



The Messenger

A Message from Pastor Lars

This last month I had the pleasure of preaching at the 125th anniversary of my home congregation in Hibbing, Minnesota. Like Christ Lutheran, it's been around a while, and has a building with lots of space, built for when Sunday schools were big and the choir needed its own room for practicing.

And while thinking about what to say, I had the chance to reflect on what it was that made the faith stick with me, and why not so many of my classmates. I'm sure the stories vary, but a few things stuck out for me.

I did a lot of things in the regular life of the church. I taught Sunday school with two other teachers (imagine having so many volunteers you could multi-staff classrooms!!). I sang in the choir. I helped out at work days and came to the fish dinner. I got to meet the saints in the church in these activities. This makes me a church nerd, I'm sure, as a lot of youth run from things with adults. But have they even tried it? Have they been asked? I worry a lot of kids grow up without adult relationships of value.

Being a Bible camp staffer for five summers was very formative. The beauty of camp is that it's not the real world, so you can focus more on God. It's full of highs and memories. The downside is it's not the real world, and Sunday church has a hard time reaching highs of experience built over a week. Still, prolonged service in the church makes a difference in faith impact. A lot of my counselor friends still are active.

Then I sat down to write and I came up with all these names of saints in the church who are now gone, but who influenced me. They weren't theologians. Several were iron miners, one was a teacher, one worked for the DNR. It was the relationship, not the knowledge, that impressed me. So I made a point of naming these saints, so the congregation could remember, so people could hopefully be inspired that sharing the faith with the next generation is not rocket science, but all about meaningful relationships and integrating youth into the life of the community. I don't know if it worked. Enough new people were there who never knew Roy Nelson and Don Gribble that they kind of looked at me. Oh well.

So here we come to November, to All Saints Sunday, and we, too, at Christ Lutheran, have this long legacy of families in the church, and many saints with great stories to tell of what being a Christian is like through the years. It's a treasure, and I wish all the kids we have could hear those stories.

For this coming year, 2026, we have three emphases that we're going to work on as a congregation, three goals to stretch ourselves to give towards: youth ministry, evangelism/marketing, and member care. These are not new goals, really, but ongoing things to take to the next level. We have families and kids, how can we assure that they have the experiences that make faith stick? What about all the kids out there who don't have a church home? What kinds of ministries might connect them to Christ Lutheran? What about their parents? I'd like us to stretch ourselves a little to start reaching out, get moving now with the gifts God has given us. Details are in the works, and we'll know more what we can do when we know what we have to work with. Your support can make that happen.

On the evangelism front, we have a great theology, a great community, and a great message of grace and love in a world that sees church as judgmental and close-minded. Let's get some things together to get that message out – on web or on the curb, whatever we can think of. And, of course, we need to make sure that no one is left behind in our church, so if you're interested in being on a care team of some sort, let me know.

This looks to be a fun November, with All Saints Sunday on one end, and the start of Advent on the other. There's a clean-up day on November 1st. Make sure to come and bring all the friends, and families, you know.

God Bless,

Pastor Lars



God's Gifts, Giving Forward

2025 Stewardship drive for Christ Lutheran Church

"God's Gifts, Giving Forward" is the title of our stewardship emphasis this year. The scriptures say that we have been given gifts in abundance for the use of the kingdom. 2 Corinthians 9:8 reads "God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work."

We begin by reflecting on the gifts we have been given, how generous giving is an important part of every Christian's life, and how our combined generosity can make even greater things possible through our congregation.

We will think together about how our giving to Christ Lutheran Church is an important part of our Christian faith, and how Christ Lutheran uses our offerings to do God's work within the congregation's walls, in our community, and around the world.

As part of giving forward, we will ask you to do two things. First, you will be asked to increase your giving to by at least ½ of 1% of your household income. Second, you will be asked to consider making a commitment on paper or by using the automatic funds transfer program that is already has in place.

You have heard from different members of the church of our excitement about our possibilities for ministry 2026. We've spoken of youth and family ministry, evangelism and marketing, and member care. We are moving forward and outward as a church with your generous support from the gifts God has given you. Then on November 9th will have our commitment Sunday, where we invite you to bring up your commitment cards during worship.

Thanks,

Pastor Lars and Peter Swant, Stewardship chair.

CLC'S FINANCES

September 2025:

Total Income: \$25,777

Total Expenses: - 28,090

Net Loss: (\$2,313)

Year To Date (approximate):

76% of projected revenue through September

74% of budget spent through September



November Birthdays!

