

Christ Lutheran Church

10827 N. Main Street
P.O. Box 737
Mantua, OH 44255

Rev. Blake J. Martzowka

Kayla Ballentine

Administrative Assistant

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Sunday Live Stream: YouTube

Sunday School 9:45 am

Sunday Worship 11:00 am



January 2025

Christ's Messenger

The Heart of Christ, in the Midst of Greater Mantua



CHRIST *Lutheran* CHURCH

2025 Officers

Council:

Melisa Pozwick	President
Anna Lee Heint	Vice-President
Diane Lottig	Secretary
Laura Cleavenger	Treasurer
John Heint	Financial Sec

Committee Chairpersons

Katherine Flynn	Head Deacon
John Clark	Head Trustee
Christina Eaton	Education Director

A Message from Pastor Blake...

Recently I was asked whether freedom of speech is defended/guaranteed in the Bible. Freedom of Speech of course is a right protected in the U.S. Constitution, and with all rights, it is based upon the "inalienable rights" granted to human beings by their Creator (i.e., God). It is important to note, however, that this list of inalienable rights doesn't necessarily come from the Bible. After all, many of the formulators of our nation's constitution were Deists. They didn't believe in the God revealed to us in the Bible – a God who is directly involved in the ongoing story and lives of His creation out of love for them. They believed in a divine watchmaker, a God who set everything in order, and then stepped away from the picture after setting everything in motion. For Deists, a God who interacts with humanity through acts of divine revelation (such as God does at Mount Sinai, the Transfiguration, and the Resurrection of Jesus) is nothing more than a myth. Instead, many Deists, including some of the founding fathers, believed that God the Creator could only reveal Himself through the Law He had written upon the human heart "in the beginning."

As Christians who recognize that God has directly revealed Himself through events such as the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai, the Transfiguration of our Lord, and His miraculous rising from the dead, we must reject this image of a divine watchmaker. Yes, God did create all things, but He continues to sustain this creation and be directly involved in it. Because their concept of revelation was so different

Pastor's message continues on page 2...

Pastor's Message Continues



JESUS AND THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY
Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground... and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.... (John 8:6, 7)

from what we as Christians know revelation to be, we should expect for their conclusions about what constitutes an “inalienable right” to be different from our own. How do we know what our inalienable rights are as creatures? We know them from the Bible, the Word of our Creator which directly tells us who we are, how we should live, and what His purpose for our lives is. On that note, the question of whether or not freedom of speech is a God-given right is still a difficult one.

Certainly, God does not compel human beings to say anything. We certainly have the freedom to say whatever we desire. Nonetheless, because we have the freedom to do something does not mean that it is always right to do anything. God has given us His Law – how we should live god-pleasing lives – to tell us what we should and shouldn’t do. As Christians, those who have been forgiven their sins in Christ Jesus and set free from the condemnation of the Law for our sins, we are now lords of this Law. The Law does not determine our relationship with God. We are solely

righteous because of Christ Jesus and His fulfillment of the Law. As Luther says, we are lords of everything. Yet, at the same time, since we have been redeemed by the Crucified One, we also have a different concept of freedom than that of the world. We are set free to serve our neighbor. So, while we are lords of everything through Christ Jesus, we are also servants of everyone.

For this reason, we live lives in accordance with the Law because the Law reveals how we might serve our neighbor. The Law shapes the way we should speak. We shouldn’t talk negatively about our neighbors behind their backs (Proverbs 24:28-29), we should speak kindly and compassionately towards one another (Ephesians 4:23), we should seek to defend and build up our neighbor’s good reputation because good reputations are a gift from God (Ecclesiastes 7:1), and we should always be willing and quick to offer a word of forgiveness when our neighbor sins against us (Colossians 3:13). Is freedom of speech an inalienable right given to us by our Creator? Yes and no. We have been set free from sin, condemnation, and the Devil by Christ Jesus. This freedom, however, takes the form of service for our neighbor. “If any would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all.” (Mark 9:35) Therefore, whatever we say and do as Christians is done freely out of service for our neighbor. In summary, just because you can say something doesn’t mean that you should say something. Before speaking we should ask ourselves: Is what I’m about to say true? If so, is what I’m about to say necessary? And if so, how can I say it in a kind way that builds up my neighbor? Maybe we’ll all become a bit quieter when we ask ourselves these questions. At the same time, we should become more loquacious for the sake of our neighbors like the civil rights activists did all those years ago. Happy Epiphany and a blessed Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Pastor Blake

Worship Schedule

"Serving With a Heart Like Jesus"

