

The Concordia Chimes

September 2025



Concordia Lutheran Church
40 Pitkin Street, Manchester, CT 06040

Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
closed on all Federal Holidays

SUNDAY SERVICE | 10:00 A.M.

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The **deadline** for submitting articles or contents for The Chimes is the **25th of each month**, or **as communicated**.



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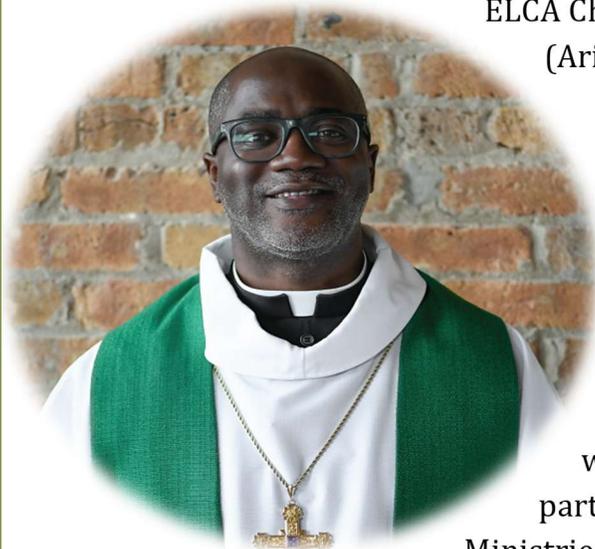
Concordia's WHY | Purpose Statement

*To be a welcoming and inviting community empowered by the Word of God;
so that we may work for social justice and exhibit compassion for all.*

Yehiel Curry Elected Presiding Bishop of the ELCA

July 30, 2025

PHOENIX — The Rev. Yehiel Curry was elected July 30 to serve a six-year term as presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The election took place during the 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly being held July 28–Aug. 2 at the Phoenix (Ariz.) Convention Center.



Curry was elected on the fifth ballot. There were 799 votes cast, with 400 votes needed for an election. Curry received 562 votes, and the Rev. Kevin Strickland, bishop of the ELCA Southeastern Synod, received 237 votes. Curry is the first Black presiding bishop of the ELCA.

Speaking to the assembly after his election, Curry reflected on his membership at Shekinah Chapel in Riverdale, Ill., where he eventually became a lay mission developer while he participated in the Theological Education for Emerging Ministries program, which prepares individuals for ordained ministry in the ELCA, with a focus on emerging ministry contexts like ethnic-specific, multicultural, rural and inner-city settings. He spoke to the assembly about his initial hesitation in accepting that first ministry role.

“Perhaps I’m out there in one of you,” Curry said. “I never saw myself as good enough, so for two years, I said no. I finally said yes. When I said yes, your support, this church’s support, of that ministry meant everything. So if you want to know what your benevolence dollars look like, it looks like me, and I want to say thank you. Thank you for your investment.”

Curry has served as bishop of the ELCA Metropolitan Chicago Synod since 2019. He previously served as mission developer (2009-2012) and pastor (2012-2019) of Shekinah.

He received a Bachelor of Arts from Lewis University in Romeoville, Ill., in 1995 and a Master of Divinity from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC) in 2013. LSTC is one of seven ELCA seminaries.

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Source:

<https://www.elca.org/news-and-events/yehiel-curry-elected-presiding-bishop-of-the-elca>

Dear Friends in Christ,

When I write newsletter articles, I am sometimes in the habit of telling you where I am writing from—especially when it is not the office. This letter comes to you from the Berkshires in **Western Massachusetts**. Needless to say, I am on vacation, and that is important for this article in *The Chimes*.

It is Friday, August 15th, and this I want you to know if only for a bit of context. Furthermore, it has been a beautiful day and not just in terms of weather, but also in terms of the day itself. It began with a trip to the library (*more about that later*). It continued with a trip up to Williamstown. Lois and I did two things there: we had ice cream at a small outdoor venue on Main Street—one of three places in the Berkshires known for exceptional ice cream, and I appreciate really good ice cream! From there, we went to the Clark Art Institute, which always offers engaging programs and art displays in addition to their renowned permanent collection.

After that (*you probably guessed it*), I went fishing at one of my favorite spots—and had really good luck. I was just about to give up when I said to myself, “*One more cast.*” About eight feet from shore, I got a hit and caught a 16-inch largemouth bass, which promptly tangled itself in a bunch of surface weeds. After it freed itself, I reeled it in. Then, at the end of the day, we went out for supper at our favorite place in Pittsfield, MA—Papa Joe’s – the end of a perfect day.

Now, if you are still reading—there is more. You will remember we started off the day at the public library in Lee, MA. What you need to know is this: here at our little summer house, we have **no** television, **no** cable, and **no** internet service. This is all **by choice**. We do have a television and a DVD player, and we borrow DVDs from the library. One of the advantages of this lifestyle is that our lives—again, by choice—are not impacted by the news. This is a real thing for me. I know this because when we go back to Wilbraham to pick up mail or keep appointments, I find myself watching Fox News, CNN, CNBC, or local news. And when I hear or read the “stuff,” I feel somehow dirtied by it.

With all this said, I have a new—or perhaps renewed—appreciation for vacation. It is real for me to “vacate” all the things that are counterproductive to life, even if only for a little while, and to fill that time with things that are life-giving, life-affirming, and life-fulfilling. Among these things for us are worship at Zion Lutheran Church in Pittsfield, being with family and friends, music at Tanglewood, visiting art museums, and anticipating our return to Concordia in September. Oh yes—I almost forgot—fishing!

Take good care of yourselves, and may yours be a restful and most pleasant, continued summer!

Peace to you all,

Pastor Rolf

Holy Closure Update

The title of this monthly update has intentionally changed from “**Transition**” to **Holy Closure**. While the Congregation Council will continue to meet at least monthly to perform its regular/legal duties, Council members will also be working jointly with the former “Transition Team” on general matters/planning/oversight related to the Holy Closure process. The joint group will now be called the **Holy Closure Team**.

