

# INTERMISSION

2400 WILCREST DRIVE  
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77042  
713-784-6620

WWW.CHRISTTHESERVANT.NET

## LENT AND EASTER EVENTS

Please note that Covid restrictions have changed some of our normal Easter events.

### **Maundy Thursday**

April 1  
12:00 pm Service  
7:15 pm Service

### **Good Friday**

April 2  
12:00 pm service  
7:15 pm Service

### **Easter Sunday**

April 4  
8:00 Service  
11:00 Service

## HOMELESS MINISTRY

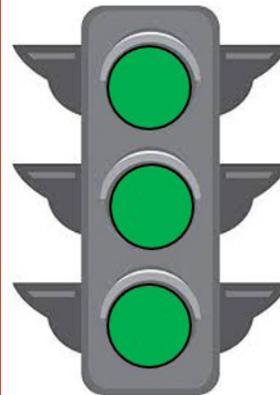
Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic we have been fortunate to continue to provide limited lunches for three locations. Just last week we provided 177 lunches for these locations.

Because of the relatively small numbers of people we are serving right now, we are tailoring the lunches to better meet the specific requests of the homeless population at each of these locations. Thankfully, we currently have sufficient volunteers for all aspects of this vital ministry, but as soon as we can safely go back to our normal larger numbers of lunches, we will need to greatly increase the numbers of volunteers. So, please stay tuned!!! And thank you so much for your generous support!



Raphael 1499-1502

## CTS Financial Dashboard Through FEBRUARY 2021



### YTD Contributions

\$ 110,855  
*above forecast for income*

### YTD Expenditures

\$ 80,591  
*5.4% below budgeted expenses*

### Cash Reserve

*7.5 months coverage of average monthly expenses*

*Excludes programs outside of General Fund (OEF, Homeless Ministry, Memorials, A/V Equipment)*

### YTD Status versus Budget or Cash Reserve Goal

- At or better than forecast or >6 month cash reserve
- <5% worse than forecast or 3-6 month cash reserve
- >5% worse than forecast or <3 month cash reserve

*Contact Treasurer (Susan Collins) with questions*

## MEET ORGANIST JJ MITCHELL



Recently named to the Diapason magazine's 2021 Class of "20 Under 30," John Joseph "JJ" Mitchell, an organist from Arlington, Virginia, has a passion for organ and sacred music pedagogy. He is pursuing a Doctorate in Musical Arts in Organ Performance from the University of Houston (UH) on a Graduate Tuition Fellowship. In addition to serving as Church Organist at CTS, he serves as an organist of St. Philip Presbyterian Church, also in Houston, and is a graduate teaching assistant in the Music History Department at UH.

Recently, JJ was appointed to the faculty of UH's Community Arts Academy, providing organ lessons to students in the local Houston area. JJ graduated Summa Cum Laude from Westminster Choir College with a bachelor's degree in Sacred Music. He then earned his Master of Sacred Music degree in Organ Performance from the University of Notre Dame, where he attended on a full-tuition scholarship. He also studied at the Conservatoire à Rayonnement Régional de Toulouse (France).

JJ has served as organist on the music staff of churches such as Christ Church Cathedral (Houston, TX), the Cathedral of St. Thomas More (Arlington, VA) and the Basilica of the Sacred Heart (South Bend, IN). He has performed in these churches as well as at Boston Symphony Hall, the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, and various other churches in the United States, Canada, France, and England. He is the winner of the Nanovic Grant for European Study for Professional Development and was a finalist for the Frank Huntington Beebe Grant. At age 24, JJ's research on César Franck and his musical influences was published in the Vox Humana

Organ Journal. In September 2020, he was a guest on Dr. Jennifer Pascual's "Sounds from the Spires" SiriusXM Radio program in which his organ recordings were broadcast. JJ is a member of the American Guild of Organists as well as the National Association of Pastoral Musicians (NPM), from which he has received several scholarships. He has served on NPM's National Publications Committee since 2017. JJ's ideal career is to be a director of music at a cathedral where he will teach sacred music to the next generation.

## YOUTH AND FAMILY NEWS

### Confirmation Class

We are almost halfway through our year-long study of Lutheran History and Catechism. Next month we begin our first of 3 sessions on the Apostles' Creed, and before you know it Faith Statement essays will be due and Confirmation is not far behind! Confirmation is 12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. on Sunday afternoons. The dates of the remaining classes for this year are: April 11<sup>th</sup>, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, June 6<sup>th</sup>, July 11<sup>th</sup>, August 1, September 5<sup>th</sup>, and October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Please note that these are all on the first Sunday of the month, except for April and July, which will meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday.

