

The Messenger

May 2018



The *God*
of all
grace.

The Newsletter of Christ Lutheran Church
Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey
An ELCA Congregation

The Church: Proudly Proclaiming Christ since A.D. 33

Pastor's Message

Clint Ramos is an acclaimed Tony Award winning costume and set designer on Broadway. He worked on *Violent*, *Sunday in the Park with George*, *Sweet Chariot* and *Once on This Island*. When we're watching a play or a musical, we don't always think about the set or costumes that much. They set the tone for what we're watching, but we turn our attention on the acting, singing and dancing. We act as if the set and costumes are secondary in the show itself. We walk away from the show saying "that was a neat set" and nothing more. In a recent interview, Clint was asked what he wished the audience might take away from his work. And he answered in an interesting way.

The set and costumes do more than set the tone for the show. The costumes and set are the first things that draw us into the event. Every button on an actor's blouse and brick on a fake backdrop wall are designed to draw the audience deeper into the story. The set and costume designer use their talents to draw the audience deeper into the story on the stage. And by bringing the audience into the story, the designers end up uncovering our personal stories and the story of the world beyond the walls of the theater. The set and costumes are clues inviting the audience to look around and see everything in a new light. Clint's only wish is for the audience, for those of us sitting in the seats, to be "more porous to those clues" that are all around them.

Imagine, for a moment, if we looked at our faith in the same way. What if we were more porous to noticing the God that is always with us? Look around you. In the set that is your everyday life, how are you being drawn deeper into Jesus' story? I tend to read my copy of *The Messenger* in my kitchen. I don't always think about how my dishwasher, the pile of dirty dishes in my sink and my dinged coffee grinder can reveal Jesus to me. But the God that created the universe is the same God who is living with you. The sets we build, our homes, offices and school lockers are places where God is truly present. We might struggle to see God in those places but maybe that can be changed. What's one small thing you could do to make the room you're in right now show God's love a little more clearly? Is there something you need to add or something you need to take away? Whatever you do, remember that Jesus is right there with you—but we can sometimes get in our own way when we try to see him.

This May, spend time helping yourself be more porous to the clues of love that God is always sending you. And let's re-design the sets in our lives to help us see God more clearly.

See you in church! Pastor Marc



Genesis Garden Kicks Off

For over 30 years, we have provided hundreds of pounds of fresh produce to The Center for Food Action in Englewood, NJ each summer and fall. Families across Bergen County use the gifts we give to supplement their meals. Last year, 1682 lbs. of tomatoes, beans, cucumbers, egg plants and more were donated to CFA. It takes a team of dedicated volunteers to plant, tend, harvest and deliver this life giving food. And the month of May is when everything kicks off!

We're starting the season a little later this year. On Tuesday, May 15th at 6:30 pm we'll install the fence for beans and plant them. The rest of the garden will be rototilled the week after. We'll prep the ground with the tarp to keep out weeds and will start planting on May 29th. We'll bless the garden on June 3rd.

Keep an eye out in our e-newsletter for the dates and times when volunteers will be meeting. And if you would like to be added to our Genesis Garden volunteer list, contact Jim and Ann Christensen at jimnchrist@aol.com.

Christ Lutheran Church Women News

Reminder to All:
Trash & Treasure Sale Saturday, May 5th, 2018
8:00 am-Noon and 1:00 pm-4:00 pm

Just a reminder you still have the opportunity to bring your treasures (meaning non-clothing items) to church for the T&T Sale until Thursday, May 3rd only!

If you are interested in helping on the Sale day, there's still time to do that! Just give Ann Christensen a call at 201-666-5078 or see her or one of us at church. If you'd like to help out the week before, just come on by anytime from 5:00-9:00 pm. New helpers (of any age) are always welcome . . . no experience necessary. It's a lot of fun and a chance to make new friends and help the church raise funds for the many charities we support throughout the year.

Christine Badame



If you visit our library, you'll notice a different look. We've downsized to better fill our current needs.

When the library started, emphasis was on school district reading lists so that a child who announced he needed a book report on Monday could find the title here. Now the needed books are downloaded or picked up at the local library, now open Sundays, and picture books are available in many different media. We had a lot of classic fiction, self-help books and Christian family guides. Now we watch PBS for the latest "guru" on living.

