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Dated Material – Please Deliver Promptly





Pastor: The Rev. Marc A. Stutzel Director of Music: Argine Safari Director of Youth Choirs: David Scance Musician: Fred Messner Administrative Assistant: Doris Crouse

A NEW COMMANDMENT

In John 13:34, Jesus offers important instructions for his followers.

Directions: Figure out the pattern in each vertical line of letters. Then add the next letter in the sequence to the blank underneath, completing John 13:14, NIV.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZABCD...

FLSY	FKY	XEIQ	BVOOJF
НМТА	ILA	YHKR	DYPSMG
JNUC	LMC	ZKMS	FBQ WP H
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ЕХМВ	CLMB	U V F	R PL VFR
FYPC			
GZSD	INSD	A X L	T RN XLT
			_,
ARJQ	C C S B	FKY	XHLQBYI
ESMR	FGTC	ILA	YJMRDAL
ΙΤΡՏ	IKUD	LMC	ZLNSFCO
			" JOHN 13:34, NIV

Answer: "Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." John 13:34, NIV

Pastor's Message It's overwhelming picking the right Valentine's Day card. Selecting the right card (or cards) needs to follow several rules. The card needs to match the personality of the person I'm giving it to, but it also needs to be a card they would expect to come from me. The card needs to set the right tone, convey the right words and show the person I am giving it to that they are

valued. It needs to be funny but not too funny. It needs to be quirky but not too quirky. And it needs to fit my budget. These rules apply for any card I'm buying, including the cards my kids want to give out to their friends at school. I need to know my kids but also their classmates. I need to know what's cool, and I need to ask a bunch of questions. Are stickers still fun? Should they glow in the dark or be scratch and sniff? Are temporary tattoos worth giving out or should I stick with candy? Or maybe I should avoid candy because I throw out all the candy my kids bring home anyways? Choosing a Valentine's Day card can be mentally exhausting.

But one thing that requires no effort this Valentine's Day is the start of Lent. Valentine's Day falls on Ash Wednesday this year. On a day when consumerism turns love into a commodity, the church will do something different. We'll start our journey towards Easter by starting with what makes us who we are. We are human. We are mortal. We suffer, hurt each other and shed tears. We laugh, celebrate and bring each other joy and hope. We make mistakes. We are sinners. And we are, above all, made in God's image. We are, through Jesus, thoroughly loved.

I know many people who love Valentine's Day. I know many who don't. Regardless of how you feel about Valentine's Day, I invite you to take time on February 14 to remember your need for God and how, through Jesus, you are loved forever. Worship with us on February 14 at 7 pm. Keep an eye on our calendar for special ash-oriented events that day. And make a plan to participate in our Soup & Studies starting February 21. We will explore why God's love for us matters and how, through scripture and Martin Luther's *"The Freedom of a Christian"*, we can live out God's love every day.

> See you in church! Pastor Marc

President's Message

Here we are, "in the deep mid-winter" sort of, and trying to stay focused on what is ahead for us and our church. Pastor Marc will lead us in Lent, beginning with Ash Wednesday on February 14th. There will be a service at 7:00 pm and probably another option earlier in the day. See the bulletins and weekly email for specific details.

Before Lent begins, we will have our **Annual Meeting, Sunday, February 4**th immediately after the ONE (9:30 am) service we will have that day. Our meeting will **begin at 10:30 am** or so. We will quickly review the highlights of each committee, our 2018 Budget and vote on many things; including Council members, Nominating Committee, Special Gifts Committee members, Koinonia representatives, the budget and more! This will be my last Annual Meeting as your Council President. I have enjoyed my role these past four years and look forward to supporting the next president, while continuing to serve in a different capacity.

We will also review and vote on the newest applications to the Special Gifts Disbursements Committee. We are blessed to have this gift from Dominick and Anna Ricci and have some new applications to present and vote on.

