

"So we are ambassadors
for Christ..." -

2 Corinthians 5:20

December 2018



Sunday Worship

8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Family Express Worship

9:10-9:40 a.m.

with Sunday School
following

Christ Lutheran Church
700 County Highway B
Stoughton, WI

Inside this issue:

Gift Giving	2
President's Report Go and Tell	3
Who's Who in the Pew 2019 Stewardship	4
News Youth Can Use	5
Sunday School News ELCA World Hunger	6
Opening Prayer Senior Luncheon	7
Lutefisk History and Recipes	8
2018 Confirmation Class Senior Excursion	9
Elizabeth Circle News	10-11
Memorials Poinsettia Order Form End-of-Year Giving	12
New Members Thank you to CLC	13
Calendar	Insert

Christ Lutheran Ambassador

December at Christ Lutheran

Saturday, December 1

Lutefisk Dinner
Ole and Lena Sale and More...

Sunday, December 2

Worship/Communion—8:00 a.m.
Family Express/Communion—9:10 a.m.
Worship/Communion—10:30 a.m.

Sunday, December 9

Worship—8:00 a.m.
Family Express—9:10 a.m.
Worship—10:30 a.m.

Sunday, December 16

Worship/Communion—8:00 a.m.
Family Express—9:10 a.m.
Christmas Program Rehearsal—9:40 a.m.
Sunday School Christmas Program—10:30 a.m.

Sunday, December 23

Worship—9:00 a.m.
Coffee and Fellowship—10:00 a.m.
No Sunday School

Christmas Eve Monday, December 24

4:00 p.m.—Children's Christmas Eve Service
with Grace Notes and Special Music, Joseph, Mary, and Baby Jesus
Communion and Candle Lighting
6:00 p.m.—Christmas Eve Worship with Chancel Choir and Special Music
Communion and Candle Lighting
11:00 p.m.—Christmas Eve Worship with Chancel Choir and Special Music
Communion and Candle Lighting

Sunday, December 30

Worship —9:00 a.m.
Coffee and Fellowship—10:00 a.m.
No Sunday School

A Gracious God—A Generous People Gift Giving

by Pastor Paula Geister-Jones

A few years ago, during the holiday season, we had our kitchen remodeled; inevitably, this meant a lot of dining out, including Thanksgiving dinner at Coachman's. Our fridge and stove were squeezed into the laundry room, and on the rare occasions we ate at home, our washing machine became the temporary counter that my kids made sandwiches on. Our wood floors were also getting sanded and varnished, which meant that almost the entirety of our main floor—kitchen, living room, and dining room—was impossible to decorate. No Christmas tree. No Nativity. No Santas or snowmen or angels.

The kitchen was finally completed the morning of Christmas Eve, just in time for us to put up a small, slightly sad, Charlie Brown Christmas tree. There were no gifts to put under it. With all the confusion of the remodeling—moving rooms of furniture from one part of the house to another, moving out for three days when the floors were being done—I had decided to simply give the kids cash. They were old enough, I thought, that they wouldn't mind.

Needless to say, they minded more than I expected. When Luke was up in Minneapolis this past weekend, touring the University of Minnesota with Sophie, they stopped at a Goodwill. There he bought me wrapping paper—a message, perhaps, to make an effort to find a reason to use it in the next month, and that cash was not acceptable.

I remember a pastor years ago doing a devotion on a canoe trip I guided. He said that when you give a gift, a **real** gift, you give something that you yourself value. Something that is special to you. Something that costs you to give, and not just in terms of cash or credit card debt. He went on to say, "God shows us how to give. At Christmas we are given the gift of God's only Son." And God, unlike the kings and queens, and czars that have ruled nations for centuries, only had **one** son. God didn't have a backup in case of death or disease. God had one, and God gave that Son, Jesus, to the world.

Just what does that mean? Before Jesus died for us, giving us forgiveness for our sins and life eternal, Jesus gave us a life of ministry. That, just as much as anything Jesus did, was also a gift to the world. He spoke a word that nobody had ever heard, one that 2,000 years later is still being talked about, and one that is still as radical now as it was when it was first spoken. Jesus, in all his actions and lessons, made a point to share God's love with everyone. Jesus made sure we knew then as we know now that God values *all* of us. God doesn't care about skin color, class, gender, sexual orientation, or any other stratifying quality. God loves all of us.

God didn't just hand us cash when God gave us Jesus. God put a lot of thought into it and gave us the most precious, costly thing God had—the solitary, singular Son. God gave us quite a gift. And what can I say? God is a gracious God. And the holiday season, once we get past the consumerism, is a time for us to remember that, and a time for us to be generous, too, not only to our family members, but to one another.



