

The Victorious Voice

March 2021



15600 North Tamiami Trail
Naples, Florida 34110-6245
(239) 597-1043
Rev. Thomas J. Slater, Pastor

Thanks Be To God, who gives us the victory through our Lord, Jesus Christ"
(I Cor. 15:57)

Don't just live...live victoriously!



Pastor Tom's Page

In the hopes that the vaccine for Covid-19 will begin to slow the spread of the virus, I have met with the staff and shared the following timeline with the Church Council. The safety of our members and staff is still our number one priority.

* We will continue to hold on-line worship services on YouTube throughout the season of Lent and Holy Week.

* We will hold 3 Drive-Through Communion opportunities during the month of March. March 8th from 10-11a.m., March 15th from 6:15-7:00p.m., and March 22nd from 10-11a.m.

* On Easter Sunday, April 4th, we will provide **BOTH**, an on-line service, and a Parking Lot service with Holy Communion to be held at 9:30a.m.

We will set up the "Altar Area" in front of the back East door of our worship building. People can park in designated spaces and the grassy area will be used to sit in a socially distanced atmosphere while wearing your mask. You are to bring your own lawn chairs.

* We will hold an on-line service on April 11th with Rev. Gary LaCroix, (a CVLC member) preaching and leading the service.

* On Sunday, April 18th, our goal is to open for in-person worship at 9:30a.m. and live-stream the service for those who remain safely at home. We will need to determine at that point, the number of people permitted in the sanctuary and whether we can sing and what protocols need to implemented along with everyone wearing masks.

*While some of you will have already received your vaccinations, the majority of us will have not had the opportunity to do so, including the entire worship team and staff.

Thank you for your patience, understanding, and commitment to Christus Victor Lutheran Church during this unstable time in our world's history. God's Word has continued to be shared, and Jesus' love has been poured out in so many ways over the last year.

A special thank you to our Synod Parish Deacon Gerry Benjamin, for his tireless efforts to get our worship services and weekly message on-line every week during the pandemic.

In Christ,

Pastor Tom

Intern Update

After much prayer and discernment, I have decided not to pursue getting another Intern for the year 2021-2022. We still do not know what the future holds for the church in terms of how things will have changed following the Covid-19 pandemic. Plus, as we have discussed in past “Long-Range Plans”, the feeling was that we have some time away from the Program before we begin the process of looking to Call another Pastor, so that the loss of the Intern Program is not associated with the new Pastor.

I have been in conversation with our Synod Parish Deacon, Gerry Benjamin and Pastor Gary LaCroix (a CVLC Member) who will help me through this transition.

I feel confident that together, we can serve the church without a disruption in worship, programs, or caring for our people.

I would like to thank the Council and the congregation for being a group of individuals who continue to move the church forward as we follow Christ’s command to share the Good News with all people.

In Christ’s Name,

Rev. Thomas J. Slater



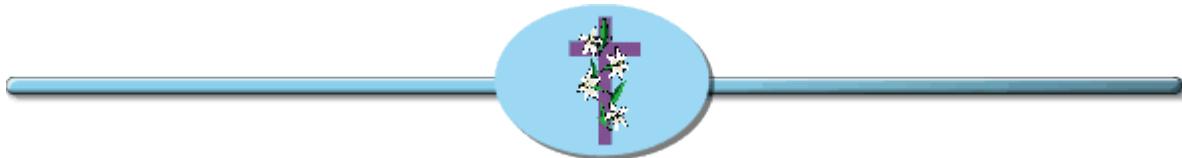


On-line Mid week Lenten Services Wednesdays
March 3rd, 10th, 17th, & 24th

**Our theme for this year's Lenten Pilgrimage is
“The Places of the Passion”.**

**Our Lenten Services will take the place of our
Wednesday messages.**

Watch your emails for these services!