The use of our library has become more focused on Bible study, Lutheran history, other religions such as Islam, devotions, prayer, etc. so our collection is now focused on what our members seek.

We will still purchase a limited selection of fiction for our regular reader, but the focus will be on topics of current interest at Christ Lutheran.

Any suggestions or comments on our new plan would be welcomed.

Dot Dohrmann, Librarian



At the end of March, total expenses outpaced total income for the first three months and we have a moderate \$15,200 loss. Although this this is a smaller loss than we started 2017 with, we prayerfully ask you keep up with your pledge and continue giving so that we can eliminate this shortfall and can keep up God's amazing work that we do here.



Thank you very much!

Martin Thalmann,
For The Finance Committee

From Worship Committee: Lent & Holy Week in Review

Thank you to everyone who reached out to members of the worship committee to share their thoughts and experience of Lent and Holy Week. On April 3, the committee met to discuss the season and make plans for next year. We value your feedback. Feel free to share your thoughts with the committee at any time (Dot Dohrmann is the chairperson, and Coleen Daub is the Council representative) or speak with Pastor Marc at pastormarc@clc4u.com.

One new thing we tried this year was moving our evening services to 7:00 pm instead of 7:30 pm. We were hopeful that an earlier start time might expand the possibility of who would be able to attend. However, we realize that the earlier start time created a time crunch for others. We'll return to a 7:30 pm next year for Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

Our 12 noon services for Ash Wednesday and Good Friday went really well. These services met in the chapel space and had their own unique liturgy. We'll keep these worship options for the foreseeable future.

Maundy Thursday is an important worship event that reminds us how Jesus wants us to treat each other and the wider world. We'll implement a few changes next year and encourage you to make plans to attend that service even if you've never attended that service before.

Kids, families and adults of all ages loved the intergenerational skit that took place on Palm Sunday at the 9:00 am worship. There's a real passion among our youth to share Jesus through plays and skits.

We received a few comments about the start of our Holy Week. It's the tradition at CLC to begin with a hybrid Palm & Passion Sunday. We start that day waving palm branches, celebrating Jesus' kingship, and end the day with Jesus' death and the making of a cross. This is an emotional service with highs and lows and everything in-between. It's not unusual to leave worship feeling disheveled and out of place. It's uncomfortable to see the cross. And that's why we start Holy Week in this way. As Christians, the cross is a central to our faith and Jesus' story. When we gather to worship, we are digging deep into Jesus' life, death and resurrection. We can't only wave palms and then head straight to Easter. We can't forget the reality of the cross. Since not everyone who attends church on Sunday will worship with us on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, we read about Jesus' death on Palm Sunday so that everyone can see that there is no place that Jesus won't go.

Hello May!
Note These Sunday Dates...



Sunday, May 13th
All females will receive a carnation
In their honor at the
9:00 am and 10:30 am worship services.



Confirmation Sunday

MAY 20 AT 10:30 AM WORSHIP
CELEBRATE OUR CONFIRMANDS

Sunday, May 27th
Memorial Day Weekend

One worship service only on
Sunday, May 27th at 10:30 am
(The church office closed May 28th.)





Need help?

A State **H**ealth Insurance Program (**SHIP**)
Medicare counselor is available by appointment
for one-on-one help with:

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- Completing **Medicare** and other related forms
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Bergen County SHIP (201)336-7413
One Bergen County Plaza, Hackensack

Alternate locations by appointment:

Bergenfield (201) 387-7212

North Arlington (201) 998-5636

Wallington (973) 777-5815



***Save the date: Vacation Bible School
For Pre-K (3+) through 6th Grade
August 6-9, 2018, 9:00 am—12 noon***

Connecting with Jesus, God and Each Other!

Each day children will explore Bible stories in fun and interactive ways. Through classroom activities, group games and fellowship, children will build friendships in a community of Christ. In all we do we give praise to God as we share in God's gifts of peace, faith, love, forgiveness and light.

Suggest Donation: \$20.00 per child

Make checks payable to Christ Lutheran Church (VBS in the memo line)

Register online at <http://www.myvbs.org/clcvbs>.

More information is coming soon!



