

# The Connection

Volume 72,  
Issue 8

Christ Lutheran Church, Bethesda

December  
2006

## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ and to transform all people into fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

## OUR VISION STATEMENT

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church exists to

*Welcome* people to faith;

*Equip* people with a faith that works in real life;

*Send* people into *service* into a hostile and hurting world in Jesus' name.

## GREAT COMMANDMENT

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.... Love your neighbor as yourself" (*Matthew 22:37-39*)

## GREAT COMMISSION

"Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (*Matthew 28:19*)

## Advent Prayer— The Discipline of Prayer

*Mark 1:9-11*  
*The Baptism of Jesus*

*At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."*

The long awaited promise of a Messiah is realized in the birth of Jesus Christ. Advent is a season in the church year when we are invited to take a deeper spiritual journey. God is passionate about each of us discovering the purpose for which God's Son entered the world as flesh and blood. Jesus purpose was to fulfill God's plan for redeeming the world. According to the gospel writer Mark, Jesus is identified as the "beloved of God." God sent Jesus to reclaim each of us as "the beloved of God."

Becoming the "beloved of God" is the great spiritual journey we have to make. An early church leader, Augustine, said it best, "My soul is restless until it rests in you, O God." The fact that each of us is always searching for God, always struggling to discover the fullness of love, and always yearning for the truth, tells each of us that we have already been given a taste of God, of Love, of Truth and of Jesus.

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# IN AND AROUND CELC

## WELCOME TO CELC!

New to Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church? Want to know more about our faith community? Please email the church at [clc@heartmindsoul.com](mailto:clc@heartmindsoul.com) to begin receiving our weekly e-newsletter.



## SUNDAY MORNING ANNOUNCEMENTS

CELC shares Sunday morning announcements on the projector screen before worship. Please email normal ministry announcements in PowerPoint to Pastor Marv at [marv@heartmindsoul.com](mailto:marv@heartmindsoul.com) by 5 pm on the Wednesday before the “announcement” should be made. Two slides maximum. We will publish them “as is” so please proof-read before you send. (If you don’t know how to use PowerPoint, contact one of the staff and we will teach you.)



We encourage the congregation to share public witnesses (stories) of how God is at work in our lives. This encourages and lifts up other Christians and helps plant seeds for non-Christians. To share a story, please speak to Pastor Marv.

Other opportunities to publicize ministries/events include the weekly e-newsletter (email Pastor Marv at [marv@heartmindsoul.com](mailto:marv@heartmindsoul.com)) and the Sunday bulletin (email Laura North at [laura@heartmindsoul.com](mailto:laura@heartmindsoul.com)). We also encourage you to come to worship early to greet and talk with people about your ministry/event.

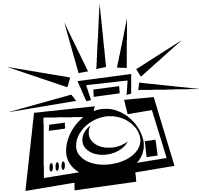
## HOLY COMMUNION INFORMATION

The sacrament of Holy Communion is offered at both worship services, every Sunday morning. We offer traditional wine and grape juice. This is to honor our children and those adults who would like a grape juice alternative. Two crystal chalices are used; the grape juice will appear dark red and the communion wine will appear white. If you would like more information about communion, please contact Pastor Marv.



## PERMISSION FORMS AND PHOTO RELEASES

All children and teens who participate in family ministry activities at CELC are required to have up-to-date health and permission forms on file at the church. As well, CELC requests that all adults sign the photo release form so that we know whether we have your permission to use photos of you and your family in CELC publications, including the web site. This will help us make sure our publications accurately reflect our community and the ministries of CELC. We thank you in advance for your help. For copies of these forms, please contact Laura North (301-652-5160 or [laura@heartmindsoul.com](mailto:laura@heartmindsoul.com)).



## GREET AND TREAT MINISTRY

Thank you to all who serve in our greet and treat ministry, which provides goodies and smiling faces to greet worshippers each Sunday morning! To sign up, speak to Lisa Bente or email her at [carpedm28@juno.com](mailto:carpedm28@juno.com).

# GIFTS OF HOPE

It's time to start thinking about Gifts of Hope, our Synod's alternative gift-giving program. This program enables us to help many people in the DC area as well as people in remote parts of the world. Last year, gifts from Christ Lutheran Congrega-

tion and Thrivent added a generous amount toward the synod total. The need continues. Gifts of Hope catalogs and card will be available in the colonnade after each service in December. For more information, please see Mary Jane Saylor.

