



November
2021

the CHALLENGE



From the Desk of Brennan Blue

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Finding Warmth in Winter

As a warm, lingering fall slowly slips away, I find myself thinking more and more of that great northern winter maxim: “There’s no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing choices.” Implicit here is the character-building, active-during-winter attitude that we Minnesotans strongly (desperately?) cling to throughout winter – and I’m all for it! As winter and a whole bunch of unknowns approach, I’m already embracing this conviction and imagining ways to help keep our energetic toddler outdoors.

At the same time, I’m naturally thinking about St. Luke and what a similar maxim might look for us. With pandemic variables lingering and helpful outdoor options become more challenging, we may need to embrace a similar reminder: “There’s no such thing as a bad ministry season, just bad ministry choices.”

Perhaps you can improve my phrasing? Either way, I think there’s some wisdom here for us we work our way through another abnormal winter. At the core is this clear reminder: instead of focusing our energy and attention on what we can’t and shouldn’t be doing, we can intentionally shift our focus to those many meaningful things that we still can be doing. Just that little shift can make a stunning difference in our outlook and attitude. It’s the same shift that sits at the heart of Minnesotan’s embrace of winter. Rather than looking outdoors and thinking “it’s too cold to go out there,” many find a way to instead say “I can finally play broomball... build a snowfriend... take a majestic winter hike.”

Friends, there are many, important ways that we can continue living into our shared calling toward love, justice and joy. I hope that we can all

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creatively embrace another season where unique new things are made possible even in the wake of some irregular barriers for our community.

In the meantime, here are a few concrete things on the horizon to be excited about together:

We've a big multigenerational Trunk or Treat celebration this **Sunday, October 31** with cider, donuts, and more. David Lohman will offer a tour of the newly completed Labyrinth in the woods and Mary Malotky will provide a walking tour of Grounds Renewal project.

In **November**, we'll share in our annual All Saints Day service of prayer and remembrance, honoring the beloved deceased in our lives and around the world. Our grounds work days and outdoor Sunday School classes will continue as scheduled, with warm clothing encouraged.

As November gives way to **December**, we'll together turn into the season of Advent and the joy of Christmas music filling our sanctuary once again. Our children and youth will lead a Christmas Pageant and our annual Fair Trade Gift Fair will return Sundays, Nov 28 – Dec 19. St. Luke will share in its annual Christmas Eve service in the Sanctuary at 4:00 pm on December 24.

All the while, we'll continue to dig into the mission work of St. Luke. November will see a supportive series on caregiving, ambiguous loss, and dementia support offered by St. Luke BeFriends and Dementia Friends groups. Our "supplies for solidarity" drives will continue, supporting The Division of Indian Work with much-needed hygiene and care supplies. Our new Community Kitchen project will hopefully be underway, preparing our congregation to more deeply and fully welcome others into our shared spaces in the months and years ahead.

Most importantly, we'll also find ways to connect and care for another as a community. In the end, there really is no bad season for ministry. Or for care. There are only good – and everchanging – opportunities to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God.

Brennan

P.S. - We're already 1/3 of the way to our Community Kitchen fundraising goal of \$60,000. Thank you to all who've made early gifts and pledges, and thank you in advance to those still planning on making a contribution!

For more on The Community Kitchen project, [click here](#).



Session Slices

From the Session Meeting of October 19, 2021

Raingarden: Session approved an easement agreement with the City of Minnetonka to further develop our rain garden by the lower driveway as a critical water flow area. The City is reseeded the area with native plants and has installed two curve cuts as part of the street repavement project. Their work is consistent with our design and hopes for the area. Session will develop a plan to assure that St. Luke fulfills our responsibilities regarding upkeep of the rain garden. Session expressed appreciation for the work Dennis Yockers has put into this agreement.

Grounds update: Following the grounds renewal work completed this year, we are planning for planting of trees and shrubs in the spring and seeding next fall – particularly in high priority areas along the sweat lodge and our neighboring properties. We're hoping to make this a big, fun event that will attract volunteers from several community partners.

