

Worship

Sunday Morning
Holy Communion at
8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Livestream at
10:30 a.m. every Sunday

Christian Education for
all ages begins at
9:30 a.m.

Office

Monday - Thursday from
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
210-822-3394
office@clcah.org



Through God's Grace
All are welcome as we joyfully,
Receive...to Give
Learn...to Serve
and Worship...to Grow.

January 2025

From the Pastor

All Things New

As a child I imagined what the world would look like in the year 2000. That year seemed as distant as the stars and planets above. My childhood arithmetic concluded I would be about 50 years old at the advent of the 21st century, so I continued to go about life as most do, living day-to-day, in many ways unaware of the steadily increasing pace of change in the world.

Parenting brought with it a greater awareness of change, as the development of my boys happened before my eyes. One after another they grew, eventually into the men who are now fathers themselves, kind and thoughtful, with full heads of hair unlike their father. There would be periods of months and years of my military duty that I did not see my own parents, and those intervals provided adequate chronological space evincing their aging, and I grieved that.

Now the mirror does that for me. My own mom and dad are now long in the mysterious presence of God's eternity, and I am increasingly aware of my own life transitions, embracing the blessings and challenges of time's passage.

A physician friend and I recently conversed about this, and he shared with me the cellular nature of time and change. Our bodies consist of literally trillions of cells, all of them eventually replaced in their divisions and mutations by others, some in as little as hours, others over years of time. It's the way we're designed.

As members of the community of faith, we believe that creation is our Creator's design, initiated and sustained by God's hand, for us to enjoy at every stage. When I feel an urge to push back against time's passage, I am reminded that change and development are all part of the "design." If I miss the boys who were once little, and in my care, I thank the Creator for their development into men. When I move a bit more slowly and do not see as clearly, I praise the One who has given me all these years of movement and visions to cherish. When my last hour will come, I hope to be able to embrace those final breaths even as a newborn

Continued on next page...

inhales the very first, likely shocked at the transition from the silent, warm familiarity of mother to the bright and noisy world of birth.

Perhaps that's why I have never made resolutions at the New Year. I'll likely fail to eat less or exercise more. I will resolve however, to cherish the division of my cells, trillions of them, for even the signs of my aging remind me that I am still here, still thanking and praising the Creator for those I love, the congregation I serve, and the life we share. For when the division of my cells ceases, so will my breath. That's why I celebrate change. I resolve to celebrate change in the world, even if it's not according to my will. It just might be God making all things new. It just might be the "design."

- Pastor H

Christian Education Corner

Faith University In January, 9:30 a.m., Fellowship Hall

- **January 5 – Epiphany Party (see page 3)**
- **January 12 – Special Guest, Pastor Dianne Garcia from Roca de Refugio church (see page 6)**
- **January 19, 26 and February 2, 9 – Briefly, Perfectly Human Book Discussion**
 - Briefly Perfectly Human is a memoir by Alua Arthur, a leading death doula in the United States, that explores how embracing death can lead to a more fulfilling life. Arthur's memoir weaves together her own life experiences with the stories of people she has helped as a death doula. She argues that thinking about death can help people find new potential in their lives and live more authentically. Reviewers have called the book "a poetic, inspiring book", "a beautiful, raw, light-bringing experience", and "a deeply urgent, divinely-inspired memoir." Pastor Leslie will lead us in conversation: part teaching, part discussion, part exploration over this four-week study as we learn how to embrace death so that we may fully live. Books are available in the CrossWay beginning Sunday, January 12, and are \$10.00. You can pay via our website, Venmo @christ-lutheran-3, or the offering plate.

