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### HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS— DID YOU KNOW?

Natural disasters are often the call to God's people to be his angels on earth.

In 1992 Hurricane Andrew was just such an event. In Homestead FL, St. Andrew's Lutheran Church was destroyed, the tower bell was found 4 blocks away. Within days the Nativity congregation was called into action and sending supplies weekly. Many of the St. Andrew's congregation also lost their homes.



bed1103 fotossearch.com

Habitat for Humanity built 20 x 20 foot sheds in the church parking lot to provide housing and storage for what could be salvaged.

A call for sheets came and in one evening Nativity filled a van and delivered the sheets the next day.

Their church organ was saved but was soaked and there were no funds to repair it. Nativity's Gil and Judy Dietz took their camper, stayed in the St. Andrew's parking lot, where Gil dried out and repaired the organ.

God's children demonstrated "love for one another". Hurricane Irma is another call for us to help our neighbors!

**The Communicator**  
 October 2017  
 Monthly Magazine

**Nativity**  
 Lutheran Church  
 & Weeki Wachee

## 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reformation

Martin Luther is well known as the Father of Protestantism, and he is famous for initiating the Protestant Reformation, changing the course of Western civilization. He spread the teaching that all men are equal and that people can only receive salvation when they attain true faith in Jesus.

Martin Luther was a German monk, theologian, priest, church reformer and university professor. He challenged the papacy and stated that the Holy Bible is the only real source of Christian doctrine. His theological views became his legacy. One of his most notable works was the "95 Theses



of Contention," a list that contained 95 issues of heretical theology and misdeeds of the Roman Catholic Church. Luther was also the first person to translate the Bible into a commonly spoken German dialect.

The Protestant Reformation impacted religious thought, philosophy, politics and economics throughout the world. The Reformation's most direct impact was upon religious and philosophical thought. The movement had economic impact as well. It gave rise to what is known as the Protestant work ethic, which led to the economic system of capitalism. The effects of the Reformation can still be felt in modern times.

Nativity will celebrate with an evening festival dinner followed by a campfire dessert, on Saturday Oct. 28th and a "Hymn Festival" on Saturday Nov. 4th at 5:30 pm.

## Look to the Future

- October 4 – Blessing of the Animals
- October 20-21 – Junktique
- October 28 – Fall Festival
- October 29 - Golf Outing at Timber Pines
- November 4 – 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reformation Hymn Festival
- November 21 – Thanksgiving Service (at Holy Cross)
- December 17 – Christmas Cantata
- December 24 – Christmas Eve Services



PASTOR’S PASSION

In the Face of Tragedy



*“Why is my pain unceasing, my wound incurable, refusing to be healed?”*  
*Jeremiah 15:18*

Jeremiah’s prayer is heart wrenching! And it’s OK; our prayers are most authentic when they are from the heart in all their raw honesty. We want life to be warm and fuzzy, protected from tensions, conflict and tragedy.

the alleged “absence” of God and rediscover trust in God is part of the journey of faith. Like Jeremiah, we may raise our fist to God and shout a heart wrenching “Why?”. God’s silence may highlight our own self-righteousness. But then we must ask ourselves “Where does my responsibility in all this lie? How might I have contributed to this? What might I do instead of complaining? This is when God tells us to trust the gifts He’s given us and to be faithful to our call.

In the face of tragedy, let us all take a deep breath and look inside of ourselves. There we will find God wanting to connect intimately with us in order to encourage, strengthen and inspire us to renew our faith, hope and love. This new life direction and meaning will help us connect with our true self and with God.



A GRANDMOTHER’S GRATITUDE to a CONGREGATION

About 4 years ago Marg King’s daughter arrived with her 4 kids and 1 suitcase for all 5 of them. Marg and her husband Steve rearranged their lives and home to accommodate the family and provide them a safe place to live This allowed their daughter to pursue a career in nursing, so she would be able to provide for her children.

Marg stated “trust” was the biggest issue for her grandchildren. She shared how important it was that the members of NLC offered the kids a welcoming environment. This welcoming was expressed with joy and acceptance. The kids felt this love and began to blossom and engage. This continued with caring acts and understanding for the needs of each of the children. For example, the choir embraced Kayla and her interest in singing and music. Sean is learning about the Audio/ Visual system and manning the control panel. Hailey often serves as an acolyte and Tyler has started confirmation classes. All of the kids love to participate in church activities.

“The church has become an extended family for the kids” says Marg. The kids’ involvement with the Food Pantry helped them realize that there were others in greater need than themselves. The Confirmation Class requires that the youth to participate in Sunday services and perform service hours which encourages

commitment and responsibility. Marg notes that “No youth program can succeed without parental/guardian involvement and commitment”.