Holy Closure Team Members (*names in bold are council members*):

Rebekka Almond, Sandy Baranowski, Jeanine Barber, Susan Bourret, John Corl, Pastor Hedberg, Nancy Lynn Knauff, Ruthie Lynch, Jan McGarity, Bobby McKinney, Randy Olson, Tina Sollinger-Ruggerio, David Smith, Ruth Sprong Heyden, Carol Stoneman, Mark Winzler.

This Holy Closure Team met on Monday, August 18 to review/discuss that which must and will take place between now and June 28, 2026, the date of our final liturgy. Here are some highlights:

Establishment of a Holy Closure Fund (*for non-budgeted expenses*)

Not surprisingly there will be expenses associated with the Holy Closure Process and these are not budgeted. These include, but are not limited to:

- Expenses for our Attorney Brad Cook
- Relator
- Real Estate Attorney
- Receptions after events such as Organ Concert/Evening Prayer (October 28), Luncheon Honoring Pastor and Lois in December, Celebration of Ministry (June 7) etc.
- Possible Travel and Overnight Accommodations for some returning pastors etc. (June 7 Celebration of Ministry)
- Brass/Timpani for June 7 Celebration of Ministry
- Funds for Musicians (organ and choir) additional rehearsals
- Final Banquet- June 28 (at a restaurant)
- Other Events Not Yet Determined

In order to create a “**Holy Closure Fund**”, The Council voted unanimously to cash in a life insurance policy on Mark Winzler which was purchased (many years ago) by Mark and whose premiums have always been paid for by Mark. Mark gifted this policy to the church and therefore the church owns it. Cashing this in will provide around **\$60,000** as the seed money for this Holy Closure fund. (The death benefit was \$100,000).

In addition to this, there will be about **another \$60,000** put into this fund from undesignated memorial and tribute funds (people were asked to designate but never did so) and a money market account. **Therefore, a total of about \$120,000 is available.** **It should be noted that none of these monies came from the Legacy/Endowment Fundand none came from our pledged giving/regular budget.**

And so now, we have a fund we can access during the coming year to pay for items associated with Holy Closure that are not covered in our budget. We are fortunate at this juncture in time, not to have to access the Legacy/Endowment Fund or our regular budget.

Keeping the “Holy” in Holy Closure

With thanks to (Retired) Deacon Karen Fedorchak (formerly of St. Mary’s Episcopal), the Council reviewed a list of things that Deacon Karen shared with us that St. Mary’s did in order to keep this process of closing as holy (as we can get caught up in tasks and details).

Following discussion, we will focus on the following:

- 1) **Sunday Prayers**: The inclusion of at least one prayer petition each Sunday as we move forward during the hold Write a reflection about Concordia which is memorable to the person.
- 2) **Chimes**- A reflection each month written by a member related to the person’s time at Concordia. (If you don’t wish to write, a member of the Holy Closure Team will meet with you to be “interviewed” and will write up for you.)
- 3) **Prayers relating to Holy Closure at Congregational Meetings**- This will be done by members of the Holy Closure Team.
- 4) **Stories/Memories**- Other opportunities for people to share stories/memories.
- 5) **Homebound**- Make sure that those who are not able to be with us in person feel a part of this journey.

There may be others. If you have another idea, please share with any member of the Holy Closure Team. For now, we are looking for people who are interested in writing a prayer or a Chimes reflection. If you are, please contact Margie who will keep a list.

Congregational Meeting with Pastor Maria- September 14

This will be the actual “kick off” for the Holy Closure work. There will be no votes taken at this meeting (not a formally-called congregational meeting), but there will be plenty of information shared and a time to ask questions etc. You are encouraged to attend.

**Holy Closure Congregational Meeting
with Pastor Maria Hammons
Sunday, September 14 | 11:30 a.m. | Kaiser Hall**

Tentative Topics to be Discussed

- Overview of holy closure process
- Team updates (Note: Pastor Maria will offer to help where needed (including walking through the building with the teams to help decide what to archive, keep, etc.)
- Real estate update/sense of congregation's interest in a non-traditional sale
- Overview of the legacy workshop process (how we will determine the disbursement of money after we close) scheduled for March 15, 2026

Dates of 2025 Activities/Events/Items of Importance

Please put these dates on your respective calendars

Sunday, September 28

Oktoberfest

Please see information sheet in this issue of the Chimes. Please note that the deadline for signing up is Friday, September 12.

Sunday, October 26

Organ Concert within Evening Prayer

Please see the information sheet in this issue of the Chimes. There will be a reception following this in Kaiser Hall.

Friday, November 14

Memorial Garden Urns/Ashes Moved to East Cemetery

Families of those interred either in the wall or whose ashes were scattered will be notified of this date. The time has not yet been set. You are encouraged to attend this.

Sunday, November 16

Decommissioning of the Memorial Garden

At the end of worship on this Sunday, we will proceed to the Memorial Garden where there will be a brief order for decommissioning the Memorial Garden as the site for interments. (This area can still be used for worship and other things, but not for interments)

Sunday, December 21

Farewell for Pastor and Lois Hedberg

After 4 years and 3 months (as of December 2025) Pastor Hedberg will complete his time as Transition Pastor of Concordia. He will preside and preach for the final time in this role at our December 24 Christmas Eve Liturgy.

The Sunday before, December 21 (4th Sunday in Advent) there will be a time at the end of worship where there will be a "Farewell and Godspeed" for Pastor and Lois.

Following worship, Pastor and Lois will be feted at a (catered) luncheon in Kaiser Hall to celebrate and thank them for their presence among us.

Other Activities

If you have an idea for another activity to bring us together, please let any member of the Holy Closure team know. We are trying to do something at least once a month between now and June.

