



The Christ Messenger

Christ Lutheran Church

Vienna, West Virginia

September 2020



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Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

I remember the first time I walked into a store in the Mid Ohio Valley with my clerical shirt and collar. A person came up to me and said, "Are you one of those minister pastor thingy's?" I looked around and thought to myself, "What is this person talking about?"



Then it hit me. I was wearing my black clergy shirt and collar. I replied, "You mean, a pastor?" The person said, "Yeah, a pastor. But you are a woman, there's no thing as women pastors."

For me, it was a strange conversation because I grew up with male and female pastors. In fact, the first woman ordained in the Lutheran Church in America, Rev. Elizabeth Alvin Platz (pictured above) came from my home congregation, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Pittsburgh (Carrick), Pennsylvania. It never occurred to me that someone might not had that same experience.

This year in 2020, we (the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) celebrate the 50th anniversary of women's ordination in the Lutheran Church. Rev. Elizabeth A. Platz was the first woman ordained in the Lutheran Church in America (of which Christ Lutheran Church was previously part of this church body, prior to the ELCA) on November 22, 1970. Rev. Barbara Andrews was the first woman to be ordained in the American Lutheran Church on December 22, 1970.

It took nine years later (1979) , for the Lutheran Church to recognize and ordain women of color. The Rev. Earlean Miller was the first woman of color to be ordained in the Lutheran Church in North America.

In 1992, the Rev. April Larson became the first female synodical bishop in the Evangelical Lutheran in America.

The Rev. Jessica Christ (ordained in 1980) became the first female synodical bishop in the western United States; she also was the first female synodical bishop to chair the ELCA Conference of Bishops.



A Congregation of the West Virginia—Western Maryland Synod & the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America





In 2013, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America made history once more as the Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton was elected to the Office of Presiding Bishop by the Churchwide Assembly. Coincidentally, that assembly took place in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; the same city where Rev. Elizabeth A. Platz was raised. In 2019, Bishop Eaton was re-elected for another six year term to the Office of Presiding Bishop.

On May 5, 2018, the Rev. Patricia A. Davenport became the first African American female bishop elected to the office of synodical bishop in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod. The next day, the South Central Wisconsin Synod elected Vivian Thomas-Briefeld; the second African American female synodical bishop in the ELCA.

On June 16, 2018, the Rev. Idalia Negron Cammano was the first female pastor to be elected to the office of synodical bishop in the ELCA Caribbean Synod.

Historical narratives tell one story. Figures and statistics tell another story. Although we strive to get past the barrier of gender within the church, only 5,332 women have been ordained in the Lutheran Church from 1970 to 2019. In the same time period, only 32 women have been elected to the office of bishop. As of 2018, 32% ELCA congregations are served by female pastors.

Like many other vocations and occupations, gender still remains a factor in compensation. In the ELCA, male clergy serving in full time pastoral calls earn \$8000 more than female clergy who serve the same full time call. The ELCA is not alone in this trend. In the Episcopal Church, female clergy serving full time pastoral calls received \$12,000 less in compensation than male clergy serving in full time pastoral calls.

Although women are ordained in the ELCA, there are many other denominations including other Lutheran Church denominations such as the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod who do not ordain women in their church bodies.

Why is there such a division on the issue of ordaining women to the Office of Word and Sacrament ministry? Much of it comes down to biblical interpretation.

For the church denominations against ordaining women to the Office of Word and Sacrament ministry, some of the following reasons include: 1. Christ only chose men to be apostles. 2. God and Christ are masculine, and thus a priest [pastor/minister] must be, 3. Women by nature are unable to receive the indelible character conferred by ordination and 4. God has ordained for all time the subordination of women.¹

Some scripture passages that are used to support the argument of not ordaining women as pastors:

1 Timothy 2:12 *I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she is to keep silent.*

1 Timothy 3:2-6 (with regard to men as bishops) ²*Now a bishop must be above reproach, married only once, temperate, sensible, respectable, hospitable, an apt teacher, ³not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, and not a lover of money. ⁴He must manage his own household well, keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way — ⁵for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how can he take care of God's church?*

1 Corinthians 14:34-35 ³⁴*women should be silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as the law also says. ³⁵If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church.*

