On 30 November 2014, a new year begins. With Christians around the world, we celebrate the first Sunday of Advent, the beginning of a new church year.

For cultures and peoples everywhere, the beginning of a new year is an opportunity to begin again—to start afresh, and to express our hopes and dreams for the year that lies ahead. In this, the Church is no different than any other “culture” or “people.” When our new year begins, we too turn to the language of hopes and dreams, expressing our longings for a fresh, new beginning. The only difference is the content of those dreams. While at the beginning of a new year it is natural for human beings to hope for such things as health and prosperity, Christian hope skews in another direction: toward the coming of God.

“O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,” cries the prophet Isaiah (Advent 1). As the writer of 2 Peter declares, “We wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home” (Advent 2). Along with Mary, the mother of Jesus, we look for the fulfillment of God’s promise to lift up the lowly and to fill the hungry with good things (Advent 3). Hoping against hope, we pray for the day when God shall turn the world’s greed into selflessness, the world’s hatred and violence into love.

As this new year begins, let us gather together and pray for the coming of God among us. Come to worship on Sunday mornings and on Wednesdays too. Together we’ll hear the ancient words of scripture. We’ll light candles. We’ll sing songs of promise and hope. And we’ll be amazed, once again, that the way God chooses to come into the world is through a cradle and a cross. The heavens are torn apart—and God is born into the world as perfect, all-reconciling love.

—Pastor Haaland
Staff
Pastors
Pastor Kristine Carlson
Pastor Erik Haaland
Cantors
Pastor Robert Farlee
Pastor Martin Seltz
Office
Stephanie Okoneski
Facilities
Chuck Merrell
Courier Editor
Josh Messner

Council Officers
President
Bob Victorin-Vangerud
Vice President
Dan Mueller
Secretary
Naomi Bruesehoff
Treasurer
Melody Pauling

Council Members
Pat Baehler
Ann Davis
Hilary Gebauer
Kevin Reuther
Luann Skrivseth
Will Stark

Announcements
Retirees
Note change: Friday 19 December, Christmas carols at 11:00am in Concordia Room followed by a catered lunch (freewill donation). Please make a reservation by giving your name to Phyllis Dunstone or Marilu Peters. Everyone welcome.

Council Updates
Council delayed its November meeting a week due to illness. So the usual council update on page 4 was not ready at the time of press. The January issue of The Courier will include reports from the November and December council meetings as well as the December congregational meeting. See page 7 for a brief message for and from your church council.
**Finances Update**

The finance committee wants to provide you with the most current information about our congregation’s finances. In addition to other communications, we will provide a quick report on the state of our operating budget in each issue of *The Courier*.

Most of our numbers are all right, except that envelope (member) giving is still considerably behind what we had budgeted. Please consider adding something extra to your offerings in December. If you are eligible to designate 2014 Thrivent Choice dollars for Christ Church Lutheran, please do so. This is a wonderful way to support Christ Church at no expense to you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>as of October 31, 2014</th>
<th>ACTUAL</th>
<th>BUDGET (10 mos.)</th>
<th>DIFFERENCE</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Member Giving/ Envelopes</strong></td>
<td>212,277.52</td>
<td>229,547.50</td>
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<td><strong>Other Income</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td>278,692.94</td>
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<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>282,103.40</td>
<td>292,493.35</td>
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<td><strong>Total Surplus (or Deficit)</strong></td>
<td>-$3,410.46</td>
<td>$0.81</td>
<td>-$3,411.27</td>
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**Helping Hands November/December**

Jason Bergquist  
Dick and Naomi Bruesehoff  
Sarah Brunsvold and Jeff Weispfenning  
Mary Lou and Peter Doll  
Hilary Gebauer  
Dorothy Iverson  
Phyllis Mattill  
Marge Meffert  
Chuck and Kristy Merrell  
Kevin Olsen and Will Stark  
Ray and Rosie Peters

