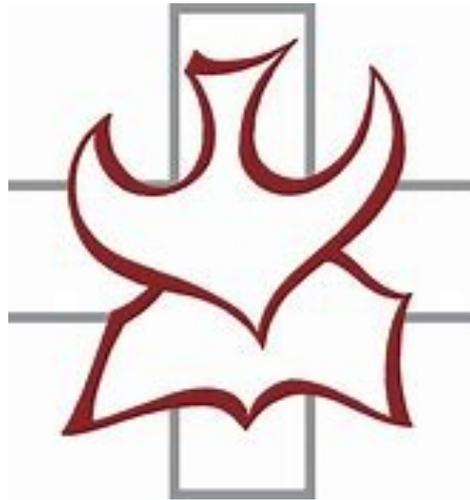


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# CLC NEWSLETTER

## AUGUST 2021



Pastor Kenneth Lentz - 928-970-1313

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Last Sunday I mentioned the unique human capacity to transcend physical reality and step into the eternal sphere. As far as we know, we are the only animals (*homo sapiens*) who can dream about the past, travel mentally into other spaces (maybe to a café at the Eifel Tower), or (mentally) project ourselves into the future. That human quality is called “*humanum*.” We are both *homo sapiens* and “*humanum*.” When Jesus declares himself to be the “bread that endures into eternal life,” he invites us to enter into his living, spiritual, person. He invites us to enter heaven in the here and now.

Dare we imagine that death is not the end but is, in fact, the open door to a higher spiritual existence? The Hebrew scriptures portray heaven as the upper region of a three-tiered world. It is above a “firmament” stretched out over the earth. The mountains on earth keep the firmament elevated and the watery chaos beyond the dome is the source of rain which is allowed to dribble in through doors opened on occasion in the dome. God is above and beyond the watery chaos, somewhere “up there.” Heaven is located “up” and the other place is “down” and we mortals are in the middle.

But the New Testament spiritualizes heaven and makes heaven a “kingdom” which is real in present human experience. It is a place to which believers will go but it is also a condition that can be realized in “this place.” Above all, it is a place of joy (Luke 15) and peace (Luke 19). Assuming that most people buy into the world proposed by Copernicus, a world with planet spheres, solar systems, and galaxies, what can moderns say about heaven? Marxists dismiss heaven as an “opiate of the people,” a “pie in the sky,” invented by the bourgeois to keep the proletariat in line. Depth psychologists have suggested that heaven is the location of a god created by humans to displace human fathers sadly unable to protect and provide for them. Freud proposed that heaven (and God) finds its genesis in a cultural value interjected into our superegos before the age of five.

But, for me, there are two points about heaven that seem clear. Since I and many of my Judeo-Christians brothers and sisters find the concept of “heaven” still useful in our spiritual world views, we must re-examine the nature of our existence in that condition that comes after our demise, or, for Christians, after our “resurrection.” Paul suggests that our present temporal state will change into a new status, adapted for a state of existence outside the dimensions of time and space. Our essence (the soul?) will continue in a new state of existence characterized by joy and peace and a relationship with our Creator that might be different. The second point about heaven for me is a serious consideration of the so-called “proleptic” approach. Must the line between the physical and the spiritual be so firmly drawn? Those confronted by the message of Jesus were changed immediately. They were fed, given drink, healed, and even raised from death. They were driven to action in the here and now. They did not take a seat in their vineyards and wait for the kingdom. C. S. Lewis argued that those who see a vision of a new world are most effective in reshaping the present world/ Pannenberg wrote, “The striving for God as the ultimate good beyond the world is turned into concern for the world.”

As I mentioned in my sermon, three great maxims for the western world are “know thyself,” “control thyself,” and “give thyself.” The third maxim comes from Jesus. The transcendent (spiritual existence) is already present whenever and wherever we share ourselves, our goods, our compassion, our love, and our hope.

