Bethlehem Lutheran Church



Bethlehem News

November





“Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever!” Psalm 107:1 (ESV)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we reflect on thankfulness, we are reminded that gratitude is more than a feeling or a response to the blessings we receive. For Christians, thankfulness flows from faith in our gracious God, who has given us every good gift and, above all, the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ.

In our daily lives, it is easy to focus on what is missing, what has gone wrong, or what we wish were different. We may become overwhelmed by the challenges of the world, concerns about our families, health struggles, financial pressures, or uncertainty about the future. Yet, even in difficult seasons, God's Word reminds us that we have every reason to give thanks.

The Apostle Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18:

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

Notice that Paul encourages us to give thanks in all circumstances. This does not mean that we must be happy about every hardship or pretend that suffering does not exist. Rather, we can give thanks because our hope rests not in our circumstances, but in the unchanging promises of God.

Thankfulness Begins at the Cross

From a Lutheran perspective, our greatest reason for thankfulness is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We recognize that we are sinners who cannot earn God's favor through our own good works. Yet, in His great mercy, God sent His Son to bear our sins on the cross and rise again for our justification.

Through faith in Christ, we receive forgiveness, life, and salvation as a free gift of God's grace. We do not give thanks in order to earn God's love; we give thanks because His love has already been poured out upon us through Jesus.

Every Sunday, as we gather for worship, we hear this wonderful message of forgiveness. Through the preaching of God's Word and the administration of the Sacraments, the Holy Spirit strengthens our faith and assures us of God's promises. In Holy Baptism, we are united with Christ in His death and resurrection. In the Lord's Supper, we receive Christ's true body and blood for the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation.

What a reason to be thankful! Even when we feel weak, discouraged, or unworthy, God's promises remain sure. Our confidence rests in what Christ has done for us, not in how strong our faith may feel on any given day.

Counting Our Blessings

God blesses us in countless ways, both great and small. We thank Him for our families and friends, for daily bread, for our homes, for our congregation, and for the people who encourage and care for us. We give thanks for the freedom to gather for worship, to hear His Word, and to share the Good News of salvation with others.

We also give thanks for the fellowship we share as members of Christ's Church. Each person has gifts and abilities that can be used to serve others. Whether teaching children, singing in the choir, visiting the homebound, preparing meals, praying for those in need, or offering a kind word to someone who is hurting, our acts of service become expressions of gratitude for God's grace.

These good works do not earn salvation. Rather, they are the fruit of faith—a joyful response to the love we have first received from Christ.

(Con’t Page 3)

News and Updates



The Voters Assembly at their meeting on Oct. 25 and elected the officers and board members (see below) and approved the 2027 church budget.



We continue to enjoy our Monday Morning Exercises and Activities in the fellowship hall.We have been changing the exercises and activities frequently to engage all who are interested in attending. If you have not yet joined us and are interested please feel free to attend and bring ideas of what you would like to do as a group.

Youth Group Sleep Overs have also resumed with a few girls attending each month. We will continue this event on November 20th. Happy Veterans Day to our members who have served our country. And Happy Thanksgiving to all of you.

Mickie Naumann

2027 Church Officers and Board Members

Council Officers

President - Richard Gerlach

Vice President - Doug Grage

Secretary - Holly Bell

Treasurer – Yvonne Murray

Member at Large – Kerry Ferguson

Board Positions

Board of Education - Mickie Naumann, Lori Jensen

Board of Elders - Doug Johnson, Chris Jackow, Greg Murray, Tim Tobeck

Board of Evangelism – Debbie Jackow

Board of Stewardship – Tim and Mary Tobeck, Rollin and Pat Duckwitz



Our first meeting of the season will be November 2nd at 1 p.m. We will be discussing our agenda for the holiday season, the Spring Rally which we will be hosting here at Bethlehem, going over the February LWML month, plus other items that need our attention. We would really love to have all the ladies of Bethlehem help us and would like everyone's input. A good way to thank God for his goodness to all of us. Sandy





We are once again collecting nonperishable food items for the families at the Buckingham Exceptional School. This year we will be providing food for 72 families. That means we will need a lot of food. We are also providing either a ham or a turkey for each family. We know food prices are higher this year, but please think about our church project when you are grocery shopping. If you see a bogo or a sale item you might want to buy it to provide for families who can't afford much food. Every donation of food will be much appreciated. We will also take monetary donations to help with the cost of the hams and turkeys. The proceeds from our October and November dinners will go to help pay for the hams and turkeys, but it will not pay for all of them. We will be packing the grocery bags and delivering them in early December. That means we just have a month to collect as much food as possible. We will gladly accept cases of food as well as individual cans or boxes. Please help to make this project as successful as possible. ***Paul Rugenstein***



God's Mission is Your Mission.

