



# the CHALLENGE



## From the Desk of Brennan Blue

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### Boldly Returning

I've described this upcoming fall as both the beginning of a second marathon and an opportunity to practice faith through a season of uncertainty. Today, I'd like to describe the return to our fall programmatic year with one final analogy: a bold step into our future together!

There will be marathon feeling weeks and moments of uncertainty ahead, to be sure, but as I look forward, I see bold opportunities for us to return to the future we've been working toward together. Here are some important highlights for you, your family and yours friends to know about as we enter this new season together:

Our regular St. Luke **programming will ramp back up** as folks return from their summer travels:

- Worship will continue to take place live in the sanctuary of St. Luke. Our outdoor seating and digital livestream options will remain, giving folks three ways to share in the worshipping life of St. Luke.
- Sunday School, Youth Group and OWL (Our Whole Lives) programming returns in earnest with programming for all ages.
- Coffee Hour makes its triumphant return on Sun, Sept 12, outside and with special treats to mark the start of our programmatic year. We'll then continue to provide coffee hour outdoors so long as the (relatively) warm weather lasts.
- Adult Education returns in "hybrid" fashion with presentations on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month and special community dialogue opportunities on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays. In short, there's something for every Sunday!

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## From the Desk of Brennan Blue - continued

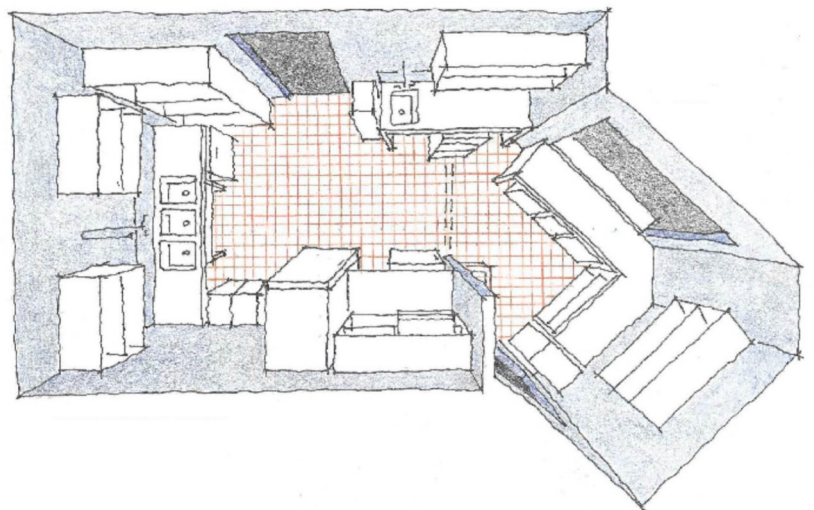
In addition to our regular programming, St. Luke will offer a variety of **outdoor, multigenerational events** to help our community connect even as COVID cases wax and wane. Highlights for the coming months include:

- A multigenerational grounds work day with a blessing of the harvest as our St. Luke/DIW Food Garden offers its bounty (Late Sept)
- A Blessing of the Animals service on the St. Luke grounds (Early Oct)
- A "Trunk or Treat" Halloween event hosted by our Faith Formation team (Oct 31)
- A return of our Christmas Gift Making Workshop (December)

Finally, we are stepping boldly into our future this fall by launching an exciting new project: **The St. Luke Community Kitchen!** Pandemic shutdowns withstanding, the past few years have found St. Luke working more and more in coalition with others as we pursue the gospel of God's love, justice, and peace. With an abundance of parking and flexible meeting spaces, we've been excited to find ourselves positioned as a central gathering place for faith-based community organizing for a number of West Metro community organizations and efforts. St. Luke's Earth Stewards, for example, has partnered with several environmental orgs to host timely climate care lectures and events. The Minnetonka Coalition for Equitable Education held their end of year review and celebration on our grounds earlier this month, working in partnership with us to shape the event. Our St. Luke Performing Arts Series (returning soon, we hope!) brought a wide variety of folks together to celebrate the arts while raising awareness and funds for partnered non-profit organizations.