President's Report

by Dan Matson

The Call Committee has met most Sundays this fall to plan for the call of a new pastor. This past month, most of our work was dedicated to preparing interview questions, deciding where interviews should take place, preparing an information packet for prospective applicants, and discussing the timeline of events. We are now at the stage where the Synod has our Ministry Site Profile and is sharing our call with the community of pastors who may be interested in responding. We are told that initially we will receive three applications. At this time we have not received any applications, but this was expected, as the first level of screening applicants is done by the Synod. It is our hope to have these initial interviews in November. From there, we will decide if additional interviews are necessary. Pastor Paula has a role in screening applicants as well. The interviews themselves will be done by the Call Committee, and results discussed with Pastor Paula and the Synod. As much as we are in a hurry to move on with a new co-pastor, we recognize the choice must be the right person. The Call Committee will not be able to share any applicant names, but will keep the congregation informed once interviews start.

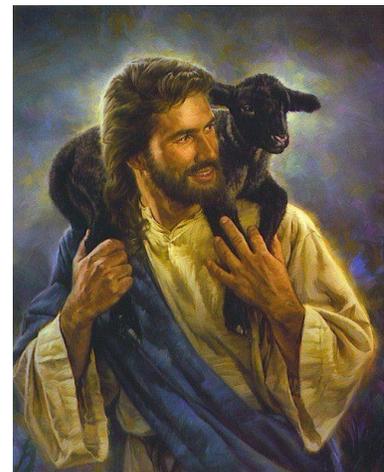
Go and Tell

by Roger Slack

Luke 15 starts out stating that all the tax-gatherers and sinners were coming to hear Jesus, and the Pharisees and scribes were criticizing Jesus for associating with them and actually eating with them. We know who the tax-gatherers were, but a side note in my Bible describes the sinners as “the irreligious and non-practicing Jews.” Both were people that the Pharisees had given up on and rejected as unfit and unworthy of being accepted by God. God deserved better.

Upon hearing their criticism, Jesus starts to tell them the parable of the lost sheep. He tells of a man who has one hundred sheep, but one day realizes that one of his flock is gone. My first thought was, “How do you count one hundred sheep as they move around grazing on pasture?” I grew up on a farm, but we never raised sheep. I Googled to find out how much land you would need to pasture one hundred sheep, and it said you would need about thirty acres of good pasture land. The land in Israel ranges from desert wilderness all the way to good farmland. Even today, much of their cropland needs to be irrigated, so it probably was more than just thirty acres that his sheep wandered over. My second thought was, “If he had already lost one of his sheep, why is he leaving the remaining ninety-nine to go look for the one?” I suppose if he took the whole flock backtracking, it would be harder to know when he had found the one he was looking for. The one thing that is for sure, this man is a good shepherd who cares about each one of his flock. The Pharisees’ way of thinking was, “Don’t bother, that one is not worth the effort.” I don’t doubt that the lost sheep was probably a young one that hadn’t gained the wisdom of “safety in numbers” yet. My next thought about this shepherd was how he treated the sheep when he eventually found it. He didn’t make a switch and chase it in anger back to the remaining flock, but rather picked it up and carried it on his shoulders. He knew it was scared, probably needed water, and was quite possibly hurt, so he was just glad that it was still alive. The friends of this shepherd got to see the heart of the man as he was so excited over just one sheep. Those sheep were part of him and were his love. It is really easy to see why Jesus is referred to as “the Good Shepherd.” The tax-gatherers and sinners got a chance to see love rather than the anger and rejection they had seen from the Pharisees and scribes. It is pretty easy to see why they were “irreligious and non-practicing Jews.”

The writer of the book of Hebrews, in chapter 10:24-25, writes about that concept of “safety in numbers” for the “flock” when he writes “and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.” The truth is, we need each other for acceptance, for friendship and love, for encouragement and examples of how to stay close to the Good Shepherd and not stray off.



Who's Who in the Pew—Ted Sehmer

by Diane Matson



It might be said that in only eleven years after arriving in Stoughton, Ted Sehmer has contributed more to the life of Christ Lutheran than many of us do in a lifetime. For example, Ted chaired the Properties Board for five years, served as Christ Lutheran treasurer as a part of the church council for six years, continues to chair the Lutefisk Dinner, and volunteers as both an usher and a lector. Prior to arriving in Stoughton, Ted was a member of Calvary Lutheran in Oshkosh, where he was equally as active in the life of the church, serving as president of their church council and chairing the Call Committee.

