

# Gethsemane Gazette

Gethsemane Lutheran  
Church  
Virginia, Minnesota  
[www.gelc.info](http://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

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March, 2023

Volume 45, Issue 3

## Join us for March Worship and Events!

### Lent Services

Wednesday evenings (March 1st - March 29th.)  
with Peace United Methodist Church

### Weekly Wednesday schedule:

Community Table Soup Supper - 5:00 pm

Lenten Devotional Prayer Service - 6:30 pm

Mar. 1 - Supper @ Gethsemane, Service @ Peace

Mar. 8 - Supper @ Peace, Service @ Gethsemane

Mar. 15 - Supper @ Gethsemane, Service @ Peace

Mar. 22 - Supper @ Peace, Service @ Gethsemane

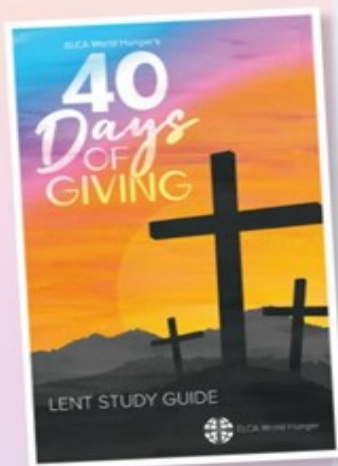
Mar. 29 - Supper @ Gethsemane, Service @ Peace

ELCA World Hunger's

# 40 Days OF GIVING

## ELCA World Hunger's 40 Days of Giving

We invite you to study, pray, be challenged and give with us throughout Lent during ELCA World Hunger's 40 Days of Giving — toward a just world for our families, our neighbors and communities around the world.



**"God gave me another  
opportunity that I don't  
intend to waste. ...**

[Mennonite Social Action Commission (CASM), partners of ELCA World Hunger] have been a light in the midst of the darkness, and I am more than grateful, because they have given me back the hope that I can go on."

—Norma Ramirez

Each session of the Advent and Lent study guides features a story from someone who benefits from the work of ELCA World Hunger around the world. **Read Norma's story in session 4 of the Advent study guide!**

## New Member Class Sunday, March 12th

We will be having a new member class on Sunday, March 12th, from 10:30 - Noon with lunch following. If you are interested in becoming a member of Gethsemane or just interested in hearing more about the church, please call the church office or talk with Pastor Amy.

Please join us on the following Sunday, March 19th as we officially welcome our new members during worship service.

## February Angels

Many thanks to all the February Angels for helping out with the worship service and coffee an': Barb and Ken Alaspa, Donna Flannigan, Darcy Norha, Dan Gallagher, Aiden Marchetti, Bunny Varani, Pam Fields, Lance Ness, Dana and Gail Waldron, Debbie Poderzay, and Joyce Bloomquist.

God's blessings! Laurie Harvey

## All Women of Gethsemane

Thursday, March 23rd, 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!

## \*Please Note\* Fran Shimmin's 91st Birthday has been Postponed!

Fran's family has decided to postpone her party that was scheduled for Sunday, March 5th until later in the spring or Summer when the weather is a bit nicer. We will let you know when the new date is planned.

## Help Needed to Water Plants at Church

Due to recovering from surgery, Dawn Thomas will not be able to water the plants at the church. We are looking for someone to temporarily fill in for her during the **Month of April**. If this is something you would like to do, please call the church office. Thank you.

## From the Pastor

THEREFORE  
ENCOURAGE ONE  
ANOTHER AND  
BUILD UP EACH  
OTHER, AS  
INDEED YOU ARE  
DOING.

1 Thessalonians 5:11  
NRSV



Winter is hard. It doesn't matter if you grew up walking to school barefoot, uphill both ways, carrying your sister, through 3 feet of snow (as my dad often jokes) or if you've developed effective strategies for staying warm in below-zero temperatures and have sturdy boots to deal with deep snowdrifts. Even if you enjoy outdoor winter sports and snow activities, every winter at about mid-February or early March, a lot of us are DONE with it. Winter has lasted too long. Bring on the spring!

