



The Beacon

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

February 2024

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

Bethania's Mission Statement

We are a community of Christ-centered, welcoming, inclusive and multi-generational people rooted in God's faith, hope and love, called to advocate for justice, give to those in need, and share God's affirming love with the world.

Pastor Chris's Message

Nothing says I love you like, "And to dust you shall return." Ash Wednesday falls on Valentine's Day this year and while many couples will be gathered together over nice dinners celebrating their love of one another, I'll be smearing palm tree ash on people's foreheads, reminding them they're going to return to the dust from whence they came. Love surely is in the air.

While it may seem far-fetched, I think the celebration of Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday can play off one another. I think of it this way. 13.8 billion years have lead you to this moment right here where you're reading these words. The chemical needs to create life on earth are so vast and have to be so perfect that for the creation of life to happen, you existing in this moment is an absolute miracle. And yet, your existence wouldn't even register as a blip if we were to put the expansion of the universe on a timeline. And yet, here you are, reading these words. Everything you've ever gone through, experienced, will experience, every moment of meaning, every memory that has created the person you are have all happened on that blip. Sometimes the joy I experience inside feels so magnanimous I imagine it could fill this expansive universe, and yet that feeling is juxtaposed with that blip.

Ash Wednesday reminds us that from dust we were created and to dust we shall one day return. This blip is what we have. And while intellectually we could say it's just a blip, a tiny particle in the ever-growing universe, our personal experience within it can feel magnanimous, right? Jesus showed up in a blip and in that short time he changed the world. He pointed to people and showed them that in this time we've been given, we are loved, just as we are, and if we can love others too, this blip of ours will feel immense.

How do we spend this blip we have? I believe that's the real question that is posed every Ash Wednesday, at least for me. From dust you came and to dust you will return. How will you spend the time in between? The world is competing for our time and energy during that blip. And at times we give into the world, and at times we give in to the divine. It's been my experience that when I choose to just love people, that's when this blip becomes so magnanimous that it can't possibly be just a blip.

continued on next page

While science has shown us how great and vast the universe is, quantum science is now just starting to show us that the human body, the human mind, and I would add, the human soul, are even greater. So it's an interesting paradox that we may only exist for a blip in the timeline of the universe, that one day, we'll return to the stars we are comprised of, but before then, this amazing love that God has bestowed upon us fills a space even greater than eternity.

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

Ash Wednesday Soup Supper and Service

We'll be gathering to start our journey of Lent with our Ash Wednesday service and soup supper. **All are invited to join for a simple meal at 6pm in the Parish Hall and our Ash Wednesday Service will start at 7pm in the Sanctuary.** If you are able to make a soup for the service, please contact Kristyl Downey at bethanialutheranch@gmail.com or (805) 688-4637.

Lenten Soup Suppers Story Telling: Grace

We'll be gathering again for our weekly Lenten soup suppers, and as we did last year, we'll be sharing stories from our lives. The theme for our story telling this year will be Grace. We tend to think of Grace in Lutheran terms of moments when we should have negative consequences, but someone extends grace and love instead. But Grace can also be any moment of someone extending a kindness when least expected. It's the opposite of quid pro quo, it intersects this idea that relationships should be transactional, and Grace is any action of kindness or love given without motive or need of a response.

And I'm looking for Story Tellers! If you have a story from your life where someone extended Grace to you, or where life extended Grace to you and it was an impactful moment, please consider sharing your story. I'm looking for anywhere from 5-10 Story Tellers, and each story should only be about 5 minutes or so long.

Soup Suppers will be every Wednesday in Lent, beginning Feb. 21 at 6pm. A Soup Sign-Up Sheet will be in the Parish Hall for folks to sign up for soup, salad, or bread.

Communion Bread

You may not have thought much about the bread Pastor Chris holds up during the Communion Liturgy. It makes tangible the "bread and the wine". And it is a special homemade baked bread made by Emily Abello, Anna Cook, Kristyl Downey, Nancy Emerson, Betty Madsen and Sheila Mee. They bake this bread one or two times a year and put it in the church freezer for his use. Its recipe comes from the ELCA Luther Seminary in Minnesota. This bread is easy to make, requiring no fancy bread making knowledge. We are always glad to include new volunteers. If you think you might like to bake, contact Nancy Emerson at nancyfemerson52@gmail.com or 805-350-8780. She will be happy to arrange a "show and tell" with one of the bakers before you decide whether to join the group.

