

# Gethsemane Gazette

Gethsemane Lutheran  
Church  
Virginia, Minnesota  
www.gelc.info

January, 2023

Volume 45, Issue 1

## Join us for January Worship and Events!

### 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

### Gethsemane Annual Meeting Sunday, January 29th, at 10:30 am in the Sanctuary

All confirmed members of the church are asked to attend our annual meeting of the Congregation. The report can be picked up in the narthex starting on Sunday, January 22nd. Hope to see you all there!!



### Annual Report Assembled January 19th

Volunteers are needed to help assemble the annual report on Thursday, Jan. 19th at 9:30 in the Youth Room. The more people we can get to help, the faster this job will get done. What a great way to help out the church, and your help is greatly appreciated. Thank you!



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## Ways to Worship

### In the Sanctuary

We are worshipping in-person in our sanctuary. Please assess your own health as you consider attending worship in person. Masks are optional. We are now receiving communion at the altar using bread and wine/grape juice. Gluten free is also available.

### 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 – 6:00 pm, Tuesdays – 4:00 pm  
Wednesdays – 10:00 am, Fridays – 10:00 am  
Sundays – 7:45 am



## January 2023 “Favor of the Month”

The Lakeview Residence in Virginia is a residential group home, established in 1982, that provides a variety of services such as providing a safe home for the elderly, chronically mentally ill, and recovering chemically dependent individuals. The residents of Lakeview range in age from 18 and older, males and females. Currently there are 27 males and 3 females residing at the home. For the month of January, the Generosity Team will be asking for donations for our “Love Across the Lake” Favor of the Month.

The greatest needs of our neighbors across the lake are new or gently used tube style stockings and personal hygiene products such as bar soap or body wash, shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, and deodorant. These items will be handed out to the residents as needed while staying at the house.

During January we will be collecting these items and ask that all donations to support the Lakeview Residence and “Love Across the Lake” be delivered to the box in our church office.

Thank you again for your constant generosity!

## December Angels

Thank you! Our Gethsemane Angels are just so awesome! When asked to help there was never a hesitation and even during the crazy busy month of December. We couldn't do what we do without everyone pitching in! Thank you to our Angels during December - the Reid Family, Debbie Poderzay, Sheryl Kochevar, our wonderful Sunday School children, Hannah Davidson-Teff, David Lind, Ron Picek, Pam Burgess, Tom & Cindy Lee, Nancy Rosewall, Chris, Andrea & Emma Lintula, Dana Waldron, Joyce Bloomquist, Molly Pemmaraju, Pam Fields and Brenda Ryberg. Thank you everyone!

Sheila Davidson,  
December Angel Coordinator

## All Women of Gethsemane

Thursday, January 26th, at 5:30 pm in the youth room. We are having a casual get together just to “hang out” with other gals, enjoy visiting, relax, and have some laughs. We'll meet the 4th Thursday of each month. No commitments, just bring yourself and your own beverage. Please come. - we'll have a fun time!

## From the Pastor

*“and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.” ~Matthew 2:9b-10*

On Epiphany, we remember the story of the Magi following the star to Bethlehem to see the Christ child. They notice it in the sky and are guided by its light to the Holy Family. The arrival of the Magi symbolizes the inclusion of all people of the world into Jesus's family.

Wouldn't it be nice if we had a sign as obvious as a big, bright star to guide us in our journey with Jesus? Sometimes we need help in noticing God's action in our lives and in the people around us. God speaks to us in many ways as we seek God's presence.

This Epiphany season, I invite the whole church into the practice of STAR WORDS, which can help us to look for God in our midst, change our perspective, and focus our attention on Christ amid all the distractions of daily life. A STAR WORD gives us an opportunity to listen deeply and hear God in a new way.

On Sunday, January 8 and for the rest of the month, you are each invited to take a star from the table in the narthex. You are encouraged to trust the STAR WORD that selects you, but there are no rules in star choosing, so if you need to trade for a different random word or look through the words until you find one that feels especially for you, you are free to do so.

If you are not regularly attending at Gethsemane in person, you can call the church office and we will give you a STAR WORD over the phone.

Keep your STAR WORD in a place where you will see it every day. Use your star word to pray for God's guidance and to help you seek Jesus in your life throughout this year. You may find that your STAR WORD takes on increased significance or meaning as you experience your year, framing your perspective through the word God has put before you.