A native of Milwaukee, Ted spent his first seventeen years in a multi-generational family home with his parents, an older brother, and his grandmother. Three days after arriving at UW-Stout, while attending a church function for new students, Ted met his future wife, Julie. After three years of dating, they married weeks before the start of their senior year. Julie passed away on May 20, 2018, after over 51 years of marriage.

Both Ted and Julie were educators, Julie in home economics and social studies prior to staying home to raise her family, while Ted taught high school graphic arts and photography before moving to the administrative side of education. He retired as Director of Vocational Education, Transportation, and Special Projects for the Oshkosh Area School District.

The family of three boys Jeff, Mark, and Jon, soon welcomed two-year-old sister Mya, who joined the Sehmer family from Korea through Lutheran Social Services' Special Needs Adoption Program. Sehmer grandchildren followed. Abby, Clare, and MacKenzie live in Verona with mom and dad Jeff and Julie. Son Mark and his wife, Heidi, live in Stoughton. Grandchildren Madison and Ethan are both Stoughton High School alumni, and Campbell is in eighth grade at River Bluff Middle School. Youngest son Jon and his wife Bridget live in California, which gives Ted and Mya a reason to travel, a favorite hobby of all of the Sehmers when the boys were growing up. All four of the Sehmer children had the opportunity to visit 48 states and parts of Canada before graduating from high school, sometimes traveling in full-size passenger vans, where the boys would often sleep overnight in tents.

Ted is particularly appreciative of the support he has received from Pastor Paula, Scott, and the many congregation members who have "been there" for his family when Julie was going through her numerous medical issues since arriving in Stoughton. He says, "Mya and I both love Christ Lutheran Church and intend to continue to be active members for as long as possible." Thank **you**, Ted, for your commitment, involvement, and devotion to CLC. You've had many hats to wear, and you wear them well.

Stewardship 2019: United in Christ—A Gracious God, a Generous People

It's not too late!



If you have not submitted a pledge card or Time and Talent sheet, it's not too late to do so. If we receive your pledge before the end of December, we can still use it toward our 2019 budget campaign. Also, if you have not submitted a Time and Talent sheet, please take the time to review where you could possibly help out with the church functions. I would especially like to seek out help for offering counting. It is not difficult, and if you can help with this task, it would be greatly appreciated. You can sign up with another person, and we have people who will provide instruction on the processes.

Also, for members who are over 70½ years of age, this is a reminder regarding IRA Charitable Rollover and how this option can save you tax dollars. There was a letter in a previous *Ambassador* which can be found on the CLC website and a link on the CLC website for this option.

Thank you and God's blessings,

Eric Smedal
Stewardship Chair

Advent Beginnings

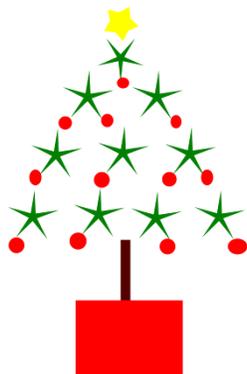


Sunday, December 2
10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

This year the Youth Ministry Team is hosting an event for the entire congregation on Sunday, December 2, from 10:30 a.m. (immediately following Sunday School)–12:30 p.m. We will make homemade Christmas cards and Christmas decorations as well as frost cookies. Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m. The menu is homemade mac and cheese, lasagna, garlic toast, salad, cookies and milk. A freewill donation will be taken to help cover expenses.

Check out the crafts! They are on display in the narthex. If anyone has old beaded jewelry they wouldn't mind donating, we could use it.

7th and 8th Grade Sunday School Schedule for December



December 2: Final preparations for Advent Beginnings. Before December 2 we are hoping that many of you will volunteer to help with Advent Beginnings. We need older youth to help the younger youth with crafts.

December 9: Class with Todd Hipke

December 16: Help in the kitchen and wherever else needed. It's the day of the Sunday School Christmas Program.

First Graders Make Advent Yule Logs Milestone Ministry Event

Pastor Paula will be working with the first grade students and their parents during Sunday School on December 2.



Wednesday Evening Menus



Supper is served from 5:45–6:30 p.m.

Confirmation students and their families, "God and Games" participants and their families, or older members—really anyone is invited to come and break bread.

A donation of \$3.00 is suggested to help cover the cost of food.

