

The Messenger

July-August 2022



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

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

PASTOR'S NOMAILTE:

Months ago, NPR shared an article about singing and it made me think deeper about why we, as a church, sing. It's sort of strange that we do since so many of us believe we can't sing. Trincice Robinson-Martin, a vocal teacher at Princeton University and Long Island University, share how "singing is the only instrument that people don't allow themselves to not be good at right away." We don't often think of our voice as an instrument, and we assume singing is a talent only a few people have. But the truth is that your voice is an instrument you carry with you at all times. It can be trained, worked on, and developed regardless of your age. And since it's an instrument, we need to give ourselves permission to accept it won't sound like Beyonce on Sunday morning. Yet we can train our voice to grow into something that sounds a bit more pleasant than we think it does. I know that sounds surprising, but I, someone who chants and sings in front of you during worship, was never formally trained in singing. What made me grow comfortable with my voice was the gift of singing in church. When I started attending church in my 20s, my voice cracked, grew sore, and sounded like nails on a chalkboard when I sang along to the hymns. Yet, because I sung with others in the congregation, the church gave me the space to practice. The church is one of the few places in our world that doesn't expect you to be perfect. Instead, the church wants you to always be you because you are a beloved child of God.

As you worship this summer, I want to give you permission to try and sing. If you're joining online or via conference call, sing loud. If you're sitting in the pews, sing loud enough so I can hear you. When people around you sing, celebrate the fact you can hear them and don't judge the sound coming out of their mouths. Sing and let others sing because that is one of the ways we strengthen our community.

Once you grow comfortable singing, practice stretching your voice. When you speak the bolded words in the bulletin, speak them intentionally and confidently. The NPR article (<https://www.npr.org/2022/05/18/1099744999/how-to-sing>) also has different exercises you can do to stretch your voice.

Once you feel your voice stretching, also work on focusing on our breath. Singing without breathing is impossible. The way you breathe is crucial to finding your singing voice because you need to feel the air fill your lungs and go all the way to your belly. Pay attention to how air moves through your body and that will help you feel more confident as you sing.

Another tip is to grow comfortable with the fact that your voice is your voice. God created us to be exactly ourselves which means our voices are going to be different, too. Some of us will be able to hit the high notes; others will be able to hit the low notes; and even more will only be able to reach those notes in the middle. The church can't sing without your voice, and God wouldn't have it any other way.

We sing in church because communal singing has always been a gateway to community. The Bible is full of songs because God is constantly signing. When we sing together, we enter a story that is bigger than ourselves yet has space for us to be exactly who we are. God doesn't want you to sing as well as you think you should; God just wants you to sing. Maybe this summer can be a time when we grow more comfortable with our voices. So sing loud because Jesus' love for you will always include your voice.

Blessed to be the church with you,
Pastor Marc



**YOUR
CHURCH
COMMITTEE UPDATES**

Care Committee is pleased to announce the return of the "Gab" Session on Wednesday, July 27th @ 11:30 am. We will have a quick handout of senior resources in Bergen County followed by hot dogs and great conversation. We will meet in the Opsal Room with windows open, tables spaced, and an air purifier plugged in. Please bring your mask. For those interested, there will be a Linus Project to try. Next month we meet Tuesday, August 23rd, 11:30 am. To determine food amounts, please call Debbie Louis at 201-358-6435 or 201-925-6618 to say you will attend. Let's socialize! See you there!

Knit One Crochet Too: This group is looking for 'Wannabees'. Do you wannabe knitting or crocheting? Join us at CLC on the 4th Tuesday of each month, 10:00 am. Supplies and Instructions are available. Work on something for one of the church projects or make something for yourself. All skill levels welcome! Want to try something different, we have looms. Socialization is the name of the game. Come, have fun! See you on July 26th, 10:00 am.

A Church Financial Update: At the start of June, our total income was \$92,880, and our expenses were \$111,732. Our loss for the year is \$18,852 which is \$8,250 better than planned and \$4,536 better than this time last year. Compared to last year, your gifts are 7.1% higher and were ahead of our budget plan for the first time. Your generosity is astounding and enables us to bring the good news of Jesus through worship, words, and being the kind of neighbors God invites us to be.

Due to the high volatility in the financial markets, the church council recently made some accounting changes that increased the amount of cash we have available to fund operating expenses. Money that has been reserved for operating expenses and to be added to our investments is currently sitting in our bank account and hasn't been moved. At the start of June, we had over \$123,000 available to fund our basic operating expenses. This should allow us to focus on preaching and living the good news of Jesus through the ups and downs of the market. At the end of May, our conservative portfolio of investments was down a little more than 9% YTD which was several percentage points better than market indexes.

Property Committee Update on Security System: New electronic locks have been installed at the entrances to Opsal Hall and the church offices. These locks are opened via a code. The old key will not open them. Cameras, doors sensors, and other parts of the system are currently being integrated into an updated Wi-Fi system. The system isn't fully installed (as of press time), but we're nearing completion of this project.

