

The Messenger

CELC

March 2024

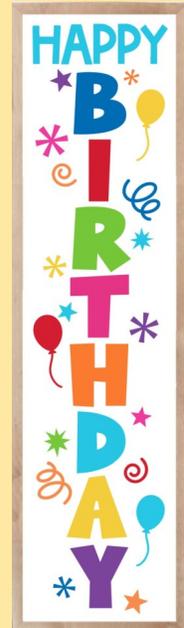
All will Participate in the Passion Reading on Sunday, March 24, 2024

You will be a part of the beloved Passion Story according to Saint Mark, Mark 14:1-15:47 NRSV, on Palm and Passion Sunday, March 24, 2024. Everyone present will have the opportunity to be one of a group of eyewitnesses, including the Chief Priests, the Disciples, Accusers, Bystanders, the crowd or the soldiers. Individual reading parts are available for those who would like to read the part of the Narrator, Jesus, Peter, Judas, the High Priests, the Servant Girl, Pilate or the Centurion. If you would like to offer your gifts as an individual reader, please choose a part and sign-up and get your script after worship at the hospitality table in the Gathering Space. Sue Frantz will be happy to assist you.



March Birthdays

Lisa B	1
Sarah S	3
Stacy B	5
Vera B	5
Frank L	12
Barbara D	13
Andy Y	14
Jeremy C	21
Charles M	22
Pat M	22
Keith D	24
Olivia K	28
John P. Jr.	29
Marilyn T	30
Hannah F	31



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Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

Congregation Council Meeting Minutes February 12, 2024

Draft version. Minutes not officially approved until the following Congregation Council meeting.

Present: Pastor Laura Kuntz, Ryan Smarsh, Chuck Heindrichs, Eric Mohny, Tim Gottshall and Katie Koch

Present via Audio: Amy Lodge

The in person meeting was called to order by Council President Ryan Smarsh at 6:35 p.m. and opened with a reading and prayer.

Review and officially accept minutes from previous Council meeting

Motion: Accept minutes of the January 8, 2024 Congregation Council Meeting.

Motion: Tim Gottshall

Second: Chuck Heindrichs

Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

Financials thru January 31, 2024

	January	YTD	
Income	\$21,902	\$21,902	
Expenses	\$14,607	\$14,607	
Net Income	\$7,295	\$7,295	
Organ Loan	\$17,502	Pledges Reserve of 1/31/2024	\$3,259
External Funds	\$847,856		
Internal Funds	\$52,817		

Chuck Heindrichs reviewed the financials through January.

Property

Tim Gottshall reviewed repairs and maintenance the Property Committee completed over the last month. He also supplied a list of to-do items the Property Committee plans on completing each month.

Pastor's Report

Council discussed the first chapter of "When a Church Stops Working" and plans to discuss the remainder of the book at the next council meeting.

Previous Business

Preschool met and had their Visioning Planning with the consultant. There was a good presence and responses.

The Call Committee has narrowed down to two candidates. They are currently seeking guidance from Pastor Mitch and faithfully waiting.

New Business

There has been a request for two representatives to go to the annual Synod Assembly. Council will reach out to the congregation to see if anyone is interested.

Chuck Heindrichs recommended putting the ERC money into the Mission Investment Fund so it is radially available as it is needed.

Motion: To accept \$24,000, an increase from \$7,000, as Pastoral Housing Allowance for 2024, being retroactive to January 1, 2024.

Motion: Chuck Heindrichs

Second: Ryan Smarsh

Motion passed.

The Spring Congregational Meeting will be held Sunday, May 5, 2024, following worship. Council will go to the congregation for a nominating committee, as the President and Financial Chair are both at term limits.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Eric Mohny

Second: Chuck Heindrichs

Motion passed.

Ryan Smarsh adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer. Date for the next council meeting will be March 11, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Katie Koch
Secretary



Congregation News

2024 Lent Schedule

Palm Sunday- 10 A.M. March 24th

Maundy Thursday- 5:30 P.M. March 28th Children, youth, and their families are invited to bake bread before the service. Gather at 5:30 and meet in the kitchen.

