

Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church

November 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 gathered congregational input on perceived needs, values, and mission.
 - The MET drafts Christ Our Savior's Ministry Site Profile.
 - A Town Hall Meeting his held for congregational review of the MSP and preparing for the congregational Town Hall Meeting December
- **COS is in this stage** > A Call Committee is formed. COS's Call Committee is Aaron Dietz, Edie Schafner, Angie Lura, Dave Abresch, Mike Singer, and Brynn Haigh (youth rep). ***The COS Call Committee is ready to interview call candidates and awaiting names. 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.

Good Tidings in Times of Transition

Stewardship Edition: Received in Love

Count your blessings. I cannot recall the number of times that I received that advice as a young person while my faith was being formed. Count your blessings. It's an easy lesson to brush off – maybe because of how common the expression is. But there's a lot of wisdom in common expressions that are handed down from generation to generation, and count your blessings is one of those – especially for those formed in the Christian faith. Counting our blessings isn't a moralism, it's a way of looking at the world and way of life. Learning to see life from a standpoint of abundance rather than lack has the power to change our hearts. Counting our blessings puts us in a life posture of awareness of what we receive from God: **everything**. So let's count our blessings today.

God's love is a blessing. God's love can be talked about in general terms: we know that God loves us. We know that God is love (1 John 4:16). But the weight of the power of God's love really begins to hit home as we grow in awareness of the ways we experience it in specific ways. We hear and taste that message on Sundays when we celebrate Holy Communion: The body of Christ, ***given for you***. The blood of Christ, ***shed for you***. These are gifts to us in the imperfect specifics of our lives. To be moved by God's love is to know how it intersects with the parts of us that are hurting and in need of mercy and restoration. When we're clear not just about God's dependability, but also about how the love we're receiving from God impacts us, the kingdom begins to emerge within us so by that grace it can be shared with others in need. When we are aware of what we ***Receive in Love*** from God, we can follow the trajectory of that love into our hearts back out again as a powerful point of connection with the world around us. What we receive in love, we share in love. God's love blesses us. God's love working in and through us blesses the world.

Faith community, church, is a blessing. Complicated life in the church is where we learn about God's grace and love, and what it means for us to become people of faith. Those who fulfill their baptismal vows by supporting us in our growth in faith and love are the saints that journey with us in our baptismal journey. Their smallest gestures come to mean everything to us over time by our inclusion in the life church. Their small gestures teach us that a committed life of faith doesn't need to be grandiose, only humbly offered in

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Good Tidings in Times of Transition continued...

love as an offering of trust in God. The nurturing environment of the congregation is an incubator for our lives and it is an important place for us to see grace and mercy enacted time and time again. It sets for us the example that a life of faith is dynamic and evolving – its very essence is grace – and it is important for us to see God’s abundance displayed in people who care about us, and who we are about.

To incorporate what we receive in love, in community, is a blessing. There are no shortage of occasions in life that will test us. Calling on the memory of God’s love we’ve received from others is a gift that can help us remain grounded for a lifetime. In this season of contemplating stewardship and our response to all that God shares with us may you continue to grow in clarity and conviction that what we receive from God in love is always worthy of sharing.

In Christ,
Interim Pastor Michael Anderson

From the Associate Pastor

Our household has been a family of four a little over a month’s time, and I’m happy to report that #Parenthood2.0 is going very well. In months approaching the birth of our daughter, Eva, we began saying with some frequency, “Things are really going to change around here.” But in those weeks leading up to September 20th, we started adding, “But things were going to change regardless.”

People of God, one of the few constants of this life is the experience of change. Sometimes we welcome change, sometimes we dread change, sometimes we do everything we can to avoid changing until it hurts too much to not change. But like it or lump it, change is inevitable.

As we started to name for ourselves, the fall of 2023 and the subsequent years, were going to bring changes to our household, no matter what choices we made. Folks would keep getting older, the world would change around us, and the relationships and responsibilities that we had would adjust. Change is simply part of life. But for Katheryn and I, we decided that growing from a family of three to four was important to pursue.

