

# The New Humanity

*a monthly newsletter from*



St. Luke  
Lutheran Church

*JUNE 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:

- Featured Article from Jeff
- From the Loft
- Point & Click
- Zoom Corner
- Reunion Weekend Events
- Pride in the Park
- plus more Announcements
- Pray together
- Calendar



## Featured Article

**by Jeffrey Snedeker**



# UPSTATE NEW YORK SYNOD

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN  
CHURCH IN AMERICA

I was privileged to represent St. Luke as a voting delegate to the Upstate NY Synod Assembly May 26-7, held at the Doubletree Hilton in Syracuse. I'll be honest - my expectations were fairly low. But I found myself moved and uplifted by the spirit of change and creativity that is at work in our Synod and our sister congregations.

The Synod's brand new logo, shown above, represents the diversity and love that are at the heart of our ministry. The Synod's focus for the coming year is "experimentation" - trying new ways to be impactful, and taking a "yes, . . . and" approach to new ideas rather than "no, . . . but". Much of this experimentation will involve an expanded need for lay leadership. By way of example, of the 13 congregations in our Synod who are currently seeking rostered leadership, only 3 are looking for a full-time pastor.

The Upstate NY Synod's 17-year partnership with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zambia (ELCZA) was highlighted. Bishop Miller and 3 others representatives of the Upstate NY Synod spent 3 weeks in February visiting the ELCZA, which has 50 congregations and 32 rostered ministers. It was astonishing to learn that only 7 of those ministers are paid, at an average salary of \$20 per month, \$10 less than a common laborer. ELCZA staff and district pastors lack transportation, and must walk from congregation to congregation. Upstate NY Synod Council has designated \$8000 to the ELCZA for pastoral support, but individual donations are also welcomed, and it was suggested that Upstate NY congregations could provide further support by partnering with a congregation in Zambia.

At the Assembly, the Synod welcomed a new congregation (Hope Lutheran in North Greenbush, near Troy), and gave thanks for the ministry of St. Stephen Lutheran Church in Syracuse, which has closed. The Assembly also approved downsizing the number of Conferences (regions) from 7 to 6, and dissolved the Southern Tier conference, of which St. Luke has been a member. St. Luke will now belong to the Central Crossroads Conference, which extends north/south from the PA border to the St. Lawrence River, and east/west from Seneca to Herkimer counties. It is a much larger conference; Pastor Churchill, as the outgoing dean of the Southern Tier Conference, highlighted a number of challenges of this new organization structure for the Assembly.

The Assembly voted to approve term limits for all Synod officers (except the Bishop), and approved a conflict of interest policy prohibiting first degree relatives and domestic partners of Synod staff from serving on Synod Council. A proposal from the Southwestern Conference

to eliminate the requirement for the bishop to approve laypersons presiding at the Eucharist was referred back to Synod Council for further deliberation.

I bring warm greetings from Rev. Dr. Rahel Hahn, who some of you will remember as a former member of St. Luke (1988-1992) who was supported by our congregation during her discernment of a call to ministry. Rahel has been pastor at the Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit in Albany since 2020, and is active in Sumud, an ELCA initiative providing educational tools and advocacy resources for those seeking peace and justice in Israel and Palestine. For more information, visit [elca.org/sumud](http://elca.org/sumud).

There was way too much information to convey in this summary, so see me if you'd like to hear more about what's going on in our Synod.

Jeff Snedeker

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# From the Loft

Erik Kibelsbeck  
*Music Director*

## **New Service Setting for Summer**

With the regular texts of the service (Kyrie, Hymn of Praise, Holy, Holy, Holy, and Lamb of God) it is good to vary the melody once in a while. We have an impressive repertoire of different settings, and will add a new one this summer: setting eight.

If each setting in the ELW has a single word to describe it, the word for eight is “contemporary,” which gives us a chance to use the piano a bit more and perhaps even get a little band going when players are available. However, even as a guy who has more affinity for the traditional, I assure you it's not going to be scary.

