

Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church

December 2021 Newsletter

Good Tidings!

...from Interim Pastor Michael Anderson

1 Samuel 3:7-11

Now *Samuel* did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. The Lord called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to *Eli*, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy. *Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'"* So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

Now the Lord came and stood there, calling as before, "Samuel! Samuel!" *And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening." Then the Lord said to Samuel, "See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle."*

Several years ago, the wireless communications giant, Verizon, ran a commercial so well-conceived that its tagline, "Can you hear me now," entered into the common social lexicon of daily communicating. You couldn't go anywhere without someone making a reference to it. The commercial went viral and its signature line progressed from advertisement, to catch phrase, to joke, to having jumped the shark.

While the commercial was a bit of a sensation, I remember that part of my reaction to it (instead of wanting to run out and sign up for Verizon wireless service) was to casually think on a detail brought to my attention by the commercial: when it comes to real world communication, there's a mighty big difference between hearing and listening. Hearing a sound is a one-way event, it is merely recognizing the presence of sound. Listening is altogether different. Listening is relational; it is two-way communicating. Listening is engagement. Listening implies conversation, patience, the goal of understanding, and the possibility of empathy. I am privileged to serve Christ Our Savior as its interim pastor as it enters a period of holy listening - for the voice of God and to each other. A congregation's time of discernment in ministry is holy time and I am so pleased to be with you and accompany you as you explore Christ Our Savior's mission and call a new

pastor. Listening for what God is saying and how God is calling you to be the church is truly important work and depends on many voices of participation and much listening as well as reverence and patience for the movement of the Holy Spirit.

God's specialty, it seems, is making things new and as much as we welcome this newness, it brings with it its own set of challenges and adjustments. So it goes in congregational life. God is faithful. God's creative activity is moving through Sussex and through Christ Our Savior and is about to do a new thing. Over these next months, perhaps Christ Our Savior, like Samuel, will embrace a practice of listening as you seek to discern your current sense of identity as people of God, what the Holy Spirit is stirring among you, and how God might need you to serve.

"Speak, for your servant is listening." Let us listen, indeed, for God is surely calling.

You are powerfully gifted for God's mission in this world.

In Christ,
Rev. Michael Anderson

In this Advent season of anticipation, I find myself particularly looking forward to celebrating Christ's coming into the world by gathering in joy with fellow believers. I recall how last December we hosted our Christmas worship services Drive In style, and while I am confident that God was present with us ("wherever two or more are gathered in my name") the experience left me wanting. Even as a household, Kathryn, Lily and I were cautious about gathering in person for Christmas celebrations, planning Zoom gatherings instead.

Though Christ Our Savior will likely still have some precautions in place for our in person worship services, I'm eagerly awaiting the opportunity to see families gathering to hear about how the God of the cosmos entered into the world to give every person the gift of hope and the promise of redemption. 2020 impressed upon me two truths about the church. First, that even in times when we are unable to gather as we would wish to worship together, God still binds us together in the holy work of the gospel. And second, even though God binds us together even when we are apart, God bids us to gather in order that through worship and fellowship we might be sustained and supported in our gospel mission.

Friends, God continues to walk with us as we journey through these turbulent times! And God continues to call us to the life of the church - the community of God's people gathered in order to share in the life giving transformation of the gospel with all the world. May you feel the presence of God surround you in this Advent season, and may God reveal to you all of the ways that God is preparing to bring forth new life and hope in the coming year. I look forward to sharing in the excitement of discovering what gifts God shares with the world through us.

Pastor Joe

Council Updates

We Have an Interim! What's next?

Pastor Michael Anderson was welcomed at our November 14th worship services. If you were not able to be with us, please be sure to say hello and introduce yourself. As you know, he will be with us for the next 18-24 months as our interim lead pastor. Along with taking on the responsibilities of lead pastor, he will begin to get to know the congregation, staff, and council.

Two of his primary responsibilities as interim will be to help us determine who will be on our Mission Exploration Team (MET) in order to complete our Ministry Site Profile (MSP). The MET and MSP are integral to determining who we are and helping us to find our new Senior/Lead Pastor.

Please remember that per the Synod, he is not allowed to be a candidate for our future senior pastor.

