

ABIDING SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH

CONNECTING JESUS TO PEOPLES' HEARTS

Church Telephone: 352 – 331 – 4409

Preschool Telephone: 352 – 331 – 7770

Online at www.AbidingSavior.info

NEWSLETTER FOR DECEMBER 2020

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MINISTRY TEAM LEADERS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

	<u>Officers</u>	
President	John Underwood	diagimg@aol.com
Vice President	Phyllis Leone	chunkymonkeysnana@gmail.com
Secretary	Natalie Petruska	4nataliejean@gmail.com
Treasurer	Ann Stone	anna@flstones.com
	<u>Elders</u>	
	Dave Buth	Davidbuth129@yahoo.com
	Chuck Moss	chuck_moss@msn.com
	Todd Williams	todd@forrentgainesville.com
	Jimmy Flateau	jmfjr@hughes.net
	Hal Lerch	haroldlerch@gmail.com
	Fred Townsend	f.send@outlook.com
	Derek Sain	sain.derek@gmail.com
	Ministry Team Leaders & Team Members	
Christian Education	Sarah Suter	ssticks1@gmail.com
- <i>Sunday School</i>	Sarah Suter/Derek Sain	ssticks1@gmail.com/sain.derek@gmail.com
- <i>Preschool</i>	Sarah Suter	ssticks1@gmail.com
Christian Fellowship	Danny Schmitt	youth@abidingsavior.info
- <i>Family Life</i>	Danny Schmitt	youth@abidingsavior.info
- <i>Women's Ministry</i>	Linda Struckmeyer	Struck60@gmail.com
- <i>Men's Ministry</i>	Pastor Alan Struckmeyer	pastora@abidingsavior.info
- <i>Youth</i>	Danny & Jessica Schmitt	youth@abidingsavior.info
Outreach & Evangelism	Hannah Mazur	hannahjmazur@gmail.com
Trustee		
Elders	Derek Sain	Sain.derek@gmail.com

	<u>Administrative Staff</u>	
Pastor	Rev. Alan Struckmeyer	pastora@abidingsavior.info
Director, Music & Digital Ministries	Joshua L. Mazur, M.M.	jmazur@abidingsavior.info
Church Administrator	Susan Moss	smoss@abidingsavior.info
Preschool Director	Brenda Arden	barden@abidingsavior.info
Preschool Admin. Asst.	Jessica Schmitt	jessica@abidingsavior.info

PASTOR ALAN UPDATE

We can rejoice that Pastor Alan was able to return home from the hospital in time for Thanksgiving. He and Linda enjoyed time with their sons and daughters-in-law over Thanksgiving and have continued to join with our Abiding Savior family for worship online.

Please continue to keep Pastor Alan and Linda in your prayers as he recovers from an infection and continues treatment for his glioblastoma.

DECEMBER CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

A congregational business meeting will be held on Sunday, December 13th at 9:45am in the FLC with a Zoom link available for those unable to attend in person. A draft agenda and the 2021 budget proposal are available on the welcome table in the narthex. A Zoom link will be provided to all members with the agenda and budget proposal attached.

ADVENT DEVOTIONALS & PORTALS OF PRAYER

Advent Devotionals, *God with Us*, from Lutheran Hour Ministries are available on the welcome table in the narthex. Take one home for daily self-study and reflection during this season of Advent.

January-March Portals of Prayer are available on the welcome table in the narthex. Feel free to pick them up at the church anytime! The church office is

open daily Monday through Thursday from 8:00am to 3:00pm and from 8:00 am to noon on Friday.

SEWING FOR MISSIONS

Sewing for Missions is the 2nd and last Saturday of the month. December 12th will be the only meeting this month. Regularly scheduled mission quilt sewing will resume in January. We will spread out into the fellowship hall. Gloves will be provided. Please wear your masks. Contact Linda at struck60@gmail.com for more information.

PRESCHOOL NEWS – BRENDA ARDEN, DIRECTOR

The Abiding Savior Preschool students have been practicing and preparing to record songs of praise of Jesus' birth for our Christmas Pageant. We will be recording our Christmas pageant December 1-4. The Christmas Pageant recordings will be shared with our Abiding Savior Lutheran Preschool and Church families on December 10 and 11. Singing is a special way to spread the good news of Jesus' birth. "Go Tell it on the Mountain".

