

The Messenger

February 2016



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

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

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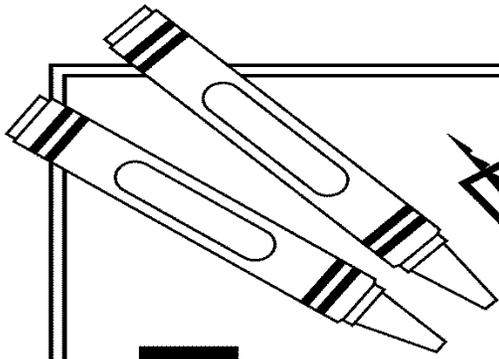
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PUZZLE

True Friendship

What makes someone a good friend?
The Bible offers lots of advice about true friendship.

*Directions: Starting at the *, connect the dots clockwise and complete the words using the word bank. Then fill in Proverbs 27:9, NIV.*

WORD BANK:

heart prings ir verbs vice ness end

27:9, NIV

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27:9, NIV

Answer: The pleasantness of a friend springs from their heartfelt advice.
Proverbs 27:9, NIV



Lent is coming.

And I'm not sure I'm ready for it.

Christmas just finished. We've put away the tree, wrapped up the lights, and we're trying to avoid looking at our credit card statement for the new few months. We're finally exhaling after the busy Christmas season. But here we are with Ash Wednesday about to arrive. On February 10, at 7:30 pm, we'll gather in the sanctuary to worship, pray, and feel ashen crosses made on our forehead. We'll start our 40 day journey towards Easter by reflecting on God's story and our own. These 40 days bring to mind the 40 days Jesus was in the desert before he began his public ministry (see Matthew, Mark, and Luke). Jesus fasted, listened to God and was tempted by the Devil before beginning his journey to the cross. Lent is a time when the church slows down, reflecting on who we are and what Jesus has done for us. It's a time to breath-in God before the celebration of Easter.

But how do we breathe-in God? One way is through our mid-week Lenten soup and worship services. We'll gather on Wednesdays at 7:00 pm to eat delicious homemade soup and participate in a worship series called "Sensing the Gospel." We'll continue our weekly Bible studies as we read through the entire Bible in a year. We'll raise money and support for ELCA World Hunger and the Center for Food Action in Englewood and gather toiletries for the homeless in New Jersey. We'll sing, laugh, cry and celebrate a God who doesn't just know us. We'll celebrate a God who walks with us.

This Lent, I invite you to breath-in God. Take up a discipline to pray first thing in the morning or right before bed. Join us at worship or study. Serve your neighbors through the church or trying something new. Find what you need to breathe-in God, and let's breathe-out God's love in everything we say and do.

See ya in church!

Pastor Marc

FAITH OUT LOUD: READING THE BIBLE IN 2016

FEBRUARY SCHEDULE

BIBLE STUDIES:

WEDNESDAYS AT 11:30 AM &

THURSDAYS AT 7:00 PM

Feb 1: Leviticus 1-4

Feb 2: Lev 5-7

Feb 3: Lev 8-10

Feb 4: Lev 11-13

Feb 5: Lev 14-15

Feb 6: Lev 16-18

Feb 7: Lev 19-21

Feb 8: Lev 22-23

Feb 9: Lev 24-25

Feb 10: Lev 26-27

Feb 11: Numbers 1-2

Feb 12: Num 3-4

Feb 13: Num 5-6

Feb 14: Num 7

Feb 15: Num 8-10

Feb 16: Num 11-13

Feb 17: Num 14-15

Feb 18: Num 16-17

Feb 19: Num 18-20

Feb 20: Num 21-22

Feb 21: Num 23-25

Feb 22: Num 26-27

Feb 23: Num 28-30

Feb 24: Num 31-32

Feb 25: Num 33-34

Feb 26: Num 35-36

Feb 27: Deuteronomy 1-2

Feb 28: Deut 3-4

Feb 29: Deut 5-6

CHECK THE WEBSITE WWW.CLC4U.COM TO VIEW COMPLETE
SCHEDULE (WILL MEET MOST WEEKS)

Sensing the Gospel: Mid-week Lenten soup and worship
Wednesdays at 7:00 pm

“We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life. . . ” (1 John 1:1)

In Jesus Christ, the salvation God provides cannot be reduced to an idea or abstraction. Salvation happens, instead, in human flesh. Indeed, God arrives as human flesh, and people encountered Jesus in their own bodies. These were real people in real contact with a real man from Galilee.

