



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

Pastor

pastor@bethlehemlutheran.net

This year, Ash Wednesday falls on February 17 and with Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent. It feels like just yesterday that we were observing Lent last year — reading Wendell Berry poetry and talking about slowing down and paying attention to God's presence. Well, hopefully, you were able to take those lessons and poems to heart and it's been helpful to you in this year unlike any other. Now we've come back around in the church calendar to the season of Lent again.

This year, once again things will be different and once again, we're not entirely sure what the months ahead look like. Hopefully, this season of Lent can help you to turn back to God, to find practices to help you reflect and meditate on Jesus' love for you, and you can find ways to let the Holy Spirit guide you. Sunday morning worship and Wednesday midweek Lenten discussions are a couple of the ways that we as the church can walk through this season together, even during time when we may be physically apart.

For Ash Wednesday this year, the imposition of ashes will be done differently. In some ways, this may be a good thing! The hope is that those of you who have always been too busy on Ash Wednesday to get to church for worship and ashes will now be able to find that time at home. On Wednesday, February 10 (and the days that follow), you'll be able to pick up a kit a church that will have a bulletin for Ash Wednesday along with a small container of palm ashes mixed with olive oil. Ash Wednesday services will be on February 17 either outdoors in the church courtyard at 12 p.m. or online at the church Facebook page at 6 p.m. During that service, there will be a moment when you take out the container, open it up and use your finger to make a cross on your own forehead and the forehead of anyone else in your household.

In the weeks that follow during Lent, our usual midweek event will now be on Zoom from 6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. It will include music from our Worship & Music staff, then a discussion over tea with the theme of "Bless This Mess" — knowing that God loves us and blesses us in the midst of our messy lives. Discussion cards and tea will be included in Lenten boxes for

SUNDAY WORSHIP:

TEMPORARY COVID-19 SCHEDULE

9:00 AM – IN-PERSON WORSHIP

10:00 AM – ONLINE STREAMING

STAFF:

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



those who RSVP for the midweek Lenten program. (Send an email to office@bethlehemlutheran.net or call the church at 818-360-4777 to get your name on the list for a box by February 9!)

In this Lenten season I look forward to worshipping with all of you, both online and in person, and having wonderful discussions on Wednesday nights. May God bless us and guide us on our journey of faith this year!

In Christ,
Pastor Megan

JANUARY DECEMBER COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

By Marilyn Fursman, Secretary

1. The Council received a preliminary analysis from Gerry Puchlik on two issues:
 - a. Areas of the roof that are leaking and potential cost of repair or replacement.
 - b. The types and cost of air filtration equipment to protect against COVID-19.
More research is needed.
2. There was a lengthy discussion on how to safely move the 9 a.m. worship service indoors, while keeping the safety of staff and worshippers a top priority.
3. Sarah reviewed the status of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan: all was spent and we are ready to apply for forgiveness. There is the possibility of qualifying for a second loan of a similar amount with the same conditions.
4. December offerings were up due to year-end giving. For 2020, offerings were down 60%.
5. Cards will be sent to all the members as a means of staying connected and offering support.



ANGEL TREE PROJECT 2020

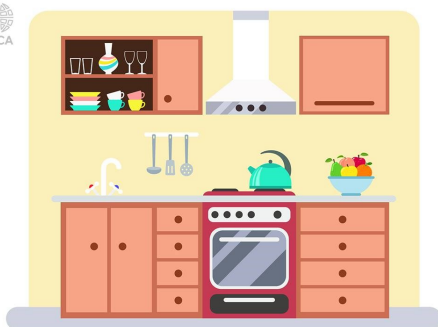
Dear Church Family and Friends,

This year was more difficult and different than years past, however, I want to say a special thank you to Betty Sue, Betty Pust, Dianne, Connie, Dorothy, Nancy, Norma, Ruth Anne, Jan Maseda, Vivian Scott, Susan and Pam for your generosity. You made 17 children and 5 caretakers very happy last Christmas. I am also very grateful and humbled by your generosity. Thank you is to small a word to express my Joy in all of you!!!

