

January
2024



Messenger

Christ Lutheran
CHURCH & SCHOOL

FROM THE RIVER TO THE MOUNTAIN

Happy New Year. Not only is this an appropriate greeting as the turn the page on the Church calendar entering Advent, but it is also the perfect greeting as we turn the page to 2024.

The season of Advent has concluded, and by the time you read this the festivities of Christmas will be in the rear-view mirror. As we turn the page to 2024, we are met with the season of Epiphany.

“Epiphany” comes from a Greek word that means “to reveal.” Today, if someone says, “I had an epiphany,” he means he had some extremely important, life-changing revelation. Within the Church Year, that is the purpose of the season of Epiphany—to reveal important truths about Jesus Christ, truths that will indeed change your life.

For most of his adult life, Jesus was known simply as Mary’s son. He followed his adoptive father, Joseph, into the carpentry business. People in his hometown of Nazareth probably thought of Jesus as a very nice man—hardworking, honest, a role model for others. (That is still how many think of Jesus today.) But around the age of thirty, the fuller truth about Jesus began to be revealed: his person, his power, his purpose. It started with Jesus standing in a river with John the Baptist. The biggest epiphany took place at a mountain, where select followers saw Jesus shining brighter than the sun. All these epiphanies—all these revelations about Jesus—changed the lives of everyone around him. In this season of Epiphany, as we follow Jesus from the river to the mountain, may they change us too.



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During the season of Epiphany, we have the opportunity to see God reveal who He is through Jesus. Week after week, revelation after revelation, we learn more about who Jesus is and what He came to do. As Jesus casts out demons, teaches with authority, heals the sick, and forgives a paralyzed man his sins, more and more revelations about Jesus and His work accumulate. All this leads to the undeniable conclusion we are left with after we witness Jesus' transfiguration. He truly is the beloved Son of God. Through His work on our behalf, our sins are forgiven and we are reconciled to God.

May God bless you richly in 2024.

Pastor Greg

Worship during this Epiphany season will follow this pattern:

First Sunday after Epiphany:	<i>It Begins with Baptism</i>
Second Sunday after Epiphany:	<i>The Kindness in His Calling</i>
Third Sunday after Epiphany:	<i>Committed to a Lofty Charge</i>
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany:	<i>Absolute Authority</i>
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany:	<i>The Devil's Work Undone</i>
Last Sunday after Epiphany:	<i>A Glimpse of His True Glory</i>

LET US PRAY

"The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit"

(James 5:16b-18).

In need of Healing/Strength: In need of Healing Strength:

Rev. Tim Jones, (cancer); Greg Allen (chemo); Muriel Shervey's grandson (in need of a kidney transplant); Dorothy Warhol (hospice care— Tanya Stenzel's mother); Angie Christensen (autoimmune issue with eye); Mary Jo Buss; Jane Schneider (recovering from heart surgery); Marie Eckdahl (stage 3 cancer); Jeff Kincaid (Wingers Son-in-law); David Steltenpohl (John's brother); Shirley Rosenow; Jerry Eslinger, Bill Tepp, Dennis Webster (Mrs. Krizan's Dad), Mike Schaal (hospitalized).



Pastors and Missionaries: Pastor Greg, Pastor Scott Yount (Missionary Ukraine), AALC Presiding Pastor, Rev. Dr. Cary Larson; Seminarian Alex Lancaster.

Prayer for Shut-ins: Jill Bahr (Lake Hallie Memory Care); Darwin Bergstrom (at home); Mickey Johnson (at home); Mary Kuhnert (at home); Ed Ray (Cambridge Senior Living, Eau Claire); Muriel Shervey (at home); Leitha Swanson (Our House Memory Care).

CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: INTRODUCTION

The Old Testament is a long and multifaceted collection of writings. As theologically conservative Christians, we view it as foundational to our faith - we quote it, read it, and even pray portions of it (particularly the Psalms). However, the fact remains that, despite its status as God's Divine Word, the Old Testament is shrouded in mystery for many faithful Christians, and is often poorly-understood. It raises many difficult questions: What are we to make of the bloodshed? What about the laws in Leviticus? How do we even begin to make sense of baffling Books like Ecclesiastes and Ezekiel? How do the Jewish people relate to Christ and the Church today?

