The New Humanity

a monthly newsletter from

St. Luke Lutheran Church

November 2026

The New Humanity, affectionally referred to as the "NuHu," is inspired by Ephesians 2:15: *"that Christ might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace."* This longer, monthly newsletter includes articles from staff and one committee in addition to the regular weekly announcements. May we be reminded of our New Humanity in Christ as we read and reflect together.

This month's contents:

- Fireside Chat
- *NEW:* Vicarious Thoughts
- Committee Spotlight
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From the Pastor's Fireside

Pastor Jason Churchill



Welcome, Vicar Todd!

One of the greatest gifts we have is our place.

That was one of the things we learned through the LEAD process. Goodness, those meetings, conversations, and surveys now feel long enough ago that some of you have joined this community without ever hearing much about them. Together, we asked what matters most to St. Luke and how those commitments should shape our ministry. Three words rose to the surface: **Christ-centered. Belonging. Celebratory.**

I want to sit beside that middle word for a while.

Belonging.

This is a place where people find their place. Through music. Through learning. Through conversations that begin with the weather and somehow reach the deepest questions of our lives. Through the work of justice. Through the discovery that you can come as you are, even when you are still figuring out who you are becoming.

At the heart of this is a promise: in Christ, God has claimed us in love. Before we can make ourselves useful. Before we can explain what we believe. Before we have found the courage to tell anyone the whole truth about our lives.

Our life together grows from that grace. We belong to God, and God draws us into belonging to one another.

And that makes a claim on us.

When so much of the world sorts people by their usefulness, their wealth, their citizenship, their gender, or whom they love, the church has a gospel to proclaim—and a life to practice. Every person bears the image of God. No one's dignity is disposable. Our belonging must reach beyond the people we already know how to love.

What might that ask of us here, in this particular place?

It might mean joining conversations about the future of Collegetown, listening to our neighbors, and helping imagine a neighborhood where people can flourish. It might mean volunteering to keep our building open for students who need somewhere to study, breathe, or simply be.

And here is the difficult part: it might mean sitting here week after week when no one comes. Making the coffee. Turning on the lights. Opening the door. Wondering whether any of it matters.

Until one afternoon, someone steps inside.

We may never know how long they stood outside before reaching for the handle. How many

times they walked past. What it cost them to believe that a church door might open onto kindness.

Perhaps they need a quiet table. Perhaps they need someone who will remember their name. Perhaps, after years of being told otherwise, they need to discover that God's love includes them.

We cannot schedule that moment. We can be here when it comes.

We are in a season of considerable change. We will experiment. Some things will take root; others will need to be reconsidered. There will be empty chairs, disappointments, and mistakes that require honesty and repair. There will also be laughter we could not have anticipated, friendships we could not have arranged, and moments when we recognize that the Spirit has been at work among us.

I hope we will see new people filling this place. I also know that faithfulness cannot be measured only by how many people arrive. The person who comes through the door deserves our whole attention, whether they are one among a hundred or the only person who comes that day.

Christ meets us in the neighbor before us. Our call is to make room, to listen, and to let that encounter change us.

That is part of what makes belonging deeper than welcome. When someone belongs, their absence matters. Their grief has somewhere to go. Their joy becomes something we celebrate together. Their presence helps shape who we are becoming.

And, dear ones, this includes you.

You who have carried this congregation through years of change. You who have only recently found your way here. You who are tired. You who wonder what you have left to offer. You who quietly need someone to notice that you, too, are carrying something heavy.

You belong here before you volunteer for anything. You are loved on the days when you can only receive.

And from that love comes an invitation: help us tend this place where others can discover the same promise.

What might you offer? An hour? An idea? A willingness to try again? The courage to sit beside someone whose life you do not yet understand?

We belong to God. We belong to one another. In a world that teaches so many people to expect rejection, we have been entrusted with a place where that promise can become tangible.

May someone reach for our door and find us here.

May they discover, in time, that we had been making room for them all along.

And may we be bold enough to carry that belonging beyond our doors—to meet people where they are, to bring the church into our neighborhood, our campuses, and our city, and to discover Christ already there, drawing us toward one another.

Vicar*ious* Thoughts

Vicar Todd Eames



A message from Vicar Todd...

