

CHRIST THE SERVANT LUTHERAN CHURCH, LCMC  
 1976 — CELEBRATING 40 YEARS! — 2016

JANUARY 2016 NEWSLETTER

SUNDAY WORSHIP: "EXPLORE THE BIBLE" (MATT. 1-13)

As we begin the New Year we continue to look at the gospel of Matthew for the months of January and February. The scripture passages are timely as we listen to the very words of Jesus to us concerning His expectations of us and carrying His values. We will hear His Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) and be challenged once again to live lives that reflect the coming of the Kingdom of God among us and in this world.

Copies of the personal study guide are on the back table for you to use in expanded personal and group settings during the week (suggested donation is \$5).

Jan. 3 – Matthew 5:1-16 – "The King's Expectations"  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Christmas

Jan. 10 – Matthew 6:5-18 – "Approaching the King"  
 Baptism of our Lord  
 Sunday  
 Affirmation of Our Calls Sunday

Jan. 17 – Matthew 5:17-22, 43-45 – "Carrying His Values"  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany

Jan. 24 – Matthew 7:13-21, 24-27 – "Two Paths, One Choice"  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany

Jan. 31 – Matthew 8:5-13 – "Faith Demonstrated"  
 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany



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CONGREGATIONAL MEETING JANUARY 10TH  
 AFTER WORSHIP

There will be a congregational meeting after worship on January 10 to discuss three important items. These items are: (1) discussion and vote on two proposals from the Teen Mom Infant Childcare Oversight

Committee (copies of the proposals were distributed at our last congregational meeting on Dec. 13 and are available on the back table), (2) discussion on expenses if Pastor Garry Seefeldt returns in March and

September upon his request and recommendation, and (3) a brief explanation of our expanded church structure with the additional teams recommended by Pastor Garry Seefeldt.

**Worship Schedule:**

Sunday School 8:45 a.m.

Worship 10:00 a.m.

**Lent Begins  
 February 10**

Ash Wednesday

## AFFIRMATION OF OUR CALLS SUNDAY, JANUARY 10, DURING WORSHIP

One of the recommendations that Pastor Garry Seefeldt suggested when he met with the congregation on Dec. 10 was to incorporate an Affirmation of Our Calls during a worship service. The purpose of the Affirmation is two-fold: (1) both Pastor Steve and Pastor Matt will reaffirm the call that was given to them by the congregation (copies of the calls are available in the back of the church for your review) and (2) the congregation will reaffirm their commitment to their call by using their gifts and talents to do the works of ministry. Clarity of call is important as both pastors and congregation covenant with each other. Much like the Old Testament when the leaders and the people gathered, a covenant was made between the two for the sake of ministry and mission. During our worship service on Sunday, January 10, the Reaffirmation of Our Calls will be consecrated as we move forward. A copy of the Affirmation of Our Call will be available by January 3 on the back table along with the call letters to both Pastor Steve and Pastor Matt. Please clear your calendar and plan to attend this important Affirmation on January 10.

## NORFOLK COMMUNITY 21-DAY FAST JANUARY 3 – JANUARY 24

Several members of the Norfolk community have been participating in an Annual 21-Day Corporate Fast for themselves and our region. Besides individual fasting there will be various opportunities for fellowship, prayer and worship throughout the city. A fast is most effective when we continue in prayer and fellowship together. The purpose of the fast is to focus our hearts on God, to seek His will, and walk it out together. Our lives are filled with so many voices. Each person who participates in fasting can make their own schedule of time to spend alone in prayer and reading God's Word and also spend time in corporate prayer with others in our community. Watch for more details!

We have learned over time that it is best if each person decides what they need to fast. Some suggestions of things to fast are: TV, sweets, caffeine, meat, one meal a day, social media, other habits like gossip, etc. Journaling is also suggested to add to your experience and daily reflection along with prayer and Bible reading. The Daniel Fast suggests a partial fast that abstains from meat, sweeteners, refined flour products and dairy. Some allow limited portions of meat, while fried foods are shunned. Daily foods permitted are: all fruits, all vegetables (fresh, canned, frozen, juiced), soy products, whole grains, all nuts, vegetable oils and water.

Preparation suggestions (before you start) are: ask God what He wants you to fast, buy a new journal, get off caffeine slowly, cut back gradually on foods you plan to fast, obtain worship music to replace TV time, let your family and friends know ahead of time that you will not be eating certain items, leave open times in your schedule to slow down to wait upon the Lord, make this journey your own, invite a friend or two to join you for encouragement to stay the course, and prepare yourself knowing you will be tempted to break your fast. Of course, it would be a great way to "reboot" yourself, your family and Christ the Servant in the coming year.

