

GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH

GATHERING IN CHRIST ✝ SHARING HIS LOVE

THE GLORION
October 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

ADDRESS: 130 S. Lone Oak Drive, Leesburg, FL 34748

OFFICE PHONE: (352)787-3223

OFFICE EMAIL: gloriadeilutheranleesburg@gmail.com

WEB SITE: www.gloriadeielca.com

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



October, 2025

Nonviolent Jesus

Lately, it seems there is a violent shooting or bombing of innocent people every day. Mass shootings, school shootings, assassinations of well-known leaders. Around the world, there are missile attacks, drone attacks, armed invasions and encroachments. The response to this violence is ... more violence.

There is a different way to live. I have been listening to episodes the “Nonviolent Jesus Podcast” with Father John Dear. Father John has spent his life protesting against violence in its many expressions in the world. He has taken a stand against nuclear bombs, against war, against all conditions which oppress people. He points out, for example, that building weapons requires people to work daily in unsafe conditions, to live near polluted land and air, to raise children in conditions which will affect them all their lives.

Father John’s work is based on scripture, especially the Beatitudes. Here is a quote from a sermon on the sixth Beatitude: Love your enemies.

We can never talk about this commandment enough. For me, it sums up Christianity. If we do this, we will obey Jesus fully, because it encompasses everything—reflecting God’s universal love, working for disarmament, seeking justice for the poor, practicing forgiveness, living in hope and trusting in the God of peace. ... What’s so shocking is that Jesus commands us to love our enemies not just because it’s right; not just because it’s moral; and not because it’s the only practical solution; but because God

loves God's enemies. This is the nature of God. Jesus wants us to be "sons and daughters of your God in heaven, for God makes God's sun rise on the bad and on the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and on the unjust." *

Loving our enemies applies in many ways: in the voting booth, in donating to food pantries, in paying school taxes. It even applies when we are driving and shopping.

I hope that the next time we hear of a violent action, we can take a breath and count the many ways God loves the person who caused the violence, as well as the person or persons who were injured.

In peace

Pr Lynn

* [Love Your Enemies \(Sermon on the Mount, Part 1\) – Father John Dear](#)

GLORIA DEI WOMEN OF THE ELCA

MARK YOUR CALENDARS-

Tuesday, Oct. 21, 2025 at 11:30: A fall fashion show will once again be held. Fashions from Maxine's Fashion Labels will be worn by volunteer women from Gloria Dei. The guest speaker that day will be from WOMEN BUILD- HABITAT FOR HUMANITY LAKE COUNTY. Their motto is "We build strength, stability, self-reliance and shelter."

Women Build is a national initiative to engage women in the effort to provide safe and decent homes for families in need of affordable housing.

Florida-Bahamas Synodical Women's Fall gathering:

"All God's Children" November 7-9 th 2025

Warren Willis United Methodist Conference Center
Fruitland Park. Registration deadline October 10 th -
Register at flwelca.com/2025 Fall gathering.

Christmas baskets for the homebound members of the congregation:

Friday December 19 th at 9:30 am

COUNCIL CORNER

By Vaike O'Grady

Celebrating One Year of Faithful Leadership

As we enter this fall season, we have not one but TWO significant anniversaries to celebrate milestones that represent the continued blessing of dedicated leadership at Gloria Dei.

Pastor Lynn Fonfara completed her first full year as our interim pastor this fall, and what a year it has been! Pastor Lynn stepped into her role during a time of transition, bringing not only her theological expertise and pastoral care but also a genuine heart for our congregation. Her thoughtful sermons have challenged and comforted us, her pastoral presence has been a source of strength during difficult times, and her vision for our church's future has inspired us all.

Throughout this year, Pastor Lynn has shown remarkable dedication to understanding our church's unique culture and needs. She has been present for our joys and sorrows, has guided us through important decisions, and has

helped us maintain our focus on Christ during a season of change. Her leadership style – both gentle and strong – has been exactly what our congregation needed. We are truly grateful for the way she has embraced Gloria Dei as her church family.

Equally significant is the first anniversary of Len Cremisio as our musical director. Len brought his considerable talents to Gloria Dei just over a year ago, and the impact has been remarkable. Our worship music has flourished under his direction, with both traditional hymns and contemporary songs lifted to new heights. Len's musical expertise, combined with his heart for worship, has enhanced our Sunday services and special occasions alike.

Beyond his role at the organ and piano, Len has worked tirelessly to encourage musical participation throughout our congregation. He has welcomed new choir members with patience and enthusiasm, has worked with our youth to develop their musical gifts, and has shown remarkable flexibility in accommodating the diverse musical preferences within our church family. His dedication extends far beyond Sunday mornings – from special holiday services to wedding ceremonies and memorial services, Len has consistently offered his gifts in service to our church community.

