

The Messenger



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

And this is the testimony: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

—1 John 5:11

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LUTHERAN
CHURCH
OF OUR
SAVIOUR

8401 W. Hillsborough Avenue, Tampa FL 33615
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Email ~ office@lcostampa.org

OUR VISION

Through LCOS all come to know the unconditional love of God, grow in their faith, and share their love and faith with others.

OUR MISSION

That all may experience the love of Jesus Christ, we reach up through worship celebration. We reach out by sharing our faith. We reach in through prayer and study.

SUNDAY WORSHIP CELEBRATIONS

Bible Study	8:30am
Worship Service	9:30am
Fellowship	10:30am

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Stephen Kauffman, **Pastor**
Naoko Okada, **Minister of Music**
Charlie McCoy, **Accountant**
Roger Swain, **Financial Secretary**

CHURCH COUNCIL *(Ministry Area)*

Sara Berge, **President**
(Governance & Administration^a) and (Technology)
Don Richardson, **Vice President**
(Facility & Grounds)
Jan Spaulding, **Secretary** *(Education)*
Kristi Saligame, **Finance/Treasurer**
(Stewardship & Financial) and (Social Media)
Charlie McCoy *(Stewardship & Financial)*
Lynne O'Reilly *(Care)*
Fran Palermo *(Fellowship & Hospitality)*
Sharon Rozell *(Outreach)*
Judith Stocker *(Worship)*

^aIncludes Pr. Kauffman

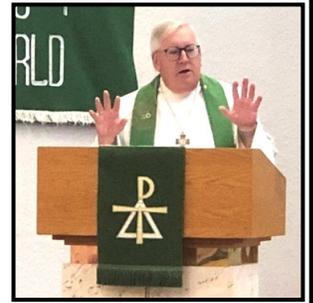
MISSION TEAM LEADERS

Acolytes & Crucifers	Cherri Krall
Adult Education	Don Richardson Kent Chetlain
Altar Guild	
AV Team	Heidi Richters
Bulletin	Ginnie Berge
Coffee Hour	Martin Stewart Heidi Richters Fran Beauregard
Communications	Karen Urban
Counters	Kristi Saligame Roger Swain
Facility & Grounds	Don Richardson
Fellowship & Dinners	Don Richardson Martin Stewart
Food Bank	Kristi Saligame
Greeters	Heidi Richters Fran Beauregard
Information Technology	Kent Chetlain
LAFFS	Lynne O'Reilly
Lay Pastoral Care	
Newsletter Team	Karen Urban, Rick Padin and Ginnie Berge
Note Folks	Linda Dillinger
Outreach	Danielle Kearney Sharon Rozell
Ushers	Martin Stewart
Website & Social Media	Kristi Saligame
Worship & Music	Naoko Okada

Our Calling is Bigger than We Think!

Submitted by Pastor Stephen Kauffman

In this reflection from another pastor*, I discover the hope that enlightens our path in Epiphany. Our call extends farther than we imagine. Read and reflect!



The Bible never pretends that God’s people are immune from exhaustion. In fact, the Bible is often more honest about fatigue than the Church is willing to be. Spiritual formation is not about becoming superhuman; it is about meeting God in our limitations. Many congregations today feel tired—shrinking resources, aging members, cultural shifts, denominational struggles. It is tempting to believe, “Our strength has been spent for nothing.”

But the Servant’s tiredness doesn’t disqualify them. It becomes the very place where God speaks next.

God does not say, “Come back when you’re more energized.” God says, “You’re discouraged? Good. Now listen... because I have something to show you.”

Here comes the turn—one of the most beautiful lines in all of Isaiah.

God says: *“It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to restore the survivors of Israel;
I will give you as a light to the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”* (Isaiah 49:6)

Too small a thing for your calling to be limited to Israel. Too small a thing to restore only one people. Too small a thing to think your light is for a single group, a single tribe, a single nation. In other words:

“Your mission is bigger than you think. Your light is brighter than you know. Your calling extends farther than you have imagined.”

God expands the Servant’s imagination.

And this is why the Church reads passages like this during Epiphany—the season of light. The season when we remember that Christ’s light was never meant for one people alone but revealed “for all nations.” Epiphany pulls our gaze outward. It reminds us that the light God gives is not a private possession but a gift meant to travel, to cross borders, to illuminate places we have not yet dared to go.

