



**Christ
Lutheran**
CHURCH

2610 Campbell Street • Valparaiso,
Indiana 46385 • (219) 462-6660
clcvalpo.org • office@clcvalpo.org

The Good News March 2024





RECONCILING IN CHRIST

proudly proclaims:

For the past two years our congregation has been listening, learning, asking and wondering what we mean when we say “Everyone is welcome here.” We heard from our beloved youth as they shared their experiences in the LGBTQIA+ community at the high school and around town; our beloved siblings shared about their family, friends, neighbors and coworkers; we have explored and learned how our culture uses pronouns, talks about gender, and more. Together we crafted, revised, and ultimately approved [an official Welcome Statement](#) that

We are a community of people sharing God’s love through Christ and growing together in faith.

We are delighted to report that our good work has been recognized: we have been named a Partner Congregation in the [Reconciling in Christ](#) Program, a “holy ministry of welcome, inclusion, celebration, and advocacy.”

The purpose of the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Program is to ensure the welcome, inclusion, celebration, and advocacy for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions; work for racial equity and commit to anti-racist work and support the national program. Since 1983, the RIC program has been a public way for faith communities to see, name, celebrate, and advocate for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions in the Lutheran church.

As a result of this recognition our congregation is now listed in a searchable national map, which provides people in the LGBTQIA+ community and their allies the ability to search for a faith community in their area. This inclusion in the directory is an important way for us to extend welcome and invitation to the people we have specifically named in our Welcome Statement.

The RIC program notes [something we’ve already experienced](#) during the “Deepening our Welcome” process:

Many RIC partners report the demographic most often drawn in by the RIC status is young couples with children. These folks are seeking communities prepared to help them raise their children in ways consistent with their values. They want their children to grow up surrounded by diversity and to know their families will never have to question if their children will be welcome as they grow and learn more about who they are.

Together we will name and celebrate this milestone in the life of our vibrant, loving, welcoming congregation during worship on February 4, with cake and celebration during the Formation Hour (9:20am). Please be sure to join us for this important step in the life of our congregation.

Thanks be to God for the plentiful gifts of hospitality and welcome so generously given to our

CLC Social Ministry and Mission March 2024



Each month the Social Ministry highlights a special giving opportunity pertaining to hunger, homelessness/housing, or mission. March's specific emphasis provides monetary/volunteer support for the **Valpo New Creation Men's Shelter/Resale Shop** <https://newcreationempowers.org> + <https://www.facebook.com/newcreationresaleshop> and **Gabriel's Horn** www.gabrielshelter.org

New Creation (2102 N. Calumet Ave.) was created several years ago as a center for homeless men in Valpo and Porter County. The Men's Center currently offers supportive services for homeless men year-round during daytime hours and overnights at area churches. The Resale Shop is always in need of donated furniture and appliances, household and office supplies, laundry essentials and toiletries, and cleaning supplies and paper goods.

New Creation Men's Center helps educate the community on the problem of homelessness in Porter County and on the challenges faced by clients, with the goal to create self-sufficiency. For numerous years now, from April to October, CLC members have assisted the Men's Shelter program in several ways i.e., hosting men overnight at CLC on Saturdays (Apr.-Oct.), preparing/serving meals (dinner and breakfast), and taking time to sit and talk with the men who are taking advantage of Shelter services. Along with six other churches (one each night), CLC is planning to resume the overnight program with New Creation on Saturday evening, April 13, 2024. Please see various announcements in March about how CLC folks can volunteer for time slots and/or and bring meals on Saturdays beginning soon and continuing through the summer.



Gabriel's Horn in South Haven/Portage is a Shelter for Homeless Women and Children. The short term shelter provides a safe, temporary shelter, food, linens, and basic supplies at no cost. Services include an aftercare program, arts & crafts classes, counseling, case management, and transportation. The Shelter helps lives rebuild, return to independence, and find dignity - through providing shelter, education, counseling, and referrals to community connections.

Help achieve our goal of \$2500 in February (over and above giving combined with CLC's budgeted amount of \$1200). By achieving our goal CLC will help **New Creation** and **Gabriel's Horn** continue to thrive. Use your weekly worship giving envelope with check to CLC and indicate "New Creation" or "Gabriel's Horn" or contribute through Subsplash on the CLC website <https://clcvalpo.org> via the "Give" button. Thank you to members for supporting monthly social ministry emphases.

