



# TIDINGS

December 2021

## ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT MT. CARMEL

Join us as we celebrate the holiday season at Mt. Carmel. Masks are required for all in-person events.

- **Sunday, Nov. 28, 9:30 a.m.**—First Sunday of Advent. Worship in person and online. Take home an Advent study guide and a kit to make your own Advent wreath!
- **Sunday, Dec. 5 & 12, 9:30 a.m.**—Worship in person and online.
- **Sunday, Dec 19, 9:30 a.m.**—Children's Service : Oh, Come Let Us Adore Him. Worship in person and online
- **Friday, Dec 24, 4 p.m.**—Christmas Eve. Worship in person and online
- **Sunday, Dec 26, 9:30 a.m.**—Worship in person and online.

## END OF THE YEAR CONTRIBUTIONS

The fiscal year ends Dec. 31. Cash and checks received by the church office on or before that date will be recorded on your 2021 Mt. Carmel giving statement. We will post checks received in the mail after Dec. 31 only if the check is dated Dec. 31, 2021, or before and the envelope carrying the check is postmarked Dec. 31 or before. All financial gifts and offerings received after Dec. 31 will be posted to the 2022 first quarter statement.

## CHURCH ANNUAL REPORTS DUE

It is time for committee chairs and group leaders to begin thinking about your annual report article. Articles are due to the church office by Friday, Jan. 15, although earlier is better. We will be assembling the annual report and following week and making it available to church members. Questions can be directed to Nancy Nordeen at [office@mountcarmelminneapolis.org](mailto:office@mountcarmelminneapolis.org) or 612-781-2796.

## MT. CARMEL NEEDS YOU

Please see the inserted 2021 Committees and Activities Sign-Up to select the ways in which you will share your time and talents in the coming year. The Congregational Life Directory has been updated. You can pick up a booklet at church or download a PDF from [https://bit.ly/MtC\\_Directory](https://bit.ly/MtC_Directory) to learn about the ministries listed on the sign-up sheet. Please return this sheet to the office by Sunday, Dec. 19!

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### OFFERING OPPORTUNITIES

Please continue to support our congregation with your faithful financial contributions to Mt. Carmel as you are able. There are several ways to give:

- Online by credit card or bank account. Visit [mountcarmelmpls.org](https://mountcarmelmpls.org) to give online.
- Mail or drop off your check to the church office.

Your generous support for Mt. Carmel and our ministry is truly appreciated.



## MT. CARMEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

We are a faith community participating in the life of God, both as sheer gift to us and as a calling to the neighborhoods of Northeast Minneapolis. We are a multigenerational community that proudly celebrates our history while joining together with younger generations to follow where God is leading. We build our community through faith practices like prayer, dwelling in the Word and hospitality.

1701 St. Anthony Pkwy NE  
Minneapolis, MN 55418  
612-781-2796  
Fax: 612-781-1621

### Office hours

Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

### Interim Pastor

Christine Wenzel, ext. 103  
pastor@mountcarmelmpls.org

### Office Administrator

Nancy Nordeen, ext. 101  
office@mountcarmelmpls.org

### Interim Director of Music

Ruth Bills, ext. 120  
ruthabills@gmail.com

### Maintenance Engineer

Steve Panning, ext. 104  
building@mountcarmelmpls.org

### Tidings

Jenni Lathrop  
jenni@jennilathrop.com

### Mt. Carmel Child Care

Brenda Wetzel, ext. 107  
612-781-2798  
childcare@mountcarmelmpls.org

[www.mtcarmel.net](http://www.mtcarmel.net)

**The mission of Mt. Carmel  
Lutheran Church and its members  
is to learn, live and share  
God's Word.**

Ministry Affiliates: Minneapolis Area  
Synod/ELCA; Northeast Senior Services,  
Inc.; Little Kitchen Food Shelf; Every Meal;  
Eastside Meals on Wheels; Plymouth  
Christian Youth Center;  
Mission Northeast and  
Casa de Oracion a las Naciones.

The Mt. Carmel facility is shared with the  
following community groups:  
Scout Troop 132, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts  
and Alcoholics Anonymous.

