

2025 Annual Meeting Report
February 1, 2026
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Agenda for the Congregation Annual Meeting February 1, 2026

1. Call to Order (Jeff)
2. Establish quorum
3. Prayer (Pastor)
4. Secretary's Report:
 - a. Minutes of the Annual Meeting January 26, 2025 (Debby)
5. Election of Council Members (Jeff)
 - a. (3 vacancies – Full Term)
6. Reports:
 - a. Treasurer's Report
 1. 2025 Year End Report
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 1. Property/Work Crew
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7. Report of Election
8. Election of Nominating Committee member
9. Installation of New Council Members
10. Adjourn
11. Lord's Prayer

Faith Lutheran Church of Rotonda West Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes January 26, 2025

President Jeff Kamm called the meeting to order at 9:35am. Thirty-eight voting members of the congregation were present which constitutes a quorum. Pastor Brian Armen opened the meeting by leading the congregation in prayer.

Jim Hughs moved to appoint Debby Porter as recording secretary for the meeting, seconded by Harold Schultz. Motion carried. Linda Jackling then moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes from the 2024 annual meeting. Jim Taylor seconded the motion, the motion carried. A motion to approve the minutes for filing was made by Sandy Cox, seconded by Noma Hicks, the motion carried. All voting was done by voice acclamation.

The nomination committee consisting of Jeff Petersen, Jay Fisher and Kathie Wiley submitted names to be placed on the ballot for the three open 3 year terms. The nominees are: Jeff Petersen (2nd term), Jim Porter and Dave Woodliff. President Jeff opened the floor for nominations, as there were none Jim Hughs moved to close the nominations and for the secretary to cast a written unanimous ballot for the 3 nominees. Kay Culver 2nd the motion which carried by voice vote.

Every three years the ELCA revises and mandates changes to the model constitution. These need to be voted on to update Faith's constitution.

The council has also recommended a change specific to Faith's constitution pertaining to a vacancy on council. The constitution currently states” council shall elect a replacement to fill a vacancy until the next congregational meeting”. The council recommends replacing the word shall with may. Jim Hughs moved to accept the change as recommended by council, 2nd by Jeff Petersen, motion carried.

The treasurer's report for 2024 and the proposed budget for 2025 were presented for review. The pastoral reduced, share time budget for 2024 was \$207,000. Giving for 2024 was about \$179,000 leaving a \$28,000 shortfall. Investment income for the year was good, earning enough to bridge the gap. The 2025 budget includes an approximate \$6,000 increase due strictly to increase costs and cost of living increases for staff other than the Pastor's salary. Jim Taylor moved to accept the 2024 treasurer's report and the 2025 budget as presented, seconded by Sandy Cox. The motion carried by voice vote. Pastor Armen then pointed out that on the last page of the budget in the over/under column of figures the lines were off sync by one row.

Per the constitution, a nominating committee for 2025 is to be formed with three members, one of which is an outgoing member of council. This is a one year term with no re-election, therefore members of the 2024 committee cannot serve again on the 2025 committee. Jeff Kamm volunteered to serve on the committee as the outgoing council member. Jeff then opened nominations from the floor. Ken Stephens and Jim Taylor volunteered to serve. Mary Lou Fitzgerald made a motion to close the nominations and appoint these three volunteers as the 2025 nominating committee. A second was made by Kay Culver. The motion passed.

The next order of business was to elect delegates to the Florida-Bahama Synod Assembly to be held the 12-14th of June. One male and one female delegate is preferred. As no nominations were made this vote will be tabled for council to elect in the Spring.

The Pastor's report, parochial report, president's report and committee reports for 2024 were presented for review. Debby Porter noted that in the last paragraph of the Worship and Music report the name Cyndi Carley should be corrected to Cyndy Hoops. Linda Jackling moved to receive the reports from the 2024 annual report as corrected. Linda Schultz seconded the motion. The motion passed.

New council members, Jeff Petersen, Jim Porter and Dave Woodliff were then installed by Pastor Armen. The congregation pledged their support and welcomed the new council members.

The outgoing council members, Jay Fisher and Jim Taylor were called to the front by Pastor. Acknowledgment of their time and service was made. Then Pastor offered a prayer of thanks and appreciation.

Several announcements were made by President Jeff Kamm.

Council has recommended that a committee be formed to help with funeral arrangements and the fellowship time afterwards. A coordinator is needed plus committee members.

Please see Jeff to volunteer or for more information.

Jim Hughs is stepping down as coordinator for the property committee after many years of serving in this capacity. A new coordinator is needed.

Marcia Wilkins is stepping down as coordinator for the ushers after many years of serving. A new coordinator is needed. Primary responsibility is to recruit ushers and make a schedule twice a year.

