



# CHRIST THE REDEEMER

## LUTHERAN CHURCH

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### Having a Life Filled With Prayer

#### See to Please

Shift your prayer life from "Please, God" to Please God." Take the comma out of those two words when you pray, and transition your praying from asking God for things to asking God for the pleasure of God's pleasure. --Homiletics

#### A Powerful Weapon

Satan dreads nothing but prayer. His one concern is to keep the saints from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayer-less work, prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, he mocks our wisdom, but he trembles when we pray. --Samuel Chadwick

#### A Word From Matthew Henry

Seventeenth-century Bible scholar Matthew Henry had great insight into God's will when he proclaimed, "When God intends great mercies for His people, He first of all sets them a'praying."

Did you ever consider that when you feel the urge to engage in deep meaningful prayer, it might be God's preparation for "great mercies"?

### Hard Faith

According to author Stephen King, "What separates the talented individual from the successful one is a lot of hard work."

Similarly, what separates the doubt-filled Christian from the Christian in good spiritual health is hard faith, working and praying diligently - and often - to build one's faith.

#### Faith and Health

Dr. Herbert Benson of Harvard Medical School made a study of the effect praying can have upon those who pray. He discovered those who pray 10 to 20 minutes daily can lower their blood pressure, heart rate, breathing and metabolic rates. Prayer can work wonders. --Proclaim, Nov. 1, 1998

#### Prayer Helps

A man was seen praying in a church and was approached by a fairly officious person in clerical garb. Said this person: "May I help you?" The response came clearly, "No thank you. I *am* being helped!" -- Anonymous



THE  
**POWER**  
OF PRAYER



January 2018

## The Cornerstone

A publication of Christ the Redeemer Lutheran Church

Rev. Scott Burmeister  
Pastor

Suzanne Watt, Director  
of Christian Education

Myrthe Harkenrider  
DCE Intern

Nikki Witt  
ECC Director

Connie Phillips  
Office Secretary

Mary Jane Landin  
Business Administrator

Norma Muller  
Organist

Craig Amendt  
Choir Director

Norm Zanter  
Property Coordinator

"Leading people  
into a living relationship  
with Jesus Christ"

Sunday Worship: 8:15 &  
10:45 AM. Sunday School  
and Bible Classes for all  
ages at 9:30 AM.

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FAX: 918/492-3524  
Web: [www.ctrtulsa.org](http://www.ctrtulsa.org)  
You can view this  
newsletter online!

Email:  
[christredeemer@ctrtulsa.org](mailto:christredeemer@ctrtulsa.org)

Early Childhood Center  
Phone: 918-492-1416



### Lutheran School/ECC Appreciation January 28 at 9:30

Parish Life will be hosting a reception during the Sunday school hour honoring our ECC Director, Nikki Witt. Nikki has worked at the church for 11 years and has been the director at ECC for eight years. Join us as we celebrate her ministry at CTR!



## HELLO MY NAME IS

January 26-28, 2018 at Camp Lutherhoma

## JR HIGH RETREAT

For 6th-8th Grade Youth & Friends  
See the Youth Ministry Page for more details!

## SAVE THE DATE —WOMEN'S RETREAT—

MARCH 2-4, 2018—CAMP LUTHERHOMA



CHRIST THE REDEEMER'S

## CAMP OUT WINTER VBS

February 2-4, 2018

Check out the DCE Intern Myrthe's  
page for more information!

## Jr. Roustabout

*Jr. Roustabout is January 7th immediately following late service. We will start out the afternoon with a complementary meal. Then we will dive right into service projects lead by the Roustabouts! There will be projects for the whole family to do from 2 to 82 years old! Please email DCE Intern Myrthe Harkenrider if your family is interested in this unique multigenerational service project!*



FROM THE PASTOR’S DESK

Happy New Year! I am sure that I have worn out Psalm 40. I cannot celebrate the New Year without this Psalm coming to mind.

“I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry.”

It is remarkable that the Lord would see fit to turn His face toward us, sinners. But, that’s what He does. He turns to us, only because of His Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. What an amazing love that God has shown to us. He sends His Son to die for us. He raises His Son from the dead. He gives us His Holy Spirit and sanctifies us in the one true Faith. If that were not enough, He then turns to us and hears our cry.

“He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.”

God lifts us out of the slimy pit of sin. God pulls us out of the mud of death. God frees us from the mire that is the power of the devil. If that were not enough, He then gives us a firm place to stand; the rock of salvation, our Lord Jesus Christ. Faith, Confession, Truth, and right Doctrine are all the rock of our church. We can hear the voice of Martin Luther speak, “here I stand I can do no other.” We stand on the rock of God’s Word and its true exposition of the Confessions.

“He put a new song in my mouth a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord.”

It is God who inspires hymns and songs of praise. God inspired David to write this Psalm and it was surely set to music and sung to the praise and glory of God. The Gloria, the Kyrie, and all of our Hymns are songs that God himself puts in our mouths. We see God in our liturgy, because it is God’s Word. We fear, love and trust in God above all things as He causes righteousness in us, through the faith that He created. Our trust is in Him alone.

This new year is an opportunity to reacquaint ourselves with the blessings that God bestows through Divine Worship. Here at Christ the Redeemer Lutheran Church, we celebrate with Divine Services I, II, III, IV and V on consecutive Sundays changing every two or three weeks. What a blessing it is to be brought together by God through Word and Sacrament. I would challenge all of our members to make worship a priority for your family. If you were only able to make 25%

of the worship services last year, then make it your goal to get to 50% this year. If you made 50% of the worship services last year, then make a goal of 75% this year. Now, if you are not able to make Sunday services because you have to work, give me a call at the office and maybe we can set up a time when we can visit together and share the Lord’s Supper.

