



# Christ Findings

Developing Dynamic Disciples for Christ

**WINTER ISSUE:**

# TRANSFORMED

*HOW GOD CHANGES US*

**Also:**

*Transforming  
the Hearts  
of Students*

**Treasures  
in the  
Church  
Library**

*The Joy  
of Grand-  
parents*

**The Epiphany  
of Singing**

**Stained  
Glass  
and  
Seismic  
Shifts**

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2015

# Transformed

**Pastor Burkey**



Romans 12:2 (New International Version 1984)  
*“Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”*

Moving into a new year provides a time for assessment and steps forward. I always appreciate how the end of a year provides a time to review and the beginning of a new one provides a commitment to grow. Most of us make New Year’s resolutions with a hope and desire to improve our lives in the year ahead.

As people look at resolutions, it might involve a change of diet and exercise for the hope of weight lost and better health. For others, they have decided to get a handle on their finances as Christmas bills come in the mail. For others, they want to learn a new skill or begin a new relationship or renew an old one. So where do you go to find help in not merely making resolutions, but making them stick?

Barnes and Noble (one of my favorite stores) has a great self-help section. There are experts in our world who can help you make life changes. But what does God have to say about bringing out the best in our lives? Do His words apply to all aspects of life rather than just on a spiritual level?

Part of the beauty of the Christian faith, is that God speaks and provides help not only in the spiritual part of life, but indeed, for all of life.

That’s why I love Paul’s words in Romans 12:2, the invitation to be transformed. Inspired by Paul’s words, starting January 11 we begin a series called *Transformed*.

The world shouts for our attention with answers to our relationship struggles, solutions to our financial trouble, and explanations to our search for meaning. But the world’s promises too often leave us empty and searching for more. God’s will is the only answer that promises to TRANSFORM our lives from the inside out.

As we look to move from “conformed to the world” to “transformed by God,” we will look at what God has to say about the Spiritual, Physical, Mental, Emotional, Relational, Financial and Vocational parts of our lives and how they all come together in Christ.

Through weekend worship and messages,

daily digging into God’s Word, weekly Life Group engagement, and even more applied principles – not just for the start of the year, but for the rest of our lives – we look for the transforming work of the Holy Spirit, alive and active in us. The key is to realize the Bible doesn’t speak to just a part of life, but to all of life. The challenge is applying God’s Word to all of life. That’s the goal of *Transformed*.

An ancient proverb says, “The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is today.” Looking back on the past twenty years, it’s easy to see all the trees that should have been planted: we should have spent less and invested more, we should have studied more, prayed more, taken the kids to more picnics, appreciated others more, watched TV less, worried less, laughed more, enjoyed life more, and on and on.

It’s easy to see today all the trees we failed to plant twenty years ago. And it may be tempting to dwell on those good things left undone. God, however, has forgotten them; those sins of omission have been cast into the same sea of forgetfulness as our other sins. Instead, we must be about the business of planting trees today. That’s why I invite you to be part of *Transformed*. Have a great new year!



## Christ Tidings

Developing Dynamic Disciples for Christ

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## Transforming the Hearts of Students at Christ Lutheran School

**Xavria Schwarz**



### The Transformation of Bible Memorization

Psalm 119:9,11; *“How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.”*

Memorizing Scripture serves a purpose in all of our lives. When we “hide the Word” in our hearts, we have equipped ourselves with the very thing that will guide us at all times. God’s Word firmly rooted in our hearts is transformational.

The 7th graders are challenged each year with memorizing 60, yes, **60** Scripture verses throughout the year. They are challenged to remember each of them, and by the end of the year, most of these students would be able to sit down with you and recite all 60 verses...truly a blessing to anyone who witnesses this.

Is it for a grade? Well, since it is part of our Discipleship curriculum, yes. But if you would talk to these students, they would tell you what a blessing it has been to have been able to hide these verses in their hearts.

“When I am in bad times, I use Scripture to help me overcome.”

“Scripture isn’t something I read, take a quiz on, and forget. Scripture is something my heart stores for those hard times; the times of sadness, anger or confusion. It is my Safe House. It is my rock.”