Many thanks and appreciation to both members for their service to Faith.

Please see Jim, Marcia or Jeff Kamm if interested in volunteering.

Our outdoor bell system is not functioning properly. The top bell and speaker on the tower was blown off by Hurricane Milton. The telephone pole the bells/speakers are mounted on is the main issue. Decisions need to be made whether to fix the current system, replace the system or do away with an outdoor bell/speaker system. Please share your thoughts with members of council.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Sandy Cox and seconded by Kay Culver. Motion carried, Jeff Kamm adjourned the meeting at 10:20am, with the traditional dismissal by Pastor Armen.

Respectfully Submitted,
Deborah Porter, recording secretary

Faith Lutheran Church Congregational Meeting Minutes
Call Committee
Date: Sunday, September 14, 2025

Attendees: A quorum of 38 members was present.

1. Call to Order - The meeting was called to order by Council President Jeff Kamm at 11:47 AM.
2. Opening Prayer - Pastor Syl opened the meeting with a prayer.
3. Call Committee Selection Process - Council President Jeff Kamm provided an overview of the selection process for the Call Committee. He explained how the committee would be chosen, which would consist of six members and one alternate.
4. Motion and Vote - The floor was opened for questions. Hearing none, Jim Hughes made a motion to select the following members:
 - Larry Bennett
 - Ernie Ovitz
 - Debby Porter
 - Ruthie Rohrbach
 - John Schleede
 - Bob Wormuth
 - Jan Moynihan (alternate)

Kathy Wiley seconded the motion. The congregation voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

5. Next Steps - Jeff then described the next steps in the process, noting that due to budgeting concerns, the congregation may need to look into a Shared Time arrangement.
6. Adjournment - Chris Banting moved to close the meeting, and Kathy Wiley seconded the motion. President Jeff Kamm adjourned the meeting at 11:56 AM.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT 2025

Committee Members: Jeff Kamm, Ken Stephens, Jim Taylor

The committee has been diligently searching for three candidates willing to run for 3-year terms on the congregational council for 2026-2029. These members have agreed to serve: Jeff Kamm (agreed to another term)

Jan Moynihan
Ken Stephens

Faith Lutheran Church - Rotonda West FL
Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2025

Thursday, January 29, 2026

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Account #	Account Name	YTD Balance
Assets		
1.10.101	Checking - Crews Bank	30,365.66
1.10.102	Savings Account - Crews Bank	1,347.95
1.10.104	ELCA Federal Credit Union (CLOSED)	0.19
1.10.201	Mission Investment Fund - ELCA	59,224.58
1.20.101	Thrivent TMAFX Mod Ag-S 4678	86,019.84
1.20.103	Thrivent TLVIX Lg Cap Val -S 9287	109,331.95
	Total Assets	\$286,290.17
Fund Balances		
3.10.100	GENERAL(BUDGET) FUND	(3,037.47)
3.20.100	<i>UNRESTRICTED FUNDS</i>	
3.20.101	Pooled Interest/Change in NAV Balance	86,698.13
3.20.110	Undesignated Fund	20,546.98
3.20.150	Parsonage Fund Balance	135,543.08
	<i>Total UNRESTRICTED FUNDS</i>	<i>\$242,788.19</i>
3.40.100	<i>RESTRICTED FUNDS</i>	
3.20.120	Pass Through (Comment) Balance	15.00
3.20.123	St Francis Food Pantry Balance	475.00
3.20.124	Lilly/Poinsettia Balance	386.12
3.20.126	Kid's Needs Balance	175.00
3.20.127	Chick's Ministries Balance	445.01
3.40.109	Wedding/Funeral Fees Balance	4,240.11
3.40.110	Emergency Assistance Balance	1,939.41
3.40.111	Altar Flowers & Candles	(96.05)
3.40.112	Music	1,993.62
3.40.113	Landscape	1,129.62
3.40.114	Thrivent Choice	2,219.45
3.40.115	Memorial Garden & Gazebo	7,408.16
3.40.120	Ministry Opportunities (Youth/Shawl/Drama/PotLuck)	1,054.99
3.40.121	Love and Serve (Camper Lunch) Balance	4,187.28
3.40.200	Capital Improvement Fund	7,042.70
3.40.300	Endowment Fund	13,924.03
	<i>Total RESTRICTED FUNDS</i>	<i>\$46,539.45</i>
	Total Fund Balances	\$286,290.17
	Total Liabilities and Fund Balances	\$286,290.17

Faith Lutheran Church - Rotonda West FL
Treasurer's Report as of December 2025 for General (Budget) Fund
Thursday, January 29, 2026

