



The Beacon

Bethania Lutheran Church
621 Atterdag Rd
Solvang CA 93463

February 2025

805-688-4637
bethanialutheranch@gmail.com
www.bethanialutheran.net

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.

10,000 Ways Not to Do Something

How do you think we deal with faults? I posed this question to the Unorthodox group a couple weeks ago, and at first the responses were pretty positive. Most people were raised by their parents not to be shamed when they made mistakes and were given the freedom to feel like trying again. However, the response was dramatically different when it switched to peers. How did peers in school, friends in life, and colleagues at work respond when someone would make a mistake? Most people said that it was not only shaming, but done in a way where folks felt like they had to carry their mistakes on their sleeves for a long time.

Imagine the lasting effects of this. If you felt like your mistakes would be thrown into your face by your peers, what would you do when you made a mistake? Would you be open about it? Or would you try to bury it? Would you come clean if someone brought it up? Or would you work overtime to deny it ever happened? Would you be quick to genuinely apologize? Or would you make excuses, deflect, etc.?

Jesus was a person who inherently believed in and extended to others New Beginnings. Consider the apostles he calls: One of them is a tax collector, a local Jewish person employed by the Roman Empire to collect taxes from their community members. They were reputed to not just collect what was required (which was already a lot), but they also collected extra for their own pocket, thus enriching themselves. And everyone knew about this. And yet Jesus calls a tax-collector to join a bunch of average Joes, all of whom probably had to pay their taxes to this person. Imagine the anger. Imagine what they wanted to do. Imagine what they felt was justifiable retribution for extortion. And yet, the gospels give no indication of this. Jesus never condemns him for past sins, berates him in front of others, or seeks reparations before he can become a follower. He is just welcomed. He no longer participates in his get-rich scheme and becomes fully dedicated to a way of life of love and compassion and taking care of many people to whom he probably did harm. But he does so without any guilt forced on him by others. He is simply offered the chance to begin anew.

If you were to ask anyone, or even yourself, if you are perfect, or if you are a person who makes mistakes, what would they say? Correct. We are people built to evolve. And we don't evolve by one increasing success after another, but by bumping into walls, by stubbing toes, by hurting others and feeling really bad about it and choosing not to do that again. We are built to make mistakes and learn from those mistakes and grow from them. And Jesus knew this intimately and responded in kind. It

was more important for his followers to feel the freedom to try again, rather than shamed to fear trying at all. Yet, we live in a paradoxical society where we both acknowledge that we're imperfect and yet have a standard of perfection for most people around us.

Thomas Edison once said, "I don't make mistakes, I just find 10,000 ways not to do something." Our path as a church is not to point out flecks in our neighbors eye, but rather give them loving space to make mistakes and grow from them, to have the freedom to try again because continuing to try loving people as best we can is what our faith is all about. By the way, the Bible has a word for this kind of work. It's called Grace.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Chris

Faith in Action

Next Brown Bag Senior Breakfast Packing: Feb. 2, 2025

Our next Brown Bag Breakfast packing day will be held on Feb. 2nd. Come help out at the coffee hour between services and make a difference in local seniors' lives! Even if you just have time to pack a few bags, your help makes it possible for us to meet the monthly needs of local seniors.

These bags provide food items to seniors who need to take medication with food. Many of them cannot afford this additional cost in their budgets. They also receive a few extra items so that they have snacks if needed.

If you are able to donate any items below, please drop it by the office or deliver on packing day. You can also make a donation and earmark it "Brown Bag Breakfasts" so we can go do the shopping. Any amount of help is much appreciated!

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)

Plan to come and make a difference for a local senior who is struggling with food insecurity. Every contribution to this project helps make life a little better for a local senior. Thank you!

–Linda Marzullo

Chairman, Social Ministry Committee

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

Food Distribution at Bethania

Last night was our last Tuesday distribution in January. We have seen an increase, week by week after the holidays, with more people coming to Bethania for food each week. But last night was different.

The last week is usually a USDA week, the one week out of the month that the majority of what we give out comes from government programs through the Food Bank. Last night we were wondering – will the spending freeze on all government programs change this? Will we need to be spending even more of our funds to keep feeding people? (Since last night, the spending freeze was rescinded for now – stay tuned.)

Usually, our food line starts forming at 2:30. People arrive and wait for us to open. Cars start lining up to wrap around the block. There is a lot of socializing going on while clients wait for us to open. Not last night. ICE was in town.

