



SHINER
LUTHERAN

2022 WINTER QUARTERLY CONNECTIONS



A Message from Pastor Chris



10 hours and 11 minutes. This is roughly how much daylight there will be in Shiner, TX on December 21, 2022. Sunset will be at 5:35PM. It will be the Winter Solstice. In the Northern Hemisphere, this is the shortest day or the longest night. The term “solstice” comes from the Latin words *sol* (Sun) and *sistere* (to stand still) because the angle between the Sun’s rays and the plane of the Earth’s equator appears to stand still. The Sun appears at its lowest in the sky.

Seasons come and go. Did you know that the church also has seasons? This Quarterly Newsletter is published during the Advent Season. It’s the first season in the church, and its color is blue. During Advent, the church lights candles and patiently waits for the birth of Jesus. It’s a time of anticipation. Advent ends with Christmas and then moves into the green season of Epiphany.

I am convinced that congregations just like ours have seasons as well. There are times when our church will feel blue, like it’s in the Winter Solstice and there’s more darkness than light. At other times, our church will feel bright red like everything is exciting, new, and maybe even chaotic like on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came. Life is like that; life has its seasons.

And of course, your life has seasons, too – seasons that may not always coincide with the seasons of your neighbors or even your spouse or family. You will go through seasons at your own pace and in your own time.

The temptation is to rush through seasons. No more can the church speed up the purple penitential season of Lent so to get to the white joyous season of Easter, neither can you rush through a season of grieving or waiting. Part of good spiritual health is intentionality. You want to act with intent. Don’t just react. God created both the light and the darkness in the Genesis 1. We need both just like we need the seasons.

I’ll tell you short story: When asked why God created darkness, a teenage girl in our Shiner church said this. “If God had not created darkness, we would never see the beauty of the firefly.”

December has been one of the better giving months of the church year. It’s been said that this is a season of generosity. I’d like to invite you to consider making a special, year-end contribution if you are able. Join in that spirit of generosity in giving to the Lord.

Thank you for allowing me to walk with you through life’s seasons as your pastor. Indeed, this is what we as Lutherans do. We pray. We share a cup of coffee together. We cry together. We rejoice together. We live in faith that God is right there with us by the power of the Holy Spirit as we move through the seasons of life. As our eyes need a moment to readjust when moving from darkness to light, may your eyes so readjust to God’s blessings already around you.

Pastor Chris Heinold

Ministry Areas in Action

WORSHIP

For the past three months, Shiner Lutheran has offered many opportunities to worship in a variety of expressions. The Blended Blessings Band covered many services, but we also worshiped with a Polka beat, Country Gospel style, two services led by Leah Matocha on piano, and an energetic Youth led service celebrating Reformation Sunday. Even animals were included with a special Blessing of the Pets service remembering St Francis of Assisi. All Saints Sunday Nov. 6 remembered those who have passed away since the last All Saints Day. November closed with a Thanksgiving/Christ the King celebration and the First Sunday in Advent. The Altar Guild held an Acolyte Training and kept busy with all the liturgical color changes in banners and paraments. Weekly Brief Communion, Home Communion, and SNRC devotions all continued as worship opportunities.



Learning

August brought a Blessing of the Backpacks and an Ice Cream Social that welcomed back all our youth to the beginning of the school year. In September, Wednesday evenings were again filled with Growing in Faith Together, our multi-age Christian education ministry. Each Wednesday a meal was prepared with help from volunteers, supported by food and monetary donations. Attendance varied from 70-80 learners, including an adult class. An offering was taken each week for this year's GIFT Mission Project which involves using offering collected to purchase specific items for the Shiner Community Food Pantry. Those interested in summer camp met and held a Little Caesar's Pizza Kit Fundraiser. The sale was a success, selling 302 pizza kits and netting \$1,848.00 for our campers fund. Each Sunday morning a group gathered with Pastor Chris to dig deeper into the day's lessons. Wednesday mornings Pastor Chris led a study on Second Samuel. In August a quarterly Women's Bible Study began. All ages are learners!