Account #	Account Name	2024 YTD	2025 YTD	Proposed	
				2025 Budget	2026 Budget
Income					
4.10.100	Envelopes/Pledges	156,761.65	138,583.87	160,000.00	145,950.00
4.10.101	Loose (Cash/Checks)	19,670.44	17,374.03	18,000.00	19,750.00
4.10.102	Other Inc/Special Worship Services	786.00	1,182.00*	1,000.00	980.00
4.10.105	Interest	1,093.48	862.37	1,000.00	925.00
4.10.107	Transfer from Savings (or additional giving)	0.00	10,000.00	33,000.00	12,630.00
	Total Income	\$178,311.57	\$168,002.27	\$ 213,000.00	\$ 180,235.00
Expense					
Benevolence					
	Total Benevolence	\$8,400.00	\$8,600.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 8,400.00
Pastoral Compensation					
	Total Pastoral Compensation	\$50,029.64	\$16,666.64	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
Total Staff Compensation					
	Total Staff Compensation	\$46,723.26	\$47,716.99	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 49,500.00
Pastoral Ministry Expense					
	Total Pastoral Ministry Expense	\$31,691.98	\$35,043.85	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 5,900.00
Worship & Music					
5.10.301	Worship Supplies	1,037.17	326.08	1,500.00	
5.10.306	Instrument Maintenance	0.00	300.00	500.00	
	Total Worship & Music	\$1,037.17	\$626.08	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,900.00
Administration					
5.10.501	Church Supplies (consumables)	995.03	2,977.02	1,500.00	2,500.00
5.10.504	U.S. Postage	277.35	302.00	500.00	500.00
5.10.505	Office Machine Expenses	3,228.34	4,228.97	4,700.00	4,700.00
5.10.507	Membership Fees	221.07	58.00	300.00	200.00
5.10.508	Church Utilities and Alarm Monitoring	12,477.22	8,430.02	9,700.00	8,000.00
5.10.509	Church Telephones	2,973.09	4,262.29	2,800.00	3,000.00
5.10.510	Church Technology	1,559.74	2,673.54	1,500.00	1,500.00
	Total Administration	\$21,731.84	\$22,931.84*	\$ 21,000.00	\$ 20,400.00

**Faith Lutheran Church - Rotonda West FL
Treasurer's Report as of December 2025 for General (Budget) Fund**

Thursday, January 29, 2026

Account #	Account Name	2024 YTD	2025 YTD	2025 Budget	Proposed 2026 Budget
<i>Leadership and Training</i>					
5.10.601	Stewardship	511.93	549.00	700.00	600.00
5.10.602	Evangelism	0.00	508.22	200.00	100.00
5.10.603	Publicity	3,258.42	2,744.00	3,250.00	2,000.00
5.10.605	Mid Gulf Conference	0.00	250.00	250.00	250.00
5.10.606	Synod Assembly	1,489.42	625.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
5.10.607	Fellowship	150.00	8.00	400.00	500.00
5.10.608	Education	50.00	325.00	200.00	100.00
	Total Leadership and Training Expense	\$5,459.77	\$5,009.22	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 5,550.00
<i>Total Property</i>					
5.10.703	Lawn Service	4,035.00	5,104.16	5,000.00	4,500.00
5.10.704	Maintenance (Interior/Exterior)	9,352.76	8,001.04	12,000.00	12,000.00
5.10.706	Insurances	12,896.99	13,429.18	12,000.00	13,000.00
5.10.709	Real Estate Tax	6,838.84	6,976.10	8,000.00	7,500.00
	Total Property	\$33,123.59	\$33,510.48	\$ 37,000.00	\$ 37,000.00
	Total Expense	\$198,197.25	\$170,105.10	\$ 213,000.00	\$ 189,100.00
	Difference	(\$19,885.68)	(\$2,102.83)		

Faith Lutheran Church - Rotonda West FL
Consolidated Fund Activity Report as of 12/31/2025

