



# The Beacon Online

December 5, 2025/ Vol. 6 / No. 47

## The Beacon Online is the communication source for the SELC District.

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## Divine Service Held in Spanish at St. Lucas Lutheran Church

On the first Sunday of Advent, marking the commencement of the new church year, St. Lucas Evangelical Lutheran Church commenced the Divine Service in Spanish. Forty people attended the service. From now on, there will be a Spanish-language service held at St. Lucas Lutheran Church in St. Louis each week. If you speak Spanish and wish to join this church, please join us next Sunday at 12 p.m.





## **Lutheran Haven Hosts Retreat on the “Neighbor-to-Neighbor” program**

On Friday November 21, residents of the Lutheran Haven gathered for a short retreat led by the staff in the Pastoral Care office. The morning opened with prayer and a fast-paced game that had teams unscramble the words of Bible verses as a preview to our Bible study which centered around Galatians 6:10, “So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith” and 1 Peter 4:10, “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace...”

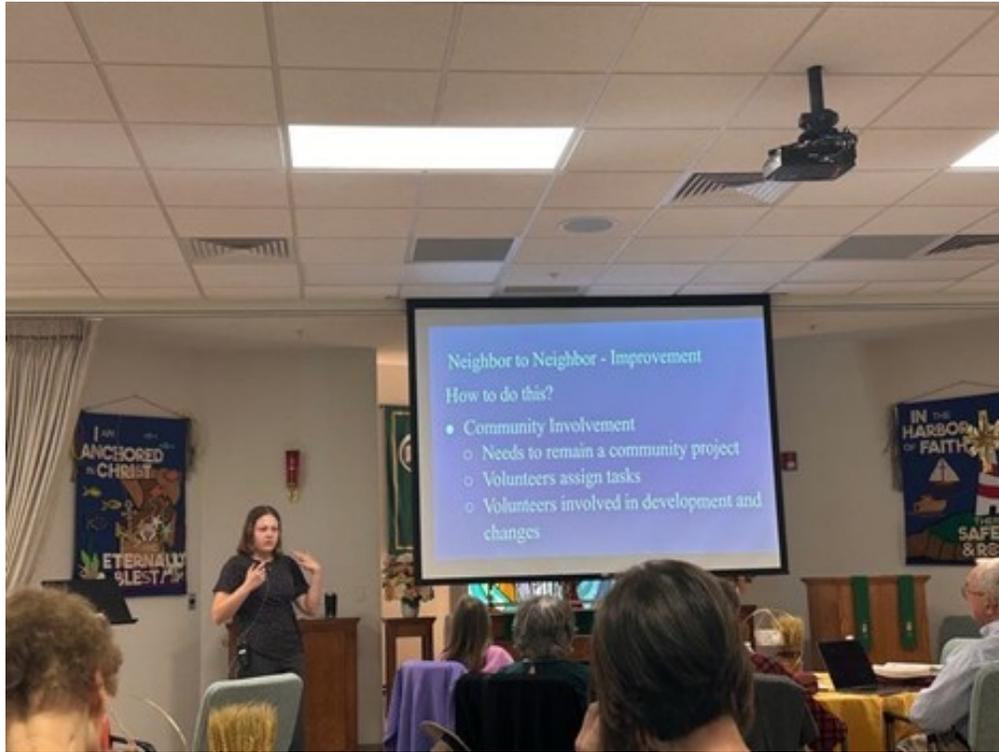
Pictured on the right is Pastor John Elliott leading a discussion with residents who participated in an exercise that promoted unity and teamwork over competition.



The Bible study led directly into an announcement that the office of the Deaconess would be working to provide support for the “Neighbor-to-Neighbor” program. The program has been around for a few years, but it was time to strengthen its foundation

to improve consistency and provide for its longevity. With this program, needs within the Haven that cannot be met by staff will be collected and matched with resident volunteers who are ready and willing to help. This will be a great way to use the gifts God has given each person to do good to everyone, especially those in the household of faith!

