

Christ's Messenger

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH The American Association of Lutheran Churches



"To know Christ,
and make Him known."

February 2022



In the Hands of the Refiner

"Let Us Love One Another, As Christ Loves Us"

What is the first thing you think about when you think of February? Maybe its that Spring may be just around the corner or not until May. Maybe you're thinking of getting out of Duluth for a far warmer climate. Maybe you think about St. Valentine's Day; giving your wife or husband a box of chocolates or a romantic card that says, "I love you" or "Will You Be My Valentine?" What is it about February?

We do know that February has long been celebrated as a month of romance, and that St. Valentine's Day, as we know it today, contains traces of both Christian and ancient Roman tradition. The history of Valentine's Day—and the story of its patron saint—is shrouded in mystery. Who was Saint Valentine, and how did he become associated with this ancient tradition?

There are at least three different saints named Valentine or Valentinus, all of whom were martyred. One legend contends that Valentine was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. When Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families, he outlawed marriage for young men. Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentine's actions were discovered, Claudius ordered that he be put to death. Still others insist that it was Saint Valentine of Terni, a bishop, who was the true namesake of the holiday. He, too, was beheaded by Claudius II outside Rome.

Other stories suggest that Valentine may have been killed for attempting to help Christians escape harsh Roman prisons, where they were often beaten and tortured. According to one legend, an imprisoned Valentine actually sent the first "valentine" greeting himself after he fell in love with a young girl—possibly his jailor's daughter—who visited him during his confinement. Before his death, it is alleged that he wrote her a letter signed "From your Valentine," an expression that is still in use today. Although the truth behind the Valentine legends is murky, the stories all emphasize his appeal as a sympathetic, heroic and—most importantly—romantic figure.

For the last three weeks of January, the Sunday messages preached were related to understanding that the Church is empowered by the Holy Spirit without whom we are truly powerless. That you would understand what the Holy Spirit accomplishes through His gifts to individuals working *together* as the Body of Christ, the Church. Then there was the reality of *gathering together*, to hear and respond as we see the power of the Word of God in Christ Jesus. That you would rejoice at the hearing of God's Word and its power, especially as we *gather together* as one Body in worship.

What is the emphasis? Loving one another is the emphasis. Loving one another is what keeps the Church alive and vibrant. You see, the Cross of Christ Jesus is the source of Christian love toward one another. So, as a follower of Jesus, you are being conformed to the image of Christ as you love one another.

We are to love one another even as Christ Jesus has loved us. Does that seem like a monumental task? It could be or rather should it be considered a task? Should it be something we must "do?" What should *love one another as Christ loves us* look like?

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Christ Lutheran Church

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 Christ Lutheran Church Duluth

 Christ Lutheran Church Duluth

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

Part of last Sunday's Epistle reading was from 1 Corinthians 13:1-8a, "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends."

I am beginning my third year here as Pastor of Christ Lutheran Church. Things were pretty rocky when I came on board. People were tired. The Church was not really united in love for one another. Since then, people have come, and people have gone. I'm encouraged that we have a core group of people who want to see Christ Lutheran Church flourish, grow, and reach the community for Christ. We must watch out for staying away from our brothers and sisters because of resentment and hurt feelings. If these attitudes occur, unity in the bond of peace is just a biblical catch phrase that really has no substance. God wants us to grow in unity and peace.

Love is not irritable or resentful. Love bears all things; endures all things. Love is patient and kind. Let me share the lyrics of a song entitled "Forgiven."

Verse 1

Lord, forgive us for our pride when our faith becomes a show; dressed in righteous deeds to hide all the stains below. We have judged Your sons and daughters for the sin that is our own. May we now forgive each other and lay down our stones.

Forgiven, forgiven. through the blood of Christ we are forgiven.

Verse 2

Lord, forgive us for our love of the things we wish to own. We forsake the feast above for all the crumbs below. Though You've made us sons and daughters we do not the world disown; May we find our greatest treasure is in You alone.

Forgiven, forgiven. through the blood of Christ we are forgiven.

