

Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church

December 2022

Call Process & Update

A congregation's Call Process contains several "mile markers" by which the journey is charted:

- A pastor announces that they are leaving the congregation.
- An interim pastor is identified, merges with congregational life, and begins to develop a sense of the congregation and a familiarity with the parishioners.
- **COS is in this stage** -----> A Mission Exploration Team (MET) is formed and works to engage the congregation in the self-learning and investigation that reveals a thorough understanding of the congregation's history and journey, the present reality of the congregation, where the congregation believes God is calling them, and what kind of pastoral leadership might best partner with them in pursuing that mission. This is the meat and potatoes of the Call Process.

Surveys and Focus Groups have been conducted to Gathered congregational input on perceived needs, values, and mission.

The MET is drafting Christ Our Savior's Ministry Site Profile and preparing for the congregational Town Hall Meeting December 11th following the late service.

- *The church council is at work identifying candidates for the Call Committee.*
- The Church Council receives the Call Committee's pastoral candidate recommendation...
- ...and at long last...The congregation votes on the Church Council's recommended pastoral candidate and a call is issued.



Good Tidings in Times of Transition

I love Advent.

For some, it's the "waiting" element of the season the nurtures them and draws them into the mystery of the soon arriving Christ child. For others it is the giddy anticipation of awaiting Christmas – breaking up the monotony of the recent past, a chance to prepare a beloved recipe, an occasion for long loved traditions.

What I love about Advent is just the blatant hope of whole thing. This season hopes to hold two things about the nature of God and the reality of life in tension: 1) What is; and 2) What is yet to be finished.

WHAT IS

Advent points to the God that is and the creation that is. It tells us beautiful stories that draw us into the mystery that somehow all that is in this world, belongs. My role then, as a person of faith, is to not resist the ways in which that truth will expand me and in that, teaching me about what matters to God. Teasing out the details of that statement and trusting it can take a lifetime, but it's also a shorthand way of being reminding that there is no part of life/ creation that is not filled with the presence of God. That's good news that I need to hear, and it's something I need to learn from.

WHAT IS YET TO BE FINISHED

Advent also lets us know that while God fills all things and that everything that exists belongs to God and to this life that there are parts of this world that haven't reached the state of completion yet. This very earth, in its geological and climatic shifts moves towards a new future. So does the universe, somehow expanding and speeding up in that expansion at the same time. We are not finished in our growth and expansion as human beings. And we are not yet done growing into God's desired and promised vision for God's own creation, "Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" (Isaiah 43:19). What is yet to be finished is God's vision for justice and love to reach their fullness of expression for all of humanity and creation. God doesn't need our belief. God craves restorative justice, wholeness, and relief from oppression and persecution for God's people. For the hungry to be fed, the sick to be cared for, and for any in need to receive comfort. We are invited to share in this work and be a part of the fulfillment of God's vision.

A PASTORAL HOPE

For you all in this coming year, in your personal lives and in your congregational life, my hope for you is that you will be awakened to the loving, compassionate presence of God in your life, that you will be "wowed" in how you are grown in your capacity to see that same presence in the people you encounter in your day-to-day life and that rather than being dismayed at the challenges and hardships that are ever-present in this life, you will discern how God is calling you to be a part of what God is finishing in this creation by attending to the world around you.

In Christ,
Pastor Michael

From the Associate Pastor

I was speaking with someone the other day who lamented how their holiday season preparations were leaving them feel drained and run down. Somewhat guiltily, they admitted to wishing they could opt out of the trappings of Christmas.

People of God – let my gift to you this holiday season be the word of your pastor inviting you to slow down, to prioritize rest and stillness, and to ground yourself in the promise that Christ comes into the world with or without all the trappings of gatherings and gifts and other traditions we have accumulated.

Christmas is our celebration of the birth of Jesus who sets us free from captivity to sin and death and gives us the gift of new life. If we realize our holiday expectations leave us feeling trapped by commitments that wear us down and steal our joy, may the Holy Spirit stir us to receive anew the promise that God welcomes us to the beloved community just as God made us.

You are already a gift to the world, and are not required to first wrap yourself in the shiny bows and tinsel that are so highly prized for how they catch the eye. Recall, dear people, how the first Christmas was marked by simple swaddling clothes in a common stable. The shepherds greeted the Christ child in their work clothes having just come in from the fields, and Mary and Joseph welcomed them with nothing more than humble thanks for their tidings of joy.

