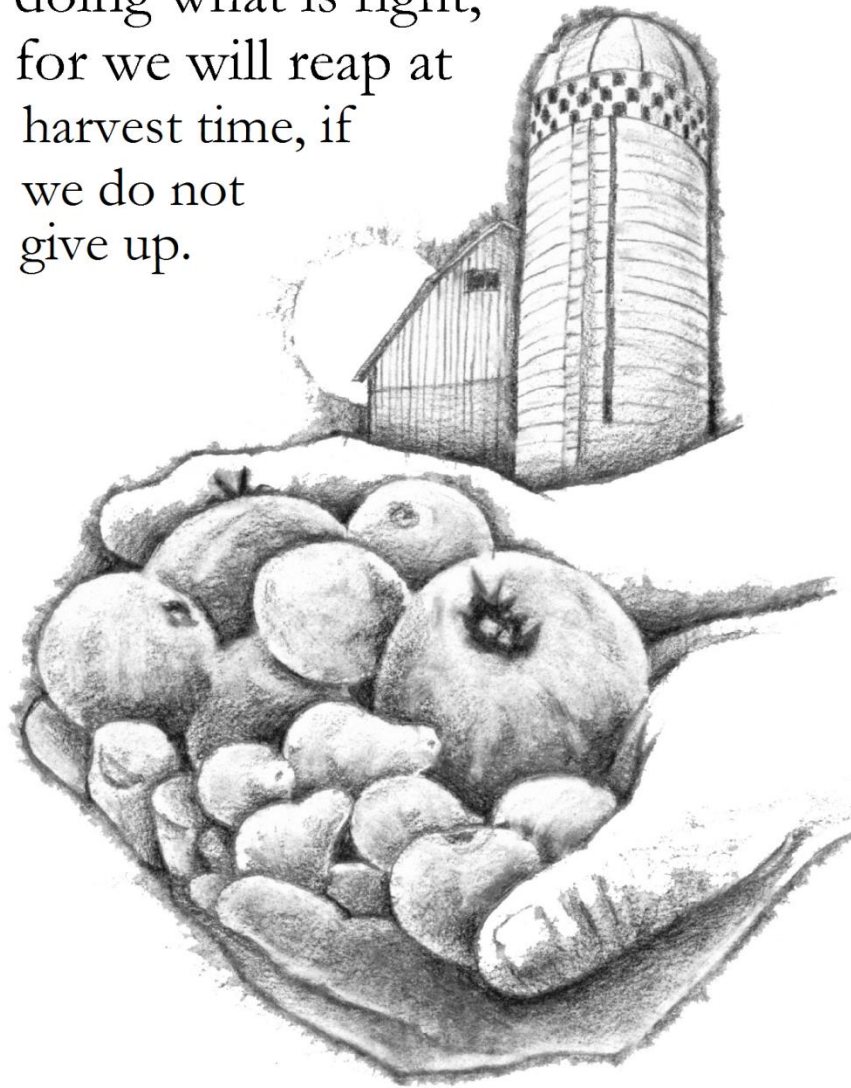


The Messenger

October 2015

So let us not grow weary in
doing what is right,
for we will reap at
harvest time, if
we do not
give up.



**The Newsletter of Christ Lutheran Church
Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey**

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

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www.clc4u.com

Pastor: The Rev. Marc Stutzel

Director of Music: Argine Safari

Director of Youth Choirs: David Scance

Musician: Fred Messner

Administrative Assistant: Doris Crouse



What Does Hospitality Look Like?

I think hospitality looks like what happened on Sunday, September 13th. When we started dreaming of packaging 40,000 meals to feed our neighbors in Bergen County, we didn't know how the neighborhood would respond. We couldn't do this on our own but God was calling us to keep making an impact in Bergen County. We spent months coordinating with other churches to raise money and recruit volunteers. Each week another church jumped onboard. As August approached, we knew that this event would catch fire. We knew the Spirit would bring the 160 volunteers we needed. But I didn't expect that the people would just keep coming. People saw our ads. They shared the event with their family and friends. Groups who signed said they were bringing 2, ended up bringing 10. People in Bergen and Rockland County showed up at our doorstep wanting to make a difference in the world.