Ideas for engaging with your STAR WORD:

- Look up the definition of the word, even if you know it well. Learn about its origins. What culture does it come from? How has its meaning changed over time?
- What does this word bring to mind as you contemplate? Does it recall any memories? How might God be speaking to you through the feelings and the stories this word evokes?



### From the Pastor

### - continued-

- Find this word or a synonym in the bible – what does the scripture tell you? Does this word remind you of other bible passages or stories? One place to search for where your word occurs in scripture is [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com).
- Write your own prayer using your word or find a prayer written by someone else that includes your word and pray it regularly.
- Draw or trace a star in the center of a piece of paper and write your word inside. Then doodle, color, and write around it with symbols and names of people or things you want to pray about. Color and doodle as long as you want, until the prayer feels complete. Try this every week to see how your prayers change.

Like the Magi followed the star to find Jesus, may your STAR WORD guide you as you follow Jesus this year.

Your sister in Christ,  
Pastor Amy

### Faith Builders

(Preschool - grade 5)

Here are some pictures from our  
Sunday School Christmas Program



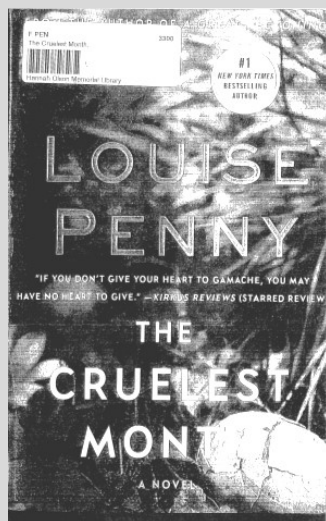
## Library News

A few murder mystery readers have recommended books by Louise Penny. The library had two books of a series called a great reckoning: Still Life and a Fatal Grace.

Recently a third book The Cruellest Month was added to the series. The main character in the series is Chief Inspector Gamache.

Here's an overview as described by Barnes and Nobel. The Cruellest Month is the third book in the series featuring the wise and beleaguered Inspector Armand Gamache. Some of the villagers in Three Pines decide to celebrate Easter with a séance at the old Hadley House. One of their party dies in fright. Chief Inspector Armand Gamache is called to investigate. The case will force him to face his own ghosts and where relationships are far more dangerous than they seem.

New books can be found on the glass shelves and the book cart in the library.



## Military/College Students Christmas Shoe Box Gifts

Thanks to your generous donations, we were able to send about 13 Christmas Care Packages to college students and military personnel on December 5th!



## Generosity Team

KIVA is a top US charity that connects loan money at 0% to applicants around the world and even in the USA. Many do not have access to 'traditional' sources of funding. People and groups apply for a loan to improve their life--- agricultural supplies, food to stock a small store, animals to sell, etc. They repay the loan. Repeat the process. Kiva does all the details. People provide the funds in \$25 increments. Borrowers' lives are improved. More info is available at KIVA.org. The KIVA administrative expenses are covered by grants, donations and a small fee added to each loan made. Over 2 million people have joined KIVA and provided almost 2 billion dollars in loans. The repayment rate is over 96% (currency exchange rates account for part of this.)

I am a KIVA member and just about to make choices for relending \$150. I have helped Norah in Kenya to purchase seeds and fertilizer, the Benkadi Group in Mali to purchase livestock for resale to other farmers, and a group in Senegal to establish a fish selling business, and others. My wife and I believe very strongly in social justice as a part of our religious beliefs. We do a lot to help locally and regionally. Kiva opens the door to helping others around the world.

The Generosity Group at Gethsemane has opted to do one event to help internationally with that choice being KIVA. The fund raiser is a chocolate dessert buffet. We call it Schokolade (German for "chocolate"). Sample pies, cakes, cheesecakes, cookies, make-your-own brownie sundaes, waffles, novelties, ice cream and a whole lot more. Drink coffee or hot chocolate as you have 2 hours to chat with friends and relax as you sample. Can't stay? Boxed sets of desserts will also be available. Tuesday, Feb. 21 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. is also the Mardi Gras date for "Fat Tuesday." All profits will be invested in KIVA projects. You will be kept informed of what we do with the funds, who received funding, and how we reinvest year after year. We will share the projects of people helped by the Schokolade buffet event.