Pictured below is Deaconess Rachel Burnham giving a presentation regarding the Neighbor-to-Neighbor program.



## Spiritual Care and Mental Health Resource

If you are a pastor, do you sometimes wonder why you're the last to know when a church member or family is in crisis? If you're not a pastor, have you ever wondered why it seems that some pastors are more approachable than others? Whether or not you're a pastor, have you ever wondered whether pastors get depressed and need mental health care, just like everyone else? **The latest issue of the *Concordia Journal* from Concordia Seminary, St Louis, addresses these questions and more as it focuses on spiritual care and mental health.** You can read a review of this issue by SELC District Ministerial Care Coordinator Rev. Chris Cahill [HERE>>>](#).



## Christ the King Lutheran Church Exceeds the Challenge to Supply Thanksgiving Meals

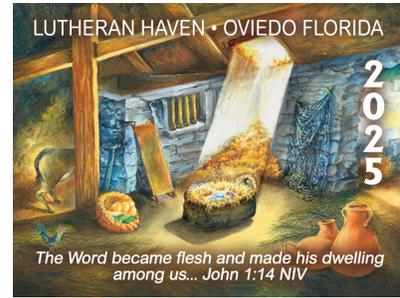
At Christ the King in Lodi, Ohio, the congregation has been busy! They set out to help the Lodi Family Center Food Pantry supply 40 complete Thanksgiving meals. Read below to see how they exceeded their goal!



The congregation is also helping the Food Pantry with Christmas. One of our members that doesn't come often, is doing an angel tree with her daughters, and we had enough money left to give her cash to buy more gifts as well as helping with "take outs" again at Lodi Family and their first ever in-house Christmas dinner on Christmas day. They provide meals 6 days a week in addition to all the other good work they do. The food pantry supports families with nutrition education, essential food, and vital resources. Weekly in-person shopping. Explore the Love INC personal Care Pantry for household, laundry, and cleaning necessities.



## Lutheran Haven Annual Seals Appeal to Benefit the Benevolent Care Fund



The 79th Annual Seals Campaign has begun! This campaign supports the Benevolent Care Fund at Lutheran Haven. This campaign supports the mission and ministry of Lutheran Haven:

***To provide a quality, Christ-centered haven of care for older adults.***

Our Benevolent Care Fund is critical in assisting retired Lutheran pastors, rostered church workers, retired Lutherans and others in need of our healthcare services. We also assist with things like Advanced Fees and Monthly Maintenance Fees along with assisting residents with emergency needs such as temporary healthcare assistance or even meals. It is only through the generosity of people like you who support the Haven that we can continue to come alongside these faithful servants.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us...  
— John 1:14 NIV

**T**o call someone kind, well-meaning, or charitable is to call them benevolent. The dictionary defines benevolence as a disposition to do good. Scripture describes many of God's attributes, including His benevolence toward us.

In 1 Timothy 6:17: "He richly provides us with everything to enjoy." He satisfies "the desire of every living thing." Our Father not only provides for our earthly needs, but He also exemplifies the greatest benevolence of all time in the sacrifice of His Son.

During His earthly ministry, Jesus demonstrated benevolence through His actions. He healed the sick, the lame, and the blind, to name just a few. He gave up the perfect glory of heaven to come as a helpless infant to die on a cross out of His great love for us. He healed not only the body but also the heart and soul of sinful people who could not help themselves. He still does so today. His example has been our reason for being.

His was the guiding principle of our founder, Andrew Duda Sr. and remains our mission today: ***"To provide a quality, Christ-centered haven of care for older adults."***

It is your benevolence that has helped sustain Lutheran Haven for nearly eight decades! What began 79 years ago with our first Christmas Seal outreach is now a vital source of support for many in need through our Benevolent Care Fund. Saying "thank you" seems insufficient for all you've done, but please know that your prayers and gifts have made a monumental difference in the lives of our seniors. It is a blessing for us to *show* how benevolence is lived out in the lives of our precious residents, thanks to you:

***"Lutheran Haven's benevolent care fund has meant the world to me. My family is always telling me not to worry about the future and this program helps me to do just that. I talk to the Lord about things all the time and He helps me. I thank Him for bringing me here and providing me with the help I needed. Many years ago, God led me to Lutheran Haven and I'm so happy He did!" - A grateful resident***

Out of thanks to God for His many blessings, I/we enclose a gift to  
The Lutheran Haven Foundation for:

Benevolent Care       General

Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Church Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Payment:  My check payable to LHF is enclosed

Please return this card with your gift in the enclosed envelope.

