

News of the Son

Trinity Lutheran Church — Columbia, MO



March
2026

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FOR US

Lent

Ash Wednesday, February 18

12 & 6 pm—Midweek Lenten Service

5:00 pm—Lenten Light Supper: Elders

Wednesday, February 25

12 & 6 pm—Midweek Lenten Service

5:00 pm—Lenten Light Supper: Social Ministry

Wednesday, March 4

12 & 6 pm—Midweek Lenten Service

5:00 pm—Lenten Light Supper: Stewardship & Finance

Wednesday, March 11

12 & 6 pm—Midweek Lenten Service

5:00 pm—Lenten Light Supper: Evangelism

Wednesday, March 18

12 & 6 pm—Midweek Lenten Service

5:00 pm—Lenten Light Supper: Christian Education

Wednesday, March 25

12 & 6 pm—Midweek Lenten Service

5:00 pm—Lenten Light Supper: Mary Martha Guild

Holy Week

Maundy Thursday, April 2

12 & 7 pm—Maundy Thursday Service

Good Friday, April 3

12 & 7 pm—Good Friday Service

The Resurrection of Our Lord

Easter Sunday, April 5

7 am—Sunrise Service

Breakfast following sunrise service

10:30 am—Easter Service

Monday 6 pm—Easter Service

Knowing Christ's Love
Seeking His Will
Spreading His Word

SERVE AND ENCOURAGE

Lenten Light Suppers

- **Wednesdays, March 4, 11, 18 & 25 at 5:00 pm**

Join us for Lenten Light Suppers at 5 pm on Wednesdays before the 6 pm midweek service.

Women's Fellowship Time—Winter Brunch

- Saturday, March 7 at 10:00 am
- Fellowship Hall
- RSVP to Amanda Hakes 573-864-6757

The body of Christ is designed to serve and encourage one another as we toil here on earth awaiting the second coming of Christ. We want to connect the young and the experienced women of Trinity for a time of fellowship. We are seeking to share and receive encouragement and wisdom from fellow Lutheran women. We so hope you will attend.

Young Adult Bible Study

- Saturday, March 14 at 9 am
- Hakes Residence: 1703 Apple Valley Ct.
- RSVP to Amanda Hakes: 573-864-6757

The topic will be "a study on vocation and spiritual gifts" led by Pastor Thieme.

Lutheran Ladies (and Friends) Having Fun Night

- Thursday, March 26 at 6:30 pm
- Thieme House
- RSVP to Sarah Thieme at 573-999-7746

We will be starting a Bible class called, *Sip, Savor, and Drink Deeply*. It is a scripturally sound but unusually based on coffee Bible study. Jesus loves us. The Lord wants our company. He invites us to meet with Him in His Word. Just imagine what He has in store for us as we meet Him with our "cup"—our self—a vessel created and chosen by God, redeemed in Christ, and ready to be filled for His purpose. Time spent in Bible study will fill you to the brim and beyond with God's Good News. Sip, savor, and drink deeply from His Word. Receive the outpouring of His grace, His joy, and His peace!

LIFE TEAM

Save the Date: Lunch & Learn

- Topic: November vote on Amendment 3
- Speaker: Susan Klein from Missouri Right to Life
- Sunday, April 12, 2026 after the 10:30 service
- Fellowship Hall
- Lunch will be provided by the Life Team.

The Life Team would like to help us all learn, ask questions, and grow in understanding together as a church family. All are welcome!

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you." —Jeremiah 1:5

LWML NEWS

Mary Martha Guild

- Wednesday, March 11 @ 9:30 am
- Fellowship Hall
- March ingathering: Marked Bibles

Vesper Guild

- Tuesday, March 10 @ 5:30 pm
- Church Library

JUST A REMINDER

When making a donation or fulfilling your promise to the **NARTHEX EXPANSION PROJECT** please indicate on your check or envelope **ACCOUNT 269**. We thank you for your ongoing support.

GRIEF SHARE

- Thursdays, January 8—March 26 at 7 pm

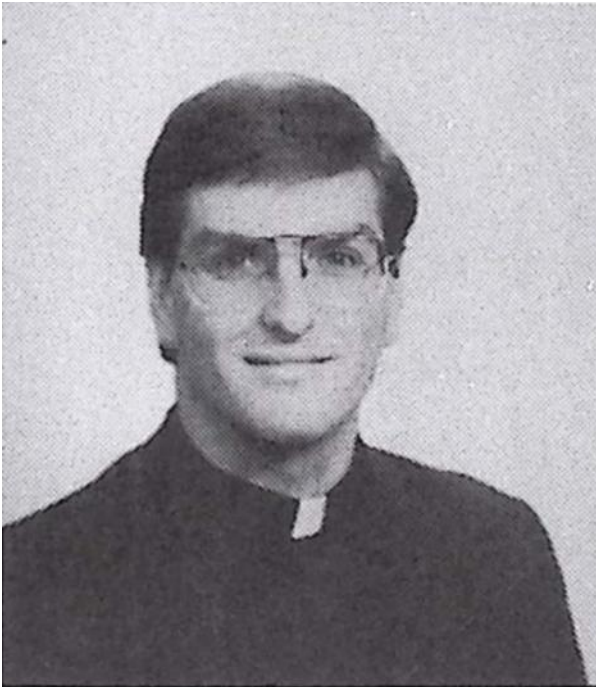
Are you struggling with the loss of a loved one or know someone who is? Please consider joining our Grief Share group.

