

The Messenger

January 2019



**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

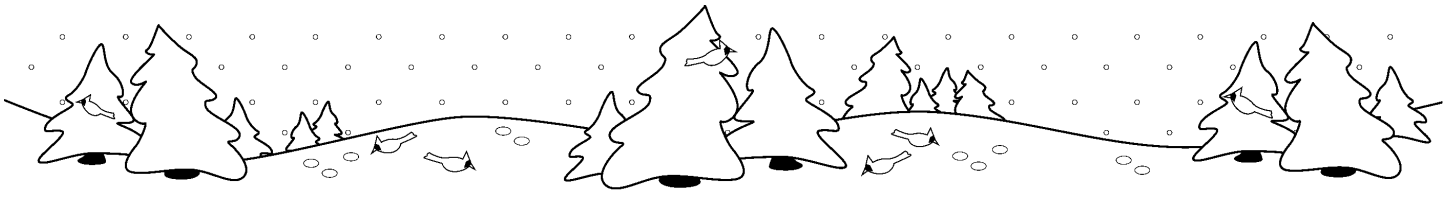
As I write this, Advent is still in full swing and Christmas is almost here. The sanctuary is still decorated, Santa hasn't come yet, and our Christmas Eve services at 5:00 pm and 10:30 pm are a joy-filled future event. It's a bit odd to be writing a message for the first month of next year when this year hasn't ended yet. But a new year is an invitation to try new things and form new experiences. Last year at this time, I asked you a question: If you had a magic wand and could dream up anything to grow your faith, what would that be? Over the last year, we've had different opportunities to explore what an answer to that question might be. We hosted new Bible studies, formed new relationships with local charities, created new worship experiences and strengthened our prayer ministry. We've done more to showcase the generosity of this church and how your gifts make a difference in this place and around the world. We updated the lights in our sanctuary to match with our call to be proper stewards of God's creation. We plan to start streaming one of our worship services in late January so that you can experience Christ Lutheran Church no matter where your life takes you. We spent the first year of a two-year program with the New Jersey Synod to strengthen our commitment to generosity and evangelism. And we're working with other local Lutheran congregations to help new folks in our area grow a deeper connection with the communities they call home.

This journey over the last year hasn't been without its challenges. Like other faith communities in our area, we're discovering how we can continue to spread the gospel while living with our new fiscal reality. Every day, Jesus makes a difference in our lives, and we will continue to share Jesus in everything we do. If there's a faith idea on the tip of your tongue that you haven't yet expressed, there's still time to make your Spirit-inspired idea a 2019 reality. You can always reach me by stopping by the church office or sending me at note at pastormarc@clc4u.com. Let's make 2019 a year where our talents and gifts show our neighbors in northern New Jersey just how much Jesus matters to each of us.

See you in church!

Pastor Marc





The Care Committee Presents: Our Next Gab Sessions

Mickey Mouse shaped waffles made out of stuffing, mac & cheese with your favorite toppings, and more desserts than you can shake a stick at: CLC's monthly Gab Session is a great way to get to know the people who sit next to you in the pews. Join us on January 23rd at 11:30 am when we will share a lunch (typically potluck style) to socialize, have fun and discover the amazing lives of the people at CLC. If you would like to join us, please RSVP with Debbie Louis by calling her at 201-358-6435.

Camp Koinonia



Camp Koinonia, an outdoor faith-based camp located in Highland Lake, New York, is currently undergoing some difficult times. As we reported before, recent weather conditions caused most of the buildings at the camp to develop mold. The camp is currently closed while the procedure to remediate and renovate the buildings is under development. On November 17, 2018 a special meeting of the Corporation that oversees Koinonia was held. Kim Kearns, Tom Kearns and Pastor Marc represented Christ Lutheran Church at the meeting. A motion was passed to begin remediation pending the pre-approval of a \$2 million loan from the ELCA Mission Investment Fund (MIF), and the establishment of a fundraising program that reaches a minimum of \$500,000 in gifts and pledges. The board and current executive director believe that \$3 million are needed to fix the current mold issues and renovate the buildings so this mold issue doesn't happen again. Beyond fundraising, Koinonia is in conversations with the Department of Environment Conservation (DEC) and have discussed putting some of property into a trust that would benefit Koinonia financially and yet allow the Koinonia's use of the land. Koinonia is currently working on organizing a capital campaign. If you have any questions about the status of Camp Koinonia or would like to know more, please speak to Kim, Tom or Pastor Marc.

