



SHINER  
LUTHERAN

# 2023 SPRING QUARTERLY CONNECTIONS



Spring 2023

Brothers and sisters in Christ, grace to you and peace from God our Father, and our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

As we move into another quarter of being in ministry together, it is only fitting that we take the opportunity to not only look back at the year we have had so far but look forward to what we will accomplish in the next three months.

On a personal note, this year has brought some exciting changes in my life as your Vicar. As I continue to grow into my call as a Minister of Word and Sacrament, I have had the opportunity to learn how to be a leader in Christ's church in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. I have had the chance to lead an adult education class in GIFT, which has grown by leaps and bounds since last year, averaging 14 people each week! We have gotten to dig deep into what it means to be Lutherans and how we live in the world.

I have had the opportunity to grow in my skills in giving pastoral care and have grown in my skills in leading worship. This growth could not have happened without your prayers, support, and guidance. I am thankful each day that I come to Shiner Lutheran Church and can serve and grow alongside you.

The next quarter, more so than the last, will bring even more changes. As I finish my formal internship over the summer, I will begin to have some extensive conversations with the Grand Canyon Synod (in Arizona) and Wartburg Theological Seminary about where I am called to be in the church. I covet your prayers as I enter the final steps of my educational process and move even closer to my ordination.

These next three months will also significantly change my family life as Mallory and I welcome our son into the world in late May or early June. As you all know, this will bring its own challenges and joys, and we are so excited to share these with you.

Thank you all again for allowing me to serve as your Vicar, and I am so excited for the days to come and the joys we will share. God be with you all.

Vicar Daniel Volkmann



## Ministry Areas in Action

### WORSHIP

Winter Quarter was filled with worship. Midweek Advent services calmed busy days with liturgy of Holden Evening Prayer. Worship on December 18th was enriched by the pageantry and music of the GIFT Christmas program *One Night in Bethlehem*. The Christmas weekend involved three services: 5 pm Christmas Eve with a country flavor, 10:00 pm Christmas Eve with organ & trumpet, and the Sunday Christmas Day service. In January we celebrated a New Year's Day Sunday worship and later in the month a Country Gospel Service. Scout Sunday was recognized on February 12 and Transfiguration Sunday was celebrated with a special polka service. Ash Wednesday brought both an afternoon and evening services, with worshippers receiving both ashes and communion. Our congregation embraces worship!



### Learning

Learning in December centered on preparation and presentation of the GIFT Christmas program *One Night in Bethlehem*. Over 50 children & youth joined many parents and other adults to share the program on Sunday December 18th. After a Christmas break, our Wednesday evening GIFT, *Growing in Faith together*, resumed meeting weekly. The adult GIFT class gained new attendees, and new families kept joining us throughout the winter quarter. The Sunday morning "Looking at the Lessons" group continues to meet as does the Midweek Wednesday Morning Study with their study of 2nd Samuel. The Women's Quarterly Study met in December. Other education opportunities included an online study session about Luther's wife Katherine von Bora, led by Holly Heinsohn. Our conference hosted the annual *Equipping the Saints* event bringing together members of many congregation. We continue to grow and learn!



Service has included hospitality, caring ministries and fellowship. Following the February Mission Group meetings, we are renaming this group CARING and moving fellowship events to another area. Hospitality is probably the most obvious ministry in this group. Our proactive hospitality team planned and hosted many events during winter quarter including the Christmas Program reception and a Fifth Sunday Covered Dish Dinner in addition to providing one of the GIFT meals. With the help of volunteers, Caring hosted two funeral luncheons and two meetings of JOY, Just Older Youth, and the Giving Tree. Ongoing ministries included Home Touch mailings for some elderly, LWR quilting, a card ministry, support for those grieving, and a renewed effort to enable SNRC residents to join us for worship. Our partnership with the Methodists at the Shiner Food Pantry continued to thrive. We are striving to meet some of the needs of congregation and community.