Even today, we encounter God and God’s salvation in embodied ways—in our bodies’ abilities to perceive familiar realities and to interpret new ones. Lent provides opportunities to acknowledge this. The season begins with smelly and greasy ash as a stark liturgical reminder of our flesh’s dusty finitude. It will end with our feet washed in cool water or a bittersweet taste of wine in our mouths as we imagine the horrible sight of a man’s body mangled on a cross. In between, Lent allows us to consider together who we are and how we encounter an incarnate God.

Join us Wednesdays for homemade soup and an exploration of sensing the gospel.

Pastor Marc



Souper Bowl Sunday is February 7th

We are collecting soups and money to benefit the Center for Food Action in Englewood. So please remember to bring a can of soup to the narthex (or 2 or 3 cans) by that date for delivery to the Center for Food Action in Englewood. The struggle to put food on the table goes on in many families in our area. A bowl of soup is always warming and is gratefully received at the Center for Food Action where the need is so great. So, watch your local papers for the sales. Your donations will help relieve that with a warm bowl of soup.



Lenten Hunger Appeal: ELCA World Hunger

Care Committee's annual Lenten Hunger Appeal will benefit ELCA World Hunger. Partnering with congregations all over the United States, we hope to raise over \$2 million dollars to support this amazing ministry. The mission of ELCA World Hunger is to be involved where ever hunger takes place. From the plains of Ethiopia, the mountains of Nepal, to the shores of the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina and the streets of Passaic, New Jersey, ELCA World Hunger is there. In the United States, over 48 million people don't know where their next meal is coming from. We pray and work to change this reality. The Care Committee will be hosting coffee hours and bake sales after worship during Lent (February and March) to support ELCA World Hunger. We invite you to stick around after worship, enjoy a delicious bite to eat, get to know someone new and help end hunger around the world.



Here we are, "in the deep mid-winter" sort of, reading the Bible together 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 10th.

Before Lent begins, we will have our Annual Meeting, Sunday, February 7th, immediately after the **ONE (9:30 am) worship service** that day. Therefore, our meeting will begin at 10:30 am or so. We will quickly review the highlights of each committee, our 2016 budget and will vote on many things: Council members, Nominating Committee, Special Gifts Committee members, Koinonia representatives, the budget and more!

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 24th. Please take one home, read it and bring it to the meeting on February 7th.

We will have coffee and some light refreshments to nourish you during the meeting. Please come and stay and VOTE! Remember we do need a quorum to conduct this meeting. If last year is our guide, we can plan on concluding the meeting around noon.

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



Annual Meeting
February 7



Christ Women make sale plans

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, April 30th, 8:00 am until 4:00 pm

Clothing collection begins: Monday, April 4th

T&T household items collection begins: Sunday, April 17th

We are very excited that Crystal Ramhorst will be here to help with the clothing setup in April, but she won't be able to come up from Georgia every year unfortunately. ☹️ We are hoping to find a clothing setup coordinator that can take over the responsibilities. This will be a great opportunity since Crystal will be here to train someone. If you are interested please contact Ann Christensen.

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

Christine Badame



Church library news

As we start a year of reading the Bible, did you ever consider reading God's word in a different version? Our library has nine different editions for your use (some in large print) which may be clearer to you than the version you now have. We also have individual explanations on each book. Take a look in the library for all the translations on display and feel free to borrow any of them.

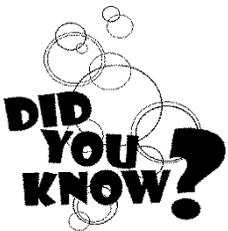


We've got pictures . . . Now that our library is mostly updated (although still a work in progress), I've turned my attention to the archives of Christ Lutheran. We have at least one volume of pictures, news articles and literature for each decade of our life, and I am trying to collate and update each volume.

There are a large number of pictures that don't seem to pertain to our history and many more with no date or names which probably should be included.