Children, Youth, and Adult Education

The Joy of Christmas

Thank you to everyone who participated in our instant Christmas pageant on Sunday, December 16th. It was a joy acting out the Christmas story with our amazing group of angels, camels, shepherds and city dwellers.

Sunday School News

Twice a month we meet after the 9:00 am worship to learn more about Jesus, God and why Christ's love changes everything. Each session starts in the sanctuary, singing songs with David Scance before splitting into our two classes (one for younger kids and one for older.) We'll meet again on January 6th and January 20th. We are



looking forward to sharing Jesus' story through lessons, crafts and service projects.

Confirmation

Our partnership with Prince of Peace Lutheran Church continues with an exciting, informative and meaningful Confirmation program. Seven youths meet twice a month to tackle what makes us who we are. After learning Latin words like *Adiaphora*, we're moving into the Apostles' Creed and Ten Commandments. Our next sessions are January 13th and January 20th.

Northern New Jersey Lutheran Youth Co-op

The Northern New Jersey Lutheran Youth Co-op aims to support the high school youth of all 19 ELCA congregations in our area. We typically meet twice a month for worship, service and fun. The group is open to all 8th – 12th graders because church doesn't stop after Confirmation. We are making plans to visit a mosque and go snow tubing in January. More details will be available soon!

Winter Youth Assembly – February 8-10, 2019



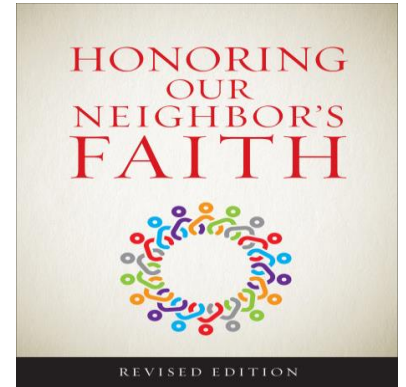
COME ALONG!

The New Jersey Synod's exciting, faith-filled senior high youth retreat (9th through 12th graders), the Winter Youth Assembly, is a great opportunity to connect with other Lutheran youth from around New Jersey and explore God's love and how together we can make a difference in the world.

The 2019 WYA will be at beautiful Fairview Lake YMCA Camp, Stillwater, NJ. If interested, please contact Pastor Marc at pastormarc@clc4u.com.

Being Lutheran in a Multi-Faith World

We've had some amazing sessions! Every two weeks, 8 of us meet to talk about our Lutheran Christian identity and what our traditions look like. Each session includes questions, videos and conversation. Our next session meets January 3rd at 10:30 am (new time!). We'll introduce Hinduism and Islam using resources provided by those perspective faith traditions.



Confronting Antisemitism: a How-to Guide for Christians

There has been an uptick of recent anti-Semitic graffiti in our local high schools and middle schools. The Upper Pascack Valley Interfaith group is actively engaged with schools, administrators and teachers to do what we can to confront this threat. One of the effective ways to combat this rising tide of hate is by working together, as a community, to protect those most affected by anti-Semitism. It's hard to sometimes know how we, as Christians, should (or can) respond. Pastor Marc is working on putting together a series of conversations in late January or early February. If you're interested in being a part of this, please contact Pastor Marc at pastormarc@clc4u.com.

Check This Out in the Library

When you go to bed tonight, push your slippers a little under the bed. When you get up in the morning, you'll have to get down on our knees to retrieve them. While you're on your knees, why not say a little morning prayer! Don't know how to pray? Take a look in our library this month at the titles displayed. One of them is
2428 Schafer - *Pray: prayers for people who say they can't*

What's Your Place?