This year, watch as God puts a new song in your mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. May this year be filled with God’s Word in your life and may His Sacraments be the key component to your faith. Amen!



**CHURCH DIRECTORY  
UPDATES**

Please add these individuals to your church directory or change the information that is currently printed.

Roger Witte: rwnwitte@gmail.com  
Dale & Cheryl Davison: 918-605-6101

Jim & Norma Blackburn  
1014 W 84th Pl. S  
Tulsa, OK 74132; 918-605-4742 (Jim’s cell)

Jennifer Adams  
7404 S Indianapolis Ave. Tulsa, OK 74136  
jenn8307@yahoo.com - 918-978-9029

Jordan Flasch  
1109 S Fern Ave. Broken Arrow, OK 74012

Dee Dee Reeves  
5510 E 75th St. Tulsa, OK 74145; 918-491-6646

please join us for an official

**KENDRA  
GIVES BACK  
PARTY**

enjoy sips, sweets and jewels  
MONDAY, JANUARY 8TH | 5PM - 7PM

KENDRA SCOTT AT UTICA SQUARE  
1842 Utica Square Tulsa, OK 74114

20% of the proceeds benefit Christ the Redeemer Early Childhood Center

KENDRA SCOTT

bring a friend!

COME SHOP AND HELP THE  
ECC ALL IN ONE NIGHT!

Share our  
event!

EVEN IF YOU CANNOT MAKE IT TO THE  
STORE TO SHOP ON THE 8TH, YOU CAN  
STILL SUPPORT US BY CALLING THE  
STORE AND MAKING AN ORDER BY  
PHONE THE DAY OF THE EVENT!





## CTR-U Monthly Schedule

### 5:00-5:30 PM

- ♦ Children's Chimes Choir Practice - Sanctuary
- ♦ Youth Band Practice- Pastor Burmeister

### 5:30-6:30 PM

- ♦ Faith Friends - Gym- DCE Intern Myrthe
- ♦ Confirmation Class - Library - DCE Suzanne
- ♦ Youth Ministry Bible Study- Youth Room- Pastor Burmeister
- ♦ Women's Small Group- Conference Room
- ♦ Men's Small Group - Bridal Room
- ♦ **CTR-U Craft Class - January 17**

### 6:00-7:00 PM - Come & Go Dinner Menu

- ♦ Jan. 3: Pizza/salad/dessert
- ♦ Jan. 10: Chicken strips/mac & cheese/salad/dessert
- ♦ Jan. 17: Lasagna/Alfredo/salad/dessert
- ♦ Jan. 24: Tomato soup/grilled cheese/salad/dessert
- ♦ Jan. 31: Pizza/salad/dessert

### 7:00-8:00 PM

- ♦ Choir Practice with Craig Amendt
- ♦ Youth Group- (Jr/Sr High 6th-12th grade) DCE Suzanne Watt- Gym & Outside
- ♦ Pre-Confirmation Youth Group (4th & 5th Grade)- DCE Intern Myrthe- Youth Room
- ♦ Men's Small Group- Bridal Room (Continues)
- ♦ Adult Bible Study- Hebrews-the Fulfillment of Faith - Pastor Burmeister- Fellowship Hall



### Craft Class - January 17 - 5:30

The frame will be a laser wood frame that can be painted and then decorated with your choice of burlap ribbon.

Class is limited to 12 participants.  
Cost is \$12.00.



### DON'T TRASH THOSE COUPONS!

Military personnel and their families stationed at major overseas bases in Europe and Asia can use those manufacturer's coupons up to six months after they have expired. A box marked "Coupons for the Troops" is located at the south entrance.

### The Prayer Whisperer Annie Wiederstein



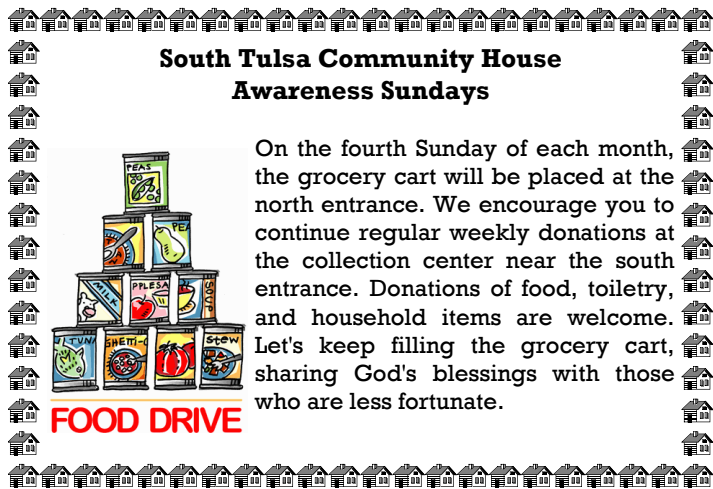
All believers are commanded to praise God! In fact, Isaiah 43:21 explains that praise is one reason we were created, "This people I have formed for Myself; they shall declare My praise." Hebrews 13:15 confirms this: "Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise - the fruit of lips that confess his name." From an article in *All About Pray*, online.

As believers we need to offer our worship and praise to God. What does this look like?

We can praise and thank God in our distress, in our joy. In our homes, in our cars. We can praise God for the wonderful day he created, for the rain, for the sun.

The verse says "continually." Repeat in the same way. Basically, Praise/Repeat. We need to always have Prayer and Praise in our mouth, on our lips. This puts a different spin on all our communications, doesn't it? With our co-workers, our families, our friends.

*Father, I praise you this day for this day and for all that I may encounter. I praise you for my mind and my lips and for your glorious works. In Jesus name, AMEN*



### South Tulsa Community House Awareness Sundays

On the fourth Sunday of each month, the grocery cart will be placed at the north entrance. We encourage you to continue regular weekly donations at the collection center near the south entrance. Donations of food, toiletry, and household items are welcome. Let's keep filling the grocery cart, sharing God's blessings with those who are less fortunate.

