

St. Thomas Lutheran Church News: November 2026

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

XLVIII Issue 10

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November at a Glance

Events for Everyone

Nov 8: LuMin Lunch Cart
Nov 8: Bach Cantata Project
Nov 13: Game Night
Nov 14: Piecemakers
Nov 15: Annual Budget Meeting
Nov 25: Pantry279 Volunteering
Nov 29: Hanging of the Greens

Events for Youth

Nov 3: HS Progressive Lunch
Nov 6: 5-8th Lock In

Events for 60+

Nov 3: IU Cinema
Nov 7: Bloomington Chamber
Singers Concert
Nov 20: Lilly Library Tour

From the Senior Pastor

On All Saints Sunday, one of our readings is from the book of Revelation.

I haven't met many Lutherans who say, "I really *love* Revelation." In fact, many Lutherans are happy to know that Luther suggested *not* including Revelation in the New Testament. And that was long before Revelation became the center of a 19th Century theology called premillennialism and its new prediction that, when Jesus returned, all good Christians would be raptured into heaven.

There is no rapture in Revelation. There are also no predictions about future tragedy. Like the disclaimer in a novel or movie, any likeness to modern figures is purely coincidental and not intended by the author.

Revelation is a book about...revelation. It asks, given everything that's happening (and there were some pretty awful things happening), where will God be revealed?

Rome taught that divinity will be revealed within the halls of power—the Caesar was divine, after all. But to Christians, Jews, and many other marginalized people what had been revealed was violence and the corrupting reality of power.

The suffering described in Revelation is difficult to read or imagine. It is also a difficult book for us because, unlike its original audience, most of us are not marginalized people.

Nevertheless, Revelation invites us to cast a critical eye around. What have we been promised? And what does it really look like? Rome promised peace, but the peace was only for a few. Rome promises prosperity, but most people who traded with their coin were anything but.

What Revelation shows us is God revealed as a lamb, who brings together people from every tribe and people and language, whose promise is peace—true peace—and an end to hunger and suffering for everyone. At the end, the kin-dom of God comes to earth, and at its center is the tree of life whose leaves "are for the healing of nations" (Revelation 22:2).

Where is God being revealed to us? Where do we see the kin-dom at work today? Where is healing? Where is peace? Where are people being fed? And how do we become a part of that work?

In Christ,



Pastor Adrienne

One more thing—I am always happy to meet with you! You can schedule an appointment to meet with me [here](#) or by [contacting the church office](#).

What the Senior Pastor is Reading

Thirty-Two Words for Field: Lost words of the Irish landscape by Máiréad Magan

I picked this book up at a bookstore in Ennistymon, in County Clare, Ireland, from where Matt's great-grandmother emigrated. We'd learned a handful of Irish phrases for the portion of our trip in the

Gaeltecht, the part of Ireland where Irish (a Gaelic dialect) is the official language, so I was interested in a book about the language. Every page of this book makes me think about John 1: “In the beginning was the Word...” I also find myself thinking about theologian Andrew Root’s work on the immanent frame—this sense that there is (or isn’t) something beyond what can be scientifically observed. Magan argues for a world shaped by language that has itself been shaped by community, the physical world, wonder, and mystery.

The Annual Budget Meeting

The Annual Budget Meeting of St. Thomas Lutheran Church will be **Sunday, November 15, following the 11 a.m. service (the meeting will begin around 12:15 p.m.)**. A budget packet will be emailed to members the week of November 1; paper copies will be available in the office.

New Member Corner



Bob Hetherington is pleased to be back home again in Indiana where he grew up before successful careers in journalism and public relations, primarily in Tennessee. With IU and U of Memphis degrees, these days he teaches at the IU Media School and consults part-time with clients. He is a father of four and grandfather of one. In his leisure, he enjoys nature walks, good books, and time with friends.

From the Finance Committee

Thank you, faithful stewards, for your support of our congregation and its ministries. We need your generosity now more than ever.

Financial status at the end of September 2026 (75% of the year):

	Amount	Percent	2025
Income	\$359,875.54	74%	74.61%
Expenses	\$348,475.09	71%	75.19%
Net Income	\$11,400.45		-\$3,270.75

Click [here](#) to give to St. Thomas.

Please note that gifts offered for specific ministries or mission partners are held in our congregation’s restricted funds for their specified purpose and do not affect the general fund nor our congregation’s daily expenses.



