

THE GUSTAVIAN WEEKLY

ESTABLISHED 1891

DECEMBER 6TH, 2019

Last Issue, See You in February!

ISSUE 12

**Spotlight on:
C in CC
Dancers**

VARIETY - PAGE 5



**Having an
actual break for
Thanksgiving**

OPINION - PAGE 11



**Gustie's perfect
start lengths
to 7-0**

SPORTS - PAGE 16



Christmas in Christ Chapel is a spectacle that brings both the Gustavus community and disciplines of art into one massive production.

Cole Trebelhorn

Behind the scenes of Christmas in Christ Chapel

The unseen production behind Christmas in Christ Chapel

Marie Osuna
Staff Writer

The planning for Gustavus' annual holiday production, Christmas in Christ Chapel, begins almost a year before the first performance.

The event, produced by the Office of Marketing and Communication at Gustavus, in combination with the fine arts and the help of numerous others, features three combined choirs, handbell players, an entire orchestra and band, and even dancers—and those are just the performers. The number of people behind the scenes is even greater.

"For many people, this is the start of their holiday season," Senior Director of Institutional Events in Marketing, Barb Larson Taylor, said.

Taylor has worked at Gusta-

vus since 1994, noting that a few important changes have been made to the beloved Christmas event during her time here.

"Having Heroic Productions do the lighting has made it so much more dramatic from an audience perspective," Taylor said.

Heroic Productions has made massive changes to the way audiences experience Christmas in Christ Chapel. Gustavus originally made contact with the AV company to rent lighting equipment but came away with a great partnership instead.

Heroic helped Gustavus produce its first-ever live stream of Christmas in Christ Chapel in 2014, and it has been part of the tradition ever since.

"Having the live stream, we double our audience," Taylor said.

Having the cameras at the event is no small feat, as per-

formers learned during a rehearsal on Tuesday night.

"With twelve cameras in the room, assume that one of them is always on you," CEO of Heroic Productions and a Gustie alum from the class of 1977, Jon Young, said to the performers. "If you don't know the words to one of the congregational hymns, the camera sees that."

Those 12 cameras are accompanied by 25 Heroic team members and 2 lighting directors. It's no small task to capture this massive event on camera.

Of course, the event isn't easy to plan, either. The planning committee starts meeting in January, only a few weeks after the previous year's performances have ended—to begin putting together the details of the event all over again.

Each year the production has a theme, decided by the artistic director in conjunction with the

planning committee. This year, Artistic Director Siri Erickson helped choose "Love Beyond Borders," a theme to celebrate love that goes beyond our divided world.

The planning committee also helps decide the musical pieces, the scripture and non-scripture readings, where dance is going to fit in and the visual designs. Most of these details are usually set before summer break.

By fall, the team is just finalizing the details before performers start rehearsing to make the magic come to life.

"I think the challenge and the joy [of Christmas in Christ Chapel] is that you're telling a familiar story and you want to find a new way to tell the story every year and a new way to have the audience experience something different yet familiar every year," Taylor said.

This year in particular, the

planning committee had a unique vision to help tell the story.

"Because we've had a longer relationship with Heroic, and because [Erickson] as the artistic director had some ideas visually that she wanted to convey, we were much more intentional in meeting with the Heroic lighting designers," Taylor said.

One of the people helping to make those stunning effects happen is Matt Dobosenski, Assistant Director in Institutional Events and Event Technical Services in Marketing.

**Continued on
page 4**



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Published weekly on Fridays, except during academic breaks, by the students of Gustavus Adolphus College. Subscriptions are available from THE GUSTAVIAN WEEKLY for \$50 per year.

Opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of the institution or of its student body. The editors assume full responsibility for editorial and unsigned material.


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Campus Safety Report

Monday, November 18th

- No incidents reported

Tuesday, November 19th

- No incidents reported

Wednesday, November 20th

- Campus Safety discovered students on the roof of Southwest Hall. Students referred to the campus conduct system.
- Campus Safety performed a medical transport to Rivers Edge.