In other professional settings, the role of a Vicar looks a lot like an intern. In that way, being your Vicar is an extremely important part of my development professionally and spiritually. You all play a vital role in my development. During my Vicar-Intern-ship, I look forward to your constructive feedback on the work I will do and roles I will fill. It's that feedback that will help me learn more about ministry, you, and me. With or without your feedback, you will be integral in the formation of my own pastoral practices and style, as I believe it is through you is some of how the Holy Spirit will do Her work.

So, I formally invite you to share with me your thoughts, ideas, growing edges, and strengths you observe (or, don't!). Please, please feel free to email or talk with me in person and share what you'd like. I hope you will see that I am very difficult to “offend” (no worries!), and have always held the credo of, “I'm either winning or learning!”
Peace!
Vicar Todd

Committee Spotlight

Worship & Arts Committee

by Liisa Ambegaokar Grigorov, Chair

The Worship and Arts committee of St. Luke Lutheran is directed by our constitution to "oversee all matters relating to worship services, including the liturgical forms, music selection, artwork, paraments, banners, and the like." This fall, we are truly grateful to have welcomed the talents and contributions of visual artists Carol LaBorie and Aara Edwards.



St. Luke Lutheran Church, 109 Oak Avenue, is now a participating location for Ithaca Gallery Night, which takes place on the first Friday of every month and displays the work of local, regional, and international visual artists in galleries and venues of Tompkins County. On September 4, and October 2, our very own Carol La Borie displayed some of her collection. It was a wonderful opportunity to view her creative works as well as learn a bit about the processes and methods used. We greatly appreciate Carol's willingness to share her time and talents with our community! Next, on November 6, we welcome artist Angela Sorensen to gallery night from 5-8pm.



Another exciting artwork development was the presentation of paraments designed and sewn by Aara Edwards for the Season of Creation. What a delightful addition to our collection of fair linens, and to the history of handmade sewing and weaving by (in most cases) women in Lutheran congregations. Our committee again wishes to express sincere gratitude to Aara for her contribution to worship. I had the opportunity to visit Aara for coffee, and asked if she would tell us a little bit about how this project unfolded.

Liisa: Our Worship and Arts Committee, as well as the congregation, wish to thank you for the beautiful paraments you made for the Season of Creation. Can you tell how that came about?

Aara: I've been watching the beautiful paraments we already have for years, and when I'd get distracted and day-dream during church I'd often imagine what I would do if I were to make a set of paraments. I've also been involved with the quilting group (Peace by Piece) at church for years, and have seen what really neat quilting designs the women there have made.

Liisa: Have you ever made fairlinens for church before?

Aara: This was my first time. I had some free time this summer, so I brainstormed with Pastor Jason ways I could fill my Friday mornings that would contribute to the church. This was my favorite idea. Piper and I came up to the church most Friday mornings and hung out in the quilting room, where there's both a big table and a good sewing machine. It took longer than I expected, because I was really careful to do my best work.

Liisa: How did you come up with the design?

Aara: They started out as an idea, then a doodle in my journal, then a paper mock-up, then a small-scale quilted version, and finally the full-size version. I used skills I learned from my mom, a college friend, Diane Conneman, Betta Hedlund and others. I thank Elin Edwards for buying the fabric for the front of the paraments - I got good fabric so it will last a long time. I kind of like the idea that I have contributed the linens to the church and now I let go. I don't need recognition; I did it for the church, for God and for Creation.

Worship and Arts committee meets on the second Wednesday of the month, at 11:30 am, in the Campus Ministry Lounge. Please join us anytime. All are welcome!













