



**Community
In Christ
Lutheran Church**

CIC NEWS

December 2023

Serving the Lake Norman area since 1977

A newsletter published for the members and friends of Community In Christ Lutheran Church, 7621 Norman Island Drive, Cornelius, NC 28031 704-892-0120 email: swheeler@communityinchrist.net www.communityinchrist.org



Sunday Worship in December:

December 3 & 10

9 a.m. Worship (Contemporary & livestreamed), 10 a.m. Sunday School begins with music in the sanctuary, 10 a.m. Coffee Cart, 11 a.m. Worship (Traditional)

Dec 17 & 31—One Service 10 a.m.

Join us on Sunday, 12/17, in one worship service at 10 a.m. including the annual Christmas Program that features spoken and vocal parts proclaiming God's love for the world in Jesus' birth in a manger.

Dec 24—10 a.m. 4th Sunday in Advent

We worship together in one worship service at 10 a.m. on the morning of the 24th IN THE SPIRIT CENTER for a casual celebration of the 4th Sunday of Advent. This service will have experiential elements in addition to traditional praying, singing, offering, and communing! Please note that this service will not be livestreamed.

Christmas Eve—Celebrate the Newborn King at 4 p.m. or 7 p.m.!

Candlelight Worship in Sanctuary. The livestream time will be announced closer to the date.

[Facebook Link](#)

[YouTube Link](#)

For the seasons of Advent and Christmas our narthex will be adorned with a new Chrismon tree. The tree is a memorial gift to the church and the Chrismons were handmade for the tree by Sharon Heckman.

We are grateful to have this beautiful addition to our gathering space!

From the Pastors.....

Midway through the month of November, the Church Council sent out a letter surrounded in gratitude for CIC's continued living out our baptismal promises and the glorifying of God in all of it. Since the time the letter was mailed, our shared mission and ministry has continued to be enveloped in appreciation for the congregation's robust response to the Angels and Sparrows Pathways Program Thanksgiving meal. At least 90 guests were served and 200 plates of food shared sending home to-go boxes with guests as well as feeding volunteers. In addition, your generosity made all of the angels on the Angel Tree become gifts to brighten Christmas for those at East Lincoln Christian Ministry. We have also had the blessing of welcoming two new members into the body of Christ through the waters of baptism as well as the opportunity to greet and worship with numerous new visitors every week at both services.

Like the Council said, there is much to be thankful for what God is doing in, with, and through CIC! We appreciate the time you have taken to review the letter from the Council as well as the year-to-date statement of giving that was included. Council member, Todd Rixman, will be presenting content of the letter in a Temple Talk at both services on Sunday, December 3rd. The conversation pieces of the letter and Temple Talk allow us all the opportunity to see how mission dollars help us live out God's call in this time and place and to see how we can work together to better meet the congregation's financial needs. The transparent ask from the Council is that **if this time of life is one where an increase in giving is possible, please consider doing so – a collective increase of 5-10% will not only help us to meet our budgetary needs, but it will enable us to continue doing God's work here at Community in Christ and throughout Lake Norman.**

We recognize that an increase for everyone may not be an option during this particular season. At the same time, perhaps you are able to increase an even greater percentage. Regardless, our congregation's abundant generosity in worship, work, and service has enabled God's ministry at Community in Christ to flourish in all times, and we trust that, through the work of the Holy Spirit and all of our collaborative gifts, we will keep Moving Forward as a Community in Christ. We are honored to serve with you and grateful for all you do for Community in Christ and for God's kingdom.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Lisa and Pastor Michael

Advent Worship and Gathering Opportunities:

Wednesdays, December 6, 13, and 20 – Midweek Advent Worship

- **6 p.m. – Free-will Offering Soup Supper in the Fellowship Hall:** Please join us for dinner on Wednesday nights during Advent! The light meal of soups and sandwiches will be served by the Handbell Choirs each week. The free-will offering each week is designated to the Handbell Choir to off-set the cost of their upcoming retreat weekend at Lutheridge learning together from two well-known bell clinicians, conductors, and composers.
- **7 p.m. – Holden Evening Prayer Worship**
- **Holiday Traditions:** We gather on Wednesday nights during Advent at 7 p.m. for worship in the sanctuary and on livestream. We will spend time each night to learn about and experience holiday traditions from around the world. You won't want to miss it! In addition, at the 12/6 service, we will gather to support Elena Cunningham as she celebrates the Affirmation of her Baptism.

