

Christ's Messenger

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH The American Association of Lutheran Churches

January 2022



"To know Christ,
and make Him known."



In the Hands of the Refiner

How do we know God?

Text: Ephesians 1:17-21

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which He has called you, what are the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His great might that He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come."

With each new year comes another year of hope. When we look back at 2021, what do we see? What have we discovered about ourselves, others, our church, our nation, and the world?

For what do we hope? Will we keep our new resolutions?? Do we wish that 2022 will be the best year of our lives? Will 2022 be a better year than 2021?

In the text above, St. Paul prays that the Ephesians would *"know what is the hope to which He has called you, what are the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable great of His power toward us who believe..."*

We can apply this prayer to ourselves. There is wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God. When we think carefully about this verse, we ask ourselves, what is the hope to which God called us? The hope is the knowledge of God.

I believe we can be established in this hope by asking God for wisdom and revelation in order to live out a life of knowing Him intimately. That is the hope that we must carry in our hearts for 2022.

Wisdom and revelation are special characteristics of the Holy Spirit's operation in us. The Holy Spirit imparts wisdom and special revelations of divine mysteries. In other words, the effect the Holy Spirit produces in us is wisdom and revelation.

God's wisdom is one of His attributes. His is infinite wisdom, and He works wisdom in believers by means of the Holy Spirit. Another work of the Holy Spirit is revelation; to reveal to believers spiritual mysteries.

What is the wisdom and revelation for? Wisdom and revelation are for our growing knowledge of God.

"In the knowledge of Him" means that this knowledge of God would increase, not simply be initiated, because Paul is writing to believers who already know God as Savior.

We must seek the full knowledge of God through Jesus Christ. It is a knowledge which is not merely intellectual, but of the nature of spiritual experience. Paul is saying, *"Of Him"* — our growing knowledge of God the Father, The sphere in which we will receive God's gift of wisdom and revelation is in the knowledge of God.

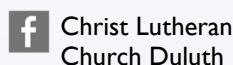
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Christ Lutheran Church

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Website: clcduluth.org

President:
Quitdee Carson

Vice President:
Carolyn Lofald

Treasurer:
Sandy Carlson

Every Month:
Wednesdays:
10 AM Ladies' Bible Study
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

January Ushers & Trustees

January 2

Ushers: Carolyn Lofald & Jim Carlson

Trustees: Grace & Bill

January 9

Ushers: Mike & Wendy Pickar

Trustees: Wendy & Carol

January 16

Ushers: Bill & Jan Arezzo

Trustees: Laurie & Laura

January 23

Ushers: Grace Wells & Jim Carlson

Trustees: Laurie & Jim

January 30

Ushers: Gary & Carolyn Lofald

Trustees: Grace & Bill

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



January Mission of the Month

CLC Father/Daughter Ball

The 26th Annual Father/Daughter Ball

is scheduled for January 29 and February 5, 2022!

The mission of the Father Daughter Ball is to provide a quality, memorable, and wholesome event for fathers and daughters of all ages. We acknowledge that the unique and significant relationship between fathers and daughters is a mirror of God's love for His children, and that God has entrusted fathers with the role of bringing up daughters to live in His truth.

This ministry is specifically intended for fathers (and father figures) to strengthen their relationships with their daughter(s). It also provides an excellent opportunity for fathers to show their daughter(s) what a dating experience should be. These precious moments will always be cherished in both your hearts!

We support MN Adult & Teen Challenge and through gifts of our partners we are able to provide complimentary tickets to those fathers and their daughters as they rebuild their relationships.

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."*

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY!

The Father Daughter Ball Committee will be looking for volunteers to help again this year at our events. Watch for the sign-up sheet in early January!

Financial Update

November Income: \$8,517.00
November Expenses: \$9,221.42

*Monthly income was under
expenses by \$704.42*

YTD Income \$139,486.41
YTD Expenses \$122,138.46

*YTD income was over
expenses by \$17,347.95*

November Mission: AALC
\$882.50



We must seek to know God more intimately and thoroughly. Therefore, however far you may have advanced in knowledge and in love, there is a profound depth of knowledge which you can still explore, and which you are being exhorted to continue to comprehend.

Why is it so important that we grow in our knowledge of God? Because far and above everything or anyone else having to do with our lives, God is the basis of our hope. It is because whatever may go on in our lives, happiness, sadness, health or illness, success or failure, our hope is built on nothing less than our knowledge of God.

Who is God to you? What has He done for you and your family? What blessings has He bestowed upon you?

When you believed upon Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, you must acknowledge, *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ..”* (Ephesians 1:3)

Paul is saying that Christians have received **every** spiritual blessing in Christ, i.e., because we have been united to Christ by means of the Holy Spirit in our baptism, we have received **every** spiritual blessing. The meaning is that the spiritual blessings of God are found in heaven and are brought to us. They are brought to us in worship, in prayer, in praise, in meditation upon God’s Word, in our devotions, in the means of grace (the Word of God, baptism and the Lord’s Supper).

But wait. There is more! Paul is telling us that there is so much more over and above **every spiritual blessing** – it is in the knowledge of God! The result of our growing knowledge of God is worked out in our discipleship – in our following Jesus – in our learning from Him. Living a Christ-like, God glorifying life is the result of our growing knowledge of God through Jesus Christ.

The knowledge of God is the knowledge of the Triune God. *“Philip said to Him, ‘Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’ ‘Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. ‘Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves.’”* (John 14:8-11)

The knowledge of God brings us hope. How? Because He is the God of hope. In other words, it is in Him alone that we must place our hope regarding any circumstance we may face in the new year. *“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”* (Romans 15:13) We must believe in the God of hope! The prayer means for God to cause hope and peace to abound in you, or to furnish or supply hope and peace liberally to you! Knowing God intimately makes placing our hope in Him full of confidence and assurance.