This is where we showed true Christian hospitality. The smiles from the greeters at the door, the amazing spread of refreshments put together and continually refreshed to feed 230 of our newest friends, and the army of men and women directing people, plugging people in and making sure they had what they needed to get the job done. Debbie, JoAnn, Tom, Bill, Carla, Jim, Meredith, Jim, Ann, Bill, Doris, David, Florence, Katie, Dot and the countless others who stepped up to lead. You were inspirational and made our new friends feel valued and appreciated. Thank you for that!

And I saw many of our members doing the difficult thing by letting a volunteer from another organization take their place. I know that wasn't easy. It's hard to give this opportunity up. But you showed true Christian hospitality by giving someone you didn't know an opportunity to love and serve. You gave up your spot to train others to serve. You served the servants, living out an important aspect of the Christian life. We created these 41,124 to feed others because we know that Jesus feeds us. We wanted to join in God's work in the world of feeding and nourishing the hands of those who are called to be a Christ to their neighbors. Christian hospitality isn't only about being a good host. Christian hospitality is also helping others live out God's love.

We'll have several opportunities to share our Christian hospitality over the next year from "Walk Thru the Bible" on October 24, Interfaith Thanksgiving Worship in November, the Advent dinner and more. Let's keep living out Christ's hospitality.

See you in church, Pastor Marc



The Numbers for God's Work, Our Hands on September 13th

Over \$12,000 raised! 230 Volunteers! 8 Lutheran Churches! 41,124 Meals!
The meals were packed and delivered to The Center For Food Action
where they will be handed out to those who are in need.
Thank you for your support, prayers, and time!
Let's keep fighting hunger in Bergen County!

President's Message



As you receive this, we are preparing for many exciting events here at Christ Lutheran this fall! I can't believe what a difference a year makes! I just looked back at my message for last October and it was all about meeting Pastor Marc and Kate and preparing to listen and vote! What a great year we have had!

Thanks again to all of you who helped and contributed to our **God's Work, Our Hands** Sunday on September 13th. What a great day! We exceeded all our goals! We had over 250 people working here throughout the day and packaged up 41,124 meals! The meals were picked up by The Center For Food Action the following week and will go to many local families. We even finished up early, thanks to the friendly competition on the lines. The day ended with a brief rain shower and a rainbow!

It was wonderful to work with the eight other churches who contributed both money and people. Many of them commented to me on how well run the event was and how happy they were to participate with us in such a worthwhile project. My hope is that we will do more of these good works with other churches. By combining our time, talents and funds, we can do more for the communities . . . things we can't do with one church alone. Thanks again to all our helpers, especially Pastor Marc (our main organizer), and Debbie Louis and JoAnn Sallo who provided the wonderful refreshments.

We can all look forward to Confirmation on October 11th. Come celebrate at the 10:30 am service with our four confirmands as they become adult members of our church.

Thanks again for all your support. We have a lot going on this fall so please read your weekly emails, bulletins and of course, *The Messenger*.

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

There's Something about the Eucharist

Did you know that our denomination, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is always chatting? We are a church growing in our faith by engaging in conversation as we grow into who God wants us to be. The church engages with current social and religious issues, responding with the creation of Social Statement and theological documents that are developed by scholars, pastors, bishops, and the public. In 2013, I was at the voting assembly where the church adopted a social statement on criminal justice. Currently, among the many active conversations that are being held, the church is re-examining how we do Holy Communion.

Earlier this year, we joined in that conversation with our own midweek Lenten study looking at our congregation's practice. We read and studied scripture, shared our experiences of being welcome and un-welcomed at the Lord's Table, and examined what other Lutheran churches do in their communities. As Lutherans, our practice is connected by our theology (what we say about God) but expressed in different ways.

Over the last few generations, the practice of Holy Communion has changed in the Lutheran church. For some, Holy Communion was first given after confirmation at the age of 14 or 15. But the age has shifted. First communion classes were established for fifth graders, third graders, and then second graders. The definition of what a person needs to do, or understand, before they receive communion, continues to evolve. Some churches hold mutual conversations with pastors and parents so each family and pastor decides when the child "ready" to receive. As Lutheran churches stretched out of their northern European heritages, becoming filled by people who were not raised Lutheran, churches can no longer assume that everyone was communed at the same age or time. Some churches are noticing that their neighborhoods are filled with adults and families who did not grow up in churches and were never baptized. These churches are opening up communion to people who are not yet baptized, concerned that limiting who has access to this tangible expression of God's grace is against Christ's preaching of God's welcome and love for all. Some tangible expression of God's grace was against Christ's sharing God's love to all. Every church, no matter their practice, is concerned that God's love, grace and gospel are fully expressed in what they practice but many have discerned different answers to the question of what they should do.

