



Bethany Lutheran Church

News & Notes

Week of May 14, 2023

Be Blessed + Believe + Belong!

This week at Bethany



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
14 th	15 th	16 th	17 th	18 th	19 th	20 th
9:15am: Bible Study & Sunday School 10:30am: worship Service	1pm: C.S. Lewis “Screwtape” Bible Study		10am: Highland Lakes Bible Study	6 pm: C.S. Lewis “Screwtape” Bible Study		1pm: CRAFT ^{er} noon

DON'T FORGET YOUR NAME TAG – MEET A NEW FRIEND IN CHRIST TODAY!

Our Mission Statement:

Bethany Lutheran Church is a place where you matter to God and to us, existing to glorify the Holy Trinity, to administer the sacraments, to teach and preach the gospel in all its purity, to grow in our relationship to God.

WORSHIP----CONNECTING-----GIVING

How to Contact:

Pastor Mike: Call Church Office 352-787-7275.

Office hours Mon.-Thurs. 8:30am-2:30pm (but I can be out doing visits or appointments)

Friday is my off day.

I am always open for conversations, and I want to know any concerns/prayers/joys. We're in this life together as God's family. Pastor Mike

Church Office: 352-787-7275 | email: BLCLeesburg@gmail.com

Office is open 9am-1pm Mon.-Fri.



Facebook: We are “Bethany Lutheran Church Leesburg FL” on Facebook

Website: www.bethanylutheranleesburg.com

YouTube (Livestream): www.youtube.com/bethanylutheranleesburg

Online Giving --- It's simple. Go to our website at

<https://www.bethanylutheranleesburg.com/home> and click on DONATE tab. Follow instructions.

Your donation will be tracked through church records as usual.

Altar Flowers: if you would like to provide a bouquet or two of flowers for a special occasion or just because, sign up on the Flower Chart in the Narthex. Cost per bouquet is \$35. The flowers are yours after the service on Sunday.

Do you have something for NEWS & NOTES?

Email to church office (BLCLeesburg@gmail.com) by early **Thursday** each week to share in the News & Notes. Earlier in the week is preferred.

Our Church Calendar exists online and is found on our website under the menu item “Connect.” There's a lot going on lately and that's a great place to check up! If you see that something is not on there that should be, let us know in the office!

Pastor's Corner

Be Blessed + Believe + Belong!



Mother's Day is not a liturgical holiday in the Church calendar, but it certainly is an important Christian holiday. Mothers are a gift from God and we are commanded in the Fourth Commandment to honor both our fathers and our mothers. Though we should remember that the Fourth Commandment doesn't require this one day out of the year, but every single day of our lives!

In his *Large Catechism*, Martin Luther wrote about God's special distinction given to both mothers and fathers in the Bible:

To this estate of fatherhood and motherhood God has given the special distinction above all estates that are beneath it that He not simply commands us to love our parents, but to honor them. For with respect to brothers, sisters, and our neighbors in general He commands nothing higher than that we love them, so that He separates and distinguishes father and mother above all other persons upon earth, and places them at His side. For it is a far higher thing to honor than to love one, inasmuch as it comprehends not only love, but also modesty, humility, and deference as to a majesty there hidden, and requires not only that they be addressed kindly and with reverence, but, most of all, that both in heart and with the body we so act as to show that we esteem them very highly, and that, next to God, we regard them as the very highest. For one whom we are to honor from the heart we must truly regard as high and great.

Martin Luther noted that in honoring parents in this way, God also gave to children such a wonderful way to please God. If you ever have said to yourself, "I really want to do something good for God!" Martin Luther would say, "Honor your father and mother. This is a good and pleasing work that God has given you. This is a better and more noble work than almost any other thing you might choose to do for yourself because this has the command of God behind it."

So whether you're a mother who is thus honored by God to be given such high distinction to be given honor by your children or whether you're a child who is given the great privilege of loving God by honor your parents, there is much here to rejoice.

And yet we also would do well to remember those who have lost their mothers; those who have broken relationships with their mothers; those who have desired to be mothers, but haven't been able to; those mothers who have had to lay their children to rest. And there are likely still other situations I haven't mentioned that describe your situation.

