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Gethsemane Lutheran Church

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Rebecca LeMenager
Pastor
Brenda "Bunny" Varani
Parish Secretary

Come and see us on the web!
www.gelc.info

One big, heartfelt thank you to the Koski family! In September of 2025, Ruth Koski and her children, Gail, David, and Matt, generously donated to our church, this beautiful table that has been in Ruth's living room for so many years,

The table was crafted by Robert and Ruth Koski using rocks the young children collected over several summers on the North Shore of Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula. Ruth designed the table to resemble Martin Luther's five-petaled rose. With the assistance of another Lutheran artisan in Cedarville, MI, they designed and built the wooden legs and the circumferentially framing trim.

The table stands at 39.5 inches in diameter and 17 inches tall. It now graces our narthex, adding a touch of beauty as people enter the church. Take a moment to sit and appreciate the fine workmanship of this generously donated table.



Gethsemane Lutheran Church
Virginia, Minnesota
www.gelc.info

Mission Statement
To draw all people to Christ, nurture faith, and fulfill our calling to serve

Vision for Gethsemane
A vibrant place of worship, learning and service, where every person is passionate about their belonging and their ministry

Marks of Discipleship
Pray daily
Study Scriptures diligently
Worship weekly
Encourage Faith in Others
Serve for the sake of others
Give freely

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Gethsemane Gazette

November, 2025 Volume 47, Issue 11

Join us for November Worship and Events!

Congratulations and Blessings to our 2025 Confirmands who affirmed their Baptisms on October 26th. Pictured from Left to Right: Ada Boe, Genevieve Zeidler, Pastor Rebecca, Grant Reid, Garrett Reid



October Angels

Thank you to all the people who helped for the month of October whether you were an October Angel or not. Our wonderful angels were: Jen & Eric Krause, Jeannine & Bill Bauman, Char Meinzer, Pat Sleeman, Tom & Wendy Krause, Dawn Matschiner, Darcy Norha, Laurie Harvey, Dana Waldron, Pam Burgess, Mayme Barber, Pam Fields, Dan Gallagher, Tony Mazzeo, Trevor Ranisate, Debbie Poderzay, Gail Wieman, Sam Davidson-Teff, Joyce Bloomquist, and the Fellowship Team. Even though there wasn't an Angel Coordinator for October, we still got things done. Blessings to Everyone!!

All Women of Gethsemane

Thursday, November 20th, at 5:30 pm in the Youth Room. This is a week early, as the 4th Thursday of November is Thanksgiving. We continue to have our casual monthly get together just to "hang out" with other gals, enjoy visiting, relax, and have some laughs.

No commitments, just bring yourself and your own beverage. Please come. - we always have a fun time! Hope to see you there!

Pastor Rebecca is Helping Cover Pastor Laura's Maternity Leave

Pastor Rebecca and Pastor Liz from Our Saviors will be covering Pastor Laura's Maternity leave starting on Monday November 3 through the end of January. Messiah has promised to keep us informed as birth events are known. Our thoughts and prayers are with Pastor Laura and Bjorn as they prepare to welcome their bundle of joy!

Pastor Rebecca Is Out of the Office on the following Dates

Pastor Rebecca will not be working in the office on the following dates: Nov 3, 17-18 & 27-28. But like always, please call her on her cell phone if you have a pastoral emergency. She will check text messages and emails while away.

Advent Starts Sunday November 30

The first Sunday of Advent starts on November 30th. This year, different groups of the church will be highlighted as advent wreath candle lighters! We hope you will be in church with us each Sunday of Advent as we learn more about some of the groups in our church.



From the Pastor

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith." Hebrew 12:1

Who handed down the faith to you? Who strengthens you when your faith is weak? These are the questions I am asking you to consider as we look to All Saint Sunday. For each of us, there were people along the way who nurtured our faith and who, even today, strengthen us when we struggle.

As you look back at your childhood memories of the faith, perhaps you were fortunate enough to grow up in a family that worshipped together, prayed before meals and talked openly about God's love and so your faith stories are tied into your family stories. Perhaps for you, it was the impact of a Sunday School teacher, a confirmation mentor, a neighbor or that older man or woman at church who always took the time to talk with you on Sunday morning. Maybe you remember the older youth you thought were so cool when they would lead worship or with loud voices and laughter would occasionally pile up on the chancel steps for a children's time even though they were "too old" for the kid's message or would include you at their table at coffee time or a church supper and made you feel included.

