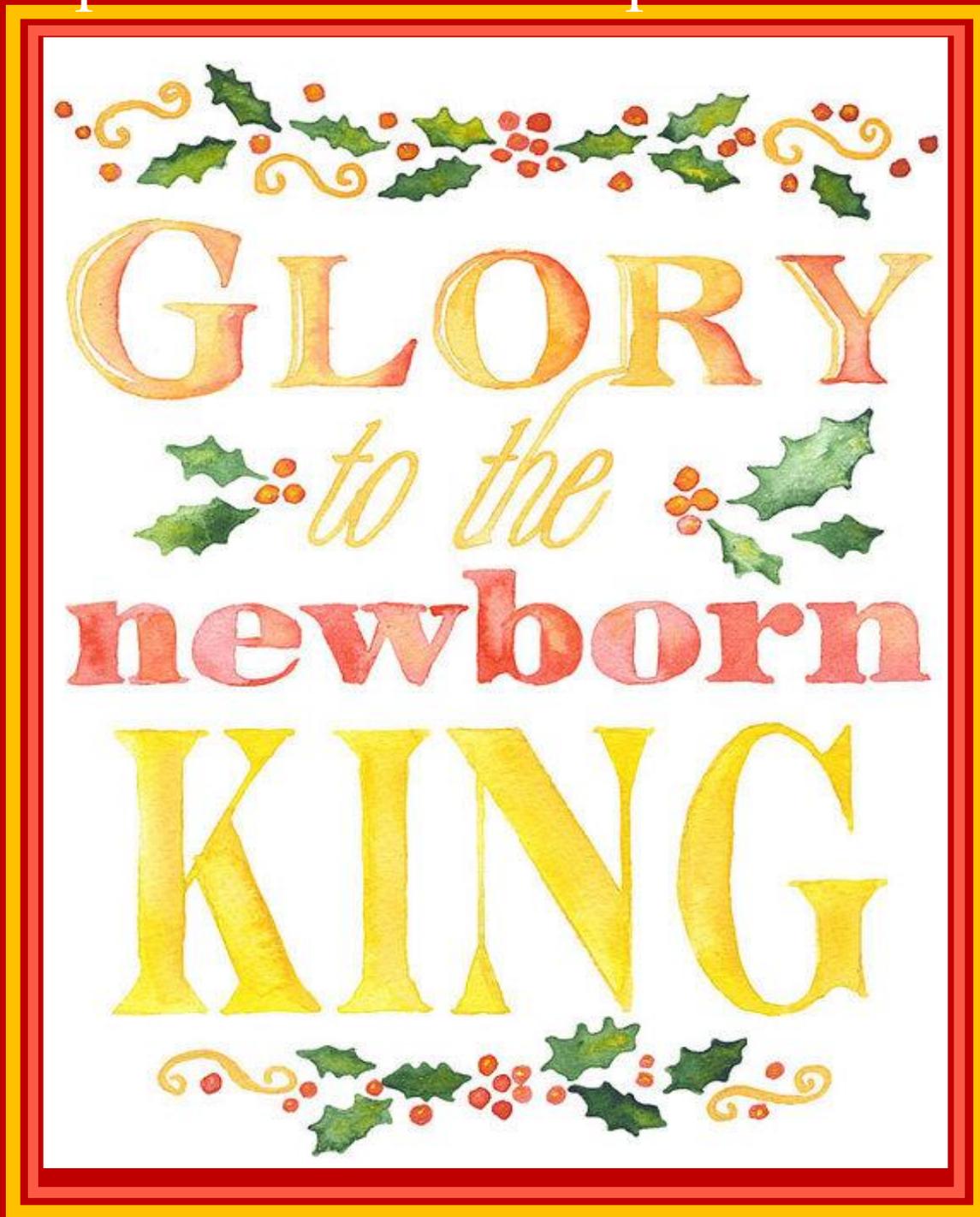


The Magic of Christmas is not in the presents but in His presence.



