

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 2 5

# The Communicator

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE LIVING CHRIST

## Space Trash?

On January 28, 1986 I remember being at a friend's house for a scout meeting. Soon after the small group of 4th graders sat down together, we watched as the space shuttle, Challenger, launched into the sky. We were in awe as the giant rockets propelled the shuttle at Mach 1.92 (1473 mph). When it reached an altitude of 46,000 feet, 73 seconds later, we saw an explosion and then it broke into pieces. This left me wondering again about how much we have achieved in space travel.

During the same time of my life, I remember watching movies about astronauts, Star Wars, and Star Trek. Space was a fascinating thing! In addition to NASA and other government groups, several private organizations have now developed private companies to facilitate space launches for satellites and exploration. Now there's conversation of trying to land humans on Mars and other planetary bodies. And yet, we are still only thinking within our own solar system.

I occasionally visit the 18th Space Defense Squadron information page to learn more about space. This is the group tasked with identifying, tracking, and sharing information on objects entering, leaving, or orbiting our earth. Currently, they monitor an estimated 47,800 space objects. However, that's not the end of what they monitor, they also monitor additional debris that is floating around the earth at over 17,000 mph! Imagine the amount of damage that could do if it were to collide with an object. It would be catastrophic!

Of course, I had to do a search for a video illustration of what this may look like. If you're interested, check out the European Space Agency video on YouTube called "Distribution of space debris in orbit around Earth". After viewing that, my impression of what outer space might be like has changed. The level of shock I had was similar to what I experienced while watching the Challenger explode.

With my awareness of all the garbage, my innocence was lost. The image of a clean and open passage into the unknown was destroyed. Needless to say, I was happy to read that there is an effort to clean up the garbage. I'm sure this will be a very difficult task to say the least.

Learning of all this garbage and the danger it presents, the protection provided by the earth's atmosphere and gravitational properties make it possible for us to stay alive in ways I never knew. I marvel at the way God has provided for this planet. God's creation of all things on earth and in the cosmos is beyond our comprehension. Isaiah 40 says,

**Website:** [www.lc-livingchrist.org](http://www.lc-livingchrist.org)

**Office Email:** [lc1c2725@gmail.com](mailto:lc1c2725@gmail.com)

**Office Phone:** 314-839-0466

**Address:** 2725 Concord Dr, Florissant, MO 63033

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## Weekly Gatherings

### SUNDAY WORSHIP

9:15am, in-person/Facebook live

### ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

10:30am, in-person

### TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY

10am, in-person

## LCLC Staff

### PASTOR

MATT HELFRICH  
314-914-4776

### SECRETARY/OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

CYNTHIA SWAN

### CHOIR

### DIRECTOR/ORGANIST

DAVID EGGERS

### PIANIST

GREG OTT

**OFFICE HOURS** 8:30AM-  
12:30PM

Articles Due 21st of each  
month

*“21 Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? 22 It is [God] who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to live in; 23 who brings princes to naught, and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.”*

Yes! Our God is the one who holds all this together. Be encouraged to know that God is aware of all things, all events, and every particle in every location. God is at work through unconditional love, to bring about justice, peace, and a future in the midst of what may appear to be chaos and tragedy. We are people who know of a greater truth and power than anyone or anything in the universe. Now is time for us to look to the heavens – watch and listen. There is far more going on than we may realize. God has this covered.

Pastor Matt

  
*St. Louis Area Foodbank*

Food Fair | SSM Health DePaul Hospital | February 13, 2025  
February 13 @ 9:00 am

If you or someone you know has a vehicle, you can visit our Food Fair. This event is set up to be drive-through food distribution. Volunteers and staff will put food in your car. We ask that you have space in your vehicle for the food items and that you not leave your vehicle during the distribution.

