



THE MESSENGER *VOLUME 66 #10*

Pastor's Column October 2026

A few years back I was meeting with a young woman who was raised muslim, in the US, and had left to start her own “personal spiritual journey”. She hadn’t ruled out Christ, but was, like many her age, keeping her options open, nervous to commit too much to one “path”. When she discovered what I do for a living, I got barraged with questions, but not of the kind I expected. I anticipated theological or Biblical points, maybe things about suffering or problematic texts. Instead I got questions about my own experiences with faith and committing to one religion, and then being a leader in it.

After much back and forth she said something that struck me. She said I needed to be able to tell my story of my own faith, my own doubts, my own encounters with God, because that was where the truth of the message would be, and where it would be compelling to others. She said I would need to lead through my own journey, because how else would anyone think I was sincere, or worth listening to?

It was all so different from how I’d been trained. The Word was The Word and it existed objectively and independently of the person preaching it. Essentially, it doesn’t matter what I had ever felt or experienced, the truth was there, so teach it. Use analogies to illustrate, but the authority of The Word comes from God, not from the speaker.

I get where Luther and the theologians are coming from. I believe they’re right, that God’s Word and Truth are outside me, and will exist and be true regardless of my actions or beliefs. The Gospel stands on its own. But for the person in secular society, who has the option of any religion, any combination of religions, or no religion, how does one decide between the buffet of options? Objective proofs? Hard to do. Logical proofs? They, at best, demonstrate “a creator deity” but don’t point to one over the others. What secular people have, instead, are the personal stories of the believers and what they see in how they live their lives after those experiences. Religious truth is not objective in our culture; it’s subjective, personal, and relative. It has no authority outside of the testimony of the believer. Personal religious truth is the only religious truth left. What my friend was saying was hitting that perfectly: they don’t want to hear you expound your doctrine of who God is; they want to know how God has worked in your life.

This is familiar territory in some Christian denominations, where the “testimony” is the centerpiece of the service. Some are amazing, and show God making powerful changes. Some turn into competitions to show who was the greater sinner before converting, thus

proving their conversion was greater still. And some of those sin-olympics can sour you on the idea of testimony itself, especially when the lynchpin in the story always seems to be a “personal decision for Jesus” which Luther railed against. “We don’t choose God, God chooses us”. Again, that’s correct, but not how it plays out in our world for everyone. Some of us do make a choice to give up a past life and take on being a disciple of Jesus. I wish I heard more of those stories in Lutheran churches.

There’s a common phrase used today called “my truth”. It drives me nuts because it is so relativistic. If it’s only “your” truth it’s not truth. You can’t independently verify it. You can’t test it. Maybe you should call it “my operating principle” or “my opinion”, but we don’t. It’s My Truth. And My Truth is based on My Experience and that is the only authority there is.

For a church that has historically based itself on objective doctrines expounded without reference to personal experience, this can be a scary world. So, you’re telling me that it doesn’t matter what is right, only what I experience as right? That God is not what I have demonstrated through theology, but only what you have experienced him to be? How do we, then, communicate to people who have not heard, or do not know, Jesus? What truth do we speak?

Well, I speak my truth and my experience. I tell what God has done in my life. I share when God has been present to me, when God touched my heart. I tell when the Spirit gave me a vision, or a dream, or even a powerful silence that is too much for words. I tell when I went through things and how God made a difference. I share how I found Jesus to be the one path I choose to follow. The beauty of this new world is that it does not require us to be theological experts or learn philosophical proofs. It requires something much more personal and uncomfortable – sharing our stories.

One thing I like to do at confirmation is bring in adults in the church to share their stories with the kids. I enjoy getting outside perspectives, and the kids get to hear people answer the questions they’re asking most: why should I care? What difference does Jesus make? Why bother being a part of this? How does it change anything? We have those answers, at least for our selves, and those stories carry with them the power to change lives, and make the Gospel real. I’m still looking for people to share on Sundays for classes. You might get asked.

