



*THE MESSENGER*  
*VOLUME 66 #7*

***Pastor's Column July 2026***

I'm writing this column from a Starbucks in Spokane Valley. I just picked up Johan from Champ Camp at Lutherhaven, while his brother will be there until Friday. He had a great experience, and I continue to be impressed with the professionalism up there. Having worked in outdoor ministry for I know I am both biased towards it, and potentially critical – having seen so much behind the curtain of operations.

Our Bible camps are some of the best resources we have in the ELCA – and I don't just mean that the land would be utterly unaffordable to us today. Acres of Coeur D'Alene Lake would cost millions today. But what really makes them gems is that they are places where kids can have an in-depth spiritual experience of the Gospel and Christian community that is hard to do in most congregational settings. We could have the best youth ministries, but most of the time they meet for an hour or two and everyone goes home to their phones and sports and all the social politics of middle school. At camp they can build a community outside of the school pecking orders, where trophies and parental finances don't matter, where bullying and put-downs are not tolerated, and where you can be free to sing and pray and wonder about the faith openly. I've seen kids' faith impacted in great ways, as well as staff getting called into ordained ministry. But I don't know anything about that 😊.

Of course it's a truism that any time you are able to get away from the pressures and preoccupations of life you can focus on higher things. That applies to adults as well. We just don't have enough vacation time to leave for a week or two to pray every year. But it would be great if we could. Imagine the possibilities...

I also believe that our world is not structured well for spirituality. In the old old old days we would hunt and gather our food, be done for the day, and sit around the camp fire looking up at the stars and telling stories. We would hear the sounds of the animals and see the bright stars and try to fathom our place in it all. It's easy to be connected to the transcendent powers of the divine when you don't have a huge to-do list every day, coupled with limited time off and anxiety about the future and our politics and world. Nobody in the ancient world had to worry if AI would take all their water and leave them unemployed. That anxiety takes over the space in our minds, somewhat literally, filling us with stress hormones that make deeper and more rational thinking harder. The spiritual retreat is designed to remove you from those things for an extended period of time so that you can

world is artificially stressful and distracted and unnatural that getting away feels unreal. Isn't that what we say when we experience the amazing? "That was unreal, man".

I'm grateful we have a place like Lutherhaven to go for time to be in the creation with our fellow Christians to strengthen our faith, and that of our kids. I used to wonder why we couldn't replicate the highs of camp in our churches when I was a counselor, and the more I think about it it's a mixed bag. On the one hand, we live in the world, and do have to worry about the bills (even for the church) that you don't think of when you're camp staff. We don't have weeks at a time to live at church. On the other hand, as Lutherans we have had a long culture of suspicion towards spiritual experience and personal revelation. Luther used to call it "enthusiasms" and worry that people would think their gifts would make them justified, not the cross. I can't say I've seen a lot of that. We're all at some level craving the communion, the unity, with God in our lives. We all want to hear the still small voice, to be closer to the one who made us, and know we are loved and known by God. It's universal. Which is why I don't think we can exactly replicate camp, we can make setting time to experience God, to pray together, to meditate together, to sing together part of our collective life. It's hard sometimes to want to add a day of spiritual retreat to the schedule when so much of what we do at church is the operational side – meeting and planning and making policies. But let's not cut ourselves short. It's an opportunity, as well, for us to invite our unchurched friends to be a part of the experience of God. I was asked about spirituality when I came to interview, and I still believe it's an opportunity for evangelism for us. Let the ideas flow.

In the meantime, enjoy your summers. The warm weather, the cool mornings with coffee on the deck, the visits to the Blue Mountains. Church life can calm down a bit, and that's fine. We'll kick into gear later. For now let's get outside and commune.

Pastor Lars

---



Happy Birthday, Mirney Wagner! Celebrating 97 incredible years is a remarkable achievement, and it's truly inspiring to see you going strong. Your journey through nearly a century is filled with countless memories, the love of Christ, wisdom, and experiences that have touched the lives of many. We know your day was filled with joy, laughter, and the love of family and friends. Here's to your continued health and happiness in the years to come! 🎂🎉

# VBS @ Christ Lutheran Church



Vacation Bible School was a blast this year. We had sixteen kids, plus adults, for five days from 5pm-7pm. A huge thanks to all our volunteers, and especially our coordinator Kirsten Brannon.