### Subscribe To Our YouTube Channel

**It's easy!** Just click the "Subscribe" button underneath any of our videos on the YouTube site.

**It's convenient!** You'll be notified by email whenever we go live. Never search for a link again!

**It's cheap!** So cheap, in fact, that it's ABSOLUTELY FREE.

**It helps!** We currently have a little over 100 subscribers, but we need more. It's not vanity or ego – the more subscribers we have, the more functionality we will be allowed – which allows us to reach more folks!

### Check In

If you pay attention to our live streams or our website for the past 2 weeks, you may have noticed a new feature. We are encouraging everyone who participates in a live stream to check in online so that we can register their attendance. Attendance is not a fun part of worship but is an important part. While numbers are not the most important thing for a congregation – accurate figures can help us make better decisions about how we are using our time, talent, and resources. Whenever you watch our Sunday streams - whether it's LIVE, during the week, or a month later – please take a moment and check in using the link on our website at: [christtheservant.net/CheckIn](http://christtheservant.net/CheckIn)

## COUNCIL COMMENTARY

The Christ the Servant (CTS) council's most recent meeting was held on Thursday, March 11th. The council unanimously approved a revised version of the Death Benefit Addendum to the CTS Employee Handbook. The revisions were made solely to clarify the language of the addendum.

An employment offer was extended to Mr. John (JJ) Mitchell, a PhD candidate at the Moores School of Music at the University of Houston, as CTS' temporary organist. Mr. Mitchell will play for Sunday worship services, and all services during Holy Week. His position with CTS will be subject to review following the initial three-month temporary employment period.

The council wishes to extend its thanks to D.J. Blockhus, who was instrumental in securing heaters for the "Neighbors in Action" initiative during our recent week of unseasonably cold weather and power outages. The group sponsoring the initiative was very grateful for CTS' contribution and sends its gratitude to the entire congregation.

The council also wishes to thank Ken Smith for his work in leading the CTS initiative for God's Work, Our Hands, particularly at a time when meeting in person remains a material challenge. Please look for further communication regarding how CTS congregation members may get involved.

In an update from last month, the CTS council determined it will be unable to meet the March 31st deadline to apply for a loan under the current Payroll Protection Program being administered by the U.S. Federal government. However, as there may be future programs, the CTS council is considering convening a congregational meeting to discuss and vote on whether the congregation would approve of engaging this type of loan. Please look for future communications regarding a possible congregational meeting in the future.

In light of the changing environment regarding Covid-19, the CTS council discussed CTS' current protocol surrounding in-person activities at CTS, including worship services. Following its discussion, the council decided to maintain CTS' existing Covid-19 protocol for the present time. However, given the rapidly changing environment, the protocol will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. As more CTS congregation members become fully vaccinated, it is anticipated that a return to a more normal protocol will eventually be possible. Please note that streaming services will be maintained for the foreseeable future to enable those congregation members wishing to do so to worship from home.

Prayerfully submitted,  
Karen Carter, Council Secretary

## OEF NOTES

The Opportunity Endowment Fund is a unique ministry. It is not usual practice to try and give away so much money through grants that the funding organization has a real probability of going away, but that is exactly what the OEF has been doing. It has a goal of distributing 25% of the January 1 total before the end of the year. And yet, the OEF has grown and thrived over the past 9 years, due to the continued giving by our donors and a history of giving to tangible benefits without funds going to overhead or payroll of the receiving organizations.

The OEF is continuing its mission this year and has already awarded over \$21,000 in grants to support our church, our community, and our world. We still have over \$18,000 in grants to go and with your help we will do this! Here are a few of the awards we have funded:

- Karatu Hospital
- Fulshear Outreach
- Lutherhill Ministries
- Houston Community Tool Bank
- Seminary Student Support

Please look forward to the photos that will be coming in the future of the great work being done by these organizations.

We still need help from you. Please get the word out that we want more grant requests and if you would like to bring a special program to our attention, please reach out to the committee members so we can do what we can with the resources you have given us.

We would especially appreciate the opportunity to do a matching gift campaign as we did a year ago, so we can magnify the good we can do.

Please ask any of the committee members any questions and we are honored to serve our church, our community, and our world.