## Advent Prayer

*(continued from page 1)*

Each of us has deep inner memories of the innocence we once possessed but have since lost. We once knew innocence before we felt guilty; we knew light before darkness encompassed our lives; and we knew home before we started to search for home. How do we become the "beloved of God?" Henri Nouwen put it this way, "Becoming the Beloved means letting the truth of our Belovedness become enfolded in everything we think, say or do."

How do we become the "beloved of God" and let the truth of our Belovedness into our soul? It is through the process of prayer. Prayer is listening to the voice of Jesus, the one who calls you "beloved." Prayer is listening with careful obedience to the voice that affirms our true identity. I encourage you to find prayer space and time with clear boundaries so that distractions are at a minimum.

I invite you to begin each meditation from your CELC Advent devotional, "A Time of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love," with the words of Mark 1:11. *And a voice came from heaven: "You are my (beloved), whom I love; with you I am well pleased."* These are the words Jesus heard at His baptism, they are also meant for me and for you.

*In Christ,  
Pastor Marv*

## Hope, Peace, Joy, & Love

Our 2006 Advent Devotional, "A Time of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love," is available on the table in the Narthex. Please take copies to use at home and to share with your family and friends.

## Christmas Worship

Christ is Born!



Christmas Eve  
Sunday  
December 24

7:00 pm Candlelight  
Communion Service

11:00 pm Traditional  
Candlelight Service  
with Communion

Christmas Day  
December 25  
10:00 am  
Carols and Communion

# It's a Birthday Party!!

Join us for a Birthday Celebration on *Saturday, December 9, 4:00-6:00 pm* in Luther Hall at CELC. The Family Ministry Team is sponsoring this party for all children through grade 5 and their families and friends.

We will have crafts and other activities that help us learn what makes Jesus so important in our lives. We will also be treated to a special telling of the Christmas story.

A child-friendly meal of hot dogs and macaroni and cheese will be served. A highlight of the party will be the birthday cake and singing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus!

Share the good news and bring your friends! Contact Laura North, minister of children & families, for more information. Look for your invitations in the mail this week!



## Celebrate the Season as a Family

*Greetings for a peaceful Advent and joyous Christmas season!*

Look for devotion booklets for children called "Living Light was Born One Night" and "Listen to the Wondrous Story." They will be available on the table in the narthex. Use this book with your children as you use our own "Hope, Peace, Joy & Love" devotional to learn together the meaning of Advent, as we prepare for the birth of Jesus!

I hope you find the articles on these pages useful. They are printed with permission from a publication that I've started reading, about which I'm very excited, "Children's Ministry," published by Group Publishing. This magazine has resources for leaders and parents to minister together to our children.

Please contact me any time with any suggestions, questions, or ideas you may have. During the day, Monday-Friday, from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm, I am in the church office; the phone number is 301-652-5160. My home phone is 301-871-8161. I look forward to getting to know you and partnering with you in ministry!

—Laura North

## Secret Angels

Have your family encourage another family this holiday season by delivering special gifts as a secret angel. Select another family that needs cheer due to a recent struggle, hardship, or loss. Fill baskets with items such as cookies, ornaments, gift certificates, or homemade breads. For several nights leading up to Christmas, have your family anonymously leave a basket with a note of encouragement for the family. On Christmas Eve, leave a final basket with a book telling the Christmas story and a note that Jesus brings hope and joy at Christmas. Pray for the family each night as you deliver the gifts, but don't reveal your mission to anyone. Your kids will learn the joy of being a blessing in disguise.

### **Proverbs 22:6**

*Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it.*

# Children & Family Ministry

## Family Meal Time

Kids who regularly share meals with their parents are healthier, happier, and better students, according to a recent study by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse. One benefit of eating together is uninterrupted conversation time. So use these tips to help initiate healthy communication around the dinner table.

**Create an open environment.** Let kids know they can discuss anything with Mom or Dad. Never label a question irrelevant or stupid. Encourage discussions on tough subjects, especially as kids get older.

**Communicate your values.** Every discussion with your child is an opportunity to model your values and faith. Explain your opinions rather than just expressing them—but avoid a lecture. Help kids recognize God’s presence in every part of our lives.

