



St. Thomas Lutheran Church News

St. Thomas Lutheran Church is a Christ-centered community that lives, shares, and celebrates God's grace with all people!

October 2021

XXXXIII Issue 10

From the Pastor

The Bible is filled with stories of separation and togetherness. The first joy in the Garden of Eden, and the sorrow at leaving. Jacob runs away from his brother in fear and reunites in generosity. Israel's slavery in Egypt, wandering in the wilderness is brought to an end when the people settle in a new home, the Promised Land. The people sin and are estranged from God and are brought back by Deborah and Samson and the judges. They weep in Babylonian exile and rejoice when they rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. The prodigal son leaves home on a dream and returns with only a shred of hope to an extravagant welcome. The joy of ten lepers healed and the marvel of the one who returns in gratitude. And our lives, too, find rhythm in coming together and leaving, in hellos and goodbyes, in gatherings and benedictions.

COVID has provided us with an often unwelcome lesson on this ancient pattern. Our extended absence from worship and from one another's lives have felt like an exile. Recalling this ancient pattern can help us begin to find meaning in what has happened to us and can become for us a source of hope.

That is the truth on which the Church—and our congregation, St. Thomas Lutheran Church—is built. That where there is separation, here there is welcome. Where division is sown, here we reap unity through diversity. Where there is intolerance, here there is radical hospitality. Where there is exile, here is a homecoming. Where there is the cry, "how long, O Lord?," here is solidarity and hope.

And, believe it or not, all of this is funneling into a stewardship plea. October is the time when we come to you and ask to pledge to support this ministry in the coming year. This year, the theme is "A Future with Hope," a riff on Jeremiah 29:11, "For surely I know the plans I have you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope." Look for letters and emails encouraging your participation and detailing what plans we are discerning, in hope, for our future together.

God be with you,

Pr. Adrienne

Thank you to everyone who helped with, attended, or logged in to view the Installation service on September 12. Your presence made this day so joy-filled, and sharing in ministry with you is so meaningful. Thank you.

From the Minister of Youth and Christian Nurture

At the end of October, three young folks plan to make public affirmation of their baptism. I am excited to walk with them as they prepare their faith statements. They are wrestling with a question that I hope they will return to throughout their lives - what difference does faith in Jesus Christ make in your life?

In my own life, the answer has changed as my circumstances have changed. As a high school student, when I left my friends behind as my family moved across the country, Jesus was my best friend, the one who I could talk to and kept me from feeling alone. When I was starting out as a new college graduate who struggled to find employment with a sufficient wage, my faith told me that God would provide for my needs. As I struggled with depression and feelings of hopelessness, faith told me that God will restore all things and this was not the end. While the focus changed, the centrality and life-giving nature did not.

One of the gifts of being in church together is to be able to share our stories of how faith makes a difference with each other - and to receive words of encouragement and hope when we need it. This is also an important part of learning and growing in faith for our children and youth, yet one we need to do on our own before we can share it.

As we hear from our young folks, I encourage you to consider what difference your faith makes in your life - and I would love to hear your answers. Feel free to [email me](#) or [set up a time to chat](#).

Your partner on the way,

Pastor Lucia

Upcoming Events

Prayer at Noon on Zoom

This calm, quiet moment in the middle of week provides a space for participants to rest with God. Join us for a simple service praying the Lord's Prayer, the Apostle's Creed, and requests of those gathered on the **first Wednesday** of the month. Our next gathering will be **Wednesday, October 6 at noon** on [Zoom](#).

New Member Class

Have you been worshipping with us through the pandemic and want to relate more closely with our congregation? Have you recently moved to the area and are looking for a congregation in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to worship with? We are eager for you to join us. Pr. Adrienne will be hosting a new members class **after the 11am worship service Sunday, October 10**. A light lunch will be served and, if needed, childcare can be provided in the nursery. A zoom version will be offered later the same day at 7pm. This meeting will provide a very brief overview of St. Thomas and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and provide an opportunity to meet our staff and some of our leaders. New members will be received in worship on Sunday, November 14. If you are interested in participating or in meeting with Pr. Adrienne, please [email her](#) directly or contact the church office [via email](#) or 812-332-5252.



