

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 2 6

The Communicator

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE LIVING CHRIST

Living
Lutheran



God's love knows no bounds

By: Shawna Day

December 16, 2025

Benedict Owusu and I met at the Ole the Viking statue on Augustana University's campus during move-in day last year. We were both brand new to Augustana, excited and nervous about what it all meant and how the year would go. We had both moved from familiarity to new surroundings. I hold dear to my heart how God brings people together through human connection to build God's kingdom.

The Holy Spirit is always up to something transformative. Moving to a new place transforms us spiritually because of the reliance it takes to embrace the unknown. Owusu bravely boarded a 23-hour flight from Kumasi, Ghana, to Augustana's campus in Sioux Falls, S.D., uncertain how a Midwestern state would react to a young man from Ghana.

The reality of leaving home sank in while he was trying American pasta on the flight. He still remembers it as an unpleasant meal, realizing that U.S. cuisine uses a lot of cheese and very little spice. The weather, even in August, was cold compared to home, and nothing would prepare him for the winter wind of the Great Plains. However, if you meet Owusu, you'll quickly learn he is a resilient spirit. He rides his bicycle year-round to a grocery store where he can buy ingredients to make dishes from home that provide some comfort in an unfamiliar place.

Another reality that set in for him was how different everyday life would be. "Back home, you live in communities where you never go without someone stopping in to visit or borrow something they need, and privacy was not a thing—you often didn't lock your door," Owusu said. "With five siblings, [I was] always in the presence of a family member or friends. Campus life took getting used to; it was quiet, and the culture was one of American individualism. I was used to seeing children playing outside all day after school and people in conversation with neighbors outside. It was lonely the first few months."

Out of curiosity, I asked Owusu what made him choose Augustana from the 10 U.S. universities to which he had applied. (He got into all of them on the strength of his academic achievements.) He laughed and said, "Mount Rushmore." Growing up, he was inspired in school when he learned about the history of U.S. monuments. Unfortunately, when he visited Mount Rushmore in person, he found it didn't live up to his expectations. We both laughed over the disappointment, but he found the beauty of the Black Hills and the Badlands to be majestic.

Owusu's greatest hardship came when he was working in Sioux Falls. He was serving food for a public event, and a man from the area yelled at him loudly enough for everyone to hear, refusing to stand in Owusu's line. The experience hurt him profoundly. "Other than the color of my skin, what could this man hate about me?" he asked.

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SUNDAY WORSHIP

9:15am, in-person/Facebook live

LCLC Staff

SECRETARY/OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

CYNTHIA SWAN

CHOIR DIRECTOR/ORGANIST

DAVID EGGERS

PIANIST

GREG OTT

OFFICE HOURS M-F

8:30AM-12:30PM

Articles Due 21st of each month

After the incident, he isolated himself and stopped leaving his room after class. He wondered if everyone felt this way and if it would happen again. He worked through the experience by drawing on his faith, through prayer and conversations with God, and confiding in his mother, to whom he is close. He also spoke with Augustana's Office of Faith and Spiritual Life for pastoral care to process what had happened and learn how to work through it. Because Owusu's faith is so important to him, he felt most comfortable sharing what had happened with spiritual care staff on campus.

"Talking to others helped me come out of my room and not give up," he said. "While there are people in the world who will use hurtful words, there are many people who are kind and truly care." He found God in the people who cared—friends, family, the ones who show up during hardship and help you through a hard time. The experience has deepened his faith, he said, and he still takes time daily to talk to God. He shared something his mother had told him: "God's love knows no bounds." This expression from Ghana helped him remember that God's love will get us through, that it is unavoidable, empowering and for all people; there are no boundaries to God's love.

From this experience, Owusu has gained wisdom to share with his international peers on campus. "First, don't give up—you will miss out on the good that can happen," he said. "I almost went home in the first month, and now, looking back, I feel at home at Augustana. It got better, and I met so many remarkable people I would have never met before. There are so many good people at Augustana and friends that I never thought would be so supportive. My friend Francisco calls me daily to check in and see how my day went.

