Christ Lutheran Church
10827 N. Main Street
P.O. Box 737
Mantua, OH 44255

Rev. Blake J. Martzowka

Kayla Ballentine
Administrative Assistant
Office Hours: M-F 10:30 am-2:30 pm
Phone: (330) 274-2849
Email: clcmantua737@yahoo.com
Website: christlutheranmantua.org
Sunday Live Stream: YouTube

Sunday School	9:45 am
Sunday Worship	11:00 am

February 2026

Christ's Messenger

The Heart of Christ, in the Midst of Greater Mantua"

A Message from Pastor Blake…

Christ Jesus has united us to Himself and to one another. By dying on the cross, He gathered all people to Himself (John 12:32). There He shed His blood for the forgiveness of the world's sins, washing away the sin that separates us from Himself and from one another. By the power of the Holy Spirit, He makes us members of His body through Holy Baptism (1 Cor. 12:13). As members of His body, though we are diverse and different, we are all members of one another. In the Lord's Supper, He gives us His true body and blood to eat and to drink in, with, and under the bread and wine, so that just we all partake in one bread and one cup, so too do we partake in the one body of our Lord and become His one body, the Church (1 Cor. 10:16-17).

This union with Christ Jesus and one another in Christ Jesus accomplished through His manifold Word is the union for which Jesus prays to His Father in John 17:14-21. Union with Christ Jesus and with one another is accomplished solely by Christ Jesus on account of His death and through His Word. Hence our union is in Christ Jesus because of His Word and Sacrament, not because we share the same opinions, not because we always agree, not because we are always perfectly loving, etc. The one, holy, Christian and apostolic Church exists from Christ, through Christ, and in Christ. For this reason, St. Paul attributes our union with Christ Jesus and one another solely to the Triune God and His work: **"There is one body and one Spirit – just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call – one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."** (Eph. 4:4-6)

Yet sinful human beings seek to divide themselves from Christ and one another. That is why Paul writes to the Corinthians: **"I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment."** (1 Cor. 1:10) Though Christ has united all people to Himself, some separate themselves from Christ by refusing to believe in His promise of forgiveness, life, and salvation given on account of His death and resurrection. In spite of the fact that Christ Jesus has

Pastor's message continues on page 2…

washed away the sins of the entire world, some deny this universal forgiveness from Christ when they refuse to forgive our neighbor and seek forgiveness for ourselves.

Though we are one body, we do not always live out this reality. We allow differing opinions on matters not relating to the proclamation of the Gospel to divide us. Sometimes we fail to speak and act out of love for our brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus and offend them. Such offense – whether intentional or unintentional – is sin and it can drive our brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus away from the Gospel (Mark 9:42). The offended – when they allow such offense to drive them away – similarly sin, choosing to value their own feelings and sense of worth above the thing that unites offender and offended: the forgiveness of sins in Christ Jesus (Matt. 5:10-12). The only legitimate grounds for division within the Church is when we separate ourselves from a congregation because there the Word of God is not taught in its purity and truth, and baptism and the Lord's Supper are not administered in accordance with the Gospel (1 Tim. 6:3-5, 11).

At St. Thomas and Christ Lutheran, we are blessed to have a rich confession of faith. One that rightly and faithfully confesses the truth of God's Word in the Creeds, the Small Catechism, and the Book of Concord. These confessions keep us in communion with the Church of God throughout the world and every age because they help to preserve the Gospel among us (2 Tim. 3:14-17). Not every Christian church is so blessed. At Christ and St. Thomas, we preach and hear Christ and Him crucified, the only message with power to unite us with God and one another. What St. Paul wrote thousands of years ago is true for us today. He was sent **"to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."** (1 Cor. 1:17-18)

Dear Christians, you are one body with Christ Jesus and each other. You have God-given union because of Jesus' death and because He gives you participation in this death through His Word. The union of the Church is not a human work, just as salvation is not a human work. All we can do is live out this union, a union we already have, just as we love because Christ first loved us and gave up His life for us (1 John 4:10). Be who you are, what you are, one in Christ Jesus. When someone shares an opinion you don't agree with, show empathy and seek to understand where they're coming from, and above all, remember that you are one with them (Eph. 4:2). If someone causes offense, remember that Christ Jesus has died once and for all to forgive this and every offense, and therefore you have the privilege to forgive every offense and seek reconciliation (Matt. 18:15-20).

