

Happenings at NLC

January 2020

Monthly Newsletter

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

Worship Services 8:30am & 11am

Reverend Giuseppe Mattei

Congregational Meeting Sunday, January 12, 2020 9:45am in Winemiller Hall

Nativity Lutheran Church Council Members hope you will be able to attend this very important meeting.

Upcoming Events

January 5 - Council Members Installed

during service

January 7 - WON Board Meeting

January 12 - Ordination of Michelle Mehan-

Conklin, NLC 3:00PM

January 18-25 - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

January 19 - Ecumenical Service, St. Andrews

Episcopal Church 4PM

January 26 - ThankOffering Service

Please visit our website at **www.nlcww.org** to view the NLC calendar, submit requests for dates/events, download sermons, among other things.

6363 Commercial Way, Weeki Wachee, FL 34613 • 352-597-1456 • www.nlcww.org

LETTER FROM YOUR PREVIOUS COUNCIL PRESIDENT

It is January of 2020, and I hope you are all able to see with 2020 vision. It is the start of a new calendar year and it will be the beginning of a new year for new Congregation Council members. Just as we all look at our lives and try to set some resolutions for self-improvement, the council will be looking ahead and setting some goals for the new year.

Last year, the council began the year with a weekend retreat that was held here at our church. We spent a Friday evening learning about the roles and responsibilities of the officers and individual council members. We looked at the Constitution and Bylaws so we would all be familiar with what is covered in this document and how to apply it to our jobs on council. We also spent Saturday morning looking at Policy and Procedures Guidebook for our church. We learned that there were many gaps in this document and there were sections that were out of date and required some attention. Later on Saturday, we met with many of our congregation additional leaders and did brainstorming to prepare some short- and long-term plans. From this weekend, the council started to move forward with three areas of planning and one area targeted for change.

The areas of planning and exploration included how to improve our worship services, research into implementing a thrift store, and research into improving the use of the Narthex. Several suggestions for improving worship were forwarded to the Worship and Music Committee. They reviewed recommendations and implemented some and put others on hold. A group performed extensive research on local thrift stores and the recommendation was that this idea was not feasible for our congregation at the present time. The Narthex project has been explored and many options for updating usage have been presented to council. Many of these require some costly changes to our building and will be considered in the future as our budget or fund-raising activities will allow.

The council targeted changes to several parts of the Policy and Procedures Guidebook. To accomplish this, we established some subcommittees and charged them with making updates for Weddings, Funerals, Facilities Use, and Communications. As a result of this effort, the council approved two updates to the Policy and Procedures Guidebook and one update to a Continuing Resolution.

In addition, the entire year was marked with identifying areas of church life that could be improved by reviewing processes and improving activities. As a council, we discovered that our church had begun to be lax about how we performed many activities. We weren't following documented processes and procedures and sometimes we were doing things contrary to what was documented in our Constitution and Bylaws. We worked hard to improve how the church operated and we either brought our operations in line with what was written, or we modified what was written to reflect a better way of doing things. For instance, we learned that the congregation should elect people who will attend Synod Assembly next June and we made sure they were added to the slate of candidates for last December's election. We learned that we were to appoint a person to serve on the Memorial Committee and we did that in December.

As we move into the new year, I look forward to working with the new council and our new council president, Will Schantl. We will continue to improve the life and working of Nativity Lutheran Church for the glory of God and we will continue to carry light and love to our world!

Blessings in Christ and Happy New Year,

Ed Lewis

SPIRITUAL LIFE

ORDINATION OF MICHELLE MEHAN-CONKLIN - Sunday, January 12, 2020 at 3:00PM. Michelle, a member of Nativity Lutheran Church, will be ordained into the Ministry of World and Service in the ELCA. Rev. Pedro Suarez, Bishop of the Florida-Bahamas Synod will be presiding. Please join us at Nativity Lutheran Church to celebrate this important event. Fellowship time to follow the service.