Verse 3

Lord, forgive us for our shame when we can't release the past; when we're quick to take the blame, but forget we're free at last. We avoid Your sons and daughters for the fear we don't belong. Give us eyes to see each other Through Your only Son.

Forgiven, forgiven. through the blood of Christ we are forgiven.

True Christian love covers a multitude of sins. Love protects. Love forbears. Can you love this way? Yes, of course you can! We love, "because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." Romans 5:5b

The Apostle John exhorts us, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and His love is perfected in us." 1 John 4:7-12 (ESV)

When I think of February, I think of love – not only the Valentine's Day "love," but rather the love we have for one another as Christians here at Christ Lutheran Church. We are a diverse family. We come from different places; have different parents and relatives. However, we are one, united together in Christ Jesus by the Holy Spirit in our baptism.

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The Apostle John wants to emphasize another truth: Whosoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God is in him and he in God. It is necessary that you join in the confession of John, that you accept his testimony concerning Christ without doubt. This fact, that the despised Jesus, who died the death of a common criminal on the cross, is nevertheless the true, eternal Son of God, is the basis of Christian faith.

No Christian can be sure of his salvation unless these facts are known to him. Where this belief is firmly established in the heart of a Christian, there that wonderful fellowship obtains the glory John is continually setting forth, where God makes His abode in the heart, there the believer is in God, united with his heavenly Father by the loving bonds of such a perfect union as is unknown anywhere else.

As Christians we have recognized and believed the love which God has in us. This glorious knowledge and certainty came to us by faith in Christ Jesus. We have realized, at least to some extent, continuing to go deeper, what that love means which God has shown us in our Redeemer.

Christian love is a matter of experience, and yet also of belief, for it is so great and wonderful that it is impossible for any Christian fully to comprehend how much it comprises. We must keep on believing and loving until we see Him face to face and know Him even as we are known.

May God bless your February with an increased love for one another!

Gary DeSha

Pastor Gary DeSha



Sunday services are livestreamed on our Facebook page:

Christ Lutheran Church Duluth at 9:30 AM

You can also log onto our website clduluth.org



Christ Lutheran Church Duluth



Christ Lutheran Church Duluth

Oh, For the Love of a Dog

I'll never forget the look on Jack's face when I dropped him off at our daughter's house on January 15th before we left for our Florida vacation. His doggy bag and bed were organized, Hannah had feeding instructions, I gave him a last minute hug, and turned to go. I looked back to tell him, "OK Jack, you're in charge," and there he stood across the room at attention with ears perked and a quizzical expression. I hesitated wondering if he would be ok.



Sometimes we receive intimations and silent warnings ahead of time, but most often we don't know what's ahead and we proceed forward with our plans, God willing. A week into the trip we received a report that Jack had thrown up, but that had happened before when he was anxious. Then a few days later Hannah started getting worried. Was it dog anxiety or something else. After she took him to the vet, we learned it was serious and a positive outcome wasn't likely. Hannah sent us a photo of Jack and as we drove home I looked at it often; actually I looked into his eyes in this photo often as we drove home remembering how often I had gazed deeply into his dog soul with my hands cupped around both ears saying, "I love you, Jack."

We arrived in Menahga at 9:30am on Thursday and our faithful friend was still alive, but very weak. We held him as he died and I watched the breath of life I knew so well slip away from him. I share this with you because in that moment I realized that Jack was never ours. Oh yes - we bought him, fed him, trained him, traveled with him, enjoyed him, loved him, and shared ten years with him ... always a part of everything. But in that moment I was struck with the truth that he belonged to God. Our Father in Heaven, the Creator of all things, gave the breath of life to Jack and that day that breath returned to God.

I had often reminded Jack that, "You're the best dog ever" and "I own you." These verses come to mind as I reconsider the responsibility of stewardship and my ideas about ownership.

- *For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the hills, and all that moves in the field is mine. Psalm 50:10-11*
- *Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. Matthew 10:29*
- *Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD! Psalm 150:6*

May your February be filled with Love!

