

The Connection

Volume 77,
Issue 12

Christ Lutheran Church, Bethesda

December
2011

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)

I Love A Child

One of my mentors in writing is Walter Wangerin Jr. A wonderful pastor, a fantastic father, and a writer of stories! I, in case you haven't noticed, love telling stories, and for this month's Connection, I would like to share one of Walt's with you. It is called "An Advent Monologue." I hope you enjoy it.

I love a child.
But she is afraid of me.

I want to help this child, so terribly in need of help. For she is hungry; her cheeks are sunken to the bone; but she knows little of food, less of nutrition. I know both these things. She is cold, and she is dirty; she lives at the end of a tattered hallway, three flights up in a tenement whose landlord long forgot the human bodies huddled in that place. But I know how to build a fire; and I know how to wash a face.

She is retarded, if the truth be told, thick in her tongue, slow in her mind, yet aware of her infirmity and embarrassed by it. But here am I, well-traveled throughout the universe, and wise, and willing to share my wisdom.

She is lonely all the day long. She sits in a chair with her back to the door, her knees tucked tight against her breasts, her arms around these, her head down. I can see how her hair hangs to her ankles; but I cannot see her face. She's hiding. If I could but see her face and kiss it, why I could draw the loneliness out of her.

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DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

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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).

DECEMBER

**Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church
presents**

***An Evening of Christmas
Musical Delight***



**Sunday, December 18
5:00 pm**

Please join us for a reception and carol sing
Immediately following the concert.



Saturday, December 24

7:00 pm Contemporary Candlelight Service

9:00 pm Traditional Candlelight Service

I Love a Child

(continued from page 1)

She sings a sort of song to pass the time, a childish melody, though she is a woman in her body by its shape, a swelling at her belly. She sings, "Puss, puss." I know the truth, that she is singing of no cat at all, but of her face, sadly, calling it ugly. And I know the truth, that she believes she is right. But I am mightily persuasive myself, and I could make it lovely by my love alone.

I love the child.

But she is afraid of me.

Then how can I come to her, to feed and to heal her by my love?

Knock on the door? Enter the common way?

No. She holds her breath at a gentle tap, pretending that she is not home; she feels unworthy of polite society. And loud, imperious bangings would only send her into shivering tears, for police and bill collectors have troubled her in the past.

And should I break down the door? Or should I show my face at the window? Oh, what terrors I'd cause then. These have happened before. She's suffered the rapings of kindless men, and therefore she hangs her head, and therefore she sings, "Puss."

*My name is
shall be
Emmanuel*



I am none of these, to be sure. But if I came the way that they have come, she would not know me different. She would not receive my love, but might likely die of a failed heart.

I've called from the hall. I've sung her name through cracks in the plaster. But I have a bright trumpet of a voice, and she covers her ears and weeps. She thinks each word an accusation.

I could, of course, ignore the doors and walls and windows, simply appearing before her as I am. I have that capability. But she hasn't the strength to see it and would die. She is, you see, her own deepest hiding place, and fear and death are the truest doors against me.

Then what is left? How can I come to my beloved? Where's the entrance that will not frighten nor kill her? By what door can love arrive after all, truly to nurture her, to take the loneliness away, to make her beautiful, as lovely as my moon at night, my sun come morning?

I know what I will do.

I'll make the woman herself my door—and by her body enter in her life.

Ah, I like that. I like that. However could she be afraid of her own flesh, of something lowly underneath her ribs?

I'll be the baby waking in her womb. Hush: she'll have the time, this way, to know my coming first before I come. Hush: time to get ready, to touch her tummy, touching the promise alone, as it were. When she hangs her head, she shall be looking at me, thinking of me, loving me while I gather in the deepest place of her being. It is an excellent plan! Hush.

And then, when I come, my voice shall be so dear to her. It shall call the tenderness out of her soul and loveliness into her face. And when I take milk at her breast, she'll sigh and sing another song, a sweet Magnificat, for she shall feel important then, and worthy, seeing that another life depends on her. My need shall make her rich!

(continued on page 5)

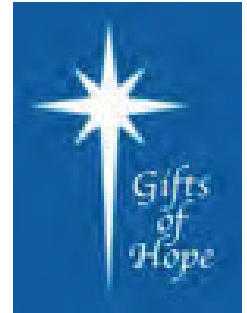
Call Committee Update

The Call Committee met in late October to understand what's next in the call process. We see our situation as being unique in several ways and are collecting candidate interview questions that are pertinent. By clearly communicating our development, urban environment, and congregational needs in our information and questions to candidates, we expect to receive answers to help us discern the best spiritual leader in the short and long term. We have also scheduled another meeting with the Bishop as we approach the agreed-to timeframe for the synod to collect candidate names for our church.