Our theme was "And It Was Good" based on Psalm 104 and Genesis 1. We explored the days of creation and our place in it with lessons, crafts, activities, and art. Pastor Lars led us in music and everyone enjoyed the outside games, especially the Friday water fight 😊. Our shirts this year we tie-died ourselves with the logo on them.

A big thanks also to everyone who brought us food, and everyone who stepped in to do a lesson. It wouldn't have been the same without you.





The Walla Walla Sweets baseball game on June 27, 2026, was an unforgettable experience for everyone. The atmosphere at Borleske Stadium was electric. As everyone indulged in classic stadium food like hot dogs, popcorn, and nachos, the Sweets put on a spectacular performance. The game kept everyone on the edge of their seats leading to a 3-2 victory for the Sweets. To top off an already exciting night, a mesmerizing drone light show illuminated the night sky, leaving everyone in awe. It was an evening filled with community spirit, excitement, and memorable moments that left a lasting impression for everyone.

P.S Linda Lohrmann caught a foul ball with her arm and has a lovely bruise to show for it. Sorry Linda!



## JULY BIRTHDAYS

Leah Bailey	July 3rd
Kathryn Krebs	July 4th
Mike Austin	July 7th
Martha Anderson	July 10th
Velma Rose Harvey	July 10th
Bill Roznowski	July 10th
Matthew Lohrmann	July 12th
Marit Rasmussen	July 12th
Logan Berry	July 13th
Terri Wallingford	July 14th
Aanika Swant	July 15th
Dick Hanson	July 17th
Carroll Gjovik	July 18th
Christina Daggett-Simpson	July 19th
Alicia Lohrmann	July 19th
Rebecca Thorpe	July 19th
Haliagh Zeller	July 22nd
Jonathan Holce	July 23rd
Deanne Johnson	July 26th
Megan Moberg	July 26th
Nick Anderson	July 28th
Karen Telstad	July 30th
Phybea Leaumont	July 31st

The Church Directory is now ready for distribution! If you did not pick up your copy 6/28 they will be available 7/5. If you miss getting your copy you can come to the church office and ask for your copy. To ensure everyone receives their copy, there will be a table set up in the Narthex where you can sign for your directory. We kindly ask that you take only one copy per family. A heartfelt thank you goes out to Janet Mobley and Linda Lohrmann for their countless hours of dedication and hard work in making this project a success. Your efforts are truly appreciated!

### **CLC'S FINANCES**

**May 2026**

**Total Income: \$20,517**

**Total Expenses: - \$43,307**

**Net Loss: \$22,790**

### **Pride Booth @ Walla Walla Pride Fest**

Evangelism and Outreach teamed up to have a booth at the recent Walla Walla Pride Festival. This was the second year that CLC has been represented at the festival. Members of the Social Justice Advocacy Group took part in planning and attended. Pastor Lars designed bookmarks, stickers, and an informative card for distribution. Kristi Hammar printed t-shirts. An enthusiastic group of CLC members took part in setting up, manning and taking down the booth. We handed out candy, stickers and bookmarks, and talked about our church. Our message that ALL are welcome at Christ Lutheran Church! was greeted with smiles and led to good conversations. We hope to see new faces here at church.

**Christ Lutheran Church**  
**Church Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday June 9, 2026**

Council President Kay Shelton 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 Julie Michener.

**Devotions** – Devotions by Pastor Lars Hammar

**May Minutes** - Minutes of the May 12 meeting were approved by email affirmation May 27, 2026.

**Financial Report** - Greg Romaniuk will email the financial report to council members.

**Pastor's Report** – Pastor Lars Hammar, emailed his current report to council members.

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

**Committee Reports**

**Finance & Budget:** Jim Peterson

We have received two credit cards from Banner Bank. The debit card was cancelled at the bank and the card was destroyed. The Pacific Power bill for the May billing period is \$54.90. Last year for the same period it was \$492. We are losing ground in terms of actuals to budget. Income through May is less than budgeted. Expenses through May are more than budgeted. Due to overpayment, Portico will be sending us a refund of \$12,605.70 in the next couple of weeks. That will make the year-to-date balance look better.

