

The Crusader

Christ Lutheran Church
315 N Shipley Street
Seaford, DE 19973
Rev. Ray M. Rogers
Seaford, DE 19973 Phone: 302-629-9755
8:30 am Praise Worship
9:45 am Sunday School
11:00 am Traditional Worship

JANUARY 2025



From the Pastor: Thoughts on Planning for 2025

On the cusp of this New Year, are you the type of person who likes to "fly by the seat of your pants" or do you prefer to plan? I ran across an article by Scott Hubbard, managing editor of *Desiring God* magazine, that offers a very balanced view of planning in the life of a Christian. There are some things which we should account for in our planning, but there are many areas of life beyond our control, which by faith we leave in the hands of our gracious, sovereign God. Let me summarize here Hubbard's main points.

There is nothing intrinsically wrong about planning. In fact, when we plan, we are imitating God, who declares in 2 Kings 19:25. The true God is not capricious, making it up as He goes how He will act. Nothing happens randomly in our lives, but according to His "definite plan" (Acts 2:23). One caveat remains: When we put too much faith in our own planning, we forget that we are mortal. Each of us needs to repeat: "I am not God." Here are Hubbard's five suggestions regarding "planning" in the life of a Christian:

1. Plan like a mortal.

Whenever we plan, we are guessing about what we need to do now to reach certain goals in the future. What are our chances of success, when we "do not know what tomorrow will bring" (James). We are "a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes" (James 4:14). We are mortal.

As we mortals sketch out our plans, our sketches need to be rendered in pencil, not in permanent ink. We need to have one of those large pink erasers nearby to make changes. And always upon our lips need to be the words: "If the Lord wills... we will do this and that" (James 4:15).

2. Plan like a child.

Pride easily often undermines our planning. Pride says, "I can handle this; I don't need to pray. I'll rely on my own reason and common sense.

"Common sense isn't bad; all you have to do is look at the Book of Proverbs.

But if we think we can master this complex world just by a perfect list of pro's and con's, we are deceived. God's thoughts are not our thoughts, nor are his ways our ways (Isaiah 55:8).

Pastor's Portion (continued)

We are more like children than we would like to admit. Our wisdom and our perspective are both limited. Never underestimate how prone we are to wander into folly. Knowing all our limitations, we saturate our planning with prayer, which brings us into the presence of God and makes available to us wisdom and power from above to help us. Best of all, the Holy Spirit will give us what is best: the love of God in Christ that needs to animate all our thoughts and actions (Philippians 1:9–10).

3. Plan like a worshiper.

Praying is part of God's strategy for guarding us from pride in planning. We can make every day a holy day, a day of worship (see Luther's explanation of the Third Commandment). Worship reorients our priorities. Worship helps us to say "no" to some activities, but it also help us pay attention to the "one thing [that] is necessary" (cf. the story of Mary and Martha in Luke 10:42).

Scripture is filled with other examples of "laser focus" in the prayers of God's people. The Psalmist says, "One thing have I asked of the Lord," namely, to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living (Psalm 27:4). Paul is intent on doing "one thing" (Philippians 3:13), forgetting the past and pressing forward to the goal of eternal life.

A worshipful planner daily prays this ancient Anglican prayer: "O dear Lord, three things I pray: To see Thee more clearly; to love Thee more dearly; and to follow Thee more nearly...day by day." Pursuing God in worship, we won't take ourselves too seriously. We will rest in God's unshakeable love and mercy. We will receive the gift of discernment from the Spirit and adjust our priorities whenever necessary.

4. Plan like a dreamer.

One of our hymns on prayer says: "You are coming to a King./ Large petitions with you bring./ For His grace and power are such, None can ever ask too much." Since God created us "in Christ Jesus for good works" (Ephesians 2:10), we are bold to attempt good works for the Kingdom of God. We may attempt what Hubbard calls "wonderfully audacious" works for God, works that may take longer than all of 2025 to accomplish, but we do so with the promise echoing in our minds and hearts: "With God, all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26).

