NOVEMBER 2024

GOOD NEWS from Christ Lutheran Church

Christ Lutheran Church
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Insert Calendars

Issues, Etc.
Talk Radio for the Thinking Christian
www.issuesetc.org

Sacred Music 24/7
lutheranpublicradio.org

Lutheran Doctrine: Christ-Centered, Cross-Focused

From the Pastor

This year has been, in the kindest terms, different. As we approach the celebration of All Saints Day, we have only had one member who is no longer with us in this earthly life. We don't usually have a lot of members die, but for our age, to have only one is low. We have had a number of parents of members and former members die and enter paradise with their Lord and what comfort their faith brings us as we contemplate not seeing them again until we too celebrate there with them.

In the same manner we have not had a lot of babies born into our congregation this year either. Again, with the age of our congregation that is a bit surprising.

Outside of the congregation we have had the election. To say the least, it to has been different. I don't believe any of us has seen a campaign season like the one we are getting ready to see come to an end. Regardless of who ends up the president, the rhetoric will go on and many will be dissatisfied.

Most of these changes, we have little or no say in. They happen and we just need to accept them and move on. Not all change is like that. Some change we do have input and say in and if we make the change and we later decide we wish to go back we can.

One of the changes we made this past year was using black paraments for Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. It was not that what we did before was wrong, no.

There were some that thought this would be a good change so the monies were approved, paraments ordered and the change was made. At the same time some were not sure about this change so down the road the topic may be brought up again and the change may stand or it may change back.

Also this past year we have started using setting one without communion on those Sundays that I have been out of town. This was done for a variety of reasons. One reason is that we have discussed using another communion service so that we do not always use setting 3. Not that there is anything wrong with setting 3, just our hymnal has 5 settings (I doubt we will ever use most of them, though I have been wrong before) and since prior to COVID we have been looking at adding one.

This has been a kind of trial run and the feed back has been positive, so next year we will start using setting 1 in place of setting 3 occasionally, we are working on a schedule. If

(Continued on page 8)

Voters Meeting, Dec 08, 2024 after Divine Service

ANNIVERSARIES

09 Erik & Lula Arlton

BIRTHDAYS

November

07 Michaela Nix Richardson
13 Mildred Corey
14 Daniel Monson
18 Duane Ellis
19 Ian Nix
21 Erik Arlton

BAPTISMS

November

04 Basil Wetzel
23 Leslie Britson
25 Austin Preheim
28 Benard Ewoldt
29 Michaela Nix Richardson

LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

November 3rd, All Saints Day~ "In the fullness of time, our Lord was born for our sake. In the fullness of time, He will bring all the faithful into eternal fellowship with Him. In the fullness of time, He will dry every tear and fulfill His will for all mankind, as John the Evangelist witnessed in the Revelation God granted him." *Deaconess Bethany Stoever, Director-at-Large, LFL of Kansas – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

November 10th, 24th Sunday after Trinity, ~ "For no one of those who are alive today knows where he was during the first two years, when he lived either in the womb … Yet he lived at that time, and he was a body joined to a soul—a body adapted to all natural functions." *Martin Luther – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

November 17th, 25th Sunday after Trinity ~ "If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world." *C.S. Lewis (Mere Christianity) – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

November 24th, Last Sunday of Church Year ~ "In spades the Lord has taught me, and prayerfully you also, that Psalm 23 is a thanksgiving psalm. He anoints our heads, which is the Old Testament way of saying He chooses us as kings. He makes us a part of His royal household! Man, are we blessed as His kids!" *Pastor Keith Haberstock, guest speaker on "The Lutheran Hour" – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*



Thanksgiving Divine Service

Thursday,
November 28th,
at 9:30 am



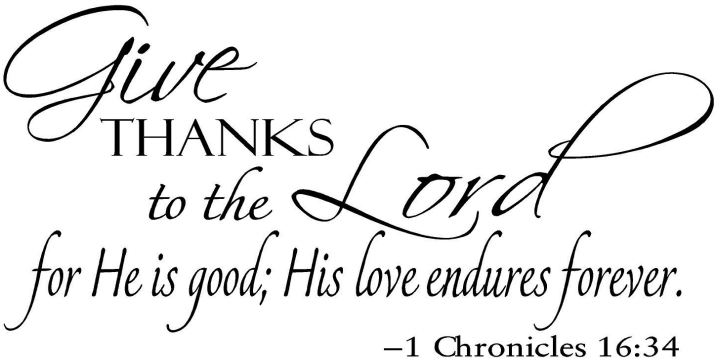
Welcomed in to membership by baptism

Sienna Mae Johnson, daughter of Heather Johnson, was baptized on Saturday, October 19th. We welcome Sienna into the family of believers.



