



THE SHEPHERD'S STAFF

The Parish Paper of Shepherd of the Glades Lutheran Church

6020 Rattlesnake Hammock Road (Corner of Santa Barbara)

Naples, Florida 34113

OCTOBER, 2026

Volume 29- Issue 9

Editors: Deanna Colbert &

Lynn Dickerman



SHEPHERD OF THE GLADES LUTHERAN CHURCH

PASTOR'S PAGES . . .

"Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you" (Acts 17:22–23, NKJV).

Kelli and I recently vacationed in Greece. Our first stop was in Athens. This city is most famous among Christians for the Parthenon where Paul preached to the



people of Athens. It is amazing to physically be present at this site because, although two thousand years have passed since Paul preached there, you can still imagine the setting among the ruins. I did not initially go to Athens with spiritual renewal in mind, but there is something different about being where Paul once preached. Although many of the pillars are incomplete, the coves where the people sold their goods are still very visible. And the city has many places that still have local marketplaces in the streets. It was a wonderful gift to be able to visit Athens and experience the feelings that the tall pillars and ancient buildings brought to me.

Thank you for time away for renewal and spiritual growth. We visited many ancient churches, and we were even blessed with attending a Mass in Slovenia. I used Google Translate, and we enjoyed the Mass as we followed along on the translator. Some of the cathedrals we visited were overwhelming! I have never gotten lost in a church, but there was one cathedral we visited that by the time we were ready to leave, I was not even sure where we came in! There were entire chapels within the main cathedral that were dedicated to saints. We also accidentally happened upon an ancient church cemetery in Mykonos that had memory boxes with a glass display and lighted oil lantern on each grave rather than a headstone. The memory boxes contained items like a toy tractor or military awards or other personal items. It was definitely a sacred place.

PASTOR'S PAGES (CONTINUED) . . .

All of this led me to recognize that the Christian faith stories that originate in this region of the world are over 2,000 years old. If the story of Jesus' death and resurrection were not true, I believe it would never have survived and continued to this day. It is true there are many mysteries of faith, but Paul writes in his letter to Hebrews in his time that, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Although I have not "seen" Jesus in person, I have been blessed to get a glimpse of the places St. Paul walked and gave witness of his faith in Jesus Christ.

And I am blessed to get a "foretaste of the feast to come" each and every week as we worship and gather together for Word and Sacrament. Thank you for the opportunity for spiritual renewal and the blessing of walking where St. Paul once walked.

Peace to you,

+Pastor Jeff

FINANCIALLY, HOW ARE WE DOING? . . .

PERIOD: Nine Months Ended September, 2026

	Actual	Budget	Difference: Favorable (Unfavorable)
Operating Income	\$234,968	\$262,665	(\$27,697)
Operating Expense	\$296,703	\$315,309	\$18,606
Net Income (Deficit)	(\$61,735)	(\$52,644)	(\$9,091)

Summer is behind us and season is approaching! We are less than \$10,000 away from breaking even financially. With faithful summer givers and trimming our expenses so that we are below our expense budget, we have made it through the lean summer months. Thank you!

COUNCIL CORNER . . .

September 8, 2026, Council Meeting Minutes (Unapproved)

Members in attendance: Pastor Ungs, Penny Morken, President, Bill Nicklay, Vice-President, Pam Bhathena, Council Secretary, Sue Kautz, Council Member, Becky McDanel, Council Member, Barbara Tommingo, Council Member, Gunar Strungs, Council Member. **Absent:** Scott Krenz, Treasurer, Sandra Haberman, Council Member, and Tom Dunlop, Council Member.