That's why winter is often a metaphor for a time of struggle, a time of basic survival, a lean time when our tolerance and determination is tested. In the popular TV series *Game of Thrones*, the line, "Winter is coming," is spoken in threatening tones and hushed, fearful whispers. A warning to prepare for the worst.

For some members of our community, this winter has been a struggle, and is still a struggle. Many of our physical neighbors are experiencing housing instability and food insecurity. The heating bills stack up and the grocery and gas budget runs thin. They depend on the Salvation Army and the little food shelves to keep their family's bellies full and their homes warm in the cold months when their paycheck doesn't go quite far enough. How can we continue to build up these neighbors with generosity and compassion?

All people and congregations go through seasons in their lives. We all experience times of growth and strength, times of waning energy and dying leaves on our trees, and times when the wind is cold and there is seemingly little movement. Winters of discontent. Winters when the snow covers the ground, and the path forward is not easy to see.

## From the Pastor

- continued-

As we begin Lent, may we remember that we are walking towards Easter, but there is no resurrection without dying first, no transformation into something new without letting go of what was. God gives us new life by the power of the Holy Spirit through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, but we must die to our own plans, our own expectations, and our own selfish desires. We must let go of some of the things we grasp in our own hands so that we can reach out our hands to help and build up our neighbors.

As we experiment with a new way of participating in Lenten Suppers and Worships, may we look for the ways this holy experiment is helping us grow. Let us be a church that stretches to reach out a hand of compassion and comfort toward our fellow Christians and our neighbors in need. Let us build up and encourage one another, trusting that God is at work in all of our lives in different ways. That under the snow, God is preparing us for our next faithful step. And when our spring finally comes, let us rejoice as new growth peeks out of the ground.

Your coworker in Christ,

Pastor Amy

## Faith Builders

(Preschool - grade 5)

The Sunday School children are still enjoying and learning so much from the Spark series. They just finished making crosses out of clay and painting them.

For a Special Valentine's Day, they played heart bingo and enjoyed a special Valentines treat.

They are so excited to start practicing for Palm Sunday. They can't wait to sing for you again!!

Your Sunday School Leaders,  
Cindy and Pam



## First Communion Instruction Class Sunday, March 26th, 10:30 - Noon

Children in grades 1 - 5 and their parents are invited to join us!

Please call the church office at 218-741-4961 to R.S.V.P. Thank you. If you have any questions, contact Pastor Amy.

All are invited to the Celebration of First Communion on Maundy Thursday, April 6th at 7:00 pm during worship service.



## Confirmation

### Another Successful Sub Sale!

Thank you to all the confirmands and their parents that helped. Without such an amazing group of young people in the kitchen we could have not done so well. Everyone got along and I think they had fun working side by side and making Super Bowl Subs.

This fundraiser took in \$530 in total Sales!!! Congratulations to Miia Johnson for being the top Sub seller! Miia sold over half of the subs that were ordered.

Thank you all!

## We WANT our youth to go to camp! so... You pay the deposit - Gethsemane will pay the rest!

Gethsemane 's Mission Endowment Team has approved a plan to fully cover the cost of our youth (and one friend) attending Bible Camp with Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry (VLM) out of the Roy Carlson Youth Ministry Fund.

We request that you register as early as possible to take advantage of early-bird discounts, so start thinking about this summer NOW.





## Weekly Giving

February giving has dropped to \$3,052 per week, vs. \$3,798 needed for budgeted expenses.

The new budget for 2023, as approved at the Annual Meeting, shows 2023 income matching 2022 budgeted income. However, this falls \$15,000, or about 8 1/2 %, short of expenses for 2023.

Inflation has impacted most expenditures in the new budget, as it has impacted each of us. We need to each review our financial situation, as well as our commitment to Gethsemane, to evaluate increasing contributions. For example, if a \$40 per week contribution were increased to \$43 per week throughout the year, this would go a long way toward closing the gap and restoring a balanced budget, if each of us did likewise. Please consider. All contributions are welcome and valued. Stay well.