Merry Christmas from the staff of Marco Lutheran Church

John Davis
Pastor
Mike Killian

Paula Tom

Betsy Sabbides

Lawrence Socio
Gael



THE SHIP'S MESSENGER



DECEMBER 2021

VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE BY PASTOR TOM BOECK

MARCO LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Thing That Matters

² But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are too little to be among the
clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose coming forth is from of old,
from ancient days.

-Micah 5:2 (ESV)

Do you remember when you were a little child at Christmas time? What did you like about Christmas? Oftentimes when this subject comes up, we think about our younger selves and often we realize that when we were that young, we were generally more interested in the gifts at Christmas than we were in anything else. We were children, after all. In fact, some of us concentrated on the big presents, others concentrated on the number of gifts we received, and still others focused on what we received and if they matched up what we had asked for in the first place.

As children it was easy to forget about what was important when we knew that Santa Claus was coming to town. Some of us even went on a mission to do extra chores around the house and to be extra nice to our siblings, while showing a little more respect to Mom and Dad. This was all in an effort to make sure that we were

on Santa's "good list."

For those of us who were fortunate, we had parents who helped us to remember the real reason for our celebration. We had parents who helped us to know the importance of the thing that mattered most. Our parents never let us forget that the real gift at Christmas was the birth of that "little baby" Jesus who came to save us all. But even at that, we were often drawn toward those presents under the tree and may have gotten a little antsy while the Christmas Story of Jesus' birth was read to us.

Now as adults, we've gained a new perspective. For us as Christians, we understand better just how important the birth of that little child in Bethlehem's manger really is in our lives. Isn't it appropriate that God would send His Son to that little town of Bethlehem, to come in a little package of swaddling cloths. In that little gift from our heavenly Father, the world was given the big gift of salvation that would come in the form of Jesus dying on the cross to remove the stain of our sin and rising to new life and showing us the way to eternity with Him! That's the thing that matters! It's not the stuff. It's not the fruitcake. (Does anyone besides me still eat that stuff?) It's not the

Christmas tree or decorations. It's not the presents under the tree. The thing that matters is God's love for us that came in the form of that little baby at Christmas. So, what are the things that matter for you? Yes, there are other things that matter, too. Family matters. Relationships matter. People matter. And most of all, Jesus matters. Let all of those other worries melt away and focus on Jesus this Christmas. Because nothing matters more.

You matter. You matter to your church family. You matter to others. But more than anything, you matter to Jesus. No one loves you more than He does. That's why He came on Christmas day.

Blessings to you and yours for a wonderful Christmas season.

Pastor Tom



I'd like to express my sincere thanks for the incredible outpouring of love and support from the congregation for me in celebration of the conclusion of my seminary studies and attaining unrestricted status within our church body. You have all been such wonderful supporters of the ministry here at Marco Lutheran, as well as supporting me in the ministry here. I am truly blessed by your love and support. Thank you so much for the celebration you had for me, and for all you do to help the ministry here at Marco Lutheran Church. It is a blessing to be your pastor.

Blessings to all.

Pastor Tom



CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND FELLOWSHIP!

Come and join us in the Great Room right after worship each Sunday in Advent for a time of Fellowship, Snacks and Christmas Carols!

SUE CHAPIN Council President



By now, you will have celebrated Thanksgiving, whether with your friends or family and I hope you enjoyed the time and gave thanks for the many things we should be thankful for. God has blessed us in so many ways. Many of us will have enjoyed the wonderful turkey dinner prepared in the kitchen with Dave Tobiasz and Leesa Carls leading Lighthouse Harbor with Women of Marco supplying the turkeys. A big thank you goes out to those helpful volunteers.

The Congregational meeting was held on November 21st with more than 70 congregants. The Budget for 2022 was adopted and many of our committees were recognized and thank you's to many.

I know a busy season is approaching with many get-togethers with family and friends. I want to make sure you stay safe and healthy.

Celebrate (Musical Christmas Event) will be a wonderful evening of entertainment at MLC along with rejoicing at the Esplanade on December 9. Will also celebrate Advent with fellowship and song. A time to be joyful. Come and join in on the fun.

As God , our Faith grows!
Love and God's Blessings to each one of you.