**FOOD DRIVE**

### VA Announces Applications for New Veterans ID Card

Any veteran with an Honorable Discharge can now apply for an ID card. To this point, veterans who did not retire, had to use their DD214 as identification to receive discounts at various stores, etc. If you qualify, use the following URL to learn more and apply: [vets.gov](http://vets.gov), click on "Apply for Printed Veteran ID Card".

### ENDOWMENT FUND UPDATE

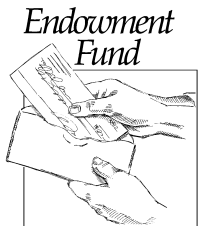
As of the latest statements, the Morningstar account balance was \$577,967.18, and the brokerage account balance was \$13,344.78, for a total Endowment Fund balance of \$601,306.94. The Dupuis Trust account balance was \$239,938.41.

The Endowment Fund provides a means for us, as Christian stewards, to express in a tangible way, our deep gratitude for God's many gifts and blessings. A gift to the Endowment Fund is a reflection of our faith and Christian love over and above our normal regular support for the ongoing mission and ministry of our church.

The trustees continue to encourage all members to consider charitable gifts to the Endowment Fund as part of their long term financial and estate planning.

Also, consider memorial gifts to the Endowment Fund in memory of a friend or loved one, as well as gifts in honor of friends and loved ones on special occasions such as anniversaries, birthdays and graduations.

Questions can be directed to any of the trustees: Scott Mabrey, Brad Young, Janet Jamison, or Rob Koch.



Outreach Ministry would like to thank CTR and ECC families for all their donations to the Thanksgiving baskets and remembrance bags that they provided. Eight families received full baskets and 16 members received the remembrance bags. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

### Join CTR on Facebook & Twitter!

Keep up with coming events, announcements, and updates about recent events including pictures. The public events page is at: <http://www.facebook.com/ChristTheRedeemerLutheranChurch>  
The private group is at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ctrtulsa/>  
For the Twitter account use: @PastorBe\_CTR



*Stay in Touch*

To join the private group, click Join Group in the top right hand corner of the page or contact James Morgan via e-mail: [communications@ctrtulsa.org](mailto:communications@ctrtulsa.org)

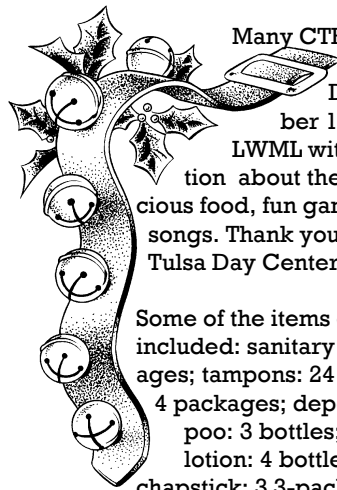
## QUILTS



An LWR quilt is special! It brings warmth and shelter to families by becoming a bed, room divider, backpack to carry belongings, and at times even a home.

**HOW CAN YOU HELP??** We need help in purchasing the fabric to make the quilt tops. Each quilt costs approximately \$25 to make. Donations marked "LWML quilts" can be dropped in the mite box or put in the offering plate. Filler material of new/used blankets as well as flat sheets in twin size or larger are also needed (no other filler fabric can be used). Prayers for our quilt program are needed plus prayers for the recipients of our quilts.

The quilters meet every Tuesday at 10:00 in the fellowship hall. You can cut squares, sew squares, assemble the filler and tops, tie the quilts - anything you are interested in doing! Join us - we would appreciate your help!



Many CTR women enjoyed the annual Christmas Dinner Party on December 14th hosted by the LWML with fellowship, a devotion about the Advent wreath, delicious food, fun games and Christmas songs. Thank you to all for supporting Tulsa Day Center for the Homeless!

Some of the items collected for the center included: sanitary napkins/pad: 34 packages; tampons: 24 boxes; flushable wipes: 4 packages; depends: 1 package; shampoo: 3 bottles; conditioner: 3 bottles; lotion: 4 bottles; deodorant: 7 sticks; chapstick: 3 3-packs; toothpaste and toothbrushes: 3 each; brush/comb sets: 3; razor: 3 5-packs; soap: 5 bars; perfume: 4 bottles; tissues: 1 package.





Congratulations and God's richest blessings to all of our couples as they celebrate their wedding anniversary!

Lonnie & Janet Jamison	Jan. 5	27 yrs
Scott & Amy Merrill	Jan. 13	17 yrs
Don & Vernice Bersche	Jan. 17	48 yrs
Greg & Julie Littleton	Jan. 30	30 yrs
Sam & Suzanne Romine	Jan. 30	8 yrs



**SENIOR FRIENDS** will meet for lunch on January 14 at First Watch on S. Lewis.

**BUNKO** will be January 9 at 7:00 at the church hosted by Pat Bartley. Please sign up.

**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING** will be January 21 at noon following a potluck. Members are asked to bring main course and side dishes. The board will be providing the desserts. Babysitting will be provided. Plan now to attend!

**CONNECT NIGHT:** Connect will be hosted at Nikki and Brandon Witt's house on Saturday February 6th from 6:00-8:00 p.m. Please dress in your most festive Christmas sweater. Complimentary babysitting will be provided at Church from 5:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.



### Epiphany Wonder

Today the Magi gaze in deep wonder at what they see: heaven on earth, earth in heaven, humanity in God, God in humanity, one whom the whole universe cannot contain now enclosed in a tiny body. As they look ... their symbolic gifts bear witness: incense for God, gold for a king, myrrh for one who is to die.

