

Gethsemane Gazette

Gethsemane Lutheran
Church
Virginia, Minnesota
www.gelc.info

Mission Statement

To draw all people
to Christ,
nurture faith, and
fulfill our calling to serve

Vision for Gethsemane

A vibrant place of
worship, learning and
service, where every
person is passionate
about their belonging and
their ministry

Marks of Discipleship

Pray daily
Study Scriptures diligently
Worship weekly
Encourage Faith in Others
Serve for the sake
of others
Give freely

Inside this issue:

Nurturing Faith	2
From the Pastor	2
Children, Youth and Family Ministry	3
Service in our Congregation	4
Service in Community and World	5
People of Gethsemane	6
Congregational Support	7
Prayer Wall	7
Fundraiser for Hannah & Ava Jaus	8



March, 2024

Volume 46, Issue 3

Join us for March Worship and Events!

Lenten Wednesdays 2024 (Feb 21 - Mar 20)

This year, Gethsemane is grateful for the invitation to worship on Wednesdays with our neighboring churches as we go through a pastoral transition.

Please participate with *Ours Saviors Lutheran*, *Messiah Lutheran*, or *Peace United Methodist* on Wednesdays throughout this season as a way of enriching your faith in preparation for the celebration of Easter.

Our Saviors Lutheran - Soup @ 5:15 pm, Worship @ 6 pm
"Altered by the Spirit" stories from Acts.

Messiah Lutheran - Gather for dinner and worship at 6:30 pm
"Dinner Church" a Word and Meal worship around tables

Peace United Methodist - 12:00 Noon
Midday Table Fellowship & Devotional Service

Holy Week Worship Services at Gethsemane

Maundy Thursday - March 28

6:30 PM - Worship with Holy Communion

Good Friday - March 29

7:00 PM - The Passion Story, Tenebrae

Easter Sunday - March 31

Celebration of the Resurrection
& Holy Communion

9:00 am (in-person & live streamed)

Easter Breakfast 8:00 am - 10:30 am

11:00 am (in-person only)

Questions? Call the church office at
218-741-4961



HOLY WEEK

February Angels

Many thanks for many who helped out in February: Barb and Ken Alaspa, Donna Flannigan, Evie Kinnunen, Darcy Norha, Joyce Bloomquist, Gail and Dana Waldron, Lance Ness, Tony Mazzeo, Dan Gallagher, the National Youth Gathering youth and parents who helped for Pastor Amy's going-away party, and Pep's Bakery for the beautiful cake!

God's blessings! Laurie Harvey

Mark your calendars, let's help Celebrate Fran Shimmin's 92nd Birthday on Sunday, March 10, 2024!!

Please join us for cake and coffee after the service in the fellowship hall on Sunday to help celebrate with Fran.

All are welcome!



All Women of Gethsemane Get Together

Thursday, March 14th, at 5:30 pm in the youth room. We are having our casual get together just to "hang out" with other gals, enjoy visiting, relax, and have some laughs.

We normally meet on the 4th Thursday of each month, but the 4th Thursday in March is Maundy Thursday. Since this is religious day, we decided to move it up 2 weeks as the 21st did not work for many people. No commitments, just bring yourself and your own beverage. Please come. - we'll have a fun time!

A Reminder that Daylight Savings Time is Sunday, March 10, 2024

It is that time of year again. Make sure you turn your clocks **Ahead** one hour. You don't want to be late for church on Sunday.

It is also a good time to change the batteries in your smoke detector too!!



She's Baaaack!

Like a bad penny, I just keep turning up! My name is **Reverend Rebecca LeMenager**, and I filled in briefly at Gethsemane right before Pastor Amy came to serve as your pastor. I am so excited and humbled to have the privilege of filling in for a few weeks while your council works with the NE Minnesota Synod on securing and interim pastor or other arrangements.

I will be with you on Sunday mornings starting on Sunday, March 17 and will be with Gethsemane through Holy Week and Easter. Because I work full time at the Virginia Public Library, my day time hours are limited and my other duties will be light.

I am planning to offer a "First Communion" class for any children 1-5th grade and for any children interested, there will be First Communion on Maundy Thursday Service (6:30 pm on March 28th). I am available for pastoral visits and hospital visits in the evenings or weekends. If this is something you or your loved one desires, please contact the church or call my cell phone directly (218-290-7314) and leave a message. Please note that due to my full time work schedule, I am not available for funerals but other arrangements have been made. Please call the church office.

