

THE DOVE



The Dove: Sharing the Good News at CALC

January 2017

From the Pastor

Dear Christ Ascension,

*As with gladness men of old
did the guiding star behold,
so, most gracious Lord, may we
ever more be led by thee.*

2016 was a year in which we lost many stars. On Facebook, in the news, in our everyday conversations, it seems like there has been an increasing litany of names of stars who have died. And they've been stars of varying sizes and brightness. Some were perhaps a little larger than others, closer to us personally, more on our radar. Others were smaller, dimmer, perhaps they had moved out of our line of sight in recent years.

There were still other stars who died that perhaps we were the only ones to see. In our own lives, we lost stars. Our congregation lost two stars of its own. And there were others still, like so many stars, whose names we will never know and whose light has gone out.

I've been thinking about this "star" language we use in the world today. We have many people who we call stars. And they are stars for lots of reasons: their acting talent, their musical talents, their athletic talent, who their parent(s) is/are, how much money they made... Star culture is an odd thing. It elevates persons to such levels as to be almost non-human, their apotheosis is based on what they can offer our culture and/or society that seemingly no one else can. In the 60s, astronauts and NASA scientists were stars. Their knowledge and scientific advancement were seen as something no one else could offer. More recently it has been glamour, talent, or wealth that rockets individuals to stardom.

The magi, astrologers from the east, studied the actual stars, the celestial bodies that were believed to not only tell the happenings of the world, but to control them. And when one

star appeared brighter and faster moving than any other, the magi knew that the One they were waiting for must have come into the world. And they followed that star to a home in Bethlehem some years after Jesus' birth and offered...well, you know the rest of that story.

When we read Jesus' story, and certainly when we portray it in film and on television, I think we often want to make Jesus into a star. We want him to be the big celebrity of his time in Judea. Heck, we even have a franchise naming him Jesus Christ *Superstar*. But we miss the point. Jesus was easily overlooked. There were folks all the time teaching and preaching and proclaiming the forgiveness of sins...looking at those three criteria, John the Baptist fits the bill. It wasn't that Jesus was preaching, teaching, proclaiming forgiveness, or even that he was healing the sick. Jesus stood out because of what he was teaching, what he was preaching, with whose authority he was forgiving sins and healing the sick.

The gospel that Jesus preached, the life he taught, the healing and forgiveness he offered was unlike any other—it still offers to the world something we cannot find anywhere else. And in that way, yes, perhaps Jesus was a star. But when we look to Christ as a star—as society encourages us to do with the next sensation in talent—we use him as our guide, we orient our lives, our direction by him. And perhaps find it much more satisfying, and certainly much less fleeting than the rest of this star culture we find ourselves in.

In this season, may you be guided by Christ the Bright Morning Star, and may you find grace upon grace in God's truth.

Happy Epiphany,

Pastor Jay



- ◆ **Child Care Meeting**—
January 10,
7:00 pm
- ◆ **Book Group**—
January 16,
7:00 pm
- ◆ **Council Meeting**—
January 17,
7:30 pm

Adult Forum

For the Epiphany season—the season of Divine Revelation—Adult Forum will explore *The Human Jesus*. Join us on any Sunday from January 8th through February 26th as we explore the under-told stories of Jesus:

- January 8th: Jesus the Unknown
- January 15: Jesus the Refugee
- January 22nd: Jesus the Loner
- January 29th: Jesus the Mischief-Maker
- February 5th: Jesus the Angry
- February 12th: Jesus the Sarcastic
- February 19th: Jesus the Worried
- February 26th: Jesus the Valiant



Bring your questions and your stories! We will share how these stories inform our image of Jesus and how they show the humanity of Jesus.

Epiphany Sermon Series

This year, the season after the Epiphany is nearly as long as it can ever be. While it often is a season where we work chronologically through a period of teaching. While we will hear Jesus teach his Sermon from the Mount, we will also hear from Paul in his letter to the Corinthians, an important letter which delves into the day-to-day life of the early church...which wasn't so different from today. This year, Pastor Jay will be preaching a sermon series on Paul's teachings in his first letter to the Corinthians:

- January 15th: *Dateline: Corinth*
- January 22nd: *E Pluribus Unum...en Christus*
- January 29th: *Silly God*
- February 5th: *Reading Christ's Mind*
- February 12th: *God's Mission Field*
- February 19th: *Whose Are You?*



House Blessings

If you are interested in having your home blessed for the New Year during the Epiphany Season which runs for January and February, please contact Pastor Jay.

Matthew writes that when the magi saw the shining star stop overhead, they were filled with joy. "On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother." In the home, Christ is met in family and friends, in visitors and strangers. In the home, faith is shared, nurtured, and put into action. In the home, Christ is welcome.

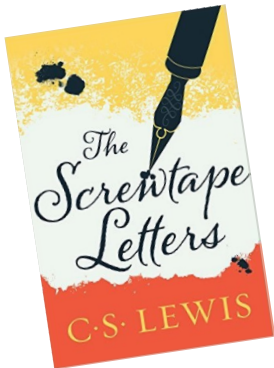
Pancake Supper!

Mark your calendars for our

Second Annual Pancakes and Board Games Night!

Shrove Tuesday: February 28th

Book Group



Join us on Monday, January 16 at 7:00 pm in Kimes Hall to discuss *The Screwtape Letters* by C.S. Lewis.

This is a classic masterpiece of religious satire that entertains readers with its sly and ironic portrayal of human life and foibles from the vantage point of Screwtape, a highly placed assistant to "Our Father Below." Wildly comic, deadly serious, and strikingly original, *The Screwtape Letters* is the most engaging account of temptation—and triumph over it—ever written.

