

Angelos

January 2026

Almost Goodbye

This will be my next-to-last Angelos article, covering January, my last month as pastor of Christ Lutheran. I'll save my teary farewells for the next Angelos!

I love the fact that my last month here is during the Season of Epiphany. The entire church year is built around the Jesus story but in a particular way Epiphany is the season that brings who Jesus is to the forefront. From

his baptism in the Jordan (week 1 of Epiphany) to the Mount of Transfiguration account (the final week of Epiphany) the whole season intends for us to see Jesus and get a sense of his true identity. If Christmas makes clear that Jesus is fully human, then Epiphany wants to make it clear that Jesus isn't only human.

One of the words that gets highlighted this season is the word 'glory'. It's the outshining of who God is (something akin to the light that emanates from the sun). It is so brilliant that when people came in contact with it in the Old

Testament they had to shield themselves from it. But in Jesus God has done something remarkable (in Fleming Rutledge's words), *"He is willing to shrink himself, so to speak, so that we are not swallowed up alive by his glory."* No one would ever have guessed that one of God's qualities was the ability to shrink himself!

There are some standard stories that come with this season. The Day of Epiphany (12 days after Christmas) features the magi (or wise men) coming with their gifts, and King Herod being not all too happy about that. The next Sunday always has Jesus in the river getting baptized (I love Dale Bruner's comment on this, he thinks of this as the first miracle of Jesus' ministry,



WHAT'S INSIDE

Pastor Ralf
Pages 1-2

Children & Families
Page 3

Can you help?
Page 4

Sing Along Messiah
Pages 5

Narnia
Pages 6

Advent Festival
Page 7

Retirement Events
Pages 8

CLCW
Pages 9

Worship Helpers
Pages 10

January Calendar
Pages 11

"the miracle of his humility."). Jesus getting baptized begs the question, "If baptism has to do with repentance, why is Jesus in the river?" And then Epiphany always ends with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, being changed for just a moment.

There are other stories that we read depending on which particular year it is (Year A, B, or C – we are now in Year A). I want to focus on one that seems especially good for us (Christ Lutheran and the Kalms's) to hear. It's the John 2:1-11 account of Jesus at the wedding of Cana.

The story is familiar – a wedding that has run out of wine. This is hardly a catastrophe in terms of the suffering that's going on at any given moment somewhere in the world. But it would have been embarrassing for the host family on one of the biggest days of their lives.

When Mary tells the servants, "Do whatever he tells you," she is fully confident that Jesus can do something (Leslie Newbigin writes, "*This is not apathetic resignation; it is expectant faith.*").

When the water that has become wine is brought out the steward (sort of an ancient version of a caterer) says: "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now."

At this point at the wedding everyone thought the highpoint of the wedding had happened, now you had to settle for whatever was left. But something new happens when Jesus is involved: "You have saved the best till now!"

Can we believe this wedding at Cana holds a promise both for Christ Lutheran and Thelma and Ralf Kalms? What's the promise? Not lots of good wine in our future (maybe that too!). But this – God has a great surprise for all of us as we move into the next chapter of our church and Ralf/Thelma's lives. The best is not behind us but instead before us. "You have saved the best till now," maybe we should make that the Christ Lutheran slogan or catch phrase for this next year. Rather than approach what's coming with a sense of resignation let's believe that

the Lord who surprised everyone at a wedding in Cana has some surprises in store for us. Maybe even the best is still coming!

Many years ago I came across this prayer on a Beyond Malibu trip:

O Lord God, who hast called thy servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown: Give us faith to go out with a good courage, not knowing whither we go, but only that thy hand is leading us, and thy love supporting us through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I love the sense of adventure this prayer has. Let's be a church and a husband and wife of good courage because we are being led by such a good Guide.

The Best is Yet Before Us!
Pastor Ralf

A couple of other things...