The GS classes will meet on Thursday evenings from January 8 through March 26. To sign up, visit the GS website www.griefshare.org/findagroup.

Any questions, please call/text Kevin Burns (Facilitator) at (573) 424-7514.

Pastoral Biographies

A Publication of the History Committee of Trinity Lutheran Church



Rev. Carl Rockrohr
1990-1992

The Reverend Carl Edwin Rockrohr was born May 30, 1962 in Brooklyn, NY, the son of Rev. David K. and Mrs. Jane E. (née Spersud) Rockrohr. His parents had married in 1959 in Evansville, WI and his father might have been at Concordia Collegiate Institute of Bronxville, NY before graduating from Concordia Seminary of Springfield, IL in 1963. His father taught at Concordia College in Portland, OR from 1963-1967 before moving to St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Milwaukee where he stayed as pastor until 1993. Rev. Carl graduated from Milwaukee Lutheran High School in 1980. He received his college education at Concordia College, Mequon, WI, graduating in 1985 with a Bachelor of Arts degree. He continued his education at Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis, graduating in November 1989 with a Master of Divinity degree. He had conducted his vicarage assignment at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Stuart, Florida.

Rev. Rockrohr married Deborah Roth of Cape Girardeau, MO in 1987. She graduated in 1981 from Saint Paul's Junior College, Concordia, MO and in 1984 from Concordia College, River Forest, IL with a Bachelor of Arts degree in

the Diaconess Program. She received a Master of Arts in Religion Degree in 1986 from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. At the time of Rev. Rockrohr's acceptance of the call to Trinity Lutheran in Columbia they had two sons: Paul Edwin and James David.

Rev. Rockrohr was the first Assistant Pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church. There had been two commissioned Directors of Christian Education prior to his installation and the last had left in 1988. Church attendance had grown, a mission church in Columbia was in the planning stage, and a second Sunday service began in April 1990. The 1989 minutes detailed the discussions on the expected role of the Assistant Pastor and with much time and effort a call document prepared. A June 1989 Special Assembly of Voters approved the call document and the use of the LCMS Board of Assignments (rather than applying for an established pastor through the district). No candidate came from the November 1989 seminary class but Rev. Rockrohr, in the February 1990 class, accepted the call.

Candidate Carl E. Rockrohr was ordained and installed at Trinity Lutheran Church, Columbia on February 25, 1990. Rev. Lawrence A. Burgdorf, the Second Vice-President of the Missouri District served as the Ordinator and Installing Minister. The Rev. Doctor Norman E. Nagel from Concordia Seminary served as the Preacher for the worship service.

Rev. Rockrohr settled into his new duties and office and began submitting Assistant Pastor reports to the Board of Directors and Assembly of Voters meetings. He became the Youth Ministry Coordinator and taught the Junior Confirmation Class. The Weekday School of Religion was conducted on Wednesday evenings for grade school children to prepare them for the confirmation classes. He conducted services while Rev. Gerike was the vacancy pastor for Good Shepherd Lutheran in Centralia. Diaconess Deborah was the director of the 1991 Vacation Bible School. Rev. Rockrohr conducted "Lifelight" sessions to reach members new to Bible study. He was the TLC contact for an October 1990 Mission Festival for the Columbia Circuit held at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Booneville.

In an article in *The Lutheran Witness*, October 2011, Deaconess Deborah explained how Rev. Rockrohr had discussed foreign mission work with her while he was completing his seminary studies. She was “uncomfortable at the prospect since their children were very young and their family was still growing.” The subject came up again toward the end of her third pregnancy (Rebecca, or Becky) and the article quoted her saying, “Let’s wait to see if the child is healthy, and then you can look into it.” That began the process that led to Rev. Rockrohr’s call as an evangelistic missionary. Sadly, the TLC Archives do not contain any monthly newsletters for 1991 and 1992 nor the key minutes from the BOD or AOV when he announced his intention to leave TLC. Minutes from the Lutheran Layman’s League in September 1992 record their plans to go to the Konkomba people of Ghana. The Farewell Service at TLC was held September 27, 1992.

