

# Lutheran Church of Guam

*A small church looking to grow on a small island paradise*



## ABOUT GUAM

Guam is a U.S. territory in the Pacific using U.S. currency and English as the primary language. The island is about 210 square miles with a population of about 160,000, which is primarily Chamorro and Filipino. The island is also home to an Air Force Base and a Naval Base — occupying about 28% of the island with service members and their families numbering about 12,000 — and soon, an expected 5,000 Marines will be stationed here as well.

Our economy is based on tourism, welcoming 1.5 million tourists, largely from Japan and Korea, annually. The island offers several malls and shopping facilities to include many familiar stateside stores and restaurants like Macy's, Kmart, Home Depot, Ross, Chili's, Applebee's, Ruby Tuesday and many local restaurants.

The island has tropical temperatures averaging about 82 degrees year-round.

## WHO WE ARE

Established: 1969

Affiliations: Lutheran Church Missouri Synod and Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ

Membership: 70 members

Average service attendance: 45-50

## MISSION STATEMENT

We, the members of the body of Christ, assembled as the Lutheran Church of Guam, empowered by the Holy Spirit, share the Good News of God revealed in Jesus Christ in all we say and do, both within and outside of our community of faith. In this effort, we are guided by the Bible and Lutheran tradition, and are committed to strengthening the family of God through worship, Christian education, and prayer, all manifested in love.

## OUR CONGREGATION'S BEST QUALITIES

- **Diversity:** We are a hodgepodge of denomination backgrounds and nationalities including residents native to Palau, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Philippines, Indonesia, China, Korea, the Netherlands, the mainland United States and elsewhere. Our congregation is also quite transient, serving as a temporary church home for U.S. military families and those on employment contracts.
- **Warm and welcoming:** We truly abide by our motto "Not just for Lutherans," welcoming visitors from all backgrounds and practicing open communion.
- **Like family:** Our congregation feels like family among all age groups and is very supportive of each other. Our members who leave Guam often stay in touch and come back to visit.
- **Educated:** Our congregation includes lawyers, engineers, real estate professionals, small-business owners, teachers, social workers and directors of government agencies. We bring many skillsets to the operations of the church and value opportunities to study and learn God's word together.

- **Firm yet flexible:** We are firm in our adherence to Lutheran tradition and liturgy, though we are liberal on some practices, such as open communion, so as to be inclusive in a diverse population.
- **We own our own facility:** We own our church facility and parsonage on oceanfront property in Agana Bay. We share the facility with a Marshall Islanders congregation.

#### **WE'RE KNOWN FOR**

- **Tender Shepherd Preschool:** LCG operates Tender Shepherd Preschool within the church, a well-known and respected preschool and child care program of 15 staff members and [number] children aged 2 to 5 years.
- **Our location:** LCG is situated along the shoreline with an unobstructed view of the palms trees and ocean from our sanctuary and the parsonage on the second floor.
- **Octoberfest:** An annual celebration of the Lutheran Church's German heritage, food, dance, contests, and crafts. A fun-filled event that welcomes families, friends, and congregation.
- **Beachside Nativity:** A telling of the Christmas story beachside. Joyous carols, storytelling, and a live Nativity located by the LCG's ocean shore.

#### **A WEEK AT LCG**

Monday–Friday, 7 a.m.–6 p.m. – Tender Shepherd Preschool  
 Tuesday, 7 p.m. – Bible Study  
 Friday, 5:30 p.m. – Worship Team Practice  
 Sunday, 9 a.m. Sunday School  
 Sunday, 10:30 a.m. Worship Service followed by Coffee Fellowship  
 Sunday, 2 p.m. Marshallese congregation service

