

ST. ANDREW WEEKLY NEWS

January 2, 2026

St. Andrew Lutheran Church
12405 SW Butner Road, Beaverton, OR 97005

Worship Service:
Sunday, 9:30 am

www.standrewlutheran.com ■ Telephone: 503-646-0629

The Faithful Middle: Lutheran Theology in a Polarized Extremist World

In the acclaimed movie, *Conclave*, Ralph Fiennes, playing the role of Archbishop Lawrence, dean of the conclave to select a new Pope, announces to the assembled Cardinals at the beginning of their work that the ultimate sin is certainty. He then proceeds to affirm the necessity of doubt. Presumably he means that certainty without doubt can be misguided, even dangerous. And we might add that doubt without conviction leads to hopeless confusion that makes living well difficult. In other words, conviction (certainty) and doubt ought always to be in dialogue, in tension.

But we need look no further than our own Lutheran historical and theological tradition. Luther, working and writing in the sixteenth century and heavily influenced by St. Paul and St. Augustine, developed his own theological polarities and tensions. What all these examples and these traditions have in common is that the polarities must necessarily work together in some kind of balance and harmony; the one without the other makes no sense or leads to extremism, or both.



Jim Aageson will lead this five-week course on Sundays at 11:00 am in Fellowship Hall beginning **January 4**. A brief exception: The class that is scheduled for **Sunday, January 11**, will start late, at 11:20 am, and will be held in the sanctuary, so as to accommodate the Retirement Reception for Carol Harker.

Volunteer to Bake the Bread that Feeds Souls

Do you like to bake? We need your talents to prepare the gluten-free bread we use for Holy Communion at Sunday worship. More bakers are needed to supply enough bread for our growing congregation. Please volunteer today by contacting Carolyn Teifel (carolynteifel@comcast.net) who will send you the recipe along with directions. Volunteers typically bake communion bread about once a month. A big thank you to all who support St. Andrew's ministry and worship through this important task and blessed offering.



Urgent Need for Working Clothes Washer



DEAR (Daytime Enrichment Activities & Recreation) is in need of an immediate replacement for their used washer that has broken. This machine is run daily to launder clothes following use by DEAR's customers. Please call or text Gordon Teifel at 503-267-2041 who will arrange free pick-up of the donation.

Preparing for Carol Harker's Farewell

God be with you till we meet again. -ELW #536

Our farewell for Carol Harker is fast approaching! A reception in her honor will be held in Fellowship Hall on **Sunday, January 11**, immediately following the worship service. Gifts will be presented to her during the celebration.



If you would like to contribute financially to the gifts being given, there is an option for online giving marked "Carol Farewell." Checks are also welcome, but need to be designated for such by writing "Carol's Farewell" in the memo line. Since time is so tight, we are asking that all donations be in by **this Thursday, January 8**.

There will also be a basket at the farewell for cards and notes. Sign-up sheets are available in the narthex, one for those wanting to help with the reception, and the other for those donating finger foods to be served alongside cake and coffee. Please contact Beth Johnson with any questions regarding this very special celebration.

Next New Member Sunday Is Almost Here



Our next New Member Sunday is scheduled for **January 11**! If you are considering membership at St. Andrew, please contact Pr. Allison Bengfort. She would love to get to know you, give you an overview of the St. Andrew community, and answer any questions you may have.

You can reach Pr. Allison Bengfort by phone at 503-646-0629, extension 201, or email at pastorallison@standrewlutheran.com.

Removal of the Greens

As we joyfully adorned our church for Advent and Christmas, now it's time to come together and put everything away until next year. This is very much an all hands on deck morning – many hands make light work, and the more helpers we have, the faster (and more fun) it will be!

Please join us on **Saturday, January 10**, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm to remove the greens and Christmas decorations from around the church. Please bring gloves and wire cutters as the garlands will need to be unwound and the greens placed in the yard waste bin in the parking lot.

Thank you for helping make our church so beautiful and festive at the Hanging of the Greens. Now, let's work together to get everything safely stored until next Advent.

For more information, please call or text Kim Taylor-Blakemore at 503-545-6133.



How to Recycle Christmas Lights (and a Few Other Holiday Supplies)

I hope you all had a meaningful and blessed Christmas Day! While we have enjoyed the festive cheer that Christmas lights bring, it will soon be time to put them away until next year. Unfortunately, those lovely strands of color are often not as durable as we would like them to be. Every year, it seems I have at least one strand of lights that no longer works.

