



GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH

GATHERING IN CHRIST ✝ SHARING HIS LOVE

THE GLORION

June 2025

www.gloriadeielca.com

IN CASE OF PASTORAL EMERGENCY

Contact the office during regular office hours:

9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. – Monday thru Friday

After office hours contact:

**Pastor Lynn M. Fonfara via email:
pastorgloriadeileesburg@gmail.com**

ADDRESS: 130 S. Lone Oak Drive, Leesburg, FL 34748

OFFICE PHONE: (352)787-3223

OFFICE EMAIL: gloriadeilutheranleesburg@gmail.com

WEB SITE: www.gloriadeielca.com

OFFICE HOURS: Monday – Friday from 9:00-2:00 PM

PASTOR: LYNN M. FONFARA

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC: LEONARD CREMISIO

OFFICE MANAGER: EVELYN ROLLINS

SEXTON: TINA JANOSA

SUNDAY WORSHIP – 9:30 A.M



June, 2025

Pastor's column

Well, here we are. June in the church. I think we have said “See you in the fall” to all the snowbirds, now. It’s just us, the Florida residents left, and we will take vacations for a week or two throughout the summer.

It often seems that nothing happens in the church for the next 3 or 4 months, but that is so far from the truth. Over the summer, we continue to worship God each week, visit with each other over coffee (or iced tea!), and give to the ministries of the congregation and the greater church. We continue to feed hungry people, because hunger doesn’t take the summer off.

We also plan for the fall and winter.

- The Stewardship Team and I have sketched out plans for a campaign in September and October to give a sense of the budget for a pastor.
- The Council has arranged for a speaker after worship one Sunday in November.
- The Council will also be reading a book together: *Leading Faithful Innovation*, and making plans for ways to use the information and accompanying videos with the congregation.
- The Call Committee will continue working on the profile for a new pastor, based on survey results and other factors they consider important.
- And, the bills continue all summer. I give thanks to those who give consistently to Gloria Dei, even if you are away or spending time with family and not coming to worship on Sundays. We count on your regular giving to stay current with the electric bill, the phone / internet bill, the water bill, the insurance bills, and so forth.

Once we get past Pentecost and Holy Trinity Sundays, we will begin to journey with Jesus, listening to parables and challenges to “the-way-we’ve-always-done-it”. If we pay attention and open our hearts so God can change us, we can become better disciples. Isn’t that always the hope, to become

more the people God continually calls us to be?

I look forward to spending the summer with you.

Pax

Pastor Lynn

THANK YOU

This month, I give thanks to the music leadership of Len and the choir. You all help us sing better, stronger, more confidently. Congregation members assure me that the special music each week is inspiring, though I often don't get to hear much of it!



Order of Lutheran Franciscans, continued

So far, I have covered two of the three vows: Poverty, and Chastity. This month, we'll consider the vow of Obedience. We pledge our obedience to the call of God, as any baptized person does.

The vow of obedience invites us and challenges us to use our God-given gifts for God's purposes. We are not all preachers or musicians or carpenters. Some are called to be teachers or prophets or cooks/bakers or less-specific followers/supporters. Calls and gifts change over time, and we seek to be obedient to the call from God to use different gifts at different times, or in different places.

We also vow obedience to the leaders of the Order. If we are asked to assume responsibility for a certain ministry, such as teaching/formation, money management, worship, we are invited to prayerfully consider the request, and at the same time, remember that we have been selected after prayerful consideration. The obedient response is, Yes, with God's help.

Our vow of obedience to the Order also means we behave in certain ways, based on the written Rule. For example, we are expected to pray the daily offices (morning, noon, evening, night prayers) daily. This obedience trains us to

put God first in our lives, and praying several times a day keeps God present with us, helping us in our promise of obedience.

I have included an image of the rope Franciscans and other vowed communities wear. The barrel knots stand for the three vows we make.

Pastor Lynn

Leesburg Elementary Leadership Academy

2229 South Street ~ Leesburg, FL 34748
Phone (352) 365-6308 ~ Fax (352) 365-9018 ~ Website <https://lel.lake.k12.fl.us/>

"Ensuring Achievement, Learning, and Leadership for ALL."