*Witness has been renamed Connecting to reflect that as we share the Gospel we hope to connect and grow with those we touch. Connecting includes our traditional fellowship groups and other events that reach out beyond our membership. In December, we had an evening of Cocoa & Caroling. In February there was a successful "Hearty Party" for 6th through 12th graders—74 young people enjoyed the evening. Some of our youth attended the Bluebonnet Conference Youth Gathering February 26th. Our congregation joined the Shiner Chamber of Commerce to connect with the community at large. We are connecting!*

# Ministry Areas in Action



Supporting embraces those active efforts that enable Worshiping, Learning, Caring, and Connecting to thrive. The organization and operation of our congregation comes under the Supporting label. During Winter Quarter, the 2022 Annual Report was published and the January Semi-Annual Meeting was held. The 2023 Church Council was installed. The five Mission Groups met in February and renewed their commitment to keep our congregation missional. Our congregation treasure and bookkeeper, Shannon Blaschke, continued to organize and update our financial reports using computer tools and programs to better monitor our financial stewardship. Our constitution, which was updated by committee in 2021, was revisited and now includes the needed 2022 updates. This document will be submitted to the Synod office for inspection. After the Synod lawyer approves it, the document is submitted to the congregation for examination. A vote on adoption of the constitution will take place at a congregational meeting.

## SUPPORTING

This winter our landscape again experienced a freeze and it will take time for plants to recover. This year, however, we are blessed with the newly installed sprinkler system that will help us if the rains do not come. The property team continues to handle repairs and maintenance. As spring comes, volunteers will be recruited to help refresh the landscape and polish up the interior. We are blessed to have a this facility for worshiping, learning, caring, and connecting.



# Our Congregation

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



Two members passed away and Pastor Chris officiated their funerals:

Anna Lee Harabis, who passed away January 22, 2023

Susan Ann Ulcak, who passed away February 9, 2023

# Parochial events coming during the Spring quarter:



New members will be received by transfer and affirmation of baptism on Palm Sunday, April 2. A reception to welcome these members follows worship.



Pastor Chris will meet with parents and children in preparation for their First Communion, which will take place during Holy Week.

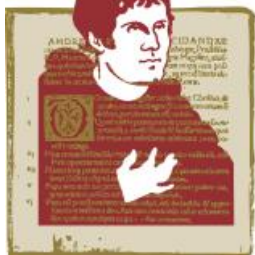


Baptisms have been requested and are being scheduled.



Our eighth graders will be confirmed on Sunday April 16th.

## On Being a Lutheran...



During the 16th century, Martin Luther challenged the teachings, practices and structures of the Roman Catholic Church. He insisted that the central message of Christianity is the good news that sinners become reconciled to God by grace through faith because of the saving work of Jesus Christ.

It's important to remember that Luther didn't intend to start a new church. He wanted to reform the existing church so the gospel message was communicated clearly and so the life of the church reflected that gospel center. Lutherans organized into a separate church only after the Roman Catholic Church repeatedly rejected Luther's views.



*Sola Gratia*  
Grace Alone

*Sola Fide*  
Faith Alone

*Sola Scriptura*  
Scripture Alone

### Shiner Lutheran Membership

- **Baptized Member**—If you are baptized here at Shiner Lutheran, you automatically become a baptized member. If you have been baptized elsewhere in the name of the Triune God, and have been received by certificate of Lutheran transfer or by affirmation of faith, you are a baptized member.
- **Confirmed Member/Voting Member**—Lutherans are all about Christian education. Our tradition here at Shiner Lutheran is to gather our seventh & eighth graders for confirmation instruction. When confirmed, usually at the end of eighth grade, students become full voting members of our congregation. Adults who wish to join Shiner Lutheran transfer from another Lutheran congregation or they meet with the pastor and then, with an affirmation of baptism, become a confirmed, voting member.
- **Associate Member**—We have a special category for those who may hold membership in another congregation, but wish to participate in the life and mission of this congregation as well. Associate members may not vote or serve on church council, but can otherwise participate fully.

