

# MARTYR MONTHLY

## DECEMBER 2024



### WORSHIP AT SSM

SATURDAY AT 5:00PM

SUNDAY AT 9:30AM\*

SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30AM

### CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

CHRISTMAS EVE, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24TH 4:00PM AND 9:00PM\*

CHRISTMAS DAY, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25TH 9:30AM\*

*\*INDICATES WORSHIP SERVICES STREAMED ON ZOOM,  
FOR ZOOM INFORMATION PLEASE  
CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE.*



# PASTOR'S PAGE

Dear SSM Faith Community,

What shakes you up and causes you stress? So many things in the news the past months and years have shaken us. Some have lost faith in government and other institutions. Others have lost faith in God or religion. Still others have little optimism about the future.

As another church year dawns, Advent brings our annual spiritual wake-up call. Be alert and watchful. Look for signs in the sun, moon, and stars. Pay attention to what matters. The first Sunday in Advent gospel declares that “the powers of the heavens will be shaken” when Christ comes again. Amid our fear of what is coming upon the world, we are invited to stand up, and raise our heads, for redemption is drawing near. When we are shaken, perhaps we are most open to welcome the surprising presence of Christ as he comes among us in worship, in the events of our everyday lives, and in those poor and most vulnerable.

With so much that causes us to despair, we need this season that invites us to look with eager longing for signs of hope breaking into our world. This change of heart is a kind of repentance that prepares us to receive Christ anew this holy season.

Though Christmas decorations are starting to appear everywhere, during Advent, our worship space is decked in blue, the Advent color for hope. The bare branches in the worship space mirror the wintry landscape. During these cold, dark days we turn inward, and prepare ourselves to welcome Christ, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

Advent is a favorite church year season for many in our community. I look forward to gathering with you around the Advent wreath, as we pray, sing, wait and hope for God's promised future.

Peace, Pastor Brian



# A NOTE FROM DENISE, COUNCIL PRESIDENT

## Year-End Council Update and Request

At our most recent church council meeting, I was reminded to be thankful for and see all the abundance with which we have been blessed. Our church is blessed with many people who are generous with their time and their gifts. We are blessed with a diligent and giving staff. We are blessed to have a facility that serves our needs. And, we are blessed to have all of you join us for worship in person or online.



It is the time of year when we are finalizing our 2024 finances and drafting our 2025 budget. Although SSM is running a deficit for 2024, we remain financially healthy. If you are in a place to do so, I encourage you to make a year-end gift to SSM (to the general fund to help cover regular expenses or designated to a special fund). I would also encourage you to make a pledge for 2025 (pledge cards were sent in the mail and are also available in the gathering space). Your pledges help us anticipate the types of programming we will be able to provide throughout the year. Thank you for all that you have done and are able to do in the future.



**SSM Budget Review Meeting**

**Sunday, January 19**

**SSM Annual Meeting**

**Sunday, January 26th**

**Meetings will take place in the Fellowship Hall  
immediately following worship**

**The Annual Meeting will be in person and streamed on Zoom**

# DATES TO REMEMBER



**DECEMBER 15 Sunday School PJ & Movie Day!**  
**10:45-1pm** - Wear your jammies to Sunday School and stay for a pizza and movie party! All youth (and friends) are invited to hang out after service for fun with crafts, pizza, a Christmas themed movie, and silly minute-to-win-it style games. Christmas Party will take place downstairs in lower Sunday school rooms.

**DECEMBER 22 Advent/Christmas Concert and Reception** during the Sunday morning worship service at 9:30am. Special music will be provided by the SSM Choir, Handbell Choir and Sunday School.

**After the concert** treats & coffee will be provided by Youth and Family along with activities and crafts for youth to participate in.



**Christmas Eve  
Worship  
4:00pm & 9:00pm**

**Christmas Day  
Worship  
9:30am**

**Christmas Eve 9:00pm and  
Christmas Day 9:30am  
Worship will be streamed  
On zoom**

Contact the office for Zoom information







# WELCA COOKIE SALE

It is time for some baking!! SSM is having our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Christmas Cookie/Candy Sale on December 14 and 15 before and after the church service. We are again asking for your help. We would ask each family to donate a batch of their favorite Christmas cookie or candy for the sale. All proceeds go to both local and international charities. Donations will be collected at church on Friday December 13 from 9 to noon or Saturday December 14 from 9 to 10am. Like last year we do not expect you to package them for sale.



