



# Spirit of Life Lutheran Church

Jacksonville, FL  
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August 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!

Happy August!! After April--which was about 200 days long, and May & June--which were not much better—we have finally come to the time when we can gather at church again. It has been good to be together, even with masks and social distancing. Certainly, we'd prefer not to bother with those things, but since we love one another, it's worth the effort to praise God together, and to feel secure that we are not irresponsibly spreading any kind of danger to vulnerable family members.

Have you been to worship lately? If not, let me ask you—WHY? Many of us are in the “tender and vulnerable” age of over 50...but if you are going anywhere outside your home, let me assure you that you are probably much safer gathering at church than you are elsewhere. We sanitize the sanctuary, take temperatures, wear gloves and masks, and sit in socially distanced groups. We even have individual communion wafers and cups, which no one handles but the person who is communing. We have left nothing to chance. So why not give it a try? Each week the number of folks who gather grows, but we miss our brothers and sisters who have not yet shown up. It's been a tough year, but we have much to celebrate as we move forward into the second half of 2020! Come to hear all the details.

Right now, we are not equipped to have a children's ministry program, but we hope to begin that again as our pandemic and panicky world moves into phase 3 of our Covid-19 program. Brian and Anita Vance are planning to move to be closer to their grandchildren, so our Buddy the Bunny ministry is on hold, and we're seeking a new Christian Education Director. In a small congregation, creativity is the key to having a robust children's program. If you're interested in giving it a try, please let me know.

We're close to "hooking up" all the things that will allow us to occupy our new mobile building. We desperately need the space, and the impressive (and overwhelming) growth of the Food Pantry only underlines that need. Spirit of Life has been awarded a grant for \$4,000 from the Florida-Bahamas Synod to be used for more Food Pantry equipment, so there's site planning and interior decoration planning going on. I know you could contribute to the flurry of ideas and excitement—why not come and see just what we are hoping to do. We thank the synod for demonstrating their faith in us.

We can use every single volunteer who can stand on two feet to help with our flood of clients at the Food Pantry. Could you come Monday, to help stage and get things ready for clients? Could you come on Tuesday, when the need is really greatest? Tuesdays are not for the faint of heart, but not every job requires extreme physical fitness, either. Then on Wednesday, there is a steady flow of customers, but nothing like we experience on Tuesday. Really, ANY day could work out, if you could volunteer. If you're interested, please contact Gary or Jo Stryck. Also, don't forget to invite neighbors and friends to come and help, too. All are welcome and there's enough for everyone to share in the work.

This Covid-19 situation has really affected every part of our lives, and our congregation is no exception. We've had extraordinary expenses, and some folks—for very understandable reasons—have not been mailing or bringing in their weekly offerings like they used to do. Please remember that, just like with your home, Spirit of Life has on-going expenses whether we gather together or not. I know it may be last on your To-Do List, but tithes and offerings are our pledge of faithfulness to God's work. Please mail in your donations, or better yet, bring them with you on Sunday at 10am when you come to worship.

In everything we do, we praise God and give thanks for the ways in which we have been blessed.

In Christ's love,  
Pastor Karen

## President's Corner

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

Hello Spirit of Life Congregation. I must say, I think wearing a mask during service improves my singing. Even Debby, sitting next to me, does not complain. Please worship with us on Sunday and see if a mask improves your singing.

I know it is difficult to worship the way we have to, to be safe. However, worshipping together, even in this new way, is WORSHIP. It certainly renews my spirit to see everyone and know we share God's Love.

Our Food Pantry continues to set new records for serving our community. Debby continues to push and prod our general contractor to begin getting our water and electricity for the new modular building. Do you recall a worship song words...'**Soon and Very Soon**'? Keep this in your prayers.

The Synod's Disciplinary Hearing Panel has rendered its decision. The Leadership Team has reviewed and accepted their decision. Pastor Karen and I are awaiting constitutional direction from the Synod for formal communication to the congregation. If you have questions please see Pastor Karen or myself.

