



CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH

402-733-3294

ctklc-bellevue.org

7308 South 42nd Street, Bellevue, NE 68147

ALL ARE WELCOME

Christ the King Lutheran Church
7308 South 42nd Street
Bellevue, Nebraska 68147
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

News and Information *from the Office*

Church Calendar

The church calendar for beyond what is published in the newsletter is available on the congregation website - <https://ctklc-bellevue.org/calendar/>. Here you will see congregational events (green) and community use of our building (red). Hall rentals are not listed here.

If you would like to subscribe to the Congregational Events calendar on your iCalendar:

<https://calendar.google.com/calendar/ical/ctklcbellevue%40gmail.com/public/basic.ics>

If you would like to subscribe to the Congregational Events calendar on your personal Google calendar:

<https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=ctklcbellevue%40gmail.com&ctz=America%2FChicago>

Grace and Peace

A message from Pastor Bryan

You may have heard that the fastest-growing religious affiliation in the United States isn't a religion at all—it's those who say they're not affiliated with anything. This group includes atheists, agnostics, and those who simply check the box for "nothing in particular."

That category has grown dramatically over the last couple of decades—from about 16% of U.S. adults in 2007 to nearly 30% in recent studies. Some researchers have even suggested that if this trend continues, the church as we know it may all but disappear within a generation.

That's a sobering thought. And what's more, it's not just outsiders saying this—it's something leaders within our own denomination, the ELCA, have projected. According to recent data from our Office of Research and Evaluation, if trends continue, we may see fewer than 67,000 members across the entire ELCA by 2050, and fewer than 16,000 in worship on a typical Sunday just a few years before that.

But here's something worth noticing: lately, those trends seem to be slowing down. Several recent polls, including those from Gallup and Pew, have shown a kind of leveling off in the number of people who identify as religiously unaffiliated. The percentage has remained relatively steady—around 20–22%—since 2017. That doesn't mean the challenge is over, but it does remind us that things are rarely as inevitable as they seem.

For a long time, the Church has asked: *How do we stay faithful to the gospel in a culture that's increasingly unsure of religion—or even resistant to it?* That's not a new question. G.K. Chesterton, a British writer from over a century ago, wrestled with it in his own time. As academics and public thinkers dismissed Christianity, Chesterton responded not with fear, but with joy—using wit and wisdom to defend the faith and remind others of its beauty.

One of Chesterton's most memorable insights was this: **Christian joy goes deeper than sorrow.**

It's not that Christians are always cheerful. Like anyone else, we hurt. We grieve losses and mourn injustice. But unlike the rest of the world, our joy doesn't vanish when things get hard. It comes from knowing where we come from, why we're here, and where we're going.

Chesterton wrote:

"When the pagan looks at the very core of the cosmos, he is struck cold. Behind the gods, who are merely despotic, sit the fates, who are deadly. Nay, the fates are worse than deadly; they are dead."

In contrast, Christians find hope at the very heart of everything. Even when life is hard, we know that God is working. Even when we face death, we know it's not the end. Even when the world is dark, we trust that light will return.

St. Paul put it:

"I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us." – Romans 8:18



And Jesus told his disciples:

“I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.” – John 15:11

In a world so often marked by fear, stress, or bitterness, **joy stands out.**
It’s not just a gift – it’s a sign. A witness. A glimpse of something greater.

So what if our churches were known first and foremost as places of joy?
Not because everything’s easy. And not because we ignore the world’s pain.
But because we believe – deep in our bones – that **God’s mercy is real, his promises are true, and the best is yet to come.**

Too often, churches get remembered for what they’re *against* – for seeming angry, fearful, or rigid.
But we’re not called to live that way. We are people who know the ending of the story: goodness triumphs, love endures, and Christ returns. Think about the difference that makes.

If you believed that life ended in nothingness... wouldn’t fear or despair make sense?
But we believe that Jesus is coming again – to wipe away every tear, to make all things new, and to bring everlasting joy.
That’s the story we live by.
That’s the joy that anchors us.
And maybe, just maybe, it’s the joy someone else is waiting to see.

