



VOL LXVI
February 4, 2025

2024 Event Schedule		
February 15, 2025 2pm	Laskiainen celebration Glenn and Kathy Blomquist	Gethsemane Lutheran Church

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We had a great time at the Lucia celebration on December 14, 2024. The young People’s performance, fellowship and good food make the event a highlight of the year.
 Musician: Kelly Peterson, Organ
 Director: Kristie Eubank
 Narrator: Stephanie Cooley
 Lucia Participants:
 Signe Ingram
 Edie Ingram
 Savannah Peters
 Sullivan Peters
 Christian Pousette
 Lily Davis
 Juliette Wilder
 Christian Wilder
 Sonia Murdock
 Mia Hyde
 Aila Schorsch
 Linnea Schorsch

Tack sa mycket to the adults who sang in the choir! Photos will follow at the end of the newsletter; if you have others that you would like to share, please send them to my email.

Many thanks also to all who participated and brought contributions for the reception, and a special thanks to Gethsemane Lutheran Church, to David, Jackie and Kelly, the organist, Kelly Peterson and Holly Sherwood and Jeff Forsyth who helped with sound and recording. It takes a team; you are terrific!

The winter storms have been beautiful even though they have made getting around more challenging, yet it has been a great time to curl up with books. I started with *The Wager: A Tale of Shipwreck, Mutiny and Murder* by David Grann on tall ships that went around Cape Horn in the 18th century, chasing Spanish galleons during the war of Jenkins Ear between England and Spain. Sailing around Cape Horn at the bottom of South America, especially on a tall ship, was known to be tremendously perilous. The ocean moves around the globe between South America and Antarctica without obstacles and can develop tremendous waves, not to mention effects of frequent storms. This took me to "The last Cape Horners," on YouTube, an hour well-spent, and a true tale with Finnish connections.

Gustaf Erikson of Aland islands, went to sea at age 9, and by age 19 became ship master of a number of ships. At age 40, he bought up several of the last windjammers. Ship owners were switching to steam powered ships in the early 20th century which made it possible to purchase the tall ships cheaply. According to Wikipedia, it was just possible to make a profit by hiring light crews to sail from Europe east to Australia for grain, and then to sail around Cape Horn from the west back to Europe. There are video clips from those days showing how dangerous that enterprise could be.

In the 18th century, the ships, including the *Wager*, set out from England with a crew of 2000 and eventually 200 made it home. No one had the benefit of modern knowledge and technology to sail safely and avoid illnesses, but that did not stop them! In the 20th century usually one crew-member died on each voyage as there were still many perils.

It is stunning to hear the former 20th c. crew members describe their experience. While they avoided most of the diseases, including scurvy, (a killer disease), the tall ships were not warm, dry places in the southern seas, in either century. The mariners went up masts in all kinds of weather. Sometimes it took two hours to furl a sail, and at times the winds could rip the clothes off one's back. Once the winds pushed a ship on its side, and then bounced back. You might enjoy listening to the YouTube clip for more riveting details from the mariners, most from Nordic countries.

Kristan shared news from Denmark, where King Frederik X has released an amended coat of arms that gives more emphasis to Greenland and the Faroe Islands which are part of the realm. See *Danish King Changes Coat of Arms amid Row with Trump over Greenland*, *The Guardian*, of January 6, 2025.

Kristen also forwarded an article which describes trouble in the Baltic where various communication lines are being severed. NATO is sending support to help protect undersea infrastructure, and certain ships are being detained to determine whether this is accidental or not! See *The Global Post*, January 10 and 28, 2025.

Another article Kristen forwarded has to do with the genetic makeup of the Vikings. See *The Global Post*, December 16, 2024: *Discoveries: Viking Norse Code*. Associate Professor Christopher Tillquist, from the University of Louisville, studied the genetic makeup of Vikings who were in the Faroe Islands, around 900 CE, and found a broad range of Scandinavians, but different from Icelanders. We need to hear more on this topic!

Monica shared an interesting article about Finland's efforts to restore bogs so that reindeer will return. It is more complex than restoring the environment and then returning wild animals to the area; it also focuses on cultural aspects that intertwine people with the presence of the animals. It is exciting to see something lost, and precious restored! See the following site for more information.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/dec/23/finland-ecology-reindeer-deep-mapping-folklore-entwined-rewilding-karelia-peatland-forest>

Our next meeting will be at 2 o'clock on Saturday, February 15 at Gethsemane Lutheran Church. Glenn and Kathy Blomquist will present a talk entitled "Sweden, Finland, Latvia and Poland in the 1500s and Now." This is not to be missed! Please bring your favorite pea soup or side dish for a celebration of Laskiainen! Nahdaan pian! (See you soon!)

Usually, it is easy to copy paste photos to the newsletter; something has changed. I will bring photos to the meeting to share until I find out the new way to enclose them in an email!

For anyone who has not yet paid the annual dues, Glenn is our treasurer and will be glad to accept them. The cost is \$25 for singles, and \$30 for families.