

preparing for Christian service (see more about the program at [www.thediakoniaprogram.org](http://www.thediakoniaprogram.org) ). Classes began Sept. 14. For more information please contact Callie Howland at [callie@ctkmiami.org](mailto:callie@ctkmiami.org) or 305-665-6063 ex. 213.

## November Events

- Nov. 1-8 Pastor Boudon on Synod trip to Cuba. Pastor Dale Young will lead worship on Nov. 3.
- Nov. 24 Thanksgiving Service at the beach.



**St. James Lutheran Church**  
**Newsletter**      **Vol. 1, No. 3**  
**November 2013**

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**St. James worships every Sunday at 10:30am, with a bilingual service mostly in English but with some Spanish.** The entire liturgy is presented in both languages on the screen above the altar, so that one may follow along in the language one prefers. Pastor Boudon preaches the sermon in English, followed by a brief summary in Spanish.

**GREEN FAITH.** St. James is participating in a two-year certification program with Green Faith, which will provide the church with a holistic, well-supported and structured program to “green” our worship, education, facilities and outreach. The program will include ecology-focused activities and will showcase the Garden of Our Lord. When completed, St. James will be the first green church in Miami.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL.** St. James offers a full Sunday School program for adults and children at 9:30am every Sunday morning before worship. There is Bible study for adults and Christian education for children.

**MONTHLY HEALING.** St. James offers a healing liturgy as a part of our normal worship service on the third Sunday of the month, replacing the Prayers of Intercession.

## From the Pastor

November is a time for giving thanks but it is also the month in which general elections are held. This year we have only local issues on our ballot and so perhaps it is a good (i.e. safe) time to talk about what Christianity brings to the political discussion. Never in my lifetime have I witnessed such a polarization in this nation. We are sharply divided between two competing world views, one of which favors the poor at the expense of the rich, while the other favors the rich at the expense of the poor. This is oversimplified, I readily admit, but it's also fairly accurate. As a former political scientist, what concerns me most is that this country is bordering on ungovernability. In Latin America, the recent past has told us that polarization leads to political breakdown. Is that where we, too, are heading? And how should we as Christians engage in this debate?

Without going into too much detail, it seems to me that what Christians ought to be espousing is the common good, which is based upon the greatest commandment that we should love God and love our neighbor. This is one commandment, not two, and if we follow it earnestly we will find that partisan politics no longer matter. If we truly love God and our neighbor, all of our relationships will change, for we will want only the best for each other, regardless of where we are in the socio-economic realm. We will focus on the common good and favor those policies that can best achieve that. Currently, environmental conservation is one such policy since it benefits everyone. So maybe it's time for us Christians to take the lead. We need to persuade our elected officials to focus not on narrow ideologies but on the common good.

## ECO-TIP OF THE MONTH

**Food:** Worldwide meat production releases more greenhouse gas emissions than the entire transportation sector combined (Source: UN Environment Program). Start small by eliminating meat one day per week, or challenge yourself by taking a week-long vegetarian pledge. See [www.meatlessmonday.org](http://www.meatlessmonday.org) or [www.vegetariantimes.com](http://www.vegetariantimes.com) for good recipes and more information.

### Partner with LSF to Bring Happiness to a Child

If you are looking for a Christmas project that will bring you a lot of satisfaction, consider partnering with Lutheran Services Florida. LSF brought God's healing, hope and help to over 42,000 children last year in the name of Jesus Christ. These children are in foster homes, youth shelters, Head Start programs, or belong to refugee families. The one thing they all have in common is they are in need, whether it be due to poverty, abuse, neglect or other circumstances. If you or your group would like to put a smile on the face of a child in need on Christmas morning, contact your local LSF office or send an email to [sceccchetti@lsfnet.org](mailto:sceccchetti@lsfnet.org). We will work with you to make sure your gift and Christmas message get into the hands of a child who would otherwise be forgotten. Don't let Christmas be "just another day" for these kids.

### Diakonia Program

The Diakonia Program is a two-year lay education process of spiritual formation and theological study for those who are interested in deepening their faith life and