



# Happenings at NLC

May 2020

Monthly Newsletter

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

Worship Services [nlcww.org](http://nlcww.org)

Reverend Giuseppe Mattei

**Rachel's Day - Sunday, May 3**

**Sunday, May 10**

Happy  
*Mother's*  
Day

## Upcoming Events

All church activities and the food pantry are canceled until further notice. Please watch for weekly announcements sent by the church office.

Please visit our website at [www.nlcww.org](http://www.nlcww.org) to view the NLC calendar, submit requests for dates/events, and download sermons, among other things.



6363 Commercial Way, Weeki  
Wachee, FL 34613 • 352-597-1456 •  
[www.nlcww.org](http://www.nlcww.org)

## **"THANK YOU" FOR BEING THE CHURCH TOGETHER**

Since March 15, our last in-person worship service, we have been on lockdown. This period of physical distancing and isolation has been challenging and disorienting, elevating the level of anxiety and uncertainty. On the other hand, we have felt closer to one another, confirming that the church is not the walls we gather in. We genuinely care for one another and miss seeing each other.

Contact with parishioners has been mostly by phone or by person, observing the CDC recommendations. Our Home and Hospital Visitors have kept in contact with members beyond the usual list of sick and shut-ins. Currently I have personally made over 134 phone calls to our parishioners, including members, friends, prospective members, and all people with no electronic connection. I have counseled and prayed with members who were in distress, ill, and mourning the loss of loved ones.

People have been extremely appreciative of our digital recording of the worship services. Through those we have reached people beyond our usual reach. A big "Thank You" goes to all the volunteers that have made the services possible and continue to do so.

Easter blessings,

Pr. Giuseppe Mattei

# **SPIRITUAL LIFE**

**The following meetings/gatherings are canceled for the month of May:**

- Soul Seekers, Altar Guild, Midday Prayer, Choir, Handbell Choir, Bulletin Folders, Weekend Blessings, Stewardship Committee

## **PRAYER TIME WITH PASTOR MATTEI (ZOOM MEETING PLUS DIAL-IN)**

Join Pastor Mattei for Prayer Time every Thursday in May at 10:30AM.

Join the Zoom Meeting at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82274908805>

Meeting ID: 822 7490 8805

If you want, you may call in every Thursday at 10:30 AM by dialing 1-929-205-6099, and when prompted for the meeting ID, enter in 82274908805#. During that time we sing, read a Bible passage and a Psalm, and then offer our prayers to God.



## **Nurturing Your Spirit During This Time**

This is an unprecedented time. Our world is upside down. So much of what we did is now changed - church, grocery shopping, appointments. We will get through it.

So how is your spirit through all of this? We have provided worship online, prayers on facebook, and reaching out through phone calls and emails.

In the Church library we a resource for your spirit that you can use anywhere. It is a Spirituality Tool Box. It is a box of resources that allows for the exploration, learning and development of one's resources for your spiritual journey. Through the use of these tools you can learn new and different ways to explore your spiritual journey.

We are all spiritual beings. We don't always recognize or know what nurtures our spirits. Perhaps you attend worship and your spirit is nurtured there. Perhaps you don't or are unable to attend worship. These tools will give you ways to see God and the Holy with tools outside of worship. These do not replace worship. They are in addition to worship.

There is no one size fits all on how we practice our faith. There is no "right" way. However, there are tools that can help bring us closer to God in our daily walk. Living a spirit-filled life is a choice. It is about recognizing the Holy in our everyday experiences. Since we all learn and process things differently, we can connect to God in different ways.

There are tools that apply to our creative side, our head side and our heart. This box is a starting point. The point is to try something new, exploring new ways to connect with God.

This toolbox has things to try. My hope is that they will spark your imagination to see how you can connect to God, to give yourself permission to take time to be with God in a way that nurtures your soul and gives you strength to get through whatever it is that you are facing.

