



# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2025

Mission: To Follow  
Jesus and Share His  
Love

**Tanque Verde Lutheran Church**  
8625 E. Tanque Verde Rd • Tucson, Arizona 85749



# follow Jesus share love

Community



Worship



Family



Fellowship



Faith



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# A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTORS



Dear Friends,

As we reflect on this past year, our hearts are filled with gratitude. We give thanks for the many ways God has been at work in our congregation—through worship, service, fellowship, and the relationships that continue to shape our life together. We rejoice in the joy of welcoming many new members into this community and celebrating 5 baptisms, signs of new life and God’s promises among us. At the same time, we have held both joy and sorrow as we celebrated the lives of several long-time saints of TVLC, including Pastor Frank Nausin. We are grateful for their witness and the ways their faith continues to inspire us. We are also deeply thankful for the generosity and commitment of this congregation through the Enduring Grace campaign. Because of your

faithfulness, we were able to complete our Grace Upon Grace goals by paying off our remaining mortgage debt. This is a significant milestone that opens new possibilities for ministry. It has already allowed us to welcome Teila Creekmore at the beginning of 2026 as a full-time director of student and children’s ministry, will help us continue to care for and renew our aging campus, and gives us flexibility to grow in new ways in the coming year.

This year also marked an exciting new step in our ministry as we participated in Lutheran Campformation in Prescott for the first time. Both pastors, along with 11 of our students, experienced a meaningful time of worship, learning, and community. We look forward to this becoming a regular part of student ministry, and we are especially grateful for Pastor Amy’s growing leadership, including her role on the Campformation Executive Team for 2026.

Pastor Amy brings energy, care, and vision to her ministry. She stepped up this fall to lead both middle school and high school student ministry, helping to nurture faith and connection among our young people. She continues to serve the wider church through her work on the Synod Youth Advisory Team and her involvement with Campformation.

Pastor Josh’s work includes a focus on important administrative and leadership transitions that support the ongoing ministry of TVLC. This has included migrating our email and file systems to Google Workspace, as well as helping oversee transitions in preschool leadership and financial management. He also continues to serve the wider church through his role on the board of Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Arizona.

We look ahead at the coming year with hope and anticipation. God continues to open new doors for ministry, and we are excited to step forward together. We do so grounded in gratitude, strengthened by what we have accomplished, and eager to see what God will do next in and through Tanque Verde Lutheran Church.

Grace and peace,

*P. Josh*      *P. Amy*

# A MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT



Dear Friends in Christ,

This year through your extraordinary generosity, the funds raised through the Grace upon Grace campaign transformed the sanctuary kitchen into an accessible restroom, raised a significant amount of funds to pay down the mortgage balance, and helped enhance TVLC's ministries and outreach programs. Last fall, the Enduring Grace campaign was launched to raise the remaining amount needed to fully eliminate the mortgage balance. Once again, the congregation's generosity exceeded expectations and the remaining mortgage balance of \$468,947 was paid off in January 2026. With the extra \$162,000 in annual cash flow created by becoming debt-free, TVLC is now in a strengthened financial position and will be able to enhance our various ministries

and address important facility needs. TVLC's Finance Committee and church leadership facilitated the consolidation of the church's business banking activities with JP Morgan Chase to take advantage of its comprehensive range of products and services to better meet our needs. Additionally, this year we engaged the bookkeeping and payroll processing services of Clergy Financial Resources which provides specialized expertise in providing tax, bookkeeping and payroll services exclusively to clergy and religious institutions. We believe that these actions will positively impact TVLC's financial well-being and future financial planning.

TVLC experienced a net increase of 22 new members to our congregation this past year. Our baptized membership is now at 739. We have been averaging about 321 people attending in-person services and 187 people worshipping online. Our choir and musicians continue to beautifully integrate faith and music as a core part of the TVLC worship experience!

At our April 2025 Annual Congregational Meeting, Felix Jimenez, Paul Plunkett, and Grady Sakall, were elected to the Congregation Council. Two council members, Linda McDaniel and Johnice Mitchell, left Council after serving two terms. It has been a privilege to work with all the individuals who serve on Church Council. They continue to challenge and inspire me as together we discover the Lord's will here in this Christian community. We had some staff transition in 2025-2026, saying goodbye to some longtime employees and welcoming new faces. We continue to be blessed with a faithful and gifted staff that helps keep TVLC ministry running smoothly.

On September 27, 2025, a memorial service was held at TVLC for Pastor Frank Nausin who faithfully served as Lead Pastor of TVLC from 1982-2002, and again as Interim Pastor in 2016. We were able to acknowledge and celebrate his leadership, inspiration, and love that Pastor Frank poured into our congregation over the years.

## Ministry and Outreach Highlights:

- God's Work Our Hands Days of Service were observed on October 18-19, 2025, where congregants packed Hygiene Kits and Wellness Supplies for distribution. On October 18th TVLC facilitated free paper shredding and electronics recycling as well as medication disposal for the local community.
- The TVLC Endowment Committee made \$6200 in contributions to ministry projects in the community.
- TVLC's Refugee Welcome Committee and Food Ministry assists three families in becoming established in their new community.
- Your generous support of our Food Ministry enabled us to provide bountiful holiday meals and extra groceries for families at Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Our food bank provided emergency food bags for those in need in our community as well as supplemental food baskets to several other organizations to overcome food insecurity.
- Household Blessings Ministry provides kitchen/bath items, linens, furniture, clothing and other household items to those in need, including the refugee families we support. Household Blessings works with our ministry partners to supply New Home Starter Kits.