Thursday, November 21st

- Campus Safety responded to a medical assist at Pittman Hall.
- Campus Safety responded to a suspicious incident in Norelius Hall.

Friday, November 22nd

- Campus Safety responded to graffiti on a city utility box east of Uhler Hall.
- Campus Safety responded to a CF's call for assistance in Pittman Hall for excessive noise and breaking courtesy hours.

Saturday, November 23rd

- Campus Safety observed an of age alcohol violation in College View Apartments. Campus Safety referred one student to the Campus Conduct System.

Sunday, November 24th

- Campus Safety was called to Norelius Hall for an alcohol incident. Campus Safety referred one student to the Campus Conduct System
- Campus Safety responded to GAC Criminal damage at the Walker House. Campus Safety made the broken window safe.
- Campus Safety removed a bat from the Ten O Nine house.
- Campus Safety observed Non GAC criminal damage to 3 bicycles laying on the road past College View. The bicycles all had flat tires.

Monday, November 25th

- Campus Safety responded to the Finance office for a counterfeit 20 dollar bill.

Tuesday, November 26th

- Campus Safety responded to Beck Hall for a report of lost Gustavus keys.

Wednesday, November 27th

- Campus Safety responded to property damage in Norelius Hall. An exit sign with emergency lighting was knocked down in the 4C hallway.

Thursday, November 28th

- No incidents reported

Friday, November 29th

- No incidents reported

Saturday, November 30th

- Campus Safety Officer received inappropriate communication/Threatening. One student was referred to the Campus Conduct System.

Sunday, December 1st

- No incidents reported

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Psychology Department showcases work

Psychological Studies department hosts annual research symposium



Psychology students complete and conduct research over the course of the semester.

Katie Mattinen

Elsa Biese
Staff Writer

On Thursday, Dec. 5, the Psychological Studies department hosted the Fall 2019 Psychological Science Research Symposium where students in the department were able to present research projects and studies that they have completed and conducted.

"The purpose of the research symposium is to showcase all the hard work Psychological Science students have done over the course of the semester. This includes research conducted as part of a class, like research methods or child development, as well as research projects students completed with faculty as an independent research project or as part of the faculty's own research," Assistant Professor in Psychological Science Patrick Heath said.

The symposium was a space for students to stand with their projects, answer questions about their research and share their process with the community.

Heath, along with professors in Psychological Science Lauren Hecht and Madeline Harms, are currently teaching the research methods course and were key in

preparing the symposium.

"[Hecht], [Harms] and I are teaching sections of our research methods course this semester and have helped students develop, refine and conduct their projects for that class," Heath said.

This is also part of the course, but other students were able to present if they felt inclined to do so.

"We don't have a formal selection process. Students who are taking psychology classes with a research component are required to participate. Beyond that, any students who complete their own research projects or assist with faculty research are encouraged to take part so that others can see all the hard work they have been doing," Heath said.

Students taking the Child Development course in the Psychological Science department are also presenting their research from the Children's Museum of Southern Minnesota taught by Professor and Chair in Psychological Science Kyle Chambers.

Junior Isabel St. Dennis presented two of her projects during the symposium.

"I presented two posters; the first one is for my stats and research methods II class and it is about voice recognition and vocal attraction. We wanted to see if there was a relationship between the voices that are categorized as attractive or unattractive and the voices that are most frequently recognized. My second poster is about a project I did along with the other research assistants in the Center for Developmental Science, done at the Children's Museum of Southern Minnesota in Mankato. We observed children as they played in different exhibits and recorded how frequently they went to each exhibit and how long they stayed at each exhibit. The data collected during this project allows the museum to have concrete evidence on their exhibits regarding how popular each one is and what element within each exhibit is visited most frequently," St. Dennis said.

Heath also mentioned the benefits students gained from being part of the symposium and attending the event in general.

"For the students presenting, this is a great opportunity for them to gain experience com-

municating research findings with others. Presenting research is something they will likely have to do if they continue to graduate school, so it's a great way for them to develop their presentation skills. For the attendees, it's an opportunity to learn about psychology from their peers. Additionally, the studies that are being presented span a wide range of psychological topics that apply to everyday life, so we hope that attendees will learn some things about how the world works," Heath said.