Please Note: The official start time for this event is 9:00am. However, distribution of food may begin prior to 9:00am if setup is completed. Neighbors are welcome to get in line early. Supplies are limited and may not meet the need of all who attend.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR  
February, 2025**



**TREASURER'S REPORT  
December 2024**

**Not much to report on the sale of the church property. We have had folks look on line, but nothing that has gone beyond that. It is still early and the council will get a report before each council meeting from the realtor on progress. So stay tuned for those updates.**

**In addition, we are continuing our efforts with Zion to see what we will look like in the future. The executive committees of both councils are going to get together and talk seriously about where we go from here, i.e. have discussion and make recommendations on merging or some other action. We face some difficult decisions going forward and we absolutely need all of your opinions. Being passive is NOT an option. Your council needs to know what you think and what you might do depending on how this all works out. If you want to discuss things, get a council member or several and talk about it. Otherwise, you are going to get a recommendation from council that you may have had no input into. We are a family here and your council is committed to keeping it together, if at all possible. So, express your thoughts and do a lot of praying. This is a difficult time and prayer is our major resource to lead us down the right path.**

Category	December Actual	YTD Actual
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>\$23,137</b>	<b>\$149,729</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$13,168</b>	<b>\$179,167</b>
Congregation Coord	\$150	\$600
Cong Vitality Team	\$0	\$0
MISSIONS	\$884	\$14,973
OFFICE	\$145	\$3,624
OUTREACH	\$0	\$250
PASTOR FUND	\$0	\$0
PROPERTY	\$1,869	\$43,974
STEWARDSHIP	\$0	\$225
SUPPORT	\$1,750	\$23,301
WAGES	\$8,084	\$90,507
WORSHIP	\$285	\$1,714

Total YTD Income       \$ 149,729  
 Total YTD Expenses       \$ 179,167  
 Total YTD Difference    -\$ 29,438

2024 General Funds paid to missions are as follows:  
 Central States Synod     \$ 6,000  
 Outreach/Local Missions \$ 8,973

We ended the year with an outstanding December offering of \$23,137, almost double our typical monthly offering. It did not wipe out our debt for the year, but with December expenses of \$13,168 for the month, we ended with a December surplus of \$9,969! Our year-to-date expenses of \$179,167 exceed year-to-date income of \$149,729 by \$29,438. However, I was expecting a deficit closer to \$40,000, so \$29,438 does not look so bad.

We are headed into a new year full of unknowns, but we travel the road with faith and with each other.

Dave Endorf, Treasurer  
 dave.endorf@gmail.com     502-612-3518



# NOTE

FEBRUARY 2025  
by Bill Kaoppel

**The tragic assassination of Brian Thompson, CEO on Unitedhealthcare, has put the focus on the healthcare industry and its problems.**

**Researchers at the Commonwealth Fund analyzed the health care process, efficiency, equity and health outcomes in 10 advanced countries. The USA ranked #10.**

**We face the most barriers to accessing and affording health care. We rank last in health outcomes, including acute illnesses, chronic diseases, and death; we live the shortest lives and have the most avoidable deaths. We have the highest infant mortality rate. We are #9 in equity, providing care for those of different background and income.**

**Problem: denial of claims. Denial rates from health insurance companies range from 22-33% among the major companies. There may be problems with prior authorization, documentation of care, inaccurate data, or "not medically necessary." This puts an additional burden on both providers and patients attempting to appeal and resolve the denial.**

**For Medicare Advantage plans (2021) only 6% of 35 million claims were denied. Only 11% were appealed, but the denial was overturned in 82% of those cases.**

**About medicare...**

**There is original Medicare A & B (pays for medical care by hospitals and doctors, including urgent care, assuming they have agreed to accept Medicare), Medicare D (prescription plan). Cost of Medicare b is deducted from social security. Medicare D (many plans) is private pay.**

**ADVANTAGE: you can go to any doctor or specialist (without referral) who accepts medicare and use any hospital. You will pay a percentage of the cost unless you have a Medicare Supplement plan which you pay (there are many from which to choose).**

**Additionally, there are multiple Medicare Advantage plan You have to continue paying Medicare B but there may be little or no premium for the MA plan.**

**ADVANTAGE is low cost and additional benefits, e.g. eye and hearing care. Disadvantages: copays for services, need for prior authorization to see specialists, limited to provider network, increased cost if using provider not in network.**

**MAKING YOUR EXPERIENCE BETTER: Prepare. Make copies of your insurance cards. Print your medicine list including over-the-counter pills and your doctor's name and phone number to carry with you. Before a doctor visit, write down questions and problems.**