The preschool families have been living generously as "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts 20:35 during the month of November. We collected 62 boxes for Operation Christmas Child to be delivered to children all over the world and many nonperishable food items for the Bread of the Mighty Food Bank! The amazing generosity shared by the preschool families is a blessing from God.

During the month of December, the preschoolers will enjoy viewing the Christmas Pageant and celebrating Jesus' birthday. December Bible stories will include Jesus is Born, The Angel's Announcement to the Shepherds, and The Wise Men Find Jesus. The season of Advent begins on November 29. Advent is a time of waiting and preparation for Jesus' birth at Christmas time. The Advent wreath reminds us of God's never-ending love. During the upcoming weeks we will be reminded of the hope, peace, joy, and love that comes from Jesus.

The preschool will be hosting a Scholastic Book Fair the week of December 7-11. The Book Fair will be open daily from 8:00-9:30, 11:30-1:30, and 2:30-3:30 in the Octagon Room. The Book Fair will also be open Sundays, December 6 and 13,

from 9:00-10:30. There will be a limit of 15 people in the book fair. Masks and hand sanitizer will be required. You can also shop online at the following link: <https://www.scholastic.com/bf/abidingsaviorpreschool1> The preschool receives a portion of the proceeds to buy new books for the classrooms and the library.

Abiding Savior Lutheran Preschool students, staff, and families wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year filled with the hope, peace, joy and love from our Savior, Jesus Christ!

In His Hands,
Brenda Arden,
Preschool Director

ALTAR CARE

Altar for December:

Cindy Brannon (chair), Jan Banks, Karen Herder, and Samantha Nuckolls

Altar for January 2021:

Muriel Young (chair), JoAnn Petersen, Georganne Eibe, and Patti Gill

LUTHERAN CHURCH EXCHANGE FUND (LCEF)

Christmas Ideas

With this topsy-turvy year of COVID-19, most shopping will be online. If you are looking for ideas, why not select something with the Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) that helps our church grow while helping you save?

As expected, national interest rates remain depressed and disappointing. However, LCEF short-term fixed-rate notes are higher than many comparable bank CD rates. Likewise, the Steward Account Certificate starts at 0.125% with just \$100 to open an account, which is much better than bank money market and savings account rates. The LCEF rates go up for larger amounts and are also flexible in terms of adding and withdrawing funds.

You may go to “lcef.org” to see rates for other minimum amounts, longer terms, a variety of options and application forms. If there are children or grandchildren involved, the Young Investors Club is a wonderful way to start a savings plan. Rates are 2.0% for the first \$1,000 and 0.50% over that amount.

FELLOWSHIP REPORT – DANNY SCHMITT

Family life – We have resumed a limited, outdoor only, fellowship opportunity after early service each Sunday. Coffee and snacks are provided. Other events remain on pause to guard the health and safety of all. However, we are encouraged that Abiding Savior members are attending online worship and checking in on the well-being of each other via phone and email.

Youth – continues online and with limited on-site events. Contact Danny at Youth@abidingsavior.info for more information

OUTREACH AND EVANGELISM REPORT – HANNAH MAZUR

In 2020, Abiding Savior Lutheran Church and Preschool has had many opportunities to spread the love of Jesus through meeting the immediate physical needs in our community! We packaged and distributed sandwiches to the food and housing insecure in downtown Gainesville, provided hot meals to the residents of St. Francis House on a monthly basis, offered Vacation Bible School to children attending Summer Camp at ASLC, put together backpacks filled with school supplies for students at Metcalf Elementary, collected 470 pounds of food for Bread of the Mighty food bank this Thanksgiving, and will soon sponsor 30 children from Terwilliger Elementary with our Star Tree program, in hopes to make their Christmas just a little brighter this year.