This article is the introduction to a series on how to interpret the Old Testament. This series will have many parts. The aim is to tackle some of the difficult questions people often ask (such as the above), but the primary goal is to answer the question: What am I supposed to get out of the Old Testament? The answer is: Jesus Himself. Christ says that all of Scripture testifies about Him (John 5:39; Luke 24:25-27); this article series will take Him at His word, and attempt to show how Jesus Christ permeates every page of the Old Testament. This series will make some use of a Bible study titled *The Messiah: Revealing Jesus in the Old Testament* (Concordia Publishing House, 2022). Other sources will also be used.

It is my hope and prayer to address some of the challenges Christians face when interpreting the Old Testament, and to show that these sacred Writings are saturated with Gospel hope, and the work of our Savior Jesus. If you have any questions about the OT which trouble or confuse you, feel free to send them my way; I will add them to the queue, and do my best to address them in this series. I pray that many of you will follow this series, and use it as an opportunity to open your Bible and dig into these holy Words. Hope awaits!

Christ's slave, your servant,

Alex Lancaster



ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14, 2024



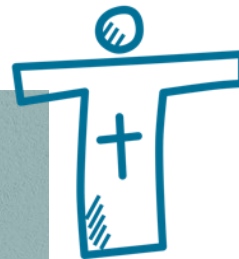
Agenda items will include:

- Reception of Reports from various groups.
- Election of Congregational and School Deacons.

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH (WI)

Church App

For your mobile devices, Christ Lutheran Church has an official "App." With the help of a company called, Subsplash, we have a church app that provides a wealth of information for the user. Different from our website, the "App" is for our regular attenders. If you haven't yet downloaded our church app, please do so today. Go to our App Store or Google Play and in the search area type: Christ Lutheran Church (WI). Look for this little logo and download.



Christ Lutheran Church (WI)

Download the app today

Download on the App Store GET IT ON Google Play

- Read the Bible
- Listen to past services
- Give weekly offering
- And so much more
- Read weekly announcements

A smartphone displaying the church app interface. The screen shows a "Welcome" message, a "LIVE" stream of a service, and a "Sunday Mornings" section with a video thumbnail. The app is set against a teal background.

JANUARY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

First Sunday after Epiphany – Baptism of Our Lord

January 7, 2024

*FROM THE RIVER TO THE MOUNTAIN
IT BEGINS WITH BAPTISM
(The Baptism of Our Lord)*

- **Isaiah 49:1-6** – Through the pen of the prophet Isaiah, the Messiah himself speaks, telling us of the work he would do when he was anointed at his baptism.
- **Romans 6:1-11** – St. Paul connects our baptism to Christ, and he discusses the results of that connection in our lives.
- **Mark 1:4-11** – Jesus public ministry begins with the anointing he received in his baptism.

Second Sunday after Epiphany

January 14, 2024

*FROM THE RIVER TO THE MOUNTAIN
THE KINDNESS IN HIS CALLING*

- **1 Samuel 3:1-10** – At a time in history when the word of the LORD was rare, the LORD shows kindness to the boy Samuel by calling to him.
- **2 Thessalonians 2:13-17** – God called us to faith through the gospel, not because of any merit or worthiness in us, but entirely because of his grace and kindness.
- **John 1:43-51** – Jesus proves to Nathanael that he knows absolutely everything about us. In kindness, Jesus calls Philip and Nathanael to follow him.

Third Sunday after Epiphany

January 21, 2024

*FROM THE RIVER TO THE MOUNTAIN
COMMITTED TO A LOFTY CHARGE*

- **Jonah 3:1-5,10** – The reluctant Jonah had been given the lofty charge of proclaiming a message from the LORD to the people of Nineveh.
- **2 Corinthians 5:14-21** – Christ has committed to us, as his ambassadors, the message of reconciliation.
- **Mark 1:14-20** – When Jesus gave Simon and Andrew the lofty charge of fishing for people, they left everything else behind.

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

January 28, 2024

*FROM THE RIVER TO THE MOUNTAIN
ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY*

- **Deuteronomy 18:15-20** – Moses prophesies that the LORD would raise up another prophet who would speak with all the authority of God himself.
- **Hebrews 3:1-6** – As great as Moses was, Jesus is worthy of infinitely greater honor. For only Jesus has absolute authority.
- **Mark 1:21-28** – Jesus demonstrates absolute authority. Even his enemies, the demons, have to obey him.

