



December 2019

A Publication of
Christ Lutheran Church
113 Union Street
Natick, MA 01760

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George Hall, President
Hannele Saramo-Raja, Vice President
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Dorothy Nail, Secretary
Carol Virshbo, Professional Leadership
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Mary Avalos, Family Promise
Robin Hurst, Family Promise
Coffee Hour - open
Frank Miller, Financial Secretary
John Whitlock, Resource
Amy Lousararian, Endowment
Edie Lohr, Altar Guild
Phil Roberts and Kim Petot –WMWA
Bruce Schnepfer, Property
Jeffrey P. Kinney, Stewardship
Martha Cronin, Communications
Janice Laakko, Visitation/Card

Congregation Council:

George Hall (2020)
Dorothy Nail (2020)
David Pellauer (2020)
Hannele Saramo-Raja (2020)
Hilding Hedberg (2021)
Celeste Larson (2021)
Amy Lousararian (2021)
Peter Miller (2021)
Edie Lohr (2022)
David Ripp (2022)
John Whitlock (2022)
Ellen Zagajeski (2022)

Christ Lutheran Church REPORTER

Advent and Christmas at Christ Lutheran Church

December 1 First Sunday of Advent: Light the first candle!

9:00 Wreath-making Workshop

December 4 6:15 -7:30 Mid-week Reflections in the Nave

(Soup's on! Help yourself to a bowl before or after the meditation.)

December 8 Second Sunday of Advent: Light two candles!

2:00 Sing with the Bell Choir at Mary Ann Morse.



5:00 – 8:00 Open House at the Parsonage, 61 Fisher Street, Natick

December 11 6:15 – 7:30 Mid-week Reflections in the Nave

(Soup's on! Help yourself to a bowl before or after the meditation. We'll be hosting Family Promise guests, so enjoy your soup in the Memorial Room.)

December 15 Third Sunday of Advent: Light three candles.

December 17 6:15 – 7:30 Mid-week Reflections in the Nave.

(Soup's on! Help yourself to a bowl before or after the meditation. *Note that we'll gather on **Tuesday** this week!*)

December 18 Wass-Ale at Morse Tavern, 85 E. Central St., Natick: Invite friends & family, enjoy public singing, and order what you like from the tavern menu.)

December 22 Fourth Sunday of Advent: Light four candles!



December 24, Christmas Eve:

4:30 p.m. Jazz Service of Holy Communion with Las Posadas* and candle lighting, followed by hot cocoa and piñata.

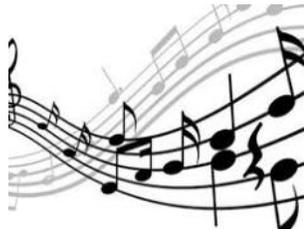
9:30 Carol Fest

10:00 Festival Service of Holy Communion with choir and candle lighting

December 25, Christmas Day

10:00 Contemplative Service of Holy Communion

*See Pastor's Page for a description of Las Posadas.



**Caroling with the Bells!
Sunday Dec. 8, 2-3pm**



**Mary Anne Morse Nursing Home
45 Union St, Natick, MA 01760**

**Annual Christmas Cookie and Bread Sale
December 15**

We need bakers, wrappers, and buyers!
Please let Celeste Larson know if you are willing to help.



Please note: Any material for the weekly e-news should be submitted to either Pr. Bourret (pastor.bourret@christnatick.org) or Joyce Simon (joycesimon@earthlink.net) as a Word document no later than Monday at 2:00 p.m. The e-news is a place for very brief and timely notifications.

Reporter submissions should be made to the church office by the 20th of each month, also in Word format. It may be necessary to edit for reasons of length, clarity, or formatting.



Pastor's Page

Over the last few months much of our attention, across the country, and especially at Christ Lutheran Church, has been focused on our southern border, and the plight of migrants waiting, and desperately hoping, for the chance to enter the United States. Some have walked thousands of miles, and others have hitched rides, or clung to “la bestia”—“the beast,” also known as “el tren de la muerte,” the death train,” the most dangerous train in the world—all in hopes of leaving behind crushing poverty, gang violence, and exploitation.