Linda Mobley	11/7
Kirsten Brannon	11/10
Mike DeRuwe	11/13
Samuel Holce	11/15
Dick Swenson	11/16
Dan Grinstead	11/19
Thelma Sanks	11/20
Anne Swant	11/23
Sara Pinkerton	11/27

Here I Am, Lord – Leadership Nominations

One of my favorite hymns is “Here I Am, Lord,” based on Isaiah 6:8:

Here I am, Lord. Is it I Lord? I have heard you calling in the night. I will go Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.

Have you heard a voice nudging you to serve? Our Christian faith asks us to be Christ to each other every day. We must listen to the voice “calling in the night” to follow God’s lead.

Every fall there is an emphasis on leadership as we prepare for the Congregational meeting in December to elect leaders for the upcoming year. In 2026, the Church Council and congregation will explore some structural changes in leadership. One reason for change is to comply with the new Model Constitution that was adopted at the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in August, which suggests the Congregation Council include: “at least one ... youth and at least one ... young adult.” The 2026 Council and congregation will also explore reducing the size of the Congregation Council from fourteen members, which is the maximum allowed under the current Constitution.

In the event of a smaller Congregation Council, Committee Chairpersons may not be required to hold a Council position, although all committees would have a liaison Council representative to ensure strong communication.

The following leadership positions are open for 2026: **Secretary** (officer, one-year term), **Treasurer** (appointed officer, one-year term), **Evangelism** (two-year term), **Youth Ed** (two-year term), **Adult Ed** (two-year term; this opening subject to Peggy Haug’s nomination to Worship chair, an open two-year term); **Stewardship** (two-year term); and **Personnel** (two-year term). Three other positions require nomination and election, but the current Council member is willing to do another term: **President** – Kay Shelton (officer, third one-year term), **Finance/Budget** -Jim Peterson (second two-year term), and **Outreach**- Melanie Hein (second two-year term).

Lastly, here’s the fine print: To nominate yourself, please talk to a Church Council member as soon as possible. To recommend someone else, please encourage that person to contact a Church Council member. If someone from the Nominating Committee asks you to serve, please consider saying “Yes! Here I am, Lord.” If you are willing to serve as a committee chairperson, but not on the Congregation Council, please make that request. Additional responsibilities: church officers must be members of Christ Lutheran Church and serve as voting members on the Executive Council; Church Council members rotate as counters for offering collections, working in pairs.

Kay Shelton, Church Council President

Attendance Report

*Average Sunday Worship
Attendance*

September 2025 - 126

September 2024 - 111

Pastoral Acts

Wedding October 25, 2025

French/ Heilman

Confirmation October 26, 2025

Maxwell Lohrmann

Jayla Ortiz

Social Justice Advocacy Group News

During the month of November, Adult Education is teaming with the Social Justice Advocacy Group (SJAG) to offer a series of forums, table talks, and classes on social justice issues, especially as they relate to the upcoming congregational vote on whether Christ Lutheran Church will choose to become a Reconciled in Christ (RIC) congregation. Here's a chart to show you what classes/forums are offered, and when and who's facilitating each one:

DATE	TOPIC	LOCATION	FACILITATOR
11/2	Talking Together About Tough Social Issues	Library	Linda Lohrmann
11/9	Human Sexuality Social Statement Updates	Library	Peggy Haug
11/16	Bound Conscience Section Of Human Sexuality Social Statement (see note)	Library	Pastor Lars
11/23	Why RIC?	Fellowship Hall	Pastor Lars

A few notes of explanation: the first session, Talking Together About Tough Social Issues, uses a resource published by the ELCA several years ago. The second and third sessions make reference to the ELCA Human Sexuality Social Statement that was written prior to 2019 and then partially updated at the 2025 Church wide assembly (CWA) of the ELCA. For the part of that statement that deals with the "bound conscience" section, the committee recommended postponing those changes until they can be presented at the 2028 CWA.

And just what do we mean by "bound conscience?" Let me quote a few sentences from the actual social statement. I believe they are a powerful reminder for all of us:

"We understand that, in this discernment about ethics and church practice, faithful people can and will come to different conclusions about the meaning of scripture and about what constitutes responsible action. We further believe that this church, on the basis of "the bound conscience," will include these different understandings and practices within its life as it seeks to live out its mission and ministry in the world."

In this class with Pastor Lars, he will help us to understand four different ways that people come to conclusions about the meaning of scripture. I hope many of you will join us for this class, but if you are unable to attend, we will have copies of that material for you to take home and read. As we embark on this process, it is my fervent hope and prayer that we understand *that faithful people can and will come to different conclusions about the meaning of scripture.*

Also, on the three Sundays when classes will be held in the library, there will be members of the social justice committee who will be seated in the fellowship hall during coffee hour, ready and willing to discuss any questions and/or concerns you may have over the upcoming vote. It is our hope that everyone's concerns can be heard so that the vote on December 7 will have a positive outcome. SJAG believes that a vote for RIC is a vote that clearly tells the marginalized of our world that they are safe in our midst.

