

Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church

May 2023

COS Mission Statement

A Community Gathered in Christ, Fed by God's
Word, Sent to Serve...

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.
- 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 gather congregational input on perceived needs, values, and mission.
 - * The MET drafted Christ Our Savior's Ministry Site Profile.
 - * A Town Hall Meeting was held for congregational review of the MSP and prepared for the congregational Town Hall Meeting last December
- **COS is in this stage** > A Call Committee is formed. COS's Call Committee is Aaron Dietz, Edie Schaffner, Angie Lura, Dave Abresch, Mike Singer, and Brynn Haigh (youth rep). ***The COS Call Committee has received its orientation and is proceeding with its work. Please hold them in prayer.***
- The Church Council receives the Call Committee's pastoral candidate recommendation.
- The congregation votes on the Church Council's recommended pastoral candidate and a call is issued.

In Christ,
Interim Pastor Michael Anderson

Good Tidings in Times of Transition

Ephesians 2:11-14

So then, remember that at one time you Gentiles by birth, called "the uncircumcision" by those who are called "the circumcision" — a physical circumcision made in the flesh by human hands — remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to

the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us.

One of the very first issues confronting the emerging Christian church was whether Jesus and his gospel were inclusive of people who were not Jewish. Jesus was Jewish and remained Jewish until his death. His disciples were Jewish. Jesus' Jewish roots and observance are what empowered him mightily in his ministry: they allowed him to critique his own tradition. Jesus did not throw the baby out with the bathwater regarding his Jewish formation, he honored it while transcending those elements that were self-serving rather than God serving. All religions benefit from adherents that can do so. It is needed. When religion is only concerned with itself rather than pointing to the larger truth beyond it or when it concerned with itself at a level where there is a human cost, it ceases to be of use. Including Christianity. The argument in the early Church about who Jesus and the gospel were for and who could be a part of the emerging Christian sect might seem odd to us in modern times, but it was a critical issue in the emerging first century church. Thanks to Paul's work, those that did not have Jewish roots were included in the new church.

While that issue might have been resolved in the 1st century, Christianity often seems on the verge of losing the meaning of that teaching: Jesus and his gospel transcend whatever divisions we attempt to erect that create groups of insiders and outsiders. Borrowing Paul's language from the Ephesians text quoted above, Christ is our peace and in him all dividing walls are broken down. There is no "insider" or "outsider," or "us" and "them." All there is, is all of us, in Christ. He is still our peace. All our peace. And that means he is our peace when we attempt to go around this truth by rebuilding tired dividing walls/ hostilities that humans have loved from time immemorial and insist that they are bigger or more powerful than Creator God — dividing walls like nationality, skin color, resident/ immigrant, class, sex, gender, wealthy/ impoverished, healthy/ sick, etc. Christ breaks down dividing walls so that we know that it is not possible to be divided in Christ AND in order that we are relieved of the burden of not facing each other. Avoidance solves nothing in life. Christ is the total opposite of that impulse. He does not redeem all creation by avoiding it. He embraces and becomes whatever needs transformation. That is the meaning of incarnation. The symbol for it is the cross.

How will we, like Jesus, know when we should critique our own tradition? Perhaps it will be when we recognize the ways we have come to think that we have something to lose in our buildings and institutional structures and protect them at the expense of what mattered to Jesus: people. Can we acknowledge our fears? Can we, instead of tending them, give them to God? The love and inclusion of the gospel of Jesus Christ is always far ahead of the church. While that may be ever so, may it be the pillar of cloud that leads us by day and the pillar of fire by night that leads us to a promised life in which the hostility between us is broken down.

In Christ,
Interim Pastor Michael Anderson

From the Associate Pastor

The words of the psalmist declare, “Be still and know that I am God.” The gospel writers tell us that Jesus often withdrew from the crowds in order to pray. Genesis’ opening story of creation describes how even God set aside time to rest and established the importance of Sabbath time for all of creation. Our scriptures remind us again and again that God’s rhythm of life calls us into seasons of restful abiding in God’s presence followed by seasons of fruitful activity before returning to the holy practices of Sabbath keeping.

