

The Connection

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Christ Lutheran Church, Bethesda

January
2012

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)

A Light Shining in the Darkness

Isaiah 11:1-10

Pauline Tittle, a seventy-seven year old woman was attacked this morning by two men in Norfolk, Virginia, breaking her hip, causing some cuts and bruises, and stealing her money, 47 cents.

Triple Iraq bombings kill at least 26.

A car bomb kills the top Lebanese General.

One million people without power in the Midwest after an ice storm.

Six high school students shot at their bus stop as they got off the bus.

Preacher stabbed while meeting a prostitute.

Two teenagers on trial for murder of father at his daughter's sweet sixteen birthday party.

Man killed when car hits bridge near Forte Meade.

Man pronounced dead after crash outside auto-repair shop.

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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, clc@heartmindsoul.com, to begin receiving our weekly e-newsletter.



HOLY COMMUNION INFORMATION



The sacrament of Holy Communion is offered at both worship services, every Sunday morning. We offer traditional wine and grape juice.

Two crystal chalices are used; the grape juice is white and the communion wine is dark red. If you would like more information about communion, contact Pastor Jon.

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, contact George Wenchel (george@wenchel.com).

facebook

Find us on facebook:
Christ Lutheran Church

twitter™

Follow us on twitter:
@christbethesda

FAIR TRADE COFFEE

Purchases of Fair Trade coffee provides the means for small farmers to make enough money to support themselves while using the premiums to improve their standard of living.

Here's what's available:

- pillow packets (pre-ground) of Regular (Mind Body Soul) and Decaf (Columbian). Each pillow packet makes one pot (about 64 oz) of coffee (\$2)
- a variety of whole bean and ground regular and decaf coffees (\$8 for 12-oz pkg; \$9 for 16-oz pkg and decaf)



To learn more about this coffee, visit www.equalexchange.com. Proceeds from the coffee will be given to support the ministry of Mi Refugio, the school for impoverished children in Guatemala. Please contact Lisa Bente (carpedm28@verizon.net).

THE TABLE MINISTRY

Why The Table and Neighborhood Life? Neighborhood Life is the optimal place for life change similar to the experiences of the early church where spiritual development and outreach happened right where you live... by building genuine friendships with both CELC and non-CELC neighbors; by growing spiritually as a natural part of your everyday life; by responding to the needs of others in your neighborhood and beyond.

If you would like to participate in a Table group, please contact Sanna Solem (sannasolem@gmail.com), Florence Heacock (flohea@heartmindsoul.com), or Larry Goolsby (goolsbyl@comcast.net).

A Light Shining in the Darkness

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These are just a few of the headlines from the papers one could find. Day in and day out we are reminded of the pain nature can cause, the pain we as sinful humans can inflict upon one another and our world, and the pain we feel by simply reading and acknowledging the imperfections and pain of this world.

It is not easy to stare reality in the face and remain optimistic. I would imagine it was difficult for Isaiah too. Judah was facing a grave threat from their neighbors to the north. Damascus and Israel wanted Judah to join them in fighting Assyria. This is, however, not what God wanted Judah to do. Isaiah told King Ahaz not to join with either side. Do not join forces with Assyria, and certainly do not join forces with Damascus and Israel for Yahweh, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, God Almighty, the God of all is stronger, wiser, God is faithful and just, God is going to deliver us. It is God we should put our trust in, it is God who rules over us, it is God who wants our allegiance.

Unfortunately, Ahaz did not listen to Isaiah. Judah made a deal with Assyria, thus making it a vassal state. Assyria whittled away at Damascus and Israel until there was nothing left of them. When that happened, the deportations began. In the year 701 BCE more than 200,000 people were deported from Judah. The glory of the Lord was certainly hard to see at that point. More than 40 years of war, an entire generation new nothing but bloodshed, death, and destruction. Another generation would not know its native land as home. It is a dark and bleak outlook for those living at that time.

And to these people, Isaiah says, "Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel (7:14)," which means God is with us. "For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (9:6). From our text, "The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. With righteous-

ness he shall judge the poor and decide with equity for the meek of the earth...the wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid (11:2-6)." On that day, when the child is to come, it shall be a glorious day; a day as no other; the fullness of the Kingdom of God shall arrive. There will be no more weeping, no more war, no more hunger, the former things shall pass away, and the all will know the glory of God. Mercy and peace shall be his reign, righteousness and justice will be the tools by which judgment is passed.

