



Newsletter

September 2023

Council Finds Inspiration

The Church Council requested a meeting with Rev. Rick Carter, Assistant to the Bishop. The meeting was to discuss current financial challenges and reimagine evangelistic approaches to the Bluffton community.

Pastor Carter shared three initiatives from his experience as a Mission Developer.

A Robust Faith Formation: Any positive change begins with the current congregation before any impact will be felt in the greater Bluffton community. Faith Formation that deepens each person's relationship with Jesus will impact the greater community. It begins with this invitation.

Who leads? Robust Faith Formation begins with the Pastor and Council. The Pastor guides and facilitates the study using our Lutheran resources. The purpose, to help our community to center in Christ, developing a Lutheran identity and a language of faith that is easy to share with one another and others in our daily walk.

The Council's role is to commit to the initiative by attending and encouraging others to join in the study. Pastor Carter provided an example used as Mission Developer to illustrate what Robust Faith Formation can look like and the benefits when the Council leadership joins up with the Pastor to encourage and equip the community.

"Every congregation can be a vital congregation. In 2018 the Conference of Bishops defined congregational Vitality as, "Worshiping Communities of Jesus that invite individuals into a deeper relationship with Jesus, each other and

the world. This definition shares with us that every congregation, no matter the size of membership, worship attendance or budget, can be a vital congregation."

2. Faithful Worship: Worship that reflects our Lutheran identity faithfully. Liturgy, Sacraments and preaching that is invitational to experiencing the grace, love, and forgiveness of Christ.

Each guest should be welcomed and invited to opportunities to deepen/grow their faith, not simply to come back to worship. "Invite guests to your faith formation studies and activities." Additionally, Pastor Carter pointed to the need for participation in worship that simply goes beyond attendance. "Encourage individuals to participate in worship, e.g., reader, worship assistance, acolyte, usher, greeter, altar guild, etc. There are always opportunities to assist in worship." (continued on page 12)

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
NOVEMBER 12TH
AT 9:30 AM



God's Work—Our Hands

Bob Adams, George and Karen Roland, Susan Steele, Bunny Norell, and Karen Meyers worked at Bluffton Self Help on September 7th. Bob Adams did some work out and around the outside of the building. The rest of the Lord of Life team removed food from shelves, washed the shelves, and restocked them. That is not a job that regularly gets done. They used their \$250 from Thrivent Action Teams money to purchase labels and stickers they use for marking items.



The logo features the words "Save These" in a cursive, orange font, with "Save" positioned above "These". Below this, the word "DATES" is written in a large, bold, dark blue serif font. To the left of the "D" in "DATES", there is a graphic of a network or molecular structure with three orange nodes and blue connecting lines.

2023

Bring a friend or two or more!

September 29 **Game Night – 6:00PM**

Game Night (fun games that anyone can play. No skill necessary) Bring a friend, or two, or three, or more. There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex. Hors d'oeuvres will be provided. Please indicate if you would like to bring snacks to share. Please bring the beverage of your choice and perhaps extra to share.

October 29 **Oktoberfest** after 10:00am worship. bring a dessert or potato salad

December 3 **Christmas Cantata** 10:00am

December 4 **Blue Christmas**

December 24 **Christmas Eve Service** at 10:00am, 5:00pm, and 7:00pm

December 31 **New Year's Eve** – one service at 10:00am

December 31 **German New Year's Eve Party** Gather at 5:00pm
Ring in the New Year with Germany at 6:00pm
Bring hors d'oeuvres.

2024

Bring a friend or two or more!

