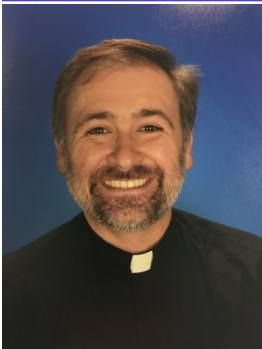




THE BETHLEHEM STAR

T O K N O W C H R I S T . . . T O M A K E C H R I S T K N O W N



PASTOR'S MESSAGE

IOAN ITTU

Associate Pastor

pastorioan@bethlehemplutheran.net

Happy Year!

As I write this, I'm laying on a couch after eating an awesome dinner of chicken enchiladas that I made. The apartment is filled with the smell of chocolate chip cookies my girlfriend is baking. It has been a good evening.

What's most important to you these days? What is the most important thing you'll do today? What are the top priorities that need and deserve your time and focus this week? Or for the next few months? Or in this next year? Is it your family? Your children or grandchildren or parents? Family is a wonderful priority and one that God honors and blesses. Is your health calling for attention? Your physical health? Your mental well-being? Do you need to slow-down? Exercise more? Eat more veggies? Or is your work this year to make peace with aging and accept this new home you now live in? God honors this attention to our own well-being too. He tells us to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. We must know how to be kind and gentle and generous and forgiving with ourselves in order to become good at it with others.

The new year is a time for fresh starts. I've been doing a lot of self reflection in preparation for going into this new year. What do I want to build on from this past year? What do I want to go differently?

Those who love me most encourage me to pursue joy and well-being. I tend toward ambition. I love getting projects and to-do lists done; however, I'm working on being present and enjoying the little things more. Things like being rich in time to read and make dinner and go to see the Christmas lights two hours away with my mom... having a weekly date night either in or out with my lovely lady.

This new approach takes some adjusting. Christ tells us to love the neighbor... love our family and friends... love those who depend on us. And this can lead some of us to a place where we must relearn how to love and care for ourselves. What do those who love you most want for you in this next year? What is it that you need to relearn and practice and get in the habit of for yourself as much as for others?

Make your new year one where your joy is as important as other people, work, chores, school or solving the problems of the day. I will try for the same. Hope it is a good year for us both.

SUNDAY WORSHIP:

9:00 AM – CONTEMPORARY STYLE
 10:10 AM – SUNDAY SCHOOL
 (SEPT-MAY)
 11:00 AM – TRADITIONAL STYLE

STAFF:

SENIOR PASTOR:

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pastor@bethlehemplutheran.net

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REV. IOAN ITTU
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SUMMARY OF BETHLEHEM COUNCIL MINUTES – DECEMBER 11, 2019

Present at the meeting were Pastor Megan, Pastor Ioan, Sarah Karzel, Janet Puchlik, Bev Compton, Connie Troe, Lisa Nakata, Sue Akin, and Donna Ophus.

The meeting this month was held at Sarah's home with a delicious dinner and a relaxed meeting in front of a cozy fireplace. Pastor Ioan opened the meeting with prayer.

The minutes from the November 20, 2019, council meeting were presented and approved.

Pastor Ioan would like to stay at $\frac{3}{4}$ time rather than going to full time in January 2020 as had originally been planned. He needs to spend more time with his mother who has lung cancer. He presented a letter which he would like presented to the congregation by email as well as a mailed letter to those who don't have email. This was accepted by the council.

Sue reported that the new audio system has been partially installed and will be completed soon and that it is working well. Discussion followed regarding video screens, including the number of screens, placement, size, etc. The January council meeting could be held in the sanctuary to discuss these issues further. Money has been set aside for the AV system and there is endowment money available if needed.

Sarah was able to get a bid for a new phone system with a five year lease after which time the equipment would be owned by BLC. Detailed bid numbers will be received soon. It was decided to go ahead with this plan.

Bev reported on a discussion held at the school board meeting regarding the new construction project that will begin in January. Ways to keep the children separated and safe during the construction period are being planned.

Meeting adjourned for dessert!!
Secretary, *Donna Ophus*,

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: JANUARY 26 AT 10 A.M.