For the church denominations (such as the ELCA, and the predecessor Lutheran Church bodies such as the Lutheran Church in America, the American Lutheran Church) in favor of ordaining women to the Office of Word and Sacrament ministry, some of the following reasons include (from the statement made by the faculty of Luther Seminary, 1968): **The New testament does not confront the question of ordination of women** and therefore does not speak directly "1. to it. On the other hand, nothing in the New Testament speaks decisively against it. 2. Although the ordination of women raises new and difficult questions, **there is no decisive theological argument** 3. The **practical objections, however serious, do not by themselves settle the question for Lutherans.** As long as no decisive biblical or theological objections are raised, the ordination of women remains a possibility. 4. **The most serious objection is the ecumenical, that Lutherans ought not unilaterally in the present divided state of Christendom make decisions which affect all Christian churches.** But inasmuch as other churches already have ordained women to the ministry,

and some churches not presently ordaining women are open to discussion of its possibility, the exact weight of this objection is difficult to assess. In view of the considerations above, we can see no valid reason why women candidates for ordination who meet the standard normally required for admission to the ministry should not be recommended for ordination."²

Some scripture passages that are used to support the argument of ordaining women as pastors:

Galatians 3:28 *There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 4:3 *Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.*

John 20:18 *Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.*

Matthew 28:5-8 ⁵*But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. ⁶He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. ⁷Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' ⁸This is my message for you."* ⁸*So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples.*

Romans 16:1-2 *I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church at Cenchræe, ²so that you may welcome her in the Lord as is fitting for the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a benefactor of many and of myself as well.*

As you can see, there are a wide Scripture passages that have been used to support the different perspectives on whether or not women are to be ordained in the Church. With such a wide variety of viewpoints, it is understandable why there is a division into this day on this specific issue alone.

Depending on where you come down on the interpretation of the Scriptures, it determines how you understand things like the ordination of women. If you take a firm literal interpretation of the Scriptures, then the verses could support an argument against the ordination of women in the church. If you look at the bigger picture and understand the time and context the Scriptures were written, there could be verses that support the possibility of the ordination of women.

On this 50th anniversary of the ordination of women, we stand together with Christ as our foundation and authority to preach and teach the Word and administer the Sacraments. I acknowledge that the call to preach and teach the Word of God embodied in Christ and revealed through the Holy Scriptures is sacred ground. It is not a guaranteed right or privilege to be a servant of the Church. I recognize that there are many other women who have gone before me to pave the way, so I could become a called and ordained pastor of the church. The internal call I sensed in college and was affirmed by the Church through the candidacy process.

Here at Christ Lutheran Church in Vienna, we give thanks for the saints who have gone before us. I give thanks for a daughter of this congregation, Rev. Louise A. Knotts who had a sense of humor about herself balanced with her firm grasp of theological understanding of who Christ is and preaching and teaching the law and gospel. I give thanks for Melissa Bannister, who faithfully continues to serve as a lay worship leader for the last 18 years for Christ Lutheran Church and for other congregations in the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod. I am thankful for the women in our church that continue to teach the Christian faith in the present and future generations of Christian disciples.

Yes, I acknowledge there will always be challenges in serving as a ordained pastor of the Church, who happens to be female. Like many other vocations, not every experience in the Church will be a level playing field. Some people will endorse the ordination of women, while other people who do not support the ordination of women will create every obstacle, second guessing every decision she makes (even if it is the same decision a male pastor makes). Yet we persist in the preaching and teaching of the Christian faith, the proclamation of the Gospel and administer the Sacraments because our faith is in Christ Jesus; and not in human made institutions and rules.

I look forward to the day when we no longer have to celebrate the anniversary of anything because women will simply be seen as equal co-workers in the vineyard, preaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments. I look forward to the day when we no longer have to keep justifying ourselves in answering God's call in our lives to serve in the Church.

In the meantime, I give thanks for the saints (past, present and future) claimed and marked by the cross of Christ and sealed with the power of the Holy Spirit to have the faith to go forth and answer God's call to ordination in the Church. I give thanks for the churches who nurtured them in this faith and supported them in their journey to ordination and call in the Church. Thanks be to God. Amen. Serving with you in Christ, Rev. Emilie Theobald-Rowlands

Fall Worship Schedule September 2020

*Sept. 6, 2020 - 10:00 A.M Service
(Via Facebook Live)*

Sept. 13, 2020

Sept. 20, 2020

Sept. 27, 2020

(9:30 A.M. Outdoor Service)

Parsonage Backyard

**If it rains, worship service will be held in the
Sanctuary.*

(10:45 A.M. Indoor Service-Sanctuary)

*. For those participating online, we will be
online via Facebook Live.*

***MASKS ARE MANDATORY FOR ALL
WORSHIP SERVICES!***

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS SERVICE

October 3, 2020
10:00 A.M.
(CLC Parking Lot)



PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING

*All people present need to be wearing a MASK.

