



ST. LUKE

Lutheran Church

The Story of God Changing Lives

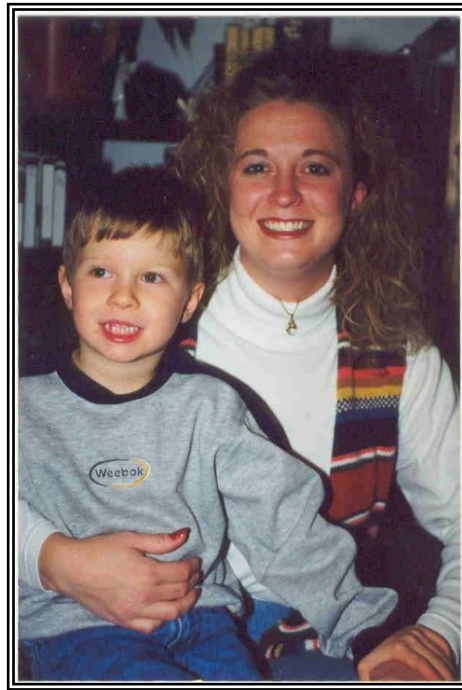
Learning, Living, Loving: United in God's Steadfast Love



The Journey

December 2016

St. Luke Holds Highly Successful Youth Activities Fundraiser



Tiffani Busch-Pickens and her son Seth, age 6

More information on page

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A Message from the Pastor....



Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

I make no secret about how much I love this time of year. I thoroughly enjoy choosing gifts for my family and friends, decorating our home and the church, re-watching my favorite Christmas movies, and coming to church on Christmas Eve to recall the birth of the Savior of the World. As we know, however, Advent is about all of this and more.

Thomas Merton wrote, “Advent is the ‘sacrament’ of the presence of God in His world, in the Mystery of Christ at work in History.... This mystery is the revelation of God Himself in His Incarnate Son. But it is not merely a manifestation of the Divine Perfections, it is the concrete plan of God for the salvation of men and the restoration of the whole world in Christ.”

As we know, a sacrament is a means of conveying grace to us. It is an act of God, using physical signs, to draw us into God’s presence and forgiveness. In many ways, when we talk about Advent, we often speak of preparing ourselves for the celebration of Christ at Christmas. While there is some merit in thinking this way, another way to think of Advent is that it is God who is preparing us.

For what is God preparing us? It is for more than a Christmas season or celebration. God prepares us and this world for an entirely new order, one in which God’s “will is done on earth as in heaven.” This is nowhere better reflected than in the words of the great hymn, “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus,” by Charles Wesley:

Come, thou long expected Jesus
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel’s strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear Desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.
Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit,
raise us to thy glorious throne.

This month, I invite you to consider how God is working in this world to prepare us for the reign of Christ. May we pray for the coming of Jesus, both at Christmas and in the world to come.

May you and your family have a blessed Advent and a Merry Christmas!
Pr Robb

COUNCIL MEMBERS 2016

Member	Phone
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Paul Egas.....President.....	678-488-7323
Vickie Pace.....Vice President	770-946-4187
Kelly Williams	Secretary909-567-9467
Mark Rettig.....Treasurer	770-914-5694
Dave Barkdoll.....	770-507-1856
Andrew Grunzke	
Tony Kelley.....	770-471-5002
Debbie Lundell.....	770-815-8918

Vision: *The Story of God Changing Lives*

Mission: *Learning, Living, Loving: United in God's Steadfast Love*

Church Location:

1748 Brannan Road

McDonough, GA 30253

Worship Service

Sunday:

9:40 am Sunday School

11:00 a.m. Worship (With Holy Eucharist)

Office Hours

10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

(Tuesday ~ Thursday) Office is closed Monday & Friday

To Reach us:

Phone: 678-432-0845

E-mail storyofgod@bellsouth.net

Website: www.storyofgod.org

**Mailing address: 289 Jonesboro Road #333
McDonough, Ga. 30253**

Pastor:

Rev. Dr. Robert Harrell 678-432-0845 Church Office

or

404-625-1994 cell

e-mail: pastor_robb@storyofgod.org

Church Secretary

Susan Sparrow 678-432-0845 or

678-778-0568 cell

e-mail: storyofod@bellsouth.org

Council meetings are open to all members of the congregation. If you would like to address the council, we ask that you let the President, Paul Egas, know in advance so we can put it on the council meeting agenda.



**St. Luke Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes
October 16, 2016**

Council Mission Statement: Learning, Living, Loving, united in God's steadfast love.

