

Christ Lutheran Church

Germantown, Maryland

Epistle To The Saints

September 2026

Sunday School at 9:30 AM Service at 10:30 AM each Sunday

Sunday, September 6th – Refreshments after service hosted by Janice Delagrange

Monday, September 7th - Labor Day

Saturday, September 12th – 50th Anniversary – PICNIC and GAMES 12 NOON

Sunday, September 13th – 50th Anniversary – Holy Communion and Luncheon

Sunday, September 20th - Holy Communion and Sunday School resumes 9:30AM

Sunday, September 27th - Church Council Meeting

We are collecting Canned Meats for Damascus HELP through September



Welcome!

To view the livestream of our services, go to the church Facebook page (Christ Lutheran Church AALC) or go to our website (clcmd.org) and click the link at the bottom of the first page. Once on the FB page click the "videos" tab. Bulletins for our services are on the website.

September
2026



Christ
Lutheran
Church
Germantown,
MD

50th Anniversary
Celebration:
Saturday, 9/12
AND Sunday
9/13

(Resuming 9/20)
Sunday School
9:30 AM

Worship Service
10:30AM
(Livestream)

Men's Bible
Study-Monday's
11AM

Women's Bible
Study-
Wednesday's
10AM

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		1	2 Women's Bible Study 10 AM 50 th Meeting 12:30 PM	3	4	5
6 Worship Service 10:30 AM	7 Labor Day	8	9 Women's Bible Study 10 AM 50 th Meeting 12:30 PM	10	11	12 50 th Picnic and Games 12 NOON
13 Worship Service 10:30 AM Holy Communion 50 th Luncheon	14 Men's Bible Study 11 AM	15	16 Women's Bible Study 10 AM	17	18	19
20 Sunday School Resumes Sunday School 9:30 AM Worship Service 10:30 AM	21 Men's Bible Study 11 AM	22 Church Council Reports Due First Day of Autumn	23 Women's Bible Study 10 AM	24	25	26
27 Church Council Mtg Sunday School 9:30 AM Worship Service 10:30 AM	28 Men's Bible Study 11 AM	29	30 Women's Bible Study 10 AM			

September Birthdays

18th-Bruce Gladhill

21st-Carilee Layman



September Baptisms

1st-Anja Clarke

*Carol Bartels



PRAYER AND PRAISE

AUDREY STAPF: *Thank you, Lord, for your continued healing in Audrey. Thank you for your constant presence and assurance.*

50th Anniversary Committee: *Father, please be with the committee as they work to prepare our celebration for your gracious love and goodness to our congregation.*

REVEREND DR. CARY LARSON: *Heavenly Father, we thank you for Reverend Larson. We pray that you keep him in your care and bless his work in Your name.*

VICAR CHRIS: *Lord, we ask that you bless Vicar Chris and his family as they faithfully serve You.*

FOR OUR CONGREGATION: *Father, we ask for your merciful goodness in providing us with the wisdom, discernment and courage to do your will. We thank you for providing each of our members, visitors, friends, and family. Each and every one is a true blessing.*

FOR OUR CHILDREN: *Lord, keep each of them strong in you each day. Protect them and guide them in the plan that you have for each of them.*

FOR OUR PASTORS: *By the power and presence of the Holy Spirit, please uphold and help them stand firm in the truth of Your gracious word.*

FOR CAROLYN SHRIVER: *Father, please comfort Carolyn with Your mercy and bless her with the full healing of Your love.*

FOR THOSE SERVING AWAY FROM HOME: *Father, please guide them in Your mercy and bless them with the fullness of Your love.*



Like us on Facebook!



Christ Lutheran Church AALC

Our Facebook page is looking great! Lots of wonderful information about our church, congregation, and news.

Every week the service's video is posted.

AWESOME!

*We are collecting canned meat for
Damascus **HELP** during the month of
September*



christlutheranofgermantown.org

We encourage you to provide Jeane with your comments and things that you think would add additional value to the site.



*There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens:
a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot.*

-Ecclesiastes 3:1-2

-Pastor Irvin Stapf:

An Observation - Meaning of Life

Jean-Paul Sartre, a French philosopher and playwright, 1905-1980, was recently highlighted in a BreakPoint commentary from the Charles Colson Center. The commentary pointed out that Sartre rejected the notion of a fixed human nature. He argued that the individual must decide their nature. Without a fixed nature, humans are then radically free to choose values and identity. Though his ideas of “radical freedom” sound liberating, for Sartre, it was not a gift. Rather, humans are, he said, “condemned to be free.” No matter how we define ourselves or what meaning we make, it is all done within a meaningless, absurd universe. “It is meaningless that we are born,” Sartre said, “and it is meaningless that we die.”