For a community that has historically followed our calling out into the world beyond our doors, it's been a joy to find those beyond our doors now coming to us for support in their own lives and callings. As many of you know, St. Luke's kitchen is not up to city code, which means we are unable to use the kitchen for food and hospitality prep for any event that engages the public or community partners. While we've found creative work-arounds in the past, we can far better invest in a vibrant future for St. Luke by removing this barrier to community and care. To further position St. Luke as the home for faith-based community organizing, advocacy and fundraising efforts here in the West Metro, we will transform this barrier into long-term asset by renovating and expanding our kitchen.

This exciting project will *benefit* our community while also *building* community beyond our membership. We are therefore calling it the St. Luke Community Kitchen! Join us in worship on Sept 12 to hear more about the vision behind the effort and then in Adult Ed on Sept 19 to review our current design plans, anticipated costs, benefits, and more.



# Adult Education

Adult Education 3.0 at St. Luke will begin on **Sept 19, 9:15 am**. Flexibility is the name of the game for the coming year. The AE focus group considered a lot of options and finally settled for now on a hybrid model of in-person presentations live-streamed from the East Room, twice a month on the **1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays**.

A zoom link – listed below – will be live from the East Room where Zoom participants will be projected onto the wall, so if you're not comfortable attending worship and AE in person, you can still stay connected to our engaging AE sessions. We're also going to be reconfiguring the room for physical distancing and accommodating the zoom audience. Follow our [Facebook](#) for updates!

Here's a peek at what we have coming up:

**September 19: The St. Luke Community Kitchen**

**October 3: Navigating Strained Family Dynamics (anti-maskers/vaxxers)**

**October 17: Fun COVID Responsible Fall/Winter Activities**

Join us live or via [zoom](#)

Meeting ID: 849 5696 8408

Password: peace

## September Birthdays

September 1 Joy Gresham	September 9 Krista Schneider	September 23 Joe Williams
September 1 Otto Juricek	September 10 Sue Kirchhoff	September 25 David Haskin
September 2 Joe Lindberg	September 13 Isaac Avery	September 25 John Lee
September 4 Peg Keenan	September 14 Lyle Meyer	September 26 Kathy Whatley
September 4 Mary Bonner	September 15 Don Davies	September 26 Dick Oberg
September 7 Dick Smith	September 15 Lindsay Juricek	September 27 Deanne Larin
September 7 Aidan Pettit	September 17 Bev Ryther	September 27 Lindsay Messenger
September 7 Charlotte Bonner	September 18 Connie Ryks	September 27 Ariana Egan
September 7 Judy Gregg	September 18 Evelyn Headen	September 29 Madeline Hampstead
September 8 Marilyn Cool	September 20 Mark Taintor	September 29 Kristi McNamara
September 8 Cynthia Lowe	September 21 Joe Cline	September 29 Danny Drill-Mellum
September 8 Timothy Manning	September 22 Lydia Sutton	September 29 Leif van Lierop
September 9 Justin Seel	September 23 Brianna Stratman	
September 9 Judy Cline	September 23 Anna Kostial	

# The Book Group

## The St. Luke book group is back this fall for vaccinated persons.

The book group will meet at 9:30, Wednesday, September 8, at the home of Nancy Anderson, 3835 Xenium Court N, Plymouth.

We will read and discuss *The Night Watchman* by Louise Erdrich:

Based on the extraordinary life of National Book Award-winning author Louise Erdrich's grandfather, who worked as a night watchman and carried the fight against Native dispossession from rural North Dakota all the way to Washington, D.C., this powerful novel explores themes of love and death with lightness and gravity and unfolds with the elegant prose, sly humor, and depth of feeling of a master craftsman.

We hope you can join us.

