



The Beacon

Bethania Lutheran Church
621 Atterdag Rd
Solvang CA 93463

February 2026

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.

Just Be...

I came across a quote last week from author Robin Meyers' book [Saving God from Church](#), that said, "In the sermon on the mount, there is not a single word about what to believe, only words about what to do and how to be. By the time the Nicene Creed is written, only three centuries later, there is not a single word in it about what to do and how to be—only words about what to believe." The sermon on the mount opens with the Beatitudes, which we hear the first Sunday in February this year. The Beatitudes are a powerful opening to this famous sermon by Jesus about who God sees amidst the history of the world, and I find myself dwelling on this above quote, the Sermon on the Mount, and the Beatitudes as we get ready to go through the journey of Lent this year.

The Beatitudes are my favorite verses within the entire Bible and I've often thought if had to pick one part of the Bible to keep with me it would be the Beatitudes, and now in the midst of the turmoil we're experiencing around us, I find myself thinking, maybe the Beatitudes should be the only part of the Bible Christians focus on. I think of it this way: the Sermon on the Mount is the first sermon of Jesus' public ministry. It's the first time he's speaking in front of crowds that would make up the future church. And what does Jesus choose to share? It's not doctrine, dogma, it's not who's in or who's out, it's not a call to arms, which a lot of people were hoping for—rather it's about love. It's how people, regardless of their place in life, can choose to love one another, choose forgiveness and compassion, can choose to live in community with people who are different than they are because they choose to see God in those around them. And in this famous sermon, Jesus did not intend for people to consider this way of life, he directed them to live it out. This was Jesus' first sermon, and he did not preach it, he then went out and lived it; lived it so radically, he was put to death because of it. But he created such transformation in the time he was on earth, that a whole host of people who followed him into that way of life were able to carry on the mantle, something Jesus always intended.

Our faith is really easy. We've just complicated it. We've complicated it with words, with dogma and doctrine. We've complicated it by turning it into a faith that lives in our mind and intellect rather than our hearts and our deeds. And yet, even in all the complications, there is the Sermon on the Mount, as explicit as can be, calling us to love each other, to care for one another, calling us to kindness, and calling us to care for the least of these. Perhaps for Lent this year, we can make it easy on ourselves.

Without deep, intellectual reflection, without spaces of long devotion, what if we just chose the daily actions of love that are not just at the center of this famous sermon, but at the center of our faith. What if our intentionality this time went into the daily opportunities that cross our path to be kind to one another, to show compassion to those who need it most, to just let go of the ways that our intellect can become traps to our faith, and instead... Just. Be. Followers. Of. Jesus.

**Yours in Christ,
Pastor Chris Brown**

Ash Wednesday



Please join us for a simple soup supper followed by our Ash Wednesday service on Feb. 18. Dinner will be served at 6pm in the Parish Hall, and then we'll walk over to the sanctuary at 7pm for the service and imposition of ashes. All are welcome to one or both events.

Lenten Soup Suppers & Storytelling

Every Wednesday in Lent, from Feb. 25 to March 25, we'll gather for Lenten Soup Suppers and Storytelling. We'll be changing the time a little bit and this year we'll be gathering at 6pm in the Parish Hall to enjoy homemade soup, salad, and bread, followed by stories from our own community members. The theme this year will be "Unexpected Kindness". I ask everyone to think of a moment of kindness that you really needed at a moment in your life and share your story. If you'd be willing to be a storyteller this year, please let Pastor Chris know.

We also need help with soup, salad, and bread. Look out for a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall, and let's get the sign-up sheet filled up as quickly as possible!

Bethania Preschool & After School News

We are so grateful to share a joyful update on all the wonderful learning happening within our school. The children are truly enjoying exploring all things winter through hands-on discovery, creativity, and play.

Miss Nicole's class has been learning all about winter animals and the sounds they make and so far, the class favorite has been the polar bear! Miss Leslie's class is diving into literature through the beloved book Brown Bear, Brown Bear, where the children are joyfully transforming into different animals. Miss Christina's class is exploring the Arctic while also preparing to take on the excitement

of the wild jungle. Miss Rowena's class has embraced every opportunity to explore winter, even getting the chance to make their very own snow!