I have happily served this congregation as Director of Outreach and Evangelism by organizing these things, but it is YOU who has taken the gifts and blessings our Savior has bestowed upon you, turned it right around, and given it back to furthering His kingdom here on earth. To God be the glory! Thank you to everyone who has given your time, talent, and/or treasure to help us carry out our mission which is 'Connecting Jesus to people's hearts'. I look forward to many more opportunities to spread the love of Jesus in 2021!

Star Tree Covid Style: This Christmas, we again have the opportunity to sponsor 30 children from Terwilliger Elementary School with our annual Star Tree! In past years, the star tree had been placed in the narthex with cards for each child for you to choose from. This year, we will be using an online sign up tool in order to select which child you would like to sponsor, should you wish to participate this year! If you need assistance in accessing the website, please contact Susan or Joshua in the church office.

The items on the wish lists are only a suggestion-please don't feel obligated to purchase all of the items- this is just to give you a sense of what the children's interests are. We were not provided with specific ages for the children this year; hopefully the items on their wish list and clothing sizes can provide some clues as to what their age might be.

In addition to the specific children to be sponsored, there is always a general shoe and sock need. If you would like to purchase new socks and shoes and bring them, they will certainly be put to use.

When your gift is ready to be turned in, simply drop it off in the narthex under the Star Tree (this is what we have done in previous years). Each child has been assigned a "code": A1, S2, etc. This is so we know which child is to receive that gift. Please make sure that you place a sticky note or some other paper on the outside of the bag with the code of your chosen child.

The final day for drop off is Sunday, December 13th.

Here is the link to sign up and select which child you will sponsor:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D45AFA72CA0FAC52-angel>

Thank you in advance for your participation in this opportunity to make a difference in a child's life this Christmas! If there are any questions, or if you would like to sponsor a child but don't want to physically go to the store to purchase gifts, please email me at hannahjmazur@gmail.com

St. Francis Ministry Team: Abiding Savior's St. Francis House outreach ministry will undergo some changes in the new year. The first is a logo, designed to provide a visual reminder of our mission to serve our less fortunate brothers and sisters in Gainesville.



The second change will be an on-line sign-up chart, located on our church website. You will be able to volunteer to prepare food items for the current month and for the months throughout the year. Those who are not comfortable with the on-line method can still contact me to volunteer.

Lastly, we are working to list our St. Francis House ministry as an option to send your Thrivent dollars to help financially support our outreach effort.

Final information and instructions will be presented during announcements in early January. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all who have helped over the last several years to support this outreach. It could not have been done without you.

Phyllis Leone (Email: ChunkyMonkeysNana@gmail.com; Cell: 352-316-3586)

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL – SARAH SUTER

Sunday School Kits

Kits that are related to the Gospel each week will be available for the children. If you would like one of these kits you can RSVP to office@abidingsavior.info with your family name, service time and how many you need. We will only make as many as have RSVPs.

ELDERS' REPORT – DEREK SAIN

Christmas Eve Communion Services
will be held at 4:00pm, 6:00pm and 8:00pm.

Midweek Advent services will be pre-recorded and available on the church
website on Dec. 2, 9, 16th.

MONTHLY BOOK CLUB

Book Club is on break through the holidays. If you would like to be added to the book club email list, please send your request to Georganne Eibe at savygg@yahoo.com

The next book club meeting will be a Zoom meeting on January 26th at 7:00pm. The book will be *“The Giver of Stars: A Novel,”* by Jojo Moyes.

ADULT BIBLE CLASSES

- **Girl Friends' Bible Study** meets at 9:30am via zoom for now. Email Linda Struckmeyer at struck60@gmail.com if you would like to receive a link to this class.
- **Chuck Moss** leads a zoom Bible Study on the book of First Samuel at 9:45am each Sunday. Email chuck_moss@msn.com if you would like to have a link to this class.
- **Pastor Alan's** Bible Study will be postponed for a few weeks.
- **Joshua Mazur** hosts an Adult Bible Study on the book of Psalms which meets via zoom at 7:00 pm on Sunday. For a link to the zoom class, please email JMazur@abidingsavior.info

