

GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH

GATHERING IN CHRIST ✝ SHARING HIS LOVE

THE GLORION
July/August 2025

www.gloriadeielca.com

IN CASE OF PASTORAL EMERGENCY
Contact the office during regular office hours:
9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. – Monday thru Friday
After office hours contact:
Pastor Lynn M. Fonfara via email:
pastorgloriadeileesburg@gmail.com

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OFFICE HOURS: Monday – Friday from 9:00-2:00 PM

PASTOR: LYNN M. FONFARA

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC: LEONARD CREMISIO

OFFICE MANAGER: EVELYN ROLLINS

SEXTON: TINA JANOSA

SUNDAY WORSHIP – 9:30 A.M



July/August, 2025

BELONGING

Somewhere on the Internet, I saw a colorful expression of the word Belonging. It makes me wonder how we can express Belonging at “home”, at Gloria Dei.

It seems to be an essential part of our beings that we need to belong to someone, or several someones. When we are children, we belong first to our families, our parents and other adults in our lives, as well as any siblings and cousins. Within the family circle of belonging, we are (usually) safe, well fed, cared for, and loved. Belonging to the family gives us our first sense of identity. We belong to our families, and they belong to us.



As we grow, our belonging circles widen to include friends, teachers, those who keep us safe, like street crossing guards. Our circles of friends happen in several places, at school, at church, and in the neighborhood. The friends in our circles may be similar to us, or different, and they invite us to explore the world from a safe place.

As children, we are taken to church, to worship and learn. We ask questions: Who is Jesus?; Who is God in my life?; Do I believe what I am being taught?; and so forth. Catechism class is a safe circle we belong to as we grow in faith. As adults, we can choose to belong to groups. We choose the people we want to love and live with. We create new circles of belonging when we add children to the circle. We have circles we belong to at work, in our neighborhoods, and in our volunteer organizations like Kiwanis and Lions. As adults, we can choose to belong to a church, a congregation of people, a bigger circle. Within the congregation, we choose a few circles to belong to, W/ELCA, Property, Choir, Food Pantry, and so forth. Here in these circles, we use the gifts and skills developed in the years of belonging to other circles.

These are all sorts of human circles of belonging. And there is one more, one that encompasses all the circles. We belong to God. From before we are born, we belong to God. While we live and grow and wander near and far, we belong to God. On our death bed and beyond death, we belong to God. Even when we think we don't belong anywhere, we belong to God. And through God, we all belong to each other, even if we aren't in one another's birth or chosen circles. God's circle encompasses the world and all that live in and on it. It's a large circle of belonging.



Unfortunately, there are also ways to exclude people from our circles, to deny that they belong. This hurtful behavior goes against God's plan for humanity. It's God's plan that we love our neighbors, all our neighbors. The only way we will work with God to heal our broken world is to start to welcome those who are different into our circles and get to know each other. In that way, we will begin to see how much alike we are, that we all belong to God and to each other.

Pax
Pr Lynn

Quotes from Synod Assembly

"Jesus doesn't drop theological truth bombs. He listens and allows questions before he speaks." Rev. Emily Harkins, Keynote Speaker

"Stop trying to go back; instead look for where God is already, ahead of us. ... We are, today, the bridge to the future." Rev. Emily Harkins, Keynote Speaker

"Our gifts don't expire until we do." Michele Hilton

"How do we follow the Lamb when the Elephant and the Donkey are fighting with each other?" Bishop Pedro Suarez (his approximate words)

PRAYERS

July and August

We will pray for the joys, sorrows, and concerns of the following members in July:

- 7/6** Rose Gulbrandsen, Ralph and Sylvia Hallberg, Gerry Haller,
Northilt Handwerck, Kay Hawtin
- 7/13** Dick Healy, Linda Hide, Carla Hoback, Roger Hollands, Martin and
Martha Holleran
- 7/20** Mary Humphreys, Irvin and Susan Johnson, MaryJean Kancel,
Nancy Kancel, Shirley Kelley
- 7/27** John and Arlene Kelly, Mary Kelp, Bess King, Byron and Crystal
Kirkpatrick, Sandy Kolb

