



Happenings at NLC

July 2022

Monthly Newsletter

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

Worship Service: 9:30AM

Reverend Giuseppe Mattei

Be Well, Stay Safe



Upcoming Events

July 4 - Office Closed

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

SPIRITUAL LIFE

PASTOR'S VACATION - Pastor Mattei will be going on vacation June 28 - July 5, and July 22-31. Pastor Peter Stiller (retired ELCA pastor) will preside over the July 3rd, 24th and 31st services.

ALTAR GUILD. Members beautify the worship space and prepare the altar for our Sunday celebration. They also set up the sanctuary for the celebration of weddings and for funeral/memorial services. It is always a joy to make the necessary preparations to support everybody's worship experience. We invite anyone (male or female) to attend one of our meetings which is held on the 4th Monday 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 **Suzanne Chelf at 352-684-7329.** **Our next meeting is July 25, 2022, 10:00AM.**

ALTAR FLOWERS. If you would like to purchase flowers for the altar in honor or memory of a loved one or event, there is a sign-up sheet in the narthex on the kiosk. You can also call the office at 352-597-1456. Cost is \$25.00. For those people who have purchased bouquets, the Altar Guild will have them ready for you to pick up after the 9:30AM service. PLEASE, do not remove flowers from the altar. Members from the Altar Guild will remove them for you.

CHRIST IN OUR HOME AND LIVING LUTHERAN - We have received our copies of the July/Aug/Sept issue of *Christ in Our Home* and July issue of *Living Lutheran*. If you would like a copy they are available in the narthex, or stop by the office between 9:00AM and 12PM and pick up a copy. A small donation would be appreciated to offset the costs of the devotionals. You can use a green pew card and mark it "devotionals". If you have any questions, or want to make sure copies are still available, please call the office at 352-597-1456.

NLC'S SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE - Listen to Nativity Lutheran's Sunday Worship Service every Sunday night at 6pm. Tune in to WZEU-FM 102.9 on your radio for a broadcast of this week's Sunday Service.

OUTREACH

JULY/AUGUST MISSION OF THE MONTH:

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE

Weekend Blessings is a program designed to feed preschool, elementary, and middle school children whose families qualify for the Federal Free/Reduced Price Meal program. On the last day of every school week kids participating in the Weekend Blessings program get bags filled with sufficient food for the weekend. If you would like to donate to this mission, make your check payable to Nativity Lutheran Church and indicate People Helping People(PHP)/Weekend Blessings on the memo line. If you would like further information regarding this ministry, please call Sue and Frank Margagliotti at 352-442-6177.

Our annual shopping day for the **Migrant Workers' Children's Shoes Project** is August 5th at 5:30PM at the Zephyrhills WalMart. It is always a joy to see children shopping for this essential item before the start of the new school year. This mission project is in collaboration with Resurrection (Rez) House Lutheran Church in Dade City. If you would like to participate in this heart warming shopping trip, please contact Linda Russo at 352-596-0673.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION (Discipleship)

CONFIRMATION NEWS

Three of our youth, Ryan Alessio, Ella Wozniak, and Jesse Wright, have completed their three-year confirmation journey and have affirmed their Baptismal vows on Sunday, June 5, the Feast of Pentecost. During the worship service, they shared with the congregation their thoughts on why they wanted to be confirmed. Read their statements below.



Ryan Alessio

I want to be confirmed because I want to spread the gospel because I believe in God the father, the son and the holy spirit, as well as to reside in the house of God.

I feel like I need to be in the church to learn about God and worship God. I want to learn how to love others. I hope the church prospers and grows while never failing.



Ella Wozniak

I want to affirm my Baptismal Vows because I want to enjoy a closer relationship with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Being confirmed will give me the opportunity to be more involved in church. The more I learn about Jesus, the closer I am to God the Father in the Spirit, so even after my confirmation I will continue to learn and study more about God. To learn about God is to love God.

To me, God is kind and loving. He sacrificed His only son for our sins. He also helps us every day. God treats us as his children and loves us all the same. God's Spirit lives with all of us and empowers us to do better in our lives and for others around us. The encouragement of the Spirit allows me to grow into the person God the Father wants me to be. It is still the Spirit that allows me to grow in my relationship with Jesus and to follow in his footsteps.

To be a part of this church means a lot to me. I was baptized at Nativity and have grown up here. My hopes for the future of this church is to help reopen the nursery and the Sunday School rooms so younger kids can start their journey to learning more about God.



Jesse Wright

When I started attending church, I did not know much about religion or faith. I was unsure of what I believed in. As I started Sunday school classes and started to learn about the different stories that are in the Bible, I began to understand what faith is. Faith is believing in something or someone, even if you cannot see them physically. Having faith that God exists and that Jesus died and rose again for our sins, is similar to having faith in others that we can not see, like Santa. You have to open your heart and mind, and trust that they are there for you. The more I learned about Jesus, though, the more I could see the difference. God wants to build a relationship with me and through Jesus, God calls me friend. In Jesus and through the Spirit, God the Father wants to be my friend. God wants to get really close with me.