Pastor's Portion (continued)

Our prayerful, financial help for seminarians at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, is a good example of planning for the future of the church which may or may not benefit us directly, which will take some time to bear fruit.

Hubbard says that there are many other ways we show our willingness to "embark on a path whose end lies over the horizon": when we plant a mission church, when we take part in the Seaford Festival in hopes of evangelizing Seaford, when we get involved in bringing up grandchildren and nieces and nephews "in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

5. Plan like a Sub-Planner

How do you react when you find out that God's plans were different from your own? Proverbs 19:21 reminds us: "Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand." We can be glad that God sometimes overrides our plans, that for our own good He sometimes "frustrates the plans of the peoples" (Psalm 33:10).

God has given us the freedom and dignity to dream.

Sometimes, God even lets us see our dreams come true. But God also wants us to know that when we fail, He is such a God of grace and mercy for Jesus' sake that He will cause even our failures to work together for our good and His glory (Romans 8:28).

Love in Christ,

Pastor Ray

PASTOR RAY'S NEW SCHEDULE IN 2025

Pastor Ray will be working part-time, starting January 6th. From December 30 through January 5th, Pastor will be visiting his sisters, Dyana and Sharyn, and his brother Mark, who is coming to Ohio to get a second opinion from Cleveland Clinic concerning his cancer treatment. Pastor Elwood "Woody" Mather, a seminary classmate of Ray, will be preaching and leading worship on January 5th.

Pastor Ray will be going back on his retirement pension and working 20 hours per week. His schedule is flexible, with him working Sunday through Wednesday most weeks. He will be sure to have time for you to see him in his church office. And another priority will be visiting the sick and shut-in. As always, you can reach him on his cell phone at 443-523-8579.

Preaching and Teaching—6 hours per week

Sermon and Bible Class Preparation

Administration—3 hours per week

Bulletin preparation (Prayer requests, announcements, Prayer of the Day, Prayer of the Church)

Newsletter and other communications

Record-keeping and reports

Council/Call Committee Meetings

Lay Ministry

Stephen Ministry

Worship—6 hours per week

Midweek & Sunday Services (Midweek Bible Study when there are no midweek Advent or Lenten services)

Hymn Selection

Visitation—4 hours per week

Hospital

Sick and Shut-in

Visits with guests in worship

Circuit—1 hour per week

Monthly meeting in Dover

Meeting of retired pastors and pastors from Bethany; Immanuel, Easton; and Immanuel, Preston.



Mark Your Calendars! Our Book Club is beginning this January. Please join us! Our first meeting is Tuesday, January 7, at 2 pm. We will be discussing *The Chosen: I Have Called You By Name*, written by Jerry B. Jenkins. The book is a novelization of The Chosen series, Season 1. We will also be selecting future books to read, so bring your recommendations. If you have not read the book, but have watched the first season of The Chosen, you might be very interested in our book discussion, too. We are looking forward to seeing you!

Upcoming Events:

- Friends Supporting Friends—Mondays at 11 am
- Thursdays@7 pm Choir Practice
- January 5th and January 19th Holy Communion at both services
- January 16th@2 pm LWML Meeting
- January 18th@3 pm Corn Hole
- January 21st@2 pm Lay Ministry Meeting

Evangelism Report for January 2025

January is here! Fresh starts, new beginnings, hopes for wonderful things to come.

Let's start with a re-cap of the month of December. We did have some interest from folks that were open to visiting the homebound. Thank you to those folks, much appreciated! Danielle Dempsey worked with the children in Sunday school making cards for the residents of Lofland nursing home in Seaford. They have been delivered to those residents. Danielle is gathering information on American Heritage Girls. Thank you, Danielle!

Joel and Candi Lichtenberg participated in the Downton Seaford Association (DSA) Holiday Celebration Dinner held at the Nanticoke River Yacht Club. A lot of things will be happening this year that our congregation can support.