In These Times: 5000 Hour Volunteer Challenge



Thank you to everyone who pledged volunteer hours, who committed to the challenge, and who requested help finding places in our community to serve. Continue (anonymously) submitting your volunteer hours [using this form](#) or scan this QR code (which is on the bulletin board outside the office).

As of the end of October, we have over 3000 hours submitted! Keep up the great work!

Celebrating Our Ministry

Welcome Table Lunch Packing

Thanks to all the happy hands who helped pack 110 lunch bags and bake treats for the hungry folks who gather each Sunday at First Christian church for breakfast. Once a quarter, St. Thomas supplies lunch bags filled with homemade desserts for those who gather at The Welcome Table. Our next packing day will be right after Christmas, **Saturday December 26, at 10 a.m.**

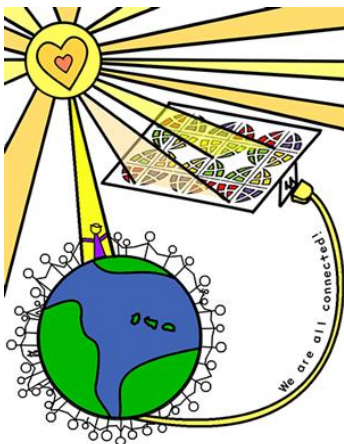


Music Revue

On Sunday, October 4, thirteen musicians shared their gifts in what we hope becomes a new tradition: a fall music revue concert! We enjoyed music from jazz, opera, musicals, to class childhood staples and hymns. Thank you, musicians!



Creation Care Calling



Thanks to many donors, our new solar ground array behind the building has been operating for several weeks. You can see from the south window that it is tilted up for winter when the sun is low on the horizon. During summer it will be almost horizontal when we have peak solar production with the sun high overhead. More than 1,000 kilowatt hours of clean energy produced in October allows our annual electricity cost to be under \$400 each year.

St. Thomas and several other solar powered places of worship are examples of how local actions can reduce the amount of fossil fuel burned that is causing extreme weather due to climate change. We have been a leader in energy conservation for decades, acknowledged by certificates displayed in the conference room. Take a look if you haven't seen them.

Kathleen Boggess, Creation Care Committee

Protein for Pantries

Almost thirty volunteers packed protein for over 11,000 meals in under an hour as part of our Reformation Celebration. Pack Away Hunger brought bulk texture vegetable protein, which our volunteers repackaged into family-sized portions.



Pie Social

The Donor Development Task Force organized a Pie Social on Reformation Sunday, October 25 to thank our donors, share information about our congregation's current financial picture, answer questions about our upcoming budget, and celebrate our ministry.

Thank you from Scholarship Recipient

St. Thomas received a lovely letter from the family of Lama Al-Khalil, whose education in Syria is supported by our congregation. In the letter, Lama's father, Mohammad, writes, "I am the father of three daughters, and I work as a painter for a Lebanese employer. Unfortunately, my health is not good...My income from work is not enough to cover my expenses...These expenses become even higher during the winter months because of heating costs. The current war between Iran and the United States has also caused fuel prices and other living costs to increase. On top of that, there are school supply expenses, medical visits, and medications when needed, and the cost of clothing...Without the support of you...I would not be have been able to continue providing an education for my daughter...I am truly grateful for your support and for everything you have done to help and my family here in Lebanon."

Life Together: Upcoming Events for All Ages and Stages

On Sunday mornings don't forget to wear your name tag! And say hello to someone you've never met—now they'll already know your name.

All Saints Sunday

On **November 1**, we celebrate All Saints Sunday. We will read the names of saints including saints from the Bible, saints from history, and saints from St. Thomas who have died since last All Saints Sunday. The area around the baptismal font will be reserved for the saints you would like to remember including saints from history and friends and family members who have died at any time. Bring in a picture or memento to place on the table and spend time as you enter worship on this day remembering all the saints.

Come Together: News from the Outreach and Community Care Committee



LuMin Lunch Cart, Sunday, November 8, after both services.

The sign-up for hosts and donations is on the Welcome Desk. The food that students take home often goes in their backpacks during the week; we hope it also reminds them of how much our congregation cares about them.

We Need Hosts for the Lunch Cart!

It's short, it's easy, and it's a great way to meet the students who worship with us. Easy-to-follow instructions are available (contact committee chair [Dawn Bakken](#)).

Every Odd Month: Game Night at St. Thomas, Friday, November 13, 6:30 p.m.

A very casual and fun get-together. Bring your favorite game or learn a new one. And bring a snack or drink to share.