FINANCE REPORT AS OF NOVEMBER 30, 2020

	Nov. est.	Year to date est.
Offerings	22,000	248,940
Preschool Income	62,843	594,262
Other Income	0	2,616
Total Income	84,843	845,818
Total Expenses	94,696	1,038,483
Net Income	- 9,853	- 192,665

Abiding Savior received a Payroll Protection Loan (PPP) for \$183,200 on April 14th. As a result, all the church and preschool staff, a total of 28 employees, were paid throughout the school and church shutdown during March, April, May and part of June. While offerings remained stable, preschool tuition disappeared. Starting in June, preschool tuition payments which cover preschool staff expense resumed. The forgiveness application was received and approved by our lender and we anticipate receiving word of complete forgiveness by the end of the year.

MUSIC & DIGITAL MINISTRY – JOSHUA L. MAZUR

Advent: A Penitential Season

Penitential, adj. from the latin *paenitentia* meaning “repentance.”

Various days of penance, repentance, or penitence, have been proclaimed and observed from time to time at various places. Does this mean that it is only during these times that we feel contrition for our sins? By no means. Does this mean that we may *only* feel contrition during these times? By no means.

Juxtaposed in the church year are times of “penitential” reflection and times of jubilant joy. If you’ve been attending a Lutheran church for some time you will have heard the terms “Law & Gospel” plenty of times; **Law** of course being the immutable will of God as expressed in his commandments and other commands concerning how humanity should be in thought, word, and deed, which we are hopelessly incapable of achieving – and **Gospel** being the doctrine that while we have not kept the law, and are therefore condemned by it, Christ has satisfied and paid for all guilt and without any help from us has obtained and won for us forgiveness of sins, and eternal life.

It is easy to recognize the seasons of Christmas and Easter as joyous times celebrating the victory expressed in the birth of our savior and the resurrection of our savior. What use is it to think of the seasons of Lent and Advent as penitential? In the same way that we hold Law and Gospel to be united doctrines (in the broad sense) the purpose of both penitential and joyous seasons become apparent as well. It is important to consider the fact that the world was in need of

a savior as we consider that He was born. It is important to consider the suffering and death of Christ as we consider that he was after three days arisen. The acknowledgement of these dual aspects of the reality of our Lord and Savior's actions on our behalf contribute to a fuller understanding of the wonderful and awesome gift that we have already received, while also giving us the opportunity to focus and reflect on our continuing need for grace.

It is, after all, good practice for life in general to juxtapose those realities as well. In the dark corners of our lives it is useful and a blessing to be able to reflect on the joyous assurances of the Gospel, while in the easy moments it may also be useful and proactive to consider the magnitude of God's law. Spiritual balance in this way may seem precarious and difficult but after all, the gate is narrow! (Matthew 7:13-14)

During this season of Advent, it may be advantageous to consider some of the words of Andrew Peterson's Cantata "Behold the Lamb of God": "So sing out with joy for the brave little boy who was God, but He made Himself nothing – He gave up his pride and He came here to die as a man. Therefore God exalted Him to the place of highest praises and He gave Him a name above every name, that at the very name of Jesus, Son of God, we would Sing out with joy... Of the power of Death undone by an infant born of glory, Son of God, Son of Man..."

Upcoming Events:

- **Contemporary Christmas Cantata*:** The Worship Team presents Andrew Peterson's BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD via Pre-Recorded livestream this Christmas Season. This work explores not only the traditional story of the birth of Christ but the very roots of our need for a savior, revealing how all of human history and every word of scripture whispers his name. *"Gather round you children come, listen to the old, old story of the power of death undone by and infant born of glory, who was God but He made himself nothing; He gave up His pride and He came here to die as a man."*

- **Christmas Choir Singing:** We will be presenting identical Christmas Eve services this Christmas and will need some singers to assist in leading worship at all services. No rehearsals will be held, all music will be hymns from the hymnal, and choristers will be separate from the congregation and distanced from each other in the choir room/loft.