EASTER WORSHIP SCHEDULE 2024



March Altar Gifts

Holy Communion	Erik & Kelli Ciesinski ~ In Memory of Charles D. Linder
Altar Candles	Irene Adams ~ In Memory of my parents: Robert & Erna Geuther
Eternal Lamp	Sara & Jeremy Long ~ In Memory of Pearl Long (Grandma)

Senior Gathering

Thursday, March 28
Church Hall

Please join Gail Mannington and get to know more about A.M.O.S.

ALL SENIORS ARE WELCOME!!

LITTLE LAMB PRESCHOOL

Openings

Little Lamb Preschool has a few openings for our 2024-2025 school year in our Young 5 afternoon class. This class has 4–5-year-olds. It is Monday-Friday from 12:30-3:00. If you or any one you know would be interested in that class, please contact Jen at jen.gottlieb@clcvalpo.org or 219-462-6660 #14.

Chapel

Chapel continues to be a wonderful time when we come together as a school to hear stories and sing songs about God's love and grace. Our stories this month have focused on Jesus' miracles and his great love for us.

Lutheran Schools Week

Little Lamb Preschool will be joining other Lutheran Schools around the country as together we celebrate "Lutheran Schools Week," March 3rd– 9th. Please see the Sunday Bulletin insert on March 3rd for information sent by the ELCA Schools and Learning Centers. The theme for Lutheran Schools Week is ***On the Road***. We will explore this theme through in class art activities, devotions, Chapel and gross motor activities.

Art Show and Breakfast Fundraiser

Little Lamb Preschool will host an art show and breakfast, along with a wonderful silent auction on Saturday, March 2nd. This is such a wonderful time to enjoy with extended families and is Little Lamb Preschool's biggest fundraiser event of the year. Last year we hosted over 350 people! We hope to be near the same this year!

Christian Mission Statement

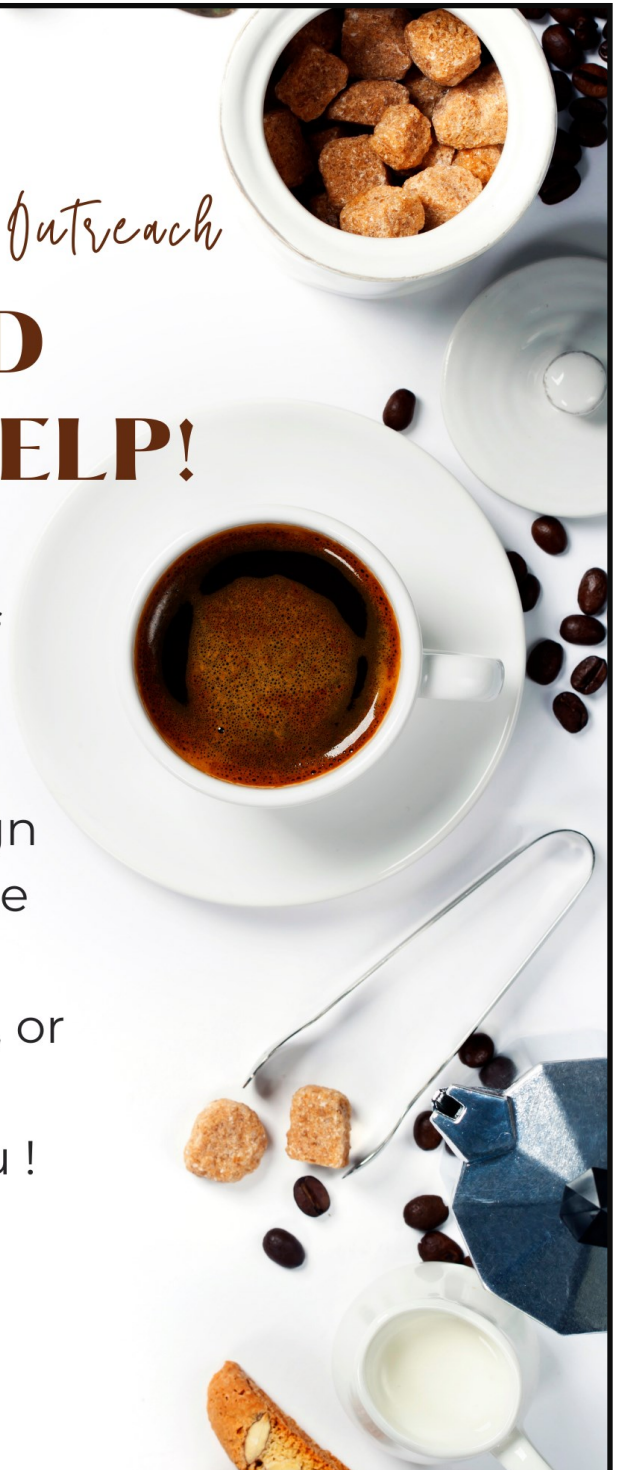
Little Lamb Preschool, in union with Christ Lutheran Church, serves God by shepherding God's children as we nurture the whole child in partnership with families.



