

INTERMISSION

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

WWW.CHRISTTHESERVANT.NET

NEWLY ELECTED CONGREGATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

CTS Council representatives for 2021 are:

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

The 2021 Opportunity Endowment Committee is:

Kurt Goedecke
Marsha Bower
Carrie Stallwitz
Adam Jones
Pastor Jim Giannantonio
Susan Collins

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Parables of Jesus

The Parables of Jesus will be the topic of discussion beginning Jan 3rd and continuing through the end of Feb (possibly March). Per Arland Hultgren, a professor at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, the English word "parable" is a loanword from the Greek word *parabole* and its basic and primary meaning is a "comparison". Per Dr. Hultgren, two things are generally known about Jesus of Nazareth that are beyond historical doubt. The one is that Jesus was crucified in the first century of the Common Era. The other is that he taught in parables.

There are 38 comparisons in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark & Luke) that are considered parables. These parables serve as the Gospel reading for 11 Sundays in the Revised Common Lectionary year of Luke (Dec 18 to Nov 19 – 1 ½ to 2 years ago), 10 Sundays in the year of Matthew (Dec 19 to Nov 20 – last year) and only 2 Sundays in the year of Mark (Dec 20 – Nov 21 – this coming year).

The parables class will cover the 8 parables not included in our three-year lectionary series. They are:

The Lost Coin: Luke 15:4-7
The Wise and Foolish Builders: Matthew 7:24-27
& Luke 6:47-49
Children in the Marketplace: Matthew 11:16-19 &
Luke 7:31-35
The Two Debtors: Luke 7:41-43

The Father's Good Gifts: Matthew 7:9-11 & Luke
11:11-13
The Slave at Duty: Luke 17:7-10
The Pounds: Luke 19:12-27 (similar to Matthew
25:14-30)
The Great Banquet: Luke 14:16-24 (similar to
Matthew 22:1-14)

We will also concentrate on Luke's parables which are included in the lectionary, as it has been 1½ to 2 years since we've had them read as the Gospel lesson and preached by Pastor Jim.

Adult Sunday School is held from 9:30 to 10:30 am Sunday mornings in the CTS Conference Room. You may participate in person (just show up) or online via Zoom from your home computer. If you don't have a webcam, we may have a webcam (we have four available) we could give to you so you can participate online. If you would like one, email Richard Carlson at richardcarlson70@att.net or call Richard at 281-236-0174. Most laptops do have a camera/microphone built in which should work with Zoom. Richard can arrange a practice Zoom session if you like to see that your computer is compatible prior to a Sunday morning class.

We will be using Arland Hultgren's "Parables of Jesus" and Robert Farrar Capon's "Kingdom, Grace & Judgment" as resource books.

JOHN KRUEGER

Editor's note: CTS Organist and Choir director John Krueger was called to his eternal home in Christ on January 7, 2021 after a two month battle with the damage caused by Covid-19. For those who may not have known John well, the following is an excerpt from the obituary posted on tributearchive.com.



John Frederick Krueger was called to his eternal home in Christ on January 7, 2021 after a two month battle against physical damage caused by Covid-19. He is survived by his loving wife of 31 years, Pam, son Ross (wife Kate), daughter Kristin, sister Jann Krueger Coursey (husband John, sons Jeremy and Jonathan), many extended family members and a vast network of dear friends. John

was preceded in death by his parents Norman F. Krueger and Nelda Jean Krueger.

Born and raised in Monroe, Michigan, John graduated from Hillsdale College, with a Bachelors Degree in music and music education. He moved to Houston, Texas to pursue a Master's in Vocal Performance at Rice University where he met Pam, the love of his life. John continued his musical education by obtaining a Masters in Church Music from Concordia University, Wisconsin and a Certificate of Liturgical Studies from Notre Dame University. He was nominated and became a member of Societas Liturgica in 2017 and followed that with application and acceptance into the North American Academy of the Liturgy (NAAL). John never lost his desire to learn and was currently challenging himself with the task of translating the Tanzanian songbook Tumshangilie Mungu into English. John traveled internationally to several Societas Liturgica conferences and had planned to present a paper on the Tanzanian project at the conference later this year.

