

Niantic News

A monthly publication of Christ Lutheran Church
222 Niantic Road, Barto, PA 19504
610-845-2583 christluthchurch@windstream.net
www.christniantic.com

March 2026

Page 1

A message from the Pastor...

Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

As you probably know, this is the last newsletter article I will write as Pastor of Christ Lutheran Church of Niantic. Whatever words I share with you in this space, they cannot adequately express my gratitude to you. It was March of 2021 when I began my time with you at Christ Lutheran. At that time, we were still navigating our way through the pandemic. It certainly made for an unusual start to ministry. I did not get to know any of you by your whole face for a few months. We were also navigating a new shared ministry arrangement with St. Paul's.



I hope you appreciate the amount of change you went through as a congregation in those months. What I am most proud of though is how you emerged from that change. While we gladly put away the masks and pandemic worship accommodations, the post-pandemic environment was not the same as the pre-pandemic environment. In the midst of this changed world, I saw a congregation that desired to minister to this new environment.

Over the past years, you have engaged in multiple new community outreach efforts, added updated hymnals, and invested in technology to communicate in that new environment. I see a congregation that is in a very different place than you were five years ago. I see evidence of renewed engagement, participation, and vitality. I see a congregation ready to continue growing in faith, hope, and love. Remember you are the body of Christ, each member with different gifts, talents, and blessings. Together you have all that you need to do what God is calling you to do. Keep focusing on the ways God has blessed and equipped you and don't get distracted by what you may lack. Whatever God is calling you to do now, he will equip you to do it.

Know that you will remain in my prayers. I pray for your continued faithfulness to God's call, and for new possibilities and potential partnerships. With your eyes fixed on the resurrection keep walking in the way of the cross.

Thank you for allowing me to be your pastor. I know that my experiences, in this community, have made me a better pastor, and I hope that I have helped the congregation come to a place of more fruitful ministry as well. Thank you for your faithfulness and vision. Thank you for teaching me how to be a better pastor. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

In Christ,
Pastor Matt

On Monday, February 9, the Council received a letter of resignation from Pastor Finney. His last day will be Tuesday, March 10th. As was discussed at the congregational meeting on February 8, we will be working closely with Pastor Matt and the synod in order to have a smooth transition toward wherever God leads next. If anyone has any questions, please feel free to contact me, or any other council member. Thank you for your continued support. Dave Fioriglio, Council President

Official Pastoral Acts

(Baptisms, Funerals, Weddings)

Funeral of Dorothy Willing on Saturday, February 21, 2026.



Reminder:

Don't forget to "spring your clocks ahead" on Saturday, March 7 when you go to sleep!! You don't want to be late for church!

Worship Attendance

Date	9:00 AM	Conf. / Bible Study
January 4	53	4 / 13
January 11	82	4 / 12
January 18	19	0 / 14
January 25 (snow – worship canceled)		13 (1/28)

2025 Sun. Avg.: 55 4
 2026 Sun. Avg.: 49 4 / 13
(Prior year averages are based on same time period)



Notification in Case of Illness



Christ Niantic Lutheran hopes that all members will notify the church office if they become aware of any member who is ill or who may have other pastoral needs. Please do not assume

that "someone else" has already called. We do not mind receiving multiple notifications. Thank you!



Newsletter Deadline –

Information for the April issue of the Niantic News is **due by Tuesday, March 10th**. There are several ways for you to submit your articles.

- ✓ E-mail it to me at: christluthchurch@windstream.net.
- ✓ Submit it on a flash drive, which can be borrowed from the church office;
- ✓ Place your typed or neatly written copy in my mailbox outside of the offices.

Bulletin Deadline is Tuesday for the upcoming Sunday. Your cooperation in meeting this deadline is greatly appreciated. This allows the office ample time to prepare the bulletin for Sunday Worship.

Church and Pastor's Office Hours

The Church Office Hours are Monday through Friday, 9 – 2 p.m.

All non-emergency, non-pastoral calls can be called into the church office during or after office hours.

Pr. Matt Finney will have office hours on Fridays.

If you'd like to meet/speak with Pr. Matt, or it's a pastoral emergency, please call Pr. Matt at 484-587-6506.



Altar Flowers and Bulletins

The 2026 Altar Flower and Bulletin Charts are posted in the narthex.