- **December 6 – St. Nicholas:** Bring a shoe to leave in the narthex!
- **December 13—St. Lucia:** Be ready to see some candles!
- **December 20—Las Posadas:** Mary, Joseph and Pinatas!



- **December 11—Blue Christmas:** On Monday, December 11th, we gather at 7 p.m. creating a sacred space for those for whom the holiday may be marked with pain.
- **December 17—Caroling:** Come spread joy in the world with a caravan of carolers as we share Christmas cheer at the homes of several congregation members. The group will depart from the church parking lot at 2 p.m.! Caroling books and addresses will be provided!
- **Christmas Eve:** Celebrate the Newborn King at 4 p.m. or 7 p.m.! The livestream time will be announced closer to the date.
- **A limited number of Advent devotionals are still available! Please pick yours up in the narthex! Family Devotions Packets are one per family, please!**

Ways to Give of Tithes and Offerings at CIC:

1. Online/Direct Withdrawal

- Go to www.communityinchrist.org & click on the “donate now” button in the upper right-hand corner.
- Select “Create Profile”
- Provide your email address
- Create your profile and provide the various pieces of information. Once your profile is created, you can select what types of giving you would like sign-up for.

**When considering this option, please note that church incurs an additional service charge for debit and credit card fees.*

2. Mail In: We have a locked mailbox at CIC that is checked frequently. CIC’s address is 7621 Norman Island Drive, Cornelius, NC 28031

3. Offering Plate: The ushers provide an opportunity for you to place your offering in the offering plate during worship.

4. Are you a Thrivent Financial member? You may be eligible to designate Thrivent Choice Dollars to enrolled non-profits that you care about – including our church! Feel free to contact your Thrivent agent to check your eligibility! We appreciate your support of CIC’s ministry through Choice Dollars!

Stock Account—Have you ever thought about giving the gift of stocks, mutual funds, or IRAs? CIC has a resource available through Thrivent Financial to transfer these funds to the church into a charitable, tax-free gift account. If you would like to learn more about this possibility or have questions please contact Gary Samuelson (704-506-3234) and/or Madalyn Wilkinson at financedirector@communityinchrist.net.

Office Communication: Please be in touch with Stephanie in the church office (swheeler@communityinchrist.net) about the following:

- If you read the newsletter online and prefer that it no longer be mailed to your physical address.
- If you have switched to giving primarily through digital means and no longer have a need for physical envelopes.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO UPDATE YOUR CREDIT CARD EXPIRATION DATE IF YOU ARE SET UP FOR AUTO DEDUCTION ON OUR WEBSITE.

Things to take note of:

Tuesday Morning CIC Bible Study: Tuesday Morning Bible Study meets each Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. in the Narthex. Please note there will be NO Bible Study on Tuesday, December 26th and Tuesday, January 2nd.

December Grocery Cart Collection: we will be collecting items for Angels & Sparrows. Angels & Sparrows is a Community Table and Resource Center for families and individuals who need assistance with food, health, education, housing, finances, and more. The Community Table serves lunch Monday-Friday year-round to anyone who needs help. The Community Table kitchen at Angels and Sparrows is in need of : **canned sliced carrots, canned peas, canned green beans, canned corn, cream of chicken soup, and cream of mushroom soup.** When you’re doing your grocery shopping this month consider picking up a few of these items and adding them to the grocery cart at CIC. Thank you to everyone who continues to support our grocery cart collections each month. Your generosity is making a difference!

Have you joined CIC's new online photo directory yet?

- The directory is through a program called Church Center, which is also an app.
- Follow the QR code to get started.
- If you need assistance, there will be tech support in the narthex between services or call the office for help.



