

Christ Lutheran Church

The People of Christ Sharing the Love of Christ

January 2024



Dear friends

As I have probably shared on various occasions, my Dad's favorite passage in the Scriptures was a portion of Revelation 21:5. The Lord, seated on his throne in heaven, after he has gathered all his people to himself, says these words: "Behold I am making all things new." I never understood why my Dad was so enamored with those words, but the older I get the more I understand the significance of God's words. As the writer of Ecclesiastes, presumably King Solomon, wrote, "the days of a man's life are filled with sorrow." As such it is a joy to know that there awaits for us a time and place where the old order of sorrow and sadness and sin will pass away. And that time and place is with our God in His kingdom of heaven, where there will be no more death nor sorrow nor crying nor pain...when God will make all things new.

January 1st is not that day, but in a small way it gives us a glimpse of that day. It gives us a new chance, if only in our minds, to hit the reset button in our lives, to start fresh and new at trying to be a better person... to be more disciplined in the way we eat and exercise, more faithful in our worship attendance and more generous in our giving (to God and others), more intentional in our relationships, and more focused on living the life that we had always intended to live before other less important things got in the way. The new year is not a 'get out of jail' free card or a cure "to all that ails you," but it is the beginning of something new, and it is a reminder of the newness and healing and hope that God will bring us when he returns to this earth to claim us and raise us for heaven. May you each begin this new year with that hope and promise in your hearts and minds as you live out your lives, still on this earth, as a new creation in Christ Jesus.

Have a blessed 2024
Pastor John

**PASTOR
JOHN
STENNFELD**



WHAT'S INSIDE

2-3 Around the Church

Continuing Prayers from November Worship Services for Our family members and friends

Gary Lippe – cancer and COPD
Harvey Mitschke (Louise Stuenkel's brother) - hospitalized from a stroke
Richard Ziehr – hospitalized

Loss

Leroy Albrecht family, Katherine Richter's brother, as they mourn the death of Leroy's passing.

Kawai Piano Dedicatory Recital at St. Paul, Austin—With joy and thanksgiving to God, St. Paul will be offering a Dedicatory Recital on the newly rebuilt Kawai KG-5C (1977) Grand Piano on Sunday, January 14, 2024, at 4 PM at St. Paul Lutheran Church, 3501 Red River, Austin, featuring Dr. Elizabeth Grimpo, Professor of Music at Concordia University-Nebraska. Included on the program will be works of Bach, Chaminade, Granados as well as piano settings of Hymn Tunes. A pre-concert presentation by Jim Watson, piano rebuilder, will be at 3:00 PM. A reception will follow the recital.

Dedication Recital of The Newly Rebuilt Kawai Piano at St. Paul Lutheran, Austin

3:00 PM	Pre-concert presentation	Jim Watson - piano re-builder
4:00 PM	Recital - Dr. Elizabeth Grimpo	Concordia University-Nebraska
5:00 PM	Reception in Noah Hall	

Stewardship Verse

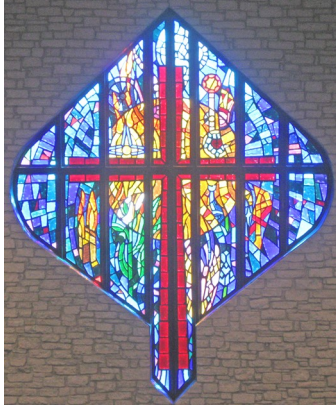
Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.

I Timothy 6:17-18





Letter from the President



Mission Statement

*The mission of
Christ Lutheran Church
is to connect people to Jesus
through:*

- ✚ *Inspirational Worship*
- ✚ *Loving Service*
- ✚ *Caring Fellowship*
- ✚ *Relevant Education*

*So that they may know, and
grow in, his love.*

**Creative
Communication
and
Community**



Just a reminder that we often take photos, and at times, video, of ministry events to put up around Church on the screen on Sundays and to post to the web that publicizes the worship, service, fellowship, and education life of Christ Lutheran.

Happy New Year! What a joyous time at Christ Lutheran over the last month, with great worship and great fellowship!

As we begin a new year, I want to express my gratitude to our outgoing President David Schaare for his leadership over the past four years. Being President is often a thankless job, and David has carried out his duties faithfully through challenging times. I am grateful that he will continue to serve as our Vice-President.

