

# CENTRAL LUTHERAN MESSENGER

1604 W. Yakima Avenue,  
Yakima, WA 98902 (509) 575-6490  
[office@clcyakima.org](mailto:office@clcyakima.org) · [www.clcyakima.org](http://www.clcyakima.org)  
Pastor Kathleen Anderson

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**August Messenger Deadline is**  
**July 27, 2022**

**Please e-mail your articles to**  
**Central Lutheran Church**

**[Lea.Ramirez@clcyakima.org](mailto:Lea.Ramirez@clcyakima.org)**



## Around the Internets

While reading around the Internets one day, I came across an article by an Episcopal priest that is spot-on. Many, many people, both inside and outside of the church, are offering post-mortems on the decline and looming demise of the U.S. church. I read as many of them as I can, mostly because most people, inside and outside of the church, read like they think they have THE answer. Spoiler alert: there is no one answer or solution to what some of us within the system watch with dismay as the church dwindles away like sand running through our fingers. Rather, there are a number of reasons why the U.S. church is in decline, and all the reasons I can think of right off the top of my head are entirely fixable by us.

The U.S.'s biggest contribution to this deterioration is the so-called "evangelical" movement in which a crabbed and narrow group of people have bled almost all meaning out of the word "Christian" by their very un-Christlike speech and behavior. These people have created a Christless Christianity, which sounds like it ought to have been a tricky thing to accomplish, but as Kurt Andersen recognizes in "Fantasyland," the kind of nonsensical bigotry these people spew is actually very American, so it blends right in with the societal discourse, even as it alienates followers-of-Jesus discourse and pushes faith language to the margins and beyond,

I'm not saying that this article I found on the Internets has all the answers, either, or all the causes. The causes and reasons for church decline are both simple and complicated, and numerous. But this author is right on with the ones that he lists. There are other reasons and causes that are right on, as well, but these are, perhaps, the most obvious and most painful. On the other hand, we can overcome all of them if we have the willingness and the courage. I have added a few comments in square brackets [ ].

## Five Ways Churches Inflicted Pain on Themselves

Let's be clear: The much-heralded "decline of Christianity in America" isn't about God losing faith in humankind.

It isn't about losing our moral compass thanks to whatever you happen to loathe. It isn't about fickle millennials. It isn't about zigging trendy or zagging traditional.

In fact, I would argue that Christianity isn't in trouble at all. Churches are in trouble. Denominations are in trouble. Religious institutions like seminaries are in trouble. Professional church leaders are in trouble.

But churches can't hold God hostage. God will do what God will do. Whether our churches stay open for business, God will keep on loving all that God has made. Loss of an institution won't deter God.

So let's relax about Christianity — the faith — going down the tubes. This isn't an existential crisis for God or for faith in God. Even if every church in America went dark, God would try another way.

The tragedy — in the classic sense of self-inflicted wounds and fatal flaws — is that we did this to ourselves, and we hurt many people along the way. Here is what we did:

### 1. We stopped trying.

For a time, religious institutions in America were bold risk-takers. Then we settled into maintenance mode, because it felt safe and comfortable. We fought over churchy things that didn't matter because the things that did matter — racism, inequality, demagoguery, corporate thievery, obsession with money, and sex — cut too close to home.

### 2. We stopped giving.

Over the past 50 years, our giving has dropped by more than half as a percentage of family income. We have starved our churches of resources. When tough budget choices had to be made, the facilities that we wanted usually defeated the mission that God wanted. [Far too many congregations have a budget-driven mission instead of a mission-driven budget.]

### 3. We turned inward.

Just as American houses went from porches in front to patios out back, we stopped connecting with our neighbors. We stopped looking outward, except for the occasional noblesse oblige charity. We opened our doors on Sunday and welcomed each other. [One writer claims that electric garage door openers were the beginning of our isolation from each other. When we pulled into the driveway at the end of the day, we used to have to get out of the car and open the garage door. This gave us an opportunity to interact with our neighbors. Electric garage door openers ended that.]

### 4. We fixated on Sunday morning.

Long after Sunday changed character in American life, we kept expecting Sunday worship to do our work. Rather than transform lives through mission work, circles of growth, and personal spirituality, we had people sit in pews for a crammed hour of singing, praying, announcing, chatting, communing, and learning. Then we sent people out to their cars and figured we had done our work for the week.

