



499 PLAZA DRIVE, VESTAL NY 13850 | 607-729-2688

**Report of the Mini Town Hall Meeting, July 23, 2017**

The first 'regular' mini town hall meeting of the congregation was held on Sunday July 23, immediately following the 9:00 AM summer worship service. The purpose of the meeting was to foster an atmosphere of open and honest dialogue within a congregation in transition. The following items were addressed:

\*Some members of the congregation are upset because they do not like the changes made to worship for the summer months. Pastor AJ and the Leadership Team responded that it was clearly advertised the changes were only for a short while, to explore alternative trends to summer attendance. This was the first of what will be many experiments, and a great deal was learned by it.

\*Some members of the congregation are upset that there is a lack of communication about what is going on at CTK. Pastor AJ and the Leadership Team responded that this appears to be a repeating pattern in the life of this congregation. Information from the Pastor and the Leadership Team is published regularly in the monthly and weekly newsletters, the weekly bulletins, on the CTK website, on the CTK FaceBook page, and announcements are broadcast at the end of each worship service. The congregation must be proactive in its quest for readily available communication. A regularly scheduled Mini Town Hall meeting will help to foster a sense of open communication in the congregation.

\*Some members of the congregation believe the Synod wants CTK to close. Pastor AJ and the Leadership Team responded that NOBODY wants CTK to close! Nobody. How would that serve the Body of Christ? However, the congregation trends in attendance and giving show a steady decline. The congregation is on the verge of no longer being self-sustainable. Transformational Ministry was offered to the congregation to help address this before it is too late.

\*Some members of the congregation are upset because they didn't really understand what Transformational Ministry was before they agreed to it. Pastor AJ and the Leadership Team listened to this concern. Although the Leadership Team assures the congregation that full disclosure was made prior to the congregational vote in 2016, all that we can really do at this point is make the best of it as we discern how God is using us here and now.

The next Mini Town Hall meeting is scheduled for Sunday September 10, immediately following the 10:00AM worship service.

**God's Work, Our Hands Sunday**

God's Work, Our Hands Sunday will be observed on September 17. We will be meeting at the Discovery Center at noon. There will be a short prayer service upon arrival. There are jobs for everyone. If you want to assist with outside work, please bring rakes and shovels and gloves. Inside work is also available that is much less strenuous. We will then meet at Christ the King for a dinner around 5:00 PM. Assistance is also needed at CTK to prepare for the people coming back. Sign up sheets will be available soon for food. This is a great opportunity to help the Discovery Center and meet new people from other area Lutheran churches. If you have any questions, please see Todd Eames, Joe Brunt or Carol Strano.

**September Worship Schedule**

*Sunday, September 3, 10, and 17*  
9:00 AM—Bible Study 10:00 AM—Worship

*Beginning September 24th, regular Sunday worship hours resume:*  
9:00 AM—Classic Worship 10:10 AM—Education Hour 11:15 AM—Progressive Worship

**9/11 Prayer Service**

On Monday, September 11, we, the congregation of CTK, have been invited to participate in a Public Prayer Service at 5:00pm, at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Binghamton. The service will take place outside of Redeemer, on the busy street, and last about 15-20 mins. This is a great opportunity for public witness, as we invite the community to pray and remember with us the tragic events of September 11, 2001.

**Worship Ministry Team**

In the book Inside Out: Worship in an Age of Mission, Mark Bangert, Professor of Worship and Music at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago writes, "Christians are always tempted to keep liturgy and evangelism far apart from each other. Our task is easier that way. Evangelism can be ignored altogether, or it can be reconfigured as if it were a matter for specialization, a function for the interested few. Without a close bond between liturgy and mission, worship is too easily transformed, as if it were merely an aesthetically pleasing ingredient in one's personal quest for things spiritual - liturgy reduced to a ritual hot water bottle for those with spiritual chills. Turned in on itself in such a way, liturgy evolves into a spiritual concert for the lonely."