Pastor has taught me through the scripture readings that God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are in us, around us, and with us every day. I have learned that God cares about every aspect of our lives because God is all about love. We, as God's children, know that our God is the reason for anything and everything. God is our father, our creator, our teacher, and someone who sees the good in all of us. Because of that, God is able to go beyond our mistakes and our sins and can see Christ in us.

Jesus Christ is the son of God. He came to teach us how to live and how to treat others. Jesus said we should love God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength. We are also supposed to love our neighbors as we love ourselves, and those are some of the very important things he taught us. Jesus came to earth to forgive us for our sin, and he did this by dying on the cross for us. He rose again and sits at the right hand of God in heaven. Jesus has taught me to be kind, forgive, and accept all others. In Jesus, we are reconciled to the Father and share life eternal in God. Through forgiveness, nothing can separate us from the love of God.

The Holy Spirit is constantly at work in my life through everything I do. Every decision, every hardship and every prayer, the Holy Spirit is right there next to me, guiding me through the life he already has planned out for me. The Holy Spirit is the part of the Father and the Son that lives inside of me, and it helps me to know that they are here with me. The Holy Spirit gives me the sense that when times are tough, someone is there for me. It's in the Spirit's power that I am able to forgive, reach out to others in need, and let others know about God.

Because of everything I learned, and my faith being stronger now, I am committed to spreading the word of God, and following the teachings of Jesus. I will continue to treat others with love and kindness. I will not judge. I will remember that God only gives us what he knows we can handle and is there when we don't think we can. I will remain strong and let the Holy Spirit inside me, continue to guide me through my life.

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.

DAYS FOR GIRLS will not be meeting in July. Stay tuned for announcements regarding August.

CARDS R US - JULY 6 & 13. Cards R Us Circle will be creating greeting cards from your used, donated cards on the first and second Wednesdays in July, the 6th and 13th, from 12:30pm-3:00pm in Winemiller Hall. All are welcome to join us in this fun mission. All proceeds from your donations for our cards are given to Pastor's Discretionary Fund. So please remember to shop our kiosks in the narthex and in the admin bldg. hallway. For further information, call Susan Nordstrom at 352-428-1918.

FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE - JULY 16. Friendship Circle will meet on the outside deck of Bayport Inn, 4835 Cortez Blvd., Weeki Wachee 34607 at 4:00pm on Saturday, July 16. We will share devotions, a meal, a beautiful view of the sawgrass flats, and joy in each other's company. Live entertainment will begin at 5:00pm. All are welcome to join us. Call Susan Nordstrom at 352-428-1918 for further information.

CRAFTY LADIES - FRIDAYS, 9:00AM - 11:00AM.

CRAFTY LADIES NEED PEOPLE TO SEW! Do you want to learn to sew (a straight line) to create the beautiful quilts we send to Lutheran World Relief? We are offering sewing lessons at 9:30AM on July 22 & 29; and August 5 & 12. Any questions, please call Jill Helgeson at 352-686-3367.

SARAH CIRCLE - is looking for help! - Crocheters and knitters, cash donations for yarn, or yarn itself. If you enjoy crocheting or knitting, please join Sarah Circle on the third Thursday of the month in the Youth Room at 10:00AM. **Our next meeting is July 21st.** Or, if you prefer, the prayer shawls can be made in your home. For information, call Peggy Sanders at 352-382-1781.

WOMEN OF NATIVITY - SAVE THE DATE! The annual WON summer bible study will be on Saturday, August 13 from 9am to 12pm, followed by lunch. The theme this year is "Crafted in Christ" and will be presented by Carlan Helgeson, Michelle Mehan-Conklin, and Phil Schroeder. If you have any questions, please call Jean Drach, 352-684-1632.

Welcome to all our new members! We are happy that you chose Nativity as your place of worship.

Rick Behan



Rick was born in Rhode Island, and moved to Florida 7 years ago. He was a construction worker, and operated heavy equipment. He enjoys the beach, swimming, and walking. He is looking forward to getting more involved at Nativity.

12008 Peaceful Ave.
Weeki Wachee, FL 34614
Ph: 352-942-3655

Mae Haines



Mae was born in Jamaica, NY. She lived in Long Island all her life before moving to Florida in 1996. For 25 years she held a position in Management and Treasurer of Fire District in Sound Bend Long Island, NY. She enjoys being involved in the WELCA.

