



# The Christ Connection

February, March & April 2021



## Pastor's Corner

### The Hands of the Passion

When we consider Jesus and the people around him in his Passion, we can't help but think of their hands — the hands that beat their breast, accepted money for betrayal, petulantly swung swords, pointed in accusation, beat and disavowed, praised, washed, were pierced, and offered eternal life. In short, we can't help but think about how we sinners have had the same sinful hands as those who surrounded Jesus in his Passion, and how Jesus our Savior has touched us with his hands of grace.

We invite you to join us, therefore, for ***The Hands of the Passion***, a special Lenten series for 2021 at Christ Lutheran Church. In these services we will explore the many roles hands played during the Passion History, from waving palm branches to nailing our Savior to the cross, while meditating on all that Jesus has done for us.

We will worship on Wednesday evenings at 7:30, beginning on Ash Wednesday, February 17, and continuing each week until March 24. (Note: we will not meet in person on Wednesday, March 10, only online.) The series will continue through Palm Sunday, in our regular 10:30 AM worship on March 28, and finish up on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, April 1 & 2, meeting again at 7:30 PM. . On the next page you'll find the full schedule of services, with their respective themes. Please join us, in person or online, for ***The Hands of the Passion***.



## Our Mission:

Christ Lutheran Church is a family joined together by God's Love through our Savior, Jesus Christ, to worship the LORD, to grow in His Word, and to share His Love with all people.

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## Upcoming Events

2/17 – Ash Wednesday

2/20 – Call Meeting via Zoom

4/1 – Maundy Thursday

4/2 – Good Friday

4/3 – Cleaning and Decorating for Easter

4/4 – Easter: ***Certain Hope for Uncertain Times***

# The Hands of the Passion

## CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH 2021 LENTEN SERIES

February 17, 2021 — Ash Wednesday — 7:30 PM

**Hands of Repentance**

Wednesday, February 24, 2021 — 7:30 PM

**Hands of Betrayal**

Wednesday, March 3, 2021 — 7:30 PM

**Hands of Misguided Zeal**

Wednesday, March 10, 2021 — 7:30 PM

**Hands of Hypocrisy**

Wednesday, March 17, 2021 — 7:30 PM

**Hands of Brutality**

Wednesday, March 24, 2021 — 7:30 PM

**Hands of Self-Preservation**

Palm Sunday — March 28, 2021 — 10:30 AM

**Hands of Praise**

Maundy Thursday — April 1, 2021 — 7:30 PM

**Hands of Humility**

Good Friday — April 2, 2021 — 7:30 PM

**Nail-Pierced Hands**

Of course, the season of Lent leads us to a celebration like no other: Easter! Our theme this year is: ***Certain Hope for Uncertain Times***. For anyone looking for hope that stands firm in the face of pandemic, unrest, insecurity, worry, or just the changes that come in life, the answer can be found in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It is the proof — for all the world, not just for Christians — that God keeps his promises. And he has promised us forgiveness for our sins, a perfect life in heaven, and help of all sorts here on earth.

We hope you will be able to join your brothers and sisters here for our celebration and worship — and the return of our “Alleluias!” — on Easter morning, April 4. And we also encourage you to invite friends, neighbors, relatives — even strangers you might meet! — to come, too, to learn the good news of what Jesus has done for them, and share in the Easter joy. At this point it’s hard to say what pandemic restrictions we will be operating under, but even if you or your friends can’t join us in person, everyone will at the least be able to join us online.



### **Celebrate the Resurrection with Flowers!**

It has been the long-time tradition of this congregation to decorate the altar and chancel area with Easter lilies (and perhaps other spring flowers) for Easter. We will again take orders for lilies and purchase them all together (and individuals pay for as many as they want and are able to take them home after Easter). (You may still bring your own lilies or other spring flowers if you want.) Please see the sheet on the lobby table to sign up for Easter Lilies!

### **Getting Ready for Easter**

There’s always a lot going on as we prepare for the wonderful celebration of our Savior’s Resurrection, so we want to make sure you have everything on your calendar. First off we have **Cleaning and Decorating** for Easter at church at 10:00 AM on Saturday, April 3 — please join your brothers and sisters as we get our place of worship ready for visitors and worthy of the occasion.

**Some News & Notes from Pastor Samelson:**

**Health:** I thank the congregation most of all for your prayers, but also for your patience when I came down with COVID-19 in January and during my recovery (it's a long process!). I'm happy to say that I am mostly back to normal now, though there is still the occasional cough and my stamina and strength are not what they were — but those are steadily improving. The Lord is good, and I had every confidence that he would see me through my illness, but it meant a great deal to me to know that my brothers and sisters here at Christ Lutheran were remembering me in their prayers. Thank you!