#### **OUR CHALLENGES**

- **Growth:** We seek leadership in welcoming, engaging and retaining more members to grow our human resources in the church operations and in our ministries. We have historically had a strong base of military families, aided by pastors with base access, and would like to regrow this sector of our congregation.
- **Isolated geographically:** As one of few protestant churches and the only Lutheran church on an island that is 85% Catholic, there is not a large support system of other pastors or churches of the same denomination, though the island does have a Guam Ministerial Association and a few other protestant organizations. Additionally, Guam is 18-24 hours from the U.S. mainland, and being far from family can be a difficult transition for pastors and their spouses and children. Those new to the island always comment on the friendly nature of the people, which helps ease the transition and makes one feel part of the family in no time.
- **Outreach and missions:** In the past LCG has held youth mission trips, conducted a prison fellowship ministry and supported several other regional and community causes. We seek to grow our membership to enable these and other outreach efforts.

#### **WE HOPE TO FIND A PASTOR WHO:**

- Is energetic and appeals to youth
- Is a people person and enjoys getting to know our members and visitors
- Is able to appeal to military service members and potentially has base access
- Offers strong Bible-based leadership

## WHO WE ARE

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In spite of its many transient memberships, by the grace of God LCG grew and in 1972 a parish hall was dedicated for the mission purposes of preschool classes, Sunday school classes, prayer gatherings, confirmation classes and fellowship activities. Since then, the congregation's outreach ministry of Tender Shepherd Preschool and Child Care has continually served families and their children from two to four or five years of age by providing quality growth in a Christ-centered environment.

Today LCG has contact with nearly every part of the world, having members and visitors from Guam, the United States, Japan, Indonesia, Micronesia, the Philippines, Palau, India, China, Korea, Australia, the Netherlands, Germany, the Marshall Islands, Taiwan, and more. Its membership is made up of people from diverse denominational backgrounds, other religious backgrounds, and some traditional Lutheran upbringing. Our church slogan, "We're not just for Lutherans!" describes our reflection of the diversity of God's people, though we also reflect unity as we come together to celebrate the new life that we share in Jesus Christ. We are rooted first in the Bible as God's living word, looking through the lens of the reforms of Martin Luther.

In 2009, LCG disaffiliated with the ELCA and became affiliated with Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC) and remained affiliated with the LCMS.

Tender Shepherd follows the A Beka Book curriculum, which is based on sound scholarship and the Word of God. Each morning, the children work on developmentally appropriate material in separate classrooms. Afternoon care takes place in a mixed age-group environment during the afternoons. Birthday parties, field trips, visiting guests, seasonal and holiday programs are all part of the Tender Shepherd experience. During the summer a special "Day Camp" is offered for ages 2-8. Vacation Bible School week kicks off the summer camp in June and another VBS week brings the summer program to a close in August. The rest of the summer is filled with child care, special outings, crafts and activities.





**Who are we?**

Jeff & Kate Moots

**What brought us to LCG?**

Jeff: Born and raised Lutheran, I moved to Guam and saw an ad for this wonderful church in the Pacific Daily Newspaper.

**What's the one thing you love most about LCG?**

The people.



**Who are we?**

Curtis & Naoko Rigsby

**What brought us to LCG?**

Pastor Jeff Johnson (former pastor)

**What's the one thing you love most about LCG?**

The mix of different cultures and families together in the LCG congregation.



**Who are we?**

Kevin & Diana Graham

**What brought us to LCG?**

We were drawn to LCG, because of its close relationship with the Pacific Islands University. The church was welcoming and we decided to stay and become more involved.

**What's the one thing you love most about LCG?**

The greatest thing about LCG is that it's a church that provides its congregation with many opportunities to grow spiritually and as a person by teaching ministry and how to serve.



### **Who are we?**

Jack & Rose Ary– pictured with grandchildren Nathan and Devin

### **What brought us to LCG?**

Our children. My son, Harley, was born in 92' and I was looking for a caring, family-based church for him to be baptized in. I found LCG and we've been here ever since.

### **What's the one thing you love most about LCG?**

I love the church atmosphere and who we are as a congregation. We're bible-based and family oriented. We truly feel as if the LCG congregation is our second family.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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