



MARCO LUTHERAN CHURCH

50th Anniversary 1974-2024



...Then...
AND
...Now...



Happy Anniversary Marco Lutheran Church!

OUR MISSION: "At Marco Lutheran Church, we are followers of Jesus Christ who share His Good News by loving and serving all people."

Marco Lutheran Church • 525 N. Collier Blvd. • Marco Island, FL 34145 • 239-394-0332
www.marcolutheran.org

AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR PAST...

God has blessed this congregation for many years. Marco Lutheran Church held its first worship service on May 5, 1974, in the meeting room of the Naples Federal Savings and Loan Association, Marco Branch. The service was led by Rev. William P. Volm, Missionary at large from Naples. Over thirty-five people attended including five families who were full-time Marco Island residents.

✚ **Rev. Ted Wurffel**, our congregation's first full time pastor was installed on May 9, 1976. He was involved in dedicating the first church structure on October 25, 1981, on this same location, and served until 1982 when he began his service as a U.S. Air Force Chaplain. His last sermon here was January 2, 1983. He then served as pastor at Agape Lutheran Church in Seattle, Washington.

✚ **Rev. Ted Klees** was installed on March 27, 1983, to succeed Rev. Wurffel. Pastor Klees served until his death from cancer on April 9, 1991. That was the year our Great Room was added.

✚ **Rev. Roger Stoehr** was installed on February 2, 1992, and served until July 31, 1995, when he and his wife, Lois, died in a tragic automobile accident. The "Underway in Faith" campaign began during Pastor Stoehr's tenure.

✚ **Rev. Ron Biel** was installed on October 20, 1996. The House of Worship and extended facilities that we enjoy today, like earlier construction, resulted from excellent pastoral leadership, detailed planning, and the efforts of many. "Setting Our Sails For His Service" began in January 2001, after purchasing lots on Holly Ct., and then approving construction plans; it served as our building fund campaign during this time. Furthermore, beginning in 2002, we welcomed our Family Minister, Joyce Heffernan, to the Church's staff and she served for six years.

✚ **Rev. Kevin Koenig**, was installed in 2008. The mission plans to guide the future of the church under the initiative, "View from the Bridge", were created under Pastor Koenig. Rev. Koenig continued to serve this congregation by working alongside other churches to further our mission in the community. Pastor Koenig retired in December 2019.

✚ **Rev. Ken Garazin** was installed as our seasonal Pastor on Sunday, February 27, 2022. Prior to that, he served us for over 10 years as our seasonal pastor.

✚ **Rev. Thomas Boeck** was called into service in February of 2018. He served as Associate Pastor until Pastor Kevin's retirement, and as Sole Pastor with seasonal assistance from Rev. Ken Garazin until March 2023.

✚ **Rev. Gary Koltz**—Present—Pastor Gary is serving as vacancy pastor while our Call Committee is working to find our next pastoral Call.

Along the way, there were several interim & seasonal Pastors

MARCO LUTHERAN CHURCH...

Marco Lutheran Church, a member of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, seeks to serve all Lutherans in the Marco area. Lutherans from all three major Synods (ELCA, ALC and LC-MS) are represented in the membership and the boards of the parish.

The community of Marco Island doubles its population during the winter season. So also the parish, as there are more visitors than year-round members in church from January to Easter. It is our purpose and intention that Lutherans and other Christians from a variety of places and backgrounds will feel at home in our church, feel welcomed, and feel encouraged to participate fully in worship and parish activities while on Marco.

"We welcome you, and God bless you."

In the subsequent years we have grown in numbers of our Full members, Associate Members and Friends. Our worship is a blended service with Holy Communion at every service. Weekly Bible Studies are held on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. The Artist Series continues to be a hallmark program during the season. Yoga twice a week that has created many contacts in a short time.

Our focus is the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ as expressed in our wide range of activities which enables us to build relationships in the Kingdom of God. We are a family, a church family, a family of God, caring for and about each other. We reach out to all people, inviting them to join that family.



OUR HISTORY – HOW WE CAME TO BE

In a scrap book that is in our archives, dated 1990, there is the following description of the history and purpose of Marco Lutheran Church:

“Marco Island, Florida is a lovely water-canal community in SW Florida which was been developed by the Deltona Corporation in the last 15 years. Prior to that, it was an isolated fish camp area, with homes and school in the hill section of Caxambas and in Goodland. Excavation studies at the turn of the century produced evidence of a quite well established Indian community on the Island. The semi-tropical climate provides ideal outdoor living, and the hill section of the Island offers security in time of storm.”



THE BUILDING BEGINS 1980

On May 5, 1974, several Lutheran families met to discuss the formation of a church on Marco. Shortly after that, Rev. Wm. Volm of Golden Gate began holding services in the original Naples Federal Savings and Loan Association, Marco branch.

In 1976, Rev. Ted Wuerffel was called as the first full-time pastor, and in 1978 a Building program was undertaken.

The Deltona Corporation deeded a beautiful 4.4 acre canal site on Collier Blvd. at Holly Ct. to the church in December of 1979, and in the fall of 1980 construction of an 8,000 sq. ft. multi-purpose worship facility was begun. The original building was modest: 25% of the original cost was for pilings!

