



The Beacon

Bethania Lutheran Church
621 Atterdag Rd
Solvang CA 93463

April 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

Easter is an ah-ha moment. Jesus spends his ministry trying to show people God's new way of living and love, a way that is a massive departure from the world's, and people genuinely have these transformative moments when they experience this way. But these all are the opening, the "dare to hope" moments that maybe the world can be different. Then something happens. Jesus is crucified by the world, and the hope people dared to have comes crashing down. Until Easter Sunday. It's the ah-ha moment, that Jesus and this way of life was not just real, but could not be confined by death, could not be stopped. It's an ah-ha moment that everything he did and said and called people to do would last forever. Easter is the final stamp that empowers people to commit their lives to this way, and it's what helps people experience heaven through their communities.

I had that experience this March, and I am forever grateful. The 10-year anniversary party the church threw me was such a joyful, community driven experience and my heart is still so full! I was so touched by the words people shared, both to me personally and in front of everyone else. Those words are not just a reflection of my role as a pastor, but really our identity as a congregation, and I can't help but see how it's reflected in these communities that Jesus and his followers were trying to empower. In a world that at times feels hopeless, it is a reminder that communities of love and compassion can exist and thrive.

From the bottom of my heart, I want to thank everyone who came and those who reached out that could not make it. Thank you for your kindness and your affirmation and your ongoing commitment to our Jesus-centered community here. Thank you so much to everyone who helped plan the event and make it so joyful. I know you all had worked hard for weeks and spent a lot of your free time, energy, and resources, and I hope you know how grateful I am.

The moment I decided to become a pastor was something I'll never forget. I had this profound desire that just hit me that I wanted to help create and be a part of a community that was committed to love and compassion. I didn't know anything else beyond this profound feeling except that I felt being a pastor of a church was the most promising space to do that. That was 16 years ago. Here I am today thinking back on that moment and I'm eternally grateful for Bethania and our community. I'm grateful for the ways we show up for each other, the ways we seek joy together, and the ways we seek to make the world a more loving and compassionate place. You all are such a blessing to me and at the heart, it's an Easter blessing because this is what Jesus envisioned for the communities he visited and called to live into their divine identities together.

**With a Grateful Heart,
Pastor Chris Brown**



Good Friday Service

Please come and join us as we conclude our Lenten Journey with our Good Friday Service. The service begins at 7pm in the sanctuary. We will gather in light and conclude in the shadows as we come closer to the story of the cross and its ongoing meaning in our lives.

Easter Chalk Drawing

We will gather once again on Saturday, April 19th, to decorate the church walkway with our Easter Chalk Cross. Chalk and some design suggestions will be out on the bench by 8:30am. Please come and invite any friends or family to decorate a square or two or three. Please make sure to ONLY decorate the squares that are marked. We were rained out last year, so it'll be an extra welcome sight!

Easter Flower Cross

The Easter Cross will be out front of the church on Easter morning so please bring flowers from your homes, from the store, from the wild, or from a random person's house and bring this cross to life!

Easter Lilies

18 Easter Lilies will grace the sanctuary for Easter. If you would like one, please fill out the form below with payment and return to the Church Office.

I/We would like # _____ Easter lily/lilies at \$15 each.

I/We would like the dedication to read - From _____

Payment enclosed.

Name: _____

Phone # or email: _____

Faith in Action

Brown Bag Packing - April 6



Our next Brown Bag Breakfast packing day will be held on April 6th. Help out at the coffee hour after the 9:30 service 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

What is happening with Federal Funding cuts to Food Programs?

Bethania Tuesday Food Distribution has been in operation for over 5 years, beginning in March 2020 when the COVID shutdown occurred. While this is a major accomplishment, it is also a sad fact that we still need to provide food to so many people who are not able to do so for themselves.

With the recent cuts to federal funding and USDA food allocation programs, including a freeze on The Emergency Food Assistance Program and cancellation of federal contracts with local produce growers connected to the SB Food Bank, it is paramount that additional support be given to keep our local families healthy. BTFD will need to purchase and secure more food than ever in order to meet the needs of our local families. A shocking statistic is that Santa Barbara County has the second highest poverty level among all of California's 58 counties.

The number of households currently receiving food assistance at BTFD has skyrocketed from an average of 180 per week at the end of 2024, to the current 280 per week. We anticipate with the cuts to federal programs, including school lunches, SNAP (food stamps), and other food assistance programs, that our numbers will rise again.