It is a vision of hope, of restoration of the people of God, of God's dwelling place, of God's future with the people God has chosen and anointed with a mission and purpose of making known the goodness and grace of God through their lives with one another and their witness to the world through their lives. On that day...the day when the Lord comes, all of this will take place. As I mentioned earlier, it is hard to stare reality in the face and hold tight to this vision at the same time. I want to share a piece of an article I read as I researched this text.

Dr. William R. Long, M. Div. PhD writes in his essay about coding. Shakespeare, Jane Austen, and tons of other writers throughout history have written their stories and have used allegory, metaphor, symbolism, irony, and other literary devices to say things about culture through their stories that they may or may not have been able to say in a more straight forward manner. Dr. Long argues that Isaiah is doing the same thing and here are his conclusions:

My suggestion or attempt to 'break the code' of Isaiah (if you are even convinced there might be a code (!)) is that Isaiah actually believes that the hopeful vision he portrays is as hopeless as the situation in which he and the people find themselves. He says this by pairing human virtue and (dumb) animals. Human virtues are paired with (dumb) animals--animals which may at times speak in the OT but are never endowed with the kind of virtues that correspond to the list of virtues in Is. 11:1-5. Since we know that humans and animals cannot be compared in terms of their moral

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traits in the OT, then the whole superstructure on which the passage is built collapses before our eyes.

Isaiah, in fact, didn't believe in what he said--he was too much of a realist to believe that some glorious future age really would dawn, but he knew that one of the things that vaulted prophets to the top of national recognition was the ability to maintain a vision of hope even when things looked really bleak. So, he did that--and he got his reward by eventually being included in the canon and by being considered a classic prophet of hope, whose Scriptures are used in Advent. But, when the truth of Isaiah is told and the code is interpreted, he is as bogged down by the realities around him as anyone else. The only thing, however, is that he knew how to convince others that he wasn't. We have "fallen" for his line about hope. Now is the time to right the balance.

I am not sure reinterpreting one of the greatest prophets of all time as an egotistical, self-centered, self-preserving liar is the best way to go with this text. Everyone in their lifetimes will have doubts, I do, you do, Isaiah did, although those are never recorded, we all have doubts...that does not mean we do not believe in the future promised to us by God. Isaiah believed every word he spoke. Why? Because even when God's people are unfaithful, God is faithful! When we wander, God is the anchor that draws us back! When we get lost, God is the Shepherd that finds us! When we are walking in the dark, God is the light that guides us out! When we are scared, God is the peace that comforts us! When we are hungry, God gives us the food we need to live! God has promised to the world that "On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious (11:10)." On that day when the Lord comes again...righteousness will be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall lay with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid. In other words, when God's Kingdom comes in its fullness, nature shall be restored to its original state, its Garden state, and I don't mean New Jersey. All will live in harmony, and

all shall be judged with righteousness and faithfulness. The Kingdom of God will be as beautiful as beautiful can be: On that day!

Well, what do we do until that day? I will share a couple of stories with you that I hope will shed some light on the question.

*A Symbol of Humanity, by Debbie
Story Editor: Joyce Schowalter
California, USA*

I work in the children's department of a major department store. In February 2005 I encountered a customer of Arab descent, or so I assumed at the time because of her clothing. She was dressed in black and gray from head to toe, including having most of her face covered.

She was looking around guiltily because she was about to rip open a packaged dress shirt. It's no big deal really. Everybody does it. Because of my training, my first thought was "theft", because she was acting so guilty.

But then I saw her eyes: she was AFRAID.

I approached her and asked if she needed help. She was clutching a dress shirt for boys, and now she looked terrified. It was amazing how much emotion I could see in her eyes. I believe in "eye contact" and looking someone in the eye when speaking with them, but how often do we *really* do this?

In fact, it's possible that not being able to see her whole face helped me to see "her".

She didn't speak English. She kept pointing at a 9- or 10-year-old boy and almost wringing the shirt she was clutching. That was easy enough to understand without words, "Does it fit him?"

I asked her to hand me the shirt and showed her the trick to open the package without ripping it apart. Suddenly the fear in her eyes was gone, replaced by smiling eyes. After that, I helped her to find a different tie

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than the one she had picked, because it didn't go with the suit she had.

Then she started saying a lot of words I didn't understand and patting me on the arm. I knew she meant a very enthusiastic thank you. I was glad I could help her.

When I came in to work the next day, I was told there were some "strange" Arabs waiting for an employee in the children's department. The lady had come in again, with her daughter to translate. My boss had guessed she wanted me, and told her when I would be in. They waited for me.

Through her daughter, this is what she said. "I have been in this country one month. I find nothing but hostile and danger eyes. I am not a terrorist. My family is not terrorists. You are the only one to see this. You treat me kind, even though I misbehave. I thank you."