Our On-line Holy Week schedule will be:

March 28th

On-line Palm Sunday Service

April 1st

On-line Maundy Thursday Service

April 2nd

On-line Stations of the Cross

April 2nd

On-line Good Friday Service

April 4th

On-line Easter Day Service

Easter Day Parking Lot Service 9:30a.m.

Please join us! Bring your lawn chairs to sit by your car.

Cancellations

The decision has been made to cancel all Worship Services at the church until further notice. **Please watch your emails for information regarding CVLC Worship Services on Christus Victor's YouTube channel.**

Please watch your emails for further information regarding other activities that are happening via Zoom or otherwise.

If you are planning to come to the church office please call and make an appointment first and masks are required.

Please watch your emails for any further developments. May God's peace surround us all during this time of uncertainty and tension.

Pastor Tom



Online Giving

We have had a number of questions about opportunities to continue contributing to CVLC when we don't attend services. One option is to mail your checks to the church (we have a secure mailbox) **15600 Tamiami Trail N., Naples, FL 34110**. Another option is to use our E-Giving program as follows:

Go to the CVLC website (www.christusvictorfl.org).

Click on "Give" (upper right)

Under "Two Ways to Enroll" click on "online"

Then indicate the amount you wish to contribute

Choose the frequency using the drop-down

Create your Online Profile so that you can easily return to your online account

Click on "Continue" at bottom left and follow the prompts.

You have the option of having the contributions come directly from your checking account (our preference), or you can make contributions via credit card (this option deducts at least 2.5% from your contribution before it gets to us).

If you have any questions or need assistance with setting up the account, please contact the CVLC Treasurer (Doc) at 509-595-7399.



From the Desk of the Synod Parish Deacon

I pray for all of you to remain healthy and safe.

Spring is just around the corner and we are all looking forward to the start of spring. I pray for an increase in the supply of vaccine, so that each one of us will receive the necessary shots.

On the technology front, we will be finalizing and testing the live stream system to be ready for our tentative in person service on April 18. During these trying times continue to be hopeful and believe that God the Father is watching over each and everyone of us.

M.E.L.S, ((M)en (E)ating (L)earning and (S)upporting), our men's ministry group at Christus Victor, is cancelled until further notice.

Thank you all, for your kind words during the Communion drive throughs. I pray for guidance and look forward to continuing to serve the members of Christus Victor Lutheran Church.

Blessings,

Gerry Benjamin
Synod Parish Deacon



Sick or Hospitalized?

Please tell us if you or someone you know in the congregation will be hospitalized or in need of a visit as we are not routinely notified by local hospitals when members are admitted. The office number is 597-1043. Prayer for one another is understanding love.

Music Notes by Joyce Reitz, Director of Music

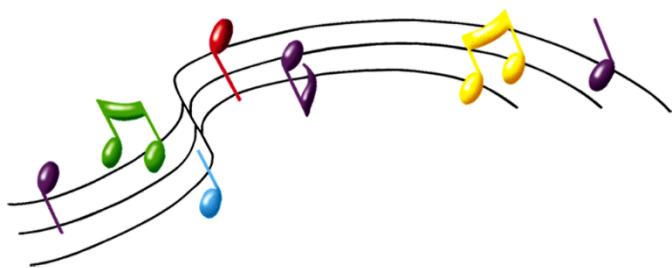


As we continue our journey through Lent, we look forward to the resurrection of our Lord in April. The Christus Victor Sextet will be singing some very lovely Lenten anthems that express our feelings of gratitude, remembering why we celebrate this season as we head toward Easter. Thank you to Greg, Kim, Al, Deb, Pastor Tom, and Sherry for their dedication to helping make our services so special. It still amazes me how our services, although virtual, have touched so many lives. I thank you all for your support of my music ministry. We will continue on and pray that soon we can all be together again. Hopefully we will all be able to get the vaccine and take another step forward to returning to normal soon.

God bless and keep you safe and well.

Until next month, keep a song in your hearts!