I encourage you to think about your faith story, and of the moments when you experienced God. What was it like? What did it feel like? What precipitated it? Was it a time of silent prayer? Was it a moment of frustration after tragedy? Was it in something joyous and amazing that only God could do? How did it affect you? That’s where it all starts.

Peace,

Pastor Lars

Thoughts on Worship at Christ Lutheran

I want to share a few thoughts on worship – actually it's not on worship per se but rather the service components of worship. There's a lot that goes into what enables a worship service to flow smoothly. Everything from the Organist and the Cantors to the ushers, the greeters, the flowers, those who help serve communion, as well as all the behind the scenes duties that magically happen every week: the altar is made ready, the communion bread is baked, the sanctuary is cleaned, as well as the communion ware, and folks are called to see if they can serve.

It's really nice when people sign up, and I think all of us rejoice when we see that someone has volunteered for coffee hour duties. But lately, there have been fewer volunteers. Have you noticed how many times we didn't have coffee hour as well as how many times a few good souls dashed out for donuts to serve with coffee so that we would have a reason for some fellowship after worship? Have you noticed how many times the same handful of people serve as ushers or help with communion?

I don't know what the answer is, but I am certainly open to suggestions. Perhaps some of you would like to offer to help, but you don't know how to offer communion or how to be an effective usher. If this is the case for you, please consider joining us for a brief class after worship on Sunday, October 18. Anyone is welcome to serve; even children can participate as long as their parent is able to guide them initially until they are comfortable serving.

Please think about how we all can contribute to the logistics of a smoothly run worship service with weekly coffee hour fellowship. ALSO, in the near future, there will be a brief survey on a few worship preferences for you to complete. Your feedback will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you! Peggy Haug (Worship Chair)

Confirmation Class Schedule 2026-2027

Sept 20	Jan 10
Oct 4	Jan 24
Nov 1	Feb 21
Nov 29	Mar 7
Dec 13	Mar 21
Apr 4	Apr 18



Upcoming Adult Education Classes

October 4th & 11th – Cheryl French: Phlock Philosophy Lessons from God through my chickens. (Hey, God used a donkey once, right?) by Dana A. Gamble.

October 18th & 25th – Writing Prayers.

November 1st – 22nd : Pastor Anderson – Galatians

December 6, 13: Luther's Spirituality (Pastor Lars and others)



Stewardship 2026



The theme for “Stewardship 2026”, will be, Time, Talent, Tithing and Thankfulness. How has serving with the 4T’s at Christ Lutheran Church, impacted your life? Let’s look at Talent, what is talent and who has it? From the biblical Parable of the Talents, which shifted the word’s meaning “toward an endowment or gift to be developed”. God has given each of us many talents and has invited us to develop our talents to serve others and ourselves to the fullest of our abilities. Let God work through your talents (being a greeter at CLC), (fixing a meal for someone who is hungry), to show his love, grace and peace for all.

QUILT SUNDAY IS COMING!

Be sure to join us on October 4th when we will celebrate Quilt Sunday. This is when we showcase many of the wonderful quilts that have been made by our own Mission Group. When you arrive that Sunday you will see a sampling of the over 175 quilts that have been made this year. Amazingly throughout this year we have also produced 500 care kits! Our temple talk will highlight some interesting facts about where the quilts are sent, as well as how they get from Christ Lutheran to Spokane and across the country before they are sent overseas. We will also be asking for financial contributions to cover those shipping costs. Please join us October 4th and consider a special contribution towards shipping our quilts!



Christ in Our Home

The Christ in Our Home devotional booklet for October, November & December is now available for free in the Narthex or on the table by the back entrance. Large Print copies are also available. Please take one for you or your family.

Christ in Our Home is a quarterly devotional resource, published by Augsburg Fortress that encourages readers to live out their faith daily. Each reflective reading is accompanied by a daily scripture reference and prayer of the day. Our congregation has a group subscription. You are encouraged to take one home with you.

