



Glory of Christ Lutheran Church

Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

4040 County Road 101 North • Plymouth • MN • 55446

Office Phone 763-478-6031
www.gloryofchrist.org

Pastor: Rev. Jeremiah Johnson
Assistant Pastor for Missions: Rev. John Fehrmann
Visitation Pastor: Rev. Dean Weibel

Pastor's Letter

Rev. Jeremiah Johnson
816-716-2453 (cell)

A few days before Christmas, the elders sent out a copy of the “short list” of all the candidates on our call list, along with some basic information about each one. Now that you have something in hand to look at, let's talk about the call process a little bit more before our meeting on January 10th.

Glory of Christ has experienced quite a few changes over the last few years. We've called a pastor and lost a pastor. We've welcomed in quite a few new members. We've committed ourselves to a big mission project in Mexico and we've taken the next step in a building program. And now, we're calling a pastor (again!). With change always comes a little bit of uneasiness, a little bit of uncertainty. We get comfortable with the way things are, and the unknown can make us a little nervous. You might wonder, “What will the new pastor be like? How will he fit in? Will he bring changes? Will this all work out?”

But take heart! Remember two things: First, this is the *Lord's* church, and He watches after it. Second, you're *His* people. He has staked an eternal claim on you with His name. No matter who we call or what other changes may come down the pike in the years ahead, these two facts will not change.

Nevertheless, you probably still have questions. So let me address a few thoughts and issues that people have brought to me thus far:

Tell me about the call process so far

The elders received about 15 names for potential pastors from the congregation. That list was forwarded to the Minnesota South District, where just a few of those names were removed because they had just received another call or hadn't been at their current congregation long enough. The District then added about a dozen more names and forwarded two personnel documents about each of these pastors to the elders. These two documents are the PIF (Personal Information Form) and the SET (Self-Evaluation Tool). The PIF is mostly factual information about a pastor's family, education, pastoral experience and a few other details. The SET is primarily a theological questionnaire. If you would like to see either of these two documents in their fullness for any of the candidates, they are available in the church office. The only stipulation is that they cannot leave the church.

After receiving the full list of candidates, the elders read through all the PIFs and SETs and narrowed down the field to 10 candidates. After making contact with all ten, four of the candidates had compelling reason to be removed from the list. The elders then interviewed six of the candidates, eliminated one, and are submitting the remaining five candidates (the necessary minimum number specified by the constitution) for the January 10th meeting.

Tell me about these information sheets that Brenda forwarded to me

Because the PIFs and the SETs for *each* candidate are at least a dozen pages in total, the elders wisely opted to summarize the most pertinent information. What you received via email contains a few details gleaned from the PIF accompanied by a short summary of the impressions the elders received of each candidate during the interviews.

In addition to the email, the elders also selected a few questions from the SET and reproduced the candidates' answers on a handout that you will find at church. Because the SET is private personnel information, we cannot electronically reproduce it or let you take it home.

Why do all the candidates sound so similar?

Several people have commented to me that the candidates sound very similar. Good news—the elders thought so too! The elders have done an excellent job filtering through the candidates to find men who they believe will fit well with our congregation, so naturally, they have some similarities. All of them are strong teachers who treasure the liturgy and are theologically conservative. But if you read through the elders' impressions very carefully, you'll see some of the unique characteristics of each of the candidates coming through.

How should I prepare for the call meeting?

First, pray. Second, read the information that the elders have distributed very carefully. Third, pray. Fourth, talk to other people in the congregation to get their impression of the candidates. Fifth, pray. Sixth, think about the congregation and what needs and who might best fit that description. Seventh, yep, pray.

The call process is not an exercise in divine mind-reading, but we do well to ask our Father to grant us wisdom and humility in this task.

So what exactly are we doing on January 10th?

