

The Star of Bethlehem



JANUARY 2018

CALLING AN ASSOCIATE PASTOR:

A Thumbnail Sketch Of Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Jacksonville Beach, FL
By Rev. Dana Allen Brones and the Call Committee of Bethlehem Lutheran Church

The following is a document required by Concordia Seminary for congregations calling a pastor directly from the seminary. The document is defined as a "thumbnail sketch" (not to be longer than one page) which describes mission, demographics and purpose in callings a seminary graduate. The following is the document:

Bethlehem Lutheran Church (BLC) loves worship, Bible study and mission. BLC is dedicated to:

BELIEVE - Preach the crucified and risen Christ as Lord and Savior, make disciples in all the world, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit;

LOVE - Practice Christian fellowship with one another and help each other grow in the Word;

CARE - Serve the needs of all people in Christian love.

We support two missionaries serving abroad (South Korea and Ghana), one travelling missionary in the U.S. and Canada (a called pastor, Rev. Dave Horn), and a mission partner church in South Africa. We have a preschool with approximately 60 students. Our Sunday adult Bible class averages 30 participants and our children's Sunday School averages 20 children. BLC participates in two mission trips abroad: Guatemala and South Africa. We serve monthly in the local homeless shelter and are active in different missions through Lutheran Social Services. We have been blessed to have had 8 vicars. We grant \$25,000 to our vicars during their fourth year.

BLC averages about 270 in worship on Sundays. We have three Sunday morning services – two are traditional and one is contemporary. We serve Holy Communion every Sunday in every service. We are adding new young families and are thrilled to have had 12 infant/child baptisms this year and one adult baptism. We are not a declining congregation. However, our funerals have been equaling the number of baptisms so our attendance has remained steady the past few years. The best part is that BLC is excited about mission. We want to spread the Gospel to the ends of the earth and we are passionate about our opportunity to call an Associate Pastor to help

lead us in this mission.

Jacksonville Beach is one of a series of connected beaches on the Atlantic Ocean in Northeast Florida (Atlantic Beach, Neptune Beach, Jacksonville Beach and Ponte Vedra Beach). The beaches population is around 85,000. The projected growth during the next five years is about 5%. The city of Jacksonville is approaching one million. Mayport Naval Station is five miles from BLC. BLC has many Navy families, veterans and retirees. However, younger families are moving into the area in high numbers. Thus, our desire to call an Associate Pastor whose ministry focuses on children, families and youth.

Bethlehem has a committed Sr. Pastor who is not planning on retiring for another five years. We are in a position now where the administrative and day to day ministry needs of the congregation are met but also see our children and youth as the underserved population of BLC. As BLC looks to the future we see an opportunity to call an Associate Pastor to focus specifically on the needs of our children and youth.

The congregation is unified in this vision. The goal of this position is that the youth of BLC would consistently be taught to believe the central teaching of the Gospel, be taught to think as Lutheran Christians in mature and theological ways that enable them to navigate the trials, temptations, and varied circumstances of their formative years. Included in this goal is that the Youth Pastor would be highly visible and engaged in BLC's preschool and Sunday School ministries. BLC, our preschool, Sunday School, youth, the surrounding community, the growing population and our facility combine to develop a growing and sustainable youth ministry. We are praying that the Holy Spirit would lead us to an Associate Pastor dedicated to this ministry.

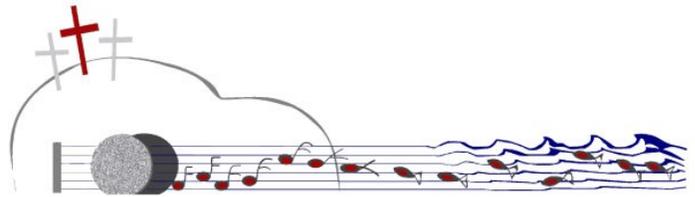
May our good and gracious Lord guide us in this process in the new year.

