



The Beacon

Bethania Lutheran Church
1-805-688-4637
www.bethanialutheran.net

February 2021

621 Atterdag Rd, Solvang CA 93463
email: bethanialutheranch@gmail.com

Pastor Chris's Message

The end is in sight. We are moving to a finish line that we can sort of make out. Vaccine rollout has been abysmally slow, but as production increases and as more people get vaccinated, combined (hopefully) with people maintaining guidelines in their personal lives, we will start to see numbers decline.

I'm trying to rejoice in this news, but do so in a cautious way. When I jog (which is rare) and I get to that last quarter mile in which I can see my house I burst forth with this energy and no matter how tired I am I sprint the rest of the way. I have control in that moment and speeding up the last bit of this exhausting exercise so that it's finally over is something I can do. I feel that we might experience this in a collective way. We can see the end of this pandemic and we might rush to get there, ignoring the caution with which we need to continue.



I share this for two reasons. One, as your pastor I have a very small sphere of influence, and so I wish to utilize that and encourage you to maintain guidelines in your personal lives. Please make sure you continue to social distance, wear masks, and not gather with people who have not been following guidelines. We have two options of either allowing this virus to take its course while we get enough vaccinations out there or joining in and speeding up a drop in rates in our area by maintaining guidelines. The sooner the numbers go down, the sooner we can resume more of our functions at church that I know we've been missing.

Which leads me to my second reason in sharing a request for caution. As we move forward, I'm sure we'll be eager to return to church. I want to reiterate what Council voted on in November, that we will be strictly following county guidelines on what we're able to do. I am just as eager to resume church activity as you all are, but your safety is my paramount concern, and we can get to that space of coming together more quickly if we can avoid trying to sprint to the finish line. Please know that our Council will be monitoring the changes over the next few months and deciding as a council on what to do.

Lastly, I would like to encourage you to get the vaccine when it is available, but understand if anyone is uncomfortable and chooses not to get it. I would recommend talking to your primary care physician about any concerns you might have, as well as any friends who have already received the vaccine. The vast majority of our church members up at Atterdag have received both doses and I'm sure would be okay sharing their experiences. Because of my work at Atterdag I have received the first dose and will be receiving the second dose at the beginning of this month and I'm happy to share what it's been like for me. The more people who get the vaccine, the sooner we come out of this. But again, if you are uncomfortable that is perfectly understandable. It's been a long road so far and we have a bit to go, but we're getting closer to the end of this. Please know I miss you all and I am here for you in this long interim of life. Do not hesitate to reach out if you need anything.

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Chris Brown

Youth and Family Ministry

Warm Greetings,

Virtual Sunday School continues on our Bethania YouTube channel. Attachments and materials list are shown in the weekly service email.

Our large scheduled social events have ended due to our current pandemic. I am hopeful that we may organize the Rummage Sale, Youth Bake Sale, and other fundraisers this year.

ELCA Youth Gathering to Minneapolis was rescheduled for **July 2022**. High schoolers and parents are welcome, please contact me.

Vacation Bible School will be **July 2021**. Each year grows in success because of Bethania's beautiful volunteers. Please let me know if you would like to help.

In search of the following items:

Masking tape & Silver duct tape
X-Large cardboard boxes to build a bridge
White & Blue iridescent paper
Artificial Christmas trees

Stacks of white & blue & black paper
White & Blue fairy lights
Polyester fiberfill/ batting
2 pairs of adult size rain boots

Stay safe and be well,

Livier Ghamari-Brown, Director of Youth & Family Ministry
livierghamari@yahoo.com [\(909\) 962-9366](tel:9099629366)

Faith in Action

Thrivent Action Team Project

I was happy to be able to provide our Preschool and After School Program with several counting and stacking sets, an alphabet set and a large set of markers. Because of COVID-19 restrictions all items must be plastic or non-porous so they can be sanitized after each use. Since there are school age children in the Parish Hall for their Zoom school time, they need more markers.

Jim and I each used a card to buy food for the Brown Bag Breakfasts we are making in February (mine was for January which was postponed). Jim is using one to buy salad dressing for Bridgehouse in Lompoc.