Kurt Goedecke, Chair  
Marsha Bower, Secretary  
Adam Jones  
Carrie Stallwitz  
Susan Collins  
Pr. Jim Giannantonio.



# ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

## Parables of Jesus

Here are some ideas/impressions from selected parables we studied last month in Adult Sunday School.

### **The Lost Sheep** - Matthew 18:12-14 and Luke 15:4-7

We all remember this parable where the shepherd leaves the 99 to look for the one lost sheep. In Matthew's version, the lost sheep could have been any one of the flock but is later identified as one of the little ones. Matthew's version emphasizes the recovery of the one lost or led astray. In Luke, the man (not specifically identified as a shepherd) rejoices when he finds the lost sheep. He is so happy he calls his friends together to join in the celebration.

### **The Lost Coin** - Luke 15:8-10

This parable is often considered a "twin" of The Lost Sheep. This parable is remarkable in that it portrays a woman as a metaphor for God. In the parable, the woman lights a lamp, sweeps the house and searches diligently until she finds the lost coin. Then she calls her friends and neighbors and invites them to celebrate with her. Luke concludes this parable with a closing comment that God's angels rejoice over even one sinner who repents. This is very similar to the closing comment in Luke for The Lost Sheep. Hultgren makes an interesting point in that the lost coin is an inert object and had nothing to do with its being discovered! I think we can all relate to stories about searching for missing things ... I look for something misplaced several times a week and generally find the missing object ... often with my wife's help of course.

### **The Rich Fool** - Luke 12:16-21

The rich man land produces grain in such abundance that he decides to pull down his barns and build bigger barns to store all his grain and his goods. He then plans to take it easy and to "eat, drink and be merry". God responds by saying "Fool! This night your soul is required of you." The fool has placed all his trust and faith in his possessions. The call of God and the need of neighbors were apparently absent from this rich man's life. Of course, we never fall into this trap of accumulating wealth for say retirement ... I'm not so sure about that.

### **The Treasure in the Field** - Matthew 13:44

The kingdom of heaven is compared to treasure hidden in a field, which a person finds, hides it then sells all that he has and buys that field. The main point of this similitude per Hultgren is that the disciple of Jesus responds to the kingdom with a commitment that risks all without reserve.

### **The Pearl of Great Price** - Matthew 13:45-46

In this parable, the kingdom of heaven is compared to a merchant looking for fine pearls and when he had found one of extraordinary value, he sold all that he had and bought it. This parable is considered a "twin" of The Treasure in the Field. It is interesting that pearls were considered in some instances more valuable than gold in

the first century A.D. The merchant was looking for pearls while the person wasn't looking for treasure in the previous parable. In this parable, the pearl discovered by merchant was of extraordinary value. Those seeking the kingdom who do in fact discover it will find something far greater than one could have imagined.

Adult Sunday School is held from 9:30 to 10:30 am Sunday mornings in the Conference Room.

You may participate in person (just show up) or online via Zoom from your home computer. I still have 4 webcams if you need one so you can participate online.

Email me at [richardcarlson70@att.net](mailto:richardcarlson70@att.net) if you would like to receive the weekly handouts via email.

## PRAYER REQUESTS

Karen Bauer  
 Sharon Cotta, mother of Christy Iversen  
 Jane Fontenot, grandma of Miley Rose  
 Mary Hiestand  
 Roger Lemburg  
 Gerry Ludwig  
 Cathy Roberson & Debby Weaver, daughters  
 of Jodie Davis  
 Ron, father of Tim Murawski  
 Mary Shabunas, mother of Mary Hiestand  
 Marjorie Swartz, mother of Julie Heil  
 Frank Welsh, friend of Mike and Phylis Karas  
 Yessica, friend of Nancie and Bill Blair  
 Zachary, grandson of Bitsy Muse

This newsletter and a calendar of church activities are available on the CTS website at:  
[www.christtheservant.net](http://www.christtheservant.net)

**May newsletter information deadline is:**  
**April 15**

Please submit information and articles in  
**MSWord documents** to Laura Wilhelm at  
**lvhwilhelm@comcast.net**  
 Information may be edited to available space.

