

Christ

CHRIST
providence

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CHRIST
SOUTH

CONNECTIONS

**MAY
JUNE
2020**

IN THIS ISSUE

SUNDAY SERVICES
ARE NOW SHOWING
LIVE! ONLINE

CHRIST PROVIDENCE

8:45 a.m. Traditional Worship
11:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship

CHRIST SOUTH

10:00 a.m. Casual Family Worship

CHRIST CONCORD

10:00 a.m. Blended Worship

For links, bulletins and more,
go to christelca.org and
click Christ Online



Pastor's Blog
christelca.org/blog



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Christ Providence - Christ Lutheran
Christ Concord - Christ Lutheran
Christ South
Fusion at Christ Lutheran
The Experience at CLC



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Christ Lutheran, Charlotte, NC



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DETAILS AND MORE INSIDE>>



FROM THE SENIOR PASTOR

PASTOR SCOTT SUSKOVIC

Oh, How I Miss You!

Preaching to an empty house on Easter morning missed the celebration of the day– Oh, how I've missed you... Hearing of you being sick and not being able to run to the hospital to sit by your side has been awful– Oh, how I've missed you!

Having a funeral with only a handful of family members present has been hard– Oh, how I've missed you! Weddings that have had to be postponed after a year of planning– Oh, how I've missed you... No hugs, no handshakes, no pecks on the cheek, only a friendly face on Zoom or waving to one another across the street– Oh, how I've missed you!

I understand the necessity of social distancing and I believe that we have accomplished flattening the curve and saving lives. But that doesn't take away from missing being together. We are in the people gathering business! We are the Body of Christ, the Fellowship of Believers. And when we can't be together physically, there is a loss. Oh, how I've missed you!

And oh, how I've appreciated you!

The way that you've faithfully remained connected online even as we are apart. In one month, our reach has increased 644%! Oh, how I've appreciated you! The letters, emails and phone calls, "Just checking in on you, pastor," have been such a blessing. Oh, how I've appreciated you. While other churches are down in their giving by 30-50%, we closed out April having received about 102.5% year to date of our budgeted income! Oh, how I've appreciated you!

For all the positive pauses, people going out of their way to do small acts of kindness, speak words of comfort and remember those who are struggling has all been so heartwarming. Oh, how I've appreciated you!

These times bring out the worst in people in terms of hoarding, anxiety, fear, loneliness and depression. If there are any underlying issues within ourselves or with others, they are only heightened during this time of separation because we must deal with it in unhealthy ways. That is, in our solitude, surrounded by 24-hour news of compounding calamity, the demons come out with negative thoughts that spiral us downward in unhealthy ways.

But when we are together, we can find healthy ways to deal with these struggles either through activities, social engagement, mental health or human touch. If God is the God of community, then the devil is the god of isolation.

Oh, how I have missed you! And oh, how I've appreciated you! I look forward to that time soon that we can gather together once again, share a handshake and a hug. Be close to one another. To hold hands in prayer. As the song goes, "Soon and very soon. . ."

Just not yet. But when that day comes, it will be a glorious day with the saints on earth below and with the saints in heaven above giving thanks that the Body of Christ is once again where it should be – together.

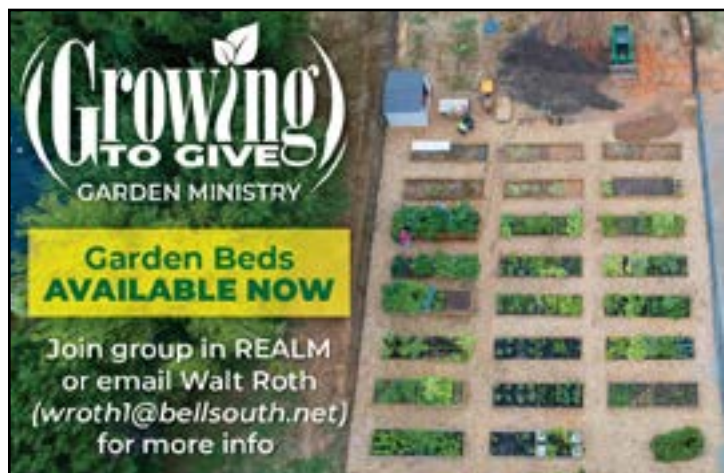
Phasing Back into Normal

Each of us knows that long term planning these days is about three days out. Every time we try to put something on the calendar, the government moves the goalposts out a few more weeks. It makes it nearly impossible to plan.

