

Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church

January 2022 Newsletter

Good Tidings!

...from Interim Pastor Michael Anderson

Matthew 2:1-2

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising and have come to pay him homage."

The scripture quoted above tells part of the story of the wise men following a star to find the newborn Christ child – it is the classic gospel reading for the observance of the *Epiphany of our Lord*. The word Epiphany can be defined as: manifest or manifestation. So, we might understand Epiphany as the time set aside for our honoring and contemplating the glory and mystery of God being manifest to humanity in Christ. While Jesus may have been born in ancient history, Christ still comes to us and is manifest in this life each and every day. It's really quite the gift! The presence of God revealing itself in creation all the time! May God give us eyes to see and ears to hear!

The Matthew story of the magi following the star until it led them to the baby Jesus might be good encouraging scripture for the moment in history that Christ Our Savior is walking through. Having entered a period of transition by initiating a call process to search for a new pastor, a whole lot of the work that the congregation will engage in will be the work of the discernment. That is to say, the congregation will engage in a prayerful process of learning about itself in order that it might gain greater clarity around the type of pastoral leadership it needs to move into its next season of mission. When a congregation pursues the mission of God's kingdom, invariably you are led into encounters with Christ. This isn't just good news. It's **GREAT** news.

What's *great* about this news is ultimately that it's challenging, invigorating, and faithful. Perhaps we might say that this period of learning that COS is living through is one of learning to watch for the rising of the star that will continue to lead the community in the way of Christ for the foreseeable future. To be a 21st century church is to live with many different demands on who we think we should be and what we

think we should be doing or how we are going to preserve what we've had or how we're going to become something else in the future. But one thing that remains the same is that you can never have a church engaged in any learning about itself or moving in any direction at all without being grounded by the one who illuminates and gives life to all: Jesus Christ.

In this season of learning, discernment, and transition may you be sustained by the comfort and inspiration of the Holy Spirit and grounded in the practices of our faith tradition – prayer, worship, and the sacraments - that nurture us, give us our unity, and offer us life.

In Christ,
Rev. Michael Anderson



Resolutions

One of the most awe inspiring traits of humankind is the vast range of depths we are capable of becoming. Humankind produces the likes of Harriet Tubman and Albert Einstein, but also Adolf Hitler and Jeffrey Dahmer. Humans are capable of truly awesome and awful legacies. And yet, for the vast majority of humans, our lives and our actions will never be recorded in history books. For this reason, we might falsely assume that our lives and our actions are not of great consequence and that our lot is simply to get by day to day, paycheck to paycheck, or year to year, simply minding our own business and attending to our own concerns. But this assumption denies the truth we hear in God's word.

Beloved child of God, your life matters. Your actions, your words, the way you choose to live each day – these things are of great significance. First of all, because in a pragmatic sense it is rarely, if ever, individual humans who accomplish greatness all by themselves. People forget that the phrase "Pull yourselves up by your own bootstraps" was originally said in jest because of the impossibility of it. Humans exist in relationship with one another, and it is through collective effort and through the support of community that the greatest accomplishments of humankind have been enacted.



But secondly, and more to the point of this article, your life and actions matter because you have been called and chosen to help bear the kingdom of heaven into the

world. Yes, you! This is what we proclaim in our common Christian faith – Christ has accomplished the salvation of humankind, but has called his followers into the work of bringing about the community of God in its fullness in our

communities. By our words and our actions, by the legacies we enact with our lives, we can advance the unfolding experience of the divine in this world. We can join with Christ's movement to care for those who are hungry or sick; we can stand for justice on behalf of those who are imprisoned or oppressed; we can work to ensure that the immigrant and the refugee are welcomed and provided for in our land, all because of the truth of creation's abundance and God's compassion for all of the family of humankind that has been revealed through Jesus.

Or, we can not. We can choose to pay no heed to the Way of Christ, and just focus on our own business and our own concerns. God gives us the power to choose – the full range of humankind's depths are possible for us. But some choices are grounded in love of neighbor. Some choices foster increased wellness and wholeness for ourselves and others. Some choices increase the justice and compassion in the world and set the stage for a better tomorrow. God invites us to choose life! To experience the abundant life found in following Christ's Way. There are folks who like to ring in the new year by setting resolutions for themselves to guide their choices for the coming year. I invite you to consider the how God is calling you into the promise and possibility of 2022, and to reflect on what legacy you will create with the choices you make. May the blessed Creator of the Cosmos watch over you and guide you in 2022.