Credit card donations can be made directly through our website by  
visiting [lutheranhaven.org](http://lutheranhaven.org). Just click on the Faithful giving tab on the  
menu bar. You can also scan our QR Code and it will take you directly to  
Faithful Giving.



You can mail your gift to the Benevolent Care Fund to the address below.

Lutheran Haven Foundation  
2041 West State Road 426  
Oviedo, FL 32765



## Brass Band of Central Florida Presents Holiday Concerts December 5th and 6th

Join us for two festive performances by The Brass Band of Central Florida! Enjoy a wonderful Christmas-themed concert that's sure to fill you and your family with the joy and spirit of the season.

WATCH ONLINE: [youtube.com/@stlukesconcertseries](https://youtube.com/@stlukesconcertseries)  
For further information about the Concert Series,  
visit [sllcs.org/concert-series](http://sllcs.org/concert-series)



## Two Job Opportunities at Redeeming Life Outreach Ministries

Redeeming Life Outreach Ministries is a Registered Service Organization of the LCMS that provides a home, help, and hope for women in crisis pregnancy situations. We are currently searching for two Lutherans with a passion for life-affirming ministry to join our team, based out of Sanford, FL. Please check out the job listings for Program Manager and Director of Development and contact us through the information on our website ([rlom.org/careers](http://rlom.org/careers)) if you have interest in discussing these opportunities further.



## Vicarage Applications due February 13, 2026

Vicarage applications are due to the SELC District office no later than February 13, 2026. If you are interested in applying for a Vicar, please contact the District Office at [selc.lcms@gmail.com](mailto:selc.lcms@gmail.com) or 610-965-3265, press 6.



## Save the Date - Concordia Seminary Celebrates 100th Anniversary at Clayton, MO Location

Celebrate 100 Years in Clayton with Concordia Seminary  
3 p.m. (CT) Sunday, April 26, 2026  
Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus

Mark your calendars! Concordia Seminary is celebrating 100 years at its iconic Clayton, Mo., location — and we want you to be part of it. Plan to join us for a special chapel service Sunday, April 26, 2026, honoring our milestone anniversary with the theme: "O Christ the Living Stone – a lasting legacy, a firm future." Won't be able to attend in person? Plan to watch the livestream at [csl.edu/live](http://csl.edu/live). We'd love to hear your story.

Do you have a personal connection to the Seminary's history in Clayton, Mo.? Perhaps a relative who served on the original planning committee a century ago, helped design or construct our campus buildings, or even founded a club or ministry based here in Clayton. If so, we'd be honored to learn more about your family's connection to the Seminary. Please share your story by [clicking on the link below](#) — the form is simple and easy!

**Share my story**



## Preaching Retreat on Lent Scheduled

Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary in St. Catharines will be hosting a Preaching Retreat on the topic of Lent on January 19-20, 2026. We will delve into the why of midweek Lenten services, crafting sermon outlines, why Lutherans preach differently, and putting what you have learned into practice.

Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary is located on the campus of Brock University near Niagara Falls, Ontario.