Call to order by President Penny Morken

Devotions: Becky McDanel

Motion to approve the minutes of May 12, 2026, meeting made, seconded and approved.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Jeff welcomed back council members. Summer activities continued to keep members busy. On July 18th Pastor Jeff and seven members attended Grace Place for the Backpack distribution celebration. SOTG contributed 75 backpacks to the students of Grace Place. There was a decrease in worship attendance during the summer months; however, the congregation did provide significant community support for the food donation to St. Matthew's House. Pastor thanked everyone for time away to attend his grandson's baptism in Virginia. The congregation said farewell to Mary Winsor who moved to Iowa to attend Wartburg Seminary. Her new address will be published in the newsletter. We have not taken any current action to fill her position. We have had several productive meetings with the Church Council Executive Committee and with Pastor Nicole Eastwood, Assistant to the Bishop, to discuss future planning and church growth. Pastor and Kelli will be celebrating their 35th wedding anniversary. He will be out of the office from September 1- - September 24. During his absence, Pastor Tara McGraw will do pulpit supply and Pastor Courtney Noya will be available for pastoral emergency needs.

Treasurers Report: In the treasurer's absence, Pastor Jeff reviewed the submitted financial reports from August. A motion was made, seconded and approved to transfer the remaining Sebe estate funds from the Money Market Account to the Vanguard Sebe Growth Fund.

Committee Reports:

Endowment Committee: Submitted by Gunar Strungs. Since the most recent meeting of Church Council, the Endowment has received and deposited a generous \$50,000 contribution from a congregation member. The Endowment Committee has also formally distributed previously budgeted awards for 2026 (\$2,500 academic scholarships each to Elizabeth Cianflone and Mary Winsor, and \$1,000 to Luther Springs Bible Camp). The Endowment Fund balance based on the most recent available reporting period (July 31) is \$205,130.70. The beginning balance for January 1, 2026, was \$146,100.38. The ELCA Ministry Growth Fund, our investment vehicle, is mirroring its investment benchmarks well.

COUNCIL CORNER (Continued) . . .

Gunar has done an extensive review of the current constitution/bylaws of Shepherd of the Glades Church as they relate to the management of Endowment Funds and Memorial Funds. Currently, Endowment Funds are managed by the Endowment Committee and Memorial Funds are managed by the Executive Committee of the Church Council. Gunar proposed the Endowment Committee work towards completing any needed bylaw revisions that would more clearly define the role/function of the Endowment Fund.

Evangelism Committee: Submitted by Becky McDanel. Becky reported on a successful back-to-school event at Grace Place where over 800 students received backpacks. The church has received a thank you letter from the event organizer which will be shared with the congregation in our next newsletter. During the summer months, the Sew-Sew Committee had three people working one day each month completing seven quilts. The committee will begin full-time on October 13th.

Fellowship Committee: Submitted by Sue Kautz. The Fellowship Committee will meet at the end of October to outline fellowship activities for the coming year. Council discussion included adding game nights or another type of social activity that might appeal to working and/or younger members.

Worship/Music: Submitted by Pastor Jeff. We have had special music during the summer months. The committee also reviews hymns, liturgy, and special requests from the congregation. Pastor Jeff thanked Megan for her hard work and dedication.

Education Committee: Submitted by Becky McDanel. Sunday school continued during the summer months including one session with five children.

Old Business: Church safety committee submitted by Barbara Tommingo. Discussion regarding church safety procedures is ongoing. Plans are to meet with Collier County Sheriff's liaison regarding church safety recommendations.

New Business: The Executive Committee met during the summer and discussed various ideas to increase church growth. One outcome of the planning sessions was the need to provide more year-around, visible space for fellowship/gathering activities along with providing an attractive, inviting building appearance to prospective visitors. After lengthy discussions at the September Council Meeting, the council voted unanimously to approve moving forward with architectural exploration that would address these objectives. **A two-part motion** was made, seconded and passed:

1. Hire an architect using the Sebe Growth Funds to create a building design that would connect the Sanctuary and Hanson Hall (along with researching Collier County Construction requirements) with the goal of providing increased year-around fellowship space. Additional needs/repairs to Hanson Hall should also be addressed.
2. Send a letter from the Church Council to members of the Congregation outlining exploratory planning with the architect.

