

# Bethlehem News



Dear Friends in Christ,

You are most likely wondering what's with the cartoon?

This crude drawing with inscription, found in the palace of Septimius Severus (ruled A.D. 193 – 211), apparently was made by a pagan youth who sought to ridicule a fellow student named Alexamenos who was a Christian. The crucifix with a donkey's head on the figure of Christ reveals the scandal of the cross and the ancient world's utter contempt for the crucified Christ. The Greek inscription reads "Alexamenos worships [his] God," attesting to the Christian belief in the divinity of Christ.

During Lent it is tradition to give something up. I remember during lent as a kid every Friday we would have fish in the cafeteria.

*"Take Up Your Cross and Follow Jesus"*

Luke 9:23-27. <sup>23</sup> And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. <sup>25</sup> For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself? <sup>26</sup> For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. <sup>27</sup> But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God."

To save one's life is to lose it, and to lose one's life is to save it (9:24). This is the same principle of the Great Reversal that is characteristic of Jesus' teaching (cf. first/last, last/ first [13:30]; humbled/exalted, exalted/humbled).

Our world is changing, but the disciples of Christ have always been looked down upon. Taking up our cross and following Jesus is something we do every day. We live in a world hostile to Christ. And thus, we suffer at times for our Faith, but we march on taking the ridicule of words and insults like Alexamenos but never reverting from our faith in Him who saves those he loves.

Take up your cross and follow Jesus

Pastor Karl

### News and Updates



We reopened for worship on Sunday, February 14.

You will notice some changes as you enter the Sanctuary. We have closed off every other row of pews to keep everyone safely distanced. Please remember to keep the proper 6' spacing between families in each row. We also ask that you wear a mask for the entire time that you are in the church.

Communion will be offered as we did at the Christmas services. Pick up a prefilled cup and wafer packet, in a plastic bag, as you enter through the Narthex. We will all take communion at the same time in the pews. The used cups should be placed back in the bag and discarded as you depart.

We have re-set the fellowship hall so that the tables are safely distanced from each other. Please keep your mask on during bible study. We will not serve refreshments as they require people to remove their masks.

If you feel unwell, or have the symptoms of the virus please **do not** attend the service in person but join us online. If you are reluctant to return to church at this time you can also worship with us online. Our goal is to keep everyone safe.



Our first plant sale was a big success. We sold all the azaleas raising over \$400 to support our missions. Thanks to all who helped with this effort.



Any Thrivent member who has Choice Dollars from last year has until March 31 to allocate them to a charity or they will be forfeited. Our church would appreciate your donation. Go to [Thrivent.com](http://Thrivent.com) or call 1-800-847-4836. If anyone is interested in Thrivent free zoom classes or free concerts, go to [Thrivent.com/Southeast](http://Thrivent.com/Southeast) to see what is available.

Betty Willis

#### Bethlehem Launches New Website

[www.bethlehemplutheranfortmyers.org](http://www.bethlehemplutheranfortmyers.org)

Our webmaster, **Ryan Kirsch**, has launched our new website. Log on to see how he has updated and greatly enhanced our site-you will be amazed. Anyone using our old address will be automatically forwarded to the new one.

We are blessed to have Ryan supporting our church. He is the person behind all our technology and produces each Sunday streaming service.

**Thank You Ryan!**



People over 65 can now pre-register for vaccine appointments through the State health department. The website is [myvaccine.fl.gov](http://myvaccine.fl.gov). Call 866-200-3468 to pre-register if you don't have internet access.

Some members have received vaccinations at Publix. Their website is [www.publix.com/covid-19vaccine](http://www.publix.com/covid-19vaccine).

Lee county health department has information about vaccinations on their website at <https://www.leegov.com/covid-19/vaccine>

# MARCH 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 1PM: LWML Meeting	2	3 10:30 Bible Study	4	5	6
7 10:30 Worship 11:30 Bible Study; Sunday School & Confirmation	8	9	10 10:30 Bible Study	11	12	13
14 <b>Daylight Savings</b> 10:30 Worship 11:30 Bible Study; Sunday School & Confirmation	15	16	17  10:30 Bible Study	18	19	20
21 10:30 Worship 11:30 Bible Study; Sunday School & Confirmation	22	23	24 10:30 Bible Study	25	26	27
28 <b>PALM SUNDAY</b> 10:30 Worship 11:30 Bible Study; Sunday School & Confirmation	29	30	31 10:30 Bible Study			

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES	
15	Terri & Richard Gerlach
21	Audrey & Al Vine
22	Barbara & Gary Schaeffer
30	Pam & Paul Rugenstein

MARCH BIRTHDAYS	
9	Barbara Schaeffer
11	Ben Smith
13	Ruthann Thorton
16	Patricia Kulbacki
17	Jennifer Morosey; Rudy Rugenstein
18	Carol laser
23	Kay Remmers
25	Sue Hartman
26	Robert Hedrick
29	Rita Wellman



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



Thank you to all those who have sent in their offerings. In addition to mail, you can give online on the church website ([bethlehemplutheranfortmyers.org](http://bethlehemplutheranfortmyers.org)) or through your bank's bill pay system. *We need your continued support.*

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

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

**Sunday Worship**

**10:30 AM** Worship Service

**Rev. Karl Glander**

[pastorkarlglander@gmail.com](mailto:pastorkarlglander@gmail.com)

239-293-1489

Organist: **Holly Bell**

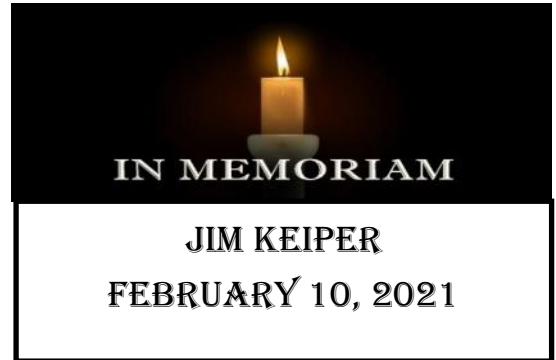
Church Secretary: **Linda Kirsch**

**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 [jlkirsch3@comcast.net](mailto:jlkirsch3@comcast.net)

Your needs will be taken to the Lord!



The air conditioning units for the sanctuary were installed about 15 years ago. They have required more frequent maintenance and repair in the last year. The estimated replacement cost is approximately \$25,000.

We have started an "Air Conditioning Fund" to raise the needed money to replace these units.. Please label your donations as "A/C Fund".

Thanks for your help in keeping Bethlehem 



**Ushers Needed**

Looking for a great, safe way to connect with members of the Bethlehem congregation? Consider being an usher for our Sunday services. You will greet everyone entering the church, show them where to pick-up a bulletin, their communion kit, and place their offering. At the end of the service you'll collect the attendance cards as they depart.

You can sign up on the sheet in the fellowship hall or call the church office.