

The Star of Bethlehem



November 2017

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THANK GOD

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

Philippians 4:6

I can't believe it's time to write my November newsletter article already. Today is October 12th and it's ninety degrees outside. Where I grew up in Denver there was always a chill in the air by now and heaters were being turned on. Here I find myself lowering the air conditioner. Regardless of the weather, November is still the time of the year when we gather together as individuals and the church to give thanks to God for all the blessings He pours out on us.

Increasingly I hear people saying they don't have anything for which to be thankful because there are so many problems in the world and in their own lives. It really does seem like things are out of control. If there is one thing we don't seem to have much control over, it's this set of nerves which keeps assailing us on every side - morning, noon, and night, and at the most unwelcome moments in between! Health, finances, what other people think of us, unexpected personal and world events that can overwhelm us with grief and anxiety. Where does one end the list of things in day-to-day life which keep us on the raw edge of anxiety? Indeed, sometimes it feels like the list is endless.

The Apostle Paul gives us direction as we face struggles in our lives. *"In everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."* There it is, the Christian way with every trouble in the world, our secret for serenity: bring God into it. Undergird it with the love of the Savior.

In no way does this simplify the pain, anxiety, or heart-ache of our lives. It does, however, give us direction . . . a place to go when we feel lost. It is that little phrase, *"with thanksgiving,"* that gets my attention, and I'd like it to get hold of yours. When you are in the doldrums, when the world seems to be falling apart, when you are feeling fretful and unhappy, and people around are doing everything they can, it seems, to beat you down, then remember the other side of the ledger. The credit side has some entries, too. *"Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits"* (Psalm 103:2). I should say: health, if you still have it, friends, the beauty of so much of the world that shouts its praise to the Lord (Isaiah 55:12). Don't forget that God is still forgiving you at Jesus' cross, at the very moment when anxiety has a stranglehold on you. The big thing is under control. You can still thank God for that!

Anxious about something? Take it to the Lord in prayer. And remember all the good things too. Take it to Him *"with thanksgiving."*

And remember, please join us for our *special service of thanksgiving on the eve of Thanksgiving, Wednesday, November 22, at 7:00 PM.* It is good to come together with thanksgiving and remember all His benefits to us.

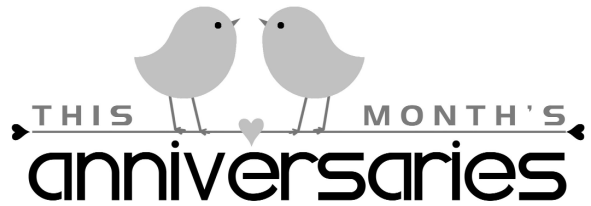
A blessed Thanksgiving to you all,

Pastor Dana Allen Brones

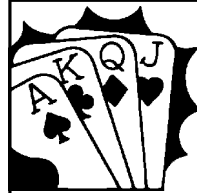
Bethlehem Lutheran Church and Preschool
1423 8th Avenue North . Jacksonville Beach, Florida 32250
(904) 249-5418 Church or (904) 249-1204 Preschool
www.bethlehemlutheranjaxbeach.org



- 1 Travis Hardy
- 2 Dee Reichard
- 3 Cynthia Briggs
Kristen Pretzell
Earleen Shord
- 4 Kristen Randolph
- 5 Jamie Mazzeo
Ron Zarski
- 6 Joanne Dengler
Kate Schaufler
- 7 Danny Barley
Don Grigg
Maureen Murphy
- 8 Martha Fischer
Abigale Hardy
Cooper Heisler
Leslie Hart
- 10 Ava Garner
Madilyn Garner
Erica Grigg
- 11 Summer Porter
- 15 Elizabeth Thies
- 16 Nancy Furnas
Cheri Mcleod-Greene
- 17 Brian Matthews
Logan Wortelboer
Robbie Wortelboer
- 19 Jan Aleschus-Runko
Lillian Hart
Dave Horn
David Lease
- 21 Rebekah Alenduff
Owen Carlson
Loren Sifferath
- 22 Carleda Krause
- 24 Bob Van Ness
- 25 Alex Limbaugh
- 26 Dan Runko
- 27 Becky Duck
- 29 Jesse Shimp
Lolly Starkey
Randall Wardin
- 30 Herbert Cox
Gale Lucas
Barb McCombs
Brook Porter



- 3 Matthew & Candace Gray
- 7 John & Cheri Porter



SENIOR GAME DAY

November 6

@ 9:30 am

Contact MaryAnn Lawrence with any questions.

