



The Beacon

Bethania Lutheran Church
621 Atterdag Rd
Solvang CA 93463

April 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.

Thoughts from Pastor Chris Brown

I want us to go back in time to the world of Jesus, to the people who followed him, and to the first audiences that read his story in the gospels. In 1st century Judea and Galilee, the peasant class, of which Jesus and almost all his followers belonged, represented about 95% of the population. These communities had their land taken away from them by Herod the Great, and they were taxed upwards of 90% of their goods to both pay tribute to Rome and fund the building campaigns of Herod: a weatherproof port at Caesarea Maritima and a massive expansion to the Jerusalem Temple called The Court of Gentiles (both done in honor of Caesar Augustus).

Jesus' community was angry and hurting during this time. There were those among them that were so angry, they formed a guerilla force called The Zealots. Their goal was to violently ambush Roman forces and rally support from other Jewish peasants to join their cause. When Herod died in 4 BCE, the Zealots led a revolt in Judea that was successful enough, Rome had to send down the Syrian Legion (a force of 6,000 soldiers) to quash the resistance. They destroyed the town of Sepphoris and killed or enslaved most of its inhabitants. The people of Galilee and Judea learned that if you're going to rise against Rome, you better have a long-term plan. So they waited.

The Zealots were present throughout Jesus' ministry. One of his disciples was known as Simon the Zealot, not because of his religious zeal, but because of his militant affiliation. Scholars believe that Peter, James, John, and Judas Iscariot were also Zealots. The idea of responding to the brutality of Rome with regional brutality was always in the background. Anger, vitriol, resentment, violence, these were all values laying under the surface of peasant class. They were just waiting for the right spark.

Then this member of the peasant class shows up, a guy from a little town, Nazareth, just 4 miles from the ruins of Sepphoris, and he starts teaching people about another way. Love your enemies, pray for those who persecute you, if you're harboring anger against your neighbor don't come to the temple until you've reconciled, spend your energy not in resentment, but in compassion for the most vulnerable, love one another in the way he loved you. It may seem trivial and simplistic, but it worked. He garnered a following and a reputation. Every town he visited, people were eager to hear about this other way; even more, they began to participate in it. They started to let go of the anger, resentment,

and violence they were harboring. They began to hope that something new was happening. Then he died.

Being disappointed was normal for people in this time. But to start hoping for something different and then be disappointed—that's a special type of pain, one that can ruin a person's faith forever. Might as well go back to the old ways. At least you know what to expect with anger, resentment, and violence. What's the point of hoping for anything else? And then he rose.

You see, for a long time we have treated the resurrection like it was an action meant to just get us to heaven after we die. And sure, that's there, but there's so much more. In Jesus' time, his resurrection was the assurance to everyone who dared to hope in this way of life that it could not be stopped by anger, resentment, violence, or even death! Christ's resurrection was the ultimate victory that love, compassion, forgiveness, reconciliation, and kindness are stronger than the strongest forces empires have ever conceived. Even death cannot stop it. This was the spark people were waiting for, but it sparked a movement of resilient love.

My friends, we've lost this part of the story. We have accepted a form of Christianity that beds anger, resentment, division, and violence, rather than standing against them with love. Throughout Christianity, Easter has been the greatest of its holidays, and we need it today, not for this self-centered pat on the back that we get to go to some exclusive place reserved for a few. We need it to remember that Christ's victory of death is also a victory of this way of life he called all his followers to participate in. We need it to remember that to be a disciple is to let go of the old tactics, and each day, embrace something new, embrace the hope that God is still here calling us into ways of love and compassion, and this hope will never disappoint, this hope is stronger than any other force, even stronger than death. This hope is what will change the world. But we have to choose it.

**In the Risen Christ,
Pastor Chris Brown**

Holy Week & Easter at Bethania

Good Friday Service, April 3	7pm in the Sanctuary
Chalk Cross, April 4	9am to 5pm in front of Sanctuary
Flower Cross, April 5	Before 9:30 Easter Worship
Easter Sunday, April 5	9:30am in the Sanctuary



Easter Lilies Available

Easter lilies will grace the sanctuary on Easter. If you would like one, please fill out the form below, include payment and return to the Church Office.

Easter Lily Order Form

I/we would like # _____ lily/lilies

in memory/in honor of

_____.

My/our name is _____.

Payment (\$10 each) is enclosed.

Please submit form and payment to Kristyl
in the Church Office before March 30.

Bethania Preschool & After School News

Spring has arrived, and with it comes a season full of growth, energy, and joyful activity here at Bethania. This time of year is always especially busy, as our classrooms come alive with hands-on learning, exploration, and meaningful connections.

