



THE KING'S BANNER



Christ the King Lutheran Church, Houston, Texas
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

2353 Rice Blvd,
Houston TX 77005
ctkelc.org

Volume 77, Number 12
December 2022

Retirement Reception



Honoring Deacon Rick Erickson
December 4 following 11:00am worship
Christ the King Courtyard, Rice Village Campus
For more about Rick, [See Page 6](#)

Weihnachtsmesse

December 24, 4:00pm

Gottesdienst in Deutscher Sprache

German Language Christmas Service

For a complete Advent/Christmas schedule, see last page.

Annual Meeting of the Congregation, Part 1

December 11, 12:30 pm, Rice Village Campus

- Election of Council Members
- Budget Presentation
- Revised Constitution Presentation
- West Campus Feasibility Study
- New Gift Acceptance Policy

Bach's Christmas Oratorio
Saturday, December 10 at 3:00 pm
Brockmann Opera House,
Rice University

Bach Society presents Bach's great
Christmas Oratorio, parts 1-3.

[See Page 5](#)



A CRÈCHE FESTIVAL

Crafting Tradition: A Crèche Festival

December 17 & 18, 9:00 am– 6:00 pm

Parish Hall, Christ the King Church - Rice Village

Come see beautiful nativities from around the world and learn the stories of the artists who have made them. A selection of crèches from Christ the King member Daniel Zorn's collection serve to represent the tradition of crèche art crafted by individuals, families, and community workshops. To request information:

CrecheFestivalHouston@gmail.com.



Commemoration of La Virgen de Guadalupe

December 11, 11:00am Rice Village Campus

During the service, we will commemorate La Virgen de Guadalupe, recounting the story of her appearance to St. Juan Diego, and giving thanks to God for demonstrating his great love towards indigenous peoples of Mexico. There will be special music offerings during this service.

Longest Night

Service of Hope and Comfort

Wednesday, December 21, 6:30 pm, Rice Village

This contemplative service offers time for remembering, sharing our hurting places with God, and preparing our hearts for the coming of Christ. Join others for whom the Christmas season is bittersweet to hear scripture, offer prayers for healing and wholeness, and to sing hymns that acknowledge God's presence with those who mourn and grieve, with those who suffer, and with those who struggle. God is the light shining in our darkness. All are welcome!

Upcoming Retreats at Lutherhill:

Register at lutherhill.org

Worship. Lead. Serve: February 17-19

Unwind: February 24-26

Explore: March 24-26

Spring Family Retreat: April 14-16 [See Page 11](#)



**Freewheels provides bikes to
Ukrainian refugees [See page 12](#)**



Dear faithful people of Christ the King Evangelical Lutheran Church:

On the First Sunday in Advent, December 2, 1973, The First Sunday in Advent,

Lutherans, Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Moravians, Presbyterians, Reformed, United Church of Christ and United Methodists in the United States all began using a common three-year Lectionary. That means that the First Sunday in Advent this year (November 27, 2022) is the beginning of the fiftieth year of our use of that lectionary.

Why is this important to note?

A quick look at the list of the communions that adopted that lectionary provides the first and most important answer. With the exception of Roman Catholics, all the other church bodies who use the (now) Revised Common Lectionary are in full communion with our congregations in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. That alone is worthy of note.

But even further, the wide use of this lectionary was the first step in the liturgical renewal that so defines worship at Christ the King Evangelical Lutheran Church today. The next big 50-year anniversary will be on the First Sunday in Advent 2078 (November 27 that year too!) when the green Lutheran Book of Worship came into general use. So, this Advent inaugurates a five-year celebration of virtually everything that God has used to unite more fully Christ's Church and to reconnect our worship, not only with each other, but with those who have gone before us. You see, the Lutheran Book of Worship and our current Evangelical Lutheran Worship materials are all based on the liturgy from the time "the church was one," in the Fourth Century of the Common Era. The point of this paragraph deserves a Banner article all its own!

Some might be asking, what is a lectionary?

A lectionary is a list of the scriptural readings – a first reading usually (but not always) from the Hebrew Scriptures, a psalm, a reading from the New Testament and from one of the four Gospels.

Prior to 1973, each of the communions listed above had their own lectionaries and those lectionaries were not for three, but for one year. These readings 'bounced around'

from one Gospel to another. These readings also divided the psalm into several separate parts sung as Introits (before the kyrie) and Graduals (between the first and second readings). Often the denominational choice of Sunday and holy day readings fortified each denomination's ongoing liturgical critique of all the other denominations.

But beginning in 1973, the church bodies above began to appreciate the work of over a century of biblical scholarship and recognize that each Gospel had a unique way to express God's activity in Jesus Christ, and that that uniqueness ought to be emphasized. And so this year we are reading Matthew's Gospel nearly every Sunday (series A); next year we will read Mark, and a good deal of John, (Series B) and the following year Luke (series C). Furthermore, because the first reading from the Hebrew Scriptures and the psalm are chosen to go with the Gospel, we also hear more of those scriptures than we did before. In a time when biblical literacy is waning, this is an important development to celebrate.

Many of us, of course, have only known worship to be shaped in this way; few remember the previous lectionary. Please take my word for it, what we do now is significantly better, but if you'd like to see how things were in the past, just pick up one of our old hymnbooks and see.

Because we read and hear scripture together, the vast majority of Christians have drawn closer together and have come to appreciate, not only the different 'takes' on Jesus' life in the four Gospels, but the different 'takes' on Christian living among us. Our eyes have been opened a bit wider. We see, increasingly, how Christ's Church can be one.

Join me in celebrating this 50th year of that commonality, rooted in Scripture. And listen carefully this year, as through the work of Matthew the Evangelist we are treated to a unique understanding of who Jesus is and how God works for and with us.