Faith in Action

Food Distribution at Bethania – Making A Difference Locally

Bethania continues operating as a Food Distribution site every Tuesday. This past month we have been converting to an electronic check-in system from the Food Bank.

On Jan. 23, we helped some elderly people with specific health needs, a young man who requires a special protein drink for this kidney failure, a woman whose partner died and she has lost a significant portion of her income as well as her support, young mothers with babies who need formula. All sorts of people need a little help, the majority of whom are working.

You can donate protein items, cereal, soup, macaroni and cheese, canned meat, chili, pasta and jam for the Blessing Box or for Tuesday's Distribution. Please contact Linda Marzullo or Kristyl in the Church office if you need more info. Donations of diapers and wipes, along with incontinence and feminine hygiene items, protein drinks and baby food, are also needed.

If you would like to volunteer, please contact me. Our Tuesdays are split into shifts: 9 am - help move items and get ready for packing; 1:30 pm unload the Food Bank truck; produce is packed; 4:45 prepare for the evening distribution; 6:45 pm clean-up.

We continue to need your prayers and support which is making a difference in so many lives in our area. We appreciate everyone who assists with this monumental task and cannot thank them enough

–Linda Marzullo

Chairman, Social Ministry Committee

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

Bags, Bags, Bags!

We could use more bags! Our Food Distribution program requires the use of almost 200 brown grocery bags weekly, as well as 200 plastic bags. The heavier-duty plastic are the best, as we pack produce in them. Please drop your bags off in the boxes inside the church entry. Thank you for your help!

Next Brown Bag Senior Breakfast Packing: Feb. 4th

Our next Brown Bag Breakfast packing day will be Feb. 4th. Help out at the coffee hour to make a difference in local seniors' lives! Packing just a few bags helps meet our monthly goal of 500+ bags which provide nutrition to low-income seniors.

Brown Bag Breakfast items we need:

- Protein Drinks (such as Ensure or Atkins)
- Soft Granola/Cereal Bars and soft Protein Bars
- Oatmeal Packets (Protein type) or small Cereal Boxes or Cups
- Fruit Cups or Applesauce

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

If you are able to donate these food items, please drop them by the office or deliver on packing day. You can also make a donation and earmark it “Brown Bag Breakfasts” and we can shop for you.

Support local seniors struggling with food insecurity. Every contribution to this project helps make life a little better for them. Thank you!

–Linda Marzullo

Chairman, Social Ministry Committee

688-5219, 688-3059 or vikingpressprint@verizon.net



“Joyful Quilters” Meet Feb. 9 in the Parish Hall

Friday morning Feb. 9 is the next opportunity for everyone to have fun tying quilts. We have lots of tops, backs and batting ready to go. We meet at 9 am and always have some kind of snacks to keep us going.

Noisy Sunday: Let’s Show Some Love!

Our February Noisy Sunday offerings will be used to support our Preschool and After School Program. Let’s show them some love and give them some change, to purchase supplies or use for facility needs. Bethania Preschool & After School Program is an excellent program teaching children from age 2 to age 5, and providing after school child care and activities for school age children.

You can also help by donating gift cards for the teachers to use, so they don’t have to purchase supplies out of their own pockets, such as from WalMart, Amazon, Michael’s, Office Depot, CVS or Rite Aid. (Drop your gift cards off in the church office for delivery or give to our amazing Preschool Director, Lola)

Bring your coins, cash and checks and make some noise on Feb. 25th. Together, we can show some love to our Preschool and our Teachers here at Bethania this month!

– Linda Marzullo, Social Ministry

Events and Occasions



Theo Pub

There will be NO Theo Pub, in the month of February. With the cold nights, attendance has been down, so we'll gather again in March.

