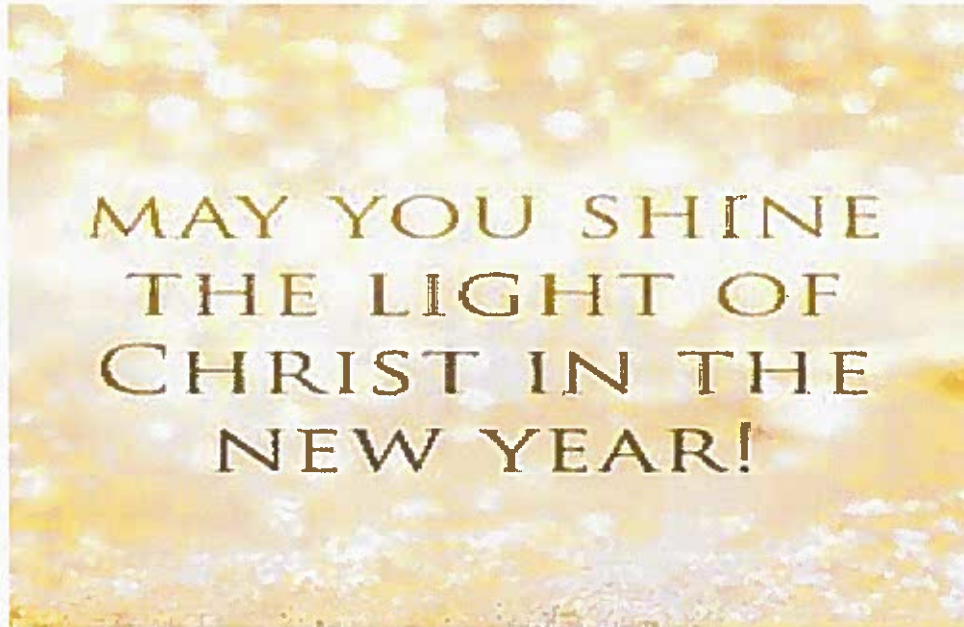


**News from St Jacobus, Woodside  
January 2023**



News from:

St Jacobus Lutheran Church  
7201 - 43rd Avenue  
Woodside, NY 11377

A note from the Pastor

Hello Everyone

As always, how are you? Seriously, we care to ask and can handle the answer. We continue to hold everyone in our prayers in these uncertain times. Please reach out to us if you feel isolated or have any needs or concerns.

We have now completed our third pandemic Christmas together. Christmas Eve and Christmas Day were amongst the coldest in history. I remain thankful for all those who came out to celebrate with us and all those who used our Zoom option. Also I share words of thanks with Jen for playing Cello on Christmas Eve, Drew and our choir for another amazing year of music and all of those who helped with clean up, decorating, welcoming and hosting.

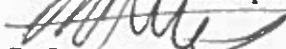
This year, many different and diverse people celebrated Christmas at St Jacobus. The Good news was shared in many languages, shows, messages, sermons and events. Throughout Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, 8 different churches, all serving our community with good news, gathered, read, prayed, ate and partied in English, Spanish, Nepali, Fujianese, Mandarin, Bengali, Indonesian and Hindi (plus some dialects I can't identify or name). Despite below zero temperatures and an on-going pandemic, over 1000 people came through 7201 43rd Ave for Christmas Church.

As usual in our January newsletter, I leave the thoughts to someone else, I share Howard Thurman's poem "The Work of Christmas". It feels more fitting this year as I spent my Christmas sermons talking about the excitement and shared work of Christmas, of proclaiming Christ our savior is born and God is with us

### **The Work of Christmas by Howard Thurman**

*When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the kings and princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with their flock,  
The work of Christmas begins:  
To find the lost,  
To heal the broken,  
To feed the hungry,  
To release the prisoner,  
To rebuild the nations,  
To bring peace among brothers,  
To make music in the heart.*

With Christmas hope and looking forward to 2023

  
Pr Joe

What I Said on Sunday: Our church follows the narrative lectionary. This year long cycle of readings goes through the Old Testament, the Gospels and then The Book of Acts, Letters of Paul and other letters. This December, we completed our long Advent or wait for Christmas as we finished our Old Testament series and shared the good news. Christ our savior is born. In January, we start the Gospel of Matthew which will take us to Easter.

On Sunday, December 4 our readings were Esther 4 and Matthew 5:13-16. The book of Esther is controversial. It was one of the last books to be accepted as part of the Old Testament collection of scripture. Esther is not a report about real events in the royal court of Xerxes, it mentions the king of Persia 190 times but does not mention the God of Israel directly at all. The book of Esther holds a space in scripture because the main turns and actions in the story indirectly point to God, it is a story that shows God's salvation of the Jewish people. Our reading today is paired with Jesus' invitation let your light shine before others, be salt because that is what Esther and Mordecai do, it is what we are called to do for such a time as this.