John began his music career singing in the Houston Grand Opera Chorus and at Memorial Lutheran Church, where he discovered a love of choral conducting. In addition to his many performances with the Houston Grand Opera, John also sang with the Houston Gilbert and Sullivan Society, Opera in the Heights, Sons of Orpheus, Cecilia Choir, PIVO (a jazz ensemble), and for several years was a volunteer conductor of the BP employee choir.

John has been employed by Christ the Servant Lutheran Church in Houston for the past 16 years, where he served as Director of Music. He loved every aspect of his job and particularly enjoyed working with the children of the congregation, cultivating their love of music and their faith in God. John firmly believed we learn best through singing and that music engages our minds and souls in a special way, bringing us closer to each other and to God.

In addition to his love of music and worship, John was very involved in the recovery community and was passionate about helping others. He was an avid bowler and loved to travel and see new places as well. Most of all, John loved people and none more than his family. He was a proud father and would tell anyone who would listen about his children's latest accomplishments. He was quite proud of everything they've done and was thrilled to include them in his musical endeavors. John never met a stranger and with his broad knowledge base and sense of humor he could talk to anyone, instantly connecting and forming a friendship.

Editor's note: In mid-December, on a day he thought recovery was around the corner, John Krueger sent the following contribution for the newsletter from his bed at Memorial City Hospital.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

As we have completed the midweek Advent services, the question has come up about what kind of home liturgies may be out there. There are three in the hymnal that don't require a pastor - Morning and Evening Prayer, and Prayer at the Close of the Day (Compline). Compline is almost never done, and all three require a great deal of chant. As a result, they would be very complicated to record .

I am still in the hospital, so the online services are an absolute Godsend. But, hospital or not, I am faced with the same problem as everyone else - how to get fed during the week.

The resource I am currently using is Morning and Evening Prayer - but from out of Luther's Small Catechism. Those of us with children will likely have a catechism around (and maybe those of us who still have theirs). I also have a phone app. However, Luther's Small Catechism can be found in the back of the hymnal at pp. 1166-67 as "Morning" and "Evening" Blessing. In both cases, the format is the same: make the sign of the cross, say the prayer, pray the Creed and Lord's Prayer, sing a hymn, and go on about your day (or end your day).

A scripture reading could be added between the prayer and the Creed. There is a daily lectionary in the back of the hymnal as well. It is based on the Sunday readings, and also provides a directed path through the psalms in a year. As for the closing hymn, the church year and other areas of concern are listed at the top of each page.

This has been used for nearly 500 years, and in a book primarily written for children. Sometimes, simpler is better...

John Krueger
Director of Music

COUNCIL NOTES

The following is a summary of both the December 2020 and January 2021 CTS council meetings:

Church maintenance continued with the completion of the water line repair and the replacement of the broken air-conditioning/heating unit in the sanctuary. All work was completed during the month of December.

Although most of the CTS outreach programs are on hold due to the current health pandemic, the Homeless Ministry has managed to continue serving its mission. A small group of volunteers, led by Pastor Jim, continues delivering non-perishable meals to the Houston homeless population regularly.

Attendance at worship services, both in-person and online, has remained healthy, with most worshipers choosing the online option. CTS' YouTube subscribers has climbed to 100 as of January 2021, which is up 13 subscribers from the prior month. The Christmas Eve online service was well attended with 176 viewers, while in-person worship included about 60 worshipers.

Thank you to those congregation members who filled out the survey regarding CTS' online worship services. We received constructive feedback and will be working to improve the online experience, specifically as it relates to the recording quality of music played during services. This will be an ongoing project, and the council greatly appreciates your patience with our efforts.