The first TLC monthly newsletter that was archived here listed January 15, 1993 as the date: “ROCKROHRS ARE TO ARRIVE IN AFRICA!!” Trinity Lutheran Church served as the distribution center for the Rockrohr Chronicles and Together in Mission letters that they sent. All five suffered from malaria multiple times and frequented the Baptist Medical Center in Nalerigu. They initially had no electricity. The seasons varied between drought and heavy rain. Scorpions and chicken-eating pythons, measles and cerebrospinal meningitis epidemics added to the drama.

They were in the northeast part of Ghana in Gbindiri and had to evacuate in February 1994, due to tribal warfare, by going west before going south to safety in the capital, Accra, for a two month stay. Despite these difficulties they had success in spreading the Gospel and in baptizing and confirming. Working with other missionaries they completed a translation into the tribal Komba language of Luther’s Small Catechism that had been started by another missionary who had been advised to return to the United States due to rumors of his being targeted. During a month-long furlough in January 1995 they returned to TLC for a visit. Another visit came in October of that year when their six-month long furlough was moved up by half a year due to tribal warfare. They lived in St. Louis and during this time Rev. Rockrohr worked on his Master of Sacred Theology (STM) degree at the seminary. When they returned to Ghana in January of 1996 they found that the assistant evangelists had successfully continued their work. By 1997 four pastors, who had attended seminary in Nigeria, had been ordained and ten chapels built. In February 1998 their plans for a two month long furlough changed into a release from the mission to allow a visit with Rev. Carl’s father, suffering from chronic illness, and completion of his STM degree. He returned to preach at TLC in September of that year.

The Rockrohrs returned to South Africa in 2012 where Deaconess Deborah Rockrohr was tasked with helping to establish a deaconess-training program at Lutheran Theological Seminary (LTS). Rev. Dr. Carl Rockrohr taught and assisted the rector with administrative tasks and also assisted the bishop of the Lutheran Church of South Africa. A fourth child, Ted, accompanied them.

Rockrohr News was published by St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Northville, MI. Deborah received a doctorate from Regent University in Virginia Beach, VA during this time. By 2014 their mission moved to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia where Rev. Dr. Carl was Dean of the School of Theology at Mekane Yesus Seminary and Deaconess Dr. Deborah were involved with formal discussions between the LCMS and the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus. In October of that year they came to TLC for a visit. Rev. Gerike attended their son Paul Rockrohr’s, graduation from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, in 2015. A 2024 article in the Kenosha, WI newspaper told of Rev. Paul’s work as a Navy chaplain at the Naval Station Great Lakes, IL.

Pastor Thieme stated that Pastor Carl Rockrohr’s subsequent history was “off to further adventures” that cannot be summarized here.

Authored by Dr. Nick Couper

February 5, 2026 Board of Directors (draft meeting minutes)

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors was held in the Fellowship Hall on Thursday, February 5, 2026, beginning at 6:30 p.m. The following board members attended: Larry McCoig (President), Pastor Thieme, Annette Kiehne, Warren Harms, Keith Davis, David Attebery, Connie Coil, Kassen Lock, Emily Derendinger, Travis Vellema, Mary Frerking, Chuck Murphy, and Debbie Antel (Secretary). Lou Eggerding and Ryan Mott were also in attendance.

President McCoig called the meeting to order. Pastor Thieme led a study based on *Around the World Devotions* from February 1-7, 2026. David Attebery made a motion to approve the meeting agenda; seconded and approved.

Keith Davis, Financial Secretary, presented the report of operating income through December 31. He noted this was the same report provided at last month's meeting, as the early timing of the current meeting did not allow sufficient time to provide the January 31 report. Next month he hopes to provide the month-end reports from January and February. President McCoig stated that because the December 31 report has already been entered into the record, no further action was required at this meeting.

Warren Harms, Treasurer, noted he did not provide a report for the current meeting.

The consent agenda includes the minutes from the January 13, 2026 regular meeting and board reports from the Elders, Christian Education, Evangelism, Stewardship and Finance, and Youth. The Elders report included this membership change:

Transfer In:

Polly Ann Eilers – 1/11/26 – Profession of Faith

Mary Frerking made a motion to accept the consent agenda; seconded and approved.

Old Business - None

New Business

Vacant Pastoral Position: President McCoig requested a motion to allow ten minutes of discussion. David Attebery so moved; the motion was seconded and approved. President McCoig read relevant sections of the Constitution and Bylaws and asked the BOD members to consider how and when to present the matter to the Voters. David Attebery asked whether it was the BOD's intent to call another pastor and emphasized the need to determine the congregation's intent.

Mary Frerking made a motion that the BOD recommend to the Assembly of Voters on February 22 to proceed with the process of calling a second pastor. The motion was seconded and approved.