As of this writing, the City of Framingham, from which we intend to purchase a gently-used minibus for Iglesia Luterana Cristo Rey in El Paso to use in its ministries with migrants and children, has not yet put the vehicles up for sale (at auction); but the word is that the vehicles will be readied imminently! The good news is that the delay likely means a more favorable sale price for us. Other good news: we are more than halfway toward reaching our goal of at least \$10,000, and there are folks who intend to give who have not yet, and individuals and groups who will be invited once we have a firm price.

Here's what we hope to cover with \$10,000 or more:

- Purchase of a 16-passenger minibus,
- Flights for two (a driver and companion, probably Fernando, Pastora Rose Mary's husband, and Pastora) from El Paso to Boston,
- Gas (8-10 miles/gallon), food, and lodging for the 36-hour drive back to El Paso,
- Title, registration, and other ancillary costs related to the sale and transfer of title
- A fund to ease future maintenance and repair costs associated with the vehicle (so that our gift does not become a burden)

At our early Christmas Eve service at 4:30, which has traditionally been more child-oriented, we'll also give a nod to our southern neighbors, incorporating Las Posadas into the service. (This will take the place of a children's message.) Las Posadas—“The Inns”—is an Advent-Christmas tradition introduced by the Spanish to Mexico and other parts of Central America in the 15th or 16th century. It commemorates the journey of Mary and Joseph on the night of Jesus' birth, and the eventual hospitality they found in the stable.

In Central America, the festival may play out over nine days, beginning on December 16, marking the nine months of Mary’s pregnancy. Each night pilgrims—families, friends, neighbors—go from door to door, singing a traditional song requesting accommodations. Innkeepers (those in the homes they visit) reply in song, declining their request, until at least one agrees to allow them to stay, and prayer and partying ensues. The celebration includes a piñata in the shape of a seven-pointed star (representing the seven deadly sins), cracked open by a stick (representing virtue), from which treats—the glories of heaven—cascade. At CLC we’ll abbreviate the festival, but we will have a piñata and hot chocolate after worship!

I hope and expect this to be a fun tradition to include this year; but even more, I hope that the drama of the Holy Family’s desperate search for shelter will help us to see the living Christ in the vulnerable folk who seek asylum and protection in our neighborhoods, in the Commonwealth, and in this great land.

Peace in Christ.

Pr. Rebecca Bourret



MUSIC NOTES

TOM BERRYMAN, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Advent and Christmas Music

The Advent and Christmas seasons are short, but filled with fabulous hymns, carols and choral music. We'll be singing verses from the Advent hymn, "O come, O come Emmanuel" each Sunday of Advent for the Gospel Acclamation. We also will be singing verses from "Soon and very soon" each Sunday as the Sending Hymn.

For Christmas Eve: The 4:30 pm candlelight communion service carols will be lead by jazz artists Ross Petot, Max Petot and John Clark. Come early for a good seat and to hear the Trio's Prelude. The music for the liturgy will be all based on traditional Christmas carols and "El nombre del cielo," from the Mexican *posada* tradition will be featured.

The CLC Choir will lead the music for the 10 pm Christmas Eve Festival Service. We will begin with a CarolFest at 9:30 pm including carol singing, choral music and vocal and instrumental solos. The festive candlelight eucharist at 10 pm includes plenty of carols for congregational singing.

Support LIVE Music! December is a fantastic month for hearing music in performances that include members of the CLC community:

The Jameson Singers (Tom Berryman) EACH FUTURE SONG: A Holiday Concert (<https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4419523>), Saturday, Dec 7 at 8 pm First Church in Cambridge and Friday, Dec 13 at 8 pm Hancock Church in Lexington.

Boston Cecilia (John Whitlock) EL ESPÍRITU NAVIDEÑO: The Spirit of Christmas (<http://www.bostoncecilia.org/christmas-concert-2019>) Friday, Dec 13 at 8 pm Church of the Advent in Boston and Sunday, Dec 15 at 3 pm at All Saints Church in Brookline

Chorus Pro Musica (Kim Petot, Mary Wolf) CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS (<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/chorus-pro-musica-boston-candlelight-christmas>) Friday, Dec 13 at 8 pm Old South Church in Boston.