Women's Bible Study

Come one and all to **Women's** (not exclusive, men, too) **Bible Study**. We meet the second Sunday of the month in Room 17, by the kitchen at 9:45, after the first service. Last week we began our study into the Holy Spirit and had a good discussion of the Holy Spirit as a Goose shape and not always a dove! (Think about it, a goose is) We read from the Bible about the Holy Spirit as The Spirit of God, revealer, and resource. This next month we will look at The Holy Spirit as the Breath of God, reviver and reformer

through the scriptures and discussion. **You are welcome and, oh, so, invited!!! October 10 in Room 17.** Any questions: contact Kari Esarey at kesarey@mccsc.edu or kariesarey@gmail.com or 812-219-4177.

The Bloomington Bach Cantata Project

Bloomington Bach Cantata Project invites you to join us here at St. Thomas in the worship space on **Sunday, October 10 at 2:30pm** for the second concert of the 2021-2022 season, featuring the sublime cantata from 1734, *In allen meinen Taten*, BWV 97. The Bloomington Bach Cantata

Project brings together students and faculty from Indiana University, as well as professional artists from around the region, to present cantatas by J. S. Bach in performances modeled on his own.



Word in the Woods

Encounter God in the changing seasons as we gather at a new time. Join us on **Sunday, October 17 at 3pm** as we gather at Griffy Lake Boathouse for a worshipful hike. We will contemplate scripture together, pray and celebrate communion across the 1.5 mile trail. Please RSVP to [Pastor Lecia](#) by October 14.

Youth Group

All high school youth are invited to join us on **Sunday, October 24 at 2:30pm-4pm**. We will gather at the Watters' home for a campfire and time together. Please RSVP to [Pastor Lecia](#) by Thursday, October 21.

Making Homelessness Rare, Brief, and Non-Repeating

On **Sunday, October 24**, the Mission Committee will sponsor an adult forum with representatives from **New Hope for Families and the United Way of Monroe County**. Learn more about the work of New Hope, the only family shelter in Monroe County, and about the Heading Home 2021 project to reduce homelessness and increase housing security. Please join us in the Conference Room during the education hour after the first service (around 9:45am).



Pipes Spooktacular!

St. Thomas will once again host the IU organ department's annual Pipes Spooktacular event. Please join us **Friday, October 29 at 7pm** for this family-friendly event. Costumes are welcome!

Reformation Celebration

Explore the Reformation on **Reformation Sunday, October 31, 2021**. Join us in Heritage Hall from **9:45am-10:45am** for activities to learn more about the Protestant Reformation and Martin Luther. Some serious, some silly, these activities are intended for folks of all ages, individually or as households. You can come for the whole hour or just part. Because this is for all ages, children will enjoy this more if they participate with an adult.



Ministry Opportunities for Getting Involved

Sunday mornings are for faith formation!

We have classes for everyone aged four through adults and there is a space for you! Classes are from **9:45am-10:45am**.

Children: Those aged four through kindergarten are invited to join our Godly Play class. Elementary students are divided into two classes, first through third grade (room 12/14) and fourth through sixth grade (room 13/15). Children who are under four years old and their parents are welcome to gather in the nursery with their children for conversation and time to play while others are in class.

Confirmation: Students in grades seven and eight will be part of our confirmation class in room 16.

Youth: High School students will meet in the youth room.

Adults: Pastor Adrienne's class on the social statements of the ELCA will continue through October. Social statements are the teaching and policy documents of the ELCA, which help the church think and discuss social issues through the lens of our faith. Adults meet in the conference room.

There will be no Sunday School classes on Sunday, October 31. Everyone is invited to participate in our Reformation Celebration in Heritage Hall.

We still need some adults who are willing to be substitutes or assistants in our children's classes. If you are willing to volunteer occasionally or for any other faith formation questions, please [contact Pastor Lecia](#).

Online Giving

Beginning **Sunday, October 10**, we will change our primary online giving platform to Vanco. If you occasionally give using the “Donate to St. Thomas” button on our webpage, things will look different on October 10, and, if you had saved your financial information, you will be prompted to enter it into our new, secure system. If you have set up automated giving through tithe.ly, you can continue to use this platform or you can set up automated giving through Vanco. Please contact our bookkeeper, [Jason Blessing](#), in the church office (812-332-5252) if you need help ending giving through tithe.ly or setting up automated giving through Vanco. Additionally, Vanco offers a mobile app (search for it on your phone’s app store); St. Thomas’s code is *RTTMYX*.