On Sunday, December 11th our readings were Isaiah 42:1-9 and Matt 12:15-21. This was our last Old Testament reading. This was a busy Sunday with 2 baptisms and my 13 year anniversary at St Jacobus. I never lose sight of the fact that my first introduction to this church was paperwork that reported, this church was diminished and lacking resources, needed work, had an unfavorable relationship with its school and didn't have more than 16 months left of paying a full-time pastor or possibly even staying open. The experienced and expert all agreed. This was a starter church and I should be prepared to move on quickly. Well here we are over 11 years past our expiration date. God is doing something new in this community, in baptism, in Jesus healing on the Sabbath and in the promises from Isaiah.

On Sunday, December 18 our readings were Matthew 1:18-25 and Psalm 23. After years of hearing about immigration, after recent news about the governors of Texas and Florida, busing people to sanctuary cities, to overwhelm, to show, this is what we are dealing with. This always felt like a far away, over there kind of challenge. The issue got real on November 13th as we celebrated Drew's 10 year anniversary here and 17 people (7 or 8 adults and 8 or 9 kids) showed up at St Jacobus from Ecuador. Regardless of policy or opinion, what I saw were people in need, cold coming, no shoes or coats, hungry, tired, scared in a strange place, who came to a church for help. The people of Israel had been hearing about the messiah, the savior, quotes, expectations that didn't happen, Now all of a sudden, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. Christmas is the moment when things got real.

On Christmas (December 24 and 25th) our reading was Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]. This year I looked at the difference between Church Christmas and community, secular, holiday Christmas. The other stuff is fun but Church Christmas is different, it is any time, action or work that proclaims Christ our savior is born and God is with us. This year I was entrusted to help a family mourn, celebrate and bury a loved one in the days before Christmas. It was a time to proclaim God is with you, with us, to speak comfort and Christmas. Church Christmas is a challenge, a call to change, it is the work of caring for others, seeing everyone as loved by God and witnessing to the promise "God is with us".

## Birthdays for January

Susan Walsh 13  
Jeremia Silaban 23  
Ellie Pena Humes 31

## Merry Christmas



**Christmas Memorials & Gifts**  
**In loving memory of:**



*Erik Smykal, Joseph & Bertha Slavicek and William & Emily Smykal  
by Joan & Ken Smykal*

*Our departed loved ones by Gloria & Teddy Wilson.*

*Loved ones by Yeshey Droelma*

*Loved Ones by Jeff & Christine Fisher*

*Aunt Hilde & Uncle Johnnie Schwartz by Monica, Charlie, Cynthia & Charlie Racz*

*Robert Grady, Anna Florence Martin, Katherine Grady & Corrin Barker by Jennifer Grady-  
Mantovani*

*W.Sahat Silaban & Tumpak Hutajulu by Rev. Samuel Silaban & Family*

*Madeline S. Ornstein by Janet & Maggie Ornstein*

*Walter Maerz by Elke Maerz*

*Linda Maline by loved ones*

*Evelyn Bekcer by the Racz family*

*Stanley & Marie Miller by Emil & Marie Votava*

*Our Departed loved ones by Ted, Laura & Andrew Fisher*

*John Mantovani, Salvatore & Lucy Napoli by Connie Mantovani and Family*

*George & Kathleen Yuen by Linda Varriale & family*

*All my loved ones by Lorraine Scherer & Family*

*Miss Sophie Popp, Mr. Harry Blessing, Mrs. Catherine Blessing, Miss Dorothy Popp  
Mr.Christian Seitz & Mrs Ellen Seitz, by Christian Seitz & Caryl Seitz*

*Marion Mondrow, Dorothy Rera, Linda Kiehl and Evelyn Becker by Susan, Matt & Shane Walsh*

*Eleanor Humes, Grace Ward, Elena Aguayo de Peña by the Peña-Humes family*

*Our parents Herta & Frank Schwuchow, Emma & Willy Radermacher, Hilda & John Schwartz, Ruth Pfeil and Ludwig Daiber by Marion & Wolfgang Radermacher*

*Michael and David Wisniewski, David Campbell, Martha & Paul Oakes, Jacqueline & Bernard Wisniewski by Rebekah Oakes & Steve Wisniewski*

*Christopher Cronin by Helen Cronin*

*Alice & George Kustka by John Kustka*

*Emmi & Toivo Sohlberg, Vieno & Simo Saukkonen by Ingrid Sohlberg*

*My mother Tandin Wangmo, my grandmother Tshering Dem by Ugen Choephel*

***Given to the Glory of God for***



*Emma Wisniewski and BJ Burbidge: Kadin and Eve Wisniewski, Peggy Campbell by Rebekah Oakes & Steve Wisniewski*

