



St Michael's
LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Messenger

December 2022

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The Already and Not Yet ~Pastor Ali Ferin

The season of Advent contains a perplexing paradox; we are waiting for Jesus to be born among us, and yet all throughout the year we proclaim that Jesus is *already* here. We will sing hymns such as "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" and light the Advent wreath to help countdown the weeks, all to help us wait for something that has already happened...a curious practice indeed! The season of Advent plays with our understanding of time – we remember something that happened in the past in order to inform our hope in the future, that just as Christ once came to earth, Christ will come again.



So much of our journey of faith is living in the paradox of already and not yet. Already in our lives we experience moments of love, grace, and peace, but in between them are moments of sorrow, loss, and struggle. We can know what it is to belong to a community, while at times still feeling alone or isolated. We can claim values of inclusivity, welcome, and justice, while still falling into habits formed by our prejudice and bias. We are already living in God's kingdom on earth, but because it is broken, it is not yet fully realized.

It can be easy to obsess on the reality of "not yet." After all, our readings for Advent invite us into that space. Soon we will hear John the Baptist's cry to "Repent!" precisely because the world is not yet as it should be. And we see it all around us too; perhaps this holiday season is not fulfilling the expectations of past celebrations. Maybe you feel the loss of what *should be* whether that is: how your holiday table *should be*, how the gifts under the tree *should be*, how our schools *should be*, how our political life *should be* how our worship *should be*. Awareness and recognition of the gap between *what is* (the already) and *what should be* (the not yet) can be helpful. It can motivate us to better our circumstances or the world around us; it can drive us to better align our values with our actions, it can inspire us to help, participate, and dream. But it also comes with the danger of becoming entrenched in constant criticism of ourselves and others, burdening us with guilt and shame, and consuming us with self-righteous anger that serves no one.

Advent invites us to hold the paradox of "Already" and "Not yet" and see what wisdom can be had. As we apply this paradox to our personal lives, we might ask: how can we find gratitude for the ways God is already working in our lives, **and** how might God be drawing us into a reality that is not yet here, whether that is a healthier self, showing up authentically in relationships, or seeking integrity in our work? As we apply this paradox to our faith community, we might ask: how has God been present in our congregation in the past and present, and how is God inviting us to grow and change in the future? As we apply this paradox to our nation we might ask: how has God used our country to bless the world, and how has our country participated in the systematic oppression of others?

This Advent season as we wait for the Christ child to arrive, I encourage you to discern the ways in which Christ is already here, so that on Christmas, when we celebrate the birth of Jesus, we might recognize the ways in which God is still seeking to be born among us in new and unexpected ways.

December Worship & Education Schedule

December Worship Services

Worship at 8:45 a.m. is led by piano. Worship at 11:00 a.m. is led by organ.

Sunday, December 4: **8:45 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.**

Sunday, December 11: **8:45 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.**

Sunday, December 18: **8:45 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.** Children's Christmas Program at the 11:00 a.m. service

Wednesday, December 21: **6:00 p.m.** Longest Night Worship. *Note the time change.*

Saturday, December 24: **4:30 p.m. & 10:30 p.m.** Nursery is available at the 4:30 p.m. service only

Sunday, December 25: **10:00 a.m.** Christmas Day Worship

Sunday, January 1: **10:00 a.m.** New Year's Day Worship

Live-Streamed Services

Each Sunday, one of the worship services will be live-streamed and available for later viewing at your leisure.

Subscribe to the St. Michael's You Tube Channel to watch worship live on Sunday mornings if you are not able to come in-person. Follow this link to the St. Michael's Channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbsN5e-01XueIDWgrWE_lag/videos

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbsN5e-01XueIDWgrWE_lag/videos

Our current schedule for Live Streaming worship is:

Sunday, December 4 @ 8:45a.m.

Sunday, December 11 @ 11:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 18 @ 11:00 a.m.

Saturday, December 24 @ 4:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 25 @ 10:00 a.m.

Watch your Friday Flyer for a copy of the Bulletin to download and follow along, as well as the link to the live service.

Streamed services will also be recorded and posted on Sunday evening on our website

<https://www.stmichaelselca.com/> for viewing at your convenience.

Sunday Education Hour

Religion in Life @ 10:00 a.m. in the Courtyard Room

December 4 Amy Marga; The Construction of "Whiteness," Protestant Theology And the Bible

How is Christianity implicated in race injustice in America? Although there is a lot to unpack on this topic, it is worth considering how Christianity supported the American movement to define most people of European descent as "white." In this session, we will explore the imagery and theology within Christianity that contributed to the construction of "whiteness" in Europe and America and what we can do to disentangle our faith in God from racial constructions.