“There are many blessings that come along with memorizing Scripture. One of the most significant I’ve personally seen is more faith in God. The more I’ve learned about His will, the more I trust Him. Some of those verses come at exactly the right time. If it’s not the right time, that’s OK. Now, I have it with me in case I do need it.”

“A blessing I’ve seen in my own life because I have memorized Scripture is peace. No matter what the situation, there seems to always be a verse I’ve memorized that helps me through. Just when I think things are about to fall apart, one of those verses or even just part of one, pops back into my head. It gives me hope.”

Jeremiah 15:16 *“When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart’s delight, for I bear your name, O LORD God Almighty.”*

### The Spiritual Transformation of Worship

One of the most engaging ways to develop spiritual truths and habits in children is through singing, especially songs that lend themselves to movement. Second graders are very joyful, energetic children. They love to move and sing!

In 2nd grade the class begins each day singing praises to God. They “sing” the Bible. The year begins with singing songs about creation. This continues throughout the Bible. For example, when students are learning about Abraham the class sings *Father Abraham Had Many Sons* which involves a lot of movement. Second grade sings many Bible memory verses too, like *The Lord is My Shepherd*. They are moving in some way in just about every song they sing. They especially love to sing about how very much God loves them and that they are very special to Him. The students’ love for Jesus shines through in their voices and on their faces. They will remember many of these songs forever and with God’s power, use them as a transformational guide to direct their lives.

### The Spiritual Transformation of Prayer

In the Kindergarten class at CLS, students engage in an active prayer life and learning to develop the habit of prayer as a transformative piece of their daily lives. Kindergarteners learn to give thanks in all things, pray for one another, and ask God questions through the “Prayer Spot.” Each day, a new student has an opportunity to be in the “Prayer Spot.” At “Prayer Spot” time, the student comes to the front of the class to share something they are thankful for, something they would like to ask of God, and they choose another person to pray for. At that time Ms. Christopher, our Kindergarten teacher, leads the class in prayer over that student, specifically thanking God for their unique gifts and praying for continued spiritual growth, and then prays for their requests. At the end of the day the “prayer spot” person leads the class in closing prayer. The Kindergarteners at CLS know that they can take all things to the Lord in prayer. They know God hears their prayers and desires for them to be in dialogue with Him daily. They also experience the value of actively praying together for each other as brothers and sisters in Christ.

In 4th grade prayer is taken very seriously. The year begins with lessons about the power of prayer. Fourth graders ask and answer questions like: why do

*“Transforming Hearts” continued on page 4*

# We Are Transforming

## Pastor John



We are transforming. In response to this, some of us are saying, “Yeah, it’s about time,” while others of us are saying, “No, not me...not today...not tomorrow.” In a time of transformation and cultural seismic shifts, our challenge is to stand strong on our core values and beliefs while remaining relevant, so that the message we have to herald can still be heard in our diverse community.

I was recently reminded of how the society I live in is undergoing seismic shifts in encountering God. In the Wall Street Journal I read an article about how the demand for stained glass windows in new churches is dramatically falling. Stained glass has been used in churches for centuries as an aid for people to learn Bible stories in a visually compelling way. Yet many new churches are purposefully avoiding stained glass because of what it represents to the population of people they are hoping to reach with the Good News of Jesus’ resurrection. The article pointed out that folks who avoid the traditional

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### *“Transforming Hearts” from page 3*

we bow our head, why do we fold our hands, why do we close our eyes? Fourth graders also discover the truth that God already knows our wants and needs, BUT we need to articulate them so we are aware of what we need from God, and then trust that God will answer. Each morning the fourth graders gather their prayer requests and they are written on a large roll of paper in the classroom. The following day the class returns to the prayer requests and star each item that God has answered. At the end of the year, fourth grade rolls out the huge paper roll and counts the number of stars. Those are the answered prayers from God. This long roll of paper with numerous stars is a great visual to the power of prayer and God’s active presence in our lives. God gives us the gift of prayer as a way to transform us and grow us closer to Him.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Christ-Lutheran-School-in-La-Mesa-CA/249821385053883?sk=wall>

stained glass environment are still very much visually inclined, but their preferred visual experience uses the technology of “environmental projection” and videos. For those of you who attend the 10:30 service you know firsthand what environmental projection is. It wraps the walls of your worship space with images and pictures.

