

CROSSROADS

Cross of Christ Lutheran Church
Newsletter

Mar/Apr. 2024
No. 6



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Happy Easter!

Our congregation has been busy! As you know, we have welcomed the Department of Disability Services of the Hispanic Coalition of Greater Waterbury into our building and they are settling in nicely in the “education wing.” A section of our building that was once empty, is being filled with new energy and opportunity. Most recently, we are opening up our sanctuary to our brothers and sisters in Christ from Eternal Life Ministries, so that they may have a worship space. There will be the sounds of worship and praise filling the sanctuary at a time when it would have been quiet.

I am delighted that as a congregation, we are discovering the joy of sharing space with those who can use it, filling both a need with these groups, as well as filling our building with life and vitality. Physics students will tell you there is a saying, “nature abhors a vacuum,” meaning that where there is an empty space, nature will seek to fill it - and nature is not always discerning about how that void is filled. This saying is true spiritually, as well. As individuals, we purge ourselves of sin and selfishness, and the grace and forgiveness of Jesus enters in. We drown our old ways in the waters of baptism, and the Holy Spirit enters in and fills that space. As a congregation, we worked hard to create empty space so it could be filled with something good - good for us, good for the groups using it, and good for our community. We created a vacuum and it is being filled!

I am sure when the women discovered the emptiness of the tomb on that first Easter morning, that feeling echoed in their hearts. But what seemed empty to them, was full of something new: new life with the resurrected Jesus, new freedom from the sting of death, a new way to walk in the light of the risen Christ, a new call to share this good news - Christ is Risen!!! With hearts full of gratitude, with souls full of the Holy Spirit, let us go forth and share that fullness - where there is a vacuum, let us be the ones who seek to fill that space with something Holy and good.

Easter blessings,

Pastor Sam



Financial Secretary, Counter's Sheets 2024

| | 7-Jan | 14-Jan | 21-Jan | 28-Jan | Jan | 4-Feb | 11-Feb | 18-Feb | 25-Feb | Feb | YTD |
|-------------------------------|-------------|--------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|--------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 600 Weekly | \$ 1,450.00 | | \$ 2,340.00 | | \$ 3,790.00 | \$ 2,480.00 | | \$ 2,490.00 | | \$ 4,970.00 | \$ 8,760.00 |
| 605 Trinity's Donation | | | | \$ 973.48 | \$ 973.48 | | | | \$ 61.22 | \$ 61.22 | \$ 1,034.70 |
| 610 Communion | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 615 Lenten | | | | | | | | \$ 40.00 | | \$ 40.00 | \$ 40.00 |
| 620 Easter | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 625 Thanksgiving | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 630 Christmas | \$ 50.00 | | \$ 20.00 | | \$ 70.00 | | | | | | \$ 70.00 |
| 635 Plate | \$ 205.00 | | \$ 195.00 | | \$ 400.00 | \$ 30.00 | | \$ 150.00 | | \$ 180.00 | \$ 580.00 |
| 640 Hellman Trust Interest | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 690a Miscellaneous Operating | | | | | | | | | \$ 27,000.00 | \$ 27,000.00 | \$ 27,000.00 |
| Rental Income | | | | | | | | | \$ 27,000.00 | \$ 27,000.00 | \$ 27,000.00 |
| Other | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 690b Miscellaneous Designated | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Inreach Gift | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lenten Devotional Boxes | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lutheran Disaster Relief | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Luther's Lunch | | | | | | | | | | | |
| School Support | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Palm Sunday Breakfast | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Reimbursement | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sanctuary Lamp | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Seasonal Flowers | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Short Duration Fundraiser | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Conference Series | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 700 Memorials-Unrestricted | \$ 100.00 | | \$ 100.00 | | \$ 200.00 | | | \$ 100.00 | | \$ 100.00 | \$ 300.00 |
| 703 Scholarship | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 760 Hospitality | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | \$ 1,805.00 | \$ - | \$ 2,655.00 | \$ 973.48 | \$ 5,433.48 | \$ 2,510.00 | \$ - | \$ 2,780.00 | \$ 27,061.22 | \$ 32,351.22 | \$ 37,784.70 |

Deuteronomy 32:10: "He sustained him in a desert land, in a howling wilderness waste; he shielded him, cared for him, guarded him..."

In the Bible wilderness is a significant word/place/time starting when Adam and Eve were shut out of Eden; the Israelite people wandering in the desert for 40 years; the experiences of Moses and of Jeremiah and of Jonah; John the Baptist; Jesus in his humanness struggled in the wilderness for 40 days. In Deuteronomy alone there over 300 verses with the word wilderness. Does a wilderness have to be a desert, a barren land, a dense, almost impenetrable forest? Do we create our own wilderness places for escape and renewal in our minds, a quiet place/our garden walk? Wilderness encounters give us another chance, a new way. The wilderness paths on which we are led or which we create do the same. Wilderness walking can calm, bring clarity, be life-changing. It is a time to walk closer with God.

