

The Messenger

January 2020



KEEP SEEKING HIM

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

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



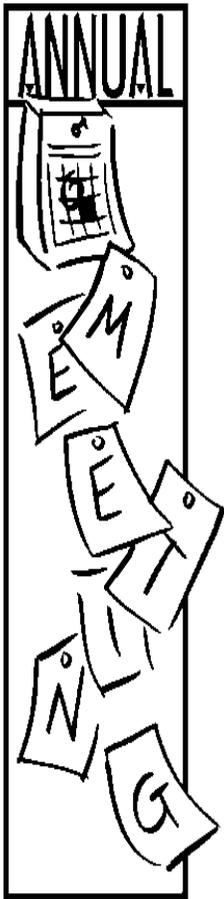
Twenty-Twenty

I received my first pair of glasses when I was about five years old, but I'm pretty sure my eyesight needed help long before that. I don't remember there ever being a time when I didn't need help seeing. When I first wake up in the morning, everything is fuzzy. Every light radiates like a star on the top of a Christmas tree, and every object looks like a fuzzy multi-colored blob. The biological lenses in my eye are not quite right so I need help to see twenty-twenty. That's why one of the first things I do every morning is to put a little plastic lens in my eye. That lens I put on helps me see the world more clearly. Without it, I would struggle to see what's in front of me.

This January marks more than a new year; it's also a new decade. From now on when we hear someone mention the "20s," they're talking about today. A new decade means new possibilities and new opportunities. But it also lets us reflect on where we have come. Some of us weren't even born ten years ago. Others were still in school, college, or had just started our first job. Some of us were happily married while others knew they needed to separate. And many of us were surrounded with loved ones who will not be entering this new decade with us. Even if we do not feel that January 2020 feels any different than January 2010, our lives and our world have changed. Yet, regardless of whatever change we've gone through, God has been with us through it all. And the Jesus who loved you in January 2010 is the same Jesus who loves you now.

This new decade provides us an opportunity to look forward. We can be honest about everything we've gone through. We can admit the ways things haven't turned out the way they should. And we can take time to worship, pray, and be with Jesus – and to discover how he's been with us through it all. When we notice that Jesus has always been part of our lives, I believe that's when we gain a new perspective on the life we've lived. That new perspective then becomes a new lens as we look forward to the future that's about to come. The new lens helps focus us, noticing the ways God is in the world and in our lives. And when we see God more clearly, we might also learn how to love ourselves, world and neighbors in a deeper and more meaningful way. The 2020s won't be entirely the same as the 2010s. But maybe we can choose to live through the 2020s with our eyes seeing the Jesus who is always there.

See you in church! Pastor Marc



Congregational Annual Meeting

Sunday, February 2, 2020

One worship at 9:30 am.

The meeting follows at 10:30 am.

Make plans to attend our Annual Congregational Meeting on February 2, 2020. We'll have ONE worship service that day at 9:30 am. The meeting will follow at 10:30 am. Annual reports will be available to review prior to the meeting. During the meeting we'll approve a budget for 2020, elect new church council members, appoint delegates to the Camp Koinonia annual meeting, discuss the gift from Redeemer Lutheran Church in Dumont and vote on projects to support with our Special Gifts fund.

Annual meetings are open to all. However, as a non-profit, only voting members are allowed to vote on items raised during the meeting. If you're interested in joining Christ Lutheran Church as a full voting member, please speak to Pastor Marc (pastormarc@clc4u.com).

Stay Up-to-date with CLC Online!

It's 2020 – do you know where CLC is online? Make sure you are up-to-date on the most recent information by following us on Instagram (www.instagram.com/clc4u), Facebook (www.facebook.com/clc4u), and sign-up for our weekly email newsletter at <http://eepurl.com/bFWdgb>.

Raise the Roof Update

Our three year capital campaign is officially over! Thank you to everyone who contributed to the campaign. Final numbers will not be available until later in January. We invite you to visit the Opsal Hall entrance. We recently hung new drywall to replace the water damage in the ceiling. Also, if you notice the snow on the roof staying longer than it used to, that's because the attic space created by the new pitched roofs is helping to insulate the buildings. The new roofs are helping to lower energy costs throughout the year!

Stewardship and Generosity

There's still time to turn in your stewardship pledge for 2020! As of December 7th, 37 individuals and families have committed to contributing over \$14,200 to the church in 2020. Last year we received 50 pledges of support for 2019. We hope to break that number this year!

And This Is Only One of Their Ministries . . .