## WELCA Cookie Sale

**Saturday December 14 and Sunday December 15**  
**Before and after**  
**worship**

## NATIVITY DISPLAY

Nativity scenes vary from traditional Italian Renaissance style to children's play sets to those representing almost every culture on earth. What interesting or beautiful Nativity sets do you have? Bring your Nativity Scene to church and place it on the table in the Fellowship Hall anytime during Advent to share it with the rest of your SSM family. Then, take a few moments after a service or during coffee hour to see the variety. (Please make sure your items are marked so that we can be sure they get back home again.)





# HUMAN CONCERNS



**Food Pantries**-Food donations collected for the month of December will benefit our partner congregation of Faith Santa Fe. Any non-perishable food items are greatly appreciated. If you prefer to make a monetary donation, please make your check payable to St. Stephen the Martyr, note that it is for *Food Pantries* and place it in the offering.

**Bay View Community Center Christmas gifts**-BVCC gave us information to purchase gifts for 30 boys and girls and as usual their request was met almost before it was asked. Please have your purchased gifts returned to the church no later than December 8th. Gifts should be unwrapped (gift bags are fine) with the pink or blue card firmly attached to the gift for distribution purposes. Thank you!



**ELCA Good Gifts**-We are happy once again to offer Good Gifts ornaments this year. Ornaments can be purchased in a variety of different amounts. These colorful ornaments can be sent or given to someone as a way to let them know that a gift was given in their honor or the ornament can be taken home to decorate your tree or it can be hung on the tree in the Narthex by the display. This tree will stay

in place through the Christmas season to decorate our gathering space. Thank you!

**Please continue to support the feeding ministry of our partner parish Unity Lutheran Church by volunteering to help.** On Wednesday, December 11 we will help with the Unity Meals To Go program, which provides bag lunches. On Wednesday, December 18th we will help with the CommUnity meal, which provides a hot meal. Information and sign up sheets for both are on the bulletin board outside of the office.



# MERU COFFEE



**Christmas Traditions**



**Sampler – 6 pack**  
(Butter Pecan, Choc. Rasp., Regular, French Vanilla, Hazelnut, Peaberry)



**Sampler – 4 pack**  
(Regular, Decaf, Peaberry, Christmas Traditions)

Mt. Meru **Christmas Traditions** coffee blend combines 100% Mt. Meru premium Arabica coffee beans, enhanced with the rich flavors of cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla, and hint of chocolate and other selected spices. Christmas Traditions is available in 12 oz. bags of drip or whole bean and sells for \$18.

We also have a **Four-Pack Holiday Sampler** assortment that sells for \$15 and our **Holiday Sampler Six-Pack** assortment of flavors that sells for \$20.

Any of these flavorful coffees would make wonderful Christmas or hostess gifts. Please contact me at 414-403-0509 for special orders.  
Thank you! Shelly Rosenstock

## BIBLE STUDY NEWS



As things get switched around a bit during the holiday season some dates for the Men's and Women's Bible Studies will be out of the ordinary rotation. Bible Study meeting dates for December and January are as follows:

**Men's Bible Study will meet on Wednesdays at 9:30 on  
December 4th, December 28th, January 8th and January 22nd**

**Women's Bible Study will meet on Wednesdays at 10:15 on  
December 11th, January 15th and January 29th**

Beginning in February dates return to the usual pattern - the men meet the 1st and 3rd Wednesday and the women meet the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month through June.



<i>1st Weekend of Advent</i>		
<b>Saturday, 11/30</b>	<b>5:00pm</b>	Worship
<b>Sunday, 12/1</b>	<b>9:30am</b>	Worship
		Sunday School
	<b>10:45am</b>	Coffee Hour
<b>Tuesday, 12/3</b>	<b>6:30pm</b>	Mega Meeting
<b>Wednesday, 12/4</b>	<b>9:30am</b>	Men's Bible Study
	<b>5:45pm</b>	Handbell Rehearsal
	<b>7:00pm</b>	Choir Rehearsal
<b>Thursday, 12/5</b>	<b>6:30pm</b>	Confirmation Class
<i>2nd Weekend of Advent</i>		
<b>Saturday, 12/7</b>	<b>5:00pm</b>	Worship
<b>Sunday, 12/8</b>	<b>9:30am</b>	Worship - New Member Welcome
		Sunday School
	<b>10:45am</b>	Kid's Pizza/Movie / PJ Party
<b>Tuesday, 12/10</b>	<b>10:00am</b>	Prayer Garden Meeting
	<b>6:30pm</b>	Council Meeting
<b>Wednesday, 12/11</b>	<b>10:15am</b>	Women's Bible Study
	<b>5:45pm</b>	Handbell Rehearsal
	<b>7:00pm</b>	Choir Rehearsal





