



# 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

**MEGAN FRYLING**

Senior Pastor

[pastor@bethlehemlutheran.net](mailto:pastor@bethlehemlutheran.net)

People of Bethlehem,  
This is a season of trying new things, of experimenting, of rethinking the way we do things and who we are. Much of this has been done not out of a desire for change or creativity, but out of

absolute necessity. This has been the case for the way our church operates, the way the school operates, and for many of our personal lives.

For my own family it's meant adapting the physical layout of our house and our schedules to accommodate a desk and setup for 1<sup>st</sup> grade distance learning, it's involved physical therapy and appointments for the littlest kids through video calls. It's meant very different kinds of summer vacation (traveling to remote areas and avoiding other people, rather than visiting extended family as we usually do), and a new job for Kyle.

Here at the church we've had to make a lot of changes over the last several months. Then within those changes, there have been adaptations and more changes. It's meant experimenting with microphones, lots of video editing, creative use of sanctuary space for distancing. As of the moment I'm writing this letter to you, we're working on our plans to resume in-person worship again. This time, we're adding in the option to bring your own blanket or chairs and sit in the lovely courtyard grass area for Sunday morning worship in addition to the option of the seats on the cement area. We're exploring the possibility of some misters to keep people cool on those mornings when it's already 80 degrees at 9 am. We'll also be figuring out how to pull a TV screen out to the courtyard to show some recorded elements even during outside worship!

This time of experimenting is certainly difficult, but there are good things coming from it. All of the new audio-visual things that we're adding in to both the online and in-person service will help us consider what we like and what's possible as we move toward the work of adding visual elements on TV screens in the sanctuary, which is something we've been discussing for the last two years. Our Zoom Bible studies on Jonah in

## SUNDAY WORSHIP:

**TEMPORARY COVID-19 SCHEDULE**  
9:00 AM – IN-PERSON WORSHIP  
(POSTPONED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE)  
10:00 AM – ONLINE STREAMING

## STAFF:

SENIOR PASTOR:

REV. MEGAN HUNT FRYLING  
[pastor@bethlehemlutheran.net](mailto:pastor@bethlehemlutheran.net)

DIRECTORS OF MUSIC MINISTRY:

VICENTE DITTO  
MARISA RAWLINS-BRADFIELD  
MATTHEW A. KESSELL  
[vicenteditto@bethlehemlutheran.net](mailto:vicenteditto@bethlehemlutheran.net)  
[marisabradfield@bethlehemlutheran.net](mailto:marisabradfield@bethlehemlutheran.net)  
[matthewkessell@bethlehemlutheran.net](mailto:matthewkessell@bethlehemlutheran.net)

YOUTH DIRECTOR:

JENNIFER ADKISON  
[youthdirector@bethlehemlutheran.net](mailto:youthdirector@bethlehemlutheran.net)

BOOKKEEPER:

KAREN MEIER  
[finance@bethlehemlutheran.net](mailto:finance@bethlehemlutheran.net)

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR:

WANDA MORENO  
[admin@bethlehemlutheran.net](mailto:admin@bethlehemlutheran.net)

FRONT OFFICE ASSISTANT:

EVELYN CULAJAY  
[office@bethlehemlutheran.net](mailto:office@bethlehemlutheran.net)

PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR:

MARY ASHDJIAN-KANDILIAN  
[director@bethlehemlutheran.net](mailto:director@bethlehemlutheran.net)

## CONTACT BY PHONE:

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



May and now Ephesians in September, as well as the "Dear Church" book study in July and August, have helped us to see the way that we can use technology to include even more people in our educational opportunities. Zoom Bible study means that folks can join in without having to drive to church and that even those who've moved away can participate too! Once we're back to in-person Bible study again, we'll be able to utilize both ways of meeting. Our Zoom study discussions have been deep and powerful, giving us all things to think about and thoughts to consider as we continue to ponder what God is calling us to now in this time and in this place. (Our Ephesians study has just started and even if you missed the first session, you can still join us on Wednesday nights!)

Consider in this time the ways that God is speaking to you, the way that the Spirit is pushing you to be flexible, to be willing to try something different, to look at church and Christian living from a different angle. Find a new way to stay connected and get involved. Consider new ways of thinking, maybe even do something in a way you've never done it before. It's a bumpy ride, for sure, but I know that Jesus is holding your hand along the way. Be brave! You've got this, because God's got you.

