

Concordia CONNECTION

December 2018



CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE | KIDSMIN SUNDAY | YEAR END FINANCIAL UPDATE | TURKEY BLESSING

PASTOR'S NOTE



Blessed holidays to you ... from Thanksgiving to God's giving of His Son Jesus at Christmas!

I am so excited for the many ways in which faith gets expressed at Concordia during this season. I hope you can "fan into flame" the gift of God that is in you, too. Read on, and read well, the many ways in which God's Spirit is moving around and through our congregational family.

Warmly,

Pastor Seidler
Senior Pastor
sseidler@CKhome.org

ADVENT

ADVENT DEVOTIONS

Look for them at the Spotlight Table and the wall by the Lobby desk.

COOKIES FOR THE OLDER ADULTS

A service opportunity to bake cookies for those who are homebound or live in community senior centers. Bake two dozen cookies and bring them to the church office in a disposable container or cookie tin by **Sunday, December 9**. Interested in delivering cookies? Contact **Sharon Ema** at sema@CKhome.org or 314-822-7772 x105.

KIDSMIN SUNDAY CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Join us on **Sunday, December 16, 9:20-10:20am** for a Christmas party during our regular KidsMin Sunday hour. *Please also note we will not meet on December 23 and December 30.*

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

Wednesday, December 19, 7:00pm

"Early" Christmas Eve (Sanctuary); this service is designed specifically for those who may be out-of-town on Christmas Eve.



Christmas Eve Services (Monday, December 24)

All services are identical candlelight worship and will be held in the Concordia Center. Service times are 3:00, 5:00, 7:00 (sign-language interpreted) and 10:00pm. Childcare available at 3:00, 5:00 and 7:00pm.

Tuesday, December 25, 10:00am

Christmas Day worship in the Sanctuary

ADVENT MIDWEEK WORSHIP

This year's midweek services are thematically based around a different Advent hymn each week; they are also a great opportunity to hear our seminary field workers preach. Join us on the following Wednesdays at 11:00am and 6:45pm: **December 5, December 12, December 19** (this date 11:00am only)

ADULTS



Dear Friends in Christ,

“My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.”
(Luke 1:46-47)

There is always something about Christmas that captivates me. And most of these “captivations” seem to be connected to the songs of Christmas. When I was a child, it was *Angels We Have Heard on High*. Do you remember being taught to distinctly pronounce “egg-SHELL-si-us Day-o?” I can’t sing *Hark the Herald Angels*

Sing without recalling Linus and his so-endearing reading of Luke’s Christmas story in the *A Charlie Brown Christmas* television special. But, this year, it is Mary’s Song (aka *The Magnificat* from Luke, Chapter 1). Her magnification of the Lord becomes my magnification of the Lord as I recall how He has made me His child through Holy Baptism. The rejoicing of her spirit is my rejoicing, too, for He is also God my Savior.

Mary’s Song will be the Gospel reading for the Fourth Sunday in Advent, also the Last Sunday before Christmas; it points us to Christmas. In Sundays prior, the readings will, likewise, point us to the celebration of the coming of our Lord; it is a great season of preparation. It is the season of Advent. It is the season that points us to His first coming in Bethlehem and is intended to prepare our hearts for His second coming, as well. Let there be room in your preparations for the preparation of your heart.

In addition to our Wednesday Advent worship opportunities, our Adults and Older Adults get an extra dose of Christmas prep on **TUESDAY, December 11**. It is our annual **Christmas Celebration Lunch and Learn**. The theme this year is “*Emmanuel, God with Us*.” I hope you will join us for food, conversation and inspiration. And, be assured, there will be songs of Christmas. The meal, which includes their specialty Chicken Modega, new potatoes, green beans, salad, rolls and beverages, is catered by the Hawthorne Inn for \$15 per person. As always, enjoy special entertainment and Christmas music with fellowship. Bring a dozen cookies to share. RSVP by contacting **Patty Wilson** at pwilson@CKhome.org or 314-822-7772 x121.

There are also JOY-ous songs of Christmas to delight in on **Thursday, December 20**, at *Sing! An Irish Christmas*, a special concert featuring Keith and Kristyn Getty and our own Concordia Festival Choir. They had me at “JOY,” and I hope you will likewise be had.

