

Bethlehem News



Dear friends in Christ,

Through the years Easter has become more commercialized and now many celebrate but for different reasons. I would like you to read this passage from the book of John.

John 11:17 On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. 18 Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, 19 and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. 20 When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

21 "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask."

23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

24 Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; 26 and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

27 "Yes, Lord," she replied, "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

That's it. "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world"

Jesus, the Messiah, the one our ancestors from long ago have waited for. For us, yes, we enjoy the meal and the baskets of candy, the dresses and oh yes, the hats we must not forget the hats. But for us, it's even better because we understand and believe what Jesus did in the resurrection of Lazarus; we understand Christ's resurrection. And yes, we believe in Christ's second coming. We believe that Jesus is the Christ, the promised Messiah spoken of in the scriptures.

This past year we have had losses and there is no doubt there will be more losses in our lives going forward. But we have a promise. We have hope.

Jesus said "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

And our answer is a resounding **YES Lord!** You are the Son of the loving God. The world can be falling apart but what we have waiting for us is better than anything. It is Jesus.

BELIEVE

Yours in Christ

Pastor Karl

News and Updates



The pandemic continues to challenge our ability to return to what we would call "normal." The council shares the frustration that many feel and prays that we will be able return to "normal" sooner than later.

We have resumed in-person worship services, bible study, confirmation and Sunday school. We are maintaining social distancing and refraining from serving refreshments to keep everyone masked. We will continue to monitor the guidelines published by our governmental agencies to keep our congregation safe. We will keep you informed of any new developments.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Our educational mission is Christ centered, preparing students of all ages to be lifelong learners of

God's word, with the goal of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Sunday and Wednesday morning Bible study are led by Pastor Karl. We encourage you to attend in person or on Zoom. Information is on our website.

Sunday School and Confirmation classes are held after church. We currently have 2 young people attending confirmation classes.

We regrettably are not having VBS this summer, but hope to get in touch with the list of children we have and invite them to our youth group when we are able to again meet. Pray that we can get our kids back together soon.

As always, yearn to learn!

Sandy Grage



We received this message from Operation Christmas Child expressing their gratitude to Bethlehem.

"Even during the pandemic God richly blessed us so that millions of children are receiving a gift, perhaps for the first time in their life, and hearing about a God who loves them and a Savior who died for their sins.

Here are the numbers we are celebrating for 2020:

- 19,445 shoebox gifts collected in SW Florida
- 507,974 in the Florida/Puerto Rico Region
- 7,809,401 in the United States
- 9,113,853 globally (from U.S., U.K. Canada, Germany, Australia & New Zealand, Spain, Finland and Japan)

We appreciate that you and your congregation have the vision of what God is doing through Operation Christmas Child and continue to generously partner with us.

Thanks to all who helped with this effort,
Terri Gerlach



My goal is to get as much money from Thrivent as possible for projects. In 2020 we had 12 Action Team projects receiving \$3200 for some of the following projects: Ft. Myers Rescue Mission, vacation bible school, Operation Christmas Child boxes, Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets, layettes and dresses for Haiti and 2 church dinners.

Each Thrivent member can do 2 action teams per year receiving \$250 each. Choice dollars can be distributed to a charitable organization such as Bethlehem Church quarterly. Anyone having \$750 or more in annual premiums of qualifying insurance products or having \$20,000 or more in contact value of qualifying products like IRA or annuity can donate a minimum of \$25 or more of free money yearly. You must donate it by website or phone quarterly. Bethlehem received \$1800 from Choice dollar donations in 2020.

Thrivent has many activities on zoom by going to [Thrivent.com/Southeast](https://www.thrivent.com/Southeast) to see what is offered.

We need Thrivent members for our projects upcoming. Please let me know if you are a Thrivent member and I can assist you with a project that can make money for our church.

Betty Willis 239-240-5972



The past two years have required many changes for our Altar Guild and LWML Ladies as well as our entire church. We are so thankful that our ladies have made it possible to keep our duties and projects active and successful.

There is a new process for serving communion both during services and separately by Pastor Karl for those who aren't yet attending Sunday services.

Our LWML Ladies have met monthly and still actively supported Operation Christmas Child and a Christmas Giving Tree for several needy Children.

This February we raised money and supported the many LWML outreach programs with the generous help from our congregation.

We thank God for our ability to dedicate these activities to His glory and pray that, with his help, next year will be even better.

Pam Rugenstein

APRIL 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Maundy Thurs. 7PM Worship	2 Good Friday 7PM Worship	3
4 EASTER 10:30 Worship	5 11:00AM LWML Luncheon Caloosa Grill at Riverhall	6	7 10:30 Bible Study	8	9	10
11 10:30 Worship 11:30 Bible Study; Sunday School & Confirmation	12	13	14 10:30 Bible Study	15	16	17
18 10:30 Worship 11:30 Bible Study; Sunday School & Confirmation	19	20	21 10:30 Bible Study	22	23	24
25 10:30 Worship 11:30 Bible Study; Sunday School & Confirmation	26	27	28 10:30 Bible Study	29	30	

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

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

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



Pastor Glander with new members Carol and Sam Harrison, who joined the Bethlehem Congregation on Palm Sunday, March 28 .

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

Website:
www.bethlehemplutheranfortmyers.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

Your needs will be taken to the Lord!

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.

Sign up on the sheet in the fellowship hall or call the church office.



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

Goal: \$25,000 Raised: \$ 7890



Elders Paul Rugenstein and Gary Lohr working on our grounds. Gary Dreischerf pitched in and sent in these pictures.



Dennis Snyder on his new bike

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) or through your bank's bill pay system.

We need your continued support.

Richard Gerlach, Council President