Call Committee

Volunteers for calling an additional pastor

- Dana Brones
- Alex Limbaugh
- Bruce Dellinger
- Tammy Barley
- Lee Fischer
- Liz Jaranowski
- Brian Kientz
- Pat May
- Carol Pietrasiuk
- Karen Wilhelm

Stewardship

	September 2016	September 2017
Worship	\$44,011.25	\$44,687.49
restricted	3,992.42	4,503.00
YTD Totals	<u>\$437,111.45</u>	<u>\$475,544.60</u>
restricted total	\$35,709.13	\$48,143.46

Attendance Record

<u>Date</u>	<u>8 am</u>	<u>9:30 am</u>	<u>11 am</u>	<u>Total</u>
Sept. 4, 2016	84	80	80	244
Sept. 3, 2017	84	79	84	247
Sept. 11, 2016	86	91	81	258
Sept. 10, 2017	0	0	0	0
Sept 18, 2016	Homecoming			244
Sept. 17, 2017	94	88	71	253
Sept. 25, 2016	70	65	94	229
Sept. 24, 2017	108	92	85	285

Like us on Facebook for the latest in news, photos and fun!

	Screen Operators	Greeters	Altar
Nov. 5	8 am	Pat	Setup Jenn Val
	9:30 am	Candice	Joan R Joan
	11 am	Gina	Lee & Joan F MaryAnn
Nov. 12	8 am	Sam	Tami Susan
	9:30 am	Tami	Joan R Tami
	11 am	Carol	Julie T & Rita W Carol
Nov. 19	8 am	Susan H	Anna Val
	9:30 am	Brenda	Julie T Brenda
	11 am	Susan S	Diana
Nov. 26	8 am	Val	Carol Susan
	9:30 am	Romaine	Joan R Amy
	11 am	Toni	Mary D & Barbara W Kathy O.

Please contact Kristine Perryman if you are interested in serving as a screen operator and what service you attend, 904-536-0826. If you would like to serve as a greeters, please contact Anna Arno, anna202358@hotmail.com (8 am) Joan Richards, 463.6703 nanajoin55@icloud.com (9:30 am), Jean Shimp, rlshimp@comcast.net (11 am) It is a great way to get to know more members. If you are interested in acolyting, please call Tammy Barley 704-5117 - or email tarnot@bellsouth.net.

Give Thanks

1 Tim. 4:4-5 Everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.

We will probably be hearing a lot about the importance of "giving thanks" in the days running up to Thursday, November 23rd. So, if having society preach at you about what kind of shape your attitude is in really ain't your thing... brace yourself. It's coming.

Of course, we should give thanks! As human beings, as Americans, and even more so as Christians, we have much to be thankful for. But one of the biggest challenges for us Christians in the season of "giving thanks," is that we understand the concept in a way that differs from the wider culture. Most of the time, in the midst of our very general "thanksgiving," an important truth is lost. Namely, that in order to "give thanks," one must have an actual person to express said thanks to! And that person must have actually given you something! Contrary to the impression you might receive this month, thanksgiving isn't simply a warm fuzzy in your tummy that makes you feel good. Rather, it is a specific response to a specific person for specific things that person has done.

Sometime this month, I would encourage you to take a sheet of paper, and just write. For 10 minutes, just write down things that you have, things you've been given - both "spiritual" and "material," both "holy" and "mundane." But don't stop there. The world does that much. Go one step further. Pray that list. Lift it up before the Triune God who gave you such things. As Paul wrote to young Timothy, even the most mundane things become holy things when we recall that they were given to us by a good and holy God. So make your list. Then pray it.