Since you are not able to come to church to get the box, what follows is a description of what is in the box. Some of these items you can find around your home. Others you can improvise with.

May this give you a new way to connect with God and your spirit during this time. IF you have any questions or would like to talk about this, please call Michelle Mehan, ELCA Rostered Deacon at 727-267-1047 or email her at shelltbfb@hotmail.com.

## Coloring— Coloring Book and Crayons



As a spiritual practice, coloring can help you focus and meditate on things beyond the coloring page. It also has emotional and health benefits, especially when used as a tool to help de-stress and calm anxiety. It can also be a way to give you a tangible tactile experience in a world full of screens. Coloring provides that space we need to stop, breathe, and reset ourselves towards healthy choices.

## Play –Doh— Creativity and Spirit



As a spiritual practice, arts and crafts is a way to use your imagination, to be creative. Think about the creativity of God. Look at nature, look at art. Let go of judgement and accept that whatever you create is good because it came from the heart. It is a way to be in the present moment. Have fun.

## Prayer Square



A prayer square is a square that can be held onto for added support and comfort. A prayer square can be knitted, crocheted or made from fabric. A prayer square can provide support for school, work, or medical challenges. One can hold onto it and know that they have been

prayed for and not feel alone in their journey.

## Candle



People light candles in their homes. Candles are lit for worship services. Candles are lit for dinners. Candles are lit to set the mood for events. Think about how a candle can be used

## Journaling



Often when the spiritual discipline of journaling is brought up, the first words one hears uttered are, "I can't do that," or "What if I do it wrong.?" Let me give you this permission right now. There is no right or wrong way to keep a journal. Some people write long flowing sentences. Some people write bullet points. Others poems and others doodle. (Yes, you have permission to doodle.) We are different; we are all different. There is

no one right way to go about this activity. Take the first step. Get a journal. The journal can have blank pages, pages with lines or even pages with grids on it. Take your time and find one that appeals to you. Some people like a composition book. Others like a small book that can be carried with them. Still others have journals for different topics. Try different methods, different ways, and explore. Start. Starting is the hardest. Keep at it for a period of time and soon it will become a routine a part of your sacred space. And guess what? If something happens and you skip a day or some time, you can go back. You pick up where you left off and you keep going. No one is perfect. We get sidetracked and let things go. You can go back and begin again. A good process in journaling is to go back after a certain period of time and reread what you wrote. Reflect on those words and see how you have changed since then. What or who influenced you? How did you get back up? How are you different? Journaling is a gift not a chore. Yes it can seem like a chore at times yet the benefits to the discipline will help you in many ways.



## Living Water



Water is so integral in our lives. It makes up our physical bodies. It is necessary for our daily tasks. It is often a part of our worship. It can be a place of renewal, healing and solace when we want to get away from it all. And it is a part of our social community when we gather at a beach, lake, river, or pool. Take time to reflect on water and what "living water" means to you. If you have been connected to a community, you have likely experienced water in worship, heard about it in scripture and sung a hymn or two about it. Then there are the times when you have been to a beach, lake, river, or pool and shared times with friends. There are even times when we are alone at one of these bodies of water and we

reflect on the gift of water. How essential it is to our beings. How the gift of this element can help renew our spirit. May you take time this day to recall those times and what that meant to you. Take time to reflect on the gift of water in your life and how it can be a reminder of healing and hope.

## Essential Oils



We experience life through our senses. We experience worship through our senses. Take time to smell the essential oil. What does it remind you of? How does it make you feel? Can you think of times in scripture or stories where you heard about oils? What did you think? Take time to be present with the oil. Be in the moment and not rush.



## Gratitude Jar



A Gratitude Jar, a thanks jar, a conversation jar, whatever you call it, is a tool that can be used to prompt your thoughts. Sometimes we need a jump start. The thoughts and questions here are just suggestions. Use them as prompts to begin thinking about things that can challenge, encourage and provide hope in our lives.

