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# GLORIA DEI

## LUTHERAN CHURCH

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GATHERING IN CHRIST † SHARING HIS LOVE

**THE GLORION**  
**MAY 2026**

[www.gloriadeielca.com](http://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 phone:**

**352-249-8533**

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

**OFFICE PHONE: (352)787-3223**

**OFFICE EMAIL: [gloriadeilutheranleesburg@gmail.com](mailto:gloriadeilutheranleesburg@gmail.com)**

**WEB SITE: [www.gloriadeielca.com](http://www.gloriadeielca.com)**

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

**PASTOR: LYNN M. FONFARA**

**DIRECTOR OF MUSIC: LEONARD CREMISIO**

**AFTER WORSHIP SEC. : JOAN DAVIS** *(In order to assist the Pastor, if you need the Pastor to contact someone or address something.)*

**OFFICE MANAGER: EVELYN ROLLINS**

**SEXTON: TINA JANOSA**

**SUNDAY WORSHIP – 9:30 A.M**



May, 2026



The church season of Easter continues for eight weeks, and ends with the festival of Pentecost. I love Pentecost and the opportunity to wear red. And I love Pentecost because we celebrate the coming and the presence of God's Holy Spirit.

While many Lutheran hymns for Pentecost are quiet, more meditative songs about the Spirit being with us, I love the raucous ones that get our blood pumping, like *Every Time I Feel the Spirit*. These kinds of songs remind us of the excitement the disciples and the crowd must have felt on the first Christian Pentecost.

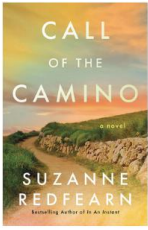
Can you imagine yourself in the same room with the disciples when a whoosh went through the room even though it was calm outside? Can you see the flames, candle flames, torch flames, or fire that shone above everyone's head? Can you feel your heart pumping first with fear, then with joy as you realized it was Jesus sending the Spirit among you?

Even more, can you imagine the amazement in your own heart as you spoke, in Galilee-accented Aramaic, and the people from all over the world understood what you were saying?

For me Pentecost is not a quiet day, but a day for joy and celebration. Come wearing red and celebrate with me that God's Spirit is alive and active at Gloria Dei and all around the world, today and every day.

Pax  
Pastor Lynn

## Recommendations from a Book-a-holic



### Call of the Camino: A Novel, by Suzanne Redfearn

Sometimes I find a book to read by searching for a particular title or author. This month's book, *Call of the Camino, a novel*, by Suzanne Redfearn (2025) was discovered by happenstance. It was a free download from an online bookseller. I have a Franciscan sister who walked part of the Camino de Santiago a few years ago, so I was drawn to read the book out of curiosity.

Isabelle and Reina are both walking the Camino from southwest France, across northern Spain to Santiago de Compostela in northwest Spain. It's an ancient system of trails that pilgrims have walked since at least the 9<sup>th</sup> century, to visit the shrine of St James, one of the first Apostles. Over the centuries, hostels and cafes have emerged along the route to accommodate pilgrims, some of them quite primitive, some more luxurious.

Some modern pilgrims have the latest hiking equipment, but many walk simply, with only a backpack containing a change of clothes, a refillable water bottle, a box of adhesive bandages, and some portable snacks obtained from a roadside vendor.

It is in this more primitive manner that Reina and Isabelle are traveling, though they are traveling for different purposes and at different times. Isabelle is walking the camino in 1997. In her small home village in Andorra, local politicians want her to agree to a development plan. Isabelle and her family may be killed if they refuse to support the development, so Isabelle changes her name to Joan and flees those who seek her by hiking the Camino.

Reina hikes the trail almost by accident in 2024. A work assignment gone a bit awry sends her from America to the Camino with minimal time to prepare for its grueling trek. She knows her deceased father had hiked the trail before he and her mother had married, and she has his journal from those days. In the meantime, she is joined a few days later by Matt, a work colleague.

Reina and Isabelle learn life lessons from the Camino. They gain traveling companions who encourage and challenge them daily. They learn that what they have heard is true: The Camino provides. They often walked singly on a narrow trail, in silence, with their thoughts their only companion. Their lives are changed by the pilgrimage, with futures made more clear by the month away from the usual patterns of living. And the connection between them is slowly revealed, as their stories unfold.

I read this book a few chapters at a time, following along with the story as it alternated between Isabelle and Reina, almost like walking the Camino, minus the blisters, the dorm-style overnight housing, and pouring rain or blistering heat.

Most of us are not able to take a month to walk 500 miles in rugged conditions, but we can take hours or days to unplug from the news, and focus on our physical, mental, and spiritual needs. This time off can help reorient us toward a healthier future.