In Advent anticipation and JOY,

Pastor Meggers

Associate Pastor

dmeggers@CKhome.org

GERMAN SCHOOL CHRISTMAS

We are excited to invite you to the German School’s 56th Weihnachtsfeier, the traditional German Christmas celebration of the *German Cultural Society of St. Louis & the German School Assoc. of Greater St. Louis*, a non-profit organization offering affordable German language classes for children & adults at Concordia. The event is **Saturday, December 8**; performances at 10:00am at German Cultural Society Hall (3652 South Jefferson Avenue). Admission is \$5 donation.

WORSHIP ARTS



This holiday season brings several special worship opportunities and schedule adjustments, so please refer to Concordia's website or our weekly *FrontPage* emails to stay informed as you make plans:

Advent Midweek Worship

This year's midweek services are thematically based around a different Advent hymn each week; they are also a great opportunity to hear our seminary field workers preach. Join us on the following Wednesdays at 11:00am and 6:45pm:

December 5, December 12, December 19 (this date 11:00am only)

Lutheran High School South (LHSS) Music

We are excited to host musical groups from Lutheran High School South this December! Be sure to attend the following events:

Friday, December 7 at 7:00pm – Concert featuring the Wind Symphony, Concert Band and Jazz Band

Sunday, December 9 at 9:30am – The Wind Symphony will lead music for worship in the Concordia Center

Sunday, December 16 at 7:00pm – Concert featuring the LHSS choirs

Sunday, December 16 – Worship

We are pleased to offer special music in worship on this Sunday. The 8:15am service will feature music led by our Sanctuary Choir and accompanied by a string and woodwind ensemble; at 9:30am and 10:45am, our Children and Youth Choir will share some special songs to enhance worship in the Concordia Center.

“Early” Christmas Eve Worship

On **Wednesday, December 19, at 7:00pm**, we will have a special Christmas Eve service designed for those members who will be out-of-town over the Christmas holiday.

Keith and Kristyn Getty in Concert

Concordia is excited to host *Sing! An Irish Christmas*, led by none other than the internationally acclaimed Keith and Kristyn Getty and their all-star band. They have performed in the most prestigious concert halls and churches around the country, and we are honored to host them here in our Concordia Center. The Gettys have written several songs we sing regularly in worship, like *In Christ Alone*, *How Deep the Father's Love for Us*, and *O Church Arise*.

Tickets for the concert have already sold out! If you have already purchased them, we look forward to seeing you on **Thursday, December 20, at 7:30pm** in the Concordia Center. Come sing along with Keith & Kristyn and Concordia's Festival Choir for an evening that unites tradition and innovation in a vibrant celebration of the season!

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Services

Monday, December 24 – Christmas Eve services at 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, and 10:00pm in the Concordia Center

Tuesday, December 25 – Christmas Day worship at 10:00am in the Sanctuary

Our normal worship schedule will resume the weekend of December 29-30. *Please note there will not be a New Year's Eve service on Monday, December 31, this year.*

LIFT UP YOUR HEARTS

Research has shown that lifting up your voice in a choir with others actually synchronizes your heart rates. So, literally, when you sing in a church choir, you physically experience the unity of the Body of Christ. That's cool stuff! And ... that unity is experienced in other ways as well: we unite around the Word as *“we sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with thankfulness in our hearts”* (Ephesians 5:19), pray, and lead the congregation in the Lord's song. Everyone who comes feels better when they leave ... and faith is increased in the hearts of those who hear us sing. A place in the choir is waiting for you! We practice Wednesday nights, from 7:00-8:20pm, in the Music Room between the school and the Sanctuary on the church's top floor.

Brendan Knorp

Director for the Worship Arts

bknorp@CKhome.org

KIDSMIN

KIDSMIN SUNDAY

We focus this month on the humble means by which our Savior, Jesus, came into the world. The people had waited for the Savior; we, too, wait ... for the same Lord Jesus, who came into the world as a baby, to come again in great glory on the Last Day.

December 9* – Hearing the Good News—Jesus is born!

December 16* – Christmas Celebration

December 23 – No KidsMin Sunday

December 30 – No KidsMin Sunday

*December 9 and 16, we will collect items for children at St. Louis Children's Hospital.