We will pray for the joys, sorrows, and concerns of the following members for August:

- 8/3** Helga La Cava, Dock and Barbara Lias, Sylvia Mackey, Gail Madson,
Dennis and Dianne Marcotte
- 8/10** Carol Marshall, Evelyn Matthes, James, Julian and Quiana Menchaca,
Andy and Taeko Mincer, Rita Moritz
- 8/17** Brian and Karen Mundy, Vaike O'Grady, Lillian Ostrander, Bob
Pierce, Susan Stack and Sandy Retz
- 8/24** Jim and June Rieb, Ronald Riikonen, Elizabeth Sanguedolce,
Alberta Siepiela, Lillian Skilbred
- 8/31** Maureen Skurecki, Donna Smith, Linda Steege,
Hank Stennes

JULY / AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

JULY

07/26	Jon & Marva Tetting	50 years
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AUGUST

08/13	Fred & Marlene Farris	20 years
08/23	Ralph & Sylvia Hallberg	67 years*
08/30	Charles & Joy Yonko	56 years*

**Special congratulations to those celebrating fifty or more years of marriage.*

JULY / AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

JULY

07/09	Lillian Skilbred	07/11	Joan Davis
07/15	Christine Carlson	07/16	Rose Gulbrandsen
07/18	Dianne Marcotte	07/20	Charles Yonko
07/21	Milton DeLong	07/23	Edward Thompson
07/25	Sylvia Hallberg	07/26	Helen Ames
07/27	Julie Eld	07/30	Northilt Handwerck
07/30	Alberta Siepiela		

AUGUST

08/07	Jon Tetting	08/16	Janet Braun
08/19	Evelyn Matthes	08/23	Jacki Goding
08/24	Brian Mundy	08/28	MaryJane DeBarr

BIBLE STUDY/EDUCATION

Education

Monday evening Zoom, we continue to study the Gospel of Luke. In July and August, we'll be reading Chapters 16-18 or 19. Jesus teaches about money, and faith, and prayer, and kindness toward one another. By September, we will be reading about Jesus' last week. All are welcome at this Bible study, and while Pastor Lynn leads, it's really a conversation because all bring their own comments and questions.

COUNCIL CORNER

By Vaike O'Grady

Council Corner: There is a Time for Everything

As we reflect on the recent Florida-Bahamas Synod Assembly (June 11-14) with its powerful theme "There is a Time for Everything," we find ourselves deeply encouraged by the wisdom shared and the connections made. This phrase from Ecclesiastes 3:1 spoke directly to our congregation's current season of transition and hopeful anticipation.

Rev. Emily Harkins, the assembly's keynote speaker, reminded us that this biblical passage "is not just a line about balance" but rather "a call to awareness. It invites us to stop resisting the season we're in." How profound these words were for our congregation! As we continue our pastoral search, we might be tempted to rush the process or long for certainty, but Scripture calls us to trust the timing that God has set before us.

Our interim period is not empty time to be endured—it's a season with its own purpose and gift. As Rev. Harkins observed, "There is a time for everything—which means this time, your time, this strange, sacred, in-between season—is not a mistake." Our Call Committee continues their faithful work, and we trust that God is preparing both our congregation and our future pastor for the right moment of calling.

The synod assembly also reminded us that we are part of something larger than our individual congregation. When nearly 400 Lutherans gathered from

across Florida and the Bahamas, we were reminded that "the work of becoming—personally and communally—can't happen in isolation." We are part of a movement of faith that spans congregations, states, and nations.

Rev. Harkins offered this beautiful blessing for churches in transition: "May you have the courage to stay rooted in this moment. May you trust the God who wastes nothing—not your grief, not your joy, not your waiting." God is not wasting this time in our congregation's life. Every Sunday we gather, every act of service we perform, every prayer we offer is weaving us more deeply into the fabric of God's unfolding purpose.