The Use of the Means of Grace was written and approved by the ELCA at a voting assembly in 1997. It's a document that examined the variety of communion practices in the ELCA and pulled out teachings, experiences, and practices that are

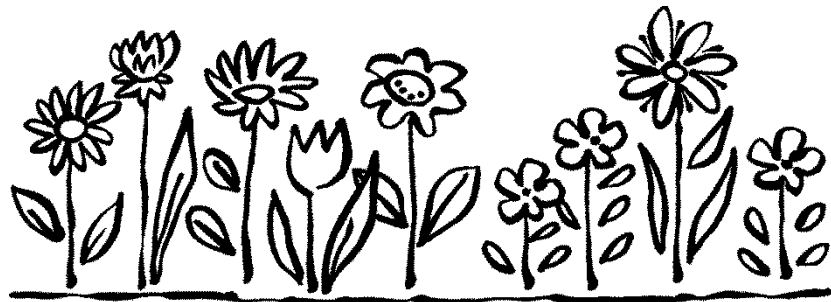
found in scripture, our teachings and traditions. The document affirms our belief that Holy Communion is served at Jesus' Table. We are invited, by the Lord himself, to have our faith nourished and our sins forgiven when we eat and drink at the Lord's Table. We are invited by the one who claims us, in baptism, as his own. We met Jesus. Having our body fed by his body and blood is meeting Jesus. From this Table, we are called to be witnesses to the Gospel in our lives. Holy Communion is Jesus feeding us so that we can be the faithful people God calls us to be. God isn't letting us travel through our lives without support. Jesus is coming to us, over and over again to feed us so that we can feed the world through prayer, faith, actions, and deeds. We feed those we love and God does the same.

The Use of the Means of Grace doesn't try to establish a step one, step two, step three process-like approach to Holy Communion. The document, instead, reflects the mystery of Holy Communion. How can this bread and drink be Jesus' body and blood? How can this precious gift be met for each of us? This meal is holy but we know that we are not holy. We make mistakes. We forget God. We sometimes act, and believe, that we are God. Only Jesus is holy but this meal is intended for us. Communion is a mystery and a paradox. It can never be fully understood and can only be fully experienced through our years of eating with Jesus and bringing who we are and what we experience to a Lord who loves us in spite of our sins.

Holy Communion is a mystery that can never be exhausted nor is it designed to be hoarded just for ourselves. We honor all who have communed before, no matter what tradition or church they come from. We see in communion the gift of Christ's presence. We hold First Communion classes for kids (and adults) who commune or are about to, knowing that the mystery and exploring the mystery go hand-in-hand. As a community, we are committed to those who commune with us and committed to their relationship with Jesus Christ. In the words of Rev. Dr. Gordon Lathrop, historian and former professor of worship at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, ". . . one who eats and drinks with the community, even once, is bound to the community and the community to her or to him." Communion binds us to God and to one another. And so what we can do build up that bond in any way that we can.

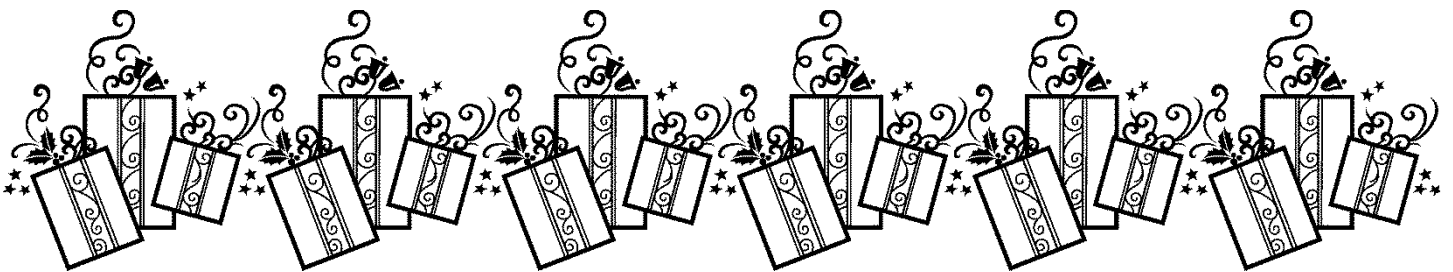
Explore Holy Communion and current conversation at <http://www.elca.org/Resources/Worship> (click on table and font tab). Dwell with their words, your experiences, and explore Jesus Christ's gift to us.