We were blessed with many new visitors in December. They were welcomed with open arms. They were guided to take part in other church activities. Church membership was talked about as well which will lead to new members at Christ Lutheran Church.

Here are a few things going forward to the month of January and the rest of 2025.

The Evangelism Committee has assumed responsibility for the outdoor electric sign content as well as the website (www.christlutheranseaford.com) and the Facebook page: Christ Lutheran Church. Art Payne will be handling the sign and the web site. Jean Lohmeyer has agreed to handle the Facebook page. The goal of Art and Jean will be able to keep the information fresh and relevant to the church seasons and activities at least once or twice a week. Look for regular updates. Frequent updates are important for a website so that internet users "landing" there see new pictures and information and know that the church values this form of outreach. We now have a handle on how to update the website. We will now focus on more website tools to make our website and church more easily found. Thank you, Art and Jean!

The committee is now looking into the possibilities of mass mailings. A new and updated trifold brochure is also in the works. Stay tuned for those details soon!

Happy and Blessed New Year to all!!

Your Evangelism Committee,
Joel Lichtenberg, Art Payne, Danielle Dempsey and Jean Lohmeyer

BSSP January News Article

We hope you were able to either attend the BSSP Christmas Program or view it online. This year's program was based on a poem from Leanne Guenther titled "The Christmas Story." The students did an outstanding job! Thank you to all who donated cookies for our reception following the Christmas Program.

We will begin our Saturday morning classes on January 11th. The curriculum we will be using from January through May is *Growing in Christ* from CPH and the lessons will focus on "God Sends His Son to Save Us" and "Jesus Shows He is True God".

January Lesson Schedule

January 11 – The Birth of John Foretold
January 18 – The Birth of Jesus Foretold
January 25 – Mary Visits Elizabeth



We wish everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year.

BSSP Staff and Students



January 5
January 12
January 19
January 26

**NO ONE SIGNED UP FOR
FLOWERS IN JANUARY**

There are still many blank spaces on the sign-up sheet for Altar Flowers for 2025. Please sign up to keep our altar beautiful for 2025!

Call Committee Update

The Call Committee received a Call List from LCMS' Northeast District Office. After the Advent/Christmas holiday, Pastor Michael Thress, our Circuit Visitor, will call the eleven perspective candidates to determine their interest in being interviewed by the Call Committee. Interviews will be scheduled shortly thereafter.

Respectfully Submitted,
Madeline Dunn, Call Committee Chair

**JOIN US FOR FUN, FELLOWSHIP AND CORNHOLE
AT CHRIST LUTHERAN, SEAFORD
SATURDAY, JANUARY 18, 2025, AT 3:00 P.M.**



**PLAYERS AND FRIENDS FROM
IMMANUEL, EASTON
IMMANUEL, PRESTON
BETHANY, SALISBURY
ARE INVITED**

**THERE IS A SIGN-UP SHEET ON THE BULLETIN
BOARD IN THE NARTHEX.
FOOD WILL BE PROVIDED FOLLOWING PLAY
ANY QUESTIONS, CALL or TEXT Bill Watkins at 302-
930-7025**

JANUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER
FOOD SHELF MINISTRY REPORT

2 Corinthians 9:8

"And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency, in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work".

Through the grace of God and the gifts He gives us, we were able to bless 43 families in 2024 with much needed assistance, totaling nearly \$6,800. Monthly monetary donations to the Food Shelf provided our neighbors assistance with rent, emergency shelter, prescription medication, personal care items, emergency food boxes, "Grab&Go" lunch supplies, electric, gas and water bills and other needs of daily living that we may take for granted.

We also provided approximately 2,000 non perishable food items and 14 cases of water over the year.

An updated list of high priority items and Code Purple needs is attached to the food shelf for your consideration.

Please continue to support this vital ministry through prayer, monetary donations and non-perishable items.

Blessings

Food Shelf Team

Linda Boone

Carl Boone

Janet Moore



STEPHEN MINISTRY MINUTE:

In the new year, don't forget the power of Prayer. Stephen Ministers use prayer as part of the caregiving process. Prayer is how we communicate with God. Prayer is how we express our concern for our care receivers, family, friends, and neighbors who touch our lives.

