



January 2019  
Quarterly Magazine  
1st Issue

# The Communicator

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## New Beginnings & Fresh Starts

Why is it that as you get older time passes faster? Once again, we find ourselves contemplating another New Year and we still have things we haven't fixed or finished from the last one. And you know there are going to be changes coming. As hard as that sounds, it is usually for the better.

We have a new Administrative Assistant who will bring fresh ideas and some different ways of doing things. And just look at our newly decorated Administrative Assistant's office. Fresh paint, clutter gone, supplies in order, room for two to work, additional phones and new computers with updated software and improved networking. All things long overdue but necessary for an effective and efficient business office.

So, what's next? Well, a much-needed review of how we use our space, what condition it's in, storage needs and a really good spring cleaning. We all know what happens after years of projects, events and ministry activities. We've got "stuff" everywhere for everything, especially for things we'll never do or use again!

So, let's get our minds and bodies working on New Beginnings & Fresh Starts. Be the one in your group or ministry to coordinate the **clean up and throw out** the things no longer needed. Organize and minimize the volume of items in storage areas, closets and filling cabinets. I heard once or twice when I was younger that "*Cleanliness is next to Godliness*". Surely a bunch of Christians can mustard the fortitude to tackle the task of cleaning and organizing our Lord's house!

**Sunday Worship Services**  
**8:30 & 11:00 AM**

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

# Pastor's Passion

## How much is enough?

*"As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him.*

*"Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"*

*Mark 10:17-31*

We have probably asked that question when considering our monetary donations for the ministry of the Church. How much are we returning to God for God's goodness to us? The Bible suggests 10% or a tithe as in **Leviticus 27:30** *"A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD."*

So, how much are we keeping for ourselves? 90%, 95%, 99%? How much is enough for us to live on?

Perhaps the question we should be asking is: How do we learn to trust God? We can find an answer in **Romans 8:32**, *"He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?"*

The questions we have to ask ourselves are:

- Are we willing to trust that God will provide what we need?
- Do we accept God's gifts joyfully and thankfully?

In **Matthew 22:37-39** it reads *"Jesus replied: 'Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.*



*This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'*

Christ asks us to support His church and care for our brothers and sisters in need. The church is our little piece of heaven on earth. A place of sanctuary and a source of strength and knowledge. Loving our brothers and sisters refers to caring for all mankind in need.

Did it ever occur to you that you and this congregation are God's agents to deliver what other's need? Think about this. A box of cereal that costs \$4 provides a child with 14 breakfasts. What would you have spent that \$4 on, a cup of Starbucks coffee? Would that even have paid for that cup of coffee at Starbucks?

Try thinking of your giving as year-round Christmas gifts. Remember your part of God's plan. You are sharing what God has given you by providing that special gift to your brothers and sisters in Christ. Perhaps the very things you might take for granted like food, clothing and shelter are the gifts God wants you to deliver.



**Giving God Our Best!**

*"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."*

**2 Corinthians 9:7**



# 4 AREAS OF MINISTRY

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

Spiritual Life	Outreach	Christian Ed	Community Life
<b>Jack Page</b> <b>C: 352-601-8579</b> <a href="mailto:jack.page@nlcww.org">jack.page@nlcww.org</a> <b>Ruth Ann Hoy</b> <b>C: 727-403-8867</b> <a href="mailto:ruthann.hoy@nlcww.org">ruthann.hoy@nlcww.org</a> <b>Columbarium</b> <b>Mercy Ministry</b> Communion & Visitation Grief Support Prayer Chain <b>Pavers</b> <b>Stewardship</b> <b>Worship &amp; Music</b> Acolytes & Crucifers Altar Guild Assisting Ministers Audio-Video Bulletin Folders Choir Greeters Nativity Ringers Nursery Readers Sanctuary Team Ushers	<b>June Kristoferson</b> <b>H: 352-596-6472</b> <a href="mailto:june.kristoferson@nlcww.org">june.kristoferson@nlcww.org</a> <b>Backpack Ministry</b> <b>Communication Team</b> <b>Evangelism Team</b> <b>Food Pantry</b> <b>Fund Raisers*</b> <b>Membership Team</b> <b>Mission &amp; Outreach</b> <i>(Assist internal &amp; external ministries)</i> Angel Tree Global Missions - Haiti Golden Rainbow Ranch Luther Springs New Generation People Helping People Resurrection House World Hunger - ELCA <b>Mission Endowment</b> <b>Thrivent Action Team</b>	<b>Janet Jones</b> <b>C: 352-263-7121</b> <a href="mailto:janet.jones@nlcww.org">janet.jones@nlcww.org</a> <b>Adult Forum</b> <i>(Sunday Bible Study)</i> <b>Archives</b> <b>Bible Study</b> <b>Ceremonies</b> Baptism Confirmation Funerals Weddings Orientation <b>Children's Sunday</b> <b>School</b> <b>Library</b> <b>VBS</b> <b>Youth Ministry</b> Luther League Youth Advisory Council	<b>Susan Lee</b> <b>C: 586-405-3129</b> <a href="mailto:susan.lee@nlcww.org">susan.lee@nlcww.org</a> <b>Book Club</b> <b>Coffee Hour</b> <b>Dinner for Eight</b> <b>Fellowship</b> <b>Finance Committee</b> Audit Counters Data Entry <b>Gardens</b> <b>Golf</b> <b>Hospitality</b> <b>Lay Leadership</b> <b>Memorial</b> <b>Men's Group</b> <b>Mutual Ministry</b> <i>Parish Nurse*</i> <b>Property &amp; Safety</b> <b>Women of Nativity</b> Cards R Us Crafty Ladies Days for Girls Friendship Circle Mary Joy Circle Sarah Circle
All are welcome to attend Ministry & Council meetings.			
* Under consideration			
<div>             Nativity Lutheran Church Website  <a href="http://nlcww.org">nlcww.org</a> </div>			