Call for Advent Devotion Writers

On Christmas Eve, we often proclaim: “Joy to the world, the Lord is come! / Let earth receive her king; / let ev’ry heart prepare him room and heav’n and nature sing.” Christmas still seems so far off, but now is the time when we prepare...to prepare. This year, our Advent theme is *Dwell*. We are asking members of St. Thomas to reflect on what this word means to you. Where do you dwell? On what does your heart dwell? What do you value in your dwelling place? Tell us a short (1-2 paragraph) story and select an accompanying Bible verse or short passage. We will compile these into an Advent devotion for our whole community to use this December. Let us know you’re writing a devotion by October 15 (you can just reply to this email!). Devotions are due to [Erica](#) in church office **by 4:30pm on Monday, November 1**.



Altar Guild

The Altar Guild prepares the communion elements and cares for the vessels, linens, and vestments. New volunteers are sought who are willing and able to set up communion several times a year. Training is available from experienced Altar Guild members. If you are interested please contact Barb Unger [via email](#) or 812-325-4078.

MEF Accepting Applications

The Mission Endowment Fund provides funding for special projects at St. Thomas Lutheran Church, local outreach, and missions beyond the local community. If you have a project in need of funding, please submit an application before **October 31**. [Application forms](#) can be found on our website. If you have questions, please contact [Keith Knipstein](#), Chair of the Mission Endowment Fund Committee, or the church office [via email](#) or 812-332-5252.



Property Committee Work Day

The Property Committee will host a work day on **Saturday October 2 from 10am to noon**. Volunteers are needed to paint—indoors and outdoors—or to assist with a small plumbing project. Additional projects added as needed. **Masks required**. The Property Committee hosts work days on the first Saturday and third Tuesday of the month at 10am. For more information contact Sam Eichmiller at [via email](#) or 812-279-5197.

Take Out the Old and Bring on the New

The **Landscaping Committee** at St Thomas is updating the tired looking areas that surround our building. Work has started on cutting back dead branches and bushes, to be followed this fall and next spring with adding more desirable native plantings. A sketch on the bulletin board as you enter the church shows the areas getting attention, including the prayer garden, columbarium, waterfall and around the steeple.

Landscaper [Andy Marrs](#) is doing the native planting design. His website has pictures that reflect some of his designs and the type of native plants he has used. Some pictures are posted along with the sketch on the bulletin board. The sketch and pictures will also be available on our website and our Facebook page in the month of October.

If you would like to have some of the current plantings, contact [Deb Selk](#) or [Kathleen Boggess](#) in the next few weeks and they will direct you to the appropriate places and work with you to handle the soil in the scatter garden with care and honor.

The committee is developing a five year plan to rehabilitate other areas, including the sanctuary berm and the boulevard next to Third Street which both need extensive refurbishing. If you have questions, contact [Deb](#) or [Kathleen](#) and they will be happy to address whatever questions you have.

Landscaping Committee Members:

Deb Selk, Co-chair
Kathleen Boggess, Co-chair
Kaye Hill

Del and Letty Newkirk
Lindsey Smith
Tom Sinn, Council Liaison

Racial Justice Spiritual Growth Group

Join a still-forming interfaith, spiritual group of people passionate about increasing our understanding of racial justice in our country. Building on the efforts of national groups, including the ELCA, we want to work to do something positive in our community. Contact any member of our small group to join in--Carol Seaman, Lindsey Smith, and Helen Ingersoll from STLC and Lesley Levin from Congregation Beth Shalom. We meet monthly via Zoom. Contact Helen for the link or for more information: hingerso@iu.edu or 812-339-9610. Please join us and share your thoughts!!

Adult Choir

Rehearsals are **Thursday evenings at 7pm** in the sanctuary. We always welcome new voices and would love to have you join us! Please contact [Katie Gardiner](#) or [Mike Powell](#) with any questions.



Rides to Worship

Several Members of our community are in need of rides to worship. Would you be willing to give a ride one month at a time? We will strive to assign rides based, more or less, on people who live near one another. If you are able to help, even if it is only as an occasional substitute, [please fill out this form](#). If you need a ride to church, please contact the church office [via email](#) or 812-332-5252.

Prayer Chain

Want to join our St Thomas email prayer chain? Do you have prayer requests? Contact [Susan Colston](#) for further information.

Altar flowers

Please consider signing-up to provide altar flowers. The cost is \$18. You may take the arrangement home after the indoor service and then return the vase later. To sign-up: contact the church office [via email](#) or sign the sheet on the bulletin board behind the welcome desk.