**Listen.** Help your kids feel confident that you’re truly listening by summarizing what they tell you or asking questions for clarification. Good listening skills build trust.

**Have patience.** Kids are often lengthy storytellers. Don’t zone out or leave to clear the table. Make eye contact and use facial expressions to help your child know he or she has your full attention.

## Christmas Thank You

Teach your kids the importance of gratitude by helping them create personalized thank you cards for Christmas gifts they receive. Have kids draw a picture of themselves and their gift, or take a photo of your child with his or her gift. Help kids write a message of thanks to accompany the picture or photo. Gift-bearers will appreciate the thank you and will have a personalized keepsake to cherish from your child.



## Wows and Pows

Start a family mealtime tradition with this conversation starter. At the dinner table, have family members each share something about their day that made you say, “Wow! That was great!” and “Pow. That hurt.” This prompt will help everyone reflect on their day and identify feelings with experiences. Before clearing the table, pray together about your experiences. Consider keeping a journal to watch how God is working in your family.

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### ***Building stronger families in Christ Jesus...*** ***(Building stronger children/teenagers/parents in Christ Jesus...)***

- Reaching out with the love of Jesus (evangelism)
- Connecting with other believers (fellowship)
- Growing in faith (discipleship)
- Using our God-given gifts in ministry to other (service)
- Falling more deeply in love with Jesus Christ (worship)



***... Developing families of faith***

# Youth News



*Happy Holidays to All,*

We are finally starting to make progress in getting everything started up with the New Year. Our first Sunday for Youth Group is going to be *Sunday, December 17* when will have a Christmas social from 6:00 to 8:00 pm in the Youth and Family Ministries office on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Bring your friends. This will be a very laid back, come-as-

you-are atmosphere. Read my blog as we get closer because there will be updates

Two weeks later, on Sunday, January 7 we will be starting back to weekly Youth group activities called Lutheran Youth Fun and Fellowship, or “LYFF”. Most every Sunday there will be some kind of activity from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. Where and what we will be doing? We will be Holy Spirit led, that’s the one guarantee. Any week there could be an activity from a game night to Bible study, scavenger hunt, and homemade music videos where we see where God is working in our lives. At least once a month we will be doing some kind of community service project, when we will be doing repair work for members of the community, Martha’s Table, and even visiting shut ins. Also once a month there

will be some kind of fun activity at a time other than Sunday nights when everyone can get together and just have fun.

Ideas to be looking for in the next couple of months include Super Bowl Party... 30 hour famine... Lent and Holy Week I know we are in Advent but it will get here quicker than we think...

I cannot emphasize enough reading my blog at [www.andyadams.blogspot.com](http://www.andyadams.blogspot.com). Right now it’s a lot of commentary, but once LYFF gets going this is how I will be communicating during the week in addition to the bulletin. There is a group on Facebook.com for the youth group called Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church of Bethesda, MD.

—Andy Adams

## 30-Hour Famine Date Set

Save the date!! CELC Youth will again be participating in World Vision’s 30-Hour Famine. The event is planned for *March 17-18, 2007*.



With your help, last year we sent more than \$5,000 to World Vision to feed and care for children around the world. Remember that \$30 a month—just \$1 a day—can feed and care for a child for 30 days. Funds raised by 30-Hour Famine participants help feed and care for children in poverty-afflicted countries around the globe. Each year, about a million young people participate.

As part of this year’s weekend, the youth and their friends will ask you for help in making sandwiches to take down to Martha’s Table in Washington, DC as part of the monthly ministry to help feed the homeless.

Look for more information in the weeks ahead. This year’s coordinator is Jill North. Please contact her with any questions at [jillpop123@yahoo.com](mailto:jillpop123@yahoo.com).

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

*presents*

# An Evening of Christmas Musical Delight



**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10TH  
7:00 PM**

**FREE ADMISSION**

**CHRIST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
8011 OLD GEORGETOWN RD.  
BETHESDA, MD 20814**

*Featuring*

**BAY STREET BRASSWORKS**

# Readers' Circle Coming Soon

The CELC Readers' Circle is a new small group ministry. Pam Vodicka currently plans to host this monthly gathering; a co-host is desired. Anyone interested in co-hosting the Reader's Circle and/or participating can contact Pam at pvodicka@verizon.net or 301-443-2753.