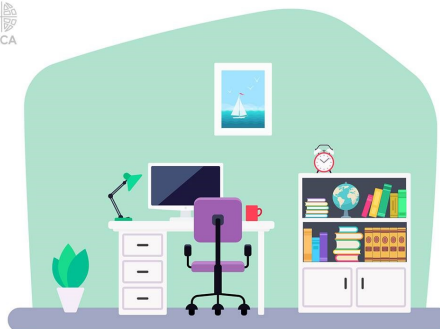
Blessings,
Judy Cave

BLESSINGS

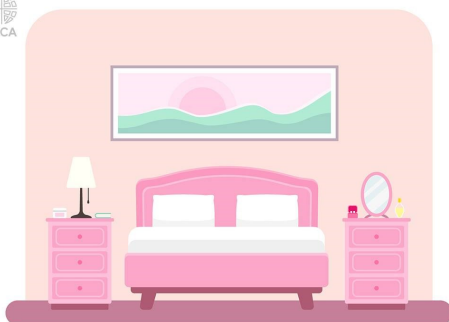
We have all been spending a lot of time at home lately. We thank God for the gifts of home while honoring the ways people practice their faith in their life at home: chores and hobbies, cooking and eating, ways of relaxing, relationships within the household and beyond it, caring for our bodies, and connecting with creation. Read these blessings as you move about your home, or picture your space as you give thanks to God for the gifts of a home. (From "Blessing for a Home," Sundays and Seasons)



O God, you fill the hungry with good things. Send your blessing on those who prepare food here, and make us all ever thankful for daily bread.



O God, grant that those who learn in this place may use knowledge to heal & help your world. Draw us together through our technology for every good purpose.



Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we may rest in peace.



O God, you set apart time for rest and enjoyment of the world you made. Bless those who gather here for fellowship and recreation, that they may be renewed and refreshed.



MUSIC NOTES

VICENTE DITTO

Senior Music Minister

vicenteditto@bethlehemlutheran.net

It was with great sadness that we learned of Suzanne's husband's passing last month.

Benito was a wonderful presence in our choir during the summer. Even though he was the bass section leader at Northridge United Methodist Church, their choir had summers off so Benito was able to sing with us during that time. He was an excellent musician and supported our bass section with positive comments and great humor. The co-president of the choir at Northridge UMC put together a mini memorial for Benito that was broadcast during their Jan. 17th 10 a.m. worship on YouTube. You can view this segment of the service by typing "Northridge United Methodist Church January 17 10 a.m." into YouTube's search engine. The memorial starts at 31 mins into the video. Suzanne is planning on having an in person memorial for Benito as soon as we can all gather safely again indoors.

BLESS THIS MESS

A playlist for Lent 2021 (and beyond)

Go to this link: <https://spoti.fi/3oM5q0U>

or search for Bless This Mess on your Spotify

app to find this specially
curated playlist.



MARDI GRAS BINGO!

Save your Bingo card and candy markers that were included inside the bag. On February 13 at 6:30 p.m., join others on Zoom to play the ever-popular Bingo! Yes, it's Bingo time! In keeping with the Mardi Gras theme, you may want to make an eye mask, wear beads, or don the traditional Mardi Gras colors of green, gold, and purple. Join the fun! Play from home! Win a prize! Add some virtual Mardi Gras merriment to your Saturday evening!

Meeting ID: 845 8207 3027

Passcode: 739707



HELP FEED THE HUNGRY

Bethlehem would like to reach out to neighbors in the community by collecting nonperishable food items. Please bring your nonperishable food items when you pick up your gift bag for Ash Wednesday and for Bingo. Be part of helping someone in need!

GIVING STATEMENTS

Statements have all been emailed or mailed out for the year.

If you did not receive yours or if you have any questions about your statement, you can either email counters@bethlehemplutheran.net or you may call the church office.