Lutheran Campus Ministry at IU



We are just over a month into the fall semester, and time seems to be flying. Before we realize it Thanksgiving will be upon us, then finals and Christmas break. After enjoying a cookout in September with St Thomas and getting our Bible studies underway, our ministry is gearing up for a great October full of service and spirituality.

For Fall Break this year (the second weekend in October) a group of us from Rose House LuMin and Canterbury Episcopal Ministry will venture to Waycross Camp to dabble in various creative spiritual practices while also spending some time in Sabbath rest. Our hope is that participants will discover ways to connect with God and spirituality that they can take back with them and continue to apply in their daily lives.

On the service front, Rose House LuMin will be participating in Trunk or Treat at MCUM, hosting a collection of items for Beacon, and several other projects that are in the works. The students in Rose House LuMin are excited to give back to the world and make a difference in our community. For some of the service projects that are still in the works, we may need volunteers from the congregation to serve with us to help make them successful. Those opportunities will be posted on Rose House LuMin's social media accounts and in the weekly bulletin announcements at St. Thomas as information becomes known.

Once again, a huge thanks to everyone who has been walking with us thus far: the OWLs (Older Wiser Lively Saints), the Rose House LuMin Board Members, those who have gifted us with their wisdom and suggestions for the upcoming retreat, and those who support us behind the scenes through prayer and gifts. We could not do any of this without you.

May God continue to guide your hearts and minds with wisdom and love of neighbor and may you find joy in service to others. Amen.

Peace,
[Pastor Amanda Ghaffarian](#)
Rose House LuMin

Collection for Beacon hosted by Campus Ministry

Throughout the month of October, Rose House LuMin will be collecting items for Beacon to help the houseless in our community. Items can be dropped off at Rose House (314 S Rose Ave) beginning October 1 (either inside or at the drop box in front of the garage).

Items requested by Beacon:

Socks	Towels	Men's Clothing	Deodorant
Hair Ties	Combs	Nail Clippers	Washcloths
Razors	Shaving Cream	(Travel Size) Shampoo and Conditioner	
Backpacks	First aid supplies such as triple antibiotic ointment and large bandages		



From Our Ministry Partners

MCUM Open House

MCUM is holding an Open House and Resource Exchange to heighten community awareness of its many resources and to just plain have fun!!

Representatives from the following agencies will be in attendance: South Central Community Action Program; Boys & Girls Clubs of Bloomington; Bloomington Housing Authority; Community Kitchen; Catholic Charities; Opportunity House; Bloomington Police Department and Bloomington Fire Department.

In addition to the agency information tables, there will be family fun activities such as a dunk tank, prize walk, craft and tie-dye tables, and food truck vendors.

Where: Monroe County United Ministries/MCUM - 827 West 14th Court

Date: Saturday, October 2

Time: 1pm- 4pm

Questions? Contact Helen Ingersoll [via email](#) or 812-339-9610 MCUM Board Member

MCUM Donations

The wish list from [MCUM](#) includes the following items:

- Crackers
- Helper Meals
- Canned carrots
- Canned potatoes
- Shampoo & Conditioner
- Laundry Detergent
- Deodorant: Men's & Women's
- Toilet Paper
- Trash Bags

Donations can be left in the baskets behind the Welcome Desk here at St. Thomas.

Bloomington Chamber Singers Concert

There will be a live concert at the Buskirk Chumley Theater entitled "Considering Matthew Shepard" by Craig Hella Johnson. Event dates are **Saturday, October 9 at 7:30pm and Sunday, October 10 at 3pm**. This event requires masking and vaccination of all audience members. Tickets and livestream information is [available here](#).

Climate Change Advocacy with Beth Shalom

[Beth Shalom](#) has invited the members of St. Thomas to collaborate on a long-term letter writing campaign to advocate for climate change legislation on the **first Sunday** of every month around 10am. No need to sign up in advance, just stop by the table outside Beth Shalom to sign prepared letters. If you have any questions, please contact the church office [via email](#) or 812-332-5252.

New Hope for Families

When families with children are experiencing homelessness, one of the ways [New Hope for Families](#) welcomes them into their shelter is by supplying them with fresh clean sheets, towels, toiletries and other such items they need to make the place feel comfortable, peaceful, and safe. New Hope relies on donations of new and gently-used items to provide this important support to the families they serve.



New Hope recently celebrated its 10 year anniversary of being the only place in Monroe County where families with children can find emergency shelter together. Your generous donations help these families move from homelessness to stability. A list of [immediate needs](#) can be found on the New Hope for Families website. Donations can be dropped off at the church in the marked bins in the narthex. Checks are also appreciated-- please make them out to "St. Thomas Lutheran Church" with "New Hope for Families" in the memo line. Thank you for your generosity in supporting this vital local ministry.