She gave me a jade green amulet. Her daughter said it is a symbol of humanity. I will treasure it always, as a reminder that we are all just people. Each of us is an individual with our own unique story.

Different cultures do not eliminate the humanity in humans.

Words of Encouragement, by Joseph Hili
Story Editor: Joyce Schowalter
Gozo, Malta

I live in the island nation of Malta. When I was young and attending the secondary school in the late 50's, I had to study by the light of a kerosene lamp. Since there was no electric service in our area, we had no electricity at home. When finally the electricity passed our house, in 1961, I called a local electrician to come and install electricity in our house. He promised to come, but he never did it.

I was so frustrated that I went to a hardware store, bought all the material necessary to wire two rooms, and from my knowledge I installed them myself.

Then I applied to get the electrical meter. The day the meter installer came, I was so frightened that he might tell me to take everything away because it was not a good installation. His helper, who was always with him just to carry his tools, looked at me and said, "Bravo, bravo, good work. You will pass the exam".

These words were so encouraging for me that I decided to continue installing electricity in all of our house. Then my neighbors asked me to install electricity for them also. I made many mistakes, but from them I learned a lot.

In the meantime, I began to take evening classes in electricity, to get the relevant certificates to be licensed. Eventually, I got them.

Then, instead of continuing to study for a common clerk typist, which I had planned to do before, I became a professional electrician. I took big contracts until I retired.

In about 1997, I was returning home from an urgent electrical repair request from a farmer who had given me two big melons to take home. I once again saw the gentleman who had told me "bravo" 45 years ago. He was standing with his son waiting on a bus-stage.

I stopped to give them a lift, which he accepted. I offered him a melon and told him that it was as a reward for what he had said to me 45 years ago. I told him he had changed my entire route of life.

He answered that he didn't remember anything about that encounter, but he was very happy to hear it, and thanked me heartily. I told him that it was I who had to thank him.

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I always remember him and mention this story frequently, for he changed my life completely.

How Could She Tell? by Crystal C.
Story Editor: Clayton Bennett
Oregon, USA

Early in 1999, our family had to drive several hundred miles to Billings, Montana, to visit a hospitalized family member. Between travel, lodging and having given most of our available cash to help relatives out with expenses, we had very little money when we left to return home. It was dusk when we drove out of Billings.

We didn't notice at first that our headlights were dimming, and that's probably why we missed the exit for the interstate leading home. After about 40 miles we began to see that nothing along the highway was familiar. In 35 more miles we saw an exit to a town that wasn't anywhere near where we were supposed to be.

With eight miles to the next exit, we realized the headlights were dangerously dim. The car began to sputter, and I had to turn off the lights to keep it running. At the foot of the exit ramp there was a small post office. The car stopped running completely as we pulled into the parking area.

I soon determined that the alternator wasn't working. It was 7 p.m. and we were in Rosebud, Montana, a tiny town with no services.

To make things worse, heavy snow was falling. We needed to find our family a safe place to spend the night, then find an alternator to fix the car in the morning.

We couldn't see any other buildings, and the rest of the town was nearly a mile away. Even if we walked there, we knew, there was probably no motel or parts store.

Just then a lady stopped to check her mail before heading home. I asked if she had a few minutes to help

charge up our battery and where we could find food, lodging, and car parts. She gave what we needed and more.

She suggested we go to Forsyth, about seven miles away. We followed her with only our parking lights on so the car wouldn't die again. She led us to a motel, where she insisted on paying for the room. While we were settling into the room, she returned with a meal she had purchased for us.

The next morning she came back! She took us to the parts store and insisted on buying an alternator for us. While I was fixing the car, she got us another meal -- and when we were leaving, she filled our tank and insisted that we take some money for the trip home.

She did all those things for us when we had just asked for a jump-start and a few recommendations. How she could tell what else we needed, I don't know, or why she gave us so much. But I know how much it meant to us. Perhaps her greatest gift was to give us a memory of one person who would do so much for complete strangers.

Different cultures do not eliminate the humanity in humans. I always remember him and mention this story frequently, for he changed my life completely. Perhaps her greatest gift was to give us a memory of one person who would do so much for complete strangers. A light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots, and a little child shall lead them. Children of God, each of us has been given the light of Christ, let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven; for out of us, flowers bloom on the branch of life, and the Kingdom of God touches the world everywhere we go. On that day, the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples: the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious (11:10). Amen!