In the years since the original building was built, we have at different times expanded the sanctuary, added the narthex, added offices, added our great room/fellowship hall, relocated and expanded the kitchen, added the front porch and steps, added a gazebo, added the Memorial Gardens and added an outside play area for kids.

WHO & WHAT FUELS US...

OUR STAFF:

Vacancy Pastor - Rev. Gary Koltz
Seasonal Pastor - Rev. Ken Garazin
Director of Church Ministry- Betsy Sabbides
Music Director- Craig Greusel
Key Board Specialist- John Davis
Facilities Manager - Larry Soccio
Technical Advisor - Adelin St. Fleur
Office Assistant - Vicki Williams

OUR STRUCTURE:

Church Council

Officers: President - Mark Kuhnly, Interim
CFO - Jaye Spencer
Financial Secretary - Karen Keuttner, Interim
Boards: Lay Ministry - Linda Harrison
Human Care - Annette Bertelson
Outreach - Lili Surber
Properties -Tom Kramer
Christian Education - Carolyn Ohman
Finance & Admin - Jaye Spencer



OUR POINTS OF CONNECTION...

Men's Bible Study (Tuesday a.m.), Women of the Word (Wednesday a.m.), Thursday Adult Study, Women's BSF & Men's BSF (both on Tuesday evening sign up on Bible Study Fellowship website) Choir/Music, Resound, Outreach Activities, Yoga, Sailing Solo, Women of Marco/LWML , Greeters, Ushers, Communion Assistants, Readers, Chair Crew, Altar Guild, Office Assistance, Technology Help, Welcome Center, Christmas Cantata/CELEBRATE, Christmas Parade, Christmas Caroling at the Esplanade, Rummage Sale, Movie Nights, Thanksgiving dinner, Visiting Scholar Speaker Series, Artist Series and other theatrical offerings, Last Supper, Foundation, Grief Support Group.

RESOURCES

- Website: www.marcolutheran.org
- Monthly newsletter, Sunday bulletin announcements and calendar, welcome center, ministry center, ministry cards outside of church office and in Great Room, church office, "library" outside of offices, bulletin boards
- Streaming.

THE SHIP OF THE CROSS

For Christians, since the days of the apostles, *THE SHIP* has been a symbol for the Christian Church. The mast and yardarm form a simple *CROSS* (in wood) which stands for Jesus who saved us by giving Himself on a cross that we might be forgiven.

The *CHI RHO* ☩ (in metal) is a combination of the first two Greek letters of the name *Christ*, meaning "The Anointed One" or "The Messiah." *THE WAVES* symbolize the troubles and difficulties of life on earth. *THE SAILS* are filled with wind, a symbol of the Holy Spirit, which empowers the Church. Thus, the Christian Church, under the Cross of Christ carries the faithful safely across the troubled seas of life to heaven. As we come together for worship, the cross of Christ is before us. We choose, you and I, to worship with people for whom the cross is both the sign of salvation and the sign of Christ in our lives.



VACANCY PASTOR MESSAGE—PASTOR GARY KOLTZ

Dear Friends in Christ:

What a joy it is to announce the celebration service of the anniversary of our church's founding! Consider this your invitation to our Church Anniversary!

It's amazing to think about, but it was 50 years ago that a small group of people gathered together with the desire to plant a church to have an impact on their community. Little did they realize what would take place, but I'm sure they dreamed a bit about the possibilities.

Jesus has planted Marco Lutheran Church (MLC) on Collier Blvd. to serve and grow His kingdom on the island into the surrounding community and the world. During this time MLC has been led by a number of pastors. Thanks to Pastors –Ted Wuerffel, Ted Klees, Roger Stoehr, Paul Koepchen (Vacancy), Ron Beil, Kevin Koenig, Ken Garazin (Seasonal), Tom Boeck, and myself, what started out as a small one building church has grown and expanded over the years to what you see today.

There was a time in the Old Testament when the temple was being rebuilt and the statement was given: ***Zechariah 4:10 "Who despised the day when little things began to happen? They will be delighted when they see the plumb line in Zerubbabel's hand. (GW)."***

With any great work, there will always be some level of opposition, especially when it comes to the work of Jesus! We may never know the struggles it took to get this fledgling work off the ground, but one thing we do know; it DID indeed get off the ground and continues to have an impact to this day on our community, and yes, even the world through our generous giving to mission work.

It's all because of you and the hard work of many pastors, leaders, and church members, that we continue to grow and sail with Jesus. May Jesus continue to bless His church and each of you with a bright future.

Joyfully Serving Jesus, Vacancy Pastor Gary Koltz



**'COMMIT TO THE LORD
WHATEVER YOU DO, AND YOUR
PLANS WILL SUCCEED.'**

PROVERBS 16:3

INTERIM PRESIDENT MESSAGE– MARK KUHNLY

What a blessing it is for Marco Lutheran Church to be celebrating our 50 years of ministry on Marco Island! A Golden Anniversary uses the symbol of gold to represent long health and success. Gold was valued in biblical times for its beauty and strength. These definitions of gold certainly are some of the same words that seem fitting for the 50 years Marco Lutheran Church established on Marco Island.

