

Christ Lutheran Church

Volume 34 no. 7 July 2023

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America God's work. Our hands.

This is Christ's church. There is a place for you here. We are the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace. Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person--questions, complexities and all. Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

TheClarion

Welcoming all with grace. Worshiping God through praise. Witnessing Christ through service.

A Message From Pastor Sellers

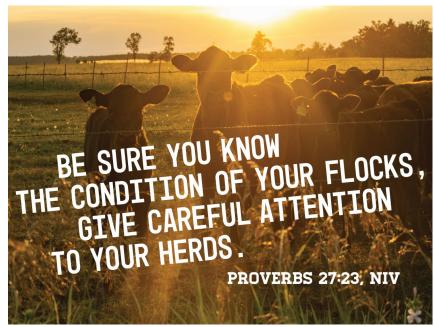
Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

On Sunday a frequent visitor to the congregation said that he really appreciates the quality of our live stream. He sees other church services, and feels like the quality of the online experience is better here. He doesn't live in our area, but watches at home, and visits in person when he can.

Before the pandemic, if you had suggested that in a very orief time Christ Lutheran worship services would be livestreamed on the internet each Sunday, we would offer a mid-week Facebook based prayer service, and that church meetings would be held both on line and in person using teleconferencing software, you would have been laughed at. But necessity, it turns out, IS the mother of invention. We not only have an online presence, but we have worked hard to make the sound and video quality – as well as the worship content – as good as we can. We have come a LONG WAY.



Thank you, Lord of life, for this beautiful summer day! May all who worship here know the warmth of your presence and the sunlight of your love.



Along the way we questioned the wisdom of investing so much time, energy, and financial resources in our remote experience. Wouldn't we be reverting to "normal" soon? But as the pandemic dragged on, we realized that there was not going to be a day when everything would take its pre-pandemic form – and that included the church.

There was some discussion, when things began to reopen, that we should stop streaming the service so that people would "have to come back." But it was

clear that some of the members who were worshiping on-line still had concerns about being in crowds, some were no longer driving, and some had other new hurdles to overcome to participate in person. We also recognized that there were quite a few folks who live at a distance, or are not members, but worship with our church regularly through the internet. We decided we couldn't stop including these people in worship – they are part of God's family.

Our experience was not unique. A survey by Pew Research Center at the end of 2022 found that about a quarter of U.S. adults watch religious services online or on TV regularly. While most of them are highly satisfied with the experience, people tend to give even higher marks to worshipping together in person. And those who do both (watch services on screens and attend in person) overwhelmingly say they prefer going in person. Let's dig into the weeds of this survey a bit.

Two-thirds of those who regularly stream religious services online or watch them on TV say they are either "extremely satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the services they see. Even bigger shares of physical attenders say they feel extremely or very satisfied with the sermons (68% on line to 74% in person) and music (54% to 69%) at the services they attend in person. Those who do both — who watch services on screens and attend in person — overwhelmingly say they prefer going in person, by a margin of 76% to 11%.

When asked why they watch religious services online or on TV, many cite multiple reasons, but convenience is the most-commonly selected option. The next most-cited reason is being able to watch services that are far from their home. 42% cited safety, disability or health as reasons. Among those who regularly attend worship services in person AND watch them virtually – **most say they watch services offered by a congregation other than, or in addition to, the one they typically attend in person. (Our recent new members overwhelmingly participated with us on-line first, before coming to the church.)**

But virtual worshippers are much less likely to report feeling connected to others participating in worship. Roughly two-thirds (65%) of regular in-person attenders say they feel "a great deal" or

"quite a bit" of connection with their fellow attenders. Far fewer – 28% – say they feel a strong connection with people who are attending a service in person while they, themselves, are watching on a screen. And only 22% of virtual worshippers say they feel strongly connected to the other people watching. 61% say that when they are watching services on a screen, they typically do *not* do things they would normally do when attending in person, such as praying out loud, or singing.

32% say they feel they are watching "without truly being an active participant."