There are Sundays still available for sponsors, so if you have that special day you'd like to honor or remember someone, please sign up. The cost of Altar Flowers is \$40.00 and Bulletins are \$20.00. There will be no altar flowers during the Sunday's in Lent and Palm Sunday, March 1 – 29. Questions can be directed to Sandy Gehman.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Patricia Moser
- 3 Chase Bartman, Steven Berner*,
Cathy Eldridge, Joanne Hoffman
- 4 John Francisco
- 5 Braden Bartman
- 6 Philip Hoffman, Sandra Hoffman
- 8 Kathy Drury, Holly Francisco,
Elijah Novotny
- 9 Chasin Sminkey
- 13 Ellen Roberts
- 14 Susan Wilson
- 15 Gregory Moser
- 16 Bruce Bartman, Jr.
- 17 Rachel (Flicker) Lapinski
- 21 Ronald Elliott, Jr., Betty E. Hoffman (1933),
Glenn Hoffman
- 22 Herbert Carter, Anna Gehman, Samantha
Johns, Suzanne Moll (1945)
- 27 Diane Carter
- 29 Kade Davidheiser, Hunter Hoffman,
Taylor Howard



Mid-week Lenten Services

Mid-week Lent services are being held Wednesday evenings February 25th through March 25th beginning at 7:00 p.m., at Christ Lutheran Church in the parlor.

Save the dates for...
Holy Week Services

Palm Sunday – March 29, 9:00 a.m.
Holy Week begins March 29 with our Palm Sunday services at the usual time with the Blessing and Distribution of Palms and the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

Maundy Thursday – April 2, 7:00 p.m.
Maundy Thursday commemorates the Last Supper of Jesus with his disciples, which was the occasion for the institution of Holy Communion. The service will be at 7:00 p.m. at our church.

Good Friday Tenebrae Service – April 3
at 7:00 p.m. More details about the service will be forthcoming in the bulletins, E-news, and April newsletter.

Easter – April 5 at 6:30 a.m. beginning in the cemetery. *A Coffee Hour will be held beginning at 7:30 a.m. in the Welcome Center then at 9:00 a.m., we will celebrate the resurrection of our Lord with a service of Holy Communion in the sanctuary.*



Quilt Tying

On **Tuesday, March 10** beginning at 10:00 a.m., we will be tying quilts in the room H (across from music room). Help is always needed!! Then we will go to the...

Lutheran Ladies Lunch

The March Lutheran Ladies Lunch will be held on **Tuesday, March 10**, at **12 noon** at Shorty's Sunflower Café, 1494 N. Charlotte St., Pottstown (North End). We will meet in the parking lot at 11:30 a.m. to carpool to Shorty's Sunflower Café by 12 noon for lunch or meet us there!



Join us during Holy Week!

Food Bank Donations

Donations for March/April will go to the Boyertown Multi-Service in Boyertown. Let's all make regular Food Bank giving a part of our weekly or monthly planning and shopping. Your donations help their pantry during this time, so please think about picking up one or more items when you do your weekly grocery run and drop it off at the church to help those in need!

FOOD Items most needed are:

Pancake mix, Pancake syrup, Cereal, Crackers, Canned soups, tuna, meat meals (ex. Chef Boyardee, Manwich, Spam etc.), pasta sauce, rice, canned fruit, instant mashed potatoes, pasta sides

PERSONAL CARE items most needed are:

Shampoo, conditioner, soap bars, dish soap, laundry detergent, toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant

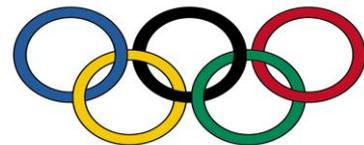


And the GOLD goes to...

OUR OLDEST MEMBER, Hilda Kolb!
Hilda recently won 2 Gold Medals in the Winter Olympics at Frederick Living (Cedarwood). She will receive her gold medals at the Closing Ceremonies on March 3.

Her first gold medal was won in Drawing and the second in Ring Toss.

Congratulations Hilda for a job well done! Thank you for representing Christ Lutheran at Frederick Living!



Thank you...

...for the donation of twenty-four handmade quilts for our Veterans that were given to patients at the Coatesville VA Medical Center. It is through the efforts of the community partners like you that allow us to continue the quality care and services that we seek to provide for our deserving Veterans. Thank you for your support.

**Jennifer Lilly,
Chief CDCE**

...for your generous donation of \$310.00 on January 30 in support of the Boyertown Area Multi-Service. Your contribution makes it possible for us to further our cause.

Boyertown Area Multi-Service

Notice from the Cemetery Board

All planting of shrubs, trees or plants is prohibited. Remove all winter decorations 3 weeks (**by March 15**) before Easter. April through October all flowers and memorials will be removed 7 days after all holidays. All arrangements affixed on top of the gravestones may remain until they are unsightly.



Book Club

Our next Book Club gathering will be on **Tuesday, April 7 at 7:00 p.m.** in the Welcome Center.

