



# Spirit of Life Lutheran Church

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January 2020

We spread the gospel through love, acceptance,  
and giving of ourselves for Jesus.



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Web Site:  
<http://spiritoflifejacksonville.org/>



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Amazing! It seems as if we just began Advent—that time of preparation for Jesus's coming into the world—and already it's January! Time really does fly when you're having fun, and when you're as busy as a bee. To tell the truth, all of 2019 seemed a little like a whirlwind.

Our Christmas Eve services were holy and wonderful. More than 80 of us gathered in two services to greet the birth of Jesus and watched as the candle-light illuminated faces full of joy and expectation. At the first service the children wore costumes and treated everyone to a spontaneous Nativity experience. At the second service, we were reverent and relaxed at the same time—just the right frame of heart to welcome our Savior once again.

So, what to expect in January? What to expect in 2020? We expect this will be another year of work mixed with laughter and the sense that we are doing something very important in the Kingdom of God. We expect that the large crowds of people needing food for body and spirit will continue to come to our door, and we will continue to welcome them. We expect to discuss more fully our building expansion program and to perhaps even do some concrete things (you see what I did there?) to make the dream a reality. We expect to have triumphs and also some troublesome times, because after all, we are the Body of Christ, and the world has never been comfortable with us or our mission.

The action kicks off in January as we welcome new members on January 19. There are several families who have been worshipping with us who will be added to our membership that day, thank God! And then on January 26 we will have our regular Annual Meeting. Please remember, at our annual meeting we will be revisiting the matter of whether to have one combined service each Sunday, or two. We have some "paperwork" to do as we approve some minor

changes to our church constitution. We also need some folks to step up to join our Leadership Team, as several of our current members have “timed out”. They’ve done a great job, but now it’s time for the rest of us to share the load and help steer the congregation as it moves forward in 2020.

In all we do, it is important to remember that God is in control of our circumstances, both present and future. His plan is our plan, and His ways are meant to be the model for our actions both inside and outside of our congregational walls. Jesus has promised that nothing—as in not one thing—will stop us as long as we are following Him. To God be the honor and praise and glory forever and ever. AMEN

Pastor Karen

## President’s Corner

**Leadership Team Member: Al Speicher - [speial@comcast.net](mailto:speial@comcast.net) or (904-707-6702)**

Hello Church Family,

Let’s welcome in the Christmas season and New Year with great wonder and excitement. When I count the incredible accomplishments and growth at Spirit of Life, I can only be humbled by everyone’s individual effort to make Spirit of Life Church grow and prosper throughout the past year.

There is no doubt that our faith has been challenged and tested. We all adjust to changes differently. Some like changes and others struggle but, our strength comes from respecting each other and working for a better, faithful life together. I believe that as long as our focus is on Christ, we cannot fail.

My personal goals for Spirit of Life in 2020 are to assist in the development of our music program and manage the acquisition of Portable Buildings, to give the Food Pantry and Church room to expand.

If you thought that we were busy in 2019 with growth and change.... ..... Hold On... we are just beginning! Your Faith, Love, Prayers, and Hard Work will make 2020 even better.

Blessings to you and your families.  
Sincerely,

Al Speicher

## Community Food Pantry and Garden

Steve Carlson - [steveandcasey@yahoo.com](mailto:steveandcasey@yahoo.com) (904)654-6462

*Matthew 25:35. "For I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me"*

The food pantry continued to be busy this month. We exceeded 200 families each week.

We received donations from a friend of Spirit of Life Family as well as an anonymous donation that allowed us to purchase ham, vegetables and macaroni and cheese as a special gift from us, in addition to the normal distribution. We have been blessed! Thank you, God.

We are very proud of all the volunteers we have which include some of our weekly clients. It takes all of us and many prayers to provide food for the body as well as food for the soul.