The good news is that Christ Lutheran Church Ministries is doing a very good job reflecting this seismic shift in encountering God. We have members who seek to encounter God in a traditional worship setting, complete with stained glass and organ. We are blessed with a sanctuary that is visually engaging with stained glass and audibly rich with a top-notch organ. We also have members who seek to encounter God without the “trappings” of stained glass windows. We are blessed with a contemporary worship setting that has a 21st century, technologically enriched visual environment where top-shelf music is heard and felt.

Both of these groups of members are seeking to encounter God and are a blessing to the Body of Christ. Each group is chained to the core value of being anchored to the Word of God. What Christ Lutheran Church Ministries does very well is keeping the core value of engaging in the Word of God as the heart of ALL worship experiences. We remain anchored to this because we know that God’s Word is one sure place we will always encounter God. This single core value keeps us united as a single congregation.

We do not want to fall into Satan’s divisive trap of judging “the other” group as inferior. Our diversity is reason to celebrate and to thank God. We are a family of faith that accomplishes the incredibly difficult task of being bilingual in its worship language, all the while keeping God’s Word at the heart of all.

Our ability to reach out and touch lives and families in our community is only strengthened by our worship diversity. Do you like the worship service you attend? Does it bring God’s Word into your life in a way that speaks loudly and powerfully to you? If your answer is “yes” then BE BOLD! Proudly share your transforming experience with those people in your life who love you and listen to you. What’s holding you back? God has richly blessed Christ Lutheran Church Ministries, now he is asking us to boldly share our blessings with others.

# An Epiphany of Singing

Roger Howard



Now that Christmas is over and we are no longer singing beloved carols in our worship services, congregational singing tends to go through some post-Christmas doldrums. In sailing parlance, doldrums are a period of time when no fresh wind is blowing; they are a time of stagnation and lack of energy and movement.

People of God, this does not have to be! In a recent church leadership article by Michael White and Tom Corcoran titled, “*Music — The Bellwether of Church Health*,” these authors have some interesting things to say about a congregation’s singing:

“After air quality, music is the single greatest environmental factor for our community, because it determines how people feel in our church. It has the power to make us feel like pampered customers or dissatisfied ones. It also has the power to make us feel like we’re part of the movement of growing disciples that we want our congregation to be...

Congregational singing seems to be a reliable bellwether for church health. We like to say coming to church and not singing is like going to the gym and not working out. You gotta sing! When a congregation is worshipping God together through song, in a sincere and selfless way, it is transformative.”

“Sincere and selfless” is the opposite of artificial and self-conscious, but I would guess that many people in public worship feel more like the latter when it comes to singing.

In this season of Epiphany, when Jesus was revealed as Savior of all mankind to the world outside of Judaism, we Gentiles have something to sing about! In order for the Spirit to move in us in transforming ways, however, we need to act like the unified Body of Christ that we are, and that includes singing together.

So the next time you feel like sitting up in the balcony by yourself and depriving the rest of us of your presence and full participation, find a seat on the main floor instead. The next time you are tempted to check your text messages (or send some) during a hymn, turn off your phone and join in. You are a crucial member of this body, and every part of you – heart, hands, and voice, as Martin Rinckhart reminds us in his great hymn “Now Thank We All Our God” – can transform your worship and bring you to a place where you can say, “I met God today, and my life will never be the same.”



# TRANSFORMED

*How God Changes Us*

*Be transformed by the renewing of your mind . . .*

ROMANS 12:2

**New sermon series beginning January 18th!**

# Transforming Student Leaders

**Cheri Selander**



*'The best thing a person can bring to leadership is his or her own transforming self.'*

—Bill Hybels

As a church that develops dynamic disciples, we seek to intentionally grow leaders. Two leadership teams are growing servant leaders among our middle school and senior high youth.

The **Student Leadership Team** is for Christ Lutheran School students, grades six through eight. After an application process, this team forms to promote school spirit, to actively pray for the student body, and to plan, organize and lead others through events and an overall attitude of serving. These leaders are gaining skills and learning that true leadership is about others.

