



The Beacon

Bethania Lutheran Church
621 Atterdag Rd
Solvang CA 93463

March 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.

Pastor Chris's Message

I had the absolute blessing to see one of my favorite authors, Richard Powers, at UCSB's Arts and Lectures Series. Powers is a novelist who uses the themes of ecology, technology, science and AI to weave together stories that not only point, sometimes with warnings and other times with hope, to where we are going as a society, but beautifully holds mirrors up that remind us where we've come from as a species. His books are poetic, tragic, uplifting, despairing, all mixed into one, and in each that I've read I feel like I've reclaimed more and more what it is to be alive. At his core, he is an advocate for all the species of life with whom we share this planet but often don't consider.

He said something fascinating at this lecture about literature I've never considered before that I wanted to share. He said if aliens showed up to Earth and you gave them a book of fiction that has been written in the last 200 years from which they would be able to learn about the planet, odds are they would think that human beings are the only ones who inhabit this rock of ours. In other words, most fiction over the last 200 years has not thought to include in its story telling the vast array of species we live with. We have not included the invertebrate, the plants, and the creatures that exist because we think of ourselves as the most important part of this great story that is 4.5 billion years old and counting called Earth.

What's caused this shift in our own storytelling? Technology. Through technology, we have felt less and less dependent on the created life around us and consequently less connected, not just to other species, but even to our own. It has given humanity the perception that we can simply do life by ourselves. We can work, play, go to school, shop, and see the world all from the comfort of a chair while being physically isolated from anyone or anything around us. After sharing this mind-blowing revelation, Powers got to his main point: our independence of each other and all life around us is just an illusion. He continued that he felt his job, and the job of art in general is to help us break away from the illusion of our separateness.

As we enter this season of Lent, and as we seek more intentional ways to be connected to God, I would love for this to be in the back of our minds, because I believe the pull of Jesus is the same. Jesus calls us to follow him, and part of this ministry is to help us break away from our illusion of separateness from God, from each other, from our community, from life itself. The various ways churches gather during Lent are not traditionally well attended. And the purpose of the gatherings at Bethania are centered in feeling more connected to one another. So I would like to encourage you to

be intentional this Lent about showing up. Come to Ash Wednesday for soup and the service, come to the Lenten Soup suppers and enjoy the meal prepared by friends and the stories shared from our community, come to the various ministries we have this month that connect us not only to each other, but also to the world around us. My hope is that as this illusion of separateness dissipates, we will find how connected we have always been, and how much of a gift this whole planet truly is.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Chris Brown

Faith in Action

Ash Wednesday Soup Supper and Service

All are welcome to join us on March 5 for our Ash Wednesday Soup Supper and Service. Soup will be served at 6pm in the Parish Hall and the Service will be at 7pm in the Sanctuary.

Lenten Soup Suppers and Story Telling

We continue our tradition of gathering every Wednesday during Lent for Soup Suppers and Story Telling, which begins March 12. Here's how you can help and participate. A sign-up sheet will be in the Parish Hall asking people to sign up to bring a soup, salad, or bread. It would be great to have the sheet entirely filled out as soon as possible, so please check it out the next time you're in the Parish Hall.

We'll also be sharing stories again and we really need story tellers. The hope is to have three storytellers an evening and share a 5 to 10 minute story about yourself. The theme this year is **HOW WE FIRST MET**. This will be a wonderful way to hear heartfelt and joyful stories from your life. They can be about spouses, friends, communities, etc. Storytelling is one of the best ways for us to connect as communities as we often hear things about you we've not heard before and can almost assuredly connect to. So if you have a story to tell (and we know you do!) please contact Pastor Chris to sign up.

Troll Stroll

In February, a group of women from Bethania braved the rain to have coffee at Olsen's bakery and then walk to the California Nature Art Museum. Once at the museum, the group enjoyed a tour of the museum and got to see the current exhibits and the latest permanent display of Lulu Hyggelig, California's first permanent Thomas Dambo Troll. Lulu was constructed by "recycling artist" Thomas Danbo (thomasdambo.com)



Piece Makers at Bethania



The Piece Makers are busy making quilt tops at home and tying together the layers, batting and backing at church. We are a little behind compared to last year. I think there is a lot more socializing going on, which is a big part of what makes our gatherings so fun. Our next meeting is **March 14 at 9 am in the Parish Hall.**

Left: Lois Walen & Cheryl Heredia tie a quilt made by Betty McCaffrey.