--Peter Chrysologus (5th century)



## Faithful Measures

For the Month of November	2016	2017
Total Worship Attendance .....	1002	1041
Weekly Average.....	250	260.25
SS/Bible Class Attendance .....	603	432
Weekly Average .....	150	108
November Giving .....	\$56,542	\$62,127
Monthly Budget .....	\$63,231	\$63,788
Year to Date Giving .....	\$734,687	\$776,229
Year to Date Budget .....	\$758,770	\$765,456
YTD Expenses.....	\$684,219	\$691,486

Praise be to the God ...  
the Father of compassion  
and the God of all comfort,  
who comforts us in all our troubles,  
so that we can comfort those in any trouble  
with the comfort we ourselves  
have received from God.  
2 Corinthians 1:3-4



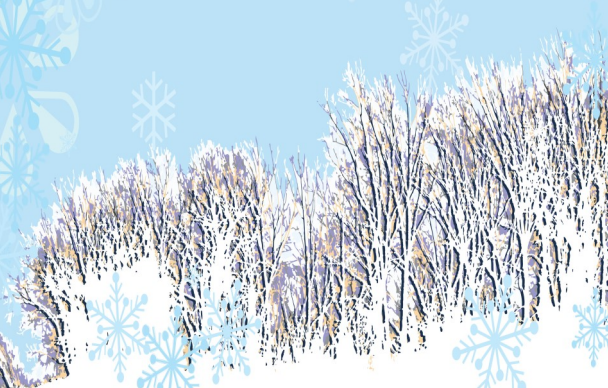
### Altar Flowers

The sign-up chart is available at the information center. Write your name on the date and share the special reason for the flowers. Simply drop your \$35 check (put ALTAR

FLOWERS on the memo line) in the offering plate the week before or that Sunday! You may take the arrangement home following the late service.

### Flowers for the Altar

7: by Deb Drain in celebration of Kris's birthday  
7: by Timothy & Katie Michaels-Johnson in celebration of Rex's birthday  
14: by Harold & Colene France in celebration of Katelyn's birthday  
14:  
21:  
21:  
28:  
28:



# 10 WAYS TO LOVE YOUR BRAIN



**START NOW.** It's never too late or too early to incorporate healthy habits.



Visit [alz.org/10ways](http://alz.org/10ways) to learn more.

alzheimer's association®  
THE BRAINS BEHIND SAVING YOURS:™




**Raise Money While You Shop & Browse the Web**

 To support Lutheran Women's Missionary League, shop at **Amazon Smile**. The products, shopping experience, and even your login and password are the same as on amazon.com. They donate 0.5% of your purchase to your charity. You can also shop at hundreds of sites through **GoodShop** and **Gumdrop**. Use **GoodSearch gumdrop** when you browse the web and support the LWML at the same time. The percentage donated depends on where you shop. **\$24,010 has been raised so far through these sources for LWML!**

**Recycling**

The **Oklahoma District LWML** has been recycling printer cartridges and other items since 2001. The funds collected are dispersed in three ways: 25% of the funds go to national LWML Mites, 10% go to our OK District Special Gifts Fund and the remaining 65% are used within our district to help with leader training efforts. To date, we have been blessed to collect **over \$61,000**. It has also kept these many items out of the landfills, thus helping our environment.


 **CTR LWML** participates in this effort by collecting:

- **Ink-Jet Cartridges:** Canon, HP and Lexmark
- **Laser-Jet Cartridges:** Brother, Canon, Dell, HP, Lexmark, Panasonic, Samsung and Xerox.

In addition, we also collect **cell phones, PDAs, I-Pods, digital cameras, laptops, MP3, tablets, GPS Systems, and scientific calculators**. Please include cords. *We cannot use Epson cartridges, those marked "remanufactured" or toner tubes.*

**Please leave your donation at the collection area in the back hall at CTR.** This year we were also able to recycle cartridges at Staples that the District LWML couldn't take. We received **\$60 in store credits** we used for purchase of school supplies!

**Thanks for your support!**



**Resolve to "be there"...**

Let our New Year's resolution be this:

We will be there for one another as fellow members of humanity, in the finest sense of the word.

--Goran Persson

"A smile is a curve that sets everything straight."  
-- Phyllis Diller

"Laughter is the sun that drives winter from the human face." -- Victor Hugo

"A day without laughter is a day wasted." --Charlie Chaplin

*News From Our Board President*

This letter, by virtue of our Cornerstone mailing schedule, will probably reach you right around the Christmas holiday. With that in mind, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you a happy Christmas and New Year!

While we are travelling and celebrating with friends and family this year, there will be ample gift giving and receiving (with the prerequisite shopping done to varying levels of effort). No shortage of commercial and social pressure will be felt as we wrap and unwrap, cook and eat and clean, all in the work of celebration.

I think we can all relate the stress and satisfaction that can be felt during these weeks, but I am always challenged by asking myself what will endure from these times. Memories, affection, the affirmation of community and the remembrance of God's graciousness in giving first to us. Presents, on the other hand, usually seem to pass, despite our intentions.

Ask myself why that is, I came across this passage in St Augustine: "...[A] possession... is not diminished by being shared with others; if it is possessed and not shared, [it] is not possessed as it ought to be possessed... [God] will give, then, to those who have: that is to say, if they use freely and cheerfully what they have received, He will add to and perfect His gifts." (On Christian Doctrine, 1). To paraphrase: true ownership (with all the joy and satisfaction sought therein) is known through free sharing of the good gift. Until something is shared, it cannot be owned as God intended.

I am still working through the profound implications of that idea, but as it pertains to Christmas, I think a simple message is clear: we are most truly owners of our lives, our gifts, our provisions, and our faith, when we freely share them with others.

I'd like to express my own gratitude to the many hundreds of our church family who have shared so much of their time and treasure with us and the broader community through CTR this year and the many hundreds who have pledged to continue to experience the perfection of God's gifts in their lives through the continued sharing of those gifts. As you share all these gifts with others during the holiday, may you experience and know this perfection and increase in joy which God accomplishes in us and through us as we share.

