



December 2023 Newsletter

*Connecting Hearts
to Jesus*

Online at
www.AbidingSavior.info

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Members, Family, and Friends

- Jessica Acker (breast cancer surgery/chemo) by John Schmitt
- Brenda Arden (recovery/back surgery)
- Judy (heart) & Ken Bates (health issues)
- Clarissa Clayton (heart) by Chiarelli family
- George Dix
- Hans Farber (hospice care) Carol (caregiver)
- Beven Ferguson
- Jack Furey (DJ's father)
- Randy Gill (granular sarcoidosis/heart problems)
- Laura Grubbs (mastectomy/breast cancer) Linda Struckmeyer's sister
- Danielle Hickman (job search)
- Jackie (cancer surgery) by Jean Schadow
- Janie Klassy (serious intestinal surgery) Judy Lerch's sister
- Julia Kohlberg (lung cancer/chemo) Kathy Schmitt's sister-in-law
- Eric Moon (medical tests)
- Gary Moon (health issues) Carla's uncle
- Matthew Musser (kidney cancer) Marj Evans' grandson
- Sal Pandazzo (cancer/hospice) by Veronica Ruth
- Lucille Ramputi (terminal colon cancer) by Marliyn Palumbo
- Graysen Riehl (2)(head banging) Carla's grandson
- Peter Setek (cancer) Veronica Ruth's uncle
- Gary Smith (health issues)
- Bill Stone (diabetes/heart & memory issues)
- Dorothy Thomas (Hospice care) by Chiarelli family
- Colleen Toppins (leg problems)
- Doris Wilber (heart valve leakage) Carla's mom
- Amy Young (breast cancer surgery/radiation) October 26
- Kevin Tredenick (quadriplegic/ serious infection) Phyllis Leone

continued

Prayer List *(continued)*

Praises: Thanksgiving blessing, Aurora Lily (new Struckmeyer grandbaby)

Shut-Ins: Fran Jacobs

Sympathies: Pam Licht family, Pastor Besalski family

Military

Eric Tappy - Iraq

Martin Hekking - Air Force (Kansas)
Karen Nobles' grandson

Jason Joseph - Alaska (by Phyllis Leone)

Sam Kleinhauser (sniper) Now Home

Matt Young - Air Force Reserve

Duncan Shewchuk - Army

Pray for our Military, especially those
deployed in combat zones

Continue prayers for:

Covid victims

Missionaries

Young people in college

Families and victims of war and poverty
(Afghanistan, Ukraine, Israel, Gaza)

St. Francis House Residents

Those dealing with disasters: fire, floods,
hurricanes, and tornadoes

Earthquake victims in Turkey

Our country, our president and our elected
officials

*May Our Lord continue to watch
over and bless Abiding Savior
Lutheran Church.*

*Names will be kept on the Prayer list for one month unless renewed.
Please call the church 352-331-4409 or
Muriel Young 352-332-1386*

Altar Care

December: Muriel Young (chair), JoAnn Petersen, Georganne Eibe, Patti Gill

January: Phyllis Leone (chair), Annetta Coleman, Candi Steinway, Carol Mackenzie

The Gift of Christmas - Pastor Glover

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.” (Matthew 1:18-25)

Our family opens presents on Christmas morning. One of the things I miss about this ritual in our household is that nobody asks for toys as gifts anymore. Our kids are older teenagers and their preferences for gifts aren't what they were when they were younger. So, no more superhero action figures, no more American Girl dolls, no more Legos, and no more random toys that were always so much fun to play with during the Christmas holiday.

I know, I know, Christmas isn't about toys. Nor is it about exchanging gifts or fond family rituals. But this doesn't mean there's anything wrong with giving or receiving gifts, looking forward to those family rituals, or even enjoying playing with a fun toy (regardless of your age!). So, keep doing those things and rejoice in the Lord while doing them! (And maybe for good measure, I'll just go ahead and buy some toys for my kids anyway this year!)

But we are all wise to remember that Christmas is about THE gift. As you know, it's about the greatest gift ever given: the birth of the promised Messiah. And this is the gift that keeps on giving!

It's the gift that brings families together. It's the gift that brings smiles to faces. It's the gift that makes this one of the greatest holy days of the year. It's the gift of Jesus.

Born to the Virgin Mary, this gift brings peace to the world. This gift brings forgiveness. This brings eternal life.

