



The Beacon

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

September 2021

621 Atterdag Rd, Solvang CA 93463
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Pastor Chris's Message

The first person to call God by name in the Bible is Hagar. Many of you might not remember who Hagar is, so here's a quick recap: We meet Abraham after we meet Adam and Eve and their children, and Noah, his wife and their children. Abraham is the man who God decides to bless with a great nation, which become the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim people. Before Abraham and Sarah have Isaac, Sarah is so concerned that she cannot conceive that she gives her slave, Hagar, to Abraham, who ends up conceiving a son with her. Sarah immediately regrets this decision and treats Hagar wickedly and Hagar runs away in fear and tears. As Hagar is crying, she is visited by an angel of God, who tells her that God sees her and the son she is carrying will become a great nation. It is in this moment that Hagar, an Egyptian slave, who is treated by Abraham and Sarah with such contempt, and who is seen and validated by God, utters God's name for the first time in the entire Bible. She says, I will call you El-roi, or *God who sees*.



Before the Jewish people become Israel, the next time God's name is brought up is when Jacob, a scumbag of a person, has stolen his brother's inheritance and fled from his brothers wrath, wrestles with an angel of God, and after beating the angel, asks for God's name. The angel refuses to give the name of God and instead renames Jacob, Israel, or *One who struggles with God*.

The next prestigious moment that centers on God's name is a bit more familiar, Moses and the burning bush. Moses has fled from Egypt and made a home for himself. He stumbles upon a burning bush, which contains God's voice and directs Moses to go back to Egypt to free the Hebrew people. Moses asks God, "Whom shall I say has sent me?" and God's response is simply, "I am what I am." You see God's name is incomprehensible, indefinable, uncontainable. And that's the point. God's name is not needed for Moses—the liberation of the Hebrews is needed. God's name is not needed for Jacob—Jacob's identity as Israel, the one who struggles with God, which becomes the identity of the Jewish people, is what's needed for Jacob. Again, the first person to even name God is a non-Jewish slave who is treated with contempt by the ancestors of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

God's name has always remained mysterious among Jewish and Muslim people. Most Jewish people will not speak God's name. Muslim people will not depict God in pictures or sculptures. This is not only because God is so magnanimous and inconceivable, but also because Jewish and Muslim people's identity is not wrapped in God's identity, it's wrapped in their relationships with their faith and the praxis of that relationship.

To Jesus' credit, Jesus attempts the same thing. After miracles, Jesus instructs people not to tell others who he is. When religious authorities appeal to the confines of the law, Jesus always points back to the purpose of the law, which is Leviticus 19:18: Love your neighbor. Jesus tries really hard to point people back to relationship with God and with neighbor, who for Jesus is the least of these. And for a while it works. After Jesus' ascension, his followers don't call themselves Christians, they call themselves The Way. It's Rome who calls them Christians, as a derogatory classification. It's also under

Rome, when Christianity is adopted by the empire, that Christianity, God and Jesus start to be named and defined—the very thing Jesus tried to avoid and the very thing our Jewish and Muslim siblings have been so good at staying away from. For when something can be defined or codified, it can be controlled.

Today, we worship Jesus' and God's identity. We cast them in stones and brush them into paintings. We've defined their essence in dogma and doctrine. And we often place them up on pedestals and affix our gaze. Meanwhile, the way of life they pointed us too, of loving neighbor, of caring for the outcast, the least of these, of doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God, are either neglected or relegated to the private and individual realms. We often treat Jesus' identity, as one who loves and saves us (individually), as good news. But this often doesn't result in good news for the poor, oppressed, marginalized, and beaten. This is why I preach so much on our actions as Christians and our response to God's love.

We have even defined and named our identities as Christians in this world to the same effect. We are Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Methodist, Protestant, Evangelical, etc. And almost exclusively, our identities are about what we believe, not how we act.

My hope as a pastor is that we perpetually become more centered in this way of life Jesus calls us to and we let go of the identities that we've been grasping onto. When we look at the Bible, from beginning to end, we see this strong undercurrent of a God who calls us to love one another and to change the world through justice for the oppressed, far more than a God who calls us to assert our identities. When Jesus says we are to deny ourselves, pick up our cross, and follow him, I believe he is asking us to let go of the identities that hold us back from radically loving others, and radically start to love others. And I believe that if we do this, we will start to see a church that is more authentically aligned with Jesus' vision of "where two or three are gathered, a church that genuinely responds to the world's pain in systemic ways, and we will see more breakthroughs of God's kingdom come.