Why I Don't Sit With My Husband at Church

Rebecca McLaughlin writes in *Christianity Today* about her practice of hospitality which involves sitting with others during church. Read her five reasons to separate from your spouse—and sometimes your kids—on Sunday mornings by visiting <https://www.christianitytoday.com/women/2018/april/why-i-dont-sit-with-my-husband-at-church.html>.

When Art Comes to Church

Each autumn since 2009, a great assembly of artists and artworks has gathered in downtown Grand Rapids, Michigan for ArtPrize, an international competition with half a million dollars in prizes based on both jurors' assessments and popular votes. In 2017 ArtPrize drew 1,300 submissions from 41 states and 47 countries, displayed in 180 venues that ranged from art museums to bars and auto garages.

And churches: In 2017, ten churches in central Grand Rapids signed on as ArtPrize venues and displayed the works they had selected from applications received.

Read how these churches participate in their local art scenes by visiting <https://www.christiancentury.org/article/critical-essay/when-art-comes-church>.

Community Event On the Needs of Older Adults in Bergen County

On Thursday, May 3rd, 9:00 am, Bergen County will hold a public hearing event about the needs for residents 60+, at the County Administration Building (One Bergen County Plaza, 5th floor, Hackensack). It's open to Bergen County residents age 60+, caregivers and agencies serving older adults in Bergen County. Written and verbal testimony is acceptable and limited to five minutes. If you need more information, please call Senior Services at (201) 336-7416.

BBC Shared Amazing Short Video on Facebook

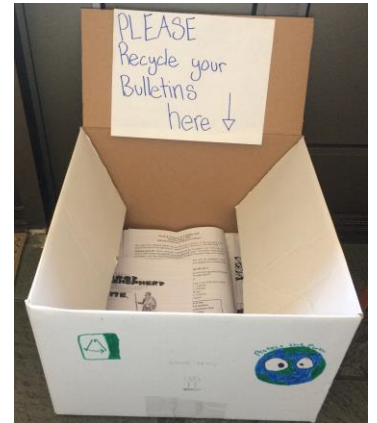
(<https://www.facebook.com/bbciplayer/videos/2168915343327846/>) about grief. Science used to assume that grief impacted every part of who you are but, over time, it faded away (i.e., you 'got over' it). But we're now discovering that's not necessarily true. "You don't get over grief, you just learn to have it as part of your life."

LOOK

What's
Happening at
Sunday School

An Idea from Sunday School

Part of our hospitality plan at CLC includes making worship as accessible as possible. We print our entire worship service so that long-time Lutherans and first-time visitors can see how our entire worship unfolds. Our bulletins come in two sizes so that limited eye-sight won't stop someone from singing along to the songs and hymns. We include all our announcements, a calendar, and a special commentary by Pastor Marc so each bulletin can be re-read during the week. If you ever want to show someone what we do on Sunday, feel free to share your bulletin with a friend!



But if you don't use your bulletin during the week, we invite you to recycle it. For years, recycling bulletins is something we've done. But we realize we could have made that more obvious. In honor of Earth Day and in response to God's call to care for God's creation, one of our Sunday School classes created a special recycle box. It's located by our front doors. Toss your unused bulletin into that box and know that it will be recycled.



Easter Egg Hunt at Church

A big thank you to Jenn Elek, Meredith Drobinske, Darleen Castellano and all who organized a wonderful Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday. The entire day was special. From the tasty Easter breakfast to the amazing music at both services, Easter Sunday was a truly wonderful event. Thank you for being a part of it.

Eagle Court of Honor: Christian Stremmer



Big congratulations to Christian Stremmer (far right) who earned his Eagle Award! His project converted an unused Sunday School room at Christ Lutheran Church into a proper storage room. Pastor Marc was honored to participate in the event. We're proud of Christian and celebrate his accomplishment!

March for Our Lives March 25



Youth from Woodcliff Lake and Mayor Carlos Rendo lead off the March 25th event organized by Temple Emanuel of the Pascack Valley. Alyssa Alhadeff, a victim in the Parkland shooting, lived in Woodcliff Lake when she was younger and attended Temple Emanuel. Woodcliff Lake police did an amazing job escorting marchers from Dorchester Elementary School to Temple Emanuel. Rabbi Loren Monosov, Cantor Alan Sokoloff and Rabbi Shelley Kniaz led the service. High school students and friends of Alyssa spoke at the rally. Rev. Larissa Romero of Pascack Reformed Church and Pastor Marc led prayers during the event.



