

Christmas Time – Family Time

The year 2022 comes to an end, and the new year 2023 is already lingering around the corner. At least I just got myself a new calendar as the appointments for January are already starting to come in. In this time of endings and new beginnings, I always like to look back and ponder on the highlights of the passing year, and gather my hopes for the year to come.

For me personally, the highlight of the year 2022 was our family vacation in Germany this summer. Eventually after five years I had the chance to visit with my mom, family from my husbands' side, and school friends. We had a wonderful time, intense and exhausting at some point, but it was a much-cherished gift for us to experience ourselves as a part of a wider family, because we don't have any family living in Canada. Many of you shared with me your own experiences after this long time of separation during the pandemic. It was good to see that many of you had been able to visit family from afar or welcome them into your homes again. May we all be able to celebrate Christmas together again with our families without any isolation rules because of this nasty virus, which changed our lives so much over the last two and a half years. Especially on high festive days like Christmas, we sadly feel the separation from our loved ones – those still with us, living in other parts of the country or the world and those who are not with us anymore.

Christmas is a family feast and expectations are high, and we know that family life can sometimes be challenging too. In the shimmering light of our Christmas candles the scenery with Mary, Joseph,

baby Jesus, shepherds, angels and the three wise men in and around the stable looks peaceful and happy; but we know that the Holy Family had to carry their load as well. In the first chapter of Matthew, the bible tells us that Joseph planned to separate from Mary because he wasn't the father of the child she was carrying in her womb. But an angel appeared to him and set him straight. Thank goodness. If he would have left her, she would have been punished hard. On top of this those poor people had to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Every pregnant woman can tell you how exhausting this is. Mary had to deliver Jesus all by herself without any help of another woman or a midwife, and she had to do this far away from home in a dirty stable. Not long after the delivery they had to flee to Egypt as King Herodes has been up to no good. Later we can read in the bible that Jesus' relationship to his family of origin was indeed difficult. Family life can be challenging at times. And I can imagine that it is not easy to have the Son of God as part of your family. But good for us, because on Christmas God became human in Jesus and he knows about our struggles and challenges as he went through them as well.

We can count on him. He is with us – wherever we are. He knows about our desire of having a fulfilled family life and our longing for joyful days together as a family. In prayer I lift you and your family up into God's loving hands. May He bless you and your family on these festive days, keep you safe when you are travelling and give you peace in your togetherness as a family. Embrace your precious family moments with all your heart, they are priceless! Rejoice, our Saviour is born!

Blessings, Pastor Heike



Our Love and Prayers go out to all our Christian brothers and sisters who are ill, grieving or in long-term care.

Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the

Lord Jesus Christ.

***For a visit from the Pastor,
please contact Pastor Heike at
519-212-9952***



St. Luke's Christmas Bazaar

Don't Miss!

Saturday, November 5

8:00 am – 1:00 pm

Ish 'N Chips

Wednesdays 4:00-7:00 pm through November

Skip the Dishes and enjoy a change of pace. Please support this local food truck as the church also benefits.

Finance Committee -- Fall Update

As we return to fall schedules and routines after the summer months, we would like you to consider your donations to St. Luke's for the remaining year. At the end of September, St. Luke's has a current year deficit of approximately \$25,000 as weekly offerings are not covering the church's operating costs. Over the past few years, we have successfully managed to operate St. Luke's with only a small deficit in 2021 and no deficit in 2020 and we hope we can end 2022 in a similar fashion. Therefore, we encourage members to prayerfully consider their donations and help eliminate the current year deficit through their weekly offerings, PAR or E-transfer which is set up as auto-deposit. Thank you for your continued support for the ministry of St. Luke's.

- *Christine Petersen, Finance Committee Chair*

Council's Corner

(The place where you can read about Council updates!)

Update from the September meeting:

The Facilities Management Team and the Property Team have kept us up to date on the boiler, snowplowing for the coming winter and building needs. The emergency plan is still in the development stage.

The Congregational Christmas Dinner was discussed. Volunteers will be necessary in order to make this a success.

Council's goal is to improve communication between council and committees and between the committees themselves.