The leadership of the church is eager to get us up and going again with programs and worship. But we also want to do it in a safe and responsible manner. As the government eases the restrictions, so will we. Just as the country speaks in terms of phases, so will the church operate in phases to get back to normal.

Until then, your patience and understanding is appreciated.

**Missing and Appreciating You,
Pastor Scott**



The Endowment Challenge

Before the Coronavirus changed the way we do church, we had launched a challenge campaign for the Endowment Fund at Christ Lutheran. We had a private donor who was willing to match gifts from the rest of the congregation up to \$25,000 in order to fund the Endowment. The suggestion was for everyone to give a gift of \$500 or more.

To date, we have raised \$19,820 towards this \$25,000 goal. If you have not done your part, please consider a gift to the Endowment Fund. We have until August 1, 2020 to meet this challenge.

If you have questions about the Endowment Fund and/or the challenge, please contact Gregg Huether at ghuether@christelca.org.

Garden Beds: Going Once... Going Twice...

It's spring planting time and our Growing to Give Community Garden (across from the church office) is ready for your seeds and caring hands! We share our fresh veggies with others in need and no means to acquire them.

For more information, join the Growing to Give Garden Ministry group in REALM or contact Walt Roth at wroth1@bellsouth.net.

Next Steps for Christ South

It is so hard to plan these days with guidelines slow in coming and changing by the day. While Concord and Providence campuses look forward to that time of gathering back together for physical worship, South finds itself in a predicament. CMS has been less than clear when or even if they are going to allow us to return to Polo Ridge Elementary School to resume worship.

So what's the plan?

Online worship has worked well for all three campuses. In fact, we were well poised with our online technology and online minister before COVID hit. While this will continue for all three campuses, we have had to make some decisions regarding Christ South worship.

Towards that end, the Executive Committee met with Pastor Matt and has approved submitting to the town of Weddington a plan to erect a large, steel building and gravel parking space on our property on Rea Road. There are still many details to work out including sewer, pricing, timeline, permitting, impervious ground, etc., but we think it is a wise decision to get onto that land sooner than later. At this point, it is a plan. As this moves forward, we will certainly keep the congregation apprised of the progress.

This virus has forced us to rethink the way we do church. May God's Spirit lead us to make those decisions that make the greatest impact for the Kingdom of God.

Congratulations to Our High School Graduates



Erin Arthur
Charlotte Catholic



CeVion Barber
East Meck



Ja'Nasia Barrino
East Meck



Abigail Breeggemann
A.L. Brown



Olivia Brown
Providence



Julie Bugg
Charlotte Christian



Savannah Clardy
Myers Park



Ellie Cotton
Providence



Caroline Fagan
Porter Ridge



Kaitlynn Fletcher
Ardrey Kell



Kayla Furney
Providence Day



Taylor Gailunas
South Meck



Vincent Gerik
Myers Park



Megan Hallman
Providence



Bennett Henry
South Meck



Jonathan Howard
Fletcher School



Thor Iverson
South Meck



Annabelle Laine
Myers Park



Madeline Laine
Myers Park



Catherine Leach
Ardrey Kell

CLASS OF 2020



Casey Lepley
Ardrey Kell



Tucker Lepley
Shawnee Mission West



Brynn Martinson
South Meck



Ainsley Mengel
Providence



Nate Miller
Providence



Abby Owens
Charlotte Latin



Jake Parker
Wayzata



Emilee Pope
Providence



Harrison Reid
Providence



Jason Roth
Providence



Lucas Schroeder
Marvin Ridge



Arran Scott
Ardrey Kell



Erik Suester
Myers Park



Olivia Sule
Myers Park



Kaden Teel
Nation Ford



Jack Tenzer
Lawrenceville School



Nick Walder
Covenant Day

May you be blessed with *courage*, that fear may never keep you from exploring new paths. May you be blessed with *hope*, that you may never give up on yourself or others. May you be blessed with *goodness*, that in you strangers may find a generous friend. May you be blessed with *laughter*, that you may never take yourself too seriously. May you be blessed with *curiosity*, that you may always desire to seek out the mystery of faith. May you be blessed with *gratitude*, that you may see all of life as a gift. May you be blessed with *remembrance* of one another and your time together here... for there is forever a thread woven through your spirit.