**Worship: Peggy Haug**

We recently learned that our Organist, Dr. Kang, will need to tend to some family matters in Taiwan over the summer. He has asked that we find coverage until at least the end of August. We are so very grateful that James French is still willing and able to fill in. He has agreed to cover the entire summer. While it may seem like we are on “autopilot.” it is only due to the efficient care of our altar guild. We are beyond grateful. Peggy is still working on the idea of pulling together a small group of people who are interested in creating meaningful worship at Christ Lutheran. She welcomes any suggestions.

**Evangelism:** Linda Lohrmann

**Outreach:** Melanie Hein

Evangelism and Outreach teamed up to have a booth at the recent Walla Walla Pride Festival. This was the second year that CLC has been represented at the festival. Members of the Social Justice Advocacy Group took part in planning and attended. Pastor Lars designed bookmarks, stickers, and an informative card for distribution. Kristi Hammar printed t-shirts. An enthusiastic group of CLC members took part in setting up, manning and taking down the booth. We handed out candy, stickers and bookmarks, and talked about our church. Our message that ALL are welcome at Christ Lutheran Church! was greeted with smiles and led to good conversations. The Christ Lutheran Church directory is almost ready to print. It has been a collaboration of Evangelism, Fellowship and CLC's Parish Administrator. Janet and Dee have been marvelous partners in this endeavor. On Sunday, June 14, CLC members will have the second of two opportunities to check the accuracy of their information in the draft directory, and make corrections as needed. The directory will be printed, bound and distributed after June 14. Thanks to everyone for taking time to send in information and photos.

**Property: Anne Swant**

We had an unfortunate incident with a break in. Nothing appeared to be taken. It was reported to the WW Police Department. Their suggestions were to lock the doors into the courtyard when leaving the building and to ask the last people who leave the building on Sundays to do a quick sweep of the building before they do the final lock. Arrangements will be made for weeding around the building. Tracy Rutledge is doing the mowing of the church property, and we are so thankful for his service. We are looking for any spare keys to the outdoor shed so that Tracy can have a set. If you have one, please contact Anne. The Artist Council will be changing the artwork in the next couple of weeks. Please thank these gifted members for sharing their God given talents with our congregation. Joyce Anderson, Jeff Wagner, Judith Hedberg-Duff, John Knapp, Gracie Nelson, Peggy Haug, & Cassie Spangrude. Camera scan of the property is being done. One, for property inventory, and two, for planning with our Design Team work. The Design team did not meet in May. Summer dates are being planned. Look in the small meeting room for some of the work that the team has done to this point. Exterior painting of some of our metal structures and rails needs to be done this summer. Anne needs volunteers to help with this little project.

**Fellowship: Janet Mobley**

We have the Walla Walla Sweets Baseball game coming up on Saturday, June 27th. The deadline to sign up and pay for your tickets is Thursday, June 25th. Looks like we will have a nice sized gathering to look forward to! Janet agrees with Peggy that Fellowship begins by gathering and participating in the many activities and services we have at CLC. A big thank you to everyone for all you do to help create so many ways to share fellowship.

**Stewardship: Lori Peterson**

Lori plans a short presentation on Stewardship 2026 at Council. She asks everyone to look at Stewardship in a different light. She hopes to give council and the congregation a chance to help build Stewardship 2026. She plans a little talk to the congregation on Stewardship 2026 when it works for Pastor Lars. She looks forward to receiving ideas and suggestions from the council and the congregation. Everyone will be invited to participate.

**Personnel report: Mara Palumbo**

Pastor Lars, Kay Shelton, and Mara completed Dee Kasten's evaluation. We met together with Dee to go over the evaluation and heard feedback from Dee about her experience working at Christ Lutheran Church.

**Adult Education: Cheryl French**

We successfully completed the first class. The feedback on the class was very good. Many people expressed how much they enjoyed it. We are taking a break for the summer and hope to begin classes in the fall.