This is the foundation on which a Youth Ministry operates. Marg pointed out that every ministry has the potential to engage our youth. This is a call to each ministry to explore ways they can engage the youth in their individual ministries, perhaps with workshops and by scheduling activities that accommodate their school schedules. Ministries should look for opportunities where youth could be assistants or learn a skill, like sewing or operating tools or equipment. To be engaged and invited is the key. Each of us can contribute to giving our youth a fulfilling purpose with a chance to serve.



4 MINISTRY AREAS

Spiritual Life

- Jack Page
- Ruth Ann Hoy
- Columbarium & Pavers
- Discipleship Formation
- Mercy Ministry
  - Grief Support
  - Home Communion
  - Hospital/Rehab/ Hospice
  - Post-Hospital
  - Prayer Chain
- Stewardship
- Worship & Music
  - Acolytes & Crucifers
  - Altar Guild
  - Assisting Ministers
  - Audio-Video Ministry
  - Bulletin Folders
  - Choir
  - Drama & Puppets
  - Greeters
  - Nativity Ringers
  - Nursery
  - Pew Maintenance
  - Readers
  - Ushers

Outreach

- June Kristoferson
- Backpack Ministry
- Communication Team
- Evangelism Team
- Food Pantry
- Inter-Denominational & Inter-Faith
- Ecumenical Team
- Junktique
- Long Range Planning & Development
- Membership Team
- Mission & Outreach
- Mission Endowment
- Thrivent

Christian Education

- Janet Jones
- Adult Forum
- Archives
- Baptism Preparation
- Bible Study
- Children's Sunday School
- Library
- New Members Class
- VBS
- Wedding preparation

Community Life

- Clyde Rosten
- 500th Anniversary
- Reformation
- Fellowship
- Finance Committee
  - Audit Committee
  - Counters
  - Data Entry
  - Memorial
- Financial Team
- Hospitality
  - Coffee Hour
  - Special Group Events
- Lay Leadership
- Mutual Ministry
- Parish Nurse
- Property & Safety
  - Gardens
- Small Group Ministry
  - Book Club
  - Cards R Us
  - Crafty Ladies
  - Friendship Circle
  - Golf
  - Mary Joy Circle
  - Men’s Group
  - Sarah Circle
  - Women of Nativity
- Youth Ministry
- Confirmation Class
- Luther League

To accomplish our mission, we organize our ministry teams into four areas.



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.

# OUTREACH

## COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE ...

The **Communication team** was formed last year and since then has been extremely busy. One of the main goals of the team was to keep “in touch” with our congregation. By this we are referring to a variety of things but all are intended to inform you about the various committees and groups that make up our four areas of ministry. An additional goal is to ensure our signage is consistent for all published materials.

We look to make sure we get the word out to the community about Nativity Lutheran Church (NLC) and what we, as a loving and caring congregation, offer both onsite and with our outreach efforts. Here are just a few of the things that our team works on:

**1<sup>st</sup> Time Visitor Bags** – We provide these bags to those who join us for the first time at our Sunday service to promote God’s message of light and love.

**PR and Advertising** – When various outreach programs are undertaken by NLC members, we send out photos/captions to the Tampa Bay Times. Many of them appear in the Hernando section on Fridays. Recently photos of the Backpack Blessing, the New Generation baby bottle program, the Shoe Purchase for the children at Resurrection House have all appeared in the newspaper. Ads also ran for our Easter services and for Vacation Bible School. All of this helps to educate the community about what we do.

**Website** – We have created a new website for NLC. It is much more visual and offers considerably more information about us. Here both members of NLC and those who may be looking for a new church can learn in more detail about who we are and what we do. The

website also has the sermons and services available to view in case you can’t make it to church or are away. There’s also a calendar where you can see what’s happening at the church. We hope you check this all out.

**The Communicator** – We have created this monthly magazine to showcase the activities and accomplishments of our ministries. This will not only be informative to our members but helpful to shut ins, sharing with potential members and the community at large. A future goal is to have the magazine available on the Website for our Snow Birds.

Our team is always looking for new people to join us in helping get the word out about NLC. If you are interested, please contact:  
Evelyn Galli  
at 352-684-2261 or Email [evgalli@bcany.com](mailto:evgalli@bcany.com) or  
Lyn Derenski at 352-587-2624.



# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

### What is a Sacrament?

The word "Sacrament" is a combination of two Latin words: "sacra-" meaning "sacred" or "holy" and "-ment" meaning "thing". Thus, a sacrament is a "holy or sacred thing."

Lutherans recognize that sacraments are the "means" by which God gives faith at Holy Baptism and strengthens faith with Holy Communion. For this reason, they are placed in a very special category called "Means of Grace."



