Christ Lutheran Church

Volume 34 no. 12
December 2023

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Advent is a time of both confluence and tension between the OÌ ËOÌ O 6sX_ Ë X_ üÌs `xË6_Åã O 6sX_ Ë³ _ heightened anticipatory state in the Holiday Season Ûwith a Ox Xü_x`X O6xO(x¯ ãÌx¼¼ÞX¶ _ tã ¯ËxN ÆD itself, and a social calendar full of overindulgence that will not quit, the Season of Advent is on a parallel but vastly dissimilar track. Advent, which begins four Sundays before Christmas, is also in an anticipatory state Ûbut with another focus all together. ûÌs ÆËx6Þ_ t âs ãxXÇ Þã OxXã Ns_ `ÞüÌ üËtÞ thing in, while the Advent Season is about making room in our already jam packed lives. After all, Jesus was born in a dirty stable, because that was the only place left for him. The fact that God Ì _ sXüsËs_ ÞXüx üÌs OËs üÞxX ÞX üÌ ü _ÞX¶ register for most. Advent encourages us to create a place of honor for God in our lives. God shows up, whether or not we create a space, but when we make a regular meeting place and time for God, we are much more likely to notice, and much less likely to miss the life transforming presence.

The Holiday Season is about trying to get a lot of things done in a limited time Ûbut the Advent Season is about stopping our relentless doing so we can watch and wait for something that is being done for us. We do not need to find the perfect gift for µx_° EsO ãs `s O XÅü³ µx_ Xss_ã XxüÌÞX¶ ¯

the Home School group is there as well as Monday/Wednesday during distribution from 6:00pm to 8:30pm.
The Task Force will continue to work on their goals. We will continue to provide clear communication to
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Total ordinary income is over budget for October by $15,642, thanks to a general fund giving increase for the month. The letter from the Council/Finance and Stewardship Committee reminded the congregation about the need to maintain giving to the general fund for ongoing operations of the church. Such a blessing.
This also brings our year to date (YTD) ordinary income just shy of $12,000 under our planned budget numbers through October.
Ordinary income YTD October 2023 is ahead of YTD October 2022 by $3,791.
Total actual ordinary expenses for October remain just under budgeted expenses, as do the YTD expenses.
Ordinary expenses for 2023, as expected, are higher than 2022, based upon normal payroll and general cost of living increases, as seen in past months.
Shepherd Shelf receipts are under for the month of October but remain ahead of the budgeted receipts YTD. The reduction this month is due to the discontinued Merck Cow Plop receipts we budgeted for.
The $300 deposit for the Live Nativity is posted against the Endowment Fund as approved by council, up to the maximum realized funds from 2022.
Ultimately, October Net Ordinary Income is ahead of budget $15,878. YTD ahead of budget $2,636.
Comparing 2023 to 2022, our Ordinary Net Income shows a loss of $3,172 more than that of last year, again cost of living.
October Net Income is $10,236 ahead of budget, YTD Net Income is ahead of budget by $46,989. Keep in mind this is capital expenditures and unbudgeted Investment earnings along with Shepherd Shelf receipts. Net Income for 2023 is ahead of 2022 by $204,634. This is reflective of Shepherd Shelf capital expenditures and investment losses in 2022.

	Actual	Budget	Budget Variance
wOüxEsË Äáâ ÝXOxN¼	$44,918	$29,276	$15,642
wOüxEsË Äáâ rn¼sX$$	$30,350	$30,588	-$238
Net Ordinary income	$14,567	-$1,312	$15,879
YTD Income 2023	$283,138	$295,103	-$11,966
YTD Expense 2023	$303,971	$318,572	-$14,602
Net Ordinary income	-$20,833	-$23,469	$22,636
»ËsZÞx ã ss Ë ü	x Äáâ2023	2022	Change
Income Jan-Oct	$283,138	$279,346	$3,791
Expense Jan-Oct	$303,971	$297,007	$6,964
Net Ordinary income	-$20,833	-$17,661	-$3,172

Youth News

By Karolin Brechbill

Giving Thanks

It is the time of year when families gather around their tables and express their thanks to God and to each other for the many ways they have been blessed. The time between Thanksgiving and Christmas always seems such a magical time: full of hectic schedules and lists of To Dos, yes, but still a time that we try to reflect on the good in our lives and be grateful for it.

