

Sorry for the delay of the Newsletter.

Our software platform was having major issues that left us unable to send this out as well as any email blasts.

The Encourager



February 2024

(Deadline for the upcoming Newsletter submissions is on February 25th)

**The Mission of St. Luke's Lutheran Church is to
Share God's Love Through
Welcoming, Encouraging and Serving**

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

TBA, president

TBA, vice-president

TBA, secretary

TBA, treasurer

Lisa Rhyne, David Sweet, Phil Brooks,
Tom Ainsworth, Erin Pushman-Aldred

Members are encouraged to bring any questions, suggestions,
or concerns to Council.

Click on the buttons below to view reports.

December Council
Minutes

Financial Report EOM
November

Approved 2024 Noisy Offering List

Interim Pastor Council
Report December

Administrative Support Team December

Finding the VerbFocus Process
Report

CONGREGATION & WORSHIP LIFE



Watch us on YouTube

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY - February 4th at 10:00am
(Sanctuary)

w/ Special Blessing of Scouts

Kid's Worship
Worksheet

TRANSIGURATION OF OUR LORD - February 11th at 10:00am
(Sanctuary)

Kid's Worship
Worksheet

ASH WEDNESDAY - February 14th at 7:00pm
(Sanctuary)

Kid's Worship
Worksheet

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT - February 18th at 10:00am
(Sanctuary)

w/ Noisy Offering Pastor's Discretionary Fund

Kid's Worship
Worksheet

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT - February 25th at 10:00am
(Sanctuary)

Kid's Worship
Worksheet

UPCOMING WORSHIP DATES

Mark your calendars for upcoming events through Easter:

- Palm Sunday - 3/24 10:00am Sanctuary
- Maundy Thursday - 3/28 7pm Sanctuary
- Good Friday - 3/29 7pm Sanctuary
- Easter - 3/31 10:00am Sanctuary

WORSHIP NOTES EPIPHANY 2024

Love Builds Up

Overall Theme: The word Epiphany means manifestation or appearance. We have just celebrated Christmas and proclaimed that the light has come into

the darkness and the darkness can't overcome it. That light is the light of the world. In the fall, we identified the mission of St. Luke's Lutheran Church is "To share God's love." How will that manifest or appear in this world at this time? How will we manifest or share the love of God? During this season we will have two gatherings during Fellowship Time after worship where we will work together to develop a "Rule of Love" to guide us. This rule will make the discipline of behavioral love a regular in the life of this community. In 1st Corinthians 8, Paul says that "Love builds up." We are going to be mining the lectionary texts for how we are to "Share God's Love through welcoming, encouraging and serving." We will see how this love builds up the body of Christ and makes that love known.

February 4th

5th Sunday after Epiphany

"Entrusted With a Commission"

Rule of Love Part 2 and Serving

Text: 1 Corinthians 9:16-23
(Isaiah 40:21-31; Mark 1:29-39)

February 11th

Transfiguration Sunday

"The Image of God"

Text: 2 Corinthians 4:3-6
(2 Kings 2:1-12; Mark 9:2-9)

Lent Worship Notes will be sent out at a later date.

COPELAND'S CORNER

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?" (John 14:1-2)

Do Not Let Your Hearts Be Troubled: Jesus shared this prior to his death. It is part of what is called the farewell discourses. St. Luke's has faced a lot of loss and grief in these past few months. It has been especially hard to lose our beloved Jan who so faithfully served and loved this congregation and those in it. What does it mean when Jesus says to not let our hearts be troubled? How do we not let our hearts be troubled?

Going Before Us to Prepare a Place: Jesus was leaving them, but only to go before them. Jesus was making a way where there was no way. He was

opening a path to a future where death does not have dominion. That victory was won through the resurrection. Even though the disciples no longer walked with their leader and friend in the flesh, they followed by faith in the assurance that he has prepared a place for them. They were not to let their hearts be paralyzed with despair, but rather to follow in faith and hope where Christ had led the way.

Jesus Is Already in Our Tomorrow: Jesus is preparing our place in the future. He is already making a way where there seemed to be no way. Our task is not to create our own future. Our place is to listen and follow the Lord into what God is already preparing. We are not to let our hearts be troubled, but believing in God we follow our Lord out of the darkness into the light of a new day.

Surrounded By A Great Company of Saints: Jan had a vision for the future of St. Luke's and for this community of faith dwelling in this place in a different way. He worked hard to prepare the way just as the Lord did for his disciples and for all of us. Jan had hope in this future because he believed in the Lord and in the resurrection. We are surrounded by a great company of saints on this journey. Let us set our hearts on Christ and get ready to move into the future already prepared.

