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Christ Alive!

Sharing Mission, Ministry,
and Life in Christ

A HEART FULL OF GRATITUDE!

Goodbyes are never easy. As I reflect on my past two years as Vicar of Christ Lutheran Church, so many memories flood my mind. The wonderful welcome my family and I received in January 2019, fellowship around the tables in the gathering space, VBS, Godly Play, Confirmation, book and bible studies, just to name a few. Each memory holds a special place in heart. Pastor Twila and I have talked about how my internship has been like a two-for-one deal. My first year was a "normal" church year and my second year has been anything but normal. One internship with two very different years, each year a learning experience I will carry with me.

The next step in my ministry is to complete my Rostered Minister Profile, meet with Bishop Clements, finish seminary, and begin the first call process. While it is difficult and sad to say goodbye to Christ Lutheran Church, I am excited for the next phase in my journey. It is hard to believe I am nearing the end of seminary. I have

three classes left until graduation on May 16, 2021. Seminary has been an amazing and challenging adventure.

I want to thank each and every one of you for being a part of my internship. I especially want to thank Pastor Twila, Pastor Neal, Deacon Laura, Valerie, Michelle, the church council, and my internship support committee for loving and supporting me during my internship. You all have taught me, supported me, encouraged me, and loved me. I have been blessed by each and every person at Christ Lutheran Church. My internship has been fantastic, challenging, exhausting, and fun; and I would not change a thing.

I leave you with a heart full of gratitude and love. Thank you for a wonderful internship!

Yours in Christ,

Vicar Katrina Steingraeber



IN THE CLC FAMILY

We extend our sympathy to the family of Alvin Westman, who died on November 20. May light shine perpetual on him. . . +

THANK YOU STEPHEN AND GERD

Please join us in thanking Stephen Stegmair and Gerd Westervelt, along with Rebecca Stegmair, for all of their years of service with the blood drives hosted here at CLC. With their leadership, we have hosted six to seven drives yearly. Although they have stepped down from their leadership roles, Christ Lutheran will continue to host these essential blood drives. We have established a small group of volunteers to help with these drives, which will be led by Deacon Laura. We continue to make small changes due to the ongoing pandemic, but we hope to return to things we've done pre-Covid once it is safe to do so. If you are interested in helping with the blood drive by being a host to welcome donors, helping to call people to make appointments, or helping to set up or tear down the space, please contact Deacon Laura. Thank you again to Stephen, Gerd, and Rebecca for all of your dedication to this important ministry!



THANK YOU

Thank you Christ Lutheran Church! Chaplains Pam and Ben of MercyHealth are wearing masks donated by CLC's Service and Outreach Committee. They express their deepest gratitude for CLC's support of the chaplain's office.

FAREWELL, VICAR KATRINA!

Bundle up, and join us for an outdoor "Farewell and Thank You" for Vicar Katrina on **Sunday, December 20 from 1-3 pm** on the Christ Lutheran Church Labyrinth. This will be a masked, socially-distanced procession for each of us to express our appreciation to Vicar Katrina for two years of service. You are invited to bring a card for the card basket! A brief program will be held at 2 pm.

LET'S SPREAD CHRISTMAS CHEER!

Send a brief video greeting or holiday photo to share with your CLC friends. Please send your submissions by **Monday, December 21** to Valerie Dusso (valerie@makingChristknown.org).

WINTER SOLSTICE – THE LONGEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR

On the 21st of December, the Northern Hemisphere will sink into its deepest point of darkness. It is the longest night and the shortest day of the year. The Northern Illinois Synod will hold a Prayer Vigil over the Longest Night, December 21 from 4:30 pm on Monday, 12/21 until 7:30 am on Tuesday, 12/22. The synod invited PATHWAYS, our center for spiritual renewal to participate! Our recorded service, Winter: A Season of Listening and Waiting, will occur during the 2nd hour (5:30 – 6:30). When things are their darkest, we will pause to remember that God's light drives out the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it. The link to participate is: <https://nisynod.org/events/longest-night-prayer-vigil>.