Meeting was called to order by Paul Egas. In attendance were Pastor Robb Harrell, Paul Egas, Kelly Williams, Debbie Lundell, Andrew Grunzke, Tony Kelley, Dave Barkdoll, John Shaw, Vickie Pace, and Mark Rettig.

1. **Call to Order:** by Paul Egas.
2. **Devotion:** Pr. Robb led a discussion of Chapters 10 & 12-14 of the book titled Autopsy of a Deceased Church.
3. **Review/Approve Minutes:** The minutes from September 18, 2016 were reviewed by the council as well as Congregational Meeting Minutes from October 2nd and October 9th. Mark made a motion to approve with changes and it was seconded by Debbie. The motion carried.
4. **Recognize Guests:** None
5. **Correspondence:** We received a thank you letter from LLCA World Hunger in which we raised \$658.32 for the sponsor a pig campaign.
6. **Officer Reports:**
 - A. **Pastor:** Attached as addendum. Submitted by Pastor Robb Harrell.
 - B. **President:** No report.
 - C. **Treasurer:** Attached as addendum. Submitted by Mark Rettig. Income for September was short of expenses by \$2016.
7. **Ministry Area Reports:**
 - A. **Worship:** Submitted by Pastor Robb Harrell. We have begun using the new setting for the liturgy which will continue until advent. On Reformation Sunday, we will be using a very traditional Lutheran setting: Setting #1 from the red worship book.
 - B. **Fellowship:** Attached as addendum. Submitted by Vickie Pace. New Member Sunday was September 11, 2016. The October Fest will be held on October 22nd at 6:30pm at John Shaw and Vickie Pace's house.
 - C. **Discipleship:** Attached as addendum. Submitted by Tony Kelley. Adult Sunday School, Children's group, Teen group, and Wednesday Bible Study are all underway.
 - D. **Evangelism:** Attached as addendum. Submitted by Debbie Lundell. There was a temple talk on October 11th for stewardship. National Night Out is scheduled for

Thursday, October 27th. Saturday, November 5th will be the magnet distribution day.

E. Ministry: Submitted by Paul Egas. We are currently and continuously collecting items for shoeboxes and Thanksgiving. Pastor suggested that we revisit the display for signing up for various ministries to make it more accessible and visible for everyone. The table that we are currently using is somewhat convoluted.

F. Property: No report.

8. Old Business:

Nominating Committee & Elections: The nominating committee is actively recruiting for candidates.

MIF Account: Mark Rettig explained that we need people to share their personal information (i.e. name, address, SSN) to complete the application. Mark Rettig and John Shaw volunteered to offer their information as signees on the account.

Prayer Request: Debbie Lundell suggested that we follow-up on making the prayers of the people more personable and relatable to the congregation. The council will institute a prayer book for congregation members to write in special prayer requests in which the lay minister will include in the prayers of the people during worship service each week.

Time and Talent: Council will review the time and talent questionnaire to ensure that it is aligned with the current needs of the congregation

9. New Business:

Property Search committee: The opening bid of \$50,000 for the potential property was more than we can afford; therefore, the searching continues.

Motion to adjourn made by Pastor Robb and seconded by Andrew Grunzke. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Kelly Williams

St. Luke Lutheran Church

Treasurer's Report for Month Ending September 30, 2016

BANK ACCOUNT STATUS	Bank of N Ga Check	Bank of N Ga MM	Thrivent MM
Ending Balance as of 8/31/2015	47,970.99	140,593.87	9,770.70
Outstanding Checks	0.00		0.00
Outstanding Deposits	0.00		0.00
Reconciled Balance	47,970.99	140,593.87	9,770.70

CASH BALANCE SHEET	Checking Accounts
Cash Assets (Checking Accts)	198,335.56
Liabilities (Restricted Funds):	
Building Fund	132,850.96
Raise the Roof Fund	30,477.00
Ministries	1,784.00
Memorial Gifts	0.00
Worship / Furnishings	135.00
Endowments (Busch-Pickens)	13,366.04
Undesignated Escrow Funds	23,558.58
Pass-Thru Contributions	953.35
Total Unrestricted Cash On-Hand	-4,769.05

OVERALL BALANCE SHEET	All Accounts
Cash Assets (Checking Accts)	198,335.56
Money Market Investment Assets (LCF)	54,412.28
Land Assets	0.00
Property & Equipment Assets	24,000.00
Cash Liabilities (Restricted Funds)	-200,104.61
FNB VISA Balance	0.00
Net Worth	73,643.23

