

# The Messenger

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

February 2024



## February Birthdays

Ed B	1
Addison C	1
Daniel L	1
Jacob L	4
Jacob M	4
Bill R	5
George M	8
Adam L	8
Lisa P	12
Kay S	12
Karen L	20
Melissa I	21
Paul O	22
Rainer F	25

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## Volunteer Opportunities

What are your special gifts or talents? Where do you feel that you can plug in and help feel and feed the pulse here at CELC? What best suits your time availability? Do you work better solo or with a team? We want to help you feel connected and wanted here at CELC.

We encourage everyone to prayerfully consider what gifts and talents that they can share with the church family. Each of us are needed and wanted here at CELC. Each of us are special and loved. Please contact the church office to get connected.





# Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church Congregation Council Meeting Minutes January 8, 2024

*Draft version. Minutes not officially approved until the following Congregation Council meeting.*

**Present:** Pastor Laura Kuntz, Ryan Smarsh, Amy Lodge, Chuck Heindrichs, Eric Mohny, Tim Gottshall and Katie Koch

The in person meeting was called to order by Council President Ryan Smarsh at 6:35 p.m. and opened with a reading and prayer.

Review and officially accept minutes from previous Council meeting

**Motion:** Accept minutes of the December 11, 2023 Congregation Council Meeting.

**Motion:** Chuck Heindrichs

**Second:** Eric Mohny

**Motion passed.**

## Treasurer's Report

### Financials thru December 31, 2023

	December	YTD	
<b>Income</b>	\$30,683	\$235,703	
<b>Expenses</b>	\$10,506	\$235,780	
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$20,177</b>	<b>-\$77</b>	
<b>Organ Loan</b>	\$17,887	Pledges Reserve of 12/31/2023	\$3,534
<b>External Funds</b>	\$813,295		
<b>Internal Funds</b>	\$59,100		

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Chuck Heindrichs reported there may be a correlation between discussing the Organ Fund at Congregation Meetings and an increase in giving. A Statement of Intent for \$6,000 was made to the NEO Synod for 2024. The proposed 2023 Operating Budget did not use the ERC Fund, so it went back into External Funds.

### **Property**

Tim Gottshall reported repair and maintenance notes from December 2023, and a list of items to-do items for 2024. The Property Committee will be meeting the 3rd Wednesday of every month, which will be January 17. Tim did clarify the snow contract was signed at the end of October for the season.

### **Pastor's Report**

Pastor Laura reported the Preschool Board and Consultant planning will take place on Saturday January 20, 2024. Lent will start on February 14, and she is still determining Lent services and when they will take place. The next book study is "When Church Stops Working" and Council has agreed to read the first chapter to discuss at the next meeting.

### **Previous Business**

The Call Committee has completed the second round of interviews for all three candidates. They are to meet this week to vote.

The audit is planned for January 27, 2024 and there are enough volunteers. This audit includes the Preschool Books as well.

### **New Business**

The Solar Eclipse Committee has met and are still waiting on the city to determine road closures and traffic flow. The city's next meeting is January 24, 2024.

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**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting.

**Motion:** Amy Lodge

**Second:** Chuck Heindrichs

**Motion passed.**

Ryan Smarsh adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer. Date for the next council meeting will be February 12, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Katie Koch  
Secretary

✚ **Do you have a student in 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade? Have they received a Bible from our congregation?** If not, please see Julie Pressnell to hear more.

### **Vacation Bible School 2024**

**2024 VBS is coming soon!** It's never too early to think about Vacation Bible School. We will be using the "Scuba" curriculum prepared by Group Publishing. VBS will be held June 10-14 (tentatively).

We need volunteers to make this mission possible. Please prayerfully consider how you will support this amazing outreach. Please see Julie Pressnell for more information.



