

Chi Rho

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF CHRIST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH



OUR PURPOSE

CONNECTING PEOPLE TO
PEOPLE, PEOPLE TO
FAITH, FAITH TO LIFE

OUR MISSION

AS FOLLOWERS OF JESUS
CHRIST, WE AT CHRIST
LUTHERAN CHURCH SEEK
TO SHARE GOD'S WORD,
TO SHOW GOD'S LOVE,
AND TO SERVE GOD'S
WORLD, PROCLAIMING
THE GOOD NEWS OF
JESUS CHRIST TO ALL
PEOPLE.

OUR VISION

A WORLD EXPERIENCING
THE DIFFERENCE GOD'S
GRACE AND LOVE IN
CHRIST MAKES FOR ALL
PEOPLE AND CREATION.

CONNECTING PEOPLE TO PEOPLE



Christ Lutheran Evening at the Pleasant Hill Vineyards

5015 Pleasant Hill Road
Thursday, September 17
5:30 pm

Join us for an evening of
fellowship - all friends and
members are welcome!

Snacks and nonalcoholic
beverages will be provided.

Please reach out to fellow
members or contact the office
at (740) 593-3144 or
office@clcathens.org if you
would like to carpool.



Children's Church

Children, grades 6 and under are invited to Children's Church. Children's Church is offered during the 10am service immediately following the Children's Message.

September Birthdays

2nd	Meena Juedes
3rd	Rachel Prange and Elizabeth Schmidt
5th	Jack Haseley
7th	Megan Cutright
22nd	Karen Dahn
23rd	Carol Kuhre

A Letter from Pastor Chad

There is something special about September. Even if we are decades removed from the first day of school, something in the air still shifts. The cicadas grow louder, the daylight softens, and we feel the invitation to begin again.

This September feels especially full of new beginnings. Just a few weeks ago, we gathered for the Blessing of the Backpacks, praying for students, educators, and the heavy bags that carry both textbooks and hope. It was a beautiful morning, a reminder that God does not stand apart from our daily lives but walks right into the classroom, the lecture hall, and the lunchroom with us. If you missed it, know that the prayers we offered are still hovering over every student in this community, including the thousands of new Bobcats who arrived on campus last week.

The Bridge is already buzzing. After a summer of planning, our campus ministry welcomed new and returning students with open arms and, let's be honest, probably too many Oreos and hot dogs. If you have not yet had a chance to meet the students who gather at Christ Lutheran on Sunday mornings for worship and brunch, or on Thursday evenings for dinner and discussion, I hope you will soon. They bring a contagious energy, good questions, and the kind of honest faith that reminds us why we do this work. They are not the church of tomorrow. They are the church of right now.

As we settle into the rhythms of a new program year, I find myself thinking about the burning bush. In Exodus, we read the story of Moses encountering that wild, unconsumable fire in the wilderness. It is a story about paying attention to what is holy in unexpected places. A bush on the side of a road. A conversation with a stranger. A student far from home who walks through our doors, wondering if there is a place for them here.

There is.

There is a place for the curious and the skeptical. For those who have been wounded by religion and for those who cannot imagine life without it. For families with young children and for empty nesters. For long-time Athenians and for those who just arrived last week. This is Christ's church, and there is a place for you here. A place to serve on September 13, God's Work, Our Hands Sunday, when we will pack snack bags for our vulnerable. A place for community as we gather at Pleasant Hill for an evening of fellowship on September 17th.

This month, I invite you to notice the burning bushes in your own life. Where is God calling your attention? Where is the holy breaking through the ordinary? Perhaps it is in the routine of dropping a child off at school. Perhaps it is in a new commitment to justice and equity in our community. Perhaps it is simply in showing up, week after week, to sing and pray and be fed together.

And mark your calendars for Saturday, October 3, when we will gather in the church yard for the Blessing of the Animals. Bring your dogs, your cats, your hamsters, your stuffed animals if the real ones are too much trouble. It is one of my favorite days of the year, a chance to remember that God's love extends to all creatures, and that our care for them is a small mirror of God's care for us.