The Care Committee's mission is to care for Christ Lutheran Church and the surrounding community. Other ministries of this vital Committee include the prayer chain, visits, letters and phone calls, Gab Session, Knit One Crochet Too and our prison ministry. They meet the second Tuesday of the month at 10:00 am.

Pictured below are a few of the members of **Care Committee** who put together 10 Christmas baskets to deliver to shut-ins and members of CLC who could use a little Christmas cheer.



Diane Anderson, Gunnel Wuehler,
Dot Haslun, Edy Post, Debbie Louis (not pictured)

And You Don't Have to Speak Italian!

Care Committee's next Gab Session is coming on Wednesday, January 22nd at 11:30 am in the Sunshine Room. All are invited to this potluck event which will feature Italian food for lunch. This is a great time to get to know members of Christ Lutheran better! If you would like to join them, please RSVP to Debbie Louis by calling 201-358-6435 or gundheaven@aol.com.

To All Christ Lutheran Church Women

**You Are Invited To
The CLCW Annual Lunch on Sunday, January 19th
immediately following the 10:30 am worship.
Enjoy lunch of finger sandwiches, soup, dessert and other goodies.
Come join us to . . .
Review the year 2019!
Plan for events for 2020!
Discuss Trash & Treasure Sale, May 2, 2020!**

Thanks to our successful 2019 Trash & Treasure Sale, we were able to support many worthwhile causes in the world, our area and in our own church (both financially and our Genesis Garden).

Check Out These Thrivent Financial Events At Christ Lutheran

Thrivent Financial's mission is to do more than offer insurance and financial services. Their goal is to help Christians be wise with money and live generously. For over 100 years, Thrivent Financial has helped Lutherans become better stewards of their financial resources. Many people at Christ Lutheran rely on Thrivent Financial for their guidance, and they manage the church's investments. We're excited to be partnering with Thrivent Financial to host several events in 2020 including:

Sunday January 12th

Coffee Hours following 9:00 am and 10:30 am worship services

William O'Doherty, Thrivent's Financial Consultant who is located in Montvale, will do a general presentation about Thrivent overall, action teams and qualified charitable Distributions. He will also discuss the upcoming workshops here at Christ Lutheran.

Tuesday February 11th at 6:30 pm

Retirement & Estate Strategy Workshop

Dinner will be served. No products will be sold at this event. More information will be coming soon.

Tuesday May 12th at 6:30pm

Long Term Care Workshop.

Dinner will be served. No products will be sold at this event. More information will be coming soon.

Kids and Adults: Education and More!

Sunday School Dates

Thank you for a fun Christmas Pageant during the 9:00 am worship, December 22nd! We sometimes need God to remind us to “not freak out.” God’s love is all around us, and Jesus is here for us. Thank you to all our pageant stars who shared God’s story with everyone. Pictures are online, and we hope you enjoy this picture from the rehearsal.



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 three classes (pre-k, k-1, 2nd+). We’ll meet again on January 5th and January 19th.

Confirmation

The 7th and 8th grade confirmation class will meet again on January 5th and January 19th, 2020 at 6:30 pm.

ELCA Youth Gathering

It's not too early to start thinking about the ELCA Youth Gathering in 2021. From June 29 through July 3, 30,000 high school youth and their adult leaders will be in Minneapolis. The theme is “boundless: God beyond measure,” based on Ephesians 3:19. This is the premier ELCA faith formation event for Lutheran youth. We'll worship, study, serve and get lost in a giant interactive center. The ELCA Youth Gathering will be open to all 8th through 12th graders at time of registration (will need to be entering 9th grade in fall 2021 or have graduated 12th grade in June 2021). This is one of the best gifts we can give our young people to strengthen their faith for years to come. Visit elca.org/youthgathering for more information and let Pastor Marc (pastormarc@clc4u.com) know if you might want to come.

Happy New Year ♪ *Happy New Year* ♪ *Happy New Year*

Worship Notes

The 2020 Flower Chart is now available in the church narthex! You may choose an available date for which to purchase the altar flowers (\$50), and you will be contacted for further information.

What Goes Up Must Come Down . . .

Thank you to the 20+ 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 5th. Let's carefully store these beautiful items so they will be ready to use again next December.

The Prayer Experiment Continues Each Month

On the third Sunday of this month (January 19th), please write your name on the green piece of paper you are given and place in the baptismal font during worship. On the following Sunday (January 26th), pick a name from the font and commit to praying for that person throughout the month of February.

What is Epiphany?