Plan of Action – Pastor(s) Five-Day Work Week: David Attebery, on behalf of the Board of Elders, made a motion to modify the position description regarding Pastor's Day Off. The current allowance states "One day off per week." Modify to: "Two days (16 hours) per week to be taken on a flexible schedule at pastor's discretion." The motion was seconded. Discussion followed. President McCoig re-read the motion and called for a vote. The motion was approved. The motion will be presented to the Assembly of Voters on February 22, 2026.

Plan of Action – Revise Plan for Church Office Entrance: President McCoig read the motion by Tom Myers, who was not present. The motion stated: "Talk to the architect and have him revise the plan for the church office entrance and provide the estimated cost to the building committee." David Attebery moved the motion, and it was seconded. Lou Eggerding, member of the Trinity Expansion Project Committee, distributed a document explaining the need for an alternative entrance during construction and the available options. He noted that the proposed change had already been reviewed with an architect. Lou recommended keeping the plan previously approved by the AOV. He confirmed that the door installed during construction may be either temporary or permanent and will be like the door unit currently in the fellowship hall on the south side. Costs related to the door options were discussed. President McCoig re-read the motion and called for a vote. The motion failed.

Plan of Action – Promethean Boards: Connie Coil, on behalf of the Board of Christian Education, made a motion to approve the removal and disposal of the Promethean boards in Rooms 123 and 124. The motion was seconded. Connie said the Promethean boards are obsolete and are no longer in use and removing them will provide more wall space for teaching materials. Annette Kiehne, Director of the Child Learning Center, said she does use the Promethean boards for staff meetings and payroll, and mostly uses the one in Room 122. There is a total of five Promethean boards; one each in five different rooms. President McCoig re-read the motion and called for a vote. The motion was approved. Annette asked to review the Promethean boards slated for removal to see whether one could replace the board in Room 122 if it is in better condition.

Proposed Bylaws Amendment: The proposed amendment was withdrawn per an email received by Larry McCoig and Debbie Antel.

Reduction of hours of church administrator: President McCoig announced the Executive Committee approved a request by Heather Asbeck to reduce her schedule to 30.5 hours per week while she focuses on completing her dissertation. She will maintain her benefits and will work in the office on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, with additional remote hours to total 30.5 hours weekly.

2026 Meeting Dates: Proposed meeting dates are included in the agenda packet. President McCoig requested input on the following revisions: September 10 BOD; September 27 AOV; November 10 BOD; November 15 AOV; and December 13 a combined BOD/AOV meeting. Chuck Murphy made a motion to approve the revised list; seconded and approved. This will be presented to the AOV for approval on February 22.

Mary Frerking made a motion to approve three Facility Use Requests; seconded and approved:

Gym, February 21, 2026, 2:00-6:00 p.m. for a birthday party, per Martha Spotts.

Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall, August 8, 2026, all day, for a wedding, per John Kuehner.

The Executive Committee approved a date change from January 24, 2026 to February 7, 2026.

2025 End-of-Year Financial Surplus: Attendees shared ideas.

E2 Conference: Anyone wanting to attend the conference in Jefferson City on February 28 should register at mo.lcms.org

Lenten Light Suppers at 5:00 p.m.: Board members signed up to host as follows:

- February 18: Board of Elders
- February 25: Board of Social Ministry
- March 4: Board of Stewardship and Finance
- March 11: Board of Evangelism
- March 18: Board of Christian Education
- March 25: Mary Martha Guild

Announcements

Regular AOV Meeting - February 22, 2026; 12:30 p.m. (Youth-hosted meal at 11:45 a.m.)

E2 Conference – February 28, 2026

BOD Meeting – March 10, 2026; 6:30 p.m. Written reports from all boards (see Bylaws 7.1.7)

are due to Debbie Antel, Congregation Secretary, and Heather Asbeck, Church Administrator, by 4:00 p.m. March 4, 2026

David Attebery made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded and approved. The meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m. Pastor Thieme closed the

meeting with prayer.

Debbie Antel, Secretary

**February 22, 2026 Assembly of Voters
(draft meeting minutes)**

Minutes for the February 22 AOV meeting will be included in the April newsletter, and will also be available by request from the church office by March 20, 2026.

**2026 Trinity Lutheran Church
Officers and Board Members**

President

Larry McCoig

Secretary

Debbie Antel

Treasurer

Warren Harms

Financial Secretary

Keith Davis

Board of Elders

Benjamin Asbeck

David Attebery

Mike Brame

Jim Cherrington

Ron Dickes

John Frerking

Carey Smith

Board of Christian Ed.

