



June 1, 2022

Dear Christ Lutheran Church,

I remember a time when life in the church slowed down for the summer. Those days are past. Summer at CLC is shaping up to be a busy and fruitful time.

First off, I am excited to report that The Transition Team is in place. The team is made up of Amy Grimmer, Paul Godlin, Sabine Rilling, Shannon Rohman, Leslie Caviglia, and Joe Harding. They will meet this coming weekend with our consultant, Pastor Jeff Kjellberg, to learn how they will assist in the transition of pastoral leadership. They are not the Call Committee (that will be assembled sometime soon). A large part of what they will do is gathering and interpreting data, and crafting a ministry plan and leadership profile. Please pray for them.

Speaking of Jeff Kjellberg, he will be with us this Sunday (**June 5**) to give a presentation on the recent Missional Assessment Profile many of you filled out. I invite you to attend the presentation. It will be at 11:00 in the Community Connection Center. A light lunch will be provided. The presentation will be 90 minutes in length. Child care will be provided. I hope many CLC members will be present. This will be a crucial presentation to identify how our folks see the church and sense our health. I am sure there will be plenty of opportunities to ask questions and gain clarity. This first step will set us off on the journey toward new pastoral leadership and planning for the future.

This Sunday is Pentecost Sunday, which means it is also Confirmation Sunday! We will celebrate five of our 9th graders who will make a public profession of their Christian faith at the 9:30 service. For those of you who were confirmed, you no doubt have memories of your Confirmation. Please join your church in celebrating these youth, and pray for them as they further explore the wideness of God's grace, and the call to discipleship that is placed upon them.

Also, beginning this Sunday, we will return to offering Prayers for Healing in worship. The theme for worship in June and July is "How to Save a Life," and we will be reflecting on the healing stories of Jesus. What better time to specifically pray for those in need of physical, emotional, relational, and spiritual healing. We will have just one prayer station in the north aisle toward the back of the sanctuary. Members of the Prayer Team will be masked and have a hand sanitizer present to help insure safety.

On Monday, **June 6th**, CLIPArts will return after a two-year break! We are excited that this valuable "after school" performing arts ministry will be under the direction of T. J. Greco and his staff as they prepare for the production of *101 Dalmatians*. Watch for information on when it will be presented in July, and make plans to attend.

On Sunday, **June 12**, at 9:05 we will have our semi-annual Congregational Meeting. The agenda of this meeting is to receive recommendations from the Selection Team identifying those who have agreed to serve in posts of congregational leadership. We will be voting on the Selection Team's recommendations for the Church Board, the CLIPArts Board, the ChristKids Preschool Board, and the Endowment Committee. All members are encouraged to be present.

On Sunday, **June 19**, we will be receiving 20 new members! They are:

- Lisa and Mike Adams, Mickey
- Linda and Jim Bettinger
- Jenna and David Brethouwer, Theo and Julia
- Norm Davis
- Paul Delgado
- Terri Harada
- Virginia and Mike Jorgenson
- Rev. Julie and Lance Kelly
- Chris and Laura Robertson
- Ramee and Dylan Stewart

Twelve of those joining are coming to us from St. James Lutheran Church, Hanford (now closed). Joining a church is not easy (as some of you might remember). There are names to learn, styles to get used to, ministries to discover, and a church history to get to know. Please make every effort to get to know these wonderful people, welcome them not only to worship but also events and activities, and pray that they will flourish in their faith by being a part of CLC.

And add to it all are the fellowship events sponsored by JPEG ("Joyful People Experiencing Grace"). The CLC Round-Up on Saturday, **June 4**, promises to be a great time. Do you have your tickets? And on Sunday, **July 3**, we will have just one worship service at 10:00 outdoors (English and Lahu together), followed by a potluck soon after worship is over. If your last name begins in A-H, bring a dessert; I-R, bring a main dish; S-Z, bring a salad (Lahu to bring their delicious cultural foods!). And on Friday, **July 8**, it's CLC Night at the Rawhide. Tickets will be on sale soon, so join your church at Recreation Park.

In light of all this positive news, I need to address some very important information. The first is to recognize that, for four months into 2022, our giving has been behind budget. This is a serious situation, especially as we go into the summer months (when, due to vacations, giving often drops). Our Lahu members have been faithful in their giving; they have not been behind their budget. But a sizeable number of English-speaking members have not given through the first quarter (many who may or may not be worshipping on-line). As outlined above and in worship, ministry is happening, and it takes dollars to make ministry happen. While one's financial giving is between them and God, I urge all our members to be in prayer about how/if you are able to increase your giving. Your timely response to this request is critical.

As an aside, if you wander into the CCC kitchen you will notice many changes. Under Kurt Salierno's direction, and in consultation with a "kitchen committee," you may notice new dishwashers, new stoves, new cabinets, a new ice maker, and a new sink. All of these changes have been paid for from the Endowment, Celebration of Life accounts, and private gifts. None of the expenses have come out of the operating budget.

The second important information to share with you is regarding our Synod leadership, specifically our Bishop. Late last year Bishop Megan Rohrer dismissed a Hispanic pastor from his call due to allegations of abuse. The Bishop did this on December 12, the Festival of the Virgin Guadalupe. This resulted in severe backlash from many inside and outside the Hispanic community. The end result has been the formation of a listening team commissioned by Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. Late last week Bishop Eaton reported that, based on the findings of the listening team, she recommends that Bishop Rohrer resign. Because it is a recommendation and not a formal dismissal, Bishop Rohrer may or may not comply. This weekend (**June 2-4**) is the annual Synod Assembly. This will no doubt be a significant issue that will be discussed and debated. It has the potential to cause serious division within the Synod. Please, *please*, pray for wisdom and discernment for Bishop Rohrer, the Synod Council, and the gathered assembly (both on-line and in person; I and our voting delegates will be attending on-line).

I realize that I have given you a very brief explanation of what lies before our Synod. If you would like more information, please make an appointment with me and I will provide more in depth detail (though, much of this issue has been kept confidential).

So, as I said at the beginning, these are busy and interesting days in the church. I believe the Church of Jesus Christ can overcome any challenge it faces. And specifically, I believe Christ Lutheran Church, and its members, are poised to go into the future with confidence that what we do and why we do it really matters in lives of those who benefit from our ministry. May God continue to be faithful to us, and may we grow in our faithfulness to God.

Amen.

Pastor Brian Malison

Christ Lutheran Church, 3830 W. Tulare Ave, Visalia CA 93277
559-732-1851*www.clcvisalia.org