My prayer is that each of us rejoices in this gift. For it is the gift that makes everything else possible.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Glover

Financial Report

		November Estimated	Year-to-Date Estimated
Offerings	\$	27,845	146,560
Preschool Income	\$	107,760	508,077
Other Income	\$	0	0
Total Operating Income	\$	136,605	654,637
Total Operating Expenses	\$	137,000	652,480
Net Operating Income	\$	-1,395	2,157

Noisy Offering

Noisy Offering is the third Sunday of every month. This month’s Noisy Offering will be Sunday, December 17. Our monthly Noisy Offering collection will be dedicated to Meals of Hope. Other ways to contribute include a check made out to Abiding Savior with “Meals of Hope” in the memo line or by donating online through the church website.

Home Visits

If you know of someone who desires Pastor Glover to visit with them in their home or at the hospital, to include bringing Holy Communion to them, please contact Pastor Glover at PastorG@abidingsavior.info or call (352) 331-4409.

Helping Hands

Helping Hands is the fund we use at Abiding Savior to directly assist our community and the needs of individuals. You can contribute to this fund directly or by donating grocery or gas cards that are given to individuals who come by our church seeking help.

There will be no book club during December due to the holiday season. Meetings will resume January 2024.

If you would like to serve as hostess/discussion leader for any upcoming meetings or want to be added to the email list, contact Georganne Eibe at savygg@yahoo.com.

Adult Bible Study

Sunday Bible Classes will not meet on December 24 and 31.

We have several group Bible studies. You are welcome to join any of these classes.

Sunday 9:45 a.m.:

Pastor Glover's Class: New to Abiding Savior? Interested in a discussion on what Lutheranism is all about? Pastor Glover is holding a new member class during the Bible Study hour. Prospective members, guests, and current members are invited to attend. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Glover at: pastorg@abidingsavior.info or call the church office at: (352) 331-4409.

Girl Friends Bible Study: The ladies' Bible study meets in the Library between services. Contact Linda at struck60@gmail.com or Debbie Hill at debbie@lombardihill.me for more information.

Girlfriends Sunday School class will study the Women of Christmas in December: Elizabeth on December 3, Mary on December 10, and Anna on December 17. There will not be a meeting on December 24 or 31.

Study the Bible One Book at a Time: Study with Chuck Moss in the Building 1 classroom. This group is currently studying the book of *John*. Contact Chuck_Moss@msn.com for more information.

Other Bible Studies:

Young at Heart Ladies Bible Study meets the second Tuesday of the month in Building One. The next meeting will be December 12 at 10:00 a.m. Muriel Young will lead the study of "Lord Teach us to Pray" - Part 2.

Tots Sunday School

Tots Sunday School Music Class in the Youth room during the new member class. Class begins at 9:45 a.m.

Trustee Report

The Trustee Team is seeking volunteers. There is a lot of work to be done around the church and preschool, such as weeding, refreshing mulch, trimming branches, and keeping the campus looking fresh. If you are interested and willing to help this team, contact John Schmitt at (352) 514-0478.

Bible Breakfast

If you would like to contribute to our weekly fellowship breakfast, feel free to bring fruit, casserole, donuts, sandwiches, etc. Clean-up help is always appreciated too! Thank you for your continued support.

Lutheran World Relief Sewing

Join us this year on the second and last Saturday of the month, meeting in the library of Building 3 at 10:00 a.m. LWR sewing will meet on December 9 and 30. The group is sewing quilts for Lutheran World Relief.

Sewing for LWR has appreciated your donations. At this time we are not accepting additional fabric, We would love additional workers on the second and last Saturday of the month, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. in the library.

Contact Linda Struckmeyer at struck60@gmail.com for more information.

Youth

Youth meets every Sunday evening from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. If you or your child is interested in joining Youth activities, contact Danny Schmitt at Youth@abidingsavior.info or by phone at (352) 514-2371

Progressive Dinner for youth will be on Sunday, December 10.

Mid-year Congregational Meeting

Members are asked to attend the mid-year congregational meeting on Sunday, January 14, 2024. The purpose of the meeting is to provide updates on church and school ministries along with a financial report. A luncheon will be served immediately following late service and the business meeting will begin at approximately 1:30 p.m.

2023 has been an exciting year for Outreach here at ASLC! In May, we packed over 52,000 meals at Meals of Hope to support Bread of the Mighty in their efforts to aid the food insecure members in our community. In August, we partnered together with the families of those that attended VBS and collected several wheelbarrows full of school supplies to support students at Stephen Foster Elementary school. In November, we partnered with the Preschool and collected over 1,800 lbs of non-perishable items in our annual Food Drive. The Star Tree is up and ready to support students from Mebane Middle School this Christmas season. Volunteers have faithfully cooked and served monthly meals at St. Francis House. What a wonderful and good thing it has been to be able to support our brothers and sisters in need in 2023.