Luther had a list like this. In his Small Catechism, he describes the sorts of things, even mundane things, that are wrapped up in our petition for daily bread. "Daily bread" he says, "includes everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout husband or wife, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, self-control, good reputation, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like."

It's all good. And even the mundane can be holy. This month, be specific. Pray your own "daily bread thank-you list" to the One who died to give you all blessings. I'm not going to harp on whether your tummy is sufficiently fuzzy on November 23rd. I will however stress that there is nothing too small, too insignificant to thank God for specifically. Because even the smallest gifts of God are made holy through the Word of God and prayer. "Be thankful" = Pray.

Vicar

Thanksgiving and Christmas Baskets

Bethlehem will once again be providing Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for needy families in the area. We are looking for gift cards and non-perishable items. If you know of a family in need, please contact the office. The baskets are located in the Narthex. Thank you for your generosity.

Online Sermons

We are so blessed and thankful that we now have the capability to upload our weekly sermon to our church website for all to listen to. Simply log on to <http://www.blcjaxbeach.org/> and under Current Sermon Series you can click on the sermon you want to listen to.

Amazing Grace

Recently I received a beautiful card welcoming me back from my recent couch/wheelchair recovery. It was truly written with genuine joy and was so received by me. It spoke of "leading us in praise to the Lord through music!" It was like the light after what seemed to be a very long darkness and it made me happy. The front message of the card reads "True worship freely flows from hearts who have heard the melody of God's amazing grace." It brought to mind many things. I asked Pastor recently to give me one word that would speak of The Reformation (besides 500 years!) and he replied "Grace Alone". (Be on the listen for the choirs' anthem at the Reformation Service). It also brought to mind the moment at the recent President's Equip Conference when 'true worship' was freely flowing from hearts as our proud and devoted choir backed up by our equally as devoted Praise Team stood on the raised platform, singing and clapping as 750 folks stood and joined them also singing and clapping - the melodies of God's amazing grace. I am also reminded of the older gentleman at one of the nursing homes where Richard and I play once a month, who is crippled and confined to a wheelchair. He can't really move by himself, although I see his feet kind of tapping as we play, but as soon as we sing "Amazing Grace", his melodic and strong bass voice joins in and sings all the words of all the verses: true worship freely flowing.

As we approach the upcoming seasons of Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas, I look forward to bringing the melodies of God's amazing grace and miraculous birth and life to our hearts, to keep 'true worship freely flowing'. Thank you for joining in our songs of praise and please, keep singing!

In His service and yours,
Kathleen

Go Noles

University Lutheran, the campus ministry at Florida State University, is seeking to develop an alumni network, the LutherNole Network, that is specifically focused on helping new graduates from FSU become acclimated to the new cities they find themselves in after graduation, including connecting them to your church. If you are an FSU alumni at a Lutheran church, we would love to be able to connect newly graduated students to your church through you. To get involved or to find out more, please send an email to jan@universitylutheranchurch.org or visit <http://luthernoles.org>.



Emails....

Are you receiving email notifications from the church? If not, it may be that we do not have your correct email address on file. When you sign the attendance book today, please include the email address you would like for us to use when sending out notifications. Notifications may be funeral announcements, events or just general communication to all members. We don't want anyone left out. Contact Carol at carolpiet@aol.com for more information.

You'll Know Them by Their Badges

The Board of Elders' are now recognizable by their red badges. Please feel free to talk to an Elder about our church or ask questions about our faith. Call the office if you are not sure who your elder is. Let us know what we can do for you!



BLC serves the homeless the third Friday of every month at The Mission House. Please sign up in the Narthex. It only takes about two hours and is an amazing mission.

Operation Barnabas

Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

The vision of Operation Barnabas is that every military connected person lives in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

This year Bethlehem decided to create a chapter of Operation Barnabas by joining over 100 congregations across our country to reach out to with a ministry to our Armed Forces; active duty, reserves and veterans. As well as Reserve chaplains and their families.

This is a Call To Action to Pray for our troops, Recognize these people in our congregation and serve as a resource to other organizations that provide care to military families and veterans. Sunday, November 12th, Veterans Day weekend we will have our first program celebrating a salute to our Armed Forces immediately after the 11 o'clock service including a Potluck meal in the Fellowship Hall.