### 5. We trashed our reputation.

We became known as judgmental, angry, self-serving, smug, boring, and old. As far as people outside can tell, we live to fight, we think too highly of ourselves, and we are moral scolds. Who needs that?

What, then, is the future? The future for God is as bright and glorious as ever. Our ever-changing, ever-dynamic, ever-loving, and ever-transformational God will be just fine. We can say our prayers with confidence.

Churches, on the other hand, are in trouble. Many will run out of money. Many will lose heart. And yet some, perhaps many, will rise to the challenge. They will give up the old certainties and do what Jesus did. [Can Central rise to this challenge? Will you work out your own salvation with fear and trembling?]

Those challenge-meeters will look outward, proclaim good news, welcome [but first, invite] strangers, serve “the least of these,” give their lives and resources away, work for justice and mercy, be faith communities seven days a week, and put love ahead of right opinion and kindness ahead of victory. [I hope and pray that Central will mature to be one of these communities.]

And God will be in the midst of them.

*Tom Ehrich is a writer, church consultant, and Episcopal priest based in New York. He is the author of “Just Wondering, Jesus” and founder of the Church Wellness Project. His website is [www.morningwalkmedia.com](http://www.morningwalkmedia.com).*

*Source URL: <http://sojo.net/blogs/2015/05/19/5-ways-churches-inflicted-pain-themselves>*

Peace to you—Pastor Anderson



*Letters from our*



*Council  
Members*

Hello from your friend in Christ, Tim Franks

Our church council President, Melissa Christian, has asked each council member to take a turn in writing the letter in the monthly messenger, and this month it is my turn, so here goes. I am not sure whether to say, “lucky you or unlucky you” but after getting over my nervousness of writing to the congregation, I am actually excited for the opportunity.

It is the first day of summer as I write this letter and finally it feels like summer is arriving. I think back to a year ago this month when we were experiencing a heat wave with temperatures well into the triple digits. As much as things are so different on a daily, monthly, or yearly basis, things really stay the same. For centuries countries have been at war and this year is no different as we experience Russia invading Ukraine. For centuries folks have experienced hunger and food shortages, and today I read in the newspaper where 10 local schools are offering free food, otherwise 83% of kids may go without a meal. For decades and decades politicians seem like they can never agree on what path is the best for the public, and this year seems no different as seen in examples of “vax or not to vax”, “Roe vs Wade” or “how to fight inflation”.

The only constant thing we can count on is God’s love. I remember reading one time that there are 62 Bible verses about life changing, but how God is constant. God never leaves us but continues to provide everything we need. We need to keep reminding ourselves to not turn away but to trust in our Lord and Savior. As we change from spring into summer, remind yourself every day to focus on God and tell every friend and stranger to do the same.

Your pew mate and sinner, Tim



IN OUR  
*Thoughts and Prayers*

Phyllis Gillihan (Ponderosa)

Chet Hausken (Landmark)

Art Ries (Livingcare)

Toni Perschke (Avamere)

Betty Douglas (Moxee)

Wilma Aspevig (Lives with daughter)

Doris Benish (Orchard Park)

Marie Halverson (Yakima)

Kyle Dixon (Yakima)

Elaine Bueling (Covenant House)

Tim Schulz (Yakima)

Joanne Puyear (Arbor House)

Carol Nelson (Yakima)

Ria and Dave Desmarais (Naches)

Donald Breshears (Anne Chapman's Dad)

Barbara Breshears (Anne Chapman's Mom)

Greg Bainter (Yakima)



# “Celebrating Central”



1st Lois Sabol, Tracy Durels

2nd Karen Baken, Darrien Gillespie

3rd Kae Miller

5th Jordyn Durels

6th Tamera Lewis

7th Taylor Ziegler

10th Maureen Nygard, Melissa Christianson

11th Mikki Schied, Faith Richardson

12th Al Karn

17th Hillary Robey, Brittany Valicoff, Cooper Falk

18th Milton Gunderson, Barbara Beehler, Kathy Moen

20th Cheryl Bush, Suzanne Weil, James Board

21st Karen Franklund

22nd Ron Rutherford

23rd Bessie Eberle, Ron Gillespie

24th Enzo Maynard

25th Marcia VanDyke

28th Teigan Greenside

30th Margaret Turner, Jessica McKeirnan





11th Randy and Kathy Jacobs

17th Shane and Nicole Pierone

20th Doran and Mary Riehl

28th Tom and Val Perry



Cooper Falk, Madeline Falk, and Arianna Nygard were cconfirmed by Pastor Anderrson on June 5th at the 11:00 am Worship.