On behalf of the Holy Closure Team,

Mark Winzler

I C E P o l i c y

While Concordia has had a security policy in place for a number of years, since the pandemic we have not been as judicious as we should have been in ensuring that the policy is in force. That changed as of a few months ago when we have once again been following it and have sent communications to the churches/groups/organizations outside of Concordia to do the same.

As another part of security, the Congregation Council recently passed a policy which details a protocol should a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agent appear at any door of the church and to seek entrance.

All churches and schools were advised to do this. In that light, information was gathered from a number of places resulting in the policy. **A copy of that policy follows.**

As things in our society have changed, so we change with them. Some examples from the past from both Concordia and society in general:

- When Concordia opened its doors in 1961, the sanctuary was left totally unlocked so that people could come to pray whenever they wanted. That worked well for a number of years. However, that changed when there was vandalism in the sanctuary (altar candlesticks etc. were tossed around and damaged) and the office was broken into and other damage done.
- The norm used to be that there was no security to walk through at airports: one could walk directly to the airport gate to get onto a plane or someone could go to a gate to greet a person coming off of a flight. As we know, 9/11/2001 changed all that for all of us forever.
- We always had multiple doors of our church building unlocked when we were in the building for worship or otherwise. We had an audit done by the Manchester Police Department pointing out various things that we needed to do to ensure the safety of those in the building. Our practice changed to now limiting the doors by which one can enter and making sure outside doors are locked.

This ICE Policy, therefore, is not something “political”, but rather in response to the most recent change in society. We owe it to ourselves and to those outside groups/organizations/churches to do our best to ensure safety.

It is the same as having fire extinguishers in the building. They are there, if needed, but again, we hope that we never have to use them. Same goes with the ICE Policy.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any member of the Congregation Council.

Mark Winzler

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CHURCH ICE POLICY

Purpose of this policy: This policy provides the basis for protocols to be followed in the unlikely event of immigration enforcement action or investigation at Concordia Lutheran Church. This policy is intended to honor our community's First Amendment right to the free exercise of religion and Fourth Amendment right to be free from unreasonable search and seizure.

Citizenship or immigration status is irrelevant to our religious activities, and therefore Concordian Lutheran Church does not seek information about any participant's citizenship or immigration status, and does not keep records which include the citizenship or immigration status of any member, visitor, or friend of Concordia Lutheran Church.

Designation of private spaces at Concordia Lutheran Church: Concordia Lutheran Church is an unincorporated association which is owned by its members. All areas of the church building are private space. Although we may invite visitors to join us in our private space for some events, we limit the areas of the building into which visitors may go, and we reserve the right to deny access.

In the unlikely event that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or Customs and Border Protection (CBP) personnel came to Concordia Lutheran Church and requested access to any of our private space, they would be required to present a signed **judicial warrant** (see Appendix A & B for samples) that specifically gives them authority to have that access, or alternatively they would need to gain consent from a person who is authorized to give that consent on behalf of Concordia Lutheran Church. Judicial warrants specify the Address, date and time frame that the warrant covers.

That being said, Concordia Lutheran Church will not (except in a true emergency situation) consent to ICE or CBP accessing areas of the church in which religious activities are in progress and are likely to be disrupted.

Persons authorized to make decisions about interaction with ICE and CBP: Concordia Lutheran Church's lay governing body will designate one or more persons to review any request for access by ICE or CBP, including warrants or other documents they present. Only those designated persons will be authorized to give consent for ICE or CBP to enter any of the private space belonging to Concordia Lutheran Church. Pastoral and program staff, office staff, and volunteer ushers and greeters will be instructed to ask any ICE or CBP personnel to wait in the public space outside the church until one of those authorized persons can be contacted.

First: Mark Winzler | 860.690.8651 | if unavailable,
Second: Carol Stoneman | 860.559.2208 | if unavailable,
Third: Pastor Rolf Hedberg | 413.544.4859 | if unavailable,
Fourth: Nancy Lynn Knauff | 860.794.8254.

If possible, document everything you can from any incident or encounter with ICE agents or officials. If you feel comfortable, you can video record the incident on your phone. If you do so, **ANNOUNCE THAT YOU ARE RECORDING**. Otherwise, you can take notes, and later write up full notes. This information can be used in the future, possibly in court, to document any illegal actions taken by ICE agents, which can be used to stop or reverse any course of action ICE may be taking against residents, clients or [your organization's name]'s properties.

Document what happened in the encounter including:

1. Date, time, description of the encounter
2. What you said, what the agent said or what questions were asked by the agent
3. Any identification of the agent (name and badge numbers of agents)
4. Number of agents
5. Information regarding the warrant or other legal document
6. Whether they had any weapons
7. Whether agents blocked exits or restricted movements
8. Any property taken/searched, persons questioned
9. The names of persons detained
10. How the encounter ended, any details of agents using intimidation or force
11. Names of any witnesses





Highlights of the July 2025 Treasurer's Report

Summary

July giving was 111% over the monthly budgeted amount due to two full year and the second portion of full year pledge being received. Year to date giving was 17% over YTD budget. All of the special funds realized gains in the month of July. Community Cares and Legacy for Ministry (Fidelity accounts) have year to date gains of over \$80,000. Thank you to everyone for continuing to honor your financial commitment to Concordia.

Report Details

The below information represents the envelope and stretch giving for the month of July as well as the percentage against the monthly and yearly budget amounts.