NO EXCEPTIONS!

*BAGS - in case your pet or animal leave a gift behind in the parking lot

Dogs must be on leashes.

Cats must be in carriers.

* REMEMBER TO STAY
6 FEET APART AT ALL
TIMES.

See you at the Blessing
of the Animals Service on
October 3, 2020 @ 10AM!



THE GOOD SAMARITAN ITEM OF THE MONTH FOR SEPTEMBER 2020



Due to COVID19, there has been an increased demand for food at GSC. The following items are needed at this time: Jello and frosting (for icing). If you have any of these items at your house and would like to donate these to GSC, please leave these at items at the in the crates located by the door of the main entry. Thank you in advance for your help!

THANK YOU FROM OUR FINANCIAL SECRETARY, KAY ROWAN!

Our Financial Secretary, Kay Rowan wishes to say thank you to everyone for their continued support through their financial giving to the ministries of Christ Lutheran Church. She thanks everyone for the kind and encouraging notes that continue to be sent with the offerings. Kay truly appreciates it and says “thank you.”

As we go through the summer months, please continue to remember Christ Lutheran Church in your offerings. Offerings can be mailed to the following address:

Attention: Kay Rowan, Financial Secretary, c/o Christ Lutheran Church
4513 Grand Central Avenue, Vienna West Virginia 26105

Thanks for your continued prayers and support!

PRAYER LIST– September 2020

We keep the following people in our prayers:

Glen Addis; Wesley Archer; Tara Bannister; Russell Behnke; Richard Dilinger; Jerry John DiNicola; Pam Goots; Ann Hammer; Heather; Mary Hennen; Carrie Hommond; Diana Houllings; Diana Huddleson; Laura Lemley; Jacob Logue; Johnnie Mays; Rob Miser; Ben Moore; Mary Ann Roddy; Dottie Rothwell; Les Rothwell; Gean Secreto; April Sowards, Mildred Stanley; Keith Tanner; Zane Thorpe, April Tibbs; Donna Vincent; Terry & Vicki Wilson; Lois (Steege) Wood; police and first responders; our troops; Christians and other minorities in the Middle East; people in the Ukraine and eastern Europe; pray for peace; and for our military, especially for Airman Elijah Modesitt (U.S. Airforce)., for all who have been diagnosed with COVID 19 and/or hospitalized for the virus, for all who have died from the virus, for all of our medical personnel and first responders who are treating patients, for all families and loved ones separated by quarantines, for people who do not have access to medical care to be treated, for folks who are unemployed and the underemployed.

ATTENTION!!!!

We are working to update our prayer list to reflect the most recent needs of our congregation. If you have a prayer request, or need to change a request that you have previously made, please contact the church office, either by email or phone. Next month we will be starting the list from scratch, so if you have someone who you would like to remain on the list, please let us know about that too.

Thanks!

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

September 1: Gage Freeman

Vicki Wilson

September 11: Jessica (Rogers) Fordyce

September 21: Rev. Emilie Theobald-Rowlands



SEPTEMBER READER SCHEDULE

September 6: None

September 13: Melissa Bannister (9:30AM) & Pastor Rowlands (10:45 AM)

September 20: Dave Freeman (9:30AM) & Al Behnke (10:45 AM)

September 27: Melissa Bannister (9:30 AM) & Larry Armstrong (10:45 AM)

Summer Worship Schedule

Sundays

Outdoor Worship 9:30 a.m.

Indoor Worship 10:45 a.m.

Church Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Rev. Emilie Theobald-Rowlands, Pastor

Contact Us

Phone: (304)295-9241

Email: clcvienna@gmail.com

Facebook: Christ Lutheran Church

Website: www.christlutheranviennawv.org

Newsletter Submissions

Place items for the newsletter in the church mailbox or email to church office by the 25th of the month. Please include your name with the

submission.

Thank you!

Christ Lutheran Church
4513 Grand Central Ave.
Vienna, WV 26105



Christ Lutheran Church Mission Statement

“As Children of God,
nourished by Word,
sacrament and the
fellowship of loving, hopeful
believers, we are guided by
the Holy Spirit to witness to
Christ’s saving presence in
this world.”