

Christ the King Lutheran Church

499 Plaza Drive
Vestal, NY 13850

**Christ The King
Lutheran Church
499 Plaza Drive
Vestal NY 13850**

Phone: 607-729-2688

Christ the King is Full of...
Hearts Loved By God
Hands to Serve All
Through Jesus Christ

We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation. We are called by Christ to care for, love, understand, and listen to each other, regardless of race, age, gender and gender identities, marital status, physical and mental abilities, sexual orientations, national origin, or economic status.

Staff

Pastor –

Church Administrator — Marsha Pulz

marsha@ctkvestal.org

Music Director – Jim Ford

jrfme2000@yahoo.com

Nursery Staff- Jane Davis

Sexton- Gary Robertson

Congregational Council

Co-President: Joe Brunt

Co-President: Carol Strano

Secretary: Rich Lindstrom

Treasurer: Randy Kerr

Debbie Doyle

Jody Fiorentino

Dennis Chapman

Tammy God

Todd Eames

Kathy Leonard

Financial Secretary: Phil Roberts

Worship Schedule

Sundays:

Classic Worship at 9:00 AM

Education Hour at 10:10 AM

Progressive Worship at
11:15AM

Find us on the interwebs:

www.ctkvestal.org

[@ctkvestal](https://www.facebook.com/ctkvestal)

@ctkvestal

HEARTS LOVED BY GOD · HANDS TO SERVE ALL · THROUGH JESUS CHRIST



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The Herald

FEBRUARY 2017

Discipleship

We're in the midst of a sermon series on the first 14 Disciples. After the Middle School Yoots requested learning more about the first Disciples for their own study, it also seemed a fitting theme for all of us as we prepare to launch into Transformational Ministry, the next chapter in Christ the King's book. What does it mean to be a Disciple? Were Disciples any different than me? How can I Disciple?

Jesus said in Luke 14:26-27:

“If you want to be my disciple, you must, by comparison, hate everyone else—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple. And if you do not carry your own cross and follow me, you cannot be my disciple.”

As you just read what Jesus said, you may have tripped over the words “hate everyone else” and that hate is to include even your family. Scholars say the original word, that is translated here as “hate”, implied a comparative hate; as in, you may hate peas when compared to carrots. In other words, it is a VERY clear distinction when the choice is yours to make: Jesus over EVERYTHING else. This is not very different than the first three Commandments: I am the Lord your God; You must not have any other god but me; You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. So, this is Jesus the Emmanuel (God with us) simply clarifying what everyone to whom He spoke should already have known: God should be the sole (soul?) center of your universe.

As we begin to live with Jesus at the center of all we do and say, we will begin to Love as He did; without any conditions or expectations of any return. As we begin to be Disciples of Jesus, Grace will replace competition for more stuff in our day-to-day work. We will see the beauty of the work of God in the world with a new, clean lens that will not only magnify the awe and frail splendor of nature, but also remove our filtered view of each other. We will feel the power of Mercy as both the forgiven and the forgiver. Becoming a Disciple is deeply and completely Transformational.

In his book, *Cost of Discipleship*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer shares the timeless advice God had shared with Martin Luther: “Discipleship is not limited to what you can comprehend--it must transcend all comprehension. Plunge into the deep waters beyond your own comprehension, and I will help you to comprehend even as I do. Bewilderment is the true comprehension. Not to know where you are going is the true knowledge. My comprehension transcends yours. Thus Abraham went forth from his father and not knowing whither he went. He trusted himself to my knowledge, and cared not for his own, and thus he took the right road and came to his journey's end. Behold, that is the way of the cross. You cannot find it yourself, so you must let me lead you as though you were a blind man. Wherefore it is not you, no man, no living creature, but I myself, who instruct you by my word and Spirit in the way you should go. Not the work which you choose, not the suffering you devise, but the road which is clean contrary to all that you choose or contrive or desire--that is the road you must take. To that I call you and in that you must be my disciple.”

The path to Discipleship is a continual unfolding mystery to those walking that path. One that requires trust and countless leaps of, and in, Faith. Just like the first Disciples, there will be times of both doubt and doing, tones of both questioning and conversation, feelings of both insight and oblivity, as well as discovery and dumbfoundedness. Comfort zones will be expanded and eventually redefined. Discipleship is not a destination, it is a transforming journey. We all have this opportunity to begin this journey to Discipleship together as Christ the King begins our Transformational work as a congregation. The choice to be part of this process is yours. The work will be challenging and rewarding. But, Helen Keller said, “Life is either a daring adventure or nothing at all.” Let's go make it something together!!

~Todd Eames

Annual Meeting

The annual meeting was held on January 22. Our new Pastor, AJ Striffler preached and the congregation affirmed the council's decision to call Pastor AJ as our Transformational Pastor. At the annual meeting, many wonderful ministries were reviewed. Our Constitutional changes that SYNOD required were voted upon. If SYNOD has any changes, we will bring those back up for vote. Our budget was approved with a needed income of \$190,000. It was discussed that giving will need to be increased to meet this.

The 2017 CTK Council met briefly after the annual meeting. Your new Council is: Joe Brunt (Co-President), Carol Strano (Co-President), Rich Lindstrom (Secretary), Debbie Doyle, Dennis Chapman, Todd Eames, Jody Fiorentino, Tammy Gow, and Kathy Leonard. Please keep all of us in your prayers, and feel free to join us at any meeting or share your concerns with us.

