

TABLE TALK

NOVEMBER 2023

Christ the King Lutheran Church

1301 Mowry Ave.

Fremont, CA 94538

Office: (510) 797-3724

Email: ctkfremont@sbcglobal.net



Pastor's Letter

Grace and peace to one and all.

Earlier in August, one of the Gospel readings for worship was Matthew 14:13-21. As you may recall, the story is about the feeding of the 5,000+. Just a few verses before this text is the beheading of John the Baptizer, a gruesome story. Our text picks up with Jesus and his disciples coming to know of this murder. Upon learning of the tragedy, in verse 13, we are told Jesus departs by boat to a quiet place, - or well, that was the intent. But having heard where Jesus was going, the people followed him.

Though we have a story with the amazing feeding of 5000+, we benefit from looking deeper into the story. I would like to lift up two of the many wonders and miraculous things going on in this story.

Those who have gathered are over 5,000, “not counting women and children.” This crowd is comprised mostly of the poor, the oppressed, and probably heartbroken over the state-sanctioned murder of John the Baptizer. Matthew shares that Jesus, moved by compassion, healed the sick and the weak. In the story we have these hungry folks in a hot, dry, parched area, barren of accessible resources.

In verse 15, the disciples tell Jesus: “This place is deserted and the hour now has passed; send the crowd away, in order that having gone into the villages they may buy food for themselves.”

What was Jesus response to his disciples? Was it . . . “I guess you are right . . . let us not be burdened . . . you are right we don't have enough . . . and if we send them away . . . even though they have not enough money to buy food . . . it is not our problem . . . I am not responsible.”

NO! Jesus does something completely different. He says: “They have no need to go away; You give to them something to eat.”

But the disciples' retort was: “We have nothing here except five loaves and two fish.”

Jesus responded, “Bring them here to me.”

The text continues with: “And having ordered the crowd to sit on the grass, having taken the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and blessed and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowd.”

The disciples are coming from a world view of scarcity: “we only have 5 loaves and 2 fish.” Their impression is that there is just not enough to go around. We have talked a lot about this at CTK as we explore where God is calling us in ministry in the time ahead and what a mindset of scarcity does to a person’s attitude. The mindset of scarcity limits our thinking to inward thinking instead of bigger-picture thinking. The troubling and destructive elements of greed, hoarding and self-centeredness, quickly stir within.

Jesus, in word and action, demonstrates to the community long ago and to us today that instead of a mindset of scarcity, good things happen when we operate out of the mindset of abundance . . . “thank you, God, for these five loaves and fishes.” There is enough for everybody.

We need to avoid saying and feeling that the church "needs" more money, more members, more "help." That is a position and mindset of scarcity, even when we truly desire to act compassionately, “if only we had more money, more space, more volunteers, more . . . we could really do ministry.”

Rather, we need to be thankful for that which we have been blessed, believing God has provided ample resources for us to do the ministry we are called to do. We need to continue growing in the belief that God has provided ample resources for us to do the ministry we are called to do. Planning and looking to grow is important. The idea of growing and embracing additional resources is not to be discarded, but scarcity should not be our mantra and not lamented.

The first point naturally leads to the second point: Jesus basically says to the disciples that this situation needs their participation and commitment. Jesus tells the disciples to get involved, participate, and reinforces that they are quite capable.

These reluctant, skeptical disciples are called to participate in the care for others. They are called to be a part of God working miracles in and through them, just as we are called to be a part of God working miracles in and through us. We are called to be the voice for those who are not heard, to respond to those who are hungry, those who are oppressed, those on the margins, to care for one another showing love and compassion. God’s miracles continue when we help with Abode, SAVE, Safe Parking, leading and participating in bible study, volunteer in church administration and worship, volunteer on various church committees, and when we call on a friend who is sick or struggling with loneliness or isolation.

When you and I live into the call to love one another, to care for one another, through us, God is working the same kind of miracle we hear about in Matthew.