Imagine a new neighbor just moved in. They want to know more about their new home. Where should they eat? What bagel joint do you love? Who is your mechanic, and what special place should they see? You live here for a reason, and let's celebrate every business, farm stand and library we love.

Christ Lutheran Church in Woodcliff Lake, Good Shepherd in Pearl River and Prince of Peace in Old Tappan want to help people new to our neighborhood learn more about their new home. These surveys can be found in our church Narthex, and we'll be collecting them through the end of December (and into early January).

From being fear-driven to being love-drawn

The Christian mysticism of Richard Rohr

Fr. Richard Rohr is a globally recognized ecumenical teacher bearing witness to the universal awakening within Christian mysticism and the Perennial Tradition. He is a Franciscan priest and founder of the Center for Action and Contemplation (CAC) in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Fr. Richard's teaching is grounded in practices of contemplation and self-emptying, expressing itself in radical compassion, particularly for the socially marginalized.

The CAC sends out a daily devotion, offering you a prayer and reflection about one aspect of our spiritual life. Below is a small excerpt from a recent devotion:

Prayer should not be too rational, social, verbal, linear, or transactional. It must be more mysterious, inner, dialogical, receptive, and pervasive. Silence, symbol, poetry, music, movement, and sacrament are much more helpful than mere words.

When you meditate consistently, a sense of your autonomy and private self-importance—what you think of as your “self”—falls away, little by little, as unnecessary, unimportant, and even unhelpful. The imperial “I,” the self that you likely think of as your only self, reveals itself as largely a creation of your mind.

Through regular access to contemplation, you become less and less interested in protecting this self-created, relative identity. You don't have to attack it; it calmly falls away of its own accord and you experience a kind of natural humility.

If your prayer goes deep, “invading” your unconscious, as it were, your whole view of the world will change from fear to connection, because you don't live inside your fragile and encapsulated self anymore.

In meditation, you move from ego consciousness to soul awareness, from being fear-driven to being love-drawn. That's it in a few words!

If you would like to receive these daily devotions, visit <https://cac.org/email-faq/>.

Growing in Generosity

Christmas Gifts for Children and Families in Need

Thank you, thank you to all who donated gifts, money and gift cards to everyone on our list again this year! We delivered 46 gifts to individuals and over \$700 in gift cards to the Tri-Boro Family Assistance Program, Tri-Boro Food Pantry and Westwood Social Services. We look forward to doing it next year! Thank you again for your generosity.

Christine Badame



Hygiene Bags

In December, 48 hygiene bags with towels, shampoo, toothpaste and more were assembled and delivered to our friends at St. John's Lutheran Church in Passaic. These kits will be given out to those who attend their weekly worship service at a local Home Depot parking lot. Thank you to the volunteers who organized this and the Special Gifts fund and Care Committee for making this annual event happen.



Knit 1 Crochet Too at the Tri-Boro Food Pantry's Thanksgiving Distribution

The Tri-Boro Food Pantry handed out all the 'fixings' for a Thanksgiving meal to 81 different families. Our Knit 1 Crochet Too team donated hats, scarves and more to hand out.

Thank you for helping keep our neighbors warm this winter season.



Additional Examples of Generosity

The **Christ Lutheran Church's Women's group** sent **\$1000 to the ELCA Good Gifts program**. This substantial gift provided chicks, a goat, a community vegetable garden, training for a community health care team, vaccinations for a child and stock for a health clinic for a week.



Give something
unexpected
this
Christmas.

Your support of God's Work, Our Hands generated a \$500 donation to the Tri-Boro Food Pantry by Thrivent Financial. We joined hundreds of other congregations who gathered close to 70,000 food items this holiday season.

Care Committee's October Blanket Fund drive raised \$125 for Church World Service. These blankets go to support individuals experiencing an extreme crisis. From January through June 2018, 75,157 blankets were distributed globally. That included 19,201 blankets that were used in 16 U.S. states.