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to?

Certainly, there are many passages in the Bible that tell us not only that we SHOULD give thanks, but how to, when, and how often we should offer thanksgiving to God. There are too many passages to recount, but here are just a few:

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I could go on and on, but you get the picture. In fact, the word thankful or thanksgiving is mentioned 72 times in the Bible, and the word gratitude is found 157 times. So obviously, giving thanks to God

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we certainly do!

Some years back, Gratitude Journals became a thing, where people would try to find time each day to write down what they were grateful for. Easy to do when all is going well! However, the journaling took on more significance if we continued the practice of recounting gratitude even in the midst of

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do offer an opportunity to focus on the good, focus on being grateful and focus on appreciating how our needs have been met. Often times, when someone is going through a tougher period in their life, a gratitude journal or some other type of practice of gratitude or thankfulness can really

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or heartbreak. As a believer, when you mix in the idea of addressing that gratefulness to God, it can
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does change us.
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the sadness and death and destruction humans bring to one other. It makes us want to avoid giving thanks, as the good of the world seems dim and distant. And yet, the good persists. Even in the darkest times, God is continually blessing us, loving us, and offering His mercy.
The season of Advent is upon us, and this year, rather than just do a countdown of days, I have decided to add a bit of thanksgiving to my Advent calendar. Perhaps focusing on a moment of grace or a particular blessing or a beloved relationship each day, will bring the Light of Christ a little bit closer to my heart in these weeks leading up to Christmas.

The 2024 Winter Youth Retreat
The Youth Winter Retreat is always a highlight of the year. For as far back as I can remember (and way further than that) we have been attending a weekend winter retreat with our youth group at Camp Men-O-Lan. Even during the height of the pandemic, we found a way to still have a get together at the camp (with a winter outdoor fun day). The weekend is filled with fun, group
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ûÌÞã ts ËÅã ËsüËs ü Þã ãOÌ-13, 2024. For the last two years, we have held a one night retreat (due to busy schedules and cost) and this year we will do the same, however we are trying something new! Rather the renting the large Landis Hall with the larger dorms upstairs, we are going to be housed in 2- â O EÞXã X_ üÞ6ÞŠs üÌs O N¼Åã 6x_¶s ¯xË x Ė
While this may change the type of activities we offer, I think this set up will also afford our smaller group a more intimate setting, with spaces to watch a movie, meet in groups, play games and sit by the fire. The other huge benefit to changing our housing is that meals are included in this package, and the overall cost is lower.
I am excited to get started on planning the schedule and writing up curriculum that will help our students grow closer to each other and deepen their relationship with God. With such a beautiful, natural setting, Camp Men-O-Lan is the perfect place to allow us to unplug from the world a bit and re-connect with our creator!
Information regarding registration for the Winter Retreat will be sent via email in the coming weeks. The event is open to any youth in 6-12th grades, and as always, youth are encouraged to bring a friend, if they wish. Adult volunteers are always welcome to attend as we will need enough adults to fully chaperone the cabins. The event will run from 5 pm Friday, Jan 12 through 5 pm, Saturday, Jan 13, 2024. Drop off and pick up will be at the camp. The buildings we are using are past Landis Hall (drive through parking lot and down small drive; meeting lodge is the second building on the left).

Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Make Your Voice Heard Via the Synodical Mission Profile Survey

Dear Beloved Church,

In May of 2024, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod will be electing a new bishopBishop Davenport is concluding her six-year term and has informed the Synod Council that she will not stand for a second term.

As a part of the process of preparing for this election, a Transition Team was formed to develop a Synodical Mission Profile. This document will assess the vitality of and hoped-for missional direction of the synod. This resource will be the basis of discussions led by a Discernment Team and will help to inform persons who may have the gifts to serve as bishop.

