



St. Luke Lutheran Church
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Open doors, open hearts, open minds.

Parish Times February 2019



The Pastor's Perspective...

Middle Laps | Pr. John Keller

In college, I ran track. I was not very fast, but I grew up watching Jim Ryun run a sub-4 minute mile. I dreamed of being such a miler, clicking off each of the four laps on the track in 60 seconds. In reality, I rarely could run one lap under 70 seconds, let alone four in a row. Still I competed each year, yearning to improve.

One thing track taught me was the value of persistence, especially in the middle laps. The first and last laps of a mile race have their own magic which can pull the runner along. The first lap has the quick start and the pack jockeying for position. The gun lap has the pull of the finish line and the knowledge that the race will soon be completed.

It is the second and especially the third lap that always challenged me mentally and physically. The pain of running at race pace had become reality, but the finish seemed too far away to contemplate. If I focused on the pain, I rarely did well. If I focused on staying calm, relaxed, and fluid, I could maintain my semi-fast pace. By my senior year I knew the challenge I faced each time I approached the start line.

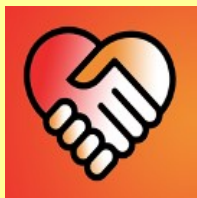
I think of this as St. Mark and St. Luke continue the process of shared ministry. Now that we have voted affirmatively to move forward and prepare the documents, we are past the starting lap of the interim journey. Yet we still have many meetings and at least two congregational votes before we see the finish line. We are in the middle laps of our race together and so we need to be persistent and patient.

The Christian life also requires persistence and perseverance. *The joy of the Lord is our strength* (Nehemiah 8:10), yet not every day will be happy. Life can be difficult and challenging; it can feel like we are in the middle laps of a very long race. Our prayers may seem to circle around our heads, never reaching God's heavenly ear. Saint Paul reminds us that we are to keep on praying, keep on believing and trusting, even when the days seem long.

Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer (Romans 12:12)

At some point this year I am confident that St. Mark and St. Luke will call a shared pastor. We will finish this interim journey. Yet our life in Christ will carry on for many more laps. Christ is not simply at the start or the finish, but running beside us each lap of the race, helping us to stay patient and calm. Thus what we are learning in this interim time will carry over into future ministry in Christ. Thanks be to God.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, open the eyes of my heart to see you each day with patience and hope.



Usher Notes

Many thanks to our ushers for February: Dave Grzywinski, Judy Salaba, David Tews, Kay Reich, Mike and Nancy Hegdahl, Linda Funkhouser, Roger Diestler.



February Birthdays

- 4 Maggie Erickson
- 7 Samantha Smith
- 9 Kirby Peterson
- 10 Junella Litzkow
- 11 Sue Grzywinski
- 14 Dianne Diestler
- 16 Ann Verschoyle
- 17 David Nedrelow
- 23 Mary Dybvig,
Volker Landenberger
- 24 Jeff Kinglsey
- 26 Karen Wasko
- 28 Sadie Pilgrim

February WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Readers

- 3 Beth Peterson
 - 10 Laurie Herrmann
 - 17 Al Fredrickson
 - 24 Christine Olson
- ### Communion
- 3 Jen Fredrickson
 - 17 Al Fredrickson

SAVE THE DATE!

Come one, come all to our ever-popular ALL MEMBER WINTER CHURCH RETREAT at Camp Onomia, Feb. 15-17. Young and old, parents or singles, all are welcome! Want to get away from your busy life, and just relax and have fun? Or do you want to have some great family time with your kids? There is something of everyone! To RSVP, please sign up on the kiosk asap.



A big thank you to our February Bun Volunteers: Mike Hegdahl, David Tews, Ken McGrew, and Doug Klein.



Ladies Night Out

in February will take place on Tuesday, February 19th at Obb's Sports Bar & Grill, 1347 Burn Ave., St. Paul at 5:30 p.m. If you are interested in carpooling, please meet at church at 5:00 p.m. Please notify Joyce Bluel (651-690-4614) by Sunday, Feb. 17 if you are planning on attending so we have an idea of how many for the reservation.

We are in need of Loaves and Fishes meals volunteers to help prepare (4pm to 5pm) and serve (5pm to 6pm) at St. Matthew every fourth Monday of the month. There is also a need for cleanup after the food service around 6pm. It is a fairly short time commitment, but a very fulfilling experience. If you have any questions or are willing to volunteer, please contact Joyce Bluel at church or at 651-690-4614.



We are very grateful to all who donated to our Mitten Tree for Advent/Christmas. Thanks to your generosity, we donated four big boxes of hats, mittens and scarves, plus an additional donation of quality women's clothes, to Naomi Family Residence, a division of the Union Gospel Mission, which provides shelter and services to women and children struggling with homelessness and poverty. Together, we **can** make a difference. God's work, our hands!



The 2019 offering envelopes are now available in the Social Hall. Please pick up your box as soon as possible to defray postage expenses. Thank you.



February Acolytes

- 3 Victor Landenberger
- 17 Tatum Herrmann

Financial Report

Thank you for your financial support of St. Luke and the many ministries we do together.

Fourth Quarter Receipts	\$40,855.12	Fourth Quarter Expenses	\$35,163.05
Total 2018 Receipts	\$146,278.95	Total 2018 Expenses	\$141,475.44

Receipts include the offering, gifts of Thrivent Choice Dollars, and what is given for the use of our building. Expenses include 55% of Interim Pastor Keller's compensation. Please contact treasurer Ruth Carlson with any questions or comments.



Musings from the Music Director

I would like to extend a big THANK YOU to all the people who shared their musical talents during the Christmas season! It was such a delight to hear everyone. Thanks so much for the time and commitment you made to making our services shine a little brighter. And a special thank you to my tireless (or perhaps tired?) and dedicated choir members in bells and in our vocal choir. Your efforts were well rewarded and I'm so glad to work with all of you.

All that said, special music is special all year, even in the off-months. While I look forward to the last half of our choir season, I also encourage all musicians in the congregation to contact me with music you'd like to share or just to let me know you'd like to share your music sometime. It is such a pleasure to be in a congregation with such love and appreciation of music and with those who share their talents!

Becca Ruiz

Important Shared Ministry Update On Sunday, Jan. 13, we took a vote of those members present regarding going forward in our SL/SM Shared Ministry. At St. Luke, the result was 40 folks voted YES and 5 voted no. At Saint Mark, the vote was 26 YES and 0 voted no, so our Shared Ministry Team will continue to work together to craft both a Shared Ministry agreement and the Ministry Site Profile (MSP). One additional task will be to form a Call Committee. Each church will have 6 members on that call committee for a total of 12 members. If you are interested in serving on this committee, or can recommend a fellow member for it, please contact Wendy Bjorklund at (651) 357-5742 or wlbjorklund@stcloudstate.edu. On Sunday February 24, we will once again have a congregational meeting to 1) ratify the new Constitution (approved at the November semi-annual meeting), 2) approve the Shared Ministry Agreement and MSP and 3) elect the Call Committee. Please put this important meeting on your calendars. In addition, we'll have a Town Hall Meeting to gather your input on Sunday, February 3. As always, feel free to reach out to anyone of the members of the Shared Ministry Team with any questions or concerns: Wendy Bjorklund, Ruth Carlson, Laurie Herrmann, Becca Ruiz.