You too can use a Thrivent Action Team Project card to help the Preschool and After School Program, church programs, Atterdag Village, Iglesia Luterana, or another charitable project. All it takes is a little ingenuity and planning and you can support a service project.



If your Thrivent membership qualifies, you can do two service projects a year. Both Jim and I started these projects in December so we have two more this year. We are looking forward to it.

If you have any questions, please contact me at bethanialutheranch@gmail.com or 805-688-4637 and leave a message. I will call you back and try to help you begin the process. You may also go on-line thrivent.com or call 1-800-847-4836 for help.

**Thrivently,
Kristyl Downey**

Brown Bag Senior Breakfast: Feb. 7, 2021 Packing Day

Our first 2021 socially distanced packing day will be on Feb. 7. Set up will be at 9:30 am and packing begins at 10:30am. We will pack in the church, maintaining strict distancing and sanitizing procedures. If you feel able to help, please be aware that you will need to follow our guidelines for this project in order to keep everyone as safe as possible.

Last year we packed and delivered 7,098 bags to the Buellton Senior Center – wow! Great job to everyone who helped in some way with this project. YOU have all made a difference in the lives of these seniors. Here is one of the statements from a recipient of our brown bags last year:

“I keep my brown bag by my bed so I can have a snack in the evening when I take my pills. Sometimes I even have a snack at midnight. This is great because then I don’t have to get out of bed! I live with my sister and she does the same thing. In a way I feel the bag makes me a little safer – and her as well.” – MK

The bags we make up are intended to provide items which can be eaten while taking medications and to guarantee a morning meal (and an afternoon snack – and even sometimes a midnight snack as you can tell from the above quote!).

Some SYV seniors are living in such difficult circumstances that they do not have enough food for their meals and medication-taking needs. We have made it a priority to help these seniors be more secure by providing our little brown bags, which the Buellton Senior Center currently distributes.

The church is open daily (usually from 9-5) and you can drop off any donated items you would like inside. Or, you can leave them at the church office during the week or drop them off on the packing day. You can also make a donation and earmark it “Brown Bag Breakfasts” so we can go do the shopping. Any and all help is much appreciated.

Protein Drinks (such as Ensure or Atkins)

Protein Bars

Instant Cup of Soup/Lunch or Noodles

Pudding (non-refrigerated)

Small Juice Boxes or Plastic Bottles of Fruit Juices (such as Apple, Cranberry, Orange)

Soft Granola/Cereal Bars

Oatmeal Packets (Protein type)

Fruit Cups or Applesauce

Thank you for your support of this project. Each bag created by us 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 vikingpressprint@verizon.net**

Food Distribution Continues on Tuesdays

“We may be comfortably living in our apartments or houses. We may not be getting affected by hunger during this time of despair. But there are so many people out there who may not have eaten a proper meal in the last few days. The turmoil caused by the COVID 19 pandemic is playing havoc in the lives of millions of people from all around the world. We are all in this together. We all can do our bit. Let's feed the hungry and help the less fortunate among us. Together we can make this world a better place.”

— Avijeet Das

Bethania continues operating as an Emergency USDA Food Distribution site every Tuesday from 5:15-6:45 pm. Distribution is through drive up or walk up line each Tuesday. There are no restrictions on income or family size at this time. We serve people from all walks of life, and in all types of circumstances. We have people coming for food from teenagers up to 92 years old.

Here are the numbers we served in January:

| | | |
|------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| January 5 | 301 Households | 1099 Individuals |
| January 12 | 293 Households | 1107 Individuals (89 new this month) |
| January 19 | 307 Households | 1178 Individuals (61 new this month) |
| January 26 | 288 Households | 1076 Individuals (44 new this month) |

We can always use donations of protein items (canned chicken, tuna, macaroni & cheese, peanut butter) and staples such as canned vegetables, pasta and sauce, jelly, honey, cereal, soup and chili. Donations can be left in the church or you can contact me to drop off items. **We also distribute diapers and wipes, along with incontinence and feminine hygiene items, which are very needed.** Donations are appreciated in these areas also.