I look forward with great anticipation to 2024, and all of the ways we can continue to follow Jesus' command to love our neighbor. We will continue to serve our community by doing the projects we love to do each year, while embarking on some new endeavors (like our upcoming trip to Peru!) to seek out new ways to further God's kingdom on earth.

May God continue to bless us here at ASLC so we can continue to be His hands & feet.

Christmas Season at Abiding Savior

Wednesday Advent Services at 7:00 p.m. December 6, 13, & 20

December 24 Divine Service 10:45 a.m.

Christmas Eve Divine Service at 4:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Day Divine Service at 11:00 a.m.

December 31 Divine Service at 10:45 a.m.

Advent by Candlelight

Advent by Candlelight

Abiding Savior &
First Lutheran Women
Annual Women's Christmas Worship &
Fellowship Event

Ladies, you won't want to miss this year's Advent by Candlelight on Sunday, December 3 at 5:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall of Abiding Savior's Family Life Center. Please plan to join us for an evening of fellowship, and enjoying beautiful music and delicious food. All women of Abiding Savior and First Lutheran are invited, and are encouraged to invite their friends to prepare their hearts for Advent. There is no charge for this event.



Poinsettias

Purchase a poinsettia in memory or in honor of someone special. The cost is \$10 each. The sanctuary will be decorated with these flowers for Christmas Eve and you may take yours home after the 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service or after the Christmas Day service. Find order forms on the welcome table.

2024 Offering Envelopes

If you typically use envelopes for your offerings, there is a box with your name and number on a table in the narthex. Those typically giving electronically do not need envelopes.



CHRISTMAS DINNER

Sunday, December 17, 2023
5:00 p.m.

9700 West Newberry Road
Gainesville, FL 32606

Free of Charge

Please sign-up on the clipboard in the
narthex so we can plan for food and seating

Harmonizing the Season of Advent

Music That Guides Our Hearts - Joshua Mazur

*O Jesus Christ,
Thy manger is the paradise at which my soul reclineth.
For there, O Lord, Doth lie the Word Made flesh for us;
herein Thy grace forthshineth.*

Dear Members of Abiding Savior Lutheran Church & School,

As we gather at the threshold of another Advent season, I am filled with joy and anticipation to journey together through this penitential period of reflection, preparation, and hope. Advent, which means “coming” or “arrival,” beckons us to delve deep into the mystery of Christ’s incarnation and to eagerly await His return in glory. It is a season marked by repentance, watchfulness, and joyful expectation.

Music has a profound way of touching our souls and stirring our hearts, and during Advent, it plays a vital role in guiding us towards the profound message of this sacred time. Whether it’s sung by our mostly-classically-trained choir, played on the organ or piano, or presented by our beautiful folk-band of a praise team, all of the music we present here is not for mere entertainment; the music of Advent powerfully proclaims Gods Word in a way that continually reminds us of the three-fold message: “Jesus came, Jesus comes, Jesus will come again.”

*Thou Christian heart, Whoe’er thou art,
Be of good cheer and let no sorrow move thee!
For God’s own Child, In mercy mild,
Joins thee to Him;-how greatly God must love thee!*

1. Reflecting on Christ’s Incarnation:

Advent begins with a focus on the past—the historical event of Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem. The hauntingly beautiful hymns and carols of Advent, such as “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” and “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming,” transport us back in time to that holy night when the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. As we sing these melodies, let us remember that Jesus came as a humble infant, born of the Virgin Mary, to bring salvation and light into a world in need of hope. Our music should evoke feelings of awe and gratitude for this great gift.

2. Embracing the Present:

Advent also reminds us of the present reality of Christ’s presence in our lives. Through the Holy Spirit, He dwells within our hearts, guiding and transforming us. Songs like “Come, Holy Ghost, God, and Lord” and “Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart” emphasize the

continued

Harmonizing the Season of Advent (*continued*)

ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. These hymns invite us to open our hearts to the Spirit's leading, allowing Him to prepare us for the daily encounters with Christ.