Christian Education News

CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

Sunday School for children age 3 through Grade 5 will meet downstairs in Kimes Hall at 9:30 am on Sunday, January 15 and Sunday, January 29. *No Sunday School on January 1.*

A Note: Sunday School for children will be on the "odd" Sundays of the month, every first, third, and fifth Sunday. But EVERY week there will be a children's message during our 10:30 am worship. All are welcome...and bring a friend!



Congregational Annual Meeting

Annual Meeting Sunday, January 29, 2017



We will gather immediately after service on Sunday, January 29, 2017 for a soup and bread lunch. If you can provide a soup, bread, or beverage, please let Pastor Jay know.

Reminder: Committee 2016 annual reports are due to the church office no later than January 12, 2017 for inclusion in the annual report.

November celebrations

Baptisms

Jan. 2—Margie Ayres
Jan. 7—Kyle Kaufman
Jan. 8—Phoebe Ingersoll
Jan. 19—India Rosso
Jan. 28—Kai Heen



Birthdays

Jan. 1—Louis Bugno
Jan. 5—Marie Jordan
Jan. 7—Dianne Loufman
Jan. 10—Gabriella Cammarata
Jan. 11—Jean Kowalski
Jan. 24—Margie Ayres
Jan. 30—Annette Murray, Anne Wentling

Council's Corner

Minutes found here will always be a month "behind" although we will get them to you as early as possible. Also remember that council meetings, unless otherwise called, are public meetings to which any member of the congregation may attend.

Christ Ascension Lutheran Church – Council Meeting Minutes – November 15, 2016

Pastor's report

- Adult forum – "stump the pastor" has been going well; 11/13 was full of conversation about the election; looking for help with advent dinner and activities (especially for 11/29 when Advent wreaths will be made)
- Outreach to former members of St Michael's list continues
- Spaghetti dinner was successful – better than last year but with fewer people
- Film series/club a possibility as the months get cooler
- Seminarian (Lindsey Bell) started on 11/13 and is taking on Good Brews at Iron Hill discussions
- Church open on Election Day and ~12 people came
- Multi-faith thanksgiving eve service at Germantown Mennonite on 11/23 at 7:30 pm – need donations of bread for common table
- Families will light advent wreath
- Christmas Eve services at 4:30 and 7:00 pm; Christmas Day at 10:30 am as pajama worship – a banner has been ordered to announce holiday service times and website

Committee Reports

Worship – Katherine Reier

Larry continues to help coordinate music

Katherine will be playing on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

Outreach – Ursula Bechert

Committee will be meeting in early December – to look back and plan forward

Thanksgiving plans underway with Martha Reumann coordinating – donations for turkeys and distribution on 11/22 at Settlement House – volunteers helping with meal service

Childcare – Kristin Gray

Tanya has started as new Director

Finances – Elizabeth Beck

Almost all pledge monies have been received and it's important remaining pledges come in; \$16,700 had to be withdrawn from the Bartlett Fund to cover remaining year's expenses

New pledges – approximately \$83,487 expected; \$34,560/year will be received in rental income

Property – Elizabeth Beck

New tenants have moved in

Church clean-up being planned prior to advent season (perhaps weekend after thanksgiving); including yardwork with 1,000 bulbs to plant

Top of steps at parsonage still need to be repaired (sidewalks and tree trimming done)

Railing for back steps to sacristy still needs to be done

Water abatement options are still being explored, but repairs underneath church are temporarily on hold, because they'd cost >\$10,000

Information Items/Old Business

Strategic Taskforce Committee met once – will meet again on Saturday, 11/19 from 11 am to 1 pm

New Business

Nominating Committee – Two Council members will be rotating off, opening positions – committee to nominate individuals for congregational vote

State of the Congregation & Lord's Prayer – Adjournment



January 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1</p> <p>9:30 am Adult Forum & Sunday School</p> <p>10:30 am Worship</p>	<p>2</p> <p>New Year's Day Holiday Observed</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p> <p>7:00 pm AA Meeting</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8</p> <p>9:30 am Adult Forum</p> <p>10:30 am Worship</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>7:00 pm Child Care Meeting</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Annual Reports Due</p> <p>7:00 pm AA Meeting</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15</p> <p>9:30 am Adult Forum & Sunday School</p> <p>10:30 am Worship</p>	<p>16</p> <p>7:00 pm Book Group</p>	<p>17</p> <p>7:30 pm Council Meeting</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p> <p>7:00 pm AA Meeting</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22</p> <p>9:30 am Adult Forum</p> <p>10:30 am Worship</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p> <p>7:00 pm AA Meeting</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p>9:00-10:00 am MALT Class</p>
<p>29</p> <p>9:30 am Adult Forum & Sunday School</p> <p>10:30 am Worship</p> <p>Congregational Annual Meeting</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>				

Call for Building Improvement Fund

Please consider donating to our Building Improvement Fund. This fund provides for building upkeep and repairs. Mark your donation "Improvement Fund." Thank you!

Memorial Mission Fund

Gifts can be given to the Memorial Mission Fund anytime in memory of our beloved dead. Church council will have discretionary oversight of this account and use funds only for purposes that directly advance our mission, ministries and public witness.

Thank you for supporting the congregation's mission in this way.



Contact Us

Give us a call or send us an email for more information

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office@christascension.org

Visit us on the web at
www.christascension.org

and on Facebook:
"Christ Ascension Lutheran Church-Chestnut Hill"

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Christ Ascension Lutheran Church
8300 Germantown Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19118

A congregation of the ELCA

Christ Ascension

A Church United in Faith, Hope and Love

Worship Schedule

9:30 a.m. Holy Communion

Schedule changes on September 11

9:30 am Christian Education

10:30 am Worship

PLACE
STAMP
HERE