



Bethlehem Lutheran Church



## Bethlehem News

# November



Dear Friends in Christ,

There's a curious connection between Halloween and Reformation Day, and it's more than just proximity on the calendar. Why did Martin Luther nail his famous 95 Theses to the Wittenberg church door on October 31, 1517? He was confronting two religious observances that promoted false saintliness and exploited people's fear of judgment and purgatory. **What Is Reformation Day?**

Reformation Day (October 31) commemorates Luther's posting of his 95 Theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany on October 31, 1517. This act triggered the Reformation. The Protestant Reformation was the rediscovery of the doctrine of justification – that is, salvation by grace alone (Gal. 2:21) through faith alone in Christ alone. It was also the protest against the corruption within the Roman Catholic Church. The century before the Reformation was marked by widespread dismay with the corruption of the leaders in the Roman Catholic Church and with its false doctrines, biblical illiteracy, and superstition. Monks, priests, bishops, and popes in Rome taught nonbiblical doctrines like the selling of indulgences, the treasury of merit, purgatory, and salvation through good works.

**Halloween** (October 31) is celebrated by millions each year with costumes and candy.

Halloween's deepest roots are decidedly pagan, despite its Christianized name. Its origin is Celtic and has to do with summer sacrifices to appease Samhain, the lord of death, and evil spirits. Those doing the pagan rituals believed that Samhain sent evil spirits abroad to attack humans, who could escape only by assuming disguises and looking like evil spirits themselves. Christians tried to confront these pagan rites by offering a Christian alternative (All Hallows' Day) that celebrated the lives of faithful Christian saints on November 1. In medieval England the festival was known as All Hallows, hence the name Halloween (All Hallows' Eve) for the preceding evening.

### All Saints' Day

All Hallows' Day or All Saints' Day (November 1) was first celebrated on May 13, 609, when Pope Boniface IV dedicated the Pantheon in Rome to the Virgin Mary. The date was later changed to November 1 by Pope Gregory III, who dedicated a chapel in honor of all saints in the Vatican Basilica. In 837, Pope Gregory IV (827-844) ordered its church-wide observance. Its origin lies earlier in the common commemorations of Christian martyrs. Over time these celebrations came to include not only the martyrs but all saints. During the Reformation, the Protestant churches came to understand "saints" in its New Testament usage as including all believers and reinterpreted the feast of All Saints as a celebration of the unity of the entire Church.

Why Reformation Day? Instead of the treasury of merit that was for sale, Luther protested, "**The true treasure of the Church is the Most Holy Gospel of the glory and the grace of God**" (Thesis 62). **This was Luther's desire for Reformation Day.**

We can be thankful that God used Martin Luther and continues to use many others to bring the purity of the Gospel.

**Ephesians 2:8** For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – "Now that's something to be thankful for."

Thanks be to God.

Pastor Karl



News and Updates



The Voters Assembly, at their meeting on Oct. 30, elected these officers and board members for a 2 year term beginning 1/1/2023 and approved the 2023 budget:

- President- Richard Gerlach
- Vice President- Doug Grage
- Secretary- Holly Bell
- Treasurer- Kurt Laser
- Member at Large- Annett Brocious
- Board of Trustees- Jeff Kirsch, Gary Dreischerf
- Board of Elders- Paul Rugenstein, Kurt Laser, John Wittenberg; Gary Lohr
- Board of Evangelism- Terri Gerlach
- Board of Education- Sandy Grage, Jennifer Morosey
- Board of Stewardship- Bob & Marty Jurs, Rollin & Pat Duckwitz

(In addition, there are three appointed seats on the council for our standing committees: Altar Guild; LWML; Thrivent Liaisons. Pam Rugenstein will represent LWML; Emmy Larson, Altar Guild; Betty Willis, Thrivent Liaisons.)



Thrivent choice dollars are now available to be directed to Bethlehem Lutheran for the third quarter. Money is needed for \$10.00 donations for Operation Christmas Boxes. We currently have 75 boxes. All boxes are due by November 13 for shipping.

*Betty Willis*



LWML will have its first fall meeting on November 7th at 1PM. All ladies are invited to attend. There is a lot to discuss as we get ready for the holidays.

*Pam Rugenstein*



We are collecting shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child again this year. Samaritan's Purse collects our boxes and distributes them to children in need throughout the world. Each one, prayerfully and uniquely packed, is just the beginning. Through The Greatest Journey, which accompanies each box, the children learn about Jesus' love and how to share that love.

Bethlehem provides the boxes with instructions on how to pack them. Suggested items include toys, hygiene items (no liquids), school supplies and clothing. Betty Willis and Joann Erdman each have requested and received Thrivent cards for \$250. We'll use that money to pack even more boxes.

If you have question call *Terri Gerlach 239-243-8733 or Betty Willis 239-240-5972*

**BOXES NEED TO BE BROUGHT TO THE CHURCH FELLOWSHIP HALL BY SUNDAY NOVEMBER 13.**



We are collecting nonperishable food for the families of the Buckingham Exceptional School. We will take the "baskets" to the school the week of December 5. We will put the food in grocery bags on Sunday December 4. We are providing a turkey or ham with each grocery bag of food. Please bring in cans of vegetables, soups, fruit, or other foods as well as pasta, rice, or other dried foods. There are collection bins in the narthex and the entrance to the fellowship hall. All donations are greatly appreciated.

*Paul Rugenstein*



# November 2022

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2 10:30 Bible Study	3	4	5
6 10:30 Worship 11:30 Bible Study; & Sunday School	7 IPM LWML	8 Election Day VOTE	9 10:30 Bible Study	10 4-7 Church Dinner	11 	12
13 10:30 Worship 11:30 Bible Study; & Sunday School	14	15	16 10:30 Bible Study	17	18	19
20 10:30 Worship 11:30 Bible Study; & Sunday School	21	22	23 Worship 7 PM	24 Thanksgiving  Dinner 1PM	25	26
27 10:30 Worship 11:30 Bible Study; & Sunday School	28	29	30 10:30 Bible Study			

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS	NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES
2 Gary Lohr	12 Wende & Steve Williams
3 Doug Grage	<div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 10px; margin: 0 auto; width: 80%;"> <p><b><u>May God Bless Each One of You As We Celebrate Your Special Day!</u></b></p> </div>
7 Jake Stecklein	
11 John Wittenberg	
24 Dennis Snyder	
25 Hope Kulbacki	
27 Sandy Grage	
28 Robert Vanderpool	



Bethlehem held a "Trunk or Treat" for neighborhood kids on Halloween Night. 24 kids and their parents turned out for treats.



**Bethlehem Lutheran Church**

Phone: 239-694-3878

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

Email: [bethlehemlc@gmail.com](mailto:bethlehemlc@gmail.com)

**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!

**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**

**Ushers Needed**

Looking for a great way to connect with members of the Bethlehem congregation? Consider being an usher for our Sunday services. You will greet everyone entering the church, give them a bulletin, and show them where to pick up their communion kit.

Sign up on the sheet in the fellowship hall or contact Linda Kirsch in the church office.

**Memorials totaling \$750 were given this month for:**

**EMY LOU MCCOMB- FOR ROOF FUND**

**LCMS FL/GA DISTRICT GIVES BETHLEHEM \$20,000**

Rev. James Rocky, District President, presented Pastor Glander with a check for \$20,000 for Bethlehem's new roof fund.

We have applied for a FEMA Disaster Grant as well. The cost to replace the roof will be about \$85,000.

We have already received donations totaling over \$2000 from congregation members.