## Worship Assistants

need for July:

Reader: July 10th, 24th and 31st  
please contact Kirsten Monick

Ushers: contact Rick Rodden

Be sure to check for Coffee and Treats sign up

Also, if anyone would like to run the sound system or  
livestream please contact Ken Toop or Duane Monick.

Committees are always looking for new members. If  
you would like to join a committee please contact the  
office, (509) 575-6490.



The quilts made by the Piecemakers are available year  
round. Contact Myrna Hillestad, Marion Jones, or Mary  
Johnson if you are interested in purchasing one or  
more! Quilts and baby quilts make wonderful gifts.




Dear friends, Thank you for your gift of \$5,000 , which we received on June 1st, 2022. Per your request, your gift will be used to help hungry people in the Yakima Valley. We are grateful for your support of **Northwest Harvest**. One of our Food Access Network partners recently told us, “We are seeing some people who have never used the food bank, and they’re telling us that groceries are getting so expensive they now need to come.” Together, we are all making our community a better place. We hope you have a wonderful spring and a joyful and restorative summer. Best regards, Thomas Reynolds Chief Executive Officer

Dear Friends at Central Lutheran Church, Thank you for supporting young people in the Yakima Valley and **Rod’s House**! Your contribution of \$5,000 on 5/27/22 provides direct care to young people experiencing homelessness and shows them that you care about their future. Thank you so very much!!!  
With Appreciation, Mark James Executive Director



A big thank you for Melissa Christianson, Anne Chapman, Felicity Pittman, and Manny for painting the Church Office. It looks more attractive for visitors and members who come to the office. Thank you - Lea

# July

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
		
<p><b>3</b> 4th Sunday after Pentecost</p> <p>9:00 am HOLY COMMUNION</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>10:00 a TOPS</p> <p>6:30 p Boy Scouts</p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>8:00 a Foot Care</p>
<p><b>10</b> 5th Sunday after Pentecost</p> <p>9:00 am HOLY COMMUNION</p>	<p><b>11</b></p> <p>10:00 a TOPS</p> <p>6:30 p Boy Scouts</p> <p>Preschool Summer Camp</p> <p>6:00 p Property Meeting</p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p>Preschool Summer Camp</p>
<p><b>17</b> 6th Sunday after Pentecost</p> <p>9:00 am HOLY COMMUNION</p>	<p><b>18</b></p> <p>10:00 a TOPS</p> <p>6:30 p Boy Scouts</p> <p>6:30 p Council Meeting</p>	<p><b>19</b></p>
<p><b>24</b> 7th Sunday after Pentecost</p> <p>9:00 am HOLY COMMUNION</p>	<p><b>25</b></p> <p>10:00 a TOPS</p> <p>6:30 p Boy Scouts</p>	<p><b>26</b></p> <p>8:00 a Foot Care</p>

# 2022

<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday/Saturday</b>
		<b>1</b> 8:00 a Foot Care
<b>6</b>  Youth leave for Lutherhaven	<b>7</b> 9:00 a Piecemakers  Youth at Lutherhaven	<b>2</b>
<b>13</b>  Preschool Summer Camp	<b>14</b>  Preschool Summer Camp	<b>8</b> 8:00 a Foot Care
<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>9</b> Youth Return from Lutherhaven
<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 9:00 a Piecemakers	<b>15</b> 11:00 a Memorial for Lynda Birmingham
		<b>16</b>
		<b>22</b> 8:00 a Foot Care
		<b>23</b>
		<b>29</b> 8:00 a Foot Care
		<b>30</b>



**Central Lutheran Youth & Family and On the Corner** are teaming up to bring days of activities, games, guest speakers, and field trips for 1<sup>st</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade kids this summer!

