

Epiphany: A Season of Lights

The season of Epiphany begins after the twelfth day of Christmas, January 6. It is the day and season that we celebrate the in-breaking of God's light. Throughout the season of Epiphany, we will hear many wonderful stories of the start of Jesus' life and ministry.

Epiphany is called Three Kings Day in some places of the world, to commemorate the Magi's visit with gifts. In some places, such as Latin American countries, more gifts are exchanged on Epiphany than Christmas Day itself. In other places, such as Ireland, it is called "Women's Christmas." This is the day that women hold parties or socialize with other female friends and relatives, getting a day off from the traditional female household duties.



Many popular customs take place on Epiphany: blessing one's house, eating a Three Kings Cake, or removing Christmas decorations. Chalking the door is another tradition at Epiphany, one in which we will take part at Christ Lutheran. The doors are marked with the year, with C, M, and B in between. This year it will show 20 + C + M + B + 25. The letters C, M, and B can represent two things: the traditional name of the Magi (Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar) or the Latin blessing *Christus mansionem benedicat*, meaning "May Christ bless this house." Join us after worship on Sunday, January 5 to chalk the doors and bless our sanctuary for another year.

Deacon Laura

In this issue

- Taizé Worship P2
- Call Committee P2
- Epiphany P2
- Service & Outreach P3
- Education P3
- Christ in Literature P3
- Thrivent Choice Dollars P3
- Newcomers P4



Worship Time Change

Beginning Sunday, December 29 (2024), CLC will offer one worship service at 9:00 am on Sunday mornings going forward. Adult Forum and Godly Play will follow worship from 10:30 – 11:15 am.

This change offers many positive impacts for our congregation, including a greater sense of community by worshipping together, increased fellowship, and better use of ministry volunteers and resources.

Please speak to Deacons Laura or Jennifer if you have any questions. See you at church!



Taizé Worship *January 6, 6PM*

Join PATHWAYS for a contemplative prayer service led by Deacon Marti Bein with candlelight, simple song, meditative prayer and silence. Gather with others in the presence of Christ as we sing uncomplicated, repetitive songs, allowing the mystery of God to become tangible through the beauty of simplicity. Visit the [PATHWAYS site](#) for more information.

Epiphany

Following Epiphany worship on Sunday, January 5, we will “chalk the door” to celebrate the occasion of Epiphany with God’s blessing of our lives and church home. Please stay for this symbolic and meaningful practice.

Financial Update *through November 30, 2024*

Budgeted Contributions YTD:	\$ 428,790
Actual Contributions YTD:	\$ 476,270
Actual Expenses YTD:	\$ 394,426
Net Surplus or (Loss)	+\$ 81,844

Please note this surplus is the result of members meeting or exceeding their pledges as well as monthly expenses being under budget. In addition, our Synod Mission Support is at 6% rather than our historic 15%.

Thank you for your continued support of Christ Lutheran.
Respectfully submitted by Jeff Bieck, Treasurer

Call Committee

Though it seems like it, the journey has not been that long. The Synod has been actively seeking a candidate for our Senior Minister position for the past seven months.

What makes CLC unique compared to other openings is that we are looking for a senior minister, which requires a specific skill set. It needs to be someone who will lead our hardworking staff well and can articulate our congregation's forward-thinking direction. This person needs to possess strong administrative skills and communicate effectively on many levels with a strong work ethic and the ability to remain non-anxious around big decisions. And most importantly, this person must be a faithful disciple of Jesus that encourages us all in our lives of discipleship through preaching and leadership as we strive to make Christ known.

Our senior minister is out there and we will not settle for just any candidate. It must be the candidate we need and deserve. Keep the faith. Have patience and know the Spirit is at work calling that person with those skills and gifts to our congregation.

Submitted by Jack Wilson, Call Committee Chair

<p>January 5 Isaiah 43:16-21 Matthew 2:1-12</p>	<p>January 12 Isaiah 43:1-7 Psalm 29 Acts 8:14-17 Luke 3:15-17, 21-22</p>	<p>January 19 Isaiah 62:1-5 Psalm 36:5-10 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 John 2:1-11</p>	<p>January 26 Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10 Psalm 19 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a Luke 4:14-21</p>
--	--	--	--

Service and Outreach

Join us with the Souper Bowl of Caring as we help combat hunger in Boone County. We are hosting a friendly competition within our congregation between the NFC and AFC teams that will play in this year's "big game." Donate towards either team and help predict who might win the game! Donations are due Sunday, February 2; donations will be given to Empower Boone.



Education

Adult Forum: Through the water of baptism, we are claimed, gathered, and sent out for the sake of the world. Join us during Adult Forum as we explore the five gifts of discipleship through baptism beginning on Sunday, January 12.