Epiphany is God’s gentle insistence that the world is wider than our worries, and the gospel is bigger than our boundaries.

*Rev. Tyler Tankersley, Day1 Radio/Podcast

President's Report

Submitted by Sara Berge



Greetings!

It's hard to believe that we're already in the second month of 2026. Time seems to continue to pass by faster and faster. We fill our schedules with family, friends and hobbies. When we are focused on everything happening in our lives, time flies right on by.

We have a lot happening at LCOS right now too. We welcomed Judith Stocker as a returning council member. Gail Smeach and Barbara Beauregard have decided to step down from council at this time. With these changes, we now have new ministry team leadership. Don Richardson has graciously agreed to lead the Facilities and Grounds ministry team, Judith Stocker will lead the Worship ministry team, Jan Spaulding will lead the Education ministry team, and I will be leading the Technology ministry team. We are excited to move forward and see what great things God has in store for LCOS this year.

Along with these changes in leadership, we have lots of new ideas and experiences coming up. LAFFS will be hosting another fundraiser concert for the Food Bank on Friday, February 13. We will be working on holding another Easter Egg hunt this year. We will also welcome a Danish girl's choir who will present a free concert on Saturday, April 4. They will also participate in our Easter service on Sunday, April 5th. On top of all of that, we will also be having our regular worship services, Lent activities will take place, and our Call Committee will be getting to work.

For all of this to happen and for our church to continue to grow and thrive, we need to work together. Although we all have busy schedules, it is important that we all pitch in to ensure that LCOS continues to spread God's love. Please consider joining one of our ministry teams and helping on a regular or rotating basis with things. We need volunteers to help with the Altar Guild, to help with maintenance around the church, and to help with administrative tasks. Wherever your gifts lie, we have a place for you to help! If you are ready to dive in, talk with me or any council member and we'll get you started. May God bless you and the work we will do together this year!

LCOS Treasurer's Report—December 2025

Submitted by Kristi Saligame



December Financial Review:

Church **income** in December was **\$45,472**, well above our budget of \$26,206 and last year's result of \$21,661.

Member Giving in December was \$37,968, roughly double our budget of \$19,356 and year-ago gifts of \$18,359. We had a large, one-time gift from a member during the month, which accounts for the higher income.

Designated Funds: during December we used \$3,000 from the Mortgage Reduction Fund. We used \$1,128 from the Choir/Music Fund, and \$5,500 of the Golf Tournament proceeds, for the planned upgrades to our sound system.

Facilities income was \$3,377 in December, vs. \$3,302 a year ago.

Church **expense** was **\$20,655** in December, vs. \$19,686 a year ago and our budget of \$22,353.

We set aside \$1,500 in December for the Pastoral Compensation Fund, which now has a balance of \$20,500. These funds can be used toward our upcoming call process and/or future compensation of a Pastor.

All expense categories were in generally line with or below expectations.

LCOS recorded **net gain** of **\$30,317** in December. For 2025 we had total (preliminary) income of \$317,579. After expense of \$302,254, our net income for the year was \$15,325.

2025 Year in Review:

Month/Q	Current Year Results			Year-Ago Results		
	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expense</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expense</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Jan-Mar	\$68,301	\$68,781	(\$480)	\$56,222	\$55,301	\$922
Apr-Jun	\$70,423	\$68,153	\$2,271	\$100,997	\$59,604	\$41,393
July-Sep	\$72,989	\$80,884	(\$7,894)	\$71,642	\$117,295	(\$45,653)
Oct	\$40,678	\$30,990	\$9,688	\$18,539	\$19,627	(\$1,089)
Nov	\$19,715	\$32,791	(\$13,076)	\$30,881	\$23,492	\$7,388
Dec	\$45,472	\$20,655	\$24,817	\$21,661	\$19,686	\$1,974
Total	\$317,579	\$302,254	\$15,325	\$299,941	\$295,005	\$4,935

Looking ahead:

Please think about specific/designated gifts you may wish to make to LCOS in 2026. You can direct gifts toward our music programs, to the Mortgage Reduction Fund, to the Food Bank, Outreach, or to any other part/program of the church that is particularly meaningful to you.

