

Prayer Requests

Healing and Comfort

The family of Pam (Roach)
Petty
Shirley Nuechterlein
Dennis Nuechterlein
Luanne Schmidt
Miquela Omosowon

Blessings/Guidance

Yohannes Ghebru
Paul & Kristin Humber

The Week Ahead

SUNDAY, December 31

9:30 A.M. Traditional Worship w/Communion
6:30 P.M. New Year's Eve Worship w/Communion

MONDAY, January 1

Office Closed

TUESDAY, January 2

7:00 P.M. Lay Ministry

WEDNESDAY, January 3

6:00 P.M. Confirmation

THURSDAY, January 4

FRIDAY, January 5

1:30 P.M. Feeding Frogtown @ St. Paul City School

SATURDAY, January 6

SUNDAY, January 7

8:00 A.M. Traditional Worship w/ Communion
9:15 A.M. Education Hour
10:30 A.M. Contemporary Worship w/Communion

Upcoming Birthdays, Feasts & Commemoration

December 31: *Eve of the Circumcision and Name of Jesus*

January 1: *Circumcision and Name of Jesus*

January 2: Terianne Bender, J.K. Wilhelm Loeh, Pastor

January 3: Kathy Fleischhacker

January 4:

January 5:

January 6:

CELEBRATING



January contact person: Sue Kressin

David & Diana Betts, Erin Betts, Matt & Jen Caquelin, Marian Harmening, Ronald Hoelscher, Arnie Johnson & Eileen Vierow, Admasu Mekonen & Diribe Desissa, Ed & Marlene Potter, Jim Radtke & Sue Kressin, Jeff & Jodi Wussler

St. Stephanus Lutheran Church
Preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ for 125 Years

C • O • N • E • C • T • I • N • G



with Jesus Christ and Each Other

Dec. 31, 2017

First Sunday after Christmas



Luke
2:30

Welcome Visitors

Please sign the attendance register. If you desire a call from the pastor or are interested in membership, please note that on the attendance register.

Our Mission Statement:

To proclaim the gospel through word and sacrament to our membership, our communities and our world.

Our Vision:

Connecting people with Jesus Christ and each other through worship, learning and service.

Connecting Groups & Youth:

Much more than a Bible Study... come and find true Biblical Relationships. For more info, contact: Megan Huff meghuff@gmail.com

About Communion:

Non-alcoholic wine is offered in the center of the communion trays. It is distinctly lighter than the surrounding wine. Children who have not received instruction are invited to the rail to receive a blessing. Visitors are welcomed to the rail if you join us in confessing that the Lord gives not only bread and wine, but His very Body and Blood to eat and drink for the forgiveness of our sins and to strengthen our union with Him and one another. Our Lord invites to this table those who (1) trust his words, (2) repent of all sins and (3) set aside any refusal to forgive and love as He has forgiven and loves us.

Sunday Services

Traditional Worship 8:00 AM
Education Hour 9:15 AM
Contemporary Worship 10:30 AM
Holy Communion at both services on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Sunday of each month.
Eritrean Service 12 Noon



**St. Stephanus
Lutheran Church, LCMS**
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PASTOR: Pastor Andrew Thompson
pastor@saintstephanus.org
Phone: (612) 208-7388

OFFICE HOURS:
Monday to Friday 9 AM to 1 PM
Bulletin Deadline: 11 AM Wed.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT:
Clarice Anderson
saintstephanus@comcast.net

Central Lutheran School

775 Lexington Pkwy N
St Paul, MN 55104
PHONE (651) 645-8649
EMAIL school@clssp.org
WEB SITE www.clssp.org

December 31 Worship Assistants

Preacher: Rev. Andrew Thompson
Acolytes: (9:30) Genna Curtis & Addy Munoz
Caretaker: (9:30) Judy Brinkman
Video Ministry: Jeff Johnson
Communion Assistants: (9:30) Dan Savard, John Schonebaum, Russ Van Dassar
Elder: (9:30) Wayne Warnest
Greeters: (9:30) Judy Brinkman & Wayne Warnest
Lector: (9:30) Terianne Bender
Music: (9:30) Organ: Bruce Anderson Cantor: Katie Miller
Soundboard: (9:30) Leonard Miller
Ushers: (9:30) Bruce Karger, Reba Peterson, Steve Sohn, Dale Trapp



