



Bethlehem Lutheran Church



Bethlehem News



"The just shall live by faith" –Romans 1:17

Dear friends in Christ,

As we remember Martin Luther and the Reformation this month, it's tempting to think of Luther as merely a historical figure. But from our perspective in the LCMS, Luther's importance is not about Luther himself, but about the **Gospel of Jesus Christ**. The Reformation was, at its core, a proclamation of the biblical truth that sinners are justified before God *by grace and through faith in Jesus Christ*, not by their own works or accomplishments.

Luther wrestled deeply with the question: *How can a sinful person stand before a holy God?* That question remains today, although we may express it differently: *Am I good enough? Have I done enough? Does God really forgive me? Why do I still struggle with sin? Is my faith strong enough? Can I ever be the person God wants me to be?*

Today's culture teaches us to measure our worth by our achievements, our success, our reputation, possessions, or productivity. Even Christians can quietly fall into the same trap – believing that God's love depends on what we are doing, and how well we are doing it. The Lutheran confession points us somewhere else. It says: **Look to Christ**. His perfect obedience, His death on the cross, and His resurrection are the foundation of our salvation. Justification means that God declares the sinner righteous for Christ's sake. These familiar phrases sum up our faith:

Grace Alone – Sola Gratia: We do not earn God's love. Salvation is God's gift

Faith Alone – Sola Fide: We receive Christ and His gifts through faith, rather than earning our salvation through our works.

Scripture Alone – Sola Scriptura: God's Word is **the** source for what the Church believes, teaches, and confesses.

These words speak directly to us today. When the world tells us, "Prove yourself," the Gospel says, ***Christ has done it for you***. When our conscience says, "You have failed," **the Gospel points us to the cross**. When we wonder whether God could forgive us, **Scripture directs us to Jesus**.

Luther's teaching on vocation is especially meaningful. Because of God's grace, we do not have to earn God's favor. This means we are free to love and serve our neighbor. The LCMS describes vocation as *God's work through the ordinary relationships and responsibilities of daily life*. That means your ordinary life matters.

Everyday acts of service can be acts of eternal significance. We do not serve our neighbor to become worthy of God's love. *We serve our neighbor because, in Christ, we*

The world has changed dramatically since Luther's time. Technology has transformed our lives. Communication happens instantly. Our culture faces questions Luther could never have imagined. But some things remain the same: we still sin, suffer, fear death, and long for forgiveness. We still need God's mercy. And the Gospel remains the same.

Jesus Christ came into the world for sinners. He lived the righteous life we could not live, He died for our sins, and He rose from the dead. Through faith in Him, we have forgiveness and life.

A Reformation Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we give you thanks for your servant, Martin Luther and for the way you used him to proclaim the truth of your Holy Word. Keep your Church faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Protect us from trusting in our own righteousness, accomplishments, or works. Turn our hearts continually toward Christ and His cross. Give us confidence in your grace, faith in your promises, and love for our neighbors. Teach us to live faithfully in our vocations and to serve those whom you have placed around us. In a world filled with uncertainty, remind us that Your Word endures forever and that our salvation rests not upon our strength, but upon Jesus Christ, for through Him we have forgiveness, life, and salvation.

In Jesus name, Amen

"For it is by grace you have been saved through faith....it is the gift of God" Ephesians 2:8

Blessings, Pastor Karl



News and Updates



We will have a Voters' Meeting on October 25th after the worship service. We will be electing the council and board members and presenting the budget for 2027 for approval at the meeting. We encourage all members to attend.



All ladies of Bethlehem are invited to attend the Fall Rally being held at Faith Lutheran Church in Naples. It is scheduled for October 17th starting with registration beginning at 1115 and the Rally ending at 3 p.m. It is a wonderful day of fellowship including lunch, worship, a speaker, Bible study, and a short meeting. If you would like to attend, please let Mickie or any member of LWM. Your registration will be paid by LWM. You can carpool if you would like by meeting at the church. We will let you know what time to be at the church when we get closer to the 17th. We also will resume our monthly meetings, with our first meeting being on November 2nd starting at 1 p.m. We invite all ladies to attend. The busy holidays will soon be upon us. We would love to see you there and your input is more than welcomed.