The council spent considerable time discussing ways in which CTS could support the Krueger family during this difficult time. A bereavement support fund will be set up shortly to which CTS members, and others, may contribute. Please look for additional communication outlining the logistics of supporting the Krueger family. Additionally, a CTS committee will be formed and tasked with deciding how to best continue John's music vision at CTS. A larger celebration of John's life is planned for later in 2020, or 2021, contingent on resolution of our current health situation.

And finally, the CTS council wishes to thank the following individuals: Vicki Rudolph-Williams for her wonderful music support during our recent difficult time; Chandler Wilhelm for his leadership as CTS Council President during 2020; Joanne Dumler for her service as a member of the CTS council; and Laura Wilhelm, who faithfully puts together our monthly newsletter - something that helps hold us together during these times!

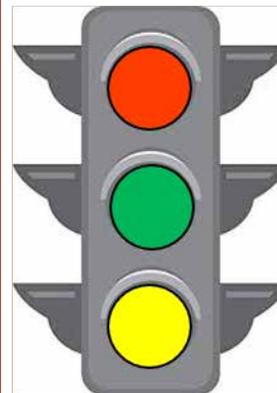
Prayerfully submitted,
Karen Carter
CTS Council Secretary

CARE TEAM

Listening is often the only thing needed to help someone.

As we start a new year and you think about what you would like to accomplish in the coming year, consider the gifts that you have received from God and are able to share with others. Do you have the desire to help another person by listening and responding in the most appropriate way? The Care Team provides this service to our church members. We would love to have new members join the team. We meet once a month and each member contacts the care receivers approximately every 4 to six weeks. One or two members make contact each week and we sign-up for the weeks that we can serve. Our monthly meeting provides discussion/training regarding how to better serve our care receivers. If you would like more information about the Care Team, please contact Karen Welborn at 713-784-7072 or email at kwogontz@live.com.

CTS Financial Dashboard Through DECEMBER 2020



YTD Contributions

\$ 549,035

11% below forecast for income

YTD Expenditures

\$ 611,372

1% below budgeted expenses

Cash Reserve

5.0 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

FLOWERS AND ENVELOPES

The 2021 Flower Chart is up in the Narthex. Sign up for the Sundays you want. Single bouquets are \$27, both arrangements \$54.

Offering envelopes are also out in the Narthex for pick up on Sundays. They may be picked up during the week also, but call the office first.

YOUTH AND FAMILY NEWS

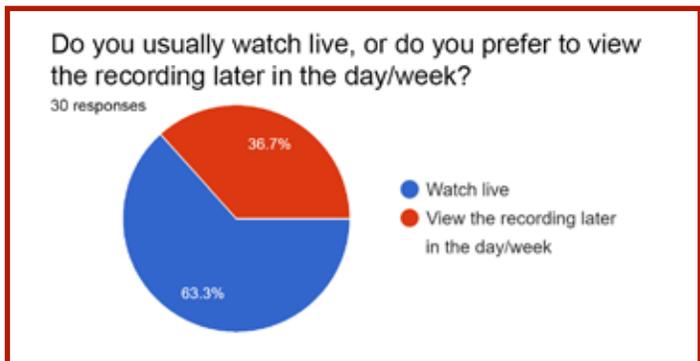
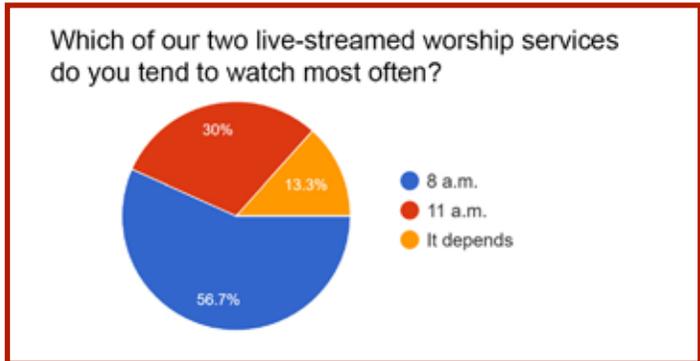
Seafarer Boxes