## PASTOR STEVE'S LETTER TO THE CONGREGATION: **"REBIRTH"**

As we begin a New Year, instead of talking about New Year's Resolutions, I would like to visit with you with a different thought and direction. Every once in a while my computer or smart phone gets "stuck" or freezes up where I am unable to move forward or type anything to get to the page I want to go. After a few moments of frustration, I do what I should have done in the first place, I reboot. I turn off my computer or smart phone temporarily and then turn the power on again. It is amazing how a simple procedure like that can totally change everything. With a simple reboot, all is well and my device is working as it was originally programmed to do. Would it amaze or surprise you that the same thing can happen with a person, a family, and a congregation? Sometimes all we need is a reboot, a restart, or a rebirth. Often when we get "stuck" (when nothing is self-evident), it is easy to be negative, complain and/or withdraw.

I am calling the Year of 2016 as the Year of Rebirth for Christ the Servant. In the fall we will be celebrating 40 years of ministry. We have seen remarkable things happen in our history which only could happen with the blessings of God and indwelling of the Holy Spirit within us. But now it seems we are "stuck" in many ways and I tend to hear more negative things than I do about positive things that are happening. Is it that your "computer screen" is stuck as well? Sometimes when a computer is not working well, one solution is to throw it away and get another new one. But sooner or later that computer will get stuck or freeze up. Instead of moving from computer to computer (or church to church) to find the "perfect" one, God might be calling you to reboot. Sometimes I need to take my computer to an "expert" who can also look more closely at what is causing my computer to freeze or run so slowly. Usually I have too many programs looking at once or I have programs that I no longer need and simply need to get rid of. Does that sound like your life at this time?

Are you getting my drift? Sometimes all we need in life is a "reboot" – either for ourselves, our families or our congregation. Congregationally speaking, we are in need of a reboot, restart, and rebirth. Pastor Garry Seefeldt's recommendations speak directly to this thought (copies of this recommendations will be available in the back of the church). He suggested we add four new teams (a term to use instead of committees) to our current structure with 3-7 members on each team. These teams are: (1) Budget Review Team with an appointed Financial Secretary), (2) Mission and Ministry Team, (3) Membership and Stewardship Team, and a (4) Welcome and Hospitality Team. The function and purpose of these teams will be presented in a written form, a visual flow chart, and explained briefly at our congregational meeting on January 10. I, personally, am very excited about this new structure Pastor Garry has recommended for us.

Again, when we feel we are in a "stuck" mood, people tend to be less positive. The fear is that we will not be able to fill all these teams with enough members. Although I understand that fear, I also believe God is working among us and in us and that there are many who are ready to "reboot" their lives for the sake of Christ the Servant and recommit themselves to the ministry we cherish and God has used for almost 40 years. You will be hearing me address this often in the coming weeks and months. I see myself as the Sower who will be sowing seeds praying that many will find root in good soil (although perhaps dormant for a season or two).

As a starting point of our "reboot", we will be having an Affirmation of Our Calls during worship on January 10. During this service the entire body of Christ who gathers as the congregation we call Christ the Servant will make a covenant vow of recommitment to the call we have in Christ as His Church and the call that the body of Christ the Servant extended to both Pastor Matt and me. It will be an important part of our worship on January 10 as it will also coincide with the Baptism of our Lord where His call was given by God the Father. It will be a day of rebirth, renewal, recommitment, reboot, etc. (add your word that begins with "re"). This Sunday will also be an important Sunday for YOU! Your presence will be a sign of your commitment to reboot yourself, our congregation, and our purpose as a congregation in this community.

Ready for a rebirth with you,

## PASTOR MATT'S LETTER TO THE CONGREGATION

*"... but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us." **Romans 5:3***

New Year's Day again, seems like it happened just a year ago, but with New Year's Day comes the inevitable disappointment. Hang in with me, I'm not a pessimist. As a New Year begins, it is like the Tabula Rasa, the clean slate. Each year we look forward to another New Year with its resolutions to be better and its hoped-for promise of a year in its infancy. But isn't it interesting that each year ends up with Father Time looking worn and haggard? Could it be because in each year there will be disappointments, struggles, even suffering and loss. Perhaps there will be complete changes of life situations and health, financial markets are always precarious, and toss in a bit of ISIS and such... yeah; each year will inevitably bring disappointment.

So that is why I was thinking to myself, "Why do we keep putting so much stock into the things of this world, knowing that we are going to be disappointed?" To face another New Year, might I suggest a simple resolution: I will focus my attention and energy on building my relationship with Jesus Christ and His body here on earth. What this resolution does is to commit my heart and mind to seek out Jesus and His will for me in our relationship together. It encourages me to take another step and action to seek to face myself honestly in each day of my year, and to then let my relationship with Jesus define how I respond to all things as they come.