service



Service includes the areas of hospitality, caring ministry, and fellowship. During the past quarter the hospitality team actively worked on the ice cream social, baptism and new member receptions, GIFT meals, and a covered dish dinner. Our caring ministry team guided ongoing ministries including Home Touch mailings for the homebound, helping at the Shiner Community Food Pantry and providing breakfast there once a month, and sending greeting cards both to those who are ill or homebound. Monthly Noisy Offerings this past quarter gathered \$187.75 for Lutheran World Relief, \$222.49 for Texas Lutheran University Campus Ministry, and \$227.86 for Legacy Ranch. In November 167 quilts and 90 school kits were sent to Lutheran World Relief. The fellowship component of the service group included the special JOY (Just Older Youth) Fellowships, Men's and Women's Fellowships, and Women of the ELCA.



GIFT, 5th Quarter and JOY involve outreach as well as fellowship. A kind donor provided funds to purchase a new set of three Mevo cameras, enabling multiple views during livestreaming the service. Teena Davis joined Karen Vaughan as a Mevo camera technician.

Ministry Areas in Action



SUPPORT

Our support group includes staff and volunteers that work with finances and facilities to manage resources so that our congregation and our ministries can function smoothly. The Finance Team met the past quarter to recommend a proposed budget for 2023. Budget items were realigned according to need, but the overall budget increased due to added expenses in our clergy medical plan, property insurance, and utilities. The Property Team kept busy refreshing the confirmation classroom and office bathroom with new coats of paint, handling a major leak from an AC unit that forced parsonage repairs, obtaining and spreading new engineered wood fiber mulch for playground safety, and seeing that parking lot lighting was repaired. Regular maintenance issues were addressed, and plans began to convert sanctuary lighting to LEDs and fix some light sockets that are not functioning. A return to full programming following the pandemic has increased facility use and kept the support group busy!



We have many silent servants and others that thrive on remaining totally anonymous. Nevertheless, we recognize with gratitude both those listed and not listed. Our congregation is truly blessed! We say a special thank you to...

- Pastor Chris Heinold. October was clergy appreciation month but we thank him always for serving our congregation as we continue to move forward in mission.
- Gemayel Heinold for all her work this fall in all things GIFT—setting the schedule, planning meals, preparing meals, and cleaning up. We also thank her for her all her special decorating touches and her leadership in establishing, organizing, and instructing an active Altar Guild.
- Brian Pokluda for handling both minor and major property tasks, including troubleshooting and parsonage repairs. Both Brian and Michele are thanked for installing new playground mulch.
- Ronnie Bruns, Teena & James Davis, and Larry Gerum for taking care of lawn and landscape,
- All our members and friends who donated time, talent, or money to make our Fundraiser BBQ a success.
- Sandy Machacek and Teri Stratman for hauling Quilts and School Kits to Marion.

Our Congregation

During the past months, the following parochial events took place:

Oren James Remmers, son of Austin & Jessica Remmers, was baptized on August 14, 2022.



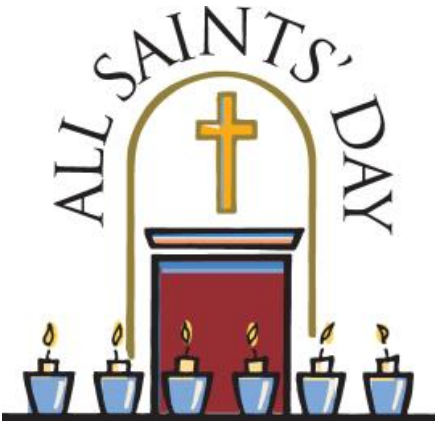
Mallory Johnson, Andrew Smith, Reese Smith, children of Josh & Hannah Smith, were baptized on September 25, 2022.