Of course, it goes without saying that if you have Christmas lights or other Christmas decorations that are still useful, but no longer needed or wanted, you should take them to Habitat Restore or some other thrift store so someone else can enjoy them.

Why should we recycle Christmas lights? First, we should all be doing what we can to keep things out of the landfill. Second, holiday lights are made of valuable recyclable materials like copper wire, glass, and sometimes harmful lead. (Lead is highly recyclable and can be recycled indefinitely without losing quality.) And third, those lights which contain small amounts of lead would leak the toxic material into our environment if tossed in the trash. Because these materials can be reclaimed or recycled, they don't belong in the trash.

How to recycle Christmas lights. We should recycle these lights, but I realize it's hard to do! You can't put them in the recycle bin. A few hardware stores will take them; you could check with your local store. Many metal recyclers will take them as well. I checked with the following businesses to verify that they recycle Christmas lights:

- Habitat Restore, 13475 SW Millikan Way, Beaverton
- Habitat Restore, 16160 SW Upper Boones Ferry Rd, Portland
- SBC Recycle, 19040 SW Shaw St, Beaverton
- Far West Metals, 9665 SW Tualatin-Sherwood Rd, Tualatin

Mail-in recycling options. There are a couple of companies that you can send your light strands to. You pay the shipping, but in return they send you a coupon to use for ordering new lights.

- EnvironmentalLED.com offers a 10% coupon to replace your old light strands with efficient LED lights.
- HolidayLEDs.com offers 15% off of your next order of LED lights.

Note that modern Christmas lights are generally LED bulbs that will last longer, use less energy, and are safer because they don't heat up and become a fire risk.

Increase the longevity of your lights with proper storage. Most lighting problems don't occur while lights are on display, they happen during takedown and storage. Christmas lights contain thin wiring and delicate connections that don't respond well to pressure, moisture, or temperature swings. When strands are tossed loosely into boxes or tied into tight knots, internal wires weaken and sockets loosen. Moisture trapped inside containers can corrode metal components, while prolonged exposure to heat or cold can cause insulation to crack.



Rushing through takedown often leads to tangled cords, damaged bulbs, and unnecessary frustration the following year. Make sure the lights are dry before storing. Keep lights evenly wrapped and separated by wrapping cords loosely around a structured object such as light winders, extension cord reels, or sturdy cardboard. You can also coil them by hand and secure with twist ties. For shorter strands, you can hang them from coat hangers inside a closet.

Other Christmas recycling notes. These items can go into your curbside recycle bin:

- Paper gift wrap and tissue paper **without** glitter, plastic, or ribbons. No metal or foil wrapping paper.
- Cardboard boxes.
- Paper greeting cards **without** glitter, plastic do-dads, etc. And definitely no cards with batteries. These "singing cards" can cause dangerous fires at recycling centers.

Liz Hardy
Earth Care Team

Spirituality Book Group News

The Spirituality Book Group will meet in the upstairs library on **Sunday, January 11**, at 2:30 pm with Cathy Fallon leading the discussion on *The First Ladies* by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray.

"*The First Ladies* is a riveting look about Eleanor Roosevelt's political rise to First Lady and her eyebrow-raising friendship with civil rights activist Mary McLeod Bethune.... The women's friendship helped form the foundation for the modern civil rights movement." —Historical Novel Society



All are welcome! If you have any questions, please contact Mary Smith.

Future Reading: On **February 15**, Elaine May will lead discussion on *Invisible Boy: A Memoir of Self Discovery* by Harrison Mooney.

Seasonal Worship Planning Meeting for Lent

You are invited to join the Worship Planning Team on **Saturday, January 10**, in the main library from 1:00 pm until 3:00 pm to help plan this year's observance of Lent (the liturgical season leading up to Easter). We would love for you to join the team in brainstorming how we can create meaningful Lenten worship experiences.

If you would like to peruse the resources before the gathering, so your ideas can begin to percolate, reach out to Pr. Allison Bengfort by emailing pastorallison@standrewlutheran.com.

Nourishing Conversations Returns Soon!

