

The Beacon

Bethania Lutheran Church
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June 2020

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Dear Siblings in Christ,

Grace and Peace to all of you as we enter the Summer season. I remember thinking about summer plans for Bethania months ago and looking forward to a time to be able to gather in ministry and in fellowship. My hope was to have potlucks, movie nights, BBQs, bonfires, and beach trips as a church. Needless to say, I imagine much of this won't be happening this summer due to the ongoing nature of COVID-19.

It is in regard to COV-19 and the process of opening up for in-person services that I write today. As many of you have probably heard, California Department of Public Health, by way of the governor's plan to reopen our state, has given the go ahead for churches to open for in-person services with many modifications. While this headline has made news, the modifications have not. The list is quite extensive and arduous. Among the parameters are face masks, social distancing, a capacity of 25%, a recommendation to not sing or recite liturgy, the taking temperatures of everyone who comes in, and much more.

While I agree with these parameters, I have discussed the process of reopening for in-person worship at this time with our council and we have decided that what is required is beyond our capacity as a church to put in place. The guideline that makes this most difficult for us is if we open for in-person worship we have to close the sanctuary the rest of the week. Because we're utilizing the sanctuary for food needs right now and we plan on using it for food distribution if/when the preschool opens, council has decided it is best to continue the live-stream service until our state gets to Phase 3, at which time we will revisit what guidelines are required.

For some of you I imagine this comes off as disappointing news. I'm so sorry for this, but I hope you understand this only comes from a place of wanting to make sure we are keeping the health and safety of all our church attendees into account, as well as continuing our call as the Church to feed the hungry. I anticipate that we will enter into Phase 3 sometime in the beginning to middle of summer, so hopefully this is only for a short while. However, I do want to note that when we do open for in-person worship it's going to look very different than what we're used to, so please be patient.

I want to let you know that we've purchased upgraded equipment for the live-stream to bring a much higher quality video and the plan is to go back to much of our original liturgy in the next couple weeks. I'm also planning on leading virtual communion, so to participate, people will need to have bread and wine/juice/water of some sort to commune themselves from home (more details on that later).

Finally, I want to express as your pastor who cares deeply about your health and well-being, I am of the mindset that while our society seems very polarized right now, the systems we have in place with regards to health should be trusted, and consensus among these institutions are that this virus still presents a very real danger. Additionally, if I'm going to error as a pastor, I would rather error in the way of caution. I must advocate that all of you continue to follow the guidelines that Santa Barbara

County Public Health has put forward. Ultimately, you'll choose for yourself, but as your pastor, this is my plea. Until a vaccine comes out early next year, we're going to have to take steps to mitigate the risk of this virus and protect the most vulnerable among us.

As always, in the midst of any anxiety, fear, distress, frustration, concern, etc. you might be feeling, I'm here for you. Please reach out if you need to talk, vent, decompress, whatever. And if you have any questions or concerns about council's decision, feel free to reach out to me or our council chair, Stewart Fries. I fundamentally believe that while news and information feel chaotic right now, if we keep falling back into our identity as Christians, which calls us to simply love and care for ourselves and others, we'll make it through this.

**Yours in Christ,
Pastor Chris**

Youth and Family Ministry

Summer Greetings,

As many of you know scheduled events have changed due to our current pandemic. VBS (June 22-26) will be rescheduled for next summer. *** Until then, I will be crafting decorations while working from home. If you need something to do and would like to help, please email me and I can give you some creation ideas. ***

Each year VBS grows in attendance as children excitedly return and bring more friends along. Our volunteers are the most wonderful and integral parts of this event! You can contact me directly if you'd like to help in any capacity.

Here is a list of supplies for next year. If you have any items to lend or you'd like to donate, please see below:

Artificial Christmas trees (decor)	Silver duct tape	30 flip flop sandals
Stacks of white & blue & black paper	X-Large cardboard boxes	White & Blue fairy lights
White & Blue iridescent paper	Polyester fiberfill/ batting (decor)	Masking tape
2 pairs of rain boots (adult size)	2 armor breast plates (costume)	
Plastic toy knights helmet (costume)		

I have decided to create a new program at Bethania in lieu of VBS, known as **Bethania Busy Bags!** I will contact VBS attendees and create sanitized take home activity bags for parents to pick up in the sanctuary. It will have a scripture lesson and fun activity. If you'd like to help me assemble them, please contact me.

Stay safe and healthy,

Livier Ghamari-Brown
Director of Youth & Family Ministry
livierghamari@yahoo.com
(909) 962-9366

Bethania Preschool & After School

We are so happy to announce that after closing the preschool on March 16, we will be re-opening on Monday, June 8 for our summer program. Our hours will be slightly different with us being open from 8:00 am-5:00 pm.

