



**Christ Lutheran Church**  
Walla Walla

**THE MESSENGER**  
**VOLUME 66 #6**

### ***Pastor's Column June 2026***

Few things have changed more over the years in Lutheran church ministry than the protocols for pastoral visitation. When my grandfather was ordained in 1942 it was expected that he would hit the local hospital just about every day to check who was in. There was a book in the front desk with a registry of every name, and he would look through it to find any of his members. This was a regular after lunch routine.

It's amazing how many things worked in days past on an honor. Nobody in the 1950's would deliberately go to the members of other churches to evangelize while they were sick. But by the 80's I remember things changing. We had an unscrupulous pastor in our town in Minnesota who would deliberately look for people who belonged to the liturgical churches in town – who we called the CLEO (Catholic – Lutheran – Episcopal – Orthodox) – go to their rooms while they were on their death beds and plant doubts in their minds about the state of their souls. “Are you really sure you're saved? Have you accepted Jesus Christ?” And they'd reply that they went to mass every week for 80 years, and wasn't that enough? “No”, the preacher would tell them. Eternal hellfire awaits if you haven't made that personal confession of faith. Besides, he was certain, liturgical churches with infant baptism were no better than being an atheist or satan-worshiper – probably worse because satan worshipers know they're not saved, but the CLEO churches trick you into thinking sacraments and such things worked. So the old people would suddenly have a panic attack and say the magic words “I accept Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior” and the preacher would congratulate himself on rescuing another CLEO person from hell.

As predicted, this was not well-received, so the hospital locked up the books. No pastors could see them. But the preacher was undeterred. He told the secretary, who went to his church, that she would be guilty of sending people to hell if she didn't hand him the books anyways. You can't let those pesky bureaucrats block saving souls. He would get the books that way, and be back to scaring the dying and frail. The secretary got some form of discipline, and the books were taken away forever.

Then came HIPPA, and nobody anywhere got any information about anyone unless they went through several pages of legal flaming hoops to allow the chaplain to call the pastor. Needless to say, I have gotten only a handful of such calls my entire 26 years in ministry.

For many, this was seen as a tragedy. How will the clergy know to visit people? How will church communities know to give support? Well, the patients would just have to let them know.

There are good reasons for HIPPA, as frustrating as it can be. HMO's were calling pretending to be family members to get medical information to use against insurance claims. Some people had medical issues they would rather their churches/families not know – say, an abortion, or an AIDS diagnosis. But it left pastors having to retrain their congregations to tell them when something was up. This was not a quick nor easy process. Going from decades of a default of “the pastor will figure it out” to “I need to call the church to let them know” was hard. They didn't shake the expectations of the past and got angry and hurt when nobody from church visited. And we pastors would reply again and again that “you have to tell us”, which was mostly heard, but occasionally not. I still ran into the whole “if you cared you would have made the effort to find out” bit. They knew I couldn't read minds, but felt if they were important enough I would be constantly calling to find out. As if I have time, or people really want me, to go through the directory calling “just in case”. And with cell phones, it's easier than ever to let me know. Call. Email. Text. Messenger. It's not hard.

I've been blessed here at Christ Lutheran with a congregation that goes out of the way to tell me when you know of something up with someone. Please keep doing that. I would rather get 50 people telling me the same thing than not knowing, then not visiting, then people being angry that “the pastor didn't care”. It can happen, especially with accidents or bigger tragedies, that you're in a haze just coping, and forget to call me, and forget that you forgot to call me, so having friends let me know helps.

Sometimes I will visit and not be able to, nor should I ethically, share that I visited or what I learned. It's up to the person to share their story, not me. So it can happen that I will be visiting, but not telling anyone, and then it looks like I didn't visit because I'm not going to tell the congregation what happened to so-and-so. People often don't want visits right away, and just need quiet time to heal and cope. I always put the patient/members' privacy wishes first, and the burden on informing is on them. This applies to the prayer list as well. Not everyone wants to be on it, and I don't put people there unless I am confident they're ok with it. The prayer notices are usually brief, and are not intended as the church medical-information-phone-tree. They're for more prayers. Nothing more.

On the flip side, a church that wants to know is a church that cares, and I have appreciated that here. You pay attention to your fellow congregants, and I love that about this church. That's the kind of community that you want to be in. People have been good about informing me about situations that come up, and I thank you immensely. Don't worry if I might already know. Better to hear it too much.

