

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2026

The King's Messenger

CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH MEMPHIS TN



Over the years, I have reached out to various prominent figures, expressing my appreciation for their work. Admittedly, in the back of my mind, I've hoped they would deign to respond. I have written authors such as Yan Martel, who wrote "Life of Pi," along with Christian poet, author, and lecturer Christian Wiman. I once wrote Don Henley of the Eagles along with New York Times columnist, David Brooks. I will often send our Mayor Paul Young encouraging and supporting emails because governing this dear city of ours can't possibly be easy. About a decade ago, I wrote Pontiff Emeritus (Benedict XVI) a short letter thanking him for something he had written which at the time made a strong impression.

You might be surprised to know that of the personalities I've listed, all of them but Don Henley wrote back. If he only knew that I was the Eagles' biggest fan! I'll never forget opening the letter from Benedict, which he even signed. The Roman Pontiff writing a lowly Lutheran pastor. Miracles happen, folks. The fact that most haven't written me back makes those who did all the more special. Frankly, I think one of the main reasons for their response was that I was sure to use the prefix "Rev." in all my letters.

We feel good, happy, validated when people engage us especially when these

people are a little more prominent than ourselves. A kind word, a thank you note, a phone call, can make a big difference. 'Tis more blessed to give than to receive but it's still very good to be on the receiving end of benevolent words.

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Indeed it did! God mercifully deigned to come to sinful people in Jesus Christ and among the main reasons for it was to validate us, to make us feel loved and important. Jesus came to the unloved, the disliked, and the unwanted and from God's perspective we all fall into all of these categories because of sin.

Lent soon begins. During Lent we focus on God's benevolence in Jesus. Let's not forget the fact that God's love for us went so far as the cross. I would die for my family, close friends, and you would, too. I doubt I would willingly die for anyone else, but God did exactly this: died for those no one liked, or wanted, let alone loved.

There's a verse in a Lenten hymn that always strikes a chord within me. "Do we pass that cross undeeding, breathing no repentant vow?" (LSB 423) Heavens, no! Remembering, grasping even in the smallest degree, how God deigned to reach out in love to us, may we be drawn to Him and may we always validate others with God's love.

Pastor Mark

Happy New Year

JANUARY 2026

COME TO BETHLEHEM—Youth led Advent Worship

The CTK youth-led Advent worship service was a light to the world. High School youth read scripture while Middle School youth helped and guided our PK4– 6th grade Sunday Schoolers as they presented the story of Jesus' birth through the eyes of shepherds. The students had a summer series on the names of Jesus, so

this service expanded on that premise and they shared some of the names with the congregation.

Not only is Jesus a baby in the manger, He is our **King**, the **Light** in darkness, our **Shepherd**, the perfect **Lamb** (sacrifice) and our **God, Immanuel**.

Thanks to our Youth & SS teams for their continued dedication to the youth ministry of Christ the King!



MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH

Confirmation Instruction continues each Sunday morning at 9:45 for 7th & 8th grade students.

MS Youth will gather on Jan. 16 at 6pm for fellowship time and on Jan 30 at 6pm for a movie night (in the CTK Youth room). Join us for one or both! Thanks to Mr. LeBoriorous for leading the Middle School youth..

Thank you SS Ministry Team!!

Pat Oxford, Linda Smiley, Kim Britt, Christy Murphy, Linda Ritter, Bill Kuykendall, Nick Tieman, Sharon Hyde & Kitty Kosman

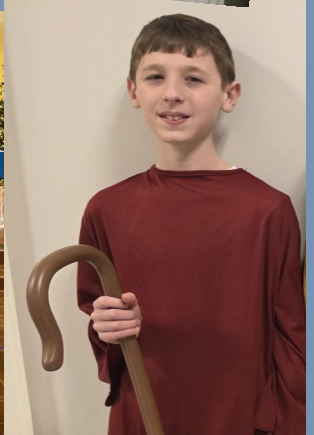
HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH

THANK YOU to the Baskettes for hosting our **HIGH SCHOOL** youth Christmas Party!

Celebrating with food, fellowship, a hayride and of course, games, a good time was had by all! High Schoolers joined the Adult Choir, Middle Schoolers, and Team Job for Christmas Caroling to the residents at Ciel Senior Living Center in Collierville. We continue to meet on Sunday morning at 9:45 in the youth room for

Bible study and application of Biblical principles to everyday life of youth in today's society. Thank you for the leadership team of Chandra Smith, Emily Smith and Kevin and Ashley Baskette to our High School Youth!







Join the ladies of Christ the King's LWML at their next meeting on Thursday, Jan. 15, 5:30—7:00PM, in Room 201. We welcome new members!

February's meeting is scheduled for Feb. 19 at 5:30PM. Come see what's next for LWML as we prepare for mission work!

Mite Box Sunday is the first Sunday of every month. Your contributions add up to BIG ministry!



CTK's Faith in Action would like to thank the congregation for their generous donations of gifts cards to the families of our 2025 Angel Tree. Over \$3,000 worth of cards was graciously donated and distributed in time for church families to help with their needs and to school families before their Christmas break. Thank you for your unending support!