Your servant and brother in faith,  
James



Norma Muller

For the next few months I will be sharing tidbits of the contents of Lutheran Service Book, our current hymnal. Before I get into the first tidbit for January, I hope to make very clear that we are not required to do everything that is possible to do with the resources in this hymnal. You certainly won't be justified before God by praying the prayers, singing the liturgy or hymns, etc. **Jesus took care of the justification part** by atoning for our sins through His life, death and resurrection.

So why do I encourage you to engage in using the hymnal? Let me explain. When you like someone, you want to get to know more about that person, perhaps to build a special relationship. God has called us into a special relationship with Him. Through baptism God has adopted us into His family of believers in Him. Through His Word, we can know about God but more importantly, we can grow into an intimate relationship with Him. That is for OUR benefit. Praying is a means to talk to God about all kinds of things. The hymnal is full of prayers in prayer form, but also as hymns and liturgy. We praise God and we thank Him. We ask for His blessings and for specific needs or wants. God already knows all about us, but He desires this relationship so that we are drawn closer to Him. Obviously, the Bible is the source of learning about God and His people throughout history. The hymnal is only one of a multitude of resources as prayers for us to grow closer to God, but it is an outstanding one.

Now for the tidbits. Did you know that there are guidelines for what to do while you are in the sanctuary for worship? On the **VERY FIRST PAGE** in Lutheran Service Book there are "Prayers for Worship". This includes the following: (a) On entering a church; (b) Before worship; (c) After Worship; (d) Before confession and absolution; (e) Before communing; (f) Thanksgiv-

ing after receiving the Sacrament; and (g) For blessing on the Word. Talking with God through these prayers is one way of drawing closer to God. Which ones might you pray before services begin? What about the others?

On page v near the front is the "Contents" of the hymnal starting with the introduction, the Church Year, etc., and continues to list everything that is in this book. Just looking at the first section entitled "The Church Year", you will find "The Time of Christmas" which includes the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany and breaks down into more detail the specific Sundays. Note that there are letters in burgundy after each Sunday. The explanation of those letters is at the bottom of page xi. So, in Advent, the paraments and the vestments worn by Pastor are either blue (which we use) or violet. Christmas is white. What color will you expect to see on January 14, the Second Sunday after the Epiphany? Which hymn begins the Epiphany section of hymns in the hymnal? Have fun learning the answers and more to these questions.

Norma Muller, organist and accompanist




**A Good Start...**

He who fritters away the early morning, its opportunity and freshness, in other pursuits than seeking God will make poor headway seeking him the rest of the day. If God is not first in our thoughts and efforts in the morning, he will be in the last place the remainder of the day.

--E.M. Bounds





**DO SOMETHING GOOD FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**

**ELECTRONICS:** The LWML will recycle all the following items for you: empty inkjet and laser printer cartridges (NO Epson cartridges or remanufactured cartridges), cell phones, pagers, PDAs, I-Pods, DVD games/players, MP3 players, digital cameras, laptops, GPS systems, etc. (please include cords and accessories). Boxes are located at the collection center at the south entrance of the church.

**MOST Ministries** collects eyeglasses and distributes them to people all over the world. A collection box is located at the collection center. For more information go to [www.mostministries.org](http://www.mostministries.org).

**PAPER & OTHER RECYCLING:** You can recycle all your mail/newspapers, etc. as well as cardboard, metal cans and plastic containers (no glass items) in the collection bin in the southeast corner of the parking lot.



# News from the Seminary

To friends dearly loved by the Brakhages and by our Lord Jesus Christ:

We write this letter with excitement. It is the day before the end of finals week. All of my classes, exams and papers will be finished by this time tomorrow. That's when Suzy, Graham and I hit the road for Christmas. We'll be heading to my grandparents in northwestern Kansas to spend a week on the ranch. Graham loves the animals and being outdoors and our family is looking forward to seeing how big he has gotten. I've been invited to play the organ at my grandparents' church on Sunday. After a week there, we'll be traveling back toward the Lawrence/Kansas City area for Christmas and New Year's with Suzy's parents, siblings and their families. We hope Graham enjoys spending time with 8 of his 11 cousins.

Contributing to our excitement is knowing that we will soon be with you again in Tulsa. The courseload is lighter in January. The curriculum has me taking one course on LCMS history, along with doing interviews for our spring vicarage assignment. But the lighter load means the possibility of making another trip back home to Tulsa to see our family at CTR. We don't have the itinerary laid out yet, but we're already looking forward to the visit.

Our CTR family is never far from our hearts. Just today, we opened a card from Lynne Kollock on behalf of the Outreach Ministry which included a generous Christmas gift. Next, we opened a letter from the Oklahoma LWML that included a check signed by Katie Michaels-Johnson. We cannot overstate how much we appreciate the financial support we receive from our family of faith in Oklahoma; it means so much that you're willing to sacrifice to aid my preparation to be a pastor. Even more, we love the personal messages that accompany your gifts. These reminders of your care and support are beautiful reminders of how you've invested in us personally through your thoughts and prayers. We love you.

As I'm writing this letter, Graham is playing at my feet. He is entertaining himself by chewing on the plastic/rubber clip from our bag of pretzels. Anything can become a toy for him: the piano, a scarf, Suzy's hair. He especially loves empty cups. An empty cup can keep him busy for hours. He loves twirling it around, looking inside it, and chewing/licking it. He's also become quite the drummer with a plastic spoon and some empty pots and pans.