Council has 4 openings!
Prayerfully consider joining council.

Soup Sundays for Servant's Heart Ministries!

November 13 - Please join us following the service for soup in the Fellowship Hall. We have a great variety of soups on the menu. Free will offering in support of mission projects in the Dominican Republic.

St. Luke's Women Dessert Social

Tues. November 8 at 6:30 pm

Guest speaker Pastor Heike

Please feel free to bring a guest.



CANTATA SUNDAY

Sunday, November 27 at 10:00 am

I Hear the Prophet Callin'

The Christmas Story from Prophecy to Fulfillment

Music and Lyrics by Pepper Choplin

The adult choir, children's choir,
Hand Bell Choir and Hand Chime Choir
will be featured

Come and join in this year's Cantata Sunday!

Christmas Dinner is Back!!!!

**Sunday
December 11,
2022**

*after service in the
Fellowship Hall*



Tickets:

\$20/adult

\$10/child 10 and under

Tickets will be on sale through the month of November during coffee hour.

There will be a sign-up sheet for volunteers.

We need people to help sell tickets, set up, take down, wash dishes and bring salads, desserts, buns and butter.

Menu by Little Mushroom Catering:

Roasted Turkey with Cranberry Sauce and poultry Gravy; Garlic Mashed Potatoes; Honey Glazed Carrots; Sage & Apple Dressing.

Vegetarian Option: Ratatouille in a Zucchini Boat

German Christmas

On **Tuesday, December 13, at 1:30 pm** all who love German Advent and Christmas Traditions are welcome to join for a German Christmas Celebration. We will sing German Christmas Carols, enjoy tea, coffee and cookies as well as revamp our German. I'm looking forward to a cozy afternoon in the Parlour.

- Pastor Heike



Frohe Weihnachten
UND EIN GLÜCKLICHES NEUES JAHR

St Luke's Women Collectibles 2022

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Wool, prayer shawls

Legion (for wheel chairs)

Pop can tabs

Salvation Army Mitten Tree

Mitts, gloves, hats, scarves

Slippers, socks

New items only please.

Food for Children

Pneumonia vests

Eye glasses, sun glasses

Wool, material, craft items

Adult & children's clothing

Baby items

Pots & pans, kitchen utensils

Plastic bowls & containers

Medical supplies

Unopened medications

School supplies, knapsacks

Small toys, stuffed animals

Non-electrical tools

Household items

Towels, table cloths

Bedding, blankets, Afghans

Purses, shoes

Place in box in narthex anytime.

Items are dispersed when collected.



The Sounds of Christmas
Celebrating 5 Years 2022
Conceived & Directed by Nicole Guse

A Heartwarming Musical Celebration

In support of
KidsAbility
Foundation

A multi-performer musical journey through the many styles of Christmas Music from Traditional to Country to Gospel featuring Harmony Singing, Toe-tapping Instrumentals & Various Styles of Dance.

SHOW TIMES
Fri. Nov 25 - 2:00pm & 7:00pm
Sat. Nov 26 - 2:00pm
Fri. Dec 02 - 2:00pm & 7:00pm
Sat. Dec 03 - 2:00pm

WMB Church, 245 Lexington Rd., Waterloo, ON
Reserved Seating for Groups of 20 or more

TICKETS:
18 & Under \$20 | Adult \$35
Group Rate (20 or more) \$30/person

Available for purchase:
Box Office: 519.502.8390
Online: ticketscene.ca

www.guseproductions.com

Living Advent Calendar

As our Living Advent Calendar on YouTube brought lots of joy last year, even beyond the borders of our congregation, it was requested to create one this year again. But without you, the good folks of St. Luke's, it's an impossible endeavour. Please let me know by November 29 if you would like to open the door to your house for us and show us your talent and creativity. There will be a sign-up sheet posted on one of the bulletin boards in the Narthex or you can sign up with me directly. Let your creativity run wild, the possibilities are manifold – you can show a beloved Christmas or Advent Tradition, read a story, sing a song, show a craft, share your favorite recipe, whatever comes to your mind. If you need help with recording let me know as well and I will stop by and help with videotaping. You can sign up with me by the end of November if you would like to receive a daily email during Advent with a short thought, prayer or text and the link to the door.