St. Dennis echoed this sentiment by expressing her interest in being able to share her studies with her peers.

"I enjoyed being able to explain what my role was in both of the studies I presented and being able to answer questions that people may have had about the work I did. It makes me so proud to be a psychology major and look at my completed project with real data and know that I did that," St. Dennis said.

These research methods courses allow students in the major to be able to understand how to conduct their own research study and gain the skills needed during their career in

the psychological science field.

"This helps me in the psychology major because we often read articles and information about studies that involve knowing the general knowledge of how a method and results/discussion section flows. Having experience in running my own study and writing my own research article, it allows me to be more present and attentive to understanding other people's studies," St. Dennis said.

J-Term courses maximize winter enjoyment

Gustavus provides students with opportunities on and off campus



Students spend January 2019 in Indonesia.

Submitted

Deanna Giles
Staff Writer

January 2020 is bringing Gustavus students exciting opportunities to either study abroad all over the world or create memories right here on campus. While on campus, forget about the zero below temperatures, and enjoy events hosted on campus from a variety of organizations. One way to stay warm is cozying up in the Multifaith Center for story time and hot cocoa. The Multifaith Center will also be having Rosary Prayer, Mindfulness Meditation, worship and Fridays for Future. These events are for the purposes of personal and communal meditation and prayer, interfaith conversations, text studies and contemplative practices.

Gusties can also attend events with the Peer Assistants such as bingo and Tuesday trivia. Come and learn about health-related knowledge with the PA's.

Other events during this J-term include career tools and resources with Career Development, Friday night dive dances, and Saturday night in Lund (SNL). Career Development will be having hands-on tutorials on Handshake profiles, jobs, candid careers, and Learning to Live. Saturday night SNL's are sponsored by Hmong American Cultural Outreach with a gameshow theme on January 11, Sigma Alpha Epsilon with a Roaring 20's theme on January 18 and DEEP with games and Insomnia cookies on January 25. SNL's are a great way to get-to-know different student organizations and be used as educational events. Before checking out an SNL, cheer at home and away men's and

women's basketball games, hockey games, swimming and diving, gymnastics and track and field.

During J-Term, Gusties will be playing against Carleton, Saint Mary's, Winona State, UW-Superior, St. Olaf, UW-Eau Claire, Northland College, Augsburg, Hamline, St. Thomas and the College of Saint Benedict.

Those not on campus during the month of January may be studying abroad at one of ten J-Term IEX programs or a few limited external opportunities, including a program with HECUA in Ecuador. Currently, there will be 249 students studying abroad at 18 different countries during J-Term. This year, Australia, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, and Saint Maarten are the destinations with the most students, according to Assistant Director of Study Away Programs Bryan Messerly. The study abroad programs are three to four weeks long with two to four weeks abroad. One of the programs is called Brother Enemy: Identity, Resistance and Liberation in Cambodia and Vietnam. Professors Phillip Voight and Patty English will be attending with students. Students will travel to two World Heritage Sites, Angkor Wat and HaLong Bay, and will also visit the Mekong Delta and the Cao Diast Temple in Tay Ninh.

All the study abroad programs are similar in how they emphasize the experience component as the principal learning tool in their curriculum.

The Brother Enemy program will explore many different war-related sites, including Cu Chi Tunnel complex and the Killing Fields. J-term study abroad is a good option as it satisfies one of

the two J-Term IEX credits required of all students. "All these programs will fulfill one of the two J-term requirements that students need, so on a practical level, these programs work with every student's four-year plan," Messerly said.

Another study abroad program is Glaciers, Volcanoes, Sagas and Songs: Interweaving Culture and Landscape in Iceland. Students will be exploring

the intersections between community and isolation in one of the world's least populated and most remote nations. For those who are unsure about committing to a three-month semester abroad, J-term IEX programs serve as an introductory travel experience.