Preschool & Elementary Sunday School

Preschool

Sunday, January 5: Epiphany Party and Banner-making in Fellowship Hall

Sunday, January 12: Godly Play Lesson

Sunday, January 19: Godly Play Lesson on MLK (Children's Chapel)

Sunday, January 26: Pancakes and PJ's

Elementary

Sunday, January 5: Epiphany and Banner Making Party in Fellowship Hall

Sunday, January 12: Bible Lesson

Sunday, January 19: Godly Play Lesson on MLK (Children's Chapel)

Sunday, January 26: Pancakes and PJ's

Upcoming Events

Epiphany and Banner Making Party, January 5

We are blessed to have many creative and artistic people at Christ Lutheran, and we are grateful to Patti Lynch and Mary Overstreet who will lead our children in painting banners for the Epiphany Season at Christ Lutheran! This will take place at a special party we will have (all ages invited) on January 5 at 9:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. There will be a hot chocolate bar and a telling of the story of Epiphany. Children should dress in clothes that can handle a few paint splatters!

“Un-hanging” of the Greens, January 5

Help! We need lots of willing folks to join in the “un-decorating” project following the 10:30 a.m. worship service on January 5. The sanctuary was beautifully decorated for the Christmas season, but now those decorations need to come down, get packed up, and be put away until next year. Please stick around after worship to share the work. It goes quickly! We promise. Thank you in advance for helping!

Growing our Wednesday Night Dinners – All are Welcome

This past fall, the parents of our choristers started hosting simple dinners for fun and fellowship on Wednesday nights at 6:15 p.m. Our goal this spring is to continue growing the community of people who gather for Wednesday dinners, now welcoming the entire congregation to join! Each Wednesday (Jan. 8, 15, 22, and 29), church members will help to prepare the meals. If you would like to help, you can sign up for a January dinner here: <http://bit.ly/4f14kDQ>

Once we have a team signed up for each week, we will reach out to coordinate meal planning for simple meals. Meals are provided on a free will basis, and you can bring cash or Venmo the church @christ-lutheran-3.

Please join us and be part of the community we are creating on Wednesday nights! If you have any questions, please reach out to Natalie Stone (nataliestonetate@gmail.com).

Visitor & New Member Wine & Cheese, January 16

The CLC Welcome Team invites all visitors and new members to a Wine and Cheese gathering in the CrossWay on Thursday, January 16, from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. We will gather for lively conversation in a casual and comfortable setting to get to know one another better. There will also be special activities for the children with Ms. Carrie. Please join us and get to know more about CLC in an evening of fellowship, fun, and food.

Liturgical Planning Team Meeting, January 21

Do you ever wonder what goes into planning a worship service? Do you wish you could help select the hymns? Do you ever find yourself imagining a creative way to engage the congregation in faith exploration? The Liturgical Planning Team might be for you! This team meets two to four times throughout the year to plan the major church seasons, including Advent/Christmas and Lent/Holy Week. Together we develop the concept, themes, and ideas for implementation that bring the theology of these seasons to life. If you're interested in serving on this team, we will be meeting on Tuesday, January 21, at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall to plan for Lent and Holy Week. A light dinner will be provided. Please RSVP to Pastor Leslie or the office to let us know you will be there!

CLC is heading to Family Camp at the BEACH this Summer!

On July 31 - August 3, we invite you to spend a long weekend on the beach for Family Camp at the Mustang Island Episcopal Retreat Center! We use the term "family" loosely as singles and couples without children also are invited! It's about gathering with our church "family." Everyone stays in a beautifully furnished room with a private deck and bathroom and a view of the Gulf of Mexico. The program begins on a Thursday afternoon/evening and continues through Sunday lunch. Enjoy swimming, singing, surfing, arts & crafts, delicious meals, beach games, fishing, resting under a beach umbrella, a campfire, worship with great music, biblically-based teaching, and more. Online registration is now open. Folks are encouraged to make their reservations soon as space fills up quickly (usually it's full around mid-March). Pricing: 1 person - \$460, 2 people - \$620, 3 people - \$800, 4 people - \$990. Children under 2 are free. To register: <https://www.dwtx.org/events/mustang-island-family-camp-session-10-2024>

Thank You from the Staff

The staff thanks you, the congregation, for your Christmas gifts. Your thoughtfulness and generosity are overwhelming. We very much appreciate your ongoing support and love. You make Christ Lutheran a great place to serve!

