



# Central Lutheran Church

the Messenger newsletter

**Central Lutheran Church**

1420 Cordova Street  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501  
907-277-1622 phone  
centluth@gmail.com  
<http://www.centluth.org>

**JANUARY**  
**2025**

**Pastor**

Interim Pastor Mark Galbraith centluth@gmail.com

**Office Manager**

Kathy Freeman centluth@gmail.com

**Financial & Membership Secretary**

Karen Voris centluth@gmail.com

**Treasurer** Kathy Dale

**Choir Director** Tai Wai Li

**Bell Choir Director & Organist** Debbie Pankow

**Custodian** Rey Nelvis

**Find our congregation at**

<http://www.facebook.com/centluth>



## COMING EVENTS

Sundays

9:30 am Worship service

Tuesdays

7 am Early AM Study

6:30 pm Divine Drama

Wednesdays

Noon Divine Drama

5:45 pm Bell Choir rehearsals

7 pm Choir rehearsals

Saturday 1/4 at 9 am Men's

Breakfast @ Flo's Pancake House

**SPECIAL EVENTS:**

"From the Interim Pastor's Desk" 1/5

Q & A with Bishop Tim 1/12

**Annual Congregational Meeting 1/19**

New adult ed class begins 1/26



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

## Phase III of the interim ministry process is coming

Beloved People of God:  
Happy New Year 2025!

I trust and pray that the Advent and Christmas holidays were a rich blessing, with cherished traditions, feasts, gatherings with family and friends during this weeks-long celebration of the king of Kings and Lord of lords.

We have much to give thanks to God for the year 2024. We give thanks to God first of all for Pastor Jeff and his 8+ years of ministry among us here at Central Lutheran Church. We give thanks to all leaders of members of our faith community for how they stepped up to the plate in the “in between time” between Pastor Jeff’s leaving and my beginning with you as Intentional Interim Pastor.

I’m thankful for the warm welcome you have given me, for how you have embraced me into your congregation’s ministry and lives, and for your active participation in the interim process as it has unfolded so far.

A new year marks a new chapter in this Interim Process as we will soon enter into “Phase 3” of this season of interim ministry, discernment and prayer. I can confidently state that we are on schedule, if not ahead of schedule, as to the Interim Process. Phase 3 includes: my “From The Interim Pastor’s Chair” PowerPoint presentation of the mission study groups on January 5, vote and approval of a Call Committee at the Annual Meeting, the Call Committee working with Bishop Tim on completing the Ministry Site Profile, the launch of the ministry site profile under the ELCA national database, and the interview phase with candidates. A little more about each:

**Election of a Call Committee:** according to the bylaws of Central Lutheran Church, the Nominating Committee will put forward a slate of candidates at the **Annual Meeting on January 19** for the congregation to approve and vote on. The Call Committee is typically 6-9 members, representing the diversity of the congregation’s demographics, ideally including one youth as well as one council member, who will serve as a liaison between the committee and the council.

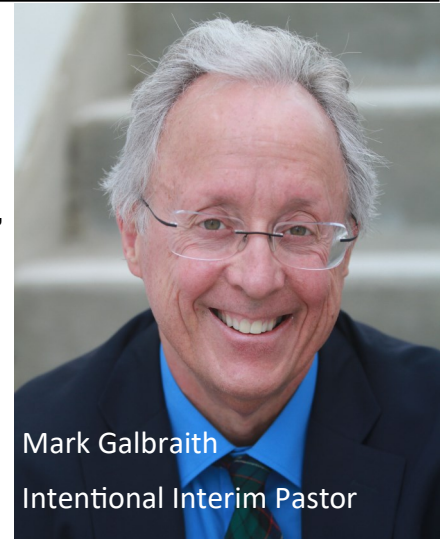
**The Ministry Site Profile (MSP):** This is the profile that the Call Committee will complete, with

the guidance of Bishop Tim, that will be a comprehensive profile of Central Lutheran’s ministry, strengths, challenges and opportunities, mission and guiding goals, demographics, financials, etc. This profile is meant to be the best and most authentic presentation of Central Lutheran’s life and ministry for consideration by candidates who will interview.

