



January 2021

# Good News

Mt Zion – St Luke Lutheran

## January 2021

### Happy New Year!

- 1-3 Worship 11:00 a.m.  
Installation of New Council Members  
*Masks and social distancing required. Online Option available*
- 1-5 Centering Prayer 8:30
- 1-6 *New Bible Study*  
6:00 p.m.
- 1-10 Council Mtg 9:30 a.m.  
Worship 11:00 a.m.  
*Masks and social distancing required. Online Option available*
- 1-12 Centering Prayer 8:30 a.
- 1-13 Bible Study 6:00 p.m.
- 1-17 Worship 11:00 a.m.  
*Masks and social distancing required. Online Option available*  
*Newsletter Deadline*
- 1-19 Centering Prayer 8:30
- 1-20 Bible Study 6:00 p.m.
- 1-24 Worship 11:00 a.m.  
*Masks and social distancing required. Online Option available*
- 1-26 Centering Prayer 8:30 a.
- 1-27 Bible Study 6:00 p.m.
- 1-31 Worship 11:00 a.m.  
*Masks and social distancing required. Online Option available*

### *An Epiphany! The Night is as Bright as the Day...*

Our daughter, Sara, has always been afraid of the dark. As a child when the rest of us needed darkness to fall asleep, Sara had to have the light on. We'd tiptoe in and turn it off after she was dreaming, but sometime during the night, she would wake up and turn the light back on and it would still be shining at the break of dawn. But, in fairness to Sara, I have not been particularly fond of the dark myself, at times. I love nights when the moon is full and the stars fill the sky, too numerous to count. But, on the nights when the moon is hidden in cloud, and you can't see your hand in front of your face, all sorts of terrifying things fill my imaginings. Every breeze brings maniacal laughter. Every twig snapping makes me jump, and I am quick to reach for a flashlight.



The media reinforces my fear of the dark, because nearly everything bad that happens on TV or in movies happens in the dark! Even how the Church talks about God confirms that the dark is not safe, urging us to turn from darkness and come into the Light that is Christ. But, in her book, *Learning to Walk in the Dark*, priest and author Barbara Brown Taylor has given me a new way of thinking about the dark. In her intro, she says Christian theology "is built on dividing reality into opposed pairs: good/evil, church/world, spirit/flesh, sacred/profane, light/dark. In every case, the language of opposition works by placing half of reality closer to God and the other half farther away." I get that. I was raised with that language and preach it myself! But "Even when light fades and darkness falls," Taylor continues, "God does not turn the world over to some other deity..." How good to hear that the Bright Morning Star, the Light of the World, does not hand the reins over to Evil when the sun goes down.

This has been an *epiphany* for me. An "Aha!" moment. For God has revealed God's self to me in a new way. Now I need not fear the dark, for I have heard that the God of Light is also God of the Dark and is with me 24/7. This is not new information, but I was able to internalize this Word from God at a deeper level, and I feel closer to him than ever before, which is often the way with epiphanies. They give you new ears.

***May the God of both the day and the night bless you with many epiphanies in the New Year! Happy 2021! Pastor Barb <><***

*... even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, Psalm 139:12*



# January 2021

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
					1	2  D.C. Williams
<b>3 Epiphany Observed</b> Worship 11 a.m. Installation of New Council Member <i>Election of officers After service- brief</i>	4	5 Centering Prayer 8:30 a.m.	6 New Bible Study Begins 6:00 pm	7	8	9  Angie Collier
10 Worship 11 a.m. Council Meeting 9:30 a.m.	11	12 Centering Prayer 8:30 a.m. DC Williams & Bill Williams	13 Bible Study 6:00p.m.	14	15	16
17 Worship 11 a.m. <i>Newsletter Deadline</i>	18	19 Centering Prayer 8:30 a.m. Jenny Brannon Aiden Coogle	20 Bible Study 6:00p.m.	21	22	23  Lelan Moretz Angie Summer
24 Worship 11 a.m.	25	26 Centering Prayer 8:30 a.m.	27 Bible Study 6:00p.m. Freddy Virden	28	29	30 Gulshanprem & Neelima Choppla Myrtle Joiner
31 Worship 11 a.m. Max Wood						

