

Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church

December 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 is 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

But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Therefore, keep awake — for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

Mark 13:32, 35-36

We stand at the threshold of National Feasting Season. Starting with Thanksgiving, we begin a dance of cautious engagement with the gustatory hospitality lavished on us by family and friends, leftovers that pack the fridge, the plate of cookies lurking on the kitchen counter, and cultural expectations. Our dalliance with the seasonal cornucopia is thrilling for a while, but it doesn't take long before second thoughts about the culinary bonanza creep in – usually between swigs of Pepto Bismol or the chalky crunch of antacid tablets. Even amid the year-end hubbub, we might tease out that, yet again, we weren't hungry for what we thought we were hungry for, but New Year's Day is just around the corner and, well, even though we don't consider ourselves "New Year's Resolution" folks, this year might be different....

Chasing the unnamable, unsatisfiable hunger within us throughout life is a hard way to live. When we live with an expectation that we need to obtain, possess, or import something outside ourselves in life to be satisfied, the result is typically that we're never satisfied. The goal posts always move. There's no "there" there – it's permanent chase mode 24/7. Rise and grind. If the utopia you seek vanishes like a mirage as soon as you reach it or if what you thought would satisfy you in life doesn't, maybe it's time to reevaluate the chase. Have you ever considered that what you were hungry for all this time was God?

Most often we don't even know what it is that we're hungry for, and so seek out those things that catch our attention in hopes that our nameless longing will be satisfied. The God of all creation is the only thing in the world big enough to satisfy the aching hunger in our lives and God is closer to us in this moment than even we are to ourselves. This Advent, as we keep awake and watch for the coming of Christ, knowing that this arrival consummates and fulfills God's life already begun in you. Let your hungry search for external satisfaction end and, in faith, trust in God's presence within you. Emmanuel comes to you and for you that you would know the love you have so desperately sought.

In Christ, Interim Pastor Michael Anderson

From the Associate Pastor

In November, I had the opportunity to attend the Leading Well retreat in Carefree, AZ. Led by the Vibrant Faith organization, the Leading Well ministry emphasizes four pillars: Sabbath Rest; Practical Learning; Collegial Support; and Intentional Transformation. The time in Arizona was a treasured opportunity to spend a week in worship and reflection about God's leading presence.

There were many notable quotes from our time together that I continue to think about since returning home, but one idea I'd encourage our congregation to engage with is the difference between the speed of productivity and the speed of care.

My own framing of this notion is that my overwhelming experience of our culture is that it constantly pushes us to live life in 5th gear. We want our food fast, if not instant. We expect that others will be accessible 24/7 by text, if not by phone or email. Businesses even develop algorithms to tell them the approximate point where the trade offs in human costs are outweighed by the profits reaped. For all the many blessings our technological innovations have provided, they increasingly shape our world to match the speed, efficiency, and output that tech can provide.

By contrast, we believe as Christians that rhythms of rest, followed by activity, followed by rest are deeply tied to the life of abundance that God desires for all people. Living and acting from a place of rest is so important that God modeled this rhythm at the beginning of creation and subsequently commanded this practice for God's people. "Remember the Sabbath, and keep it holy."

Particularly as we enter into the Advent and Christmas seasons with their own practices of activity and excitement, may you remember the importance of intentional rest. May the command to stillness not feel like yet another task on your to do list, but rather may God's word bolster your ability to establish healthy boundaries and prune in ways that create space for new life. And may you embody the invitation to rest for others in ways that glorifies God's will and invites transformation for our broken world.

Blessings,
Pastor Joe
(he/him/his)



Bread of Healing Meal

Wednesday, December 13th 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 again will do our our fall menu of Chili, Corn Bread and all the condiments (cheese onions sour cream). Yum!

If you would like to join the team, 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.

Community Banquet

Thursday, December 14th

There is only one Community Banquet this month on Thursday, December 14th at 5:30pm at St. James. We do not have a role, but all are welcome to come for a wonderful meal and a time of fellowship.

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.

Annual Meeting

Christ Our Savior's Annual Meeting will be on **Sunday, December 17, 2023**, following 9:15am worship. We will be providing reports and voting on business not relating to finances (see the attached by-law changes).