Our After School Program continues to be lively and vibrant. The children toasted off the new year by making homemade butter and have been busy racing around the track, building "exploding" sand volcanoes, creating beautiful snowflakes, and discovering the many wonders of winter through exploration and play.

We would love to invite you to join us for our Open House on Friday, Feb. 6th, from 4–6 pm, where you can see firsthand all the hard work, creativity, and growth the children and teachers have been pouring into their classrooms.

Thank you for your continued support, love, and prayers over our school and staff. We are truly blessed by our church family.

**With gratitude,
Monica, Director**

BLCW Baby Shower for Jesus

BLCW's Baby Shower for Jesus on Jan. 4 brought in many boxes of diapers and cans of formula even after the event. The decorations, including Lois DeMeyer's diaper cakes, and those from the wedding reception the day before, added to the festivities. Thank you to all who brought food and to all who attended.

Jan Zigler

Who Bakes Communion Bread?

The Atterdag Bread Bakers have been baking communion bread twice a year since 2017. Current bakers are: Emily Abello, Anna Cook, Kristyl Downey, Nancy Emerson, Betty Madsen, and Sheila Mee.

It is a special, non-yeast bread recipe developed at ELCA Lutheran Seminary in Minneapolis and provides each person attending worship with a symbol full of meaning. It takes about an hour to prepare and bake it, before bringing it to the church's freezer. You do not have to be a master baker to join us. You will find if you join the Bread Bakers and bake it 1-2 times/year that it is a tasty symbol.

Contact Nancy Emerson at nancyfemerson52@gmail.com to become a baker.

Piecemakers

The Piecemakers were very industrious in January finishing 7 quilts. We loved meeting some new volunteers and getting to know them. Our next meeting days will be Feb. 13 and 27.

Next Brown Bag Senior Breakfast Packing: Sunday, Feb. 1

We will pack Brown Bag Breakfasts on **Sunday, Feb. 1**. If you would like to donate items, you can drop them off in the Church Office or we can make arrangements to pick them up.

- 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

Noisy Sunday Coming Feb. 22

Our next Noisy Offering will be Sunday, Feb. 22. During the 9:30 service, we will gather our loose change (cash and checks too!) to make some noise. The Noisy Offering supports various non-profits we care about. Please keep your eyes open for details about what the Noisy Offering will go to on Feb. 22.

If you are not going to be in church on the 22nd, you can always bring in your change to the office. Kristyl will throw the change in the bucket before the 22nd. You may also write a check or put cash in any Sunday Offering during the month.

Events and Occasions

Fastelavn 2026



Fastelavn (Faus-the-lown), is approaching so get the kids' costumes out, work on your baseball swing, and bring your appetite! Our Fastelavn Festival and Fundraiser will be Saturday, February 28, at 5:30. We'll have our famous hotdog dinner with all the toppings, a 50/50 raffle, a prize raffle, and of course, Slå Katten of Tønden (hit the toy cat out of the barrel), and then we'll cap the night off with our Grand March! We'll also have prizes for kids with best costumes!

One of our most fun, family events of the year, you don't want to miss this, so get your tickets now! They are \$15 for ages 11+, \$10 for ages 4 to 10, and free for kids under 4! You can purchase tickets by scanning the QR code, going to the Church website, or coming by the church office.



Coffee Time

Thanks to everyone who has signed up to serve coffee and provide treats for Sunday coffee in February:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Feb. 1 | Livier in celebration of Verona's Birthday |
| Feb. 8 | Available
Oana Breen will be the storyteller on Feb. 8. |
| Feb. 15 | Cheryl Heredia and Carol Skoog |
| Feb. 22 | Available |

Theo Pub Hiatus



Theo Pub will be taking off the months of January and February as it gets cold and wet and attendance drops.

We'll gather again in March.



Sleep in Heavenly Peace

**“No child sleeps on the ground
in our town.”**

Colleen Grant, leader of the North Santa Barbara county chapter of this national organization will be at Bethania on Sunday, March 8, at 12:00 noon. She will tell us about her organization, including:

- Who donates wood and other materials
- How you can participate in a bed build
- How children are selected to receive beds

Bethania's Piece Makers quilters will present her with quilts for SHP.