An annual popular event at St. Andrew, Nourishing Conversations is coming back! Starting on **January 12**, we will prepare plant-based dinners on Monday evenings through the end of the month. Join us for food preparation, set up, and clean up. This year we will start at 4:00 pm with food prep so we can eat by 5:30 pm and then be done with clean up by 7:00 pm for those wanting to participate in Evening Prayer. No worries if you can't be there to help prepare; come for dinner and conversation. Please sign up in the narthex so we can ensure we have enough for everyone. Goodwill donations will be accepted. Any funds collected that exceed costs will be donated to the Lenten Food Drive. Contact Tira Nessel, Parish Nurse, for more information.

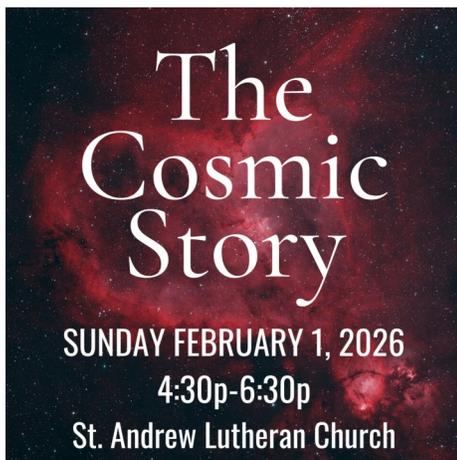


The Cosmic Story

We are living in challenging times: ecological crisis, economic uncertainty, and political division. Tensions, violence, and constant change all make it difficult to keep grounded and hopeful. Like our ancient ancestors, we long to know: Why are we here, how did we get here, and what are we to do? Origin stories have been told in all cultures and religious traditions since the beginning of language. These stories have provided significant meaning and purpose, and have impacted how we perceive the world and God's presence in our lives.

The Cosmic Story opens us to a deeper understanding of our evolving lives as human beings through a powerful ritualized telling of the 13.8-billion-year unfolding story of the Universe. This origin story is based in cosmology, specifically the book, *The Universe Story*, by cosmologist Brian Swimme and geologist Thomas Berry. As the story is told, candles are lit to mark significant events that evolved into life through the spiral of time and space. The story becomes a liturgical meditation to awaken to the mystery and beauty of creation, and to provide hope for these ecologically, spiritually, and politically challenging times.

You are invited to participate in this sacred time of unfolding awareness, quiet reflection, sharing possibilities, and trusting God's presence. This event will be held on **Sunday, February 1**, from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm in Fellowship Hall. If you would like to join the circle, please RSVP with Ruth Nickodemus by emailing her at ruthnickodemus@gmail.com.



Community Warehouse Donation Drive

Each January, the St. Andrew Service Committee supports Community Warehouse by collecting quality, gently used and new items. We know you've heard of a food bank. Community Warehouse's mission is similar, but with a focus on household good and furnishings. It connects these donated household items to neighbors in need, creating stronger homes and brighter futures for all.

Purple bins are available in the narthex through **January 25** for your donations of kitchen wares and linens. If you prefer to donate monetarily to Community Warehouse, you can do so online by visiting communitywarehouse.org/give-now-donation.

KITCHEN WARES All kitchen items <u>must</u> be clean and functional!	
Yes, please donate these items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pots and pans (most needed item) • Baking dishes • Can openers • Cooking utensils • Cutting boards • Dish racks • Dish towels • Dish sets and glassware • Kitchen knives • Mixing bowls • Potholders • Silverware • Drinking glasses and mugs 	No, thank you (do not donate these): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cracked or chipped dishes • Dishware with ANY alcohol-related branding • Plastic dinnerware or dishware • Wine glasses • Metal-rimmed dishes • Peeling nonstick cookware
LINENS All linens <u>must</u> be clean, and free of stains, tears, pilling, smells, or damage!	
Yes, please donate these items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blankets, quilts, and comforters • Bath towels and hand towels • Washcloths • Bedsheets (no king size, please) • Bathmats • Shower curtains • Bed pillows (stain-free only) • Pillowcases 	No, thank you (do not donate these): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linens with stains or tears • Bed skirts • Window treatments • Electric blankets • Clothing • Carpet

To learn more about all the good work being done by Community Warehouse, you can check out their website at communitywarehouse.org.





Donate your home goods.

Pay forward your gently-used items and help local families.

If you have household goods to donate, we'd love to have them. We'll make sure they stay out of the landfill and find a new life in a good Oregon home. Your donations help us support over 70 Portland-area families a week and are greatly appreciated.