As we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Marco Lutheran, it is a significant milestone that marks the strength of a spiritual community blessed by God. From a vision the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS) had in planting a church on Marco Island, to successfully form Marco Lutheran Church in 1974. How thankful we are for our founding members who shared in that vision, not knowing what was ahead, and uncertainties to come. Yet, they had faith that God would lead them to build and grow God's Kingdom on this beautiful Marco Island waterfront property.

Marco Lutheran Church has been blessed with faithful Pastors, Staff and Lay Servants. They have been leaders in opening the doors of the church in our community and preaching God's love to all who came. Serving God and spreading God's love to all people with missions and outreach locally, nationally, and internationally and continues to be a vision. We pray for God's continued blessing as we press forward in spreading the Gospel to all people.

There will be events throughout 2024 to celebrate the 50th Anniversary and to give thanks to God. It is my hope that you will be able to attend these events in celebrating and giving thanks.

As we celebrate the past 50 years, we also look forward to seeing what God has in store for us in the future. This parish and friends of the parish continue to bless the church with faithful acts of volunteering, participating in worship and prayer.

In His Service,

Mark Kuhnly , Interim President

Psalm 79:13 - Then we your people, the sheep of your pasture, will praise you forever; from generation to generation, we will proclaim your praise.

Our church is not a building; it's a people. It's where you come to find peace and redemption through Jesus. We welcome everyone to our services and activities. Please explore our website. If you have unanswered questions, feel free to contact us.



BOARD OF LAY MINISTRY– LINDA HARRISON

As we approach the 50th anniversary of Marco Lutheran Church, it is a great time to reflect on our past. Our founding members had to work ceaselessly to establish the church. Then the next generation of members grew the church. Today we are stewards of the church. And our work is not done.

The Ship of the Cross reminds us that the Holy Spirit will carry us over the tribulations that life throws our way. Just in the last 5 years, our congregation has weathered the storm of COVID and managed the turmoil surrounding a well-liked Sr. Pastor stepping aside due to health issues and his replacement answering a call to another church. We are still seeing God's grace in our ability to continue to worship and share His love even as we search for a new Sr. Pastor to lead us into our next 50 years. We are blessed to have Pastor Gary join our team as our Vacancy Pastor and Pastor Ken, who has faithfully served us for a number of years as our Seasonal Pastor. Even with those blessings, we pray that God will smile on our efforts and guide our steps as we work to locate the shepherd he has already assigned to the flock here at Marco Lutheran.

Through all of these changes, we are truly blessed to have a wonderful team of helpful servants who give of their time each week to ensure that our services run smoothly. You've seen them... greeting, ushering, setting up communion, providing communion, serving as a Lay Minister, singing in the choir, assisting in the Worship service, assisting in the office, providing care to our parishioners, and leading outreach. You may not have seen the hard work that goes into setting up the Great Room for events and activities. The volunteers are too numerous to list here. But do think about where we'd be without them. Thanks to all of you.

We are at a crossroads, though. We have the zeal to continue doing God's work, but not necessarily the manpower to make it happen. We can't sit by and idly believe that someone else will take action. Each of us needs to play our part. Please prayerfully consider how your faith life could grow by becoming more involved in God's house and mission here at Marco Lutheran.

Our numbers have increased enough that we will now be offering two Sunday services in addition to the Saturday service. That means we need a third more people to serve each week. So, if you are able to hand out bulletins, hold communion trays, help prepare communion, greet folks at the door, or serve as a Worship Leader, please let me know. I'll get you in touch with the right person. And if those options don't interest you, but you want to get involved and serve, let me know that too! We'll help you find an opportunity working with one of our boards that will enable you to serve God's Kingdom. Listen. The Holy Spirit is calling to you. Your church needs you!

Stand up and be counted as Marco Lutheran moves into its next 50 years loving and serving the Lord.

Your sister in Christ, Linda Harrison

*"I am the vine;
you are the
branches."*

BOARD OF HUMAN CARE – ANNETTE BERTELSON

The Board of Human Care sponsors a wide range of programs aimed at meeting the needs of our church family and the community. Thanks to the generosity and support of our church members, this very active committee demonstrates God's love in action by helping members and needy families in our community and many other charitable programs.

Life Boat Ministry

This was originally the Stephens Ministry at Marco Lutheran Church. It was converted to the Lifeboat Ministry under Pastor Kevin's leadership. It is a Christian caring ministry to members in crisis situations, grieving or in need of personal Christian care. Specially trained church members meet with Pastor Ken to determine the needs and who will be visiting the member in need. Referrals to the program are submitted to Pastor Ken or Pastor Gary. The program is entirely confidential.

Grief Share

This is a program that is offered to members grieving and are willing to meet in a group support setting. It involves a video series on grief with discussion that is led by Pastor Ken. If there is not enough individuals wanting this form of support to meet, individuals wanting this form of support are connected with the AVOW Hospice-Grief Share program.