Maybe you didn't find Christ until you were a teen or young adult. Maybe a friend invited you to church camp or to a campus ministry event while you were in college and it changed your life. Is it a friend, a camp counselor or college chaplain you will be thinking of this All Saints Sunday?

Maybe for you, it wasn't until you had a family of your own that your faith became important. Was Gethsemane your first spiritual home? Who here has strengthened you? Are there some particular people you look forward to talking with? Was there someone who sent a card when your husband died, who told you of their own struggles with widowhood who helped you through those hard first years. Is there someone in your pew or during the passing of the peace, whose smile makes you feel welcome?

And how are you passing on the faith? On Confirmation Sunday, I watched the laying on of hands and saw the way not only friends and family surrounded these young people taking this next step, but the whole church assembled there that day. And I thought to myself, "This is what we are called to do and to be as the church." For indeed we are called to be that great cloud of witnesses that surround others with the love of Christ.

Thank you for being such a big part of my faith journey and know that on this All Saints Sunday, I give thanks for you.

~Pastor Rebecca

Prayer Wall

In your daily prayers, pray God's blessings for:

- ◆ The innocents suffering in the war in Israel/Palestine; those displaced from their homes in Gaza; those suffering in Ukraine, Lebanon, and Sudan. We pray for those in need of strength and healing: Jane Erickson Jennifer Anshus, Judy Mazzeo, and Lillian Ferkins.

We continue to pray for;

- ◆ Judy Bennick and Fran Shimmin.
- ◆ All members who are homebound, in nursing homes, or assisted living.

Prayers of peace and comfort for:

- ◆ Family and friends on the death of Norman Harrington
- ◆ Family and friends on the death of Bruce Johnson
- ◆ Family and friends on the death of Ruth Koski

Blessings and Congratulations:

- ◆ Jim and Tina Pauling have a new Grandchild! Ida Louise was born on Friday, October 24, 2025. Parents are Madison and Edison.

Council Highlights

Pastor Rebecca stated LIFT is going well. She is currently working with the Worship and Music group planning Advent and Christmas services. She also stated as soon as we have all bills that occurred due to the break-in, they will be sent to the police.

Pam and Donna were very pleased with Rally Sunday. Everyone agreed it was a special day and enjoyed the activities and coffee an'. Currently there are 12-14 kids registered in Sunday School.

Bennet reported on a number of items from the Property Committee. The sump pump work has been completed by DBS and they have been paid. He is contacting companies gathering information on a fix/remodel for our South entrance doors. They do not lock properly and we've also had problems in the cold weather with them. There have been a number of phone calls to the roofing company for the final, and now the one-year inspection, but they still have not set a date. A more formal letter will be sent requesting this be completed before as soon as possible. They will receive their final payment upon completion of the inspections.

Bennet reported from the Mission Endowment Committee that plans have been firmed up for the distribution of Mission Endowment funds for their share of Rebecca's salary.

Giving through the Vanco App

Gethsemane offers several ways to contribute to spreading God's Word. One of them is through the Vanco app called "Vanco Mobile." Download the Vanco app from your App Store on your mobile device. If you're new to Vanco, you'll need to create a free account. Once set up, logging in and making electronic donations will take only a few minutes.

For more information, please contact Vanco at 800-675-7430 or visit their website at www.vanco.com/vm.

Thank you for using Vanco. We hope this simplifies your giving. If you encounter any difficulties, please reach out to Vanco or the church office.

QR Code for Giving at Gethsemane:

When you are reading our monthly newsletter or the Sunday morning bulletin, you will see our QR giving code.

Simply take out your phone, scan the code, put in your password, select how much you want to give for the month, and press done. It's as easy as that and takes less than a minute!



The Generosity team will provide a special coffee an' on November 16th as a thank you for all the food pantry donations during Stock-tober. Sheila also stated the Foster Care closet is ready for use by foster families in the St. Louis County area.

Bruce gave his monthly report and will begin work on next year's budget.

The special continental breakfast in honor of the confirmands was hosted by the Fellowship Committee, thank you.

May each of you have a blessed and peace filled Thanksgiving.