Acknowledge that though we are one, we are many with different gifts: not all of us perform the same acts of love, not all of us have the same talents, not all of us share the same background, not all of us have the same expectations. Yet though we are many and different, we can appreciate, accept, accommodate, and compromise with one another because we are one body (1 Cor. 12:12-20). And above all, remember that you and your brothers and sisters in Christ are sinners, always in need of forgiveness, and it is for that very reason we gather together every Sunday, to receive the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation from one and the same Christ Jesus, our head (1 John 1:8-10).

Pastor Blake

Worship Schedule

"Serving With a Heart Like Jesus"

	February 1st Communion/Scouts	February 8th	February 15th Communion	February 22nd
Greeter		Melisa Pozwick	Linda Hobson	Pat South
Acolyte	Abigail Flynn	Makenna B	Lily Kanengeiser	Jameson Flynn
YACA	Ryan Goodell	N/A	Amy Toothman	N/A
Reader		John Heinl	Jenny Clemens	Ron Stamm
Ushers		Larry Q	Brian Lottig	Melisa Pozwick
		Joanne Q	Lexi Ballard	Jon Pozwick
Media	Brian Swires	Becca Goodell	Melisa Pozwick	Christina Eaton
PowerPoint	Lucas Swires	Natalie Goodell	Jon Pozwick	Lexi Ballard
Deacon	Tracy Stamm	Laura Keen	Larry Q	Jake Ballard
Elder	Jenny Clemens	Jenny Clemens	Jenny Clemens	Jenny Clemens

4 C's Local Food Pantry

February donations being collected are

-Instant Mashed Potatoes (box)

-Canned Pasta

-Cereal/Granola Bars

-Individual Mac & Cheese Cups

Please place donations in the basket in the narthex marked "4 C's"

Christ Lutheran Church is a drop-off location for the 4C's

MEMORY CHALLENGE VERSE:

"For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

1 Corinthians 1:25

For your information…

SCOUT SUNDAY- On **February 1st** members of the local Scouts troop, Troop 575, will be helping lead service. Be sure to be there and show your support.

ASH WEDNESDAY- Join us **February 18th** at 7 PM for our Ash Wednesday Service.

LENT- Our Lenten Soup Suppers will begin **February 25th** as to not intefere with the free community meal the Wednesday before. Dinner at 6 PM and service at 7 PM. Sign-ups will be in the narthex.

EASTER- Easter Sunday is **April 5th**. If you would like to purchase a potted lily to help decorate the church for the occasion, order forms will be available soon. Cost is $12.50 per plant. If you do not wish to take it home after service please see Kat Flynn. She has offered to donate any left over plants to a local nursing home.

ATTENTION! FELLOWSHIP HALL UPDATE

We are excited to share that the Fellowship Hall will soon undergo a deep cleaning and a fresh coat of paint! Huge thank you to the Scouts who have graciously volunteered their time to lead this project as a gift to our church community. We ask that everyone stay upstairs beginning February 14th.

Work should be completed by the end of the month.

THANK YOU!

Jameson and Abigail would like to thank everyone who donated items for the nursing home. Over 10 bags of items were taken to the nursing home recently and the Christmas poinsettias. The scout troop and Eva's preschool made cards for the residents. Long Meadow Nursing Home staff and residents were so thankful for these items! Thank you again for your support!!

-Jameson, Abigail, and the Flynn family

LOVE BASKETS WERE GIVEN TO SEVERAL MEMBERS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

INSTALLATION OF NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS

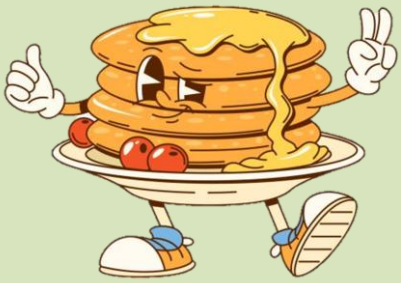
Youth Education

Christina Eaton
Christian Ed Director

Sunday School

-We plan to have a Valentines Day party 2/15 we will likely be upstairs. Celebrate God's Love!

-Thanks to all who came to family movie day. We had a surprise showing of David as the theater obtained a copy the night before! We are so grateful to community partners like the Garrettsville Theater!



Start inviting friends and family to the Pancake Breakfast- Save the date **March 21st**.