# OUTREACH

## Membership Team



Terry Halgren, Merritt & Pat Wilkins, Clyde Rosten, Jean Drach and Pastor Mattei

This team covers a myriad of responsibilities, such as using the visitor cards and guest register to contact each of our guests within 48 hours. The method of contact is based on the information the visitors provide. A list is maintained and repeat visitors are contacted by Pastor Mattei to ascertain their interest in membership. Individuals wanting to become members are invited and assisted by the team with the New Member Classes. Once the returning visitors have become members and selected their ministry of interest, their names are passed onto the corresponding ministry chair. In the future, the team plans to host an annual gathering of the current year's new members to ensure they are making the connections for a full congregational experience.

Membership has more than one category, one of which is associate member. This most often applies to Snowbirds, who attend 2 churches based on the season. The Synod has recommended changes in church constitutions to revise the definition and privileges of the associate member category. Information will be dispensed and voting on this and other changes to the constitution will take place at the Congregational Meeting in January.

Of course, there is always the *fun* part, that of recordkeeping. Once a year the membership roll of the church is reviewed for active, non-active, baptized and confirmed members which is then reported to the ELCA and included in the congregation's annual report. The team makes every effort to contact all non-active members. Records of weddings, transfers and deaths are also recorded in computer files and designated categories are written in the registry (the Red Book).

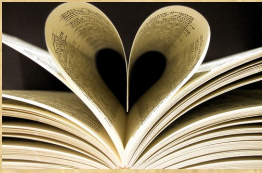
The team also tries to keep up with those who for one reason or another feel disconnected from the church. When a person leaves a church, there are only a few weeks (4 to 8 max) to bring them back before the hurt becomes too much and/or they get settled somewhere else (if they even go someplace else). When the hurt builds because it was not diffused by a simple effort of contact and care, these people may never come back to their home church or any church. The statistics tell us this is true in most churches and why many are failing. The Team tries to promptly identify and connect with those who are recognized as missing from our common fellowship and listen to their concerns. When an issue is identified, a solution is sought. In an ideal world, people with concerns would call the office to speak with our Pastor without delay.

In addition, we live in a community heavily populated with retirees. Some of them travel during the year for a few weeks and others leave for an extended time (our "Snowbirds") or relocate to be closer to family. It's hard sometimes to know the reason someone is missing unless there is timely communication. These are some of the challenges the Membership Team deals with.

So, as you can see, there is a lot to be done and as the saying goes "the more hands the lighter the work" or as chairperson Jean Drach would say "the more the merrier!" As we are all envoys of our congregation please consider joining this ministry by contacting Jean at 352-684-1632 or emailing her at [droxfl@gmail.com](mailto:droxfl@gmail.com)



# COMMUNITY LIFE



## Book Club



Nativity's Book Club had its beginnings in the home of Pastors Dan and Kris Wee in 2004. They and Pastor Phil Schroeder were the first leaders who took turns leading a discussion on a book read by the members of the group. That first 'meeting' began with a few Nativity members and continues to this day with eleven.