A brief survey has been developed by the Transition Team and is now available via Google Forms. We hope that you and members of your congregation will take the time to complete this survey. To ensure that responses are included in the Profile,surveys must be completed by Monday, December 11th. We realize that this is a quick turnaround, however the timeline is dictated by the Synod Constitution.

To access the survey, follow this link . ® x Ë ü Ì x ã s Ë s _ Þ X ¶ ü Ì s ¼ ¼ s Ë O x ¼ t ° Ì s Ë s
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdmTACbGELyR5nMZhiFO_tPTUMPVjNwJthRL8s5_N0VKGx6w/viewform

Results will be posted by the end of the year on the
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Thank you for your participation.
Patricia Moore & Pastor Heidi Rodrick-Schnaath
Transition Team Co-Chairs

One of the questions asks what conference your home congregation is:
CLC is in Lower Montgomery Conference

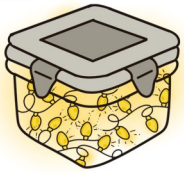
'Þ_Åã OüÞZÞü

LIGHT-UP BOX

Christmas lights remind us that Jesus shines in the darkness. Here's a fun way to play with holiday lights.

What you need:

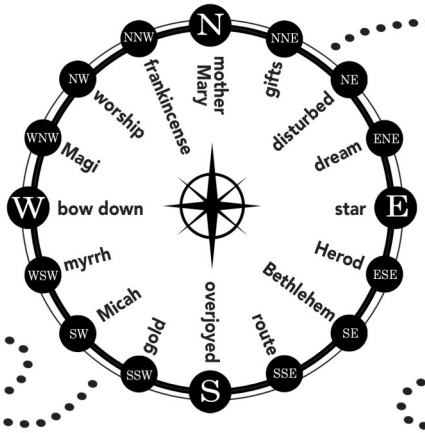
- A strand of Christmas lights
- A large clear plastic container and lid
- Green tissue paper
- Colorful beads



What you do:

1. Plug in the lights and place them in the container.
2. Put on the lid. (If the lid isn't transparent, flip the box over.)
3. Play with your light box, using these ideas as starters:
   - Cut tissue paper into triangles and arrange them in a tree shape. Decorate the tree with colorful beads.
   - Use the light box for tracing. Place a picture on it, with a clean sheet of paper on top. Then trace the drawing.
   - Use magnet tiles to build designs atop the light box. Try building a 3-D Christmas tree!

Puzzle!



Use the compass guide (and read Matthew 2) to answer questions about special visitors to young Jesus.

1. Who was king at the time of Jesus' birth? _____ (ESE)
2. Who came from the East to worship the one born king of the Jews? _____ (WNW)
3. How did King Herod feel about Jesus' birth? _____ (NE)
4. Which prophet did the chief priests and teachers of the law quote when King Herod asked where the Christ would be born? _____(SW)
5. In what city would Christ be born? _____ (SE)
6. King Herod lied to the wise men, telling them to search and report back so he, too, could do what to Christ? _____ (NW)
7. What did the Magi see in the east and follow to find Jesus? _____ (E)
8. When the star stopped, how did the Magi feel? _____ (S)
9. Who else did the Magi see with Jesus? His _____(N)
10. Before they worshiped the child, what did the Magi do? _____ (W)
11. Name the three treasures the Magi brought for Jesus. _____ (SSW) _____ (NNW) _____ (WSW)
12. These three treasures were all brought for Jesus as _____ (NNE)
13. What warned the Magi not to return to Herod? A _____ (ENE)
14. The Magi had to return to their country by another _____ (SSE)

Answers: 1. Herod; 2. Magi; 3. disturbed; 4. Micah; 5. Bethlehem; 6. worship; 7. star; 8. overjoyed; 9. mother Mary; 10. bow down; 11. gold, frankincense, myrrh; 12. gifts; 13. dream; 14. route

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Marketplace a huge success: pie bakers, vendors, shoppers, Santa & Mrs. Claus, the volunteers who assembled raffle baskets, set up, worked on the day of, and helped tear down, those who donated to the raffle baskets and those who bought raffle tickets, Joey who drove the golf cart, and a special shout out to Kim Itterly who spearheaded this event.