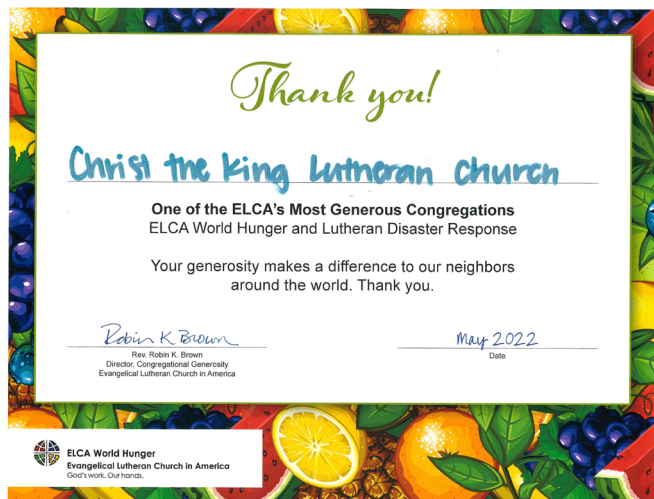
Peace and Joy – and Courage!

Amandus J. Derr
Interim Senior Pastor

Mission Offering



ELCA WORLD HUNGER



Our December Mission Offering is designated to **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America World Hunger**. The ELCA's commitment to supporting people who live with chronic hunger, disease, and poverty around the corner and around the world is carried out by ELCA World Hunger through relief, development, education, and advocacy. **Last year, we contributed \$19,669 to ELCA World Hunger**, and historically, our congregation has regarded World Hunger as one of our distinctive global mission priorities. ELCA World Hunger receives no benevolence (general budget money from general ELCA member offerings); the ELCA's world hunger ministry is based in congregations, where most of the fundraising takes place. More than 820 million people in our world today are undernourished. As members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we are called to respond. ELCA World Hunger works with our neighbors in the United States and in more than 60 countries around the world, listening and learning about how they can accompany them to help break the cycle of hunger and poverty. From water sources to animal husbandry, microloans to health clinics, our gifts to ELCA World Hunger support innovative solutions that get at the root causes of hunger. And they don't stop there. Through ELCA World Hunger, Lutherans engage in advocacy and hunger education to act and speak in ways that make a difference. All this relies on our gifts. ELCA World Hunger is funded solely by gifts from ELCA members and congregations such as ours. Thank you for making this work possible through learning, action, prayer and giving.

Foundation Invites Grant Applications

Deadline to submit applications:

12:00 noon, December 31

The Christ the King Evangelical Lutheran Church New Foundation invites applications for regular grants, which may be made solely in support of the life and work of the Congregation and other qualified organizations whose purposes are aligned with the strategic emphases of the Church. Regular grants generally support special projects and special needs of the Congregation and its mission. As set forth in the Foundation's Grant Policies, regular grants may not be made in support of routine operational expenses of the Congregation. The Foundation expects to have approximately \$25,000 available for grants in 2023.

This is an opportunity for members to request Foundation support for the outreach activities and ministries of the Congregation about which they care deeply. Preference will be given to grant applications that demonstrate a meaningful connection to the Congregation's strategic plan, which is available on the Church's website or by request. Contact the church office at ctk@ctkelc.org for a grant application.



We Need You in 2023

We are grateful for all our members' partnership in the life of our congregation and service to the community. Please peruse our Time and Talent catalog and choose at least **one thing** to "do" next year. We would love to have 100% member involvement in 2023 in gratitude for being

"deeply rooted, joyfully revived, and faithfully bearing fruit."

Click on this link, <https://ctkelc.shelbnextchms.com/external/form/d69fe853-4c33-4b7c-8178-6b9ad0375d75> to fill out your short Time & Talent form by December 31. It will take about 5 minutes to complete. **Hard copies of the catalog and survey are available in the narthex or may be requested from church office at ctk@ctkelc.org.** Thank you for sharing your time, talent, and treasure with Christ the King Church.



Sunday Forum

Sundays at 9:30 a.m.
Rice Village Campus basement classroom and online

Look for the Zoom link in the Sunday e-blast or contact ctk@ctkelc.org.

December 4: The Manger of my Heart: Spiritual practices to Celebrate the Nativity of our Lord

Presented by Pastor Sergio Rodriguez

Prepare your hearts and minds with a variety of Advent and Christmas practices from various cultures and time periods.

December 11: Conversations on the Constitution (that is: Christ the King Church constitution)

Join members of the CTK Constitution Revision Committee as we explore questions about the “what, why, where, and who” of the necessary updating of the Christ the King Church constitution.

December 18: Las Posadas (Intergenerational Event)

All children, youth, and adults are invited to join our Sunday school teachers and musicians as they lead Las Posadas beginning in the parish hall and ending in the courtyard!

Las Posadas has over 400 years of celebration commemorating the Census pilgrimage which Mary and Joseph took from Nazareth to Bethlehem. We will gather and re-enact Mary and Joseph’s travel, being led by a procession of children dressed as Mary, Joseph, angels, and shepherds singing and carrying banners throughout the church campus until we reach our final destination. There prayers are said, songs sung, and we end the time with a party.

December 25 and January 1: No Sunday Forum

Pray the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle: Tuesdays at 8:15 a.m. on Facebook

The World Council of Churches Ecumenical Prayer Cycle takes us through every region of the world

WEEKDAY ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Lectio Divina

Mondays at noon, online

Lectio Divina (Sacred Reading) is a Christian practice in which one reads a small passage of scripture, trusting in God’s presence and relevance in daily experience. Through a mingling of reading and prayers, the stories and texts of the bible meet us in our own lives. Attend as you are able, but please register with Beverly at beverlydavis@ctkelc.org.

The Life and Times of Paul *with Dr. Howard Jones*

Wednesdays at 10:00am

West Campus In-Person

Dr. Jones guides the group in understanding Paul’s letters from a 1st century perspective.

Pr. Derr’s Thursday zoom study will resume on January 12.

