



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

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

JANET PUCHLIK

president@bethlehemlutheran.net

Dear Friends in Christ,
I want to thank you for trusting me with this leadership position. Although the past year has been difficult and challenging, our church has been blessed with the leadership from Pastor Megan, the Music Team, Sarah Karzel and the Council, the Preschool Staff and many of our members who stepped up to help keep the Church moving forward and staying connected.

At my first Council meeting in February, I shared a poem I found in a book, "The Treasure Chest", my Aunt and Uncle gave me in 1968 for my graduation from High School. In reading the poem, I felt it reflected what I dream for our church. The poem is by John Milton Moore, but I have modified it and updated some of the lines for my use:

The Church of My Dreams

This is the church of my dreams
The church of a warm heart,
Of the open mind,
Of the Adventurous spirit,
The church that cares
That heals hurt lives
That comforts the elderly
That challenges the youth
That knows no divisions of culture or class, nor frontiers, geographical or social,
The church that inquires as well as affirms,
That looks forward as well as backward;
The church of the Master
The church of the people
High as the Ideals of Jesus,
Low as the humblest human;
A working church
A worshipping church
A winsome church

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
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A church that interprets the truth in terms of the truth
That inspires courage for this life and the life to come;
A church of courage
A church of all good people
A church of the living God

As we strive to return to what we consider normal, in 2021, I hope we can try and keep this poem in mind. As we address the changes, challenges and the dreams for realizing our church's potential, as it says in the poem, I want a Church that looks forward as well as backward and includes all.

UPDATE ON INDOOR WORSHIP

As we near the one-year mark from the day that we began our pandemic restrictions and closures, we all recognize that this has been a difficult year. We all look forward to the return to something that feels more normal in our lives, and especially when it comes to worship. During the pandemic, we have followed the guidelines, rules, and recommendations that have been given by the Los Angeles County Health Department. We have been blessed with members who have been willing to volunteer to make online worship work through sending in videos to contribute and we've been blessed with volunteers who have made in-person outdoor worship work by setting up, welcoming everyone, and cleaning up afterward. Now, we look forward to a move to modified indoor worship.

The current plan is that we hope to have indoor worship in the sanctuary again once Pastor Megan has been fully vaccinated. The hope was that, as part of the Bethlehem childcare center staff, she might be vaccinated in February, however, the timeline for vaccines has moved slowly, so it's currently looking like she has the possibility of trying to find an appointment for a first vaccine sometime in the beginning of March. Once she's had her first shot, we will have a much better sense of an actual timeline for the return to the sanctuary. In the meantime, Gerry Puchlik has worked to find a way to pull in fresh air and circulate the air in the sanctuary with large fans in the doorway. We've been working on a setup for how we will distance the pews and we'll be continuing to follow precautions for the health and safety of everyone—masks, physical distancing, no singing indoors, and no childcare or fellowship. As people get vaccinated and as covid-19 numbers decrease, we'll gradually get back to the in-person indoors worship and fellowship that we had before. We continue to pray for the health and well-being of all in our community and all throughout the U.S. and the world who have been impacted both by this deadly virus, but also by the strain and difficulty this has caused for all of us. We pray that God grants us comfort, peace, and hope as we move forward.

In Christ,
Pastor Megan & Janet Puchlik

FEBRUARY COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

By Marilyn Fursman, Secretary

1. Received an update on two bids to replace roofing and await a third bid.
2. Gerry Puchlik is following up on repairs due to a fire in the HVAC system.
3. Learned Bethlehem was approved for a second PPP loan for the full amount of \$218,827;
4. Sarah Karzel is preparing the application for forgiveness of the first PPP loan of \$197,000.
5. Heard the status of plans to reopen the church for in-person, indoor worship and there will not be any schedule changes just yet.
6. Asked all Council members to make a short video stating hopes and dreams for the coming year.
7. Received with gratitude a gift of funds for three projection screens for the sanctuary, in memory of member Esther Natenstedt.

MANAGEMENT:

1. January Offerings: \$22,904 vs Jan. Budget: \$20,833.
2. Fiscal Year-To-Date Offerings: (-\$928).
3. Fiscal Year-To-Date Net income is (-\$46,785).
4. Preschool January Income is slightly above the budgeted amount.