Property Committee Update on the Steps by the Boiler Room: The steps leading to the door by the Boiler Room were recently repaired. If you came by the church in mid-June, you might have noticed the cloud of concrete dust that filled the air. The repaired steps look great and increase the overall safety of the building.



Notes From the Office

Final Reminder: There's still time to update your contact information in the church telephone/address directory. Contact the church office (201-391-4224 or clc4u2@verizon.net) if your address, email address, phone number, or cell phone have changed since we last printed a directory in 2018. We are late printing a new copy but are planning to have it available during the summer.

Office Hours: During July and August, Doris (our Parish Administrator) is in the office from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. When she is on vacation (August 10th to 17th), our office hours are more sporadic. Feel free to call ahead (201-391-4224), stop by, or send an email clc4u2@verizon.net at any time.

WORSHIP AND MORE!

Sunday Worship Opportunities

1) During the summer months, we have one worship on Sunday at 10:00 am. Worship materials are available on a table in the narthex. For those who wish to commune in their seats rather than at the rail, individual communion cups and wafers are available.



2) Each worship will be streamed on Facebook (www.facebook.com/clc4u/live), YouTube (www.youtube.com/channel/UCaoB8mout3qnMGLGzaOmXng), and our website (www.clc4u.com).

3) Listen to 10:00 am worship via Conference Call: dial 646-558-8656, enter meeting id: 827 672 730 and then #. Hit # to ignore participant id and enter password 195901.

4) You can also request a copy of the bulletin and sermon mailed to your home! Call the church office, and we'll be happy to put you on our regular weekly mailing list.



A Note from the Chancel (Adult) Choir

If you are interested in learning more about the choir, reach out to Argine Safari at arginesafari@gmail.com.

Altar Flowers: Our worship space is beautified by flowers that grace the sides of the altar. The two bouquets are ordered from a local florist (Schweitzer & Dykstra Beautiful Flowers in Pearl River) and are sponsored by members of the congregation. Those who order altar flowers are invited to take a bouquet home or have them delivered to members of the community. The price for these two bouquets is \$60. A sign-up poster is located in the lobby (narthex) for specific dates. If you would like to inquire about a specific date, call the church office (201-391-4224).

Christmas in July: We're singing Christmas hymns, carols and more Sunday, July 24th, at 10:00 am.

KIDS AND ADULTS: EDUCATION AND MORE!

Bible Study on John: Starting in mid-July, we'll host a Bible Study on the gospel according to John. We're planning to have it in the evening and in-person at the church. Please contact Pastor Marc if you are interested. We hope to start during the week of July 11th.

Confirmation in the Fall: We're starting to organize Confirmation class for the fall. This two year program for 7th graders (and up) explores the Bible and Lutheranism and gives tools on how to integrate faith into our daily lives. Contact Pastor Marc at pastormarc@clc4u.com for more information.





Grace Castellano graduated from Pascack Valley High School. It's been a joy having her as part of our Chancel Choir these past few years. She will attend the College of New Jersey in the fall.

Aidan Conboy graduated from the College of New Jersey. He earned his teaching certificate and will be teaching wood working in the fall.

Julia Elek graduated from Emerson High School and will be attending U Mass Amherst in the fall as a business major in the Isenberg School of Business. This past year she became more involved in her volunteer work as the Vice President of her Key Club chapter.

Dylan Henry obtained his BS in Engineering (ME) with Cum Laude honors from the University of Western New England in Springfield, MA while balancing life as a NCAA college athlete. Dylan played football for four years at WNE and ended his career there as the starting right guard for the team. He attributes hard work, perseverance and a strong faith in helping him navigate the obstacles these past four years held. Dylan is excited to announce he has accepted an offer from General Dynamics Electric Boat and will begin his career as a strategic weapons systems engineer starting this August in New London, CT.

Mattias Stremmler graduated from Western Michigan University with a degree in Aerospace Engineering. It's always good to have a rocket scientist in the building.

GROWING IN GENEROSITY

Genesis Garden is Growing! The garden looks beautiful and flowers are appearing as you can see in this picture taken on June 30th. At the moment, work nights are on Tuesdays at 5:30 pm. We expect that to change once we start harvesting veggies. Send an email to Tom Kearns (tkearnsnj@gmail.com) to get on our garden specific email list.



Tri-Boro Food Pantry: We're excited to be supporting the Tri-Boro Food Pantry, 65 Pascack Road in Park Ridge with our Genesis Garden. Learn more at www.triborofoodpantry.org). The pantry recently received a grant from Bergen County to update its physical space. This includes new ventilation, new electric work, and new equipment to make the experience more pleasant for clients when the weather is poor. The pantry continues to serve approximately 130 families a week. Several of these families walk to the pantry which serves hungry people in our area. As the treasurer of the food pantry, Pastor Marc wanted to share a little bit of the most recent thank-you letter he sends to those who give the pantry a financial gift.