The real wonder of this story is that it continues: God still cares deeply and passionately for those who are most vulnerable – those who are sick, poor, without shelter, without food, the immigrant, – and God continues to work through us to care for them.

At first glance this is just a feeding story, but as you can see, there is much Matthew weaves into the story. May loving & compassionate God continue to strengthen you and provide you wisdom and mercy as you continue your journey caring for your sisters and brothers in creation.

Pastor Raymond

Council President's Corner

It has been a very busy time since our last Table Talk was published in May. Thanks to the many hours Jason has contributed to the editing of our Table Talks. Due to time availability, he will no longer be able to continue in the role of editor. Thanks to Dana for taking this task on as one of her duties.

In July, we joined Holy Redeemer Lutheran Church (HRLC) and Holy Trinity Lutheran Church (HTLC) to celebrate Pastor Barbara Caine's 18 years of dedicated leadership in the Tri-City ELCA community. Interim Bishop Claire Burat delivered the sermon for this very special event, and the service featured diverse musical performances, including the Good Shepherd Telugu Choir, HRLC Hand Bell Choir, the Tongan Wesleyan Church Choir, HTLC Praise Band, liturgical dancing and more.

Members of the Ad-Hoc Committee continue in communication with HRLC and HTLC. Pastor Tim (HTLC) returned from his sabbatical in September. HRLC continues the complex process of the final stages of the HRLC ministry while both churches are working to move forward, together.

During the Synod Assembly, one of the workshops I attended was "Celebrate Small Churches" that Pastor Charlane Lines presided over. Out of 181 churches in our synod, 109 are considered "small." Many great comments and resources were shared which the Ad-Hoc Committee will be pursuing.

The Sierra Pacific Assembly with a theme of "Broken yet Whole" was held on September 15 – 17. Jim Sepeda and Jan Holbrook (non-voting) joined me as CTK's elected representatives. There were approximately 540 attendees of which 439 were voting members. Of the voting members, 67% were lay, and 33% were rostered.

A significant element of the Assembly was the receiving of La Iglesia Luterana Santa Maria Peregrina as a congregation. Public apologies were made for the racism and treatment they had received by the former Bishop and the Synod Leadership in the recent past. The recognition that damage has been done and healing is necessary was crucial. It was a very moving experience.

In the past three years, the SPS has had three Bishops and faced significant controversy. In addition, their offices have moved three times. There is declining membership and finances throughout the Synod. The Synod is looking for improved connectivity between the Bishop's office and the congregations as well as among congregations. This includes options for leading a declining church to new vitality, ministry for small congregations, the Call process, support and encouragement for rostered leaders and provision of well qualified interims.

At the conclusion of the Assembly, Rev. Jeff R. Johnson (Berkeley) was voted Bishop Elect on the 5th ballot with a vote of 226; Rev. John Kuehner was second with a vote of 168. Bishop Elect Johnson will be serving a six- year term. For details regarding Bishop-Elect Johnson, the Sierra Pacific Synod Assembly, or the process, check the website at <http://spselca.org> .

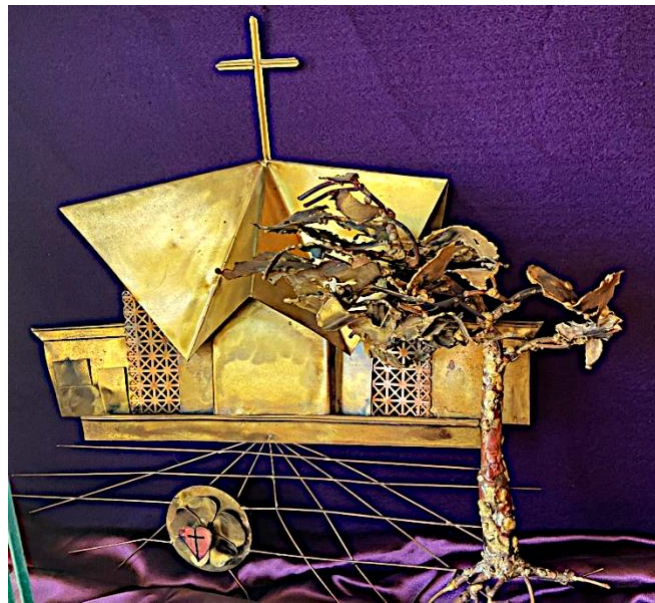
Thanks to all the volunteers who make our many ministries possible with their time, talent and generous donations – we would not be able to do all that we are able without your assistance. More help is always welcome!

