

# *St. Andrew's Evangelical Lutheran Church*

## *Newsletter*

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Welcome to worship and life at St. Andrew's!  
Sunday Worship at 9:00 & 10:30 am

December 2015  
Advent Wed worship at 12 noon & 7 pm

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Dear friends,

I know it is Advent and all around us folks are getting ready for Christmas – Christmas lights and displays, reindeer antlers on car windows, wreaths on truck grills, and Christmas music in every place you can imagine!

But I am still in Thanksgiving in my heart. I go back again and again to the gift you gave me and my family in November!

Thank you for the wonderful dinner and party.

When I realized that you were going to talk about me at the celebration, I thought you would probably roast me. But my friend, Pastor Cath Mode said, “You don’t do anything funny!” (That’s too right!)

I was overwhelmed that you would gather and celebrate what I count a very great blessing in my life – the chance to serve you as a pastor for 20 years. And how amazing that you kept it all secret!

I know that you moved heaven and earth to help my family come to be there that night. It was our Thanksgiving and Christmas all rolled into one and it was a gift beyond anything I could have imagined!

My two best families were together – the one I was born into by God’s grace, and the one I was called to serve in Oshkosh, again by God’s grace. And you gathered such wonderful people who have been teachers and colleagues and friends there to help celebrate!

All I can say is: Thank you!

The warmth of that evening walks with me on the coldest of days and I am so grateful to you and to God for our partnership in the Gospel, our life together, and our shared mission in Jesus’ name.

On the strength of that foundation we have built together at St Andrew’s, where would you like to grow in the coming year?

Our council is working hard to assemble narrative budgets – that do so much more than itemize our expenses – they help us see what it takes to get the mission done that God has given us in this place and at this time.

We all worry from time to time about whether there will be enough time, money, and commitment to get something done, renewed, or begun.

But the focus isn’t the money or the bottom line of our costs – it is the wonderful life we share in faith and service to the world God has made. It is our life together lived to Jesus’ glory.

The council leaders are hard-working, faithful, and great partners – **but they need all of us** to ponder and pray for the mission of God: the ministry and service that grows at St Andrew’s and blesses others from our corner of the world.

What hopes and dreams are stirring in your heart? What would you love to see us do as a congregation of faithful folk reaching out to a world in need?

Are you ready to try something new? Or return again to something you have always valued and loved doing?

When we take stock of ourselves – we have life and breath, love and intellect, strength and vulnerability (they give us our capacity for mercy), and the longings placed in our hearts by the Holy Spirit to do and to bless, to build and to give, to share and to celebrate.

I am looking forward to the New Year of God’s grace with you.

Yours in Christ, Pastor Karen Jewell

St. Andrew's Council Meeting  
November 10, 2015

*Minutes approved by council via email*

**Present-** Jane Martinez, Jakob Iversen, Matt Moore, Gary Bruce, Chris Ziegler, Peg Olson, Ann Stephan, Jay Klinger, Pastor Karen Jewell

**Excused-** Melissa Last, Kristi Cutts, Mike Anderson

**Guests-** Jayne Lindsay

**Treasurer's Report:** It was noted that deposits exceeded bills to be paid for the month. Motions approved to accept October financial reports.

**Old Business**

**Part-time office staff update:** There is a need for approximately four additional hours each pay period to accomplish the office work.

**Nominating committee report:** One council position and one nominating committee position remain open. Gary will speak during worship on Nov. 15 to invite people to consider these positions.

**Hiring Policy:** There will be a vote to approve the hiring policy document at the December council meeting. Copies to be sent by email, and hard copies will be on hand for council members.

**Constitution Update:** The St. Andrew's Constitution from 1991 is being compared with the model Constitution provided by the ELCA. This work is continuing by the committee.

**Budget:** There is concern that the estimated income will not be realized. There is a need for a communication strategy for the congregation to increase church income. The budget for staffing for 2016 was discussed with concern for the deficit presented. The suggestion was made to create a narrative budget for the staff to enable the congregation to see both the expense side and the work accomplished by the staff.

**Abel Scholarship for 2016:** Motion approved to give \$500 to a qualifying student from UW-O, and \$500 to a qualifying student from Ripon College. Students must be juniors majoring in performing arts, with the colleges deciding the recipients. An invitation is extended to the scholarship recipients to consider performing at St. Andrew's.

**New Business**

**Committee Reports**

**Fellowship:** Chris Ziegler thanked all who helped provide the All Saints' Sunday lunch. Between 115 and 120 people are signed up to attend the November 15<sup>th</sup> dinner.

**Property: Old Business:** Continuing to look at carpet/tile replacement in the sanctuary. We have \$8,603 in special funds, with a total need of \$13,000. The bathrooms have been re-painted. A new vacuum has been requested. Quotes will be gotten for adding a restroom on southwest side of building.