Dear Gloria Dei Lutheran Church,

As we bring the 2024–2025 school year to a close, please accept our deepest and most heartfelt thanks for your continued support of our student's facing the greatest challenges.

Because of your generosity, we've been able to provide essential resources—such as food, clothing, and school supplies—that help our students attend school with dignity and focus. Your kindness has truly made a difference in their ability to learn, grow, and thrive.

Thank you for stepping up when it mattered most. We are so grateful for your unwavering support and partnership throughout this school year.

With sincere appreciation,
Flanna Katzberg
Family School Liaison
Leesburg Elementary

MRS. SUSAN JORDAN, PRINCIPAL
JordanSJ@lake.k12.fl.us

MRS. JULIE ANDERSON, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
AndersonJ5@lake.k12.fl.us



MS. DEBORAH HARRIS, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
HarrisD2@lake.k12.fl.us

PRAYERS

We will pray for the joys, sorrows, and concerns of the following members for June:

- 6/1** Richard & Debbie Cassem, Michael & CJ Clarke, Jo An Cleary, Ellen Clement and Lynn Crane.
- 6/8** Marilyn Czuprynski, Joan Davis, Ernest & Mary Jane DeBarr, Milton & Carolyn DeLong, Judy Eads.
- 6/15** Jerry & Julie Eld, Freddy & Marlene Farris, Claudia Fetter, Lynn Fonfara, Allen & Paula Francis.
- 6/22** Diana Frederick, James & Jayne Gable, Margi Geiger, Jacquelyn Goding and Leone Goding.
- 6/29** Lawrence Goerke, Barbara Goins, Bill Grese, Dottsie Grins, John & Mary Grissom.

JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

**Special congratulations to those celebrating fifty or more years of marriage.*

- | | | |
|------|--------------------------|-----------|
| 6/4 | Bob Pierce & Susan Stack | 25 years* |
| 6/7 | Brian & Karen Mundy | 45 years |
| 6/28 | Michael & CJ Clarke | 45 years |

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------|------|-----------------|
| 6/1 | June Rieb | 6/13 | Claudia Fetter |
| 6/3 | Marilyn Wahl | 6/17 | Ernest DeBarr |
| 6/8 | Donald Ames | 6/25 | Nancy Vogel |
| 6/8 | Barb Lias | 6/28 | Leone Goding |
| 6/8 | Julian Menchaca | 6/28 | Martha Holleran |
| 6/9 | Marva Tetting | | |

GLORIA DEI WOMEN OF THE ELCA

By: Dianne Marcotte

Recent activities of the Women of the ELCA at Gloria Dei include:

Honoring Rachel's day on May 4th. In addition to ribbons pinned on the women at church that day, a collection was held to benefit Haven House. Thank you to all who donated in support of the mission of Haven House- "To empower youth to thrive and be safe, supported and successful." \$295 was raised.

Church Women United- On Friday May 9th women attended the May Friendship Day event held at St. Paul's Catholic church. This was an event with women from area churches, for a day of prayer, fellowship and friendship.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS- Tuesday, Oct. 21st at 11:30 a fall fashion show will once again be held. Fashions from Maxine's Fashion Labels will be worn by volunteer women from Gloria Dei. Volunteers needed. As Maxine says you will have fun "playing in the clothes".

The guest speaker that day will be from WOMEN BUILD- HABITAT FOR HUMANITY LAKE COUNTY. Their motto is "We build strength, stability, self-reliance and shelter."

Women Build is a national initiative to engage women in the effort to provide safe and decent homes for families in need of affordable housing.

HEART OF FLORIDA CONFERENCE

Lorain Van Haecke and Christine Carlson had the privilege of attending an Ascension of our Lord Service and annual meeting of the Heart of Florida Conference. It was held at the Orlando Lutheran Towers in downtown Orlando. This facility houses a beautiful chapel on their 18th floor, a lovely venue for the sharing of gifts of music. Violinist Lisa Ferrigno opened the service with S. Cardon's *Be Still My Soul*, Bass Soloist Stephen Mumbert sang *Give me Jesus*, as arranged by R. Kirshbaum, and Malotte's *The Lord's Prayer*. Bishop Suarez gave the sermon about proclaiming the message of repentance and forgiveness through Jesus. At the meeting right after the service, while enjoying some tasty food and drink, The Rev. Harry Schenkel was re-elected as Dean of the Heart of Florida Conference.