In our preschool, the children are embracing themes of renewal and discovery. They are learning about nature, planting and caring for gardens, observing life cycles, and celebrating the beauty of God's creation. Through stories, art, and play, we are nurturing their curiosity while supporting their cognitive, social, emotional, and spiritual development.

Our afterschool program is equally vibrant, with students engaging in creative projects, collaborative activities, and opportunities that encourage independence and confidence. They are building friendships, strengthening academic skills, and exploring new interests in a supportive and encouraging environment.

As this exciting season unfolds, we are also preparing for our biggest fundraiser of the year 10th Annual SYV Touch-A-Truck (May 2)! This beloved community event helps support our programs and ensures we can continue providing a nurturing and enriching environment for our children. If you feel called to support us, we would be so grateful for your participation, whether by purchasing tickets or making a donation. You can learn more here:

<https://www.bethaniapreschool.org/touch-a-truck>

We are deeply thankful for your continued support, love, and partnership. It is because of you, your prayers, encouragement, and generosity, that this ministry is able to thrive. We truly could not do this without you.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Monica Dunn

Director

Monica Dunn

Director

Bethania Preschool & After School

Work: 805-688-7077

Cell: 805-757-1717

www.bethaniapreschool.org

Service at Bethania and in the Community

We Really Need Help – Please Read

Friends, I'm writing towards the end of Lent, which in and of itself is a busy time, but we're also a church that is quite active Monday through Saturday in addition to our Sunday Worship. In speaking with some of our leadership, I've noticed we're getting less signups for even normal activities, like coffee hour, and my fear is we're experiencing a thread of burnout throughout our activities. I've also noticed that the same few people are signing up to do various activities, and I would like to humbly ask for everyone's help!

The experience of community is integral to our identity at Bethania, as well as Christianity at large, but it takes volunteer help to make that come about. I would like to encourage everyone to consider signing up to help with various activities at Bethania, so our gatherings aren't reliant on a handful of folks. A really big need is our coffee hour. The amount of people showing up for coffee hour has grown, but again, it's the same few people signing up to host. The more people that sign up, the less work it will feel like. The sign-up sheet is in the Parish Hall and is usually on the serving table each Sunday, so please consider helping.

I would also really like to encourage folks to think about helping during Sunday. We have a big need of Worship Assistants and Sunday School teachers. If this is something you'd be willing to do, please let me know.

For any of the above, if there is a hesitation because of feeling like you don't know what to do, I will be happy to walk through any of these. Coffee hour is easy and once you do it once, it's easy to do it again. As for Worship Assistants and Sunday School, we train everyone with what to do, and these are such needed parts of our worshipping experience. If it's a matter of money, please talk to me and we can work something out. We really just need someone who's willing to put stuff out and help clean up at the end.

I'm so grateful for all we do as a church and I know it can feel tiring at times, but hopefully many hands will make the work feel light. We are all contributing to a larger experience and that experience becomes even richer when we help. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Thank You!
Pastor Chris

Bethania Women's Group

Bethania Lutheran Church Women hosted a luncheon March 8 sponsored by Thrivent. Our featured speakers were Colleen and Matt Grant from **Sleep in Heavenly Peace**. We presented them with a check from the Noisy Offering and 27 quilts. A few members attended the bed build in Lompoc on March 21 where 64 beds were completed. The next bed build is May 16 in Santa Ynez, hosted by the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians.



Our next quilting days are

April 10 from 9-12

April 17 from 9 am-12 noon and 2-5 pm.

Bethania's Tuesday Food Distribution: 6 Years of hard work "Celebrated"

Who knew? We sure had no clue in 2020. We thought we would be finished with this project in a few months. But **Bethania's Tuesday Food Distribution** just "celebrated" our 6th Anniversary on **March 24**.

When we first began the food distribution, COVID had shut down the state, no other food distributions were open, and people were desperate for help. Have we made a difference for many, many people? A resounding YES.

Six years later – rising costs of rent, food and now gas have made people desperate for help. Is this a difficult anniversary, because there is still so much food insecurity? A resounding YES.

This problem is obviously not going to go away. Please help advocate for the low income workers, seniors and disabled in our area. Write your legislators and let them know that we do not want to be known anymore as the county that has the #1 highest poverty rate in California.

What else is something you can do to help? Our volunteers are dedicated. But we need more help. We especially need people who are able to run pallet jacks to unload the truck deliveries, move heavy items, and help with distribution in the evenings. Can you help us out? Let me know.

Food insecurity is a problem that affects all of us. Think of the people you encounter working at stores, restaurants, cleaning the hospital, taking care of our elderly, working the fields. They need our help to remain healthy.