There really is no doubt that God is inviting the whole Church to explore how and why we worship. The declining numbers in congregations of most mainline Churches should be as clear as a card with the words 'You Are Invited' printed on it. Yet, for many the choice remains familiarity and preference over mission. As wonderful as it is to be "called" and "gathered", we are those things for the express and intentional purpose of being "sent."

We are going to spend some intentional time looking at how to better and more expressly reflect these things in our corporate worship time. A small, select group of individuals, along with AJ and Jim, are going to be charged with this Transformational Ministry task, both for the 9:00am and 11:15am services. If you think you'd be interested in serving in this capacity, please let AJ know.

Please note, this is not about who is reading the lessons and which team is setting up for communion. Nothing about that is changing for the time being.

**Transformational Ministry Progress Report**

The first of CTK's Transformational Ministry Progress Reports is presently due to the Synod and the Domestic Mission Unit of the ELCA. As you are already aware, the mutually covenanted and accountable work of Transformational Ministry comes with expectations and responsibilities on both sides. As the ELCA and the Synod support the work of Transformational Ministry financially, one of our jobs is to show them what is being done.

The report asks the following questions:

1. Tell stories of what happened in your ministry as a result of receiving this partnership support grant.
  - \*How is the Holy Spirit working in, with, and through the congregation?
  - \*How has your community/neighborhood been impacted by your ministry?
2. How has your congregation changed?
  - \*What intentional changes did you make?
  - \*What still needs to change?
  - \*What have you learned?
3. What learnings are you willing to share with others?
  - \*What do you still want to learn?

The Leadership Team is preparing the report, which will then be reviewed by the Synod Mission Table, and then forwarded to the Domestic Mission Unit of the ELCA, in Chicago.

The finished report will be shared with the congregation at a November mini town hall meeting.

**A Return to the Basics - Small Group Study**

When members of CTK are interviewed, and when they talk about how their faith has been nurtured and nourished at CTK, many refer back to times when Small Groups were a big deal in the life of this congregation. Small Groups allow for the development of authentic relationships and experiences. Small Groups focus on community and sharing. Small Groups is how the Christian Church actually started!

In the hopes of building an even stronger community at CTK - one whose love and commitment to God's mission is visibly reflected in their life together - we are going to experiment with Small Groups this Fall and Winter. There are already some Small Groups that exist at CTK. That's awesome. However, new ones will also be formed.

We are going to ask that the WHOLE CTK COMMUNITY take part in a Small Group Book Study starting in October of 2017. We are going to look at the book *Slow Church*, and explore ways to build healthier relationships (with God and each other) and create an even stronger community of faith.

If you already lead a Small Group, Great!!! We will provide you all the material necessary to lead this 11 week conversation with your group. If you would like to put a new Small Group together, Great!!! We absolutely encourage that. And remember, meeting AWAY from the church building and out in the public eye is strongly encouraged, although not required.



**Tuesday AM Bible Study Group**

Each Tuesday morning at 9:30 AM, women from various denominations meet in the Fireplace Room for Fellowship and Study. The group is facilitated by Jan Prentice. Starting September 12, we will continue our study in Mark. Even if you haven't been before, all are welcome to join us!

Information: Call Church office or  
Liz Bakenhus (607) 797-1826

**Thursday Prayer Shawl Ministry**

Do you knit or crochet? OR Would you like to learn to knit or crochet?

We'd love to have you join the Christ the King Prayer Shawl Ministry. We have fun as we gather to make prayer shawls and lap robes to give to people who need God's comfort and blessing in times of illness or loss.

We meet every Thursday, beginning September 14th, from 9:30-11:30 AM in the Café. Questions? See Althea Zayleskie or Margie King. Come join us!

**Saturday Men's Group**

We are men who care about one another... who gather for coffee and bagels and to discuss life issues. Topics are rarely conventional and a lot of laughter often ensues. Men's group meets virtually every Saturday at 8:00 AM (ish) and those who come regularly often tell about what missing a Saturday means to their week. All are welcome!

