

# Stories from the Plaza



Christ the Servant  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

SPRING 2024



## ALWAYS SOMETHING NEW

Welcome to our new quarterly newsletter we are calling, "Stories from the Plaza!" The idea is to collect stories of inspiration and transformation each quarter through the kingdom building we do together and share those stories with you. Often times, we become so focused on the next thing that is coming or trying to do more and more, we forget to look back on the incredible things God has done through us and the impacts that were made. We hope this new format will invite you to press pause, reflect, and rejoice in seeing and hearing the ways God is moving in our community.



Every time we gather, whether it be for worship, fellowship, service, or anything else, we should expect and acknowledge the presence of the Spirit. If we acknowledge Her presence, then we should also expect transformation and holy moments to follow! What better way to share the gospel with people than to share the stories of impact and transformation we are experiencing right here at Christ the Servant Lutheran Church!

I'd like to invite you to think about how God is showing up in your life and especially when we gather together in community. What is the Spirit stirring up in you? What might be changing for you? Where do you see the holy popping up? How might the experience be transforming you? As you ponder these questions, what story might need to be told from your experience? Your story is important, and you never know how it might impact another person, especially when we trust that God is at work. So, do you have a story to share? We'd love to hear it! Please reach out to me or Heather Whitman if you have a story you'd like shared in the next "Stories from the Plaza" as we share our faith and witness through God's kingdom building!

Peace in all new things,  
Pastor Kenny

# Lent & Holy Week Jays

## WHAT OUR LENTEN SERVICES MEANT TO ME

BY GUY ZOLLER

We always have evening services during Lent at Christ the Servant, and Julie and I generally participate. We both love the fellowship, breaking bread with friends and members. It is an opportunity to re-center our lives in contemplation of the miraculous gift of Christ's death and resurrection.

This Lenten season was for me especially meaningful, and I'm still trying to process the reasons why. Every year our Lent services have been excellent, and I don't want to diminish what came before, but there was something built on those previous times and events that influenced Julie and myself. The services were crisp, respectful of everyone's time, yet took the time to

create a contemplative atmosphere using Taizé techniques, and I found the approach suited us in a way that drew my heart toward the meaning of the life and death of Jesus the son of God.

Our services, our fellowship, and the undemanding nature of our contemplation allowed me, and I hope the others in attendance, space to absorb the enormity of these mysteries.



## EASTER CELEBRATION

BY HEATHER WHITMAN

In my mind, Easter Sunday should always be sunny. The temperature should be crisp, with just a hint of warmth. An indication of the coming spring, of growth and new life. Despite Easter falling on March 31<sup>st</sup> this year, one of the earliest dates it can be, Mother Nature met my expectations.

In my mind, worship on Easter Sunday should be the most joyful celebration. We should sing favorite hymns such as "Jesus Christ is Risen Today". The table should be decorated with colorful flowers. Kids should run through the narthex with candy and the "good morning" greetings should have a little more enthusiasm than any old Sunday. Christ the Servant, YOU exceeded my expectations.

Here at Christ the Servant, Bruce Richardson received the gift of baptism on Easter Sunday. The congregation exclaimed "He is risen indeed! Alleluia!" and Pastor Kenny's message of what comes next in the Easter story, inspired and uplifted us all. From bingo cards and bunny bags for the kids, to mimosas and champagne for the adults, this congregation celebrated! We rejoiced together. We proclaimed the good news of the Gospel to all. What a celebration it was!

Bruce Richardson





## GOOD FRIDAY PASSION

BY ALEX BEAN

For Good Friday this year, the worship team introduced a practice that is very old, but new to CTS, namely the singing of the Passion narrative from the Gospel according to St. John. While this practice is somewhat uncommon among ELCA churches, it is permitted in the Good Friday rubrics (found on page 263 of the ELW, if anyone is checking). The reading of the Passion during Holy Week dates back at least to the 4th century, and singing the Passion can be dated back to at least the 8th. However, the exact form in which the Passion is sung varies across time and place. The Passion setting of Johann Sebastian Bach (St. John and St. Matthew Passions) are excellent examples of the heights of artistry and complexity with which the text can be set.

For our service, we elected to use a simpler chanted setting. I adapted the text for our sung Passion from two sources: the Roman Breviary (prayerbook of the Catholic Church) from which also came the chant melody, and our Bible translation, the New Revised Standard Version. The Breviary is very singable, but I found places where the language left something to be desired. The NRSV, on the other hand, is an excellent translation, but is very difficult to sing.