Thursday, January 29, 2026							Page 1 of 1
Account #	Account Name	Beg Balance	Receipts	Disbursements	Transfers/JE's	End Balance	
3.10.100	GENERAL(BUDGET) FUND	(434.64)	168,002.27	170,105.10	(500.00)	(3,037.47)	
3.20.100	UNRESTRICTED FUNDS						
3.20.101	Pooled Interest/Change in NAV Balance	68,276.72	30,953.86	12,532.45	0.00	86,698.13	
3.20.110	Undesignated Fund	19,806.98	740.00	0.00	0.00	20,546.98	
3.20.150	Parsonage Fund Balance	135,543.08	0.00	0.00	0.00	135,543.08	
3.40.100	RESTRICTED FUNDS						
3.20.120	Pass Through (Comment) Balance	(400.00)	1,495.00	1,080.00	0.00	15.00	
3.20.121	God's Work Our Hands Balance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
3.20.122	Golf Outing Balance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
3.20.123	St Francis Food Pantry Balance	300.00	175.00	0.00	0.00	475.00	
3.20.124	Lilly/Poinsettia Balance	232.96	313.00	159.84	0.00	386.12	
3.20.125	Meals on Wheels Balance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
3.20.126	Kid's Needs Balance	0.00	175.00	0.00	0.00	175.00	
3.20.127	Chick's Ministries Balance	500.00	50.00	104.99	0.00	445.01	
3.40.109	Wedding/Funeral Fees Balance	6,442.23	1,000.00	3,202.12	0.00	4,240.11	
3.40.110	Emergency Assistance Balance	1,939.41	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,939.41	
3.40.111	Altar Flowers & Candles	10.28	0.00	106.33	0.00	(96.05)	
3.40.112	Music	1,874.42	150.00	30.80	0.00	1,993.62	
3.40.113	Landscape	1,129.62	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,129.62	
3.40.114	Thrivent Choice	1,339.45	1,780.00	900.00	0.00	2,219.45	
3.40.115	Memorial Garden & Gazebo	7,616.25	400.00	608.09	0.00	7,408.16	
3.40.120	Ministry Opportunities (Youth/Shaw/Drama/PotLuck)	1,054.99	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,054.99	
3.40.121	Love and Serve (Camper Lunch) Balance	3,510.70	3,105.00	2,428.42	0.00	4,187.28	
3.40.200	Capital Improvement Fund	7,042.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,042.70	
3.40.300	Endowment Fund	13,924.03	0.00	0.00	0.00	13,924.03	
Total		\$269,709.18	\$208,339.13	\$191,258.14	(\$500.00)	\$286,290.17	

Faith Lutheran Church - Rotonda West, FL
Comparison of Income

	Year End 2023	Year End 2024	Year End 2025	2026 Budget
Income from:				
Envelopes/ Pledges	153,932.95	156,361.65	138,583.87	145,950.00
Loose (Cash/Checks)	17,274.25	20,020.44	17,374.03	19,750.00
Other Income/ Special Services	6,801.62	786.00	1,182.00*	980.00
Interest	2,101.42	1,093.48	862.37	925.00
Transfer from Savings	0.0	0.0	10,000.00	12,630.00
Total	180,110.34	178,261.57	168,002.27	180,235.00

2025 Annual Report From the Pastor

My dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

One day, while He was teaching in the Temple, our Lord Jesus noticed a poorly dressed widow near the offering box. He observed how the crowd tossed money into the collection box and how some of the wealthy individuals made large contributions. Then, Jesus saw the widow coming up and placing a small donation in the box (Mark 12:41-44; Luke 21:1-4).

Overall, the widow's donation meant almost nothing to the Temple's finances. If this were today, no priest would be taking a picture of her holding a giant paper check to post on the Temple's Facebook page. It meant almost nothing in the eyes of the world. Yet Jesus said that she had given more than all the others. Jesus said that all the others gave what they would never miss, but she gave extravagantly what she couldn't afford. She gave her all.

This story is not about size. It is about the heart. It is not about how much the offering was, but what that offering represented. God does not measure the way that men or the world measures. God looks at faithfulness. God looks at love. God looks at how willing we are to make an impact in the little corner of the world He entrusted us with, and God looks at how small things can become great.

We have not been together for long, but I can say I know you, my dear church, a bit better now. I want you to hear this with your whole heart: As long as we are faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, even if we are small in number or in any of the world's measurement scales, we are giants in God's kingdom.

When I look at you, I do not see something lacking. I see people who keep showing up. I see prayers that rise like light in the morning. I see hands that still reach out. I see hearts that still hope. Rest assured, these are not small things in God's eyes. They are dear to the Lord. We may not know what tomorrow will bring. But we know who walks with us today. Christ is our strength, our guide, our rest, and the sole reason for us to give it all.

So let us keep walking together, knowing that we may feel small, but in God's hands, we stand tall. We will continue to be faithful, and in the kingdom of God, that is what matters.

Blessings,

Pastor Syl Estevez

Parochial Statistics Report 2025

Following are the statistics for the year 2025:

Baptisms: 0

Confirmed: 0

Weddings: 0

New Members: 0

Deaths: 3

Removed (by request or by council): 35

Current Membership: 109

2025 President's Report

2025 was a milestone year for Faith Lutheran in many ways. At the start of February, Pastor Brian Armen announced he would be retiring from Faith Lutheran at the end of April. Things started to move very fast from there on. The Church Council was introduced to Pastor Nicole Eastwood, Assistant to the Bishop in charge of Pastoral Transition, on February 19th to begin our search for an interim pastor.