MINISTRY

1. Fellowship welcomed new members Chriselle Almeida, Eric Eylands, Sarah Eylands, Olivia Eylands, and Eli Eylands with a gift card for Nothing But Bundt Cakes.
2. Feb. 13, nearly 70 Bethlehem members and Scouts tuned in for Bingo and jokes on Zoom.
3. Feb. 17, Ash Wednesday: The in-person service at noon was attended by 3; and the 7 p.m. live-streamed service had 38 tuned in (more watched later).
4. Confirmation meets on Zoom, 1st and 3rd Sundays at 2 p.m.
5. Beginning Feb. 24, 6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m., midweek Lenten discussions via Zoom on the theme of "Bless This Mess."

UPCOMING:

1. Feb. 28: Scout Sunday
2. April 4: Easter Sunday worship.
3. April 4: Performance of "Jesus Christ from Bethlehem," a musical parody of "Alexander Hamilton," written and directed by Chriselle Almeida.



MUSIC NOTES

VICENTE DITTO

Senior Music Minister

vicenteditto@bethlehemplutheran.net

Plans are underway for Easter. We will have a string quartet perform at both the 9 a.m. in person worship service and the 10 a.m. streaming service. Although we had to cut the budget line for the strings, we are able to afford them due to the generous donations people made during our 2019 Christmas concert. They will be a beautiful addition to our celebration of the resurrection.

It was with great sadness that I learned of the passing of Sandy Lazaros. She was an extremely dedicated church member and sang with the choir for many years. Her enthusiasm for the community and the music department was boundless and will certainly be missed. Our prayers are with Chris and the rest of Sandy's family.



SCHOOL NEWS

MARY KANDLIAN

Preschool Director

Director@bethlehemplutheran.net

Dear Bethlehem Families,

We're so happy to report that we continue to enroll families and open up classrooms at a safe and efficient pace and process. We have started our summer enrollment, which will open to the public next week and are almost at capacity and have a waiting list in some rooms! A blessing and great problem to have!

We're also so pleased to report that most of our staff has returned along with the addition of a new staff members, Ms. Lyn and Ashley. To best support our classroom ratios and maintain Covid safety protocols we are in search of an additional kindergarten teacher— if you know anyone, please send them my way!

I'm sure you have heard about our Butter Braid fundraiser which is currently underway, we're excited to try something new and hope you will support this yummy fundraiser you can bake at home with your loved ones! Please contact the school office to put in your orders! 818-368-6947.

Thank you!

CHECK YOUR DOORSTEP BEFORE EASTER!

Bethlehem is thinking about you during your Lenten journey. Keep watching your doorstep as we get very, very close to Easter morning. Bethlehem is planning a surprise for your household!



9 A.M. EASTER SUNDAY RSVP

We have extra musical guests performing on Easter Sunday and we need all 9 a.m. in person worship attendees to reserve a spot. We also want to make sure that everyone who would like to attend is comfortable with Matthew singing outside with the string quartet.

Please go to the following link to RSVP: <https://rsvp.church/r/1tL7oRNZ>

PARTY WITH YOUR PEEPS! THE HUNT IS ON...

Please join us on Saturday, April 3 for Bethlehem's Easter Egg Scavenger Hunt !!!!

Each family will receive a map of where to find our 10 large Easter signs. The signs will be placed around Granada Hills and families will drive around to locate all 10. Participants will receive a surprise when they find them all. More details to follow!



SANCTUARY HVAC SYSTEM FIRE

On the afternoon of February 14, the fire alarm went off in the church building while Vicente and Pastor Megan were the only ones left in the building. The fire department arrived and we couldn't find a source of the fire after searching, so they eventually left after checking everything out. Gerry and Janet Puchlik arrived to help with the situation and that's when we realized that the sanctuary HVAC system was what set off the fire alarm. Pastor Megan had fortunately turned off the sanctuary heat when the fire alarm went off (which can only be explained by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit!), so we had avoided further damage.

While up on the roof, Gerry and Pastor Megan called 911 and asked the wonderful firefighters from Station 118 down the street to come back because the sanctuary HVAC unit felt extremely hot. When the firefighters arrived, they came and opened the unit up. The motor bearing had frozen and the insulation inside the duct had caught on fire and was badly burned. The HVAC unit was damaged, but fortunately the fire didn't spread further. We're in the process of getting prices for replacing the HVAC unit, which is in need of replacement now.





YOUTH NEWS

JENNIFER ADKISON

Director of Youth Ministry

youthdirector@bethlehemlutheran.net

"Happy March, Bethlehem! The days are getting a little longer, and spring is fast approaching! With it comes nicer weather and the hope of wellness for our community.