Mary Horan, Congregation President

Weekly Giving

Giving so far for October has been close to meeting budget needs. October regular giving is averaging \$4,140 per week, compared to \$4,214 per week needed to meet budgeted expenses.

Bruce Kniivila, Treasurer





Blessings to all who have a Birthday this Month

- 5: David Koski
- 6: Seth Hauber
- 7: Kathy Bogren, Jeff Burgess, Diana Hauber, Emma Rosewall, Madison Walters
- 9: Tom Hiltunen
- 10: Heather Manninen
- 13: Cally Anderson, Betty Laakso, Cheryl Seppi
- 14: Faye Roche
- 15: Danee' Haenke, Tyler Krenz, Steven Ranisate
- 16: Kade Baty-Denzel, Mailee Peterson
- 17: Jim Haenke, Max Lamma, Jerry Saisa
- 19: Valerie Florey, Myla Meinzer
- 20: Lois Curry, Deron Davidson, Sarah Davidson, Alyvia Fields, Sue Swanson
- 21: David Torkkola
- 23: Tyson Wilson
- 24: Matthew Meinzer
- 25: Heather Gulbranson
- 26: Mitch Brunfelt
- 27: Nancy Eichholz
- 28: Dale Erickson, Tye Hiltunen, Jon Jacobson
- 29: Ellie Gulbranson, Callyn Michaels

Memorial Gifts received during the month of October

In Memory of: Ruth Koski
From: Richard & Sheila Vandervort, Mary Sterling, Mary Jo Ralston, Barry & Jean Collins, Pat Duginski, William & Kristy Balder, Barbara Baldrice, Mayme Barber, Bennet & Joyce Bloomquist, Bernadine Christiansen, Deron & Sheila Davidson, Sue & Tom Hiltunen, Eila Isaacson, Terry & Debra Johnson, Sharon Lager, Tom & Cindy Lee, Barbara & Laverne Leuelling, Amy & Timothy Wallace, Range Fiber Art Guild, Donna & Paul Sadar, Judy Majerle



Look who's celebrating their Anniversary for the Month of November, enjoy your Special Day!

- 11/2 Judy and Tony Mazzeo
- 11/10 Barbara and Jeffrey Johnson
- 11/28 Deron and Sheila Davidson



Celebrating the Anniversary of your Baptism

- 11/1: Denise Ramfjord
- 11/2: Casey Aluni, Sheryl Kochevar, Danielle Seppi
- 11/7: Ashlyn Randall
- 11/8: Kathy Bogren, Dorothy Garland, Andrew Meinzer
- 11/10: Nancy Maki, Tori Wallner
- 11/11: Ronald Picek
- 11/12: Megan Saari-Copeland, Glenn Dall, Gail Wieman
- 11/14: Zachery Kalisch, Jaynee Peterson
- 11/15: Margaret Picek
- 11/16: Amanda Rosandich
- 11/21: Nolan Dunn
- 11/23: Dana Waldron
- 11/25: Mattelyn Seppi
- 11/26: Jane Axelson, Amy Dragon, Hunter Koski, Delilah Jensen
- 11/28: Brent Marchetti, Aaron Spiering
- 11/?: Brennan Peterson

****If we have left you out, we need your help to know! Call the office to update your information****

Faith Builders

(PreK - grade 6)

Whew!! We did it! The kids learned the 10 commandments and what they mean! We have been playing games to reinforce their knowledge. We are soooo proud of them. We are planning to quiz coffee an' folks soon. We are beginning to look ahead to our Christmas program which will be December 14th. Please mark your calendars! If anyone would like to help please let us know!

Pam and Donna

Reminder: Sign Up To Acolyte!

All children and youth Grades 3-12 are asked to acolyte. The sign-up sheet is on the youth Bulletin board at the end of the hall outside the youth room. This is a wonderful way to serve your church! For our younger youth, you can still go to Sunday School! You can process in, light the candles and leave at the regular time for Sunday school. We are hoping to have acolytes for the Advent Season and our Christmas Eve Services. If you have questions or would like a quick overview or review of how-to acolyte, please talk with Pastor Rebecca

L.I.F.T. FUN NIGHT is Wed., November 5

All youth grades 3 - 12th are invited to join us from 6 pm - 8 pm at Mesabi Fit for fun in the pool & gym. Dinner will be provided. You do not have to be a part of LIFT to attend. If you have questions, please talk with Pastor Rebecca.