God's blessings, Sandy



Our Monday Morning Activities have been going along quite well.

The exercises have been varied from week to week and well received by all in attendance. We continue to introduce various crafts in the later part of our sessions as well as a fair dose of chatting! All are welcome to join us at 10AM every Monday and are encouraged to bring your friends, neighbors or family members along. We also had another Youth Lock In in September (*see below*) which was attended by four girls who had such a good time that they are inviting some friends to join us for the October Event on October 23rd.



Elders Monthly Devotion

EVIL AROUND US

*Our strength is drained
by our evil thoughts and actions,
even so we do not mean to.*

The Serpent is near to lead us to evil.

*For day and night your hand was heavy on me:
my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.*

*Then I acknowledge my sin to you
and did not cover up my iniquity.*

*I said, "I will confess
my transgressions to the Lord.
And you forgave the guilt of my sin.*

Psalm 32:4-5 NIV

*Today and always be aware of Satan,
be diligent to keep him away.*

*Being upright keeps away the Serpent.
Confess to God so the lives of the faithful
will be secure in God.*

*Lord, would you bless and keep us,
Lord, please make your face
shine upon us.*

Amen

Klaus Naumann



We are collecting items for our shoeboxes. Hair brushes, hair bands, school supplies and the \$10.00 postage that is for each box submitted. Money can be given to Mickie or Betty. Boxes will be submitted Nov 12. After church November 8, any church members can participate in packing the over 100 boxes available.

Betty Willis



OCTOBER 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 10:30 Worship 11:30 Bible Study; & Sunday School	5 10:00 Gathering	6	7 10:30 Bible Study	8	9	10
11 10:30 Worship 11:30 Bible Study; & Sunday School	12 10:00 Gathering	13	14 10:30 Bible Study	15	16	17
18 10:30 Worship 11:30 Bible Study; & Sunday School	19 10:00 Gathering	20	21 10:30 Bible Study	22	23	24
25 10:30 Worship 11:30 Voters Meeting	26 10:00 Gathering	27	28 10:30 Bible Study	29	30	31

	OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS
8	Jack Young
11	Jase Albert
13	Gary Dreischerf
14	Pam Rugenstein
18	Annette Brocious
24	Darrell Erdman
25	Vi Hacker

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



CHRISTIANS ARE LIKE PUMPKINS.
God picks you from the patch, brings you in, and washes all off the dirt off, some of which you may have gotten from other pumpkins. Then, He cuts the top off and scoops out all the yucky stuff. Removes the seeds of doubt, hate, greed, etc. Then, He carves a new smiling face and puts His light inside of you to shine for all the world to see. Let your light shine for Jesus!



Pastor with our new member Maria Esquerre.

Joining the Monday morning Gatherers





Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Phone: 239-694-3878

Website: www.bethlehemplutheranfortmyers.org

Email: 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

Your needs will be taken to the Lord!

Sunday Worship

10:30 AM Worship Service

Rev. Karl Glander

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.

Sign up on the sheet in the fellowship hall.

IN MEMORIAM

JOHN WITTENBERG

SEPTEMBER 6, 2026



Endowment. Sounds like a big deal for the ultrawealthy and maybe universities like Harvard or, Columbia. It is defined as a gift of financial support or property to support long-term welfare of an organization or charity.

Our U.S. Constitution even uses the phrase "...rights *endowed* by our Creator..." Our Creator not only endowed certain rights to us, He provided a permanent and eternal endowment of forgiveness of all our sins through faith in Jesus as our Savior.

Consider your own endowment for the ongoing welfare of your church and God's work which is carried out through it.

How? Maybe as part of property or investments you sell or, as a gift through life planning, part of a Will/Trust when you no longer need all those resources. You can help fund your church's needs going forward. Consider it. Pray on it.

"...well done good and faithful servant! ...come and share your Master's Happiness!"

Your brother, in Christ,

Tim Tobeck



Melinda Williams says farewell on her last Sunday at Bethlehem. She is relocating back to Pennsylvania.

She thanks the congregation for the kindness and support shown to her.