

Lord of the Mountains History

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Updated August 2017 by Ferol Menzel for the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

Updated December 2020 by Ferol Menzel

This history is a gathering together of important milestones and events in the history of Lord of the Mountains Lutheran Church. As an overview, it does not describe or give credit to the people of Lord of the Mountains, their joys, sorrows, achievements, and the many ways in which individual members contributed their time, talent, and resources to sustain this congregation. This history is dedicated to all the people past and present who loved Lord of the Mountains and remained dedicated to its mission since the beginning in 1960.

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The Early Years: 1960 - 1982 *Go Tell It on the Mountains*

In the 1960s Lutherans in Summit County worshipped at the old Town Hall in Frisco, then at St. John's Episcopal Church in Breckenridge with supply pastors from the Missouri Synod. In 1972, the Lutheran Church in America (LCA) agreed to send Richard Bansemer as a full-time pastor to establish a congregation. Bansemer, his wife, Mary Ann, and their infant son Aaron arrived in November 1973. This was the beginning of the Lord of the Mountains congregation.

- 1973 - November - Pastor Bansemer arrived to begin development work.
- 1974 - January - Members of the soon to-be-congregation (referred to as Holy Cross Lutherans) traveled to Vail to worship with the closest sister congregation, to become acquainted with a new service and hear the LCA/Rocky Mountain Synod bishop preach. In February families met to dream dreams and make concrete plans for the establishment of Lord of the Mountains Lutheran Church (LOTM).
- 1974 - February 14 - From minutes of a meeting of the Steering Committee - "The Steering Committee for the new congregation met on February 14, 1974 at the home of Pastor and Mrs. Richard Bansemer, 0103 Solomon's Lane. The Rev. Howell Foster of the Division for Mission in North America and the Rev. Bud Edstrom, assistant to the president of the Rocky Mountain Synod, were present as guests and leaders." The committee discussed at length the naming of the new congregation. After many ballots, the name Lord of the Mountains Lutheran Church was agreed upon by consensus. An amount of approximately \$350.00 was made available for worship services to be held at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Breckenridge. It was agreed to place \$300 in a special account to be used as soon as a physical need for the new mission could be determined. Time for worship was set at 11:00 a.m. with the possibility of adding an early service in May or June if desire was adequate.
- 1974 - March 31 - The first worship service was held at the new Town Hall in Dillon, Colorado.
- 1974 - May 5 - Sunday School began and the charter of the congregation was opened.
- 1974 - October 27 - The congregation formally organized with the Lutheran Church in America with 64 adult members and 10 children by 1975. Worship was held in the Dillon Town Hall from 1973 until June 7, 1980 when church services were held in a new facility.
- 1975 - February 16 - Pastor Bansemer was installed.
- 1976 - November 14 - The first annual report listed 112 active members. The report also included a radio broadcast of portions of the weekly worship service and a description of our involvement in improving community health service. A ministry at Copper Mountain was established, and the youth group, "A New Song," joined with youth at Dillon Community Church for activities and aided with the Sunday amphitheater worship. A 1976 budget of \$23,235 was approved.
- 1976 - The first year's Sunday School averaged 20 to 30 children, and in 1976 five youth were confirmed.
- 1976 - A stewardship report identified needs for the new church building and a 2-year building fund goal of \$142,000. The congregation turned to Lutheran Laymen's League as consultants for fund raising.
- 1978 - Pastor Bansemer accepted a call to Virginia (his home) and Dean Bickel was installed in December of that year.

- 1978 - The sign identifying Lord of the Mountains Lutheran Church was erected on the property at the corner of Highway 6 and Evergreen, and the groundbreaking worship service was held at the site on September 17, 1979. (As an aside, Kari Reiquam was ordained 2 weeks prior in Aurora, Colorado.)



- 1980 - The LOTM building was dedicated on June 1, 1980 (the current fellowship hall). The celebration extended into the afternoon with an open house, an organ recital on an instrument on loan from Wells Music in Denver, and a barbecue. (I believe a snowstorm prevented a Denver bell choir from participating.) In 1980 LOTM had 160 baptized members.
- 1982 - Having shepherded the congregation into their new church building, Dean and Robin Bickel left with their hard work completed.

