



Christ's Messenger

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

The American Association of Lutheran

**DECEMBER
2024**

**Christ Lutheran
Church**

2415 Ensign St
Duluth MN 55811
clcduluth.org

Church Office
218-722-7537
church@
clcduluth.org

Pastor Mark Raitz
313-268-0319

President
Mike Pickar
651-338-4171

Deacon Chair
Gary Lofald
218-590-8217

Every Month:
**Sunday Bible
Study**
11:00 AM

Council Meeting
2nd Thursday at
6:30 PM

Food Share:
4th Thur. of the
month
11:30 AM -12:30 PM

Esther Circle
1st Thur. at 10:00
AM

AA
Mondays at 6:30 PM

A General Christmas???

A faithful and efficient secretary had set the afternoon aside for addressing Christmas cards for her boss. On her desk before her were two stacks of cards – expensive and reflecting the good taste of her employer.

After addressing about a dozen or more of the cards, she approached her boss with a question: “Which type of card should I send to Mr. Ross?” After reflecting on this for a long moment her boss sitting behind his large desk replied, “I’m not sure. He is a new client, and I don’t know too much about him. To be safe, you better just send him the ‘general holiday/Christmas greeting card.’”

And so, instead to receiving the card with the warm inscription, “The Christ Child of Christmas bless you,” Mr. Ross received the card with the richly embossed but Christ-less message, “Happy Holidays.”

How tragic it is that many Christians today are still willing to settle for the general - Happy Holiday greeting, not only for themselves, but also for their family, friends, neighbors, and business associates. They will join with their church family in the accustomed hours of worship, they are willing to observe the Advent season to what their fellow Christians call a “Merry Christmas.”

But in their dream’s they do not go back to the “Gloria in Excelsis” as sung by the angelic chorus over the skies of Bethlehem, but instead are safe as they listen to “A White Christmas” as sung by one of their favorite singers. All their formal expressions of objections to the contrary, theirs remains a worldly - safe - “Happy Holidays.”

As for Mr. Ross in the story described above, no matter who he was, he needed nothing more than in intercessory prayer of his friend at Christmas – “The Christ Child of Christmas bless you!”

The proclamation of the angel to the shepherds of Bethlehem included everyone: “Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to ALL PEOPLE. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” (Luke 2:10, 11) All people, including Mr. Ross! The message of Christmas is an evangelistic message for everyone! This world is to hear, and needs to hear the Good News of a Savior, a Redeemer being born for them. We as Christians need to sing it from the rooftops.

It is my prayer that when the Feast of the Nativity comes this month, that ours will not be a general greeting of “Happy Holidays” – no matter how warmly, beautifully, or how expensively expressed.

May our hearts rather be filled with the wondrous, glorious message of the Babe of Bethlehem – Jesus Christ! And may our lips and our lives express the heartfelt prayer for those both near and far: “The Christ Child of Christmas BLESS you.”

Pastor Raitz

Assisting with December Ministry

December 1

Ushers: Bill & Jan A., Mike & Wendy P.

Trustees: Grace & Bill

Scripture Reader: Dave S.

Communion Assistant: Jim C., Gabe W.

December 8

Usher: Gary & Carolyn L.

Trustees: Wendy & Carol

Scripture Reader: Gary L.

December 15

Ushers: Mark Y., Keith Y., Carolyn L., Grace W.

Trustees: Laurie & Laura

Scripture Reader: Aaron M.

Communion Assistant: Gary L., Birdie M.

December 22

Ushers: Jim C., Mark Y.

Trustees: Laurie & Jim

Scripture Reader: Mark W.

December 24 (Christmas Eve)

Ushers (4:30 PM): Mike & Wendy P., Gary & Carolyn L.

Ushers (11:00 PM): Volunteers

Communion Assistant (4:30 PM): Jim C., Hanna A.

Trustees: Bill & Grace

Scripture Reader (4:30 PM): Dave S.

Scripture Reader (11:00 PM): Pastor Mark

December 29

Ushers: Bill & Jan A., Jim C., Mark Y.

Trustees: Bill & Grace

Scripture Reader: Ilya M.

Communion Assistant: Keith Y., Gabe W.

*If you have a conflict with these dates,
please contact Jim Carlson at 218-343-6755*

Coffee/Fellowship Servers & Helpers

December 1	Birthday Donuts/Council
December 8	Esther Circle
December 15	Jennifer H.
December 22	Esther Circle
December 29	Esther Circle

Financial Update

October Income: \$10,180.00

October Expenses: \$9,970.48

Monthly income was over
expenses by \$209.52

YTD Income: \$107,471.00

YTD Expenses: \$96,567.16

YTD income was over
expenses by \$10,903.84

October Mission

MN Adult & Teen Challenge:
\$1,095.00

Full financial reports are available
in the office upon request



Livestream Operators

December 1	Keith L.
December 8	Keith L.
December 15	Keith L.
December 22	Gary L.
December 24	Keith L.
December 29	Gary L.