Our annual Seafarers Christmas At Sea project sent 25 satchels, each filled with a hoodie, T-shirt, socks, along with homemade scarves and hats by the Knit 1 Crochet Too team, chocolate bars and a Christmas card from the church. These satchels will bring Christmas Eve joy to a crew sailing the seven seas. Thank you to everyone who worked on this project and for the funds from CLC's Special Gifts for making this a successful event.

Collecting Health Kit items: You can clean hands, brighten smiles and, yes, kiss a boo-boo in places near and far away by donating, heavy duty wide tooth combs, hand towels (dark colors), standard size Band-Aids, metal nail files or clippers. Kits mean the difference between sickness and health for families struggling with natural disasters, violence and poverty. God has given us all that we need. Let us offer the gift of dignity to others. Place your donations into the narthex basket anytime through the end of February.

By the way, about 30 pounds of small, hotel sized toiletry items were delivered to St. Timothy's, Wayne for their **blessing bag project**. That basket is in the narthex year round for your unused items.

Letters of Gratitude

In December, we received several letters of gratitude. Several are organizations we support through our benevolences: the 10% of your financial gift to the church that supports organizations locally and around the world.

From **Meals on Wheels of North Jersey:**

This will acknowledge, with our sincere and heartfelt thanks, your donation made to Meals on Wheels North Jersey.



Your continued support allows us to continue providing nutritious meals, delivered to the elderly and/or disabled, five days a week by our 500+ unpaid volunteer drivers.

From **Lutheran World Relief:**



Dear Friends,

I'd like to share with you one way your support is making a big difference.

In Mosul, Iraq, the fighting may have stopped, but the scars of war remain - especially for the children. Eight year-old Zahraa saw her home destroyed and her sister killed during the violence. But the compassion of people like you has helped her.

Your gifts fund the "I am Safe" community center in West Mosul, where Zahraa and other children come to get help with their trauma. The first time she visited the center, she was asked to color and drew pictures of death and destruction. With the help of supportive staff and programs designed to help her, now Zahraa is coloring scenes depicting life: birds, flowers and sunshine. Her mother says she plays and smiles more now as well.

From **Lutheran Social Ministries of New Jersey:**

When we're presented with an act of generosity - whether it's a small encouragement, a much needed word of support or a big favor - we've been given a gift that helps keep us going, that lifts us up and that makes our life better. Your gift does just that for the people of our programs. You allow us to continue to build community and relationships each day. You help us to provide dignity, a home and so much more. Your gift helps to ensure that children in affordable housing are provided a safe home and opportunities. Medically fragile seniors are given access to the supportive care they need at LIFE in Jersey City. You make a difference, and we are grateful.

From the **Montvale Girl Scout Troop 518:**

Dear Christ Lutheran Church,

Thank you so much for letting us use this space in church. We wouldn't be able to have our meetings. We are excited to participate in this year's service projects. The space is perfect and we are so happy to be able to use facilities like the kitchen. Thank you again for everything!



Thank You from David Scance!

On December 2, we celebrated David's 20th anniversary of music ministry at CLC. It was an amazing surprise. He wanted to share this with all of you:

Thank you so much for the show of appreciation last Sunday. Thank you for the gift, the cards and all of the heartfelt thanks for what I've done over the past twenty years. Thank you for letting me work with your kids in choirs, bands, Sunday school, VBS and other endeavors. God willing I'll be here for another twenty years. But why wait another twenty years to honor me? I propose that we make the first Sunday of December "Dave Day" at CLC!! This way you can shower me with gifts and praises annually!! Just kidding! Another one at 40 years will be just fine. Thanks again for everything.

