



Life in Christ, Vol. 68 Issue 2 February, 2024

Beloved of Christ Lutheran-

Can you believe it has already been nearly a month since my arrival at Christ Lutheran?! Time has flown by, and, on the other hand, we still have so much time ahead of us. Thanks be to God! I am grateful for the opportunities we'll have to get to know one another in the coming months and years, and for the ministry we'll share together.

One thing you'll come to know about me is that my family are big time Minnesota Vikings fans. Skol! And even though the Vikings aren't in the playoffs this year, we are continuing to enjoy watching the games as we collectively march steadily onward to Super Bowl weekend, and it got me thinking of this song.

"Dropkick Me Jesus" by Bobby Bare

**Dropkick me, Jesus, through the goal posts of life
End over end, neither left nor to right
Straight through the heart of them, righteous up rights
Dropkick me, Jesus, through the goal posts of life**

**Make me, oh, make me, Lord, more than I am
Make me a piece in Your master game plan
Free from the earthly temptation below
I've got the will, Lord, if You got the toe**

Would you believe that it's the only Christian football waltz known to date? It is a treat and definitely worth a look up on YouTube! I heard this song for the first time on a drive Up North with my Dad and couldn't believe the lyrics nor the tune. However, the more I listen to it, the more I realize the wonderful message hidden in this catchy, quirky tune.

Most folks would say that kickers and punters are the least-respected members of a football team. Maybe it's because they are some of the smaller players. Maybe it's because they aren't in play after play. Maybe it's because their role is fairly specialized and seems

simple. (Although, as a Vikings fan, I can tell you that it isn't all that simple and a reliable kicker is someone to never take for granted.) However, if you stuck me out in the middle of a football field and gave me a football and said, "All you have to do is kick this ball through those goalposts," I'm fairly confident that I couldn't do it. It's not as easy as it seems. The mechanics of kicking, the roar of the crowd, the pressure of the moment...I think it would get to me.

So what a funny thing to think about when Bobby Bare asks Jesus to be the kicker and dropkick him through the goalposts of life! First of all, dropkicking sounds a little dangerous and a little unpredictable. You have to get the right connection. You have to have enough power. You have to have enough finesse to get it headed where it needs to go. I'm sure God would say the same thing for us. In order to get us where we're going or maybe even doing what God desires for us, it takes the right connection, enough power, and a little finesse.

Second of all, what does it mean for us to go through the goalposts of life at the Savior's will? Being dropkicked means we don't have a lot of say in where we are going. There is a trust element there. If the football could talk, I imagine it would say, "I just have to trust that the kicker will care for me as he should." Well I guess that's a little bit of jump to presume what a football might say, but I don't think my guess is far off. Trust is a hard thing to do and, admittedly, we aren't the easiest folks to wrangle, but with the right kicker (or guide), I think we can trust we'll make it.

Finally, I love Bobby Bare's plea to "make me a piece in Your master game plan." In the game of football, it's important for the players to know that they are part of a bigger plan, a team working together where all the players have a role. Each has their own way of contributing and it is difficult when one unit is not contributing as they ought to be. And so it is with us. We acknowledge that we are a piece of God's greater story and invite Jesus to use us as He wills to spread His love, share His compassion, and to be His people. We seek God's will for our lives and ask that God might use us for God's glory.

And as funny as it may sound, this is my prayer for us.

May God ever dropkick us through the goalposts of life.

May we be pieces in God's master game plan.

And for the football fans among us, may we all give a little more credit and grace to the kickers out there. Amen.

--Pastor Nikki



Preschool News

We had a very nice winter break December 22 through January 1st. School resumed on January 2nd and January remained a pretty calm month.

We are so excited to announce that the Playground renovations are complete. The children have been loving the new play structure. We are hosting a special Ribbon Cutting Ceremony Sunday February 11, following church service. All are welcome to attend.

On Wednesday, January 17th, we had a Snow Day for the children at school. The Long Beach Ice Company blew in snow on our playground and the classes took turns playing in the snow and sliding down a hill made of snow. To make the day even more special, a parent brought their snow machine so not only was there snow on the ground but there was also snow falling on the playground. It was such a fun day for the children.

We are continuing to plan for our 2024 auction, "A Night of Imagination" (Willy Wonka Theme) which will be on Friday, March 8th at 6pm at The Grand. Tickets will go on sale Thursday 2/1/24. We sent out letters and are in the process of collecting donations. Looking forward to this fun-filled event!

In February we will have Special Person Day on Feb 8th. Each child will get to bring someone that is special to them like a grandparent, aunt, or uncle. They will go to Chapel together and then enjoy going classroom to classroom to participate in different activities as well as enjoy refreshments in the courtyard. Activities will include dying carnations red, making cards, making candy, playing games, reading stories, and taking a picture and decorating a picture frame.

Wishing you a beautiful month!

For your calendars...

Saturday, February 3rd, Our Social Synod Bishop, Brenda Bos will formally install Pastor Nikki as our permanent Pastor. There will be a luncheon in the social hall following the service

Sunday, February 4th, the 2024 Church Council will be installed. If you are a council member, please make plans to be at worship this day.