Friday Morning Bible Study *with Pastor Derr*

Fridays at 10:00 am through December 17

Rice Village campus

In-person in the second floor council room and online

The group that meets on-site begins gathering for fellowship at 10:00 am with the online participants joining at 10:15 am. The group reads and responds to the upcoming Sunday’s texts. Email Cheryl Gaspard at cherylgaspard@ctkelc.org to receive the weekly readings and the zoom link.



over the course of a year. Pray with us every Tuesday at 8:15 a.m. online through Facebook live with Deacon Ben Remmert. This month we will be praying for:

December 6: Myanmar, Thailand

December 13: Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam

December 20: China, Hong Kong, Macau

December 27: Japan, North Korea, South Korea, Taiwan

More details can be found here: <https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/prayer-cycle>.

CREDIMUS UT INTELLIGAMUS

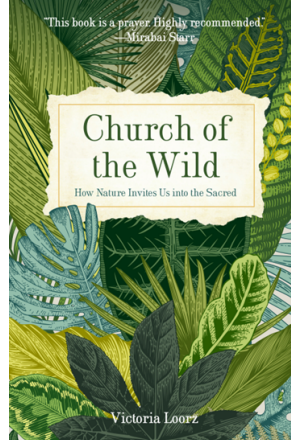
we believe so to understand

This regular column by **Elmer Ledesma** suggests a book each month that may interest “lay readers” in learning more about science and its importance for us people of faith.

This month:

Loorz, V. *“Church of the Wild: How Nature Invites Us into the Sacred”*, Broadleaf Books, Minneapolis, MN, 2021.

Once upon a time, humans lived in intimate relationship with nature. Whether disillusioned by the dominant church or unfulfilled by traditional expressions of faith, many of us long for a deeper spirituality. Victoria Loorz certainly did. Coping with an unraveling vocation, identity, and planet,



Loorz turned to the wanderings of spiritual leaders and the sanctuary of the natural world, eventually co-founding the Wild Church Network and Seminary of the Wild.

With an ecospiritual lens on biblical narratives and a fresh look at a community larger than our own species, *Church of the Wild* uncovers the wild roots of faith and helps us deepen our commitment to a suffering earth by falling in love with it—and calling it church. Through mystical encounters with wild deer, whispers from a scrubby oak tree, wordless conversation with a cougar, and more, Loorz helps us connect to a love that literally holds the world together—a love that calls us into communion with all creatures.

Community of Hope Training

Monday evenings, January 23-April 3

Deadline to register: January 6

Do you long to deepen your relationship with God? Do you want to strengthen your ability to handle difficult circumstances in everyday life? Do you want to be a better listener—to God, to your own heart, to your family and your neighbor? Then, the Community of Hope is for you!

The Community of Hope class awakens participants to God’s call on their lives



through experiential discovery and a journey into wholeness. **This spiritual formation program** is anchored in the timeless principles of Benedictine spirituality and equips people to serve in all forms of ministry including lay chaplaincy.

Most classes will be offered online with a few in-person. Registration deadline is January 6. For more information or to receive an application, contact Beverly at beverlydavis@ctkelc.org, and for more about Community of Hope International, visit <https://www.cohinternational.org>.

MUSICAL EVENTS



Bach’s Christmas Oratorio

Saturday, December 10 at 3:00 pm

**Brockmann Opera House,
Rice University**

Bach Society presents Bach's great Christmas Oratorio, parts 1-3. Come

hear this grand work for choir, orchestra and soloists as Bach Society continues our 40th anniversary celebration. Performing in the new Brockmann opera house at Rice University, this is a not to be missed event! Tickets are available at www.bachsocietyhouston.org or at the door.

Born at CTK and still deeply connected, Bach Society continues to reach out to the wider community in old

and new ways. Deep thanks to all who have brought us through these years!

Organ Concert

New Year’s Day at 6:00pm

Christ the King Rice Village Nave

Bach Society presents organist Catherine Rodland in concert. Professor of organ at St. Olaf College (and former teacher of Ben Kerswell!), she will present a diverse program of works.

Join us for this joyous event welcoming the new year! Free-will offering will be received. Reception follows.

CELEBRATING AND GIVING THANKS FOR DEACON AND CANTOR RICK ERICKSON

Interview by Gretchen Miertschin



When Rick Erickson started piano lessons at age 10 he told his teacher that he wanted to learn to play the organ, and he wanted her to prepare him. Apparently, she did—and very well at that. His mother and paternal grandmother were church organists, and his family included many other musicians as well as pastors. He knew early on that he wanted to follow their paths.

And, in fact, Rick's whole career has been spent as a church organist. While teaching at Eastman School of Music, he was organist at Lutheran Church of Incarnate Word in Rochester, New York, for 14 years; then he spent 20 years at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Manhattan; and for the last eight and a half years he's been at Christ the King Church.

So how did a longtime New Yorker make it down to the Texas Gulf Coast? Rick says that as he approached 60, he was looking for a change in his life, a new adventure. He had become familiar with CTK and the Bach Society through several channels. He'd been a guest conductor for the Bach Society in 2006. He'd continued a friendship and a working relationship with our former pastor, Robert Moore, through activities both were engaged in at St. Thomas Church in Leipzig, Germany, as well as their involvement in Bach conferences in New York. He'd also met our former music director, Albert LeDoux, at a New York conference and had spent time with him creating plans for their respective church music programs. Our congregation originally called Rick as a Deacon in the ELCA to serve as choir director at the same time he was asked to serve as Director of the Bach Society Houston. Over the years his position at CTK grew and expanded to that of Church Cantor.

Rick will resign his position as Cantor on December 4, though he will remain a member of the congregation as well as Director of the Bach Society. When asked about his most memorable moments during his tenure here, Rick immediately related the story of saving church music before Hurricane Harvey hit. As someone unfamiliar with potential ravages of a hurricane, but keenly aware of damages that might be caused by a flooded basement, Rick was anxious about the security of the choir room. Long time Houston church members, who were familiar with hurricanes but not so much with basement liabilities, assured him that the basement would be safe and dry, no windows to crash from falling branches that would in turn allow wind and rain damage. Fortunately, Rick persevered and was able to convince others that precautions needed to be taken to protect the sheet music and the harpsichord that are kept in the basement. (It was too late to arrange to move the piano, but it was on steel risers and thus not harmed by rising water.) The harpsichord was small enough to load on the elevator. And 30-40 members showed up to form the equivalent of a bucket brigade, transferring reams of sheet music to the third floor, preserving years of church music with a value of countless thousands of dollars. Rick said he was moved by the quick response of helpers, their efficient enthusiasm, and their sense of common purpose. It was, for him, a touching demonstration of the community we share.