Our most recent voter's assembly was held on December 10th. A highlight of the meeting was Pastor John's "State of the Congregation" report. His assessment is that although small, our congregation is healthy, welcoming, and Spirit-filled. We also heard reports from Jordan, our treasurer Alice Werchan and our Trustee Chair Phil Etter. Based on the written report from our treasurer through October, it looks like we our general fund revenues are a little behind need. The 2024 budget and officers were also approved. The budget for 2024 will be \$379,731, which is up 1.1% from 2023.

In a previous meeting, the congregation discussed a potential refresh of the Sanctuary. Given the significant cost of the one bid received and having obtained some new equipment to change light bulbs, the Trustees have cancelled this project. As approved by the voters, they will proceed with a contract for upgrading the balcony lights and another contract for replacement of an electrical panel near the kitchen.

In his Trustee report, Phil Etter also mentioned issues with parking. In the near future, the City of Austin will make all parking around the church metered. This should not affect Sunday mornings but could cause unauthorized parking in our lot. The Trustees and Council have discussed this previously and are considering solutions including barricades, additional signage and a towing service.

I also want to thank everyone who contributed to the Staff Appreciation fund. Through the generous donations, we were able to give each of our staff members a holiday bonus and in some small way let them know how much we appreciate their service. In a recent sermon, Pastor John said we should remember that Jesus is not the "reason for the season." We are! Thanks be to God that Jesus came to Earth for us.

Alan Werchan, President

Thank you Note from Water to Thrive

Dear Pastor John and Friends at Christ Lutheran Church

Thank you for your \$1,663.25 contribution made on 11/20/2023. Your generous donation will transform lives through the gift of clean, safe water. Through the years, Water to Thrive has built over 1,700 water projects and served almost 825,000 people in Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Uganda. We are incredibly blessed to have you as a partner. Together, may we continue to impact generations and provide blessings for Africa's rural communities. We, and those we serve, are grateful for your continued support!

With Gratitude,
Susanne M. Wilson, Executive Director—Water to Thrive

Lenten Soup—It is that time of the year when we need to think about Lenten Soup. This year Ash Wednesday is February 14th, 2024, is available. The following dates for sign up are as follows: Wednesday, February 21st, 2024; Wednesday, February 28th, 2024; Wednesday, March 6th, 2024; Wednesday, March 13th, 2024, and Wednesday, March 20th, 2024. Please email Kim Schaare at schaarehome@gmail.com with the subject line: 'Lenten Soup' with your name, your soup that you are willing to do, and email address. You don't have to be present to serve your soup, we are looking for people to donate soup. We usually plan to serve 50 people. The deadline to sign up will be Sunday, January 21st, 2024. We are also asking for anybody to donate desserts for the Lenten Soup luncheons.

Christmas Decorations - We will be taking down the decorations from Christmas in the Sanctuary on Sunday, January 7 after Worship. We will take down the outdoor Christmas crèche that same morning. Please contact Jordan if you are able to help on 01/07.

Men's Discipleship Study - Our monthly men's study for 2023-2024 will meet on Tuesday, January 2 at 7:30pm in Christ's Workshop.





“I will meditate”

“I will meditate on Your wonderful works. Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise!”
Psalm 145:5, 3

“Ordained by God!”

I should not be writing this meditation right now because I’m having a bout of the “Poor-Me’s.” I’m just not in the right mind to be writing, but the deadline for submitting it is in a few days, so here goes nothing! Yikes! Have you ever gone through one of those times where it seems like everything that can go wrong is going wrong? Well, I’m having one of those times. From a backed up septic system, to a new heating and air conditioning system, to issues with our landline phone, to computer problems, and, and, and! You get the picture. I’d run away, but I don’t know how far a bent old lady can get on a walker! Oh well. Satan, a sinful world, and our own sinful nature ensure there will be problems for us all. I knew God’s word would provide help, and sure enough, as I read Psalm 139, I came across these words by David in verse 16: “Your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in Your book before one of them came to be” (Ps 139:16). Isn’t that beautiful? There is our confidence! We are fully in God’s hands! My Heavenly Father already knows my days and has them worked out; He has ordained my days for me before I ever came to be.