A Developing Congregation and Evolving Theology: 1983 - 2006 *“All Are Welcome in This Place”*

Lord of the Mountains Lutheran Church continued to grow in terms of number of members and financial support during this period. More significantly, however, was the evolution of theology. The new pastor, Rich Mayfield, and the congregation studied and discussed the work of Marcus Borg, John Shelby Spong and other theologians exploring a “progressive” theology. Bible studies became an important part of the ministry. In the mid 1990’s theological conferences were initiated, the first being held at Colorado College with Marcus Borg. In successive years, such progressive scholars such as Marty Haugen, Susan Briehl, and Karen Armstrong stimulated our thinking with their presentations. Congregational leaders and Pastor Mayfield questioned sermons during Theo Talks, challenged ideas presented to them as children, discussed a variety of viewpoints during book discussions, and adopted a theological viewpoint that resulted in a mission and welcome statement in 1994-95 that did not sound like their forefathers’ understanding of Lutheran identity. This dynamic period of growth and development attracted people from a variety of protestant traditions: Catholics, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Methodists were all attracted to this vision of a modern theology. In addition, during this period, the congregation pursued community engagement and social justice projects that would become an important part of the ministries of LOTM.

- 1983 - March - Sue and Rich Mayfield with daughters Miranda and Molly arrived to begin Pastor Mayfield’s ministry. Their son Ian was born in Summit County.

- 1984 - October - An observance of the 10th anniversary of LOTM invited Pastor Richard Bansemer to return in October to preach.
- 1988 - January 1 - The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) was founded. The ELCA is a result of a merger among the American Lutheran Church (ALC), the Lutheran Church in America (LCA) and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC) which had earlier withdrawn from the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod after 1975. The three churches agreed to unite in 1982. They formed a 70-member Commission for a New Lutheran Church, which planned the merger. The plan was approved by church conventions in 1986, and the ELCA constituting convention was held April 30-May 3, 1987, in Columbus, Ohio, with the church beginning operations on January 1, 1988. The Rocky Mountain Synod is one of 65 synods that came into existence when the ELCA came into being. The territory of the Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA, closely follows what had been the LCA Rocky Mountain Synod which included Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, and El Paso, TX. The ALC Central District Territory had covered the states of Nebraska, Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Missouri.
- 1988 - May 31 - LOTM celebrated the united ELCA Rocky Mountain Synod in Denver. LOTM was present with the LOTM church banner and members of the choir joined the large statewide choir.
- 1988 - January 1 - The Rocky Mountain Synod came into existence at the same time as the ELCA. The word *synod* comes from a Greek word meaning "to travel a common road—to walk together." The congregations, the people, and the ministries in this expansive geographical region walk a common road— together—as the Rocky Mountain Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- 1990 - May 6 - As the congregation grew, it became apparent that a new sanctuary was needed,



along with more classrooms, nursery space and a fellowship hall. It is interesting to note that at one time, the congregation considered building a spiritual retreat center either in the lower level of the sanctuary or as a separate building with individual rooms, showers, etc. Although this did not come to pass, the new sanctuary building was dedicated on May 6, 1990 in a service of dedication. Participating in the service were Pastor Richard Mayfield and musicians including Robert Lane, Larry Hill, John Gohl, Dina McCormick, Guy Peterson, Margaret Peterson, Ray Tolman, Judy Tolman, Brian Hanly and Organist and Adult Choir Director Karen Reifsteck-Vander Kooi. During construction, the congregation worshipped at Dillon Valley Elementary School.

- 1990 - In the 1990s Council retreats were held at the Bly Ranch in Evergreen for several years, as were confirmation class retreats. Retreats at St. Benedict's Monastery in Snowmass and St. Malo's in Allenspark, CO have encouraged spiritual growth and formation.
- 1990 - Art was incorporated into both our services and the liturgy. Members of LOTM have contributed Christian artwork to the Synod Conferences and subsequently made that art available to other churches in our synod for display. Katie Romanoski and her family members designed and completed beautiful banners for the various seasons of the church.
- 1990 - May - The stained glass cross was installed in the sanctuary.