Bruce Kniivila, Treasurer

## Taking Care of our Kids – Take Two! Our March “Favor of the Month!”

The Generosity Team is inviting our congregation to help our local schools again this year! Our school nurse has asked for our help with the following donations:

- **Underwear (new)** – for both boys & girls – size 5 - 8 (think elementary!)
- **Pants/leggings/sweatpants (new or gently used)** – for both girls and boys – size 5-8 (again elementary size)
- **Personal female hygiene products** - pads (regular size) and tampons

Please bring all donations to the church office before Sunday, March 26th! Thank you!

## EASTER FLOWERS

Please help us build our Easter Garden!

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.

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 please welcome – Andrea and Dan Alto**

Hi, we are Andrea and Dan Alto. We joined Gethsemane Lutheran Church in 2021 when we moved back to the Range to be closer to friends and family after being gone for 49 years. We now live in Mountain Iron after living in Minneapolis, Brooklyn Park Minnesota and Algonquin, Illinois. We were active in our church in Algonquin and did a mission trip to Appalachia in West Virginia with 20 other members of Light of Christ Lutheran Church

Dan grew up in Embarrass and Andrea in Tower. They met while attending the University of Minnesota and married in 1976. We have a son Michael. Dan worked in the telecommunications industry for Northwestern Bell, US West, SBC, and AT&T for 42 years and held leadership positions in Marketing, Engineering and Operations. Andrea had a career as an Art Therapist and worked in Behavioral Health in several in and out-patient hospital systems. We both retired in 2016.

We enjoy spending time at our lake place on Lake Vermilion with friends and family. We like kayaking, boating, snowshoeing, and cruising. We have been on cruises with our friends Ethie and Bruce to Alaska, the Baltic (Denmark, Germany, Russia, Estonia, Finland, and Sweden), Greek Isles, Italy, Croatia, Montenegro, and Monte Carlo. We have booked a cruise to England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, France, Brussels, and Amsterdam in 2023. Andrea enjoys knitting, reading, nature, and water color painting. Dan enjoys building and landscaping projects, exercise, taking saunas as well as golf.

We are delighted to be members of Gethsemane to continue our spiritual growth and strengthen our relationship with God.



## 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.

## Quad City Food Shelf

March is Minnesota Food Share Month. Each dollar and every pound of food donated to the food shelf will be partially matched. Minnesota Food Share began its work in 1982 with a campaign advanced by congregations to restock food shelves in the 7-county Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.

The largest grassroots food and fund drive in the state, the Minnesota Food Share March Campaign brings together various community organizations, businesses, and faith communities to help stock nearly 300 food shelves statewide. In 2017, over \$8 million dollars and 4.7 million pounds of food were raised by Minnesota food shelves and Minnesota Food Share.

You can give to our mission project in two ways: (1) put food items in the grocery cart at the north entrance; and (2) cash donations (or write "food shelf" in the memo line of a check).

Would you be willing to give \$10, \$20, or whatever you wish to the food shelf in March? Thank you!!



## 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.

## Spring Quilting Retreat!

Break out the crafting supplies, and join us for our Spring Quilting Retreat!

There is no better way to kick off spring than spending time in God's Great Northwoods, being with friends, and working on your favorite creative projects. Reserve your spot today for this fun-filled retreat!

<https://www.vlmcamps.org/all.../quilting-retreat-spring>





### 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
- 9: Fran Shimmin
- 10: Laurie Laakso
- 11: William McCormick, John Meinzer
- 12: Charles Eichholz, Laurie Harvey, Marian Holmes
- 13: Mike Hauber, Amber Rosewall, Gabriella Sandnas
- 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, Thomas Wickstrom
- 24: Eric Krause, Josh Krause
- 25: Cindy Bird, Don Sipola, Elijah Wedge
- 26: Sara Weddel
- 27: Amy Maki
- 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:	From:
Skip Bol	Richard & Sheila Vandervort
Claire Seppi	Eila Ivonon, Eila Isaacson
Charles Dahl	Kathy & Francis Anderson,
	John & Lynn Rikala, Debbie & John Sweet,
	Don & Shirley Classen, Pat & Richard Honkonen,
	Dale Gilbertson



