



# The Messenger

Happy Easter everyone!!

I want to say first that I am honored to be called as the next pastor of Christ Lutheran Church. It really was the hand of the Spirit to bring everything together. You have a wonderful congregation, and I'm excited to start ministry here.

Your warm hospitality was overwhelming, and it really helped Kristie and I discern that this is the place God is calling us, and where we want to be next. A big thank you to the call committee for arranging everything.

A little heads up on the timeline for getting started . . .

I will be serving here at Lord of Grace through June – finishing up my last Sunday on June 15<sup>th</sup>, then taking a couple weeks to move. We have lived in Tucson, in the same house, for 21 years, so we have a few things to go through, pack, throw, donate etc. My first day at Christ Lutheran will be Monday, June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Kristie, as you may know, is on the board of our local school district, the Flowing Wells Unified. She has a slew of graduations and end-of-year matters in May. Our boys are also finishing up school, Johan 8<sup>th</sup> grade and Tobias 6<sup>th</sup>. When all that is done we will have some of the older kids back from school and can start packing.

Having been at Lord of Grace for 15 years, I will be tying up loose ends for a while – everything from final visits to untangling all the internet accounts, of which there are many. I want to leave in the best way to set the church up for success. I also have a commitment with the Grand Canyon Synod to be the assembly photographer when they meet in Las Vegas June 12-13. Yes, every three years we do synod assembly in Las Vegas. It will be a chance for me to say final farewells to colleagues.

I appreciate all your patience, as I'm sure this wait must feel interminable. February 16 to June 30<sup>th</sup> is a long time, especially since it will be over two years since Pastor Joel retired before I step in. I thank you, and the council, for being generous with giving me time to finish things up and get ready for the new start.

I will be praying for you these next couple months, and looking forward to a new call, and getting to know everyone. God Bless,

Pastor Lars

Did you know Christ Lutheran Church makes scholarships available to support spiritual growth by helping send our kids and families to Camp Lutherhaven, Holden Village, and other special events?

In 2024, the CLC Council awarded \$2,970 in scholarships to support 15 members attending Camp Lutherhaven and the ELCA National Youth Gathering in New Orleans. Scholarship requests are reviewed by the church council, which meets on the second Tuesday of each month. Please send your request to [christlutheran@gohighspeed.com](mailto:christlutheran@gohighspeed.com) prior to the meetings.

### SJAG-RIC recommends...

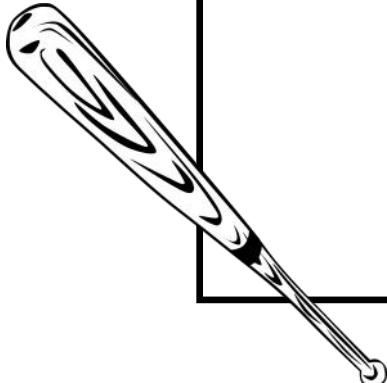
Have you checked out ELCA's own website, Reconcilingworks.org ? While there, search for "Clunky Questions", a series of brief 1 -2 minute answers from both gay laity and clergy when they are asked awkward questions.

Are you a fan of Russell Crowe and Nicole Kidman? They star in an excellent 2018 movie called A Boy Erased, a tender, coming of age story of a gay teen, who attends a conversion therapy camp. He conflicts with the leader and ultimately finds his own voice, accepting himself as he was born.

### Save the Date!

CLC has reserved the Sweet Spot on Saturday June 14th.

See Janet Mobley for details.



# BUILDING FAITH

VBS 2025

JUNE 23-27 5-7PM

Join us this summer for a hands-on experience where parents and children work together to explore the different structures of the Bible and how they connect to our faith formation. Parents—or a designated responsible teen or adult—are expected to stay with their children to assist with supervision. Dinner is provided. Please register your family using the link or QR code.

<https://forms.gle/NdqMSCvyvxGK7qZZ9>



The Youth & Family Easter Event was a huge success! Thank you to all the families that came and to all those who volunteered their time to pull this off!



Hello, friends in Christ,

The church yard was lovingly cared for by a group of volunteers on Saturday, April 19th, in preparation for our Easter Morning Celebration! We want to thank Jeff Wagner, John Funderburk, Aanen Gjovik, Carroll Gjovik, Dan Grinstead, Larry Johnson, Dick Hansen, Gene Spangrude, Dick Fryhling, Jim Peterson, Peter Swant & Deanna Wildermuth. We appreciate them all very much! Their hard work on Saturday morning made Sunday sparkle a little brighter!