Maintaining **voting membership** involves two factors: 1) attending worship/receiving communion; and 2) giving a contribution of record. (Yes, those criteria are one of the reasons we ask worshipers to complete attendance slips and use offering envelopes. Actually, electronic giving or giving by check also allow us to know you have given a gift of record. All giving information is confidential.)

Although all the above information follows formal constitutional descriptions, our church today has begun identifying **"active" members**. These are those individuals and families who regularly worship and give, but also frequently participate in the activities and ministries of Shiner Lutheran, becoming a part of our church family by their very presence. Yes, that may mean some of our "actives" may not have actually joined our congregational as traditional "official" members. It is confusing (especially to our data base) but active involvement is the most important factor in the vitality and sustainability of our congregation. The understood goal for us all is to actively live out our faith in the community of believers we know as Shiner Lutheran Church.



**GOOD NEWS:** Sunday March 12 following worship Pastor Chris will offer an informal question and answer conversations (with coffee & donuts) to sort out any membership questions from those who may be considering joining Shiner Lutheran. We already have some families who will be received as members on Sunday April 2. If you are interested in more information but cannot join this session, just let Pastor Chris know and he will work with you.



## Away and at Home



The 2023 Bluebonnet Conference Youth Gathering rocked on Sunday February 26 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Victoria. The afternoon began with a band-driven medley of upbeat and loud songs. Around 30 youth spent the afternoon with games, focus activities including art, music, and drama, a meal, and worship that was led by the youth using their focus activities. Shiner Lutheran was represented by three youth and about a dozen adults who planned or helped with the event. Thanks to all who made the gathering successful!



2023 Bluebonnet Conference Spring Gathering

## WELCOME TO GOD'S CORRAL

Hosted by: Christ in the Country Shared Ministry

Date: Saturday March 25, 2023

Place: Martin Luther Lutheran Church of Coletoville

Time: 9:00 am—2:30 Worship, Programs, Music/Singing, BBQ Lunch, etc.

Registration: Forms & information are available in the Gathering Place



## Shiner Women In Faith & Fellowship Together



The next Women's Bible Study will be held on March 23 at 11:00 a.m. The Study will be led by Pastor Chris For more information contact Joanie Honigschmidt, 512.913.2657.

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](mailto:jhonigschmidt@yahoo.com).

## Administration



In January the 2023 Church Council was installed and elected officers. New member Randy Zaruba replaced Danna Murrile, who chose not to serve another term. During the past quarter, the Council passed the motion that we continue to stream our church services using our current technology (Mevo and Facebook).

### 2023 CHURCH COUNCIL

- Brian Baker
- Shannon Blaschke
- Sandra Blum
- James Davis
- Holly Heinsohn Kropp
- Kristin Neal

- Brian Pokluda
- Mike Vaughan
- Duncan Wallace
- Randy Zaruba
- Pastor Chris Heinold
- Vicar Daniel Volkmann

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



The Congregational Semi-Annual meeting was held on Sunday January 29, 2023. The meeting was held in the Gathering Place in conjunction with a Fifth Sunday Covered Dish Dinner. At the meeting, Mike & Karen Vaughan were elected as our voting delegates to the 2023 Synod Assembly. The 2022 Annual Report had been distributed earlier, and minor corrections to the report were identified so that the final archived copy would be as accurate as possible. The next scheduled Semi-Annual Meeting will be in November.

Our Mission Groups meet periodically to reflect on our congregation's activities & ministries.



Mission Groups met Sunday February 19, 2023. Some of the names for the Mission Groups were adjusted to reflect energy and action. We now will speak of Worshiping, Learning, Caring, Connecting, and Supporting as our Mission Groups. This relabeling was also meant to help include the activities or ministries that have been realigned to a different groups. For example, fellowship groups had been listed in the Caring group, but now are found in Connecting along with youth activities like 5th Quarter to emphasize the fellowship outreach to the congregation and the Shiner community. Following a light lunch, the groups met together and Pastor Chris laid the groundwork for individual group meetings. Three different questions were given to each Mission Group to guide their discussions. After about thirty minutes, the five groups reconvened together and shared the highlights of their discussions with each other. Participants left with a positive vision of our congregation's future. Mission Groups plan to meet next in late summer or early fall to continue to keep our congregation missional.