SOUL SEEKERS - January 13, 2020, 7:00PM. We would like to welcome you to be a part of a Spirituality Group at Nativity Lutheran Church. This group is designed to support and encourage our relationships with God as we face the challenges and joys together. We will meet the second Monday of the month from 7:00PM to 9:00PM, in the Sanctuary. This group is open to all.... young, not so young, male, female, community members, members, friends, anyone who is seeking and has a willingness to explore their relationship with God is welcome! Questions please contact Michelle Mehan-Conklin at 727-267-1047 or email at shelltbfb@hotmail.com.

ALTAR GUILD – January 15, 2020, 10:00AM. We invite anyone (male or female) to attend one of our meetings on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 10:00AM (to find out what we do and how we do it). If you have any questions you would like answered before that please, call Janet DeVico at 352-597-0150.

JANUARY 18-25, 2020 IS THE ANNUAL OBSERVANCE OF THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY.

The theme chosen for 2020 is "They Showed Us Unusual Kindness." (cf. Acts 28:2) Throughout 2020, Christians everywhere pray "that they may all be one" joining our prayer with that of the Lord Jesus Christ. For more information go to: www.geii.org.

JANUARY 19, 2020 – ECUMENICAL SERVICE, which will be held as part of the area's observance of the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, will take place at St. Andrews Episcopal Church, 2301 Deltona Blvd, Spring Hill, beginning at 4:00PM. Four congregations (including ours), representing three Christian denominations, will come together for this celebration.

THANKOFFERING SERVICE – Sunday, January 26, 2020 – 8:30AM & 11:00AM

On January 26, the Women of Nativity (WON) will be leading a ThankOffering Service. This special service includes the blessing of quilts made by Crafty Ladies that are given to those in need all over the world as well as individuals at Nativity and in Hernando County; prayer shawls, made by Sarah Circle, are given to those in need; donated stuffed toys are distributed by fire and police to children in stressful situations. A special offering is collected at this service to help support Women of the ELCA churchwide efforts. Please join us for this special service.

WON will hold their annual meeting immediately following the 11:00AM service in Winemiller Hall. A luncheon will be provided. Spouses are invited to enjoy the luncheon with us.

CHRISTMAS EVE - DECEMBER 24, 2019

THANK YOU to everyone involved in the beautification of our Sanctuary for the celebration of the birth of Jesus!







MIDDAY PRAYER - Weekdays at 12:30PM. The Midday Prayer is a brief break during the day to find rest and renewal in prayer. All are welcome. People may gather for a few moments together at 12:30PM every day and then go about the rest of their day or if they would like, they can stay longer in prayer in the sanctuary. Please join us and help spread the word.

NLC'S SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE - Every service is easily accessible from Nativity's website. ALSO, Sunday night at 6pm, tune in to WZEU-FM 102.9 on your radio for a rebroadcast of our previous weeks' Sunday Service. If you are Interested in sponsoring one of the services broadcast on WZEU in memory or honor of someone, cost is \$25 and place your donation in a green envelope and mark it WZEU and place in the offering plate.

OUTREACH

MISSION OF THE MONTH - VBS

Vacation Bible School 2020 will be held at Nativity the week of June 8-12. Each year we have approximately 85 children and youth from the community, and our congregation, attend this week long event. Some of our needs include funding for advertising, curriculum, decorations, snacks/drinks, craft supplies, recreation equipment, etc. If you are a Thrivent member, please consider applying for a Thrivent Action Team Grant for our VBS. Please contact Donna Olsen for more information (352)220-2318.

THANK YOU NATIVITY FAMILY! Ed Lewis and I spent December 18th, a chilly night, on the streets of Tampa helping the homeless. We gave away 14 blankets, 16 hats, 16 pairs of gloves, 14 pairs of socks, 13 T-shirts (Thrivent), and 14 sandwiches. We witnessed one indigent man being chased away by the manager of a CVS pharmacy for setting up his sleeping bag on the sidewalk outside his store. We met many homeless across from the Tampa Police Station on the sidewalk (because the City of Tampa removed all the benches in the adjacent park to keep out the homeless!). Our gifts were met by heartfelt "Thank you!" and "God bless you!" from those who had virtually nothing. Thank you, dear family, for your contributions and Thrivent cards and a Trompeter grant which have made this ministry of warmth in the cold possible. Small gifts can make a big difference!

