

December 23, 2022 Friday Flash

Dear Ones Born Anew in Christ,

Christmas is almost here! Jesus is born anew in us, moment by moment, day by day, and especially as we celebrate his birth. Jesus, God incarnate – God. With. *Flesh*. Jesus, Emmanuel – God. With. *Us*. Jesus, the fulfillment of God's love in physical presence feeding, teaching, healing, and embodying God's love for all.

We look forward to celebrating that *Love Has Come*, at our **7 pm Candlelight Christmas Eve worship service on Saturday, December 24** and as we celebrate in song and meditate on the story of God's love at our **10:30 am Service of Lessons and Carols on Sunday December 25**.

Personally, I am looking forward to the exceptional musical offerings of our ensemble, organ, piano, and choir during this joyous celebration! It is such a gift to be wrapped in the stories of God's love born anew. **This is a great opportunity to invite others to receive this gift as well!**

As we look to 2023, I will be taking time off next week (December 26-January 2) to spend with my family. Rev. Matthew Martens will be preaching and presiding in worship on January 1. Please contact the [office](#) with any pastoral care or other needs you have while I am away. **I wish you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, and I look forward to digging in when I return January 3 as we continue to *Live in and Share God's Love with ALL* as St. Andrew's Lutheran Church.**

Grace & Peace,

Pastor Sonja

ANNOUNCEMENTS

~THIS WEEK AT ST. ANDREW'S~

- Friday, *Office Closed due to Weather*
- Saturday, *Candlelit Christmas Eve Service*, 7 pm, Sanctuary and [Livestream](#)
- Sunday, *Christmas Day Worship*, 10:30 am, Sanctuary & [Livestream](#)
 - If you have trouble with this link, go to [St. Andrew's YouTube Page](#)
 - [Last Week's Livestream Recording](#)
- Monday, *Office Closed for Christmas- Federal Holiday*
- Wednesday, *Faith Book Study Meeting*, 7 am, Hy-Vee West Market Grille
- Thursday, *Pine Ridge Donation Time*, 6-8 pm, Room 2 at St. Andrew's
- If you are having trouble reading this email, [please click here for a PDF.](#)
- *For a full listing of events, check out the St. Andrew's calendar at standrewsames.org/calendar/*

Pastor Sonja will be on vacation from Monday, December 26 until Tuesday, January 3

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Worship Services

All are invited St. Andrew's annual Christmas Eve Service on December 24 at 7 pm! Celebrate the birth of Jesus with us through fellowship, carols, amazing music, and candlelight. Then, come back for our Christmas Day service at 10:30 am! Join in our mission to *Live in and Share God's Love with All* this Christmas season.

Poinsettias

The time to order Poinsettias has passed. However, if you did order flowers, they can be taken home following the Christmas Day Worship Service on December 25.

Regarding Offerings Given on Christmas Eve

This year, we are supporting **Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance** through the (designated) donations given during the Christmas Eve offering. Please read the following details for how to write your checks:

- Any loose cash or loose checks (such as those of non-members) will be recorded and then directed to the **Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance**.
- Anyone who would like to give to this year's Christmas offering recipient (**Good Neighbor**) by check should write it to "St. Andrew's Lutheran Church" with "Christmas Offering" on the memo line. Money collected this way will also be recorded and directed to **Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance**.
- Any checks without "Christmas Offering" in the memo will be assigned as a regular offering, and it will be assumed you intend your offering to fulfill your 2022 pledge to the General Fund. If you would like to give to another recipient within the church, please designate this on the memo line.

Service N Learning Sunday December 25 and January 1: No Service and Learning or Breakfast

Service N Learning – No Service and Learning In-Person or Zoom December 25 and January 1

New St. Andrew's Pictorial Directory - Coordinator Needed

Much has changed since St. Andrew's last pictorial directory was compiled. Work is underway to create a new directory for publication in 2023, and we are utilizing the web application used previously, which allows us to upload photos and contacts, lay out the directory, and print on demand, so it can be updated frequently for new printing.

Miriam Moreno, our office administrator, will coordinate the assembly and layout; we just need a dedicated volunteer to follow up with those from whom we need updated information. If contacting folks and encouraging them to submit a photo and contact information in a timely manner is your gift, please contact Miriam at office@standrewsames.org. Stay tuned for requests for photo/information submission!

2023 Offering Envelopes

Boxes of these envelopes are backordered until February due to the vendor's problems with production equipment and lack of employees. When they arrive, the boxes will be put on the Narthex table. It is not necessary to put your offering in any envelope but the Stewardship & Finance Committee realizes that some members prefer them, so we order a few boxes each year. Donors giving cash and wanting their donation to be recorded on their end-of-year contribution statement should always use an envelope of some kind with your name and address (if not known by the church). Please direct any questions to Linda Seaverson, seaverson.linda@gmail.com.

LIRS 2022 Update

2022 has been an incredible year. Lutheran Immigrant and Refugee Services resettled nearly 14,000 Afghans and hundreds of Ukrainians, as well as over 3,000 refugees from Congo, Sudan, Burma, Central America, and beyond. They successfully launched multiple exciting new programs, such as Therapeutic Foster Care, Mental Health Services, and New American Cities, a branch of our new empowered living model, and expanded LIRS's geographic reach through new offices and enhanced partnerships. [Support the work of LIRS by clicking here.](#)

Blessings Box Update

Volunteers are needed to help maintain the Blessings Box; thank you so much to everyone who has already signed up! The box is located on the front lawn of the church. A sign-up sheet to volunteer to check the box and add items is located on the table in the narthex. In addition, donations for the Blessing Box and MICA can be placed in the donation bins labeled for each organization, located in the narthex. This will give the volunteers a source of items to use.