Maundy Thursday- 7 P.M. March 28th

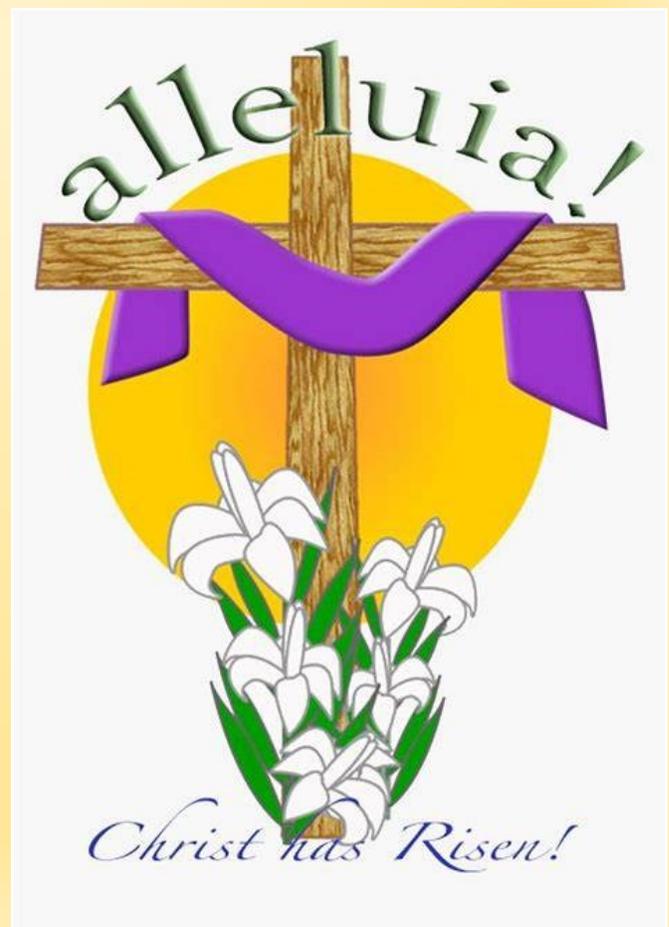
Good Friday Cross walk- 5 P.M. at St. Joseph's Catholic Church 32929 Lake Rd.

Good Friday- 7 P.M. March 29th

Easter Morning- 10 A.M. March 31st Bring cut flowers from your yard or purchase some cut flowers to be used to decorate the flowering cross! Bring them to the cross in front of the Altar by 9:45 on Easter morning to be included for the service.

Healing Service- 10 A.M. March 10th prayers of healing will be available during our regular service.

Sunday Mornings Feb 18th- March 24th 9 AM Special Lent activities for all ages! Each week will include: Breakfast treats and drinks. A bible verse to meditate on, memorize and questions to discuss. An activity, craft or art to work on.



Congregation News

We are God's Church, Waiting for God

Although the Book Study/Discussion Groups have ended, but our work has only begun. A list was made of 26 ways our congregation could be more intentional about serving God as the church in our community and in the world. The Fall Group initiated one suggestion, our church's 8:26 p.m. prayer time. The unity in prayer is proving to be powerful. Another suggestion to be more supportive of our preschool, its teacher, parents and children are being explored, and acted on.

Over-riding the book studies and all, is the example of the first church as described in Acts 1 and 2. The disciples gathered, heard the Word, worshipped, prayed, sang, shared meals and fellowship, sent people out to care for those in need, and they waited for God. This is what Jesus told the first church to do – to wait. During our 75th Anniversary Celebration Worship Bishop Barbins admonished us to do the same. We are to gather, hear the Word, worship, pray, sing, share meals, fellowship, send people out to care for others, and to wait for God. It is an active waiting and watching; listening for and hearing what God's will is for us and how we are to respond. "God is God. We are not God." We are not the star of our story. God is the star. And no matter what, we are assured that nothing can separate us from the love of God through the suffering and death of Jesus Christ.

We have only begun. Please watch for opportunities beyond worship and prayer to gather and be God's church. ...Perhaps sharing our gifts of hospitality and God's love during the Eclipse is an opportunity us to be the church in this world.