The kick-off is *Sunday, January 7, at 6:00 pm* in the hospitality room at church. This time will be used to



determine the content of the gatherings and also to select which Sunday to meet (first, second, third, or fourth).

CELC Readers' Circle is a Christian-based book club. We will not only experience Christ in the authors' writing skills but also as we reflect upon their words. During the first gathering in January we will plan for our monthly readings and reflections. Themes to be considered include but are not limited to God's work in our

world, human rights, prayer, self-revelation, forgiveness, affirmation, etc.

Evenings for 'Book Reflection' and 'Open Reflection' will be planned. All books and/or topics will be Christ-based. Selected books for reading and reflection will be planned every other month. Otherwise, we will gather for reflection on a theme, which we will call 'Open Reflection.' On these nights participants can bring their own books, articles, and magazines to the gatherings. Or, the evening may begin with a short video. A night of 'Open Reflection' will allow a looser format so participants can attend even if they are not reading a selected book but would still enjoy time to reflect with others in Christ. So as to have some structure for 'Open Reflection,' the planning session will include the selection of themes for these gatherings.

Dates, books, and themes are subject to change, based on how the Spirit moves us.

## CHRIST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH FRAGRANCE-FREE FAITH COMMUNITY

It has been well documented that exposure to scented products can heighten symptoms in patients with asthma and allergies, as well as other systemic problems.

In caring for all God's people and in consideration of these issues, CELC respectfully requests that you **refrain from wearing** scented products while worshiping, praying, studying, and/or visiting our faith community.

*Examples of these products include (but are not limited to) colognes, perfumes, deodorants, hand lotions, hair products, body washes, soft soap, alcohol-based hand cleaners, air fresheners, and fabric softeners.*

*"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it.  
The world and all its people belong to Him.  
For He laid the earth's foundation on the seas  
And built it on the ocean depths."*

(Psalm 24:1 NLT)

# GGT Update

The past few months have been extremely active for the GGT Development project and the information below is just a brief summary of the action steps taken. While all dates are subject to change based on outside decisions including county zoning, all CELC planning is geared and on schedule for the start of construction in the next 12-16 months. The Connection and other vehicles will be used to keep all CELC members current on this exciting and challenging project.

Congregation questions, comments and involvement are most appreciated.

## Major Actions Taken – September to November 2006

1. A Congregation town hall meeting was held on 9/16 to address a minor but important CELC **legal resolution change** for the project and a unanimous congregation vote to approve that motion followed on 9/17.

2. CELC Council Approved a **4 Part Motion for the 2010-2014 GGT Operating Plan** on November 12, 2006 that stated:

Exercising the authority of the 7/11/06 Council vote, on 11/12/06 Council further approved:

Project **annual business plan** for period 2010 to 2014, with related revenue designed to achieve annual positive proceeds over the center's operating costs, including P&I payments on the estimated \$7.2 million debt;

A **coordinated accounting process** to move all CELC space use revenue & related costs into GGT effective no later than the 2010 budget year;

Authority for the "**GGT Heritage Plan**" research to examine best method to utilize grants, endowments, annuities, etc. for the purpose of paying down the project debt thereby increasing future mission funds; launch subject to further Council decision and;

An **annual adjustment principle** of the business plan to review for fiscal responsibility, debt prepayment, conversion of rental, and other CELC missions and operations needs.

3. A series of meetings were held with CELC counsel, MTFA, Bozzuto and its counsel and related professionals and a **Local Map Amendment (LMA)** was filed on 11/21/06 with Montgomery County Park and Planning (MCP) for zoning approval. MCP response is expected by 2Q07.

4. Escalated action with MTFA, Bozzuto and others about **transition relocation space** for worship and other church operations during planned construction schedule (approximately 18-24 months).

5. Finalized all business issues with **architect agreement** with MTFA with assistance from CELC counsel Pillsbury Shaw Pitman.

6. Drafted **construction agreements** with assistance from Pillsbury Shaw Pitman.

7. GGT Steering Committee (SC) has kept **Council informed** of all progress and upcoming decisions with the development program.

8. Implemented a **credit line loan** of \$1.6 million from Thrivent bank (formerly Aid Association for Lutherans) on 11/20/06. That included prepayment of the mortgage with Potomac/Mercantile Bank on the Glenbrook Avenue property purchased in 2004. All major **GGT expenses are now fully separated** from CELC and MEF operations.

