



THE CROWNICLE

CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH

JANUARY 2023

Why Americans Are Leaving Their Churches¹

This book review appeared in my newsfeed early in December. It got me pondering ... what's going on? Why aren't people coming back to church now that the coronavirus is less of a threat? What happened to all the noise against mandatory lockdowns? What happened to all the racket about constitutional rights and lawsuits filed by churches against the government?

While it may seem that folks are weary of the saber-rattling and chest-thumping disguised as Christianity, there is something deeper happening. According to sociologist Stephen Bullivant, it is not a recent phenomenon. The trend has been building for about 30 years. Much has been written about it.

In his new book, *Nonverts: The Making of ex-Christian America*, Mr. Bullivant maintains that "as many as a third of Americans now claim no religious affiliation." He gives three compelling reasons for this decline in affiliation ... a decline that we are experiencing at Christ the King, throughout the ELCA, and in all the mainline Protestant denominations.

First, Bullivant says, the end of the Cold War marked the beginning of the trend. With the "godless communists" defeated, people with no religion became less of a threat to patriotism. People with too much religion, or at least with extreme religious practices, became a threat to separation of church and state.

Second, the internet opened spaces for people to create new communities and conversations, expanding the information base of previously exclusive communities. Finally, as Bullivant describes it, "the nones are rising because the nones are rising." In other words, it is now acceptable to admit no religious affiliation.

So, what does this have to do with Christ the King/Cristo Rey? Well, read to the end of this book review where the author tells Mr. Bullivant's story. He is a 38-year-old researcher who has only recently come to faith. This gives me hope. When we tell the good news wherever we go, people respond. There is a barista at the new-ish Dutch Bros. just down the street in Tigard who now asks me, "What's going on at church today, pastor?"

Just last week she said, "I think I need to come check it out ... if that's OK." Of course it's OK! It's better than OK. This is how Jesus invited folks to "come." He didn't apologize for the music or the sparse attendance, he didn't defend the message or the messenger, he didn't explain the archaic liturgy. He simply invited folks to "come." Come, hear the good news, again. Invite everyone you meet to "come, hear the good news."

Let's make a New Year's Resolution together: Invite one person to church ... invite them again ... invite them a third time ... wait a month ... invite them again ... wait until Easter ... pick them up for Easter Sunday service ... pray for them every day ... pray for the Spirit of the living God to fill them with hope and joy and wonder and curiosity ...

Today and every day I pray that each of you will be filled with hope and joy and wonder and curiosity ...

Happy New Year

Pastor Dorothy

1. *Religion News Service Online* <https://regionnews.com>

Reconciling Works Special Offering

Your Wider Welcome Ministry Team thanks you for your generosity in giving \$462 to the special offering on November 6 for ReconcilingWorks. Your gifts have been forwarded to them to continue the important work of expanding full welcome and inclusion to all.

The team at Christ the King continues to look for ways to enhance our welcome and inclusion to the LGBTQIA+ and BIPOC communities. Please share your thoughts and dreams with any team member of ways to reach out to affirm, include, and welcome all.

WWMT—Kathleen Larsen, Ruthanne Rusnak, Sharon Ray, Sherm and Mary Case

Un-Deck the Halls

Come join the fun as we "un-deck" the halls on Sunday, January 8, following worship There may even be food! We can wrap this up in about 45 minutes to an hour. No joke! Anyone can help! Anyone up for providing soup/chili/sandwiches?

Cristo Rey

Hermanos y hermanas, ven a celebrar la misa bilingüe el segundo y el cuarto domingo de cada mes a las 5 p.m. Gracias a Dios! Brothers and sisters, worship at bilingual mass the second and fourth Sundays of every month at 5 p.m. You don't have to speak Spanish—the service is printed in both languages. Come, be a part of something new! Thanks be to God!

Mark Your Calendars

Annual Meeting—February 5

Congregation Council Retreat—February 11 (all day)

Congregation Council Installation—February 12

Preschool News

In December we focused on the meaning of Christmas. We made a special present for our families and decorated our classroom. Each class put on a Christmas program and fun was had by all! It was wonderful to see CTK church members at the programs!

Registration for the 2023-24 school year has begun and families can get registration forms from the preschool or online at www.christthekingpreschool.com. We have two classes: Tues/Thurs class for 3- and 4-year-olds, and Mon/Wed/Fri class for 4- and 5-year-olds. Any questions please contact Heidi at director@christthekingpreschool.com or call the church office.

Christian Education Opportunities

Book of Faith Bible Study—resumes January 11. We meet on Zoom to study the gospel according to **Matthew!** This will be fun! Join us Wednesdays at 7 p.m. to hear the good news. Materials are available in the office.

Click on [this link](#) to join the Zoom meeting.

Phone in **1-253-215-8782**

Meeting ID **860 5524 4817** Passcode **347647**

Anti-Racism Conversation and Book Study—resumes January 12. Join us on Zoom Thursdays at 7 p.m. as we pick up *The Christian Century* magazine's Conversation Guide called "Acting Against Racism." A six-week reflection including concrete personal actions we can take against racism. The study guide is on the website under the Education tab.

Click on [this link](#) to join the Zoom meeting.

Phone in **1-253-215-8782**

Meeting ID **874 7605 3672** Passcode **810126**

CTK Is on Zoom

Weekly Worship

Sundays at 10:30 a.m. "Doors open" at 10 a.m.

Click on [this link](#) to join the Zoom meeting.

Phone in **1-253-215-8782**

Meeting ID **865 1710 7296** Password **299944**

Monthly Council Meeting

Second Tuesday of every month. Gather at 6:30 p.m.

Click on [this link](#) to join the Zoom meeting.

Phone in **1-253-215-8782**

Meeting ID: **826 0765 2262** Passcode: **417394**

January Birthdays

2 Steven Larsen
13 Julie Helle
15 Jacob Stollberg
15 Annika Stollberg
16 Gloria Barnum
16 Valerie Briggs
18 Tammy Brink

20 Mark Henninger
22 Pamela Boschee
24 Carolyn Snow
26 Tom Struck

January Anniversaries

13 Tom and Windi Struck
(44 years)

Giving

Thank you for your generous contributions to the work of the church. There are several ways to share your tithes and offerings:

- Place your offering in the plate on Sunday morning.
- Mail a check to the church office.
- Use your online banking bill-pay service.
- Set up a single or recurring contribution through our third-party giving platform, Vanco. Visit www.tigardlutherans.com and click on the **Donate** tab to set this up.
- Scan the QR code (right) with your mobile device to go directly to our giving page.



The King's Pantry

Please continue to set aside non-perishable food for the Cascade Vineyard Church food bank. Stop by the church and drop it in the barrel outside the office doors.

Plastic and glass bottles and aluminum cans with Oregon redemption value can be dropped in the barrel in the Youth Room. Cascade Vineyard will redeem them to purchase food for the food bank. Please be sure to rinse bottles and cans before you drop them in the barrel!

Christ the King Lutheran Church

11305 SW Bull Mountain Road
Tigard, Oregon 97224

Church Staff

Rev. Dorothy Cottingham, Pastor
Tim Ditch, Parish Administrator and Director of Music
Heidi Livingston, CTK Preschool Director

Church Office 503-639-2789

ctkoffice@tigardlutherans.com

www.tigardlutherans.com

Find us on [Facebook](#)



Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



Reconciling in Christ