**New Business:** Discussed using portable display boards. Auto entry doors to be installed Wed., Nov. 25. Cost of the new

hearing loop is \$7,450. Paul Wolf will replace the broken kitchen faucet. Art work is being hung by the Décor committee. Who should change the church sign messages? Gary Bruce will speak to the congregation on Nov. 15 about the hearing loop and the new sanctuary carpeting.

**Stewardship:** Moving forward with stewardship plans.

**Worship & Music:** We have started publishing personal stories of congregational involvement in the newsletter. Prints of Peace service is Nov. 7, Prayer Around the Cross is on Nov. 11. The choir will sing with other Lutheran choir members at the Nov. 22 Interfaith Festival of Gratitude at the Grand Opera House. The Blue Christmas worship service will be Dec. 23.

**Youth:** The Senior High Youth Gather is Nov. 13 – 15. Five youth are attending. There will be a family meeting for the summer trip to set the date and discuss fundraising. Amish candy will be sold at Christmas. The youth have been working on art for the Art Gala for 2016. They are also working on making a video. In October the youth group went to Little Farmer and had such a good time! They met up with a group from Bethel Lutheran Church in Green Bay. Our kids showed them what it's like to be young, caring Christian people. They really included the younger kids and I couldn't be more proud of them. We also had Confirmation lock-in. There were 8 YMT kids and 8 Confirmation kids. A scavenger hunt was held throughout the church, and the youth learned where the Eternal light was located. Two QPR training sessions were held here at church and one at Bethel Lutheran Church.

**Pastor's Report:** On Oct. 15, I attend the Faith Leader's luncheon in Appleton covering a new mental health care initiative – designed to educate and equip church leaders to support care for folks with mental health needs. Deep thanks to members of St. Andrew's who provided refreshments and hospitality for the memorial reception for Betty Young, and for the funeral for Larry Laabs, and for the open house at Emmeline Cook elementary school in October. Nov. 1 – deep thanks to all the members who took part in the congregational photo on All Saints' Day and for those who cooked, served, and took part in the fellowship lunch. It was a very happy gathering and the photos by Peg Olson and Patty Koplitz are beautiful!

Nov. 7 – Fall Clean-up Day was a great day – members of all ages took part. Thank you to Gary and Darlene Bruce for organizing it and then feeding us!

**Milestones :** Today, Nov. 10<sup>th</sup> is Martin Luther's birthday

Today is also my 24<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ordination

Sunday, Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> is my 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of beginning my pastoral ministry with you at St. Andrew's.

Sunday, Nov. 29<sup>th</sup> begins our new Church Year – Advent Begins!

**December's devotions:** Mike Anderson

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, Dec. 8 @ 7:00 pm

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Martinez, Council Presiden

## We cherish children and youth at St Andrew's

*<sup>40</sup>One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.<sup>41</sup> He first found his brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated Anointed).<sup>42</sup> He brought Simon to Jesus...*  
(John 1:40-42)

A St Andrew's Day devotion from my seminary in Columbus, Ohio told the story of a quiet saint in a congregation who had nurtured the children in the congregation over the years – she taught Sunday School, and she invited children by turns to sit with her in worship.

Here's the story in the author's own words:  
*Mary Smith was my preschool Sunday school teacher. Each week she lovingly taught us about Jesus through flannel-graph Bible stories, finger plays and songs. Mrs. Smith also had what I have come to label as a "back pew ministry." Each week she selected and invited certain children to sit with her each Sunday during worship. Mrs. Smith had a special bag full of things that keep young children busy – coloring pages, puzzles, and word searches. In that bag was the most beautiful (in my young child's mind) gold mesh pot metal coin purse that contained coins for offering that each of us got to contribute to the passed plate.*

*Mary Smith never accepted any praise for her work nor was she given any accolades, to my knowledge. Mrs. Smith simply lived out her Christian faith by doing what God called her to do ministry with children. Mary Smith was an Andrew – she faithfully pointed us to Jesus and brought us into his loving presence. She loved, encouraged, and prayed for "her" kids all her life... (Rev Dr Pamela Challis)*

There are some among us who do just the same kind of ministry. We have deeply generous and devoted Sunday School teachers, helpers and our wonderful superintendent, Michele Hawley. They work with our children from the age of 3 through fifth grade.

We have a wonderful Youth Leadership Facilitator, Patty Koplitz, who works faithfully to invite, gather, and empower our children from 3<sup>rd</sup> grade on. She

helps make St Andrew's a safe place for our youth and children: a welcoming place for their questions of faith and growing up into their gifts from God.

We have marvelous teachers and parents who have shepherded our confirmation students (grades 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>) through the studies and practice of faith to prepare them to make their faith confession as young adults and continue in faithful living.