Wilderness Walking:

I seek the wilderness...
To steady my way.
To close out the much.
To find calm and silence.
To see blue sky, green earth.
To listen to the wind.
To feel the warming sun.
To break the false mirrors.

I wander talking to God...
I wait and I listen.
I know God hears my words.
I find healing and peace.
I this day walk with God.

Sharon L. Samoska





Arthur F & family, Jacky A, Judi C, Barbara C, Hayli and Hanah B, Brandi L, Eva B, Sharon B. K., Martin S., Jr, Shawn Y, Jay P, Kristen B, Candie L, Kay L, The LeClair family, Ed B, Melissa H, Cindy S, Phyllis K, Ernst R, Iliana B, Nadia & Gary M, Fran H, Glenn & Ann, Betsy C, Adam K, Don M, Lori, Susan A, Randy and Priscilla B, Randolph K, Jeff S, and all whom we send cards through our Card Care Ministry, on our prayer tree and all whom we send cards through our Care Card Ministry, and on our prayer tree.

Lainey Blonar, Eileen Kassheimer, Matthew Perret, Seita Glasgow, Elizabeth Semeraro, Rich Piel, James Rapisarda, Bonnie Crafa, Andrea Caron, Delphine Blewitt



Submissions for the May/June 2024 newsletter should be received in the office June 3 or before. Thank You!!



January – February – March 2024

Property Team

- Aluminum trim pieces were blown off the steeple on February 28th. Requested Tom Johnson to examine the damage and he contacted a contractor who has a 65-foot lift which is needed to reach the steeple. They estimate about a half day's work to install the missing trim at a cost of \$4,100. Submitted a claim to Emery & Webb Insurance. There is a \$2,500 deductible for the property insurance.
- Several fire extinguishers were remounted and red arrow signs were installed. Connecticut Fire Equipment completed the annual inspection on March 5th.
- Received notice from Eversource that one of the two gas bills has been estimated for several months because they were unable to read the meter. Contacted Eversource and the meter repair was completed on February 27th.
- A downspout drainpipe in a handicapped parking spot was crushed by a vehicle during the week and flow through the gutter was completely blocked. Installed a temporary fix to allow water to flow. The final repair will be made in April.
- A test of the emergency lights revealed that the unit near the office has stopped working. Contacted B. Kane Electric to schedule repair or replacement.
- Updated the thermostats, light timers, and clocks to Daylight Savings Time.
- Thanks to Blanche Feero for donating a 5-foot table for the collection counters.
- Examples of custodial duties performed during this period include:
 - *Purchasing paper supplies, ice melt, and hardware needed for minor repairs.
 - *Replacing furnace filters, vacuum filters, and lamps.
 - *Replenishing ice melt shakers at the entrances.
 - *Miscellaneous repairs.



Bob Blewitt (3/8/2024)

Final Education Wing Rental Renovation Project Report (2/29/2024)

Summary

The renovation project was completed on February 12th at a total cost of \$25,116. The rental contract was signed, and a \$27,000 annual rent check was received. The official move-in date is April 1st. During March, the tenant will move in equipment and furniture to set up the education wing area for their offices. Special thanks to everyone for their dedicated effort which was essential to completing this project ahead of schedule and under budget.

Completion Dates

Electrical Upgrades --- January 8th.

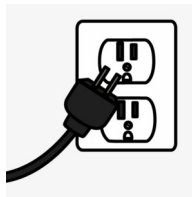
Ceiling Insulation --- January 11th.

Water Heater Replacement --- January 20th.

Building Cleanup --- January 23rd.

Attic Stairs Insulation and Repairs --- January 30th.

Vinyl Replacement Windows --- February 12th



Submitted by Bob Blewitt



Care Card Ministry: *First Thessalonians 5:11: "Therefore encourage one another and build up each other..."* Cards sent: January 2024: 10. Cards sent February 2024: 8. We are sending special care cards for Easter--contact Sharon for special requests. Please advise of changes in your address/apartment or unit #.



GWIM: *Deuteronomy 15:11: "I, therefore, command you, 'Open your hand to the poor & needy neighbor in our land.'" Statistics--Soup Kitchen:* January 2024—21,464 & Food Pantry—23,556. Cross of Christ Donations: Jan. 2024: 12. Feb. 2024: 45. "Stock the Socks for GWIM: Donations close March 31. Thanks for your donations. Your care for those in need shines God's love.



Learning Committee Notes: Crafts: Available during coffee hour. Lent materials: We outreached to about 25 children. Request: Children—please share with us your favorite color.



