

THE MESSENGER

October 2025

The newsletter of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

Thank You, Volunteers!

We give thanks to God for the many hands and hearts that serve in our congregation. From teaching and singing to setting up, cleaning, cooking, organizing, and so much more—you reflect Christ's love in countless ways.



Your time, energy, and gifts make a difference not only in the life of our church family but also in the lives of those we are able to reach with the gospel. We are grateful for each of you and the joy you bring to our ministry together.

Thank You!

A special volunteer appreciation fellowship meal will be held Sunday, **October 12 at 11:30 am**. Our congregation's newest members will also be recognized and welcomed.



In this Messenger:

- 1) Volunteer Appreciation/
Choir Members Wanted
- 2) Pastor's Devotion
- 3) Calendar
- 4) Finance & Attendance
Anniversaries/Birthdays
Women's Groups
Camp Phillip
- 5) *How Can I Be Happy?*
- 6) Open Forum
Voters' Meeting
WELS Youth Night
Siding Update

Church Choir Singers Wanted!



Do you like to sing for the Lord? Join the church choir! No experience needed. Most practices are Wednesdays at 6:30 pm. Talk to Jennifer H. for more information.

Each Sunday following the worship service, everyone is welcome to join **fellowship time** in the basement.

Snacks and coffee are available. You can sign up on the bulletin board in the hallway to host.



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 **WELS**
Christ's Love, Our Calling.
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A God of Love

“And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love.” (1 John 4:16)

Back in 2003 Thrivent Financial produced a movie about Martin Luther. I don't know how many of you saw this movie, but one scene that stuck out to me is when a young child took his own life. The father asked Luther what God had to say about suicide. The caretaker of the church's graveyard refused to bury the child, but Luther did. He told the parents that God is mercy. Although, according to my knowledge and education, we have no example of Luther doing this, but this scene illustrates a point about the Reformation.

The very next scene Luther is preaching to his congregation and he says, “Terrible, unforgiving, that's how I saw God, punishing us in this life, sentencing sinners to burn in hell for all eternity. But I was wrong. Those who see God as angry do not see him rightly. If we believe that Christ is our Savior then we have a God of love, and to see God in faith is to look upon his friendly heart.”

Luther spent the first thirty years of his life viewing God as being angry against him because he was a sinner. If we lived our lives that way we would view God as being hateful since he demands us to follow his law perfectly even though we can't. If God only treated us according to his law, then the only conclusion we can have is that God is not a God of love.

We shouldn't have a God of love, but we do! That's what this passage from 1 John emphasizes. Think of how we see God's love in our lives. **We see God's love in simple things.** Perhaps randomly out of nowhere something good happens to you and you don't know exactly why: that's an example of God's love. **We see God's love in significant ways.** Maybe you have had a loved one who is sick and dying and the doctors tell you that they have done everything for that loved one, and it seems like your loved one will pass away. But then your loved one lives: that's an example of God's love. **We see God's love in personal ways.** There are times when we offer our prayers to God and he answers our prayers exactly as we have asked: that's an example of God's love. **We see God's love in the ultimate way.** He sent his Son to save us from our sins: this is God's love.

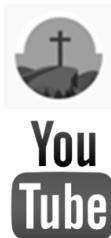
And as we view God through faith we no longer view God according to our thoughts but according to his good and loving will. Through faith we no longer see a God of hatred but a God of love who no longer sees us as sinners but as his perfect children. This is the main message of the Reformation and let us rejoice that we have a God of love.

- Pastor Neal Behm

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 9:00 am Bible Study 6:00 pm Catechism Class 6:30 pm Choir Practice	2	3	4
5 9:00 am Worship (Holy Communion) 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Teen Bible Study 10:30 am Adult Bible Study	6	7	8 9:00 am Bible Study 6:00 pm Catechism Class 6:30 pm Choir Practice	9	10 7:30 pm Swing Dancing	11
12 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Teen Bible Study 10:30 am Open Forum 11:30 am Appreciation & New Members Meal 3:30 pm WELS Youth Night	13 6:00 pm Council Meeting	14 6:30 pm Men's Bible Study 6:30 pm Women's Discipleship Group	15 9:00 am Bible Study 6:00 pm Catechism Class 6:30 pm Choir Practice	16	17 Fall Teen Retreat @ Camp Phillip (Fri-Sun)	
19 9:00 am Worship (Holy Communion) 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Teen Bible Study 10:30 am Adult Bible Study	20 6:00 pm Board of Elders Meeting	21 2:00 pm Worship @ Bell Tower	22 9:00 am Bible Study 6:00 pm Catechism Class 6:30 pm Choir Practice	23	24 9:00 am Women's Hospitality Group	25
26 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Teen Bible Study 10:30 am Voters' Meeting	27	28	29 9:00 am Bible Study 6:00 pm Catechism Class 6:30 pm Choir Practice	30	31	

8:00 am Sundays - worship service
on the radio (**96.3FM, 730AM**)

9:00 am Sundays - worship
service online at
[youtube.com/@christmerrill](https://www.youtube.com/@christmerrill)



WORSHIP LIVESTREAM Christ Ev. Lutheran Church provides an internet livestream broadcast during the **services**. The videos are available on the channel to watch at one's convenience. Please fill in the Online Friendship Register at <https://forms.gle/DtJGfDbpo1VeBYbo6> when you view a service.

Subscribe to the YouTube channel **[youtube.com/@christmerrill](https://www.youtube.com/@christmerrill)** to get updates about the live streaming schedule.