COUNCIL CORNER

By Vaike O'Grady

Council Corner: Shepherding Through Seasons

Dear Gloria Dei Family,

As we enter the summer months, we find ourselves in a season of transition that many Florida congregations know well. Our snowbird members have begun their journeys north for the summer, and while we miss their presence deeply, we're reminded that God's family extends far beyond geographical boundaries.

This month's scripture readings have spoken powerfully to our current circumstances. From Acts 9:36-43, we heard of Tabitha (Dorcas), whose faithful service continued to bear fruit even after her death, bringing the community together in prayer and witness. Like Tabitha, our departing members leave behind a legacy of faithfulness that continues to strengthen our congregation even in their physical absence. Their prayers, their encouragement, and their example of discipleship remain with us.

The Fourth Sunday of Easter brought us Jesus' words from John 10:22-30: "My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me." As we continue our search for a new pastor, these words offer profound comfort and direction. Christ remains our Good Shepherd, even as we await the under-shepherd He will provide to serve alongside us. The voice we must listen for is ultimately His, guiding both our search committee and our congregation through this time of pastoral transition.

Our May readings from Revelation have painted beautiful pictures of God's eternal kingdom where people from every nation and tribe gather in worship. This reminds us that whether our members are in Leesburg or Michigan, New York or Ohio, we are all part of one flock under one Shepherd. Distance cannot separate us from the love of Christ or from our bonds as brothers and sisters in faith.

As we move into the summer months with a smaller but faithful core, let us embrace the words from Acts 11:1-18: God shows no partiality, and His Spirit is at work in every season of our congregation's life. This is our time to deepen relationships, to support one another more intentionally, and to prepare our hearts for the pastor God will send in His perfect timing.

Thank you for your continued prayers for our pastoral search and for our church family scattered near and far.

In faithful service,

Church Council

BIBLE STUDY/EDUCATION

Zoom Bible Study

As usual, at 7:00 pm on Monday nights, Pr Lynn is continuing our study of Luke. In June we will read Chapter 14 and maybe 15. Jesus heals some folks and has surprising conversations at the dinner table. If you are interested in joining this study, contact Forrest Berg at fberg1210@gmail.com, or call our church office.

Tell me your story - Update

At the recent Council Retreat, we learned that we all have faith stories and that it's a good thing to share them with others. It was decided that the congregation should also have this opportunity.

On May 4th and May 18th while enjoying a beverage and some tasty treats at coffee hour, we broke into groups of 2 or 3 and shared brief stories of our faith journeys. It was interesting to get to learn more about the people that we see on Sunday mornings. As we share our faith stories in this setting, we grow in our ability to share how Jesus has touched our lives with people outside of Gloria Dei.

This activity was well received, and we may have some more sessions in the future. If you have questions, please ask Pr Lynn.

Interested in Leading a Bible Study?

We are looking for individuals who feel called to lead a Bible Study Group. If you have a passion for scripture and desire to help others grow in their faith, we encourage you to consider this opportunity.

If you are interested or would like more information, please speak with Christine Carlson.

CALL COMMITTEE

The Call Committee shared a Temple Talk during the May 25th service, offering an update on the interpretations of the recent congregational survey. If you missed it, you can listen to the recorded service online by accessing the May 25th livestream on Facebook.

RUTH CIRCLE

Summer time meeting break. Ruth Circle will still be busy caring for our neighbors locally, nationally and around the world.

CHILDHOOD HUNGER- In the months of July and August, Ruth circle will be collecting the following items to benefit Leesburg Elementary School when the new school year begins.

Cheese and Crackers- Laughing Cow cheese does not need refrigeration- Peanut butter and Crackers- Capri Sun, juice boxes, granola bars and raisins. Please consider if you are able to help with these much needed snack items, school has requested no donations of chips or cookies .

The children eat two meals a day during school week and back packs are sent home with some on the weekend. 63 children this past school year.

Unfortunately, contracted staff who provide food during school year, are not on contract in summer and cannot be on property. In addition, Florida has opted out of the Sun Buck summer feeding program for summer of 2025. For these reasons we are able to only collect food to be brought at start of school year in August and again in September. The good news is at beginning of school year, a freezer, refrigerator and pantry will be available for storing food purchases and donations.

