



SITKA LUTHERAN CHURCH — ELCA



Soundings

February 2012

VIEW OF THE SOUND

It seemed like in the minute after midnight on December 25th all the candy in the stores changed to Valentine's Day candy. While chocolate Santa Clauses and candy canes were relegated to the sale bins, out came the red heart shaped boxes of chocolate, and sugary treats tinged with love. "Out with St. Nicholas and in with St. Valentine". On February 15th we might be saying, "Out with St. Valentine and in with St. Patrick." Saints deserve so much more respect than to be tossed around the candy bins.

In other denominations there are very specific people who are called saints. In fact, our Roman brothers and sisters honor a different saint just about every day, sometimes more than one. Notice I wrote, "honor". In denominations where acknowledging saints is more prevalent it is important to know that followers "honor" saints, but *worship* only God.

Martin Luther is famous for saying that Christians are "simultaneously saint and sinner." This both/and approach is a distinctly Lutheran understanding of who we are in God's eyes. Saints are forgiven sinners. Here are some other thoughts Luther had on saints.....

+Just as we should not deny that we are baptized and Christians, so should we not deny or doubt that we are holy. It would be well to impress this deeply on people and accustom them not to be shocked at it or hesitate to accept it.

+But we say that the real saints of Christ must be good, stout sinners and remain saints who are not ashamed to pray the Lord's Prayer

+We are all saints and cursed is he who does not want to call himself a saint. You are far saintlier than your names indicate. However, you do owe this not to yourself but to the will of God, who would be your Father. To call yourself a saint is, therefore, no presumption but an act of gratitude and confession of God's blessings. Since, then God sanctifies you in Baptism and adorns you with His holy Word, you must surely be holy by grace. Only beware of the ambition to make yourself holy by your own works and then to step before God and teach Him holiness too. He wants to sanctify you and will have no directions about sanctification from you. Be sure to give this some thought.

So, hello to all you saints out there. Enjoy the sweetness of God's grace.

Peace.

Pastor Sandra †



February Events

- Feb. 2, Thurs. 12:30 p.m. WELCA meeting at Sitka Pioneers' Home
 4, Sat. 9:30 a.m. Parish Life meeting
 8, Wed. 7 p.m. Congregation Council meeting
 12, Sun. 10:30 a.m. Boy Scouts Sunday
 16, Thurs. 12:30 p.m. WELCA meeting at Sitka Pioneers' Home
 20, Mon. 6 p.m. Monday Night Movie ~ "Koyaanisqatsi"
 Presidents' Day ~ Church Office Closed
 21, Tue. March newsletter items due today
 22, Wed. 7 p.m. Ash Wednesday Imposition of Ashes
 29-Mar. 3, Wed.-Sat. Pastor Sandra in Anchorage

†



MONDAY NIGHT AT THE MOVIES FEBRUARY 20, 6 P.M.

KOYAANISQATSI

Prepare to be dazzled and disturbed.

This 1983 visually stunning film is a documentary (of sorts). It is also a visual concert of images set to the haunting music of Phillip Glass. While there is no plot in the traditional sense, there is a definite scenario. The film opens on ancient native American cave drawings, while the soundtrack chants "Koyaanisqatsi" which is a Hopi Indian term for "life out of balance".

So come to the church Monday February 20 at 6 p.m. for an unforgettable film experience. You can bring your own dinner, if you'd like. Popcorn will be provided. Invite your friends! †

SNOW SHOVELERS NEEDED!

If it's snowing you can bet that the parking lot at the church needs shoveling. Just pitch in and help out. There is a large push scoop and a small shovel. Take your pick. Special thanks to all who have helped out so far this winter. †



SITKA LUTHERAN TO HOST SE CLUSTER RENDEZVOUS

Pastors, representatives and visitors from the Lutheran congregations of southeast Alaska will be in Sitka for the March 9-11 Southeast Cluster Gathering. We'll need volunteers to provide housing for up to 40 people and assistance with providing meals during the weekend. If you'd like to help, please contact the church office staff at 747-3338 and you'll be directed to the coordinators. Thank you! †

Church Staff

Pastor: The Rev. Sandra S. Rudd
 Admin. Assist.: Cynthia Johnstone
 Accompanist: Dave Nicholls, Elaine Strelow

Congregation Council Members

President:Elaine Strelow
 Vice President:Wayne Dye
 Secretary:Greg Johnstone
 Treasurer:Helen Cunningham
 Patti Mac Pike Jon Fish
 Myron Oen Bill Winslow
 Lori Downing Harvey Brandt
 Nels Lawson

Office Hours

Secretary: Monday - Friday, 9 - 11:30 a.m.;
 12:30 - 2 p.m.