Although the elders will give a more thorough explanation on that day, let me give you a brief overview now. After some introductory comments and an opportunity to ask questions and express your opinions, the congregation will vote on which one of these five candidates to call. For a candidate to be selected, He needs to receive a majority of the votes. So after each round of voting, the candidate with the lowest number of votes will drop off and we will continue voting until one candidate receives the majority. After that, the elders will notify the pastor whom we're calling, and they'll provide all the necessary paperwork for the call.

Who do the elders think we should call?

The elders have elected not to recommend any one candidate. The elders and I are confident that all five of these pastors would suit our congregation well and would be excellent choices. The elders feel that they have exercised their influence by narrowing down the field to five, and now it's the congregation's turn.

Although all five candidates are good candidates, they aren't carbon copies of each other. By looking at the elders' impressions as well as their answers to our selected SET questions, you will get a little bit better sense about each one of them. Some have more experience than others, some have more education, some are more assertive, and some have had a wide variety of experience outside of the parish. So as you consider each of these candidates, you have to ask yourselves, "which one of these men will be the best fit for Glory of Christ and where we want to be in the future?" No doubt, this is a difficult question, let me speak a little more to that in the next question.

What sort of pastor are we looking for?

Of course we are looking for a shepherd who will teach, preach, and administer the sacraments faithfully. But we have made it clear from the beginning that we are *not* looking for a specialist—a "youth" pastor or a "music" pastor or a "teaching" pastor. We are looking for a *pastor*, one who will be involved in every dimension of the church's life here at Glory of Christ. So perhaps the better question is: what will life look like in the next few years here at Glory of Christ? Based on our long-range plans and other commitments, here are some of the top items that we've been talking about:

1. Strong support of your young adults and our young families.
2. Maintaining and improving our education opportunities (Bible Studies, etc.)
3. Pastoral care for the shut-in, the hospitalized, and the grieving.
4. The Mexico mission
5. Better outreach and community presence.

To be clear, this is *not* a job description, but an outline of some of the things that our new pastor (and our current pastors!) will inevitably be involved in the years ahead.

So what kind of questions would be helpful to ask?

Even though the elders will not recommend one particular candidate, you are certainly encouraged to ask questions! Clarifying questions are especially helpful and well-received. "What did this pastor mean by his answer on question 25? What did that pastor think about our Mexico mission? In the elders' impressions, what did you mean by this comment?" Here's a more concrete example: for one of our candidates it may seem unclear how many churches he is serving. This is because he began as a pastor of a single parish, but only a few years ago, he also took on another small parish and now serves both parishes. Clarifying questions like this can be very helpful to everyone.

As January 10th approaches, please pray for our church, for the call meeting, and for all five of the candidates. A prospective call is not just emotionally taxing for a congregation but also for all the pastors being considered and their families. Pray that the Lord would grant us wisdom and clarity in selecting a candidate. Pray that the pastor whom we call would make a decision that would be for the good of Christ's whole church. And finally, pray for godly humility, knowing that we cannot make or break the Lord's church. And this is just as true for all His little shepherds, even myself.

Go in joy.

Pastor Johnson



Worship this Month

Christmas 2 **January 3 – Luke 2:40-52**

The Obedient Son

At age 12, Jesus was officially a “son of the law”, which in the Jewish culture meant that He was now responsible for attending the festivals, bringing the sacrifices, and keeping the whole law. And Christ kept the law in a way no man ever could. He bore the whole weight of the law in our place, because we would forever be doomed to failure.

But Jesus did not keep the law as a divine homework assignment or as a moral notch in His belt. He kept the law out of devotion and obedience to His Father. When Mary and Joseph find Jesus in the temple, he tells them, “ Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?” And at the end of the text, Luke tells us that Jesus grew in favor with both man and *God*. It should come as no surprise to us, then, that the Father should declare His pleasure with His Son from the mount of transfiguration, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased...” And we can take great joy in the Father's pleasure with Jesus, because that same pleasure is declared to us when we become one with the Son.

Epiphany **January 10 – Matthew 2:1-12**

Men wise in all the wrong things

We always call them “wise men”, but there's some irony to that designation, because if they are wise, they're wise in all the wrong things.