Yours in Christ-

Peggy Claassen, President

The Family of Bob & Virginia Walter's Generous Donation

In 1983, a remarkable copper sculpture depicting the sanctuary was commissioned by CTK and presented to Bob Walter. This gesture acknowledged Bob's pivotal role as Chairman of the Building Committee and celebrated his tireless commitment to the church over the years. The sculpture adorned his fireplace until his passing in 2022, serving as a lasting testament to his unwavering dedication and contributions. It is currently on display in the Narthex.



Church Service Volunteer Opportunities!

Three fun opportunities to share God's love at church service are currently open:

Altar Guild: Weekly preparation of the Sanctuary for church services. The Altar Guild team works on a rotational basis and training will be provided.

Lectors/Assistants: Lectors do the readings and Psalms while Assistants help the Pastor to conduct the service. A script is provided.

Coffee Cart: Provide fresh water and check supplies for the coffee cart in the Narthex.

Cards & Calendars for Abode

Abode would appreciate any spare calendars and greeting cards you have. Residents of Sunrise Village Shelter and other Abode Housing sites enjoy giving cards to their family and friends. You may leave your cards and calendars on the table in the narthex or give them to me.

Thank you!

Bonnie Immecker

SAVE Shelter Donation Bin In Narthex

SAVE welcomes these donations for their Youth, Teen, & Adult clients - both male & female, in various sizes:

Socks & Underwear, Shorts (drawstring), Slippers, Slip on Shoes, T-shirts, Leggings (female), Sports bras (female), Full Size Toiletries: Shampoo and Conditioners - various hair types, Body Soaps, Deodorant, Teeth care items (brush, paste, floss), Feminine Products - pads and tampons, Hair Brushes - for different hair types, Hair Bonnets - night sleep cap, Donations to CTK (note SAVE Project) are always welcome.



SAVE was founded in 1976 as a grassroots organization by a group of Tri-City women to provide support to survivors of domestic violence. At the time, there were no shelters in Southern Alameda County that could serve the specific needs of individuals and families experiencing DV. Other SAVE firsts include educating police officers and medical personnel about intimate partner violence (IPV), establishing a transitional housing program which won national recognition, and providing teen dating violence awareness presentations in schools.

SAVE shelter is a safe emergency space for victims and their children to stay after fleeing a violent environment. They often arrive with the clothes on their backs. This is a list of items needed to supply clients with clothing and toiletries until they can find permanent solutions.

The shelter is part of many of SAVE's community programs.

Safe Parking: Good News, Thanks & Prayers

Christ the King hosted Safe Parking in August 2023, the fifth time starting in June 2022.

There is good news. Two participants previously at CTK got stable housing in June, one in Newark and one in San Francisco. And three participants who joined the program during August were able to leave the program within a month. One got housing in Fremont and one in Oakland where she also started a new job. The third reconciled with a family member and has been given a place to stay. We can all rejoice with them and continue to pray for them.

A thank you note to CTK included these words:

I'm happy to report that I have rented a room in Fremont...I also want to express my sincere thank you to the church at large for allowing us to utilize your parking lot as part of the City of Fremont Safe Parking program. A special thank you is extended with a warm hug to all the volunteers...

The CTK Stewardship Committee hosted a meal for the participants on Thursday August 17 - Hot Dog August Night! It included grilled sausages and hot dogs. It was a fun evening and a time of great fellowship. Eight participants enjoyed the meal plus a few non-Lutheran volunteers.