This is our time to grow in faith, to strengthen our community bonds, to clarify our mission, and to prepare for the pastoral leader God will send us.

As we move through these summer months, let us embrace this season with open hearts and faithful presence. Our time of searching and becoming is not a detour from God's plan—it is part of the plan itself.

CALL COMMITTEE

The 7 members of the Call Committee have been meeting since February 19 to assign duties on the committee and to become familiar with the 12 step process in the calling of a new pastor in the Florid-Bahamas Synod. On March 12 we began completing the five lengthy sections of the Ministry Site Profile. We also sent out a survey to our church membership asking for their priorities for a new pastor in top 5 tasks, top 5 gifts and top 5 gifts that would be very helpful in the search for a new pastor who would be best suited to lead Gloria Dei. We presented the results of that survey to the congregation on May 25th with a temple talk slide presentation. We will also follow that up with a question and answer session for our membership in the next several weeks.

The Ministry Site Profile has taken much of our meeting time since we began working to complete this document. Some of the sections can be answered quite quickly, but others have taken weeks to work through by the committee to make sure the questions are being answered clearly and accurately. The Ministry Site Profile gives a picture of who we are as a congregation, where

we are located in the community, our mission and our expectations for a new pastor. This will give the Synod a sense of who we are and what we are looking for in our new pastor. Based on this Profile, the Synod will then locate pastors looking for a congregation like ours. Prospective pastors also complete a large profile document, so Synod can identify as close a match as possible for our congregation.

We are very excited to be this far in the process. Once the Ministry Site Profile document is completed, our committee then submits it to our Gloria Dei Church Council for a final review, changes or clarifications if needed and approval before it can be electronically submitted to the Synod so they can begin a search for us.

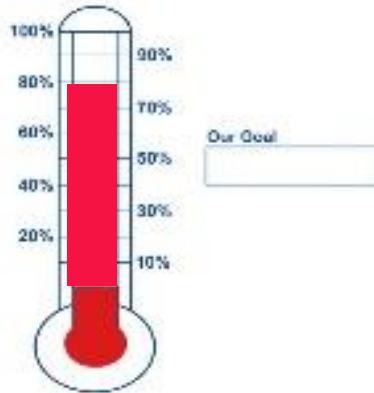
The foremost question the call committee keeps in their minds is are we doing the work that God desires for our congregation. Human preferences and personalities never come before the mission to which God calls his people. That is why every meeting of the call committee starts with prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the work that is being done.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.” (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Blessings,

Linda Steege
Call Committee Communications

FIRST IMPRESSIONS



Exterior Renovation Update

Since launching on March 23rd, **our exterior renovation campaign has raised \$21,450.00—80%** of our \$27,700.00 goal. **We're grateful for your support!** Repairs are nearly complete, with a final inspection planned soon.

FELLOWSHIP

July and August

By Loraine Van Haecke

Summer has arrived! While some of our friends have headed north in search of cooler weather, many of us are staying right here—doing our best to beat the heat. No matter where you are, we hope you're enjoying the season.

Fellowship will continue as usual throughout the summer. Mark your calendar for a special **Community Fun Day on July 6!** Join us for a joyful afternoon filled with **food, music, a sing-along, the Kona Ice Truck,** and plenty of fun and laughter.

Some of us may be taking a vacation, but wherever your summer takes you, our wish is that you stay **safe, healthy, and happy.** Take time to reflect and give thanks for the many blessings God has given us.

We also need your help to keep **Coffee Hour** going strong. If you can, please sign up on the sheet located on the **kitchen counter**. Your efforts in making coffee and bringing snacks are truly appreciated—**thank you!**

Stay tuned for more details on upcoming events and activities. Remember... **fall is just around the corner!**

Have a **wonderful summer**, and may God bless you all.