I recently stopped by the pantry on a Thursday to pick up all the wonderful financial donations we were given. While I was there, I watched our volunteers serve everyone who came to our doors. Each volunteer took a moment to chat with each client beyond the usual "small talk" we are familiar with. They asked about their families, kids, and celebrated any good news with joy. They listened as people shared about recent health scares and how being food insecure makes life very hard. As the volunteers listened, they offered each client a little hope by giving additional food or other items they might need. Rather than just giving everyone the exact same groceries, our volunteers make sure clients receive what they actually need. This is one of the ways we make sure people who visit the pantry know they are seen, known, and loved. Your gift will make sure every family receives fresh produce, canned veggies, boxes of cereal, pasta, milk, eggs, and more. We hope your summer is filled with an abundance of fun, sun, and relaxation. And we know your gift will help bring an abundance of food to those in need. Thank you for making a difference in Northern New Jersey.



Summer Events at Camp Koinonia Camp Koinonia in Highland Lake, NY, has been feeding faith for over 60 years! Here's a short list of what's happening at the camp. Visit www.koinoniany.org.

- *Grandparents & Kids Weekend: August 5-7*—Bring the grandkids up and enjoy God's creation at the peak of summer! *Family Camp: August 8-12*—Enjoy the beautiful lake, hiking, and family-centered programming and worship. Wi-Fi is available for those who need to work.

New Jersey Synod Day, September 10, 2022, 10:00 am—2:00 pm: Join the entire synod for a fun-filled day at Six Flags Great Adventure in Jackson, NJ. We will have an interactive mission fair, outdoor worship jubilee, and lunch. The cost for tickets is \$10 through August 14. After August 15, ticket price goes up. The tickets cover the synod day fun, lunch, park admission, and parking. And the park remains open until 7:00 pm to enjoy all the rides. Learn more and purchase tickets at njsynod.org/synodday.

ELCA social statements are teaching and policy documents that provide broad frameworks to assist us in thinking about and discussing social issues in the context of faith and life. They are meant to help communities and individuals with moral formation, discernment and thoughtful engagement with current social issues as we participate in God's work in the world. Social statements also set policy for the ELCA and guide its advocacy and work as a publicly engaged church. They result from an extensive process of participation and deliberation and are adopted by a two-thirds vote of an ELCA churchwide assembly.

One of the very first social statements the ELCA adopted after its formation was a statement on abortion. Other social statements cover human sexuality, economic life, genetics, peace, race and ethnicity, sexism, and caring for creation. You can find the full list, including summaries, online at www.elca.org/socialstatements.

The 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will be held in Columbus, Ohio, August 8-12, at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. Twelve voting members from across New Jersey will join Bishop Bartholomew at the meeting. The theme is “Embody the Word.” There’s an importance in the double meaning of the two words: Embody, meaning both the incarnation of Jesus Christ and the life of the church emerging from a pandemic. Word – meaning both Jesus Christ and scripture.

Luke 24:45 states: “Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures.” We embody the Word, both Jesus and the scripture, by speaking it and proclaiming it. In 1522: Martin Luther’s translation of the New Testament made the Word accessible to the people and revolutionized the Christian movement worldwide. Five hundred years later, the call to make Jesus accessible to the people still exists today and as we look to the future of this church.

The ELCA Churchwide Assembly, the primary decision-making body of the church, is a process of communal spiritual discernment. When the ELCA Churchwide Assembly convenes, its voting members meet with confidence in God’s grace around word and water, wine and bread, to carry on their work on behalf of the entire church. Over the course of the assembly, voting members:

- Hear reports and review the work of churchwide officers, leaders and units
- Receive and consider proposals from synod assemblies;
- Elect officers, board members and other leaders as specified by the constitution or bylaws;
- Establish ELCA churchwide policy;
- Worship together;
- Adopt a budget; and
- Conduct other business related to the ELCA churchwide organization.

As we get closer to date, more information about the assembly will be available online at <https://www.elca.org/CWA-2022>,

2022

July & August



2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
July 17 Worship--Holy Communion 10:00 am Sanctuary and Online	July 18	July 19 Knit1 CrochetToo 10:00 am	July 20 Genesis Garden Night 5:30 pm	July 21	July 22	July 23
July 24 Christmas in July Worship--Holy Communion 10:00 am Sanctuary and Online	July 25	July 26	July 27 Gab Session 11:30 am Genesis Garden Night 5:30 pm	July 28	July 29	July 30
July 31 Worship-- Holy Communion 10:00 am Sanctuary and Online	August 1	August 2 Worship Committee Meeting 8:00 pm	August 3 Genesis Garden Night 5:30 pm	August 4	August 5	August 6
August 7 Worship-- Holy Communion 10:00 am Sanctuary and Online	August 8	August 9	August 10 Genesis Garden Night 5:30 pm	August 11	August 12	August 13
August 14 Worship--Holy Communion 10:00 am Sanctuary and Online	August 15 Finance Committee Meeting 8:00 pm	August 16	August 17 Genesis Garden Night 5:30 pm	August 18 Council Meeting 7:30 pm	August 19	August 20
August 21 Worship--Holy Communion 10:00 am Sanctuary and Online	August 22	August 24	August 24 Genesis Garden Night 5:30 pm	August 25	August 26	August 27
August 28 Worship--Holy Communion 10:00 am Sanctuary and Online	August 29	August 30	August 31 Genesis Garden Night 5:30 pm			

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