



# The Christ Messenger

Christ Lutheran Church  
Vienna, West Virginia

**February 2022**

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## Our Mission:

As Children of God, nourished  
by the Word, Sacrament and  
Fellowship of loving, forgiving,  
and hopeful believers—

WE are guided by the Holy  
Spirit to WITNESS to Christ's  
saving presence in the World!

*7 We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure.<sup>[a]</sup> This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves.*

*(2 Corinthians 4:7)*

Have you ever had a scripture verse just sort of stick in your mind? I have had that happen to me frequently. Today it was the above verse written by St. Paul. It has always been a favorite verse of mine and one in which I feel pertains to each and every one of us. You see, ever since our baptism we have had that Holy Spirit light shining in each of us. You might even remember that pastors say in the baptismal liturgy, "let your light so shine before others, so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." We have this light.

But then the scripture goes on to say, "but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure." Doesn't that phrase describe us so well? WE are like clay jars, clay pots if you will, maybe even pots that have been cracked, have been injured, have been vulnerable and yet still we still carry this wonderful light of the Gospel in us.

Where am I going with this? Well, I will tell you. We together have begun a journey, a journey of faith. God has brought us together to begin a new chapter. All of us have our clay jar faith stories to tell and each story is an important one to tell and hear. All of us, too, are in different places on our faith journey. Some of us are forging

ahead, others may have held back for one reason or another. Yet all of us make up the Body of Christ here at Christ Lutheran Church in Vienna. I see in her a great treasure and a wonderful chapter that God has in store for us.

Spiritual renewal begins in the hearing of our faith stories, with all of the good and the bad. I am in the process of hearing your stories and hopefully when you tell them to me, God will reveal the beginning of our journey together. Hopefully by the time you receive this letter, I will be well on my way in having godly conversations with you.

The last verse from Corinthians is one we so often overlook. Our light which contains the great treasure isn't something we can muster up on our own, but the great power comes from God. It always begins with God. As we go forward in this Epiphany season and lead into Lent, may we too hold onto the words of St Paul from the book of Romans, "<sup>28</sup> *And we know that God causes everything to work together<sup>[b]</sup> for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.*" (Romans 8:28)

**Blessings, Pastor Tom <><**

*QUIET MOMENTS*

"Do everything in love." 1 Corinthians 16:14

Dearest Friends,

In this world of constant contradictions and ongoing stressors, the whole concept of loving even those we do not even like seems archaic and farfetched. Yes, we are Christians, yes, we love our family and friends and that may give us a sense of comfort and security.

Yet, that is not what Christ is saying through the words of the Apostle Paul. It does not matter what our calling in life is or was. It does not matter if we believe we do love everyone because we probably do not. The status of our country, the unrelenting media, and our own daily observations scream otherwise. We may feel safer in our own environs, but are we truly living God's word?

These words may seem judgmental, and I apologize. You see, I fit the above as well. I find it much safer/easier to love those I feel comfortable about each moment of my day. But, while I prayed that the Holy Spirit would aid me in writing today, this is what is flowing through my PC.

How do we change our mindset? One ARK at a time, (an act of random kindness) is the beginning. Reaching out to those we do not usually talk or interact with is a start. It could be across the church aisle or in stores or wherever. Once we open ourselves to be willing to love- the Holy Spirit will give us the opportunities. It is that simple but that complex.

Let this month of February and Valentine's Day begin our concerted efforts to truly do "everything in love."

Blessings,  
Liz

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>February Schedule at a Glance</b></p> <p><b>Sundays:</b>  February 6<sup>th</sup> – 8:30 &amp; 10:45 Service                      Communion Sunday                      9:30 Sunday School  February 13<sup>th</sup> – 8:30 &amp; 10:45 Service                      9:30 Sunday School  February 20<sup>th</sup> – 8:30 &amp; 10:45 Service                      9:30 Sunday School  February 27<sup>th</sup> – 8:30 &amp; 10:45 Service                      Communion Sunday                      9:30 Sunday School</p> <p><b>Events:</b>  February 10 – Elderberries                      Noon @ Cheddars  February 13 – LCW meeting following the                      10:45 Service</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ELDERBERRIES 2022 SCHEDULE</b></p> <p>JAN. 13 Church  FEB. 10 Cheddars  MAR.10 I Don't Care  APRIL 14 NET  MAY 12 Las Trancas  JUNE 9 DaVinci's  JULY 14 Fly Away  AUG. 11 Napoli's  SEPT. 8 Mary B's  OCT. 13 Tania's Country Kitchen  NOV. 10 der Dog Haus  DEC. None  (Extra locations, if needed)  Wings, Etc. and Western Sizzling</p> <p>Thank you,  Delores Steege (304) 428-2056</p>
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## ELDERBERRIES

Elderberries met on Thursday, January 13, 2022, for lunch in the Fellowship Hall. We meet there in January so we can have the space and privacy to plan locations for the upcoming year. Our menu was meat and cheese tray from Piggly Wiggly and various breads for sandwiches, Bob Evans Chicken Noodle Soup and crackers, and to finish it off-- Cherry Dessert and/or Rum Cake. Everyone (women and men) helped set it out and to clean up after. That was really appreciated.