St. Andrew's Lutheran Church
January 4 - January 25, 2026

For a full list of items we accept and general guidelines, go to communitywarehouse.org/donation-guidelines

What we need most right now:

1. Pots & Pans
2. Stockpots
3. Hand Towels
4. Washcloths
5. Pillows
6. Coffee Makers

Have furniture or other large items to donate? Drop them at any one of our 3 locations during operating hours or schedule a low-cost pickup by scanning this code.



In Need of Prayers...

<u>NAME</u>	<u>PRAYERS FOR...</u>	<u>CONTACT</u>
Family and friends of Ira "Ike" Schab	Peace and God's comfort at his death	Pr. Allison Bengfort
Bob Stadel (husband)	Healing and recovery	Cindy Stadel
Craig (husband of cousin, Dori)	Healing and recovery	Carol Hogan
Jay Meredith (husband)	Healing and recovery	Pam Meredith
Roger Sandquist (husband)	Healing and recovery	Pat Sandquist
Joyce (sister)	Healing and successful treatment	Judy Scholz
Alysha Klaus	Peace and openness to dialogue	Lee Anne Knapp
Rebecca Fako Uecker	Swift recovery from illness	Rebecca Fako Uecker
Bishop Laurie Larson Caesar	Strength and wisdom	Staff
Oregon Synod Council and Staff	Courage and wisdom	Staff
Refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants	Acceptance, safety, and just treatment	Staff
Military Personnel, especially Justina Hailey Hope Bocker, Carly Keyser, Clay Keyser	Safety and guidance	Staff
Churches serving with us in the Oregon Synod, especially Peace Lutheran (Astoria)	Blessings on their ministry	Staff

If you know someone in need of prayers, please contact the church office by phone at 503-646-0629, email office@standrewlutheran.com, or fill out the prayer request form on the church website. Requests will remain on the prayer list for two weeks unless otherwise specified.

The Real 12 Days of Christmas: The Story Behind the Song

Editor's note: Regrettably, we were unable to print this book report last Christmas when it was submitted by Pam, so we held it until this year. We may be reaching the waning days of our celebrations, but remember...the season isn't over yet: There's a whole twelve days. Merry Christmas!

Did you know that "The Twelve Days of Christmas" is actually a religious song? Yes, indeed! Written in the sixteenth century when England decided on an official state church separate from Rome, people decided to get around that by applying hidden meanings and symbols to words in songs so they could teach their children what they believed, and get around the "state church and no other" law. This went on for three centuries – long enough to write a lot of songs.

Thus, this song came about. God is "my true love" so no one gets in trouble by mentioning him. The song is repetitious because God's love never ends, and it would help instill all the hidden truths into a child's memory.



Jesus is a partridge, especially chosen because it will fight to the death for its young, and the tree is the cross. Two turtledoves were a traditional sacrifice way back in Exodus and Leviticus. Required by the law, Mary and Joseph brought them to the temple for Jesus. French hens cost a lot of money in the sixteenth century, thus, they are the three gifts brought by the wise men. The calling birds are the four gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John – the four men who went out to spread the news of Jesus. And on it goes.

It's a lovely book – authored by Helen Haidle – with more explanation than I am giving, and I do hope you will check it out to read.

Pam Farr
Adult Librarian

Please Take Home or Gift Someone a Poinsettia to Enjoy

As we reach the end of this year's Christmas season, you are invited to take home one (or more!) of the lovely poinsettias that have been gracing the sanctuary.



St. Andrew Contacts

Council President Chuck Weswig.....	president@standrewlutheran.com
Lead Pastor Allison Bengfort.....	pastorallison@standrewlutheran.com, 563-210-6304
Associate Pr. Colleen Nelson.....	out of town through January 19
Minister of Music John Gladen.....	jgladen@standrewlutheran.com
Dir. of Next Generational Ministry Kyler Vogt.....	kvogt@standrewlutheran.com
Parish Executive Carol Harker.....	charker@standrewlutheran.com
Administrative Assistant Martin Mills.....	office@standrewlutheran.com
Parish Nurses Diane Reiner.....	503-201-4222
Tira Nesset.....	503-866-5099

Men's Book Club News

The Men's Book Club will meet again at 2:00 pm on **Monday, January 12**, to discuss the book *The Science of Revenge: Understanding the World's Deadliest Addiction – and How to Overcome It* by James Kimmel, Jr. Gary Grafwallner will host this discussion at his home.