It is very important to understand that it takes on average, according to experience, 2 to 4 months to complete this profile, from the election of the call committee to its posting on the ELCA database. There will be many meetings to schedule according to the Call Committee members schedules, a plentitude of aforementioned information to gather and interpret, writing and reviewing of drafts, and final approval of the MSP by both the Bishop and the council.

Please know that the MSP that will be posted will afford candidates their first looking impression about what an awesome place and ministry Central Lutheran Church is. As the saying goes, “You have only one chance to make a great first impression!” So the MSP needs to be the best and most authentic presentation of Central Lutheran’s life and Mission, and the Call Committee needs to be supported in taking all the time necessary to do the very best job on this profile. Please do not let your anxiousness about this process impact or pressure its success, so kindly allow the Call Committee the space necessary to do their best work. The best thing you can do is support them in your prayers.

The Call Committee will be entrusted by the council and the congregation with the charge to do their best interpretive work on behalf of the congregation into the MSP and in their subsequent interview interviews with candidates.



Mark Galbraith  
Intentional Interim Pastor

**Candidate interviews:** upon successful completion and posting of the MSP onto the ELCA national database, Bishop Tim and his staff will work diligently to match candidate profiles with Central's MSP, and forward candidate names for the Call Committee to interview. Please take the heart that this Interview Phase is entirely candidate driven, as to the availability and interest of candidates available at any given time. There is no way to predict who will be available at any given time or the length of time the interview process will take, but it typically takes at the very least several months.

But please take the heart a couple of realities: First of all, pastors are in mobility search year-round. Of course there are those "sweet-spot" seasons (late spring-early fall) when pastors typically move, esp., if they are married and have children. However, I know from personal experience that I have begun calls during many different times of the year, as have many of my colleagues. So please do not fear that Central will somehow "miss the boat" if a candidate doesn't come between that sweet-spot time.

I also can attest, from experience of 15 years as an Intentional Interim Pastor that I believe that as God is already hard at work preparing Central for her next chapter of ministry, I'm also convinced that God is already at work preparing who will be the next pastoral partner with Central Lutheran Church.

I know that there is a constellation of emotions with this process, hope, excitement, as well as anxiety and uncertainty. Please do not let your anxiety unduly impact this process and the work of the call committee instead please do a couple things:

- 1) Understand that from the time the Call Committee begins at work, this is an entirely confidential process, and any inquiries with any Call Committee members as to progress of the MSP preparation and interviews puts Committee members in an awkward position, and can be disruptive in their work.
- 2) Please respect this confidentiality and instead direct your well-intended interest, concern, even anxiety towards your prayers for the work of the call committee. Also direct these energies in the continuing in the strongest fashion possible all

the ministries of Central Lutheran Church that God still and trust and calls you, the great and holy people is Central Lutheran Church, to carry on in anticipation of the next chapter of ministry.

One of the strongest ways Central will make a positive impression on candidates is that you continue to build financial strength and foundation towards the next chapter of ministry, and that you continue to carry out the ministries of our congregation in a positive and proactive fashion.

These are what your superpowers are during this whole exciting phase of the Call Committees preparation of the MSP and the interview stage. So exercise your superpowers with excitement and purpose!

As you already know, on Sunday, January 5, I will be presenting my "From The Interim Pastor's Chair" PowerPoint presentation and summary of the listening session small groups. This will be my take on what was shared and answer to the questions all of you who participated had a chance to respond to. This presentation will be immediately following the worship service followed by a fellowship lunch.

Finally, on Wednesday, January 8, I will be undergoing spinal fusion and decompression surgery. Everything from my ongoing consultation and work with my medical professionals leads me to believe that this will be a successful procedure, and I anticipate and pray for a successful and expeditious recovery. Of course I will keep you posted as to all developments, and rest assured, pastoral coverage and all the ministries will continue in good stead.

I have so appreciated all your expressions of prayer and support to me for this procedure, it means a lot and I am so grateful to all of you. Happy New Year 2025, great and holy people of Central Lutheran Church! The peace of Christ be with you all. In partnership,  
Pastor Mark

*Isaiah 43:18-19 (English Standard Version)*  
<sup>18</sup> "Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. <sup>19</sup> Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?"

Happy holiday season to all. Let us all be thankful for what all we have this Christmas Season. It was great to see so many familiar faces at the Christmas Eve services. Thanks to all who made it happen. I was told there were over 20 kids at the 5pm service playing bells. What a Sunday School we could have with 20 kids, but we must just be happy to see them when we do.