If you would like to help, please contact me. We appreciate and value every volunteer who assists us with this monumental task and cannot thank them enough. Our Tuesdays are split into shifts, with the unloading crew coming in at 9:30 to unload the trucks and move the tons of food from FoodBank. Bag and produce packers arrive between 10:30 and 11:00. Distribution helpers come around 4:45 for the evening distribution. Clean up helpers are always welcome at the end of the night.

We continue to need your prayers and support for this mission, which is making a difference in so many lives here in our area.

Among our many donors in 2020, we'd also like to thank Viking Charities for their support of the Emergency Food Distribution.

—Linda Marzullo

Chairman, Social Ministry Committee

688-5219 (Work), 688-3059 (Home) or vikingpressprint@verizon.net

Flowers for Residents of Atterdag and Friendship House



Three “flower angels” (Caro Stinson and Nancy and Sarah Puder) make up small bouquets of flowers and take them to residents of Atterdag Village (all levels of care) and Friendship House. If you could like to assist the angels, you can give them jars (for example, jars for jams or olives, canning jars, etc.), small bottles and small vases. Simply call Caro Stinson at 805-245-4951 or Nancy Puder is 805-448-7404 and they will pick them up at your convenience.

Noisy Offering: Making Change Count in February

As you grow older, you will discover you have two hands: one for helping yourself, the other for helping others. –Audrey Hepburn

For our Noisy Offering this month, we will be collecting funds to create more Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief (*see related article*).

Why are we making Personal Care Kits now?

LWR has a huge shortage of these personal hygiene kits in their warehouse, and have asked for assistance creating more during Lent. Shortages are due to the pandemic, with churches and groups not being able to gather together to assemble. Fortunately, we worked out a good system when we packed last year and can assemble kits following our safety protocols to help.

Natural disasters such as earthquakes and refugee camps are typical distribution areas for these kits. With the advent of COVID-19, many people need more assistance with basic hygiene supplies. A few simple items can mean the difference between sickness and health, and life and death.

We all “make change for the better” with the Noisy offering. So send in your checks into the office and make some noise in February. You can also bring coins, cash or checks to the office on Monday, March 1 from 9 am to noon and 1-3 pm. Together, we can CHANGE a family’s world. Even a small donation or one coin can make a difference to someone in need.

– Linda Marzullo, Social Ministry

Events and Occasions



Virtual Theo Pub

Theology Pub will be gathering on Zoom on Feb. 11 at 7 pm. An email will be sent out with the link to join on Zoom and we’ll post the link on social media. See you then!

Fastelavn

At this time, we are unable to celebrate Fastelavn in our usual way. However, we can celebrate at home for our family and give gifts to our friends. I found a good web site called danishthings.com that has some fun activities for Fastelavn including a pattern for making little barrels out of card stock. Pinterest is a great source too. Make some treats, wear a costume, decorate and have some fun.

I made a couple of Fastelavn cards (always good for me to do something new), a couple of the card stock barrels and filled twelve little plastic barrels with treats and a little toy cat for my Fastelavn friends.

Happy Fastelavn!

- Kristyl



Lenten Challenge: LWR Personal Care Kits

James 2:14-17 (The Message Bible)

14 Dear friends, do you think you'll get anywhere in this if you learn all the right words but never do anything? Does merely talking about faith indicate that a person really has it? **15** For instance, you come upon an old friend dressed in rags and half-starved **16** and say, "Good morning, friend! Be clothed in Christ! Be filled with the Holy Spirit!" and walk off without providing so much as a coat or a cup of soup - where does that get you? **17** Isn't it obvious that God-talk without God-acts is outrageous nonsense?



Lutheran World Relief has issued a plea for **Personal Care Kits** during Lent. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday (Feb. 17) and continues until Palm Sunday. They are challenging congregations to find ways to assemble kits to help stock their warehouse, which is in dire need of supplies. Shortages are due to the pandemic and the increased need, with churches and groups not being able to gather together to assemble and the demand for the kits being high globally.

The novel coronavirus has exposed how connected we are as humanity and just how many of our problems and challenges are global and interrelated. During Lent, what we need is a reminder that even though the virus has stripped away our ability to touch others, God's power and ability has not been limited. We still have resources to offer others – even without being in close contact.