## SUMMARY OF BETHLEHEM AUGUST COUNCIL MINUTES

*By Marilyn Fursman, Secretary*

### Actions:

1. Approved recommendation of the Proposed Budget for 2020-21, which includes a large deficit.
2. Sarah will prepare a cover letter to be included with the mailout of the budget proposal.
3. The Executive committee approved school tuition discounts for Pr. Megan Fryling and Director Mary Kandilian.

### Management:

1. July Offerings: \$16,362.98 (vs Budget: \$22,545).
2. Preschool donation is down due to closure of the school for two months.
3. The school is open again and new procedures are going well. There have been no illnesses.

### Ministry:

1. A guest preacher, Jonathan Hemphill, will fill in for Pr. Megan, on vacation Aug. 16.
1. Pr. Megan will begin a Wednesday evening Zoom study of Ephesians starting Aug. 26, 6:30 p.m.
2. The "Dear Church" book study concluded with 8 participants from Bethlehem and 31 from Shepherd of the Valley in Simi.

## YEAR END FINANCIAL INFORMATION

As you know, we are reaching the end of our fiscal year (and what a year it has been!) Once we have closed the books, we will be sending out information so that the congregation can see how our income and expenses went for the year. Due to the dramatic fluctuations in both, we will need to prepare some explanations to help everyone understand. Information about our endowment funds will be included as well. Keep an eye out for this information which should be coming to you in the next few weeks.

## EXCITING NEWS!

Bethlehem will resume its in-person, outdoor worship services starting on Sunday, September 6th at 9:00 a.m.! (Online worship will continue streaming on Facebook at 10 a.m.)

As you know, our outdoor worship services will be a new and different experience. We now will be using both the concrete and grassy area in the courtyard so there will be lots of space to spread out. We thank you in advance for your patience as we navigate through new procedures to ensure a safe place of worship.

Below are a few notable differences:

- You will proceed from the parking lot to one of our check in tables where you will sign in, sign and submit a Covid Waiver form and use the hand sanitizer if needed.
- Households can be seated together but still distanced six feet from the next household.

How You Can Help:

- Wear your mask.
- Bring your own lawn chair or a blanket to sit on the grass if you desire, or the church will provide a sanitized chair.
- Bring a hat and water bottle. We are worshipping outside, please plan accordingly.
- Print and sign our Covid Waiver and bring it with you. Visit our website to download the form. All adults over 18 are required to sign the form. Once a waiver is signed, you will not need to sign one again.
- We look forward to seeing you!





## MUSIC NOTES

**VICENTE DITTO**

Senior Music Minister

[vicenteditto@bethlehemplutheran.net](mailto:vicenteditto@bethlehemplutheran.net)

A new opportunity to create a virtual choir piece has arisen. Marisa's friend Macain Treat is the Worship and Arts Director at St. Peter's By the Sea Presbyterian Church. He has invited our community to collaborate with his church community on creating a virtual performance of "Mercy Still" by Nicole Elyse and arranged by Heather Sorenson. All we need are video recordings of you singing.

Recording yourself is pretty simple. All you need is a device like an iPad or PC to play the vocal guide track, headphones so only you can hear the track, and a second device with a camera to record your singing. Please let Vicente know ([vicenteditto@bethlehemplutheran.net](mailto:vicenteditto@bethlehemplutheran.net)) if you would like to participate so the music and vocal guide tracks can be emailed to you or if you have any questions. The final product will be streamed on our September 13th service.



## SCHOOL NEWS

**MARY KANDILIAN**

Preschool Director

[Director@bethlehemplutheran.net](mailto:Director@bethlehemplutheran.net)

Welcome September!

Things are rapidly changing here at Bethlehem, we have been getting various updates and requirements from Licensing, the CDC, and Department of Public Health - sometimes daily! There is much to do and we are so grateful to be able to do it!

Our students have been having a wonderful fall so far and thank God we have all been healthy and continue to closely follow health and safety guidelines.

This year remains like no other, all our major events have been canceled and we are working on creative ways to continue some of our traditions so please keep an eye out for variations of our events!

Thank you all for your support, prayers, and kind words – we are all in this together and we'll get through it hand in hand. We ask that you keep our school and the families in your prayers and we will continue to keep you in ours.

## WOMEN OF THE ELCA BIBLE STUDY

### HOLY MEMORY: WHY WE REMEMBER AND HOW GOD RE-MEMBERS US

Think of a strong memory that sparks an image, a sound, a smell, a taste, or texture. Memories are a vital part of life. We recall and retell both pleasant and unpleasant stories. Memories are shared. But why do we remember? Memories are at the heart of family and cultural traditions. They tell us who we are and whose we are. Memories connect generations. Memories are also an important part of traditions and rituals of churches and worship.