We will be following the strict guidelines set by California Community Care Licensing, the CDC, and Santa Barbara County Health Department.

Our teachers and staff will be returning next week to air out the classrooms and prepare them for the summer session. We had a drive thru Year-End Program on Friday, May 29, 2020, attended by many of our students. It was the first time we had seen them since March and were amazed at how big they had all gotten!

Please keep us in your prayers as we work through all the regulations, and welcome back our children.

Looking forward to the sound of children once again,

Eileen

Faith in Action

Brown Bag Senior Breakfast Packing Day is coming: *Sunday, June 7 at 11 am*

Mark your calendar to help us pack brown bag breakfast items for needy local seniors on Sunday, June 7 at 11 am. We are meeting a little later so you can participate in the online worship service with Pastor Chris before coming to pack bags.

We will be practicing social distancing and CDC recommended guidelines. Bags will be packed at individual stations, minimizing contact. You will need to wear a mask and follow sanitation guidelines. If you have been sick AT ALL for the past 7 days, please do not come. If you are in the "at risk" category, please do not come.

Our little brown bags are for SYV seniors who need to take medications in the morning with food, and would otherwise have nothing to eat with their pills due to financial constraints or physical limitations. Currently we are helping between 70 and 85 local seniors with breakfast bags three times a week, which means we need a minimum of approximately 840 bags per month. This ministry continues to be a vital need for our area.

You can also help out by donating any of the following items. The church is open daily from 9-5 and you can drop off items inside. Or, you can drop them on the packing day.

Protein Drinks (such as Ensure or Atkins)
Protein Bars
Instant Cup of Soup/Lunch or Noodles
Pudding (non-refrigerated)

Soft Granola/Cereal Bars
Oatmeal Packets (Protein type)
Fruit Cups or Applesauce
Small Juice Boxes or Plastic Bottles of Fruit Juices (such as Apple, Cranberry, Orange)

A big THANK YOU to the for your donations and support.

YOUR PARTICIPATION, in whatever way you are able, makes a difference in the health and happiness of someone living right here in our valley. Thank you!

Linda Marzullo
Chairman, Social Ministry Committee
688-5219, 688-3059 or vikingspressprint@verizon.net

Blessing Box and Blessing Bags Continue Strong

The **Blessing Box** in front of our church has been a true Blessing to all who have used it. We have distributed so much food to those in need out of this little box, it is amazing!

Our goal with this the Blessing Box was to have the community be able to access assistance at any time, without any stigma, from the items within it. The box is being accessed constantly. Special thanks to Elizabeth Breen, Donna Hinsbeeck and Rick Marzullo who are all assisting in keep our “mighty pantry on a post” filled daily.

With so many people struggling during the COVID-19 pandemic, we also have made up **Blessing Bags**. These Blessing Bags are located in the narthex of the church, so they may be picked up any day between 9 am and 5 pm.

If you or someone you know is in need, please be aware that these daily food programs exist at Bethania. (*See article about Tuesday Food Distribution for another food option*)

Financial donations and food donations are welcome for these projects. Items needed include canned and dried foods, snacks, cereal, coffee, condiments, cleaning supplies basically whatever you use in your household, we would like to have to distribute. Feel free to put your items straight into the box on the Atterdag Road side of the church. Or you can leave items in the church between 9-5 daily, or contact me if you like: (805) 688-5219 or (805) 451-5548. You may also email me at vikingspressprint@verizon.net if you need to arrange to meet.

THANK YOU to all who have contributed items, donated, and helped to keep this project going. Our Blessing Box and Blessing Bags truly have lived up to their names during this crisis.

- **Linda Marzullo**

Emergency Food Distribution Site at Bethania

Drive up and Walk up

New Time starting June 9th 5:15-6:45 pm

Bethania continues operating as an Emergency USDA Food Distribution site during the pandemic. We receive food deliveries from SB Co. FoodBank at 10 am each Tuesday, which we then sort and bag for families. We also have received some fresh vegetables through Veggie Rescue. Currently, we are also receiving produce boxes from Berry Man. In addition, we have received kind donations from generous neighbors and businesses, including Birkholm's Bakery, Solvang Restaurant, CVS Buellton, Olsen's Bakery, and Maili Halme, Kelli Johnson, Dr. Dennis Bales, Heather Blanchard and others.

We can always use donations of protein items (such as canned chicken, tuna, chili) and things such as macaroni and cheese, spaghetti, rice, peanut butter, and cereal. Donations can be left in the church or you can contact me to drop off items.