Please look for a copy of the annual report in the Narthex. As in prior years, due to the high cost of postage, we will not be mailing them to your home. They will be there by January 28th. Please take one home, read it and bring it to the meeting on Feb. 4th.

We will have coffee and some fresh bagels to nourish you during the meeting. So please come and stay and VOTE! Remember, we do need a quorum of 35 members minimum to conduct this meeting. If it's similar to the last few years, we can plan on concluding the meeting around noon.

Yours in Christ, Carla Hoenigmann carlah716@cs.com, 201-391-7843





Souper Bowl of Caring

January 14th - February 4th Celebrate the "Soup"er Bowl!

- Collect loose change in CFA soup containers (or pick your own container from home)
- Purchase cans of soup when you go food shopping
 - Bring your collected pocket change and soup cans to church on Super Bowl Sunday-February 4th
 - We raised over \$600 dollars and collected over 100 cans of soup last year. Can we do more in 2018?

Thank you for participating and helping The Center For Food Action take action to prevent hunger and homelessness!



Community News

The Woodcliff Lake Police Department wants to get to know residents who have a loved one with any type of special need, whether it is medical, physical or mental. This program will connect your family with officers, creating a relationship that can respond to your unique situation before a crisis arises. By knowing personalities, interests and preferences, the police will learn how to interact with them in any situation when they might be under emotional, mental or physical stress. If you feel like this program might be helpful for you, contact Sergeant Chad Malloy at <u>cmalloy@wclpd.com</u> or call 201-391-4977, ext. 524. If you feel like your town could benefit from this kind of program, we encourage you to reach out to your police department and borough hall and work with them to create this community engagement.





Do you have a favorite soup recipe? Share it with us by making a pot and bringing it to our Wednesday soup and scripture sessions during Lent. We will be having soup at 6:30 pm; and our study starts at 7:00 pm. In the past we have had some fantastic soups and discussions. Join us for a wonderful meal, study and fellowship. A signup sheet is in the narthex. If you can't join us for study, consider donating a pot of soup.



Debbie Kruegle to Visit February 18th

Debbie Kruegle is a former member of this congregation who has been working for years in Africa as a missionary. She is active with the Wycliffe translators who are working to make scriptures available to communities in their native languages. This work also includes learning how the people in these communities work together, their culture and their identities. As a congregation, part of our yearly benevolence goes to supporting her and the team she is a part of. She will be here on Sunday, February 18th at both worship services to share her work and her experience.

Committee Spotlight: The Youth Committee

know life after Did that there is confirmation? vou Janet Post (janetpost12@gmail.com) leads Youth Committee. We work with kids to identify ways to grow their faith during a time of transition in their lives. The faith that spoke to them when they were in Sunday School needs to grow and expand as they enter high school. Pastor Marc likes to say that faith is a muscle; it's always there but needs our time, energy and care to grow. The Committee works to create spaces where teens can be honest with faith, connect with each other and hopefully discover they are not alone. Youth Committee has a handful of members. If you would like to help, even if it's in a specific way like driving youth to events or making food, please let Janet Post know. Here are just a few things the Youth Committee is working on:

Game Night - February 9th, 7:30 pm—9:30 pm: Are you a winner? Bring your favorite game and play head-to-head with kids from all over! We'll bring the food. You bring yourself (and a friend!).



Reaching Out to College Youth: Youth Committee will

send warm winter greetings with care packages to our college students this month. We would like to reach as many of your children as possible to let them know they are in our thoughts and prayers. Sunday School children and high school youth will help out, baking some special treats. If you would like your child to receive a package and/or help by donating items or your time to assemble the boxes, please contact Janet for details. We will meet to assemble the boxes on February 15th, 6:30 to 8:00 pm.

Youth Study: Unplugged: This monthly study meets to dig deeper into the stories Jesus tells. At our last session, four youth dug into the parable of the Good Samaritan. Who is the Samaritan? Who might be the Samaritans in our life? What does mercy look like in the hallways of high school? This group is open to grade 9 and up!

