



Spirit of Life Lutheran Church

Jacksonville, FL
2636 New Berlin Rd.
Jacksonville, FL 32226
904-757-9114
Email: chur5900@bellsouth.net

May 2020

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



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



Find Us on Facebook!

Where do we start when some of us haven't seen each other for weeks? How do we dive in to talk about everything that has happened, will happen, or might happen? The best thing is to begin with things we know, and move on from there.

First, Oh, how I miss all of you! Believe it or not, with videotaping, music practice, daily church tasks that have to be done whether we have Sunday service or not—this has been a really busy time for all the pastors of all the churches all over. Most of us were never trained in media for an electronic age! Church is something that is done face-to-face, where we can all see and hear each other. At least, it was, in some bygone day, and most pastors over the age of 50 have fewer computer and electronic skills than we are needing right now. Also, most congregations don't have the pricey equipment for sending out a taped or live-stream service that's really easy to watch, respond to, and understand.

Rather than go over what we don't have, however, let's stress that we DO have a lot of willing souls ready to give their time and efforts to put something about our love of Jesus into your homes on a regular basis. Pastors have a joke (a little joke, not all that funny) that when we are able to gather again, most people will want to have their pj's and coffee with them in the sanctuary, because they will feel lost being back in "The Church" again. We know that's not really true, because you have all been so faithful to comment on our services, and to send in your offerings, and to remind US that we are not forgotten. Spirit of Life has managed to pay our bills and maintain our property, and for that we thank God, and we thank your generous hearts. Please continue to remember our on-going missions still need support.

We don't know yet the exact date when we will be able to gather in the sanctuary together. There are a lot of things that have to happen for us to do that safely. We have individually wrapped wine-and-wafer packets for communion—communion!!—but we must devise ways to get them passed in a safe and sanitary manner. We have disinfectant, but we have to plan a schedule and a team for disinfecting! We have masks and gloves, but we need people to follow safe and sane guidelines. We may not be allowed to sing at first—who knows? Your Leadership Team is working hard to iron out the kinks and come up with some plan that will be acceptable to our insurance carriers, because we can't get the go-ahead until it's safe in ALL ways.

We must also come up with a way for folks to safely enter and exit the church, and sit without breaking social distancing guidelines. We've thought of several ways to do it, but which way is best? We just don't know what worship will "look like" for the first couple of months, so for now, we have to all be hopeful and patient, and realize that there will be quite a lot of trial and error. Sunday School for adults and children will NOT be possible at first, because we would have to disinfect the entire building between those great lesson times and the worship service. For now, it will be step by step with God leading the way, reminding us that God's Word is active and alive, and that God's Spirit of Life is present with us all. As we develop guidelines and procedures, we will surely keep you informed. You are the Spirit of Life that God has sent to Jacksonville, and we keep this always in our minds and hearts. Pray for one another, be gracious and patient, love one another as if we were all one family—because we ARE.

May the blessings of the Father, Son +, and Holy Spirit guide you in all faithfulness and joy.

Blessings to you all.
Pastor Karen

President's Corner

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

Blessings, peace and grace to everyone. I hope each of you are coping with the social and work restrictions by keeping a smile on your face and God in your heart.

Our church may be able to have services soon. We will be monitoring the State and City guidelines and keeping you informed. In preparation, we have begun discussions on how the first services and communion may be conducted. Pastor Karen and the Worship Committee will be working on the details of our first services.

It will feel like a 'Family Reunion' when we can begin worshipping together! Stay tuned for a date.

The loan for completing the Modular Building is almost complete. The tenacity of Vonda and the Finance Team was able to start and keep this charging forward. We will be financially ready to complete our work when the permitting on our modular building is approved. Our Food Pantry capacity is growing and we need additional space for food storage. Our contractor has given us permission to begin storing food in the building while awaiting permit processing.

The Church mower has received its annual service. The monies for this service were donated. Our church friend John, has used his tractor and bush hog to clear out the nasty weeds and briers around the pond. A few days later, the weeds and briers were sprayed. Also, a portion of the pond water weeds were treated a few weeks ago. We are only doing a small section at a time to avoid too much decay in the water that will take away the oxygen from the fish. The monies for the weed killer / pond treatment were donated to the church. Our friend John donated his time and equipment use as a church tithing.