Other interesting findings were that 7% say they participate online in prayer groups, Bible study groups, or religious education programs. Overall, 17% of U.S. adults say they share content about religion on social media. 11% say they have posted a prayer request, while about four-in-ten (42%) have seen someone else's prayer request online.

Clearly, on-line church is here to stay. So the big questions for us are- how can we encourage those who are participating virtually to feel more connected to the congregation? And how can we encourage those who are in-person to appreciate and connect with those who are with us – but in a virtual way? How do we create a strong sense of belonging to one another?

I don't believe the purpose of worshipping is simply praying the prayers, and hearing God's Word. I think there something fundamental about being "in community" together when we worship. There is something essential about knowing and being known by others. Where we are of the same mind and heart, the community provides a kind of support and encouragement that helps to strengthen our faith to bear fruit in a hungry world. Where we are *not* of the same mind the community provides both challenge and the opportunity to practice the unconditional love that Jesus teaches. Being of the same heart, even when we aren't of the same mind, teaches us how to listen deeply and speak the truth in love. These practices cause our faith to grow roots deep into our way of being.

Love is not a solo project.

Although we are well past our year of "Welcoming All with Grace", and our "Year of Worshipping God with Praise" is drawing to a close, as we gear up to focus on the third pillar of our mission statement, "Witnessing Christ through Service", welcome and worship, and questions about how to best worship and welcome, will remain an important focus for ministry at Christ. I would welcome your thoughts and ideas as we move forward. "Ponder anew what the Almighty can do", and let me know what you come up with!

Yours in Christ, Pastor Serena





What to expect at CLC - In-Person-Summer 2023

Worshippers are now attending inperson worship service at 9:30am which is also livestreamed to those watching at home on Facebook or YouTube. **Before entry to worship:** Families/individuals should assess their wellness. Stay home if you are feeling ill, have a fever or have a cough.

Many thanks to our outgoing council members: Chris Martin, Donna Parks and Katie Kuhlen. We have valued your leadership. Although Chris is no longer a member of the council, she will continue to serve as Treasurer.

Congratulations to our new council members: Rick Fox, Jim Laguna and Jason Dodge. We look forward to your ideas and energy. **Thank you** to Bob DiNenno for agreeing to serve a second term. Thanks to Cemetery Board member June Alderfer for agreeing to serve another term.

July 2	9:30am	Communion / Sending of Travelers	
July 9	9:30am	Communion / Sending of Travelers Guest Pastor Karyn Wiseman	
July 16	9:30am	Communion / Sending of Travelers Recap of ASP Mission Trip	
July 23	9:30am	Communion / Sending of Travelers	
July 30	9:30am	Outdoor Service / Communion / Sending of Travelers Brunch sign-ups	



Social Media Handles





Youtube Christ kulp Instagram Clccomm

Post Pandemic Plate Passing

Beginning in July we will return to passing the plate during the offering time of our worship services. We will need additional ushers to assist with this, particularly at the 10:30 service, when we return to our two service schedule September 10. If you are interested in learning about being an usher please contact Cory Brechbill or reach out to the church office.

"Witnessing Christ Through Service"

In September we will be entering the third year of our focus on our mission statement. In 2021 -2022 we had "The Year of Welcome" as we pondered what it means to welcome all



with grace. In 2022 – 2023 we have focused on "Worshiping God with Praise" including worshipping in some new and old ways. This year we will dig deeper on the third and final segment of our mission statement. In preparation for Renewal Sunday, please share some of the ways that you "Witness Christ through Service." Your responses can be sent directly to the pastor at her email: <u>pastorss@christlc.org</u> or mailed to the church office at 2211 Mainland Road, Harleysville, PA 19438. Thanks!

Lay Communion Assistants Training

Pastor will be scheduling training this July for those who are willing to visit and bring the communion elements to our members who are unable to attend worship because of frailty or disability. If you are interested in being trained for this ministry please contact the pastor or the church office.