Pollinator Garden: *Each program I attended has stressed the importance of pollinator gardens, and we are starting our second year! Volunteer needed: To assist with soil upgrade for spring planting. Please share with children your favorite flower & what helps it grow. Survey---Do you vote for trying growing carrots in a grow bag or making a solar fountain?*



Social Advocacy: *"We are called to be a voice and spirit for the voiceless."* **NE Synod: Green Team:** Meets the 4th Monday of the month at 1:00 pm.

EcoSpirituality monthly program:

Where we explore our connection with creation. My research this month on the eel in Connecticut replaced my uneasiness about them with amazement. They swim between 800-1300 miles to spawn once in their



life time in the Sargasso Sea. (I can not swim even half a mile let alone 1300!) February magazine lists books and a link to LRC resources. **ELCA:** March is Women's History Month. **Lutherans Restoring Creation:** February Connections Call: Filmmaker, Feldman spoke on "Regenerating Life." Soil plays a key role for a positive impact on the negative of climate change. It prevents forest fires. The trilogy of soil, land, and forest make our earth, nurture life, and protect this planet. Next Connections Call: March 19—topic Creation Care during and following Lent. **ELCA Advocacy Feb 2024** edition—see web site. **God's Work Our Hands at Home:** Contact us if you for help with "little things" or "big things."

Web sites: New England Synod: www.nelutherans.org **Camp Calumet:** www.calumet.org **ELCA:** www.elca.org **Green Team:** www.nelutherans.org/whoweare/people/greenteam

Lutherans Restoring Creation: <https://lutheransrestoringcreation.org/> **WELCA:** www.womenoftheelca.org

Submitted by Sharon Samoska



2024 MEMBERS

Becky Armington, President
Charmaine Lawton, V.P.
Keith Weston, Treasurer
Pat Huesch, Secretary
Delphine Blewitt, Financial Secretary
Seita Glasgow
Tish Hunter
Blanche Feero

Conference Series

Our Conference Series at Cross of Christ is getting off to a great start this year! Thanks go to people who gave me some of these suggestions! We will have the following speakers:



* April 13 (Sat) from 1:00-2:30pm - The magician Sandy Sisti will perform her magic for children from 3-10 years old. If you have children or grandchildren, or know someone who does, please bring them to our Conference Series for a fun afternoon!

* May 14 (Tues) from 6:30-8:00pm - Charles Rosenay, the author of *True Ghost Stories of Connecticut*, will speak to us by reading parts of the book, having a question and answer session, and doing a book signing. It should be an interesting evening.



* Sept 14 (Sat) from 1:00-2:30pm - Elisabeth Breslav (age 96), the author of a book called *Five Years Under Nazi Occupation: A World War II Memoir of Resilience and Survival in the Netherlands*, will speak to us about the frightening times she faced as a 12-17 year old child. What is also amazing about this speaker is that although she is here to talk about and hopefully sell her book, she is not making anything from her book sales. She is donating everything she earns, i.e. speaker's fee and royalties, to the International Red Cross. I hope we can help her add to her donation. *To buy her book, please have your cell phone and credit card with you in order for your payment to go directly to the publisher.

Submitted by Blanche Feero

**EASTER FLOWERS GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD
EASTER SUNDAY, MARCH 31, 2024**



IN MEMORY OF

Don & Laurie Anderson
Our Parents
Our Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Grandchildren: Allison, Roman, Benjamin, Cillian
George, Caral & Ken Romain
Ray LaRosa, Parents & Family Members
Ginny Lawton
Roger May & my mother, Ellen
Loved Ones
Jeff Ouellette & Loved Ones
Our Parents & Loved Ones
Donald & Dawn Salcito
Loved Ones
Our Parents

IN HONOR OF

My grandchildren; Jared & Della Carroll
Paul & Nancy Weston

GIVEN BY

Jacklyn Anderson
Bob & Delphine Blewitt
Blanche Feero
Seita Glasgow
Tish & John Hunter
Judy Juraschka
Kay LaRosa
Charmaine & Rick Lawton
Cynthia May
Linda Nido
Marge Ouellette
Jim & Lisa Rapisarda
Nancy & Gene Salcito
Sister Carol Weaver
Keith & Elaine Weston

GIVEN BY

Jacklyn Anderson
Keith & Elaine Weston

In case you were wondering about the equipment that was parked in the front lot on Palm Sunday, this 65' lift was used on Monday morning to replace several pieces of white aluminum trim that were blown off the steeple during a windstorm. Thomas Gianni & Sons Inc. from Wolcott, working with Tom Johnson, reviewed the damage and supplied a \$4,100 proposal to repair the damage. A claim was submitted to our property insurance company who sent an adjuster to inspect the steeple and the roofs. The claim was approved, the contractor was hired, and a \$1,600 check has been sent to the office. Cross of Christ will pay the \$2,500 insurance deductible expense.