The Book Club will be reading the book: **"The Remarkably Bright Creatures" by Shelby Van Pelt.**

The book is a "Book in a Bag" book that can be signed out downstairs on the table in the Welcome Center.

Any questions, please contact Roxanne Fox.



Prayer Concerns
 Prayer Chain Initiator:
 June Herb (610) 754-7841 or
 e-mail: JuneRose56@aol.com.

NOTE: Names on the prayer list remain on for one month, unless someone notifies June or the office to remain on longer.

Thanksgiving

...for the men of our Property Committee that were able to make the plumbing repairs in our Social Hall and save the church a large amount of money

Health & Healing:

- Jim Barr
- Calli – a student in Pat Moser's daughter's class
- Terry Flicker
- Pat Gabel – Bob's wife
- Heather – daughter of Kathy Romich/cousin of Lisa Heydt
- Leroy Heissler – friend of Denise Hoffman's family
- Luke Hoffman – Denise/Philip's son
- Tim Hoffman – Denise Hoffman and Gerry Flicker's brother-in-law
- Crystal Hughes - Friend of Laurie Stofflet
- Addie Lorah – newborn daughter of a friend of Lindsey Mason
- Otto Nuss
- Polly Orner
- Pr. Jennifer Phelps – former member at CLC
- Rosalie Seasholtz – Melissa Seasholtz's mother-in-law
- Todd (Scruffy) Slonaker – cousin of Gerry Flicker and Denise Hoffman
- Mark Stofflet
- Tiffany - Nancy Fioriglio's cousin's daughter
- Elaine Wolfe – friend of Linda Hoffman

Healing and Patience:

Luke Moser

Death (Family and Friends of...):

- Lee Posey – cousin of Pat Moser (d. 1/10/26/posted 2/13)
- Dorothy Willing (2/13)
- Lee Wright – uncle of Nancy Fioriglio (2/20)

Military Deployed to Conflict Area/Serving in the Military*:

Owen Dietrich – cousin of Lindsey (Riegner) Mason; Anthony Lester – friend of Lindsey (Riegner) Mason; Dustin Lowery – Jennifer Lowery-Bomboy's nephew; Quinn Mason - Lindsey (Riegner) Mason's stepson; Matthew and Joseph Schwenk - nephews of Amy Eichinger; Nathan Powell – son of a friend of Amy Fluke

*If you know someone that is deployed or serving, please contact June or the church office to put them back on the list. Thank you.

Homebound Members of Christ Lutheran Church:

***For current addresses of our Homebound, please contact the church office.**

- Gerald Flicker (Grandview Manor in Fleetwood);
- Sue Bendinsky (Chestnut Knoll - MC);
- Hilda Kolb (Frederick Living/Cedarwood Rm. 1309B);
- Barbara Hoffman (Assisted Living in Wilmington, DE)

Highlights from December 15, 2025 Council Minutes:

PRIORITY ITEMS

1. Election of 2026 Council Officers:
 - a. TBD, President
 - b. TBD, Vice President
 - c. Danny Knaub, Secretary
 - d. Sue Hoffman, Treasurer
 - e. Nancy Fioriglio, Assistant Treasurer
2. Christmas Gift Allocations: Motion to divide by 1/3, made by Bob Heydt, second Roberta Korsak, motion passes.
3. Date of Installation of Council Members: January 18, 2026

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Vitality survey: Had a meeting with Pastor Linda Mason on December 2nd.
2. Safe Place Policy: Dave had an updated policy for all to review.

Respectfully submitted,
 Pr. Matt Finney

Just for chuckles...



**ENDOWMENT –
Grants to be awarded-
We need your proposals!**

The purpose of the Endowment Fund is to enhance the mission of Christ Lutheran Church.

In 2026, we have a total of **\$5,193** available for distribution broken down (by set percentages) in the following categories:

- Christian Education (10%) - \$519.00
- Capital Improvements (15%) - \$779.00
- Scholarships and Grants (25%) - \$1,298.00
- Outreach (30%) - \$1,558.00
- Missions (20%) - \$1,039.00

The Endowment Fund Committee invites any member of Christ Lutheran Church or committee to submit a grant proposal on the next page of the newsletter or pick up in narthex by **March 31, 2026**. Please thoughtfully consider the needs of the church and our community, by sharing a need, submitting a grant proposal, help the Endowment Committee to fulfill our purpose and give glory to God with these gifts.

If you have any questions about this, please contact any committee member: Mike Knaub, Lisa Knaub, Bob Heydt, Dawn Sandoval, Denise Hoffman, new member; Norm Hoffman, Pastor Matt Finney or Gerry Flicker, who will continue to be the Endowment Treasurer.