Update on Worship at COS:

All worship services will continue to follow the benchmarks to direct our worship time and building use. These guidelines are presented on the website and here in the newsletter. We will be following the numbers of new cases in Waukesha County per 100,000 over a seven-day average.

This continues to be a fluid situation and we will be sure to keep you updated regularly via the COS website, email/constant contact, the newsletter and Sunday bulletins and announcements. Please be sure to pay attention to the council or staff updates as they come out. Thank you for your patience and please pray for us as we continue to make decisions that impact us all.

Your council president, Maria Liedtke

Annual Meeting Announcement

Sunday, December 19th

We will have the Christ Our Savior Annual Meeting on Sunday December 19, 2021 at all worship services. Council members will be available to answer questions (open forum style) December 5 and December 12 between the 8:30 and 10:00 services (location to be determined) and at the 6:00 pm service. The budget, Annual Report, and other information will be available at church on those Sunday's and on our website beginning the first week of December.



Covid-19 Ministry Plan

<10	Worshipping indoors and online
	Masks optional
	Receiving Communion from the front
	Group singing and responding
10-24.99	Worshipping indoors, outdoors and online
	Masks recommended
	Individual Communion kits only
	Group singing and responding
25-49.99	Worshipping indoors, outdoors, and online
	Masks recommended
	Individual Communion kits only
	Only worship leaders singing
50-74.99	Worshipping indoors, outdoors, and online
	Masks recommended
	80 person building capacity.
	Advanced sign up for worship available.
	Social distanced seating
	Individual Communion kits only
	Only worship leaders singing
75- 99.99	Worshipping indoors, outdoors, and online
	Masks required
	80 person building capacity.
	Advanced sign up for worship available.
	Social distanced seating
	Individual Communion kits only
	Instrumental music only
100+	Outdoor, Drive In and Online Worship Only

Worship

Midweek Advent Worship at Christ Our Savior

We will be holding midweek Advent worship services on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. starting December 1st. We will use the Holden Village worship service; a quiet, reflective worship format that allows us to step away from the hustle and bustle of the world.



Christmas Worship

Christmas Eve
10:00 a.m., 3:30, 5:00, 6:30 p.m.
(6:30 p.m.-candlelight service)

Christmas Day
10:00 a.m. with Holy Communion

Additional worship changes include:
December 26th and January 2nd we will worship at 10:00 a.m. only.

All Sunday worship services include Holy Communion.

Please note: There will be NO Sunday School or Confirmation on December 26th and January 2nd.



Acoustic Guitarist Needed

Acoustic guitarist(s) needed for COS band. Candidate(s) should be available to play most Sunday morning services, and rehearse approximately one evening a month. Looking for someone who is an experienced/accomplished guitarist who can read music, guitar chords and tablature. Familiarity with Contemporary Christian music is a plus. Please reach out to Music Ministry Directors Linda Brackmann and/or Eileen Swierczek. We'd love to talk to you!



Red or White Poinsettias

Deadline - Sunday, December 12th

Purchase a red or white poinsettia to decorate the sanctuary and to take home after the Christmas Day service. Melissa Maas, member and owner of Bank of Flowers has kindly offered to donate \$5 to our church for every poinsettia purchased. Flowers come in a 6" pot for \$25 each. Sign up today in the narthex.



Opportunities to Serve!

Christmas Eve & Christmas Day IN-PERSON Lectors & Ushers Needed

We are looking for lectors to read in-person for our Christmas Eve Worship Services. We also need 2-3 people to read for our Christmas Day worship service. We will send you the readings in advance. In addition, ushers are needed to hand out bulletins before worship and help with offering during the service. If you are available to read or usher for any of the Christmas worship services, please contact Amy at amy@coslc.com or signup [HERE](#).

Winter/Spring Virtual Lector Sign-Up Now Available!

Virtual Lectors, Winter/Spring sign-up is now available on SignUpGenius for Jan-May 2021. The readings can be recorded at your convenience from home. Please sign up 1x/month to fill the open spots. Sign up under volunteers on our website. New virtual lectors welcome!

Winter/Spring In-Person Worship Assistants Sign-Up Now Available!