Month	Actual Recd. (Envelope & Other Funding (Stretch))	Monthly Budget	Percent Received Against Monthly Budget	Received Year to Date	Year to Date Budget	Percent Received Against Year-to-Date Budget
July	\$28,293.53	\$13,416.67	211%	\$110,320.27	\$93,16.69	117%

Additional July Operating Revenue

Open Offering:	\$45.00
Initial Offering:	\$5.00
Church Service:	\$100.00
General Use of Building:	\$300.00
Miscellaneous Gifts:	\$250.00
Miscellaneous Income Non-Budgeted:	\$100.00
Memorial Funds:	\$3,202.00 (From M&T Savings)
Total:	\$4,002.00

TOTAL JULY OPERATING REVENUES: \$32,295.53

July Non-Operating Revenue

World Hunger Gifts:	\$110.00
ELCA Miscellaneous:	\$100.00
Total:	\$210.00

Expenses

1. Utilities:

Vendor	JULY 2025	JULY 2024
CNG	\$351.41	\$331.60
Eversource/Earthlight	\$828.30 (\$0.00/\$828.30)	\$939.40 (\$0.00/\$939.40)
Cox	\$469.22	\$432.67
TOTAL	\$1,648.93	\$2,104.05



Highlights of the July 2025 Treasurer's Report

Additional July Expenses:

Staff Salaries:	\$4,824.60
Fringe Benefits:	\$148.24
Program Expenses:	\$200.00
Program Support Expenses:	\$853.29
Facility Maintenance:	\$3,412.93
Insurance:	\$3,417.00
Worship & Memorial Garden:	\$90.00
TOTAL:	\$12,946.06

TOTAL JULY EXPENSES: \$14,594.99

Bank Account as of 7/31/2025 (ACS)

Beginning Balance:	\$6,781.62
Total Revenue:	\$49,745.92 (Includes pass-through revenue from Synod (MNC) & CNS Taxes)
Total Expenditures:	\$17,049.02 (Includes MNC & Tax expenditures)
Current Balance:	\$39,478.52
Monthly Cash Flow:	\$32,696.90 (Revenue less Expenditures)

Special Funds (as of July 31, 2025)

Fund	Previous Month Market Value (June 2025)	Current Market Value	Current Month Gain/Loss	YTD Gain/Loss
Thrivent				
Scholarship	\$45,785.63	\$46,406.79	\$621.16	-\$3,112.15
Fidelity				
Community Cares	\$69,257.14	\$70,281.09	\$1,023.95	\$2,198.10
Legacy for Ministry	\$1,031,810.31	\$1,047,065.39	\$15,255.08	\$80,924.03
Total Fidelity	\$1,054,008.76	\$1,101,067.45	\$47,058.69	\$66,843.10

May withdrawals: \$6,000 from Scholarship Fund for CNS assistance. **April withdrawals:** \$3,500 from Community Cares for GHIAA and \$5,300 from Legacy for Ministry for MACC benevolence

Memorial & Tributes Savings Account (as of July 31, 2025)

Previous Month's Balance (June 2025)	Deposit	Withdrawals	Current Month Balance
\$82,217.99	\$100.66	\$3,202.00	\$79,116.64

Withdrawal of \$3,202.00 came out of Capital Replacement for organ repair and refrigerator and garbage disposal replacement.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you. Carol Stoneman, *Treasurer*

C o n c o r d i a N u r s e r y S c h o o l

Class Schedule

2025-2026

PK3 - Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

PK4 - Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

(91 scheduled sessions)

Thursday August 28, 6:00 p.m. in person in Brandt Lounge

OR

Tuesday September 2, 7:00 p.m. via Google Meets

Required parent meeting to review policies and procedures.

Please choose the option that works best for you.

Both parents are welcome, but both do not need to attend.

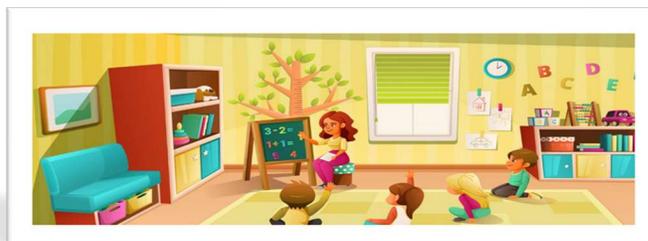
In person session is for adults only.

Thursday September 4 – Open House 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

<p>Sept. 8 (Mon.), Sept. 10 (Wed.), Sept. 12 (Fri.)...</p> <p>September 15, Monday.....</p> <p>October 13, Monday.....</p> <p>November 25- November 30.....</p> <p>December 18 - January 4.....</p> <p>January 5, Monday.....</p> <p>January 19, Monday.....</p> <p>February 16- 20.....</p> <p>March 20, Friday.....</p> <p>April 3, Friday.....</p> <p>April 13-17.....</p> <p>May 20, Wednesday.....</p>	<p>Short Sessions, 9:00-11:00 a.m. for all children</p> <p>First full session for all children, lunch begins for PK4</p> <p>No School, Indigenous Peoples Day</p> <p>No School, Thanksgiving Break</p> <p>School Closed, Christmas Vacation</p> <p>School Resumes</p> <p>No School, Martin Luther King Jr. Day</p> <p>No School, Mid-Winter Vacation</p> <p>No School, Eid-al-Fitr</p> <p>No School, Good Friday</p> <p>No School, Spring Vacation</p> <p>Tentative Last Day of School, End-of-Year Celebration <i>(families invited)</i></p>
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If **more** than 3 scheduled school days are cancelled due to weather, the calendar will be revised to add up to a maximum of 3 additional school days but finishing no later than May 29, 2026.

***Please note:** **While many holidays/vacations are consistent with the Manchester Public Schools calendar, there are some variations.**



Worship and Memorial Garden

We received a very generous gift of **\$10,000** from *Janet White's* estate. This will help greatly towards covering the cost of the monument and markers for East Cemetery. The order for the monument has officially been placed!

Thank you to **Jan Salvatore** for proofreading the whole *Pathway of Saints* book so it will be ready to be archived.

Bryan Jaworski has put in many, many hours of hard work, and one of his projects was fixing the entrance by the Garden Room. Since the Garden Room was added on, this entrance has always washed out in rain storms. **Carol Burnett** and **Lisa Taylor** also collaborated on this project. Bryan and crew relocated twelve pastor stones to this area. Landscaping fabric and a yard of 1 1/4" marble chips were installed, along with some perennial plants and a hummingbird feeder.