Being a 100% volunteer organization, every penny donated goes towards the purchase of food and program needs, including specialized food for our most vulnerable clients, infants and the elderly. This means that every dollar contributed to program needs is spent on providing food to those who need help.

A typical cross-section of the residents served includes: single residents, single parent families, intact families with children, new arrivals to the Valley (some of whom are refugees fleeing violence and persecution in their own countries and may be undocumented), migratory workers, the elderly (our oldest client is now 94 years old), the disabled, and the unhoused. BTFD serves people of all faiths, backgrounds, and races. The ages of BTFD clients are also a broad range, from teenagers to the elderly.

The majority of our clients are working in service industry jobs. These are the people who clean the hotels, work in our restaurants, pick our food, and provide basic services that keep our economy and our standard of living for our tourism customers and those living here in the Santa Ynez Valley at a quality level. All share the all-too-common reality of food insecurity. At the Bethania program, the only criterion for recipients is that they meet the LMI household guidelines. Clients are served without discrimination.

Tuesdays, come rain or shine, starting at 9 AM, volunteers start packing grocery bags with basic household items such as canned vegetables, beans and rice, cereal, peanut butter, pasta, bread, and quite often bags will include a canned protein.

By 1:30 PM, a Santa Barbara Food Bank truck delivers additional items for the grocery bags: fresh produce, or on occasion, dairy products and meat. Volunteers again step in to add the additional items to the grocery bags: bag the produce, and prepare pallets of items for the evening's distribution.

Often hours before distribution starts, people are assembling in two lines. They are either in their cars, wrapped around the block (drive-up), or lining up in person in front of Bethania Church (walk-up), bring their own wagons or having parked their cars in the parking lot.

Distribution begins at 5:15 for both lines. People are checked in and the week's food items are loaded into the awaiting car line (drive-up), or the wagons or parked cars (walk-up).

Volunteers do all the loading into cars, wagons, electric carts, etc. We offer special accommodations to clients who have disabilities and scheduling issues, as well as providing specialized food and protein supplements for clients who have specific needs.

Bethania Tuesday Food Distribution (BTFD) is by far the largest agency provider of food in the area as measured by numbers of people served monthly and the tonnage of food handed out. We only and always distribute on Tuesday so as not to conflict with other feeding programs. The hours of our program were designed to assist clients who are working and still need food assistance, as many of the food programs only distribute during the work day. We collaborate with People Helping People whenever possible to avoid duplication of services.

We differ from other programs in that we also supply baby food, baby formula, Ensure and other protein supplements, specialty food items for those with specific needs, and other items requested by our participants.

I am thankful that we are able to do so and help so many people who need assistance. With the new cuts to federal funding and the ending of other federal programs, we will need to be more diligent in finding funds so that we do not let these households fall even more into poverty. The news is that Food Bank is struggling to figure out how to cope, and many other food distributions are simply closing down.

My prayer is that all of you are thankful that we can do this for others. I especially send prayers of gratitude for our wonderful volunteers and donors who help us do this work.

- Linda Marzullo
Chair, Social Ministry Committee

Noisy Sunday: Making Change Count April 27th

For our Noisy Offering April 27th, we will be using our coins and cash to help fight hunger locally. Bethania's Food Distribution needs financial help since we are facing new challenges, and our Blessing Box is an oasis for people in trouble. (See related article)

Why do we need to support this?

- Santa Barbara County is ranked number two for highest levels of poverty in all of the 58 counties in California – especially North County.
- According to government statistics, nearly 900 families in the Santa Ynez Valley experience hunger each week!
- Currently the Food Distribution is helping an average of 280 households each and every week, with the potential for another increase as federal funds are being cut for many food programs.
- The Blessing Box has helped hundreds of people “get by” by being stocked daily with food items.
- Donations will help keep local people, right here in the Santa Ynez Valley.

We all “make change for the better” when we participate even in small ways. Thank you for helping fight hunger that our neighbors are facing.

– Linda Marzullo, Social Ministry

Hike Against Hunger

Our annual **Hike Against Hunger** (formerly Hike for Hunger) is tentatively scheduled for June 1st. Watch for more information in the next Beacon about this great event. Get ready to hike out to Nojoqui, raise funds to fight local hunger, and enjoy a delicious BBQ with everyone. Mark your calendars!

Events and Occasions

Coffee Hosts in April

Thanks to everyone hosting coffee time in April

April 6 - No-Host Coffee Hour

April 13 - Church Council in honor of Pastor Chris's 10th anniversary of call

April 20 Easter - Gloria Jensen & Kim Jensen (Ingeborg's Chocolates), Karin Baty Assisting

April 27 - Available

Please sign up on the calendar in the Parish Hall.