Both Pastor Lynn and Len have demonstrated what it means to serve with excellence and joy. They have not simply fulfilled their job descriptions; they have embraced Gloria Dei as their spiritual home and have invested themselves fully in our ministry together. Their partnership in worship leadership has created a beautiful synergy that enriches every service.

As we celebrate these anniversaries, let's take time to express our appreciation for both Pastor Lynn and Len. Their faithful service deserves our recognition and gratitude. Consider reaching out with a personal note, offering a word of encouragement, or simply saying "thank you" when you see them. Their ministry among us has been a true gift from God.

Looking ahead, we can be confident that under their continued leadership, Gloria Dei will continue to grow in faith, fellowship, and service. These first anniversaries mark not an ending but a beautiful beginning of what God has in store for our church family.

May we all follow their example of faithful service and continue to support one another as we live out our calling as the people of Gloria Dei.

COMMUNITY NOTICES

SAVE THE DATE:

Tuesday October 21st - Fall fashion show. Fashions from Fashion Labels. Guest speaker from Women Build Habitat for Humanity Lake-Sumter.

Thursday October 23rd – The lake County Senior Expo from 10am to 1pm.

Please join us after church on November 9th for a free presentation from Home Instead liaison Deborah. She will provide a short presentation regarding aging in place using home care vs home health care and explain the difference. Light refreshments will be provided. Please plan on attending.

PRAYERS

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

- 10/5** Ellen Clement, Lynn Crane, Marilyn Czuprynski, Joan Davis, Ernest & MaryJane DeBarr
- 10/12** Milton & Carolyn DeLong, Judy Eads, Jerry & Julie Eld, Fred & Marlene Farris, Claudia Fetter
- 10/19** Pastor Lynn Fonfara, Allen & Paula Francis, Diana Frederick, James & Jayne Gable, Margi Geiger
- 10/26** Jacquelyn Goding, Leone Goding, Lawrence Goerke, Bill Grese, Mary Grissom

OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

10/4	James & Jayne Gable	56 years*
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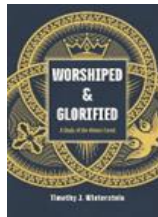
10/21	Dennis & Dianne Marcotte	25 years
10/22	Milton & Carolyn DeLong	24 years

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

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

10/10	Carla Hoback	10/23	Arthur Zerbel
10/16	C.J. Clarke	10/24	Mary Humphreys
10/18	Rita Moritz		

BIBLE STUDY/EDUCATION



Zoom Bible Study

In 325 CE, a group of bishops from around the Christian world gathered in Nicaea, Bithynia. They were charged with defining who Jesus of Nazareth was. Theories and theologies abounded: was he human, was he divine, was he a combination of human and divine? How? And what did it mean for believers?

On October 20, we will begin to study the Nicene Creed, and why it says what it says. This study will last approximately 10 weeks, as we begin with some background material before diving into the study book.

We will use the book *Worshiped and Glorified: A Study of the Nicene Creed*, by Timothy J. Winterstein. You may choose to purchase the book from the usual sources in paper or electronic form.

I hope you will join us on Monday nights at 7:00 pm for study and conversation surrounding the Creed that is so familiar to us. . If you are interested in joining us, contact Forrest Berg at fberg12@gmail.com or call the church office so you can be added to the email for the zoom.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

First Impressions Up-date:

There is not much to up-date because it's all going on right now at Gloria Dei and you can watch in real-time if you want to ride on by. There is power washing, tons of prep-work, sealing, painting and new gutters. Over the next few weeks, you will see the outside of Gloria Dei rejuvenated to restore its original luster. This project doesn't only give a refreshing appearance but also breathes new life into the structure. Regular maintenance will keep our church home looking good for years to come. Below is a work schedule if you want to keep track.

Outside Church Revitalization Schedule

- The parking lot wall has been repaired (Frank Lawton did a fine job).
- The waterproofing for the patched wall will be completed by Bill.
- The fill dirt and the sodding will be completed in the week of 09/15 by Outlook.
- Presser washing will be 09/25-26 by Precise Painting .
- All preparation and painting will run from 09/29-10/08 by Precise Painting .
- The old gutters will be removed 10/13 & new installed 10/14 Larry's Gutters.

Our church is a gift to all who enter. It welcomes the weary, inspires the seeker, and grounds the faithful. In times of joy and sorrow, the church building is a constant presence, offering stability, beauty and a sense of belonging. Gloria Dei is very blessed to have a church free of mortgage payments and a congregation who donates willingly to help defray maintenance costs.