COUNCIL CORNER (Continued) . . .

Next meeting: October 13, 2026 – 6:00 p.m.

Devotions: Barbara Tommingo

Closing Devotions: Pastor Ungs

Meeting Adjourned: 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Pam Bhatena, Council Secretary

CARING CONNECTIONS . . .

PRAYER LIST

Please keep the following people in your thoughts and prayers. Please let us know when someone should be added or removed.

Family of Beverly Adams	Erick Herath	Family of Vernon Rasmussen
Annie Barikmo	Mark & Teryl Hammerschick	Sarah
Family of Edna Blasig	Family of Joanne Hogan	Michele Spiegel
Family & friends of Merlyn Bowers	Megan Jepson	Tom Sullivan
Bruce Corson	Family of John Jordan	Doug Walck
Diane	Ray Keith	Dean Welch
Family of Ellie	Anita & Nick Lehr	Kathy Williams
Family of Barbara Gega	Family of Patty Musielak	Patty Williams

REMEMBER THOSE IN SERVICE TO THEIR COUNTRY . . .



Sergeant Weston Maki

Dean Welch, LCPL-Marines

TRUNK ‘N TREAT RETURNS . . .

The first activity of this season is a “Trunk or Treat” Halloween celebration. Anyone who wants to participate in this fun activity, October 31st, puts their goodies in their trunk, decorates their car for Halloween, drives to Church at 6:00 p.m. opens their trunk, and waits for the children to arrive. If you would like to participate but don’t want to come to the parking lot on the 31st, you can donate candy. Just drop the candy off at the office during the week. Any questions, call Kelli Ungs. This will be a spooky good time!!

WE ARE OUR BROTHER'S KEEPER . . .



Collier County

Donate new socks and underwear for children in Collier County!

For over 30 years, our community has come together to provide elementary school children in Collier County with something every child deserves—the comfort and dignity of new socks and underwear.

Please consider donating new, unused socks and underwear in children's sizes Small, Medium, and Large, and X-Large (ages 5–14).

Help us continue this tradition of caring for children in our community.

UNDY SUNDAY IS BACK!



WAYS TO GIVE

OCT. 17/18 & OCT. 24/25

Bring new socks & underwear to Church, Drop in bins by the exit



Send an item from the Amazon Wishlist

DONATE ONLINE

SCAN TO DONATE



CCDOV.ORG

Make an monetary donation to Catholic Charities



Please contact Allegra: 239-793-0059 ext.3304
abelliard@ccdov.org

GREETINGS FROM YOUR CHURCH COUNCIL . . .

The Executive Committee of your Church Council met several times over the summer months to discuss current and future church needs. Please watch for a letter that will be sent to all members of the congregation outlining our recent Council discussions. As your Church Council, we are excited to participate in future planning for our church. We look forward to continued communication with the congregation as, together, we plan for the future and continue “Transforming Lives through the Living Word of God”. Penny Morken, Council President

AA & NA GROUPS . . .

Two mixed AA Groups meet in Hanson all. One group meets at noon on Mondays year-round and the other meets at 7:30 p.m. on Thursdays, November through May.

Women's AA Group meets in Hanson Hall year-round at 10:00 a.m. on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of each month.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) Group meets in Hanson Hall at 8:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

If you or someone you know wishes to attend, please contact the office for more information.

NEWS IN THE SHEEPFOLD . . .



If we have missed your birthday or anniversary, please call the office so we can update our information and not miss you next time! YOU are special to us!

HAPPY OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS TO . . .

October 2 Brad Funk
October 6 Charlotte Gulden
October 7 Rachael Harvey
October 7 Kelli Ungs
October 10 Jim Sauer
October 11 Kathryn Williams
October 11 Tasha Funk
October 12 Carolyn Fee
October 13 Jane Limpus
October 13 Larry Gulden
October 20 Bryan Cook
October 24 Anita Lehr
October 25 Linda Stover-Fleury
October 25 Diana Snover
October 26 Dianna Myers
October 30 Harriett Barrett



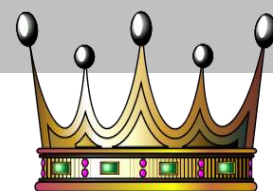
HAPPY OCTOBER ANNIVERSARYS TO . . .