As you know, our church operates every day in some capacity and the 'bills' do not get Covid-19. I want to thank everyone who is able to continue their tithing each Sunday. I know some members are in a high-risk category and cannot be with us Sunday but, each week continue to send what they are able. A sincere **"Thank You"** and many blessing to all.

Soon and very soon we are going to worship without a mask,  
Soon and very soon we are going to have electricity and water to our Modular Building,  
Soon and very soon we will be able to see everyone at our Sunday Service,  
Soon and very soon we will..( *your turn* ).....

Al Speicher  
Leadership Team President

## 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"*

Each week in July we served over 400 families. We are seeing new faces as well as some long time families who continue to be in need.

We thank God for allowing us to continue this mission and making sure that we have enough. The final week of July was our highest number with 469 families served. 290 on Tuesday and 179 on Wednesday came to our Food Pantry.

The new building has been used for storage only as we work toward getting it ready for actual use. A big THANK YOU to Pastor and Vonda who found a grant from the synod and applied for \$4000 to assist in getting large ticket items such as freezer and refrigerator in preparation for using the new building. It was indeed a blessing to hear the announcement that Spirit of Life had received a check for \$4000. Vonda had a way with words. Thank you.

Food pantry is in need of volunteers to lift and to load trunks on Tuesday and Wednesday from 8:30 until Noon. We go through the plastic and paper bags as quickly as you bring them so keep bringing them. We have to bag many of the items that we give to the clients and at over 400 per week that is a lot of bags.

Finally thank you to all who support us with your thoughts and prayers and donations and time.

Edith

## Education / Youth

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

If you haven't heard, Brian and Anita Vance will be moving soon to be closer to family.

THANK YOU both for all your hard work, prayers, and love!

## eCommunication

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

Thank you to our Spirit Of Life family for all of the love, prayers and support over the last 41/2 months. The visits, cards, calls, texts and social media posts have been helpful to our family during this difficult time. Additional thanks for those that were able to make it to Lauren's memorial service. May GOD'S blessings and peace be with you all.

Love,  
Higginbotham family

## Fellowship and Outreach Ministries

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

Fellowship Team Member: Joann Stryck – [jstryck@yahoo.com](mailto:jstryck@yahoo.com)

Greetings to everyone! As everyone knows all our plans and activities are currently on hold. We are looking forward to being able to get together again for movies, potlucks, bonfires and just coffee and treats. Until this becomes a reality we will just distance gather, hug and love each other.

Yours in Christ  
JoAnn



We've asked to take delivery October 8 (Thursday), 9 (Friday) or 10 (Saturday). We are awaiting the news from the Pumpkin Patch officials to confirm the time and date of delivery.

This is the only fundraiser that Sprit of Life has. Last year, the Patch sales allowed us tithe to the church and donate \$2719.55 to the building expansion fund. Keep in mind that open air patches are safer for shopping than retail stores. Many activities associated with the holiday will possibly be cancelled (trick or treating, costumes & gatherings) but pumpkin carving will be one of the few activities safely available. Currently, the patch will operate under the governor's mask requirement and CDC safe distancing guidelines. We hope you can share in our excitement and anticipation of some crisp, fall air.

Thank you,  
Vonda and Debby S.



Outreach Ministries is calling to all who have minimal or advanced sewing or craft skills. We will be setting up tables at the Pumpkin Patch to sell our crafts with proceeds going to helping SOL's budget. Please look at your talents and help fill the tables and contact Debby S about your donations 904-318-0964.