## Serving Our Lord in January

**Ushers** Brenden Fitzgerald and Ted Robinson  
**Altar Guild** Joe & Joy McNutt and Tommy Martin  
**Lectors** Jon Coogle and Wendi Martin

**Family Day:** *No Family Day Meal until further notice.*

**Coffee Hour:** *No Coffee Hour until further notice.*

### **Flowers:**

**1-03** Poinsettias for Epiphany  
**1-10** Jim and Patricia Trask in loving memory of John and Sarah Trask  
**1-17** Jimmy and Mary Kay Watson in honor of Daniel  
**1-24** Grady and Patsy English in loving memory of Miss Ruth Kleckley  
**1-31** David and Mary Haigler in honor of Will and Katie

**Soup Kitchen:** *No Soup Kitchen until further notice.*

**Sunday School:** *No Sunday School until further notice.*

### January Birthdays and Anniversaries

1-02 DC Williams	1-23 Angela (Angie) Summer
1-09 Angie Collier	1-27 Freddy Virden
1-12 DC & Bill Williams	1-29 Richard Collier
1-19 Jenny Brannan	1-30 Gulshan Prem & Neelima Choppla
1-19 Aiden Coogle	1-30 Myrtle Joiner
1-22 Lelan Moretz	1-31 Max Wood

## A Thank You from The Oaks Nursing Home in Marshallville!

We were blessed this year to help the residents of the Oaks Nursing Home have a Merry Christmas by giving fleece lap robes, socks and booties as requested by the Activities Department to give at their annual Christmas party. Thanks to everyone who donated the items, and for Karen Hatten for coordinating the efforts. We received a thank you note from the Oaks that said: *Thank you so much for assisting with Christmas gifts for our residents. We are blessed to have such a caring group like you who always thinks of others. Thank you again for thinking of our residents.*

*The Oaks Nursing home.*

## Thank You from our Foster Children!

On Wednesday, December 8th, we gathered with our friends from Montezuma Methodist for our annual Foster Children's Christmas Gift Giving. This year, we had to get creative as we could not meet for our traditional pizza party. So, Gail Coogle came up with the idea of having a Drive-Through Gift Giving and Carol Sing! Jenny Brannan did an amazing job of decorating, with the help of Mae.



We gathered on the steps under the carport (in our masks for safety's sake) and sang carols as the cars drove through. Santa wished the children a Merry Christmas and put their gifts and Goodie Bags into each trunk. The children waved merrily from the safety of their own cars, and we think they didn't miss the pizza *too* much!

A really huge thanks goes to DEFAC, Charlene and Kathy, who coordinated with the Foster parents for the drive-through. *Thanks to everyone* who donated to pay for the gifts, baked brownies and packed the goodie bags, helped wrap the gifts and came to sing. *And* a special thank you goes out to *Santa* for coming early to help us give some Christmas cheer again this year! A good time was had by all!

Thank you, God for the resources to do this! Amen!



## Thanks from Our Synod to Our Response to the Funding Appeal and Our 2021 Mission Support Pledge

*From Assistant to the Bishop Karen Boda and Our Southeastern Synod Mission Support Team:*

On behalf of our synod, thank you for submitting a 2021 Mission Support Intent! Because of your congregation's generosity, we will continue to be able to guide through candidacy the 90+ individuals who have been called into ministry from our Synod. We will respond to hurricanes and tornadoes, invest in our Latina/o siblings in Christ, offer creative and life-giving faith formation for our youth, and continue to provide financial relief for congregations during the pandemic. We will make grants to reduce the education debt of our rostered ministers, fund stewardship education, and provide assistance so congregations can worship remotely, and food ministries can continue. We will match congregations and pastors so that ministry continues in the local communities. And more! Together we are spreading the gospel in our communities, across our synod, and across our ELCA...and this will continue! We give God thanks for your generosity! Many blessings!