From Worship & Memorial Garden

If you would like to take home your pathway stone, you're more than welcome to do so. We recommend retrieving stones during warmer weather for comfort and ease.

Should you wish to proceed or have any questions, please feel free to contact Lisa Taylor, Ruth Sprong Heyden, or Mark Winzler—or simply reach out to the church office.

Garden Board/Closure Committee Minutes from August 3, 2025 meeting

In attendance:

Ruth Sprong-Heyden
Susan Bourret
Jan Salvatore
Paul Goodrich
Phil Stoneman

David Beauregard
Jeanine Barber
Pam Olson
Rebekka Almond

Garden party: Lisa Taylor suggested getting together in September for a work day and pizza. We agreed that a Saturday would allow for the most people to be present.

Pathway stones: People have begun picking up pathway stones for themselves and their loved ones. Lisa and Ruth are the contacts for arranging pick-up, and Bryan Jaworski has been a great help in removing the stones and replacing them with blank stones. There was discussion about what to do in a scenario in which multiple people requested the same stone. There was general agreement that it was not our place to decide who should receive the stone, but that it would be up to the individuals requesting the stones to figure out the best solution. The issue of what to do with stones that aren't claimed or that don't have a clear person to receive them was also raised. Susan and Rebekka will take a look at the stones that remain, and try to identify contacts to reach out to.

Date for moving to East Cemetery: We would like have ashes still in the garden for All Saints Day. The consensus was to look to schedule a ceremony for moving the ashes on a Friday, to avoid weekend fees. We tentatively agreed upon November 14th. We also agreed that we would like to have a service to decommission the garden on a separate, later date.

Invitation to moving ceremony: Rebekka will draft an invitation. Pam and Jan will help generate a list of people to invite.

Return of ashes release letter: Attorney Brad Cook suggested contacting a funeral parlor to see if they have a release letter we could use. Ruth reached out to Tierney Funeral Home and was told they do have such a letter, but she has not yet received it. Attorney Cook had also said that the letter we have already used would suffice if we cannot obtain one from a funeral home.

Other: We discussed the possibility of including the Memorial Garden altar along with our other sacred items on the website the synod has designed to facilitate finding them new homes.

Concordia's Annual Pool Party & BBQ at Mark's Sunday, August 10, 2025



Ken Heyden and Paul Goodrich



Carol Burnett, Jan McGarity and Bryan Jaworski:



John Corl, Pastor Rolf and David Beauregard



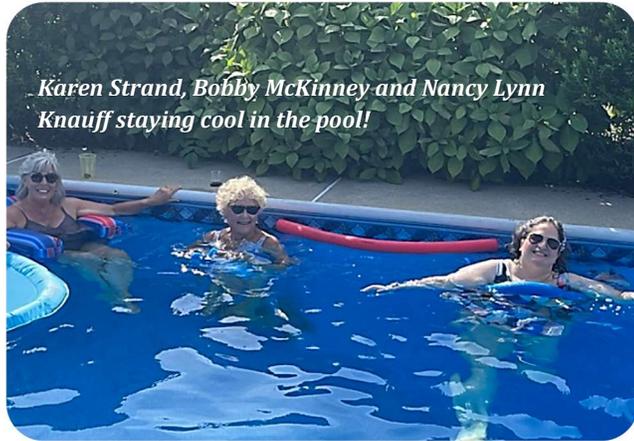
Linda Hilliard



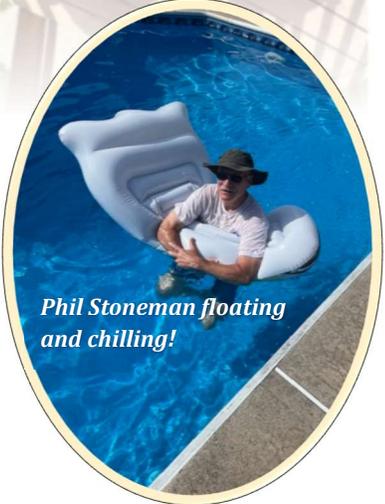
Left to right: Pam Olson, Ruthie Lynch, Kay and John Corl, and Ruth Sprong Heyden



Bobby McKinney



Karen Strand, Bobby McKinney and Nancy Lynn Knauff staying cool in the pool!



Phil Stoneman floating and chilling!

Carol Stoneman, with Margie (taking a picture of Mark, taking a picture of them!)



Pool & Barbecue Party at Mark's — August 10th

Mark's backyard was the place to be on Sunday afternoon, filled with laughter, great food, and good company.

Beverages kept everyone refreshed, and the joy of fellowship was felt in every conversation and shared bite.

"They broke bread... with glad and sincere hearts."

—Acts 2:46

"Where two or three are gathered... there am I among them."

—Matthew 18:20

A beautiful reminder that the best gatherings feed both body and soul.



Steve Strand with Jim Britton



SCHOLARSHIP FUND



At our February semi-annual meeting, we set aside up to \$30,000 out of the scholarship fund for the Nursery School to help fund them the 2025-2026 school years. This amount was based on having a minimum of 12 children.

As of this writing, they have **17 children!** (They had 18, lost two children who moved, but one child who was on the waiting list took one of the open spots.) This means that the Nursery School will not need the entire \$30,000 for the year, but rather about \$12,000 (estimate as of now.)

Even if we had to give the Nursery School the entire \$30,000, there were still additional monies in the Scholarship Fund.

Knowing this, the Congregation Council voted to send a scholarship of \$10,000 to United Lutheran Seminary for Bea Santiago who began her seminary studies a few weeks ago. (Note: The scholarship is sent directly to the seminary for use by Bea for her needs there. If the money were to be sent directly to her, she would have to claim it as income to the IRS.)