Youth Led Worship: Sunday November 30

Planning Meeting: Wed., Nov 12 @ 6pm at Gethsemane

The youth will plan and lead worship on Sunday, November 30th. If you are a youth in grades 7-12, you are invited to a planning meeting at church on Wed, Nov. 12 at 6pm. Dinner will be provided. We will be talking about themes and assigning parts. If you cannot make the meeting but want to participate in the worship service on Sunday, November 30, please talk with Pastor Rebecca.

Youth Mission/Service Trip 2026!

LIFT is headed to The Dwelling in Winston-Salem North Carolina in July of 2026! You do not have to be part of LIFT to participate in this trip! You just need to join in the fundraising and planning. If you are a high schooler, YOU are invited to be a part of this exciting, life-changing, faith-building, transformative experience! For more information, stay tuned to social media, the LIFT Team Reach App, newsletters and bulletins or you can talk with Pastor Rebecca.



Youth Christmas Wreath Sales

\$25/wreath (Payment due with order)

Checks can be made to Gethsemane Youth

Pickup at Gethsemane Lutheran Church on December 7, 2025 following worship



All proceeds go towards youth programming & events (Mission Trip, ELCA Youth Gathering, All Youth Gathering etc.) Thank you for your support!!!

Youth Christmas Wreath Sales

November starts the youth's annual wreath sale. The price is \$25; payment is due with your order. Checks can be made out to "Gethsemane Youth". Our youth will have a table after worship or talk with a youth to place your order. Wreath pick-up will be at at Gethsemane on Dec. 7th following worship.

Fall Unit of LIFT is done! BUT there are lots of ways you can continue to grow!

Our first unit of LIFT ends on Wed., November 5. We will not resume until Wed., January 7 when our Winter Unit begins at Gethsemane. Until then, please keep the following dates in mind:

Wed. Nov 12 @6pm: Youth Led Worship Planning Meeting

Sun. Nov. 30 @9am: Youth Led Worship

Wed. Dec 3 @630pm: Advent Spiral Service at Messiah Lutheran Church

Wed. Dec 10 @630pm: Visual Arts Advent Service at Our Savior's

Wed. Dec 17 @630pm: Blue Christmas Service at Gethsemane

Wed. Dec 24 @330pm & 530pm: Christmas Eve Service at Gethsemane

Thurs. Dec 25 @10am: Christmas Day service at Messiah (led by Pastor Rebecca)

All Youth are encouraged to attend these services as their schedule allows.

Foster Care Closet Corner

As a new addition to our newsletter, remember to check out this "corner" each month! We are very excited to be opening our FCC for the St. Louis County foster care program to utilize and help equip our local foster care families. Thank you to everyone who so graciously donated very needed children's supplies already. If you'd like to see our closet in person, please reach out to someone in the Generosity Team!

Thank You!

Gethsemane Church has always been a family that is ready to lend a helping hand wherever needed, and this year has been no exception! Some of the areas where you've made a difference include the Food Pantry, Snacks for Kids, North St. Louis County Treatment Courts, Buddy Backpacks, Salvation Army, Christmas at PMC, Transitional Housing, God's Barnyard, and Medical Debt Relief, just to name a few!

We want to take a moment in November to express our gratitude for all that you've done and will continue to do to further the mission of God through Gethsemane. Please mark your calendars for **November 16, 2025**, for the 9 am service so that you don't miss our special thank-you to all of you!



Christmas is just around the corner!

You're invited to help us prepare our church for the Christmas season. November 30, 2025 marks the first Sunday of Advent, which falls on the Sunday after Thanksgiving. It's a bit crazy, but the church will need to be decorated sometime after church on Sunday, November 23, 2025, and before Sunday, November 30, 2025 - Thanksgiving week.

Just a heads up, if you're a football fan, the Vikings play the Packers at noon on November 23rd. There's a possibility that the game could be televised in the Sanctuary if needed. The only time I'll be available to decorate is from noon until 10 pm on the 23rd, so I'm looking for someone to lead this project. I'll help in any way I can before Sunday or during the afternoon on the 23rd.

Generosity Team

Welcome to our edition of "Gethsemane Gifts!" Each month we will recognize the gifts of generosity that we have experienced from our very own Gethsemane Family. We will focus on one member of our church who has experienced a time of support, love, and/or generosity from other members of our church.