"One difference between semester study abroad and J-term IEX abroad is during the semester, students are more

likely to be with students from other schools around the U.S." Messerly said

"Students will be with faculty members and with Gustavus students, so there's more Gustavus support," Messerly said.

Whether you're studying abroad or staying on campus for Gustie festivities, continue to take part in these special Gustie opportunities provided just for you.



Heroic Productions team contributes significant time, effort and skill to the Christmas in Christ Chapel production.

Cole Trebelhorn

Continued from page 1

"I am the great and powerful Oz. I'm the guy behind the curtain that makes the magic happen," Dobosenski said.

"During the early planning meetings I take all the creative ideas, and I'm the

one who gets to figure out how to make them work or come up with alternative ideas. It's all the unseen stuff. It's awesome," Dobosenski said.

With all the behind-the-scenes work that goes into Christmas in Christ Chapel—from selling tickets to singing in the choir, parking cars to preparing food for the buffet—it's

clear that Christmas in Christ Chapel will continue to be a key event for years to come.

"I think it's a beloved tradition because of the emotion that the students put into their work, and the audience feels that. I think that because the students care so much about it, it's a joy to work on," Taylor said.

C in CC: a celebration of unity through dance

Elsa Beise
Staff Writer

Over the years, Christmas in Christ Chapel has increasingly featured dances in its services.

These dances help audience members to visualize the theme expressed and the messages shared during the Christmas in Christ Chapel experience.

Theater and dance professor Michele Rusinko is heavily involved in creating these dances for the services.

Gustavus' popular and beloved show stands apart from many other schools' concerts.

"...[Gustavus' show] is a service and not simply a concert. Within that context, dance has been seen in the Lutheran liturgical setting for many, many years...Ours is always conceptually grounded. Yes, it relates to Christmas but it is rarely solely about Christmas. There is always text and music, and some years dance is included as a means of investigating and expressing the ideas central to the year's theme," Rusinko said.

"For Christians of the world, the birth of Jesus represents crossing from the sacred to the earthly. Throughout the old and new testament, and of course in the current day, there are a multitude of stories of crossing borders - of refugees and immigrants. This year's service investigates all these border crossings, and in particular, the dance tries to make some of these crossings visual."

-Michele Rusinko

Rusinko plays a major role in the entire process of creating the event.

Creating the dances is a process that relies on input from both the directors and the dancers.

"Since I am thoroughly involved in the production process, I strive to have a deep understanding of the year's theme. Then I invite student dance artists to co-create with me. Some years I generate most of the movement material and other years the dancers



Dancers and choir members rehearse for Christmas in Christ Chapel services.

Cadence Paramore

generate most of the movement material and I curate and shape the material they generate. It is always a collaborative process between the artistic director, the ensemble directors, the dancers and myself," Rusinko said.

Rusinko also added that the dancers express the Christmas story through visuals and movement.

The theme of this year's service is "Love Beyond Borders", focusing on the idea of crossing borders. The dancers aim to represent this theme in an interpretive and abstract way.

"For Christians of the world, the birth of Jesus represents crossing from the sacred to the earthly. Throughout the old and new testament, and of course in the current day, there are a multitude of stories of crossing borders - of refugees and immigrants. This year's service investigates all these border crossings, and in particular, the dance tries to make some of these crossings visual. Some people can listen to these narratives either in Biblical verses or in the lyrics of a song-and visual all of this. For others, it is helpful to have the dancers create some visual representation. The dances we create are never strictly literal-there is always a level of abstraction to allow for breadth of interpretation," Rusinko said.

This theme also emphasizes the similarities we share.

"Broadly speaking it is a message of shared humanity. There is no such thing as 'us and them'. We have all crossed borders from the familiar to the unfamiliar. Whether your relatives

spent forty years in the desert, or crossed the ocean to the new land, we carry a history of crossing borders," Rusinko said.

"We really wanted to make sure that our costumes fit our time era of when our immigrants immigrated to the United States. The European immigrants are dressed in clothes that would fit the time period the Irish and Poland people would have wore during that time. The Hispanic immigrants are wearing more traditional clothes to represent now."