I hope in the following pages, you will rejoice in the desire our congregation has for following Jesus and sharing his love in our community and the world. If you have a passion for something you see in these pages or see the need for a ministry that inspires you, please reach out to a Council or Staff member to find your place within our community of faith.

Respectfully submitted,

# STAFF



**Josh Auchenbach**  
Lead Pastor



**Amy Janssen**  
Associate Pastor



**Russell Almand**  
Worship Leader



**Lars Andersen**  
Organist



**Dori Clark**  
Financial Administrator



**Teila Creekmore**  
Student and Children's  
Ministry Director



**Delana Connick**  
Communications Director



**Jim Liebeskind**  
Business & Facilities  
Manager



**Hashem Zarei**  
Campus Care  
Coordinator



**Sherri McClellan**  
Dir. of Worship and  
Administration



**Melissa Gutierrez**  
Preschool & Kindergarten  
Director



**Jennifer Wortman**  
Choir Director



# CONGREGATION COUNCIL



## Top Row:

Felix Jimenez  
Kris Hansen  
Tami Carrisoa (Vice President)  
Becky Copp

## Bottom Row:

Cristene York  
Kimberle Kennedy (President)  
Paul Plunkett  
Grady Sakall

**Not Pictured:** Matt Lauber, Matt Neilson & Ed Hudson (Treasurer)

The members of our Congregation Council meet monthly. Their duties include the general oversight of the life and activities of TVLC, including its worship life. They are also responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation. Members of the congregation are welcome at all meetings with exception for rare occasions that the council needs to meet in Executive Session.

## PERSONNEL

The Personnel Committee oversees activities and functions that impact the employees of TVLC. This includes providing employees with a manual that explains the work parameters and conditions of employment, ensuring salaries are competitive and that the church is a safe and supportive environment for each employee to be successful. The committee monitors changes in state laws that affect employees. Gayle Tonon chairs the committee. In addition to Gayle, current

committee members include Tami Carrisoa and Carol Paulsen in addition to Pastor Josh and Jim Liebeskind. Multiple staff positions became vacant during the previous calendar year and the personnel committee helped guide the transitions:

- Tori Wendell left her position as Children's Ministry Director to begin seminary in July 2025. Tara Hudson was hired in an interim role and served until January 2026.
- Jayle Sinclair stepped down as Student Ministry Director in July 2025. Pastor Amy provided additional leadership in this area in the interim. Marelly Lievanos also was brought on as a Student Ministry assistant in the interim.
- Jakub Rojek left his position as 10:30 Service Worship Leader in February 2025. Russell Almand was hired to fill the position in March 2025.
- Teila Creekmore was hired for the role of Student and Children's Ministry Director and began in January 2026.

Other work the committee focused on during the year was developing a checklist for employee personnel files and reviewing the personnel manual. Through the transitions, the staff performed at a high level and have continued to help Pastor Josh, Pastor Amy, and the TVLC congregation continue forward in carrying out our mission. **Gayle Tonon**

## Personnel Committee

Gayle Tonon  
Tami Carrisoa  
Jim Liebeskind  
Carol Paulsen  
Pastor Josh

# ENDURING GRACE

new horizons • growing **impact**

Our annual stewardship campaign this year was entitled **Enduring Grace**. In addition to ongoing support of TVLC's general fund, commitments were made to complete the final focus of our **Grace Upon Grace** effort - the elimination of our remaining mortgage debt. The goal was an additional \$160,000 in contributions to pay off our mortgage debt. Financial commitments to the special appeal totaled \$206,880, far surpassing our goal!

As a result, we were able to confidently pay off our remaining debt in January 2026, and will be able to complete some other much needed campus renovations as commitments come in. The renovation of the 50 year-old B2 preschool classroom that was not included in the Education Building renovation is scheduled to begin in May 2026.

General fund commitments for 2026 were also strong as we received 182 commitments totaling \$736,915. This reflected an 8.2% increase from 2025. **Pastor Josh**



# A MESSAGE FROM OUR COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

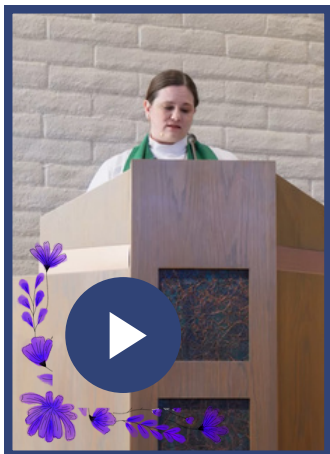


2025 was a big year for the Communications Team, as we worked to provide clear and consistent communication to all. This included the newsletter, website, graphic design, and more. Through all of these materials, we continue to share the story of TVLC and share our message with the world.

