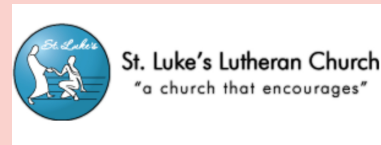


The Encourager



October 2021

(Deadline for November Newsletter submissions is on October 29th!)

PONDERING PASTOR



"Finish Strong!"

"Finish strong!" That's what is often bellowed as words of encouragement for those sprinting toward the finish line in a foot, or automobile race. Really, in any race, those participating are encouraged to finish strong. How else can anyone in the race expect to win other than to give it their all?

That's my hope for our year of ministry here at St. Luke's Lutheran Church. My hope is we finish strong! We have a lot of work to do, however, for that to be the reality.

It has been a challenging year, no understatement. It has been difficult negotiating our congregation's safety with the concerns of the spread of the Delta variant which continues to wreak havoc on our ability to plan our congregational life, together. In fact, as I write this one of our beloved elderly members has been holed up in the ER for over 24 hours after a fall and consequential pelvis fractures because the hospital system is over-extended caring for patients with Covid, WHO HAVE NOT BEEN VACCINATED!

I feel defeated out in the world, as I know many of you do, that we cannot seem to function together with genuine civility to beat back this pandemic as the means we have to do that have been so poisoned by a hyper-partisan atmosphere. I feel defeated at the church, too, as I know many of you do as our capacity to regain a sense of congregational traction feels less like striving ahead, and more like we are stumbling toward some sort of finish line.

Since we reopened months ago to in-person worship we have averaged about 45 worshippers in attendance on Sundays as compared to 135 prior to COVID-19. Our viewership online seems to be tapering off, as well. Before you ask, "Where is everybody," ask yourself, "Where am I? Am I helping to enhance that statistic for the health of my church, which I love, and the rebuilding up of my faith community?" Also concerning is our financial health.

Since January in which we experienced the highest month of pledged-giving in over 3 years at \$44,370.00, we received \$20,597.00 in September, which isn't even enough to meet payroll. Ask yourself, "Am I up to date on my pledge? Am I concerned if I am not?"

We have attempted a return to a semblance of Sunday school which at this writing has only been responded to favorably by our oldest adults. No children or youth.

The God's Work, Our Hands event had a great mixture of older adults along with a smattering of children and youth that made my heart soar because it showed me there are possibilities we can get people together, again. That has not translated though into inertia to get back together to grow in faith and community. I do not intend to be a downer, but I think I have to ask this difficult question?

What will it take to finish this challenging year of ministry strong?

It will take you...me...each one of us coming together! Your participation, your offerings, and your desire to see St. Luke's cross the annual finish line strong is what it will take to ensure we even have the legs to start 2022 strong, as well.

Jesus said at the end of Matthew's gospel when Jesus commissioned the apostles to go and spread the Gospel, "And remember, I am with you always to the end of the age." Finishing the year strong means reminding one another of this spiritual truth. Jesus is with us. The best way for us to remember that is to join one another and get across the finish line in full stride along with Jesus by our presence, our offerings, and our attention to the motto which St. Luke's is built upon, The Church that Encourages Living and Sharing God's Love in all that we do. Let's finish strong!

Peace, Pastor Jeffrey Ingold

ST. LUKE'S HAPPENINGS!

Sunday School Event for All Ages

Get to know Martin and Katie Luther in this month of Reformation focus. Join friends and family, participants of all ages for a new season of "intergenerational" Sunday school.

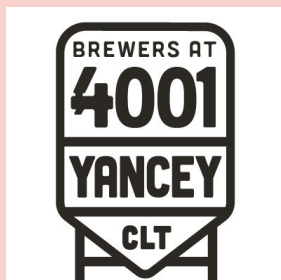
Donuts, juice boxes, and coffee will be ready as we gather at 8:45 a.m Sunday, October 3rd and 17th in the Parish Hall.

Face-coverings must be employed for everybody's safety.



Confirmation Classes Begin

Pastor Jeffrey will be hosting Confirmation classes beginning October 17th through November 14th for all Affirmation of Baptism candidates. These sessions will be both in-person in the Conference Room and live-streamed on ZOOM for a remote participation option. Indeed, we are excited to include two of our members who moved to Switzerland last year as they will participate remotely!



Beer & Bible Returns

Come out for a good meal, good brews, and good conversations around living out our faith in daily life.

Brewers at 4001 Yancey
October 5th at 7:00 p.m.

The Katarina Circle will not meet this month.

McCauley Diehl Circle

The McCauley Diehl Circle will meet on October 5th
at 12:00 NOON in the Conference Room.

Connie Counts Circle

The Connie Counts Circle will not meet this month.

Lutheran Men In Mission (LMIM)

The Lutheran Men in Mission will meet on October 13th at 1:00 pm
in the Conference Room.

The LMIM gents want you to know they are available for odd jobs with their
"Congregation/Community Help Program". If you need minor repairs, changing out
smoke detectors, batteries, and transportation needs, please contact the church office
and we will get you in touch with Tom Frick.

OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES



NOISY OFFERING!

In September you raised \$415 which we will give to Lutheran Services Carolinas to aid in helping with resettling immigrants from Afghanistan. Thank you for your offerings. The October Noisy Offering collected on October 17th will be given to Crop Walk, Charlotte.