October 5 Scott & Bonnie Kischer
October 15 Lynn & Michael Karle
October 18 Tom & Sally Moore
October 19 Brad & Tasha Funk
October 22 Mary & John Sherman
October 30 Gloria & Milan Blaho



RECEIVED HIS VICTORY IN THE LORD . . .

John Jordan passed away on Thursday, August 27, 2026. He was 97 years old. His service was on Wednesday, September 16, 2026, at East Naples United Methodist Church.



OUT OF SIGHT BUT NOT OUT OF MIND . . .

Mary Winsor's address at seminary is in the image to the right.



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS . . .

FROM THE EVANGELISM TEAM:

Thanks to your overwhelming support, our church was able to supply 75 filled backpacks for the Grace Place Literacy “Back to School Bash” held in July, 2026. Pastor Unga and several members of our congregation were at the event to help with the distribution activities. Thank you to everyone that participated in this project: God’s Work, Our Hands reaching out into the community in love and service to others. “Greetings from Grace Place:

On behalf of everyone at Grace Place, thank you for volunteering at our Back to School Bash! Despite the heavy rain and unexpected weather, your flexibility, positive attitude, and readiness to help wherever needed, helped make the event a success. We are so grateful for the time, energy, and care you shared with our families.

Thanks to your support, we distributed more than 500 backpacks during the event, and the remaining 300 were provided to families throughout this week; ensuring more than 800 students are prepared for the new school year.

We hope you enjoy looking back on the day and seeing the impact of your hard work. Thank you again for making a difference in our community. We look forward to seeing you at another Grace Place event soon!”



HERE WHEN YOU NEED US . . .

It’s often difficult to find the services of a Notary Public for official documents. Banks, for instance, may only notarize documents that originate with them. If you need the services of a notary, please call the church office, and remember to wait to sign until you are in the presence of a notary.

Happy October Everyone!

Pastor Appreciation Day is Sunday, October 11, 2026.

Thank you to all our pastors and clergy for all you do!

Still unfamiliar with Thrivent?

We are a unique financial services organization.

We're a membership-owned fraternal organization dedicated to serving the unique needs of our clients—guiding them toward financial choices that will help them live the lives they want today and tomorrow. As a fraternal benefit society, we have a shared purpose, have clients who share a common Christian bond, provide mutual protection in the form of insurance to eligible clients and offer clients opportunities to support their local communities through regional Thrivent Member Networks.

You are invited to join Thrivent for these free online events:

OCTOBER 13, 2026 | 12:30 PM ET

October Market and Economic Update presented by Thrivent

Are the current markets making you wonder how to best navigate your financial strategy? Join us for a livestream of Thrivent's Market and Economic Update, presented by Thrivent leaders. Don't miss the opportunity to hear Thrivent's perspective and what the latest trends may mean for you. Register below to attend the event or receive a recording.

**Available on-demand following the live event.*

RSVP - <https://bit.ly/October13Update>

OCTOBER 27, 2026 | 1:00 PM ET OR 7:30 PM ET

Thrivent Presents: The Washington Update Featuring Jeff Bush

Interested in knowing how what's happening in Washington affects your bottom line? During "The Washington Update," get non-partisan analysis from expert Jeff Bush. His insights give perspective to the changing landscape in the nation's capital and its impact on your taxes, investments and retirement planning. This exclusive online workshop will be offered live at two different times. Simply choose the session that works best for you! **Register now to reserve your spot!**

RSVP - <https://bit.ly/WashingtonUpdate1027>

No products will be sold at our events. For additional disclosures, see [Thrivent.com/social](https://thrivent.com/social).