Fastelavn Celebration

Bethania Lutheran Church
Saturday, February 10, 2024
Parish Hall doors open at 5:30 pm
Dinner served at 6:00 pm

*Join us for a Danish Hot Dog Dinner with all the fixings,
Beer, wine and sodas at an additional charge
Costume Contest and Raffle Prizes!!*

Please keep costumes family friendly*

All are welcome!!

However, tickets are limited, so get yours early!
Tickets: Adults \$15
Children 4 - 10 \$10
Children under 4 - Free

Tickets can be purchased at the church office,
by calling 805-688-4637 or email bethanialutheranch@gmail.com
or online: bethanialutheran.net

A cartoon illustration showing three children in costumes. On the left, a girl in a yellow dress and blue overalls. In the center, a child in a white ghost costume with a black eye. On the right, a boy in a red cap and white shirt holding a large wooden drum.

Our **Fastelavn Party is coming Sat. Feb. 10th in the Parish Hall** and all are welcome! Includes a hotdog dinner with Danish & American fixings, a children's costume parade, raffle prizes, and the main event...knocking the cat and candy out of the barrels (men's, ladies', and kids').

Wooden Bats are needed. Please drop off M-F in the Church Office or Sunday, Feb. 4 in the Parish Hall.

**Volunteers for Fastelavn are appreciated.
Drop-Off and Volunteering in the Kitchen & Parish Hall.**

Desserts: Evening drop off on Feb. 9th or Saturday, Feb 10th after 12 noon. Easy to pick up items - cookies, brownies, cupcakes, cake pops, bar cookies, etc.

Decorating: Friday evening, Feb. 9th at 5:30 pm.

All colors or clear string lights are used. Sharing lights? Please put a tag on the plug end with your name.

Food Prep: Friday evening, Feb 9th at 5:30 pm.

Food Prep and Set-Up: Saturday, Feb. 10th at 12 noon.

Serving, Desserts, Final Dinner Prep and Refilling Bowls: Saturday, Feb. 10 at 5:00 pm.

Clean up

We can use everyone's help with this task. Many hands make light work!

Thank you !!!!

Contact Mindi Christian at mjcnannie2010@gmail.com or 805-350-3810.



BLCW invites you and a friend!

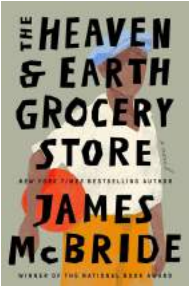
Thursday, February 29,
6:30-8:30 pm
at Lois DeMeyer's
284 1st Street, Solvang

Bring a book or two that you are finished reading and are willing to trade.

Wrap each in plain paper and write a brief description, but **no author or title!**

RSVP: lbdemeyer@gmail.com

Book Group



Bethania's Book Group is starting a new novel called, The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store, by James McBride. An Instant New York Times bestseller, a murder mystery that explores cultural themes in 1970s Pottstown, Pennsylvania. We'll be discussing the first 50 pages on Feb. 15, at 2pm in the Parish Hall. You can purchase the book at Amazon or The Book Loft, but please consider shopping local.

Endowment Fund Scholarships Available

The Endowment Committee is pleased to announce that educational/vocational scholarships will once again be available for the fall of 2024. Applications are open those who will be attending college or vocational training this fall, and who are also active in the church life of Bethania.

We invite you to apply by writing an essay introducing yourself to the committee. The content should include a description of your past and present church participation with Bethania, the influence your faith has had in making everyday life decisions, ways your faith has determined educational and future goals, and examples of your community service.

For anyone who might not receive a standard SYVUHS application form, some will also be available at the church office.

Pertinent Dates:

Feb. 7th: SYVUHS students to receive scholarship application packets.

March 15th: Applicant's due date to submit or mail applications to Bethania Lutheran Church.

For further information, contact David Hemming, Endowment Chairman

David@1valley.com (805)680-7078

Happy 100th to Gerda Willis!

Gerda Willis is celebrating her 100th birthday on Feb. 22. Please feel free to call her or send her a card. If you need her address or phone number, please call Kristyl in the church office.