In Our Prayers

The family of Milford Gentz, father of Lynette Wedeking, at his death
The family of Nancy Hamilton, James' mother, at her death
Terri Stangeland, mother of Michael, cancer
Bonnie Ellis recovering from a hip replacement
Mildred Corey, at home
Lisa Johnson, health and healing
Susan Powell, recovering from a fractured leg
Elva Clauson, recovery at home



The consequences of shallow thankfulness

Can you imagine a Thanksgiving dinner without turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy and pumpkin pie? I know I can't! To not have these on the menu, or worse, to run out of them with the family around the table, would be a culinary sin of epic proportions. An attempt to serve bratwurst and hamburgers in place of the standard fare would ring hollow and seem totally inappropriate and out of place. It isn't that the food would be bad; brats and burgers are pretty tasty. But not for Thanksgiving — they just don't go together!

This month, as we continue to walk through the stewardship hymn, "Forgive Us, Lord, for Shallow Thankfulness" (*LSB* 788), we turn our attention to verse three. Here, William Watkins Reid, Sr., the man who penned this text, draws attention to some things that do not go along with faithful, thankful stewardship.

Forgive us, Lord, for selfish thanks and praise …

We see this often with small children. They greedily snatch the candy out of a grandparent's hand, savagely destroy the wrapper, and attempt to stuff the entire delicacy in their mouth in one bite, only to have a parent say, "Tell grandma thank you." This is followed by the pro forma thanks that is uttered between chocolate chews. It isn't really thankfulness; it is simply checking a box to keep mom or dad off their backs.

We never really outgrow this either. Our shallow thankfulness takes the form of feigned humility when praise is being offered. We are thankful that our admirers noticed and called us out: "Look at me! Aren't I special?" No thought at all is given to the fact that the Lord was the One who gave us the ability and opportunity for accomplishment. Our false blush is really only masking our selfish, credit-seeking gain. Once again, we find ourselves idolatrously thanking ourselves.

For words that speak at variance with deeds …

What carries more weight: words or action? The steward who gives voice to the Gospel in the Divine Service but then lives like a pagan in the world does great damage, not only to others but to the Gospel itself! This is the consequence of failed stewardship. It is idolatry that separates the steward from the Lord. Worse yet, it also impacts others negatively. When the failed steward is the reference point outside the Christian community, there are those who want no part of being Christian or following the Christ they claim. We see this play out in the impact of overt political activity among Christians based on governing policy as opposed to fidelity to the Word of God. When our lips and our lives are out of sync, like what used to happen with old movie projectors, the impact isn't funny — it obscures the Gospel!

Forgive our thanks for walking pleasant ways
unmindful of a broken brother's need …

Our creature comforts often become an obstacle to faithful stewardship. This is true of both individual and corporate stewardship. Financial stewardship is often limited by our desire to be comfortable and have the latest toys and gadgets. Congregational stewardship is often limited by the desire to focus on what is best for the congregation as opposed to how resources might be best stewarded to reach the community with the Gospel.

When we see someone in need, or broken by the world, we often look at them as freeloaders. We admonish them to get a job. We insist that they learn our language, learn our customs, and make them their own. But this gets in the way of seeing every human being the way that Jesus sees them. Remember, that broken person is one for whom Jesus went to the cross to die and rise. When we are unmindful of these needs, our shallow thankfulness also stands in the way of the Gospel.

This stanza reminds us of the challenge we face. Our hearts are master idol-makers. Our shallow thankfulness threatens our souls and hinders others from seeing Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Stewardship is serious business. It is a task for which we were created. In our sinful failings, we are never relieved of these duties. In our Baptism, we are restored to be stewards of the Gospel. Our faithful stewardship is all about that Gospel.

Forgive us when our thanks are shallow, O Lord! In this month of Thanksgiving, grant us the grace to offer heaping helpings of this stewardship so that others may see Jesus!