May this September be a month of gentle new beginnings for you. May you hear the still, small voice in the midst of the noise. And may you know, deep in your bones, that you are held by a grace that will not let you go.

God be close,
Pastor Chad

CONNECTING PEOPLE TO FAITH



Roles	September 6	September 13	September 20	September 27
Lector	John Molinaro	Susan Urano	Elyce Friedman	Bob Alexander
Tray Server	Jane Unger	Greg Newton	Pam Cochran	Chris Snoddy
Time with Children	Jana Hovland	Cheryl Huebner	Puppets	Pastor Chad
Communion Usher	Sue Ellen Miller	Marilyn Shealy	Linda Batey	Nick Claussen
Coffee Usher	Gail Dreitzler	Wanda Weinberg	Jo Ann Ball	Dan Snoddy
Acolyte	Eliza Kopenski	Elizabeth Schmidt	Nathan Haskell	Aretha Ekuban
Greeters	Cathi Schwalbauch & Linda Batey	Chris Snoddy & Karen Beverly	Anne Sparks & Solveig Spjeldnes	Mark Sunderman & Rod Sauer
Live Stream	Marilyn Shealy	Doug Debrick	Dan Snoddy	Melissa & Jon Graham
Snacks	Lucy Juedes & Kim Valentour		John Laughlin & Jane Unger	
Beverages	Linda Sauer		Corrie Callaghan	

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

Save Aluminum Cans!

Once again, the Faith Build Coalition is collecting aluminum cans until October 31, 2026. Please rinse the cans, bag them, and Chris Snoddy will take them. If you take them to McKee's or the Recycling Center in The Plains for money, just give Chris the receipt showing the weight of the cans. For each 500 pounds, the Novelis Company will donate \$2,500 to HFH.



How can you help victims of the recent flooding in the Southern Ohio Synod (SOS) area? One way is to donate to the SOS Disaster Fund online by clicking [here](#). After clicking on the red box that says "Give Online," please select the option for "SOS Disaster Relief." Thank you for your support of your neighbors in need.

Volunteer at the Faith Build Coalition's Site

The current home being sponsored by the Faith Build Coalition is at 9 Johnson Rd., The Plains. A father of three will be the homeowner. You can volunteer from Wednesday through Saturday for a half-day or full day, from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. To sign up go to the HFH of SEOH website: [Volunteer Registration - Habitat for Humanity of Southeast Ohio](#). No experience is necessary- the training and tools will be provided!



Updates from Church Council

- A Financial Planning Committee was formed and studied the congregation's income. They discovered that CLC's pledge income is highly concentrated: five pledgers provide nearly half of total pledged dollars, creating financial vulnerability.
- The Financial Planning Committee recommended stronger stewardship and outreach goals, including adding new pledgers and increasing annual pledge commitments.
- Council discussed planned giving and noted that CLC already has a Gift and Endowment Policy, but needs a committee or process to promote it.
- For the possible building addition, the committee warned against relying too heavily on reserves or apartment income and recommended a capital campaign instead.
- Council approved Bob Alexander and Bob and Laura Geyer as new members, and Pastor Chad reported that Youth Director Eli is resigning at the end of the August.

God's work. Our hands.



September 13, 2026

Donations Needed for "God's Work. Our Hands"

On Sunday, September 13, we will once again pack snack bags for distribution to Athens County libraries as we participate in "God's work. Our hands."

We will pack bags after the worship service with both the congregation and our children participating. If you would like to contribute food items for the snack bags, you can purchase small juice boxes or applesauce squeeze pouches. There is a plastic bin in the Narthex for collection.

Thank you for your support of this valuable ministry. If you have any questions, please contact Adele Hanson at adelehanson@gmail.com.

Support Our Haitian Neighbors in Springfield, Ohio

Many Haitian immigrants living in Springfield are currently facing hunger due to the revocation of their Temporary Protected Status (TPS). Many of them have lost their right to work in the United States and are struggling to afford basic necessities.