Damaged during the hurricanes of 2024, the church bell tower needed repairs. We struggled to find contractors that were interested in taking on the project. Down to one last bidder, we were finally able to complete the project at the end of September.

On March 23rd we celebrated Faith Lutheran's 50 years of ministry in Rotonda. What a celebration it was! The event was held at the Rotonda West Community Center with over 100 people in attendance. Pastor Kelly returned for the event as well as Pastor Hamm, representing the Florida-Bahama Synod. It was joyous time for all in attendance.

April 27th was Pastor Brian Armen's final service at Faith. After 2 months without word from the synod about an interim pastor, Pastor Brian reached out to one of his friends, Pastor Bill Beljean, to assist Faith. Pastor Beljean met with the council and said he would do all he could to breach our pastoral gap until we could find an interim pastor. In late May, Pastor Nicole Eastwood provided us with the name of a pastor currently serving First Presbyterian Church in Port Charlotte, Pastor Syl Estevez. Pastor Beljean served the congregation May through June, Pastor Syl came to us as our interim pastor and started his ministry at Faith at the beginning of July. Since his arrival, Pastor Syl has been a great blessing for us all at Faith.

With First Presbyterian having worship from 9-10am, we pushed our service start time to 10:45am. A blessing in disguise has been the Lutheran Chicks starting a pre-service fellowship coffee hour. This has turned out to be a big hit with our members! During the month of July, we stopped the use of all print media for advertising. Print media has become expensive, and the word is most people new to an area are using the internet to research churches. This move resulted in a savings/avoidance of approximately \$7,500/year. In August, we completed a review of our membership roll. After reaching out via e-mail and telephone to all members that have been inactive for over 2 years, we removed 35 members from our roll which now stands at 109 active members.

With Pastor Syl in place as our Interim Pastor, the next part of the pastoral search process was to assemble the Call Committee. The process started in late July and culminated with the congregation approving the Call Committee during a special meeting on September 14th. Pastor Nicole Eastwood, met with the Call Committee via Zoom and provided them with their instructions on October 16th. The call committee put in a lot of hard work and expeditiously completed the Congregation's Ministry Site profile. This document tells who we are and what we're looking for in a pastoral candidate. It's used as a matching tool between congregations and candidates. As of this writing, the Call Committee has requested to interview Pastor Syl Estevez and is waiting for further direction from Pastor Nicole Eastwood / Synod.

I hope all of you appreciate the upgrades to the Congregation's monthly newsletter that started in August. Pastor Syl spearheaded this effort, and it goes a long way to improving communication with what's happening in the life of our congregation and its members. One of the benefits of sharing a pastor with another congregation is expanding your circle of friends in Christ. We got our first taste of this (pardon the pun) on October 9th, with the first inter-congregational potluck that we shared with and was hosted by First

Presbyterian in Port Charlotte. It was a great time for all in attendance and I look forward to returning the favor. In another beautiful sharing event, Faith and First Presbyterian collaborated on reciprocating Christmas Cantatas on December 7th and 14th. Both were truly wonderful events that were enjoyed by both congregations.

On the financial front, our giving is down over 10% year over year (see the financial inserts in the report for details). As previously mentioned, our roll numbers are declining and this is challenging. The good news is our expenses have also dropped. Income and expenses are very closely matched. This is essentially due to the absence of the costs associated with a full-time pastor. Our balance sheet remains strong due to good financial planning and solid investment returns.

I thank you for allowing me to serve you the past two years and I look forward to growing with you in Christ in the years to come.

Respectfully,

Jeff Kamm

Council President

2025 CHURCH PROPERTY MAINTENANCE REPORT

For a change from recent years, we have not had to pick up after a hurricane.

Two of our air conditioning units are limping along and will be replaced as soon as they fail.

Below is a listing of other tasks the work crew has accomplished:

Replaced light bulbs as needed.

Sprayed weeds around the church perimeter and memorial garden.

Spread mulch around trees.

Cut down dead trees and removed.

Fertilized plants around the church.

Organized the garage, threw away unneeded items.

Foam noodle materials replaced on AC lines as needed.

Trimmed heavily on the memorial garden.

Set up and put away Christmas decorations.

Set up memorial garden for sunrise Easter service.

Sprayed modular siding for green moss.

Toilets fixed in women's restroom repaired.

Sanded and painted railing leading to modular.

Cleaned gutters as needed.