I am excited to reconnecting with all of you. I am confident that Christ is calling this vibrant and faithful congregation into a new future bright with so many ways to serve Him. Please pray for your church and council and volunteer to help out during this time of transition. This church needs you. I look forward to seeing you soon!

Pastor Rebecca

Annual Meeting held Sunday, Jan. 26th

2024 Returning Council Members:

Molly Pemmaraju, President
Mary Horan, Vice President
Bruce Kniivila, Treasurer
Sheila Davidson, Secretary
Debbie Poderzay, member at large
Donna Flannigan, member at large
Laurie Harvey, member at large
Cindy Lustig, member at large

Newly Nominated Council Members:

Bennet Bloomquist, member at large
Dan Alto, member at large

Synod Assembly Representatives (Apr. 17, online)

Dan and Andrea Alto;

Nominating Committee

Char Meinzer; Tom Lee; Pam Fields

First Communion Instruction Class Sunday, March 17th, 10:30 - Noon

Children in grades 1 thru 5 and their parents are invited to join us! Class will be led by Pastor Rebecca LeMenger. Please call the church office at 218-741-4961 to R.S.V.P. Thank you.

All are invited to the Celebration of First Communion which will be held on Maundy Thursday, March 28th at 6:30 pm during the Worship Service.

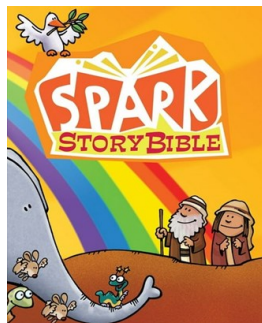


Faith Builders

Preschool - grade 5

Our Sunday School children are now working with the Spring Spark Lectionary curriculum. They will be learning about Noah's Ark, the 10 Commandments, Holy Week, and many more faith filled lessons.

We have started practicing songs for Palm Sunday, and they can't wait to wave the palms and sing for you. Hope to see you all there on March 24th!!



God's Blessings, Pam and Cindy

Youth Easter Breakfast Fundraiser

Join us for a Pancake Breakfast from 8:00 -10:30 AM on Easter Sunday, March 31st.

Buy your tickets now. The proceeds will be used for supporting the National Youth Gathering Trip.

Tickets will be on sale before church on Sunday or from any of the Youth Gathering Youth. Tickets are: \$10.00 for adults, and \$5.00 for kids 12 and under.

A limited number of tickets will be available at the door: \$12.00 for adults, and \$7.00 per kid.



High School Youth

The ELCA Youth Gathering team had another great fundraiser with the Super Bowl Sub sale raising \$1,000, thank you to all who ordered and donated. WOO-HOO!

We will be doing an Envelope Fundraiser in the Narthex every Sunday in March as well as an Easter Brunch on March 31st from 8-10:30 am, look for more details. All of these fundraisers are helping us get closer to our total remaining balance of \$6,000. Thank you for your continued support and prayers! We couldn't do it without are wonderful church family.

GELC Confirmation 2024 Spring Schedule

CHECK THE TEAMREACH APP FOR UPDATES ON INDIVIDUAL LESSONS AND ACTIVITIES

February 21 – March 20 – Lenten Wednesdays - No Lessons at GELC

Lent is a time when we encourage confirmation families and youth to experience new ways of worshipping and to engage in activities with the rest of the church body. Confirmation students should attend worship with their parents and siblings to enrich their church experience and grow in faith together.

Please attend Wednesday evening activities; as a family at one of our neighbor churches.

Our Saviors Lutheran (corner of 8th & 12th) see flyer in bulletins & on our bulletin board

Soup Supper @ 5:15 - 6:00 pm

Worship & Activities @6:00 - 7:00 pm

Messiah Lutheran (Mt. Iron near MIB school)

Dinner Church starts at 6:30 pm

ACOLYTES NEEDED!!

We still need acolytes for our church services through May. Please sign up on the bulletin board by the Youth Room. Thank you.

March 27 & April - Holy Week & Easter Week - NO CONFIRMATION

March 29 - Good Friday

This service tells the story of Jesus's trial, crucifixion, death and burial.