RUTH CIRCLE

July and August

Bins will be placed in narthex to collect snack items for children at Leesburg elementary. The children return to school on August 11 th . Requested items collected in July are:

- ☐ Juice Boxes
- ☐ Granola bars
- ☐ Peanut butter and crackers individual packages
- ☐ Gluten free crackers
- ☐ Dried Fruit

Requested items collected in August are :

- ☐ Capri Sun drinks
- ☐ Laughing Cow or other cheese that does not need refrigeration
- ☐ Raisins individual boxes
- ☐ Cheese and Crackers

According to the USDA , one in every five children is unsure where they will get their next meal.

Please help Leesburg Elementary school provide healthy snacks for their children. Being hungry results in poor performance in school, health issues and affects their thinking, learning and behavior.

Proverbs 3:27 Do not withhold goods from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act.

MARY-MARTHA CIRCLE

Mary Martha Circle will meet as quilters the Months of July and August On Tuesday July 8 & Friday July 25th. & On Tuesday August 12 & Friday August 22nd. We will start at 9am and have a break at 10:30 for coffee & snacks. Anyone who feels the urge to stick a pin or needle into something will be welcomed.

Carol Marshall Leader 352-787-0435

STEWARDSHIP

Fall is always a busy time in the ELCA churches, Gloria Dei is no different.

Please mark these dates on your calendar!

Sunday September 7th, 2025 God's Work Our Hands Day.

This is a day in which ELCA celebrates who we are as the Evangelical Church in America.

The event that day will be a fundraiser for JHIFM. Event will be open to the Community. The plan is to bring awareness about Joining Hands in Food ministry and to the fact that Gloria Dei supports this ministry in many ways. Activities as of now include a Bake Sale, a raffle of a Hurricane supply basket and music. More plans are to be made during the summer.

Sunday, October 19th, 2025 "Estimate of Giving Day.

The Stewardship team, Pastor Lynn, Arlene Kelly, Linda Steege, Allen Francis and I are adopting portions of the Stewardship program "Measuring What Matters" for this year's fall campaign.

"Measuring What Matters" will be a four-week program at Gloria Dei. Sept. 28th to Oct 19th. The plan is to capture helpful information on finances for calling a new Pastor and celebrating the generosity of our congregation. These four weeks will be a time of reflection for each of us to prayerfully consider what our investment of time, energy and resources are at Gloria Dei and do we meet our own expectations of what is important to us and what matters.

Dianne Marcotte- Stewardship chair

JULY CALENDAR

Tues.	7/1	10:00 a.m. Morning Prayer
Fri.	7/4	JULY 4TH HOLIDAY-OFFICE CLOSED
Sun.	7/6	9:30 a.m. Sunday Worship Service for Healing
		11:00 a.m. Pulled Pork/Chicken BBQ
Mon.	7/7	7:00 p.m. Zoom Bible Study
Tues.	7/8	10:00 a.m. Morning Prayer 9:00 a.m. Mary Martha quilters
Wed.	7/9	10:00 a.m. Call Committee
Fri.	7/11	8:30-10:30 a.m. Joining Hands in Food Min.
Sun.	7/13	9:30 a.m. Sunday Worship
Mon.	7/14	7:00 p.m. Zoom Bible Study
Tues.	7/15	10:00 a.m. Morning Prayer
Wed.	7/16	10:00 a.m. Call Committee
Sun.	7/20	9:30 a.m. Sunday Worship-Hunger Offering
Mon.	7/21	7:00 p.m. Zoom Bible Study
Tues.	7/22	10:00 a.m. Morning Prayer
Wed.	7/23	10:00 a.m. Call Committee
Fri.	7/25	9:00 a.m. Mary Martha quilters
Sun.	7/27	9:30 a.m. Sunday Worship
Mon.	7/28	7:00 p.m. Zoom Bible Study
Tues.	7/29	10:00 a.m. Morning Prayer