Time of Uncertainty

by PASTOR MELODY

Wow! This is a crazy, wonderful and exhausting time to be a parent. Working and homeschooling brings a new level of multitasking to what it means to be a parent. During these times the anxiety level is so high! But when all the work assignments are done for the day and all the computers are shut down for the day, family time has been great. We as a family have played games and gone on bike rides and have done projects around the house. It has been a weird mix of craziness, love, anxiety and blessing.

When it comes to Family Ministry at CLC, we're experiencing the same thing. We had to stop Sunday School in person and canceled first Communion this year, but we started virtually meeting with Sunday School classes and putting Children's Sermon on YouTube and having higher numbers than in person. We have spread the seeds of faith farther than we ever have before.

But now we're starting to look to the future, and when we can gather back together. Our future is still uncertain, but I can tell you we are making plans. I'm really excited but also know we are looking at the safety of our children before offering any activity. We are planning a virtual VBS with a mix of in-person activities (if we are able). Look for more information in E-News and on our social media pages. We are also planning other activities and hoping they will become possible. We will let you know of ways to engage further as restrictions are lifted and we can gather again.

Until then know that my thoughts and prayers are with you. If you need someone to talk to that understands life as a parent/ teacher/worker, I'm here for you. Please reach out anytime at msimpkins@christelca.org.



Fun App: Lion at Church?

We know that one of the names for Jesus in the Bible is "The Lion of Judah" (Revelation 5:5), but did you ever expect to see a Lion standing in the Lower Commons of Christ Providence? Things really have gotten wild around the church while everyone has been away!

Actually, this is a fun new feature you and your family can try at home by Google. Simply open your Google search engine and type in an animal like Lion, Bear, or Penguin (not

every animal is available). Scroll down to "Meet a life-size bear up close" and click on "View in 3D" and then be prepared to see the animal right there in your very own home. Try it!

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ON INSTAGRAM

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Geared towards parents *NEW*

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The Experience at Christ Lutheran

@Christsouthyouth
Youth at Christ South

Do you have a

College Graduate?

Send us their:
**name, high-res picture, degree/college,
and any post graduation plans** to be
honored in our July/August newsletter.

-Send info by June 15 -
to [Laurie Carter at LaurieCarter@christelca.org](mailto:LaurieCarter@christelca.org)

MOMS' MANIC MONDAY

Meditation

MOMS' TIME TO FILL
YOUR SPIRITUAL CUP • MONDAYS AT 7PM

-ZOOM ID 957 253 485 PASSWORD 003903-

HAVE AN URGENT NEED?

REACH OUT TO **NOAH'S HELPERS**
FOR ASSISTANCE

A stylized illustration of Noah's Ark with various animals and Noah standing on the deck. The background is a warm, orange-yellow sky.

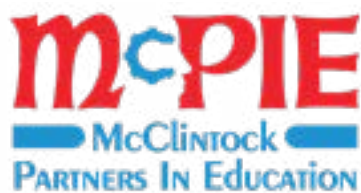
Contact: Pastor Drew
dgoodson@christelca.org



McPIE Take-Home-Challenges

by LISA HEIRIGS

For six weeks, McPIE has given out take-home-challenges on Tuesdays during the grab-and-go lunches at McClintock Middle School (MMS). The first challenge was to make something useful from duct tape. The second week we gave the students a link to some origami how-tos and we threw in a deck of cards and card games. During Holy Week we had the Save Your Peeps challenge, where a structure was built with jelly beans & toothpicks and then dropped. Did any of the Peeps really survive???



We post notice of all our challenges on Facebook (*McClintock Partners in Education*) and Instagram (*mcclintock_partners*) and we receive pictures of the students' creations.