New Jersey Synod: 2 Meetings at CLC!

Photos by Rev. Maristela Freiberg

On two consecutive Saturdays in April, CLC welcomed the New Jersey Synod to our complex. On April 14, the New Jersey Synod Council met in our fellowship hall for an all-day meeting. The New Jersey Synod Council oversees the business and ministry practices of all 170+ churches in the synod. Members of the council include ordained and lay leaders from every part of New Jersey (and includes our own Carla Hoenigmann!). Thank you to Carla, JoAnn Sallo and Ann Christensen for doing a great job offering the Bishop and the Synod Council incredible hospitality.

On April 21, we welcomed six congregations who are exploring new ways to grow leaders in their congregation. Pastors and lay leaders from Northern New Jersey, including big and small churches, met to talk about God's mission in the world. Pastor Marc and Carla attended to see if this might be something CLC would like to be a part of. The 25 who attended enjoyed using our space to talk about Jesus and being Jesus' body in the world.



North Jersey Lutheran Youth Co-Op

First Event, Sunday May 6th at Calvary Lutheran Church in Allendale

About NJLY Co-op: Every month, ELCA Lutheran youth in Northern New Jersey will gather at a different church to worship, eat locally and do something together (whether random fun or service alongside our neighbors). Calvary Lutheran Church in Allendale will host the first Gathering. And friends are always welcome!

When: Sunday, May 6, 9:30 am - 3:00 pm
Where: Calvary Lutheran Church, 165 W Crescent Ave, Allendale, NJ
Who: 8th -12th grade students
What: Worship, lunch at Village Pizza in Allendale and a hike at
Ramapo Reservation

Please bring \$10.00 for pizza and a water bottle. Wear shoes you don't mind getting muddy.

As of this writing, we have seven youth from CLC planning to attend. Can you come too?

Can Dogs Go to Heaven?

The following article is by Rev. Janelle Rozek Hooper and appeared on LivingLutheran.com

The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. . .

He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?"

I answered, "O Lord God, you know."

(Ezekiel 37:1-3).

The day we put our dog down I held her head, caressed her face and called her my favorite nickname, Maggie-Moo. And then she stopped breathing. I cried and cried and cried.

My husband and I had tried to be honest with our kids about what was going to happen with Maggie without saying more than they needed to know. When our 6-year-old son left for school that morning and asked, "So when we come home from school, Maggie will have gotten a shot and died?" we said, "Yes."

Maggie had been my daily walking companion; she sat at my feet while I worked at my desk; and if you gave her a bone she'd wait until you weren't looking and bury it. Now she was gone.

The death of a family pet may be the first experience children have of loss. How do we as caretakers help them understand what happens after a loved one dies?

As we observe the season of Lent, this text from Ezekiel comes to mind: "Can these bones live?" Or, as children ask, "Can dogs go to heaven?"

Perhaps our answer need not be any clearer than the response we hear in Scripture: "Lord God, you know." Granted, Ezekiel wasn't talking about doggie resurrection but restoring God's people. And yet, I find the words still work. God's concern for life, and presence during death, comforts us beyond any specific scenario.

When the kids came home that day, Maggie wasn't at the door to greet them. In that moment, we held each other and cried.

Next I displayed pictures of Maggie and her dog collar in our home so we could sit with our grief rather than ignore it. We placed these treasured items where we would see Maggie throughout the day—under the cross, at the foot of Jesus.

Death teaches us to pay close attention to what fills our lives with joy and to count each day as a gift. My family still gives thanks for each day we had Maggie in our lives.

Practices



- Create a memorial in your house to hold your pet's favorite things to encourage continued conversation about your pet.
- Help other animals by donating unused heartworm or flea medications or other helpful items to an animal shelter (don't feel compelled to give away your pet's favorite things).
- Keep your pet in your family prayers (at mealtime or bedtime). There's no harm in continuing to pray for your loved one.