In a devotion I read, the author explained that when he looked at the three stars of Orion’s Belt from his “distant perspective,” they looked perfectly arranged when in fact, they are hundreds of light years apart. He likened that to his own life. He can only see it up close, whereas in God’s big picture, everything “is in perfect alignment.” He has a unique perspective. And thus, God’s “ways are beyond our limited ability to understand. Yet the One who holds all things together in the heavens and on earth is intimately and lovingly involved with every detail of our lives.” God’s perspective of me is all-encompassing - past, present, and future, from the tiniest bit of my being to my place in His Creation! Every moment of my life is His! I prayerfully read Psalm 139 again, and my “Poor-Me’s” began to melt away.

I’ve heard folks say they will be happy when 2023 is done, but looking back, even with everything we had to deal with, we got through it. God provided for all our needs, even septic guys over a holiday and resources for a new HVAC. I don’t like that I sometimes get the “Poor-Me’s,” but I am a sinner, and it happens. My fears and worry are wasted time only causing me to question my Lord with doubt and bitterness. But there is a truth I cling to and cherish: Jesus, God’s only Son, lived, died, and rose from His grave for the forgiveness of all my sins and for my life everlasting with Him! At such a price, I know He loves me and will always take care of me! His “divine plans are unfolding for my good and for His honor and glory.” He has ordained every moment of my 2024, and will walk with me through it, and beyond! *A Blessed 2024! Duannah*

MEATLOAF

What could be better than meatloaf, paired with mashed potatoes or creamy cheesy garlic grits, on a cold January day? This recipe, packed with flavor, is sure to please!

- 1 1/2 lbs. ground beef
- 1 Tbsp butter
- 1/4 cup each: finely diced onion, celery, bell pepper, & grated carrot
- 1 Tbsp minced garlic
- 2 tsp beef bouillon powder
- 1/4 cup hot water
- 1/2 cup milk, 1 egg, 2 Tbsp mayonnaise, 2 Tbsp catsup, 2 tsp mustard
- 1 Tbsp Worcestershire
- 1/2 cup fresh bread crumbs
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1/4 tsp red pepper flakes

For topping: stir together 1/4 cup chili sauce, 1 Tbsp catsup, 1/2 tsp mustard, pinch onion powder, 1/2 tsp Worcestershire, 1/4 tsp black pepper, 2-3 tsp honey. In a skillet, soften onion, celery, bell pepper, carrot & garlic in butter. In large mixing bowl, dissolve beef powder in hot water. Add milk, egg, mayo, catsup, mustard, Worcestershire, bread crumbs, black pepper, and pepper flakes. Stir in softened veggies. Add beef (mixture will be a bit juicy). Pack into a small (approx. 3X7), lightly greased loaf pan. Bake at 350° for 45 mins. Carefully pour off grease. Flip meatloaf onto a small baking sheet. Spoon topping over meatloaf. Return to oven on the baking sheet, and bake additional 20 mins.

Loving Service - On Saturday, January 27 from 9 am - 12 noon, we will be volunteering in the Product Recovery Warehouse of the Central Texas Food Bank (6500 Metropolis Drive, Austin, TX 78744) to inspect, clean, sort, box and prepare donated food and non-food items to distribute to the CTFB's Partner Agencies and the communities they serve. The minimum age to participate is 8 years old. We have 15 volunteer spots reserved for our group. Please contact Jordan to sign up.

Additionally, from Sundays January 20 through February 10, we will be participating in the Souper Bowl of Caring food drive. We will be collecting cans and cups of soup, and other non-perishable food items, for Bread for All Food Pantry.





Christ Lutheran Church

January 2024

Birthdays

Lauren Chapman	1/1
Samuel Chapman	1/1
Bill Martin	1/1
Tommie Craig	1/3
Phyllis Trautner	1/6
Phyllis Mitchell	1/8
Brody Richter	1/9
Chloe Calvo	1/13
David Hamil	1/14
Emily Richter	1/17
Donald Kirby	1/20
Conner Mitchell	1/24
Dorothy Richter	1/26
Geneva Mensing	1/29
Thomas Craig	1/30
Louise Alexander	1/31

Anniversaries

Felix & Louise Alexander	01/06/1963
Mitchell & Taylor Teeters	01/25/2020
John & Linda Mitchell	01/27/2000

Flower Chart Given by...