Pr Lynn

## **Hymn of the Month**

I don't often choose a hymn to sing each Sunday of the month, but I was drawn to use this one several times. *Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth* is based on the words of St. Julian of Norwich, the oldest writings in the English language attributed to a woman. Her words invoke the mothering aspect of God. I hope you enjoy learning it.

Pax  
Pr Lynn

## WELCA - WOMEN OF THE ELCA

**Church Women United-** May Friendship Day will be held on May 1, 2026. Breakfast and refreshments will begin at 9:30 a.m., followed by the program, “Shelter Me” at 10:00 a.m., a theme of “A Place Called Home”. The topic will include information on fair, accessible housing.

### **Rachel’s Day**

On the first Sunday in May, Women of the ELCA observe Rachel’s Day. This is a time set aside to mourn the loss of our children and to renounce the forces of violence and fear.

This initiative began in 1996 to remember and grieve the loss of children from all sources of violence and evil. Physical abuse, gun deaths, neglect, all forms that result in death of children.

ELCA women encourage their congregations to recognize the first Sunday in May each year as Rachel’s Day, based on Jeremiah 31:15–17 wherein Rachel grieved for her children, to mourn the loss of our children and to renounce the forces of evil and fear that plague our nation.

A second collection will be taken on May 3rd to benefit Lake Sumter Children’s Advocacy Center. “The mission of the Lake Sumter Children’s Advocacy Center is to provide a child- friendly community- based facility to provide child abuse victims with all necessary services in a single location.”

**Isaiah 49:25:** For thus says the Lord: Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken, and the prey of the tyrant be rescued, for I will contend with those who contend with you, and I will save your children.

**Next WELCA meeting:** Tuesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, at 10:30 a.m. Lunch will follow at The Florida Porch.

The WELCA board will not meet in June, July or August. Regular meetings will return on Tuesday, September 8, 2026.

## **PRAYERS**

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

- 5/3** Patricia Bressler, Kathy Bush, Craig and Christine Carlson, Richard and Debbie Cassem, Michael and C.J. Clarke
- 5/10** JoAn Cleary, Ellen Clement, Lynn Crane, Marilyn Czuprynski, Marie Davids.
- 5/17** Joan Davis, Ernest and MaryJane DeBarr, Milton and Carolyn DeLong, Judy Eads, Jerry and Julie Eld.
- 5/24** Freddy and Marlene Farris, Claudia Fetter, Pastor Lynn Fonfara, Allen and Paula Francis, Diana Frederick
- 5/31** James and Jayne Gable, Margi Geiger, Jacquelyn Goding, Leone Goding, Bill Grese

## **MAY BIRTHDAYS**

- |             |                |             |              |
|-------------|----------------|-------------|--------------|
| <b>5/06</b> | Carolyn DeLong | <b>5/20</b> | Linda Steege |
| <b>5/13</b> | Susan Johnson  | <b>5/22</b> | Dick Healy   |
| <b>5/14</b> | Freddy Farris  | <b>5/27</b> | Jayne Gable  |

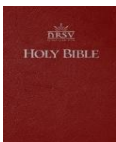
## BIBLE STUDY/EDUCATION



### Zoom Bible Study

In May, we will finish our study of First Corinthians. We have been learning that no one person, no gift, and no amount of faith is better, more important to God than another. We have been learning that we are all limbs of Jesus' body and each part is essential to the operation of the whole body. In the last few chapters, Paul addresses worship and how it should be shaped for holy order, not chaos. He asserts the faith we have in the resurrection because Jesus has been raised first. In the last chapter, Paul addresses the wish for a regular offering to support churches in areas where oppression exists and finally sends greetings to those who have helped in his ministry. You are always invited to join us. Ask the church office for the link.

Still learning  
Pr Lynn



### Pew Bibles

At the request of the Strategic Planning Team, the Council discussed placing Bibles in each pew rack. We considered how many people would use the Bible, the importance of the size of the printed text, which version of the Bible made sense, and more. It was determined that the NRSVUE Bible would match the text in the bulletin and on the screen, that 36 would be an appropriate number to order, and that it would be an appropriate use of memorial funds.

For the next few weeks, the new Bibles will be on a table as you enter the sanctuary. If you would like to have a Bible where you usually sit in worship, please take one and leave it in your pew. The hymnals that are displaced will be stored in the bookcase near the choir room.

In addition, if you would like to own one of these new Bibles, please take one. We can order more if we need to!