"Augustana grows on you, and I have no regrets. One of my favorite people is Suzanne [Miller], in the International Programs Office, who knows everything about everything, every currency from every country. She will sit with you and have coffee and talk. The world map in the office is a comfort to see and talk about. With people in and out of the office, laughter and talking, it feels like a home away from home."

As a new campus pastor, I feel close to God in my conversations with Owusu, and I've learned through his eyes what it means to be an international student here. He has reminded me to not give up on my own journey. With his inner strength, strong faith, and kind and thoughtful personality, he is a gift to all lucky enough to call him a friend. I haven't had the joy of meeting his mother, but I know she would be proud of him.

Not everyone will understand who you are, but we can get through our hardships with the Holy Spirit guiding us. When I reflect on my serendipitous meeting with Owusu at the Ole statue, I know the Spirit was at work.

February, 2026

Treasurer's Report

We start a new year with high hopes and expectations. The sale of the church property is on-going. Nothing new to report. We continue to get a lot of groups touring the church with nothing but great things to say about the property. Unfortunately, financing for churches at the amount we are asking is pretty tough. I know from when we did the renovation in 2010 that getting that through a bank is next to impossible. The Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA saved us at the time and we have started to give them as a potential lender to groups that come through. We'll see if that helps. Otherwise, keep praying for a quick and equitable close to this effort.

In the meantime, I ask you to continue with your support financially and maybe more importantly, your time. We continue to work on outreach and helping those in need. Our situation does NOT relieve us of those responsibilities. We still have a commitment to mission and that is as strong as it has ever been. So give it all you can as we work through the difficult things at LCLC.

Finally, when the property is sold, we will be arranging a "Holy Closure" Sunday service and celebration, a celebration of LCLC and what it has meant to us and the community. Toward that end, we are compiling a list of those folks and groups that should be invited to that celebration. So if you have folks that you want to see there that might not be obvious, please get their names and contact information to Laurie Brown. She is helping to put that final celebration together. If you have any other ideas or suggestions, please get them to Laurie.

That's it for this month. Hang in there and don't forget the power of prayer.

<u>Category</u>	<u>December Actual</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>
INCOME	\$10,397	\$117,818
EXPENSES	\$11,677	\$141,668
Congregation Coord	\$200	\$200
Cong Vitality Team	\$0	\$0
MISSIONS	\$1,731	\$16,775
OFFICE	\$147	\$3,291
OUTREACH	\$0	\$1,364
PASTOR FUND	\$0	\$0
PROPERTY	\$4,385	\$48,656
STEWARDSHIP	\$0	\$0
SUPPORT	-\$92	\$11,724
WAGES	\$5,306	\$59,245
WORSHIP	\$0	\$412

Total YTD Income	\$ 117,818
Total YTD Expenses	\$ 141,668
Total YTD Difference	-\$ 23,850

2025 General Funds paid to missions are as follows:

Central States Synod	\$ 4,000
Local Missions	\$ 8,000
Outreach Missions	\$ 5,275

Our December offerings of \$10,397 were only \$1,280 less than our expenses of \$11,677. Our year-to-date expenses of \$141,668 are \$23,850 more than our year-to-date income is \$117,818. Our budget for 2026 is \$107,342, which is about \$10,000 less than what our actual income was for 2025. So, I am still optimistic that we will have the financial resources to operate for about two years while we wait for someone to purchase our building and property. Let's all keep praying and doing the best we can as we move forward together.

If you have any questions, please call or email me.
Thanks.

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

FOOD

There have been increasing cautions about food additives. Might make food last longer, look nicer, taste better. But maybe not so good for us. We need to start reading the ingredient labels more closely.

Example: Looked at the bacon I got recently. In very small print: “cured with water, salt, sugar, sodium phosphate, sodium ascorbate, sodium nitrite.” Hmm. Note that these are approved by the FDA as food additives.

Sodium phosphate: not good for folks with kidney problems.

Sodium nitrite: possible link to cancer, neurological and heart diseases.

To be fair, you’d probably have to eat a LOT of bacon to be at risk.

That said, there are a lot of preservatives and antioxidants added to foods that can have potentially serious health effects from cancer to allergies.

Listing: BHA & BHT, sodium nitrite/nitrate, potassium bromate, sulfites, propyl gallate, TBHQ, artificial dyes, artificial sweeteners (aspartame, sucralose, saccharin), titanium dioxide, MSG, ADA, BVO.