January 7

xxx

January 14

xxx

January 21

Dorothy Richter
Brenda & Mark & Freddie

January 28

xxx

Lectors

1/7/2024	Taylor Teeters
1/14/2024	Clayton Pillack
1/21/2024	MaryLou Moore
1/28/2024	Gary Lippe

Braille is planning to meet on the third Tuesday, January 16, at 9:00 a.m. at Hope Lutheran Church. Car pool from Christ @8:30. Let Mildred Westfall (512) 385-6609 know if you plan to go.

Online Giving -- A word of thanks to all of you for your continued support of our ministry here at Christ Lutheran Church, and a special note of thanks to all of you who have chosen to give online through our website with the Vanco portal. In a time of less volunteerism due to Covid-19 and such, the online giving is less cumbersome and more streamlined for our Financial Secretary to manage. That being said, we would ask those of you giving through this online way to consider giving through your bank accounts (savings or checking) as opposed to using a credit/debit card. We are charged a 2.75% transaction fee whenever a credit/debit card is used, and while that may not seem like a lot for a \$25 offering (\$0.69 fee), for a \$500 offering (\$13.75 fee) those fees become quite significant. Again, we are grateful for any and all offerings and gifts to Christ Lutheran, but in order to be the best stewards of what God has entrusted to us we do kindly ask all of you credit debit card givers to consider using one of your bank accounts instead. Thank you.

Altar Flower Chart - The flower chart for the 2024 calendar year is now posted in the narthex. If you sign up for a particular date, please remember to send/turn in your payment for your flowers (in advance of that Sunday). The cost is \$45 per flower arrangement.

Fellowship after Worship - A signup sheet is posted in the narthex that has a list of Sundays available for you to choose from to bring some type of snack. There are 2 spaces for each Sunday. If you would like to host a Sunday alone, please cross out the second space, but if you would like to have a partner to host it with you, leave that space open for someone to team up with you. There is also a Sign Up Genius link where you can go online and sign up to help out in this capacity. Sign Up Genius link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F4FA5A82DAAF4C43-45825210-fellowship>

The Fellowship committee will provide coffee and juice and paper products. Please consider hosting one of our Sunday Fellowships.

Lutheran Hour Ministries—Over the last few months we have tried to bring you information on Lutheran Hour Ministries “Project Connect.” In the narthex you will find a spinner with booklet pertinent to the Christian walk. These booklets can serve you as you grow in your faith and can serve others you know who need a stronger connection to our Lord.

At this time of year, many folks make New Year’s resolutions. How about a resolution to share the Good News more each day as God gives opportunity. You know, you don’t always have to use your words to share the Good News, sometimes you can use the words of someone else. And that is what the Project Connect books help you to do.—Maybe there is a neighbor who has expressed an issue she/he is facing—Maybe on your visit to a nursing home you can provide something that will help a special person in need. - Maybe a coworker has expressed a dilemma with which they are dealing.

In each case you may find a Project Connect book to share. Let us know if you need a booklet dealing with a specific issue and we will try to provide that resource. You can find more info at LHM about Project connect and how you can help LHM with your prayers and financial help. Go to lhm.org for more information or talk to Donn Trautner.

Thank you note from Ronald McDonald House—Grateful. It’s one of the words that comes up most often when we read notes from the families at Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Texas. Thank you for supporting these families with your generous gift of snack kits. Please know that your generosity is already hard at work. With deep gratitude, Stacy Albrecht - Chief Advancement Officer

Thursday Morning Bible Study - We will begin on Thursday, January 11 from 10-11 am in Room 7 & 8. This Winter/Spring 2024 session will conclude on March 8. The class will explore the miracles Jesus performed during His ministry on earth and studies His miraculous power over sickness, Satan, creation. We will go study the Miracles of Jesus by going through CPH's LifeLight workbook about that topic. We will talk through the chapters of the CPH book: "Ten Questions to Ask Every Time You Read the Bible." Due to a generous donation from one of our people, the workbooks and books for this study will be provided at no cost to the participants. Please contact Jordan to sign up.

Christ Lutheran Web Site & Social Media

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