RECOGNITION FROM HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Your support of the 2020 Habitat Thrivent Faith Build made it possible for Michelet and Marie to finally realize their dream of having a home of their own in which to safely raise their sons, 2- year-old Jayden and 1- year-old Jeremiah. When they applied for their Habitat home, Marie and Michelet wanted a safe haven and stable foundation for their children. As we have lived through the pandemic, we see that a safe and decent home has never been more important for the well-being of every individual, especially young children. Michelet and Marie are so grateful for your helping hand. Last June, the family moved into their forever home in Vincent's Acres, Habitat's newest completed community. Without your generous support, families like this would not have the helping hand they need to purchase a safe, affordable home. Thank you for helping Habitat Collier build homes, communities, and hope.



STEWARDSHIP

By Linda Harrison



***Wrap Up Your Year with a Look
at Your Personal Stewardship!***

As brothers and sisters in Christ, we are all called to be good stewards of the many gifts God has given us. And, we offer thanks for those gifts by our donations of time, talent, and treasure.

As we near the end of the year, it is time to take a look at our personal responses to God's grace. Ask yourself:

Are you donating time and talents by serving as an office helper or worship service servant (worship leader, usher, communion assistant, transporter, musician, or choir member)?

Do you participate in outreach activities to serve our community in the name of Jesus? Do you help prepare the church for its many activities throughout the year? Do you return thanks to God with your offerings?

At the recent Congregational Meeting we learned that, in order to come close to balancing the church's budget, the Council needed to cut funding for many important services and initiatives. It isn't too late. We CAN impact the financial health of our congregation by prayerfully considering how you want to increase our personal support of the church's work.

Your Stewardship Committee is in the process of preparing a campaign to enable us to continue to spread God's word throughout the community and offer enlightening services to our congregation. But we need your help. In preparation for the launch of our program, we ask that you take a look at your current level of donation and participation and spend some time in prayer considering what changes you might be able to make to support this congregation and the work it does throughout the community.

Stay tuned for an update on the 2022 Stewardship campaign. We'll be asking you to make a commitment to serve the church and increase your giving to ensure that we'll be able to provide the types of worship experiences that will help our congregation grow spiritually. Thanks for your consideration of these important issues!

Do you know our Great Room is used for many activities, and each of those activities use a different room configuration? We have outside groups, as well as many of our own groups using the room. And each time it is used, the room chairs and tables have to be moved around and changed. It's a labor intensive task, and sometimes has to be done quickly.

The property board is looking for a few more hands to help with set up and tear downs of rooms, particularly the Great Room when needed for all the different activities utilized by the congregation and our friends in the community. If you are interested in helping, please contact Larry Soccio at 239-394-0332 or Tom Kramer at 215-205-3021.

BIBLE STUDIES

Come Join Us!



BIBLE STUDY AT ARTESIA

Bible Class will resume after the holidays on **Monday, January 24, 2022 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.** Artesia is located at 1399 Barefoot Williams Rd, Naples, FL 34113. Our class is held in the clubhouse theater located at 1460 Santiago Circle. A light supper is provided. Call the Church office for entry gate code. 239-394-0332.

DISCOVERY VILLAGE BIBLE STUDY

The study group meets on the **1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month at 10:00 a.m.** at the Independent Living building at **Discovery Village** in Naples: 8375 Sierra Meadows Blvd, Naples, FL 34113. ***Everyone is welcome.*** Guests who are not fully vaccinated must wear a mask. Bring proof of your Covid vaccination.

SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY

Come and join Pastor Tom for our Bible Study on Sunday mornings at **10:45 a.m** following worship in the Great Room. This Study will be on haitus until Jan 9, 2022.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Join Pastor Tom on **Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.** (with fellowship at 9:30 a.m) to discuss "Christ 101 - Christian Apologetics," teaching us how to share our faith with people who are not Christians.

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

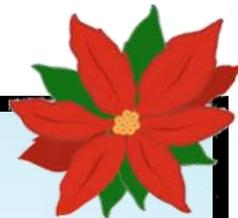
Join the Men's Bible Study every Tuesday **at 8:30 a.m.** in the Choir room. Please bring your Bible (we also have Bibles if you forget) to start a new season of study, discussion and fellowship. The study group will be led by Karl Blomgren and runs until April 2022.

