

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
917 EVERGREEN AVENUE
PITTSBURGH, PA 15209

In the Neighborhood for GOOD

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FEBRUARY 2020 NEWSLETTER

In the Year of Our Lord 2020 - Vol. 10, Issue 2

From Our Pastor's Desk

CHRIST-LOVING CONNECTIONS



I like to play around with the letters CLC. Yes, it stands for Christ Lutheran Church. It could also signify Christ Loving Community.

And Christ-Loving Connections.

Christ-Loving Connections sums up a key outcome of our recent Congregational Council/Staff/Admin team Retreat.

A #1 goal emerged: We work to create a safe, caring faith community. We withhold judgment, greet one another in friendship, build harmonious relationships, speak the truth in love, and warmly welcome those new to us.

That may seem obvious, but how many of us come to CLC with this goal in mind? Sometimes we drag our baggage into worship, not thinking about our attitude or how we impact others. Do we walk in the door consciously aware of someone we haven't seen for a long time, with the intent of reaching out to others, or

continued on inside page >

2020

In the Neighborhood for Good

2020



Mark Your Calendar!

**Fat Tuesday
CELEBRATION
4 to 7PM**

**Tuesday,
February
25**

Live Polka Music!



COVER

Did you know . . . That Fat Tuesday or Mardi (Tuesday) Gras (fat, large) in the French is another name for Shrove Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday, which begins the Lenten Season. To be 'shriven' was to do penance to prepare for the denial of self.

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**In the Year of Our Lord 2020  
Vol. 10, Issue 2**

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on high alert for that new person in our midst?

Out of the retreat came a few basic strategies for building a safe, caring faith community. And sometimes we just have to start with the basics:

**Be present.**

Focus on the present moment when coming to worship. Keep your head and heart in the present: Who is right in front of me? Who haven't I seen for a long time? Who is new? What opportunities for getting involved are being offered to me? The rest of the day and week will take care of themselves.

**Say Hello, Good morning, Nice to see you.**

Deb's Uncle Bob was the legendary greeter at House of Prayer Lutheran Church in Aliquippa. He never met a stranger and greeted every at the door with a big smile, handshake or hug, and a "How you doing?" in his classic Pittsburgh accent. What if we were to have 100 Uncle Bobs on Sunday morning?

**Smile.**

A little thing, perhaps, but greeting someone with a smile can make a world of difference. It's a tough world out there. A morning of smiles can make our week so much better.

**Be positive.**

One way to understand sin is that nothing works well most of the time. Or, to use an old Eastern European saying, "There is always a hair in the soup." We all do the best we can, even though it may not always be very good. We all need encouragement, not criticism. We all need

*continued on next page >*

support, not talk behind our backs. In healthy relationships, compliments outnumber criticisms seven-to-one.

**Speak the truth in love.**

If you have a concern or criticism, follow the advice of St. Paul and speak with some awareness of how you will impact the listener. Take the edge out of your voice and protect your relationship with the other person. The longer you hold onto your concern and criticism, the more difficult it will be to speak your truth in love.

**Introduce yourself.**

Walking into a church for the first time can be overwhelming. A new building, a roomful of strangers, a new way of doing things (and where's the bathroom, is there childcare, where do I sit, what do I do during worship??!!). The Old Testament might be summed up as simply WELCOME THE STRANGER IN YOUR MIDST! If you don't know someone, introduce yourself!

**Be kind, relational, compassionate, and caring.**

CLC is a laboratory where we practice the art of following Jesus. When we come to CLC, we consciously work to see Christ in our neighbor.

*Pastor Scott*

Scott M. Olbert, Pastor, CLC



**Follow us on Facebook and Instagram - #CLCMillvale**

**COME  
INVITE  
WELCOME  
SERVE**

The first 3 words of this Credo help us to fulfill the 4th, and in Serving, we fill our hearts with Christ and His Great Commission to spread His teachings to humanity. What a Mission! When you Welcome, let another see Christ in your eyes, your smile, your handshake or hug, and your help. Matthew 28:16-20

**FIRST  
COMMUNION**

Does your child seem curious about Holy Communion? Does your child ask questions about the bread and wine? **If so, then it may be time for First Communion!**

Speak to Pastor Olbert about planning a First Communion.

Friday, February 14 is St. Valentine's Day. Tell someone that you love them. Tell someone that nobody loves them like God loves them and He wants them to have the best that life has to offer.



#### CHURCH OFFICE ORGANIZATION

Finding a replacement for Rheba Salac, our Administrative Assistant proved difficult, if not impossible. The next best thing is having Rheba working for us at home with our bulletins, inserts, newsletters, and other published materials.