Every year we select a local nonprofit to donate a portion of the raffle proceeds, this year proceeds will benefit the Bean Bag Food Program.

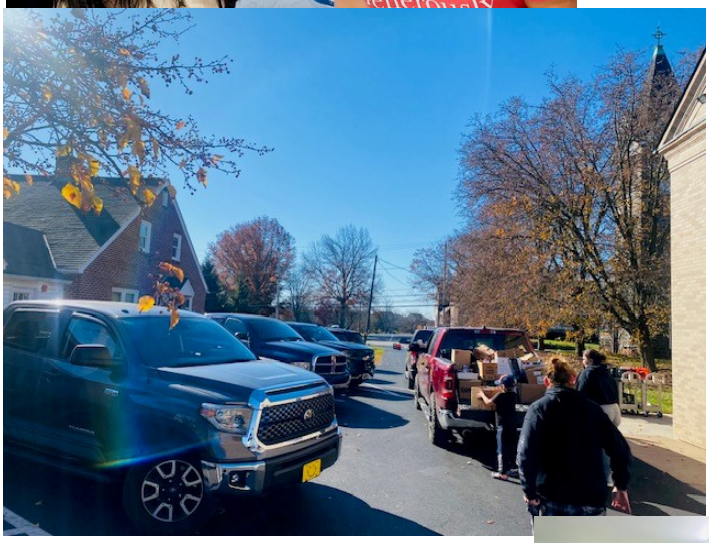
Again, thank you for all your help.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

12/01 Madison Daubert
12/02 Lee Little
12/02 Ed Martin
12/02 Jennifer Hallman
12/02 Bryn Fontaine
12/06 Jakob Strohl
12/06 Lillian Everhardt
12/08 Ray Gerber
12/09 Ed Lightkep
12/10 Danielle Rush
12/11 Sharon Noble
12/11 Dennis Hallman
12/11 Alison Valovage
12/11 Brayden Bell
12/12 Christopher Bonsignore
12/12 Haley DeLong
12/12 Alexander Bendas
12/13 Cynthia Heiser
12/13 Ben Fillgrove
12/14 Madelyn Gerber
12/15 Connie Baymor
12/16 Jane Sharkey
12/17 Katie Bendas
12/18 Neil Benjamin
12/19 Frank Keenan
12/19 Jim Bingley
12/20 Sarah Frederick
12/24 Carol Galford
12/24 Gary Marchewski
12/25 Carole Stoler
12/26 Eva Leitmeyer
12/27 John Greene
12/28 Joan Charlton
12/28 Barbara Donnelly
12/28 Julia Marchewski
12/28 Shannon Stover
12/29 Alex Knauss
12/30 Mandy Burr
12/30 Dylan Blake
12/31 Diane Rush
12/31 Lindsay Valovage

Inclement Weather Policy - If the weather outside is frightful and the safety of our members might be jeopardized by driving to church for services or other activities a decision to cancel will be made and announced early enough that you `xXÅü Es O ¶Ìü xX üÌs Ëx _³ â X_ t cancellations will be announced on the church web site, and the church Facebook page. It will also be xX üÌs OÌ ËOÌÅã XãsË Þ-X56-8738ÌÞXs For other activities please check with the organizers. Each and every member is important to us, so please be safe this winter.

Scouting for Food 2023, November 18,
Was a huge success!
Packs 78, 137, 152 and 397, and Troops 137, 141, 152, and 178 participated in collecting from the generosity of our community. Our own #178 brought in 800 bags! Around 45 volunteers unloaded trucks, date and dent checked, sorted and stocked the shelves. We are so grateful for support of the community, the boy scouts and our congregation.