Senior Respite

This program was started to provide senior requiring assistance a day out. It was monthly where the elderly would be dropped off at the church for a meal and were engaged in games and other activities. This allowed the care givers a afternoon free of care giving responsibilities. This program ran for 5 years and now has moved to the Marco Dementia Group.



OUTREACH-LILI SURBER

The Board of Outreach continues our service in helping and encouraging those in need in our community. We assist Our Daily Bread Food Pantry and St. Matthew's Food Pantry, collecting food stuffs and monetary donations to allow them to feed the needy in the community. In addition to food programs, Outreach's programs include Laces of Love, Hygiene Bags, Camp Able, Christmas Child gift boxes, Camp Able to name a few.

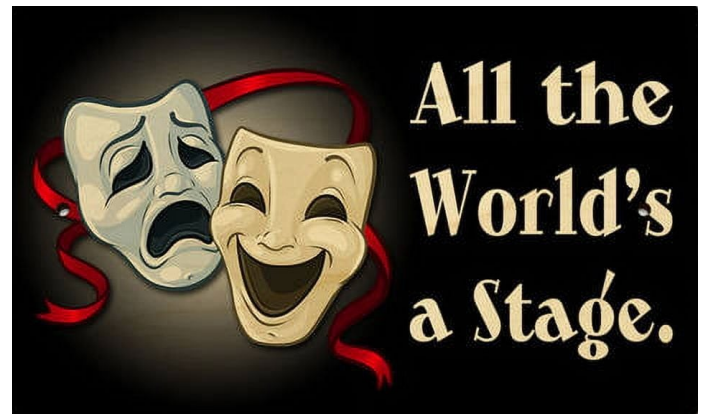
We are able to make a difference in our community because of our wonderful congregation and our fantastic volunteers.



ARTIST SERIES—LEESA CARLS, DAVE TOBIASZ, CARMEN BROOKSHAW & CRAIG GREUSEL

26 Seasons of the Artist Series

The first show was The Shower Stall Opera in February 1988. By 1998 it had developed into an annual season with four or five shows per year.



The series started as single performance shows often on Tuesday evenings. In 2018 the series expanded to two nights (Thursday & Friday) and continues to bring World Class performers to Marco Lutheran. The series remains a great way to bring friends and neighbors to meet the friendly people of MLC; as well to learn about the many activities beyond Artist Series the church offers.

Our goal is to bring in exceptional entertainment from a variety of genres to Marco Island. Our sincere thanks to all the **Friends of the Artist Series**. Because of your generous donations, we have been able to bring outstanding talent to our stage at affordable prices.

Thank you for your continued support!



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION— CAROLYN OHMAN

BIBLE STUDIES are the backbone of our Christian Education Program. We are currently offering three weekly Bible Study Groups:

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY: Tuesday at 8:30 a.m.

Led by Dalton (Bud) Coe

The men are studying how our Christian moral views relate to the current social structure of our society.

WOW WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY: Wednesday at 10:00a.m.—Led by Carolyn Ohman

The women are finishing up a study of John's Epistles. The group will end the year with "The God Who Sees" by Kathie Lee Gifford and Joanne Moody.

THURSDAY BIBLE STUDY is for both men and women. Thursday at 10:00a.m.— Led by the team of Kathy and Scott Berner, Carolyn Ohman and Betsy Sabbides. This group is studying the Parables of Jesus.

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY has not been offered this season due to other church activities on Sunday mornings. We are planning on bringing the Sunday morning studies back in the fall.

PAST PROGRAMS:

We have offered the following programs in the past and the committee would be happy to address any needs for them in the future. Children's Sunday School, Vacation Bible School and Off-campus Bible studies.

VISITING SCHOLAR

Our Visiting Scholar program started in 2019 to bring in outside speakers to address our congregation and members of the community on a variety of topics concerning how Christians can live, cope and react to the challenges of our society today.

We did not offer a Visiting Scholar this season due to the number of activities related to our 50th Anniversary and the early date for Easter. We plan to resume the Visiting Scholar Program for next season.

PAST SCHOLARS:

2019 – Dr. Mitri Raheb, pastor of Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem: "Christianity in the Holy Land"

2020 – Pastor Gary Schuske/Andreas Sturm: "Martin Luther and the Reformation"
David Zahl, author of "Seculosity"

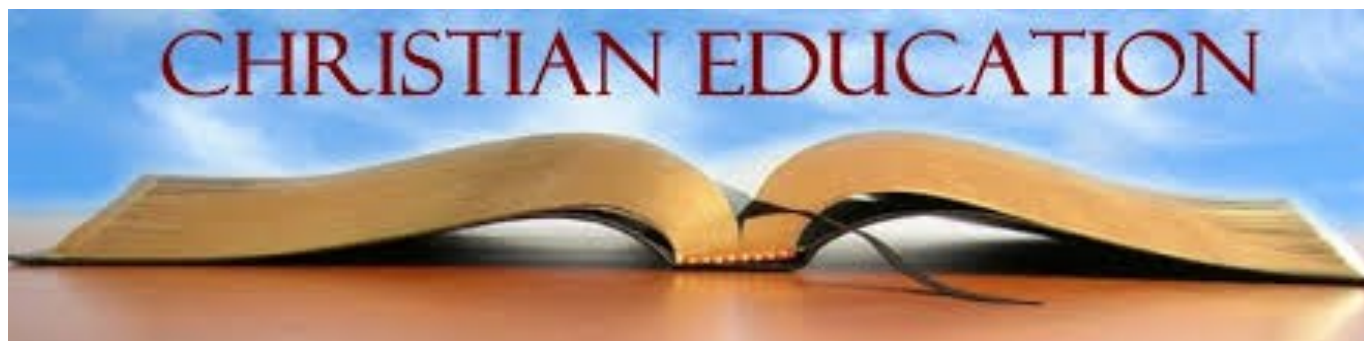
2021 – Dr. Scott Sullivan, author, teacher and Apologetics scholar