Blessings, Joshua L. Mazur

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Birthdays

Julie Thomas	Dec. 1	Jeff Knittel	Dec. 19
Rachel Morgan	Dec. 2	Paul Schubring	Dec. 21
Chris Solinsky	Dec. 5	Alan Struckmeyer	Dec. 24
Parker Hutson	Dec. 7	Jamie Williams	Dec. 24
Jim Annis	Dec. 8	Muriel Young	Dec. 25
Ed Eibe	Dec. 11	Ralph Toppins	Dec. 27
Kelly Farah	Dec. 14	Greg Claus	Dec. 30
Daniel Mandeville	Dec. 16	Karen Herder	Dec. 30
Gabriel Knittel	Dec. 17	Ashley Gouthro	Dec. 31
Natalie Petruska	Dec. 17	Kristina Mandeville	Dec. 31
Emily Tappy	Dec. 17	Daniel Schmitt	Dec. 31
Kevin Hooper	Dec. 19		

Anniversary List

Brad & Sandra Morgan	Dec. 5
Chris & Amy Solinsky	Dec. 5
Ed & Georganne Eibe	Dec. 14
Greg & Maria Claus	Dec. 22
Charles & Susan Moss	Dec. 28
Daniel & Jessica Schmitt	Dec. 29

CURRENT PRAYER LIST

Names will be kept on the Prayer list for **one month** unless renewed.
Please call the church 331-4409 or Muriel Young 332-1386

Praises Pastor Alan's return home after hospitalization for infection.

Shut-Ins Fran Jacobs, Helen Hahn, Bill Evans

Sympathy Tom Tappy family; Buda family; Art Swett family
May our Lord comfort them and bring them peace

Members & Family

1. **Pastor Alan** – continued strength and healing
2. June Amadio (Asst. living) Hannah's grandmother
3. **Leonard Atwater** (open heart surgery) Annetta Coleman's brother
4. Michelle Buth (praises for cancer in remission)
5. **Lynn Cera** (Parkinson's home care)
6. Bill Evans (health issues)
7. **Stephen Forguson** (regain faith) by Jan Hamilton
8. **Carla Flateau** (nerve impingement on spine)
9. Jimmy Flateau (headaches-neurologist)
10. **John Furey** (healing) by Colleen Toppins
11. Randy Gill (stroke but home now)
12. **Linda Goddard** (lung cancer – radiation)
13. Ron Green (lesion on lung) Ginger Morgan's father
14. **Andy Hamilton** (Parkinson's)
15. Jan Hamilton (pray doctor can bring sight back in one eye & heart issues)
16. **Beth Harland** (Immune system problems)
17. Leon Hekking (newborn ALD) Nobles grandson
18. **Betty Holland** (health issues)
19. Bob Knittel (probable cancer) Jeff's dad
20. **Phyllis Knuth** (John's aunt) esophageal cancer
21. Evan Leone (allergies/ADHD)
22. **Jimmy Leone** (neck/spine surgery)
23. Pam Leone (fractured foot & arm injury)
24. **Dan Nobles** (health issues)
25. Amy Nobles (thyroid cancer in remission) Karen and Dan's daughter-in-law
26. **Becky Mazur** (healing from stroke) Joshua's mom

27. Tim Melvin (COPD & CHF heart attack) Georganne's brother
28. **Greg Miller-House** (cancer)
29. Loga Moffett (age 6 – bad foot injury) Lerch's grandson
30. **Janet Palfey** (mastectomy and lymph nodes) Linda's cousin
31. Kathy Pine (cancer) by Debbie Rhoads
32. **Carol Prins** (back fractures)
33. Todd Robel (aggressive prostate cancer; broken limbs) by Karen Nobles
34. **Jennifer Scott** (cancer – double mastectomy) Mike and Cindy's niece
35. Pamela Spalin (stage 4 brain cancer) S. Mandeville's cousin
36. **Annika Spaberg** (health issues) Chiarelli's niece
37. Ann Stone (shoulder surgery 11/1)
38. **Bill Stone** (diabetes/health – prostate radiation)
39. Carol Stroehlen (cancer is back) infusions – Charlene's mom
40. **Kendall Tormey** (pregnancy complications) Megan Knittel's sister
41. Bob Wilber (Shand's Vista) Carla's stepdad worsening dementia
42. **Doris Wilber** (a-fib) Carla's mother
43. Debbie Zoerler (cancer -chemo) by Robert Pagano
44. **Pastor Alan's Uncle Bob** – broken hip/dementia