Also, if you are a military person we ask you to please register with this program. There is a Operation Barnabas box with forms in the Narthex.

For much more information please visit the website: lcms.org go to "How We Serve, under Witness go to "Ministry to the Armed Forces" and you may select "Learn about Operation Barnabas".

Our men and women in uniform have answered our nation's call to protect and defend us at home and abroad. We invite you to help us to help them, and while doing so share the love of Christ.

Ben Bryant

Dear Brothers in Christ,

Reformation greetings in the name of the One who makes us living stones, our Lord Jesus Christ!

During this month when many are recognizing Clergy Appreciation, I would like to express my gratitude to you for the work you do on behalf of so many. We are living in a day when the general populace seems to have little regard for the work we do. Many despise the preaching of the Word and that at times it can become discouraging and disappointing. As we look to the lives of the Prophets and Apostles, we see that in the midst of discouragement they held on to a greater hope. This hope has a first name--Jesus! He is the one who in His mercy chose you to go and bear fruit that will last. The One who has called us will supply our needs as we put our trust in Him.

In my opinion, you men are the real heroes on the front lines. It has been said that ministry is messy. You know that full well. We are living in days that many of our forebearers couldn't imagine. While each generation has dealt with difficult issues, the issues we see today are unprecedented. Many of us are no longer shocked by many of the news headlines that reinforce how depraved our society has become. It's a great reminder of why Jesus has chosen us to be His representatives. The work you do each day, the people you encounter, the variety of problems you wrestle with, the number of issues you juggle on a regular basis are the very reasons Jesus chose you and uses you in mighty ways, even when you don't recognize it. All of this causes me to have a great amount of pride in what you do and to proclaim that the Florida-Georgia District has some of the greatest servants in the Synod!

Thank you for your service to our Lord and His Church. Thank you for your dedication and willingness to work so hard, often without due recognition. Thank you for faithfully sharing the Word and Sacraments and providing worship opportunities for your people. Thank you for the work you do in your community, and for your support of the Florida-Georgia District.

May God continue to richly bless you, your family, and your ministry as you serve Him. Happy Clergy Appreciation! I appreciate you, and more importantly, Jesus, who chose you in His grace, loves you dearly. Live in that love with confidence as He continues to work through you!

Peace in Jesus,
Rev. Gregory S. Walton, President
The Florida-Georgia District, LCMS

Hurricane victims in Puerto Rico

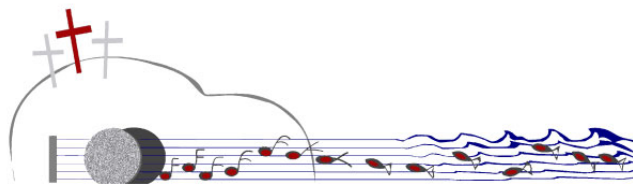
To Give: Online - visit lcms.org/puerto-rico-relief.

By text - Text LCMSPUERTORICO to 41444.

Over the phone - Call the LCMS toll-free gift line between 8 am and 4:10 pm. Central time at 888-930-4438 or the LCMS Church Information Center at 888-843-5267.

By mail - Make checks payable to "The Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod" On the memo line, write "Disaster Response/Relief" and mail to the LCMS, P.O. Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-6861. Gifts also can be designated specifically for Puerto Rico. Gifts are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

Please keep our country in prayer.



In July we came to the decision it was time for a new RV. We were getting to that point where it was going to cost more to keep the old one than to just get a new one. We owned our first haRVey for almost twelve years, with nearly eleven of those years moving every week or so. In the end it was better to trade it in and move on. We had lived longer in that RV than we have anywhere else our whole married life! In 37 years our longest residence was in an RV. What does that say about our nomadic life? I suppose our frequent moves prepared us for the next thing. Letting go is awfully hard. Dave kept saying, "Sure, it's falling apart, but it's paid for!" New is hard. More costly is hard. But we can always ask, "Lord, will you be with me?" and the answer is always, "YES."