Dr. Dale Meyer, president emeritus and professor emeritus of Concordia Seminary

2022 – Lee Strobel, atheist reporter who became Christian author

Dr. Gregory Seltz, former Lutheran Hour speaker, from the Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty

2023 – Janine Turner, actress and author



ALTAR GUILD—JUDI VOLLMER

"It is the responsibility of the Altar Guild at Marco Lutheran Church to prepare the altar and chancel for worship services that include celebration of the Eucharist. The Communion is prepared and placed on the altar, typically on a Saturday morning for any weekend services. Guild members also help with the Eucharist by holding back-up communion trays and helping to clear the altar and clean up communion vessels following the service. They also change the liturgical colors of wall banners and see that candles and candle-lighters are filled with oil. Typically a team of 2-3 people will serve for a month at a time, although this is very flexible."

The altar guild is not a social group. They don't have pot lucks; seldom have meetings, and are not involved in the business of the church. They don't take votes or make momentous decisions. Most of what they do is invisible to the congregation and is meant to be that way. The work they do facilitates and enhances our worship and particularly the Eucharist. Serving on the altar guild is a spiritual ministry. Caring for the altar is a way to act out our relationship with God. It is quiet, prayerful work.

While altar guilds can trace their roots to the women who cared for Jesus, at various times in the history of the Anglican Church, altar guilds have been composed exclusively of men or exclusively of women. Today, anyone can be a member of the altar guild. You don't have to have any experience to join the altar guild. Your training will consist of hands-on instruction from experienced altar guild members.



WOMEN OF MARCO—CINDI KRAMER



Mission statement – The Women of Marco function to serve the congregation of Marco Lutheran, our community and world through service and missions.

The Women of Marco are responsible for so much at Marco Lutheran Church!

At Christmas, we decorate/undecorate the Church and create/repair the Chrismons.



We maintain the kitchen, coordinate the LWML rallies and hold one on Marco Lutheran as required. Collect mite boxes throughout for LWML, turning in funds monthly.

We support the Marco Lutheran Thanksgiving dinner by purchasing food and supplies.

We arrange and coordinate for the congregation to help make palm crosses (about 700 each year) for Palm Sunday.

One of our most time consuming events is the annual rummage sale where we divide profits 50% going to missions and 50% going to help building projects for MLC mostly in the kitchen, such as the ice machine, freezer, plates, coffee pots, utensils, etc. But also many project around the church such as the baptismal font, tile in the sanctuary, signage out front and many other improvements repairs around MLC.



We work with other churches in our district to collect sundries and funds for phone cards every September and October for our active military troops overseas to help make their Christmas a little more pleasant. We also send \$200.00 a quarter to help defray the cost of postage as supplies are sent 4 times a year.



We sponsor the MLC Ladies Christmas luncheon, send birthday cards to all the women in the congregation, participate with the other churches and synagogue on the island to coordinate the Interfaith Breakfast/Gathering. We switch off between groups taking turns sponsoring it at different houses of worship. We also sponsor Oktoberfest. During the summer we hold a fundraiser for different charities according to the Pastor's request. As if this isn't enough, we are now in the process of creating 50th Anniversary Cookbook!

As you can see, we are a busy committee and would love to have you join us. Every woman at Marco Lutheran Church is already a part of Women of Marco, and we are always looking for new friends to join us!

DIRECTOR OF CHURCH MINISTRY– BETSY SABBIDES

What an honor it is for me to be a part of a ministry that has stood the test of time, weather (multiple hurricanes), economic unrest, and social change over the past 50 years!

Although I have only been here for a little over 7 years, I have had the pleasure to get to know Marco Lutheran through the eyes of some of our long-time members who are still here and active in the ministry of MLC.

I have heard stories of members who have grown up in the church, I have heard of the membership trends, the ministry changes, the program changes, the leadership changes, the staff changes, the growth of our building, and the growth of our membership, as well as the losses we have incurred over these many years.

Through it all, Marco Lutheran Church has remained a **Discipling, Sharing, Serving** and **Loving** community of believers in Jesus Christ. At Marco Lutheran, we are building **disciples** through Worship and Christian Education. Then we **share** His Gospel in our community and beyond.