**Communications Team**  
 Delana Connick  
 Pastor Amy  
 Pastor Josh

This year in particular, we focused on growing our social media presence, which resulted in the highest levels of engagement to date. Some of the other significant projects we took on include launching a photo directory, taking new staff pictures and completely redesigning the preschool and kindergarten website to help support their efforts.

## Most Viewed Video of 2025



**Title:**  
Room For Change  
**Platform:**  
Tiktok  
**Views:**  
2147  
**Likes:**  
238  
**Saves:**  
20

A major highlight was the Enduring Grace stewardship campaign, for which the team created all graphics, print materials, and four campaign videos, contributing to a successful mortgage payoff. Additional efforts included a "God's Work, Our Hands" photo project and the design of the 2025 Annual Report, reflecting a year of creativity, collaboration, and expanded connection.

**DELANA CONNICK**



## Social Media Video Views Comparison

2023	2024	2025
8,339	52,750	95,598



# CHILDREN & STUDENTS

This year was a full and fruitful one for our children and student ministries. We were blessed to have about 60 children and 8 adult volunteers participate in Sunday School and Kid Central. We are also grateful for our awesome teen assistants, Abby Sinclair and Harrison and Lauren Reitz. From January to May, Tori Wendell guided our children with care and dedication before stepping away at summer's end to pursue her seminary studies and pastoral call. Last fall, Tara Hudson came on as Interim Children's Ministry Director, and our children continued to thrive through the Simply Loved and Be Bold children's curriculums under her steady leadership. For Christmas, Tara worked with the kids, alongside the musical talents of Russell Almand and videography by Delana Connick, to present their Christmas program "A Story for All Time", reminding us that the story of Jesus's birth isn't tucked away in the past, but remains alive and relevant for us today.

Our student ministries also had a meaningful year, with about 17 middle school and 12 high school students participating throughout the year. From January to May, Jayle Sinclair led our middle school confirmation and high school students with warmth and heart. Families gathered monthly for UNITE! – a first-Wednesday family faith night with a shared meal, informal worship with communion, and an intergenerational activity. In the spring, confirmation students explored the life of Moses, studied the Ten Commandments during Lent, and created a video with skits teaching the commandments in "kid language" for their younger friends. The season closed with a special Affirmation of Baptism for one student, a spring celebration with popcorn and a movie, and a heartfelt thank you to Jayle as she moved on from her position. In the fall, Pastor Amy stepped up to lead our student ministries with the help of Marely Lievanos, guiding confirmation students through the life and story of Jesus. We were also proud to support three young men as they participated in the Rite of Confirmation in October.

High school students connected through High School Hangouts on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month, sharing conversation, crafts, and outings together. Highlights included a New Year's campfire, an escape room challenge at Ace of Escapes, our annual end of summer day trip up Mt. Lemmon, and building gingerbread houses at Christmas. They also joined a few "Super Youth" gatherings for ELCA high schoolers across the area. And of course, there was CAMPFORMATION! This summer, 11 middle schoolers headed off with Pastor Josh and Pastor Amy for our first-ever Campformation experience. New friends, music, games, Bible study, worship, the zip line, and more made for a memorable week, and we hope to make Campformation a tradition for years to come!

As we begin this new year, we are pleased to welcome Teila Creekmore as our full-time Student and Children's Ministry Director, and we look forward to the ways she will help our ministries grow and expand for children and students of all ages. **Pastor Amy**



Golf N' Stuff



First Communion Class



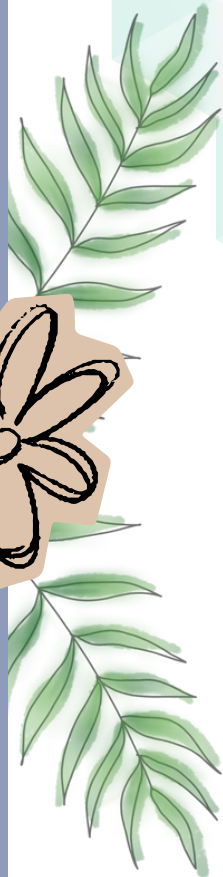
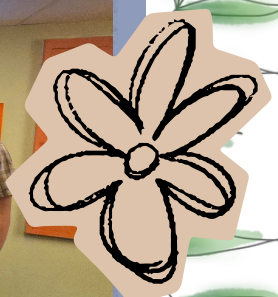
High Schoolers Staying Groovy at the Escape Room



Baptism



New friends  
Harry I have  
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# ADULT & CROSS-GEN MINISTRIES



Chili Cook-Off

## Chili Cook-Off

TVLC celebrated the 3rd Annual Chili Cook-Off on February 15. 17 chilis were entered into the contest, and Pastor Josh took home the 1st-place apron. Overall, it was a fun community event with about 75 people in attendance.

