

Annual Congregational Meeting

The 51st Annual Congregational Meeting of Christ the King Lutheran Church will take place on Sunday, January 21, 2018.

The meeting begins with worship at 10:00 AM

and continues in the

Fellowship Hall with a light brunch at 11:15 AM

where we will celebrate the ministry accomplishments of 2017 and plan for God's mission in 2018.

The Report of the Redevelopment/Transformational Ministry Pastor Christ the King Lutheran Church - The Annual Meeting of the Congregation 2017 Report - Sunday January 21, 2018

Grace and Peace to you in the holy name of Jesus Christ, our Lord!

The Year 2017 - the 50th Year in the life of the congregation - began a time of good refection and challenge, partnering with the Synod and the ELCA to participate in Redevelopment/Transformational Ministry.

Redevelopment/Transformation Ministry is a covenant between partners in ministry, stating that a congregation, which benefits from grant money and a certified and trained Pastor, will spend a specified period of time reflecting on its life and ministry and reconnecting with the biblical models and principles of "Church".

From this place of reflection and reconnection, it is then hoped that congregations possess new tools, gifts, strategies, and motivations for connecting with the community around them and finding new and creative ways to share the life-saving story of Jesus.

Christ the King Lutheran Church was approached about this opportunity in November/December 2016. After a time of reflection and conversation, the Leadership Team (Council) and the congregation voted to enter the formal, covenanted, and accountable partnership with the Synod and the Domestic Mission Unit of the ELCA. The Covenant was drafted and signed (see immediately below). I arrived to begin work with the congregation on March 1, 2017 - Ash Wednesday.

COVENANT OF TRANSFORMATION: A COMMITMENT TO BEING OPEN
Christ the King Lutheran Church, Vestal, NY

Transformation is first and foremost a spiritual process for individual members of Christ the King as well as the congregation as a whole. It is rooting in the good news of Jesus Christ and getting God's dream for this ministry in focus. It is not a one-person project. It is God's project among us. It is not just about this congregation. It is about changing the world. As such, we all have choices to make and commitments to make in living out God's dream for us. Because change is hard, as transformation begins, it is essential that the partners share clear expectations and that the accountability be strong. The participants in this covenant are the Transformational Ministry Pastor, Congregation, Transformation Team, Congregational Council, Synod Renewal Team and the Domestic Mission Unit of the ELCA. We hold this process in prayer, in hopes that it will result in Christ the King Lutheran Church growing into more vital and vibrant congregation.

Part One – Transformational Ministry Pastor

In consultation with the Upstate New York Synod bishop's office and Christ the King Lutheran Church, the Synod Council called the Rev. A.J. Striffler to serve as the Transformational Ministry Pastor beginning on March 1, 2017.

Part Two – Commitment of the Congregation to Being Open

Christ the King Lutheran Church has committed itself to biblical and spiritual renewal, including intentional growth in mission, witness, partnership with other congregations and community based ministries, worship attendance and financial sustainability. To fulfill these commitments, the congregation will:

1. Be open the movement Holy Spirit through regular prayer, scripture study and listening to God's voice and dream for the congregation
2. Be open to sharing your faith and inviting people into God's mission
3. Be open to cultivating a climate of intentional hospitality for people new to the life of the church
4. Be open to inviting and using the gifts of people of all ages and abilities
5. Be open to growing in discipleship and personal financial stewardship practices
6. Be open to the movement of the Holy Spirit in your congregation's pastor, council and Transformational Ministry team
7. Be open to being engaged in new ways (new and renewed opportunity for growing in faith, serving your neighbors and sharing God's love)
8. Be open to being a partner with the council, leadership team, pastor, synod, and the community
9. Be open to supporting new initiatives and experimenting with new ways of following Jesus
10. Be open to making changes that grow out of this process
11. Be open to new ways of thinking about the role of the pastor, leadership and the ministry of the baptized
12. Be open to supporting God's mission through the wider church through storytelling, participation in Synod-wide activities and growing in mission support to the Upstate New York Synod with a goal of 10% or more at the end of three years.

Part Three – Commitment of the Congregation Council and Transformation Team to Being Open

All transformational ministry processes are custom-fit for each congregation, but the transformational ministry process at Christ the King Lutheran Church is unique: a hybrid where leadership is shared between the congregation council and the transformational team. In matters relating to transformational ministry, the transformation team is empowered to act in partnership with the council. In matters unrelated to transformation priorities, the council retains final decision-making authority. The congregation council and transformation team will communicate well and regularly, to cultivate a cooperative environment of shared leadership. Specifically the congregation council and transformation team will:

1. Be open to the movement Holy Spirit through regular prayer, scripture study and listening to God's voice and dream for the congregation
2. Be open to growing in discipleship and personal financial stewardship practices
3. Be open to spending time in prayer and Bible study as a starting point for all meetings and work together
4. Be open to the movement of the Holy Spirit in your congregation, the pastor, and other leadership teams
5. Be open to dreaming about the future and developing plans to get there
6. Be open to not doing everything and sharing the work of the congregation with the whole congregation
7. Be open to the role of being a leader through fostering a climate of goodwill, redirecting gossip and negativity in the congregation to healthy patterns of conflict resolution
8. Be open to regularly communicating with leadership and the whole congregation

In addition, the transformation team will:

1. Create and guide a process of Bible study and discernment in the congregation toward the goal of writing a statement of God's purpose for Christ the King Lutheran Church
2. Create a 3-5 year vision and plan for mission, witness, making disciples, partnership with other congregations and community based ministries/agencies, and increased worship attendance, based on that purpose, in partnership with the congregation council and the whole congregation
3. Provide timely updates to the congregation on these plans, including proposed transformational ministry priorities and timeline
Be open and accessible to members and responsive to expressed concerns

Part 4 – Commitment of the Transformational Ministry Pastor to Being Open

Pastors are preachers and teachers, spiritual leaders, and evangelists. A transformational ministry pastor puts special emphasis on evangelism and helping a congregation be present in their community. The transformational ministry pastor will:

1. Be open to the movement Holy Spirit through regular prayer, scripture study and listening to God's voice and dream for the congregation
2. Be open to growing in discipleship and personal financial stewardship practices
3. Be open to the movement of the Holy Spirit in your congregation, the council and Transformational Ministry team
4. Be open to, and work toward, developing a broad participatory process, assisted by the Director for Evangelical Mission or member of the Regional Renewal Table, and church council/leadership team
5. Be open to dreaming about the future and creating long-term goals
6. Be open to not doing everything by including others in leadership and equipping them to use their gifts for the mission of the congregation
7. Be open to creative use of all forms of worship for the purpose of inviting new disciples and nurturing the spiritual life of the community
8. Be open to changing the way you use your time; be open to spending at least 50 percent of time in outreach (including equipping laity for: visiting sick/shut ins and others; building relationships with and accompanying new disciples; and growing in their ability to share their personal faith stories)
9. Be open to continued learning and growing in mission centered leadership
10. Be open in community with the Director for Evangelical Mission, the Transformational Ministry Team and the Congregational Council.

Part 5 – Commitment of the Office of the Bishop and ELCA Domestic Mission Unit

On behalf of the Upstate New York Synod, the Office of the Bishop will support Christ the King Lutheran Church's transformational ministry efforts by:

1. Being open the movement Holy Spirit through regular prayer, scripture study and listening to God's voice and dream for the congregation
2. Being open to spending time in prayer and Bible study as a starting point for all meetings and work together
3. Being open to the movement of the Holy Spirit in the congregation, the pastor, and leadership teams
4. Being open to providing opportunities for ongoing training, peer support, and coaching through the process
5. Being open to assisting Christ the King Lutheran Church in procuring financial support through grants and partnership support – when appropriate and as needed – to enable transformational ministry.
6. Being open to meeting with the pastor and lay leadership to review, evaluate and fine-tune mission plans
7. Being open to regular meetings between the Director for Evangelical Mission and the transformational ministry pastor and/or transformation team and/or congregation council.
Being open to being present during worship and education at least once annually.

* Date of Congregational Meeting approving the covenant: _____.

Partnership: We, the undersigned, having understood the expectations of openness detailed in this covenant, declare that we intend to be partners in the gospel ministry in this place. We accept this covenant as a declaration of mission, and by our signatures proclaim our participation.

_____ Congregation – President or Vice President	_____ Date
_____ Pastor	_____ Date
_____ Synod - Bishop	_____ Date
_____ ELCA – Director for Evangelical Mission	_____ Date

*Ministry inside and within the parameters of this covenant began and has continued since March. After an intense period in which many in the congregation took advantage of a study on the Book of Acts, connecting with and learning from the early Church, ministry has now moved into a period of internal assessment and asset inventory.

The Annual Progress Report (seen immediately below) was crafted and filed with our partners. The hard work of self-examination is being done. The partnership has been approved, along with the accompanying funds, for another year.

Annual Progress Report Christ the King Lutheran Church, Vestal, NY

1. Tell stories of what happened in your ministry as a result of receiving this partnership support grant (March 2017).

***How is the Holy Spirit working in, with, and through the congregation?**

There are surely gifted leaders and passionate disciples at Christ the King Lutheran Church. There is a receptivity of the congregation to explore and engage in the community and world around them. There is a willingness to experiment with many things, and there is a desire for deeper connection and relationship with God, with each other, and with the world.