Graham Clay Goebel, son of Garrett & Jordan Goebel, was baptized on November 13, 2022.



During the past quarter, one baptized and confirmed member, Alice Kuck, passed away on October 13, 2022.

Remembering



On Sunday November 6th we recognized All Saints' Sunday with special words and lighting of candles remembering those who had passed away from November 1, 2021 until November 1, 2022. Our service had special music and a Country Gospel beat as we remembered our members and others who have entered the Church Triumphant. We have been blessed with a great "cloud of witnesses" and we remember their faith.

Friends and relatives who passed away:

December 12, 2021—Lillie Tenberg	April 14, 2022—Juanita Lucke
January 22, 2022—Helen Zimmerman	April 18, 2022—Virginia Helweg
January 22, 2022—Mildred Rebecsek	May 29, 2022—William Jurek
January 22, 2022—Ila Stratman	June 2, 2022—Henry Lee Schierschwitz
March 3, 2022—Bernell Pohler	October 13, 2022—Alice Kuck
March 26, 2022—Mary Ann Watson	

Friends and relatives who passed away:

Christy Mikes	Larry Zaruba	James Allen
Bettie Marcak	Annette Blaschke	Gentry Rigby
Ed Lilley	John Langhoff	Russ Byriel
Jan Gisler	Owen Morkovsky	Jim Murrile
Robert Mazur	Vickie Arrell	Eugene Brooks
Ruth Gerum	Denny White	Robert Cowan
Carolyn Frank	James Brooks	Harvey Pohler
George Watzlavick	David Jaks	Pat Brown
Ruby Vincik	John Davis	Ella Berger
Alvin Mikes	Ann Sapp	James DeDear
Morris Novak	Jimmy Miculka	Lorin Miller
Don Lackey	Harold Baecker	Kolson Jacobs
Ray Dunton	Rosalie Hagens	Viola Sims
Ewald Erdelt	Gladys Biehunko	Kenneth Littlefield

Women's Ministries

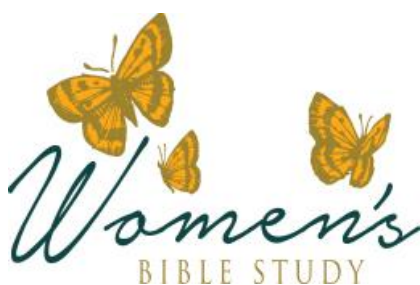
Our Women's Ministries have been rebranded with a local flair. Our acronym is SWIFFT, Shiner Women in Faith & Fellowship Together. By focusing on our congregation and the Shiner community, we hope to involve and engage more women to live out their faith in fellowship and service. A monthly fellowship time takes place, usually on the first Tuesday of the month, graciously hosted by Teri Stratman. Members, friends, and others are all invited to participate in these SWIFFT activities. If you'd like to know more or have any suggestions, please feel free to contact Joanie Honigschmidt at 512.913.2657 or jhonigschmidt@yahoo.com.



Shiner Women In Faith & Fellowship Together



Thank you to all who supported our women by ordering from the SERRV Catalog Sale, a fundraiser that supports fair trade and income for those who make handmade crafts throughout the world. The event raised around \$250 for local women's ministry. Thank you also goes to all who generously participated in the 2022 Thankoffering, a tradition for women to give to their organization. The offering totaled \$950.03. One half will go to WELCA Churchwide and the remaining will be given to local needs. A decision of where the local offering will go will be discussed at the Bible Study on Thursday December 15.



The next Women's Bible Study will be held on Thursday, December 15 at 11:00 a.m. The Study will be led by Pastor Chris, with the lesson being taken from the December Gather magazine. Copies of the study will be found in the Gathering Place. A lunch of soup and sandwiches will be enjoyed immediately following the Bible Study. Hope to see you there! Bring a friend and perhaps soup or sandwiches to be enjoyed. For more information contact Joanie Honigschmidt, 512.913.2657.