Suzanne Rabke has accepted a full time job and has resigned from her volunteer staff position of Financial Secretary. During the last weeks of February she trained Karen Vaughan, who was appointed by Church Council to become Financial Secretary. Karen will work with contribution team members Norma Goetz and Sandy Machacek to complete the weekly deposit. Suzanne will continue to monitor and process electronic contributions.



*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](mailto: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](mailto: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 & Giving



2022 brought change and challenge for the financial component of our congregation. During spring of last year we lost our dear bookkeeper and financial wizard when Juanita Lucke passed away. We have worked diligently to maintain our financial balance, and did end the year meeting our needs. We were able to pay our mortgage payments through contributions that included generous memorials for a number of beloved members who passed. Nevertheless, our Building Fund reserves have begun to shrink and we will be addressing this issue in 2023. At present we have 11 mortgage payments in reserve; the goal (per Juanita) is to maintain at least 18 months of payments in reserve. We have been blessed and will strive to be good financial stewards.



Over the years, we have received funds through special programs. As an Amazon Smile charitable organization, we received almost \$1,400 over the course of our participation. (Amazon discontinued that program February 20, 2023.) Thrivent Financial has a "Choice Dollars" program where members with certain types of accounts can designate our church to receive funds. (Thrivent members must renew their choice periodically.) Others have found matching funds that benefit our church. We thank those people who have been able to help our congregation in any of these ways.

For many years we have awarded Shiner Lutheran Church Scholarship to students pursuing education after high school graduation. In the past, the Endowment Fund earnings provided money for the scholarships. This year that will not be possible due to the current investment situation. During March we will receive donations from anyone who could help us accrue funds so that 2023 scholarships can be awarded. We appreciate help in supporting our graduates!



Noisy Offerings are gathered on the last Sunday of the month. The Caring Mission Group determines the recipients of the offering. In November, we sent \$227.86 to the Saint Nicholas Ministry; because the last Sunday of December was Christmas Day, a Noisy Offering was not collected that month. In January the Noisy Offering gave \$260.88 to our Camper Fund. February's noisy offering of \$361.66 was sent to Lutheran Disaster Response to help earthquake victims in Turkey.

Please remember that online giving is one of our options. Consistent repeated giving is the foundation of church finances; one way to do this is through an online repeated donation by credit card or withdrawal from a bank account or retirement fund. Our platform for electronic giving is VANCO. Options include:  
**TEXT:** Text an amount to 1-844-697-3838 and use credit or debit card.  
**ELECTRONIC GIVING:** Go to our website [www.shinerlutheran.org](http://www.shinerlutheran.org) and click on Connect/Give to get a direct link to our electronic giving platform.



*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.*



## Life in the Congregation



In our congregation, parents determine when their children learn about communion, but we encourage that instruction take place before the end of second grade. Pastor Chris will instruct interested families Saturday March at 9:30 am followed by First Communion before Easter.

The worship schedule for Holy Week has changed slightly. Maundy Thursday will have two communion services: a shorter service at 1:30 pm and a service with foot washing at 7:15 pm. Good Friday will have worship just once at a Tenebrae Service at 2:00 pm. Finally, on Easter morning the early service moves to 7:00 am. Join us!



- During late March, we will be taking donations of individually wrapped candy to stuff Easter eggs for our **annual egg hunt** on Easter morning.
- On Easter morning, we again will host a **Breakfast Fellowship** between our two worship services. We will be asking for donations of breakfast casseroles, fruit, juice etc. to support this great fellowship time that celebrates Easter with our church family and guests.
- We also hope to recruit all ages to **sing for nursing home residents**, for a few minutes between services on Easter morning. All are welcome!