Our family has been keeping busy. I have had finals and projects to complete and Suzy has been taking on additional hours at work. This is on top of all the fun Christmasy events that happen this time of year. Suzy led a devotion at the women's Advent tea at our fieldwork congregation here in St. Louis. Her topic was gifts, including the valuable gifts we give each other, the expensive gifts of the Magi, and the priceless gift of our Savior, Jesus. Meanwhile, I have been serving as the rehearsal pianist for our congregation's children's Christmas program. We have some really talented kids, including a junior orchestra. You can't help but be impressed by a junior high student who can manage a trombone!

I also preached for the first time in St. Louis at our fieldwork congregation. The Seminary students assigned to our congregation are handling all the midweek Advent worship services and I preached on the first Wednesday. Much like the CTR Advent devotion, we're exploring the relatives in Jesus' family that don't get much attention during Advent. My sermon was on Zechariah and it was called "Unprepared for the Unexpected."

Here on campus, there have been a number of fun Christmas events. Just this morning, Suzy, Graham and I attended the Seminary's Lessons & Carols service. They read passages from Isaiah and inserted hymns and carols from throughout history. It was everything from a *capella* Latin chants to the worship band leading Chris Tomlin music. We also attended a Seminary Christmas pageant that featured lots of my friends and classmates. Graham loved singing through the service. Mary was played by one of our best friends, Bridgette Dreier Sharp. She is studying to become a deaconess and she's the niece of Rev. Tim Dreier at Our Savior in Tulsa.

Elsewhere on campus, Graham has been having a fun time attending the Concordia Preacher basketball games. Yes, our mascot is the Preachers. The team plays hard, but usually has a significant age and size disadvantage. We play some of the junior colleges around the area and some of the other nearby graduate institutions (like law schools and dental schools.) I'm not sure we've won a game all season except against the Ft. Wayne Seminary. Graham still loves to sit on the front row and watch the guys running past. We took him to a couple Concordia soccer games earlier this fall, but it seems basketball is more his speed.

It's hard to believe that the classroom portion of my Seminary career is already half-way over. With one and a half years under my belt, we'll just have one and a half more years on campus. That means losing a lot of the camaraderie that has been established with my classmates. It has been so rewarding to learn and grow alongside these men and women. Today, many of my fellow students either led preaching or teaching demonstrations in class. You get excited for your classmates when one of them does a great job. You're proud of their growth and excited for the congregation that will one day welcome them as their pastor. At the same time, there's a bit of sadness because I recognize as we graduate and spread out across the country (and possibly around the world) there is little chance that I may hear them preach again in person in my life. There is little chance I'll ever be sitting in one of their Bible classes, able to enjoy their wisdom, insight and personality. This chance to be together at the Seminary is short and precious and I look forward to the memories still to come.

Praying for your warmth and safety as January arrives. May the certain hope of Christ your Savior fill your 2018 with purpose and promise.

In Christ,  
Joshua

[joshua411@gmail.com](mailto:joshua411@gmail.com)  
(918) 706-1632 (Joshua's mobile)  
(785) 393-3117 (Suzy's mobile)  
2 Founders Way, Unit A  
St. Louis, MO 63105

# The Joke Corner....

Boy: "Dad, Mom just backed the car out of the garage and ran over my bicycle."

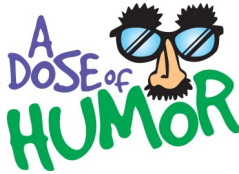
Father: "Serves you right, Son, for leaving it on the front lawn."

As the player holed out on the 18th for a score well over 100, he turned to his caddy and said, "I'll never be able to hold my head up again."

"Oh, I don't know, sir," came the reply. "You've been doing it all afternoon."

Golfer: "Funny game, golf."

Caddy: "Tain't meant to be."



## Come Back to Christmas

When January comes along, we can continue that sense of comfort and warmth that comes at Christmas by returning to the Christmas story, which gives us two great promises:

God understands you, and

God can redeem you.

I encourage people to make it a point to reread the Christmas story every month, and allow Christmas to be Christmas every month. We need to keep coming back to it.

--Max Lucado, *Publishers Weekly* interview



## Comfort Dog Project



**Sunday School Offering**

The offering for this quarter will go to St. Mark's Comfort Dog Program. The mission of the Comfort Dog Program is to provide a ministry for sharing God's presence with those in need due to tragedy or stress while providing a bridge of compassion connecting with people throughout our community. Locally they help with school programs and classrooms, special needs classrooms, children's hospitals, nursing homes, police and fire department crisis response, funerals, etc. The Comfort Dog Program is affiliated with Lutheran Church Charities.



Please give generously to this quarter's recipient of our Sunday school offering.

# Puzzle!

The 12 Old Testament books known as the Minor Prophets aren't unimportant — just short! Unscramble the names of these books. Then unscramble the circled letters to find a fruit of the Spirit.



Fruit: \_\_\_\_\_

LEJO \_\_\_\_\_

IHCAM \_\_\_\_\_

ABKUKKAH \_\_\_\_\_

DHAIABO \_\_\_\_\_

MUNAH \_\_\_\_\_

OAESH \_\_\_\_\_

AZAEHINPH \_\_\_\_\_

NJHAO \_\_\_\_\_

AGIAGH \_\_\_\_\_

OASM \_\_\_\_\_

AHRIZAHCE \_\_\_\_\_

IHCMALA \_\_\_\_\_

Answers: Joel, Micah, Habakkuk, Obadiah, Nahum, Hosea, Zephaniah, Jonah, Haggai, Amos, Zechariah, Malachi; Kindness



"Kindness is like snow - it beautifies everything it covers."

--Kahlil Gibran



Do Not Take Christ  
Out of Christmas

Do not take Christ out of Christmas  
Because He's what it's about?  
God's only Son in the manger  
Makes me sing out loud and shout!

I love the spirit of Christmas.  
kindness permeates the air,  
Lightens the hearts of believers  
And spreads joy everywhere.

It's nice to get Christmas presents,  
However, don't get me wrong.  
God's gift in the lowly manger  
Just makes me break out in song!

