



November 2017

The Communicator

Monthly Magazine

GIVING THANKS for RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

We so often take things for granted; food, clothing, housing, employment and leisure time. Do we think about the time we spend eating, choosing what we'll wear, the comfort of our homes, the benefits of our careers or retirement or the time we spend enjoying our favorite activities? Let's take going to dinner. We spend about 1 hour for drinks, appetizers, the main course and dessert. Shopping for clothing may 1 to 2 hours. We sleep in our safe homes, 6 to 8 hours a night. Employment or retirement can consume 40+ hours a week. Don't forget our favorite activities, such as golf, 2+ hours for 9 holes.

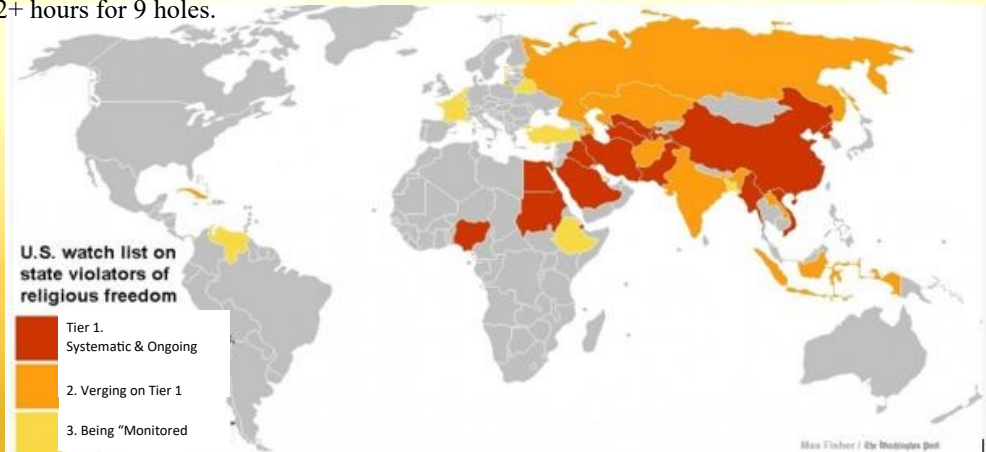
So, what about the time we devote to our freedom to practice our faith? Is it 1 hour on the Sundays when we don't have a Sunday morning tee time? Or might we make it to church once a month because we're not always in the right frame of mind. Are we the followers of Christ who complain about the length of the sermon, the poorly organized social activity or Church communications that are ineffective?

Can you imagine what would happen if we doubled or even tripled that 1 hour a week for our Lord? What if we used our time

and talent to show our thanks and gratitude? Like taking notes during the sermon to discuss the message with our family or friends. What if we volunteered to help organize or serve on that activities committee? The adage "Actions speaks louder than words" comes to mind. Yes, we are saved by faith alone, but how do we show our gratitude? Jesus gave us clear guidance:

"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."

James 1:22



Sunday Worship Services

8:30 & 11:00 AM

Adult Forum & Children's Sunday School

9:45 to 10:45 AM

It's no secret that Lutherans like to eat. We have food at virtually every gathering. We understand how important food is, not only to nourish our bodies but to foster our connections. Food manifests our willingness to sit together in the same space and find something to share. It makes the experience of putting ourselves out there less painful.

Food is critical for development. There is plenty of information detailing the impact food scarcity has on millions of people around the world. This scarcity results in hunger, malnutrition, deficiencies, imbalances and famine.

Hunger and health are profoundly connected. People who lack proper quantity and variety are disproportionately affected by diet-sensitive chronic diseases such as diabetes and high blood pressure. Kids who don't get enough to eat, especially during their first three years, are more likely to be hospitalized and face greater risks of anemia and asthma. School age children have more difficulties in school and social situations.

God tells us that his love is available to all who seek him and invites us to take him in freely, like food at no cost (Isaiah 55).

Jesus charges us to feed the hungry (Matthew 14). Preaching the Good News requires that we be attentive to the context of the listeners. They will know the love of God by the way we relate to them and taking their plea seriously. This attentiveness stimulates our curiosity: it moves us out of our secure emotional space and gets us involved and connected; it empowers us to understand the world of those who suffer and to have a better perspective on how to be in solidarity with them. Until we share food and space, we may not have a clue.