Joyce





No Bake Sale Sunday, March 28th Palm Sunday

This is your opportunity to contribute to the **ELCA World Hunger** without having to bake anything. Please refer back to page 5 of this newsletter for ways to contribute to CVLC when we are unable to attend services. Thank you!



**Set your clocks ahead one hour
Saturday evening
March 13th!**





PAIRS 'N SPARES

All are welcome to join us!!! We will be practicing “SOCIAL DISTANCING ” having 2 to 4 people at a table.

WHAT: CHARADES IN THE PARK

WHEN: Thursday, March 11, 2021 from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

WHERE: The Pavilion in Victory Park

WHAT TO BRING: Bag Dinner

WHAT TO WEAR: Masks

WHO TO CONTACT IF INTERESTED: Kim Olson

Email: kimaolson56@gmail.com OR Phone: 239-776-1655

Come and enjoy the fellowship and fun!!!



Sunday School

Children and Youth: Online Sunday School can be found on our church YouTube channel. Please join us as we learn about God's love in a fun and vibrant way. The theme for March is "Patience". *Wait for the Lord. Be strong and don't lose hope. Wait for the Lord.* —Psalm 27:14
Follow us on Facebook for more fun!

- Mar 7: When you have to wait, remember God is with you.
- Mar 14: When you have to wait, remember what's true.
- Mar 21: If you don't wait, it could cost you.
- Mar 28: You can celebrate even when you're waiting.

Adult Bible Fellowship: 9:30-10:30 via Zoom

March 7— We continue *Listen, Look, Respond, Forgive, Love, and Go* led by Richard Dougherty
March 14-28—*Why is Grace So Amazing?* We will continue where we left off. Each lesson is independent of the others, so feel free to drop in when you can!

Youth Group: Middle and High School youth meet on **Wednesday nights 6:00-7:30**

We are meeting via **Zoom or in the park. Stay tuned to your texts to find out what we're doing each week!**

Education Team Meeting

Our team works best with a lot of different voices.
Teachers, helpers, planners, and supporters are all welcome!!!



Come or Zoom into the next Education Team meeting on March 11 at 6pm

Face masks are required for those who attend.

Contact Susan O'Brien susanobrien@cvlcfl.org or 239-597-1043

Stewardship Snippets

Third Sunday in Lent, March 7, 2021

"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor. – Exodus 20:17

In the last five commandments, God commands what **not** to do, expecting us **to do** the opposite in grateful response to divine abundance. Instead of coveting what others have, we are to cultivate a spirit of generosity that helps us love and serve our neighbors—to go the second mile.

Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 14, 2021

"For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life." – Ephesians 2:10

We have been created to love God and neighbor and to live a life marked by good works and radial generosity. During the season of Lent we are reminded to devote our time and resources to go the second mile for the sake of the good news.

Fifth Sunday in Lent, March 21, 2021

"Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." – John 12:24

In this week's gospel Jesus speaks about his coming death and outlines what it means to truly follow him. Like Jesus, we are called to go the second mile, to put aside self-interest for the sake of the gospel and serve God and neighbor willingly.

Palm/Passion Sunday, March 28, 2021

"While [Jesus] was at home in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment of nard, and she broke open the jar and poured the ointment on his head." – Mark 14:3

Today we enter Holy Week and walk the road with Jesus to the cross. The gospel lesson opens with a story of second-mile generosity. The unnamed woman anoints Jesus with a costly perfume. While others criticize her wastefulness, Jesus praises her lavish gift and pure intent. What have you to bring to Jesus?

Planning Committee Update

A survey was recently sent to members and associate members who joined Christus Victor in the last five years. One of our resources suggested gathering this information as one step in the planning process. From 2016-2020 we had 90 members and 29 associate members join Christus Victor. The survey asked two questions. What brought you to Christus Victor and what keeps you coming back. The email was sent from planning.CVLC@gmail.com. If you are one of our newest members, we'd appreciate your response. We thank Cindy Beherns for sending out this survey. We'll plan to share this feedback with the congregation.