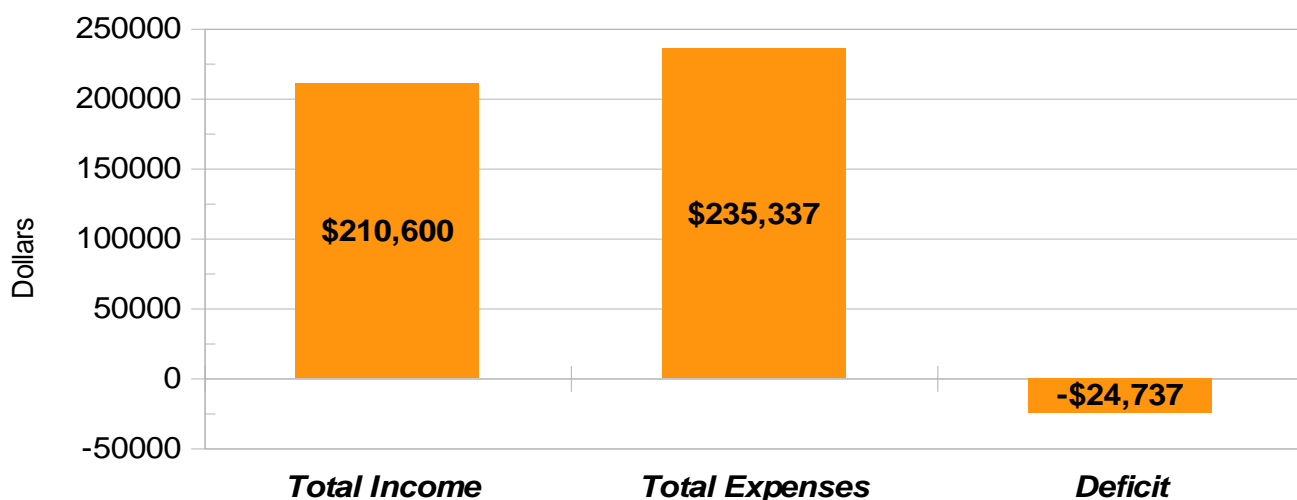
David Scance

On entering the house,
they saw the child with
Mary his mother;
and they knelt
down and paid
him homage.
Matthew 2:11,
NRSV





At the end of November total expenses outpaced total income, and we have a loss of \$24,737. 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, The Finance Committee

Restricted Funds Update

In accordance with the Congregational approved motion on June 3, 2018, the 'Restricted' funds approved for use are the following:

Approved amount	\$50,000.00
Previous amount of Total Funds used	\$20,935.00
<u>Amount accessed from approved funds:</u>	
For November, 2018	-\$407.00
 Total amount of remaining available funds	 \$29,472.00

Raise the Roof Update

We're adding an access point to the new attic space, adding new drywall and painting the Opsal room, and finishing up the Sunday School classrooms. So far, we've raised over \$41,000. Please continue to support the campaign and fulfill any pledge you've made.



Blessed to Be a Blessing

Argine Safari: Fulbright Scholar

We are thrilled to celebrate Argine Safari's (CLC's Director of Music and Choir Director) most recent award: a Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching grant. She is one of the 35 recipients of the 2018-2019 Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching. She will travel to Finland in January 2019 to develop a global collaborative project with the University of the Arts Helsinki, Sibelius Academy, several Finnish schools, and the Pascack Valley Regional High School District. Her project will help students celebrate their identity while expanding their vision of what humanity is all about. Finland's education system is one of the most advance and innovative in the world. Her time in Finland will be a blessing and she will bless Finland with her own talents, skills, and experiences. We can't wait to see what new skills, techniques, and ideas Argine brings back with her.

We are currently seeking a temporary organist and choir director to serve CLC while Argine is in Finland. Argine will be away starting Sunday, January 20th and will return for worship on Sunday, June 23rd. More information about our temporary organist will be shared as it becomes available.