Contact us at SoutheastTMN@thrivent.com or see what's happening at thrivent.com/southeast or at Facebook.com/SoutheastTMN.

Questions about Thrivent? Want to become a member?

Call Thrivent Financial Associate David Contessa at (239) 300-5139.

MONTH AT A GLANCE. . .

OCTOBER, 2026



SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
				1 2:00-3:30 P.M. UNDERSTANDING YOUR GRIEF CLASS 7:30-8:30 P.M. AA MIXED GROUP	2 9:00-11:00 A.M. WOMEN'S AA GROUP	3 8:00 P.M. N.A. GROUP MEETING
4 NINETEENTH SUNDAY OF PENTECOST 9:30 A.M. LIVE STREAMING WORSHIP	5 9:00-10:00 A.M. BONE BUILDERS 12 NOON AA MIXED GROUP PASTOR AT CONFERENCE ON MINISTRY	6	7 9:00-10:00 A.M. BONE BUILDERS 10:30 A.M. PASTOR JEFF'S BIBLE STUDY	8 2:00-3:30 P.M. UNDERSTANDING YOUR GRIEF CLASS 7:30-8:30 P.M. AA MIXED GROUP	9	10 8:00 P.M. N.A. GROUP MEETING
11 TWENTIETH SUNDAY OF PENTECOST 9:30 A.M. LIVE STREAMING WORSHIP	12 9:00-10:00 A.M. BONE BUILDERS 12 NOON AA MIXED GROUP	13 8:30-11:00 A.M. SEW-SEWS	14 9:00-10:00 A.M. BONE BUILDERS 10:30 A.M. PASTOR JEFF'S BIBLE STUDY 2:00-3:30 P.M. GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP	15 2:00-3:30 P.M. UNDERSTANDING YOUR GRIEF CLASS 7:30-8:30 P.M. AA MIXED GROUP	16 9:00-11:00 A.M. WOMEN'S AA GROUP	17 8:00 P.M. N.A. GROUP MEETING
18 TWENTY FIRST SUNDAY OF PENTECOST 9:30 A.M. LIVE STREAMING WORSHIP	19 9:00-10:00 A.M. BONE BUILDERS 12 NOON AA MIXED GROUP	20 8:30-11:00 A.M. SEW-SEWS	21 9:00-10:00 A.M. BONE BUILDERS 10:30 A.M. PASTOR JEFF'S BIBLE STUDY	22 2:00-3:30 P.M. UNDERSTANDING YOUR GRIEF CLASS 7:30-8:30 P.M. AA MIXED GROUP	23	24 5:00 P.M. DINNER CHURCH 8:00 P.M. N.A. GROUP MEETING
25 REFORMATION SUNDAY 9:30 A.M. LIVE STREAMING WORSHIP	26 9:00-10:00 A.M. BONE BUILDERS 12 NOON AA MIXED GROUP	27 8:30-11:00 A.M. SEW-SEWS	28 9:00-10:00 A.M. BONE BUILDERS 10:30 A.M. PASTOR JEFF'S BIBLE STUDY	29 2:00-3:30 P.M. UNDERSTANDING YOUR GRIEF CLASS 7:30-8:30 P.M. AA MIXED GROUP	30	31 5:00 P.M. TRUNK OR TREAT 8:00 P.M. N.A. GROUP MEETING

Shepherd of the Glades Lutheran Church
6020 Rattlesnake Hammock Road
Naples, FL 34113

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U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

NAPLES, FL

PERMIT # 18

Current Resident or

This Parish Paper is from:

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Sunday Worship Service: 9:30 a.m.

Office Hours: Monday - Friday: 9:30 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.

Pastor Jeff Unga, Pastor [cell phone: 641-529-2479]

Mary Winsor, Director for Discipleship

Megan Cianflone, Director of Music

Penny Morken, Council President

Deanna Colbert, Administrative Assistant to the Pastor

Lynn Dickerman, Administrative Assistant to the Pastor