DATES TO REMEMBER

Lectionary Studies

Tuesdays
@ Christ
10 AM

Catechism

Saturdays
1 PM

Bible

Study/Potluck

January 9th
@ St. Thomas
6 PM

Spaghetti Dinner

January 12th

Women's Guild Meeting

January 16th
6:30 PM

Council Meeting

January 19th
After church

MLK Jr. Event

January 19th
@ St. Thomas
6:30 – 8:30 PM

Evangelism Meeting

January 26th
After church

January 5th Communion

January 12th

January 19th Communion

January 26th

Greeter	Pat South	Lexi Ballard	Barb Lange	Kat Flynn
Acolyte	Jameson Flynn	Abigail Flynn	Natalie Goodell	Abigail Flynn
YACA	Amy Toothman	N/A	Jon Pozwick	N/A
Reader	Anna Lee Heinl	Jameson Flynn	Ron Stamm	Rebecca Goodell
Ushers	Melisa Pozwick	Joanne Q	Kat Flynn	Brian Lottig
	Jon Pozwick	Larry Q	Jameson Flynn	Lexi Ballard
Media	Christina Eaton	Melisa Pozwick	Christina Eaton	Melisa Pozwick
Power Point	Lexi Ballard	Jon Pozwick	Lexi Ballard	Jon Pozwick
Deacon	Nathan Goodell	Tracy Stamm	Joanne Q	Larry Q
Elder	Brian Lottig	Brian Lottig	Brian Lottig	Brian Lottig

4 C's Local Food Pantry

January donations being collected are
Pasta Sauce
Cookies

Individual Mac & Cheese Cups
Canned Pasta

Please place donations in the basket
in the narthex marked "4 C's"

Christ Lutheran Church is a drop-off
location for the 4C's

MEMORY CHALLENGE VERSE:

"If any would be first, he must
be last of all and servant of all."
(Mark 9:35)



For Your Information...



January 9th at 6:00 PM we will celebrate Epiphany with a special Bible study and potluck at St. Thomas. People from Christ and St. Thomas are invited. Come to learn about one of the most important seasons of the Church Year and to enjoy fellowship and food. Bring a dish to share!



January 19th from 6:30 to 8:30 PM we will celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day at St. Thomas by watching "An American Conscience: The Reinhold Niebuhr Story" followed by discussion.



2024 Sunday School Christmas Pageant

I am so proud of each student showing up and giving us their best. It was enjoyed by all. After, we had a celebration lunch with turkey, ham, and all the fixings. Thank you, Kat Flynn, for the cake! Thank you to the crew who helped set up, clean up, and all the things in between. You can view and share the pageant on the church YouTube channel.

Special thanks to:

Jake Ballard for helping narrate.

Tom Carr for our special music.

Rebecca Goodell for organizing the clarinet trio.

Melisa Pozwick for making the food magic happen.



Youth Education

Christina Eaton
Christian Ed Director

Sunday School

Thank you for the kindness and generosity to our
Angel Giving Tree families.

Both received holiday meals. We had a little extra money left over
and bought toilet paper and paper towels to add to it.

The families expressed great gratitude and were overwhelmed
with the response.

This year I didn't think that we would be able to
provide for our little girls first Christmas. Bad
moms went above and beyond for us and I'm
so thankful.

Thank you for helping me make it a normal
Christmas for my kids. I am truly grateful for
all of you



Regular **Sunday School** resumes 12/29 @ 9:45am.

Save the date for **Family Bowling Day**

Sat. Feb. 8th at 1pm.

Sign up in the narthex.

\$8 per person includes 2 games of bowling, shoes, pizza, and
soda.

Skylanes 8311 Windham St, Garrettsville.

We are looking forward to an **outreach project** at

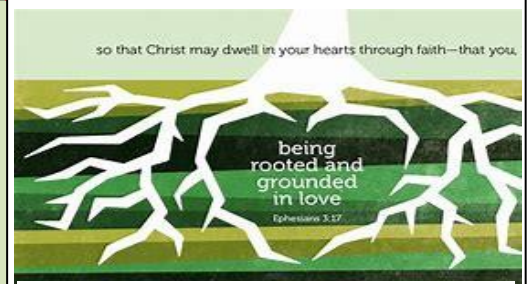
The Inn at the Pines-Memory Care

18122 Claridon Troy Rd, Hiram, OH 44234

We will prepare a skit to perform to the residences and share
the word of God.

We will meet at CLC at 1pm and car pool to the Pines.

Please sign up with Christina.



Sunday School

9:45-10:45 am

3 classrooms

Ages 3-6yrs Hannah Owen

Ages 7-12yrs Christina Eaton

Youth 13+ Melisa Pozwick

**Snack sign up posted on Sunday
School board.**

2023-2024 Sunday School Theme

"Rooted in Christ's Love"

Ephesians 3:17

Youth News

-We are prepping for the next
Pancake Breakfast on March 22 at
the Shalersville Town Hall.