Patty Ellison is learning the ropes as our Administrative Assistant in the church office. Presently, her hours are 9-12 Monday thru Friday. Along with Patty, we are using office volunteers to help with routine weekly tasks. Be sure to introduce yourself to Patty as the opportunity arises.

## GET INVOLVED THIS LENT

After ushering in Lent on February 26 with our Ash Wednesday worship at 7:00, we offer a great learning experience the five Wednesdays of Lent: March 4, 11, 18, 25 and April 1.

**Spiritual Drumming for Women with Pat Bauer:** Drumming is an ancient pathway for deepening into the sense of being centered, being in touch with your personal power, and becoming open to the Spirit. Join Pat for an inspiring five weeks.

**Meeting God in Paul with John Curry:** The teacher, Rowan Williams, offers a readable and insightful look at the way St. Paul opens up our understanding of God in Jesus Christ. As always, we value all that John Curry brings to the table as a master teacher.

**Contemplative Prayer with Pastor Scott:** Centering Prayer is a receptive method of silent prayer in which we experience God's presence within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than awareness itself. This method of prayer is both a relationship with God and a discipline to foster that relationship. Experience a different form of prayer with Pastor Scott.

**We will begin by gathering in the sanctuary at 6:00 for a brief time of greeting and prayer.** At 6:10, we will go our our course. Those who wish can remain at 7:00 for conversation and refreshments.

**Sign up at The Helping Place, by using the Connect With Us portion of the Welcome to CLC card, or call the church office at 412-821-4300.**

## 2020 CLC CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

Beth Rios--President, Julie Slepecki--Vice-President, Jackie Worst--Recording Secretary, Mandy Freiss--Corresponding Secretary, Ray Lardin--Treasurer, Shareen Jordan, Steve Slepecki, Linda Thens, Pat Bauer, Eric Stennett, Bernadette Thompson, and Tina Galioto.

**The FAITH and FAMILY CAFÉ 2020 OPENS at 8:30AM Sundays in The Gathering Place during CLC KIDS!!**  
**CLC's "Millvale and Beyond" Series features key leaders with the pulse of our communities at their fingertips.**

**February 2: Dr. Eric Stennett, Shaler Middle School Principal - "What's Going on in Public Education?"**

February 9 Lindsey Williams, State Senator, 38th Sen. Dist.

February 16 Zaheen Hussain, Dir. Sustainability, New Sun Rising

February 23 Dave Breingan, Exec. Director, Lawrenceville United

March 1 Melissa Stoller, Ass't. to the Bishop, SWPA Synod

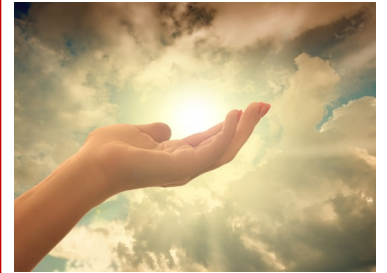
March 8 Melissa Stoller, Ass't. to the Bishop, SWPA Synod

March 15 Melissa Mason and Jackie Boggs, North Hills Community Outreach

22 Bethany Hallam, Allegheny Council-At-Large

*The Gathering Place . . .*

**CLC's newly renovated GATHERING PLACE is ready for business! Check it out for your special events, business meetings, presentations - Call 412-821-4300 or stop in for a visit.**



Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.





## **“THE NEIGHBORHOOD TABLE”**

Please join your neighbors at **Christ Lutheran Church’s NEIGHBORHOOD TABLE**

for a free meal. This is a neighborhood dinner here at Christ Lutheran on the first Monday of every month.

**Monday,  
February 3  
at 6:00PM**

**WE ARE NEED OF  
DESSERTS** ~ If anyone would like to help set up or make desserts, please call Jaime Renda, 412-523-6927. The next Dinner will be on Monday, March 2.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD TABLE**

The first Monday of every month we serve a delicious meal for friends from the community and for our members. But there is more...

There is free legal consultation provided by Tricia Sorg and Mandy Wolovich. But there is more....

Erin Hart from Farm-to-Table will soon be coming to lend her assistance for food access and preparation for seniors. But there is more....

We are exploring opportunities with State Representative Sara Innamorato for her office to offer ways that state services can be accessed by her constituents and questions answered.

**IF YOU WANT TO HEAR THE SERMON, NOW YOU CAN! We love having children—and lots of them—at worship, and we want parents to be spiritually nurtured by worship, prayer, and preaching. Our Nursery is up and running each Sunday. Not only that, the Nursery is staffed by qualified childcare providers who supply consistent and competent childcare Sunday after Sunday during Worship. You’ll find the Nursery next to the CLC Choir rehearsal room.**

Inviting your friends, neighbors, and acquaintances to worship with us is a wonderful way to introduce people to CLC. In our world, people are hungering for a word of hope, a community of caring people, and a place to grow spiritually and relationally. You can be the friendly face that invites someone to find their way to their spiritual home.