Theo Pub

Theo Pub should be back this April. Solvang Brewery is expected to be open, so plan on gathering on April 10th, and 7pm around the fire pit. Come a little early to order some delicious food and drinks!



BLCW invites you—
Bring a friend!



3596 Sagunto Street, Santa Ynez

Saturday, April 12 (New date)

- 11:30 In honor of the museum's new chuckwagon exhibit, let's have lunch! Baker's Table and Panino are both half a block west of the museum, also on Sagunto Street. Other restaurants are close by.
- 1:00 Meet up in front of the museum. The entrance fee is \$5. Together, we'll see a special exhibit of ranch-inspired paintings by artist Channing Peake, as well as saddlery, period apparel, vintage horse gear, and the largest collection of horse-drawn vehicles west of the Mississippi River.

Touch A Truck

Bethania Preschool and Afterschool Care program is hosting their 9th Annual Touch A Truck fundraising event on Saturday, May 3rd from 9:30 am – 12:30 pm. This is a fun family event featuring a variety of vehicles for children to learn about and explore. They get to meet police and sheriff's department officials up front and explore farming and construction vehicles. This year we will have a balloon artist making creations, a face painter, bike helmet fitting, and other exciting community attractions for families to learn more about their services in the Valley. Food will be offered from 2 different vendors: Lindsay's Little Bakery and Birria Boys as well as Kona Ice.

There is a group of school parents and Board members who are actively seeking sponsorships and organizing the event. If you are a business owner or know of a business that might be interested in sponsoring the event please contact the sponsorship coordinator listed below. Also if you have an unusual vehicle that the kids might be interested in exploring please contact the vehicle coordinator listed below.

Tickets are available for the event through the school website and will be available after church Sundays in April (except Easter). www.BethaniaPreschool.org/touchatruck

One last note we could use help acquiring items for the event Plastic table covers in 12 black, 10 orange or 7 yellow (108"x54'); large balloons 24 black, 24 orange or 24 yellow; masking tape, blue painters tape, bubbles, 18" long cable ties 50, crepe paper streamers black, orange or yellow. Please give donated items to Lola Gonzalez in the preschool office. Thanks.

Vehicle coordinator – Cat Uhl – NurseCat14@gmail.com

Sponsorship coordinator - Katy Woods Dean kwooddeans@gmail.com or

Katie Pearson – pearson.katie@icloud.com

A family event for all ages!



Saturday

May 3rd

9:30am-12:30pm

**@ Bethania Preschool
611 Atterdag Road
Solvang**

- 🚧 3 parking lots FULL of safety, construction, farming & specialty trucks
- 🚧 NO horn hour from 9:30-10:30am for sensitive ears
- 🚧 Helmet fittings offered with purchase of a helmet
- 🚧 Concessions, Face painting, Balloon Artist, Raffle Baskets and more!
- 🚧 Rain or Shine event-everything is more fun with rain boots anyway!

KIDS WILL CLIMB ON, SIT IN, EXPLORE & LEARN ABOUT THEIR FAVORITE

BIG TRUCKS AND VEHICLES!

TICKETS:

\$7.50/person

\$25/family of 5



For More Information:
SYVTouchATruck@gmail.com

To Benefit Bethania Preschool & Afterschool Programs

Registration for Vacation Bible School is now open!

Bethania VBS
June 23 - June 27 Grades K - 5th
6:00 - 8:15pm
Registration: \$20
www.bethanialutheran.net

Cokesbury Kids
ROAD TRIP
ON THE GO WITH GOD

Please register on Bethania's website. The registration fee will be collected the first night. For more information, please contact Cheryl Heredia (714) 450-5487 or Donna Hinsbeeck (805) 686-1671.

Time to Make Reservations!

Bethania Fall Campout at Lopez Lake October 10-12, 2025



- Each camper needs to **reserve your own campsite**.
- Reserve site in the inside loop of the Quail area to facilitate group activities. (If you prefer, there are cabins and other facilities at Lopez Lake available to you.)
- Reserve as soon as possible starting April 11th at: <https://reservations.slocountyparks.com/reservation/camping/>
- After you make your reservation, please notify Carol Skoog at carolskoog@yahoo.com so you will receive information and updates as our planning progresses. Please provide your campsite number.

Church Business

Council Meeting Highlights March 20, 2025

At the March meeting, Council heard Bill Zigler summarize the numerous property projects of various types and sizes that he and others completed on our property. This month, for example, he and Gus Heredia replaced the hot water heater at the parsonage.

