



Be Blessed + Believe + Belong!

This week at Bethany

Bethany Lutheran Church

News & Notes

Week of July 27, 2025



Sunday 27th	Monday 28th	Tuesday 29th	Wednesday 30th	Thursday 31st	Friday 1st	Saturday 2nd
9:15am: Bible Study & Sunday School 10:30am: Worship Service	10am: Life @ Bethany	1pm: Bible Study	10am: Highland Lakes 5pm: Choir	1pm: Bible Study 6:15pm: Bible Study	9am: Trustees	

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

Attendance:

June 8: 152
 June 15: 100
 June 22: 100
 June 29: 99
 July 2: 115
 July 13: 104
 July 20: 101

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.

Our Vision Statement:

Made into a caring family through God's grace, we welcome others to share His love and grow with us.

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

How to Contact:

Pastor Mike: 352-787-7275 | email: Michael.Hanel@gmail.com

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 on the clipboard in the Narthex. The cost per bouquet is \$35. The flowers are yours after the service on Sunday.

Do you have something for NEWS & NOTES?

Email to April (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!

BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES!

Sunday School: Preschool and Elementary, using CPH Enduring Faith Bible Curriculum. On February 23 we began Unit 9, "Jesus Sends the Church." Lessons follow disciples' and apostles' Spirit-powered ministries through Acts, and with related Scriptures!

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Sunday morning Bible Class led by Pastor Mike (and Tom substitute): We have returned to studying the Creed in Luther's Small Catechism! Join us in-person or via Zoom. We begin at 9:15 Sunday morning. Classes are posted afterwards on YouTube.

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Wednesday Morning Highland Lakes Bible Study! – The Gospel of Mark!
Where: Highland Lakes Clubhouse; 5500 Clubhouse Dr, Leesburg, FL 34748
Date/Time: Wednesday from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.
Audio for these classes is posted afterward on YouTube.

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Monthly Men's Prayer and Fellowship Breakfast will meet on **Thursday, August 14th at 8:30am**, at Bob Evans (360 Colony Blvd, The Villages). In the summer months, the main focus will be for fellowship and social time as many people will be traveling throughout the summer.

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Heaven and Hell Bible Study – Three Opportunities to attend!
A number of folks at Bethany are working on a LifeLight study from Concordia Publishing on Heaven and Hell. Because the topic has attracted many interested folks, you now have three opportunities to attend either in person or via Zoom. You may attend on Tuesday afternoons from 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm. You may also attend on Thursday afternoons from 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm. Finally, you may attend on Thursday evenings from 6:15 pm – 7:45 pm. It's not too late to join the study in progress as we have completed only one of the nine lessons. The goal of LifeLight is that through a regular program of in-depth personal and group study of Scripture, more and more Christian adults may grow in their personal faith in Jesus Christ. You may attend any of the sessions in person in the Fellowship Hall (knock at the kitchen door) or via Zoom. Sign up in the Narthex or contact Bonnie with questions or to receive Zoom links.

Pastor's Corner

Be Blessed + Believe + Belong!



This Sunday the sermon is going to be about prayer...

“Lord, teach us to pray.” Those are some of the key words in the Gospel reading from Luke 11. In this context, the disciples are telling Jesus that John taught his disciples to pray, and so Jesus ought to do the same for them. The request to Jesus to ask Him to teach how to pray is indeed a commendable one. The disciples saw Jesus Himself praying and wanted to know more.

All of this got me thinking, who taught you how to pray or who has been the most influential person in your prayer life? While I am sure no two of us have exactly the same answers, for me the answer begins at home. The place where I learned how to pray was in my own household where prayer was a part of the living faith of the family. Prayer before meals, devotions after meals, and prayers at bedtime were some of the regular practices at home. Some of those formalized prayers became prayers I still pray now with my own children. In other ways the themes of prayers have become things that are regular part of my prayer life. As a farm family, prayers about the weather were really important in our prayer life. In praying for our daily bread, you always knew that your livelihood came from the growth of the crops that year and the timeliness of rain or sunshine in the growing season.

Of course I learned about prayer outside of my home too. At church in the worship services or in Sunday School and youth group, there were also ample opportunities to hear others pray, pray with others, or lead the prayers myself. It's good to know that your prayers don't always sound the same as other people's prayers. They think about things differently or have different needs from your own that you wouldn't necessarily have considered.

