



**Pastor Scot Sorensen's First of the Month Letter  
October 2023**

Leadership. Anxiety. Core Values. These are my topics for this monthly missive, so let's begin.

Core Values. Earlier this year your Writing Team, a subset of the Transition Team, discerned and developed a new Mission Statement and updated Core Values. The Core Values reflect how this congregation lives out its mission. In case you haven't memorized them yet, here they are.

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

I will shamelessly plug the Fall Small Group Bible Studies that begins the first week of October. Six Biblical stories are used as a lens to understand these core values. Even if you are not part of a small group this fall, you can still ask for a copy of the study from Lauren, our Director of Adult Ministries. Here is a sneak peak at the bible stories to be explored. I think you will enjoy them,

*Explore Deeply* – John 4 and Jesus' deep conversation with a woman from Samaria.

*Embrace Diversity* – Acts 8 where Philip is led by the Spirit to encounter an Ethiopian Eunuch.  
*Serve Courageously* – Esther, hers is a celebrated story of courage in the face of peril.  
*Build Community* – Ruth 1 where we hear how two women, Ruth and Naomi, build a friendship.  
*Give Intentionally* – Luke 19 Jesus encounters Zacchaeus who is changed and gives freely.  
*Worship Authentically* – I Samuel 1 and the story of Hannah, Elkanah and Eli.

My other topics for this month are Leadership and Anxiety. Those two go together because one role of leadership is to manage the anxiety of the system they lead. We all know that in times of great anxiety, it is rarely a time of thoughtful, creative thinking. In highly anxious times everything is reactive, full of fear, and future hope is diminished if not extinguished.

I am not the first to suggest that we live in a highly anxious time. Whether you consider the world of politics, business and economics, education, climate crises, or choose your headline de jour...individuals, groups, communities are on edge. And this anxiety can easily creep its way into the life of our congregation.

This liminal time here at Christ Lutheran Church could be a time of paralyzing anxiety. It could be, but it is not. Because of the transition work done with and by Pastor Brian before he retired this potential was anticipated. I have witnessed faithful congregational leaders who are choosing to embrace this time between times. The updated mission statement and core values are two such examples. But beyond that, your leaders and staff are fully engaged to keep Christ Lutheran open to the guiding of the Holy Spirit.

The scheduled events of October speak to this future focus. The Endowment Committee starts the month with an appreciation and informational reception on October 1. A congregational fellowship event, Barnstravaganza, is slated for October 8. In the middle of the month, we will begin our stewardship emphasis. And at the end of the month, we celebrate Reformation and then Harvest Festival.

Your congregation honors its past, prayerfully anticipates God's preferred future, all while living fully in the Spirit today. A congregation full of faithful leaders turns what might be a time of high anxiety into a time of joyful anticipation.

See you in worship,  
Pastor Scot