So let’s live that joy – in our homes, in our worship, in our everyday lives.
Let’s be people who grieve the small things but rejoice in the big ones.
Let’s be a community that shines with the kind of joy that can only come from Christ.
Who knows? Maybe our joy will light the way for someone else.



Faith Formation

Sunday School, Confirmation, Bible Study



Date

August 10 Back to Church Sunday (Backpack Blessing)

August 17

Parables of Jesus *The Good Samaritan*

August 31

Parables of Jesus *The Mustard Seed*

September 14

Parables of Jesus *The Sower/The Builders*

September 28

Parables of Jesus *The Prodigal Son*

We kick off the academic year on Back to Church Sunday August 10. We won’t have a lesson that day but be sure to be in worship for the Backpack Blessing. Generally speaking, we will have lessons every other week from 11:20 – 12:30. Pre confirmation aged kids begin in the Sanctuary with music and then move into lesson time.

We have a break in Confirmation classes and this gives us an opportunity for a retreat – a chance to dig a little deeper and explore some things we didn’t get to in the last two years.

I’d like to start out with the “Intertestamental Period”. That time between the Old and New

Testaments where there doesn’t seem to be anything that happened. Only... a lot happened! And its stuff that is pretty important to fully understand the world into which Jesus was born.

So if you finished Confirmation last year, OR sometime in the previous century, join us upstairs.



Mid-Month Breakfasts

Served 9am-10:30am
August 9 and
September 13

Start your weekend off with a nice breakfast and conversation with some friends at church. There is always hot coffee and good conversation.



Empanadas! Empanadas! Empanadas!

Sunday, August 10 after Worship



BACK TO CHURCH SUNDAY IS COMING!

Mark your calendars and be sure to be in worship to renew our life together as God's people at Christ the King! Whether you're a long-time member, new to the area, or have been away for a while, we can't wait to see you! Our doors are open wide to embrace everyone with open arms. Let's reconnect, and strengthen our relationships. We look forward to having you with us on Back to Church Sunday!

One of the awesome things about working at San Andreas on Wednesdays is the awesome people we meet. One day, David came in with some leftover empanadas that his family made for an event they catered. They were awesome. If you were at the Chili Cook-off you had an opportunity to try some... if you were fast enough... I was not. 😊 "Wait?!?!?! Your family caters?!!?"

Long story short, that's what we are having for lunch. **YOU WILL NOT WANT TO MISS THIS!** Bring your family and friends along to share in the joyous atmosphere!

If you're going to school of any kind, be sure to bring your backpack or laptop case for a special blessing for the new school year!

Congregational Life CONTINUED



We're In The Parade!

**August 16 – Line up at 9:30am
Ride on the float and represent
Christ the King!**

We would like as many people as possible to ride on the float. We will line up at 9:30am beside Lincoln Rd. The parade starts at 10am. This is a fun and easy thing for kids to do.

**We hand out candy, t-shirts, and ducks.
If you have duck themed attire... wear that too!**

Churchwide News

The ELCA has elected a new Presiding Bishop

Laurel Wiegand represented the Nebraska Synod as a voting Member at the 2025 Churchwide Assembly in Phoenix, Arizona. One order of business was to elect a new Presiding Bishop.

The Rev. Yehiel Curry, bishop of the ELCA's Metropolitan Chicago Synod since 2019, will serve a six-year term as presiding bishop. He succeeds Elizabeth Eaton, who has served two terms as Presiding Bishop.



Curry, who is 52, was elected on the fifth ballot during voting on the floor of the Phoenix Convention Center. He received 562 votes out of 799 votes cast.

He spoke to the assembly about his initial hesitation in accepting the role.

"I never saw myself as good enough, so for two years, I said no," Curry said. "I finally said yes. When I said yes, your support, this church's support, of that ministry meant everything. So if you want to know what your benevolence dollars look like, it looks like me. And I want to say thank you. Thank you for your investment."