Last week was the straws challenge and two students made cars using straws, a water bottle and a balloon. They sent videos which were ultimately sent to their teachers and celebrated on the MMS daily announcements. This week we gave craft sticks, binder clips and clothes pins. The students have enough to build an impressive tower. One mom commented on my Instagram post this week, "My girls love Tuesdays because of you!" We are impressed and amazed by what the students create each week. But this week, our hearts melted.

Masks for the U.S. Embassy

by LOIS WITHAM

My son, Donald, is presently working at the American Embassy in Bucharest, Romania as the Secret Service Agent in charge of the office. After the CDC announced that we should all be wearing masks, I saw the need to make one for my husband and myself. When speaking with my son in Romania, he shared that masks were not available there – nor is hand sanitizer. Because the healthcare is so poor in Romania, I felt the call to make a batch of masks to send to him for his protection and some additional masks for others at the Embassy. Every few days I mail another batch to him for distribution in Bucharest. I understand that the Ambassador and his staff are all wearing the American Flag masks that I have made.

Being a retired nurse, I refused to try to order N95 masks because I knew how badly the medical community would need them. I searched for vacuum HEPA filters unsuccessfully, however found I could order them online. I made masks for my neighbors and gals with whom I play golf and bridge, for Christ Lutheran, the Carolina Clown organization and nurses in Tampa, FL pediatrics (Lisa Carrigan's daughter). I am merely being the hands and feet of Christ during this unprecedented time.





The Moore Sweatshop

by ANNA MOORE

We have a room in our home that we jokingly call The Moore Sweat Shop. This is where for several years, we have worked on producing pillows for breast cancer patients. Here we cut our fabric, sew the pieces together and stuff the pillows with fiber.

Then several faithful volunteers take the pillows and complete the process. These pillows are taken to nurse navigators at four local hospitals. Some of our friends at Christ Lutheran have received one of these pillows.

During this time of sheltering at home we have been able to produce quite a surplus of pillows. We now have close to 600 ready to be delivered. We are actually delivering 150 pillows today, using the appropriate distancing! It was good to have a purpose for our days rather than sitting around wondering what we could do. We pray for the day that these pillows are no longer needed.

Then we got a call. There was another need. Pillow production came to a halt when we got the word that masks were needed for our CLC congregants. We were indeed sorry that masks were needed but we now had another purpose for our days. As we worked together we remarked that working on these masks actually brought joy to us, as we had a reason to get up in the morning with something to occupy the empty hours at home. We hope that these masks have made daily living easier for those who have received them.

It is our hope that the work of our hands will bring hope to those who receive a pillow or a mask. All of these are made with the prayer that God will bless the recipient.

Looking for the Good... and There's Plenty!

by LAURIE CARTER

I don't always succeed, but I try to look for the good, even in bad times. And there is a lot of good right now amid anxiety, fear, boredom... well, you know the rest!

Let's start with commercials on TV. I have noticed a marked and blessed change, and I'm loving it. I see ads of people coming together helping and supporting each other, cheering our new, and too often overlooked, heroes... food servers, grocery store staff, sanitation workers and, of course, healthcare professionals. Only at the end of the commercial do I see who sponsored the ad, and I find myself actually looking for the company so I can be thankful for them. Trust this: me being thankful for a Walmart ad is nothing short of a miracle!

Heroes. Disappeared from our cultural radar, albeit temporarily, are the movie stars, sports stars and other notoriety seekers that many of us seem almost to worship and follow their every move on social media. Instead, we now celebrate our firefighters, EMS and other first responders.

Don't get me wrong. I went into total withdrawal missing March Madness, and I will never know if Duke could have been National Champion.... sigh! I confess to being an avid American Idol fan, and just when the top 20 were to start live performances... bam! But wait, the producers put together segments that went into greater detail of each finalist. Instead of just having a talented voice, they became real people, each with a story, not just a song. Now, I will be cheering for a friend... not just a voice! Current fave: Just Sam!

Still on the subject of "stars" that were, "so last week"... have you seen the free concerts and entertainment segments lots of them are doing? If not, check out John Krazinski's (The Office) "Some Good News" and his Prom 2020 with lots of musicians on YouTube.