[~]Carlan Helgeson



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

The Reverend Pedro Manuel Suarez Bishop November 30, 2019

Nativity Lutheran Church 6363 Commercial Way Weeki Wachee, FL 34613

Dear friends in Christ,

First, let me just say, thank you!

Your recent donation of \$2,049.00 is so very appreciated. We know you are keenly aware of the toll and devastation that result from Hurricanes. Your generosity is helping us address the situation in Freeport, the Bahamas, where Our Savior Lutheran Church still stands amid the rubble left by Category 5 Hurricane Dorian.

Please know that your gift has been used directly for Pastoral relief, replacing GFI outlets in the houses they can rehab, and then in the monumental task of getting building supplies in place to rebuild the homes that were completely obliterated. The healing starts with a tiny spark, a glimmer of hope in a supply Pastor who brings hope and much needed rest to Pastor Lewis, or in something we take so much for granted, an outlet that supplies electricity to a toaster or lamp.

Although these things may seem small to the average person, you know that after a hurricane, it is not. Your gift reminded the community in Freeport of Christ's presence and for that, we are so very grateful.

your generous spirit!

Again, thank you! We appreciate your support.

In Christ,

+ Pedro M. Suasay

The Rev. Pedro M. Suarez, Bishop Florida-Bahamas Synod, ELCA

Florida-Bahamas Synod ELCA

3838 W. Cypress Street Tampa, FL 33607-4897

Phone: 813/876-7660

Website: www.fbsynod.com Michele Hilton

Assistant to the Bishop for Administration

Florida-Bahamas Synod, ELCA

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ATTENTION: THRIVENT MEMBERS - Yes it is 2020, but you may have choice dollars left from 2019. How to direct Thrivent Choice Dollars:

- Visit Thrivent.com/thriventchoice.
- 2. In the Direct Choice Dollars section on the right, click "Get started now."
- 3. Log in, enter your user ID and password, and answer your security question. (If you haven't yet registered on Thrivent.com, click "Register for account access.")
- 4. Find the number of Choice Dollars available to direct.
- 5. Locate the organization to which you want to direct Choice Dollars:
 - a. To direct to a previous organization:
 - Click "Direct Now" next to the organization's name, or
 - Click on the "View activity history" link, scroll down and click on the name of the desired organization.
 - To direct a new organization, enter keyword(s) like organization name, ZIP code, cause, etc. Click "Search."
- 6. Choose "Direct All" or enter a specific number and click "Direct Now." Follow the prompts on the confirmation page to direct Choice Dollars.

By Phone:

- 1. Call **800-847-4836** and when prompted, say "Thrivent Choice."
- 2. **Press 1** to direct Choice Dollars or **2** to hear Thrivent Choice program Terms and Conditions. (If prompted, say or enter your phone number and date of birth.)
- 3. A representative will work with you to direct Choice Dollars.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION (Discipleship)

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

The Youth Group meets Thursday evenings at 6:00PM for devotion and fellowship. Meetings are held at Nativity in the Youth Room.

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL - every Sunday, 9:45AM-10:45AM. Classes for children 3 and up!

CONFIRMATION CLASS - We have 2 groups this year. Group 1 meets the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, and Group 2 meets the 2nd and 4th. At 9:45AM we will start out in Al Lien Hall for music practice, then proceed to the Library. Months with a 5th week we do not meet.

ADULT FORUM, JANUARY 19, 2020, at 9:45AM in Winemiller Hall - Amy Baldwin, Court Program Specialist with the Fifth Judicial Circuit Court, will lead a discussion on Hernando County's Drug, Mental Health, and Veterans Treatment Courts. Women of Nativity have been involved for several years in making graduations a celebration for the participants, giving them handmade quilts and blankets, cakes, and greeting cards, as well as publicly congratulating and thanking them, the court and law enforcement personnel who have worked to make their graduations happen. Please join us on January 19 in welcoming Ms. Baldwin and learning something about this mission project.

COMMUNITY LIFE

WOMEN OF NATIVITY

All women members of Nativity Lutheran Church are automatically members of W.O.N. and are welcome to participate in all sponsored activities of W.O.N.

Thank You!

