

MAY 2025

# AWAKENING HEARTS



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Quarterly Magazine  
Issue 3



ST. LUKE'S  
LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

**“Imagine an entire *community* coming  
ALIVE to the power of life in **CHRIST**.”**



That's what God is up to here in Central Florida and beyond. Inside this e-magazine, you will find several examples of incredible ministries that glorify our Savior and fulfill our mission of Awakening Hearts in every generation to the power of life in Christ. I pray that you find these stories encouraging as well as inspiring. As you read, remember to include the names and ministries in your daily prayers and think about ways you can become more involved in the community. This is a very exciting season at St. Luke's!

We have just celebrated an amazing Holy Week, and are looking forward to SUMMER OF GENEROSITY! Keep your eyes and ears open to new discipleship opportunities.

This e-magazine is filled with amazing ways that our members are reaching out to our communities - both locally and globally. Jesus has a deep love for the community around us, and He longs to use you to engage them with His powerful Gospel, in words and actions. We

believe that when we participate in Community Connections, the Holy Spirit deepens your love for your neighbors and uses you to share His love with them. Serve one person, or one family, or one community, and watch the ripples of God's love spread. Eventually, the love of God will awaken each heart in our community - and our community will be forever changed as it comes alive to the power of life in Christ.

**In the love of Christ,**  
Senior Pastor Tige Culbertson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tige Culbertson".

# PASTOR

*Arp*  
HAS OFFICIALLY  
**RETIRED** *after 27* *yr*

Wally Arp grew up as a pastor's kid in Illinois, Indiana, and Arkansas before the family moved to southwest Iowa. He was in college at the University of Iowa when the Lord called him to ministry. He married Lois in 1979 and they have four children (Sara, Elizabeth, Jonathan, Matthew) and nine grandchildren. Lois taught math in Indiana, Iowa and Seminole County Public Schools. She coached basketball and spent two years teaching at Orlando Lutheran High School.

Pastor Arp finished his undergraduate degree in Iowa before heading to Concordia Seminary in Fort Wayne, IN. He served his vicarage at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in 1986-87 and then graduated from Concordia Seminary in Fort Wayne in 1988 and completed his doctorate program in May, 2017.

Pastor Arp was called to Risen Christ Lutheran Church, Davenport IA in 1988. This small mission congregation built its first church building in 1990, added a called Parish Assistant in 1995, and completed an educational wing in 1996. Little Blessings Day Care opened at Risen Christ in 1997.

He was called to St. Luke's and was installed on April 5, 1998 (just the fourth Pastor in St. Luke's 85 year history), and became Senior Pastor in 2000. During these last twenty-seven years, St. Luke's has almost doubled its membership from 2300 members to 4400 members. This growth in church membership called for hiring additional pastors, education and administrative staff. The overall staff count has increased from approximately 50 to 140 employees, including full and part-time personnel with student enrollment increasing from 400 to 879.

In retirement, Pastor Arp will continue to live, play and worship in Oviedo and assist with preaching and other pastoral duties throughout the area. He continues to serve as the First Vice-President of the SELC District through 2028. Pastor Arp and Lois are looking forward to their retirement together enjoying activities such as camping, traveling and visiting their children, grandchildren, and other family.



## OUR CONGREGATION:

- Began ministry in Honduras, support of a Lutheran congregation in Latvia, assistance to Westfield House Seminary in Cambridge England
- Gave help to many local non-profits including Lutheran Counseling Center, Hope Helps, Children of Love Foundation, Redeeming Life Outreach Ministry, Samaritan Resource Center and many others
- Started a mission congregation in Chuluota and partnered with Redeemer Lutheran Church in Sanford
- Worship services increased to seven weekly services
- Began online broadcasts of worship in 2007 to the Lutheran Haven community and on the internet that continues to reach thousands of weekly viewers
- Continues to be an active member of the SELC District and Lutheran Church Missouri Synod to share the Gospel of Christ with the world





*Awakening*  
**HEARTS** in every generation to  
the power of life in Christ.

[slcs.org/awakening-hearts](http://slcs.org/awakening-hearts)



# A LIFE OF JOY

Is your faith life in a season of growth, or stagnation? If you were to look back twelve months, or even a few years, can you identify growth and development in your discipleship journey?

One of our measurements of discipleship growth is an increase of **JOY**. If you are following Jesus, growing in your awareness and appreciation of His great love for you, and growing in your love for Him, one of the ways that you can measure that growth is by observing an increase of **JOY** in your life!