Noisy Sunday: Making Change Count on March 23

For our Noisy Offering in March, and in honor of International Women's Day early this month (March 8), we will be collecting funds to help local women in need with feminine hygiene supplies. (Yes, this is an awkward subject for many – but let's get over it.)

Why do we need to support this?

During our weekly food distribution, we are asked frequently for feminine hygiene supplies. When funds are tight, these critical items are a costly reminder that women suffer more than men during times of financial insecurity. Feminine hygiene is not a luxury, but a necessity.

What Do We Know About “Period Poverty” in the United States?

Half of the population menstruates. In the United States of America, 1 in 4 teens and 1 in 3 adults struggle to afford period products, especially teens of color and lower-income households. (Source: United Nations Women Newsletter) This is called period poverty, and chances are we each know someone who has experienced this need – a neighbor, a co-worker, a friend.

No student should have to miss school, no adult should have to miss work, and no person should have to miss out on daily life because they are unable to afford the basic necessities they require to thrive. The experiences around menstruation for people living in poverty in the U.S. are quite similar to those in low- and middle-income countries. This is a shocking fact.

But we are able to “make change for the better” with the Noisy Sunday offering. So send in your coins, cash and checks and make some noise on March 23. Together, we can CHANGE a woman's world. Even a small donation or one coin can make a difference to someone in need.

– 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, March 3rd: SYVUHS students receive scholarship application packets.
Applications are available in the church office.

Friday, March 7th: Application deadline

You are invited to join



Bethania Secret Prayer Pals

Praying for others is one of the most powerful gifts we Christian men and women can give, and in doing so we build Christian community.

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.” Ephesians 6:18

To be a part of uplifting others via Bethania Secret Prayer Pals, complete the info sheet below.

- Mail the info sheet (see next page) by March 15 to Jan Zigler, 280 First Street, Solvang CA 93463
- Receive a secret prayer pal name and info about them in early late March or early April
- Commit to praying for them for one year
- Send an encouraging card from time to time
- SHHH! Don't tell anyone!
- Learn who prayed for you at a Prayer Pal Reveal Party in spring 2026

For more info contact Jan Zigler at janzigler@hotmail.com or 559-740-3676

Dear Siblings in Christ,

*I'd like to invite you to join the Bethania Secret Prayer Pals for 2025. Last year, our fourth year, eleven people participated in praying intentionally for someone in our group. During the year, **we prayed for our pal**, and some slipped cards or gifts into the mail for their pal. But prayer is the most important part! **We all kept it a secret** until this month, when I hosted a Prayer Pal Reveal party. **If you can join us, fill in the information below and return it to me, Jan Zigler, before March 15, 2025***

Name _____

Address _____

Phone # _____

e-mail _____

Birthday _____ (no years required)

Favorite:

Colors _____

Season _____

Sport _____

Team _____

Hobby _____

Author _____

City _____

Any other favorite things? _____

Are you celebrating any milestones this year? _____

Do you have a specific prayer request? _____

Anything else? _____

This year, some time in early April, you will receive information on the person you will be praying for this next year, 2025-2026 (remember to keep it a secret).

**Please return this information to me at
280 1st Street, Solvang, or janzigler@hotmail.com.**

God's Blessings to you.

Pack Brown Bag Breakfast on April 6th (March packing has been postponed)

Our next Brown Bag Breakfast packing day will be held on April 6th. 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

Events and Occasions

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 or at the church office.

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

Coffee Hosts in March

Thanks to everyone hosting coffee time in March:

March 2 - Ron & Kathy Walsh
March 9 - Harriett & Gene Madsen
March 16 - Betty Petersen
March 23 - Available
March 30 - Available

Please sign up on the calendar in the Parish Hall.



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

VBS is Coming and We Need your Help!



We are excited to announce that Vacation Bible School (VBS) for kindergarten – 5th grade children will be held June 23 – 27. We need to fill the following positions:

- Recreation Station Leader(s)
- Guides (to take the children to each station)
- Decorators (needed prior to June 23rd)
-

We are collecting:

- Road maps
- Road signs
- Old license plates
-

If you can help, please contact Cheryl Heredia (714) 450-5487 or Donna Hinsbeeck (805) 686-1671.