Community Kitchen update: Most members have received the "Look Book" by now. There is a lot of excitement about the project. Brennan's reflection on Sunday was an opportunity to step into a future that is open to the community, and the kitchen will help that. With the \$20,000 grant from Presbytery and \$40,000 in Legacy funds, we need to raise at least \$60,000. Cliff and staff are working with the inspector on requirements for ventilation, and Cliff is meeting with the contractor to fine-tune plans. A small St. Luke team will track progress and report back to Session. Session again expressed appreciation for the ongoing work Cliff is putting into this project.

Moving toward carbon neutral by 2040: St. Luke is taking steps toward achieving the goal of carbon neutrality by 2040. Light fixture replacement is almost complete and we are looking at how to heat rooms more efficiently. Another step is to make socially responsible investments with our pension and legacy funds. Session voted to form a task force to research divesting from fossil fuels. The group will come to session with a report and recommendation. We also discussed having an adult ed session on the topic and want to invite some of our youth who worked on the issue several years ago.

Staff reviews: The HR focus group is undertaking their annual staff reviews. As a reminder to the wider congregation, HR members are Todd Pointer, Lori Cocking, Peg Keenan, and Nancy Anderson.

Fair Trade Bazaar

St. Luke will be once again be back to having our annual Fair Trade Bazaar in the Garden Court, the Sunday mornings between Thanksgiving and Christmas (Nov. 28 and Dec. 5, 12, and 19). We will have fair trade food, beverage, clothing, jewelry, and craft items for sale! More info to follow soon. Frank Babka

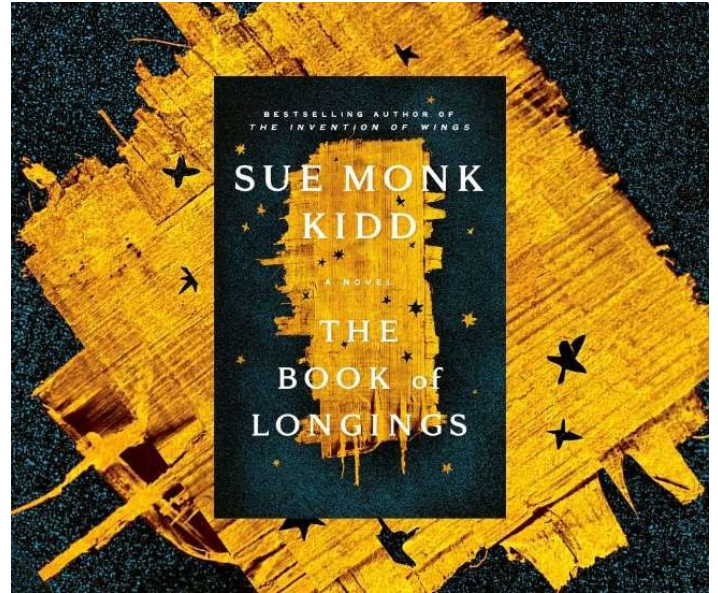
The Book Group

The St. Luke book group is in person for vaccinated people.

The book group will meet at 9:30, Wednesday, November 10, at Cecy Faster's, 4717 Maple Hill Drive, 952-474-7174.

We will read and discuss **The Book of Longings** by Sue Monk Kidd:

An extraordinary story set in the first century about a woman who finds her voice and her destiny. Into this bold reimagining of history steps Ana, a rebellious, gifted young woman who secretly writes the stories of women. She is raised in a wealthy family with ties to the ruler of Galilee and is expected to marry a rich, old widower. An encounter with 18 year old Jesus changes everything. Their marriage unfolds in Nazareth, where Ana makes a home with Jesus and his family. Grounded in research, this book is an unforgettable account of a woman's struggle to realize her passion and potential. It is a novel of emotional power and beauty.