Blessings, Pastor Joe

[Winter/Spring In-Person Worship Assistants - Sign-Up Now Available!](#)

It's time to resume our worship assistant teams! Calling all Communion Assistants, Bread Bakers, Altar Guild, Offering Counters, Hosts, Lectors, and Ushers. We are inviting YOU to serve! 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 to serve but are new to the role, reach out to Amy Berken at amy@coslc.com



[Un-Decorating](#)

Sunday, January 9th

While less fun, but still necessary, we need a few people to help take down the Christmas decorations. We will be meeting after the 10:00 a.m. worship service on Sunday, January 9th. The more hands, the quicker the work! For more information contact Amy Berken at amy@coslc.com.



Removing of the Greens

Council Updates

[We Have an Interim! What's next?](#)

In December, the council began discussing the Mission Exploration Team (MET). We have begun by determining what the make-up of the MET should be. We will begin gathering names and reaching out to potential members over the next few months. This team will be responsible for completing 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.

The open forums we had before the annual meeting seemed to be well received. Thank you to those that were able to attend. We are looking to implement more over the next few months regarding our transition, and what the council and interim are/will be doing. Watch for these open forum informational meeting announcements in the bulletin, newsletter, and in our digital communications through constant contact, Facebook and our website.



[Update on Worship at COS:](#)

Through prayer and discussion over the past months, the council has determined that our Covid-19 ministry plan needs to be adapted to the needs of the congregation. Beginning December 12th, we discontinued the use of the sign-up genius and the limit on our worship numbers, we also resumed singing. We began passing the offering plate again, while still having it available in the narthex and also offered the choice to come to the alter for communion or to use the individual communion kits during our worship services.

Thank you for your patience and flexibility over the past 2 years. We continue to offer online worship and I am excited to announce that with the upgrade to our internet, we will begin streaming our live Sunday morning worship services at the 10:00 service on December 12th.



We will continue to recommend wearing masks and physical distancing. Please respect each other's comfort levels as we worship and share in fellowship.

Please check out more information later in this newsletter and on the Current Information tab on our website. 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

Youth & Family Ministry

Mission trips for 2022!

After two years, it feels so good to be able to announce our mission trip options!

Anyone entering grades 7-12 for the fall of 2022 is eligible for the summer mission trips. Friends are also welcome, and no, they do not have to attend COS to go on a mission trip.

We will be holding a mission trip meeting at 10:45 a.m. on Sunday, January 16 to answer all your questions.

This summer we will be going on two mission trips. The first one will be a local. We will be working with our mission partners and staying at Christ Our Savior. The dates for this trip will be June 26-30! Cost is \$175. A deposit of \$100 is due Sunday, January 23.



Our second trip will take place July 16th through the 22nd and we will be going to Chicago! The cost for this trip is \$360. A deposit of \$160 is due January 23.



Forms are located on our church website at coslc.com under learn and grow then click on youth ministries or click [HERE](#). For questions, please contact Kim Lewin at kim@coslc.com

Confirmation Guest House Snack Bags

Once again, our seventh and eighth grade confirmation classes will be sponsoring food items for the Milwaukee Guest House. They have asked for 75 snack bags per week.



Items needed:

- Large brown lunch bags
- Zip-Lock sandwich baggies
- Case of bottled water
- Cookies homemade, or store bought; individually packaged
- Chips individually bags
- Granola bars individually wrapped
- Beef sticks individually wrapped
- 3-to-5-pound bags of fruit; apples, oranges, pears, cuties

Each week a different small group will pack the 75 snack bags which will be delivered Monday morning. If you have questions, please contact Kim Lewin at kim@coslc.com

Happy New Year Everyone!

To start, let's highlight the amazing work that TACOS did in collaboration with the Silver Spring Intermediate Student Council! In December, the SSI



Student Council held a donation drive in conjunction with the confirmation program for the Hephatha Stocking Drive. Students collected a whole cart load of items to add to all the Christmas cheer at COS. And then on December 12th, members of the student council helped stuff 85 stockings for families at SOS. Thank you to our SSI friends!

