

The Star of Bethlehem



JULY 2018

KEEPING YOUR COOL

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit.

Age brings with it its own advantages. Having just turned 65 on June 6th I am finding age related discounts on nearly everything from restaurants to movies to insurance. Somehow all the algorithms have lined up so that, seemingly, every advertiser knows that I have reached the age of senior discounts. Another advantage of aging is a subtle relaxing of the pressures under which one sometimes find him or herself . . . just by being alive!

At one time, when I would complain about the incessant pressures under which I found myself, a friend borrowed the words of Harry S. Truman and said, "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen." Although he was trying to be helpful, just hearing that built up even more pressure.

There are better ways to "beat the heat" when the pressure is on. One way is to remember to whom you, as a child of God, are responsible. I refer to Jesus. He is the One, the One and only, when all is said and done, to whom you are responsible. Half our pressures are rooted in trying to please everybody. But Jesus is not nearly so hard to please as people are. What, after all, does He require? Simply that you be found faithful. People, family, friends, the boss, all insist that you succeed. Jesus asks simply that you try, faithfully, with everything you've got.

Living faithfully under God's grace in Jesus releases the pressure so that we are free to serve. I really believe that this contagious freedom, lived under grace, is the power which is moving Bethlehem to service and involvement in unprecedented proportions. Our South

Africa and Guatemala missionaries are making a difference in the world one person at a time. Our preschool ministry is making a difference in children and families. Our mission to the 122 children that came to our opening VBS today is making a difference in the world one child at a time. Our musicians from the choir, bells and praise team sing and play instruments because they have the freedom to lead God's people in worship and praise. Our Sunday School teachers teach under the freedom of the Gospel so that, by the power of the Holy Spirit, God's Word impacts children, youth, and adults for life. Indeed, living under God's grace removes the pressure so that you can live and serve faithfully with everything you've got.

Here's another way to keep cool. Recall that Jesus thinks you are the right man or woman for the job, whatever it is (and BLC has many opportunities for you to serve). He sent His Son to enlist you in His service. He sent His Spirit to set up housekeeping in your heart. He did all this because He sees some promise in you, some confidence that you are right for the tasks he wants you do. He chose you, and not the other way around.

Add them up: they spell cool in the heat . . . not only in the month of July but in the heat of all your pressures. Even better is that this goes beyond the best discounts because it's free.

Serving faithfully with you,
Pastor Dana Allen Brones

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Many Thanks from Africa

Oliver Stanfield	7/2	Freya Helberg	7/16
Jean Christ	7/4	Ace Lee	
Renee Hornsby		Angela Orzeske	
Brian Kientz		Gordon Gruhn	7/17
Otto Gruhn	7/5	Daniel Tostovarsnik	
Marvin Ley		Shannon Donnelly	7/18
Kristine Perryman		Sam Florey	
Peggy Roberts		Lauren Wheeler	
Oliver Vesta		Marilyn Garrett	7/19
Kevin Engelstad	7/6	Terri Torgerud	7/20
Paul Gundian		Olivia Harrison	7/21
Elijah Addison	7/7	Jean & Roger Roman	
Bruce Dellinger		Tammy Barley	7/22
Catalina Carr	7/8	Matt Reichard	
Morgan OConnor		Matthew Reichard	
Fritz Reinhardt		Samantha Maloney	7/23
David Thiemann		Christopher Thompson	7/24
Paul Huber	7/9	Bernie & Nancy Brewer	7/25
Amanda Beaty	7/10	Daniel & Janet Dablow	
Denise Corbitt		Ron & Tammy Zarski	
Barbara Croghan		Martha Collins	7/26
Annabelle Walton		Bill Russell	
Samantha Zikeli		Janet Wiegmann	
Stephen & Linda Reed	7/11	Amy Gruhn-Case	7/27
Bayley Smith		Delores Reinikainen	
Janet Dablow	7/12	Lee Fischer	7/28
Sue Eischen		Jennifer Addis	7/29
Paul Briggs	7/13	Terri Malueg Ray	
Danielle & Nicholas Huckaba		Barbara Larson	7/30
Susan Albrecht	7/15	Luke Huber	7/31
Madison Barger			
Diane Brones			

The Lutheran Church
Intshongweni Branch

Dear Reverend

Greetings to you in this new year baba uMfundisi. I write this letter as a way of showing gratitude and appreciation after what you had done for me the past year.

