

A New Day for God's Beloved

Behold, I am making
all things new.
~ Revelation 21:5





Dear Sisters and Brothers of Light of Christ,

It's a new day at Light of Christ!

We've added new staff, launched a new confirmation ministry, welcomed dozens of new members, and introduced new worship services, songs, and celebrations. And this is just the beginning.

It's a new day for us because the world around us is changing. I was ordained in 1984, the same year that Light of Christ was founded. Much has changed in the intervening years. Being a pastor today is not the same as it was thirty-four years ago, and neither is being the church. Adapting to this new environment is essential.



That's something we know as a congregation. In fact, our priority as a congregation from the recent Missional Assessment Profile (MAP) congregational survey, is to **find new and innovative ways to be the church in today's world.** So, we



are exploring what that means for us in our youth and family ministry, our worship and music ministry, our outreach ministry, and more. You also said that you want to grow as a congregation and in living out your faith in your everyday life. In addition, you said that you want us to find creative ways to serve those living in poverty.



This is not the first time Light of Christ has welcomed a new day. We welcomed a new day when the church was founded, when we outgrew our facilities and had to build a sanctuary and an education wing, when new pastors and staff came, and when new challenges and opportunities presented themselves. Now, once again, it is time to embrace this new day.



Embracing the new day means stepping boldly into the future. We don't know what all the steps will be. But we do know what a few of the next steps will be. Deepening our faith and the connections of our relationships is paramount. We hope to staff for growth, which means to ultimately have two full-time ministry leaders for children, youth and family, a music ministry leader that may be full-time, and perhaps a part-time director of communications. We want to make faith growth opportunities fully accessible by making online sermons and worship services, Bible studies, faith discussions, registrations, giving, directories, and more, as close as your phone or computer. Making connections are at the top of our list!

A huge key to realizing these ministry goals would be to finish paying for our education wing, which has about \$46,000 a year in payments, with a total remaining debt of about \$430,000. If we pay off the mortgage in three years rather than ten years (which is the remaining time on the current note) **we will save between \$80,000 – \$100,000 in interest.** The more quickly we retire our debt the more quickly we can use that money to fund the ministry and mission we believe the Spirit is calling us to do. Your faith and generosity is key to our church taking these bold steps together, and this capital appeal will give all of us an opportunity to advance our ministry. My invitation to you is to consider what might be your best gift or 3-year pledge, over and above your regular giving, for this New Day appeal!

It is a new day for God's beloved here at Light of Christ because we belong to the risen Christ who says at the end of the book of Revelation: "Behold, I am making all things new." (Revelation 21:5) Please join me in praying for, and working for, the power and presence of the Holy Spirit so that we will be filled with a deeper faith, a livelier hope, and a more constant love, and live into this new day with joy and boldness.

In Christ's love,

Pastor Bruce

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Through your input as members, we clearly heard that we are feeling called to grow. This was top in the MAP that we took last summer. The following Mission Initiatives will help us to do just that.

Strengthening our children, youth, and family ministry.

New leadership has reinvigorated this ministry. And just as kids and their families have been a hallmark part of Light of Christ's ministry in the past, we know that **growing our reach and impact** is important as we move into a new day together.



Our hope is to expand our reach by staffing for this growth. We would like to increase Kirsten's current part-time position to much closer to full-time at some point in the not-too-distant future and therefore grow the excellence and programming of this ministry. Helping to **make faith real and to bring it into our homes and day to day lives** is at the top of our priorities.



Expanding our worship and music ministry.

All of us know how important our experience of worship is. It's where we gather, hear the Word, pray and sing together, give our praise and thanks to God, and receive nourishment from the power of the Holy Spirit as well as from the Sacraments. You might say A LOT is wrapped up in that weekly time of gathering.

Our vision is to strengthen our worship and music ministry by **moving from a part-time music director to a full-time worship director**. We plan to do this in a way that helps us embrace both the best of our tradition as well as the best of emerging Christian worship styles and music. Full-time leadership will help us to grow the number of people involved in our worship and music ministry, and make our worship life more dynamic and engaging. Finding the right worship and music director will also help us **grow our worship attendance** which is also one of the top priorities that emerged from our MAP.

Deepening our healing/wholeness ministries.

We all need help. We all need to be connected. We all need relationships. We all need to know that we are God's beloved children. Yet, there are tough times and circumstances that can challenge or undermine that experience.

At our recent Community Leader Gathering, and even through our MAP results, we have learned how important it will be to deepen our experiences, efforts and programs to foster healing and wholeness. We are discerning where the Spirit is leading us in this area of ministry and how we can **be a healing presence in our community through prayer, healing services, support groups, prayer groups, befriending ministry, and more**. You may have passion or gifts to share here; you may want to help us dream and plan. But whatever be the case, we all ultimately have a role to play in making these ministries more accessible and life-giving through Light of Christ.





Strengthening our outreach to those in poverty.

Central to our calling as Christ's disciples is that we extend **compassion toward those in need**. Indeed, reaching out and serving them was high on the priorities you expressed through our MAP survey. While LOC indeed serves in a variety of ways, we are committed to extend our reach.

We have made the commitment to give 10% of the money we raise in this capital campaign to ministries devoted to serving those in poverty. A part of that may be used to help facilitate ministries out of our own church, while other resources may be directed to one or more of our mission partners.

Poverty comes in many forms. There is financial poverty; there is poverty of spiritual vitality or connection; there is poverty of simply being connected or having a place to belong; the list goes on. Help us discern some of our next steps in this important ministry area!



And more...

Investing in and upgrading our technological capabilities will help us to connect within our own LOC community and beyond. Creating new strategy for social media, sharing our sermons and so much more, will be explored.

Care and maintenance for our always-used and persistently-aging building and property will need investment for us to have a quality center for mission and worship. Much happens here at Light of Christ. Our facility is not a monument but an instrument for ministry. We need to keep it up and improve it so that it can be the most effective instrument possible. We have a number of capital improvement improvements that we'd like to complete in the next five years. Once we reach our initial appeal goal of paying off the Education Wing, we can begin some of these other improvements.



This is a new day at Light of Christ. But one thing remains the same—Jesus' new commandment that we love one another as he has first loved us. (John 13:34) The love of God in Christ is at the heart of our life as a congregation. We are God's beloved children, living in God's beloved community, caring for God's beloved creation. God's love is the constant in the midst of great change. Central to this love is that we are called and empowered to share the good news of God's love in our words and deeds, both near and far, in season and out of season.



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