I have a friend in ministry who sometimes says folks’ push back on this assertion by saying, “But Pastor, doesn’t that story in Genesis show that God calls us to activity first, and only after we have completed all our work that we enter into times of rest?” As he shares with them, “What do you imagine God was doing before everything else existed?” The Lord abides, and calls all of creation to share in practices of working from a place of restfulness. In the kingdom of God, we do not need to earn rest – this is yet one more way that God invites us into experiences of grace and abundance.

I spoke with the council last year about making time in 2023 for me to take a three and a half month leave of absence. After the challenges we faced together navigating pandemic practices and staffing changes as a community, I recognized a need within myself to create intentional space for being still with God and attending to the direction of the Spirit for this next chapter of ministry.

A few folks inquired about my plans for this time away. If you’re curious, the short list includes: taking naps, reading books and listening to podcasts, spending time with family and friends, journaling, and following where the Holy Spirit piques my curiosity for what God has already been up to in our midst. I will also be holding our congregation in prayer during my time away, and trusting that the Creator who calls us to common mission is doing the heavy lifting of fostering transformation in our community. I look forward to rejoining with all of you in the fall to continue in our practices of being **gathered** in Christ, **fed** by God’s Word, and **sent** to serve the world around us.

Blessings,
Pr. Joe (he/him)

Be Still
AND KNOW
THAT I am
GOD.

Pastor Joe’s Time Away

Scripture reveals to us the way God’s intention for humankind is to have a rhythm of restful seasons followed by fruitful seasons, and then a return to abiding in the restful stillness of God’s presence. Our shared time of transition at Christ Our Savior has been a turbulent time as we navigated together the challenges of pandemic and pastoral change. In the fall of 2022, Pr. Joe approached the council about taking a leave of absence to make space for renewal and stillness in the presence of the Holy Spirit.

After prayer and discernment, the council invited Pr. Joe to begin his time away on May 1st in order that he would return by August 16th and share in our congregation’s preparations for fall ministry. We invite you to share in a mutual practice of holding Pr. Joe in prayer during his Sabbath time as he also holds the community of Christ Our Savior in continued prayerful reflection.



Worship Times Changes

As our community shifts into spring and summer, we will be adjusting our worship schedule to reflect the needs of the congregation and the responsible stewardship of our staff time and resources. Our final 6:00 a.m. Sunday evening worship for the season was held April 30th. We will continue to worship at 8:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. through May 21st; on May 28th, we will shift to a single 9:15 a.m. worship service. As we move from the summer into the fall, we will announce any subsequent changes to our worship as needed. Join us for worship as God gathers our community into deeper solidarity.



Adopt-a-Garden

This spring, we invite you and your family to adopt a garden to help keep our property looking top notch!! We have about 12 garden and flower beds around our church that need occasional weeding and care throughout the summer months and into early fall. Each area is small in size, so commitment is only 1-2 hours per month. Adopt your garden plot on SignUpGenius under volunteers on our website or [HERE](#). If you have questions, contact Amy at amy@coslc.com.



SUMMER Invitation to Serve during Worship!

Our worship assistant SignUpGenius is now available for you to select your dates over the summer. We will be having one worship service beginning Sunday, May 28th (Memorial Day Weekend) at 9:15 a.m. Signups are available for Altar Guild, Bread Bakers, Communion Assistants, Lectors, Offering Counters, Hosts, and Ushers. All adults, high school youth, and confirmation students are encouraged to participate. If you would like to serve, but are new to the role, we will provide you with training. Serving during worship is a rewarding experience, so we hope that you will consider this opportunity. You can find the sign-up on our website under volunteers or click [HERE](#). Contact Amy Berken for more information at amy@coslc.com.

VOLUNTEER



Join us for Fellowship Time!

Sundays 9:00-11:30 a.m.

After our worship services each Sunday, we have time set aside to check in with our fellow church members to see what's been happening in each other's lives. It is one of the ways that we can build a supportive church community. It is a wonderful time to slow down to have a cup of coffee or goodie off our fellowship table. Hope you will join us for conversation this month!

If you are interested in bringing a goodie for fellowship time, sign-up [HERE](#). Please have them at church on Sunday mornings by 8:30am or drop them off on the table in the entryway on Saturday night. If you have questions, contact Marion Jaskulski at marjask5@wi.rr.com.