The big news was that we received the Employee Retention Tax Credit a COVID era program, which Ron Walsh initiated when he was Council President. After 2-1/2 years of waiting with no response from the IRS, the check arrived... with interest! The preschool received over \$47,000, and the church received over \$22,000. Thanks be to God!

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 02/28/25

Balance Sheet				
	January 2025	February 2025	Variance	Notes
Operating Acct	\$167,979	\$189,032	\$21,053	
Money Market Acct	141,415	141,437	22	
Petty Cash Acct	26	26	-	
Fund Accounts	2,250,128	2,250,128	-	
Fixed Assets	1,880,048	1,880,048	-	Property & Equipment
Total Assets	\$ 4,439,595	\$4,460,670	\$21,075	

Profit & Loss				
February	Actual	Budget	Variance	Notes
Total Income	\$34,165	\$29,204	\$4,961	
Total Expenses	29,256	30,404	(1,148)	
Net Income	\$4,909	\$(1,200)	\$6,108	

Offerings				
February	Actual	Budget	Variance	Notes
General Fund	\$29,262	\$22,083	\$7,179	
Non-Members	543	1,375	(832)	
Total Offerings	\$29,805	\$23,458	\$6,347	

Donations - Designated Funds and Pass-Through Accounts		
Pass-Through Accounts (Managed by BLC)		
Brown Bag	\$7,500	Christian Science Legacy Grant
ELCA World Hunger	\$10	
Food Distribution	\$17,891	\$15,000 Valley Foundation Grant
Noisy Offerings	\$285	
Youth Fund	\$470	

Designated Funds (Managed by BLC)		
Memorials	\$50	
Designated Funds (Managed Outside of BLC)		
BLCW		
Cemetery		
Endowment Fund	\$80	
Heritage Fund	\$826	

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

Solvang Cemetery

We want to let you know that there are only 6 full burial sites left at our Bethania Church cemetery. We also have 79 Memory Garden (cremation) plots available but the standard cremation sites have all been sold.

Please contact Kristyl in the church office and someone from the committee will contact you if you are interested in any sites.

We would really like our congregation members to have first option before selling to the community.

Betty Petersen
Cemetery Committee Chair

Our Prayers

Carol Aides, Andy Blanton, Sheldon & Pat Green, Luis Haro, Belle Hoger, Ariana Macias, Denise Morris, Mike Murray, Kate Pearnson, 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

Prayers of comfort for the family and loves ones of Mary Hester De Meyer and Michelle De Meyer who passed away recently in March. Mary & Michelle are relatives of Don and Lois De Meyer.

Prayers of comfort for the family and loved ones of Roger Wolin who passed away March 11.

Prayers of comfort for the family and loved ones of Susan Marsh, Barbara Marsh Klein's daughter. Susan passed away in January.

Prayers of comfort for the family and loved ones of Knud Jacobsen. Knud passed away March 23, 2025. A celebration of Knud's life will be held on April 11 at 11 am here at Bethania.

April Calendar

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

5:30 pm Soup Supper in the Parish Hall during Lent - April 2 & 9

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

Friday, April 4 - Organ Maintenance & Tuning in the Sanctuary

Friday, April 4- Sunday, April 6 - Spring Camp-Out at Lake Cachuma

Sunday April 6

10:30 am Brown Bag Breakfast Packing

2 pm SYV Wind Ensemble Concert in the Sanctuary

Monday, April 7 - 5:15 pm Touch A Truck Meeting in the Fireside Room

Thursday, April 10 - 7 pm Theo Pub at Solvang Brewing Co.

April 13 - Palm Sunday - 10:30 am Coffee Hour Celebrating Pastor Chris's 10th Anniversary

Wednesday, April 16 - 5:30 pm Preschool Board Meeting in the Fireside Room

Thursday, April 17 - 6 pm Council Meeting in the Fireside Room

Friday April 18 Good Friday - 7 pm Tenebrae Service in the Sanctuary

Saturday, April 19 - 8:30 am Chalk Drawing in front of the church

Sunday, April 20 Easter

9:30 am Worship Service

Wednesday, April 23

5:15 pm Touch A Truck Mtg. In the Fireside Room

Friday, April 25-Sunday, April 27

Danish Sisterhood/Brotherhood Convention

The Beacon - April 2025

Bethania

621 Atterdag Rd.

Solvang CA 93463



Image by [gracethroughfaith](#) from [Pixabay](#)