It further pointed out that his philosophy has continue to shape much of our world even from the grave. The idea of a meaningless, absurd universe is horrible to contemplate. Total freedom with no anchors. Meaningless being born and meaningless in death!

But that is not what life is! How can we stress to others that there really is meaning in life? This is a central task for all of us who believe. There is a true God in heaven! He created us. We are His and He has a purpose and meaning for each of our lives.

For Sartre there is no meaning even in suicide. But one must ask themselves, even as Shakespeare had his character Hamlet contemplate, “is there really nothing after death”. It is easy to say we simply enter nothingness. But is there that “undiscovered country from whose b0urn no traveler returns....”? God declares that there is something there after we cross the boundary from this physical life.

Are we willing to blindly speculate what that might be in our own imagination - from nothingness to some sentimental eternal reunion on the clouds? Rather, it is better we investigate now what The Almighty God has said about life - His life and the life He wants for mankind who He created.

This is all real dear friends. Look into it now and find the meaning God has for your life today. Jean-Paul Sartre was completely wrong. What our Lord God offers is real, beautiful, and offered to all. His word is what gives real meaning to life.

(Words we can trust: Jeremiah 18:1-6; 29:11; 31:3, & above all Romans 8:38-39)

- *Vicar Chris:*

Pentecost 11 - Homooousios vs. Homoiousios

[What does "homooousios" mean?](#)

The Importance of the single letter “I” What single Greek letter was so controversial that it nearly tore the early Christian Church apart in the 4th century?

It was the iota (ι)—the tiny letter separating *homooousios* ("of the same substance") from *homoiousios* ("of similar substance"). While it might look like mere academic hairsplitting, that single letter represented two completely different views of who Jesus Christ actually is.

What Does "Homooousios" Mean?

- **Literal Translation:** A Greek compound of *homo-* ("same") and *ousia* ("essence" or "substance"), translating directly to "of the same essence."
- **Core Definition:** It describes the exact nature of Jesus Christ in relation to God the Father, asserting that Jesus is co-eternal, uncreated, and fully God.

What Does "Homoiousios" Mean?

- **Literal translation:** a similar substance
- **Core definition:** means that Jesus was a “creature” created by God, if He is created, then he doesn’t have the same power to save. Only God can forgive sin, and if Jesus isn’t God, then what does his death on the cross mean for us? It means that our sins were not nailed to the cross, it means that He could not have died to redeem us. It changes the entire nature of salvation!

The Historical Controversy & The Council of Nicaea

- **The Arian Dispute:** In the 4th century, a priest named Arius taught that Jesus was a created being, subordinate to the Father, and therefore "less than" God. **He was famous for having said “There was a time when the Son was not.”**
- **The Council of Nicaea (AD 325):** Christianity had just gone from being a persecuted religion, to being the religion of the Roman Empire. However, the debate over who Christ was, threatened to tear the church apart. Church leaders, championed by theologians like Athanasius, convened to resolve the crisis. **They included *homooousios* in the Nicene Creed to explicitly declare that Christ is "begotten, not made" and of one Being with the Father.**
- **Defining the Trinity:** Settling on this term established the foundation for orthodox Trinitarian theology—one God existing eternally as three distinct Persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) who share one identical divine nature.

Scriptural & Historical Defense

- **Scriptural Grounding:** “Sola Scriptura – we stand on scripture alone” Though the exact word does not appear in the Bible, its core concept is woven throughout the New Testament:
 - **John 1:1–3:** Affirms that the Word was with God and *was* God.

- **John 10:30:** Jesus states, "I and the Father are one."
- **Hebrews 1:3 & Colossians 1:15–17:** Describe Christ as the "exact representation" of God's nature and the Creator of all things.
- **Historical Evidence:** Early New Testament papyri (e.g., P66, P75, Codex Sinaiticus) and early Church Fathers (such as Irenaeus and Tertullian) show that the earliest Christians worshiped Jesus as fully divine long before Nicaea met.

Why Does It Matter Today?

It is easy to view *homoousios* as an ancient debate over Greek grammar, but that tiny letter protects the very foundation of the Christian faith. **Remember: If Jesus is not fully God, the entire concept of salvation falls apart.**

There are still religions that hold to the Arian view even today, JW's and LDS, and there are others.