Boston Saengerfest Men's Chorus (Tom Berryman, Hilding Hedberg) WASSAIL: A Saengerfest Christmas with Southern Rail (<https://saengerfest.org/tickets/>) Saturday, Dec 14 at 4 pm, Casey Theater Regis College in Weston. The bluegrass band Southern Rail joins the Saengerfest for this concert.

WASS-ALE - Join CLC players and singers for our annual informal carol sing at Morse Tavern Wednesday, Dec 18 at 7 pm. If you'd like to play, let me know so that I can have music for you.

Sing for Joy

You'll find a reference to this weekly broadcast from St. Olaf College in the E-News each week. Why not include a listen to this wonderful musical meditation as part of your Advent discipline? Go to www.singforjoy.org or click on the link on each Tuesday's E-News.

Adult Forum for December



December 1 Intergenerational Advent Wreath-Making: Bring candle rings and candles, if you have them, gloves and tools for cutting greens (again, if you have them), and any embellishments you'd like to add to your wreath. The Thursday morning bible study group has made available a variety of Advent devotionals that are a great companion to your ritual wreath-lighting.

December 8 Hard Biblical Texts, continued:

Judges 4: Murder in the Bible

December 15

Job 36:1-23: Biblical Frenemies

December 23

Numbers 22: A Talking Donkey

On Sunday, December 29, the fifth day of Christmas, bring a favorite poem to share during the 9 a.m. Adult Forum

Bible Studies

Come, join us on Thursday mornings at 10:00 a.m. to experience Bible discussions with Pastor Richard Hurst. These sessions will last one hour. Coffee, tea, and cookies are provided.

There will be **no CLC@the Movies in December**. We will screen our next film on January 19, the third Sunday of the month.

Do you have a friend or family member who would enjoy receiving an inspirational card from our church?

Please give Janice Laakko the information, and she will ensure that a card or cards are sent to your friend or loved one.



Janice's email address is jlaakko2585@verizon.net

Thanks to everyone who regularly provides items for the Natick Service Council Food Pantry. Please check over all items to be sure that there are at least six months remaining before the product's sell-by or expiration date.



Update from the Resource Commission

Budget for 2020. The resource commission will prepare the final draft of the 2020 budget plan at its meeting in December as soon as the stewardship committee can provide a reasonably accurate estimate of giving for 2020 based on pledges. The commission encourages pledging to assist in our financial planning for next year. We thank you all for your support.

Financial Results to Date in 2019. For the first ten months of 2019 through October, we continue to have a modest surplus because a number of families have contributed their full annual contribution as a single gift. However, we incurred significant deficits in both July and August and smaller deficits in September and October, a trend we would like to see reversed in the last two months of the year. It is particularly important as we approach the end of the year that we maintain faithful stewardship.

TOM BERRYMAN, Music Director



WASSAIL!

A Boston Saengerfest Christmas with Southern Rail

Saturday, December 14, 2019
4:00 PM to 6:30 PM

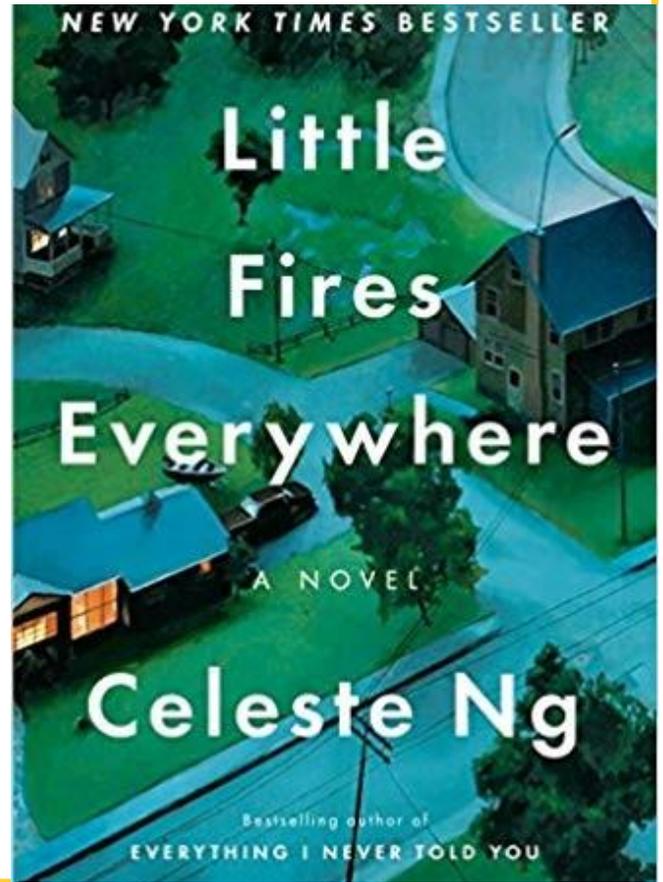
Casey Theatre - Regis College
235 Wellesley Street
Weston, MA 02493