On **Sunday, December 10th**, we will hold a **question/answer forum** in Fellowship Hall immediately following the 9:15am worship

The budget meeting will be in January.

Stewardship Update

See attached letter from Congregation President, Maria Lidtke.

Deck the Halls

Advent Wreath Workshop - December 3rd following 9:15am worship. All are invited to prepare hearts, homes, and the COS Sanctuary for Advent and Christmas.

In Fellowship Hall, make a fresh evergreen Advent wreath to take home and light each Sunday during Advent. Instructions, supplies and Advent Prayer guide provided.

We will also be decorating the sanctuary for the Christmas and Advent season. We need a bunch of helpers to transform our sanctuary as we prepare for the birth of Christ!

There will be Christmas cookies and hot cocoa for all to enjoy!

To sign up for wreath making, to be a decoration helper or to donate cookies, sign up at coslc.com/sign-up/.

For more information or questions please contact Carol Rabideau (carol@coslc.com).

Strong Baby Sanctuary Toy Drive

Help Strong Baby Sanctuary parents this Christmas by donating to the toy drive. **Accepting donations through December 5th.**

Wish lists are grouped by age. Items were specifically selected to encourage growth and development within each age range. Collection bins are located in the narthex and entry way.

Gifts for children 2-5:

- Dinosaurs
- Cars
- Play food sets
- Baby dolls
- Little People sets
- Hot Wheels
- Trains/Cars with trucks/ramps
- Elefun game
- Pop the pig
- Yeti in my Spaghetti
- Don't Break the Ice

Gifts for children 5-8:

- Barbie dolls
- Squishmallows
- Play Doh kits
- Super heros (Batman, Spiderman, Wonder Woman)
- Bluey figures
- Happy Salmon

Christmas Program Rehearsal

Saturday, December 16th, 9-10am in the Sanctuary
We will meet in the sanctuary and practice the Christmas program a couple times to prepare for Sunday's program.

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



No Sunday School

Sunday, December 24th & December 31st

Wishing you all a joy filled Christmas day and abundant blessings in the new year!

Sunday school will resume Sunday, January 7th.

Jesus' Birthday Party

Sunday, January 7th

On this day of Epiphany and baptism of our Lord, join the wise men and celebrate Christ the newborn King! Have cake, play party games, and bring a gift to give to families at Hephatha.

Items needed are: baby bath/shampoo, baby lotion, baby bottles, burp clothes, newborn diapers, pacifiers, and infant toys/rattles.

Advent & Christmas Events

Deck the Halls – Advent Wreath Workshop

Sunday, December 3rd

Full details on previous page.

Cooperating Churches of Sussex Advent Lessons and Carols Service

Wednesday, December 6th at 6pm

Begin the Advent season in the company of our local ecumenical ministry partners for a night of hopeful readings and music at Redeemer UCC on Townline, Rd., Menomonee Falls.

Christ Our Savior Caroling

Saturday, December 9th

Come join the COS choir as we sing Christmas carols at a local assisted living facility. We will meet at our church at 2:30pm to warmup/plan. Bring the whole family!

Advent Midweek Vespers with Holden Evening Prayer

Wednesday, December 13th & 20th at 6:30pm

(Sanctuary & Livestream)

We gather in gentle, contemplative evening prayer in hope and expectation of Christ's birth in our hearts.

Christmas Present Wrapping Event

Saturday, December 16th from 10am to 2pm

at Christ Our Savior.

Children's Christmas Program

Sunday, December 17th during 9:15am worship

(Sanctuary & Livestream)

Christ Our Savior's Children's Christmas Program is a joyful children's telling of the birth of Jesus.



Christmas Eve Worship with Holy Communion

Sunday, December 24th (all Sanctuary & Livestream)

3pm - Family Worship

Christ Our Savior's afternoon Christmas Eve worship is warm, festive, and family-friendly—the perfect way to share the joy of Christmas with children in a welcoming community.

4:30pm - Carols, Choir, and Communion

A festive eucharist service celebrating the mystery and wonder of the incarnation. "Joy to the World!"

