

# THE BETHLEHEM STAR

TO KNOW CHRIST...TO MAKE CHRIST KNOWN



PASTOR'S MESSAGE
MEGAN FRYLING
Senior Pastor
pastor@bethlehemlutheran.net

People of Bethlehem,

Well, it seems that May is here, despite the fact that many of our usual expected markers of the passing of time have changed or haven't been happening for

a while now. With so many of our favorite places closed, so many familiar faces distant for weeks, so much that seems uncertain, it's a challenging and in some ways, lonely time.

So where do we find our stability when the world seems to be spinning at the wrong speed these days? We find our constant in God. God's love for us never changes- it's a constant through everything we face and no matter where we are. We can find our strength to keep going in the knowledge that we are loved. It is because of that deep, unending love that God sent Jesus to live, die, and rise again for us. We are never alone because Jesus is always with us, always by our side.

You may be feeling unsure of what to pray for these days or maybe your prayer list is incredibly long. Even if you worry that you don't have the right words, know that as we read in the words of Romans 8:26-27-"Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God."

In addition to the love of God, the presence of Jesus, and the support of the Holy Spirit, we're also very blessed to have each other through this. As our physical separation between each other has continued, we've still found ways to connect. Worship hasn't been cancelled, it's moved online and it's been a joyful thing to see your comments and greetings to each other during worship. We've also started up several of our different groups through Zoom meetings. Youth Group has been meeting on Zoom since March, but now WELCA is meeting in the same format, Book Club has started up again, and Sunday School for the younger kids. This month, we'll try out a 4-week study on the book of Jonah on Saturday nights that's an intergenerational study for adults and high school and middle school students that Jennifer and I will be leading. We'll have virtual tea with our missionaries, which should be fun and educational.

#### **SUNDAY WORSHIP:**

9:00 AM — CONTEMPORARY STYLE 10:10 AM — SUNDAY SCHOOL (SEPT-MAY)

11:00 AM - TRADITIONAL STYLE

#### **STAFF:**

SENIOR PASTOR:

REV. MEGAN HUNT FRYLING pastor@bethlehemlutheran.net

**DIRECTORS OF MUSIC MINISTRY:** 

VICENTE DITTO MARISA RAWLINS-BRADFIELD MATTHEW A. KESSELL

vicenteditto@bethlehemlutheran.net marisabradfield@bethlehemlutheran.net matthewkessell@bethlehemlutheran.net

YOUTH DIRECTOR:

JENNIFER ADKISON youthdirector@bethlehemlutheran.net

BOOKKEEPER:

KAREN MEIER finance@bethlehemlutheran.net

**BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR:** 

WANDA MORENO admin@bethlehemlutheran.net

FRONT OFFICE ASSISTANT:

EVELYN CULAJAY office@bethlehemlutheran.net

PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR:

MARY ASHDJIAN-KANDILIAN director@bethlehemlutheran.net

#### **CONTACT BY PHONE:**

CHURCH: 818-360-4777
PRESCHOOL: 818-368-6947
FAX: 818-360-5559

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We'll continue to try to offer as much as we can through these new digital formats and I know we've still been keeping in touch through phone calls as well. It will still be a while until things return to the normal we knew before, but let's continue to find ways to care for each other and the community, let's continue praying for those who are sick throughout the world, and let's continue reminding one another of the love of God in Christ.

Blessings, Pastor Megan

## SUMMARY OF BETHLEHEM COUNCIL MINUTES - APRIL 2020

By Marilyn Fursman, Council Secretary

#### **ACTIONS:**

1. Agreed by consensus to authorize Sarah to apply for a forgivable small business loan to cover payroll and utilities during the COVID-19 crisis.