The family liaison has been given copy of list of nearby food banks to give to families now and if they call her in summer for assistance. The latest food insecurity rate in Leesburg is around 14%. The latest poverty rate is around 16%.

PERSONAL CARE KITS/Lutheran World Relief - Love Thy Neighbor Matching Gift Challenge Starts NOW! Your gift will DOUBLE until June 30 <https://lwr.org/kits/personal-care-kits/instructions>

Year round, Ruth circle continues to collect items for Lutheran World relief personal care kits. Nail clippers, Bar soap individually wrapped, Sturdy comb, Toothbrushes and Lightweight, dark colored bath size towels.

LWR Personal Care Kits are sent to people around the world who have experienced disasters or emergencies, or who are struggling with long-term poverty. They provide basic hygiene items to help improve the quality of life for individuals and communities in need.

Proverbs 3:27 Do not withhold goods from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act.

Ruth Circle members are grateful for your continued generosity and support of caring for our neighbors, wherever they may be.

FELLOWSHIP

By Loraine Van Haecke

The Fellowship team is responsible for keeping the necessary items we may need in the pantry and other needed kitchen equipment. After worship, we love talking with our church family and friends. In conversation we talk about our church, family, friends, and the happenings in our Florida/Bahamas Synod, and our world. This is always best with snacks and beverage, right?? Will you help to make this happen by volunteering to make coffee, bring snacks, set up, and clean up. There are other events that will be happening during the year and we will be asking for help. There is a sign-up sheet in front of the coffee on the counter so please sign up when you can help.

Thanks to all of you. We really appreciate your help. Are you ready for summer and the hurricane season?

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER AND SAFE TRAVELS TO ALL!!!!!!

MARY-MARTHA CIRCLE

Mary Marth Circle will only meet for quilting June thru August.
We will begin again 2nd Tuesday in September studying out of Gather Magazine.

Carol Marshall, Leader Phone 352-787-0435

FINANCIAL CORNER

GENERAL FUND

	April, 2025	Year to date 2025
Contributions	\$15,750.85	\$69,397.00
Expenditures	\$15,753.00	\$65,840.00

RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Beg. Bal. 1/1/2025	Donations	Withdrawals	Ending Bal 4/30/25
Altar Wine/Bread	267.90	70.00	0	337.90
AV Equipment	138.33	0	0	138.33
Choir/music	550.00	0	0	550.00
ELCA	0	45.00	45.00	0
Eternal Light	785.00	0	0	785.00
Evangelism	1,720.00	0	0	1,720.00
Fellowship	544.19	722.75	828.67	438.27
1 st Impressions Ph 4	0	15,440.00	0	15,440.00
1 st Impressions Ph 3	17,128.63	4,490.00	10,490.00	11,128.63
Flowers	400.00	705.00	0	1,105.00
JHIF	0	430.00	430.00	0
Leesburg Elementary	14.69	0	0	14.69
Oak Park Middle	0	0	0	0
Quilting	300.00	0	0	300.00
Thrive Choice \$\$	1,372.64	271.00	0	1,643.64
Trees & Landscaping	0	5,000.00		5,000.00
World Hunger	0	275.00	252.00	23.00
TOTALS	23,221.38	27,578.75	12,135.67	38,664.46

JUNE CALENDAR

Sun	6/1	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Worship/Healing Service
Mon.	6/2	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Bible Study
Tues.	6/3	10:00 a.m.	Morning Prayer
Sun.	6/8	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Worship
		11:00 p.m.	Welcome New Member
Mon	6/9	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Bible Study
Tues.	6/10	10:00 a.m.	Morning Prayer
Fri.	6/13	8:30 a.m.	Joining Hands In Food Ministry
Sun.	6/15	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Worship/Hunger Offering
Mon	6/16	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Bible Study
Tues.	6/17	10:00 a.m.	Morning Prayer
		10:30 a.m.	Stewardship Meeting
Sun.	6/22	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Worship
		11:00 a.m.	Council Board Meeting
Mon	6/23	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Bible Study
Tues.	6/24	10:00 a.m.	Morning Prayer
Wed.	6/25	10:00 a.m.	Call Committee Meeting
Sun.	6/29	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Worship
		11:00 a.m.	Storytelling
Mon.	6/30	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Bible Study

JUNE WORSHIP LEADERS

Assistant Ministers

Legend: R-Reader, +-Crucifer, C-Communion Assist., A-Liturgy Assist.