Donations can be dropped off upon arrival at KidsMin Sunday. Here are the Top 10 needs:

1. Infant/toddler toys (i.e. music/light-up toys, teethingers, rattles, crib mobiles)
2. Arts and craft supplies (i.e. Play-Doh, markers, crayons, and such)
3. Uno and other card games
4. Gifts for teens (refer to Lovelight list)
5. Lego sets
6. Small playsets (Little People, small figurines, plastic foods, and more)
7. Action figures
8. Barbie dolls
9. Small bottles of acrylic paint
10. Ear buds/headphones

You can find a full list of items to donate at stlouischildrens.org/giving/give/donate-items-from-our-wish-list.

CONCORDIA KIDS NIGHT

Grades 1-5, join us **Wednesdays** beginning, **January 9**, from **5:30-7:15pm**, for Concordia Kids Night (Kids Song begins at 5:00pm). This experience for children will consist of four different activities, all designed to strengthen their relationship with God and with each other. Register for the Spring semester at CKhome.org/KidsNight.

Rebecca Schultz

Children's Ministry Assistant

rschultz@CKhome.org



GATHERING T-SHIRTS

Purchase an "I Got This" T-shirt to support the youth going to the 2019 LCMS Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, MN. T-shirts are \$15 and available in several colors, short-sleeved, long-sleeved and youth sizes—they make great Christmas gifts! Visit CKhome.org/NYG to order today! Deadline is Wednesday, December 12.



EXECUTIVE REPORT



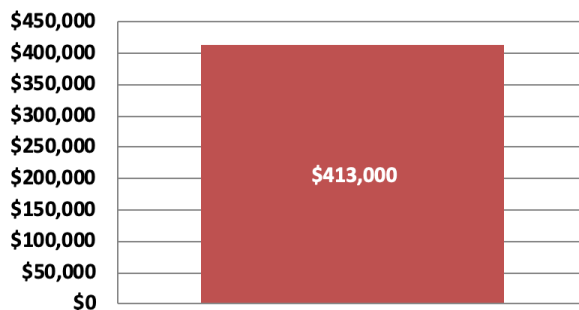
YEAR-END FINANCIAL NEEDS

As we move into December, we estimate our financial need to meet our financial obligations is \$415,000. The last two years we have reached our December target. Your “intentional, sacrificial and joyful” generosity can help in this successful year of ministry and provide a solid foundation for 2019.

NOW IS A GREAT TIME TO GIVE STOCK!

Did you know if you donate appreciated stock you will have no capital gains tax to pay? In addition, your tax-deductible contribution equals the market value of the stock on the date of the gift. This is a great way to maximize your gifts to ministry and save you money at the same time. Concordia has an easy process to donate stock. If interested, contact me at kanderson@CKhome.org.

Inbound Offering Need



December Need

OUR NEXT STEP UPDATE

Our collection of pledges is going well. Approximately 64% of pledge dollars has been given to the project. Based on the current payment schedule, we should be able to pay our bills in cash until February assuming donations continue to be given at the current rate. In March, we will begin to dip into our construction loan. If you have been waiting to start fulfilling your pledge, or are interested in pledging, we encourage you to do so. The longer we can wait to incur debt the better!

The construction is a couple weeks behind due to the inclement weather. We still hope to have the new parking lot in place before Christmas. Otherwise, everything is going well.

STAFF UPDATES

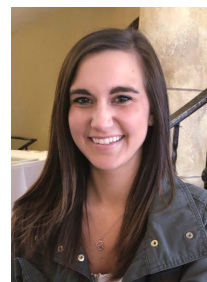
Kelly Callahan, who served faithfully on Support Staff in various roles over the last 6+ years, left our staff on November 30. Kelly, a lifelong Concordia member, will still be here in worship and, hopefully, serving in other volunteer capacities as well. When you see her, please thank her for her service. We wish her well in her next chapter.



Katie Mulchek, our Director of Communications, is leaving our staff to be a stay-at-home-mom and raise her two girls, Audrey (5) and Abby (2). She is thankful for the last five years on staff at the church where she was born and raised. She and her family will continue to worship with us and serve in other capacities.