9. Met on multiple occasions with Dr. J. Michael Sleeth, MTFA and Greater Washington Interfaith Power and Light to **plan environmentally friendly green space** in the new development.

10. Meetings were held or planned with **related stakeholders** and community on the overall project.

Additional detail information on the GGT development project is available from Council and GGT SC members. Please submit any questions on the project to CELC's Owner's Rep (OR) Barry Lemley at [barry\\_celcor@msn.com](mailto:barry_celcor@msn.com) or through the church office and we will update the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) and make those available to all.

*Submitted by the GGT SC Team: Ray Albright, Jeff Leach, Pastor Marv, Don Cumming, Andy Masetti, Mark Miller, Steve Peth, Alan Motameni, Barry Lemley*

# Small Group Ministries

*“They committed themselves to the teaching of the apostles, the life together, the common meal, and the prayers ... And all the believers lived in a wonderful harmony, holding everything in common” (Acts 2:42, 44)*

You are warmly invited to participate in these spiritual, faith-based opportunities. It’s clear that God blesses us when we meet together, fellowship together, study together—share life together. Unless another contact is listed, please contact Florence Heacock, small group minister (301-452-2491; flohea@heartmindsoul.com), or Sanna Solem of the small groups administrative team (301-571-0050) for more information. Also, if you are interested in leading a small group or are interested in a small group not listed, please contact Florence Heacock or Sanna Solem.

**Small Group Leaders Forum**—Watch for future dates!

**Challenging Lifestyles** is a Bible study based on the Beatitudes for 21st challenging lifestyles. Part I begins at 10:15 am and part II begins at 11 am on Sundays in the Upper Room. Contact Larry Goolsby (301-946-6479 or lgoalsby@aphsa.org).



**Questions of Life** is a course on Christianity for new, returning, and mature believers, with prayer, a DVD/book presentation, discussion, fellowship and a meal. It meets at 10:45 in the Hospitality room. Contact Steve Peth (301-564-1232 or sptopeka@earthlink.net).

**Celebrate Recovery** is a 12-step, Christian recovery ministry based on the Beatitudes (Matthew 5) that uses eight principles as well as fellowship and God’s healing powers to help heal hurts and overcome personal defects and replace them with life’s abundance. *Place, day, and time TBA.* Contact Florence Heacock (301-452-2491 or flohea@heartmindsoul.com).

**Couples Home Group** meets for in-depth Bible study, spiritual growth, fellowship, love, support, and prayer. *Place and time TBA.* Contact Laura North (laura@heartmindsoul or 301-652-5160).

**Coed Home Group** offers Bible study, prayer, and fellowship. *Place and time TBA.* Contact Florence Heacock (301-452-2491 or flohea@heartmindsoul.com) or Sanna Solem (301-571-0050).

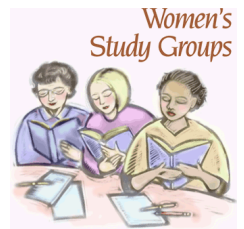
**Men’s Master Builders** meets for in-depth Bible study with a focus on men’s issues at 9:00 am on the first and third Saturdays in the Hospitality Room. Contact Steve Peth (sptopeka@earthlink.net or 301-564-1232) or Tim Bradley (301-977-0906 or tbradley4001@yahoo.com).

**The Reader’s Circle** meets for faith-based book study and reflection. *Begins January 2007*, 2nd Sunday of each month at 5:00 pm. Contact Pam Vodicka (301-215-9141 or pvodicka@verizon.net).

**Martha Circle**, a Bible study based on material provided by the Women of the ELCA, meets at 10 am on the third Tuesday of each month. Contact Mary Merrick at 301-571-7212.

**Rachel Circle**, a Bible study based on material provided by the Women of the ELCA, meets at 7:30 pm on the second Tuesday of each month. Contact Alice Daniels at 301-949-4688.

**THRIVE**, for women seeking in-depth Bible study, meets September-May, 9:00-10:30 am on the first and third Saturdays each month. Contact Sanna Solem at 301-571-0050.



**Young Women’s Small Group**, for women in their 20s and early 30s. *Place and time TBA.* Contact Laurie Heinecke, 301-468-0814 or lbheinecke@aol.com.

**A Life Worth Living**, based on the book of Philippians. Contact Florence Heacock (301-452-2491 or flohea@heartmindsoul.com).