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If you are interested in volunteering please sign up at https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0f4da9a62ea3f85-shepherds Donations are accepted during church office hours. Donations can also be dropped off at the Franconia Heritage Museum. Please see https://www.christlc.org/shepherds-shelf to get the most up to date needs list. Thank you to everyone in our church congregation and in the community for your continued support of this very important feeding ministry! If you are interested in getting more involved, please contact Steph Sharkey at shepherdsshelf@christlc.org or call the church office.

Shepherd's Shelf Summary

In October the Shepherd's Shelf served our greater community. There were 144 visits from eligible households. Diapers were distributed 43 times and wipes 17 times. Feminine hygiene products were distributed 54 times. Volunteers from CLC and from the community logged 287 hours. The estimated value of donations for the month is $34,560.

Thank You to St. Maria Goretti
ûÌs âÌs¼ÌsË_Åã âÌs6¯ ËsOsÞZs_ ü 6x _ã x¯ ¯xx_ _xX üÞxXã ¯xË üÌs Shelf.

Thank You to all who provided funds for the Christmas Gift Cards.
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Welcoming all with grace. Worshiping God through praise. Witnessing Christ through service.

The Clarion

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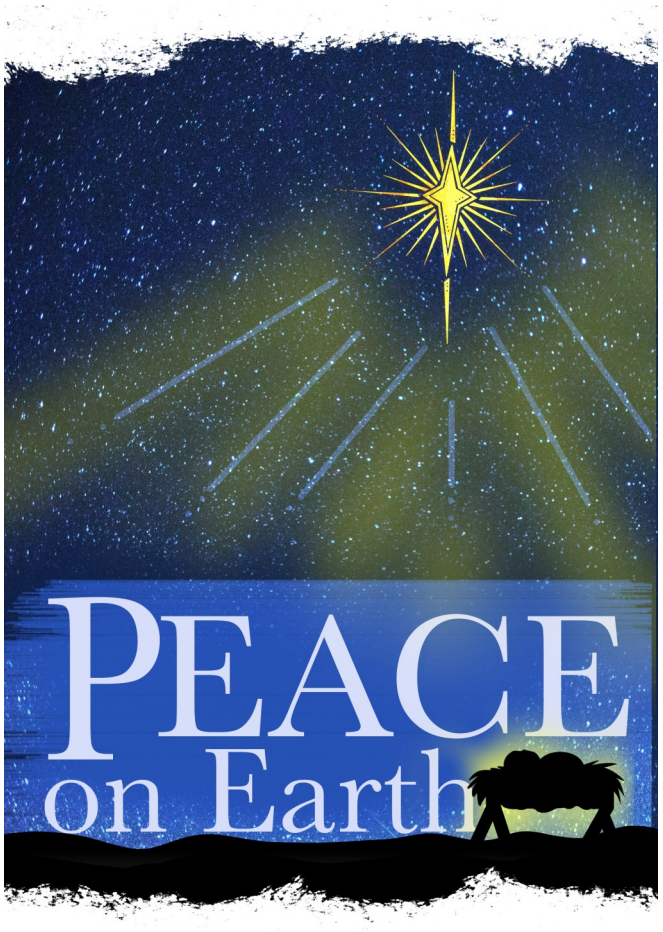
Sunday Service Schedule
9:00am in person and live stream on Facebook and YouTube (Communion 1st and 3rd Sundays)
10:30am with Sunday School opening
(Communion every Sunday)

Sunday School Classes
10:30am
Choir Rehearsal
Wednesday at 7:00pm

Deadline for Clarion articles the 20th of each month.
clcclarion@gmail.com



CLC's Ministry Teams

December 2023

The following are the Ministry Teams, their chairs and council liaisons:

Celebrations - June Alderfer, kjalderfer@hotmail.com,
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Jason Dodge, Jasondodge777@gmail.com
Youth Ministry Team - Karolin Brechbill,
kbrechbill@christlc.org,
Scott Swindells swindiculous@gmail.com

If you would like to be a part of any of these teams Please reach out to one of the listed contacts

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