CAROLS OF CHRISTMAS

Sunday afternoon, December 17, a few of the youth from Christ Lutheran – along with yours truly, Tanya, and Kellie – met up with a few youths from Zion Lutheran to sing Christmas carols. We sang at the following care centers:

Dove Healthcare—West—Skilled Nursing
Orchard Hills Assisted Living
Grace Lutheran Communities—River Pines
Grace Lutheran Communities—Prairie Point
Lakehouse Chippewa Falls (formerly Wissota Place)

What a glorious time we had, singing about the love of God through Christ Jesus our Lord.

As we were singing the carols of Christmas, from an old songbook published in 1966, I was struck by the depth of wonderful theology within the lyrics. I know that I've sung them many times before, but it is as if they were being sung for the first time. For example, ponder the last two lines of this lyric:

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face,
*With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.*

Redeeming grace entered the world at the birth of our Lord Jesus.

Then we have the prayer of O Little Town of Bethlehem, which teaches us much in this lyric:

O holy Child of Bethlehem
Descend to us, we pray;
*Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today.*
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
*O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Immanuel! Amen.*

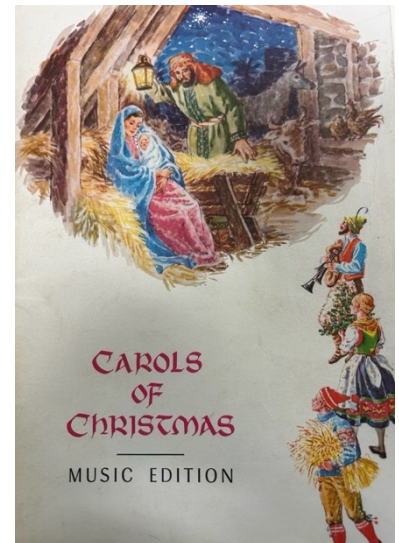
We then sang, It Came Upon the Midnight Clear, and we found the fourth stanza rich with truth about God's plan for our future:

For lo! The days are hast'ning on,
By prophets seen of old,
When with the ever-circling years
Shall come the time foretold,
*When the new heav'n and earth shall own
The Prince of Peace their King,*
And the whole world send back the song
Which now the angels sing.

We sang a few other hymns that are equally rich with theological truths, and it reminded me that all good hymns are the same. Good hymns are rich with the gospel of who God is and what Jesus has done to rescue us. They point us to what He promises to be found, what He has done, and will come again to finish our salvation.

So, next time you sing a hymn, pay careful attention to the words. Written well, they will teach us much, because they point us to Jesus. "O Come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!"

Pastor Stenzel



CHRIST LUTHERAN SCHOOL

FOR I KNOW
THE PLANS I
HAVE FOR YOU,
DECLARES THE LORD,
PLANS TO PROSPER
YOU AND NOT TO
HARM YOU. PLANS
TO GIVE YOU
HOPE &
A FUTURE.
JEREMIAH 29:11

2024 is upon us and I can't help but think about Jeremiah 29:11. God has a plan and purpose for each one of us. He wants us to prosper and HE has given us hope and a future.

I pray that we will seek the Lord's guidance as we step into the new year and that each of us will follow the path He has set before us. Happy New Year! May God's blessings be on each of you in 2024.

Joelle Sedivy
School Administrator



AVORY ANDERSON



was just accepted into The National Honors Society. The induction ceremony will be January 15, 2024.

**CONGRATULATIONS
AVORY!**

We are so very proud of you!

CHRIST LUTHERAN YOUTH

Next Youth Gathering

Sunday, January 28

6-8:00 PM

Watch the Church App for more information



Acolytes for January

January 7	Tristan
January 14	Abram
January 21	Gianna
January 28	STILL NEEDED



Confirmation Dinner Sign ups for January

January 3	No Confirmation (New Year's Break)
January 10	Christensen Family
January 17	STILL NEEDED
January 24	Nuanes Family
January 31	Widiker Family

Confirmation supper @ 4:30 PM

Confirmation @ 5:00 PM

Worship @ 6:30 PM.