<i>3rd Weekend of Advent</i>		
<b>Saturday, 12/14</b>	<b>4:30pm</b>	WELCA Cookie Sale
	<b>5:00pm</b>	Worship
<b>Sunday, 12/15</b>	<b>9:00am</b>	WELCA Cookie Sale
	<b>9:30am</b>	Worship
		Sunday School
	<b>10:45am</b>	Coffee Hour
<b>Wednesday, 12/18</b>	<b>9:30am</b>	Men's Bible Study
	<b>5:45pm</b>	Handbell Rehearsal
	<b>7:00pm</b>	Choir Rehearsal
<b>Thursday, 12/19</b>	<b>6:30pm</b>	Confirmation Class
<i>4th Weekend of Advent</i>		
<b>Saturday, 12/21</b>	<b>5:00pm</b>	Worship
<b>Sunday, 12/22</b>	<b>9:30am</b>	Worship - Advent/Christmas Concert
	<b>9:30am</b>	Sunday School
	<b>10:45am</b>	Concert Coffee Hour
<b>Tuesday, 12/24</b>	<b>4:00pm</b>	Christmas Eve Worship
	<b>9:00pm</b>	Christmas Eve Worship
<b>Wednesday, 12/25</b>	<b>9:30am</b>	Christmas Day Worship
<b>Saturday, 12/28</b>	<b>5:00pm</b>	Worship - Lessons & Carols
<b>Sunday, 12/29</b>	<b>9:30am</b>	Worship - Lessons & Carols





# LOOSE ENDS LUNCH

The Loose Ends Lunch for December will take place on Wednesday the 11th at noon. Meet at the

Outback Steakhouse

at noon. Outback is located at 8625 W Sura Lane in Greenfield. This is in the 84 South Shopping Strip on Layton Ave. between 84th and 92nd Streets. Contact Julane Sebastian to let her know that you will be attending so that reservations can be made.



Rae Gifford	01
Quinn Schuchardt	02
John Muroi	05
Faith O'Connell	08
Tom Raasch	10
Karen Palasz	11
Marge Muroi	11
Bonnie Court	13
Joe Lewandowski	15
Grayson Chybowski	15
Russ Mayer	16
Jennifer Ortega	16
Regan Kunesh	17
Breleigh Kopplin	19
Charlotte Knipple	21
Bonnie Daleness	22
Larry Stasiewski	26
Paul Heins	27
Larry Petricek	29
Abigail Hanna	29
Dan Davies	30
Lillian Mildren	31

Due to

*Christmas Break*

There will be no  
Sunday school on  
December 29th



We have been invited to join Faith Sante Fe  
for this concert and celebration.  
Attendees are encouraged to bring a dish to share.





# PICS - REFORMATION WEEKEND

Clare receiving her Bible in 3rd Grade



First Communion







Annika and Family

Sunday, October 27th



Ben and Family





# STEWARDSHIP

“For unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given  
and the government  
Shall be upon his shoulders  
and he shall be called;  
Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God,  
the everlasting Father  
The Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6



So spoke the prophet Isaiah to a king whose government was on the brink of disaster. We hear those words again on Christmas Eve as we join around the savior's entrance into a world once again whose government was being tossed about by Ceasar who demanded a return home for a tax registration. Having a government in chaos is not new, nor is it unique. We celebrate each year the magnificent and truly benevolent gift of God to the universe, God's entrance into the world that we know- into our homeland. This is God's greatest gift to humanity which spelled out the salvation of that world caught in the grip of all those powers struggling to rise to the top.

As we recall the gift of God's presence born in Bethlehem, and we again share gifts with one another, I want to offer my thanks to you as you have shared your gifts with St. Stephen the Martyr's ministry. I want to thank you for your pledges and for your gifts of time, talent, and treasures. They enable us to share our gifts with the world, those near and far, the signs of God's continued care and support to the needy and disenfranchised in the world.

As the world continues to offer the uncertainty of the times, two things remain constant. First, Jesus our redeemer remains with us in undying love; second, we continue to share that gracious love with world in Jesus' name.