#### MANAGEMENT REPORTS:

- 1. Preschool—Currently, all staff is furloughed.
- New safety protocols were presented. Connie is making masks for the teachers.
- Director Mary Kandilian contacted the families and only about 20 students plan to return.
- It is expected that the school will not have the ability to be profitable, but must break even or it will not be feasible to continue.
- 2. <u>COVID Response Measures</u>
- Pr. Megan Fryling is live-streaming worship services with limited staff participating; Jennifer Adkison is video editor.
- Meetings are taking place by Zoom video conferencing.
- The Council was given a long list of things to consider before re-opening the church.
- The sanctuary re-opening date has moved from the end of April to mid-May, when the situation will be reassessed.
- 3. <u>Audit Committee Recommendations</u>—Ruth Irwin formed a finance committee with Jan Maseda, Pat St. Michel, Lee Underwood, and Dwayne Schmidt; they'll begin working on the recommendations.
- 4. <u>Stimulus Package</u>—Sarah Karzel applied for a small business loan with Bank of America on the first day funds were available, but received no response. She will apply to the lending arm of Heartland Payroll Processor, if additional funds become available for small businesses.
- 5. <u>Treasurer</u>—Offerings are down 14% for the year. New ways of giving online have been implemented.

#### MINISTRY REPORTS:

- 1. Pr. Megan Fryling is recording eight Sunday School sessions.
- 2. Pr. Megan also pre-records chapel sessions for the preschool students.
- 3. Youth Director Jen Adkison has seven Zoom meetings scheduled for the youth.
- 4. V.P. Janet Puchlik and the Mission Endowment Fund Team (MEFT) are reviewing where to apply available dividends.
- On the Faithful Stewards Endowment Fund (FSEF) committee, Marilyn Fursman was elected Chairperson and Diane Tillman was elected Secretary (both for one year).
   Greg Imlay will request the most recent financial information on the Fund.
- 6. Ruth Irwin will review the (transitional) Mission Investment Fund with Karen Meier, Bethlehem's bookkeeper, to ascertain amounts spent and the balance of the fund.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

#### SARAH KARZEL

president@bethlehemlutheran.net

Dear Fellow Members of Bethlehem.

Well, this has certainly been a challenging time, and one in which we have had to explore different ways of doing things. I want to especially thank Pastor Megan, Vicente and the rest of the music staff for their creativity and flexibility in bringing Sunday worship into our homes. And I want to thank you for your continued support of Bethlehem during these days when we cannot be together.

Our school has been closed since mid-March. All of the teachers have been furloughed since the beginning of April. These are very challenging decisions that impact so many lives. Please pray for those in leadership roles who have to make them. Without a full school, the church cannot rely on that income as we have in the past. We have made some adjustments to church side payroll as well, but it is not enough, particularly not with giving down as well.

You may have heard of the portion of the 2nd stimulus package known as the Paycheck Protection Program. It allows small businesses, including churches, to apply for funds to cover about 2 months worth of payroll. It is technically a loan, but if you use it for payroll (and a few other approved uses), it is forgiven in full. So it is really more a grant than a loan. It is an amazing program, but given the extreme need throughout the country, there have not been enough funds for everyone. We have applied in both rounds of the program, with several different lenders, and we were finally approved this week for the funding from the ELCA credit union. Once we receive the funds, we will be in a better position to keep our staff (and our utilities) paid.

As we adjust to these times when we must be apart, we are beginning to look at the process of bringing us back together. Marilyn Fursman has graciously agreed to chair a committee to prepare plans that will spell out the when, where and how of reopening. Greg Imlay, Emily Carlson, Connie Troe, Cookie Cline and Nicole Hernandez Liva will also serve on the committee. Please join me in thanking them all for this work.

I hope you are enjoying our virtual services on Sunday. I love to see who is on and see your hellos, your appreciation for the beautiful music, and your prayers. If you have any technological problems with joining, let us know, and we will try to help you. We will get through this, but it will be easier if we all stay together and support one another. I miss you all.