Your generous donations made it possible to again give the participants gas cards. We hear regularly from some about how they limit their driving to conserve expensive gas. We also provided them with Starbucks cards, an appreciated treat. We will need to rebuild the Safe Parking funds for the next time we host the program, probably in January 2024.

A key prayer request continues to be improved relationships among the participants. A significant example, but not the only one, is that two participants left the program because of bullying by other participants, including off-site during daytime interactions. One of those who left had a mild heart attack during August and was told to stay away from the program by their doctor to limit stress. An unfortunate situation.

Typical overnight participant numbers for August were 5 to 8 participants, similar to April 2023. The maximum was 10 people and the cumulative people served over the month were 13; both these numbers are slightly higher than April.

We are thankful for everyone involved and that we continue to be able to help some of those less fortunate by providing them with a safer place to spend the night. We're always happy to add new volunteers.

If you have questions about the program, please contact Alan, Jim or Bunny.

The CTK Stewardship Committee: Alan, Cam, Debbie P., Kris, Linda P., Pastor Ray
City of Fremont liaisons: Jim, Alan

Site coordinators, in order through the month: Alan, Jim, Bunny

Check-in/check-out volunteers: Bunny, Cam, Debbie P., Jan H., Kris & Steve, Linda & Bob, Cindy, Rene & Neal (part of us, from Holy Trinity), Alan, plus non-CTK people coordinated by CityServe's Compassion Network, including a CTK visitor

Mission Peak Chamber Singer's End of Year Concert at CTK



On May 20, 2023, Mission Peak Chamber Singers returned to Christ the King for their end of season concert, having previously been here June 18, 2022. The music this year celebrated California and California composers. The 25-member choral group's voices filled the sanctuary. They were led by Artistic Director Dr. Corie Brown, Assistant Professor of Choral Music Education at San Jose State University, and accompanied by pianist Janet Holmes. Managing Director Adam Lee and Carola Di Alessandro worked with CTK members on the legal and logistic aspects. It's impressive to see how the sanctuary can be reimagined. Over 100 people were in the audience including many CTK members.

Backpack Project, 2023



Thank you CTK family and friends for your support of another successful Backpack Project. With your donations, \$250 from Thrivent, \$775 from Souper Bowl and \$86.59 from our Panera Fundraiser, we provided 95 backpacks for children in need in grades K-5. Thanks to our shoppers and help with filling the pencil boxes and pouches with supplies.

On Saturday, July 22nd, nine Scouts and some adults joined eight CTK members in sorting, counting and laying out all the school supplies on tables. After the church service on Sunday, July 23rd, 15 CTK members filled the backpacks with the school supplies, and they were picked up by Connecting for Education volunteers. Thank you to all who helped!

Since we started the Backpack Project in 2009, we have donated 1,172 backpacks to children in need.

Bonnie Immeker, Social Ministry Committee

UPCOMING EVENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

CTK BOOK CLUB: The CTK Book Club has started a new book called "Everything the Bible Says About Angels and Demons" An overview of this book said, "Readers' fascination with angelic beings--both dark and light--continues to grow. Numerous authors have given their ideas about angelic beings, but it's time to hear what God has to say. All the scriptural references on the subject have been collected and explained in a clear and concise format. The book's length and focus make it perfect for readers on the go who love the Word of God." Join us as we begin reading and discussing this topic every Thursday from 10am to 11am on CTK's Zoom. If you have any questions, you can contact Debbie Pollak at 510-825-4816.

CTK COUNCIL MEETING: Tuesday, November 14th at 7:15 pm via CTK Zoom.

JESUS & JUSTICE COLLECTIVE: Sunday, November 12th, 2-4pm, "Health Equity and Jesus' Kingdom" at 41386 Fremont Blvd. Bldg. B, hosted by the "Silent No More" group at echo.church-Fremont. Go to: jesusandjusticecollective.org/events to register.