Blessed Advent and Christmas!

Kipp W Zimmermann, Stewardship





# Council Minutes, October 8th

**Present:** Denise Sanders, Lorin Schuchardt, John Muroi, Sandy Wesolowski, Kristy Knipple, Kipp Zimmermann, Eric Sanders, Jane Miller, Alex Dollar, Keri Whitmore, Pastor Brian Hooper, Carol Jackett, Shelly Rosenstock

The meeting was called to order by Denise Sanders at 6:35 pm.

Denise Sanders shared a devotion.

The September meeting minutes were approved as amended.



## **Financial Reports:**

**John Muroi** - The money for the sound system could be used to pay down a loan or saved. A consensus was made to leave the fund as is for now. Cash reserves for now are negative but this is simply an accounting issue. Overall accounts are positive.

**Jane Miller** - General Fund is over YTD. The building fund is behind in donations. Prayer Garden donations are \$10,000 YTD. Giving letters will be sent out soon.

A motion was made and approved for the Financial Reports.

**Pastor Brian's Report:** Confirmation kicked off and classes began. Confirmation/Reformation, first communion and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Bible presentation on 10/27. Blessing of the Animals Service held on 10/5. Attending the "Leading Well" continuing education event in Scottsdale, Arizona, November 15-21. Krause Funeral Home will give a presentation on 10/27 on funeral planning for those interested after Sunday service. Stewardship/Celebration the weekend of Nov. 2 /3

## **Current Action Items:**

**Review Sabbatical Leave Policy:** The Council reviewed and made some changes to the following sabbatical leave policy sections: Introduction, Purpose, Eligibility, Length of a Sabbatical Leave, Pastor's Responsibilities. The remaining sections of the policy will be reviewed at the Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> meeting: Church Council Responsibilities, Pastoral Covenant. The goal is to have a completed and recommended Sabbatical Leave policy to present to the congregation at the January 2025 meeting.

**Old Action Items:** Ceiling Beam Repair: The ceiling beam has been repaired and completed. Sound System Updates: Nothing new to report. Eric will look for deals on a new laptop.

**Tabled Items:** Building Security/Keys – no update provided. Safety at Church: The cement pathway to the Prayer Garden has been completed. Both the cement pathway and the handrails have been well received.

## **Committee Reports:**

**Human Concerns:** Quilts and school bags will be shipped on Oct. 10<sup>th</sup>. Most will remain in the United States this year due to hurricane efforts. In November we will be looking for new or gently used coats.

**Music and Worship:** The Saturday musician will be taking a medical leave in November and December. Need to determine replacement plan.

**Christian Education:** No update

**Evangelism:** Facebook page (private group) for SSM – St Stephens Friends and Family is available

**Fellowship:** The pet blessing went well with many pets blessed.

**Finance:** Budget sheets for committees will be sent soon.

**Property:** No report.

**Stewardship:** Temple Talks will be coming up. Pledge cards will be sent out soon.

**Youth and Family:** Trunk or Treat plans are moving forward. Expectation is for enough volunteer trunks and candy donations.

**Adjournment and Closing Prayer:** Brian led the council in a closing prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.

**Next Council Meeting is Tuesday November 12 at 6:30 pm.**

Respectfully Submitted: Carol Jackett - Secretary



## OFFICE HOURS

9:00-2:00 Mon - Th

9:00-12:00 Fri

## SSM STAFF

Brian Hooper, Pastor

[pastorbrianhooper@gmail.com](mailto:pastorbrianhooper@gmail.com)

Tabitha Moldenhauer, Music Director

Mark Breutzmann, Saturday Musician

Jim Hennessy, Church Maintenance

Bonnie Zimmermann, Ministry Assistant

SSM Website: [www.ssmelca.org](http://www.ssmelca.org)

Facebook:

<https://m.facebook.com/SSMELCA/>

Email: [office@ssmelca.org](mailto:office@ssmelca.org)

Phone: 414-421-3543

Sunday School email:

[sundayschool@ssmelca.org](mailto:sundayschool@ssmelca.org)

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SUNDAY AT 9:30AM\*

SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30AM

## CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

CHRISTMAS EVE

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4:00PM AND 9:00PM\*

CHRISTMAS DAY

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## St Stephen the Martyr ELCA

6101 S. 51st Street

Greendale WI 53129

(414) 421-3543

## DECEMBER 2024



*Welcoming all, Worshiping God, Serving others*