Blessings,

Sarah Karzel

MUSIC NOTES

VICENTE DITTO

Senior Music Minister
vicenteditto@bethlehemlutheran.net

stay at home and social distancing mandates in place, but I still feel joyful. I am joyful that Bethlehem is able to provide and stream services on Sundays, that we are still able to pay half of our music staff to provide music for the services, and that we are maintaining some semblance of community during this time of solitude and communal fracturing. Unfortunately, due to a variety of reasons, we did have to place our section leaders and bell choir director on furlough as well as reduce the remaining music staffs' pay by half. I am also sorry to say that Fernando, our tenor section leader, decided to move back to Arizona to pursue his music career and will not return once the gathering restrictions are lifted. Despite these setbacks, Suzanne, Marisa, Matthew, and I will continue to do what we can to provide quality music to the Bethlehem community for as long as we are able. I thank you for the positive feedback and constructive comments pertaining to the streaming services and I look forward to the day when we will all worship together again in person.

The joyfulness of the Easter season may not be as present as we would like it to be with the

## WOMEN OF THE ELCA BIBLE STUDY

#### "ZOOM IN" TO AUTHENTIC HOSPITALITY

According to an old African American spiritual, there is "plenty good room in my father's kingdom". Is there "plenty good room" in our homes, churches, and communities today? How do we offer "plenty good room" or generous hospitality? What does this phrase really mean? Have we ever offered this genuine hospitality to angels unknowingly? The Bible offers many examples of "bottomless" hospitality. In this Bible study explore what Scripture reveals about God's gift of hospitality in the body of Christ, our communities, and the world around us.

On Tuesday, May 19th, at 4:00 P.M., "zoom in" to "Plenty Good Room", a Bible study from the GATHER magazine. All are welcome to join this virtual study. Just follow Pastor Megan's instructions, and click on the link she will provide in the email prior to Tuesday. If you need a copy of the May GATHER magazine, please contact Dianne Tillman.

Topic: WELCA May Meeting

Time: May 19, 2020 04:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86799510524?pwd=b3FZZFRRbklFWS9IcHVkQWtYQVNYdz09

Meeting ID: 867 9951 0524

Password: 470189 One tap mobile

+14086380968,,86799510524#,,1#,470189# US (San Jose)

+16699006833,,86799510524#,,1#,470189# US (San Jose)

Hospitality can be hard work, but it is also "heart" work. As you'll discover, God's hospitality is active, compassionate, and transformative. True hospitality is a gift! Discover how we can model and use that gift to make "plenty good room".

## **FELLOWSHIP**

CONNIE TROE
FELLOWSHIP CHAIR

fellowship@bethlehemlutheran.net

#### LOOKING AHEAD TO FELLOWSHIP

Once it is safe to gather for events again, the fellowship committee looks forward to having the congregation enjoy a potluck brunch and a Bunco fun night. Friendship dinners and lunches will resume. We also look forward to celebrating the baptism of Brenan Martinez.

#### **HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS**

God's call is to love our neighbors and to serve one another. In light of God's call and in realization of the needs of the less fortunate, Bethlehem women will gather at a rescheduled date to make no-sew blankets for Lutheran Social Services and Hope Gardens. So don't lose sight of your scissors! You will enjoy a short devotion, morning snacks, and fellowship as we answer God's call to meet the needs of others. When it is once again safe for social events, we will inform you of the date to join us.

## CHRIST IN OUR HOME DEVOTIONALS

You can get the daily Christ in Our Home devotion through email!

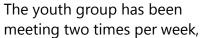
With the outbreaks of coronavirus disease 2019 in North America and around the world many people may be without a physical copy of Christ in Our Home. To assist with devotional life during this time, Augsburg Fortress is offering a limited-time complementary email subscription. Sign up and they will deliver the daily devotional to your email at 4am Central Time through June 30, 2020 Please visit the following link to subscribe.

#### https://tinyurl.com/qm4m3po

### **YOUTH NEWS**

**JENNIFER ADKISON** 

Director of Youth Ministry youthdirector@bethlehemlutheran.net





every Wednesday and Saturday at 7 p.m. We have done various games via Zoom such as Would You Rather and Scattergories. In the coming weeks we will be doing games on Wednesdays only and an intergenerational Bible study on Jonah on Saturdays. I have been having a lot of fun getting to know the youth, and look forward to the day when we can meet in person again!