## **RUTH CIRCLE**

**Please see the following updates regarding the Ruth Circle:**

### **Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief:**

We are continuing our year-round collection of items for Lutheran World Relief Personal Care Kits. Please place your donations in the marked box in the narthex. We are currently collecting:

- Dark-colored bath towels
- Nail clippers
- Sturdy combs
- Bars of soap (4 oz. size, 2 per kit)
- Individually wrapped single toothbrushes

Thank you for your continued support of this important project.

### **Nourish to Flourish:**

Food donated by congregation members and Joining Hands in Food Ministry will be delivered over the summer. Florence Katzenberger, the family liaison at Leesburg Elementary, will notify us when she is at the school to assist families, and deliveries will be made at those times.

### **Upcoming Meetings:**

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, May 7th, at 11:30 am at Chesapeake Grill at Arlington Ridge.

Please note that there are no meetings scheduled for June, July, or August. We will resume our regular schedule on September 3rd at 10:30 am at Gloria Dei. All women of the church are invited to attend.

Best regards,

Dianne Marcotte

## MARY MARTHA CIRCLE

Mary Martha Circle will meet on the second Tuesday, May 12. We will start our Mission Quilting at 9AM and have a break at 10:30AM. Bible Study at 11AM will be out of the Gather Magazine. We will have copies of the lesson for anyone who needs one. We will also be Mission Quilting on the 4th Friday which is May 22 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

Spring has a way of awakening the world around us. Flowers bloom, trees bud, and the days grow longer and brighter. It is a season of renewal—a perfect reminder of how God continually brings new life and fresh beginnings.

This same spirit of renewal invites us to reflect on stewardship in our own lives.

Stewardship is more than financial giving; it is the faithful care of all that God has entrusted to us—our time, talents, resources, and relationships. Just as a garden does not grow without attention, stewardship calls us to be intentional in how we nurture and share our gifts.

Spring offers us a natural opportunity to begin again:

- **To renew our gratitude** for the many blessings we often overlook
- **To recommit our time and talents** in service to others
- **To plant seeds of kindness and generosity** that can grow in ways we may never fully see
- **To care for our community**, especially those who are in need.

Even the smallest acts—a donated item, a kind word, a helping hand—can take root and flourish in meaningful ways.

As we watch the earth come alive this spring, may we also be renewed in our call to stewardship. With open hearts and willing hands, we can be part of the growth, hope, and love that God is bringing into the world.

**"Let us not grow weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." — Galatians 6:9**

## **A LITTLE SOMETHING TO ENJOY**

Looking for a new puzzle? A selection is available on the shelf in the narthex—please feel free to take one and enjoy.

## **Inaugural Spring Concert - I Hear America Singing!!**

**May 9<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm – 8:00pm**

**Lake Community Arts**

**3700 S. Hwy 27**

**Clermont, FL 34711**

Experience an unforgettable evening of music at Lake Community Arts' inaugural spring concert, "I Hear America Singing!" This celebration of American music will feature the 100+ voice Lake Community Choir, the inspiring young musicians of Children Sing!, and more. From uplifting folk songs and spirituals to moving patriotic tunes, the program highlights the rich spirit and diverse sound of America's musical heritage. Join us for a thrilling night of music, community, and celebration you won't want to miss!

For more information contact CJ at [legacyhippo@gmail.com](mailto:legacyhippo@gmail.com)

If you rather purchase with cash or in person, visit the Clermont Performing Arts Center via the side (south) door, at the box office down the main hall on the left.

## FINANCIAL CORNER

### GENERAL FUND

	March, 2026	Year to date 2026
Contributions	\$19,547.58	\$51,940.43
Expenditures	\$15,700.97	\$54,218.97

### RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Beg. Bal. 1/1/2026	Donations	Withdrawals	Ending Bal 3/31/2026
Altar Wine/Bread	377.90	25.00	67.89	335.01
AV Equipment	138.33	0	0	138.33
Choir/music	0	65.00	0	65.00
ELCA	0	0	0	0
Eternal Light	785.00	0	0	785.00
Evangelism	720.00	0	0	720.00
Fellowship	336.27	541.50	782.06	95.71
1 <sup>st</sup> Impressions Ph 3	7,938.58	0	0	7,938.58
1 <sup>st</sup> Impressions Ph 4	4,463.86	25.00	0	4,488.86
Flowers	1,271.42	464.06	916.02	819.46
JHIF	0	3,475.00	3,475.00	0
Leesburg Elementary	14.69	0	0	14.69
Oak Park Middle	0	0	0	0
Quilting	300.00	0	300.00	0
Thrivent Choice \$\$	665.64	180.00	88.96	756.68
Trees & Landscaping	1,850.00	0	0	1,850.00
World Hunger	0	166.13	166.13	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>18,861.69</b>	<b>4,998.69</b>	<b>5,853.06</b>	<b>18,007.32</b>