RSVP to Lois De Meyer (805-686-0091) or Jan Zigler (559-740-3676)

SPRING CAMPOUT LAKE CACHUMA

APRIL 10⁺12, 2026



Registrar: CarolSkoog@yahoo.com

408-398-5673

\$90 vehicle*/whole weekend

\$10 vehicle/day use

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



Church Business

Council Highlights - Jan. 25, 2026

We have so much to be thankful for at Bethania: the largest giving month ever in December, eleven new members in January, and the imminent expansion of our Food Distribution outreach.

I am thankful to Coastal Valleys Roofing for rushing out to put a tarp over the leak in the roof over the Fireside Room, and then a second one, to stop water intrusion during the Christmas storms. They fixed that leak as soon as the rains stopped.

I am especially thankful for the Endowment Fund. They are, in part, our saving for a rainy day. The Endowment Committee has recently voted to pay for reroofing the parsonage and garage, as well as the church office. Additionally, the fund will pay for half of the preschool's new fence around the play yard which was damaged in the recent storms. How would we fund these much-needed projects without the Endowment Fund? I suspect that we couldn't. Please consider remembering the Endowment Fund in your legacy giving.

Part II of the church's annual meeting is held each February. This year it will be on **Feb. 22 at 10:45 am** in the Parish Hall.

At that meeting, we will choose a new Nominating Committee, as well as two representatives to the synod convention in early summer. The bulk of the discussion, however, will probably be the 2025 Annual Report. Committee and ministry chairs will be on hand to hear comments and answer questions about their sections of the report.

**In Christ,
Jan Zigler
Congregational 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	Denise Johns (661) 713-1516	Ron Walsh (805) 705-3736
Donna Hinsbeeck (805) 245-5907	Lou Fox Bender (805) 245-0553	Robert Laufer (805) 717-1696

Bethania Lutheran Church
Notes for December Financial Statement
Period Ending 12/31/25

Balance Sheet				
	November 2025	December 2025	Variance	Notes
Checking Account	\$ 41,350	\$ 87,989	\$ 46,639	
Money Market Account	141,649	141,674	26	
CDs	153,283	153,778	495	
Fund Accounts	2,250,128	2,250,128	0	Cemetery, Endowment & Heritage
Accounts Receivable	(146)	(1,220)	(1,074)	Duplicate PS utility reimb, apply in Jan.
Fixed Assets	1,880,048	1,880,048	0	Property & Equipment
Total Assets	\$ 4,466,312	\$ 4,512,398	\$ 46,085	

Profit & Loss				
December	Actual	Budget	Variance	Notes
Total Income	\$ 69,884	\$ 29,204	\$ 40,680	
Total Expenses	35,955	30,404	5,551	
Net Income	\$ 33,928	\$ (1,200)	\$ 35,128	

Offerings				
December	Actual	Budget	Variance	Notes
General Fund	\$ 60,483	\$ 22,083	\$ 38,400	
Non-Members	2,448	1,375	1,073	
Total Offerings	\$ 62,931	\$ 23,458	\$ 39,473	

Donations - Designated Funds and Pass-Through Accounts		
Pass-Through Accounts (Managed by BLC)		
ELCA World Hunger	\$10	
Food Distribution	\$15,591	New Frontiers 5% Friday \$2,150, Community West Bank grant \$2,000, individual donors \$11,441
Noisy Offerings	\$174	
Youth Fund	\$310	
Preschool/Child Care Gifts	\$20	
Designated Funds (Managed Outside of BLC)		
Cemetery	\$200	
Endowment Fund	\$2,300	
Heritage Fund	\$863	

Questions? Call Carol Skoog, Treasurer, (408) 398-5673

A Thank You Letter from Kief Adler

Dear Bethania Church.