Pastor: Mon., Tue., Thurs. 9 a.m. - noon
 Wed. 3 p.m. - 6 p.m. and by appointment; Friday - day off

Contact Pastor Sandra at the church office,
 her cell phone, 752-0123 or
 pr.sandraak@yahoo.com.

NEWSLETTER SPONSORSHIP

This month's mailing of *Soundings* is made possible by a donation from Gale and Doug Freese, Summer Volunteers from 1996. Thank you, Gale and Doug! God Bless You.

A \$55 check will sponsor an issue of *Soundings*. To commemorate or celebrate a person or event, include with your donation that information and the issue you want dedicated (it must reach the office by the 20th of the previous month).

Send sponsor check, change of address or request for address removal to:

SITKA LUTHERAN CHURCH
 P.O. Box 598, Sitka, AK 99835
 (907) 747-3338
 e-mail: slc.admin@acsalaska.net
 www.sitkalutheranchurch.org

February Birthdays

Marilyn Hanson	Feb. 10
Linda Swanson	11
Delainey Steffes	11
Linda Janacek	20
Teagan Bickar	20
Lois Rhodes	23
Linda Selvig	23
Catherine Hawk	28
Craig Buehler	28
Colette Twitchell-Davis	28



Happy Birthday!

SITKA LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FOR JANUARY 11, 2012

Attending: Pastor Sandra Rudd, Myron Oen, Harvey Brandt, Elaine Strelow, Jon Fish, Greg Johnstone, Patti MacPike, Wayne Dye, Helen Cunningham - Treasurer

Absent and excused: Lori Downing, Nels Lawson, Bill Winslow

Guests/Visitors: Stan Shoening

President Elaine Strelow called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm

- Joys and concerns were shared, followed by a Gathering Prayer.
- Stan Schoening shared his progress on the paddle project. He presented a design concept that would be painted on the paddle. There was consensus that the design would be a good representation of Sitka Lutheran Church and our heritage.
- There was discussion of what we would do as Bible Work in future Council meetings.
- Minutes of the December 15, 2011 Council meeting were approved as written.
- Correspondence: Harvey Brandt shared that 2 former volunteers had sent letters that he would post on the bulletin board.
- Treasurer's report as of December 31, 2011 was approved, subject to audit. General Fund Income was approximately \$136,000; expenses were \$140,000. Stewardship and financial giving was discussed.
- Pastor's report was accepted. Pastor Sandra would like to have one more Bible study time and will be exploring times and settings. She also provided copies of a number of articles that she has read in order that the Council members might have a feel for "what the buzz is" from various religious writers. The SE Cluster Gathering, hosted by Sitka Lutheran March 9 - 11 was discussed. Pastoral leave was approved for 2 days in March.

Committee Reports:

Parish Life – Patti MacPike started a discussion on the functioning or lack of functioning of the committees. How do we recruit people that have an interest in an area rather than try to just fill the slots?

Resources – A Planning meeting was scheduled for Wednesday Jan. 18th after Soup and Worship.

- Summer volunteers have been chosen. Housing is needed in late July and early August for 2 sets of volunteers.
- There will be another Garage Sale in March/April

for the Youth Trip to New Orleans.

- Energy Audit update- there are a couple of mistakes about light fixtures in it. Project assignments will be made by the Resources Committee.
- Agave Restaurant exhaust vent update – We have been informed that the vent belongs to the building owners so we will need to work with them to have the problem corrected.