The Times They Are A-Changin'

So often we hear "In my day", but like the lyrics of the Bob Dylan song of the 60's, "The times they are a-changin'". It was different for us, just as it is different for our youth today. So how do we reach out to them? What do we need to provide for them? How can we share our faith and help them find theirs?

Nativity has formed a Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) to try to tackle these issues and the associated administrative requirements. In today's world we have to deal with background checks and chaperone training, HIPPA (medical disclosure) and insurance coverage for people and property.

Most important we need to be involved and creative. What about hosting a Christian Rock Concert series or forming a Youth Action Work Force? Inviting other Lutheran congregations, Christian faiths and organizations like the scouts to participate in projects like cleaning a park or weeding an elderly neighbor's yard.

Our youth are strong and capable and need our

assistance in helping them to find a way to use their talents and intelligence. We have skills we can share and they have the youth and energy to make great things happen.

If you have the time, talent or ideas for enhancing our youth program please share them with the YAC. The committee members are John Healy, Ashley Hoy, Janet Jones, Jayson Martin, Michelle Mehan, Tim Noe, Leana Smith, Al Wright, Council President, Pastor Mattei and Chairperson Frank DeFrancesco.

The saying "the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result" comes to mind.



SPIRITUAL LIFE

To Actively Serve

Most of us wouldn't be the first to volunteer to serve as an Assisting Minister. The thought of being in front of the congregation with the responsibility to conduct portions of the worship service would be overwhelming. So, what inspires those who do?

The response most given is service. To use their faith as a lay person, creating a connection between the congregation and the worship service.

The process begins with **Preparation**. The prayer of intercession is provided in advance, allowing them to prayerfully contemplate and practice the reading. They arrive early to check with the Pastor for any changes to the order of the service. All distracting attire and adornments are removed. The alb (robe) and crucifix is donned and the microphone is secured. The mic is

critical for the hearing impaired to participate in of the service.

In the **Procession** the assisting minister is on the pastor's right and they pause while the acolyte lights the candles and then they take their seats. The **Prayer** is read, followed by the congregation's response to each petition. The **Offering** is received from the ushers. The most intimate part is the distribution of **Communion** to



Alb



their fellow believers. The service is concluded with the **Recession** and the **Dismissal**. Again, it is a fellow

lay minister member that asks the question "People of Nativity what is our mission?" The congregation responds "With the birth of Jesus in our hearts we carry light and love to the world". The Assisting Minister proclaims the dismissal "Go in Peace. Serve the Lord".

Be sure to share your appreciation to our Assisting Ministers and to Lilo Horeis for her time, training and organization in scheduling the 15 Assisting Ministers. There is an average of 104 Sunday services not including special worship services and additional Christmas and Easter services. If you have an interest in serving in this ministry please talk with Lilo or Pastor Mattei.

OUTREACH BACKPACK MINISTRY

WEEKEND BLESSINGS — FEEDING HERNANDO COUNTY CHILDREN

Weekend Blessings is a program designed to feed preschool, elementary and middle school children. Their families qualify for the Federal Free/Reduced Price Meal program. These children have little or no food on the weekends. On the last day of every school week kids participating in the Weekend Blessings program get backpacks filled with sufficient food for the weekend. On the first day of the week the kids return the backpacks.



The backpacks include easy-to-prepare and ready-to-eat food items such as granola bars, peanut butter, tuna, crackers, mac & cheese, cereal, 100% juice boxes, etc.

People Helping People in Hernando County administer, operate, and

fund the program. Nativity Lutheran Church Backpack Ministry is 1 of 14 organizations that perform the logistical support needed to operate the program - the food shopping, packing, delivery and pickup of the backpacks. The Backpack Ministry



prepare 60 to 80 meals a week for Pine Grove Elementary. Additional funding is provided by Thrivent and the Trompeter endowment. At the end of the school year the school invites all their volunteers to an appreciation breakfast prepared by the teachers.

This program has been credited for increasing better test scores, improved reading skills, positive behavior, improved health and increased attendance. The Weekend Blessings program currently serves over 600 children through eleven Hernando County elementary and middle schools, two Hernando County Head Start programs, and

the Boys & Girls Clubs of Hernando County.

Nancy and Carl Fish lead the team of Alice Seeholzer, Connie Harvey, Sue Leimbeck, Susan Martinetti and sub Elva Posewitz. If you would like more information about the Backpack Ministry please contact Nancy Fish at 352-556-2375.