Office Update:

The church office will be closed Monday, December 25th.
Please call the church office during the last week of the month before stopping by.
The pastors will be out of the office the last week of the month.

Office & Staff Information

We encourage calling and emailing to schedule appointments.
Pastor Lisa – pastorlisa@communityinchrist.net
Pastor Michael – pastormichael@communityinchrist.net
Stephanie Wheeler, Church Administrator – swheeler@communityinchrist.net
Finance, Madalyn Wilkinson—financedirector@communityinchrist.net
Music, Sherry Malia—musicdirector@communityinchrist.net

Prayers

Prayers for Members: Gary Salzman, Suzette Iskander, Joan Garn, Janet Shuping, Betty Classey, Pat Hamby, Gregg Bottemiller, Lucy Price, Joyce Phelps, Shirley McNeilis, Blaire Hart, Warren Hamby, Laverne Waskielis, Janice Kaufmann, Sandy Barefoot, Anne Randolph, John Iverson, Liann Musano, Ron Major, Ron Raper

Prayers for friends & relatives of members: Carl Morris (Carla Henley's father); Shirley Barton (friend of Bob & Kathy Shugarman); Beth Ward (friend of Judi LaBuda); family of Audrey Wagner (coworker of Cory Wilkinson); Allison Holt (friend of Chris Spano); Michael Holland (Diana and Don Elsass' son-in-law), Lee Mitchell (Pastor Betsy Mitchell's son), Joyce Kelly (Stella Ryan's sister), Don Blackwell (friend of the church landscaper); Pat Johnson (Gary Eckley's sister); Renee Eckley (Gary Eckley's daughter); Delores Bechtel (Debbie Blackwell's mother); Lynette Brown (friend of Deborah Lowe); Michelle Smith (Deborah Lowe's niece); Delores Samuelson (Gary Samuelson's mother); Pastor Carl Yost (Congregation friend); Joe Sullivan; Mike (Spouses of friends of Cyndi White); Bob Blackwelder (Carol Moser's brother)

Prayers for all active duty military personnel and their families, healthcare workers, first responders and public servants (Community In Christ thanks you and continues to pray for you)

The Lay Pastors meet monthly to pray for all people on the list. They also send out cards letting them know they have been prayed for. Please provide addresses to send the cards. Please submit all prayer requests to the office at 704-892-020 or swheeler@communityinchrist.net.

Group Ministry News.....

Happy Times, Seniors: Happy Times will be attending the performance of "The Real Christmas Story" on Sunday, December 10th at Narroway Productions, Fort Mill, S. C. For details, please contact Barbara Eaker at (704) 451-5922.

Prayer Shawl Ministry: Merry Christmas!! If you like to knit or crochet—or would like to learn how—please join us! No experience necessary!!!! The CIC Prayer Shawl Ministry prayerfully weaves God's love and peace into hand crafted shawls, scarves, hats, blankets and prayer cloths for those in need. The group and its activities are open to all CIC members, friends, and visitors regardless of age or ability. Join us and share in this ministry! Just contact Kathy Dutton (see email address below) and she will add your name to the member/email list. This month we will continue to focus on making hat and scarf sets for those in need during the upcoming winter months. We meet in person in the CIC Spirit Center on Wednesday afternoons from 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Plan to join us if you can for some fellowship, idea-sharing and fun! Of course, you can also participate in this important ministry at home by crafting items, and bringing them to CIC. We could certainly use your help!

Note: we will meet December 6 and December 13 in the Sprit Center as usual. We will **NOT** meet on December 20 or 27. If you have any questions, or would like more information, contact Kathy Dutton (mamabissy@gmail.com) or Diana Elsass (dianaelsass@gmail.com).

Card Ministry News: The CIC card ministry creates cards that serve as physical reminders of God's love, support and presence in our lives. All are welcome and no experience is needed! Thank you to everyone who supports the card ministry through your prayers, working hands and purchasing cards from the rack. During the month of December we will be taking a break from our regular scheduled meetings. Watch for announcements of a possible special meeting later in the month. Would you like more information? Contact: Kathy Shugarman at 940-300-2290 or shugs02@gmail.com.