We hope you can join us.
Liz Heuser

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

Social Justice

The St. Luke Social Justice Collaboration Team is finalizing its plans for outbound mission giving and support. As of October 20, St. Luke has contributed \$30,800 with plans to distribute the remaining \$49,850 between now and the end of the year for a total of \$80,650. This includes \$61,150 from St. Luke's budget and \$19,500 resulting from the Stimulus Check redistribution effort last spring.

Gift Making Workshop

On the first Saturday in December, 12/4/21, from 9:30 am to 11:30 am, St. Luke will once again have a Gift Making Workshop. Children and youth have the opportunity to make gifts for their family and friends. Adults have many ways of participating too. We need a team to do set up on Friday night and take down early Saturday afternoon. We need people to assist the children in their creative work. Randy Schumacher will play Christmas music. It is one of the most joyful and fun events on the St. Luke calendar. Please join us. Preregistration is required. Communicate with either Anne in the office or Chris Sullivan at 612-616-5059 or andromeda88@comcast.net.



Donations Drive for DIW

We Are Counting on Your Help

The drive for much-needed supplies for the Division of Indian Works continues on **Saturday, November 13**. Volunteers will be at the upper parking lot to take your donations anytime between 11:30 and 1:30.

You can also drop items off in the Garden Court before worship on Sundays or from 8:30-4:00 Monday-Thursday. Checks made out to St. Luke with DIW in the memo line are also an option. Please invite your friends and neighbors living in the western suburbs to participate too.

Items Needed

- Diapers size 3 to 7; pull-ups/training diapers
- Baby Wipes
- Toilet Paper
- Paper Towels
- Shampoo and Conditioner (full size bottles)
- Lotion
- Laundry Detergent
- Fabuloso All Purpose Cleaner (purple)
- Masks (paper)
- Toothpaste

Thanks in advance for participating to meet these critical needs and continuing our partnership with DIW.



Adult Education

Three Adult Ed Mods sponsored by Befrienders and Dementia Friends

November 7 - Minnetonka Senior Services and Caregiving Support

Facilitated by Sara Roberts, Outreach Coordinator for MSS

Find out about local resources for you and your family. Explore ways for caregivers to find support.

November 21 - "Grandpa and Lucy" - A story about Love and Dementia

Provided by CLIMB Theater, facilitator CLIMB theater staff

Come and explore a short video and discussion about dementia and how focusing on strengths and creating moments of joy, meaning and purpose has rewards for the whole family. Appropriate for all ages: elementary through high school and beyond!

December 5 - Ambiguous Loss

Facilitated by Jill Engeswick and other BeFriends

What does Ambiguous Loss mean, especially in light of the pandemic? How does it affect our daily lives? How can we live with it and even learn to be resilient in spite of it? Opportunities for small group discussion.

Sundays at 9:15 am in the East Room or on Zoom

Join us live or via [Zoom](#)

Meeting ID: 849 5696 8408

Password: peace

November Birthdays

November 1	Sophie Worrell	November 11	Laurie Drill-Mellum	November 21	Meghan Jensrud
November 3	Lynda Alderink	November 12	Claire Whitney	November 21	Natalie Bonner
November 3	Chip Goodall	November 12	Jim Bjork	November 21	Judd Williams
November 4	Jean Ice	November 12	Sam Warner	November 21	Luke Elliott
November 5	Michael Marks	November 13	Sarah Swan Ray	November 23	Ellie Brockman
November 7	Sandy Zeiss	November 14	Liam Pettit	November 24	Christy Zimmerman
November 8	Nancy Fisher	November 15	Cooper Whitney	November 30	Andrew Fisher
November 9	Andrew Shotwell	November 17	Kenton Clymer		
November 11	Sean McGinley	November 19	Greg Gustafson		

Let's Begin the Holiday Season Together!

Spend the day at Maynard's
100% of the proceeds
benefit ICA Food Shelf

Monday, November 29
RESERVED SEATING

952-470-1800 for reservations

Maynard's · 685 Excelsior Blvd. · Excelsior, MN 55331

early lunch.
lunch.
late lunch.
appetizers.
early dinner.
dinner,
late dinner.