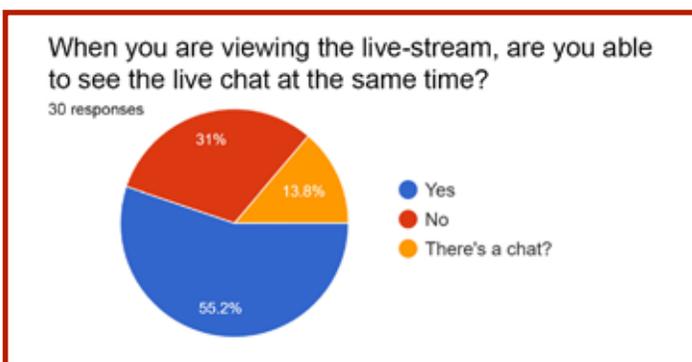
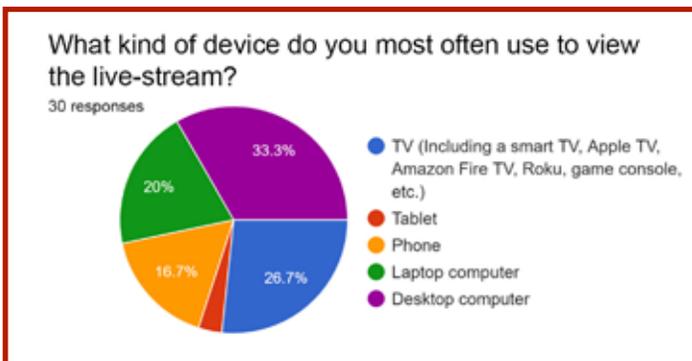
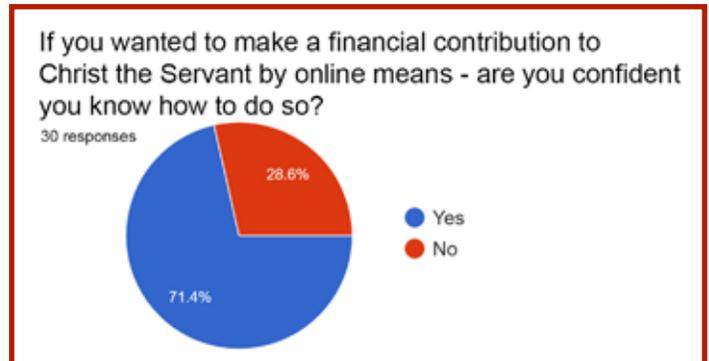
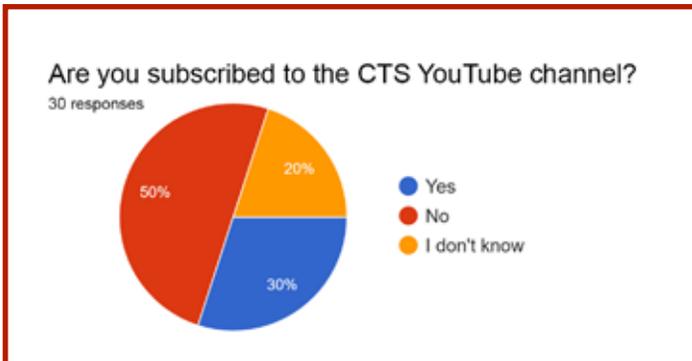
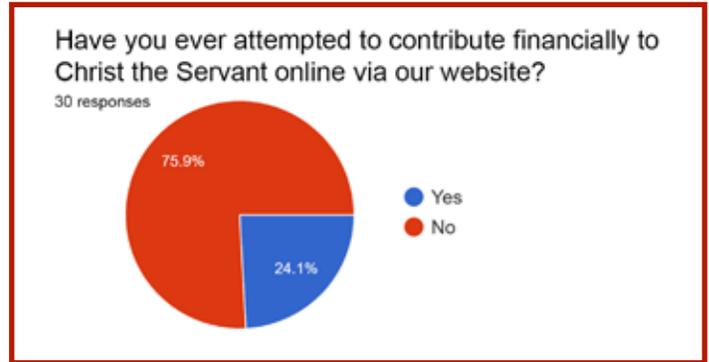
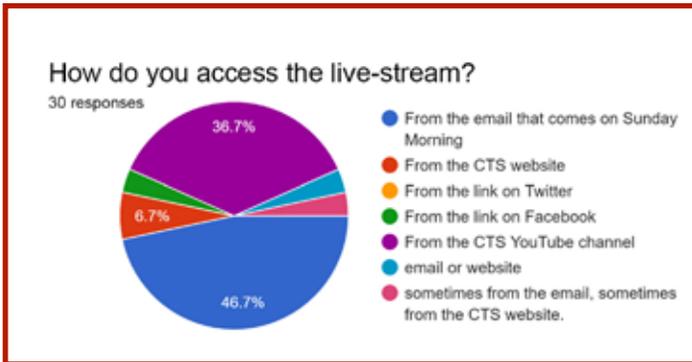
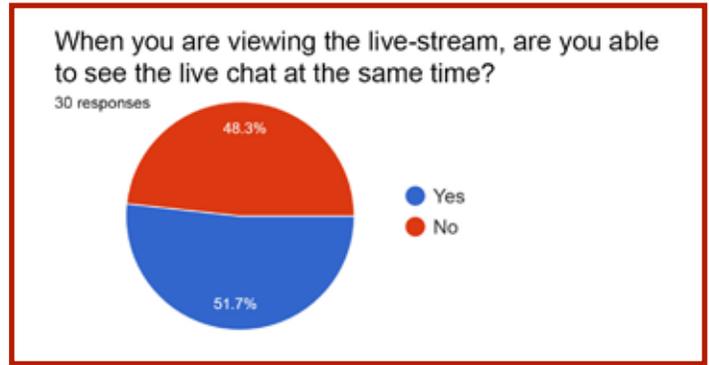
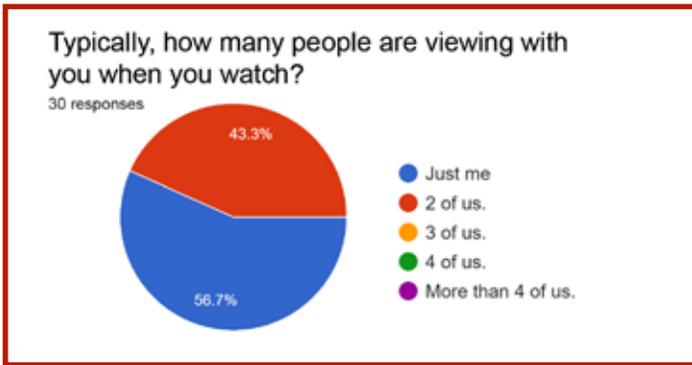
On Wednesday, December 25th, my family and I delivered 50 wrapped shoeboxes to the Seafarer’s International Center at the Port of Houston. Despite a global pandemic, the inability to gather in person, and a host of other obstacles – you kept your promises as a congregation and managed to still give above and beyond what you usually do. Thanks for your constant generosity and your Christmas spirit!