INCOME & EXPENSE REPORT	September 2016	Year To Date 2016
Unrestricted Income	10,004.00	107,511.06
Restricted Income	310.00	35,006.82
Other Income/Expense	0.00	365.00
TOTAL INCOME	10,314.00	142,872.38
TOTAL EXPENSES	12,020.89	112,877.58
Unrestricted Cash Flow	-2,016.89	-5,011.62

UNRESTRICTED INCOME COMPARISON	Monthly	Year To Date
September 2013 (5 Sundays)	12,007.68	97,007.18
September 2014 (4 Sundays)	10,305.21	98,408.73
September 2015 (4 Sundays)	9,822.00	104,642.79
September 2016 (4 Sundays)	10,004.00	107,866.06

TREASURER'S TRANSLATION (or "What does all this mean")

1. Income for September was short of expenses by \$2,016
2. We now have almost \$133K in the building fund and over \$30K in RTF (restricted cash)
3. Currently we need to average about \$13,000 per month to meet budget.
4. Our 2016 budget income amount is \$150,448. We should be at 75% of that amount.
5. Budget deficit for the year is \$6,325. Expense deficit for year is \$5,011.
6. No Memorial Fund monies were available to cover September expenses
7. No benevolence payment was made in September

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED, Mark Rettig – Treasurer

October 2nd, 2016 Congregational Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order by Paul Egas after establishing a quorum.

Motion was made by Council to approve the Nominating Committee consisting of:

Paul Egas

Tony Kelley

Vickie Pace

Diane Gilley

Barbara Little

Dave Birkdolt seconded. The motion was approved by acclamation.

Pastor motioned for adjournment. John Shaw seconded. Motion approved by acclamation.

Submitted by Paul Egas

Burial Plots Available

St. Luke owns two burial plots in Sherwood Memorial Park on Tara Boulevard in Jonesboro that we are offering for sale. Proceeds will be used to pay off remaining credit card debt. If you or someone you know are interested in these plots, please contact Pastor Robb for more information.

Are You Staying Connected?

St. Luke operates a webpage, a Facebook page, and a Twitter feed, all of which provide congregational news, upcoming events, and items of interest.

Take advantage of these resources!

Web: www.storyofgod.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Luke-Lutheran-Church/>

Twitter: @StLukeLutheran1



Backpacks and Shoeboxes packed, delivered and mailed!!



Operation Christmas Shoe Box Summary
50 Shoe boxes donated
42 People who donated items, packed boxes or donated shipping money
426 Volunteer hours
Total project cost \$1,959.00

St. Luke Holds Highly Successful Youth Activities Fundraiser

A belated thank you to all who supported the Saturday, October 1 fundraiser at St. Luke from the Tiffani Busch-Pickens Endowment Committee. The barbeque luncheon raised almost \$2,350.00 for the endowment, which supports St. Luke's youth programs.

Many thanks to Chef Al Gourley and his family for preparing and serving the great barbecue meal, to Mary Beth Egas for coordinating the many details of this highly-successful event, and to Barbara Little for donating food. Additionally, our thanks to Thrivent Financial for a \$250.00 grant. And, our special appreciation goes to all the St. Luke members, their friends and guests for their generous contributions.

Tiffani and her son, Seth, attended the former Living Word Lutheran Church. Tiffani was a strong supporter of the church's Youth Activities, especially Summer Bible School. She was killed in July 2001 at The Home Depot store in Morrow while trying to protect a second victim, customers and other employees. In loving memory of Tiffani, St. Luke established the Tiffani Busch-Pickens Endowment. It provides St. Luke Youth Activities with a flexible, perpetual source of funding. Thousands of dollars in grants have been awarded since the Endowment was established in 2003.

St. Luke's latest "Backpack Blessing" of the school year was Friday, November 18. On that day, nine food insecure children from a local elementary school were given backpacks full of nutritious food to supplement the school lunches they missed when schools were closed November 21-25.

Many thanks to everyone who donated money or bookbags for this ministry project. We know that St. Luke makes a difference in these children's lives.

If you would like to support this ministry, we are still looking for families to donate \$10.00 per month to "Backpack Blessings."

Debbie, Joe, and Erica,

On behalf of all the students at Grace House, I want to thank you all very much for providing us with a wonderful Tuesday dinner last night. Your love and support of young people, on behalf of St. Luke's means the world to us. We are a ministry of the WHOLE church.

You're the best!



National Night Out was a great success. Thank you to John Shaw, Vickie Pace, and Dave and Judy Barkdoll for setting up the booth and being there the entire evening. We appreciate the Egas and Hoover families donating candy for the event. It was a lovely evening, and there were many families present. We handed out lots of candy, pretzels, and magnets. We even talked to a few Lutherans.

