



April 2018
Quarterly Magazine
2nd issue

The Communicator

CHRIST IS RISEN! HALLELUJAH!!!

The Good News of the Gospel

Could you send one of your beloved children or loved ones to an occupied territory in a harsh environment with corrupt religious leaders to live among people whose nature is to serve only themselves?

That is exactly what God did for his beloved children – US. “For God so loved the world that He gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.” (*John 3:16-17*)

What would you do for one of your beloved children or loved ones? Would you give them hope, a way to a better life, forgive all their wrongdoing with the opportunity to go to a better place?

Throughout history, God sent messengers to guide people to Him. But they failed to remain faithful. God promised, as prophesied in the Hebrew Bible, to send a Messiah - the promised deliverer of the Jewish nation and the savior of humankind.

The Greek word “euaggelion” is the word for Gospel meaning **good news**. The 'good news' of Jesus Christ is the gospel message that Jesus did what we cannot do. He died as a substitute in our place, to make atonement for our sins and put all who believe and trust in Him into a right relationship with God.

The name Jesus means **God saves**. Jesus not only communicated what we needed to know about God's love but lived His life as an example of how we should live to honor, show our love and thankfulness to God. God has given people a choice to love Him or reject Him. He did not want us to be forced to love Him. He wanted people to get to know Him and love Him by their own choice.

God, in His righteousness and mercy, gave us Jesus, as our way to become righteous, without guilt before the Father in love. (*Ephesians 1:4*) When you hear the Gospel, and believe that Jesus died on the cross for you, something happens inside you. We are changed from the inside. God's Holy Spirit becomes embodied in us.

Hallelujah! Christ has Risen!

Sunday Worship Services
8:30 & 11:00 AM

Adult Forum & Children's Sunday School
9:45 to 10:45 AM

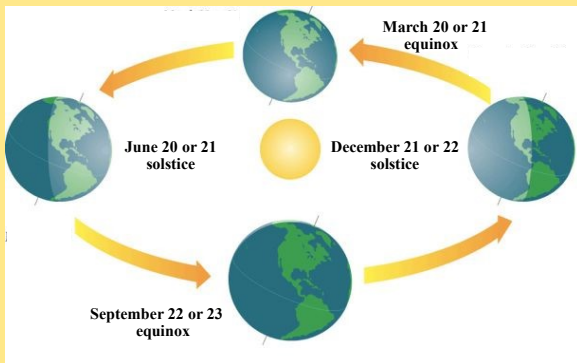
HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS DID YOU KNOW?

Why do we call the Resurrection of Jesus "Easter"?

Many scholars believe it has to do with the solar cycle. Easter follows in close proximity to the vernal equinox, when there are equal periods of light and darkness. This is the beginning of spring, a time of new life. This symbolism is used to explain the new life and rebirth given to us by Jesus' resurrection.

Easter is the term used in primarily English-speaking countries, while other cultures use the term "Passover", for instance; "Pascha" in Greek, "Pascua" in Spanish, "Pâques" in French. Easter is the oldest Christian holiday and the most important day of the church year.

Likewise, scholars believe that the main reason Jesus' birth came to be celebrated on December 25th is because that was the date of the winter solstice according to the Roman calendar. The days following the winter solstice gradually become longer and less dark. It is also, ideal symbolism to clarify the birth of "the light of the world" as stated in the New Testament's Gospel of John.



Again, Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 8:12

PASTOR'S PASSION

A Matter of Being Found!

We all have a story to tell, an epiphany, an encounter with the Lord which has marked us forever. This encounter becomes our stepping stone for a transformed and transformative life. Even those with a gradual growth in the faith can speak of a significant "Aha!" moment when life is turned around or enriched with a deeper significance. Those are the moments that mark us: we are not the same anymore and we can't keep the transformative presence of our Lord hidden. We are compelled to shout to the world "Jesus Christ is Lord". We become aware that what we proclaim in baptism comes true. Our old self has died and we arise to the new self. We don't belong to ourselves anymore but to the Lord.



PASTOR MATTEI

We discover our body as the temple of the Spirit. As vessels of the Spirit we do not seek to become more spiritual. We're already inherently spiritual beings made in the image and likeness of God. Our job is learning how to be good humans! Our life as disciples is to learn from Jesus' humanity and renounce what does not bring honor to God. Jesus gave his life so that we may know how much we are loved.

Spend some time this week, maybe five minutes a day, and reflect on those transformative stories where Goodness and Grace have touched you. Then spend some time in Thanksgiving and Contemplation. Rediscover that Fire and Holy Energy in you that has turned you around and allowed you to grow in the Spirit. Finally, find a way to tell others. Tell those who despair "God loves you". Tell those who feel lonely "God is with you". Tell those who feel helpless "God is your strength". Then go and love, be present to them, be their support and solid rock.