Hospitality and Outreach

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We are in need of
Welcome Desk
attendants and
bakers- please sign
up at the welcome
desk for a shift
between services, or
to donate baked
goods. Thank you !



Quilts

2024 Goal: 500

Quilts Completed: 88

Baby Care Kits

2024 Goal: 500

Kits Completed: 225

Fabric Care Kits

2024 Goal: 150

Kits Completed: 32

Personal Care Kits

Kits Completed: 300

- Lutheran World Relief News: According to LWR, FLEECE hats, blankets, sleepers, jackets, shirts, pants-anything with fleece is not being accepted. Fleece is made from plastic water bottles and does not breathe as a natural fiber does. It is too HOT. Also, fleece sheds minute plastic pellets not able to be seen by the naked eye. The shedding particles enter the body system causing blockage even found in body organs. Check out clothing tags sewn into the garment's body seams to see what type fiber is being used. The tag at the back of the neck is not specific enough. Some jackets that resemble fleece are made from polyester fabric. That fabric is acceptable.
- Weekly donations are coming in. Put CANS in or by the Red Ford truck or by the White Basket in the Gathering Area under the back shelf.

PERSONAL CARE KITS UPDATE

As Lent continues, we are aware of Christ's sacrifice for us. Lent is also a time of considering sacrifices which we may make to remind us of what Jesus did for us. In that spirit, I am asking you to consider making contributions to our Personal Care Kit project during the Lenten Season. With that in mind, I am offering a challenge to everyone. I will match any contributions made between Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Please consider making a contribution to help those less fortunate than we are. Our impact can be life-changing for someone. Place contributions in the offering with the special note: "Personal Care Kits Project."

Thank you in advance for any gifts that you may make. Please contact me if you have any comments. Dave Keammerer 219-462-8447 or dnssk@frontier.com

LENT WORSHIP/DINNER SCHEDULE**Mid-Week Lenten Dinners @ 5:30 p.m.****March 6 (Sanctuary Choir: Soup, Salad, Bread)****March 13 (March 13- CLC Deaconess Crew: Chili)****March 20 (Mardi Gras Crew: Jambalaya)****Mid-Week Lenten Services****March 6, 13, 20****7:00 p.m.**



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CLC Congregation,

It is baffling to think that the month of March and the season of Lent is already upon us! As we've entered the season of Lent, it also marks the start of decisions regarding what Lenten disciplines we will adopt, what things we will give up, and a time of self-examination. Alongside all of these things, Lent is a season of holding on to hope, especially in the face of despair.

I was especially thinking about the idea of this as I was traveling two weekends ago. With the intensity of recent weather, many of the roads and expressways have taken on a multitude of potholes and cracks, making them more difficult to drive on than normal. However, despite the potholes and rough patches I came across during my travels, I continued to move forward in my commute. Part of my ability to do this came with a deepened level of concentration on the road in front of me.

Lent, for me, is this image of the road with potholes. These obstacles make the journey more complex, more bumpy, but we continue to trek forward by holding onto hope and by taking on a deepened level of examination, both of ourselves and what is around us. It is hope that continues to move us forward; hope in God's promises, hope in what is to come, hope in Jesus' footsteps right alongside our own.

