



# The Christ Messenger

Christ Lutheran Church  
Vienna, West Virginia

**September 2022**

## Table of Contents

Pastor Tom's Musings.....p 1

Birthdays.....p 2

Good Samaritan.....p 2

Prayer List.....p 3

Worship Schedule.....p 3

Elderberries.....p 2

Quiet Moments.....p 2

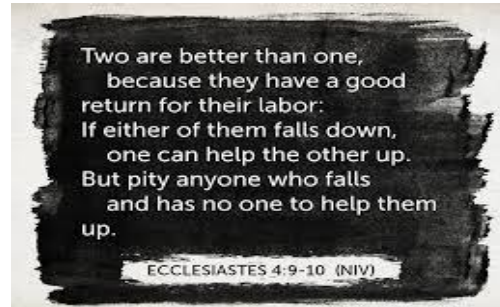
Lutheran Identity.....p 4

Stewardship.....p 5

### 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!



As I write this September newsletter to you, I have come to realize just how very important the scripture reading is, how it can and does function in your life, and when depending on it, you truly will have peace. We will very soon

be celebrating our first-year anniversary with you. We are so very happy that during this year we have had all of you at Christ Lutheran loving, praying and supporting us along the way. We thank you oh so very much, for just being yourselves.

So, as we start our second fall season with you, we will be part of who you are, what you do, how you love, and how you work together to support each other. I am very excited about that. Hopefully what we do will be a witness to those in the Vienna area, who are trying to make it alone, trying to make it without someone there to help them. Hopefully and with God's Spirit within us, people will see God's love in us, and be caught up in God's grace. Hopefully, with God's Spirit and His pleasure, those who are caught up in His grace will join us at Christ,

So I am hopeful, that as you read this scripture, you will realize that you are a very important part of the Christ's Lutheran body, and that you have an important part to play. Please know that without you, we are missing you, needing you, because without

you we are no longer whole. Together we can make a difference. Together we can be a witness. Together we can truly be the gift that God intends for us to be.

So as the lazy summer days of August wind down, may you rest for the journey. September is right around the corner when many things will be happening. Some of the things happening will be 1) reviewing our mission statement through a book study called "Living Lutheran", 2) We are planning a weekly game night later this month that will include board games as well as ping pong. Of course, bible study and confirmation and Sunday school will be starting along with a new worship time.

Have a most blessed September, Pastor Tom <><

## A PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

*Thank You, Lord, for all your gifts of love, especially for those we often overlook.*

*Thank You for friends to increase our love of You.*

*Thank You for our enemies to increase our tolerance.*

*Thank You for joys and happiness to strengthen our faith in You.*

*Thank You for trials and tribulations to strengthen our trust and perseverance.*

*Thank You for the times when all goes well to teach us serenity.*

*Thank You for the days when things are rough to teach us patience,*

*Thank You for our successes to increase our confidence.*

*Thank You for our failures to increase our humility.*

*Thank You, Lord, for the “ups” and “downs” of life.*

*Thank You, Lord, for the precious gift of life itself.*

*Help us to continue to grow and to learn, to love and be grateful.*

*Comfort us when we are disturbed; disturb us when we are too comfortable.*

*Thank You, Lord, for being by our side.*

Leo Kozeny and Father Mike Hanson

My mother gave me a prayerbook on my 32<sup>nd</sup> birthday in 1981. It is one of my favorites and this prayer is one I use daily. As you all know, prayer is a critical part of my life. It doesn't make me a saint; what it does do is to help this sinner find peace.

Blessings,

Liz

## ELDERBERRIES

Elderberries met for lunch at Napoli's Italian Restaurant in Belpre, on Thursday, August 11, 2022. Kay Rowan was in charge and although they don't make reservations, she told them a larger group was coming and they had a round table ready. Being at a round table made conversation easier for everyone to hear and be heard.

Those attending were Pastor Tom and Liz Darr, Judi and Ron Clampitt, Jenny and Mike Knotts, Kay Rowan, and Marc and Jenny McCormick. We were not able to attend so we appreciate Kay's help.

Our next luncheon will be at Mary B's Restaurant, 2212 Pike Street, South Parkersburg. It will be at noon on Thursday, September 8. Please try to join us. Sign-up sheet at church, or call Delores (304) 428-2056.

### Good Samaritan



**Hamburger Helper**

**Item of the Month**

### Church Address:

4513 Grand Central Avenue  
Vienna, WV 26105

### Church Web Page:

<https://christlutheranviennawv.org/>

### Church Facebook Page:

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

### Church Phone Number:

304-295-9241

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 9:00-12:00



### Birthdays

September 1 – Vicki Wilson  
September 10 – Madison Padgett  
September 10 – Millie Padgett  
September 11 – Jessica Fordyce



### **Cook Out and Game Day**

Cookout and game day on September 17, 2022. The time is 4pm to 6:30pm. If it should rain we will still plan to have it but we will use the Fellowship Hall.

Come out for fun and good food and fellowship for the last cookout of the season.

Bring your favorite outdoor games, cards, or boardgames and a side or dessert to share. Christ Lutheran will provide burgers and hot dogs.

Thank you and see you there,  
Fran

### **September Schedule at a Glance**

#### **Sundays:**

September 4<sup>th</sup>  
10:00 Communion Service

September 11<sup>th</sup>  
9:00 Sunday School Kick-Off Brunch  
10:00 Service of the Word

September 18<sup>th</sup>  
9:00 Sunday School  
10:00 Communion Service

September 25<sup>th</sup>  
9:00 Sunday School  
10:00 Service of the Word

#### **Activities:**

September 8<sup>th</sup> – Elderberries meets at Mary B's  
Noon

September 17<sup>th</sup> – Cookout and Game Day  
4:00-6:30

September 21<sup>st</sup> – Meeting with Bishop Riegle at  
First Lutheran about the ELCA Assembly  
6:00pm

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

Tamar Allen; Jeff Amos; Russell Behnke; David Bills; Jerry John DiNicola; Sally Ebeling; Becky Ferguson; Pam Goots; Heather; Larry Kemper; Michael Knight; Lenny Kolstad; Judy Lawson; Jack Leipold; Lora Lemley; Family of Joel McGuier; Carolyn Mendes; Rob Miser; Gary Miller; Lisa Nielsen; Sharen Nicholas; Sharon Niday; Gean Secreto; April Sowards; Tim and Lora Swarr; Caren Thomas; Donna Vincent; Emily and Lily Ann White; Brooke Wilson; 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 home from deployment; 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.

---

## **LUTHERAN IDENTITY - PART TWO**

And so we continue our Lutheran identity series and take up the beginning of the four ways in which we can identify as being a Christian in a Lutheran way. We will begin with a Way of Seeing. We will probably spend more than one time of this one. And so, we will begin today with a story from the gospel of Matthew the fourteenth chapter.

It appears as though Jesus had just fed at least 5000 men, certainly many more, and had dismissed the crowd and sent his disciples ahead of him in a boat across the lake. And a storm comes up on the lake, while Jesus is praying. He notices

that the disciples are in trouble, so he begins to walk towards them on the water. Meanwhile the storm is strong, and they disciples felt a little like Forrest Gump when he was in the midst of a storm. At any rate Peter sees Jesus walking on the water and said, Lord, if it's you tell me to come to you on the water. So, Peter goes and then he notices the wind and the waves and the storm and is afraid, and then starts to sink, but then Jesus reaches down and pulls Peter out. I remember talking about this story in Bible studies and the whole point was you've got to keep your eyes on Jesus. But if you've ever had a Peter experience you realize there is so much more. Peter was scared out of his wits, he knows he is going to die, and when Jesus reached down to save him, it wasn't about having enough faith. It was all in God's hands. God throws out the life preserver, but we do have to grab it.