We have also started distributing diapers and wipes, which are very needed. We welcome donations for this outreach also.

New Food Distribution hours of 5:15-6:45 pm are starting June 9th, due to the Preschool Summer Program opening. Distribution is through drive up or walk up. There are no restrictions on income or family size.

This is an incredibly rewarding and emotional experience for many. We could not do this without our army of volunteers, who are all amazing. I am truly grateful for each and every one of them. It has been a blessing to be able to help our neighbors through our church and FoodBank and to have such hard-working helpers.

If you would like to help, please contact me. Too many people makes it difficult for us all to be safe, unfortunately; but too little make the tasks to be done extra hard. This is why we really need people to sign up in advance. Anyone interested in attending should contact me to see if we can use help that shift/time slot.

We practice COVID-19 safety procedures and have strict guidelines we must follow or risk being shut down. If you have been sick in any way in the previous 7 days, you cannot come to help. Additionally, if you are in a risk category, please do not come and endanger yourself. Be aware that we are moving a lot of heavy canned items from pallets and into bags. Hard work, but so rewarding!

As I am writing for the June Beacon, we just completed our 10th week of Emergency Food Distribution. Last Tuesday we served 326 households consisting of 1,343 individuals. We had 63 households that received food from us for the first time in May. I hope you are all proud of your church for helping so many people.

We continue to ask for your prayers and support for this mission.

Linda Marzullo
Chairman, Social Ministry Committee
688-5219, 688-3059, 805-451-5548 or vikingpressprint@verizon.net

Events and Occasions

Virtual Theology Pub

Virtual Theology Pub will be starting up again at its regular time of the 2nd Thursday of the month at 7 pm. As we usually do in the summer months, we will be doing Open Topic Night. This is your chance to ask me any question you want about faith, theology, the bible, church history, or whatever. You can also bring up a topic that you want to discuss with the whole group. I'll be emailing a Zoom link out for people to join in and I'll be posting it on Facebook. Looking forward to seeing you all!

Honoring Our Graduating Seniors

Congratulations to our 2020 Graduates!

High School

Alexis Hemming, Santa Ynez Valley Union High School - Going to Pepperdine University

Sevin Laufer, Lompoc High High School - Going to Allan Hancock

Karli Lundberg, Orcutt Academy - Going to Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

Andrew Nielsen, Santa Ynez Valley Union High School -

Going to Alderson Broaddus University, West Virginia

Jordan Whitney, Santa Ynez Valley Union High School - Going to UCSB

College and University

Mia Andersen, UCLA

Alexander Bevier, Physics, UCSB

Blane Hemming, Allan Hancock Fire Academy and Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

Cory Soliman, Economics, UCSB

Kaitlyn Soliman, Psychology, Cal State University, Channel Islands



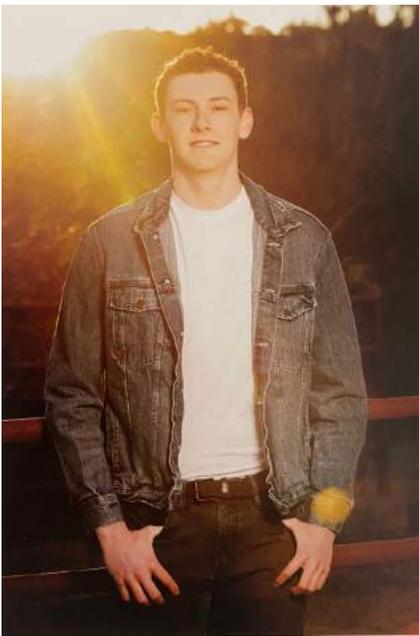
Alexis Hemming



Karli Lundberg



Sevin Laufer



Andrew Nielsen



Jordan Whitney



Blane Hemming, in the middle



Mia Andersen



Cory Soliman



Kaitlyn Soliman

Church Business

Council Report

The May 2020 monthly Council meeting was held at 7 pm on May 21, 2020. Members present were Emily Abello, Wendy Bevier, Josh Bratt, Pastor Chris, Stewart Fries, Lynne Hemming, Carol Lake, Lori McConnell, Carolyn Schuit, and Anne Twigg. Jeanelle Needham was not present. Ron Walsh was also present at the meeting.

The May 2020 Council meeting was again conducted via Zoom Conference technology.

Pastor Chris requested and the Council approved the purchase of upgraded electronic equipment to improve the quality of the church's live streaming capabilities.