Quilting Ministry: We are taking the month of December off. We will resume @ 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 11. Questions? Contact Barbara Eaker at 704-483-2060.

Preschool: The CIC Preschool currently has openings for 2 students in the 2-yr-old classes, 4 students in the PK class and 2 students in the TK class (age 5). There is a non-refundable registration fee of \$85.00 per child is due at time of enrollment. Tuition for 2023/2024: \$285.00 for 2-year-old students, \$325 for 4-year-old students. To schedule a tour contact Sharon Fuller at 704-892-0120 ext 104 or sfuller9564@gmail.com.

The 5:11s (women's group) Hope you can join in the fun with these wonderful CIC Women as we give back to our community, celebrate each other, and share God's Word! We will resume meeting in January. Jlbrooks@gmail.com



Order your Christmas Poinsettia! Order forms are available in the narthex and will be in the bulletin also. The price per plant this year will be \$10 and will be available to take home after the 7 p.m. service on Christmas Eve or the week after Christmas. Please call the office to make arrangements to pick up.

CIC Bell Choir News

Several members of our bell choirs are heading for Lutheridge the weekend of February 16-18 for a Bell Choir Retreat. Members will be joining other bell choirs to learn, rehearse, and share with others while working with Sandra Eithun throughout the weekend. Sandra is an active member of the Handbell Musicians of America. She has over 600 pieces for handbells in publication, and she has directed choirs for nearly 30 years. Those attending will also have time for worship and build and strengthen friendships through the sharing of music and free time.

Our two choirs rehearse each Thursday evening. Our Agape Choir is a three- octave choir, and our Carillon Choir is a 12-bell ensemble. We all find such joy in having this opportunity to serve. Socially it is a great way to both decompress as well as mentally keep us sharp and alert to what we are doing. When you think about a bell choir being one instrument played by many hands, those many hands belonging to many individuals become one. Our bond is strong as we depend on each other to make our music a loving devotion, not a performance. The Bible emphasizes that music is a form of worship and praise to God and a great way of communicating amongst believers, “Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre, praise him with timbrel and dancing, praise him with the strings and pipe, praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.” Psalm 150:3-6

To help offset the cost of the retreat, the free-will offerings for our mid-week Advent meals will be designated for costs related to this event. One of our prayers is that we would be able to have bell servicing for cleaning and minor repairs of all the bells. These Advent meals will be prepared, served, and cleaned up by members of the bell choirs.

In the spring we will share some of the music and techniques we practiced while spending our time at Lutheridge. Our first opportunity will be Sunday, February 25th when the retreat choir will play “**Ah Holy Jesus**” for our second Sunday in Lent. By spending this time in learning, we hope to raise the level of our musicianship. Although hand bells are not specifically mentioned in scripture, it does point to the value of live music in worship. We also hope to have added opportunities to use our 3rd octave of hand chimes. Our goal is to add to our worship services as we Praise the Lord.

Thank you in advance for your help and support for this exciting experience.



**Agape Bell Choir
(Left)**

**Carillon Bell Choir
(right)**



Bell Choirs Rehearsal Schedule

December 7: Carillon 6 p.m., Retreat Choir 6:30-7:15 p.m. Christmas Eve Choir 7:15-7:30 p.m., Agape 7:30-8 p.m. All rehearsals are in the Sanctuary.

December 14: Christmas Eve and Retreat Choir specific schedule TBD but will be between 6 p.m. & 8 p.m. in the Spirit Center.

December 21: Christmas Eve Choir 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary

January 4: Regular rehearsals resume—Carillon at 6 p.m. and Agape at 7 p.m. Rehearsals are in the Spirit Center

A Note from your Music Team

December is FULL of music! You'll have many opportunities to hear beautiful music and to make beautiful music this month. Please take note of the following:

- **Dec 3** – Choir Processional and Handbell Choir
- **Dec 6, 13, 20** - Holden Evening Prayer and other special musical offerings
- **Dec 10** – Guest flutist Ann Mitchell is back with us and your Handbell Choir will be providing special music
- Christmas Cantata 3 p.m. at First Baptist Church Huntersville. Your very own choir as well as the choirs of FBCH and HUMC sing along with an orchestra. You don't want to miss this!
- **Dec 11** - Blue Christmas Service
- **Dec 17** – Church-wide Christmas celebration featuring guest cellist Deborah Mishoe. Wonderful music is in store for you as well as a lot of joy as the children reenact the Christmas story!
- **Dec 24** – 10 a.m., 4 p.m., 7 p.m. Remember, Renew, and Rejoice at any of these Christmas Eve services. You will be blessed.