Monroe County CASA Now Accepting Applications for Fall Training

Monroe County CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) is now accepting applications for the upcoming fall training session. **The next training is from October 18 through November 10 on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 5:30pm – 8:30pm** At this time, CASA staff plan to hold the training in person and will require masks and social distancing for all trainees. This is subject to change, depending on COVID statistics prior to the start of the training.



If you have ever thought of getting involved, now is a great time to sign up. Volunteers need to be able to give approximately 8-15 hours per month, have some daytime flexibility, are 21 years of age or older, and can commit 1-2 years to volunteering. The need for volunteers is great as the number of children in need of services is always changing.

CASA is a volunteer-powered program which provides representation in juvenile court for child victims of abuse and neglect. They provide support to these children to ensure that they remain at the forefront of the court proceedings and find a safe, permanent home as quickly as possible. To learn how you can change a child's story, please visit [our website](#), or call 812-333-CASA.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Indiana-Kentucky Synod

Third Lutheran Church, Louisville, and **Grace & Glory Lutheran, Goshen**, have a monthly online book club, called **Ethos Book Club**. The group meets monthly on Zoom.

Ethos Book Club was formed as a online gathering, sponsored by Grace & Glory Lutheran and Shiloh United Methodist churches in Goshen, KY, for those interested in racial justice, anti-racism, race history, and race culture to learn how we, as people of God, might become better allies for our sisters and brothers of color, and to do this in a safe, non-judgmental setting.

It is an ecumenically diverse group that is focused on reading and discussing books that educate us further on systemic racism, racial discrimination, and learning more about the black experience.

We invite others across the Synod to join us by [pre-registering here](#).

ELCA News

2021 Hein-Fry Book of Faith Challenge announced

Some people may hope for a return to normal after the world-changing events of the last 18 months, but sociologists tell us our future will revolve around living into a “new normal.” Presented by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the 2021 Hein-Fry Book of Faith Challenge will probe this new normal. Under the theme “Imagining Scriptural Encounters in the New Normal,” four online presentations by ELCA seminary students will help participants deepen their encounters with Scripture and strengthen their relationships with God in a time of extreme and continuous change.

The [annual Hein-Fry Book of Faith Challenge](#) is an endowed theological lecture series that seeks to enliven the biblical engagement of the whole church by encouraging the development of faithful, innovative and effective ways to teach and learn Scripture. The event is sponsored by the seven ELCA seminaries, the Hein-Fry planning team and the ELCA Book of Faith Initiative. Every year, one student from each seminary is invited to develop and present a class or series for people both familiar and unfamiliar with biblical texts. The students are then invited to report their findings.

This year the challenge will comprise four online events:

- Kaylie H. Ines from Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley, Calif., will present “Hope Remains: A Creation Care Faith Study” on Wednesday, Oct. 20, at 1 p.m. Pacific time.
- Aneel Trivedi from Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa, will present “Return to Baptism, Return to a New Normal” on Friday, Oct. 22, 2 p.m. Central time.
- Katrina Steingraeber from Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago will present “Looking at Today’s World Through the Psalms” on Thursday, Oct. 28, at 10 a.m. Central time.

- Melissa J. Harris from United Lutheran Seminary in Gettysburg, Pa., will present “Environmental Stewardship: Reconsidering the Creation Narratives in the 21st Century” on Friday, Oct. 29, at 1 p.m. Eastern time.

The Rev. Dr. Diane Jacobson will serve as online host.

The public is invited to attend these free online events, but registration is required for each of them. Registration information is available [here](#).

The Hein-Fry Book of Faith Challenge was established after the American Lutheran Church (ALC) and the Lutheran Church in America (LCA) merged into the ELCA in 1988. The series combines the ALC’s Dr. Carl Christian Hein Memorial Seminary Lectures and the LCA’s Franklin Clark Fry Theological Lectures.

**Due Date for November Newsletter Articles:
Wednesday, October 20, 2021**

**Due Date for Weekly Announcements:
Printed (Bulletins): Wednesdays
Emailed (MailChimp): Thursdays**

**Unsubscribe from this list or update your preferences by emailing:
parishadmin@stlconline.org**

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Katie Gardiner, Adult Choir Director

Melissa de Graaf, Children's Choir Director

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