Respectfully submitted,
Denise Hoffman
Recording Secretary for Endowment



Easter Flowers

Tulips, to celebrate Christ's resurrection, may be ordered through **Sunday, March 15, 2026** by completing this form, attaching a check for the proper amount payable to Christ Lutheran Church, and place it in the offering plate OR mail it to the church at 222 Niantic Road, Barto, PA 19504.

I would like to order _____ Tulips at \$9.25 per tulip.

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

Your Name: _____

***Note:** Please take your tulip with you after the Easter service or pick-up during office hours that week.
Thank you.



Endowment Fund Grant Proposal

(Grant Proposals must be submitted to the Endowment Fund
Committee by March 31, 2026)



Date: _____

Your Name: _____

Your Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Your Phone No.: _____

Your E-mail address: _____

Submit to:
Endowment Fund
Christ Lutheran Church
222 Niantic Road
Barto, PA 19504-9314
(610) 845-2583
christluthchurch@windstream.net

1. Name of person or organization for Grant Proposal:
2. Description of project for proposed Grant:
3. Amount of Grant Requested:
4. Total cost of project (if this Grant will not fund entire project, identify source of balance of funding):
5. To whom should the check be made payable?

Total Funds available for 2026 disbursement: \$5193 (Place an "X" in the category for which this proposal is being submitted)

_____ (10% = \$519) Funding for ongoing Christian programs within Christ Lutheran Church.

_____ (15% = \$779) Funding for Capital improvements, building programs and / or reduction of debt incurred by Christ Lutheran Church in connection with such improvements or programs.

_____ (25% = \$1,298) Scholarships or grants to members of Christ Lutheran Church for the purpose of attending seminary; for church related camping or leadership conferences; or other such training which enables members of the congregation to grow in a Christian faith and service to God's people.

_____ (30% = \$1,558) Outreach into the community including, but not limited to, grants to ELCA colleges, seminaries, social service agencies, institutions and agencies to which this congregation relates, and to special programs designed for those persons in our parish area who are in spiritual and / or economic need.

_____ (20% = \$1039) Missions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at home and overseas, including but not limited to, grants to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for new mission development in North America, professional leadership, education ministries, world mission and ecumenism, media evangelism and capital financing.

_____ *For Fund Committee Use Only* _____

Date Received _____ Accepted _____ Yes ___ No _____ Amount Pledged \$ _____

Date Distributed _____ Amount Distributed \$ _____ Check # _____

Christ Lutheran Church, Niantic
Income and Expense Statement
 Consolidated - January 2026

	Current Period	Year to Date	YTD Prior Year
INCOME			
CONTRIBUTIONS	\$6,780.82	\$6,780.82	\$8,301.23
OTHER FUND CONTRIBUTIONS	342.00	342.00	662.84
INVESTMENT INCOME	77.12	77.12	111.77
OTHER INCOME	0.00	0.00	(23.07)
TOTAL INCOME	7,199.94	7,199.94	9,052.77
EXPENSES			
SALARIES			
PASTORAL MINISTRY	\$4,556.57	\$4,556.57	\$2,709.00
OTHER STAFF	3,389.84	3,389.84	3,239.82
Subtotal Salaries	7,946.41	7,946.41	5,948.82
WORSHIP			
MUSIC	104.36	104.36	0.00
ORGAN & PIANO MAINTENANCE	392.03	392.03	0.00
WORSHIP SUPPLIES	629.46	629.46	560.00
Subtotal Worship	1,125.85	1,125.85	560.00
SOCIAL MINISTRY/OUTREACH			
ADVERTISING EXPENSE	133.40	133.40	79.00
STEWARDSHIP	0.00	0.00	523.78
INTERNET EXPENSES	370.07	370.07	283.75
Subtotal Social Ministry/outreach	503.47	503.47	886.53
CHURCH ADMINISTRATION			
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSE	230.93	230.93	88.30
EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE	69.95	69.95	0.00
Subtotal Church Administration	300.88	300.88	88.30
BUILDING OPERATIONS			
HEAT, ELECTRIC & GAS	412.77	412.77	2,566.85
CLEANING SUPPLIES	425.00	425.00	96.92
BUILDING MAINTENANCE	1,525.00	1,525.00	0.00
Subtotal Building Operations	2,362.77	2,362.77	2,663.77
TOTAL EXPENSES	12,239.38	12,239.38	10,147.42
EXCESS INCOME/EXPENSES	(\$5,039.44)	(\$5,039.44)	(\$1,094.65)

Respectfully submitted
Susan Hoffman

Church Office Hours:

Monday – Friday: 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Worship:

9:00 a.m. ~ The Sacrament of Holy Communion is offered on the first Sunday of each month and on all festivals.

Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. Matthew Finney ~ clcpastor@windstream.net (last day 3/10/26)
Minister of Music: Deborah Matthews ~ debmatth@comcast.net
Administrative Assistant: Melissa Seasholtz ~ christluthchurch@windstream.net

2026 Congregational Council

President: Dave Fioriglio Vice President: Bob Heydt
Secretary: Dan Knaub Treasurer: Sue Hoffman**
Assistant Treasurer: Nancy Fioriglio** Financial Treasurer: Kathy Watts**
e-mail: clcfinancial@windstream.net

Braden Bartman Keith Folk Roxanne Fox
Roberta Korsak Pat Moser Steve Novotny
Marvin Steward _____ + (5/24 – 4/25)
(*non-council member / +youth member / second term)

Ministry Assistants for March 2026

	Acolyte	Lector	Communion Assist	Assistant Minister	Ushers/Greeters
Sunday, March 1 9:00 a.m.	_____*	_____*	Sue Hoffman	_____*	Ginnie Wilkinson and _____*
Sunday, March 8 9:00 a.m.	_____*	Diane Houck		Denise Hoffman	Shirley and Merle Deery
Sunday, March 15 9:00 a.m.	_____*	Donna Menear		_____*	_____*& _____*
Sunday, March 22 9:00 a.m.	_____*	Sue Hoffman		_____*	_____*& _____*
Palm Sunday Sunday, March 29 9:00 a.m.	_____*	Bob Heydt	Nancy Fioriglio	Denise Hoffman	Lisa and Bob Heydt

Altar Guild: March 1: Chershe Derr and _____*; March 8: Shirley & Merle Deery; March 15: Chershe Derr; March 22: Chershe Derr; March 29: Shirley and Merle Deery

Counting Team: TEAM B – Mike Knaub (capt.); Kathy Watts, Keith Folk, Braden Bartman

_____ * = help is needed. If you can help, please e-mail or call the church office. Thank you.

SUNDAY**MONDAY****TUESDAY****WEDNESDAY****THURSDAY****FRIDAY****SATURDAY**

MARCH 2026



(W/C) = Welcome Center
(S/H) = Social Hall

1

8:30 Coffee & Conversation (W/C)
9:00 Worship / Holy Communion
10:00 Coffee & Conversation (W/C)
10:00 Confirmation (room I)

2

6:30 Property
(W/C)

3

10:00 AM
Mercy Ministry
(room H)

4

7:00 Mid-week Lent
service at
Christ Lutheran
7:30 Senior Choir

5

6
10 AM – 1 PM
Pr. Matt's Office
Hours

7 "Spring" your
clocks ahead
when you go to
bed.

8

8:30 Coffee & Conversation (W/C)
9:00 Worship / Pr. Matt's Last Sunday
preaching
10:00 Coffee & Conversation (W/C)
10:00 Confirmation (room I)

Daylight Savings Time Begins

9

10 *April Niantic
News articles are Due

10:00 Quilt Tying (rm H)
11:30 Ladies Lunch –
meet in parking lot to
carpool to Shorty's
Sunflower Café

11

7:00 Mid-week Lent
service at
Christ Lutheran
7:30 Senior Choir

12**13**

14

National
Quilting Day

15 Blessing of the Quilts

8:30 Coffee & Conversation (W/C)
9:00 Worship
10:00 Coffee & Conversation (W/C)
10:00 Confirmation (room I)

16**17**

St. Patrick's Day

18

7:00 Mid-week Lent
service at Christ
Lutheran
7:30 Senior Choir

19**20**

1st Day of Spring

21**22**

8:30 Coffee & Conversation (W/C)
9:00 Worship
10:00 Coffee & Conversation (W/C)
10:00 Confirmation (room I)

23**24**

7:00 Council Meeting
(parlor)

25

7:00 Mid-week Lent
service at Christ
Lutheran
7:30 Senior Choir

26**27****28****29 Palm Sunday**

8:30 Coffee & Conversation (W/C)
9:00 Worship / Holy Communion /
Distribution of Palms
10:00 Coffee & Conversation (W/C)
10:00 Confirmation (room I)

30

7:30 Cemetery
Board Meeting
(room H)

31

*Endowment Grant
Proposals are DUE

April 1

7:00 Senior Choir

April 2

7:00 Maundy
Thursday service

April 3

7:00 Good Friday
service

April 4