I remember the simple joy of this time of year and not just Christmas, but the holidays and winter, and I wonder why has that diminished for me and seemingly for so many others? Could it be that we are letting the disappointments outweigh the hope of the season? Paul in Romans speaks repetitively about the nature and power of hope. But even more so, Jesus talks of the practicality of attention directed to positive action. "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal." **Matthew 6:19-20**

For the New Year and all that it will bring, in so many different ways, let us all build up our hope in the thing that makes us who we are together, the Savior born in Bethlehem, Jesus Christ the Lord; and may God bless the days and work of this New Year to see, and hear, and speak, and love, and forgive, and work the works of ministry together as the Ambassadors of Christ in this place.

A Very Happy New Year to you all.

## YOUTH CALENDAR

**A special thank you to those who came and shared in an evening with the Youth to carol and provide some meals for our widows, widowers, and shut-ins.** As always, the response has been very thankful and positive to the evening of caroling and deliveries, but this year added an extra special time of fellowship together over soup and chili and some lovely sweet goodies. Thanks to all who came.

**Sunday School Christmas Program** – Thank you teachers and students of all ages for making the Sunday service Christmas program such a nice event. It was wonderful to hear the Christmas story through the vision of the song writers who have given us so many beautiful songs to sing the story of Christmas. What a wonderful day.

**YOU are needed.** As we begin to form the new year of learning and passing on the faith, we need YOU to help and teach a topic for our children and youth. Classes are two or five sessions long and range from 1 to 1½ hours in length. Typically a class leader would teach on Wednesday or Sunday, but each class has the flexibility of scheduling in agreement with the teachers and the parents of children. Each class has fully documented information and ideas for class time, and the pastors are here to help support and work with you as you prepare and teach. We can even participate with you to help learn the ropes of youth ministry. What is needed most is a heart for Jesus and His children and a desire to pass on your faith.

**Sunday School Exploration of the Bible** – A time of gathering happens from 8:45 to 8:50 a.m. in the fellowship hall and then all the classes break out into their learning areas. This year as we continue digging deeper into the Word we are moving our focus to look into Matthew chapters 1–13 for the winter, and in the Spring we will dig into the first part of Acts. We want to thank all those who are serving the kingdom giving their time and talents to pass on the faith to our youth. Please thank these individuals for their service to Our children:

**3 and 4 year olds, and Kindergarten** Korrie Hall

**1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade** Becky Bahnfleth and Amanda Cyboron

**4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> Grade** Judy Carstens, Kristy Rosberg and Fern Zechmann

**Jr. High and High School** Mary Weich, Greg Moen, Charlie Skoglund and Brian Anderson

**IT'S CHILI, SOUP AND CARD playin' time! THAT'S RIGHT,** it's back and bigger and better — the Confirmation Class fundraiser Chili AND SOUP Cook-off and Cribbage and Pitch Tournaments with Family Game Night (still gotta find a better name). If you haven't made it before, this is the time to come and see what all the talk is about. Right in the middle of a cold and dreary winter comes a great way to warm up and fellowship with the Body of Christ. Come out, eat some chili AND SOUP, and vote for the winner of the coveted GOLDEN SPOONS. Entrance to the chili AND SOUP cook-off is a \$5 entry fee (and a chili OR SOUP) and voting for the best chili and SOUP happens with \$1 bills, so head to the bank and make sure you have plenty of singles on hand. We have seen all kinds of chilis over the years, and if you are an eater you never lose in this competition. There is also a \$5 entry fee into the Cribbage and Pitch tournaments, and each year the competition for the coveted GOLDEN DECK gets more intense. Not a cribbage or pitch player? No problem — bring a game to play with others and have a blast. **SATURDAY, January 30, beginning at 5 p.m. until done!** You don't want to miss out on this night.

**SUPER BOWL SUBS are going on sale again in January to support the Youth Group.** Please see a youth group member and place your order for sub sandwiches for the Super Bowl and beyond (they freeze and thaw quite well). We're holding prices steady even though inflation is on the rise so you can get your subs for the still unbelievably low price of \$4.75 for one or \$21.50 (a 10% discount) for packs of 5 subs. You get the same high quality and delicious subs you've come to know and love. Please see a youth group member to place your orders, and if you would like to help them out by selling to those you work with ... perhaps there is a ransom that can be arranged. Subs will be made **Saturday, February 6,** and can be picked up in the afternoon after 4:30 p.m.