LUNCH BUNCH: Wednesday, November 8th, at 1pm Lunch Bunch will meet at La Piñata located at 39136 Paseo Padre Pkwy, Fremont. All are welcome; many invite their friends. Plan for at least a 2-hour lunch, as it takes more time with a group. Best to bring cash, as separate checks are not always doable. Please RSVP to Roseanne Lawrence.

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE MEETING: Wednesday, November 1st, at 10am via CTK Zoom. If you have questions, please contact Bunny Dubel.

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING: Monday, November 13th, at 7pm via CTK Zoom.

SOCIAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE MEETING: Monday, November 20th, at 6pm via CTK Zoom. If you have questions, please contact Bonnie Immecker.

TRI-CITY 62nd ANNUAL INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING SERVICE: Monday, November 20th, at 7:30pm in-person and on Zoom. Register in advance for Zoom link at <https://bit.ly/TCIC-ITS2023>. In person venue: Niles Discovery Church 36600 Niles Blvd. Fremont. The "Sharing Our Abundance in Gratitude" service includes prayers from diverse, local, faith communities. Voluntary donations will be collected to benefit United Nations programs providing food (www.wfp.org) and clean water (www.purewaterfortheworld.org) to those most in need globally. ALL are welcome!

TRI-CITY VOLUNTEERS FOOD BANK: Donations may be dropped off Monday to Thursday, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at 37350 Joseph Street, Fremont.

Urgently needed items:

- Bottled Water (16.9 oz. or Smaller)
- Individually Wrapped Beef Sticks/Jerky
- Canned Goods and Packaged Foods (No dented cans and no items past their expiration date)
- Fresh Fruits and Vegetables from your Garden

WORSHIP SCHEDULE FOR NOVEMBER:

11/5 Rev. John Bost
11/12 Rev. Jim Brun
11/19 Rev. John Bost
11/26 Rev. Ray Waespi

Reminder about e-mail addresses and your contact list

Remember to double check the email address of any mail you want to send. You may have deleted or changed an e-mail address in your Contacts List but old e-mail addresses can still pop up when you are sending e-mails. If you want to verify a CTK member's address, please contact Dana.

2023 CONGREGATION COUNCIL

Peggy Claassen, *President*
Jim Sepeda, *Vice-President*
Jan Holbrook, *Council Secretary*
Dana Brambley, *Treasurer*
Debbie Pollak, *Financial Secretary*
Kris Adams
Bunny Dubel
Bill Kemp
Laurel King
Chris O'Halloran
Terry Pearson
Debbie Ward

CTK STAFF

Rev. Raymond Waespi, *Pastor*
Barney Tiller, *Music Director*
Dana Brambley, *Church Secretary/Office Administrator/ Table Talk Editor*
Christina Bauer, *Webmaster/Designer*

CTK OFFICE HOURS:

Monday thru Thursday, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Attachments:

1. Jesus and Justice Collective November 12th Event Flyer
2. Tri-City Interfaith Thanksgiving Service November 20th Event Flyer

HEALTH EQUITY AND JESUS'S KINGDOM

NOVEMBER 12 2PM-4PM

LOCATION: 41386 FREMONT BLVD BLDG B, FREMONT, CA 94538
HOSTED BY THE "SILENT NO MORE" GROUP @ ECHO.CHURCH - FREMONT

What does the Bible say about Health Equity and Jesus's Kingdom? We will focus on the effect of Access to Healthy, Local Food to Under-Resourced Communities with Experts and present Opportunities for involvement.

[CLICK
HERE TO
REGISTER](#)



[OR SCAN
QR CODE
TO
REGISTER](#)



JC JESUS & JUSTICE
COLLECTIVE

Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

Sharing Our Abundance In Gratitude

Monday, November 20, 2023 @ 7:30pm Hybrid Event



Tri-City Interfaith Council

A COOPERATION CIRCLE OF



RSVP for Zoom link @ <https://bit.ly/TCIC-ITS2023>
In Person Venue: Niles Discovery Church
36600 Niles Blvd. Fremont, CA 94536

Sponsored by
Tri-City Interfaith Council
TCICouncil.weebly.com