After these last six months and the work that has been done, folks are embracing a ‘different’ understanding and approach to ‘church’. All of us remnants and off-spring of the “imperial” and “state church” models, complete with rituals and practices that stem from a place of and concern for personal piety, we are beginning to re-frame Church and ministry – how we are, how we think about, and how we do ministry – using the Book of Acts and the models of the early Christian communities.

By using the headings of Mission, Purpose, Function, and Principles (MPFP), we are using Scripture to be intentional about our life, our work, and our following Jesus together by gaining a deeper insight into and understanding of 1) God’s Mission, 2) The Church’s Purpose, 3) How the Church is called to Function well in context, and 4) the very real Principles that not only guide and govern our life together, but our public witness as well.

So, at 50 years old, a once-upon-a-time well-established and respected Program Church, this congregation is now a very young and immature Intentional Christian Community. And, we are excited about this, full of joy (for the most part!) and expectation, as we wait to see how God is calling us to be and what God is calling us to do!

***How has your community/neighborhood been impacted by your ministry?**

Christ the King Lutheran Church has been engaged with forms of social ministry (service to ...) for all 50 years of its life. Reaching out in service to the larger Tri-Cities community is not a foreign concept.

Presently, the congregation is involved in providing a full meal once a month for a local, ecumenical ‘soup kitchen’; providing a monthly meal for the ‘Friends’ Dinner’, the remnant of a once thriving HIV/AIDS food and socialization ministry; we partner with the local Council of Churches and collect food for the ecumenical food pantry; we provide an annual Trunk-or-Treat event for the children in the residential neighborhood where the church-building is located; because we sit right next to the property and student housing of Binghamton University, the congregation provides quiet and safe study space for students, as well as food, during the Final Exam period of both the Fall and Spring semesters; we are present for the annual University Fest, when all the students are welcomed back to the university and the community at an outdoor festival and are made aware of what is available for them in the surrounding community; and we are involved in an annual Coat Drive for children at the Floating Hospital in NYC.

What we hope to do in the coming year is move from the existing ‘service to’ model of ministry to a ‘sharing with’ model, that will facilitate the development of relationships, the sharing of faith stories, and the making of disciples. We are presently having conversation at the Leadership Team level about how to do this and what it might look like. An understanding is beginning to develop in the wider congregation that we are sent ‘to make disciples of all nations’, and that the biblical model to do that is not just handing out literature or preaching threatening sermons on a street corner, but to engage real people in real life, build authentic and trusting relationships, and share our own personal stories of faith and community. Our plan is to spend all Fall and part of Winter learning how to do that internally, as a community of faith, in Small Groups, and then assess what ministries we already do, and how we can do them better, no longer simply providing a much needed service, but sharing with them in the recovery of self-worth and dignity, building relationships, and proclamation.

2. How has your congregation changed?

Because “change” remains a threatening word to the congregation, arousing an anxious response and an inability to truly discern God’s call in and among us, we have decided to use the word “grow” as we continue to talk about transformation and listen for God’s leading and the prompting of the Holy Spirit. We are presently in a process of learning that change is a part of growth, but it is not change just for the sake of change, rather intentional development in direct relation to God’s mission in this time and place.

It has only been six months that this congregation has been involved in renewal ministry. It has been a time with AJ of listening, conversation, relationship building, faith formation, and creating the foundations of a skill set for “intentionality” as an approach to ministry – intentional community, intentional faith formation, intentional discipleship, and intentional hospitality.

***What intentional changes did you make?**

We began an active partnership with Redeemer Lutheran Church (ELCA) in downtown Binghamton, one that we hope to intentionally expand, by sharing in a joint Ashes To Go venture on Ash Wednesday. Sack lunches were prepared by members of both congregations, and deacons and members of both congregations gathered on the streets of downtown Binghamton to distribute both the lunches and the ashes. We learned that there are some pretty weighty territoriality issues that we will need to talk about in the future. We will be doing something similar for September 11, 2017 by offering a public Prayer/Remembrance Vigil on the same busy downtown streets.

We placed the Baptismal Font in the center of the congregation, and began using baptismal language in our conversations about discipleship and what it means to be God’s Church.

We are learning about the Priesthood of all Believers by continuing to move further away from a Pastor-centered model of ministry and community life.

We have studied and are studying the Book of Acts, learning to reconnect with God’s Mission, the Purpose of the Church, how the Church Functions contextually, and what Principles guide our internal community and our external witness.

We have begun learning about public witness by having some events and conversations in public places, not just in the safety of and behind the walls of our building.

AJ has hosted several small Coffee and Conversation gathering, that have created opportunities for folks to share their faith stories, develop a sense of trust with AJ and one another, build stronger relationships and community, and be publically identifiable as Church out in the world.

We changed the Summer worship services, both to experiment with worship styles and to learn about what is important to this community of faith. Although the most difficult and contentious change to date, it was the most helpful in understanding some very important issues in the life of this congregation.

