**Christ Lutheran Church**A picture containing text, crane

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**Pastor’s 2022 Annual Report**

**Christ Lutheran, Staten Island**

***“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news…***

***to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor… ~Luke 4:18-19***

Dear sisters & brothers at CLC,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father, from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

As I write my annual report, it’s my 7th anniversary as your pastor. It’s hard to believe we enter our 8th year together in this missional outpost for the Kingdom of God. If you had asked me 7 years ago, or even a few years ago at this time that we would have lived through a pandemic, I wouldn’t have believed you. Here’s a quote from Martin Luther regarding the plague that hit Germany in 1522:

*“Therefore I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine, and take it. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance infect and pollute others, and so cause their death as a result of my negligence. If god should wish to take me, he will surely find me, and I have done what he has expected of me and so I am not responsible for either my own death or the death of others. If my neighbor needs me, however, I shall not avoid place or person but will go freely, as stated above. See, this is such a God-fearing faith because it is neither brash nor foolhardy, and does not tempt God.”*

Luther was ahead of his time! This year has been a year of pivoting from Covid-19, and returning to a sense of normalcy, whatever that “new normal” is. We kicked off Sunday School, confirmation classes resumed, and the adult bible study is going thru the entire bible in a year. Let me take this opportunity to thank all of you for the little extended vacation/mini-sabbatical last July and August to renew my spirit!

Some highlights over the past year, we have a new organ! We hope to pay off our new organ in time for our 100th anniversary in 2025. Hopefully our long awaited sewage water project is completed soon. Thanks so much for your patience. I am grateful for your generosity to our organ fund, and our building fund. Again, thank you!

If you have a chance to thank our church staff & board members who serve this church, please join me! Daniel Spreen has been an incredible youth member on our council, we hope to reignite our youth group, and we’re even looking ahead to the 2024 ELCA National Youth Gathering.

We welcomed Barbara Jackson & Ellen Devine to the board this year as well. Barbara has beautiful institutional memory of this place and serves as the liaison to WELCA. Ellen had an amazing first year, she serves on outreach, and did an incredible job with the Christmas Fair. Bob Hastedt is an excellent treasurer, and Linda Schaub as secretary of the board has almost mastered Roberts Rules of Order and is gifted with all things HR and business. I remain grateful for Peter Dodenhoff’s musical talent and wisdom around young adult ministry. Karen Molinari still serves on finance. We continue to surround Roy Onora in our prayers at the loss of his brother, I am thankful for Roy serving as Sunday School Superintendant.

I give thanks for Chris DiMeo who resigned her term a year early after 5 years of service. We also surround her at the loss of her brother, Don Devinke. Sheila Tripoli passed the torch to the new treasurer and also goes off council at today’s meeting. Finally, Jim Schermerhorn’s term is at the conclusion of today’s annual meeting. Mike will serve an extra year as he is committed to seeing the sewage project thru. His guidance and help over these past few years are unmatched.

Jim has served as our council president these past 6 years. It has been an honor and privilege to serve with him. He has been both a leader and friend, and has enriched my life both personally and professionally. In many ways, (don’t tell him I said this) he’s been a mentor, with his wise counsel, guidance, and wisdom. I consider him a brother in Christ, and am grateful for our partnership in the gospel. Please join me in thanking him.

We pray for Raisa & Maya, she’s taking a little leave of absence as this goes to print take care of her daughter. Kathy has had another incredible year with grounds. The highlight this past year has been working with our new parish administrator, Kristina Castiglione. She’s really the best thing since sliced bread. She’s modeled an incredible work ethic her first year, and has injected such positive energy into this church. I’m grateful for her patience and guidance. She has transformed this office into a well oiled machine, and I couldn’t do a fraction of what I do without her. She’s made be a better pastor, a better Christian, and a better human being. She describes her work here as a calling, not a job.

I am certain I’ve left things out of this report. Looking ahead, we as a board are beginning some intentional work around strategic planning for the life of our church as we kickoff our 100th Anniversary preparations for 2025! We hope in the coming year to elicit feedback and listening sessions from the congregation. We are called forward together in Christ. With pleasure, profound gratitude, and a deep sense of responsibility, I present my annual report to you. May this new year 2023, by the grace of God, be for us *the year of the Lord’s favor.*

It's humbling to be your pastor now these 7 years. We still miss Jean Millington & Henry Nolte. We give thanks for Paul Gelling. In the words of Dag Hammarskjold: “For all that has been, Thanks. For all that is to come, yes!”

***“Serving Others in the Name of Christ – A Community of Faith for All People.”***

Yours in Christ’s service,

Pr. Wolfgang W. Laudert+