Because Christ shares the exact same infinite essence as the Father, His sacrifice carries **infinite value**—meaning **He alone has the power to fully atone for human sin. A created being or a "lesser god" could never bridge the gap between a holy God and humanity.**

The bottom line is that *Homoousios* guarantees that when we believers pray, worship, or seek grace, we aren't reaching out to an intermediate agent or a proxy, but directly to the Almighty Creator Himself—truly "God with us."

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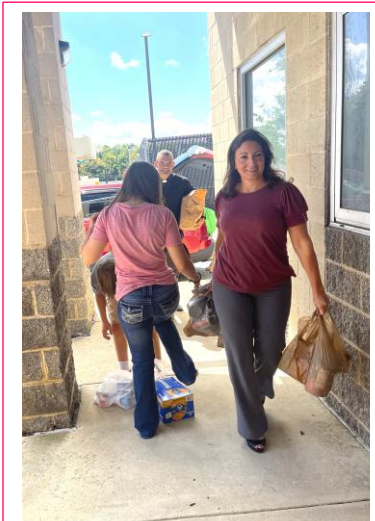
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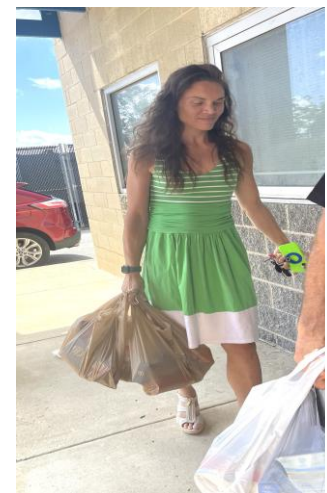
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THE PHOTO GALLERY
Foods for Damascus Helps



**Our congregation
supports Damascus
Helps each month by
filling the basket with
the specific
designated foods
each month.**

**Thank you!
Ms. Sarah**



OUR HELPERS
PICTURED

Ashley – Jessica – Sophiya – Charlotte – Anya – Aurelia

NOT PICTURED
Sarah – Vicar Chris

- Carolyn Shriver

50 Years of Memories

I remember that when our church first started meeting we met in the basement at the Schlossnagle home. They lived just down the road from us. We sat in folding chairs and on whatever furniture was available in the basement.

In our early years together Pastor Stapf's mother, Mildred, led the women's Bible Study. (We all called her "Mom Stapf".) I remember it meeting in the basement of the Schlossnagle home and in the basement area of my home on Frederick Road during that time. Our children were small and there were a lot of them but most of the time we managed to watch our children nearby AND study God's Word. During one of the Bible Studies at the Schlossnagles's home, Eric Eisel managed to slide down the laundry chute.

One year when our church met at the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Damascus—it was right after Kenny was born in 1978—Carrie would have been about 2 years old—Glenn had taken the children to Sunday School and Church. The children were running around after SS and Carrie ran into a partially opened door, hitting her head on the edge of the door. She was taken to the ER for stitches straight from Church. Glenn went with her and someone brought Sarah home to me as I was home with Kenny after his recent birth. All the news I got at that time was that Carrie had a head injury and was taken to the hospital. I did not know anything else until Glenn brought her home from the hospital. Was it a scratch? Was it life threatening? Blood? Deforming Injury? (For show and tell, Carrie can show you her battle scar.)

I remember being at a shower (I think) at Betty Klose's house when we got the phone call that Emil Isaacson had passed away. I also remember that Rosie and I drove over to Ruth Isaacson's house to visit, comfort and provide moral support for her the next day.

Glenn used to take Sunday School attendance when we met at the Seventh Day Adventist Church. Whenever he entered the SS room Katie Gladhill was in, she would cry like she was scared of him. In 1982 we moved into the new home that Glenn designed and built (the home I live in now). The first company that we invited for dinner was the Gladhills. They were to come eat lunch with us after church one Sunday. When they arrived, it turned out to be the WHOLE church. They brought food and housewarming gifts and we all had lunch together. What a surprise!

For a time Glenn and I spent our winters in Florida. We had fruit trees in our yard and enjoyed bringing home boxes of oranges, grapefruit and lemons to share with our church family. At the time there was a couple from Texas that were attending our church. The next week they brought us a "pie" as a thank you gift for the fruit. They said that black-eyed peas were plentiful where they lived in Texas and when you have plenty of something, you get creative in how you use them. Someone had come up with the idea of making a pie using black-eyed peas. It tasted just like pecan pie—one of Glenn's favorites. Who knew?