Matthew calls these visitors from the east (probably Babylon or Persia) “magi”, which are basically pagan astrologers. They are “wise” in the pagan practice of divining the future from the arrangement of the stars. This is why it's unsurprising that they saw the star in the east. Somewhere along the way, they did get the message that this star marked the birth of a king, so at least they got that right. But consider how foolish these magi were. When they came to Judea, they stopped at the wrong town—Jerusalem. They had to be given directions from the religious leaders to go to Bethlehem. They were deceived by Herod who feigned loyalty to this newborn king. And they had to be warned in a dream to return another way. From the way the story unfolds, the “wise” men seem pretty foolish. And what they are wise in—pagan astrology—is not something we would want to imitate.

But the foolishness of the Magi only highlights the grace of God. The Magi do not find the Christ child because of their profound wisdom or penetrating insight. They find the Magi because God *leads* them to Him. So it is with us. We could not know Jesus if the Lord did not lead us to Him.

Epiphany 2

January 17 – John 2:1-11

Jesus, the Banquet-master

The wedding at Cana is the setting for Jesus' first miracle: water into wine. The details are pretty straightforward. Jesus is at a wedding. They run out of wine. Jesus tells the servants to fill the water jars with water. When they bring the water to the head of the banquet, viola! The water is now super-delicious wine.

Sure, this demonstrates Jesus' great power as the Son of God, but there's something more going on here. It's no coincidence that Jesus performs this miracle at a *wedding banquet*. Throughout the Bible, salvation is often portrayed as a wedding feast, where we dine with God. Here, just as Jesus blesses this wedding feast, he will bless all His people with the ultimate wedding feast that he himself will preside over. And we will receive gifts far greater than miraculous wine. Life itself will be given at this feast.

Epiphany 3

January 24 – Luke 4:16-30

The Hometown Disadvantage

This is Jesus' first appearance in the synagogue. Most of what Jesus did was perfectly normal. One of the men from the community would stand and read the scriptures. Then he would sit down and preach on that text. But *what* Jesus said was not perfectly normal. He began, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." In other words, "that prophecy that I just read? It's about *me*."

But the people didn't believe him. After all, they knew Jesus' mom and dad (and probably all of his siblings). How could the Messiah come from such common folks? So Jesus did the rhetorical equivalent of shaking the dust off his shoes and reminded them of the widow of Zarephath. Elijah the prophet could have visited any of the faithful Israelite widows in his day, but instead, brought the word to a pagan from Sidon. Likewise, the prophet Elisha didn't cure a leper from his own people, but healed Naaman, a foreigner. So read between the lines: since the people from His own hometown wouldn't believe Him, Jesus would go to pagans and foreigners and proclaim the good news to them instead.

No wonder they were so mad.

Epiphany 4

January 31 – Luke 4:31-44

With Authority

Last week, Jesus said, in the words of Isaiah "He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners..." "Now we see Jesus in action. He releases a man from demonic possession, he restores Peter's mother-in-law from her debilitating fever, and He bound up the sick and diseased. Jesus isn't just talk. His words have authority. And still today, He teaches us with the same powerful, authoritative word.



Compassion Circle

Louise Werts
Louise6522@aol.com

The **Compassion Circle** will be meeting Monday January 4th at 1:00.

Quilters: We will be returning to replenish our supply of quilts in January: Dates will be: 12th & 26th. Pastor Fehrmann received 10 quilts over the holidays! We will start at 9:00 am and work till around 3:00pm. Come any time, we can use more help. If you come during lunch, we each bring ours with us. We always take breaks for coffee!! So, come and have some fellowship with the quilters. Thank You! Eunice McBroom.