Steve North
Call Committee Chair

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 Congregation and Thrivent added a generous amount toward the synod total. The need continues.

Gifts of Hope catalogs and cards will be available in the colonnade after each service in December. For more information, please see Mary Jane Saylor.

I Love a Child

(continued from page 1)

Then what of her loneliness?
Gone. Gone in the bond between
us, though I shall not have said a
word yet. And for my sake she
shall wash her face, for she shall
have a reason then.

And the sins that she suffered, the
hurts at the hands of men, shall be
transfigured by my being: I make
good come out of evil; I am the
good come out of evil.

I am her Lord, who loves this
woman.

And for a while I'll let her mother
me. But then I'll grow. And I will
take my trumpet voice again,
which once would kill her. And I'll
take her, too, into my arms. And
out of that little room, that filthy
tenement, I'll bear my mother, my
child, alive forever.

I love a child.

But she will not fear me for long,
now.

Look! Look, it is almost happening.
I am doing a new thing—and don't

you perceive it? I am coming
among you, a baby.

And my name shall be Emmanuel.

*May the peace that comes from
knowing Emmanuel—God with
us—bless you and keep you this
Advent, Christmas, and all of life's
seasons!*

Peace,
Pr. Jon

Faith Formation Opportunities

Children and Youth



Christmas Party

On Sunday, December 18, we will celebrate Jesus' birthday! Plan to join us at 10:20 in the upstairs classroom for a time of singing, storytelling, crafts, and snacks!

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,

Mark Your Calendars...

Sunday, December 18	Christmas Choir Concert 5:00 pm—followed by reception and carol sing
Saturday, December 24	Christmas Eve Worship 7:00 pm—Contemporary 9:00 pm—Traditional
Sunday, December 25	Christmas Day worship 10:15 am—Lessons and Carols
Sunday, January 1	New Year's Worship 10:15 am
Saturday, January 21	Town Hall Meeting 10:00 am-Noon, Hospitality Room
Sunday, February 5	Annual Congregational Meeting 10:15 am, Sanctuary

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, Open Prayer Mornings, and Alpha Prayer Course. 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

Prayer Foundation—5 Finger Prayer

Simple prayers come in many different forms. Some people have the misconception that in order for a prayer to be effective, it needs to be eloquently worded and spoken with clarity. As you read in the November Connection, we learned about many different forms and ways of prayer.

At one of the sessions of our recent Prayer Study, we had a discussion on the many forms and ways a person prays. Lisa Bente shared one of her prayer forms, and I asked her if she would share this with us. Following is her 5 finger prayer, which you can do, quietly or aloud, any where.

Five Finger Prayer

1. Your thumb is nearest to you. So begin your prayers by praying for those closest to you. They are the easiest to remember. To pray for our loved ones is, as C.S. Lewis once said, a “sweet duty.”



2. The next finger is the pointing finger. Pray for those who teach, instruct and heal. This includes teachers, doctors, and ministers. They need support and wisdom in pointing others in the right direction. Keep them in your prayers.

3. The next finger is the tallest finger. It reminds us of our leaders. Pray for the president, leaders in business and industry, and administrators. These people shape our nation and guide public opinion. They need God’s guidance.

4. The fourth finger is our ring finger. Surprising to many is the fact that this is our weakest finger; as any piano teacher will testify. It should remind us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble or in pain. They need your prayers day and night. You cannot pray too much for them.

5. And lastly comes our little finger; the smallest finger of all. Which is where we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. As the Bible says, “the least shall be the greatest among you.” Your pinky should remind you to pray for yourself. By the time you have prayed for the other four groups, your own needs will be put into proper perspective and you will be able to pray for yourself more effectively.

*Florence 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

2011: December 12

2012: 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.

Volunteer at the Interfaith Clothing Center



Join us at the Interfaith Clothing Center, 751 Twinbrook Parkway, Rockville, MD 20851, 11:00 am-1:00 pm, followed by lunch. Join us on December 10.

The Interfaith Clothing Center serves about 14,000 individuals every year. Clients come from all corners of the County and are young and old, male and female, single and married, and span all races and religions. They are working poor, homeless, disabled, immigrants, parolees, and seniors. To volunteer, contact Florence (flohea@heartmindsoul.com).