We have begun a Wednesday night Faith Formation time, in conjunction with a meal, that has fostered both a stronger sense of community, as well as the importance of life-long study of Scripture and Lutheran theology and history.

We have initiated bi-monthly Town Hall meetings, that allow for open communication and dialogue within the congregation, and foster a stronger sense of community and ownership of congregational ministries.

***What still needs to change?**

The congregation of Christ the King Lutheran Church is not sure who they are, so there is no real shared identity or sense of call and purpose. They continue to function as a medium-sized ‘program’ congregation, with a predominantly ‘traditional’ worshipping community, with no real knowledge of the community (both university and residential) around them and how, as a faith community, they might be most helpful. They are mostly inwardly focused and predominantly concerned with their own comfort levels, likes and dislikes.

There exists no real sense of unity as a faith community at Christ the King. Within the existing congregation, there are different ‘groups’ with which people generally associate. Like many congregations with multiple worship services, there are 9:00 am people and there are 11:15 am people. Several years ago, Christ the King and St. Paul Lutheran Church merged into one congregation, but nothing really changed for the existing members of Christ the King. In reality, the closing St. Paul Lutheran Church was assumed/absorbed into Christ the King, and with the exception of additional people in worship, nothing really changed for them. So, there continues to be people who self-identify as “St. Paul Lutheran Church”. Similarly, and on a much smaller scale, there are a few folks who came to Christ the King from a very small and struggling congregation from the Slovak-Zion Synod that is also in Binghamton, and who retain that connection as a primary identity. Growing together, connecting with God’s mission, and developing a congregational identity should help unify, energize and strengthen this community of faith.

Worship at Christ the King Lutheran Church is only loosely and nominally associated with ‘being sent’ as disciples who are part of God’s Mission in the world. Our study of and preaching series on the Book of Acts is beginning to help people understand themselves as disciples and participants in God’s mission of reconciliation and restoration to the world. We will be putting a small group of people together to incorporate and showcase this understanding in worship, in ways that are representative of the existing community.

Finally, the congregation of Christ the King Lutheran Church is still looking for the leadership of a strong ‘program’ Pastor, who has the education and skills necessary to chart the appropriate course for success and navigate the ship with a chain-of-command leadership style. This, of course, is not uncommon. We will continue to emphasize the congregation’s ownership of its ministries, so that the role of the Pastor can be seen more as ‘co-worker with’ rather than ‘the supreme authority’ or the ‘leader of all things’. In our ongoing conversations about intentionality and discipleship, we should have ample opportunity to educate the members of Christ the King about the differences between passivity and engagement, and find ways to celebrate the responsibility that comes with freedom in the Gospel.

***What have you learned?**

Primarily, when a congregation ‘decides’ to participate in Redevelopment, as a formal covenanted program through the ELCA, no matter how ready they believe themselves to be, they are not, and there is serious disconnect between what a Pastor is told by mouth and on paper and what they actually find when they arrive. This should be addressed 2 ways –

- Synods and DEMS have to do a much better job preparing congregations for Redevelopment/Transformational Ministry. Regardless of whether there is a handful of leaders that actually understand and are ready for change, the work of truly discerning this with the wider community should be done long before the Redevelopment Pastor arrives. I understand that this may not be realistic for many of our DEMS. However, this responsibility should also not be left to the newly called Pastor, either. Perhaps the exploration of an alternative Call Process, that allows for the time needed to truly discern, rather than rushed processes that only prove more harmful than helpful.

Relationships. Relationships. Relationships! When a new Redevelopment Pastor is beginning her or his ministry with a congregation, and in direct correlation to the previous statement, the first 6 – 9 months should only really be about getting to know one another, listening to stories, developing trust, and building relationships. Congregations are a precious gift to the Church and to the world. We have to understand how to cherish them before we ask God to transform them.

Secondly, we have learned that this congregation is a fragile system that is going to require some intentional focus by the Pastor and Leadership Team, as we equip, center, grow and discern. We will continue to form faith and offer ongoing opportunities for people to wrestle with and connect to God’s mission and the invitation to discipleship. We will also work on building an intentional and strong Christian Community by building trust, creating relationships, using open and transparent communication, reflecting upon worship and devotion, and developing faith practices.

By spending nine to twelve months intentionally focused on the congregation’s life, we will lay a strong foundation for the work that God is calling us to outside of the congregation, beyond the walls of our building and safety of what is known and familiar. We will develop tools for connecting and building relationships, as well as for discernment and how to listen (to each other and to God). By learning how to talk to each other about our faith, as well as continuing to hear about God’s mission made known to the world in Jesus, we will prepare to share this with others in a myriad of ways. And, as we experience healing, wellness, and wholeness in intentional community, we will prepare to offer an authentic invitation to the same to our community and the world.