**Laura Louzensky**

## Merry Widows

Merry Widows is a group of 6-10 widows. We have experienced the loss of a partner and this group serves as a connection with others and a way to gain insight into our own grief and loneliness. We meet once a month for lunch at various restaurants. In the year 2025 the group decided to meet year-round. **Mary Jane Carter**

## Bible Study For Men

The Bible Study for Men enjoys breakfast together on the first and third Tuesdays of each month followed by Bible study. We have around 10-12 individuals who join either in person or online. This past year has included a study of the book of Revelation and reading C.S. Lewis' "Mere Christianity". **Pastor Josh**

## Companions in Grief

Companions in Grief launched last fall to support those experiencing loss. Led by Sandy Buffington, Pam Bridgmon, Deborah Maggard, Greg Paulsen, and Dori Cark in collaboration with Pastor Amy, the ministry began with a well-attended Blue Christmas service in December. Weekly gatherings started on January 9, 2026, and now meet every Thursday from 1-3 p.m. in the TVLC library, providing a space for sharing and support. **Greg Paulsen**

## Bible Study For Women

Our Women's Bible Study welcomed 20-30 participants weekly, exploring a rich range of topics: Torah foundations, the "Everything In Between" Lenten study, wisdom books (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Job), a 7-week study on Hope, Ruth, and the Advent study "Power of Yes." Each session blends biblical scholarship with discussion, video, art, prayer, music, and creative activities, written or adapted by Pastor Amy using resources from Sanctified Art, Church Anew, and BibleProject.com. In 2026, we continue Mondays at 1:00 pm in the TVLC Cactus Cafe. **Pastor Amy**

## Feast Groups

Feast Groups are small social groups of people who usually meet monthly to share a meal and/or an activity together. Feast Groups kicked-off in November 2025 and groups were organized based on availability. Group size ranges from 8-10 people. Each group organizes and plans its own get-togethers, with each member choosing a month to plan or host an event. Some events include dinners at restaurants, potluck meals in members' homes, and more. Feast Groups open each fall to anyone interested in getting to know others in our community in an informal and social way. **Nancy Jindrick**

## Caring Friends

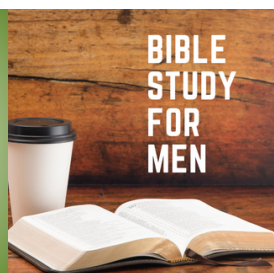
The TVLC Caring Friends ministry provides visitation and communion to homebound TVLC members. In addition to the pastors, the team consists of 6 members and regularly visits around 15 homebound individuals. **Pastor Josh**

## Prayer Ministry

This ministry, organized by volunteer Sherry Cain, distributes prayers for those in the congregation and larger community who have requested prayer intercession. This year, 234 prayer requests for individuals and families for health, strength, support, comfort, peace, healing, guidance, and sympathy were received. **Sherri McClellan**



Merry Widows Lunch



# ADULT & CROSS-GEN MINISTRIES

## Prime Timers

Prime Timers is a social group for those over 50 that gathers from September through May, with a different committee member planning each monthly outing. The committee members include David and Rosemary Brown, Phoebe Coleman, James Nelson, Carol Treese, Patrick Williams, Jeanne and Steve Wilson, and Shari Huffman. This year's adventures included touring the historic Oracle Ranch House, visiting the Rodeo Museum and Tumacácori National Historical Park, enjoying a picnic at Udall Park, and more. There is no membership fee or required attendance, simply join any event that interests you and fits your schedule. **Shari Huffman**



Prime Timers Valentine's Day Lunch At Ventana Canyon

## Growing in Faith: The Diakonia Program

Growing in Faith: The Diakonia Program is a 40+ year old ministry within the ELCA committed to fostering theological education for followers of Jesus to grow in faith with online and/or in-person communities in the Grand Canyon Synod offering classes, retreats, and mutual care to equip followers of Jesus. The program has two cohorts, Foundation Year Faith Formation Track and Practical Year Road to Service Track which are now prerequisites to the Grand Canyon Synod's (SAM) synodically authorized lay ministry program. TVLC's congregation includes 5 graduates of Diakonia Growing in Faith Program who use their spiritual gifts to faithfully serve in various capacities. **Kimberle Kennedy**



Via de Cristo Retreat

## Book Study For Women

The Women's Book Study is a small group of 4-7 women who meet weekly to read and discuss books while supporting one another through life's highs and lows. This year's book selections included "Chasing Vines" by Beth Moore, "Wearing God" by Lauren F. Winner, "The Healing Word" by Barbara Brown Taylor, and "Hidden Christmas" by Timothy Keller, sparking meaningful conversation and encouragement. **Beth Smith**

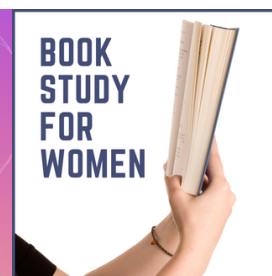


Bible Study For Women

## Via de Cristo

Via de Cristo (VdC), a community ministry at TVLC, hosts a three-day Lutheran-based weekend each fall focused on spiritual renewal, faith growth, service, and leadership through the teachings of Jesus Christ. In 2025 the weekend was held October 9-12. VdC also supports ongoing gatherings locally and across the community, and raises funds through events like Gaslight Theater performances. **Greg Paulsen**

Visit our website at [tvlc.org/events](http://tvlc.org/events) to check out all our groups, get the latest meeting times and locations, and sign up for our weekly electronic newsletter. All groups and ministries welcome new members.