The chant melodies are of some antiquity (the source I used listed them only as “traditional” without an ascription of date). More importantly, they are very formulaic, and so are easy to learn and sing. The chant traditionally has three singing parts, which we elected to split into four. They are the Narrator, Christ, and the Crowd (which we split into a Speaker for all parts spoken by a single person in the text, and the Congregation for all parts that spoken by multiple people in the text). The Crowd’s part consists of a single melodic formula adapted to fit the text. The Narrator’s part has three main formulas, one reciting tone, one to introduce parts sung by the Crowd, one to introduce parts sung by Christ, and two additional formulas for the very end of the Passion. The part of Christ is more complex, with at least two distinct formulas that are more elaborate than those of the other parts. I would like to thank Mark Schoepfle for singing the part of Christ; Walter Richardson for singing the part of the Narrator; and Roger Fielding for singing the part of the Speaker. I would also like to thank you in the congregation for participating in our sung Passion. If you couldn’t make this year, we plan to sing the story again this coming year, with a few minor revisions and more congregational participation.



## LITERALLY HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS

BY PASTOR KENNY

A very big “THANK YOU” to all who contributed to the emergency preparedness drive we held for our neighbors at the Fellowship House. The drive collected emergency supplies for the residents so they would



be prepared in case of any emergency. It was a need highlighted by the community when another Fellowship House community had a fire. We aren't able to calculate the exact amount of our total contributions, but we estimate it was over \$500 which included tons of band-aids, first-aid kits, lots of flashlights, blankets, emergency radios, ponchos, and so much more! It was a blessing to bless those items on Easter and to deliver them that morning. We pray the community will never need to use those items in an emergency, but we rest easy knowing they are better prepared now!

## BAPTISMAL PROMISES

BY PASTOR KENNY

This winter we made a shift with how we connect to young children and their families by gathering monthly to dive into important parts of our faith journeys. These milestone events include snacks, crafts, songs, and hands-on learning experiences for our kids and their parents. So far, we have focused on the Bible, Communion, and Easter. In the coming months kids will learn all about why we worship the way we do and about what it means to be a Lutheran!

While these milestone events are special times for kids to interact with foundational parts of our faith, even more special are the moments in worship where we get to celebrate these young ones! You have seen our blessings over the bibles and those who helped us prepare the table and serve the meal one Sunday. These moments highlight our on-going promise we all make in baptism to raise up our young ones in the faith and the importance of a community that surrounds these children in prayer and love!





## OPEN TABLES

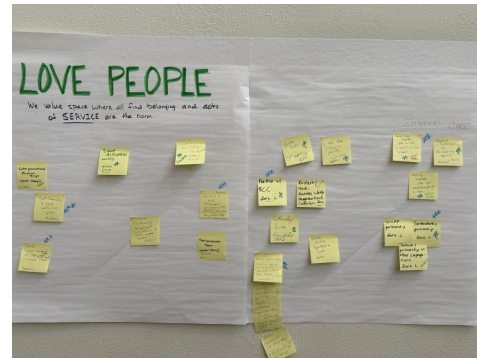
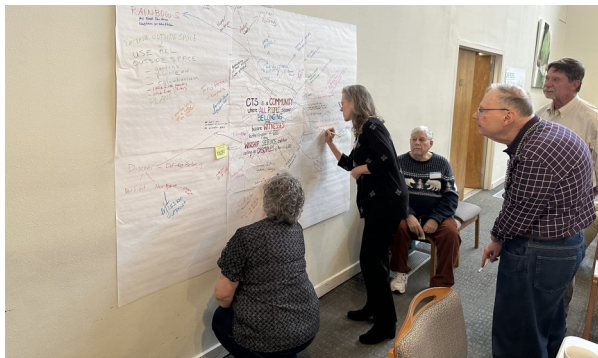
BY MARYCE RAMSEY

Like many, I came into the “Open Tables” conversation a little unsure and perhaps wary about what the experience would be. Over the months of planning, the purpose and approach had changed. I was afraid that people would not embrace the activities or that participation might be low. Would everyone like the visioning and mind mapping exercises? I probably wasted too much time worrying but then worrying is an Olympic sport in my family.

What I saw the day of the Open Tables was enthusiasm – not the “same old, same old” I had anticipated but rather enthusiastic and spirited discussions. People have “big” and small dreams for the church that respond to God’s call to love God, love people and to make disciples. I was delighted to hear some diverse voices expressing

new and different ideas about what the future of Christ the Servant looks like. The result was refocused and renewed committees, broader engagement from the congregation and a deeper sense of community.

I, and perhaps others, experienced the letting go of some of the old ideas, vision, and ways and an embrace of the new and the possible. Change can be scary. In my personal life I’ve experienced some of the most growth in work and life when I’ve thrown myself into the unknown and scary – maybe I need to be open and willing to do the same in my faith journey. Where is God leading Christ the Servant? Where is God leading me? I may not have the answers, but I trust that I won’t be alone in the journey and the destination will be more than I anticipated.