*His servant . . . and yours,
Pastor Dana Allen Brones*

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
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Pastor Dana Allen Brones, Senior Pastor . blcdana@bellsouth.net
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Stewardship

	Nov 2017	Nov 2018
Monthly Totals:	\$45,108.46	\$61,046.47
Restricted:	1,770.00	8,577.20
YTD Totals:	\$580,271.39	\$607,067.93
Restricted:	\$52,807.46	\$43,525.35



Please remember to sign the Record of Fellowship that is in your pew and pass it to your neighbor.

November Attendance

Date	8 am	9:30 am	11am	Total
Nov. 5, 2017	100	86	91	277
Nov. 4, 2018	56	97	122	275
Nov. 12, 2017	102	84	75	261
Nov. 11, 2018	63	76	88	227
Nov. 19, 2017	91	124	106	321
Nov. 18, 2018	82	87	98	267
Nov. 22, 2017	64			
Nov. 21, 2018	70			
Nov. 26, 2017	89	79	100	268
Nov. 25, 2018	82	75	105	259

Your shopping makes a difference.



Amazon donates to Bethlehem Lutheran Church when you shop at smile.amazon.com/ch/23-7061413. Thank you for your support!

SENIOR GAME DAY

Monday, January 8

Disciples Hall at 9:30 am

Play cards at 9:30 am

Talk with MaryAnn Lawrence 708-9492

It's a strange thing to pray for the death of your parent. I imagine this goes on quite a bit for all the wrong reasons, but that's not relevant here. My mom was always there for us with patience, care, respect, and that motherly talent that peers into your soul and leaves you grateful that she did. For the last 15 years or so I have missed her laughter and wisdom and her faithful willingness to listen to every little thing. I miss her 15 foot 9-pin printer PrintShop posters welcoming us home for holidays. I can only imagine what she would have done with Facebook or Instagram. "Mom, you can't post 50 pictures a day! Nobody is going to look at all that!" Wouldn't have phased her one bit. Her grandchildren have missed those things as well. She has three great-grandchildren from my immediate family that she never met. She has not yet met my children's spouses. She finally crossed the finish line early morning on Monday, the 10th of December, but she had been passing away for a very long time. She's been waiting. She and her family have been waiting, waiting for her to step into her own Easter.

As it turns out, Christmas is a great time to celebrate Easter. We could get along just fine without Christmas (but who would want to?) - a few chapters of Luke and a bit of Matthew - the good news is still intact. Remove the resurrection of Jesus and every hope and dream, every person and all of Creation, is dead forever. Mark doesn't mention the nativity. John takes us back to creation for his Jesus 'origin story'. If the New Testament had somehow gone over-budget and had to be down-sized, it's likely Christmas would have got the axe. But God is not lacking in resources. Even more, He is lavishly generous. So He has graced us with many gifts of revelation, all of which point to a King who will spring from death to reign in mercy and truth, with forgiveness as the engine of His kingdom.

As the first Christmas develops, only a handful of lowly people are on the inside of the mystery. Even they can't yet see how Jesus will pull off his victory over the powers that oppress them. *Who* is the dad, again? Nine months pregnant and we have to go *where*, now? Will he survive Herod's vengeful fear? But they know, somehow, victory has indeed come in the form of this fragile, needy little baby. Cliffhangers! Drama! What a fantastic first chapter of the story of Easter.

Yes, indeed. Christmastime is a fine time for my mom to have finally won her Easter victory. Christ is risen! Merry Christmas!

Dave Horn

Mission House

Request for all worshippers: We need Mission House help every 3rd Friday. 6:00 to 7:30 PM feeding the hungry and poor. A sign-up sheet is in the narthex. 800 Shetter Avenue, Jacksonville Beach.