So may you, beloved child of God, experience the abundant joy and hopeful expectation of our Advent season. May you embrace Christ's promise of liberation and prepare for the celebration of God's arrival with practices that connect you to Jesus' gift of new life. And may you ground yourself, your words and your actions, in the reason for the season – the presence of Immanuel, God with us. Amen.

Pastor Joe

Decorating for Advent & Christmas

Sunday, December 4th

We will be decorating the sanctuary for the season of Advent and Christmas on Sunday, December 4th following the 10AM 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



Christmas Worship Schedule

6:30 p.m. Wednesdays in Advent

Christmas Eve with Holy Communion

10:00 a.m., 4:00 p.m., 6:30 p.m.
(6:30 p.m. - candlelight)

9:00 a.m. Christmas Day with Holy Communion

9:00 a.m. New Years Day with Holy Communion

**Worship Assistants Needed for
Christmas Eve & Christmas Day**

Ushers: We are looking for a few people to hand out bulletins before our worship service.

Lectors: We need lectures to read at each service. We will send you the readings in advance.

Communion Assistants: We need two people to distribute bread, and two people to collect cups.

Any questions or for more information contact Amy at amy@coslc.com

Sign up to help with worship during the Christmas season online or by clicking [HERE](#)



*Christmas Worship
Schedule*

Christmas Eve & Christmas Day Lectors, Communion Assistants, and Ushers Needed

We are looking for lectors to read 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. We need some ushers to hand out bulletins before worship and help with offering during the service. Also, needed are two individuals to distribute bread and 2 people to hold the discard bowls during Communion. If you are available to read, usher, or assist with Communion for any of the Christmas worship services, sign up [HERE](#), or reach out to Amy at amy@coslc.com



Year-End Stewardship Reminders

1. Did you know that you can donate stocks directly to COS? If done properly, you may be able to reduce your overall tax liability; even if you take the Standard deduction. The process is quite simple. For instructions, please contact the Church office: office@coslc.com *

2. IRA Required Minimums – Do you have a required withdrawal due in an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) for 2022? Similar to the above, you may be able to get a favorable tax treatment on donations made through a Qualified Charitable Contribution (QCD). Rather than liquidating securities held within your IRA, you may be able to direct them to COS and avoid paying capital gains. *

* As with all financial decisions, please consult with your Investment professional to determine suitability.

3. Year-End Catch-up Contributions – Are you behind in your giving? Please use the green envelopes in the Narthex to designate how you wish your year-end gifts to be used; Capital Fund, Mission & Outreach, etc.

4. **Most Importantly**, consider giving your most precious resource, your time, to continue the mission of Christ Our Savior. There are many ways to help augment your financial investment in COS by volunteering to directly serve in our ministry. There are many options such as serving Communion and Ushering that don't require an additional time commitment. Serve while you worship!! If you are interested, please contact Amy Berken at amy@coslc.com.



Giving Tree

If you haven't already done so, bring your unwrapped 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. We will be delivering the gifts to our ministry partners early/mid-December. If you would like to help deliver gifts or have any questions, contact Amy at amy@coslc.com.



Fellowship Time – Thank you's!

And Please join us!

Over the last number of months, if you have had an opportunity to visit the Fellowship Room before/after/between worship services on a Sunday morning, you may have found a delicious treat or two to go with a hot cup of coffee or tea, and some great conversations. The tasty goodies have been with our thank you's to many bakers, shoppers, and families, who have volunteered to contribute to this special time. We are grateful for all who shared creative or new recipes, and our favorites! The conversations usually happen without any planning, thanks to everyone who stops by to share in this time, with information about COS or discussions about our faith and community, words of concern or encouragement for each other, attentive listening ears, and plenty of laughs and smiles to go around.

Whether you are a “regular”, or if you haven't yet had the chance to check out this time, please consider joining us, whenever it works best for you! Connect with someone you know, or someone new, and enjoy a scrumptious snack.



If you are inspired to help with the Fellowship Time, we appreciate your willingness to make or purchase one of your favorites to share; please sign up in Fellowship Room or online with SignUp Genius, to bring 2 dozen items as you choose (home-made or store-bought; muffins, bread, donuts, cupcakes, bars, cookies, brownies, etc.--NO NUTS, please, due to allergies!) – and drop off at church on table in the entryway by Saturday night or by 8:30 a.m. on Sunday.

Thanks, again, to all, and we look forward to seeing you soon! (Questions, please contact Marion Jaskulski marjask5@wi.rr.com.)