March 31 - Easter Sunday

Easter Morning services at 9:00 am and 11:00 am

April 10 - Regular Wednesday Confirmation Lessons Resume - 6:30 - 8:00 pm

Lessons will be taught by the interim pastor and/or Heath Boe

May 22 - Last Day of Confirmation - Spring Fun Activities

Gethsemane Angel Coordinators

The Gethsemane Angel program is a way that we, as a congregation, are organizing ourselves in service to the Lord. We ask every person to volunteer to serve during one month of the year with a "Team of Angels". Each month the Angel Coordinator schedules the Angels with what is needed to be done for the month. **We are looking for 3 more Angel Coordinators for the months of March, April and October.** Please consider helping out for this position. The Angel Coordinator is not responsible for arranging funeral luncheons. If you would like to sign-up as an Angel Coordinator, please call the church office at: 218-741-4961. Thank You.

Ways to Worship

In the Sanctuary - 9 am, Sundays

We are worshipping in-person in our sanctuary. Please assess your own health as you consider attending worship in person. We are now receiving communion at the altar using bread and wine/grape juice. Gluten free is also available. We practice an open table, meaning all believers are welcome to partake.

Facebook Livestream

We will continue to livestream our worship on our Facebook page at 9 am on Sundays. The video will be available throughout the rest of the week as well.

Local Public Access TV (one week behind)

Worship is still available on TV, on Channel 5 (Mediacom).

The schedule is:

Mondays – 7:30 pm

Tuesdays – 4:00 pm

Wednesdays – 10:00 am

Fridays – 10:00 am



EASTER FLOWERS

Please help us build a Gethsemane Garden for our altar on Easter morning!

If you would like to donate a plant to help decorate the altar for Easter morning; please drop off your plant (with your name on the bottom) to the church office by noon on Good Friday, (March 29).

You can pick up your plant following the Easter morning services.



Generosity Team

Welcome to our edition of "**Gethsemane Gifts!**" Each month we will recognize the gifts of generosity that we have experienced from our very own Gethsemane Family. We will focus on one member of our church who has experienced a time of support, love, and/or generosity from other members of our church.

This month is in Memory of Dan Karlin –

You know him as Dan.

Dan worked in the church for 40+ years. He was a 7 & 8 grade teacher, youth director and for the last 15 years before he retired, Dan was the director of Social Outreach at Trinity Lutheran Church Utica, MI. Dan was the only paid staff member at the beginning working with literally hundreds of volunteers. Every Sunday for the past 20 years (it still continues) they provide a meal for 125+ people, with shower facilities available and a sack lunch to take when they leave. Volunteers from the church work with the homeless shelter in the county and work with shelters in the Detroit metro area. Dan started "Motown Soup". It's an all volunteer work force that makes soup mixes and sells at craft shows & online with all the profits going to homeless shelters, food pantries and free clinics. So far 1.8 million dollars has been given out. This is the short list of what he has done.



Generosity Team

- continued-

After retirement he continued to look for places to give back. That's how he lived his life. Dan was thrilled with Rock the Block & Schokolade. He loved working at Salvation Army & the Meatball Gang, hanging clothes on the fence & filling the food cabinet. He never understood why Christians didn't work together more, so he loved that Peace Methodist & Gethsemane were actually working & worshipping together. That's the way he lived his life. When he worked for Trinity, Dan would say, "Trinity pays me, but I work for God."



Dan Karlin "reading" to his granddogs!

WARM YOUR HEART COMMUNITY CLOTHESLINE and FOOD PANTRY

The winter season is still here! We are grateful that you are continuing to contribute to our Community Clothesline. Do you have extra jackets, shirts, sweat-shirts, pants, shoes, T-Shirts, etc....? Now is the time to also bring winter jackets, warm socks, mittens, gloves, hats, blankets. Any type of clothing will be helpful.

You can help your neighbors by putting each item in a plastic bag to keep it dry, labeling it (example, "child hat, size M" or "men's jacket, size XL"), and clip it anywhere on the 'clothesline' [on the fence] on the west side of the church! (Clothespins are on site). The Community Clothesline is accessible at all times (24/7) from both the north and south parking lots.

We also have a Community Food Pantry next to the clothesline for putting nonperishable food items, personal care items, and paper products.

GIVE WHAT YOU CAN ~ TAKE WHAT YOU NEED. Let's do what we can to help our friends & neighbors.