Jenna Hartmann will be starting as our new Director of Communications this month. Jenna graduated from Bowling Green State University in 2017 with a Bachelor of Science in Technology in Visual Communication Technology. She has been working as a Production Artist at Dierbergs since graduating and is excited to start this new opportunity at Concordia and CCLS. Jenna enjoys exploring new restaurants and spending time with her family and fiancé, Nathan Dehn.

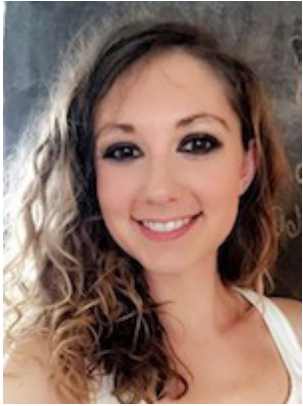


DIRECTOR OF SENIOR YOUTH UPDATE

After the nomination period concluded, we had 16 individuals on our list who we elevated to the next level and sent the job description with a few more questions. As of 11/28/18, seven of the 16 have removed themselves from our list, we have received more information from one, and are awaiting feedback from the other eight candidates. If you missed the nomination deadline, but have a great candidate in mind, it is not too late! Please contact me..

Kristin Anderson
Executive Director
kanderson@CKhome.org

SPECIAL NEEDS MINISTRY



For You created my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Your works are wonderful, I know that full well. – Psalm 139:13-14



Thanksgiving may have come and gone, but I'm sure at some point—amongst all the hustle-and-bustle of food and family—that each of us paused to reflect on what we are most thankful for in our lives. I, myself, am so very thankful for my core group of dedicated volunteers that joins me each week to teach our kiddos and adults with special needs about their friend, Jesus Christ. I am not exaggerating when I say there is NO WAY that I could do it without them. The reason for that is this: Typically, in order for a child or youth with special needs to participate in a program at Concordia, they need the one-on-one assistance of a buddy to do so!

As we look forward into the new year, there will be youth with special needs who are unable to attend programming without the assistance of new volunteers in the Buddy Ministry.

Who Is a Buddy?

Buddies are those people with hearts that desire to serve children, youth and adults with special needs and to help them learn about the love of Jesus. Buddies have mostly been middle school to college-aged youth, but adults are encouraged to volunteer as well.

What Does a Buddy Do?

Sometimes all that is needed from a buddy is to be in the same room when the kiddo requires a little bit of extra encouragement and guidance. Other times, a buddy will work closely with their friend with special needs, providing constant support so they can participate with their peers.

Sound intimidating? It shouldn't! Each volunteer is trained by me before ever being placed with a child or youth with special needs. No buddy is ever left to "fly solo" until I know they are ready to go.

How Much Time Is Required of a Buddy?

Buddies volunteer during children and youth programming on Wednesday nights and/or Sunday mornings. We have opportunities for working with the adults on Tuesday evenings, as well.

Only want to volunteer during the Summer? We have needs for buddies during that time frame, too!

A weekly commitment is appreciated, but not required, to join the Buddy Ministry.

Here's What Some of Our Buddies Have to Say:

"Being a buddy has been an amazing experience because I have been able to make the Word of God accessible for all kids."

"It's a lot of fun being able to connect with the kids and it's a really good experience."

"I think it's really awesome being a buddy. I really connected with Christ through this experience."

"Being a buddy has impacted me by helping someone special with their faith journey and seeing them grow in God."

If you would like to be a part of the Buddy Ministry, or if you have any questions, please contact me.

Jessica Crawford

Director of Children and Families with Special Needs
jcrawford@CKhome.org, 314-374-0682

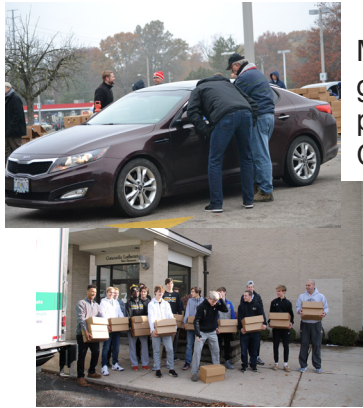


TURKEY BLESSING

Greetings Saints at Concordia Lutheran Church,

There is so much to give thanks for. The Biblical author Jeremiah writes, *"The mercies of God are new every morning."* And, for each new mercy, we give thanks. These mercies are good food, good weather, good reputation, spouses, children, friendships, shoes, shirts, and the like. These mercies are gifts. And for this we say, *"Thank you!"*

This month we would like to highlight a unique mercy for which we give thanks, namely, the Turkey Blessing. This year marks the fourth time our congregation has hosted this event with men from 8 to 80 years old contributing. Men of all ages worked side-by-side to bless those who might not be able to eat a turkey dinner otherwise.



