

THE CONNECTION

Weekly Newsletter

May 24, 2026



Baptisms of David, Jonathan, and baby Violet (p. 3).



MAY

PENTECOST SUNDAY 5/24

8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Worship Services

Bible Study—9:15 a.m. | Kids Connect—10:30 a.m.

Birthday Club—12:15 p.m.

MON. 5/25

Campus closed in observance of Memorial Day

TUES. 5/26

Schedule open

WED. 5/27

Discussion Group—10 a.m.

Polish & Potluck—6 p.m.

THURS. 5/28

Church Planning Council Meeting—6 p.m.

FRI. 5/29–SAT. 5/30

Church office closed

SUN. 5/31

8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Worship Services

Bible Study—9:15 a.m. | Kids Connect—10:30 a.m.

MON. 6/1–TUES. 6/2

Schedule open

WED. 6/3

Discussion Group—10 a.m.

Handbells Practice—6:30 p.m.

THURS. 6/4

Schedule open

FRI. 6/5

Church office closed

SAT. 6/6

Nathan Walter's Memorial Service—11 a.m.



Prayers for the following OSL church members:

Haroldo Camacho, Carol Chaddock, Marianne DeMinck, Roger Detwiler, Claire Edwards, Howard Fischer, Sue Franjione, Karen Goth, Gerry Gruenbaum, Betty Hea, Bob Johnson, Prentis Johnson, Robert Latimer, James Leone, Les Mellott, Mary Ann O'Keefe, Carol (Coram) Ross, Malcolm Sears, Jennifer Sird-De La Horra, Robert Spencer, Linda Verdi, Jodi Waldron, Glen & Cheryl Walters, John Wheeler, and Jan Withers.

Members & Family in the Armed Services:

Dustin Douglas (son-in-law of Les and Juli Mellott) at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Tacoma, WA; **Scott Tucek** (son of Carol Tucek) at Yokota Air Base in Japan; **Brock Van Sant** going into aviation training in the Marine Corps.

Rehabilitation Home: Ron Holub

*If you have prayer requests, please let us know by filling out a **Connect Card** or **colored prayer card** found in the pews. Our Prayer Team (Debi Bauer, Norma Miller, Robert Spencer, and John and Jodi Waldron) will gather the cards and pray for those needs. For personal prayers and/or additional spiritual guidance, please contact Pastor Tony at (954) 473-6888.*

Can You Guess This Member?

(Answers on p. 11!)



WELCOME TO GOD'S FAMILY!

At the 10:30 a.m. service on Sunday, May 17, 2026, Our Savior celebrated the holy baptisms of baby Violet Rodriguez as well as David and Jonathan García.



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FOLLOW ME



MEET NEW MEMBERS: Bryan & Lorna Goodluck

We warmly welcome Lorna and Bryan Goodluck to our church family!

Originally from Georgetown, the retired couple recently relocated from Maryland and are enjoying meeting new people and traveling. Lorna, who was raised in the Lutheran and Methodist traditions, visited our church, enjoyed the warm fellowship and Pastor Tony's sermons, and decided to become a member. She has a special interest in childcare, visitation, and caring ministries.

Bryan appreciates our church's teachings which reminds him of his own religious upbringing in the Anglican and Methodist church. He brings interest and experience in building and construction, as well as finance and accounting.

You can find Lorna and Bryan worshipping with us at the 10:30 a.m. service. We are blessed to have them with us and look forward to their fellowship and service!



GODSPEED FOR BROCK On Sunday the 17th, the church prayed for Brock Van Sant, a long time member of the congregation who grew up at Our Savior Lutheran Church. Pastor Tony said a blessing for him and his parents, Kim and Mitch, as he departs us to do base training for aviation in the Marine Corps. May God bless and keep him safe as he prepares to serve our country.



Spring Arts Festival
May 19, 2026





ANNUAL POLICE MEMORIAL CEREMONY Delray Police Department held its annual police memorial ceremony on May 15, 2026. Pastor Tony and fellow chaplains at Delray Beach attended (pictured above). A flower wreath is placed before the memorial stone each year during. Pastor Tony has been a chaplain with the Delray Beach Police Department since 2013.