3. What learnings are you willing to share with others?

***What do you still want to learn?**

How to trust and not be afraid

How to listen to God

How to joyfully embody gratitude

How to deepen our own relationship with God in a way that equips and sends us

How to listen and vision and dream differently

How to partner and share with other ELCA congregations, ecumenical partners, the ELCA, God’s Church, and inter-faith communities around the world and in our community

How to see ourselves as part of God’s larger story and not insularly

*2018 will continue to mark time of reflection, redevelopment, and transformation -

Reflection - the one holy catholic and apostolic Church is engaged in reflection, connecting with biblical principles of mission and purpose, and experimenting with new ways of engaging a new world with the story of Jesus.

Redevelopment - congregations in every denomination around the world are assessing the way ministry was done and ordered in the past with Pastor-centric models, and are now rebuilding ministry in a way that engages the whole body, strengthening and encouraging the gifts and ministries of all members, both clergy and lay alike.

Transformation - developing real, dynamic relationships with a real and dynamic Jesus, that transcend complacencies and comfortability and move us toward paths of authentic engagement, real experience, and incredible, confident faith.

The 2018 Partnership Support Covenant is below, and has been signed and submitted. Funds and prayers are coming from our partners. It is time for each of us to begin wrestling with the question: What is my responsibility?

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA Domestic Mission (DM)

PARTNERSHIP SUPPORT COVENANT

Partnership Support (P/S) grants from the Domestic Mission unit of the ELCA are churchwide funds that are being provided to developing, redeveloping, and transforming congregations in support of their ministry of evangelistic outreach and witness for Christ. In addition to financial support, the DM Director for Evangelical Mission and churchwide staff provide support, training, accountability and encouragement; they pray for the congregation regularly.

In acknowledgement of this partnership, the congregation ...

1. Commits to pray, regularly and publicly in its worship services, for the work of the Church, for bishops, pastors, and leaders, for the ministry of the Director for Evangelical Mission and the DM staff, for other congregations under development or in redevelopment / transformation, and for God’s mission in the world;

2. Agrees to accept the P/S grant specified above for FY 2018 (February 1 through January 31) in the amount of \$ 16,000 and to use the funds solely and exclusively for the purposes and objectives as described in the Partnership Support Application that was submitted by the congregation, including any changes that may have been agreed upon with the Director for Evangelical Mission since the application was filed;

3. Promises to provide, usually through the pastor or ministry leader, a monthly / quarterly / annual report (circle one or more) to the Director for Evangelical Mission, showing how ministry goals and objectives are being implemented and how funds have been spent, and agrees to host ministry reviews, as requested by the Director for Evangelical Mission, including an “end-of-grant” review at the conclusion of the funding cycle;

4. Commits itself to submit the ELCA parochial report, set forth in the constitution, by February 15th of each year, with a copy provided to the Director for Evangelical Mission at the time of filing;

5. Understands that Partnership Support Grants are made possible by the Mission Support giving (benevolence) of all ELCA congregations and agrees to adequately share of its own gifts, in most circumstances by sharing at least 10% or more of its offerings in Mission Support to the Synod;

6. Acknowledges that Partnership Support Grants are dependent upon available ELCA budgetary resources, and that grants are usually put on hold when a pastoral vacancy or other significant change in leadership or the ministry occurs;

7. Agrees that the amount specified in # 2 above, added to the total amount of Partnership Support grants received in all prior years, if any, will be returned to the Domestic Mission unit, out of the remaining assets of the congregation, if any, if and when the congregation closes or ceases to be affiliated with the ELCA. The congregation further agrees that if sums given to the congregation shall exceed \$75,000, the congregation will agree to execute an additional document to legally secure this agreement to return funds as stated above.

8. The congregation will have the congregation council authorize the pastor or ministry leader and a lay officer to sign this partnership support agreement and will attach a copy of the council minutes to the signed copy returned to the Domestic Mission unit.

9. Additional agreements and understandings: **Congregation will participate in Transformational Ministry Training, finalize a mission and begin executing a plan.**

In the spirit of partnership and shared mission, this covenant has been reviewed and approved by the leadership of the congregation as attested by the signatures below.

By _____ By _____
Pastor/Ministry Leader Lay Officer

Print name: _____ Print Name _____

Date: _____

*Of course, the question of our role in God's Mission and the Purpose of the Church is at the very core of what we and every congregation are doing. In our partnership, we have been asked, and we have agreed to frame these questions intentionally, and model for others that Christianity (following Jesus) is NOT a casual pastime or a rote set of exercises, but rather a truly committed life-style of confidence ... of trust ... of relationship ... of generosity. I will remain with you to explore and reflect. I must (must must must MUST) reiterate what I said to you at the very outset. I am not here to do this work for you. I am not here to help you rebuild and reinforce a model of ministry that is done and over. That would be, well, just plain silly.