- Pastor Leslie, Pastor H, Deacon Lisa, Carrie, Ainslee, Lori, Dan, Jeff, Mary, Carolyn, Sharon, Jesus, Clara, Sam, Justin, and Connie

New Members

Welcome to our 2024 New Members!

During 2024, Christ Lutheran welcomed 28 new members to our friendly fold! What a joy to worship, sing, learn, and share Holy Communion with these new brothers and sisters in Christ! We are honored you chose Christ Lutheran as your new church home, and we look forward to growing in faith with each of you.

April 2024

Elizabeth & Stephen Wright
Kathy Dicke
Nancy Hein
Becky & Rick Kimbrough
Ronda Lantz
Lorraine Potter
Gretchen & Tommy Spalten
Isabel Vaughan

November 2024

Tom Milam
Joshephine Hinds
Bianca, David, & Arianna Cerqueira
Sayle, Emily, & Meredith Fox
Joshua Halverson
Margaret & Michael Lassman
Steven Lunning
Veronica & Mary Parke
Julie Seamans
Beth & Stan Whitten

Praises to:

- The music ministry for a beautiful Lessons & Carols.
- Scott Merkord for coordinating the volunteers for Advent Soup Suppers.
- All those who brought cookies to the Cookie Exchange.
- Alfreda Pennington for hosting a lovely Altar Guild Lunch and coordinating the crucial ministry.
- Edna Robbins, Fred Valenzuela, and Carolyn Dufelmeier for the flower arrangements for the year.
- Everyone who participated in buying gifts for our Angel Tree families, the Mulligans Men's Group for organizing the Angel Tree gifts and preparing them for delivery, and Kathy Dicke and Tom Milam for helping to deliver them to Family Services.
- Everyone who participated in the Christmas Pageant, the children, the parents, Jesus Garcia, Lori Harris, and Sharon Wiedemann.
- Lucy's Circle for collecting toys to give to Inner City Development Christmas Shop.

Member News

Congratulations to:

- Nathan Krueger and Rachel Bandino who married on December 8.

Our Sympathy to:

- The family and friends of Nadine Helmke who died on November 27.

Outreach Opportunities

Mission and Outreach

In the Hebrew Scriptures, we read of many mandates from God to welcome the foreigner. As well, in the New Testament, we are advised to offer hospitality to the stranger in need. It's very clear that this is what God calls us to do. "Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it." (Hebrews 13:2).

On January 12, Pastor Dianne Garcia from Roca de Refugio church will be speaking during our Adult Education hour. She will share news about her ministry with an immigrant church in San Antonio and Nuevos Vecinos, an organization helping immigrant families settle in San Antonio. We invite you to join us in welcoming and learning from her.

Most refugees arrive with little but the clothing on their backs, so the needs are vast. Nuevos Vecinos is asking for the following items to help these men, women, and children: gently-used clothing, linens, toys, kitchenware, computers, and other household goods. They also need donations of new toiletries, larger items like beds, mattresses, furniture, and bicycles, and they gratefully accept any monetary donations. In support of our immigrant and asylum-seeking neighbors, we will hold a donation drive for Nuevos Vecinos **the last 3 Sundays in January** in the CrossWay. For more information, visit www.NuevosVecinosSATX.org.

Our **Mission and Outreach Team** will meet **Monday, January 13, at 6:00 p.m.** in the Parlor. All are welcome to join us. Please feel free to contact me or Paul Pfeifer, co-chairs of the Mission and Outreach Team. Thank you so much for your service to our neighbors in need.

- Deacon Lisa Diana

You are a gift and a blessing. Yes, you!