WOMEN OF THE WORD

Women of the Word – Our MLC Women's Bible Study meets every **Wednesday at 10:00 a.m.** Led by Carolyn Ohman. Come and join us for the wonderful study of "The Heart That Grew Three Sizes" by Matt Rawle.

MUSIC NOTES

BY Craig Greusel



C.A.R.O.L.

Come And Rejoice Out Loud!

December 9, 2021 at the Esplanade – 7:00 p.m.

Help us “Sing In” the holiday by being on hand to join in a spontaneous Carol-Sing! FLASH MOD MARCO LUTHERAN STYLE! We need you to go to the Esplanade on December 9 around 7:00 and be ready to sing when you hear someone start singing. Simply get up and join in!



MARCO LUTHERAN CHURCH

CELEBRATE!

The 4th Annual Musical Evening of Community Christmas

CELEBRATE the season with an evening of musical entertainment, including both sacred and secular songs of the season.

December 7 at 7:30 p.m.

Join our guest Artists:

Flute Cocktail, Resound, John Davis, Craig Greusel,

John & Sandy Stein,

Bob Pieske, Chris & Riley High, Island Theater Kids,

Carmen Brookshaw, The MLC Choir.

Rock out with Lucille Gaita & John Davis, the dueling pianos, and sing along with the MLC Choir to your holiday favorites.

FREE TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

WOMEN OF MARCO

By Cindi Kramer



The Women of Marco's mission is to serve Marco Lutheran Church, our Community, and the world. We aim to do that through fellowship, kindness and respect for each other.

The WOM wish to thank the generous contributions of the congregation for their donations to our active military serving overseas. Your generous donations will help them have a better Christmas, and show them there are people who care.



The WOM donated the turkeys for the MLC Thanksgiving dinner which is always a wonderful time for everyone!

December 1 is the Marco Lutheran Church Annual Ladies Christmas Luncheon. This year, to try and keep the lunch at a reasonable price, the luncheon was held in our beautifully decorated great room!

Our very popular rummage sale is scheduled for February 26, 2022.

WOM will be hosting coffee to compliment Pastor Tom and his Christmas Sing-a-long on 11/28, 12/5, 12/12 and as/18. If you would like to join us by making coffee, baking your special treats, serving or cleaning up, all are welcome. There is a sign up sheet in the hall!

As Always! We are collecting: tabs , pretty greeting Cards (new or used) and eye glasses. You can leave them all on the table in the hall.



The Women Of Marco would like to thank everyone who came out to help decorate the church for Christmas this year! Your enthusiasm helped us all be in the Christmas Spirit as we look forward to our Advent Christmas season!

Holiday Blessings to all!

The WOM welcomes all women of the church to join us in any of our activities. We meet on the 3rd Thursday of every month at 1:30 p.m. and always have a full agenda of church activities! Right now, our ladies are hard at work making Chrismons for the huge tree in the Great Room. When you go into the great room, and see the big tree, take notice of the beautiful gold and white decorations. Lots have been made, but we need more and more, so come join us and help us fill the tree!

SAILING SOLO

By Shirley Rhodes



Sailing Solo Singles Group enjoyed a fun time at our November Sunday event learning some Line Dancing steps by our very own teacher Carole Meyer. Fun was enjoyed by both the dancers and the observers. As always Carmen prepared some delicious refreshments.

On December 9 from 11:30 a.m.—2:00 p.m. our members (45) will be attending our annual Christmas Luncheon on the Terrace of Fiddler's Creek Caxambas Resturant.

Along with a delicious lunch, beautiful decorations, fun door prizes and wonderful entertainment by Carmen Brookshaw, we will be enjoying the start of the beautiful Christmas season to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

All singles are invited to our Events on the 3rd Sundays of the month 4-6 PM.
Many exciting upcoming programs in the coming New Year.

SAVE THE DATE for the Sailing Solo's John Davis Concert on Sunday, January 30, at 4:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

Sailing Solo is Marco Lutheran Church's singles ministry that meets on the 4th Sunday from 4:00-6:00 p.m.