- Pastor Heike

Christmas bags and greetings for housebound members

The Community Connection Team together with the Sunday School children will put together goody bags for our housebound members. The bags with many goodies and treats will be distributed mid-December. If you would like to help with distribution or know someone who would like to receive a greeting from St. Luke's, please let Pastor Heike know.

Prayer Box

We deeply believe in the power of prayer. It is so important to stay connected with God and lift each other up in prayer. Please make use of our Prayer Box abundantly. Prayers can be put in there before the Worship Service. The box will be brought to the altar shortly before the Worship Service starts. The prayer group – which is an open group for everyone to join by the way – will meet after the Worship Service and gather around the altar. Together we will open the box and lift up your prayer petitions.

Christmas at St. Luke's



Holy Night, December 24:

4:00 pm - Family Worship Service with Nativity Play

7:00 pm - Candle Light Worship Service

Carol Singing before Worship Services starts at 3:45 pm and 6:45 pm

Christmas Day, December 25:

Carols and Lessons at 10:00 am

Volunteers are needed for December 24 and 25 services. Sign-up sheet is on the Volunteer bulletin board in the courtyard hallway.

Sunday School News

Thanks to our wonderful teachers Darlene Brooks, Dianne Metcalf and Rachel Sutton we had an amazing start into the new Sunday School year with many children attending. Sunday School can always use help and support. A good opportunity comes up on November 20. The children will create Christmas Cards during class (everyone who would like to help is welcome to join). These cards will go into the Christmas bags for housebound members and will be available for the congregation to purchase by donation. The proceeds will go towards the purchase of books and items for our Blessing Box. This year we are planning to have Christmas Nativity Play during the 4:00 pm Worship Service on Christmas Eve. Please join abundantly – the more the merrier! Please reach out to our Sunday School Teachers for more information.

Bible Study about Gifts and Calling

The WEPP Team is currently working on a new concept for a Bible Study which will start in January 2023 (Date and time will be announced). We will start with the Study Book 'Gifts and Calling' from the Serendipity book series.

Bible quote for 2023

If you wish to receive a (personal) bible quote for 2023, let me know. Usually, I will distribute those during the Worship Service on the 'Baptism of our Lord' Sunday, but can send you one per email in advance. May this word from the bible be a companion for you during the new year, a waypoint, a light house. I will start working on a collection of quotes in the first week of January.

- Pastor Heike

DREAM TEAM REFLECTIONS

The Dream Team has been working hard these last few months to provide you with information about our discussions and progress as we attempt to provide some direction and possibilities for the future of St. Luke's.

We would like to thank those of you who were able to participate in the first Townhall meeting after the service on Sunday, October 16. We were delighted with the turnout and the feedback that you provided. For those of you who were unable to attend, we looked at the:

Vision Statement – *To be God's hands at work in the community by providing and supporting the needs of others while working with our local partners and utilizing our property and building assets.*

Goals:

- 1. To renew St. Luke's core community after the Covid disruptions and restrictions*
- 2. To establish community connections*
- 3. To identify how we could better utilize our assets and property*

The results of your feedback have been tabulated and placed on the bulletin board down the courtyard area. Thank you for all the ideas and suggestions. There is still an opportunity for you to add to those suggestions on the sheets; so please take the time to do so.

We also started working on Goal 2 by hosting a Community Round Table under the guidance of Pastor Jennifer Hoover, the Advisor for Congregational Redevelopment of the Eastern Synod. We were able to connect with several community leaders in the Stanley Park and Kitchener -Waterloo Region community. We had an interesting and informative discussion of what they considered the most urgent needs in the community, the priority areas for needed services, challenges in meeting those needs, and how together we might respond to them without duplicating services.

The Dream Team will now meet frequently to take your feedback and that of the Round Table to develop a proposal which will be presented to you at another Townhall meeting in the near future. If you have any questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to speak to a member of the Team: Pastor Heike, Cathy Dowsling, Donna Finch, or Tim Wilke. We value any contributions that you can make.