CLC BOOK GROUP
January 6, 2020

Set in suburban Shaker Heights, Ohio, this novel explores the relationships between the comfortable, established Richardson family and a mother-daughter duo who rent a house from them.

The pending adoption of a Chinese-American baby pits the two leading characters against one another and exposes the delusion of a post-racial America.

A provocative novel that helps you think differently about humanity and the current state of affairs in the U.S.



ASSISTING LIST FOR DECEMBER 2019

Date	Liturgical Day or Setting	Time	Greeter/Usher	Acolytes	Assisting Minister	Reader	Communion Assistant
December 8th	Advent 2	10:00 AM	Pam Bathen Laraine M.	Peter Miller	George Hall	Pamela Bathen-White	Cathy Gallagher
December 15	Advent 3	10:00 a.m.	Patricia Bianco Robin Hurst	Fiona Ripp	Joyce Simon	Ellen Zagajeski	Phil Roberts
December 22	Advent 4	10:00 a.m.	Ellen Zagajeski Ruth Colson	Anna Carlson	Russell Pollard	Lisa Eck	Carol Virshbo
December 29	1st Sunday of Christmas	10:00	Edie Lohr Amy Lousarar	Isaac Ripp	Phil Roberts	Lana Peta	Celeste Larson
January 5	2nd Sunday of Christmas	10:00	Sandy Smith Deb Bianco	Kirstin Kirleis	Joyce Simon	Pamela Witcher	George Hall

Date	Liturgical Day or Setting	Time	Coffee Hosts	Altar Guild	Tellers	Cantors
December 8th	Advent 2	10:00 AM	Rolf & Celeste Larson Carol Virshbo	Liana Chan Cathy Gallagher	Frank Miller George Hall	Kim Petot
December 15	Advent 3	10:00 a.m.	Curtis & Edie Blodgett Ruth and Audrey Colson	Liana Chan Cathy Gallagher	Audrey Colson Phil Roberts	John Whitlock
December 22	Advent 4	10:00 a.m.	Margit Smith Beth Gillece-Castro	Hannele Saramo-Raja Amy Lousararian	John Whitlock Amy Lousararian	Bob Weaver
December 29	1st Sunday of Christmas	10:00	Russ and Mary Pollar Joyce Simon	Hannele Sarm-Raja Amy Lousararian	Ross Petot Hilding Hedbert	Scott Carlson
January 5	2nd Sunday of Christmas	10:00	Rich and Robin Hurst Beverly Fabricius	Phil Roberts Robin Hurst	Jerry Precious Audrey Colson	Celeste Larson

Christ Lutheran Calendar - Month of DECEMBER 2019

For most up-to-date calendar information view online at: <http://www.christnatick.org/calendar/clc/>