Our six weeks of Bible studies with topics of **Listen, Look, Respond, Forgive, Love and Go** were designed to help congregation members with one step in the planning process, titled "**Listening to God**". The discussions via Zoom conclude on March 7. The February 26 weekly email has a link to a document listing all six studies. We hope each member will read the scripture, pray and reflect while considering the related questions.

Now it is time for another step in the planning process, titled "**Listening to each other**". We plan to mail a congregational survey to every member. Because we are requesting a reply from each member, multiple copies may be sent to the same household. One of the resources we accessed is the ELCA's Congregational Vitality Project. A portion of our survey will use questions provided from this resource. Using responses from these questions will help us talk about how well we are connecting with God, each other and the world. The survey will also include a core values assessment. Many open-ended questions will provide an opportunity for you to respond with individual feedback. Maybe the most important unanswered question is after your Bible study reflections, "**What do you think God is calling our congregation to do in the next few years**".

Our committee created the planning.CVLC@gmail.com account for members to use in communicating with the Planning Committee. Please use this email address to send questions or comments to the committee. Cindy Beherns and Phyllis Nichols will monitor and respond to email in this account.

Please continue to pray for the work that needs to be accomplished by this committee as we strive to analyze feedback and write our next Mission Plan.



MARCH 2021 SENIOR MINISTRY HAPPENINGS...

This class will continue through March...

There is plenty of room in the large gathering space to social distance while we do this class – please consider doing yourself a favor and join us...IT'S FREE!



MEDITATION IN MOTION with Yvette
Every Monday from 9:15am – 10:15am

Join us = **Monday's at 9:15 am in the Large Gathering Room in the Education Building** = Bring a towel or mat. All fitness levels welcome! This enjoyable class with help you focus on stretching, meditating, and “being” as Evette takes us through postures that are good for clearing the mind and stimulating the senses = **Join us...you'll be glad you did!! Let Sherry know if you're interested in attending...Call 597-1043 or write Sherry, seniorministry@cvlcfl.org**



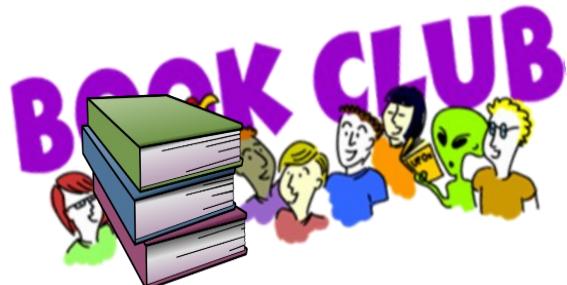
We are seeing “less and less” of all our participants in the...
6-WEEK LENTEN PROGRAM/Discipline TO LOSE WEIGHT +
Join us for - “BE FITT” (Friends in this Together)

It is still not too late to join us and get started on your own healthy journey! These sessions will continue as followsWEDNESDAYS, 3/3 – 3/10 – 3/17 – 3/24] These programs are led by Judy Butcher and assisted by Sherry Slater. Don't delay – give Sherry a call at 597-1043 or e-mail her at seniorminis-try@cvlcfl.org and get motivated and encouraged for a new way to look at your eating habits.

Join us on Zoom or attend the meetings in person...let us know which option you prefer when you register.

These 30–60-minute programs will help you identify food challenges, God's plan for living a healthier more meaningful life with a better relationship with the foods we eat.

We'll conclude our program on March 24th when we'll have all the participants be our guest in the pavilion in Victory Park for fellowship and a lovely healthy salad lunch.



March's Book: *The Gifts of Imperfection* by Brené Brown

March's book club date is: Monday, March 29th 1:00p.m.

If you haven't started reading this wonderful book, it's still not too late. Pick up a hard copy, or an electronic version for your Kindle from amazon, and join us for some great discussion about this very interesting book.