Live Stream Survey

At the end of 2020, we asked you to participate in a 2nd survey regarding our Sunday Morning live streams. Included here are most of the results for your perusal. In summary, a majority of respondents watch live, at 8 a.m., every single week, and on a desktop computer. According to these numbers, each stream represents an average of 1.4 viewers, which is one of the ways we are keeping track of attendance during the pandemic. As you can also see – about half of respondents use the electronic worship booklet, and while most people understand how to give their offering online, almost nobody actually does. We are grateful for your feedback and are already using it to improve the ministry our church is doing online. Thanks for your continued loyalty to CTS during these months apart, and for your patience as we navigate new technology and best practices.





JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

7 Chandler and Laura Wilhelm 

9 Richard and Denise Carlson

16 Richard Caldwell and Barbara Stuckey

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

1 Bob and Judi Leisk 

OPPORTUNITY ENDOWMENT FUND

An update from Mia White at the ToolBank, an organization supported by the Opportunity Endowment Fund last year:

I wanted to send along a few photos of the items you helped us purchase. Some are from University of Houston's biannual community clean up. (It brought out a hundred socially distanced volunteers) The other is from the Midtown Project, which did a community tidying event using the edgers you helped us get. We were also lending our trash grabbers to individuals - and the man in the visibility vest man took it on himself to collect trash on his daily walk - he says he picks up 1-2 small bags per day, and this his neighbor was inspired to do the same.

I also know the tillers go out frequently to community gardens. In fact, one volunteer was even saying how well the tiller ran, and how much they appreciated having a high-quality item to use for their project. We haven't got a quality photo of those yet though.

We have not had the usual number of landscaping projects this year, but these items are truly appreciated by our members! I know once summer/fall rolls around and more folks are vaccinated, we are going to see a volunteering "boom" as people celebrate being a part of their communities again. These landscaping items are going to be in high demand.

A MOST UNIQUE (SURPRISE) 90TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

What a tremendous surprise; the 60 car drive-by parade headed by the Constable, Sheriff, and Richmond Fire Dept. on Saturday, January 9, 2021 was secretly organized by my son, Ron. I am overwhelmed with all the flowers, gifts, balloons, and cards. The family has taken photos to identify all who participated so I can individually thank you. If we missed someone, please accept this as a heartfelt and grateful response to all the well-wishes! That evening, Ron & Dana hosted a family dinner, which included both of my Grandsons and their Significant Others (invited secretly). We ate a catered Italian dinner in their decorated garage, followed by a custom-baked chocolate on Black Forest chocolate cake. I will always remember this day and feel I am truly blessed. Thank you again for your selfless response!

Joan Herbanek

CONDOLENCES

Christ the Servant member Fred Korge went to his eternal home in Christ on December 24, 2020. Our condolences go out to his wife, Pat Korge, and family.



PRAYER REQUESTS

Karen Bauer
 Sharon Cotta, mother of Christy Iversen
 Jane Fontenot, grandma of Miley Rose
 Pam Krueger & Family
 Roger Lemburg
 Gerry Ludwig
 Ron, father of Tim Murawski
 Sandy, niece of Tim and Karen Murawski
 Cathy & Rob Roberson, daughter and son-in-law of Jodie Davis
 Valerie Schick, granddaughter of Nancie Blair
 Mary Shabunas, mother of Mary Hiestand
 Marjorie Swartz, mother of Julie Heil
 Frank Welsh, friend of Mike and Phylis Karas
 Zachary, grandson of Bitsy Muse

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Trey Iversen
- 3 Gabriel Lares
- 6 John Mfungo
- 9 Joan Herbanek
Bruce Palfreyman
- 16 Tina Blockhus
Mike Saunders
Joan Nilsen
- 19 Sharon Stultz
- 23 Marcy Williams
- 24 Phyllis Richard
- 28 Ember Matherne
- 30 Zach Edwards



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Peter Lares
- 3 Carla Abonce
- 9 DJ Blockhus
- 10 LeRoy Bauer
James Thomas
- 12 Susan Sutton
Jesse Thomas
- 13 Case Iversen
- 16 Paula Ruskan
- 18 Jonathan Collins
Elizabeth Collins
- 21 Jerry Myers
- 22 Vicki Rudolph Williams
Kristian Teegerstrom



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

This newsletter and a calendar of church activities are available on the CTS website at:

www.christtheservant.net

March newsletter information deadline is: February 15

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

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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	DJ Blockhus
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
Ladies Dinner Group	Mickey Walters	WHAM Representatives	11:00 Pat Welborn
Lawn Care	Russell Farmer, Kevin Petterson	Women's Ministry	Ken Smith
Lectors	Chandler Wilhelm	Worship and Music	Marsha Bower
Liturgical Assistants	Chandler Wilhelm		Lori Wood