Suggestion Box

There is a suggestion box in the narthex. If you have ideas or suggestions for the church to better serve God and our community, please, put them in writing and submit them. Include your name and contact information. Anonymous suggestions will not be entertained.

Deadline for Clarion articles the 20th of each month Please do not send pdf files. Linda Nyce Landis, Editor clcclarion@gmail.com

CHURCH COUNCIL

CLC Council Highlights – June 14th Election and Re-election of Council Officers:

Council President: Julie Munden was re-elected as President. Vice President: Allison was re-elected as Vice President Secretary Andria Alderfer was re-elected as council secretary Treasurer: Chris Martin was re-elected to serve as treasurer

Ministry Team Liaison Reassignments: See back page for teams and contact information.

Pastor's Report (Pastor) -

Pastor Sellers will be taking off July 9, 2023 & two weeks in August.

Pastor is still working on supply Pastors for the two Sundays in August

Outdoor summer services will start with at the end of this month (June) and we will be serving brunch with a Pancake bar. There will only be one service on outdoor service day.

Volunteers for VBS needed

Christian Ed Ministry Team VBS registration is open – 14 kids registered so far and we are hoping for 40. Daily Bible teachers are needed for VBS. Decorating is on Thursday July 20th from 12 noon to 5 pm.

Tweens have their last event this coming Friday – Pool Party at the Sharkeys.

Currently in need of new Sunday School teachers.

Mutual Ministry The team would like the suggestion box article to be re-run Nothing in the next clarion. No anonymous suggestions in the box.

Property Ministry Team Roof work starting this Thursday (if weather cooperates). Staining of the doors should be started soon – he will be getting back to the team with dates soon.

Shepherd's Shelf Ministry Team Still working on coat and backpack drive. In need of cat food **Social Ministry Team** Continuing to work on Holiday Marketplace.

Youth Ministry Team Parent meeting for ASP trip this upcoming Sunday. ASP trip begins July 1, 2023.

New Business:

Playground/Pavilion Rental Use Policy:

Brooke received a Facebook message asking if our space has a Pavilion, playground and basketball court.

Brooke reached out to our insurance company and there would not be any additional cost if we choose to allow people to use our outdoor space.

The individual would need to put a rider on their home owners insurance.

At this point we would consider allowing people to use it for free – we really wouldn't make any money from it and it would be a way to give back to the community.

We would need to draft something up about rules for the use of the space – Brooke is going to look at the rules for building use.

If they need access to the bathrooms that would be a different conversation.

It was shared that people have noticed that the playground has a lot of dog poop – we will look into a sign that says no pets in the playground area.

Gerri will take this back to Property to start to look at and put together

Approve 2 Fundraising Applications by Team CLC Cycling Team:

All of the money will go to the National MS Society, Bike MS City to Shore. First fundraiser will be on September 25 and it will be a free will offering after Sunday services. Second fundraiser is in conjunction with the Phillies and a portion of each ticket sale will be donated to the event. Tickets will be sold for a game on August 25, 2023. (See article in this issue)

Berkshire Hathaway Shredding Event: Allison Healy asked if the church council would allow for a shredding event in the parking lot. Council is open to having the event at the church once we have more information on date and timing. Proof of insurance would be needed and a Code of Conduct has to be signed.

Passing of the Plates: Gerri shared that the money counters have noticed the amount of money has significantly gone down since we stopped passing the plates. The recommendation will be brought to Worship and Music so that they can consider and make a decision.

Respectfully Submitted,

Andria Alderfer, Council Secretary

Treasurer's Reports and Financials (Chris Martin) Our May envelope giving continues to decline, as compared to early 2023, and as the summer months and vacations are happening, this is likely to continue. Any reminders we can make to our fellow congregation members to try to remember the church over the summer months would be helpful.

Although May is a bit under our budget, the YTD giving is now just over the budget for the year. Also of concern, is that our May 2023 YTD envelope giving is \$18,750 less than May 2022 YTD. Our ordinary expenses in the general fund continue to stay under budget MTD and YTD, higher as compared to 2022 only with respect to typical cost of living increases.