**JANUARY BIRTHDAYS**

- 1st Katelyn Hall
- 3rd Madison Metschke
- 4th Mick Kullbom
- 6th Warren Bennett
- 15th Emilee Olson
- 16th BJ Koepp
- 17th Tara Peters
- 18th Delores Olson
- 20th Aaron Cyboron
- 22nd Tammy Buckendahl
- 23rd Audrey Polenske
- 24th Jacob Svitak
- 25th Lucas Petersen
- 30th Jason Jones

2015 Monthly Attendance

December	605
November	498
October	494
September	322
August	419
July	263
June	346
May	460
April	421
March	474
February	261
January	371

**BRIGHT HORIZONS**

Any of the following items can be dropped off at any time during the year: Yellow ruled pads, steno pads, sticky notes; deodorant, children and adult Tylenol, cough medicine, Band-Aids, diapers (all the larger sizes); disinfectants, paper towels, toilet tissue, facial tissue; napkins, hair picks, shampoo, dishwashing liquid, laundry detergent, fabric softener, dryer sheets; gas cards, phone cards, Wal-Mart gift cards, grocery store gift

**CARDS OF THANKS**

Thank you to everyone from Christ the Servant Youth Group, parents, and Pastor Matt for the delicious meals, caroling and candy. It was delicious and special.

Sincerely,  
Connie Atkinson

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear CTS Youth & Christmas Carolers,

We want to thank you for your extraordinary kindness of coming to our home to carol to us and bring the wonderful food and gifts. It meant so much to us for you to think of us at our first Christmas without our beloved Tim. You are wonderful people and we have always cherished the fellowship at CTS. May you all have a very Merry Christmas and God bless you all!

With love,  
Peg St. Clair Werlinger  
& Nicole Miller

**PASTORAL ACTS**

Addilyn Kaey Rehan, daughter of Mike and Lacy Rehan, was baptized as a child of God on Christmas Eve. She was born Nov. 15, 2015. Her baptismal sponsors are Melissa and Bryan Honcik and Elyssa and Neal Davis Jr.

**7 Reasons to Dwell on the Positive**

*Research shows that gratitude and happiness are strongly connected. Happy people enjoy these perks:*

1. **You're likely to feel more optimistic.** Noticing and analyzing what goes well in life may help you build the skill of remembering good events over bad, which is linked to feeling happier.
2. **You could live longer.** Happier people with positive outlooks that are enhanced by feeling gratitude tend to have longer lives.
3. **You may feel less physical pain.** Stress amplifies pain, and thinking positive thoughts, such as what is working in your life or how things are starting to get better and better, helps you cope with stress.
4. **Your relationships may feel more meaningful.** Thinking about the people who are blessings to you makes those connections feel more satisfying.
5. **You'll possibly catch fewer colds.** Research shows that people who count their blessings report that they have fewer sniffles and sneezes.
6. **You may even exercise more.** Positive emotions have been shown to boost energy. Highlighting the good things in your life may also remind you of the many reasons to stay healthy.
7. **Your heart could grow stronger.** Experiencing positive emotions like appreciation is linked with the right amount of variation in heart rate, a sign of a healthy ticker.

**RULES FOR HEALTHY LIVING**

Less soda	More water	Less driving	More walking
Less alcohol	More tea	Less worry	More sleep
Less sugar	More fruit	Less anger	More laughter
Less meat	More vegetables	Less words	More action

# HEALTH MINISTRY

“I pray that everything may go well with you, and that you may be in good health, as I know you are well in spirit.” (3 John 2)

## ICE & SNOW: TAKE IT SLOW!

### Did you know?

It doesn't have to be 32 degrees or below outside in order to snow. It has been known to snow in temperatures as high as the mid-40s. As long as it is 32 or below in the clouds where the snow is forming, snow can fall on the ground in warmer temperatures, causing unexpected winter storms. With that being said, 70 percent of deaths during winter storms occur in vehicles. Even though we all know winter is coming and what to expect, many of us do not prepare properly for the harsh conditions.

### For safe winter driving, prepare, protect and prevent.

- Prepare your car by checking the tire pressure, antifreeze, battery and windshield wipers before going on a trip. Make sure you have more than enough gas to get where you need to go, or if you will need

to refill your tank, never fall below half a tank of gas. Have a blanket, flashlight, ice scraper and snow brush in your car or trunk at all times for emergencies.

- Protect yourself by always wearing your seat belt. Encourage others in your car to wear their seat belts as well, and always make sure children are in the appropriate car seat and location. Make sure to remove all of the snow on the roof or hood of your car so it does not blow off onto other vehicles on the road.
- Prevent crashes by avoiding distractions while driving, such as texts, calls and loud music. Drive appropriately for the weather conditions, and keep your eyes peeled for pedestrians and other objects that may be in the road. NEVER drink and drive. Always designate a sober driver.