Registration Fee: \$225 CAD (deadline January 12, 2026)

Early Bird Registration Fee: \$200 CAD (**deadline December 19, 2025**)

For more info or to register: <https://concordia-seminary.ca/2025/11/10/lenen-preaching-retreat-coming-in-january/>

January 19-20, 2026

CONCORDIA ST. CATHARINES

HOLY BIBLE

Lenten Preaching RETREAT

Preaching Your Best This Lent

RETREAT DATES:  
Monday, January 19 and  
Tuesday, January 20, 2026

REGISTER HERE

**REGISTRATION: \$225 CAD**

Deadline January 12, 2026

**EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION \$200 CAD**

Deadline December 19, 2025

**Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary**

470 Glenridge Ave, St. Catharines, Ontario  
reception@concordia-seminary.ca (905) 688-2362

[www.concordia-seminary.ca](http://www.concordia-seminary.ca)

### PREACHING RETREAT SCHEDULE 2026

#### Monday, January 19, 2026

- 8:00-8:30 AM Registration
- 8:45-9:45 AM **Session 1: Why Lent—and Why Midweek Lenten Sermons?** (Presenter: Dr. T. Winger)
- 10:00-10:45 AM Chapel
- 11:00-12:00 PM **Session 2: Is That a Theme or Just a Vague Idea?** (Presenter: Dr. T. Karvick)
- 12:15-1:15 PM Lunch
- 1:30-2:30 PM **Session 3: Sermon Outlines—Not Just Three Random Points** (Presenter: Dr. J. Kellerman)
- 2:30-3:00 PM Break
- 3:00-4:00 PM **Session 4: Fresh Vocabulary for Your Lenten Sermons** (Presenter: Prof. D. Doke)
- 5:00 PM Supper (followed by Vespers and Evening Activities)

#### Tuesday, January 20, 2026

- 8:45-9:45 AM **Session 5: Why Lutherans Preach Differently—and Ought To** (Presenter: Rev. Denton White of Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Wheatfield, NY)
- 10:00-10:45 AM Chapel
- 11:00-12:15 PM **Session 6: Putting What You Have Learned into Practice** (Presenters: Dr. J. Kellerman / Dr. T. Karvick)
- 12:15-1:15 PM Lunch
- 1:15 PM Departure

470 Glenridge Ave, St. Catharines, Ontario  
Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary





## Did Your Church Receive the Official Nomination Ballot for Synod Elections?

Each congregation should have received notice from the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod regarding that it is time for **Your Congregation** to make nominations for the Synod President, First Vice President, and Regional Vice President.

Each congregation should have received a mailing sent via USPS labeled **LCMS OFFICIAL NOMINATION BALLOT**. This mailing includes the information you need to nominate for the Synod President, First Vice President, and Regional Vice President. Your ballot must be submitted by Wednesday, **February 18, 2026**.

If you did not receive this information by November 4, 2025, please contact the LCMS Office of the Secretary at [lcmssecretary@lcms.org](mailto:lcmssecretary@lcms.org) or call the office at 314-996-1417.



## Reformation in Germany: In the Footsteps of Martin Luther with Pastors Dan Lepley and Andy Currao | June 2, 2026

Follow the liturgy as we explore the land of the Reformation next June with Pastor Dan Lepley! This unique Lutheran heritage tour comes with a liturgical twist. We will begin considering the effects of pride and prejudice at Ravensbruck concentration camp. From there, we will be built up in our appreciation of our Lutheran forebearers as we visit many key sites of the Reformation. See all tour information and register [here](#).



## 2025 Musical Advent Calendar

Since the nineteenth century, households and congregations have marked the days before Christmastide with many kinds of Advent calendars. The season of waiting and longing for the “already-but-not-yet” incarnation of Jesus unfolds amidst waning daylight in the Northern Hemisphere, a time of yearning for hope, joy, and peace.

Experience the anticipation and hope of the Advent season with Lutheran Summer Music's

fifth-annual **Musical Advent Calendar**.

Join us each day from November 30 to December 24 for a musical meditation—inviting you to pause, listen, and find stillness amid the season. Selections will be shared on LSM's **Facebook**, **Instagram**, and **YouTube** pages and archived on our **website**.

Sign up below to enjoy each day's Advent video delivered to your inbox.

**Daily Email Sign-Up**



*Want your church to grow?*

Watch this video to see how we helped  
a church raise over \$500,000  
in four weeks!