FAITH IN ACTION'S BISCUITS, PASTRIES, AND COFFEE BAR FUNDRAISER

SUNDAY, JAN. 18
 BEFORE AND AFTER BOTH
 SERVICES



DON'T MISS THIS ANNUAL FUNDRAISING
 TREAT!

LUTHERAN WITNESS SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you are interested in continuing your subscription to The Lutheran Witness, or starting a new one, now is the time! The cost is \$15/year and the deadline for renewal is February 1. Please use the envelope provided in your offering envelope box for that purpose. Checks should be made payable to Christ the King, with "LW" in the memo line.



TANZANIA REPORT FOR JANUARY—FEBRUARY, 2026

In just four months, our Tanzania Team will be departing. Where has the time gone!? God has blessed us with tremendous support, a wonderful team, and the physical assets necessary to carry out His work! We are still in need of donations to help with the international airline tickets over and back that will be purchased in January. We plan to leave on Thursday, May 14, and return on May 28. The in-country housing, transportation, and food will have to be purchased in February. The next fundraiser, plus future donations and offerings, will be used for that cost.



**GET READY FOR OUR FEBRUARY VALENTINE BAKE SALE
ON SUNDAY, FEB. 8! We will be ready for you!**



Our team is asking for **knitted or crocheted or purchased hats** to distribute to the families on the mission. After spreading the gospel and baptizing children and parents, a hat and colorful cross are placed on their heads and around their necks. If you could only see the joy each child and mother show after receiving such a small item as a hat or a cross necklace. If you are willing to knit or crochet a hat for these newly baptized lambs, it would be greatly appreciated! (Hat sizes range from medium to large.)

We will also be collecting **new or slightly used ball hats** for the men we baptize. The albino school we support needs **sunglasses and safari hats** with brims to keep the sun out of their sensitive eyes. You will find our Donation Basket in the rotunda. Thank you very much!

Please keep praying for us! We need your prayers for success, for safe travel, and that our hearts would be emboldened to perform our mission!

Asanta sana, (thank you), Christ the King Church members, for what you mean to this mission outreach! We wish we could take everyone to Shinyanga to meet the loving people of Tanzania.

Your 2026 Tanzania Mission Team:

Mark Novy, Sharon Hyde, Cindy & Mike Jurgensen

Scenes from past years' mission trips:





Proceeds from the Free Will Offering will go to support Bethlehem Bible College, the only remaining Christian college in Palestine, and the alma mater of Mr. Oday and his wife who brought the beautiful nativities to CTK.

CHANGE OF DATE! MEN'S MINISTRY BREAKFAST, JAN. 24, 9AM

Enjoy a hearty breakfast by Paul Howell and join us for "RETIREMENT: PART 2!"

Our last Men's Breakfast in which we discussed retirement topics was very successful and led to questions on many related subjects. At this breakfast, we will address concerns such as: selling your home; wills & trusts; annuities; investment tips for younger men; and reverse mortgages. Something for everyone! RSVP by contacting Gary Osing at garyosing@gmail.com.

Mark your calendar! On Sunday, March 15, we will have the privilege of hosting the Martin Luther High School Symphonic Band from Greendale, Wisconsin, for a 6:30PM concert. The program will include sacred and secular music to appeal to a variety of audience tastes.

CTK will provide an evening meal at 5:15PM. Volunteers to assist in serving are welcome!

We are asking for hosts for the 27 students and four chaperones for the night of March 15. On Monday, March 16, they will return to CTK for a brief musical program for our school children.

If you are able to host two or more students in your home, please contact Genie at gswan@ctkmemphis.com or 901-827-9223. Thank you for your hospitality!



To Our Christ the King Family,

I would like to say thank you for all your prayers and thoughts throughout Ken's sudden onset of mantle cell lymphoma and the quadriplegia that coupled that and hit us hard. The outpouring of love, the constant messages, the weeks of food deliveries from various members, the home visits to us, and the hospital visits to Ken, and then your huge support afterwards while in Hospice made such a huge difference in our daily outlook and getting us through those long hours. Your support during this eight-week life-changing event was more appreciated than you can ever know. The support from each of the Pastors and their constant visits were reassuring, emotional and so needed for Ken and for us, and I can truly say if I called, they almost came running, until the very end. We know that Ken is now at peace and in a better place with our heavenly Lord. We have been so blessed with the friendship that overwhelmingly covered us from our amazing church, the many offers of support, and your compassion, and consider ourselves extremely lucky to be a part of such a warm and loving family.

In deepest gratitude,

Caroline, Nolan, Ryan, and Tyler Johnson, and Meredith (Johnson) Reynolds & Family



Job's Journal

What has Job Comfort Dog been up to lately? He and his handlers and ministry partners have been making lots of visits to young and old(er), spreading good cheer with a wag of his tail! Job enjoys his visits to Collierville Burch Library and Bailey Station Elementary. He loves children and they love him! Job also loves his visits to places like The Pinnacle of Southaven and Culpepper Place of Olive Branch, where he charms the residents and staff on a regular basis!