As the word of God does say that blessed is the hand that gives, than the one which receives. R1 400.00, one may claim that this amount may not get you anywhere in this our new South Africa, but to me it meant a lot, trust me. I was able to buy school shoes that lasted me the whole year, I also bought a table/cellphone with which I was able to use to do School research, and apply online to different universities namely: Ukzn, Stellenbosch, UCT and U.J. I was able to excel in my matric and also be accepted by all these universities by the Lords grace and your help. Thank you very much.

Jeremiah 17 verse 10 "I the Lord search the heart, and bless every man according to the Fruit of his doings" with these words baba uMfundisi, the Lord see's and knows all your good deeds and shall bless you one day.

Yours faithfully
Mancane (Noluthando Sibiya)

Schedule for July

		<u>Screens</u>	<u>Greeters</u>	<u>Altar</u>	
<u>July 1</u>	8 am	Angela	Jackie & Val	Tami	Val
	9:30 am	Candice			Joan
	11 am	Gina	Lee & Joan		Beth
<u>July 8</u>	8 am	Susan H	Rob & Deb	Jenn	Susan
	9:30 am	Tami			Barbara
	11 am	Susan S	Rita & Julie		Diana
<u>July 15</u>	8 am	Angela	Larry & Eleanor	Anna	Val
	9:30 am	Brenda			Brenda
	11 am	Carol	Bruce & Holly		Holly
<u>July 22</u>	8 am	Val	David & Anna	Susan	Susan
	9:30 am	Romaine			Amy
	11 am	Toni	Mary & Jean		Kathy
<u>July 29</u>	8 am	Sam	Bob & Marianne	Carol	Val
	9:30 am	Tami			Tami
	11 am	Susan S	Julie & Jean		Carol

Thank you for your service

Coming Events

LWML Meeting July 1st at 12:15 pm

Senior Cards Monday July 2nd at 9:30

Office and Preschool are closed on July 4th

Feed my Sheep on July 15th

Jr. High Youth to Camp Linn Haven July 15th-21st

Serving at the Mission House on July 20th

Mites & Donut Sunday on July 22nd

Sr. High Youth to Camp Linn Haven July 22nd-28th

Angels Among Us

We have all experienced the celestial chores of angels from time to time. Sometimes we may not even be aware that an angel has just bestowed upon us a great gift, but many times we do know and are grateful. We have all been recipients of the work of one of our very own angels, who with a host of other angels brought us our very best ever VBS!

So, on behalf of all the children (from 3 to 93) of Bethlehem and the neighborhood: Thank you Ms. Darlene for sharing your wonderful gifts and all your love and energy. It was a blast!!!

Hey Volunteers & Castaways!

You made our Shipwrecked VBS here @ BLC an isle of smiles!! We're so glad you crashed with us for a while this summer. Each and every one of you came together to make a difference in our church and our community. Soooo many seeds were planted during VBS and GOD Sightings were abundant. Thanks soooo much for all your help this week in showing kids that "JESUS Rescues!!" So cool down from your fun on the island. There are oceans of fun waiting here at BLC, so don't get lost - we'd love to see you soon.

To GOD be the Glory!!
Ms. D

Thanks from Africa **LALELANI PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Dear Sir: PASTOR THWALA

A Gesture of Appreciation – 32 school bags

I hereby write on behalf of my school so as to express our school's sincerest gratitude and appreciation in respect of the thirty-two (32) school bags donated by your church and your partners to our school.

Not only did the said donated bags bring wide smiles to the recipient learners, but it went a mile away towards poverty alleviation in our school parent community. It also helped restore a sense of pride, belonging and hope for the future. Thanks a million

We are looking forward to a long-term positive and sustainable relationship with your church congregation.