*Peace,
Pastor Jon*

Call Committee Update

Bishop Richard Graham met with the CELC Call Committee in December to review the next steps of the process to call a pastor for our congregation. The synod will provide four or five names to the call committee. All candidates will be interviewed. The top candidates will then be interviewed a second time and arrangements will be made to hear them preach. If it becomes clear that there is a favorite, the council and then congregation become involved. If none of the candidates are a good fit, a second list of names will be provided by the synod.

The Bishop suggested that we also ask members of the congregation if they have any names of people they would like to submit for consideration to the call process. Please contact any CELC Call Committee member to submit a name. Current committee members are Jerry Black, Dave Lambert, Penny Smith, and Steve North.

The Call Committee will be looking for two new members since Adrienne Glenn moved and Lisa Stechshulte recently resigned. The new members will need to be voted on by the congregation.

Steve North
Chair, CELC Call Committee

Faith Formation Opportunities



Join us for our Sunday morning Faith Formation Opportunities for children and youth every Sunday at 10:20!

Our Sunday morning adventure for kids ages 3-elementary school teaches children the timeless truths of the Bible in a way that engages and excites kids! We help children know, love, and follow Jesus in a fun way. We gather at 10:20 upstairs for a time of singing, sharing, and learning all about Jesus' love for us! Laura North (301-652-5160 or laura@heartmindsoul.com) shares with the children.



If your age is between 11 and 111 and you desire to grow, you are invited to participate in the fun-filled (and frequently educational) Head-to-Heart sessions every Sunday morning from 10:20 to 11:00 in the sanctuary.

We have fun using music, game shows, skits, PowerPoint presentations, and more to open dialogues about faith in a dynamic way. Currently we are experiencing the New Testament. If you have any questions, contact Steve North (steve.celc@gmail.com).



Development Steering Committee and Graceful Growing Together, Inc

At the November 5, 2011 Town Hall Meeting on Development, members of the Development Steering Committee (DSC) and the Graceful Growing Together, Inc. (GGT) Board provided the congregation with details on the state of the CELC development project and upcoming milestones. In the open question and answer exchange, attendees were advised that a number of project elements would come together in 2012 to assist the CELC Council in further development decisions. All of the milestones noted below have been shared with our bridge loan partner, Thrivent Financial Bank.

Since that November 5th meeting, the DSC, GGT and CELC Council have reviewed and approved a number of critical next steps that are shown here in summary. Additional facts will be provided as appropriate in The Connection and at the upcoming January Town Hall meeting. DSC and GGT members have also held additional briefings for members of the congregation and the community and would continue to invite opportunities for future dialogues.

Appeal by Sole Petitioner. CELC's land use counsel, Linowes and Blocher, has advised that the current calendar for the Maryland State Court of Special Appeals is backlogged with other cases and a full state hearing date on the appeal filed by one neighbor against the Montgomery County Council for their 7-2 zoning decision vote on October 26, 2010 may not be scheduled until late 2012 or early 2013. We previously advised that the sole petitioner's initial zoning vote appeal was turned down by the Montgomery County Court of Appeals on August 11, 2011 and that the sole petitioner continued to extend his 5-year pattern of dilatory delays and appeals now at the Maryland state level. Given the extended timetable that causes uncertainties and related costs to CELC, our missions and to taxpayers, Linowes has recommended filing for an expedited process and a decision on the briefs. That has been supported by the Montgomery County Council legal counsel who would join in that process. That action has been further endorsed by the full DSC and approved by the CELC Council. If approved by the Maryland Court of Special Appeals, that expedited process and decision could be in 2Q12.

Market Assessment, Phase I Demand for Community Center Space. This study as approved by the CELC Council is moving forward under professional guidance of the NonprofitCenters Network (NCN) and with cooperation from Non-profit Montgomery. A detailed survey of 43 space related questions has been sent to over 1000 area nonprofits to help determine needs to lease future administrative and function space in our planned facilities. Those survey results will lead to focus groups and a full demand analysis report by March 2012. If endorsed by the DSC and GGT, Inc. and approved by CELC Council, a further Market Assessment, Phase II, provided by NCN would detail planned community center staffing, job descriptions, leasing policies and a ten-year 2016 to 2025 Operating Plan budget.

2016 Tenant Occupancy Plans. While it is still 3-4 years out, preliminary planning work has started with important anchor tenants such as Guiding Star, Bethesda Cares, other congregations, plus concert, senior care, recreation and support groups for phased-in occupancy plans for the new space. CELC worship, function and mission space is of course a major part of that planning. This work will be incorporated into the Market Assessment analysis by the Nonprofit-Centers Network and interior space planning with our architectural firm, MTFA.