CHURCH FINANCIAL UPDATE

Our Offerings to the Lord (1/1 – 8/31/2025)

Approved budget: \$112,036

Actual offerings: \$92,787

Actual spending: \$98,631

Missions: \$11,355

NLHS: \$3,532

Thank you for your continued support of our gospel work here and beyond. For more information see the Treasurer Report posted near the elevator.

<i>Spiritual Growth Weekly Averages</i>	Aug
Guests at Worship	13
Bell Tower worship	7

OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

9 Terry & Danielle F. 22 Rick & Ashley K.
10 Phil & Jackie M. 27 Lee & Dottie K.
19 Tom & Brenda Z.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

2 Jackie M. 15 Jerry N.
2 Bill W. 18 Hunter K.
6 Rusty G. 22 Delainy S.
10 Chris R. 24 Brittany F.
12 Leslie K. 29 Mary T.
14 Janet P.



WOMEN'S DISCIPLESHIP GROUP:

Ladies, you're welcome to join our monthly discipleship group time, held at **6:30 pm** on the second Tuesday of each month. We are discussing "Reflections on Our Unique Callings: Men, Women, and the Body of Christ." Contact Colleen for more information.



SUPPORT CAMP PHILLIP: Relaxation and Renewal

As a corporate member of Camp Phillip, our congregation shares in the blessings of this ministry. Our gifts not only support Christ-centered camping experiences, but also provide our members with a 10% discount on all Camp Phillip programs.

Each year, offerings from congregations like ours make possible over \$20,000 in program discounts for hundreds of families. This year's door offering will help ensure those blessings continue into next year.

This October, you'll have the opportunity to support Camp Phillip through a door offering. A box marked "Camp Phillip" will be available—every gift helps people experience Christ-centered rest and renewal.

Thank you for partnering with us in encouraging and supporting this ministry!

CAMP PHILLIP REPRESENTATIVES NEEDED

As a member of Camp Phillip, our congregation will elect two male members (age 18 or older) at the October Voters' Meeting to serve as our delegates to Camp Phillip's annual meeting. Representatives help share camp opportunities, promote its mission, and serve as a link between our church and the camp. If you are interested in being nominated or would like more information, please contact Scott.

NEW! WOMEN'S HOSPITALITY GROUP:

All women are invited **Friday, October 24 from 9:00 to 10:30 am** in the lower level of the church to focus on



connecting and serving. We will have a short study on Biblical Hospitality and then create cards and care packages for various groups of people within our church family. Talk with Colleen to find out more.



How Can I Be Happy?



How can I be happy when people attack me for doing the right thing?

*"Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness."
Matthew 5:10*

Parents who won't let their teenage daughter go to R-rated movies might not win a "Favorite Parent" contest with their daughter's classmates because they seem too restrictive. They are only trying to look out for the welfare of their daughter. A factory employee working at a fast pace may get a talking to by others on the job. He might hear, "Stop working so hard. You're making the rest of us look bad." He's only trying to be a faithful worker and do his best. A freshman in high school has spent hours studying for the science test. Some of his classmates know that he'll do well on the test, so they ask him to let them copy his answers. He tells them "No." Those same classmates begin to make life miserable for him. He was only trying to be honest and not help others cheat.

Can any of these people be happy that they did the right thing? Is there any happiness in being looked at differently or having a reputation ruined? Wouldn't it be better to do things that won't cause conflict? It may surprise you, but Jesus says that people can have joy in their hearts for doing the right thing. "Blessed

(happy) are those who are persecuted because of righteousness (doing the right thing), for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Jesus knew that it isn't always easy to do the right thing. But with these words Jesus is talking to people who know him. They know who he is. They know he is God who came as the Savior to forgive their failures and guarantee a place in heaven for them.

People who know and trust in Jesus want to do the right thing. They want to be parents who look out for their child's well-being. They want to use their talents and abilities as best they can. They want to live honestly. They do this even if they are attacked for doing the right thing. In the way they live, they want to thank Jesus because he's promised them the gift of heaven.

Be happy knowing that there is someplace better waiting for you. It's a place where there is no backbiting or peer pressure. It's the place called heaven. Jesus promised it.

OPEN FORUM: Join the Conversation!

All members are invited to an Open Forum on Sunday, October 12, at 10:30 am in the fellowship hall. This is a great opportunity to share your thoughts, ask questions, and engage in informal discussion about important topics, including the preliminary 2026 budget, a vision statement and survey on how to best prioritize the Paroubek Estate funds. If you are unable to be onsite, please ask a council member for information on how to participate remotely.

Survey Topics: Proposed uses for the Paroubek Fund:

- Parsonage siding project
- Extra principal payment toward mortgage
- Pew repair and reupholster
- More decorative lights in the sanctuary
- Copier/printer upgrades
- Reserve the funds until the church environment is better aligned with intentional ministry development
- Hire outside help to finish narthex cabinet and trim installation/wall repair
- Replace driveway approaches
- One-time called worker bonus
- Install a new sign running perpendicular to the building
- New lighting in the narthex

Quarterly Voter's Meeting

Mark your calendars for **Sunday, October 26, at 10:30 am** in the sanctuary for our Quarterly Voters' Meeting. We encourage all voting members to attend. If you are unable to be onsite, please ask a council member for information on how to participate remotely.

Key agenda items include:

- Election of two Camp Phillip representatives
- Appointments to the Nomination Board
- Paroubek Estate fund plan
- Consideration of the 2026 budget



Thanks to everyone who helped with the fall highway cleanup!



We Nailed It!

Thanks to your incredible generosity, we have nailed down our fundraising goal for the parsonage siding project! Together, we raised a grand total of **\$12,811** for the Improvement Fund. Your contributions are the nuts and bolts of this project, and because of you, the project is now fully funded. Be sure to check out the new siding on the parsonage.