Family Service Angel Tree

32 individuals who look to Family Service for a myriad of social services had a wonderful holiday, thanks to you, our generous congregation! We have supported the Family Service Angel Tree for nearly 30 years, buying, wrapping, and delivering hundreds of festive gifts of toys, books, clothing, and household goods to make a stranger's Christmas merry and bright. We may never meet the recipients of these gifts, but they are in our hearts, and we are in theirs.

Inner City Development

We sent out a note to you asking if you could contribute new toys, books, sports equipment, dolls, stuffed animals, and games to the Inner City Development Christmas store. Neighbors in San Antonio's poorest zip code come to shop at the humble community center on Chihuahua Street once a year, "buying" gifts for their children. Prices are slashed to a 90% discount so the families can afford the gifts. And the proceeds are used to provide emergency services to help families in the neighborhood. You, our generous and big-hearted congregation, brought in bags and boxes of new toys, which we delivered to Inner City in mid-December. Oh, the joy on the faces of the people who helped us unload your gifts. Thank you!!

- Jan Norris

Soles4Souls Shoe Drive for Children and Youth

Each year our Sunday School classes compete to see which class can donate the most gently-used and new shoes. The contest will begin on Sunday, February 2 and end on February 23. Each classroom will have a box labeled Soles4Souls Shoe Donation.

A little background on Soles4Souls: Your old shoes provide new opportunities in your hometown. Did you know there are 46.5 million people living in poverty right here in the United States? Did you know that 16.1 million of these are children? CAM helps people living in poverty gain new dignity, courage and hope. When you donate your used shoes, you are truly helping people get back on their feet. Please donate your new and gently-used shoes during our Soles4Souls Drive.

CLC Benevolence Partner's Corner

Cross Trails Ministry

Cross Trails Ministry is a year-round camping and retreat ministry operated by the congregations of the Southwestern Texas Synod of the ELCA. Two sites are at the heart of this ministry: Lutheran Camp Chrysalis in Kerrville and Ebert Ranch in Harper. In 2023, Ebert Ranch was named one of "America's Best Summer Camps" by Newsweek Magazine.

Started in 1950, Cross Trails Ministry has continued to grow as people of all ages find a need to step away from their everyday lives to encounter God in new ways. When Cross Trails formed, the ministry was focused primarily on summer youth camp. Now it is a year-round ministry for youth, adults and families at Camp Chrysalis, Ebert Ranch and several off-site locations.

In 2023, Cross Trails hosted almost 1500 youth campers and over 2000 adult retreaters. Intergenerational ministry is growing. Grandparents, parents, children and extended families come together to summer camp or retreats. Together they find a place and time to renew, explore, grow, and play. "Meaningful Faith 365 Days a Year."

In addition to exploring, growing, and playing, Cross Trails is where pastors and church leaders are formed. Almost every candidate for ministry who grew up in central Texas reports that they either received their call to ministry or their call was affirmed through a camping experience or as a counselor for Cross Trails. A strong camp experience is vital to the strength of Lutheran congregations in this synod.

The Covid pandemic shut down all camping and retreats for most of 2020. When camp and retreating opened, expenses were much greater with the need for testing kits, personal protection equipment, enhanced cleaning of facilities, and air filtration upgrades. The lack of income in 2020 and increased expenses when camp did open resulted in the depletion of strategic monetary reserves. To replace these reserves and get long range building programs back on track, generous donations are needed more than ever.

In 2023, Cross Trails' annual operating budget was just over \$1.3 million. Camp tuition and retreat fees account for approximately 70% with the remainder coming from generous individual donors and congregations. Christ Lutheran has been one of these generous donors for many years.

(Cross Trails Ministry is one of more than 25 local, Lutheran, and international charitable organizations that share 20% of Christ Lutheran's weekly worship offerings. Your gifts are changing lives. Please watch this space in future Proclaimers for information on other CLC Benevolence Partners.)