**December Birthdays**

12/2  Carol Flanders  
      Traci Boser  
12/3  Isis Faulk  
12/5  Shawn Deresch  
      Clayton Smith  
12/7  Mary Brown  
12/8  Jeremy Gustafson  
12/12 Jeannette Kretzmann  
12/15 Cheryl Leuning  
      Rita Schoenike  
12/20 Marni Schmidt  
12/21 James Bartsch  
12/28 Erla Polsfuss  
12/29 Dorothy Hanson  
      Cathy Sieving  
      Gary Wahlstrom

If you are named in the above helping hands chart, please help with Sunday morning coffee fellowship in the form of set up, clean up, or treats. Contact Michael Jefferis for details.michael.jefferis@gmail.com.

Thanks to Michael Jefferis for his presentation of treats each Sunday during coffee fellowship. Michael has hosted us well for years. We are very grateful. We love the surprise spread of treats each week. Michael, in your retirement from serving as coffee fellowship host, we hope you have time to visit over coffee. We are looking for someone to take over this position beginning in January 2015. Contact Joanne Seltz or Mary Bode for more information.
Godly Play
New Education Program for Children Begins

We are excited to be offering a program—Godly Play—for children ages 3–12 during our Sunday education hour (11:15am–12:15pm). The Godly Play curriculum is rooted in biblical stories and encourages children’s creativity, imagination, and spiritual growth. Its goal is not so much to tell children about God as it is to help children know God. Here is the schedule for December:

Sunday, December 7—Come and learn about the Holy Family. Sunday, December 14—Since there is a congregation meeting during the education hour, there will be no Godly Play this day. But Maria Markman will be in the Red Room from 11:15am–12:15pm, with fun things to do together during the congregation meeting. Children ages 3–12 are welcome in the Red Room during the congregation meeting. Sunday, December 21—Instead of Godly Play, there will be our Intergenerational Pick-Up Christmas Pageant in the sanctuary. All Godly Play children are welcome to participate and help tell the story of Jesus’ birth. Sunday, December 28—Christmas Break. No education hour. There will be more Godly Play on Sundays to follow.
Wine Tasting

On 2 November, All Saints Sunday, Scott Tunseth led another wine tasting event at Christ Church. We have been all over the world with these tastings: Germany and Austria, South America, and Spain. This time we sampled wines from the different regions of France. Thanks to Scott for organizing these tastings and sharing with us his passion for the fruit of the vine.

“One day the mountains shall drip sweet wine.” —Joel 3:18
**Christ Church Stationery**
A group of “evening guild” ladies started making stationery in the early 1970s. We met in homes but found the lighting was better at church. Rosie Peters eventually took charge and did this for thirty-three years. I took over two years ago. A group of ten to twelve meet once a month. Jeanette Kretzmann and Cliff Siewert are our “tatters”—others paste, draw, and color. We have seasonal cards as well as the tatted notes, which sell at seven dollars for seven cards. I sell cards most Sundays during coffee fellowship. Profits have gone to many church projects as well as different charities. They make a great Christmas gift.

—Phyllis Dunstone

**Christmas Cookie Sale**
Do you love baking Christmas cookies? Would you love the irreplaceable experience of baking with the talented cooks of our church? We have the opportunity for you!

We will be baking Christmas cookies in the church kitchen on Wednesday afternoons and Saturdays during November/early December. Contact MariLu Peters or Rita Schoenike if you are interested in coming to bake at any of these times. To reach them, call the church office; or you can speak to them directly.

Cookies will be packaged and sold, and the money collected will be donated to South Minneapolis Meals on Wheels in honor of Howard and Erla Polsfuss’s many years of service to this wonderful mission program.

Are you more a cookie eater than baker? We can use your help too. Order a box of cookies for $10. You could also donate baking supplies, or money to buy them with. If you prefer, you could donate money that we will add to the funds we get for cookies. Or you could give directly to South Minneapolis Meals on Wheels. Please write checks out to “Christ Church Lutheran” and put Meals on Wheels in the memo line.