## WATCH OUR WORSHIP ONLINE!

- 1. Go to <a href="www.facebook.com/">www.facebook.com/</a>
  <a href="mailto:BethlehemGranadaHills/">BethlehemGranadaHills/</a>
- 2. This will open a Facebook page. Don't worry, you don't need a Facebook account to watch the live stream. Facebook may appear persistent with requesting that you join. Just ignore it.
- 3. On the new page, below the picture, there will be a list of videos.
- 4. Click on the video labeled with the worship video that you'd like to watch. It may take a minute to load, have patience. You might need to click on the name of the video and not the image.
- 5. If the live stream isn't working for you at the exact time, you are able to come back and watch the video at a later time using the same steps above.



## **News from our Sponsored Missionaries**

#### Tea with the Missionaries

The missionaries will be doing a chat on May 7th at 7 p.m. via Zoom. This will be a 60-90 minute online program. The presentation starts with a 3 minute video with music, a Palm Sunday anthem from the church in Tanzania sung by the choir of one of our students who already has earned his bachelor's in music and will complete his bachelor's in theology this year when the universities reopen for his final semester. We continue with a power point presentation on Tanzania, the church there, and our work. We then share about what Covid-19 and the global pandemic means in



Tanzania, and how we in the US can be in community with the people of Tanzania at this difficult time. News of projects to produce Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) locally in Arusha and across Tanzania that our medical colleagues are coordinating with others, and the support needed for this project, is part of what we share in the presentation. Join us!

Topic: Tea with the Missionaries

Time: May 7, 2020 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89237182813?pwd=RkY0c1U1SzNBS3hjMVVGUGhjUjFJQT09

Meeting ID: 892 3718 2813

Password: 019137 One tap mobile

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+14086380968,,89237182813#,,1#,019137# US (San Jose)

Read more about what they're up to in Tanzania on their blog at https://mcintz.wordpress.com/

## Your support makes a world of difference!

To help your congregation fulfill its covenant sponsorship, give directly through your church. You can include your missionary support donation in your weekly offering just indicate on your offering envelope how much is being contributed to the missionaries.

## 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. Bethlehem's teachers and staff have been sharing videos of readings on the school Facebook page. If you have children in your lives or you would like to share with friends and family who have children, please do so!

## WHAT'S THE PLAN?

By Marilyn Fursman, Task Force on Re-Opening the Church

"How long, O Lord?" we cry with the psalmist (Psalm 13). On that great (as yet unknown) day when we can get back to worshipping together in our church building, some things will have to be different.

A new task force has been appointed to work on how to make gatherings safe and hygienically acceptable. To be considered is whether we jump back in all at once with two (or three) services, Sunday School, Bible studies, meetings and potlucks—or—start small with some meetings, one service,



and slowly work towards 100% of activities. Finding the right balance between over-reacting and under-reacting is our goal.

- Will we remove some pews so proper distance is easier to maintain?
- Will we wear gloves (a return to the 1950s!) and masks?
- Will we ask greeters not to shake people's hands and ushers to keep their distance?
- Will we hold off on "passing the peace" and passing the offering plate?
- How will we handle (or not handle?) communion or baptisms while staying six feet apart?
- Will we abandon the online worship services and Zoom video conference meetings or keep them as a new way to reach people?

These and dozens of other issues must be resolved before we meet again. If you have concerns or suggestions, please let me know at <secretary@bethlehemlutheran.net>.

Meanwhile, though the Church (that's you and me!) has left the building, the Church's ministries are not on hold. We remain in contact with members through weekly phone calls and twice weekly bulletins.

The pastor and staff are keeping busier than ever creating and editing the weekly video service plus preparing Sunday School class, preschool chapel sessions, youth meetings, Women of the ELCA Bible studies, Council meetings and more, all via Zoom.

Unemployed and furloughed workers worry about paying bills and so does Bethlehem! A big dip in offerings makes paying staff and bills, supporting our missionaries and the larger church, and helping local agencies a challenge; but, we remain hopeful because the Bible tells us that God's plans for God's people are good (Jer. 29:11).