As I was weeding on that Saturday, I thought about the ministry to the Lord that we can have as we are blessed with this beautiful property. I would like to create a group of approximately 3 to 5 people to be a part of a property committee. This committee would work with me as the council liaison to beautify and care for our church and grounds. Please contact me if you would like to be a part of that group.

Secondly, I thought that it would be great to gather the green thumbs of our congregation and have them assist me with the plantings and beautification of our exterior, flower beds & courtyard. I know many of us may have some extra plants or starts that we could share with the church. I also know that there are some annuals that would look lovely around our congregation. Look for further announcements & requests about this Landscape Club (not to be confused with the gardening folks that care for the raised beds on the west portion of our land). Again, please contact me if you would like to be a part of this service group.

There will be some updates to exterior lighting of the church grounds to increase safety around the church. We hope this makes getting in and out of your vehicles easier. These changes are very minor, but they will have a great impact.

Blessings,

Anne Swant, Property Chairperson  
Christ Lutheran Church  
509-386-5203 (you can call or text this number)

**Stewardship Reminder:** If your financial situation allows, please pace your donations to Christ Lutheran Church throughout the year. Regular giving helps with planning and consistent cash flow. First quarter financial statements of donations are available in the Narthex. Statements that haven't been picked up will be mailed in early May. Thank you for your generous support.

## ADULT ED NEWS

Beginning May 4, we'll take a look at the book of Luke. Why a Bible study on Luke? Not only is he one of the four gospel writers, but we happen to be in the lectionary cycle C this year, which means that most of the gospel readings for each Sunday are found in the book of Luke. This weekly adult class will be led by Peg Haug and a team of co-leaders. Grab a coffee and treats and join us in the library at 11 AM. Let's delve into Luke!

### Attendance Report

*Average Sunday Worship Attendance*

**March 2025 - 125**

**March 2024 - 147**

**Inclusion isn't just *inviting* someone to sit at your table.**

**It's *believing* they belong there.**

### Faith Food for Thought, some final words from Pastor Deanna

Some of my favorite words in worship... The peace of the Lord be with you always. The peace of Christ be with you.

*... a simple sentence, words that we hear each and every Sunday morning, words that we share with one another in the sharing of peace. These words may be simple, but they are packed full of life, grace and hope. These words contain the same power as confession and forgiveness, the sacraments and sermons.*

*When we say, "Peace be with you" we are not just saying, "Good morning." We are saying, "God's peace be with you. Do not be afraid. Know that you are forgiven. Know that God loves you. Be assured of eternal life through Jesus." The words of peace were used by Jesus as the disciples huddled in fear after his death, by Paul in his letters and by pastors extending life-giving air to those choking to death on their sin and guilt. So may the peace of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you always.*

*Gracious Lord, thank you for the gift of your peace. Help us to share your peace with others. Amen.*

*(from several years ago... the devotion <https://www.luthersem.edu/godpause/>)  
Jennifer Beil, Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Salem, OR.*

This is a good reminder of the power found in language, in meaningful ritual, and in a community of faith. May Christ Lutheran be transformed as you gather in worship and share words of life, grace and hope with one another.

Shalom (PEACE!), Pastor Deanna

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## CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

April 8, 2025

Interim Council president Barbara Hoffman called the meeting to order at 6:03pm. Those attending were Pastor Deanna Wildermuth, Julie Swenson, Gordon Heimbigner, Anne Swant, Jim Peterson, Barbara Hoffman, Janet Mobley, Melanie Hein, Kirsten Brannon, Peggy Haug, and Peter Swant. Happy Birthday was sung to Peter Swant.

Peter Swant gave devotions.

The March minutes were approved by email affirmation on March 20, 2025.

**Financial Report:** Gordon Heimbigner provided a written financial report for the month of March which showed Christ Lutheran's operational income came in \$4,165 less than budget for March. Operational expenses were \$3,153 less than budget for March. Operational funds combined for a net outflow of \$3,181 for March. Designated/restricted activity resulted in a net inflow of \$3,057 for March. Total operational revenues to-date are approximately \$15,931 over budget for the year to date. Total operational expenses to date are approximately \$2,202 under budget for the year to date