We will be open Monday, December 23 and closed December 24 and 25<sup>th</sup>. Merry Christmas. We will be open on December 30 and 31 and closed on January 1, 2020. Happy New Year. Weekly numbers:

|                 |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| 11/26 and 11/27 | 277 |
| 12/03 and 12/04 | 200 |
| 12/10 and 12/11 | 224 |
| 12/17 and 12/18 | 256 |

Edith

## Education / Youth

Leadership Team Member: Anita Vance – [anitalvance@gmail.com](mailto:anitalvance@gmail.com) 814-932-0203

### 2019 Annual Children and Youth Report

Sunday School attendance has remained steady with an average range of 8 – 10 children, ranging in ages from 1 year to 11 years old, representing 8 families. On puppet Sundays, we gain more children, as many as 17 which can be challenging. Our wonderful volunteers (Miss Patty and Miss Mary) have been amazing with coordinated crafts and lessons on those days. On the last Sunday of the month, Miss Irene has proven to be a great asset to our discussions with the children. Additional help on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays would be greatly appreciated! Ask a partner to share every other month. All planning and supplies are provided; bring your heart and hands to help support our little ones.

Each week we review the Gospel, how it applies to family and friends and the local community, through guided discussion. Crafts and games are included to reinforce the theme of the week.

Our Children's Christmas Story was an interactive retelling of the Friendly Beasts, an old English Carol. Costumes for the animals (donkey, cow, sheep and dove) in the stable were chosen and the part each played in the Savior's birth was shared with the congregation.

SOL's partnership with Oceanway Elementary gives us a chance to offer support for children in need by donating school supplies, Undie Sunday and the Angel Tree. This year, Our members made Christmas possible for 18 families and 33 children. Each child received gifts of clothing a toy, a book and hand-made stockings (Thank you, Miss Kristina) filled with coloring book and crayons, Christmas puzzles or crafts, a bit of candy and a reminder of the Reason for the Season. Thanks to the Food Pantry, we were blessed with a bag of apples and oranges for each child, as well. The School Secretary, Miss Roberta, shared anecdotes of heartfelt thanks and tearful appreciation by the recipient families. She was extremely thankful that our church has been faithfully supportive for a goodly number of years.

VBS 2019, Superheroes had 28 children registered, with an average of 20 attending daily. Approximately 30% were parish family members, and 70% were new friends. SOL's enthusiastic support by donations of time, talent and supplies make this annual event an amazing opportunity to share God's Love with our church family along with the children in our area.

2020 Theme – Mystery Island, Discovering the power of God's Love. Tentative dates: June 15 – 19 (based on Duval County Schools' Calendar)

## eCommunication

Leadership Team Member: Kristina Aldred – [kaldred@bellsouth.net](mailto:kaldred@bellsouth.net) 678-761-6387

With the starting of a new calendar year, please bring in your Bibles, Guideposts magazines, and daily devotionals for our Food Pantry clients. Feed their bodies. Feed their souls.

In Feb. after the service, there will be a meeting about updating our festivals. We need new ideals & look at different directions we may want to go. Anyone interested is welcome.

If you are not getting eBlasts from the church, please contact Vonda to get added to the distribution list.

# Fellowship and Outreach Ministries

**Outreach Leadership Team Member: Edith Brisson – emb1002@aol.com**

**Fellowship Team Member: Joanne Strynick – jstrynick@yahoo.com**

In December, we assisted Anita with providing Christmas gifts for children in our Oceanway Neighborhood.

The Outreach and Fellowship teams were scheduled to meet on December 8th right after church. No formal meeting was held. Everyone is quite busy getting ready for the holidays.

What are you doing New Years Eve? How about a potluck and Bonfire at the church? There will be lots of good food and family fun. Plan to join us Tuesday, December 31<sup>st</sup> at 5 PM for supper. Bring your comfortable lounge chair for outdoor activities afterwards.

Next meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 12<sup>th</sup> right after church. Please join us to help plan for 2020.

Enjoy a Merry Christmas and remember the Reason for the Season is Christ! Happy New Year 2020.  
JoAnn and Edith

During the month of December we held a banner raffle. The drawing was held on Dec. 15.