Members from our church, and the surrounding community, gathered together on the Saturday before Thanksgiving to pack Thanksgiving meals. These meals were distributed through Concordia Lutheran Church, All Nations Lutheran Church, and Christian Friends of New Americans (CFNA). Saturday began with a worship service immediately followed by the packing. During that morning, we packed approximately 1,200 meals to be given away.

The next day, after church, the men gathered together to distribute the meals over the course of four hours. Because of construction at Concordia, these dinners were given away at Saint Louis Community College—Meramec. Each car was offered a meal and prayer. During the event, we even changed a tire!



HERE ARE SOME REFLECTIONS FROM THOSE WHO PARTICIPATED:

"Seeing men and their children/grandchildren spend time in prayer with others was an awesome experience. I speak for myself when I say that I don't speak of my faith or pray often enough with my ... It is also very humbling to hear how needy our neighbors are. This turkey dinner may not seem like a big deal to me, but to the recipient it is the relief of a big meal provided for their family. To sum it up, the physical gift of a meal shows the love that we have for our neighbors. But it is only a symbol of Christ's love for us that we are fortunate to share with others during Turkey Blessing."—Matt Bayes

"By the grace of God, we visited 18 families from All Nations Church and Christian Friends of New Americans to distribute the turkey dinners and many of them accepted our prayers in Jesus' name. In total, we delivered turkeys to 38 families from 11 nationalities."—Vicky and Hady Matta

"We are preparing the way of the Lord by showing the mercy of Jesus to the community."—Chris Paavola

God is merciful every single day. I encourage you this Advent season to set aside time to reflect on the ways in which God gives His mercies. Certainly food, family, and fellowship are among them, but also remember to give thanks for the mercy of faith and pray for those who have yet to receive this mercy. Thank you, God!

May you have a blessed Advent season,

Rev. Jacob Schultz

Pastoral Assistant

jschultz@CKhome.org



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



The Bryant Family

Greg, Tara and Gage live in Rock Hill, MO. Greg was born and raised in St. Louis and specializes in the design and development of commercial property. Tara grew up in Albuquerque, NM, and is a flight attendant for Southwest Airlines. When they are not traveling for work, Greg loves to fish and be outdoors; Tara has a passion for cooking and loves to entertain and be with friends. Gage is a 3rd grader at Christ Community Lutheran School (CCLS) and

can't get enough soccer and football. When he is not on the field, he loves to fish with dad, hang with friends and, of course, enjoy mom's food.

The Nowlis Family

Steve, Chandra, and Abbie have lived in St. Louis since 2010, when they moved here from Scottsdale, AZ. Steve is a marketing professor at Washington University; he also works as a nationwide legal consultant for trademark infringement cases. Steve attended Stanford University for undergrad and UC Berkley for his MBA and PhD. Chandra, who has been in healthcare for more than 17 years, graduated from Arizona State University and is currently a nurse practitioner. Abbie is an 8th grader at Truman and enjoys playing guitar, volleyball, and assisting children with special needs. They have four dogs: Maya, Daisy, Bella, and Mia. World travelers, the Nowlis family recently visited Australia and New Zealand over this past Summer. They are excited to be a part of the Concordia family.



The Wells Family

Jacob is from St. Louis and Jatanna is from a small town in southern Missouri. Jacob and his family are long-time members of Concordia. The couple met at Drury University in Springfield, MO. In 2014, Jacob proposed while they were out geocaching; they were married in April 2015 and moved to St. Louis last year. Jacob is in IT technical support and Jatanna is a photographer. They own a lab mix puppy, Aellana, who loves people and playing fetch. On June 30

of this year, they added baby Theodore to their family. He is now four months old! Though a little shy, he loves to babble and watch Aellana play. All are very grateful for the welcome they have received since coming to Concordia.