**In Christ's Active Love,
Pastor Chris**

Youth and Family Ministry

Hello Bethania,

Childcare & Sunday School provided in the Fireside Room. Teachers are needed once a month.

The Garage Sale last month was a great success with earnings of \$470.00. Proceeds go to ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, July 24th- July 28th, 2022. Early Bird Registration begins now so please email if you'd like your high schooler to attend.

Youth Group meeting on Sunday Sept. 12th for Day of Service packing (10:30 am) with pizza afterwards (11:30 am) in Parish Hall.

Bible Gift Sunday will be some Sunday (to be announced) during the 9:30am service.

Newly purchased ceramic bisque ware from *Art Spot on Wheels* will be great fun for a fundraiser or church event.

Due to seasonal heat, trips to Space VR and Escape Room will be in the evenings. Youth Bake Sale will be held in the coming months.

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

A Hometown Hero in our Midst

We are pleased to announce that Linda Marzullo was nominated and selected as **KSBY's 6th and final Hometown Hero for 2021**. KSBY presented Linda with a VISA gift card as a small thank you for what she is doing.

Here is what the person who nominated Linda had to say:

When the pandemic first hit, Linda saw a need to help those in need. She went to her pastor at Bethania Lutheran Church and told him that she wanted to set up a food drive to help people in town who were out of work due to the state closures. Pastor Chris was more than willing to offer the church to set this up and Linda found neighbors, friends, and fellow church members to help her out, but it is Linda who found donors, bought food, organized the entire operation while still running her business. The food drive has now passed one year of operation, is now part of the Santa Barbara Food Bank and currently serves some 400 households and 1300 individuals. She is a powerhouse of good will and someone who never asks for anything. She is more than deserving of this award. Linda is a business owner in town but devotes her time to helping feed the community.



We all congratulate Linda for this recognition and applaud her all she does for the Food Distribution, Blessing Box, Brown Bag Breakfasts and more!

- Kristyl

Faith in Action



Helping Hands + Donated Supplies = *Our 2021 "Day of Service" Event!*

WE NEED YOU! Plan to join others in assembling School Kits and Personal Care Kits on **Sunday, Sept. 12th beginning around 10:45 a.m.** *(We also need helpers to set up on Saturday, Sept. 11th at 6:30 p.m. - see info)* Following our worship service, we will meet in the Parish Hall to start the assembly line for each project.

As part of the ELCA "Day of Service" on Sept. 12, we will be assembling both School Kits and Personal Care Kits in the Parish Hall. "Day of Service" is a church-wide event inviting everyone to do "God's Work – Our Hands." All ages and abilities are welcome to help with these projects – you can be a part of the "assembly line" no matter what your age or skill level. There are plenty of spaces for willing workers! You can count, gather, wrap, tie, box...fun for all ages as we see the piles mount and boxes fill up.

In addition to all of this, we want to hear from YOU - our Idea Wall will be the place where we ask you what things you would like to see Bethania tackle in social needs arena in the year to come. (Foster

children needs? Undie Sundays? Support for Animals?) Give us your thoughts for exploration by Social Ministry teams - share your ideas and passions and help us make it happen.

Everyone who contributed in some way to the completion of these many projects is making a difference to the person who receives the kit. YOUR hands were in direct contact with someone in need, through the volunteer time and effort you put in, however large or small.

Thank you all for your support of this important event. Our Bethania members will directly touch those in need, by sending supplies and our compassion through Lutheran World Relief.

If you have any questions, contact the church office or Linda Marzullo at work: 688-5219 or via email: vikingsprint@verizon.net

Noisy Offering is coming: Sept. 26 “Make Change for the Better”

The next “Noisy Sunday” is coming on Sept. 26. The offering from that day will be used to help cover the shipping costs of both the Personal Care Kits and the School Kits that we will be sending to the Lutheran World Relief Warehouse. This offering helps Lutheran World Relief ship the kits to the people who need them. We send our kits to an “ingathering” day set up by LWR, so that there is no cost to us to ship them to the warehouse. ***(Assembly day is scheduled for Sept. 12th - see related articles)***



Why do we need to ask for shipping cost donations instead of using those funds for creating more kits? Here's why: We plan to make 100+ School Kits and hoping for 100 Personal Care Kits. According to LWR, the approximate processing and shipping cost for each kit is as follows:

LWR Mission Quilt: (per quilt \$2.25)

LWR School Kit: (\$1.40 per kit)

LWR Personal Care Kit: (\$2.65 per kit)*

*Your gifts to the LWR Quilt & Kit Shipping Fund, for Personal Care Kits, also helps LWR cover the cost of providing a tube of toothpaste for each kit.