Our future thoughts for the church pond include; additional clearing of the pond banks of trees and weeds, continuing weed control around pond, underwater pond weed control, and perhaps adding a pond fountain as an aerator to encourage healthy pond fish.

A special, "Thank You" to those helping to keep the church lawn and parking lots looking good. We will be worshipping together very soon.

AL Speicher

Community Food Pantry and Garden

Edith Brisson – emb1002@aol.com

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"

We continue to be able to serve our community with food for the body and the soul. This week we served 362 families. Tuesday is a big day for us with cars circling the parking lot. Even though our hours are 10 to noon, some are here at 7:30 AM on Tuesday.. Wednesday is much slower. with little to no waiting. We are blessed to have partners who bring us additional items to give out when we need it most. Thank you to all who keep us in your thoughts and prayers. A big thank you to Jo and Gary Strysick, Brian and Anita Vance, Dawn Martin. Karen Beaumont and Bob Schneck who have stayed well and are physically present each week to lend a hand and smile and offer words of encouragement as our clients drive through.

Community Garden is thriving. Gary keeps it planted with seasonal vegetables. Food pantry clients are still able to pick what is available.

We need shopping plastic and paper bags please.

God's Peace to All,
Edith Brisson



Education / Youth

Leadership Team Member: Anita Vance – anitalvance@gmail.com 814-932-0203

The “Little Library” has been doing very well, but we are in need of children’s books.

I am sorry to say VBS cannot happen this summer, but I hope we can offer something.

Peace,
Anita

eCommunication

Leadership Team Member: Kristina Aldred – kaldred@bellsouth.net 678-761-6387

Are you watching Sunday Services on our FaceBook page? If you are having difficulty viewing them, please contact me.

Ministry Teams

Pastor - Pastor Karen Biggerstaff

Music Director - Mike Spotswood

Office and Congregation Secretary - Vonda Miller

Leadership Team

President - Al Spiecher

Vice President - Debbie Burrell

Secretary - Micah Polichnia

Treasurer - David Williams

Gathering and Servicing Community

eCommunication - Kristina Aldred

Community Food Pantry & Garden - Gary Strynick

Fellowship Ministry - JoAnn Strynick

Outreach Ministry - Debby Speicher

Building Faith

Education / Youth - Anita Vance

Worship & Music - Vonda Miller

Ministry Support

Financial Management - David Williams

Property - Brian Vance

Fellowship and Outreach Ministries

Outreach Leadership Team Member: Debby Speicher - yayasis@comcast.net

Fellowship Team Member: Joann Strynick – jstrynick@yahoo.com

Fellowship is on hold until we can again get together. I think it would be great to have a potluck dinner when we can again get together as a church family. Miss you all and God Bless...

Jo

Dear Pumpkin Patch Partner,

We hope this finds all of our partners and their congregations safe. We have had a number of calls regarding the upcoming Pumpkin Patch season. We wanted to touch base and let you know that we will be proceeding as though it were a normal year.

We will plant the same number of acres and have all inventory items as we have in previous years. We will also be moving forward with building our delivery schedule. If you haven't completed your Request to Ship Form, one will be sent to you via email later today. If you are able to go ahead and send in your Request to Ship form, with your preferred delivery dates, that will allow us to proceed with getting the deliveries scheduled.

Obviously, there are still many unknowns surrounding the virus and what the long-term outcome will be. If at any time your congregation is uncomfortable proceeding with the patch for 2020, just notify us at least 15 days prior to delivery. There will be no penalty incurred.

We, as always, want to thank you for being a valued partner of Pumpkin Patch Fundraisers. We hope everyone stays safe and we are looking forward to a fun and successful pumpkin patch season for everyone!

