



January 2020
Quarterly Magazine
Issue 1

The Communicator

A Christ Centered New Year's Resolution

Resolutions are driven by recognizing our imperfection. Repentant hearts demonstrate we are Christians and this is the genesis of our resolutions.

Where to start?

Stop Complaining – Look outside of self-interest.

We will quickly see, there is always someone who is worse off.

Keep the Sabbath – I don't think this was just a suggestion. This commandment was meant to keep us in touch with God, to support and be supported by our faith community.

Pray and Study – These activities lead us to reflection. This is where we find the answers to our questions through Christ teachings.

Begin Volunteering – In our community we often think we've already done our part. I would suggest if there is an opening and unless there is a new member to pass the task to, we're not done yet!

Start Tithing – Scripture clearly calls us to be generous. If you haven't been tithing, don't jump off the cliff! Start slow by increasing your giving by 1 or 2% a month or quarter of the year, rising the percentage each period until you reach your goal.

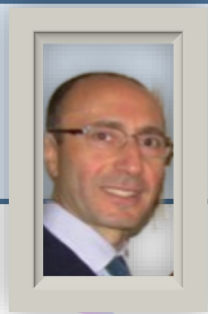
Perform Random Acts of Kindness – This is the most fun! If you are struggling to think of what to do, pause and think about what you would like someone to do for you and do it for someone. For instance simply hold a door open for someone..

God permeates our lives in incomprehensible ways that reflects His love and goodness. When we admit that God accepts us for who we are today, we enable His will to change our lives. This allows us to focus on the joy of the work or sacrifice we make. God will equip us to achieve His will.

By Lyn G. Derenski

Sunday Worship Services
8:30 & 11:00 AM

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



PASTOR'S PASSION

BY REV. GIUSEPPE MATTEI



I GOT AN I.D.E.A.



Healthy congregations are the ones with a clear identity, believe in inclusion, and have a positive energy that moves people into social service. In these congregations the standard of involvement is pretty high. One is expected to practice the faith within the congregation itself and out in the world. People know what their church stands for and practices their church values. Vision, mission and goals are clearly communicated and create boundaries for life together. These factors are a magnet for new members: this revitalizing spirit is infectious. Church identity gives confidence to its members when it is time to invite others to join.

While all congregations speak of themselves as being warm and welcoming, healthy congregations go the extra mile in seeking out and including all people. Facilitating visitors' participation in the worship liturgy helps make them more comfortable on their first visit. When they appear to be lost between the bulletin and the hymnal, a regular member can quietly offer support and guide them to the right page. A healthy church is attentive to others and like a good host, makes sure that the "inner circle" is not a "closed circle." In other words, inclusivity is truly practiced.

All small groups (formal and informal) need to be eager to adopt new people and adapt to new ideas ensuring newcomers do not feel intimidated and left out. The atmosphere is such that they feel

comfortable to seek out the groups and committees that best fit their personalities and passions. It is said that if a newcomer is able to make at least seven friends within a congregation, that person will stick around for the long haul. Church members will do well in extending friendship to those new worshipers in our midst. Friendship ties are the strongest bonding agent.

When members enjoy their church and feel energized by its vision, they get involved in its mission and develop goals for a successful life together. No matter what they commit to, the purpose is to remain faithful to their calling and contribute to the flourishing of the church. Even conflicts can be used to "discover" more about each other, to grow in understanding and closeness.

The I.D.E.A. is this: let's Invite friends and neighbors to worship with us. Then we can help them Discern if Nativity is where they want to grow in their faith journey. We can offer opportunities to Explore their needs and vocation, and help them Assimilate into our ministries and life together.



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 ministry area leader (MAL).