There will be one service on Jan. 26 at 10 a.m., followed by Bethlehem's annual congregational meeting. All members are encouraged to attend to hear the plans for the church year and to vote on new Church Council members.

Annual reports will be available on the kiosk for pick up two weeks before the meeting. At the Annual Meeting on January 26, we will vote on a slate of candidates proposed by the Nominating Committee. The slate so far is below. If you are interested in serving in any of the positions that have not been claimed, please contact one of the members of the Committee: Dorothy Stilling, Lisa Chow, Scott Fisher or Shirley Cooper.

Council Positions

Treasurer:

Secretary: Marilyn Fursman

Youth and Education:

Worship and Music: Greg Imlay

Preschool Chair: Emily Carlson

Non-Council Positions

Evangelism: Leslie Petit (continuing)

Stewardship:

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

SARAH KARZEL

president@bethlehemplutheran.net

Dear Fellow Members of Bethlehem,

Well, it's January, and many of us start to think about new year's resolutions. We think about exercising more, about cutting out sweets, about writing the great American novel (maybe that's just me). We think about ways to better ourselves. But what if, in the process of bettering ourselves, we could benefit Bethlehem and our fellow members as well. And what if, in the process of bettering ourselves and Bethlehem, we could actually have fun.

Yep, I'm talking about volunteering. You're coming to services anyway. Why not become a worship leader? Maybe you're uncomfortable reading in front of a group. Become a communion assistant instead or bring refreshments. Or maybe push yourself just a little bit outside your comfort zone and try reading. Bethlehem is the most generous audience I know.

You like to see your fellow members. Why not see them at a Fellowship meeting? Or an Evangelism meeting? Or a Council meeting? The nominating committee is making its rounds looking for new Council members. Please seriously consider it if you are asked to serve. I promise you I will not waste your time at Council meetings, and you will get at least one giggle per meeting.

Anyway, you get my point. There is lots to do here at Bethlehem, and the more you give, the more you get. If you haven't taken the leap yet, make 2020 your year. If you have any questions about volunteer opportunities, feel free to talk to our Pastors or to me.

Respectfully submitted, *Sarah Karzel*

LENDING LIBRARY

You may have seen but not heard about the two new lending libraries on campus. They look like large birdhouses. One is focused on having children's books and is by the main preschool entrance. This one will soon be decorated to match the mosaic preschool entrance. The other is bright green and by the bus stop on Balboa Blvd and can have books for all ages.

The idea is simple: "Take One, Leave One." Feel free to take a book from inside the lending library. You don't have to sign them out or bring them back or replace the one you took. Feel free to leave a book that you are done with, but really would like others to read, too.

The lending library on the blue rolling cart will continue to be a more curated selection that is intended to be signed out and brought back.

Thank you to the scouts of Troop 104 and Eagle Scout Arno Nizamian who built these libraries for the good of the community.





MUSIC NOTES

VICENTE DITTO

Senior Music Minister

vicenteditto@bethlehemlutheran.net

I would like to thank everyone who helped to make our Christmas concert a beautiful event. The Fellowship Committee, led by Connie Troe, prepared an excellent reception; our volunteer ushers, Pat and Sue, made sure everything ran smoothly; and Ron recorded the event for the ages.

I am especially appreciative of the generous donations we received from the congregation as well as from WELCA which combined to give the music department a \$1300 boost to our budget. Thank you all for your generosity and support of music at Bethlehem.

Sacred Stars, the elementary school age music group, will continue to meet in the Spring on Thursdays from 5:45 p.m.--6:15 p.m. Marisa and I had such a great time with the kids in the Fall and such a positive response from parents and congregants that the natural choice would be to continue the momentum of the group into the Spring.

DEDICATED TO LIFELONG LEARNING:

Farstrup-Mortenson Lectures/Solvang Folk School Talks presents...THE LITURGISTS February 21-22-23, 2020 at Bethania Lutheran Church in Solvang, California. Led by Pr. Chris Brown and featuring Michael Gungor and William Matthews from The 'Liturgists Podcast.