Amy Marga is Professor of Systematic Theology, and has been at Luther Seminary since 2006. A summa cum laude graduate of Concordia University, St Paul, MN (1995), she received a Master of Divinity (1998) and Doctor of Philosophy (2006) from Princeton Theological Seminary. Her present research focuses on mothering and children in the Christian tradition. Her recent course topics include Race and Protestantism; Queer Theology; Global Feminist Theology; and Christianity, Conspiracies, and Christian Nationalism. Marga is a trained racial justice facilitator through the Minneapolis YWCA, and a member of the American Academy of Religion.

December 11 Karoline Lewis; Christmas In John's Gospel

The dominant images and characters of Christmas come from only two of the four Gospels - Matthew and Luke. Mark's story begins in the desert with Jesus being baptized. And John's story begins before the beginning of time. While John's Gospel will not contribute to our nativity sets, it is always the Gospel reading for Christmas day. This presentation will focus on how John's unique theological themes shape the meaning of the birth of Jesus.

Lewis is the author of *A Lay Preacher's Guide: How to Craft a Faithful Sermon; Embody: Five Steps to Leading With Integrity; SHE: Five Keys to Unlock the Power of Women in Ministry*, and *John: Fortress Biblical Preaching Commentaries*. Ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Lewis holds degrees from Northwestern University (B.A.),

Luther Seminary (M.Div.), and Emory University (Ph.D., New Testament Studies and Homiletics). She is the Program Director for the Festival of Homiletics, a contributing writer for Working Preacher, and co-host of the site's weekly podcast, *Sermon Brainwave*

December 18 Christmas Carols & Stories that Shape Us with Karen Wilkerson, Tom Bartsch, and Chuck Hanson
Join Karen, Tom, and Chuck as they invite us into the season with songs and carols, holiday stories and remembrances, and a good amount of laughter.

December 25 No Religion in Life

January 1, 2023 No Religion in Life

Holiday Worship Schedule

Finnish Christmas December 10 2:00 p.m. Sanctuary

This festive worship is in partnership with the Twin Cities Finlandia Foundation. Learn and sing Finland's favorite Advent and Christmas songs, and enjoy this cultural worship experience!

Children's Christmas Program December 18 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary

This service will feature our preschool through 5th grade students as they tell the story of Christmas. Join us as we hear about the birth of Jesus in word and song.

The Longest Night December 21 6:00 p.m. Courtyard Room * Note the time change

Christmastime can be a bittersweet time of year, reminding many people of what and who they have lost, or never had. The anguish of broken relationships, the weariness of ill health, the loneliness of grief, and the pain of isolation can make us feel very much alone in the midst of the festive season. The Longest Night worship service is held on the longest night of the calendar year as a way to sit vigil together and hold hope as a community in God's presence.

Christmas Eve December 24 Sanctuary

4:30 pm Christmas Eve Worship with Holy Communion – *Nursery care is available for the 4:30 p.m. service only*

10:30 pm Christmas Eve Worship with Holy Communion

Christmas Day December 25 10:00 a.m. Sanctuary

10:00 a.m. Lessons & Carols

New Year's Day January 1 10:00 a.m. Sanctuary

10:00 a.m. Worship

The Church Office will be closed on Mondays, December 26 and January 2

Sabbatical Time Away Mid-May to Mid-August 2023

It is hard to believe that it was six years ago this fall that St. Michael's extended a call to me to serve as pastor. On the one hand it feels like yesterday; on the other it feels like I've been here for a long time.

It is at the six-year mark that the Saint Paul Area Synod recommends congregations provide their clergy with a time away (sabbatical) for renewal, learning, and rest. And so later in May through mid-August I will be stepping back from pastoral duties, much like Pastor Ali did this past summer, for sabbatical.

During this time I will be at the Festival of Homiletics (a preaching conference) to attend sessions and serve as one of three liturgists in leading worship services. I will travel to Geneva to visit Lutheran World Federation and then on to Taize, France for a time of worship and renewal. Throughout the summer there will be reading, projects around the house, time with family, time at the farm, and rest.

Much like during Pastor Ali's sabbatical, P&A is planning to have part-time pastoral support to assist with preaching and worship, pastoral care, and community events. More information will be available this spring.

A deep word of gratitude for this opportunity and the privilege to serve as one of your pastors here at St. Michael's
-Pastor Brad

CHILDREN, YOUTH, & FAMILY MINISTRIES

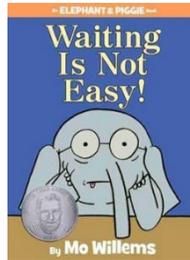
Waiting is NOT easy!

“How many days until the elf comes?”

“When do we start our Jesse Tree?”

“How many days until Christmas?”

“How many SCHOOL days until Christmas?”



Sound familiar? The questions have already begun in my household. My daughters, Naomi and Josephine, LOVE Christmas. They are ready for the decorations, baking, traditions, and most of all, the gifts. As I write this, it is not even Thanksgiving!