As I grew older I learned that there are systems of prayer or different ways to pray to help you begin the conversation with God or to organize your thoughts. The acronym ACTS moves you through Adoration (praise), Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication (request). A similar acronym [from Luther](#) was just as insightful (if less memorable) used the letters ITCP (Instruction (reflection on the truth of God's Word to you), Thanksgiving, Confession, Prayer/petition (request based on all the previous reflection)). More recently I learned about the five finger prayer (see here <https://ministry-to-children.com/five-finger-prayer/>) and there's more ways beyond these.

These are all helpful resources. But the best resource we have is the same one the disciples have Jesus Himself, who doesn't just show us how to pray, He shows us the one way pray to.

BETHANY MUSIC NOTES – JULY 25TH EDITION

“To stand or not to stand, that is the question.”

“Tradition!” A theme that repeats throughout a notable Broadway musical.

Lutherans are noteworthy, some would say obsessive, about tradition. Growing up a life-long LCMS Lutheran, I actually thought “We’ve always done it this way” was the fourth article of some obscure creed or confession.

One of the many joys of serving at Bethany is the great mix of traditions held by our brothers and sisters in Christ. We come from many different places geographically and traditionally. Some of us experienced Easter “Sunrise” services; some midnight Christmas Eve candle light; some Good Friday afternoon prayer vigils; Ascension worship on Ascension Day; Ascension celebrated on the Sunday after/before.

Our worship music reflects that breadth and diversity as well. Since last September we’ve heard ukelele, guitar, brass, piano, organ and bells. Children’s voices, solo voices, ensembles, choir voices, congregation blending with choir, soloists, and children’s choir.

This coming Sunday will be a joyful mix – Sunday school, choir, brass, piano, organ, flute, and congregation calling all to worship by singing “Holy God, We Praise Thy Name.” Back to tradition – the fifth verse of our call to worship hymn is a doxological verse. My tradition, brought on by the pastors and teachers at Bethlehem Lutheran in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, is to stand for the doxology verse. In this instance, v5. As an arranger, we set apart such a verse by changing the key – the musical equivalent of moving typing’s home row. In many churches, when appropriately equipped, the organist will play the zymbalstern – sounds like windchimes and represents the Holy Spirit.

Will you stand for that verse? I will!

Blessed beyond my dreams to be in service to Him with all of you.

BlesSings!

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It is time for our Quarterly Widow/Widower's luncheon! We will be gathering at 11:30am on **Monday, August 4th**, at Rodello's Italian Restaurant, 26736 US Hwy 27, Leesburg. If you're driving SOUTH on US Hwy 27, this will be on your LEFT (on the north side of 27) just beyond Arlington Ridge.



We heard they have great chicken salad, stuffed mushrooms, lasagna, etc. Looking forward to seeing everyone there!

Please RSVP by Sunday, July 27, to Doreen by phone or text to confirm your reservation. Hosted by the Human Care Committee

Leesburg Food Bank



During the month of July, we will focus on collecting toiletries for the Food Bank. This includes but is not limited to deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, bath wash, bar soap, disposable razors, toothpaste, toothbrushes and mouthwash. The food bank will also take those hotel toiletries.

Thank you. Karen C

Thank yous from our members

Dear Bethany friends,

Thank you for the nice lunch and cake surprise and also the many cards. I really appreciate all the support you give me. For all of the years I have been here, Bethany people are always kind, caring, joyful, and spirit filled Christians.

Love, Joan K

Dear EVERYONE who sent their love, thoughts, prayers, cards and gifts in loving memory of Rev. James R. Tews of Council Bluffs, Iowa, who received the Crown of Life on July 15, 2025.

Thanks and God's blessings to ALL.

Susan T, Dolores W, Jim and Donna W and the extended family members.

For the members of our church who have seen the stained-glass hanging in the windows of the fellowship hall and wondered where it came from, thank Doreen F for the beautiful addition to our church. She is the artist, designer, maker, and person who donated these four panels. We, the Trustees, thank her for her most generous donation to beautifying our church.



Old Friends, New Media

One of our members, Bea S was recently interviewed about her life and her needlepoint crafting work. It's pretty impressive work for anyone of any age, but You can check out the two segments at these web links:

<https://youtu.be/wz9HAg1EYXg>

<https://youtu.be/DhI0yBB8z1c>

Or search in YouTube for episodes #92 and #93 of Flosstube by Gary Sligh



At Home Caring Giving Resources

“I love you.” Words we say often, even when we are struggling to care for the ones we love. Recently, I was asked by a member of the church what I thought about some assisted living places and options for a loved one, as health, whether physical or cognitive, continues to progress in a direction that takes us on a journey we hoped not to take. It is never an easy life event.