Let us pray...***Lord of new life, we cannot know the way. We can only walk by faith that you have gone before us and prepared our tomorrow. Free our hearts from despair and lead us into a new day with the assurance that we have a place in your heart and share in your eternal life. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen!!!***

Lent 2024

“Six Tough Questions For the Church”

When The Previous Answers No Longer Work: When things are stable, answers continue to work. When things change, it is important to ask different questions. Only with different questions will we discover new answers for a new day. During the season of Lent, we are going to explore six questions that can reshape our vision and lead us to new answers. This is based on the book by Reggie McNeal, “*The Present Future: Six Tough Questions for the Church.*”

Ash Wednesday, February 14th at 7PM: We begin our Lenten journey with Ash Wednesday. Those who have come through the darkness of addiction know that the first step is to admit powerlessness. That is what Ash Wednesday is all about. Before we can truly receive new life, we must first recognize that we need it and that only God can give it. We recognize that we are dust, but then hear that because of Christ we are holy dust set apart by grace.

Wednesday Night Lenten Service and Program: As we prepare to move forward as a community of faith, we will explore these six questions with the

hopes that they will open our eyes to the future God is preparing for us. The schedule will be:

6:30pm Soup Supper: Join for some food and fellowship prior to our Lenten service and program. Look for sign-up genius to sign up to bring soup to share.

7:00pm Service and Program: As we center ourselves in scripture, prayer and song, we will explore the below Questions:

- **How Do We DE convert from Christianity To Christianity?**
- **How Do We Transform our Community? How do we hit the streets with the gospel?**
- **How Do We turn members into Missionaries?**
- **How Do We Develop Followers of Jesus**
- **How Do We Prepare for the Future?**
- **How Do We Develop Leaders for the Christian Movement?**

Make plans now to prepare your heart for the present reality of a new future and let us get ready to receive the resurrection and new life.

NOISY OFFERING

In January we collected for:



JDRF is the leading global organization harnessing the power of research, advocacy, and community engagement to advance life-changing breakthroughs for type 1 diabetes (T1D).

This month we will be collecting for:

Pastor's Discretionary Fund

This fund is available for the Pastor to give to members or non-members who demonstrate an immediate, critical need. In the past it has paid for a hotel room for someone who came in off the street and

needed a place to stay. And it was there for someone who was experiencing a crisis and needed money to buy groceries or pay a utility bill. Instead of giving money directly to the individual, St. Luke's gives the money directly to the hotel or utility, or purchases a grocery store gift card. This fund is a tangible way we can **share God's love** with those facing an overwhelming need.

FLOWER CHART IN THE NARTHEX

If you would like to beautify our church sanctuary, honor someone, or commemorate a special day, please add your name to the chart!

We are now using Starclaire House of Flowers. They can be contacted at 704-553-2435. Payment is by credit card or check in advance to the florist.

Remember to tell the florist the date you are giving.

Call Ami-Luise at the church office at 704-523-7981 or email office@stlukeaselca.org with the information you would like put in the bulletins by Wednesday morning of the week you are giving.

If you have any questions, call Pam Moser at 704-552-0996. Thanks!



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



Did we miss your birthday?

Email us
or
call us at
704-523-7981
so we can update our Birthday List.

Email the
office

1 Lucille Aldred
1 Julie Bartlett
2 Sara Mueller
4 Brittany Conner
5 Evan McKee
8 Ryan McCall
11 Aaron Safrit
12 Tom Frick
16 Hube Schmauch
17 Helen Morris
24 Thomas Johnston
24 Jim Jones
25 Ami-Luise Vucovich

Katharina Circle

The Katharina Circle members please reach out to your circle members

Anna Vee Circle

The Anna Vee Circle will be meeting in the conference room
at 12:00pm on February 6th.

Lutheran Men In Mission (LMIM)

If you need minor repairs, changing out smoke detectors, and batteries please
contact the church office and we will get you in touch with Tom Frick.

The LMIM gents want you to know they are available for
odd jobs with their "Congregation/Community Help Program".

ST. LUKE'S HAPPENINGS!

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Development of the Encouragement Center: Moving forward with the blessing of the congregation, leadership is engaging the following toward creating the St. Luke's facility as a sustainable encouragement center with anchor tenants as well as events and community service. Ongoing work includes:

- **Develop Position Description for Facility Manager**
- **Continued work on Leases for Anchor Tenants**
- **Development of Policies To Guide Use and Decisions**

Plans To Move Footprint of Congregation: To open up the most space for facility use while preserving enough space for present and future ministry and mission of St. Luke's plans are being made to consolidate and move our presence to the front. This involves:

- **Architectural Drawings for the Space**
- **A Plan for Moving Forward**
- **Timeline and Capital Plan Development**

This work is being done by task groups who report to Admin Support Team and then to council and ultimately these things will be presented to the congregation for blessing, prayer and support.

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Facing Our Grief: Worship and Music recently met to discuss the way forward. We recognized that there is no way to replace Jan, however, we can honor him by continuing to provide the best in worship and music moving forward.