Advent is the season of waiting. For our young ones, waiting can be hard. Ok, let's be honest, waiting I hard for ANY age. Elephant & Piggie are a hug hit in our house. “Waiting Is Not Easy” is a fantastic addition to not only Advent, but life lessons for all ages. I highly recommend adding this to the library of a young one in your life. If you would like to get a preview, I shared this book in my children's message in worship on November 27th. You can access a recording of the worship service on St. Michael's YouTube channel through our website and emails.

God's Peace,

Natalie Romero , Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministry

The poster is for a 'Cookie Baking & Decorating' event. It has a red background with white text. On the left side, there are illustrations of various cookies: a gingerbread man, a gingerbread house, a gingerbread tree, a gingerbread boot, and a gingerbread candy cane. The text on the right reads: 'Cookie Baking & Decorating', 'Open to all 1st-5th Graders!', 'December 4th- 1pm-3pm', 'Come bake and decorate cookies for St. Michael's Community Members.', and 'Sign up using the QR CODE'. A QR code is located in the bottom right corner of the poster.

Cookie Baking & Decorating

Open to all 1st-5th Graders!
December 4th- 1pm-3pm

Come bake and decorate cookies for St. Michael's Community Members.

Sign up using the QR CODE



Sunday School Updates

No Sunday School
Due to Holidays:
November 27th
December 25th
January 1st



Sunday School Pageant
December 18th at 11am

**Practices will happen
during Sunday school**



Youth Bake Sale

ALL PROCEED GO TOWARDS THE
ANNUAL HIGH SCHOOL SERVICE TRIP

DECEMBER 18TH
10AM-NOON

WE WILL BE LOCATED IN
CLASSROOM 1 AND
OUTSIDE THE
COURTYARD ROOM

CASH OR CHECK ONLY



Christmas Eve Nursery Care

4:15pm-5:45pm

**Available for children
0-3 years old**

**Signing in and out are
required.**

No preregistration required.
The Nursery is located on the south side of the
building (hallway closets to the parking lot).



At St. Michael's all are welcome.

Children are welcome in worship
as well as our nursery program.

We acknowledge we all have
different needs. We recognize
neurodiversity and diverse
abilities. We seek to be a place
that support differing needs.

YOUTH CHRISTMAS
DINNER

DECEMBER 4TH
5PM-7PM

Service Trip Location Announcement,
Gingerbread house contest, and more!

Location: Youth Room

2023 High School Service Trip Info!

- Save the Dates!
- June 17th, 2023 to June 24th, 2023
- Location Announcement will be at the Christmas Party on December 4th.
- \$100 Deposit due February 1st
- More detail to be announced! Be sure to participate in the Bake Sale fundraiser!

DO YOU HAVE A YOUNG ADULT THAT COULD USE A CARE PACKAGE?

FILL OUT THE FORM LINKED WITH THE QR CODE BY NOVEMBER 27TH. THEY WILL RECEIVE THEIR PACKAGE IN THE NEW YEAR.

Confirmation Classes

7th – 9th Confirmation Updates



Confirmation is held on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall

December 7 Confirmation Class

December 14 Mentor Night

Mentors and students will be shopping for holiday gifts for residents in the Lutheran Social Service Metro homeless youth program.

December 21 No Confirmation Class

December 28 No Confirmation Class

Confirmation students preparing for the 2022 Faith Project Party



Confirmation students and mentors meeting with former Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson

Confirmation Retreat News



The confirmation retreat registration is due on December 4th Register online at <https://www.stmichaelselca.com/confirmation-retreat.html>

Music @ St. Michael's

St. Michael's Singers, Adult Choir

Rehearsal Schedule

Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m. Courtyard Room

Worship Schedule

December 4, 8:45 a.m.

December 11, 11:00 a.m.

December 18, 8:45 a.m.

Saturday, December 24, 4:30 p.m. & 10:30 p.m.

The Chapel Ringers, Adult Bells

Rehearsal Schedule

Thursdays, 6:00 p.m. Adult Choir Room

Worship Schedule

December 18, both services

Saturday, December 24, 4:30 p.m. & 10:30 p.m.

Youth Choirs

Rehearsal Schedule

Wednesdays Upstairs

6:30 p.m. K-4

7:30 p.m. 5-8

Worship Schedule

December 11, both services

December 18, 11:00 a.m. Christmas Program

Saturday, December 24, 4:30 p.m.