### Notes from 2021 Annual Congregational Meeting

Mt. Zion - St. Luke held its annual congregational meeting on December 13, 2020 and after a quorum was observed the following actions were taken:

- 1) The meeting was opened with prayer by Pastor Barb Koch.
- 2) Minutes of the 2019 annual meeting were read by Katie Felker and accepted as presented.

**Foundation Fund and Hegler Fund:** Tommy Martin reported we received \$4,700 in memorials this year, bringing the balance of the Foundation Fund to \$290,035. The Hegler Fund balance is currently \$106,844. This is substantially less than last year's balance due to withdrawals to cover the cost of the repairs currently being made to our church buildings.

**Adoption of the 2021 Budget:** Max Wood and Joe McNutt presented the budget for 2021, which was very similar to that of 2020. Spending in 2020 was down due to the cancellation of some events and activities. The \$1,000 budgeted for Synod Assembly was instead donated to the Synod to help alleviate shortfalls the synod has experienced this year. The congregation raised an additional \$1,400 to add to that donation. Tommy Martin motioned that we accept the 2021 budget as presented with Joe McNutt giving the second. The motion passed unanimously.

**Election of New Council Members:** Jon Coogle, Katie Felker and Arthur Jackson will complete their Council terms at the end of the year. The Council approved David Haigler, Julia Snipes, and Diane Cagle as nominees for 2021 Council. With no other nominations, it was motioned and seconded to accept the nominees. The motion passed unanimously. The new Congregational Council will be installed in January 2021 during worship

**Other Business:** No other business was mentioned.

**Motion to Adjourn:** Tommy Martin motioned to adjourn the meeting with Bobby Martin giving the second.

Having no further business, Pastor Barb closed us with prayer and the meeting was adjourned.

### Phase 1 Guidelines for In-Person Worship to Continue through January 2021

As we are still in the colder months and most activities continue indoors, we will continue with the precautions we have been taking through January and reassess the situation for February. Thank you for your constant support and cooperation with your leadership at MZSL. We value your input. We thank God for you! Be safe. Be well.

***To Our Friends at MZSL:*** Duck and I are overwhelmed at your generosity to us! Thank you so much for the Christmas money, the many cards and gifts of food and other items! We could not feel more blessed and thank God we are able to serve here. We appreciate you more than words can say! May God help me to serve you well in 2021, with Duck's help! *Love, Pastor Barb*

**Mt. Zion – St. Luke Lutheran Church**

**P.O. Box 187**

**401 Randolph Street**

**Oglethorpe, Georgia 31068**

This year has certainly been a different one! We were not able to do our Foster Children's Christmas party as Usual, with a pizza dinner and a visit with Santa and experiencing the joy the children bring. However, we were still able to share the Christmas spirit with them! We had a *Drive-Thru* Christmas party and Santa put gifts in each trunk. Jenny Brannen decorated our carport so festively! One of the biggest blessings for us each year we do this is the generosity of our church, the Montezuma United Methodist church, and the Kiwanis club, whose donations this year have far exceeded anything I could have imagined! We received \$2000 above the cost of the gifts! As usual, the extra money goes into a Secret Santa fund that the Foster children can use all year long as the need arises. They can now go on field trips, get a new coat or whatever the need may be, because of your generosity. I am so blessed to be a part of this church! I cannot wait till we get back to "normal", but sometimes even something like COVID-19 seems to bring out the best in everybody! I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and again, "Thank you!" – Gail Coogle

***Help us keep this Prayer List Current! Call the Church Office or Pastor Barb to remove or add to this list.***

***Please Pray for Members:*** Franchelle Arnold, Al Coogle; Callie Coogle; Brenden Fitzgerald, Jr; Emily Harvill; Myrtle Joiner, Zach Martin; Helen Smith, Tricia Trask; Tony Webb, for our college students, for our nation and the world.

***For Friends and Family:*** Janice Haugabook; Ricky Haugabook; Bob Melvin; Crystal Miller; Buddy Murph; Charlene Oliver, Don Oliver; Leigh Powell; Michael Smith, and Karen Weathersby and family.