Continuing Ministry Opportunities:

- Interim Bishop Maier's visit on January 13 – 15 was discussed. Plans were made for a Saturday meet and greet time, time for touring, getting to know our town, evening entertainment, time to visit Sunday School/Adult Forum, presiding at Sunday worship, and worship at the Pioneer's Home.
- Sound System Update – Ben Downing was out of town for work training.
- Annual Meeting reports/planning – January 29th, potluck
- Cluster Meeting – The theme is First Nation Emphasis. There will be discussion and Native dance groups will be asked to dance for the group. There will be conversations about the selection of a new Bishop for the Alaska Synod.

New Ministry Opportunities:

Future dates – Epiphany Season ends with Ash Wednesday on February 22, then Lent until Easter, April 8th.

Greg Johnstone, Secretary

HOUSING FOR VOLUNTEERS JULY & AUGUST 2012

Housing for summer volunteers from July 20th thru August 12th, 2012 is needed. Harvey and Kathleen Brandt have family visiting at that time so, there is no space for volunteers at the "Brandt Inn" late July- early August. If you have an idea please step forward because volunteers are being scheduled at this time.

Any ideas are welcome. Solid commitments are preferred. The planning lead time is 12 months for this program. Volunteers are typically signed up over 6 months in advance -- some are signed up a year in advance.

Call 747-6447 or 747-3338 if you have an offer, an idea or (best of all) a commitment for part of or all of this time slot. †

ENERGY AUDIT OF OUR BUILDING

The Resource Committee met recently to plan the implementation of the recent energy audit. Sitka Lutheran Church will have invested several thousand dollars in an energy audit and subsequent improvements. Andy Baker, expert energy consultant and assisted by four church volunteers, came up with a dozen or more serious energy deficiencies in our building. Some are costly and others are jobs that take a little time, a little caulk or a bit of insulation. *We are asking members of the congregation to step forward and help out.* Please contact a member of the Resource Committee or member of the Church Council to see what you can do. Some of these tasks are simply being a go-fer for the person doing the job - holding a ladder, handing material up to them -- lending a hand.

This is significant for the congregation, for the community of Sitka and for us as good stewards of the resources God has given us. We all know that Sitka is experiencing an energy crunch and Sitka Lutheran needs to do its part. **Please help! †**

ATTENDANCE RECORDS SITKA LUTHERAN CHURCH

by Harvey Brandt

Attendance at Sunday services has dropped rather dramatically since 2007 (see figures below). Attendance was calculated using Sundays only. In mid-2008 the early morning service was dropped due to meager attendance.

We trust that good things will happen at SLC in 2012 and now that attendance has stabilized in the 40s perhaps we shall see an increase in attendance at Sunday worship services.

- Average Sunday attendance - 2007 = 70
- Average Sunday attendance - 2008 = 61
- Average Sunday attendance - 2009 = 46
- Average Sunday attendance - 2010 = 43
- Average Sunday attendance - 2011 = 43

(Pastor's note: There is another statistic we should also keep in mind - **"Total number of people, including children, actively participating in the life of the congregation in 2011."** This phrase is taken from the Congregation Report to churchwide. This year I will be reporting this number to be **86**. This number includes our average Sunday attendance in worship, our Sunday school children, the youth who show-up on Sunday afternoon, and the summer volunteers - all contributors to our congregational life. It is interesting to note that *where* and *why* people show up at church is diversifying.) †

SLC BENEVOLENCE REPORT

Nearly \$34,000 was donated by members and friends of SLC to benevolence causes in 2011. An outpouring of hearts and pocketbooks to a variety of causes.

Sitka Lutheran Church members and friends generously supported missions, quilt-making, world hunger, Lutheran World Relief, rebuilding Peace Lutheran in Joplin, Missouri, Youth Group and an abundance of other activities. Volunteers Patsy and Gary Snodgrass through the Snodgrass Family Foundation, Inc. donated \$5,000 toward repair of our back wall. Volunteers Don and Kathy Sanderson and their congregation donated hundreds of dollars toward a new popcorn machine for SLC (not yet ordered). A new Kessler Organ pump and a chair lift required special gifts and members and friends stepped up to the plate here also. Cookies, coffee and repair projects are donated anonymously by members and friends.