At 3:30 we only had one person waiting in the walk up line. No cars were in the lot besides those of Preschool families. Close to 5:00, when we were starting to move pallets to set up, only 7 cars were in the drive up line and about 12 people waiting in the walk up. This was eerie and completely unheard of at the Food Distribution. As the evening progressed, people started arriving – and asking to pick up for lots of other families. Pastor Chris was on hand in case ICE showed up to guide us through proper legal procedures. Yes, people were afraid they would be picked up on church property if they came for food to feed their families.

One family who has been coming for years and has also helped at our Food Dist. was too scared to leave their apartment – so we made a delivery for her and also her sister's family. Young people in line were saying, "My mom sent me to get the food." As it got darker and later, more people came. We ended up serving exactly 200 households, but it was a completely different feeling last night. Most noticeably, we had no field workers that we could spot. Did they send someone else to get their food? Were they picked up? Hiding? Someone told us people have been moving out in the middle of the night in the area.

ICE agents in town have terrified local workers and affected businesses - just in the past few days. Not all of the people who are scared are illegal – many are just afraid of "what could happen" if they are picked up, questioned or arrested. Many of our clients told me last night how stressful and frightened they are, regardless of their legal status. Restaurant and hotel workers, field workers, gardeners, cleaners, and especially caregivers – the ripple effect will hit our economy hard. Many of these people do jobs that no one I know would like to do. Would you like to get up at 4 am and go pick fields until 3 pm in the afternoon? I sure would not want to.

Whatever your politics, the new mandate from the President with Immigration and Customs Enforcement policy is having an impact on our local economy. It is also having an impact on people who really need help, who are living at the low to moderate income level. Recently the Public Policy Institute revealed that Santa Barbara County has the second highest poverty rate among all 58 counties in the state of California. After running this food distribution for almost 5 years now, I believe it.

Please pray for all who are affected by the ICE enforcement in so many ways. We continue to need your prayers and support for this mission, which is making a difference in so many lives here in our area.

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

Piece Makers at Bethania

The Piece Makers are off to a great start with several quilts finished. Many, many more are waiting to be tied. We plan to meet the second Friday of every month. Here are the dates for 2025: **Feb. 14**, March 14, April 11, May 9, June 13, July 11, Aug. 8, Sept. 12, Oct. 10, Nov. 14, and Dec. 12.

Noisy Sunday: Let's Show Some Love this February!

The next “Noisy Sunday” is coming on Feb. 23rd. Noisy Offering donations received that day will help support Direct Relief.

What will our donations be used towards?

Direct Relief is a humanitarian aid organization, active in all 50 states and more than 80 countries, with a mission **to improve the health and lives of people affected by poverty or emergencies** – without regard to politics, religion, or ability to pay.

Direct Relief is supporting medical facilities, first response agencies and communities affected by wildfires in the U.S. and throughout the world with requested fire-related medical items and emergency gear.

100% of donations to Direct Relief's wildfire response fund directly support efforts to assist individuals impacted by fires in Palisades, Altadena, and across California, providing critical aid where it's needed most.

We all really “make change for the better” with each Noisy Sunday. So send in your coins, cash and checks and make some noise on February 23rd. Together, we can show some love to those affected by fires and other emergencies.

– Linda Marzullo, Social Ministry

Scholarships Available

The Endowment Committee is pleased to announce that scholarships are available to students attending college or vocational training in the fall of 2025. Applicants should be active at Bethania.

Applicants need to complete a standard Santa Ynez Valley Union High School application form. If the applicant doesn't attend Santa Ynez Valley Union High School, application forms can be picked up at the church office. The applicant should also submit an essay introducing themselves to the committee. The essay should include a description of their past and present participation at Bethania, examples of their community service, and how their faith influences their decisions and future goals.

Important Dates:

Monday, Feb. 3rd: SYVUHS students receive scholarship application packets.

Applications are available in the church office.

Friday, March 7th: Application deadline

Storytelling for Lenten Soup Suppers*

Dear friends,

I want you to start thinking of your stories to share! This year for our theme we are going to take a step back from something explicitly religious, although a case can be made, and the theme for our Lenten Soup Suppers storytelling is going to be "How We First Met." This can be about your spouse, a friend, a relationship, or whatever. It's just about how we first met. This can also be done solo or in conjunction with the person your story is about. Ideally I would like 2 to 3 stories for each Soup Supper so 10 to 15 people total. I imagine there are some great stories about "How We First Met," so please let me know if you'd like to share.