Through LWR's projects, your love and compassionate support will be providing hygiene kits to those in need of care around the world. This is a time when you and our congregation can offer a "healing touch" that doesn't actually require us being physically close to someone else. Through the creation and delivery of hygiene kits to others we will be touching lives around the world..

Just to be clear: We are not asking you for any extra giving that will stretch your budget too much or make you uncomfortable. This month's Noisy Offering on February 28, whatever it may be, will be used to finish out the supplies we need to make as many kits as possible – with a goal of 75. Of course, if you want to donate any of the supplies below, they would be welcome. If anyone has a Thrivent Card they would like to use to support this project, we would love to have your help! Please contact Linda Marzullo or Kristyl in the church office to talk about utilizing your Thrivent Card for a project.

We already have enough soap and toothbrushes to make 75 kits. To finish this out, we need an additional: 75 Bath Towels, 35 Combs, and 57 Nail Clippers. (And of course, we would love to make more if possible.) Assembly day will be March 28 (Palm Sunday). We will be socially distanced and follow safety protocols on that day.

Personal Care Kits contain:

1. Bath size towels (light to medium weight, between 20"x40" & 27"x52"), dark colors preferred
2. Bars of soap (4-5 oz., any brand, in original wrapping – 2 per kit)
3. Toothbrush (adult size, in original packaging – bulk buys can be repackaged by us)
4. Comb, sturdy wide toothed
5. Nail clippers (with or without nail files)

If you have any questions or need more info, please contact me at 688-5219.

– Linda Marzullo, Social Ministry (Additional information used from LWR release for Lent)

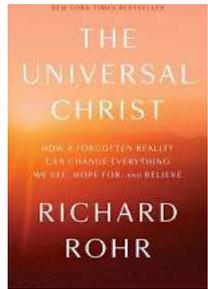
Lenten Practice

Even though we can't get together for our traditional Soup Services during Lent, why not have soup with some spiritual time at home on Wednesdays during Lent? Make a favorite soup or try a new one. You can make the soup and have special prayer, meditation, listen to contemplative music, read scripture or a religious book. And, wear purple for Lent.

I will take the Soup challenge each Wednesday during Lent. I haven't thought of a book yet but I am considering "To Bless the Space Between Us" by John O'Donahue. For a spiritual practice I am going to try to type my spiritual reflections from the garden.

What spiritual discipline will you follow during Lent? Let me know.

- Kristyl



Book Club

Book Club will be starting a new book this month. The Universal Christ by Richard Rohr is about engaging the Christ that exists in all of us, as well as the created universe. If you would like to join, we'll be starting our discussion on chapters 1-5 on Feb. 25 at 2 pm on Zoom. You can order the book through The Book Loft or online, but please consider shopping local. A Zoom link will be sent out by email and posted on social media the week of our first meeting so folks can join the discussion.

Church Business

Nyheder fra Bethania Rådet News from the Bethania Council

To be more informative and transparent, your Church Council is continuing the new process of communicating news and publishing decisions we have made via the Beacon. Our goal, each month, is to announce major decisions taken by the council to help everyone stay abreast of issues facing the church. Questions, if any, about these discussions, decisions, or messages should be addressed to a council member preferably in writing.

From the January 2021 Council meeting, we would like to report on the following topics:

- Council Changes:
- With Stewart Fries and Carolyn Schuit stepping down, the Council appointed two new interim members: Ron Walsh and Jasmine Day.
- The Council then elected new officers as follows: Ron Walsh, Interim Council President, Jasmine Day, Interim Council Vice-President, and Carol Lake, Interim Council Secretary. The remaining members of the Council will continue to serve. Lori McConnell will continue to serve as Treasurer.
- The Council voted to have two outdoor worship services (9 AM & 11 AM) on Easter Sunday, April 4. All Covid 19 precautions will be followed and reservations will be required for both services.