-Please place your deposits for the
trip \$150 per person. We are getting
quotes for the flights and waiting to
hear back from the convention about
the hotels. That will determine the
final cost. Our cost calculator
suggests we are about little behind
on budget. More fundraisers to
come. Open to suggestions! Talk to
Melisa or Christina with your ideas.

-We have three pre gathering Bible
Studies! Come to SS to check it out!

-Gloria Dei - Youth Worship Night,
Sun. JAN 12TH meet at CLC 530pm.
Event is 6 to 8pm dinner included.
Let Christina or Melisa know if you
are coming.

Women's Ministry

All Women in the
Congregation

LOAVES AND FISHES COMMUNITY MEALS

January 15th 5:00-6:30 pm

The free meals are served the 3rd Wednesday of every month in the Christ Lutheran Church downstairs Fellowship Hall.

If you and your friends would like to help (you don't have to be a member to help), contact Diane Lottig at (330) 274-2868 for what is needed.

Women's Guild Meeting:
January 16th at 6:30 PM

All women of the congregation
are welcome.

The Loaves & Fishes Free Community Meal celebrated its 16th Anniversary on November 20, 2024. Using a turkey donated by the Flynns and cooked by Diane Lottig, 8 turkey and stuffing casseroles were baked for our diners. Also on the menu were sweet potatoes, broccoli, and Pat South's homemade cranberry relish. The meal was enjoyed by 40 people. The cost of the food was \$177 which includes many frozen pies. Homemade desserts were donated that night so we will use the pies at another meal. The donation box received \$151.00.

Workers for the meal were Pat South, Joanne Quesenberry, Barb Goodell, Fran Buxton, Shirley Bellar, Melanie Seal, Linda Hobson, Brian and Diane Lottig, and Earl Evans. Melanie is new to the group, having joined us in January. We admire her youth, energy, cooking skills, and her willingness to tackle any job. Once we called her "Cinderella" because she volunteered to clean a dirty oven! Earl has been a reliable worker who does dish drying after eating his meal. Ruth Martzowka was also a new worker in January. She gladly responded to a plea to help when 4 of our regular helpers were absent. We are thankful for Earl, Ruth, and Melanie and all our monthly helpers.

All our dessert people are equally appreciated. Fred Myers, Shirley's brother, was a new dessert contributor this year. Farmer member Kathie Havener has also continued her dessert ministry. Tracy Stamm, Linda Hobson, Sue Haydu, Kat Flynn, and Melanie have also added greatly to our dessert menu.

We continue to thank others who have made our meals less costly. Maureen Ballentine's corn is always good. Beef from the Goodell family reduces our costs as well as the hams and turkey donated by the Flynn family. We also had bags of rolls donated from a recent meal. The 4 C's continues to bring leftover desserts and breads received from Heinen's to share with our diners. Earl has also helped others by donating groceries. Those not taken are given to the 4 C's.

Figures for each meal are recorded by Pat. Our average attendance this year was 46; average meal cost was \$111; average donations were \$104.00. A surprise donation of \$70 was received in Diane's mail in July from the daughter of a charter member. While shopping for the June meal, Diane and Pat chatted with this woman in the Wal-Mart checkout line.

To make extra money, The Loaves & Fishes group participated in the Fall Fest. Cookies were baked for a donation from those wanting them. We took in \$177 and after expenses were deducted, we made \$106.44. This was our first fundraiser.

Please note that Loaves & Fishes is a separate ministry not run by the Women's Guild. We deal with cash and exist by donations. The group did receive a 10% tithe from the Guild's Rummage Sale - \$117 - and the group can request money set aside in the church budget if needed.

By God's grace we've been happy to sponsor this monthly meal for 16 years and hopefully for many more to come.

Written by Diane Lottig

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE:

Blessed New Year to everyone. Hope this year finds you happiness and peace. As we welcome visitors to our services and other activities, we would like to remind everyone about our duty to keep our church clean and orderly. Please make sure we clean up after ourselves to make sure we put our best foot forward. We have issues with people dumping items in the Sunday School rooms and other spaces. We also need to clean up the rooms that we occupy instead of walking away and expecting others to clean up after you. We need to treat it better than we do in our own homes. Thank you for all your help and support during 2024 and I look forward to all the wonderful time we will spend in 2025.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 440-547-3027 or send an email to clcmantua737@yahoo.com.

COUNCIL MEETING:

Our next council meeting will be held on **January 19th** after service. We welcome anyone who would like to attend the meeting.

TRUSTEES:

The pavilion is on its way. We are waiting for final approval on the drawings before we can start the building. Please look for more information in the upcoming months.