Winter/Spring Worship Assistants Sign-Up Now Available!

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



Children, Youth, and Family Education

Preparations are underway for the 2022 Digital Christmas Pageant. Our Sunday School youth have been recording clips at church and from home that will be stitched together for our premiere showing on December 18th. The showing will be at 9:15a.m. in the North end of the Fellowship Hall, between our worship services. The Digital Christmas Pageant will also be made available online so our youth can share their production with extended families.



TACOS Update

A brief update from the Teens Around the Community Of Sussex ministry – our middle school weekly gatherings continue to meet after school on Wednesdays when school is in session. We gather in the youth room in the North end of the hall. Conversations have begun with the Cooperating Churches Of Sussex around the possibility of TACOS transitioning from a Christ Our Savior ministry to a CCOS ministry. Until we determine whether this is the right next step for the TACOS organization, we will continue to hold off on seeking a new TACOS Director. Stay tuned for the results of these conversations in 2023.



Call Process Update! Town Hall Meeting Scheduled Ministry Site Profile is Available for Review!

December 11, 2022, after the late service the congregation is invited to attend a Town Hall Meeting to review Christ Our Savior's Ministry Site Profile with the Mission Exploration Team. Greater Milwaukee Synod Bishop Paul Erickson and Assistant to the Bishop for Congregations in Mission Kristin Nielson will take part in the meeting

Over the last several months Christ Our Savior's MET (Hank Wallenkamp, Edie Schaffner, Patrick Ingle, Carolyn Casper, Toni Snyder, Roger Johnson, and Lauren Bischel) has worked to listen to how the congregation hears God calling it forward in mission as it seeks to call a new pastor. The MET's greatest hope is that its work in the MSP honestly reflects Christ Our Savior's sense of identity, mission, and the needed qualities in a new senior pastor.

Click [HERE](#) to read the MSP!

See you on December 11th!



Join Us at Our Town Hall Meeting

Save the Date! Annual Meeting Scheduled Sunday, December 18, 2022

Sunday, December 18, 2022, Christ Our Savior will hold the first of two meetings to address the business of its regular Annual Meeting. **Following each worship service** (8:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m.) members are invited to gather to receive annual ministry reports and to elect new Church Council members. In January, a second meeting will be held at a date TBD for the congregation to receive end-of-year financial reports and to approve the annual budget. Thank you all for everything you do to make Christ Our Savior's ministry come to life; we look forward to seeing you on Sunday, December 18!



ANNUAL
CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING

Strong Baby Sanctuary

During Advent, we will be collecting baby items to benefit the Strong Baby Sanctuary program at Hephatha Lutheran Church in Milwaukee. We will be collecting the items listed below. Items can be placed under the Christmas tree in the narthex or in the bin in our east entryway.

Items needed: Diapers (all sizes), wipes, baby shampoo/wash, baby lotion, and diaper cream.

New: Onesies 0-12 months, baby blankets, sleepsacks 0-6 months, washcloths, and hooded towels.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Amy at amy@coslc.com



Community Banquet

Just a friendly reminder that our last Community Banquet for this year was on Thursday, November 10th. There are no meals in December. See you in 2023. If you have any questions, email Diane Otto at diane.lee.otto@gmail.com.



Fellowship Meal

COS Cabaret Show

A huge thank you to all our singers and to everyone who came out to watch the show on Friday, November 4th. For those of you who missed it, we had 7 great singers who performed songs from Broadway musicals such as Phantom of the Opera, country favorites such as "Friends in Low Places" by Garth Brooks, a fun classic "Hello Muddah, Hello Faddah (A letter from Camp)" by Allan Sherman, just to name a few. Also, thank you to those who donated items for our bake sale during the show's intermission. We collected \$380 in freewill offerings from this event that will benefit our outreach ministries.

Thank You!

Serenity Inns

Tuesday, December 20th

Our next meal at Serenity Inns is on Tuesday, December 20th.

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 the meal, please contact Hank

Wallenkamp at 262-525-1211 or signup on the outreach ministry board. The men so appreciate the meal and the time you dedicate praying for them and supporting them on their road to recovery.



Bread of Healing Meal

Wednesday, December 14th

Our next BOH meal is on Wednesday, December 14th. If you missed out helping last month, and would like to help this month, join us in the COS kitchen on Wednesday morning at

9:00 a.m. as we prepare, make, and

assemble the to-go meals. 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 or Larry & Edie Schaffner at elschaffner02@live.com



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