December 5

- Baked Chicken, Cheesy Potatoes
- Baked Potato with toppings
- Fresh Vegetables with Ranch Dressing, Biscuit
- Apple Crisp with Ice Cream
- Coffee, White and Chocolate Milk, Apple Juice

December 12

- Tacos, Cheese Quesadillas, Spanish Rice
- Fruit Salad
- Rootbeer and Orange Ice Cream Floats
- Coffee, White and Chocolate Milk, Apple Juice

December 19

- Meatballs and Gravy, Mashed Potatoes
- Salad, Green Beans, Buns
- Christmas Cookies with Ice Cream
- Coffee, White or Chocolate Milk, Apple Juice

Getting to Know Your Sunday School Teachers

by Jenny Hoffman



This month I reached out to Ariel Annen. She is one of our two Pre-K teachers. Ariel co-teaches with her mother, Kristine. They have been teaching Sunday School together since Ariel was in the eighth grade. Ariel really enjoys working with the three- and four-year-olds. She feels that kids at that age have really open minds and that they catch onto things really easily. She likes that they can absorb so much knowledge at that age.

She expressed that it is really important for all kids to attend Sunday School, because she feels it is a great way for children to learn the meaning of God's intentions. She would like all of her students to get a basic knowledge of what is right and wrong from God's perspective. When working with her students, she wants them to not only learn, but to have fun while doing it. She wants the students not to feel like this is another day at school, but like

they are hanging out together and learning while having fun. One of the ways she feels her students learn best is through working on projects. She feels that working on a project helps the students to better understand the lesson.

When I asked Ariel about herself, the first thing she mentioned is that she is a mother. She said that family is one of the most important things in her life. She has three daughters: a four-year-old, a two-year-old, and a brand-new baby who is three weeks old. You will see her daughters come in with her each Sunday. She really enjoys spending time with her family and always wants her family to feel that they can come to her about anything and she will be there to listen.

Ariel is a manager at McDonald's and will have been there one year this December. She really enjoys seeing regulars who come into the shop, and she tries to make sure that everyone who comes in feels important. One way she does this is memorizing someone's order.

Ariel enjoys knitting and coloring when she has the time. She also really enjoys singing. When she was in High School Concert Choir, she had the opportunity to sing the National Anthem at a Brewers game; the choir also traveled to New York to sing at Carnegie Hall.

Sunday School News in December

by Jenny Hoffman

This December our students will have their Christmas program on Sunday, December 16, during the 10:30 a.m. worship service. Students will have practice Saturday, December 15, from 9:15 a.m. to noon. The program this year will feature all grade levels singing. The third through eighth graders had the opportunity to volunteer to participate in the Nativity and help with the narration of the Christmas story. The program will feature the story of Jesus' birth, and the songs, both traditional and non-traditional, will tie into the narration.

The bulletin board theme for December is based on a line from Doctor Seuss. The line is: Maybe Christmas doesn't come from a store maybe Christmas perhaps means a little bit more. The second graders will help to create the pieces and decorate the bulletin board. We will also pick up this theme through the crafts that students work on throughout the month of December.



ELCA World Hunger Appeal

Little coin boxes for ELCA World Hunger will be handed out on Sunday, December 2, the beginning of Advent. We encourage you to put your change in the boxes during the month of December and return them to the church on Christmas Eve. It is amazing how the nickels, dimes, and quarters add up and the number of people they feed.

Opening Prayer

by Sophie Geister-Jones

When I was a little kid, my parents would always read to me before bedtime. I'd put on my PJs, get under the covers, and then Mom or Dad would come in and read a couple chapters out of a book.

I thought it was wonderful—my parents got to think that they were increasing my literacy, but really, I got to stay up later (especially if I succeeded in needling *one* more chapter out of them).

But Pastor Scott and Pastor Paula were playing the long con. Yes, I got to stay up later, but I was also in bed, in my pajamas, being quiet. I was *exactly* where they wanted me to be, so that when they read the last sentence and turned off the light, I was ready for bed. What?!

That before-bed reading time set the tone for what needed to happen next. I needed to quiet down. I needed to calm down. I couldn't run around or scream at my little brother. If I wanted to be read to, I needed to be in bed, under the covers, and ready to listen. It was a transition time.

In a church service, the Prayer of the Day (POTD) is a lot like story time. The POTD is important in its content, but also important in its place.

There is no one right way to pray. Some people pray through song or dance or cooking, or, I don't know, driving or drinking coffee or something. In its essence, prayer is a moment of connection with God, so who can really tell you how to do it, yeah? And yet, in a church service, there seems to be an agreed-upon way to do it: hands together, heads down, hats off, clear eyes, full hearts, can't lose. And this is no less true for the POTD than it is for the Prayers of Intercession.