From the Worship Committee

Celebrate the STLC choir and musicians this Advent

Please join the worship committee as we host a reception honoring our STLC choir and musicians following their **Advent Choir Concert on Sunday, December 13, at 4 p.m.**

We're requesting **bite-sized, savory and sweet treats**, ready to serve on a reception-style platter, delivered no later than the second service on Sunday, December 13. Platters will be available in the narthex on Sunday, December 6. Signing up at the Welcome Desk for food, setup, and cleanup are all greatly appreciated!



"Angels" is our reception theme, and you're invited to share your **angel-themed decorations**. If possible, please deliver them to Heritage Hall prior to our reception setup scheduled Friday, December 11 at 10 a.m. You can take them home following the reception (or pick up later at your convenience).

Let's make the evening beautiful together! We're grateful for any way you can contribute and look forward to celebrating together.

Hanging of the Greens: Sunday, November 29

You're invited to the Hanging of the Greens on **Sunday, November 29, following the late service.** We're especially looking for a few volunteers able to climb a ladder and reach higher places. The Worship Committee is thankful for your help in decorating our worship space for Advent and Christmas!



Worship and the Arts Concert Series: Bloomington Bach Cantata Project



Please join the Bloomington Bach Cantata Project on **Sunday, November 8 at 2:30 p.m.** as we begin our second 100 cantatas with J. S. Bach's "Jesus schläft, was soll ich hoffen?" BWV 81. This work opens with a sleep aria but gives way to towering waves, a sea storm, and foaming billows--so bring your foul weather jacket and a life preserver. Joanna Blendulf directs.

Upcoming concerts this season:

- Sunday, January 31, "Es wartet alles auf dich" BWV 187, directed by Brian Ford.
- Sunday, March 7, "Der Himmel lacht! Die Erde jubiliert!" BWV 31, directed by Daniel R. Melamed.
- Sunday, April 4, "Liebster Gott, wenn werd ich sterben" BWV 8, directed by Ruben Valenzuela.

Advent Arts & Craft Sale to Support Sister Parish

It is time to consider using your artistic talent, if you are so inclined, to make arts & crafts items for our annual Advent sale to be held on **two Sundays in December, the 6th and the 13th.** We have had great success with this event in the past, with both seasoned, well-trained artists and people who learned their crafts at scout camp or Bible school. This doesn't have to cost much if you use items from nature or recycling. The possibilities are endless: Advent calendars, wreaths and candles, ornaments, woodworking, pottery, paper crafts like origami, German scherenschnitte (paper cutting), quilling, painting, photography, fiber arts, calligraphy, pressed flower art; seasonal baked goods and candies, poetry, jewelry, and handmade gift wrap and Christmas cards and notecards.



We are linked with Sister Parish Iglesia Santo Domingo de Guzman, Chichipate Parish of San Pedro, el Estor, Izabal, Guatemala. This is a lovely way to help our neighbors while having fun in the process. *Feliz Navidad!*

Advent Devotions

St. Paul writes, "Rejoice always!" But how do we make joy an ongoing reality in our lives? This Advent we'll explore joy: joy that tells the truth, joy that holds on to hope, joy that is a discipline, joy that trusts God in all things. Help our congregation explore joy by providing a brief devotion (200-300 words) about joy: a joyful memory, a practice, a longing for joy in your life. We're not looking for something fancy or heavily researched—just a simple reflections or stories from our members' and friends' walk with Christ. **Please sign up at the Welcome Desk or let the Church office know by November 4 if you plan to write a devotion and submit them by November 15.**

Seeking Coffee Volunteers

Our small crew of coffee volunteers needs you! Several of our dedicated volunteers are on medical leave or facing coffee crew retirement: please volunteer to help make and clean up coffee. Sign up at the Welcome Desk.



Altar Flowers



Flowers bring the beauty of creation to our worship. To reserve an arrangement, contact the church office [via email](#) or sign the sheet on the bulletin board by the coat room by Wednesday each week. The Flower Guild makes the arrangements, and you may take the flowers home after the second worship service and then return the vase later. Each arrangement costs \$20, with "flowers" in the check memo line.

Property Committee Work Days

Help our co-chairs Jim Ward and Ian Bensberg with manual tasks such as decluttering, painting, occasional cleaning, or tasks that require special expertise such as electrical, plumbing, or drywall work to maintain our facilities for our use and for the many neighbors who benefit from our low-cost meeting space. **November work days are tentatively Saturday, 14 and 28.** Please contact [Jim](#) or [Ian](#) if you'd like to participate or have any questions, comments, or suggestions.