Christ Our Savior – in the face of a world that is “going to change regardless” – what is the change that you long for? What change keeps you up at night? These are important

From the Associate Pastor continued...

questions to sit with, and invite our Hopes and our Fears to teach us about ourselves and our needs. But perhaps the most important question for us as a community of faith is, “What is the change that we sense God is inviting us into?” Where do we experience the Holy Spirit’s presence bringing transformation and calling us into God’s activity?

Our congregation has been in this season of discernment, reaffirming our sense of mission that God is calling us to prioritize. We are confident that God is still at work through our faith community, but that this new chapter is going to bring some differences from what we are accustomed. One shift recently discerned is that Christ Our Savior will be entering into a single pastor organizational model. God is at work drawing a new Senior Pastor to help steward this next chapter of ministry in the community. And once they arrive, I will stick around long enough to help onboard them and smooth out the transition as much as possible before my own call at Christ Our Savior sunsets.

Things are really going to change around here. But things were going to change regardless. Ours is not to try and freeze this present moment, nor to return our community to the past; rather, we have the blessed opportunity to share the work of shaping what the coming changes and next chapter of life will look like. I am grateful to have shared this current chapter together, and I am grateful for the remaining time that I get to have with all of you as we work to embody the beloved community of Christ. We share the opportunity to collectively discern the transformation God is inviting us to pursue. Let us embrace what God is up to in this place with boldness, placing our hope and our confidence on the faithful presence of Christ, our Savior.

Blessings,
Pr. Joe (he/him)

Thanksgiving Eve

Thanksgiving Eve Soup (and Pie!) Supper and Worship

Join us on **Wednesday, November 22nd** for a soup and pie supper followed by Thanksgiving worship.

Soup and Pie - 6pm

Thanksgiving Eve Worship - 7pm

If you’re available to help in any way with soup and pie prep or clean-up, please contact the church office:

office@coslc.com or 262-246-6537.

Sunday Morning Fellowship Time

“Wraps” around Worship

From our Mission Statement: A Community Gathered in Christ... Will you Gather with others in COS' Fellowship Hall for Sunday morning Fellowship time, when it works best for you?

8:45am until service... WORSHIP begins at 9:15am... until 10:45am or so after service... Any or ALL of the above?!

Stop in anytime, for a cup of coffee, tea, water, special treat, and time to be together at COS!

New or visiting COS? Or want to become more acquainted with others at COS? You are always welcome and we look forward to connecting! Invite family and friends to join you, too!

Help with Fellowship Time is also gratefully welcomed, and is very flexible, including timing! Contribute goodies, set up, during Fellowship time (visit and listen for ideas or others willing to help, replenish coffee or goodies), clean up, decorations, and more. Sign up in Fellowship Hall or on our [website](#), and we'll be in touch.

Ideas or questions? Contact Marion Jaskulski (MarJask5@wi.rr.com).

Staff Transitions

On Sunday, October 22nd, those gathered in worship blessed Director of Outreach and Discipleship, Amy Berken, as she completed her service at Christ Our Savior. Amy's energy and passion for the church's mission will be sorely missed, but we give God thanks for her contributions during her years of service.

In anticipation and preparation for Christ Our Savior calling a new pastor and for the church's transition to a one pastor church, Interim Pastor Michael Anderson moved to a half time role beginning Monday, October 16th. He will be in the church office on Mondays and Wednesday, 9am-4pm, and by appointment. He and Pastor Joe Wilkinson will share Sunday morning preaching and worship leading responsibilities.

As God continues to work through Christ Our Savior to bless Sussex and the surrounding community, your ongoing prayers for the church's mission are invited.

Stewardship Campaign

See the insert for an update on the Christ Our Savior Stewardship Campaign.

Community Banquet

Thursday, November 9th

Our next Community Banquet is on Thursday, November 9th at 5:30pm at St. James. COS will be in charge of set up and desserts. Any desserts should be to COS by 3pm on the 9th. Anyone willing to help with set up should be to St. James by 4:30pm.

If you are interested in helping with this ministry or have any questions, reach out to Diane Otto at dotto@wi.rr.com or 262-691-3778.