One way to help is to drop off any of the items listed below (please only the items listed) to Little Wings Thrift Store 1006-C E. State Street, Athens. They are located on the backside of the Market on State behind IHOP. The hours are Tuesday – Friday 12 pm – 5 pm and Saturday 11 am - 5 pm.

Here are some of the items needed:

- Boxed breakfast cereal
- Boxed spaghetti or Ramen Noodles
- Boxed Macaroni and Cheese
- Canned corn or canned green beans
- Canned potatoes or canned peas
- Canned tomatoes or canned peaches
- Plastic jars of peanut butter
- Canned tuna or canned ravioli



Habitat
for Humanity®
of Southeast Ohio

FAITH
Build
Coalition



Fall 5K Fun Run

Saturday, September 26th, 2026

10a.m. on the bike path by the Eclipse Store, The Plains

Registration Fee:

\$25 per adult

\$10 per child ages 18 and under

**Online registration
information is available at**

Click here:

Fall 5K Fun Run

OR Scan Below



Treasurer's Notes

Dear Faith Family,

The July 2026 budget and actuals are to the right and also linked [here](#).

We are starting the new fiscal year, so some of the actual numbers are fairly different from the budgeted amounts.

Programs are above budget due to a new outlay for worship music. The student house demo/reno project and benevolence checks were incurred at the end of the previous fiscal year and cleared this year.

We will begin our planned benevolences in September as well as our Impact Giving award distributions.

Let me know if you have questions, and see you in church.

Warmly,
Lucy Juedes
Treasurer

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church Budget vs. Actuals: July 2026				
	Actual	Budget	Budget	
Revenue				
4000 Contributed support				
4010 Pledged Contributions	12,464.63	19,428.58	64%	
4020 Unpledged Contributions	857.75	1,750.00	49%	
4030 Loose Offering	410.00	333.33	123%	
4040 Memorials, Open Use/Non-designated	1,918.95			
4070 Baptisms	100.00			
4420 Campus Ministry Support (ELCA/SOS)		1,038.33	0%	
4430 Thrivent	43.00	71.92	60%	
Total 4000 Contributed support	\$ 15,794.33	\$ 22,622.16	70%	
4500 Designated Contributions				
4517 Anticipated Benevolence Funds from LLC Profits		1,151.17	0%	
Total 4500 Designated Contributions	\$ 0.00	\$ 1,151.17	0%	
5000 Business Income				
5100 Gross rents revenue	100.00	250.00	40%	
Total 5000 Business Income	\$ 100.00	\$ 250.00	40%	
5510 Interest-savings/short-term inv	4.09			
5514 Fidelity Primary Money Mkt Account Value Change	378.38	304.17	124%	
Total Revenue	\$ 16,276.80	\$ 24,327.50	67%	
Expenditures				
Total 7100 Personnel	\$ 16,955.40	\$ 18,052.25	94%	
Total 8100 Programs	\$ 1,389.03	\$ 858.33	162%	
Total 8150 General Business Expenses	\$ 367.63	\$ 583.33	63%	
Total 8200 Facilities	\$ 1,658.48	\$ 3,604.17	46%	
8290 Council Action	630.00	183.33	344%	
8298 Student House/Property Demo/Reno	2,300.00			
Total 8290 Council Action	\$ 2,930.00	\$ 183.33	1598%	
Total 8300 Benevolence	\$ 680.00	\$ 2,151.17	32%	
Total Expenditures	\$ 23,980.54	\$ 25,432.58	94%	
Net Operating Revenue	-\$ 7,703.74	-\$ 1,105.08	697%	
Other Revenue				
5513 Fidelity Primary Stock/Bond Value Change	327.17			
5515 Fidelity Endowment Value Change	96.20			
Total Other Revenue	\$ 423.37	\$ 0.00		
Other Expenditures				
8261 Depreciation Expense	418.33			
Total Other Expenditures	\$ 418.33	\$ 0.00		
Net Other Revenue	\$ 5.04	\$ 0.00		
Net Revenue	-\$ 7,698.70	-\$ 1,105.08	697%	