Seek Creative Partnerships. Another key part of the DSC and GGT responsibilities is to reach out to various sectors of the broader community to gauge interest in long term partnerships in the planned center. Exploratory meetings have

DSC and GGT, Inc. Update

been held with a number of entities including the Montgomery County Office of Community Partnerships, Lutheran Social Services and the Montgomery County Departments of Recreation, Housing and Economic Development. Additional meetings with these parties and many other corporate, government and nonprofits groups are planned for early 2012.

Capital Campaign Feasibility Study. To determine the level of both congregation and community philanthropic support for the planned community center facility and its missions, CELC's Council approved a Request for Proposal (RFP) to seek bids from local and national consultants with specific expertise in this area. Proposal reviews and interviews with candidates were held in November and December and the CELC Council subsequently approved a GGT, Inc. recommendation to engage the firm of Community Counselling Services, Co., LLC (CCS) headquartered in New York, NY and with a regional office in Washington, DC, to conduct a 10-12 week Capital Campaign Feasibility Study. That work is currently planned to start in March 2012. Deliverables from that engagement will be the formation of a 12 member Feasibility Study Committee with Congregation, GGT Board, Community, Corporate and Foundation members. CCS executives will then conduct over 75 private interviews of potential supporters that will detail such areas of brand awareness, readiness, communications, staffing, volunteers, etc. that GGT, Inc. would need to address. It will suggest optimal timing for any future capital campaign launch and levels of gift support goals from a wide range of potential donors.

Graceful Growing Together, Inc. Board Expansion. As the role of GGT and its board becomes more essential for the future of the community center project, the GGT, Inc. Board passed a Bylaw change that was approved by the CELC Council to allow the GGT, Inc. Board to expand from its present 11 Directors up to 13 Directors in 2012. The majority of the Board seats will continue to be held by CELC congregation members but this will provide further GGT outreach, awareness and funding opportunities with the Montgomery County community. All 7 current GGT, Inc. Board members from the congregation and 4 current members from the community have been approved by the GGT, Inc. Board and the CELC Council for the 2012 term - and along with two new community Director positions - they will stand for election at the Congregation Annual Meeting on February 5, 2012.

Developer Request for Qualifications (RFQ). In mid November, three DSC members met with the MTFa team to review responses to the October RFQ. There is substantial interest from the development community for our project and numerous well known developers expressed a strong desire to engage in future in-depth negotiations with us in 2Q12 as the appeal status and other factors are clarified.

In summary, 2012 will be a critical one for CELC's long term community vision and mission and we will endeavor to keep all well informed on the process. However, please do not hesitate to contact any DSC, GGT or CELC Council member with any development questions or comments. Please continue to keep the development project and related missions in your prayers.

Respectfully submitted by the Development Steering Committee (DSC) & the Graceful Growing Together, Inc. (GGT) Board. December 23, 2011.

Ray Albright, Don Cuming*, Melanie Folstad***, Ken Hartman***, Dave Heffernan***, Pastor Jon Hundt*, Barry Lemley*, Andy Masetti*, Paula Mathis (GGT, Inc. Council Liaison)***, Mark Miller*, Tim Smith (DSC Council Liaison)** and Reverend Tim Warner****

DSC and GGT member; **DSC member only, *GGT member only.*

Small Group Ministries

Small Groups are spiritual communities where people share their thoughts, feelings, struggles, and joys, while applying Biblical principles in their lives. Small Groups grow in trusting relationships, and participants agree what is shared will remain confidential and differences of opinions are respected. Small Groups are spiritual communities where life transformation occurs through the love and Word of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, in relationships with His people.



“Challenging Lifestyles”—A dynamic Sunday morning experience for those wishing to learn, experience the lifestyle of Jesus



Christ in the 21st Century “challenging lifestyles.” A Biblical, prayerful, spiritual, nurturing, and supportive fellowship. Sundays, 10:15 am in The Upper Room. Contact Larry Goolsby (301-946-6479; lgoolsby@aphsa.org)

“THRIVE” for women seeking in-depth Bible study, fellowship, fun, outreach ministries meets September-July, 9:00-10:30 am on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month. Breakfast included.



