

AUGUST 2025

AWAKENING HEARTS



SCAN HERE
to access all
past issues.

Quarterly Magazine
Issue 4



ST. LUKE'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

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



It's beginning!

You are impacting our community. Sometimes in large groups, or small groups, or as individuals, you have been sharing with me what you have been moved to do to share the love of God through your words and actions. It has been amazing to hear how God has been growing you in your faith!

My heart is beyond grateful!

In this e-magazine, you will find several examples of how the Holy Spirit is empowering 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.

In the love of Christ,
Senior Pastor Tige Culbertson

OUR NEW *organ*



The journey to replace our organ started in the spring of 2022. The Johannes Organ dealer who worked on our old organ had just been bought out. This meant that we were not able to get parts to maintain our instrument. For a while we tried to do maintenance on our own. However, after being unable to address several problems it became apparent that we would need to replace the organ.

An organ committee was formed at the beginning of 2024. We developed a list of features that should be part of the new instrument. This included balancing the sound throughout the sanctuary and adding warmer sounds. We talked with two outstanding organ dealers: Colby and Walker Technical. With their help, we had the opportunity to visit several churches and hear instruments that these companies had produced. Both companies submitted detailed proposals for new instruments and the committee debated about the virtues of both proposals before choosing the plan from Walker Technical.

Work started June 16 with the removal of our existing organ. With the assistance of our excellent maintenance staff, the Walker team had it taken out in a couple of hours. Many parts from the old instrument were recycled to help other

congregations. Most of the hardware for our new instrument was in place within the first week. Voicing of the new organ started June 23 and the project was completed by the first week of July.

Our new organ has several noticeable features. The first being that the sound is much more evenly distributed. Our previous instrument projected sound from one location in the balcony. As a result musicians in the balcony were often blasted by sound while at the same time some congregants might barely hear it. Our new organ produces sound from three parts of the balcony as well as two different points in the chancel. As a result sound waves are more evenly distributed throughout the sanctuary. The other thing that you may notice is that the string sounds are lush and the bells are more distinct. There is also a bank of other instrumental sounds that we are just starting to try out.

We hope you have had the opportunity to hear the new organ in the sanctuary. It has been a joy to play and lead worship from. This has been a detailed, rewarding process. We are grateful for the support of our members for this important investment in our traditional worship.

You Are Invited!

FRIDAY, SEPT. 5
Time: 7p

Join us at St. Luke's for a special concert celebrating our new organ, featuring acclaimed organist Bradley Hunter Welch.

Internationally renowned and currently principal organist at Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church in Dallas, Dr. Bradley Hunter Welch promises an unforgettable evening of inspiring music.

It is vital that we continue to grow in our relationships with God and one another. The time we spend in His Word, gathering together, and sharing His love, the Spirit of God is at work wakening our hearts, growing our faith, and deepening our discipleship!

One of our measurements of discipleship growth is an increase of sacrifice. A transformed life of sacrifice is far more than doing a little bit when you can, giving the Kingdom of God your convenient leftovers. God desires your very best. He longs for you to be radically generous as you share your **Life, Influence, Finances, and Experiences** to bless others - this truly is a **Generous L.I.F.E.!**

This Generous L.I.F.E. is one that produces great joy. It brings relief and much needed help to others, but it also enriches our own souls as it expresses our deep gratitude to God and develops purpose in our vocations as disciples.

This summer, we have been on a sacrificial journey in our **Summer of Generosity Sermon Series**. My heart has been filled with wonder and excitement as many of you have shared how God has impacted your hearts and called you into deeper levels of generous sacrifice! I have heard stories of people who are noticing more and more needs around them, people who have been moved to sell possessions so that they could support ministries that have blessed them when they were in need, and people who are taking simple ideas of helping others and scaling them into brand new non-profits!

These stories of a newfound generosity are not born out of guilt or obligation. Rather, each one of these stories was shared by someone who was humble yet excited with the joy they have already encountered. They all expressed profound gratitude for all God had blessed them with, and they communicated a desire to pay those blessings forward to someone new so that they could encounter the same love of God.

You are all in my prayers, that God would deepen your discipleship as you are motivated to share your **Life, Influence, Finances, and Experiences**. This is all to His glory, so that the Kingdom of God would be increased and an entire community would come alive to the power of life in Christ!

Growing in a life of Sacrifice,
Pastor Tige



A LIFE OF SACRIFICE

- I am using my God given gifts to live out my unique calling.
- I am a steward of all the time, treasure, and talent God has given me to be used to generously serve him.
- I surrender personal gain to build up the kingdom of God.
- I love and serve my neighbors.

Bible Verse

The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." - Matthew 25:40

GRADUATING

class
class
class
class
class

2025

FEEL THE POWER

On May 28, St. Luke's Lutheran School celebrated the graduation of the class of 2025. Seventy eighth graders and their families, along with faculty and staff, participated in a worship service thanking God for how He equipped and grew our students during their time at St. Luke's.