4 AREAS OF MINISTRY

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

Spiritual Life

Jack Page
Ruth Ann Hoy

**Columbarium
& Pavers**
Mercy Ministry
Communion
& Visitation
*Grief Support**
Prayer Chain
Stewardship
Worship & Music
Acolytes & Crucifers
Altar Guild
Assisting Ministers
Audio-Video
Bulletin Folders
Choir
*Drama & Puppets**
Greeters
Nativity Ringers
Nursery
Pew Maintenance
Readers
Ushers

Outreach

June
Kristoferson

Backpack Ministry
**Communication
Team**
Evangelism Team
Food Pantry
*Fundraisers**
Membership Team
Mission & Outreach
Mission Endowment
Thrivent

Christian Education

-DISCIPLESHIP-
Janet Jones

Adult Forum
Archives
Baptism Preparation
**Children's Sunday
School**
Confirmation Class
Library
**New Members
Class**
VBS
**Wedding
Preparation**
Youth Ministry
*Luther League**
Youth Advisory
Council

Community Life

Susan Lee

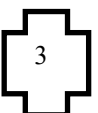
Book Club
Coffee Hour
Fellowship
Finance Committee
Audit
Counters
Data Entry
Gardens
Golf
Hospitality
Lay Leadership
Men's Group
Memorial
Mutual Ministry
*Parish Nurse**
Property & Safety
Women of Nativity
Cards R Us
Crafty Ladies
Days for Girls
Friendship Circle
Mary Joy Circle
Sarah Circle

***All Ministry and
Council meetings
welcome anyone who
wishes to attend***

**** Under Consideration***



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



COMMUNITY LIFE

FINANCE TEAM

Nativity Lutheran Church's financial committee is made up of 4 groups that focus on the physical responsibilities of the church. Their purpose is to assure the financial soundness of Nativity. Nativity's financial committees are part of the Community Life Ministry which consists of the Finance Committee, Audit, Counters and Data Entry.

Annual Report and used to measure monthly income and spending/expenses. Michele Oliver is the Finance Committee's Chairperson.

The **Audit Committee** is usually staffed by accountants and members of the Finance Committee and meets quarterly to review all financial

transactions made by the Treasurer. This ensures oversight of the established financial practices at Nativity. The Audit committee is chaired by Janet Wilkens.

The **Counters** are headed by Ernie Horeis. They meet Monday mornings to count the offerings and contributions from the previous

individual giving statements and for the Treasurer to write checks and debit accounts when paying monthly bills. The chairperson for Data Entry is Jean Drach.

The Council members currently sitting on the various financial committees include the Financial Secretary, Co-Treasurers and Council President. Other members who have joined these financial committees include current Nativity members with data processing and/or accounting experience, previous council members, and the Pastor.

For more information or for those interested in assisting on any of these committees, please contact:

Finance - Michele Oliver at 352-688-5438
Audit - Janet Wilkens at 352-597-8590
Counters - Ernie Horeis at 352-666-7584
Data Entry - Jean Drach at 352-684-1632

All meetings are open to the congregation.



week. Their job requires sorting by type of contribution and ensuring that the cash and checks balance before depositing in the bank. They also prepare the paperwork for data entry.

The **Data Entry** volunteers assure that weekly giving is credited to every individuals' contribution statement. These contributions are assigned various deposit codes based on the individuals' designations and keyed into a church software program. This software program is used to generate



The **Finance Committee** meets on the second Tuesday of every month

to exam the previous month's financial statements of the church and compare them to the monthly and yearly budgets. Discrepancies and variations are noted and discussed. Recommendations for action may be implemented. The largest task of the Finance Committee is preparing the next year's fiscal budget. Beginning in the Fall of each year, a sub-committee looks at current budget trends and uses this and previous years' historical data on which to base next year's income and spending. Nativity's Committee Chairpersons are also solicited for input. This initial budget is presented to the Church Council and if approved, presented by the Treasurer at the yearly Congregational Meeting held in November. This Budget is voted on by the Congregation. If passed by a majority, it becomes the following year's budget. The budget is included in the Congregation's



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

DISCIPLESHIP

Library



Looking for something new to read? Come check out Nativity's library located in the Administration building. The Nativity Library stocks a wide variety of reading material for all interests. You will find materials from resource books, various bibles, bibliographies, fiction with Christian themes, bible studies, children's books, books for teens, devotions, and even some video materials. Included in this collection are some large print editions. This lending library is open to all. Take a few minutes perhaps before or after Sunday Worship service to browse the selections. If you find a book you would like to check out, please complete the library card or leave your name and book title on the tablet located on one of the shelves.