4 AREAS OF MINISTRY

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

Spiritual Life

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Columbarium Mercy Ministry

Communion
& Visitation
Grief Support
Prayer Chain

Pavers

Stewardship

Worship & Music

Acolytes & Crucifers
Altar Guild
Assisting Ministers
Audio-Video
Bulletin Folders
Choir
Greeters
Nativity Ringers
Nursery
Readers
Sanctuary Team
Ushers

* Under consideration

Outreach

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Backpack Ministry

Communication Team

Food Pantry

Fund Raisers*

Membership Team

Mission & Outreach

(Assist internal & external ministries)

Angel Tree
Global Missions - Haiti
Golden Rainbow
Ranch

Luther Springs
New Generation
People Helping
People

Resurrection House
World Hunger - ELCA

Mission Endowment

Thrivent Action Team

Christian Ed

OPEN

Adult Forum

(Sunday Bible Study)

Archives

Bible Study

Ceremonies

Baptism
- Cradle Roll
1st Communion
Confirmation
Funerals
New Member Class
Weddings

Children's Sunday School

Library

Vacation Bible School

Youth Ministry

Luther League
Youth Advisory
Council

Community Life

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Book Club

Coffee Hour

Dinner for Eight

Fellowship

Finance Committee

Audit
Counters
Data Entry

Gardens

Golf

Hospitality

Lay Leadership

Memorial

Men's Group

Mutual Ministry

Parish Nurse*

Property & Safety

Women of Nativity

(all women are members)

Cards R Us
Crafty Ladies
Days for Girls
Friendship Circle
Mary Joy Circle
Sarah Circle

Nativity Lutheran Church Website

nlcww.org





Spiritual Life

By Linda Hengesh



Nativity Bulletin Folders

Upon entering the Nativity Sanctuary you are handed a crisply folded bulletin. Have you ever wondered about the many hands at Nativity who have folded those 250 bulletins and inserts for you? Each Friday morning, several volunteers meet before 8a.m. in the church library to fold, staple, collate and rubber band the bulletins for Sunday mornings. There have been many volunteers of this ministry for the past 20 years. At Nativity opportunities for volunteers are created that allow everyone to use skills and gifts that they have, to serve God.

Church bulletins often serve several purposes. They are primarily used for members to follow the Sunday morning order of worship. Bulletins also contain other important information for their parishioners. Inserts in the bulletin provide parishioners with announcements about upcoming events, prayer lists for people in the church and addresses and phone numbers for the church office.

Next time, you are handed a bulletin at Nativity, think about the faithful group of volunteers that come every Friday morning for fellowship and service. These volunteers know the bulletin is an



Left to Right - Marianne Mock, Dottie Outhouse, Joanne Johnson and Madeline Johnson
Irma Haig - Chair in lower right

important component in how our church communicates. If you would like more information please contact Linda Rizzo at 352-567-1456.



Women of Nativity Christmas Luncheon

A special Thank You for all those who made the WON Christmas Luncheon a wonderful event. Jill Helgeson, Brit Brekka, the Days for Girls Team & Thrivent for a delicious meal, the Board - appetizers, Evelyn Galli - beverages, the Circle members - cookies, Susan Nordstrom - entertainment, Rosie Rosten - centerpieces, Cam Martin & Jean Drach - Ticket sales.



Christian Education

New Member Class

By Lyn G. Derenski



Have you ever wondered what a New Member Class is all about?

Here is an abbreviated rendition using the class booklet. First, it begins with a welcome message on the cover:

*Welcome to your New Church Home
from your Sisters & Brothers in Christ!*

Page two contains the class agenda, the verse 1 Corinthians 12:12 (your homework - look it up), followed by the Ten Commandments.

Pages 3, 4 & 5 cover all the contact data, personal and family information with preference for Sunday Service time and any snowbirds months away with contact data for a second location.

Nativity's Mission, Values and Vision statements are printed for review and discussion.

The final 3 pages are to assist the new members in examining what their talents and preferences are and where they might use them in the numerous ministry opportunities here at Nativity Lutheran Church to serve the congregation, our local community or an area of the world in need.