Bread of Healing Meal

Wednesday, November 8th at 9am

The Bread of Healing team will be putting bag lunches together for Cross Lutheran volunteers and food pantry participants. We will assemble them in the COS kitchen to be delivered to Cross that morning. This month, we will continue our fall menu of Chili, Corn Bread and a cookie.

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.

We welcome you to come and be a part of feeding the hungry in Milwaukee.

Winter Clothing Needed



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.

Sunday School

Sunday, November 26th

No Sunday School - Happy Thanksgiving! Enjoy lots of family time together during this long holiday weekend!

Sunday School will resume Sunday, December 3rd.

Coming up in December:

The Children's Christmas program will be December 17th. A birthday party for Jesus in Fellowship Hall will follow the program.

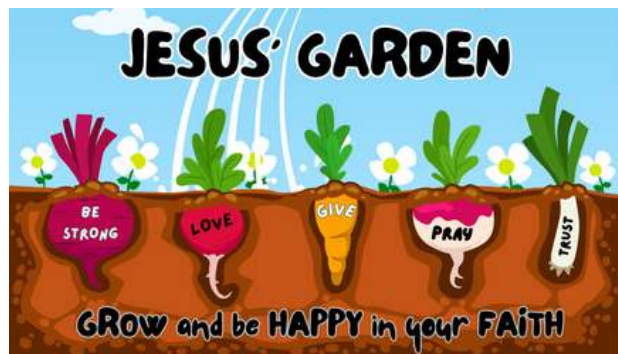
The Sunday school year is underway! All children, grades K4-6th, are welcome.

We begin in worship at 9:15am, children are then dismissed to the classroom following the children's message until 10:15am. Each week we learn about Jesus through stories, games, activities, and play.



You may register for Sunday school at any time of the year. To register scan the QR code or visit coslc.com.

Please contact Carol Rabideau (carol@coslc.com) with any questions you may have.



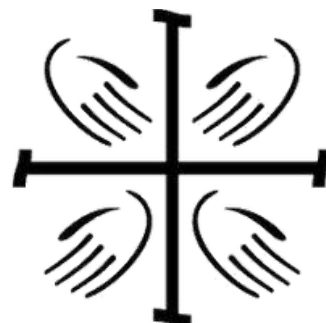
Giving Tree

Once again, Christ Our Savior is joining with our community partners to brighten someone's Christmas. The Giving Tree will be in the Narthex starting **Sunday, November 5th.**

Please consider picking a tag or two. If you purchase a gift for distribution, there's no need to wrap. Gift Cards are also

welcomed. Any assistance you can provide will be greatly appreciated.

All gifts need to be brought to church no later than Friday, December 1st. If you have any questions, please see Pam or Neil Zimmerman. Thank you and Merry Christmas!



Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church

N59 W22476 Silver Spring Dr.
Sussex, Wisconsin 53089
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

Danny Ellis,

Dir. of Worship/Music Ministry - ellisd77@gmail.com

Carol Rabideau, Youth Coordinator - carol@coslc.com

Church Office & Direct Deposit - office@coslc.com

Council - council@coslc.com

www.coslc.com

WiFi SSID: COS | Password: Gath3redF3dS3nt

Facebook - facebook.com/cossussex

Received in Love: Christ Our Savior's 2023 Stewardship Campaign/Notes from October 22, 2023

Even though our Church is experiencing generational change, God's love is forever, Christ's power for healing is real, and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit energizes our hearts for service.

In the life we share as a Church we are God-given gifts to one another that convey and amplify the love of God for the sake of the world. It should be our deepest joy to know what we have Received in Love by the work of the Holy Spirit, so that we would turn what we receive toward the world in love.

In the coming weeks, we are going to discuss the true meaning of Stewardship. We will look at how each of us can increase our support for the mission of this Church: To be a congregation gathered in Christ, fed by God's word, and sent to serve.