The attendance record was tied with 14 in attendance! We welcomed Dave Freeman as a first timer and were happy to welcome back Pam Plaskett who came with her father, Norton Woodward. Others attending were Kay Rowan, Rocky Freeman, Pastor and Liz Darr, Jenny and Mike Knotts, Loreta Delaney, Fran and Tom Williams, and Delores and Jerry Steege.

Since our name it "Elderberries", for the "Program", Delores regaled the crowd with some insight of the elderberry and of its many medicinal as well as culinary uses. Also whistles and pipes etc. are carved from the wood. Door prizes were drawn with Woody and Tom W. being the lucky winners of products made with elderberries.

We then turned to planning the year's locations. Several places were named, including three new ideas. After discussion, the schedule was made and will be printed and given out and will be in the newsletter and on the Bulletin Board.

Our next luncheon will be on Thursday, February 10, 2022, at Cheddar's. We hope many will be able to join us. There will be a sign-up sheet in the narthex.

Delores Steege 304-428-2056



### Birthdays

February 12 – Peggy Rogers  
February 18 – Jerry John DiNicola

### Anniversaries

February 17 – Rob and Lisa Miser  
February 26 – Dave and Kelly Fleming

Jerry John DiNicola has a birthday on Friday, February 18. Could we have a card shower for him?

Thanks, Delores Steege.

His address is:

Jerry John DiNicola  
Stonerise Room 208  
506 Riverview Drive  
Belmont, WV 26134

### Good Samaritan

### Item of the Month



### Kidney Beans

#### Church Address:

4513 Grand Central Avenue  
Vienna, WV 26105

#### Church Phone Number:

304-295-9241

#### Church Web Page:

<https://christlutheranviennawv.org/>

#### Church Facebook Page:

[Facebook.com/christlutheranchurchviennawv](https://www.facebook.com/christlutheranchurchviennawv)

### We keep the following people in our prayers:

Russell Behnke; Jerry John DiNicola; Sally Ebeling; Pam Goots; Heather; Laura Lemley; Family of Joel McGuier; Rob Miser; Gary Miller; Gean Secreto; April Sowards, Caren Thomas; Donna Vincent; Betty Williamson; Terry & Vicki Wilson; Tiffany Wilson; 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); Jon Shorr serving in Afghanistan; Conner Allen serving in China; families of all those who serve in the military; 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.

**Church Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 9:00-12:00**

## STEWARDSHIP

### Love yourself as Your Neighbor

*37 Jesus replied, “You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.”<sup>[a]</sup> 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’<sup>[b]</sup> Matthew 22.37-39*

Does this happen to you? When I make a mistake or do something dumb, I mentally beat myself up. But when OTHER people mess up, I’m Mr. Understanding and Forgiveness.

Clearly, I’ve got work to do, but doesn’t everyone struggle to balance love of neighbor and love of self? If we are to be good stewards of our lives, we have to get this right. That’s the genius of the second greatest commandment – that we love our neighbor and ourselves if we are to become the people God wants us to become and have the lives God wants us to have.

The month of love provides an opportunity to focus on loving ourselves, which is too often the forgotten side of the “love thy neighbor and self” equation. We live in a culture of criticism, so many of us fall into the trap of downplaying and denigrating ourselves, leaving us restless, discontent, depressed, empty, forever searching.

The secret is learning to love ourselves so we can love everyone and everything else, too. Here are some ideas.

- Pray! Ask God to help and guide you. (Psalm 139:23-24)
- Pray! Ask God for friends who will walk with you (Proverbs 17:17)
- Remember that nothing can separate us from God’s unconditional love. (Romans 8:38-39)
- Strive to treat yourself with the tenderness and care you want to give others (Luke 6:31)
- Find a counselor who can help you work through past hurts and ingrained ways of thinking.

It may be hard to walk at first, but the prayerful path of greater self-love will enrich your life, open you to new people and experiences, and help you truly to follow Jesus’ second greatest commandment. Love your neighbor as yourself.

ROB BLEZARD

*Copy right 2022, Rev Robert Blezard. Pastor Blezard serves as pastor of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, MD, and works as a content editor for [www.stewardshipoflife.org](http://www.stewardshipoflife.org) . He blogs at [www.thestewardshipguy.com](http://www.thestewardshipguy.com).*