Your brother in Christ,  
Pastor Ken

## CONGREGATIONAL CARE MINISTRY (CCM) TEAM UPDATE

JUNE-JULY, 2021

During the absence of Pastor Lentz during the months of June to July, a CCM member visited all congregants who receive communion from Pastor Lentz at home. Thanks to Gloria Leonard, cards continue to be sent to all members of Christ Lutheran Church who wish their birthdays acknowledged and those who are experiencing medical issues. The CCM Team is always available to visit anyone at home who may want a visit. Just contact the church office (941-474-1989) or Pastor Lentz (928-970-1313) or Charlene Seltz (941-460-0183), to request a visit.



In His care,  
Charlene Seltz, CCM Team Leader

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## JUNE - JULY 2021 COUNCIL MEETING

### KEY POINTS

While Pastor Ken Lentz will be on vacation from June 11th-July 22th, Pulpit Supply Pastor, Rev. William (Bill) Beljean from Sarasota will take his place for Sunday Services and emergencies only.



Plans are underway for an Oktoberfest Celebration to be held on October 23RD 2021. There will be music, dancing, games, and lots of German food! Also, plans for a Hawaiian Luau on January 22, 2022 will begin after the Oktoberfest event. The next Planning Meeting for Oktoberfest will be held on August 11th, at 3pm. If you are interested in participating in these events, please let pastor know.

Paula Beehler, a fairly new member, has volunteered to be CLC's Financial Secretary. She is currently being trained by Barbara McAlister. CLC welcomes and appreciates her willingness to serve.

Welcome to Nancy Frey, our new Office Secretary, also being trained by Barbara McAlister. Nancy will be in the office Tuesdays and Thursdays for 5 hours from 11 AM to 4 PM. We have been blessed with such talented skillful new personnel. WELCOME!

After several changes, the final sealing and stripping of the "Parking Lot Project" has been completed. The "speed bumps" in the front lot are no longer and arrows, lined spaces and handicapped spaces are now visible again! Thanks to all who donated and participated to bring this project to completion.

Lois Greene generously contributed her time, skills and financial support along with a donation from the CCM Ministry to clean all Fellowship Hall windows and hang black-out curtains to decrease A/C expenses and make the hall more appealing for classes and expenses. Thank you, Lois!

THERE WAS NO COUNCIL MEETING DURING THE MONTH OF JULY, 2021.

In Christ's service,  
Charlene Seltz, Congregation Recording Secretary

## Music and Worship - June and July 2021

The Music and Worship Team did not meet in June. Guest organists Priscilla Fullerton and David Patrick lead us in worship for most of the month, until our dear Gail returned to us after a long recuperation from surgery. Thank you Lord for her recovery, her dedication and her talent.

Pastor Bill Beljean officiated through the end of July while Pastor Ken was vacationing in Hawaii. We were delighted to meet him and welcome him to our congregation.



Sprucing up the Fellowship Hall a bit, the windows have been cleaned inside and out in preparation for the new curtains which are now installed. Keith McAlister generously donated the pressure washing of the entire exterior facility. Plans are in place to replace light bulbs in the Fellowship Hall and the Sanctuary hanging lamps. "Let there be light"!

Cleaning-up is happening at Christ Lutheran Church for the summer!

Next Music and Worship meeting will be Tuesday, August 3rd, @ 11:30 in the room next to the office.

Lois Greene, Chair

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<b>Attendance and Financials</b>		
July 4, 2021	33	\$3,154.00
July 11, 2021	36	\$1,481.00
July 18, 2021	34	\$795.00
July 25, 2021	40	\$1,970.00
Total		\$7,400.00
Income		\$7,400.00
Expenses		\$3,621.25
Balance		\$3,778.75
The monthly breakdown is available in the office.		



08/01	Paula Beehler
08/03	Muriel Lang
08/04	Nancy Marsal
08/08	Kurt Kallmeyer
08/12	Allen Dreyfuss
08/12	Elliott Stevens
08/14	Mary Campbell
08/16	Bob McAlister
08/18	Catherine Jenny
08/24	Josefine McColloch
08/26	Barbara Krueger
08/27	Beverly Samuelson

**There are no anniversaries for the month of August.**

**If your birthday or anniversary is not listed,  
please contact the office to share your special day.**