Job and his team, along with the Future Comfort Dog team, enjoyed a joint Christmas Party with a potluck, guessing games, and presents for team members and Job, too! Each team member was asked to guess the name of the Future Dog and what date he or she would be welcomed to Christ the King. We can't wait to see who the winner is, and we hope we will know sooner than later! Thank you, CTK, for your continued support of the Comfort Dog ministry. Happy New Year!



Left to right:

Job leans in to bring joy to a resident at Culpepper Place;

Job gets extra hugs at The Pinnacle of Southaven;

Students at Bailey Station Elementary love Job's soft fur and happy grin

It's not too late to join the **CONNECT CLASS** for new and prospective members! We will meet on Sunday, Jan. 11, 18, and 25, at 9:45AM in the Church Parlor. You'll meet ministry leaders, learn about the history and future of Christ the King, and find out how you can discover your niche in service, worship, and fellowship. Make new friends and feel at home at CTK!

Contact Genie Swan for more information at gswan@ctkmemphis.com or 901-827-9223.



The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 15. Evening service with Holy Communion and the Imposition of Ashes starts at 6:30pm, preceded by a Soup Supper hosted by CTK's Faculty at 5:30PM in the Fellowship Hall. A noon service will include the Imposition of Ashes.

Hosts for Soup Suppers are needed for the following dates: March 4, 11, 18, and 25. Please contact Genie at gswan@ctkmemphis.com to volunteer your group for hosting. Thank you.



UPCOMING SMALL GROUP DATES

- ***Tuesday, Jan. 12 & 26 and Feb. 9 & 24** — **Steven & Jennifer Andrews** -
"Hitchhiking with Prophets" by Chad Bird drewkrewe@yahoo.com
- ***Tuesday, Jan. 27 and Feb 24** — **Michael & Lisa Salzgeber**
"Church History in Plain Language" michael.salzgeber@sylvamo.com
- ***Friday, Jan. 16, 6:00PM** — Pastor Matt's group for 20's and 30's — at the Dennings' home, pastormatt@ctkmemphis.com
- ***Saturday, Jan. 24 and Feb. 28, 6:30PM** — **Billy & Carol Kutteh**
Study of the Book of James, by various leaders cckutteh@yahoo.com
- ***Every Thursday, 7PM** — **Jim Devan** "Woodworking" j_devan@bellsouth.net
- ***Every Tuesday, 8:00AM** — **Jim Devan** "Nehemiahs" j_devan@bellsouth.net
- ***Robyn Byrum** "Crafting Moms" For moms of teens and college-age kids.
Stay tuned for the next meeting date! robynbyrum2@gmail.com

It's never too late to join — or start! — a Small Group!

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing." 1 Thess. 5:11

CTK SCHOOL NEWS



Congratulations!

We congratulate our lower and upper elementary Spelling Bee winners! Our first-place winner, Jack Bennett, will head to the West Tennessee Regional competition in February. Good luck Jack!



We had the privilege of witnessing two of our students baptized during our School Chapel services. May God shower them and their parents with blessings!



More Congratulations!

Three CTK teams competed in the National Math Competition under the leadership of parent Helen Crews. Our 1st grade team placed 12th in the nation, our 5th grade team placed 28th in the nation, and our 6th grade team placed 24th in the nation with over 1700 participants. All three teams will be competing internationally!

“Celebrate CTK” is set for the last week of January. Our students will be singing at the 11:00am service on Sunday, January 25. As part of this week, we will also have our Annual 8th Grade vs. Faculty Basketball Game at 2PM on Friday, January 30. Come out and see your Pastors and school staff take on our 7th and 8th graders! We might even bring back our retirees to help out! Also, check out information on our Open House on Jan. 29!



The invitation features a vibrant underwater theme. At the top, a large, colorful jellyfish with purple and blue tentacles floats on the left. On the right, a yellow and blue seahorse is visible. The background is filled with numerous blue bubbles of various sizes. The title 'UNDER the Sea' is prominently displayed in the center, with 'UNDER' in a large, bold, blue serif font and 'the Sea' in a smaller, elegant, green cursive font. Below the title, the event name 'Father - Daughter Dance' is written in a flowing, purple cursive script. The date and time, 'JANUARY 31 2026' and '6:00PM', are centered in a clean, blue sans-serif font. The location, 'CTK Fellowship Hall', is also centered below the time. A line of text provides sign-up information: 'For sign up information, visit the table in the rotunda'. At the bottom, a note in blue text says '*Contact kim.britt@ctkschool.com for questions'. The bottom of the invitation is decorated with a sandy beach, green seaweed, and several colorful fish, including a yellow and blue tang and a pink and white tang. The overall design is bright and celebratory, with a mix of blue, green, purple, and yellow tones.

You are cordially invited to the

UNDER *the Sea*

Father - Daughter Dance

JANUARY 31 2026
6:00PM

CTK Fellowship Hall

For sign up information, visit the table in
the rotunda

*Contact kim.britt@ctkschool.com for questions