Rick also reflected on the sense of community he saw at work during the pandemic when the congregation and the staff struggled to stay close while keeping a safe physical distance. He noted that following scientific, medical guidelines were paramount as the staff made responsible decisions regarding worship. Singing posed some particularly sticky issues. Zoom singing exercises and the use of technology to edit motets sung by multiple voices helped the choir to stay together. When the choir finally began to sing outdoors for online services, masked and well-spaced, he said the hope and determination he could sense among them was tangible. This was another of those memories he will cherish.

As for future plans, in addition to continuing as adjunct professor at Rice, Rick hopes to expand the reach of the Bach Society. The recent performance of Bach on Four Keyboards (turned out to be five) was a definite twist on the typical performance and was great success with all ages. Appearing in new venues—the Christmas oratorio will be performed



in the new Brockman Hall for Opera at Rice and two concerts will be held at the Museum of Fine Arts in the spring—offer a means of reaching larger audiences. He also has plans for several residencies, including one in New York City and one in Berlin where he will be the organist for a modern dance troupe performing to Bach's Art of the Fugue. In addition, he's looking forward to

spending time writing, especially about improvisation in liturgical settings, and becoming part of his Galveston community through volunteer work and participation in the historical society. And, very importantly, he plans to spend an entire two months at his family's summer home in northern Wisconsin with his sisters; three nieces, who are collectively the undisputed apple of his eye; and the various friends and relatives who always drop in.

As a member of the congregation Rick, like all of us, has expectations and concerns for the challenges ahead. He shared a personal principle that he thought was pertinent to decisions CTK makes going forward: Don't change who you are to make a friend. He acknowledged we will walk the sometimes difficult path of grounding young people and new members in tradition while at the same time listening to what they are asking for and being open to new ideas. As a musician he sees music, and particularly hymn singing, which he noted our congregation does very well, as a great building block for community.

As this interview concluded Rick wanted to add a word about how he felt his time at CTK had blessed his life. He particularly felt fortunate for two gifts: the opportunity to rediscover his love of the piano and the chance to spend time with the church choir, which he described as the happiest hour and half of his week.

Rick Erickson has given many gifts and blessings to CTK. We wish him well in all his new ventures.



Martin Luther Walk-Through and Pumpkin Carving Reformation Sunday 2022

CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRY

December Dates:

- 2-3: Advent Retreat at Lutherhill
- 4, 11: Godly Play and Las Posadas Rehearsal at Rice Campus, 9:30 a.m.
- 18: Las Posadas Christmas Program
- 24: Christmas Eve
- 25: Christmas Day

Advent Family Devotionals: *Be Not Afraid*

An Illustrated Advent for Families: Do Not Be Afraid is an opportunity for families to take time each week during the Advent season to be intentional and focus on their faith. These weekly reflections explore our theme, "Do Not Be Afraid," which is found in Jesus' birth story in the Gospel of Luke.

Below is a list of the themes for each of the five weekly devotionals:

- Week 1: Do Not Be Afraid to Hold Hope
(Scripture: Luke 1:26-45)
- Week 2: Do Not Be Afraid to Bring Peace
(Scripture: Luke 1:46-55)
- Week 3: Do Not Be Afraid to Practice Joy
(Scripture: Luke 2:1-14)
- Week 4: Do Not Be Afraid to Choose Love
(Scripture: Luke 2:15-20)

Advent Retreat: *December 2-3, 2022*

A gathering for 1st-6th grade youth to explore the joy of Advent

Christmas is coming! Let's get ready. Advent is the sacred time in our church year that helps us prepare for Jesus to be born into our world, again. It's a time of holy anticipation and preparation. At this mini-retreat, campers gather for an action-packed 24 hours at the Hill. We'll get ready for Christmas as we explore the story of Jesus' birth and prepare space in our lives and our hearts for Jesus to come.

Cost: \$60 per camper, \$40 per sponsor

**One Sponsor is free for every 5 youth participants registered. If less than 5, 20% off for every youth participant registered.*

Las Posadas Rehearsals

Sunday, December 4 and 11 at 9:30 a.m.

All children and friends of Christ the King Church will be

rehearsing the Las Posadas program and songs during the Godly Play classes on Sunday, December 4 and 11 at 9:30 a.m. Our teachers will also tell the Godly Play Advent stories. We would love to see you all during this time as we prepare for our Las Posadas on Sunday, December 18 at 9:30 a.m.

Intergenerational Las Posadas Program

Sunday, December 18 at 9:30 a.m.

On December 18, during the Sunday Forum hour, all children, youth, and adults are invited to join us with our Sunday School teachers and musicians as we leading an intergenerational Las Posadas beginning in the parish hall and will end in the courtyard!

Las Posadas has over 400 years of celebration commemorate the Census pilgrimage which Mary and Joseph took from Nazareth to Bethlehem. We will gather and re-enact Mary and Joseph's traveling, being led by a procession of children dressed as Mary, Joseph, angels, and shepherds singing and carrying banners throughout the church campus until we reach our final destination. There prayers are said, songs sung, and we end the time with a party.



Interested in helping with our Children's Ministry?

In a Godly Play class, there are always two adults in each room: the storyteller and the doorperson. Adults are there in service to the children and to support the community that develops. As more and more children are returning, we need more volunteers to help with our Godly Play and children's ministry programs. If you would like to help or want more information, please call Marie Monroe or Deacon Ben Remmert.

Year-End Tax Deductible Contributions from Any Asset

As you prayerfully consider your calendar year-end giving, remember: You can take advantage of the charitable tax deduction for any gifts given before December 31. Checks must be dated and postmarked in 2022. Of course, any gifts given online or laced in the offering basket through December will be credited to 2022.

YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY



December Dates:

- 4: Wrapping Party and Las Posadas Rehearsal at Rice Campus, 9:30 a.m.
- 11: Confirmation Class and Las Posadas Rehearsal at Rice Campus, 9:30 a.m.
- 11: Luther League Christmas Party at Rice Campus, 12:30 p.m.
- 18: Las Posadas and Waffle Café at Rice Campus
- 24: Christmas Eve
- 25: Christmas Day

Seafarer Gift Wrapping Party

December 4 at 9:30 a.m.

Come and join us for a great morning of fellowship as we wrap all the collected Seafarer Gifts on Sunday, December 4 beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the youth room. Volunteers will help in wrapping gifts that we have been collecting to give to sailors that stay in the Port of Houston over the holidays. Donations of wrapping paper are always welcome.



Luther League Christmas Tree Decorating Gathering

December 11 at 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

All 6th – 12th grade youth and their parents are invited to help decorate the church Christmas tree at 12:30 p.m. Afterwards, we will have our white elephant exchange. Please bring a gift under \$10 (new or used) for the gift exchange. Gifts are typically something laying around the house that you don't want and that is funny, tacky, or "Gag Gift."



Waffle Baking or Las Posadas Help

December 18 at 8:00 until 11:00 a.m.

Youth volunteers are needed for our children's program on December 18 and for Waffle Café beginning at 8 a.m. Volunteers will make and sell waffles during Las Posadas to support the youth going on the Germany trip this summer. No experience necessary. Donations of waffle batter and toppings are welcome to help cut the cost. We also need a few youth to help with our Las Posadas program, either leading a station or helping out with the pinata at the end of the program. To RSVP or for more details, please contact Deacon Ben Remmert.

Raise money for Luther League by Shopping SERRV!

Love to give handmade gifts? Help the Luther League this holiday season with our online fundraiser from Serrv & Earn. Serrv & Earn program partners with fair trade artisans and our youth group by offering this online shopping fundraiser. 20% of your total online sales will be donated to the summer 2023 Youth Trip. The website links will be emails in the weekly congregational emails. Here is the link to our special webpage: <https://www.serrv.org/?a=ctklutherleague>.

Shopping ends on December 18. Thank you for helping us to empower small-scale global artisans & farmers to build sustainable employment, resources, rights, and a vision of hope for their communities.

Everyone Loves a Parade!

Mark your calendar now! Monday, January 17 is the day we—Christ the King members and Lutherans from across the synod—get together and walk in the annual MLK Day Parade in downtown Houston. Watch for more information in the January Banner or call Rebecca Shields (281 389-3616) if you have questions.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS - SUMMER 2023

Lutherhill Camp Registration open!

*Make sure to register with Christ the King as your congregation to get your spot with our group code: **ctkelchouston!***

Children Trips this 2023 Summer (1st-6th Grade)

Lutherhill Elementary Summer Camp July 16-21, 2023

Those that have **completed 1st-5th grade** will spend a whole week at Lutherhill discovering all of the joys camp has to offer with Deacon Ben Remmert! Alpha Campers (1st Graders) are at camp from July 17-20 and Youngin's (2nd-3rd Graders) and Yearling's (4th-6th Graders) are at camp from July 17-22. Enjoy fun bible studies, camp-wide worships, afternoon activities and daily All Camp activities. Spend an evening around the campfire making s'mores. Cost breakdowns are below. **Sign up and Register by February 15, 2023.**

Alpha (1st Grade) Program Cost: \$375

Register by December 15 and pay in full or enroll in a payment plan; you are eligible for donor support of \$50. Register by March 15 and pay in full or enroll in a payment plan; you are eligible for donor support of \$25.

Young'ns (2nd-3rd Grade) and Yearling's (4th-6th Grade) Program Cost: \$650

Register by December 15 and pay in full or enroll in a payment plan; you are eligible for donor support of \$50. Register by March 15 and pay in full or enroll in a payment plan; you are eligible for donor support of \$25.

Youth Trips this 2023 Summer (7th-12th Grade)

Lutherhill Jr. High Adventure Camp July 16-21, 2023

Those that have **completed 6th-8th grade** can experience a week at Lutherhill's Adventure program. Learn from cabin Bible studies and camp-wide worships, challenge yourself on the high ropes course, enjoy afternoon activities and daily All Camp activities, grow in community with fellow

junior high students, spend a night cooking over open fires and sleeping in the tree houses and hanging village. Sign up and register by February 15, 2023.

Program Cost: \$650

Register by December 15 and pay in full or enroll in a payment plan; you are eligible for donor support of \$50. Register by March 15 and pay in full or enroll in a payment plan; you are eligible for donor support of \$25.

Summer Germany Trip June 18-27, 2023

7th-12th grade youth are invited for a great opportunity to travel to Germany this summer. Our group will travel to Leipzig to visit with our sister congregation St. Thomas. Throughout the week we will have day trips to famous Luther sites such as Wittenberg, Eisenach, Eisleben, Wittenberg, and Erfurt. The cost is \$600 plus airfare (\$1,200 average) which includes lodging, two meals each day, museum admissions, the day trip activities, tour guides and program leaders, and train tickets. If you are interested in attending, RSVP to Deacon Ben Remmert no later than December 1 with a \$600 deposit. Scholarships are available.

Lutherhill Day Camp at Christ the King this Summer!

June 12-16, 2023

Lutherhill Staff and Luther League youth will lead Day Camp at Christ the King this upcoming summer! From 7:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. where children (ages 5 to 11) will learn bible stories through worship, games, snacks, science experiments, drama, and crafts throughout the day. This is always a highlight of the summer, so you want to make sure and register!