Welcome Session January 8, 11:45 am

Pastor Sonja will hold a Welcome Session January 8 at 11:45 am in the Fellowship Hall. Individuals who want to learn more about being a part of (or reconnect with) St. Andrew's Lutheran Church are encouraged to attend. We will talk about: opportunities to get involved and get to know others at St. Andrew's; current ministries; hopes and dreams for the future; basics of faith, worship, the Bible; and grace from a Lutheran perspective. Pastor Sonja will have a packet of information for each participant, so *please RSVP by signing up on the sheet on the Narthex table or contact Pastor Sonja.*

Now Hiring: Organist

Spread the word! St. Andrew's is on the search for an organist able to lead music in worship every other week and work with Connie, Steve Hoifeldt, and Pastor Sonja to plan and lead liturgical worship services throughout the year. Please visit standrewsames.org for more information.

St. Andrew's Policy on End-of-the-Year Contributions

St. Andrew's will adhere to the IRS rules in Publication 526, "Charitable Contributions." Contributions are deductible in the year made. Thus, donations must be postmarked on or before Dec. 31, OR brought to the church office by noon on Dec. 30 (last day the office is open in December). Simply Giving or online donations made and processed by Dec. 31 also apply to the current year. If you would like to prepay all or part of your 2023 pledge in 2022, please indicate this on the memo line of your check. If you pay online, let Linda Seaverson know so it gets assigned correctly. The donation will appear on your 2022 Contribution Statement. Questions to: Linda Seaverson, seaverson.linda@gmail.com

Nominations Committee Members Needed, Nomination forms for Council, Elected Committees Available

A nominating committee is formed each year to recruit and forward nominations for the St. Andrew's council and elected committees (Audit, EMF, Personnel, Nominating) for election at the Annual Meeting. At the 2022 Annual Meeting, the congregation voted that the congregational council would form the nominating committee for 2022. *If you are available to serve in this important role, contact council president Randy Sacco (randysacco77@gmail.com) or a council member.*

At the 2023 Annual Meeting, St. Andrew's will elect four new members to council, identify and elect the council officers from the council membership, and elect the following: Extended Ministry Fund - 3 additional members; Audit Committee - 3 members for 2023; Nominating Committee - 6 Members for 2023. If you would like to submit a name for nomination, complete a nomination form available on the Narthex table and submit in the box labeled Council and Committee Nominations.

~NOTABLES~

Worship Assistants This Week (12/24/2022)

Assisting Minister – **Janeen Christy**

Reader – **Jon Christy**

Greeter – **Pat Thompson**

Usher – **John Kovar**

Communion Setup – **Paul and Cheryl White**

Communion Servers – **Carol Putz and Jon Christy**

Tech – **Kris Parsons**

Fellowship – **No Fellowship**

Worship Assistants This Week (12/25/2022)

Assisting Minister –

Reader – **Lynn Miller**

Greeter – **Matthew Martens**

Ushers – **John Kovar**

Communion Setup –

Communion Servers – **Lynn Miller and John Kovar**

Tech – **Kris Parsons**

Fellowship – **No Fellowship**

Worship Assistants Next Week (1/1/2023)

Assisting Minister –

Reader – **Kris Miles**

Greeter – **Nora Nelson**

Ushers – **Al Jergens**

Communion Setup – **Kris Miles**

Communion Servers –

Tech – **Bruce Boeke**

Fellowship – **No Fellowship**

Happy December Anniversary

Dan and Kristine Anderson (27)

Happy December Birthday

Norma Elwick (4), Miriam Moreno (8), Janeen Christy (9), Makenzie Putz (12), Alice Thompson (12), Susan Teas (20), Gene Pollmann (23), Lynn Engen (27), Pastor Sonja (29)

~PRAYERS~

Tiah Bowie and Family (Sister/family of Finis Jones), **Marvin Hitchings** (Nora Nelson's Husband), **Phil Parsons, Alice Thompson, Lowell Elwick, John Sherve** (brother of Margaret Sherve, battling cancer), **Annette (Thompson) Bodnar** (niece of Alice Thompson), **Anita Whitaker** (Mother of Sheri Krumm), **Troy Eagen** (Sharon Anderson's son-in-law), **John Litzel, Libby Litzel Gull, Mark Ekeren** (brother of Sarah Buck), **Wayne Thompson** (brain tumor), **Marilyn Saunders** (Gene Pollmann's sister), **Gene Takle, Lou Jordan** (Dagmar Frank's cousin), **Nancy Owen** (Carol Putz's cousin, battling cancer), **Roxanne Labandz** (niece of Alice Thompson), **Pat Fawcett, Kolleen Tweed Sogard** (daughter of Violet Tweed), **Robert Pollmann** (Gene Pollmann's brother), **Mike & Kayla Endorf** (cousins of Dagmar Frank), **Diane** (Carol Putz's sister w/long COVID), **Lester & Alycia Carlsborg, Ben Buck, Stu Endorf** (Dagmar Frank's cousin), **James Loritz** (nephew of Alice Thompson), **Karen Hardy** (Rita Peterson's sister), **Susan Teas, Douglas John Putz** (brother of Dave Putz), family of **Anne Buck** (Sister-in-Law of Sarah and Ben Buck), the family of **Richard Doyle** (father of Monica Behning), the family of **Jane Ellis** (Pat Fawcett's Sister), and the family of **Norma Ness Aspengren** (former member).

For all those suffering from loneliness and grief, addiction and illness-both mental and physical, poverty and need, war and strife; we pray to the Lord to bless them and give them peace. We continue to pray for the health and needs of the people in the Ames Community, the Pine Ridge Reservation, the Hedaru and Agape Parishes in Tanzania, and all communities throughout the world.