2023 Financial Summary

Financial Summary 2023

The church budget for 2023 called for a deficit of \$39,000 and a projected reduction in monthly contributions. We qualified for the Employee Retention Credit (ERC) program which provided funds for small business and churches. Our application was approved and we received \$32,000 in October of 2023. We were prepared to apply that to our deficit at the end of the year. December contributions saw three large contributions of \$16,000 above normal monthly giving reducing the projected budget shortfall.

A “next year” budget at our church is drafted and presented at the September Council meeting of the year prior to the budget year and approved for congregational presentation in the October Council meeting. The mailing goes out before the Fall Congregational meeting. The 2023 budget was done when utilities costs were rapidly rising for everyone, snow removal was about \$9,000 in 2022 so it was made \$6,500 for 2023 and, luckily, we experienced a mild winter. Office Expenses and services did not rise as inflation slowed a bit and a more efficient copier was put into use. Listed below are the more significant budget items where expenditures were below budgeted amounts.

\$6,500 for snow removal and spent less than \$4,700

\$18,000 for Electricity and spent \$13,000

\$17,000 for Gas and spent \$11,500

\$7,000 for General Maintenance and spent \$4,500

\$25,000 for Office Expenses and spent \$18,000.

The overall deficit for 2023, with a strong December contribution showing and expenses in some areas below budgeted amount, was a minus \$77. As well, the Employee Retention Credit of \$32,000 was not used and will be held in reserve. The 2024 approved budget was prepared with a set of assumptions concerning a new full-time pastor with perhaps a wife and family as well as speculation as to a start date.

Continued on next page.

2023 Financial Summary

Benevolence for 2023

The generosity of the members and friends of our church in 2023 was truly an expression of a commitment to support others in need in our community. Our benevolence giving to the organizations designated by the congregation was \$6,140 which was divided equally or \$1,535 to each of the organizations listed below:

Haven Center (the Lorain County homeless shelter) *Our church housed and fed homeless families for a decade under the Family Promise program in Lorain County*

Redeemer Crisis Center on West 25th Street where our members assist with packaging food for distribution

Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio, Lorain
Community Resource Services of Avon Lake

Mission Partner

For 2023, our Mission Partner was the Northeast Ohio Synod (NEO Synod) which may not be as familiar to members as some of our benevolence organizations. The NEO Ohio Synod has over 150 churches in an area ranging from Youngstown in the east, to Akron and Wooster in the south, and to Lorain in the west. Our involvement with our Synod is significant. Our church member, Sue Frantz, is a member of the Synod Council and is very active. The Synod is also the central place for our church and the Call Committee in seeking a new pastor. The call process has Synod assisting in identifying potential candidates and helping us along in the process. Each church is asked to provide support to the Synod and for 2024, we have pledged \$6,000. Approximately 50% of our pledge to Synod is sent to the ELCA church in Chicago by Synod.



CELFC March Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
25 9:00am Special Lent Activities for all ages 10:00am Holy Worship 10:00am Prek-6th Grade Sunday School during worship	26	27	28 6:15pm Bell Choir Practice 8:26pm Congregation Prayer in Place	29	1 Pastor's Day Off World Day of Prayer	2
3 9:00am Special Lent Activities for all ages 10:00am Holy Worship 10:00am Prek-6th Grade Sunday School during worship 11:30am Choir Practice 12:00pm ASP Youth Mission Trip Study Session	4	5	6 6:15pm Bell Choir Practice 8:26pm Congregation Prayer in Place	7	8 Pastor's Day Off	9
10 9:00am Special Lent Activities for all ages 10:00am Holy Worship 10:00am Prek-6th Grade Sunday School during worship 9:15am Choir Sing Daylight-Saving Time Begins	11	12	13 6:15pm Bell Choir Practice 8:26pm Congregation Prayer in Place	14	15 Pastor's Day Off	16
17 9:00am Special Lent Activities for all ages 10:00am Holy Worship 10:00am Prek-6th Grade Sunday School during worship 10:00am Bells Play St. Patrick's Day	18	19 First Day of Spring	20 6:15pm Bell Choir Practice 8:26pm Congregation Prayer in Place	21	22 Pastor's Day Off 5:00pm CELC Preschool Art Show	23
24 9:00am Special Lent Activities for all ages 10:00am Holy Worship 10:00am Prek-6th Grade Sunday School during worship Palm Sunday	25	26	27 6:15pm Bell Choir Practice 8:26pm Congregation Prayer in Place	28 CELFC Preschool Spring Break - No School 7:00pm Maundy Thursday Service Maundy Thursday	29 CELFC Preschool Spring Break - No School 5:00pm Annual Cross Walk 7:00pm Good Friday Service Office Closed Good Friday	30
31 9:45am Flowering Cross, fresh cut flowers 10:00am Holy Worship 10:00am Prek-6th Grade Sunday School during worship 9:15am Choir Sing 10:00am Bells Play Easter Sunday	1 CELFC Preschool Spring Break - No School	2 CELFC Preschool Spring Break - No School	3 CELFC Preschool Spring Break - No School 8:26pm Congregation Prayer in Place	4 CELFC Preschool Spring Break - No School	5 CELFC Preschool Spring Break - No School Pastor's Day Off	6