-Junior Brigid Murray

Junior Brigid Murray, one of the dancers in the production, was excited to represent the theme in a visual aspect for the members of the congregation.

"I think [the dancers give] an amazing visual representation to the music...I love telling a visual story with movements along with the music," Murray said.

Deciding on where the dances fit into the program usually happens once the music has been taken into consideration.

"For [Christmas in Christ Chapel], we generally select the music and the text first and then decide where dance could support the theme. In this particular service, I had a strong idea of having groups of dancers crossing the chancel area representing emmigration [and] immigration across different periods of time and different locations on the globe. I explained this idea to the production committee and Dr. Ruth Lin, the orchestra conductor suggested a piece of music that seemed to capture the idea of this kind of pilgrimage," Rusinko said.

She went on to comment further on a part in the program where student choreographers participated.

"Later in the program there is a beautiful poem by Jan Richardson, that is read by Aleah Felton and danced by Nathan Thao, PhePhe Quevi and Katie Rhotan, the three student choreographers - the three who have collaborated with me every step of the way, and the last piece danced, the music was selected by Elisabeth Cherland, the director of the Lucia Singers. So as noted, there is lots of give and take, lots of collaboration," Rusinko said.

In addition to the placement of the dances, there is

also the process of creating the attire for the dancers and making sure this fits and enhances the theme and the narratives being told and shared.

"We really wanted to make sure that our costumes fit our time era of when our immigrants immigrated to the United States. The European immigrants are dressed in clothes that would fit the time period the Irish and Poland people would have wore during that time. The Hispanic immigrants are wearing more traditional clothes to represent now," Murray said.

Working with students and the entire choreographic process is one that is loved by Rusinko.

"I have often said, my favorite place is in the studio creating dancing with my students. So I enjoy the process. I also love watching students take ownership in the whole process and then have the opportunity to really shine throughout the five performances," Rusinko said.

The importance of the arts to show our world, including different possibilities for it, is highlighted in the performances.

"I think we are living through an extremely challenging time. As artists I believe it is our responsibility not only to hold up a mirror to the world we are experiencing - it is also our responsibility to paint, to compose, to choreograph-works of arts that provide a representation of the world as it can be-the world we aspire to live in. It is my intention through the dances we have created for this program - to do both," Rusinko said.

Cultivating the C in CC experience



Outlines of birds made out of map paper decorate the high vaulted ceilings and walls of Christ Chapel.

Cadence Paramore

Monali Bhakta
Staff Writer

When it comes to choosing the theme for Christmas in Christ Chapel, the Chaplain's Office is responsible for planning this beautiful, heart-warming event.

A committee of about 11 members is led by the Artistic Director who brainstorms an idea and brings it to the entire group, receiving feedback from the committee on what the overall theme should be.

They convene a year in advance in December or January to start the planning process.

This year's Artistic Director was Chaplain Siri Erickson, who is currently completing her doctorate, and will graduate in May.

One of the classes she is completing for her doctorate focuses on reading the Bible through the lens of immigration and migration.

"In the Bible, there are various stories where people are continuously moving, whether because of famine where they must move to find food for their family...or God is calling them to cross the border and move into a new land. People are migrating because of various reasons" Erickson said.

The Gospel of Matthew shows how Jesus' birth is surrounded by stories of border crossings.

She highlights how God cannot be contained by any border through encouraging people to

find love and peace with each other.

She wants people to be reminded of how this connects to our world today, as people are migrating in search of safety, opportunity and a better life for their families.

While Christmas in Christ Chapel does not convey a particular political statement, it is important to consider how the meaning of love and togetherness transcends constructed borders, providing a sense of compassion for the immigrants coming to our land.

We are all people that do not need to be divided. This universal concept of acceptance toward all individuals, regardless of where they come from, serves as the inspiration for the musical selections for this year.

There are traditional arrangements of hymns, along with modern works created by contemporary composers.

"Some of the pieces of music that were chosen deal with specific communities and cultures and people who have experienced border crossings in different ways, whether physical or otherwise," Choir Director Brandon Dean said.