Location: Christ the King Lutheran Church

Dates: Each day during the week, Monday, June 12 through Friday, June 16 at 9:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. (before and after camp options available)

Who Can Attend: Those that have finished pre-K through 6th Grade by May 2023 (ages 4-10)

Costs: \$100.00 (Before Camp- \$25.00 & After Camp- \$25.00)

Register: Register online at www.ctkelc.org If you have

Lutherhill Day Camp Staff Applications are Out

This summer we are looking for middle and high school students to serve on our CTK Summer 2023 Day Camp Staff. There are three ways to serve at Day Camp—all are essential:

- **Support Staff:** Starting at age 12, people are invited to serve in leadership positions that require orientation and specific time commitments.
- **Paid Staff:** A limited number of people between the ages of 15 and 22 will be called to serve as small group leaders and directors. Paid staff are required to participate in pre-camp learning, attend the Staff

Training Event, all staff meetings and to be prepared each day. Paid Staff Applications are due on February 15, 2023!

- **Camp Manager:** A senior in high school or college students will be called to serve as Camp Manager who helps in promoting, facilitating, and leading the day-to-day operations of Camp Hope Ministries alongside with Deacon Ben Remmert. Camp Manager applications are due on January 15, 2023!

Applications can be found online at www.ctkelc.org or paper applications can be found at Christ the King Church.

LUTHERHILL RETREATS AND NEWS



Summer Camp Staff Applications.

Have you thought about where you will be next summer? Do you know someone that you think would be a great addition to Lutherhill's summer staff? It will be the BEST. SUMMER. EVER. for the 2023 Summer Staff! Lutherhill has many amazing opportunities available for young adults to work at camp. Check out all the positions here: <https://lutherhill.org/about-lutherhill/employment-at-lutherhill/>. Applications are open now.

Questions? Contact Program Director, Curtis Bradbury atcurtis@lutherhill.org or 979.243.9831.

Mother Daughter Retreat

January 20-22, 2023

A gathering for mothers, daughters and grandmothers, too.

Enjoy a weekend away as you invest in your relationships and have some fun! Create incredible memories with all the women in your life – whether that's your mother or daughter, your grandmother, aunt, or God-mother. Sing songs around the campfire, cheer each other on at the ropes course, and connect with other faithful women, too. **Cost: \$110 per Adult, \$80 per Child, Ages 2 & Under: Free.** Register online at <https://lutherhill.org/retreats/mother-daughter-retreat/>.

UPCOMING RETREATS AT LUTHERHILL

Register at lutherhill.org

Worship. Lead. Serve: February 17-19

A gathering for high school youth in 6th-12th grade.

Unwind: February 24-26

Renew your body and spirit with your favorite ladies.

Explore: March 24-26

A gathering for elementary school youth 1st-6th grade.

Spring Family Retreat: April 14-16

Invest in your family and revel in God's creation.

FLOWERS

Christmas Flowers

Members may contribute toward decorating the nave for our Christmas services by donating \$20 for greenery and poinsettias. You may write a check or contribute online and designate "Christmas flowers." Please note whether your gift is in honor or memory of a loved one by emailing Cheryl at ctk@ctkelc.org. The deadline is Monday, December 19.



Flowers for the Nave in 2023

To donate flowers in honor, memory of or thanksgiving for someone, you will find available dates listed at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0849a4a92ca2f85-2023> or you may email your preferred date to Cheryl at cherylgaspard@ctkelc.org. Flower arrangements are \$70 per Sunday. Checks can be made out to Christ the King Lutheran Church with "Altar Flowers" in the memo line or submit an online payment at www.ctkelc.org.



Freewheels provides bikes to Ukrainian refugees

Fleeing their home in Kyiv after the Russian invasion, Tetiana Nykyforuk, Yan Pomerantsev and their daughter arrived in Houston about four months ago after they were admitted to the United States through the Biden administration's Uniting for Ukraine program. As they settled into an apartment chosen for its proximity to West University Elementary School, Tetiana (who goes by Tanya) searched for bikes that would enable them to accompany their daughter to school and explore the city. Tanya reached out to Freewheels after learning about the bike program for refugees—established at CTK in 2015—from a Facebook friend. On Nov. 12, they took a Metro bus to pick up used bikes that had been cleaned and repaired by Freewheels volunteers. After final adjustments by Freewheels volunteer and CTK member David West, they pedaled off to explore.

Although they are meeting people in Houston and learning more about the city, Yan said they are eager to receive their work authorizations. "It's strange not to work," he said. Freewheels bikes enable refugees to get to work and school, support their families and discover the many opportunities available in Houston.

Although Tanya and Yan are the first Ukrainian refugees to receive bikes from Freewheels, the community bike program provided bikes to 275 refugees in the first 10 months of 2022, almost all people who fled the Taliban

takeover in Afghanistan. Freewheels also provided bikes to 42 veterans emerging from homelessness, 44 fifth and sixth graders who attend Klentzman Intermediate School in Alief ISD and 22 other people referred by their case managers at other nonprofits and social service agencies. Freewheels has already doubled its 2021 distributions.

Freewheels Houston's ability to continue to grow in its mission and provide more people with bikes will depend on our ability to attract more volunteers who share our commitment and enjoy participating in our workdays, bike donations and continued financial support from CTK members and others that help pay for tubes, tires and other bike parts and ensure that we can continue to work in our well-equipped shop in the Gulfton area.

Tanya and Yan said they plan to tell other Ukrainians in Houston about Freewheels. Our volunteers are working on bikes every weekend to fulfill requests received every week.



Freewheels Houston volunteers celebrated providing bikes to Ukrainian refugees on Nov. 12. Pictured from left: volunteer Katelin Cherry, volunteer Bill Chapman, Ukrainian bike recipient Tetiana Nykyforuk, new volunteers Russ and Holly McNaught, volunteer David West and Ukrainian bike recipient Yan Pomerantsev

AMMPARO

St. James Family Life Center

Our AMMPARO team continues to feel gratitude for our congregation at Christ the King for their generous support of St. James Family Life Center. We met our goal for raising \$1,000 to provide ten families with Thanksgiving baskets!



Baby Shower for Families in Need

Additionally, we want to thank the congregation for their overwhelming support of our community BABY SHOWER hosted by Donna Olson-Salas. Approximately 700+ diapers, 15 packages of wipes, 12 boxes of cereal, plus quilts, baby clothes, various equipment and toys and a couple of gift cards were donated from over 25. Upon delivering the heaps of goods, staff at St. James were very pleased and gratified to receive all of these items on behalf of their families.