- 1990 - In the 1990s funds were raised to establish a memorial garden. Many members of the church provided gifts for the garden and the purchase of the sculpture that now resides in that garden.
- 1996 - November - Along with the need for more space came the need for more staff. Kari Reiquam and husband, Brian Austill, and daughters Siri and Annelise arrived from Hawaii in November of 1996.
- 1998 - Eight youth from LOTM were joined by 11 adults in December to make our first trip to Juarez, Mexico, for Casas por Cristo, a group based in El Paso, Texas, that builds houses for the poor in Juarez. Mission trips continued to Juarez, Peru, Haiti, Jordan, and Africa through 2006. In the 2003 Annual Report Jim and Nancy Gulley reported on the West African Community Care Team of Summit County and the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, a division of Lutheran Family Services. LOTM shared Thanksgiving Baskets with ten West African families located in Summit County.
- 1999 - Sandy Olson was called as Associate in Ministry in 1999.
- 1999 - The Lord of the Mountains Charitable Endowment Fund was established in 1999 thanks to a generous gift by Ralph Eckert. The Endowment extends and enhances the mission outreach of Lord of the Mountains beyond and apart from programs, ministries and work of the congregation normally supported through regular offerings and pledges.
- 1999 - October 17 - Lord of the Mountains congregation celebrated 25 years of Ministry. Attending the celebration were Rev. Bansemer, Rev. Dean Bickel, Rev. Richard Mayfield, Rev. Kari Reiquam, Rev. Henry Kircher, Director of Music Sandy Olson, Administrator Kathy Rada, Organist Karen Peterson, and several other folks who assisted with organizing the celebration. Six new families were welcomed into the congregation on that day as well: the Holston-Green, Carestia, Cook, Phillips, McLaren and Campbell families.
- 2000 - LOTM began holding annual Fair Trade Markets of craft items produced by workers and artists from different countries all around the world. The markets ensure that the workers and artists are paid a fair amount for their wares which helps them use their skills and talents to become self-sustaining. LOTM purchases the items from several non-profit organizations. Our markets are held at least once a year in November (and sometimes at Easter) providing a fun opportunity for everyone to purchase gifts for the holiday(s) and supporting the fair trade effort.
- 2001- The lower level of the sanctuary was finished in 2001. This additional space allowed LOTM to be more hospitable to the community by offering the space to groups needing a place to meet.
- 2002 - November - Nancy Thomas, an internationally known parent trainer and author of "When Love is Not Enough," presented a workshop.
- 2002 -2004 - During this period, and consistent with the welcome statement, Lord of the Mountains welcomed the Synagogue of the Summit for their High Holy Days celebrations, the High Country Unitarians, El Bethel Church, and AA.



2002 -2004 - Volunteering in Manchay, Peru. The following trips were made possible by Lord of the Mountains, Summit County Catholic parishes, and Summit County Rotary. Approximately \$40,000 was raised to equip the Manchay high school, and \$15,000 was raised for the domestic violence shelter.

- 2002 - eight people worked for one week in September renovating a 25 unit domestic violence shelter.
- 2003 - three people returned to Manchay to volunteer in the schools for one week.
- 2004 - approximately 15 people went to Manchay to work in the community.

- 2005 - November - the congregation adopted the Lord of the Mountains Mission Statement.
- 2005 - Lord of the Mountains formed a 15-member task force to study the issues surrounding homosexual marriage and ordination (Summit Daily, May 9, 2005). One of the outcomes of this task force was that LOTM became a reconciling in Christ congregation, announcing to the public that the congregation welcomes gays and lesbians to a safe place for them to worship.

The Work Continues as Pastoral Leadership Changes: 2006 - 2016 *“Here in This Place Gather Us In”*

Having a pastor retire after 23 years is a challenge as well as an opportunity. Pastor Ken Stenman prepared the congregation for this transition while serving as interim pastor. The congregation welcomed Pastor Joe Holub and his wife Marcia and established several programs during this time period to serve the Summit County community. In addition, the congregation and Pastor Joe continued to develop progressive theology and practices.

- 2006 – June 3 - Rich Mayfield retired after serving the congregation for 23 years.
- 2006 - The Rev. James Wiberg served as interim pastor from July to December 2006 with Co-Pastor Kari Reiquam, who served the congregation until 2008.
- 2006 - November - The congregation completed “A Profile of the Congregation.” This profile and the information contained in it provided the information necessary for calling a new pastor. At the time of this report the congregation had 123 members pledging, of which 36 lived out of Summit County and the remainder lived within Summit County. Thirty-one Associate Members pledged in 2006.
- 2007 - Pastor Ken Stenman served as interim pastor from January 2007 until 2008.
- 2007 - The organ was dedicated February 17 with Co-Pastor Kari Reiquam officiating and Justin Stephens serving as organist.
- 2008 - Rev. Joseph Holub and his wife Marcia arrived at LOTM in 2008. He served the congregation until his retirement in 2013.

