

The Messenger

June 2015

The Newsletter of Christ Lutheran Church
Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey



O give
thanks to the LORD,
for he is good;
for his steadfast love
endures forever.

Psalms 107:1, NRSV

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

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Director of Music: Argine Safari

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Musician: Fred Messner

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What does eternal life look like?

I've been thinking about this question during the last two months. We've been in the gospel according to John for most of April and May and 'eternal life' keeps popping up. In fact, one of the most favorite verses from scripture, John 3:16, mentions "eternal life." So what does eternal life look like?

We might say that eternal life means "never" dying and that it's an opportunity for immortality. Eternal life is the next step in our journey through God's creation. We're born into the world, spend the next decades living our lives as human beings, and then die, only to transform into a slightly better, and more immortal version of our past self. We'll spend forever in our favorite shirt, drinking our favorite beverage, while relaxing on our own private beach in heaven.

But that isn't necessarily the vision of 'eternal life' that Jesus talks about. In a reading we heard last year, Jesus is praying right before he's arrested. He's prepping his disciples for his eventual resurrection and ascension into heaven. Jesus asks his Father to protect his disciples. He also asks that God help his disciples to love as he loved. And in the middle of this prayer, Jesus describes eternal life. Eternal life is knowing, and being known, by God (John 17:1-3). There's no talk about a life after death. There's no mention of heaven. Instead Jesus says in one short verse that eternal life is knowing God and knowing Jesus. That's it.

That feels a little simple, doesn't it? Yet I find grace in Jesus' words. His words show that eternal life can't be separated from our current life. We don't need to think of eternal life only something that happens after we die. Jesus knows us and we know Jesus even if we are sometimes confused by what Jesus is doing - or not doing - in our lives. And since Jesus continues to make himself known through worship, readings, and holy communion, we're have eternal life. Eternal life isn't about what comes next; eternal life is about our lives right now. So if we have eternal life, just what is God calling our lives to look like today? See you in church!

Pastor Marc – marc.stutzel@gmail.com – 607-227-8761 (cell)

The Care Committee



Our meeting held on May 12, 2015 at 9:30 AM was a special meeting since we were recognizing Bobby Allen's dedication to the Care Committee; specifically her Luncheon and Bible Study that was held once a month and open to the community. There would always be a delicious lunch served at that time chosen from among Bobby's many recipes. This would be followed by a Bible study.

Following the meeting members of the committee retired to the Opsal Wing. Here they enjoyed a special brunch consisting of Bobby's favorite recipes prepared by committee members.

The menu included Bobby's famous "Upper Crust Chicken" served with a delicious cranberry mold and a broccoli salad. Dessert was pineapple upside down cake and, because of Bobby's special love for anything chocolate, there was also a chocolate cake.

Bon Appetite, Bobby!

Mae Hulburt



From the library . . .

One of the new books added to our library recently is . . .

Life among the Lutherans

By Garrison Keillor

We're all familiar with his NPR series about Lake Woebegone on NPR, and this is in the same vein. Be sure to read the introduction. It explains how a Sanctified Brethren member became fascinated by and a big fan of Lutherans.

Dot Dohrmann

Christ Lutheran Church Women

To All Our Trash & Treasure & Clothing Workers . . .



. . . and to everyone else in the congregation who donated items or clothing, made food and supported our Annual Trash & Treasure & Clothing sale! Once again, YOU made it a huge success! We are amazed that we have taken over \$16,000 as of May 11th. We expect it to increase a little more once everyone pays their outstanding bills. Please see Crystal Ramhorst to pay for your clothing or Kim Kearns for T&T balances—checks should be made out to: *Christ Lutheran Church Women*.

Once again, it was a fun week of camaraderie combined with some hard work and a chance to work with people of all ages. A special thanks to our youth workers who helped again this year. The kids were instrumental in helping us put the items on the tables, carry the heavy bags, check out our customers and sort all the toys! We hope you will come back next year!

Hats off to the families who baked, cooked and brought us food. You provided the workers with over 232 delicious meals during the 8 days of Trash & Treasure! We couldn't have done it without you. Many thanks to all the kitchen volunteers who worked so hard setting up and cleaning up for each meal. On the day of the sale, we had about 70 people working and eating lunch together. Those of us who ate the food thank those of you who prepared the great food. Once again—A GREAT BIG THANK YOU!