Youth Bells

Rehearsal Schedule

Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m. Adult Choir Room

Worship Schedule

December 4, both services

Social Ministry Activities

Social Ministry Calendar

- December 5 **Rezek House Meal**
- December 13: **Keystone Mobile Food Distribution**
2:00 – 4:00 p.m. *in Circle drive*
- December 14 & 28: **Quilting and Bandage Rolling**
9:00 a.m. *Fellowship Hall*
- December 11: **Sandwich Making for Union Gospel Mission**
11:00 a.m. *Serving Area & Kitchen*
- Daily: **Panera Bread Ministry:** Evening pick up at Rosedale Panera, Morning Bagging in Kitchen



Holiday Gift Drive

We will be collecting holiday gifts for local families through the Roseville Area School District. Grab a tag on our Giving Christmas Tree and return gifts by December 18th. Thank you!

Women's Retreat – Save the Date!

This year's women's retreat will be held on February 24-26 at Luther Crest Bible Camp in Alexandria. More information and registration to come, but mark your calendars and invite your friends!



Guatemala Partnership

2022 has been a busy year for our partner congregation in Cimiento, Guatemala. The members of Santa Cruz de la Esperanza have worked together to raise funds and build a permanent church building big enough for future growth needs of the congregation. You have been a part of this project also! Through encouragement, prayer, and donations, St. Michael's has walked along with the construction project progress in Cimiento.



As we look into 2023, the opportunities for the continued growth of our partnership look exciting. Cimiento has invited us to be part of a delegation visit to their area in April. They are hoping some friends from St. Michael's can be present for a dedication of their new church building!

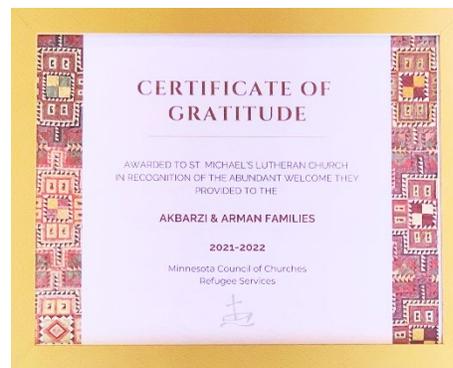
There are many questions to answer, even to think of yet, as we discern the possibility of a trip to Guatemala. The Guatemala Team welcomes your questions, comments, and concerns as we listen for how we are each called to walk together as partners in ministry as we develop plans for 2023 & 2024.

~ Pastor Ali, Pastor Brad, Sandra Eliason, Joan Felice, Lisa Koland, Dave Yarusso, Natalie Romero

An expression of gratitude

St. Michael's recently received a Certificate of Gratitude from the Minnesota Council of Churches in recognition of the "Abundant Welcome" this community has provided our Afghan refugee families.

The Refugee Resettlement Team thanks everyone at St. Michael's for the generosity and kindness with which these families have been met. It truly has been a demonstration of our core value of *Extravagant Welcome*.



Study & Fellowship Opportunities

Thursday Morning Bible Study

Thursday Morning Bible Study meets in the Courtyard Room at 9:30 a.m. This month we are exploring the weekly lectionary texts for Advent and Christmas.

Thursday, December 1

Isaiah 11:1-10	From David's line, a ruler bringing justice and peace
Psalms 72:1	May the righteous flourish; let there be an abundance of peace.
Romans 15:4-13	Live in harmony, welcoming one another
Matthew 3:1-12	A voice cries: Prepare the way of the Lord

Thursday, December 8

Isaiah 35:1-10	The desert blooms as God's people return from exile
Luke 1:46b-55	My spirit rejoices in God my Savior.
James 5:7-10	Patience until the coming of the Lord
Matthew 11:2-11	The forerunner of Christ

Thursday, December 15

Isaiah 7:10-16	The sign of Immanuel
Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19	Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
Romans 1:1-7	Paul's greeting to the church at Rome
Matthew 1:18-25	A God near at hand

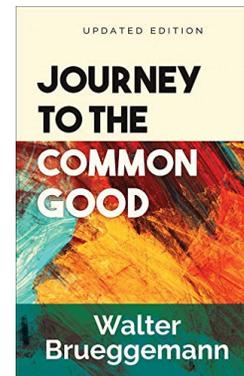
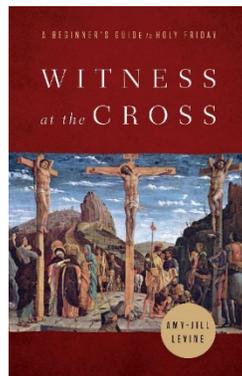
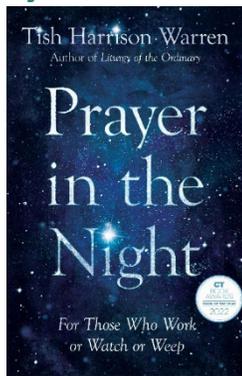
Thursday, December 22

Isaiah 9:2-7	Light shines: a child is born for us
Psalms 96	Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad.
Titus 2:11-14	The grace of God has appeared
Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]	God with us