Casey Carlson was the winner of the Christmas banner. Congrats to Casey hope you have years of enjoyment. We raised \$191 for the expansion fund. Thanks to all who participated.

Our next event will be our New Years Eve potluck and bonfire. It will start at 5:00. All are invited bring a dish to pass and your choice of beverage. Signup sheet is on the bulletin board.

The Fellowship team hopes everyone had a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!!!

Yours in Christ  
JoAnn



Hello everyone. We are looking to start up a sewing group at SOL. Men, women, young adults are welcome. We are looking at meeting on Thursdays, and it would be start at 10:00 till 12:00 or 2:00. However, these times are all flexible. We may want to do projects for special needs or whatever someone may have an ideal, and/or you may be working on your own project

Interested? Please contact Debby Speicher for your thoughts and ideas.

## Financial Corner

**Leadership Team Member: Brian Vance - [bavance54@gmail.com](mailto:bavance54@gmail.com)**

### ATTENDANCE

|        | <u>Church</u> | <u>SunSchool</u> | <u>TOTAL</u> |
|--------|---------------|------------------|--------------|
| Dec 1  | 51            | 5                | 56           |
| Dec 8  | 63            | 8                | 71           |
| Dec 15 | 62            | 8                | 70           |
| Dec 22 | 51            | 5                | 56           |
| Dec 29 |               |                  |              |

### FINANCIAL CORNER FOR DECEMBER 2019

Envelope Offerings

Designated Fund Donations \$ 8,680.48

12/24 env offerings \$ 532.00 TOTAL EXPENSES \$ 10,425.24

12/29 env offerings 2010

12/31 interest income

TOTAL INCOME \$ 11,222.48

Designated Fund Balances

Pumpkin Patch \$ 1,818.82

VBS \$ 200.00

Spring Fling/Fall Fest \$ 790.55

Fellowship Events \$ 260.01

Call Committee \$ 2,995.02

Food Pantry Income \$ 2,202.00

Food Pantry Expense \$ 1,505.22

Food Pantry Balance \$ 3,942.37

Bldg/Mortgage Balance \$222,401.84

## Property Team

**Leadership Team Member: Debby Speicher - [yayasis@comcast.net](mailto:yayasis@comcast.net)**

On January 18, 9 am - 2 pm we will be having a church work day to move the playground, and to clean up around trailer in back. Please come by and help. Many hands make light work.

## Ruth Circle (WELCA)

Women of the ELCA (WELCA)

Dawn Martin (904)518-6903

January is Thankoffering month gifts from individuals in gratitude for blessings. Lutheran women have been carrying out this tradition for more than 100 years. Women practice the thankoffering daily by setting aside coins in a designated jar or box to support the women ministries of the ELCA. The offerings are turned in annually during the month of January. If you would like to join this tradition of gratitude, there are boxes available on the table in the narthex.

Pie Sale: 50 pies were sold and \$442 was collected. \$300 went to the "Expansion Fund" and this included a generous donation for \$80 that someone made but didn't ask for any pies.

"Love Table": December's table was Christmas items for our Community Food Pantry clients. You made their homes brighter this year. Thank you!

Congregational Christmas Cards: Be sure to check the basket with "A-Z" folders in the Narthex for cards to individuals and families. Also, we tried something new this year. We had a display to hang just one card to the entire Congregation and money saved was donated to the "Expansion Fund". Both of these worked well.

Also be on the lookout in the Narthex for the 2020 Flower Calendar!



Grandma Ruth's Sweet Shop: As always, this was a huge success!!! Many items were sold out before church service even started. Some of these monies will also go to the "Expansion Fund".

Catered (Olive Garden) Christmas Lunch: It was delicious! There were some extra monies left over which were donated to the "Youth Fund".

Next meeting is January 3<sup>rd</sup>, from 10am until noon..