February 11 **Burning of the Palms** in preparation for Ash Wednesday
Valentine Brunch – Wear Red or Pink

February 14 **Ash Wednesday Service** 11:00am and 5:00pm

Lent **Soup Supper** @ 5:30
Worship @ 6:00pm February 21, 28, March 6, 13, 20

March 24 **Palm/Passion Sunday**

March 28 **Maundy Thursday** 6:00pm

March 29 **Good Friday** 6:00pm

March 17 **St. Patrick's Day Brunch** – wear green

March 31 **Easter Breakfast** – wear Easter Bonnets

May 19 **Pentecost Sunday** – wear red


June 2 **Summer Schedule**

Communion Given to NHC Residents

Every third Thursday of the month, Mitzi Dube, Linc Tumej, Mary Lee Tumej, and Sue Ellen Johnson go to NHC to give communion to the residents. The service consists of hymns played by Sue Ellen; the reading of scriptures and devotions; the singing of hymns; and Communion celebrated. It was joyful to see the residents enjoying the service.



Backpack BUDDIES



We just wanted to thank our fabulous volunteers who helped us pack on Tuesday afternoon. They Mitzi, Donna and Jim, Dee, Sharon, George, Karen and Don, Karen and Dale, Lorraine, Susie, Jack, Gail, Cindy, Butch, Carole, Pastor Jennings, Joe, Coleen, and Ann.

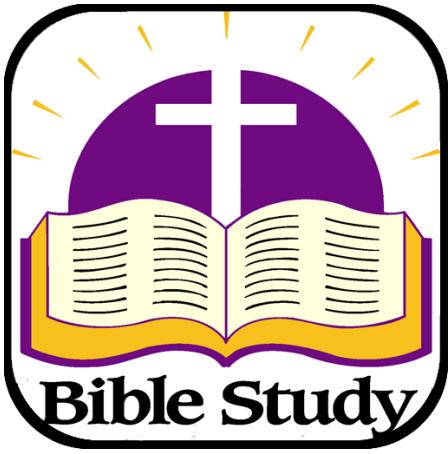
We packed 180 bags for children in need in 16 minutes breaking the previous record. Great Job Everyone!

We couldn't have done it without you... and Thank you for putting a SMILE on a child's face today.

Hope to see you again next time , so mark your calendar for Tuesday November 7th at 2:00.

Peace and Love and Gratitude,
Elizabeth and Robert Fyfe





Tuesday Bible Study 11:00 am in the café

Wednesday Bible Study 10:30 am in the café

Thursday Lutheran Men in Mission @ 8:00 am

*Currently meeting by Zoom.

*Breakfast in person every Third Thursday at 8:00 am

Men in Mission Breakfast

Every third Thursday of the month, the Men in Mission Bible Study group meets for breakfast. Join them!





A good time was had by all at the Olive Garden luncheon on September 7th. Charlotte Mayer organized the lunch and introduced a creative friendship card activity.



Ministry Highlights

Communication

PowerPoint: Using photos from the past two and a half years of newsletters, a Welcome slide show for visiting guests was created.

Emails: Mass emails have been a big frustration for the office and the congregation. Not everyone is getting an email from the church, even though their email address is listed in Google Groups. Wayne Butterworth suggested using a mass email program that charges to belong. Wayne suggested a couple of programs to look at. Pastor Angela looked into programs for mass email program that would work for Lord of Life.

Time and Talent Sheets: The Time and Talent sheet rough draft was emailed to Pastor Angela for her final proofread and any alterations she would like to make. The Time and Talent sheets will be handed out at a church service in the month of October.

Stewardship

Fall Campaign: Time and Talent sheets coming out in October and Estimate of Giving cards will be done at the same time for 2024.

Volunteers Needed: The Stewardship Committee is sorely lacking members at this time.

Care and Call 8/21–9/14

Greeting Cards sent: 19

Phone calls: 3

Handed out: 3 Grief Booklets

Communion: celebrated at NHC on September 21st

Come and See

Ladies lunch was initiated

Nametags were placed in the attendance folders

LOL Members have been encouraged to pass out LOL business/information cards

We are doing better job announcing gift bags for visitors at the beginning of services

We meet next month to help make sure that we do not drop the ball on other activities mentioned such as more potlucks, updating of the church directory, etc.

We also need to keep reminding everyone periodically that "Come and See" is ultimately work that must be done by the entire congregation.