In February the youth group met two times virtually, on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month. On Valentine's Day, we had a Zoom party! During the previous week, I had families of middle and high schoolers pick up a goodie bag for each teen. Inside were Valentine's candies, bubbles, heart tattoos, a button pin that said "Be Love," an individual sized bottle of Martinelli's, and 2 heart shaped sugar cookies complete with frosting and sprinkles for decorating. While over Zoom on the 14th, we did a short Bible study on 1 John 4:7-8 and then we decorated our cookies. The teens seemed to enjoy the activity, and almost all of our youth group came to the event. The youth group will meet two times in March, on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month at 7 p.m. via Zoom. If you have a middle-high school student who is interested in joining our youth group, or just checking it out, please e-mail me at youthdirector@bethlehemlutheran.net or call/text at 425-281-1413.



Blessings!

EVANGELISM

PAM SHEA

EVANGELISM CHAIR

evangelism@bethlehemlutheran.net

The Scripture-Based Breathing and Movement Sessions and Prayer Sessions will now be part of Evangelism outreach. Meeting times have changed: The Scripture-Centered Breathing and Movement Sessions will be at 11:00 a.m. every Sunday morning and Prayer Sessions will now be at 11:30 a.m. on the third Sunday of each month. Several outreach projects are being planned, including an Adopt-A-Hospital program where we will be partnering with local hospitals to supply staff with items for their break rooms. A collection container will be set up at church for the items and there will be a poster board available to sign & write brief notes to the staff members. Items to donate include small things such as pens/pencils, wrapped candies, individual snack items, etc. We will also be installing a Prayer Wall on site at church and finally, we are working on a Neighborhood Clean-up project. If you are interested in participating in any of these endeavors, please contact me at evangelism@bethlehemlutheran.net.

We will also be collecting cards for Adopt-A-Hospital project. Poster boards are also at church for people to sign.

Pam Shea

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 U.S. 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 and material resources. Many people are in need and we want to be a blessing to them.

WOMEN OF THE ELCA BIBLE STUDY

JOURNEYS WITH ANGELS: COMFORTING, ENCOURAGING, PROTECTING ANGELS

Do we need "angels"? Did Jesus need angels? The answer to these questions is "yes". Jesus certainly needed angels, and we need God's heaven-sent messengers today. Do you remember any sort of "angel" who brought you comfort after a physically challenging time? What kind of angels might our world most need today?

In the March GATHER Bible study, our journey will focus on comforting, encouraging, coaching, and protecting angels. These angels are messengers from God. These messengers bring us into the goodness of God. Meet some of these heaven-sent messengers as we look at the stories of Hagar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, Daniel in the lion's den, and finally the story of Jesus being tempted by the devil. We will also learn about angels at the beginning of Jesus' public ministry and on the night of his crucifixion.

Discover how we all need angels, God's workers, to journey with us. All are welcome to Zoom into the March 16th Bible study at 4:00 P.M. Just click on the link that Pastor Megan sends prior to the meeting or log into Zoom using the following ID and passcode if you don't have the link.

Meeting ID: 839 8551 3717

Passcode: 940736

MARCH 1 STARTS OUR "SWING INTO SPRING WELCA BOUTIQUE"

Spring is coming and so is the online spring boutique! The Bethlehem WELCA Virtual Boutique will be live with spring items on March 1! Find flower decor, artwork including framed paintings, Easter baskets, candy, treat bags, and other decor. New items will be added each week. Boutique proceeds will be used to support the needy in the community. Mark your calendar and tell your friends! Thank you for your support of WELCA and all of the great programs these proceeds will support!

Here is your shopping link for March 1:

<https://bethlehemwomenoftheelca.square.site>

Questions? welca@bethlehemlutheran.net



NEWS FROM LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES

A huge, enormous thank you to everyone who contributed to the Food Drive in February when you went to pick up your Lenten bags. We were running out of canned goods, and we received dozens and dozens of canned goods, really helping our Food Pantry to not look so bare! So thank you, thank you.

We've had some questions lately about what we take and don't take at LSS, especially in light of the pandemic. So here goes: we take any and all food items, including canned goods, frozen food and fresh or perishable foods. Just fyi, if you have expired canned goods that you want to donate, all food banks have extended code dates that we go by, so if a can is just expiring, or expired 3 or 4 months ago, we can still take it because of these extended code dates published by our Regional FoodBank. Anything older than World War II however, we can't use. We are also taking used clothing for men, women and children's clothing, shoes and blankets, and new toiletries, paper towels, toilet paper and cleaning items. What we have enough of for several months at least are household items, children's toys or items related to babies (car seats, rockers, bathing seats, etc.), and children and adult books. We do not take furniture, car parts, electronic equipment or pictures (wall hanging type).