The SWT Synod Women of the ELCA Convention was held in September at the Disciple Oaks Retreat Center in Gonzales. There were 75 women who attended the convention with the theme

Rejoicing (that God is forever with us); **Renew** (and appreciate our different cultures and ways of life to help move each other forward anew); and **Respond** (with kindness, generosity and love...daily). Board members were elected with Holly Heinsohn Kropp being re-elected for another term; thank you Holly. The convention offering and auction receipts totaled \$5,792 to be distributed as follows: WELCA Churchwide--\$1,824; WELCA Synod--\$912; Golden Crescent Food Bank--\$743.50; Norma's House--\$655 (plus physical items); Project Radical Hospitality--\$1,657.50. Pastor Ildilko Rigney was the Worship Leader and Pastor Jonathon Mollenkopf led the Bible Study.

Administration

2022 CHURCH COUNCIL

- Brian Baker
- Shannon Blaschke
- Sandra Blum
- James Davis
- Holly Heinsohn Kropp
- Danna Murrile
- Kristin Neal
- Brian Pokluda
- Mike Vaughan
- Duncan Wallace
- Pastor Chris Heinold
- Vicar Daniel Volkmann

THANK YOU to those serving as the 2022 officers:

President: James Davis
Vice-President: Brian Pokluda
Secretary: Brian Baker
Treasurer: Shannon Blaschke



In 2022 our Church Council consisted of ten elected members who meet monthly to oversee our congregation and conduct its legal business. Assigned council members are present at each worship service to provide support and secure the offerings. Members also serve on Mission Groups. We thank all council members who served in 2022, especially including Danna Murrile who has chosen not to serve another term. Randy Zaruba has been elected to serve a three year term beginning in January 2023, along with Brian Baker and Mike Vaughan, who were both re-elected.



The Congregational Semi-Annual meeting was held November 13, 2022. The 2023 budget was approved. Elections were held with the following results approved by acclamation:
 Church Council—Brian Baker, Mike Vaughan, and Randy Zaruba
 Endowment Committee—Rae Nell Janik
 Nominating Committee—Chuck Stratman, Dee Schierschwitz, Karen Pokluda
 Synod Assembly Delegates—postponed until the January congregational meeting

Our Mission Groups meet periodically to oversee our congregation’s activities. In August, the Mission Groups participated in the Leadership Retreat. The next time Mission Groups will meet is January 8, 2023.



WORSHIP

service

SUPPORT

Learning



Each Mission Group involves a small group of about six people. At least one council member is included in each group. Both staff members and volunteer leaders participate by appointment according to their responsibilities and interests. Mission Groups support and review the ministries in their areas, looking to maintain energy and a missional outlook for all activities. Brainstorming and looking to the future are another component of discussions. Mission Groups may plan or suggest, but final decisions are made by Church Council. At the same time, the “boots on the ground” work is handled by specific teams such as Hospitality, Property, etc. All our levels of leadership work together to live out the mission statement of our congregation.



The staff position of bookkeeper has been filled by Shannon Blaschke. He has been working diligently to convert our financial tracking to an electronic program. Sandy Machacek continues her responsibilities as Office Assistant but has asked to work on a volunteer basis. She maintains many of the same duties but now has more flexibility in her schedule.



*Scheduled office hours are Monday—Wednesday from 9am – Noon
 The staff is also on site most Tuesdays & Wednesdays until 4 pm.
 Please leave a message at 361-594-2345 or email shinerudml@att.net for help.*

At times the exterior office entrance may be locked, but the entrance from the parking lot into the Gathering Place usually remains open for building access.
 Our email is checked remotely (shinerudml@att.net) when the staff is not in the office.
 Pastor Chris can be contacted directly at his church cell number (830-203-2906).