JAN'S HEALTH UPDATE

Hello Family and Friends,

Jan was discharged from the hospital this past Tuesday—she is so happy to be home! Erik arrived just in time to bring her home and be with her for the next week...doctor appointments, blood draws, transfusions, bone marrow biopsy, the journey continues....

Her doctors are positive about how she is responding to the chemo and are taking no risks with infection or virus - the medications are endless —there is always something new to add to the mix of targeted therapy.

The next round of chemo will be determined in the next few weeks

Jan remains positive, eating well, moving around keeping her strength, and resting regularly. She also looks absolutely beautiful with her new hairdo (not pictured)!

—Mary (Jan's sister)



I feel so blessed to have such an amazing family supporting me through this journey and the prayers keep coming in from my community of believers and all over the states through all of you. It really does take a village, and I feel all the love.

Most important is that God is with me all the time and I had many opportunities to speak the name of Jesus in the hospital with many of my caregivers.

*I Love you all,
Jan*

Dear Our Savior Family,

Christ has risen! Alleluia! This salutation provides a necessary foundation as I share difficult news with you.

It is with deep sadness that I inform you of the death of **John Waldron (72)**, our congregational vice president, who died on Sunday, May 10, 2026 in an automobile accident on University Drive in Sunrise.

John's sister, Robin, who lives in New York and is his next of kin, notified me after being contacted by the police department. The accident is still being investigated, and no other information is readily available. Robin asks for our prayers for their family and for John's daughter, Jodi (pictured below), as they navigate the days ahead. This is our prayer:

Merciful God and Father, graciously look upon the family of our departed brother, John. Remember us in all our sorrow and grief. Support us when we are unable to understand the things that happen to us and those we love. Comfort and console us, and grant that through Your merciful help we may have courage to face the days ahead; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*In faith,
Pastor Tony Durante*





BLESSING OF HANDS On May 7, Pastor Tony Durante gave blessings to nurses at Encompass Health and Rehabilitation Hospital of Sunrise as part of Nurse Appreciation Week. The chief nursing officer of the facility invited Pastor to come that day and lead a Blessing of Hands Ceremony, a tradition believed to have been started by Florence Nightingale in the 1800's, that involves anointing the hands of nurses. It is an affirming gesture reminding them that their hands are means to deliver godly compassion to patients. With scripture readings and prayer, Pastor Tony encouraged the nearly twenty nurses who attended the gathering. He pronounced a blessing upon each nurse as he poured water over their hands. Our Savior Member Mercedes Camacho was among the nurses who participated in the ceremony.



Teacher's Appreciation
May 4-8, 2026



Our Savior Lutheran Church & School 65th Anniversary (April 19, 2026)

by Jane Niklas

Good afternoon, everyone. I'm Jane Nicklas, and I'm so happy to be here to celebrate the 65th anniversary of Our Savior Lutheran church and School.

My husband Ed was called as the pastor here in 2001, and I became principal the next year. That was when I realized God had a great sense of humor. I swore I'd never be an administrator, and I'd never work with my husband. It took a few years, but eventually I hit the trifecta by retiring in FL – the last thing I'd never do.

Ed and I were proud of our years here. But we knew we were standing on the shoulders of the members who came before us. Those men and women, like Pastor Arndt and Pastor Volz, established the mission of Our Savior to this community. The school had several leaders, but the person who established the preschool was Barbara Fisher, along with her friend Gloria Volz. I only worked with them for two years before their retirements, but they are still the models for the care and education in the preschool. You are missed, Barbara, for your creativity, hard work, and style. Thank you, Howard, for sharing her with us. I believe a few people I hired are still here.

I believe there are 8 teachers I hired who are still at Our Savior. I'm glad I was smart enough to hire all those amazing women. I've been retired for 13 years, and I applaud Linda Root for creating a school where the staff is so committed to the education ministry. It's so nice to see Heather Bleier here, too.

I live in northern Virginia now, and I get a little wistful at Christmas and Easter. I can't plant the wilting poinsettias in my backyard after Christmas, and there's a line item in the church budget for the same kind of palms we'd cut from behind the church for free. However, I haven't met anyone in Virginia who had to investigate how to get iguanas from nesting in the preschool playground either.