- 2008 - Upon the arrival of Pastor Joe, he and Len Rhodes, choir director and organist, worked on a developing a new liturgy “that better fits the emerging paradigm of Christianity and Lord of the Mountains.” (Annual Report, 2008).
- 2008 - In late 2008, Deborah Hage, an active member of the Outreach Committee at LOTM, had a dream of providing an inclusive community dinner for anyone who wanted to come. Hage received start-up funds from Summit Rotary and LOTM, the Elks Lodge opened their hall, and the community dinner was born.
- 2009 - In early March, the first dinner attracted 50 people. By the winter of 2018, the average dinner served over 500 people most Tuesday nights. The 90,000th meal was served in 2018. The attendees represented a cross-section of the community, including but not limited to, the underemployed, homeless, the deaf community, the elderly, seasonal workers, and children. The dinner was not limited to individuals in need. Consistent with the LOTM Welcome Statement, the Community Dinner welcomed everyone. A broad spectrum of the community got behind the dinner with local resorts and restaurants providing and preparing food and many church and civic organizations serving the dinner.
- 2009 - September 13 - Lord of the Mountains celebrated the 35th anniversary of the founding of the congregation with a party at Arapahoe Basin. Jan Shackelford was the chief organizer and Pastors Bansemer, Mayfield, Reiquam and Holub were all in attendance. A partial attendance list included the following: Steve and Linda Wakefield, Jena and Darald Hurlbut, Jean and Bill Daily, Henry and Mabel Kircher, Jim and Alice Noble, John and Mary Kidd, Henry and Terry Rissier, Donna and Catherine Clark, Chuck and Myra Kincaide, Pat Foote, Jack and Aleen Nyquist, Bonnie Brown, Diane Wegner, Ken and Mary McHose, Blair and Christie Miller, Barb and Glenn Johnson, Kari Reiquam, Elmer and Doris Koneman, Tom Hand, Jim and Luray Wiberg, Carl and Anne Schomberg, Paul and Deborah Hage, Jim and Lorraine Hudson, Jonie Thieme-Weinberg, Amy Christina and Nicole Mclachlan, Laurie and Bob Fobes, Brian and Jane Smith, Joe and Linda Kimak, John, Cathy and Deke Spierling, Karen and Bill Musolf, Nancy and Jim Gulley, Rick and Karen Garrell, Sandy and Bill Reetz, Jodi Wiedl, Rod and Sharie Schofield, Mary Staliz, Alex Cooper and Candace Barnes, Susan Juergensmier, Doug and Mary Schwartz, Bill and Dee Simon, Linda and Tom Festa, and Peggy, Keith, Genna, Abby, and Mac Hiller.
- 2011 – January - Deborah Hage and Jim Gully returned to Haiti for the 1st anniversary of the tragic earthquake on January 12, 2010. They were both very active for many years in the church relief work there, and they presented the changes that occurred in Haiti during that year. During the earthquake, Jim and several others were trapped for 55 hours when the Hotel Montana collapsed. They survived in a small box-like area in the rubble – just wide enough to sit close together side by side, but not stand up. They had no water, food, or light except cell phones, which had no signal and had to be turned off most of the time to save their charge. Two men were half in and half out of the space, and their legs were crushed by beams that formed part of the space. The two men lived until they were rescued, but one later died of his wounds in the hospital.
- 2012 - Gerald Ireland, a member of the congregation, gifted to the church the Bosendorfer grand piano which continues to be an important part of LOTM services.
- 2012 – January - LOTM began hosting Day Services on Wednesday and Friday afternoons from 1:00 to 4:00. Showers, telephone, laundry, internet, computer access, and a meal were offered to those who did not have access to these amenities. The clients were screened and referred to LOTM by FIRC (Family and Intercultural Resources Center). Day Services also

provided information about food banks, community dinner and other services offered in the county. Day Services served 86 different clients between January of 2012 and 2015. Those clients represented over 500 visits. Most clients used all the services offered, but the showers and laundry were especially helpful to people camping or living in their vehicles year-round. Brian Hanley, violinist, and William David, pianist, performed several concerts to benefit the Day Services program. Their beautiful music was greatly appreciated for the sake of people served by this program.

- 2012 - Second Offering Sunday (SOS) was established. Every fourth Sunday of the month, with the exception of December, LOTM's congregation made a second offering to local, national and international causes. The Outreach Committee selected which non-profit groups would receive the offering. Some of these groups included: Dillon Valley Elementary School, the Community Dinner, the Family Intercultural Resource Center, Haiti Orphanage and Senior Center, Namibia Scholarships for young women, and Lutheran World Relief to name a few. The Committee ensured that the funds collected were wisely spent, and that youth were included as volunteers in as many activities as possible.
- 2012 - Family and Intercultural Resources Center (FIRC) Food Bank - Lord of the Mountains began supporting the food bank by collecting food, diapers, and toiletries for those in need. The food and other goods were collected in the "Food Bank" cart in the Church Narthex. Once a week the food and other items were collected and taken to the FIRC headquarters in Dillon. Over the course of this and all following years, LOTM collected food, diapers, and other items worth thousands of dollars, and volunteers shared the responsibility of making this delivery.
- 2013 - Pastor Joe Holub retired in 2013. The congregation presented Reverend Holub with a camera, and since then he has become an accomplished photographer while living in the mountains of Buena Vista Colorado with wife Marcia.
- 2013 - Pastor Beverly Piro served as interim pastor after Pastor Holub's retirement.
- 2013 - Pastor Stephanie Kopsch was installed as Pastor of LOTM in November 2013.
- 2014 - Adult counselors from Sky Ranch provided the curriculum for Camp Compassion. Previously the camp had been organized by volunteers. The camp provided a week of summer activities for children from preschool through middle school. The curriculum included Bible study, songs, craft activities, games, and fellowship. Members of the congregation providing leadership included Peggy Hiller, Katie Romanoski, Cindy Massaro, Darlene Muschett, and later Katie Okes.
- 2014 - The congregation engaged in a "Healthy Start Program" to aid in the transition to Pastor Stephanie Kopsch. This process involved developing a new organizational chart and assisting Pastor Kopsch in getting to know the congregation by holding small group gatherings.
- 2014 - March - Lord of the Mountains Church in Dillon began its efforts to reduce gun violence with an event called "March Sabbath." After that launch, a small task force continued to build awareness, in the church and across Summit County, of the epidemic that gun violence has become both in Colorado and in the United States. Over 30,000 people die every year in the US by guns, but instead of the country working to reduce that number, a few special interest groups have turned the issue into a political controversy. Therefore, LOTM joined with Colorado Faith Communities United to Reduce Gun Violence in an effort to find solutions to the epidemic and to encourage lawmakers to enact provisions to protect citizens.
- 2014 - LOTM welcomed the Muslim community of Summit County to the Fellowship Hall for their Friday Prayers. Welcoming other faith traditions has been a part of our outreach to the community.

