

# Christ Connections



march/april 2026



## SUNDAY SCHEDULE

- 8:45 a.m. **Traditional Worship**
- 10:00 a.m. **The Bridge Service**
- 11:00 a.m. **Contemporary Worship**
- 10-10:45 a.m. **Sunday School**

## JOIN US FOR **Wednesdays During Lent**

FEBRUARY 25 - APRIL 1

**"The Least of These"**  
in Christ Chapel

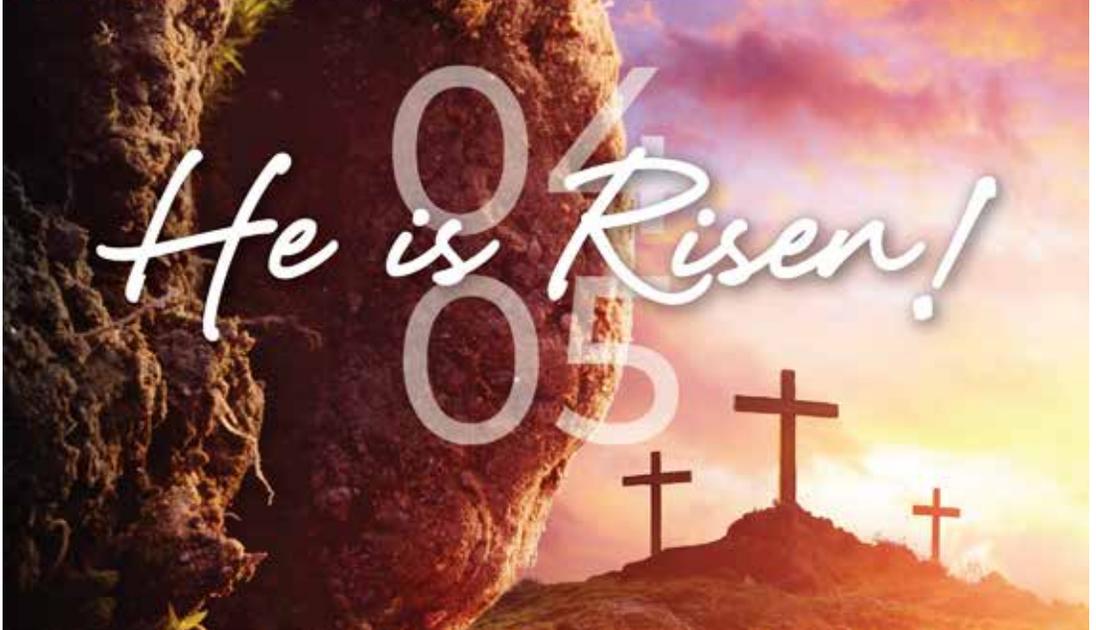
*The midday service is followed by lunch in the Forum • \$5*  
WORSHIP IN PERSON -OR- ONLINE

## Holy Week

MARCH 29 - APRIL 4



# He is Risen!



For links to live-stream services, upcoming virtual events, bulletins, ChristKidsTV and more:  
[christelca.org/online](http://christelca.org/online)

CONNECT ON SOCIAL MEDIA





PASTOR SCOTT SUSKOVIC

## The Marks of Discipleship

We know what it means to be a disciple from the inside; that is, to believe in Jesus as Lord, receive the forgiveness of our sins and put our trust in God's grace alone. But what does a Christian look like on the outside? That is going to be the emphasis of our Lenten Journey.

Sadly, when it comes to things like divorce, illness, bankruptcy, alcoholism and all the other vices, statistically there is not a huge difference between professing Christians and the rest of society. But there are some outward signs to see that during Lent we call, **"The Marks of Discipleship."**

**Worship:** It is the most important thing that we do as believers, set aside that time to come into the presence of God with his children and praise his holy name.  
*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and strength and mind.*

**Devotion:** We set aside time to be alone with the word of God and to pray, deepening and nurturing that real and personal relationship with God.  
*Jesus went alone to a lonely place to pray.*

**People:** We were created to be in community with other believers. Fellowship is not a side effect of church, it is one of the Marks of Discipleship.  
*Bear one another's burdens.*

**Service:** For the believer, service is a non-negotiable Mark of Discipleship. We serve those in need to be the hands and feet of Jesus.  
*For the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve.*

**Stuff:** What's stuff? It's divorce, illness, heartache, addiction, bankruptcy. Stuff happens, and will happen. More importantly, however, is how our faith gives us strength and hope to persevere.  
*In this world you will have trouble, but take heart, for I have overcome the world.*

### You can join us during Lent to discover and do the Marks of Discipleship three ways:

1. Attend worship with each Sunday focusing on a different Mark of Discipleship;
2. We will have in the bulletin a daily devotion for you each week on one of the Marks;
3. Join the pastors in Fellowship Hall on Sundays during Lent for a study on each of the Marks.

What does it look like to be a Christian? You can't tell by a person's ethnic background or citizenship. It is not recognized by your age or gender or hair color. And no one can judge another's heart. But you can see the Marks of Discipleship in one who lives out their faith for others to see and to the Glory of God.

Join us this Lent in making these Marks real and powerful for you.

**Peace,  
Pastor Scott**



# Lenten Sunday Series

## FEBRUARY 22 - MARCH 22

# The Marks of Discipleship



*Overview: What does a follower of Jesus look like? You certainly can't tell by outward appearance, ethnic background or family heritage. God is always about the heart of the believer which the Bible characterizes with these Marks of Discipleship.*

### **February 22 • Worship**

We have said often that the most important thing that we do is worship. In that weekly gathering, the saints gather with other brothers and sisters in Christ to praise God's holy name, hear his Word and share in the sacraments. Every other Mark of Discipleship flows from the greatest commandment to love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and strength and mind.

*Mark 12:24–34; Hebrews 10:19–25*

### **March 1 • Devotion**

Can you imagine having a close, personal and intimate relationship with your spouse if you never carve out time alone? The same is true with our relationship with God. During his busiest times, Jesus often carved out time to be alone with God in prayer, reflection and devotion. This Mark of Discipleship draws us into a deeper and personal love relationship with God.