To order your box of Christmas cookies, look for a sign-up sheet by the Sunday morning treats. Cookies will be ready for pickup on Sunday 14 December at noon.

**Volunteer Opportunity**
The Communication Committee is looking for an editor for the Courier, a monthly communication of our rich life together at Christ Church Lutheran. Familiarity with InDesign would be helpful. If interested, please contact Pastor Carlson.

At the forum on All Saints Sunday, Pastor Paul Rogers presented on “The Peaceful Revolution: Saints in our Time.” Having just returned from twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations of the peaceful revolution in Leipzig, he told us moving stories of the protests that led to the fall of the Berlin wall in November of 1989. He included stories of one former East German soldier, Pastor Helge Vogt, who is currently hoping to spend a year in the Minneapolis Area Synod, based among us at Christ Church.

Our Godly Play children and Pastor Carlson in the newly painted and decorated Godly Play classroom. It’s a wonderful space.
Joulu—Magical Finnish Christmas

Christ Church Lutheran congregation is invited to join the Finnish community on Saturday 13 December from 11am–4pm as our education wing comes alive with the sights, sounds, and smells of Christmas in Finland. An elegant Christmas buffet, created by Finnish chef Soile Anderson, includes Christmas ham, lox, herring, cucumber, traditional salads, breads, Scandinavian torte, and more. Served from noon to 2pm in the gym. Purchase tickets in advance at joulumn.org.

Kauneimmat Joululaulut (Christmas Carols) will begin at 3pm—a sing-along service in the sanctuary, with music by the Ameriikan Poijat brass ensemble, Sara Pajunen, and Harvey Gustafson. The celebration also includes Tiernapojat (Starboys), a musical play based on the Three Magi story, a Christmas marketplace for gifts, Finnish films, kid’s activities, wreath contest in the atrium and classrooms. More information at joulumn.org.

Thank You, Council

Thanks to this remarkable group for its faithful leadership and dedication.

And your council wishes to remind you to attend the congregation meeting on Sunday 14 December at 11:15am in the sanctuary, and also to join us for midweek Advent services beginning on Wednesday 3 December (see page 1 for full worship schedule and page 10 for the menu).
Altar Flowers at Christ Church

Many beautiful flowers and arrangements have been placed on the high altar during our worship services. Members of the altar guild, who oversee this ministry, have helped with providing these flowers and arranging them. There is a small budget available, but it does not cover the full cost, so these folks have been covering the extra costs themselves.

The altar guild encourages monetary gifts to the altar flower fund to help with this ministry. Perhaps you would like to give money to this fund for a particular reason: as a memorial, to honor someone, or to commemorate a special event.

To donate money, write a check to the church and mark the memo line *altar flower fund*. Or put cash in an envelope and write your name and *altar flower fund* on the outside. If you would like to give for a particular reason, please indicate that too. Put your gift in the offering plate or drop it off at the church office.

Your help in continuing to beautify our worship services with these gifts of nature will be greatly appreciated by our whole community. The altar guild plans to have seasonal flowers every Sunday except during Lent.

Flower arrangements made by a local florist shop are still accepted by contacting the church office at least two weeks ahead of time. The cost depends on which florist is used and the kind of flowers requested. The church office will put you in contact with someone who will help you with your order. You may take the flowers after the worship service.

Thanks for supporting this ministry in the life of Christ Church.
Welcome, New Members

Kate Haugen and Carlton Hunke

Kate Haugen is a native of the Twin Cities. She received her undergraduate degree from Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, and her masters and PhD from the University of Iowa. She held numerous positions in her forty-two year professional career in student services in higher education—at Luther College, the University of Iowa, the University of Minnesota, and North Dakota State University. Before her retirement in 2013, she served as Associate Vice President of Student Affairs at NDSU. Kate has served as a board member on the Plains Art Museum, the Fargo-Moorhead Area Foundation, and the North Dakota Humanities Council.