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
October 21, 2025

Council President Kay Shelton called the meeting to order at 5:32pm. Those attending were Pastor Lars Hammar, Julie Swenson, Gordon Heimbigner, Anne Swant, Jim Peterson, Barbara Hoffman, Karleen Heintzberger, Janet Mobley, Melanie Hein, Kirsten Brannon, Peggy Haug and Peter Swant.

Karleen Heintzberger gave devotions.

The September minutes were approved by email affirmation on September 12, 2025.

Financial Report: Monthly Results: Christ Lutheran's operational income came in \$148 more than budget for September. Operational expenses were \$1,286 more than budget for September. Operational funds combined for a net outflow of \$2,312 for September. Designated/restricted activity resulted in a net inflow of \$1,292 for September. Year To-Date: We have collected approximately 75.80% of the revenue through September. We have spent approximately 74.10% of the budget through September. Balance Sheet Items: CLC's checking and saving account ended September with a \$186,696 balance. Restricted/endowments fund totaled \$285,476 as of 9/30/2025. CLC had \$1,813,122 in positive equity on 09/30/2025.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Lars Hammar provided a written report to Council.

Committee Reports:

Property: Property has a fall clean up day scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 1, starting at 9 am. Coffee & Donuts will be provided. Fall maintenance of the irrigation system has been scheduled with JC Landscaping. Anne is still looking for participants in a property committee.

Finance & Budget: 1. \$20,000 was transferred from Banner Bank Savings to Banner Bank Checking on October 14 to provide needed cushion for our checking account. Checking account balance reached a low of \$14,128 on 10/8. Today it stands at \$35,089.80. 2. A Christ Lutheran Church CD at MIF of ELCA matured on October 14. It is identified as 3661 CD #4 on our balance sheet. Current balance is \$26,162.48. We are currently within the 10 day grace period. My recommendation is to renew the CD at \$25,000 for one year at the current MIF rate of 4.15 % and take the accrued interest (\$1,162.48 plus a little bit more) as interest income to the church. 3. Portico insurance for rostered clergy required our congregation to choose a plan for 2026 by 10/14. After consultation with Pastor Lars and Kristie the Value Copay 4000 plan was chosen. This plan seems to be the closest, of four available, to the one we have been providing. Pastor, spouse, and eligible children are covered.

Worship: Pastor Lars and I met and worked on worship plans through the end of the calendar year.

Evangelism: I have nothing new to report for Evangelism.

Fellowship: We are all ready for Brats & Brews this Saturday, October 25th. 4:00 PM. The more the merrier! We are planning for Christmas Caroling to our shut-ins, nursing Homes and possibly the VA for December 13th and everyone is invited to Jim & Kari's afterwards for hot cocoa & fellowship! More specific details to come, including time & meet up etc.

Outreach: Outreach continues being busy. Check the bulletin board in the hallway for the agenda over the next several weeks leading up to the vote on RIC. The quilts were shipped last week. Thanks to everyone who helped with packaging and donations for shipping. We continue with meals for the Sleep Center and Christian Aid Center, and food donations to the Salvation Army. Outreach is also all the little things we do for family, friends, neighbors, and community, showing that we care.

Youth Education: Pastor Lars, Sara Pinkerton, Kirsten Brannon and Emily Stone had a productive meeting outlining what the youth ministry position will look like. Pastor Lars also put together a rough draft of a job description.

Youth and Family: The Corn Maze was cancelled due to lack of interest because it was a very rainy day. It will be an impromptu gathering if we go this year.

Adult Education: Adult Education is working with SJAG for the month of November to present four sessions in preparation for the congregational meeting and vote on whether to become a Reconciled in Christ (RIC) church. We have finished our book study of an inconvenient gospel by Clarence Jordan.

Stewardship: Included with Pastor's update; goal to increase pledged givers from 40 we had last year and to have revenue more consistent throughout the year.

Continuing Business:

Pastor Lars updated Council on the work he and Peter Swant are doing for the Stewardship Drive. Commitment Sunday is November 9.

New Business:

Anne Swant made a motion to approve Voting membership at Christ Lutheran for Maxwell Lohrmann and Jayla Ortiz upon their confirmation on October 26, 2025. Barbara Hoffman seconded. Motion passed.

Barbara Hoffman made a motion to renew MIF 3661 CD #4 (\$25,000) for one year at the current MIF rate (currently 4.15 %) and deposit the accrued interest (\$1,162.48+) as interest income. Peggy Haug seconded. Motion passed.

Anne Swant made a motion to approve the Building Use Request for the French-Heilman wedding on October 25, 2025. Melanie Hein seconded. Motion passed.