The Council also voted to send a scholarship of \$2,000 to United Lutheran Seminary for Campfield Heinrich who is nearing the end of his academic seminary studies and will begin a year-long internship in a church in 2026. Campfield is the son of Pastor Eric (St. Mark's in Norwich) and Anne Heinrich of Emanuel Lutheran (Manchester). We have supported Campfield in the past and wished to do so again.

Replies from Bea and Campfield upon being notified:

Hello All,

There are no real words that could express the immense gratitude I feel and how thankful I am for this generous gift and for all that Concordia Lutheran Church has been in my life and this journey.

You all have made such an impact in my both my spiritual growth as a Pastor but also in my life as human being. In 20 years from now when I look back at my life and this journey I have been on Concordia Lutheran church will always be a great and unforgettable part of it.

Being a part of the Concordia Lutheran Church Family has brought me joy, love, acceptance, support and most of all a home. Something I never thought I would find at church.

With deep gratitude, appreciation and love I thank all of you for your kindness and generosity.

Bea

Thank you so much for sharing this wonderful news and for the support that Concordia has provided; I greatly appreciate it!

God's Peace,

Campfield

Though we started out the year with what we thought was a narrower slate of issues than in some previous legislative sessions, as things unfolded, GHIAA worked on a wide range of campaigns:

Immigrant Rights: Trust Act

GHIAA came alongside a coalition supporting House Bill 7212, which would have accomplished several important policy changes to protect immigrants in CT:

- Prohibiting public agencies and officials from sharing people's private information with ICE in the absence of a judicial warrant or other exceptional circumstances
- Protecting access to the justice system for all CT residents by prohibiting ICE enforcement action in state courthouses or while people are on their way to or from legal proceedings
- Requiring those entering into contracts with the state to commit to not cooperating with ICE in the absence of a judicial warrant, etc.
- Making the existing Trust Act enforceable by establishing the right to sue for people whose rights have been violated under this statute

The bill had a successful public hearing in the Judiciary Committee and strong legislative support. However, the governor signaled late in the session that he was opposed. While there were enough votes to pass the original bill, there were not enough votes to override the promised veto.

Instead, the enforceability provision was added to another piece of legislation, which was passed and signed into law. All other provisions were not enacted.

GHIAA's impact: we generated more than 70 testimonies and won support through more than a dozen constituent meetings. We crafted and co-led an impactful interfaith press conference and advocacy day. We added the moral authority of our faith traditions and the people power of our voices. What we did not find a way to do was influence the governor.

Immigrant Rights: ICE Preparedness

- We held a Know Your Rights training with Ben Haldeman of New Haven Legal Aid, for which over 100 people registered.
- Several GHIAA congregations, including Concordia, have developed and approved policies for ICE preparedness, so that they have plans in place to keep people safer if immigration officials should show up in their space.

Housing: HAT Teams

- HAT teams have been established in several GHIAA towns. They are at varying stages of the organizing process.
- GHIAA staff provided trainings on organizing skills and affordable housing basics, and offers consultation and technical assistance as needed.
- Teams engaged in learning the affordable housing landscape in their particular towns using a resource GHIAA staff developed.

Housing: HAT Teams (*continuation*)

- Some teams have taken part in public hearings or other advocacy activities. Others are still preparing to engage in those ways.
- Next steps include further training and building relationship across the various teams to catalyze shared learning across the region.

Housing: Just Cause Eviction Protections

- GHIAA came alongside the CT Tenants Union and Make the Road CT to support House Bill 6889, which would have expanded existing eviction protections to apply to nearly all tenants in the state.
- While the bill had strong legislative support and, based upon what representatives were saying in public, more than enough committed Yes votes in the House, the bill was not called for a vote. Our understanding is that some legislators who were publicly supportive were reluctant behind closed doors, and they pushed leadership not to bring the bill to a vote.

GHIAA's impact: we generated 56 testimonies and won support through over a dozen constituent meetings. We turned out for press conferences and took part in public leadership where invited. The voices of our leaders mattered. What we did not find a way to do was hold wavering legislators, or the party leaders who were enabling them, accountable.

Fiscal Reform

- We joined our voices with many others in calling for our state to create a budget that truly invests in the human needs of our communities, which requires reforming the policies that currently funnel billions of dollars in existing revenue away from the places where they need to be spent.
- We held an impressive action at Immanuel Congregational Church with CT for All and SEIU 1199, with over 750 people present. Speaker Matt Ritter made bold commitments about lifting the guardrails and declaring a fiscal emergency.
- Unfortunately, those commitments were not fulfilled. An emergency was not declared, and the guardrails were not lifted.
- The only true modification to the fiscal guardrails was an increase in the volatility cap – an important change, but not enough. The new budget also invests significant resources via off-budget accounting that puts them outside the spending cap, which does allow for some increased investment, but leaves the restrictions in place rather than achieving systemic change.
- We are told there will likely be a special legislative session later this year, once the federal budget has been finalized, to address the impact of expected cuts.
- GHIAA's impact: we were an important voice in this conversation because we do not stand to gain directly from the state budget, but are making the case on the moral grounds of what is actually good for our communities and faithful to our values. We brought some education, clarity, and understanding to a confusing issue, and raised its profile with some legislators. What we did not find a way to do was hold Speaker Ritter accountable for his commitments or influence Governor Lamont.

Combating Racial & Religious Hate

- A team of GHIAA leaders developed and launched the “Broadening Understanding, Deepening Solidarity” (BUDS) program, with over 50 participants. Meeting monthly for 4 sessions, the program provided opportunities to build relationships across racial and religious differences, share lived experiences of racism, antisemitism, and anti-Muslim bigotry, bear witness to our neighbors’ pain, and learn and hone our skills for interrupting harm. Participants completed homework and engaged in one-to-one conversations outside of the sessions as well.
- The BUDS leadership team was a microcosm of this work, building strong relationships and deep trust through a sometimes bumpy process of learning, sharing, and developing this program together.
- Over the summer, we held trainings on Combating Antisemitism, through Project Shema, hosted by the Jewish Community Center in West Hartford, and Combating Anti-Muslim Bigotry, led by our own Aida Mansoor at Hartford International University for Religion and Peace. There will be an (Up)Rooting Racial (In)Justice training in the fall.