Come for engaging dialogue and thoughtful discussion on the most pressing and relevant topics of our time through the lenses of art, science, and faith, and enjoy the amenities of the charming Danish-style village of Solvang. For more information, or to listen to a podcast, go to <www.theliturgists.com>. Online registration available at: <https://www.bethanialutheran.net/education/>

WOMEN OF THE ELCA BIBLE STUDY

Women are invited to attend a Gather Bible Study either on Tue., Jan. 14 at 11 a.m. at the church. At 4 p.m., Jan. 21, at the home of Judy Cave. *We Are Called!* is the focus of the next two sessions (January and February).

Explore how God's voice is heard in four different ways: historical, literary, theological and devotional contexts.

Come learn how our ancestors heard and responded to God's Call and reflect on our own lives and callings.

Gather magazines are available in the church office. Remember at 11:00am bring your sack lunch. Beverages and dessert will be provided. All women are welcome! For more information contact Dianne Tillman.

REMEMBERING YOUR STORY

As each of our lives is a link in the chain of generations, each life story is also part of a BIG story—of HIS story. Where *your* story, and *my* story and *God's* story intersect can be places of divine revelation!

We have an opportunity to review the stories of our lives in a new adult discussion group, *Remembering Your Story—Creating Your Own Spiritual Autobiography*. In this 10-week, life review class, beginning Sun., Jan. 12 after the 11 a.m. service, participants will meet for lunch (provided) and guided discussions on the stories of our lives. Not simply reminiscing about things, we'll focus on those instances where we realize God was active in our lives, resulting in a spiritual legacy for those who come after us!

Marilyn Fursman will facilitate using a workbook by Richard L. Morgan.

There is space for a couple more participants to join this exciting journey. Contact Marilyn (mcfursman@icloud.com) for more information or to register.

ADULT EDUCATION MEETING

January 14 at 1:00 p.m. at Bethlehem.

The Adult Education Committee meets the third Tuesday of every month. Members are needed!

YOUTH NEWS

JENNIFER ADKISON

Director of Youth Ministry

youthdirector@bethlehmlutheran.net



The youth group had a fun Christmas party on December 20th! We had dinner, played a couple games, and had our White Elephant Gift Exchange. There was some leftover snow from the event the day before, and the youth had fun playing in it.

Here are the upcoming youth events for January: Friday, January 10 through Sunday, January 12 is the Confirmation Retreat at El Camino Pines Lutheran Camp. Please contact Pastor Megan with any questions.

Monday, January 20th we will be bowling at Matador Bowl in Northridge. Please meet at the bowling alley at 2:00 p.m. and allow the youth enough time for two sets. For more information, please contact me. (425-281-1413).

CONFIRMATION CLASS

Sunday, January 19

Home Group @ BLC

10:15 a.m.-10:45a.m.

SCHOOL NEWS

MARY KANDILIAN

Preschool Director

Director@bethlehmlutheran.net



Happy New Year!

We hope everyone had a wonderful and safe holiday season! I'm personally so grateful for all the blessings of the year, our school is flourishing, our church is growing - there's so much to be thankful for!

In the month of January we'll be wrapping up our Winter Camp which has been so much fun and educational for all our kids! We also have our Chuck E Cheese Fundraiser slated for January 20th on the day that school is closed in observance of Martin Luther King Day. Please come out and have some pizza to support the school at Chuck E Cheese in Granada Hills!

Wishing everyone a blessed new year filled with health and happiness!

KROGER COMMUNITY PROGRAM

We encourage you to link your *rewards* card to Bethlehem Lutheran Church & School Community.

It's easy: Just shop, swipe your card and earn! The more you shop with Ralphs, the more money we will earn!

- Register your Ralphs Rewards Card online at www.ralphs.com, using our organization name and/or NPO number.
- Individual purchases will begin counting towards your organization within 72 hours of registering the individual Rewards Cards online.
- Every time you shop for groceries and swipe your card, our organization automatically starts earning a rebate.

If you do not have access to the online sign-up method, please call 1-800-443-4438 4438 to have them register you.

MEN'S MONTHLY BREAKFAST

Since the first Wednesday of the month was January 1, the Men's Monthly to Coco's Restaurant in Mission Hills at 7:30 a.m. for fellowship. See you January 8!