From Debbie Lundell, evangelism chair

Christmas Caroling: An Intergenerational Event.

Make a joyful noise and get into the spirit of Christmas with an evening of singing, food, and fellowship.

Date: (check with pastor after the council meeting)

Time: Sunset, which is about 5:30. Be there by 5:15 so we can get organized

What to Bring: a flashlight

cookies or other goodies to share (if you are willing and able)

wear Christmas colors and apparel, but dress appropriately for the weather



“Birthday in a Bag” ministry
 Members and friends can purchase basic supplies such as cake mix, icing, candles, crepe paper, balloons, small plates and napkins and place them in a Birthday bag. Bags will then be donated to A Friend’s House and given to a family with no means to celebrate a birthday.

A Note from Judy Jenkins,
 Due to computer and printer problems I’ll be shrinking my card-giving mini-ministry considerably.



You can begin placing your order for Poinsettias. If you would like to place an order, please fill out this form and place it in the slot marked “Bulletin” in the church office. The cost of each plant is \$8.00. Make your check out to St. Luke and indicate poinsettias on the check. The deadline to place your order is December 20. If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Little (770-957-4640).

*THERE IS NO LIMIT TO YOUR PURCHASE.
 PLEASE PRINT*

In Honor of: _____

In Memory of: _____

In Thanksgiving of: _____

Order placed by: _____

Thanksgiving Food Distribution 2016

A note from one of the families:

Hello St Luke,

I would like to thank you all for the Thanksgiving box/groceries that my family received from you all. You all will truly be blessed!



After a lot of hard work: sorting, distribution and helping clean the church.....

ELCC and St Luke Thanksgiving Boxes 2016

2 Shelters

29 Families

207 people fed

47 volunteers November 19

319 volunteer hours including other volunteers

Total project cost \$3,723.00

Thank you to all who donated and helped!!!





The youth had lunch and went bowling!!!





Installation of Barbara Little as St. Luke's first Verger.



The Ministry of the Verger

There are many different roles in the church, especially where it relates to public worship. Most of us are familiar with more common roles like acolytes, crucifers, assisting ministers, and the clergy. However, many are unfamiliar with another formal position, that of verger.

Vergers first became part of the church about seven hundred years ago, originating in England. They had many responsibilities, including leading the procession into the church, when they would use a mace-like staff called a “virge” to clear a path through animals and people so that the clergy could enter the church. They also served other functions, such as making sure that everything was prepared for the clergy upon their arrival at liturgy, digging graves, and general upkeep of the church.

The role of verger still exists today, though about 90% of a verger’s work is behind the scenes. They oversee altar guilds, they train and prepare acolytes, crucifers, lectors, and lay assisting ministers. They make sure that everyone is present and prepared prior to worship, and either find a substitute when someone is absent, or fill in themselves. When the resident clergy is away for a Sunday, they greet the guest clergy and show them where they can vest and assist them in the service as needed. The verger is a person of details that frees the clergy to focus on their own role of preaching and presiding in the Divine Service.

The verger serves at the pleasure of the pastor. In so many ways, Barbara Little has been doing many of these things for us already. Barbara provides leadership and organization to the altar guild and lay assistants in worship. It is because of this that I have decided – with the blessing of the church council – to appoint Barbara to serve as St. Luke’s first verger. She has accepted and we are currently working to refine her role and set a date for her installation. Barbara has labored for years behind the scenes to assure the church is ready to worship, and this step recognizes that valuable ministry.

Thank you to Barbara and to all who faithfully serve Christ through the ministry of the church.

Peace, Pr Robb



Prayer Requests

Henry Quant
 Resurrection Church,
 Germany
 Christ Whynn
 Elizabeth Thompson
 David
 Gary Dinsdale
 Twylah Schmidt
 Keith Ian Latcha
 David Pilling
 Kirk
 Vicky Fordham
 Dona Fries
 Pr. Gene Sheffield
 Bob
 Robbie Cates
 Lucas Fisher
 Aaron

Howard and Alice
 Esaun
 Susan Whitener
 Elizabeth Rettig
 Marion Henry and kids
 Mia Duay
 Murphy Family
 Louise Harrison
 Juan Padilla Sr.
 Leon Blackburn
 Linda Blackburn
 Theresa Sodachanh
 Sierra, Heather
 Phillips-Padilla family