This graduating class excelled in many ways. 100% of the eighth graders taking the state's Algebra I exam passed this rigorous test. In athletics, our boys' soccer and girls' volleyball and basketball teams won state championships. Multiple musical groups earned the highest superior rating at the district music festival. Several students received awards at the Seminole County Science Fair.

More significantly, our eighth graders grew in their faith as they were steeped in God's Word and talked through how the Bible can help them face life's challenges. They worshiped together in both the regular Wednesday chapel services as well as special GLOW (God Lights Our Way) worship opportunities just for middle school. At each GLOW service, two eighth graders shared their faith testimony with the entire middle school. They all served the community in multiple locations during our annual middle school service day.

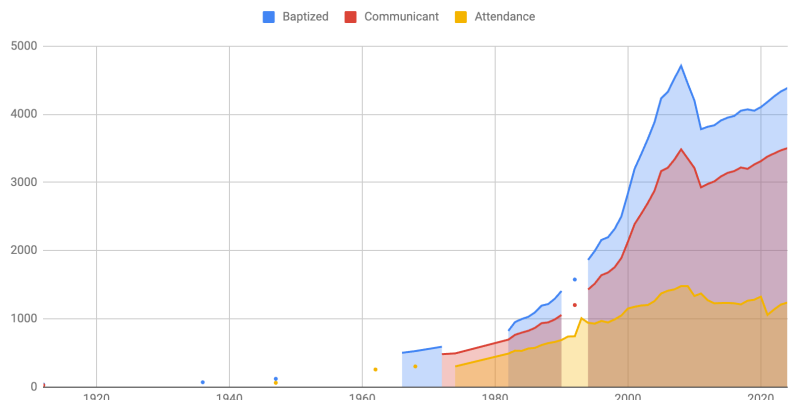
Now our graduates leave us to attend a variety of high schools in our community both public and private, big and small. They go forth with the power of the Holy Spirit, equipped to awaken hearts as they live out their faith firmly grounded in God's Word and the saving message of the Gospel.



Church MEMBERSHIP

Baptized - All Members, all ages
Communicant - Confirmed Members
(normally about 14 years+)

Baptized, Communicant and Attendance





WATCH the recap
of the Youth Gathering



ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT



We are thrilled to highlight St. Luke's Lutheran School alumnus Tanner Olson, a talented author, poet, and speaker who continues to make a meaningful impact through his words and ministry. Tanner, the creator behind *Written to Speak*, has built a platform that blends faith, hope, and creativity to reach readers and audiences of all ages.

Most recently, Tanner served as one of the three keynote speakers at the 2025 LCMS Youth Gathering in New Orleans—a gathering of thousands of Lutheran teens from across the country. His heartfelt messages, rooted in Scripture and seasoned with authenticity, humor, and grace, deeply resonated with students and leaders alike. It was a powerful moment not just for those in attendance, but for all of us at St. Luke's who remember Tanner as

a former student walking these very halls.

In addition to his work as a speaker and poet, Tanner recently released a children's book called *"All The Things I Say To God"*, further expanding his reach to younger readers. His new book continues his mission to spread encouragement and the love of Christ through storytelling, offering kids a meaningful and faith-filled reading experience. You can find a copy of his book in our Christian Resource Library. We are incredibly proud of Tanner and the ways he continues to live out his faith in bold and creative ways. His journey is a wonderful reminder to our current students that God can use their gifts—whatever they may be—for something truly impactful.

You can learn more about Tanner's work and ministry at [**writtentospeak.com**](https://writtentospeak.com).



Have a heart for vulnerable children? *You can make a real difference—right here in our community.*

Foster families often face unique challenges, and they foster longer and more successfully when they are surrounded by a strong support system. That's where St. Luke's Care Crews Ministry comes in.

Launched in 2023 in partnership with Commission 127, this ministry is dedicated to wrapping around local foster families with practical, ongoing support—such as meals, child care, prayer, and help with everyday errands.

You don't need to be a foster parent to support foster care. By joining a Care Crew, you can be the hands and feet of Christ to a family in need—simply by providing a monthly meal, helping with transportation, or running errands.

Want to learn more or get involved?
Contact us at carecrews@slcs.org



Foster Mom Testimony

Our CareCrew from St. Luke's has been a blessing. These wonderful volunteers give their time, energy, and hearts to support us. Their warmth, smiles, and consistent presence have become something we truly look forward to each week. Being a single parent is hard, and being a single foster parent adds layers of complexity: navigating weekly visits with birth parents and siblings, coordinating with case managers, GALs, licensing representatives, training sessions, endless paperwork, court dates, and, above all, supporting a child through the uncertainty and emotional weight of trauma and transition.