Thanks so much,

Pumpkin Patch Fundraisers

Financial Corner

Leadership Team Member: David Williams

Though we are not physically at the church, congregational life must go on. You may drop off your offerings at the church (the church office will be open on a limited basis please call Vonda at 904-483-7948 before you stop in), mail your church to Spirit of Life, 2636 New Berlin Rd. You can make a one-time or reoccurring payment from your financial institution bill pay program to Spirit of Life Lutheran Church, our financial institution is TIAA, account #0379375801, routing #063092110. Also, a donation can be made directly by clicking on the following link:

<https://spiritoflifeofferings.square.site/>

FINANCIAL CORNER FOR APRIL 2020

<u>Envelope Offerings</u>	\$ 8,160.50	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 9,178.52
COJ - voting princinct	\$ 200.00		
4/30 interest	\$ 2.10		
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 8,362.60	<u>Designated Fund Balances</u>	-
Food Pantry Income	\$ 70.00	Pumpkin Patch	\$ 1,818.82
Food Pantry Expense	\$ 111.94	VBS	\$ 200.00
Food Pantry Balance	\$ 3,914.43	Spring Fling/Fall Fest	\$ 790.55
		Fellowship Events	\$ 260.01
Bldg/Mortgage Balance	\$218,030.56	Call Committee	\$ 2,995.02



BLDG Expansion balance	\$ 5,026.85
Loan fee for additional 25K	\$ 850.00

We have been approved for \$8300 for payroll expenses by applying for funds provided by government Small business association. This loan should be treated as a grant but the government has not provided our banking institution the terms of the loan forgiveness program portion.

Mission investment (MIF) has completed and approved our mortgage refinance with an additional \$25K to complete new building. The funds should be received by June 1.

Property Team

Leadership Team Member: Brian Vance - bavance54@gmail.com

A huge, Huge, HUGE "Thank you" to Richard and Dee Crawley for taking care of cutting the grass at SOL.

We need volunteers to help with cutting the grass, weed eating, and blowing off the sidewalks. The work is outdoors so Social Distancing shouldn't be a problem.

We would like a least 2 teams with 2 -3 people per team so the work can be spread out between everyone.

Please help keep our church looking beautiful by contacting Al (707-6702) or Debby (318-0964).

The last week of February saw the arrival of our new building. Pastor has christened it "The Blessing". The roof has been painted. A damaged piece of siding has been replaced. Some other exterior painting has also been done. We are waiting on the official go ahead from the city before we can really get started. On February 29 many people helped clear trees and brush from around the pond. Work to beautify that area is ongoing. A big thank you to all who turned out. An emergency light by the office was also replaced on the 29th.

Another big thank you to everyone who helped set up and tear down for Vicky Haugen's celebration of life.

AND to all those who helped put up chairs after the service on March 15 to make room for the voting equipment

Tammy Martin has been working hard getting the building ready for when we can meet again. Thank you Tammy.

Ruth Circle (WELCA)



Women of the ELCA (WELCA)

Dawn Martin (904)518-6903

While Ruth Circle has not been meeting please remember about the Food Pantry's "Love Table" while doing your Spring cleaning.

A special "Thank You" to Vicki & Terry Haugen for the treasures that the food pantry clients are enjoying.

Blessings,
Dawn Martin

<u>May Birthdays</u>	<u>May Anniversaries</u>
2 Sirena Mia DeLaRosa 2 Penny Lantz 5 Debby Speicher 8 Tyler Vickery 15 Dan Nichols 16 Michael Spottswood 20 Evangeline DeLaRosa 22 Mary Elwood 22 Toni Hennis 24 Jasmine Roziers 28 John Bostick	7 Dale & Kim McLarty 21 Ronnie & Cathy Barnes 29 Robert & Mary Williams 
	

Call to Care (Prayer List)

Our Loved Ones: Mary Ellen Sanders (Brenda Murray Mom, Hood family grandmother & great), Betty Jones, Lauren Higginbotham, Katherine Thomas, Margaret Sloan and Michele Rademacher

Our Military members: Eric, Jeff, Nathan & Anthony

Chronic Prayers: Larissa Hinman, Cathy, Eric Holt, Donna Strynick, Kevin Demarest, Cathy M, Jimmy & Faye Carter, Jackie Corderio (Maggie Spruill sister), Dan Fisher (Michele Hoyle father, Bob's F-I-L), Wayne Hanna (Tammy Martins father), Larry and Terri Joiner, Barbara Kirkwood, Sandra Mullins, Sue Patterson , and John Tucker

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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!