Sunday February 4th, the Worship & Music committee will meet at 11am in the Adult Lounge

Thursday, February 8th, is the OWLs in the Nest Lunch. Join us in the conference room for lunch and good fellowship. Bring a side dish or dessert to share.

Saturday, February 10th at noon Sons of Norway meets in the Social Hall. Everyone is welcome to come and learn about the Norwegian culture.

Sunday, February 11th
Preschool Playground Blessing and Ribbon Cutting after worship.

Sunday, February 11th Sunday Education, "Alzheimer's and Dementia Diary" See ad in this newsletter.

Ash Wednesday, February 14th
Imposition of Ashes at 11am with the preschool during chapel, (all are welcome).
Worship and Imposition of Ashes at 7pm.

Sundays -February 18, 25 and March 3,10,17 we will host Lenten soup lunches and devotions following worship.

Wednesday, February 21,
Women's Bible Study at 630pm in the Adult Lounge.
See ad in this newsletter .

Tuesday, February 27th
DayTimer's LunchBunch
1130am at Hof's Hut,
Bellflower Boulevard

Sunday Education



Course name: Alzheimer/Dementia Diary

Course description: A reading and reflection on my Mom's Alzheimer and my experience caring for her.

Participants: Adults

Class date: Sunday, February 11 after Church

Place: Adult Lounge

Instructor: Joyce Carter

Materials Needed: Sense of humor

GOD OF DELIVERANCE

A STUDY OF EXODUS 1-18

JEN WILKIN



A 10-SESSION STUDY BY JEN WILKIN

Join us for this verse-by-verse study of Exodus 1-18 to discover how Israel's story is our story: The same God who delivered Israel also delivers all those He loves from slavery to sin and from service to the pharaohs of this world. He lifts our eyes to the promised land He has prepared where we dwell with I AM and worship Him as the one true God.

CLC Women's Bible Study

WEDNESDAYS • FEBRUARY 21 – APRIL 24
6:30 – 8:30 PM

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH • LOUNGE
6500 Stearns Street, Long Beach

Contact: Shannon Timney at (562)209-5699



Members at Home or in Care Centers: Laurie Ennen, Ione Marchael, Sydney Nichols, and Frances Willms.

Those struggling with illness or other concerns: Don Darnauer, Judy Haenn, Shannon Howard, Daniel Howard, Chris and Sheryl Hunter, Kathy Klute-Nelson, Karen Koch, Jeff Rodrigues, Bary & Janice Schlieder, Kurt Weisel, Rich Williams, Gary & Linda Zimmerman.

***Family & Friends:** Carolina, Chad, Barrett, Michael, Noah, Lois Brown, Zach Burkard, Charlie and David Corm, Mary Croes, Denise Davis, Tamara Fitzgerald, Brechin Flournoy, Barbara Gina Barvy Fournier, Daryl, Cindy Gray, Kylie & Crystal Huber, Barb Korsmo, Katrina Lahr, Sue Lance, Ronda Lynn, Farnaz Perl, Kristina & Scott Randolph, Sharry Reed, Tom Sievers, Christine Storm, Von, Vicki Thompson, Paul Valenzuela, and Jessica West.

We pray for the ongoing work of:

+ Linda Gawthorne among the Kogi people of Colombia

+ First responders who provide safety, security, and care

+ Those serving in our nation's Military, especially Samuel Brown, Ryan Dorris, Morgan Llewellyn, Johnny Luna, Jim Reeder, Steven, Brina and Michael Navarro.



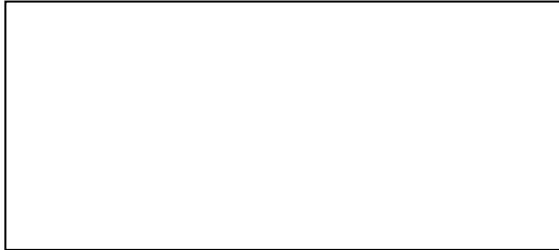
2/12 Stephanie and Ken Petrbock
2/15 Doug Holdhusen and DJesus Trujillo
2/27 Angie and Ron Nelson



2/5 Angela Joseph
2/11 Jeff Rodrigues
2/12 Frank Croes
2/13 Jeanne Peterson
2/14 Chloe Halvorson
2/17 Rich Williams
2/20 Laurel Elliott

Christ Lutheran Church
6500 Stearns Street
Long Beach, CA 90815-3497

Return Service Requested



Mission Statement

Living by Christ's example,
 we welcome, serve, and love
 all through God's grace.

Vision Statement

Embracing the truth that God's love
 and grace is for all, Christ
 Lutheran Church is a vibrant
 and active community spreading
 the good news through acceptance,
 action, and benevolence.

Our Position

Christ is ALIVE!

March Newsletter Deadline:
 February 15

Life In Christ

Is the newsletter of

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**Please join us in person for Sunday
 Worship 9:30am
 Live on FB or later on YouTube
 Channel**



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