If you would like to donate books and materials to the Library, please place them on the cart located in the Library and notify the secretary. A volunteer team reviews the books and materials to determine they are up-to-date and appropriate. They are cataloged and shelved in the appropriate grouping. Materials not used are donated to other organizations.

There have been some recently donated books which need to be cataloged, processed and shelved. If you like books and have an hour a month to help keep the library in order, please contact Janet Jones, the Ministry Area Leader for Christian Education:
Phone 352-684-0174
Email- janet.jones@nlcww.org





Celebration of Ministries!!!



In the past year your Stewardship Committee has been focusing on commitment of time and talent. That commitment, of course, is to the ministries of our church. The Celebration of Ministries event was conceived as a way to inform our congregation about the many ministries we support, and provide an avenue for members to commit to volunteering time and talent to a ministry that appeals to their desire to help. Because there had never been an event like this, the Stewardship Committee did not know what a good measure of "success" would be.





It was decided that attendance of 75 persons would be a "success," as long as ten ministries received at least one new volunteer. On the Saturday of the event we had 80 visitors. The displays were left out so that at the next day's Coffee Hour which followed each service in Winemiller Hall could provide additional exposure to the many opportunities to commit.

The great results of the event were:

- 53 commitments to volunteer
- 33 ministries have interested volunteers
- 35 individuals volunteered

The Stewardship Committee has made a concerted effort to make sure every volunteer was contacted and welcomed. All ministries continue to be open to welcoming new volunteers who are interested in serving.



OUTREACH

FOOD PANTRY

How familiar are you with the Nativity Lutheran Church Food Pantry? Did you know that NLC's Food Pantry is the only church pantry open for more than 1 day a week for a couple of hours? The NLC Food Pantry is open Monday through Friday from 9:30am to 1:00pm. This community outreach program serves 200 – 250 families a week. Donations of non-perishable food items, hygiene products and clothing are greatly appreciated and can be dropped off during food pantry hours, placed in the grocery cart located in the church narthex before or after worship services or during church office hours between 9am to 2pm Monday through Friday. Monetary donations are also welcomed. Checks should be made out to NLC and writing Food Pantry on the memo line.

*"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat,
I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,
I was a stranger and you invited me in,"*
Matthew 25:35



from each of several shelves including hygiene products to fill a plastic grocery bag. In addition, they may choose a bread and something from the clothing rack.

It can be really hard to be in need of help and even harder to ask for help. The welcoming hospitality, with an offer of a cup of coffee and snack, says to our brothers and sisters in Christ, we care!

Volunteers are needed to keep the pantry open and keep this ministry going! Stop by and meet Bonnie Kuester and her volunteers at our Food Pantry located in the Administration Building. They would be happy to give you a tour and maybe talk you into being a volunteer. A short training period will be provided. For more information, please contact Bonnie Kuester at 352-596-8548.

Residents of Hernando County are eligible recipients of the Food Pantry. The recipient selects an item

Welcome New Members!

**Windy & Bill
Binns**



**Karen &
Clarence
Crawford**



Eileen Smith



**Paul & Kathie
Schmidt**



**Tom &
Marilyn
Schneider**



SPIRITUAL LIFE



Back row left: Jill Helgeson, Cherylann Schneider, Karin Glessner, Ernie Horeis, Harry Elliott, Dan Derenski, Linda Wagner
Front row left: Lyn Derenski, Joanne Johnson, Ruth Edwards, Jane Henkel, Jean Drach, Suzanne Chelf, June Kristoferson

Make a "Joyful Noise to the Lord"

Nativity Ringers, one of Nativity's most vibrant groups, is part of the Worship & Music team that falls under the Spiritual Life Ministry headed by Jack Page and Ruth Ann Hoy. It plays a three-octave set of Malmark English hand bells and a three-octave set of hand chimes. Additional bells are added from time to time.

The main purpose of this group is to use God's gift of music to support and enrich Nativity's worship services using the liturgical calendar. In addition, bell playing brings interested players together to express different ways of presenting music using tuned individual bells and chimes that are rung in chords.

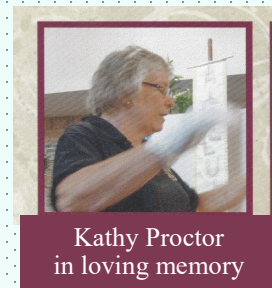
Nativity Ringers was established in 1998 by Aina Rappold. Kathy Proctor succeeded her as director

until September 2017 when Jane Henkel and Cherylann Schneider became co-directors. Most of the bells have been donated through Nativity's Designated Memorial Fund. Each bell carries the name of an individual donor on its handle. The largest bells and much of the bell choir music are on loan from Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Spring Hill. This invaluable gift has been made possible through Nativity's ongoing relationship with Holy Cross.