And **JOY** is not dependent on your circumstances. You can have **JOY**, even in times of trials, grief, uncertainty, or loss. You can have **JOY**, because it is not dependent on what is happening around you, but is totally dependent on what is happening **IN** you. Your cherishing of God's love for you, His fulfilled plan to save you, His promise to be with you, and His promise to return and restore you - these are all the things that bring you **JOY**, and none of them can be taken away from you by outside circumstances.

In **JOY**, we spend regular time with God in worship, praise, and devotion. We linger longer in His Word. We invest more time in prayer. We talk to others regularly about who God is and what He is doing in our lives. We consider it pure joy to love and be loved by God.

our joy  
comes  
from **GOD,**  
pure and  
**SIMPLE.**

**My prayer for you today?** I join in the voice of the Apostle Paul as he shares in Romans 15:13 - *"May the God of hope fill you with ALL joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."*

Together in Great Joy,  
Pastor Tige

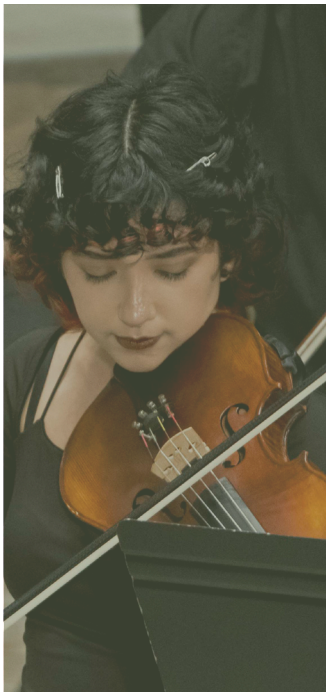
## A LIFE OF JOY

- I celebrate a regular rhythm of rest to spend quality time with God.
- I am growing in my ability to share my story with others.
- I share life together with other believers and engage in fellowship regularly.
- I am living out my faith at home, work, and in my neighborhood.

*Bible Verse*

*"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."*

- Romans 15:13



## St. Luke's CONCERT SERIES

Our thirty-first season of the St. Luke's Concert Series has now come to an end. The Concert Series began after the new sanctuary was dedicated in 1993. Motivated by the desire to share this beautiful acoustical space with the entire community, the congregation agreed to present quality musical performances in the new facility and offer free admission. Since 1994, audiences have come to the sanctuary to enjoy music in a space that gives glory to God in all things. Judy Duda served as Executive Director for the first twenty-five years and built this **FREE** Concert Series through individual donations and grants.



The series fosters collaborations with regional ensembles such as the *Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra*, *Orlando Concert Band*, *Brass Band of Central FL*, *UCF Symphony Orchestra* and more. Over the years, the Concert Series has included the music programs of several LCMS University and high school touring musical groups and local youth orchestra programs. The series has included world famous musicians and conductors performing over the years as well as premier performances of new musical compositions.

During peak years, more than 10,000 attendees a year enjoyed the concerts. During COVID, concerts continued and it became the norm to broadcast our Concert Series online. Now, concert attendance includes in-person and online audiences. Open dress rehearsals are back creating an even more unique experience for the audience. *We have great audiences for every concert, and there's room for more!*

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*We look forward to seeing you in September as  
we start our 32nd season of the St. Luke's  
Lutheran Concert Series!*

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**Get a Sneak Peek at  
our upcoming season!**

St. Luke's  
CONCERT SERIES



## PASTOR SAM SHICK

Director of Spiritual Formation

*"To awaken hearts in every generation to the power of life in Christ", St. Luke's works around three 'gears' that work simultaneously in the life of our members: Worship, Spiritual Formation, and Community Connections. Pastor Shick our Director of Spiritual Formation, oversees the organization of our Bible classes, youth groups, and small groups besides all the other duties that our pastors share.*



*"Reading the Bible made me want to be a pastor, because it's an awesome story! Everybody should know this. God isn't a distant person who's in control of everything, and has this heaven and hell to decide whether you've been good enough or not. God is intimately involved in creation and loves us. That's what made me want to tell people about Him for the rest of my life.*

*Around eighth and ninth grade is when I decided I really wanted to go into pastoral ministry. It was something that I worked at a lot. Along the way I started giving speeches about Jesus and things I really believed in. I think God gave me a gift of being a little bit more eloquent and a little bit better of a communicator than when I was giving speeches about Huckleberry Finn and stuff like that.*

*My prayer every Sunday is just that, that I wouldn't speak to glorify myself, but I would speak to glorify God. I think that helps me to get out of the way of what God's doing and recognize, even if I mess up and it's a colossal failure, I think God will use it for His good. And that's the comfort that I take in the middle of all of that – it doesn't depend on me. God's not waiting for me to do the work to save his people, God's gonna save His people.*

*I'd like to share the blessing that pastoral ministry is to me. I imagined once upon a time, that I would go into the lives of all of these people and influence them positively and tell them about Jesus. I get to see people at their lowest, I get to see people at the big moments, the baptisms, weddings, and at the funerals. It's a blessing to walk with people through these stages of life. It's a blessing to see what it looks like to be a faithful Christian in so many different ways. These circumstances have built me up in faith in incredible ways."*



St. Luke's is thankful for the work of Pastor Sam Shick. Prayerfully ask the Lord to continue sending workers to serve in the ministry as He did with Pastor Sam. If you are interested in serving in the ministry visit [lcms.org/set-apart-to-serve](https://lcms.org/set-apart-to-serve) to learn more.