Christ Lutheran Evangelical Church

2026 Impact Giving Grants



1. A **\$15,000.00** grant was approved for the Athens-Meigs Educational Service Center (AMESC) for the ***Project RISE STEM Exploration and Lending Center*** project. The AMESC proposes to expand Project RISE by creating a community-accessible STEM and Advanced Manufacturing Learning Lab. A key component will be a shared STEM equipment library, allowing schools to bring students to the lab or borrow STEM kits for classroom use. This lab will provide hands-on learning in robotics, engineering, coding, and problem-solving, aligned with graduation seals and workforce credentials. The grant will help purchase equipment, kits, and curriculum and instructional materials.



2. A **\$5,500.00** grant was awarded to The John W. Clem Recovery House for its ***Pathways to Success: GED Services for Recovery Housing Residents*** project. Many of the residents do not have a high school diploma or equivalent credential, creating a significant barrier to employment, career advancement, and long-term stability in recovery. This grant will allow the staff to develop and implement a GED program designed to provide current residents, who have not yet obtained a high school diploma or equivalent, with the educational support necessary to earn their credential and improve their future opportunities. Integrating educational services into the recovery housing environment will give the men access to structured academic support while maintaining their focus on recovery.



3. An **\$8,000.00** grant was approved for the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)- Southeast Ohio for the ***Try Something New: Creative Connections for Wellness and Recovery*** project. This program was started in January of 2026 by Recovery Connections, and the first six months were funded by other grants. Since Recovery Connections closed, NAMI of SEOH will use this funding to continue the twice-monthly community series of creative activities aimed at reducing social isolation and promoting recovery. These shared learning experiences are free, create connection, provide shared learning of new hobbies, and improve wellness.



4. A **\$5,000.00** award was approved for the Ohio Valley Museum of Discovery (OVMoD) for the project titled ***Utilizing County Libraries to Bring STEAM Learning to Rural Appalachia***. This grant will allow the museum staff to purchase supplies to provide one afterschool program per month at each of three rural libraries: Chauncey and Glouster in Athens County and Racine in Meigs County during the 2026-2027 school year. These hands-on, collaborative learning experiences will encourage creativity and promote excitement for science, technology, engineering, the arts, and math.





SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 Wit & Wisdom 11:30 am in FH Worship & Arts 1pm in FH Equity & Justice 7pm on <u>Zoom</u>	2	3 CCw/PC@DC 10am Social Ministry 7:00pm <u>ZOOM</u> The Bridge Connect!on 5:30-7pm	4	5
6 Worship 10am Sanctuary	7 Labor Day - Office Closed AA Meeting 5pm Fellowship Hall	8	9 <u>Wednesday Prayer Service</u> 7pm on ZOOM	10 CCw/PC@DC 10am The Bridge Connect!on 5:30pm-7pm	11	12 St. Ephraim Orthodox Church 9am Sanctuary
13 Worship 10am Sanctuary God's Work, Our Hands - 10 am	14 Listening Group 2:00pm Narthex AA Meeting 5pm Fellowship Hall	15 Church Council 7pm on <u>Zoom</u>	16 <u>Wednesday Prayer Service</u> 7pm on ZOOM	17 CCw/PC@DC 10am Evening @ Pleasant Hill Vineyards 5:30pm-7:30pm The Bridge Connect!on 5:30-7pm	18	19 St. Ephraim Orthodox Church 9am Sanctuary
20 Worship 10am Sanctuary Reception of New Members	21 AA Meeting 5pm Fellowship Hall	22 <u>Earth Justice</u> 7pm on ZOOM	23 <u>Wednesday Prayer Service</u> 7pm on ZOOM	24 CCw/PC@DC 10am Life Together 7pm <u>ZOOM</u> The Bridge Connect!on 5:30-7pm	25	26
27 Worship 10am Sanctuary	28 AA Meeting 5pm Fellowship Hall	29	30 Property Committee 5:30pm F. Hall <u>Wednesday Prayer Service</u> 7pm on ZOOM			