Zoom used to be what a car did. Today it's probably one of the most used words in the business community! The church staff uses it regularly to hold staff meetings, and our leaders are using it for small groups and classes. It has been a blessing allowing us to continue to work and our groups to meet. Coffee with the Pastors has 20 people gathering virtually every week! I suspect Zoom may change us forever.

Creativity. This is a big one. I love to see how people are using their brains to discover new ways to do things... teaching, parenting, working... even churching!

But for me, one of the biggest "goods" to come from this horrible situation is that we seem less angry with each other. I don't see so much division as I did just a month ago. We are uniting against an unseen enemy—fighting a war together with the entire world. I used to think we, as a society, had become our own worst enemy. I hope when this is over, we can avoid that!

Outreach Responds

by AMY DANIELS

Our team of tireless volunteers is making meals possible for our McPIE families during this time of uncertainty. They're making grocery bags for McClintock families, some of which are distributed on Heat-and-Eat meal days, and some delivered to families who can't get out or find what they need right now. They're also taking families to Loaves and Fishes referrals or picking up their groceries for them. Several volunteers are helping Second Harvest Food Bank with assembling groceries for distribution.

A number of outreach volunteers are delivering more than 60 Heat-and-Eat meals each week to more than 10 families that were regular attendees at Wednesdays Together. Mike's cooking is a welcome relief to families that usually counted on McPIE Family Nights at McClintock and Wednesdays at church.

Amy says she'd love to give you ideas on how to help those in our community at this time. You can contact her at adaniels@christelca.org. We are also accepting non-perishable food donations at the portico at the Christ Providence campus, used to fill grocery bags for families. Recently, we were able to assemble 20 grocery bags just on what was donated!

Groceries & Heat-and-Eat Meals

by LISA HEIRIGS

As of this writing, we are currently making 70 grocery bags to be handed out Tuesday and Friday at McClintock Middle School and Wednesday with the delivery of the Heat-and-Eat meals. Filling 70 grocery bags requires a lot of canned meat and cereal, but also macaroni and cheese, vegetables and fruit and toilet paper. Two-day delivery times are laughable. When we started, we needed 20 bags and all I had was tuna and cereal. In a Monday afternoon McPIE Board meeting, the Board was expecting a large number of bags because I had spent a lot of money, but all I had was five bags. I told them that I needed my Costco order, which had macaroni and cheese and green beans, but really I needed toilet paper and fruit, too. Early the next morning, imagine my surprise when I opened the donation bin and it was full of everything I was missing!!! I was dumbfounded, but so so grateful to the God who provides and the Holy Spirit who inspires. He is Good!!!

For the grocery bags on another week, we needed potatoes and carrots to go with two dozen radishes from Lydia. I went to Costco and bought 45 lbs. of potatoes and 30 lbs. of carrots and filled my cart with canned fruit, vegetables, mac & cheese, cereal and my single limits of canned meat. Driving to church, I wondered how we will gather enough food, given the limits on canned meat and cleaning supplies, to provide the bags



at McClintock Middle School. As I unload my truck and roll the potato and carrot laden cart to the CLCC, I look in the bins and they are full. The gardeners dropped off lettuce, baby kale and parsley along with Lydia's radishes. Kate had dropped off a load of groceries and perishables, and Dana & Madi delivered a truck full of canned meat and beef stew. And I am reminded of who is in charge because it is certainly not me! He Provides!!!

Lastly, on Wednesdays for several weeks now we have provided Heat-and-Eat meals for some of our Christ Providence/McPIE struggling families. Last week was the first week that we provided a bag of groceries with that meal. Our hearts were full of joy to surprise our families with a bag of groceries. In turn, some of the comments from the families included: "Thank y'all for always thinking of my family!", "Y'all are such a blessing", "I don't know what my family would do with out your help!", and finally "Tell everyone we are very thankful. Y'all are really angels!" One bag of groceries = joy, thankfulness and blessings for all. A rich ROI!!

Answered Prayers

by BILLY MUSSARI

Peace be with you! I have been praying for a long time for my son to want to attend Sunday service with me, ever since he has moved here. But, I never asked him to come because I felt God would move in his heart to want to attend with me.

On Good Friday, his lady friend called to invite me for Easter dinner with the two of them. She suggested we could all "stream" Christ Concord's service.