AUGUST CALENDAR

Sun.	8/3	9:30 a.m. Sunday Worship Service for Healing
Mon.	8/4	7:00 p.m. Zoom Bible Study
Tues.	8/5	10:00 a.m. Morning Prayer
Wed.	8/6	10:00 a.m. Call Committee
Thurs.	8/7	2:30 p.m. Developing Disciples Bible Study
Fri.	8/8	8:30-10:30 a.m. Joining Hands in Food Min.
Sun.	8/10	9:30 a.m. Sunday Worship
Mon.	8/11	7:00 p.m. Zoom Bible Study
Tues.	8/12	9:00 a.m. Mary Martha quilters 10:00 a.m. Morning Prayer
Wed.	8/13	10:00 a.m. Call Committee
Sun.	8/17	9:30 a.m. Sunday Worship-Hunger Offering
Mon.	8/18	7:00 p.m. Zoom Bible Study

Tues.	8/19	10:00 a.m. Morning Prayer
		11:00 a.m. Executive Committee Meeting
Wed.	8/20	10:00 a.m. Call Committee
Fri.	8/22	9:00 a.m. Mary Martha quilters
Sun.	8/24	9:30 a.m. Sunday Worship
		11:00 a.m. Council Meeting
Mon.	8/25	7:00 p.m. Zoom Bible Study
Tues.	8/26	10:00 a.m. Morning Prayer
Sun.	8/31	9:30 p.m. Sunday Worship

JULY WORSHIP LEADERS

Assistant Ministers

Legend: R-Reader, +-Crucifer, C-Communion Assist., A-Liturgy Assist.

	<u>9:30 a.m.</u>		
7/6	R=Vaike O'Grady += Julian Menchaca A=Pat Bressler	7/13	R=Linda Hide += Leone Goding A= Pat Bressler
7/20	R=Lorraine Van Haecke += James Menchaca A=Vaike O'Grady	7/27	R= Donald Ames += Leone Goding A= Kathy Bush

Ushers

If you are able to serve or have any questions, please contact Crystal Kirkpatrick at 552-3983.

	<u>9:30 a.m.</u>		
7/6	Byron Kirkpatrick Ritch Cassem Craig Carlson John Kelly	7/13	Byron Kirkpatrick Ritch Cassem Craig Carlson John Kelly
7/20	Byron Kirkpatrick Ritch Cassem Craig Carlson John Kelly	7/27	Byron Kirkpatrick Ritch Cassem John Kelly Craig Carlson

Altar Guild for July: Crystal & Byron Kirkpatrick

Post Worship Secretary for July: Judy Eads

Greeters

7/6

7/13

7/20

7/27

Fellowship

7/6 BBQ

7/13

7/20 June & James Rieb

7/27

Counters – Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m.

7/6 Jeanne Talts

7/13 Linda Steege & Janet Braun

7/20 Arlene Kelly

7/27 Arlene Kelly

AUGUST WORSHIP LEADERS

Assistant Ministers

Legend: R-Reader, +-Crucifer, C-Communion Assist., A-Liturgy Assist.

9:30 a.m.

8/3 R= Linda Hide
+= Julian Menchaca
A=Pat Bressler

8/10 R=Linda Hide
+= Leone Goding
A=Kathy Bush

8/17 R=Vaikke O'Grady
+= James Menchaca
A=Pat Bressler

8/24 R=Vaikke O'Grady
+= Leone Goding
A=Vaikke O'Grady

8/31 R=Pat Bressler
+= Julian Menchaca
A=Vaikke O'Grady

Ushers

If you are able to serve or have any questions, please contact Crystal Kirkpatrick at 552-3983.

9:30 a.m.

8/3	Byron Kirkpatrick Ritch Cassem John Kelly Craig Carlson	8/10	Byron Kirkpatrick Ritch Cassem John Kelly Craig Carlson
8/17	Byron Kirkpatrick Ritch Cassem John Kelly Craig Carlson	8/24	Byron Kirkpatrick Ritch Cassem John Kelly Craig Carlson
8/31	Byron Kirkpatrick Ritch Cassem John Kelly Craig Carlson		

Altar Guild for August: Crystal & Byron Kirkpatrick

Post Worship Secretary for August: Helga LaCava

Greeters

8/3
8/10
8/17
8/24
8/31

Fellowship

8/3 Dianne Marcotte (Providing Orange Juice)
8/10 Dianne Marcotte (Providing Orange Juice)
8/17
8/24
8/31

Counters – Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m.