# 2025 - FIFTY PLUS

	Activity	Coordinator / Host	Time & Place	Lunch Site
Jan 15 Wednesday	Planning for 2025	Joyce Wolf & Joyce Meyer	10:30 a.m. LC-LC	Lunch after planning provided
Feb 19 Wednesday	Pizza & Bingo	Glenn & Jann Mueller	10:30 a.m. LC-LC lower level	LC-LC lower level
April * 23 Wednesday	Fast Lane Classic Car Museum	Sheila & LeVaughn Smart	St.Charles, MO	TBA
May 21 Wednesday	Aerie's Resort & Winery	Erle & Margie Craig	Grafton, IL	TBA
June 18 Wednesday	Picnic	Glen Mueller & John Meyer	LC-LC	LC-LC
August 20 Wednesday	St. Charles County Heritage Museum	Joyce & John Meyer	St. Peters, MO	TBA
September 17 Wednesday	Kimmswick Historical Society Museum & Homes	Bill Kaeppel	Kimmswick, MO	TBA
October 15 Wednesday	Octoberfest	Dolores Chappel & Cathie Lehr	LC-LC	LC-LC
November 19 Wednesday	TBA	Karen Haynes	TBA	TBA
December *18 *Thursday	Christmas Luncheon	Doris Stoechner & Jeanne Calderwood	LC-LC lower level	LC-LC lower level

\* Note Date Change

## Reconciling In Christ Bishop Candeia

At the 2024 Central States Synod Assembly, we adopted a resolution to become a Reconciling in Christ Synod, a public statement of welcome, inclusion, celebration, and advocacy for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions as well as a commitment to the work of racial equity. The resolution also included the adoption of the following statement of welcome:

Traveling the way of Jesus, who commanded his followers to love one another as Christ has loved, and believing that all persons are created in the image of God, this synod welcomes people of every race, background, age, political affiliation, economic and social status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and mental and physical ability. As a synod we strive to enable all people to participate fully in the life and work of the church in the ministry of Jesus Christ.

I am often asked why such a statement is necessary. We know that Jesus loves everyone, and that everyone is welcome. Why then do we point out and name specific groups of people, such as the LGBTQIA+ community? Because our neighbors need our specific and direct words of affirmation, welcome, care, and love. I have always appreciated Martin Luther's response on why we do good works. He states that we do good works, which includes our words, not to earn a reward for ourselves, not to prove our righteousness, but because our neighbor needs them.[1]

Our neighbors who are part of the LGBTQIA+ community have heard the public proclamation from our newly inaugurated president that their lives and relationships are not recognized in the government policy[2] if they do not conform to a binary understanding of gender identity. This makes it even more vital that they hear the message of God's word that those in the Queer community, those who are transgendered, and those who are non-binary in their gender expression and understanding are beloved of God and reflect the image of God in whom they are made.

As the bishop and pastor of the synod, I publicly proclaim that you who are part of the Queer community are brave and beautiful. You reflect the incredible diversity of God's creation. You refuse to conform to binary limited categories that seek to define your personhood. You instead trust who God has created and called you to be, continuing to witness to the love of God and the ways we can express that love through our communities where all are welcome.

As the bishop and pastor of the synod, I also publicly say to those who view the government policy as a reflection of Biblical teaching, that you are no less one of God's beloved. I believe that you do desire to live faithfully and do good works out of love for your neighbor. But I urge you for the sake of your neighbor to open your hearts even wider, to wrestle with those Biblical teachings, that you might hear Scripture as a beautiful love story between God and God's people, remembering that the purpose of Scripture is to reveal Christ, the Word of God dwelling among us. As the gospel of John puts it,

These things are written so that you might come to believe (trust) that Jesus is the Messiah, and that through believing you may have life in his name." John 20:31

For Christ is the one who is reconciling us to one another. It is hard to see at times how we can come together across so many differences, but in Christ, we are already one body. May we continue to reflect on the reconciling work of Christ, be merciful to one another, walk humbly with one another, and reflect the love of God for all creation in all our words and actions. Our neighbors, those who are part of the Queer community, those who are immigrants, those who are the most vulnerable, need not only our statements of welcome but our bold and loving actions. This is indeed the work of the church.

[1] The Freedom of a Christian 1520: The Annotated Luther Study Edition, translated by Timothy J. Wengert, copyright © 2016 Fortress Press.