Schokolade 2024 "Thank You"

The 2024 Schokolade "Mardi Gras" event was a success! There are many people behind the scenes to make this event happen and are being acknowledged in this article. This was a collaboration between Gethsemane and Peace United churches with Sheila Vandervort and Lois Lackner as the organizers. A huge thank you to the volunteers who helped to decorate, undecorate, ready the to-go boxes, serve the chocolate goodies and clean up the fellowship room. The volunteers from Gethsemane were Sheila and Richard Vandervort, Sheila and Deron Davidson, Donna Flannigan, Gail Wieman, Dan Alto, Darcy Norha, Char Meinzer, Mandy Brunfelt, Hannah and Sam Davidson-Teff, Debbie Poderzay, Nancy Rosewall, and Pat Sleeman. The volunteers from Peace United were Lois Lackner, Pam Omersa, Barb Porter, and Terry Hilar.

Thank you to all the bakers who helped to make Schokolade a chocolate feast! The bakers from Gethsemane were Barb Alaspa, Pam Fields, Margaret Karlin, Evie Kinnunen, Christine Lehtinen, Debbie Manninen, Darcy Norha, Sheila Davidson, Sheila Vandervort, Sue Swanson, Debbie Poderzay, Nancy Rosewall, Pat Sleeman, and Gail Wieman. The bakers from Peace were Rachel Bodas, Char Cremers, Sue Kolstad, Sandy LaBarre, Lois Lackner, JoAnn Martinson, Pam Omersa, and Connie Rabideaux.

The net profit from the event was over \$2,200. This is a wonderful start to the development of a weekend community food program. Eleanor Anshus and Pat Sleeman were the lucky winners of the two raffle baskets. Congratulations to Eleanor and Pat!

Camp Corner

Spring Quilting Retreat ,Camp Vermilion 2024
2555 Vermilion Camp Road Cook, MN. Starting
Thursday, March 7 at 2 pm through Sunday, March 10,
at 1 pm. at Camp: Cost is \$300/per person. **This retreat fee includes 6 meals (Dinner & Brunch), snacks, irons, a cutting table, space to sew, & lodging (multiple-occupancy) in Voyageur Lodge. Can't stay the whole time? Contact us for additional rates. VLM's Quilting Retreat offers a chance to tackle some of your big projects.*

This retreat is ideal for quilters who need some focused time to start or finish a project, who are interested in connecting with others who share a passion for sewing, or simply need a weekend away in a great setting! **Not a quilter?** Bring your knitting, crocheting, needlepoint, scrapbooking, or any other craft you wish.

To register, you may download the registration form on our [resources page](#) or call the camp office at **800-331-5148**.



Blessings to all who have a Birthday this Month:

- 1: Sandi Shoden
- 2: Hannah Davidson-Teff
- 3: Ian Ramfjord
- 5: Don Bird, Zachary Schiller
- 6: Gladys Boril, Jace Fridelieb, Helen Niemi, Julie Spiering
- 7: Ruth Koski, Keith Nelson, Henri Fyre
- 9: Fran Shimmin
- 10: Laurie Laakso
- 11: William McCormick, John Meinzer
- 12: Charles Eichholz, Laurie Harvey, Marian Holmes
- 13: Mike Hauber, Amber Rosewall
- 14: Kayla Cochems, Evan Friedlieb, Livia Jorgenson
- 15: Edward Zeidler
- 16: Beckett Cochems, Rees Harvey
- 17: Debra Carpenter
- 19: Dana Waldron, Sherry Wiitala, Shelly Zeidler
- 21: Rebekah Davidson, Tyler Norha
- 22: Michaela Le Doux, Jaynee Peterson, Mary Jo Ralston
- 23: Sheila Davidson
- 24: Eric Krause
- 25: Cindy Bird, Don Sipola, Elijah Wedge
- 26: Sara Weddel
- 28: Barry Collins, Abigail Olson, Nancy Richter
- 29: Kinsley Suihkonen Braden Tiedeman,
- 31: Harry Lamppa

Memorial Gifts received during the month of February

In Memory of:

Janet Suihkonen

From:

Richard & Sheila Vandervort
Barry & Jean Collins



Look who's celebrating their Anniversary for March, enjoy your Special Day!