Today's Altar flowers are given by:

Tami Nissen-Omosowon

Last Week's Contributions:

Current - \$ 6,839.25	CLS - \$10.00
Building Fund - \$200.00	Concordia - \$20.00
Christmas Eve - \$453.00	Christmas Day - \$1,915.00
Advent - \$975.00	
Total - \$10,412.25 (\$6,500 needed weekly)	

January 7 Worship Assistants

Preacher: Rev. Andrew Thompson
Acolytes: (8:00) (10:30)
Caretaker: (8:00) (10:30)
Video Ministry: Jeff Johnson
Communion Assistants: (8:00) (10:30)
Elder: (8:00) (10:30)
Greeters: (8:00) (10:30)
Lector: (8:00) (10:30)
Music: (8:00) Organist: Bruce Anderson **(10:30)** Worship Band
Soundboard: (8:00) (10:30)
Ushers: (8:00) (10:30)

Thank you to the musicians who participated in Sunday's Christmas Eve services: Amy Gundermann, Tom Gundermann, Amy Fleischhacker, Sharon Savard, Noah Miller, Noah Gundermann, Leonard Miller, Elizabeth Thompson, Lynn Thompson, Kayla Gundermann, Leah Van Dassor, Ana Gundermann, Anna Thompson, Katie Miller, Anna Miller, Terianne Bender, Eva Gundermann, Lexi Miller. ~From the organ bench~

The LWML Winter Workshop of the St. Croix River Zone/ St. Paul Metro Zone is Saturday, January 20, 2018 "Being the People of God in our Broken Cities" Guest Speaker Pastor Mark Koschmann, M. Div., M.A. (Fiechtner Chair in Christian Outreach and Instructor in Theology & Ministry at Concordia University St. Paul) St. Peter Lutheran Church ~ Afton, MN (880 Neal Avenue South) Registration & Light Breakfast at 9:00 AM; Workshop at 9:30 AM. Free will offering.

Thank you for all of your prayers for healing, comfort, and peace on behalf of my family and myself. My surgery was successful and they were able to remove all of the cancer. I have healed well from the surgery and I am getting stronger each day. I am undergoing five months of chemotherapy in hopes of preventing a recurrence of the cancer. God has been gracious and placed His healing hand on me. Thanks again for your concern for my family and me. ~Eugene Heuton~

Bible Study: No Bible Study today.

One of the most fascinating of all literary devices is irony, through which authors and poets point out amazing contradictions and turnabouts. For example, it seems the best mysteries are those in which the "who" that "dunnet" is the one you'd least expect. There are many ironies in the Christmas story which are pointed out in the poetry of the carol "Let All Together Praise Our God," found in our hymnal as #389, and which will be our prelude today. The words and melody are by the German Lutheran musician Nikolaus Herman (1480-1561). As is often the case with musicians, Nikolaus had a heart for children. He wrote many of his hymns for them and even wrote a book about the Christian education of children. Even though this carol is one of his songs written for children, he doesn't begin in a childlike way with the story of the baby Jesus being born. Instead he gets right to the theological truth behind the birth, "Let all together praise our God / Before His glorious throne; / Today He opens heav'n again / To give us His own Son." In stanza two, he begins pointing out the opposites, the ironies. "He leaves His heavenly Father's throne, / Is born an infant small, / And in a manger, poor and lone, / Lies in a humble stall." Note the contrasting pairs of words or phrases - infant small, throne - humble stall. Who sits on a throne but someone rich and powerful? Yet now he lies "poor and lone."

Stanza three continues the lovely litany of opposites: "Within an earth-born form He hides His all-creating light." "Form" is contrasted with "light." One that is "earth-born" is created. Christ is called "all-creating." Even for a children's song, Nikolaus is selecting his words with great care to reveal eternal truths! "To serve us all He humbly cloaks the splendor of His might" - opposites again.