At the following meeting on **February 9**, members will discuss *Lewis & Clark Among the Indians* by James P. Ronda. And for the **March 9** meeting, the title selected is *The Nickel Boys* by Colson Whitehead.

Interested in learning more about the Men's Book Club or joining the discussion? Please contact Tim Holte for more information.



HAPPY New Year

Emergency Pastoral Care

December 29, 2025 – January 5, 2026

Pr. Allison Bengfort is on vacation.

For Pastor Emergencies during this time, please contact Pr. Susan Kintner

Cell phone: 503-724-2556
Email: smkintner@gmail.com

Preparing for Worship Sunday, January 11, 2026

Acts 10:34-43
Psalm 29
Matthew 3:13-17

Highlights for the Week at St. Andrew

Friday, January 2

10:00 am Tai Chi Fellowship Hall

Saturday, January 3

9:00 am Nifty Notters Fellowship Hall

Sunday, January 4

9:30 am Worship with Children's Church Sanctuary, livestream, and via Zoom

9:30 am Portland Taiwan Worship Service Chapel

10:45 am Taiwanese Church Fellowship Gathering Chapel

11:00 am Adult Ed | The Faithful Middle: Lutheran Theology in a Polarized Extremist World Fellowship Hall

11:00 am Confirmation for Middle School Youth Library

11:00 am High School Youth Group Youth Room

Monday, January 5—Church Office Closed

7:00 pm Finance Team Meeting via Zoom

Tuesday, January 6

7:00 am Men's Gathering and Bible Study Elmer's Restaurant on 158th (1250 NW Waterhouse Ave)

7:00 am Sunrise Women Elmer's Restaurant on 158th (1250 NW Waterhouse Ave)

10:00 am Tai Chi Fellowship Hall

10:00 am Worship Planners Meeting Library

12:00 pm Bridge Group Fellowship Hall

1:00 pm Immigrant Story Recording Session Children's Library

1:00 pm Sanctuary Team Meeting Library

5:30 pm Narcotics Anonymous Meeting Chapel

7:00 pm Brass Quintet Rehearsal Sanctuary

7:00 pm Columbia Willamette Faceters' Guild Fellowship Hall

7:00 pm HR Meeting via Zoom

Wednesday, January 7—Weekly News deadline is 4:00 pm; submit material to office@standrewlutheran.com

1:00 pm Staff Meeting Chapel, Library

6:00 pm Bells of Grace Rehearsal Sanctuary

7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal Sanctuary

Thursday, January 8

10:00 am Strength + Stability with Susanne Fellowship Hall

12:00 pm Alzheimer's Support Group St. Andrew Room, Children's Library

5:00 pm Executive Committee Meeting via Zoom

7:00 pm Foundation Team Meeting Library

7:00 pm Wing Chun Class Children's Commons

Friday, January 9

10:00 am Tai Chi Fellowship Hall

Saturday, January 10—Sunday Worship Announcements deadline is 11:59 pm; submit announcements to pastorallison@standrewlutheran.com

9:00 am Taking Down the Greens Sanctuary, Narthex, Fellowship Hall

12:30 pm Girl Scouts Badge Workshop Children's Commons

1:00 pm Seasonal Worship Planning Meeting for Lent Library

Sunday, January 11

9:30 am Worship with Children's Church Sanctuary, livestream, and via Zoom

9:30 am Portland Taiwan Worship Service Chapel

10:30 am Retirement Reception for Carol Harker Fellowship Hall

10:45 am Taiwanese Church Fellowship Gathering Chapel

11:00 am Confirmation for Middle School Youth Library

11:00 am High School Youth Group Youth Room

11:20 am Adult Ed | The Faithful Middle: Lutheran Theology in a Polarized Extremist World Sanctuary

2:30 pm Spirituality Book Group Library

Worship at St. Andrew or Connect to Virtual Worship

 **YouTube** **9:30 am:** Worship in the Sanctuary, watch the livestream of worship on YouTube, or participate in worship via Zoom. *Links for remote worship will be sent to you via email and the church app.*

 **zoom** People participating in worship via Zoom are invited to join worship at 9:30 am. To participate via Zoom, you may use a computer, smartphone, or tablet. Please note that Zoom worship is only available at 9:30 am.