*The family I love by Nicolas and Barbara Monty*

*Chimi and my children by Ugen Choephel*

*Our family by Gloria & Teddy Wilson*

*The ministry of St Jacobus by Ted, Andrew and Laura Fisher*

*Oma & Opa Radermacher by Susan, Matt & Shane Walsh*

*Our loved ones by Marion & Wolfgang Radermacher*

*Oma & Opa Radermacher by the Racz family*

*Loved ones by Yeshey Droelma*

ELCA Church Council Welcomes New Vice President And 18 New Members  
Nov. 16, 2022

CHICAGO — The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) met at the Lutheran Center in Chicago, Nov. 10–Nov. 13. The council welcomed ELCA Vice President Imran Siddiqui and 18 new members elected by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. The council serves as the ELCA churchwide organization’s board of directors and interim legislative authority between meetings of the Churchwide Assembly.

In her report to the council, ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton drew attention to the substantial work charged to the council by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. Eaton said the work will “have a significant effect on this church as we listen to God’s call and try as best as we can and as faithfully as we can to remain true to the gospel, but somehow find a way to speak and act in the cultural vernacular.” Eaton said one of Martin Luther’s gifts was translating the Bible into German so that people could receive it in their language. She emphasized to the council how the work set before them could impact those who are presently not in church but may come in five or ten years.

In key action, the council approved a nomination process for the Commission on a Renewed Lutheran Church. The commission will consist of up to 35 voting members, including at least 25% people of color or whose primary language is other than English, and a goal of at least 20% youth or young adults.

Nominations will be received from synod councils or synod executive committees as well as through an open nomination process. The Church Council’s executive committee will present a slate of nominees at the council’s April 2023 meeting. This action is in response to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly call for the council to establish the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church to consider statements of purpose for the church and its organizational structure and to present its findings and recommendations to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly in preparation for a possible reconstituting convention. The council also referred to the commission in the question of changing the denomination’s name.

In other action, the council:

- Authorized the engagement of a firm to conduct a comprehensive audit for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility of the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA (CBCR), the Roster Manual, the Church Council Governance Policy Manual and “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline.” A report will be presented at the fall 2023 Church Council meeting.
- Scheduled for 2024 the initiation of a task force for reconsideration of the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*.
- Amended the Churchwide Organization Personnel Policies to include a provision concerning nondisclosure agreements as requested by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly memorial on separation agreements.
- Revised the 2023 fiscal year current spending authorization from \$68,814,000 to \$68,429,562 and revised the 2023 World Hunger spending authorization from \$22,869,000 to \$25,250,000.

- Deferred questions on the development of social messages on U.S. national gun policy and child abuse and protection and the revision of the social message “Homelessness” until the spring 2023 Church Council meeting.
- Adopted a continuing resolution establishing council advisory members to include the presidents — or designees — of the ELCA ethnic associations and a representative of Reconciling Works. The council also approved revisions to the ELCA Church Council Governance Policy Manual to include references to advisory members.
- Repealed the 2003 Policy on Criteria for Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities and directed consideration of a new policy.
- Encouraged the task force addressing disciplinary concerns of leaders of color to continue the conversation regarding the position of a racial justice ombudsperson.
- Received a report on research work related to discriminatory treatment within the call process and inequitable compensation of rostered ministers of color and called for interaction with and among the Christian Community and Leadership home area, the Leadership Committee of the Conference of Bishops, and the Candidacy and Leadership Development Working Group.
- Closed the special appeal for the COVID-19 Response Fund, which raised \$2,112,429.
- Approved amendments to three corporate social responsibility issue papers and a new Privatized Immigration Detention Social Criteria Investment Screen.
- Received a progress report regarding the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and urged actions to increase awareness of the confession in advance of the 500th anniversary in 2030.
- Elected members of the advisory board of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University and boards of directors of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, Wartburg Theological Seminary, the Mission Investment Fund, and National Lutheran Campus Ministry, and elected a member of the Committee of Hearing Officers.
- Approved amendments to the bylaws of Portico, Lenoir-Rhyne University, and United Lutheran Seminary.

The Church Council received/engaged in the following:

- Reports from the church’s secretary, treasurer, and vice president, from the ELCA Conference of Bishops, from the Church Council Youth and Young Adult working group, and from the churchwide office home areas.
- Progress reports on synod diversity goals and from the Candidacy and Leadership Development working group.
- Debrief of the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.
- Education on gender and racial justice.
- Greetings from ecumenical partners.