October Birthdays

Bill Miller	10/1
Jill Roznowski	10/1
Adelyn Schmid	10/3
Jerry Ladderud	10/4
Marlene Strabel	10/11
Charleen Kaaen	10/13
Susan Quinn	10/13
Sandra Krebs	10/21
Janet Mobley	10/24
Johan Hammar	10/27
Sandy McCoy	10/29
Mary Beth Norby	10/29
Chuck Austin	10/30

Attendance Record

August 2025 - 119

August 2026 - 92

CLC'S FINANCES

August 2026

Total Income: \$25,593

Total Expenses: - \$27,922

Net Loss: \$2,329

God's work. Our Hands

The "God's Work, Our Hands" event proved to be a tremendous success, thanks to the collective efforts and generosity of everyone involved. Special appreciation goes to Lori Peterson for her invaluable hard work and dedication, which played a pivotal role in organizing and executing the event. Heartfelt thanks also go out to all the generous donors who contributed much-needed goods and food. The sleep center was overjoyed with the donations, which will significantly aid those in need and enhance their quality of life. This collaborative effort not only demonstrated the power of community but also underscored the impact of compassion in action.



Join our church group for a delightful adventure at the Walla Walla Corn Maze, located at 853 5 Mile Rd.! It's a wonderful outing for all ages, offering both fun and fellowship in the great outdoors. Admission is \$15.00 for adults (12 and over) and \$10.00 for kids aged 4 to 11, while children 3 and under can enjoy the maze for free. Let's gather in the parking lot at 2 PM to start our exciting journey through the winding paths of the corn maze. This is a perfect chance for our church community to come together for a day of exploration and joy.



Brats & Brews 2026



Join us for a fun-filled afternoon at Brats & Brews on Saturday, October 17th, starting at 4:00 p.m. Gather with friends and family to enjoy delicious food and refreshing brews. We kindly ask each guest to bring a salad or dessert to share with everyone, adding to the communal spirit of the event. If you are bringing something please add it to the sign up sheet in the Narthex. Feel free to bring your own favorite beer to sip and savor. If you're interested in lending a hand with the event, please reach out to Janet Mobley via text at 509-200-1363. We look forward to seeing you there for an enjoyable day of great food, drinks, and company!



Living Lutheran

The latest edition of Living Lutheran is available now!!! Christ Lutheran Church pays for a yearly bulk subscription. You are encouraged to pick up a free copy in the Narthex or on the table by the Back Entrance!

Living Lutheran is the primary publication of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The mission of the publication is to nurture awareness of Christ's presence in our lives and the world; connect readers with the global Christian community; provide an open forum for discussion; and to challenge readers to bring God's grace and care to all.



Nominations Are Open!

The Congregation Council will appoint the Nominating Committee during its meeting on October 13. This committee selects a slate of candidates for the congregation to elect at a congregational meeting in December; terms begin in January 2027. Two Council members and three members from the congregation serve on the committee.

The Nominating Committee will select candidates for;

- **President.** Kay is finishing her last year. The President's term is one year, with a limit of three consecutive terms.
- **Chair, Youth Education.** This position is a two-year term, with a limit of two consecutive terms. The position was not filled for 2026.

Several more positions will be-appointed by the Congregation Council in January: Audit Committee (one opening for a three-year term) and the Mission Endowment Fund Committee (two openings for three-year terms).

Please prayerfully consider volunteering. If you are willing to serve on the Nominating Committee, or if you are interested in learning more about open positions, please contact Kay Shelton at 801-259-0273.

Christ Lutheran Church
Church Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday September 9, 2026

Council President Kay Shelton called the meeting to order at 5:30PM. Those attending were Melanie Hein, Lori Peterson, Janet Mobley, Pastor Lars Hammar, Jim Peterson, Peggy Haug, Mara Palumbo, Anne Swant, Linda Lohrmann, Cheryl French and Julie Michener

Devotions – Devotions by Peggy Haug

Minutes - Minutes of the August 11th meeting were approved by email affirmation August 24, 2026.

Financial Report - Greg Romaniuk was out of town and will share the financial report when he returns.

Pastor's Report – Pastor Lars Hammar emailed his current report to council members which included information on Confirmation classes scheduled on Sundays from 3-5 and adding the 1991 Hymnal Supplement music to services.