January Birthdays and Anniversaries

David & Barbara Jacobs	1/1	James Padgett	1/14
Joe McHa		Melissa Starkey	
Annie Moffitt		Adelle Edwards	1/16
Jeff Carr	1/3	Arielle Edwards	
Gloria Gregg		Mason Gray	1/17
Stephen Huber	1/5	Larry & Diana Clawson Jr.	1/19
Dorothy Loftin		Stacie Stanfield	
George Zikeli		Janine Thackston	
Kameryn Roberts	1/6	Elizabeth Dellinger	1/20
Sobra Horn	1/7	Melissa Estervig	
Aliya Smith		Janice Flock	
Debra Smith		Robbie May	
Austin Duensing	1/8	Adam Carr	1/22
Leland Lammle		Ann Cirillo	1/23
Peter Bennett III	1/9	Mark Christ	1/24
Kenneth Thompson		Fox Hastedt	
Tyler Zarski		Faith Hawk	
Charles Singleton III	1/10	Larry Orr	1/26
Erik Hunter	1/11	Andrew Alenduff	1/27
Thomas McNeil		Mary Dorsett	
Jamie Seim		Nancy Russell	1/28
Charles Newton	1/12	Gabriel Smith	
Christopher Gregor	1/13	Connie Machurick	1/29

Schedules for January

		<u>Screens</u>	<u>Greeters</u>	<u>Altar</u>	
<u>Jan 6</u>	8 am	Pat	Val & Jackie	Tami	Val
	9:30 am	Brenda	Joan R		Brenda
	11 am	Gina	Lee & Joan F		Diana
<u>Jan 13</u>	8 am	Sam	Bob & Marianne J	Jenn	Susan
	9:30 am	Candice	Joan R		Nina
	11 am	Toni	Julie T, Rita W		Kathy
<u>Jan 20</u>	8 am	Angela	Larry & Eleanor	Anna	Val
	9:30 am	Tami	Joan R		Amy
	11 am	Carol	Bruce & Holly D		Carol
<u>Jan 27</u>	8 am	Val	David B & Anna A	Carol	Susan
	9:30 am	Romaine	Joan R		Barbara
	11 am	Susan S	Jean S & Mary D		Holly

ABC "Thank You"

Thank you to everyone for making Bethlehem's first "Advent by Candlelight" a wonderful, memorable event! Over 90 women attended the worship service and tea. The tables were decorated exquisitely by each of the 14 hostesses and the food was delicious. The service was beautiful, filled with sacred music and Scriptural readings. The candlelight carol "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" nearly brought me to tears as I heard the mass of women's voices singing loudly to their Lord Jesus in reverent anticipation of His coming, first in Bethlehem and someday at the End of the Age.

I am thankful for the talented and devoted women of Bethlehem. Dozens were involved in the planning and production: the initial committee, several subcommittees, musicians, table hostesses, food volunteers, and of course, those who attended. Thank you also to the many men who helped spruce up the property and grounds in the weeks prior to the event and who helped out that night with videotaping, lighting, sound, photography, carrying boxes, and other necessities.

Thank you, also, to Pastor Brones, who immediately supported the idea of Advent by Candlelight after it was presented to him last summer and encouraged us along the way.

The ultimate praise, of course, belongs to God, from whom all blessings flow. He truly blessed our congregation through Advent by Candlelight. May He continue to provide us with many more years of this special opportunity to keep our eyes on Jesus.

In Christ,
Bonnie Arndt

Happy New Year!

Jan 2019 Outreach

A special thanks to all who participated in the Supply Drive for The Gabriel House. The church donated a full trunk load of supplies that was greatly appreciated by the staff. On the bulletin board in the narthex is a letter of appreciation from the director.

The outpouring of gifts and clothing for the Angel Tree children was unbelievable. Each year the church continues to provide abundantly for the children in Jacksonville in need. I am always moved to tears as I load up the abundance of gifts that our church provide. Thank you all.

Mark your calendar now for January 28th, Monday Bethlehem will be providing dinner for the families staying at the Gabriel House (on the campus at Mayo Clinic). I will need about 8 people to help prepare dinner and clean up. We will begin cooking at 4pm and should be done by 6:30pm. This is a great opportunity to witness to the sick patients and their caregivers as they eat and share fellowship. Please consider joining for all or part of this event.