Community Banquet

Thursday, May 11th

We had 6 volunteers who helped with our role of clean-up in April. A special thank you to all the helping hands! This month, we do not have a role, but everyone is still welcome to come for the community meal at St James at 5:30 p.m. However, please mark your calendars for Thursday, June 22nd as we serve in two roles: setup and cooking.



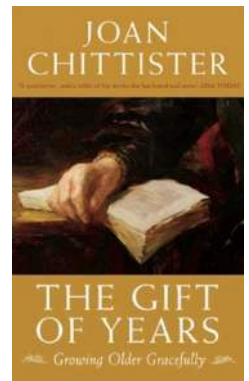
Fellowship Meal

If you would like to help with the June meal, reach out to Diane Otto at dotto@wi.rr.com or 262-691-3778.

Women's Inspirational Book Group

Beginning Wednesday, May 10th

We are exploring a Women's Inspirational Book Group in May. We will be reading the book, *The Gift of Years: Growing Older Gracefully*. The author, Joan Chittister, is an International spiritual writer and lecturer. We are tentatively planning on meeting once a week on Wednesday afternoons beginning May 10th. Times/dates may change based upon what works for the group. If you are interested in participating in this book group, please reach out to Toni Snyder at tonisnyder37@gmail.com



Hygiene Items - Thank You

Thank you for all the donations of hygiene items during our Lenten collection. We filled several boxes with toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo, body wash, razors, and deodorant, etc. These items will be distributed to those who need them at the Bread of Healing Clinic at Cross Lutheran Church.



Lawn Mowers Sign-up Now Available

The sun is out, we've had plenty of rain, and the grass is growing! Time to mow the church lawn! We have a lawn mowing team that keeps our property looking well maintained. We've divided the lawn into front and back halves, each one takes about 1 1/2 hours to cut with one of our riding lawn mowers. If you would like to join the team to mow the church property, sign-up [HERE](#) on SignUpGenius to select dates. Contact Chris Stromberg at c.k.stromberg@gmail.com for training or questions.



Bread of Healing Meal

Wednesday, May 12th

Come join us in the COS kitchen on Wednesday, May 12th at 9:00 a.m. as we prepare, make, and assemble to-go bags. As we move into spring, we will be making sandwiches. If you haven't helped in the past, we welcome you to come. No experience necessary! Just willing hearts and open hands is all you need! If you would like to become involved in feeding the hungry in Milwaukee, contact Chuck Liedtke at chuck.liedtke@sodexo.com and Larry & Edie Schaffner at elschaffner02@live.com



Serenity Inns

Tuesday, May 16th

Our next meal at Serenity Inns is on Tuesday, May 16th. If you haven't served before, we invite you to reach out to Hank and offer your help in preparing a meal for the residents (about 15 men) at Serenity Inns. It can be any of your favorites: spaghetti, sloppy joes, tacos, burgers, etc. You are also welcome to eat dinner with the residents. In addition, we are always looking for desserts. Thank you to those of you who have made cupcakes, bars, and cookies, etc. in the past. Keep on baking! The men at Serenity Inns love them! Any extra food or dessert are used for lunches during the week. If you would like more information or would like to help, reach out to Hank Wallenkamp at 262-525-1211 or signup on the outreach ministry board. Please have all items at church by noon on Tuesday.



Spring/Summer Collection: As you are cleaning out your closets for spring, consider donating gently used shorts, shirts, hats, sunglasses, and light-weight jackets to Serenity Inns. Donations can be placed in the bin in the east entryway.

Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church

N59 W22476 Silver Spring Dr.
Sussex, Wisconsin 53089
Telephone: 262-246-6537

Pastor Michael Anderson - PastorMichael@coslc.com

Pastor Michael cell 414-379-3639

Pastor Joe Wilkinson - PastorJoe@coslc.com

Pastor Joe cell 262-372-1048

Council - council@coslc.com

Amy Berken, Dir. Adult Discipleship & Outreach

Amy@coslc.com

Sandy Hollnagel, Office Manager - office@coslc.com

Direct Deposit - office@coslc.com

Website - www.coslc.com

Wifi SSID: COS password: Gath3redF3dS3nt

Facebook - www.facebook.com/cossussex