*Luke 5:15–16; Psalm 92:1–8*

### **March 8 • People**

We were never created to go it alone. Our Christian identity has always been marked by living in community

with other believers. Fellowship is the place to share life together, receive honest feedback, experience grace, engage in faithful living and enjoy the blessings of life. Over 50 times in the New Testament we are called to be together and lift up one another. *John 15*

### **March 15 • Service**

For the believer, service is a non-negotiable Mark of Discipleship. Jesus made that abundantly clear as he used himself as the example. "The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom to others." You don't have to do everything, but you have to do something — something that flows from faith, something that asks nothing in return, something for no recognition. So, what is your something?

*Matthew 25:31–45; Philippians 2:1–11*

### **March 22 • Stuff**

Stuff happens — divorce, illness, heartache, addictions, bankruptcy — stuff happens. For Christians, perhaps even more so. The world, the devil and all the empty promises run completely counter to the Gospel. Jesus warned his followers, "In this world, you will have troubles." But then he gives this word of encouragement, "But take heart for I have overcome the world!" This Mark of Discipleship is not whether or not stuff happens, but how our faith gives us strength and hope to meet the days ahead.

*Mark 10:34–40; Acts 12:1–2; 2 Corinthians 11:21–31*

READ MORE & WATCH THE PROMO VIDEO: [christelca.org/sermon-series](http://christelca.org/sermon-series)



## Deck Barn Open for Events

If you haven't been to the Deck Barn at our Southland property (located at 315 Reid Dairy Road in Waxhaw), you are missing a nice place to gather. We recently renovated the space with a warming kitchen, new lighting and painted interior. You can reserve it for a church event such as your small group or Sunday School class, or for a personal occasion such as a birthday or anniversary.

If you are interested, please reach out to Tony Hyde in the church office for availability and cost. His email is [thyde@christelca.org](mailto:thyde@christelca.org).



**NEW SUNDAY ADULT CLASS**  
*The Marks of Discipleship*







**Sundays • 10:00-10:45 a.m.**  
**in Fellowship Hall**

Explore what a follower of Jesus looks like and get ready to spark your spiritual life as you learn about The Marks of Discipleship! Led by CLC pastors.

**UPCOMING**  
*Baptismal Classes*

**Sunday, March 1**  
**Sunday, April 12**

**1:00 p.m. on Christ Online**  
 For info, email Caroline at [cdiffley@christelca.org](mailto:cdiffley@christelca.org)

**FOR VIRTUAL LINKS:**  
[christelca.org/online](http://christelca.org/online)

**FAITH FELLOWSHIP LENTEN SERIES:**  
**The 7 Greatest Words of Love**

**Sundays • 10-10:45 a.m.**  
 Forum A&B -or- Online (Zoom)

As Jesus was dying on the cross, He made 7 statements of love in the final hours of His earthly life. Pastor & author Rick Warren returns to this moment in a 7-wk Lenten video series to define their deeper meaning.

**ZOOM LINK: [christelca.org/online](http://christelca.org/online)**



# meet the members of our **2026 CHURCH COUNCIL**



**Andy Brincefield**  
President



**Molly Zmuda**  
Vice President



**Holly Cannon**  
Secretary



**Dave Hutchinson**  
Treasurer



**Ashley Head**  
Children's Center



**Chad Melton**  
Administration



**Jeffrey Kung**  
Cornerstone Gifts



**Lauren Ratcliffe**  
Worship/Music



**Mark Schroeder**  
Benevolence



**Julie DePalma**  
Family Ministry



**David Herran**  
WEL-COM



**Brad Keller**  
Endowment

**Coffee with the Pastors**  
BOOK STUDY

**Wednesdays • 9:00 a.m.**  
at Christ Providence (W150) -or- Online (Zoom)

 [christelca.org/online](http://christelca.org/online)

**2020 somethings** FELLOWSHIP EVENTS FOR YOUNG ADULTS IN THEIR 20s & 30s

**Bible Study**  
Meets every other Thursday  
6:30 p.m. in W150

Young adults are invited to join with others in their 20s-30s for a time in the Word.

**UPCOMING DATES:**  
March 5 • March 19 • April 16 • April 30

MONTHLY PARENT CLASS  
**Mental Wellness in a Modern World**  
meets on 2nd Wednesday of each month  
6:00 - 7:30 p.m. in Forum C

**Upcoming Topics**  
March 11 • *How the Internet & AI are Raising Your Children*  
April 15 • *Technology*  
May 13 • *Wrapping It All Up*

 Led by a mental health professional, Trent Morrow, LCSW, of L&B Counseling. Parents of children of all ages welcome!

**Brothers in Faith Book Study**  
Thursdays at 7:00 a.m.  
at the South Land  
(315 Reid Dairy Rd. in Waxhaw)

Adult men are invited to join this new, weekly book study as we delve into *The Screwtape Letters* by C.S. Lewis. We look forward to seeing you there!

**MORE INFORMATION:**  
David Dietert ([dietert0103@gmail.com](mailto:dietert0103@gmail.com))

HELP ADORN THE SANCTUARY WITH

**Altar Flowers**

**\$75 • SIGN UP IN REALM >>>** 

## Cornerstone Gifts - Crosses

*Cross: an object formed by two intersecting lines or pieces.* While that simple definition of a cross is technically correct, what does the cross mean to you? A symbol of the crucifixion of Jesus, His resurrection and redemption? A symbol of salvation through grace alone, faith alone and scripture alone? A symbol of faith, joy and the promise of heaven? Christians across the world show their faith through the display of the cross as jewelry or as a centerpiece in their home.

Whether it's a piece of jewelry, a wall cross, a standing cross or a greeting card, Cornerstone Gifts is pleased to offer a variety of crosses for you and your family. We will be featuring two different styles of crosses that came from the construction of our own Sanctuary at Christ Lutheran. Member Roger Szymczyk and former member Bud Moore created two styles of wooden crosses: a wall cross constructed from scraps of the stained ceiling in the Sanctuary and a standing cross constructed from other scrap wood used in the building. These crosses have been stored away for many years, but now is the time to offer them to the congregation for purchase with the proceeds going directly to benefit the Outreach Ministries of the church. Stop by Cornerstone Gifts and consider purchasing one of these crosses to hang in your home to remind you of your faith and the place that continues to grow and nourish that faith every week.



**CHRIST LUTHERAN**  
**cornerstone**  
*gifts*

Store Hours:  
**SUN | TUE | WED | THU**  
9:30a.m. - 12:30p.m.

 FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK!