Receiving home-cooked meals once a week eases our busy schedule and knowing that people consistently show up to care for our well-being, pray for our family, and hope for the best outcome for my daughter is deeply comforting. Support comes in many forms, and even the smallest gesture can have a huge impact.

On Mother's Day 2025, my first as a foster mom, our CareCrew delivered a card filled with kind words and encouragement. This simple act of kindness, during a particularly overwhelming week, was a reminder to me that I was seen, appreciated, and not alone.



Welcome

Vicar Grant Burnham & Deaconess Intern Rachel Burnham

Dear Pastor Culbertson, and all Brothers and Sisters of Saint Luke's,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! It is with great joy that I accept my placement for 2025-2026 as a vicar at your congregation. I have heard excellent things about your congregation from many of my classmates, the faculty and staff of Concordia Seminary, and last year's vicar Rob Choate, and am excited to experience all that your congregation has and does for myself.

I am originally from Germantown, Wisconsin, and completed my undergraduate studies in Political Science and History at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia. Before coming to the seminary, I worked in Milwaukee for a company named Derse performing accounting and software development tasks. During my first year of seminary education, I met Rachel, a student in the diaconal program, and we married on May 31. We are both thrilled to embark upon the adventure of marriage and, shortly thereafter, move to Florida and begin the adventure of our vicarage and deaconess internship. Both of us are looking forward to engaging with the myriad of opportunities that Saint Luke's offers.

I pray that all the ministries of Saint Luke's would continue to bear much fruit and that I am able to contribute, in whatever small way, to their ongoing success and growth as I am formed as a vicar over the next year.

Grant Burnham

Pastor Elliott and Congregation of St. Luke's,

I am thrilled to accept this assignment to Saint Luke's for my deaconess internship. Multiple people with connections to Saint Luke's have shared their love of the congregation and excitement for me to serve there. Even professors at the Seminary have assured me that it is a great congregation. The long history of having vicars and a few deaconess interns gives me confidence that this will be a positive experience.

I grew up in Michigan, and have lived in Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin. After life in the Midwest, a year in Florida will be a big change. This size of congregation will also be a new experience for me. While I've attended churches of varying sizes, the congregation I have been doing field work at during my studies is one that worships about 50 people each weekend. The multiple ministries at Saint Luke's are sure to provide lots of opportunities to learn and grow.

Grant and I will be moving to Florida less than two months after our wedding. We met at the Seminary even though we discovered that we had been living about half an hour apart in Wisconsin for a couple years. We are excited to serve the church together and support each other in ministry. Our wedding in Wisconsin will be followed by a relaxing honeymoon and then a laid-back celebration in Michigan, mostly for my extended family. The next few months contain a lot of excitement and transitions!

In my free time I love to read, backpack/hike, work on jigsaw and word puzzles, and play the flute. I've already noticed some trails on the map that I want to check out! I have some family in Tampa and Sarasota that I haven't seen in years, and I look forward to connecting with them while I'm closer.

I pray that you are doing well, and that the Lord will continue to bless the people of St. Luke's and the ministry there.

God bless,
Rachel Wegener Burnham



HONDURAS UPDATE

In 2007, DCE Leah Abel took a group of college students to the Children of Love Foundation in La Paz Honduras. During the last 18 years, the Lord has worked through more than 100 members of St. Luke's who have visited Honduras. What began as a trip to build a home continued with caring for children at the orphanage, holding VBS, Thanksgiving shoe giveaways (Operation Barefoot), eyeglass clinics and eventually, the purchase of land and building of a church.

Thank you for all your financial support and prayers for our ministry outreach in Honduras. The Honduras FORO; a group of churches from the US and Honduras that has come together to raise funds, partner in leadership, volunteerism, and mutual encouragement; continues to gather twice a year to actively seek new and fresh ways to spread the Gospel to the people of Honduras.

The support of the FORO is also fostering the development of a Lutheran seminary in the Dominican Republic which will aid the Caribbean and Latin America region. The FORO will begin meeting this year with a consultant to develop a plan to plant more churches and raise up more pastors and deaconesses in Honduras in the future.

The establishment and strength of a Lutheran church body in Honduras is becoming a reality because of Christians like you who look outside themselves to the needs of others. Thank you for your generosity and be on the lookout for a future short term mission trip opportunity to Honduras.

Pastor Scott Coerber



Over the years, congregations from Rockledge FL, Perry GA and Centennial CO came alongside to assist with sharing the Gospel in La Paz. Pastor Junior Martinez was called as a missionary in 2014 and a Lutheran Church was established in a rented home. Property was purchased in 2018 and the Pastors home was built in 2020 with the church building being completed in 2021. In the meantime, a mission location was started in Comoyaguela and in 2024, a third Lutheran mission location was added in Chuluoteca.