And we have those quiet folks whose ministry may never be "public" but who know those names, encourage those wonderful young souls to know they are loved and cherished in God's house.

It does make a difference. You make a difference.

In our recent staff evaluations we talked about **challenging all of our adults to become "Andrew" for our children and youth.** What do you think that would look like in you? The first step, of course, is to ask God to help us see the children with Jesus' eyes.

The next steps might include praising a child or youth who has taken leadership – as an usher, a reader, a singer, helping in whatever way. And we can walk up to our children and youth in fellowship and say hi and ask what is going on in their lives.

**You make a difference** – you are Andrew, too – helping someone find the love of Christ is here for them – and is for them always.

Beyond your friendship and mentoring, our congregation uses your offering gifts to place bibles in the hands of every child from three years old and on up. Your gifts fund our Sunday School, our Confirmation program, our youth activities and the leadership to accomplish all this.

**Thank you so much!** And by the way, Happy St Andrew's Day (November 30<sup>th</sup>) and many happy returns of the day!

### Sunday School led Christmas worship December 20<sup>th</sup> 10:30 am

Come and see our children lead worship on Sunday, **December 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 am** as our Sunday School offers Christmas worship. We expect visits from St Nicholas, Santa Lucia and Katie Luther! (And Santa may drop by...) Please join us!



## November 1, 2015 at St Andrew's

Thank you for the November 1 All Saints photos and fellowship meal – thank you to everyone who helped!

Patty Koplitz and Peg Olson took beautiful photos of us in the sanctuary. A group of folks hosted a meal that began after the photos were taken, lasted through the second service and feasted a whole lot of our members – we had time to eat, to talk and to deepen our friendship. Thank you!

## November 7<sup>th</sup> Clean-up was a success!

Thank you for the Clean-up Day Nov 7 – youth and adults turned out on a crisp autumn morning to rake leaves and neaten beds and put away the things that needed to be out of the winter snows that will come.

Thank you, Gary and Darlene Bruce, for feeding and warming us with the great refreshments!

## Prayer in Advent

As we begin our Advent worship services – we will also be offering two times to learn about prayer and practice prayer so that we can deepen our faith life.

We worship at noon Wed Dec 2, 9 and 16 with a study and practice of Prayer following from 12:30 to 1:30 pm in the Lounge.

We also gather for confirmation from 6:00 to 7:00 pm on the same three Wednesdays to study prayer – **all members are welcome to join us.** We follow that hour of study and practice with our evening Advent worship from 7:00 to 7:30 pm. Please come!

## A word of Grace about Advent practices

We all want to do more for good health and well-being but Oh! how to make it work in daily life!

So I found this word of grace from Pastor Rachel Hackenberg, who offers daily prompts for prayer during Advent to be especially helpful. I pass it along to you:

*P.S. Sunday is the first day of Advent, and once again during this Advent season I will email daily prayer prompts to you and post daily prayers on my blog. Two quick notes in preparation:*

*(1) I recognize that daily emails can feel overwhelming, and sometimes we find ourselves feeling guilty for not keeping up with daily prayer. Please extend grace to yourself and know that these prompts are not intended to provoke guilt but to provide a pause for prayer. If it helps, file the emails that you don't read immediately and return to them when you need an unscheduled prayer prompt.*

*(2) If your email is anything like mine during the holidays, each day holds a plethora of emails filled with advertising. Remember that this email offers what advertising emails don't: an invitation to refocus your spirit amidst the holiday noise. So while I encourage you to give yourself grace as needed, I also hope that you'll give yourself the time & space needed to nurture your spirit during this busy season. Best wishes for Advent!*

If you would like to sign up for her emailed advent prayer prompts or are simply curious about her work please go to [www.rachelhackenberg.com](http://www.rachelhackenberg.com).

**BYG: Beginning Youth Group!**

**SPAM night: Soda, Pizza and a Movie**

**Friday Dec 18 6-9 pm**

**Children and youth from Grade 3 and up are welcome to join us for a pizza, soda and a movie.**



## Want to leave a mark in Luther Land?

St. Andrew's can be a part of the Luthergarten in Wittenberg, Germany! Luthergarten is a park-like setting of 500 trees being created to represent religious communities and denominations from around the world. The design recreates the shape of the Luther Rose.

In 2017, Wittenberg, Germany will be the center of the celebration of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation. This park, sponsored by the Lutheran World Federation, will be a focal point for the celebration of the life and work of Martin Luther.

A tree will be planted in the Luthergarten in St. Andrew's name, with a plaque identifying it as "our" tree. A "companion" tree will be planted here at St. Andrew's representing our partnership with faith communities around the world. \$1200 is needed to purchase and plant the trees and plaques. Contributions may be made to the "Luthergarten Tree Fund" by check or on our website. Contact Sandy Last or Pastor Karen for more information. They visited the garden while in Wittenberg! You may also visit the garden's website at <http://www.luthergarten.de/>.