Join us for refreshments, discussions, programs, optional projects and lots of good fellowship and fun! For more information, please call

SAILING SOLO BOOK CLUB MEETING

By Betty Fry

Join us on Wednesday, December 15 at 5:30 p.m. For a book adventure! Share the story of one of your recently read books with other ardent book lovers! Join us for the love of reading. All are welcome!



MOVIE NIGHT

Friday, December 10, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

Free admission and snacks!

Looking for a fresh start, Robin (Katharine Isabelle), a recently divorced mother moves to a small town with her daughter, Sophie (Lilah Fitzgerald), where she has purchased a fixer-upper. Needing help with the renovations on her new home, she hires a handyman, Henry (Shawn Roberts), her meddling guardian angel, who helps her with so much more.

DECEMBER

Birthdays

Judy Dukelow	Dec 2
Paul Greene	Dec 2
Carol Horne	Dec 3
Susan Knox	Dec 3
Nancy Kramer	Dec 5
Peggy Pond	Dec 5
Cindi Kramer	Dec 6
Michele Sturzenegger	Dec 6
Fran Klein	Dec 7
Jan Minuitti	Dec 9
Carolyn Ohman	Dec 10
Carol Gore	Dec 11
Michael Knox	Dec 11
Kevin Koenig	Dec 11
Zachary Gremel	Dec 12
Paul Gremel	Dec 13
Dorothy Roberts	Dec 14
Joan Boisse	Dec 15
Carole Meyer	Dec 15
Andy Rozite	Dec 15
George Leksas	Dec 16
Joyce McKenzie	Dec 21
Dick Moody	Dec 22
Jerry Wiens	Dec 22
Donnie Rooksberry	Dec 25
Lyle Sledge	Dec 25
James Strosnider	Dec 25
Kimberly Razavi	Dec 26
Marjorie Witkop	Dec 26
Jim Gilbertson	Dec 27
Kayla Obrenski	Dec 27
Robert Witte	Dec 27
Katelyn Johnson	Dec 29
Jaye Spencer	Dec 29
Mabel Hollenberger	Dec 31

Anniver-

Robert & Shirley McLaughlin	Dec 2
Robert & Barbara Meyn	Dec 7
Wade & Sue Keller	Dec 14
Rodney & Carol Thole	Dec 14
Dan & Christine High	Dec 20
Jim & Audrey Gilbertson	Dec 21
Dwight & Rita Stiehl	Dec 21
Veli & Judy Lapinoja	Dec 23
Barry & Ruth Noffze	Dec 23
Joe & Nancy Sustersic	Dec 26
Andy & Anne Rozite	Dec 27
Rodney & Dorothy Roberts	Dec 29



525 N. Collier Boulevard | Marco Island, Florida 34145

CHURCH OFFICE: 394-0332

www.marcolutheran.org

CHURCH STAFF & CONTACT NUMBERS

Rev. Thomas Boeck	239-394-0332
Rev. Ken Garazin	239-394-0332
Craig Greusel, Music Director	239-250-5200
John Davis, Keyboard Specialist	239-776-1200
Larry Soccio, Facilities Manager	239-394-0332
Betsy Sabbides, Office Manager	239-394-0332
Nancy Piper, Technical Administrator	239-394-0332
Vicki Williams, Office Assistant	239-394-0332



By David Contessa



“When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy”.

– Matthew 2:10.

On behalf of all of us at Thrivent, I want to wish each of you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed, Happy and Healthy New Year!

Thrivent Member Network December 2021 Events

December 3 - 5, 2021 | (Anytime) Christmas with Amy Grant Virtual Concert (Virtual)

Get into the holiday spirit with Contemporary Christian artist, Amy Grant. Sing along to your favorite Christmas songs and learn more about the Queen of Christian Pop during an exclusive interview. View this special online event on your own schedule for three days only.

Register for free - <https://thrivent.me/AmyGrant>

December 8, 2021 | 12:00 PM and 7:00 PM Economic Update (Virtual)

What shapes your financial strategy? See how the latest economic data can help you make informed money decisions. Attend the Economic Update webinar to learn Thrivent’s perspective on the economy and how it could affect your financial strategy.