Why?

Just like reading to me before bed got me settled enough to sleep, the POTD, and the specific way we act during the POTD, gets the congregation settled for the rest of a worship service. The POTD sets up the theme for the sermon and the Sunday, and, when combined with the Hymn of the Day and Prayers of Intercession, cohesively forms a *worship* instead of just a jumbled amalgamation of parts of a service. A parent might read *Goodnight Moon* to their kid if they really want their kid to focus on going to bed. The POTD might be focused around service if the sermon that Sunday is focused on—you guessed it—service.

And the POTD also marks a change in the flow of the service. Before the POTD, all the aspects of the worship are focused on gathering as a community—Confession and Forgiveness, Invocation, Kyrie. It is all about connecting as a whole and as a church. The POTD gives a direction for that community to *focus*. It's a liturgical long con (but, like, in a good way).

So I challenge you, as a congregant and worshipper, to pay attention the next service you go to. Listen to the Prayer of the Day, and to the sermon and Prayers of Intercession, and look for those connections. Be an active worshipper. Don't go to sleep.



Senior Luncheon

Monday, December 17
11:30 a.m.

Program: Stoughton's Madrigal Singers

This has become something of a tradition, and a great one at that. On Monday, December 17, the Stoughton High School Madrigals will be here to perform following lunch.

Church Resurrects Lutefisk Tradition

An article written by Bill Dunn, correspondent for the *Capital Times*—November 15, 1999
Article submitted by Mary Sime.

Lutefisk has returned to Christ Lutheran Church after a nineteen-year absence. As part of the church's 125th anniversary, more than 200 volunteers rolled out the barrels of cod steeped in lye on Saturday, along with lots of lefse, a small mountain of meatballs, and other Norwegian dishes.

The lutefisk dinner tradition died in 1980 due to indifference. It originated in 1949 as a fundraiser to fix a fire-damaged sanctuary. The first year, 719 people were served, according to church records. About 800 dined Saturday.

Phyllis Gullickson, event chairwoman, said organizers thought it was time to restore the tradition. "It's part of this congregation, and it should be brought back at least for our anniversary," she explained. Soderholm Wholesale Foods imported 1,000 pounds of dried cod from Norway, and volunteers set out to put the dinner together. Gullickson laughed about the reaction that her order for 200 yards of cheesecloth to cook the fish in got at Hancock Fabrics. "May I ask what you need that for?" inquired the clerk.

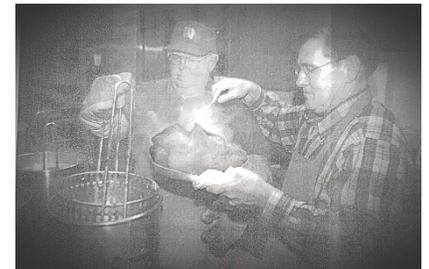
Other raw ingredients included 320 pounds of beef-pork mixture for meatballs, 2,500 sheets of pastry for lefse, and 400 pounds of potatoes—the kind that must be peeled. How many meatballs were rolled? "The recipe said it made 5,000, and no, we did not count," said Gullickson, who admits she's mostly Irish and English, "probably 100 percent non-Norwegian."

So she could appreciate the crestfallen look of a young boy experiencing his first such dinner. "I could tell from his face he hadn't eaten lutefisk before." Gullickson's solution, one she's employed in similar situations, was to mix in a liberal dose of mashed potatoes with the fish to make it more palatable. It seemed to work, she said.

The Reverend Robert Garbrecht, visitation pastor for the 1,300-member congregation, was among the uninitiated. "Decidedly different" from Wisconsin fish fry fare was his assessment. "It is distinctive—let me put it that way." Not only does lutefisk not taste like chicken, Garbrecht was hard-pressed to compare it with anything. "I really can't put a comparative taste to it," he said, good-naturedly suggesting that German sauerkraut be added to any future menus. What surprised him more than the taste was the translucence of the fish and its gelatinous texture.

Gullickson said the goal was to break even, but any profits will go to the building fund, Martin Luther Christian School, and mission work. The meal cost \$11 for adults and \$5 for children 5-12.

She heard a lot of positive feedback, but doesn't know if the tradition will continue. "I know the public would definitely say we have to have it again next year, but it's a lot of work," Gullickson said. "It's going to have to come from the younger members."