I had the opportunity to work at the family cold weather shelter Christmas night with Judith Muller and Brain Bjorkquist. It was a great evening; the kids were happily allowing us to help them play with their new toys. We were all betting on when the batteries would wear out.

I heard many happy stories last night about guests who had recently moved into housing or were planning to soon move into housing. I heard a sad story when I was there. One mother with 2 teenage boys had left the boys at the shelter and moved in with her boyfriend. The boy's aunt and uncle agreed to take the boys but only if they could pay for their own food. Several volunteers have been chipping in to make that happen. Many of us have so much, we forget to be thankful for all we have.

Wishing you all the best over the holiday season.

- Steve Lambert, 2024 President

# Birthdays



*Wish a happy birthday to:*

Anne McCormick 1/1  
 Pam Tesche 1/2  
 Veronica Wagner 1/3  
 Sue Tonkins 1/5  
 Eileen Kemink 1/5  
 Frederick Tesche 1/6  
 Ottilie Bergh 1/6  
 Cathie Nicolet 1/7  
 Bob Voris 1/8  
 Kristin Coady 1/9  
 Jim Emmel 1/9  
 Dale Huelskoetter 1/9  
 Jane Hanson 1/11  
 Craig Carlson 1/12  
 Matthew Amundsen 1/13  
 Steven Hanson 1/14

Britta Helm 1/14  
 Betsy Cooper 1/14  
 Mariah Graham 1/15  
 Karsten Hall 1/15  
 Laura Paulson 1/18  
 Ingrid Kelly Alexakis 1/19  
 Andreas Nordgaard 1/19  
 Adam Bryant 1/19  
 Sandra McKinney 1/20  
 Ann Solberg 1/20  
 Sharon Phillips 1/21  
 Marcia Brown 1/21  
 Madeleine Bulkow-Macy 1/22  
 Nelson Priddy 1/23  
 Muriel Furman 1/24  
 Edward Sanders 1/24

Fredrik Lyle 1/25  
 Lori Boecker 1/25  
 Lise Falskow 1/25  
 Nicole Soiseth 1/26  
 Michael Graham 1/26  
 Katelyn Zernia 1/26  
 Lottie Marshall 1/26  
 Timothy Thorsness 1/27  
 Robert Kiesel 1/27  
 Anna Boltz 1/29  
 Jan Adasiak 1/30  
 Dexter Bahn 1/30  
 Lindsay Brown 1/31  
 Haddi Lofgren 1/31  
 Brogan Nieder 1/31

# Anniversaries

*Wish a happy anniversary to:*

*Stephanie Bauer and Royce Williams 1/3*

*Ingrid and Howard Thomas 1/4*

*Kathy and Gene Dale 1/6*

*Rae and Kaare Elde 1/7*

## Golden Connections

A new year and new opportunities for food, fellowship and fun. On Wednesday, January 15, Chef Alan Lorimer will be holding a cooking class from 11:30 am - 1 pm here at Central. Chef Alan always has lots of great ideas and recipes to share plus we get to share the food he makes.



there will be blood pressure checks, information on vaccines, chair yoga and other topics related to good health. This is also at Central Lutheran.

Reservations for the events can be made online at [www.lassalaska.org/gc](http://www.lassalaska.org/gc) or call 907-272-0643. Deacon Linda will also be happy to add you to the list. Come and join us, we would love to see you.

January 29<sup>th</sup> the focus will be taking good care of yourself. Beans Cafe will be sharing a healthy lunch for us and thanks to the Parish Nurses,

Deacon Linda  
Project Manager for Golden Connections, LSSA

## Worship & Study

† Sundays 9:30 am worship service

† The Early AM Study continues with weekly meetings via zoom (meeting ID 963 8911 9335 and contact the office if you need the password) at 7 am to study The David Story by Robert Alter.

† The Divine Drama meets Tuesdays, 6:30-8 pm, and also Wednesdays, Noon-1:30 pm, (same class two times weekly, pick the best time for you!) both in the Community Room and via our regular zoom link

† Confirmation classes for middle-school youth resume Sundays, 4 - 5:30 pm, at *Lutheran Church of Hope* for a six-week session. Snacks are provided. The focus will be on the sixth through tenth Commandments.