# Prayer Corner

Isabella Beyer and her parents Greg and Michaela; Rhea McVicker's mother; Betty Sutermeister; Mason Timberlake and his parents Gary and Liz; Grace Bowden; Sophia and Samel Johnson and their parents shawn and Catherine; Rosemary Wenchel; Diana; Emily Champagne and her mother

Abby; Dr. Matthew and Nancy Sleeth; Grace Lloyd-Davies; Rev. Pam Strader and her son Brian; Jackie Meyer; Niina Tang; Ruby Yoshioka; Stephanie Coleman; Guy Bradley; Lynn and Scott Echels; Robert Corbey; the Barnes family; Donny Strunk; Holly Almont; Robert Corbey; David Sprague; Dawn Marie Ehlert; Edith Moskaluk; Jean Hammet; John Richey; Margaret Day; Nancy Lewis; Nelson Goolsby; the young men of Nick's Place; Robert Condon; Terry and Jane Seaks; Willem Scheltema; Robert and Noah Harris; Ray Nader; Nancy Harris; Dustin Harris; Jan Ingles; Danny and Janine McVicker

We do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes ....

Romans 8:26



# Prayer Ministry

CELC's Prayer Room I is open for prayer from 8:15 am– noon on Sundays. Prayer Room II is open for prayer throughout the week. **Prayer Ministry** contacts are Paula Mathis (mathispaula@cs.com) and Norma Jennings (norma\_jennings2003@yahoo.com)

To add a prayer request to the prayer list or to get involved in our prayer ministry, contact Florence Heacock (301-452-2491 or flo-hea@heartmindsoul.com). Prayer lists are available in the narthex.

# Martha's Table

We have the wonderful opportunity to serve dinner to the homeless through Martha's Table in Washington, DC.

On the third Saturday of every month, a group of volunteers serves soup, sandwiches, dessert, and drinks to dozens of men, women, and children out of a mobile soup kitchen van provided by Martha's Table.

We carpool from Christ Lutheran, leaving the church no later than 4:00 pm and returning sometime around 7:00 pm. Jeff Leach and Steve North are trained drivers; we need you to ride along and help serve the food.



Please sign up on the Service Opportunities bulletin board in the narthex or speak with Jill or Steve North. Thanks for your support!

## Looking Ahead...

*January 20, 2007:* "Reaching New Generations"; workshop hosted by the Metro DC Synod Division for Congregational Life, at King of Kings in Fairfax. The workshop is led by Rev. David Berg, who has a passion for reaching new generations with the gospel through innovative and imaginative ways.

*January 26-27, 2007:* GWCEA Convention, High Point High School, Beltsville. This convention promotes and encourages Christian education and provides hundreds of workshops offering specialized and focused training for almost every phase of church ministry, leadership, and evangelism. [www.GWCEA.org](http://www.GWCEA.org)

# “Serve God, Save the Planet”

## CELC’s Retreat Weekend



CELC was blessed with the prayers, ministry, teaching, sharing, and love of Dr. J. Matthew and Nancy Sleeth on November 3-5. The Sleeths brought their “Serve God, Save the Planet” ministry to a Leadership/Development Forum; CELC’s Fall Retreat at Mar-Lu-Ridge; and sermons at both services, a lunch, and public forum.

Dr. Sleeth’s book and Bible study address the following questions and make it a personal journey for you:

- How can I live a more godly, equitable, and meaningful life?
- How can I help people today and in the future?
- How can I be less materialistic?
- How can I live a more charitable life?
- What would happen if I led a slower-paced existence?

On Friday evening, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, we were discussing “needs vs. wants”, and Nancy shared with us that she asks herself two questions when encountering this phrase: “Will it bring me closer to God?” “Will it help me to love my neighbor?”

Throughout Matthew’s book, Bible study, forums, and our Retreat, his message/ministry is for God, to “help individuals, couples, groups, and classes gain a deeper understanding of earth stewardship, and to help you move from understanding to ACTION [for God]”. Matthew brings the Word of God to you and makes it personal to and for you. When you read the book, “Serve God, Save the Planet,” read the prayers and Bible study he has written, connect and talk with people serving God and saving/making His world a better place now and for the future [earth stewardship], sit and talk with Matthew and Nancy, you can touch and know how and that they do live the Word of God with passion, compassion, understanding, knowledge, and love.

