

# Christ's Messenger

September 2021

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH The American Association of Lutheran Churches



"To know Christ,  
and make Him known."



In the Hands of the Refiner

## Going Back

The phrase "Going Back" makes me think of a lot of different things. Going back to school. Going back to the way things were. Going back to our way of life. Going back to church.

### Going Back to School

During the Covid-19 shutdown, it was eerie not hearing the voices of the children. Not seeing the parents drop off and pick up their children. It was always good to hear the little voices of children across the street from my office window when school was in session. Even the shrill shrieks of girls at play were music to my ears...well sometimes. Back to school has always meant new clothes, new back packs, pens, pencils, paper notebooks, gadgets, and gizmos. It means fall is here, football is back, new teachers, and new friend possibilities. It is literally a new season. *"He changes times and seasons, deposes kings and sets up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding. He reveals deep and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with Him."* Daniel 2:21-22 NRSV This new season can be a new season for us too at Christ Lutheran Church.

### Going Back to the Way Things Were

What does that mean to you? Does it mean you are recovering the romance in your marriage? Does it mean that you are seeking to understand again those things about someone you really care for? Does it mean to respect again someone who you've lost respect for because of a failure? Does it mean we desire to go back to the way we were? What were those things; those ways; those feelings? Going back most always means making changes to revert to the way things were. Going back means that you know how they were, what they were, how they came to be, and what it means to recover them.

A famous musical group called "The Byrds" wrote and recorded a song entitled, "Going Back" This is what they said:

*"I think I'm goin' back to the things I learned so well in my youth; I think I'm returning to those days when I was young enough to know the truth. Now there are no games to only pass the time; no more electric trains, no more trees to climb; but thinking young and growing older is no sin, and I can play the game of life to win. I can recall a time when I wasn't ashamed to reach out to a friend. Now I think I've got a lot more than just my toys to lend. Now there's more to do than watch my sailboat glide, but every day can be a magic carpet ride. A little bit of courage is all we lack. So, catch me if you can, I'm goin' back."*

### Going Back to Our Way of Life

Ever since these United States seemingly opened its doors again, our country has wanted to get ahold of herself and get going back to our way of life. Covid-19 really changed our way of life. The trouble is some people are telling us our way of life will never be the same. We will not be able to going back to the way of life we've known. Going back to our way of life as of the year 2019. What is the way of life? What was your way of life; your neighbors, your family or friends' way of life? Has it changed? Have you changed? If so, how have you changed? How has that affected you? How should we think about it? *"I know, LORD, that a person's way of life is not his own; no one who walks determines his own steps."* Jeremiah 10:23 CSB

God also tells us in His Word, *"Thus says the LORD: "Keep justice, and do righteousness, For My salvation is about to come, And My righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man who does this, And the son of man who lays hold on it; Who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, and keeps his hand from doing any evil."* Isaiah 56:1-2 NKJV

Our country has sinned, and sinned horribly. Our country needs to repent and turn to God. We must not go back to our former way of life, which got us into the mess we're in now. However, we must return to God, in order that He would bring justice and righteousness to this land, and that we would live as He commands and intends for us to live.

As Christians living in the United States, God tells us, *"You were taught to put away your former way of life, your old self, corrupt and deluded by its lusts, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds..."* Ephesians 4:22-23 NRSV

### **Going Back to Church**

Going back means you've already been there. You've experienced it before. You've been there and done that. You know what it is like being there. For whatever reason, you left, and now you're thinking of going back. Other than the government mandated lockdown, why wouldn't one go back to church? There are a variety of reasons people haven't returned to church since Covid-19. It has been said that 25% of people who attended church prior to the lockdown will not return to church. Even though this is true for a variety of reasons, this presents new opportunities for the Church. This presents us with new possibilities. This presents us with new worship possibilities and opportunities for growth. This presents us with hope! Hope for now and for the future. We can and must do new and innovative things in worship. We can and must do new and innovative things regarding evangelism, discipleship and missions. I'm not talking about a new Gospel or a new theology. What I am talking about is listening to God and hearing what He has planned. I'm hearing Him say that we should follow Him as He begins to do something new with us. *"I am about to do something new; even now it shall come to pass, suddenly you shall perceive it: I will make a road through the wilderness and rivers in the desert."* Isaiah 43:19 There is light at the end of the tunnel.

What does this mean for us here at Christ Lutheran Church? It means that we must learn from what we've been taught from God's Word – like what was taught during the Church Essentials series: about being a community of believers, about being missional, about being disciples who make disciples. The month of September is a month about Going Back to Church. September 19<sup>th</sup> is National Back to Church Sunday. It is about inviting others to come to church with you because you care about their souls. It means that we care more about others than about ourselves. *"Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others."* Philippians 2:4 NRSV

We are going back to church to share the hope we have in us because of what God has done for us through Jesus Christ. *"But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, but with gentleness and respect..."* 1 Peter 3:15 NASB

*"For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, through perseverance we wait eagerly for it."* Romans 8:24-25 NASB

Hope is Here! That is our theme for the month of September! Hope is Here! Hope is here is the reason to return to church. What is the reason for Going Back to Church? Hope is the reason. Going back: to believing; to trusting; to relying upon God and Him alone. Going back: to loving; giving; forgiving; having mercy; sharing the Gospel; and making disciples. Hope is the reason to grow the life of Christ Lutheran Church. We are Going Back because Jesus is with us; Jesus is here, and when Jesus is here, Hope is here!

May God bless your September!

Pastor Gary



New Message Series "Hope Is Here"

## Christ Lutheran Church

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 Christ Lutheran Church Duluth

 Christ Lutheran Church Duluth

President:  
Ouitdee Carson  
Vice President:  
Carolyn Lofald  
Treasurer:  
Sandy Carlson

Every Month:  
Wednesdays:  
6:30 PM Adult Bible Study

Esther Circle  
First Thursday of each month at 10:00 AM

Council Meeting  
Second Thursday of each month at 6:30 PM

AA meets at the church every Monday at 6:30 PM

## September Maintenance Report

The mountain ash trees and sumac are turning color; fall is closing in! (Although, with this humidity and heat that is hard to believe.) We are running the exhaust fan to pull the heat from the sanctuary, but the offices are very warm. Pastor and Judi have fans running in an attempt to cool them, but with the heat this offers little relief. Our custodian, Gary, postponed the rug cleaning until later this fall. With the humidity in the church being this high the rugs would not dry well. Gary continues to clean well for us too with the different groups now meeting in our fellowship hall. A continuing gentle reminder that the pavement at the lower entrance door is uneven, so, PLEASE WATCH YOUR STEP! We are working with Arrowhead Window and Door on the windows at the parsonage that need attention. This has been a slow process. The rep for the windows should be here next week with the parts that need to be replaced. The surge protectors finally arrived! Chris, from Benson Electric, has installed them and that task is complete. These are for our main power supply and subpanels and all the other computers and electrical components in the church. This was a safety precaution recommended by our insurance company. This information will now be forwarded on to our insurance company to show our due diligence in taking care of our church home. Hopefully it will help when we have our yearly review and they are figuring out our premium. As we make improvements, some at their recommendations, we send the paid invoices for proof that it has been completed. At the recommendation of our elevator inspection, the emergency batteries have been replaced. This will assure that if we have a power outage that the elevator will lower and the doors will open. We are thankful that Jim and the Esther Circle have been faithful in taking care of our church gardens and grounds, everything looks so nice! We still have the staining of the garage on our "to-do" list for fall; we may do another coat of protectant on the play yard as well. Again, looking for abled body volunteers! If you note something needs attention, please let us know. We are blessed!

Also, we are missing 3 plastic tables. Please be sure to contact the office if you would like to borrow something from the church so we are able to keep track of all our items. We appreciate it. God's blessings on you!

Carolyn

### LOST RECIPE BOOK

The Stauber family is once again asking to please put the word out that they are still looking for Marlene's recipe book. Marlene feels she had it at church for the last youth dinner that she helped with, so it's been missing for a few years now. It is more than just recipes to their family, it holds many precious memories of recipes that were passed down through the years by their family members. If you have contact with any of our church family that are not attending for health reasons or prior members, please inquire for them. Your help in finding it would be such a blessing to their family. Thank you!

*Mn Adult & Teen Challenge presents*

**HOPE**  
**IS** *alive*

Gary & Carolyn Lofald are reserving a table for the fall Teen Challenge Gala on October 21.

If you are interesting in attending there are still 4 - 6 places available at their table.