As always, thank you for your ongoing, faithful support of LCOS – this church family is such a blessing to its members and the surrounding community! Please keep the mission, ministries, and members of this church in your prayers.

Kaye Prox Food Bank

Submitted by Kristi Saligame

December was such a busy month for the food bank! 1,406 families were served over the course of the month. We distributed on 12 days in December, with 2 days closed for the holidays.

During the week preceding Christmas, we offered some Christmas gifts for clients to select, in addition to our supplemental food items.

We hosted a luncheon for Volunteers and Friends of the food bank on December 18th, what a wonderful afternoon!! (lots of photos on facebook that you're welcome to use).

Attached are a few more photos from Wednesday, December 17th.



Spotlight on Service

Submitted by Karen Urban



As most of you know, Steve and Gail Smeach are leaving the Tampa area. They will be snowbirding between the Poconos and Florida, splitting their time near their three daughters, two in the Tampa area and one in New Jersey. Right now they are house hunting and preparing for selling their current home.

They met in Illinois where Gail was working as an RN, and Steve was in the pharmaceutical industry (He had also been a professor of math at USF.)

After retirement in 2012, they moved into their vacation home in Tampa. When in town, they visited LCOS and felt very welcomed here.

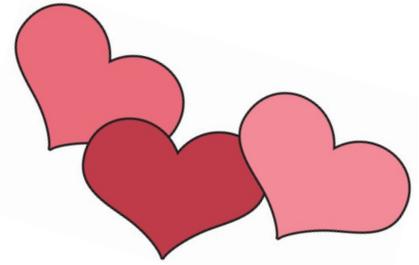
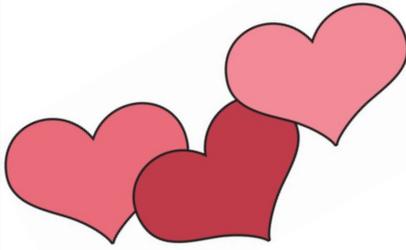
Gail began volunteering and found herself very busy - golf tournament, doves anniversary project, fellowship, Sunday school and youth. Pastor Jose Luis asked her for blue altar flowers for Advent, and that began her journey of altar decorating. Both Gail and Steve sang in our choir.

Steve had retirement plans for himself. One was to become closer to God. Pastor Jose Luis suggested he take the Diakonia (care that Christians offer to their fellow humanity, modeled on Christ's example) which the synod offered. Steve took the 12 classes over several years. During that time he heard the words "the great commission" many times and felt God was calling him. So he became a certified deacon.

His initial work included assisting with worship, adult education and forming the pastoral care team. Since then he has taken on many tasks including preaching, technology and much organizing. He recently helped create teams to take care of many church programs and connecting those teams with council members. If he saw a need, he stepped in to find a solution. This has been especially appreciated during our time with our interim pastor.

A celebration of their ministries to LCOS will be held during the worship service at 9:30 on February 22.

These servants will be truly missed.



LAFFS Presents
Valentine's Party Fundraiser
Benefitting the Kaye Prox Food Bank

Friday, February 13, 2026
7:00-9:00pm

LCOS Luther Hall
8401 West Hillsborough Ave, Tampa

Bring your favorite snack and beverage and enjoy an evening of live jazz & blues with Cadillac Zack!

It's an evening of great music and great company for a great cause!

Tickets: \$20 per person + a non-perishable food item

To purchase tickets, visit our website at www.lcostampa.org
or contact Lynne O'Reilly.

Checks to be made payable to Kaye Prox Food Bank.

Snaps & Snippets

Submitted by Karen Urban

Installation of Church Council on Sunday, January 18, 2026

(left to right): Lynne O'Reilly, Sharon Rozell, Charlie McCoy, Don Richardson (Vice President), Sara Berge (President), Pastor Steve Kauffman, Jan Spaulding (Secretary), Kristi Saligame (Treasurer), Fran Palermo, Judith Stocker



Snaps & Snippets—Christmas Eve

Submitted by Karen Urban and Rick Padin



Pastor and Naoko presented with Christmas gifts from the congregation



LCOS FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Rochelle Lewis	Feb 2
Sara Berge	Feb 14
Peggy Kienzle	Feb 16
Don Richardson	Feb 19
JoAnne Richardson	Feb 25
Stephen Smeach	Feb 25
Sharon Rozell	Feb 27