Finances



The Finance Team has continued to work towards best practices for the financial management of our congregational resources. This past quarter, designing a 2023 proposed budget was the major finance team task. Throughout the year, the team looks at budget spending. For example, at the end of October we had spent 80.11 % of the budgeted general fund. This was below that scheduled milestone of 83.33 %. However, within the budget some areas had overspent; others were below budget. The finance team considered our ministries and adjusted budgets between these categories for 2023. For the past years our overall budget has remained steady. For 2023, however, an increase of \$4,997.24 had to be made in the budget to account for increases in pastor’s medical insurance, church property insurance, and utility costs. This puts the General Fund 2023 Budget at \$226,548.00 and the Building Loan Payment at \$132,033.36 for a total budget of \$358,581.36. This budget was approved at the Semi-Annual Congregational meeting on November 13, 2022. The goal is to continue to be good stewards of our finances. Every offering or donation enables us to use our resources to continue the ministries of our congregation.



After much planning and discussion, the congregation approved a building renovation in 2015. A loan was secured with First National Bank of Shiner, and the process began. Of course, there were some bumps in the road—issues with subcontractors, Hurricane Harvey, and the unseen cost of bringing a building built in the 1950’s up to today’s building codes. Dedication of this project took place in December of 2018. The projected cost of this project was overwhelming, but unavoidable. We secured help from the ELCA Mission Investments to run a capital campaign. The campaign solicited financial commitments from members that would be paid out over three years. This was above and beyond regular giving, and directly supported the Building Fund for our mortgage payments. After three years, many commitments were fulfilled or exceeded. Other commitments were not completed due to members leaving or finances changing. In 2019 we should have been running a second capital campaign. Instead, our pastoral vacancy and the pandemic blocked our planning. Fortunately, some members continued giving to the Building Fund, and along with designated memorials and special gifts, we have been able to make our payments. During 2023 we will revisit the capital campaign process in order to more steadily fund our mortgage payment.



Results

The 2022 Shiner Lutheran Fundraiser BBQ	
INCOME includes Tickets, Bake Sale/Country Store & Untracked Donations	\$16,053.50
EXPENSES includes Patek’s Groceries, Radio Ads, Hall Rental	(\$ - 8,507.93)
INCOME less EXPENSES	\$ 7,545.57
INCOME from Tracked DONATIONS	\$ 7,200.00
TOTAL FUNDS RAISED by event	\$ 14,745.57

The 2022 BBQ Fundraiser results show the generosity and hard work of members and friends. The Bake Sale/Country Store depended upon donations of many baked goods and hand crafted items and raised over \$2545. The meal depended on the faithful teams of planners, BBQ cooks, servers, and brownie bakers. Many unseen smaller donations came from volunteers picking up a tab or others saying “keep the change.” The larger direct donations offset most of the cost of supplies. Approximately 1,000 plates were sold and enjoyed.

Giving



A church depends on donations to exist. Money is needed for everything from supporting ministries and paying salaries to paying utilities and maintaining facilities. Our congregation is grateful to all those who offer support, thankful that we have been able to “make ends meet” and blessed to be a blessing to others. These are some of the ways our congregation gives to others:

- We offer the Shiner community free participation in GIFT (Growing in Faith Together), JOY (Just Older Youth), 5th Quarter youth fellowship after football games, dominoes, canasta, and various other fellowship groups.
- We open our facility for others to use. Non-profits can use our facility at no charge. Examples are Shiner 4H, Scouts, Shiner ISD, and Lavaca County Texas A & M AgriLife Extension trainings. Others use our facility with a small fee: VBS participants, non-member weddings, funerals, showers, etc.
- We provide volunteer hours, physical items needed, or financial support to a variety of causes such as the Shiner Community Food Pantry, Shiner Lutheran Scholarships, or Cross Trails Camping Ministry. We donate through our Noisy Offerings and Mission Projects to such causes as Norma’s House, Bluebonnet Youth Ranch, Legacy Ranch, LAMB, Saint Nicholas Ministry, Texas Lutheran Campus Ministry.
- We reach beyond our own community, sponsoring missionaries in Mexico, giving to Lutheran Disaster Response, ELCA World Hunger or Good Gifts, and providing donations, quilts and school kits for Lutheran World Relief.