TREASURER'S MESSAGE:

Following is our financial data from the past 3 months:

Month	Income	Expense	Net Income	YTD Net
Sept 24	\$14,357	\$13,115	\$1,242	\$169
Oct 24	\$9,558	\$11,756	-\$2,198	-\$2,029
Nov 24	\$10,287	\$11,850	-\$1,563	-\$3,592
YTD Oct	\$124,135	\$127,727	-\$3,592	

Tim Snodgrass/Laura Cleavenger

EVANGELISM COMMITTEE:

Our next Evangelism meeting will be **January 26th** After Church. Below is the detail:

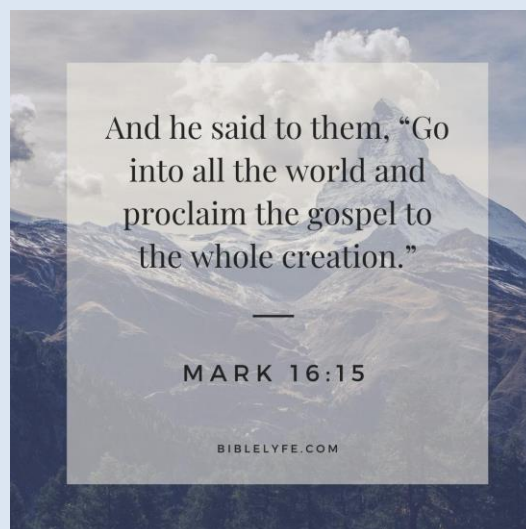
- 1.) The updated Picture Directory will be sent to the printer during November and will be ready shortly after for distribution.
- 2.) If you have not done it yet, please fill out the medical form and get it to Kayla. If anything, please supply us with an emergency contact. This will help get your help quickly.
- 3.) Kat is organizing a **Financial Peace** event. She is currently working on getting the information and is planning for it to take place February 2025. So be on the lookout for more info to come.

Up Coming Activities

- 1.) **Spaghetti Dinner** Fundraiser – **January 12th** after church.
- 2.) **Martin Luther King Event** – We will celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day at St. Thomas by watching “An American Conscience: The Reinhold Niebuhr Story”, followed by discussion. Join us **January 19th** from 6:30-8:30 PM.
- 3.) **Family Bowling** will be **February 8th** at 1 PM at Skylane in Garrettsville. Cost is \$8 per person and it includes 2 games, shoes, pizza, and soda. Sign-up sheet in narthex.
- 4.) **Chili Bar and Game Night** – **February 22nd**. Will possibly be held at St. Thomas.

Look for more exciting items as they unfold.

Please come to the meeting to help brainstorm new ideas on how to get our church out to the community.



God answers prayer.

At Christ Lutheran, we know the power of prayer.

Ezekiel 22:30 says, *"I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before me IN THE GAP on behalf of the land."*

GAP, (God Answers Prayer), is one of these prayer ministries. Those who serve in this ministry serve in the gap that Ezekiel wrote of as they are available to pray for people.

Please contact Barb Goodell who will begin the prayer chain for your need.

GAP MINISTRY

Barb Goodell	330-274-2161
Hannah Owen	330-931-0839
Kelly Britt	330-357-1101
Diane Lottig	330-274-2868
Linda Hobson	330-562-8327
June Zamecnik	330-281-7202
Tracy Stamm	330-571-0304
Shirley Bellar	330-281-8327
Anna Lee Heintz	330-842-2080
Joanne Quesenberry	330-274-2991
Christina Eaton	234-703-9735
Pat South	330-257-0948
Ellen Froelich	330-274-2081

Birthday Blessings on your special day and throughout the year!

Natalie Goodell	1/2
Robert South	1/4
Brian Pozwick	1/7
June Zamecnik	1/11
Mike Schneider	1/15
Brian Lottig	1/20
Diane Lottig	1/21
Charles Owen	1/27
Diane Perrine	1/27

Prayers for Hope, Healing, Comfort & Guidance

Members

Eva Flynn, Corey Flynn, Fred Myers, Donna Snider
The Family of Kay Kravcisin

Young Families

The Ballard/Eaton Family, The Ballentines,
The Flynns, The Goodells, The Goodrichs,
The Koerlins, The Martzowkas, The Owens,
The Pozwicks, The Rickseckers, The Sandricks,
The Swires, The Toothmans, The Tutwilers

Shut-ins

Linda Koerlin, Tom Briggs,
Jill Kravcisin, Becky Krichbaum

Friends & Family

Steven Blunk, Patty & Denny Pesecky,
Linda Havener, Lisa Bey, Rick Kilpatrick, Sam Weise

Military Service

Caleb Dean Pete, Robert South, Owen Heintz
Monte Stamm

Baptismal Birthdays

Karl Koerlin – January 1st
Larry Quesenberry – January 1st
Timothy Bodnar – January 6th
Rebecca Goodell – January 7th
Anna Lee Heintz – January 7th
Brian Pozwick – January 7th
Mike Schneider – January 15th
Diane Lottig – January 21st
Carley Kerkhoven – January 22nd

Wedding Anniversaries

Rob & Erin South – January 3rd