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
TREASURER'S REPORT
October 31, 2024

	08/2024	09/2024	10/2024
Deposits:	$ 9,528.20	$ 29,489.50	$ 13,907.25
Disbursements:	$ 13,856.78	$ 14,345.71	$ 19,163.85
Deposit Breakdown:			
General Fund:	$ 9,354.20	$ 26,985.50	$ 13,701.25
Designated Funds:	$ 174.00	$ 2,504.00	$ 206.00
Monthly Budget Requirement:	$ 21,234.00	$ 16,987.20	$ 16,987.20
Mortgage Balance as of 10/31			$ 53,943.40

SERMON TITLES AND TEXTS FOR NOVEMBER

November 3rd — ***"Are You Blessed?"*** — **St. Matthew 5:1-12**
Hymn of the Day: ***"For all the Saints"*** — **LSB 677**
Revelations 7:2-17
Psalm 149
1 John 3:1-3
St Mathew 5:1-12

November 10th — ***"How Do You Live Out Your Faith?"*** — **St. Matthew 9:21**
Hymn of the Day: ***"In the Very Midst of Life"*** — **LSB 755**
Isaiah 51: 9-16
Psalm 126
Colossians 1:9-14
St Matthew 9:18-26

November 17th — ***"Are We There Yet?"*** — **St. Matthew 24:21**
Hymn of the Day: ***"Preserve Your Word, O Savior"*** — **LSB 658**
Exodus 32:1-20
Psalm 14
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
St Matthew 24:15-28

November 24th — ***"Do You Have Enough Oil?"*** — **St. Matthew 25: 3, 4, 8, 9**
Hymn of the Day: ***"Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying"*** — **LSB 516**
Isaiah 65:17-25
Psalm 149
1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11
St. Matthew 25:1-13

November 28th — ***"What Are You Thankful For?"*** — **St. Luke 17:15**
Hymn of the Day: ***"We Praise You, O God"*** — **LSB 785**
Deuteronomy 8:1-10
Psalm 67
1 Timothy 2:1-4
St Luke 17:11-19

Preserve Your Word, O Savior

Lutheran Service Book 658 | study by Richard J. Serina, Jr.

Introduction

Unlike many other cultures throughout the world, the United States has not experienced widespread persecution of Christians during its relatively brief existence. Political positions and widely held beliefs may oppose certain features of Christian doctrine, but there is little prohibition of our faith or negative consequences for gathering to worship on a Sunday.

Yet Scripture reminds us that we should expect persecution and suffering. How we endure such suffering is the theme of this particular hymn, "Preserve Your Word, O Savior." In it, we cling to what God does promise us: That He will preserve us in His Word no matter the trial or obstacle. We cling to His Word, for it will not fail us.

- Have you ever been threatened with death or imprisonment for your faith?
- How would you respond to religious persecution? What doctrines would you be willing to die for rather than recant?

Exploring the Scriptures

The Gospel Lesson for the Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Trinity is Matt. 24:15–28. This particular lesson gives us a clear depiction of what the Church will face in the latter days. Our Lord prepares the disciples for what lies ahead. Read verses 15–22.

- What are some of the rather terrifying images Jesus uses in this lesson?
- Why does the Lord need to prepare His disciples? What kind of things will they face after His ascension? What will happen to many of the Twelve?

There is a particular threat that should concern the disciples more than any other. Jesus tells them that many will come in His place claiming to be the Christ. These antichrists will lead many astray, even those who are Christians. Our Lord warns His followers not to fall for their tricks or trust what they say. Read verses 23–28.

- What does Jesus mean by the phrase, "Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather"? Who is the corpse? Who are the vultures? What is Jesus trying to prevent here?
- Jesus here warns us of apostasy, which means falling away from the faith. Why is that a threat to us all? How must we protect ourselves from it?

Exploring the Hymn

Background

Between 1618 and 1648, Christian Europe endured one of its bloodiest periods and most intense religious battles, known as the Thirty Years' War. This war was waged over differing confessions of faith, as Protestant and Roman Catholic lands fought to retain significant economic and military strongholds, while also expecting their inhabitants to affirm their doctrinal positions. Both sides carried their share of blame, and the loss of life, home and wealth was widespread.

But this led to many Christians questioning whether doctrine was important at all. Some grew to believe that if affirming Scripture or church authority led to bloodshed, then neither were worth retaining. They instead suggested we should abandon all beliefs that might cause friction between us and seek the common good.

- How would you respond to someone who says the Christian faith cannot be true because wars have been fought over it?
- What actually causes religious wars — doctrine or sin?

The problem with religious wars is not doctrine, but sin. Rather than trusting the Word of God and prayer to convert people to the truth, our sinful desires lead us to force others into agreement. But the result is never salutary. It is not we who preserve the Word; it is God who preserves His Word. We merely proclaim that Word and trust God to do His work through it.