### For winter safety at home, plan, winterize and check.

- Plan for emergencies such as power outages. Stock food that does not have to be refrigerated or cooked, and have plenty of flashlights and extra batteries. Have an up-to-date first aid kit and extra baby supplies if needed.
- Winterize your home by preventing excess cold air from coming into your house with plastic around your windows and doors if needed. Sand or cat litter can also be useful to have around the house if icy conditions occur. Put the sand or cat litter down on top of the ice to help it melt and give extra traction to your shoes.
- Check all of your home heating systems to ensure they are working correctly. Clean out all chimneys and fireplaces, and invest in a smoke detector. Also think about installing a carbon monoxide detector, and check the batteries monthly. If you can, have an alternative safe heating system and extra fuel in case of emergencies.

Women of Christ the Servant What's Coming Up!	March	3 <sup>rd</sup> Women's Meeting @ 6pm 5 <sup>th</sup> Spring Gathering (TBA) 17 <sup>th</sup> WWW @ 7pm Michelle Anderson	
January	7 <sup>th</sup> Women's Meeting @ 6pm 28 <sup>th</sup> WWW @ 7pm Fern Zechmann TBA Women's Night Out	April	7 <sup>th</sup> Women's Meeting @ 6pm 28 <sup>th</sup> WWW @ 7pm Linda Miller & Jo Roberts TBA Blue Jean Sunday
February	2 <sup>nd</sup> Groundhog Movie Night (TBA) 4 <sup>th</sup> Women's Meeting @ 6pm 15 <sup>th</sup> Mercy Meals @ 6:30pm 25 <sup>th</sup> WWW @ 7pm Connie Atkinson	May	5 <sup>th</sup> Women's Meeting @ 6pm 7 <sup>th</sup> Bless & Be Blessed Rummage Sale 26 <sup>th</sup> WWW @ 7pm _____
	June	2 <sup>nd</sup> Women's Meeting @ 6pm 4 <sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting 23 <sup>rd</sup> WWW @ 7pm Shirley Theil	

## Minutes of the December 15, 2015, Joint Board Meeting

Present: Pastor Steve, Pastor Matt, Charlie Skoglund, Brian Anderson, Linda Cyboron, Steve Jessen, Margaret Svitak, Mary Weich, Becky Bahnfleth,

Absent: Greg Moen, Joan Falke, Ginger Beckman

Guests: Danita Broders, Trisha Schulz of MOPS

The meeting was opened with a devotion by Pastor Steve from Ephesians, chapter 4, followed by a prayer.

Trisha and Danita gave a report on their MOPS group and expressed their appreciation from the support they receive from Christ the Servant.

At 7 p.m. the agenda was reviewed. The senior choir is serving soup tomorrow. Pastor Steve distributed an outline of Pastor Garry's recommendations, which includes the formation of several new committees. He diagrammed where those committees would fall under the jurisdiction of each board. It was decided to schedule a retreat for the boards, which will be here at CTS on Friday evening, January 29, and all day Saturday, January 30.

Our next board meeting will be January 19th, and Pastor Garry will Skype with board members. We will also look at the Local Benevolence list.

On January 10th, the pastors will reaffirm their calls during worship.

With increased enrollment in the childcare program, we need to hire part-time staff (Amanda Cyboron). The board of spiritual oversight will decide how much to compensate her for the hours she has already worked, and will inform Steve Jessen so he can issue a paycheck.

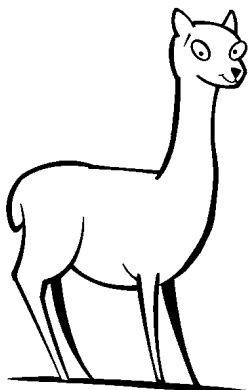
Motion by Pastor Lund to reimburse Amanda Cyboron at the current minimum wage for the hours she has worked thus far and will work through the end of the year; motion seconded by Anderson. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken, and the motion passed with none opposed. Steve Jessen will require a W-2 and I-9 for Amanda, and anyone else hired by the childcare program. The Childcare Oversight Committee does the work of hiring and makes recommendations to the board regarding who is officially hired.

According to state regulation, this board recognizes that an additional part-time employee needs to be added to the childcare staff. A recommendation from the childcare oversight committee will be forthcoming.

Pastor Matt closed the meeting with prayer. Meeting adjourned.

## Animal Facts

On the sixth day God created the animals of the earth of every kind (Gen 1:24-26).



Draw a line to match the fact to the animal.

1. I'm green and live in and out of water.
2. I catch lots of insects with a trap I make.
3. I can fly up, down, sideways, forward, backward and hover.
4. I'm the largest creature on earth.
5. I can hang by my tail and I play dead.
6. I live near the North Pole and my babies are born in a snow drift.
7. I can stand on my front legs and spray a terrible scent.
8. I have a bill, four webbed feet, and live mostly under water.
9. I can fly, but I have skin, not feathers.

- a. bat
- b. skunk
- c. platypus
- d. spider
- e. frog
- f. blue whale
- g. polar bear
- h. opossum
- i. humming bird



Women of Christ the Servant  
Meeting Minutes  
December 3, 2015

Present: Michelle Anderson, President; Julie Freese, Vice-President; Kathy Rogers, Treasurer, Fern Zechmann, Secretary.