You might get the latest gimmick  
Or, maybe a brand new car.  
God's gift that first Christmas morning  
Tops any of those, by far!

Many houses decorated  
With beautiful Christmas lights  
Sent forth in the celebration  
Of that blessed Holy night!

And don't forget the Christmas tree  
With ornaments and holly.  
Soft lights aglow from its branches  
Just makes me feel so jolly.

I won't forget the manger scene  
Placed beneath the Christmas tree;  
The "Crown" of all decorations  
Of this gift for you and me!

The children's anticipation  
As Christmas is drawing near,  
Makes me join in their excitement  
And fills my heart with their cheer.

It takes me back to my childhood  
Hoping what Santa would bring,  
While Mom and Dad shared the story  
Of Jesus, our Lord and King.

I enjoy the children's pageants.  
It's delightful watching them  
Reenacting our Savior's birth  
In the town of Bethlehem.

They help share the Christmas story  
So others may come to know  
The One and only Son of God  
Who came to conquer our foes.

I love to hear the children sing  
"Away in the Manger" song.  
Their sweet, happy, cheerful voices  
Joining with Angelic throng.

Generosity flows freely.  
Kind hearts willingly give more;  
Bags of food and Christmas presents,  
So graciously, to the poor.

It brings pure joy to the needy  
When other folks share their love,  
With some of the many blessings  
Given them from God above.

I love the church on Christmas Eve.  
The pews are filled to the brim  
With worshipers there to honor  
The Christ child of Bethlehem.

The church is all decorated  
With poinsettias and such.  
And the Christmas tree with Chrismons  
Adds a real meaningful touch.

The bell choir ringing the hand bells  
Brings sweet music to the night,  
While joining with choir voices  
Singing under vigil lights.

I love to hear the minister  
Bring the Word of God to life.  
How God sent us His only Son  
To a world that's filled with strife.

Do not take Christ out of Christmas.  
Banish that thought from your mind!  
He is the One, true Son of God  
Who came for all of mankind.

If you take Christ out of Christmas  
Then, you're only left with "mas".  
You'll lose the meaning of Christmas,  
And you would have missed the bus?

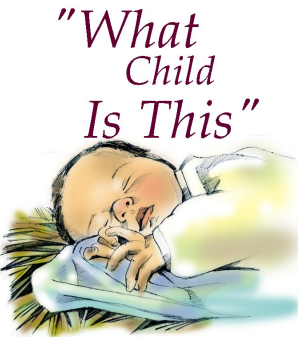
Christ walked the road to Calvary  
Where He died there in our place!  
He took our sins upon Himself;  
Saved you and me by God's grace!

But, the story doesn't end there.  
Three days after Jesus died,  
On Easter morn, Christ conquered death  
And declared: "I am ALIVE"!

You can take Christ out of Christmas  
However, you would be smart  
To, only take Christ from Christmas  
Just to place Him in your heart.

You'll have Christ with you all the time  
Through each and every day;  
To give you strength and hold your hand  
And to guide you on life's way!

--Ruth Ann Atkins  
Christmas 2017



Daily Bible Reading

Week 1

Monday - Genesis 1:1-2:25  
Tuesday - Genesis 3:1-24  
Wednesday - Genesis 4:1-6:8  
Thursday - Genesis 6:9-8:22  
Friday - Genesis 9:1-10:32  
Saturday - Genesis 11:1-12:9

Week 2

Monday - Genesis 12:10-13:18  
Tuesday - Genesis 14:1-15:21  
Wednesday - Genesis 16:1-17:27  
Thursday - Genesis 18:1-19:38  
Friday - Genesis 20:1-21:34  
Saturday - Genesis 22:1-24

Week 3

Monday - Genesis 23:1-24:67  
Tuesday - Genesis 25:1-26:35  
Wednesday - Genesis 27:1-28:22  
Thursday - Genesis 29:1-30:43  
Friday - Genesis 31:1-33:20  
Saturday - Genesis 34:1-35:29

Week 4

Monday - Genesis 36:1-37:36  
Tuesday - Genesis 38:1-39:23  
Wednesday - Genesis 40:1-23  
Thursday - Genesis 41:1-40  
Friday - Genesis 41:41-57  
Saturday - Genesis 42:1-44:34

ECC

Thanksgiving  
Feast!!



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Janee' Jones is the lunch chef here at Christ the Redeemer ECC. She is the daughter of Terry and Sharri Reeves, former members of CTR, who now live in Yukon, OK. In September of 2011, she married her best friend, Rick Jones, and they enjoy working out together, spending quality time together and caring for their three fur babies, Pete, Boomer and Noodles. She has worked as the chef since early in 2014, but also worked at ECC while she attended Union High School and during the summers while she attended OSU Stillwater. Her first degree from OSU Stillwater is in Theatre Performance and while she loved performing on stage around the country, in 2009 she decided to return to Tulsa and pursue her culinary arts degree at OSU Okmulgee. She loves that she can use her culinary education and her creative instincts to get the kiddos to try some new, healthy foods.



Janee' is so thankful for Nikki, her ECC family and the CTR church group for giving her the opportunity to work at such a wonderful childcare center that provides a strong, Christian education and loving, caring environment for little ones to enjoy.



Love Gathering for January

Please bring Kleenex, paper towels and non-scented wipes to the collection baskets in the narthex for ECC. Your donations are greatly appreciated!!

Help support ECC by shopping on Amazon Smile. Simply select Christ the Redeemer Lutheran Church and .5% of your purchase will be given back to the ECC.



Merry  
Christmas  
from our  
classroom  
to you and  
your family!