- 3/12 Dana and Gail Waldron
3/31 Charles and Nancy Eichholz
3/31 David and Renee' Pollock



Celebrating the Anniversary of your Baptism:

- 3/1: Mandy Brunfelt
3/2: Mary Horan
3/4: Makayla Waldron
3/7: Matti Koski
3/8: Hannah Anderson
3/9: Richard Vandervort
3/12: Kinsley Suihkonen
3/13: Tye Hiltunen, Amber Rosewall
3/15: Chrystal Olson, Emma Rosewall
3/18: Jim Pauling
3/19: David Lind,
3/22: Austin Kalisch
3/24: Earl Haugen
3/25: Ruth Koski, Aiden Marchetti
3/27: Kade Baty-Denzel
3/28: Rollie Seppala
3/29: Laurie Laakso
3/30: Helen Niemi
3/??: Jesse Benne, Sophia Lamppat

****If we have left you out, we need your help to know!
Call the office to update your information****

Prayer Wall

In your daily prayers, pray God's blessings for:

- ♦ The innocents suffering in the war in Israel/Palestine, Gladys Boril, Mary Sterling, Marian Holmes Lillian Ferkins, Brianna Saver, Margaret Karlin, Amanda Rosandich, and Mary Jo Ralston.

We continue to pray for;

- ♦ Judy Bennick, Ruth Koski, Mark Andres, Kristy McCarty, and Fran Shimmin.
- ♦ All members who are homebound, in nursing homes, or assisted living.

Prayers of peace and comfort for:

- ♦ Family and friends on the death of Janet Suihkonen
- ♦ Family and friends on the death of Jeffrey Rosati



Council Highlights

We have recently said farewell to Pastor Amy and are grateful for her time and all she has done for our congregation. However, have no fear/worries as God works in wonderful ways and we will continue to thrive. So, let's move forward and get energized about the future!

The council has been diligently working with Deacon Susan Williams and others from the MN Northeastern Synod, ELCA to search for our interim pastor. In the meantime, we are blessed to have coordinated excellent and passionate coverage from beloved clergy we are familiar with that are stepping up to the plate for Lenten services and Easter!

Also, let's keep in mind this is not a new situation and change is not always bad. We had our long-term Pastor Nathan Sager move on and were fortunate to have received Pastor Amy, so we know someone that is meant to be here will come and we must all pray about this and be patient.

On a different note, didn't we have an excellent February filled with Schokolade? Nummy, I know I did... we are so fortunate to have so many hard-working

Vanco GivePlus Mobile App. Members

THE NEW VANCO APP: Vanco updated their phone and tablet APP. It is no longer "Give Plus" but is now called "Vanco Mobile." If you used it before on your phone you will need to go to your app store to download the new app and log-in with the info you used before to set up electronic giving.

Please call Vanco at: 800-675-7430 or visit us at www.vanco.com/vm to learn more about what steps you need to take.

Thank you for using Vanco. We hope this new timeline offers you the flexibility needed to inform your members and launch Vanco Mobile.

QR Code for Giving at Gethsemane:

When you are reading our monthly newsletter or the Sunday morning bulletin, you will see our QR giving code.

Simply take out your phone, scan the code, put in your password, select how much you want to give for the month, and press done. It's as easy as that and takes less than a minute!



volunteers. All their efforts toward this event along with those who attended brought in significant funds that will go toward upcoming community programs. For those of you who enjoyed that as much as I did...please don't hesitate to volunteer where you feel called to...your assistance can help so many.

Lastly, let's get out and take a walk and enjoy this mild winter...since we don't get these often!

Molly Pemmaraju, Council President

Weekly Giving

Giving for this month continues to be down, below budget. Giving for February has averaged \$3,009 per week, which is a little more than three-quarters of budget, or \$829 per week less than our budgeted expenses. Take care.

Bruce Kniivila, Treasurer





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Gethsemane Lutheran Church

901 Fourth Street South
Virginia, MN 55792
Phone: 218-741-4961
Email: gelc@gelc.info
Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 9 am to noon

Brenda Varani
Parish Secretary

Come and see us on the web!
www.gelc.info

Hannah is the Daughter of Pastor Nathan and was a member of Gethsemane

**Saturday
March 16th
3-8pm**

**\$10
PER PERSON**
Tickets at the door
Raffles



SPAGHETTI DINNER

Fundraiser for

Hannah & Ava Jaus

Valentini's Supper Club

31 W Lake St Chisholm, MN 55719

All proceeds will go to help Hannah and Ava with the never ending cost associated with losing their husband/father, Nate

Go Fund Me:



Pick-up Pre-Orders:
Garth: 218-780-0462
Brad: 218-966-0603

Questions or Donations: Rhonda 612-229-6063