On Sunday, October 22nd, Church Council member, Christa Trushinsky, a long-time member of Christ Our Savior, shared this message about what she believes it means to be "Gathered in Christ":

*Once upon a time, there was a tremendous drought.
Promising clouds passed over the hills and valleys but not a drop fell.
The land was parched, the rivers and streams were low, and all the life there seemed to be dying of thirst.*

*One day, a crow happened upon a pitcher.
Curious as crows are and yearning for water,
The crow stuck its beak inside hoping for just the smallest drop.
Alas, while there was some water at the bottom of this pitcher, he couldn't reach it.*

*The bird tried and tried but to no avail.
He paced around the pitcher, almost feverishly, trying to figure out how to get to the water.*

*Finally, an idea struck him.
The clever crow picked up a pebble and dropped it into the pitcher.
Plunk!
He looked inside.
The water was still far out of reach.
He didn't dare tip the pitcher over and risk losing the water, so he tried again.
He picked up another pebble and dropped it in.
Kerplunk!
The crow looked inside and thought the water had risen ever so slightly.
That small change sparked just enough hope to fuel his determination.*

*Plunk, plunk, plunk...
He dropped a few more in. Now the water was really rising.
He continued to drop pebbles until the water had risen into the neck of the pitcher.
Then the bird reached his beak in and drank the cool, life-giving water.
And the crow, more than satisfied, flew away to live another day.*

*~The Crow and the Pitcher
An Aesop Fable adapted by Christa Trushinsky*

I wanted to relate this story to you in the interest of our stewardship campaign. All too often, churches, for one reason or another, become more and more dependent upon financial giving and tithing to support the workings of the church.

And, while indeed several aspects of our worship and ministry require that support, when you strip everything away, the church is not the building or anything else that is tied to it—the church is the people who gather for

God's word every Sunday for worship and fellowship. In this way, a small community of like-minded servants to his mission are gathered—people who can depend upon one another—people who the rest of the community can depend upon as well.

Now I'm going to tell you another story.

Like a lot of people, I left Christ Our Savior when I graduated high school and left for college. I got an education, got married, and life kept going from there. The man I married became a pastor and twice became appointed by his conference to yoked churches. In other words, these were dual appointments--he was shared between two very small churches in a part-time capacity. It seemed like it would be a tremendous amount of work on both our parts, especially his! However, that was not the case, and our eyes were very quickly opened.

These congregations were ALIVE, THRIVING, and thoroughly connected throughout their communities and not just by the other organizations they helped.

What did these churches all have in common?

Their active memberships were below 50 (15, in one case!) and yet, they still managed to support a pastor, operate their own church buildings and even a parsonage—most importantly, despite their small size, they continued to be a beacon throughout their communities. In doing so, they actively sought out ways to invite and welcome members of their communities into their churches in a relaxed, unassuming, friendly way. They played host to people they knew and many they didn't know—young and old of all different backgrounds. These churches' missions were to be an anchor in their communities, a place where people could go to find refuge and solace, even if they didn't pray the same way. They sought to help others face-to-face and in doing so, they helped themselves. They were present in their communities, seen and heard. Hands were shaken, hugs were given, smiles shown.

*With such small congregations, members gave of their time and talents to host amazing vacation bible schools and holiday programs. Members volunteered their time to provide music and education during services, go caroling, organize community dinners, and even make pasties to sell each week. *(meat and potato pasties) Men and women gathered and played softball together against other groups in the community. They often partnered with other churches in the area to provide special worship and educational opportunities. The confirmands were even auctioned off to help with yard work around the community, which could not have been done without the support of their parents! This was not an exclusive club shut in behind closed doors, only to be opened by a secret knock and handshake. These churches were unapologetically, unabashedly active in their communities, determined, and self-reliant. And because of their commitment to their own churches and the outreach they provided to their communities, the congregations could not only support themselves and their endeavors but went from being a group of acquaintances to a tight-knit group of friends and family.*

It is easy to give that which we have an abundance of—be it time, talents, or riches and to favor one over another, despite the needs of an ever-evolving church. With that we must remember the work that Christ compels us to cannot be done solely with a Sunday offering but by also sharing our time and talents with others. Thanks!

Please mark your calendars, next Sunday, Oct. 29th, following the service, we will be meeting to brainstorm ideas that will help us to be more present and visible in our community. We urge you to bring your ideas.

We all have skills and gifts to give or know someone who does.

Please, help us open our doors to the community and in doing so, create and maintain connections with those we seek to serve.

And remember, where one pebble failed to raise the water, many together succeeded. When we help others, we help ourselves. Thank you!