



June 1, 2023

For this June's edition of the First-of-the Month letter, I want to share with you the inspiring and forward-leaning work of your Writing Team. A brief aside...beside a hard-working transition team, and a faithful call committee, you – the good people of Christ Lutheran Church – have a dedicated group who comprise the Writing Team. This group has been charged to take the work of the Transition Team; the congregational surveys, the Ministry Assessment Plan, the hours of prayer and conversation and translate that into a new Mission Statement and set of core values that represent the “DNA” of this congregation. The Writing Team is Amy Grimmer, Ashley Irvine, Josh Nauman, Jennifer Newell, Kevin Northcraft, Cydney Oster, and Noel Thompson.

I have had no input on this process, so I speak as an interested observer. This is excellent work that I believe accurately reflects who you are as the people of God here at CLC, how you live out your calling, and what principles will help you discern and make decisions about God's preferred and promised future for this congregation.

Without further ado, here is the new Mission Statement.

**Living the truth of Christ's radical acceptance,
we are committed to bridging the gaps of our community
with unconditional love and grace.**

On behalf of the Writing Team, Noel Thompson (Director of Student Ministries) offers the following context: “[The writing team] really wanted something that reflected our DNA as a church and reflected our Lutheran theology. With that said, our mission statement has “three phrases” that we really worked on that we think reflect our DNA and our Lutheran theology.

-Christ's radical acceptance. That Jesus truly accepts everybody. No matter who they are or what they have done. We believe that is true and we want to live out that truth.

-Bridging the gaps. We are proud that CLC has a long tradition of not only serving the community, but how and who it serves. We want to continue to be a bridge between God's love and those who need it. We want to be the church in our community that goes to the “gaps” Whether it is the homeless, LGBTQ community, or any other needs. We want to be the bridge.

-Unconditional love and grace. Love and grace is everything. That is why we do what we do. Grace is central to the Lutheran church. We want to experience God's grace by giving it away.”

The six new Core Values are:

- Explore Deeply
- Embrace Diversity
- Serve Courageously
- Build Community
- Give Intentionally
- Worship Authentically

Again, I will turn to Noel Thompson to provide the rationale for these new Core Values.

Here at Christ Lutheran Church, we...

1. Explore Deeply

For us, this replaces “Grow Spiritually”. We really wanted to stay away from “churchy words” as much as possible. We want to be a church that asks the questions and promises that we don’t have all the answers. We commit to explore deeply what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

2. Embrace Diversity

For us, this replaces “Accept Boldly”. We wanted to be more specific and positive in our new core value. We don’t just want to accept or tolerate diversity. We want to embrace it. Diversity includes all people from all backgrounds, doesn’t matter what gender or race they are.

3. Serve Courageously

For us, this replaces “Serve selflessly”. We felt that it is impossible to really serve selflessly. To serve people, it takes courage because it takes us out of our comfort zone. No matter how you serve, it takes courage because it involves some sort of sacrifice on our part.

4. Build Community

For us, this replaces “Connect courageously”. We want to be a church that wants to build community within every generation and across every generation.

5. Give Intentionally

Whether it is our time or finances, when we give, we do it intentionally. Our intention is to spread the goodness God has given to us to others. If you look at our benevolences and how we serve, we are very intentional in what we do. We believe our members reflect that as well.

6. Worship Authentically

We believe worship is a core value of CLC. When we plan worship, we approach it to make sure we are staying authentic to our Lutheran tradition and theology. We also believe that you can be you during worship. That is very important.

Over the next several months you will be hearing and seeing both the Mission Statement and Core Values used in a variety of ways. The worship themes for the next nine months are all sourced from this document.

As Noel and the Writing Team has said, this Mission Statement and these Core Values reflect CLC’s DNA and Lutheran Theology. I look forward to how these inspirational words will guide the life and mission of Christ Lutheran Church.

See you in worship,

Pastor Scot