MLC has stayed true to the scripture, teaching and preaching the Word of God to our members and community. We strive to take Jesus outside of our walls and share His Good News with our community and world. We do this through our worship services, keeping with the tradition of our LCMS foundations and doctrine. Although in the past, we could only offer worship to those who came through our doors, with advances in technology, we are now able to put our worship services on our website, You Tube, and Facebook. This has opened our doors to people who might be homebound, might be living in other cities, states and yes, other countries.

We are also disciples of Christ through our Christian education and Bible studies. We have offered many Bible Studies over the years and strive to be offering opportunities to be in God's Word all year long. We have classes that are strictly for women, classes strictly for men, and classes that are open to anyone and we encourage all our congregation to always bring a friend to both Bible study as well as our worship services. There is no better way introduce a friend to the love of Jesus than to personally invite them to join you in one of our ministries!

Marco Lutheran is a community that **serves** God's people. We have reached into our community to serve, wanting nothing in return, but to reflect Jesus in our church and community. We serve God in worship and church ministries, we have served our community with missions such as St. Matthews House, Habitat for Humanity, Laces of Love, Our Daily Bread Food Pantry, Harry Chapin Food Pantry, the Women's Shelter, Vacation Bible School, and so many more over the past 50 years. When people see us in service, we hope they see Jesus working through us and shining into the world.

And finally, Marco Lutheran is a congregation that **Loves**. We love God through loving others. We show our love by giving back to the God who gave the ultimate for us. He gave us His Son. To honor His gift, we give back our time, our talents, and our treasures. We love others by using our gifts, in the name of Jesus Christ, to further His ministry in our church, community and world.

For 50 years, Marco Lutheran is a church that has been a beacon, sharing Christ with our community, friends, neighbors, and family. As we march into our next 50 years, I am blessed to be a part of its wonderful legacy and its promising future as we plan new ministries and missions to continue to shine the light of Christ. Come, join us on this great adventure!

SOME FOUNDATION HISTORY—KAREN KUHNLY

The origins of the Foundation go back to a Special Gifts Committee established by the Congregation in the 1980's. This committee was charged with receiving and disbursing Memorial Gifts or other Special gifts received by the congregation, it did operate as an endowment fund and was able to distribute the full amount of any gift received. In 1999 the Special Gifts Committee recognized the desirability of establishing an endowment fund wherein the principal amounts of gifts would be retained and only the income would be distributed and the Endowment Fund Committee replaced the Special Gifts Committee.

The fund grew slowly at first, but in April 2001, the Church Council adopted a resolution that all unrestricted funds from memorials or bequests would flow to the Endowment Fund. This provided a continued small growth in memorial gifts. Assets were invested with The Lutheran Community Foundation. The Committee's emphasis was on education of the congregation to the desirability of including Endowment Fund in wills. In 2006, the church received a bequest of \$2,200,000 from the estate of Lewis Konkell. The gift was unrestricted and in accordance with established policy, was transferred to Foundation.

Since its' inception. The Foundation has issued almost 200 grants to local, national and international missions totally over \$1,750,000.00!



STEWARDSHIP—LUCKY LANG

Stewardship isn't all about money, and it isn't about comparing ourselves to anyone else. Stewardship IS all about our sharing our gifts and blessings and returning thanks to God for all that he has done in our lives.

Jesus preached that we are to give of our time, talents, treasures and prayers in response to the grace freely given to us by God. Remember, financial giving isn't the only way you can be a good steward. Part of being a good steward is finding your place in service within God's Kingdom. Do you know your role? Do you need help in finding a way to commit your talents to maintaining and growing the Kingdom? Now, more than ever, there are ample opportunities for service to our fellow man – and our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. —2 Corinthians 9:7



PROPERTY BOARD—TOM KRAMER

The Property Board is responsible for the care and maintained for all church property. We look after items such as 14 air condition units, lighting, painting, lawn care, roof, doors, windows and room set up/break down for all events.

The Property Board has eight members that meet to discuss repair issues to maintain the care of the church property,



CANTATA SUNDAY & CELEBRATE—CRAIG GREUSEL

Starting with *A Shepherd's Song* in 1988, Marco Lutheran has presented an Advent Worship/Performance each year. As many of our members have normally traveled home for the holidays, a tradition of starting the Christmas season with an early advent musical offering was established. Each year the choir and guest soloists would create a “cantata-like” worship experience. Over many years we even transformed the naïve of the church by turning the seating ninety degrees to face the organ and choral area. Once, we even placed the altar in the center and created a performance in the round. When the church was going through its latest renovation the service was moved into the great room. Using a more theatrical approach became an even newer adaptation to this service format. It was decided to create a performance piece that could be used as an outreach opportunity to our community, and thusly CELEBRATE was born. For the past seven years we have included our annual showcase as an opener for the Christmas Island Style activities. By combining sacred and secular works we joyously welcome visitors and our own congregation to get into the spirit of the season.