## APRIL CALENDAR

<b>Fri.</b>	<b>5/1</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Women United Friendship Day</b>
<b>Sun.</b>	<b>5/3</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Sunday Service/Baptism/Rachel's Day</b>
<b>Mon.</b>	<b>5/4</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Zoom Bible Study</b>
<b>Tues.</b>	<b>5/5</b>	<b>10:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Morning Prayer</b>
		<b>10:30 a.m.</b>	<b>WELCA Board Meeting</b>
<b>Wed.</b>	<b>5/6</b>	<b>4:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Choir Rehearsal</b>
<b>Thurs.</b>	<b>5/7</b>	<b>11:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Ruth Circle @ Chesapeake Grill</b>
<b>Fri.</b>	<b>5/8</b>	<b>8:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Joining Hands in Food Ministry</b>
<b>Sun.</b>	<b>5/10</b>	<b>9:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Sunday Worship/Healing Service</b>
		<b>11:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Bible Study (Bearing Witness)</b>
<b>Mon.</b>	<b>5/11</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Zoom Bible Study</b>
<b>Tues.</b>	<b>5/12</b>	<b>9:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Mary Martha Circle</b>
		<b>9:00 a.m.</b>	<b>LWR Quilting</b>
		<b>10:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Morning Prayer</b>
<b>Sun.</b>	<b>5/17</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Sunday Worship/ Hunger Offering</b>
		<b>11:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Bible Study (Bearing Witness)</b>
<b>Mon.</b>	<b>5/18</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Zoom Bible Study</b>
<b>Tues.</b>	<b>5/19</b>	<b>10:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Morning Prayer</b>
<b>Fri.</b>	<b>5/22</b>	<b>9:00 a.m.</b>	<b>LWR Quilting</b>
<b>Sun.</b>	<b>5/24</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Sunday Worship</b>
		<b>11:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Bible Study (Bearing Witness)</b>
<b>Mon.</b>	<b>5/25</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Zoom Bible Study</b>
<b>Tues.</b>	<b>5/26</b>	<b>10:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Morning Prayer</b>
<b>Sun.</b>	<b>5/31</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Sunday Worship</b>
		<b>11:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Bible Study (Bearing Witness)</b>

## APRIL WORSHIP LEADERS

### Assistant Ministers

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

<b>9:30 a.m.</b>			
<b>5/3</b>	R= Art Zerbel += A=Patricia Bressler	<b>5/10</b>	R= Dianne Marcotte += A= Vaike O'Grady
<b>5/17</b>	R= Patricia Bressler += Kathy Bush A= Patricia Bressler	<b>5/24</b>	R= Marie Davids += A= Vaike O'Grady
<b>5/31</b>	R= Kathy Bush += Vaike O'Gr A= Patricia Bressler		

### Ushers

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

<b>9:30 a.m.</b>			
<b>5/3</b>	Byron Kirkpatrick Ritch Cassem John Kelly Craig Carlson	<b>5/10</b>	Byron Kirkpatrick Ritch Cassem John Kelly Craig Carlson
<b>5/17</b>	Byron Kirkpatrick Ritch Cassem John Kelly Craig Carlson	<b>5/24</b>	Byron Kirkpatrick Ritch Cassem John Kelly Craig Carlson
<b>5/31</b>	Byron Kirkpatrick Ritch Cassem John Kelly Craig Carlson		

**Altar Guild for April:** Crystal & Byron Kirkpatrick

**Post Worship Secretary for April:** Joan Davis

**Fellowship**

**5/3**

**5/10** Dennis and Dianne Marcotte

**5/17** June and Jim Rieb, Marie Dean, Bonnie Cremisio

**5/24**

**5/31**

**Counters – Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m.**

**5/1** Jeanne Talts

**5/10** Linda Steege & Patricia Bressler

**5/17** Arlene Kelly & Lillian Ostrander

**5/25** Arlene Kelly & Lillian Ostrander

**5/31** Jeanne Talts

# 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.*

**2026 CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Pastor	Lynn M. Fonfara	352-249-8533
President	Richard Healy	352-223-4800
Vice President	Kathy Bush	610-657-1168
Secretary	Vaike O'Grady	512-827-6344
Treasurer	Linda Hide	253-740-3063
Financial Secretary	Jeanne Talts	352-530-6865

Members:

John Braun	412-926-3381
Christine Carlson	516-458-7355
James Menchaca	210-913-6224
Ritch Cassem	352-406-3339

**COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS**

Worship & Music	Pastor Lynn M. Fonfara	352-249-8533
Evangelism/Technology/ & Communications/Webmaster	Bill Birdsall	732-773-2680
Property	John Kelly	352-399-6253
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