As Matthew and Nancy write, speak, and believe, “Because of these changes, we have more time for God. Spiritual concerns have filled the void left by material ones. Owning fewer things has resulted in things no longer owning us. We have put God to the test, and we have found his Word to be true. He has poured blessings and opportunities upon us. When we stopped living a life dedicated to consumerism, our cup began to run over.”

During your Advent and Christmas Season, how can you “stop living a life dedicated to consumerism,” and begin to have your “cup runneth over” with God’s unconditional and immense love and blessings, and touch the “true reason for the season, the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ”? What gifts will you give Him?

From CELC’s “Serve God, Save the Planet” weekend, participants shared the following comments:

“Something that struck me during one of his talks... We lament that the government, that industry, that others are ruining the environment, the earth. Why doesn’t someone do something? Matthew said that before



# “Serve God, Save the Planet”

## CELC’s Retreat Weekend

we ask others to do something we should take stock in what we are doing/not doing for the environment. That brings the responsibility right back to the individual. How can we ask others to do something if we are not doing it ourselves? Once we are acting responsibly then we can ask others to do something.”—*Sanna Solem*

“When Matthew Sleeth was in the area during his recent visit, I had the pleasure of meeting with him and several CELC and GGT leaders to examine ways our building plans could minimize utility usage, employ building materials that give off fewer chemicals, and incorporate more greenery in our “footprint.” While I knew that Dr. Sleeth had many practical suggestions for these principles, I had no idea that he knew of so many immediate resources and of other organizations and churches in our area that had already gone down this path. He was able to provide us a wealth of contact names and other connections that should make our efforts go far more quickly and easily than would otherwise be the case. We have truly been blessed to come to know him and to have him share his vision with us. Dr. Sleeth’s book, “Serve God, Save the Planet,” is an excellent resource for learning about how we better care for God’s creation and better serve all his people.”—*Larry Goolsby*



Other participants commented that the Retreat was “Excellent. CELC is an outreaching church”, “Very inspiring”, “Would like more programs [retreats] as the one with Dr. Sleeth”, “Perfect topic and timing”, and “A very important subject for our world – helpful to know of ways we can help”.

A favorite hymn of Matthew and Nancy Sleeth---“This Is My Father’s World”...”This is my Father’s World, And to my listening ears, All nature sings, and round me rings, The music of the spheres. This is my Father’s world; I rest me in the thought Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas; His hand the wonders wrought.”



Let us close with The Prayer of St. Francis, which helps us focus on Matthew 22:37-40 and the theme of Matthew and Nancy Sleeth’s ministry:

*Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace; where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love; for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life. Amen.*

—*Florence Heacock*

# Backpacking for the Homeless

A thank you to all who participated in the Back-Pack Ministry this year. By Thanksgiving Eve, more than 77 backpacks and stuffings had been donated to the cause. That evening the packs were filled by a willing group, including children, who had just earlier eaten a hearty meal prepared by the staff. Richard and Kent gifted us with music; and words and prayers were spoken by Pastor Marv.

Thursday morning, Florence and I went to the Church to deliver the backpacks. We met briefly and spoke with Blake, who coordinates the Bethesda Cares lunch program for the homeless. He indicated that last year 82 people came to be fed on Thanksgiving Day. We had only 60 backpacks last year, and he said that he had not asked us for additional as he did not want to pressure the church. And this year we had collected 77. Well, the Lord does provide, as we had enough additional backpacks to reach 82.

As the doors were about to open to Luther Hall, Florence and I looked

outside and saw people (men and women) lining up, waiting to enter. Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church would be their place of refuge, if only for an hour or two, to come in from the rain and cold and to be nourished with a hot meal.

Most of us think of homeless as the souls we see around the city on grates and sleeping on park benches. But there are others. Some are homeless living in shelters, who may even have jobs but can't afford housing. Some are called couch-surfers - those who go from family and friend's homes for short periods of time. Some are lucky to find a couch, and many just end up on the floor - but it is a roof over their heads.

The back-pack ministry will not end homelessness, but it can bring some comfort to those who wander. We will do this again next year. And if the Spirit strikes you - you might want to consider buying a backpack(s) now and filling it through-out the year. Also, after having spoken with Blake, Flor-

Whatever you  
did for one of the  
least of these  
brothers of mine,  
you did for me.



