



Saint Luke Lutheran Church

1807 Field Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55116 | 651-698-9443 | saintlukechurch.org

December 2025 Newsletter



The Pastor's Perspective

Wear Lights in Your Hearts

Our autumned hearts stand waiting
for God's gracious gift.
Someone is coming whose sandals
we are worthy to carry. (Matthew 3:11)
Prepare the way of the Lord! (Matthew 3:3)
But how do we prepare the way for a King
who is not of this world?
Crowns, red carpets, and flowing robes
He desires not at all.
Our ungospelled hearts try to hide
embarrassed at our slowness to respond
to such a gift.

Poor, cluttered hearts
starving for the emptiness
that makes fullness possible.
Prepare the way of the Lord!
It is so little that God asks of us.
Give some evidence that you mean to reform. (Matthew 3:8)
Wear lights in your hearts
instead of on your trees.

Our autumned hearts stand waiting
For God's gracious gift
Come, Lord Jesus, come!
Gospel up our lives with your presence

Pr. Bristol Reading

December Volunteers

Thanks for your participation!

ONLINE USHERS

1st Sunday: David Tews
2nd Sunday: Sue McNeill
3rd Sunday: Raulie Ruiz
4th Sunday: David NedreLOW

IN PERSON USHERS

First and Second Sundays:
Doug Nelson, David NedreLOW
Third and Fourth Sundays:
Mary Jo Brandt, Carol Vigdal

SUNDAY AM READERS

7 Casey Ulrich
14 Gwen Brummund
21 Christine Olson
28 Wendy Bjorklund

SUNDAY AM COMM. ASSTS.

7 Wendy Bjorklund
14 Gwen Brummund
21 Christine Olson
28 Wendy Bjorklund

CANDLELIGHT SERVICE READERS, 12/7, 6PM

Wendy Bjorklund, Emily Elfritz,
Laurie Herrmann, Christine
Olson, Nancy Redlin, Kay Reich

CHRISTMAS EVE READER 12/24, 6PM

Julie Gaarder

and we'll wear lights in our hearts
instead of on our trees.

--Macrina Wiederkehr, Seasons of Your Heart, 45-46

It seemed to me that people put up their Christmas decorations much earlier this year. I spotted lit Christmas trees through living room windows around my neighborhood in mid-November. Since we've been experimenting with a seven-week Advent at St. Luke this year (as opposed to the traditional four-week season), I guess I can't blame anyone for getting started early. We lit the first candle on the Advent wreath on November 9!

Not to mention, these are hard days for many. Small joys can be acts of great hope, and Christmas decorations can certainly bring a sense of beauty and wonder into dark times. Decorating is a way many people get their homes and spirits ready for the celebration of Christmas.

But it isn't only our homes that need the light; our hearts need it even more dearly. I've been re-reading poems by the wonderful writer Macrina Wiederkehr, a Benedictine monastic who died in 2020. I was really struck by this poem of hers above, which calls us to do the heart work of preparing for the light of Christ to break into our world. "Gospel up our lives with your presence," we plead to God, "and we'll wear lights in our hearts instead of on our trees." (As I said, I'm not going to begrudge anyone the small joy of a lit Christmas tree, so maybe we'll say we should wear lights in our hearts *in addition to* on our trees!)

In this poem, Sister Macrina is drawing on Matthew 3:1-12, a text about John the Baptist that will be our Gospel reading on Sunday, December 7. You might go read that passage now as a companion to the poem. John the Baptist is all about getting ready for Christ, and he's definitely focused on the heart work. He demands that the pharisees and scribes, religious leaders of his day, "bear fruit worthy of repentance." I like Sister Macrina's adaptation of that line: "Give some evidence that you mean to reform."

Even if you're not a pharisee or scribe, it's a challenge worth reflecting upon. How will Christmas change you this year? How will you respond to the incredible gift of God's presence among us in the person of Jesus? How will you hear the familiar story of the nativity anew and let it renew you? What helps you keep the light of Christ's love shining brightly in your heart?

I hope your holiday season is filled with many small joys: good food, beautiful music, colorful decorations, time with loved ones. And I hope it is also filled with the greatest joy of all: knowing that the light of Christ has come into the world and the darkness will never overcome it. Thanks be to God!