Respectfully submitted

Kathleen Birdsall, chair

First Impressions Task Force

Arlene Kelly, Pat Bressler, Linda Steege, Crystal Kirpatrick

FELLOWSHIP

October 2025

Loraine Van Haecke

We have been enjoying lots of special treats after worship each Sunday with our coffee or juice. It is good to sit and chat with our friends, old and new. We get caught with what is happening in their lives as we share what is going on in ours. **WE NEED YOUR HELP!** If you feel that you can help, please sign up. The sign up sheet is on the kitchen counter. You can make it as simple as you want. If you are a baker, bring some homemade cookies, bread or Danish. If you are not a baker, stop by Publix, Winn Dixie, Aldis or stop for donuts, make coffee, set it out and usually there are folks always there to clean up.

We are going to show our appreciation to Len for his many musical talents Sunday, October 05 after worship. This is his first anniversary with us. We are so Blessed at Gloria Dei for Len, his wife Bonnie and all our congregation!

PLEASE CONSIDER HELPING TO KEEP THIS FELLOWSHIP COFFEE TIME TO CONTINUE!

Loraine Van Haecke

RUTH CIRCLE

NEXT MEETING- Thursday Oct 2nd 10:30 am. Bring your lunch for Fellowship time. All women of Gloria Dei are welcome to attend!

Dates to remember:

October 21 at 11:30 Fashion show and salad luncheon. Speaker will be from Habitat for Humanity Women Build. Please bring a salad to share. Desserts and sweet and unsweet tea will be provided.

Nov 7 to 9th. WELCA Fall Gathering- Information at www.flwelca.com. Theme is "All God's children". Flyer and registration forms on counter in Fellowship Hall. All women of the church are invited to attend. Warren Willis United Methodist Camp & Retreat Center, Fruitland Park, FL

Welca annual Christmas party- Thursday Dec 4th at 11:30 Chesapeake Grill at Arlington Ridge. Please bring a box of Christmas themed "Little

Debbies" for JHIFM. Further information and ticket sales at beginning of November.

Christmas baskets for those members who remain at home.- Gathering on Friday December 19th at 9:30 am.

MARY-MARTHA CIRCLE

Mary Martha Circle will meet on the 2nd Tuesday, October 14. We will start our Mission Quilting at 9AM and have a break at 10:30. Bible Study at 11 will be out of the Gather Magazine. We will have copy's of the lesson for anyone who needs one. We will also be Mission Quilting on the 4th Friday which is October 24 at 9am. Please come and join us for fun & fellowship. Please continue to sew tops as we will continue to need them.

Carol Marshall, Leader Phone 352-787-0435

STEWARDSHIP

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

The Stewardship team, Pastor Lynn, Arlene Kelly, Linda Steege and myself 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. 28 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

Nourish to Flourish

This summer, Ruth Circle embraced a special project to support the students and families of Leesburg Elementary School. Working with Florence, the school's Family Liaison, we collected and delivered much-needed snack items.

Through these conversations, we learned that the need is even greater than we imagined. Food insecurity among families in our community has risen sharply, with as many as 87%—approximately 600 families—uncertain of where their next meal will come from. Florence shared that food is distributed to families as quickly as it arrives. The school now has a refrigerator, freezer, and pantry to provide nourishment. Children receive meals and snacks during the school day, and on Fridays, they are sent home with food to last the weekend—because for some, those meals are the only food they will have until school resumes.

The need has shifted from snacks to more substantial food items. In response, Gloria Dei Church is launching an ongoing ministry: Nourish to Flourish. This program will provide long-term support to Leesburg Elementary by collecting and distributing essential food items for children and families in crisis.

The Church Council has joyfully approved this ministry and encourages us to give generously, keeping in mind both our unhoused neighbors and working families who struggle to make ends meet. A collection box will be available in the narthex for donations of the following items:

- Canned fish and canned meats
- Small boxes of cereal
- Granola bars
- Juice (individual or gallon) and bottled water
- Rice and macaroni & cheese (individual-size packages)
- Fruit cups

- Soup
- Peanut butter and jelly
- Instant oatmeal

Every contribution makes a difference. As Florence reminded us, even one can of tuna or one bag of groceries can change a child's day.

If you prefer to give financially, Gloria Dei has a dedicated fund for Leesburg Elementary. Your donations will be used directly to purchase food. Checks may be made payable to Gloria Dei, with "Leesburg Elementary" noted in the memo line.

Together, we can ensure that no child goes hungry. Thank you for helping us live out our mission to share God's love in tangible and life-giving ways.

For more information, please contact Dianne Marcotte.

Nourish to Flourish Update

The congregation of Gloria Dei has responded with extraordinary compassion and generosity to the urgent need for food among families of children at Leesburg Elementary School. On Monday, a remarkable outpouring of love took shape in the form of a literal mountain of food, delivered to the school to help nourish children and their families.

