

Christ Lutheran Church

The People of Christ Sharing the Love of Christ

December 2022



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As we arrive at December we also arrive at the beginning of a new church year. While December marks the end of our calendar year, it also marks the season of Advent, which begins our new church year.— preparing and waiting for Jesus' return — we also prepare to close out one year and begin another. Part of that process in the church is to make our pledges to God for the 2023 calendar year. This can be a rote and mindless activity of filling out the card and putting in the pledge box, or this can be a spiritual exercise of reflection as you contemplate how best to respond to the blessings that God has poured down upon you. The choice is yours. Choose wisely as you prepare to make your commitments to God for the coming year. Pledge Sunday will be December 11.

In Christ,
Pastor John

“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

II Corinthians 9:6-7

Hallmark - "Twas the Night Before Christmas" - Do you love Hallmark Christmas movies? Then have I got a movie for you. On December 17th, on the Hallmark Channel, one of our family members here at Christ, Zane Holtz, will star in the Hallmark movie, "Twas the Night Before Christmas." I don't know the time yet, but when I find out the time, I will pass that along to you. For now, mark it on your calendar so we can watch one of our own on the 'big' screen. Blessings, Pastor John

**PASTOR
JOHN
STENNFELD**



WHAT'S INSIDE

2-3 Around the Church

Special Prayers in November Worship Services for Our sick family members and friends

Pastor John – recovery from vocal cord surgery
Phil and Sue Etter, and Sue's mom, Carole - tested positive for Covid.
John Mitchell – variety of possible neurological issues
Russ Grim (nephew of MaryLou Moore) - heart attack
Tom Fore (Bob Wiley's brother-in-law) - tests for ALS

Protection

Nori Vail (Justin Vail's wife) – pregnancy with baby due in April
Divina and Micah Stennfeld driving back from a visit to Fayetteville, Arkansas

Stewardship Verse

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Genesis 1:27-28



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.

Saturday, December 3rd we will set up our outdoor nativity and decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. Check the bulletin for details and please help if you can.

We will have a voter's meeting on December 11th at 10:45 in the sanctuary. The most significant topics will be next year's budget and officers. As always, we will have updates from Pastor John, Jordan, the Treasurer, Trustees, and other groups. Please plan to attend and do your part to address the business of the church.

Advent represents the start of a new church year. Advent is a time of preparation and anticipation for the coming of Christ both in the past in His incarnation as the baby Jesus, but also in the future with His promised second coming as Christ. It is my continuing prayer that each of you make Sunday, the time of worship, a priority. Our congregation is not the same when you are not here.

Thank you, Donn Trautner for leading discipleship class to help Pastor John to allow him time to heal his voice. I hope those that attend found the classes that he led helpful and inspiring.

Please continue to keep Christ Lutheran Church in your prayers as well as Pastor John and Jordan as they continue to bring the word of God to us every Sunday. Reminder that all of Pastor John's sermons are available on our website, so if you ever want to relisten to one of our pastor inspiring sermons, they are always available. Please continue to contribute to the church so that we can continue to bring the word of God not only to the members of Christ Lutheran Church, but to those that might find our website or our YouTube channel.

David Schaare,
President

Pumpkin Patch - To God be praised for \$4,979 in sales from our 2022 SoCo Pumpkin Patch as a result of our fundraising efforts in partnership with the Navajo Nation who grow the pumpkins. From Church proceeds/profits from the patch, as well as donations given directly to Water to Thrive, \$2054.50 will be given to Water to Thrive. Central Texas Pig Rescue received a number of leftover pumpkins in early November as part of their "The Annual Great Pumpkin Haul."

Voter's Meeting will be held on Sunday, December 11, at 10:45 a.m. in the sanctuary following worship. All members are encouraged to attend.

Angel Tree Project We are blessed to partner with Upbring once again this Christmas season on the Angel Tree Project. This is a tradition at Christ where we have the opportunity to buy and bring in wish list gifts for the children living in foster homes served by Upbring. We'll be collecting the presents at Christ Lutheran Church thru the morning of Sunday, December 4th.

Poinsettias The poinsettias are \$12.00/plant this year. Please fill out the cut away portion at the bottom the announcement sheet starting November 13 or use the envelopes in the narthex and return in the offering plates or by mail to the church office ASAP. We only have 35 poinsettias for purchase (first come, first served/paid), so please be sure to get your orders in quickly. Please make sure you write legibly, fill out the form completely, and include payment for the proper amount.