Contact Sanna Solem (sannasolem@gmail.com; 301-571-0050)

“Men’s Master Builders” meets for breakfast, Bible study, worship and fellowship at 9:00 am on the first Saturday of the month in the Hospitality Room. Contact Richard Cypinski (240-505-9505; richard@heartmindsoul.com) or Pastor Jon Hundt (pastorjon@heartmindsoul.com)

“Monday Night Group” meets weekly, 7:30-9:00 pm for study, prayer, fellowship in the Hospitality Room. Contact Steve North (steve.celc@gmail.com; 301-871-8161)

“The Table Ministry”—21st Century table experience, around the Table of Christ. Build genuine friendships in and out of CELC, grow spiritually on every day basis, and respond to the needs of others. Three-session series, with meal, in Host Homes. Contact: Florence Heacock (301-452-2491; flohea@heartmind-soul.com)

“PrayerLife Ministry”—meets for prayer, study, discussion, fellowship. PrayerLife outreach includes Taize Prayer Services and prayer study. Contact Florence Heacock (301-452-2491), Larry Goolsby (301-946-6479), or Dave Lambert (301-983-5034)

“Martha Circle,” a Bible study based on material provided by the Women of the ELCA, meets at 10:30 am on the 3rd Tuesday of

each month. Contact Mary Merrick (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 2nd Tuesday of each month. Contact Alice Daniel (301-949-4688)

“Women’s Healing Ministry” —A 12-step, Christian recovery ministry based on the Beatitudes that uses eight principles as well as fellowship and God’s healing power to help heal hurts and overcome personal defects and replace them with life’s abundance. Contact Florence Heacock (flohea@heartmindsoul.com; 301-452-2491)



Reasons to Join a Small Group:

- You will understand the Bible better in a small group.
- You will begin to really feel like part of God’s family.
- Prayer will become more meaningful to you.
- You will be able to handle times of crisis, change, and stress better.
- You will have a natural way to share Christ with friends, relatives, and work associates.
- You will develop leadership skills you never knew you had!
- You will deepen your understanding of worship.
- You will have fellowship, laughter, and fun

A Praying Life

Jesus prayed! Even though He was the Son of God, Jesus prayed while He was on earth. This is amazing because it tells us of our deep need of prayer. If even the Son of God needed to pray, how much more do we stand in need of prayer!

Prayer can never be fully understood this side of heaven. But even a child can pray. Beyond doubt, our God listens when we pray. He is a God who answers prayer. And the Bible records God's miraculous answers to prayers.

There is no short cut to prayer or any substitute. A life devoted to prayer is one that can transform the one who prays so much that its benefits cannot be measured. A praying man or woman never remains the same. He or she is changed to Christ-likeness day after day.



One need not understand all about prayer to pray. To pray, one just needs to pray. That is all. It is so simple. Yet a lifetime is not enough to master prayer. It is so profound. Therefore pray!

Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops (James 5:16 to 18 NIV). This is a New Testament insight into the life of an Old Testament person. It says that Elijah was a man just like any one of us. He

was not an extraordinary man. But he was *earnest in prayer* and the *effects of his prayer were extraordinary*.

This is a great encouragement for us to pray. It tells us that great things are possible in prayer. It is accomplished by earnest prayer which can be practiced by ordinary people. The results are extraordinary because the One who answers prayer is God.

So let us all be encouraged to pray much in earnest. Then the works of God shall be made manifest. Therefore enter into communion with God in prayer. Wait at His feet in anticipation. He shall do some great things for you!

From <http://www.lovesark.net/prayer/prayerlifejesus.html>

Florence D. Heacock
Minister of Small Groups

Taizé Prayer Services

Join us on the third Monday of each month , 7:15-8:00 pm, in the Sanctuary

January 16, February 20, March 19

The Taizé Community is an ecumenical Christian monastic order in Taizé, France, founded in 1940. The community has become one of the world's most important sites of different cultures and different Christian traditions. The Taizé community has sought to demonstrate this in the music and prayers, where songs are sung in many languages, and have included chants and icons from the Eastern Orthodox tradition. Through the Taizé community's ecumenical outlook, they are encouraged to live in the spirit of kindness, simplicity and reconciliation. The music emphasizes simple phrases, usually lines from Psalms or other pieces of Scripture, repeated and sometimes also sung in canon.

Coming in February...

The Jesus Lifestyle



Our culture is obsessed with lifestyle. Magazines and websites tell us what to wear, how to get fit, what to drive and how to love. Everyone wants to tell us how to live our lives.

Jesus did not leave us a lifestyle magazine. He sat down on a mountainside and began to teach. How to deal with anger. How to handle money. What to do when faced with difficult people. Simple, memorable, and profound, Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount are as relevant and as challenging today as they were 2,000 years ago.

In this engaging and fascinating "The Jesus Lifestyle" study, we will look at the Sermon on the Mount and the life that Jesus wants you, and all people, to live. This study examines Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount and the radical alternative it presents to the modern lifestyle. Small groups will find themselves in discussion, study, and fellowship with intriguing and exciting topics such as "how to find the secret of happiness", "how to change the world around you", "how to understand the Old Testament", "how to understand sex in the twenty-first century", how to view marriage and divorce", how to respond to difficult people", "how to spot false prophets", how to stop worrying and start living", and many other discussions.