Yours faithfully
J.M. Mathe (principal)

Check our improved
website! blcjaxbeach.org

Enjoy and respect every note

"Musicians are some of the most driven, courageous people on the face of the earth. They deal with more day-to-day rejection in one year than most people do in a lifetime. Every day they face the financial challenge of living a freelance lifestyle, the disrespect of people who think they should get real jobs and their own fear that they'll never work again. Every day they have to ignore the possibility that the vision they have dedicated their lives to is a pipe dream. With every note, they stretch themselves, emotionally and physically, risking criticism and judgment. With every passing year, many of them watch as other people achieve the predictable milestones of normal life – the car, the house, the nest egg. Why? Because musicians are willing to give their entire lives to a moment – to that melody, that lyric, that chord or that interpretation that will stir the listener's soul. Musicians are beings who have tasted life's nectar in that crystal moment when they poured out their creative spirit and touched another's heart. In that instant they were as close to God as anyone could ever be. And in their own hearts, they know that to dedicate oneself to that moment is worth a thousand lifetimes."

These words were not written by me, but by David Ackert (I never heard of him either!), but they sure rang loud and clear to me as they do to all the musicians I know (I am blessed to know some great ones!). It happens every week right here at Bethlehem. All the musicians who play or sing here – our choirs (bell and vocal) our praise team, our visiting musicians all have dedicated themselves to that moment, giving the very best they can in praise. And when they do this they are indeed very close to God; and so are you whenever you open your mouth and sing; and so am I whenever I can play. AND so are all the little children who sang and rang and beat the drums in VBS.

This man who wrote this essay calls musicians courageous, and although I don't disagree, I believe they are even more blessed than courageous. I have come to this conclusion via my own life: I don't feel particularly courageous, but I sure feel blessed!

So please, enjoy and respect every note you hear and/or sing. They are as special as the flowers and beautiful gifts from God. And don't forget to thank a musician – thanks nurture them.

In His service and yours,
Kathleen Olive, Minister of Music

Stewardship

	May 2017	May 2018
Monthly Totals:	<u>\$45,458.13</u>	<u>\$47,555.85</u>
Restricted:	1,312.46	3,729.00
YTD Totals:	<u>266,264.91</u>	<u>267,151.86</u>
Restricted:	23,959.28	11,994.68

Baby bottle campaign

This year we started on Mother's Day and ended on Father's Day, Sunday, June 18 with our Baby Bottle Campaign for First Coast Women's Services. Will you give the gift of life to unborn children? If you haven't yet returned your bottle, do so ASAP. Thank you for your support!

Please remember to sign the fellowship book and to let the office know of any address changes.

Scripture Alone

Scripture Alone, *sola scriptura*. Faith Alone, *sola fide*. Grace Alone, *sola gratia*. Christ Alone, *solus Christus*. Anyone even tangentially familiar with the Lutheran church or the history of the Reformation will recognize these phrases. They were, and still are, held very dear. And for good reason. These "alones," or "*Solas*" confess our faith in stark contrast to many errors that can creep into the Church. Being, therefore, rather important, it would probably be helpful to parse them out a bit. For now, let's look at the idea of *Sola Scriptura*.

One of the difficulties when we discuss the "alones," is that there are more than one. The "alones" aren't alone. Which is kinda funny. But the reason there are a handful of them is because each "alone" is addressing a different question or topic. In other words, a key question to ask is "Alone for what?" In the case of "Scripture Alone," we are asking, "What is the source and norm of Christian doctrine for the Church?" The answer to this very narrow question is... you got it... Scripture Alone. When it comes to the question of what we should teach as doctrine, and what is the #1, primary source that should shape our thinking on spiritual matters, the answer is Scripture Alone.

[Please, please, please note that the phrase "scripture alone" does not answer the question, "What do I need to be a Christian?" There is more to the Christian life than "just me and my Bible." No, even more central to Christian identity than "the Bible" is *Jesus*. And *Jesus* delivers Himself most clearly and potently through the public proclamation of His Word, through baptism, through the fellowship of believers, and most blatantly, through His very own body and blood. This stuff happens in what we usually call "church" - a vital reality in the life of a Christian. So FYI, "just me and my Bible" is *not* what *Sola Scriptura* means.]

Rather, *Sola Scriptura* means that Scripture is the ultimate authority, and the only source of Christian doctrine. In Luther's day (and ours), this combated errors on two sides. (There are almost always two sides of the horse to fall off, aren't there?) On the one hand, there was the tendency of Rome to place the authority of men - councils, Popes, or tradition - on an equal standing with Scripture. This paved the way for all kinds of ghastly abuses, many of which you are probably aware of. Sadly, this placed fallen mankind on the same authoritative tier as God - a clear idolatry. Sadder still, anytime we try to "reasonably infer" something about God based on our own logical syllogisms rather than a Scripture text, we fall into the same trap. Ditto for when we insist that "our way" is the only "right" way to do something in the church, simply because "our way" is the way it's always been done. How much better it would be to examine the Scriptures and see if there really is a clear word from God on the issue! Yes, we still need *Sola Scriptura* even today.