So, while still connected to the old, we give thanks for the new and move forward glad to have the means to continue our work. That's what any thanksgiving is about, isn't it? God has given us all the means to continue our work in His kingdom, shining His love to others, bringing the praise of all creation back to Him.


The Horns

Who Can Help You at BLC

Altar Guild	Val Gruhn	904-536-2912
Baptism	Church Office	904-249-5418
Bible Study	Rev. Keith Bicknase . . .	904-249-5418
	Pastor Dana Brones	904-249-5418
Coffee Fellowship	Pat Robar	904-249-8216
Elders	Gordon Gruhn	904-838-6585
Fellowship	Brenda Murray	904-220-0447
Funerals	Church Office	904-249-5418
8:00 Greeters	Anna Arno	904-223-1766
9:30 Greeters	Joan Richards	904-463-6703
11:00 Greeters	Jean Shimp	904-249-2040
Handbells	Brenda Murray	904-220-0447
Kitchen cleanup	Carol Pietrasiuk	904-536-2871
Music	Kathleen Olive	904-249-5418 x17
Newsletter Articles	Church Office	904-249-5418
Prayer Ministry	Vicar	904-249-5418
Preschool	Patricia May	904-249-1204
Screen Operators	Kristine Perryman	904-536-0826
Senior Card Day	MaryAnn Lawrence	904-246-3279
Sunday School	Deb Donnelly	ddonli@yahoo.com
8:00 Ushers	Susan Heimbach	904-307-1917
9:30 Ushers	Donny Barley	904-955-3838
11:00 Ushers	Allan Werner	904-223-0939
VBS	Darlene Maxwell	904-307-9078
Weddings	Church Office	904-249-5418

If any group has been forgotten, please call the church office to update phone numbers of listings.

November 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5 2 am Daylight Savings 8, 9:30 & 11 am Worship 9:30 Bible Study	6 9:30 am Senior Cards 6:45 pm Gideon's Meeting	7 7 pm MPC	1 ALL SAINTS DAY 9:30 Chapel 11 am Staff Mtg 5 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Confirmation 7 pm Bible Study	2 9:15 Prayer Meeting 9:30 Bible Study 6:30 Choir 6:45 pm AA Mtg	3 5:30 Wedding Rehearsal Middle School Gathering	4 8 am Hunger Fight 8:45 am AA Mtg 9 am Grounded in Faith 10 am Music Practice
12 8, 9:30 & 11 am Worship 9:30 Bible Study 12 Noon Operation Barnabas Potluck	13 7 pm Over the Ditch Small Group	14 6 pm Bells 7 pm Elders Meeting	8 9:30 Chapel 11 am Staff Mtg 5 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Confirmation 7 pm Bible Study	9 9:15 Prayer Meeting 9:30 Bible Study 6:30 Choir 6:45 pm AA Mtg	10 PRESCHOOL CLOSED	11 VETERAN'S DAY 8:45 am AA Mtg 10 am Music Practice 6 pm LSS Redtie Affair
19 8, 9:30 & 11 am Worship 9:30 Bible Study 12:15 Cong. Meeting	20	21 6 pm Bells	15 9:30 Chapel 11 am Staff Mtg 5 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Confirmation 7 pm Bible Study	16 9 am Circuit Meeting 6:30 Choir 6:45 pm AA Mtg	17 6 pm Mission House	18 8:45 am AA Mtg 10 am Music Practice
26 8, 9:30 & 11 am Worship 9:30 Bible Study	27 7 pm Over the Ditch Small Group	28 6 pm Bells 7 pm Exec. Council	22 9:30 Chapel 11 am Staff Mtg 5 pm Bible Study 7 pm Worship	23 Office & Preschool Closed  THANKSGIVING	24 Office & Preschool Closed	25 8:45 am AA Mtg 10 am Music Practice
8, 9:30 & 11 am Worship 9:30 Bible Study	9:15 Prayer Meeting 9:30 Bible Study 6:30 Choir 6:45 pm AA Mtg	9:30 Chapel 11 am Staff Mtg 5 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Confirmation 7 pm Bible Study	29	30		