Thank you CIC Members!!!!

We did it!! The First Annual Thanksgiving Sunday Dinner was a huge success. We served over 100 individuals from Angels and Sparrows. And you did it. You really delivered. Those of you who brought food, those of you who brought supplies, those of you who volunteered your time on Saturday and Sunday- Wow, what an out-pouring of generosity and caring!! The feedback we received from the attendees was one of great appreciation and love. We are already planning for the Second Annual Thanksgiving Sunday Dinner as we continue to "Spread Our Wings". ~The Planning Committee

One Blood Big Red Bus



One Blood's Big Red Bus will be returning to CIC on Sunday, December 10th, from 8 a.m. until 11 a.m. You can go ahead and save your space on the bus signing up today here https://donor.oneblood.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/1422541 or by following the QR code. There are 9 appointments for Whole Blood donations and 2 appointments for Double Red Cell donations.



Sunday School

On Sundays, December 3 & 10, All students will stay in the sanctuary between worship services to practice for the Christmas Program! Parents are invited to stay nearby to assist Ms. Sherry as needed.

December 17 – Following Worship – Stay tuned for updated information.

December 24 & 31 – No Sunday School

Parents: If you haven't filled out a new Registration Form for the Fall, please get one from the classroom or email Pastor Lisa.

Confirmation

6th-8th graders:

Sunday, December 3: 6-8 p.m. Class at the church

Sunday, December 17th: 2 p.m. Christmas Caroling

Senior High

On December 21st, youth will have an afternoon and evening filled with service and fun! We'll start at the church at 2:30 p.m. where we'll work alongside CIC's Card Ministry. From there we'll transition to a Halal market where we'll purchase ethnic food for Lutheran Services Carolinas' New Americans program. After dinner at Mustafa's Place, we'll conclude the evening enjoying the lights and fun activities at Charlotte Motor Speedway. Please message Pastor Michael at your earliest convenience if you plan on attending.



Finance Team

October financial gifts brought in \$35.9k, for a YTD total of \$141.6k. Contributions continue to trend lower than our normal operating expenses, and we are now at 6% behind the Budget. The Preschool continues with 49 enrolled students. This is also much lower than what we have historically seen in terms of enrollment numbers and will lead to a shortfall in Tuition Revenue and increase the overall Revenue Deficit for this year. As far as spending goes, we have renewed our annual subscriptions of Constant Contact (\$174) and Microsoft Office 365 (\$370), we are continuing to utilize the Church Center app (\$100/m), and will be discontinuing our Signup Genius subscription. We replenished office printing supplies and vendor checks (\$405). Property related expenses included paper goods for the bathrooms (\$305), removal of a live bat in Spirit Ctr (\$150), plumbing fix in the men's restroom (\$290), annual kitchen hood inspection (\$360). The Music Ministry saw a renewal of our annual Christian Video License (\$290) and fees for flute and trumpets players at Reformation services (\$150). Also YTD, we have sent \$13.4k in tithes to the Synod, plus additional \$4.3k from last year's excess (UP) money. Additionally, we used Capital/Emergency funds to pay \$7.2k to remediate termite damage in the fellowship hall and \$5k to trim overgrown trees along the front of the property. We ended October with a deficit of \$4.8k, combined YTD Deficit of \$29.6k. With the low revenue numbers, both from Contributions and Preschool Tuition, and with normal spending, we have now dipped below our usual 'cash on hand' goal of 3 months worth of Operating Expenses. ~Madalyn Wilkinson, Director of Finance.