Philippians 4:4-11 reminds us to turn to God in prayer. Specifically, verse 6-7 reads: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

It's important to remind our care receivers that prayers don't get answered based on what we want, but rather on what we need. Dr. Charles Stanley stated that there are 3 possible answers to our prayers:

1. Yes, and your request is granted
2. Wait, the time is not right.
3. I have another plan for your life.

In Paul's final instructions to the Thessalonians, he reminds them to "Be joyful always: pray continually: give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus". (5:16-17). When people are in crisis they may pray for peace (or good health) to come back into their lives. We need to remember that God's will overrides our desire. At the same time though, we must remain sensitive to our care receivers needs and ask them specifically what it is they want us to pray for to help them cope with their crisis.

If you or someone you know could benefit from the caring presence of a Stephen Minister, talk to one of our Stephen Leader, Kathryn Lamberton at 302-841-9622 or Pastor Rogers at 443-523-8579.

**CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
A PROCEDURE FOR VIEWING PAST CHURCH SERVICES
ON FACEBOOK**

1. Go to church website – www.christlutheranseaford.com
2. Look for a box with the message “JOIN US ON FACEBOOK” near the top and click on it.
3. At the church’s Facebook Page, scroll down a little and look for this line:
Posts – About – Mentions – Reviews – Followers – Photos – More-
4. Click on “More” and a Drop-Down Menu will appear.
5. On the Drop-Down Menu, click on “Videos.”
6. Videos should appear – 3 across – with the most recent on top.
7. Using the Right-Side Bar, move down until the video appears that you want to view. (See Note 1 below.)
8. Click on the video that you desire. (Note that the title is in very small print.)
9. The video should pop up to a larger size and begin to play.
10. The video can be paused at the left side of the “Play Bar” that is visible below the banner at the bottom of the video. The “Play Bar” can also be used to advance or rewind the video.
11. To end the video, click on the black “X” at the upper left corner of the video.
12. The video may continue to play in a smaller window toward the right side of the screen.
13. Click on the black “X” again, now at the upper right corner of the video, and the video should stop permanently.
14. Now the slide-bar on the right side of the screen can be moved up or down to select another video.

Note 1 – By continuing to move the side bar down, every video that Christ Lutheran Church has produced, beginning in March 2020, can be viewed. This goes all the way back to March 18, 2020, when the first video was produced at a Wednesday Evening Lent Service using a hand-held cell phone.

These videos include Praise Services, Traditional Services, Advent Services, Lent Services, Daily Inspirational Messages from Pastor David Nuss, and Memorial Services, and Christmas Eve Services.

Dale Odenwelder

January 2025

January 2025							Feb 2025 ▶
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	
		1 	2	3	4	5 8:30 am Praise Service w/Communion 9:45 am Adult Bible Study 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Traditional Service w/Communion	
6 11 am Friends Supporting Friends 7 pm Council Meeting	7	8	9 7 pm Choir Practice	10	11 10 am BSSP	12 8:30 am Praise Service 9:45 am Adult Bible Study 9:45 am Sunday School 11 am Traditional Service Food Shelf Sunday Stephen Minister Meeting	
13 11am Friends Supporting Friends	14	15	16 2 pm LWML Meeting 7 pm Choir Practice	17	18 10 am BSSP 3 pm Com Hole	19 8:30 am Praise Service w/Communion 9:45 am Adult Bible Study 9:45 am Sunday School 11 am Traditional Service w/Communion Mile Box Sunday	
20 11 am Friends Supporting Friends	21 2 pm Lay Ministry Meeting	22	23 7 pm Choir Practice	24	25 10 am BSSP	26 8:30 am Praise Service 9:45 am Adult Bible Study 9:45 am Sunday School 11 am Traditional Service	
27 11 am Friends Supporting Friends	28	29	30 7 pm Choir Practice	31			