MIRA

- A team of GHIAA leaders continued to attend meetings of the MDA (MIRA Redevelopment Authority) board, bringing public attention and accountability to an otherwise unscrutinized process. As a result, board decisions were more responsive to the needs of Hartford residents.
- However, at the very end of the legislative session, back-door dealings allowed for language to be hidden in the 700-page budget implementer legislation that undid decisions of the MDA board and once again prioritized outlying towns over Hartford.
- We partnered with Trinity College students to gather stories and document lived experiences of MIRA’s 4+ decades of environmental injustice.
- We are working to figure out next steps to ensure that the needs of Hartford residents, who bore the brunt of MIRA’s operations for decades, are at the center of the decision-making and use of remaining MIRA resources.

New Staff

We have hired two new GHIAA organizers: **Nina Vazquez** and **Lukas Champagne**. Nina will be Concordia’s new GHIAA staff liaison.



Nina Vazquez is a seasoned community organizer, cultural educator, and strategist with over eight years of experience building equity-driven initiatives across Connecticut and Puerto Rico. Her work bridges public history, grassroots mobilization, and transformative education to support low-income, first generation, immigrant, and BIPOC communities. Nina has led programs at Wesleyan University, the Connecticut Museum of Culture and History, and served as President of the Connecticut Association for Educational Opportunity Programs this last year, where she championed statewide campaigns for educational access. As an incoming organizer, Nina focuses on strengthening interfaith and multi-neighborhood coalitions to advance housing justice, immigrant rights, and racial equity. Bilingual in English and Spanish, she is known for her collaborative leadership, strategic thinking, and deep commitment to cultural work as a pathway to liberation.

Please feel free to reach out to Carol Stoneman, Susan Bourret, Nancy Lynn Knauff, David Smith, or Rebekka Almond if you would like more information or to find out how to get more involved.



“Then the father said to him,
‘You are always with me,
and all that is mine is yours.’
(Luke 15.31)

As stewards, we give generously to take care of what God has entrusted to us. Our church is our spiritual home in which as Christians we’re commissioned to further the ministry in and around this community of faith. In our baptism we were made children of God and members of the body of Christ, the church. God’s message of hope and reconciliation strengthens us in our faith and calls us to be servants of Christ and stewards of what God has entrusted to us.

The Stewardship Committee will be meeting in September to plan this year’s program and we’re open to any members of the congregation interested in helping us out. This year’s program is called **Rooted in God’s Grace** and will serve as a reminder of how well we’ve given to the church over the years, and how we need to continue this throughout the Holy Closure process next year.

We will do some temple talks in October and will send letters in prep for a Stewardship Sunday in November. If you’re interested in letter writing, or writing for the Chimes, or interested in sharing your Stewardship witness, please reach out to us. We’d love to have you.

God’s Blessings,

David Smith, for the *Stewardship Committee*

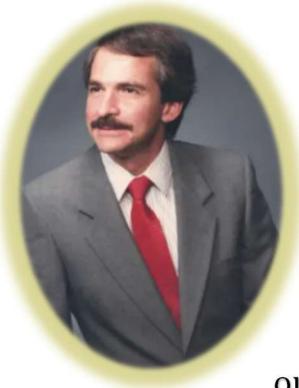


TROOP 123 NEWS

Troop 123 is welcoming **Alex Pattacini** as the 16th Scoutmaster for their boys' program. **Alex**, an Eagle Scout with the troop in 2010, has gotten to know our current Scouts while serving as a merit badge counselor for the past few years. He took on the role of **Scoutmaster** effective **September 1** with the full confidence of the adult leaders and the recommendation of the Scouts. His predecessor, **Ed Bouchie**, *retires* after **11 years** in the role, second only to the troop's founder, **Russ Turner**. In his retirement Ed has assumed the role of Marketing Director for the troop.

On that note, if you know any boys or girls who are ready for **Scouting**, please contact Ed at **Troop123isForMe@gmail.com**.

*(Alex can be contacted going forward at **123scoutmaster@gmail.com**.)*



In Memory of David Stoneman

For a few years, David and I were co-signers on a church account required for capital improvements. This meant we'd have to get together from time to time to both sign the checks to the contractors to cover invoices received. As we both worked in downtown Hartford, we'd arrange meetings on Constitution Plaza roughly half-way between both our buildings. Many times we'd have lunch together in the Café in the Hartford Steam Boiler building where he worked.

David was certainly a popular guy there. People would constantly come over and say hello to him while we were eating. Together we'd have some nice conversations talking about our jobs and things that were going on for us.

At the time, he was back to work after recovering from a lengthy medical issue that kept him out of work for an extended period. He mentioned to me the little things in life he couldn't do while in recovery that he began to appreciate and really miss. I remember him saying how for years he took the commuter bus into Hartford and never thought twice about it, but when he was unable to take it, he missed it, and realized how great it really was to be driven to and from the city and be able to converse with other riders along the way.

It got me thinking about all the little things you only miss when you're unable to do them, for whatever reason, and the importance of being thankful. This was something I always remember when I think about David and our discussions in the café during lunches.