Small Group Ministry Forum

Saturday, January 14
10:30-Noon

For more information, please contact Florence Heacock (flohea@heartmindsoul.com) or Larry Goolsby (lgoolsby@aphsa.org).

An additional small group resource that will be available for you and your of small group -



"WALK THE TALK"

Walk The Talk – what does it really mean to walk by faith? Chuck Colson, Rick Warren and Gerard Long will rock your worldview. They are Biblical sages for this generation, champions of critical thinking. In eight video sessions - this is perfect for small groups that are ready to challenge their outlook by faith. Walk the Talk study topics are (1) A Brand New Perspective, (2) What is a Worldview?, (3) What is Truth?, (4) Where Did We Come From?, (5) How Did The World get so Messed Up?, (6) What's the Solution?, (7) What do I do Now?, (8) Suit Up.

For more information, please contact Florence Heacock (flohea@heartmindsoul.com) or Larry Goolsby (lgoolsby@aphsa.org).

Florence D. Heacock
Minister of Small Groups

Mark Your Calendars...

Saturday, January 21

Town Hall Meeting
10:00 am-Noon
Hospitality Room

Sunday, February 5

Congregational Meeting
10:15 am
Sanctuary

A Few Good Men

No, we're not talking about the Marines this time, but instead the men who participate in the Men's Ministry at CELC. We have regular meetings for Bible study and discussion and in addition use the Men's Ministry as a way to keep in touch and support each other as we serve the Lord and serve CELC's mission for this congregation and community.

Our group is built around our times together for Bible study, which are currently scheduled for the first Saturday morning of each month; the next session will be 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, January 7. We use material from the *Men's Master Builders Bible for Men*, which contains commentary and questions specially tailored to the issues and concerns men often have in their faith journeys. For more details about this interesting edition of the Bible, see <http://www.lutheranmeninmission.org/ministries/bibles.html>.

As the book's title indicates, the theme of our discussions – and the questions, prayers, and decisions we make that go along with them – all center around “building.” Building is something men traditionally do and enjoy, but it's much more than the hammer and



nails version. We try to help build God's kingdom here on earth, through helping CELC's work both within and outside of the church. We also help build up each other as we encounter obstacles and frustrations in daily life – and we enjoy hearing about all the good things happening to us. Finally we build up our spiritual foundations as we seek a deeper understanding of the Bible's teachings and God's plan for our lives.

We never run out of things to talk about, and there are always many challenges for which we need God's guidance. Our members are involved in everything within CELC from small groups to the church's redevelopment plans. Different ones of us serve the church through music, small group leadership, finance, and other ministries. Outside the church, we are active in a variety of professions as well as volunteer activities. We also connect with others in the church on plans and tasks where we can

volunteer or help out. The places, and people, where we have opportunities to “build” are almost limitless.

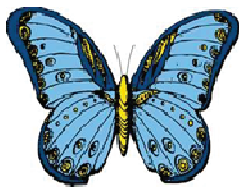
Our Bible studies and the discussions they generate are about as practical and “real-life” as you can get. Some sample questions from a recent session include “Do you tend to see the glass as half-full or half-empty?”, “This week, have you felt more like a conqueror or the conquered?”, and “How are you doing in the school of hard knocks right now?”

We welcome all CELC men to join us. We also are in need of a permanent new group leader who can cover important but relatively simple leadership tasks such as maintaining our e mail lists and assigning members their times to lead discussion in turn. Join us on January 7 at 9:00 a.m. (in the Hospitality Room unless we announce otherwise), and bring a snack or some fruit to share. We hope to see you then and to have you join in the good “building” work we do. Contact me at goolsbycl@comcast.net or (301) 946-6479 if you have any questions or suggestions.

Larry Goolsby

Thriving Women

The women's Bible study group Thrive will be studying the books of the Bible. Each time we meet for study, one person presents a study/discussion of a book of the Bible she has chosen to study and share with her Sisters in Christ. If there are books of the Bible you would like to read and share with others, please join us on the first and third Saturdays of each month.



We are women who look forward to getting together on the first and third Saturdays of the month to grow spiritually, while, at the same time, sharing each other's company, life experiences, insights, prayers, and joys. Our studies vary, and we entertain all suggestions that help us develop as Christian women.

Remember, we meet at the church, upstairs in the "cozy" prayer room II, first and third Saturdays of each month, except August, 9:00—10:30 am. It is easy to find. There will be a table outside set up with coffee and goodies—we are women who love our Lord, our time together...and breakfast!