Our 2019 Guatemala Habitat/Thrivent mission trip dates will be April 27- May 5. We will be traveling to the extreme northern portion of the country this year. This area boasts the most beautiful national park in Guatemala called Tikal. We will leave early on Saturday morning traveling to Guatemala City. Sunday morning we will take an in-country flight to Pitan where we will be working for the week. Our work week will consist of building houses and stoves in the region. Saturday we return to Guatemala City and depart for home Sunday. The endowment funding will provide the vast majority of the trip expenses including air fare. Please contact Holly Dellinger 904-349-6059 for more information.

New Year, Same Gospel

Change. This is the word that best describes my 2018. Some change can be good, some can be bad. Some can bring stress, some happiness. Most of the changes that occurred in my life this past year have been fun. I missed being home for the Holidays, but I also enjoyed spending those days with you all. Thank you for all of your support during this time away from home.

If you would have told me last year at this time that as the calendar turned to 2019, I would be in Florida, still wearing shorts most days, I would've laughed and thought that would be awesome. If you would have told me about all the things that I would do, of all the wonderful people I would meet, I wouldn't have really believed it. But change happened this year, and I thank God for all these wonders. I look back on 2018 with so many fond memories. From the grueling demands of Seminary, to the Summer of visiting friends, to this vicarage journey, it all has added up to a wonderful 2018.

As much as I look forward to the New Year, I also realize that there will be more changes coming. And as a good Lutheran, I am reluctant to embrace these changes. I like things how they are! But I will embrace these changes as they come.

With all this talk about change, I am reminded that there is something big that will never change. As I struggle to turn 8's into 9's when writing dates down, I remember that Jesus and his Gospel is unchangeable. Hebrews 13:8 says "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever". Revelation 14 speaks of the Eternal Gospel. It is the Good News of Jesus's birth that we just celebrated, and his life, death, and resurrection that we will celebrate the rest of the New Year. This message cannot be destroyed because it is not created by man, it is from God himself.

There are two things that are certain in 2019. Number 1, things will change in your life. But amidst whatever changes happen, I pray that you remember number 2, that is that Jesus doesn't change. He is the solid rock, the constant in this changing world.

Have a blessed 2019.
Vicar Jeremy

VBS 2019

Save the Date

June 10-14, 2019

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

Mission Statement for LWML FL-GA District

The mission of the LWML FL-GA District is to share the love of Christ with women of all ages and diversities and to foster a recognition that the mission field exists both at home and abroad.

What is LWML?

LWML stands for Lutheran Women's Missionary League

The LWML is the official women's auxiliary of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

It has at its 'mission heart' thousands of volunteers who are daily dedicating their lives to making a difference in this world.

It is women who are finding avenues to use their God-given talents as they meet the challenge to share the Gospel message.

It is composed of individual women and women's groups within congregations of the LCMS, on campuses, in residence homes, or in other settings.

It seeks to develop and maintain a greater mission consciousness among the women of the Synod through education, inspiration, and service.

What is a Mite Box?

Based on the Biblical account of the widow's mite (Luke 21:1-4), the Mite Box is intended for regular contributions of "mites" – offerings above and beyond the support given to the congregation and the Synod. Mite Box contributions amount to millions of dollars that fund district and national mission grants and implement the LWML program.

(Taken from the LWML website)

Attention Women of Bethlehem

The LWML National Convention is being held June 20th through June 23rd in Mobile, Alabama. Florida-Georgia is part of the host committee. And the convention planners are looking for volunteers. This is a great chance to attend a National Convention at a reduced price. For more details see Becky Bicknase.

The LWML FL-GA District convention was held in September 2018 and twelve new Mission Grants were chosen. The mite goal for 2018-2020 is almost \$104,000 for our district. More information can be found on-line about the mission projects.

Did You Know?

You can remember or mark a special occasion with Altar Flowers? Each of the beautiful arrangements are \$30 per vase and a sign-up sheet for each Sunday of the year is in the Narthex. This is a great way to acknowledge a birthday, anniversary, and to remember a loved one who has gone before. You can choose to take them home with you after the 11 am service or mark for them to be delivered to a homebound congregation or someone in the hospital. Please put your donation in the offering plate or mail it to the church.