## Endowment Recognition Dinner

On April 26, the Endowment Committee will host our biennial recognition event for those who have made gifts to our Endowment Funds, creating a lasting legacy supporting Christ Lutheran. We will hear from some "beyond our walls" who benefit from our Benevolence, which is where much of the Endowment draw is directed each year. We will also have a delicious meal from Chefs Mike and Alicia, as well as time for fellowship. Invitations will be mailed in March. Please direct questions to [brucedvoelker@gmail.com](mailto:brucedvoelker@gmail.com).



presents

# Defying Gravity

BLOCKBUSTER BROADWAY

**Friday, March 20 • 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary**

DIRECT FROM BROADWAY - STARRING!



Scott Coulter



Jessica Hendy



Kelli Rabke



John Boswell

\$30 GENERAL ADMISSION | \$15 STUDENT | \$40 VIP

**Scan QR Code for More Info and RSVP**

or go to <https://t.ly/3UaEP>



## Welcome Our New Members!



Emily, William  
and Jackson Fiederlein (not pictured)



Daniel Sidorenko, Taylor Farris  
and Rory



David Sauers, Elizabeth Warren  
and Xander



Jessie Craven and Andrew Richmond



Jim and Susan Yount



Jonathan Ryen and Randi Moose

**INSIDE: 'THE SOUNDS OF SUNDAY'**



**JUNE 10 • JULY 29 • AUGUST 19**  
 ORGAN                      PIANO                      HANDBELLS

Join Mark and Phil this summer in Cornerstone Cafe at 11:45 a.m. for three in-depth seminars where we'll explore different musical equipment that leads and shapes our worship. Bring your lunch!

**MORE INFO:** [mjohanson@christelca.org](mailto:mjohanson@christelca.org)



**Lutheridge**

**MUSIC WEEK**  
**July 5 - 10 at Lutheridge**

Adults are invited to sing, ring, play and pray along with others as we are strengthened in our faith and musicianship. Mark Johanson will serve as choral accompanist with Mark Sedio and David Cherwien as clinicians.



Scan/Click To Register With Lutheridge  
 or go to <https://t.ly/10F60>

*Re-Membering Event*

**Sunday, March 8**  
**12:15-2:00 p.m. in Forum A&B**

If you have joined CLC within the past year, we invite you to a special lunch gathering to connect with others and share how your journey has been so far.

**Scan/Click for Info & to Register**

Please RSVP by January 26



**Easter Flowers**

*Purchase flowers in memory or honor of loved ones to adorn our worship spaces on Easter Sunday. Flowers may be taken home after the Easter Sunday Contemporary service.*

**\$15 lilies • \$30 for hydrangeas**

**Scan/Click to Order>>**  
 DEADLINE FOR INCLUSION  
 IN BULLETINS: MARCH 23



**Easter Wreaths**

*Sponsor a floral wreath to decorate the church this Easter! These locally-crafted, artificial wreaths will adorn our sanctuary doors and Easter Sunrise service. Wreaths may be taken home after the Easter Sunday Contemporary service.*

**\$75 for Peony or Yellow Wreath**

**Scan/Click to Order>>**  
 DEADLINE FOR INCLUSION  
 IN BULLETINS: MARCH 23



## Adding During Lent

by MARK JOHANSON

The Church year once again brings us to the season of Lent, beginning on Ash Wednesday. For me, Lent and the changing of seasons go hand-in-hand. Nature reawakens after winter, with plants



blossoming and animals returning from their rest. Lent's place in the forty days before Easter — the Resurrection of our Lord — seems most appropriate as we, especially in the Carolinas, welcome Spring and enjoy a feast for the senses as we shed off the cold of winter.

I do believe that it is not before the penitential time of Lent, however, that the Christian can fully appreciate the joy and celebration of Easter. Lent is a period of time which is traditionally marked with less. Less singing, for we tend to omit "gloria's" and "alleluia's" in

many of our worship services. Less celebration, for our sanctuary is presented with the striking and somewhat imposing Corpus Christi ("body of Christ") carving that hangs before the cross. Less decoration, as we near the conclusion of Lent with the stripping of the altar on Maundy Thursday.

Some faiths, in particular Catholicism, often mandate a reduced choice of food for its believers, necessitating the seasonally appropriate Bojangler fish sandwich (I'll pass, thanks). I have friends who will sometimes give up something for Lent, in order to help remind them of Christ's sacrifice and what He gave up in order that you and I would be saved.

Rather than giving up something this year, may I suggest you consider adding something for Lent that strengthens your faith and the faith of those around you. Adding a daily devotion, prayers before mealtime with your family, singing or Bible time with your children, calling or writing to a friend or family member, attending worship more regularly... the decision is yours.

Since I proposed adding something, here's something specific to add. Join us on Wednesdays at noon in Christ Chapel for our midweek Lent services, beginning on Ash Wednesday (February 18) and concluding on April 1. They are a refreshing, and brief, service of Word, Meal and music. Lunch is served afterwards in the Forum. It's a refreshing and, I think, a much-needed pause in the middle of the week. I hope you'll join us.

## Easter Wreaths

This year, in addition to purchasing lilies or hydrangeas in memory or in honor of loved ones, you can also sponsor an Easter floral wreath that will help to decorate the church for the Resurrection of our Lord! These locally-crafted wreaths, featuring artificial foliage for long-lasting beauty, will adorn our sanctuary doors and Easter Sunrise service, and then be available for you to take home after the Easter Sunday Contemporary service.

Wreaths are \$75. There are two choices of wreath: both the Peony and Yellow wreaths can be commissioned in memory or in honor of a loved one. The deadline for commissions to be included in the bulletin is March 23.