Pastor Chris also provided a further update on the actions taken by the church in response to the Covid-19 outbreak, including:

- **Food Distribution on Tuesdays**
 - 29,000 pounds of food from SB Food Bank was distributed
 - Supplemented by purchases and contributions from Veggie Rescue and Berry Man
 - 375 households and 1,596 individuals were provided food
- **Diaper and wipes distribution was started by Elizabeth Breen and Jen Klamn**
 - 5,786 diapers and 205 cases of wipes were distributed
- **New Blessing Box**
 - The Blessing Box is so popular it is being refilled 6 to 8 times each day

Livier Brown provided an update on youth services during this pandemic. She reluctantly proposed, and the council approved, that VBS be cancelled for this summer. Instead she briefed the council on a new alliterative youth program called Bethania Busy Bags which she has been developing and will introduce for this summer.

The council also discussed:

- New signers on Montecito Bank checking account
- Endowment Funding of scholarships for 2020-2021
- Pastor's annual review
- And the possibility to Virtual Communion

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 18, 2020.

**The Peace of Christ be with you all,
Stewart Fries, Bethania Council President
805-245-0041**

Treasurer's Report

Balance Sheet:

- Cash position is up for the month
- Money market fund has increased due to PPP loan funded 4/30
- Current liabilities include the ppp loan (which will decrease as we use the cash for operations); the \$11,544 is the amount that needs to be paid to Pastor Chris for his housing equity allowance (included in his letter of call)
- All other liabilities are current, and there is no indebtedness

Operating statement notes:

- Other income is down due to lack of facility rentals (also for year to date)
- Offerings for the month are up by \$2,862; still down slightly for the first four months (keep in mind, we were down by \$6,000 in the first two months)
- No VBS contribution yet, as to uncertainty if we will hold VBS in June as scheduled
- Factoring out the VBS contributions budget, we are only \$846 off of offering budget for the first 4 months
- Total receipts for the month are \$3,838 over budget; total income for the first four months is down by \$4,579 (largely due to lack of rental income, and fund-raising under budget by \$2,033).

Expenses

- Salaries & benefits are below budget by \$1,447
- Staff expenses are under budget
- Office administration is up due to purchase of postage stamps in April
- Property expenses are below budget
- Utilities are below budget by \$786.45
- Overall April net revenue over expenses were \$2,858 over budget; for the first four months we sustained a deficit of \$776 compared to a budgeted deficit of \$3,599
- Credit card processing fees are up due to increased donations by credit card

The Endowment Fund money is listed on the pass through statement. Again, as we need it, it will roll through the operating statement.

2020-21 Scholarship Awards: Another great reason to make a Memorial or Honorarium Gift to your Endowment Fund...

Bethania Lutheran Church Endowment Fund is pleased to announce three Scholarship recipients for the 2020-21 Academic Year. Our recipients will each receive a \$1,000 scholarship to continue their education.

Kurt Beehler

Lexi Hemming

Karli Lundberg

Congratulations to these young people and we offer them our support and prayers as they continue their education.

Remember the Endowment Fund only gifts from its earnings. Your gift to the Endowment Fund will continue to produce income for gifting!

I would urge you to utilize gifting to the Endowment Fund as a memorial gift or to honor someone special, knowing that your gift is safely invested and will continue growing in the years ahead. These scholarships we are able to provide are an investment in the future of our young people and our community.

Thank you for your support of the Endowment Fund and through your gifts to this fund, the support of these wonderful young people.

Carolynn D. Petersen
Chairman, Endowment Fund

In Our Hearts, In Our Prayers

We uplift in prayer the following people in our congregation and community. May we minister to and bless all who need God's help.

For comfort during grief for the family and loved ones of Bob Petersen. Bob died April 30th. The service celebrating and remembering his life will be held at a future date.

Andy Blanton, Dennis Bornhoft, Annette Clausen, Terry & Jo Daly, Sharon Espinoza, Chris Frederiksen, Debbie Fritts, Sheldon & Pat Green, Shannon Hazard, Belle Hoger, Jennifer Howell, Glen Jacobsen, Michael Jech, Robert & Gail Jennings, Gladys Jorgensen, Brenda Knudsen, Jeanne Labarge, Betsy & Steve Logan, John Marzullo, Stella Miller, Brian Merrick, Denise Morris, Barbara & Charles Osborn, Marie Ostertag, Kate Pearrson, Chèle Ludwig Petersen, Doyle Phillips, Joyce Purvis, Rikka Rasmussen, Tim Reed, Judy Stamat, Kathy Walsh, Robert Workman, David & Yolanda Yanez, and those who serve our country both at home and abroad

Photos from Food Distribution Day



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Congratulations, Graduates!

Happy Father's Day, June 21, 2020