Candles - Using the eternal light candles that have graced our sanctuary for the last couple of years, we have created a remembrance of the 75 years that God has blessed our congregation and the people that have grown in faith within its walls. Please feel free to take one you will find in the narthex for your family. If they are all gone, please let us know and we will provide one for you. To God be glory, great things HE has done!

Braille is planning to meet on the third Tuesday, December 20, 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.

75th Anniversary T-shirts—We have some 75th anniversary t-shirts still available. For more information, please see David or Kimberly Schaare, or contact via email schaarehome@gmail.com



Eunice Guild

St. Paul says in 2 Tim. 1:5, that Eunice, the mother of Timothy, was a woman of "sincere faith." She loved her Lord and Savior, and she lived her faith. It is our prayer that we may all be granted this same sincere faith. God be with you and bless you as you spend time in Meditation and in Cooking With Eunice.

This page is sponsored by the Women of the Eunice Guild.

Meditation —

"Just Listen"

The day had finally come! It was about two weeks until Christmas, and we were at our uncle's farm to hunt for the cedar trees flagged with bright pink surveyor's tape, having been chosen a few weeks prior to become the family's Christmas trees! Dad would tie ours to the top of the car for the ride home where it would be put in a bucket of water on the back porch to soak for several days before being brought into the house for decorating. Mom had bundled my brother, sister, and me in our thickest coats with scarves tied around our ears, but our exposed cheeks were stung red from the cold wind as we crossed the pasture running to keep up with everyone who had come to get their tree. Dad, holding his axe, had already reached the fence which separated the pasture from the thick forest of post oak, cedar, and yaupon on the other side. His boot was firmly pushing down on the bottom barbed wire while his gloved hand pulled up on the middle wire, making a gap for us to cross through. "Come on kids!" he hollered. "Follow me and watch where you're going! If you get lost, I'm not turning around to look for you!" Once through the fence, our very young little legs moved as fast as possible over the gravel laden sandy loam and through the brush. Here there was no wind, but the icy damp air made our noses run and stung the back of our throats with every breath. We sometimes lost view of Dad, but we would just listen for his voice. Then we giggled and ran, knowing he would never leave us alone in the dark and gray forest. He was always nearby, watching, and ready to help us when necessary. One of my dearest Christmas memories is of Dad's reassuring voice through the post oak thicket. Some of my most treasured words of Jesus are these recorded by St. John, "My sheep listen to my voice, I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one" (John 10:27-30). And these words, prayed by Jesus just before he was betrayed and arrested, "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am" (John 17:25). But what are these Bible verses doing in a Christmas meditation? Well, this is exactly where they belong! Jesus, our Lord and Savior, loves us so very much that He left the comfort and glory of Heaven to be born in an animal enclosure, from a woman! He was totally without sin, yet he walked through this dark sin-filled world and chose a tree upon which to suffer brutal death, forsaken by His Father, as punishment for the sin of all mankind, so we may someday go home with Him. In my family's searches for our chosen cedar Christmas tree, our parents were near to protect us, help us find our way, and keep us from becoming lost. We listened for and knew their voices. We were content and happy in their love. Jesus our Savior, whose birth we celebrate at Christmas, is always near, protecting, helping, and keeping us from becoming lost in the dark and gray forests of our lives. We know His sweet voice and only need listen to hear as He prays, "I want [them] . . . to be with me where I am," and "no one can snatch them out of my hand!" "Them" is us, all believers, with Jesus now and forever. The magnitude of this LOVE is beyond understanding, but oh, what joy and contentment there is in this precious gift we were given that first Christmas so long ago. *Peace & Joy in Jesus, this Christmas and always. Duannah*

Cinnamon Roll Poke Cake

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|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| ¼ tsp yeast | ½ cup brown sugar |
| 2 cups flour | 4 tsp cinnamon |
| 4 Tbsp buttermilk powder | 3 Tbsp butter |
| 2 ½ tsp baking powder | ¼ cup milk |
| ¼ tsp salt | 1 tsp vanilla |
| ½ cup Crisco | 2 cups powdered sugar |
| 1 ½ cups granulated sugar | |
| 4 eggs | |
| 2 tsp vanilla | |

Preheat oven to 350°. Grease well a 9X13 pan. Put yeast & pinch sugar in ¼ cup warm water & set aside. In small bowl, mix flour, buttermilk powder, baking powder & salt. Set aside. In mixing bowl, cream Crisco & granulated sugar until light & fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating until pale yellow & frothy. Add yeast mixture, additional ¾ cup water & 2 tsp. vanilla. Beat just until combined. Add flour mixture & beat about 30 seconds. In small bowl, combine brown sugar & cinnamon. Set aside. Smooth half of cake batter in pan. Sprinkle sugar/cinnamon evenly over batter. Pour rest of batter on top & smooth. Use butter knife to swirl sugar/cinnamon through the cake batter. Bake 25-30 minutes (edges golden brown). Cool slightly while you melt butter with the milk. Add 1 tsp vanilla & powdered sugar, whisking until smooth & glossy. Poke holes into cake with wooden spoon handle or chopstick. Pour glaze evenly over warm cake & allow it to soak in for 10 minutes, tilting pan if glaze pools on sides. Enjoy!



