



# Bethlehem News

**MAY 2020**



## **BETHLEHEM'S REGULAR SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES REMAIN SUSPENDED DUE TO COVID-19 VIRUS**



Grace and Peace to my friends in Christ.

It seems like an eternity since we have been physically together. I know many of us long for our great reunion. While many were excited by Gov. DeSantis going into phase 1 of reopening Florida, others were fearful of the future effects. While we don't know what will happen, we can rejoice in the fact we are justified through our faith in Jesus and have peace with God now. That is our hope for the future.

We can rejoice in this relationship with God, even when we suffer. Our suffering does not change the fact that we have peace with God. It is not that suffering is good, but it doesn't change the reality of what God has done for us in Jesus. When the actions of others cause us to suffer, this reality doesn't change. Rejoice that you are still justified by your faith in Jesus. No matter how difficult times get for us in our lives, we have peace with God. And that is far more important than a little bit of suffering.

Now what? We have faith and peace, and we share it with others. As Florida and our country slowly reopen what is the future for Bethlehem Lutheran? We as a church and God's people are called to be humble, gentle and patient bearing with one another in Love.

St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 talks about Love. 4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

This is the result of our faith. This will be the result. Our Lord and Savior gave His life for us and we can be assured it is done. So what now? What is our purpose in this life? What is God's purpose for Bethlehem Lutheran Church? And a little closer to home, what is God's purpose for you and your family?

As we move forward, I would like you to think about what is God's purpose? And have you ever stopped to think about the gifts God gives? What gifts has God given you and for what purpose? We will discuss these questions in our bible study on Wednesday and also, I will incorporate some of these questions on Sunday morning for us to think and ponder upon. May our gracious Lord be with you and give you peace.

Blessings,

Pastor Karl

### News and Updates

Because of the Corona Virus, Bethlehem’s suspension of our regular services and church activities continues into May until the situation changes.

If you need help or know of someone who does please contact the church office at 239-694-3878 or you can reach Pastor Glander at 239-293-1489 or Richard Gerlach at 239-243-8373.

We encourage you to reach out to one another electronically or by phone during these trying times. If you need a phone number or email address, let us know and we will get it to you.

We will keep you informed of changes or new announcements by email and by postings on the church website BLCEFM.org

Pastor Glander has done a wonderful job reaching out to everyone with his video Sunday services and Zoom Wednesday Bible Study sessions. He has now also started a Monday 9AM message on the church Facebook page.

Please follow the directives of our local authorities and stay safe and healthy.

God Bless,  
Your Church Council

#### EDUCATION

We put together Easter baskets for some of the youth group. I went shopping and found a candy cross, a few other candy items, a cross craft project, and an Easter children’s bulletin. Thank you to Gary and Linda for getting them to the children. I heard from several of them and they were excited to receive them.

We are continuing to plan for VBS. We will decide about having it as scheduled or cancelling later, as we will follow all health guidelines to keep children and leaders safe.

Please join the Bible Study on Wednesday morning done by Zoom. We are studying God's Word and being able to spend a little online time with each other. Both are very good!

As always, yearn to learn!  
Sandy

#### 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.

Thrivent facts and figures from 2019:

- **139,006 Thrivent members** in our member network
- **10,245 Regional events** with member participation.
- **9,731 Thrivent action teams** held (*Our church had 19 Teams*)
- **22 Completed homes**, repairs and worldwide trips in partnership with Habitat for Humanity
- **10,757** Number of eligible members who directed Thrivent Choice Dollars.
- **\$1,892,101 distributed** through Thrivent Choice (*Our church received over \$2,000*)
- **1,638** New lives protected with an insurance product.

Betty Willis  
Thrivent Liaison

**April Offerings: \$5,836**

**April Expenses: \$7,874**

While our services are suspended, 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 banks bill pay system.

*We need your support.*

Richard Gerlach  
Council President



**MAY 2020— NO SCHEDULED EVENTS CURRENTLY PLANNED**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 	26	27	28	29	30
31						

MAY ANNIVERSARIES	
4	Sandy & Gary Lohr
12	Joy & Don Kulbacki
15	Beverly & Joy Kogoy
22	Linda & Chester Rust
25	Linda & Robert Hedrick

MAY BIRTHDAYS	
2	Linda Prosser
9	Nancy Weyl
10	Cyndi Hebert
23	Mark Hebert
24	Gary Fernberg
25	Johnieann Smith
31	Sandy Lohr; Emy Lou McComb; Don Thornton

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



Vacation Bible School Flyer

Mark your calendars and plan to help or volunteer.

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

Website: [www.blcefcm.org](http://www.blcefcm.org)  
Email: [bethlehemlc@gmail.com](mailto:bethlehemlc@gmail.com)

**Sunday Worship**

**9:00AM** Bible Study and Sun School

**9:45-10:30** Fellowship Time

**10:30 AM** Worship Service

**Rev. Karl Glander**

[pastorkarlglander@gmail.com](mailto: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 [jlirsch3@comcast.net](mailto:jlirsch3@comcast.net)



**Bethlehem's new lawn tractor**

Thanks to all who contributed to the Tractor fund.