- James Ehler

Small Group Corner

CLC Book Club, Tuesday, January 7, Primrose House

Readers! The CLC Book Club will meet on Tuesday, January 7 at 6:45 p.m. in the Primrose House to discuss *The Small and the Mighty* by Sharon McMahon. Judy Gomez will lead the discussion. Please join us!

The Gathering Thursday, January 9, 9:30 a.m., Bird Bakery

A group for moms whose children range from birth to college age. The Gathering is a place where moms can chat about anything and everything. It's a group to give advice when asked, to listen, laugh and just enjoy making and growing friendships. For more information, contact Joan Woods or Carrie Jowers.

Lucy Circle, Sunday, Jan. 19, Parlor

In January, February, and March, the Lucies will be reading and discussing Anne Lamott's sweet booklet: *Help Thanks Wow – The Three Essential Prayers*. At our first meeting for 2025, on Sunday, January 19, at 9:30 a.m. in the CLC Parlor, we'll discuss "Help," the first section of her book. You can find the book on Amazon or in a bookstore. If you're lucky, the SA Public Library may have copies available. All are welcome to join our friendly group.

- Jan Norris

Lunch Bunch, Thursday, January 16, 12:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Lunch Bunch invites seniors to gather for lunch on the third Thursday of the month. We will gather on January 16 at noon in the Fellowship Hall for food and fellowship.

Children and Youth Corner

Angelicus (pre-K) & Gloria (K-5th) Choirs – January Info & Spring Schedule!

The Gloria and Angelicus Choirs are looking forward to a fun and musical spring semester at Christ Lutheran. Parents, please note that there is no children's choir rehearsal on January 1 due to the New Year's holiday. Both choirs will return to rehearsals on Wednesday, January 8 at 5:30 p.m.

Rehearsals begin Wednesday, January 8, at 5:30 p.m. and run every Wednesday through May 7, except for the following Wednesdays:

- March 5 – Ash Wednesday
- March 12 – Spring Break
- April 16 – Holy Week

Angelicus Choir will sing in Worship at the 10:30 a.m. service on:

- February 9
- March 2
- April 13 (Palm Sunday)
- May 11 (Mother's Day)

Dates for Gloria Choir to sing in Worship at the 10:30 a.m. service are TBD.

First Communion

Class - Sunday, January 12, 11:40 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Worship - Sunday, January 26, 10:30 a.m.

Typically, 5th graders receive First Communion instruction and then their First Communion at Christ Lutheran. But we also are open to your child's spiritual timeline and readiness to partake in the sacrament. If you are interested in having your child attend First Communion classes, please reach out to Pastor Leslie or Ms. Carrie.

First Communion instruction will take place on Sunday, January 12, following the 10:30 a.m. worship service. Pastor Leslie and Carrie Jowers lead our First Communion class.

The schedule:

11:40 a.m. - Lunch

12:00 p.m. - The History of Holy Communion

12:30 p.m. - Make Bread for First Communion Sunday which will be held on April 30

1:00 p.m. - The Sacrament of Holy Communion

1:30 p.m. - Paint chalices (cups) and patens (plates) to use for First Communion

Class should conclude around 2:30 p.m., if not earlier. One parent is asked to attend with each child. The youth will celebrate their First Communion at the 10:30 a.m. service on Sunday, January 26. During the worship service, the youth and their families will be called forward for a special prayer and blessing to recognize this milestone in their faith lives.

Confirmation Ministry (6th-8th grades)

Confirmation Class will meet on Wednesday, January 8, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. upstairs in the education wing with Pastor Leslie and Ms. Carrie. We will have pizza to make the evening easier to manage. We will be studying the Lord's Prayer.

Camp Chrysalis Speaker in Fellowship Hall Sunday, January 12, (1st - 12th graders)

On Sunday, January 12, during the Sunday school hour, a representative from Camp Chrysalis will visit with our parents of elementary through high school kiddos. Please join us in the Children's Chapel to hear more about Camp Chrysalis and all they have to offer for our children and youth this summer. You can read more about Camp on page 7.