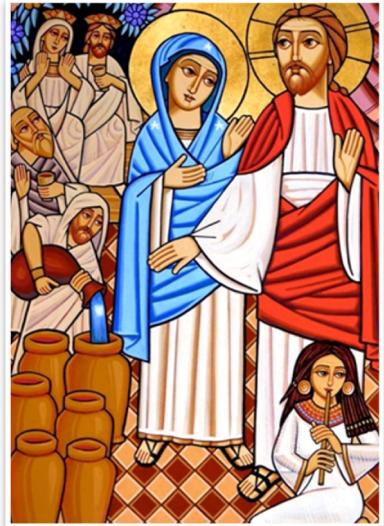
Adult education for January:

- Sunday January 4: "Let's Revisit Compassion Weekend"
- Thursday January 8th, 15th, and 22nd and Sunday January 11th, 18th, and 25th
"What in the World Have I Learned after 40 of Being a Pastor?!"

Confirmation Sunday:

I made a decision at some point in 2025 that it would be most helpful if all the young people in confirmation right now would get confirmed together, despite the fact that they are at different points in our confirmation ministry. I thought an interim pastor would appreciate not being in charge of confirmation!

Confirmation Sunday will be on January 18th at the 10:30 service! The kids getting confirmed are: Rhys McNamara, Zach Miller, Elayna Jensen, Frank Robinson, Henry Hagman, Xavyion Thompson, Sklyer Clarke, Mayla Pewo, Jack Nelson.



Children & Families

This year I bought myself a new sweatshirt and it says, "I'm just going to jingle some of the way this year, I'm tired!" Oh so true! December was FULL to the brim of so many things and I am definitely tired in these last few days of the month. And, as I reflect now, I would not change one single thing. My mind is full of beautiful memories all month long. We began the month with Advent Festival and so many families came and had so much fun make crafts and candle centerpieces together. The lunch was delicious and we all devoured the lefse, ableskivers and krumkake.

Narnia this year, had over 370 people in attendance. I watched in delight as young children, and older adults all danced in the snow, were invited into the wardrobe by Professor Kirke, were delighted in having tea with Mr. Tumnus, giggled as Aslan snored, tiptoed around the White Witch, choked on CS Lewis' pipe smoke and were lathered in love by Father Christmas. I am so grateful that Christ Lutheran has embraced Christmas in Narnia and our community loves it. A huge thank you to the many, many hands who all made it happen this year.

Our Children's Christmas Program was without a doubt, absolutely precious. Over 30 kids acted out the Nativity story and they did a wonderful job. I never quite know how it will go, but as some of you saw at the second service, one of our little animals decided to steal the baby Jesus from the manger, and once we coaxed them to return Jesus, the doll ended up falling on his head. What a great reminder for each of us, from the sweetness of a child, that we should all so desire to do whatever we can to hold Christ close to us. And just as the doll baby Jesus survived his fall, the real Jesus came to earth specifically for our messy, clumsy, and imperfect lives. A huge thank you to all the children, volunteers, and parents who made this years program a memorable - and hilariously holy - success!

With much love and gratitude,
Lyndi



Can you help?

Shampoo Needed

The Monday Growth Group needs Shampoo donations for their on going project, to fill pill bottles for the Tacoma Rescue Misson. Please contact Karen Claussen with any questions. Thank you for your help!

Nonperishable Food Donations

We have teamed up with the Lakewood Rotary Lions to stock the Little Free Pantry and the Tillicum Food Bank. They are in need of cereal, canned tuna/chicken, small jars of peanut butter, trail mix/nuts, canned soup, ramen, fruit or pudding cups, protein bars, and bottled water. Please consider adding a few extra things to your grocery list in the coming week and dropping them off at our foodbank box.

Altar Flowers

Interested in providing the flowers on Sunday morning? Altar Flowers are \$29.00. You can find the sign-up sheet in the Friday email, or call the church office. The 2026 Altar Flower sign-up is now available!

Adult Ed Help Needed

Our church is blessed with amazing people who have amazing gifts! Pastor Ralf and I would love to put together a schedule for our adult education classes on Sunday mornings and hopefully Thursday afternoons (February-May). If you feel called to lead or facilitate a class please call or email me, I would love to talk with you!

Remember God doesn't call the equipped, He equips the called!

Michele Green
Spiritual Formation
(253)576-2076

Worship Helper Scheduling

Do you have a preferred weekend that you like to serve? Would you like to have a set schedule?

If you answered, "yes"! Please email Aubrie at secretary@clc-lakewood.org or call the Church Office and I would be happy to schedule you!

Angelos

If you have any information or articles for the Angelos, please email them to Aubrie at secretary@clc-lakewood.org by the 15th of the month. Thank you!