**genysys Group**  
*Discovering New Life in Ministry*

[www.genysys-group.com](http://www.genysys-group.com)



**Family Bible Journey Podcast**

Did you know that the Psalms follow the life of faith from birth through death, and end with everlasting songs of praise? Learn how the psalms end with heavenly praises by listening to the Family Bible Journey podcast.

Listen on your favorite podcast player or at [familybiblejourney.com](http://familybiblejourney.com).



Join the journey  
of journaling through the Bible.



- Independent Living
- Assisted Living *(new apartments)*
- Memory Care

Visit our Community to experience the difference  
 Call **407-542-1637** to find out more

AL Lic. #12811

## Everyday Access Faithful Purpose

An **All Access Account** from LCEF offers easy access, online convenience and the opportunity to grow your investment while supporting LCMS ministries.



[lcef.org/AllAccess](https://lcef.org/AllAccess)

\*App access restricted to individual investors. Online access available for all others. LCEF is a nonprofit religious organization; therefore, LCEF Investments are not FDIC insured, are not a federally insured savings or deposit account or insured by any state or federal agency. This is not an offer to sell investments, nor a solicitation to buy. LCEF will offer and sell its securities only in states where authorized. The offer is made solely by LCEF's Offering Circular. Investors should carefully read the Offering Circular, which more fully describes associated risks. StewardAccount products are not available to investors in South Carolina. StewardAccount access features are offered through UMB Bank n.a. All Access Account is known as "StewardAccount" for investors in Washington.





## Prayer Requests

**Rev. Brian Roberts**, Orlando, FL. Please pray for him as he is gaining weight and strength.

**Rev. John Telloni**, St. John in Massillon, OH as he is working and continuing to regain his strength as he has returned to work.

**Rev. Tom Soltis**, Parma, OH for God's loving care.

**Rev. and Mrs. Kenneth Ballas**, Parma, OH. Please keep the Ballas' in your prayers for their health challenges.

**Rev. Alan Mercer** in Galloway, NJ for his ongoing health struggles.

**Rev. Kevin Duff**, Hilton Head, SC, who is recovering from surgery. Please keep him and his family in your prayers as they prepare the next steps in his treatment.

**Rev. Edward Kucera**, and his wife Irene, St. Louis, MO.

**Bev Cahill**, wife of Rev. Chris Cahill. Lodi, OH, continues her recovery. The Cahills are grateful for all the prayers for Bev. The Cahills are posting updates on "Caring Bridge" at <https://tinyurl.com/Bridge4Bev>.

**Anna Bocklage**, Bel Air, MD, wife of Rev. Steve Bocklage, who is in physical therapy and will return to work in October.

**Megan Skelton** in Oviedo, FL Please continue to pray for her and her doctors to find pain relief solutions for her jaw pain and severe headaches.

**Laura Bergmann**, Munster, IN, please pray for her to continue to build strength in her injured knee.

**Nita Huffines**, St. Louis, MO, wife of Rev. Warren Huffines, praising God for a year of scans clear of tumors, we ask for strength during immunotherapy maintenance; may the Lord complete His healing, adding joy and thanks to each of Nita's days.

**Daniel McLean**, Oviedo, FL, who has stage 4 cancer and is receiving treatment. Please keep him, his wife Emily, Deaconess at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Oviedo, and their children in your prayers.

**Pamela Meyr**, Rockledge, FL, wife of Pastor Ron Meyr retired from Faith Viera, for healing from kneecap surgery after a fall.

**Milly Kwiatkowski**, Parma, OH, who had surgery. Please pray for Milly as she continues her recovery from surgery.

*If you have people you would like to be included in the prayer list, please send the information to [selc.lcms@gmail.com](mailto:selc.lcms@gmail.com) or call the District Office at 610-965-3265 and press 6.*



**SELC District - A District Without Borders**  
***Showing Everyone Life in Christ, by Showing  
Everyone Love in Christ***

**SELC District of LCMS**

2623 Brookside Road  
Macungie, PA 18062  
610-965-3265

**[selc.lcms@gmail.com](mailto:selc.lcms@gmail.com)**

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