When our children were younger, we celebrated All Saints Day with parties as opposed to Halloween. There were many creative costumes and several families not only dressed as Bible Characters, but they acted out Bible Stories. A memorable one was when Kate and Lisa Gladhill dressed as Grapes from the Promised Land. They were hanging on a pole carried by Joshua and Caleb (Amy and John). I believe Bruce and Jan read the story as they acted out their portion. One year someone (Maybe John and Sue Herder's kids), acted out the story of the talking donkey.

I remember later on when we met at this church having yard sales to benefit the Frederick Crisis Pregnancy Center. Then sometime after that there were free yard sales to benefit the community. I remember donating a lot of things. I also remember bringing home a lot of things “I needed”.

I remember Hilda Diggs having Quilting Parties. At that time my children were small and I wasn’t able to attend. I think the quilts benefited a Westminster Ministry where they donated quilts and blankets to victims of floods, fires, catastrophes and the mission field.

In our earlier years we sang and fellowshiped at nursing homes on occasion. Pastor would share an encouraging word with the residents and the children and any adults present would sing Sunday School songs. (I overheard a one resident “whisper” to her friend. “I didn’t think they were so good.”)

We regularly have Men’s Bible Study and Women’s Bible Study. The form of the Bible Studies has changed over the years but we always study God’s Word and lift up our various concerns and needs to the Lord in prayer. Also, there is usually food involved in some fashion.

In the past for several years we joined Bethesda UMC in holding Bible School. Our congregation helped in providing some teachers, some students and making refreshments.

For a while many of us volunteered to serve meals and fellowship at the Frederick Rescue Mission.

In our more recent years we began tying fleece blankets together for our prayer ministry. When there is a prayer concern, we gather around a chosen blanket (usually after our church service) and pray for the specific person by name and need and ask God to bless, heal, comfort, bring peace, etc.—each of us holding on to an edge of the blanket. Then the blanket is delivered to the recipient by a friend or mailed to the recipient. I think of Jan getting after us if we didn’t tie the blankets “up to standard”. When she got after Joyce Ballard for not doing her stretch of the blanket like the rest of it, Joyce said, “That’s OK. It’s for my son and he’ll know which part I worked on.”

The kids especially enjoy the “Seasonal Parties” these days. They usually include a meal, games and the favorite—a pie eating contest. One year we had a Christmas Party in our fellowship hall. It involved a gift game. Art’s gift ended up being a pair of reindeer slippers—which he wore to church the next day. He was a part of the Praise and Worship team and we all enjoyed his attire.

One Christmas we had an open house and service. Jan’s nephew played a beautiful piece on the violin and another friend played a song on the harp.

One year we wanted to have a community outreach at Christmas time. We decided to have some light refreshments and free giftwrapping for anyone that stopped by. Nobody stopped by.

Susan remembers that we had an outdoor 4th of July church service and picnic at our home many years ago. The next thing we knew Dick Malone jumped in the pond to swim. Of course, several others followed pursuit. Carolyn and Glenn were nervous knowing that the bottom of the pond is very silty and there are many snapping turtles included in the habitat of that pond.

And who can forget Luigi—who visited us on several occasions when we were having a fellowship event. Sometimes he would show us his morning routine of getting ready for the day. Other times he might show us how to make a cake for the occasion.

For a time we held a coffee house in the fellowship hall at our Cedar Grove location. Our praise team would often sing as well as ones from other churches in the area.

In earlier years we met several times for a Christmas Caroling event. We would drive to homes where the residents were sick or incapacitated or in need of encouragement and sing several Christmas Carols. We would then meet back at a home for hot chocolate and refreshments.

There were several years that we had progressive dinners. We would all drive to the first house for appetizers. The next house might have a soup or a salad. The third house would serve the main meal. The last house, usually Bruce and Jan's, would have dessert. YUM! FUN!

There were several years that we held Father/Daughter Dinner Dances in our fellowship hall. We used nice table clothes and Miss Carol provided chair covers and decorations that made the room feel magical. There was a nice meal served with dessert. After that Miss Carol would have some of her students perform. Then the attendees would be led through the evening's dances with the lead and sometimes instructions by Miss Carol. Pictures would be taken with a special backdrop. The ladies would all receive a corsage when they arrived. Many times there was a small gift—perhaps a piece of jewelry or an appropriate book encouraging a healthy biblical father and daughter relationship.