Please continue to follow our news posts. AMMPARO will be attending a collaborative meeting with St. James and Church World Services to learn more about their CWS Welcome Backpacks for unaccompanied children in early December. If you have a special interest in volunteering with St. James Family Life Center, please be in touch with Emily Triantaphyllis via email: ewtrianta@gmail.com.





Advocate for Justice Every Week

Each week, the Justice Advocacy Ministry Team highlights a different justice issue, and offers all CTK members the opportunity to advocate using their smartphone. Look for the sign in the narthex or the courtyard highlighting the justice issue, with the QR code that you can use to access the e-advocacy opportunity.

Miss a Sunday? We also post this justice advocacy opportunity on CTK's Facebook page. Speak for justice every week!

The Work of the ELCA: Lutheran Theological Center in Atlanta

The Lutheran Theological Center in Atlanta (LTCA) has been called to develop an intentionally focused educational program that will lead and recruit participants for nondegree and degree programs in theological education and spiritual growth, focusing on lay leaders, rostered leaders and candidates for rostered ministry. The LTCA equips leaders for the gospel-centered work of doing justice and dismantling racism and systemic oppression and strives to deepen relationships between the ELCA and historically Black communities of faith. Its intentional focus on African-descent pedagogies and developing African-descent leaders and communities makes the LTCA an exciting approach to preparing for ministry, especially in this evolving church. To learn more about LTCA, see: <https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Leadership/Lutheran-Theological-Center-in-Atlanta>.

Justice Advocacy Opportunity *Smorgasbord*

There are a number of active justice advocacy requests from a variety of organizations. Speak up for justice today!

Creation Care — As part of the effort to pass the Inflation Reduction Act, legislators announced there was a side deal negotiated that would gut bedrock environmental protections, put many frontline communities in harm's way, endanger public health, and fast-track approvals for polluting projects. Stand with communities impacted by pollution and the climate crisis. Tell your legislators to oppose this deal: <https://interfaithpowerandlight.salsalabs.org/stopthedealnovdec/index.html>.

Immigration — Much work remains to ensure a safe, humane, and orderly asylum process that protects the dignity of asylum seekers & their legal rights. Improvements, such as increasing staff/facilities at the border & access to legal services and ending the Remain in Mexico policy & use of private prisons for detention, are needed. Ask the Administration to restore & rebuild our asylum system at this link: <https://lutheranimmigrationrefugeeservice.quorum.us/campaign/42321/>.

Religious Freedom — The San Carlos Apache Tribe is struggling to save their sacred land, Oak Flat. Currently protected within Tonto National Forest, this oasis is threatened with destruction. Only Congress can save Oak Flat, and the bipartisan Save Oak Flat Act can protect this sacred land. Join with other Christians to ask your members of Congress to protect sacred Indigenous land by passing the Save Oak Flat Act: <https://secure.everyaction.com/jU0pEqdwOUa59JT35OvJMQ2>.

Human Rights — There is at least one death of, or major injury to, a Palestinian child each month. Join other Lutherans in urging Congress to pass legislation prohibiting use of U.S. military aid for detention, interrogation, abuse, or ill treatment of Palestinian children: <https://support.elca.org/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=1560>.

Democracy — The Electoral Count Reform and Presidential Transition Improvement Act provides clarifications to the processes of counting electoral votes, electing a president and facilitating the orderly transition of power. Presently, the 135-year-old Electoral Count Act of 1887 outlines procedures for casting and counting Electoral College votes. Experts across the political spectrum have urged that this act be updated. With nearly equal support from both sides of the aisle, it is clear that this is imperative for our country ahead of the next presidential election. Join other Lutherans in urging your senators to pass this bill: <https://support.elca.org/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=1562>.

Churchwide Assembly Justice Look-Back: Human Sexuality

At churchwide assembly in August, a memorial was passed calling for revision to the social statement *Human Sexuality*, originally issued in 2009. The revisions to the social statement's wording would reflect current church understanding, church policy, civil law, and public acceptance of marriage of same-gender and gender non-conforming couples. Some specific suggestions include changes to descriptions of marriage and family. The revised social statement could be considered as early as the 2025 churchwide assembly. To learn more about this memorial, or other justice-related actions taken at the 2022 churchwide assembly, see this link: <https://www.elca.org/Resources/Churchwide-Assembly>.

Justice Advocacy Success Stories!!

As part of negotiations to pass the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), a side deal was made to place new limits on environmental review & curtail public input on major

projects. This permitting side deal would have weakened bedrock environmental law, thereby putting frontline communities in harm's way & endangering public health. We opposed inclusion of this deal in the IRA at our September Justice Advocacy Event. The language was removed from the bill that was ultimately passed.

Also at the September Justice Advocacy Event, we petitioned the federal government to increase funding for disaster relief and prevention. At that time, there was no specific bill before Congress on this topic. But, by our October Justice Advocacy Event, the Reforming Disaster Recovery Act had been introduced and we advocated in support of this bill.

Weekly justice advocacy opportunities are presented to the congregation on CTK's FB, as well as via a sign with a QR code in the narthex each weekend. One week in June, July, and August, our weekly justice opportunity featured advocacy for passage of the Global Malnutrition Prevention Act. It was passed and signed into law on October 19. Persistence pays off!



Sustainable Celebrations

The natural world is an uninvited, often unrecognized and certainly underappreciated guest at all our celebrations. Celebrations are a time of joy. How do we make them joyful for all creation, people and planet? First, treat nature as your guest. Consider nature's preferences, then nature's needs, and finally, how to avoid harm to the natural world. How might you do this in planning a celebration? Start by adding something to the event that is intended to directly benefit the natural world. Next, consider how the celebration uses natural resources and creates waste/pollution, or other harms to nature (such as noise, nighttime light, etc...). Once you've

understood the negative impacts to nature from your celebration plans, work to eliminate them as a priority. For those that cannot be eliminated, reduce the level of harm, and offset it with additional benefits to nature. And, finally, if offsets are not possible, then minimize the harm to the fullest extent possible. Planning your celebration this way will make it a time of joy for all the earth!