## Financial Corner

Leadership Team Member: David Williams

### FINANCIAL CORNER FOR JULY 2020

<b>Envelope Offerings (TIAA)</b>	<b>\$ 6,216.65</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 11,562.56</b>
FP xfer for \$512.23 JEA bill	\$ 100.00		
Ricoh payment overage	\$ 215.52	<b>Designated Fund Balances</b>	-
leftover call committee funds	\$ 2,995.02	Pumpkin Patch	\$ 1,818.82
7/31 interest		VBS	\$ 200.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 9,527.19</b>	Youth (CF)	\$ 479.97
		Youth Gathering (CF)	\$ 394.60
<b>FP ELCA COVID 19 grant</b>	<b>\$ 4,000.00</b>	Spring Fling/Fall Fest	\$ 790.55
Food Pantry Income	\$ 187.00	Fellowship Events	\$ 260.01
Food Pantry Expense	\$ 253.96	Misc. Memorials (CF)	\$ 5,701.60
<b>Food Pantry Balance</b>	<b>\$ 8,050.81</b>	Property Projects (CF)	\$ 3,799.82
Bldg Expansion donation	\$50.00		
<b>Bldg Expansion (CF) BALANCE</b>	<b>\$ 5,019.23</b>	(CF) Community First Credit Union	

## Property Team

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

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).

## 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" and the need for plastic bags.

Dawn Martin

## Worship & Music

Leadership Team Member: Vonda Miller

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WHAT'S MISSING?

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The worship team has been making a diligent effort to keep our family connected while we were unable to be together at the church. On a weekly basis, we made the worship plan available via email or mailed to our members who are not electronically connected.

We opened our doors for worship July 12th and are together once more. We have spruced up the narthex, minimized hard surfaces and continue to ensure all are cleaned & disinfected before and after worship. For your safety, we are requiring members to have their temperature taken at the door (100 or above sorry no entry). Individual communion sets, masks & gloves are being provided and required. The sanctuary has been set up according to CDC social distancing recommendations. Currently, we are not sharing the peace, having bible study, nursery, or children's church. The children are worshipping in the sanctuary as we await the lessening of restrictions.

The offerings are being placed in the trays at the exit doors. If you have not been to church to submit your offerings, you can do so by mailing in your check, make a one-time or reoccurring payment from your financial institution bill pay program to Spirit of Life Lutheran Church. We bank with TIAA, account#0379375801, routing # 063092110. If you'd like to make a donation online, please use the following link: <https://spiritoflifeofferings.square.site/>.

If you or any of your loved ones are feeling anxious, lonely or just need someone to talk to please do not hesitate to contact Pastor Karen directly at 231-343-4426 or [karen@biggerstaff.pro](mailto:karen@biggerstaff.pro).

We continue to strive to give everyone a meaningful and joyful worship experience. We are open for improvements and welcome your compliments, comments, and suggestions.

WELCOME  
*Home*

Your Worship Team

<u>August Birthdays</u>		<u>August Anniversaries</u>	
3	Tom Meissgeier	2	Herbert & Julie Roziars
4	Brennan Hood	8	Silas & Betty Jones - <b>60 YEARS !!</b>
5	Kelli Hood	9	Mike & Maggie Spruill
8	Sophia Polichnia	13	Brian & Anita Vance
9	C'ana Bilbro		
12	Robert Williams		
16	Betty Jones		
19	Brittany Hoyle		
21	Brenda Higginbotham		
24	Kelly Matthews		
27	Brandon Higginbotham		
31	Theresa Rademacher		



## Call to Care (Prayer List)

**Our Loved Ones:** Kyle Barone, Dorothy Cook

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

**Chronic Prayers:** Fred Covalt (Kristina Aldred's father), Chris Bock (Claudia Moreash's brother), Micah Polichnia, Katherine Thomas, Mary Ellen Sanders (Brenda Murray's Mom, Hood familys' grandmother & great), Larissa Hinman, Cathy, Donna Strysick, Cathy M, Jimmy & Faye Carter, Jackie Corderio (Maggie Spruill's sister), Dan Fisher (Michele Hoyle's father, Bob's F-I-L), Wayne Hanna (Tammy Martins' father), Larry and Terri Joiner, Barbara Kirkwood, Sandra Mullins, and Sue Patterson



### **WE CAN'T PRAY FOR WHAT WE DON'T KNOW**

PLEASE, PLEASE BELIEVE WE CARE AND WANT TO LIFT YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES UP IN PRAYER.

You can share your requests on Sunday before the announcements, call, text or email the Pastor and/or the church office.



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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!