Food Distribution Shifts on Tuesdays:

- **9:00 a.m.** – Packing stable food items in bags in the sanctuary.
- **1:15 p.m.** – Trucks arrive for unloading.
- **1:30 p.m.** – Produce bags packed.
- **4:45 p.m.** – Moving out items and Setting up for Evening Distribution (starts at 5:15)
- **6:45 p.m.** – Shut down and clean up

If you are able to volunteer at any of the shifts, or have any questions, please contact Linda Marzullo at vikingpressprint@verizon.net.

Noisy Sunday April: Good Samaritan Shelter

The next “Noisy Sunday” is coming on April 26th. Our donations from the offering will be used to support Good Samaritan Shelters, located in Santa Maria and Lompoc, with the work they are doing.

For more than 30 years, Good Samaritan Shelter has been committed to providing emergency, transitional, and affordable housing with support services to the homeless and those in recovery throughout the Central Coast.

Good Samaritan Shelter provides programs addressing homelessness as well as alcohol and substance abuse. They provide assistance in countless ways – providing shelter, affordable housing, clean & sober living, drug & alcohol treatment, outreach, and education within the local community. Good Samaritan Shelter is continually expanding its services to better assist those in need.

We all really “make change for the better” with our Noisy Sunday! So bring your coins and make some noise on April 26th. Together, we can HELP TO CHANGE a person’s life.

Good Samaritan Homeless Shelter

I made two trips (full car loads!) to deliver donated items to the Good Samaritan Homeless Shelter in Santa Maria from our Lenten Challenge. When I went into the shelter, I saw row upon row of beds on two sides of the building. I saw how people tried to make their bunk area their “own” by hanging fabric and blankets and decorating their areas in small ways. It reminded me how everyone wants a space to call their own.

On the first delivery, I met a man who was extremely grateful for the items we sent and informed me that it would all be gone in a flash. And he talked about how many people needed help. He was living in the shelter and had been all around the county, trying to find a space of his own.

He was a very interesting person. We walked by the playground and he saw a child playing, asking for the attention of his parent, who was on her phone. He told me how technology makes him so sad for the parents of this world. I asked him why. He explained: “I have a 10 year old son. I have not been able to see him for 7 years. All I would like to do is see his face and watch him play. The parents are always on their phones, at the playground. They are missing the best part of life: getting to watch your child play. Getting to see their happiness. And just playing with them. If only they could see how precious a gift that is.”

I left that day thinking of how many precious gifts and opportunities we have each day that we do not appreciate. And I wanted to let those who donated know how much so many people who are in need appreciated the contributions of blankets, jackets, shoes, socks and toiletries. Thank you.

- Linda Marzullo

Hike Against Hunger

Our annual **Hike Against Hunger** is scheduled for **May 17**. Watch for more information in the next Beacon about this great event. Get ready to hike out to Nojoqui, support those hiking, raise funds to fight local hunger, and enjoy a delicious BBQ with everyone. Mark your calendars!

"Lord, When Did We See You?" - Bethania Lenten Challenge

During Lent this year, Bethania participated in a church-wide campaign by the ELCA called "Lord, When Did We See You?" The idea was to center ourselves during Lent on Matthew 25, in which Jesus calls his followers to see him in the "least" of these. Each week in Lent we focused on one of the ways Jesus directed us to see him:

- **Week 1: Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food?** We talked about food insecurity and collected shelf stable items for our Blessing Box.
- **Week 2: Lord, when was it that we saw you thirsty and gave you something to drink?** We talked about water issues and how people struggle to obtain clean water around the world. Our Noisy Offering in March actually happened on World Water Day, and the coins collected will go to LWR projects for clean water.
- **Week 3: Lord, when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you?** We talked about how to welcome people into our lives and our church.
- **Week 4: Lord, when was it that we saw you naked and gave you clothing?** We talked about how much clothing we have, what "fast fashion" is, and collected blankets, jackets and shoes for the Good Samaritan Homeless Shelter.
- **Week 5: Lord, when was it that we saw you sick and visited you?** We talked about ideas on how to visit people who are facing challenges, and wrote notes (see below) to people on our prayer list.
- **Week 6: Lord, when was it that we saw you in prison and visited you?** We talked about hope, mercy, and how to help those who are incarcerated.

This Lenten season, we tried to remember how we "see" Jesus every day in those around us.



Activities at Bethania

Coffee Time

April 5 - Available

April 12 - Available

April 19 - Lisa & David Pedersen

April 26 - Available

Kevin McConnell will be storyteller during coffee hour on April 26 and play some of his original compositions.



Theo Pub is Back!

Theo Pub is back now that it's warmer out and we'll be gathering on Thursday, April 9 at Solvang Brew at 7pm. Come a little early and grab a drink and some food and meet us by the fire pit! The topic this month is "Faith or Belief".