Small Group Ministry Forum

Saturday, January 14
10:30-Noon

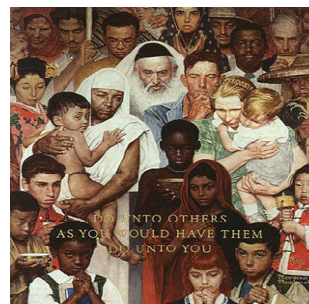
Open Prayer Morning

(silent, contemplative prayer time for all people)

December 3

10:00 am-Noon, Sanctuary

Christmas Message



Christmas is the time to spread the message of the birth of God's Son, Jesus Christ, love, harmony and peace. Of course, it is a time to get showered with gifts and wishes, but in the midst of all the commercialism and meism, we should not forget the real spirit of Christmas. The humble prayer of *St. Francis of Assisi* sets forth a message that reminds us that Christmas is not only about fun and gifts, but of the teachings of Jesus---love, peace, faith, forgiveness, hope, light, joy, and generosity.

Lord, make us instruments of your peace,
Where there is hatred, let us sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is discord, union;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy;

Grant that we 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.

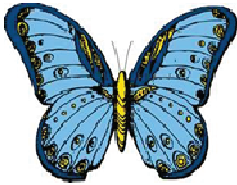
Amen

The CELC Small Groups and Ministry extend our hands and hearts to everyone to join and share time with us to experience the love of Jesus in our faith community. During Christmas and throughout 2012, may your family, friends, and neighbors experience and know the love of Jesus Christ.

*Florence Heacock
Minister of Small Groups*

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.



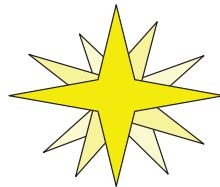
We are women who look forward to getting together on the first and third Saturdays of the month to grow spiritually, while, at the same time, sharing each other's company, life experiences, insights, prayers, and joys. Our studies vary, and we entertain all suggestions that help us develop as Christian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

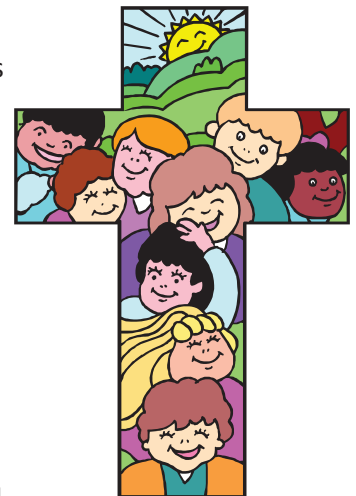


Guiding Star Child Development Center

Guiding Star Child Development Center provides exceptional child development services in a safe, nurturing Christian environment. Our philosophy: Safety is essential. Nurturing and respecting the uniqueness of each child is key.

We offer child care at two locations in Bethesda: 7009 Wilson Lane and 8011 Old Georgetown Road. Contact Sylvia Moreno, senior director for more information: 301-229-3004.

Guiding Star is a mission of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1 style="text-align: center;">December 2011</h1> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Please see page 10 of this newsletter for small group ministry opportunities throughout the week!</i></p>				1	2	3
					Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm	Women's and Men's Groups 9:00-10:30 am
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9:15 Contemporary 10:15 Christian Ed 11:15 Traditional ADVENT 2	Monday Night Group 7:30 pm			Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm		Interfaith Clothing Center 11:00-1:00
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
9:15 & 11:15 Worship 10:15 Christian Ed ADVENT 3	Monday Night Group 7:30 pm <i>Taize Prayer Service 7:15-8:00 pm</i>	Rachel Circle 7:30 pm		Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm		Women's Group 9:00-10:30 am
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
9:15 & 11:15 Worship 10:15 Christian Ed ADVENT 4 <i>Choir Concert and Sing-a-Long 5:00 pm</i>	Monday Night Group 7:30 pm	Martha Circle 10:30 am <i>Connection Deadline 5 pm</i>	<i>Council 7:00 pm</i>	Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm		CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP 7:00 pm Contemporary 9:00 pm Traditional
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP 10:15 am						

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Interim Senior Pastor

Laura North
Office Administrator

Richard Cypinski
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.

January Connection Deadline

Submissions for the December issue of The Connection are due by 5:00 pm on **Tuesday, December 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.*