Join us for all the fun over 4 day sessions! Our FREE summer programming will occur from Monday -Thursday at Central Lutheran Church from 9am - 3pm during the weeks of:

July 18 – 21  
August 15 – 18

Need 2 – 3 volunteers for part or all day for snack and lunch helpers and/or walking field trip to the Franklin Pool. If you can donate a little time please contact Felicity Pittman, (509) 575-6490.

Things to donate:

Oyster Crackers, Goldfish Crackers, Go-Gurt, Cheese Sticks

Perishable the Sunday before each week please – baby carrots, celery, apples, bananas, grapes



Summer Camp in June stayed busy for their 4 days! Felicity & Jennifer brought a chicken, duckling, and a rabbit. Jason helped them plant beans and flowers. The kids enjoyed walking to the Yakima Valley Museum, making crafts, playing games, and just having a wonderful time. Can't wait for July!











Treasurer's Report  
Financial results thru

May 31, 2022

	Offerings/income		Expenses by major category		Year to date
	May	Year to date	May	Year to date	
General fund	24,914.36	126,842.58	Salaries & benefits	19,185.50	93,198.09
Building Usage	265.00	265.00	Youth & Family	-	1,068.93
other income	3.00	671.76	Worship	835.31	2,946.23
Transfers			Hospitality	550.00	1,564.67
from endowment fund	41,120.00	51,082.59	Stewardship/Church in Society	20,000.00	32,085.73
from money market	774.81	-	Property	1,529.30	50,946.18
Gertie Hein - Visitation			Office	1,564.15	7,126.66
<b>Total</b>	<b>67,077.17</b>	<b>178,861.93</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>43,664.26</b>	<b>188,936.49</b>
	May 2022		operating loss, net of transfers	\$ (18,481.90)	
			net income	\$ 23,412.91	
		Year to date	operating income, net of transfers		\$ (61,157.15)
			net loss		\$ (10,074.56)

## Church In Society

### **Caring for Creation: Back to the Bar**

When I was growing up (a long time ago) washing your hands involved using water and a bar of soap. Many things have evolved, including the prevalent use of liquid soaps. There are many reasons that going back to the bar (soap that is) provides many environmental advantages.

Liquid soaps use 5X more energy to produce the raw materials than for the equivalent bar of soap.

Liquid soaps also use 20X the energy for packaging production than a bar soap.

A bar of soap can be provided to the consumer with minimal paper-based packaging. Liquid soaps are provided with plastic containers as well as plastic pumps, and besides the energy and petroleum products used for production, these are additional sources of plastic-based garbage to enter our landfills.

Liquid soap takes more energy for transportation as it is a heavier product, further increasing the carbon footprint of that choice.

Our use of liquid soaps is so easy that we consumers typically use 6X the amount of liquid soap compared to the use of a soap bar, by weight.

When using a bar of soap you can make that choice even more environmentally helpful by remembering to turn off the running water while you lather up.

So remember, going back to the bar can be a more earth friendly option! - Ann Willis

### Camp Hope:

June's dinner served about 120 folks at Camp Hope, and a big thanks to Kirsten Monick and Mary Johnson for coordinating this event. Thanks also to Helen Riehl, Selma Umbarger, Myrna Hillestad, Jane Peterson, Joyce Rikerd, Kris Vestad, Karen and Jim Bodeen, and Duane Monick. It takes many hands to prepare and serve and all are appreciated!

Thanks to Steve Hill for serving as the liaison between Central and the Gay Pride Parade participants. Their use of our parking lot for their staging ground is something they have previously done, and many other community groups have used it as well.

### Habitat for Humanity:

The first home in the Vines Development was recently dedicated with special recognition given to Central Lutheran for our generous donation (through Endowment Funding). In addition to the contribution Central members worked for a week on the home's construction. Four members of Central were there for the meaningful blessing of the home and introduction of the family members. This is the first of ten homes to be built in the largest ever Habitat project in the area, and the first to feature solar panels. Drive by and take a look, it is at 1502 Conrad Ave. Good work, Central Lutheran!!