The **Dream Team** is the high school student leadership team. This group of 13 students commit to

monthly meetings to gain skills, plan, organize and continually evaluate ministry among the Senior High Youth. Many of these student leaders from both of these teams are serving in the schools, in ministries in our church such as the younger youth groups, and are influencers in their communities.

Together as servant leaders, we are learning that as we worship, connect, learn and serve, God changes us and grows us. Often this process happens through the challenging times of trial and error. God does his good work in us so that we may continually get better as servant leaders who love Him and love others.

Pray that God continues to transform servant leaders at Christ Lutheran Church Ministries who will bring His Kingdom to the world we live in!

Coming in March:  
**Our Easter  
Season Issue!**

**Christ Lutheran Church Ministries will be house-building in 2015!**  
(Passport Required)



**January**

**17 & 31**

**February**

**7 & 21**

For more information  
Contact Cheri Selander at

[cselander@christlamesa.org](mailto:cselander@christlamesa.org)



# Wellness and Transformation

Brandon Heath



A flat tire never happens at a convenient time. Often you discover it when you get to your car with a day full of plans. Other times it is a sudden, startling blow out. You may be lucky enough to have an early warning with noise of the leak. Our wellness – or wholeness wheel – can be the same way.

I was first introduced to the concept of a “wellness wheel” in college. You have different pieces of the pie: social wellness, emotional wellness, physical wellness,

financial wellness, vocational wellness, intellectual wellness and social wellness. When one or more of these areas are deflated, you are running on a “flat tire.”

When I first learned this “spiritual wellness” was one part of the pie. But recently I have seen several groups put it as a layer that binds the circle – think of the rubber of a tire that actually hits the road and keeps the air in the tire. This visual reminds us that our spiritual wellness is connected to ALL of our life, and is not something we can compartmentalize.

Our society has us looking at our wellness wheel wanting us to try harder to keep it inflated. In fact, in some areas we are told that over inflated is good. But there is no perfect ride this side of heaven. Our sin, other’s sin and the evil of the devil affect all these aspects of our lives. Even if we are able to have one area perfectly balanced, other areas are wanting.

Paul describes it a different way. “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20).

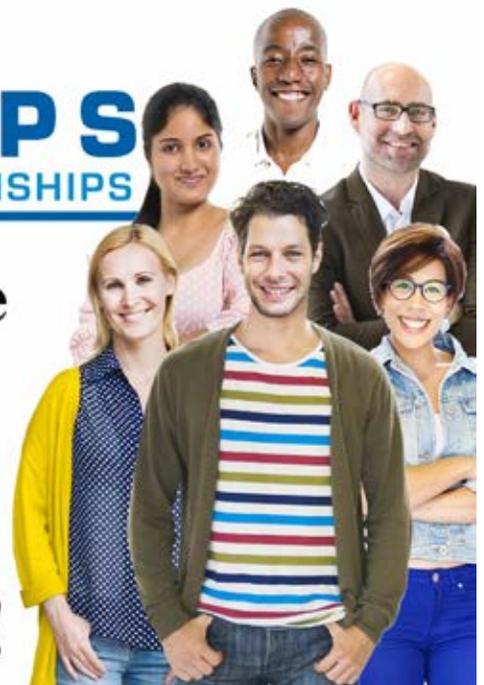
So no matter where your wellness wheel is today or tomorrow or the next day, be reminded that you have been transformed through Christ Jesus. He forgives you. He restores you to Him. He fixes your flat tire every day!



**LIFE GROUPS**  
DEVELOPING FAITH RELATIONSHIPS

**Life Group sign-ups take place  
on the patio and outside  
the gym after church on  
December 28, January 4 & 11.**

**Join a Life Group Today!**



# Sticky Faith: The Joy of Grandchildren

*Grandchildren are the crown of the aged, and the glory of children is their fathers.*

(Proverbs 17:6)

Christ Lutheran School has a great tradition of celebrating grandparents when they hold their annual “Grandparents Day.” On this day, Grandparents are invited to spend the day with their grandchildren. They have chapel together, go to class together and even enjoy snacks (and sometime recess) together. This year, Grandparents Day will be held on Friday, February 13.