Shepherd's Shelf receipts were down a bit in May, but YTD continue to be over budget. The expansion last year is the largest variance of 2022 to 2023.

Building fund receipts were also down a little in May but YTD very strong as well as compared to 2022. We have some building projects coming up and a budget to go with them.



	Actual	Budget
May Income	\$25,520	\$29,501
May Expense	\$29.815	\$31,818
Net Ordinary income	-\$4,294	-\$2,316
YTD Income 2023	\$150,811	\$148,282
YTD Expense 2023	\$151,878	\$163,112
Net Ordinary income	-\$1,067	-\$14,830



Exciting changes are happening at Shepherd's Shelf! The Shelf has added a daytime distribution on Tuesday's from 10-11:00. The new day and time have been added to the sign up genius, so if you are able to help (see below) sign up. Shepherd's Shelf distributes every Monday and Wednesday evening from 6:30-8pm. We are ALWAYS looking for more volunteers to help during distribution times. Adults and youth 12 and older are welcome to help. No experience necessary, we will train you when you come.

Anyone interested in helping can sign up. Any questions

contact Steph or call the church office.

If you are interested in volunteering please sign up at <u>https://www.signupgenius.com/</u> go/10c0f4da9a62ea3f85-shepherds Donations are accepted during church office hours. Donations can also be dropped off at the Franconia Heritage Museum. Please see <u>www.christlc.org</u> 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 <u>shepherdsshelf@christlc.org</u> or call the church office.

Shepherd's Shelf Summary

In May the Shepherd's Shelf served our greater community. There were 117visits from eligible households. Diapers were distributed 21 times and wipes 11 times. Feminine hygiene products were distributed 29 times. Volunteers from CLC and from the community logged 306 hours. The estimated value of donations for the month is \$28,080.



School just let out, but at the Shepherd's Shelf there is already planning for fall activities. To help our clients get ready for back to school

the Shelf will be collecting backpacks (to distribute in August) and coats (to distribute in October). With the increase of clients this year, we are in need of more items then in the past few years. Please see this link for more information and to sign up for items we need. <u>https://</u> <u>m.signupgenius.com/#!/</u> <u>showSignUp/70A054FAEA723A5FD0-backpack</u>



Thank You! Saint Maria Goretti dropped off 44 bags of donations for the Shepherd's Shelf.





July Women's Group Meetup

Bring a chair and join us on Sunday, July 16 at the Bandshell in Souderton Park (Wile Ave. & Reliance Rd) for the E Street Shuffle, a Bruce Springsteen Tribute Band.

The concert is free and will begin at 7pm.

More information will be coming. If you have questions contact Marlys Thomas at

<u>marlysthomas1@gmail.com</u>.

Team CLC is a group of CLC members and friends who ride together. We ride socially and in charity rides with the National MS Society's Bike MS City to Shore Bike ride as our end of the year ride. This year's ride is on September 30and October 1.

As a fundraiser for this year's ride, we are selling tickets in sections 233-237 to the Friday, August 25, 7:05pm game vs. the St. Louis Cardinals. A portion of each ticket will be donated to the MS Society in Team CLC's name. Tickets are \$43 +fees. If you would like to buy tickets, you can either use this NMSS Coupon Code: <u>https://mlb.tickets.com/?</u>

agency=MLB_MPV&orgId=21&pid=9138493&coupon=NMSS&exclusiveCoupons=true#/event or QR Code below.





If you would like to join Team CLC for either the City to Shore or other rides contact Cory Brechbill, cbrechbill@verizon.net



JULY BIRTHDAYS

- Marlene Bardman
 Laurie Prestia
 Remy Esposito
 James McFadden
- 5 Connie Craig
- 5 Lois Faut
- 5 Steve (Stackhouse) Landis
- 5 Brandan Grebe
- 7 Angelina Laguna
- 7 Lauren Frye
 7 Sophia Childs
 8 Marley Donnelly
 8 Lauren Wolfe
 9 Cory Brechbill
 10 Marlys Thomas
 10 Dann Stephens
 12 Linda Nyce Landis
 12 Stephen Richards
 13 Kathy Griffin
 13 Michael Baymor
 13 Aidan Healy
 18 Ginny Ward
- 18 Del Daubert
- 19 Joyce Nuss

- 21 Chris Everhardt
- 21 Jessica Wolfe
- 22 Bonnie Knauss
- 23 Elizabeth Carpenter
- 25 Bette Haslam
- 25 Andrew Hallman
- 26 Jim Laguna
- 26 Michael Hillegas
- 26 Lauren Hallman
- 27 Connor Williams
- 28 Michele Keyser
- 30 Sarah Swindells
- 30 Rachel Kagarise
- 31 William Nuss
- 31 Matthew Swanson

Vacation Bible School!

Save the Date! Vacation Bible School at CLC is scheduled for July 24-28, from 9 am- 12 noon daily! The curriculum to be used is from Group publishing, which is a space theme titled "Stellar! Share God's Light".



During this fabulous week, there will be singing, dancing, making cool crafts, playing fun games, eating awesome snacks and learning about God's light brought to the world through Jesus. Vacation Bible school is FREE and open to any child age 3-12. 3 year olds should be out of diapers, or accompanied by a parent. Tweens and teens are most welcome to help out as volunteers. We really enjoy having the youth help lead the little ones through the stations.

Volunteers are always welcome! You can give a day or the whole *week*! No experience necessary, just a positive and willing attitude. Taking part in this week is good for the soul, as the laughter of children filling our building is always so special.

If you have questions or wish to volunteer, please contact Karolin Brechbill at <u>kbrechbill@christlc.org</u> or you can call the office (215-256-8738). Please note: all volunteers that will be working directly with children must have current background checks on file with the church office.





A sprinkle of pepper and a dab of soap illustrate a big concept from God's Word.



What you need:

- Shallow dish
- Water
- Black ground pepper
- Toothpick
- Dish soap
- Bible

What you do:

- 1. With the dish on a table, fill it halfway with water. Don't jiggle the dish.
- 2. Sprinkle pepper on the water.
- 3. Dab the toothpick into a drop of soap. Then touch its tip to the center of the water and observe.
- 4. Read Psalm 103:8-12. How does this experiment illustrate God's forgiveness?
- 5. Explain the science behind this experiment: The soap disturbs the water's surface tension. The soap molecules don't want to interact with the water. This repels the water molecules from the soap, causing the floating pepper to also move to the sides.

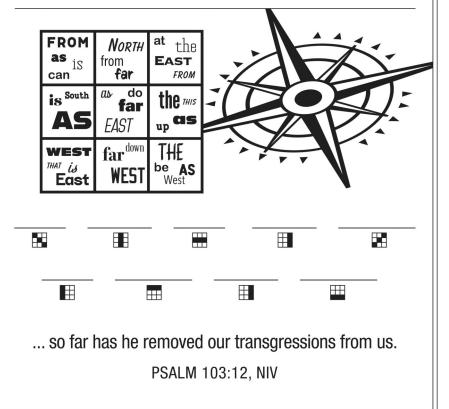
Kids Activity Page



SEPARATION FROM SIN

David praises God for his love and compassion. What does God do for people who fear him?

Directions: Using each grid pattern marked below, find the word that appears in all three of those squares. Write the words in the spaces below to complete Psalm 103:12, NIV.



Answer: As far as the east is from the west



Youth News

By Karolin Brechbill

Congratulations To Our Graduates

I wanted to take this opportunity to lift up our amazing 2023 High School and College Graduates. We have six high school and nine college graduates from our church family, all with amazing

futures ahead of them!