The greater portion and best part of the class is comprised of Lutheran theology, covering the basics of The Five Solae. These are the tenants of Lutheran faith: 1. Scripture alone 2. Faith alone 3. Grace alone 4. Jesus Christ alone 5. the glory of God alone. Other areas of discussion include the "Traditions" of the worship service. This ties into the review of "Liturgy", the body of rites prescribed for worship. The final areas of discussion are for new members to express "What Am I looking for?" and "What are my expectations?"



New Members October 2019





Reformation?

By Pastor Janet Mulroney Clark

Edited by Lyn G. Derenski

What and Why do we celebrate Reformation Sunday?



Reformation Sunday honors Martin Luther's bold action on October 31, 1517. On that date Luther posted his statement of faith, known as the 95 Theses, on the door of Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany, thus beginning the Protestant Reformation. For Lutherans and many other Protestants in America, the last Sunday in October is celebrated as Reformation Sunday. In some parts of Europe, Reformation Day is a civil holiday celebrated to commemorate the vast social and political change that resulted from Luther's actions.

Who Was Martin Luther?

Martin Luther was a devout Catholic. He attended the university in Erfurt and studied the law. While traveling home he encountered an intense storm and promised that if he survived, he would dedicate his life to God. Surviving he entered an Augustinian monastery and was ordained as a monk in 1507.

Luther was driven by his fear of hell, which resulted in him performing endless good works and acts of piety, as well as self-flagellation and other acts of penance. Through reading the Bible, Luther came to believe people were saved through their faith in Jesus Christ and not by good works or acts of penance.

Papal Indulgences

Luther researched the scriptures in their original languages to understand the true message of Christ and to ascertain if there were any bases for the current teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. One of those issues was the selling of indulgences. The Catholic church sold papal indulgences which they claimed would eliminate the need for acts of penance in this life and in the hereafter. He was especially bothered by the sale of jubilee indulgences, which Pope Leo X sold, in part to pay for St. Peter's Cathedral. Luther became increasingly convinced that salvation came through faith alone, not works.

The 95 Theses

Martin Luther was a professor of theology. He was a monk and a devout Catholic with no intentions of starting a new church. He did, however, want to reform the church, and with that goal in mind, Luther wrote the 95 Theses, which detailed his objections to the selling of indulgences and its effect upon the people. He posted them on the door of the church because that was a common place for posting public notices. Within weeks, word of the theses had spread. Consequently, Luther was viewed by the Roman Church as a heretic, threatened with burning at the stake, and was excommunicated by Pope Leo in 1520. Many theologians agreed with Luther, hence the beginning of the Protestant Reformation.

Luther believed the Roman Catholic Church had become corrupt and concluded that the pope would not accept reform, and reform must come from outside the church. Luther advocated that salvation is available to all through faith and God's grace, not from religious authority.

World Communion Day



BY LINDA HENGESH



Photo collage by Art Alt

World Communion Sunday (originally called World Wide Communion Sunday) is a gift of the Presbyterian Church to the larger ecumenical church. It is celebrated on the first Sunday in October. The first celebration occurred at Shadyside Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, PA, in 1933 where Dr. Hugh Thompson Kerr served as pastor. He and his congregation wished to show the interconnectedness of Christian churches, regardless of denomination. Carlan Helgeson brought the celebration of World Communion Sunday into our congregation since it was part of his church experience from childhood. Since 2016 the congregation has responded positively to this new tradition. Some people

have purchased multiple flags in a single year and others have purchased flags every year. Buddy Kristoferson and Bob McDowall have made the stands for the flags. Volunteers iron, place flags in stands and label flags. The flags represent Christians from every continent except Antarctica. The flags by the chancel represent our mission partners in the Caribbean, Haiti, Guyana, Suriname and Cuba as well as the Bahamas (part of our Synod) and Paraguay where Tim Noe, a member, is serving in the Peace Corps. Each Sunday through November the flags remind the congregation that we are all God's children.





Community Life



By Jane Henkel

Property and Safety

“Who can fix a broken light switch?”

“Why is the air conditioning not working?”

“Who can install a handrail for the safety of our congregants?”