UPCOMING MINISTRIES AND EVETS

- “The Clothing of the King” Advent services Wednesday December 4, 11, 18 at 6:30 PM
- Bob Hanson began the legacy of partnering with the Salvation Army years ago. To honor this legacy, we are making December 1st and December 8th Salvation Army Red Kettle Day. Please consider a donation to the Salvation Army on these days to help in all their ministries. **If writing a check, please make payable to Salvation Army.**
- Rend Collective *Jolly Irish Christmas Tour* at Denfeld Auditorium December 8 at 7 PM. Please see Gary Lofald if you are interested in attending.
- Esther Circle meets on the first Thursday of the month at 10 AM at church.
- Band of Brothers meets every Wednesday at 7 AM at Caribou Coffee by Cub Foods.
- Esther Circle is still collecting hats, mittens, & scarves for Piedmont Elementary School.



Hear Ye, Hear Ye, It's Spritz Cookie Season!

Time to place your orders!

The Sunshine Bakers are planning to make cookies on December 10 & 11 (if needed). Two dozen assorted for \$7.00 and two dozen Chocolate Fingers for \$8.00.

We are in need of some shoppers, dough makers, squeezers, decorators, bakers (to watch the ovens closely), dippers, rack movers, assemblers, wrappers, sticker placers, packers, callers and of course money collectors!

Benefits are priceless and we do need to test our samples!!!! Bring a dish to share for lunch and join in the comradery! Work for part or all of the day. Early, early shift will be 8:00, (9:00 oven people) 10



2025 Church Council

President Mike Pickar

Vice-President Carolyn Lofald

Deacons

Gary L.

Keith Y.

Jim C.

Mark W.

Dave S. - Newly elected

Trustees

Laurie W.

Grace W.

Bill A.

Wendy P.

Laura M.

Carol Z.

Sharon W. - Newly appointed

Julie F.-Newly elected

PASTIE MAKING

Thanks to all that made our Pastie Making such a success! Fun was had by all. We hope that everyone enjoyed their pasties. Please let us know if we need to be tweaking anything with the recipe. A step-by-step book has been made and we have that under safekeeping for future generations! As much of the meat was frozen from last year, we had very little in the way of expenses. Our net profit was \$1,207.93 with only \$142.07 in expenses. A total of 139 packages were assembled, that's 278 actual pasties! We had a couple of hic-ups, but we stayed the course and were able to get them all made in one day and all the equipment cleaned and put away. Thanks to all!!

YOUTH CALENDAR SALE

The Proceeds from the Calendar Sale will help offset the cost of our youth going to camp this July in Estes Park – YMCA of the Rockies. Calendars have beautiful scenery with a bible verse overlaid on it. Each week also starts with a Bible verse. We are asking \$10.00 for the cost of each calendar. The youth will make \$5.50 off each one. Thank you for your support!

ESTHER CIRCLE HAT & MITTEN DRIVE

We are looking for hats and mittens for the youth over at Piedmont Elementary School. If you love to knit and crochet, we would welcome your wares, we are also accepting purchased items. The school is requesting these items now that the cold weather is here. We will continue to collect through February.

Thanks to all of you that have made or purchased items for the students. We have dropped off all the items that we have collected to date at the school. They were so appreciative. Bless You!

DECEMBER MISSION OF THE MONTH

American Lutheran Theological Seminary

The American Lutheran Theological Seminary is committed to the inerrancy, relevance, and intensive study of God's Word. Study of the scriptures dominates the curriculum. Students at ALTS study and apply the content of a Biblical and confessional Lutheran curriculum to the contemporary American and global context.

The ALTS relies on the generous financial gifts of others to continue to serve the church by training pastors for the ministry of the Word and Sacraments. They welcome all who would join them in supporting and sustaining the structures and programs through which their students are prepared to serve His church through the ministry of the gospel.

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."



American Lutheran
Theological Seminary

December Maintenance Report

We are thankful we were able to get quite a few of the outside projects completed as fall just seemed to fly by. We plan to do some gutter/drain tile work in the spring to route water out and away from the church and the parsonage. We will rent a ditch witch for this. We continue to save money for a new parking lot.

These are a few items still left to do on the old list:

- Basement Janitor closet doors
- Retaining wall at parsonage
- Base repair in Fellowship Hall
- Grout repair in upstairs bathroom floor tile

We will be looking into having the top portion of our altar addressed. Some of the old varnish is peeling and new stain is not adhering – it is in need of some TLC. The fire may have contributed to these issues. We will wait until after the new year for repairs. There are some base and mopboard areas in the church that need some touch up, too.