***If you would like to MAKE A DONATION
to the Honduras ministry, go to the St. Luke's Giving
page and choose Honduras Support.***



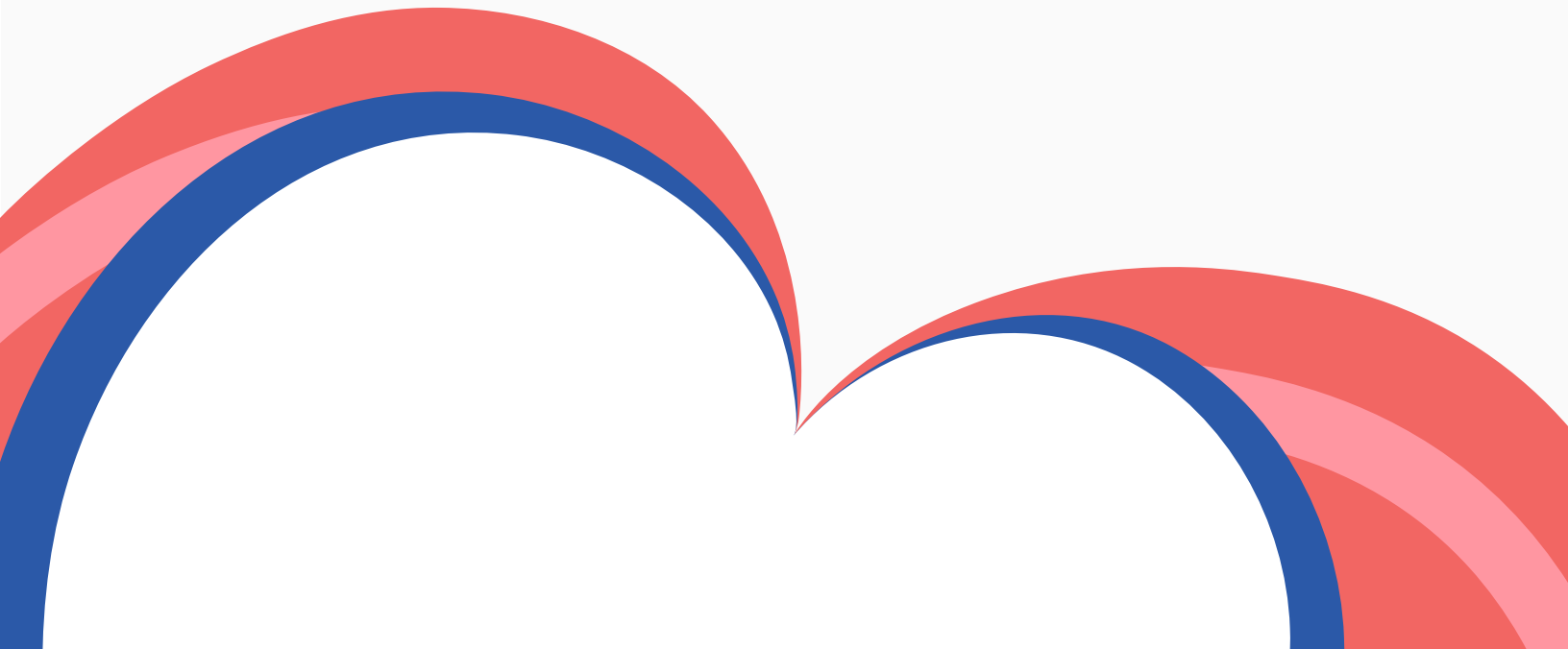
STUDENT OFFERINGS

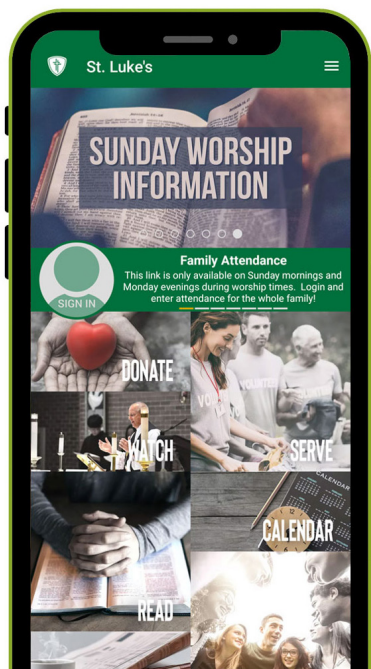
- Year 2024-25



FOOD DRIVE

Total: \$14,187 | **Food Drive:** \$1254 + 3,548 food items

- **\$485** Agua Viva
 - **\$722** Military Chaplaincy
 - **\$953** Haiti
 - **\$699** Iris Mission For The Blind
 - **\$739** Redeeming Life Outreach Ministry
 - **\$3,086** Lutheran World Relief
 - **\$6,268** Basecamp Children's Cancer Foundation & Mission Haiti
- 



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