Drank copious amounts of coffee and consumed lots of goodies.

-Jeff Petersen and Dave Johnsen

2025 Education Report

Faith Lutheran continues to provide educational opportunities for its members by offering Adult Sunday and Mid-Week Bible / Book studies.

Sunday School conducted two sessions with one in the Winter / Spring and another in the Fall. Sunday School was adjourned during the Summer months. During the Winter / Spring session, Sunday School utilized a Max Lucado study guide to review and study the New Testament book of Ephesians. During the Fall session, the class again utilized a Max Lucado resource for a Study/Review of the Life Lessons of 1st Corinthians. The class averaged 6 people in attendance with as many as 10 on occasion. Classes are structured where at any time people can join the class and contribute and learn without preparation. Classes are held in the “Outback”.

Mid-Week Bible study provides another Learning / Fellowship opportunity for our worship community. This growth opportunity continues to be held twice per month in the “Outback”. Early in 2025, the group completed a study titled “Hitchhiking with the prophets, an Old Testament overview”. The next session focused on a Study of Parables. The group most recently finished a study on Angels of Christmas Hope. The real value of these study opportunities is the learning experience that comes from the discussion with other believers.

Christian Education in our congregation is a resource that is underutilized. Everyone can benefit from these opportunities.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeff Kamm

Faith's Memorial Garden 2025

Faith's Memorial Garden, over nine years old, continues to be a place of peace, meditation, remembrance, internment and worship. It is such a restful place, it is beautiful, so serene, a wonderful place to meditate and just sit and take in nature. Most of the time you can hear the sounds of nature all around. Just outside the gated area the space was used for early worship services during the early months of the year. People brought their own chairs or sitting in their cars.

The Garden continues to be overseen by a committee consisting of Jim Hughs, Marcia Wilkins, Mary Lou Fitzgerald, Linda Bennet, Noma Hickock, Jay Fisher, Harold and Linda Schultz. Gardening is done sporadically by Linda and Harold Schultz, Marcia Wilkins, Jay Fischer, Kendra Evans, Mary Lou Fitzgerald, Dave Woodliff and the Tuesday morning work crew. Because of the heat and wet conditions during the summer, the garden "took off" and a major trim still has to be scheduled. Thank you to all of those involved with the garden for your help. We always welcome new members to both the committee and to help with gardening. Just let me know—Mary Lou Fitzgerald. Just a minimum number of meetings and hopefully monthly sprucing up the area.

During the past year the following has taken place in/and immediately outside the garden:

To commemorate Faith's 50th Year Anniversary in May, bricks were placed adjacent to the bottom of the tear drop for Pastors of Faith:

Karl Kaltreider
Carl Kelley
Patricia Large
Brian Armen

Bricks for the following were ordered in 2025 and will be placed along the sidewalk in January 2026.

- Jack Myers,
 - Verne Newlon,
 - Bobbie Hildebrant
 - Bill Speth
- Robert Baran cremains will be interred in late January 2026 and placed beside the cross.

A storage bench was purchased to help with care of the garden.

Last year it was reported that Joann Best loved the Memorial Garden and gave 4 trees, planted north of the actual garden: a Jacaranda, Cassia, Powder Puff and Hibiscus. They were doing well, then Hurricane Milton hit in September and the trees were flooded. Unfortunately, 3 of the 4 died. Salt water and inadequate watering seemed to be the causes.

The Memorial Garden account has a positive. These funds are used to mulch and fertilize. Bricks to honor, remember or commemorate a special event may be purchased for a fee of \$100. Six people have prepaid spaces for their interment at a cost of \$150. Anyone who wishes a Christian burial may be buried in the Memorial Garden. Guidelines for the memorial garden and bricks are in a brochure in the narthex of the church. Funds to perpetuate the garden may also be donated.

Take some time to visit the garden any time and enjoy the natural beauty of God's creation. Your help is needed to care for the MG. If you have a relative interred in the garden or have purchased a sidewalk brick, please consider being a member of the committee. Help is needed. Contact the chair.

Mary Lou Fitzgerald, chair

Worship and Music Committee Report 2025

Members: Jeff Petersen, Pastor Brian Armen, Pastor Bill Beljean, Pastor Syl Estevez, Candace Montesi, Ruthie Rohrbach, Mary Lou Fitzgerald, Debby Porter, Noma Hickok, Jim Porter, Lou Taylor, Jeff Kamm

Committee meetings were held 2/10, 3/31, 4/24, 7/7, and 9/23. Members reported on their areas of responsibility, and plans were made for worship services. January-April worship services were held twice Sunday. An outdoor service at 8:30 a.m. And an indoor service at 10:30 a.m. Pastor Armen retired and we were helped by Pastor Bill Beljean during the months of May and June. Services were at 9:30 a.m. for those two months. We were fortunate to have interim Pastor Syl Estevez on contract for the remainder of the year. Pastor Syl is serving as Pastor for First Presbyterian Church in Port Charlotte. This necessitated changing to a 10:45 a.m. service to allow for travel time. We have added a popular coffee/snack time preceding our services at 10:15 a.m.