Thursday, December 29

No class

Faith in Daily Life



December 7	<i>Prayer in the Night</i> , by the Rev. Tish Harrison Warren	Parts 3 & 4
December 14	<i>Prayer in the Night</i> , by the Rev. Tish Harrison Warren	Parts 3 & 4
January 4	<i>Witness at the Cross</i> , by Amy-Jill Levine	Intro-Chapter 2
January 11	<i>Witness at the Cross</i> , by Amy-Jill Levine	Intro-Chapter 2
February 1	<i>Witness at the Cross</i> , by Amy-Jill Levine	Chapters 3-4
February 8	<i>Witness at the Cross</i> , by Amy-Jill Levine	Chapters 3-4
March 1	<i>Witness at the Cross</i> , by Amy-Jill Levine	Chapter 5-Conclusion
March 8	<i>Witness at the Cross</i> , by Amy-Jill Levine	Chapter 5-Conclusion

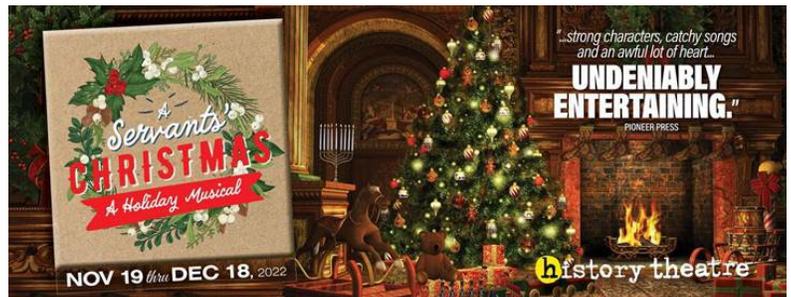
Note: *Sundays, March 26 and April 2, join Roland Hayes for Religion in Life as he explores the topic, "Why was Jesus Executed?" as we move from Palm Sunday through Holy Week.*

April 5	<i>Journey to the Common Good</i> , by Walter Brueggemann through Chapter 1
April 12	<i>Journey to the Common Good</i> , by Walter Brueggemann through Chapter 1
May 3	<i>Journey to the Common Good</i> , by Walter Brueggemann through Chapter 3(end)
May 10	<i>Journey to the Common Good</i> , by Walter Brueggemann through Chapter 3(end)

Esther Circle

The Esther Circle will meet on Tuesday December 6th at 10:00 a.m. in the Courtyard Room. We will continue our conversation on Art and the Liturgical Year. Join us for this time of conversation, connection, and learning! Interested in learning more? Contact Pastor Ali

On **December 1**, the Esther Circle is heading to the History Theatre! There may be tickets left for a *Servants Christmas*, a musical set on St. Paul's Summit Avenue in 1899, depicting the relationship between the Christian Warner family and their Jewish servant girl. The show is Thursday, December 1 at 10:00 a.m. Contact Pastor Ali to see if there are tickets left!



Those who want to carpool to the theatre should arrive to church at 9:00 a.m. We will leave church no later than 9:20 a.m.

Quilting and Bandage Rolling

Quilting and bandage rolling will meet twice a month over the program year on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Join us as we turn scraps into beautiful comfort items!

Come join the fun on **December 14 & 28.**



Desserters II Book Club

All are welcome! The Desserters II book discussion group will meet next on Tuesday, January 24 at 7:00 pm in Classroom 1. Masks are encouraged.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| Jan 24, 2023 | <i>The Island of Sea Women</i> by Lisa See |
| Feb 28, 2023 | <i>Searching for Sylvie Lee</i> by Jean Kwok |
| Mar 28, 2023 | <i>American Gospel: A Novel</i> by Lin Enger |
| Apr 25, 2023 | <i>The Violin Conspiracy</i> by Brendan Slocumb |
| May 23, 2023 | <i>The Old Woman with the Knife</i> by Gu Byeong-mo |

Men’s Bible and Brew

A reminder that St. Michael’s Men’s Bible & Brew will meet on Thursday, December 1, 7:00 p.m.



With the holidays coming up (Thanksgiving & Christmas) we will be adjusting the Men’s Bible & Brew gathering and will be meeting on Thursday, December 1, 7:00 p.m. at St. Michael’s—simply having one gathering between the months of November and December. For this gathering we will be reflecting on holidays and traditions that have been important to us. What are the traditions that have been or are important to you? What have been your experiences over the years? Bring a favorite beverage, a snack to share (if you’d like), and stories about the holidays.

In January Men’s Bible & Brew will be meeting on Thursday, January 19, 7:00 p.m. Mark your calendars!

Yoga Devotion

All are welcome.

The current Yoga Devotion session runs through December 19..

Class on Mondays starts 6:30 p.m.