When Ed and I arrived in South Florida, it didn't take long to see how Our Savior responds to crisis. My husband was installed on September 9, 2001, and two days later, the Twin Towers were attacked. Consoling our collective grief was the priority. Over the years, Our Savior welcomed people who suffered property loss from hurricanes, sent supplies to Haiti after the earthquake of 2010, and comforted each other at the loss of loved ones in the school community.



**Worship service after
Hurricane Wilma (2005)**



(Jane Niklas' 65th Anniversary Testimonial Cont.)

But there were many happy moments too. One Friday afternoon, Ed was officiating a wedding. The church was packed, and the bride was ready to enter the church. Little did they know, but the after-school children were getting a demonstration on how cotton candy was made. It turns out the spinning machine puts out enough heat to set off the smoke alarms- which is exactly what happened. So, everyone had to evacuate the church. Of course, the students were thrilled to have all the fire trucks arrive with their sirens going strong. Once they realized the cause, the firefighters wrapped things up and were ready to go. But my husband asked the firefighters to join the bride first for some photos. Now that's a wedding album I'd like to see.

After Hurricane Wilma in 2005, we were determined to hold Sunday Services even though we didn't have any power. But Ed and Jan Withers ran off bulletins with our generator, the preschool was cleared of its Halloween motif, and the pumpkins were reworked as fall décor. We needed all the windows and doors open, so Dorothy Schawk stationed herself at one set of doors to chase away any curious Muscovy ducks.

Our Savior was able to open earlier than the public schools because our power was restored sooner. The staff met, and we decided that since the children had missed out on trick or treating during Wilma, we'd invite parents to send in their candy. We had our usual costume parade, and then the children trick-or-treated at stations on the property. On that day, I felt like the boy with the fish and loaves. Candy was everywhere! We couldn't even give it all away.

One thing I've always been proud of at our school is how the students are prepared from the youngest age to participate in worship services. During one preschool Christmas program, my job was to sit on a small chair next to the lectern and help the children as they climbed up to the microphone. This time it was 4-year-old Jared Khan Bagley, ready to be one of the Magi. When he finished his line, I helped him step down. I told him he did a wonderful job and gave him a hug. He looked at me and said, "Can I have a kiss too?" A few years ago, I went to Jared's graduation from Syracuse University. I want to admit that I did all the obnoxious things I asked parents not to do – I went up too close to take pictures, yelled his name, and waved from my seat. I was so proud when, later, he introduced me as his first principal. I'm also proud that he went on to get a master's in education and is now teaching special ed in the Syracuse area.

A number of years ago, Our Savior became involved with Transforming Churches Network. My husband presented a plan for Our Savior to be more involved in the community. At one point, we had 40 volunteers at Mirror Lake Elementary School, Guy Shepherd led four musical groups at Christmas at Los Olas, as well as a number of assisted living facilities and at the mall. We started a book club that is still going strong under Carol Tucek's leadership. I'm a member, because we meet by Zoom each month.



(Jane Niklas' 65th Anniversary Testimonial Cont.) About the same time, Dorothy Schawk used her unique powers of persuasion to beautify our property. Somehow, she convinced us to use our own money and our sweat equity to “adopt a plot” and make our own money to make Our Savior even more lovely. Her efforts were rewarded by an award from the City of Plantation.

In fact, I was happy to see all the awards that Our Savior received from the city, county, and the public school system. They represent the love OSL has for our neighbors and the willingness to put that love into action.

My history here was full of blessings. My daughter Janice was married here in 2005, and in 2007, Ed and I got word that our first grandchild was born back in Virginia. I ran down to the church to tell Ed. I found him and Jan on ladders painting the interior of the church. But they put their paint brushes down long enough for hugs and tears.

In 2013, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. Ed called the church and the school offices. The next day, I arrived to see all our doors covered in giant pink paper bows. At Chapel that day, I was greeted by all the staff and the students wearing pink. But the moment of hope came the day after. I was outside, and a preschool class was walking by. A little girl stopped and asked me, “Are you all better now?” and I was. I was ready to face whatever was in my future.

Whenever I'm in the church, I think of something Debra Beck would tell her four-year-old students. She'd point to the risen Jesus on the cross and tell them that Jesus was welcoming them with a big hug. I like to think that's exactly what Our Savior does for everyone – welcomes us with a hug.