Finally, our Care Team is up and running, so we can expand our reach to those in need in our community. My primary function is sacraments and calling when things come up. But long term and deeper care needs – things more social work and home-health sort of things – the care team can do. We have a good team, filled with people with all sorts of gifts in nursing and social service and just caring. To contact them, just email [care@christwallawalla.org](mailto:care@christwallawalla.org).

Pastor Lars

## June is Pride Month!

Yes, and here in Walla Walla it will be celebrated on June 6 with a pride festival on Main Street from noon to 5 PM. Last year, Christ Lutheran had a wonderful booth which allowed us to have a presence that was appreciated by many who strolled by. We have been invited to participate again and we would appreciate your support. There is a sign up paper in the narthex. We need your help in setting up our booth and taking it down, as well as spending time in our booth, greeting people as they walk by. Please consider volunteering!

### **Mission Quilting Group Luncheon**

The luncheon will be held June 23rd @ 11:00am. It will be hosted by Judith Hedberg-Duff at her home. She will be giving maps to the quilting ladies soon.

**If you are decorating the Church's front yard, please don't tape anything to the large sign. Tape removes the paint and leaves residue.  
Thank you**

### **On Fellowship and Service By Peggy Haug**

Did you know that once a month Christ Lutheran provides a dinner for the folks at the Christian aid center? This has been guided by Kurt Hoffman for over 20 years. He always asks for volunteers to help with the prep work and to serve the meal. In the process, some of us have learned how to fill-in when he's gone. I am one of those who volunteers occasionally to lead the meal preparation or to help serve. I want to share an idea that was triggered by an article in last Saturday's Union-Bulletin by Marc Gellman in his God Squad column. He was asking the question about happiness and positing the idea that it is "the natural fruit of duty." I happened to read the article right after my experience this past Friday night when I helped serve at the Christian Aid Center. (CAC) To be honest, I was tired and not eager to go there, but I knew they were short and that I was needed, so I went. And I was so thankful I did! When you share an experience like that with other people, there's a fellowship that is deeply rewarding. It gave me a chance to learn about Sloan, to see him enjoying a camaraderie with us. And I shared some "nursing stories" with fellow nurse Francis, and his friend, Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner Paul H. Also, I marveled as Janet shared the amazing news about the salmon she caught that very morning when she was fishing with her son. All of this chatter was going on as we did some chopping and food prep, when we served, and while we waited in between the meal times. I left the Center very feeling grateful for the experience, glad that I had pushed through my reluctance which resulted in an enjoyable time as I got to know others from Christ Lutheran Church. If you get a chance, do read Marc's God Squad column of 5/9/26. As he quotes Dostoevsky, "...in your kind deed, you are giving away in one form or another part of your personality and taking into yourself part of another...." and I say that is Christian Fellowship!

#### **WANT TO SERVE?**

Next time, say YES, and join us! Contact Kurt: [hoffman@whitman.edu](mailto:hoffman@whitman.edu) to get on the email list for CAC. OR, you can also help with food prep and delivery for the "Sleep Center", usually on the 2nd Sunday of every month. Contact Charleen Kaaen: [ckaaen@gmail.com](mailto:ckaaen@gmail.com) to get on that email list to serve.

Sunday May 17th - the 121st year of Norwegian independence as a nation, and the 212th year since its constitution was first signed - about 75 people gathered at Christ Lutheran for a community-wide celebration. Called Syttende Mai, Norwegians spend the day gathering with friends and family, marching in parades and eating hot dogs and ice cream. A big part of the observance is wearing traditional folk costumes called bunads, both men and women.

A committee of Charleen Kaaen, Anne Swant, Joanne Savage, Linnea Keatts and Kari Isaacson organized the event. The public was invited. There were many visitors both local and from out of town.

At church there were decorations, and tables of displays of antiques, crafts such as carving, Hardanger embroidery and painting called rosemaling, and other objects telling the story of emigration from Norway and settlement in the U.S. Several people wore bunads, which are unique to the region in Norway where the family had roots. The Brannon family - Kirsten, Nathan and Rowen - demonstrated how to make lefse, serving up samples.