**MEDITATION IN MOTION with Yvette
Every Monday in *February* from 9:15am –
10:15am**

Join us **Monday's at 9:15 am in the Large Gathering Room in the Education Building.** Bring a towel or mat. All fitness levels welcome! This enjoyable class will help you focus on stretching, meditating, and "being" AS Yvette takes us through postures and exercises that are good for clearing the mind and stimulating the senses. **Join us...you'll be glad you did!!**

CURRENTLY – RSVP'S ARE REQUIRED. Call 597-1043 or write Sherry, seniorministry@cvlcfl.org

FEBRUARY'S #1 SENIOR MINISTRY - SENIOR FOOD PROJECT

Twenty-Four resource-challenged Seniors from our community were treated to a delicious meal prepared by our very own CVLC "chef – extraordinaire" John Kraft, along with having all the "fixings" donated and plated by Sharon Vic. **What a team** – thank you so much for all your hard work in getting these meals pulled together...
24 lucky seniors from our community got to enjoy your efforts!





#2 - SENIOR MINISTRY'S: Community Senior Food Project

Thank you to everyone who has been so generously making and donating food supplies to the monthly PEANUT BUTTER & JELLY FOOD DRIVE!

Our next session will be on Monday March 22nd. Already put together sandwiches can be dropped off at the COMMUNION DRIVE THROUGH EVENT that same day.

If you'd like to join us in making the sandwiches, we start at 10:30 am in the kitchen area of the Education Building. **Bring 2 loaves of bread** – currently we have plenty of donations for peanut butter and jelly, so, we'll provide those items.

A few of our wonderful volunteers at February's Peanut Butter & Jelly Senior Ministry Food Drive.

THANK YOU TO ALL THE PARTICIPANTS – Linda, Cindy, Sandy, Jan, Lavinia, Paige and to all those that brought your sandwiches in...

It's GREATLY appreciated by many!!



The ladies made beautiful wreaths at our Wreath Making Class in February...nice job! Thank you, Kim, for teaching us – it was super fun!!





Mary Martha Circle

We are currently meeting by Zoom on the second Tuesday of the month at 9:30a.m. We'll meet next on **Tuesday, March 9th**. If you would like to join us, please contact me, Phyllis Nichols at 815-545-4771. Our study is printed in the *Gather* magazine.

In January we started a four part study "Journeys with angels" in which we will shake those biblical branches, watch for angels and listen for God's calls to action. Angels are not a major focus of holy Scripture, nor are they ever mentioned in our Christian creeds. Yet they show up frequently and at pivotal moments in both Old and New Testaments.

Session topics:

March: Loneliness, abandonment and holy comfort

April: Feasting angels



CAMPERSHIP FUND

Dear Christus Victor Church Family,

Well, it isn't too soon to be thinking about the youth of our Church going off to Luther Springs Church Camp this summer. If you would like to help our Elementary, Junior High and Senior High youth attend Camp this summer at Luther Springs, you can.

Just make out a check to Christus Victor Lutheran Church and put Campership Fund on the commentary line at the bottom of your check.

Thank you all in advance for adding a great opportunity to form Christian Lives within our Church Family.

Virtual Hugs,
Kim Olson



Thank you Stephen Stidinger for the wonderful and informative postings on the Christus Victor Facebook page!!! Now all the congregation has to do is. . .



Like Us On
facebook f

AND

Find us on
Facebook



Visit Christus Victors YouTube channel to view our worship services and Mid-Week Pastoral Messages. Please copy and paste the link below into your browser.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGS9TN9p5QWOIMIE0mGCCdw>



Daily Grace is an on-the-go companion for your journey, offering a faith reflection every day. Encounter God's extravagant, boundless and often surprising grace by signing up for a daily email message. Please copy and paste the link below into your browser. You can also download the newly updated app for your IOS and Android devices. <https://www.womenoftheelca.org/blog/category/daily-grace>



Hopefully, you've been watching your blood pressure. Remember to watch your salt and sugar intake – Get up and move around more.