The other side of the horse were those Luther called "Enthusiasts." They found their ultimate source of revelation and authority not within the pages of God's clearly written Word, but within themselves. Their feelings or intuitions. Their dreams. Their special, personal revelations from God. It led to crazy things. Like one radical reformer of Luther's day, Thomas Muntzer, who died at the hand of enemy troops because he listened to what he thought to be the Holy Spirit "speaking to his heart," as we might say today. The "Holy Spirit" informed him he would be able to catch the enemies' cannonballs in his shirt sleeves while out on the battlefield. Guess what? That was not the Holy Spirit. Adios, Muntzer. Guess what? The Holy Spirit, God Himself, speaks through His *written Word*. Period. Don't look elsewhere. When it comes to the question of authority, we've got a much better source than tradition, our personal opinions, or our own inclinations. We have the Word of God. Let's use it!

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete..." ~ 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Mission Statement of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League:

The mission of the LWML is to assist each woman of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in affirming her relationship with the Triune God so that she is enabled to use her gifts in ministry to the people of the world.

Vision Statement of the LWML:

The LWML, the leading group for LCMS women, is the place where each woman is welcomed and encouraged to use her unique God-given gifts as she supports global missions and serves the Lord with gladness.

Bethlehem's LWML ladies will be meeting on July 1st after the 11 am worship service in the cottage for a devotion and fellowship time together. Please join us! You can contact Becky Bicknase @ 605-949-1608 with any questions. We have mite boxes available in the Narthex, for you to drop off your spare change and don't forget Mitey Mutt! It will be a blessing! Visit www.lwml.org

The next few months we will be publishing book reports that our confirmands wrote during their class. Enjoy!

Book Report:

Behind the reformation, By Abigale Hardy

Martin Luther was born in 1483 Saxony (now Germany), part of the Holy Roman Empire, to his parents Hans and Margareta. Luther's father was a prosperous businessman, and when Luther was young, his father moved the family of 10 to Mansfield. At age five, Luther began his education at a local school where he learned reading, writing and Latin. At 13, Luther began to attend a school. The teachings focused on personal piety, and while there he had found interest in monasticism. But Hans Luther had other plans for young Martin—he wanted him to become a lawyer—so he withdrew him from the school in Magdeburg and sent him to new school in Eisenach. Then, in 1501, Luther enrolled at the University of Erfurt, the premiere university in Germany at the time. There, he studied the typical curriculum of the day: arithmetic, astronomy, geometry and philosophy and he attained a Master's degree from the school in 1505.

But later that year, Luther got caught in a violent thunderstorm, in which a bolt of lightning nearly struck him down. He considered the incident a sign from God and vowed to become a monk if he survived the storm. The storm subsided, Luther emerged unscathed and, true to his promise, Luther turned his back on his study of the law days later. Instead, he entered an Augustinian monastery. Luther began to live the Spartan and rigorous life of a monk but did not abandon his studies. Between 1507 and 1510, Luther studied at the University of Erfurt and at a university in Wittenberg. In 1510-1511, he took a break from his education to serve as a representative in Rome for the German Augustinian monasteries. In 1512, Luther received his doctorate and became a professor of biblical studies. Over the next five years Luther's continuing theological studies would lead him to insights that would have implications for Christian thought for centuries to come.

He is most widely known for criticizing aspects of the Roman Catholic Church. The Protestant Reformation was a major 16th century European movement aimed initially at reforming the beliefs and practices of the Roman Catholic Church. Its religious aspects were supplemented by ambitious political rulers who wanted to extend their power and control at the expense of the Church. Augustine had emphasized the primacy of the Bible rather than Church officials as the ultimate religious authority. He also believed that humans could not reach salvation by their own acts, but that only God could bestow salvation by his divine grace. In the middle Ages the Catholic Church taught that salvation was possible through "good works," or works of righteousness, that pleased God. Luther came to share Augustine's two central beliefs, which would later form the basis of Protestantism. His central teachings, that the Bible is the central source of religious authority and that salvation is reached through faith and not deeds, shaped the core of Protestantism.