Vicki Gatewood
 Tommy Nichols
 Helen Yurtseven
 Judith Aydin
 Leverett Family
 Jerry
 David
 Gail
 Jeri
 Willy Simmons
 Jack Lewis
 Kenny Willis

Odellis Lord
 Bob Owen
 Robert and Sue Gebel
 Clarence DeWitt
 Sease Family
 Richard Brock
 Dianne
 Morgan
 Jordan
 Pastor Oliver Wood
 Pat Wood
 Paige
 Darcy Chaffin



Matthew Kelley	3
Steven & Thomas Gourley	8
Tony Kelley	10
Beverly Adair	11
Dory Harrell	19
Barbara Little	22
Judy Barkdoll	24
Ron Brauer	26
Asheton Harrell	26
Rose Denzin	28
Mallory Gourley	28

If your birthday is not announced in the monthly Newsletter, it could be because we do not have your information in the church records.

If you would like your birth date to appear in the monthly Journey, please fill in the information provided below and return it to the church office.

Name _____

D.O.B.

Month____ **Day**____

Year_____

The year will not be posted, but will be used for other record-keeping here at the church.....Thank you!

December 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>In <i>December</i> we will collect donations for A Friend's House. A "Christmas Wish List" is on the table. St. Luke's children put up a "Jesse Tree" to place the unwrapped gifts under.</p>						
4 2nd Sunday of Advent	5	6	7 Advent Supper 6:15 Service 7pm	8	9	10 Children's Craft Fair 10-12
11 3rd Sunday of Advent	12	13	14 Advent Supper 6:15 Service 7pm	15	16	17
18 4th Sunday of Advent Donations due for Jesse Tree Council meets	19	20	21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Service 7pm
25 <i>Nativity of Our Lord</i>	26	27	28	29	30	31
Christmas Service 10am	<p style="text-align: center;">Join us at church for dinner and worship on Wednesday evenings, December 7 and 14, for Advent. We will gather at 6:15 pm for soup and sandwiches and fellowship time, followed by a brief service of prayer and worship.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">All are invited and encouraged to come, as we hope this will be a time when people from across generations can share in the spirit of anticipation appropriate to the season.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">For more information, contact Pr. Robb.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Please sign up if you can help provide soup and/or sandwiches.</i></p>					

December Sunday Servants

December 4	C
Assisting Minister	Barbara Little
Lector	
Crucifer	
Acolyte	
Counters	Paul Egas and Jim Sease
Ushers	Team 3
Nursery	
Greeters	Joe Lundell and Beverly Adair
Clean Up	Barkdoll/Egas

December 11	D
Assisting Minister	Cindy Gourley
Lector	Andrew Grunzke
Crucifer	Thomas Gourley
Acolyte	Benjamin Mason
Counters	Mike Adair and Beverly Retig
Ushers	Team 3
Nursery	
Greeters	Tony Kelley and Dona Curtis-Thomas
Clean Up	Sparrow

December 18	E
Assisting Minister	Mark Rettig
Lector	Conrad Busch
Crucifer	
Acolyte	
Counters	Paul Egas and Jim Sease
Ushers	Team 3
Nursery	
Greeters	Andrew Grunzke and Debbie Lundell
Clean Up	Joyner/Kelley

December 25	A
Assisting Minister	Debbie Lundell
Lector	Joe Lundell
Crucifer	
Acolyte	
Counters	Vickie Pace and Judy Barkdoll
Ushers	Team 3
Nursery	Paul Egas
Greeters	Judy Joyner and Linda Hoover
Clean Up	Little/Pace/Adair

January 1 2017	B
Assisting Minister	Kelly Williams
Lector	Dave Barkdoll
Crucifer	Mallory Gourley
Acolyte	Paul Egas
Counters	Mike Adair and Beverly Retig
Ushers	Team 1
Nursery	
Greeters	Mark Rettig and Judy Aydin
Clean Up	ELCC

USHERS Team # 3

Mike and Linda Hover, Ed and Judy Joyner,
Mike and Beverly Adair and Dave Barkdoll



The Journey
is a publication of
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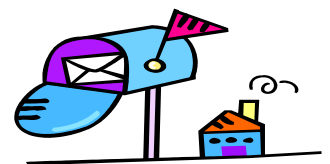
9:40 a.m. Sunday School
Sunday Worship
11:00 a.m.



If you have any ideas or suggestions for The Journey,
please contact the church office

Please have all Journey items into the church office by the
25th of each month.....

(678-432-0845) or by email at storyofgod@bellsouth.net.



Please call the church office if you have a change of address or a new phone number so that our records can be updated.