### **Committee Reports:**

**Property:** Two bids were received by Dan Grinstead for exterior lighting work around the church. I met with Walla Walla Electric to review exactly what each portion of their bid entailed. They were the least expensive of the bids so I chatted with them first. \*I recommend that the church council support the exterior lighting updates proposed through the report. These lighting changes will increase safety and security of our building as well as increase the visibility of our congregation. Mostly these changes are about security and updating very outdated lighting systems. More energy efficiency will be achieved with this work. FYI - A repair was made on the exterior front fascia of the church early in the month of March. This was an immediate repair that was needed and was fixed for almost \$400 under the bid amount of \$1200. We will be watching the upstairs roof (as Dan did) for any needs as they arise. This could happen again when there is freezing and melting and freezing again. Both contractors said to keep an eye on the fascia. FYI- Additionally, WW Electric will be coming in and switching out all light bulbs in the sanctuary to LED and so that they ALL work. About half of them are burnt out. This will be done before Easter. The bulbs are very difficult to change out. This is the only safe option. FYI-I asked JC Landscaping to do snow removal of the parking lot. They did it three times. I will call on them in late fall next year to secure their services. FYI... I will be asking anyone who would like to help on Saturday, April 19th, at 9:00 a.m. We will do a general spring spruce up of the lawn & beds around the church.

**Personnel:** Marit, Pastor Deanna, and Kay met with Erin for her annual performance review. Erin has completed four years with Christ Lutheran and continues to exceed our expectations in the office management; she is also a friendly, welcoming receptionist. Multi-tasking is one of Erin's super powers, but the congregation needs to respect her need for focus time when she is working on tasks that require attention to detail. Erin says that the favorite aspects of her job are the people and the flexibility.

**Finance & Budget:** 1. During March, Christ Lutheran Church received \$2,495.61 of interest income. The first quarter (January, February, March) interest from the savings account at Banner Bank was \$1,040.79. Interest from two CDs that matured in March was \$1,454.82. This was the accrued interest for the duration of the CDs. Interest was paid out to us, while the principal amounts (\$25,000 in each case) were reinvested in 12 month CDs. Another CD will mature in August.

2. Year to date operating income is \$93,181.27, thirty point two percent of the annual budgeted amount. Year to date operating expenses total \$81,555.89, twenty three point six percent of the 2025 budgeted expenses. The fact that income is ahead of budget to date results from strong income in January and February. The fact that expenses are happening slower than the monthly pro rata rate results from the fact that certain large expenses have not been incurred or paid at this time. 3. Income in March was substantially less than January and February. This follows annual trends for the last several years. 4. We will need to transfer some money from savings to checking during April. 5. Christ Lutheran Church is well within 2025 budget parameters at the end of March.

**Worship:** Pastor Deanna has planned worship creatively and comprehensively through the month of April AND beyond.

When she completes her bridge pastoral time at CLC at the end of April, she will leave us with worship plans through the end of August! I am very grateful to her. We have intentionally done things differently during worship in the past months as a way to prepare our church for the change that comes with a new pastor. The pulpit supply schedule for the months of May and June is nearly complete.

**Evangelism:** Sunday, April 6 is "name tag Sunday." Julia and Mike Michener have requested a transfer to Christ Lutheran from another Lutheran church.

**Fellowship:** Soup Suppers have been going well. Thank you to Council as well as Leslie & Nick for all your amazing help!

Council discussed Pastor Deanna's last day which is Sunday, April 27th. Fellowship will host coffee hour/reception to show our appreciation for all she has done! Several people have offered to bring something and help. Thank you. A Meal Train has been set up for Mark Stone while he recovers from back surgery. If all goes well that should begin on April 13th.

**Outreach:** SJAG is continuing working on the RIC Welcoming Statement. We had good responses from Sunday's Hope/Fears session. Also, we are going forward with the handicap bathroom, and safety rails in the hallway plans for discussion at the council meeting. Other committees continue their work. 40 days of giving continue till Easter.

Hunger is becoming more and more an issue. I urge everyone to count their blessings and share what you can with those in need.

**Youth Education:** No report.

**Youth and Family:** April 19th 3-5pm. CLC kids' activity. Crafts, Easter Egg hunt and Haystacks.

April 20th, Youth breakfast at 10am. Food donations sign up in the Narthex.

**Adult Education:** We had good attendance and a positive response to the March series about the history of the Bible, led by Paul Anderson. In fact, there has been interest for more from Paul, which I will keep in mind once I am able to do some planning with Pastor Lars. With April 6 being used for an information gathering session for SJAG, and the next two Sundays being Palm Sunday and Easter, we are planning to start the next adult Ed series on April 27. It will be a Bible study on the book of Luke, led by several members of the Adult Ed team.

**Stewardship:** No report.

**Pastor's Report:** Pastor Deanna provided a written report to Council.

**Continuing Business:** Jim Peterson made a motion to approve Judith Richerzhagen and Kaye Miller as CLC voting members for the online synod gathering on May 3. Melaine Hein seconded. Motion passed.

