



Bethlehem News

September



Dear friends in Christ,

Since Florida recorded its first case of Covid on March 1 much has transpired. You more than likely have gone through a roller coaster of emotions and mountains of worry and strife. And your Lord and Savior has been there with you every step of the way.

Maybe at times you seemed alone, but Jesus was and is there. When you prayed for strength, He comforted you. A Christian is never truly alone, even if at times we might be lonely and afraid at moments in our life on earth. Jesus walks with us and takes our hand.

I can imagine when Jesus left after his ascension into heaven, the disciples were lonely at times. Jesus certainly knew we needed someone who understands us and can help us in times of struggle.

John 14:15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, 17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

The Spirit of the Living God walks with us and dwells within us. We can't see him or touch him, but God's Word tells us about Him. Loving Jesus is at times not easy but Our Father will not abandon us or forsake us.

26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

We know we have been redeemed, not because we earned it but because God loves us and on account of our faith our crucified and risen Savior. Loving Jesus leads to keeping His commandments. God wants us freely, not under threat or fear but to willingly love Him. And remember we have a helper, the Holy Spirit to guide us reminding us of what Jesus has told us. That is peace beyond

"27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."

Remember Jesus is with you.

Blessings,
Pastor Karl

News and Updates

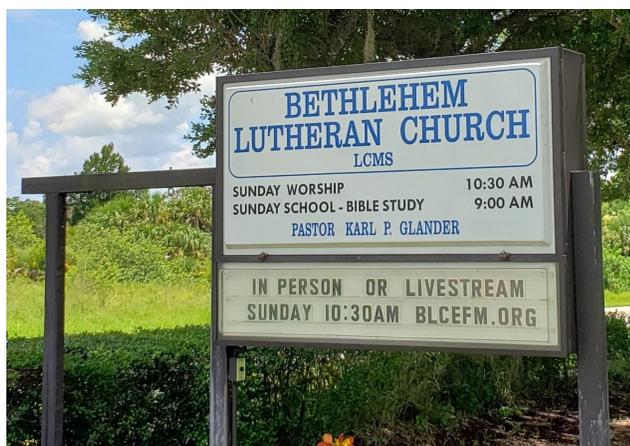
The church council met on August 16th. Much of the meeting was spent discussing the latest reports and guidance about the Covid-19 pandemic. While It was clear that everyone wished that we could go back to our normal routines and practices at Bethlehem, we recognized our obligation to protect our congregation.

The council decided to continue our Sunday worship services in September *and to restart our Wednesday morning bible study in the church beginning Sept. 2.*

We will postpone Sunday Bible Study, Sunday School and our monthly dinners until later in the fall.

We have begun live streaming our Sunday service for those unable to attend (see sign below).

Church Council



August Offerings: \$ 7872
August Expenses: \$ 10723

Our financial obligations continue during this crisis.

Thank you to all those who have sent in their offerings.

In addition to mail, you can give online on the church website (blcefm.org) or through your bank's bill pay system.



New stops signs donated and installed by Ryan Kirsch.

The Altar Guild announces a return to our Floral Calendar. for those who like to honor family occasions such as birthdays or anniversaries. Also, live floral arrangements make it possible to gift live flowers to those who are confined to their homes due to illness.

Please signup on the Flower Calendar in the narthex for special dates you would like to celebrate or just for the opportunity to give flowers to those who might enjoy them.

See the chart below for the remainder of this year. Many Sundays are still available.

Simply place cash or a check in an envelope marked for Altar Flowers and the date. Place the envelope in the collection plate in the narthex. The cost is \$40 per Sunday. Thanks so much for your thoughtfulness.

*Pam Rugenstein
 Altar Guild*

THRIVENT

It is now time to direct your Thrivent choice dollars to Bethlehem Church for this quarter. Do it on line or call Thrivent at 800-847-4836.



SEPTEMBER 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 10:30 Bible Study (also on Zoom)	3	4	5
6 10:30 Worship	7 	8	9 10:30 Bible Study (also on Zoom)	10	11	12
13 10:30 Worship	14	15	16 10:30 Bible Study (also on Zoom)	17	18	19
20 10:30 Worship	21	22	23 10:30 Bible Study (also on Zoom)	24	25	26
27 10:30 Worship	28	29	30 10:30 Bible Study (also on Zoom)			

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES	
15	Carrie & Brad Stecklein

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS	
12	Joyce Kelnosky
14	Pete Remmers
15	Pat Duckwitz
20	Sharon Goers
21	Tom Harder
22	Steve Williams

May God Bless Each One of You As
We Celebrate Your Special Day!



Bethlehem Lutheran Church
 14531 Old Olga Road
 Fort Myers, FL 33905
 Phone: 239-694-3878

Website: www.blcefm.org
 Email: bethlehemlc@gmail.com

Sunday Worship

10:30 AM Worship Service

Rev. Karl Glander

pastorkarlglander@gmail.com

239-293-1489

Organist: **Holly Bell**

Church Secretary: **Linda Kirsch**

Prayer Chain Needs

Do you know that Bethlehem has a prayer chain that prays for the sick, dying and hurting needs of our church family?

Call or email Linda at (239) 693-5026 or jlkirsch3@comcast.net



Bruce Yerkes
 (Friend of Elsie Stowell)
 August 21, 2020



Operation Christmas Child collects shoebox gifts filled with fun toys, school supplies and hygiene items – and delivers them to children in need around the world to demonstrate God’s love in a tangible way. For many of these children, the gift-filled shoebox is the first gift they have ever received. Since 1993 Operation Christmas Child has collected and delivered more than 178 million shoebox gifts to children in more than 160 countries and territories.

In 2020 Operation Christmas Child hopes to collect enough shoebox gifts to reach another 11 million children. Bethlehem Lutheran Church wants to help them meet this goal by filling 100 shoeboxes ourselves. Let’s all participate and make this happen. Boxes are available in the Narthex along with shoebox gift suggestions. We are asking that all participants include a personal note of encouragement and/or photo so the children can relate to you, the person who filled their shoebox.

If you prefer the convenience of online shopping – especially this year – you can build your boxes at samaritanspurse.org/build_online. You can select gifts matched to a child’s specific age and gender. You can also add a personal note and photo on-line.

There is a \$9.00 donation per shoebox which is critical for Operation Christmas Child and covers the collection, processing and shipping of the boxes as well as ministry materials which accompany the shoeboxes. You can include a check with each box made out to Bethlehem Lutheran Church, or you can pay on line and follow your boxes on their journey.

These are difficult times for all of us. The pandemic has disrupted our everyday lives. It’s so important to continue to share God’s love and His Gospel of hope to those in need. Let us do our part and fill 100 boxes. Thanks to Joann Erdman and Betty Willis for getting us off to a great start.

Any questions call Terri Gerlach (239-243-8733).