Youth Ministry News



High School Youth Progressive Lunch on Tuesday, November 3

A progressive lunch is a lunch in multiple places! Think appetizers in one home, a main course somewhere else, and finish with Bruster's Ice Cream! Meet at St. Thomas at 10:45 to carpool. Sign up at the Welcome Desk.

5th-8th Grade Lock-In starts Friday, November 6

Stay overnight at St. Thomas for fun and games, snacks, and a movie—and maybe a *little bit* of sleep! Arrive at 7 p.m. for pizza, leave after pancakes around 8 a.m. Students and chaperones sign up at the Welcome Desk.

60+ Group News

First, **we now have a bulletin board** at St. Thomas. Turn left just past the library as you enter the narthex and it will be on your right before you get to Community Hall. [Dawn Bakken](#) will post our schedule as it changes. **Sign-ups for carpooling and events will always be on this board and not on the Welcome Desk.**

IU Cinema, Tuesday, November 3, 7 p.m.

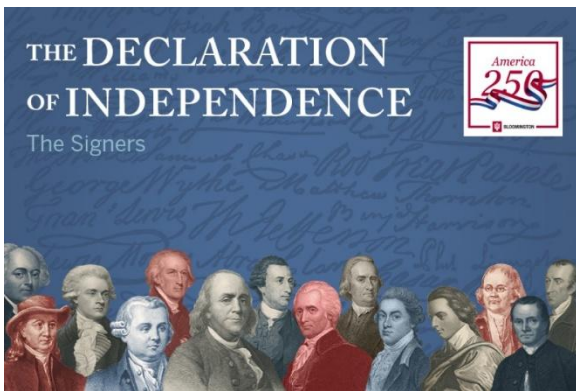
Join Kari and David Esarey for a showing of *Mary Oliver: Saved by the Beauty of the World*. Tickets are available online or at the door.

Bloomington Chamber Singers "Bach and Roll" Saturday, November 7, 7:30 p.m.

If you'd like to carpool to the Unitarian Universalist Church for the concert, please sign up on our bulletin board no later than **Sunday, November 1 and arrive at the STLC parking lot no later than 7 p.m. on the night of the concert.** Tickets are available at the door.



Guided Tour of the Lilly Library, Friday, November 20, 2 p.m.



Join [Dawn Bakken](#) in the front entrance for the regular guided tour that features a selection of the library's holdings and, for a few more weeks, includes the Lilly's special exhibit on the Declaration of Independence (that exhibit will be taken down on December 12).

Let's have lunch together in January!

Specific Sunday TBA (probably the 10th or the 17th). The Outreach and Community Care Committee will provide a main dish or two. You bring a salad, side dish, or dessert. We'll think about what we might want to do together in 2027.

Serving our Neighbors

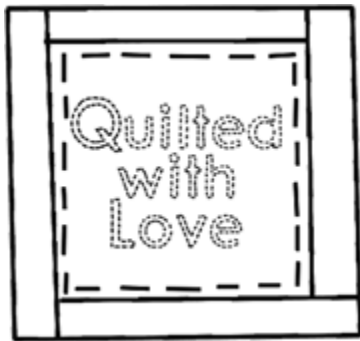
Thanksgiving Collection for Pantry 279

We are collecting instant mashed potatoes and packets of turkey or chicken gravy mix for the Pantry 279 Thanksgiving baskets. Help us collect items to fill 2500 holiday meal boxes for families in Monroe and surrounding counties. We will be collecting through **Sunday, November**

15. Stay tuned in November for opportunities to help assemble or deliver the boxes the week before Thanksgiving.



The St. Thomas Piecemakers



The St. Thomas Piecemakers are now working on quilts for next year's blessing! If you'd like to be a part of this exciting mission to show our love for war and disaster victims, please join us in **Community Hall on Saturday, November 14 at 10 a.m.** We can always use help sandwiching the quilts together, tying them, or cutting squares for new quilt tops.

Volunteer at Pantry 279

St. Thomas sends a group of volunteers once per month to Pantry 279 to help out. On the last Wednesday of the month we volunteer from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. repacking bulk items, pre-packing delivery bags, and helping customers as they grocery "shop." There are both sitting and more physical jobs. This is a wonderful opportunity to assist the busiest food pantry in Monroe County on their busiest day of the month. Sign up at the Welcome Desk.