We are looking for sponsors!
For your donation of ***$100*** your business card will be featured on our placemats during the event and two tickets to attend.

$200 gets the placemat and signage on the wall the day of the event.

$500 gets you all the above and on the main signage by the road and flyers.

$700 - Your donation includes all the above and you may include brochures or other items to hand out and 6 total tickets to attend.

Business card or logo to be used can be emailed to Christina.eaton2@expresspros.com

Checks maybe payable to: Christ Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 737, Mantua, OH 44255
Please put pancake in the memo.

Sunday School

9:45-10:45 am
3 classrooms

Ages 3-6yrs	Hannah Owen
Ages 7-12yrs	Christina Eaton
Youth 13+	Melisa Pozwick

Snack sign up posted on Sunday School board.

Youth News

SUPER BOWL SUBS - Order today! Pick up extra forms to share with coworker and neighbors. Order and extra one for a great lunch on Monday! Proceeds benefit the youth convention to San Antonio 2028!

SAVE THE DATE!
Pancake Breakfast
Saturday, **March 21st**!

SAVE THE DATE!
VBS will be held June 8th – 12th
Theme: True North
Don't forget to bring a friend.
See you there!

Women's Ministry

All Women in the Congregation

LOAVES AND FISHES COMMUNITY MEALS

February 18th 5:00-6:30 pm

The free meals are served the 3rd Wednesday of every month in the Christ Lutheran Church downstairs Fellowship Hall. If you and your friends would like to help (you don't have to be a member to help), contact Pat South at 330-257-0948 for what is needed.

Women's Guild Meeting: **February 19th** @ 6:30 PM Special guest speaker Tracy Stamm. Join us while she tells us about her trip to South Africa.

Loaves and Fishes Free Community Meal celebrated its 17th year on November 19, 2025. On that night, 53 diners were served turkey loin, stuffing, mashed potatoes, peas, and homemade cranberry salad plus dessert and beverage. The workers were Pat South, Melanie Seal, Shirley Bellar, Fran Buxton, Linda Hobson, Barb Goodell, and her young friend Arianna, Joanne Quesenberry and Brian and Diane Lottig. Donations totaled $208.00.

We received a card from Earl, one of our diners, who helps with dishes after eating. He wrote: "Happy Thanksgiving. Thank you for the many meals that you all offer to the community area. I know that the Lord will bless you all with the service you do to those that come. Hebrews 6:10. "May the Grace of God fill your hearts and His love be a blessing to you"."

The year was full of blessings from many people. In December 2024 we happily received a donation of homemade cookies from Lori Podojil and her children Haley and Frank IV. Also at that meal we were blessed to receive cookies baked by church members left from the Cookie Walk. One diner at that meal put a small note in the donation box which read: "We appreciate all you do in preparing the meals."

Also in December Donna Snider potted Christmas Cactus cuttings which we gave to our diners. Donna also joined us at two meals to work and we thank her for her help.

In January and February we experienced cold and snowy conditions. We are very thankful to Kayla Ballentine for shoveling and making it safer for our diners. This is her special ministry.

We had 2 meal overlaps this year – the Advent Soup Supper in December and the VBS family meal in June. We thankfully received some pasta, sauce and croutons from Christina Eaton left from a school function which we used in June. We received a lovely thank you note from her which read: "Thank you for cooking for VBS! Teamwork really paid off. Thank you for helping making VBS stellar!" In August we were blessed to receive leftover brats from the Corn Roast. We are very thankful to the Goodells for their meat donations and Maureen Ballentine for her corn. Dessert donations are always appreciated. We could not continue our ministry without the generosity of everyone.

We averaged about 40 diners per month in 2024 and finances are doing well. We are thankful for several donations from the daughter of a charter member family. The Lord has truly blessed us throughout the 17 years. -Diane Lottig

Council

CHAIRPERSON: Linda Clark

I want to thank Diane Lottig for all the years she has served as council secretary. Also, thank you to Melisa Pozwick for serving 3 terms as Chairman. These are very trying positions. A big thank you to you both. Council is beginning work on several things. 1. An Ad Hoc IT committee, has been put in place. 2. We are working on the parameters and duties of a Security team. 3. All committees will be taking a look at their duties to see if we need any changes there. Also, we will be reviewing the Constitution to see if there are any updates needed there. I want to thank all the voters for their support in electing me to this new position. God Bless.