Youth & Family: Kirsten Brannon

It's everything VBS right now, June 15-19 from 5-7 pm

**Continuing Business:**

A. Stewardship 2026 – Lori noted the great thing happening at CLC, a new Pastor, new Pianist, great Godly play as a few examples. She would like to do a Temple Talk to encourage members to become active in Stewardship when Pastor returns from his conference and summer vacation.

B. Policy Reviews: the President's Report was reviewed. Discussion of the Child & Youth and Sabbatical Policies were shared. Jim Peterson made a motion to add "the Congregation" along with the Council in the Sabbatical Policy, to receive the review of Pastor's sabbatical report. Second by Peggy Haug, passed by Council vote. Revisions to the Child & Youth Policy were tabled until August. Cheryl and Pastor Lars will make recommendations.

Other Policies to be reviewed in August: Social Media Policy (Pastor Lars) and Accounting (Kay and Jim)  
September: Gift Acceptance Policy (Mara and Lori) and the Fund-Raising Policy (Lori, Kari & Jim.)

October: Building Security Policy (Anne and Kay)

Kay, Linda, Jill R., and Pastor Lars will present a review of the Bylaws in August

C. Report on April Synod Assembly – Pastor Lars, Anne, Jim and Cheryl attended. They enjoyed the breakout sessions. Holden Village is temporarily closed due to storm damage. Campus Ministry funding has been cut.

#### **New Business:**

A. Property List review – Anne is scheduled to have this completed by August

B. Update on building intruder May 26 - repairs and additional security measures are being added

C. Summary of Dee's Personnel Review – Mara met with Dee to review her current performance and receive feedback on how to best support her in the secretary position.

D. Update of Building Use Request by a member for private event on June 30 to serve wine. Motion to approve was made by Peggy Haug, seconded by Cheryl French, approved by Council vote.

E. Thank you to Chuck Austin for taking care of the courtyard. He is ready to pass this job on to a new volunteer. Thank you to Jeff Wagner for his years of service as sexton; Jeff's replacement, Bert Rodrigues, is doing well.

#### **Future Dates:**

**June 15-19 – VBS**

**June 27 – WW Sweets Baseball Game**

**To be determined in August: All Ages Jubilee Lake Hike**

**No Council Meeting in July**

**Adjournment** – The meeting concluded with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Julie Michener, Council Secretary



## **Donations for the Sleep Center**

**Reminder:** Lori Peterson is collecting the following items for the Sleep Center.

There is a box in the narthex marked, "Sleep Center," she will take all contributions after church on Sunday to the Sleep Center.

Clothing does not need to be new. Gently used items work well.

List of items needed.

Shampoo

Conditioner

Men's Deodorant

Men's Shorts, all sizes, especially larger

Women's shorts, all sizes

Men's short sleeve t-shirts, size 2X and larger

Women's sandals or slip-on shoes

# July 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5 9:30am Worship Service	6	7 9:00am Mission Group 10:00am Men's Group	8	9 1:00pm Bible Study	10	11
12 9:30am Worship Service	13	14 9:00am Mission Group	15	16 1:00pm Bible Study	17	18
19 9:30am Worship Service	20	21 9:00am Mission Group 10:00am Men's Group	22	23 1:00pm Bible Study	24	25
26 9:30am Worship Service	27	28 9:00am Mission Group	29	30 1:00pm Bible Study	31	



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)

# July 2026

## Church Staff

**Pastor**  
Lars Hammar

**President**  
Kay Shelton

**Office Manager**  
Dee Kasten

**Secretary**  
Julie Michener

**Sexton**  
Bert Rodriguez

**Treasurer**  
Greg Romaniuk

**Organist**  
James French

**Stewardship**  
Lori Peterson

**Fellowship**  
Janet Mobley

## Church Council

**Property Management**  
Anne Swant

**Finance/ Budget**  
Jim Peterson

**Worship**  
Peg Haug

**Evangelism**  
Linda Lohrmann

**Youth & Family**  
Kirsten Brannon

**Outreach**  
Melanie Hein

**Adult Ed./Library**  
Cheryl French

**Personnel**  
Mara Palumbo

**Youth Education**  
Vacant

## 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.