Monty Recording Music for Sunday: We want to move quickly but not rashly. We are blessed with Mr. Monty Bennet who was a good friend of Jan to record our music during the week to be played back on Sunday. We will continue to do this while beginning clarification of need and beginning a search.

Choir and Anthems: The choir is going to identify anthems that they know well and begin to offer them in worship as soon as they can organize the effort.

Search Process Community Based: The search will involve those in choir and members of the congregation. There will be opportunity to engage candidates before they are hired.

RULE OF LOVE COMING TO THE CHURCH NEAR YOU

How Will We Love February 4th – Fellowship Time: We will be completing our “Rule of Love” for St. Luke’s on Sunday, February 4th during the Fellowship Time. Please join us as we discuss the ways We will love and how We will deal with unloving or disrespectful behavior.

Council Will Finish and Approve the Rule: The council will add their voice to the rule by defining how they will lead this rule of Love and keep love alive in the life of the congregation.

Practicing The Rule of Love During Easter Season: During the Easter Season, we will find creative ways to lift the Rule of Love and practice it. As Easter is the Season when God showed the greatest of Love, it will be a great opportunity for us to commit to this same life of love.

HELP KEEP THE MUSIC GOING

While we are looking for an interim music director,
we are looking for volunteers to push buttons on the organ.
Please reach out to the office for more information and training.

HELP WITH SOUND & LIVE STREAM

We are looking to add to the Sound & Live Stream Team!

With Ami-Luise having to cut back on this commitment on Sundays, we need
volunteers to help keep this important piece of service work going.
Looking for teens to adults and we will teach you what you need to know.
Please reach out to the office with any questions.

LENTEN SOUP SUPPERS

Sign Up Genius will be sent out later this week for the soups and bread for the
Wednesday evening dinners followed by worship.
Beverages will be provided by the church.

6:00pm - 6:30pm Soup Supper
6:30pm - 7:00pm Worship

February 21st
Parish Hall & Chapel

February 28th
Parish Hall & Chapel

March 6th
Parish Hall & Chapel

March 13th
Parish Hall & Chapel

March 20th
Parish Hall & Chapel

March 27th
Schumacher Community Room & Sanctuary



TO ST. LUKE'S FROM COZETTE NOWAK'S GREATFUL HEART:

God doesn't comfort us to make us comfortable but to make us comforters. This truth you know well, for I received it actively and often during the long goodbye to my beloved Johnny. In his last two months, especially, he most often spoke of HOME. "I want to go home," he'd say. "Please help me get home." "When can I go home?" Which home did he long for? He'd had many in 96 years: his childhood home in Minnesota, the home in which he fathered three children, a home in one of his several corporate locations, the home he and I shared. I never knew which of these, but God did. And in His time, He came and accompanied His child John Nowak, His good and faithful servant, to his eternal Home.

(Poem source: Priests of the Sacred Heart, Sacred Heart Ministry)

SAFELY HOME

I am home in Heaven, dear ones;
Oh, so happy and so bright!
There is perfect joy and beauty
In this everlasting light.

All the pain and grief is over,
Every restless tossing past;
I am now at peace forever,
Safely home in Heaven at last.

Did you wonder I so calmly
Trod the valley of the shade?
Oh! But Jesus' love illumined
Every dark and fearful glade.

And He came Himself to meet me
In that way so hard to tread;
And with Jesus' arm to lean on,
Could I have one doubt or dread?

Then you must not grieve so sorely,
For I love you dearly still:
Try to look beyond earth's shadows,
Pray to trust our Father's Will.

There is work still waiting for you,
So you must not idly stand;
Do it now, while life remaineth---
You shall rest in Jesus' land.

When that work is all completed,
He will gently call you Home;
Oh, the rapture of that meeting,
Oh, the joy to see you come!

THANKS. AND. PRAISE

Sometimes it seems that good news is hard to find. So let me share with you that my follow up PET scan last week revealed that I am cancer free! It's been a long and hard journey, but it was worth it. Praise God for His grace and thanks to all of you for your prayers and support. St. Luke's is the greatest!
Diana Brooks

ROOM IN THE INN 2024

Our first RITI for this season was December 17th, a bitterly cold and wet night. We welcomed 7 women and 1 man, who were very thankful for our warm beds and hot soup served upon arrival. Only three churches in Charlotte were hosting that night.

Our group of volunteers did a wonderful job. Heather Micci drove the van to transport our neighbors to the church and back to Roof Above on Monday morning. Alyene Keen and family members, Aldin Hibovic, Margit Hunt, and Prissy Carpender set up the beds and tables & chairs and served as greeters for our guests and helped them settle in. The Anna Vee Circle hosted that night and provided dinner and breakfast items. Our delicious meal consisted of meatloaf, Mac and cheese, squash casserole, salad, sweet potato casserole, rolls, and cake & brownies for dessert.