Liz Heuser

October 13 - *Blink* by Malcolm Gladwell

November 10 - *The Book of Longings* by Sue Monk Kidd

December 8 - *Akin* by Emma Donoghue

January 12 - *Tears We Cannot Stop* by Michael Eric Dyson

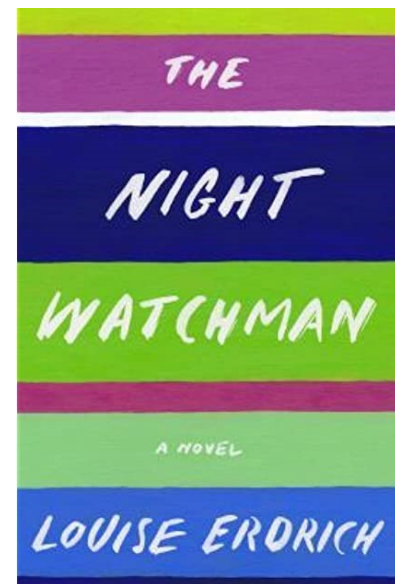
February 9 - *Cher Ami and Major Whittlesey* by Kathleen Rooney

March 9 - *Sold on a Monday* by Kristina McMorris

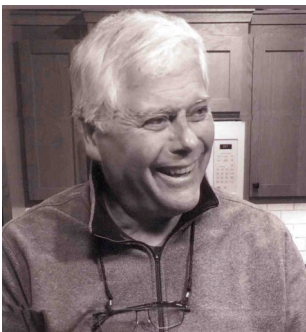
April 13 - *Virgil Wander* by Leif Enger

May 11 - *A Woman of No Importance* by Sonia Purcell

June 8 - *Klara and the Sun* by Kazuo Ishiguru



## Greg Smith Memorial Service



### September 18, 2021 at 11:00 am - Sanctuary and livestream.

A memorial service honoring the life of Greg Smith will be held at St. Luke at 11:00 on Saturday, September 18. However, due to the recent surge in Covid cases complicating this planned celebration, St. Lukers are asked to please join by livestream viewing through the church website in order to save in-person space for family and close friends.



## Revitalizing Recycling

**St. Luke has always strived to be sustainable in its operations.** The congregation has been separating its solid waste stream for many years. However, it is always important to evaluate how we are doing. A Hennepin County grant was received in early summer to help us improve on our efforts. The grant provided us with uniform recycling and organic receptacles and informational signage.

Four major stations have been set up throughout the building. Each area has 3 containers (garbage-black/brown, recycling-blue and organic-green) that are consistently sized and colored. The containers have uniform signage that indicate which materials can be placed in them. The bathrooms also have consistently sized and colored containers.

This fall and winter look for educational opportunities about our solid waste system (face-to-face and on-line program, handouts, newsletter articles and e-mails). The goal is to reduce the amount of solid waste that we are disposing into landfills. Becoming more sustainable with our solid waste practices will also help address our climate situation.



## Climate Connections

### **Tell Congress: Pass a Clean Electricity Standard**

In the coming weeks, Congress will be voting on the most ambitious climate legislation it has ever considered. Can you send a message to your elected officials letting them know that you support bold federal climate action? You can do so by visiting: <https://bit.ly/3AB6SJV>

## Focus on Food

**St. Luke members, Lori and Gary Cocking**, from Waverly MN have created garden space for produce for the Division of Indian Works (DIW) to supplement the food gardens on the St. Luke grounds. Nancy Olmsted interviewed them for this article:

“We selected a property along the Crow River in Wright County that was a former horse facility and had never been monocropped. That was very important as we wanted to grow a healthy organic garden. The property had been abandoned and pasture grasses were shoulder height and the river was hidden by a rich variety of bushes.

We decided we didn’t want a traditional tilled garden and would instead mow the tall grass down to a few inches and plant the squash, tomatoes, melons peppers and other plants by simply digging a shallow hole and then mounding the plant in the ground in the now short pasture grass. For us this meant the garden plants would become a part of the nature that was already flourishing such as grasses, milkweed and other pasture vegetation. Our plants seem to thrive!



It’s not a tidy garden but it’s a **joyous** garden with our produce running through the garden in any direction they choose. We feel we have created harmony and creativity in our wild pasture garden that reflects the love of nature and the love for our Native community. American Indian culture emphasizes harmony with nature and a strong belief that man is inherently good. We hope our garden models these values.”



The *Division of Indian Work* (DIW) is a Native led urban non-profit whose mission is to support, strengthen and empower urban American Indian people. DIW Director, Louise Matson believes access to healthy fresh produce is essential in building healthy bodies and minds to overcome the generational trauma of assimilation schools, decolonization and the adverse health effects of government provided commodity foods. In the south Minneapolis Native urban Community nutritious options are difficult to find. The community does not have large grocery stores within walking distance and the food shelf had few options for healthy fresh garden produce.