Jim Peterson made a motion to approve the Building Use Request by Sara Mooney and Sue Smith for the Bob Smith Celebration of Life on March 7, 2026. Peter Swant seconded. Motion passed.

Barbara Hoffman and Anne Swant volunteered to be council representatives on the 2026 Church Council Nominating Committee.

Barbara Hoffman made a motion to require 67% Yes votes, of votes cast, for the passage of the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) vote at the Congregational Meeting on December 7, 2025. The ELCA requires 2/3 majority vote for the passage of social statements; the CLC constitution requires only 50% plus 1 vote. CLC Council chooses to use the ELCA requirement for the RIC vote. Peggy Haug seconded. Motion passed.

Pastor Lars discussed progress toward implementing 2026 Goals: investment in youth ministry, new evangelism initiatives and caring ministry.

Jim Peterson urged Council to begin planning for the 2026 church budget. Please send him spending requests before November 11.

Resumes are being collected for the open Office Manager position. A farewell to Erin Aycock will be held on Thursday, October 30 at 2pm.

Barbara Hoffman made a motion to split the \$1,621.72 from the Designated Temporary account between the Christian Aid Center and Alliance for the Homeless (Sleep Center). Karleen Heintzberger seconded. Motion passed.

Jim Peterson made a motion to place the \$50,000 donation in memory of Cynthia Knutson, given to Christ Lutheran by her family, into a Designated Account to support music at CLC. Peter Swant seconded. Motion passed.

Jim Peterson updated Council on the solar panel installation.

Pastor Lars clarified the subscription process for the Living Lutheran magazine. CLC will receive the magazines in bulk and make them available to church members.

Future dates:

Financials: Nov. 5 & 19 (reimbursement or credit card requests due before church, on prior Sunday)

October – Stewardship Drive continues

October 25 - Brats & Brews

October 26 – Reformation Sunday and Confirmation

November 1 – Fall Clean Up Day

November 9 – Commitment Sunday

November 30 – Advent begins; Wednesday Advent services Dec. 3, 10, and 17

December 7 – Congregational Meeting

December 13 – Christmas Caroling and Cocoa – more info to follow

December 14 – Tri-City Americans Hockey Game

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:25pm with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, *Julie Swenson*, Council Secretary

November 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Private Event in Fellowship Hall 1-3 _{pm}
2 - All Saints Sunday 9:30 _{am} Worship Service 9:30 _{am} Godly Play 11 _{am} Adult Education 3:30 _{pm} Confirmation Class	3	4 9 _{am} Mission Group 10 _{am} Men's Group 6:30 _{pm} Mission Group	5 Financials	6 10 _{am} SJAG Meeting 1 _{pm} Bible Study	7	8
9 - Commitment Sunday 9:30 _{am} Worship Service 9:30 _{am} Godly Play 11 _{am} Adult Education 3:30 _{pm} Confirmation Class	10	11 9 _{am} Mission Group 5:30 _{pm} Council Meeting	12	13 1 _{pm} Bible Study	14	15
16 9:30 _{am} Worship Service 9:30 _{am} Godly Play 11 _{am} Adult Education	17	18 9 _{am} Mission Group 10 _{am} Men's Group 6:30 _{pm} Mission Group	19 Financials	20 1 _{pm} Bible Study Newsletter Deadline	21	22
23 - Christ the King 9:30 _{am} Worship Service 9:30 _{am} Godly Play 11 _{am} Adult Education	24	25 9 _{am} Mission Group	26	27 - Thanksgiving Office Closed	28 Office Closed	29
30 9:30 _{am} Worship Service 9:30 _{am} Godly Play 11 _{am} Adult Education						



Christ Lutheran Church

**1420 South 2nd Avenue
Walla Walla, WA 99362-4502**

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www.christwallawalla.org

November 2025 Newsletter

CHURCH COUNCIL AND STAFF

·President·

Kay Shelton

Pastor

Lars Hammar

·Finance/ Budget·

Jim Peterson

·Secretary·

Julie Swenson

·Office Manager·

vacant

·Worship·

Barbara Hoffman

·Treasurer·

Gordon Heimbigner

·Sexton·

Jeff Wagner

·Youth Education·

Emily Stone

·Stewardship·

Peter Swant

·Organist·

Eleanor Elkins

·Youth & Family·

Kirsten Brannon

·Fellowship·

Janet Mobley

·Personnel·

vacant

·Adult Ed/ Library·

Peggy Haug

·Outreach·

Melanie Hein

·Property Management·

Anne Swant

·Evangelism·

Karleen Heintzberger

Mission

We are God's people, united by faith in Jesus Christ, forgiven, chosen, and called by him through the Word and Sacraments to make disciples, and to serve in the world God loves.