The monthly meetings originally began on Friday evenings; the current get-togethers are Friday afternoons, usually the fourth or fifth in the month. Meetings are held in a member's home chosen at the previous gathering. Meetings continue throughout the year with a month off in the summer.

Books are chosen by input from all with Pastor Schroeder guiding their choosing. Books that have previously been read are religious and secular books, fiction and non-fiction, historical and biographical.

Books are chosen so that members can learn from as well as enjoy. Examples of challenging and provocative titles that have been read are: *We Were Eight Years in Power: An American Tragedy* by Ta Nehisi Coates and Jon Meacham's *The Soul of America: The Battle for Our Better Angels*.

Pastor Schroeder sums up Nativity's Book Club as follows, "the Book Club nicely blends a monthly discussion of important topics in a getting-to-know-you gathering and an enjoyable reunion with friends. It is unhurried and unintimidating. A book takes on new meaning when it is reviewed and discussed with friends."

Membership is open to anyone. Contact Pastor Phil Schroeder at [psandsss@gmail.com](mailto:psandsss@gmail.com) with questions.



**Back: Sharon and Rev. Phil Schroeder, Marilyn Henkel, John and Libby Capell. Front: Beury Simons, Linda Borowski, Susan Nordstrom, Ellee Simons and Dorothy Apgar.**





# Church Council

The Congregation Council, elected by the congregation of Nativity Lutheran Church, is charged with general oversight of the life and activities of our church. The church membership is responsible for voting for new members of the Congregation Council every December. The congregation voted to add Jack Chase, Karin Glessner and Jane Henkel to the Council for the year 2019. Jane has already served her first three-year term and has been elected to serve a second term. Jack and Karin have been elected to serve and replace Jack Page and Al Wright.

The congregation should be thankful for those who have allowed their names to be put forward for election this past month, and extremely grateful for the service that Jack Page and Al Wright have provided during their tenure on council and during their years in leadership positions. The Congregation Council for 2019 will be Ed Lewis (President), Dan Derenski (Vice President), Karin Glessner (Secretary),

Jane Henkel (Financial Secretary), Evelyn Galli (Treasurer), Jack Chase, Janet Jones, Buddy Kristoferson, and Susan Lee.

According to our Constitution, the Congregation Council is to consist of the Pastor, the Officers of the church, and 4-7 other members elected by the congregation. The council is tasked with leading the congregation in stating its mission, preparing a long-range plan, setting goals and priorities, and evaluating the activities of the church considering the goals and our mission. The council is to oversee and provide for the administration of the congregation and thus enabling all of us to fulfill our functions within the church so that we can boldly perform our mission.

As we enter this new year, please pray regularly for your Congregation Council. They look forward to serving Nativity Lutheran Church as fellow Christians, and in a responsible and accountable manner.



Front: Jane Henkel, Evelyn Galli, Susan Lee, Janet Jones Back: Buddy Kristoferson, Pastor Mattei, Ed Lewis, Dan Derenski, Al Wright, Jack Page

Thanks to Al & Jack, for Jane's continued service and welcome to Karin Glessner and Jack Chase.





# Cards R Us



Tim Noe, Georgeann Scheidter, Elizabeth Deon, Alice Seeholzer, Linda Borowski, Susan Nordstrom

The Cards R Us Circle's mission is to make greeting cards from donated, used greeting cards. The recycled cards are placed on our kiosks in the narthex and in the Administration Building hallway, where they are offered for a donation. We have received funds to cover our tools and supplies from the Dorothy and David Trompeter Endowment Fund and from Thrivent. All profits are turned over to Pastor's Discretionary Fund, where they are given to people in need during one-time emergencies. In 2017, Cards R Us donated \$815 to the Discretionary Fund. Those being helped, sometimes members of Nativity, are in tough situations. Most often, the funds are given to people needing a room, security deposit, rent, fuel for their vehicle, taxi ride, bus ticket, food, or help paying a utility bill. In one instance, Pastor's Discretionary Fund was tapped to assist in paying a funeral home for their services. Those making the cards feel blessed that they can play a part in helping other people in difficult circumstances.

This mission is led by Susan Nordstrom, who was inspired by a visit in November 2011 to the Cedar Falls (Iowa) United Methodist Church, the church of her mother's childhood, where these cards were available in their narthex. When Susan approached Women of Nativity about this mission, they quickly agreed to support it. Nativity's Church Council



agreed to this project. At the time, Hallmark was going out of business in the Gulf View Square Mall, so Susan purchased one of their used kiosks. Lilo Horeis and Margret Raeder initially demonstrated how to make the cards, as they had previously done this for Lighthouse for the Blind. They were up and running by March 2012.