As we head into the new year, there are some minor changes coming for TACOS. High School TACOS will no longer be meeting weekly on Tuesdays at 7:00-8:30pm, but will be gathering monthly on a selected date of every month! Middle School TACOS programming will remain the same. To accommodate the busy lives of our high school youth while still being able to engage with them on a deeper level, we will work into a new routine of less scheduled gatherings but more time for enriching connections and service projects. Our first High School TACOS monthly gathering will be **Late Night Pancake Study Session on January 18th from 6:00-9:00 p.m.** TACOS are welcome to gather at COS for a pancake dinner and study hard for the start of their semester exams the following day. Bringing study buddies is highly recommended!

Also happening in the month of January, TACOS will be attending Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp's Winter Wonderland Retreat on January 14th-16th. That Friday afternoon, we will be loading up a 15-passenger van and hitting the road for the beautiful Upper Peninsula! For those who are attending, Wade will be communicating last minute and final details as the date approaches so make sure to stay on top of emails and communications. We will be sure to capture all the fun we have throughout the retreat to share with you all on our website and Facebook page!

We hope you all have a safe and healthy start to the new year!

Souper Bowl of Caring Sunday

February 13, 2022

It is good to bring back our Souper Bowl of Caring!

We will be collecting money on Sunday; February 13. All proceeds go to SOS food pantry.



Outreach Ministries

Giving Tree

Generosity & Gratitude!

Your response has been amazing! Thank you for all the gifts and gift cards you donated this Christmas! Your generosity blessed so many people!!

We were able to deliver over 50 gifts to our three sponsored families (including 12 children) from the Christmas Clearing Council. One of the moms was visibly emotional while we were there delivering gifts and was so extremely appreciative!

In addition, we distributed 114 gift cards to our ministry partners, including 17-Serenity Inns, 25-Hephatha Lutheran Church, 13-Cross Lutheran Church, 25-Eras Senior Network (plus 8 books of stamps), and 34-Sussex Outreach Services.

A huge thank you to Sarah Strobusch and Kristin McCoy and their confirmation small group students who helped with the Giving Tree. Sarah stated it the best, "THIS is what it is all about!!!" Your love and support shined brightly sharing the gospel message this Christmas.



Food Pantry Delivery Needed

We are looking for volunteers to pick up and deliver donated items from church to the SOS Food Pantry in 2022. Select the month you would like to serve on SignUpGenius [HERE](#). The items need to be picked up once a week, but you can choose a time that works for you. Food Pantry Drop Off Times: Monday - Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon.



Serenity Inns

Tuesday, January 18th

Our next meal at Serenity Inns is on Tuesday, January 18th. If you would like to help with the meal, please contact Hank Wallenkamp at 262-525-1211 or sign up on the outreach ministry board. Also, desserts are always needed and appreciated! If you would like to bake a sweet treat, please have it to the church by Noon on Tuesday.



Winter Clothing Needed: We will continue 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.

Mac-n-More

This January, we'll be building another pallet of nutritious foods along with our traditional gift of mac-n-cheese to share with our brothers and sisters at Cross Lutheran Church in Milwaukee.

We can share God's love by ensuring their nutritional needs are met while we help to make their tummies full. Let's see how tall we can build our tower of food this year!



Fruit - Canned in 100% juice or dried (e.g. raisins)
Canned beans, tuna, and chicken
Vegetables - canned, low sodium
Shelf stable dairy - such as boxed milk
Whole grain, low sugar grain products like brown rice or non-sugary whole grain cereal
Mac-n-cheese

Bread of Healing Meal

Wednesday, January 12th

Our next BOH meal is on Wednesday, January 12th, 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

Thursday, February 10th Cooking

We had a wonderful bunch of helping hands that setup and made desserts for the meal on Thursday, December 9th. We just received the schedule for 2022! Community Banquet will resume in February, as they have decided not to schedule meals in January.

Looking ahead, Christ Our Savior will have the "cooking" role on Thursday, February 10th.

If you would like to help with meal planning or cooking this meal, reach out to Diane Otto at dotto@wi.rr.com or 262-691-3778. You can also sign up on the outreach board.