I came to know you by volunteering with your food distribution on Tuesdays. I met Donna, Linda, Joanne, Laura, Bill, Lou, Elizabeth, Robert, Kristyl and so many more church service attendees and non-attendees. And then I met Pastor Chris and thought to myself, "I should dig a bit deeper here." It was Chris who told me about Unorthodox and suggested that I would like it, and indeed I have. I even became a member of the church as well as a regular donor and also started helping out through the property committee. But this is all just for a bit of background. What I'm really writing to you about is to say thank you.

Becoming a member of the church put me on the email list which means that I've been receiving your Sunday bulletins. Now I don't read this but I do skim the sections and I've always looked at that last page. That list of names to be prayed for... and I've always thought to myself, "I'm glad that my name's not one of those."

But several Sunday's ago my name was one of those and it stopped me in my tracks. Instead of feeling despair I felt an uplifting of joy and love and gratitude. So I write this to you, Bethania, to tell you how grateful I am to have come to know you. How the prayers that you send my way join so many others that have been offered to me and lift me up. To me these prayers are converted to love and love is such a pure and powerful energy. Wasn't this a primal part of Jesus' message that we need to love one and other? He knew the power of love.

I am humbled by your prayers, your love. I embrace it because it fills me with such joy and gratitude. And this message is so powerful that it gives me the energy I need to battle the cancer that I know will eventually kill me.

So this is a note of thanks to all of you and all who came before you and all who will follow you. When there is more love than hate in this world the world will, indeed, be a better place and you exemplify that philosophy. With all my heart, I thank you.

Kief Adler

Our Prayers

Carol Aides, Kief Adler, Andy Blanton, Sheldon & Pat Green, John Groh, Barbie Haile, Luis Haro, Belle Hoger, Ariana Macias, Robby Meinhert, Analie & Larry Merich, Denise Morris, Mike Murray, Jerry Olsen, Kate Pearrrson, Tom & Carolyn Petersen, Doyle Phillips, Jane Shade, Judy Stamat, Hayes Robert White and those who serve our country both at home and abroad.



February Calendar



Sundays

9:30 am Worship Service in the Sanctuary

Sunday School **9:30 am** (Rm 1) & **11:00 am** (Fireside Room)

11:00 am Unorthodox in the Sanctuary

5-7 pm Youth Group in the Fireside Room (twice monthly)

Mondays

5:30 - 7 pm Dungeons and Dragons Teen Group in the Parish Hall

7 pm AA in the Fireside Room

Tuesdays

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

Wednesdays

9 - 10:30 am Praise Band Practice in the Sanctuary

11:30 am Preschool Chapel in the Sanctuary

2:30 pm School Age Chapel in the Sanctuary

5:30 pm Yoga in the Parish Hall (Fireside Room during Lent)

7 pm Choir Practice in the Parish Hall

Thursdays

5:15-6:15 pm Contemplative Prayer in the Sanctuary

5:15-6:15 pm Irish Dance in the Parish Hall

2nd & 4th

7-8 pm Boy Scouts in the Parish Hall

Fridays

9 am Jim Skoog practices in the Sanctuary

Noon - Lisa Blanton practices in the Sanctuary

Sunday, Feb. 1

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

5:30 pm Chili Cook Off in the Parish Hall

Friday, Feb. 6

4-6 pm Bethania Preschool Open House in the Preschool Classrooms

Thursday, Feb. 12

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

Friday, Feb 13

9 am Piece Makers in the Parish Hall

5 pm-8:30 pm Private Event in the Parish Hall

Monday, Feb. 16 - Presidents Day

Bethania Preschool & After School Program is closed.

5:30-6:30 pm Wedding Menu Tasting in the Kitchen

Wednesday, Feb. 18 - Ash Wednesday

6 pm Soup Supper in the Parish Hall

7 pm Service in the Sanctuary

Thursday, Feb. 19

6 pm Church Council Meeting in the Fireside Room

Sunday, Feb. 22

Noisy Offering during the 9:30 service

10:45 am - 11:45 am Annual Mtg. In the Parish Hall

Friday, Feb. 27

9 am Piece Makers in the Parish Hall

Saturday Feb. 28

5:30 pm Fastelavn Party in the Parish Hall

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Ash Wednesday - Feb. 18

