger	Wicklund
01/02	Ian	Wolf	01/21	Leslie	Fraijo
01/03	Owen	Dustan	01/21	David	Haynes
01/03	Patrick	Farr	01/21	Jeffrey	Higgins
01/03	Christine	Fauske	01/21	Addison	Reinke
01/03	Sophia	Flicker	01/22	Tim	Grabe
01/04	Brian	Els	01/22	Jaxson	Peirce
01/04	Jami	Flicker	01/22	Natalie	Stamper
01/04	Gary	Miniszewski	01/23	Brian	Hanna
01/04	Levi	Stanley	01/24	Eliana	Kraby
01/05	Haley	Metz Wilson	01/24	Jeff	Martini
01/05	Hillary	Schoap	01/24	Sandy	McIsaac
01/05	William	Wood	01/24	Tyley	Petering
01/06	Raingard	Kuhse	01/24	Matthew	Piwonka
01/06	Marilyn	Simmons	01/24	Ronda	Reynolds
01/07	Emily	Wood	01/24	Cindy	Tortorelli
01/08	Becky	Tuttle	01/25	Christine	Arthur
01/09	Andrea	Lairson	01/25	Arne	Fromme
01/09	Wilbur	Menicosy	01/25	Joe	Gantt
01/09	Diane	Swingen	01/25	Jennifer	Niemeyer
01/10	David	Burt	01/25	John	Osbrink
01/10	Tai	Dustan	01/25	Christophe	Senah
01/10	Stella	Insalaco	01/25	Michael	Swope
01/10	Judith	Sims	01/25	Kay	Vorderstrasse
01/11	Geraldine	Foote	01/26	Conor	Arthur
01/11	Anna	Taylor	01/26	Darlene	Durgan
01/11	James	Weeks	01/26	Nancy	Feldman
01/12	Marlene	Clarke	01/26	Michael	Ford
01/12	Gary	Heuer	01/26	Craig	Novack
01/12	Steve	Mileham	01/26	Sophie	Pratasiewicz
01/12	Calla	Snowden	01/27	Joy	Ramsby
01/12	Caleb	Stephens	01/27	Greg	Wilhelm
01/13	Evelyn	Brickwedel	01/29	Daniel	Carpenter
01/13	Julie	Ferguson	01/29	Mika	Chesnutt
01/13	Laure	Patrick	01/29	Catherine	Schlechter
01/13	Christine	Ulmer	01/30	Emma	Hayes
01/14	Greta	Halvorson	01/30	Molly	Moreland
01/14	James	Steele	01/31	Andrew	Burke
01/16	Mark	Dustan	01/31	Tyler	Mitchell
01/16	Carol	Lindeman	01/31	Melia	Patrick
01/16	Evelyn	Rosendahl			
01/17	Connie	Liakos			



February 2024 BIRTHDAYS

02/01	Sandra	Bacon	02/14	Dani	Swope
02/01	Kaden	Leeper	02/15	Rose	Menge
02/02	Leslie	Gott	02/16	Deb	Steele
02/03	Judy	Christensen	02/17	Kristine	Roley
02/03	Dave	Nuss	02/18	Kai	Cunningham-Parmeter
02/03	Heidi	Roe	02/18	Mark	Insalaco
02/03	Diana	Tuttle	02/18	Sophie	Marsh
02/04	Richard	Wald	02/18	Claire	Niemeyer
02/04	Joan	Yackley	02/18	Betty	Wald
02/05	Kathleen	Berg	02/19	Keaton	Keller
02/05	Bernard	Deazley	02/19	Sarah	Snowden
02/05	Annika	Hopp	02/19	Katherine	Weeks
02/05	Leanne	Van Horn	02/20	Samantha	Fernandes
02/06	Parker	Andersen	02/20	Katie	Watry
02/06	Judy	Dodson	02/21	Anadege	Adibonou
02/06	Mary	Kerns	02/21	RuJeanne	Anderson
02/06	Valerie	Thibeau	02/22	Margrethe	Farnstrom
02/07	Gerry	Brenes	02/22	Dawn	Juliano
02/07	Kay	Hansen	02/23	Joan	Elliott-Barclay
02/07	Carver	Snowden	02/23	Robert	Schreiber
02/08	Mary	Burton	02/24	Jack	Insalaco
02/09	Derek	Reinke	02/25	DeNie	Mills
02/10	Andrew	Curran	02/26	Gavin	Martini
02/10	Joel	Peirce	02/26	Sam	Novack
02/11	Diana	Domingo-Foraste	02/26	Calvin	Stamper
02/11	Max	Insalaco	02/26	Margaret	Woodward
02/11	Leo	Novack	02/27	Bryton	Barclay
02/11	Lee	Welch	02/27	Braven	Garnica
02/12	Durham	DeSanno	02/27	Cathy	Rasmussen
02/12	Izaak	Jockers	02/28	Gwladyse	Adibonou
02/12	Amanda	Mercier	02/28	Elizabeth	Brashear
02/12	Devon	Singrey			
02/13	Carrol	Klett			
02/13	Owen	Stark			

St. Luke Lutheran Church
4595 SW California St.
Portland, OR 97219

503-246-2325

www.stlukechurch.com

office@stlukechurch.com



TIME DATED MATERIAL

Return Service Requested

WORSHIP † CONNECT † SERVE