Benevolence from Sitka Lutheran Church and benevolence donations directed to Sitka Lutheran Church in 2011 were focused and generous. Thanks to all who support the missions of the ELCA, the Alaska Synod and Sitka Lutheran Church. This is Stewardship! †

YOUTH GROUP 2012

The Sitka Lutheran Church Youth Group started up again in January. Elaine Strelow hosted a baked potato bar on January 8th and students made homemade ice cream on Jan 15th.

Along with the homemade ice cream students were given a tour of the church by Kathleen Brandt and Pr. Sandra. They also enjoyed the Sunday School kids art work on the "tablecloths".

Teens who attended recently: Emmie Fish/Sitka, Miranda Johnson/Pilot Station, Miranda Slwooko/Gambell, Macy Kenworthy/Kotzebue, Tanya Chikigak/Alakanuk, Ashley Sagoonick/Unalakleet.



Adults have generously supported this Sunday afternoon program at SLC: Pr. Sandra, Interim Bishop Don Maier, Helen Cunningham, Elaine Strelow, Wayne Dye, Amy Kipp-Phillips, Patty Bickar, Lois Rhodes, Harvey and Katheen Brandt.

Phyllis and Jerry Oomen – traveling nurses from Michigan – worked for SEARHC last year and faithfully supported SLC by attending worship, donating money for our mission and providing endless photos and a booklet of photos of youth activities taken last year. In a recent e-mail Phyllis stated, “I enjoy taking photos. I’m glad that people were able to enjoy the book. I pray that God continues to work in the lives of the many teens that come and go thru your ministry there. I will keep praying that the work of the Lord will shine through.”

Special thanks to Jon and Eve Fish for providing transportation and advertising for teens. Pr. Sandra also introduced her new ice cream maker at a recent gathering.

Pizza, robots, paper airplanes, board games, interactive group games, picnics and hikes are just a few of the activities planned for the next few months. If you are tired of Sunday afternoon football and TV come and join the adults sponsoring the SLC Youth Group on Sunday afternoon. †

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

During the first Sunday of each month at the Sunday school gathering at 9:15 a.m., we will collect and roll the Barnyard Banks to put in the offering plates. We can receive the banks on other Sundays as well if people are going to be out of town or otherwise absent.

Sunday school will be practicing a couple of songs for Easter Sunday. Anyone wishing to join us is welcome. See Laura Buehler, Patti MacPike or Sherri Kluting. †

YOUTH FUND-RAISERS CONTINUE

Garage Sales Coming – Stuff is Needed

Two more garage sales are scheduled for March and April. Please bring GOOD STUFF to Brandts at 3704 Halibut Pint Road. We welcome: art work, electronics, tools, yard tools, bicycles, kids toys, jewelry, camping equipment, kitchen utensils/housewares, kitchen-ware, Legos, board games, books, furniture, appliances. A used car, truck, canoe, motorcycle, kayak or outboard motor would be welcome.

Please support our youth in their trip to the New Orleans Youth Gathering July 18-22, 2012. If any youth wish to attend the All-Alaska Youth Gathering in March –these garage sales also support that youth activity. †

RUSSIAN-AMERICAN HISTORY CONFERENCE IN FINLAND

An opportunity to learn some Lutheran history while enjoying a trip to Finland. Maria Enckell and Eva Meyer, both of whom have done extensive research on Sitka Lutheran Church are key leaders in organizing this conference.

The Åland Islands Emigrant Institute will host **August 20-25, 2012 Conference on Russian America Mariehamn, Åland Islands, Finland.** The conference languages will be English and Russian. [The Åland Islands Emigrant Institute](#)

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M/V CHRISTIAN NEWS

Greetings from the M/V Christian to all our friends and ministry partners in 2012! Here's a short summary of our Fall/Winter 2011-12 'Doings'.

In October, we were delighted to attend and provide housing on board, for Alaska Native Brotherhood and Sisterhood delegates, during their Grand Camp gathering in Klawock. This Christian organization gathers Native men and women from across the state and Pacific Northwest, to advocate for Native rights and issues. Last year we were invited to join, and were very excited to meet many new friends. We were encouraged by their willingness to stop events and pray about concerns as they arose during the gathering. We hope to assist the leadership to rally membership in the villages in the coming spring, by hosting the elders and leaders on board the M/V Christian, transporting them from village to village in Southeast Alaska.