Whatever it may be that is adding weight in your life right now, it is that hope and holding steadfast to our God that moves us through each season we enter. As Paul wrote, "We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed" (2 Corinthians 4:8-9). As you walk through this season of Lent, whether it is a smoother journey or one that is filled with potholes and bumps, I hope that the joy of Easter, of Jesus overcoming death, is a reminder that we too overcome our own potholes and obstacles with God's guidance, faithfulness, and love for us.

Blessings on your Lenten Season,
Kaitlyn Jedrzejowski
Director of Youth Ministries



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YOUTH MINISTRY UPDATES

Circle Dinners!

Is there a new recipe you've been excited to try out? Have you been looking for ways to be involved with our youth? We are in need of volunteers to help provide dinners for Circle for the second half of the year. If you are interested in providing a dinner, the QR code will take you to a sign up! Thank you so much for supporting our youth!



Easter Bake Sale!

Are you in need of treats to fill the Easter eggs with for the Easter Egg Hunt? Is the yearly Easter sweet tooth setting in? Are you in charge of desserts for the Easter meal? If you answered yes to any of these questions (or even if you didn't), then the Youth Ministry Easter Bake Sale is where you want to be! On Easter Sunday, there will be a table with home baked treats that will be available in the Gathering Space. Free-will donations will be accepted for any of the baked goods! If you have any questions, please contact Kaitlyn at kaitlyn.jedrzejowski@clcvalpo.org. We hope to see you on Easter Sunday!

Mardi Gras Thank You!

Thank you so much to everyone who supported the Mardi Gras fundraiser! Your prayers, support, and attendance were such a blessing! Fundraisers such as this one are a huge help in making the trip to the Youth Gathering possible for our group, so thank you so, so much!

Lectors are needed to serve at the 8:00 Services in the coming months. If you would like to serve in this important ministry, please contact Dave Keammerer at dnssk@frontier.com and he would be very happy to schedule a time for you.

Workday/Spring Clean Up with our partner congregation Bethel!

Date: Saturday, March 16th
Time: 9 – 2 (including lunch)

Sign-up in the Gathering Space

Our partner congregation, Bethel Lutheran Church in Gary/Miller is celebrating their 150th anniversary this year. To prepare for all the festivities (including a visit from the Bishop), we will join Bethel for a Work Day to spruce up the church! Most of the tasks are cleaning tasks – so anyone can join in.

If you'd like to carpool or need a ride to Miller/Gary, meet at the church at 8:15am.

Questions? Contact Irene Adams or Kathy Sutherland



Easter Sunday Egg Hunt

Donations of candy and treats to put in eggs are needed. Please drop your donations off at the CLC office.

Thank you!



HOLY WEEK



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March 2023 Schedule

March 31st | Easter Bake Sale | Sunday Morning

Theology Club

March 4th | Theology Club | 6pm

March 18th | Theology Club | 6pm

Confirmation (7th)

March 6th | Final Lenten Class | 6-7pm

Fusion (5th-8th)

March 3rd | Fusion | 9:20-10:20am

March 10th | Fusion | 9:20-10:20am

March 17th | Fusion | 9:20-10:20am

March 24th | No Fusion | Holy Week

March 31st | No Fusion | Easter

High School (9th-12th)

March 3rd | Circle | 6-8pm

March 10th | Youth Gathering Meeting

March 10th | Circle | 6-8pm

March 17th | Circle | 6-8pm

March 24th | No Circle | Holy Week

March 31st | No Circle | Easter

Confirmation (8th)

March 6th | No Confirmation

March 13th | Confirmation | 6-7pm

March 20th | Confirmation | 6-7pm

March 27th | No Confirmation | Holy

If you are a Girl Scout, Girl Scout Leader or have earned the Gold Award and would like to be recognized on Girl Scout Sunday, March 10, 2024, please call the church office (219-462-660).

Thank you!!

For Children and Families - Mark Your Calendars!

Third Grade Bible Basics

Every year, our Third Graders and families meet to learn about the Bible - Why do we read it? How does God's love come to us through the Bible? Where did it all come from, anyway? This year's Third Grade Bible Basics classes will meet on Sundays during the Formation Hour - **March 3 and March 10**. Email Pastor Erica (pastorerica@clcvalpo.org) with any questions, or to let us know you'll be attending!