We are inviting YOU to serve by being a lector and/or usher at our 8:30 & 10:00 a.m. worship services. All adults, middle school, and high school youth are encouraged to participate. Sign-up on our website under volunteers [HERE](#) to serve as a worship assistant. If you would like more information, contact Amy Berken at amy@coslc.com.

Decorating for Advent & Christmas

Sunday, December 5th

We will be decorating the sanctuary for the season of Advent and Christmas on Sunday, December 5th following the 10:00 a.m. worship service. We need a bunch of helpers to transform our sanctuary into a warm welcoming place of peace, joy, and love as we prepare for the birth of Christ! Everyone in the congregation is welcome to join in! For more information contact Amy at amy@coslc.com.



Youth & Family Ministry

No Classes December 26th and January 2nd

There will be no confirmation or Sunday school classes on Sunday, December 26 and Sunday, January 2. I look forward to seeing you in the new year!



Birthday Party for Baby Jesus

Friday, December 8th, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

The birthday party for baby Jesus will be Friday, December 10 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall.

We will have dinner, decorate Christmas cookies, make Christmas ornaments, play games, hear a Christmas story, and of course, we will have birthday cake! There is a suggested donation of \$10 per family. Here's a list of suggested birthday gifts, all donations will be given to the Strong Baby Sanctuary Ministry at Hephatha Lutheran Church.

Onesie's size 0 to 24 months
Pajama's size 0 to 24 months
Socks size 0 to 24 months
Receiving blankets
Towels and washcloths
Diapers size 0 to 5T
Baby wipes
Baby soap, shampoo, lotion

For questions, please contact Kim Lewin at kim@coslc.com please **RSVP** [Birthday Party for Baby Jesus](#).

Hephatha Christmas Stockings

Once again, the youth will be collecting small items to put in Christmas stockings for children ages 3 to 13 years old. Please share the list of items needed with your friends, family, and neighbors. If you would like to make a monetary donation, checks can be made to Christ Our Savior, memo should read Hephatha Stockings. We are looking for small toys, small stuffed animals, games, markers, coloring books, pencils, children's toothbrushes and toothpaste, and candy canes.

Please place all donations in the large bin in the east entryway marked Hephatha Stockings. Please contact Kim Lewin at kim@coslc.com.



Stocking Stuffers

TACOS

This fall, TACOS is back to gathering in-person at Christ Our Savior!



High School TACOS on Tuesday nights from 7:00-8:30 p.m.
Middle School TACOS on Wednesday afternoons from 2:45-5:00 p.m.

If you have any questions about TACOS, please email Wade, at tacos@coslc.com. We hope to see you soon!

Additional TACOS News:

Last month, the Greater Milwaukee Synod spent a day with the Middle School TACOS filming their program and getting to know some of our amazing youth! The synod is planning on creating a video to showcase what TACOS is and does for the community and to share it with other congregations and partners of the synod. So very soon, be on the lookout for the awesome collaboration happening with TACOS and the Greater Milwaukee Synod!

The Silver Spring Intermediate Student Council is slated to help TACOS and COS with the Hephatha Christmas Stocking project! The student council will facilitate a collection of items for the stockings as well as stuffing the stockings onsite in December. We would like to thank SSI Student Council for their collaboration with TACOS and COS!

Finally, Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp in Crystal Falls, MI is once again hosting a Winter Wonderland Retreat and TACOS is planning on going! The date for the retreat is January 14-16. Wade is working on getting all the information together for registration and payment options, so please stay connected through email and our website and Facebook page for all the information you will need regarding retreat logistics.

Special Schedule Note:

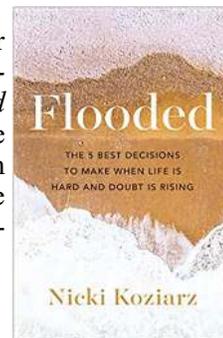
There will be **NO TACOS** on December 28th and 29th, Happy Holidays!

If you have any questions about TACOS, please email Wade, at tacos@coslc.com. We hope to see you soon!