**CHRISTMAS DAY READER
AND COMM. ASST. 12/25,
9:30AM**
Kay Reich

ALTAR GUILD
Kay Reich, Christine Olson

COFFEE HOSTS
7 Karen Larson, Aidelle Volkman
Nancy White
14 Jo & Doug Klein
Dennis & Ruth Olafson
21 Nancy Redlin
Don Clark
28 Mary Jo Brandt
Carol Vigdal

COUNTERS
7 Katy Eggert
14 Kay Reich
21 Julie Gaarder
28 Carol Hornung



Bun Run

Many thanks to our Bun Run volunteers for December: Kn McGrew, Doug Klein, Kay Reich, Julie Ellingson,

December Birthdays

4 Olivia Peterson
5 Douglas Nelson
7 Raul Ruiz
18 Holly Schultz
20 Nancy White
21 Sandy Pilgrim
23 Deborah Vigdal
30 Roger Diestler



***Notes from the
Music Director - Becca Ruiz***

I don't know if you realize this,
but it has been joyfully boisterous

Join us for our beloved Advent Candlelight Service on Sunday, December 7, at 6:00 p.m. This cherished tradition invites us to pause amid the holiday rush and reflect on the hope, peace, joy, and love of the season in a warm, candlelit setting filled with music and meaning. After the service, please stay and enjoy fellowship and refreshments in the social hall. If you're able, please bring a dozen cookies or treats to share—a sweet way to continue the spirit of community and celebration together.

Bible Study All are welcome to our weekly Bible Study, in person or online, on Wednesdays at 10am led by Pastor Bristol. We will discuss the scriptures for the forthcoming Sunday. The Zoom link is emailed to you every Monday. Join us!



Supper with Saints will meet at Joseph's Grill, 140 S. Wabasha St. at noon on December 6th. Please let Joyce Bluel know by Sunday, November 30th if you would like to reserve a spot. We will need a firm number and will not be able to accept requests after this date.



Season's Greetings,

This year has gone by fast, and our reports at the annual meeting showed us how busy we have been this year with all the repairs to our church home. Thank you to everyone who has helped and continues to help with all these repairs and events, whether big or small. These things can't get done without all of you.

I want to thank Mike Hegdahl, for serving on the council as his term comes to an end. Thank you to Raulie for agreeing to come on the council and a special thank you to Emily for agreeing to be President of the council in 2026.

Wishing all of you peace, love, and joy this holiday season,

Nancy Hegdahl

at St. Luke on Wednesday evenings! For five weeks, families of St. Luke were invited to come for dinner and conversation followed by a time for music. We warmed up our voices, we imitated rhythmic and melodic patterns, we found crazy hippopotamuses and learned new songs! And to cap it off, the St. Luke Family Choir will join the adult choir for an anthem on December 21st!

A big thank you to everyone who helped contribute to our dinners! It was a great help and all of it was appreciated. But I must give the biggest thanks to Karen Larson for all her work setting up and cleaning up each week. You don't know how grateful I am for all your help - the time and work it saved me was a lot and I can't express how much I appreciated it each and every week. Thank you!

And thank you to the kids and adults who participated! I had a lot of fun exploring music with all of you. Everyone brings a different talent to the group and I appreciate each and every person - Kaylee for always having the right suggestion when I needed it; Oliver for your amazing rhythmic patterns; Magnolia and Juniper for being my right and left hand helpers; Everett for your enthusiasm and great timing; Max for your willingness to participate even when I'm being silly; Hugo for your tenacity in learning the music; Violet for your crazy roller coasters; and Marie for your great listening skills. And I'm excited for all the fun we'll have at the next round of Family Choir!



All are invited to Game Day at St. Luke, Friday, December 5 and 19. Bring a snack to share and your favorite game and settle down to an afternoon of fun...join us!



But the kids can't have all the fun! Join me at 4pm on Sunday, Dec. 21st for my Christmas Warm-up. I'll share a few Christmas pieces I enjoy playing that you won't hear on a Sunday morning and we'll sing just about every Christmas hymn in the hymnal! It's a very relaxed vibe, come late, leave early - usually it's about 45 minutes in length.

One-Hour Vocal Choir is back January 4th! If you'd like to sing in the choir just for one day, join me at 8:30am on Jan. 4th and we'll learn a simple piece to share in service that morning!

Lent and Easter Music Preview will be in January, TBD. We'll talk about midweek services and Lenten liturgy, with the opportunity to give some feedback on the upcoming season.

***Connect, Grow
and Serve***

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