Youth

Julie Anderson
612-791-0163
Julesanders@live.com



Bread of Life – 2016 Higher Things Conference

It seems early to talk about it, but registration time will be here before we know it. The 2016 Higher Things Conference theme is Bread of Life and Glory of Christ will be going to the Cedar Falls, IA Conference location next year. Dates are July 5th to the 8th. Please let us know if your children are interested and if any of you would like to chaperone. Cost is \$100.00 per child, but don't let cost deter your child from going! **We need to know the names of who is going before January 17, 2016 as the registration cost goes up on February 1st!**



General News & Updates

2016 Flower Chart is now posted. The 2016 Flower Chart is now posted in the Narthex. Please be sure to sign up for your special day(s)!

2015 Tithing Report and 2016 Time & Talent Sheets will be available by Mid-January.

Voters Meeting: The Elders have met, sifted through the names of potential pastors to Call and have created a list of names. A voters meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 10th after Bible Study, to call a Pastor. We will follow our constitutional process (how to vote from the provided list of names, how to add to the list of nominee's etc.). There will be a light lunch provided before the meeting begins. Bios of the candidates will be emailed out soon. Questions? Talk to Head Elder, Garry McCreary or Pastor Johnson.

Monthly Game Night! Join us in the fellowship hall every 2nd Friday of the month for cards, board games, and fun. The first two nights have been so much fun! The next one is scheduled for Friday, January 8th. Whether you have a favorite game you never leave the house without, want to learn a new game, or don't own any games at all, come on out! The night starts at 6:30. Card and game lovers of all ages are welcome.

After the Final Exam - College can raise a lot of questions. It's a good thing to be challenged, and no doubt the college experience has done just that. You've been stretching your wings, and learning how to live under your own roof rather than your parents'. You've encountered new ideas and new perspectives in your classes and from your friends. As your pastor, I'd like to hear about your experience. So here's what I'm proposing. On Sunday, January 3rd, 6pm, we'll meet at church. I'll feed you guys, and you'll come and share about your college experience thus far. For some of you, it's still pretty new, and some of you are old pros at this. But I'd like to talk with all of you. No agenda; just free food and talking with Pastor. ***Parents: I wasn't able to get all our college students' emails, so if you're the parent of a college student, and they haven't heard about this get-together, please pass along the word to them. Thank You! Pastor Johnson.

Joint Council/Elders Meeting: The joint Council/Elders Meeting will be on Tuesday, January 5, 2016. Council will meet at 6:30 and the Elders are to join them at 7:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall.

Help Needed to take down Christmas Decorations! Please help us on Saturday, January 9th at 9:00 am to take down the Church Christmas Decorations. Many hands make light work! Thank You.

Special Guest Preacher Saturday, January 2nd and Sunday, January 3rd: Rev. Dr. Robert H. Bennett, Executive Director of Luther Academy will be our Guest Preacher at these Divine Services. Please welcome him!

2016 Offering Envelopes are on the tables in the Alcove outside of the office. Pick yours up today! If you do not see a box of envelopes for yourself, please let Brenda know. Thank You.



Music

Organists: Carla Claussen,
Zelda Malo, Maddie Marshall
and Sarah Miller
Adult Choir Director: Carla Claussen

Bell Choir Director: Brenda Richards
Music Coordinator: Zelda Malo
Children's Choir: Andrea Heeren
Chimes Director: Ellie Leimer

All Music groups will begin their rehearsals on Wednesday, January 6th at their regular times. Thank You!



President's Letter

Dennis Karius
952-220-4236
denniskarius@gmail.com

Results of new Elders, Council Members and President from the December 6, 2015 Voters Meeting:

At the 12-6-15 voters meeting the congregation voted in:

2016 President - David Teske.

New Elders are: Andy Madson, Mark Swenson, Ben Rolf and Garry McCreary.

New Council Members are: Kim Bonine, Bill Anderson, Patton Hoffarth and Jonathan Schultz.

Please welcome and congratulate them all!