He previously served as pastor of Shekinah Chapel Lutheran Church in Riverdale, Illinois, and as mission developer at the church, which is predominantly Black.

Curry grew up Catholic on the South Side of Chicago and became a seventh-grade public school teacher. An unexpected invitation to a worship service in St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, back in the 1990s, led him to discover a calling to ordination.

He earned a Bachelor of Arts from Lewis University in Romeoville, Illinois, in 1995 and a Master of Divinity in 2013 from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. He and his wife, LaShonda, are the parents of three daughters.

Youth and Family

If you have a young person in your life please encourage them to participate. We promise a welcoming space for all.



Young Adults *Post-High School*

Steel and Timber – August 17, 7pm

Finish out the summer with your church friends at Steel and Timber Axe Throwing! It's just east of Fort Crook Road from Cornhusker. Only \$10. We'll have a sign-up genius so we know how many lanes to reserve. We'll also plan our September gathering that night.



Youth

Game Night – September 21, 4:30pm

Join your church friends for games, pizza and other party food at the Rices (13503 South 22nd Street). We attend different schools but having people outside of school to help you grow your faith can be a huge asset. Just ask any of the people in the young adult group.



Meema's House August 24, 4:30pm

Summer's come to a close and we're back in school, but there is still time for one more pool party. We had a great time to finish out VBS at Meema's house. Join your church friends at Meema's – 18202 Nicholas Rd. Plattsmouth, NE 68048.

August and September 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 9am Adult Study 10am Worship 11:15am Fellowship	4 12pm Fitness Club 5:30pm T.O.P.S.	5	6 9am San Andreas Pantry Set-up	7 12pm Fitness Club	8	9 9am Mid-Month Breakfast
10 Back to Church Sunday 9am Adult Study 10am Worship 11:15am BtC Empanadas!	11 12pm Fitness Club 5:30pm T.O.P.S.	12	13 9am San Andreas Pantry Set-up	14 12pm Fitness Club	15	16 Arrows to Aerospace Parade Line up at 9:30am
17 9am Adult Study 10am Worship 11:15am Fellowship 11:20am Christian Education 7pm CTKYA Axe Throwing	18 12pm Fitness Club 5:30pm T.O.P.S.	19 11:30am WELCA	20 9am San Andreas Pantry Set-up	21 12pm Fitness Club	22	23
24 9am Adult Study 10am Worship 11:15am Fellowship 4:30pm Sunday School Summer Send-off	25 12pm Fitness Club 5:30pm T.O.P.S.	26	27 9am San Andreas Pantry Set-up	28 12pm Fitness Club	29	30
31 9am Adult Study 10am Worship 11:15am Fellowship 11:20am Christian Education Don and Mille's	1 Labor Day OFFICE CLOSED 12pm Fitness Club 5:30pm T.O.P.S.	2 9am Quilting	3 9am San Andreas Pantry Set-up	4 12pm Fitness Club	5	6
7 9am Adult Study 10am Worship 11:15am Fellowship	8 12pm Fitness Club 5:30pm T.O.P.S.	9	10 9am San Andreas Pantry Set-up	11 12pm Fitness Club	12	13 9am Mid-Month Breakfast
14 9am Adult Study 10am Worship 11:15am Fellowship 11:20am Christian Education 7pm CTKYA	15 12pm Fitness Club 5:30pm T.O.P.S.	16 9am Quilting 11:30am WELCA	17 9am San Andreas Pantry Set-up	18 12pm Fitness Club	19	20
21 9am Adult Study 10am Worship 11:15am Fellowship 4:30 Youth Game Night	22 12pm Fitness Club 5:30pm T.O.P.S.	23	24 9am San Andreas Pantry Set-up	25 12pm Fitness Club	26	27
28 9am Adult Study 10am Worship 11:15am Fellowship 11:20am Christian Education	29 12pm Fitness Club 5:30pm T.O.P.S.	30				