6 pm - Candlelight Worship

Restore your spirit with sacred readings and beloved music during this special candlelight service.

Christmas Day Worship with Holy Communion

Monday, December 25th

9:15am - Christmas Festival Worship

(Sanctuary & Livestream)

Rejoice—the light of the world is here! Join us as we celebrate the incarnation.

Christ Our Savior Christmas Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 31st

9:15am Worship- The Christmas season is a high point of joyous singing in the church year. Let your hearts overflow in love and song in this festive worship celebrating Emmanuel.

Epiphany + Baptism of our Lord

Sunday, January 7th - Following 9:15am Worship

Birthday Party for Baby Jesus Worship Christ the newborn King! Full details on previous page.

Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church

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Hello Congregation,

As part of our Stewardship campaign in October and November, you have heard from Christa Trushinski about what it means to her for a church to be gathered in Christ, from Pastor Joe about what it means to him to be fed by God's word and sacrament, and from Chuck Liedtke about what it means to him to be sent to serve as a member of this congregation.

I am here this week to speak about ways to participate. For our church to thrive, it needs more support from the congregation than we are currently getting. We need you to share what you can whether it be your time, talents, or treasures. I would like you to consider what more you could be doing to support the ministries and running of the church.

You've heard from our speakers the last three weeks about being gathered, fed, and sent to serve. Participating in our ministries takes your time and talents and supporting our ministries and running of the church takes your treasures.

Since 2020, inflation has risen about 18%. If you haven't increased your financial giving in that time, your dollars are worth 18% less. I want to thank you for what you are currently doing and I'm not asking that everyone make an 18% increase in their offering. But I'm not discouraging it either 😊. I am asking that you consider increasing your offering in an amount that makes sense to you. Consider what Christ Our Savior means to you and those who receive the blessing that you as this church provide.

With your bulletins on November 12th, you received a 2023 Commitment Form and Time and Talent survey. Please return them or simply go to the online version of the forms which can be accessed through our weekly constant contact communications or the website which will be available through the end of the year.

The most effective way to make a consistent impact is to contribute via direct deposit. If it weren't for our direct deposit givers, we may not have made it through the covid years. Please consider direct deposit in any amount. This creates a reliable income source to ensure our mission goes forward whether you are here or not. There are red cards on the welcome center to either join or increase your giving.

I would also like to remind you to consider volunteering as a member of one of our worship teams, one of our ministry groups, or in a leadership role in the congregation. Please reach out to the church office or one of the pastors to express your interest or get more information on how to get involved.

Peace,
Maria Liedtke
Congregation President

Proposed By-Law Changes

Christ Our Savior Council is recommending the following by-law changes. In accordance with C16.03 *of the constitution, the congregation is being notified of the changes which will be voted on at the Annual Meeting on December 17, 2023.

*C16.03 The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.

Proposed by-law changes:

C11.02. The officers shall be elected by the congregation by written ballot and shall serve for a **three-year term**. Change to "two-year term." The term shall begin at the conclusion of the annual meeting and end at the conclusion of the annual meeting three years later.

C12.02. The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected by written ballot to serve for **three years** Change to "two years" or until their successors are elected. Written ballots are not required when members standing for election are unopposed. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin **at the close of** Change to "January 1 of the year following" the annual meeting at which they are elected. (This would be in line with our current practice for over 10 years.)

C13.02. A *Governance Committee* of at least 2 and no more than four voting members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be appointed by the congregation council to a three-year term. Members may be reappointed for consecutive terms. The duties of the governance committee are stated in the bylaws.

C13.06.03 **Governance Committee: The governance committee shall guide council and leadership through transition of a smaller church council with a focus on managing by establishing policy, long range planning, and assuring everything is in place for the mission and ministry of the congregation to be implemented.**

Change to the following:

C13.06.03 *Governance Committee: The governance committee shall guide the council and leadership to ensure it is working in line with the COS and ELCA Church Constitutions. It will also keep the COS constitution in alignment with the ELCA constitution. It will also act as a resource for the pastor(s) and council for institutional knowledge.*