### **Luther Reading challenge**

Would you like to join an international group reading Martin Luther's writings and discuss and learn from them as we approach the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of the Protestant Reformation?

If you would like to explore this please go to: <https://www.lutherreadingchallenge.org/> You can sign on and read Luther's writings for free. As they explain at their website, the reading is just the beginning. You may participate in online discussions with other readers from around the world!

The readings will help us think through what Luther's writings meant when he first published them and what they mean for us now. He was a wonderful biblical scholar, teacher and preacher. He inspired an enormous effort to bring our daily lives into line with our faith in Jesus Christ.

## *Saints Alive!*

*Gary Wagner*

*Reflections from members who have contributed their time and talent in a variety of ways.*

**Gary Wagner:** "Throughout my spiritual life, I have fond memories of the churches I attended – none more fond than those where I was actively involved. There were many people that influenced me – pastors and parents – with common themes: "servant leadership," "count your blessings." As a result of their teaching and leading by example, over the years I served the church in various capacities at the congregation and synod levels. In retrospect, serving in such roles had a by-product that I hadn't anticipated. The more I served, the more I grew in my faith; the more I contributed, the better I felt; and the more I gave, the more I received. So, I challenge you to listen to the kind-hearted, happy, benevolent people in your lives and I believe you, too, will follow their example, the example that was first shared by our Lord and Savior."

*Watch future newsletters for more reflections of our fellow members and their involvement at St. Andrew's.*



### *Advent & Christmas Worship Services*

*Wed, December 2, 9, 16 - 12  
noon & 7:00pm Advent prayer*

*Sundays, December 6 & 13 at 9 & 10:30 am  
Advent Holy Communion*

*Sunday December 20<sup>th</sup> 9:00 Holy Communion  
& 10:30 am Sunday School Christmas worship*

*Wednesday, December 23 - Blue Christmas  
worship at 7:00 pm - candlelit & quiet*

*Thursday, December 24, Christmas Eve  
6:30 carols by request  
7:00 Lessons and Carols for Christmas Eve  
11:00 Candlelight Holy Communion*

*Friday, December 25, Christmas Day  
Holy Communion at 10:00 am.*

*Sunday, December 27 Holy Communion  
at 9:00 and 10:30 am.*





## St. Andrew's Men with Purpose (STAMP)

### **Breakfast –**

Meet at the Delta Restaurant, 515 N Sawyer St.  
**Saturday, Dec. 12 at 8 am**

### **Lunch –**

Meet at Jansen's Restaurant, 344 Bowen St.  
**Tuesday, Dec. 15, at noon**

## Lutheran Adults for Fun and Fellowship

LAFF will NOT be meeting in the month of December.  
Watch the newsletter and bulletins for future dates.

### Art & Soul

Art & Soul will also NOT be meeting in December.  
Future dates will be announced in January.

## Notes & Meetings

All members are welcome.

### **Council Meeting**

Tuesday, Dec. 8, at 7 pm

### **Property Committee**

Thursday, Dec. 17, at 6 pm

### **Worship & Music Committee**

Monday, Jan. 4, at 4 pm



Would you like to help decorate our tree in the Sanctuary? Our tree is going up on Friday, Dec. 18 at 8 am, with the help of the men of STAMP. We will have the Chrismon ornaments (white and gold symbols of Jesus) ready to put up on Saturday, Dec. 19 at 8:30 am. Please join us!

### **December Noisy Offering**

The December 20th Noisy Offering is designated for the Oshkosh Area Community Food Pantry, helping provide food and necessities for many.



### **Advent – Christmas 2015: Woven Hearts**

The most beautiful Christmas ornaments are the handmade ones. One simple one is the woven heart: uniting two separate papers into one woven basket. Much the way your gifts join others to carry out God's mission through St Andrew's congregation! We invite you to make your gifts to St Andrew's electronically, if that is best for you! Please feel free to use the short URL: <http://bit.do/stagiving> or sign up for Simply Giving at our website: <http://www.standrewsoshkosh.org>. Also, you will find the QR code below. Your gift will support the mission of God through St. Andrew's.



*(Questions? Please call us at 920-235-6616)*

When you give electronically, please make use of the fish symbol cards in the pew racks to place in the offering plate as it passes! Your gift matters. **WE THANK YOU!**

### **Church Staff**

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Choir Director – Brenda Francis  
Organist – Sandy Last  
Caretaker – Pat Coates

### **Looking ahead to January**



**January 6, 2016** – 7 pm- Epiphany Evensong –  
**January 10, 2016** – Sunday School resumes  
**January 13, 2016** – 7 pm- Prayer Around the Cross  
**Worship**  
**January 31, 2016** – 9: 00 am Holy Communion  
10:30 am – Congregation Annual Meeting