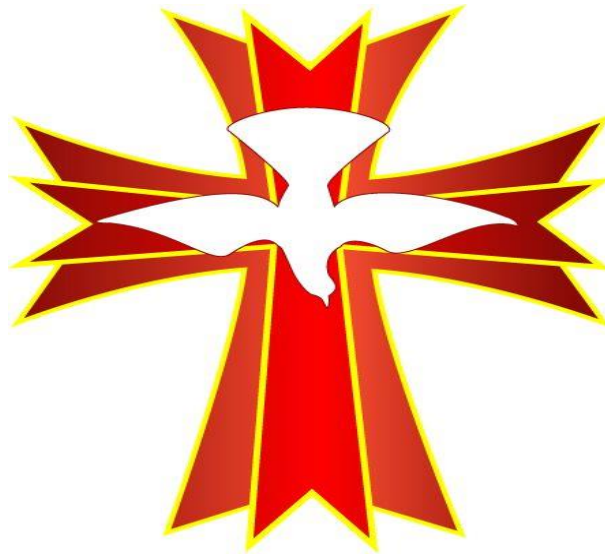


CLC NEWS

January 2021

*A newsletter from Christ Lutheran Church
Englewood, Florida*



Published by Jeannie Caporaso, Office Administrator



FROM THE DESK OF PASTOR KEN

"Message from the Pastor"

Two young boys raced outdoors to enjoy the first heavy snowfall of the season. They threw snowballs, made a snowman, and happily screamed as they rode their sleds down the hills between the wooded groves. They suddenly arrived at the edge of a large freshly covered field. One boy challenged the other, "Let's see who can make the straightest tracks across that field!" They began their journey across the trackless expanse. When they reached the other side, they observed that the track lines were different. One line was almost perfectly straight and the other zigzagged crazily. The zigzagger asked the other, "Why are your tracks so straight while mine are so crooked?" His friend answered, "It's simple. I picked out a post on the other side of the field and kept my eyes on it, always walking straight toward it."

Those with well-defined goals in life walk purposely and tend to achieve more while those who establish no goals tend to leave behind an ill-defined legacy. The beginning of a new year gives us reason to ponder: "Is human history a zigzagged affair or is it haphazard? Has God directed a well choreographed history of Earth or have the millennia of events preceding this moment been zigzagged and dependent upon non-God orchestrated "survival of the fittest" principles? Those who subscribe to the "straight line" theory tend to favor a God as architect of the universe perspective and see the last hundred years as a century of human progress starring Edison, Einstein, Karl Barth, and Martin Luther King. Those who see history as coincidental and accidental see a history that fortuitously produced human existence. They are therefore not surprised that millions have died as the result of war and personages like Hitler, Stalin, Hussein, and Manson have made their bestial contributions.

But we religious folk tend to think positively. We accentuate the positive. The world in which we live is a product of evolution perhaps, but evolution guided

by a loving and conscientious deity. The years have been good to us and the coming years will bring more of the same.

But I think few would agree that the year 2020 has been a wonderful year. Friends of mine in Heidelberg termed 2020 as "annus horribilis." (the year of horrors) Hopefully it was only a little bump in the road. Hopefully, the way ahead will smooth itself out. COVID-19 will be left behind and the Democrats and Republicans will learn to work together again. Conspiracy theories will be quickly discounted and radical groups will go back into their holes until another economic and/or political opportunity comes along to give them opportunity to come into the sunlight and broadcast their hate.

The Biblical prophetic utterances (i.e. Isaiah 53, Haggai 2, and Ezekiel 48) encourage us. John of Revelation sees "...the holy city, new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, like a bride adorned for her husband." (21:2) One of my favorite teachers, Helmut Thielicke ("The Silence of God"), taught that, "in spite of all appearances to the contrary, God still has a plan for this bankrupt world. He still has something in store for it. He still wants this world as a theater for His grace and glorious direction." We do not fear the future. In faith we walk. We make straight lines of tracks in the snow because we see the goal ahead of us. In spite of everything, we move confidently forward to a world waiting for us.