NOEL

*Hail, O ever-blessed morn! Hail, redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem: "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
("See amid the Winter's Snow," Lutheran Service Book #373)*

A promise spoken and not kept is worse than if the promise were never spoken. After all, promises stir our hearts to yearning, a longing to receive the item promised. And if that item fails to come, our hearts are crushed with disappointment, our spirits are distressed by an unkept oath, and the failed-to-be-kept promise taunts us with what could have been.

But this is not the way of our God. He promises; but more than that, He delivers on what He has sworn to do. There is not any disappointment with Him. There is no longing for a gift that is undelivered. What He says He will do is what He does ... every time!

In sin-broken Eden, God promised that One would come who would crush the ancient serpent's head (Genesis 3:15). And the faithful trusted that what God said He would do, He would indeed do. For centuries they put their hope in this God and in His salvation. They believed God's salvation to be so true that prophets spoke about the future event in words that sounded as if it were already done. "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6 ESV)

So, now we celebrate this promise as a promise kept, a done deal, all blessedly fulfilled in Jesus Christ! Therefore, the Church on Christmas takes up these beautiful words above: *Hail, O ever-blessed morn! Hail, redemption's happy dawn!* When the Virgin laid her Babe in the manger on that first Christmas night, it was as if she were laying salvation itself into a vault. The birth of this One was a guarantee that what God had always promised He would keep; for this Babe is our Redeemer and our Savior, the Lamb who would be the payment for our sins.

We, therefore, cling to all He has promised. We take all His words as though they are already done. For this same Lord says to you and me: *If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.* (John 14:3 ESV) This same Lord who came so humbly will come again, but this time in glory; and He of whom we sing will give us to share in His glorious kingdom.

*Blessed
Christmas!
Pastor K*

*The world may hold her wealth and gold;
But thou, my heart, keep Christ as thy true treasure.
To Him hold fast until at last
A crown be thine and honor in full measure.
("O Jesus Christ, Thy Manger Is," Lutheran Service Book #372)*