FAMILY AND  
CHILDREN'S  
MINISTRY



DCE Intern  
Myrthe  
Harkenrider

For more information about any upcoming activities, please contact families@ctrtulsa.org

## Save the Date!

- ⇒ January 6, 2018: Connect Night
- ⇒ January 7, 2018: Jr. Roustabouts\*
- ⇒ February 2-4, 2018: Camp Out Winter VBS\*
- ⇒ February 3, 2018: Club 345 Camp Out Movie Afternoon
- ⇒ March 3, 2018: Connect Night
- ⇒ March 4, 2018: Jr. Roustabouts\*
- ⇒ April 6-8, 2018: Club 345 Retreat to Camp Lutherhoma\*
- ⇒ April 14, 2018: Reconnect Night
- ⇒ May 12, 2018: Club 345 Silly String and Water War

\*Make sure to check out the library window and church bulletin to find out how you can serve at these events!



Club 345's first ever Christmas Party was a ton of fun! The third, fourth and fifth graders are thrilled to have a group of peers to be in fellowship with!



**Final call to sign up for Jr. Roustabouts!** In Jr. Roustabouts families partner with Roustabouts to clean up the church! There is something for everyone to do! From 2 years old to 85 years old, we are so excited for our congregation to partner together!

## CAMP OUT WINTER VBS IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER!

**What's a Camp Out without Lutherhoma!?** Erin and John Busch will be attending Winter VBS! They will lead opening music with the Youth Band and will also teach a Parent Bible Study.

**You Heard That Right Parents!** VBS is not just for your kids anymore! It's time for you to have some fun and devotion at Camp Out! During the station portion of VBS, Erin and John will be leading a Bible Study and fellowship time for you!

**Bring a Friend.** With just two sessions of VBS, this is the perfect way for friends who are not familiar with VBS to test out the fun and spiritual growth of a VBS! We are challenging every child to bring a friend to Winter VBS!

### Important Dates and Times

Friday, February 2, 2018

Kick-Off Dinner: 4:45 p.m.-5:30 p.m.

Friday Night VBS: 5:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 3, 2018

Breakfast: 8:30-9:00 a.m.

Saturday Morning VBS: 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Club 345 Movie: 11:45 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Sunday, February 4, 2018

VBS Celebration/Lutherhoma Presentation: 9:30 a.m.



**Our kids did such an outstanding job presenting the story of God's promise coming true through the birth of Jesus in the Christmas Program!**



DCE  
Suzanne Watt

## CHRIST THE REDEEMER YOUTH MINISTRY

**Jr. High (6-8th graders)**

**Sr. High (9-12th graders)**

*"8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8*

## Save the Date!

**Eastern OK LCMS Lock-In @ Incredible Pizza for Jr High & High School is Feb 18-19, 2018**

**Jr Roustabouts Servant Project @ CTR is March 4**

**Ok'd in Christ High School District Gathering in Norman, OK is March 9-11, 2018**

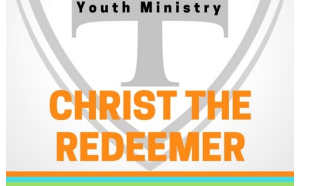
**Lutheran Youth Fellowship Leadership Training in St. Louis, MO is March 15-18, 2018**



### Wednesday Night Confirmation

5:30-6:30 in the Library

as part of the CTR-U schedule and are open to students in 6th grade and up. Jan 3-Feb 7 we will be studying Lutheran History. Please speak to DCE Suzanne if you have any questions regarding Confirmation requirements or remaining classes needed to complete.



**Sunday Night Schedule! Fall 2017-Spring 2018** we will have youth events 2 Sundays a month from 3:00-5:00 PM! You will have the option of participating in a Confirmation class or a Small Group Bible Study followed by a light snack and games. Other weeks we will have weekend retreats or special events.

**January 14** Journey in January High School Retreat  
**January 28** Jr High Retreat @ Camp Lutherhoma

**February 11** Small Group w/Snack & Games  
**February 25** Small Group w/Snack & Games

**March 11** Ok'd in Christ High School Gathering  
**March 25** Small Group w/Snack & Games

**April 8** Small Group w/Snack & Games  
**April 22** Eastern OK LCMS Youth Event

**ANNUAL JR HIGH RETREAT (6th-8th grade)** is only CTR

youth and friends. This event brings together our 6th-8th grade students and friends for a weekend of Bible study, fellowship and team building. This year's theme is "Hello, My Name Is..."

Jr High Retreat @ Camp Lutherhoma in Tahlequah  
January 26-28, 2018

Cost is \$70 per jr high student or friend and \$35 per high school student leader. We will be in the retreat cabins so linens, towels and meals are provided. Transportation & a t-shirt are also included.

You can sign up by returning a check for the registration amount (see above) to DCE Suzanne with the registration form attached to this email. You will not complete a medical form until after January 1st.



**OK'D IN CHRIST  
OK DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL GATHERING**  
March 9-11, 2018

Embassy Suites- Norman, OK  
Registration is \$100 due by 2/4/18  
\$135 between 2/4 and 2/25

Includes event, night life activities, t-shirt, all meals, hotel room and transportation.  
Friends invited to attend!

Eastern Oklahoma LCMS  
Middle School and High School Youth

**AMERICA'S  
Incredible  
PIZZA  
Company**  
Great Food, Fun, Family & Friends

**INCREIBLE  
YOUTH LOCK-IN**

Sunday - Monday  
10:30pm, February 18  
5:30am, February 19

Celebrate President's Day with  
**PIZZA, DRINKS,  
GAMES, and RIDES!**

**Stay all night and enjoy:**

- Bible Study led by the youth
- Pizza Buffet in the evening
- Cinnamon Rolls in the morning!
- Unlimited soda and slushies all night
- Unlimited Laser Tag, Go-Karts, Mini-Golf, Bumper Cars & XD Theater
- 1 hour unlimited jumping in Spring Town
- \$15 Game Card

**Only  
\$30 /person**