## **It’s FAT TUESDAY at CLC Tuesday, February 25 from 4-7PM**

### **KEVIN SOLECKI RETURNS FOR SHROVE/FAT TUESDAY**

Grammy-nominated accordionist, Kevin Solecki, returns February 25 from 4-7 for our Shrove/Fat Tuesday dinner.

Come and enjoy the newly renovated Gathering Place with plenty of room for eating AND dancing. Kevin provided an entertaining evening for us last year and we'll put him on the new stage front and center.

Shrove Tuesday, also known as Fat Tuesday, arose as a way to use up a household's eggs, butter, and fat prior to the season of fasting during Lent. Our menu includes potato pancakes, sausage, applesauce, dessert, and drinks. No cost for children 2 and under; for ages 3-15 the cost is \$5.00; and adults are \$8.00. Pierogies will be on sale from our CLC Youth (take out or eat in)!



**Eat-In, Take-Out**

**Enjoy POLKA MUSIC**

**Accomplished Accordion**

**by Kevin Solecki  
from 4 to 7PM**



## Coming to our Millvale Community Counseling Center!

Our three therapists for the Millvale Community Counseling Center have full clients loads! In only four months, we are reaching capacity!

So, we are grateful that we are adding two interns this semester to MCCC. Kristin Collins, Master's Level at Slippery Rock University, will be with us until May. Chris Slay, also from SRU, is a BSW Social Work Student.

Spread the word to everyone who might need help going through a bump in life, that affordable and quality counseling is available at MCCC. All anyone has to do is call the church office at 412-821-4300 to schedule an appointment.



## PUT THESE IMPORTANT DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR

|                                |                                         |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Fat Tuesday                    | February 25, 4:00-7:00 pm               |
| Ash Wednesday<br>Worship       | February 26, 7:00pm                     |
| Wednesdays<br>in Lent          | March 4, 11, 18, 25, April 1 at 6:00 pm |
| Children's Choir<br>Musical    | April 5, 9:30am                         |
| Maundy Thursday<br>Worship     | April 9, 7:00 pm                        |
| Good Friday<br>Worship         | April 10, 7:00 pm                       |
| Youth Easter<br>Worship        | April 12, 7:00 am                       |
| Easter Breakfast               | April 12, 8:00-9:15 am                  |
| Easter<br>Celebration          | April 12, 9:30                          |
| CLC Kids ends                  | May 17                                  |
| Faith and<br>Family ends       | May 17                                  |
| Confirmation                   | May 31, 9:30 am                         |
| CLC Youth<br>Work Camp         | June 14-19                              |
| CLC Kids GIG                   | June 22-26                              |
| Millvale Community<br>Carnival | August 8                                |
| Carnival Picnic                | August 9, after worship                 |
| CLC Fall Kickoff               | September 13                            |



## CLC GOALS FOR 2020

At their Leaders' Retreat, the staff, Admin Team and Congregational Council looked at the key traits of healthy and growing congregations. Working together, they chose to focus on six goals for 2020:

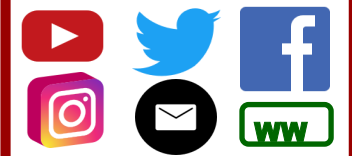
- We work to create a safe, caring faith community.** We withhold judgment, greet one another in friendship, build harmonious relationships, speak the truth in love, and warmly welcome those new to us.
- Children's ministry that kids don't want to leave.** Imagine kids being in an environment that allows them to understand God's love for them while being invested in by caring adults who partner with parents to disciple them.
- Genuine heart for the lost and the desire to embrace the mess.** Growing churches aren't just conscious of the lost, they pursue them and are ready to take on the messes of life they may bring.
- Clear outward focus.** Their members intentionally know non-believers, with budget spent to start new ministries and expand services.
- We have a strong core group, but also equip and invite others to serve.** Long-term members open the door for new members to serve, equipping the next generation to lead the church into the future.
- Shareable Church Communication that Inspires and Informs.** A church that is healthy communicates constantly.

We're connecting Your  
Family with our Sunday . .  
**HIGH SCHOOL  
SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**ATTENTION ALL TEENS and  
PARENTS of TEENS!**

**Don't forget, we are up  
and running with our High  
School Sunday School  
class! We meet on the 2nd  
and 4th Sundays each  
month.** All post-Confirm-  
ation teens are welcome.