# A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESCHOOL & KINDERGARTEN DIRECTOR



Dear Friends,  
Tanque Verde Lutheran Preschool/Kindergarten (TVLCPK) is a community ministry of Tanque Verde Lutheran Church (TVLC). We view each student as a child of God, created with unique developmental needs and abilities. TVLCPK offers classes for children ages 2-5, along with morning and afternoon enrichment opportunities for children ages 3-5. These enrichment classes are designed to support the varying needs and schedules of our families. Our Kindergarten program is a full-day experience that prepares students both academically and spiritually. Weekly chapel is a special highlight for both students and staff, as we come together to worship in the chapel and sanctuary. We are grateful to Cristene York and the pastoral staff for their continued support and for sharing meaningful

weekly lessons with our students. The TVLC School Board is composed of 3-5 church members who serve as voting members, along with non-voting members, including the School Director, Administrative Assistant, and Church Council Liaison. The board meets monthly to discuss, advise, and evaluate important matters concerning the school. We are truly blessed by their guidance and support.

The second half of the year brought some exciting changes. I am incredibly honored to have been named Director in June 2025. We had a very successful summer program, filling all three sessions and receiving wonderful feedback about our dedicated teachers, engaging crafts, and meaningful learning experiences.

Along the way, we experienced some staff transitions and are now fortunate to have a team of 10 committed teachers who continually invest their time in professional growth and in nurturing our students academically, socially, and spiritually. Several teachers attended a conference at the University of Arizona, supported by the church's Endowment Committee, to continue their professional growth.

Throughout the year, we host many celebrations and events that invite families into our school community and connect them with church programs. These include our Fall Festival, special Christmas chapel services, Spring Carnival, celebrations honoring mothers and fathers, and end-of-year events. TVLCPK is deeply grateful for the ongoing support of our church community. Tax credit donations from TVLC members help fund our Kindergarten program and provide scholarships for families who might not otherwise be able to attend. We are also thankful for the resources made available through Thrivent Financial, which support many of our school events. It is truly a blessing to serve alongside such dedicated educators, a supportive school board, and a caring church community. I am confident that God will continue to guide and bless our school in the year ahead.

Respectfully submitted,

**MELISSA GUTIERREZ**



# SCHOOL STAFF



**Melissa Gutierrez**  
Director



**Ashley Barbara**  
Administrative  
Assistant



**Stephanie Chadwick**  
Bunny Lead Teacher  
Lambs Assistant



**Emily Floyd**  
Bunny Lead Teacher



**Marie Goins**  
Giraffe Lead Teacher



**Erin Harayda**  
Lamb Lead Teacher



**Linda Kubiak**  
Kindergarten  
Gecko Lead  
Teacher



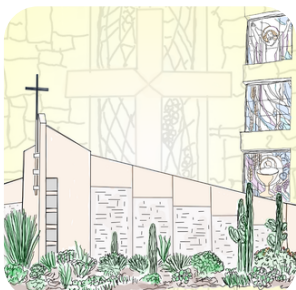
**Marlena Mendoza**  
Owl & Dolphin  
Lead Teacher



**Lesley Pinelli**  
Monkey Lead Teacher  
Giraffe Assistant



**Tarah Webb**  
Lamb Assistant



**Jannell Wheeler**  
Giraffe Lead Teacher



# WORSHIP & MUSIC

2025 began on solid ground with the leadership of with our lead pastor, Rev. Josh Auchenbach and our associate pastor, Rev. Amy Janssen. Worship was offered in the Sanctuary on Saturdays at 5:00pm and on Sundays at 9:15am in the Sanctuary, and at 10:30am in the Chapel with an average weekly attendance of 321.

Together, the pastors planned each sermon series for the year, addressing the needs of the world and our local community. The messages reminded us to “Make Room” for our Savior, look at “Everything In Between” to find God within the polarization that divides us, and find purpose “Empowered” by Jesus’ victory over death. We learned how to manage “Under Pressure” in a world of stress, and how “The Power of Yes”—just one small word—can change an entire world. The Good News was shared on Easter Sunday morning with 730 people. The Birth was announced on Christmas Eve to a crowd of 869 singing carols and sharing smiles over the glow of candlelight. Upon the departure of worship leader Jakub Rojek, we welcomed Russell Almand in March to lead the 10:30am service alongside Dale and Becky Clowers.

TVLC continues to be a strong family of members, volunteer worship leaders, altar guild (communion preparation), bread bakers, readers, ushers, acolytes, communion assistants, greeters and sanctuary decorators who are all dedicated to the gift of God’s grace.

Our Worship and Music staff and volunteers are committed to setting a scene of worship: Lars Andersen our Organist, Jennifer Wortman our Chancel Choir and Children’s Choir director, Woan Ching Lim our Chancel Choir Pianist, Russell Almand our Modern Worship Leader, Sherri McClellan our Saturday Worship Leader, Vickie Denning our Children’s Wee Sing Director, Mary Andersen, JD Davidson, and Parker Hudson our Livestream Techs, Karen Reynolds our Sanctuary Video Operator, and Greg Paulsen our Modern Worship Sound and Video Tech.

