

*We are called to be the Body of
Christ for West Cobb*

EST 1984



Christ Lutheran Church - December 2017

Giving and Receiving

When I was in college I worked as a garbage man for a while. Riding the back of garbage trucks in the middle of winter will teach you a lot of life lessons, but there is one lesson I will never forget: as the weather got colder and Christmas came closer, every once in a while we'd find on the tops of the garbage can lid a nicely wrapped paper plate full of goodies or cookies. It was usually accompanied by a note of gratitude. It was a small gesture, but I never forgot the houses that expressed their joy for our work. Sure, we were just doing our job, but when all you usually hear throughout the year were complaints about what we did wrong, the change of tone was noticeable and appreciated.

There are times when receiving gifts are easy: an unexpected cookie and word of thanks in the midst of a cold winter's day, for instance. Especially if you're doing the kind of work that often goes unnoticed. Those gifts, the ones that are easy to receive, are also the ones that are so much fun to give: watching someone's face light up in a grin as their day goes from "just doin' my job" to getting a surprise that blesses their

day—priceless.

On the other hand, sometimes gifts are not easy to receive. The gift of a compliment, for example (especially if you're Lutheran!). Gifts that feel like too much are over-extravagant in substance or price. Gifts that you cannot possibly ever hope to repay. Maybe even the gift of forgiveness. In those cases, instead of receiving something in gratitude, we can feel guilty where we want to at least match the gift that we have been given. We have a hard time just receiving the gift as a gift.

In our own faith life it can be overwhelming to think about the ultimate gift from God that never rusts or breaks or becomes outdated: the gift of life, forgiveness, and love that God gives to us in Jesus Christ, coming to us first as a tiny baby, then as a wounded, bleeding Savior. It's too much. It's over-extravagant. We can never hope to repay it. So the next time you come to the Lord's Table to receive communion, don't worry about the extravagance. Don't worry about trying to repay it or live up to it. Just hold out your hands in faith and gratitude. It's a gift. It's for you. And it was given in joy and in love.

Merry Christmas,

Pr. Tim Wrenn

Blue Christmas Service

In the midst of all the holiday cheer, not everyone feels like celebrating. Grief, illness, aging, depression, loneliness, unemployment, and loss are magnified. Even those not struggling with a loss might feel the stress of the season.

The Blue Christmas Service is a time and a place for people to bring all that hard stuff they are carrying with them, especially during a season where the message being promoted is to just be of good cheer.

The service will be on Thursday, December 21st at 7:00 p.m.; close to the winter solstice is the time of the year when we have the longest night. In fact, winter solstice literally means "standing still." As we gather for Advent services we are waiting for the light to come, through the coming of Christ into this world.

The service then is centered around the thing that we need the most in this season: hope. It is a service of contemplative music, readings and a litany of candle lighting leading us to the Christ child giving us hope now and into the future.

"O come, O come, Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel."

Merry Christmas!

It has been an incredible year for our church and we certainly have plenty to celebrate this season. I'm very proud of the efforts of our church council to represent our congregation, to build a stable foundation for a growing future, to grow in Christ together, and to further our mission.

Hopefully, everyone will have a chance to enjoy fellowship together with friends and family this month! Thanks be to God for the bountiful harvest we all have in each other!

God Bless,
Mike Mahler

Stewardship Ministry

Stewards of Time: Thinking back over the years how many times have you said to yourself or even out loud "Time Flies." The busier we are, the faster the clock goes. While the actual measurement of time will never speed up or slow down today's way of life sure has accelerated the pace. With better roads and cars, we travel further to work and schools. Cell phones have become as much a part of our daily life as putting on a belt or carrying a wallet. Having longer commutes and social media at our fingertips not to mention the 24 hours a day with hundreds of channels available to us on TV. All of these consume the precious commodity of time.

The hectic pace in which we sometimes allow ourselves to reach eventually has an effect on family and personal health. We spend far less time at the family dinner table and general conversation with the ones we love. We might be rushing to a soccer game or some other organized activity. By the end of the week, we just can't figure out where all the time went. At this point, we are so overwhelmed and looking anywhere for some relief "something must give." It is at this point the first casualty arises, worship. You must ask yourself "do you plan your worship around your week or your week around your worship."

Stewardship of time is a severe challenge. Time, like every other gift from the Lord, is to be stewarded. Time will not slow down or speed up for anyone. Start your week by first putting worship on the schedule. Follow it up with everything else you have and give each one a start and finish time. Avoid as many time wasters as you can. Once we get in the habit of scheduling worship and giving this time to God, the Holy Spirit will help strengthen us in our true faith and help us find some peace in this hectic schedule.

With Christmas coming, scheduling time for worship and still trying to visit friends and relatives can be even a more significant challenge. May we all enjoy the rich bounty that God provides, not only in Word and Sacrament but also in house and home, property and income, family and friends.

God's Blessing to you all,

Artie Kappel
Stewardship committee

Fellowship Committee:

Greetings,

We had a good turnout for our Fall Festival/Monster Mash in spite of the weather, there was plenty of good food, fun and laughter! We are planning our second annual Christmas Bash to be held on Sunday, December 10th following the 11:00 service. We will be providing the main meal consisting of ham, baked beans and rolls. Please bring a covered dish or your favorite dessert to share. We have a sign-up sheet posted in the Narthex.

Witness/Evangelism Committee:

This year we had three new member classes, and we are already planning another one in the spring. As a church we have not only grown in our membership, but we have also increased our outreach and impact this past year. There seems to be a heightened sense of excitement, energy, and fellowship in everything CLC does. I cannot wait to see how our congregation grows, and what we accomplish together in 2018! Have a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year!!