So, long story short, God allowed my son and I to attend church together. He is a mighty God that answers prayers in ways we just can't see, yet He does answer them.

"The Lord Himself will fight for you. You need only keep still." -Exodus 14:14

Seneca Tornado Response

by ASHLEY COOKE

In the early morning hours of April 13, an EF-3 tornado touched down in Seneca, SC leaving a path of destruction 16 miles long and 3 miles wide, killing 9 people, destroying hundreds of homes and leaving thousands without power. As local volunteers scrambled to help those in need, Christ South asked the community to help.

On Monday, April 20, we loaded an SUV full of toiletries, towels, cereal bars, Ensure and adult diapers and delivered them to the donation station in Seneca. Additionally, after mentioning the need during our Sunday broadcast, we received almost \$1000 in donations to help purchase additional needs. We were able to BE the CHURCH and do a small part to meet a big need.

If you would like to help, you can donate to the United Way Oconee Tornado Relief Fund by sending a check to:

Tornado Relief Fund
P.O. Box 1693
Seneca, SC 29679

Designate on the checks that the money is for the *Tornado Relief Fund*. You can also donate by using Venmo @United Way-Oconee. 100% of donations will be used to help people affected by this disaster.



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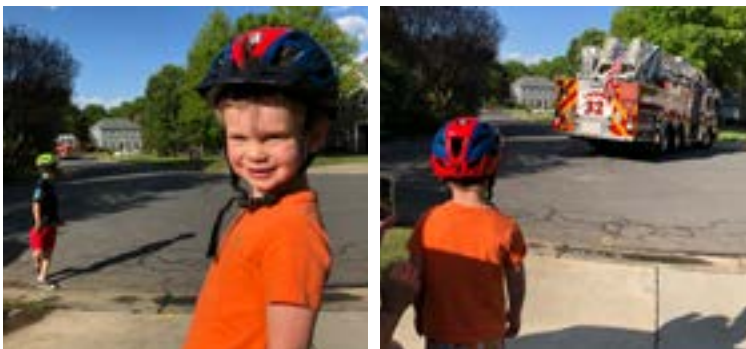


Birthday Fire Truck

by PASTOR DREW

When our son Caleb (who loves fire trucks) turned four, can you imagine his surprise when he saw the local Ladder Truck of the Charlotte Fire Department coming down the street?

The firefighters were unable to stop, given the social distancing requirements, but they turned on the lights, sirens, and made a special birthday announcement over their PA system wishing a happy birthday! We give thanks to God for our fire fighters and for all first responders who serve our community and help to brighten the day for so many!



Teddy in the Window

by LYNDA KUEHNI

I have been reading Philippians 4:4-13 almost daily, with 4:8 reminding me exactly what to focus on. Our neighborhood also has the 'Teddy Bear in the window' concept for when kids walk with their families in the neighborhood to be on the lookout for bears in windows. Since I don't have stuffed animal bears, I'm drawing one with a positive message at the end of the driveway in sidewalk chalk.

For Easter weekend, since the liturgical dance team wasn't able to dance in celebration 'live and in person,' I channeled that creativity by doing some adult coloring. Made for a relaxing weekend.

I miss seeing the staff, Spirit Song and the entire congregation, however, I know that this is a temporary situation and we will be back to dancing and greeting and serving communion soon. It is all in God's good timing. Blessings to you and yours and please stay safe and well!



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May/June 2020

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Tennyson Shifley • Pastor, Christ Concord
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TO SUBMIT A STORY OR NEWS ITEM

Fill out a Communications Project Request Form, found online at form.jotform.com/80496362784165.

Submissions are due by the 15th of the prior month except as noted.

Issues for 2020:

JAN/FEB*, MAR/APRIL, MAY/JUNE, JULY/AUG, SEPT/OCT and NOV/DEC
*submissions due by the 5th of the prior month to allow for early printing.

Pray-ERS of the People

The past few Sundays we have had volunteers helping with the prayers during worship at Christ Providence.

If you would like to be a prayer helper please reach out to Pastor Drew at dgoodson@christelca.org.

He will talk with you about how you can take part in helping the church raise our voice of prayer to God in worship.