### Why are infants baptized?

The church and parents following God’s command want their child to receive God’s grace, forgiveness and the promise of resurrection. The baptized godparents promise to raise the child in the community of faith.

### Why does the congregation participate?

In baptism, we are grafted into a family—the church, the body of Christ, “the communion of saints.” We have a whole body around and about us, our brothers and sisters, the baptized. They belong to us and we to them.

### Why is Baptism a Sacrament?

Baptism is a visible means of an invisible grace. It is characterized by an earthly element, water, that has a promise attached to it and was commanded by God. The promise is hope. The Apostles Creed defines the promise as the resurrection of the body and everlasting life with God.

### What is changed in the liturgy for a Baptism?

The order of the service is changed to incorporate the baptismal liturgy and one of the music selections lyrics reflects the baptism in the service.

### What is presented to the Baptized?

Traditionally, the baptized receives a certificate and a candle. Unique to Nativity, a personalized banner, a medallion with their name & baptismal date, the baptismal towel and a quilt are presented to the baptized. A member is available to take pictures of the ceremony 3 Sundays a month. These gifts and arrangements are made in conjunction with Pastor Mattei and organized by a team made up of Janet DeVico, Donna Olsen, Art Alt, Lilo and Ernie Horeis.



Mind giving the baby it’s bath—the baby will be asleep by the time we get home.



# COMMUNITY LIFE

## Mary Joy Circle

There were three circles originally established with the formation of Nativity Lutheran Church (NLC) in 1987. The Alpha Circle worked on projects. The Mary Circle worked with Resurrection House, the Spanish Mission in Dade City. The Joy Circle was a group of young mothers in the congregation with children who would gather at the playground of Deltona Woods.

About 7 years ago, the Mary and the Joy Circles merged becoming the Mary Joy Circle. This circle was organized to bring women together to further their knowledge of the Bible and to share loving fellowship with one another. The focus is Bible study with fellowship and refreshments. During the summer, the focus is fellowship and food at various local restaurants. Bible Study is taken from Gather Magazine, which is published by the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. This year's study is about The Apostles Creed.

The Mary Joy Circle supports the Women of Nativity (WON) and the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (WELCA) to which they belong. A collection taken at each meeting goes to support the budget of WON and other worthwhile causes in the church and community.



The group is open to all women of Nativity and guests. The Mary Joy Circle meets on the second Thursday of each month at 12:30 pm in Winemiller Hall. Everyone is invited to join Mary Joy Circle. Call Louise Weyen for more information at 352-684-6855.



Louise Weyen



# SPIRITUAL LIFE

## USHERS

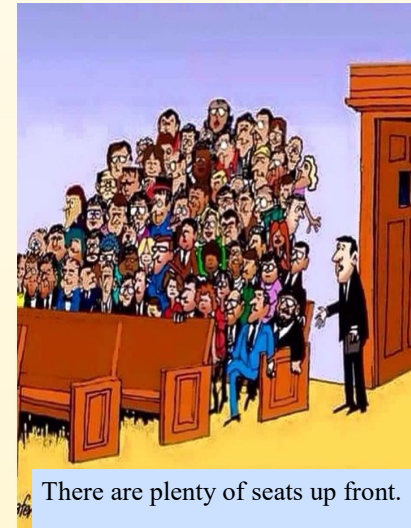


Being an usher at Nativity Lutheran Church (NLC) is a very rewarding commitment. Ushers perform critical services for the congregation and visitors to the church.

**Hospitality** is one of the most important aspects in setting the stage for a positive worshiping mind set. A smile and greeting when handed a bulletin and the offer of one in large print put everyone in an uplifting frame of mind.

**Informative** ushers provide the congregation and newcomers directions for facilities and services, be it restrooms or enhanced hearing aids.

**Emergency** response can never be overlooked. This response can be in the form of a wheelchair, assistance to the restrooms or a call for emergency services.



There are plenty of seats up front.

**Ceremony** format and processes receive guidance and assistance from the ushers for the acolytes and crucifers. The ushers present first time visitor gift bags, collect and present the offering and facilitate communion. They also identify individuals unable to come to the communion table to the Pastor or assistant minister.

**Administrative** needs like the attendance and securing the offering are also performed by the ushers.

**Facilities** requirements needed for the service such as the lighting and HVAC systems are checked to ensure they are operating and properly set. After the service, the usher team retrieves any bulletins, flyers or litter in the pews, turn off lighting and adjust the HVAC.

Not as simple as it looks! But not to worry, training and teaming up with an experienced usher makes it a joy to serve.

If you would like to become an usher for our:

8:30 am service contact  
Judy Seidl at 352-382-9085  
11:00 am service contact  
Tim Cotter at 352-797-9682