That is our next point. This is all you need to know about God. 'God comes down to us, and God finds us. We discover that we don't find God. God finds us in our darkness, in our pain, in our emptiness, our loneliness and our weakness. This doesn't mean that God isn't in our joy, that we must be depressed, but that God meets us most profoundly at the point of our deepest reality, our honest confrontation with weakness, pain solitude and death.

You know how it is as you transition from high school into life, and you begin to realize all the things that matter most. Love is a way through suffering, but its pain that brings us together. It's not just that we scratch ourselves but there is this human journey and we can try to put a smile on our face and think you are going to get closer to God, but it's really in our struggling with this that God comes down and enters our lives. Personally, for me was when my father died a number of years ago. As I look back, one of the things that was very central for me was the God you meet in the cross in Jesus. You know God is out there separate from us and God comes down to us and enters our world through our suffering. And one of the central questions of our faith is, if God is all good, if God is all powerful, then why is there pain, and why do we suffer. We don't know the answer, but we do trust that God is good and all powerful and, in the end, we know that God is going to win. But we also find that it is God who leads us through our suffering.

So, the Cross is that central place where God meets us in our brokenness and suffering. In the Cross, God enters our darkness and embraces us with total and unconditional acceptance. God identifies completely with our pain and sorrow of our existence. God knows what it's like to be us in our journey. God woos us into a love relationship with himself. In the cross is God coming down, not to punish us for what we've done wrong, but to woo us with His love to help us come to a new place.

But not only in God's embrace, the Cross is God's victory. In the cross God enters our darkness, in the places of our brokenness. God exposes and defeats the powers that reign in the world. In the cross and through the death of Jesus God liberates us from any person, anything, and system or any ism that would keep us in bondage.

Or anything that which would enslave us by demanding absolute loyalty. We are free. We are free to let God be God, we are free to be human. To really be us, to be the way God made us to be.

In our freedom that God gives us we discover that God is a Risking, prodigal, extravagant, passionate, merciful, mothering, and fathering God who came to us in Jesus, dwells in flesh today, hides himself in the common stuff of this earth, lives in all so we can see God in all.

Next month we will talk about what it means that God dwells with us in the flesh. We know this from Christmas when we read the word became flesh and dwelt among us. We will take further when we talk about baptism and Holy Communion. We will talk more then.

## ***Stewardship of our work life***

*And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. --Colossians 3:17*

The priesthood of all believers has been characterized as Martin Luther's most underappreciated theological insight. Simply put, Luther observed that God calls all Christians -- not just pastors -- to lives of holiness. Every one of us, not just priests, accomplishes God's holy work, regardless of what we do for work, whether employed or working at home.

It's a simple idea, and one that certainly elevates our "job" to a new status, but it can be hard to live out. Here are some tips:

**Think *disciple*:** You may know to be a disciple in church, but prayerfully imagine how you can be a follower of Jesus at work, too!

**Think *excellence*:** There's satisfaction in doing your best. Knowing that your work is holy can provide not only incentive but also a satisfaction boost.

**Think *relationship*:** They're not just your coworkers, they're also the neighbors whom Christ commands us to serve and to love as ourselves.

**Think *service*:** Every workplace holds challenges for your employer, coworkers and customers. How can your experience and gifts help?

**Think *priest*:** You are called to be a holy person 24/7. How does this awareness invite you to change your behavior and attitude toward your work?

We spend so much of our lives in our jobs, we can't park our faith at the door. Instead, we bring the light of Christ to the workplace as holy people of God's reign!

***--Rob Blezard***

*Copyright © 2018, Rev. Robert Blezard. Reprinted by permission. Pastor Blezard serves as an assistant to the bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod and works as content editor for*

[www.stewardshipoflife.org](http://www.stewardshipoflife.org).