How can you help? Come to the event, bring friends, consider volunteering for an hour or two, and even possibly baking/making chocolate items. More information will be in our upcoming Sunday bulletins.

Dan Karlin  
Generosity Team Member

**Ticket Sales for Schokolade will begin on Sunday, January 29th for only \$12.** Tickets are limited so be sure to buy yours quickly to help support Kiva.org and enjoy some awesome chocolate treats on Fat Tuesday, February 21st. This is a joint effort of our wonderful Generosity Team and Fellowship Team!



### WARM YOUR HEART COMMUNITY CLOTHESLINE and FOOD PANTRY

The winter season is upon us! 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 and neighbors.

### Hat and Mitten Tree

The hat, mitten, and scarf tree is once again in the entryway of the church.

Everyone is encouraged to help decorate this tree with warm gloves, mittens, scarves, etc. These items will be distributed throughout our communities.

Thank you for caring!



### Jackie's Attic Thrift Store in Virginia

This thrift store has a specific request for size 6 women's boots. Other regular items that they almost always need are towels and silverware. They are Located at 210 South 5th Ave.

Hours are 10 am - 4 pm. Monday through Friday, and 12 - 4 pm. on Saturday. Any questions, please give them a call at 218-780-2359.

### Camp Corner

#### Summer Staff Applications are Live!

Are you or do you know a young adult that would love to work in God's Great Northwoods? We are hiring a diverse team that will gain skills, build lifelong friendships, and share God's love in creation this summer! Head to [vlmcamps.org/employment](http://vlmcamps.org/employment) to learn more about the many job opportunities at VLM-Camp Vermilion and Camp Hiawatha.

#### Summer 2023 Registration is Open!

Registration is open for Summer 2023!  
To register go to: [www.vlmcamps.org/registration](http://www.vlmcamps.org/registration), email [vlm@vlmcamps.org](mailto:vlm@vlmcamps.org) or call our Duluth office at our **new number** 218-481-9080.

#### Camp Vermilion Paddle Building January 13-16

Join us at Camp Vermilion for an extended weekend of building your very own bent shaft canoe or paddle-board paddle. You will craft your own paddle, from gluing the wood blanks to a finished work of art. For more information and to register visit: <https://www.vlmcamps.org/programs-events> or call our main office at 218-481-9080.



### VLM's Duluth office is Moving!

We are moving our Duluth office to be based out of Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd. We will be moving in December.

**New address:**  
**1325 N 45th Ave E Duluth, MN 55804**



### Blessings to all who have a Birthday this Month:

- 1: Isabelle Sandnas
- 2: Casey Aluni, Jean Collins
- 4: Aiden Marchetti
- 5: Kash Suihkonen
- 6: Floyd Jaros
- 7: Amanda Brunfelt
- 8: Elise Finc
- 11: Patty Davidson
- 13: Jim Pauling
- 14: Benjamin Brunfelt
- 15: Larry Roberts
- 16: Matt Koski, Grace Randall, Lawrence Sandnas
- 17: Tori Wallner
- 19: Jayne Scott
- 21: Ronny Shoden, Russell Wiitala
- 22: Mary Horan
- 23: Ilze Ibrahim, Matthew Mahonen
- 24: Connie Christenson, Steven Starkovich
- 26: Leevi Aronen-Paul, Garrett Reid, Grant Reid,
- 27: Jeremy Waldron
- 28: Abby Toivari
- 29: Austin Kalisch

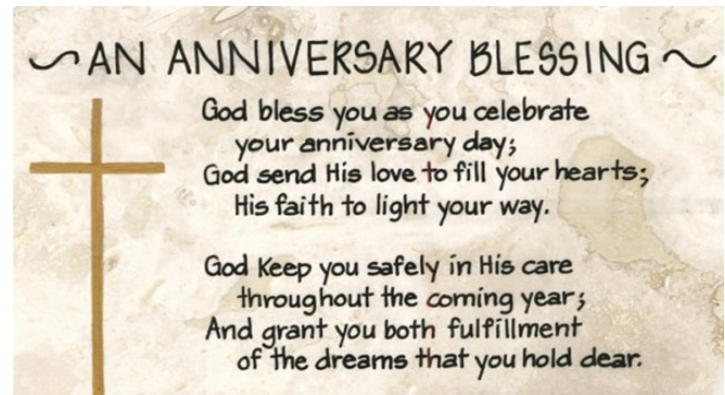
### Memorial Gifts received during the month of December