Faithful Resilience: A Study on Climate Resilience for Faith Communities

Wednesdays, January 11 – February 15, 6 p.m., online

Faithful Resilience is a six-part weekly study on climate resilience for faith communities. Join the exploration and consider how you can become a force for climate resilience. To learn more/register, see: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/faithful-resilience-a-study-on-climate-resilience-for-faith-communities-tickets-468917503877>.

Contact Lisa Brenskelle at brenskelle@aol.com for more information.

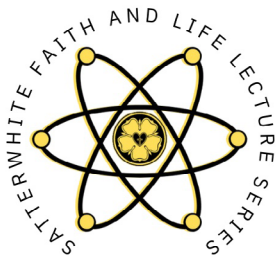
Climate Solutions 101

Tuesdays, Jan. 10 – Feb. 14, 6 p.m. central, online

Climate Solutions 101 is the world's first major educational effort focused solely on climate solutions. Rather than rehashing well-known climate challenges, these materials from Project Drawdown concentrate on game-changing climate action based on rigorous scientific research and analysis. This course, presented in video units and in-depth conversations, combines trusted resources with the expertise of inspiring voices from around the world. Register for this course on www.eventbrite.com at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/climate-solutions-101-tickets-468915688447>.

Contact Lisa Brenskelle at brenskelle@aol.com for more information.

SATTERWHITE LECTURE SERIES LAUNCHED ON NOVEMBER 3



Dr. Elaine Howard Ecklund did a spectacular job in exploring ***Why Faith and Science Need Each Other*** on November 3 at the west campus. Using personal stories to illustrate her extensive research, she offered some shared values

and ideas to help us enhance the intersection of science and faith. We look forward to the continuation of the Satterwhite Lectures on Faith and Life. What was also impressive about this lecture was that about 3/4s of the audience were not members of Christ the King! We engaged the broader community in this conversation

. . .and this happened on the night when the Astros were also playing the World Series!



Welcome New Members

Gabriel Cuadra
and
Katherine



Journal Making Workshop

Sunday, January 8, 2:00-4:00pm

Christ the King, Rice Village

Start your new year off learning something new! Irmi Willcockson will provide all materials and share different journal binding techniques. Participants bind their own journals using linen thread and take them home. This fun and creative workshop is appropriate for ages 12 and up. (Under 16 require an adult to attend as well).

A donation of \$25 to the CTK January mission offering (SEARCH Homeless Services) is requested. Space limited. RSVP to Beverly at beverlydavis@ctkelc.org.

ADVENT WREATH WORKSHOP 2022



CHRIST THE KING FESTIVAL 2022

Our deepest gratitude is extended to all the people that made our annual Festival a great success! It was obvious that everyone enjoyed being back in-person for both fun-raising and fund-raising for our outreach ministries! We especially thank our committee: Mary Ann Beseda—Festival Chair; Terri Koehler—Sociables; Courtney Harper and Cindi Scruggs—Decorations; Beverly Davis—Wine Pull and Wishing Wall; Food—Bette Bowers and Gaelyn Leshner; Administrative and Creative Support—Rachel McWhirter,

Beth Hartfiel, Cheryl Gaspard, and Ben Remmert; and the Piecemakers—for the gift of their time and talent in the creation of this year's quilt "Starlight."

And thanks to everyone that donated wine, auction items, and sociables; to all who bid, purchased, and granted wishes; and to those that helped set-up, decorate, and clean up. **We are indeed deeply rooted, joyfully revived, and faithfully bearing fruit!**



RE-DEDICATION AND BLESSING OF NEWLY CLEANED CHURCH FACILITIES AND REFURBISHED BELL TOWER ON CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20



Belltower



Blessing

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

Rice Village Campus

December 4	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
8:30 am	Brief Order of Holy Communion
9:30 am	Faith Formation
11:00 am	Holy Communion: Lessons and Carols
12:30 pm	Retirement Celebration for Cantor Rick Erickson

Wednesday, December 7	6:30 pm	Advent Vespers
Saturday, December 10	3:00 pm	Bach Christmas Oratorio (at Rice U.)
Saturday, December 10	6:00 pm	Contemplative Worship

December 11	THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
8:30 am	Brief Order of Holy Communion
9:30 am	Faith Formation
11:00 am	Holy Communion: La Virgen de Guadalupe
12:30 pm	Annual Meeting, Part 1

Wednesday, December 14	6:30 pm	Advent Vespers
Sat-Sun, Dec. 17-18	9:00 am-6:00 pm	Creche Festival
Saturday, December 17	6:00 pm	Caroling & Bonfire

December 18	FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
8:30 am	Brief Order of Holy Communion
9:30 am	Faith Formation: Las Posadas & Waffle Cafe
11:00 am	Holy Communion

Wednesday, December 21	6:30 pm	<i>The Longest Night Service</i>
------------------------	---------	----------------------------------

December 24	CHRISTMAS EVE
4:00 pm	<i>Weihnachtsmesse</i> , German worship
6:00 pm	Festive Holy Communion
8:00 pm	<i>Misa de la Navidad</i> , Spanish worship
10:00 pm	Festive Holy Communion (with incense)

December 25	CHRISTMAS DAY
11:00 am	Holy Communion with Christmas Carols

January 1	NAME OF JESUS
11:00 am	Holy Communion
6:00 pm	New Year's Day Organ Concert

Saturday, January 7	6:00 pm	Contemplative Epiphany Worship
---------------------	---------	--------------------------------

January 8	EPIPHANY AND BAPTISM OF OUR LORD
8:30 am	Brief Order of Communion
9:30 am	Faith Formation
11:00 am	Holy Communion: Blessing of the Nave

West Village Campus

December 4, 18	10:30 am	Holy Communion (11th at Rice Campus)
December 24	4:00 pm	Christmas Eve Festive Worship
December 25	10:30 am	Christmas Day Holy Communion



Photographer: Niall McAuley