PASTORAL CARE

If you would like a pastoral care visit from one of our pastors, please contact the church office and let us know. (818) 360-4777.

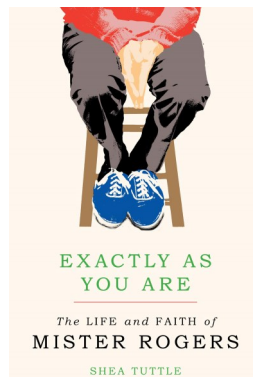
SUBSCRIBE TO OUR PODCAST!

Get each week's sermon and a musical selection delivered to your phone. You can find our podcast on any smartphone or computer through either the Spotify app or Spotify.com by searching for "Bethlehem Granada Hills". You'll know it's our podcast when you see our logo with a set of headphones on it. To have the podcast automatically sent to you when a new one comes out, just click "subscribe" on iTunes.



BOOK CLUB

Book Club meets Wed., Jan. 8. to review the book, *Exactly As You Are: The Life and Faith of Mister Rogers*, by Shea Tuttle. For more information, please contact Pastor Megan (pastor@bethlehemlutheran.net).



WORSHIP LEADER SCHEDULE

If you see an empty spot on the worship leader schedule and you're able to fill in, please call the church office. You can serve one time or be put on a monthly rotation. Thank you.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 5 Ken Cave
- 8 Kathy Vasquez
- 12 Pastor Megan Fryling
- 14 Charlize Steelman
- 17 Ron Van Deest
- 19 Christine Foster
- 22 Richard Taylor
- 23 Max Stark
- 27 Marisa Bradfield
- 28 Ron Goodman
- 29 Dwayne Schmidt
- 29 Esther Natenstedt
- 31 Betsy Kalusa

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 7 Nate & Tiffini Traylor (2012)
- 22 Greg & Deborah Imlay (2005)

DECEMBER STATISTICS

December offering: \$28,257; Budget: \$22,545
 November offering: \$23,335; Budget: \$22,545
 Actual YTD: \$92,314; Budget YTD: \$90,180

Attendance:

December average at 9 a.m.: 49
 December average at 11 a.m.: 62
 Christmas Concert: 127
 Christmas Eve at 5 p.m.: 180
 Christmas Eve at 11 p.m.: 39

November average at 9 a.m.: 44
 November average at 11 a.m.: 67

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

If you would like to stay in touch and get updates of events happening at Bethlehem, please visit www.facebook.com/BethlehemGranadaHills and like us!

Also, check out our preschool Facebook page at www.facebook.com/bethlehemlutheranschool.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|--|--|--|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| 29 9 & 11AM Worship 10:10AM Sunday School 12:15PM Sunday Forum | 30 5PM Bell Choir | 31 | 1 Office & School Closed  | 2 6:15PM Ensemble 7PM Faith Choir | 3 | 4 |
| 5 9 & 11AM Worship 10:10AM Sunday School 12:15PM Sunday Forum | 6 5PM Bell Choir | 7 | 8 7:30AM Men's Breakfast 10:15AM Adult Study 4:30PM Fellowship Team Mtg 6:00PM Book Club | 9 5:45PM Children's Choir 6:15PM Ensemble 7PM Faith Choir | 10 Retreat @ El Camino Pines | 11 |
| 12 9:00AM Worship 10:10AM Sunday School 11:00AM Worship 12:15PM Sunday Forum | 13 5PM Bell Choir | 14 1PM Adult Ed Team Mtg | 15 10:15AM Adult Study 7PM Council Meeting | 16 5:45PM Children's Choir 6:15PM Ensemble 7PM Faith Choir | 17 | 18 |
| 19 9:00AM Worship 10:10AM Sunday School 10:15AM Home Group 11:00AM Worship 12:15PM Sunday Forum | 20 Church & School Closed  | 21 | 22 10:15AM Adult Study | 23 5:45PM Children's Choir 6:15PM Ensemble 7PM Faith Choir | 24 | 25 |
| 26 10:00AM One Service 11:00AM Annual Congregational Meeting | 27 5PM Bell Choir | 28 | 29 10:15AM Adult Study | 30 5:45PM Children's Choir 6:15PM Ensemble 7PM Faith Choir | 31 | Feb. 1 |