3. Anticipating His Glorious Return:

The final aspect of Advent calls us to look to the future with hope and anticipation. We await the second coming of Christ when He will return in glory to judge the living and the dead. Songs like “Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying” and “Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending” remind us of the need to be vigilant and prepared for that momentous day. Our music should stir our hearts to live in constant expectation of Christ's return, motivating us to keep His Word and follow His commandments in our daily lives.

In our musical selections for Advent, we will aim to balance all three aspects of this season. The choir will travel, musically, to convents in the Black Forest of Germany with music by Hildegard von Bingen (written between 1075 and 1145) for our Advent Choral Evensong, and you'll hear all of the music ministry in modern – and sometimes secular – music at the Christmas Dinner on the 17th, alongside traditional carols during the Youth's play. The Praise Team will present beloved Lutheran texts in new musical settings befitting the Folk-Gospel stylings they are so very good at.

The music ministry is always striving for excellence and reaffirming our commitment to singing and playing with full understanding that we are not mere decorations for “Worship Services,” but active and faithful proclaimers and confessors of the faith in God's Divine Service. Join us as we embark on this Advent journey, and let us allow the music that haloes the full and perfect Word of God to draw us closer to Christ—past, present, and future. Let it serve as a reminder of the incredible love and grace God has poured out upon us through His Son, as well as a catalyst for a deeper, more expectant faith.

*The world may hold Her wealth and gold;
But thou, my heart, keep Christ as thy true Treasure.
To Him hold fast Until at last
A crown be thine and honor in full measure.*

May our hearts be open, our spirits be attuned, and our voices raised in joyful anticipation as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior and await His glorious return.

In Christ's Love,
Joshua L. Mazur, M.M.
Director of Music Ministry
Abiding Savior Lutheran Church & School



The Abiding Savior Preschool students have been practicing and preparing songs of praise of Jesus' birth for our Christmas Pageants. The Christmas Pageants will be shared with our Abiding Savior Lutheran Preschool and Church families at 9:30a.m. and 11:00a.m. on Thursday, December 14, and Friday, December 15. Singing is a special way to spread the good news of Jesus' birth. "Go tell it on the mountain! Jesus Christ is born!"

The preschool families have been living generously as "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts 20:35 during the month of November. We collected 2,195 items or 1,800 lbs. of nonperishable food items for the Bread of the Mighty Food Bank! We are thankful for the showers of kindness and generosity.

During the month of December, the preschoolers will enjoy celebrating Jesus' birthday. December Bible stories will include Jesus is Born, The Angel's Announcement to the Shepherds, Simeon and Anna See Jesus, and The Wise Men Find Jesus. The season of Advent begins on December 3. Advent is a time of waiting and preparation for Jesus' birth at Christmas time. The Advent wreath reminds us of God's never-ending love. During the upcoming weeks we will remember the hope, peace, joy, and love that comes from Jesus.

The preschool will be hosting a Scholastic Book Fair the week of December 11-15. The Book Fair will be open Monday-Wednesday from 8:00-9:30, 11:30-1:30, and 2:30-3:30 and Thursday-Friday from 8:00-9:30, 10:00-11:00, and 11:30-1:30 in the Octagon Room. The Book Fair will also be open Sundays, December 10 and 17, from 9:15-10:30. The preschool receives a portion of the proceeds to buy new books for the classrooms and the library.

Abiding Savior Lutheran Preschool students, staff, and families wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year filled with the hope, peace, joy and love from our Savior, Jesus Christ!

Celebrating His Promises,
Brenda Arden
Preschool Director

December Calender

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 5:30p Young Life 7:30p AA Meeting	2 8:30a Decorate the Church 9a AA Meeting
3 8&10:45a Worship 9:15a Bible Breakfast 9:45 Bible Stud 5p Advent by Candlelight	4	5 5p AA Meeting	6 2p Wind Ensemble 5p Praise Team 6:30p Chancel Choir 7p AA Meeting 7p Advent	7 5p Girl Scout Banquet	8 7:30p AA Meeting	9 9a AA Meeting 10a LWR Sewing 2p Shirley Jackson Funeral
10 8&10:45a Worship 9:15a Bible Breakfast 9:45 Bible Study	11 7p Church Council	12 10a Young at Heart 5p AA Meeting	13 2p Wind Ensemble 5p Praise Team 6:30p Chancel Choir 7p AA Meeting 7p Advent	14	15 7:30p AA Meeting	16 9a AA Meeting
17 8&10:45a Worship Noisy offering 9:15a Bible Breakfast 9:45 Bible Study 5p Christmas Dinner	18	19 5p AA Meeting 6p Elders Mtg	20 2p Wind Ensemble 5p Praise Team 6:30p Chancel Choir 7p AA Meeting 7p Advent	21	22 7:30p AA Meeting	23 9a AA Meeting
24 10:45a Worship 4p - 7p Christmas Eve Services	25 11a Christmas Day Service	26 5p AA Meeting	27 7p AA Meeting	28	29 7:30p AA Meeting	30 9a AA Meeting 10a LWR Sewing
31 10:45a Worship	Church office closed the week of December 25 to 29					

