

**PASTOR'S MUSINGS**

**Back towards the future**

I imagined before – as many of us do in the western world – that New Year is like us standing on a high place, looking towards to the future, to a terrain into where we are supposed to tramp to get forward in life.



My wife lived in Tanzania for a while, and she told me that African people have a different understanding of time. They also picture themselves standing by a view, but they are facing the past. Their future is behind their backs and thus impossible to be seen. Because they are looking to their past, they are entering the future by walking backwards.

Everybody knows that walking backwards, especially in rough terrain, is a difficult task because you are not able to see where you are going. I find the African parable of us humans in time more truthful than the western one, where we imagine that we are facing our future and can see what's coming to us?

The choices that we make for our future are usually based on what we have learned in our past. Life indeed is like walking backwards where you must orientate according to what you have gone through earlier. When walking backwards, we must trust that the terrain continues somewhat similar as a couple of steps before.

We all know that repeating one's mistakes is not a fruitful way in life. However, repeating the successful choices may not always be the best way either. Best decision made in the past may be the worst one when repeated in the future. Life seldom duplicates circumstances twice the same way.

So, it would be great to learn to be creative and flexible as planning and making choices in our personal life or the life of a Congregation. Future is a scary thing because it is unknown to us. To a Christian, it remains as hidden as to anyone. A Christian has, however, one advantage compared to many others.

We hope and believe that God is guiding our journey. We are not on our own or the mercies of blind forces of life. God has promised to lead us. When we let God guide us, we are not bound to repeat our past choices – bad or successful – but we are free to try something new, too.

Have a Happy and blessed New Year 2019.

Pastor Olavi

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Church Office: (519) 893-3826

Pastor's Cell: (519) 277-4145

Pastor's Email: pastor.olavi@gmail.com

Church E-mail: stlukes@rogers.com

Secretary: Daisy Puttock

Organist: Gloria Berg

**CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Cathy Dowsling	Joy Montgomery
Donna Finch	Kathy Thomsen
Debbie Gastmeier	Tim Wilke
Susan Hennig	Aaron Wilke
Vic Lytle	Maryann Lang
Darlene Hilborn	



**Those who are shut-in:**  
Mildred Kaminska & Laurie O'Brien

**Those who are at:**  
*Lanark Place:* John Schmidt & Cliff Schneider  
*The Westmount:* Audrey Parker

*Winston Park:* Les & Marie Kipfer  
*Briarfield Gardens:* Ruth Debus, Geri Leis, Irleen Karn, Ralph & Joanne Roth

**Those who are out of town:**  
*Alymer:* Mary Hendel     *Elmira:* Ed & Lola Ware  
*Guelph:* Ruth Rudy     *Listowel:* Norm Lewis  
*New Hamburg:* Anna Picard

## BAPTISM

28 October     Alyssa Beata Gorasso  
Child of Cassandra Gorasso

## FUNERAL

12 November     Rev. Albert Lorch

## YEAR-END REPORTS FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING

In order for the church office to properly prepare the Bulletin of Reports for the Annual Meeting, it is important that all reports from the standing committees and church group reports be into the church office **on or before Sunday, January 6, 2019**. Financial records are also needed for an internal review.

### ATTENTION NEW MEMBERS!

On Sunday, January 20<sup>th</sup> we will celebrate the New Member's Sunday at St. Luke's. Anyone who has recently become a member by transfer from another church is in focus on that day. Full membership doesn't require a public notion to be valid, but we want to celebrate the colours that the new members bring to the existing gamut of our community. Lately, a significant influx has come from the St. Philip's but also other churches. Everyone is equally welcome to participate. Please invite your fellow-new-member to join you.

During the service, I will invite you to the altar to confess our Christian faith together with the congregation and to receive a blessing – like when you were confirmed. Someone has mentioned a cake during the coffee in the fellowship hall. It obviously will be a St. Luke's-style celebration.  
Pastor Olavi

## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

**Sunday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

(immediately following the service)

The purpose of the meeting is to:  
*Review the 2018 Bulletin of Reports*  
*Approve the 2019 Annual Budget*  
*Elect Church Council Members*  
*Deal with other related business*

Copies of the Bulletin of Reports will be available on Sunday, February 3rd.

## LENT SERVICES

Although the theme of this year's mid-week Lenten series has not been finalised, we will be gathering on Wednesday evenings for a **Lenten Supper in the Parish Hall at 6:15 pm**, followed by a **Lenten service in the church at 7:15 pm** (please note the change in times). The dates are

Mar 6, 13, 20, 27  
Apr 3, 10

We also gather on Maundy Thursday, Apr 18<sup>th</sup> for a meal and service.

The Good Friday service is Apr 19<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM.



## ST LUKE'S WOMEN

Come join us on  
**Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>**  
for a Potluck Dinner

Details about the evening will be posted on the courtyard bulletin board and in the weekly worship bulletin, as they become available.

## ST. LUKE'S WOMEN

We are the hosts at the Trinity Village Tea Room  
Sunday, March 24, 2019, from 2:15-3: 30 pm  
If you are interested in helping with this ministry,  
please contact Ruby Janssen 519-748-0092

## CATCHING Up ...

**Nov 3rd** – The **ANNUAL CHURCH BAZAAR** was a great success. The Parish Hall was packed with vendors and shoppers. Over \$7,200 was raised. Many thanks to everyone who helped with the set-up and clean-up, the making and baking of cookies and pot pies, and all who volunteered throughout the day. And a special word of thanks to those who provided the various items for the raffle table.