"VBS": Who doesn't love a road trip? Save the date and join us for a week of fun at Kids Camp (formerly Vacation Bible School) starting on Monday, June 23. This year we're making some changes to our program. Our time together will start with a light dinner at 5:30 pm before we hit the road. We will travel to different destinations as we have fun and learn through Bible stories, crafts, music, science, and games. Friday will be a Family Fun Fest where kids can show off their crafts, sing their favorite songs from the week, and enjoy a cookout with families to wrap up the week.

Invite your children, grandchildren, neighbors, and friends to come along for the journey. Keep your eyes peeled for registration materials which will come out soon! See Shirley Collins to volunteer to help or with any questions.



Christ in Literature

Lawrence Anthony's *The Elephant Whisperer* is our Christ in Literature book for the month of January. Join us at 3 pm on Monday the 6th as we discuss his memoir detailing his experiences caring for a herd of "rogue" wild elephants on the Thula Thula game reserve in Zululand, South Africa. All are welcome to attend the "wild" discussion.

Thrivent Choice Dollars

Thrivent Choice Dollars are funds that eligible members of Thrivent can make recommendations on as it pertains to the distribution of some of its charitable grant funds. These recommendations are shared by directing Choice Dollars to enrolled nonprofit organizations, including churches. Eligibility is based on annual premiums and contract values for qualifying products. Choice Dollars designated during the calendar year can be directed until March 31 of the following year. Members can direct Choice Dollars online at thrivent.com/thriventchoice or by calling (800) 847-4836.

Thrivent is a not-for-profit financial services organization that offers a range of services, including financial advice, investments, insurance, banking and generosity programs (charitable giving). Founded by Lutherans in 2002, Thrivent also offers Thrivent Action Teams for its members which provides resources for fundraisers, educational events, or service activities in their communities. Many CLC projects are funded (at least in part) by Thrivent grants.

Happy New Year from the CLC Staff!

The church office will be closed on Wednesday, January 1. God's blessings to you all for a happy, healthy, and abundant new year!






Christ Lutheran

425 Riverside Road / Belvidere, IL 61008

Phone: 815-885-2522

makingChristknown.org

 facebook.com/Christ.Belvidere

Also on Facebook, search:

Pathways: A Center for Spiritual Renewal

† **Worship:** Sundays 9:00 am

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Rockford, IL
Permit No. 521

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Our Council

Jenny Campbell

Howard Yakey

Shirley Collins

Jeff Bieck

Jenny Breckenridge

Elizabeth Brinkley

John Herring

Peter Hightower

Lori Murphy

Denise Rindels

Don Skadow

Dave Swanson

President

Vice President

Secretary

Treasurer

Council Member

Council Member

Council Member

Council Member

Council Member

Council Member

Council Member

Council Member

Our Staff

Deacon Laura Gorton

Deacon Jennifer Fox

Katie Belinson

Dagny Brandt

Michelle Nelson

Chris Parkinson

Acting Interim Minister

Minister for Worship & Music

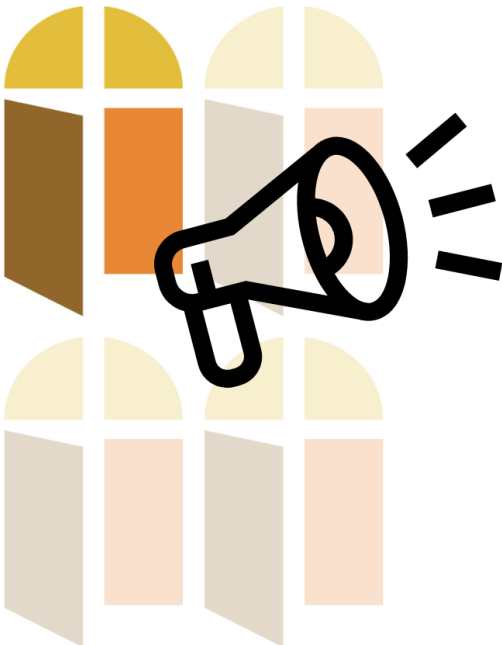
Dir. of Outreach & Communications

Church Musician

Finance & Office Administrator

Church Musician

Have you been visiting and worshipping with CLC for a while and want to learn more? Come to the next Newcomers Orientation on Sunday, January 12 to learn about our community life together. Please call the CLC office or let Jeff Bieck, chair of the Evangelism Committee, know if you plan to attend by Wednesday, January 8.



**NEWCOMERS
LUNCHEON & ORIENTATION
SUNDAY, JANUARY 12
11:15 AM**