#### In Memory of:

Pearl Aronen  
 Pearl Aronen  
 Pear Aronen

#### From:

John and Jaynee Yocum  
 Carol Hagberg  
 Pear Aronen's Family



### Celebrating your Wedding Anniversary for the Month of January, enjoy your Special Day

- 1/14 Jeffrey and Paula Hanson
- 1/17 Janet and Michael Burke
- 1/19 Dave and Lynn Isaacson
- 1/19 Jayne and Roger Scott
- 1/25 Richard and Sheila Vandervort



### Celebrating the Anniversary of your Baptism:

- 1/1: James Stanhope
- 1/2: Geoffrey, McNeil, Nathan Spiering
- 1/7: Danee' Haenke
- 1/8: Beth Collins, Vera Muck, Jennifer Tiedeman
- 1/9: Gail Waldron
- 1/11: David Koski
- 1/12: Matt Seppi Jr.
- 1/17: Sarah Davidson
- 1/22: Robert Koski
- 1/23: Jillian Ofstad
- 1/25: Ron Reiersen
- 1/26: David Pollock
- 1/30: Daniel Hilmas, Darren Hilmas, Genevieve Zeidler

**\*\*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:**

- ♦ Judy Bennick, Claire Seppi, Jason G, Chuck Bothwell, Gail Waldron, Ruth Koski, Bella Paulson, Kristy McCarty, Fran Shimmin, and Alyssa Newman.
- ♦ And all members who are homebound, in nursing homes, or assisted living.

**Prayers of peace and comfort for:**

- ♦ Family and friends on the death of Jan Pauling

**Special Prayers for Sam and Hannah Davidson-Teff** as Sam is deployed to Poland through the Army National Guard and all others who are in the military service.

## 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!



## Council Highlights

Greetings everyone! I hope you all had a Merry Christmas. This month the council did not have its regular meeting, but instead gathered for a Christmas get together. I would like to take this time to thank the members of the council for all their work in the past year. I would also like to thank all of the members of Gethsemane that spend countless hours making a difference, not only here at Gethsemane, but in our community as well.

I know sometimes we might feel kind of burned out or think that we don't have time to do something more (or any thing at all), but it's all of us working together doing God's work here at Gethsemane that makes our church the amazing place that it is. So when called upon, please consider saying yes, I know you'll find it rewarding and a blessing.

Speaking of blessings, as I near the end of my term as President I would like to say how blessed I have been. I started my term without a called Pastor in place and worked with three wonderful interim Pastors before we were fortunate enough to call Pastor Amy. She has been tremendous to work with during the trials of the past couple of years and not only I, but also our congregation, is blessed to have her.

## 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](http://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.



Thank you Pastor Amy, and may God continue to bless you as you care for us at Gethsemane. Well, only one more news article to write, so I'll see you in church! Annual meeting the last Sunday of January. Stay warm!

Grace,  
Bennett Bloomquist, President

## Weekly Giving

December giving is showing a large increase over previous months. Christmas week contributions, plus bequest income, help bring the weekly average for December to \$4,424 per week. This is \$857 per week ahead of meeting our budgeted expenses.

Thank you all for your generosity. Merry Christmas!

Bruce Kniivila, Treasurer







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## Gethsemane Lutheran Church

901 Fourth Street South  
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Phone: 218-741-4961  
Email: [gelc@gelc.info](mailto:gelc@gelc.info)  
Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 9 am to noon

**Rev. Amy Janssen**

*Pastor*

**Brenda Varani**

*Parish Secretary*

Come and see us on the web!

[www.gelc.info](http://www.gelc.info)



"...always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else."  
- 1 Thessalonians 5:15

# Help us pack

United Way of  
Northeastern MN

**BUDDY  
BACKPACKS**



4:30-6 pm Wednesday  
January 11th at United Way  
(608 East Drive, Chisholm MN)

call the church office at 218-741-4961 to sign up!

United Way of NE MN's program feeds 1,000+ local children at-risk of hunger every weekend and holiday break of the school year.  
The organization requires all volunteers for Buddy Backpacks be 12+ and requests volunteers wear comfortable shoes.