We are an ELCA congregation. All are  
welcome. Learn more about the ELCA at  
[www.elca.org/About](http://www.elca.org/About).



Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

## PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

Forty-one members responded to the survey put together by the Transition Team. Thank you for your time and commitment. Your honesty and insight shows a strong sense of community in the past, present and future. Here is a very general synopsis of the opinions shared in the survey:

### Looking to the past

You shared the following:

- You were attracted to Mt. Carmel by location, the warm and loving community and opportunities to get involved in your neighborhood.
- The commitment and relationships built by Mt. Carmel's meaningful worship, music, Sunday School, youth, volunteer and social involvement.
- While some have considered leaving due to challenges with pastors, discord within the organization or seek a more diverse church, ultimately, you are committed.
- Reasons for staying included pastors, level of involvement and a sense of loyalty to work alongside each other.
- You also recalled many favorite events and memories—more to come.

### Looking at the present

While many of you recalled the mission to "Learn, Live and Share God's word," some were uncertain about what that might mean going forward:

- The pandemic has impacted your ability to work together, yet there is still enthusiasm and energy in the responses.
- You see yourselves as a community eager to roll up your sleeves, pull together, celebrate and serve both inside and outside of your church.
- You are not sure how to best attract and retain new members.
- The building hosts outside programs like AA and Scouts, and Casa.
- You were frank about your struggles, too—tension between what you want to do, and what you have capacity to do.
- A lack of clarity: how things get decided and a lack of voice in the processes.
- Volunteering often falls to a core few members.
- You grieve the loss of members, after discord, and without closure.
- Some say you are stuck in our old ways and see a need to update our practices while still honoring the traditions and history.

### Looking to the future

- There are a lot of unknowns about the future:
- You want more community outreach and active engagement, but how?
- You worry about financial stability—your current size challenges your ability to maintain all the ministries and groups you have hosted in the past.
- The core group of volunteers is feeling burnout.
- You see a need to restructure some of your organizational ways.

Pastor's Ponderings, continued on 3

# MT. CARMEL CHILD CARE

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Thank you to all who supported our fall fundraiser, this is our third year and we are so grateful for the support of our Mt. Carmel community. As we head into the Christmas season, the children will be doing a program over Zoom in lieu of our annual Christmas program/meal. We hope to be able to gather next year.

Have a wonderful and safe holiday season!

*Brenda Wetzel, Director*

## THE BUTTERFLY GARDEN UPDATE

Abundant thanks to Dave Olson and the volunteers who birthed and cared for this new garden. It continued to change and grow silently until the first frost and snow have put it in hiatus mode. It's a sacred setting for flora and fauna to live and especially for the butterflies who graced its space.

The members of Mt. Carmel and our neighbors have experienced the beauty of its flowers and can look forward to seeing it again in 2022.

*Janell B. Wampler*

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### Pastor's Ponderings, continued from 2

- The pain of pastoral change and loss of specific members, is felt deeply and is impacting your trust in each other.
- At the same time, there is a general urge to seek renewal—a renewed sense of community, dedication and stability.
- You want a community that is inviting and welcoming, with strong leadership and a diverse circle of believers.
- You want to be able to take care of members young and old.
- You see this next pastor call as crucial:
- You seek a pastor who will create a deep connection to Mt. Carmel and the Minneapolis community, with passion and not at the end of their career.
- Some are eager to enter into a ministry partnership with Gustavus Adolphus, already demonstrated by sharing confirmation.

Mt. Carmel has the potential to be a neighborhood and community hub:

- Representing diversity, inclusion, justice and compassion.
- Will need to struggle with the same issues seen in the wider community.
- Needs to build on your strengths and commitments.
- And most important, live into your mission inside and outside the physical building.

God has truly blessed the community of faith at Mt. Carmel. You are in my prayers, please keep me in yours.

*Pastor Christine Wenzel, Interim Pastor*

## PUBLICATION DEADLINES

### Weekly Sunday

**Announcements:** Sunday mornings. Due by 5 p.m. the Wednesday prior.

### The Candle weekly email:

Sent Wednesday mornings. Due by 10 a.m. the Tuesday prior.