God bless you, David. **You will be missed.**

David Smith

Memorial Donations Received
in loving memory of
David Stoneman

Dan and Carol Burnett

BIRTHDAYS

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SEPTEMBER

- Kathy Parsons (Noyes)(1)
- Lanie Turner (5)
- Erich Stoneman (11)
- Tina Sollinger-Ruggerio (17)
- Edna Nekiunas (23)
- Michael Rehmer (23)
- Carol Burnett (24)
- Donald Slater (25)
- Joyce Davis (25)
- Ed Chiffer (30)



OCTOBER

- Carol Stoneman (14)
- Bill Salvatore (20)
- Brielle Sollinger (21)
- Dan Burnett (22)
- Janet Bellino (25)
- Gail Feder (26)



NOVEMBER

- Kay Corl (3)
- Anna Link (4)
- Kayden Parson (8)
- Nancy Lynn Knauff (12)
- Linda Lange (18)
- Pam Olson (19)
- Edwin Adams (26)





PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY

Contact parish office for Prayer Requests.
Names will be held in prayer for one month,
unless otherwise requested.



Date Requested	Praying For (Person/Family)	Prayers For	Requested By
8/17/2025	Dan Burnett	Comfort and healing	Tina Sollinger-Ruggerio
8/17/2025	The Stoneman Family	Peace, healing, and comfort	Tina Sollinger - Ruggerio
8/10/2025	Kathy Noyes	Healing and comfort, health	Ruth Sprong Heyden
7/28/2025	Lois Johnson	Healing and Comfort	Rev. Ann Lovejoy Johnson
7/20/2025	Anna Link	Comfort, strength & healing during health issues	Sandra Baranowski
7/14/2025	Michael Jaworski	Healing and strength during health issues	John & Sharon Jaworski
6/18/2025	Laura McKay	Comfort, strength and healing	Sandy Baranowski
5/5/2025	Stacy	Complete healing and restoration of body.	Marian E. Slater

For Concordia's ongoing transition process.

The Intentions of this Community:

- † Concordia Nursery School Students and their families
- † The work of Manchester Area Conference of Churches (MACC)
- † The work of the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA)
- † For our Cub Scout Pack and Scout Troop
- † For Licensed Lay Minister Beatrice Luciano and Ministerio Nueva Creacion
- † For our Friends at Emanuel Lutheran and former members of St. Mary's now merged with St. John's Episcopal Church (Vernon)



Concordia Lutheran Church

Reverend **Rolf Hedberg** | *Transition Pastor*
Mrs. **Margie Gallagher** | *Parish Administrator*

✉ 40 Pitkin Street | Manchester | Connecticut | 06040

☎ (860)649-5311 | ✉ office@concordiamanchester.org | 🌐 www.concordiamanchester.org



Altar Flowers



We would like to have flowers on the altar each Sunday beginning immediately through our final liturgy on June 28, 2026. Normally we have two vases: one on each side of the altar, but it can be one larger arrangement (of course, you can have more than 2 as well).

You can.....

- a) bring flowers from your own garden to church (we have vases)
- b) buy flowers on our own and bring them to church (we have vases)
- c) have Margie order flowers for you from Park Hill Joyce Florists. (You can determine the amount of money you wish to spend totally or for each vase.) Concordia will be billed by Park Hill Joyce and you can reimburse Concordia. (Flowers will be picked up for you and brought to church.)

Flowers can be given.....

- a) in memory of a person/group of people
- b) in honor of a person/group of people
- c) to give thanks for someone/something
- d) for any other reason/no reason at all except to beautify the altar area (chancel)

If you would like to sign up for flowers for a given Sunday, please contact Margie as she is keeping a chart in the office for this purpose!



**MANCHESTER'S
HISPANIC HERITAGE DAY
CELEBRATION**

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 11 AM - 3 PM
MAHONEY CENTER, 110 CEDAR STREET**

**JOINT WORSHIP
&
FELLOWSHIP AT
JB WILLIAMS
PARK**

You are invited to join
Members of The Lutheran Church of
Saint Mark, St. James' & St. Luke's
Episcopal Churches
At 11:00 am
On Sunday, September 21st
At 705 Neipsic Road

Collecting non-perishable food items for the Glastonbury Food Pantry!

Schedule as follows:
11:00am Worship Service
12:00 pm Build-a-Grinder Luncheon

**Please RSVP on Sign-Up Sheet in the Narthex
by Sunday, September 7th**

Organ Concert *within* Evening Prayer

Reformation Sunday - October 26th - 4:00 P.M.

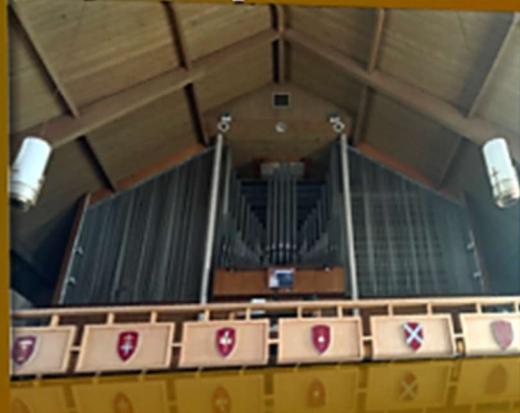
**Concordia Lutheran Church
40 Pitkin Street , Manchester, CT**

**Reformation-themed music by Bach, Messiaen, Bender, and Manz, plus
musical surprises from recent years!**

 John Anderson, *Organist*

 *The Concordia Choir* — Linda Hilliard, *Director*

 **Reception Following in Kaiser Hall**





September 28, 2025

Following worship at Concordia
Social hour 11:30 a.m. -12:15 p.m.
(Hors d'oeuvres, cheese/crackers)
Wine and Beer

Dinner 12:15pm

M e n u

German Sausages

(Weisswurst and Bauernwurst)

German Potato Salad

Sauerkraut

Green Beans and Mushrooms

Applesauce

Salad

Rolls and Butter

Dessert Table

Coffee/Tea

The cost of the dinner is **\$15.00** per person, children under 12 are free.

Name (s): _____

of People Attending _____

Payment Amount: \$ _____

I(we) can bring: Dessert _____

Please include your payment with this reservation form and submit it to the
Church Office by **Friday, September 12, 2025.**