WOMEN DISTRIBUTE FUNDS 2020

Every year the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (WELCA) board take all of their monies from the boutique and monthly Bible Study offerings received and redistribute. We begin by giving a tithe to Lutheran Social Services, Lutheran Camping, California Lutheran Homes, Open Arms Pregnancy Center and Tanzania Emergency Fund.

Next we give money to own church. 2019 we designated funds to go to Pastor's Discretionary Fund, Angel Music Fund, Bethlehem Pre-school, Christ in our Home donation, office copies of the Gather Magazine which includes our monthly Bible Study and related articles and other women's programs, and other projects we designate.

Lastly we give to others (especially to those who have made suggestions of worthy organizations). This year we chose ELCA Good Gifts, SFV Rescue Mission, Hope in the Valley Rescue Mission – the help center and Hope Gardens Sylmar – housing and training program.

During the year we also made and gave our no-sew blankets to the LSS and Hope Gardens Sylmar. To see a listing of the total disbursements check in the church office or see Dianne Tillman.



YOUTH NEWS

JENNIFER ADKISON

Director of Youth Ministry

youthdirector@bethlehemlutheran.net

Hello Everyone! February is here! This month the youth group will meet on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month, most likely at 7p.m. via Zoom. On Sunday, February 14 we will be having a virtual Valentine's Day party via Zoom! There will be goodie bags for teens to pick up on the days leading up to Valentine's Day, and on the 14th we will do an activity together via Zoom from those goodie bags! I'm really looking forward to this and to seeing the middle and high schoolers doing something fun together. Parents and teens, please stay tuned via email and What'sApp for more details. If you are a middle/high schooler who would like to participate, but are not getting my emails, please contact me at youthdirector@bethlehemlutheran.net and I will be sure to include you! Blessings in Christ Jesus.

EVANGELISM

PAM SHEA

EVANGELISM CHAIR

evangelism@bethlehemlutheran.net

Dear Bethlehem Members:

Thank you so much for your vote of confidence in electing me to the position of Evangelism Chair of Bethlehem Lutheran Church. I know that outreach during this time of Covid-related restrictions is going to be a challenge, but I am already formulating plans for some specific projects. If you have a heart for outreach and would like to join the Evangelism committee or if you have specific questions to ask, I would be thrilled to hear from you. You can e-mail me at pamelasheapoet@gmail.com and we can communicate either via e-mail or by phone.

Pam Shea

THANK YOU NOTE FROM JANET CHANDLER

1/26/21

Pastor Megan : Members

Your kindness and sympathy
are more deeply appreciated
than any words of thanks
can ever express

*Thank you so much for beautiful
funeral arrangements sent for R's
passing! Your note was so heartwarming
as R and I will always have a special
place in our hearts for Bethlehem!*

NEWS FROM OUR SPONSORED MISSIONARIES

We write, deep into the first semester of the 2020-2021 academic year. Our classes are humming along and other projects are progressing as well. We write here of two: an **Intensive Student Reading Group on Race and Christian Theology**, and an experiment in **training for congregations in Mission Engagement**.



RACE AND CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

In mid-2020 when we were still in the US and watching the news of protests and movement in race relations, we started discussing how university students were engaging—and sometimes initiating—national and international conversations about race. This led to dialogue with Cynthia's brother R. Ward Holder, who teaches at Saint Anselm College in New Hampshire, and to two grant applications to develop a joint student learning initiative on Race and Christian Theology, bringing students from Saint Anselm's and Makumira together in learning about key African and African American thought about race and theology—a combining of topics not made by many of those leading protests and movements demanding an increase in racial justice.

To finish reading their article please visit 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.

HOW TO CONTINUE SUPPORTING BETHLEHEM

Ways to Financially Support Bethlehem

- Mail in your check
- Through your bank's Bill Pay Donate
- On-Line through our church website (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.
- Download the GivePlus+ app on your smartphone. Find Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Granada Hills, CA and donate.