Carolyn

**Christ Lutheran Church
Agenda Council Meeting
August 16, 2026**

Present: Pastor Emeritus Irvin Stapf, Bruce Gladhill, Helen Gibson, Jeane Flesch, Vicar Chris Clarke

Guest: Meryl Beneati

Absent: Art Delagrange, Carrie Perini,

Opening Prayer: Pastor Emeritus Irvin Stapf

Items from the President:

- Our Preaching schedule: Pastor Emeritus Stapf will preach the 1st and 3rd Sundays and will conduct Holy Communion on the 3rd Sunday and on selected Festival occasions. Vicar Chris Clark is again preaching the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month and will again do the Children's Sermons. Joe will preach on months with a 5th Sundays and act as a back-up for Pastor Stapf and Chris. Jeane will be the back-up for the Children's Sermons.

Financial Matters (See Attached Excel Files):

- RBC: Total \$203,568.09
- Jeane reviewed the attached Treasurer's Report. There was an error and the report was corrected with the outstanding check data. Balance: \$32,167.50
- One outstanding check to Damascus Helps for \$200.00.
- Chris made a motion to approve and seconded by Irv. Motion passed.

Old Business:**Anniversary Celebration:**

- Minutes of the committee for July 29, 2026 distributed and discussed.
- Roster of invited guests and members distributed and discussed.

New Business

- Review minutes from Council Meeting July 19, 2026.
 - Irv made a motion to approve and seconded by Helen. Motion passed.
- Helen made a motion that we move the Council meeting to the fourth Sunday of the month given we have Holy Communion on the third Sunday which results in a very long morning.
 - Bruce made a motion to approve and seconded by Chris. Motion Passed
- Chris reported that Sofiya would be interested in volunteering to help with secretarial duties.
 - Jeane will contact her to help with The Epistle.
- Chris reported that the Children's Sunday School program wanted to order materials.
 - There is a line item on the budget that they should use.
 - Motion made by Irv to approve; Helen seconded. Motion passed.

Committees:

- **Call:**
 - See notes attached of the Video Meeting Friday August 14, 2026 with Irv, Chris, Dr. Cary Larson and Pastor Joe Christina.
 - Jeane's notes given to Irv and he will send a profile of our geography.
 - Jeane will gather and send to Irv the financial package of Pastor Abraham.
 - Next conference call is scheduled for Friday, August 21st.
- **Outreach:**
 - Damascus Help items for August are canned Tomato's.
- **Special Projects:**
 - **Memorial Garden status:**
 - See attached Layout of July. 23. 2026
 - Discussion on the bench now being 6 feet instead of the 4 previously noted.
 - Irv distributed copies of the **Memorial plaque** and Bruce gave him a check for the required down payment on \$800. Ashley Signs.
 - Discussion on **tree** – Meryl will do more research on obtaining the Dwarf Dogwood in 7gallon pot. Price \$160. Chris made the motion to approve, Bruce seconded. Motion passed.
 - The **contractor** will begin work on August 27th in putting in the paving blocks. 10" base of stone, sand, then the stone-grey pavers. Clear grass for the flower beds. Chris made the motion to approve, Irv seconded. Motion passed.

○ **Property:**

- Meryl proposed that the sidewalk be repaired/replaced. To be discussed in more detail at next meeting.

Next Meeting:

- September 27, 2026

End Meeting:

- Irv made a motion to close the meeting, with a second by Chris. Motion approved.
- Meeting was closed with Irv leading us in the Lord's Prayer.
- Minutes respectfully submitted,
Jeane Flesch, Recording Treasurer
Christ Lutheran Church



50 Anniversary Celebration

Please come and join in the celebration!

Saturday, September 12th – Starting at 12PM

Games and prizes for the children with bounce house. Picnic and time to visit with friends and family. IF you have a lawn chair, please bring it.

Sunday, September 13th – 10:30AM

Service with Holy Communion. Luncheon in the Fellowship Hall immediately following service.



Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

-Romans 12:2



Epistle To The Saints

September 2026

Christ Lutheran Church

23425 Davis Mill Road

Germantown, MD 20876

Facebook: [Christ Lutheran Church AALC](#)

Website: christlutheranofgermantown.org

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Epistle: [Jeane Flesch jef.jlhf @ comast.net](#) and [Sofiya Clarke](#)