The choral arts are responsible for connecting the music to scriptural or poetic texts. It helps to put a reflective narrative for the audience during the service.

Making relevant musical selections is crucial because text is meant to inform the music,

and vice versa, so they work symbiotically to make the whole show flow.

This theme of coexistence is reflected in how the different ensembles will have subsections singing together.

This includes having tenors and basses from Chapel Choir and Gustavus Choir singing a small feature within a larger work.

From there, the Lucia Choirs will join in, along with the sopranos and altos from Chapel Choir and Gustavus Choir filling in the rest.

There is an intentional effort to collaborate on pieces, which shows the musical dedication to the selected theme.

The music is so powerful, and the expression is breathtaking, whether being in attendance or viewing it from live stream.

Professor of Theatre and Dance, Michele Rusinko, was chosen as the lead choreographer.

The dance pieces are meant to follow the history of immigration, primarily refugees who are leaving the land they are most familiar with and assimilating into a place where they would be strangers.

She had an idea that visually represented people from different times and places.

Instead of having the choirs enter through the Chapel in the beginning, a change that has been made this year is having the dancers enter first.

There will be traditional

Hmong and African dances showcasing the vast number of places that people travel from.

Gradually throughout the program, there will be a mesh of people on stage depicting the interconnectedness of immigrants during multiple generations and showing how we are all united together.

Nothing should be able to separate us after all this time of being with one another.

Rusinko really wanted to capture the stories of the Southeast Asian immigrants who came during the Vietnam War era, wanting this portrayal to be in the truest, most authentic form.

In collaborating with Orchestra Conductor Dr. Ruth Lin, they found a piece that could flow with the dancing.

When consulting with her student co-creators, she wanted them to be her truth-tellers that could call out any appropriation of identities.

They were involved in selecting who would be other cast members.

"I appreciate that there is more movement created by them this year, and I am just working as a curator that is the overview who pulls it together," Rusinko said.

One of the final components includes the set design, created by Visiting Professor in the Theatre and Dance Department Lydia Francis.

"When I thought about 'Love Beyond Borders' I was immediately struck by the image of

migrating birds. They fly great distances not knowing why but end up somewhere that has plenty of food, water, and places to sleep. Thinking about 'Love Beyond Borders' I wish that humanity could do the same. The birds and maps together give us a sort of collage feeling the birds don't feel literal and we aren't seeing only maps. We get the visual impact of the flying birds while also seeing images of maps pieced together from all around the world," Francis said.

She describes how she is excited to see everything come together.

This includes the messages, choirs, dancing, handbells, and orchestra bringing the whole theme to life.

She loves how Jon Young comes in with his fantastic team from Heroic and finishes with the wondrous magic of Christmas in Christ Chapel.

Francis also loves how this year's theme came together quite nicely.

While she would have liked to incorporate projections to show movement of people migrating, that idea could be saved for another year.

She is most proud of getting to highlight the beautiful architecture of the Chapel.

The space's structure is magnificent for constructing bold designs.

It has really showcased a masterpiece as the Choirs, Orchestra, and Handbell ringers take center stage this weekend.

Preview: Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Lecture



Office of Marketing and Communication

Sofia Boda
Section Editor

The Gustavus campus is preparing to host this year's Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Lecture speaker Donzaleigh Abernathy. The lecture will take place from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Monday, January 20 of 2020 in Christ Chapel.

Born in the throes of the Civil Rights movement, Abernathy is the daughter of American Civil Rights Movement Co-Founder Rev. Dr. Ralph David and Mrs. Juanita Jones Abernathy.

Rev. Dr. Ralph David spearheaded Civil Rights initiatives alongside his close friend, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

As a child, Abernathy was a survivor of the bombing of her parents' home and her father's First Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama.

Abernathy and her siblings also witnessed and participated in many Civil Rights movements and marches, including the Freedom Riders, the March On Washington, the Selma to Montgomery March for "The Right to Vote" and the Chicago Housing Demonstrations.