The table below shows the budget summary for 2017 alongside both the 2016 budget and total revenue and expenditures. A more detailed copy will be available on the Church Council Bulletin Board outside the church office. Please feel free to make a copy and return the original to the bulletin board.

2016 Budget	2016 Budget	2016 Actual	2017 Budget
Income	\$ 174,900	\$ 153,075	\$ 189,267
Mission Support	\$ 6,300	\$ 4,697	\$ 5,940
The Wider Church	\$ 16,626	\$ 14,096	\$ 16,626
Program Support	\$ 16,133	\$ 22,975	\$ 8,276
Pastor	\$ 62,868	\$ -	\$ 71,114
Staff	\$ 43,389	\$ 44,123	\$ 44,865
Operating Exp	\$ 9,444	\$ 9,568	\$ 9,672
Facility	\$ 31,754	\$ 30,143	\$ 32,774
Total Exp	\$ 186,514	\$ 125,602	\$ 189,267

Pastor AJ

As many of you know, Pastor AJ Striffler's prior call was at First English Lutheran Church in Syracuse. He was the final pastor there as they completed Holy Closure this past month. Many of you probably Googled or Yahooed Pastor AJ as soon as you saw that he was our next pastor and perhaps came across a story from a Syracuse news outlet about the closure of FELC. In it, the journalist described Pastor AJ's role this way: "Striffler's job in the Lutheran denomination might be what's called a downsizer in the corporate world. He goes in to struggling churches and helps them figure out how to survive or how, ultimately, to close. The Syracuse church was his first in this new role."

To be clear, Pastor AJ's role is not to close down any church nor is it helping a congregation merely survive. The journalist misrepresented Pastor AJ's call even though he tried to convey his actual role as a Transformational Ministry/ Redevelopment pastor. We want to be up-front and transparent as possible in all that we do as a community of faith. So, here is what we do know and what the Council learned when meeting with Pastor AJ. First English was a very different congregation than Christ the King. When they entered this process they were less than half the size of Christ the King and were using significant portions of their reserves each year to meet their budget. The congregation, while growing in spiritual vitality, just did not have the people power to lead their community outreach ministries AND do the work of growth and evangelism needed before their reserves were depleted.

Transformational ministry is about helping people deepen their faith in God so that they can live their discipleship every day by sharing the love of Jesus, connecting Sunday morning with the other six days of the week, increasing overall participation in the life of the congregation and partnering with the community to impact and change the world. This is definitely not the description of a church closing. When we voted to become a Transformational Ministry process and have a Transformational Ministry pastor called as our next pastor we did this because this what we think God is calling the people of Christ the King to be and do.

If you'd like to know more, please ask a member of Council or Pastor AJ himself.

Youth Update

Our youth going through confirmation are getting together with their sponsors Sunday, January 29. This is a very important time for our youth to know that our church is active and interested in their lives. We're also getting ready to start a Alpha program for youth. It will be a 12 week program like the Alpha program many of us have done. This will be a time to explore questions of faith, and deepen relationships. Please keep our youth in your prayers.

Soup Kitchen

On Saturday, February 18, we will be serving our neighbors at the Soup Kitchen. Beef stew, bread/ biscuits, salad, and cookies are on the menu. If you would like to contribute to the meal, please sign up in the Entry Way or contact Todd Eames (hteames@gmail.com or text at 761-3744).

BU Study Space

Thank you to everyone who sat at the church while our BU students studied. We had a total of 12 students who used the space. The students very much appreciated having a quiet place to study and enjoyed the many snacks that were available to them. We will be offering a quiet study space again in May.

CHOW Blue Barrel

The CHOW barrel needs to be filled! Once it is full, the Community Hunger Outreach Warehouse will distribute it to needy families. Some examples of items they can use are: cold cereal, peanut butter and jelly, oatmeal, instant potatoes, pork and beans, tuna fish, mac and cheese, and juice. Bring your donations (no glass containers, please) to the blue barrel located in the Entry Way.

Red Cross Blood Drive

On Thursday, February 23, Our Saviour in Endwell will be sponsoring a Blood Drive from 1 - 6. The area ELCA churches are sponsoring this Blood Drive. There is an extreme need for blood since many blood drives needed to be cancelled due to weather. On May 5, Christ the King will be the location for the Blood Drive. Please come out to support a need in our community.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Tuesday, February 28, 5:30 PM
 Redeemer Lutheran Church
 Ritchie Building
 Main Street, Binghamton
 Freewill Offering
 Proceeds to go toward Redeemer Renewal Fund

Email name and # attending to:
 redeemer_lutheran@hotmail.com
 Or call 607-722-1029

Save – unwanted items. A Rummage Sale is planned for the Spring. Storage can be arranged. Items can be dropped off at CTK. For pick-up, call Debbie Doyle at 724-1072. No clothing, please, until Spring. No computers, electronics, or heavy items.

Many at our Annual Meeting did not know about this picture. This photo was on The Floating Hospital's Facebook page and Instagram. It's our very own "Coat Lady", Helga, giving coats to children in NYC. The look on the child's face shines with the Spirit and Joy of Christmas!! Each of you helped Helga bring that twinkle that will last long past December 25.