Cost \$63.00

Register & pay with this link:

<https://yogadevotion.com/class/yogadevotion-flow-with-sandy-st-michaels-lutheran-church-roseville-mn-zoom-and-or-in-person-7/2022-11-07/>



DEI Matters Returns in January

We welcome you to participate in a group to explore Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Matters, using movies, article, books and open, authentic conversations in a brave space. The focus this year is on colonialism and indigenous people. These topics are geared toward adults and young adults. Watching and reading will be done individually, prior to meetings, where group discussion will allow us to consider how and why these matters matter. The purpose of this program is to broaden our self-understanding through deep self-reflection and sharing our learnings with each other. Meetings take place over Zoom.

The group is facilitated by Laurie Krachmer, a member of St Michael’s who has been engaged in diversity and inclusion work for the past 8 years and is a trained facilitator.

Meetings are on the third Sundays of January through May at 4:00pm and last 60-90 minutes, depending on the need of the group.

Instructions for January 15 DEI Matters Pre-work and Zoom Meeting

Watch the following videos on colonialism and colonization:

- *What is Colonization?*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6qWf4JrRVtw>
- *Colonialism: Crash Course Geography*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RzHbL0ByeLY>

- *How Does Colonialism Shape the World We Live in?*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pOdLzM4lz-Y>
- Watch *Even the Rain*, 2010 movie directed by Icíar Bollaín.
The movie is available on Netflix, for purchase at Amazon, or you can borrow a DVD from Laurie.
Note: this movie is in Spanish with English subtitles.

Use this link to join the Zoom meeting on January 15

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89738801324?pwd=U0hsdzNFZEJOR3VtSzFOMUhnZE1Edz09>

A Church at Work

Church Council Corner

The church Council met on Tuesday, November 15th. Discussion centered on the Feasibility Study and the Sanctuary Wall Construction project.

The next church council meeting will be held on Tuesday, **December 13**, 2022, 6:30 p.m. in the Courtyard Room.

Sanctuary Exterior Wall Project Update

At the congregational conversation on October 2nd, those present were brought up to date on the exterior sanctuary wall project. We shared that due to inflation, the cost of the wall construction had increased. The original price approved by the congregation at the annual meeting was \$542,400. The project was put out for bid in the spring, but we did not have receive a full slate of bids. In early June we worked with the architect LHB to look at other options and received two additional bids (one still incomplete) and a second from Langer construction was received in early August. We have decided to move forward with Langer Construction (the same company that built the fellowship hall years ago), and they have updated their final numbers, planning a spring 2023 start. The new bid was for \$753,000. This is significantly higher than what was approved at the annual meeting.

After staff, members of the Property Committee and the Church Council reviewed the bid and removed some items, the final price was reduced to just under \$681,000. The available congregational financial resources include the Thrivent loan approved by the congregation at the annual meeting (we were able to lock this in this past spring at a favorable interest rate), the reserve funds approved by the congregation at the annual meeting, funds made available through the Economic Recovery Act, and generous special gifts from members of the congregation. In order to get income and expenses to match, some items from the bid were changed. These include: removal of the new cross (with option to add later when funds become available), change from a metal to EFIS wall on the west end of the sanctuary, removing landscaping allowance, and removing colored films from the windows. An additional \$20,000, approved by the congregational council will be drawn from reserves. (Even with this amount being taken out the Reserve Fund we have a healthy balance of around \$200,000 or 25% of annual budget).

It is anticipated that some income will be recovered from copper sales. Although it is hard to know how much that will be, the goal is to use excess revenue to replace funds taken from reserve, as well as use the funds to complete landscaping.

After much hard work, a solution that will solve the long-term problem of water penetration is at hand. The Church Council will need to approve the contract with Langer by the end of the month to lock the amount of this bid in place.

Submitted by Brian Cihacek, Congregational Treasurer & Sandra Eliason, Congregational Vice President

St. Michael's Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, January 29, 12:15 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.

Save the date for the St. Michael's Annual Congregational Meeting. This year we plan to return to a simple lunch in the fellowship hall after the 11:00 a.m. worship service (around 12:00 p.m.) with the congregational meeting to begin at 12:30 p.m.

Items for this year's Annual meeting include:

- Review of 2022 Program Report
- Review of 2022 Financials
- Approval of 2023 Budget
- Constitutional updates that allow for co-pastor model
- Update on Sanctuary Wall Project & Property Items
- Report from Feasibility Study and proposed next steps
- Election of Council positions

2022 Budget Overview and Financial Update

	October Actual	October Budget	YTD Actual	Annual Budget
Income	\$46,579	\$61,862	\$651,110	\$874,359*
Expenses	\$56,087	\$68,937	\$672,953	\$874,359
Net Balance	-\$9,508	-\$7,074	-\$21,843	\$0

*At the Annual Meeting on January 30, 2022, the congregation approved use of Reserve Funds (the carryover income from 2021) to balance budget, if needed at the end of the year. This is included in the Annual Approved budget of \$874,359.