## Stone



A stone or other object can be used to hold onto as we pray. Sometimes we need something to hold onto to help us focus our thoughts. Hold the stone. Feel its texture and temperature. See how it changes as you hold it. Consider painting it with an image or word that brings you comfort or hope.

## Labyrinth

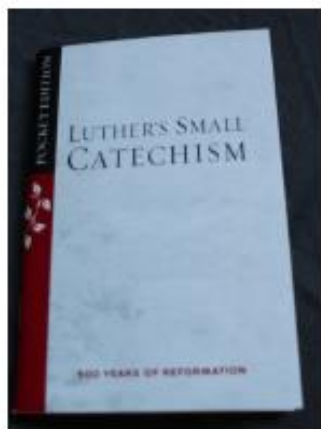


"Prayer labyrinths are an ancient form of prayer that invite our bodies to participate in the process as we follow a path that mirrors the winding and circuitous journey of faith, existing mostly in gardens and churches.

A finger labyrinth...invites you into a portable but equally meaningful version of the experience. As your finger moves from the outside entry point and traces along the path, notice

any interior movements that indicate your response to God." - Jenn Giles Kemper, in the Sacred Ordinary Days planner

## Luther's Small Catechism



Martin Luther wrote the Small Catechism to provide basic instruction of faith to be taught in the home. This was written in 1529. This booklet provides the basic tools of the Lutheran Church. This booklet can be used alone or with family for learning and discussion and provide growth in your faith.

# OUTREACH

## MISSION OF THE MONTH - ELCA WORLD HUNGER

It is sad that so many people in this world go hungry - even in the good old United States. Much of it is due to weather conditions such as hurricanes, tornados, and floods - plus poverty, insurrection, dictatorships and the economy. Now we are experiencing a still greater threat due to the pandemic known as coronavirus (COVID-19). This horrible disease has caused much shortage due to the closing of so many businesses and the unavailability of personnel due to illness or government restrictions, not to mention hoarding done by so many people.

We can help. You can help. We need your donations. Your box of offering envelopes includes envelopes for ELCA WORLD HUNGER. YOU can also use the green offering envelopes or just a plain white envelope, marked for ELCA WORLD HUNGER. Just write a check, and mail it to Nativity Lutheran Church, 6363 Commercial Way, Weeki Wachee, FL 34613.

Thank you for your help.

Yours in Christ,

Jim Christensen

**THE FOOD PANTRY IS CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.** Food donations will no longer be accepted. Watch for future announcements as to when donations will be accepted again.



**OFFICE OF THE BISHOP**

The Reverend  
Pedro Manuel Suarez  
Bishop

Florida-Bahamas Synod  
ELCA

3838 W. Cypress Street  
Tampa, FL 33607-4897

Phone: 813/876-7660

Website:  
[www.fbsynod.com](http://www.fbsynod.com)

March 16, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

Thank you so much for your generosity and support to our shared mission in the Florida-Bahamas Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Thank you so much for your commitment through your mission support to allow us to be a church together for the sake of the world. Together we are church that is committed to the Good News of the Bible for the sake of igniting people's faith and passion for Christ.

We are a church that is committed to the work of justice and peace in the world. Through your mission support we are being church locally and globally as we accompany our companion churches in Cuba, Haiti, Guyana, Suriname, and the seminary in Jamaica. It is such a great joy to witness their ministry and to learn from their context about how to spread the message of the Good News and make disciples.

Thank you for your commitment to our shared partnership in God's vision in the Florida-Bahamas Synod. We are excited for the vitality process as we explore new ways to connect to God, connect to each other, and connect to our neighborhoods for the sake of being vibrant communities of faith that bless people with hope and peace.

Your financial commitment makes mission happen. Together we are empowering congregations to be redevelopment sites as they brand their ministry in a new model to connect with their changing communities. Together we are starting new churches and mission centers where people are experiencing God's love. Together we can do more and be more.

Again, we say thank you and ask you to continue to live and sacrifice as you do for the Glory of God and the goodness of Christ's Church.