**Relocation:** Many have asked, and it's only right that we give you an update on our new housing situation. Charlene and I have put in an offer on a house in Grafton, WI, and it has been accepted. Everything seems to be proceeding as it should with both the purchase and the mortgage, and we are scheduled for closing on Friday, March 12. We are working to figure out what company will move us, and we are discovering just how much stuff there is to pack!

**Departure:** Since finding a house was the biggest thing preventing us from setting any kind of timeline for our departure, we have now been able to put that on the schedule. After consulting with the council, we have agreed that both the congregation's and our personal needs are best served by making my last Sunday here at Christ Lutheran be Easter, April 4. We hope to be able to arrange for our move the week after Easter. My first official day of work at Christian Life Resources is scheduled for April 16.

**Staying in Touch:** We definitely do not want our last day at Christ Lutheran to be the last time we see or hear from any of you! Our personal email addresses ([jeff@threesolas.net](mailto:jeff@threesolas.net) and [charlene@threesolas.net](mailto:charlene@threesolas.net)) and cell phone numbers will remain the same. We will, of course, also leave you the address of our new home.

**Left Behind:** You may notice some new additions to the church library and some other items around the church. We are happy to donate these to Christ Lutheran for everyone's use. (We will likely also be leaving some things behind in the parsonage for the new pastor and his family to use.)

**A Farewell Message?** After being at Christ Lutheran and serving with you, my brothers and sisters, for almost 21 years, it would be very difficult, perhaps even impossible, for me to condense everything I might want to say and everything I feel into a farewell message, either written or in a final sermon (there's also the probability that I would struggle to get through preaching such a sermon). So, in the interest of managing expectations, I want to let you know that I do not intend to offer a farewell message in any formal way. What I hope you will notice, though, is that the Sunday sermons through this Lenten season will address many of the topics that are on my mind — and perhaps on yours as well — as I bring my ministry here to a close, and entrust your care to another pastor whom the Holy Spirit will send you.

**Face Up to the Challenge**

Most of you are probably aware that the church has a **Facebook** page. What you may not be aware of is that the various volunteers that have helped administer the page over the years have all left the congregation or otherwise stepped down. Since Pastor Samelson and Charlene are the sole remaining administrators for the page, we are most definitely in need of one or more volunteers to take over. Please let Pastor know if you might be interested in helping with this vital part of our outreach and communication strategy!

**Voter's Meeting highlights:**

Officers to be installed on Sunday, 2/21/21:

- Robert Small elected president
- Jason Miller elected to VP/Secretary
- John L was re-elected to serve as Chairman of the Board of Elders
- Derek Rohl re-elected to Treasurer

**Call Meeting Highlights:**

Pastor Donald Tollefson led the congregation through our Call Meeting by Zoom and presented a list of four candidates he determined have the gifts to meet the needs of our church. After input from all in attendance, a pastor-elect was approved unanimously by voters and was contacted by the council president shortly after the Call Meeting adjourned. The Divine Call packet will be mailed early this week.

Voters also granted, with heavy hearts, the peaceful release of Pastor Samelson from his call, effective April 4. Pastor Samelson has been our shepherd for 21 years, and Charlene Samelson played an indispensable role by his side throughout that time in leading our youth education programs, general in-reach and outreach activities, including the successful *Mommy and Me* program we started in 2019, as well as volunteering in countless other areas in service to our church. She was always a cheerful and encouraging presence who especially loved working with children and young adults, and they loved her back. We are sad to see them go, and their contributions will be greatly missed, but we know the Lord will bless them in their new home in Wisconsin and we wish Pastor all the best in his new role as Director of Ministry Advancement for Christian Life Resources. Even though they will no longer be physically here, the Samelson family will always be part of our congregation and we look forward to them visiting us in the future.

Robert Small  
President-elect

**ONLINE GIVING:**

Christ Lutheran Church has a new, convenient and secure method for giving online. We have partnered with Vanco GivePlus to process electronic contributions. We offer the option to give at our [online GivePlus website](#), or by downloading the free GivePlus mobile app from the App Store or Google Play.

Alternatively, you still have the option to donate online through your financial institution; check your financial institution's website for details. Use the following address for Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church if requested by your financial institution:

12570 Clarksville Pike Clarksville, MD 21029

Additional information and links are available on our website at <https://www.christlutheran.net>. If you need any assistance or have any questions please contact our Financial Secretary, David Bradley at [financial.secretary@christlutheran.net](mailto:financial.secretary@christlutheran.net) or by phone at 301.865.3578.



**LWMS News**

Heritage Circuit congregations are supporting two WELS missions, Family Ministry Outreach and Academia Cristo Project through prayers and mission offerings. Since using a collection basket is not practical at this time, the door offering has gone “virtual”. Checks can be sent directly to the Heritage Circuit LWMS treasurer, or donations can be made electronically through our church website; details were emailed previously, but if you have any questions you may ask Ali Bradley. (Donations are due April 3, 2021.)