Your brother in Christ,
Pastor Ken

ATTENDANCE AND FINANCIALS

December 6, 2020	39	\$	4,347.64		
December 13, 2020	45	\$	3,250.00		
December 20, 2020	51	\$	1,055.00		
December 24, 2020	61	\$	878.00		
December 27, 2020	33	\$	684.00		
TOTAL		\$	10,214.64		
Income		\$	10,214.64		
Expenses		\$	8,853.68		
Balance		\$	1,360.96		

The monthly breakdown of expenses for December 2020 is available in the office.

COUNCIL KEY POINTS

CLC continues to function with a deficit. Funds for AC replacement units continue to be collected. Presently, two AC units (one in the Church and the other in the Fellowship Hall) are not functioning properly. The cost for replacement is approximately \$10,000 per unit.

Additional property maintenance issues also need attention. Issues are: new flooring for office, paving the parking lot, removing tree roots, sprucing up the gazebo and prayer garden.

Donations of office and maintenance supplies would help to lower expenses.

A new Bible Study began in January focusing on "Our Lutheran Heritage." One-hour sessions are being held on Sundays at 11 a.m. and Mondays at 11:30 a.m.

The Congregation Annual Meeting will be held by February 15, 2021. Two new Council members will be needed. Please consider taking an active part in representing the congregation by serving on Council, or by becoming a Ministry Team Leader.

A New Member Orientation will be held on February 19, 2021 at 2 p.m. Council Members and Team Ministry Leaders will be sharing an overview of their positions and ministries. New members will be received during the service on February 21, 2021.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE MINISTRY TEAM UPDATE

The CCM Team sadly reports the loss of three faithful members of Christ Lutheran Church during late November and the month of December. **JOHN FAZEKAS** (90) passed away peacefully on November 29, 2020. Interment will be in the Memorial Garden at CLC; date to be announced shortly. On December 12, 2020, **JACK STURROCK** (84), a former member of CLC, went home to the Lord. A memorial service for Jack will be held at Faith Lutheran Church in May. **VERN GUSTAFSON** left this life on December 15, 2020 to live eternally with our God. He was laid to rest in Massachusetts. All continue to be remembered in prayers.

Beginning in January 2021, the CCM Team will resume meetings and visitations where permitted. Pastor Lentz will continue to do all communion visits. Plans will begin for a program promoting "Arts/Crafts" as a method for healing. CCMers will be contacting our talented members and friends to display their works. Donated paintings of the late Vern Gustafson will be featured.

Charlene Seltz, CCM Team Leader

KIDS' NEEDS of ENGLEWOOD

THRIVENT ACTION TEAM GRANT FOR 'KIDS' NEEDS'

Donations of shoes, socks and underwear were boxed up after church on January 3, 2021. 677 items for Kids' Needs of Englewood were received! That is AWESOME! Thank you to all of our members and friends who were able to contribute items! The love and generosity of Christ Lutheran Church in these "gifts of hope" will bless many kids and families in our community. Thrivent's motto, "Live Generously", along with the \$250 seed money, set up the success of this project. Thank you, Thrivent!

THRIVENT ACTION TEAM GRANT FOR 'FAMILY PROMISE'

For the month of January, Christ Lutheran Church, along with a grant from Thrivent Financial, will be collecting items for Family Promise. We are preparing kits for newly housed families. These families will receive essentials for a family that has been struggling with housing stability or just moved from homelessness to housing. Please take a card which lists an item that is needed for one of the kits and return it to church along with the card. Thank you for your generous support to this very worthwhile project.

Our church is also a collection site for new and gently used clothes and shoes for Kids Needs to help out during the year.

If you are a Thrivent member, you qualify to receive two (2) Action Grant awards each calendar year. Together, let us continue to seek opportunities to "Live Generously".

Mary Anne DiGrazia, Thrivent Member

SOCIAL MINISTRY

IN-HOME MEMBERS RECEIVE CARDS AND POINSETTIAS

During the week before Christmas, poinsettias and Christmas cards were delivered to each of our in-home members. This year, due to COVID, church members were unable to visit and sing carols with these special friends. It is hoped that our caroling tradition will restart next year. The plants and cards were received with much JOY!