Bob Gullickson and Myron Sime

A number of people have asked for Pastor Paula's meatball recipe, so here it is—makes 6 servings

1 pound ground beef	a little pepper	½ teaspoon sage
½ teaspoon salt	½ pound pork sausage	½ cup bread crumbs
¼ teaspoon allspice	½ teaspoon baking powder	1 egg
½ onion, cut up		

Combine all the ingredients and mix well. Form into round balls and **bake** in oven. For the gravy, make a roux and use Lipton's Beefy Onion Soup. Pour the gravy over the baked meatballs and bake until gravy is bubbling and hot and you are ready to serve them.

This recipe comes from Rollag, Minnesota, where there is only one kind of meatball—Norwegian. It is out of their *Steam Threshers Reunion Cookbook*. I use onion powder so the meatballs stay together.

Overnight Swedish Rye Bread

1 cup brown sugar	2 tsp. salt	1 cup milk
½ cup molasses	3 cups cold water	3½ cups rye flour
2 tbs. shortening	1 package yeast	7 to 8 cups white flour

Boil together the brown sugar, molasses, shortening and milk. Add salt and cold water. When cool, sprinkle with 1 package yeast. Add rye flour and beat well. Then add enough white flour to make a moderately stiff yet soft dough. Knead. Let stand covered in the refrigerator overnight. Punch down in the morning. Make round loaves. Place on cookie sheets. Bake at 350 for 50 to 60 minutes. Note: You may use 2 packages of yeast and bake the same day instead of allowing the bread to rise overnight.



2018 Confirmation Class

by Pastor Paula Geister-Jones

At baptism, God tells each and every one of us that God wants to be part of our lives. God tells us that no matter what, God will never stop loving us. I tell the confirmation youth that this truth can be a great source of strength on those days when you think no one cares about you and you are a total mess. On Sunday, October 28, these fifteen youth affirmed their baptisms and told God, "Yes, I want you to be a part of my life. I need that steadfast and everlasting love you have to give." Confirmed were: Olivia Anderson, Ella Dambach, Alani Estervig, Bradley Garcia III, Deven Johnson, Laci McPhee, Ben Model, Kayla Schultz, Ainsley Stapelfeldt, Emma Stokes, Zachary Thomas, Luke Vienneau, Collin Williamson, and Ashton Wuenneman. Please keep them in your prayers.

Senior Excursion—*Elf*

Fireside Theater in Fort Atkinson

Thursday, December 13

Cost: \$69.00

Based on the beloved holiday film, this hilarious fish-out-of-water comedy is now a must-see holiday musical. Buddy, a young orphan, mistakenly crawls into Santa's bag of gifts and is transported to the North Pole. The would-be elf is raised, unaware that he is actually a human, until his enormous size and poor toy-making abilities cause him to face the truth. With Santa's permission, Buddy embarks on a journey to New York City to find his birth father and discover his true identity. Faced with the harsh realities that his father is on the naughty list and his half-brother doesn't even believe in Santa, Buddy is determined to win over his new family and help New York remember the true spirit of Christmas. This modern-day holiday classic is sure to make everyone embrace their inner elf!



People have signed up and now it is time to go. I have no doubt we will have an enjoyable afternoon. The Fireside always does a nice job and the food is delicious. We meet at the church parking lot at 10:30 a.m. and carpool to the Fireside and return around 4:00 p.m.

From YAGM Andrew...
What I Signed Up For

I see all these other YAGMs giving better names to their blog posts than “October 30, 2018.”

What I signed up for was a challenge, and that’s what I’m getting. This past week has had many ups and downs, but has resulted in realizations and growth.

During the middle of last week, I was in the mindset of wanting to help. I’ve surprisingly had a lot of energy here, and I think a lot about how I want to spend it. If you know me, you probably know that I like to do nothing. Leaving the house to go do things is hard for me for some stupid reason. But here that hasn’t really been a thing. Maybe because there are so many people, Senegalese, watching me? Or because I want to make a good impression on the Senegalese for the sake of the YAGM program and for the U.S.?

I think every day—do I want to read, write, study, talk, help, talk to home, or rest? Why?

Read—I have a lot of time here, and reading is good. I don’t know if I’ll have time again when I go back to the U.S. to read, or if I’ll want to as much as I want to here. I also have good books that I’m borrowing from Kristin, that other people want to borrow and read, too. So I gotta read those fast so I can share them with the other YAGMs.