During Lent we had worship services on Wednesday at 6 p.m. preceded by a soup supper at 5 p.m.

We have an adult Sunday School at 9 a.m. facilitated by Jeff Kamm. Debby Porter has led a bible study group every other Wednesday at 6 p.m.

Numerous worship assistants and ushers were gracious enough to offer their help at our services throughout the year. The alter guild worked seamlessly behind the scenes to help our services happen. The congregation appreciates greatly all of their efforts.

Candace Montesi has led us musically from the keyboards throughout the year.

The Chimes Choir was enthusiastic and so appreciated. Special music adding to worship during the last year including Linda Jackling, Jeff and Julie Petersen, Ann and Chris Banting, and Jim Porter. Thanks to Priscilla Fullerton for playing services in Candace's absence. The "singers" from Faith Lutheran joined with the choir at First Presbyterian to present to both churches the Christmas Cantata "Sing a Song of Christmas". Both churches rehearsed together and separately for many weeks to bring the wonderful musical experience to both Faith Lutheran - at their service on December 7 - and First Presbyterian Port Charlotte at their service on December 14. This choir of 16 singers with narration provided by John Schleede and directed by Sue Brembs from First Presbyterian and assisted by Candace Montesi from Faith Lutheran was warmly and enthusiastically received by both congregations. It was a wonderful and joyous collaboration.

Our technical staff has once again helped provide visuals and sound reinforcement throughout the year. In addition, their skills have allowed us to broadcast via YouTube and archive our services for those unable to attend our worship services.

Thanks to all coordinators who have worked so diligently to help make our church the special place that it is.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeff Petersen, Worship and Music Committee

Altar Guild 2025

Another year, 2025, concludes for the Altar Guild and thank you for those who were part of the group. So, Kay Culver, Kathy Gallagher, Linda Jasper, Gloria Marsh, Kathy Myers, Linda Ovitz, Julie Petersen, Debbie Porter, Linda Schleede, Joan Thoren, Rose Anne Woodliff, Debra Easterday, and Donna Johnsen. Let's not forget Harold Schultz and Brian Lindhurst who change the paraments on the altar and monitor the candles.

The first 5 months of the year 2 services were held until Pastor Armen retired. A month of supply pastors and then Interim Pastor, the Rev. Sly Estevez.

During the year a total of 3122 communed which was 198 below 2024. Reason two Sunday services had no communion and Christmas Eve was a special service. Most likely the number would have surpassed 2024.

So, what is expected of a member? On either Friday or Saturday set up the altar for communion—filling communion cups, placing communion vessels and linens on altar and changing the colored paraments at different liturgical seasons. After service the communion glasses are counted and recorded. The altar is then cleared and the linens that were used for communion are laundered. So how long does it take to set up the altar about 30 minutes and to clean up about 20! Short time considering the importance of the work done.

- Special displays of lilies and poinsettias adorned the altar at Easter and Christmas. Thank you to those who sponsored the flowers. Easter lilies and poinsettias that remained in church after the Sunday were planted near the Memorial Garden.

This ministry is so important to our worship! More help would be appreciated in 2026 so that two could team together. How about using a portion of your time and become a member of the guild? You will be trained and hopefully working with another person so ask a friend. It really is an easy job but so necessary for the worship!

Need more info, have questions just ask me and perhaps I can answer and/or encourage you. For me the time I spend doing the altar is a time when I am in conversation with God.

Mary Lou Fitzgerald, chair

Tech Crew Report

The Tech Crew is responsible for audio/visual support. We set up the speaker and microphone systems as needed for worship and other events. We prepare the slideshows for worship for display. We livestream worship services as well as record them for future viewing on YouTube. Your team consists of Jim Porter, head honcho, with support from Lou Taylor and Ellen Lindhurst. Jim Taylor and Brian Lindhurst also lend a hand when needed. Would you like to help? We'll be glad to share how and what we do. Just ask!

Respectfully submitted,
Tech Crew

Are you aware of all these ministries and happenings at Faith?

Stephen Ministry

Did you know that Faith is a Stephen Ministry Congregation? Do you know what it does? Stephen Ministers are lay congregation members trained to provide one-to-one care to those experiencing a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness or relocation. Stephen Ministers all share a passion for bringing Christ's love and care in a time of need. The members are there to listen, care and encourage and provide emotional and physical support which always remains private between you and your Stephen Minister.