Christ Lutheran Church

December 2022

Birthdays

Milton Ihlo	12/1
Roy Pietsch	12/1
Esmeralda Cano	12/2
Holly Herber	12/3
Robert Strait	12/3
Eric Harrison	12/6
B J Zamora	12/6
Blaine Bartels	12/16
Jean Wiley	12/20
Benjamin Schaare	12/27
Jewel Anderson	12/28
Cory Rabitoy	12/30

Anniversaries

Sonny & Phyllis Mitchell	12/17/1966
Dale & Patty Brodbeck	12/19/2015
Earnest & Susan Sermons	12/22/1985

Lectors

12/4/2022	Micah Stennfeld
12/11/2022	Taylor Teeters
12/18/2022	Clayton Pillack
12/25/2022	MaryLou Moore

Flower Chart Given by...

December 4

The Herbers

Milton Ilo's and Holly Herber's birthdays

December 11

BJ Zamora

December 18

Patty & Dale Brodbeck

December 25

Mark & Brenda

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.

Fellowship after Worship - We have a Fellowship after our worship service each Sunday. 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. Fellowship committee will provide coffee and juice and paper products. Please consider hosting one of our Sunday Fellowships.

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas! At least it will if you come out and help us decorate our facilities here at Christ on Saturday, December 3rd, at 9am. We will be working to decorate both the inside of our facility (narthex, sanctuary, tree, etc.), and also the outside of our building (setting up our beautiful yard creche). There will be songs of the season, snacks, and sufficient opportunities for fellowship. So, come join us for some morning fun as we decorate our facilities for the holiday season.

Adult Discipleship Study - The Adult Discipleship class has continued to meet during the time of Pastor's surgery and rehab. Currently, we are studying the concept of forgiveness using a Lutheran Hour Ministries study called *Nurturing Your Faith: Forgiveness*. It considers how our first sin required God's pardon in order to re-establish the broken God-man relationship caused by our original rebellion. Along the way, it looks at how God works through the forgiveness we seek and offer in our lives, and it reminds us that where there is love, mercy can triumph.

Mankind's rebellion in the Garden of Eden caused a complete separation between humans and God. In His grace, however, God offered a total forgiveness that one day would be won by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Now, as followers of Jesus, we are to practice forgiveness in our daily lives-both giving it and, when necessary,

Travis Heights Art Trail—In early November, we opened our doors to three Austin-area, art-related, non-profits during the 20th. annual Travis Heights Art Trail. We had the largest turnout of visitors in our five years of involvement and helped these organizations make lots of contacts and provide funding for the future work. Through a Thrivent Action Team grant we provided complimentary water and snacks for the visitors. The excitement generated through these two days leads us to begin planning for next year's event. We could use your help!

What is Lutheran Hour Ministries?

A Christian outreach ministry supporting churches worldwide in its mission of *Bringing Christ to the Nations—and the Nations to the Church*.

Currently, our congregation is using Bible study material developed by LHM in the adult discipleship class on Sunday mornings.

For more information, visit www.lhm.org or call 1-800-876-9880.

Pumpkin Patch - To God be praised for \$4,979 in sales from our 2022 SoCo Pumpkin Patch as a result of our fundraising efforts in partnership with the Navajo Nation who grow the pumpkins. From Church proceeds/profits from the patch, as well as donations given directly to Water to Thrive, \$2054.50 will be given to Water to Thrive. Central Texas Pig Rescue received a number of leftover pumpkins in early November as part of their "The Annual Great Pumpkin Haul."

Men's Discipleship Study - Will meet on the First Tuesday of each month through May 2023. We'll continue on December 6 at 7:30 pm in-person in the Christ's Workshop. Our topic is the Armor of God. Please contact Jordan for details, and to sign up.

2023 Flower Chart - Will be available starting December 4. If you sign up for a particular date on the flower chart, please remember to send/turn in your payment for your flowers, \$45 per arrangement (in advance of that Sunday).

Christ Lutheran Web Site & Social Media

www.christaustin.org | Facebook | Twitter | You Tube