On October 31, 1517 Luther defiantly nailed a copy of his 95 Theses to the door of the Wittenberg Castle church. He wanted the church leaders throughout Germany to understand his sincere concerns about indulgences and to respond to them. Luther later on becomes an outlaw but that does not stop him he pushes forward and spreads the word of god and its meanings and teaches. Today these are the building blocks of our religion and helped start others.

***Thanks for Worshipping
with Us. See you next week!***

Visit our website for more
information: blcjaxbeach.org

May Attendance

Date	8 am	9:30 am	11 am	Total
May 7, 2017	84	89	75	249
May 6, 2018	88	71	94	253
May 14, 2017	70*	70*	86*	226*
May 13, 2018	98	79	97	274
May 21, 2017	90	81	95	266
May 20, 2018	77	72	111	260
May 28, 2017	86	59	70	215
May 27, 2018	82	74	97	253

*no attendance was taken

Bethlehem Lutheran, Bible Study, Children and Families, Ministry Meetings, Music Ministry, Official Acts, Outside Groups, Pastor/Staff, Preschool, Special Events, Youth and Young Adults, Christian Holidays

Jul 2018 (Eastern Time)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Sixth S. a. Pentecost 8am - Liturgical Worship @ 9:30am - Adult Bible Study 9:30am - Adult Bible Study 9:30am - Family: 9:30am - Sunday School @ 11am - Liturgical Worship	2 9:30am - Senior Game Day 6:45pm - Gideon's Meeting	3 11am - Staff Meeting @ 6:30pm - Small Group @	4 Independence Day 7am - Preschool Closed 9am - Church Office Closed 5pm - Adult Bible Study 7pm - Adult Bible Study	5 9:15am - Prayer Group @ 9:30am - Adult Bible Study 6:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @ 6:45pm - AA Meeting @	6	7 8:45am - AA Meeting @ 10am - Praise Team
8 Seventh S. a. Pentecost 8am - Liturgical Worship @ 9:30am - Adult Bible Study 9:30am - Adult Bible Study 9:30am - Family: 9:30am - Sunday School @ 11am - Liturgical Worship	9 6:30pm - "South of the	10 7pm - Elder's Meeting @	11 11am - Staff Meeting @ 5pm - Adult Bible Study @ 7pm - Adult Bible Study @	12 9:15am - Prayer Group @ 9:30am - Adult Bible Study 6:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @ 6:45pm - AA Meeting @ 6:45pm - Gideon Ladies	13	14 8:45am - AA Meeting @ 10am - Praise Team
15 Eighth S. a. Pentecost Feed My Sheep Sunday @	16 7pm - Call Committee 7pm - MPC Meeting @ Conf.	17	18 11am - Staff Meeting @ 5pm - Adult Bible Study @	19 Pastor Brones Out of Office	20 6pm - BLC Serves Supper	21 8:45am - AA Meeting @
22 2:30pm - Jr. High Youth to Camp Linn Haven 8am - Liturgical Worship @ 9:30am - Adult Bible Study 9:30am - Adult Bible Study 9:30am - Family:	23	24	25 7pm - Adult Bible Study @	26 9:30am - Adult Bible Study 6:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @ 6:45pm - AA Meeting @	27	28 10am - Praise Team
29 Pastor Brones Out of Office Mites Sunday Ninth S. a. Pentecost	30 6:30pm - "South of the	31	1 11am - Staff Meeting @ 5pm - Adult Bible Study @	2 9:15am - Prayer Group @ 9:30am - Adult Bible Study	3	4 8:45am - AA Meeting @ 10am - Praise Team
3 Tenth S. a. Pentecost 8am - Liturgical Worship @ 9:30am - Adult Bible Study 9:30am - Family: 9:30am - Sunday School @	4 Nominating Committee 11am - Staff Meeting @ 5pm - Adult Bible Study @ 7pm - Adult Bible Study @	5 9:15am - Prayer Group @ 9:30am - Adult Bible Study 6:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @ 6:45pm - AA Meeting @	6 9:15am - Prayer Group @ 9:30am - Adult Bible Study 6:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @ 6:45pm - AA Meeting @	7 6:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @ 6:45pm - AA Meeting @	8	9 8:45am - AA Meeting @ 10am - Praise Team