I would like to thank everyone who made the Women of Nativity Christmas luncheon a success. Special thanks for all the work that Days for Girls did planning the menu and preparing such a wonderful meal. Thank you to Jill and Brit who made Christmas wine glass slippers as favors for everyone. I heard that the entertainment was a lot of fun put everyone in the holiday spirit.

~Doreen Davis

FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE - is asking for donations of NEW teddy bears and other stuffed animals. These little animals will be given to Oak Hill Hospital for their Pediatrics Oak Hill will not accept used animals for sanitation reasons; the animals must include their sales tags. As much as we enjoyed giving our teddy bears to the County EMT/Firefighters, the Florida Highway Patrol, and the Sheriff to comfort children in trauma, we were not alone. These three agencies are overwhelmed with teddy bears donated by many different groups. Good times for us to purchase the teddy bears is during the clearance after Christmas, Valentine's markdowns Dav. Easter. Thanks for your generosity. Any questions, please call Susan Nordstrom at 352-428-1918.

FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE - On Saturday, January 4, Friendship Circle will enjoy a meal together and see *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*, a poignant and powerful big screen tribute to the man who embodied kindness and love to children and adults for four decades, Mr. Fred Rogers. Two-time Oscar-winner Tom Hanks portrays Mister Rogers in a timely story of kindness triumphing over cynicism. If *A Beautiful Day* is not showing locally on the 4th, we will select another movie. If anyone other than a member of Friendship Circle wishes to join us, please call Susan Nordstrom at 352-428-1918. Members will be notified of times and places by e-mail a few days prior to the 4th. Thank you very much! Susan Nordstrom, Leader, Friendship Circle

CARDS R US - Wednesday, January 8 & 15, 2020 - 12:30PM-3PM. Cards R Us will craft cards on the second and third Wednesdays in January in Al Lien Hall. All are welcome to join us in some fun, knowing that your efforts will result in money for Pastor's Discretionary Fund to help those in need during one-time emergencies. Thank you, everyone, for your used card donations and your cash donations for our completed cards. For more information, you can contact Susan Nordstrom at 352-428-1918.

MARY JOY CIRCLE - Thursday, January 9, 2020-12:30PM Our monthly Bible study continues on Thursday, January 9, 2020, at 12:30PM in Al Lien Hall. All women of Nativity are invited to join us for fellowship and bible study (led by Cam Martin). We look forward to welcoming you. For more information, please contact Evelyn Lawlor at 352-835-7784.

MEN'S BREAKFAST - Tuesday, January 21, 2020 - 8:30AM. Please join us at PERKINS RESTAURANT, 4685 Commercial Way, Spring Hill, for fellowship and breakfast. For more info on this group, please call Jim Christensen at 352-683-9141.

DAYS FOR GIRLS - next meeting will be Thursday, January 16, 2020 at 9:00AM. Days for Girls is a non-profit organization formed to help girls in developing countries stay in school. Through the Trompeter Fund and Thrivent Financial, WON (Women of Nativity) have been able to participate in this life changing mission. Please consider joining us. For more information, contact Jill Helgeson at 352-686-3367.

PAINTING CLASS - Wednesday, January 8, 15, 22 & 29, 2020 - 10AM-12PM. We meet every Wednesday in Al Lien Hall. For more information, contact Germaine Major at 352-686-0416, or Penny Morman at 352-888-1829.

THE NATIVITY CUP GOLF TOURNAMENT will resume January 19, 2020, at the Rivard Country Club (18001 Rivard Blvd, Brooksville, FL 34604.) Please be at the course by 1:30PM. You will get your team assignment at that time. Tee time is 2:00PM sharp. Dinner afterwards will be at Beef O'Brady on Spring Hill Drive. A sign up sheet is on the kiosk in the Narthex. The next event will be at Hernando Oaks on Feb 16. More info to follow. Any question, please contact Jim Runyan at 609-385-6679.

CRAFTY LADIES - Fridays, 9:00AM - 11:00AM. We are a group of approximately 17 women, who meet every Friday morning at Nativity from 9:00AM until 12:00 noon. These dedicated ladies, iron, cut squares, pin and sew the quilts together, and tie a knot in every square. Please come and join us. Questions? Call Jill Helgeson at 352-686-3367.