LCOS MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Linda Pusateri	Mar 3
Kevin Groh	Mar 4
Jani Stocker	Mar 10
Kim Cross	Mar 14
Deborah Kauffman	Mar 15
Maclin Heselius	Mar 16
Terry Kaladeen	Mar 22
Yolanda Jacobs	Mar 24
Spencer Baun	Mar 26
Kent Chetlain	Mar 29
LaVonne Carroll	Mar 30



If your birthday is missing from our list, please contact Roger Swain, 813-886-7961 or roger.swain@tampa.rr.com, so we may include you in next year's newsletter.

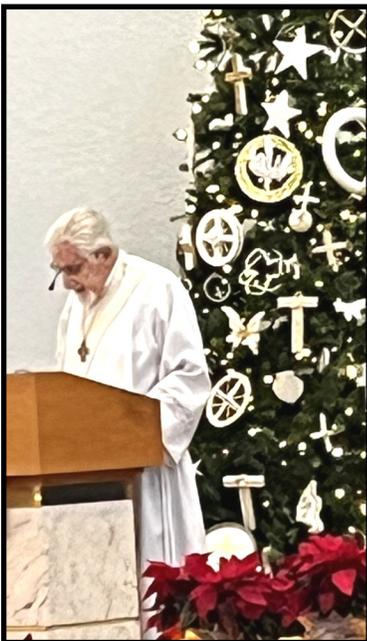
If you are missing from the list above and wish to be included in the bulletin, please contact Ginnie, 701.429.3279 or gkberge7@gmail.com.

Snaps & Snippets

Submitted by Karen Urban

First Sunday of Christmas—Carols and Readings: Deacon Steve Smeach and Sara Berge

Second Sunday of Christmas—Children's Message About Chrismos: How many crosses do you see?



FEBRUARY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:30am Adult Bible Class 9:30am Worship with Holy Communion 11:00am Fellowship 12:30pm New Ark	2 Groundhog Day 10:30am Portico Ministry 12:20pm Food Bank	3	4 10:30am Portico Ministry 12:20pm Food Bank	5 10:00am Pastor Steve Hours 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm New Ark 7:00pm AA	6 2:30pm Food Bank	7
8 8:30am Adult Bible Class 9:30am Worship with Holy Communion 11:00am Fellowship 12:30pm New Ark	9 10:30am Portico Ministry 12:20pm Food Bank	10 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 	11 10:30am Portico Ministry 12:20pm Food Bank	12 10:00am Pastor Steve Hours 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm New Ark 7:00pm AA	13 2:30pm Food Bank 7:00pm LAFFS Valentine's Party Fundraiser	14 Valentine's Day 
15 Transfiguration Sunday 8:30am Adult Bible Class 9:30am Worship with Holy Communion 11:00am Fellowship 12:30pm New Ark	16 Presidents' Day 10:30am Portico Ministry 12:20pm Food Bank	17	18 Ash Wednesday 10:30am Portico Ministry 12:20pm Food Bank 7:00pm Ash Wednesday Worship	19 10:00am Pastor Steve Hours 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm New Ark 7:00pm AA	20 2:30pm Food Bank	21
22 8:30am Adult Bible Class 9:30am Worship with Holy Communion 9:30am Recognition of Deacon Steve and Gail Smeach 11:00am Council Meeting 11:00am Fellowship 12:30pm New Ark	23 10:30am Portico Ministry 12:20pm Food Bank	24	25 10:30am Portico Ministry 12:20pm Food Bank	26 10:00am Pastor Steve Hours 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm New Ark 7:00pm AA	27 2:30pm Food Bank	28

LAFFS Valentine's Party Fundraiser
Friday, February 13

Valentine's Day
Saturday, February 14

Transfiguration Sunday
Sunday, February 15

Presidents' Day
Monday, February 16

Ash Wednesday
Wednesday, February 18

Recognition of Deacon Steve and Gail Smeach
Sunday, February 22





Deadline for submission of
March Newsletter items is:

FEBRUARY 10, 2025

Please submit articles or pictures to:

newsletter@lcostampa.org



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