Currently there are 12 bell ringers who rehearse weekly on Tuesday evenings from 6-8pm in the Sanctuary. The Ringers enjoy offering a monthly selection at both Sunday services. In the past Nativity Ringers or ensembles within the group have played at funerals and memorial services, Christmas Eve services, Timber

Pines Christmas programs and local nursing homes.

New ringers are always welcome with one-on-one instruction beginning at 5pm prior to the group rehearsal on Tuesdays. Additional ringers could expand the choir by using bells that now sit unused. Trained substitutes are always needed. Reading music is not required to play in the bell choir—just the ability to count. For more information, please contact Jane Henkel by phone at (352) 597-2170 or via her email address jetgal55@gmail.com



Left to right:
Sue Mom, Margret Raeder, Barbara Signor,
Joanne Johnson, Judith Ward,
Linda Wagner, Lilo Horeis, Aina Rappold,
Kathy Stindal, Ernie Horeis, Art Bellion

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES 2018

Your fellow members of NLC wish to congratulate you on your graduation success! It is a new beginning. Anything is possible when you just believe in God and in yourself. Step into future with a prayer in your heart and you'll soon reap the fruits of your efforts and hard work! Be strong and courageous, for God will be with you wherever you go. Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.



Ashley Hoy
Weeki Wachee H.S.

Will be attending
Pasco Hernando State
College to study in
the Radiology
Technician program.



Harry Elliot
Weeki Wachee H.S.

Will be joining the
United States Navy
with aspirations to
be a Nuclear
Engineer.



Kayla Patterson
Weeki Wachee H.S.

Currently undecided
on her aspirations.



Madison Gould
Hernando H.S.

Will be attending
Florida Keys College
to study Marine
Biology.

YOUTH

The youth have been quite busy the 1st quarter of 2018. They have spent time together creating a new path for the youth of Nativity Lutheran Church. Their first get together of 2018 was a planning and pizza party. They were guided through a brainstorm session to decide what direction they wanted to take in 2018. The youth provided many ideas for fun, mission service work and fundraising. They completed a calendar through June of this year which you may see posted on the bulletin board near the church office.

The first service project was in February where they assisted at the Humane Society. Their second was in conjunction with Crafty Ladies in hosting a March Lenten “Soup and Sandwich” dinner. These service projects provided them the opportunity to serve the community and the congregation.

The future holds a whole host of experiences and prospects to serve. Check out the following schedule of events:



Fundraisers:

Pancake Breakfast - Easter Sunday – preparing and serving breakfast for both Sunday Worship services.

Flamingo Flocking - March and April – a fundraiser for the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering.

Fellowship & Fun:

Dinner, Outdoor Movie and Bonfire at the DeFrancesco home on March 23. Friends and Family were invited.

2nd Sunday Funday April 8 - possibilities include Escape Room, Bowling, Springleton Fun Park (TBA). May 4 - Cookout at Pine Island, Friends and Family Invited.



Mission Service Work:

Weeki Wachee River Clean Up and kayaking - April or May TBD

VBS - June 18 - 22

2018 ELCA Youth Gathering - This national youth gathering happens once every three years and will be held in Houston, Texas this year. It is an opportunity for our youth in 8th to 12th grades to convene with thousands of youth from all OVER. They will be celebrating, learning and serving. The theme "***This Changes Everything***". The celebrated verse will be Ephesians 2:8 *“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.”* Nativity has 7 youth and 2 adults registered to attend.



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**Nativity Lutheran Church Website
nlcww.org**

A member challenge!

There are 6 congregation members that were part of the "Founders" of Nativity Lutheran Church, signers of the original church charter.

Your challenge is to find those "Founders" and ask for their last name. On Sunday ask those in the pew with you, ask as part of your peace greeting or check with folks at coffee hour.

Here's your one hint.
 There are 6 people but only 4 last names.

Last name beginning with:

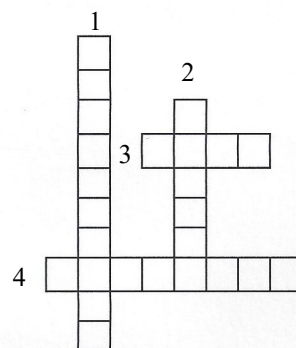
DOWN

1. The letter "K"
2. The letter "R"

ACROSS

3. The letter "H"
4. The letter "D"

Answer in July Issue.



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 Phone 352-597-1456