Kara Powel, in her book, *The Sticky Faith Guide For Your Family*, says that “Grandparents are more involved than ever” and “Involvement = Influence.” So this is to our grandparents out there. How are you sharing your faith in Jesus with your grandchildren?

For those far away it may seem tough. But in today’s age it is easy to communicate. Be part of social media like Facebook or Twitter and message them or tag them from time to time. Set up a standard Skype date with them. Call them on the phone – and it’s ok

if you call them more than they call you! Be retro and send a hand written card or letter.

For those close to their grandchildren, offer to babysit them from time to time. Your children will love you for that! Have special play dates. Share your family story through pictures and videos. Be sure to include the family’s faith story too.

Check out the Sticky Faith blog here for 40 other ideas for grandparents: <http://stickyfaith.org/articles/40-ways-to-build-sticky-faith-in-your-grandkids>.

May your time with your grandchildren be full of joy and a time of faith transformation for both you and them!



## Christ Lutheran School Reminders:

**January 19: Martin Luther King Day (no school)**

**February 13: Grandparents Day!**

**February 16: Presidents Day (no school)**

**Visit our website for more information!**

**[lutheranschool.org](http://lutheranschool.org)**

# Treasures in the Church Library: *Something for Everyone!*

This is only a partial list of the categories of books in our church library: Fiction, Biography, Bible Study Helps, Parenting, Discipleship, Prayer, Life Challenges, Addictions, Money Management, Divorce, and more. The library is located in the Fireside Room and is open on Sunday mornings from 7:30 to 9:20 and from 10:15 to 12:30. You are welcome to browse in the library even if people are already arriving for Bible Studies or other events. If you are on campus during the week, just get a key from the church office and spend as much time as you want browsing.

When we have quite a few books by the same author, you will find them grouped together and labeled with the author's name. John Ortberg is one of those authors. He is pastor of Menlo Park Presbyterian Church in Menlo, California and has written for *Christianity Today* and *Leadership Journal*. These are some of his books we currently have in our library:

*If You Want to Walk on Water, You've Got to Get*

*Out of the Boat*. John Ortberg invites you to consider the incredible potential that awaits you outside your comfort zone.

*The Life You Always Wanted, Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People*. The heart of Christianity is about transformation. It is about a God who wants to impact every aspect of our lives.

*Faith & Doubt*. We often think of doubt as the opposite of faith, but it could actually strengthen our relationship with God.

*Love Beyond Reason*. This book brings you face-to-face with the Lord that frees and empowers you to love.

*God is Closer Than You Think*. You can see God in action. You can hear God speaking to you. You can connect with God, heart-to-heart.

*When the Game is Over, It All Goes Back in the Box*. When the game is over (life), you don't get to keep a thing unless you are playing for the right prize.



**mission trip**

**Join Us!**

**2015**

**Paraguay**  
**Juan Pedro Cabellero**  
**July 10-19**

**Paraguay**  
**Su Refugio, Tobati**  
**July 17-26**

**For More Info, Contact Pastor John at [jpalka@christlamesa.org](mailto:jpalka@christlamesa.org)**

AIR MAIL  
U.S. 8¢

# DivorceCare and DivorceCare for Kids Sessions Start February 8

These seminar-based support groups have helped many heal from the hurt of divorce in their family. It is a very painful time for adults, but we must not forget the effect divorce has on children. Children also deal with depression, anger, loneliness, difficulty in forgiving, financial worries and more. Single parents face many unique challenges, no matter the reason they are single.

A great way to reach out to others is to let them know about this ministry we have here at Christ Lutheran Church Ministries. The next 13-week session of these programs begins Sunday, February 8 at 4:00 p.m. Each session is 90 minutes long. There is an \$18 fee to cover the workbook and scholarships are available.

**DivorceCare** features 13 dynamic video sessions with 32 renowned experts on divorce and recovering, facilitated by people who understand how you feel, where you'll learn how to deal with the pain of the past and look forward to rebuilding your life. The class meets in courtyard room G.