From the Loft

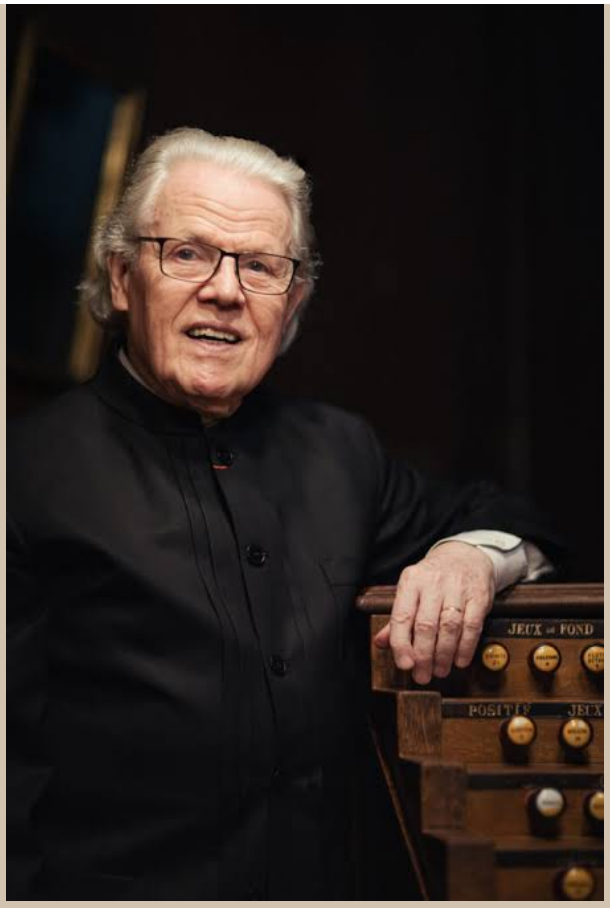
Erik Kibelsbeck
Music Director

TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE JUGET-SINCLAIR FRENCH ROMANTIC ORGAN

Ten years ago we dedicated the organ in our gallery after a years-long process to replace our medium quality organ with something of the highest craftmanship and in a style that would be useful to organists around the region as well as serve our services. Many fine organists have played it publicly or visited; Cornell students use it regularly, and Eastman School of Music students from Rochester get here occasionally. It gives the player and listener the feel and sound of an organ built in France in the late nineteenth century, without compromises aside from an electric blower so no one needs to hand or foot pump it!



We celebrate this anniversary with two of the world's most renowned organists:



Sunday, November 8 at 4pm Nathan Laube, who tours the world performing and teaches at the Eastman School of Music

Wednesday, November 11 at 7pm Daniel Roth, who was longtime organist at St. Sulpice in Paris, where one of the best preserved large instruments in the style of the day makes glorious music much as it has for over 100 years. His varied program will start prior to the French Romantic era but will get there, taking full advantage of the instrument's capabilities.

Without suggesting for a moment that other organists haven't been special, these two programs are sure to be extraordinary and all are encouraged to attend!

---

point & click

Kimberly Fick
Communications Manager



Over the last few weeks we have slowly been expanding our Open Hours to include Thursdays (in addition to Wednesday evenings) and eventually some hours on Tuesdays. This effort has been in part a response to the need we see for a safe space for students and our community to study, work, gather, and pray. Our beautiful building can meet that need, and so we are working toward adding more and more open hours over the next weeks and months.

Since we began, a handful of students have walked in asking about the study space (and gratefully utilized the lounge) and also looked for a quiet space to pray. My hope is that as more and more students notice the sign outside and the social media posts, they will venture in and invite their friends to join them. One graduate student who came in to study told me that she saw the post on instagram and wanted to check the space out for herself. She was alsmot giddy when she saw the lounge. Sometimes all you need is a quiet space with a comfy

chair!

As you pray this week, please pray for students to notice that we are here for them and take the step of courage to walk into a new building. I am excited to see how this small step on our part can meet a growing need.

In other news, I am also working now on the Annual Report and will be ready for everyone to read before the Annual Meeting. Between that and all the amazing events we've been hosting this fall, this Communications Manager has been quite busy creating graphics and managing all the external communications to make sure that our community is aware of all the awesome things happening at St. Luke. Good things are happening, and I know more good things are going to come!

A Note from Pastor Jason

Dear St. Luke family,
Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for the wonderful celebration of my ordination anniversary. I wish I could thank each of you personally. I suspect I will spend a lifetime thanking you—and thanking God for this community.

The surprise visit you arranged with my mother and aunt was an extraordinary gift. Living so far from home, I cannot be with them nearly as often as I would like. Having them here, surrounded by this community I love, meant more than I can say.