God bless us all! You are outstanding! We are grateful! God is pleased!

Your Directors for Evangelical Mission,

Rev. Khader El Yateem  
Florida-Bahamas Synod, ELCA

Rev. Robert S. Carlson  
Florida-Bahamas Synod, ELCA



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

# MISSION SUPPORT

2019

[ Thank You ]

To the members of  
Nativity Lutheran Church, Weeki Wachee  
(07764)

from the

Florida-Bahamas Synod

of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.  
In grateful appreciation for giving.

**\$12,000.00**

for Mission Support beyond the congregation for synod and  
churchwide ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

*+ Pedro M. Suarez*

Synod Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

*Elizabeth C. Eaton*

Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION (Discipleship)

The following meetings/gatherings are canceled for the month of May:

- Youth Group Activities and Sunday School
- Confirmation Classes will be held on Fridays May 1 to June 5, 3:00PM via Zoom. See below and also the church calendar for details.

Join the Zoom Meeting at:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/72221270169>

Meeting ID: 722 2127 0169

## 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.

### **Rachel's Day – May 3, 2020**

Prior to the online service, Susan Nordstrom will be talking about Rachel's Day, which is observed by Women of the ELCA annually on the first Sunday in May. The day takes its name from *Jeremiah 31:15–17*, in which the matriarch Rachel grieves for her children. It is a time set aside to mourn the loss of our children and to renounce the forces of violence and fear that plague our nation.



**The following meetings/gatherings are canceled for the month of May:**

- Painting Class, Friendship Circle, Cards R Us, Mary Joy Circle, Days for Girls, Sarah Circle, Crafty Ladies, Fellowship Committee, Men's Breakfast

## **FROM NATIVITY'S FINANCIAL SECRETARY**

### **BLESSINGS TO YOU ALL DURING THIS DIFFICULT TIME OF COVID-19**

**Giving** was on-target for the month of March! This is largely due to the Lenten season and having 5 Sundays with only two Sunday services canceled. Our members have continued un-interrupted giving via mail, on-line, or drop-off in the new lockbox outside the gate.

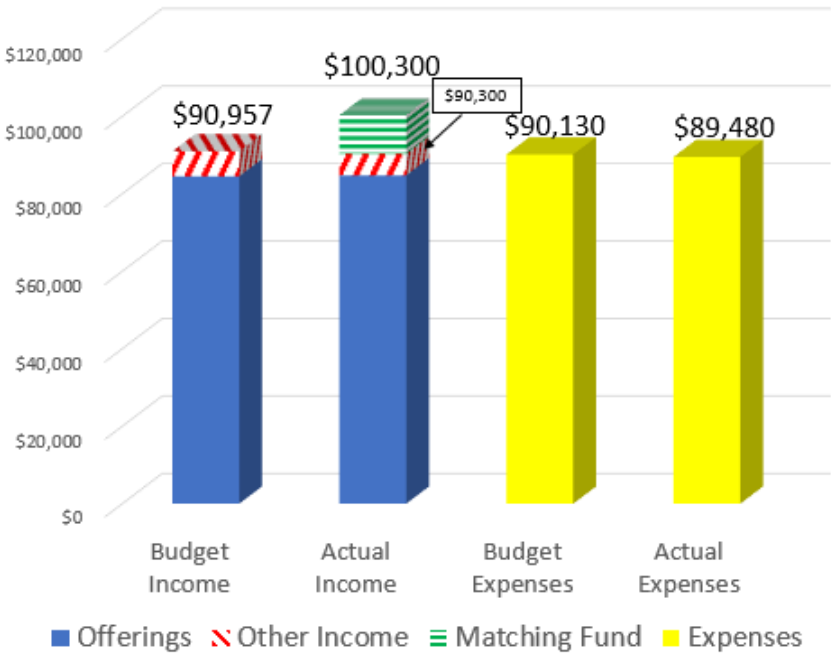
**Thank you for those who are continuing and keeping up with their pledges during this time.**

**Attendance Statistics:** Our attendance figures were trending down slightly in the first three weeks of regular services. The last two weeks of the month were '0' as worship services were suspended due to COVID-19. Future attendance figures may be measured differently based on NLC's weekly service being on-line now.