Sue

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Dear friends at Christ Lutheran,

My most sincere thank you to all who made up the gift bag and lovely cookie tray which I received at the Christmas Eve service. Gary and Carolyn picked me up for the service and also took me to their home after the service. It was so good to share that time with them as my family are a long way from me.

I have used the many things in the bag and enjoyed all of them. Thank you again for each of them.

God bless each of you for your kindness and thoughtful surprises!

Love in Christ,

Laviere

Thank
you!



CLC Food Share

The next food packing date is Tuesday, February 15.
February distribution is Thursday, February 17 from
11:30-12:30.

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

Quilting:

Tuesday, February 8 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.



February Ushers, Trustees & Scripture Readers

February 6

Ushers: Bill & Jan Arezzo
Trustees: Wendy & Carol
Scripture Reader: Jim

February 13

Ushers: Jim Carlson & Gary Lofald
Trustees: Laurie & Laura
Scripture Reader: Jim

February 20

Ushers: Jim & Sandy Carlson
Trustees: Laurie & Jim
Scripture Reader: Mark

February 27

Ushers: Keith Youngren & Mark Youngren
Trustees: Bill & Grace
Scripture Reader: Gary

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

Financial Update

December Income: \$14,120
December Expenses: \$12,511

*Monthly income was over
expenses by \$1,609*

YTD Income \$153,610
YTD Expenses \$135,014

*YTD income was over
expenses by \$18,595*

December Mission:
Fellowship of Christian Athletes—\$580



January Mission of the Month:

**The AALC
HERE WE STAND**

Confessing • Caring • Calling

*We confess our faith. We care for one another.
We call others to faith in Christ.*

All of our congregations are fortresses of safety in a post-Christian frontier. Each congregation is an outpost, carefully positioned as a haven, providing the protection of God's Word and the sustenance of His Holy Sacraments.

Each congregation is a fortress, an outpost from which God's people are sent forth with Christ's commission of Kingdom expansion and Gospel proclamation into a wilderness culture of immorality and unbelief.

Each congregational fortress in The AALC is precious. Some of our congregations are very small and some are located in remote areas, yet each one is connected to Christ Jesus and to the rest of our Association. We stand together, committed to the care and support of our brothers and sisters.

We focus on Keeping the Fortress, but we also focus on Taking the Frontier!

"Taking the Frontier" includes everything from congregational outreach to church-wide overseas missions. The gift of the Gospel of Jesus Christ must never be hoarded as our own personal possession, but instead be shared with a world lost in spiritual poverty and eternal darkness. God is ever expanding The AALC by motivating ministers and multiplying ministries.

With all of this said, however, we know that our efforts of protection and expansion are fruitless without Him. Though He uses clay vessels like us, it is God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit who is Keeping the Fortress and Taking the Frontier. Hallelujah! Amen.

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: AALC
Union Gospel Mission

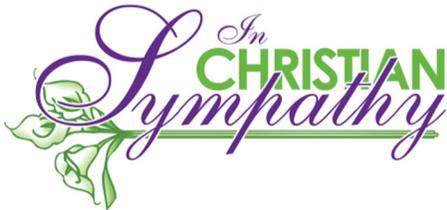
Persecuted Christians throughout the world
The steadfastness of our faith
Lutheran Vicar Mwavu Ronald and his 2 churches:
St. John's Lutheran Church,
Nankandulo, Kamuli, Uganda
St. Paul's Lutheran Church,

THOSE WITH HEALTH NEEDS:

Ruth Dahl	Barb Hanson	Mary Jenny
Carol Johnson	Jane McLean	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	Bethany White
Kathy Stevens	Carol Schneeberger	Maggie Kaptonak

Linda Anthony (Dick McLean's Daughter)

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



Our sympathies to the family and friends of
Richard Johnson who passed away recently.
Please remember his wife, Sharon in your prayers.

Our sympathies to the family and friends of
Evelyn Johnson who passed away recently.
Services will be held later this spring or summer.

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!
Psalm 139:16,17*

Ouitdee Carson	February 1
Sharon Widell	February 4
Al Decker	February 4
Judy Stocke	February 24
Darlene Saaf	February 25
Hannah Allen	February 27
John Kubiak	February 28