PATTER FROM PATTI

Happy New Year. I want to take this opportunity to tell you how much we appreciate you joining us for our Fellowship Activities. We realize that not everyone is interested in all of them, but we try to do a variety in adventure and cost. If you have not joined us previously, now is the time to start. Here is what we have coming up:

Monday, January 27th, Mystery Dinner, meet at church at 4:00PM. Here is how a Mystery Dinner works: come to church for appetizers and beverage, join up with others and receive instruction on how to get to an undisclosed restaurant. Upon arrival at the restaurant you will order from the menu and receive separate checks. This particular restaurant is opening up for us that night.

These dinners are always lots of fun. This has a menu with a variety of prices to keep everyone happy. If you are planning to attend, we ask you to give us a deposit of \$10.00 per person, which will be returned to you when you get to the church. We will start accepting those on Sunday, January 12th. The best way is with a check because we just give the check back to you that night.

Saturday, February 22nd, 5:00PM Spaghetti Dinner/Game Night. This will be at church and will be \$5.00 per person. Watch for details in the next newsletter. Ticket sales start on February 9th

Friday March 27th, SHOW PALACE PRESENTS MAMA MIA 6:00PM. We have reserved 48 tickets for the production of MAMA MIA at the Show Palace in Hudson. It is now under new ownership, and there are a few changes. The group rate for the tickets is \$45.00 per person to include a Buffet Dinner and the musical production. Included in the price is already the gratuity, change from previously, and an upgraded dessert, also nonalcoholic beverages. We will start to accept money for these tickets on January 12, no sooner. This will be first to come, get the tickets. We will stop selling them when they are gone or by Sunday February 23rd. Just a side note, this is a lively musical and one of my Tim's favorites, I promise I won't let him jump on the stage to join them. We would prefer to have you just give us checks made out to Nativity Fellowship, we can take cash if that does not work for you. We will have an insert in the bulletin on January 12th a form you can fill out to help get the tickets in your name.

April—Mystery Dinner

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to give me a call. Patti Cotter 352-797-9682.

FROM NATIVITY'S FINANCIAL SECRETARY

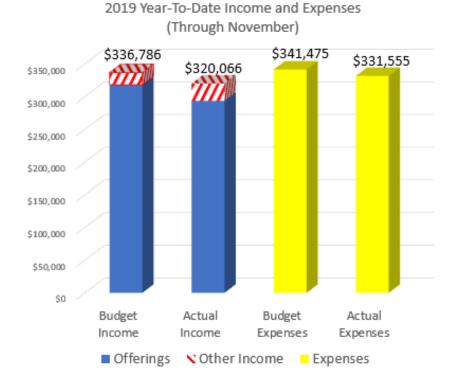
November Attendance: November attendance dropped slightly due to many congregants traveling to be with family during the Thanksgiving holiday. Otherwise, we are similar to 2018 attendance numbers.

November Income & Expenses: Expenses have been higher than income during the last four months. This is partially due to expenses incurred from higher attendance numbers; however, our treasurer has held down expenses (actual vs budget) by \$10K through her vigilance and diligence.

December Matching Funds: Good news! The Matching Fund program has begun! Individual giving in December that is higher than last December 2018 will be matched dollar-for-dollar by this fund. In addition, anonymous and unattributed cash giving will be also matched. Your participation is highly encouraged! Any questions about how to double your gift using this fund can be directed to the Chairman of Stewardship Committee, Bob Schneider

--Jane Henkel

Questions: jane.henkel@nlcww.org





COUNTERS NEEDED — Every week donations are counted by a group of volunteers. For more information, please call Ernie Horeis at 352-666-7584.

AV OPERATORS NEEDED. The audio operator makes sure the congregation can hear the spoken word and music. Please consider helping to take on this very important (yet simple) task. Call Art Alt at 352-596-1585 for more info.

COMMUNION MINISTRY HELP NEEDED. With so many of our members being temporarily (after surgeries and medical procedures) or permanently housebound, more people are needed to bring them Holy Communion. Please contact Pastor Giuseppe. A short training is all that is needed.