Worship Assistants

March 3

Greeters:

Usher: Chip Crout

Lector: Eric Klenz

Cantor: Julie Pressnell

Live Stream:

Altar Care: Jan Wunderle

Bulletin Folding: Nadine Carlson

SS Teachers:

Bread Maker: Chip Crout

March 10

Greeters:

Usher: Betsy Floyd

Lector: Betsy Floyd

Cantor: Rob Pedersen

Live Stream: Bill Higgins

Counter: Chuck Heindricks

Altar Care: Jan Wunderle

Bulletin Folding: Marilyn Culler

SS Teachers:

Bread Maker:

March 17

Greeters:

Usher: Brian Knip

Lector: Laura Knight

Cantor: Johanna Markko

Live Stream: Ryan Smarsh

Altar Care: Jan Wunderle

Bulletin Folding: Marilyn Culler

SS Teachers:

Bread Maker: Laura Knight

March 24 Palm Sunday

Greeters:

Usher: Ryan Smarsh and Eric Mohney

Lector: Marilyn Culler

Cantor: Julie Pressnell

Live Stream: Bill Higgins

Altar Care: Jan Wunderle

Bulletin Folding: Marilyn Culler

SS Teachers:

Bread Maker:

March 28 Maundy Thursday

Greeters:

Usher: Betsy Floyd

Lector:

Cantor: Rob Pedersen

Live Stream:

Altar Care: Jan Wunderle

Bulletin Folding: Marilyn Culler

Bread Maker:

March 29 Good Friday

Greeters:

Usher:

Lector:

Cantor:

Live Stream:

Altar Care: Jan Wunderle

Bulletin Folding: Marilyn Culler

March 31 Easter Sunday

Greeters:

Usher: Chip Crout and Brian Knip

Lector: Ron Jantz

Cantor: Angela Pedersen

Live Stream: Bill Higgins

Counter: Julie Skaggs

Altar Care: Jan Wunderle

Bulletin Folding: Marilyn Culler

SS Teachers:

Bread Maker:



Volunteering in a church is a wonderful way to serve God and others. It can also help you grow in your faith, make new friends, and discover your gifts and talents. Whether you are interested in teaching children, singing in the choir, greeting visitors, or helping with the maintenance, there is a place for you in the church. Volunteering is not only a duty, but a joy and a blessing.

Preschool Director Retirement Letter

Dear Christ Lutheran Preschool Families,

You may have heard the rumor that I am retiring at the end of the school year. The rumor is true. Twenty-five years ago, my youngest child completed her preschool career here and I began mine. Now, it is time for me to retire and catch up on a few things that I have been needing and wanting to do as well as embark on some new adventures. In the meantime, the preschool board is navigating a plan to hire my replacement by the beginning of May while also setting up a strategic vision for the future of the preschool.

I have been blessed to work with many great women over the years. I have marveled at their commitment and desire to provide all our students with a great first educational experience, instilling in them a love of learning and introducing them to Jesus's love for us.

I am thankful for all the families that have entrusted us with their children and supported the preschool. Whether through donations of needed supplies, volunteering in the classroom, or taking part in a fundraiser, our families have always shown me and the preschool grace and generosity.

The Preschool Board members, the Pastors, the church congregation, and especially the office administrators, will always have a special place in my heart. Their insight and support as we navigated COVID and other things over the years will not be forgotten.