Your quarters, dimes and nickels (and hopefully some dollars!) will help us ship both types of kits, which are desperately needed, according to LWR.

The August Noisy Offering total was used for purchasing items for our Day of Service projects, which are the school kits and the personal care kits.

We continue to “make change for the better” with the Noisy Sunday offerings. So bring your coins and make a noise on Sept. 26th. Together, we can CHANGE the world!

– Linda Marzullo

What do you collect your change in? I use a big Ball jar at the office and a basket at home.

Let me know what you collect your “Noisy Offering” in.

- Kristyl

Tuesday Food Distribution and Blessing Box Stories

Bethania's Emergency USDA Food Distribution site is every Tuesday from 5:15-6:45 pm. We purchase items for our clients as well as using food provided by FoodBank. In addition to this service, the Blessing Box is open 24/7 to serve the needs of those in our community. We stock it with donated items and through donated funds which help us provide everything from cereal to laundry soap to Vienna sausages and peanut butter and jelly.

Some of the stories we hear are heartbreaking. In August we had an elderly woman and her son come to the Tuesday Food Distribution for the first time. They had lost their home and were living in their van, with the son's children. He was very angry. The mother was worried about him. We gave them information about where to apply for rental assistance, gave them food and some unconditional love. She was crying when she said to me, "I thought no one around here would care about us."

On Tuesdays we see so much. Sometimes all goes smoothly, sometimes there are new challenges. This past Tuesday a man needed a special formula for his new baby that the pediatrician had told him he must get. He could not afford it or find it locally. He showed me a picture and was very emotional – I tried to let him know in my terrible Spanglish that we would get it for him the following week. This is just one of many, many babies we are trying to help have healthier lives. Some challenges local babies and families face: twins but not enough money for the formula, preemies needing extra care, cleft palate that will have at least 6 surgeries, baby born with hole in stomach, parents living with no clean water to make formula – these are all stories I have heard over the past several weeks. Yes, right here, in the Santa Ynez Valley.

At the Blessing Box last week, a woman and her two children came to check it out. The little boy was super excited – we had put some toilet paper in. "Mama, I get to have toilet paper!" he yelled. "And some cereal!" The mother told her children, "You need to thank God in your prayers for the people here who are helping all of us." It was something I have carried in my heart all week.

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, at the church office or you can contact me to drop off items. **We also distribute diapers and wipes, along with incontinence and feminine hygiene items.** Donations of any of these products are greatly appreciated.

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. We need people to set up and pack some of the items in the morning at 10:30 and then another crew to help pack the bags and sort produce after 1:45. Unloading/moving helpers can come at 9:30 or 1:30. The evening distribution needs people who can lift heavy items and put things into cars, so if you are able to help, we would love to have you.

We continue to need your prayers and support for these projects, which are making a difference in so many lives here in our area.

–Linda Marzullo
Chairman, Social Ministry Committee
688-5219 (Work), 688-3059 (Home) or vikingpressprint@verizon.net

The Produce Table is Open!

The Produce Table opened June 6 and will be open each Sunday after the 9:30 worship service or come early before the 11 AM Unorthodox Gathering. And, in order to do so, we need volunteers to “run” it. Each person who takes a Sunday will get the materials from the closet in the Parish Hall and bring everything to the front of the church. Bethania’s gardeners and friends in the community will bring their produce, vegetable starts, plants and flowers to the table. After worship the Produce Table Volunteer (PTV) will help people bag their produce and receive their donations. When everyone has been helped, the PTV will count the Produce Table money and give it to the Pastor Chris to put in the Church Office. Proceeds benefit the ELCA World Hunger Appeal and Bethania’s Food Pantry.

Please email Kristyl at bethanialutheranch@gmail.com or call 805-688-4637 to select a date to run the Produce Table.

Sept. 5	Lisa Pedersen
Sept. 12	_____
Sept. 19	_____
Sept. 26	_____



We are grateful for all of the wonderful produce we have received..

Thank you to everyone for your support!