† Coming January 26, Craig Carlson leads a new adult ed class each Sunday after worship. His focus will be "After Augustine – Before Luther: The Mid-life Crisis of Christianity" and the class will continue through Lent. No book needed.

## Central Lutheran is praying for...

January ELCA Alaska prayer partner: Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church

*Central members or close family of our members who've passed in the last year:*

Fred Shepard (Debbie Pankow's stepdad), Bob Reupke, Lenore Clinton, Faye Gilmore (David Dale's life partner), Brenda Engelby, Dave Hillemeier, Michael Griggs (nephew of Sharon Jones), Doris Ziegler (mother of James Ziegler), Judith Moore, Linda Padden, former Central pastor Rev. Luther Abrahamson, George Rhyneer, Kay Zernia, Lila Ward (Lorna Nelson's mother), Carol West-Dahl (Lori Dahl's mother), Rev. Myrin Bentz, Marie Brown, Bill Kostecki (brother in law of Eva Wissmann), Larry Menkens (father of Stacey Menkens), Calvin Whitmire (Paul Harris's stepdad)

# Scenes from December



*December 10  
AFACT action on  
Fairview Rec  
Center - a very  
successful night  
for our  
neighborhood!*



*At left, Altar  
Guild and  
Chancel Choir  
during the week  
of December 22.*

*Below, view from  
the altar during  
the Christmas Eve  
candle-lighting  
(photo credit:  
Rev. Mark  
Galbraith)*





Donate by using the QR code

Website: <https://inourbackyard-ak.org/>

In our Backyard is a 501c3 nonprofit organization  
Federal Tax ID #93-4915440

Dear Central Lutheran,

Several board members spent the night in the tiny cabins in early December to make sure everything was in working order before guests moved in. We discovered that the motion sensor lights are very bright and stay on for too long, the beds are very comfortable, the design of the cabins helps keep out noise and that walking to the bathroom in the night was not a big deal. Of course, it was a warm night in the mid-thirties. We adjusted the motion sensor lights, added small battery operated interior lights close to the beds and made sure that there is plenty of ice melt available.

Two guests have now moved in. We are still going through growing pains as we set up the trash pick up, laundry services, shower trailer timers and propane

delivery. We started with onsite managers 24/7, but as we have come to know the schedules and routines of our guests, we have scaled that down to 12/7. The APD HOPE team is also doing drive bys at night. Restorative Reentry Services (RSS) has also been doing check-ins with the guests during the day. Meals are being picked up by volunteers from Bean's Cafe. We are currently working through applications and interviewing more people who are interested in staying at In Our Backyard. It is our hope that all the cabins will soon be filled.

Prayers that more lights will be shining in the cabin windows soon.

Loaves & Fishes, Julie Graham,  
Chair of In Our Backyard

A poster for 'SYNOD YOUTH SUMMER TRIP' with a light green background and a black border. The text is centered and surrounded by illustrations of outdoor gear: a yellow and blue backpack, a red and black camera, a green flashlight, a red and black sleeping bag, a red and black tent, a red and black water bottle, and a red and black boot. The text includes details about the location, dates, participants, and activities.

## SYNOD YOUTH SUMMER TRIP

**Where:** Fairbanks, AK  
**When:** June 23-27, 2025  
**Who:** Current 5th - 12th graders  
**What:** Adventure & Service

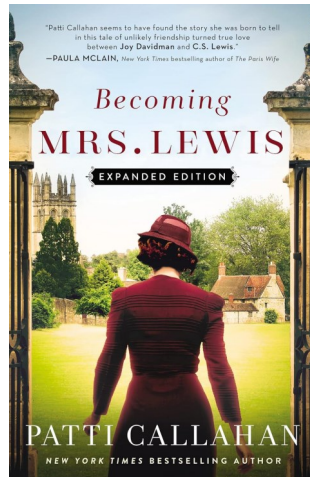
- River float in rafts
- Service projects
- Hiking

**How much:** \$100 deposit

- Pay to your local church
  - Scholarships available
- **DEADLINE: March 1, 2025**

*Study:*

**Book Group** is reading **Becoming Mrs. Lewis** by Patti Callahan. In this novel, we follow Joy Davidman on a decade long journey of transformation from a wife and mother in upstate New York to the beloved wife of C. S. Lewis. Discuss with friends on Monday, January 20, at 4:30 pm.