[From Living Our Baptism: a resource from the ELCA]

The church typically celebrates the day of Epiphany on January 6th, twelve days after Christmas. This year, we'll celebrate on January 5th – the Sunday nearest to Epiphany. We will recall the story found only in Matthew 2:1-10 when magi (sometimes referred to as wisemen or kings) came from the East searching for a king born under a star. They met with King Herod in Jerusalem and ascertained that a king was to be born in Bethlehem. Herod directed them to continue their search for this new king. They visited Jesus and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Knowing that King Herod wanted to kill Jesus, the magi returned to their home without letting Herod know what they saw.

The magi risked much and traveled far to pay homage to the king born under a star in Bethlehem. They came offering their gifts, only to be overcome with joy, not grasping that it was Jesus who provides the greater gift to the world. Aha! God was revealed to the wise men!

Epiphany is the season of Aha! And during January and February, we'll hear stories from the Bible when people have "Aha!" moments. We experience similar Aha moments when we say, "So that is what God is up to!" as we discover the grace God gives us everyday.



Growing in Generosity

Did You Know Care Committee is Into Gaming?

Edy Post, Michael Post and I played Bingo with the residents of the Waterfront Home in Woodcliff Lake on December 5, 2019. The residents are always welcoming and eager to play Bingo for prizes. The prizes consist of soap, hand lotion, toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, shaving cream, socks, etc. These are all items we put into our shopping baskets on a regular basis and never think of doing without. These Care members make sure all the residents win three or four times, and as a result we always leave with an empty basket.

Alice Namendorf

Christmas Gifts for Children and Families in Need

Thank you to those who donated gifts, money and gift cards to everyone on our list this year! We delivered 50 gifts and gift cards to individuals and an additional \$200 in extra gift cards to Westwood Social Services. There were so many gifts—the bags overflowed into additional offices in Westwood's Borough Hall. We look forward to doing it again next year. Thank you again for your generosity.



Kate Stutzel

Souper Bowl Sunday Sponsored by the Care Committee

The month of January is designated as **Souper Bowl Sunday Month** at Christ Lutheran. This year's campaign will go from January 12th through February 2nd. We will be collecting cans of soup and your pocket change to support the Center for Food Action in Englewood. Pick up a plastic container on January 12th to collect your change and return the cans of soup and your pocket change to the church by February 2nd.

60th Anniversary Thank Offering Update

The final tally for our 60th Anniversary Thankoffering was \$7,070! Thank you! We plan to deliver this gift to Santa Isabel Lutheran Church in Elizabeth before the end of 2019.

Seafarers Christmas-at-Sea

We sent 25 satchels, each filled with a hoodie, T-shirt, socks, homemade scarves and hats (crafted 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.



Care Committee's October Blanket Fund

Care Committee sent \$200 to Church World Service to support their blanket ministry. These blankets go to support individuals experiencing an extreme crisis such as fleeing from their homes or recovering from a disaster. From January through June 2019, 21,574 blankets were distributed in the United States alone.

Hygiene Kit Project

In December we partnered with St. John's Lutheran Church in Passaic who has an amazing ministry with local people who struggle financially. We sent St. John's 48 brightly colored hygiene kits filled with towels, toothpaste and other goodies for these people who cannot afford these basic products. We're grateful to everyone who shopped and assembled the kits to put this project together. This ministry was graciously supported by the Special Gifts fund and the Care Committee.



From Our Partners

Camp Cross Roads Retreat Center Now Hiring: Summer Staff 2020

1. Camp Cross Roads is a year-round camp and retreat center located in the heart of New Jersey. Sponsored and supported by the New Jersey Synod and the Episcopal Diocese of Newark, the camp works to sustain, nurture and deepen the faith of all people. They're currently hiring staff for all positions (counselors, kitchen staff, grounds, maintenance and more) for Summer 2020. We're encouraging all young adults to consider spending next summer making a difference in the lives of children and youth. Apply online at www.crossroadsretreat.com/employment/

A Note from Seafarers International House

Seafarers International House is the Lutheran response to the urgent needs of vulnerable seafarers and sojourners. Since 1873, they have supported seafarers who stop in the port of New York and New Jersey. Here's a bit of what their ministry looked like in 2019.

- Assisted over 27,000 seafarers in the ports and at the guesthouse (near Union Square in Manhattan) last year.
- Individuals, congregations and organizations contributed over 1,850 Christmas-at-sea satchels in 2018 (including CLC!) that SIH staff distributed to lonely seafarers in 2019.
- Seafarers (mariners/crew members of container ships) often spend many months isolated at sea. Finally in port, *Seafarers International House's* port chaplains bring them Wi-Fi and companionship and transport those with visas to a clinic or mall.
- Asylum is a protection granted to foreign nationals by virtue of the Refugee Act which was passed by Congress in 1980. An asylee is a person that has been granted the legal right to stay in the US.
- In 2019, 28 new Americans became contributing members of our country after staying with Seafarers International House for 3 months or less.
- In 2019, SIH set aside six rooms for asylees each night, up from four, with the goal to assist 40 asylees with free lodging, transportation, food cards and assistance from the social work intern.