“Who can install Visitor Parking signs suggested by the Evangelism Committee?”

What do these items all have in common? These and others are typical requests that are made to the Property & Safety Committee by individuals and committees of Nativity.

The Property & Safety Committee is informally headed by John Siedel and Clyde Rosten who have together served a total of 27 years. Their historical knowledge, along with Buddy Kristoferson's, provides the continuity and expertise needed for Nativity's mechanical systems and grounds.

The Property and Safety Committee meets monthly at 9 am on the first Wednesday of the month. This meeting is usually attended by 6-8 members and the Custodian. They discuss resolutions to previous requests and plan for short-term and long-term future items, while assigning responsibility to fulfilling those requests. Short-term items are the immediate physical needs of the property—broken or non-working items or systems. Long-term items are for things such as planning for a new roof for the Sanctuary which requires a long lead time. Other items on their monthly agendas deal with the contracts that Nativity has with outside contractors: lawn mowing, shrubbery and sprinkler maintenance, the existing security system, pest and termite control, etc. The committee reviews the contractors' work to ensure their work is satisfactory.

Another item on their lists of “to-dos” is overseeing NLC's Custodian and assisting in the hiring of one when needed. Day-to-day custodial duties are determined by the position's Job Description but tasks that fall outside of that list are discussed and approved or assigned to others.

Inspections and their outcomes are an additional aspect of Property & Safety. Yearly inspections of many of NLC's systems are required by law--the fire suppression system and the water and waste systems—to name a few -- all must be inspected by outside professionals and any deficiencies that are found must be corrected. Outside firms that maintain the air conditioners, our alarm system, etc. must be arranged to be inspected at prescribed intervals.

A recent addition to the Property & Safety Committee responsibilities is the Security sub-committee of NLC. A small group has recently formed and is helping to implement procedures that enhance the security of our congregation during worship and other hours. Changes are transparent to the congregation and have required little or no funding. In the future, the Security group would like to enhance security measures as other churches in the surrounding area have.

The Property & Safety Committee is always looking for members to participate in planning and even more important with the skills to perform many of the requested projects. Please contact Clyde or John for information on how you can join and help.

While the Property & Safety Committee's work is not always visible, it serves an invaluable role in maintaining Nativity's buildings, systems and surrounding property.





OUTREACH

BY JOANNE BOGGUS

RESURRECTION HOUSE



Rez House (Resurrection House) is located in Dade City and is a mission of the Florida-Bahamas Synod, Tampa Bay Area. Margarita Romo is the Executive Director and heads a staff of three, plus countless volunteers. Salaries for the staff are paid by Farmworkers Self-Help, INC (FSH) of which Rez House is an outgrowth and was founded in 1987. Rez House exists to provide opportunities and to meet



unmet needs of underserved members of the local immigrant community who are mostly impoverished and work at jobs paying minimum wages.

Rez House provides after-school care, supervised study time for scores of children, Sunday services, Sunday School and in general serves as a “go to” place for families encountering problems. Upwards of 250 families and their children are helped yearly in some way by Rez House.

There are a number of Lutheran congregations that support Rez House with funds and projects. Nativity Lutheran Church (NLC) has been involved with Rez House for 25 plus years and today Rez House continues to be a part of our Mission and Outreach. NLC sponsors the “New Shoes for a New School Year” program, which has been a big success. This



year NLC was able to not only provide shoes, but were also able to add socks and underwear for more than 50 school-age children.

This past August NLC purchased the shoes at WalMart in Dade City. Four of the Nativity congregation arrived at WalMart to assist with the purchase. WalMart provided a designated sales clerk and a designated cashier for the event. Additionally, WalMart provided each child with a bag of goodies consisting of school supplies plus a wrapped cake treat. There was a festive air as children and parents were delighted with shoes and the goodie bag.

It was a successful shoe shopping experience and an example of the spiritual arm of the church reaching out to provide for the less fortunate.