What to do?

1 – Read the labels on prepared foods (boxed, canned, frozen)

2 – Choose whole foods: fresh and frozen fruits and veggies (wash well), meat that YOU prepare

3 – avoid packaged snacks, sugary drinks, processed meats, fast food

“You are what you eat.” Eat well, be healthy.

MEDICINES

Cost of medicines can take a bite out of your bank account. Even if you have a prescription plan.

Experience: I called my plan: why aren’t you paying for this? Answer: “ Oh, we don’t cover that; it isn’t on our formulary. We could suggest another medication.”

Phooie. So I did some research, and this is what I found:

ADVAIR (name brand):

one month (GOODRX) Costco \$301 Walgreens \$281

three months Pharmstore (Canada) \$324

ADVAIR (generic)

one month (GOODRX) Walmart \$191 Target \$100

three months Pharmstore (Canada) \$127

Of course, if you order from Canada, your doctor has to send them a prescription, and it may take 4-6 weeks to get the medication.

Would appreciate suggestions for the Nurse Notes. Any topic you would like researched, please share.

Bill Kaepfel



Origins of Black History Month February

Black History Month has a rich history that dates back to the early 20th century. It began as a way to honor the contributions of African Americans to society.

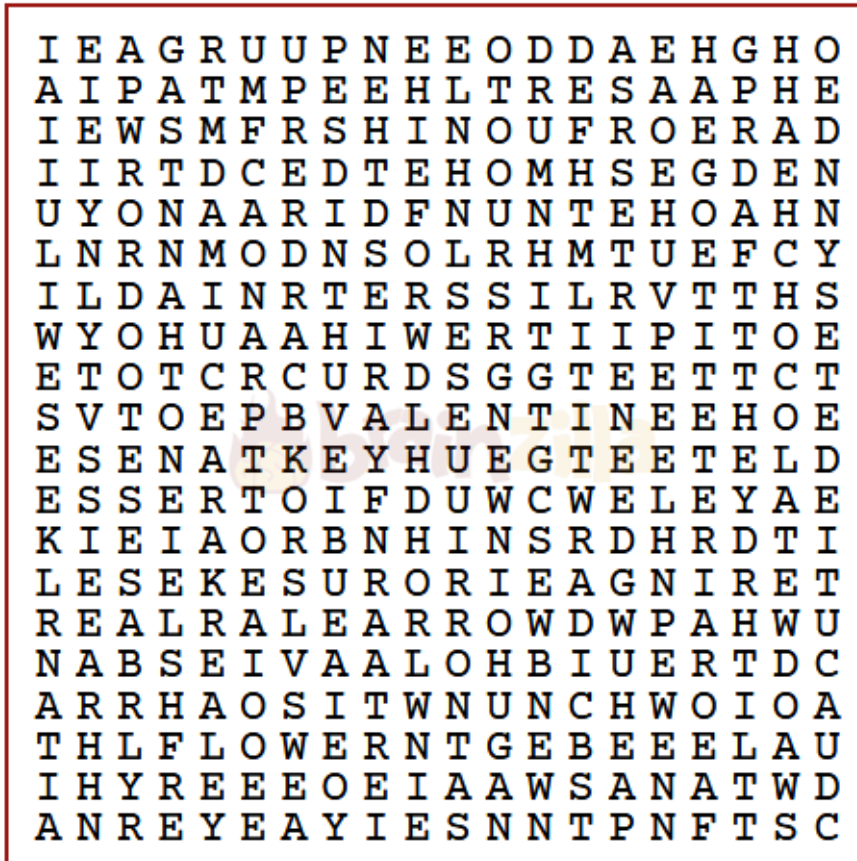
- Black History Month started as "Negro History Week" in 1926, created by historian Carter G. Woodson.
- Woodson chose the second week of February to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass.
- The celebration expanded to a month in 1976, during the United States Bicentennial.
- President Gerald Ford officially recognized Black History Month in 1976, urging Americans to honor the accomplishments of Black Americans.
- Black History Month highlights the history often overlooked in traditional history books.
- It provides an opportunity for schools and communities to educate others about Black culture and history.
- The month encourages the study of African American history year-round.
- It serves as a reminder of the ongoing fight for racial equality.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. is honored for his leadership in the Civil Rights Movement.
- Rosa Parks is remembered for her pivotal role in the Montgomery Bus Boycott.
- Harriet Tubman is celebrated for her work with the Underground Railroad.
- Malcolm X is recognized for his advocacy for Black empowerment and civil rights.
- Barack Obama, the first African American president, is also celebrated.
- It has inspired numerous cultural events, including parades, concerts, and art exhibits.
- Many schools incorporate Black history into their curriculum during February.
- The month has led to the creation of documentaries and films that highlight Black history.
- It has encouraged the publication of books and articles about African American history.
- Canada celebrates Black History Month in February, similar to the United States.
- The United Kingdom observes Black History Month in October.
- Ireland also celebrates Black History Month in October.
- These countries use the month to honor the contributions of Black individuals to their societies.
- The Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) provides educational materials and hosts events.
- Many museums, such as the National Museum of African American History and Culture, offer special exhibits.
- Libraries often feature collections of books and films about Black history.
- Online platforms like YouTube and streaming services offer documentaries and educational videos.
- The theme for 2021 was "The Black Family: Representation, Identity, and Diversity."
- In 2020, the theme was "African Americans and the Vote," marking the 150th anniversary of the 15th Amendment.
- The 2019 theme was "Black Migrations," highlighting the movement of African Americans to new destinations.
- Themes are chosen by the ASALH to reflect current issues and historical milestones.
- It has led to increased awareness and discussions about racial inequality.
- The month has inspired many young people to learn more about their heritage and become activists for social justice.