Learn more by visiting www.sihnyc.org.

Financial Summary – As of November 30th

General Fund	Income	Expense	Difference
January	\$16,743	\$23,770	-\$7,027
February	\$16,477	\$23,297	-\$6,820
March	\$22,390	\$23,249	-\$859
April	\$24,041	\$20,375	\$3,666
May	\$17,553	\$17,343	\$210
June	\$19,827	\$19,802	\$25
July	\$18,829	\$22,085	-\$3,256
August	\$17,435	\$16,419	\$1,016
September	\$18,162	\$19,677	-\$1,515
October	\$19,164	\$22,674	-\$3,510
November	\$20,205	\$20,184	+\$21
Year to Date Total	\$210,826	\$228,874	-\$18,048



We're projecting we'll end the year with a deficit. If you are able to make an additional gift to help the budget, please return that gift/special envelope to the church office by December 31st. You can also make a gift online by visiting www.clc4u.com/give. End of the year numbers will be available in late January.

Thank you very much, The Finance Committee

Restricted Funds Update

We regularly send updates about how much of our current 'restricted funds' are being used. This is in accordance with the congregational-approved motion on June 3, 2018. The change in available funds is related to our monthly spending (by taking income minus our expenses) and the market value of our investments at the end of each month.

Approved amount:	\$50,000.00
Previous Amount of Total Funds Used:	\$7,122.00
<u>Amount accessed from approved funds:</u>	
Amount used for November 2019	(\$2,664.00)
Total amount of remaining available funds	\$45,542.00

In Community

Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice

The 2019-2020 theme for the Upper Pascack Valley Interfaith Clergy Council is Care for Creation. Each month, we're looking at how our different faiths (Jewish, Christian and Islam) engage with creation and the call to take care of what God has first given us. Our hope is to use our faiths to feed our collective action when it comes to environmental stewardship.

But did you know that the ELCA has been engaged with Creation Care for a long time? In 1993, an ELCA social statement entitled "Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice" was adopted at that year's churchwide assembly. An ELCA social statement is a teaching and policy document, designed to help the church think about and discuss social issues in the context of our faith and life. "Caring for Creation" is shorter than most ELCA social statements (only 12 pages), but its message remains timely and relevant today.

The statement begins by saying: "Christian concern for the environment is shaped by the Word of God spoken in creation, the Love of God hanging on a cross, the Breath of God daily renewing the face of the earth." The way we live our life should be, as Lutheran Christians, rooted in where God was revealed: in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As people of faith born anew in the waters of baptism, we are gifted a faith that gives us a new way to see the world. By claiming our identity as Lutheran Christians, we connect with God and with God's creation in a different way. Like our faith, creation itself is also a God-given gift.

Our identity provides the fuel of our life in the world. And with that identity comes responsibility. "Caring for Creation" reminds us that: According to Genesis 2:15, our role within creation is to serve and to keep God's garden, the earth. "To serve," often translated "to till," invites us again to envision ourselves as servants, while "to keep" invites us to take care of the earth as God keeps and cares for us (Numbers 6:24-26). We don't often view responsibilities as gifts, yet our responsibilities help shape, form, and nurture the people God wants us to become. According to Genesis, not every creature was called to be a steward: only humankind was given that responsibility. And that responsibility is one of the ways we love others as Jesus loves us.



The social statement does not endorse any one policy goal or plan. It was written before churches began putting solar panels on their roofs (like our friends at Good Shepherd Lutheran in Pearl River) and before the hole in the ozone layer dropped to 1/3 its pre-1975 size. The document isn't new but it stays relevant because it remains rooted in our responsibility as human beings. Yet, that responsibility begins and ends in God's gifts—including the gift of grace, love and faith. We get to care for creation because sin and captivity . . . are not the last word. . . By the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God frees us from our sin and captivity and empowers us to be loving servants to creation. We get to embrace our responsibility towards creation because God, through the Cross, has made sure we are captured by hope and we, as people of hope, will proclaim the Spirit of God, through us, will renew the face of the earth.

If you're interested in reading the social statement on your own, visit www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Caring-for-Creation.