- Have you ever become angry with someone who disagreed with you in a conversation about religion? Why? What did it accomplish? Were you concerned with the other's faith in the Word or with being right?
- How does God convict sinners and persuade them of His truth? What is our role in such a work of God? How does He use us?

Text

There are two themes interwoven throughout this hymn, both related to God's divine act of preservation: God's preservation of His Word and God's

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KIDS IN THE DIVINE SERVICE



What is the "Agnus Dei"?

The "Agnus Dei" (pronounced AHN-yus DAY-ee) has been sung by the Church for almost 1,200 years. "Agnus Dei" is Latin for "Lamb of God." We usually sing these words in the Divine Service after the Words of Institution have been spoken by the pastor.

Why do we use the Agnus Dei?

In John 1:29, John the Baptizer proclaims, through the power of the Holy Spirit, that Jesus is the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." He said this as Jesus was walking up to him. When we sing the Agnus Dei, like John the Baptizer, we are once again hearing, proclaiming and learning the great Gospel message which confesses that Christ is here with us in Holy Communion, giving us His very body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins. What a great way to recognize the real presence of Christ in the Sacrament!

Parents:
After the Divine Service, read John 1:29–34 with your children. Compare John the Baptizer's words to the Passover story in Ex. 12:1–11, 21–23. Be sure to discuss why John calls Jesus the "Lamb of God." Jesus was the ultimate sacrificial Lamb of God by whose death we have been rescued from sin, death and the power of the devil.

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Church Choir

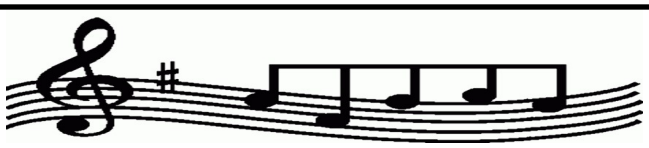
Vocal choir practice, Wednesday nights at 7pm. New voices are always welcome!



Handbell Choir

Bell choir practice will begin December 4th at 6:15pm before Wednesday Advent Services. More ringers are needed for this group!

If you are interested in being a part of either group please see Lynette Wedeking at 605-351-3245.



UPCOMING 2024

2024

- Nov 03 Daylight Saving Time Ends, 2am
- Nov 28 Thanksgiving Day Divine Service, 9:30 am
- Dec 1 Advent Service, 7pm
- Dec 08, 15, 22 Advent Services, 7pm
- Dec 08: Voters Meeting, after Divine Service
- Dec 15, 4:00 pm Children's Christmas Service
- December 24 Christmas Eve service, 5pm
- December 25 Christmas Day Service 9:30 am
- No New Year's Eve/Day Service

2025

- Jan 06, Epiphany Divine Service 7pm
- Mar 05 Ash Wednesday Divine Service, 7pm
- Mar 09 Daylight Savings Time Begins, 2am
- Mar 09 Voters' Meeting
- Mar 12, 19, 26 April 02, 09 Midweek Lenten service, 7pm (Dinner prior)
- April 17 Maundy Thursday Divine Service, 7pm
- April 18 Good Friday Tenebrae Service, 7pm
- April 20 Easter Sunrise Matins Service, 7am
- April 20 Easter Breakfast, 8am
- April 20 Easter Festival Divine Service, 9:30am
- May 11 Mothers' Day Breakfast
- May 29 Ascension Day Divine Service 7pm
- June 08 Voters Meeting
- July 20-24 VBS
- Sept 07 Voters Meeting
- Nov 02 Daylight Saving Time Ends, 2am
- Nov 27 Thanksgiving Day Divine Service, 9:30 am
- Dec 3 Advent Service, 7pm
- Dec 6 decorating Tree 10am & Caroling to shut -ins to follow
- Dec 07: Voters Meeting, after Divine Service
- Dec 10, 17 Advent Services, 7pm
- Dec 15 Children's Christmas Service, 4pm
- December 24 Christmas Eve service, 5pm
- December 25 Christmas Day Service 9:30 am
- No New Year's Eve/Day Service

preservation of His Church. These two are not dissimilar from one another.

Stanzas 1–3 all deal directly with God preserving His Word and the doctrine based upon that Word. In stanza 1, the hymn claims that we are in the "latter day," when the devil is at war to stop the growth of God's kingdom through the enlarging of the Church. In these latter days, according to stanza 2, the honor of our Lord and His Word are under attack, and He must defend His honor not by might, but by changing hearts and minds: "Convince, convert, enlighten / The souls in error's night." Stanza 4 resumes this theme, calling God's Word and the preaching of that Word a saving power, a "living water" that rains upon us God's grace and sustains us until our Lord's return in glory.