Valentine's Day

Word Search



This is a word search puzzle about Valentine's Day. Words like "kiss", "love" and "cupid" are in the list.



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Valentine's Day

ARROW
CANDY
CARD
CHOCOLATE

CUPID
FEBRUARY
FLOWER
HEART

HUG
KISS
LOVE
RED

ROSE
SWEET
VALENTINE

Create Days for 2026

The following are dates for Create Days at Living Christ. Friday mornings at Living Christ 9-11 January through October, ending with the Lutheran World Relief Ingathering on Saturday, October 17th.



February 27

March 27

April 10

May 15

June 12

July 17

August 21

September 18

October 9

October 17, Lutheran World Relief Ingathering, 9-11 am, (place to be determined)

Any questions, please speak with Kathy Endorf (502)475-4508.

Council Bullets

- Randy will resume giving Council Update before the Benediction each week. Questions/concerns can be addressed to any Council member at any time.
- We are beginning to compile a list of members or interested individuals who will be invited to our Holy Closure celebration. Please contact Laurie Brown if you have names and addresses to include.
- Immanuel UCC (Ferguson) is operating a food pantry at their church in Ferguson. Ribbon cutting was on Monday, January 19 at 11:00 am.
- FMSC Trivia Night is on Saturday, March 14 at 7:00 pm at Atonement. More information to come.
- February Outreach Project – food collection for TEAM (see article in the Communicator).



50+ FEBRUARY VALENTINES PARTY

Fifty Plus will meet on February 19 at 12:00 pm at LCLC on the upper level. We will be enjoying red and white pasta, pizza, salad and garlic bread. A drink and dessert will also be available all for a donation of \$10. We will also be playing a Valentines trivia game to test our memory. A sign-up sheet will be posted on a bulletin board.

50+ DECEMBER RECAP

The 50+ Club started the new year with a Bingo & Pizza Party at the church. 19 people attended enjoying lively conversation, pizza, and winning delicious prizes at Bingo. We decided to have a Valentine's Day party in February and look into a tour of the newly renovated Powell Hall in March. Dues will not be collected this year because of the uncertainty of the future of Living Christ. We are changing the day that we meet from the third Wednesday to the third Thursday and we are only planning events a couple of months ahead instead of the entire year.

We want to thank Glenn & Jann and Joyce & John for putting together the Bingo & Pizza Party. Everyone had a good time.