**Nov 13<sup>th</sup>** – This year's pleasant weather allowed many of the ladies and friends of the congregation to gather at Golf's Steakhouse for **LADIES NIGHT OUT**. It proved to be a wonderful evening of fun and fellowship.

**Dec. 2nd** – The church was "packed to the rafters" when our choirs presented their **CHRISTMAS CANTATA – "Images of Adoration"**. What a wonderful way to help us prepare for the coming of the Christ Child. A free-will offering of over **\$670.00** was received in support of the music ministry of St. Luke's.

**Dec 16<sup>th</sup>** – Once again it was a sell-out of tickets for our **CHRISTMAS DINNER**. A special thank-you to the members of the Parish Life Committee for organising it and the volunteers who made it happen.

### **VOLUNTEERING. It's a good thing!**

*"The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing."* W.E. Disney

Our volunteers play a vital role in the life of St. Luke's. You could even go so far as to say the church could not run without its volunteers. Just imagine if any one group of volunteers stopped doing what they do? Perhaps the offering would not get counted, the bulletin would not get folded, there would be no coffee hour etc. Indeed, our

volunteers are the lifeblood of this church. Many of our current volunteers do so in more than one role. We are very grateful for their service. We need more of our members to volunteer as many hands make the load lighter. There are many opportunities for volunteerism at St. Luke's. In fact, we have several opportunities that need volunteers right now.

**Outreach Team:** The Congregational Surveys overwhelmingly suggested that we need to find the needs in our community and support those needs. There were even specific suggestions on what to do. However, all these suggestions need volunteers. Our current Outreach Team is unable to proceed due to the lack of volunteers to get this work started. We need more than one person to start and maintain valuable outreach programs. If you truly believe in outreach and want our church to be in mission for others as a way to attract other members and be relevant now and in the future, you need to be on the Outreach Team. It is easy to do- just talk to Pastor Olavi or a member of Church Council, and we will get you started in the right direction.

**Church Council:** Three people are needed to serve on the council. Two people are needed to each serve second terms of three years. One person is needed to serve the third year of a second term. Serving on council requires you to, at a minimum, attend monthly meetings (11 in total) and be a liaison to a committee and attend those meetings.

**Sunday School Teachers:** We need two or three Sunday School teachers to help Susan Hennig. Preliminary read through of the congregational surveys revealed that many of our members believe we need more youth and young families at St. Luke's. If we truly believe that we need more young people attending, then we must first support the youngest of our members currently coming to church. Show our children they are important and they are more likely to continue to come to church as young adults. This can only happen if there is programming for them along their faith journey. So, to those who believe our youngest are the key to future success, please volunteer to teach Sunday School. If we have four teachers, each would only need to teach once per month.

**Rental Co-Ordinators:** We need one or two people to help Chuck Stuebing in this role. Currently, Chuck is the only person taking care of short-term rentals. He opens the church, turns off the alarm, shows them around the area(s) they are able to use, explains garbage and blue box procedures and then returns to make sure lights are out, cleanup was done and check for any damage and lock up. We would like a team of people to share this role. Ideally, we are looking for members who live near the church.

**Ad Hoc Team for Rentals:** Two people are required for a short-term study of our current rental policies. This means reviewing our current rental contracts/policies and fees and researching the rental contracts/policies of other churches. From this, lease agreements for long-term rentals (one year or more) and short-term rentals would be developed. Recommendations for changes would be made based on the findings of the team to fit the various kinds of rentals we could engage in.

There are many reasons given to decline an invitation to volunteer. Reasons such as “I have done my time- it’s someone else’s turn”, “I don’t have time”, “I’m too old” etc. The problem is that when people say no, vital jobs don’t get done and then St. Luke’s does not function as well as it should. I would like everyone to know that we can be flexible with our volunteer roles in order to take into consideration concerns that keep people from saying yes. If you are interested in any volunteer position, please ask questions about the role. Volunteering is very rewarding when the right person is in the right role. I invite everyone to volunteer and, in particular, to volunteer in one of the positions listed in this article. If you believe in an idea or a project but are not willing to put the time into it yourself, how can you expect others to take on your worthwhile cause? We cannot go forward in mission for others if we continue to remain stuck in the talking phase. The only way to start is to *“just begin doing.”*

Kathryn Thomsen  
Council Chair

**AIM** is a not-for-profit Day Program for young adults with developmental disABILITIES and operates from Monday to Friday from 8am-4:30 pm. AIM participants partake in meaningful activities that promote community inclusion for individuals who are interested in making new friendships, trying new things, staying active, and building new skills.

AIM provides opportunities for participants to develop confidence and increase independence. AIM programming assists participants to develop work skills and engage in purposeful community involvement through volunteerism.

#### Our Vision

To build a strong, safe and supportive community for adults with developmental disABILITIES through building connections in all we do.

#### Our Mission

To encourage growth and enhance life experiences for participants with developmental disABILITIES, through building bonds of friendship, creating meaningful activities, providing opportunities that increase well-being and by fostering purposeful community connections.

#### We Believe

“Everyone deserves the right to have a place where they are accepted, understood and valued. A place where what they do has purpose and meaning to them and their community. A place of safety, self-growth and opportunity.”

#### DONATION

Donation for the automatic door system was given in memory of Jeanette Wyatt’s parents George & Emma Weber. With great gratitude, we give them many thanks! This was needed tremendously to support our faith community’s needs.