HELP WANTED. THE WOMEN OF NATIVITY ORGANIZATION is looking for volunteers to represent Nativity at the Hernando County Drug Court, Mental Health Court, and Veteran Court graduations. If you would like to learn more about this program, or would like to volunteer, please contact Susan Nordstrom at 352-428-1918.

GARDEN HELP WANTED! We need your help to maintain the gardens at the entrance of the administration building. Any questions, contact Linda Wagner at 352-799-8577 or JoAnne Berg at 352-428-0156.

REMINDERS

OFFICE HOURS - Monday through Friday - 9AM-2PM

SAVE THE DATE

February 8, 2020 at 2:00PM - Harmonizers Performance at Nativity Lutheran Church. More details coming soon!

February 15, 2020 - Life Line Screening at Nativity Lutheran Church. More details coming soon!

MAILBOXES: When you come to church, please take a moment to check your mailbox in Winemiller Hall and see if anything was left for you.

NEWSLETTER: If you would like to have something included in the **February** newsletter, please submit it to the office by **January 15**.

NLC CALENDAR: You can view it on the website, www.nlcww.org. If you do not have access to the website please let us know and we can arrange for you to receive a printed copy. In addition, on the website you can submit a request to schedule a meeting. We have many ministries scheduling meetings including non-NLC groups. If you need to reserve a room, please make sure you submit your request to the office. Submissions can be made using a form that can be obtained in the office, or via email to nativitylutheran63@gmail.com or via the form on the website. This will help resolve any conflicts that may arise.

MISSION STATEMENT

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

VISION STATEMENT

We seek to become people who live the nativity by...

Giving Worship and Praise to our God: Presenting ourselves before God as adoring servants, who, in loving God, recognize that it is no longer we who are at the center of the universe, but the One to whom we are singing our praises.

Intentionally giving ourselves as Christ's servants: Participating in his mission in the world, helping those who need our help, both in our church family and in the world beyond: recognizing that there can never really be any peace or joy for us until there is peace and joy for others.

Opening our doors and our hearts to all people: Welcoming all to our fellowship, caring for all in Christian love, and reaching out with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Encouraging each other to grow in faith: Growing our understanding of the scripture and God's leading in our lives through study of the Word, meditation, and prayer; knowing that learning is not just a matter of the mind, but also of the heart, and that raising questions is sometimes of more value than finding answers.

Being responsible to God through the creative use of our income, possessions, time and talent; recognizing that loving our neighbor is not so much a feeling as it is an act of will, and that sharing what we have on behalf of the Kingdom of God is only giving back what was already God's to being with.

Celebrating the gift of life together: Loving our neighbor, losing ourselves and then finding ourselves, having discovered that the Good News means that it is impossible not to feel joy in the presence of the Savior.

OUR VALUES STATEMENT

We recognize that we are not here by chance but are gathered together to be the church of God in Christ.

We recognize that God is making us, through grace, into a Fellowship that embodies and expresses the spirit of Christ. In this fellowship, there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female, for all of us are one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28). We, therefore, welcome equally all people, regardless of religious office, position, possessions, education, race, age, gender, sexual orientation, mental ability, physical ability or other distinctions. (Adopted 9/7/07)

January Birthdays

Henry Wittschieben	1/1
Elaine Malone	1/2
Viola Broda	1/4
Kathleen O'Brien	1/5
Jennifer Johnson	1/6
William Schneider	1/6
Robert McDowall	1/7
Stephanie Mattei	1/10
Pam Rogers	1/13
Ahmec Torres	1/13
Rebecca Hanneman	1/15
Michelle Mehan-Conklin	1/15
Theresa Halgren	1/18
Margret Steffens	1/18
James Ward	1/18
JoAnne Berg	1/19
Vivian Deon	1/23
Pauline Dougan	1/23
Marilyn Schneider	1/23
Phillip Schroeder	1/24
Josiah Breida	1/25
Cynthia Rogers	1/26
Ruth Goodwin	1/29
Margaret Spina	1/31



January Wedding Anniversaries

Joyce & Conrad Colombo 1/28 Susan & Don Eckert 1/28