So what is "holy memory"? "Holy time" is God's time. God "re-members" us. What does it mean to be "re-membered" by God? God is part of our past, present, and future. In the September GATHER Bible study, the lesson focuses on readings from Luke 22 and I Corinthians 11 to show us the role memory plays in our rituals, traditions, and faith today. Discover what it means for memory to be "holy" and what it means to be "re-membered" by God. Find out where the church needs to be "re-membered" by God.

Learn also the difference between tradition and nostalgia and the role each plays.

All are welcome to zoom in to the Bible study on Tuesday, September 15th, at 4:00 P.M. Explore "holy time", being "re-membered" by God, the difference between tradition and nostalgia, and how God's grace speaks to us through memories.

If you would like a copy of the GATHER Bible study, contact Judy Cave at 818-894-7773 prior to the 15th.



## WATCH OUR WORSHIP ONLINE!

1. Go to [www.facebook.com/BethlehemGranadaHills/](http://www.facebook.com/BethlehemGranadaHills/)
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.

## FINISHING UP OUR CHURCH PICTURE DIRECTORY

Thank you to everyone who already submitted a photo for the new photo directory. We will be finishing this project up soon so please send your picture by September 8 to be included in the photo directory. If you haven't emailed a photo, email Evelyn (office@bethlehemlutheran.net) a landscaped orientation photo. Thank you!



Landscape



Portrait





## YOUTH NEWS

**JENNIFER ADKISON**

Director of Youth Ministry

youthdirector@bethlehemlutheran.net

The youth have been busy over the past few weeks with their "Chalk Art Your Neighbor's Driveway!" fundraiser! The art that the kids came up with was both beautiful and pretty amazing for having been done with just chalk. It was a great success, raising just over \$900! Thank you to everyone who donated to help send Bethlehem's Youth Group to the 2022 Youth Gathering! With school back in session, youth group is now meeting once a week, Saturdays at 7pm, via Zoom. We are currently doing a Bible study on the book of Jonah. If you know of a middle schooler or high schooler who would like to join, please e-mail Jennifer Adkison at youthdirector@bethlehemlutheran.net.



## SANCTUARY VIDEO PROJECT BACK IN MOTION – POWERED BY GIRL SCOUT!

Hi! I'm Kiera Nusbaum, a member of Bethlehem's youth community and a girl scout in Troop 7266. I am working toward earning my Silver Award by assisting with a project that makes a beneficial change in my community. Installing screens in the sanctuary is something I've been hoping to work on for a while and now it can be a reality! A special budget was created during the merger to update the sanctuary's audio visual capabilities. I believe installing screens will benefit Bethlehem by:

- Saving paper and diminishing our community's contribution to global warming
- Spending less on paper and printer ink
- Encouraging better interaction between worship leaders and congregants
- Enhancing worship with videos, pictures, and other multimedia worship aids
- Staying up to date with the tools and technology that other churches are using to enhance worship in their communities

I'm so happy that we finally get to put this idea into action! During the next couple of months, I plan to communicate with most if not all of Bethlehem's members in order to provide project status updates, answer any questions members may have, and take note of the community's concerns and views on the topic. I will then collaborate with the Worship and Music team to present what I have learned to the council. I am so excited to be working on this and I hope you all share my excitement as we take these ideas and turn them into a reality!

## HOW TO CONTINUE SUPPORTING BETHLEHEM

### Ways to Worship

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

[www.facebook.com/BethlehemGranadaHills/](http://www.facebook.com/BethlehemGranadaHills/)

### Ways to Give

- Mail in your check
- Through your bank's Bill Pay Donate
- On-Line through our church website ([www.bethlehemplutheran.net](http://www.bethlehemplutheran.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.

## ANGEL TREE

There could be several ways to provide gifts to the Angel Tree children this year.

1. Purchase a gift card from \$15 to \$25, Judy Cave will see the cards get to the coordinator well before Christmas.
2. Purchase gifts and get them to an Angel Tree Office, they will deliver them.
3. Purchase gifts and have the people pick them up at a designated time, at Bethlehem. This is the method we have used for the past several years.



This year Judy needs to know how the congregation feels Angel Tree should be handled. Please email, call or text her your suggestions at [judy.cave@yahoo.com](mailto:judy.cave@yahoo.com), call 818-894-7773 or text 818-429-7742.