Community in Christ Lutheran Church Ministry Plan	July 23-June 24 Budget	October 23 Actual	% of Budget
<i>Revenues</i>			
Member Contributions	\$530,000	\$141,553	27%
Other Revenue <i>Facility usage, Preschool tuition and fees, Bank interest, credit card rewards</i>	204,900	50,401	25%
Total Revenues	734,900	191,954	26%
<i>Expenses</i>			
Worship <i>Altar supplies, devotionals, substitute pastors</i>	5,300	1,291	24%
Witness <i>Offering envelopes, new member activities</i>	2,260	534	24%
Synod benevolence	53,000	13,888	26%
Administration <i>Computer software, copier lease, insurance, internet, postage, office supplies, telephone, payroll service, credit card fees</i>	46,443	14,139	30%
Mortgage <i>Principal and interest on mortgage</i>	69,348	23,116	33%
Property <i>Building maintenance, janitorial services, utilities, lawn care, fire/security alarms, exterminating, floor/carpet cleaning</i>	59,227	17,192	29%
Staff <i>Salaries, payroll taxes, and benefits for four full-time and one part-time employees; staff development</i>	333,817	107,652	32%
Music Ministries <i>Guest artists, music for choirs, copyright fee, handbells, AV maintenance</i>	4,615	1,793	39%
Youth Ministries <i>Youth mission trips, retreats, activities, VBS, Sunday school, campfirmation</i>	8,150	429	5%
Preschool <i>Staff salaries and benefits, activities, supplies, maintenance</i>	151,499	41,555	27%
Total Expenses	733,659	221,589	30%
Surplus	\$1,241	(\$29,634)	


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Community in Christ Lutheran Church
 7621 Norman Island Drive
 Cornelius, NC 28031
 1 - 77, Exit 25 2 miles west on HWY 73
 (704) 892-0120 e-mail:
 swheeler@communityinchrist.net

Church Council
 Dean Miller (Treasurer)
 Jeff Moen
 Natasha Nadeau (Pres.)
 Adam English (VP)
 Carl Yarger
 Susan Bauer
 Sharon Heckman
 Tracy Lyon (Secretary)
 Todd Rixman

Staff
 Pastor Lisa Beery pastorldisa@communityinchrist.net
 Pastor Michael Beery pastormichael@communityinchrist.net
 Office Administrator, Stephanie Wheeler (swheeler@communityinchrist.net)
 Preschool Director, Sharon Fuller (Sfuller9564@gmail.com)
 Finance - Madalyn Wilkinson (financedirector@communityinchrist.net)
 Music—Sherry Malia (musicdirector@communityinchrist.net)

Team Leaders
 Youth
 Adult Faith Formation (Mark Myers)
 Finance (Madalyn Wilkinson)
 Technology
 Outreach (Kathy Dutton)
 Inviting Ministries
 Property (Stephanie Wheeler)
 WELCA
 Stewardship
 Support Staff (Kathy Shugaman)
 Worship & Music





Moving forward in
 Outreach
 Stewardship
 Welcome & Inclusion
 Worship
 Youth & Family Ministries
As a Community
 in Christ

Worship Times

12/3 & 10:
 9 a.m.—(Contemporary & Livestreamed)
 10 a.m.—Sunday School & Coffee Cart
 11 a.m.—(Traditional)

12/17 & 31: One Service at 10 a.m.
12/24: 10 a.m. 4th Sunday of Advent
Christmas Eve: 4 p.m. & 7 p.m.

Livestreamed on [Facebook](#) & [YouTube](#)

Please note that announcements for the bulletin, newsletter and Facebook pages are for church related items only. Anything non-related to the church will be deleted. Thank you for adhering to this policy. Submissions for the bulletin must be received in writing to the church office by Thursdays at 10 am. Submissions for the newsletter must be received in writing to the church office by the 20th of the month.

Are you getting our E-Mails?

Each week we send out an e-mail to the congregation sharing what's going on and what's coming up. If you have not been receiving these e-mails, please let us know. Write your e-mail down in the black book and put a note by it asking us to include you in our weekly e-mails. You can also sign up for e-mails at our website.
www.communityinchrist.org