Please contact Carolyn Lofald (722-8392) if you would like more information.

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Dear CLC Family & Friends,

## “The Secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven”

Jesus told many parables, but the parable of the sower is special. It is included in Matthew 13, Mark 4, and Luke 8. This is what Jesus says about this special parable, “If you can’t understand the meaning of this parable, how will you understand all the other parables?” (Mark 4:13 NLT). This tells me it’s important to spend some time reading, thinking, and praying for understanding about the parable of the sower.

I pray that you will meditate on and enjoy this parable with me so that we will be better able to see, hear, and understand the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven. Here is the parable from Mark 4:1-20.

Once again Jesus began teaching by the lakeshore. A very large crowd soon gathered around him, so he got into a boat. Then he sat in the boat while all the people remained on the shore. <sup>2</sup> He taught them by telling many stories in the form of parables, such as this one:

<sup>3</sup> “Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seed. <sup>4</sup> As he scattered it across his field, some of the seed fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate it. <sup>5</sup> Other seed fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seed sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. <sup>6</sup> But the plant soon wilted under the hot sun, and since it didn’t have deep roots, it died. <sup>7</sup> Other seed fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plants so they produced no grain. <sup>8</sup> Still other seeds fell on fertile soil, and they sprouted, grew, and produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted!” <sup>9</sup> Then he said, “Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand.”

<sup>10</sup> Later, when Jesus was alone with the twelve disciples and with the others who were gathered around, they asked him what the parables meant.

<sup>11</sup> He replied, “You are permitted to understand the secret<sup>[a]</sup> of the Kingdom of God. But I use parables for everything I say to outsiders, <sup>12</sup> so that the Scriptures might be fulfilled:

‘When they see what I do,  
they will learn nothing.  
When they hear what I say,  
they will not understand.  
Otherwise, they will turn to me  
and be forgiven.’<sup>[b]</sup>”

<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “If you can’t understand the meaning of this parable, how will you understand all the other parables? <sup>14</sup> The farmer plants seed by taking God’s word to others. <sup>15</sup> The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message, only to have Satan come at once and take it away. <sup>16</sup> The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. <sup>17</sup> But since they don’t have deep roots, they don’t last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God’s word. <sup>18</sup> The seed that fell among the thorns represents others who hear God’s word, <sup>19</sup> but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life, the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things, so no fruit is produced. <sup>20</sup> And the seed that fell on good soil represents those who hear and accept God’s word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!”

**Let’s take God’s word to others this September as we boldly invite family, friends, and neighbors to Come Back to Church on September 19!**

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## CLC YOUTH

Confirmation Class with Pastor Gary starts Wednesday, September 8<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am!

Youth Bible Study begins Sunday, September 12<sup>th</sup>. We'll meet weekly in the Fireside Room at 11:00am. Our first semester study is "Growing in Christ's Church." <https://vimeo.com/33604542>

See you there!



## BELOVED APPRENTICE IN AUGUST

I am so thankful for our special times of Bible Study, friendship and prayer each month with "Beloved Apprentice." Remember all women are invited and you can join in anytime.

**ONLINE Tuesdays starting September 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm**

**IN PERSON Wednesdays starting September 15<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am in Fellowship Hall**

## CLC FOOD SHARE

Thank you for your generous donations and volunteer service for the CLC Food Share. We will continue sharing groceries with school district families the third Wednesday each month. August grocery packing is Tuesday 9/21/21 (time TBD). Food share distribution is Wednesday 9/22/21 from 11:30am - 12:30pm. See you there!

In Christ's love,

**Sue**

320-815-1561

[suedesha@gmail.com](mailto:suedesha@gmail.com)

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## Quilting: September 26<sup>th</sup> from 9 AM - 3 PM

This is a time to make quilts that will be given to help others in need. No experience - no problem.

Bring a willing spirit and a sewing machine if you have one. I will have plenty of tools, rulers, rotary cutters and best of all fabric to get us started. Beginners more than welcome. Stay for whatever time you can, bring a bag lunch and beverage if you plan to stay for the day. Contact Sandy Carlson (349-2786) with any questions you have. This is a great time for some fun and fellowship.