### **Cleveland West Spring Rally**

**May 18, 2024**

**Cleveland West Cluster - NEOSWO  
Spring Rally**

**Our Saviour Lutheran Church  
Hinckley, OH**

**(More Information to follow)**

Cathy Byers

Grace Lutheran Church

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# **Congregation News**

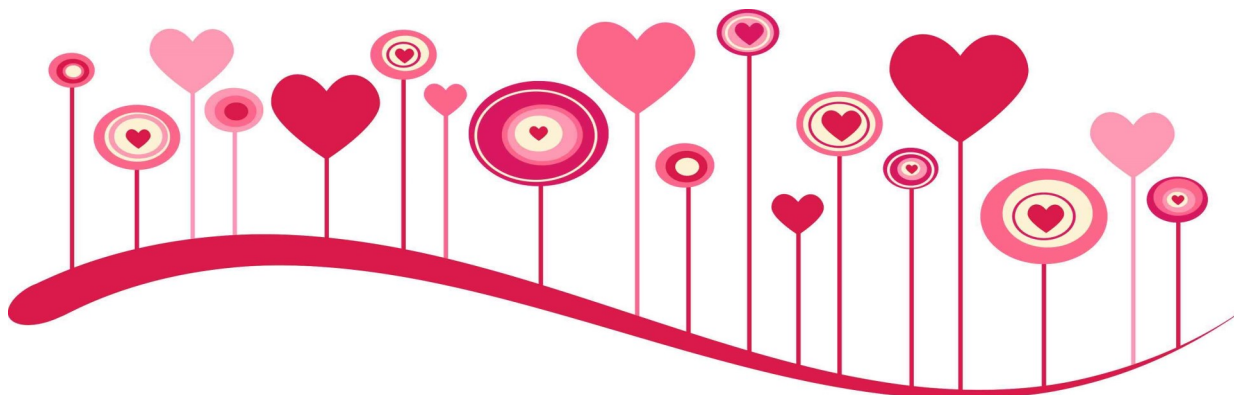
## **CELC Call Committee Update**

Our Call Committee has met all three candidates for a second interview. We are spending much time in prayer and in listening for God, as we try to discern which candidate possesses the best gifts to serve our congregation's needs well and are in harmony with our members' survey results. We are grateful that Pastor Mitch, Ohio Northeastern Synod Assistant to the Bishop, who continues to make himself available to help us with any questions we may have despite his overloaded schedule. Please note that it is still necessary to protect the identities of the pastors we interviewed, as they all are currently serving other congregations which they love. Thank you for your help in this matter, and for uniting in prayer with us, as we continue to do our best to discern who will be our next pastor. *Bless all that we do, so that we can do what you bless. Hear us, O God. Amen.*

## **Benevolence for 2023**

The generosity of the members and friends of our church in 2023 was truly an expression of a commitment to support others in need in our community. Our benevolence giving to the organizations designated by the congregation was \$6,140 which was divided equally or \$1,535 to each of the organizations listed below:

1. Haven Center (the Lorain County homeless shelter) *Our church housed and fed homeless families for a decade under the Family Promise program in Lorain County*
2. Redeemer Crisis Center on West 25<sup>th</sup> Street where our members assist with packaging food for distribution
3. Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio, Lorain
4. Community Resource Services of Avon Lake



## **Financial Summary 2023**

The church budget for 2023 called for a deficit of \$39,000 and a projected reduction in monthly contributions. We qualified for the Employee Retention Credit (ERC) program which provided funds for small business and churches. Our application was approved and we received \$32,000 in October of 2023. We were prepared to apply that to our deficit at the end of the year. December contributions saw three large contributions of \$16,000 above normal monthly giving reducing the projected budget shortfall.

A “next year” budget at our church is drafted and presented at the September Council meeting of the year prior to the budget year and approved for congregational presentation in the October Council meeting. The mailing goes out before the Fall Congregational meeting. The 2023 budget was done when utilities costs were rapidly rising for everyone, snow removal was about \$9,000 in 2022 so it was made \$6,500 for 2023 and, luckily, we experienced a mild winter. Office Expenses and services did not rise as inflation slowed a bit and a more efficient copier was put into use. Listed below are the more significant budget items where expenditures were below budgeted amounts.

\$6,500 for snow removal and spent less than \$4,700

\$18,000 for Electricity and spent \$13,000

\$17,000 for Gas and spent \$11,500

\$7,000 for General Maintenance and spent \$4,500

\$25,000 for Office Expenses and spent \$18,000.

The overall deficit for 2023, with a strong December contribution showing and expenses in some areas below budgeted amount, was a minus \$77. As well, the Employee Retention Credit of \$32,000 was not used and will be held in reserve. The 2024 approved budget was prepared with a set of assumptions concerning a new full-time pastor with perhaps a wife and family as well as speculation as to a start date.

## **Mission Partner**

For 2023, our Mission Partner was the Northeast Ohio Synod (NEO Synod) which may not be as familiar to members as some of our benevolence organizations. The NEO Ohio Synod has over 150 churches in an area ranging from Youngstown in the east, to Akron and Wooster in the south, and to Lorain in the west. Our involvement with our Synod is significant. Our church member, Sue Frantz, is a member of the Synod Council and is very active. The Synod is also the central place for our church and the Call Committee in seeking a new pastor. The call process has Synod assisting in identifying potential candidates and helping us along in the process. Each church is asked to provide support to the Synod and for 2024, we have pledged \$6,000. Approximately 50% of our pledge to Synod is sent to the ELCA church in Chicago by Synod.