This journey began at St Luke Presbyterian Church in Minnetonka who has often partnered with DIW. As St Luke members, Lori and Gary Cocking became involved in the gardens at St Luke working with garden manager and member Judy Gregg. The produce at the St Luke garden also goes to the DIW food shelf.

After a few years, Lori and Gary made the decision to move from Excelsior to Waverly to create more garden space for DIW produce.

Both gardens have benefited from the wisdom and guidance of Native Chef Derek Nicholas who is a member of the DIW staff as their Nutrition Development Associate. Derek is also the author of *Eating with The Season* that highlights traditional Native foods. Derek advises and helps select garden plants and seeds for both gardens. He also creates and ensures healthy meals are created from the produce and provided to the south Mpls. Native community through direct deliveries to residences, shelters, and community meals or the DIW food shelf.



# Women's Retreat

## The Feisty Women of St. Luke Are Unstoppable!

St. Luke's feisty women aren't going to let Covid cancel another Women's Retreat! Instead of our usual weekend at Clearwater, we are going to gather safely at St. Luke and build connection and community in new ways.

- Bonfire song fest and story sharing - October 15 at 7:30 pm
- Breakfast and Feisty Women Program - October 16 in the morning
- Lunch, optional activities, and closing ceremony - October 16 in the afternoon



Open to any vaccinated St. Luker who identifies as a woman and is willing to mask and observe social distancing. Activities will be outside as much as possible. Registration forms are available from the church office or in the back of the church starting September 13 and are due back no later than October 8. Free will donations will be accepted to cover food costs. Childcare available on request.

Contact Adele Lennig Sullivan at [adele\\_jennig@outlook.com](mailto:adele_jennig@outlook.com) if you have questions.

## ICA

### ICA Food Shelf Current Needs

- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrushes
- Deodorant
- Baby wipes
- Bar soap
- Dish soap
- Other hygiene items





# Youth and Families

## Youth and family programs return Sept 12!

After 19 months of learning how to stay safe, we're using all those lessons to restart our in-person youth and family programs this fall. We believe that now more than ever we must provide a life-giving space of comfort and discovery for our youngest and their families. All leaders will be vaccinated and masked, plus we will utilize outdoor spaces as long as we can while encouraging physical distancing during our programs.



A big thanks to Mary Malotky, Doug Anderson, Phyllis Messenger and Phyllis Kerr for their help prepping a NEW outdoor stump circle gathering place in our woods for youth and children to meet. This site will host: Our Whole Lives, comprehensive human sexuality and moral development groups for youth; Sunday Morning Faith Groups, Sunday Club playdates, and any other excuse we can think of to use this amazing new space! Thanks y'all!!!

Sunday School and all ages Sunday Morning Faith Groups return with our new curriculum called "Dwell." Our youngest will explore and discover the ministry of Jesus and the life-giving lessons found through community, compassion, and fun!

We also know that some families may not be ready to return to a group setting at church just yet and we're working to figure out a remote option for families to stay engaged as well if COVID rates take a turn for the worse this fall. But we're still holding out hope that come winter we'll be able to be back in our Sunday School & Youth rooms downstairs!

# dwell®

## Session Slices

### From the meeting of August 17, 2021

**Elections:** Session welcomed new elders Lindsay Juricek, Cathy Murphy, Nancy Olmsted and Janie Warner. We also elected returning elder Judy Gregg. We also said goodbye, with many thanks, to Nicole Egan, as she goes off session. Newly elected deacons are Doug Anderson, Connie Branson, and Sharon Grostephen. Newly elected audit committee members are Dave Cline and Ken Corens.

**Presbytery survey:** Clerk of Session reported that there were 78 responses to the Presbytery Congregational Questionnaire, representing a total of 97 adults and 15 children. Responses can still be submitted on-line or by mail. Thanks to all who have responded.