Feasibility Study Update

During the month of October, Steve Olson from Olson Advancement conducted a feasibility study meeting with 35 households. Invitations to participate in the study were extended to individual households and the entire congregation through weekly emails, the monthly newsletter, and bulletin announcements.

Steve shared his report with the feasibility team on November 1st and with the church council on November 15th. The full report is available at church and is located in the hallway across from the coat racks. A summary of the findings is below:

- There is overwhelming appreciation and affection for the community of St. Michael's.
- Strengths of our community include our generosity, welcome and inclusivity, support and care for one another, and multi-generational learning and participation, to name a few.
- Challenges facing our community include a lack of participation particularly in younger generations, pandemic recovery and reengagement, aging facilities, and lack of ethnic diversity.
- There was **unanimous support** to use capital campaign funds to complete the sanctuary wall project (Phase 1). Though funding for this project was already secured at the 2022 annual meeting, capital campaign funding would allow us to add back in aspects of the project that had to be postponed due to rising costs and inflation in order to keep it within its original projected budget. It would also allow us to pay down the loan from this project.
- There was **broad support** to use capital campaign funds to renovate narthex bathrooms currently located in the coat closet and re-imagine the narthex area, possibly adding a vestibule or expanding the entryway to provide energy efficient doors and create coat room space and additional gathering areas after renovating the restrooms. (Phase 2)
- Other ideas generated during the household conversations include: funding future building projects/deferred maintenance such as the parking lots, including a benevolence component (such as tithing a percentage of campaign gifts for community partners) enhancing sound in the Sanctuary, A/C in the Sanctuary, adding solar panels, and paying off the existing mortgage, to name a few.
- A **large majority** of households indicated that St. Michael's should engage in a capital campaign and showed interest in giving financially and of their time to help the campaign be successful.

Due to the findings of this report, both the feasibility team and the church council decided unanimously to pursue next steps in the capital campaign which include:

- Contracting with Olson Advancement to continue pre-campaign work
- Create a short-term team to finalize the scope and details of phase two work, refine the case study, and structure campaign goals
- Provide updated case study to congregation in preparation for congregational meeting
- Vote at the January 2023 annual meeting to proceed with campaign

Thank you to those who participated in the feasibility study! Keep an eye out for future materials regarding this work.

Feasibility Team

Al Barkve, George Beebe, Lee-Ann Breuch, Jessica Etten, Gary Wilkerson, Pastor Ali Ferin

Church Council

Renee Berndt, Brian Cihacek (Treasurer), Belinda Cline, Ginger Fairchild (Secretary), Chuck Hanson (President), Sandra Eliason (Vice President), Mike Krachmer, Deb Legan, Bill Lindquist, Aleksi Moran, Mary Nosek, Peter Thompson, Greg Zarambo

A Place for You

Hopefully you have received your stewardship packet for 2023. Inside you will find your annual pledge card. These cards help Church leadership establish our estimated income for each budget year; information provided on those cards and historical income represent 85% of estimated income each budget year.

The amount on the pledge card does not represent a guarantee or contract to give an amount but a personal, and ultimately, communal goal to sustain the ongoing mission, vision and values of St. Michaels. We know that circumstances often change, which could affect the amount you are able to give, but a returned pledge card helps the council and committees form our annual budget.

By completing and returning your pledge card as soon as possible, you help us create the most accurate budget possible even if the amount is not changing from the previous year. If you are enrolled in Simply Giving, automatic electronic contributions, (I encourage you to do so!), staff will update your electronic contribution automatically based on the information you supply, or you can login and change the information yourself.

As the year comes to a close, please also consider any required distributions from retirement plans as part of your giving plan! The money will be non-taxable if donated. Consider pledging a part of the amount to the following year's budget.

Thank you for your continued generosity, commitment, and community!

Sincerely,

Brian Cihacek, Treasurer



Qualified Charitable Distributions

Did you know? Money from an individual retirement account (IRA) can be donated to charity. What's more, if you've reached the age where you need to take required minimum distributions (RMDs) from your traditional IRAs, you may be able to not pay taxes on them by donating that money to charity. That's good news if this is something you're keen on doing. This tax break was made permanent in 2015.

A distribution from a traditional IRA normally incurs taxes since the account holder didn't pay taxes on the money when they made the contribution. But account holders aged 70½ or older who make a contribution directly from a traditional IRA to a qualified charity can donate up to \$100,000 without it being considered a taxable distribution. The deduction effectively lowers the donor's adjusted gross income (AGI).

Talk to your financial planner to review whether this might be the right fit for you.

St. Michael's has, over the last several years, learned from several households that this has been a great way for them to support the church financially.

Year End Giving

A reminder that if you are making a 2022 end-of-year gift to St. Michael's please place it in the offering plate or mail it to the church by December 31st. All checks must be dated December 31, 2022, or earlier.