JOIN US FOR  
**Wednesdays  
During Lent**

**FEBRUARY 25 - APRIL 1**

**in Christ Chapel**

The midday service is followed by lunch in the Forum • \$5  
WORSHIP IN PERSON -OR- ONLINE

**12:00 p.m.**  
**"The Least of These"**

**Wednesday, February 25 • Rahab**

It is called the world's oldest profession, but rarely does anyone aspire to work in it. It is always out of desperation, abuse and need. But God wants Rahab to rescue two Israelite spies, provide inside information on the conquest of Jericho and was rewarded for her faith and courage. Who would have guessed that this prostitute, the least of these, would be named in the family tree of Jesus? *Joshua 2:1-11; Matthew 1:1-6*

**Wednesday, March 4 • Jonathan**

The relationship between David and Jonathan has been used often as an example of a deep friendship. What many don't know is that without Jonathan risking his life to protect his friend, David would never have become the most beloved king in Israel's history. Jonathan's story is brief, it is rarely told, but God used this relationship to change the course of Israel's history. *1 Samuel 20:1-17*

**Wednesday, March 11 • Ananias**

We hear the words of Jesus to love and pray for our enemies, but has that ever been put to the test in your life? Enter Ananias. As the early Christian Church began to emerge, they were under constant threat of imprisonment and death from both Rome and the Jews. Leading this charge for the Jews was an angry, ruthless Pharisee by the name of Paul. But when God confronted Paul on the road to Damascus, He led him to a faithful man named Ananias who had to make a hard decision: Do I put the words of Jesus into action? Do I love my enemy... really? *Acts 9:1-19*

**Wednesday, March 18 • The Man of Macedonia**

Sometimes the "least of these" is such a minor character, that they don't even have a name. During one of Paul's missionary journeys, they were experiencing hardship and uncertainty on where to proceed. Each path they took became an obstacle they could not overcome, until an unnamed man from Macedonia came in a vision giving Paul and his team clarity and unity as to the path they must go. *Acts 16:6-10*

**Wednesday, March 25 • Phoebe**

Love that name, Phoebe. Where does it come from? A 1950's movie? A soap opera? Phoebe is actually part of the least of these, a cameo appearance of a woman in the Bible who is probably directly responsible for the growth and encouragement of the Christian Church in Rome. Though only briefly mentioned, the meaning of her name, Phoebe says it all, "Bright and Radiant." *Romans 16:1-2*

**Wednesday, April 1 • Onesimus**

Onesimus. Was that on your list of potential baby names? Probably not, but this "least of these," has a brief but rich history with Paul. Onesimus was a runaway slave after stealing something from his master, Philemon. His encounter with Paul transformed him into a beloved companion and reminds each of us that no one is beyond God's redemption. *Philemon 8-18*

EVENINGS WILL BE REGULAR WEDNESDAYS ABLAZE PROGRAMMING

**5:00 p.m. Dinner • 6:00 p.m. Classes**

more info on dinners & classes: [christelca.org/wednesdays-ablaze](http://christelca.org/wednesdays-ablaze)

COME PRAY WITH US AT  
CHRIST LUTHERAN'S EASTER

**PRAYER  
VIGIL**

STARTS **Thurs., April 2 • 8 p.m.**  
ENDS **Fri., April 3 • 7 p.m.**  
at Christ Providence  
(Lackey Chapel)

**ABOUT THE PRAYER VIGIL**

As we remember the heart-wrenching display of courage shown by our Lord, Jesus, on the evening of Maundy Thursday, we are reminded that Jesus spent His last hours as a free man praying to His Father in Heaven. Matthew 14:35 says that in the Garden of Gethsemane "...He fell on the ground & prayed..." and Luke 22:44 says, "And being in an agony He prayed more earnestly; and His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down upon the ground."

Every year, we are provided the opportunity to pray together as we remember the sufferings Christ endured for the sins of the world. We pray in 1-hr. shifts using prayer requests submitted by fellow members of the congregation. The Vigil begins in Lackey Chapel on Maundy Thursday at 8 p.m. and ends at 7 p.m. on Good Friday before the start of our Tenebrae service.

**GET INVOLVED**

With shifts throughout the night, many volunteers are needed. Sign up for a 1-hr. time slot by filling in your name on the signup board in the Lower Commons. Opening prayers & devotionals with pertinent scripture will be made available to assist the prayer volunteers as needed.

You can also submit your own prayer. Prayer slips are available in the Lower Commons and in Christ Chapel. Fill out a prayer slip and drop it in the Prayer Vigil box, or submit a prayer request online at [christelca.org/prayer-request](http://christelca.org/prayer-request).

SCAN/CLICK TO SUBMIT A PRAYER  
[christelca.org/prayer-request](http://christelca.org/prayer-request)



# Holy Week & Easter Sunday

2026 WORSHIP SCHEDULE

## Palm Sunday March 29

- 8:45 a.m. Traditional Service (Sanctuary) 🕊️📺
- 10:00 a.m. Bridge Service (Christ Chapel) ⬆️ 🕊️
- 10:00 a.m. Sunday School 🕊️
- 11:00 a.m. Contemporary Service (Sanctuary) 🕊️📺

## Holy Week Wednesday April 1

- 12:00 p.m. Midday Lenten Service (Christ Chapel)  
*followed by light lunch in the Forum, \$5*
- 5:00 p.m. Wednesdays Ablaze Dinner (Fellowship Hall)  
*\$8 adults/\$6 child/\$30 family max*
- 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays Ablaze Classes

## Maundy Thursday April 2

- 12:00 p.m. Midday Worship (Christ Chapel)
- 5:30 p.m. Seder Meal (Spirit Hall) ⬆️ 🕊️  
*\$10 • Register in REALM*
- 6:30 p.m. Evening Worship (Sanctuary) 🕊️
- 8:00 p.m. Prayer Vigil Starts (Lackey Chapel) ⬆️

## Good Friday April 3

- 10:00 a.m. Children's Service (Sanctuary) ⬆️  
*for families with young children,  
preschool & elementary students*
- 12:00 p.m. Seven Last Words (Christ Chapel)
- 7:00 p.m. Prayer Vigil Ends (Lackey Chapel) ⬆️
- 7:30 p.m. Tenebrae Service (Sanctuary)

## Easter Sunday April 5

- 7:00 a.m. Sunrise Service (Fountain Plaza) ⬆️
- 8:45 a.m. Traditional Service (Sanctuary) 🕊️📺
- 10:00 a.m. Bridge Service (Christ Chapel) ⬆️ 🕊️
- 11:00 a.m. Contemporary Service (Sanctuary) 🕊️📺

⬆️ IN PERSON ONLY

👶 nursery available (0-36 months)

📺 children's message



[christelca.org](http://christelca.org)



# Easter Flowers & Wreaths

Purchase fresh flowers and locally-crafted artificial wreaths in memory of or in honor of loved ones to adorn our worship spaces on Easter Sunday. Flowers and wreaths may be taken home after the Easter Sunday Contemporary service.