Laying a firm groundwork in biblical models and principles, which is what a good number of us are doing by participating in small groups and faith formation opportunities, we will be able to discern together what the Holy Spirit is doing in and among the community of Christ the King Lutheran Church.

Congratulations! And, well done, faithful servants.

In peace,

The Rev. AJ Striffler

Congregation Vital Statistics for 2017

Transfers Out:

Keith and Tammie Werkman to Our Savior Lutheran

Elizabeth Boesen to Zion Lutheran

Baptisms:

LanaRose Sophia Faughnen

Elaine Mae-Rose Scalzo

Owen James Mars

First Communions:

Confirmations:

Jonah Allen, James Brunt, Matt Fiorentino, Brooklyn Hoyt, Brielee Hoyt, Justin Oakes, Josh Sifert

Funerals:

Kenneth Thomas, Jr.

CTK Annual Congregational Meeting

1/22/17

Minutes for the Annual Meeting held January 22, 2017 cannot be located.

REPORT OF THE LEADERSHIP TEAM CO-PRESIDENTS

As we look back at the last year at Christ the King, we have so much to celebrate. During this year, we celebrated our 50th anniversary as a church body of Christ. As I looked into our history to create the slideshow, I learned so much about our beginnings. Interesting enough, our beginnings look very similar to what we are trying to get back to in our venture of transformational ministry. The church service was held in many places and in many different configurations. One person commented that one never knew what the seating was going to look like from week to week. This is similar to the 11:15 service now that is trying out different seating arrangements in an effort to create a more intimate setting.

In March, we welcomed Pastor AJ Striffler to walk with us in our journey. With the assistance of our Deacons and many others, we were able to lead our church for two years without a pastor. When we interviewed AJ, we had stated that we wanted to be able to continue our leadership roles. We now have AJ to walk with us and lead with us. What a blessing this has been. It certainly has not been without some new learning curves for all but we are so much stronger for it. We have started up the small groups again with the reading of "The Slow Church." As we finish up this book, we look forward to our next venture. Any ideas? We are open to all ideas.

Hopefully over the last year, we now have a better understanding of our own faith and where the Holy Spirit is leading us. Remember that 499 Plaza Drive is just a location of our church. Where the Holy Spirit leads us is the church.

DEACON REPORTS

Todd Eames – Most of 2017 was spent continuing the work from 2016. I served on the MIT team for Redeemer, and concluded my MIT team service for us here at Christ the King. I also had the honor to lead worship in congregations at Our Saviour in Endwell, and Our Saviour's in Horseheads. As of the end of 2017, my service on the MIT team will end as they are transitioning to a Transitional Pastor (A.J. Striffler, in fact, will serve in that capacity). Even though my official role has come to a close, I know my relationships with the folks at Redeemer will compel me to continue to work with them as they see fit. There are so very many opportunities to work in God's mission there on the corner of Chapin and Main. I recommend any and all of you join me in these efforts.

I have also started to teach the latest Confirmation Class that is comprised of kids from both CTK and Redeemer. They are a fun and active crew! Any and all are invited to attend our gatherings each (most) Sunday evenings from 6:30-8:00 PM; let me know if you're interested and I'll give you the details.

I also tried to serve in God's mission through a variety of other efforts (see the report for the Soup Kitchen) and tasks at CTK and elsewhere in the community. I look forward 2018 with the addition of exploring internet-based ministries for CTK. I would be remiss in not recognizing the financial support of Thrivent (via Rick Westfall, et al.) who has contributed hundreds of dollars this past year in these and many other events and efforts.

STAFF REPORTS

Music Director Report

Let me first of all take this opportunity to thank the members of our CTK Choir and Good News Band for their faithfulness and dedication in sharing their musical gifts week after week to enhance our worship services here at Christ the King. Our summer services were covered very well musically by the talents of individuals from both of these groups.

In celebration of Christ the King's 50th anniversary, we were thrilled to have Christian concert pianist Jim Hendricks performing in the Sanctuary on June 11. A truly awe-inspiring performance! And he was gracious enough to donate several of his CDs to the church library. Please feel free to borrow any of these recordings. They feature Hendrick's gift to uplift the listener spiritually in a vast array of musical styles.

On November 19, Christ the King was host for a Commemoration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. For this service, a combined choir from all four ELCA church in the Triple Cities sang *thank Sei Gott in der Höhe* (Glory to God in the Highest) which was written in Germany in 1972 only 75 miles from Wittenberg where Martin Luther posted his Ninety-five Theses in 1517. Clergy, Deacons, Church Leadership Teams, choir members and musicians, as well as Bishop John Macholz participated in this event that been planned over a period of months. It was a glorious commemoration indeed!