[2] Defending Women From Gender Ideology Extremism And Restoring Biological Truth To The Federal Government. Presidential Actions January 20, 2025

## Invitation to Listening Sessions at LCLC

There will be a listening session here at Living Christ on Friday, February 7 from 1:00 PM – 6:30 PM. We are asking people to sign up to be part of a small group, 4-6 people, for 30-minute sessions. The purpose of these listening sessions will be to give you all a chance to share with Bishop Candea and Rev. Whetter the following:

1. What do you appreciate about the ministry and faith community here at Living Christ?
2. What concerns do you have for the congregation?
3. Any other ideas/concerns you want to voice.

Please Email the office [lclc2725@gmail.com](mailto:lclc2725@gmail.com) if you did not receive the email invitation with link.

## February Fundraiser

On display on the bulletin board in the Coat Room are envelopes with dollar amounts from \$1 to \$50 on each.

Choose one of them, insert that amount in cash or check, include your name, and place in an offering plate. The money raised will help with our church expenses. Questions can be directed to Jeanne Calderwood.

**The Great Rivers Collaborative** Recently Adopted an Update Purpose Statement. The Great Rivers Collaborative, comprising several Lutheran congregations in North St. Louis area, embodies Christ's love through mutual support and community engagement. Called by the Holy Spirit, we faithfully embrace a future that leads us to proclaim the gospel in new ways which may include sharing resources, consolidating to pursue new missions and ministries and joining together to engage with our neighborhoods. Through God's grace we come together to worship, foster relationships beyond our church buildings and serve our neighbors. During this journey, we commit to uplifting one another and working collaboratively to create a vibrant, inclusive ministry where everyone is welcomed and valued.



## GIRL SCOUTS COOKIE BOOTH

The Girl Scouts will hold a cookie booth on Saturday, February 15 & Monday, February 17 from 10am-3pm. Please come out and support the Girl Scout troop.

## COUNCIL BULLETS

- **Ash Wednesday / Lenten Worship:**
  - Ash Wednesday (March 5) at Atonement – fish fry followed by worship**
  - Mid Week Lenten – may be combined with other GRC congregation (TBD)**
- **The GRC Purpose Statement has been finalized and is included In the February Communicator.**
- **LCLC 2025 Council Retreat – Saturday, February 22, 9:30 am – 12:30 pm at LCLC.**
- **Bishop Candia and Pastor Wetter will be joining us for “listening sessions”. Date TBD.**
- **EMC (Eastern Missouri Conference) 2025 Council Retreat – Saturday, February 8, 900 am – 2:00 pm at Holy Cross Lutheran Church.**
- **Synod Assembly – June 5-7, Olathe, KS.**

## 50+ PLUS BINGO AND PIZZA

FIFTY PLUS will meet on February 19 in the lower level at LCLC at 10:30 am for pizza and bingo. Please bring \$5 for pizza, salad, dessert and drinks along with a \$5 wrapped gift for bingo prizes.

Membership dues are \$10 for the year. Please call Glenn Mueller at 314-839-1230 for a reservation.

## 50+ PLANNING MEETING RECAP

16 people attended the 50+ planning meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 15. Annual dues of \$10.00 were collected and the schedule for the year was planned. The calendar is posted on the bulletin board in the cloakroom and a copy is printed here. It was agreed to again support USO with monetary donations. \$69.00 was collected at the meeting to be sent to USO. We welcome everyone to our activities. Lunch was enjoyed after the meeting.

## CVT/OUTREACH

CVT/Outreach will be supporting the Room at the Inn with a delivery of meals once a month @ the Drury House, Mullanphy Lane. See flyer posted for more information.

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CVT/Outreach - supporting First Responders & Veterans -110 Valentine cards were sent including some sent to LA Fire Fighters Association, Cookies were also baked & delivered to local First Responders & Police.

## FEBRUARY LUNCH BUNCH 2025

Lunch Bunch will be meeting at the Sports Café on February 13 at 11:30 am. The address is 3579 Pennridge Dr, Bridgeton.

The menu includes sandwiches, salads, appetizers, pizza, pasta and other choices. We welcome everyone. For reservations contact Joyce Meyer at 314-374-4135 or 314-838-3741 .