## September Ushers & Trustees

### September 5

**Ushers:** Carolyn Lofald & Jim Carlson

**Trustees:** Laurie & Jim

### September 12

**Ushers:** Bill & Jan Arezzo

**Trustees:** Bill & Grace

### September 19

**Ushers:**

Mike & Wendy Pickar; Grace Wells; Jim Carlson

**Trustees:** Wendy & Jim

### September 26

**Ushers:** Gary & Carolyn Lofald

**Trustees:** Laurie & Laura

*If you have a conflict with these dates, please contact Jim Carlson at 343-6755*

## Financial Update

July Income \$8,484.00

July Expenses \$13,252.35

*Monthly income was under expenses  
by \$4,768.35*

YTD Income \$84,037.24

YTD Expenses \$82,003.37

*YTD income was over expenses  
by \$2,033.37*

July Missions:

Wittenberg Door Campus Ministry: \$907.50

Women's Care Center: 457.50



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## **September Mission of the Month: Gideons**



**GIDEONS**  
INTERNATIONAL

Members of The Gideons International share their faith because they realize how often people today need someone to come alongside them in finding their way to true salvation that is available only through the grace of God. As opportunities arise, they take time to share the Gospel message with friends and family, business acquaintances, and other people they meet who are struggling in their daily lives.

They believe distributing copies of God's Word plants powerful seeds God can use according to His own timing (I Corinthians 3:6), allows many to read the truth for themselves (John 8:32), provides a lasting witness (Hebrews 4:12), and makes it easier for those they reach to boldly spread the Good News (II Timothy 2:2).

Members of The Gideons International personally witness and distribute God's Word to police, fire, and medical personnel; prisoners; military personnel; students in the fifth grade and above; and to those with whom they interact on a daily basis. Scriptures are also placed by Gideons and Auxiliary in key locations, including hotels, motels, hospitals, convalescent homes, medical offices, domestic violence shelters, prisons, and jails.

The Gideons International began distributing the Word of God in 1908. Today, there are more than 269,500 Gideons and Auxiliary – and an untold number of supporters – in some 200 countries, territories, and possessions across the globe. These dedicated individuals have given their time and money to make it possible for others to learn about the love of God by giving them access to His Word. They have placed and distributed more than 2 billion Bibles and New Testaments around the world.

Please prayerfully consider a donation to this month's chosen mission. You may make checks payable to Christ Lutheran Church. Thank you for your continued support in our mission "To know Christ and to make Him known."

PLEASE PRAY FOR....

*Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.  
James 5:14*

Our Pastor & the Leadership of the Church  
All of our students from pre-school to college  
Our Country, Military & Police  
The teachers and students at all schools  
Mission of the Month: *The Gideons*  
Persecuted Christians throughout the world

The steadfastness of our faith  
*Lutheran Vicar Mwavu Ronald and his 2 churches:*  
*St. John's Lutheran Church,  
Nankandulo, Kamuli, Uganda*  
*St. Paul's Lutheran Church,  
Buluva, Namendwa, Uganda*

THOSE WITH HEALTH NEEDS:

Ruth Dahl	Barb Hanson	Mary Jenny
Carol Johnson	Evelyn Johnson	Mark Malander
Florence Kubiak	The Lund Family	Donna Swanson
Brian McDonald	Carol Schramm	Eli Miletich
Judy Stocke	Ruth Peterson	Darlene Saaf
Del Sandberg	Carol Sogard	Jane McLean
Kathy Stevens	Tom & Marlene Stauber	Carol Schneeberger
Linda Anthony (Dick McLean's Daughter)		Maggie Kaptonak
Pastor Jerry Albert		

*If there are any people who have been accidently overlooked, please contact the church office. We apologize for any oversights.*

**Ruth Dahl's new address:**  
4939 140<sup>th</sup> St W  
Apple Valley MN 55124  
952-683-1113

# Happy Birthday!

*All the days ordained for me were written  
in your book before one of them came to be.  
How precious to me are your thoughts,  
O God! How vast is the sum of them!*

*Psalms 139:16,17*

<i>Diane Malander</i>	<i>September 13</i>
<i>Kelly Carson</i>	<i>September 19</i>
<i>Gayle Maruska</i>	<i>September 20</i>
<i>Eli Miletich</i>	<i>September 23</i>
<i>Sandy Carlson</i>	<i>September 24</i>
<i>Cindy Kent</i>	<i>September 29</i>