Connie Coil

Karen Provost

Hillari Roberts

**Board of Early
Childhood Ed.**

Jordan Bedsworth

Tom Myers

Kendal Reaser

Kylie Sterling

Dan Watts

Board of Evangelism

Nelson Akpabli-Tsigbe

Kassen Lock

James Roberts

Board of Social Ministry

Emily Derendinger

Jessica Kespohl

Travis Vellema

**Board of Stewardship
and Finance**

Jon Berendzen

Lori Dickes

Mary Frerking

Richard Mangold

Karen Niederjohn

Mason Reaser

Board of TLC

Endowment Fund

Pat Hansen

Hunter Kevil

Chuck Murphy

Board of Trustees

Aaron Bedsworth

Conrad Brown

Jordan Duenckel

Board of Youth

Jenny Brame

Brooke Cameron

Jacque Eckhoff

FAMILY OF CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH DRIVE THRU ONLY FISH FRY



Menu
\$15 per Meal
cash or check only!
***Fried Fish**
***Curly Fries**
***Baked Beans**
***Coleslaw**
***Dessert**

Friday March 13, 2026
4:00 - 7:00 p.m.
408 S. Main St. - Ashland
(across from the YMCA)

Portions of the proceeds to
benefit: Ashland Senior Center

LIFE NEWS—FEBRUARY 2026



**LUTHERANS
FOR LIFE**

lutheransforlife.org



Life Newsbytes

Approximately 10,000 people, many of them young adults and families, gathered in Paris, France, on January 18 for the annual March for Life to publicly oppose abortion. The participants also spoke up against euthanasia amid ongoing bioethical debates in France. The peaceful demonstration began at Place Vauban in front of the Invalides palace and proceeded through the streets of the capital. Organizers described a family-friendly, resolute atmosphere, with participants carrying signs promoting life and a banner reading “Treat and support, never suppress.” The march came two years after France became the first country in the world to enshrine abortion as a constitutional right in 2024. That amendment, incorporated on March 8, 2024, followed a 780-72 vote in a joint session of parliament. Pro-life advocates viewed the change as elevating abortion to a protected status, shifting it from a once-criminal act to a fundamental right. This year’s event also highlighted opposition to pending Senate discussions on legislation that would legalize euthanasia and assisted suicide, which organizers framed as a “licence to kill.” Marie-Lys Pellissier, the 24-year-old spokeswoman for the March for Life in France, said, “It is the only moment in the year when we can publicly express our opposition to abortion and euthanasia and propose concrete solutions.” (Read more: tinyurl.com/59ekc4ky)

Speaking up For Life

“All life is sacred. Your life is sacred. Every life has infinite worth and eternal value. Your life matters—from conception to natural death to eternity. The psalmist declares: ‘I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are Your works; my soul knows it very well’ (Psalm 139:14).” *Rev. Robert Mohns, Lutheran Church–Canada*

“We may not be trained healers, but we have been trained through our own experiences and God’s Word to bring comfort. Be brave, reach out, and know the Lord is by your side. Pray for His guidance in what you say and do so you will bring needed comfort. We have a message of hope!” *Virginia Flo, Lutherans For Life*

“I love reminding them that the first diagnosis is, ‘It’s a baby,’ and no other diagnosis ever negates diagnosis number one. The baby is inherently valuable and worthy of our love.” *Dr. Robin Pierucci*

“Handmade by the one true God and designed in His image, we are inherently valuable, not only for this life but for all of eternity.” *Michelle Bauman, Y4Life*



Order LFL
Resources



at cph.org

FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE

BY REV. DR. ARIC FENSKE



“I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well” (Psalm 139:14).

This inspired Word of God is our theme for this year’s commemoration of Life Sunday. This verse is one of the pillars on which our understanding of the sanctity of life is built. On the one hand, using this verse as our theme causes me to be a bit sad for the very fact that we have to commemorate Life Sunday yet again. It is a recognition that many of God’s children, who are all fearfully



and wonderfully made by Him, are still being ignored, abused, devalued, and destroyed. And, with a sigh, I suppose this will continue to be the case until the day that Jesus returns to free us from this vale of tears.

On the other hand, this verse should also fill us with both awe and hope. After all, David himself tells us that these are words of praise! In acknowledging that we are God’s wonderful creation, we are also acknowledging that we are God’s precious possession. In fact, that’s what the beginning of Psalm 139 teaches us. David reminds us throughout this psalm that there is nowhere we can go where God is not looking after us and providing for us.

May that knowledge fill us all with comfort and joy as we consider our own daily lives and our continual effort to fight for the lives of the most vulnerable among us. God is not ignorant of our suffering or of the senseless violence that is brought upon His children. And He who created all does not just sit quietly on the sidelines to watch it happen. Our recent celebration of the birth of Jesus is all the reminder we need of that.

Our God acts to defend and protect His people. And our theme verse reminds us of one of the ways in which He does that. He fearfully and wonderfully creates *us*. Our heavenly Father has created us with ears to hear the cries of His people, mouths to speak His praises and defend our brothers and sisters, and hands and feet with which we can serve and protect them.

