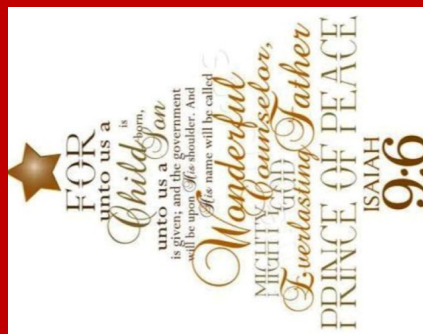


Long Lake Lutheran Church
3921-277th Avenue NW
Isanti, MN 55040



Long Lake Lutheran Church

December 2020

Country Spire

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR LEADERSHIP

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DRIVE-UP SUNDAY SERVICES

9:00 am Sunday

STREAMING SERVICES ON FACEBOOK

9:00 am Sundays

6:00 pm Wednesdays

Long Lake continues to follow recommendations made by the CDC and Minnesota Department of Health in regards to places of worship. Following directions from the Minnesota Department of Health we ask that you wear a mask if you are entering the building. Due to COVID-19, LLLC in-person services will remain suspended until further notice. Watch Facebook & emails as more information is available.

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Luke 1: 26-38



When Covid-19 hit, it became one of my first tests of my new found COMPLETE trust in God. Amazingly I've never become fearful of the virus. Psalm 139:5 became a reality for me "You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me". God had my back allowing me to hit the streets without fear. It has been an amazing very busy few months here. All the norms went out the window and we got busy! Because of the great need, we in a greater way were feeding the hungry, clothing the poor, loving the unloved, and preaching the gospel. In a way, Covid-19 has opened up more opportunities for us to be salt and light and to tell many more of His great love.



Jim's Journey

Never did I imagine what would happen in my first eight months in Flushing, NY. God had brought me to a place of complete trust in Him. Before I arrived in New York I went through some very difficult heartaches, through which I came out on the other side purified and refined.

At 56 years old the jump into full-time missions was a long time in coming and a huge leap of faith.

In the past five years, I've been on five mission trips with Street LIFE Ministries to Brazil where God gave me a burning passion for the lost through street evangelism. The cost has been high, and the enemy stole much from me as he began to see how God wanted to use me. Through it all God was there and truly trustworthy and faithful, and I realized He will NEVER leave me or forsake me!



PRAYERS

PRAYER CONCERNS:

Please let us know how we can pray for you your loved ones

Pray for healing for: Dave Johnson, Dale Strike, Larry Oliver, Claudia Hanson, Diane Englund, Jim Johnson, Sharon Johnson, Donnie Weidner, Donnie's sister Kay; Will's sister Grace; Connie Engren's Brother-in-law Terry, Marcy Stoeckel's niece Erin, Karen's mom Floy, Dave Ringstad's cousins Brad and Iris, Ron Selix's sister Donna, Becky's uncle Del, Pat O'Keefe's sister Carrie, Shawna's dad Mike, Monica Ahlman's sister Anne, Sarah Hanson, Claudia's friend Beth, Jenny's brother Kevin, Julie's cousin Ron, Elaine Mellin, Julie Nielsen's cousin Ron, Marsha's son Joe, Colleen Evenson, and all who are struggling with health issues and other difficulties.

Pray for strength and comfort for: their caregivers.

We all pray: Good and gracious God. Fill us with your healing. Bring peace to our conflicted and divided country. Lift up those who are sad, lonely, or hurting in any way. Give us wisdom in fighting the Coronavirus and provide scientists the knowledge to develop and distribute vaccines for your people. Give us patience as we alter our plans for holidays, work, gatherings, school, and shopping. Return us to hopefulness as we begin our upcoming Advent season. In the name of your son, Jesus Christ, our risen Savior and Lord. Amen.



From The Desk of Pastor Sue



The church year came to a close on November 22nd, with “Christ the King” Sunday. Last year, the lectionary focused on the Gospel of Matthew; this year it is on the Gospel of Mark. On November 29th, we begin a new church year with the first Sunday in Advent.

The theme for the four Sundays in Advent is “Coming Home”, the homecoming of Christ to redeem and renew us and creation. Advent is a time of waiting, watching, listening, remembering, and anticipating. It is a time of renewal and wonder. It can be such a wonderful time leading up to the celebration of the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. The lectionary draws from three of the four Gospels.

Advent 1, November 29th —HOPE (Mark 13: 24-37)

Advent 2, December 6th —PEACE (Mark 1: 1-8)

Advent 3, December 13th —JOY (John 1: 6-8, 19-28)

Advent 4, December 20th —LOVE (Luke 1: 26-38)

As our worship services will be broadcast from the sanctuary at 9:00 am, without our congregation inside, we invite you to set aside some time to watch our online broadcasts whenever you choose; set up your advent wreath and light your candles at home as we light our candles in the church. The bulletins will be e-mailed on Fridays. Separate children’s church will be posted on Facebook as well. Wednesday services will be scripture and prayer at 6:00 pm on Facebook. Shawna will keep our families informed on the education schedule

EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

VIRTUAL SUNDAY SCHOOL

For all of our families, we have set up a special Facebook page. Long Lake Children’s Ministry page is all about Sunday School!

Talk to Shawna about getting added to this great page.

We will be posting videos and other fun Sunday School activities on this page.

ZOOMING CONFIRMATION CLASSES

Confirmation classes will continue with our printed schedule, just via Zoom!

We will meet on Zoom Wednesdays, from 7:00-7:45 pm.

Let Shawna know if you have any questions about how Zoom works, or if you need any help getting it figured out.

