

Shared Life Newsletter

October 2026

From Pastor's Heart

"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth; do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." (Isaiah 43:19)

During our council retreat, Pr. Erin Jones, D.E.M. for the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, encouraged the council to think about and reflect on our "Why"? We reflected on why we are a part of this community of faith and where God may be calling us.

This question led into our "What" and our "How". Our "Why" is that God loves us and calls us to share that love with others. We strive to love others and encourage a loving community where people feel that they have a place here, where they feel like they belong. The "What" and "How" of it is our mission statement.

*"Nativity Lutheran Church is a **caring** community of believers in and **witnesses** for Christ, **serving** in response to God's love to meet human needs."*

Using the three adjectives which sum up our calls as members of this community of faith and as followers of Jesus, we developed this proposed restructure of our council. In our current model, each council member is the head of a committee within the church, they attend each council meeting, report what their committee is doing and vote on various action items. In this proposed trial model, each council member will be responsible for being the liaison of sorts between the committees and council. If the committee has action items that need to be discussed, the council liaison will bring it to the council and report back to the committee. The current committee heads/leaders will remain the same throughout this trial period.

In this proposed restructured church council, we've broken it up into these ministry areas: **Executive, Caring, Witnessing, Serving.**

Dates in October

10.4

**Special
Congregational Mtg**
World Communion Day

10.6

Worship & Music Mtg

10.8

Council Mtg

10.11

Christian Ed Mtg
Pastor Appreciation Day

10.18

Stewardship Cake Kits

10.24

Bayernhof Tour

10.25

Coffee Hour
Reformation Sunday

10.31

Reformation Day

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Executive Committee

1. Pastor/President – Pr. Jennifer Soltis – Ad hoc committees – anniversary, safety, strategic planning.
2. Vice President – Jean Chantz – Finance, endowment, property. (Treasurer & Financial Secretary)
3. Secretary – Kim Brandt
4. Treasurer – Tom Beecher

Caring, Witnessing, Serving

5. **Caring** (Jerry Sever) - Fellowship, Mutual Ministry, WELCA (as needed)
6. **Witnessing** (Merlinda Bisese) – Worship and Music, Communication, Christian Education/Youth.
7. **Serving** (Margie Radebaugh) – Stewardship, Social Ministry, Christian Outreach

You may be wondering: Why restructure? - This is something we would like to try because what we have been doing is no longer working in our context. We all see the decline in worship attendance and participation; not just in our congregation, but in many mainline protestant churches. We want to find something that will enable us to continue to do the work we are called to do. The church council's major role is to facilitate and support the congregation in fulfilling our mission. We think this idea will enable us to continue in our work and we hope that this will create opportunity for more people to be involved without so much commitment.

This idea will not fix everything, and there very well may be a lot of kinks to work through as we try. I want to remind you all that this is a proposed trial. It is up to you all whether we try this new plan. And if we decide to move forward, we will move into a trial period starting with our October council meeting and we will re-evaluate in June 2027. If you have any questions/concerns regarding this proposed plan, don't hesitate to reach out to me. The church council and I ask for your patience, understanding, flexibility, openness and grace in this new endeavor. Through all of the changes that transformation brings, and the joy and grief that goes along with it, may we be reminded of the Spirit's presence guiding us along the way. May we trust in God's promises that God loves us and is with us always.

Blessings,

Pastor Jennifer Soltis

ATTENDANCE

September Worship (Average)

<u>In-person</u>	<u>YouTube</u>
33	34

CLERGY APPRECIATION OCTOBER 11

We are truly blessed to have Pastor Jennifer lead our church!

We also recognize and appreciate the several other clergies in our membership: Rev. Brian Bennett (LUC Pastor), Rev. Kirk Bish (Retired), Rev. Jim Dollhopf (Retired) & Rev. Phil Williams (Retired)

Serving This Month

Offering Counters

Jerry Sever
Lori Coon

Altar Guild

Carol Banks
Linda Ryan

Coffee Hour

Oct 25 - The Brandts

Each week we need Lectors, Ushers, Greeters, Videographers and offering counters.