Michelle opened the meeting with a devotion and prayer. November meeting minutes have been approved by board members online. Kathy presented the treasurer's report showing a balance of \$1,027.78. Fern moved that the treasurer's report be accepted. Julie seconded and the motion carried.

Old Business

Living Proof Live with Beth Moore: Hotel has changed to Hampton Inn with pricing at \$114 and we can have four people in a room. Anyone interested in attending will need to contact Michelle by the end of December.

Magnet Fundraiser: The "Keep Christ in Christmas" magnets are in. They will be \$5 each. We need ladies to sell these after worship or individually. Kathy will also have these available in the church office.

Wine, Women and Wisdom: December 17<sup>th</sup> will be hosted by Michelle Anderson and Mitzi Ludke. On January 28<sup>th</sup>, this will be hosted by Fern Zechmann; and on February 25<sup>th</sup> by Connie Atkinson and Linda Shaffer. A listing of the women who have been studied previously, and the sign-up sheet for hosting in 2016, will be on our bulletin board.

Ornament Day @ Creatively Fired: This was held on Sunday, November 15, 2015 from 1-4 pm. 13 people came to paint.

WCTS Directories: These are complete and will be handed out on Saturday.

Thankoffering: As of December 1<sup>st</sup>, the total was \$354.06. This is down significantly from last year. We will decide on how this will be designated on Saturday.

New Business

December 5<sup>th</sup> Gathering: Final plans were made and the theme will be the Candy Cane. Included will be a cookie exchange, meeting, potluck lunch and decorating the church for Christmas. Thank you to Steve Jessen, Don Knee and Orlin Olson for helping bring Christmas items in from the shed.

Membership Care Team: Michelle would like to be relieved of this responsibility. Fern is willing to assist with this.

Funeral and Kitchen Duties. Julie would like some relief with these duties. We are looking for someone to assist in this way.

Poinsettias: Twenty red poinsettias have been ordered and will be delivered Tuesday. There is a sign-up sheet. The Altar Guild will water these.

Altar Guild: A leader needs to be designated. This group needs to use Suzie Lutz and Brian Anderson as liaison between the Guild and the Worship Committee. Quarterly meetings will be scheduled.

2015/2016 Events:        December 5 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Cookie Exchange/Decorate for Christmas  
                                  January – TBA Women's Night Out  
                                  February 2 - Ground Hogs Day Movie/Discussion Night  
                                  February 15 – Mercy Meals @ 6 :30 pm  
                                  March 5 – Spring Gathering  
                                  April 15-16 – Living Proof Live with Beth Moore  
                                  Blue Jean Sunday (cleaning) - TBA  
                                  May 7 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Bless and Be Blessed  
                                  June 4 – Annual Meeting (VP and Treasurer election)

The meeting was adjourned.

Women of Christ the Servant Gathering – 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Cookie Exchange/Decorate for Christmas — December 5, 2015

11 women and two children were present. Michelle opened the meeting with prayer and devotions based on the Legend of the Candy Cane.

Old Business

Magnets: These are being sold for \$5 each. Women were asked to volunteer to take some to sell.

Living Proof Live with Beth Moore: Please let Michelle know by December 31<sup>st</sup> if you will be attending. Rooms are reserved at the Hampton Inn.

Wine, Women & Wisdom: A sign-up list for hosting in 2016 and a list of women who have been studied are on our bulletin board.

Women's Directory: These are finished and were handed out.

Treasurer's Report: A balance of \$1,027 was reported.

New Business

Thankoffering: The balance is \$354.06. It was suggested that we give 1/3 to each of the following: Bright Horizons, the Rescue Mission and Mercy Meals. Any remainder will go to the CTS Youth. Janell moved that we use the money in this way and Amanda seconded. Motion passed.