Treasurer's Report

Jesse Huber
612-590-7632
Jphuber55@gmail.com

Glory of Christ Lutheran Church Treasurer's Report November 2015

Month			Year-to-date		
Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance
57,201	56,033	1,168	453,843	494,790	(40,948)
5,840	0	5,840	22,359	0	22,359
0	0	0	29,838	25,000	4,838
1,537	975	562	12,390	10,574	1,816
64,578	57,009	7,569	518,429	530,364	(11,935)
0	0	0	26,519	0	(26,519)
0	5,000	5,000	60,000	65,000	5,000
11,527	13,652	2,125	145,444	157,970	12,526
16,954	19,818	2,864	143,385	218,001	74,616
(2,569)	167	2,736	29,880	40,833	10,954
7,105	4,883	(2,221)	34,264	39,318	5,053
2,893	3,000	107	32,664	37,500	4,835
35,910	46,520	10,610	472,157	558,622	86,465
28,668	10,488	18,179	46,272	(28,258)	74,530

Summary of Results:

- General offerings are \$1.2K favorable for the month of November and \$41 unfavorable to plan YTD.
- Checking and savings account balances totaled \$84.4k as of 11/30/2015.
- Pastoral Support for November and YTD is favorable to plan given we have budgeted for an additional pastor.
- Education expenses for November reflect a favorable variance due to the paying of the Higher Things expenses out of the Youth designated funds account.
- Choir and Music expenses were unfavorable for November by \$2k due to the timing of the payment for the music conference at Ft. Wayne Seminary.
- Designated Funds primarily relates to the funds raised for supporting the Mexico Mission of \$13k, and additional mission expenditures for German Novelli also for the Mexico Mission of \$10k.
- Deferred Annuity Proceeds received by GOC (in 2011) in the amount of \$40.1k is being held by United Life Insurance Company.
- Balance as of 11/30/2015 in the LCEF Stewardship account was \$407k. On 10/8/2012, GOC purchased its mortgage and roof loan from LCEF (loan originator) with the proceeds held in the LCEF Stewardship account. GOC will continue to make payments to itself on the mortgage and roof loan until paid off entirely. Beginning in May 2013, GOC will monthly remit \$2.1k from the checking account to the LCEF account in order to accrue for the capital improvement fund. See below for monthly rollforward and current balance.

LCEF Stewardship Acct.	
Acct. Balance (10/30)	\$ 399,044.41
Mortgage Loan Payment	4,519.52
Roof Loan Payment	965.63
Capital Improvement Fund November	2,083.33
Interest Inc. (11/30)	257.41
Acct. Balance (11/30)	\$ 406,870.30

Respectfully submitted,
Jesse P. Huber, Treasurer



Serving this Month

Serving Sunday January 3, 2016

Coffee:	Ann Milbrath & Linda Corey
Acolyte:	Will Broksma
Elders:	Roger Hargreaves & Todd Schoolman
Ushers:	Jeremy Eickhoff & Marcus Olson
Altar Guild:	David & Gayle Barnaby
Offering Counters:	David & Naomi Teske
Bread Baker:	Charlotte Smith
Bread Deliverer:	Craig Smith

Serving Sunday January 10, 2016

Coffee:	Carla Claussen & Sandi Edenberg
Acolyte:	Will Broksma
Processional:	Austin Corey
Elders:	Roger Hargreaves & Todd Schoolman
Ushers:	Russ McBroom & Chuck McGriff
Altar Guild:	Kevin & Suzy Skau
Offering Counters:	Tim Lavanger & Russ McBroom
Bread Baker:	Sandi Edenberg
Bread Deliverer:	Beth Schoolman

Serving Sunday January 17, 2016

Coffee:	Gen Dykhoff & Pauline Hemingway
Acolyte:	Chris Corey
Elders:	Roger Hargreaves & Todd Schoolman
Ushers:	Paul Koosman & Bruce Larson
Altar Guild:	Beth Schoolman & Lisa Gallmeyer
Offering Counters:	Barbie Gruenhagen & Mike Miller
Bread Baker:	Susan Johnson
Bread Deliverer:	Carl Hartness