Please remember to bring your Bibles and Small Catechism books with you.

If you can not acolyte we ask that you find your own replacement.

We also would like to thank all of you who have signed up to help with providing supper for the kids.

Friendly reminder for Confirmation suppers please plan for about 15 people when planning your meals to ensure everyone get dinner.

In the event, schools are closed confirmation class will continue unless you receive an email from the church office.



Carolyn Licht
 Carlee Chittendon
 Leonard Johnson
 Brad Polzin
 Brian Pitsch
 Kaitlyn Sommerfeld
 Carrie Bateman
 Flower Ray
 Jill Bahr

1	Catherine Van Nurden	22
2	Larry Seidlitz	22
3	Robert Wing	25
4	Lucy Polivany	27
7	Timothy Bergevin	28
7	Timothy Hedrington	28
9	James Goss	29
16	Linda Goss	29
17	Deb Markham	30

USEFUL
 Information and Dates

Sunday
 FELLOWSHIP

Thank you to all of you that signed up to bring treats!

Financial
 UPDATE

A financial report is available to our membership upon request. Please contact the office.

Prayer
 CHAIN

If you find a need for prayer in your life or in the life of a friend, you are invited to put our Prayer Chain to use. please call Carol Johnson at 715-723-1676. **Prayer Chain participants** please check your E-mail daily to see if there is a message.

Kitchen
 NEEDS

The kitchen is in need of a few donations if anyone is able to help out it would be greatly appreciated. We are looking for coffee, hot chocolate packets and a few different flavored tea packets.

Newsletter
 SUBMISSIONS

The deadline for submissions for the February Newsletter is Monday, January 22nd. Please email submissions to secretary4clc@gmail.com. Thank you!

Contact
 INFO



CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
 467 E. Colome Street | Chippewa Falls,
 WI 54729
 secretary4clc@gmail.com
 715-723-8273

PASTOR GREG STENZEL
 pastorstenzel@mac.com
CHRIST LUTHERAN SCHOOL
 715-723-3697
 jsedivy@christlutherschool.org

January 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 8:00AM Chapel 8:30AM Quilters 6:30PM Divine Service	4 10:30AM Bible Study (ZOOM Meeting)	5 6:00AM Men of Christ Bible Study Chippewa Family Restaurant 8-8:30AM Willing Workers	6 8:00AM Men's Club
7 9:30AM Divine Service/Communion 10:30AM Fellowship 10:45AM Sunday School All Ages	8 5:30PM Pastor's Class-First Corinthians	9	10 8:00AM Chapel 8:30AM Quilters 4:30PM Confirmation Supper 5:00PM Confirmation 6:30PM Divine Service	11 10:30AM Bible Study (ZOOM Meeting)	12 6:00AM Men of Christ Bible Study Chippewa Family Restaurant 8-8:30AM Willing Workers	13 9-11AM New Member Orientation
14 9:30AM Service of the Word Annual Congregational Meeting	15 7:00AM Elders 5:30PM Pastor's Class-First Corinthians	16 6:00PM School Board Deacons	17 8:00AM Chapel 8:30AM Quilters 4:30PM Confirmation Supper 5:00PM Confirmation 6:30PM Divine Service	18 10:30AM Bible Study (ZOOM Meeting)	19 6:00AM Men of Christ Bible Study Chippewa Family Restaurant 8-8:30AM Willing Workers	20 9-11AM New Member Orientation
21 9:30AM Divine Service/Communion 10:30AM Fellowship 10:45AM Sunday School All Ages	22 5:30PM Pastor's Class-First Corinthians Newsletter Submissions Due	23	24 8:00AM Chapel 8:30AM Quilters 4:30PM Confirmation Supper 5:00PM Confirmation 6:30PM Divine Service	25 10:30AM Bible Study (ZOOM Meeting)	26 6:00AM Men of Christ Bible Study Chippewa Family Restaurant 8-8:30AM Willing Workers	27
28 9:30AM Service of the Word 10:30AM Fellowship 10:45AM Sunday School All Ages 6:00PM Youth Group	29	30	31 8:00AM Chapel 8:30AM Quilters 4:30PM Confirmation Supper 5:00PM Confirmation 6:30PM Divine Service			