FEBRUARY LUNCH BUNCH

Lunch Bunch will dine at Massa's on February 12 at 11:30 am. Massa's is located at 3761 New Town Blvd., St. Charles, MO. The 50's Group ate there after a Fast Lane Classic Cars Tour last year. They offer a varied menu with appetizers, salads, pizza, sandwiches and pastas. Everyone is welcome to attend. If you would like to join us, please notify Joyce Meyer at 314-374-4135 or email jameyer46@charter.net.

JANUARY LUNCH BUNCH RECAP

Las Fuentes at 680 N Hwy 67 in Florissant was the location to meet on January 8th at 11:30 am for lunch. There were nineteen of us enjoying chips, salsa, fajitas, quesadillas, enchiladas and other entrees. We had a good time enjoying the food and socializing!

2026 Great Rivers Collaborative meeting dates and locations

- March 15 (Unity Bel-Nor)
- May 17 (Living Christ)
- July 12 (Atonement)
- September 13 (Shepherd of the Hills)
- November 8 (St. Philips)

OUTREACH

For the month of February, Outreach will be collecting food for TEAM. TEAM (The Emergency Assistance Ministry) was founded in 1986 and is operated by 100% volunteer help in Florissant-Hazelwood. TEAM serves over 700 families per month! Canned fruit, canned vegetables, canned meat are a few of the items that are needed. There is a TEAM collection table on the way into the church. Thank you!



Celebrate February!

Birthdays

Maddie	PIERCE	1
Dave	ENDORF	14
Rev. Paul	BEINS	18
JoAnn	OTT	22
Levaughn	SMART	25
Anne	SCHULTZ	26
Jeffery	BROWN	27

Anniversary

Joyce & John	Meyer	12th	60years
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February Worship Assistants

February 1, 2026

Preaching/Presiding: Pastor Chad Langdon (Bishop's Associate)

Assisting Minister: Bill Kaepfel

Lector: Terry Calderwood

Live Stream: Erle Craig

Musician: Greg Ott

Ushers: Jann & Glenn Mueller

Greeter: Joyce Meyer

Altar Guild: Doris Stoechner, Marilyn Wiley & Bill Kaepfel

February 8, 2026

Preaching/Presiding: Pastor Rick Mueller

Assisting Minister: Angela Bennett

Lector: Gary Brown

Live Stream: Rod Wallace

Musician: Greg Ott

Ushers: Glenn Albers & Ann Schultz

Greeter: Jeanne Calderwood

Altar Guild: Maureen Buchek & Marjorie Becker

February 15, 2026

Preaching/Presiding: PMA Jon Heerboth

Assisting Minister: Bill Kaepfel

Lector: Laurie Brown

Live Stream: Marilyn Wiley

Musician: Greg Ott

Ushers: Levaughn & Sheila Smart

Greeter: Jim & Doris Stoechner

Altar Guild: Cathie Lehr & Joyce Meyer

February 22, 2026

Preaching/Presiding: Richard Schademann

Assisting Minister: Randy Henning

Lector: Dave Endorf

Live Stream: Gary & Laurie Brown

Musician: Greg Ott

Ushers: Jim & Doris Stoechner

Greeter: Judy Holmes

Altar Guild: Karen Hayes & Sheila Smart

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

FEBRUARY 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 9:15am Worship Tiam True Vine	2	3 Tiam Exercise Class	4	5 Tiam Exercise Class	6	7
8 9:15am Worship Tiam True Vine	9 6pm CVT 7pm Council	10 Tiam Exercise Class 7pm Wedgewood Trustees	11	12 Tiam Exercise Class 11:30pm Lunch Bunch 6:30pm Girl Scouts	13	14 Valentine's Day
15 9:15am Worship Tiam True Vine	16 President's Day	17 Tiam Exercise Class	18 Ash Wednesday	19 Tiam Exercise (LL) 12pm 50+ Valentines Day Party (UL) 6:30pm NCOTC	20	21 10am Girl Scouts
22 1 Lent 9:15am Worship Tiam True Vine	23	24 Tiam Exercise Class	25	26 Tiam Exercise Class	27 9am Create Day	28 10am Girl Scouts

Zoom links for events can be found on our website:
www.lc-livingchrist.org/calendar

Lutheran Church of the Living Christ
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