January FX3 (6th -12th Grades)

Our middle and high school youth are invited on the 1st and 3rd Sundays each month from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. for a special time of faith and fellowship with friends. These evenings will consist of Bible study, prayer, fellowship and dinner. We will explore scripture in an open conversation to link worship and the Word of God to our everyday lives. Our faith is always growing, so let's grow together! Don't forget to bring a friend!

Schedule for winter and spring:

January 5: No FX3

January 19: Service Project in Fellowship Hall for CAM

February 2: Work on Souper Bowl of Caring Skit

February 16: No FX3 due to Monday Holiday

March 2: Lenten Devotional & Dinner

March 16: St. Patrick's Day Party

April 6: Dinner & Fellowship

April 20: No FX3 Easter Sunday

May 4: FX3 Dinner & Fellowship

May 18: Pool Party (Last FX3 of the year)

Faith Stepping Stone

Our 3rd graders will be gifted the Spark Bible to acknowledge their new reading skills and maturity development in this Stepping Stone from the picture Bible. The Spark Bible is the NRSV translation, which is the same translation we most often use at church. The Spark Bible is also full of age-appropriate introductions and details to help your child enter the Bible more deeply.

On Sunday, February 2, 3rd graders are invited to celebrate and receive the Spark Bible from our congregation, thus marking a new stage in their faith development. During the 10:30 a.m. worship service, the children and their parents will be invited forward for a special blessing and to receive their Bible. To make sure we have enough Bibles, RSVP carrie.jowers@gmail.com that you can attend.

Third graders and at least one parent are encouraged to attend a Bible Navigation class during the Sunday School hour (9:30 a.m.) on Sunday, February 2. Our class will focus on helping children learn how their Bible is organized, how to look up passages, and how the children on their own, and together with their families, can use the Bible for faith formation.

High School Retreat: Save the Date

DATES: February 14-16, 2025, at Camp Chrysalis

The high school students are heading to the 2025 High School Youth Gathering - "True North" at Camp Chrysalis February 14-16, 2025!

High School students are having to make decisions about their life further and further in advance. Discernment can be difficult, but we know God is with us whether we know what we are doing next or not. No matter what path you are taking, if you are pointed toward God, discernment is made easier. The youth are invited to join other high school students for a time of faith-filled camp fun.

We will depart Christ Lutheran at 6 p.m., grab a bite at Whataburger and head to Camp Chrysalis. We will return after lunch and worship on Sunday, February 16.

The cost is \$125 per camper for the weekend. Scholarships are available. Please ask Ms. Carrie for more information.

Staff

The Rev. Leslie Price
Senior Pastor

The Rev. Howard Stendahl
Pastor

Carrie Jowers
Director of Faith Formation

Dana Ferraro
Director of Day School

Ainslee Ford
Office Manager & Accountant

Lori Harris
Office Administrator & A/V Tech

Deacon Lisa Diana
Minister of Mission & Outreach

Dr. Dan Long
Director of Music Ministry

Jeff Hammack
Organist

Mary Patino
Youth Choir Director

Sharon Wiedemann
Youth Choir Accompanist

Sam Tenorio and Justin Martin
Custodians

Jesus Garcia
A/V Tech

Carolyn Dufelmeier
Event Coordinator

Congregation Council

Michael Fischer,
President

Bryan Woods,
Vice-President

Jeff Timm,
Treasurer

Paul Pfeifer,
Secretary

Rhonda Barsalou,
At-Large Member

James Ehler
At-Large Member

Edna Robbins
At-Large Member

Pastor Leslie Price
Pastor Howard Stendahl

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



EPIPHANY PARTY

Children of all ages are invited to help decorate Epiphany banners, enjoy some delicious snacks, and listen to the story of the Epiphany.

Sunday, January 5
9:30 a.m.
Fellowship Hall