Over the past 6 1/2 years, many members of Nativity have assisted, some cutting out embellishments and others crafting cards at their homes. They gather together in Al Lien Hall monthly, on the first and second Wednesdays of the month from 12:30 - 3pm, to make the cards. This ministry fosters creativity, friendship and lots of laughter. All are welcome to join.

Their cards are an example of up-cycling, benefiting the environment. They are one-of-a-kind. They provide members and visitors an opportunity to provide joy and caring to others. They bring smiles to faces. They are told on a regular basis how people receiving our cards appreciate and enjoy them. They actually have such a following that they have received donated used cards from people in St. Pete, Inverness, Michigan, New Jersey, etc. These people say this mission has touched their hearts and is the reason they can give their sometimes-precious cards to us.

For more information contact Susan Nordstrom at 352-428-1918.





# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Our Confirmation ministry is spread over a three-year period. The curriculum follows the traditional tracks of Hebrew Scriptures, Christian Scriptures and Luther's Catechism. Youth, after 6<sup>th</sup> grade, can join us at any time during the three-year span.

This year, we looked at the Hebrew Scriptures and began with a study on the formation of the Bible. Beginning with the origin and development of the oral tradition, the chronological history of Israel, and the various parts of the Scriptures. We also explored the development of Israel's relationship with God moving from polytheism (worship of many gods) through monolatry (worship of one God without the denial of other gods) to monotheism (belief in only one God), with the purpose of connecting God's ever relevant command to worship Yahweh alone and no other gods or idols. Modern day attractive idols were identified, especially those that seem to grant power and affluence but only cause evil and damage human relationships.

Most importantly, we tried to respond to the questions "Why is the Word of God important to us?", "Is the Bible inspired Word or human word?" and "How do we make sense of contextual elements that do not resonate with our times?"

The second year of study will concentrate on the Christian Scriptures and the proclamation of the Rule of God in God's Kingdom, the life-death-resurrection of Jesus, the missionary travels of Paul and other apostles and the call to discipleship.

In the third year we look at Luther's Catechism: The Creeds, the Sacraments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments.

The purpose is to move our youth to a personalized understanding of their relationship with the Lord. Following the pattern of God's revelations in the Hebrew Scriptures and Jesus' encounters in the Christian Scriptures we move from *academic information* (see Dt 11:19) to *faith exploration* (see John 3) to *Affirmation of Baptism* (see Romans 10:9) and finally to *social engagement* as exemplified in our Lutheran tradition of stewardship of resources, faith, talents, abilities, passions, treasure and advocacy on behalf of all creatures (See James 2:14-26).

Throughout the courses the students take notes and create their building blocks for a final Statement of Faith which they share with the congregation at the time of the celebration of their Affirmation of Faith (Confirmation).





# SPIRITUAL LIFE



## NATIVITY CHOIR

*Donna Olson - Worship & Music Director*

### “Make A Joyful Noise to the Lord”—Psalm 100

Nativity Lutheran Church’s vocal choir known now as the Nativity Choir is part of the Worship and Music Ministry of the Spiritual Life area of Ministry. Donna Olsen has been the Worship & Music director at Nativity for the past 10 years. She is also the choir’s accompanist.

songs that told the Christmas story in a meaningful and compelling way. It was performed on December 16<sup>th</sup> at the 11:00 service. Soloists were Linda Hengesh and Ed Lewis.

Future plans for the choir include continued growth by



There are currently 37 members in today’s choir which is the largest number that Nativity has ever had.

This choir sings weekly during September through May. It sings an anthem at the 8:30 service one week and then, sings the same number at the 11:00 service the following week. A soloist or instrumentalist(s) will sing or play during the non-choir service. Many times, these musicians are also choir members. Every year the choir performs a cantata. This year, the choir presented the Christmas Cantata *Behold, A Savior!* It was chosen for its beautiful and well-known

including youth into the group. Donna also hopes to expand the choir’s outreach by singing in nursing homes or other facilities; and, perhaps, doing ecumenical events by combining choirs in our community to perform together.

Donna is always looking for new people to share their musical gifts by joining the choir, singing a solo or playing an instrument. Nativity’s Choir rehearses Wednesday evenings during September through May at 6pm. Contact her at [dolsen@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:dolsen@tampabay.rr.com) if you would like to share your musical gifts with the congregation.