	<u>9:30 a.m.</u>		
6/1	R= Loraine Van Haecke	6/22	R=
	+= James Menchaca		+=
	C=		C=
	A= Patricia Bressler		A= Patricia Bressler
6/8	R= Don Ames	6/29	R= Patricia Bressler
	+= James Menchaca		+= Leone Goding
	C=		C=
	A= Vaike O'Grady		A= Vaike O'Grady
6/15	R= Patricia Bressler		
	+= Leone Goding		
	C=		
	A= Vaike O'Grady		

Ushers

If you are able to serve or have any questions, please contact Crystal Kirkpatrick at 552-3983.

9:30 a.m.

6/1 Byron Kirkpatrick
Ritch Cassem
Craig Carlson
John Kelly

6/22 Byron Kirkpatrick
Ritch Cassem
Craig Carlson
John Kelly

6/8 Ritch Cassem
Byron Kirkpatrick
John Kelly

6/29 Ritch Cassem
Byron Kirkpatrick
Craig Carlson
John Kelly

6/15 Ritch Cassem
Byron Kirkpatrick
John Kelly

Altar Guild for June: Crystal & Byron Kirkpatrick
Craig Carlson

Post Worship Secretary for June: Debbie Cassem

Fellowship

6/1 Margie Geiger, Linda Steege, Pat Bressler

6/8 Diane Marcotte, Loraine Van Haecke

6/15

6/22

6/29

Counters – Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m.

6/1 Jeanne Talts

6/8 Linda Steege & Janet Braun

6/15 Arlene Kelly

6/22 Arlene Kelly

6/29 Jeanne Talts

THE BELIEVE THE BEST PRINCIPLES

The Basics:

Every relationship has spoken and unspoken expectations. And then there are the actual experiences within the relationship. Sometimes the expectations and experiences match up, and sometimes they don't. When they don't it creates a gap:



EXPECTATION

EXPERIENCE

gap

When a gap occurs between what we expect and what we experience, we can choose to fill the gap with one of two things:

BELIEVING THE BEST or **ASSUMING THE WORST**

Believing the Best is based on trust and goodwill

Assuming the Worst is based on distrust and suspicion.

Five Principles for being a “Believe the Best” community:

1. When there is a gap that forms between what I expect and what I experience, I will BELIEVE the best. *(We will start with trust and goodwill).*
2. When other people assume the worst about you, I will come to your DEFENSE.
*(Gossip is not permitted; we will put the best construction on what our neighbor does-
the Eighth Commandment).*
3. If what I experience begins to erode my TRUST, I will come directly to you about it.
(We won't let issues fester or be shared with others, nor will we ignore them).
4. When I'm convinced I will not be able to deliver on a promise, I will inform you AHEAD of time.
(We will keep our commitments to one another).
5. When you confront me about the gaps I've created, I will tell you the TRUTH.
(We will be open to hearing others' concerns, and respond to them with integrity).

Adapted from Celebration Lutheran Church- Cypress, Texas.

2025 CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Pastor	Lynn M. Fonfara	352-249-8533
President	Loraine Van Haecke	407-252-4692
Vice President	Allen Francis	614-565-1844
Secretary	Vaike O'Grady	512-827-6344
Treasurer	Linda Hide	253-740-3063
Financial Secretary	Janet Braun	412-445-7774

Members:

John Braun	412-926-3381
Joel Weinhardt	330-936-8451
Bill Birdsall	732-773-2680
Christine Carlson	516-458-7355
Crystal Kirkpatrick	352-552-3983

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Worship & Music	Pastor Lynn M. Fonfara	352-249-8533
Evangelism/Technology/ & Communications/Webmaster	Bill Birdsall	732-773-2680
Property	Bill Birdsall	732-773-2680
Fellowship	Loraine Van Haecke	407-252-4692
Stewardship	Dianne Marcotte	352-933-5517
WELCA	Dianne Marcotte (contact only)	352-933-5517
Christian Education	Christine Carlson	516-458-7355
Finance	John Braun	412-926-3381
	Joel Weinhardt	330-936-8451