**Confirmation class and kids' and adult faith formation classes** resume Sunday evenings, January 12 - February 16. We'll meet 4 - 5:30 pm at Lutheran Church of Hope for this six-week series. The focus will be on the sixth through tenth Commandments.

Coming January 26, Craig Carlson leads a **new adult ed class** each Sunday after worship. His focus will be "After Augustine – Before Luther: The Mid-life Crisis of Christianity" and the class will continue through Lent. No book needed.

Ladies, our monthly **Gather Bible study** meets at 2 pm on 2nd Mondays, next on January 13. Bring a *Gather* magazine or share ours.

Gentlemen - **Breakfast & Bible Study** meets first Saturdays, next on January 4, at 9 am at Flo's Pancake House.

*Fellowship:*

Central Seniors and friends - **coffee klatsche** every Wednesday at 8:30 am at Kaladi Brothers Coffee on Brayton Drive.

**Sarah Southside Circle** meets first Tuesdays for fellowship, next on Tuesday, January 7, for coffee at 10:30 am at Bells on Specking Road. All are welcome!

Join our multi-generational group of **pickleball** players. We play most Tuesdays in the Fellowship Hall, often 4:45-6:15 pm. Text Christi at 646.710.0805 for details. All skill levels welcome—invite a friend—need not be a member!

*Serve:*

Year-round, we collect **shelf-stable foods for LSSA Food Pantry**. Our January focus will be soups and chilies—both canned and dried soup mixes.

*News*

# News

*News*

Our **Helping Hands Clothing Closet** continues to welcome visitors about eight days monthly who are in need of socks, gloves, blankets, backpacks, outdoor gear, and clothing -- the fastest to go are smaller adult sizes. Donations may be new or used but usable, and are welcome during closet hours, office hours, or worship services.

Fourth Thursdays of the month, we provide the **evening meal to the residents of Clare House** women's and children's shelter. THANK YOU to the Hillemeier family for sponsoring the December 26 meal. In January, let's collect a variety of casseroles for January 23. Contact the Church office to provide one or the sides.

*News:*

Our **Little Free Library** welcomes your gift of used books and magazines, for all age groups.

*Call Process:*

Please plan to attend worship on January 5 and stay following the service for Pastor Mark's "**From the Interim Pastor's Desk**" presentation in which he shares the results from our small group listening sessions this fall. The following week, Bishop Tim will lead a Q & A on the call process with us.

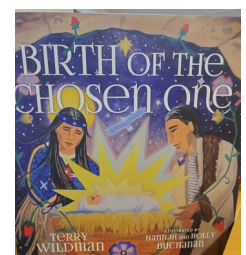
*Annual Congregational Meeting:*

**Annual Reports** are requested now from leaders and committees, with a final deadline of January 8. We will plan to have completed annual reports available to all via paper copy or PDF download on January 12.

Our **Annual Congregational Meeting** will be Sunday, January 19, following worship.

*Thank you:*

To all those who have brought in clothing, staffed the Clothes Closet, refilled the Little Free Library, decorated the Sanctuary, made our services so well-run, worshiped and sang and lit candles, greeted friends old and new, run A/V, and so much more.





# January 2025 - Central Lutheran Church

(Please note: This calendar lists church-related events only. Numerous community-related events take place in the building. To schedule space for an event, please contact the church office.)