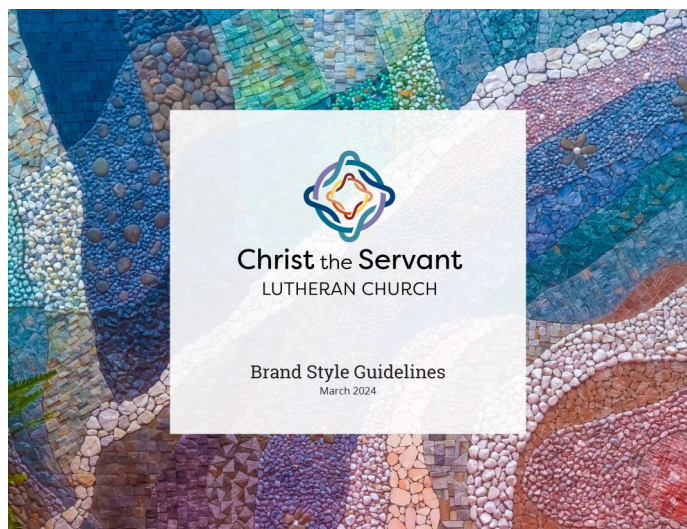


## BELL CHOIR

BY GABBY BOUWMA

I decided to join the bell choir because I thought that it would be fun and I have a passion for flute and music. I thought that this would be a great experience as I have always wanted to learn another instrument. So far, I have had a bunch of fun and playing with other people and learning to practice like we were one instrument has been such a great learning experience. Everyone is really friendly, nice, the practices are really good and fun. Although, the only complaint I have is the early arrival times on Sunday. Joining the bell choir is such a great way to learn music, have fun, and get to know people. Over the past few months, it’s been great.





## SAME IDENTITY, NEW VISUALS

Over the past few months we have had a team of people working with the designers of Evoke Engagement Experts to develop a new visual identity for Christ the Servant Lutheran Church! A big thank you to Guy Zoller, Gabby Bouwma, Rebecca Fallen, Jolene McNamara, Fred Sherman, and Chris Whitman for their energy, creativity, and dedication to this community and this special project!

A visual identity is more than just a logo, it is an entire look and feel that captures the identity of the community and translates it in a visual form. A visual identity creates a unified look and message in all our avenues of communications from signs on our building to social media posts, website and worship resources. The idea is when you see something that is Christ the Servant's, you know it is Christ the Servant and that the imagery and content evoke an emotion connected with our faith community!

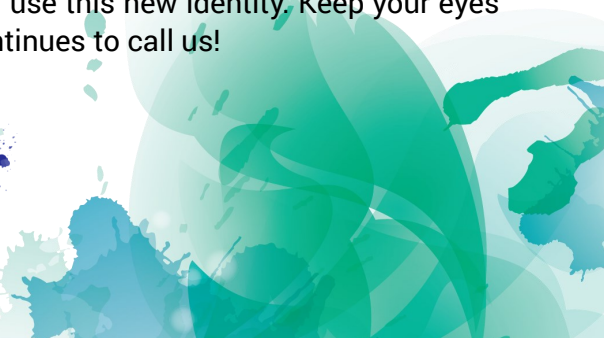
The intertwining lines of the logo represent the enduring nature of the church - its history and persistent looking to the future - as well as the ongoing care the community has for one another and our neighbors. The shape of the logo also resembles a cross or a crown of thorns pointing to the death and resurrection of Christ, our central proclamation. The circular nature points to the ongoing cycle of the church, from death to life and the consistency of God's creation, we are always being made new.

The visuals were distilled from unique attributes identified by the team that describe who Christ the Servant is and continues to strive to be. Insightful/contemplative, thoughtful/deliberate, curious, evolving, loving/caring, hospitable, empathetic, quirky, creative, easy-going/fun-loving, rooted/sentimental, and brave were the words used to communicate our unique personality and guided the process of design.



The icons give us additional options that connect to this new identity and provide a connection to our past, in particular the tree which is an old identity that can still be seen on our building. The color palette gives us a range of colors that still span the rainbow which symbolizes the inclusive nature and call the congregation has as an RIC community. The colors have been softened and modernized with a move from pure primary colors.

You have already begun to see how this new visual identity will be used through this very newsletter, on our social media, in our Worship Resource, and view our weekly email the Bulletin. We are in the works of redesigning our website, updating signs, and discovering new ways to use this new identity. Keep your eyes out as we continue to live into this new thing and discern how God continues to call us!





Christ the Servant  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

# Save the Date

## GROWING YOUNG STUDY

April 28-May 19 @ 11:15 AM

## WORSHIP MILESTONE

May 5 @ 11:15 AM

## CORNERSTONES FOOD SORTING

May 10 @ 3:00 PM

## RESTON PRIDE

June 1 @ 12:00 PM

## RECONCILING IN CHRIST SUNDAY

June 2 @ 10:00 AM

## LUTHERAN MILESTONE

June 2 @ 11:15 AM

## CONGREGATIONAL MEETING & LUNCH

June 30 @ 11:15 AM

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Sunday Worship | 10:00 AM



Prayer & Care  
Requests

DISCOVER  
belonging



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America



Reconciling in Christ  
Congregation