**IF YOU HAVEN’T GOTTEN YOUR ADVENT BAGS YET,
CONTACT SHAWNA OR JEN AND THEY WILL MAKE SURE TO
GET YOU ONE.**

Don’t forget to turn in your luminaries (paper bag) for Christmas Eve so we can light a path! If you have any questions about this, contact Shawna or Kara!

However, there is one thing that I know to be true, and that I cling to in the midst of all the uncertainty and change. I can't control the craziness in the world right now, but I can control my attitude about it.

In the midst of all the things I mourn, there are things to celebrate too! There is less rushing around, more family time, there is all of the creativity unleashed in finding new ways to do things, more cooking at home, more appreciation for our teachers and front line workers, happier pets, more time for reading and hobbies and sleep.

Your Council and COVID task force have worked tirelessly to determine how we operate in a safe manner, in these uncertain times. This has often come with hard decisions. Each time a decision is made, there will be people that may disagree with the decision. Please know that decisions were made after much discussion, research and prayer, and that there is also great faith in the people of Long Lake to persevere, and even thrive in the midst of these different times.

We may not be in the building, but we can still BE the church. This last Sunday, we gathered for worship online and in the parking lot. In spite of technical difficulties on line, people tuned in. In the parking lot, our members waited patiently while we tried to get everyone working all together. Then afterwards, you showed up in a big way to support our youth! I thought we would be lucky to get 5 baskets and a couple of pies and maybe make \$500 because of the unique circumstances. We had 15 baskets, ten different gifts cards, syrup, pies and a tree and brought in \$2500!

We can do this – it will be different, and sometimes we might be sad about it. We can choose to celebrate the community that we are, and the ways we persevere, the leadership we have been gifted with and the ways God keeps showing up! Thanks be to God!

We will join together in the Lord's Supper on Dec. 6th, 20th, and 24th. If you haven't picked up your communion supplies, you can do so by calling Pastor Sue or Jen to set up a time. Or, you can use your own wine and bread, crackers or juice.

Christmas Eve will be broadcast at 4:00 pm on Facebook and into the parking lot. At 10:30 pm, we will gather outside for candles and carols. Pray for warm weather! Christmas morning will be a recorded broadcast at 9:00 am.

December 27th will be a recorded worship service with Bishop Anne Svenningsen preaching. This is a gift from our Synod to give pastors a day of rest. It is a blessing to all of us.

Augsburg University is doing a virtual Advent Vesper Service at 7:00 pm on Dec. 4th. You can find it at www.augsburg.edu/vespers. This is a magnificent experience of music and liturgy, focusing on the theme of preparation and culminating in the joyful celebration of the Incarnation.

The Trans Siberian Orchestra is doing a streaming event on December 18th at 7:00 pm. There is a \$30 charge, but they are amazing. <https://www.trans-siberian.com/news/title/tso-2020-livestream>.

The ELCA has put out an Advent Study for 2020 focusing on World Hunger. It is called, "God With Us." And is available for download: https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/ELCA-AdventStudy2020.pdf?_ga=2.260872141.1598212100.1606142149-2002560180.1579006017

Happy Thanksgiving everyone!

While 2020 has brought us challenges, disappointment, and sadness, we still have so much to be thankful for. The Good Lord continues to bring us blessings and The Promise of forgiveness through Jesus. You all know as well as I do that Covid, politics, and many other things have created anxiety for just about all of us. Please do not forget that God has blessed each and everyone of us with a bounty of things to be thankful for.



Just look around and you should be able to find blessings within an arm's reach. I'm sitting inside typing this article in a warm house with my computer working just fine. Thanks to technology (when it works), we are still able to worship; whether it's in the parking lot or in the comfort of our own home viewing on Facebook or YouTube. Another thing that I'm also thankful for is a great turnout and successful auction that we held to raise money for our youth. Our staff and volunteers did such an amazing job getting it together for all of us to enjoy. Also, all of you that generously participated, and bid have given us plenty to be thankful for and I personally thank all of you!

As we enter Advent, I hope that all of you stay safe, healthy, and spiritually fulfilled. Please don't focus on the anxiety that seems to come so naturally from isolation. Remember to pray. This will pass and God will take our worries away, but we have to let Him. God has blessed us with multiple and different abilities that allow us to "think" that we can accomplish so much by ourselves, but we need to remember that those blessings come from God, and He deserves all the Glory!

Please take time out of your day (on Thanksgiving and every other day) to thank God for all the blessings that He has given you.

God's Peace, Matt Lundeen



Shawna Berg

*Director of Youth and
Family Ministries*

Thank you to my church family for all the messages, cards and prayers as I recovered from COVID. As is probably true for many people, I had tried to be careful and take due diligence, so a part of me was surprised when I received the positive test results. Since people I know found out I had it, I have received many private messages from people telling me that they were currently dealing with it, or had recently had it as well. People seem afraid to share that information as when they do they have been shamed or attacked from other people who automatically assume that these people have been participating in reckless behaviors. It is a strange virus, everyone seems to respond differently. Some have been very ill and hospitalized, and some have had more minor symptoms. Then there is the group of us that seem to have symptoms that linger, like my headache that has now lasted almost a full month or those that have started to see new problems like heart problems and lung issues that are being attributed to their COVID illnesses. All that is to say – this stuff isn't fun.

If I'm honest, there are days I just want to be mad about it all. I want to be a kid again so I can just throw a good old fashioned temper tantrum. I want to be mad about missing out on normal worship services and fellowship events. I want to be mad that we couldn't have a lunch and regular type of funeral for my grandma. I want to be mad that we are missing out on big family celebrations, and sports, and in person schools and.....