Women's Inspirational Book Group

December 6th & 20th

In December, we will be wrapping up our book study, *Flooded: The 5 Best Decisions to Make When Life Is Hard and Doubt Is Rising* by Nicki Koziarz. We meet on Mondays twice a month from 6:00-7:00 p.m. in the lounge. If you have any questions, contact Amy at 414-975-1228 or email amy@coslc.com.



Outreach Ministries

Giving Tree

Deadline December 5th



If you haven't already done so, bring your gifts for the Giving Tree, with tags attached, to church. You can place them either on the table in the east entryway or under the tree in the narthex. If you have purchased gift cards, place them in the drop-box or bring them to the church office. The dead-

line for all gifts and gift cards is December 5th. We will be delivering them to our sponsored families and ministry partners early/mid-December. If you would like to help deliver gifts or have any questions, contact Amy at amy@coslc.com.

Strong Baby Sanctuary

For the month of December, we will be collecting items to donate to the Strong Baby Sanctuary at Hephatha Lutheran Church in Milwaukee. This ministry provides baby items to moms in need. Here is a list of the items we will be collecting for the month of December.

- Onesies size 0 to 24 months
- Pajamas size 0 to 24 months
- Socks size 0 to 24 months
- Receiving blankets
- Towels and washcloths
- Diapers size 0 to 5T
- Baby wipes
- Baby soap, shampoo, lotion



All items can be dropped off in the donation bin underneath the SOS table in the east entrance marked Birthday Party for Baby Jesus.

If you have questions, or need more information please contact Kim Lewin at kim@coslc.com

Serenity Inns

Tuesday, December 21st

Our next meal at Serenity Inns is on Tuesday, December 21st. Mark Stieglitz will be preparing and delivering the meal this month. If you would like to make some Christmas Cookies, please have them to the church by Noon on Tuesday. If you would like to help with an upcoming meal, please contact Hank Wallenkamp at 262-525-1211 or sign up on the outreach ministry board



Winter Clothing Needed: This month, we will be collecting warm winter clothing for the residents at Serenity Inns. If you have winter coats (XL-3X), hats, mittens, or boots that you would like to donate, drop them off in the entryway and we'll get them to the men at Serenity Inns.

SOS Holiday Meal Funds

Thanksgiving and Christmas

Each year money is raised to purchase both Thanksgiving and Christmas meals for clients of Sussex Outreach Services. Hundreds of meals are provided which gather families together making special holiday memories around the table. Food costs for holiday meals are anticipated to be higher this year with supply chain challenges. Please consider donating to give a special holiday meal to those who most need it.



Donate funds online at <https://gofund.me/4cb4755a>.

Food Pantry Delivery Needed

We are looking for a volunteer to pick up and deliver donated items from church to the SOS Food Pantry in the month of December. The items need to be picked up once a week, but you can choose a time that works for you. Drop off times at the Food Pantry are from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon Monday-Saturday. Signup [HERE](#) if you are available to help! Question?? Contact Amy at amy@coslc.com



Bread of Healing Meal

Wednesday, December 8th

Our next BOH meal is on Wednesday, December 8th, and we will be making to-go chili meals. We'll be meeting at church on Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning to make, prepare, and assemble the bags. If you would like to become involved in this meal ministry to feed the hungry in Milwaukee, contact Chuck Liedtke at chuck.liedtke@sodexo.com.



Community Banquet Resumes

Thursday, December 9th - COS Setup & Desserts

COS will be helping with Setup & Desserts on Thursday, December 9th for the Community Banquet meal at St James Catholic Church. If you are able to help with set-up and/or dessert portions of the evening, reach out to Diane Otto at dotto@wi.rr.com or 262-691-3778. You can also sign up on the outreach board.

If you are unable to attend, but would like to bake, we are looking for some simple desserts such as cookies and bars. They can be dropped off in advance at COS in the entryway by Thursday at 3:00 p.m.

Please label the desserts as Community Banquet. As always, thank you for your help!



Outreach Ministries

SOS Food Pantry- Monday Shift

Our Monday Shift from 5:00-7:00 p.m. at the SOS Food Pantry is still SUSPENDED at this time. SOS will contact us when they are able to resume in-person volunteers.



Socktober Results

We collected 565 pairs of socks during our October sock drive. These socks will be donated to our ministry partners to help them stay warm and healthy during the cold winter months.

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