- 2016 – January 31 - LOTM formally adopted a resolution calling for the rights of individuals who own guns to do so legally and responsibly. At the same time members worked with gun owners, educators, law enforcement, mental health providers, community leaders and other faith based organizations to educate the public about the causes of this epidemic, create policy solutions, and reduce the horrific number of deaths. This work continues.
- 2016 - Thanks to the leadership of LOTM an Interfaith Council was founded in Summit County. Organizations included Emmanuel Fellowship, Father Dyer United Methodist Church, High Country Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church, St. Mary's Catholic Church, Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church, Synagogue of the Summit, Lord of the Mountains Lutheran Church, and Summit County Senior Citizens.
- 2016 - The Building Committee conducted an energy audit and completed some of the recommendations.
- 2016 - Pastor Stephanie Kopsch resigned in May 2016.
- 2016 - Lord of Mountains was grateful to Pastor Dena Williams who served as an extended supply pastor after Pastor Kopsch's departure. Pastor William's sermon on the people of God including the Doubter, Believer, Thinker, Devout, Mystic, Philanthropist, Listener, Skeptic, Confused and Divine Healer spoke to the many ways in which this progressive congregation approaches faith.

A Time of Re-formation: 2016 to 2020
“Here in this Place a New Day is Dawning”

At the time of Pastor Kopsch's resignation, it became clear that the congregation needed time to consider the characteristics of the next pastor. Bishop Gonia recommended that the congregation go through a process of redevelopment, taking a long look at all that had transpired during the Rich Mayfield years. This discernment process came as the congregation was preparing to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. As a result, the congregation put in place a reformation process to prepare for the next pastor.

- 2016 - July - Pastor Liliana Stahlberg was called by the Rocky Mountain Synod to serve as a pastor for redevelopment. Pastor Stahlberg and her husband, retired Pastor Wolfgang Stahlberg, arrived at LOTM in August of 2016.
- 2016 - 2017 - Collaborating with Bishop J. Gonia of the Rocky Mountain Synod and under the leadership of Pastor Liliana Stahlberg, the congregation embarked on a process of reformation as described in the statement below.

Purpose of Re-formation at Lord of the Mountains Lutheran Church
November 16, 2016

“This period of renewal and redevelopment for the Lord of the Mountains congregation is designed to discover and generate the capacity to thrive as a congregation for the purpose of God's mission of a transformed world.

Through prayer and study of Scripture, through listening and learning, our task is to deepen our relationship with each other, with the community, the wider church, the world, and with God, resulting in a clear sense of identity.”

Re-formation Team Members: Bonnie Brown, Mark Clark, David Domzal, Peggy Hiller, Karen Kugler, Jean McArthur, Sam Sooter, Steve Wakefield, Joe Fassel, Doug Sims, Steve Wakefield, and Pastor Liliana Stahlberg, Facilitator