As an adult, Abernathy is a venerated keynote speaker and activist. Abernathy has spoken at the National Association of Women Judges Annual Conference, the 2016 Democratic National Convention African American Caucus, and the Judicial Division of the American Bar Association Mid-Year Conference, among many other speaking engagements.

Aside from her speaking career, Abernathy is also an accomplished actress.

Some of the movies and shows she stars in include Warner Bros' Civil War epic "Gods and Generals", the Emmy and Golden Globe winning "Miss Evers Boys," NBC's Golden Globe nominated "The Tempest," and NBC's Directors Guild of America Award winning movie, "Murder in Mississippi".

Abernathy's upcoming on-campus lecture will be centered around her experience growing up around influential Civil Rights leaders like Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The lecture will be followed by an open facilitated discussion in the Heritage Banquet Room in the Campus Center.

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Kyara Craven
Staff Writer

1973

This was the year the beloved Christmas in Christ Chapel, or CinCC as most people call it, began. Every year since then, the chapel has opened its doors to Gustavus and the Saint Peter community. Many traditions that we see today, the most notable tradition being ending every service with “O Come All Ye Faithful,” started with this very CinCC. Fun Fact, in 1979, CinCC ended its service with the Hallelujah Chorus instead, and the negative feedback made sure that it never happened again.

1987

Christmas in Christ Chapel presented a service titled “Celebrating the Old and New Worlds From Which We Have Come.” This service paid homage to old traditions that stemmed from countries like Finland, Sweden, and Norway (as well as the state of Minnesota) by singing well known Christmas songs from each country. This theme told the story behind the single candle being a “living light” and the harbinger of Christmas in the North.