**If you have a High  
School Student who would  
like to attend,** please email  
Steve Slepecki and let him  
know: [steve91281@  
hotmail.com](mailto:steve91281@hotmail.com). Or just flag  
him down before or after  
church. *Thanks!*



Please visit us at the  
CLC Website:  
[https://www.clcmillvale.  
com/](https://www.clcmillvale.com/) ;  
Youtube: [clcmillvale](https://www.youtube.com/clcmillvale) ;  
Twitter: [ChristMillvale](https://twitter.com/ChristMillvale) ;  
Facebook and  
Instagram: [#CLCMillvale](https://www.instagram.com/CLCMillvale).  
You can also email to:  
[ChristLutheran917@  
hotmail.com](mailto:ChristLutheran917@hotmail.com).

# Oh! What a Relief It Is

Joseph Imhoff

“Whew, is it finally over?” The Christmas tree is disassembled or if live at the curb for recycling, the ornaments and lights are boxed and stored, decorations both inside and out have been taken down awaiting next season. Oops, are those pine needles in the corner and on the rug, is that a stray piece of tinsel on the sofa, why is that mistletoe still hanging in the doorway? All that remains of the spectacular holiday feast is in the freezer in labeled containers. Christmas is over by December 26th or January 2nd so the world tells us.

Not so! Christmas has just begun for most Christians except for Orthodox and Coptic Churches. These believers do not live in an alternative universe or time dimension. If you think last month’s explanation for setting a date for Christmas was a tad confusing, the reasonings behind three branches of the Christian Church having that date at different times is circumlocutory.

Calendars are curious and varied, the calendar towel on my kitchen walls reads 2019, if it were Hebrew: 5780, Chinese: 4714, Buddhist: 2560, Muslim: 1441. Then there is the Mayan calendar which many believed that when its cycle was over a few years ago a cataclysm would take place. Each was designed to measure time, predict planting and harvest times, the changes in weather, the apparent movement of the sun, moon, and stars in the heavens, equinoxes and solstices, and fixing dates for remembrances or celebrations. And then there are fixed dates for Christian celebrations which seem unfixed!

“DUH!”

The Gregorian Christian calendar has become the standard by which the world marks time. Political correctness has replaced AD (Anno Domini: year of our Lord) with CE, Common Era and BCE, Before the Common Era (common to whom, but I digress!). The Roman Empire counted its years from the founding of the city of Rome @ 756 BC, making this year 2775.

All calendars are based on the phases of the moon, the sun, and the stars, beginning and ending when the same alignment is achieved. Thus astronomy and mathematics enter the picture to describe natural events, mathematics is absolute, nature is not. Over time days needed to be added or subtracted by a complicated formula to bring things into alignment.

So in 708 AUC (ab urbe condita, from the founding of the city, 45 BC) Julius Cæsar had things brought up to date adding a month for himself, Augustus did too, and all was right for the time being.

As Christianity rose to prominence, scholars tried to pin down the dates of events and counting them from the birth of Christ. They settled on 756 AUC that became year 1, although it might have been in 752 or 753.

However, there is always a however, many noticed that natural phenomena were straying from their appointed days so the Church commissioned a study and by 1582 after 37 years Pope Gregory XIII announced the change so the day after October 4, 1582 became October 15, 1582, ten days had been added to the calendar in 1627 years. The Catholic Church adopted it immediately as did Catholic countries, other countries took up to 150 years so George Washington who was born February 14 O.S. (old style) was corrected to February 22 N.S. (new style), both appearing in older history books.

The Eastern Orthodox Church had none of this as did the countries under its influence, many only switching civil calendars in the twentieth century. The Eastern Churches and Copts have not.

Now that you have read this ‘timely’ article, one less burden not having to worry about. Oh! What a relief it is.

## WORSHIP at CLC

At 5PM each Saturday, we celebrate **HIGHER GROUND** Contemporary Christian Worship with our Soul Spirit Band.

At 9:30AM each Sunday, we celebrate Christ in **traditional Lutheran Worship** every week throughout the year, so come as you are and join us! **Visit and uplift your soul.**



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Pastor

The Reverend Thomas R. Stennett

Pastor Emeritus

Steve Slepecki, Seminarian

Ed Kapsha

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Paul Bell

Director of Organizational

Development

Beth Rios

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Ray Lardin, Treasurer

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Deb Olbert, Director CLC Kids

Patty Ellison

Office and CL Kids Support

Jade Lane, Minister for Youth

Maureen Herbster

Pastoral Liaison

Sherrie Lane and Michelle Hilliard

Sextons