**Sherri McClellan**



## Wee Sing

Wee Sing is a choir for Pre-k through second grade. They often sing songs in the 9:15 AM service. This year they sang songs such as “Born to Bring Us Joy,” “Praise God,” “Allelu,” and more! They meet weekly on Sundays at 10:15 AM in the choir room. **Vickie Denning.**

## Chancel Choir

The Chancel Choir enjoyed a vibrant year of music, presenting over 35 anthems across diverse styles alongside local instrumentalists. Following Easter, they began a new tradition of traveling to sing with other church choirs, with plans to continue in the future. **Jennifer Wortman**

## Children’s Choir

The Children’s Choir continues to thrive with double-digit singers from 3rd–8th grade, growing each year. Volunteers Ms. Jennifer and Ms. Susan prepare monthly music for the choir. In March, five singers joined over 50 students from six Tucson churches at the Young Voices Choir Festival at St. Thomas of the Apostle, celebrating God’s gifts through music. **Jennifer Wortman**

# LIFE OF FAITH

TVLC has been involved in the Life of Faith Initiative since the fall of 2022. Its purpose is to support and equip people to live out their faith in family, workplace, school, local community, and the world to recognize and affirm God's ministry that we are already doing in our daily roles and relationships. Interview sermons have been a way to continue to highlight God's work in congregation members' daily lives. The team has also been mindful of incorporating Life Of Faith themes in our different sermon series and offering ongoing adult education opportunities.

## Life of Faith Team

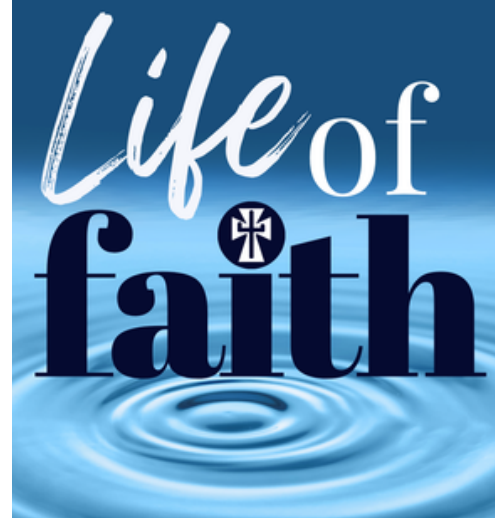
Kimberle Kennedy

Carol Paulsen

Kathy Puls

Pastor Josh

Pastor Amy



# FAITH 101

In October, Exploring Your Spiritual Gifts Course was offered to individuals who were interested in identifying their God given gifts and to understand how to use them to build up the Body of Christ. Through a series of exercises and conversation 20 attendees were guided through a 6-week process of discernment of their gifts by retired ELCA pastor, Rev. Stewart McDonald who has led this retreat multiple times with excellent results. Kim Kennedy and Carol Paulsen facilitated this educational opportunity. Stay tuned for future offerings! **Kimberle Kennedy**



# LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES

In 2025, Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest (LSS-SW), a partner supported through TVLC's benevolence budget, continued its mission of assisting individuals and families in crisis or transition, including older adults, people with disabilities, and refugees and immigrants across Southern Arizona. In addition to its financial support, TVLC expanded its hands-on involvement by forming a refugee resettlement team in mid-January that served three families, and by mobilizing in early February to provide essential supplies and gift cards to 388 newly arrived refugees after an unexpected loss of government funding. The congregation also held a Diapers and Desitin Community Baby Shower from April 27 to May 11, delivering multiple carloads of donated items such as quilts, clothing, and baby supplies, while additional contributions through Household Blessings included sewing machines, cribs, strollers, and clothing. Throughout the year, TVLC's Food Ministry supported five to six LSS-SW families each month with shelf-stable food, and in July, collected and delivered school supplies for children. **Susan Fissell**

## MOBILE MEALS

Mobile Meals of Southern Arizona—Each Friday the TVLC delivery team delivers diet-specific meals from the Mobile Meals kitchen to homebound clients. The team consists of four couples and three individuals. In 2025 the team delivered seven to nine meals each Friday. Each team member delivers no more than once a month, developing relationships with those to whom they deliver. **Carol Paulsen**

## CREATION CARE

On October 18, the team conducted its annual electronics recycling and paper shredding event, offered free to the community; this year a drug drop-off station was added. We thank the Pima County Sheriff's Department for providing the shredding trucks and assistance with traffic control and are grateful for our many church volunteers. Throughout the year we recycle printer cartridges (please, no laser cartridges!) and used eyeglasses; these can be placed in the labeled boxes located in the office workroom. **Sue Jensen**

## INTERFAITH COMMUNITY SERVICES

TVLC and ICS have been ministry partners for many years. ICS, now celebrating its 40th anniversary, assists isolated seniors, single mothers hoping to further their education, adults and children with disabilities, people in financial crisis, and families without sufficient food. The TVLC Food Ministry makes regular donations of food to the ICS Food Bank, and Household Blessings has provided many kitchen items, furniture, linens and cleaning supplies to ICS clients throughout the year. Members and friends of TVLC attend the ICS Empty Bowls fundraiser each year to support the mission of ICS. **Sue Jensen**

## LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY

Lutheran Campus Ministry continues its long-standing mission of serving students at the University of Arizona and the Tucson community by fostering an inclusive environment centered on worship, fellowship, and service. Open to all, regardless of faith background, LCM embodies hospitality by offering a welcoming space for study, connection, and spiritual growth, complete with free meals and supportive relationships. TVLC supports LCM financially, by providing meals, and through pastoral support. Pastor Josh serves on the LCM board and Pastor Amy has offered help with Wednesday night worship. **Pastor Josh**

## CHRISTMAS GIFT PROGRAM

Through the generosity of the Tanque Verde Lutheran Church community, our Children's Gift Program brought joy to 263 children across 92 families, working in partnership with 10 agencies. Donors provided thoughtful Christmas gifts tailored to each child, while the church's quilting group contributed handmade blankets that offered extra warmth and comfort to many of the youngest recipients. This collective effort reflects a deep commitment to caring for families in need during the holiday season. **Eileen Monahan & Catherine Davidson**



# ENDOWMENT

The TVLC Endowment fund was established in 1987 to provide for mission work beyond the operational budget of the congregation. The fund is invested in the ELCA Foundation Endowment Trust. At the end of 2025, the fund balance was \$170,458.

Current Endowment Fund Committee members are Kimberle Kennedy, Michele Stone, Gerald Spaniol, and Pastor Josh Auchenbach. Recipient application forms are posted on the TVLC website and distributed to selected ministries and organizations. The 2025 activity is as follows:



## 2025 Disbursement Budget: \$6200 Approved at March 2025 Church Council Meeting

\$6200	Transferred from ELCA Foundation Account to TVLC Checking.
\$1326.08	Carryforward 2024 Disbursement Funds Balance.
(\$2500)	5/25 Site Visit and distribution to Cruzando de Fronteras for food ministry of La Casa de Misericordia
(\$1305)	10/25 Southern Az Association for the Ed of Young Children Conference for Preschool staff development.
(\$1200)	10/25 Laminating Machine purchase for TVLC Preschool & Church
(\$2500)	10/25 UofA Lutheran Campus Ministry Technology Update Grant
\$21.08	Balance Carryforward to 2026

We invite you to consider memorial gifts to the Endowment Fund and to include the Endowment Fund in your planned giving. Also, if you know of ministry opportunities that could use the support of the endowment, contact one of the committee members. **Kimberle Kennedy**

# LIBRARY & GIFT SHOP

The TVLC Library & Gift Shop continues to serve members, visitors, preschool and kindergarten families, and the broader community with a diverse collection of over 8,200 items, including books, games, CDs, and DVDs. In 2025, 274 new items were added through generous donations, and 674 items were borrowed. With the support of a valued partner, the Children’s Book Giveaway distributed hundreds of nearly-new books to families, schools, shelters, and community organizations, alongside a separate giveaway of adult books, CDs, and DVDs. The Gift Shop, located within the library, offers cards, books, jewelry, seasonal décor, and handcrafted items, with proceeds supporting the Library, Grace Upon Grace, and other TVLC ministries. **Julie Muirhead**





## Baby Hats

A clean, warm and dry head covering at birth can be lifesaving for newborns, and baby hats play an essential role in home, emergency and hospital births by preventing heat loss and helping infants adjust to their new environment. Through God's work and your hands, each hat is a meaningful blessing that continues to make a life-saving impact time and again. In 2025, 580 and 520 hats were sent to Indonesia, and 470 hats were provided to Global Health Ministries in Minnesota, which includes baby hats in its birth kits and serves 13 lower income countries across Central America, Asia and Africa through partners who reached more than one million people last year.

**Sandy Buffington**



## School Supplies

In July 2025 TVLC held a successful school supplies drive, collecting craft supplies, notebooks, backpacks, paper, pencils, pens, crayons, erasers, staplers, file folders and many other assorted classroom necessities. Supplies were delivered to the TVLC Preschool and Kindergarten, Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest, Wheeler Elementary School, Miles School, Emerge Center Against Domestic Abuse, and multiple refugee families. An Amazon wish list of the most-needed supplies was provided and proved helpful to many shoppers.

**Sue Jensen**



## Haiti Ministry

TVLC continues to support our ministry partners in Haiti through creative and impactful outreach efforts. In 2025 a total of 40,000 cans were donated, generating \$892 to help provide stability and resources for those in need. At the same time, 35,000 pull tabs were collected from these cans and donated to the Ronald McDonald House, extending the ministry's impact even further. The Hole-In-One for Haiti Golf Outing returned in January 2026 and raised \$6,700.

**Ralph Lucht**

The knitters are devoted to charity, education, companionship and fun. The group knits for a variety of charities including Project Linus which distributes handmade blankets to children who are seriously ill or injured, the Baby Hat ministry, sweaters and hats for students in the Navajo nation, and hats and shawls. They average 5-6 knitters weekly and 12 on their monthly Saturday gathering. They welcome all who knit or crochet, including those who want to learn.