I am grateful that God has wonderfully and fearfully created you. And I am grateful that He continues to use you to love and serve His children. I pray that the words of our theme verse this year will both comfort and encourage you as you partner with us in 2026 to be Gospel-motivated voices for life in this world of sin and death.

Praise indeed be to the Father, Son, and Spirit, who has fearfully and wonderfully made each of us.

SERVING THE LORD IN

Latin America & the Caribbean: missionaryMAC



January 2026

News from Volunteer Coordinator Erin Mackenzie | missionaryMAC.blogspot.com | [f erin.mackenzie5](https://www.facebook.com/erin.mackenzie5)

(If you received a hard copy of this and would like to help me be green and save on postage, please email erin.mackenzie@lcms.org.)

Looks like I'm pinching a little more than pennies this National Financial Wellness Month (January, after the spending frenzy that is the holiday season)!



Top to bottom: Alcázar de Colón (RD\$1000); Puerta del Conde (RD\$100); Catedral Primada de las Américas, Basilica de Nuestra Señora de la Altagracia (RD\$50).

Heart Languages

I remember the first time I heard the term “heart language”: June 2010. Now more than then, I can identify. I've been learning Spanish since 7th grade, even majoring in it in college. Though I flub my grammar often, I'm fluently bilingual.

It's a beautiful language. And yet, even if I were to live in my non-English speaking host culture longer than I lived in the US, you can take the girl out of the US, but you can't take the heart language out of the girl: English. In my heart language I know how words are defined and connoted. When my fiancé says “te amo,” I know intellectually he's saying something sweet; “I love you,” triggers an involuntary smile.

The concept of heart languages is not new. Martin Luther (German) and Casiodoro de Reina (Spanish) risked their very lives so 16th century commonfolk could read God's Word. Even in Bible times, hearing the Gospel in one's heart language was prized, c.f. the first Pentecost or Paul's diatribe on speaking in tongues.

Missionary life upholds the concept of heart languages without fail. One can most efficiently and effectively make Christ known in the heart language of one's constituents. All new LCMS missionaries who deploy to LAC learn Spanish before they preach a single sermon, take a single photo, or host a single volunteer. LAC also boasts the VDMA program, equipping Spanish-speakers with digital theological resources in their heart language.

Missionaries so value language acquisition because we so value the acquisition of new souls for Christ. Though it is the Holy Spirit who calls, gathers, and enlightens, He invites our feeble efforts—and tongues—to contribute in some small way. Hear Romans 8: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness...”. His Divine aid transcends time, space, and phonology, bearing our petitions for ourselves, our families, our churches, our communities, and our world before the throne in any and every language.

Adapted from [my most recent CPH “Serve” blog post](#).

**Making
Disciples
for Life** 



Praises and Petitions

1. Thanksgiving for the installation of the first national pastor in Belize on 11/30/25.
2. Thanksgiving for the birth of Miranda Lynn to the Rev. Rafael & Jamielynn (Chile).
3. Thanksgiving that the *Lutheran Book of Prayer* is now available in Spanish from Lutheran Heritage Foundation.
4. For public school ministry in Licey al Medio, DR, as plans for the remainder of the '25-'26 academic year solidify.
5. For missionary colleague Tirzah upon her engagement to CTSFW Joe Musolino on 12/31/25.

[Pod]castaways

Effective evangelism is responsive and adaptable; recognizing a need to bulk up its digital strategies, the Puerto Rico team launched a [podcast](#) in late 2025. Episodes typically feature one or more missionary pastors plus a guest presenter (Rev. Roberto Weber, Rev. Roberto Bustamante, Vicar Paul Mroczenski, and a relatively new Lutheran from CA sharing his faith journey have graced the studio thus far). Topics have ranged from “The True Meaning of the Lord’s Supper” to “Why Do We Read About the Triumphal Entry During Advent?” and even a seasonal deep dive into Christmas hymnody, though never deviating from the title principle: *Cristo en el Centro* (Christ at the Center). New contacts are already beginning to trickle in, and not just from the immediate area; off-island inquiries are referred to the nearest missionary pastor. Don’t speak Spanish? You can still help the creators grow their audience to 500 (from 305 as of this writing)! Listen to the latest episode and subscribe [here](#). *Cristo en el Centro* is also available on [Spotify](#) and [Apple Podcasts](#).



Below: Date night at El Son de Keka, a weekly (Sunday afternoon) street dance on Calle Archilla Michel featuring the Cuban son.



I love that Christmas in LAC (décor, music, etc.) tends to run through the ACTUAL 12 days of Christmas. Above photo: Snapping a pic of a Christmas peacock (?) in December 2025.

Below: Vespers with attendees of the 4th annual FPH conference for the DR seminary’s online distance students.



Quote of the Month

“Marriage is not the end of the search for love. It’s the end of the search for the person to love. The search for ways to love that person has just begun.”
–Tank Sinatra, Instagram personality

To support the LCMS through me, you may give a tax-deductible gift...