Thank you,  
Blessings,

*Judy Cave*

## “DEAR CHURCH…” BOOK REVIEW by Marilyn Fursman

In July, eight Bethlehem members joined with 29 folks at Shepherd of the Valley (Simi Valley), for an hour on six Wednesdays via Zoom, to discuss a provocative new book called *Dear Church…A Love Letter From a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the U.S.*, (Fortress Press publ., 2019). Because racism and “white privilege” are front and center in the public discourse these days, it seemed the right time to take a closer look at these issues.

The author, Lenny Duncan — a black, recently-ordained ELCA pastor with a compelling personal story — has challenged the Church he loves to address its structure of white supremacy and make drastic changes. His claim that the problem is Lutheran theology, not sociology, is worth a longer discussion than the group was able to have. Duncan pushes the denomination to change how it addresses social issues such as systemic racism, white supremacy, toxic masculinity, sexuality, nationalism, etc., if it is to exist in 50 years.

Duncan suggests that dismantling white supremacy will take three things:

1. Repentance—Public admittance that systemic racism is woven into the fabric of our structures, our hymnals, our liturgies, our vestments, our very organization. It might mean removing straight, white men from nominations for bishop.
2. Reparations—The Church must pay what it owes to black descendants of slaves used to build its churches and to indigenous peoples for building on land stolen from them. It might mean removing white Jesus from stained glass windows; or giving free tuition to black seminarians.
3. Reconciliation—Webster defines it as restoration of friendship or harmony; but, says Duncan, you can’t skip over reparations to get to reconciliation.

Clearly, this made for a difficult, even awkward, discussion. At the conclusion, only one person was bold to say aloud, “I didn’t like this book;” but, overall, people expressed how important the subject was and very much worth talking about. And while I did not agree with all Duncan’s assertions, I could agree that he said a lot of things that challenged the efficacy of the status quo and made one think whether there might be a better way to be the Church for the sake of the world—whether I might do better at welcoming *and incorporating* people into the community of my church and among the friends in my life. And if this could be done without insisting they do everything the way I do…the way my church does things…Can we make room for people with new perspectives and different ways of doing things?

Indeed, one of the book’s critical reviewers said, “On the more hopeful side of things, the people in the ELCA do seem to have a sincere commitment to wanting to do the right things once they become aware of the facts.” I was reminded that our own Southwest California Synod currently has 25% people of color or who have a primary language other than English, a black vice president (Randall Foster), earlier had elected a black female vice president (Dr. Stephanie Taylor Dinwiddie), and in 1983, elected the first black bishop (Nelson Trout). People from the LGBTQIA community and of non-European heritage also are well-represented in leadership positions.

So…out of all this discomfort came a question: What can we do now to make a difference?

The Bethlehem participants took up one of Duncan’s challenges, which is that most churches have pictures of Jesus depicted only as a white, northern European man. The group worked together to choose a selection of new artwork for Chandler Hall that showcases how Jesus might be seen in other races and cultures, as an addi-



tion to the depictions of Jesus we have in our own sanctuary windows. As a group, we discussed the importance of the way that Jesus is portrayed and the impact that has, both on being welcoming and on children as they grow up in the church.

In an interview with the Rev. Eric Shaefer, Bishop Guy Erwin recently reflected on the mood of our country and how the church might engage in healing the wounds of racism. He said, "I ask you to reflect...on how our church can help us...live more fully as neighbors to each other — as people who know each other's stories and feel each other's pain...I invite you into the holy discomfort of listening..."

Stay tuned for more opportunities for conversation, listening and learning.

## NEWS FROM LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES

First of all, a HUGE thank you to all of you who contributed to the drive up food donation day, Saturday, August 1st. We filled up our van and it was wonderful to see a lot of you in person (after a long hiatus). Thank you to Mary Fisher, Emily and Hannah Carlson for being there that morning and getting everything set up. It was just great, thank you thank you!

Our food supply chain is getting better, and thanks to our every day volunteers who do the food pick ups for us. Hanns Botz, Randy Miller, Roxanna Velasquez, Judy Aguillar, Griselda Garcia, Mark Kuntz – they are our heroes! Target, Jon's, Trader Joes, Costco and the Regional FoodBank are beginning to get back to normal, and as a result, so are we.

Our volunteers from Tierra del Sol have started coming back also, and they are such a great help. They run and manage the Food Pantry and the Clothes Closet, and we really missed them.