Write—I finally have a reason to write and think, with all the free time I have. About anything. Find myself or whatever. I actually really value doing this. I want to know who I am and how to be the best person I can be, and when I have this much free time and not that many people around me that I understand verbally, it’s almost like I’m alone. Nobody to say “This is right!” or “This is the correct way to think!” Nobody to distract me from what I think. Nobody to patiently listen to and try to understand where they are coming from and what they’re saying (which I love to do, don’t get me wrong). People are amazing. The world is so big, and there are so many different perspectives. But I’ve been really trying to take in information about the world from people for two years now, and haven’t had time to process. I’m able to be myself for real, which could give me a lot of things I want in life. So I have to journal while I can here.

Study—One of the greatest things, if not my favorite thing, about being here is the language immersion. How I’m able to communicate with people in another language all day every day. And the language is Wolof. What? What is Wolof? I think a lot about how if you told me in middle school or high school that in several years, I would be living in Senegal, Africa, speaking Wolof, I would definitely not believe you. Or I would be terrified. Or super surprised. What I’m doing is so crazy, yet it makes so much sense at the same time, embodying who I am. I want to be fluent so badly. It makes me so excited and motivated to think about being fluent. But to do that takes a lot of work. And after I come home to the U.S., my Wolof will only get worse until it’s nonexistent again. So I question whether or not studying day in and day out is the best use of my time.

Talk—I always feel the need to connect with who I’m with. And building relationships is the reason I’m here! But how much effort on talking and connecting with people is too much? How much is too little? I definitely don’t know.

Help—I’m here as a volunteer officially, so I need to help somehow. And again, the society here is very patriarchal, so any chance I get to do what Senegalese culture defines as a woman’s job, I need to take it. Cooking, cleaning, doing laundry by hand (which is so difficult), serving, etc.

Talk to home—I’m very lucky to have so many good friends and family that want to know how I’m doing and stay in communication with me while I’m over here. But like I said in the last post, too much removal from immersion makes the re-immersion a pain. Yet I want to stay connected to everyone.

Rest—How much work is too much work? How much can I do without losing motivation or excitement to keep going? Also, what is rest here? There’s TV, but I don’t understand a word of it. I have my phone, which has music and pictures and my favorite game, Geometry Dash, on it, but I can only listen, remember, and jump up and down as a little square so many times before I’m bored.

Continued on page 11

What I Signed Up For continued

So there it is. My daily struggle, trying to think of what to do. They're all important things to do. Anyone who has advice on options to eliminate, please send me an email or message.

But weirdly, I like thinking about all of this. It's what I signed up for, discerning between which one is best to do in each moment of the day. So don't worry, there's part of this that I find fun. And all of these options in moderation is fulfilling to me. I'm not driving myself crazy. Or at least not any more than usual.

In fact, doing all of these things has brought me to a pretty good place emotionally and mentally (I eat a lot; the food has been really good recently, so I don't know about physically). This morning I meditated and prayed on something written by Dietrich Bonhoeffer and another passage from a mindfulness book. I have this little clay thing that says Holden on it, that my thumb fits into perfectly, that I use when I pray. My dad got it from Holden Village when he was on sabbatical years ago. So in all this, in what you might view as chaos, I've found peace, more than I have in a long time.

That's definitely something I signed up for.

Day to day, I've done some pretty cool stuff recently. Last week we had a big meeting for the SSP, so I helped make Senegalese beignets, a lot of them. They are delicious, and I'm learning how to make them for when I come home. It's like funnel cake, but balls of it.

This past Sunday was Magal Touba, a Muslim holiday where many people go to the city of Touba. Because of this, very few people were in Linguere this weekend, which was nice. We've also been having Cafe Touba a lot recently for breakfast, this spiced coffee drink. It's delicious. And we had couscous and chicken for dinner on Saturday and lunch on Sunday. Definitely the best meal I've had in Senegal. Wow. And watermelon for dessert, and this cold mango drink, too. This weekend was amazing food-wise.

I went to the tailor last week, and now have three Senegalese shirts, my favorite of which is made from fabric from Linguere. They are SICK. "Dafa rafet" in the words of Wolof.

Church is always wonderful and peaceful. We continue to sing songs that I think I know in English, but we're singing in Pular.

Papa, Mangan, and I have gotten more close recently, to the point where they come into my room whenever they want now, which is a blessing and a curse. I introduced them once to the game Geometry Dash on my phone, and now they can't get enough. That's because they're eight and twelve, but also because Geometry Dash is the best game ever invented. They've also come to me saying they want to learn English. I've taught them barely anything because they lose interest pretty fast (did you know English is hard?), but the initial thought is nice.

And last Friday, my teaching at the school went great. I went over my teaching time of an hour without realizing it. And I think the kids were actually sad when I left. Again, I never thought of myself as a teacher. I still don't. So teaching, and enjoying it, has continued to be a pleasant, very fulfilling surprise for me.