Pastor Chris

* The Lenten Soup Suppers are on Wednesdays in March and April.

Events and Occasions

Theo Pub

Theo Pub will be taking a break for the months of January and February, when it's too cold to gather. We'll resume in March.



Coffee Hosts in February

Thanks to everyone hosting coffee time in February:

Feb. 2 - Livier Brown for Verona's baptism & 5th birthday

Feb. 9 - Glenda Madrid

Feb. 16 - Terry & Roger Billings

Feb. 23 - Carol Skoog & Cheryl Heredia

Please sign-up for **dates in March** on the calendar in the Parish Hall.



BLCW invites you to

A Troll Stroll

Tuesday, February 11

10:00: No-host coffee at Olsen's Bakery

11:00: Stroll two doors down to the California Nature Art Museum (formerly Wildling Museum), admission \$5. Stay as long as you like.

Come and see Danish recycle artist Thomas Dambo's latest troll creation from found materials. They are all over the world, and now there is one in Solvang!

Questions: Contact Jan (559) 740-3676

Fastelavn 2025

Fastelavn will be Saturday, March 1 and tickets will sell out! Doors will open at 5:30 and our traditional hotdog dinner with all the fixins will be served at 6pm. Kids are invited to wear costumes as there will also be a costume contest. And of course 3 beefy barrels are currently being constructed!



This event will sellout so buy your tickets as soon as possible and please share with friends and family. You can purchase tickets online at Bethania's website, on Sundays after church, or at the church office.

Adults	\$15
Kids ages 4 – 10	\$10
Kids under 4	Free



Please come to Pastor Chris's
10th Anniversary Party
Dinner & Entertainment!
March 22, 2025
Doors open at 5:00 pm

You must RSVP to
Jan Zigler@
559-740-3676 or
janzigler@hotmail.com.

You may bring donations for
Pastor Chris's gift to the
office. The monetary gift will
be presented on
April 13 at 10:45 am.

BETHANIA SPRING CAMPOUT

April 4-6, 2025

- Tent, RV, or Day Use
- Hiking, Fishing
- Saturday Potluck
- Campfire
- Stargazing
- Soccer, Disc Golf
- Yoga
- Sunday Gathering
- Museum, Nature Center
- Birdwatching
- Canoes, Pontoons
- Games Together



Cachuma Lake County Park
Dakota Plains Group Site

Registrar: Carol Skoog
carolskoog@yahoo.com
408-398-5673

Cost:
\$80 vehicle*/whole weekend
\$10 vehicle/day use

*1 vehicle = RV or car or truck or van or vehicle+trailer

Church Business

Council Meeting Highlights - Jan. 16, 2025

In order to be transparent, here are highlights from the January Council Meeting.

At the January meeting, the Council **welcomed** three new members: Cheryl Heredia, Secretary, Lou Fox Bender, and Robert Laufer.

We also **concluded** a discussion about the pros and cons of making our church a California Historical Building. We agreed not to pursue it because it would prohibit us from making certain kinds of repairs and updates.

We **celebrated** the fact that December giving reduced the 2024 deficit from \$20,000 to only \$2,000. Thanks be to God!

Finally, we **noted** some important upcoming dates in the life of the church: Feb. 23, the Congregational Meeting; March 1, Fastelavn; March 22, Pastor Chris's 10 Anniversary Dinner. But there are more. We are a "church that does"!

Jan Zigler, President (559) 740-3676	Rikka Rasmussen, Vice-President (805) 453-8535	Carol Skoog, Treasurer (408) 398-5673
Cheryl Heredia, Secretary 714-450-5487	Karin Baty (612) 229-8172	Ingelise Pedersen (805) 688-3836
Donna Hinsbeeck (805)245-5907	Lou Fox Bender (805)245-0553	Robert Laufer 805-717-1696

Financial Statement - Period Ending Dec. 31, 2024

Balance Sheet				
	November 2024	December 2024	Change	Notes
Operating Acct	\$163,844	\$195,237	\$31,394	
Money Mkt Acct	\$141,366	\$141,391	\$25	
Petty Cash Acct	\$26	\$26	\$0	
Fund Accounts	\$2,056,642	\$2,056,643	\$1	Cemetery, Endowment & Heritage
Fixed Assets	\$1,880,047	\$1,880,048	\$1	Property & Equipment
Total Assets	\$4,241,924	\$4,273,344		