Our high school graduates are Ryan Bell, Conlan Carpenter, Lauren Frye, Tommy Greene, Katie Kuhlen, and Julia Marchewski. This group of young men and women are highly motivated, empathetic, lovely humans, each with unique gifts to share with the world. I have had the privilege of knowing some since birth, and have enjoyed my time with them. Unfortunately, the pandemic altered a few of the formative years they would have had in our congregation as teens. These students didn't get to have all of their winter retreats, they were remote for Sunday School, youth events, confirmation and worship for over a year, and they didn't get the opportunity to attend an ELCA youth gathering. With all of that, they persevered, followed God's path and are now entering a new chapter. Each of these students possess unique qualities and skills, but more importantly, each has been marked by the love of God, and has been supported and prayed for by our congregation for their entire childhoods.

Our college graduates are truly impressive people! Maggie Wilson has graduated from Penn State with a degree in communications. Connor Williams also graduated from Penn State with a degree in Mechanical Engineering (and is getting married this summer!). Joseph Weeks has graduated from Widener with a degree in Biology, and plans to continue his education in a DPT program at Arcadia University. Megan Stoler will graduate in December from Kutztown University. Adriana Marchewski graduated with a degree in Psychology and Public Health from Temple. Angelina Laguna is living in Brooklyn after graduating from SUNY Purchase and will be working in arts admin and hoping to secure a position as a professional free-lance dancer. Jordan Brechbill graduated from the University of Findlay, with a degree in Equine Science and is working as a professional equine trainer while pursuing a Master's in Education. Katie Swanson earned her Master's in Occupational Therapy and is hoping to secure a position in the Philadelphia area. And finally, Rachel Kagarise earned her Doctorate in Physical Therapy from Lebanon Valley College and is planning to enter the work force. Wow! What an amazing group of young adults! I have so many wonderful memories of them all. They have attended Vacation Bible schools, Sunday school classes and events, Intergenerational Dinners, service projects, youth group retreats and sleepovers, Youth Sundays, ELCA youth

gatherings, mission trips and so much more! They have blessed this congregation with their talents, enthusiasm, courage and passions.

One of the greatest joys of being in a church family is celebrating with the children as they reach milestones and getting to witness their growing faith. As a congregation we welcomed them in at their baptisms, accompanied them on their faith journey and reaffirmed our support at their confirmations. And when they are on school breaks, or come back for a visit, we will warmly embrace them and celebrate their return. What a blessing for us and for these young people to share such wonderful relationships! We thank God for the opportunities to accompany them on their faith journey.