Have a wonderful New Year,  
Dawn Martin



# Worship & Music

**Leadership Team Member: Dan Nichols**

The next Worship and Music Team meeting will be Wednesday, January 15 at 6pm. All who are interested in the form our services take and the music we sing and play during worship are invited to come and be part of this group. We'd love to expand to some drama, alternate sermons, etc, so come with your ideas ready to share!

## January Birthdays

5 Kelly Kirk  
6 David Kirk  
6 Michele Rademacher  
11 JoAnn Stryck  
12 Dale McLarty  
12 Antrone Jones  
15 Jeremy Morrman  
16 Michele Hoyle  
17 Paul Spellman  
18 Derek Ochoa  
21 Lucas Ochoa  
24 Kyle Barone  
25 Pat McLarty  
26 Kassandra DeLaRosa  
26 Kara Wenk  
27 David Messick  
29 Erika Moorman



## January Anniversaries

3 Stephen & Ashley Barnes





# January 2020

| Sun   | Mon                                  | Tue                                  | Wed  | Thu | Fri                       | Sat                               |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|-----|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|   |                                      |                                      | 1<br>New Years Day   | 2   | 3<br>10:00 AM Ruth Circle | 4                                 |
| 5<br>9:00 AM Adult Bible Study<br>10:00 AM Church Service   | 6<br>6:00 PM Leadership Team Meeting | 7<br>10:00 AM Community Food Pantry  | 8<br>9:00 AM "Manna and Mercy Bible Study"<br>10:00 AM Community Food Pantry                                     | 9   | 10                        | 11                                |
| 12<br>9:00 AM Adult Bible Study<br>10:00 AM Church Service<br>11:00 AM Fellowship and Outreach Ministries Meeting | 13                                   | 14<br>10:00 AM Community Food Pantry | 15<br>9:00 AM "Manna and Mercy Bible Study"<br>10:00 AM Community Food Pantry<br>6:00 PM Worship & Music Meeting | 16  | 17                        | 18<br>9:00 AM Church Clean Up Day |
| 19<br>New Member Sunday<br>9:00 AM Adult Bible Study<br>10:00 AM Church Service                                   | 20                                   | 21<br>10:00 AM Community Food Pantry | 22<br>9:00 AM "Manna and Mercy Bible Study"<br>10:00 AM Community Food Pantry                                    | 23  | 24                        | 25                                |
| 26<br>9:00 AM Adult Bible Study<br>10:00 AM Church Service<br>11:00 AM Annual Congregational Meeting              | 27                                   | 28<br>10:00 AM Community Food Pantry | 29<br>9:00 AM "Manna and Mercy Bible Study"<br>10:00 AM Community Food Pantry                                    | 30  | 31                        |                                   |

## Call to Care (Prayer List)

**Passed to Church Triumphant:** - Victoria Elaine Haugen. Please keep Terry and family in your parayers.

**Our Loved Ones:** Hope Bissell, Catherine Spottswood, Sue Patterson, John T., and Kevin

**Our Military members:** Eric, Jeff, Nathan & Anthony

**Chronic Prayers:** Joe, Elizabeth, Ronnie Barnes, Jimmy & Faye Carter, Jackie Corderio (Maggie Spruill sister), Brenda Donaldson, Dan Fisher (Michele Hoyle father, Bob's F-I-L), Larry Fortune, Mary Hall, Julie Hammond, Vicky Haugen, Alan, Larry and Terri Joiner, Barbara Kirkwood, Tammy Machlouf, Erika Moorman, Paul Ruen, and Mary Ellen Sanders (Brenda Murray Mom, Hood family grandmother & great), Betty Smith, Donna Strysick (Gary's Mom, JoAnn MIL), Ted St Martin, and Mildred Taylor

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*Community, Faith and Service*

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**[www.SpiritofLifeJacksonville.org](http://www.SpiritofLifeJacksonville.org)**

This is Christ's Church.  
There is a place for you here.  
We are the church that shares a  
living, daring confidence in God's grace.  
Liberated by our faith, we embrace  
you as a whole person—  
questions, complexities and all.  
Join us as we do God's work in Christ's  
name for the life of the World!