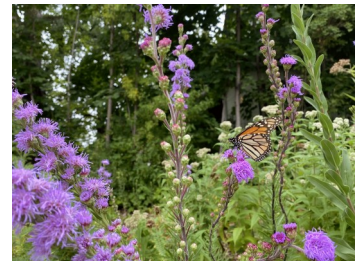
**Memorial services:** Pastors reported that they are in discussion with several families about memorial services this fall and options for meeting their needs while adhering to COVID-19 protocols. Session discussed options, given the many unknowns of the virus.

**Facilities updates:** Cliff Buikema presented preliminary sketches for the proposed kitchen remodel. Session members expressed great enthusiasm for the project and look forward to sharing details with the congregation in September. Also, as a first step in St. Luke's Earth Care Action Plan, Session approved plans to move ahead on a project to swap out current lighting fixtures to LED.

## Help Seed a Sermon

### Help Seed a Sermon!

Brennan is looking for your stories and/or pictures about the land, gardens, or physical places that you care for, however big or small. Why do you care for these spaces? What makes them special or worthwhile to you? Share pics/stories with Brennan by email at [brennan@stluke.mn](mailto:brennan@stluke.mn) for a worship service celebrating Holy Ground on Sept 5.



## Library Corner

### Calling all Library Books

Calling all church library books back home now that we are able to return to our beloved church! You can return them to the big black return bin just inside the Library door (not on the shelves or counter please). And the library is now open for browsing and check-out again! Just sign the little check-out card, date it for three weeks ahead (there's a little calendar there) and leave it in the little caddy on the counter.

Enjoy, yahoo!  
Julie Mall



# September Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 9:00 AM OWL Orientation Grade 1-3 10:30 AM Worship 11:45 AM Faith Formation Fall Program Preview 12:30 PM OWL Parent/ Guardian Orientation	30 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM AA	31	1	2 7:00 PM ACA 7:00 PM Depression & Anxiety Support	3	4 9:00 AM Grounds renewal service day
5 10:30 AM Worship 12:00 PM Sunday School Training 1:00 PM Jr High vs Sr High Preseason Games	6 ● <b>Labor Day</b> 7:30 PM AA	7	8 9:30 AM The Book Group	9 7:00 PM ACA 7:00 PM Depression & Anxiety Support	10 4:00 PM Presbytery Meeting	11 7:45 AM Hermanos 9:00 AM Presbytery Meeting
12 9:00 AM Little OWL 10:30 AM Worship 3:00 PM Senior OWL 5:00 PM Youth Dinner 6:00 PM Middle OWL	13 7:30 PM AA	14 6:09 PM PEO 6:30 PM Earth Stewards	15	16 2:00 PM Challenge Deadline 7:00 PM ACA 7:00 PM Depression & Anxiety Support	17	18 9:00 AM Grounds renewal service day 11:00 AM Greg Smith Memorial Service
19 9:00 AM Little OWL 10:30 AM Worship 6:00 PM Middle OWL	20 Seasoned Luker Retreat 7:30 PM AA	21 Seasoned Luker Retreat 6:45 PM Session Meeting	22 ● <b>First Day of Autumn</b>	23 7:00 PM ACA 7:00 PM Depression & Anxiety Support	24	25 <b>St. Luke Woods Renewal - Big Push Day!</b>
26 9:00 AM Little OWL 10:30 AM Worship 11:45 AM BeFrienders 3:00 PM Senior OWL 5:00 PM Youth Dinner 6:00 PM Middle OWL	27 7:30 PM AA	28	29	30 7:00 PM ACA 7:00 PM Depression & Anxiety Support	1	2 9:00 AM Grounds renewal service day



# St. Luke Staff and Communications

## Every member and friend, Ministers

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**Joe Anderson & Brenda Davis, Sunday Morning Custodians**

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## GENERAL QUESTIONS

Email Anne at [office@stluke.mn](mailto:office@stluke.mn)

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## WEB ADDRESS

[www.stluke.mn](http://www.stluke.mn)

## NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE

*The Challenge* is published monthly.

The deadline for submitting articles  
for the October newsletter is:

2:00 pm, September 23  
to [office@stluke.mn](mailto:office@stluke.mn)

St. Luke is a joyful, inclusive and compassionate community on a spiritual journey  
seeking to do justice, make peace, act mercifully, and walk humbly with God.