We were happy to visit congregations and meet with supporters of the ministry in the Pacific Northwest in November during a development trip. Later in the month, friends in Hydaburg invited us to spend Thanksgiving with them. The following weekend we helped carry and raise a Centennial Totem Pole in celebration of the 100th year of their village. We celebrated the first Sunday of Advent with folks in Klawock, with an evening prayer service.

December found us in the Northern waters of the Southeast Alaskan Panhandle. Weather becomes more dicey, as well as icy! Fortunately, we found holes of calm weather between storm systems, and made it to Juneau, Hoonah, Angoon and Kake, to wish all our friends a

Blessed Christmas. It is such a privilege to share in the lives, struggles and hopes of so many precious folk. We are honored to walk alongside them, and worship and study together during this Advent time. Together we look toward the New Year!

As far as challenges and concerns, we are needing to replace the fresh water and salt water pressure tanks soon, as Stan has discovered some leaking. The pumps are working over-time to keep the pressure up, and we have to turn them off at intervals. Also, the aft sleeping quarters furnace is kaput, so will need to research how best to fix this. We are so thankful for the diesel cook stove, now one year old, which is also the main heat source for the boat. It is blissfully silent, and keeps this steel boat wonderfully warm. It is way more efficient than the original, fuel-wise as well.

As the mission of Lutheran Indian Ministries lies in raising up Christian Native leaders, to minister to their own and others, we know our job and calling is to work ourselves out of a job. We were excited to introduce a Native couple to our executive director in December, as possible new ministers on board the M/V Christian. We are hopeful and excited to explore all the new ways that the boat could be used in this way to further the mission of Lutheran Indian Ministries and the Gospel. More and more, we feel we are being called to step aside, and would ask that you would join us in prayer to discern and be faithful, in all that lies ahead. We envision a year of training, transition and celebration!

We are ever thankful for you all, for your partnership with us, in prayer and support.

God's Peace and our love,

Pastor/Skipper Stan Berntson & Sharon Geldaker RN

P.S. The PBS program Visionaries will broadcast their episode featuring the M/V Christian & Lutheran Indian Ministries soon. Check local PBS stations to inquire when it will air near you! You can also access it soon in their Season 17 episodes online at www.visionaries.org.

M/V Christian ~ Be Heard. Work Healing. Serve Freed.

motorvesselchristian@gmail.com

907-617-3597 (AT&T)

907-254-1110 (ACS/Verizon)

PO Box 8416, Ktn AK 99901

www.lutheranindianministries.org



The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of what then shall I be afraid? (Psalm 27)

Prayers for the dying and their grieving families:

Horton Family

Prayers for recovery from surgery, injuries or illness: Bob and Midge Layton, Marilyn Hanson

Prayers for strength, courage and faith in cancer treatment: Pat McFadden; Dan Wegner; Lois Rhodes' daughter, Rhonda and her family; Nancy Beutel, Chris Pryor's sister, Linnea, Sue Fleming's great-niece Anna and her family

Prayers for heart or stroke patients and their families: Shirley Anderson

Prayers for other chronic health issues: Ruth Johnson, Trevor Kluting & family

Prayers for other needs:

Alaska Synod Prayer Partner for February, Brevig Memorial Lutheran Church, Brevig Mission

Pioneers' Home residents and staff

Families of all who are serving or have died serving around the world.

Bishops Mark Hanson (ELCA) interim bishop, Donald Maier (Alaska Synod)

Please call the church office, 747-3338, with any changes to the prayer list.



Celebrating Our Heritage An Historical Instrument Sounds New Notes

Sitka Lutheran church's 1844 Kessler Organ #45,
First pipe organ on the West Coast of North America

Harvey D. Huiner, organist

An excellent gift idea! Each CD is \$20 (inc. s/h). Make check payable to Sitka Lutheran Church and send it to Cynthia Johnstone, Sitka Lutheran Church, P.O. Box 598, Sitka, AK 99835. Be sure to include your mailing address. For CD play list, email the church office at slc.admin@acsalaska.net