Church Business

Council Meeting Highlights

In February, the Council completed tasks in preparation for the Annual Report and the Congregational Meeting. Special thanks go to Carol Skoog, Church Treasurer, and all of our committee chairs for compiling a Benevolence Report which details Bethania's charitable giving and activities for 2024.

Once again, we're looking into companies that produce theater curtains with the goal of replacing the Parish Hall curtain. Our quote a year ago from a professional theatrical company was \$13,000. Due to sticker shock, we dropped the topic for a time. If anyone has a lead, please reach out to Rikka Rasmussen.

Jan Zigler
Council President

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

Notes for Financial Statement Period Ending 01/31/25

Balance Sheet				
	December 2024	January 2025	Change	Notes
Operating Acct	\$195,237	\$167,979	\$(27,259)	
Money Mkt Acct	141,391	141,415	24	
Petty Cash Acct	26	26	0	
Fund Accounts	2,056,643	2,250,128	193,486	* See details below
Fixed Assets	1,880,048	1,880,048	0	Property & Equipment
Total Assets	\$4,273,344	\$4,439,595		

Profit & Loss				
January	Actual	Budget	Variance	Notes
Total Income	\$22,328	\$29,204	\$(6,877)	
Total Expenses	32,036	30,404	1,632	
Net Income	\$(9,709)	\$(1,200)		

Offerings				
January	Actual	Budget	Variance	Notes
General Fund	\$17,530	\$22,083	\$(4,553)	
Non-Members	474	1,375	(901)	
Total Offerings	\$18,004	\$23,458		

Other Donations - Designated Funds and Pass-Through Accounts		
Pass-through Accounts (Managed by BLC)		
Brown Bag		
ELCA World Hunger		
Food Distribution	\$1,585	
Hike Against Hunger (June)		
Noisy Offerings	\$131	
Produce Table (June - Nov)		
Youth Fund	\$1,901	primarily from Chili Cookoff

Designated Funds (Managed by BLC)		
Memorials	\$130	
Designated Funds (Managed Outside of BLC)		
BLCW		
Cemetery		
Endowment Fund	\$50	
Heritage Fund	\$100	

* \$1,000,450 Cemetery Fund, \$1,154,103 Endowment Fund, and \$95,575 Heritage Fund.

The increases in the Cemetery Fund, Endowment Fund and Heritage Fund are primarily the result of investment increases for 2024.

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 & Carolyn Petersen, Doyle Phillips, Jane Shade, Rick Shade, Judy Stamat, Hayes Robert White and those who serve our country both at home and abroad

Thanks You's

Grateful for SYV Foundation's Support!

"Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does." – William James

A huge "Thank You" to the SYV Foundation, who just recognized all of the hard work, effort and volunteer hours through the weekly Food Distribution. We have just received \$15,000 from the foundation to help us purchase food to keep feeding our hungry neighbors. A big thanks to Dave Wong for writing the grant and helping us to get this funding. If you know anyone on the board or just want to say how appreciated this money will be – please contact the SYVF or any Board Member with your personal thank you!

- **Linda Marzullo**

March 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 Fireside Room during Lent

6:00 pm Soup Supper in the Parish Hall during Lent

7:00 pm Choir Practice 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, March 1

10:00 am Fastelavn Set-Up and Decorate

5:30 pm Fastelavn in the Parish Hall

March 5 - Ash Wednesday

6:00 pm Soup Supper in the Parish Hall

7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service in the Sanctuary

Friday, March 14

9:00 am-12:15 pm Quilting Group in the Parish Hall

Saturday, March 15

10:00 am Celebration of Life for Patrick Blood in the Sanctuary

3:00 pm SYV Jewish Community Celebration of Purim in the Parish Hall

Wednesday, March 19

5:30 pm Preschool Board Meeting: Fireside Room

Thursday, March 20

6 pm Council Meeting in the Fireside Room

Friday, March 21 & Saturday, March 22

Prepare for Pastor Chris's 10th Anniversary Dinner in the Parish Hall and Kitchen

Saturday, March 22

5:00 pm Celebration of Pastor Chris's 10th Anniversary Dinner in the Parish Hall

Monday, March 24

5:30 pm Christian Education Mtg. in the Parish Hall

The Beacon - March 2025

Bethania

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**March 2025
Welcome Spring!**