Carlton Hunke grew up on a farm in western North Dakota. After attending the Air Force Academy he completed a law degree at the University of North Dakota. He served as a law clerk for Charles Vogel, Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit and then joined the Vogel Law Firm in Fargo, North Dakota. His forty-four-year career in law concentrated in civil litigation. Carlton has been active in the arts and served on the boards of the Rourke Art Museum, the FM Symphony Orchestra, and the FM Opera Company.

Kate and Carlton continue to enjoy the arts, as well as tennis, biking, and traveling. Kate has one son living in Richfield, Minnesota. Carlton has a daughter in Eagan, a son in Fargo, and a son in Nevada.

Leif Voltz

Leif is originally from Bemidji, where he attended the University of Minnesota-Bemidji. He graduated in 2012 with a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education. After a short stint living out east, Leif found his way back to Minnesota. He is currently teaching eighth-grade science in Elk River.

Leif plays the violin, takes photographs, and stays active outside. He is an avid cross-country skier and enjoys being on the water and running. Leif discovered Christ Church through pure happenstance: “I was wandering around on the LOLA art crawl and stumbled into this beautiful building.”
Lectionary Readings  
December 2014

Sunday 7 December  
*Second Sunday of Advent*  
Isaiah 40:1-11  
Psalm 85:1, 2, 7-13  
2 Peter 3:8-15a  
Mark 1:1-8

Sunday 14 December  
*Third Sunday of Advent*  
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11  
Psalm 126  
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24  
John 1:6-8, 19-28

Sunday 21 December  
*Fourth Sunday of Advent*  
2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16  
Luke 1:46b-55  
Romans 16:25-27  
Luke 1:26-38

Wednesday 24 December  
*Nativity of Our Lord*  
Isaiah 9:2-7  
Psalm 96  
Titus 2:11-14  
Luke 2:1-20

Thursday 25 December  
*Nativity of Our Lord*  
Isaiah 52:7-10  
Psalm 98  
Hebrews 1:1-12  
John 1:1-14

Sunday 28 December  
*First Sunday of Christmas*  
Isaiah 61:10—62:3  
Psalm 148  
Galatians 4:4-7  
Luke 2:22-40

Upcoming Educational Forums  
Sundays 11:15am

7 December  
**What’s Happening at Christ Church? Part II**  
After a special Saint Nicholas coffee fellowship, gather in the Kretzmann Room for announcements, details and discussion led by the church council to prepare for next week’s congregational meeting.

14 December  
**Congregational Meeting**  
After a special Santa Lucia coffee fellowship, come back to the Sanctuary for our December congregational meeting.

21 December  
**Pickup Christmas Pageant**  
After coffee and fellowship in the atrium, come back to the sanctuary for an intergenerational, one-of-a-kind Pickup Christmas Pageant.

**Advent Midweek Menu—Lunch and Supper**  
Wednesday Advent Meals will be prepared for you to enjoy with friends at Christ Church. Noon meals follow worship and evening meals precede worship. Menus are identical and served in the Concordia Room on the lower level of the education wing. Suggested donation is $5 per person. All are welcome—bring a friend.

December 3—Honoring Saint Nicholas  
Bratwurst, German Potato Salad, Red Cabbage Salad, Stollen, Apple Cider, Gingerbread, Cookies

December 10—Honoring Saint Lucia  
Swedish Meatballs  
Mashed Potato Hot Dish  
Cranberry Relish, Saint Lucia Buns, Glögg, Star Cookies

December 17—Honoring the Shepherds  
Shepherd’s Pie, Lettuce Salad, Pita Bread, Shepherd’s Staff Cookies