Communion Conversations

CLC children and families are invited to our annual Communion Conversations on **Saturday, March 9, from 9-10:30am**. Our practice at CLC is to welcome children to God's table whenever families discern that they are ready to receive - and then to make an opportunity available to learn more, together! If your child is ready to begin receiving communion, or if they are already receiving communion and are ready to learn more, please join us! Email Pastor Erica (pastorerica@clcvalpo.org) with any questions, or to let us know you'll be attending!

Our All-Ages Easter Vigil is the highlight of the year! This year at **4pm on March 30**, we will celebrate this ancient tradition while having a lot of fun along the way, using all 5 senses (plus our sense of humor) to walk through the family stories of God's people and celebrate the Resurrection - and then break our Lenten "fasts" with s'mores. One of the best parts is always a collection of family storytellers for our Bible Stories - you can sign up at the following link, and contact me (pastorerica@clcvalpo.org) for any help with ideas or questions!
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0C49A4A92FA5FE3-47492298-easter>

Easter Sunday Egg Hunt, March 31 after 10:30 service

Times are approximate, depending on when worship wraps up:

12:00– pre-k-k (near the Memorial Garden)

12:10– 1st– 4th grade (out in the field)

12:15- 5th-8th grade (in the woods)

We will have some plastic bags, but you may want to bring your own collecting container. Emptied eggs will be collected back afterwards to be recycled for next year.



Attention All Thrivent Financial Members!

Do you have any ***Thrivent Choice Dollars*** that have not been directed to the charity of our choice?

Minimum and maximum Choice Dollars Designations

Eligible clients will be designated a minimum of 25 Choice Dollars and a maximum of 5,000 Choice Dollars per eligibility period (Jan. 1 to Dec. 31).

Choice Dollars designated during the calendar year can be directed **until March 31, 2024**.

There are two ways of directing ***Choice Dollars*** to Christ Lutheran Church:

Computer: Go to the Thrivent Financial web site (www.Thrivent.com) and direct the ***Choice Dollars*** on-line.

Phone: Call Thrivent Financial at 1-800-847-4836. When prompted by the electronic answering system, say “***Thrivent Choice***.” Follow the remaining prompts, and a representative will come on the line to assist you. You will need your Thrivent membership ID number and will need to answer some other personal questions to verify that you are the Thrivent member who is on the line.

Join the continuing series in the Faith Formation hour!

Join us during the weeks of Lent for the study of *The Color of Compromise* by Jemar Tisby. This book and video series introduces us to the roots of racial injustice in the American church. The six sessions at CLC will take us on an historical, sociological, and religious journey from the American colonial period right through the Black Lives Matter movement and charts a path forward to replace established patterns and systems of complicity with bold, courageous, immediate action.

The author, Jemar Tisby (BA, University of Notre Dame; MDiv, Reformed Theological Seminary), is President of The Witness: A Black Christian Collective, where he writes about race, religion, politics, and culture. He is also cohost of the Pass the Mic podcast and is studying for a PhD in History at the University of Mississippi with a focus on race religion, and social movements in the twentieth century.

We meet at 9:20am in the Church Hall (big room next to the kitchen). Dates for the series are March 3rd, March 17th, March 24th, and April 14th.



It is **not** necessary for you to purchase the book or study guide, but if you would like to purchase the book, click the QR code (on the right). If you would like to purchase the study guide (which includes a personal study guide for reflection between sessions – a possibility for your Lenten devotional time) click the QR code (on the left).



Questions?? Contact Kathy Sutherland (ksutherland54@yahoo.com) or Patrice Weil (psherriweil@gmail.com)

High School Theology Club

Are you interested in exploring big theological questions? Have you ever thought to yourself, “Who is God?” or “Do humans have free will?” or “How is Jesus 100% human and 100% divine?” If these questions are ones you want to explore further, then Theology Club is the place to be! Twice a month on Mondays at 6pm, Theology Club meets to explore these big questions in a deeper way through discussions, books, movies, and guest speakers. In Theology Club, we know that there may not always be an answer, but that we have a space to explore the questions to understand them more deeply (and sometimes that in itself is an answer!) If you are interested in joining and are a 9th-12th grader, reach out to Kaitlyn, Director of Youth Ministries, at Kaitlyn.jedrzejowski@clcvalpo.org for more information!