Kristyl Downey

Next Brown Bag Senior Breakfast Packing: *Scheduled for Oct. 3rd*

Our next 2021 socially distanced Brown Bag Breakfast packing day is tentatively scheduled for October 3. (We may need to pack earlier if we go through the 557 bags we packed on August 22). Thanks to everyone who helped pack at our last event!

The bags we make up are intended to provide items for local seniors to eat while taking medications. Usually our bags are used for breakfast meds and to guarantee a morning meal, afternoon snack or sometimes a late evening or midnight snack as one of the recipients let us know. Our breakfast bags are delivered three times a week.

If you would like to donate items, church is open daily (usually from 9-5) and you can drop off any donated items inside or at the church office, in addition to bringing items to us on 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.

Cont. on next page =====>

Protein Drinks (such as Ensure or Atkins),

Soft Granola/Cereal Bars

Protein Bars

Oatmeal Packets (Protein type)

Instant Cup of Soup/Lunch or Noodles

Fruit Cups or Applesauce

Pudding (non-refrigerated)

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

Every item you donate, every dollar you contribute, goes directly to helping a local senior.

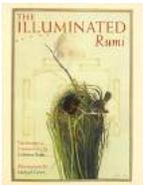
– **Linda Marzullo, Chairman, Social Ministry Committee**
688-5219, 688-3059 or vikingpressprint@verizon.net

Events and Occasions

Theo Pub

Theology Pub will be gathering once again at Solvang Brew! We'll be getting together at 7PM on Thursday, Sept. 9th. We'll be starting our topic-centered conversations again and this month we'll be talking about "activism". And now that we're back at the brewery, bring your appetites! See you there!

Book Club



Bethania's Book Group will be continuing *The Illuminated Rumi*. We'll be discussing chapters 9 & 10. If you would like to join, we'll be meeting on Zoom on Sept. 23th at 2 PM and a link will be sent out.

Coffee Hosts Wanted!

Would you like to provide some treats for coffee hour on Sunday? We are looking for people to provide baked goods for our time after worship. Some one makes the coffee and you would put out cups, plates, sugar, etc. Put out your treats, serve, then clean-up and put things away. It's a great way to provide a welcoming, social place to talk and enjoy one another's company. Sign-up on the sheet in the Parish Hall today.

We have these dates available:

Sept. 5 _____

Sept. 12 _____

Sept. 19 Emily Abello

Sept. 27 _____

Church Business

Nyheder fra Bethania Rådet News from the Bethania Council Aug. 19th Meeting

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 August Council meeting, we would like to report on the following topics:

- Sunday School will begin Sept. 5th at the 11 AM hour. We are still looking for a couple of teachers. If you can volunteer, please contact Livier or Kristyl.
- Approved the hiring of Cynthia Nunez-Perez as lead teacher in the after school care program for the Preschool.
- Approved up to \$1,000 for purchasing plants and benches to complete the pergola area as a prayer garden.
- Approved request for continued Endowment funding (\$5,000 per month) on an as needed basis depending on cash flow needs.
- Agreed to seek estimates for concreting in the area closest to the parish hall that is now dead grass and weeds, and add a fire pit for a conversation area.
- Funding for both of the above projects will come from designated funds.
- The Fireside Room is being set up for youth space in addition to being used by the preschool.
- Vacation Bible School was a great success with nearly 50 kids in attendance.

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

Emily Abello (805) 688-1243	Jasmine Day day.jasmine@gmail.com	Lori McConnell (805) 331-7971
Wendy Bevier (805) 680-1521	Lynne Hemming (805) 698-9886	Ann Twigg (805) 350-1922
Josh Bratt (805) 245-0465	Carol Lake (805) 688-6797	Ron Walsh (805) 705-3736

Bethania Lutheran Church

Notes to Financial Statement July 2021 Financials

BALANCE SHEET

	July 2021	June 2021	Change	Notes
Operating Acct	\$45,742	\$52,206	-6464	
Money Mkt Acct	142,299	145,185	-2886	
Petty Cash Acct	100	100	0	
Fund Accounts	2,007,563	2,007,563	0	
Fixed Assets	1,857,376	1,857,376		
Total Assets	4,053,080	4,062,430	-9350	
Current Liabilities	326,712	333,447	-6735	
Equity	3,726,368	3,728,983	-2615	
Total Liab/Equity	4,053,080	4,062,430	-9350	

PROFIT & LOSS ACTUAL VS BUDGET

July 2021	Actual	Budget	Variance	Notes
Total Income	20,173	28,653		
Total Expenses	23464	26,389		
Net Income	-2,543	2,264		

Balance Sheet:

- The cash position is still good with \$45,000+ in checking and \$145,185 in the money market account.