If you would prefer to receive your monthly newsletter via email instead of US Postal mail, please let us know by contacting Betsy in the church office:  
[ctsoffice1@comcast.net](mailto:ctsoffice1@comcast.net)

## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Edna Lwekamua Ndanshau
- 4 Louise Hauser
- 5 Tim Murawski  
Ena Puder
- 8 Ken Smith
- 9 Linda Siegele  
Dale Olson
- 13 Karen Carter  
Russell Reider
- 14 Paul Siegele
- 15 Linda Saunders  
Omega Kihupi  
Jim Sterle
- 17 Julia Dittrich
- 18 Tim Coulter  
Matilda Schrader
- 19 Carrie Stallwitz
- 21 Evynn Stallwitz
- 22 Connie Brown
- 26 Haika Ngowi
- 27 Jackie Scace
- 28 David Stallwitz
- 29 Anne Marie Cook  
Theresa Kelly



## APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

- 5 Rich and Paula Ruskan
- 6 Mike and Linda Iversen
- 19 Kurt and Connie Goedecke  
Tim and Karen Murawski  
Laramie and Donna Winczewski
- 20 John and Linda Shoemaker
- 22 DJ and Tina Blockhus
- 23 Bill and Cheryl Skillman
- 24 Nick and Louise Hauser
- 25 Jim and Patti Sterle
- 26 Bill and Susan Givens



## CONDOLENCES

We wish to extend our sympathy to Ruth Froebel and her family. Robert went to his eternal home in Christ on March 17th. A service was held at St. John's Lutheran Church in New Ulm, Texas on Sunday, March 21 with Pastor Jim officiating.

## 2020 FLOWER CHART

There are still many openings for flowers in 2021! The 2021 Flower Chart is hanging in the Narthex. Sign up for the Sundays you want. Single bouquets are \$27. To donate both arrangements, the cost is \$54. Sundays still available for the next few months are:

- May 23
- June 13, 27
- July 18

The rest of the year also has many openings. If you cannot fill out the sign-up chart in person, feel free to call Betsy in the office and tell her which day or days you would like.



## CHURCH STAFF

### PASTOR

The Rev. James Giannantonio  
jrgiannan@gmail.com

### OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

Betsy Riggs  
ctsoffice1@comcast.net

### DIRECTOR OF YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

Jason "JT" Thomas  
jt@christtheservant.net

### NURSERY CAREGIVER

Sandra Ani

### SUNDAY CUSTODIAN

Sulma E. Cruz

### CHURCH OFFICE PHONE

713-784-6620

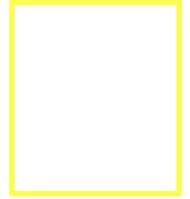
### CHURCH OFFICE FAX

713-784-4742

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APRIL 2021

Christ the Servant Lutheran Church  
2400 Wilcrest Drive  
Houston, Texas 77042

Phone 713-784-6620  
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## 2021 COUNCIL

President: Barry Rava

President Elect:	Dale Dickman	At Large:	Zach Edwards
Secretary:	Karen Carter	At Large:	Neema Makia
Financial Secretary:	Emma Chanimbaga		
Treasurer:	Susan Collins		
Treasurer Elect:	Vicki Rudolph-Williams		

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS, GROUP LEADERS, CONTACT PEOPLE

Acolytes	Inga Carlson, Michele Byrnes	Memorial Service Coordinator	Linda Iversen
Adult Christian Ed	TBA	Men Who Love Spaghetti	Roger Cutler
Altar Guild	Lori Wood	Nursery Attendant	Sandra Ani
CanCare Representative	Susan Kramer	Opportunity Endowment Fund	Kurt Goedecke
Care Team	Pat Korge and Mary Puccini	Personnel	Ken Smith, Shirley Downing
College Ministry	Tina Blockhus	Prayer Chain	Marti Hatcher
Disaster Response Team	Ron Herbanek	Property	Brent Brown, Ron Herbanek
Family Aid Ministry	Carolyn Giannantonio	Sound Team	TBA 8:00 Service
Fellowship Committee	Rosalie Fontenot		Brent Brown-11:00 Service
Greeters	TBA	Stewardship	Chandler Wilhelm
Homeless Ministry	Carolyn Giannantonio, Rosalie Fontenot	Ushers	8:00 Russell Farmer
			11:00 Pat Welborn
Ladies Dinner Group	Mickey Walters	WHAM Representatives	Ken Smith
Lawn Care	Russell Farmer, Kevin Petterson	Women's Ministry	Marsha Bower
Lectors	Chandler Wilhelm	Worship and Music	Lori Wood
Liturgical Assistants	Chandler Wilhelm		