The tellers will be making the final deposit for 2022 on Tuesday, January 3, 2023

Thank you for your generosity and on-going support of St. Michael's!

Thrivent Action Grants

Do you have products through Thrivent? Every adult member is eligible for 2 Action Team Project Grants annually. Thrivent offers all the resources you need to get started, including up to \$250 in seed money.

St. Michael's is looking for a few members who are willing to help by applying for grants for projects including:

- Supplies for Confirmation Retreat
- Young Adult Care Packages
- Fellowship Events
- Sunday School Outreach Projects.

Contact Pastor Ali, Pastor Brad, or Natalie if you are able to help with these projects.

SMART Update—December 2022

Throughout this fall St. Michael's has continued to follow local and state guidance with regard to COVID-19. At this point in time St. Michael's, like the majority of places, has moved to face masks recommended due to the preponderance of cold, flu, RSV and COVID infections circulating.

We continue the move toward normalcy. Over the last few months you have likely seen:

- The adult choir has returned to rehearsing in the choir room
- Coffee hour is now back up and running
- The church is hosting receptions and meals
- And we anticipate having communion at the communion rail beginning in January on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays (with continuous communion on the 2nd and 4th Sundays)

For all intents and purposes, we are operating in many ways like we did prior to COVID-19.

As we move through the holiday season SMART continues to encourage all who are able to get their COVID-19 boosters. Also, for those experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 we recommended you get tested and refrain from congregational activities for the recommended periods of time.

We want to thank you for being community over the last 2 ½ years and for all you have done to care for yourself and others. We continue to strive to keep everyone as healthy as possible.

We anticipate the St. Michael's Assessment & Reopening

Team will be winding down our work and updates. We will simply move into action if there are significant case increases or issues in our community or the congregation.

Again, with our sincere gratitude! *Karen Wilkerson, Deb Legan, Sara Osterman, Sandra Eliason, Dennis Skovsted, Hal Tiffany, Jone Tiffany, Pastor Brad Froslee*

Worship Leaders and Volunteers Needed

Looking ahead at 2023, there are a wide variety of OPEN Worship Leader spot! Check SignUp Genius for opportunities to volunteer for: **Ushers, Lectors, Communion Deacons, and Worship Flowers, and Fellowship Hosts.**

Visit Sign-up Genius to see the opportunities awaiting you. The quickest way to get there is to visit St. Michael's website: www.stmichaelselca.com and click on the Volunteer Sign-up icon



Online Giving & Mobile Giving



Did you know that you can pay for an event or set up a recurring automatic gift to support the work of St. Michael's? Authorization forms are available from the church office or follow this link:

<https://www.stmichaelselca.com/givenow.html>

Vanco also has a mobile App as another method to set up a payment or a recurring automatic gift to support the work of St. Michael's.

Download the Vanco Mobile App from the App Store and search for "St. Michael's Lutheran Church".

St. Michael's is a Reconciling in Christ Congregation



St. Michael's Lutheran Church lives out God's grace and love for all people. Faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we welcome those who have been part of church communities, those who have no previous church experience, and those who have felt excluded by the Church because of their race or ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental capabilities, financial resources, or family circumstances. In this witness we seek reconciliation, healing, and wholeness. As a diverse people we are then empowered by the Holy Spirit to live and work together for God's promised day of justice, peace, and mercy.

Land Acknowledgement

The ELCA has published "A Declaration of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to American Indian and Alaska Native People," in which the church confesses its sins toward Indigenous peoples and lists the commitments it will begin working toward as it responds to its original "Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery" from 2016.



St. Michael's Lutheran Church is located on the original and ancestral homeland of the Dakota people, and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.

Not getting your *Friday Flyer*?

Are you having a problem with our weekly e-newsletter, the *Friday Flyer* not showing up in your primary inbox? First check your other inbox folders—it often shows up in a spot called the *Promotions* folder. Or it could be in your *Spam* folder. If a search of those yields nothing, then contact Lisa Koland at office@stmichaelselca.com, and we'll find a way to make sure the newsletter gets to you!

Making the *Messenger Green*

If you prefer to read your upcoming issues of St. Michael's monthly *Messenger* newsletter in your email or on our church website instead of having a paper copy mailed to you, please notify the church office.

Got something for the January *Messenger*?

The *Messenger* submission deadline is Friday, December 16, 2022.

St. Michael's Staff Directory

St. Michael's Lutheran

www.stmichaelselca.com

651-631-1510

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Jill Schendel

Pianist

Karen Wilkerson

Adult Choir Director

Charles Preis

Adult Bell Choir Director

Cory Bock

Youth Choir Director

cory@stmichaelselca.com

Elliot Polzin & Fernando Garcia

Custodians

Owen Hamer & Emma Koland

Weekend Custodian