Started by David and Nancy Guthrie, GriefShare is a nondenominational, nonprofit ministry serving more than 20,000 churches worldwide. This ministry creates and publishes video-based curricula to help churches minister to people experiencing the life crisis of grief. St. Luke's has been hosting Griefshare continuously since 2008.

The GriefShare ministry at St. Luke's is run by dedicated volunteers who have experienced a journey of grief themselves. Understanding that grief is felt differently by everyone, they want nothing more than to help participants move through the grief that they are experiencing and to know that they are not alone.

The course consists thirteen sessions two-hour lessons with each session starting with a devotional, prayer, a workbook review, and a video for discussion. Participants are encouraged to express what they are experiencing and feeling; tears are shed, stories are shared, lives are changed, and friendships are made.

A gathering around food at the end of each course contributes to securing new friendships and a sense of camaraderie. Griefshare also offers a special session each year during Thanksgiving and Christmas to help those experiencing grief through the holidays.

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

## TO LEARN MORE:

Email **[griefshare@slcs.org](mailto:griefshare@slcs.org)** or contact the Church office and we'll put you in contact with a GriefShare team member.

### **PARTICIPANTS In Their Own Words**

*"The permission I needed to let grief happen."*

*"I saw my grief so much more clearly."*

*"I was able to see I was not alone."*

*"You find out that you are not crazy."*

*"A turning point in my life."*

*"I would be a mess if it weren't for GriefShare."*

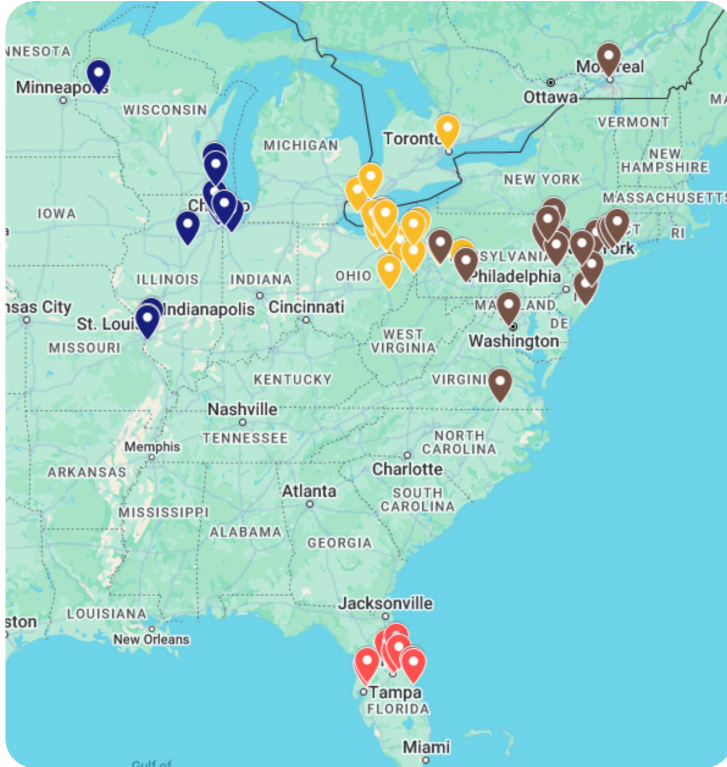
*"Group members quickly became family."*

*"GriefShare has given me hope."*

*"The best thing I ever did for myself."*



# SELC DISTRICT



## UNITED IN MISSION

The mission of the SELC District is to unite the congregations of the SELC, and their respective members, in a common mission to share the Good News of Jesus Christ in their congregations and communities across North America by supporting local congregations and planting new missions.

St. Luke's Lutheran Church is a member of the Lutheran Church Missouri-Synod (LCMS). The LCMS has over 2 million members in more than 6,000 congregations. There are more than 9,000 pastors organized into 35 Districts. St. Luke's is part of the SELC District of the LCMS.

The Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church (SELC) was organized in 1902 in Connellsville, Pennsylvania, with ten pastors and fifteen congregations. In 1959, due to the declining use of the Slovak language and culture, the Synod changed its name to the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches. The Synod merged with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in 1971, becoming a non-geographical district, now known as the SELC District.

Today the SELC spans the eastern half of the continent, with 58 congregations in the United States and Canada. The SELC focuses on mission outreach here in the US and abroad. It has no full-time officers; all pastoral officers of the District remain in the parish, where they continue to serve the Lord as ministers of Word and Sacrament to His people.

Our pastors and staff serve roles in the SELC District as officers. Pastor Arp serves as First Vice-President of the Southern District, Pastor Tige as Pastoral Assistant at-large, Steve Lehenbauer as Disaster Relief Coordinator and John Glanzer as Education Executive.

**[selc.lcms.org](http://selc.lcms.org)**



## SPOTLIGHT

# SERVING THE COMMUNITY

Do you ever stop and ask yourself, What is Jesus up to in our community? Finding the answer is as simple as looking into what is happening through members of St. Luke's! One of our Catalyst (home) groups just completed a community service project and it is amazing what happens when we spur one another on to love and good deeds (Hebrews 10).

Nikki Peters is part of one of our Monday evening groups. After hearing from a fellow church member, Annette Shaffer, about the amazing outreach happening at the Samaritan Resource Center (SRC), a local partnership of churches working to end the cycle of homelessness, Nikki shared this news with her group.

Her group began asking, What is Jesus up to? It became clear they wanted to bless people in need. The Lord was moving their hearts. After Annette shared the good work at SRC, Nikki's group applied for a LIFE Service Grant through the St. Luke's Stewardship Department.

[samaritanresourcecenter.org](https://samaritanresourcecenter.org)

## Piecemakers



In 2024, Lutheran World Relief ([lwr.org](https://lwr.org)) distributed 689,814 quilts to people all over the world in need of a "comforting quilt". Of those, 13,794 quilts were distributed in the US. The Lutheran Haven Piecemakers just completed and sent off 132 quilts to Lutheran World Relief.

The Piecemakers meet in the Craft room of the Haven Fellowship Hall every Thursday from 9-11a and 1-3p. Visitors and workers are always welcome.



These grants allot up to \$2,500 to each group who desire to show the love of Christ to others. They purchased shelving and bins to install a resource room for SRC clients so they can receive items they needed for free. They used the remainder of their grant to purchase a little bit of everything from the SRC Wish List: backpacks, flashlights, sunscreen, toiletries, undergarments, bottled waters, and food items.

Nikki said, *"It was eye-opening to drop off the items at the center during an event where another community group was providing lunch to SRC clients."* The SRC's mission is to offer their clients critical life needs such as showers, laundry, a mail service, healthcare, computer training, Bible studies, a food pantry, and more. The efforts made by the Catalyst group contributed to the advancement of this mission.

Nikki and her fellow group member's hearts were so moved by their experience they are planning to get involved with SRC through volunteer work in the future.

### **LIFE Service Grant**

You can receive a LIFE Service Grant from St. Luke's in amounts of \$500 (groups 2-5) and up to \$2,500 (more than 5 people).

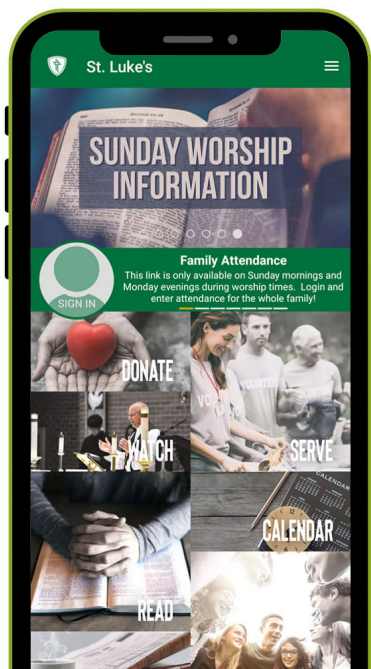
If you'd like to know more contact Doug Taylor, Stewardship Director at: [dtaylor@slcs.org](mailto:dtaylor@slcs.org) or (407) 365-3408.



### **CATALYST Groups**

**Join TODAY!** Contact the church office at (407) 365-3408 for more information.





## WORSHIP SERVICES

**8AM**

Traditional, *Sanctuary*

**9:30AM**

Traditional, *Sanctuary*

Contemporary with Sunday School, *Founders' Hall*

Traditional, *Lutheran Haven*

**11AM**

Traditional, *Sanctuary*

Contemporary, *Founders' Hall*

**MONDAY 7PM**

Traditional, *Chapel*

Scan Here to learn  
more about St. Luke's