Council President's Report – Council President, Kay Shelton, emailed her report to council members which included updated revisions to the church Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions. The Constitution will be reviewed at the September and October meetings.

Committee Reports

Finance & Budget: Jim Peterson

August income was \$25,593, \$76.34 greater than budget. August expenses were \$27,922.89, \$1,515.39 less than budget for the month. We finished \$1,591.73 better than the budget, but \$2,329.89 in the red for the month. Year to date, Christ Lutheran Church has received approximately 65% of our budgeted income and has expended approximately 65% of the budgeted expenses. So, although we are tracking on budget, we are currently experiencing a negative \$25,481 balance for the year because the congregation adopted a budget with a negative year-end balance. We are solvent because CLC is currently showing a positive \$34,019.69 balance in designated and restricted funds. Reserve fund balances are consistent with our plans and commitments. We have \$311,729.10 in savings and council invested reserves.

Worship: Peggy Haug

Sunday, September 6th, we welcomed our Organist, Feng Kang, back from Taiwan. We are grateful to James French for faithfully filling in all summer. We are also very grateful to Clarice Swanson for being our cantor during the chanting of the weekly psalm. One of the challenges I face is having enough people volunteer for ushering or reading or serving communion each Sunday. I welcome any suggestions. Also, I plan to create a questionnaire/survey to learn people's preferences around various worship practices.

Evangelism: Linda Lohrmann

The Evangelism umbrella includes reaching out to the community, carrying out visitations for inactive members, greeting visitors and members on Sundays, identifying guests at worship, providing classes for prospective and/or new members, annually reviewing and updating church membership, and working with the Fellowship Committee to gather information for and prepare the congregation directory.

To better reach out to our members and the community, I have asked several CLC members to join in this work. We will meet soon. The membership book is up to date. Pastor Lars and I plan an Orientation and Welcome for new members. A request for funds from the Mission Endowment Fund for advertising and outdoor banners was recently granted. Janet Mobley and I updated, printed and distributed the 2026 Congregation Directory. Copies are available in the church office. CLC's subscription to Christ in Our Home was renewed in August. Christ in Our Home is a quarterly devotional resource that encourages readers to live out their faith daily. It is published by Augsburg Fortress. Pick up your copy in the narthex or on the table by the back door. Christ Lutheran has a bulk subscription for Living Lutheran, the primary publication of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and an important connection to our larger church community. The mission of the publication is to nurture awareness of Christ's presence in our lives and the world; connect readers with the global Christian community; provide an open forum for discussion; and to challenge readers to bring God's grace and care to all. It is published quarterly. Christ Lutheran currently has a bulk subscription of 75 copies. I am gathering information prior to renewal and will publicize the magazine in future newsletters so that CLC members are aware that it is available at the church. The magazine can be picked up in the narthex and on the table at the back entrance. Sunday Greeters offer members the chance to take a copy.

Outreach: Melanie Hein

The Mission group continues sewing quilts and making health kits. We need donations of large pieces of cotton material. We continue to serve meals at the sleep center and the Christian Aid Center. We've made extra meals at the sleep center, due to their needs and we appreciate your help. With everything that is happening around us, I urge you to look around and reach out to those in need. A phone call, a note, can mean a lot.

Property: Anne Swant

There is a lot happening in the property department. Over the summer the Design committee took a pause but will reconvene in September - we meet on the 3rd Monday of each month. Design Team members are Melanie Hein, Dan Grinstead, Pastor Lars, Marit Rasmussen & Allison Hines. This summer, we had JC's Landscaping do a weeding of the property around the church. Humberto, our sexton, will take over those tasks. We have a new set of art pieces being displayed in the church thanks to the Arts Committee. Those members are our resident artists: John Knapp, Judith Hedberg-Duff, Joyce Anderson, Jeffery Wagner, Cassie Spangrude, Peggy Haug & Gracie Nelson. Their current plan is to change out pieces every 3 months. We thank them for sharing their God given talents with all of us. The property committee is Dan Grinstead, Jim Peterson, John Funderburk, Tracy Rutledge & Anne. These people have been incredibly helpful whenever needed. I am so thankful for these men who take their time and share their talents whenever we needed (or they know we need something done and they just do it!) Tracy has been mowing all this year, what a blessing! If you get a chance, tell him thank you for his hard work and commitment to our property's care. I want to acknowledge that Dave Hartzheim has been so kind to trim our hedges & trees around our property. He is a former longtime member of the church and did not request any payment. The financial office computer has been purchased and is being set up to be used by Carmen Funderburk, financial secretary. We want to thank Carmen for her patience as we navigated this purchase. Fall Clean Up will be coming sometime during late October to early November. Getting the word out and everyone pitching in is what makes light work of a very big job.