Empty Bowls Fundraiser – Save the Date: March 9th

Veronica Medina of Community Clayworks in Buellton, Chef Budi Kazali, Pastor Chris Brown, Donna Hinsbeeck and I encourage you to "Save the Date" for our second Empty Bowls Fundraiser. "Empty Bowls" will be held at Bethania on March 9. What a bargain: Delicious soup and bread made by local chefs, a handmade ceramic bowl of your choice, and feeling great that you have helped fight food insecurity in our community. Over 300 handmade bowls will be available, made by potters at Community Clayworks and students at Midland, Dunn and SYVUHS. Proceeds raised benefit Bethania's food distribution. Fundraisers like this enable us to give out food to families who are need each week.

Tickets are \$30 per person, and two different seating times are available. You can order your tickets and reserve your dinner seating on Bethania's website or through communityclayworks.com website. If you are unable to attend, you can always click on the "donate" button and make a contribution.

Volunteers are needed to help serve at the event. If you would like to help, contact Linda Marzullo (vikingpressprint@verizon.net), Pastor Chris or the church office.

Do you love to bake? We could use some help setting up a bake sale table at the event. Donations of wrapped, ready to eat goodies are welcome!

This is an exciting partnership with Community Clayworks and Bethania as we work together to fight food insecurity locally and raise awareness in our valley.

– Linda Marzullo

Santa Ynez Valley
**EMPTY
BOWLS**

A fundraiser to fight food
insecurity in our community

March 9 | 5:30 & 7:30pm

Bethania Parish Hall, Solvang



- Handmade ceramic bowl of your choice
- Soup and bread by local chefs

Sponsored by
Community Clayworks
Viking Press
Visit SYV



www.communityclayworks.com
All proceeds benefit Bethania Food Distribution



Tickets
\$30

CHURCH FAMILY CAMPOUT

APRIL

5-7

- Tent, RV or day use
- Organized hikes
- Potluck suppers
- Campfire activities
- Stargazing
- Soccer, Disc Golf
- Yoga
- Sunday gathering
- Fishing
- Museum
- Canoes, Pontoon
- Restaurant



Lake Cachuma State Park Dakota Plains Group Site

SIGN-UPS ARE OPEN DURING COFFEE HOUR

Registrar: Carol Skoog

carolskoog@yahoo.com

408-398-5673

Cost:

\$30 individual/weekend

\$50 couple/weekend

\$70 family/weekend

\$10 vehicle/day use

Donations accepted/Camperships Available

Congregational Business

Annual Meeting, pt. 2

The Annual Meeting, pt. 2 will be in the Parish Hall Sunday, Feb. 25 after the 9:30 service. The primary purpose of the meeting is to receive the annual reports for 2023.

Nyheder fra Bethania Rådet News from the Bethania Council

- In 2023, our church ended the year \$24,732 short of expenses. This total shortfall is beyond what we received from the Endowment Fund to meet expenses. As a result, we'll be starting a stewardship campaign soon.
- There are several property projects underway to reduce our utility bills moving forward.
- The Property Committee is seeking volunteers for their newly forming Long-Range Property Improvement Plan Committee. The purpose of this committee is to review under-used spaces on our church campus and to make recommendations to the congregation and the Council for integrated and sustainable improvements.

Jan Simonsen (805) 319-8652	Leigh Berenger (310) 877-8418	Ingelise Pedersen (805) 688-3836
Karin Baty (612) 229-8172	Jan Zigler (559) 740-3676	Rikka Rasmussen (805) 453-8535
Josh Bratt (805) 245-0465	Carol Lake (805) 688-6797	Carol Skoog (408) 398-5673

Financial Statement

Notes for December Financial Statement Period Ending 12/31/23

Balance Sheet

	November 2023	December 2023	Change
Operating Acct	\$61,504	\$73,084	\$11,580
Money Mkt Acct	\$125,431	\$147,701	\$22,270
Petty Cash Acct	\$100	\$100	\$0
Fund Accounts	\$1,832,408	\$1,832,408	\$0
Fixed Assets	\$1,878,466	\$1,878,466	\$0
Total Assets	\$3,897,910	\$3,931,759	

Profit & Loss Actual vs Budget

December 2023	Actual	Budget	Variance
Total Income	\$32,188	\$39,832	-\$7,644
Total Expenses	\$28,501	\$29,015	\$514
Net Income	\$3,687		