It has been 108 degrees Fahrenheit the days of last week and this weekend. It's 100 right now. So I've started sleeping with my fan *inside* my mosquito net.

Finally got the monkey proverb down: "Ndank ndank japp golo ci nyay bi"—Slowly, slowly catches the monkey in the bush.

Wolof lesson for the day: "Do you understand?" which I didn't realize was kinda funny in English until I was on the phone with my cousin Samuel, who always brings out the funny in situations. It's "Degg nga" in Wolof, but since it's said so much, it gets shortened to "Deng." The Senegalese are also much louder people than Americans, so imagine, after everything someone says to me, the word "DENNNGGG?"

Thank you all for your comments and messages. I appreciate every one of them, and I read and remember them all. People from St. Mark's especially thank you so much for your support, interest, and prayers. I love you all so much. I'm praying for you as well as you continue to look for a new pastor. From what I've heard, the call committee is the dream team.

Deaths:

Lawrence (Larry) F. Ganshert

Memorials:

In Memory of:

W. Joyce Riechers
W. Joyce Riechers
W. Joyce Riechers
Roger Veir
Roger Veir
Roger Veir
Phyllis Garbrecht

From:

Rita Johnson
Gladys Thompson
Gloria Hayne
Jack and Jan Finney
Roger and Joyce Utermark
Dwight and Debra Pautz
Mark and Karen Benson



Endowment Foundation:

In Memory of:

Roger Veir

From:

Roger and Judith Nitzsche

Altar Flower Chart for 2019

The Flower Chart for 2019 is available. If you would like to give flowers on a special day, call Gloria at 873-9353. The cost is \$32.50. The dates **not available** are: January 13, April 14, May 19, July 7, August 11, September 8 and 29, and October 6, 20, and 27.

End-of-Year Giving

A reminder as the close of the year approaches: all gifts must be **postmarked** by December 31, 2018, to be included in this year's giving. You will find a "Final Year-End Gift" envelope at the end of your envelope packet for your personal use. Merely insert your check, tape it shut, add postage, and mail it in. You may also bring it with you to any of the church services in December.

Poinsettia Order Form



If you would like to donate a poinsettia plant this Christmas season, they are available for \$15.00 each. Make checks payable to Christ Lutheran Church and return to the church office by **December 14**.

Given by: _____

In Memory of: _____

or In Honor of: _____

New Members Received on November 18



During Family Express Worship, CLC members were introduced to our newest members: L to R—Joshua Howell and Amy Prevost, Evan and Josie Howell; Jason and Lyndsay Hoverson, Asia and Slayton; Ben and Renee Hagen, Anna and Trevor. New members not present for the photo are: Amy and Anders Hermanson. Make sure you introduce yourself to our new families!

Thank you notes received...

Dear Members of Christ Lutheran:

On behalf of the Stoughton Food Pantry I thank you for the following donations:

- In April—\$2,555.00 and 92 pounds of laundry detergent.
- In May—182.5 pounds of food and \$500.00
- In October—95 pounds of food and \$1,470.00

Thank you for your continued support of the food pantry. Stoughton is a better place because of caring congregations such as yours.

Sincerely,

Linda Lane

Volunteer—The City of Stoughton Food Pantry

Dear Christ Lutheran Church Quilters,

Thank you for your generous gift to Lutheran World Relief's Quilt and Kit Shipping Fund! Your donation of \$594.95 ensures the LWR Quilts and Kits get into the hands of people who need them most.

Last spring, a shipment of quilts, school kits, personal care kits, and fabric kits traveled to Peru. LWR staff and our partner CARITAS, distributed the quilts and kits to 30,600 women, men, and children all across the country. Mountain-dwelling families especially welcomed the warmth of quilts as winter temperatures began to set in, hitting average lows in the 30s in July and August.

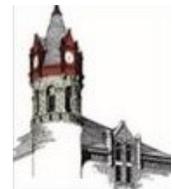
On behalf of LWR, our partners, and those we serve together, please accept my heartfelt thanks once more for your gift and all that it will do.

Warm Regards,

Daniel V. Speckhard
President and CEO



Lutheran World Relief
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. LASTING PROMISE.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

“So we are ambassadors for Christ...” -

2 Corinthians 5:20

Pastor Paula Geister-Jones

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office@clcstoughton.org**

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Staff:

Gloria Hayne, Church Secretary

Eileen Klinzing, Financial Secretary