The Breakfast Club: If you've walked through the church on a Sunday morning and wonder why it smells like someone was cooking breakfast, you noticed the Breakfast Club! Each month, the youth group meets to cook breakfast, study and grow. Last month, five youth got to know each other over eggs and pancakes. We're cooking things up again on February 11th at 10:00 am.

The ELCA Youth Gathering: We're sending youth to the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston. Over 30,000 youths from all over the country will attend. This event is one of the easiest ways to grow faith. Regular registration ends February 15th. If you want to attend, please let Pastor Marc know by then!

02.04.2018 Worship at 9:30 am Meeting begins at 10:30

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Look at 2017. Plan for 2018!

Pr. Gus Vinajeras: SANTA MARIA IN EXILE

Our friend Pastor Gus Vinajeras is working hard with his community in Texas. Through the Special Gifts fund, Care Committee and Christ Lutheran Church Women, we have contributed to his ministry. In 2016, his church community suffered a split. Pastor Gus and remnants of the Iglesia Luterana Santa Maria de Guadalupe began to worship in a new building and are rebuilding their community. His community sent out a "Thank You" report to sponsors and here are a few highlights:

During 2017:

- + We received 36 new members.
- + Our weekly attendance grew to an average of 57 per week.
- + The average weekly offering was \$550 (a 12% increase compared to 2016).
- + We baptized 6 children and 1 adult.
- We celebrated 5 first communions on Easter Sunday and 5 confirmations on Pentecost Sunday.
- We worshiped once or twice per week in the church building and 14 times in different homes.
- + We studied scripture regularly and continued to train leaders and organized a women's group.
- ⁺ We had joint bilingual worship with Holy Trinity Lutheran Church on Holy Week, Reformation Sunday and Christmas.





You Are the Way: Devotions for Lent 2018

Our at-home devotions for Lent will be available for pickup this February! Here's the description from the publisher:

In the Gospel of John, Jesus describes himself with a series of "I am" statements: "I am the light of the world," "I am the good shepherd," "I AM," and so on. This beautiful, full-color devotional explores one or more "I am" sayings of Jesus during each week in Lent. Each reading is accompanied by a photo, a quote to ponder, reflection, and prayer. The accessible and colorful format makes it easy to incorporate a simple Christian observance into your Lenten journey.

We encourage you to pick up the devotion and spend time with it this Lent!



Church Mouse: Did You Hear?

Argine Safari, Christ Lutheran Church's Director of Music, was presented on December 18th with a Congressional Certificate of Recognition by Representative Josh Gottheimer as a "Home Town Hero" for her commitment to her students and making a difference in the 5th Congressional District.

Christ Lutheran Church Women

Here we are in the midst of winter, dreaming of a warm spring to come . . . and for some of us those thoughts make us think about the Trash & Treasure & Clothing sale for this year! If you're looking for something to do, how about cleaning out your closets and/or basement and putting things away for the sale? Here are the important dates for you to know:

Trash & Treasure Sale date: Saturday, May 5th, 8:00 am until 4:00 pm

- Clothing collection begins: Monday, April 9th
- > T&T household items collection begins: Sunday, April 22nd

More details about work days and meals will come in later Messengers.

Thanks! Christine Badame

Sunday School Will Warm Your Heart!

We meet during the month of February on the 11th and the 25^{th.} We will show our love for others by baking cookies! When we meet on February 11th we will be participating in a service project for youth who are away at college. We will bake and decorate cookies to add to care packages that will be sent to members and friends living away at college. They will be so happy to receive our warm wishes and treats from CLC! On February 25th we will again meet to share Jesus' love for us with songs, lessons and crafts. If you know of anyone who is away at college and would like to receive a care package, please contact Darleen Castellano at zepness@aol.com. Thanks!