I recommend you take 6 or so minutes to look at this video to help you become familiar with it:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yFq1stGOfGc>

(You can skip the “Now the Feast” section as we won't do that this summer.)

I mentioned above our repertoire of settings. They include:

Setting 1—an amalgam of 3 different composers' music (new in 2006)

Setting 3 – setting one from the green 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship

Setting 4 – setting two from the LBW  
Setting 5—setting three from the LBW a chant setting  
Setting 6—from the African American tradition  
Setting 7—from the Spanish speaking tradition  
Setting 9 – a contemporary setting in a traditional style  
Setting 10 – hymn settings  
Glendalough (we have used in recent Advents)  
St. Olaf  
Schubert  
Now the Feast (has been a while, though!)  
Some of All Creation Sings setting 12

And here and there some other settings cobbled together from the service music section.  
I would venture to say we know more settings than many congregations!

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point & click  
Kimberly Fick  
*Communications Manager*



## **A Day in the Life**

What does a day in the life of a St. Luke Lutheran Church Communications Manager look like? Thankfully, not every day is exactly the same, which I appreciate since I enjoy variety! Typically, however, I begin most days when I am working onsite (instead of remotely) by opening up the church building... unlocking the main doors and turning on lights. I check the blue cabinet out front and fill it; then I check the mail and put whatever is not mine to manage in the appropriate mailboxes (Pr. Jason, Erik, the Treasurer, etc). Finally I check the phone for any messages.

Once that is all accomplished I sit down at the computer and get to the daily Communication tasks. Most of the rest of my morning is spent replying to emails, updating the website (calendar and pages), and creating graphics for a variety of uses. Weekly Announcements and Monthly New Humanity newsletters are compiled on Wednesdays and sent out on Thursdays. Social media (instagram and Facebook) is checked daily for comments and messages. I generally try to create the social media graphics on Fridays and schedule those posts to appear throughout the week. As often as needed I create sign-up forms for events, create reports, update and archive documents and records. My goal with all these tasks, as often as I am able, is to make the purpose or vision clear (ie. "what's the point") and communicated in such a way that it connects with the intended audience (ie. "did it click?").

The big projects ahead of me this summer will include updating our alumni contacts and compiling accurate archives. I am, perhaps, too optimistic when I say I plan to have it all completed by the end of the summer... but sometimes being realistic is a bit boring.

I have also been enjoying finally making it to Sunday worship here at St. Luke with my children more often lately (after we had quite the season of respiratory viruses this spring). As I sit up front with them in the Prayerground, you may also notice me taking photos and videos. I use these mostly for the church's social media posts and website, and you can see an example of some of that work below. If you are uncomfortable with yourself or your kids being included in any of the photographs I take, please don't hesitate to let me know. You may have to send me an email, though, because on Sunday mornings I am usually chasing down three boys going in three different directions, and "A Day in the Life of a Mom of Three Neurodiverse Boys" is an article for another day.



*Photos Kimberly has taken during worship for the church website and social media.*



# The Zoom Corner

*Welcome to a new monthly article - The Zoom Corner! This section of the New Humanity will be a place for us to connect with the St. Luke family who worships with us via Zoom.*

## **The history of Zooming at St. Luke**

Like many churches during the Pandemic, St. Luke worked to set up an online presence that allowed us to continue to connect and share a worship service. It became a spiritual lifeline for our members as we struggled with the difficulties of isolation and separation. To be able to go to our computers, or even our phone, and hear the Gospel and a message was a warm spot of connection that we came to rely on during those difficult days.

What is different about St. Luke is that now, several years after the end of the pandemic, we are still using and improving our Zoom connection to reach out to those who are far away and those who cannot get to the building for one reason or another. With the realization that the building is not the Church, we are the Church, St. Luke seeks to gather people in all the ways possible. To that end, it is our intention to keep finding ways to improve our on-line presence, to reach as many people as possible, and to make it the most inclusive experience possible.

