



Spirit of Life Lutheran Church

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

January 2021

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



In This Issue

- Pastor's Letter
- President's Corner
- Community Food Pantry & Garden
- Education/Youth
- eCommunication
- Fellowship & Outreach Ministries
- Financial Corner
- Property Team
- Ruth Circle (WELCA)
- Worship & Music
- Prayer List
- Celebrations

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



Find Us on Facebook!

The year dragged on so long...and yet, these last few weeks have seemed to rush by in a blur. In spite of conflict, confusion, and crushing separation that seemed impossible to maintain—once again we were in a rush to get to the manger! I wonder what 2021 will bring, and yet I'm hesitant to look too far into the future because I don't want to miss anything important that's happening around us.

And that's part of the problem, isn't it? In a year which we will probably remember less-than-fondly, there have been positive insights, gains, and moves forward in our lives and in our faith family. God has not abandoned us, and God WILL NOT abandon us, and that's something we all need to slow down and learn by heart. God doesn't help us out of the human messes into which we get ourselves—God stands by us, and teaches us how to use what we've learned at great cost. Let's not rush to shake the dust of 2020 off our shoes. In these last few days of a wearing and weary year, let's think about what we've learned.

We've learned:

There is always room for togetherness—even if it's a strange kind of gathering, one which we would never have chosen for ourselves. We've had the need and the joy of being involved in a faith family during some very hard times, and for that we thank God.

There's a great deal we miss when we can't see one another's faces. As "grown up" as we are, we still can be lifted up by the power of an unmasked smile. And, on the other hand, many of us have had to admit that at times, masks can be useful social tools to prevent us from over-sharing. Perhaps we've learned a bit about how to rely on unexpected partnerships, and revised some previously uncalled-for judgments we made about other people. Maybe we've begun to really grow up in our faith! And for that, we thank God.

We have learned that, when we get out of the “habit” of attending worship on a regular basis, it’s difficult to make coming to church a fixed point in our weeks and our year. We’ve learned that not everyone feels the same way we do about life, or family, or faith—and that, as long as we continue to be aware of, and faithful to, the Holy Spirit in our lives, it’s okay to allow some differences in how we see, hear, and understand our God. And for that, we thank God.

I hope we have also learned that God has great plans for Spirit of Life Lutheran Church, and the only thing we really have to fear is giving up before we see the flowering of all the new things that 2020 has planted in our congregation. At this end of a very stressful year, we are together because God has put us together for this kind of time in this place. And for that, we thank God.

May the world’s new year somehow “catch up” to the wonder of the new church year we’ve begun together. God’s blessing on all of us.

Blessings!!
Pastor Karen

President’s Corner

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

Zoom, Zoom, Zoom, the year is gone. Praying for an awesome 2021 is our next year’s goal. We pray for the Covid-19 vaccine distribution, people returning to work, our children returning to school, our business reopening and recovering. That is a lot of praying! There is enough for all of us to pray daily. Please take time to invoke the power of prayer for our church and community.

The church modular building blueprints had to be redrawn because the original drawings designer has passed and there needed to be changes for Florida.

Our General Contractor has completed the revised blueprints and they are at the City’s Building Inspector’s office for approval. When approved, the General Contractor will begin installing up the plumbing and wiring. Remember the song, ‘Soon and Verry Soon’ ? Praying it applies to our new building.

Recently Debby found a supplier for Food Pantry shelving and upright freezers. We purchased and delivered the shelving. The freezers are being evaluated and pricing being negotiated. We have been so blessed to have Roland and our young ladies leading our worship songs. Wearing masks or face shields usually hinders voices but we must continue complying with CDC guidelines. Perhaps soon some of our worship restrictions will be lifted.

Bri created Outreach signs and distributed the signs in new neighborhoods. These signs were inviting people to worship for Christmas Eve and beyond. I encourage everyone to look for opportunities to invite a friend or neighbor to worship.

Your Leadership Team is preparing documents and budgets for our Annual Congregational meeting in January 2021. Next year we expect CDC to ease the Covid-19 restrictions and perhaps we begin youth / children’s church and church wide events. We do not have any dates, just hoping so...