Chuck Kennedy

Chuck lives in Crestwood. He works in mortgage loans and enjoys playing the drums for various bands.



The Koebbe Family

Gus and Laura work for her husband's family business, Gus' Pretzels; Gus



is the third generation! Their daughter, Reese, goes to Lindbergh Early Childhood Education two days a week and is also involved in swim and gymnastics. Susan is seven months old, very smiley and loves to pull Reese's hair. The Koebbes spend lots of time with their families and the girls playing with their cousins. They also love being outside, running and going to the lake. The family has one dog, named Nellie.

New Member Orientation

We invite those interested in becoming members to participate in a class which overviews the Christian faith and the Christian life shared by Concordia's family. Our next orientation is **January 28** at 6:30pm. Childcare available. Sign up at CKhome.org/membership.

CCLS

CCLS DINNER AUCTION

The 2019 Hearts on Fire CCLS Dinner Auction will be held **Saturday, February 16, 2019** at Orlando Gardens Banquet Center in south St. Louis county. Please mark your calendar and make plans to attend or support this special fundraising event for the CCLS community. Tickets are \$75 per person or \$700 for a table of 10. Sponsorship, advertising, and donation opportunities are available. For more information, please visit ccls-stlouis.org. Contact Joel and Kerrie Karsten, Dinner Auction Co-Chairs, at auction@ccls-stlouis.org with any questions.



NIGHT TO SHINE

Concordia is proud to host **Night to Shine**, sponsored by the Tim Tebow Foundation, on **February 8, 2019**. This unforgettable prom-night experience, for people with special needs ages 14 and over, is centered on God's love. In addition, in this Fifth Anniversary year, the event is expected to serve more than 100,000 people with special needs through 200,000 volunteers and 700 host churches in all 50 states and 20 countries around the world!



Each *Night to Shine* guest enters this complimentary event by red carpet, complete with a warm welcome from a friendly crowd. Once inside, guests receive the royal treatment, including everything from limousine rides, red-carpet "paparazzi," professional photography and hair-and-makeup stations to corsages and boutonnieres, shoe shines, a catered dinner, karaoke room and a Respite Room for parents and caretakers. And, don't forget the dance floor ... all leading up to the moment when each guest is crowned as king or queen of the prom!

As you can imagine, we want our *Night to Shine* to be the best prom in the world, so we hope that you will consider helping us make that possible by volunteering for this very special event. It is sure to become your favorite night of the year!

If you would like to partner with us and be part of this worldwide movement, please visit NightToShineKirkwood.com/ volunteer to see the complete list of open volunteer positions and to register. We still have **more than 100 volunteer positions available** on nine different volunteer teams!

Is there someone you would like to invite to this fantastic event? Take an invitation or send them to our website at NightToShineKirkwood.com/register!

PRE-MARRIAGE SEMINAR

Many couples today are spending a great deal of time and money planning for their wedding day, but spending little, if any, time planning for their future marriage. You must pass a test before you receive your driver's license, yet you can get a marriage license for just a few dollars. A successful relationship requires more preparation than an elaborate wedding!

Concordia values the importance of strong Christian families and wants to support and encourage couples who are planning to be married. We require each couple that will be married at Concordia to attend a **Pre-Marriage Seminar, led by Charlie and Debbie Davis**. This seminar will be based on the **PREPARE/ENRICH inventory** and will cover marriage expectations, personality issues, communication, conflict resolution, financial management, leisure activities, sexual expectations, children/parenting, family/friends, role relationships and spiritual beliefs. Charlie and Debbie look forward to working with each couple, helping them to prepare for a lifelong marriage. They are **trained PREPARE/ENRICH facilitators** and have been leading these seminars at Concordia for more than 10 years.



The **seminar dates for 2019** are **Saturdays, March 2, June 1, September 7**, from **10:00am-4:00pm**. Email Debbie Davis at ddavis@CKhome.org to register.



CONCORDIA
Lutheran Church

BE STILL, BE ONE, BE FAITHFUL

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