When we talk about God's mission, it's clear that it is to spread the good news of Jesus as Savior for all who believe. He gave His only Son for us.

His mission s big…worldwide….and, it's local, right here in our neighborhood. You're a key part of that mission. You show it in your regular worship, your service and your financial support of the church's work. As we move toward the end of 2026, consider how you will carry out Your Mission moving forward. Plan your 2027 giving. Plan to volunteer. We have plenty of sign-up sheets in the fellowship hall. Plan to return some of what God has given to you. He can do it all and you can help.

Expect great thing from GOD. Attempt great things for God!

"I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me"…Philippians 4:13

Your brother, in Christ, Tim Tobeck

November2026						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 **10:30 Worship** **11:30 Bible Study** **& Sunday School**	2 **10:00 Gathering** **1:00 LWM**	3	4 **10:30 Bible Study** **3:00 Service for Pam Rugenstein**	5	6	7
8 10:30Worship 11:30BibleStudy; & SundaySchool	9 **10:00 Gathering**	10	11 **10:30 Bible Study** VETERANS DAY	12 ChurchDinner 4-7	13	14
15 10:30Worship 11:30BibleStudy; & SundaySchool	16 10:00 Gathering	17	**18** **10:30 Bible Study**	19	20	21
22 10:30Worship 11:30BibleStudy; & SundaySchool	23 **10:00 Gathering**	24	25 **10:30 Bible Study**	26	27	28
29 10:30Worship 11:30BibleStudy; & SundaySchool	30 **10:0 Gathering**	1	2 **10:30 Bible Study**	3	4	5

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS	
3	Doug Grage
7	Jake Stecklein
15	Dawn Steckelberg
25	Hope Kulbacki
27	Sandy Grage
28	Robert Vanderpool

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES	
12	Wende & Steve Williams

May God Bless Each *One of You As*
***We Celebrate Your* Special Day!**

Pastor's Message Continued

A Thankful Heart in Every Season

Thankfulness does not always come easily. Some among us may be grieving the loss of a loved one, facing illness, experiencing loneliness, or carrying burdens that others cannot see. During these times, we can remember that God has not abandoned us. His Word assures us that nothing can separate us from His love in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:38–39).

We may not understand every circumstance, but we can trust the One who holds us in His hands. We can bring our worries and sorrows to Him in prayer, knowing that He hears us. We can lean on the promises of Scripture and find encouragement in the fellowship of fellow believers.

A thankful heart does not deny sorrow. Instead, it clings to Christ through sorrow, trusting that His death and resurrection have secured our eternal hope.

Living a Life of Gratitude

As we move through the coming days, let us look for opportunities to express our thankfulness:

- **Begin each day with prayer.** Thank God for His mercy and ask Him to guide your words and actions.
- **Spend time in God's Word.** Let Scripture remind you of His faithfulness and the promises that are yours in Christ.
- **Encourage someone.** Offer a sincere word of appreciation, write a note, or reach out to someone who may feel forgotten.
- **Serve your neighbor.** Use the gifts God has given you to care for others in your home, congregation, and community.
- **Gather for worship.** Receive God's gifts with joy and join your fellow Christians in praising Him for His grace. (Concluded on Page 4)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Phone: 239-694-3878
Website: www.bethlehemlutheranfortmyers.org
Email: bethlehemlc@gmail.com

Prayer Chain Needs

Do you know that Bethlehem has a prayer chain that prays for the sick, dying and hurting needs of our church family?
Call or email Linda at **(239) 693-5026** or **jlkirsch3@comcast.net**
Your needs will be taken to the Lord!



PAM RUGENSTEIN
OCTOBER 16, 2026

KAY REMMERS
OCTOBER 22, 22026



Pastor Glander was honored on Pastor Appreciation Day with a plant and a gift card for his dedication and service to Bethlehem.





Members enjoying the Bethlehem Monday Morning Gathering

Pastor's Message Concluded
Dear friends in Christ, we have been richly blessed—not because life is always easy, but because our Savior is faithful. In Christ, our sins are forgiven, our future is secure, and our lives are held in the hands of our loving heavenly Father.
May the Holy Spirit fill our hearts with gratitude, strengthen our faith in the promises of God, and lead us to share Christ's love with those around us.
"Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift!" — 2 Corinthians 9:15
Blessings
Pastor Karl P Glander