-Jim Ford

Church Administrator Report

It was another busy year in the Church Office. My tasks as Church Administrator include: preparing bulletins and inserts for each worship service, prepare *Crossings* (the weekly e-newsletter) and the *Herald* (the monthly newsletter), order supplies, sort mail, order flowers, update the media booth for services, and administratively support the ministries of Christ the King.

Although there are many who have helped out over the past year, I especially want to thank Lorna Kinsman. Lorna comes in every Friday to fold the bulletins and inserts for the week.

Let me know if you ever have questions or suggestions, or just want to say "hi". Office hours are Tuesday-Friday 9:00AM – 1:00 PM.

-Marsha Pulz

MINISTRY REPORTS

Children's Ministries

Our Children's Ministries continue to evolve and grow here at Christ the King. Jesus and Friends Sunday School, led by Meg Burczynski, has been exploring a curriculum called Deep Blue Kids. Deep Blue is a comprehensive Bible study for children, incorporating the pillar stories of the Old and New Testaments. Each weekly adventure begins at church, and then continues at home with parent conversation and activity ideas sent home on a printed sheet. The curriculum incorporates Bible stories, science activities, arts and crafts, animated video storytelling, and active games into a lived-faith experience that will help children discover what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ today!

Looking for something to do on Sunday mornings between 10:10 and 11:05? We always welcome helpers, whether you'd like to help for one class, a month of classes, or the whole school year!

-Meg Burczynski

Binghamton University Study Space

We offered study space to our college neighbors twice this year. However, since the avenue in which to get our information out of students had changed at the University, we had no students. We are still going to explore different ways to let the community know that we are open and available to study in a safe and inviting environment.

- Carol Strano

Soup Kitchen, First UMC, Endicott

The Soup Kitchen continues to serve the folks in the neighborhood surrounding the First UMC in Endicott where the meal is provided. You all are great cooks and continued to prepare delectable entrees and delicious desserts! Before each meal, during our offering of thanks for God's Grace, we added prayer requests from the guests in attendance. I believe this has been well-received and I hope and expect it is meaningful to more than just me. Dave Banner led the effort for CTK to finance the addition of a third basin to the kitchen sinks. We are now able to clean dishes (manually) in compliance with Health Code. The folks who come to help serve are an enjoyable crew and are always open to new and interested people to join them.

~Todd Eames

Friends' Dinner

Christ the King has been participating in serving at the Friends' Dinner since March 2013. The Friends' Dinner is a weekly dinner for individuals with HIV or AIDS, held at Trinity Memorial Episcopal Church in Binghamton. Every Tuesday the dinner is prepared and served by a different church or community organization, with Christ the King serving once every other month. The dinners offer a place where guests and servers can come together, and share a meal and conversation in a safe place. In providing these meals, not only are we offering nutritious food, but we are demonstrating our care and support of individuals in the AIDS community. Over time, we are forging relationships with the individuals who attend the meal. Christ the King will be continuing this outreach ministry in 2018. The 2018 dates are: January 2, March 6, May 1, July 3, September 4, and November 6. Please contact Angie Crawford, Kelli Cruise, or Carol Strano if you would like to assist with food preparation and/or serving at a future meal.

SMALL GROUP REPORTS

Friday Morning Group facilitated by Evelyn Goetz

We are a friendly group of men and women that meet every Friday from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM in the CTK fireplace room. Our purpose is to expand our knowledge and strengthen our faith through various Bible Studies and other Christian based studies. An important part of our meetings is prayer and support for each other. We recently have started the "Socks for Souls" campaign for those in need in our community. We always welcome new members and new ideas. Consider joining us.

Friday Night Group facilitated by Bob and Linda Truman

The Friday night group is SLOWLY going through the book Slow Church. We average a dozen participants who participate in lively conversation, study, fellowship and support for one another.

Congregational Council Nominees

Christy Banner

My name is Christine (Christy) Banner. I'm a Wife, Mother and Grandmother. I'm a registered nurse by profession and have been retired for two years. I've been an active member of the Christ the King family for about fourteen years. I am a member of both the CTK Choir and the Good News Band. I feel that I have been given a unique view of our community as a whole by acting as co-chair of our most recent Call Committee and by participating in both services through music ministry. With the help of God I look forward to serving this community in anyway I can.