### The Tidings Monthly

**newsletter:** Mailed the last Wednesday of the month. Due by 10 p.m. the third Tuesday of the month (Please email all Tidings submissions to [jenni@jennilathrop.com](mailto:jenni@jennilathrop.com)).

Please contact the office with your submissions or with any questions.

## NEED A RIDE TO CHURCH?

The mini-bus is revved up and ready to go. Call the church office at 612-781-2796 by noon Friday to let us know you need a ride for Sunday.



## CONFIRMATION UPDATE

Confirmation students from both Mt. Carmel and Gustavus Adolphus met in November. As part of their learning, they painted rocks to share with someone special in their lives and decorated seashells to help them to remember their baptism.

## KEEP US INFORMED

Did you know that because of privacy laws, hospitals and nursing homes do not call us to report if a parishioner has been admitted, or if a person's condition has worsened? That means we rely on family members and friends to keep us informed. Please call the church office, 612-781-2796, if you or someone you know of is hospitalized.

# COVID TASK FORCE UPDATE

As we enter the Advent season, we need to continue our vigilance against the COVID virus to ensure everyone's safety—both in our church congregation, but also in guests, visitors, extended family and even those groups that use our building for their meetings and events.

You may have been hearing about infection rates increasing. And while those numbers are certainly increasing among the unvaccinated, they're increasing even in those who are vaccinated. While the unvaccinated are the vast majority who require hospitalization, there are still 5-15% of vaccinated people who require hospitalization as the result of a COVID infection. Being vaccinated also means that we are not immune from spreading the virus if we are vaccinated.

We need to also understand that there are those among us who are particularly vulnerable: children under the age of five, who are not eligible for the vaccine; those with underlying medical conditions such as compromised immune systems as the result of organ transplant, cancer treatment, HIV infection or other medical treatments or diseases; diabetics, the elderly (over age 50), and others. In our daily lives of meetings, shopping and normal business, we may not recognize people with these risk factors. So we should treat everyone with the respect of masking up when indoors and maintaining our distance, regardless of our vaccination status. That's why masking and distancing is required in the church building.

We've all been watching the trends with the virus, and have seen that since the delta variant has come onto the scene, infection rates haven't waned significantly, and yet, in my trips to get groceries or other errands, I'm seeing what seems like increasing numbers of people not masking up in stores or other public areas.

What this all means for Mt. Carmel heading into Advent and toward Christmas Eve worship is that we likely will not be able to host many more than 70 people in the sanctuary and will need to continue to limit socialization and events that may have been planned for the indoors. The task force recognizes this is difficult and disappointing, but can't take the risk in allowing more people in our space when there is a greater chance of infection.

We understand that our guidance and rules have taken a "wait-and-see" approach, but this is the only choice we have. We need to watch the infection trends and act accordingly. For instance, in the summer, it looked as though we might be fully open by rally day, but we weren't able to do that. As a result of having to follow the numbers and trends with the virus, while we would like to say we might change our current rules in time for Christmas, at this time, we don't feel comfortable taking that risk.

We encourage everyone to get vaccinated if you're eligible, and get the booster if you haven't already, especially as that is open now to everyone over age 18. Please continue wearing your mask indoors, and keeping your distance from others from outside your household. And please be mindful of those around you who may be at greater risk than you, and take those extra precautions to keep them as healthy as possible.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and understanding.

*Paul Lathrop*





## BEFRIENDERS COMMISSIONING SERVICE

Our Befrienders were commissioned for this ministry during the worship service on Sunday, Nov. 14. They had completed their initial training for this ministry in early March 2020, but the commissioning service was delayed due to the COVID-19 lockdown. However, throughout this pandemic our Befrienders have continued to be in contact with our homebound members and others who are experiencing a grief situation. At first, these contacts were limited to phone conversations, but as people have gotten vaccinated, many in-person visits have begun. Our Befrienders include Al Erickson, Janell Wampler, Diane Langer, Myrna Flatland and Tim Quinlan. Pr. Dave Olson is the trainer and administrator for this ministry. The group continues to meet monthly for support and ongoing continuing education to better equip our visitors for this ministry.