The communication committee is seeking an editor for *The Courier*, a monthly communication of our rich life together at Christ Church Lutheran. Familiarity with InDesign is helpful. If you are considering this volunteer position, contact Pastor Carlson.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
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<tr>
<td>1:00 PM Tai Chi Chih</td>
<td>7:00 PM</td>
<td>11:30 AM Morning Prayer</td>
<td>10:00 AM Staff</td>
<td>Noon Lunch</td>
<td>7:00 PM Choir</td>
<td>10:00 AM Finnish School</td>
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<td>11:15 AM Education</td>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>Noon Lunch</td>
<td>Noon Baking</td>
<td>1:00 PM Baking</td>
<td>6:00 PM Supper</td>
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<td>9:00 AM Stationery Christmas Party</td>
<td>Preservation</td>
<td>1:00 PM Council</td>
<td>LSS Safe House Meal</td>
<td>7:00 PM Choir</td>
<td>Finnish Independence Day Celebration</td>
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<td>1:00 PM Tai Chi Chih</td>
<td>Property</td>
<td>7:30 PM Council</td>
<td>11:30 AM Morning Prayer</td>
<td>Choir</td>
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<td>7:30 PM Accordo Concert</td>
<td>11:30 AM Morning Prayer</td>
<td>Noon Lunch</td>
<td>Noon Baking</td>
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<td>11:00 AM Eucharist Bldg. Tour</td>
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<td>Noon Lunch</td>
<td>LSS Safe House Meal</td>
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<td>11:15 AM Congregation Meeting</td>
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<td>7:00 PM Choir</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30 AM Morning Prayer</td>
<td>Night Prayer</td>
<td>Choir</td>
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<td>11:00 AM Eucharist</td>
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<td>11:00 AM Eucharist</td>
<td>7:00 PM Night Prayer</td>
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<td>11:00 AM Eucharist</td>
<td>7:00 PM Night Prayer</td>
<td>Choir</td>
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**Special Events:**
- **9:30 AM Sunday School (Eucharist)**
- **11:15 AM Congregation Meeting**
- **11:00 AM Eucharist with Choir**
- **10:00 AM Finnish School**
- **7:30 PM Carol Service**
- **“Messiah” Concert**
- **11:00 AM Joulu — Magical Finnish Christmas**
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assisting Ministers</th>
<th>Acolytes</th>
<th>Lectors</th>
<th>Head Ushers</th>
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<td>Pat Baehler</td>
<td>Jan Radloff</td>
<td>Daniel Rinehart</td>
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<td>Jason Bergquist</td>
<td>Phyllis Mattill</td>
<td>Daniel Holmgren</td>
<td>Gary Skrivseth</td>
<td>Bob &amp; Ute Swenson</td>
<td>Paul Hanson</td>
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<td>Lucille Buelos</td>
<td>Donna Gawreluk</td>
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<td>Jeff Weispfenning</td>
<td>Samantha, Chloe Rice</td>
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<td>Simo Sarkanen</td>
<td>Phyllis Mattill</td>
<td>Lynn Larson</td>
<td>Dave Kutzbach</td>
<td>Donna Lindberg</td>
<td>Harvey Leuning</td>
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<td>Sarah Brunsvold</td>
<td>Jan Radloff</td>
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<td>Dick Thompson</td>
<td>Price, Isis Faulk</td>
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<td>Jason Bergquist</td>
<td>Donna Gawreluk</td>
<td>Simo Sarkanen</td>
<td>Bob Davis</td>
<td>Jan Radloff</td>
<td>Kay Madson</td>
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<td>Dawn Dankers</td>
<td>Lynn &amp; Kevin Larson</td>
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<td>Pat Baehler</td>
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<td>Rachel Mann</td>
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<td>Jason Bergquist</td>
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<td>Mary Bode</td>
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<td>January 4</td>
<td>Jason Bergquist</td>
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<td>Dan Mueller</td>
<td>Dick Bruesehoff</td>
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<td>Gene Bruss</td>
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