- Donna Finch



Memorial Trees have been planted

After we lost our trees to the storm last May, the Property Team has planted three sugar maples. If you wish to donate towards a tree in memoriam of a beloved one, please indicate to the office, and a tree will be assigned to you. We are looking at \$200 per tree (the amount can be shared between several people). Further information will follow.

Canada Lutheran Magazine

It is time for our renewal. Cost per subscriber has not increased. \$20.97 per subscriber includes HST. If you currently receive the magazine or wish to join the subscription list, please contact Helga in the office. Payment can be included with your Sunday offering and mark it 'Magazine'.

Poinsettia Fund

Contributions are being accepted for poinsettias for the Sanctuary in celebration or memory of a loved one until December 18. Poinsettia envelopes will be provided on the entrance tables.

Salvation Army Tree of Hope

The Tree of Hope for the Salvation Army will be up until November 27.

Your donation of the following items is greatly appreciated:

Mitts, gloves, slippers, hats, scarves, socks.
Only new items please.



Clipart from pixabay.com



Canadian Lutheran World Relief *Gifts from the Heart*

Give a meaningful gift with CLWR's Gifts from the Heart catalogue. Your gift to a loved one will provide meaningful, tangible items for people around the world facing hunger, and poverty.

Gifts from the Heart catalogues should arrive soon.

Visit www.clwr.org/GFTH to learn more.

ANNUAL REPORTS !

Call to all committees:
Please start preparing your reports for the
Annual General Meeting

Please submit report to the office by
JANUARY 10, 2023

Volunteers

Volunteers are needed in the areas of:
Counting, Lector, Ushers, and Live-Streaming.

Worship & Music Committee is looking for a volunteer to wash the worship gowns twice a year. If you are able to help or need more details, please contact the office.

Council Members:

Council Co-Chairs:

Jane Hennig and Tim Wilke
Vice Chair: Kathy Thomsen
Secretary: O.J. Wilura
Lynn Brooks
Brent Clarke
Mary Ann Lang
Dennis Willfang
Bonita Ziegler

Standing Committee Chairs:

Finance: Christine Petersen
Mutual Ministry: Kathy Thomsen
Worship and Music: Kathy Thomsen
Property Mgmt: Vic Lytle
FMT: Cathy Dowsling
Christian Ministry & Parish Life: TBA
Community Connection: Gay Anderson and Heather Meyer-Kraft
Dream Team: Rev. Heike Toeller
WEPP: Rev. Heike Toeller
Sunday School: Darlene Brooks, Dianne Metcalf, Rachel Searam

Church Office:

(519) 893-3826
Email: info@stlukeslutheran.ca
OR stlukeslutheran317@gmail.com

Office Hours:

M/W/Th 9:00am – 1:00pm

Website:

stlukeslutheran.ca

Pastor Heike

(519) 212-9952
Email: pastor.heike@gmail.com

Office Administrator

Helga Morrison

Music Director

Gloria Berg

Treasurer

Dave DeCoppel

Weekly Offerings

We appreciate your support to meet our financial obligations. Please send your offerings in through the mail or drop it off in the church's mailbox on the left side of the doors to the narthex.

We also accept E-transfers, which are set up as automatic deposits; so, there is no need for secret question/answer.

Please send e-Transfers to our email address at stlukeslutheran317@gmail.com

When the transfer is sent, you can put the designation into the comment box (current, benevolence, building, etc.).

Please contact Dave DeCoppel at stluketreasurer317@gmail.com if you have any questions.

Our mailbox is checked regularly; however, for your peace of mind, arrangements can be made with Helga to ensure your offering is retrieved the day you drop it off.

We are thankful for all who have joined PAR for their contributions. For PAR information, please contact the church office.

We graciously thank all who have continued their generous offerings.

Keep in touch...

Visit our Website at www.stlukeslutheran.ca for our online worship services, Newsletters and updates.

Like us on Facebook and subscribe to our YouTube Channel under St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Kitchener

**DEADLINE FOR
Feb-Mar 2023 NEWSLETTER
is January 10th**

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