Readers, Elders, and Flowers

Readers	8:00 a.m.	10:45 a.m.	Readings
12/3	Chris Annis	Brenda Arden	Is. 64:1-9 1 Cor. 1:3-9
12/10	Kris Pagenkopf	Ann Stone	Is. 40:1-11 2 Peter 3:8-14
12/17	Phyllis Leone		Is. 61:1-4, 8-11 1 Thess. 5:16-24
12/24	One Service	Phyllis Leone	2 Sam. 7:1-11, 16 Rom. 16:25-27
12/31	One Service	Chris Annis	2 Sam. 7:1-11, 16 Rom. 16:25-27

If you are interested in volunteering to read, email office@abidingsavior.info and let us know what Sundays you are available.

Elders of the Month

8:00 a.m. - Mike Brannon
10:45 a.m. - Michael Arden

Flowers

12/3 Morgan
12/10 Toppins
12/17 Mandeville
12/24 Moss
12/31 Mazur

Choose a date on the flower chart next to the church office and write your name and dedication if so desired. Flowers are \$40 for a pair.



Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays

Julie Thomas 12/1
Rachel Morgan 12/2
Chris Solinsky 12/5
Parker Hutson 12/7
Jim Annis 12/8
Ed Eibe 12/11
Michael Arden 12/13
Kelly Farah 12/14
Daniel Mandeville 12/16
Natalie Petruska 12/17
Judy Bates 12/20
Paul Schubring 12/21
Jamie Williams 12/24
Muriel Young 12/25
Ralph Toppins 12/27
Greg Claus 12/30
Karen Herder 12/30
Ashley Gouthro 12/31
Daniel Schmitt 12/31
Kristina Mandeville 12/31

Anniversaries

Dan & Kathryn Lerch 12/4
Brad & Sandra Morgan 12/5
Chris & Amy Solinsky 12/5
Terry & Deb Armey 12/9
Ed & Georganne Eibe 12/14
Greg & Maria Claus 12/22
Charles & Susan Moss 12/28
Daniel & Jessica Schmitt 12/29

Ministry Team Leaders and Contact Information

Officers

<i>President</i>	Phyllis Leone	Chunkymonkeysnana@gmail.com
<i>Vice President</i>	Sandra Morgan	Bemorganat@gmail.com
<i>Secretary</i>	Sarah Sain	Sarah.d.sain@gmail.com
<i>Treasurer</i>	Charlene Stroehlen	Charlene.stroehlen@wsp.com

Elders

Derek Sain, <i>Chair</i>	Sain.derek@gmail.com
Michael Arden	Mikearden1973@gmail.com
Mike Brannon	Mbrannon01@yahoo.com
Jimmy Flateau	Jmfjr@hughes.net
Hal Lerch	Haroldlerch@gmail.com
Chuck Moss	Chuck_moss@msn.com

Ministry Teams

<i>Christian Education</i>	Elizabeth Torrence	Eliztorren@gmail.com
<i>Christian Fellowship</i>	Danny Schmitt	Youth@abidingsavior.info
<i>Outreach & Evangelism</i>	Hannah Mazur	Hannahjmazur@gmail.com
<i>Trustees</i>	John Schmitt	Schmittjohna@aol.com

Administrative Staff

<i>Pastor</i>	Graham B. Glover	PastorG@abidingsavior.info
<i>Director, Music Ministries</i>	Joshua L. Mazur, M.M.	Jmazur@abidingsavior.info
<i>Preschool Director</i>	Brenda Arden	Barden@abidingsavior.info
<i>Church Admin.</i>	Susan Moss	Smoss@abidingsavior.info
<i>Preschool Admin. Asst.</i>	Jessica Schmitt	Jessica@abidingsavior.info
<i>Communications Coord.</i>	Anna Hyland	Anna@abidingsavior.info
<i>Financial Assistant</i>	Myra Heitman	Myra@abidingsavior.info
<i>AV Tech</i>	Andrew Hodgson	Andrew@abidingsavior.info