HISTORY OF THE CHOIR—CRAIG GREUSEL

The Marco Lutheran Church Choir was a cornerstone of the early church. From its inaugural days, the founding members placed an extreme importance on musical worship. Starting out with a small group of singers, the first director, Hank Justice and accompanist Doretta Alger, developed their musical strategies. Other members included Don and Donna Rustad, the developers of the Marco/Naples Philharmonic, and Ed and Ginny Koriath, whose son Kirby was the head of the music department at Ball State University. Kirby played the dedication concert for our first organ. Other original singers included Martin Lauth and a very young Meredith Baer. In 1987 it was decided to expand the musical department by hiring on both a full-time organist, Kim Diehl, and a musical director, Craig Greusel. Over the next three decades, Marco Lutheran has proudly achieved many musical goals, establishing itself as a performance-oriented place of worship. The choir, ranging from 12 to 67 singers throughout the years, has performed anthems, cantatas, and concerts both sacred and secular in the sanctuary, the great room, and the community. The choir has been an active part of ecumenical special services, parades, as well as trolley caroling or just “Splash-mobbing” at the Esplanade.

Instrumentally, Marco Lutheran has been blessed to have had a plethora of talented musicians throughout the years. From Kim to Kay, from Margie to Lucille to Ray, and now with John Davis astounding us each week, we have been so lucky to have been a part of their musical lives. From a small spinet and a two-octave electric keyboard, our church has developed a fine array of musical hardware for our players. The Allen organ has served us well for many decades, but now we welcome our newest musical addition with the imminent installation of our Rogers Organ. Over the years we have had several wonderful pianos to play, including the Steinway in the choir room, which Larry and Eve Lindgren helped us to acquire. For our stage performances, we also enjoy the sweet sounds of the Kawaii Grand in the Great Room. Finally, we are very grateful for all of our congregation who helped us get our Bosendorfer Grand in the sanctuary, which was once owned by Victor Buono. And, as we continue into the future, we thank the excellent leadership of our Artist Series for helping us secure all of our additional technical musical needs.



CAMP ABLE—LU ANN SCHIEFEDECKER

Camp Able has been a mission project for Marco Lutheran Church since 2017. Founded in 2006 by Reverend Kyle Bennett, formerly of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Camp Able has always provided a community of unconditional love, compassion, and acceptance celebrating the individuality, and highlighting the abilities of individuals with special needs. While mini-events are hosted throughout the year, the focus of Camp Able is a creatively themed, life-changing week each July for all involved. The week offers campers, which include adults and children, the opportunity to experience activities they may never have before in a safe and loving environment. In 2017, a member of the Board of Human Care at Marco Lutheran Church met with Reverend Bennett to explore ways our church could support the camp. Providing 3 meals a day for 60 Campers and 100 staff and counselors is costly, so it was decided we would fund, prepare and serve one evening meal. This has now become an annual outreach mission for MLC.

Additionally, our support has expanded and in recent years, the Outreach Team has brought the financial needs of Camp Able to our membership's attention. The Grace Swanchak Memorial Fund has gifted scholarships as did our entire membership, raising \$7,000 in 2023 for this specific purpose.



SAILING SOLO-SHIRLEY RHODES



Sailing Solo Singles Group was started in 2015 to meet the needs of many who had been a “we” but then became a “me”. Over the past 9 years we have become a group of active singles who meet monthly to promote friendships, social contacts, involvement in group activities and to provide emotional and spiritual growth through our functions.

Throughout these years we have had many interesting speakers on various subjects, performers of the arts, craft demonstrations, a variety of games and local civic groups at our monthly meetings. We have a very active book club and Mahjong group.

Outside of our regular monthly meetings we attend various outside activities, such as tours and day trips, concerts, plays, library events, paddle boat tour, happy hours, craft shows, touring TV studios and the Naples Airport, karaoke, movies, etc.

In the last 2 years, for our December holiday meeting, our membership elected to have what we call the “Christmas Gathering of Giving”. This is a tea held in the Great Room with a guest speaker from a charitable organization that is selected for a donation. We have been able to give a \$1000 donation in 2022 to The Salvation Army of Collier County and in 2023, \$1000 to the Alzheimer’s Association of Collier County.

But perhaps the best part of Sailing Solo is the amazing friendships we have developed with God’s guidance.



An October “welcome back” meeting to our seasonal members



Monthly meeting with the Calendar Girls entertainment featuring flamingoes. Everyone got their picture taken!



We have fun, too!





HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Over the years donations funded construction of houses for at-risk families in Collier County. In addition, groups of volunteers helped build several houses. As well, pastors prayed at house dedications.

CHRISTMAS ISLAND STYLE STREET PARADE

Outreach took to the streets with award winning Christmas Island Style Parade floats matching the music to the theme: Tell Somebody about Jesus; I Believe, You Believe, We Believe; Keep Christ in Christmas



THE LAST SUPPER

In 2007, Pastor Biel wrote a script for a dramatic interpretation of the Last Supper. This has been performed about every 5 years when Easter falls at the end of March.

GRACE PLACE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

A team of volunteers regularly helped out with Family Literacy Days, Christmas gift wrapping and various facility projects.



ST. MATTHEW'S HOUSE

Pre-COVID, the Lighthouse Harbor Team monthly cooked and served a meal to approximately 120 residents at the recovery and homeless shelter.