From the State of New Jersey:

2018 New Jersey Tax Amnesty Ends January 15, 2019

The State of New Jersey asked churches and other organizations to let you know of a tax amnesty program currently running. You have the opportunity to file past tax returns and/or pay back taxes along with only half of the interest due as of November 1, 2018. This amnesty applies to outstanding tax filings or payments that were reportable on a tax return due on or after February 1, 2009 and prior to September 1, 2017. If you have a tax filing/payment to make and you choose not to participate in the amnesty, a 5% penalty will be applied. You can find more information (in English and Spanish) by visiting [TaxAmnesty.nj.gov](https://www.taxamnesty.nj.gov).

Worship Notes

Upper Pascack Valley's Interfaith Clergy 50th Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Worship Congregation B'nai Israel, Emerson, New Jersey



Over 275 people from over a dozen congregations gathered at Congregation B'nai Israel in Emerson for our annual Thanksgiving worship. Representatives from Christian, Jewish and Muslim communities participated. The *Jewish Standard* mentioned this service (and quoted Pastor Marc's sermon) in an article posted on November 29. Visit <https://jewishstandard.timesofisrael.com/this-is-what-america-looks-like/> to read it!

Help Us Undecorate

Thank you to the 25 amazing volunteers who decorated our worship space for the Advent and Christmas season. We will undecorate the sanctuary following the 10:30 am worship on Sunday, January 6th. Let's carefully store these beautiful items so they will be ready to use again next December.



Note Altar Flower Price Change

Our altar flower arrangements have increased slightly in price for 2019. The new rate for the two bouquets is now \$50.00.



Birthdays

Debbie Louis

Lorraine Sadlon

Anniversaries

First Worship Service of Christ Lutheran Church – January 11, 1959

Baptisms

January 6 – Ashley Christensen

January 7 – Shane Kurtz

January 14 – William Lintner

January 20 – Oliver Stutzel

*[You are invited to contact the church office to update our records
on your important upcoming celebrations.]*

Annual Meeting

Announcement – February 3, 2019

One worship at 9:30 am. The meeting follows at 10:30 am.

To All Christ Lutheran Church Women:

**You Are Invited to
The CLCW Annual Lunch is Sunday, January 20th
immediately following the 10:30 am worship.
Enjoy lunch of finger sandwiches, soup, dessert and other goodies.**





Come join us to . . .

Review the year 2018!

Plan for events for 2019!

Discuss Trash & Treasure Sale, May 4, 2019!

*Thanks to our successful 2018 Trash & Treasure Sale, we were
able to support many worthwhile causes in the world,
our area and in our own church.*

2019	January					2019
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 NEW YEARS DAY Church Office Closed	2  Chancel Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm	3 Multi-Faith Group 10:30 am Nominating Committee Mtg. 8:00 pm	4	5
6 EPIPHANY Sunday School 9:45 am <u>Worship</u> Contemporary with Holy Communion 9:00 am Traditional with Holy Communion 10:30 am Sanctuary Undecorating 11:30 am	7	8 Care Committee Meeting 9:30 am Worship Committee Meeting 7:00 pm	9 Chancel Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm	10	11	12 
13 <u>Worship</u> Contemporary 9:00 am Hymn Sing 10:30 am Confirmation Class 6:30 pm	14 Property Committee Work Night 7:30 pm	15	16 Chancel Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm	17 Congregation Council Meeting 8:00 pm	18	19
20 Sunday School 9:45 am <u>Worship</u> Contemporary with Holy Communion 9:00 am Traditional with Holy Communion 10:30 am CLCW Annual Mtg. 11:30 am Confirmation Class 6:30 pm	21	22	23 GAB Session 11:30 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm	24	25	26
27 <u>Worship</u> Contemporary with Holy Communion 9:00 am Traditional with Holy Communion 10:30 am	28	29	30 Chancel Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm	31		

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Dated Material – Please Deliver Promptly

ALL CONFIRMED FEMALES OF CHRIST LUTHERAN
ARE INVITED TO THE CLCW ANNUAL LADIES LUNCHEON
SUNDAY, JANUARY 29, 2019
AFTER THE 10:30 SERVICE IN THE OPSAL ROOM
SANDWICHES, SOUPS & DESSERT FOR LUNCH
COME JOIN US!

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