The highlight of the celebration was hearing Aanen Gjovik's recollections of Nazi occupation of his hometown in Norway as a child, and his family's role in the resistance underground. Special cakes were prepared by Linnea Keatts, all decorated red, white and blue.



*And it was good...*



**VBS @ Christ Lutheran Church**  
**June 15-19, 2026 | 5 - 7 PM**

*Dinner provided.*  
*Register by June 5th.*



<https://forms.gle/vWcPwEGRH7wrJAR56>



**ADULT EDUCATION NEEDS YOU!**

Adult Education Director Cheryl French would like to form a small committee to come up with new ideas for the fall adult education class. Do you have an idea for a class??

Would you like to teach a class this Fall? There are sign up sheets on the bulletin board across from the library. Please note there will be no classes over the summer.

## JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Brysan Harvey	6/1
Morgan Berry	6/4
Jeffery Ladderud	6/4
Kaye Miller	6/5
Bobbette Hedman	6/6
Gwyneth Nierman	6/6
Eric Schmid	6/6
John Ladderud	6/7
Dane Gomsrud	6/8
Jan McDowell	6/8
Forrest Swant	6/8
Nicholas Holce	6/9
Racheal Pederson	6/9
Amelia Grinstead	6/13
Florisel Gomez	6/14
Joyce Anderson	6/17
Bev Cunnington	6/19
JoAnne Savage	6/20
Noah Ross	6/21
Jacob Keyes	6/22
Mirney Wagner	6/25
Aanen Gjovik	6/26
Susan DeRuwe	6/27
Stephanie Gomsrud	6/27
Charlene Mail	6/28
Judith Richerzhagen	6/28



A huge thanks to everyone who participated in collecting items for Hope Heals. We had a great turnout. We took two truckloads and a car full of donated items to their storage unit. Thank you, especially to Dick Hanson, and Nick and Leslie Anderson for the use of their vehicles and help moving everything to the storage unit. Please keep Hope Heals in your thoughts whenever you're sorting, or downsizing anything in your home. Thank you also to the SJAG committee for helping to pay the storage fees for 6 months along with the Episcopal church.  
Melanie Hein  
Outreach

### CLC'S FINANCES

April 2026

Total Income: \$20,951

Total Expenses: - \$30,471

Net Loss: \$9520



### Walla Walla Sweets Game

Saturday, June 27th

Please sign up now if you want to attend the game this year. Tickets are \$26.00 each and need to be paid for before the game.

Ticket price includes gate entry as well as "Sweet Spot" entry and all you can eat ballpark food and non-alcoholic beverages, alcoholic beverages will be available for purchase.

There will be a Drone Light Show following the game.

Any questions please call Janet Mobely

(509) 200-1363

Christ Lutheran Church  
Church Council Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday May 12, 2026

Council Vice-President Melanie Hein called the meeting to order at 5:30PM. Those attending were Melanie Hein, Lori Peterson, Janet Mobley, Pastor Lars Hammar, Jim Peterson, Greg Romaniuk, Anne Swant, Peggy Haug, Kirsten Brannon, Cheryl French, Linda Lohrmann, Mara Palumbo and guest Leslie Anderson.

**Devotions** - Melanie Hein

**April Minutes** - Minutes of the April 14 meeting were approved by email affirmation April 26, 2026.

**Financial Report** - Greg Romaniuk, emailed the current financial report to council members.

**Pastor's Report** – Pastor Lars Hammar, emailed his current report to council members and it will also be in the congregation monthly news email.

**Council President's Report** – Council President, Kay Shelton, emailed her report to council members.

**Altar Care** - Leslie Anderson attended the Council meeting as a representative of Altar Care. She announced that Bob and Sandy McCoy purchased and donated two funeral palls to Christ Lutheran Church. Leslie displayed the palls for the council members. One is a small, embroidered pall used to cover urns. The second is a six-foot by ten-foot pall that covers a coffin. Both are on white fabric with embroidery. They are beautiful additions to funeral services at Christ Lutheran Church. Pastor Lars reminded the Council that the palls are symbolic of Resurrection. Leslie mentioned that a pall brings equity to a funeral service. A richly embroidered pall covers even the simplest coffin or urn. The Council gratefully recognized the generous gift.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Finance & Budget: Jim Peterson**

Income and Expenses are tracking very close to budgeted amounts. Remember our 2026 budget has an expected negative \$47,000 year-end balance. Our year-to-date net operating balance is -\$16,706. This is about one third of the budgeted year end amount. So, we are "on budget" but we are not cutting into the planned deficit. Dedicated and restricted fund balances for the year to date are almost \$33,000 positive. This allows us to keep a savings account balance of \$150,000 but does not impact the general fund budget status.