\$15 lilies  
\$30 hydrangeas  
\$75 artificial wreath

Scan QR Code to Purchase

DEADLINE FOR INCLUSION IN BULLETIN: MARCH 23



REALM

## Good Friday Family Service

by PASTOR ADRIENNE

Families with young children are invited to attend this meaningful and family-oriented Good Friday Worship Service on Friday, April 2 at 10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary. This service is designed for families to come together in interactive learning and reflection as we remember the significance of Good Friday. Through a Gospel-centered message, we will focus on the hope, grace and redemption made possible through Jesus' sacrifice. The service will be engaging and accessible for children, creating space for families to experience this sacred day side by side.

As part of the worship service, students will have the opportunity to participate in interactive stations that share about the events of Jesus' last day. Each station is thoughtfully designed to help learn and engage in tangible ways, highlighting the depth of Christ's love and the power of God's redeeming grace. We invite you to bring your children and join us for this powerful morning of remembrance, discovery and worship as we prepare our hearts for Easter.

## Maundy Thursday's Seder Meal

What is the Seder Meal and why do we reenact it on Maundy Thursday? Good question! The Seder Meal is a remembrance of the plagues and suffering of the Israelite slaves in Egypt. By sacrificing a lamb and painting its blood on their doorways, the angel of death passed over their homes and families.

How does this connect to Jesus? When John the Baptist cries out "Here comes the Lamb of God" when Jesus walks by, it signals that the true and final Passover Lamb has come. The gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke tell us the last meal Jesus had before going to the cross was the Passover meal He celebrated with His disciples. In this meal, Jesus took bread and wine and gave them new meaning: "This is my body... this is my blood." Jesus fulfills the Passover by becoming both the host and the Lamb whose body and blood delivers us from sin. As the Seder Meal proclaims "This is what the LORD did for me," the Lord's Supper proclaims Christ's sacrifice given "for you." Jesus fulfills God's promise of deliverance in him, we are forgiven of all our sins and given true life.

We celebrate this special meal to remind ourselves of our rich tradition of God's action and promise in the lives of his people and in the 2nd graders He is calling to the Lord's table of mercy.

## First Communion 2026!

by KRISTEN RANK

During the season of Lent, we begin preparing our 2nd-5th graders to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion for the first time! We began on February 22nd where the kids learned how many sacraments are in the Lutheran Church as well as what makes Baptism and Communion sacraments. Hint- there are 3 things!

Supplies to create First Communion banners are handed out at this event. Kids create a banner unique to them that is treasured for many years. On Story Day, kids and parents follow Moses through the Exodus story in a very interactive and energetic way to learn the Passover story and how it connects to the Passion story. The final class is called "Livin' Forgiveness," where we review what they have learned. The kids are able to taste the elements, receive a gift from the congregation, a blessing from their parents and leave their banners that will be hung up in Spirit Hall during the Seder Meal. We are looking forward to celebrating the gift of Holy Communion with the class of 2026!

**Lutheridge** CONFIRMATION CAMP  
for current 6th-8th graders  
**July 5-10**  
at Lutheridge

Click/Scan for More Info & RSVP>>  
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: JULY 5

*Stepping Stones*  
FIRST COMMUNION

PREPARATION CLASSES • SAVE THE DATES  
Feb. 22 • Meaning of the Meal • 1-3 p.m.  
March 14 • Story Day • 8:45 a.m.-12 p.m.  
March 29 • Livin' Forgiveness 1-3 p.m.

First Communion will take place during Maundy Thursday's service on April 2nd (after the completion of the Seder Meal). Prep classes are for 2nd graders & their parents to attend together.

MORE INFO: [krank@christelca.org](mailto:krank@christelca.org)

*Seder Meal*

Thursday, April 2 • 5:30 p.m.  
in Spirit Hall

Join us for a traditional Jewish passover meal and reenactment of The Last Supper. The meal includes lamb, wine, veggies dipped in saltwater, matzah, bitter herbs, horseradish and romaine lettuce dipped in charoset.

\$10 • Scan/Click to Register>>

EXPEDITION CAMP **IMAGINE more**  
**July 12-17**

Current 7th-12th graders are invited to a camp at Lutheridge in preparation for the ELCA Nat'l Youth Gathering in the summer of '27. This will bring together the best parts of camp & the best parts of the Gathering for an unforgettable week.

Scan/Click to Register  
MUST REGISTER SEPARATELY WITH LUTHERIDGE, THIS IS FOR TRANSPORTATION & PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY

**peer**  
ministry leadership

March 8 • March 22  
12:00-2:00 p.m. in the Pit

All high school students are invited to come learn some important life skills that can be used to help their peers get through tough life problems.

Scan/Click to Register>>



**Stepping Stones**  
CONFIRMATION

**LORD'S PRAYER: PRAYER PATH**  
Sun, March 1 • 3-5 p.m. (Fellowship Hall)

Parents and their 6th grade Confirmation students are invited to explore the Lord's Prayer and discover its significance in our faith journey. Students will have an opportunity to take part in an interactive prayer path for a time of reflection, creativity and connection.

**Scan/Click to Register**



REALM

## 6th Grade Confirmation Stepping Stone: Lord's Prayer

**Sunday, March 1st • 3-5 p.m. in the Forum**

Parents and their 6th grade Confirmation students are invited to explore the Lord's Prayer and discover its significance in their faith journey. The highlight of this event is participating in an interactive Prayer Path. It is a powerful and memorable experience. Join us for a time of learning, reflection, creativity and connection. 7th and 8th graders who have not yet attended this Stepping Stone are also invited.



**High School graduates**  
Class of 2026

**ATTENTION** If you have a HS senior, email Caroline ([cdiffley@christelca.org](mailto:cdiffley@christelca.org)) or Natalya ([nlegvold@christelca.org](mailto:nlegvold@christelca.org)) to receive graduate information.

**IMPORTANT DATES**

March 15: Childhood & current pic of grad due  
June 7: Quillow Sunday for grads & parents

## 8th Grade Confirmation Stepping Stone: Apostles' Creed Event

**Sunday, April 19 • 3-5 p.m. in the Forum**

As part of the final steps in Confirmation, our 8th grade students and their parents are invited to an 8th grade only Apostles' Creed Stepping Stone Event on Sunday, April 19 from 3-5 p.m. in the Forum. They will be exploring the three Articles of the Apostles' Creed and discovering their significance in our faith journey. This will be the beginning of students crafting their personal faith statements which they will finish at the 9th grade retreat in August.



**Stepping Stones**  
QUILLOW SENDING

**LEAVE YOUR MARK!**  
Sun., March 15 • 4-6 p.m. (the Pit)

We are restarting an old tradition! All high school seniors are invited to leave their mark on a space they have spent so much time in. We will provide materials to paint a tile to leave on the wall in the Pit for years to come.

**Scan/Click to Register**



REALM

## 12th Grade Stepping Stone: Leave your Mark!

**Sunday, March 15 • 4-6 p.m. in Center Six**

High school seniors and parents are invited to join us for this new Stepping Stone that will include a time of fellowship and intentional conversations about this stage in your lives. Students will also paint a tile that will hang in the Pit to encourage the next generations of youth in their life of faith.

**Reminder: March 15th is the deadline to send in your photos to be put into the newsletter, bulletin insert and a video display that will be shown during services on Quillow Sunday, June 7th.**

E-mail two pictures of your graduate and the following info to Caroline at [cdiffley@christelca.org](mailto:cdiffley@christelca.org):

- How you would like the graduate's name listed;
- Two high-resolution pictures of your graduate, one baby/toddler picture and one current picture;
- Graduate's high school.
- Post high school plans or college they will be attending next year if known (if post high school decision is unknown as of March 15th, you can still forward this information by May 1st).



**follow jesus.**



SPOTLIGHT SUMMER CAMP

**Frog and Toad**

August 3-7, 2026

Rising 2nd-5th graders are welcome to register for this all-day summer camp featuring singing, drama & choreography, led by CJ Michael & Jessica Luedeman. Cost: \$300

PERFORMANCE:  
Friday, August 7 • 6:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall

**Click/Scan QR Code for More Info & RSVP**



CENTERSTAGE SUMMER CAMP

Reid Dohi's

**Willy Wonka JR.**

August 3-7, 2026

Rising 6th -12th graders are welcome to register for this all-day summer camp featuring singing, drama & choreography, led by Aj Calpo & Lamar Davis. Cost: \$300

PERFORMANCE:  
Friday, August 7 • 7:00 p.m. in The Pit

**Click/Scan QR Code for More Info & RSVP**

## Spring Family Events

As we say goodbye to one of the biggest snowfalls Charlotte has seen in years, it's time to look ahead to warmer days and Spring fun! Family Ministry has several upcoming events that are sure to get you into the Spring state of mind!

### Xperience Fundraiser | March 8 • 5:00–7:30 p.m.

As Xperience prepares for their summer tour to Texas, you can help them on their way! Join us for an evening of Tex-Mex, crafts, line dancing, a silent auction and more. It's more than a fundraiser — it's a Texas-sized celebration for the whole family. Come support our youth and their ministry!

### Out and About | March 21 • 2:00–4:00 p.m.

Families with younger children are invited to Woodplay Charlotte for an afternoon of play and fellowship. Kids can enjoy the showroom while parents connect. Light snacks will be provided for both kids and adults. Don't miss this fun family-friendly event!

### Family Field Day | April 18

Lace up your sneakers and join us at the South Land for our first-ever Family Field Day! This afternoon will be packed with races, games and activities for all ages. We're still finalizing the details, so watch REALM for updates on timing and event highlights.

## Become a VBS Volunteer

Why Volunteer for Vacation Bible School this summer? So many reasons and no experience necessary!! We hear over and over that VBS is often a child's most memorable church experience of the year. Your presence and encouragement are scattering the seeds of faith in our kids to prepare their hearts for the Holy Spirit to move and grow their understanding of God's love!

**Interested?** Contact Kristen Rank at [krank@christelca.org](mailto:krank@christelca.org)

**VBS**

**Vacation Bible School**  
for ages 4 through rising 5th grade • FREE!

**June 15–19**  
**Register Now!**

Scan/Click QR Code for More Info & RSVP

REALM

**XPERIENCE**  
SUMMER TOUR FUNDRAISER  
**Sunday, March 8**  
5:00 p.m. in the Pit

The Xperience will host a fundraiser dinner to support their summer tour to Texas. Chef Mike & Alicia will provide a Tex-Mex style dinner (dine in or to go). Proceeds will support our fundraising goal of \$10,000.

**No RSVP required • Come and join us!**

RESCHEDULED!

**OUT&ABOUT** -family outing-

**WOODPLAY CHARLOTTE**  
**Saturday, March 21 • 2-4 p.m.**  
(9517 Monroe Rd.)

Kids can play in the showroom while parents enjoy time in fellowship. Light snacks will be provided for all — don't miss this family-friendly event!

Scan/Click to Register

REALM

**High School Dinner & Prayer Path**  
**Sunday, March 1**  
4:30-7 p.m. in the Pit

High school youth are invited for dinner & games around the Pit. Once middle schoolers are done, we will go through the Prayer Path. A great faith-building opportunity!

Scan/Click to Register

REALM

MIDDLE SCHOOL SERVICE PROJECT  
**Crisis Assistance**  
**Saturday, March 28 • 12-4 p.m.**

Grades 6-8 and their parents are invited to this hands-on service project as we serve as production assistants in the Crisis Assistance Free Store. Meet at church at 12pm for a meal and then we'll head to the store in Southend to work for 2 hours before returning to church.

Scan/Click to Register

REALM

HIGH SCHOOL  
**Kate's Skating Rinks**  
Indian Trail

**Sunday, March 22 • 3-5 p.m.**

Join us for an afternoon of fun & laughter as we hit the skating rink together! Bring your friends and come ready to roll, hang out & make some great memories.

Scan/Click to Register

REALM



## Family Night is in BLOOM!

Spring Family Night is finally in bloom! After several weeks of weather delays, Family Night kicked off on February 10th with our Registration Night! McClintock students and families arrived at McClintock Middle School for a warm dinner and registration fair to see what McPIE would offer for this semester.

Over 120 meals were served and afterward, students and families filled the gym to meet club leaders and see what all is happening this Spring. There is something for everyone. Elementary siblings have activities. Our K-1st-2nd grade students build with legos and blocks, do fun crafts, work on puzzles and more! Our 3rd-5th graders get a glimpse into robotics and coding through a partnership with You Can Tech! And our tiniest babies have a nursery where they are loved and cared for!