Sing Along Messiah

We had a full house this year for our Sing Along Messiah! It was another beautiful afternoon of music, treats and fellowship. Thank you again to Sylvia Allen and her team for all their hard work to make this annual event happen each year.



CHRIST LUTHERAN
CHURCH PRESENTS:

SUNDAY JAZZ MATINEE

11 JANUARY 2025 - FIBONACCI'S REVENGE

FEATURING VOCALIST MELANIE GLADSTONE - SONGS FROM THE GREAT AMERICAN
SONGBOOK, FROM ELLA FITZGERALD TO CHET BAKER & FRANK SINATRA, BACKED BY
GEN OBATA (MANDOLIN), MARKAL HARRIS (PERCUSSION), DENNY FOREMAN (GUITAR)
& BILL THROSSELL (TRUMPET)

PERFORMANCES AT 2PM
OPEN JAZZ JAM FROM 3:30PM TILL 5PM

JAM LED BY EDUCATOR/DIRECTOR BRADY MCCOWAN

ALL AGES/ NO CHARGE - FREEWILL OFFERING

8211 112TH STREET SW, LAKWOOD, WA
CHRIDLUTHERANLAKWOOD.COM

Narnia



Advent Festival



Retirement Events



Faith Circle

9:30am Thursday, January 22nd in the Alpha Room.

Dorcas Circle

3:00pm Thursday, January 22nd in the Alpha Room.

Miriam Circle

10:00am Tuesday, January 27th in the Fireside Room.

Monday Morning Bible Study

Bible Study will resume on January 5, 2026, at 9 AM in the Alpha Room. We are continuing our study of The Gospel on the Ground by Kristi McCleland. This has provided insights into the geographical, cultural and religious practices of the Early Church. We will be at Session 6, page 135 when we return. We are getting ready for a new study – come in January with suggestions.

Prayer Group

The Prayer Group meets Monday mornings after Bible study (around 11:15 AM). If you have prayer requests, you may click the prayer request "button" in the CLC weekly email or call the Church secretary. You may also drop a written prayer request in the offering plate. We celebrate the power of prayer.

Book Group

The CLC book club meets on the third Thursday of the month (01/15/2026), in the Alpha Room at 10 AM. January's selection, *The Briar Club* by Kate Quinn, is historical fiction that transports us back to the 1950s – the time of The Red Scare.

The Briarwood House is a down-at-the-heels, all female boarding house in Washington, D.C. The novel captures the paranoia of the McCarthy era. The 5 boarders reflect the changing roles for women in postwar America. When widow Grace March moves into the attic room she livens up the house with weekly dinners, redecorating the depressing interior and forming tenuous friendships. An act of violence tears the house apart; the women are challenged to discover the enemy in their midst.

1/15/26	<i>The Briar Club</i> by Kate Quinn
2/19/26	<i>Only the Beautiful</i> by Susan Meissner
3/19/26	<i>The Book of Hope</i> by Jane Goodall, Douglas Adams
4/16/26	<i>The Queens of Crime</i> by Marie Benedict
5/21/26	<i>Making the Best of What's Left</i> by Judith Viorst
6/18/26	<i>The Backyard Bird Chronicles</i> by Amy Tan
7/16/26	<i>Vera Wong's Guide to Snooping (on a Dead Man)</i> by Jesse Q. Sutanto
8/20/26	<i>The Making of Another Major Motion Picture Masterpiece</i> by Tom Hanks

Please join us. If you use the library, always check the availability of the selection as well as the Lucky Day shelf. If you would like more information for Monday Morning Bible Study, Prayer Group or Book Discussion contact Mikel Robinson: text or call (253)307-9373 or email at mar8412@hotmail.com.