I've put them in a box on the narthex table. When you have a chance, please go through them and either take them home or identify the date and people IN PENCIL on the back. Thank You!

Dot Dohrmann, Church Librarian



. . . That the Congregational Annual Meeting is Sunday, February 7th, immediately following the 9:30 am worship service (one service only that day). The meeting will include highlights from our Council committees and a vote on the newest special gifts applications. Attendance by all our members is encouraged. Visitors are welcome. Light refreshments will be available.

. . . That copies of the 2015 Annual Report are available in the narthex; you may pick one up for an early review. Please bring it with you to the Annual Meeting.

. . . That a limited number of devotions for Lent, "Bearing Fruit", are available in the narthex. Each day includes an evocative image, a reading from Colossians, a quotation to ponder, a reflection and a prayer.

. . . That Easter Sunday flowers for the altar will be available for sale the first Sunday in March. There will be a choice of lilies and other spring flowers. Watch the narthex for envelopes for your use to order.

. . . That the Care Committee thanks all who decorated our Love Tree in the narthex in December with their heartfelt greetings, messages and donations. Your gifts help us with our ministry.



From Our Presiding Bishop Rev. Elizabeth Eaton

*Putting the pieces together
2016 dedicated to setting directions,
priorities across all the church*

It has been just more than two years since I began this call. I'm often asked what has been the greatest surprise. Certainly the amount of travel has been a surprise, but the greatest has been the complexity and scope of the ELCA. As bishop of the Northeastern Ohio Synod, I had a pretty good grasp of the ministries in its 20 counties, but now my territory includes all of the counties in all of the states and the Caribbean, along with international partnerships.

This church does a lot. All over the world. All of the time. At your churchwide office, spreadsheets track the progress of the six goals we set for ourselves in the 2013-2016 operational plan. This just tracks the work of churchwide staff, not that of congregations, synods, social ministry organizations, colleges and universities, seminaries, conciliar relationships, camps, campus ministries, separately incorporated ministries, federal chaplaincies and missionary personnel.

At its November 2015 meeting, the ELCA Church Council received the report of the Theological Education Advisory Council. One of the striking revelations in this report was the number of ways we deliver theological education in the ELCA. We do this through seminaries, of course, but also through colleges and universities, lay schools, certificate programs, synodical schools and congregational schools.

This can be seen as a rich flourishing of creative and diverse delivery of theological education, or it can be seen as a symptom of a disconnected approach. With the best intentions, groups within the church see a need and develop a solution for a particular issue without considering what else might be in place or even how the solution fits in with the mission of the whole. We have one synod that has two lay academies and neither one knew the other existed.

The ELCA constitution states: “The congregations, synods and churchwide organization of this church are interdependent partners sharing responsibility in God’s mission.” This is constitutional language for “We are church together.” Some days we are, but many days and in many ways we aren’t. I’m not singling out theological education as an egregious example, but as one instance among many where we aren’t really connected with each other. This exposes the cultural sense that the church is a voluntary association like the Rotary or the Girl Scouts, where one can come and go as one chooses, and not a new creation joined to Christ in baptism.

As Peter wrote to the churches in Asia Minor: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy” (1 Peter 2:9-10). God created the church. God has put us together through baptism as the body of Christ. You just don’t opt in or out of that.

Looking through the lens of Martin Luther’s explanation of the eighth commandment, I believe that good and faithful members, congregations, synods and the churchwide organization have tried to carry out God’s mission. The issue, I think, is that the mission has become at once universal and very particular. We are doing everything and we are doing it in pixels — pixels that don’t come together to make a complete picture.

Throughout 2016 we — all of us — are going to take a look at the future directions and priorities of this church. We will build on the work already done on this issue. We will engage all the expressions of this church, it will be part of the work of the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, and it will clarify and sharpen our mission.

Apart from God our work is in vain. This process must depend on the Spirit’s guidance. This isn’t merely a technical problem to be solved, but a time for this church to engage intentionally and consistently in a process of communal spiritual discernment. We aren’t just inviting God into this process at the beginning and thanking God at the end. Instead we, as a church, will open ourselves up to the invitation of God to be part of God’s reconciling work through Christ in the world. Join me.