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.

JOURNEY WITH ANGELS: TURNAROUND ANGELS

What is something precious you've lost and then found? It might have been a small thing, a large thing, your health, a job, a pet, or a relationship. What actions did you take to find the lost "treasure" or to get a new job? How did you regain health or a relationship? In order to find or regain the lost item, we probably had to open our eyes and ears and change our actions.

In Luke 15, we read the parable of the woman who engages in vigorous sweeping in hopes of retrieving a lost coin. After she finds it, she expresses her joy by calling her neighbors and friends to celebrate! And Jesus tells us "Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." (Luke 15: 10). Imagine the celebration of heavenly angels! What might that look and sound like?

In the GATHER Bible study for February, we read about angels that do more than celebrate. As we read about Jacob, Moses, Balaam, and Joseph, all are welcome to discover how angels are involved in changing the course of these characters' lives. Prepare to meet these "turnaround angels" as they serve as witnesses, agents of warning for the people of God, or they simply applaud God's people for changing direction.

Journey with others as we learn from God's heavenly creatures by zooming in to the February Bible study on Tuesday, February 16 at 4:00 p.m. Just click on the link that Pastor Megan gives in the February 15 weekly schedule.

If you need a GATHER Bible study, please contact Evelyn or Wanda in the church office.

SPRING ONLINE BOUTIQUE

Spring is coming and so is the online spring boutique! The Easter and spring items will be popping up online on March 1. Further details, the boutique link, and featured items will be shown in the March newsletter. So look for more on this exciting event!

Thank you to all of you who supported our fall online boutique! With your help, WELCA was able to reach out with donations to Bethlehem, the preschool, Lutheran Social Services, Hope Gardens, and several other community and synod organizations. Our neighbors were helped thanks to all of you!

FEBRUARY CONGREGATIONAL EVENT

Observe important dates in February by joining in on Ash Wednesday and participating in another zoom Bingo event. Begin the observance by stopping by the church on Wednesday, February 10 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. to pick up a bag containing a devotional, candle, and ashes for Ash Wednesday. The bag will also contain items for Mardi Gras Bingo. If you are unable to pick up your bag at that time, stop by the church before February 13, ring the office doorbell, and Wanda will greet you with your bag. Pick up one bag per household. R.S.V.P. to the office in advance and indicate the number in your household who will be playing Bingo so enough items are included in your bag. Save the Bingo card and candies if you wish to play Bingo!



NEWS FROM LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES

February already? Time to get ready for Christmas. OK, how about Easter then? Time certainly does fly when you're having fun. So – are we having any yet? I think we may be able to eat at a restaurant now.

Speaking of eating – The LSS Food Pantry has been very busy, especially since COVID. The lines haven't slowed down yet, and the ripple effects from all of the shutdowns from COVID are probably not going to slow down any time soon. We at LSS are so grateful for all of you – your personal financial donations, donations of food and clothing, household items, baby items, blankets – rest assured they are all going to good use, especially used jackets, sweaters, boots, hats, scarfs, socks, blankets and anything that could be used in the rain and cold right now. All very much appreciated and very much used and given away on a daily basis.

If not for our wonderful churches and their members here in the San Fernando Valley, we would find it very hard to stay open day in and day out. Thank you also to our Council members for Los Angeles, Target and Jon's stores, the LA Regional FoodBank and many other non-profits and organizations that assist us.

But far and away our most valued, important and life-saving items comes from all of you – people of faith, always giving back to your community and trying to help others. It brings tears to my eyes as I write this, because we can never thank any one of you enough. Did you know that some of you gave us your entire stimulus check so we could purchase more food? And some of you gave large, individual grants for the same purpose. It's truly amazing and wonderful and continuous and unselfish and loving.

The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Galatians 5:14. And you all do.

Jan Maseda/Director/LSS San Fernando Valley (818)288-7054



MEN'S MONTHLY BREAKFAST

The men's breakfast group will not meet due to the updated LA County restaurant restrictions.