CHURCH PLANTS

Marco Lutheran has been a strong financial and volunteer support of Thrive Community Church serving the FGCU community in Estero, Amigos Mission of SWFL in Immokalee, and Pelican Church in Golden Gate/Naples,

FEEDING THE HUNGRY

Food collection and monetary support for Our Daily Bread, help with Harry Chapin food drops, Thanksgiving Bags, and packing meals with Meals of Hope.

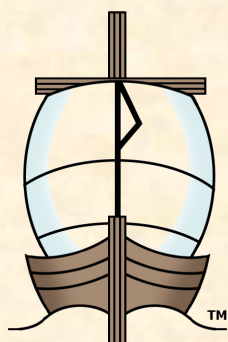


RESPONDING TO LOCAL / NATIONAL / WORLD DISASTERS

Continuing our strong Mission emphasis, recent special congregational collections resulted in support for Uvalde, the Texas Tornadoes, Ian relief and the conflict in Ukraine.

VISITING SCHOLAR

Visiting Scholar Program- Our Visiting Scholars are authors, speakers, professors, and pastors who have knowledge of Christianity in our world today. Visiting Scholar weekend brings us nationally known scholars to share their Christian worldview and contributions in education, theological studies, and other Christian interests to our congregation and community.



DISCOVER MARCO

Discover Marco is our New Members class – offered in the spring and the fall. We welcome all those who would like to become either Full or Associate members of Marco Lutheran, as well as those who have been attending MLC for years, but would like to join in the discussion on what it means to be a "LCMS Lutheran."

The year was 1974 and we have a pretty good idea what was happening on the Marco Lutheran Church front, but do we remember what was happening in the world at large? Below are some events that might jog your memory:



Major events in 1974 include the aftermath of the 1973 oil crisis and the resignation of United States President Richard Nixon following the Watergate scandal.

In the Middle East, the aftermath of the 1973 Yom Kippur War determined politics; following Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir's resignation in response to high Israeli casualties, she was succeeded by Yitzhak Rabin.

In Europe, the invasion and occupation of northern Cyprus by Turkish troops initiated the Cyprus dispute, the Carnation Revolution took place in Portugal, and Chancellor of West Germany Willy Brandt resigned following an espionage scandal surrounding his secretary Günter Guillaume.

In sports, the year was primarily dominated by the FIFA World Cup in West Germany, in which the hosts won the championship title, as well as *The Rumble in the Jungle*, a boxing match between Muhammad Ali and George Foreman in Zaire.



1974



An uncirculated 1974 PENNY is worth \$.35 in 2024!

What was life like in America 50 years ago in 1974?

-The first point that comes to mind is the cost of living. Inflation is certainly present, although some experts believe it is on the decline. World Population Review states that as of December, “the average household in the United States spends \$61,334 a year on expenses.” Almost 35% of that is aligned to household, living, rent, or mortgage costs.

-What Else (Besides Money) Was Going On 50 Years Ago?

If you flip back in your history books you will find 1974 was quite the eventful year. Let’s start with this monstrous headline from *The New York Times*: “Nixon Resigns.” Vice President Gerald Ford automatically then became the president of the United States. He would remain in office until 1977.

-What About Sports?

On January 13, 1974, the Miami Dolphins defeated the Minnesota Vikings in Super Bowl VIII. This was the last time the Dolphins won the Super Bowl. The 1974 season champion (played in January 1975) was the Pittsburgh Steelers.

-In baseball, the Oakland A’s won the World Series. The Philadelphia Flyers won the 1974 Stanley Cup. Finally, the Boston Celtics won their 12th NBA title, in an exciting seven-game series.

-In addition, the most notable sporting event of the year was none of the above. In October, Muhammad Ali took on George Foreman in the “Rumble in the Jungle.”

-Entertainment

A 31-year-old Barbara Streisand had the number one song of the year with “The Way We Were”. Other popular songs 50 years ago include “Bennie and the Jets” by Elton John, and “The Joker” by Steve Miller Band.

-The highest-grossing film of 1974 was *The Towering Inferno*, starring Steve McQueen and Paul Newman. Not too far behind that was Mel Brooks’ *Blazing Saddles*, starring Gene Wilder.

-Honorable Mention

Other notable fun facts about what life was like 50 years ago in America in 1974: a new author in his mid-20’s published his first novel entitled *Carrie*. This relatively unknown writer goes by the name of Stephen King.

-Lastly, in 50 years the world has doubled its population. *The People History* claims 4 billion people globally was met in 1974, whereas, the Census currently has the world population at 8 billion.

THE LAST SUPPER

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? - Written by Pastor Ronald Biel

March 21 & 22, 2024

*"If you would my disciple be, take up your cross and follow me,
and together we will bring in the Kingdom of the Lord!"*



We are looking for actors/readers to portray the roles of:

*Jesus, Philip, Nathaniel, Andrew, Peter, James the Less,
Matthew, James, John, Simon the Zealot,
Judas Iscariot, Thomas, and Thaddeus*

**Please Sign Up for this exciting adventure
on the Bulletin Board in the Choir Room**

Additional Choir Members are also welcome to join us for this program!

For Additional Information call 239-250-5200