Crop Walk 2021- November 7, 2021

Crop Walk is November 7, 2021, this year, and the in-person walk will be at Memorial Stadium. It is easy to get to and easy parking so hope lots of you will join us. The virtual option is still around this year. If there is another time you can walk in your neighborhood that works better for you, that is fine. The basic distance of the walk is 4 miles, and that is symbolic for the number of miles many folks have to walk each day for water.

We had a bonus year in 2020 and raised \$4148. It was wonderful! I have put our goal as \$5000 this year. Hope you will walk and raise money and/or donate towards the church goal. Let's really work towards that goal.

Below are links to St. Luke's CROP walk page and also for the Charlotte CROP walk page.

Church World Services does so much more than we realize. They assist in floods and hurricanes and all-natural disasters, in the United States and worldwide. They are an amazing

organization.

In Charlotte, one-quarter of the money we raise goes to these fabulous organizations: Loaves & Fishes, Crisis Assistance Ministry, and Second Harvest Food Bank. These organizations have made a huge difference to so many people over the years, but this past year they have been even more amazing!

St. Luke's CROP
Walk

Charlotte CROP
Walk



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 9-12pm 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

CONGREGATIONAL & WORSHIP LIFE

Altar Flowers

The Flower Chart is back up in the hall outside of the main office. 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@stlukeselca.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!

Poinsettias 2021



Till the season for Poinsettias and orders are due by **November 7th**.

\$11.50 each please attach a check with your order in the offering plate or to the church office.

Order forms will be in Sunday bulletins till November 7th.

October Birthdays



Did we miss your birthday?
Email us at
office@stlukeselca.org
or
call us at
704-523-7981
so we can update our Birthday List.

1 Kristen Conner
1 Lindsay Rosti
1 Russel Schlick
2 George Heintz
3 Charlene Mock
3 Evan Hofland
3 Edward Burchins
5 Tiana Sullivan
7 Carol Schmauch
7 Sophie Chien
7 Melissa Eubanks
9 Charles Berry
9 Jacqueline Behm
11 Johnathan Cheville
12 Ansley Moresi
15 Deborah Hofland
16 Rachel Berry
16 Kevin Walsh
19 Virginia Schimacher
21 Emily Burchins
22 Jeremy Shine
22 Vanessa Stolen
22 Rebecca Dolan
23 Ryan Borachok
23 Onastasia Ebright
24 Rebecca Jones
26 Gregg Borachok
30 Darrin Beltran

Wear Red for Reformation

Reformation Sunday, October 31st marks the annual celebration which remembers our Lutheran/Protestant heritage. To mark the occasion when we worship you are invited to wear red-colored clothing, the liturgical color of the Reformation, and the movement of the Holy Spirit!



God's Work, Our Hands. A Huge Success!!



Thank you to Judy Hall pictured here who organized this incredible opportunity along with aid from Thrivent Financial, represented by Charles Beatty, pictured here.



As is always the case it was so much fun working together to fill the "Welcome Home" kits for our transitional homeless neighbors. Perhaps the boxes of household items we provided will ease their burden transition in God's grace. Thank you to everyone who participated and contributed to this important and wildly successful ministry effort.





St. Luke's Green Team

THANK YOU Green Team for all the work and effort that you have done around our campus and Prayer Garden. Church members, Day Care staff and Parents have all commented on all your hard work during one hot summer season.



Green Team Information

We are also blessed and thankful for the work done by Al Dowfom.

Looking to get your hands dirty and want to join the team? Click below and email the church office.

Blessing of the Animals at Holy Comforter Episcopal Church



Father Greg Brown, rector at Holy Comforter and host for this occasion.



Pastor Russ Dean of Park Road Baptist, Pastor Jim Ewing of Avondale Presbyterian, and Pastor Jeffrey Ingold of St. Luke's Lutheran.



Pastor Jeffrey and Buddy exchange a blessing!

COUNCIL LIAISONS

The work of St. Luke's reflects our mission together and is organized into different ministry areas. These areas are effective through the collaboration among pastor and staff, council, and members of the congregation (committees). There is a place for you to share your gifts in one or more of these ministry areas. Please contact the Staff Member or Council Liaisons for the ministry area(s) of interest to you to begin sharing your gifts and building the body of Christ here at St. Luke's.

Worship (Music, Altar Guild, Worship Adjunct Groups)

Staff Member - Jan McCoy
Council Liaisons - Terri Wells and Pete Schmidt

Nurture Faith (Sunday School, Confirmation, New Members, VBS, Mid-Week Learning, Youth/Young Adults)

Staff Member - Pastor Jeffrey Ingold
Council Liaisons - Alex Jenkins and Jonathan Wolff

Community Care (Social Awareness, Outreach Ministries, Benevolence)

Staff Member - Pastor Jeffrey Ingold
Council Liaisons - Emily Phillips and Lisa Rhyne

Member Care (Bereavement, Homebound Ministries, Visitors/Prospective Members, Archives, Communications)

Staff Member - Ami-Luise Vucovich
Council Liaisons - Rebekah Woodward and Julie Fosbinder

Operations (Building and Grounds, Finance, Stewardship)

Staff Member - Kathy West
Council Liaisons - Kristen Conner and John Hofland

Planning (Sustainability & Vitality, Personnel)

Staff Member - Pastor Jeffrey Ingold
Council Liaisons - Wanda Ebright and David Sweet