Adults choose from ESL, Pathways Out of Poverty classes — Getting Ahead and Women's Journey, and new this semester is a partnership with NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness). They will provide a NAMI Basics class for adults who have an adolescent experiencing mental health issues. We are excited for this new partnership, especially as mental health is at the forefront of many people's minds today.

Middle School students have three afternoon possibilities: Hiking, Game On and Gardening. These are great options to get outside and enjoy the coming Spring weather. Evening clubs include Art, Robotics (NEW), Cyber Spy, Girl Scouts, Top Scot Chef, Drama, Woodworking, Hands 2 Heart, Sports Drills, Ten80 Racing and Volleyball. You are sure to find a club that fits with such diverse offerings!

Spring is a fun time to get involved. If you want to come and see what Family Night is about, please do not hesitate to reach out to Angela Davis ([adavis@christelca.org](mailto:adavis@christelca.org)) and schedule a time to come take a tour!

## Room In The Inn

RITI has been a successful and MUCH needed ministry, especially during the bitter cold January and February months. Let's help this ministry finish strong during March. We are currently in need of overnight hosts on these specific dates: March 5th (1), 12th (2) and 26th (1).

LET'S HELP OUR NEIGHBORS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS. If you are able to volunteer and experience what a rewarding time this is with folks, go to their Sign Up Genius and sign up today (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0B4EA9AD2BA57-59392690-clcroom#/>). If you have any questions, please contact Lane Goode at [lane.goode@gmail.com](mailto:lane.goode@gmail.com).

## Benevolence

Christ Lutheran is very generous to our neighbors and community agencies. In 2025, 12% of our annual church budget supported multiple ministries and non-profits. The benevolence committee meets quarterly to allocate available funds to non-profits. Now into 2026, we have a new "grant application" for non-profits looking to receive funds from CLC Benevolence. If you are part of a non-profit that would like to apply for funding, please reach out to Angela Davis ([adavis@christelca.org](mailto:adavis@christelca.org)).

## CROP Walk Update

Christ Lutheran exceeded last year's CROP donations and hit \$60K! This is an impressive number and certainly helps families in our area who are experiencing hunger. It was a team effort including multiple donors, from inside and outside the church, with gifts of \$500, \$1000, \$1500 and more. Of course, every gift is a treasure, particularly those from folks who gave sacrificially reminiscent of the Widow's Mite in Luke 21.

Thank you to everyone who donated and helped ensure that hunger has no place in Charlotte. We defended our position as the top team in the country; Number 2 trailed us by about \$18k. To celebrate this achievement, each of you are invited to attend the CROP Hunger Walk Recognition Brunch on Saturday, March 7 at St. John's Baptist Church from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. Kindly RSVP to [kristine@charlottecropwalk.org](mailto:kristine@charlottecropwalk.org) with cc to [ricknc82@carolina.rr.com](mailto:ricknc82@carolina.rr.com).

## Garden is Coming!

The Garden Ministry is just getting started. We will be amending the soil with compost and peat moss and tilling each bed before March 31st. Depending on what you want to grow, most planting starts after the 1st frost free date of April 1. We have 32 raised beds reserved with 10 more still available! The garden is available from sunrise to sunset so set your own schedule. Regular harvest times, known as "Pickin' Parties" begin around mid April. New to gardening? Not sure how to start? There are many gardeners willing to welcome and mentor you - meet new friends and enjoy fellowship while helping to feed our hungry neighbors.

### Busy Bees!

It's a great time to come and observe how we care for our bees. It is a requirement for you to do this three times before you can join in. We are in the process of restoring three lost colonies and expanding to three more new ones.

With proper training and equipped with knowledge, the chances of being stung is minimal. Without a doubt, they are fascinating creatures made by our Heavenly Father for our benefit. Come and see for yourself. As orderly as bees are there are no regular set times. The bees let us know what and when to do the things to keep them healthy and productive.

For more information and/or to get started, contact Walt Roth at 704-907-7080 or by email at [wroth1@bellsouth.net](mailto:wroth1@bellsouth.net).

## McPIE 20-Year Celebration!!!!

Twenty years ago this April, Amy Daniels attended a Faith Summit held by then CMS Superintendent, Peter Gorman. A call was put out for faith communities to partner with high-risk schools. Christ Lutheran answered that call! What has evolved over these past 20 years is the culmination of love, tears, determination and sheer grit.

The partnership Christ Lutheran has with McClintock Middle School has flourished. Thousands of students have created future stories, countless volunteers have been inspired, multitudes of families have been supported, and community being built at the school is noticeable.

Over the course of our 20-year milestone, McPIE will celebrate with a different theme each month. Stay tuned for ways to get involved and opportunities to donate your time, talents, and resources!



*Clothing Donations for*  
**Crisis Assistance**

Bring new or gently used clothing (cleaned & in bags please) to donate to our neighbors in need! Drop off **CLOTHING ONLY** at the Outreach Office Mon-Fri. On Sunday, the blue bins will be outside the Outreach Office doors.  
**PLEASE, NO TOYS OR HOUSEHOLD ITEMS**  
Questions? [nealman@bellsouth.net](mailto:nealman@bellsouth.net)



oneblood   
*Share your power.*

**BLOOD DRIVE**

**Sunday, April 19**  
**8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**

**TO REGISTER, GO TO:**  
**[oneblood.org/donate-now](http://oneblood.org/donate-now)**

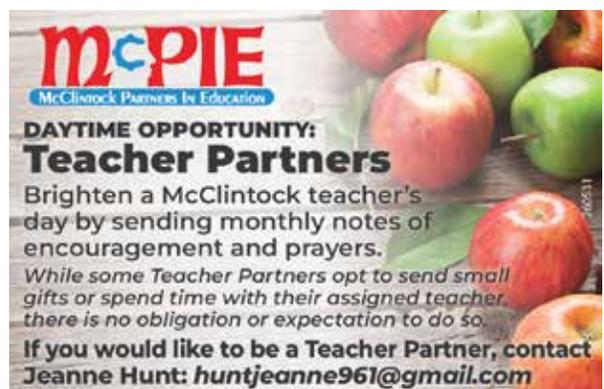


DAYTIME OPPORTUNITY  
**Teacher Luncheons**

Support teachers and staff at McClintock Middle School with lunches on early release days. Volunteers needed to prepare dishes as well as help serve.