- 2017 - Lord of the Mountains congregation received the report of the Re-formation Team at the January 2017 Annual Meeting and accepted the report and the recommendations of the team by a voice vote.
- 2017 - September - Pastor Liliana Stahlberg and Father Michael Glenn conducted an ecumenical prayer service to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. During the service pastors lifted up the Five Imperatives agreed upon by the Catholic Church and the Lutheran Church in the document *From Conflict to Communion*. One hundred sixty-two people from Lord of the Mountains and from the Catholic churches in Silverthorne and Breckenridge attended the celebration and the meal that followed. The following clergy participated in the prayer service: Reverend Liliana Stahlberg (Lord of the Mountains Lutheran Church), Reverend Michael Glenn (Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church, Silverthorne), Reverend Felician Mvala (St. Mary’s Catholic Church, Breckenridge), Reverend Judith Van Osdol (Rocky Mountain Synod), Reverend Wolfgang Stahlberg (Lord of the Mountains Lutheran Church), Reverend Lydia Wittman (St. Anthony’s Hospital Chaplain), Reverend Kari Reiquam, Reverend Darlene Muschett, Deacon Jim Doyle (Silverthorne, Colorado). Lay readers included Connie Anders, Patti Leifheit and Ferol Menzel. Karen Reifsteck Peterson, former organist at Lord of the Mountains, accompanied the service. Christy Reinking directed the bell choir.
- 2017 - October 13 - Pastor Wolfgang Stahlberg died of an aneurism leaving LOTM, the Rocky Mountain Synod and the Progressive Christianity community deeply saddened.
- 2018 - February - Pastor Liliana Stahlberg was installed as the permanent pastor of Lord of the Mountains. The congregation and Bishop Jim Gonia celebrated this pastoral transition and a new life for Lord of the Mountains.
- 2018 - Richard W. Swanson, faculty member at Augustana University in Sioux Falls, SD spent a weekend of storytelling with Lord of the Mountains. He is the director of the Provoking the Gospel Storytelling Project, and a member of the Network of Biblical Storytellers. According to Pastor Swanson, “Then and now, the heart of my work involves exploring the insides of biblical narratives.”
- 2018 - Marianne Borg, Founding Chair of The Marcus J. Borg Foundation, presented a weekend workshop and worshipped with us. She is a retired Episcopal priest having served at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Portland, Oregon for 18 years. She founded Trinity’s Center for Spiritual Development, an educational program that drew national attention. Members of Lord of the Mountains are grateful to Pastor Borg for sharing her friendship and expertise with us.
- 2016-2017 - Unfortunately, the church building was defaced with graffiti in November 2016. Pastor Liliana suggested that our loving response to this act of violence be met with a community project to state boldly that LOTM can persevere through hardships and continue to love all who gather at Lord of the Mountains. In 2017 the congregation completed a mural on the outside of the church designed by Bonnie Norling Wakeman. The mural represents the

various organizations who use the LOTM facility with a message of love, peace, hope and reconciliation.

- 2017 - September - Challenging finances were not new to Lord of the Mountains. In reviewing past annual reports, there were several times that council members declared concern about whether the church would end a fiscal year in the black. That financial challenge revisited LOTM in August of 2017. Based on a recommendation of the Finance Committee, the church council launched a “Bridge the Gap” Campaign and raised slightly over \$30,000 to complete the 2017 fiscal year in good fiscal order.
- 2018 - a new logo was adopted by the congregation (see below)
- 2018 - The LOTM website was completely rebuilt thanks to the leadership of Nancy Spears in collaboration with Ferol Menzel. The new site was launched in December, and Nancy continued to update and maintain the website with the help of Jered Klima.
- 2019 - January - During the 2019 Annual Meeting the congregation established a Legacy Gift Endowment Fund to be invested with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Foundation for the purposes of securing the future of the congregation and responding to financial emergencies.
- 2019 - June - Biblical scholar Charles Manta conducted three interactive workshops providing in depth discussions on the Lord’s Prayer and Beatitudes.
- 2019 - October - LOTM embarked upon a border immersion experience in conjunction with the Cristo Rey Lutheran Church. Cristo Rey Lutheran Church is an ECLA congregation in El Paso, Texas, located in the heart of a low-income Hispanic district. Cristo Rey works in collaboration with the Annunciation House run by the Catholic Church. Cristo Rey ministers to people on both sides of the international border, at Juarez and El Paso. The worshipping congregation provides an inclusive place for cultures to meet and share their gifts. Cristo Rey Border Immersion Program seeks to educate participants about border issues through shared learning, experience, work, prayer, and hearing stories. During the weeklong immersion, representatives of LOTM met with first generation immigrants, visited local organizations working with immigrant populations, met with government officials to hear about border protection and law enforcement, learned about immigration law and discussed economic policies and realities affecting people on the border. In addition, the LOTM team had the opportunity to work directly with migrants and their children. Participants included: Pastor Liliana Stahlberg, Rose Mary Grove, Karen Kugler, Bonnie Brown, Kris Eickhoff, Karen Johns, Catheryn Carlson, Greg Wright, and Bill and Sandy Reetz (former LOTM members).
- 2019 - A new sound system was installed in the sanctuary in 2019 thanks to the generous contribution of Barry Rumack and the work of a committee including Greg O’Neill, Bill Kyrioglou, Donna Clark, Pastor Liliana, and Barry Rumack. The system was designed and built by AV Colorado in Denver and coordinated with Assist2Hear in order to integrate the hearing loop-coils with the audio visual system.
- 2020 - A labyrinth was built in on the west side of the building. Funds to build the labyrinth came from the Hage family in memory of Paul Hage, a long-time member and treasurer of the congregation.
- 2020 - LOTM added Jay and Kelsey Meservy to the staff as Youth and Family Life Coordinators.
- 2020 - March - The COVID-19 pandemic caused LOTM to find new ways to worship, to continue fellowship and to maintain ministries of the congregation. Social distancing, wearing masks, and washing hands became a part of daily activities. The sanctuary remained almost