Blessings, Peace and Grace, Al Speicher

eCommunication

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

Spirit of Life's FaceBook On-line Craft Fair brought in almost \$200! This money will go into the general operating fund to help us pay our monthly bills. I want to personally thank both those who donated the crafts and those who bought them. Maybe we will do this again this year. Or better yet, maybe we can have a craft fair with our Pumpkin Patch.

DID you know that we have a **Little FREE Library** located on our church property?

It is one of the largest grassroots book-sharing network in the world! With many schools and public libraries closed, Little Free Library book-sharing boxes are more important than ever. Your contribution will help build community, inspire readers and expand book access for all. It's easy to contribute just bring any of your new or used magazines, periodicals or books of any kind to the church that we can fill our box with. [Donations can be left in the church office.](#)



Peace,
Kristina

Fellowship and Outreach Ministries

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

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

Happy New Year to all. Out Reach ended the year on a very happy note. We had a wonderful outpouring of Christmas decorations donated to the annual Christmas decoration giveaway which was very successful. So many people were able to have decorations that may not have been able to because of the generosity of all those here at Spirit Of Life. Also, the mystery/grab bag that we had during the Christmas decoration giveaway was a lot of fun for everyone & it also was very successful! We were able to raise \$243 that was donated to the general fund here at the church. Thanks to everyone who helped make both of the outreach projects of success. We could not have done this without everyone's help! We are looking to have a garage sale sometime during the month of February or March. Please keep us in mind as you clean out your closets, thank you

Debby



Financial Corner

Leadership Team Member: David Williams - dwilliamsf@gmail.com

ATTENDANCE

Dec. 6	27
Dec. 13	36
Dec. 20	34
Dec. 24	26
Dec. 27	30

FINANCIAL CORNER FOR DECEMBER 2020

Envelope Offerings (TIAA)	Total Expenses \$8357.40	
Offerings	6,322.07	December operating carryover balance \$4105.44
Craft Fair Dec sales (total 198)	118.00	
Christmas grab bag fundraiser	243.00	Designated Fund Balances
FP paying for Dec JEA bill	410.79	Pumpkin Patch 537.21
Saved by the Sea (total 220)	118.00	VBS 200.00
TOTAL INCOME	7,211.86	Youth (CF) 522.22
		Youth Gathering (CF) 394.80
Food Pantry Income	817.00	Spring Fling/Fall Fest 650.64
Food Pantry Expense	614.15	Fellowship Events 260.01
Food Pantry Balance	7,614.10	Misc. Memorials (CF) 5,707.62
		Property Projects (CF) 2,603.15
BALANCES		
Mission Investment (mortgage)	241,471.77	
Bldg Expansion (CF)	29,971.34	(CF) Community First Credit Union

ANNUAL GIVING STATEMENTS

The annual giving statements have been printed and you should receive them in the mail this week. If they are not received by January 10th, please contact the church office via email or phone: if there's no answer leave a voicemail. The financial team has begun an audit of the 2020 church records. What does that mean to you? We need your help by you taking a few minutes of your time and reviewing your giving statement. If you find a discrepancy in your statement, please contact David Williams, Treasurer via phone call, text, or email at 904-755-8650 or dwilliamsf@gmail.com.

Thank you,
Vonda, Financial Secretary

Property

Leadership Team Member: Dan Nichols - r.daneel.nichols@gmail.com

Thank you Dan for volunteering to lead our Property Team!

Ruth Circle (WELCA)

Women of the ELCA (WELCA)

Dawn Martin (904)518-6903

Our Purpose Statement:

As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship on Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, We commit ourselves to grow in faith, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world.

We will continue on sabbatical until March or when it is possible to meet in the church.

Continue to be strong, be not afraid, and remember GOD is always with you to the end of the age.