Fellowship: Janet Mobley

September 20th will be our back to Sunday School/Godly Play kickoff day! Carmen has volunteered to serve the ice cream sundaes, and I will provide other treats for coffee hour as we welcome our kids back from the summer break. Thank you, Carmen, for starting this annual event! Saturday, October 17th will be our annual Brats & Brews event! Carmen, John, Charlene and Lori offered to help and I really appreciate them! Details as well as a sign-up sheet will be going up soon. Please let me know if you are interested in helping, the more the better! This November, Thelma Sanks will be celebrating her 97th birthday so I'm planning a special coffee hour for her. Kitchen supplies look good for now. Thanks to all of you for donating coffee, filters, tea, hot chocolate, creamer, etc. I appreciate you taking the time to see what we can use or need. Thank you to Jim & Kari for hosting so many coffee hours. You two are amazing and we all appreciate you! Coffee hour is such a big part of Fellowship so please consider hosting soon with a friend or two!

Stewardship: Lori Peterson

I met with Pastor and the Stewardship Committee on 8-19-26, we plan to have 4 members do "temple talks", on Stewardship with the first on September 13th, followed by September 27, October 11th and October 25th. I do not have a speaker confirmed for the 13th; do you have any suggestions of members who might be willing to speak? The question we will ask each to speak on is how have the 4 T's at CLC impacted your faith? Time limit, 3 minutes or less. 2nd Stewardship meeting will be on September 9th. E-Blast articles on September 18th, October 2nd, and October 16th. Newsletter articles on August 22nd, September 22nd, and October 22nd.

Commitment Sunday, November 8th

Personnel report: Mara Palumbo

Personnel report-the youth coordinator position was posted, and we received several solid resumes. The committee will conduct interviews soon, projected for September 13th. Kay Shelton and Mara Palumbo met with Pastors Lars and completed his annual review.

Adult Education: Cheryl French

Adult Education is off to a slow start. Invitations for the committee will be sent via the Friday blast. I have scheduled a meeting for all who are interested in being on the committee for after church September 20th. October 4th will start a fun class using the book, "Phlock Philosophy, Lessons from God Through my Chickens! (Hey, God Used a Donkey once. Right?)". It's a 2-week class. I hope everyone enjoys it as much as I did. With the help of the adult education committee, I am hoping to have more classes scheduled for the winter and spring.

Youth & Family: Kirsten Brannon

Wheelin' Walla Walla Cruise will be Crusin' past CLC between 5:30pm & 7pm. Come join us in front of the church and see some amazing classic cars. Popcorn has been ordered from Bright's. Scott and Kim Morasch are bringing ice cream for the event. Some volunteers will be helping me to set up yard games earlier in the day.

Continuing Business

A. The minutes from the Endowment Fund Committee meeting were reviewed. Jim made a motion to accept it as written, Peggy seconded, the Council unanimously approved the endowment as written.

B. Property list review – Anne completed her annual review of the Church's property in September. She provided an extensive list of CLC property and also video-recorded items for documentation. Jim suggested adding the solar panels to the list. On Anne's request, the Council considered whether the church still needed their 5 pianos when only 2 are being used. She suggested we keep the upright piano on wheels and the upright grand piano. Anne then made a motion to offer the other 3 upright pianos to the congregation with the stipulation that they would have to move them. Melanie seconded, after a short discussion the Council approved by unanimous vote. Anne suggested that the surplus furniture throughout the church be tagged and offered to the congregation. Linda suggested we have a period of time so the congregation can say whether they want a piece to stay in the church. Anne will compile a list of the items for Council review in October.

