



First of the Month @ CLC

July 1, 2022

Dear Christ Lutheran Church,

Half the year is over! Can you believe it?

We are in full-swing with activities in the church. This coming Sunday we are celebrating the Fourth of July weekend by having one worship service on Sunday, at 10:00am, outside in the plaza. Both English-speaking and Lahu will combine in the service. Following the service there will be a potluck...our first in over 3 years!

I hope you attended the MAP presentation on June 5. Pastor Jeff Kjellberg helped us to see that we are a church with many strong qualities. The presentation revealed that we have a very engaged congregation who feels as if the church is making a difference in people's lives. 95% of the respondents said that they agree or strongly agree that they believe in the mission of the church! Wow. Our desire to learn to love like Jesus is taking on significant momentum. And yet, we recognize that for us to have a strong future we will need to "grow the church younger." Doing so will require greater attention to helping people get involved in meaningful ministry, and connecting members to one another. We have work to do!

The next step in the transition process in identifying our next lead pastor will be a series of conversations our consultant will have with individuals and with groups later in August. If you would like to be a part of one of the focus groups, please call the church office and let us know.

July and August will see a flurry of activities for children and youth. On Thursday, July 14 at 6:00pm, the summer CLIPArts program will be presenting *101 Dalmatians*. This will be a treat. The week of July 18 the senior high youth will be going on their summer servant trip, this time to Las Vegas. Noel and his leadership team will be taking 17 kids for a week of service, learning, and fun. And the first week of August is Summer Adventure Camp where up to 50 elementary-age kids will be having their best week of the summer as they hang out at church. As always, your prayers are requested for safe and effective ministries to and with our children/youth. They are a gift!

I lift up the children and youth ministry because of the lasting impact this ministry has. It has been cited in several studies that somewhere between 80 and 90-percent of adults who are in a church today, are so because they were a part of a church's student ministry programs when they were younger. I am one of those. We believe that what we do for our kids can have life-long effects. Having said this, only 16% of the MAP survey respondents have children under 18. Again, creating open doors for young families and offering programs designed to help the whole family will be one of our primary foci as we move to the future.

On July 17 the Church Board will host another round of "Bagels With the Board" (this time with bagels!). There will be two offerings; one at 9:05 and the other at 10:35. Both will take place in the Christian Life Center. The agenda will largely center on the second quarter financial information, our income and expenses. As has been communicated recently, our leadership is voicing concern over our financial deficit. Please stay current with your financial giving, and if you can go over and above your pledge, that would be of great help.

One change that you might be seeing in worship soon is a new (smaller) grand piano. Our current grand piano, as you may recall, was made available to us from The Fox Theater. It has served us well these past number of years. But it is requiring more attention than usual; it is not staying in tune. Paul Delgado is working with a couple of sources to purchase a new piano. Funds for this acquisition have been committed through our Celebration of Life account. A new piano will be a gift in helping our church worship God week in and week out (as an aside, for those who have missed the organ the last couple of months in 8:00 worship, there is a malfunction in the pipes; we are awaiting a repairman to look into this).

Looking back over the past couple of years, I am so proud how Christ Lutheran Church members have stayed committed to worship, stayed connected to one another through small groups and Bible studies, and stayed active in ministry. You – we – have been through a lot. We have grieved over missed opportunities and lost members. We have struggled to provide a safe campus. And we have transitioned through staff and leadership positions. While it would be foolish to say all that is behind us, I think we can say that God has shown us (again) that we can trust God's leading. We mustered strength we didn't know we had. We prayed more prayers than we ever had done. And we (re)discovered how deeply important being a community of faith is, both in worship and also in fellowship.

As we begin the second half of this year, may we keep our eyes on Jesus. And God, help us to remain steadfast in our faith, confident in your promises, and willing to follow wherever you lead.

Peace,

Pastor Malison

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