Hope that helps everyone for now. It changes every so often, so if you do have something you're not sure of to donate, just give me a call.

Story for the month entitled: Can You Ever Not Care? This last week, we were blessed to receive some unused lunches from LA Unified, fully packed with a sandwich, chips, fruit, drink and cookies or crackers – really great. The day we received the lunches, we were actually closed and the food bank was not open. A woman came in looking very frazzled asking if we had any food for children. I asked her what she needed, and she said that because the schools were all closed, her 3 kids were not eating regularly, especially for lunches, and that she had missed several days of trying to pick up some from a school that was giving them out for free. She said she would just take 2 lunches and they could share. So of course we gave her 12 lunches, she broke down crying, then we both sat on our bench crying about how awful it is to not be able to feed your children. Something probably very few of us have ever had to experience. After 20 years of doing this, I still can't ever not care, and it looks like the members of Bethlehem can't either. Bless each and every one of you.

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 restaurants 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

We will be reading Katharina and Martin Luther for our next book. Our next meeting is March 18 at 6 p.m. You're welcome to join us!

Another book we will read in the future is Slaying Giants, Walking on Water and loving the Bible.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Fred Ophus
- 3 LaVonne Binder
- 2 Kim Kalusa
- 4 Robert Yribe
- 5 Zoey Andrews
- 7 Dylan Yribe
- 8 Travis Kalusa
- 8 Dorothy Paulson
- 9 Ryan Andrews
- 9 Bettina Rainey
- 11 Beverly Compton
- 11 Georgia Fisher
- 14 Paige Gleason
- 14 Olivia Eylands
- 16 Cordelia Cross
- 22 Jerry Sitko
- 22 Kyler Nusbaum
- 23 Steve Nakata
- 24 Suzanne Recer
- 24 Laura Watson
- 25 Alaine Bartus
- 26 David Smifnoff
- 27 Gavin Carlson
- 27 Nancy Hall
- 29 Eli Eylands



MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Richard & Lisa Chow (2008)
- 6 Ron & Susan Van Deest (1965)
- 19 Bud & Gale Gundersen (1983)
- 20 Dwayne & Sue Schmidt (1975)
- 24 Gerry & Janet Puchlik (1973)
- 29 Randy & Jonelle Miller (1969)



FEBRUARY STATISTICS

Offerings for February are for the first 3 weeks only, as of 2/21 total is \$13,284
 Budgeted offerings for the month \$20,833

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 9AM In-Person Worship 10AM Online Worship 11AM Zoom Fellowship	1	2	3 6:30PM <u>Wednesday Night Lenten Zoom Discussions</u>	4	5	6
7 9AM In-Person Worship 10AM Online Worship 11AM Zoom Fellowship 11AM Breathing Sessions 11:30A Virtual Sunday School 2PM Confirmation Class 3:30PM Endowment Com. Mtg	8	9	10 6:30PM <u>Wednesday Night Lenten Zoom Discussions</u>	11	12	13
14 9AM In-Person Worship 10AM Online Worship 11AM Breathing Sessions 11:30A Virtual Sunday School 7PM Youth Group	15	16 4PM WELCA Bible Study via Zoom	17 6:30PM <u>Wednesday Night Lenten Zoom Discussions</u>	18 6:00PM Book Club	19	20
21 9AM In-Person Worship 10AM Online Worship 11AM Breathing Sessions 11:30A Virtual Sunday School 11:30AM Prayer Session 2PM Confirmation Class	22	23	24 6:30PM <u>Wednesday Night Lenten Zoom Bible Study</u>	25	26	27
28 9AM In-Person Worship 10AM Online Worship 11AM Breathing Sessions 11:30A Virtual Sunday School 7PM Youth Group	29	30	31 6:30PM <u>Wednesday Night Lenten Zoom Bible Study</u>	April 1 <u>Maundy Thursday</u> 	2	3

9:00 a.m. In person service readers

Date	March 7	March 14	March 21	March 28	April 4
Reader	Randy Miller	Jan Maseda	Vicente Ditto	Chriselle Almeida	Randy Miller

10:00 a.m. Online service readers

Date	March 7	March 14	March 21	March 28	April 4
Reader	Greg Imlay	Marilyn Fursman	Pam Shea	Brian Grefsrud	Lauren Gleason



Bethlehem
LUTHERAN
CHURCH & SCHOOL

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