**2020 HOME AND WORLD MISSION PROJECTS****Project #HM-2020-08: Family Ministry Outreach**

Every home mission congregation hopes to draw in new people from the community and ultimately serve their spiritual needs. Family ministry programs are being developed to specifically welcome parents/caregivers and their young children to congregation-based social gatherings. While such programs foster friendships, communication skills, positive relationships, and child development, congregations can do so much more when integrating the love of Jesus and truths based on God’s Word. Your gifts will assist home mission congregations looking to begin programs to reach this special demographic by sharing Jesus through music, crafts, and fellowship as parents/caregivers and their young children interact in a safe, caring, and welcoming environment.

**Project #WM-2020-27: Academia Cristo Project**

The primary focus of our Latin American mission team is Academia Cristo (Christ Academy). Academia Cristo is a multi-faceted effort which seeks to 1) make disciples in Latin America by sharing the message of God’s grace with as many people as possible, 2) identify and train potential leaders, and 3) encourage those leaders to make disciples who make disciples. The Spanish-language website offers video and audio Bible studies and live online training to reach out to non-Christians as well as to teach Latin American church members how to share their faith. Today more than 1.3 million people follow the Academia Cristo page on Facebook, 40,000–50,000 people visit the website each week, and hundreds of thousands have downloaded resources after being directed there by our social media presence.



Every Spanish speaker is invited to take a 10-lesson introductory class to learn truths about God’s Word and simple ways to teach Bible stories to others. Those who successfully complete the class are invited to continue studying in the program, connected with a pastoral mentor who encourages and guides them as they grow in the knowledge of the truth, work to share God’s good news with others, and ultimately strive to plant and develop churches in their communities that clearly and faithfully teach God’s Word. These efforts have led to more than 20 new church planting groups working with us to spread the good news! Your gifts will help support this online outreach, the development and maintenance of a mobile application, and the online training that occurs through Academia Cristo.



## Learn about WELS

WELS is a group of more than 360,000 men, women, and children in nearly 1,300 congregations across the United States and Canada united by a common faith in Christ's saving love. We are committed to a common calling—encouraging each other in our faith and sharing God's gift of a Savior with the rest of the world.

**Mission Statement:** The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod exists to give all glory to God by upholding, defending, and proclaiming the truth of the Holy Scriptures as articulated in the Lutheran Confessions, and by providing a means for congregations and their members to extend the reach of their God-given mission of proclaiming the gospel in Word and sacrament through joint mission efforts at home and abroad, the training of called workers, and coordination of gospel applications to encourage spiritually healthy called workers in spiritually healthy congregations and schools.

## What's in a name?

Our acronym stands for the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. We admit, it's a mouthful. But each word is significant.

Wisconsin is where three pastors serving German immigrants joined together in a common fellowship more than 150 years ago. Today, it is still where more than half of our membership calls home—but now we have congregations spread all across North America and missions spanning the globe.

Evangelical is a Greek word. Literally translated it means "gospel oriented." It is an apt description, for the gospel of Jesus Christ is at the core of all we believe and proclaim.

Lutheran refers to those who adhere to the teachings of Martin Luther, the leader of the Reformation in Germany. God used Luther to point out the errors of the church some 500 years ago—that salvation was something that must be earned. It was Luther who once again made clear that salvation is received through faith in Jesus as a gift from God (Ephesians 2:8,9).

Synod literally translated means "walking together." As a fellowship of Christians, we walk together as individuals and congregations sharing a common bond of faith in Jesus articulated in the Lutheran Confessions.

We invite you to walk with us.

## WELS' Extended Family

WELS is united in fellowship, meaning one in doctrine, with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod in the U.S. and with more than 30 other Lutheran church bodies around the world as a member of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference.

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." — **Ephesians 2:8-10**

[found at: <https://wels.net/about-wels/> ]



### Members' Birthdays for:

#### February

15 – Kathleen Lichtenauer  
18 – Anna Conroy

#### March

17 – Pastor Samelson

#### April

9 – Jill Murtagh  
11 – Peter Conroy  
18 – Jenny Poole  
20 – Gary Jochem  
24 – Alex Small

## Contact Information

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**Pastor Jeff Samelson** [pastor@christlutheran.net](mailto:pastor@christlutheran.net)

### Worship With Us on Sunday!

**Sunday School/Adult Bible Study**  
9:15 AM

**Worship** 10:30 AM

**Fellowship** ~11:30 AM

### Visit Us Online!

[www.christlutheran.net](http://www.christlutheran.net)



# CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH