



Cornerstone

AUGUST 2021

Knowing God, Knowing the Times, and Being Empowered to Live in the World...

As we enter into the last month of summer, we again are amazed at how fast summer goes in Minnesota. We as people are also amazed at how the one true God is a God of love. Nothing we can do can make him love us more. Nothing we can do can make God love us less. God is not influenced or surprised by our behavior. But God is the one who created us and the one who redeems us from our brokenness. There is no other way to be whole than to accept his work on the cross for us and to live in His Good News for us. Trying to make ourselves worthy of his love or trying to earn his love does not work. We are called to receive his love as an undeserved gift so that we might have a new attitude toward our great God. We praise God, our Lord Jesus, and the Holy Spirit that every day he showers his blessings of mercy, wisdom, and gifts beyond measure to us. He does

Much more than we realize.

God has not just given us faith in Jesus and the Good News he has also put us into the body of Christ, His church. In the church we have been called to live according to the standards of Jesus. When we drive down the highway we appreciate the smooth paved roads, we appreciate the signs that show where the road is curving or going downhill. We even appreciate the speed signs. We do not go 40 mph because we prayed about it and it felt right, but because it says 40mph is the safe and the legally ordered law.

There are times when people really want the law and there are times when people do not want the law. There are times when people want God's grace, but do not want the law. There are times when people think that even grace is needless. We are living in such times. People make a

mockery of God and his goodness for us. When we as Christians want to be like Jesus, when we want to do what God says is holy, there are people who like to push back hard against it. People like to say, "you cannot put that on me!"

There is always a drift away from God. We forget to put others first. We forget to not do anything out of selfish ambition. Then pretty soon we say, "Well you should do whatever feels good to you." It is funny how we have to remind ourselves to feed the hungry, to visit the sick, to befriend the stranger. We live in such times when the church looks more like the world than it looks like Jesus.

Jesus is not discouraged, nor should we be. Christ is saying I want you to grow into who I made you to be. Stay close to me, stay in my love, and you will bear good fruit. Today and this moment is a time when we can again see what

is happening, the times we are living in and we can live out of Jesus, obeying his ways. You have been given the Holy Spirit, and you can make that daily decision to live empowered by God, to live for Him alone.

There is incredible public pressure, the need for a acceptance, the fear of ridicule and rejection that are saying to the church be quiet. The church has been far too quiet. Again, God says, "Worship only me, use my name only in praise, remember to rest in me, honor your parents and those in authority, do not steal, do not lie, do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not bear false witness, do not hate your enemies, do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth...Do you want to feel God's strength? Then love your family, love your neighbor, and love your enemy. And the God of peace will make himself known to you.

Pastor Ron

Charis Women's Study

Charis, the Thursday morning women's Bible study, will begin September 16. This year we are doing Beth Moore's DVD and book study of Revelation. We last did this study in spring of 2014, but feel a need to refresh our memories in light of current world events.

We will return to our original format at church of coffee, treat, and conversation at 9am followed by the study from 9:15am to 11:15am. For a fresh workbook, contact Joan, Becky, or Tami our church office administrator.

Mark your calendar; you don't want to miss this great study!

The Goal of the Christian Life

The Olympics are in full swing, and if you are anything like my family that means that we are watching obsessively and cheering enthusiastically every moment of sporting events that we only care about once every four years! Synchronized diving, amazing! Olympic Triathlon, spellbinding! Air Rifle Shooting, mesmerizing! Does it get any better than this?! While you may have a different favorite Olympic sport than I do, or not care about them at all, one thing we can all agree on is that all the athletes that are competing had to set lofty goals to just get to the point of competing in the Olympics, much less actually winning a medal. Without clearly defined goals and a constant focus on obtaining those goals there is no way that any of the athletes would be enjoying the success of being in the Olympics. With no goal, there is no direction, no clear forward progress.

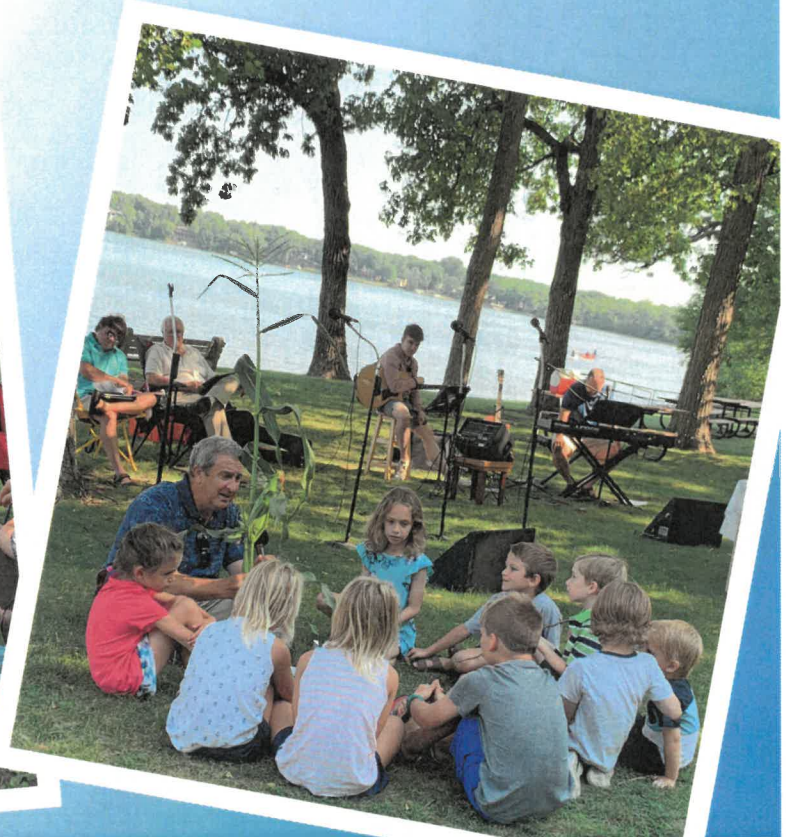
This led me to think about my life as a Christian, specifically what goals should those who call Jesus their Lord and Savior have. What is the purpose of life on this earth AFTER receiving the gift of salvation from Jesus? When we receive God's grace we are not miraculously taken up to heaven. No, instead we are left on this earth, so there must be a reason (and it is not just hanging on until we die, or Jesus comes to take us home). No, as we see in Ephesians 2:10, Christ has things he wants us to accomplish which he prepared in advance for us to do. So how do we find these things that we should make the goal of our Christian life? The best place we can turn to look is clearly God's word, the Bible. Let's look at just some of the things God tells us should be our goals as found in scripture.

1 Timothy 2:3,4 tells us that God's will for us is that we are saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. We were created for God's glory and to proclaim his praises (1 Corinthians 10:31; Ephesians 1:11-12; 1 Peter 2:9). It is God's plan for each of us that we "be conformed to the likeness of his Son" (Romans 8:29). Even in this life, we "are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory" (2 Corinthians 3:18). Paul labored with the Galatians "until Christ is formed in you" (Galatians 4:19). He told the Ephesians that our goal is

Congratulations
Pastor Wes
on your
Ordination!!!

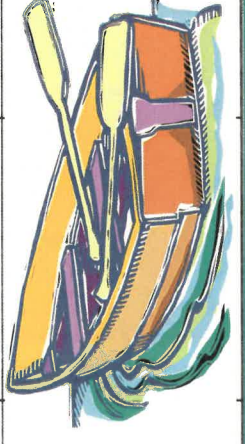


Worship Service & Picnic at Baker Park



AUGUST

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Aug 1 9:00am Worship Service 10:00am Coffee Fellowship	2 10:00am Coffee Time 6:30pm Whisper Study	3 11:00am Staff Meeting (Fireside Room) - Tami Greenwood 7:00pm Young Adult Study	4 6:30pm Ezekiel Bible Study 7:30pm Music Practice	5 6:30pm Memorial Committee	6 OFFICE CLOSED	7
8 9:00am Worship Service 10:00am Coffee Fellowship	9 10:00am Coffee Time 6:30pm Whisper Study	10 7:00pm Young Adult Study	11 6:30pm Ezekiel Bible Study 7:30pm Music Practice	12	13 OFFICE CLOSED	14
15 9:00am Worship Service 10:00am Coffee Fellowship 11:00am Young Families Cookout	16 10:00am Coffee Time	17 7:00pm Young Adult Study	18 7:30pm Music Practice	19 7:00pm Council Meeting	20 OFFICE CLOSED	21
22 9:00am Worship Service 10:00am Coffee Fellowship	23 10:00am Coffee Time 6:30pm Whisper Study	24 11:00am Staff Meeting (Fireside Room) - Tami Greenwood 7:00pm Young Adult Study	25 6:30pm Ezekiel Bible Study 7:30pm Music Practice	26	27 OFFICE CLOSED	28
29 9:00am Worship Service 10:00am Coffee Fellowship	30 10:00am Coffee Time	31 7:00pm Young Adult Study	<i>When you go through deep waters, I will be with you</i> ISAIAH 43:2			



"attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13). As people who have been liberated, our goal is to serve and live before God in holiness and righteousness all our days (Luke 1:74-75).

This is by no means an exhaustive list (far from it!), however there is one thing that all these verses have in common as a goal, **growing in our knowledge of the risen savior and being made more and more in his likeness.** This is the goal

Of the Christian life. It will look different for different people but will have a few key things in common; spending time with the creator and savior God through prayer, scripture reading, and devotion; spending time with other believers as we share together in the word and his sacraments; loving our neighbor as ourselves and sharing Christ with them so they too can experience his love and forgiveness.

As Christians, growing in our love for God and for other people ought to be the goal that dominates our life, giving us direction, and influencing all our decisions. Through the power of God, we can live the life we are called too, all the while allowing him to transform our minds as we conform less and less to the patterns of this world (Romans 12:2) and grow closer

and closer to Him. Like an Olympic athlete let us keep our goal in focus, constantly looking to Jesus Christ, the one who saves.

~ Pastor Wes

Financial Update for Christ Lutheran

We are thankful to God who has sent rain in due time. God knows our needs and for reasons we do not fully understand, the rain does not come as we please, but we trust Him. It is good to know our God cares and has only good reasons for all he does. As our congregation has an unpredictable life of people coming and going, of pandemic changing how we do things, so also our giving varies and changes. But we ourselves remember to be faithful to God in our giving and God we know will be doing exactly what He does, which is always good!

Our June offerings were only \$16,804. This is low even for June.

Our expenses were \$24,354 for the month. Which is normal. For the year we have received \$126,673 and have spent \$147,343 so we are \$20,175 behind. We expected to be about \$15,000 behind for the year at this time.

As we all work together on building our congregation to be in its mission for Christ we think of "What can we do?" First, we can pray for God to give us the desire to want to support His church in the world, work on our relationships of building each other up, and adjust our staffing to the ability we are able to afford. We know this is a transition time in our staffing, as

we have brought on Pastor Wes and Worship & Music Director Eric. The lead pastor's salary will go down as Pastor Wes takes on more responsibility. It will work out. But we pray for God's direction and for support of the ministries of Christ Lutheran Church.

We also thank Matt Mundahl for his work on the Church Council and for being our treasurer. He and Laura have made a new move to Wyoming. It has been a dream and passion of his to live out west. We pray God's blessings on them both and we thank them for the service they gave our congregation.

Summer of Fun (and if not fun, at least something a little different)!

Summer is a great season in the church to do something a little different and take a break from the usual routines that we all get used to and maybe need a break from. Along those lines I have started a couple of groups this summer for different populations of our church family. The families of young children are meeting together with Anya and I once a month for a young family's cookout at the parsonage (even though the first one was rained out and moved to the church)! These cookouts are a great time for parents of young children to gather for fellowship and encouragement. Raising a family is not for the faint of heart and being able to share the journey with others is a gift. Our next cookout is August 15th at 11am at the parsonage.

This summer has also seen the beginning of a young adult's group for those that have graduated from high school. This is a great way to reconnect with some of our past youth students and build new relationships with others! Meeting every Tuesday, this group is tackling what it means to be a new adult in this current culture. By tackling topics that are at the

the forefront of today's generation we look at what God requires of us and what a Christian response looks like.

~Pastor Wes

Connect Online!

A new regular feature that Pastor Wes has just begun is his "Jesus Changes Everything" videos. In these videos Wes explores how Jesus impacts every major aspect of life and changes the entire world. In 10 min or less he will focus on one topic and explore how Jesus changes it. The first video "Jesus Changes Religion" is already out and can be found on The Christ Lutheran YouTube Page OR Christ Lutheran Facebook page at <https://fb.watch/v/1NbmkCy8B/> Give it a listen and join in the conversation in the comments section of the video!

Speaking of online resources, the Christ Lutheran Church website (www.mpclc.org) is in the process of being updated and refreshed. It includes all usual information that you are used to, as well as easy links to our YouTube, Spotify, and Facebook pages. Take a look at the progress that has already been made and check back regularly to see all the updates that take place!

A Message from Council President, Shelly Anderson

What a great blessing it has been for Christ Lutheran Church to be a part of, and to experience, the ordination of Wes Asheim!!! God's fingerprints are so clearly evident, for He foreknew the plans he had for Wes, even as he served in ministry here as youth director, God had a plan for him and for the church body of Christ Lutheran! As a community of believers and family members in the blood of Christ we were able to participate in the spiritual blessing of the laying on of hands; to fan into flame the gift of God which is in Wes and is in you! Thank You Father!

We are blessed by a God who is ever faithful and full of grace, and nothing can thwart his plans! Wes humbly spoke to us as a newly ordained Pastor and shared the verse Ephesians 2:10, which I Point helped me to memorize, "We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, to do good works, which he has prepared in advance for us to do!" Our church has been doubly blessed by the gifts given to Wes and his ministry here. We are not our own, we are God's and belong to him. What acts of workmanship might God be asking each of us to do, both individually and in community? Perhaps it may not be seminary, but maybe God has been prompting you to act, speak, move, or serve. If so, would you consider sharing that prompting with myself or someone else?

*Your Sister in Christ,
Shelly Anderson*