COMFORT QUILTERS AND KNITTERS

During worship on Sunday, January 31, our quilting and knitting tradition will be celebrated. It will be our annual "Blessing of the Quilts and Prayer Shawls". Hoping you will join us at this special service.

Jeffrey and Carol Rice, Social Ministry Team

WORSHIP & MUSIC MINISTRY TEAM

The following is the newest protocol for attending worship.

1. A mask must be worn at all times inside the church except when accepting communion or if health issues preclude you from wearing one. When lining up for Communion, please observe 6' distancing.
2. Social distancing is to be observed when seated. Please be observant of a minimum of 6' from all persons surrounding you...side to side and back to back. Our facility is large enough to accommodate this requirement.
3. We will continue singing, but masks must be kept on.
4. When the service concludes, we ask that you exit by row starting at the rear of the church (the ushers will guide you) while still maintaining 6' distancing. Pastor Ken will be standing outside of the church doors to greet. You may then enjoy social time on the patio.

We seek your cooperation to keep our beautiful church healthy and safe during this difficult time. We are all in this together with God.

Lois Greene, Chair

FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR ARE TO THE GLORY OF GOD

If you would like to purchase flowers for the Altar, please add your information in the "Flower Book" in the Narthex. The cost is \$15. Use an envelope in the pew and mark ALTAR FLOWERS on it. Thank you for contributing to our worship.

CLC MINISTRY TEAMS NEEDED

According to the Constitution, the following ministry teams are also required and are not currently active at CLC:

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Audit</i> | <i>Memorial Garden</i> |
| <i>Christian Education</i> | <i>Nominating</i> |
| <i>Evangelism (Outreach)</i> | <i>Personnel</i> |
| <i>Fellowship</i> | <i>Property</i> |
| <i>Financial</i> | |

If you would like to volunteer to be on any of these ministry teams, please contact any Council member or Pastor Ken.



To my new friends in Englewood:

Many thanks to all the folks who blindsided me on December 20 with the after-church reception on the occasion of my 50th ordination anniversary. Thanks for the beautiful certificate, for the elegant cake, the medal, and the cards. My ordination in 1970 was a memorable occasion. I had just returned from my studies in Germany in the late fall of 1970. After my final exams, I had traveled with a group of pastors (and spouses) on a trip to visit the Luther sites in the German Democratic Republic before flying home all ready to accept my first call. I accepted a call to a small country church in Hardin County, Ohio, and organized my ordination at the small country church where I grew up in New Lebanon, Ohio. Some of the pastors from the Luther trip attended my ordination and participated in the laying on of hands. All were either ALC or LCA pastors with the exception of one woman pastor in the United Church of Christ. My cousin was the director of the music program at Dixie High School in New Lebanon. He brought his entire high school concert choir to the ordination and performed compositions by Palestrina, Bach, and Praetorius. I'm not sure the farmers of Madison Township appreciated the effort but I did. Some of the farmers from Dola moved my meager belongings to the 10-room parsonage across from the church at a country crossroads surrounded by corn and soybean fields. I managed to furnish the parsonage with furniture I bought with a \$500 loan from the Trotwood bank and old furniture gleaned from chicken coops and barns and restored to new life by a popular technique called "antiquing." (I covered the old furniture with a thick coat of paint and then glazed the surface; it was cheap but it worked) I decorated my new home with prints of old paintings glazed with clear coats of lacquer. And then I was ready to start 50 years of ministry.

So, thanks for encouraging me to dust off old memories and remember a cold December day in the year of our Lord 1970. May the good Lord bless our work together at Christ Lutheran Church. Your partner in ministry, Pastor Ken"



BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH

Ines Kallmeyer	01/02
Elizabeth Stevens	01/04
Debbie Scheuermann	01/10
Paul Campbell	01/13
Steve Plumley	01/18
Sue Nace	01/19
Pastor Chet Hoversten	01/21
Carol Rice	01/29

*Anniversary
Blessings*



Happy 50th Anniversary to Jeff and Carol Rice
January 2

Please contact the office to share your birthday / wedding anniversary.