- **online**, securely from any device: lcms.org/givenow/mackenzie;
- by **phone**: 1-888-930-4438 (donor care rep) or text **LCMSMACKENZIE** to 41-444;
- by **sending a check** (with “Mackenzie/Latin America” on the memo line) to:
 - ⇒ LCMS, PO Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-6861; or
 - ⇒ Mission Central, 40718 Highway E 16, Mapleton, IA 51034.



SERVING THE LORD IN

Latin America & the Caribbean: missionaryMAC



February 2026

News from Volunteer Coordinator Erin Mackenzie | missionaryMAC.blogspot.com | [f erin.mackenzie5](https://www.facebook.com/erin.mackenzie5)

(If you received a hard copy of this and would like to help me be green and save on postage, please email erin.mackenzie@lcms.org.)

FITRAM



The Metro de Panamá was a Godsend last month, saving a volunteer team and I hours in traffic. Though I've enjoyed riding Santiago's *teleférico* (cable car) multiple times now—just for fun! — I'm as anxious for the completion of our very own *monorriel* as the next *Santiagoero*. Here's what's expected:

1. Fourteen stations.
2. Fifteen 580-passenger trains, for a capacity of 20,000 passengers per hour, in each direction.
3. Trains every 90 seconds.
4. A maximum velocity of 80 km/hour.
5. Twenty-five min. transit time from end-to-end.

Divine Directions

Travel exhilarates me. I flew for the first time before my first birthday, and my current role has made me a jetsetter. While I have few travel horror stories, travel calls for letting go. It's a metaphor for the Christian life. My confirmation verse is Proverbs 3:5-6:

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths.

This control freak needs said reminder daily. Thanks be to God for the heavenly help He offers in sticking to the passage's three directives:

1. **Trust.** When my own heart struggles to relinquish command, God answers my prayers (c.f. Psalm 51:10-12) for a "clean" one.
2. **Lean.** When my understanding is flawed, Scripture assures me that in looking beyond the sinful realm we inhabit, there is rejuvenation (c.f. Romans 12:2).
3. **Acknowledge.** On my own, all hope for any relationship with the Almighty evaporates; I need His promised strength from outside myself (c.f. John 14:26).

Et voilà! Straight paths! Right? Sometimes, equipped as I might be to trust, lean, and acknowledge, I still choose a more sinuous route.

In 2019, I hiked the Camino Inka. It was a grueling trek made less grueling by a cadre of porters. However much they – and our guide – directed our path, though, they couldn't make it "straight." Yet perhaps the porters' most important contribution was carrying our belongings. The same God who makes our paths through this life straight also carves us a way heavenward, sending Jesus to bear our sin. Loaded with the world's iniquity, He died and rose again. His scars are a map that lead to life eternal. Buckle up and stow your tray tables for takeoff.

Adapted from [my most recent CPH blog post](#).

**Making
Disciples
for Life** 



Praises and Petitions

1. Thanksgiving for the new missionaries who received calls and solemn appointments at the Board for International Mission's 1/28 meeting.
2. Thanksgiving for a visit from Josh's parents later this month.
3. For the [Paul](#) family, transitioning from the Cayman Islands to Peru.
4. For recent marriages around the region: a deaconess in Panama (1/17) and a DR seminary grad in Chile (1/31).
5. For all involved in planning LAC's 2026 regional conference in Wittenberg, Germany.

It Takes a Global Village

Missionary care looks like regular furloughs for resting and reconnecting. When you're the only worker in the DR's capital city of 5 million, though, who picks up the slack? Anticipating the [Rev. Lucas Elberhardt](#) and family's departure for 2 months in their native Brazil, LAC welcomed the Rev. Alisson Henn and family, fellow Brazilians who serve in [Spain](#) and conveniently needed to leave for a stretch in order to renew their visa, in late December. While technically part of Eurasia and not LAC, the common language was the cherry on top of a win-win exchange. Rev. Henn is proving highly capable, but the many extracurriculars (e.g. sports and music) happening between two congregations demanded MORE support. Enter Technology Administrator [Aaron Reith](#) and Technical & Programmatic Support Specialist Enzo Fritzler. Both twenty-somethings graciously uprooted their lives in Santiago temporarily to provide needed connection with the youth of both Las Américas and Ozama. Their tech-savviness is coming into play, too; classes for members & friends with similar interests are on the horizon, and Iglesia Luterana Pan de Vida has a new [Facebook page](#) and logo. They'll be one step closer to live-streaming sermons if they can garner 100 followers!



Josh getting fitted for one of his birthday presents, a *chacabana* (aka *guayabera*)-style clerical



Spontaneous Saturday brunch at the Webers' with missionary friends and visitors.



I finally made it to Panama City's [Mola Museum](#).

Quote of the Month

"The 'earth' without 'art' is just 'eh.'"