empty except for the pastor, musicians, and a few members of the congregation who participated in the service. Most members watched the services via live streaming from March 2020 until well into 2021. A special thank you to the audio-visual team who made this possible. We all looked forward to being together again and were grateful to our pastors and musicians for continuing to serve the congregation.

Remembering the Past, Planning for the Future:
2020 - 2021
“Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil”

With the resignation of Pastor Liliana Stahlberg in October of 2020 due to a family emergency, LOTM once again found itself seeking an interim pastor and ultimately a permanent pastor. In February 2021, Pastor Penni Walsh agreed to serve as a consultant to LOTM’s transition team and call committee to assist with the preparation of the Ministry Site Profile necessary for calling a new pastor. A special thank you to Pastor Joe Holub, Pastor Darlene Muschett and Pastor Lydia Ziauddin for serving as pulpit supply from October 2020 through this time of transition.

Even with challenges of a pastoral transition and COVID-19, LOTM looks to the future while continuing our commitment to witness to the gospel and a courageous, resilient, and faithful community.

APPENDIX

MISSION STATEMENT

(Adopted 2005)

In the spirit of the Reformation, Lord of the Mountains Lutheran Church continually seeks meaningful ways of expressing our commitment to the life and teaching of Jesus.

We do this by...

- *Welcoming all people to full participation in our community of faith.
- *Recognizing there are other ways to God than just our way.
- *Striving to be compassionate toward all of creation.
- *Aspiring to live what we believe.
- *Allowing for diversity of thought and opinion.
- *Working for peace and justice for all people.
- *Committing ourselves to serving others.

WELCOME STATEMENT

(Revised 2017)

We rejoice that diversity in God's creation enriches, nurtures, and challenges our life and ministry as followers of Jesus and as servants in the world.

Because we believe with Jesus that God's grace is truly amazing, we are committed to welcoming all people to this place... no matter where you come from, no matter what age, race, socio-economic or family status, no matter what gender identity or sexual orientation, no matter what your faith tradition or theological beliefs.

Grace is for everyone or it isn't grace.
It's that simple.

VISION STATEMENT

(Adopted 2018)

Lord of the Mountains Lutheran Church is an open, welcoming, and affirming community, fulfilling God's vision of a world where peace, love, and justice become a reality for all.

THEOLOGY STATEMENT

(Revised 2018)

This statement of theology had its roots in the very beginning of Lord of the Mountains even before the congregation had its first building. Over time it has been revised with the most recent revision occurring as part of the Reformation process under the guidance of Pastor Liliana Stahlberg and the Reformation Team 2018.

Inclusiveness

We believe with Jesus that God's grace is truly amazing. God's love is free and without condition, unearned and unmerited. Therefore, we are committed to welcoming all people.

Intellectual Integrity

We take the Bible seriously, though not literally. We ask questions about the scriptures understanding that none of us possesses the whole truth. We believe there is more grace to be found in the search for understanding than in dogmatic certainty, more value in questioning than absolutes. We also recognize the value of a variety of perspectives from both religion and science.

Spiritual Vitality

We continually seek meaningful ways of expressing our commitment to the life and teachings of Jesus because Jesus is the face of God's love in our life and in the world. Following the path and teachings of Jesus can lead to an awareness and experience of the sacred and the oneness of all life.

Social Justice

With the knowledge that God cares for justice for all, we strive for peace and justice among all people through both our institutional life and spiritual lives. We enter the public sphere where we advocate for the poor, the hungry, and people suffering from injustice. We aspire to serve our neighbor in love both locally and globally.

Faith Formation

We value faith formation for all ages through continued education and conversations as we grow spiritually. It is our responsibility to pass on this expansive and evolving faith to all as well as to future generations.

Caring for the Earth

We understand the urgency to care for God's beautiful creation and attempt to live in ways that are compassionate and honor our planet.