**Friday AM Group**

We are a casual and fun group of men and women who strive to strengthen our faith through various types of bible studies and interesting discussions. Very important is the time set aside for prayer, sharing our joys and concerns and supporting each other. A small voluntary donation is taken each week for a designated charity. For the past 2 years we have donated to the Veterans Administration in Binghamton.

We will resume our weekly meetings on Friday, September 8<sup>th</sup> from 10 AM to 11:30 AM in the Fireplace Room at CTK. On the 8<sup>th</sup> we plan to welcome new members along with coffee, light refreshments and conversation to catch up on our summer adventures and also discuss ideas for our next topic for study.

We ended our meetings last Spring with plans for a new project called SOCKS FOR SOULS. Everyone needs warm feet, especially during the cool weather months ahead. We will be collecting all sizes of socks and toiletries for those in need. (children, teens, men and women ) Look for a box in the Narthex if you would like to help with this project. We invite all to join us on Friday, September 8<sup>th</sup>. Come check us out.

*Evelyn Goetz: facilitator*

**Friends Dinner**

The next Friends Dinner hosted by Christ the King will be held on Tuesday September 5 at 5:30pm. The Friends Dinner is a weekly dinner for individuals with HIV and AIDS that is hosted by various churches in the community and is held at Trinity Memorial Episcopal Church in Binghamton.

The menu for the next dinner includes baked ziti, bread, salad, and dessert. There will be a sign-up sheet in the entrance hall, if you would like to contribute to the meal and/or help to serve the dinner. If you have questions, contact Angie Crawford (727-6497), Kelli Cruise (349-8557), or Carol Strano (725-6635).

**Soup Kitchen**

On Saturday, September 16, we will be serving our neighbors at the Soup Kitchen. Stews & soups, bread, tossed salad, and desserts 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).

If you would like to help with preparation, serving, and /or cleanup, the Soup Kitchen is held at First United Methodist Church (corner of McKinley and Monroe) in Endicott. Preparation starts at 10:30 AM and the meal is served at noon.

**University Fest**

The University Fest was a great success! Thank you to everyone who worked the booth! We were able to give away many prayer squares.

Thanks to Thrivent, Christ The King gave away 250 packages of Macaroni & Cheese and 192 bottles of water to the students at BU. Also, a great thanks to Zach Burczynski who created and donated the beautiful banner that is now available for any group to use.

Many students were interested in our study space during finals. Let's see how else we can reach out and assist our young adult neighbors.

**Notes from Music Director Jim Ford**

Our regular rehearsals for the CTK Choir will resume on Wednesday, September 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM. The Good News Band will start rehearsing again on Saturday, September 9<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM.

Special thanks go to all those who have enhanced our worship services during the summer months by sharing their musical talent!

**Office Note**

The Office will be closed Tuesday, September 12.

Regular hours of 9am-1pm Tuesday-Friday will resume on September 13.



**SUNDAY SCHOOL RALLY DAY IS SEPTEMBER 24TH!**

Come one and all to help launch another year of faith formation. More details to come, so keep an eye on upcoming bulletins!

# Chris the King Lutheran Church

499 Plaza Drive  
Vestal, NY 1850

**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 – AJ Striffler  
[pastoraj@ctkvestal.org](mailto:pastoraj@ctkvestal.org)  
Church Administrator — Marsha Pulz  
[marsha@ctkvestal.org](mailto:marsha@ctkvestal.org)  
Music Director – Jim Ford  
[jrfme2000@yahoo.com](mailto: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 Gow  
Todd Eames              Kathy Leonard

Financial Secretary: Phil Roberts

**Worship Schedule**

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Bible Study at 9:00 AM  
Worship at 10:00 AM

*Sunday, 9/24:*

Classic Worship at 9:00 AM  
Education Hour at 10:10 AM  
Progressive Worship at 11:15 AM

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