**DC4K (DivorceCare for Kids)** is a special group tailored to help kids heal from the hurt caused by the separation or divorce of their parents using games, activities and music to create a fun, comfortable atmosphere. There are two groups, one for grades 1 through 5 and one for grades 6 through 12. The class meets in courtyard room F. Childcare is available for younger children upon request.

Both programs are non-denominational and feature Biblical teaching for recovering from divorce, separation and associated stresses. For more information or to register, please contact Marcy Moeller at 619-660-9698 or via e-mail at [marcylamesa@yahoo.com](mailto:marcylamesa@yahoo.com) or visit [www.churchinitiative.org](http://www.churchinitiative.org).



*Sundays, 4 - 5:30 p.m.  
in Room G*



*Sundays, 4 - 5:30 p.m.  
in Room F*

***Both Programs Start Sunday, February 8, 2015***

For more information contact Marcy Moeller at:

[marcylamesa@yahoo.com](mailto:marcylamesa@yahoo.com)

or visit:

[www.churchinitiative.org](http://www.churchinitiative.org)

# CLCM College Voices

*a new feature highlighting a young adult college-age church member*

**Name:** Corinne Selander

**Year/University/Major:** Freshman / Concordia University, Nebraska / Elementary Education

**Where/how have you connected with other Christians on your campus?**

I am a part of a life group with five other girls and we meet every week to spend time in the word and just stay connected. I go to chapel during the week and *Praise*, which is a student led worship on Wednesday nights. I also spent time discussing life and going through advent devotions with my friends during December!

**Where have you seen God at work at school?**

He has really blessed me with such great friends! They love and comfort me so much. I thought that I would be going crazy in the small town but I am much calmer at school just enjoying all the scenery.

**Where are your favorite hang-out places?**

My dorm room! I actually like the study rooms in the library because they're quiet and the windows offer a great view of the campus; and the Janzow Campus Center, which is the student common area where many students hang out.

**What is something you have learned while away at school?**

I now know what "wind chill" is. I have learned how to make a whistle out of clay. But most importantly, I have learned and experienced how and why God brings people together to spur each other on toward love and good deeds.

**What are your career plans after graduating?**

I would love to go to Australia for my internship and maybe teach in Africa for a couple years after that! But I would eventually want to settle and be a first grade or kindergarten teacher!

**How can Christ Lutheran members pray for you?**

Pray that I would find more service opportunities in the town.



## Bible Reading Plan for 2015

Have you ever considered reading the Bible, cover to cover, perhaps even attempted it, but felt intimidated by the sheer magnitude of the number of pages?

Reading God's Word helps us to better understand the character of God – how He thinks, how He loves and how He works. Why not begin the

habit or continue your habit of reading through God's Word this year?

You can easily read the entire Bible in one year by engaging in a Reading Plan. Bible Reading Plans for the year are available in the courtyard, back of the gym or the church office. Give it a try and become engrossed in God's Word and his love.



# TRANSFORMED

## *How God Changes Us*

*Be transformed by the renewing of your mind . . .*

**ROMANS 12:2**

<p>Jan. 17 &amp; 18, 2015</p>		<p><b>SPIRITUAL HEALTH: How to Get Closer to God</b></p>
<p>Jan. 24 &amp; 25, 2015</p>		<p><b>PHYSICAL HEALTH: Stressed to Blessed</b></p>
<p>Jan. 31 &amp; Feb. 1, 2015</p>		<p><b>MENTAL HEALTH: Change Your Life by Changing Your Mind</b></p>
<p>Feb. 7 &amp; 8, 2015</p>		<p><b>EMOTIONAL HEALTH: How to Deal with How You Feel</b></p>
<p>Feb. 14 &amp; 15, 2015</p>		<p><b>RELATIONAL HEALTH: Facing the Fears that Ruin Relationships</b></p>
<p>Feb. 21 &amp; 22, 2015</p>		<p><b>FINANCIAL HEALTH: Transforming How I See &amp; Use Money</b></p>
<p>Feb. 28 &amp; Mar. 1, 2015</p>		<p><b>YOUR CAREER: Facing Giants in Life &amp; Work</b></p>