Christian Nurture

Sundays in the Adult Forum

This November, explore the work of artists and thinkers we've lost this year including Wendall Berry, Dolly Parton, and Annie Dillard. On November 22, explore Luther's explanation of the Lord's Prayer in conversation with our 5th-8th graders.

Prayer at Noon on Zoom



Join Pr. Adrienne for [Prayer at Noon on Zoom](#) on **Wednesday, November 4** for a quiet twenty minutes of prayer and support.

Worship at Redbud Hills & Bell Trace

St. Thomas members and friends at Redbud Hills are invited to join us in the activities room for worship on **Monday, November 9 at 10:15 a.m.** Members and friends at Bell Trace are invited to join us in the Chapel for worship on **Monday, November 16 at 9:45 a.m.**

Pastor's Bible Study

Join the pastors for Bible Study on the upcoming Sunday readings on Monday afternoons at 1 p.m. in the Conference Room. There is no need to prepare ahead. We read the text together and explore what interests us and what it means for us today. Questions encouraged!

- **November 2:** Amos 5:18-24; Psalm 70; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13
- **November 9:** Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18; Psalm 90:1-8 [9-11] 12; 1Thessalonians 5:1-11; Matthew 25:14-30
- **November 16:** Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24; Psalm 95:1-7a; Ephesians 1:15-23; Matthew 25:31-46
- **November 23:** Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37
- **November 30:** Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8
- **December 7:** Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126; Luke 1:46b-55(alternate); 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28



Prayer Chain

Be part of a little group making room in the world for God to work in people's lives. When prayer requests come, we receive an email and pause to pray. If you are interested in joining us, [email](#) Susan Colston.

Prayer Requests



Martin Luther said, "Pray, and let God worry." When something worries you, others can carry you along in prayer. Send requests for prayer to Susan Colston [via email](#).

Lutheran Campus Ministry at IU

Cookie Bake Off sponsored by Campus Ministry

Have a favorite cookie that you love to bake? A special family recipe that you think might be the best cookie recipe ever? Just love to eat cookies? Whether you like to bake or just eat cookies, you are invited to LuMin's first ever Cookie Bake Off inspired by the Great British Baking Show (and LuMin's Chili Cookoff). Mark your calendars as this event will take place immediately following the second worship service at St. Thomas on **Sunday, December 6**. It is completely free to attend and friends are welcome!



How will it work, you might ask? Simple! Each baker will submit two dozen of one kind of cookie along with a complete ingredient list (recipe not required but can be included if you wish). There will be three categories that will be eligible for prizes: Chocolate Chip, Sugar Cookie/Snickerdoodle, and Everything Else. Congregation members and friends will taste test the cookies and vote using ranked choice and the top cookie in each category will win a mystery stocking with stocking stuffers inside. LuMin students will also be voting for best overall cookie (based on taste, texture, and presentation) to win the grand prize.

All cookies that are uneaten at the end of the event will be donated to college students, shut ins, and local homeless shelters. If you have any additional questions, please email Pastor Amanda at lutheran@iu.edu. A sign-up sheet for those interested in baking cookies will be put on the welcome desk. No sign up needed to come taste test the cookies.

Peace,
[Pr. Amanda Ghaffarian](#) (She/Her)
Rose House LuMin Campus Minister



News and Notes from Ministry Partners

Hope for the Holidays Tree Festival



Hope for the Holidays tree festival on **Tuesday, November 17, Wednesday, November 18, and Thursday, November 19, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Switchyard Park Pavilion.**

A Holiday Tradition with a Purpose! The holiday season is a time for traditions, family, and coming together as a community. Hope for the Holidays is a Bloomington tradition that brings the magic of the season to life while helping fulfill the mission of New Hope for Families: “In our community, no child will sleep outside. Not tonight. Not ever.” Every child deserves a safe place to sleep. Every family deserves a home for the holidays.

More than 50 unique and charming holiday trees will be on display, decorated by local businesses, organizations, and families, *including the Mission Committee of St. Thomas Lutheran Church!* The festival is fun for the whole family. There will be an online auction, but no live auction this year.

Free to attend and open to the public. For more information, [visit their website](#).

Traveling University

The Traveling University has two events remaining this fall.