With the challenges of COVID-19 comes great opportunity and innovation for the body of Christ. Just as many of us quarantined in our homes have been spring cleaning, purging closets and garages and reassessing our priorities, could it be that this is a good time for the Church to do some house cleaning, too? Is God calling us to refocus on our purpose and priorities as we go forward?

Until we meet again, "Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the Lord" (Psalm 31:24).

## How to continue Supporting Bethlehem

#### Ways to Worship

Watch our worship service on our Facebook on Sunday mornings at 10 a.m.

#### **Ways to Give**

- Mail in your check
- Through your bank's Bill Pay Donate
- On-Line through our church website (www.bethlehemlutheran.net) Enter through the Church site and locate the orange DONATE NOW button at the top right. You can set up an auto pay or one-time donation.
- Text 844-930-2811 to give a donation and follow the steps.
- Download the Giveplus+ app

#### **Ways to Care**

- Pray for our world, our leaders, our doctors and nurses.
- Follow the guidelines of the CDC.
- Check on family, friends, and those most vulnerable in our community during this time.
- Be generous in your giving of financial & material resources. Many people are in need and we want to be a blessing to them.

You can now also donate by downloading the GivePlus+ app on your phone.



Giving through our GivePlus Mobile app is an easy and convenient way to donate to our church. It only takes a moment to set up an account:

- Download the free GivePlus app from the App Store or Google Play.
- Find our church by ZIP code ##### or by searching for our Church name.

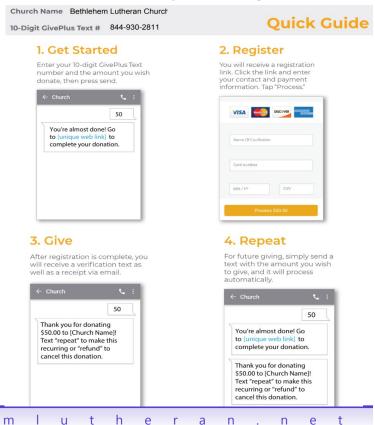
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3. Donate!

Thank you for your generosity!

You can also text 844-930-2811 and enter the amount you wish to donate and hit send. Follow the steps to register and in the future, simply send a text with the amount you wish to give.



## MAY NEWS FROM LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES

Well, it finally happened.

On Tuesday, April 21st, our Food Pantry at Lutheran Social Services in North Hollywood ran out of food. First time in 35 years (different locations – all serving the San Fernando Valley). We had to shut our outside gate and put a sign up that said "Sorry – we are closed because we have no food to distribute." To say that it was a sad time is an understatement - there were tears all around with even the people outside of our gate still waiting expressing their sadness.

On the same week, on Thursday, April 23rd, we received our shipment from the LA Regional FoodBank – where we get the majority of our foodstuffs, especially our non-perishables. We normally receive 10-15 pallets of food every two weeks from the FoodBank, but on that Thursday we received two pallets – one of Girl Scout Cookies, and one of strawberry milk.

Fortunately, one of our churches – Sherman Oaks Lutheran, brought a van full of groceries on that Friday, April 24th, so we were able to stay open. And also fortunately, two families from Bethlehem gave us checks for the FoodBank – and so we were able to purchase more food from the LA Regional Foodbank. Through a contact with Supervisor Paul Kerkorian's office, we were asked to give him a shopping list, and he is sending over bags and bags of groceries this next week. We thank everyone who was able to make a difference.

It is not going to be easy these next few months, as food supply chains are becoming less and less bountiful (as you probably know from going to the stores yourselves). The Regional FoodBank has already started giving away their foodstuffs for fall and Thanksgiving – boxes of stuffing/dressing and cranberry sauce. We know that they are very short on canned and non-perishable items. Our churches are struggling also, and some not even open or staffed - so we are not receiving their regular donations either. Most of the other Food Banks that are in the San Fernando Valley are having the same issues as LSS, and some have already closed for an unspecified period of time.

But we also know that God provides. We'll see what happens in the short term. Please keep us in your prayers, stay well and healthy until we can see each other again.

Blessings, Jan Maseda



## MEN'S MONTHLY BREAKFAST

We're taking a break for now because restaurants are closed. Please continue to fellowship with one another through a phone call or through an email. We will keep you updated.