- According to the hymn, how does God defend His Word? Does that defense depend upon us and our wits? How does God convince, convert and enlighten sinners?
- How does stanza 4 remind us of the Small Catechism's commentary on the Third Commandment (LSB, p. 321)? In what way does the Lord's Word preserve us when we "hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it"?

Stanzas 3 and 5 explain how God preserves His Church in the midst of this awful strife in the latter days. God's "Zion" is His Church, those who have been convinced, converted and enlightened by the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacrament and who now believe, teach and confess the Word of the Lord, no matter the consequences. It is our prayer, then, that God would protect His flock, the sheep of His fold, from the attacks of these latter days. Though the enemy will attack and the wind and the waves of false doctrine will rock the boat that is the Church, Jesus is the "pilot" who steadies and steers this boat until she arrives safely in the "eternal light" that is the promised eternal rest prepared for her before the foundations of the world and kept in heaven, never to perish, spoil or fade.

- What sort of opposition to its faith and doctrine does the Church face in these latter days? How did our Lord prepare us for this? What do we cling to in the midst of such opposition?
- This hymn pictures the Church as a boat. Where do we find such imagery in the Scriptures (e.g., 1 Peter 3:18–22, Eph. 4:11–16)? What are the "wind and the waves" that confront us according to the Scriptures? How does God sustain us and protect us against that wind and those waves?

Making the Connection

Jesus warned us in the Gospel Lesson that the devil would raise up enemies against His Word and His Church in the last days. That happens to us constantly. Yet our Lord has not left us alone. He has provided the means to sustain and even strengthen our faith against the devil and his attacks, and He has done so through Word and Sacrament. In the boat that is Christ's Church, we will find His Word and Spirit, where faith is created and fortified against the errors of the enemy. Likewise, at His table, the risen and ascended Lord comes to us in His own flesh and blood, ensuring that we are not alone, and fulfilling His baptismal promise to be with us until the end of the age.

- What challenges to your faith or to the faith of your church have arisen? How has God resolved them? What was your strength in the midst of that mighty opposition?
- If religious persecution were to break out in your corner of this world, how does God promise to protect you? Where will you turn for help and aid?

In Closing

The Lord is with you as He promised to be and He sustains you, not by your great might or wits or resources, but by His Word alone and in His Church alone. Here, through Word and Sacrament, God does His work of conviction, conversion and enlightenment, changing wicked hearts and sustaining souls as we eagerly anticipate His return.

- Sing or read aloud together LSB 658.

Prayer

Almighty God, we implore You, show Your mercy to Your humble servants that we, who put no trust in our own merits, may not be dealt with after the severity of Your judgment but according to Your mercy; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen (Collect for the Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Trinity).

(Continued from page 1)
down the road, the congregation wants to make a change to this change they will have the opportunity to do so.

One other change that we will be making again this year is we will be going back to the three year lectionary. This is the one that over a three year period, we rotate through three different sets of readings. This is something that has been changed at Christ a number of times.

When we first moved into our current building Christ used the three year series. Then when the new hymnal came in we switched to the one year. Then when our last pastor left and I was asked to do most of the preaching during the vacancy, I agreed as long as we went back to the three year (there was no one year series set up for deaf congregations). Finally four years ago we went back to the one year series (I had had the time to setup the readings for Trinity).

Each time we changed, it was not one hundred percent agreement. And that is ok. Depending who your ask people feel one is better than the other. But the reality is they are just different. With the one year series, you get the same readings year after year. The hope is this builds a better knowledge of these parts of Scripture. For the three year series, you cover a wider portion of Scripture. There by giving you a wider knowledge of God's word. It is not that one is right and the other wrong. They just present different concepts on how to get the Scriptures into your heads and hearts.

The truth on the matter is we are far from the first to change the readings that are used in the worship service. If you look in The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH), the one we used to use, you will see that they did not have an Old Testament reading. If you are one that preferred the one year series, please take this opportunity to see how the three year series might help you see more of God's Word. If you are one that prefers the three year series, enjoy.

I am guessing that some where down the line we may change again, and that is ok

May God guide you through these changing times. Both those we can have a say in and those we can't.

In Christ,
Pastor Nix