All this giving to others, living out our mission statement, is only possible because of the gifts our congregation receives in the offering plate, offering envelopes, online electronic giving, or special gifts. As we close out 2022 and begin a new year, our prayer is that this giving continues and grows, enabling us to better serve others as Christ’s hands and feet in this world. If you give nothing, you are deciding not to be a partner in this mission. Whether you give time, talent, one dollar or many dollars, you are part of our ministry. We are thankful for the surprising generosity that has enabled our path, and pray for continued support in the new year.



Did you know? Planned legacy giving enables churches and non-profit organizations to continue to exist, despite the uncertainties of offerings. In the past we have been blessed with bequests, oil leases and other special donations that have enabled both ministries and facility improvement. Special legacy giving is also the financial base that made our endowment fund possible.


Looking Ahead – Dates for your Calendar



- GIFT Wednesday December 7 & 14 @ 5:30 pm
- Advent Worship Wednesday December 7,14,& 21 @ 7:15 pm
- JOY Fellowship Friday December 9 @ 11:30 am
- GIFT Christmas Program Sunday December 18 @ 10:15 am
- Caroling & Cocoa Sunday December 18 @ 6:00 pm
- Christmas Eve Worship Saturday December 24 @ 5 & 10 pm
- Christmas Day Worship Sunday December 25 @ 10:15 am




- New Years Day Worship Sunday January 1 @ 10:15 am
- Mission Groups Lunch & Meeting Sunday January 8 @ 11:15 am
- 5th Sunday Covered Dish Dinner Sunday January 29 @ 11:15 am
- Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting Sunday January 29 in conjunction with the Covered Dish Dinner



- Joy Fellowship Friday February 9 @ 11:30 am
- Transfiguration Polka Worship February 19 @ 10:15 am
- Ash Wednesday February 22: Worship @ 1:30 pm & 7:15 pm
- Bluebonnet Youth Gathering Sunday February 26 @ 3:00 pm (Victoria)

If you or someone you know would like to receive the weekly email update “Weekly Connections” please call the office at 361-594-2345 or email the office at shinerudml@att.net. We do send out a few print copies to those who do not have email. We would like everyone to stay connected.



Plans are underway for a self-published directory of households who are part of our worshiping community. Sandy Machacek and Joanie Honigschmidt have volunteered to gather or confirm contact information. We hope to add thumbnail digital pictures if possible, taking pictures before or after worship. Look for action in December and January. Details in Weekly Connections.

CONTACT information



Please contact the church office if:

- Your address or phone number (including cell phone) has changed, or you have dropped your land line
- You do not see your birthday, baptism, or wedding anniversary in our lists, meaning the information is not in our data base
- A household member has moved away
- You or a household member have changed to a different church affiliation



Please see Weekly Connections for times & other events as they are added to the calendar. Check the up-to-date electronic church calendar by clicking on the link in your Weekly Connections or visiting the church website.

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SHINER LUTHERAN CHURCH QUARTERLY CONNECTIONS WINTER 2022
Publication schedule is now at the end of February, May, August, and November.



SUNDAYS @ 10:15 am

In person or online @ Shiner Lutheran Facebook Page

Worship on Sunday December 18
at 10:15 am and join the children,
youth and adults telling the story:



Saturday December 24

**Christmas Eve
Candlelight Services
5:00 pm & 10:00 pm**

Sunday December 25

**Christmas Day
The Nativity of Our Lord
10:15 am**

**ANNUAL
MEETING**

*Mark your calendars: Sunday January 29, 2023
Worship—then meet in the Gathering Place for our semi-annual
meeting and enjoy a covered dish dinner with your church family.*



**Visit Our Website: www.shinerlutheran.org
News/Events/Calendar/Connect/Give— Information and Links**