Please consider helping by signing up either [on-line](#) or in person on the paper signup across from the kitchen



OCTOBER

birthdays & anniversaries

BIRTHDAYS

Joseph Bisese	3
Don Schmitz	9
Carol Messner	13
Jim Coon	25

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Jim & Nan Shuey	10
Marina (Smith) & Tyler Bradley	15
Justin & Nicole Kirkland	30



OCTOBER

baptisms

Adam Mitchell
Jerry Sever
Jim Zaffuto
Joe Bisese
Judy Beecher
Samantha Chantz

Women of the
ELCA 


Joyful Hearts

All women of Nativity and their friends are welcome to join our weekly meetings and activities which are held on Tuesday mornings at 10:00 a.m.

Our schedule for October are as follows:

Oct 6	Project Day – Quilting
Oct 13	Business Meeting
Oct 20	Bible Study: “ <i>Bold Faith on an Unexpected Journey</i> ” Session 2: “ <i>Love and Loyalty</i> ”
Oct 27	Book Review: <u>Tom Lake</u> by Ann Patchett (carried over from Sept.)

Church FAMILY —PRAYER LIST—

Members, Family & Friends in need of on-going prayers

- ♥ Andy & Katy Greer (*Friends of the Heyne's*)
- ♥ Katie Wallaart-DeBeor (*Niece of the Dollhopf's*)
- ♥ Pr. Tony Schneck (*SWPA pastor*)
- ♥ Pr. John Cawkins (*SWPA pastor*)
- ♥ Andy & Linda Halcoussis (*Nativity Members*)
- ♥ Janet Liotta (*Nicole Kirkland's Aunt*)
- ♥ Tim Wargo (*Friend of the Bank's*)
- ♥ Terri Brandt (*Charlie Brandt's Sister*)
- ♥ Dave Miller (*Lori Coon's Father*)
- ♥ Matt Fickes (*Friend of the Coon's*)
- ♥ Lorraine Howell (*Traci Saunder's mom*)
- ♥ Keith Huffman (*Carol Huffman's son*)
- ♥ Sandy Hutchins (*Friend of Ruth Kiefer*)

Service Personnel:

- ☞ Sarah Foster (*Traci Saunder's daughter*)
- ☞ Allison Stover (*Cheryl Kilbert's granddaughter*)

**Need To
Submit a
Prayer
Request?**

**Call the Church
(412) 346.4971**

**Email the Church
NativityLC@verizon.net**

submit one through our
website's [on-line form](#)

Almighty and merciful God,
you are the source of health
and healing; you alone can
bring calmness and peace.

Grant to our siblings, an
awareness of your presence
and a strong confidence in
you. In their pain, weariness,
and anxiety, surround them
with your care, protect them
by your loving might, and
grant to them once again the
gifts of health and strength
and peace; through Jesus
Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.



Mark your calendars!

Watch your Nativity News and weekly bulletins for more information as we get closer to the date!

Tax Talk

As we enter the fourth quarter of 2026, most of us start looking towards the year end and filing of our income taxes. If you have an Individual Retirement Account (IRA), you can make a Qualified Charitable Donation (QCD) to Nativity or any other charitable organization without paying any income taxes on the distribution. If you are eligible to make withdrawals from an IRA, your financial institution must have the distribution paid directly to Nativity or other charitable organization. If it is paid to you, you will have to pay the taxes and then claim this contribution on your taxes. The current standard deduction is so high, you might not be able to take advantage this. Please check with your accountant or financial advisor for their advice. Good stewardship is not only what you give but how you make those choices.