Unleashing Salt and Light,
Tiffany (with Joe, Braden, and Evan's help!) Sorrentino

2017 Social Ministry Programs:

It is that wonderful time of year when we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As we celebrate the tremendous gift of God's Son, we also join in giving gifts to loved ones and those less fortunate. We have several programs which you and your family may participate in this Christmas season.

Mitten Tree - You may buy scarves, hats and mittens for all ages to decorate our Mitten Tree and keep those less fortunate warm during the winter months. Donations are provided to the YWCA.

MUST Toy Shoppe -You may purchase gifts for children and adults of all ages to provide a wonderful Christmas surprise for those who cannot afford it. Just place your gifts in the Narthex by the MUST box or under the Mitten tree. The Toy Shoppe opens December 5th and we will deliver the gifts weekly. Ideas include toys, stuffed animals, books, games, puzzles, sporting equipment, t-shirts, underwear, socks, mittens, hats and blankets.

LSG Hope Tree - We will have cards with special wishes and needs from adults with developmental disabilities. We will have sign-up sheets available on November 19th. Just select a wish and fulfill it by December 10th so they can be distributed.

Cobb Street Ministries - We will have cards with clothing wishes and needs for the residents of Cobb Street and many of the families they provide extended support to. You would just sign up on the sheet, take a card and shop for the requested items. Items need to be provided to the church no later than Sunday December 17th. If you are willing to provide Walmart Gift cards or shop for any late coming residents, let me Kathy Dickens know (kathydickens@bellsouth.net).

For additional information about any of our Christmas programs, you are welcome to contact Kathy Dickens at 770-401-5320 or kathydickens@bellsouth.net.

Thanks for your generous support of our programs.

Have a Blessed Christmas Season.

Social Ministry Committee

Social Ministry – “Feed the Few” M.U.S.T. Ministries

The Social Ministry Committee decided to do the same as last year at our December 27th monthly MUST lunch ... distribute one pair of sox to each person we serve as they leave the dining hall. Why? Several reasons. First, they were so well received by the MUST Diners last year. Those of us who distributed the sox were literally overwhelmed by the thanks, smiles and gratitude of those receiving their unexpected gifts. Second, it's a foolproof way of giving something that's needed by everyone especially those who are out in the weather. Third, we as 'givers' benefit every bit as much as the 'receivers'. And lastly, as stewards we found a pretty good deal at a 'big-box' store by buying in bulk and figured it's a great use of the money you donated for MUST. THANK YOU SO MUCH for doing that.

December 10th we're asking for your help in decorating the sox packages after each service. We need adults as well as children to assemble the sox, ribbon, cards and candy into about 150 gift packages. That's the same day as CLC's Christmas Party – what better way to get into the Spirit of the Giving Season!

One last thing: We're putting together the 2018 schedule for serving and baking for the MUST lunches. If you want to be put on the schedule, go to the website and fill in the form 'MUST lunch sign-up 2018'. Or just call or email Rita with the dates (4th Wednesday of every month) that you want to bake a pasta or brownies or serve food at the lunch. If you just want to sign up for one date to see what's going on, that's OK! (We'll get you hooked on the fellowship!) Kelly Mahler / Rita Buehner 678-327-5133 ritabuehner@bellsouth.net

Christmas Card Photo Display:

We will begin collecting your families Christmas Card Photo's and Christmas Letters for display on our bulletin board in the Narthex starting this week.

Christian Education Committee:

It's almost the Christmas season! That means it is time for the Christmas program. The Christmas Program will take place on Sunday, December 17 at 8:45 and 11:00 am. Rehearsal will take place on Saturday, December 16 at 10:00 am. This year's program will showcase the talents of our youth. Please contact Maxine Langford or Lisa Fallin for details concerning the program. We would love to have the participation of all of our youth.

Mission Trip - 2018 Update

The high school youth and their parents chose New Orleans for the next mission trip. The trip will take place from July 7 - 13. A deposit of \$125 is due on December 10th. Friends are welcomed to join with parent permission. Fundraising will begin in December and continue in the new year. We look forward to another spirit led mission with the support of our church family.

Mutual Ministry Committee:

Developing the faith of our youth is an important part of our mission at Christ Lutheran Church. In order to create a safe environment for that faith to grow, we have issued a Youth and Child Protection Policy (see church web site). We all pray that our youth are never exposed to unsafe situations or circumstances. Our objective is that the policy increases our awareness and provides guidance to manage potentially unsafe situations.

You can find the policy on the church website. Please take a few minutes to read the policy, and join us in creating a safe environment at CLC.

Peace,

Tom Mabry



Advent Season is here! Please plan on coming to the church this Saturday, Dec. 2 at 9:00 to decorate for Advent. It really is a lot of fun and the more hands we have, the quicker it goes. We can usually get the job done in a couple of hours. We promise that it will put you in the Christmas spirit! Coffee, juice, and doughnuts will be provided. We will see you there.



Poinsettias for Christmas Eve

If you would like to purchase a poinsettia to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas Eve services, please fill out the enclosed form in honor or memory of a loved one. The cost this year will be \$10 each. Sunday, December 17th will be the last day to purchase poinsettias and to have names placed in the bulletin.

Copyright © 2016 Christ Lutheran Church, All rights reserved.

Monthly Church Newsletter

Our mailing address is:

Christ Lutheran Church
176 W. Sandtown Road SW
Marietta, GA 30064
770-424-2850

<http://www.clcwestcobb.org/>

Find us on Facebook @CLCMarietta

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can **update your preferences** or **unsubscribe from this list**