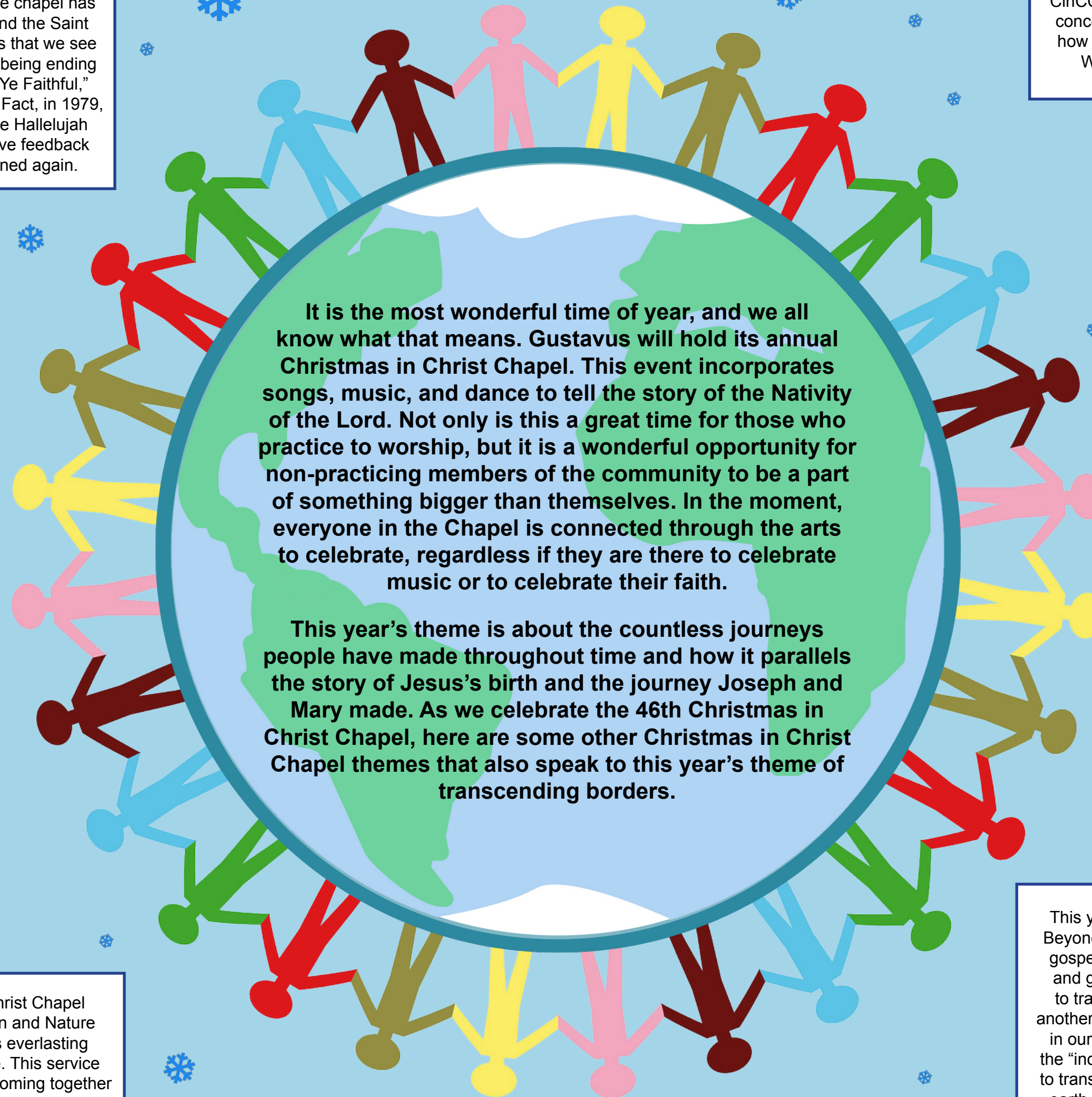
1994

This service, titled “Old and New Spain: Prepare for an Age of Abundance,” told a story of Christmas inspired by Latin and Mexican American culture. They incorporated music and dance to celebrate the richness and vitality that Latin culture brings to our lives and faith.

2000

The Christmas in Christ Chapel service, titled “Heaven and Nature Sing,” brought God’s everlasting love and divinity to life. This service celebrated the idea of coming together as one to help God in his mission to create a better world for everyone.

Christmas in Christ Chapel: Through the Years



It is the most wonderful time of year, and we all know what that means. Gustavus will hold its annual Christmas in Christ Chapel. This event incorporates songs, music, and dance to tell the story of the Nativity of the Lord. Not only is this a great time for those who practice to worship, but it is a wonderful opportunity for non-practicing members of the community to be a part of something bigger than themselves. In the moment, everyone in the Chapel is connected through the arts to celebrate, regardless if they are there to celebrate music or to celebrate their faith.

This year’s theme is about the countless journeys people have made throughout time and how it parallels the story of Jesus’s birth and the journey Joseph and Mary made. As we celebrate the 46th Christmas in Christ Chapel, here are some other Christmas in Christ Chapel themes that also speak to this year’s theme of transcending borders.

2003

The “Some Children See Him” CinCC service focused on global concerns and perspectives and how the world understands the Word that became flesh.

2005

The Christmas in Christ Chapel service titled “Ageless Visions of a Timeless Moment” spoke about how the moment of Christ’s birth was an intersection of eternity and time itself. The moment of his birth and the love that he gave continues to be a staple moment in time, even as time itself continues to move forward.

2016

“Ubuntu, Jesu: From the Cradle of Humankind to the Ends of the Earth” was the theme of the 2016 Christmas in Christ Chapel. This service focused on community and how it defines a person. “I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am,” stated John Mbiti in regards to the idea that a person is only a person because of other people. Through art and music colored with African roots, this service was able to cultivate a moment of community during a time when our nation was beginning to divide.

2019

This year’s Christmas in Christ Chapel is titled “Love Beyond Borders.” It follows the incarnation story in the gospel of Matthew, connecting us to God’s abundant and generous border-crossing love. It will inspire us to transcend borders that keep us divided from one another and from God’s reign of justice and compassion in our world. This year’s service aims to explore how the “incarnation illuminates God’s persistent movement to transcend the boundaries that separate heaven from earth, spirit from flesh, and resident from immigrant,” stated by Chaplain Siri Erickson.