Submitted by Bob Blewitt



This 'n That



ALTAR CARE TEAM COULD REALLY USE SOME HELP: The altar care team readies the altar for worship each Sunday—filling the chalices, setting out communion wafers, setting the altar, lighting the sanctuary candle, replacing short candles, displaying the hymn numbers, and changing the altar colors when necessary.

It usually takes no more than 20 minutes for a team of two, and it's such a vital and reverent ministry in preparing for worship. Right now we are facing a shortage of team members, with 5 people at most. **CAN YOU HELP?** Depending on how many we have, you would be scheduled every 3 or 4 weeks. We'll train you—it's not difficult.

Contact Delphine Blewitt, 860 426-1304 or del157@comcast.net

PLEASE USE YOUR ENVELOPES! Many of you are not using your numbered envelopes, either using the generic pew envelopes or dropping loose checks into the basket. The counters team is asking that you please use your assigned envelopes; it takes them a lot longer to record your contributions without your “official” envelope. So, if you receive church envelopes in the mail, please help the counters by using them. You can also indicate your envelope number on your checks as well as on pew envelope Thanks.



BELLS WILL BE RINGING AGAIN...Our complete set of Schulmerich handbells, a 3-octave set, had been sitting idle for many years. They are worth about \$16,000 new. This past month, with the go-ahead from Council, Delphine Blewitt and Bob Melnick collaborated to sell the bells. Bob did the marketing on Facebook Marketplace, and we were able to sell the complete set for \$6800 to a couple from Lancaster, PA, who came to inspect them and complete the sale on March 9. She is on the board of two home-school associations with a music background (piano) and plans to start handbell choirs for the young children and older teenagers in the home-school groups. The wonderful bells will ring again!

Submitted by Delphine Blewitt

50 days of Easter

This is a season for affirming and celebrating resurrection stories! We certainly need reminders that God is always with us...no matter what! I noticed that the week day lectionary readings (from the Church Year B 2024) have been focusing on psalm passages with a theme of God's "steadfast love." This phrase actually comes from the Hebrew word, *chesed*, which describes the enduring, active love between God and His chosen people, Israel.....and continues with you and me as we follow Jesus in our lives and in our church.



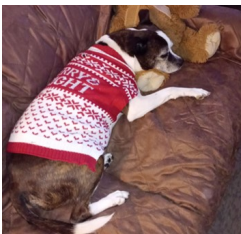
Another scriptural place where *chesed* is lifted up may be found in the beautifully told story of Ruth and Boaz. It also happens to be the source of my call to ministry in the summer of 2001. My life hasn't been the same since!! Thank you God for your steadfast love! God's *chesed* relationship gives us hope and courage to go into an uncertain future with perseverance and love! Amen.

I think this fits so well with the 50 days of Easter—a beautiful ancient term which affirms the Christian's devotion for loyalty and faithfulness arising from commitment to our God and each other. Yes—we need to hear this sacred promise over and over again! God is with us—always! HE IS RISEN!

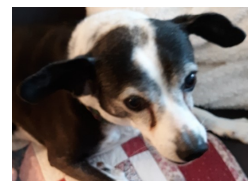
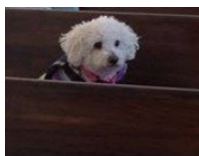
In closing, I am compelled to share my call to prophetic diakonia through Micah 6:8. We are certainly called to enter a hurting world by doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with our God. But with the help of *chesed* in our relationship with God and each other, I am drawn to a compelling message that is a quote often attributed to the Talmud, but is more accurately described as a loose translation of another commentary. Listen to these words: "Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief. Do justly, now. Love mercy, now. Walk humbly now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to *abandon it*." With God's help and steadfast love, we move forward with perseverance, courage, love, and Jesus leading the way.

Have a blessed 50 Days of Easter *Cross of Christ!* Keeping all in my heart of prayer. Amen!

Peace, love, and justice always,
Sister Carol Weaver, Abby, and the canine angels of Charlie and Gracie



GRACE HAPPENS



**G.W.A.N.A. Campout Subcommittee Presents
The...**

Mac 'n Cheese Cook Off !!!

Saturday April 20th

1555 Hamilton Ave. Waterbury, CT

Food 11am – 12pm

Speaker Meetings at 12pm & 1pm

Tickets are \$10 in advance / \$12 at the door

The winning recipe will receive the legendary

“Cheese Trophy” & a full Campout Package!

Pieter J. 203-928-0421 Sarah D.475-313-2362



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CROSSROADS

He has been raised.
— *Mark 16:6*



Cross of Christ Lutheran Church
Guiding our journey of faith.

*To welcome all into safe, sacred
relationship, as the Spirit works through us
to embody God's love and grace in the
world.*