That's the foundation of Zoom Church, but a church requires tools and systems to function. We are very fortunate to have some amazing members who know and have developed the skills to present us, in various off-site locations, with a really well-done connection to the service.

Each week Erik Kibelsbeck generates a tech script which lets our two IC student operators know about anything out of the ordinary in the service and cues them on audio, camera, and zoom tasks needed for the service. Andy Antal, as he has done for many years, maintains and adjusts equipment as needed for the best possible production of image and sound. Those of us at home are so grateful for their talents and hard work in keeping us connected.

That's the foundation and the tools of Zoom Church, but the heart, what really makes it work, is the people.... people who stay online for their own after church time to celebrate birthdays, see what's for dinner and wish each other a good week.... people who care enough to support investment in good equipment.....people who think about all of us and keep trying to find better ways to reach out and include as many of us as possible.

Throughout the summer, Outreach and Social Ministry Committee will be sending out emails and arranging online meetings to discuss any ideas people have for what they would like to see, or what they find to be a problem. Look for updates here and of course, you can always contact the office or me ([dricotta1@gmail.com](mailto:dricotta1@gmail.com)) with any questions or comments.

We are really looking forward to making the best system we can to include everyone who can't make it into the building but wants to make a spiritual connection.

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# Announcements



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## CONNECT in COMMUNITY

HOPE THAT WILL NOT BE EXTINGUISHED



**ST. LUKE LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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**BOOK STUDY**  
STLUKEITHACA.ORG

**Made for Goodness: And Why This Makes All the Difference**  
*Desmond Tutu and Mpho Tutu*

**Thursdays | 6:00 PM | Zoom | Starting May 28**

Written not only by a survivor of apartheid South Africa, but by a witness to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission—a process that laid bare some of the darkest realities of the human condition—this work dares to proclaim something deeper: that we are, at our core, made for goodness.

With Tutu and his daughter as our guides, we will explore how that spark of goodness remains alive within us—and how hope, grounded in truth, can shape the way we live, love, and act in the world.

We will be discussing chapters 4-5 tonight.

[TONIGHT at 6pm! Click Here for Zoom](#)

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# ITHACA GALLERY NIGHT @



St. Luke  
Lutheran Church

*featuring work by Carl Whittaker*  
**Friday, June 5 from 5pm-8pm**

109 Oak Ave, Ithaca  
*stlukeithaca.org - ithacagallerynight.com*

## St. Luke Lutheran Church invites you to our Reunion Weekend Events on Saturday, June 6th

Lutheran/Episcopal Celebration  
of Alumni and Guests

### Holy Communion

Anabel Taylor Hall Chapel

**9:00 AM**



St. Luke  
Lutheran Church

*Followed by tea and  
light refreshments in the  
Founders Room*

### Organ Tour Open House at



St. Luke  
Lutheran Church

**2PM-4PM**

French Romantic Organ

*See and hear how it all works!*

Episcopal/Lutheran Celebration of Holy  
Communion:

Pastor Jason and Mother Taylor invite alumni and friends to the Lutheran & Episcopal Alumni Celebration of Holy Communion. For nearly five years, our campus ministries have collaborated in worship and programming. This gathering is an opportunity to reconnect, to give thanks, and to experience again the joy and hope we have found together. All are welcome, without exception, to join us at the table.

Organ Open House at the St. Luke Lutheran  
Church:

Whether you know nothing about pipe organs but are curious or you are an accomplished organist, you are welcome to come visit the organ at St. Luke Lutheran Church, used by the Cornell Organ Department, which is a ten year old instrument very much in the style of a French organ from around 1890. See and hear how it all works!



Welcome back to St. Luke, Cornell Alums! We're so glad you're here for Alumni Weekend. Please take a moment to share your information [by clicking here](#) so we can stay in touch and keep you connected to the St. Luke community. We're also building a new alumni network and would love to have you be a part of it!

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## **Pastor Jason's Schedule in June**

Pastor Jason will be working remotely next week as he visits his mother and father in Chicago. He will also be away for the annual Campus Ministry (LuMin) staff meeting June 21-25 at University of Denver followed by a vacation with Craig. He will be back July 1st.