Offerings

	Actual	Budget	Variance	Notes
General Fund	\$25,466	\$35,000	-\$9,534	
Non-Members	\$3,732	\$1,000	\$2,732	
	\$29,198	\$36,000	-\$6,802	Total offerings short \$24,775 for 2023

Other Donations

Bethania Heritage Fund	\$401
Cemetery	\$100
ELCA World Hunger	\$10
Facilities Fee	\$200
Food Distribution	\$22,145* *\$20,000 Kei Lin Foundation
Memorials	\$350
Noisy Offering	\$176
Thrivent Choice \$ Fund	\$213

If you have any questions please reach out to Leigh Berenger / Treasurer Bethania / 310-877-8418.

Next Social Ministry Meeting – Feb. 7th @ 6 pm

The next Social Ministry meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 7th at 6:00 pm in the Fireside Room. The main topics for discussion will be:

- “Empty Bowls” fundraiser planning
- Setting the date for the next Community Networking Fair
- Brown Bag Breakfast packing
- Hike Against Hunger discussion

We need committee members to help us shape the direction of our ministries! Please consider joining us on this committee. 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

In Our Hearts, In Our Prayers

We uplift in prayer the following people in our congregation and community.

For Prayers During Grief for the family and loved ones of...

Stewart Mee - Stewart passed away Jan. 6, 2024. His service was held at Bethania Jan. 15.

Health and Other Concerns

Carol Aides, Frank Amby, Andy Blanton, Dyann Driggers, Sheldon & Pat Green, Luis Haro, Belle Hoger, Ariana Macias, Loretta McConnell, Denise Morris, Mike Murray, Erwin Ostertag, Kate Pearrison, Tom & Carolynn Petersen, Doyle Phillips, Renate Sanders, Jane Shade, Rick Shade, Judy Stamat, Hayes Robert White and those who serve our country both at home and abroad.

Thank You's

Thank you....

I want to say a sincere “thank you” for all the sympathy cards, phone calls, flowers and messages I received following Stewart's death. They were a great source of comfort during this difficult time. I also want to thank Denise Johnson and the ladies who prepared the lunch following the service. The Danish open faced sandwiches were beautifully prepared and were Stewart's favorites!

Thanks also to Pastor Chris for his kind words during the service and to Kristyl for making sure all the details were covered beforehand.

**Sincerely,
Sheila Mee**

February Calendar Items

Sundays

9:30 am Worship Service in the Sanctuary
11:00 am Unorthodox in the Sanctuary
11:00 am Sunday School in the Fireside Room

Mondays

7:00 pm AA in the Fireside Room

Tuesdays

9:30 am, 1:45 pm, and 5:15-6:45 pm Food Distribution Shifts

Wednesdays

6 pm Lenten Soup Suppers beginning Feb. 21 during Lent
11:30 am and 3:30 pm Chapel in the Sanctuary
5:30 pm Yoga in the Fireside Room - Beginning Feb. 14 through Lent
7 pm Choir Practice in the Sanctuary during Lent

Thursdays

Noon - Lisa Blanton practices in the Sanctuary
7-8 pm Boy Scouts in the Parish Hall

Fridays - **8:30 am** Jim Skoog practices in the Sanctuary

Thursday, Feb. 8

5:30 pm Touch-A-Truck Meeting in the Fireside Room

Friday, Feb. 9

9:30 am - noon Quilting Group in the Parish Hall

Saturday, Feb. 10

Fastelavn Celebration

Wednesday, Feb. 14 - Ash Wednesday

6 pm Soup Supper in the Parish Hall
7 pm Ash Wednesday Service in the Sanctuary

Wednesday, Feb.

5:30 pm BPSAS Board Meeting in the Fireside Room

Thursday, Feb. 15

2 pm Book Group in the Parish Hall and via Zoom
7 pm Council in the Fireside Room

Sunday, Feb. 25

Noisy Offering
10:30 am Annual Meeting, pt. 2 in the Parish Hall

The Beacon February 2024
Bethania
621 Atterdag Rd.
Solvang CA 93463

Feb. 10, 2024

*Contact the Church
Office for details*