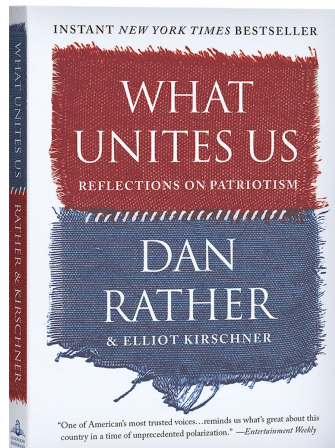
LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

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/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

Book club will resume via Zoom on February 18 at 6 p.m. The book for the month is "What Unites Us" by Dan Rather. You can contact Pastor Megan by text or phone for details 610-680-7220.



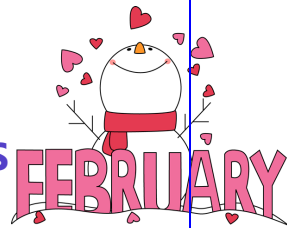
FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Lorrie DeCoursey-Thomas
- 1 Richard Liva
- 3 Sandra Burkhardt
- 6 Jane Stanton
- 7 Laureen Gleason
- 8 Erin Sears
- 11 Barbara Bond
- 11 Richard Chow
- 11 Betty Griffith
- 13 Sandy Lazaros
- 14 Wanda Moreno
- 16 Julia Fisher
- 19 Nicole Hernandez-Liva
- 23 Sunni Sears
- 24 Todd Akin
- 26 Matt Akin






FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 15 Manny & Kathy Vasquez (1986)



JANUARY STATISTICS

The January offerings were \$20,422.72
Budgeted offerings were \$20,833.00

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 <u>9AM In-Person Worship</u> <u>10AM Online Worship</u> <u>11AM Zoom Fellowship</u> <u>11:30A Virtual Sunday School</u> <u>7PM Scripture Breathing Sessions</u>	1	2	3 <u>6:30PM Wednesday</u> <u>Night Bible Study</u>	4	5	6
7 <u>9AM In-Person Worship</u> <u>10AM Online Worship</u> <u>11AM Zoom Fellowship</u> <u>2PM Confirmation Class</u> <u>6:30PM Prayer Session</u> <u>7PM Scripture Breathing Sessions</u>	8	9	10 <u>6:30PM Wednesday</u> <u>Night Bible Study</u> <u>Bingo & Lent</u> <u>package Pick up</u>	11	12	13 <u>6:30PM Mardi</u> <u>Gras Bingo</u>
14  <u>9AM In-Person Worship</u> <u>10AM Online Worship</u> <u>11AM Zoom Fellowship</u> <u>11:30A Virtual Sunday School</u> <u>7PM Scripture Breathing Sessions</u>	15 Office Closed 	16 <u>4PM WELCA</u> <u>Bible Study</u> <u>via Zoom</u>	17  <u>Ash</u> <u>Wednesday</u> <u>Service</u> <u>12PM Outdoor service</u> <u>6PM Online Service</u>	18 <u>6:00PM Book Club</u>	19	20
21 <u>9AM In-Person Worship</u> <u>10AM Online Worship</u> <u>11AM Zoom Fellowship</u> <u>2PM Confirmation Class</u> <u>7PM Scripture Breathing Sessions</u>	22	23	24 <u>6:30PM Wednesday</u> <u>Night Lenten Zoom</u> <u>Bible Study</u>	25	26	27
28 <u>9AM In-Person Worship</u> <u>10AM Online Worship</u> <u>11AM Zoom Fellowship</u> <u>11:30A Virtual Sunday School</u> <u>7PM Scripture Breathing Sessions</u>	March 1 Online Spring Boutique	2	3 <u>6:30PM Wednesday</u> <u>Night Lenten Zoom</u> <u>Bible Study</u>	4	5	6



Bethlehem
LUTHERAN
CHURCH & SCHOOL

12227 Balboa Blvd., Granada Hills, CA 91344