General Petitions

- Pray for Covid 19 victims.
- Pray for young people in college.
- Pray for Families and victims fleeing war and poverty.
- Pray for those dealing with disasters: fires, floods & hurricanes. May our Lord comfort them and give them courage.
- Pray for our country- our president and our elected officials

Military

Especially those deployed in combat zones

Eric Tappy – Iraq

Casey Dougherty (MP) by Annetta

Rachel Dougherty by Annetta

Eric Eibe

Jack Furey CSM Retired Colleen Toppin's Dad – doing well

Jason Furey

Matthew Gustafson

Jason Joseph (Alaska) by Phyllis Leone

Jennifer Kelly (Air Force) by DJ
Sam Kleinhauser (sniper)
Patrick Nobles (Air Force – Alaska)
Matt Young - Air Force Reserve home from Turkey
Nathan Underwood – San Diego, CA
Josh Wervy USMC (Nobles grandson) Japan
James A. Zoerler – 3rd deployment by Robt. Pagano

Friends of ASLC

Peter Alberts (cancer) by Kris Pagenkopf
Bolin family adoption process
Lauren Brasington (auto immune pain)
Vivian Bueker (major heart issues) by Pastor Alan
Jack Buth (stroke) by Mandeville
Aaron Caraway (cancer) hospice by Rhoads
Rhet Cooper (3yr. old – cancer) by Jessica Schmitt.
Aundrea Corbet (health issues)
Theresa Ferguson (cancer/hospice) by Carla
Pat Gaylord (cancer-hospice care) by the Rhoads
Merle Gill – NFRH heart failure (by Carla)
Charlie Hill (3 yr. old. Needs liver trans.) by Amy Solinsky
June Hood (throat cancer) by Inez
Cathy Jennings (brain tumor not responding)
Lavonne Lumsden (hospice care) by April
Mary Lynch (open heart surgery) by Jan Hamilton
Mike Malardi (brain cancer - shunt) by Len Young
John Martin (fell-broke back/crushed ribs, etc) by J. Flateau
Ashley Martinez-Malo (pregnant/breash cancer) by Schmitts
Rhonda Matheny (tonsil cancer)
Bryan McCarthy (colon cancer-kidney failure) by Jan and Andy Hamilton
Carol McCarthy (breast cancer)
Frank Neece (Feb. brain surgery) by wife Trish
Benny Nettles (spine surgery) by the Rhoads
Angie Newman (hip replacement) by R. Chiarelli
Judith Newson (healing) by Colleen
Richard Olson (cancer treatments) by the Rhoads
Paula Pennekamp (breast cancer - chemo for 5 mo.)

Marilyn Rabin (dialysis and health issues)
Dawn Sandvig (stem cell – lupus)
John Scott (Covid 19 serious) by Muriel
Tom Scott (shoulder replacement)
Steve Smittle (in hospital for several weeks – mersa etc.)
Loni Sheets (heart)
Wendy Thomas (cancer) by Flateaus
Brent Toeller (prostate surgery) by John Knuth
Kevin Tredinick (quadriplegic (seriously ill))
Jimbo Walsh (bladder cancer) by Flateaus
Diane Ward (full of cancer – weeks to live)
Eric Werner (failing health) by Annetta Coleman
Joanne Wofford (stage 4 cancer)

*May Our Lord continue to watch over and bless Abiding Savior
Lutheran Church, Pastor Alan and our congregation leaders.
Sustain us all and bring us back together stronger than ever.*

ABIDING SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH

CONNECTING JESUS TO PEOPLES' HEARTS

9700 W. Newberry Rd.

Gainesville, Florida 32606

Church Telephone: 352 – 331 – 4409

Preschool Telephone: 352 – 331 – 7770

Online at www.AbidingSavior.info

In-Person Worship Has Resumed

Attendance is limited to 50 participants.

Please call weekly to reserve your spot.

8:00am – Divine Service with Organ

10:45am – Divine Service with Praise Team