Watch your STRESS LEVELS - Stay positive...pray often!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

March

| | |
|----|---|
| 10 | Karin Feist Charles Mayers |
| 11 | Barbara Winterstein |
| 12 | Dianne Halling Gabrielle Camacho |
| 13 | Devyn Dennis |
| 15 | Darwin Sederburg |
| 16 | Anna Myers |
| 17 | Joyce Reitz |
| 20 | Mary Rynchek |
| 22 | Pete Christ Joshua Engler Ansley Pascucci |

| | |
|----|---|
| 24 | Chase Brinser Judie Pavlovic Zeke Perez |
| 26 | Robert Ferguson Bette Swanson |
| 29 | Andrew Ferguson Melody Gregory Shawn Ruhl |
| 30 | Bridget Engdahl Stephen Stidinger |



Happy Birthday

A very Happy Birthday to each and every one of you! May the year ahead be filled with wonderful memories to cherish, and opportunities to serve God wherever He places them.

If your birthday is incorrect or missing, please contact the church office (597-1043) so we can change or update our records. Thank you.

CVLC FINANCIAL REPORT

thru January 2021

General Operating Donations (Income) vs Operating Expenditures

| | Operating Contributions | Operating Expenditures | Net Operating Income | Dedicated Contributions |
|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| January 2021 | \$60,576.65 | \$35,664.65 | \$24,912.00 | \$2,245.00 |
| Year-to-Date | \$60,576.65 | \$35,664.65 | \$24,912.00 | \$2,245.00 |
| Previous YTD | \$60,864.25 | \$40,958.87 | \$19,905.38 | \$1,848.00 |
| YTD 2021/2020 (%) | -0.5% | -12.9% | +20.1% | 17.7% |

Selected Dedicated Fund Contributions

| | January 2021 | 2021 YTD | 2020 YTD |
|--------------------------|--------------|----------|----------|
| ELCA Hunger | \$700.00 | \$700.00 | \$870.00 |
| Additional Pastor | \$140.00 | \$140.00 | \$159.00 |
| Victory Park | \$115.00 | \$115.00 | \$243.00 |
| Missionary Support | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$10.00 |
| Disaster Relief | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$5.00 |
| Memorials | \$400.00 | \$400.00 | \$0.00 |
| God's Work Our Hands* | \$30.00 | \$30.00 | \$0.00 |
| Fund for Leaders | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Endowment Principal | \$25.00 | \$25.00 | \$60.00 |
| Bells and Bell Choir | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Senior Assistance | \$700.00 | \$700.00 | \$0.00 |
| National Youth Gathering | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |

In Christ, Richard H. Dougherty, Treasurer



CHURCH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

| | |
|--|---|
| John Butcher fdccollect@aol.com | Teaker Harris, Jr. <i>Property</i> |
| President | Janice Lorimer janice@keystosuccess1.com |
| Jim Helle hellejim@gmail.com | <i>Spiritual Ministries</i> |
| Vice President | Pastor Tom Slater pastorslater@cvlcfl.org |
| Ginny Engler vme913@aol.com | Paul Bartholomew poja2@aol.com |
| <i>Administrative Liaison</i> | <i>Associate Member Rep.</i> |
| Carol Benjamin cabenja46@gmail.com | |
| Secretary | |



SHARING CHRIST THAT ALL MIGHT LIVE VICTORIOUSLY!!

Sunday Worship Services – January through April 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
May through December 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

Phone (239)597-1043 Fax (239) 597-6028
Web page: www.christusvictorfl.org
E-mail: ChristusVictor@cvlcfl.org

**THE REV. THOMAS J. SLATER, PASTOR
cell - 239-450-0699**

Dawn King
Office Administrator

Joyce Reitz
Director of Music

Susan O'Brien
Director of Education & Youth

Sherry Slater
Director of Senior Ministries

**Gerry Benjamin
Synod Parish Deacon**