**Expenses:** Expenses were held down because of the lack of services during the last two weeks of the month. Although our expenses continue, they are less due to the COVID-19 closure.

**Questions? Please email or call Jane Henkel [jetgal55@gmail.com](mailto:jetgal55@gmail.com) or (651) 402-1473.**

## 2020 Year-To-Date Income and Expenses (Through March)



### **TRINKETS & TREASURES (FORMERLY JUNKTIQUE)**

We are still looking to have this fundraising event on Saturday, October 17 (set-up will be Friday, Oct. 16). We will be working on arranging for storage space, as well as what types of donations we will accept, in the coming weeks. With all of us staying home now, we probably are looking for things to do. This may be the perfect time to "clean house" and put aside items that you are looking to donate. We know we will be accepting dishes, glassware, small appliances, jewelry (other items to be determined once we can get back together to discuss). In the meantime, should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Evelyn Galli at 516-909-3119, or Pat Runyan at 609-335-6427.

## REMINDERS

**Temporary Office Hours: Monday - Friday: 9am - noon**

**ZOOM ACCOUNT.** Nativity now has a Zoom account which can be used by any groups wanting to meet virtually. Even if someone in your group does not have a computer, they can still participate by dialing in (phone numbers are provided in the meeting details). If you wish to try a Zoom meeting, please contact the office (352-597-1456), and Linda will be more than happy to assist in setting it up.

**LOCK BOX INSTALLED.** For your convenience, we have installed a lock box outside Al Lien Hall door (next to the playground). This will make it more convenient if you wish to drop off your donation, or any mail for the church, in the secured lock box, which is checked daily.

**DOOR BELL.** Also for your convenience, so you don't have to go through the courtyard gates, a door bell has been installed on the Al Lien Hall door.

**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 **June** newsletter, please submit it to the office by **May 15**.

**NLC CALENDAR:** You can view it on the website, [www.nlcww.org](http://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](mailto: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)

## May Birthdays

Murial Bishop	5/1
June Heinecke	5/2
Roselind Rosten	5/4
Marie Hamilton	5/6
Gary Kopitzke	5/7
Kim Mehan-Conklin	5/7
Cherylann Schneider	5/7
Eleanor Hockings	5/8
Lonora Smith	5/9
Irma Haig	5/11
Joan Marceau	5/12
Laura Marasco	5/13
Linda Wagner	5/13
Joyce Colombo	5/14
Sandie Bates	5/15
Russ Colombo	5/16
Alma Luoma	5/17
Judith Nelson	5/18
Ellee Simons	5/18
Ian Rogers	5/19
Sara Zybelle	5/19
Lynda Bohn	5/21
Susan Nordstrom	5/21
John Capell	5/22



Richard Sander	5/22
Ginger Wielk	5/22
Larry Fortner	5/23
Joan Lombardo	5/24
Phyllis Olsson	5/24
Janet Pellerito	5/25
Winona Binns	5/27
Chestley Merritt	5/27
Alice Seeholzer	5/28
Monika Brennan	5/29
Connie Chase	5/29
Linda Russo	5/29
Ruth Edwards	5/30
Julie Hopkins	5/30
Irene Froehlich	5/31

## May Wedding Anniversaries

William and Renee Desilets	5/3
Jack and Connie Chase	5/7
Bob and Cherylann Schneider	5/17
Doug and Sharon Johnson	5/19
Paul and Karen Chipko	5/22
Dan and Lyn Derenski	5/24
Nicholas and Doris Daley	5/25
Larry and Laura Fortner	5/26
Ahmec and Ivette Torres	5/30