Increasingly, families are striving to keep their loved ones close, enabling them to live at home for as long as possible. I know this life all too well, caring for my 91-year-old mother who has been in a wheelchair for 20-plus years. It's like juggling balls constantly; sometimes some of the balls go away, and it's a simple one/two, easy-going. Other times, it is like someone keeps tossing the balls into the circle that you are juggling, and you wonder when they will all fall. That is the time when you need help. Needing help is okay. It is about balance, sleep, grace, and sometimes releasing the pressure valve. But where do you turn to? Family, friends, someone you read about in the paper, or a caregiving service? The responsibility of a loved one in need of “care” versus the loving relationship we are committed to can be overwhelming. Sometimes their ability to communicate their needs declines, becomes confused, or flustered as they try to tell you. Other times, it may become demanding, rude, or disruptive. Things that may be entirely out of their nature. The reality is that the feelings of being overwhelmed, insecure, unsafe, or not being heard may be at the root of these needs.

Whether you call it a crisis, a major change in life, or a decline in health, there are many hard facts to look at to ensure the caregiver and the care receiver are equipped with the essentials for relief and help. Prognosis, communication, acceptance, and understanding the duration of care needed, as well as financial expenses, can lead to uncomfortable conversations with family and friends. Being the spouse means a lifetime of commitment and love. Remember that when you make those hard decisions and choices regarding care, it is love when you are providing safety, comfort, and care for both spouses and family members.

The cost of assisted living and nursing homes can be astronomical. Family and friends can help. This is a wonderful time to give to someone who has given so much to you over the years. Reality sets in quickly when you are choosing to “give up” or “change up” parts of your life for weeks, months, years, or more. That is why balancing becomes part of the plan. The word 'burden' is out of the vocabulary, as it changes the direction of the journey. This is about love, safety, and the ability to be in your own home.

Faithfully yours means caring for yourself while caring for others. In this article, we discuss how to obtain the assistance you need in your own home. That is a major step in caring for yourself.

Hiring someone: This is tricky if you are hiring someone who is not connected with an agency. If you know and trust someone, that is great. Hire them! It makes the transaction easy. However, there are times when we see posts about someone looking for a caregiving position who wants an easy paycheck. They may even have some excellent references. In today’s world, you have to be so very careful of fakes. Fakes are individuals who seek to take advantage of you. Here are some things to think about before hiring someone for cash, under the table, or not licensed:

1. If your family becomes combative, there is a chance you could be liable for medical expenses, and God forbid, the “employee” decides to press charges of assault. Yes, that does happen.
2. If the helper becomes hurt while on your property, does your insurance cover them if you are paying for caregiving services?
3. What about IRS rules regarding household employees? 1099s? And all kinds of other stuff?
4. Not to discount the trust you instill in that person, may show up as neglect, abuse, or theft.

I know I am playing the “devil’s advocate” as to what can go wrong. There are some wonderful people out there. Phil and I have both helped with providing care. However, when you are stressed, in need, and starting to get overwhelmed, that is when red flags can be missed. I want you all to be safe. Here are the reasons why using a service answers those questions above.

1. As an employee of a company providing the service, they are trained to deal with all kinds of service needs, including how to de-escalate a situation when fear, anger, or other emotions can become combative.
2. If the employee becomes injured, the employer pays for workman’s comp, which pays for those injuries and the legal issues.
3. The employer pays for all the tax withholdings and reporting of income.
4. Background checks, training, interviews, and case management all reduce the chance of neglect, abuse, or theft. If something does happen, you have someone to go to who can hold that person responsible.

Here are a few agencies you might want to consider for home care services.

Compassionate Care <https://www.amedisys.com> The Villages (352) 415-0778 Clermont (352) 467-7423
Short or Long Term hospice care with weekly visits from nurses and daily services

Visiting Angels <https://www.visitingangels.com> Phone 352-289-8438

Services include: Companion Care, Personal Care, Palliative Care, Transitional Care, 24-Hour Care, Dementia Care, End of Life Care

Right at Home <https://www.rightathome.net/lake-sumter-county> Tavares Office 352-835-0101

Companion, Personal Care, and Specialty Care

Care.Com <https://www.care.com> is a private pay service finder. Every caregiver on this site has had a background check.

The services that I or a family member have used in the local area. Please let me know if you have any questions.

In your service, Karen G, Human Care Committee

This week's Memory Verse:

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.