Left to Right: Zell Boggus, Margarita Romo (Rez House), Lilo Horeis, Joanne Boggus & Ernie Horeis

CHURCH COUNCIL

by Ed Lewis, Congregation Council President

Your Legacy of Faith!

Have you ever thought about your spiritual legacy – your legacy of faith? How will you be remembered regarding your faith? What will the record of your life's journey look like? What are the stories of God on your journey? Most of us can recount stories and observations of how we respond to life's difficulties; how we celebrated; how we worshipped; how we prayed and saw God move. We can talk about things we did that made a difference in the lives of others. We can share about how we conquered bad attitudes and habits, or how we handled disappointments.

But have you ever thought about a legacy of faith being about what you did with your finances, your time, your talents? I was asked to give a stewardship talk at a church I attended many years ago. I thought about this a great deal and studied scripture verses that had been quoted to me over the years. You know the ones about cheerful givers or bringing the tithe into the storehouse. I thought about the many ways of encouraging people about giving the first fruits to God. But the more I prayed about what to say, the more God seemed to lead me to talk about being a faithful giver.

I hope that my legacy of faith will include my faithfulness in giving. In the past, I traveled a great deal for work. I would often be gone for weeks at a time and often not be in my church. My church upbringing had taught me that it was very important to give of my time, talents and treasure. But how could I keep up with my giving if I were gone so frequently. I found ways.

Before banks offered online payments, I wrote checks and left them for others to put in the offering plate on my behalf. After my bank started providing a means to make payments online, I started sending my checks to my church using online bill payment services. The choice I was making was to be faithful in my giving because it was important to me.

You have choices at Nativity Lutheran Church. If you want to find a way to give when you aren't here all the time, ask about *Simply Giving*. Jean Drach or Jane Henkel would be glad to tell you about this program. Also this year, we have the benefit of seeing our increases in giving doubled thanks to an anonymous donor who has created a matching fund. Every dollar of increased giving to the operating fund starting in December will be matched by this matching fund up to twenty thousand dollars per year. The donor has asked that we not reduce our giving to our missions, so we need to stay faithful to that giving as well. What an opportunity to be faithful to our church and our mission to our community and the larger world.

Your spiritual legacy is like a baton that you begin to pass on to the next generation even while you live. Your family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors can grab onto this baton and run with it now and long after your portion of the race is finished. Let's look for ways to be faithful in our stewardship – let's think about our legacy of faith!

YOUTH

by Lorrie & Frank DeFrancesco

Service, Support and Super Silly

The youth joyfully made and served smores at the Fall Festival. The group has begun meeting on Thursday nights and have met with the Pastor to discuss future opportunities for service and support. Taco, game and movie nights provide camaraderie and reinforce faith.



Top: Ashley, Gina , Lorrie (Youth Advisor), Emma.
Bottom: Senora, Ella

"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity."

1 Timothy 4:12



L to R: Jayson, Mark, Robert, Abby and Senora

David and Gina were supported by their fellow youth at their High School Chorus Concert.



Taco & Movie Nights

Chorus Concert Weeki Wachee High School





Blessing of the Animals

held on Oct. 4, 2019
with 12 Dogs & 1 Cat
and their keepers!



"But ask the **animals**, and they will
teach you, or the birds in the sky,
and they will tell you;

Job 12:7



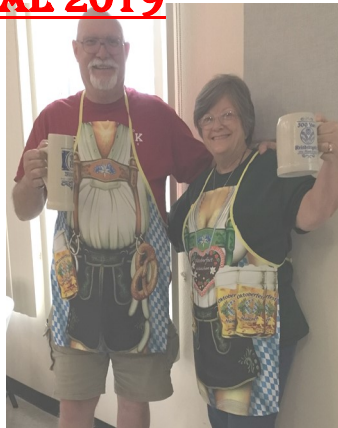
FALL FESTIVAL 2019

SPIRITED APRONS

SOULFUL SINGING

FAITHFUL SERVICE

INSPIRED LEADER



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The Communicator

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God's work. Our hands.



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