- The Council appointed Lori McConnell as the liaison to the Endowment Committee.
- The Council also approved becoming the Charter Partner for Boy Scout Troop 41 (formerly chartered to Santa Ynez Valley Presbyterian Church) to be effective January 2021. The Council appointed Wendy Bevier to be the Chartered Organization Representative (liaison between Bethania and the Troop). Troop 41 is the only Boy Scout Troop in the Santa Ynez Valley and without our chartering them they would not be able to serve the young people they do.

If you have any questions or comments on any of these topics, please contact one of the council members below:

| | | |
|--------------|---------------|----------------|
| Emily Abello | Jasmine Day | Lori McConnell |
| Wendy Bevier | Lynne Hemming | Ann Twigg |
| Josh Bratt | Carol Lake | Ron Walsh |

Treasurer's Report - December 2020

Balance Sheet:

The cash position is very strong with over \$79,000 in general checking available after all payables were done at the end of the month.

The money market fund has increased by \$39,000 over the month of November. Designated funds were received for food distribution and property projects and accounted for the increase.

The church has nearly \$4,000,000 in total assets. There is no long term debt and all payables are current, with the exception of the pension liability.

The one liability for \$5,000 on the balance sheet is the result of the Endowment Fund contribution for the month of January being received in December. It will be moved in January to 2021.

Profit & Loss Budget Performance:

Income:

Offerings for the month were over the budget by nearly \$17,000, and for the year were at 98% of the budget. Thanks to the generosity of our members and non-members, we will end the year with a net revenue over expenses.

Other income for the year was nearly \$19,000 over the budget. This is due to the contributions from the Endowment Fund that sustained us through the last six months of the year.

Total income for the month was \$26,860 over the budget, and for the year we were at 102% of the budgeted income. Praise God!

Expenses:

Salaries and benefits were slightly over budget for the year at 103%.

Staff expenses for the month and the year were below budget by 24%.

Office expenses were over budget for the month due to renewal of our software support fee for our offering accounting and membership tracking system. For the year, the administrative expenses were on budget.

Property expenses were below budget for the month and were below budget by 20% for the year.

Utilities for the month were slightly over budget, but were under budget by 5% for the year.

All other expenses were at or below budget for the month and the year.

Our total expenses for the year were 96% of budget .

Overall:

To say that 2020 was a challenging year would be a gross understatement! Through it all, however, Bethania not only survived, but in many cases thrived. Our faithful members and supportive non-members gave of their time, talents, and treasure. God has truly blessed us as we in turn have been a blessing to our members, our community and the world. As we began 2020 we projected a deficit of \$13,000 for the year. Several months into 2020 we began to wonder how we would ever survive the rest of the year. God indeed has provided us with what we needed to be His hands and feet in the midst of the pandemic. We give thanks to the Endowment Fund which provided over \$30,000 this year to our operating budget. Without this, we would have not made it through the year without serious financial considerations. In the month of December we experienced the largest donations in recent history from both our members and non-members, with the result that we will end 2020 with a net revenue over expenses of \$8,100. Praise God from who all blessings flow!

- **Lori McConnell, Treasurer**

Information about Giving Statements

Annual Giving Statements were mailed recently. Please contact Kristyl at the Church Office if you have a question. If you donated via PushPay you can download and print a donor statement from the app.

Thank You's and Acknowledgements

Thank you to Alan Needham and The Valley Gardener for donating landscaping services to Bethania from March - December 2020. This donation helped us to keep expenditures down during 2020 when we experienced financial uncertainty.

Check Writing Schedule for 2021 (printed on the next page)

Please try to adhere to each of these dates (listed below), as it will give our bookkeeper the time to write the checks and get them back to the office for signature. All of our checks require two signatures and sometimes authorized signers may not be available on the dates for signature. We will do our best to adhere to this schedule. If there is need for a check other than on this timeline, we will do our best to accommodate.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Ron Walsh

Assistant Treasurer/Business Manager

**Checks submitted
to the office by:**

January 11
January 25
February 8
February 2
March 8
March 24
April 8
April 23
May 10
May 25
June 8
June 24
July 8
July 26
August 9
August 25
September 8
September 24
October 11
October 25
November 8
November 22
December 8
December 27

**Checks returned to office
for signatures:**

January 15
January 29
February 11
February 26
March 15
March 30
April 15
April 29
May 14
May 31
June 15
June 29
July 15
July 30
August 13
August 31
September 14
September 30
October 15
October 29
November 15
November 30
December 14
December 30

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 for the family and loved ones of

- **Felix Finn.** Felix died Dec. 30, 2020.
- **Mary Connors.** Mary died Dec. 31, 2020. Mary's family has designated Bethania's Emergency Food Distribution Program as a recipient for memorials given in Mary's memory.
- **Margaret Barlow,** Ruth Plambeck's sister. Margaret died at the end of January.