Social Ministry & Christian Outreach News



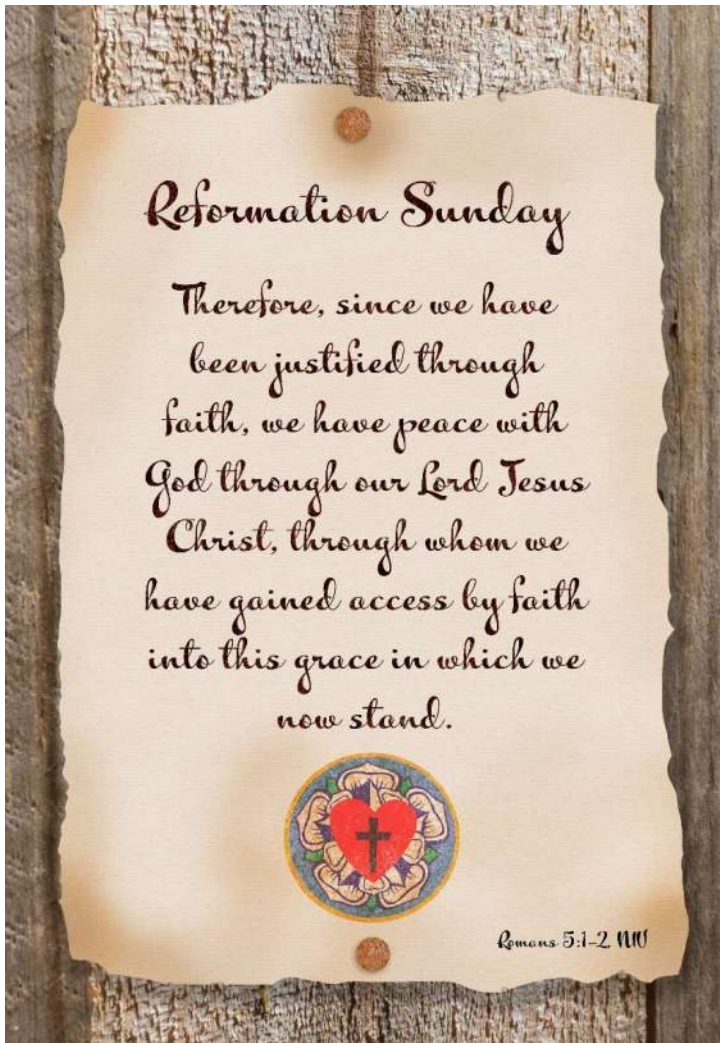
There is still time to donate items for the NHCO's "Coat Shop". We are collecting new coats for children ages infant to 18-years-old. New hats, scarves and gloves are also being accepted. Gift cards to purchase coats are also greatly appreciated. Coats can be hung on the designated area of the coat rack in the hallway by the nursery. Other items can go in the designated bins in the same area.

This will run through October 11.



TURKEY ON EVERY TABLE

NHCO's Turkey on Every Table will begin this month and will run through November 15th. This project gathers groceries for a Thanksgiving dinner. Donations of specific Thanksgiving grocery items, cash for grocery gift cards are the most requested. Watch the bulletins and Nativity News for more information.



Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi (Prayer for Peace)

(The Catholic Church celebrates the feast of St. Francis of Assisi every year on October 4. Known as the patron saint of animals and ecology, the 13th-century Italian friar is often remembered for his deep humility, his life of prayer, and for founding the Franciscan order. Here is a prayer attributed to him.)

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
 where there is hatred, let me sow love;
 where there is injury, pardon;
 where there is doubt, faith;
 where there is despair, hope;
 where there is darkness, light;
 where there is sadness, joy.
 O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
 to be consoled as to console,
 to be understood as to understand,
 to be loved as to love.
 For it is in giving that we receive,
 it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
 and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
 Amen.

Seeds of Victory

Months before the U.S. victory at the World War II Battle of Midway, important work was happening far from the ocean. Code analysts were quietly studying Japanese messages, using early tools that came long before the computers we know today. Their careful work helped crack a code and gave American forces the warning they needed to avoid an ambush.

It makes you wonder what those long days felt like. Did the analysts ever grow tired of searching for answers? Did they wonder whether their efforts mattered? Did they feel discouraged when the breakthrough had not yet come?

We can understand that feeling. Christians sometimes grow weary, too. We wonder whether teaching children about Jesus is making a difference. We wonder whether small acts of kindness, quiet prayers or faithful service will ever bear fruit. We see sin, sorrow and brokenness around us and wonder how victory will come.

But God sees what we cannot. **No faithful work done for him is wasted.** The Spirit who helps us plant seeds of truth and love is also able to bring the harvest. And because of Christ, the final victory is already secure.



Charging Forward in Stewardship

I will praise You, for I am
fearfully and wonderfully
made; Marvelous are Your
works, And that my soul
knows very well.

Rhinoceroses are remarkable creatures. Strong, sturdy and surprisingly fast, a rhino is built to protect. When it senses danger, especially near its herd or its young, it does not hesitate. It moves with focus, strength and purpose.

There may be a stewardship lesson for us in that.