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

- 3/12 Dana and Gail Waldron  
 3/20 Amy and Paul Maki  
 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: Devlin Burke, Richard Vandervort  
 3/12: Kinsley Suihkonen  
 3/13: Craig Aluni, Tye Hiltunen, Amber Rosewall  
 3/15: Cassandra Isaacson, Chrystal Olson, Emma Rosewall  
 3/17: Isabelle Sandnas  
 3/18: Joshua Isaacson, Jim Pauling  
 3/19: Parker Breeden, Charles Dahl, 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 Bennet

**\*\*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:**

- ♦ Chet Fields, Mark Olson, Dale Pepelnjak, Carol Nevala, Judy Bennick, Mark Andres, Ruth Koski, Kristy McCarty, Fran Shimmin, and Alyssa Newman.
- ♦ All members who are homebound, in nursing homes, or assisted living.

**Prayers of peace and comfort for:**

- ♦ Family and friends on the death of Skip Bol
- ♦ Family and friends on the death of Charles Dahl

**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 from your new council president! I will be following some big shoes (I don't mean literally but figuratively) of former president Bennet Bloomquist. Let's hope I can live up to all he has and continues to do for our church congregation and community we live in. Let's all give him a huge thank you for his tireless work!

I am honored to have attended and ran my first council meeting on February 14, yes you heard that correctly, on Valentine's Day, but in the evening. Don't worry we all had some sweets to stay sharp as we did our work. Also starting their first term on the congregation council with me, are Laurie Harvey and Cindy Lustig. We are joining the ever-devoted, hard-working, and experienced council members, Mary Horan, VP, Bruce Kniivila, Treasurer, Sheila Davidson, Secretary, Char Meinzer, Tom Lee, Debbie Poderzay, Donna Flannigan, and Pastor Amy.

The February meeting covered significant ground and lasted nearly 2.5 hours, I was told this isn't common...hmmmm. I will say it was time well spent as many important topics were discussed. Updates from all Ministry Teams were shared: Children, Youth, and Family Team, by Char, Generosity Team by Sheila, Worship and Music Team by Pastor Amy and Fellowship by Donna.

## 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.

## A Reminder that Daylight Savings Time is Sunday, March 12, 2023

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!!



We are in the process of obtaining a new Property Team leader but hoping that the great work and knowledge from Ken Alaspa (present/prior leader) will continue to be with this team as there is much to do in this area for our church.

Financial reports were discussed by Bruce who turned complicated accounting data into quite understandable information.

I am looking forward to sharing more information on future projects discussed at the meeting once details are feathered out.

Finally, we must all thank Dan and Andrea Alto who will be our church representatives to the Synod Assembly!

Let us all work together and live our Church's mission statement: "....to draw all people to Christ, nurture faith and fulfill our calling to serve."

Thank you, congregation, for allowing me to be of service in the coming year.

In gratitude to our congregation and on behalf of our council.

Molly Pemmaraju, President



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## Gethsemane Lutheran Church

901 Fourth Street South  
Virginia, MN 55792  
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)

## New Church Officers 2023

The annual meeting was held on Sunday, January 29th. Elections were held during the meeting for New members of the Congregation Council, Nominating Committee, and Mission Endowment Committee .

### ***Congratulations to the people who were elected!***

#### **Congregation Council:**

Molly Pemmaraju - President  
Cindy Lustig - Member-at-Large  
Laurie Harvey - Member-at-Large

#### **Nominations Committee:**

Bennet Bloomquist  
Nancy Rosewall  
Ken Alaspa

\*We still need a Youth/Young Adult Council Member (ages 15-24)! If you or someone you know are feeling called to use your voice to impact the life of the church, please talk to Pastor Amy or any council member.\*

#### **Mission Endowment Committee:**

Bennet Bloomquist - Chairman

Laurie Laakso will stay on as a committee member.

## Ways to Worship

### **In the Sanctuary**

We are worshiping 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.