Ms. Florence, the school's family liaison, expressed deep gratitude for this outpouring of support, which will provide relief not just for today, but through the coming days and weeks.

Thank you, Gloria Dei, for embodying the spirit of neighborly care and reminding us all of the power of community.

OCTOBER CALENDAR

Wed.	10/1	10:00 a.m.	Call Committee Meeting
		4:30 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Thurs.	10/2	10:30 a.m.	Ruth Circle
Sat.	10/4	1:00 a.m.	Blessing of the Pets
Sun.	10/5	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Worship / Service for Healing
		11:00 a.m.	Temple Talk
Mon.	10/6	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Bible Study
Tues.	10/7	10:00 a.m.	Morning Prayer
		10:30 a.m.	WELCA Board Meeting
Wed.	10/8	4:30 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Fri.	10/10	8:30 a.m.	Joining Hands in Food Ministry
Sun.	10/12	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Worship/Rememberance
		11:00 a.m.	Temple Talk
Mon.	10/13	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Bible Study
Tues.	10/14	9:00 a.m.	Mary Martha Circle
		9:00 a.m.	LWR Quilting
		10:00 a.m.	Morning Prayer
Wed.	10/15	4:30 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Thurs.	10/16	9:30 a.m.	First Impressions
Sun.	10/19	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Worship / Hunger Offering
		11:00 a.m.	Measure What Matters
Mon.	10/20	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Bible Study
Tues.	10/21	10:00 a.m.	Morning Prayer
		11:30 a.m.	Fall Fashion Show
Wed.	10/22	1:00 p.m.	Memorial Service for Barbara Goins
		4:30 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Fri.	10/24	9:00 a.m.	Mary Martha Circle
		9:00 a.m.	LWR Quilting
Sun.	10/26	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Worship
		11:00 a.m.	Council Meeting
Mon.	10/27	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Bible Study
Tues.	10/28	10:00 a.m.	Morning Prayer
Wed.	10/29	10:00 a.m.	Call Committee Meeting
		4:30 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal

OCTOBER WORSHIP LEADERS

Assistant Ministers

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

10/5 **9:30 a.m.**
R= Kathy Bush
+= Kathy Bush
A= Patricia Bressler

10/19 R= Arlene Kelly
+= James Menchaca
A= Ellen Clement

10/12 R= Patricia Bressler
+= Leone Goding
A= Kathy Bush

10/26 R= Byron Kirkpatrick
+= Leone Goding
A= Vaike O'Grady

Ushers

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

10/5 **9:30 a.m.**
Byron Kirkpatrick
Ritch Cassem
John Kelly
Craig Carlson

10/19 Byron Kirkpatrick
Ritch Cassem
John Kelly
Craig Carlson

10/12 Byron Kirkpatrick
Ritch Cassem
John Kelly
Craig Carlson

10/26 Byron Kirkpatrick
Ritch Cassem
John Kelly
Craig Carlson

Worship Media Team

C- Cameras, P- Powerpoint

10/5 **9:30 a.m.**
C= Linda Hide
P= MaryJean Kancel

10/19 C= Susan Johnson
P= Irvin Johnson

10/12 C= MaryJean Kancel
P= Arlene Kelly

10/26 C= Lillian Ostrander
P= Jeanne Talts

Altar Guild for October: Crystal & Byron Kirkpatrick

Post Worship Secretary for October: Janet Braun

Fellowship

10/5

10/12

10/19 Fall Stewardship Brunch

10/26

Counters – Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m.

10/5 Jeanne Talts

10/12 Linda Steege & Janet Braun

10/19 Arlene Kelly & Lillian Ostrander

10/26 Arlene Kelly & Lillian Ostrander

FINANCIAL CORNER

GENERAL FUND

	August, 2025	Year to date 2025
Contributions	\$14,387.28	\$138,927.90
Expenditures	\$19,821.26	\$130,815.25

RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Beg. Bal. 1/1/2025	Donations	Withdrawals	Ending Bal 8/31/25
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	1,538.50	1,435.89	646.80
1 st Impressions Ph 4	0	30,629.00	0	30,329.00
1 st Impressions Ph 3	17,128.63	4,490.00	13,180.05	8,438.58
Flowers	400.00	875.00	0	1,275.00
JHIF	0	3,395.00	3,355.00	40.00
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	1,054.00	589.64
Trees & Landscaping	0	5,000.00	3,150.00	1,850.00
World Hunger	0	529.00	526.00	3.00
TOTALS	23,221.38	46,592.50	23,325.94	46,487.94

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		
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
James Menchaca	210-913-6224
Kathy Bush	610-657-1168

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