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**Bring Your Own Lunch BIBLE STUDY on Tuesdays is taking a break for the rest of June and will start up again on July 7.**

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The Cornell parking lot just across the footbridge is being paved and likely unavailable this Sunday and for an unknown number of weeks. We will keep you posted!

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## **Church Building Update from Erik**

The exterior stonework project has been continuing. The stone wall just to the left of the front steps was starting to crumble, and here you can see a photo from during the work, when the old cladding had been removed, and one from after.

We rarely think about the exterior side of the chancel wall, but here are before and after photos. It mostly shows that the vines have been removed, but significant repointing of the brickwork took place as well!

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his week exact measurements were taken to make replacements for the worn one hundred year old pieces at the front. Progress!




FAMILY FRIENDLY!

# SHOW TUNES SINGALONG

WEDNESDAY  
JUNE 17, 2026

## 7:00 PM

COME DRESSED AS YOUR FAVORITE CHARACTER FROM STAGE OR SCREEN AND SING YOUR HEART OUT!  
AT ST LUKE LUTHERAN CHURCH: 109 OAK AVE, ITHACA

 ITHACA PRIDE ALLIANCE  
MUSIC AT ST. LUKE

Led by Kristin Zaryski, Mary Mulaney, and Mark Lawrence.  
Refreshments included. Donations accepted for Ithaca Pride Alliance and Music at St. Luke.  
[stlukeithaca.org](http://stlukeithaca.org)

# SERVE in COMMUNITY



Thank you so much to everyone who has signed up to volunteer for this event! Every two-hour time slot has at least two people signed up now. But, at an event like this, the more the merrier! If you haven't signed up to volunteer and you would like to, please fill out this form below. If you would like to just stop by and say hello, please do that too! We would love to see you there.

[Sign Up Here to Volunteer](#)

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## Feeding Our Hungry Neighbors

### **Ithaca Kitchen Cupboard:**

**For June:** please donate cans of chick peas and boxes of cereal in the Red Wagon in the church narthex.

### **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 and toilet paper are always welcome. Thank you for supporting this ministry!



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## We pray together for and with...

Rebekah, Ron & Lu, Kathleen, Keith, Carole Gathagan, Grace. For Communities experiencing war, famine, and strife.

*Upcoming commemorations of saints, renewers of society, and other festivals can be [found here](#). Prayers are added weekly to our list and will remain for three weeks. If you wish to extend the name of the person for whom we are praying please inform the office. To add someone to the prayer list please [email the Communications Manager](#).*

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## Calendar

### **Thursday, June 4**

- 9:00 am. Peace by Piece Quilters
- 1:00 pm CCC Events Committee
- 6:00 pm. Book Study Zoom

### **Friday, June 5**

- 10:30 am. Tea and Tarot at Cornell
- 5:00 pm. Ithaca Gallery Night at St. Luke

### **Saturday, June 6**

- 9:00 am. Episcopal/Lutheran Holy Communion at Anabel Taylor Hall Chapel
- 2:00 pm. Organ Open House at St. Luke

**Sunday, June 7**

10:00 am Holy Communion

**Tuesday, June 9**

*No Bring Your Own Lunch Bible Study until July 7*

**Wednesday, June 10**

10:00 am. Staff Meeting (virtual)

1:00 pm. Collegetown Community Collective

**Thursday, June 11**

1:00 pm. CCC Events Committee

6:00 pm. Book Study Zoom

*St. Luke Office is generally open: Mon. 1 pm-5 pm, Tues. 9:30 am-1 pm,  
Wed. 8am-4pm, Thur. 9:30 am-5pm, Fri. 9:30 am-1pm*

***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!***

## Download Our Church App!

Download our St. Luke Lutheran church app for free.

Download now



**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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Our mailing address is:  
St. Luke Lutheran Church 109 Oak Ave Ithaca, NY 14850-4729 USA

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