Holiday Music Family & Friends A Time to Give



Trunk or Treat

Noon to 1:00 pm, October 31, lower parking lot

Halloween is on a Sunday this year and it's also the week our Little OWLs complete the 1st-3rd grade program! To celebrate we're inviting kids of all ages to dress in costume and join us after worship for a Trunk or Treat event!

Are you interested in decorating the trunk of your car and handing out treats to kids? Come help us celebrate the season and add some joy to our children's and grandchildren's lives after a bumper of a Halloween last year.

Contact nora@stluke.mn for more details



Youth and Families

The temperature's shifting, but we've had a ton of fun outside while it's been nice with games and Our Whole Lives (OWL) groups for all ages.



Middle OWLs did the often uncomfortable work about learning how anatomy works.



Little OWLs explored feelings around growing families through crafts like finger paint.



Senior OWLs began learning about gender and identity with an LGBTQ panel of guests from our community.

As it gets colder, we'll find ourselves being indoors. Masks are required for all Sunday School children and programs, plus vaccinations are required for all eligible children/youth.

Coming this winter: DWELL at home! An at home faith and fun program for parents to explore faith with their children. Contact Pastor Nora (nora@stluke.mn) for more information



And mark your calendars: December 4 marks the return of the Gift Making Workshop! We're still working out all the details, but look forward to offering SOMETHING of this beloved tradition even if it's not everything we've always done in the past. Contact Chris Sullivan (andromeda88@comcast.net) or Pastor Nora (Nora@stluke.mn) for more details to get involved.

November Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>31 Reformation Sunday 10:30 AM Worship 3:00 PM Trunk or Treating</p>	<p>1 All Saints Day 6:30 PM West Metro Climate 7:30 PM AA</p>	<p>2 Municipal General Election</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 3:00 PM Depression & Anxiety Support 4:15 PM Group Violin Class 7:00 PM ACA</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6 9:00 AM Grounds renewal service day 1:00 PM Daisy Troop</p>
<p>7 Daylight-Saving Time Ends 10:30 AM Worship</p>	<p>8 7:30 PM AA</p>	<p>9 6:30 PM Earth Stewards</p>	<p>10 9:30 AM The Book Group 7:00 PM Lucille Book Group</p>	<p>11 Veterans Day 3:00 PM Depression & Anxiety Support 4:15 PM Group Violin Class 7:00 PM ACA</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13 7:45 AM Hermanos 11:30 AM DIW Supply Drive</p>
<p>14 10:30 AM Worship 11:45 AM Sunday Club Games</p>	<p>15 7:30 PM AA</p>	<p>16 6:45 PM Session Meeting</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18 2:00 PM Challenge Deadline 3:00 PM Depression & Anxiety Support 4:15 PM Group Violin Class 7:00 PM ACA</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20 9:00 AM Grounds renewal service day 1:00 PM Brownie Troop</p>
<p>21 10:30 AM Worship</p>	<p>22 7:30 PM AA</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25 Thanksgiving Day 3:00 PM Depression & Anxiety Support 4:15 PM Group Violin Class 7:00 PM ACA</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27 June Cleaveland Service</p>
<p>28 Advent 10:30 AM Worship</p>	<p>29 7:30 PM AA</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2 3:00 PM Depression & Anxiety Support 4:15 PM Group Violin Class 7:00 PM ACA</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 9:00 AM Gift Making Workshop 1:00 PM Daisy Troop</p>

St. Luke Staff and Communications

Every member and friend, Ministers

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Jill Engeswick (she/her), **BeFriendsers/Dementia Friends Coord.**

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Joe Anderson & Brenda Davis, Sunday Morning Custodians

Anna Flekke, Childcare Worker (she/her)

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WEB ADDRESS

www.stluke.mn

NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE

The Challenge is published monthly.

The deadline for submitting articles
for the December newsletter is:

2:00 pm, November 18
to 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.