Whether a day of joy or a day of grief (or maybe even a mixture of the two), I pray that if you rejoice, that you give thanks to God for the blessing of motherhood, and if you grieve, that your heart be comforted and consoled by Jesus who Himself knew the love of his mother Mary, but called all people to come to Him and find their ultimate comfort in His kingdom (Matt. 5:4).

BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES!

Sunday School:

Pre-school through elementary: *Enduring Faith Bible Curriculum*, Unit 3, which with key teachings of Jesus: The Good Samaritan, the Lord's Prayer and the Good Shepherd.

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Sunday morning Bible Class led by Pastor Mike. We're spending time brushing up on the basics as we study Luther's *Small Catechism*. Join us. The discussion begins at 9:15 Sunday morning.

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Wednesday Morning Highland Lakes Bible Study!

Where: Highland Lakes Clubhouse; 5500 Clubhouse Dr, Leesburg, FL 34748

Date/Time: Wednesday from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.

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Monday and Thursday Bible study

Monday 1:00 to 2:30 pm OR **Thursday evening** 6:00 to 7:30 pm in Founder's Hall or via Zoom. study of the C.S. Lewis' *Screwtape Letters*, a fascinating study of temptation and of human nature told from a reverse psychological perspective. Screwtape is a senior tempter in the Lowerarchy of Hell (which is presented as a dreary bureaucracy). He writes a series of advice letters to his nephew, Wormwood, a junior tempter who has just been assigned his first human "patient" to shepherd on the way to Hell. We'll also consider the short follow-up publication, *Screwtape Proposes a Toast*.

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Monthly Men's Prayer and Fellowship Breakfast will meet on **Thursday, June 8th at 8:30am**, at Bob Evans (360 Colony Blvd, The Villages). We will watch a short video (on the Apostles' Creed) with discussion, followed by a time of prayer. This is open to all men (whether members of Bethany or not).

Beverly Shores Elementary Faith-Based Partnership

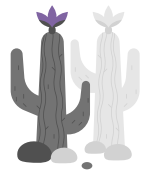
Teacher Appreciation Week

Thanks to your generosity, teachers and staff enjoyed fresh fruit, bottled water, and candy treats Tuesday, May 9, 2023, to celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week. This was our last event this school year. Next year the school is planning a new school building. If you have ideas for features to include in the new building, you are invited to attend planning meetings starting in July. We will announce the meetings in News and Notes.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL – JUNE 5-9TH

We are increasing our numbers of registered VBS attendees. We have a link on the HOME page for children to be registered now. One goal is to have one male and one female crew leader for each group of children. Crew leaders will be an active part of the team and engage in all the activities with the children they are building relationships with during VBS.



We have children that would love to come but need transportation. We will be renting a van, so we need a driver and a helper to fill our transportation needs.

There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex for any additional volunteers. We may not need everyone but if we know who is willing and can also act as a backup volunteer it would be wonderful!

Bethany Singers Will Be Returning

As we transition some schedules and our Music Director heads north for the summer, we will once again have a summer choir, Bethany Singers. **The Singers will begin rehearsing Tuesday, June 13 at 5 pm.**



Also **if you wish to share any musical talent by singing or playing an instrument**, contact the church office know so we can all be blessed by your gifts! We usually have special music every service, so there are ample opportunities to contribute.

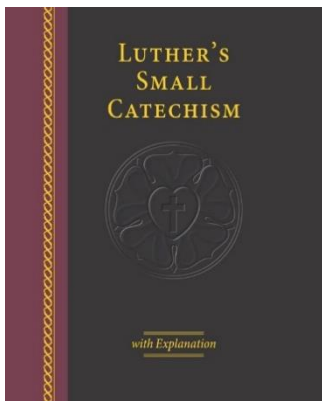
Calling all Crafters!

Please join us for **Bethany CRAFTernoons**. Our next session is **May 20th, 1pm-4pm** in Founders Hall. Bring your WIP (work-in-progress) or we'll have a project you can work on. We're meeting for fun and fellowship. Ongoing meetings are planned for the third Saturday afternoon of each month.