Matthew 25:40

ence and I realize that we need to change and eliminate some of the items on the list. We want to have identical items in each backpack. A new item list will be provided for men, women, girls and boys. Stay tuned!

—Sanna Solem

## Life Line Screening at CELC

CELC will be hosting a Life Line Screening for our members as well as the community on *Monday, January 15*. Life Line Screening will perform four different health screenings using ultrasound equipment: *Carotid Artery/Stroke Screening; \$45; Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening; \$45; Peripheral Arterial Disease Screening; \$45; Osteoporosis Screening; \$35*. The cost of the complete wellness package of all four tests is \$129. The vascular package is \$109.

Registration opens to the community at-large soon. Take advantage of this opportunity by pre-registering now by calling 1-800-324-1851. Appointments start at 9:00 am, but you must be pre-registered.

Flyers are available in the narthex. For more information, contact Laura in the church office, 301-652-5160.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
<h1>December 2006</h1> <p><b>Sunday morning opportunities:</b>            Adult Bible study: Part 1: 10:15; Part 2: 11:00 am            Alpha: 10:45 am            Pathfinders for children: 11:00 am</p>			<p><i>Please see page 10 of this newsletter or the Sunday morning bulletin for small group ministry opportunities available throughout the week!</i></p>		1	2 Thrive 9:00-10:30 Men's Master Builders 9:00-10:30
3 Worship: 9:45 Contemporary 11:15 Traditional	4	5	6	7 Praise Band 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm	8	9 <i>Family Ministry Birthday Party for Jesus</i> 4:00 pm
10 9:45 & 11:15 Worship  <i>Christmas Choir Concert</i> 7:00 pm	11	12 Rachel Circle 7:30 pm  <i>Council Meeting</i> 7:00 pm	13	14 Praise Band 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm	15	16 Thrive 9:00-10:30 Men's Master Builders 9:00-10:30  <i>Martha's Table Serving Night</i>
17 9:45 & 11:15 Worship  The Connection Deadline 5:00 pm  Youth Group 6:00-8:00 pm	18	19 Martha Circle 10:00 am	20	21 Praise Band 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm	22	23
24 9:45 & 11:15 Worship  <i>Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship</i> 7:00 pm 11:00 pm	25 <i>Christmas Day Worship</i> 10:00 am	26	27	28 Praise Band 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm	29	30

## Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

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The Rev. Marvin Tollefson  
*Pastor*

Andy Adams  
*Minister of Youth, Young Adults  
& Community Care*

Laura North  
*Minister of Children & Families*

Richard Czypinski  
*Minister of Music*

Kate Scott  
*Organist & Pianist*

Laura North  
*Office Administrator*

Florence Heacock  
*Small Groups Minister*

### Church Council

Steve North, president  
George Wenchel, vice president  
Moges Gebremedhin, treasurer  
Larry Goolsby, secretary

Greg Beyer, June Bradley, Ingrid Dal-  
laire, Catherine Johnson, Jeff Leach,  
Rhea McVicker, and Maura Miller

## Sunday Schedule

- 9:45 am** Contemporary Worship  
with Communion in the Sanctuary
- 10:15 am** “Challenging Lifestyles” (part 1)  
in the Upper Room
- 10:45 am** “Questions of Life” Alpha course  
in the Hospitality Room
- 11:00 am** “Challenging Lifestyles” (part 2)  
in the Upper Room
- 11:00 am** Pathfinders for children  
in the second-floor education wing
- 11:15 am** Traditional Worship with Communion  
in the Sanctuary

### Mission of The Connection

*To communicate about disciple-making  
events and opportunities, all for the  
glory of God and to grow His Kingdom.*

Please contribute to The Connection! Let’s share all the  
exciting ways God is at work here at Christ Lutheran!  
Questions? Please call Laura North at 301-652-5160 or email  
laura@heartmindsoul.com.

### January Connection Deadline

Submissions for the January issue of The Connection are due  
by 5 pm on **Sunday, December 17**. Please drop them off in  
the box on Laura’s office door or e-mail them to  
laura@heartmindsoul.com.

*Please note: This is an earlier deadline because of the  
Christmas season.*

*New to CELC?*

*Want to know more about our faith community?*

*Please email [clc@heartmindsoul.com](mailto:clc@heartmindsoul.com)*

*to begin receiving The Connection and also our weekly e-newsletter.*