Profit & Loss Budget Performance:

Income:

- We were very close to on budget with regular offerings, although were short of the income projected on the budget. Endowment is committed to helping over the summer and would like an update in September.

Expenses:

- Expenses are still well controlled, although expenses have gone up due to many normal operations resuming.

Social Ministry Meets Sept. 1 @ 6:00 pm

Anyone who is interested in invited to attend our meeting of the Social Ministry Committee will be held **Wednesday, Sept. 1 at 6:00 pm.**

Please come and let us know your thoughts on Food Distribution / Food Pantry development, Brown Bags for Seniors and other concerns. WE NEED YOUR INPUT.

Everyone is invited to these planning meetings – we are all involved in being the hands and feet of Jesus to the world.

–Linda Marzullo
Chairman, Social Ministry
688-5219, 688-3059 or vikingpressprint@verizon.net

Thank You – *Mange Tak!*

BIG “Thank You’s” to:

- **Bill and Jan Zigler**, for spearheading the Tuesday Food Distribution Volunteer Thank You BBQ on Aug. 29. They did all the work and made so many of our volunteers feel super special. And they are volunteers themselves! They also help stock the Blessing Box every night during the week around 7 pm.
- **Donna Hinsbeek**, for her tireless assistance with Tuesday Food Distribution, the Blessing Box, the Brown Bags, church cleanup, recycling service and more. As someone recently said, “If I go by the church, it is pretty much guaranteed Donna will be there.”
- **Gene & Harriett Madsen**, for delivering our packed Brown Bag Breakfasts out to Buellton Senior Center when they are needed for their delivery team out there. Thanks!

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 Ken Labarge. Ken passed away Aug. 24, 2021.

Emily Abello, Andy Blanton, Dennis Bornhoft, Kristyl Downey, Melissa Eck, Sheldon & Pat Green, Shannon Hazard, Belle Hoger, Jennifer Howell, Tomi Izuno, Glen Jacobsen, Jeanne Labarge, Betsy & Steve Logan, Ariana Macias, John Marzullo, Stewart Mee, Brian Merrick, Denise Morris, Eric and Mallory Oftebro, Barbara & Charles Osborn, Marie Ostertag, Kate Pearrison, Chèle Ludwig, Petersen, Doyle Phillips, Robin Schatan, Judy Stamat, and those who serve our country both at home and abroad.

Calendar Items

Sundays

9:30 am Worship Service in the Church

10:30 am Produce Table in the Breezeway & Coffee Hour in the Parish Hall

11:00 am Unorthodox Gathering in the Church

11:00 am Sunday School in the Fireside Room

Monday - Friday

9:00 am - 3:00 pm - The Church Office is open.

Mondays

6:00 pm Art Spot on Wheels in the Parish Hall

8:00 pm AA in the Fireside Room

Tuesdays

9:30 am Prepare and Organize for Food Distribution

1:30 pm Arrival of Food from FoodBank in the Front Parking Lot

1:30 pm Food Distribution Packing in the Church, Produce Sorting & Bagging in Front of the Church

5:15 - 6:45 pm Food Distribution on the Laurel Side of the Church and
on the Courtyard Side of the Church

6:00 pm Yoga in the Fireside Room

Thursdays

7:00 pm Santa Ynez Valley Wind Ensemble in the Courtyard

Wednesday, Sept. 1

6:00 pm Social Ministry Committee Meeting in the Church

Thursday, Sept. 9

7:00 pm Theo Pub at Solvang Brewing Company Fire Pit

Sunday, Sept. 12

10:30 am "God's Work, Our Hands" ELCA Day of Service - Packing and Assembling School Kits and Personal Health Kits for Lutheran World Relief in the Parish Hall

Thursday, Sept. 16

7:00 pm Council Meeting in the Fireside Room

Friday, Sept. 17

12:30 pm Wedding Rehearsal in the Sanctuary

Saturday, Sept. 18

12:30 pm Set-up and Decorate for Wedding in the Sanctuary

3:00 pm Wedding in the Sanctuary

Thursday, Sept. 23

2:00 pm Book Group via Zoom

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