### FUNDRAISERS for CAMPERS

Orders for Nothing Bundt Cakes will be taken from Easter thru May 10, with delivery in time for Mother's Day. Delicious!



Our Hamburger Fundraiser takes place at the SVFD Cook-Off and Car Show on Saturday April 15, 2023. Youth and parents grill burgers for show visitors or those who drive thru for a burger.

### 2023 CAMPERS

Briana Baler	Ryder Boedeker
Lexi Boner	Blake Guettner
Lilly Fojt	Ryan Scott
Raleigh Moore	Kayla Heinold
Cade Shimek	Mallory Johnson
Collin Wallace	Jade Boner
Gavin Wallace	Pastor Chris Heinold
Blake Zaurba	Gemayel Heinold
Case Becker	




Growing  
In Faith  
Together


At the end of April we will finish the 2022-23 GIFT season with a special evening of celebration. On Wednesday April 26 we will meet at church and will rejoice that we have Grown in Faith Together. Special activities and games, a Godly Play lesson, music and a meal fill the evening beginning at 5:30 pm. This season of GIFT has been full of energy and vitality, with new families joining this Christian Education ministry throughout the year. As we look to celebrate this season, we pause to thank all those who help make this ministry possible—volunteers who cook, serve, clean up, teach, assist, lead, pray, and donate food or funds. We thank the Lord that our congregation has been blessed with this GIFT! The GIFT adventure continues in fall...




## Looking Ahead – Dates for your Calendar



- Sunday March 12— On Becoming a Lutheran—Coffee & Conversation with Pastor Chris following worship
- Sunday March 19—Country Gospel Worship followed by a Spring Fellowship Event with Hamburgers & Hot Dogs for all
- Sunday March 26—Congregation Baby Shower for Vicar Daniel & Mallory



- Sunday April 2—Palm Sunday with reception of new members.  
Monthly Communion in Cars from 12-12:30 pm for the mobility impaired
- Thursday April 6—Maundy Thursday Worship @ 1:30 pm & 7:15 pm
- Friday April 7—Good Friday Worship @ 2:00 pm
- Sunday April 9—Easter Worship @ 7:00 am & 10:15 am
- Saturday April 15—Hamburger Fundraiser @ SVFD Cook-off & Car Show
- Sunday April 16—Worship with Confirmation; Reception following church
- Saturday April 22—Southwestern Texas Synod Assembly Learning & Fellowship Event (Seguin)
- Sunday April 23—Youth Worship Service
- Wednesday April 26—GIFT Celebration ending 2022-23 GIFT season
- Sunday April 30—Worship with Recognition of Graduates; Reception following church along with a Fifth Sunday Covered Dish Dinner



- Saturday May 6—Southwestern Texas Synod Digital Business Assembly
- Sunday May 7—Mother’s Day Polka Service
- Friday May 12—JOY (Just Older Youth) gather for a midday meal

Looking ahead:



**Vacation Bible School**—Monday July 10-14

**Campers to Camp Chrysalis**—Sunday July 16-21



### 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 SPRING 2023**  
*Publication schedule is now at the end of February, May, August, and November.*



**WORSHIP**

**SUNDAYS @ 10:15 am**

In person or online @ Shiner Lutheran Facebook Page



**EVERY WEDNESDAY in March:**

**1:30 pm Lenten Brief Service with Communion in Sanctuary—"Amazing Grace"  
7:15 pm Lenten Worship—"Unfinished..."**



Worship Schedule for  
**Holy Week**

**Sunday April 2 @ 10:15 am—Palm/Passion Sunday**

**Thursday April 6 @ 1:30 pm & 7:15 pm—Maundy Thursday**

**Friday April 7 @ 2:00 pm—Good Friday Tenebrae Service**

**Sunday April 9 @ 7:00 am—Early Easter Worship**

**Sunday April 9 @ 10:15 am—Easter Worship**

**AVAILABLE  
ONLINE**

**Visit Our Website: [www.shinerlutheran.org](http://www.shinerlutheran.org)  
News/Events/Calendar/Connect/Give— Information and Links**