Register for free - <https://bit.ly/EconomicData123>

Anytime - The Power of Membership

Join the Thrivent Member Network - Southeast Region for an educational webinar to learn about your member benefits and how you can make an impact in the communities where you live, work and worship.

Register for free - <https://bit.ly/memberpower123>

No products will be sold at our events. For additional disclosures, see [Thrivent.com/social](https://thrivent.com/social).

We help Christians find financial clarity, enabling lives full of meaning and gratitude. All are welcome to attend our free virtual events.

Feel free to share the events with your friends and family. Contact us at

SoutheastTMN@thrivent.com or see what’s happening at thrivent.com/southeast or at [Facebook.com/SoutheastTMN](https://facebook.com/SoutheastTMN).

Questions about Thrivent?

Call Thrivent Financial Associate David Contessa at (239) 300-5139.

This season, we will be updating our photo directory, aiming to have a print version by February. If you would like to be included, please email us a head & shoulder shot in a clear electronic photo in a JPEG format.

Couples, please send in a photo of the two of you together.





MARCO LUTHERAN CHURCH

Visiting Scholar Program

Welcomes

Lee Strobel

January 21 –22, 2022

Atheist-turned-Christian Lee Strobel, the former award-winning legal editor of *The Chicago Tribune*, is a *New York Times* best-selling author of more than forty books and curricula that have sold fourteen million copies in total. He currently serves as Founding Director of the Lee Strobel Center for Evangelism and Applied Apologetics at Colorado Christian University.

In 2017, Lee's spiritual journey was depicted in an award-winning motion picture, *The Case for Christ*, which showed in theaters around the world. The movie was on Netflix for three years. Lee won national awards for his books *The Case for*

Christ, *The Case for Faith*, *The Case for a Creator*, and *The Case for Grace*. His latest books are *The Case for Miracles* and *The Case for Heaven*.



Friday, January 21, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, January 22, 2022 at 10:30

a.m., 1:00 p.m. & 2:15 p.m.

ALL EVENTS ARE FREE. PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.

**Visit our website to register:
MARCOLUTHERAN.ORG**



ARTIST SERIES ANNOUNCES 2022 SCHEDULE



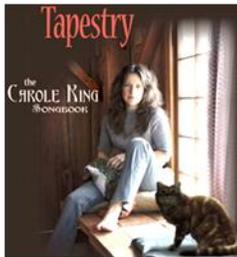
Gary DeLena

Thu Jan 27th &
Fri Jan 28th
7:30 pm



Divas 3

Thu Feb 3rd &
Fri Feb 4th
7:30 pm



The Carole King Songbook

Thu/Fri, Feb 17th & 18th – 7:30 pm



Phil Dirt & The Dozers

Thu Mar 10th &
Fri Mar 11th
7:30 pm



A.R.I.A.

Thu Mar 24th &
Fri Mar 25th
7:30 pm

Season tickets \$110—Individual shows are \$25

(on sale beginning December 6)

Ticket Desk open Mondays & Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Check out the Church website for more information

ArtistSeries@MarcoLutheran.org

239-394-5579



UPDATED WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday Worship will continue to be at 9:30 a.m.
Beginning January 9, 2022, Sunday Worship will be at
8:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

Saturday worship will also begin at 5:00 p.m.
on January 8, 2022.

BOARD OF LAY MINISTRY

By Bob Harrison



It is hard to believe that it is Christmas time already. Many of our Northern neighbors have returned and we have seen a marked increase in our Sunday worship.

As you are aware, until January we will only have one 9:30 a.m. service on Sunday. Our Sunday Worship at 8:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. will begin on January 9, 2022.

We will continue with our Communion Service as we are now, without the Common Cup.

We had a Celebration for Pastor Tom on 11/14/2021. We had refreshments and thanked Tom for all of his hard work. I would like to thank Craig Greusel for his special music. Also I would like to thank the following people for all of their efforts in making this celebration a success: Carmen Brookshaw, Sue Chapin, Bob Lanham, Brenda Richard, Karen Kuhnly, Judy Karlin and Linda Harrison.