**Worship: Peggy Haug** – Easter was successful thanks to the behind-the-scenes help of so many. We have been enjoying the accompaniment of our new Organist, who started April 12. Feng Kang treats us to a combination of both piano and organ music. Our congregation has been learning his style, and he has been learning the flow of our worship. Overall, it has been successful. Worship works because so many people volunteer time behind the scenes. Leslie Anderson heads up the altar guild, the team of people who prepare the altar and elements for worship every Sunday. I'm so grateful for their assistance. I will be working on a way to encourage more participation by the lay people of Christ Lutheran.

#### **Evangelism: Linda Lohrmann** –

Janet and I are working together on the Directory. We appreciate all the help we receive from Dee. I met with Pastor Lars to review membership. I am reaching out via phone to encourage more members to be Greeters on Sundays and have met with positive response. I am updating Greeter Instructions.

**Property: Anne Swant -**

The Design Committee has been meeting and studying the purpose and usage of spaces in the building. No decisions have been made at this time. The committee will share info/input in the fall.

**Fellowship: Janet Mobley -**

Linda and I are working to finish everything needed for the new Church directory. We are thankful for Dee and Pastors help. Our Fellowship Hall will be booked this Sunday, May 17th from 3-6 for the Norwegian Constitution Day Celebration. This is an event open to all. I'm working on some ideas to encourage our congregation members to host a coffee hour. Also, there will be a Drone Light Show after our baseball game on Saturday, June 27th.

**Stewardship: Lori Peterson -**

Shared a list of ideas received from council members on what "Stewardship 2026" should include/look like. Thank you to everyone who sent an email, I am very pleased with all of the suggestions. There is still time to send ideas. I will wait until June to present our "Stewardship 2026" to council with Pastor. Please review the list and send an email to me with any other ideas or suggestions you would like considered. I will be presenting the first look at "Stewardship 2026" at the June council meeting and we will proceed from there.

**Personnel report: Mara Palumbo –**

The sexton job was posted and we received many resumes and narrowed it down to six candidates. Those candidates were scheduled for an interview on May 6th, only 2 of the candidates showed for the interview. Of those two, one stood out as a strong candidate for the position and we would like to present him to council for approval for hiring

**Outreach: Melanie Hein -**

SJAG is making plans for the PRIDE festival. They also made a motion to help pay the storage fee for Hope Heals for 6 months along with St Paul's. Quilting continues each Tuesday. Meals continue at the Sleep Center and Christian Aid Center. Care committee is starting slowly. Anyone with needs or if you know of anyone with help assistance, please contact the committee. Adult Education: Cheryl French – no report

**Youth & Family: Kirsten Brannon -**

The Easter activity went well. Thanks to Carmen and John Funderburk for helping with Easter eggs. The Kickball Game was well attended and appreciated. Kirsten Brannon will give a Temple Talk about food baskets. Upcoming Events: Vacation Bible School in June. Theme: Creation. Volunteers are needed: Music; Meals; Clean Up; Story/Skits; Teachers for activity options of Science, Art and Crafts; and Game Leaders. Tentative date for all-inclusive Jubilee Lake Hike is Saturday, July 11. Game Night is pending. We are looking ahead to supporting community summer lunch/breakfast programs

**Continuing Business:**

A. Peggy Haug moved that Council approve Dr. Kang's building use request for teaching up to two hours of piano lessons every week on the Christ Lutheran Church piano on an ongoing basis, with fees waived while Dr. Kang is an employee at Christ Lutheran Church. Pastor Lars seconded the motion. Motion carried by email affirmation on April 22, 2026. Council ratified the action.

B. Sexton Position – Anne Swant, Mara Palumbo and Pastor Lars Hammar held interviews for the Sexton position. Motion was made by Anne Swant to hire Umberto Rodrigues. Second by

Peggy Haug. Motion passed by Council vote.

