



Bethlehem News

APRIL 2020

SPECIAL EDITION



BETHLEHEM SUSPENDS REGULAR SERVICES AND CHURCH ACTIVITIES UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE DUE TO COVID-19



Dear Friends in Christ,

Have you ever thought about it? Have you ever wondered, “what if”? What would the world be without it? Just what would this country and this world be without baseball? I know it sounds silly, but it’s where we are today with people running and hoarding toilet paper, chicken, cereal and water. And if you want to find disinfectant wipes or paper towels forget it. Anything with a disinfectant in it is being hoarded. Anything that will kill a virus or bacteria is hard to find. Did you ever think in our country or the world that people would be worried about a little thing like virus when at times whole lifetimes are spent not even thinking about it? As a matter of fact they even have had a virus within them that they feed and encourage.

I am talking about sin. Sin is a virus. It has infected us from the time we were born. As Christians we know it but what do we do? At times we want to live as the world has. At times we would rather watch a movie than spend time with God. Sin separates us from God.

Can you imagine purposely infecting yourself with CoVID19? Of course not! Why take the risk? Yes, we know not everyone will get seriously ill but why take the risk. But that is exactly what we do with sin. But we know there is a cure. We know we have the answer. Go to church, right? It’s what we have done all of our life. So that’s what we will do. But we can’t right now.

Now in Matthew 18:20 Jesus tells us “**where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.**” You have seen and heard the church is not a building its the people, right? And we gather and listen to the Gospel of Jesus in our Church, Bethlehem Lutheran.

They didn’t just gather but they gathered in His name. So what are we to do? We gather, we gather online, we gather on Wednesday at 10:30 for Study of His word. We go and gather around our computers on Sunday in His name at [http:// www.blcefm.org/](http://www.blcefm.org/). We gather on [https:// www.facebook.com/BLCEFM/](https://www.facebook.com/BLCEFM/). The disciples gathered together and we will continue to gather together because Jesus is the answer, he is the cure to the virus inside of us, the sin within us. That is why we gather because we need Jesus. We have fellowship in Christ.

Hebrews 10:23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. **24** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, **25** not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

There is much we don’t know, and when our end will come is never known, but worry not. Jesus died for you and for me. Gather together in His name and may the peace that passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Amen

Pastor Karl Glander

News and Updates

Because of the Corona Virus, Bethlehem has suspended our regular services and church activities 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 me know and we will get it to you.

We will keep you informed of changes or new announcements by email. Remember that you can still "attend" Sunday's worship service and the Wednesday Bible Study online at the church website. *Don't forget to send in your offerings.*

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

God Bless,

Your Church Council

Re:Vitality Survey Results and Next Steps

We had 57 people complete the survey on Bethlehem and where they see our church at this time. Our results were very encouraging. They indicate that we see Bethlehem as being a mature congregation with a strong sense of vitality.

Our higher scores were in the areas of unity and high morale within the congregation; a strong belief that Bethlehem will survive in the future ; and that we are a welcoming congregation to visitors and guests.

A big opportunity for us lies in defining and agreeing on the vision and purpose of Bethlehem as a church.

The purpose of the Re:Vitality report is to provide a starting point for our congregation to build upon. It is the "you are here" indicator that we need to start going to where we'd like to be.

The survey administrators have recommended that we begin our process by implementing their "*Serving in God's Mission: Strategic Planning for Congregations*" program. The program engages the congregation in defining and reaching agreement on the core values; the purpose; the mission and the future direction for our church.

The first step in the program is for the congregation to complete a specially created bible study program. Pastor will begin this program as his Wednesday morning bible study, once we have received the needed materials later this month.

He will present the sessions online using Zoom. The link for these sessions will be listed on the church website, www.blcef.org. Please tune in to these sessions as our goal is to have as many people complete the bible study as possible.

If you have any questions or comments please contact me.

Richard Gerlach

Council President

rrgerlach@aol.com

239-243-8373

APRIL 2020— NO SCHEDULED EVENTS AT THIS TIME

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

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES	
6	Pete & Kay Remmers; Lester & Janice Bradtmiller
17	Linda & Jeff Kirsch
21	April & Scott Czaplewski; Kay & Emmy McComb
23	Holly & Gary Bell
25	Sharon & Larry Goers

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

I trust God...and I wear my seatbelt.
I trust God...and I wear a motorcycle helmet.

I trust God...and there are enough life jackets in my boat for everyone on board.

I trust God...and I use oven mitts with really hot dishes.

I trust God...and I lock my house at night.

I trust God...and I have smoke detectors in my house.

I trust God...and I take my prescribed medicines.

I trust God...and I will follow the best guidelines to share the task of flattening the curve.

Acting with caution and wisdom does not indicate a lack of trust in God

APRIL BIRTHDAYS	
4	Joann Erdman
5	Douglas Johnson
7	Don Kulbacki
14	Pastor Glander; Raul Puga
15	Jessica Puga
16	Holly Bell; Beverly Kogoy
19	Joy Kulbacki
21	Jeff Kirsch
24	Ralph Willis
26	Paul Olson
30	Joe McVoy

A thought-provoking dissertation for our current situation....

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

Website: www.blcefcm.org
Email: 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

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



Pictures above are from our March dinner which raised \$950 for Vacation Bible School.