## JANUARY LUNCH BUNCH RECAP

Twelve of us braved the snow, ice and cold to meet at Chimi's Fresh Mix in Florissant for lunch on January 9. It was nice to get out of the house after the snowfall. Hoping for better weather for February's outing.

## CREATE DAY

the next Create Day to work on the quilts for Lutheran World Relief will be Friday, February 7, 9:00am-11:00am,

March 7,

April 4,

May 2,

June 6,

July 18,

August 8,

September 12,

and October 3.



The Lutheran World Relief In gathering will again be in October. Our goal is to work on quilts to have twenty-four quilts completed by then. Anyone is welcome to help!





# Celebrate February!

## *Birthdays & Anniversary*

### Birthdays

Deanna	GUNN	3
Dave	ENDORF	14
Rev. Paul	BEINS	18
JoAnn	OTT	22
Harper Willow	DESMOND	23
Levaughn	SMART	25
Anne	SCHULTZ	26
Jeffery	BROWN	27

### Wedding Anniversary

Joyce and John	Meyer	12th	59years
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**HAPPY  
ANNIVERSARY**



# *February Worship Assistants*

## **February 2**

Preaching/Presiding: Pr. Matt

Assisting Minister: Bill Kaepfel

Lector: Randy Henning

Live Stream: Marilyn Wiley

Musician: David Eggers

Ushers: Jim & Doris Stoechner

Greeter: Ann Schultz

Altar Guild: Doris Stoechner, Bill Kaepfel & Marilyn Wiley

## **February 9**

Preaching/Presiding: Pr. Matt

Assisting Minister: Angela Bennett

Lector: Dave Endorf

Live Stream: Gary & Laurie Brown

Musician: Greg Ott

Ushers: Gloria Broderick & Cathie Lehr

Greeter: Kathy Endorf

Altar Guild: Maureen Buchek & Marjorie Becker

## **February 16**

Preaching/Presiding: Pr. Matt

Assisting Minister: Randy Henning

Lector: Angela Bennett

Live Stream: Rod Wallace

Musician: David Eggers

Ushers: Jann & Glenn Mueller

Greeter: Joyce Meyer

Altar Guild: Cathie Lehr & Joyce Meyer

## **February 23**

Preaching/Presiding: Pr. Matt

Assisting Minister: Bill Kaepfel

Lector: Cathie Lehr

Live Stream: Erle Craig

Musician: Greg Ott

Ushers: Glenn Albers & Ann Schultz

Greeter: Jeanne Calderwood

Altar Guild: Karen Haynes & Sheila Smart

**\*\*\*If you are unable to serve on your assigned date,  
please swap with someone or find a replacement\*\*\***

# FEBRUARY 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 9:00am EMC Council Retreat Holy Cross Lutheran
2 8am Vocal Choir 9:15am Worship 10:30am Adult Forum 11am True Vine	3	4 10:00am Bible Study 11am Exercise Class	5	6 11am Exercise Class	7 9:00am Create Day 11:00am Bells 1:00 pm Synod Listening Session	8 9:00am EMC Council Retreat Holy Cross Lutheran
9 8am Vocal Choir 9:15am Worship 10:30am Adult Forum 11am True Vine	10 6:00pm CVT 7:00pm Council	11 10am Bible Study 11am Exercise Class	12	13 11:30am Lunch Bunch	14 11:00am Bells Valentine's Day	15 10am Girl Scouts Cookie Booth
16 9:15am Worship 10:30 am Adult Forum 11am True Vine	17 President's Day Office Closed 10am Girl Scouts Cookie Booth	18 10am Bible Study 11am Exercise Class	19 10:30am 50+ Bingo & Pizza (LL)	20 11am Exercise Class 7pm NCOTC	21 11:00am Bells	22 9am Girl Scouts 9am Executive Committee w/ Zion/LCLC
23 8am Vocal Choir 9:15am Worship 10:30am Adult Forum 11am True Vine	24	25 10am Bible Study 11am Exercise Class	26	27 11am Exercise Class	28 11:00am Bells	

Zoom links for events can be found on our website:  
[www.lc-livingchrist.org/calendar](http://www.lc-livingchrist.org/calendar)

**Lutheran Church of the Living Christ**  
**2725 Concord Drive**  
**Florissant, MO 63033**