January Worship Helpers

8:30am	01/04	01/11	01/18	01/25
Ushers	Don Crump Carol - Wray Sturgill	Don Crump Phil Sorensen	Dick Ferrell 1 Needed	2 Needed
Greeters	Donna Crump Sandy Reed	Donna Crump 1 Needed	Sandy Reed 1 Needed	Carol - Wray Sturgill 1 Needed
Reader	Grace Meloeny	1 Needed	1 Needed	1 Needed
Communion Set Up	Carol Brown 1 Needed	2 Needed	Bob & Sandy Reed	2 Needed
Communion Assistant	Jerru Dunlap Thelma Kalms Lyndi Reed	Thelma Kalms Lyndi Reed Carol - Wray Sturgill	Thelma Kalms Lyndi Reed 1 Needed	Thelma Kalms Lyndi Reed 1 Needed
Communion Clean Up	Bob & Sandy Reed	Susan Sorensen 1 Needed	2 Needed	2 Needed
Coffee Hour Host	Lark Orwick Moore	Linda Cole Mikel Ann Robinson	Dave Bennett Carissa Thomas	
10:30am	01/04	01/11	01/18	01/25
Ushers	Jeremy Mitchell Ben Sclair	Jeremy Mitchell 1 Needed	Rod & Sharon Shaffer	Jeremy Mitchell 1 Needed
Greeters	Nancy Selland Sharon Shaffer	John Korsmo Kira Korsmo	Thelma Kalms 1 Needed	Cheryl Yannello 1 Needed
Reader	Mikel Ann Robinson	1 Needed	1 Needed	Theresa Luedtke
Communion Assistant	Thelma Kalms Mikel Ann Robinson Lyndi Reed	Thelma Kalms Kira Korsmo Sharon Shaffer	Thelma Kalms Lyndi Reed 1 Needed	Thelma Kalms Lyndi Reed Sharon Shaffer
Communion Clean Up	Mikel Ann Robinson Deb Sclair	2 Needed	2 Needed	2 Needed

The Worship Helper sign up sheets are available in the Gathering Place.

Money Matters

November 2025 Offering and Expense Report

YTD Offerings for Salaries, Utilities & Programs	563,164
YTD Reimbursable Receipts (Book Fees, Events, Reg.)	150,341
YTD Transfer from Sustaining Fund	94,629
YTD Total General Funds Available	808,135
YTD Expenses for Salaries, Utilities & Programs	(876,039)
Estimated General Fund Balance (end of November)	(67,904)

JANUARY 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4 PB&J Sunday Traditional Worship 8:30am Adult Ed/Fellowship 9:40am Contemporary Worship 10:30am	5 Women's Bible Study 9am Quilters 9am Prayer Group 11:15am	6 Book of Acts Study 10:30am Book of Acts Study 7pm	7 Youth Group 6:30pm	8 Worship Noon Education Hour 1:30pm MomCo 5:30pm Joyful Noise Rehearsal 7:30pm	9 Office Closed	10 Ed Larson Memorial 1pm
11 Traditional Worship 8:30am Adult Ed/Fellowship 9:40am Contemporary Worship 10:30am First Communion Class 11:40am	12 Women's Bible study 9am Quilters 9am Prayer Group 11:15am	13 Youth Group 6:30pm	14 Rooted Dinner 5:30pm Classes 6:00pm Youth Group 6:30pm	15 Book Group 10am Worship Noon Education Hour 1:30pm Joyful Noise Rehearsal 7:30pm	16 Office Closed	17
18 Confirmation Sunday Traditional Worship 8:30am Adult Ed/Fellowship 9:40am Contemporary Worship 10:30am	19 MLKJR Day Office Closed	20 Youth Group 6:30pm	21 Rooted Dinner 5:30pm Classes 6:00pm Youth Group 6:30pm	22 Faith Circle 9:30am Worship Noon Education Hour 1:30pm Dorcas Circle 3pm MomCo 5:30pm Joyful Noise Rehearsal 7:30pm	23 Office Closed	24 TGLS 9am Carol Neufeld Memorial 1pm
25 Traditional Worship 8:30am Adult Ed/Fellowship 9:40am Contemporary Worship 10:30am Tea Party for Thelma 2pm	26 Women's Bible study 9am Quilters 9am Prayer Group 11:15am	27 Miriam Circle 10am Book of Acts Study 10:30am Book of Acts Study 7pm	28 Rooted Dinner 5:30pm Classes 6:00pm Youth Group 6:30pm	29 Worship Noon Education Hour 1:30pm Joyful Noise Rehearsal 7:30pm	30 Office Closed	31 TGLS 9am Retirement Dinner 5pm

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ELCA Synod

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Office Hours M-TH 8-4:30

Missed church last Sunday?

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catch up on our YouTube page!

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Did you know you can make an offering online

www.christlutheranlakewood.com

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