18704 Bent Pine Dr.
Hudson, FL 34667
Ph: 727-863-4329

COMPASSIONATE DRIVERS NEEDED. Quite a few people have wondered if there were anyone willing to give them a ride to church on Sunday morning. The request comes from people living in Timber Pines and the Spring Hill area. If you are willing and able to pick up people on your way to church that would be most appreciated. Let's create a database of drivers and riders. Please, sign up in the narthex or call the church office (352-597-1456).

COMPASSIONATE CALLERS NEEDED. Quite a few people are feeling increasingly lonely and isolated due to the changed worship schedule, illness, or limited transportation. One way to keep our community together would be to contact by phone once or twice a month or as often as possible those who used to sit together in church. If anyone is willing to invest some time in this important ministry, please contact Pr. Giuseppe (352-597-1456) for names and telephone numbers to call.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE 2022 SYNOD ASSEMBLY - JUNE 3-5.

Germaine and Claude Major, and their son Mark were Nativity voting members. There were about four hundred people (rostered and lay) from throughout the Synod in attendance.

The Synod Assembly opened with an Eucharistic Celebration.

The focus of the Synod Assembly was on ministry more than business. Therefore, many workshops were planned and offered. The Synod's theme was taken from Romans 12: Patient in Affliction, Faithful in Hope, Joyful in Hope.

Guest speakers:

The Rev. Dr. Phil Hirsch gave the Churchwide Report. He is the Executive Director of the Christian Community and Leadership Unit. Rev. Hirsch reported that the ELCA has contributed over \$900K to Global Missions; over \$500K to World Hunger appeals; over \$356K to Disaster Response; \$9M+ for the Eastern European crisis; \$1.8M for Covid 19 related ministries. During the covid period, 92 new ministries were launched. According to the Presiding Bishop, the Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, people seeking help online brows for 1. Prayer; 2. Loneliness; 3. Anxiety; 4. Marriage Help.

The Rev. Dr. Darius Butena (PCUSA) was the ecumenical partner for the year. He observed that there are many similarities between the ELCA and the PCUSA especially in terms of demographics. We may be old and have little money but still have a calling from God. In his view, vibrant Christ-centered congregations 1. Build Relationships; 2. Have Spiritual Depth; 3. Are Missional, which he elaborated as having three components: A. Leadership Development (from “members’ to “disciples”); B. Active Reconciliation; C. Clarity of Identity.

Keynote Address:

Dr. Luis Torres-Hostos gave the keynote address throughout the Assembly. Dr. Torres is the founding Dean and Professor of the School of Social Work at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley in Edinburg Texas. His research focuses on health disparities and social determinants of health with a focus on Hispanic and African American communities, and on community engagement initiatives aimed at building community resilience. Dr. Torres has traveled and worked extensively in Latin America, and has established collaborations in Mexico, Central America, and Puerto Rico. He serves on the Board of Directors of the American Red Cross South Texas chapter and is a member of the Rotary Club of Mission. Originally from Puerto Rico, Dr. Torres holds a Doctorate in clinical psychology from Fordham University in New York City.

He developed his reflections on the Synod's theme.

The main insight I gained from his speech is that we need "cultural humility": loving my neighbor who looks/sounds different than me – this is both difficult and normal. Discrimination among people is a "natural" life skill and there is no shame in it. At the dawn of life, discrimination helped families and tribes survive potential life-threatening situations from foreign groups. Once a society is established, a rational behavior can be chosen over a reactive response to people who don't look like us. Being patient with ourselves and one another is difficult. We all have bias. We all discriminate. This does not make us bad or wrong. Seeing Jesus in the other is a choice we can make. Sharing the burden can help us all. We can start by recognizing our natural tendency to mistrust. Then, take a leap of faith and choose to recognize God in the "other" no matter how different from us.

There were ministry tables in the Connection Café and many pre-recorded videos highlighted ministries of the Synod churches. New Synod Council members were installed on Sunday.

~Pr. Giuseppe

I want to share with you how I have enjoyed attending the ELCA conference in Orlando, June 3-5, and listening to all the interesting speakers and attending some of the workshops.

I was very interested in what God has in store for the Lutheran Church. I see God working with the youth for they are the future of our church and the leaders of tomorrow doing God's work in His kingdom.

We have to pray for this young generation. They live in a time that is very trying for them. Jesus loved the little children, He still does (and the teenagers too!)

~Germaine Major

For the first day, which was Friday, were spent meeting people from other congregations, and voting on different issues concerning the ELCA.

On the second day, we had our first workshop. We learned and practiced on what coaching looks like, and different ways that coaching can benefit. We also voted on different issues concerning the ELCA.

One workshop I attended was on "Bias and Welcoming New People in our Church." We want to create a congregation of belonging and not of division, so that everyone feels welcome as a family.

Another workshop concerned "Vision to Action." I also want to mention that we were shown a video on a large screen, and that our Pastor Giuseppe had the best presentation for "Definition of Love."