And he took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me." Mark 9:36-37



Material included in The Communicator for Nativity is gathered from Committee Meeting Reports. If you would like material included in the publication, please submit your Committee Meeting Report to your group leader.



Three years ago, Jill Helgeson was searching for something useful to do. Her sister suggested she checkout Days for Girls (DfG). So, for a week Jill researched on-line for detailed information. She found a program that empowers women and girls around the globe by providing sustainable feminine hygiene solutions, health education and an income-generating opportunity. The program offers three levels: Super Sewer, Team and Chapter. Super Sewer fit the bill, a project Jill could take on and help girls in need. Jill presented the program to the Women of Nativity (WON) as a project, and they gladly embraced it.

girls to learn what is working and what can be improved. For instance, they learned that by taking their DfG kits to school daily gave them great privacy. The kits also provide underwear as most girls do not own any. Kits needed to last for at least 2 to 3 years due to the lack of kit availability. By getting an education they can learn to make kits increasing available and earn an income.

Jill is working on getting WON charted as a Team with the goal of significantly increasing the number of kits.

Although the guidelines are stringent, there are plenty of steps in the process that don't require advanced skills. So please consider joining the WON Days for Girls project on Nov. 16th in Al Lien Hall from 9 –11 AM.

In July of 2017 69 kits were delivered to the St. Petersburg chapter who boxed and delivered them via container ship bound for Malawi, Africa.



African Woman Business Owner

How does it help the Girls?

- Gives back days of education, health, and opportunity while reducing the drop-out rate
- Offers women the opportunity to educate others about the importance of Menstrual Hygiene Management
- Gives women the tools to make DfG Kits to sell, providing employment and reaching yet more women and girls
- Reduces community poverty



Top: Jill, Elaine, Janet, Marilyn, June

Bottom: Susan, Lilo, Gloria, Janet

The program is in continuous conversation with the women and

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

Meredith Wozniak, Linda Russo, Janet Jones and Donna Olsen work together to provide children with a structured Sunday School program combining music, bible lessons and activities intended to give each child a firm basis in the teachings of Jesus.

Nativity Sunday School focuses on pre-school age through 5th grade children. The group meets from 9:45 – 10:45 AM between first and second services each Sunday. The class averages between 6-15 students. When numbers and age groups necessitate, the children are broken into two or three classes. If the group is smaller, the children all work together helping each other to understand and combine ability levels.

Meredith and Linda both emphasized that they have a passion for working with children and love the interaction with Nativity children. When describing the greatest requirement for leading Sunday school classes - both Linda and Meredith agreed that flexibility



is key to providing a good program and keeping the children's interest.

Nativity Lutheran Church believes that offering Bible training to children is a key part of our mission to take light and love to the world. While we do not have a large group of children at this time, it is our goal to offer individual attention and interaction with each child to nurture Christian values in our youngsters.

People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.

Mark 10:13-16 NIV



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UPCOMING EVENTS

November 4 - 500th Anniversary Reformation Hymn Festival (5PM)

November 21 - Thanksgiving Worship Service (at Holy Cross)

December 17 - Christmas Cantata (8:30AM and 11AM)

December 24 - Christmas Eve Services (4PM and 10PM)

December 31 - Worship Services (8:30AM and 11AM)



*With the birth of Jesus in our hearts we carry
light and love to the world.*

Nativity Mission Statement

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HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS— DID YOU KNOW?

The Timeline of our Church Property

In 1975 the church body known as the Lutheran Church in America held a meeting to discuss the future growth of the Lutheran church in Florida. As a result of that meeting they purchased 10 acres of pine covered land just north of State Route 50 along US 19. The land laid fallow for 10 years.

1985 - Nativity Lutheran Church purchased the front 5 acres from the ELCA Synod.

1988 - June 19th was the ground breaking.

1989 - March 5th the first service was held in the new church & April 16th the church dedication was conducted.

1991 - Another 1.35 acres was purchased to expand parking.

1992 - The second 5 acres was purchased to expand the parking lot.

2012 - An exchange was made with the State receiving 2 acres behind the cell tower for 2 acres north on US 19.

2016 - The property where the cell tower sits is leased to Crown Castle and if it the tower goes out of service the property reverts back to the church. The total property acreage is approximately 13.35 acres.