I received one of those hugs in 2018 when my husband died. The hug was in the arms and kind words of Pastor Tony and so many people in this community, including John and Glenda Strang, Jan, Ivan Swartsfigure, Denise Kunz, Cindy Davis, Dorothy Schawk, and Kathy Mahaffey. They walked with me during Ed's long goodbye with Alzheimer's. I will never forget it.

This morning, Jan and I watched the anniversary church service together. Jan needs all our prayers and a hug from Jesus as she faces treatments for leukemia. Thank you, Pastor Tony, for caring for Jan with words of hope and God's presence in this journey.

I know we can all celebrate the love that Our Savior Lutheran has given to the members, the school, and the community for 65 years. And, the next time you're sitting in the pew, let yourself feel the welcoming hug Jesus offers to you.

Our Savior Lutheran School's safety patrol team with our campus security guard, Mr. Rodney. Thank you for keeping us safe every day!



Guess Who?

ANSWER:

John Wheeler!



BIRTHDAYS

MAY 1

Cathy Koontz
Kiara Westby

MAY 3

Prentis Johnson

MAY 4

Kelly Srot

MAY 5

Carol Chaddock
Anthony Colburn
Rolf Fischer

Robert Latimer

MAY 9

Ian Johnson
Jan Withers

MAY 10

Mary Ginchereau

MAY 11

Noah Chang

MAY 12

Kim Schuh

MAY 13

Harriette Leslie

MAY 16

James Hurst

MAY 17

Pam Mills

MAY 20

Les Mellott

MAY 24

Christina Flahive

John Wheeler

MAY 26

James Leone

MAY 31

Heston Curry

HELP US

UPDATE

OUR DATABASE

*If you are a member and have not seen your birthday or anniversary listed in our newsletter, kindly contact **Mika** at, (954) 473-6888.*

Not sure if you're a member? Contact us. We'd love to help you find out!

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

MAY 4

Rob Losier & Wendi Miller (31)

MAY 5

Jerry & Alejandra Starner (29)

Joseph & Kristin Iannarone (2)

MAY 7

Edward & Linda Stannard (21)

MAY 16

Michael & Tammy Weidner (34)

MAY 18

Michael & Donna McLeod (10)

MAY 19

Timothy & Caroline Brangan (14)

Greg & Karen Goth (36)

MAY 24

Robert & Lerryn Latimer (58)

John & Glenda Strang (52)

🌸🌺🌻👑MAY FLOWERS👑🌺🌸

The flowers adorning the chancel this month were graciously provided by:

- **[5/10] Belinda Aguilar:** "Thank you OSL for 22 wonderful years. I will miss my church family".; **The Flower Fund & John Waldron** in celebration of all mothers.
- **[5/24] Norma Miller:** In loving memory and honor of John Waldron. *Well done good and faithful servant.*

As of this Sunday, we now have **\$2,547** in our **flower fund**. That is enough to cover two bouquets for **50 Sundays**. Thanks be to God!



Our Savior Lutheran Church & School

8001 NW 5th Street, Plantation, Florida 33324

CHURCH

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ALTAR FLOWER DONATIONS



*If you would like to direct your contribution toward our **general flower fund**, please write “Flower Fund” on the memo line or envelope. For **personal orders**, kindly fill out the **Chancel Flower Sign-Up** slip and include it with your payment. These are found below or in the pews. We currently only accept checks, cash, or VANCO payments. Please notify the church office when giving through the VANCO app or website.*



CHANCEL FLOWERS SIGN-UP



If you would like to have flowers on the altar on a given Sunday in honor of someone, in memory of a loved one, or to commemorate a birthday, etc., all you need to do is fill out this form and put it in the offering plate. The cost is \$25.00 per order; two pieces would cost \$50.00. Call the church office if you have any questions, (954) 473-6888.

Name: _____

Date you would like flowers: _____

In Honor, Memory, Celebration, or Thanksgiving of _____

FOR OFFICE:
of bouquets _____
\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Paid ____ / ____ / ____

*Check this box if you would like to collect your flowers after the 10:30 a.m. service.
Any unclaimed flowers will be donated to a local nursing home. Thank you.*