This month please welcome – Danee' and Jim Haenke

Hello Gethsemane Family! My husband Jimmy and I live in Lakeland, outside of Gilbert. Our favorite activities are being at the lake on weekends on the beautiful Lake Vermilion. We have a seasonal camper at the New RV Park on Pike Bay; enjoying the Beautiful Sunsets, Campfires, and our friends we also call family that camp there.

Our son Danny live in North Carolina with his wife Emily and son Theo. Our grandson is now 10 years old! We love visiting them, exploring North Carolina and trying all the fun restaurants. It's such a blessing to follow Theo in all his activities. Wish North Carolina was closer to Minnesota. So grateful for smart phones.

Family is very important to us. Through the years, we enjoyed sitting in church with my parents for worship. Participating in many activities together at Gethsemane, too many to list, but I treasured those wonderful memories.

A little history about my family. My parents Patty and Dan Davidson moved to Virginia in the spring - early Summer of 1962. Shortly after, they joined Gethsemane church. My two brothers and I grew up in our church from baptisms to our Weddings, with the exception of one brother who lives in Annadale. Our children grew up in our church. Gethsemane has been a big part of my life.

Our family has lived through sickness, death of loved ones, but also very blessed with the love and support our church family has given us.

I did leave the Virginia area to attend college and later returned to Virginia. I was nervous and excited to return to Gethsemane. Almost immediately I felt so welcome and went through many emotions, especially love. I remembered smiling as I made my way to a pew and sat down. The sun was coming through the beautiful colored glass windows. I looked around, admiring our beautiful church and the Congregation with their greetings of Good Morning and warm smiles. A few words came to my mind; I'm home again. My how the years have flown by.

Generosity Team

- continued -

Thank you to our Gethsemane family for all your kindness and support. Our church has been our rock and foundation.

Jimmy and I feel very fortunate and blessed to be a part of Gethsemane Church.

God Bless!



Thanksgiving, November 27th & 28th



Qualified Charitable Distribution:

If you are at least 70-1/2 years of age, you can make a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) from your IRA, payable directly to a charity, such as Gethsemane Lutheran Church. This tax-free transfer provides benefits to the charity, and to you - the donor. Please consider discussing this with your financial institution or your financial advisor soon, so that you can receive this income tax benefit for the year in which you make your contribution.

Hold Those Thrivent Cards in Reserve!

In January of 2026, LIFT will be at Gethsemane and VBS is at Gethsemane this summer as well. We are going to be looking for some Thrivent cards to help pay for food! As you start to think about how you want to spend your Thrivent dollars in 2026, we hope you might have Gethsemane on your list! Please talk with Pastor Rebecca if you think you'll have a card for us to use!

Range of Voices Holiday Concerts

The Range of Voices community choir will present their 57th Annual Holiday concerts on Friday, November 21, and Sunday, November 23rd.

The concert on Friday, November 21st, will be at the Chisholm Baptist Church in Chisholm, Minnesota, at 7:00 p.m. The concert on Sunday, November 23rd, will be at Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Virginia at 2:00 p.m. A coffee and fellowship will follow the concerts.

This year, the holiday concerts will feature a special mix of Christmas carols and Thanksgiving songs. Once again, this year, we are privileged to have Jonathan Cleghorn as our music director and Dawn Thompson as accompanist. The cost of tickets is \$10 for adults, \$5 for youth aged 6-18, and free for those five and under. Join us for a delightful program of holiday music to gladden hearts and welcome the holiday season.

LUTEFISK & MEATBALL DINNER

Everyone is invited to a LUTEFISK & MEATBALL DINNER on **Tuesday, December 2, 2025, from 3:00 – 7:00 pm** at Gethsemane Lutheran Church.

Come and enjoy a delicious dinner of Lutefisk with drawn butter and cream sauce, handcrafted meatballs with potatoes and gravy, vegetables and beet pickles, lefse and bread, and cupcakes with coffee and milk.

Take outs are available. Pre-orders are encouraged. Tickets are on sale at the door: Adults \$20.00, Children 6-12 \$8.00, and Children 5 and under free!

For more information, call Gethsemane Lutheran Church, Virginia at: 218-741-4961.

BRACE YOURSELVES.

**LUTEFISK
IS COMING.**