Pictures of the home dedication. This is the owner's mother, the owner and her daughter. Pictures from Bruce and Ann Willis

## Call Committee

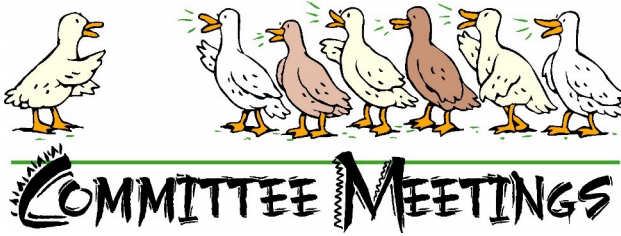
It's a lot like a fishing trip. Much time is spent in preparation for the trip, now we're on the lake waiting for a bite. If you've been fishing before, this can feel like an agonizingly slow process. That is to say, the above-named members of our call committee started work in September and are working hard and we're well prepared. We thank our Mission Site Profile (MSP) team for excellent work in preparing our document which serves to paint a picture of our church and community. We're at the stage where we consider a slate of candidates from the synod (which can include nominations from the membership) and conduct interviews. So far, we've had one interview and we anticipate more after Easter.

We are all very aware that we represent you, our members, in this work. The synod reminds us of our task related to determination: "Is this the person that God wants us to call?" And for the pastor: "Is this the place where God wants me to be?"

We will continue to be diligent in our work which includes holding in confidence the profiles of our candidates. So... you will not be hearing much from us until you do. But when you do, we will invite you to fully engage with us regarding information and insight we have about our recommendation for congregational consideration.

Process from the synod: "On-site interview with final candidate(s). This pre-call on-site visit shall be held, at congregation's expense. If the pastor has a spouse/partner, he/she should be invited to the on-site interview along with the pastor. A visit around the community would be helpful. The congregation should also meet the candidate(s) as a reception, coffee hour, potluck, or other informal time. The synod office will provide guidance for this on-site visit."

If after all of this, the Call Committee feels the candidate met through the above-mentioned on-site visit meets the needs of the congregation and is their selection for pastor of the congregation, they then make the recommendation to the Congregation Council. If the Council agrees with the Call Committees recommendation, a special meeting of the congregation will be arranged where written ballots will be used in electing a pastor. Whew! Hang in there and be patient. We know the Lord is on our side and we will have our pastor in due time. Blessings, Stephen Merz



Monday July 11th 6:00 pm Property Committee

Monday July 18th 6:30 pm Church Council



Pastor Kathleen will be gone July 18th until 24th

Felicity will be gone July 25th until July 31st

Lea will be gone July 31st until August 11th

CHURCH  COUNCIL

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President Melissa Christianson (509) 952-8435

[melissachristianson@live.com](mailto:melissachristianson@live.com)

Vice President MacKenzie Bond (509) 834-3452

[karnmackenzie@gmail.com](mailto:karnmackenzie@gmail.com)

Secretary Shane Pierone (509) 654-8465

[shane@bbold1.com](mailto:shane@bbold1.com)

Treasurer Tim Franks (509) 952-9908

[timf@hcyakima.com](mailto:timf@hcyakima.com)

Pastor Kathleen Anderson (206) 719-5302

[Pastorpkanderson@clcyakima.org](mailto:Pastorpkanderson@clcyakima.org)

Ron Burkhardt (509) 453-4429

[ron.burkhardt42@gmail.com](mailto:ron.burkhardt42@gmail.com)

Melissa Falk (509) 307-2785

[lissy.1109@hotmail.com](mailto:lissy.1109@hotmail.com)

Karen Baken (509) 952-1280

[klbaken@gmail.com](mailto:klbaken@gmail.com)

Felicity Pittman (509) 594-2666

[felicity.pittman@clcyakima.org](mailto:felicity.pittman@clcyakima.org)

Chris Svendsen (509) 949-6707

[csvendsen8327@chater.net](mailto:csvendsen8327@chater.net)

Jennifer Crane (509) 424-7815

[jennifer21crane@yahoo.com](mailto:jennifer21crane@yahoo.com)

Kirsten Monick (509) 494-3858

[kmonick@charter.net](mailto:kmonick@charter.net)