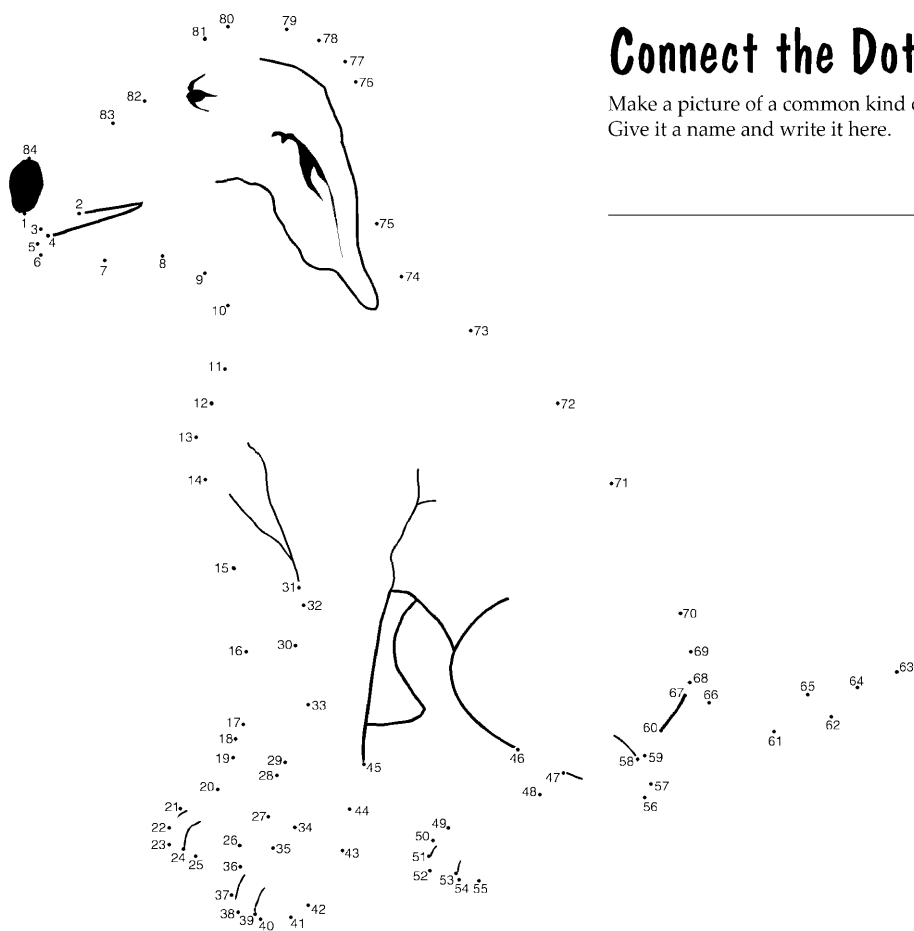
Advent Meal: We will be serving on December 9<sup>th</sup>. We will be serving soups, relishes and bread. Ladies volunteered to bring food items or to donate for bread and crackers.

Membership Care Team: Michelle will organize with Fern.

Funeral and Kitchen Duties: Looking for relief.

Altar Guild: Will work with Worship Committee with Susie Lutz and Brian Anderson as liaisons.

It was discussed that if supplies are used, please let Kathy Rogers know so they can be replenished. Meeting was adjourned.



## Connect the Dots

Make a picture of a common kind of pet.  
Give it a name and write it here.

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## STEWARDSHIP

As we welcome in the new 2016 year, there are many existing and new areas to find ways of service and stewardship. God has given us the gifts of: "ourselves, our time and our possessions". This can be interpreted as: "our heart-the essence of our being, our commitment-to take the first step, show up and become involved, and our gifts-talents, crafts, passions and resources.

I encourage you to be a steward and re-cycle at home and here at church. Many items end up in the trash-garbage that have reuse options and could be recycled to help other people and the earth-God's creation. It takes few dollars-just a little bit of time, effort and probably most of all; desire. Some other neighborhoods have much better collection and re-cycling programs available. I would encourage you to speak with your local representatives and city government here in Norfolk, to expand the items they currently accept for recycling. I recently heard an interview regarding "Caps Of Love". This is a non-profit organization to help handicapped children in the USA receive wheelchairs. Two different grades are collected: Polypropylene and polyethylene plastic caps and lids in all sizes, shapes and colors. Just think about how many water bottle caps alone we just "pitch" in the trash. This is only one example. It is not that difficult, it just takes the "first step".

In September, at the congregational stewardship meeting, I encouraged us as members to volunteer as individuals and/or families one hour per week somewhere inside and outside the congregation. If you already volunteer somewhere weekly, I encourage you to increase your time by adding another hour somewhere. It could be a local organization; school; care facility; the hospital; the VA Home; pick up trash along the roadside; provide a ride; prepare a meal for a shut in, a individual and/or family in grief, someone home from the hospital and/or family of someone hospitalized-some congregations do this as a specific ministry providing daily meals for as long as it takes; send a note and/or card to someone letting them know you were thinking of them-in this current age of electronics, a hand written note means a great deal to someone who may be lonely, isolated and/or feeling alone and it helps keep cobwebs from forming in the mailbox as well as something to look forward to other than bills and "junk mail". The Norfolk Rescue Mission, is a great agency-one of many in the Norfolk area. SMILE is in our area and also provides some great opportunities for volunteers.

I encourage you to still complete and return the time and talent sheet that was handed out at the congregational stewardship meeting and/or placed in your mailbox if you did not attend the meeting. I sincerely thank those of you who took the time to read, fill out and return the form. It is a helpful resource to provide leaders information for areas in which you have an interest and do and/or would consider participating in the life of the congregation.