Have a year filled with blessings,
Dawn Martin

Worship & Music

Leadership Team Member: Vonda Miller - ontrey64@gmail.com

It was a strange December! We usually have all sorts of activities and special worship times during Advent to help us prepare to welcome the Baby Jesus. But with Covid-19, everything was pretty much either outdoors or cancelled. The world might be in the midst of a pandemic, but the birth of our Savior is the best news ever told. What should—or could—we do to remind the world of that good news?

Well, on the Worship Team, we don't take our Advent and Christmas lightly, so we came up with a new plan. We went outside, and sang Christmas carols to the world as it went by on New Berlin Road! Each evening, traffic slows near our property due to the huge number of people going home from work and school. Since we couldn't visit folks and sing, we went to the edge of our church yard and caroled our hearts out—carefully spaced apart, of course. If people normally pass our little church without even noticing—we put a stop to that! Now they know that Spirit of Life Church not only exists, but it is filled with the people who love the Lord. We had a great time, too. And it didn't rain, as we were afraid it might. But, oh, was it cold! After singing every Christmas song any of us knew (thanks to Vonda for the book of lyrics, and to Mike for his masterful music on his own portable equipment), we retired to the church kitchen for hot chocolate and snacks. When we had thawed out, we decided to make caroling to our community an annual event—even though we hope and pray that next year we won't have to be socially distanced!!

A special devotion was sent out to our members each Saturday during Advent as a way of saying that, even if we couldn't join together for our customary Advent meals and activities, we are still one faith family. We have also been sending out copies of our Sunday worship bulletins for those among us who for one reason or another are homebound. Since our services are posted on our Facebook page, folks who have no way of getting to church (or who are at-risk during this time) can still take part in the service and sing and pray along with the rest of us. During this tightly-controlled time, we have had to cut back on our music (it seems that the long breaths we take to “make a joyful noise” can send any potential viruses flying long distances), and toned down our worship services. But we are so grateful to be together that it doesn't seem to matter all that much to most of us.

We hope to see you at worship soon. Nothing says love and grace more than our thoughts, hopes, and prayers when we are able to get “2gather”. We regularly sanitize our facility, and we wear masks and some of us wear gloves. You are certainly safer and less likely to “catch” anything at worship than you are almost anywhere else in town these days. Unless, of course, you catch a deep, lasting love of God and God's people. Come join us in person when you can, or catch up with us on-line. Happy New Year!

<u>Birthdays</u>		<u>Anniversaries</u>	
1	Annelise Spottswood	3	Stephen & Ashley Barnes
6	Michele Rademacher		
11	JoAnn Stryck		
12	Antrone Jones		
15	Jeremy Moorman		
16	Michele Hoyle		
20	Emmeline Spottswood		
24	Kyle Barone		
25	Pat McLarty		
26	Kassandra DeLaRosa		
26	Kara Wenk		
28	Mike Spottswood		
29	Erika Moorman		



Call to Care (Prayer List)

Our Loved Ones: Fred, Brian, Kathi (Kristina's family), Virginia, Peggy (June's SIL) and Ann

Our Military members: Brandon, Jeff, Nathan and Anthony

Chronic Prayers: Mary Elwood, Steve Eunice, June and John Hanson (Moorman family members), Rita Hays, Betty Mallard, Amanda Bennett, Cathy Edwards, Dorothy Cook, Bri Polichnia, Mary Ellen Sanders (Brenda Murray's Mom, Hood family grandmother & great), Larissa Hinman, Cathy, Cathy M, Jimmy & Faye Carter, Jackie Corderio (Maggie Spruill's sister), Terri Joiner, Sandra Mullins, Ruth Vega (Kassi Delarosa's mother),



I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your generous Christmas gift. 2020 has been difficult and at times a tumultuous year but it is a blessing knowing that I have such a supportive and wonderful church family. I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your generous Christmas gift.

Blessings to all for a prosperous and healthy New Years. -Vonda

Spirit of Life Lutheran Church
2636 New Berlin Road
Jacksonville, Florida 32226

Community, Faith and Service

Spirit of Life
Lutheran Church

2636 New Berlin Road
Jacksonville, Florida 32226

Phone: 904-757-9114

Email: chur5900@bellsouth.net

Community, Faith and Service



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!