Paul says, *“having the eyes of your hearts enlightened..”* God will help you know Him. He will cause His knowledge to come to light and become clear to you. Once the knowledge of God becomes clearer, and the more you come to know Him, you will understand *“the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of His power toward us who believe..”*

Therefore, in 2022 make knowing God intimately your first priority, understanding that He will grant to you wisdom and revelation to come to a fuller knowledge of Him day after day.

That is my prayer for the coming year, beloved of Christ Lutheran Church, as we continue to “Know Christ and make Him known.”

May God bless you this New Year of 2022.

In Christ’s Love,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary DeSha". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pastor Gary DeSha

Discipleship Outfitters

A Light Shines Brightly in the Darkness

Epiphany is a special time on the church calendar that can easily be overlooked as we rush back into “real life” after Christmas. Always on January 6th, Epiphany is based on the Greek word “epiphaneia” which means to reveal, appear, manifest, and to make known. The Epiphany, the 12th day of Christmas and final day of the season, shines a light on Christ’s birth to deepen our understanding of the Noel we have just experienced.

The Old Testament reading for Epiphany looks ahead to the future glory of Israel after the exile in Babylon, their time of great darkness. Light and glory would come to Israel by way of fulfilled prophecy about a son of David born of a virgin. He would crush the head of the serpent, bring salvation to God’s chosen people and then to all nations, and would sit on the throne of King David forever.

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. Isaiah 60:1-3

In the Gospel reading for January 6, we meet Three Wise Men who followed the star of promise to Bethlehem bringing treasures to bless the prophesied Holy Child. They are acknowledged as the first heralds of the Incarnate Word, announcing His appearing to the world as they travel back to distant lands, but avoiding Herod to protect the newborn King.

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: “And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.” Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way. Matthew 2:1-12

The New Testament reading reveals the Mystery of Christ and confirms the promise of Isaiah 60:3, that salvation through Christ was not only for Israel, but for all nations.

For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles—assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Ephesians 3:1-6

Brothers and sisters, we are fellow partakers in the promise of Jesus Christ. God has sent His light into our own hearts of stone and turned them into soft, tender hearts of flesh so we can experience our own personal epiphany. We have been enabled to see and hear, perceive and understand the glorious truths of what God has done for us and for people from all nations through Jesus. This is why Immanuel appeared in Bethlehem as a Baby, and why he will appear again as a King when he returns; to save us and be with us forever.

Whether a star in the night sky or a small candle on your nightstand, light shining in the darkness invites us to look and listen as it speaks a silent word of calm, comfort, and peace. Jesus Christ is the light of the world, and He is the light in whatever darkness you are experiencing. Receive His appearing and accept His invitation to draw near for everything your heart needs this winter.



Blessed New Year!
Sue
320-815-1561
suedesha@gmail.com

Our Maintenance Report for January is short and sweet! We thank Jim Carlson for shoveling and snow blowing when needed! The back heated slab has been adjusted and is working well. The heat tape on the roof is working and doing its job. A thank you also to our custodian Gary Glad for doing such a wonderful job for us in taking care of the church. He goes above and beyond - always bringing items to our attention and taking care of even the little things. Our church is blessed beyond measure. Praying for a healthy and blessed New Year!

In Christ,
Carolyn

Quilting:

January 20 from 10 AM - 2 PM

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.



Thank you!

Dear Church Family,
Wasn't Christmas Eve worship awesome!
It was so good to be together with you!
Thank you for the lovely cards and gifts. You bought us a delicious dinner for Christmas Eve from Super One and much more!
Love and blessing to you all and Happy New Year!
Pastor Gary and Sue



CLC Gals,
Thank you for all the special gifts you had delivered by way of Mike Pickar. I miss you but find I can worship via the TV and radio in my comfortable chair!

God bless you all
From Gwen Nelson

A heartfelt thank you for the many well wishes, texts, cards, and prayers after my recent appendectomy. I'm slowly feeling better—appreciate your kindness & concern,
With my love,
Carolyn

Dear Christ Lutheran,
With awe and amazement when Jim Carlson came to the door with a beautiful bag filled with cookies and excellent devotional booklets about Christmas. The real treasure is a plaque saying "Believe". This plaque will grace our fireplace mantel for years.
Your caring and thoughtfulness is so much appreciated.
The infectious disease doctor highly recommended no public visitation for two months for Priscilla.
May you have a BLESSED CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY HEALTHY NEW YEAR.
In God's Love,

Priscilla and Don Olson



Dear Christ Lutheran Church Family,
Sincere thanks for the gifts in the blue bag. The wooden cross and calendar are so beautiful. God bless you all.
Diane Malander



Dear Christ Lutheran Church friends,
Thank you for the Super One gift card I received for Christmas!
It is a blessing to work with you all!
Looking forward to praising the Lord together for all His goodness in 2022!~

Judi Morgan

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:
CLC Father/Daughter Ball

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,

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	Carol Sogard	Darlene Saaf
Del Sandberg	Tom & Marlene Stauber	Jane McLean
Kathy Stevens	Carol Schneeberger	Maggie Kaptonak
Linda Anthony (Dick McLean's Daughter)		Bethany White

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

CLC Food Share

The next food packing date is Tuesday, January 18

December distribution is Thursday, January 20 from 11:30-12:30.

Thank you so much for all of your prayers and support of this ministry!



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

Jean Clark	January 4
Pastor Gary	January 10
Dale Lund	January 14
Laura Melander	January 15
Mike Pickar	January 15
Wendy Pickar	January 17
Courtney Carson	January 19
Gabe Wiita	January 22