Our prayer list...

Prayer Corner

Paul Swanson; Laura North; Ethan Dschaak; Brent, Jake, and Casey Dschaak; Eleanor Black; Alicia Owens; Steve Perkins and family; Bill Booth; Gleason Cosgrove; Ethan Dschaak; Grayson Brown; Julia Samuel; Tom Parrott; Marie Eason-Williamson; Andrew and Ruth Dambow; Elke Meldau-Womack; Bobby Larsen; Gene Saylor; Michael Foster; Dr. Lindi Wu; Marie-Laure; Phoebe Clater; Deborah Lambert; Anne Goeltz; Oscar Line; Danny Strunk; Megan Condon; the young men of Nick's Place; Terry and Jane Seaks; the ministry of the Mi Refugio school in Guatemala; the children undergoing treatment at The Children's Inn at the National Institutes of Health and their families and caregivers; the Chikumbuso Women and Orphans Project in Zambia.



Via de Cristo

VIA de CRISTO is a Spanish phrase meaning "Way of Christ." VIA de CRISTO is a highly structured three day weekend designed to strengthen and renew the faith of Christian people and bring them to a new awareness of living in God's grace. It is a combined effort of lay people and clergy toward renewal of the church.

The movement originated as "Cursillo" in the late 1940's in the Spanish Catholic church and moved to the United States in the late 1950's. It began in the Lutheran church when lay people and clergy attended a Catholic Cursillo in 1971, both in Iowa and Florida. The first Lutheran sponsored weekends were held in 1972 in Iowa and Florida and have now been held in over 25 states and some foreign countries. VIA de CRISTO is the Lutheran expression of this method which is currently being used in many denominations including: Episcopal, Methodist, Presbyterian and Reformed churches.

On Saturday evening January 14, 2012, CELC will host the Rainbow Via de Cristo reunion gathering in Luther Hall 6:00-8:30pm. This event with potluck, singing, testimony and Holy Communion is open to members of the Rainbow community, attendees of other 3-day Cursillo-style weekends and their invited guests only. Members of Christ Lutheran are also welcome to attend.

For more information, see Pr. Jon or Dave and Dee Lambert or visit <http://www.viadecristo.org>

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>10:15 am Worship</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Women's and Men's Groups 9:00-10:30 am</p>
<p>8</p> <p>9:15 & 11:15 Worship</p> <p>10:15 Christian Ed</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Monday Night Group 7:30 pm</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Rachel Circle 7:30 pm</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15</p> <p>9:15 & 11:15 Worship</p> <p>10:15 Christian Ed</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Monday Night Group 7:30 pm</p> <p><i>Taize Prayer Service 7:15-8:00 pm</i></p>	<p>17</p> <p>Martha Circle 10:30 am</p>	<p>18</p> <p><i>Council 7:00 pm</i></p>	<p>19</p> <p>Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm</p>	<p>20</p> <p><i>Connection Deadline 5 pm</i></p>	<p>21</p> <p>Women's Group 9:00-10:30 am</p> <p>1:00 am-Noon Town Hall Meeting</p>
<p>22</p> <p>9:15 & 11:15 Worship</p> <p>10:15 Christian Ed</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Monday Night Group 7:30 pm</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>9:15 & 11:15 Worship</p> <p>10:15 Christian Ed</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Monday Night Group 7:30 pm</p>	<p>31</p>	<p>January 2012</p> <p><i>Please see page 10 of this newsletter for small group ministry opportunities throughout the week!</i></p>			

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Minister of Music

Ji-Na Kim
Organist

Florence Heacock
Minister of Small Groups

W. Karunaratne
Finance Administrator

Church Council

Lisa Stechschulte, president
George Wenchel, vice president
Tim Smith, secretary
Alireza Motameni, treasurer

Pastor Jon Hundt,
Bobby Larsen, Paula Mathis,
Barry McVicker, Suzanne Parrott,
and Nathan Sprenger



SUNDAY MORNINGS

- 9:15 am** Contemporary Worship
with Communion in the Sanctuary
- 10:15 am** Christian Education/Faith Formation
for children and adults
(see details inside newsletter)
- 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 Church! Questions? Please call Laura North at 301-652-5160 or email laura@heartmindsoul.com.

February Connection Deadline

Submissions for the December issue of The Connection are due by 5:00 pm on **Friday, January 20**. Please email them to laura@heartmindsoul.com or drop them off in Laura's office.

*New to CELC? Want to know more about our faith community?
Please email clc@heartmindsoul.com
to begin receiving The Connection and also our weekly e-newsletter.*