Belonging to the ELCA

We are committed to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Rocky Mountain Synod. Central to our spiritual life are:

Sacrament of Baptism

Baptism is a visible sign that reminds us of our identity as beloved children of God, in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Sacrament of Communion

Weekly we gather, receive communion at the same table where all are equal before God, and are sent back out to the world to live God's mission.

The Cross

The death of Jesus on the cross is a visible sign that God is always present in the margins of our lives, identifying with our suffering and pain.

Our Ministry

We are called to express gratitude for God's gift of life and love by serving others and caring for Lord of the Mountains Lutheran Church through our financial gifts, our time, and our talents.

LOGO



LORD OF THE MOUNTAINS

LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

(Adopted in 2018)

CHARTER MEMBERS OF LORD OF THE MOUNTAINS

Miss Laurie Anderson
The Rev. and Mrs. Richard (Mary Ann) Bansemer (3 children)
Miss Laurie Anderson
Mrs. Judy Bengé
Mr. and Mrs. Peer (Nancy) Bjornstad (2 children)
Miss Melissa Cantrell
Mr. and Mrs. Robert (Judy) Clock (1 child)
Mr. and Mrs. Kemper (Joan) Coleman (3 children)
Mr. and Mrs. Milt (Martha) Copenhaver
Mr. and Mrs. Dan (Marti) Dever (2 children)
Mr. William C. Dixon
Mr. and Mrs. Fred (Naomi) Dumler (3 children)
Mrs. Linda More (1 child)
Mr. Norm Evanger

Mr. and Mrs. Joe (Barbara) Fehr (1 child)
Mr. and Mrs. Quent (Carol) Gauerke (2 children)
Mr. and Mrs. Rex (Marcy) Glass (2 children)
Mr. and Mrs. Dene (Emily) Hurlbert (2 children)
Mr. and Mrs. Clarence (Edna) James
Mr. Robert Jobman
Mr. and Mrs. Rod (Judy) Jobman
Mr. and Mrs. Tal (Lynn) Jones (child)
Mr. and Mrs. Neil (Shirley) Kelly (2 children)
Mr. and Mrs. Robert (Linda) Killinen (3 children)
Mr. and Mrs. Lash (Marlis) Laursoo (2 children)
Mr. and Mrs. Dean (Gerry) Mosher (2 children)
Mr. and Mrs. Harry (Betty) Moyes
Mr. and Mrs. Olin (Marian) Mueller
Mr. and Mrs. Alan (Shirley) Olson (4 children)
Mr. and Mrs. Brian (Jan) Petersen (1 child)
Dr. and Mrs. J.D. (Sue) Peterson (2 children)
Mr. and Mrs. Ron (Norma) Peterson
The Rev. and Mrs. John (Mary) Pfeiffer
Dr. and Mrs. Harvey (Sue Butler) Rester
Mr. and Mrs. Dave (Darlene) Rud (1 child)
Mr. and Mrs. Doug (Gigi) Rud (1 child)
Miss Jackie Skaro
Mr. Dave Thayer
Mr. and Mrs. Erich (Jean) Windisch (1 child)
Mr. and Mrs. Gerald L. (Dona) Wittwer (2 children)
Mr and Mrs. Wesley L. (Van) Woodford (2 children)

LOTM PASTORS

1973-1978 Rev. Richard Bansemer - Pastor Developer/Pastor

1978-1982 Rev. Willard Bickel (Dean) - Pastor

1983- 2006 Rev. Richard Mayfield - Pastor

1996-2008 Rev. Kari Reiquam - Co Pastor

1999-2007 Ms. Cassandra Olson - Associate in Ministry/Director of Christian Education

2008-2013 Rev. Joseph Holub - Pastor

2013-2016 Rev. Stephanie Kopsch - Pastor

2016 to 2020 Rev. Liliana Stahlberg - Pastor

Interim Pastors
Rev. Bev Piro
Rev. Dena Williams
Rev. James Wiberg
Rev. Ken Stenman

Honorary Pastor Emeritus Henry W. Kircher

PAST COUNCIL PRESIDENTS

1987 - Colin Karsten
 LOTM is seeking names of church presidents between 1987 and 2003
2003 - Sandy Reetz
2004 - Peggy Hiller
2005 - Peggy Hiller
2006 - Peggy Hiller
2007 - Bob Gutherie and J. Kent McHose
2008 - J. Kent McHose
2009 - J. Kent McHose
2010 - Henry Rissier
2011- Henry Rissier
2012 - Henry Rissier
2013 - Amy Smits
2014- Amy Smits
2015 - Amy Smits
2016 - Ferol Menzel
2017 - Ferol Menzel
2018 - Bonnie Brown
2019 - Bonnie Brown
2020 - Amy Simper
2021 - Amy Simper