Pastor Marc



You're Invited!

Fall is here and you are invited to the Christ Lutheran Church Women's Annual Retreat, so mark your calendars now for October 2nd to 4th, the dates for the women's annual Retreat Weekend at Camp Koinonia. It is open to all women of the church, and is a nice opportunity to meet other women and enjoy the peaceful surroundings of Koinonia. Come join us for all or part of the weekend, filled with fun, food, and fellowship (along with time for individual pursuits). The cost is only \$95 for the weekend and includes food. See Kim Kearns or Ann Christensen if you are interested in attending or have any questions. Carpooling is easily arranged. People usually go up on Friday afternoon/evening. If you can only make part of the weekend, that's ok too.



Looking ahead – Christmas gifts for needy children

Christ Women will once again be working with the Bergen Volunteer Center to provide gifts to children through Mentoring Moms and the All Wrapped Up program. The lists will be available in November. We will be making announcements as the time gets closer. Keep an eye on The Messenger and weekly bulletins for further information. Thank you in advance!

Christine Badame



Each Sunday in October
Contemporary service, 9:00 am
Organ led traditional service, 10:30 am

- The 4th Care Sunday with guest speaker
- The 11th Confirmation Sunday
- The 18th Fall Stewardship Kick-off
- The 25th Reformation Sunday—Koinonia Sunday with guest speaker
We will worship during the 10:30 am service using the green hymnal (LBW) Setting II)

Looking for Assisting Ministers

Worship Committee would like to involve you in the ministry of worship. We are seeking people who would occasionally like to help lead a worship service along with Pastor Marc. Contact him with your interest.

From the Library . . .



Recommended Reading *Pastrix* by Nadia Bolz-Weber

Our library is still a work in progress, but books are being added monthly. One of the newest books is "*Pastrix*."

What is a Pastrix? It's a coined word for a female Pastor. Take a heavily tattooed, drug addicted, homeless, alcoholic and expose her to the Holy Spirit, and what do you get? You get an unconventional Lutheran minister with a large, vibrant congregation. This is well worth reading!

Dot Dohrmann

TELL ME, I'll forget.
SHOW ME, I'll remember.
INVOLVE ME, I'll understand.



IN ONLY A FEW MEMORABLE HOURS, UNDERSTAND,
LIKE NEVER BEFORE, 4,000 YEARS OF LIFE CHANGING,
GODLY WISDOM.



Save the date: Saturday, October 24. Live Bible Event.

An interactive exploration of the Old Testament.

You don't want to miss this. More information coming soon.

Visit www.walkthru.org to see what this event will be like.

Extravagant Giving

Stewardship Sunday

What is God calling me to do?

Join us on Sunday, October 18, as we explore what God is calling us to be. Sit with the question, enter the conversation, and let's see God's extravagant generosity.

We Need Your Ideas!

The Special Gifts Disbursement Committee needs your help! We have received our annual distribution check from the Dominick and Anna Ricci Foundation totaling \$67,026. The Committee needs some ideas for spending it. If you have an idea, all you need to do is download an application from the CLC website or pick one up from the mailboxes near the office and return the completed form to the Committee's mailbox. The deadline for any new applications to be voted on at the 2016 Annual Meeting is November 15, 2015, but the Committee will be meeting several times before then so don't procrastinate. Get your project ideas into us now. (Remember in order to be considered, the application must be signed by a member of Council.)

Per our charter we must allocate at least 10% of the monies received from the Ricci Foundation in each of the following areas. (So any projects for these particular categories are appreciated.)

1. Outreach Ministry or Benevolences to local community or worldwide
2. Special Congregational Ministries
3. Capital Improvement or Asset Replacement

Bill Hoenigmann

The Special Gifts Disbursement Committee