We have added new signage downstairs for visitors to better find our restrooms. These are larger print blue signs. We also are looking into a tract rack to hang by the back door for our visitors and parishioners to take for Biblical insight into daily life.

Our church boiler is scheduled for our annual inspection on December 11. We still need to schedule the load test with Arrowlift, our elevator company. We are waiting to hear back from them.

At the parsonage, we will be looking into providing a new front closet door and a coat hanger. This had been removed in years past. The parsonage boiler had its yearly inspection. The relay for the pump will be replaced as it has been making noise.

We helped the soccer association put a new overhead door on their shed to replace the one that was vandalized. Please keep an eye out for suspicious behavior for them. They have been great neighbors and have been mowing and caring for our soccer field.

We will meet with MN Power soon to discuss better night lighting for the lower part of our parking lot to help flood some light on areas that are not currently illuminated.

We are looking into a new or reconditioned snowblower for the church. We are also looking into some Ring cameras and are checking our WiFi throughout the church.

If you note that something needs addressing, please bring it to my attention. We will do our best to take care of it and/or find and/or hire someone to fix it. We have been blessed with a beautiful church home and grounds and are thankful that God has entrusted it to us.

The Esther Circle and Church members have now decorated for the Advent Season! Invite a neighbor or friend to join us for our services. So thankful for Pastor Mark sharing God's Word with us. May God grant you, your family and friends a very Blessed Christmas!

In Christ,
Carolyn Lofald – VP/Maintenance Chair

Your gift to Lutheran Bible Translators carries the light of God's Word to people in their own language. Thank you for sharing the hope of scripture.

Donna M. of LBT

*Thank
you!*

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your recent gift to Gideon's International. Your donation helps Gideons and their wives accomplish our single objective of winning others for the Lord Jesus Christ. Because of your support, members are equipped and ready to share the Word of God and their word of witness to those who need to hear the message of hope.

Every scripture placed through your faithful giving provides others the opportunity for a new life in Jesus Christ. Your partnership helps accomplish amazing things and lives are being changed. To learn about lives impacted by the Gospel, please visit gideons.org/blog/Life_Change. Thank you again for your contribution. May God bless you.

In Christ,

Daniel J. Heighway

Join us for Advent services Wednesday

December 4, 11, & 18 at 6:30 PM

Christmas Eve Services will be at 4:30 PM and 11:00 PM



FOOD SHARE UPDATE

We were able to bless many families at our food share on November 21st. A total of 50 bags of groceries were given away. If a family had more than 4 in their family, we gave them two bags.

Our goal this November was to help provide for a Thanksgiving meal. Each bag contained: Instant mashed potatoes, two turkey gravy packets, 2 cans of vegetables, a box of stuffing mix, a box of orange jell-o, a can of jellied cranberries, a large can of chicken noodle soup and a box of cereal. Along with that, each family was given one \$20.00 gift card to purchase their turkey, desserts, and other items. Evangelism provided each family with a Devotional/Advent handout and a card with our upcoming church service times and dates. They also gave out 24 craft bags and an Advent Calendar for those that had children. We have many items in our pantry now, so "thank you" to all that bring cereal and items for the barrel to offset our costs. We also welcome your monetary gifts.

These families really appreciate your dedication to keeping this mission going and are so thankful for your generosity and prayers. God bless!

PLEASE PRAY FOR....

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:16

The leadership of the church
Dr. Cary Larson & the AALC
The ministry at Union Gospel Mission
Students and Teachers from pre-k to college
Our country, military & police

Pastor Yount and his ministry in Slovakia
The steadfastness of our faith
Persecuted Christians throughout the world
Mission of the Month: ALTS

Please Pray for Those with Health Needs:

Jean Clark
Vi Boder
Florence Kubiak
Jane McLean
Luanne Wachula

Carol Sogard
Donna Swanson
The Lund Family
Laura Cruz
Brian MacDonald
Bryan White

Mary Jenny
Mark Malander
Michael Wilson
Janice Peterson
David Wood

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

Altar flowers and plants

All are welcome to place fresh flowers or floral plants on the church altar for a Sunday service. It can be for a memorial, tribute, celebration, or just because. We need to know at least 2 weeks before you would like to place them -unless they are from a funeral. Please call the church office to get more information. Thank you!

Sunday services are livestreamed on our Facebook page:
Christ Lutheran Church Duluth at 9:30 AM
You can also log onto our website clcduluth.org



Christ Lutheran Church Duluth



Christ Lutheran Church Duluth

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

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|-------------------|-------------|
| Sharon Super | December 5 |
| Andrea Allen | December 5 |
| Danielle Miner | December 19 |
| Claudia Pianfetti | December 25 |
| Carol Miletich | December 28 |

If you would like your birthday included in the messenger please contact the office