In celebration at the birth of Brea Rynese, daughter of Kelly & Lewis Johnson, granddaughter of Denise Johnson. Brea was born Oct. 31, 2020.

Andy Blanton, Dennis Bornhoft, Greg Braund, Annette Clausen, Kerstin Emerson, Chris Frederiksen, Sheldon & Pat Green, Shannon Hazard, Belle Hoger, Suzanne Hollrah, Jennifer Howell, Glen Jacobsen, Michael Jech, Robert & Gail Jennings, Gladys Jorgensen, Jeanne Labarge, Betsy & Steve Logan, Ariana Macias, John Marzullo, Stewart Mee, Brian Merrick, Denise Morris, Robert & Shelly Myers, Roger Myers, Eric and Mallory Oftebro, Barbara & Charles Osborn, Marie Ostertag, Kate Pearrison, Chèle Ludwig Petersen, Doyle Phillips, Joyce Purvis, Tim Reed, Robin Schatan, Judy Stamat, Clay Tremblay-McGaw and those who serve our country both at home and abroad.



Memorials

Over the past year we have received several memorial gifts. These gifts are kept in Bethania's Memorial Fund until they are used to buy items for Bethania, the Preschool & After School Program and the Cemetery. Combined together with other such gifts, we have been able to buy new ovens for the kitchen, easy-up canopies, new software for the church office computer, among many other things. We thank everyone who has contributed memorials in memory of loved ones.

Received in 2020 with Gratitude

~ In Memory of ~

Larry Marsh

Ray Wagstaffe

Harlan Burchardi

Bob Petersen

Len Dalberg

Bill & Myra Petersen

Hans Knudsen

Elizabeth Lee

Karena Kvingelby

Lori Ann Marsh

Chelsea Lynn Brunell

Clayton Nielsen

Erling Grumstrup

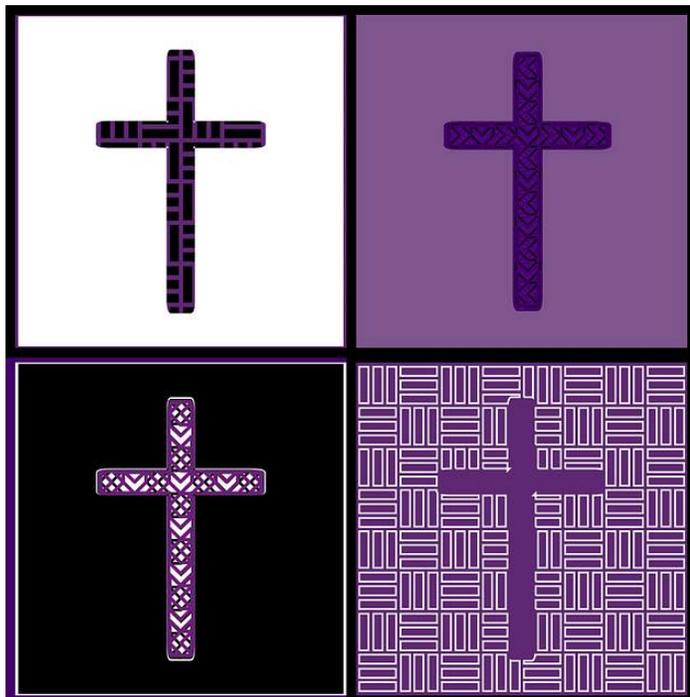
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Preschool/After School
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Ash Wednesday is Feb. 17, 2021
Lent Begins Feb. 17, 2021