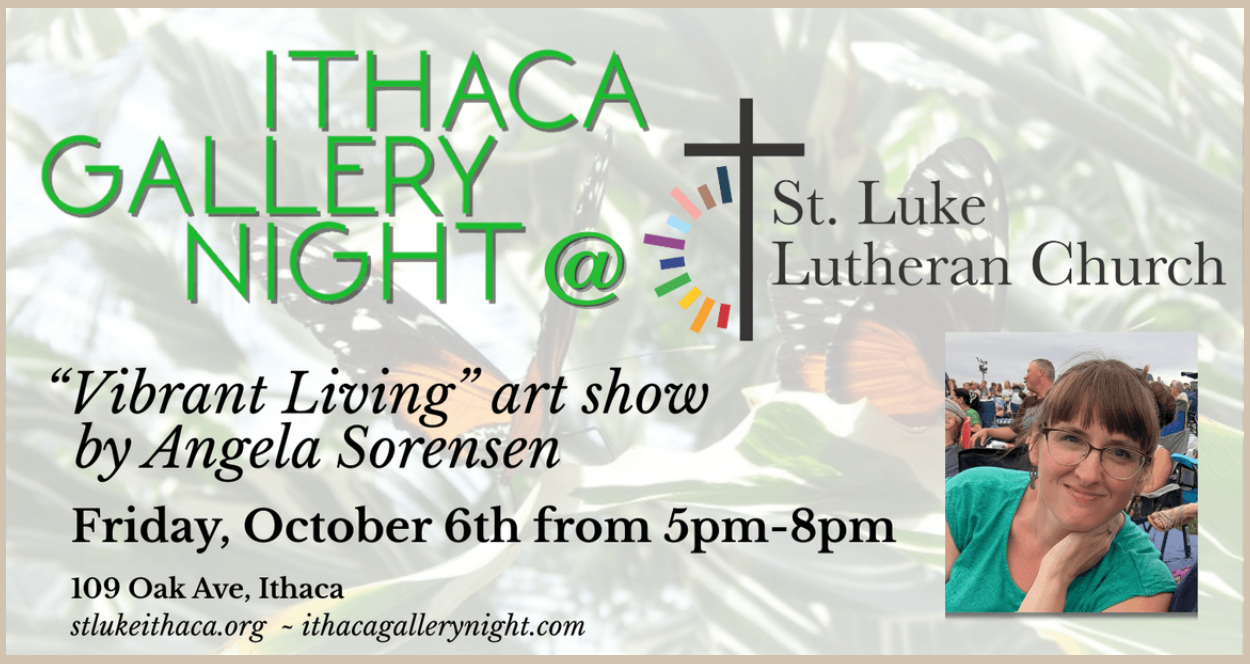
Thank you for the cards, the food, the wine, and even the jokes! Thank you for embracing Craig and for welcoming me as I am. We say that we are a church where people can come as they are. You have helped me know, in my own life, that this promise is true. It is a precious thing to proclaim belonging and then find yourself held so tenderly within it.

November 1 marked the beginning of my fifth year with you. We have shared so much already, and there is still so much ahead. May God bless us with the energy, hope, and courage to be the church for such a time as this.

With love and gratitude,
Pastor Jason

Announcements

Connect in Community



Artshow this Friday from 5pm-8pm!

Introduced to photography by her father at age ten, Angela Sorensen's creative practice has since grown to encompass studies in ceramics, papermaking, and digital arts among a few directions. Driven by an enduring curiosity for creative mediums, Sorensen has continually expanded her artistic scope over the decades, integrating techniques from textiles, jewelry-making, and traditional crafts into her broader aesthetic perspective.

Sorensen's photography remains deeply rooted in traditional film practices, relying on pure, unfiltered compositions rather than digital processing. Her work celebrates color, structure, and the natural world across shifting seasons.

In her professional life, Sorensen applies her analytical mind to administrative work.

Complementing this structured focus, her creative heart lies in crafting visually compelling art—whether practical or decorative. Through this exhibition, Sorensen invites viewers to reflect on the harmony of form, function, and the beauty of God's creation.

Hey, Cornell and IC students!



THIS SUNDAY and WEDNESDAY!





Welcoming New Members & Friends

Advent begins a new church year as we look with hope toward the coming of the Christ child. On the Second Sunday of Advent, December 6, we will joyfully welcome new members and friends into the St. Luke community during worship.

Perhaps you are a student who maintains membership in congregation back home but would like to be recognized as a friend of St. Luke. Perhaps you are considering transferring your membership or making this your church home. Whatever your circumstances, we would love to formally welcome you and celebrate the gifts you bring to our life together.

If you are interested or simply have questions, please reach out to Pastor Jason. He would be happy to gather newcomers for coffee after an upcoming Sunday service or meet individually during the week.

You already belong here. This is an opportunity to celebrate that belonging together.

Email Pastor Jason about Membership

SERVE in COMMUNITY

Godly Play is THIS SUNDAY at 11:30am! If you're interested in learning more or helping out, please reach out to Mandy Kempf.

Email Mandy Kempf

Sign up to Volunteer



As we plan for the year ahead at St. Luke, your giving estimate helps us build a thoughtful and responsible budget for our ministry together. This is not a binding commitment — simply your best estimate of what you hope to give this year. You may submit this at any time during the year. If you're uncertain, you may choose to enter the total amount you gave last year if you plan to give at least that much again.