If you are interested in joining this team, contact Melinda Dale at [melinda28226@hotmail.com](mailto:melinda28226@hotmail.com)

McClintock Partners In Education



**McPIE**  
McClintock Partners In Education

DAYTIME OPPORTUNITY:  
**Teacher Partners**

Brighten a McClintock teacher's day by sending monthly notes of encouragement and prayers. While some Teacher Partners opt to send small gifts or spend time with their assigned teacher, there is no obligation or expectation to do so.

If you would like to be a Teacher Partner, contact Jeanne Hunt: [huntjeanne961@gmail.com](mailto:huntjeanne961@gmail.com)



**SOUP KITCHEN**

**3rd SUNDAYS OF THE MONTH**  
at Roof Above

Serve up a warm meal for those in need!  
*Limited volunteer capacity.*

**To get involved, contact:**  
Liza Snow (704) 806-0064



**Become a NAMI Navigator Volunteer**  
 NAMI Charlotte is seeking adult volunteers for their Navigator Call Line to respond to incoming calls and offer mental health information, types of services available and encouragement. No professional mental health experience is required.

To learn more & apply, scan/click or go to <https://t.ly/46NVf>



2060601

## Sleep in Heavenly Peace Upcoming Builds

**March 27-28 Building Beds at South Land**



SCAN TO SIGN UP

<https://t.ly/qqLbX>

(fyi only) From April 13-16, 6,000 Lowe's employees & 1,000 SHP leaders will aim to build 11,000 beds in 24 hrs!

Want to Learn More?  
 Email Chris Barkoukis at [chris.barkoukis@shpbeds.org](mailto:chris.barkoukis@shpbeds.org)



## McPIE Amazon Wishlist

Items from this list will benefit MMS teachers & students, fulfill our Family Night incentives, snacks & supplies, and help with our weekly grocery bags. This list will be updated frequently! You can decide which supplies you want to donate, pay for the items and they will be shipped straight to the church!

Scan/Click for Amazon Wishlist or go to <https://t.ly/z0mcZ>



## McPIE

McCLINTOCK PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

**Family Nights at McClintock**  
 every Tuesday from 5:30 - 7:15 p.m.

To get involved, contact Angela: [adavis@christelca.org](mailto:adavis@christelca.org)

206051

## FEED A FAMILY

DONATE [onrealm.org/christelca/-/give/now](http://onrealm.org/christelca/-/give/now)



2060401

## Crisis Assistance

Do you have clothing you want to donate? Drop it off in the blue bin outside of the Outreach office any day of the week. We have a dedicated team of volunteers who pick up donated clothing weekly and deliver it to Crisis Assistance uptown. These are valuable donations for our neighbors in need. As a reminder, we take CLOTHING ONLY – no toys, housewares, etc.

## Sleep in Heavenly Peace

Sleep in Heavenly Peace would like to request your help building and delivering beds to children that are sleeping on the floor. We are building beds in March; please come and help if you can, leave when you need to, or donate if you would like. No experience necessary, just a desire to help.

**March 27 • 9 a.m.– 1 p.m.**

**March 28 • 9 a.m.– 1 p.m. or until we finish**

(Rain or Shine.)

To register, go to <https://volunteer.shpbeds.org/timeslots/Hew59BOlcH>. The reservation has 2 dates. Click 'Additional Times' to select both/either sign ups. Thank you all!



## Happy Spring Thrivent Members!

As a Thrivent member, you have two Thrivent Impact Cards of \$250 each available for 2026 to sponsor projects that support many of CLC's outreach initiatives – McPIE, Freedom School, the Quilting Ministry, Room In the Inn, Habitat for Humanity, etc. Or you can use them to support causes near and dear to your heart.

The application process is easy – you apply online and we can provide the information necessary to complete the form. Additionally, Thrivent members who have insurance products earn Thrivent Choice dollars that can be donated directly to an organization of your choice with the click of an online button! It's the easiest way to give back. There are many organizations to choose from including our own Sleep in Heavenly Peace initiative.

To access your Choice dollars, log into your Thrivent account, click on the "Generosity" tab, then the "Direct Choice Dollars" tab, then you can access the donor organizations. Please contact Dee Dee Petronis ([dpetronis@christelca.org](mailto:dpetronis@christelca.org)) for more information and assistance.

## Feed A Family – Letter of Thanks!

*Christ Lutheran Angels, Thank you for saving the Feed a Family Fund. I am blown away at the outpouring of generosity in the fall. With the ICE scare and rising grocery prices, many families needed help and we met that challenge head on. The school is delighted with the bags every week. The gardeners donated money so we can include a little fresh produce with their normal groceries during the winter months. We continue to feed our neighbors with glad hearts knowing that Christ Lutheran supports us!*



# CHRISTLUTHERAN

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CHRIST LUTHERAN'S BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## Christ Connections



march/april 2026

Scott Suskovic · Senior Pastor  
Ryan Ritzmann · Pastor, Evangelism & Faith Formation  
Adrienne Ladd · Pastor, Family Ministry  
Alexis Williams · Minister, Christ Online  
Angela Davis · Director of Outreach  
Mark Johanson · Minister of Music  
Tony Hyde · Director of Property and Finance

### JOIN THE NEWSLETTER MAILING LIST

In your REALM profile, you can set newsletter mailing preferences to USPS mail or online delivery. Hard copies are available for pickup at each campus. You can also view the online, interactive version at [christelca.org/latest-news/newsletter](http://christelca.org/latest-news/newsletter)

CONTENT DEADLINES FOR 2026 EDITIONS

Jan/Feb - December 10 Mar/April - February 15 May/June - April 15  
July/Aug - June 15 Sept/Oct - August 10 Nov/Dec - October 15

\*Submit stories or other news items at [christelca.org/jotform](http://christelca.org/jotform)

## WEDNESDAYS ABLAZE

**Dinner 5:00-6:00 p.m.**

in Fellowship Hall (\$8 adults/\$6 child/\$30 family max)  
To speed up your check-in, prepay for dinner in Realm

**Activities & Classes 6:00-7:30 p.m.**

**JANUARY 7 - APRIL 29**

**LEARN MORE & RSVP FOR DINNERS:**  
[christelca.org/wednesdays-ablaze](http://christelca.org/wednesdays-ablaze)



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*For the latest on upcoming events  
and other announcements:*

[christelca.org/latest-news](http://christelca.org/latest-news)