PROPERTY TEAM REPORT

With God’s Grace the following projects were completed (not in chronological order):

- Removed downed tree on east side of parking lot
- Approved painting in Narthex
- Installed new chairs and table in entry
- Replaced broken doorstops
- Replaced a sanctuary light bar
- Replaced an emergency light in the sanctuary
- Removed large hornet nest
- Removed creeper vines and brush– leveled the area and seeded it
- Landscaping done on the front (north side) of the church which included terracing the left hillside and extensive planting of trees, flowers, ornamental grass, and shrubs
- Hung the newly made CTK sign on entrance portico
- Cleaned the gutters
- Moved and anchored the TV in the fellowship hall
- Arranged annual maintenance for heating system
- Made corrections for annual fire inspection

Café Flood:

- Wet vac floors and rugs/set up drying system
- Clear out nursery and storage room
- Pull out rug from storage and nursery
- Demo and repair/rebuild wall between nursery and storage room
- Sealed block walls
- Painted damaged and repaired walls
- Tiled nursery and storage rooms floors
- Scoped gutter system on south side of church building
- Flushed gutter system
- Dug out drywell, replaced gravel and rebuilt block wall liner for drywell
- Dug out and extended the overflow for the drywell
- Built temp cover for drywell

We will continue to follow up with what is listed for the capital campaign and attend to those other matters that have a way of coming up now and then.

We also wish to thank God for this opportunity to serve. Many thanks to the Leadership Team for their support. Thanks to Linda, Kathy, and Debbie for leading the painting project. Thanks to Carol and Andrew for refilling the storage room. Thanks to Bob for mounting the wall hanging system. Thanks to James B. for jumping in and helping with the tree removal. Thanks to Ray Roux and Turf Grow for their care of the grounds. Thanks to Bob and Linda Truman, Deb Doyle, Zach Burczynski, Rich Lindstrom, and Jimmy B. for being our ad-hoc members. Thanks to all who help with spring and fall cleaning and those who quietly do things like: weeding, dusting, sweeping, watering, making sure we have working candles, changing vestments, jumping in when seeing a need—all of them with no desire for recognition. Great thanks to God for the opportunity to be stewards of this place of worship.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry Leonard

Pat Doyle

John Lurenz

Capital Campaign

The Capital Campaign began in April of 2015. It will officially come to a close on April of 2018. The purpose of the Capital Campaign was to have money pledged so we could complete needed projects around the church, increase our mission in our neighborhood and around the world. The congregation has pledged approximately \$118,000.00 over three years. We have collected a total of \$78855.22. We have been able to complete the following projects: update our lights in order to reduce our carbon footprint and reduce our electric bill, replace our gutters, give to the Mission Investment Fund, give to the American Church, have windows installed in our classrooms for the safety of all, have our furnace cleaned yearly, remove dead trees from our property, put snowbirds on the roof so the new gutters do not come down, repair and paint the ceiling of the church, clean the carpets, repair and seal coat the parking lot, paint pastor’s office and the narthex, replace the original doors to the original church, landscape the front and fix the bricks and handrails on the steps, and repair the water issue in the back in addition to replacing the flooring that resulted from the flood. As on December 20, we have \$57,750.93 in the account. We have earmarked \$25,000 for the boiler in case we need to replace it. We also need to replace the roof over the original church. We have accomplished so much and yet still have so much more that we want to do. Thank you to all for keeping your pledges coming. You have 3 more months to complete your pledge which amounts to \$39,144.78 more. Together, with God’s guidance, we will be able to accomplish awesome things!

FINANCE TEAM REPORT

Here are the actual results for the last two completed years, and current data for 2017 fiscal year:

	2015	2016	2017	Change from 2016	
				\$\$	%
Mission & the Wider Church	\$21,484	\$18,793	\$22,682	\$3,889	21%
Program Support	\$13,751	\$22,975	\$8,942	\$(14,033)	-61%
Pastor	\$46,238	\$-	\$69,814	\$69,814	
Staff	\$42,374	\$44,123	\$43,432	\$691	2%
Operating Expenses	\$11,357	\$9,568	\$8,770	\$798	8%
Facility	\$33,398	\$30,143	\$36,414	\$6,271	21%
Total Expenditures	\$168,602	\$125,602	\$190,054	\$64,452	50%
Giving	\$166,982	\$152,822	\$162,442	\$9,620	6%
Other Revenues	\$5,216	\$253	\$19,424	\$19,171	7577%
Total Revenues	\$172,198	\$153,075	\$181,866	\$28,791	19%
Rev less Exp	\$3,596	\$27,473	\$(8,188)		

We spent \$8,200 more than we received in 2017. Our total expenditures increased by 50% while our total revenues increased 19%. While the largest increase in expenditures is the calling of our new Pastor, expenditures in the Facilities category also increased. The Facilities expenditures were driven by spending about \$6,000 more for snow plowing than prior years, an unexpected repair to the building’s external drainage, and our utilities expenditures increasing by about \$1,500. The decrease in Program Support is from the ending of the MIT team.

Our total giving has increased slightly from 2016, still about even with 2015 giving level. The Transformational Grant from the ELCA comprises the increase in other revenues.

- Todd Eames for the Finance Team