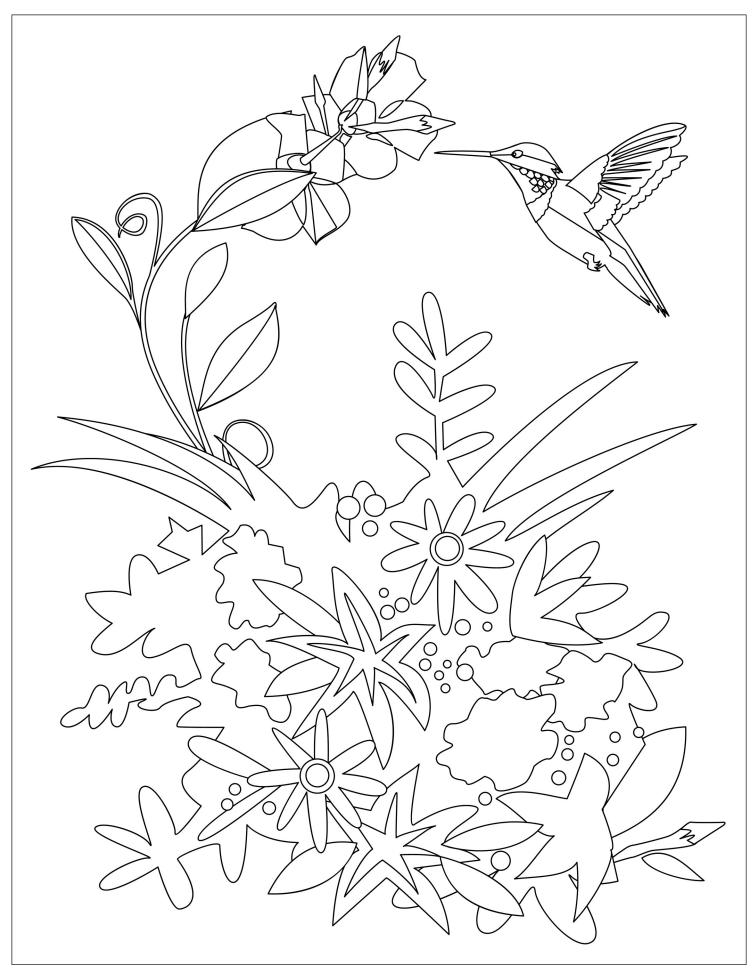


Kentucky, Here We Come!

By the time you read this Clarion edition, we will be on our way to Kentucky for our ASP trip! Bob Walker and I will be leading five youth (Katie Kuhlen, Noah Brechbill, Lily Kuhlen, Sage Munden and Maddie Healy) on the trip, partnering with St John's Lutheran Church in Blue Bell. The youth leader from St John's is a veteran of the ASP trip, so we are grateful to have his expertise for this adventure. We will be leaving on Saturday July 1, staying overnight in West Virginia, attending worship with a host church, then continuing to our destination on Sunday, arriving at 3 pm in Salyersville, KY. While there, we will be staying at a middle school and then traveling to and from our work sites on a daily basis. The general schedule for Monday-Firday is breakfast, pack up, morning devotions, head out to the site, work the day (with a lunch break on site), come back in late afternoon, shower, dinner and then evening group activities (Bible study, sing alongs, group games etc), lights out. Of course with it being July 4th, we are hoping to see some awesome fireworks. Then on Saturday the 8th, we will head out super early to travel home and return by 5 pm/6 Saturday evening.

We plan to share our experiences the following week, but I'm not exactly sure what we will do for that. Consider it a surprise!

I'd like to thank the congregation for allowing us such a great opportunity. The money we received from the Loaves and Fishes fund and support from individual members is a blessing. Please pray for us during the week that we all are safe, we enjoy our time, we do good work, we experience many God moments, and we deepen our relationships with our creator and his people.







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God's work. Our hands.

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The Rev. Serena S. Sellers Karolin Brechbill, Dir. of Faith Formation Brooke Kuhlen, Office Manager Marge Blum, Financial Secretary

Sunday Services Summer Schedule One Service 9:30am In person and live stream. Outdoor Service last Sunday of the month at 9:30am Followed by picnic/covered-dish brunch Sunday School Classes Resume in September Choir Resumes in September



CLC's Ministry Teams

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

Celebrations- June Alderfer, kjalderfer@hotmail.com, Allison Healy, allison.healy@foxroach.com Cemetery- Mike Kuhlen <u>mike.kuhlen@gmail.com</u>, Jim Laguna, laguna@comcast.net Christian Education - Karolin Brechbill, kbrechbill@christlc.org, Scott Swindells, swindiculous@gmail.com Communications- Dann Stephens, dann.stephens571@gmail.com, Linda N. Landis, lindalandis7@gmail.com Finance & Stewardship- Brian Sharkey briansharkey@outlook.com, Lee Wolfe,

lee.wolfe831@gmail.com

Mutual Ministry– Michelle Martin, michellepmartin2001@yahoo.com, Lisa DeLong, lisardelong@yahoo.com Property- Rob Kagarise, rkagarise@verizon.net, Gerri Test, mushedpickle@yahoo.com
Shepherd's Shelf- Steph Sharkey, shepherdsshelf@christlc.org, Rick Fox, Rfoxx18@gmail.com
Social Ministry- Ginny Ward, gwrfine@verizon.net, Andria Alderfer, andrialalderfer@gmail.com
Welcoming - Paula Morris, plm21354@msn.com, Bob DiNenno, robertdinenno@gmail.com
Worship & Music- Michael Hillegas, mchillegas@yahoo.com, 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



July 2023