Food Pantry for St. Francis of Assisi

A large basket is located in the narthex of the church where non-perishable food is collected once a week, and taken by one of Faith's members to St. Francis Church to be combined with their pantry. Donations are greatly appreciated as our contributions help the less fortunate in the area.

Wednesday Bible Study Group

This group doesn't just study the Bible they collect an offering each time they meet. The funds collected are used for global, national and community needs. In 2025 the following was given:

- \$300 to Faith's Camper ministry to purchase safety vests and reflectors
- \$150 Lutheran Disaster Response to help victims of flooding in Texas
- \$250 to Lutheran World Relief for the victims of Hurricane Melissa in Jamaica
- \$100 in McDonald Gift Cards for Christmas for Faith's Camper Ministry

God's Work Our Hands

On September 7th this year, the Faith Family was asked to bring toiletries to be given to Kids Needs of greater Englewood, and they sure did. Over 230 items—shampoo, conditioner, comb, brushes, scrubbies, soap toothpaste, deodorant, hair ties and monetary gifts---were given. Kids Needs was very appreciative of the donations.

Fellowship

A very active ministry seems to have an underlying benefit—food! Coffee “hour” is well received by many and had a rebirth after our interim pastor, Syl Estevez, came to Faith. Lenten soup suppers on Wednesday evenings during Lent were delicious as many soups brought by attendees were enjoyed each week.

Lutheran Chicks

This group has many parts. "Lutheran Chicks" is the name of a women's fellowship group at Faith. You are encouraged to join them meeting in the double-wide building on Tuesday mornings, 9:00-noon, no skills required!

The "Chicks" have a card-making ministry, overseen by Linda Ovitz, Linda Bennett and Joan Thoren, and sending out over 35 beautiful handmade cards monthly to shut-ins or members that need a bit of encouragement (such as illness, broken bones, deaths, birthdays, anniversaries, remembrance to those unable to attend church).

The "Chicks" also support the Camper Ministry, which prepares and delivers 30 lunches per week for the homeless/ underserved "camper" population via a program that distributes out of Indian Mound Park.

Another ongoing "camper" project is making crocheted sleeping mats. Each mat is made from approximately 800 plastic grocery bags. The bags are cut into strips which are looped together to become "plarn," which is then crocheted into a 3x6' long sleeping mat. The making of "plarn" is a simple, no skills required, time consuming part of the project.

Another project for the "campers" is preparing personal care/ toiletry kits and laundry kits, which include a few dryer sheets, laundry soap pods and some quarters for the machines. Warm jackets and sweatshirts are collected and distributed in January. Several members loom knit (an easy, group project) or traditional knit and crochet warm hats and scarves. The Chicks have also made no sew fleece blankets and periodically provided essentials such as bug spray and sunscreen.

The Chicks are frequently called upon to organize, set up and prepare food for Coffee Hour, luncheons or other programs.

We welcome anyone interested in service projects and great fellowship to stop by the double-wide building on Tuesday mornings. 9:00-noon. No skills required.

Ladies Luncheon Kathie Wiley

In 2025 the Ladies Luncheon Bunch reached a 12-year milestone. Created as an opportunity for the women of Faith Lutheran to meet together and share opinions, viewpoints, family stories, and yes, maybe even a little gossip now and then. We also used our time to share information about the health and welfare of our fellow members, share special birthdays or anniversaries. We travel to many of the Englewood area restaurants providing an opportunity to try different menus, enjoy the food and not have to do the dishes! Hands down the favorite restaurant is Big Bamboo Asian Fusion in El Jobean where we always have a full house!

This past year we met 10 times with a monthly average of 12 even during "off-season." Guests are always welcome. Each Christmas we remember those less fortunate with items collected to share through the St. Francis Food Bank. This past December we collected peanut butter and macaroni & cheese. Please come and join us any month. Sign-up sheet is located on the bulletin board in the narthex. We order off the menu and pay our own checks, endeavoring to keep costs relatively low according to your own choice. And by the way, men are *always* welcome too, providing they bring their credit card and pay for everyone!!

A Fellowship Dinner, hosted by 5 members, attended by 38, was held in the Sanctuary on February 13. The main focus of event was to meet and get to know others. (Let's not forget the time before worship which is a real time for fellowship.)

Halloween Safe Walk on Dearborn Street

Once again Faith participated by having over 10 people handing out candy at the walk. The Faith family donated candy! We gave out two extra-large trash bags full plus more loose donations. This event is usually attended by over 5000 adults and children. What an outreach!