# February

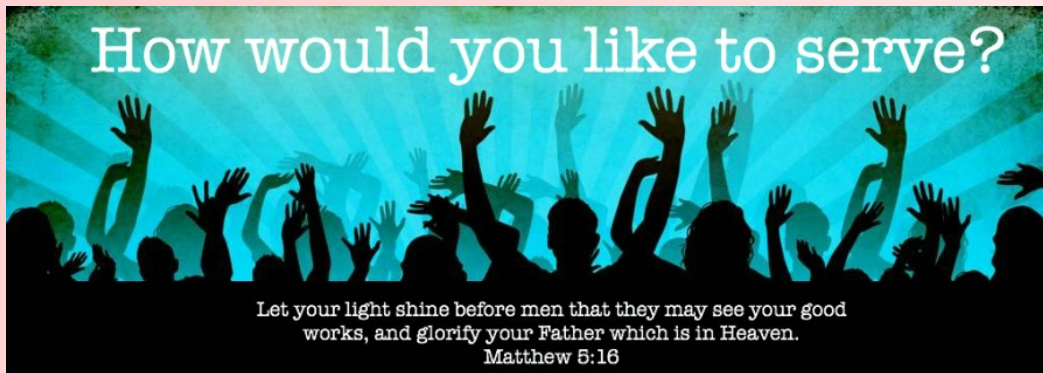
# 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 10:00am Holy Worship 10:00am PreK-6th Grade Sunday School during worship 11:15am Book Study 5:00pm 2024 Eclipse Team Meeting	29	30	31 6:15pm Bell Choir Practice 8:26pm Congregation Prayer in Place	1	2 <b>Groundhog Day</b> Pastor's Day Off	3
4 10:00am Holy Worship 10:00am PreK-6th Grade Sunday School during worship 11:15am Book Study 11:30am Choir Practice	5	6	7 6:15pm Bell Choir Practice 8:26pm Congregation Prayer in Place	8	9 Pastor's Day Off	10 9:00am Preschool Consultant Meeting
11 10:00am Holy Worship 10:00am PreK-6th Grade Sunday School during worship Transfiguration Sunday 9:15am Choir Sing 11:15am Book Study	12	13	14 Ash Wednesday Ash Wednesday Valentine's Day 8:26pm Congregation Prayer in Place	15	16 Pastor's Day Off	17
18 10:00am Holy Worship 10:00am PreK-6th Grade Sunday School during worship 10:00am Bells Play	19	20	21 6:15pm Bell Choir Practice 8:26pm Congregation Prayer in Place	22	23 Pastor's Day Off	24
25 10:00am Holy Worship 10:00am PreK-6th Grade Sunday School during worship	26	27	28 6:15pm Bell Choir Practice 8:26pm Congregation Prayer in Place	29	1 Pastor's Day Off <b>World Day of Prayer</b>	2

**CELC Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**32747 Lake Road**  
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**Worship**  
**Sunday 10:00 a.m.**  
**Sunday school for PreK-6th**  
**During Sunday Worship**



February 4

**Greeters:**

Usher: Eric Mohney  
Lector: Tim Gottshall  
Cantor: Michelle Young

**Live Stream:**

Altar Care: Nadine Carlson  
Bulletin Folding: Nadine Carlson  
SS Teachers: Kristen Luciano  
Bread Maker: Nadine Carlson

February 18

**Greeters:**

Usher: Brian Knip  
Lector: Tim Neumann  
Cantor: Angela Pedersen  
Live Stream: Bill Higgins  
Altar Care: Nadine Carlson  
Bulletin Folding: Nadine Carlson

**SS Teachers:**

**Bread Maker:**

February 11

**Greeters:**

Usher: Betsy Floyd  
Lector: Betsy Floyd  
Cantor: Rob Pedersen  
Live Stream: Bill Higgins  
Counter: Julie Skaggs  
Altar Care: Nadine Carlson  
Bulletin Folding: Nadine Carlson

**SS Teachers:**

Bread Maker: Marilyn Culler

February 25

**Greeters:**

Usher: Ryan Smarsh  
Lector: Laura Knight  
Cantor: Sue Frantz  
Live Stream: Bill Higgins  
Counter: Brenda Crout  
Altar Care: Nadine Carlson  
Bulletin Folding: Nadine Carlson

**SS Teachers:**

Bread Maker: Laura Knight