Profit & Loss				
December	Actual	Budget	Variance	Notes
Total Income	\$58,248	\$40,812	\$17,437	
Total Expenses	\$33,605	\$28,596	\$5,009	
Net Income	\$24,643	\$12,216		

Offerings				
December	Actual	Budget	Variance	Notes
General Fund	\$51,493	\$36,000	\$15,493	
Non-Members	\$3,429	\$1,000	\$2,429	
Total Offerings	\$54,922	\$37,000		

Other Donations - Designated Funds and Pass-Through Accounts		
Pass-through Accounts (Managed by BLC)		
ELCA World Hunger	\$315	
Food Distribution	\$18,142	\$205 Grateful Goods Event, \$2,000 Foundation Grant, \$5,000 Donor Advised Fund
Noisy Offerings	\$211	
Youth Fund	\$135	
Preschool/Child Care Gifts	\$100	
Designated Funds (Managed by BLC)		
Memorials	\$175	
Central Coast Conference	\$1,026	
Designated Funds (Managed Outside of BLC)		
Cemetery	\$250	
Endowment Fund	\$2,250	Multiple individual donations
Heritage Fund	\$14,320	\$10,000 from the Estate of Barbara Pedersen

If you have any questions, please reach out to Carol Skoog / Treasurer Bethania / 408-398-5673.

Our Prayers

Carol Aides, Andy Blanton, Mary Hester De Meyer, Dyann Driggers, Sheldon & Pat Green, Luis Haro, Belle Hoger, Ariana Macias, Denise Morris, Mike Murray, Kate Pearrison, Tom & Carolynn Petersen, Doyle Phillips, Jane Shade, Rick Shade, Judy Stamat, Hayes Robert White and those who serve our country both at home and abroad

The family and loved ones of Ken Verkler who passed away Dec. 22, 2024.

The family and loved ones of Barbara Pedersen who passed away Dec. 22, 2024.

The family and loved ones of Jody Nedegaard who passed away in January.

The family and loved ones of Warren Dickey who passed away Jan. 29, 2025

Other Notes

Thank You from the Youth Group

On behalf of the Bethania Youth Group we want to say thank you to everyone who participated in the first annual Chili Cook-Off! We were expecting to raise a few hundred dollars and treat this as a trail for future fundraisers, but the event was able to raise **\$1,667!!!** Thank you so much for making it a wonderful event, thank you so much especially to our Chili entries, and thank you for supporting the Bethania Youth Group. I also want to thank all the kids who helped bring this event to life! They worked hard and their work paid off. We're already thinking of some ways to make next year's Chili Cook-Off even better!

February Calendar

Please note: Bethania's Calendar is accessible on-line from our web page bethanialutheran.net

Sundays

9:30 am Worship Service in the Sanctuary

11:00 am Unorthodox in the Sanctuary/Sunday School in the Fireside Room

Mondays

6-10 pm Dungeons and Dragons Teen Group in the Parish Hall

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

11:30 am Preschool/**3:30 pm** After School Chapel in the Sanctuary

5:30 pm Yoga in the Parish Hall

7:00 pm Choir Practice (resumes Jan. 8) in the Parish Hall

Thursdays

7-8 pm Boy Scouts in the Parish Hall

Fridays

8:30 am Jim Skoog practices in the Sanctuary.

Saturdays

Noon - Lisa Blanton practices in the Sanctuary

Saturday, Feb.1

Birthday Party in the Parish Hall, Fireside Room & Playground

Sunday, Feb. 2

10:45 am Brown Bag Breakfast Packing in the Parish Hall

Friday, Feb. 14

9:30 am-12:15 pm Quilting Group in the Parish Hall

Monday, Feb. 17 - President's Day

The Church Office and the Preschool are closed.

Wednesday, Feb. 19

5:30 pm Preschool Board Meeting: Fireside Room

Thursday, Feb. 20

6 pm Council Meeting in the Fireside Room

Sunday, Feb. 23

11:00 am Annual Meeting, pt. 2 in the Parish Hall

Friday, Feb. 28

Set-Up and Decorate for Fastelavn

Saturday, March 1

5:30 pm Fastelavn Celebration in the Parish Hall and Fireside Room



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