If you would like more information about this group or think you could benefit from being placed in contact with a Befriender, please, contact Dave Olson at 651-528-7459 or call the church office.

*Dave Olson*

## AFGHAN REFUGEE UPDATE

We are pleased to announce that we have met both our initial financial commitment to sponsor an Afghan refugee family and have recruited the desired number of core group volunteers who will be working directly with this family. A special word of thanks to all who have contributed financially and/or committed their gift of time to this outreach ministry. Additional financial contributions for the family are still welcome. If you make a contribution, please indicate it is for "Refugee Resettlement" on the memo line of your check.

During the latter part of November, this core group of volunteers received training from the staff at Lutheran Social Services (LSS). Once completed, we will be eligible to be matched with a refugee family. Watch for additional news on this developing effort and ways in which the broader congregation may be able to help with this family's resettlement in the near future.

*Dave Olson*

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY TROOP 132

Mt. Carmel's Scout Troop 132 celebrated its 90th birthday on Nov. 17. Sponsored by the Brotherhood of Mt. Carmel English Lutheran Church, the troop received its original charter on Nov. 17, 1931. Since its beginning, Troop 132 has seen 743 young men join its ranks, with 50 of those going on to earn the rank of Eagle Scout. The scouting program has changed much in the last 90 years, but one thing hasn't—the support of Mt. Carmel, its members and the community. The scouts and leaders of Troop 132 would like to thank all those, both past and present, who have supported the scouting program at Mt. Carmel throughout the years.

## GIFTS RECEIVED

TO THE FOUNDATION

**In memory of Joyce**

**Hegstrom:** Ted and Carmen  
Trampe

## JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST

Stay updated on our community life. Join our email list to receive The Candle once a week, special announcements and important church communications.

To subscribe, email office@mountcarmelmpls.org or visit the church website at www.mtcarmel.net.

## PRAYER CHAIN

To to lift up a prayer concern for the prayer chain, please contact Leona Olson at 612-859-7075.

## SMALL GROUP MEETINGS

**Good Fruits Bible Study—**  
Tuesdays at 2:30 p.m. at Silverwood Park. (Contact Leona Olson at onondave@yahoo.com)

**Online Men's Bible Study—**  
Wednesdays at 6:45 a.m. (Contact Ralph Matthes at marinosdelimpls@gmail.com)

**Anti-Racism Book Club—**  
Every other Thursday at 6:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room (Contact Barb Hollister at 612-590-6469 or bjhollister@comcast.net)

# TREASURER REPORT

**Oct. 30, 2021**

Mt. Carmel's finances have experienced a setback. Giving has been down through the summer and while expenses have been down as well, the year end is closing in on us and we have a ways to go to erase the budgeted deficit.

In good faith, the Mt. Carmel congregation passed a deficit budget for 2021 of (\$25,246.19). The good news is that this fall we have seen a positive upturn that has helped to erase a portion of this deficit. Giving has been up and expenses have continued to be down, but the bad news is that we still have a ways to go as the year end is closing in on us.

**October: Actual Income/Expense**  
Positive \$809.27

**October: Budgeted Income/Expense**  
Negative (\$2,345.81)

**YTD: Actual Income/Expense**  
Negative (- \$13,773.26)

**YTD: Budgeted Income/Expense**  
Negative (-\$21, 104.57)

Please prayerfully consider keeping your giving up to date, and possibly give a little extra so we continue towards the goal of ending the year on a positive note and we can faithfully erase the budgeted deficit together. Watch for updates in the Candle and Sunday announcements through the end of the year.

*Diane Davis Langer, Mt. Carmel Church Treasurer*

## COUNCIL UPDATE

Council meet on Nov. 9.