COUNCIL MEETING:

Our next council meeting will be held on **February 8th** after service. We welcome anyone who would like to attend the meeting. The Trustees will be hosting coffee hour.

TREASURER: Tim Snodgrass

The following is our financial data for the past 3 months:

Month	Income	Expense	Net Income	YTD Net
Sept 25	$11,836	$12,546	-$710	-$7,695
Oct 25	$27,443	$12,050	$15,393	$7,194
Nov 25	$12,685	$12,574	$111	$7,305
Dec 25	$12,513	$13,799	-$1,286	$6,019
Year-End 2025	$158,279	$137,956	$6,019	

2026 Officers

Council:

Linda Clark	Chairperson
Anna Lee Heinl	Vice-Chairperson
Donna Snider	Secretary
Tim Snodgrass	Treasurer
John Heinl	Financial Secretary

Committee Chairpersons:

Ron Stamm	Head Elder
Katherine Flynn	Head Deacon
John Clark	Head Trustee
Christina Eaton	Education Director

"Hearts from Christ"

The Elders at Christ are starting a new charitable fund to assist members and friends of Christ Lutheran Church who find themselves in need. This fund will be called "Hearts from Christ." It is established to provide financial assistance for active members of Christ Lutheran Church who are in need as well as to purchase a memento of care for active members of Christ Lutheran Church and friends of the congregation going through difficult times. If someone needs assistance, they should contact Pastor Blake and the elders. Any request will be kept strictly confidential. This fund will be completely dependent upon free-will offerings given by the congregation. You can donate to the Hearts from Christ fund anytime of the year by marking an envelope dedicated to "Hearts from Christ" and placing it in the offering plate.

God answers prayer.
At Christ Lutheran, we know the power of prayer.

Ezekiel 22:30 says, *"I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before me IN THE GAP on behalf of the land."*

GAP, (God Answers Prayer), is one of these prayer ministries. Those who serve in this ministry serve in the gap that Ezekiel wrote of as they are available to pray for people.

Please contact Barb Goodell who will begin the prayer chain for your need.

GAP MINISTRY

Barb Goodell	**330-274-2161**
Hannah Owen	**330-931-0839**
Kelly Britt	**330-357-1101**
Diane Lottig	**330-274-2868**
Linda Hobson	**330-562-8327**
June Zamecnik	**330-281-7202**
Tracy Stamm	**330-571-0304**
Shirley Bellar	**330-281-8327**
Anna Lee Heinl	**330-842-2080**
Joanne Quesenberry	**330-274-2991**
Christina Eaton	**234-703-9735**
Pat South	**330-257-0948**
Ellen Froelich	**330-274-2081**

Birthday Blessings on your special day and throughout the year!

Maureen Ballentine	2/3
Frankie Bowman	2/4
Carley Kerkhoven	2/4
Clara Blunk	2/11
Mike Snodgrass	2/16
Amy Toothman	2/17
Charles Lehota	2/24
Katie Toothman	2/25

Prayers for Hope, Healing, Comfort & Guidance

Members

Corey Flynn, Kat Flynn, Tim Toothman, Fred Myers, Gay & Bob Wetshtein, Marla Bellar

Young Families

The Ballard/Eaton Family, The Ballentines, The Flynns, The Goodells, The Goodrichs, The Koerlins, The Martzowkas, The Owens, The Parrs, The Pozwicks, The Rickseckers, The Sandricks, The Swires, The Toothmans, The Tutwilers

Shut-ins

Linda Koerlin, Tom Briggs, Jill Kravcisin, Becky Krichbaum

Friends & Family

Steven Blunk, Linda Havener, Lisa Bey, Rick Kilpatrick, Sam Weise, Dylan Graybeal & Klarissa Schott, Jim Flynn, Dwight Husk, Theresa Higgins, Tommy Barr, Oke Meyer, Mary Smith, Andrea Belding, Brenda Elling, Pam & Bob Maynard, Nancy Lacan, Kelly Oles, Mart Clark, Dwight & Dottie Cherry, Keith Goodell, Kelly Styron

Military Service

Caleb Dean Pete, Robert South, Owen Heinl
Monte Stamm

Baptismal Birthdays

John Heinl – February 9th
Brian Lottig – February 20th
Katherine Flynn – February 21st
Linda Hobson – February 24th

Wedding Anniversaries

Tim & Katie Toothman – February 14th