I brought my bachelor's degree in child and family development and my experience as a teacher, a childcare center director and a mom to the preschool. I began my career here teaching 2-day pre-K and added the afternoon 4-day pre-k class the following year. Later, I took over the morning 4-day pre-k class along with the afternoon group. In 2007, I added Preschool Administrator to my duties. I have cut back on teaching these last few years, so now I have the best of both worlds. I take care of all the administrative tasks, I get to spend time with all our students, and I help the teachers whenever needed.

Continued on next page.

Call Committee Update

A few people have asked, “What’s next?” I am not sure of the whole answer to that question, but I am buying a new bike in the spring and plan to get back to enjoying the bike paths that Lorain County has to offer. I hope to become a “Red Coat” at Playhouse Square where I will be able to help people find their seats, then enjoy the show, too. Working at elections, finally learning to crochet, spending time with my family, a little traveling, and so much more awaits!

I will miss Christ Lutheran Preschool and everyone here who has touched my life.

Thank you for sharing your child with me,
Teri



CELC Call Committee Update – January 30, 2024

The discernment process continues. Our Call Committee continues to meet, to spend much time in prayer and in listening and watching for God, as we together with our primary candidates, try to discern who is to be our next pastor. We are grateful that Pastor Mitch, Assistant to our Bishop, who continues to make himself available to help us with any questions we may have. It is still necessary to protect the identities of the pastors we interviewed, as they all are currently serving other congregations which they love. Thank you for your help in this matter, and for uniting in prayer with us, as we and our candidates continue the work of discernment. Bless all that we do, O Lord, so that we can do what you bless. Hear us, O God. Amen.

**CELC Christ Evangelical Lutheran
Church**

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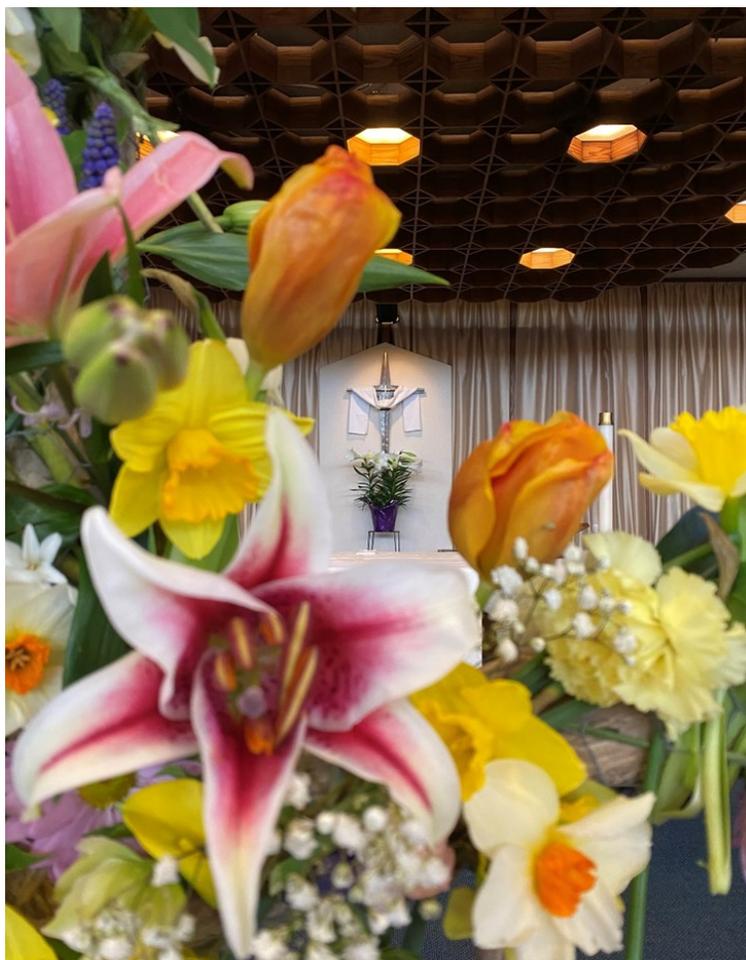
Worship

Sunday 10:00 a.m.

Sunday School for PreK– 6th

Grade

Attend during worship.



**Christ Lutheran
Preschool Art Show
Friday, March 22
5:00–7:00 pm.**