~Claude Major

The ELCA Synod Assembly in Orlando was a fun learning experience. Learning the thoughts of the people involved and even talking to the bishop was fun and very informational.

A memorable quote I remember was "You'll like 70% of what you learned here." If there is something you don't like, a song, an instrument, it might not be for you, but that is part of someone else's 70%."

They also introduced the continuation of the physical and online school of lay ministry program called Diakonia. It offers many classes each taught by a coach ranging from history, to theology, to even just life advise. It can help with your beliefs and knowledge on the Bible and the church.

Something else that I've heard about reviving the church post-covid. Its not a fast process and it has slow results but in the end we can hopefully go back to how we were just a few years ago.

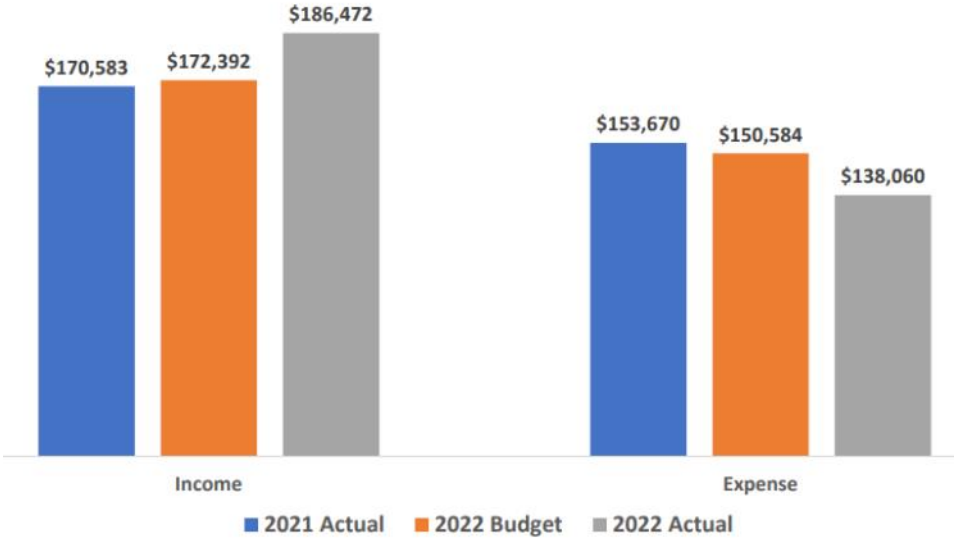
Church is something to enjoy and look forward to and as long as we make the right steps the future of nativity should be smooth sailing from here on out.

Overall the assembly was a fun and special experience that I hope to relive again someday.

By- Mark Major

**FROM NATIVITY'S FINANCIAL SECRETARY
MAY 2022**

2022 YTD Income and Expenses



REMINDERS

OFFICE HOURS - Monday through Friday - 9AM-12N

INTERNET SERVICE - If you would like to connect to our internet when on campus look for **Nativity 2**, the password is **guest1234**.

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 **August** newsletter, please submit it to the office or via email to nativitylutheran63@gmail.com by **July 15**.

WE WANT TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH YOU - We understand that not everybody is online and receives the church information through emails, Facebook, or our web-based calendar. If you know of anyone who hasn't been able to attend church for some time, you may be the only link between them and Nativity. We would appreciate it if you kept them included in the happenings at Nativity so that they may not miss out on activities or schedule changes. In addition, please let us know as well so that we can work to keep them in the loop about things at NLC. Should you or anyone you know have a change in your address, phone number and/or email address, please let the office know.

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.

July Birthdays

Bonnie Kuester	7/1
Marion Attaviano	7/3
Kathy Olson	7/7
Harold Reber	7/7
Carl Roa	7/7
Christopher Wright	7/7
Douglas Beals Jr.	7/9
Joan Rasper	7/10
Paul Chipko	7/12
Rhonda Nelson	7/14
Phan Squires	7/14
Christina Roa	7/15
Irmgard Timm	7/15
Carol Fleschner	7/16
Anna Hupp	7/16
Jessica Stephan	7/19
Jessica Miller	7/20
Elizabeth Capell	7/22
Bob Schneider	7/23
James Glessner	7/24



Tim Noe	7/24
Nina Vaznelis	7/24
Gilbert Herr	7/25
Todd Holly	7/25
Lynn Cawley	7/26
Barbara Strohl	7/26
Richard Posewitz	7/27
Mary Reber	7/30
Arthur Alt	7/31
Frani Barnes	7/31
Janet Jones	7/31

July Wedding Anniversaries

Judith and Frank Alessio	7/5
Janet & Todd Holly	7/6
Ruth Ann and Don Hoy	7/6
Jane and Scott Henkel	7/11
Michelle and Kim Mehan-Conklin	7/18
Nancy and Walter Johnson	7/19
Lynne and Chestley Merritt	7/29



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)