Bethania Campout at 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

Dessert Auction Supports Bethania's Youth Group

The Youth Group is hosting a Dessert Auction on April 19th at 11am in the Parish Hall. Money raised will be used to fund upcoming Youth Group trips. Please come and explore decadent desserts and bid on your favorites. If you can make a killer dessert to auction off, please contact Pastor Chris. And please share with your friends and family! The more folks that come, the more competitive the bidding! Please help support our Youth Group!

Church Business

Improvements at Bethania seem to be rolling forward nonstop. By now, you've seen the beautiful new fence around the preschool play yard. But you may not have seen the newly installed stainless steel sink outside the kitchen door which will make it easier to wash big pots, bakery trays, and the like. Thanks to Bill Zigler, Gus Heredia, Alan Laugesen and Phil Wilson for collaborating on this complex project. Finally, you have not seen them, but new security cameras have been installed throughout the campus. This is primarily to enhance the safety of our preschool students, but they have already recorded some nefarious nocturnal activities.

Activities also seem to be rolling forward nonstop. Holy Week is coming soon, followed by the church camping trip at Cachuma Lake, the youth's dessert auction to fund the national gathering in Minneapolis in 2027, and the preschool's annual fundraiser, Touch-a-Truck. There are plenty of opportunities for you to participate wherever you want to jump in!

Finally, speaking of jumping in, the results of the Time and Talents survey have been distributed to ministry leaders, and you will see some new faces working alongside the usual suspects. Thanks be to God.

**In Christ,
Jan Zigler**

Council Members Contact Info

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 February Financial Statement
Period Ending 02/28/26

Balance Sheet				
	January 2026	February 2026	Variance	Notes
Checking Account	\$ 71,837	\$ 79,368	\$ 7,531	
Money Market Account	141,697	141,719	22	
CDs	154,292	154,807	515	
Fund Accounts	2,609,977	2,609,977	0	Cemetery, Endowment & Heritage
Accounts Receivable	77	0	(77)	
Fixed Assets	1,880,048	1,880,048	-	Property & Equipment
Total Assets	\$ 4,857,928	\$ 4,865,919	\$ 7,990	

Profit & Loss				
February	Actual	Budget	Variance	Notes
Total Income	\$ 26,763	\$ 28,849	\$ (2,086)	
Total Expenses	29,898	32,561	(2,663)	
Net Income	\$ (3,135)	\$ (3,712)	\$ 577	

Offerings				
February	Actual	Budget	Variance	Notes
General Fund	\$ 19,457	\$ 22,348	\$ (2,891)	
Non-Members	740	1,089	(349)	
Total Offerings	\$ 20,197	\$ 23,437	\$ (3,240)	

Donations - Designated Funds and Pass-Through Accounts		
Pass-Through Accounts (Managed by BLC)		
Food Distribution	\$6,048	We Are Community Fundraiser \$3,504; \$500 Hill Family Foundation; \$2,044 individual donors
Food Distribution Lease	\$13,750	ELCA Congregational Outreach Grant \$5,000; Southwest California Synod Grant \$8,750
Noisy Offerings	\$438	
Youth Fund	\$2,611	Chili Cook-Off
Preschool/Child Care Gifts	\$40	
Designated Funds (Managed Outside of BLC)		
BLCW	\$30	
Endowment Fund	\$75	
Heritage Fund	\$22	

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

New Church Directory!

There are many Bethania members who haven't given us their information or a photo, and we'd love to include you. You can send your contact info and a photo to the church email, email me, text me or look for me on a Sunday. Once your information is added, you will get access to the directory via a link. Also please ask me any questions!

Becky Sutherland
(562) 505-1726
padelobeck@msn.com

Our Prayers

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



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 & 2:30 pm Chapel in the Sanctuary
5:30 pm Yoga in the Parish Hall
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

CALENDAR CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

HOLY WEEK

April 3 - Good Friday

7 pm Tenebrae Service in the Sanctuary

Saturday, April 4

9 am - 5 pm Chalk Drawing in front of the Sanctuary

April 5 - Easter

9:30 am Worship Service in the Sanctuary

Thursday, April 9

7 pm Theo Pub at Solvang Brewing Company

Friday, April 10

9 am Quilting in the Parish Hall

Friday, April 10-12

Family Camp-out at Lake Cachuma

Thursday, April 16

6 pm Church Council Meeting in the Fireside Room

Friday, April 17

9 am - 12 noon Piece Makers in the Parish Hall

2-5 pm Piece Makers in the Parish Hall

Sunday, April 19

11 am Dessert Auction in the Parish Hall

Sunday, April 26

Noisy Offering during the 9:30 service



The Beacon - April 2026
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Easter Service
Sunday, April 5, 2026
9:30 am