Our **Spring Voters' Meeting** is on **Sunday, May 21st after the worship service**

- ❖ If you are already a Voting Member (having signed in as such in previous meetings), your attendance counts toward our requirement for quorum (25% attendance of total voting membership).
 - ❖ If you are a full Communicant Member over 18 years old and have not yet become a Voting Member, you can do so by attending this meeting and signing in as a new Voting Member.
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Sunday morning Bible Class meets at 9:15 am. We are embarking on the study of **Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation** beginning **May 7th**. The book, published by Concordia Publishing House, will be used to guide our study. Copies have been ordered from the publisher and will be available from upon their arrival.

The Small Catechism covers the basic elements of our faith: the Ten Commandments, The Apostles' Creed, The Lord's Prayer, The Sacrament of Holy Baptism, The Sacrament of the Altar, Daily Prayers and a host of other topics that relate to our journey of faith.

We look forward to your joining us as we review these most important elements of our faith.

This 2017 edition of the Small Catechism is available from Amazon for \$15.99 at [this link](#).

Lessons Learned from The Screwtape Letters

For some weeks now, some Bethany folks (and some guests) have been doing a Bible study based on *The Screwtape Letters* by C.S. Lewis. The book is a study of temptation and of human nature told from an upside-down perspective. Screwtape is a Senior Tempter in the Lowerarchy of Hell which is portrayed as a dreary, endless bureaucracy. He is giving advice to his nephew, Wormwood, a Junior Tempter who has just been assigned his first “patient.” Thus the advice that Screwtape gives is designed to corrupt and condemn the “patient.” Some folks have been troubled by this negative literary device, so we have set ourselves to restate the lessons that we have learned in a positive format. Here is the first installment:

- The challenges faced by Christians today have been around for a long time. Furthermore, they are not unique nor are they impossible to overcome through faith in Christ.
- Dedication to regular prayer, worship and Bible study is critical to staying fit in your faith.
- Satan wishes us to be fuddled and confused; therefore, we must keep ourselves intellectually sharp and in fighting trim by paying attention.
- When we pray for others, pray practical prayers.
- We need to be focused outward on serving God and serving others and not focused exclusively inward on ourselves.
- We value Christianity because it is true, not because it is a means to an end.

Remember that our time and our possessions do not belong to us; they are gifts from God.

Bethany T-Shirt Day Rescheduled!

In an effort to try to coordinate our clothing as a purely optional part of our worship, we had scheduled Sunday, May 28th to be “Wear Your Bethany Shirt” Sunday. However, that Sunday is also Pentecost Sunday, which is one of the Sundays in the Church Year where we also invite congregation members to wear red. So here’s the new plan:

Sunday, May 28th – Wear Red for Pentecost

Sunday, June 4th – Wear Bethany Shirts

Of course, remember your participation in this is purely optional. You receive no special merit, credit or commendation in the eyes of God for these activities. It is though an outward way that we can communicate our inner oneness in Christ as the Body of Christ.

Council Update

Pastor's Report: Lots of busy! Post-Easter, catching up on visits with people. Life at Bethany class ending soon, more new members to add in May! Worship attendance growth year over year continues to amaze me. Very thankful and blessed for what God is doing at Bethany!



President's Report: We hosted a Pastor's conference in April. Thanks to several members for helping prepare this meeting.

Our Future Growth Committee is finishing up work regarding future growth for the Voters' Meeting. Thanks to all for your love and dedication to spread the Word of God!

Financial Secretary: Thank you to all the additional counters this year: An audit was completed and no changes in process were suggested.

Stewardship Report: Work on a scholarship fund is underway by Stewardship Committee. \$1000 (budgeted) was sent to LCMS Veterans of the Cross as a donation. Over \$2000 was raised through the Baby Bottle fundraiser for the Pregnancy and Family Care Center.

Elders Report: After a medical leave of absence our head Elder was reinstated as Chairmen of the Elders and a new member was invited to join the Elders and accepted. Another Elder will be honored by the Elders as an Elder emeritus.

Education Report: Numerous Bible studies and Sunday School continue. Thanks to all who are leading them! Vacation Bible School plans continue with numerous volunteers involved. We continue to pray God will send many children to hear the Gospel with us!

Trustees Report: The Trustees continue to get MANY projects finished. I'm not going to list them all here. The City of Leesburg is working on an area by the fire hydrant which appears to be a leak from the hydrant water line. Hopefully this will get resolved early next week. Avoid the area marked by white flags.

This week's Memory Verse:

John 17:17

"Sanctify them in truth; your word is truth."