C. Youth Education curriculum update – Kay and Pastor Lars - We currently have 3 Godly Play teachers and 1 substitute. We will continue to use the Godly Play curriculum and cycle it every three years. More teachers are welcome.

D. Youth Coordinator proposal – Mara and Pastor Lars – We received many applications for the Youth Coordinator position. The top 4 were selected and interviews are being scheduled.

New Business

A. Model Constitution and Bylaws Update – The Council continues to review sections of the Model Constitution and Bylaws to ensure they are consistent with the needs of the for CLC.

B. Guidelines for Restricted Youth Fund – Tabled until October meeting

C. The Child and Youth Protection Policy is under review.

D. An application for Building Use to Teach Fencing Classes was submitted by Robert Tabacco. The application was approved, subject to 1) the Fellowship Hall will be left clean and 2) when classes are held Monday evenings, the Fellowship Hall tables and chairs will be left in the set-up required for the Quilting Mission Group on Tuesday mornings. Robert will pay a building use fee equal to 15% of the income generated from the lessons. per the Building Use Policy.

Future Dates

9/20 - Godly Play resumes. Sign-ups for Door Persons to assist the Godly Play teachers are available in the Narthex or by contacting Kay Shelton at 801-259-0273. Thank you for volunteering to help.

9/20 - We will be having an ice cream social / baptism reception during coffee hour. Come join the celebration.

9/27 - Meeting in the library after church to explore new ideas for this winter and next spring's Adult Education classes. All are welcome and encouraged to attend. We would really like to know how to meet your education desires.

10/4 - Quilting Sunday fundraiser for the Quilting Mission Group (pre-approved at January Council meeting)

10/4 - All are welcome to participate in a 2-week class starting October 4th after service in the library. The book is Phlock Philosophy Lessons from God through my chickens. (Hey, God used a donkey once, right?) by Dana A. Gamble.

10/17 – Annual Brats & Brews. Details coming!

Adjournment – The meeting concluded with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Julie Michener, Council Secretary

October 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
				Bible Study 1pm		Weavers 1pm – 4pm Corn Maze 2pm
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Worship 9:30am Godly Play Adult Ed. 10:40am Confirmation 3-5pm	Design Team Meeting 6:30pm	Mission Group 9am		Bible Study 1pm		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Worship 9:30am Godly Play Adult Ed. 10:40am		Mission Group 9am Men's Group 10am	D&D 7pm	Bible Study 1pm		Brats & Brews 4:00pm
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Worship 9:30am Godly Play Adult Ed. 10:40am Worship Class 10:40am		Mission Group 9am Evangelism Team 10am Council Meeting 5:30pm		Bible Study 1pm		
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Worship 9:30am Godly Play Adult Ed. 10:40am	Newsletter Deadline	Mission Group 9am Men's Group 10am	D&D 7pm	Bible Study 1pm		



Christ Lutheran Church

1420 South 2nd Avenue
Walla Walla, WA 99362-4502

Return Service Requested

Church Website come see what's new!
www.christwallawalla.org

October 2026

Church Staff

Pastor Lars Hammar	President Kay Shelton
Office Manager Dee Kasten	Secretary Julie Michener
Sexton Bert Rodriguez	Treasurer Greg Romaniuk
Organist James French	Stewardship Lori Peterson
	Fellowship Janet Mobley

Church Council

Property Management Anne Swant	Outreach Melanie Hein
Finance/ Budget Jim Peterson	Adult Ed./Library Cheryl French
Worship Peg Haug	Personnel Mara Palumbo
Evangelism Linda Lohrmann	Youth Education Vacant
Youth & Family Kirsten Brannon	

Mission

We are God's people, united by faith in Jesus Christ, forgiven, chosen and called by him through the Word and Sacraments to make disciples, and to serve in the world God loves.