- The nominating committee (Karen Matthes, Barb Hollister and Lory Dubbels) is working on recruiting for 2022 Council members to fill three council seats.
- In 2021 we passed a deficit budget of (\$25,246), and are currently at (\$13,773). The budget team is meeting in December. An update about the audit will be on the December council agenda.
- A time and talent form will be distributed with the Congregational Life Directory that provides a description of activities with contact information. They will be available in print and online in late November/early December.
- The Mt. Carmel council met with the Gustavus Adolphus council in October. Our shared confirmation class has started and we agreed to continue to find ways to collaborate with each other. Diane and Allison are interested in planning a bonfire with GA in December. Pastor Christine suggested that we focus on what our churches can do better together, rather than separately.
- The transition team will be meeting to review and summarize over 40 responses from the survey. The information provides information needed to fill out the ministry site profile.
- We reached our initial goal with the Afghan refugee sponsorship and we have more than 10 people taking an online class learning how to work with the family. We met the minimum requirement but will still need funds for the future. It's not too late to still donate to the cause if you wish.



## FOUNDATION LEGACY SUNDAY

The Mt. Carmel Foundation celebrated Legacy Sunday on Oct. 31. The day was blessed in many ways and we are thankful to many and to God for a beautiful day. Appreciation to all who helped make the day a success: the Mt. Carmel Foundation members and spouses, our speakers, Ruth and choir, the special music provided, technology team, youth and Pastor Christine. We enjoyed hearing from Liam Davis Temple, now a Hamline graduate, as he shared his story as a college scholarship recipient. It was a joy to hear from camp scholarship recipients Zoe Labandz and Greta Kutzer about their journey to Camp Wapo on the church bus and the relationships they built. We heard beautiful trumpet sounds from our guest Dan Kuch and special offering of music from the choir and Ruth. Jenni's help with the PowerPoint slides and Paul's technology expertise pulled it all together, along with our campers and foundation members who served.

We experienced beautiful weather as our Foundation members and youth served our infamous caramel rolls and coffee outside in the sunshine. We enjoyed much needed fellowship time, and there was even curb-side service to our drive-up folks supplied by the youth. Thank you Nora, Frida, Zoe, Stella, Oliver, Nik, Asher, Eli and Greta for helping out. You are awesome.

We give special thanks and recognition to Foundation members Myrna Flatland, Kathy Halverson, Karen Moeller and Brian Wirth as they finish six years of dedicated service.

Thank you from the Mt Carmel Foundation

Diane Davis Langer, Mt Carmel Foundation President

Justin Sawyer, Vice-President

Matt Nordeen, Treasurer , Kathy Halverson, Secretary

Mary Catherine, Myrna Flatland, Ralph Matthes, Karen Moeller, Roger Peterson, Brian Wirth and Kevin Ziegler

## FORGET-ME-NOT

Birthday greetings to each of the members listed below who will reach or surpass the 80th milestone in this month. We pray that God bless you on your special day and in the year to come.

Dec. 7: Bob Bauer

Dec. 8: Dick Anderson

Dec. 23: Gloria Anderson

Dec. 25: Carroll Rignell

## NEXT TIDINGS DEADLINE

**Dec. 21, 10 p.m.**

Submit articles to  
jenni@jennilathrop.com.

Issues are delivered the first week of the month.

## MT. CARMEL COUNCIL

Tim Quinlan, President

Barb Hollister, Vice President

Karen Matthes, Secretary

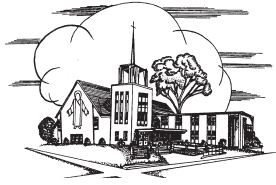
Diane Langer, Treasurer

Allison Gurney

Doug Jones

Dave Larson

Patrick Lathrop



## Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church

1701 St. Anthony Parkway NE  
Minneapolis, MN 55418

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### Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church

#### Interim Pastor

Christine Wenzel

#### Office hours

Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

#### Sunday worship

9:30 a.m.—In person or online on  
Facebook or YouTube.

#### Mt. Carmel Child Care

Brenda Wetzel, Director  
612-781-2798

**Mission: Learn, live  
and share God's Word**



## WORSHIP WITH US

**Join the Mt. Carmel faith community for worship in person or  
live on Facebook and YouTube, Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m.**

Worship with us in person or live online. For now, masks and physical distancing are required for all worship services and meetings. For those unable to worship with us in person, **we also broadcasting worship live on Facebook and YouTube.** Videos are available to watch at any time after live worship on YouTube.



612-781-2796



office@mountcarmelmpls.org



www.mtcarmel.net



/MountCarmelMpls