**Connie Mallette**



## Knitters





## Food Ministry

The Food Ministry team is deeply grateful for the generous support of the TVLC congregation, which enables outreach to individuals and families experiencing food insecurity throughout the year. In 2025, new initiatives included expanded pantry storage, reusable decorative delivery bags with custom labels, congregation packed rice bags, and a collaboration with Household Blessings that provided 22 grocery bags to families in need. The ministry continues its longstanding holiday outreach, serving 77 families at Easter, 112 at Thanksgiving, and 110 at Christmas, along with 236 children who received gift bags. Holiday food bags filled with donated pantry staples, fresh items, and frozen meats were packed and delivered by congregation members. Beyond seasonal efforts, the ministry now provides ongoing monthly support with food deliveries and collected donations, including contributions to the UA Campus Pantry. Additional outreach included a May food drive for veterans that gathered 3,868 food items and 160 pounds of pet food, as well as an October drive that collected 4,447 items and 414 pounds and 884 dollars in donations. Congregation members remain actively involved through organizing, packing, and delivering food, helping sustain a growing and impactful ministry.

**Susan Fissell**



## Refugee Welcome Team

In 2025, the Refugee Ministry at TVLC carried out its work during a year of significant national challenges, as changes in U.S. policy suspended new refugee admissions and sharply reduced funding and staffing for resettlement agencies. Despite these obstacles, the team remained actively engaged, receiving training early in the year and supporting two Venezuelan families already in Tucson. Throughout the year, volunteers provided ongoing assistance with housing, childcare, school enrollment, employment guidance, transportation, and English language learning, while also building strong, supportive relationships. Both families made meaningful progress toward stability, with adults securing employment and children thriving in school. The ministry also organized weekly English classes, hosted regular support visits, and helped both families navigate important legal and financial processes, including tax preparation and steps toward permanent residency. Even as new refugee arrivals paused, the ministry continued its mission by walking alongside families in need, demonstrating resilience, compassion, and a deep commitment to service.

**Abigail Byrd**



## Household Blessings

Household Blessings expanded its impact in 2025 by providing household items, clothing, and essential supplies to individuals and families through partnerships with more than 50 community agencies. Shoppers visited weekly to select needed items, while the team sorted donations monthly and distributed goods across Tucson. Special events included God's Work Our Hands, where Sunday School children helped create and fill over 125 Thanksgiving bags for nine agencies and prepared dog food for outreach, as well as participation in La Frontera's Winter Resource Fair, where items, hygiene bags, and treats were shared with residents. With support from Thrivent and the congregation, the ministry also hosted youth service nights, organized a successful cleaning supply drive, and partnered with the Food Ministry to provide groceries to shoppers, making 2025 a year of meaningful growth and service.

**Donna Elmquist**



# GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS.

TVLC's annual "God's Work. Our Hands." Days of Service took place in October 2025, bringing together volunteers and community partners for a weekend of meaningful outreach. On Saturday Morning, October 18, the Creation Care Ministry partnered with the Pima County Sheriff's Department and Grumper Recycling to host a free community event offering electronics recycling, Dispose-a-Med services, and paper shredding. Nearly 300 vehicles went through the line, with many attendees also donating food and cash to support TVLC's Food Ministry. That evening, hygiene kits in reusable sacks were assembled for refugees served by Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest. Washcloths, soaps and toothbrushes were among the items joyfully packed. On Sunday, October 19, volunteers of all ages assembled bag lunches for day workers at the Primavera Men's Shelter and packed rice for families in need. During the rice-packing effort, approximately 18 volunteers prepared 180 bags using 350 pounds of rice, which were distributed for Thanksgiving and Christmas. TVLC extends its gratitude to all volunteers, the Sheriff's Department for providing shredding trucks and support, Boy Scout Troop 141, and Thrivent for their generous contributions. **Johnice Mitchell**





### GWOH Photo Project

God is at work in every moment of our lives, from big events to even the most mundane. During the month of October, TVLC asked the congregation to send photos of their hands. We then printed all of the photos and displayed them for several weeks. At the end of the project, we encouraged everyone to take a photo with them and to remember the work that God does through our hands everyday. **Delana Connick**



### Women's Retreat

The annual Women's Retreat was held February 1, in Linder Hall. The theme was "Wandering Women: The Peril of Dismissing Feminine Strength." Twenty-seven women attended. We heard from lesser-known Old Testament women in Exodus and Judges about listening to God's calling. These women defied Pharoah and other leaders to do what was right and necessary to save the people of God and lead them away from sin and into covenant with God. We laughed, we were amazed by the dangerous things these women did to obey God, and we dressed up and encouraged one another to be bold and strong when God calls upon us. **Erin Cowan**



### Quilters

The TVLC quilting group serves the congregation and community through monthly gatherings in Linder Hall, bringing together members and local participants who share a passion for sewing. The group creates quilts for pastoral care visits, contributes to church traditions such as the chili cook-off apron, and provides handmade baptismal blankets, bags, and embroidered cloths for services. As a self sufficient ministry, it funds its work through sales at the annual November craft event, provides quilts for staff milestones, and supports Lutheran World Relief with donated quilts, remaining committed to serving through the talents of its members. **Karen Yodice**



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