Christ Natick, Christian Holidays, Office Hours, Youth & Family							Deco 2019 (Eastern Time - New York)						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 First Sunday of Advent 10am - Holy Communion 11:15am - Coffee Hour	2 7pm - Tom Berryman,	3	4	5 8:45am - Bible Study - 8:45pm - OLO Bell Choir 7:45pm - OLO Choir	6 9am - Tom Berryman,	7	8 Family Promise Feast of the Immaculate 10am - Holy Communion 11:15am - Coffee Hour 2pm - Caroling at MA 3pm - Open House at	9	10	11	12 Feast of Our Lady of	13	14
15 Family Promise 10am - Holy Communion 11:15am - Coffee Hour 11:15am - Cookie Sale 4pm - OLO @ the Movies	16	17 8pm - Resource 6:15pm - Advent Mid Week	18 6:15pm - Advent Mid Week 7pm - Wass-als, Morse	19 8:45am - Bible Study - 8:45pm - OLO Bell Choir 7:45pm - OLO Choir	20 Reporter Deadline	21	22 10am - Holy Communion 11:15am - Coffee Hour	23 Christmas Eve 4:30pm - Jazz Carols and 7:30pm - Council 10pm - Festival Eucharist	24 Christmas Day 10am - Christmas Holy	25	26 8:45am - Bible Study - 8:45pm - OLO Bell Choir 7:45pm - OLO Choir	27	28
29 10am - Holy Communion 11:15am - Coffee Hour	30	31	1 8:45am - Bible Study - 8:45pm - OLO Bell Choir 7:45pm - OLO Choir	2	3	4							



1 *First Sunday of Advent* Lift up prayers of thanks and praise for this season of anticipation, remembrance and celebration of Jesus Christ — God's awesome gift of love and redemption for all humanity.

2 Pause each day to reflect prayerfully on the symbols, traditions and practices — ancient and new — that we see and experience throughout Advent and Christmas. Give thanks for everything that centers our attention on the good news of Jesus Christ, deepens our faith as loved and redeemed children of God, and inspires and guides our baptismal journey.

3 Today has become known as Giving Tuesday, a day for encouraging generosity and charitable giving. Pray that the Spirit will always inspire us to be generous with our resources, money, gifts and time for the sake of our neighbors in need.

4 Pray that we awake each day, putting on Jesus Christ and shining as a light in the world, a brilliant light that shines with good news, love, justice, compassion and peace.

5 Remember in prayer Augusta Victoria Hospital (AVH) and the other hospitals in East Jerusalem. AVH is owned and operated by the Lutheran World Federation and supported by several of its member churches, including the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Pray that our government will restore funding vital to the safe and effective operation of the East Jerusalem hospitals as soon as possible so that patients — especially children, who are particularly at risk — will continue to receive the treatment and care they need.

6 Give thanks for the young people who have served or are currently serving as Young Adults in Global Mission, working alongside our global companions to share the gospel, grow the church, care for people in need and strengthen communities in the name of Christ. Pray that these young adults will inspire others to respond to God's call to ministry and service — locally and globally.

7 When you see an Advent wreath, reflect on the circle of evergreen branches and give thanks for the gift of eternal life we have in Jesus Christ — the promised Messiah, born for the sake of the world.

8 Pray for clarity and faith in the lifelong baptismal journey for which the Holy Spirit calls, renews and equips us — a journey for the sake of the world.

9 The "Declaration of the ELCA to People of African Descent" is a public apology offered by our church in the context of the quadricentennial remembrance of slavery in this country. With faith in God's forgiveness and mercy, pray that we will be unconflicted in our repentance, committed to understanding injustice and racism, and bold and persistent in working to end racism and white supremacy wherever they exist, including in the church.

10 Give thanks that we are freed by our faith to serve our neighbor and affect change in our communities, nation and world — change that is grounded in the gospel and God's vision of justice, compassion, healing and peace for all people.

11 Pray that God's righteousness, justice, peace and compassion for the poor and oppressed will flourish in the world, and that we will be bold and persistent in doing God's work together.

12 Remember in prayer people, especially women and children, who live in refugee camps and immigration detention centers. Pray that they will soon return home or move to a community or country where they are welcome and safe, able to reunite with family and reestablish their lives. Give thanks for our church's and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service's commitment to advocate and care for refugees and immigrants everywhere.

13 Remembering that we have been welcomed without hesitation into the body of Christ, pray that we will exercise, without judgment or partiality, grace and hospitality toward our neighbors — friends, antagonists and strangers alike.

14 Give thanks to God for the gifts, service and ministry of women as we celebrate 50 years of Lutheran women being ordained in the United States, 40 years of women of color being ordained and 10 years of LGBTQIA+ individuals being able to serve freely.