Property

Sanctuary AC repairs was contracted. Replacement was Tuesday, September 19th. Pastor Ramos will bring in a crew to move boxes/items and create clear paths for the installation crews to work as the area has been used for storage and needs to be organized.

Johnson Controls continues to progress through the list of contracted Fire Protection System testing and remediation activities.

BJWSA sent notices that we are late providing proof of satisfactory inspection of the sprinkler system back-flow valves. There seems to have been some disconnect in the calendar scheduling between BJWSA's need for proof and Johnson Controls calendar of when they need to do it. The inspection is now scheduled for Tuesday, September 19 and will happen every April moving forward.

Tidelands was called to repair a thermostat in Luther Hall. The thermostat apparently blew a fuse somewhere internal to the AC unit.

Sprinkler System needs replacing on Zone 3 between the church and Buckwalter. The ones that are working may need servicing. Unfortunately, most of the sprinkler zones have been permanently disabled by tree roots and trunks and repair of those is prohibitively expensive. The good news is that God has done a nice job of keeping up with the watering this year.

Insurance companies—Several Council members have negotiated with the insurance companies for property and liability insurance. Our current property insurance company has ceased to include wind and hail insurance coverage. Our insurance agent arranged a new company for the wind and hail insurance, but they have been reluctant to accept our design specs and builder's statements that the sanctuary is a reinforced concrete wall structure. Marshall found an area around the removable panel in the attic for access to AC equipment where the wall is exposed. Pictures were provided proving that it is concrete >10" thick from the ground to the roof line. Our agent is confident that this will resolve the issue so we can proceed with the contract with the new wind and hail insurer.

Emergency lights—Bones identified one of the e-lights was malfunctioning in the Café. Marshall purchased and installed a new e-light and did a little paint trim around it since it was a bit smaller.

Gutters—The eave gutters need to be cleaned especially around the patio area; tree saplings are growing in the gutters. There are two pieces of flashing lying on the ground near the patio. Not sure where they came from, but wherever that was, they should be replaced. Pastor Ramos will head up cleaning out the gutters and have his roofing guy determine where the loose flashing came from.

Lord of Life Celebrates Sue Ellen Johnson's Retirement

After accompanying church singers and choirs for 45 years, Sue Ellen moved herself from the piano bench to the congregational chair.



PlayCare has a Luau!



3. **Stewardship:** Pastor Carter complimented Lord of Life's financials as complete and easy to read. However, he also pointed out that it is not sharing the story of Lord of Life's ministry. "I learned from Pastor Angela the value of creating and using a 'Narrative Mission Plan' in our goal of sharing the mission story of our congregation. You have an expert in Pastor Angela, I strongly recommend using this method." Some of you may recall, in 2018 we used a Narrative Mission Plan. A Narrative Mission plan is used in addition to our financial statements. I agree with Pastor Carter; by implementing and sharing the story of our ministry with one another and guests, we proclaim the Gospel and the impact it is making in our Bluffton community. How you may ask? It shares stories of faith that reflect the impact of the money used for ministry.

Pastor Carter looked to us as leaders, strongly suggesting that we should also look at our own giving practices. "I encourage the Council to consider moving toward a tithe in their giving. It is hard to ask others to give if you as the leaders are not reflecting the ask."

When he shared this, I thought of Jacob in the Old Testament. Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God, and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that you give me I will surely give one tenth to you." Genesis 28: 20-22

I do acknowledge that we should examine our giving practices and make every effort to move toward bringing our giving to a level that reflects our faith, like that of Jacob. By so doing, we can share, invite, and encourage others to do the same.

Developing a culture of generosity begins with the leadership of the Church, thus, it is led by the Council with the Pastor's guidance.

I end by sharing with you that I believe we can do this -- do this together. I invite you to join us in becoming a Vital Congregation, inviting individuals into a deeper relationship with Jesus, each other, and the world. Amen. Pastor Angela