C. Building Use Policy –Discussion was held concerning a raise of the Building Use Fee for non-members from \$150 to \$300 per event.

Motion was made by Linda Lohrmann to raise the fee for non-members to \$300. Second by Lori Peterson. The motion was passed by Council vote.

D. Directory Update – Janet Mobley spoke about the Directory. She and Linda Lohrmann are working on it. They hope to have information gathered by the end of the month. They greatly appreciate the help and support from Pastor Lars and Dee Kasten. Jim Peterson encouraged the addition of church information including address, phone number and email addresses on the front cover.

### **New Business:**

A. Insurance Policy – Anne Swant, Mara Palumbo and Jim Peterson reviewed the congregation’s insurance policy. Motion by Jim Peterson to renew our insurance policy with Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company with the policy year beginning June 1, 2026, at a yearly premium of \$12,642. Second by Anne Swant. Passed by Council vote.

B. Coffee hour - Suggestions for increasing participation in hosting coffee hour and a possible a free-will offering were posed by Janet and Anne. No action was taken.

C. Re-homing of miscellaneous church property – Anne Swant has been storing miscellaneous church property in Room 4. No action was taken on re-homing it at this time.

D. Building Use Requests – An application for use of the Fellowship Hall for Tuesday June 30 from 4:00 to 8:00 PM by a member of Christ Lutheran Church was received. Motion made by Anne Swant to approve, second by Cheryl French, passed by Council vote. Jim Peterson moved to approve Robert Tabacco’s application for use of the Fellowship Hall once per month for Walla Walla Fencing Academy tournaments and potlucks. Second by Kirsten Brannon. Motion passed by Council vote.

### **Future Dates**

June 6 – CLC booth at Walla Walla Pride Festival, noon – 5:00 PM

June 15-19 – VBS

June 27 – WW Sweets Baseball Game

July 11 – TENTATIVE: All Ages Jubilee Lake Hike

Adjournment – The meeting concluded with the Lord’s Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Julie Michener, Council Secretary



**Last Call for the Directory**  
**June 7<sup>th</sup> & June 14<sup>th</sup> we will have**  
**draft copies of the directory for**  
**you to check your photo &**  
**information after church.**  
**Please check.**

# June 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		2 9:00am Mission Group	3	4 10:00 am SJAG 1:00pm Bible Study	5	6 Weavers 1 pm to 4pm
7 9:30am Worship Service 9:30am Godly Pay	8	9 9:00am Mission Group 10:00am Men's Group 5:30pm Council Meeting	10	11 1:00pm Bible Study	12	13
14 9:30am Worship Service 1:00 to 3:00pm Petars Service & Reception	15 5:00pm to 7:00pm VBS	16 9:00am Mission Group 5:00pm to 7:00pm VBS	17 5:00pm to 7:00pm VBS	18 1:00pm Bible Study 5:00pm to 7:00pm VBS	19 5:00pm to 7:00pm VBS	20
21 9:30am Worship Service	22	23 9:00am Mission Group 10:00am Men's Group	24	25 1:00pm Bible Study	26	27
28 9:30am Worship Service	29	30 9:00am Mission Group				



Christ Lutheran Church

1420 South 2nd Avenue  
Walla Walla, WA 99362-4502

Return Service Requested

Church Website come see what's new!  
[www.christwallawalla.org](http://www.christwallawalla.org)

# June 2026

### Church Staff

### Church Council

<b>Pastor</b> Lars Hammar	<b>President</b> Kay Shelton	<b>Property Management</b> Anne Swant	<b>Outreach</b> Melanie Hein
<b>Office Manager</b> Dee Kasten	<b>Secretary</b> Julie Michener	<b>Finance/ Budget</b> Jim Peterson	<b>Adult Ed./Library</b> Cheryl French
<b>Sexton</b> Jeff Wagoner	<b>Treasurer</b> Greg Romaniuk	<b>Worship</b> Peg Haug	<b>Personnel</b> Mara Palumbo
<b>Organist</b> James French	<b>Stewardship</b> Lori Peterson	<b>Evangelism</b> Linda Lohrmann	<b>Youth Education</b> Vacant
	<b>Fellowship</b> Janet Mobley	<b>Youth &amp; Family</b> Kirsten Brannon	

### 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.