We will have Christmas Eve Services on December 24 at 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. There will be no Communion at those two services. There will be a Christmas Day Service on December 25 at 9:30 a.m. with Communion being served. On Sunday, December 26 we will return to our regular 9:30 a.m. service.

YOGA



gentle yoga

Mondays & Thursdays
12:30 p.m. \$5 per session

chair yoga

Mondays & Thursdays
2:00 p.m. \$5 per session





Marco Lutheran Church

WOMEN OF MARCO'S Winter Wonderland

Ladies' Luncheon

Wednesday, December 1

at 11:30 a.m.

in the Great Room

Tickets are \$33

Call the office for

tickets 394-0332



MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR:

Luther & Shakespeare Fellowship Lecture

Sunday, January 2, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

A member of Parliament in Baden-Württemberg, Germany and Marco Lutheran Church Visiting Scholar Alumnus Andreas Sturm, MdL will return to Marco Lutheran Church as our *Luther & Shakespeare Fellowship Lecturer!*

The Lecture is free, please register on our website

www.marcolutheran.org We welcome all to join us! We especially

encourage you to bring children, grandchildren, all youth studying Shakespeare or history in school! It will be an unforgettable evening for all!



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

By Steve Hirsch & Jacquielynn Wolff

The Board of Christian Education and Youth is wishing everyone the most beautiful December and offer our thanks and appreciation to our Bible study leaders who serve our congregation and community. Thank you to the amazing Carolyn Ohman who leads Women of the Word, to Karl Bloomgren who organizes the Men's Bible study class, and Pastor's Ken and Tom who also lead Bible Studies both on and off our campus. As we look back and reflect on 2021, we recognize with deep appreciation our 2021 fall Visiting Scholar, the brilliant and learned Dr. Dale Meyer.

Dr. Meyer is President Emeritus and Professor Emeritus of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. It was such a pleasure and privilege to have Dr. Meyer in residence with us for three days and four incredibly thought-provoking sessions under the heading "*Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow*" (studies in 1st Peter).

Dr. Meyer brought us a poignant session in Bible Blinders among other highly engaging topics; bringing us back in history to the 1st Century A.D. of the Roman Empire when the thoughts, concerns, and daily lives of what we might refer to as "early Christians" were vastly different than for us today. He brought us a sense of deep appreciation and reflection for the liberation that our 1st and 14th amendments allow us which was not available to early Christians who were gruesomely persecuted; impaled and even lit on fire! In the U.S. we are protected from religious prosecution, by our Constitution; how fortunate we are to be living today! Dr. Meyer always brought us back to the **core of his message**, which is **Jesus**, the **Love of Jesus for all of us as we share Jesus's Love with one another**. We encourage everyone to visit Marco Lutheran Church's YouTube page to re-watch or see for the first time the wonderful wisdom shared with us by Dr. Meyer.

Thank you Dr. Meyer; for your time, your wisdom, your energy, your thoughtfulness, your scholarship, and showing such love for Marco Lutheran Church. You join an immensely worthy and impactful fellowship of Marco Lutheran Church Visiting Scholars; we are honored to have you among this company.

A deeply heartfelt thank you to all who volunteered with the Visiting Scholar Program; Betsy Sabbides, Shelbe and Bob Lanam, Jacquielynn Wolff, Patti Naughton, and Van Johnson! We are so grateful and so appreciative for you!



*Pastor Tom Boeck, Dr. Dale Meyer
& Pastor Ken Garazin*

We are honored and privileged to share Visiting Scholar Alumnus Andreas Sturm, MdL, who will be returning to Marco Lutheran Church for the *Luther & Shakespeare Fellowship Lecture* to be given on January 2, 2022! Please Mark Your Calendars for an evening to remember with: scholarship, music, dramatic demonstration and wonderful fellowship!

We are excited to present our 2022 Spring Visiting Scholar, acclaimed author, Lee Strobel who will be at MLC on Jan. 21-22! Reserve your seats now on our website!