January 3, 2021

Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12

January 10, 2021

Genesis 1:1-5
Psalm 29
Acts 19:1-7
Mark 1:4-11

January 17, 2021

1 Samuel 3:1-10 [11-20]
Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
1 Corinthians 6:12-20
John 1:43-51

January 24, 2021

Jonah 3:1-5, 10
Psalm 62:5-12
1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Mark 1:14-20

January 30, 2021

Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalm 111
1 Corinthians 8:1-13
Mark 1:21-28



HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Thanks to your generosity and four Thrivent Action Teams, our Hope for the Holiday

ministries were a great success:

- 86 pies were donated to the Rockford Rescue Mission
- 34 Meals in a Bag plus \$1345 was given to local food pantries
- 80 gift cards (totaling \$2250) were given in 1 lovely gift bags to LSSI Adopt an Angel
- 50 residents in eight MOSAIC group homes will receive gift baskets, alongside a gift card for a pizza party in each home

That's a total of \$4820 shared by our members and \$1000 in Thrivent Action Teams!

CONFIRMATION

The winter module for Confirmation is fast approaching. We will gather together on Wednesday evenings to dive into the New Testament. Each class begins at 5 pm with dinner and will be finished by 7:15 pm. We will be using the west wing so that we can have proper social distancing. The classes will take place on January 13, January 20, January 27, February 3, and February 10. If you are interested in having your child join us, please contact Deacon Laura.

TAX BENEFITS FOR END-OF-YEAR GIFTING

Diane Peters, our treasurer, shares several ways to give to the church and receive a tax benefit.

Special 2020 \$300 Deduction There is a new deduction provision this year, part of the CARES Act, that may apply even if you don't itemize: each tax return can claim an "above the line" deduction of up to \$300 for cash gifts to qualifying institutions.

Special 100% of AGI deduction threshold. Another special one-time provision in the CARES Act allows you to deduct donations up to 100% of your AGI, up from 60%.

Qualified Charitable Distributions. Those over 70½ can distribute up to \$100,000 annually from their IRAs directly to charity, offsetting RMDs. QCDs that are less than or equal to the amount of the RMD have the same net impact on taxable income as donating cash and taking the itemized deduction.

Donate Appreciated Securities vs. Cash If you donate appreciated securities like stocks or mutual funds, you can generally deduct an amount equal to the market value of the donation. Any unrealized appreciation is wiped away because of the donation.

Bunching Donations. Bunching multiple years of contributions into a single year can allow your itemized deductions to exceed your standard deduction.

If you feel you qualify for any of these benefits, speak to your financial advisor to learn about exceptions or added benefits.

CHRIST IN LITERATURE

Will be meeting at Christ Lutheran on **Monday, January 4 at 3 pm.** This month's book selection is *Moloka'i* by Alan Brennert.



Do you shop Amazon? Support Christ Lutheran's ministries by shopping through Amazon Smile. The charity link for Christ Lutheran Church is - <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/36-3025736>



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Our Council

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Ken Erboe	Council Member
Tari Flack	Council Member
Bev Frank	Council Member
Mike Meinert	Council Member
Bruce Schuchard	Council Member
John Sommerfield	Council Member
David Swanson	Council Member

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Our Staff

Pr. Twila Schock	Senior Minister
Deacon Laura Gorton	Associate Minister
Vicar Katrina Steingraeber	Pastoral Intern
Valerie Dusso	Office & Com. Administrator
Deacon Jennifer Fox	Minister for Worship & Music
Craig Carlson	Church Musician
Michelle Nelson	Finance Assistant

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WORSHIP WITH US THIS CHRISTMAS

DEC. 24 | Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

DEC. 27 | Lessons & Carols



All services can be viewed online at www.makingChristknown.org.