--Unknown

To support the LCMS through me, you may give a tax-deductible gift...

- **online**, securely from any device: lcms.org/givenow/mackenzie;
- by **phone**: 1-888-930-4438 (donor care rep) or text **LCMSMACKENZIE** to 41-444;
- by **sending a check** (with "Mackenzie/Latin America" on the memo line) to:
 - ⇒ LCMS, PO Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-6861; or
 - ⇒ Mission Central, 40718 Highway E 16, Mapleton, IA 51034.





Birthdays

2 Phil Glenn	16 Harold Tipton
3 Jeany Griggs	19 Sawyer Bergman
5 Hawk Harris Gary Kespohl Wyatt Smith	Margaret Fines 20 Warren Harms Mary Redders Donna Weber
6 Robert Dierking Rob Hall Matthew Swartz	21 Roland Meyer Rosemary Vandermillion
7 Dennis Haubein	22 Emily Ferm Tom Stone
9 Rob Crouch Karen Easton Emma Gooch	23 Louise Griggs Chris Kespohl
10 Brooke Cameron Cynthia Green Dana Luetkemeier Zachary Mott Dan Noll	24 Theodore Bier Debbie Laupp Drew Lubiewski
11 Benjamin Asbeck Lameck Mwamgiga Sophie Tomson	25 Timothy Smith 26 Joyce Walters
12 Michael Brown Bonnie Lawler Margaret Parker Ezekiel Williams	27 Dianne Linneman 28 Karly Berendzen Jacob Mariott Leon Sendelweck Theresa Yeager
14 Kevin Smith Josh Thieme	29 Ron Lueck
15 Hannah Nandor	30 Karl Christopher

Dear Church Family,

Please contact the Church Office when:

- a member of your family is admitted to the hospital so visits can be made
- someone you know is very ill or has passed away
- you would like to be assigned a Stephen Caregiver to help you through a difficult time
- your class, board, or group would like to use the church for a meeting or event so it can be scheduled on the church calendar
- your contact information or address changes
- a new baby arrives in your family
- a member of your family leaves home for college, joins the military, or is getting married
- you would like to have a member call you to visit or assist you in some way
- you have a prayer request
- you would like to share your time and talents
- you feel the church can assist you in any way

March 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Lent 2 8a Divine Service 930a Sun. School 1030a Divine Serv 6p JCC	2 9a Bible Study 6p Divine Service	3 5p BoECE 545p Pickleball 6p Stephen Min.	4 9a LC Chapel 12p Midweek Lent 5p Lenten Supper 6p Midweek Lent	5 9a LC Chapel 11a Communion @ Lenoir 545p Pickleball 630p Handbells 7p GriefShare	6 Pastor's Day Off	7 10a Women's Brunch
8 Lent 3/DST begins 8a Divine Service 930a Sun. School 1030a Divine Serv 6p JCC 6p Choir Practice	9 9a Bible Study 6p Divine Service	10 530p Vesper Guild 545p Pickleball 630 BOD	11 9a LC Chapel 930a MM Guild 12p Midweek Lent 5p Lenten Supper 6p Midweek Lent	12 9a LC Chapel 545p Pickleball 6p BOCE 630p Handbells 7p GriefShare	13 Pastor's Day Off	14 9a Young Adult Bible Study @ Hakes 1p Beltz Shower
15 Lent 4 8a Divine Service 930a Sun. School 1030a Divine Serv	16 9a Bible Study 6p Divine Service	17 545p Pickleball	18 9a LC Chapel 12p Midweek Lent 5p Lenten Supper 6p Midweek Lent	19 9a LC Chapel 11a Communion @ Lenoir 545p Pickleball 6p Evangelism 6p Life Team 630p Handbells 7p GriefShare	20 Pastor's Day Off	21
22 Lent 5 8a Divine Service 930a Sun. School 1030a Divine Serv 6p JCC	23 9a Bible Study 6p Divine Service	24 545p Pickleball	25 9a LC Chapel 12p Midweek Lent 5p Lenten Supper 6p Midweek Lent	26 9a LC Chapel 545p Pickleball 6p Elders 630p Lutheran Ladies 7p GriefShare	27 Pastor's Day Off	28
29 Palm Sunday 8a Divine Service 930a Sun. School 1030a Divine Serv 6p JCC 6p Choir Practice	30 9a Bible Study 6p Divine Service	31 530p Trustees 545p Pickleball	1 9a LC Chapel	2 Mauudy Thurs 9a LC Chapel 12p Mauudy Thurs Service 7p Mauudy Thurs Service	3 Good Friday 12p Good Friday Service 7p Good Friday Service	4

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Rev. Brian Thieme, Pastor

Divine Service:

Sunday 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
Monday 6:00 p.m.

Bible Study & Sunday School:

Sunday 9:15 a.m.

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