- **Sunday, November 1, from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.,** Professor Marjorie Hershey will present *How Secure are the Election Results?* at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington (2120 N. Fee Lane).
- **Sunday, December 6, from 3:45 p.m. to 5:15 p.m.,** Professor Peter Cherbas will offer *Why Should a Grownup Play with Flies?* an overview of the many contributions basic research on fruit flies has made to our understanding of ourselves and the world in which we live. This presentation will be held at the main branch of the Monroe County Public Library (303 E. Kirkwood Ave).

Details of these events can be found [on the website](#). We hope to see you there!



St. Thomas Communications

Due Date for **printed** Weekly Announcements: Wednesdays.

Due Date for **emailed** Weekly Announcements: Thursdays.

Due Date for **December Newsletter** articles: **Friday, November 20.**

Unsubscribe from this list or update your preferences by emailing:

parishadmin@stlconline.org

November Calendar

Regular Sunday Schedule*

8:30 a.m. Worship/Livestream Worship
 9:45 a.m. Sunday School & Adult Forum
 11 a.m. Worship
 *see each Sunday for additional events

Erica Out of Office
 Monday, November 16
 through
 Friday, November 20

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
¹ All Saints Sunday 9:30 am MEF Meeting	² 1 pm Pastor's Bible Study 7 pm Mission Committee Meeting	³ 11 am High School Progressive Lunch 6:30 pm Worship Committee Meeting 7 pm 60+ Group Event: IU Cinema	⁴ 12 pm Prayer at Noon on Zoom	⁵ 7 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal	⁶ 6 pm 5 th -8 th Grade Lock In	⁷ 7:30 pm 60+ Group Event: BCS Concert
⁸ 9:30 am LuMin Grab & Go Lunch 12 pm LuMin Grab & Go Lunch 2:30 pm Bach Cantata Project	⁹ 10:15 am Worship at Redbud Hills 1 pm Pastor's Bible Study	¹⁰	¹¹ Office Closing Early	¹² 7 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal	¹³ 1:15 pm Friday Musicales 6:30 pm Game Night	¹⁴ 10 am Property Committee Work Day 10 am St. Thomas Piecemakers
¹⁵ 12 pm Annual Budget Meeting	¹⁶ 9:45 am Worship at Bell Trace 1 pm Pastor's Bible Study	¹⁷	¹⁸	¹⁹ 7 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal	²⁰ Office Closed 2 pm 60+ Group Event: Lilly Library	²¹
²² Christ the King Sunday	²³ 1 pm Pastor's Bible Study	²⁴	²⁵ Office Closing Early	²⁶ Office Closed	²⁷ Office Closed	²⁸ 10 am Property Committee Work Day
²⁹ First Sunday of Advent 12:15 pm Hanging of the Greens	³⁰ 1 pm Pastor's Bible Study	All dates and times are subject to change. Please confirm via the online church calendar: https://stlconline.org/about/news/				



Dementia Caregiver Support Group

**Second Tuesday of the month
6 p.m. - 7 p.m.**

**St. Thomas Lutheran Church
380 East 3rd Street
Bloomington, IN 47401**

**Questions? Contact Lucie Scott at
812-276-4279 or Lscott24@iuhealth.org.**

Build a support system with people who understand.

Alzheimer's Association® support groups, conducted by trained facilitators, are a safe place for people living with dementia and their care partners to:

- Develop a support system.
- Exchange practical information on challenges and possible solutions.
- Talk through issues and ways of coping.
- Share feelings, needs and concerns.
- Learn about community resources.

ST. THOMAS EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

3800 East Third Street
Bloomington, Indiana 47401
Office Hours 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Phone: (812) 332-5252
stlconline.org

Partners in ministry with
**Lutheran Church of
the Living Waters**
Cherokee, North Carolina

Linked with
Sister Parish
Iglesia Santo Domingo
de Guzman, Chichipate
Parish of San Pedro, El Estor,
Izabal, Guatemala

In covenant with
**Lutheran Campus Ministry
at Indiana University**
Rev. Amanda Ghaffarian
Campus Pastor
lutheran@iu.edu
Phone: (812) 333-2474
lcmiu.org

Rev. Adrienne Meier
Senior Pastor
pastor@stlconline.org

Erica Whichello
Parish Administrator
parishadmin@stlconline.org

Matthew Benkert
Director of Music and Organist
directorofmusic@stlconline.org

Ben Wegner
Adult Choir Director
choir@stlconline.org

Melissa de Graaf
Children's Choir Director

**St. Thomas Lutheran Church and LCM-IU
are Reconciling in Christ Ministries**

**We are a Christ-centered community that lives,
shares and celebrates God's grace with all people!**