15 Give thanks for being reminded and reassured — through the word of God, the sacraments and the witness of one another — that Jesus is the promised Messiah, our savior, teacher, life and hope.

- 16 Pray for ELCA missionaries and young people serving in the Young Adults in Global Mission program who are separated from their families and home congregations during the holidays yet celebrate the good news and gift of Jesus Christ with our companion churches and brothers and sisters in Christ around the world.
- 17 Pray that wherever the weather turns cold and damp, all people will have the warmth and safety of shelter, and that where shelter is absent or difficult to find, the love and generosity of God dwelling in us will move us to create and open shelters in our congregations, community spaces and homes.
- 18 Give thanks for ELCA Good Gifts, an opportunity to support ELCA ministries and programs in nearly 80 countries around the world, including the United States. These funds and gifts support work being carried out by our congregations, companion churches and ecumenical partners.
- 19 Over 47,000 people in the United States died by suicide in 2017, and there were approximately 1.4 million suicide attempts. Pray for hope, relief from suffering and skilled, compassionate care for people who struggle with loneliness, isolation and depression, especially during the holidays. Ask that the Spirit will move us to see and respond to the people around us and to engage in and support suicide-prevention efforts such as the work of the Suicide Prevention Ministry, an independent Lutheran organization.
- 20 Give thanks and praise to God, who lifts up those bowed down and oppressed, watches over strangers and sets free the bound and imprisoned.
- 21 Remember in prayer the many people who work and serve during the holidays, including first responders, care providers, law enforcement, medical personnel, pilots and attendants, truck drivers, men and women serving in the military, seafarers, social service staff, and people serving in stores, restaurants and hotels.
- 22 In the story of Mary, Joseph and the humble birth of Jesus, we sense God's love for humanity and God's understanding of the diverse contexts in which we live. Praise God for loving us as we are and for reaching into the world in ways that we can relate to, understand and embrace.
- 23 Ask that we will be strengthened and inspired by the Holy Spirit for sharing the story of God's love and mercy — the story of Jesus — in today's world and culture.
- 24 *Christmas Eve* What draws you to Jesus? What are you looking for in God's promises? Give thanks to God for revealing to us through Jesus Christ the gifts of fullness of life and the one true light that illuminates God's ways and truth.
- 25 *Christmas Day* Join with our sisters and brothers around the world and with all creation in lifting up prayers and songs of praise and thanksgiving for God's gift of love and life, manifested in the birth of Jesus Christ — a light in the darkness that cannot be overcome.
- 26 "Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things." Pray for enthusiasm and courage in spreading the good news of Jesus Christ through our words and actions each day.
- 27 Remember in prayer people who struggle to meet the costs of living, students and seminarians graduating with long-term student loans, and people experiencing ongoing or unexpected medical expenses. Ask God to help us exercise understanding, empathy and generosity in our support and care for people struggling with financial debts and needs.
- 28 Pray that the good news, joy and faith that live in us will not diminish with the passing of the holidays and special celebrations but will grow deeper and pervade every aspect of our life.
- 29 Reflect on Mary and Joseph fleeing one country for another with the baby Jesus; lift up in prayer all people who suffer injustice and persecution and have become refugees and immigrants seeking safety and acceptance.
- 30 Pray that God will bless the experiences of college and university students participating in J-term courses and service-learning experiences, and that these will enrich their faith, knowledge, wisdom and discernment of vocation.
- 31 On the threshold of a new year, ask that the Spirit will instill in us a sense of time and life that is unrushed, observant and appreciative of the people, community, creation and gifts given by God for our sustenance, use, enjoyment and sharing.

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 4	Advent Mid-week Meditation, 6:15 pm
December 8	Sing with the Bells, Mary Anne Morse Nursing Home, 2 pm Open House at the Parsonage, 5 - 8 pm Family Promise Host Week Begins, 5:00 pm
December 11	Advent Mid-week Meditation, 6:15 pm
December 17	Advent Mid-week Meditation, 6:15 pm
December 18	Wass-ale, 7pm, Morse Tavern
Jan. 31 - Feb. 2	Calumet Retreat

The January Reporter deadline is December 20, 2019



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