Beginning in stanza four, he clearly expresses what he has been hinting at with the contrasting terms used in the first three stanzas. "He undertakes a great exchange, / Puts on our human frame, / And in return gives us His realm, / His glory, and His name." This "exchange" is not a fair trade at all! This, for Nikolaus Herman is the theme of this carol - the great irony: that God did all this for no practical reason at all, but to save the undeserving and to serve the unworthy. Look at the resulting situation. "He is a servant, I a lord: / How great a mystery! / How strong the tender Christ Child's love! / No truer friend than He."

The theme of "opening heaven" from stanza one is touched upon in stanza 6. When Adam and Eve fell into sin, they had to leave the Garden of Eden (Paradise) and an angel was posted to keep everyone out (Genesis 3:24). "He is the key and He the door / To blessed paradise; / The angel bars the way no more. / To God our praises rise." "Your grace in lowliness revealed, / Lord Jesus, we adore / And praise to God the Father yield / And Spirit evermore."

This melody was also written by Nikolaus Herman, but not originally for this carol. It is a unique melody with many repeated notes recalling trumpet fanfares which might be used for important announcements. Nikolaus originally wrote the tune for another children's song about the greatest "Announcer" in the Bible, John the Baptist! How appropriate then, that John the Baptist's tune should be used to this day to announce the birth of Christ. That's perhaps a bit of irony in itself! (source: Lutheran Hour Ministries) ~From the organ bench~

Feeding Frogtown Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

We want to thank you for all you have done in 2017 to bring food to Frogtown. Together we have provided a food source that residents of Frogtown have grown to depend on. The gratitude we receive from our shoppers every week is a testament to the difference you are making in the lives of so many. Please join us for a celebration dinner on Friday, January 5th at 6 P.M. (after we are all cleaned up at St. Paul City School). St. Stephanus will provide chili (both meat and vegetarian) and salad. Bring your stories about how being of service to your neighbor has impacted your life. We look forward to celebrating the community of Frogtown and the wonderful volunteers that make it great!

To RSVP please go to this website <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0a44a4ab29a75-volunteer> or email Lynn Thompson at good-luna07@gmail.com

If you would like to help set up or clean-up for the dinner, please contact Lynn.

Join me in celebrating that Yohannes Ghebru, a member of St. Stephanus and the Eritrean Church that meets here, has been accepted into a Seminary program and begins his education towards being a pastor in January. Yohannes will be in a program that allows him to do both the educational and practical training of being a pastor from a distance, so he will be here among us doing the work of God in this place as a Vicar at St. Stephanus under my supervision. He will work with us primarily in the Tigrinya speaking congregation, but also with us in the English speaking congregation, to share the light of Jesus Christ with our communities. We look forward to a time in January when we will officially welcome him as a Vicar and help you get to know him better. Please keep him in your prayers.

"³⁷Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. ³⁸Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." – Matthew 9:37-38

-Pastor Thompson

On the third Sunday of each month, our church collects your pocket change for "mites for missions" in the big mite box in the narthex. Please remember to bring your mite box from home or take one with you to fill for next month. These mites go towards mission projects as well as provide assistance to those seeking a Lutheran High School education, assisting seminary students with food/clothing, or help expand outreach to ethnic women and families to name just a few ways that your mites help the LWML reach the world. Thank you for your support.

~Women's Ministry ~

International Association for Refugee Volunteer Training - Saturday, January 6th 9 A.M.- 3:00 P.M

For folks interested in volunteering with Jonathan House*, this is the first crucial step to becoming equipped to be a good friend and neighbor to asylum-seeking refugees. Led by IAFR's Director of Church Training, Rachel Uthmann, and U.S. Regional Leader, Sarah Miller, we will cover:

* Looking at Forcible Displacement

* IAFR's Continuum of Recovery

* Christian Witness in a Humanitarian Context

* Asylum Seekers in the US

* Opportunities with Jonathan House

* This training is **REQUIRED** for any folks who would like to volunteer with Jonathan House residents. We will provide information on our volunteer application process at the training.

Please RSVP by January 4 to help us plan adequately for refreshments and to help us prepare training materials. Please bring your own sack lunch for the 45-minute lunch break.

Thank you for your care for forcibly displaced individuals! We look forward to partnering with you.

Contact Sarah Miller, sarah@iafr.org with any questions.

To register please go here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/iafr-jonathan-house-volunteer-training-registration-41399880156>