*Happy New Year!
Suzanne*



From Pastor Kaster

**Bethlehem Lutheran, Bible Study, Children and Families, Ministry Meetings, Music Ministry, Official Acts, Outside Groups, Pastor/Staff, Preschool, Jan 2019 (Eastern Time - New York)
Special Events, Youth and Young Adults, Christian Holidays**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>30</p> <p>First S. a. Christmas</p> <p>8am - Liturgical Worship @</p> <p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study @</p> <p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study @</p> <p>9:30am - Family: Contemporary</p> <p>9:30am - Sunday School @</p> <p>11am - Liturgical Worship @</p>	<p>31</p> <p>9am - Church Office Closed</p> <p>7pm - New Year's Eve Worship</p>	<p>1</p> <p>NEW YEAR'S DAY</p> <p>7am - Preschool Closed</p> <p>9am - Church Office Closed</p> <p>6:30pm - Small Group @ The</p>	<p>2</p> <p>11am - Staff Meeting @ Conf. Rm</p> <p>5:30pm - Confirmation</p> <p>7pm - Adult Bible Study @</p>	<p>3</p> <p>9:15am - Prayer Group @</p> <p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study @</p> <p>6:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @</p> <p>6:45pm - AA Meeting @</p> <p>6:45pm - Barnabas Life Group</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p> <p>8:45am - AA Meeting @</p> <p>10am - Praise Team Rehearsal @</p>
<p>6</p> <p>Epiphany</p> <p>Epiphany (Observed)</p> <p>8am - Liturgical Worship @</p> <p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study @</p> <p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study @</p> <p>9:30am - Family: Contemporary</p> <p>9:30am - Sunday School @</p> <p>11am - Liturgical Worship @</p>	<p>7</p> <p>9:30am - Senior Game Day @</p> <p>6:45pm - Gideon's Meeting @</p>	<p>8</p> <p>6pm - Hand Bell Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>7pm - Elder's Meeting @</p>	<p>9</p> <p>9:30am - Chapel with the</p> <p>11am - Staff Meeting @ Conf. Rm</p> <p>5:30pm - 7th & 8th Grade</p> <p>7pm - Adult Bible Study @</p>	<p>10</p> <p>9:15am - Prayer Group @</p> <p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study @</p> <p>6:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @</p> <p>6:45pm - AA Meeting @</p> <p>6:45pm - Gideon Ladies Meeting</p> <p>7pm - Outreach/Fellowship</p>	<p>11</p> <p>8:45am - AA Meeting @</p> <p>10am - Praise Team Rehearsal @</p>	<p>12</p>
<p>13</p> <p>LWML Sunday</p> <p>Second S. a. the Epiphany</p> <p>8am - Liturgical Worship @</p> <p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study @</p> <p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study @</p> <p>9:30am - Family: Contemporary</p> <p>9:30am - Sunday School @</p> <p>11am - Liturgical Worship @</p>	<p>14</p> <p>6:30pm - "South of the Border"</p>	<p>15</p> <p>6pm - Hand Bell Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>7pm - Call Committee Meeting @</p> <p>7pm - MPC Meeting @ Conf. Rm</p>	<p>16</p> <p>9:30am - Chapel with the</p> <p>11am - Staff Meeting @ Conf. Rm</p> <p>5:30pm - 7th & 8th Grade</p> <p>7pm - Adult Bible Study @</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Circuit Pastor's Conference</p> <p>9:15am - Prayer Group @</p> <p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study @</p> <p>6:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @</p> <p>6:45pm - AA Meeting @</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Wedding</p> <p>8:45am - AA Meeting @</p> <p>10am - Praise Team Rehearsal @</p>	<p>19</p>
<p>20</p> <p>Feed My Sheep Sunday @</p> <p>Third S. a. the Epiphany</p> <p>8am - Liturgical Worship @</p> <p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study @</p> <p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study @</p> <p>9:30am - Family: Contemporary</p> <p>9:30am - Sunday School @</p> <p>11am - Liturgical Worship @</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Birthday of Martin Luther King...</p> <p>7am - Preschool Closed</p> <p>9am - Church Office Closed</p>	<p>22</p> <p>6pm - Hand Bell Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>7pm - Executive Council Meeting</p>	<p>23</p> <p>9:30am - Chapel with the</p> <p>11am - Staff Meeting @ Conf. Rm</p> <p>5:30pm - 7th & 8th Grade</p> <p>7pm - Adult Bible Study @</p>	<p>24</p> <p>9:15am - Prayer Group @</p> <p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study @</p> <p>6:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @</p> <p>6:45pm - AA Meeting @</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p> <p>8:45am - AA Meeting @</p> <p>10am - Praise Team Rehearsal @</p>
<p>27</p> <p>Fourth S. a. the Epiphany</p> <p>Mites Sunday</p> <p>8am - Donut Sunday @ Disciples'</p> <p>8am - Liturgical Worship @</p> <p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study @</p> <p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study @</p> <p>9:30am - Family: Contemporary</p> <p>9:30am - Sunday School @</p>	<p>28</p> <p>5pm - BLC Serves at Gabriel</p> <p>6:30pm - "South of the Border"</p>	<p>29</p> <p>6pm - Hand Bell Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>7pm - Board of Trustees Meeting</p>	<p>30</p> <p>9:30am - Chapel with the</p> <p>11am - Staff Meeting @ Conf. Rm</p> <p>5:30pm - 7th & 8th Grade</p> <p>7pm - Adult Bible Study @</p>	<p>31</p> <p>9:15am - Prayer Group @</p> <p>9:30am - Adult Bible Study @</p> <p>6:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @</p> <p>6:45pm - AA Meeting @</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p> <p>High School Youth Gathering</p> <p>8:45am - AA Meeting @</p> <p>10am - Praise Team Rehearsal @</p>