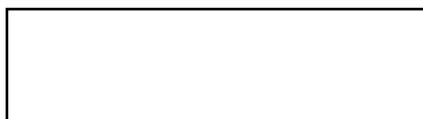
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><b>JANUARY</b></p> <p>5 9:30 am WORSHIP with Rev. Mark Galbraith followed immediately by "From the Interim Pastor's Desk" presentation</p>	<p>6 1:30 pm Staff meeting</p>	<p>7 7 am Early AM Study 9:30 am Altar Guild 10:30 am Sarah Southside Circle @ Bells on Specking Road 11:30 am - 1 pm Divine Drama 1 - 3 pm Helping Hands Clothing Closet open 4:45-6:15 pm Pickleball 6:30-8 pm Divine Drama</p>	<p>1 <i>New Year's Day</i> <i>Church office closed</i></p> <p>8 8:30 am Coffee Klatsch <i>Note, today's Divine Drama will meet Tuesday 1/7</i> 5:45 pm Bell Choir rehearsal 7 pm Choir rehearsal</p>	<p>2 Noon Staff Christmas Lunch (off site)</p>	<p>3 Noon Men's Breakfast @ Flo's Pancake House</p>	<p>4 9 am Men's Breakfast @ Flo's Pancake House</p>
<p>Pastor Mark out January 8 through next two or more weeks for back surgery. Return date TBA.</p>						
<p>12 8 am Church Council 9:30 am WORSHIP with Bishop Tim Oslovich followed immediately by Call Committee Process Q&amp;A with Bishop Tim 4 - 5:30 pm Confirmation &amp; Faith Formation Classes @ Lutheran Church of Hope</p>	<p>13 2 pm Women's Gather Bible Study</p>	<p>14 7 am Early AM Study 1 - 3 pm Helping Hands Clothing Closet open 4:45-6:15 pm Pickleball 6:30-8 pm Divine Drama</p>	<p>15 8:30 am Coffee Klatsch 10 am Kitchen Cleaning 11:30 am - 1 pm Golden Connections cooking class Noon-1:30 pm Divine Drama 5:45 pm Bell Choir rehearsal 7 pm Choir rehearsal</p>	<p>16 Noon Finance Committee 1 - 3 pm Helping Hands Clothing Closet open</p>	<p>17 11 am - 2 pm Foot &amp; Wound Clinic open Noon - 2 pm Listening Post open 1 - 3 pm Helping Hands Clothing Closet open</p>	<p>18 11 am - 2 pm Foot &amp; Wound Clinic open Noon - 2 pm Listening Post open 1 - 3 pm Helping Hands Clothing Closet open</p>
<p>19 9:30 am WORSHIP with Rev. Bill Maury-Holmes followed immediately by Annual Congregational Meeting 4 - 5:30 pm Confirmation &amp; Faith Formation Classes @ Lutheran Church of Hope</p>	<p>20 <i>MLK, Jr Day</i> <i>Church office closed</i> 4:30 pm Book Group discusses <i>Becoming MRS. LEWIS</i> by Patti Callahan</p>	<p>21 7 am Early AM Study 1 - 3 pm Helping Hands Clothing Closet open 4:45-6:15 pm Pickleball 6:30-8 pm Divine Drama</p>	<p>22 8:30 am Coffee Klatsch Noon-1:30 pm Divine Drama 5:45 pm Bell Choir rehearsal 7 pm Choir rehearsal</p>	<p>23 by 3 pm Volunteers deliver evening meal to Clare House shelter</p>	<p>24 2:30 pm Caring Ministers Meeting @ Dahna's</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>26 9:30 am WORSHIP with Rev. Bill Maury-Holmes 4 - 5:30 pm Confirmation &amp; Faith Formation Classes @ Lutheran Church of Hope</p>	<p>27 1:30 pm Staff meeting</p>	<p>28 7 am Early AM Study 1 - 3 pm Helping Hands Clothing Closet open 4:45-6:15 pm Pickleball 6:30-8 pm Divine Drama</p>	<p>29 8:30 am Coffee Klatsch 11:30 am - 1 pm Golden Connections Health Check Noon-1:30 pm Divine Drama 5:45 pm Bell Choir rehearsal 7 pm Choir rehearsal</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>	

**Central Lutheran Church**  
1420 Cordova Street  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

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January 2025



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

**Central Lutheran Church is here for you.** We want to include you in our prayers, arrange for pastoral visits and announce information to the congregation, when appropriate. Please notify the church office (277-1622) as soon as possible when:

- A member of your family or a friend dies;
- Hospital or home visitation would be a blessing;
- You or someone you know wants to plan a baptism or wedding;
- You or someone you know is ill or grieving;
- You move or change your telephone numbers or email.

***Please contact the church office if your address has changed or you no longer wish to be on our mailing list. Thank you!***

**Central Lutheran Prayer Chain** will sincerely pray for your needs, joys and sorrows. Our prayer chain always welcomes new links. If you would like to contact the prayer chain with a prayer request or become a part of the chain, please contact Karen Emmel or the Church office.