There is so much we can do to help others. With budget concerns and issues, we can fill needs and find better ways to invest in ourselves. A past department supervisor use to tell us to "Work smart". That meant in part that we had to think smart, it didn't cost us anything extra; in fact, it saved us time and energy and we were more efficient. Did we let ethics, integrity and quality of work slip? No. Providing our best was always the goal, it was necessary, lives depended on it.

As one leader at CTS Lutheran Church, I would encourage all leaders to confirm things before we say it and/or put it in print. Slow and correct integrity rather an faster and inaccurate. We need to maintain and/or regain our credibility as leaders before this congregation and more and most importantly before our Holy God. Truth and accuracy matter. It always does. In the Holy Bible we are reminded that "The truth will set us free". Words worthy to remember and live by for all of us. I do not believe that we are free here at CTS because we have yet to arrive at real TRUTH. I continue to pray that we will be humbled before God in order that He will bless us, use us and guide us to healthy. A catch phrase from the Obama campaign days that I heard a lot of and seems to have caught on is "transparency". Well, I don't know how that is working for him; however, I believe if we are totally honest and tell the full truth we don't have to worry and/or concern ourselves with transparency. The truth will take care of itself. Not elusions, half truths, distorted truth, tainted truth rather full honest truth. Brothers and Sisters, do you wish to be at Peace, do you wish to be Free. Free in Christ. Free to worship and Free to proclaim Him as Lord of my life. We are not at peace because we are not obedient to His Word.

A question was asked recently at a Bible study. Was Jesus a friendly Jesus? What do you think? We sing as young and older children, "What a Friend We Have In Jesus" and yet, in the new testament Jesus tells us that "You are my friend, if you keep my commandments" We are not a friend of Jesus because we are inherently disobedient and sinful. Jesus is not a friendly Jesus. Jesus is a just Jesus. God was not reconciled to us, we were reconciled to God.

Heavenly Father, as we readjust our inner and outer timetables and calendars, motivate us to give YOU and YOUR CHURCH first priority in our lives for we need the opportunities it provides to worship You, for study, support, community and to prepare us to go outside these walls and through these doors into a hurting world in service as Your people and to share the GOOD NEWS. Keep us mindful to be Your servants in Your Church that we might be blessed to carry on Your ministries. Keep us mindful to invest our time, our abilities and our resources in its mission. Bless us as a congregation, for we profess we want to be Your Church, as we begin a new program year. Guide us and bless us to become Your Church; not a club; pioneers, not just settlers; an outpost as well as a sanctuary.

Joan Falke

# January 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	Pastor Matt out of office on Mondays	Staff meeting Thursdays at 10:30	Prayer meeting Wednesdays @ 6:30 p.m.	<i>Happy New Year</i>	1 <b>CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED</b> Pastor Steve out of office on Fridays	2
3 Christmas 2 Worship 10 a.m. (no Sunday school)	4	5 Childcare meeting @ 6:30 p.m.	6 <i>Epiphany of our Lord</i> FLYTE, Confirmation @ 5 p.m.; Youth group @ 7:30; Choir practice @ 7:30	7 PieceMakers 9 a.m. WCTS @ 6 p.m. MOPS planning meeting @ 6:30	8	9 Fellowship hall reserved (K. Rogers)
10 <i>Baptism of our Lord</i> Sunday school 8:45 Worship 10 a.m. Affirm calls Cong. meeting	11	12 Worship committee meeting @ 7 p.m.	13 FLYTE, Confirmation @ 5 p.m.; Youth group @ 7:30; Choir practice @ 7:30	14 Agape @ 9 a.m.	15 <i>Deadline for newsletter articles</i> Girl Scouts 5:30 p.m.	16
17 <i>Epiphany 2</i> Sunday school 8:45 Worship 10 a.m. Altar Guild meeting	18	19 Board meeting @ 6:30 p.m.	20 FLYTE, Confirmation @ 5 p.m.; Youth group @ 7:30; Choir practice @ 7:30	21 Card party @ 2 p.m. MOPS @ 6:45	22	23
24 <i>Epiphany 3</i> Sunday school 8:45 Worship 10 a.m.	25	26	27 FLYTE, Confirmation @ 5 p.m.; Youth group @ 7:30; Choir practice @ 7:30	28 Wine, Women & Wisdom @ 7 p.m.	29 <i>Kathy (vacation)</i> Board retreat @ CTS	30 Board retreat 5 p.m. Chili & Soup cook-off & cards
31 <i>Epiphany 4</i> Sunday school 8:45 Worship 10 a.m.	<i>Kathy (vacation)</i>		<i>Lent begins Feb. 10 (Ash Wednesday)</i>			