Serving Sunday January 24, 2016

Coffee:	Barry & Emily Fuchs
Acolyte:	Will Broksma
Elders:	Roger Hargreaves & Todd Schoolman
Ushers:	Todd Zitzlsperger & David Werts
Altar Guild:	Jill Larson & Gayle McGriff
Offering Counters:	Lori Beck & Carl Hartness
Bread Baker:	Charlotte Smith
Bread Deliverer:	Janis Kimmel

Serving Sunday January 31, 2016

Coffee:	Gary & Mary Petersobn
Acolyte:	Claudia Wikman
Elders:	Roger Hargreaves & Todd Schoolman
Ushers:	David Barnaby & ?
Altar Guild:	Chad & Denae Kuenzel
Offering Counters:	Craig & Charlotte Smith
Bread Baker:	Julie Anderson
Bread Deliverer:	Julie Anderson



Birthdays & Anniversaries

January 3 rd	Janel Koosman	Birthday
January 6 th	Robbie Zitzlsperger	Birthday
January 7 th	Philippe & Sarah DeBlois	Anniversary
January 8 th	Mark Swenson Tom Richards Rhonda Berry Ezra DeBlois	Birthday Birthday Birthday Birthday
January 9 th	Sharla Woolfolk Chris Corey	Birthday Birthday
January 11 th	Ella Merkle	Birthday
January 13 th	Kate Marshall	Birthday
January 14 th	Max Gruenhagen	Birthday
January 15 th	Curt & Sharla Woolfolk	Anniversary
January 17 th	Cory Olson Rory Olson Michelle Nelson	Birthday Birthday Birthday
January 20 th	Heather Knea	Birthday
January 22 nd	Ryan Koosman	Birthday



Calendar

~ January 2016 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 5p-6p Divine Service
3 9a-10a Divine Service 10:30a-11:30a Bible Class/Sunday School	4 1p-2p Compassion Circle Meeting (Glory of Christ Lutheran Church, County Road 101, Plymouth, WI)	5 10a-11:30a Mom's' group 7p-8p Joint elders and council meeting	6 10a-11a Bible Study 4:30p-5p Children's Choir Rehearsal 4:30p-5:30p Sunday School teachers' meeting 5p-5:30p Children's Chimes Rehearsal 5:30p-6:30p Confirmation 6:30p-7:30p Bells Rehearsal 7:30p-8:30p Adult Choir Rehearsal	7	8 6:30p-8:30p Game Nght	9 9a-12p Take Down Christmas Decorations 5p-6p Divine Service
10 Call Meeting 9a-10a Divine Service 10:30a-11:30a Bible Class/Sunday School	11	12 9a-3p Quilters	13 10a-11a Bible Study 4p-5:30p Mom's' group 4:30p-5p Children's Choir Rehearsal 5p-5:30p Children's Chimes Rehearsal 5:30p-6:30p Confirmation 6:30p-7:30p Bells Rehearsal 7:30p-8:30p Adult Choir Rehearsal	14	15	16 9a-4p Bethesda here 5p-6p Divine Service
17 9a-10a Divine Service 10:30a-11:30a Bible Class/Sunday School	18	19 10a-11:30a Mom's' group	20 10a-11a Bible Study 4:30p-5p Children's Choir Rehearsal 5p-5:30p Children's Chimes Rehearsal 5:30p-6:30p Confirmation 6:30p-7:30p Bells Rehearsal 7:30p-8:30p Adult Choir Rehearsal	21	22	23 5p-6p Divine Service
24 9a-10a Divine Service 10:30a-11:30a Bible Class/Sunday School	25	26 9a-3p Quilters	27 10a-11a Bible Study 4p-5:30p Mom's' group 4:30p-5p Children's Choir Rehearsal 5p-5:30p Children's Chimes Rehearsal 5:30p-6:30p Confirmation 6:30p-7:30p Bells Rehearsal 7:30p-8:30p Adult Choir Rehearsal	28	29	30 5p-6p Divine Service
31 9a-10a Divine Service 10:30a-11:30a Bible Class/Sunday School	Notes:					