JANUARY WORSHIP LEADER SCHEDULE

| WORSHIP LEADERS - 9:00 SERVICE | | | | <i>One Service 10AM</i> | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Date | 1-5-20 | 1-12-20 | 1-19-20 | 1-26-20 | 2-2-20 |
| Assisting Minister | Nicole Hernandez-Liva | Ryan Nakata | Scott Fisher | X | Lisa Chow |
| Reader | Pam Shea | Connie Troe | Carla Cross | Laureen Gleason | Mary Fisher |
| Acolyte | Richard Liva | Alison Rubinstein | Hannah Carlson | Paige Gleason | Katie Nakata |
| Ushers | Brian Grefsrud | Natalie Nakata | Lisa Chow | Scott Fisher | Brooke Coffin |
| | Carla Cross | Shea Clancy | Pat St. Michel | X | Nicole Hernandez-Liva |
| Refresh + Juice | Connie Troe | Leslie Petit | Ruth Irwin | X | |
| Altar Guild | Cookie Cline | Betty Pust | Pat St. Michel | Janet Putschlik | |

| WORSHIP LEADERS - 11:00 SERVICE | | | | | |
|--|------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Date | 1-5-20 | 1-12-20 | 1-19-20 | 1-26-20 | 2-2-20 |
| Assisting Minister | Jill Goddard | Sandy Lazaros | John Cooper | Ron Kraus | Nancy Hall |
| Reader | Kevin Rubinstein | Ruth Anne Sitko | Jill Goddard | X | Melisa Nusbaum |
| Communion Asst. | | Dylan Yribe | Kevin Rubinstein | Sarah Karzel | Kiera Nusbaum |
| Ushers | Judy Cave | Ryan Yribe | Jan Maseda | Fred Ophus | Kevin Rubinstein |
| | Ken Cave | Janet Putschlik | Ron Kraus | X | Ken Cave |
| Greeter | Nancy Hall | Jan Maseda | Janet Putschlik | Susan Van Deest | Greg Imlay |
| Refreshments | Donna Ophus | | | Jan Maseda | |
| | Ruth Anne Sitko | | | X | |
| Offering Counters | Brian Grefsrud | Carla Cross | Mary Fisher | Fred Ophus | Janet Putschlik |
| | Barbara Bond | Pat St. Michel | Betty Pust | Janet Putschlik | Betty Pust |

A HUGE THANK YOU FROM LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES

By Jan Maseda

Whew! That was a busy December!

On December 7, Combat Radio from Santa Clarita hosted 100 of our LSS kids at the Salt Creek Grille in Valencia to a beautiful and delicious buffet breakfast. Santa was there with presents for all, and every family took home a Christmas tree. Buses were also provided that day and, even though it was freezing and rainy, no one noticed at all. Well, almost no one. For many of these families, it was the first Christmas tree they had ever had.

The week of December 9 was spent getting ready for our Toy Store to open on Sat., Dec. 14. Thank you to the volunteers from Bethlehem who showed up during the week to help us get ready. And thank you to everyone who donated new toys and clothes to LSS for our Christmas Toy Give-a-Way. It was a very special day on Dec. 14 with the best turnout from our families that we have ever had.

So we gave away a LOT of toys! We also had arts and crafts tables donated by a Jewish temple, Santa was there, and we had cookies and punch for the kids. Thank you for making it a very special Christmas for many boys and girls who would not otherwise have any presents for Christmas.

Thank you also for the holiday Thanksgiving food, which we gave away the week of Thanksgiving. We had a donation of turkeys given to us, so that was fun to give away, also.

Thank you to those who donated financially, allowing us to buy extra food from the L.A. Regional Food Bank for the months of November and December. Yay! Our Wish List for now includes a working refrigerator or freezer and gently used men's jackets, and sweaters for both men and women. It's cold out there.

Thank you for all you do for LSS. Your continuing support makes this blessed mission possible.



Bethlehem
LUTHERAN
CHURCH & SCHOOL

12227 Balboa Blvd., Granada Hills, CA 91344