* * * * *

Community Event: MLK Jr's DAY OF SERVICE 2020

Supporting CFA

January 20, 2020 4:00 pm

Central Unitarian Church of Paramus

156 Forest Ave, Paramus

This year's Day of Service event will support Center for Food Action's Weekend Snack Pack Initiative. Many children who receive free or reduced-price school meals are left without adequate nutrition on weekends and holiday breaks. The Weekend Snack Pack Program is designed to fill that gap. Last year CFA supporters funded and assembled more than 35,000 Weekend Snack Packs, distributed to children in 20 area schools. And in 2016, CLC funded and supported 1700 snackpacks supporting two area schools.

Volunteers can help provide these children with nutritious and filling food to help fight weekend hunger. Your registration fee (\$47.50 for adults, \$25 for students over the age of 10, free for kids under 10) covers the cost of all the contents of the snack packs that will be assembled. Register online by visiting cfanj.org/event/mlk-day-of-service-2020/ and click on the Paramus button.

Have You Read This? . . .

Recommendation: When Life Gives You Pears

Jeannie Gaffigan (actress, producer, and comedy writer) released a book last fall about her brain tumor, surgery and recovery. Her book blurb describes her experience as follows: In 2017, Jeannie's life came to a crashing halt when she was diagnosed with a life-threatening brain tumor. As the mother of 5 kids-6 if you include her husband-sat in the neurosurgery department in star-covered sweats too whimsical for the seriousness of the situation, all she could think was "Am I going to die?"

Thankfully, Jeannie and her family were able to survive their time of crisis, and now she is sharing her deeply personal journey through this miraculous story: the challenging conversations she had with her children; how she came to terms with feeling powerless and ferociously crabby while bedridden and unable to eat for a month; and how she ultimately learned, re-learned and re re-learned to be more present in life. She shared with NPR's Scott Simon a bit about her experience as a faithful Catholic.

SIMON: You're a person of faith. You believe in the power of prayer.

GAFFIGAN: I do.

SIMON: And you turn to it - nuns specifically.

GAFFIGAN: Yes, I turned to nuns definitely because I think everyone should have, like, a sort of a gaggle of on-call nuns, because nuns kind of live their life around the clock making appeals to heaven. They're kind of like the attorneys, you know, for you. And when people go to kind of find themselves or find their spirituality, a lot of times they'll cloister themselves. Like, you know, that's what - that's, I think, why nuns are so holy. It's because their day's kind of built around the spiritual life or people, you know, go cloister themselves in a monastery.

We don't all have a gaggle of on-call nuns, but as a friend of CLC, you do have our prayer chain which is available whenever you need it - just contact the church office, JoAnn Sallo or Pastor Marc. We invite you to listen to her interview with Simon at <https://n.pr/2o6kSeV> or by googling "Jeannie Gaffigan On Surviving A Brain Tumor In 'When Life Gives You Pears.'" Let us know what you think!

2020

January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 	2	3	4
5 <u>Worship With Holy Communion</u> Contemporary 9:00 am Sunday Church School, 9:45 am Traditional, 10:30 Undecorate Sanctuary, Noon Confirmation 6:30 pm	6 EPIPHANY  EPIPHANY OF THE LORD Mary Circle 7:30 pm	7 Worship Committee Mtg. 8:00 pm	8 Chancel Choir Rehearsal 8:00pm	9	10	11 
12 <u>Worship With Holy Communion</u> Contemporary 9:00 am and Traditional 10:30 am Thrivent Financial Coffee after 9:00 am and 10:30 am	13 Property Committee Work Night 7:30 pm Finance Committee Meets 8:00 pm	14 Care Committee meeting 9:30 am	15 Chancel Choir Rehearsal 8:00pm	16 Congregation Council Meeting 8:00 pm	17  February Messenger articles due	18
19 <u>Worship With Holy Communion</u> Contemporary 9:00 am Sunday Church School, 9:45 am Traditional 10:30 am CLCW Annual Mtg. Noon Confirmation 6:30 pm	20 	21	22 Gab Session 11:30 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal 8:00pm	23	24	25
26 <u>Worship With Holy Communion</u> Contemporary 9:00 am and Traditional 10:30 am	27	28 Knit 1 Crochet Too 10:00 am	29 Chancel Choir Rehearsal 8:00pm	30	31 	

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Dated Material – Please Deliver Promptly



CLCW Annual Meeting—Sunday, January 19, 2020

The meeting will start right after the second worship service. We invite all confirmed female members of the church to come and enjoy a delicious lunch and fellowship. Come join us as we review Trash & Treasure 2019, the recipients of our donations and discuss plans for 2020!

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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