The Stutzels' Old Dog, Twinkie

2018



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Worship Committee Meeting 8:00 pm	2 Chancel Choir 8:00 pm	3 Trash and Treasure Collection Ends	4	5 Trash/Treasure and Clothing Sale 8:00 am – Noon 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
6 Sunday Church School, 9:45 am <u>Worship</u> 9:00 am Contemporary 10:30 am Traditional Lutheran Youth Event, Calvary Lutheran Church 9:30-3:00 pm CLCW Board 11:30 am Confirmation Class 6:30 pm	7	8 Care Committee Meeting 9:30 am	9 Chancel Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm	10	11	12
13 Mother's Day <u>Worship</u> 9:00 am Contemporary 10:30 am Traditional	14 Mary Circle 7:30 pm Property Work Night 7:30 pm Finance Committee Meeting 8:00 pm	15 Bergen Pericope Group Meets 10:00 am Genesis Garden Night 6:30 pm	16 Chancel Choir 8:00 pm	17 Council Meeting 8:00 pm	18 	19
20 Confirmation Day Sunday Church School, 9:45 am <u>Worship</u> Holy Communion Contemporary 9:00 am Traditional 10:30 am	21	22 Knit 1, Crochet Too 10:00 am Genesis Garden Night 6:30 pm Chancel Choir 8:00 pm	23 Messenger Mailing	24 Chancel Choir 8:00 pm	25	26
27 Holy Trinity Sunday <u>One Worship Service</u> 10:30 am	28 Memorial Day Church Office closed	29 Genesis Garden Night 6:30 pm	30 Chancel Choir 8:00 pm	31		

God's Plan for Me

By Louisa D. Groce



My journey to ministry started at age 12 as the teacher for the youngest children in Sunday school at my Lutheran church. Every Sunday during the doxology, I walked the neighborhood collecting children for class. I later realized I could never become a Lutheran nun or deaconess, nor teach in a Lutheran parochial school, because of my ethnicity.

Once I had children, I changed churches, eventually transferring to St. Luke Lutheran Church, Willingboro, N.J., unaware I was forsaking my Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod roots.

Dorothy Ricks, assigned by the Lutheran Church in America (an ELCA predecessor) to facilitate outreach at St. Luke, became a lifelong friend and mentor. When she was reassigned, I acquired a new title, associate in ministry, responsible for St. Luke's after-school program.

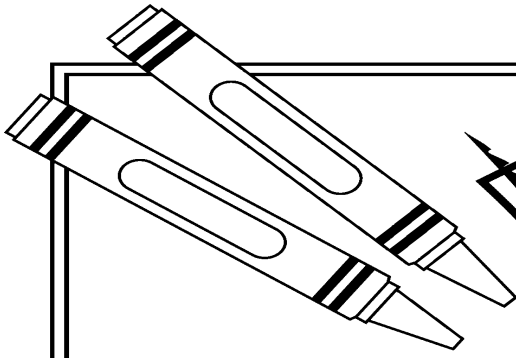
Years later she requested I shepherd a small congregation in south Philadelphia. My task was one of encouragement, revival, restoration and renewed hope. For six years I was "pastor" of Emmanuel Lutheran Church.

One Saturday morning, I opened a letter from the New Jersey Synod. E. Roy Riley, then synod bishop, had extended an invitation to do the impossible. I called and reminded him I was in my 70s. Would anyone my age be accepted as a student, especially by the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia?

God's answer was "yes." I completed my studies at age 80 and accepted a call to Redeemer Lutheran Church in Jersey City, N.J. It was an unimaginable privilege to serve this community as an ordained minister for 10 years—one of God's miracles.

During my 99 years of life, I have seen God sweep aside barriers of ethnicity, gender and age to help me become a pastor of Christ's beloved people.

*Groce is retired from Redeemer Lutheran Church
Jersey City, New Jersey*



PUZZLE

WORTHY OF RESPECT

On Mother's Day, we celebrate our moms and everything they do for us. How does God tell us to treat our moms?



Directions: Using the key below, fill in the blanks to complete Deuteronomy 5:16, NIV.

A	C	D
E	F	G
H	I	L

M*	N*	O*
P*	R*	S*
T*	U*	Y*

“ _____ your _____
 _____ and your _____,
 the _____ your _____ has
 _____.”
 _____ 5:16, NIV

Answer: “Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you.” Deuteronomy 5:16, NIV

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