Giving Estimate Form

Mealtrain for Diane Ricotta

Diane Ricotta has been managing a couple injuries that have made everyday tasks more challenging. For that reason some friends have put together a Meal Train. What is Meal Train? There are times in our lives when friends and family ask, "What can I do to help out?" The answer is usually to help them with a meal. When many friends provide support through a meal, Meal Train keeps everyone organized.

Click here to sign up for the Meal Train

Feeding our Hungry Neighbors



RED WAGON for the Ithaca Kitchen Cupboard for November: personal care items such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, feminine hygiene products, etc.

BLUE WAGON for the BLUE CABINET: Please consider donating canned soups, tuna, and plastic jars of pasta sauce, peanut butter and jam. Cereal, oatmeal, macaroni and cheese, pasta, protein bars, toilet paper, and personal care products are always welcome. Thank you for supporting this ministry!

Treasurer's Report for October 2026

- October income was $21,278, or 69% of the budget plan of $30,987.
- YTD income is $278,349, or 90% of the budget plan.
- October expenses were $27,954, or 90% of the budget plan of $30,987.
- YTD expenses are $304,664, or 98% of the budget plan.
- By the numbers we finished October with a YTD deficit of $26,315.
- Our October month end balance in Tompkins Bank checking was $79,641, down from $95,104 at the end of September.
- At the end of October our Morgan Stanley investment values: Endowment (designated) @ $2,895,913, down from $2,899,242, at the end of September. Reserve (unallocated) @ $505,356, up from $491,215 at the end of September.

We Pray Together for...

... Diane R, Kathy and Keith, Anne, Andy, Bishop Curry and his family, and Craig.

On Sundays, please feel free to write your prayer requests on the back of the gold colored Contact Cards and place it in the offering plate or the mailbox outside the main office door.

Upcoming commemorations of saints, renewers of society, and other festivals can be found here.

Readings for November 8

Today the prophet Amos calls for justice to roll down like waters. Paul urges us to encourage one another with the promised coming of the Lord. Jesus tells the parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids. Surrounded by the faithful of every time and place, we celebrate Christ's coming in our midst in the word of life and the feast of victory—the marriage feast of the Lamb.

- **Amos 5:18-24**
  Let justice roll down like waters
- **Psalm 70**
  You are my helper and my deliverer; O Lord, do not tarry. (Ps. 70:5)
- **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**
  The promise of the resurrection
- **Matthew 25:1-13**
  The story of the wise and foolish bridesmaids

Calendar

Thursday, November 5
9:00 am Peace by Piece Quilters

Friday, November 6
10:30 am. Tea and Tarot at Cornell
5:00 pm. Ithaca Gallery Night at St. Luke
6:00 pm. First Friday Dinner!

Saturday, November 7
3:00 pm. Cornell on Fire

Sunday, November 8
10:00 am Holy Communion
11:30 am. Godly Play
4:00 pm. 10th Anniversary Organ Concert: Nathan Laube

Tuesday, November 10
12:15 pm. Bring Your Own Lunch Bible Study

Wednesday, November 11

10:00 am.	Staff Meeting
1:00 pm.	Collegetown Community Collective
5:30pm.	Building Open for Study/Co-Work
7:00 pm.	10th Anniversary Organ Concert: Daniel Roth

St. Luke Office is generally open weekdays from 9 am-12pm.

If you would like to be removed from this list, please reply or send us an email with UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line. We will be sad to see you go, but... Remember, God loves you!

Website | Give | Campus Min. Store | Calendar



Sunday 10:00 am
Service of Holy Communion

St. Luke is a Reconciling in Christ Congregation of the ELCA. As a Reconciling in Christ Congregation, the people of St. Luke Lutheran Church are called by God to be a community of Christians, a part of the body of Christ. Because we believe we are one in God's eyes, we welcome the mix of ages, races, gender identities, physical and mental capabilities, and sexual orientations with which God's children are blessed. Everyone is invited to share in God's grace. We rejoice in the knowledge that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus--not our wealth, nor our poverty, nor our nationality, nor our political convictions, nor whom we love, nor anything else in all creation. We are called to follow God's mission of reconciliation and justice with all humanity, and we celebrate our journey of discipleship with a special appreciation for the privileged responsibility of our campus related ministry.

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