Melanie Hein made a motion to use wood from excess pews to make safety rails for the halls from the restrooms to the sanctuary. Anne Swant seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Melanie Hein made a motion to plan a fundraiser for late summer to raise funds to upgrade the nursery restroom to gender neutral-handicap accessible. Anne Swant seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Melanie Hein made a motion to upgrade the nursery restroom to gender neutral-handicap accessible by replacing the sink, toilet and adding an automatic door for up to \$4,000. Peggy Haug seconded. Melanie Hein made an amendment to the motion for project funds not to exceed \$5,000. Peggy Haug seconded. Amendment passed. The amended motion was passed.

**New Business:** Melaine Hein made a motion to approve membership by transfer for Mike and Julia Michener. Janet Mobley seconded. Motion passed.

Jim Peterson made a motion to approve the new Building Security Policy as modified in section 6. Anne Swant seconded. Motion passed.

Kirsten Bannon made a motion to use \$300 from the Youth and Family Scholarship account for tuition for James Pinkerton IV to attend Camp Lutherhaven. Jim Peterson seconded. Motion passed.

Anne Swant made a motion to accept the Walla Walla Electric bid for \$4345 for lighting for safety and security of the CLC property with funds from the Property budget. Jim Peterson seconded. Motion passed.

**Future dates:**

Pastor Lars's first day – Monday June 30

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 7:22pm with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, *Julie Swenson*, Council Secretary



Beverly Hermsen	5/3	Oscar Gomez	5/21
Mike Michener	5/6	Vince Peterson	5/21
Terri Gilbert	5/8	Norma Hanson	5/22
Linda Lohrmann	5/10	Gene Spangrude	5/22
Peggy Haug	5/11	Virgil Hein	5/24
Lynn Knapp	5/12	Julie Michener	5/29
Jagger Mobley	5/17	Carmen Funderburk	5/30
Steve Benzel	5/18	John Funderburk	5/31
Kacen Stedman	5/18		

## EXPLORING FAITH

Finding a faith community can be a personal and sometimes complex journey. That's why we're excited to introduce our new "Get Connected" tool at [ExploreFaith.church](https://ExploreFaith.church). The Exploring Faith site is designed to connect people who are unfamiliar with the ELCA or new to their area with affirming Lutheran communities that are ready to support them as they discern their faith. Whether you're exploring faith for the first time or seeking a community with which you resonate, our Get Connected tool makes it easier to discover how you can grow in devotion. From wetting your feet to treading water, [Explore Faith](https://ExploreFaith.church) has many ways for you to dive deeper!

## March 2025

	General Fund	Budget	Difference
Income	\$21,586	\$25,750.00	\$4,165
Expense	\$24,767	\$27,919	\$3,181

# May 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 1pm Bible Study	2	3
4 9:30 am Worship Service 9:30 am Godly Play 11 am Adult Education	5 9 am Mission Group 10 am Men's Group 6:30 pm Mission Group	6 9 am Mission Group 10 am SJAG meeting 1 pm Bible Study	7 8 10 am SJAG meeting 1 pm Bible Study	9 10		
11 9:30 am Worship Service 9:30 am Godly Play 11 am Adult Education	12 9 am Mission Group 6 pm Council Meeting	13 9 am Mission Group 1 pm Bible Study	14 15 1 pm Bible Study	16 17		
18 9:30 am Worship Service 9:30 am Godly Play 11 am Adult Education	19 9 am Mission Group 10 am Men's Group 6:30 pm Mission Group <b>Newsletter Deadline</b>	20 9 am Mission Group 10 am Men's Group 6:30 pm Mission Group	21 1 pm Bible Study	22 23	24	
25 9:30 am Worship Service 9:30 am Godly Play 11 am Adult Education	26 9 am Mission Group	27 9 am Mission Group	28 29 1 pm Bible Study	30	31	



Return Service Requested

We're on the Web!

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

## May 2025 Newsletter

### CHURCH COUNCIL AND STAFF

·President·

Kay Shelton

·Secretary·

Julie Swenson

·Treasurer·

Gordon Heimbigner

·Stewardship·

Peter Swant

·Fellowship·

Janet Mobley

·Outreach·

Melanie Hein

·Finance/ Budget·

Jim Peterson

·Office Manager·

Erin Aycock

·Worship·

Barbara Hoffman

·Sexton·

Jeff Wagner

·Youth Education·

Emily Stone

·Organist·

Eleanor Elkins

·Youth & Family·

Kirsten Brannon

·Personnel·

*vacant*

·Property Management·

Anne Swant

·Adult Ed/ Library·

Peggy Haug

·Evangelism·

Karleen Heintzberger

### Mission

We are God's people, united by faith in Jesus Christ, forgiven, chosen, and called by him through the Word and Sacraments to make disciples, and to serve in the world God loves.