Communion Box

# Altar Guild



Have you ever wondered who does such a wonderful job of taking care of our Altar every week and whenever there is a specific service?

It is a very important ministry called the Altar Guild. Members of the altar guild are comprised of some very dedicated people who have the privilege of preparing the worship space.

The Altar Guild is concerned with the care and placement of the furnishings, appointments and ornaments used in worship. After a service there are routine procedures to be done in order to prepare the worship area for the next week. The overall goal of the guild is to see that the worship space is kept beautiful and is in good order.

Linens and paraments are cleaned regularly and kept pressed. Paraments, the liturgical hangings and cloths that you see on and around the altar are inspected weekly to keep them spotless. The items that adorn the altar have appointed colors according to the liturgical

and humiliation and mourning, is appointed for Ash Wednesday. Gold is the preferred color for Easter Day.

Sacramental vessels and their worship items are kept clean and polished. Adequate supplies of communion wafers, wine, candles and other necessities are secured and properly stored. The Altar Guild secures the materials needed and prepares the Communion Sets used by the Home Communion Ministers. During the Maundy Thursday service they assist the Pastor in the ritual stripping of the altar, and on Thanksgiving, they decorate the altar with fruits and vegetables.

The Altar Guild meets on the third Wednesday of every month at 10:00 AM. The chairperson for the Altar Guild is Janet Devico.

If you would like to become a member of the Altar Guild, please contact the office at 352-597-1456 for Janet's contact information.



Lilo Horeis & Janet Devico

church calendar. For example, white indicates it is the Christmas Season or Easter. White is the color of light, gladness, purity and joy. Bright red is the color of fire, the fire of the Holy Spirit. Scarlet represents the color of the crucifixion. Purple is the penitential color of Lent. Blue is the preferred color for Advent because it is the color of hope. Green is the color of growth. Black, the color of ashes





# YOUTH

Fall has flown by with many activities for the youth. They kicked off the fall with a parent/youth meeting by watching an evangelism presentation by Vicki Page, talked about some scheduled events, handed out a tentative schedule, asked for ideas and participated in a positive team building activity.

September brought them into "God's work, our hands" at Luther Springs Camp about two hours north, some more painting in the youth room and cooking a meal of lasagna and fixings for the New Beginnings shelter for youth in Hernando county.

October started with an animal themed day with the opportunity to volunteer again at the Humane Society of the Nature Coast, ending the day with pet blessings at Nativity. They also began the Helping Hands program, which is a service to anyone needing an extra hand for some light duty projects. It is their gift, to give help to others, with love and happiness. They ended the month helping out at the fall festival with chairs and campfire smores.



November and December have been quieter months with some paint days, a game night with pizza, a Helping Hands project, ending with bowling. They have a couple other Helping Hands projects they will complete while the youth are on vacation.

Next year brings a special New Year's get together, flamingo flocking, some new and old activities. They are always looking for volunteers and helpers to have fun with the youth. Please contact Frank or Lorrie DeFrancesco if interested at 352-942-2844 or email [Ljdefran@gmail.com](mailto:Ljdefran@gmail.com)



*Hoping you had a Merry Christmas and wishing you a Happy New Year from the youth to all of you. Thank you for all your help and support !*





### 10 Commandments of Office Etiquette

- 1 Honor an individual's work priorities
- 2 Be aware of you speaking volume
- 3 Don't conduct conversations in the office work area
- 4 Complete a Work Request form for projects or assistance (requests will be prioritized, please submit form a minimum of 2 weeks in advance)
- 5 Don't leave items on the Admin.'s desk
- 6 All materials should have your name, date and contact info (instructions when needed)
- 7 Don't remove things without letting the Admin. know
- 8 Return borrowed items promptly
- 9 Respect a closed door
- 10 Always consider "What would Jesus do?"



### **Women of Nativity**

On December 1, Women of Nativity began Christmas joy in Winemiller Hall. Over 50 attended and enjoyed a delicious luncheon prepared by Lorrie and Frank DeFrancesco. Spirited entertainment was provided by the Then and Now Quartet, part of the Hernando Harmonizers. Doreen Davis, President of WON, gives her heartfelt thanks to all who helped make it a wonderful success.

## *Nativity Lutheran Church*

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### **Office Hours**

Monday— Friday  
9AM—2PM



**Linda Rizzo**  
**Our New**  
**Administrative**  
**Assistant**



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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.