God has entrusted each of us with gifts, time and resources to use for his kingdom. When opportunities come to serve, give, encourage or help, faithful stewards do not stand still and wait for someone else to go first. They respond with willing hearts and steady faith.

Stewardship is not passive. It calls us to move with purpose, give with conviction and serve with the strength God provides. May we be quick to answer God's call, bold in putting our faith into action and faithful in caring for the people and work God has placed before us.

Christian Symbol

LAMP — In Bible times, lamps were small but essential sources of light, especially during the dark hours of night. Scripture often uses the image of a lamp to represent God's guidance, truth and wisdom. Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path," reminding believers that God's Word directs each step of life. Jesus' parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids also connects the lamp with wisdom and spiritual readiness (Matthew 25:1-13). In addition, the lamp is sometimes used to symbolize the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the gift of life itself. Because of these meanings, the lamp has become a lasting symbol of God's guidance, faithful living and the light of Christ shining in the darkness.



GOD'S WORK OUR HANDS

Sunday, October 18

**Donate supplies to
Help us help others**

Celebrate!



Nativity is collecting donations to assemble BIRTHDAY BOXES to be distributed through North Hills Community Outreach so that all kids can celebrate their special day!

Items **STILL** needed

9 X 13 disposable aluminum pans with lids

Cake mix – any flavor

Cans of Frosting – any flavor

Small packs of colorful party supplies: streamers, balloons, plates, napkins, etc. must be able to fit in 9 x 13 pan

Items can be dropped off in the designated bins in the hallway across from the Pastor's office. Please have your donations in by Sunday, October 11.

Please sign-up to help assemble kits on October 18th. Sign-up sheet located on bulletin board across from kitchen or use the on-line Sign-Up Genius.

There will be cake served after the kits are assembled for those who wish to stay and socialize.

Scripture Readings for October

October 4

- **Isaiah 5:1-7**
The song of the vineyard
- **Psalms 80:7-15**
Look down from heaven, O God; behold and tend this vine. (Ps. 80:14, 15)
- **Philippians 3:4b-14**
Nothing surpasses the value of knowing Christ
- **Matthew 21:33-46**
The parable of the vineyard owner's son

October 11

- **Isaiah 25:1-9**
The feast of victory
- **Psalms 23**
You prepare a table before me, and my cup is running over. (Ps. 23:5)
- **Philippians 4:1-9**
Rejoice in the Lord always
- **Matthew 22:1-14**
The parable of the unwelcome guest at the wedding feast

October 18

- **Isaiah 45:1-7**
An earthly ruler as the instrument of God's will
- **Psalms 96:1-9 [10-13]**
Ascribe to the LORD honor and power. (Ps. 96:7)
- **1 Thessalonians 1:1-10**
Thanksgiving for the church at Thessalonica
- **Matthew 22:15-22**
A teaching on giving to the emperor and to God

October 25

- **Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18**
Holiness revealed in acts of justice
- **Psalms 1**
Their delight is in the law of the LORD. (Ps. 1:2)
- **1 Thessalonians 2:1-8**
The apostle's tender care for the Thessalonians
- **Matthew 22:34-46**
Two great commandments: love for God and neighbor

Fall for Jesus
He never leaves



October 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28 Art Group - 1p AA - 8p	29 WELCA - 10a NA - 6:30p	30	1	2	3
4 Special Meeting	5 Art Group - 1p AA - 8p	6 WELCA - 10a NA - 6:30p W&M - 7p	7	8 Council Mtg - 7p	9	10
11 Pastor Appreciation Day Christian Ed Mtg	12 Art Group - 1p AA - 8p	13 WELCA - 10a NA - 6:30p	14	15	16	17
18  Stewardship Kits	19 Art Group - 1p AA - 8p	20 WELCA - 10a NA - 6:30p	21	22	23	24  Bayernhof Tour - 2p
25 Coffee Hour Reformation Sunday	26 Art Group - 1p AA - 8p	27 WELCA - 10a NA - 6:30p	28	29	30	31  Reformation Day
1 All Saints Sunday	2 Art Group - 1p AA - 8p	Notes We worship every Sunday at 10:15 am Adult Sunday School meets each Sunday from 9:15 am & Children's Sunday School meets the 1st & 3rd Sundays at 9:15 am				