## **SUBSCRIBE TO OUR PODCAST!**

Due to technical difficulties our podcasts have not been updated but there are plenty of old sermons you can still listen to.



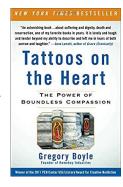
You can find our podcast on any smartphone or computer through

either the Spotify app or

Spotify.com by searching for "Bethlehem Granada Hills". You will see our logo with a set of headphones on it.

## **BOOK CLUB**

Book Club is meeting via Zoom every other Wednesday at 7 p.m. We will meet May 6, May 20, and June 3rd. We're slowly making our way through "Tattoos on the Heart" by Gregory Boyle. Feel free to join us even if you haven't read the book



Topic: Book Club

Time: This is a recurring meeting Meet anytime

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83932725110?

pwd=ZjNqbnZpKzF0N2NHSTBLdTlHWUpSQT09

Meeting ID: 839 3272 5110

Password: 234054

One tap mobile

+14086380968,,83932725110#,,1#,234054# US (San

Jose)

+16699006833,,83932725110#,,1#,234054# US (San

Jose)

## **MAY BIRTHDAYS**

- 4 Bryan Fougner
- 4 Melisa Nusbaum
- 6 Kathy Taylor
- 7 Pat St. Michel
- 8 Steve Maseda
- 9 Cookie Cline
- 9 Andrea Hall
- 10 Dixie McNinch
- 11 Nikki Steelman
- 12 James Hein
- 13 Scott Fisher
- 15 Floyd Standke
- 17 Helen Kelsey
- 20 Matthew Kessell
- 24 Greg Imlay
- 25 Mary Fisher
- 29 John Cooper
- 29 Susan Van Deest

## **MAY ANNIVERSARIES**

- 18 Scott & Mary Fisher (1992)
- 23 Steve & Lisa Nakata (1998)
- 28 Ron & Sarah Karzel (1983)

## **STATISTICS**

Note- this is as of 4/23/20. We do have checks that have come in this past week to be deposited.

March Actual: \$16,335 Budget: \$22,545

YTD March Actual: \$136,142.59 Budget: \$157,815.00

April (as of 4/23)

Actual: \$14,096 Budget: \$22,545



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 10AM Online Worship	27	28	29	30	1	2
3 10AM Online Worship 11:30AM Children's Sunday School via Zoom	4	5	6 7:00PM Zoom Book Club	7 7:00PM Tea with the Missionaries via Zoom	8	9 7PM Zoom Intergenerational Jonah Bible Study
10 Mother's DAY **  10AM Online Worship 11:30AM Children's Sunday School via Zoom	11	12	13	14	15	16 7PM Zoom Intergenerational Jonah Bible Study
17 10AM Online Worship 11:30AM Children's Sunday School via Zoom	18	19 4PM WELCA Bible Study via Zoom	20 7:00PM Zoom Book Club	21	22	23 7PM Zoom Intergenerational Jonah Bible Study
24 10AM Online Worship 11:30AM Children's Sunday School via Zoom	25	26	27	28	29	30 <u>7PM Zoom</u> Intergenerational Jonah Bible Study
31 10AM Online Worship 11:30AM Children's Sunday School via Zoom	June 1	2	3 7:00PM Zoom Book Club	4	5	6

## MAY WORSHIP LEADER SCHEDULE

Date	5-3-2020	5-10-20		
1 Reading	Laureen Gleason	Marilyn Fursman		
Psalm	Jill Goddard	Pam Shea		
2 Reading	Ron Kraus	Beverly Compton		

## **PLAN FOR A BOUTIQUE!**

Even though planning events in the far future may be uncertain now, the women are remaining hopeful that the pre-Christmas boutique scheduled for Saturday, November 7th and Sunday, November 8th will still happen. It's not too early to mark your calendar. And it's not too early to craft an item that can be donated to the boutique. Further details will be released as the situation and time allow.



12227 Balboa Blvd., Granada Hills, CA 91344