Our Clothes Closet has moved outside so now our clients can also receive clothing and shoes when they get their food. We still do not let clients into our facility in order to protect our staff and volunteers, but it's working well and we will continue this for at least another couple of months, or until the City and County get to Stage 3 of the Covid crisis.

As you may know, we have a contract to manage three apartment buildings in the SFV. We bring in programs for the residents and assist them with things like social security issues, immigration, medical referrals, etc. This last week, one of our families had a severe crisis when the Mom and income earner, had a heart attack and was hospitalized, leaving three children at home, ages 18, 13 and 12. I'm sure we all have nightmares about this happening to us or our families, especially now when no one is allowed in hospital facilities to see their loved ones. There are still many issues, and we are doing our best to help. We had a grant to help them with a large, past due utility bill, we are bringing them groceries every week, and we are currently trying to outfit them with clothes and shoes, and also supply them with hygiene items like shampoo, toothpaste, bath soap, laundry soap, deodorant, etc. As of this writing, the Mom is still hospitalized in critical condition, with no relatives living close. Please keep this family in your prayers and thoughts.

Blessings and thank you for all you do!  
Jan Maseda, Director/LSS/SFV



## MEN'S MONTHLY BREAKFAST

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

## 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](http://www.facebook.com/BethlehemGranadaHills) and like us!

Also, check out our preschool Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/bethlehemplutheranschool](http://www.facebook.com/bethlehemplutheranschool). 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!

## BOOK CLUB

Our Book Club will resume Thursday, September 17 from 6-7 p.m. via Zoom. For more information please contact Pastor Megan.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81238242446?pwd=NWRTckN4eURILzd1ODZSNk1oaVpUUT09>

Meeting ID: 812 3824 2446

Passcode: 537807

## BIBLE STUDY

We've started a study on the book of Ephesians every Wednesday, now through September 30 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. We will talking about how Ephesians informs who and what we are called to be in the church. Don't miss it!

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86398646370?pwd=Z1N2d0dMcmlcDY3c1p1WC9ObGNDZz09>

Meeting ID: 863 9864 6370

Passcode: 651572

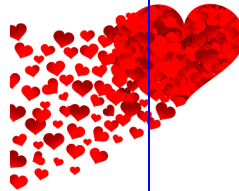
## SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Brooke Coffin
- 2 Bud Gundersen
- 8 Betty Pust
- 9 Manny Vasquez
- 10 Shaza Nassar
- 15 Lisa Chow
- 15 Mike Gleason
- 16 Andrew Akin
- 17 Dianne Tillman
- 18 Corwin Traylor
- 19 Isabella Cross
- 24 Deborah Imlay
- 26 Don Tillman
- 27 Karen Fouts
- 27 Emily Carlson
- 30 Robert Heyd



## SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 3 Richard & Barbara Yeager (1967)
- 13 Brian & Marsha Grefsrud (2003)
- 14 Ed & Peggy Kossart (1963)
- 16 Jerry & Ruth Anne Sitko (1973)



## AUGUST STATISTICS

August Offerings: \$17,012

August Budget: \$22,545

July offerings: \$16,327.72

July Budget: \$22,545.00

# SEPTEMBER 2020 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>30</b> <b>10AM</b> Online Worship	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> <b>6:30PM</b> Wednesday Night Bible Study	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> <b>10AM</b> Online Worship	<b>7</b> <b>Labor Day</b> <b>Office Closed</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> <b>6:30PM</b> Wednesday Night Bible Study	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> <b>7PM</b> Youth Group
<b>13</b> <b>9AM</b> In-Person Worship <b>10AM</b> Online Worship	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> <b>4PM</b> WELCA Bible Study via Zoom	<b>16</b> <b>6:30PM</b> Wednesday Night Bible Study	<b>17</b> <b>6PM</b> Book Club	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> <b>7PM</b> Youth Group
<b>20</b> <b>9AM</b> In-Person Worship <b>10AM</b> Online Worship	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> <b>6:30PM</b> Wednesday Night Bible Study	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> <b>7PM</b> Youth Group
<b>27</b> <b>9AM</b> In-Person Worship <b>10AM</b> Online Worship	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> <b>6:30PM</b> Wednesday Night Bible Study	<b>Oct. 1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> <b>7PM</b> Youth Group



**Bethlehem**  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH & SCHOOL

12227 Balboa Blvd., Granada Hills, CA 91344