Did you ever wonder what happened to our unsold items? Well, you will be happy to know that the majority of them were passed on to other organizations to help people in need. The clothing leftovers were split between Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Star of Hope Ministries in Paterson, NJ and "Your Grandmother's Cupboard", from St. Timothy's Lutheran Church (who also took some small toys, and infant items for their program to help the working poor), and the rest went to a church ministry in Paterson, NJ. The church was back in order by 6:00 pm—what an amazing day it was!!!

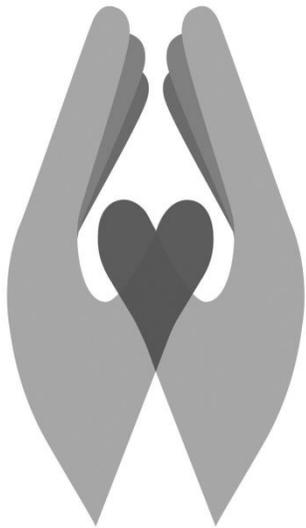
Thanks again to all of you who helped in any way.

Christine Badame

Teaching Children to Pray

During a recent Christian Education meeting at our church we were discussing how to nurture strong faithful lives of children and families. One of the questions we asked each other was what would we like our children to learn at various ages. One of the topics we readily agreed upon was that we would like our children to learn how to pray. We want them to develop a relationship with God through their own conversations with him. We want them to know that God hears all their prayers and answers them in his own time and in his own way. Many of us noted that even as adults we are not always comfortable praying, particularly aloud or with other people listening to us. Most of us also said we wished we had learned to pray earlier. All agree how important it is to know that someone has been praying both for you and with you at different times in our lives. What a comfort to children to know that their prayers count, that others will pray for them and with them, and that Jesus is their best friend forever.

So how do we start, if we are not already praying with our children. Here are a few ideas shared by Cheri Fuller from Lifeway Magazine:



Let your children know that prayer is simply being with God and having a conversation. Assure them they can talk to God just like they can to mom, dad or a best friend. God is always ready to listen no matter where they are—home, school, church.

Be sure your children hear *you* praying. You can pray for them at bedtime or in the morning asking God to watch over them and for their heart to be filled with love. Thank the Lord for something specific such as a gift or talent in your child.

Share with your child a time that you prayed and received the answer in a surprising or dramatic way.

Pray on the spot: the next time your child comes to you with a problem or worry, instead of saying, “I will pray for you”, do it right then. You will be demonstrating the important principle that God wants us to cast all our concerns on Him and pray about everything.

It is amazing what we learn by sharing prayer time with our children. Not only do we hear their joys and concerns, but their simple and unrehearsed prayers can help us to see that we are blessed beyond our own realization. Praise to God!

Please stay tuned for upcoming Christian Education meetings, and join in our conversations about growing faith filled lives for our children.

Janet Post, for Christian Ed



*If you agree that our youth are amazing
and you like to have fun,
then this is for you!!!*

Our church is looking for someone to share that flair as a youth representative on the Congregation Council, which meets only once a month, and with Youth Committee.

Contact Crystal Ramhorst with your interest or questions at Ramhorst@optonline.net

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Congregational Picnic, June 14th following the 10:30 am worship service. Sign up on the poster in the church narthex.

Summer worship schedule begins June 21st: There will be one worship service throughout the summer at 9:30 am. Our two service schedule will resume on Sunday, September 20th.

Graduate Sunday, June 21st: During the 9:30 am worship, we'll honor all graduates. Come, celebrate the amazing youth who are on their way to new adventures.

Blessing of Animals: Do you have a pet animal? Any kind? Bring them along on Sunday, June 28th for a special blessing during the 9:30 am summer service.

Vacation Bible School is planned – August 10-14th, 9:30 am to 12 Noon. You may register your youth now by completing a registration form found on a table in the church Narthex or calling the church office.

Women's Weekend at Koinonia!! This year, Christ Women has scheduled the weekend of Friday, October 2nd to Sunday, October 4th as the Women's Retreat weekend. More details to follow in the fall. Think about joining us in the renovated two family cabin for fun, food and a respite from your busy life here in Bergen County!