Our serving team consisted of Mark and Sandie Fenton, Patsy Schober, Rebekah Woodward, Cindy McKee and her mother, Phil and Diana Brooks, and Grace and Sofie Merritt. In addition, we had food contributed by Marilyn Schuster, Dreema Brunnemer, Pam Moser, Brenda Shuping, and Rosalie Steinitz. Fancita Lorimer provided lunches for all eight of our guests. We were

also so blessed to have Vanessa Infanzon and her son Michael McCall as our overnight hosts. They also served breakfast items the next morning, supervised the breakdown of cots. and escorted our guests to the bus.

As you can see, there are many volunteers needed to make this night possible. A huge THANK YOU to all of them. We had a wonderful group of guests who were so appreciative of our efforts and thanked us over and over again. This is truly one of the most impactful ministries at St. Luke's. It's a perfect way to share God's love!

Phil & Diana Brooks

BOY SCOUT TROOP 355

The Scouts still have some BBQ left to sell.
Please reach out to Ami-Luise during office hours.

COAT DRIVE

THANK YOU to everyone who brought items for Crisis Assistance Ministry.

We were able to collect:

- 15 Men's coats
- 23 Men's sweaters & active wear
- 17 Women's coats
- 21 Women's sweaters & active wear
- 8 Kid's coats
- 13 scarfs
- 3 pairs of shoes
- 2 hats
- 2 pair of socks
- 1 pair of gloves

Total of 105 items!



CROP WALK FINAL TOTAL

St, Luke's total for 2023 is \$4028.

THANK YOU to everyone who walked & donated!

FROM BEHIND THE LENS OF "MR.TERRY" CHEVILLE







OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

NOURISH UP

You are a true hunger hero!

Last month we donated of 166 lbs. of food to Nourish Up helps provide groceries and meals to our neighbors in need.

We truly appreciate your kindness and generosity.
We are so grateful for your support making it possible to nourish our neighbors with food and compassion.

Sincerely,
Lindsey Houser
Community Engagement Coordinator

We are continuing to collect items for our neighbors in need.
You can bring items on Sunday or during office hours.

Priority Needs

- ☐ **Canned Meat - Tuna, Chicken, etc.**
- ☐ **Canned Fruit - No Sugar Added**
- ☐ **Canned Vegetables - Low Sodium**
- ☐ **Pasta - Canned or Dry boxed**
- ☐ **Cereal - Whole Grain**

No Glass Please



New Name, Same Mission

Loaves & Fishes/Friendship Trays is now **Nourish Up**, providing the same mission to nourish our neighbors with food and compassion.

LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF COFFEE

Lutheran World Relief Farmers Market now offers chocolate in addition to coffee!

Mountain Harvest works with roughly 850 farmers in eight communities on Mount Elgon, Uganda with each farm growing between 600 and 1,000 coffee trees. We pay farmers up to 30% above local market prices allowing them to better provide for their families, invest in their crops and land, and ultimately, drive the local economy to benefit their community.

Latitude Craft Chocolate signs long term contracts with their suppliers to grow organic cocoa, promote biodiversity and ensure fair labor practices on all the farms. Over half of their contracted farmers are women. Latitude pays on average 50% higher than prices in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire, the world's leading cocoa producing countries.



LWR Farmer's Market
Coffee

Assist M.E.

We take in gently used medical equipment and gift it to low income, uninsured patients in our community.

Assist M.E. is a non-profit [501c(3)] organization in the Charlotte, North Carolina area. We take in gently used medical equipment and gift it to low-income, uninsured patients in our community. Assist M.E. gets wheelchairs, bedside commodes, walkers, shower chairs, and other medical equipment from individual donors and organizations.

If you have any unused, or gently used medical equipment to donate, simply call our church office 9-12:30pm M-F to make arrangements to drop your equipment off so that it may be reused by someone in need.

Visit Assist M.E.
website

List of donation needs

FAMILIES IN CRISIS NEED YOUR HELP

Your love will reach your neighbors who feel so alone as they continue to fight for their lives.

You'll provide frightened, cold and hungry children, mothers and seniors with:

- Shelter from the deadly cold with beds, pillows and heaters.
- Warm meals and clean water.
- Mobile medical clinics that provide health care, critically needed medical supplies and mental health support for PTSD and trauma.
- Essential supplies, like soap and toilet paper.
- Comforting quilts made by members of our caring Lutheran family.
- Love, support — and most importantly — hope for a brighter tomorrow.

Click on the button below and connect to the website enabling you to contribute directly and your offering will flow swiftly to where it needs to go.

Lutheran World Relief



St. Luke's Lutheran Church | 3200 Park Road, Charlotte, NC 28209

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