8/3	Jeanne Talts
8/10	Linda Steege & Janet Braun
8/17	Arlene Kelly
8/24	Arlene Kelly
8/31	Jeanne Talts

FINANCIAL CORNER

GENERAL FUND

	May, 2025	Year to date 2025
Contributions	\$16,631.26	\$86,028.55
Expenditures	\$16,033.32	\$81,873.87

RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Beg. Bal. 1/1/2025	Donations	Withdrawals	Ending Bal 5/31/25
Altar Wine/Bread	267.90	90.00	0	357.90
AV Equipment	138.33	0	0	138.33
Choir/music	550.00	0	0	550.00
ELCA	0	75.00	75.00	0
Eternal Light	785.00	0	0	785.00
Evangelism	1,720.00	0	0	1,720.00
Fellowship	544.19	837.50	858.63	523.06
1 st Impressions Ph 4	0	18,320.00	0	15,440.00
1 st Impressions Ph 3	17,128.63	4,490.00	10,490.00	11,128.63
Flowers	400.00	735.00	0	1,135.00
JHIF	0	1,495.00	1,495.00	0
Leesburg Elementary	14.69	0	0	14.69
Oak Park Middle	0	0	0	0
Quilting	300.00	0	0	300.00
Thrive Choice \$\$	1,372.64	271.00	0	1,643.64
Trees & Landscaping	0	5,000.00	3,150.00	1,850.00
World Hunger	0	327.00	327.00	0
TOTALS	23,221.38	31,640.50	16,395.63	38,466.25

THE BELIEVE THE BEST PRINCIPLES

The Basics:

Every relationship has spoken and unspoken expectations. And then there are the actual experiences within the relationship. Sometimes the expectations and experiences match up, and sometimes they don't. When they don't it creates a gap:



EXPECTATION

EXPERIENCE

gap

When a gap occurs between what we expect and what we experience, we can choose to fill the gap with one of two things:

BELIEVING THE BEST or **ASSUMING THE WORST**

Believing the Best is based on trust and goodwill

Assuming the Worst is based on distrust and suspicion.

Five Principles for being a “Believe the Best” community:

1. When there is a gap that forms between what I expect and what I experience, I will BELIEVE the best. *(We will start with trust and goodwill).*
2. When other people assume the worst about you, I will come to your DEFENSE.
*(Gossip is not permitted; we will put the best construction on what our neighbor does-
the Eighth Commandment).*
3. If what I experience begins to erode my TRUST, I will come directly to you about it.
(We won't let issues fester or be shared with others, nor will we ignore them).
4. When I'm convinced I will not be able to deliver on a promise, I will inform you AHEAD of time.
(We will keep our commitments to one another).
5. When you confront me about the gaps I've created, I will tell you the TRUTH.
(We will be open to hearing others' concerns, and respond to them with integrity).

Adapted from Celebration Lutheran Church- Cypress, Texas.

2025 CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Pastor	Lynn M. Fonfara	352-249-8533
President	Loraine Van Haecke	407-252-4692
Vice President	Allen Francis	614-565-1844
Secretary	Vaike O'Grady	512-827-6344
Treasurer	Linda Hide	253-740-3063
Financial Secretary	Janet Braun	412-445-7774

Members:

John Braun	412-926-3381
Joel Weinhardt	330-936-8451
Bill Birdsall	732-773-2680
Christine Carlson	516-458-7355
Crystal Kirkpatrick	352-552-3983

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Worship & Music	Pastor Lynn M. Fonfara	352-249-8533
Evangelism/Technology/ & Communications/Webmaster	Bill Birdsall	732-773-2680
Property	Bill Birdsall	732-773-2680
Fellowship	Loraine Van Haecke	407-252-4692
Stewardship	Dianne Marcotte	352-933-5517
WELCA	Dianne Marcotte (contact only)	352-933-5517
Christian Education	Christine Carlson	516-458-7355
Finance	John Braun	412-926-3381
	Joel Weinhardt	330-936-8451

