

BLESSED
LENT
A SEASON OF REFLECTION

Worship
With us

March 2026

The Bethlehem Star

Sundays at 10am

Official Newsletter of Bethlehem Lutheran



Pastor's Message by Rev. Megan Hunt Fryling

People of Bethlehem,

We are well into Lent now, a season that invites intention, reflection, and holy creativity.

As we continue drawing inspiration from Henri Matisse, we remember that limitation can open the door to something new. When illness changed how he worked, Matisse began cutting paper into bold shapes, creating beauty in a completely different way. What looked like restriction became revelation. Lent can work the same way.

Whether you have given something up or added something in, this season is about creating space for God. It's not about spiritual performance, it's about paying attention. What might God be shaping in you? What might need trimming? What new practice could stretch your theological imagination?

Maybe this is the year to try something new:

- Show up to a gathering you've never attended.
- Sit in silence for a few minutes each day.
- Introduce yourself to someone new.

Explore a faith practice that feels unfamiliar.

Lent is also something we do together. Community deepens faith. Trying new things together strengthens our life as the Body of Christ. Join us for our midweek Lenten dinner and worship from 6-7:30 pm during this season! These simple evenings of shared food and prayer are a meaningful way to walk this season together.

At the end of March, we begin Holy Week with Palm Sunday on March 29. From waving palms to standing at the cross to celebrating the resurrection, these sacred days shape who we are as a community. Showing up matters. Being present matters.

May these remaining weeks of Lent be a time of holy stretching: cutting away what distracts, adding what nourishes, and trusting that God is creating something beautiful among us.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Megan

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... and so much more!

Faithful Stewards Endowment Fund
Mission Endowment Fund

Bethlehem is blessed to have two endowment funds that help support our ministries. Each has a unique purpose and focus.

The Faithful Stewards Endowment fund primarily supports ministries within the congregation, such as programs, building improvements or new initiatives at Bethlehem, including outreach into the community, programs for those in spiritual or economic need, and any other programs which are consistent with the purpose of the Faithful Stewards Endowment Fund. It also provides a way for members to leave a lasting gift to strengthen the church's mission for generations to come. Janet Puchlik is the Chairperson of this Committee.

The Mission Endowment Fund supports the mission of the church beyond our walls, including outreach to the community, ministries in the larger church, and programs that serve those in need. It also helps the congregation respond to new opportunities for ministry and service, both locally and globally. Ken Cave is the Chairperson of this Committee.

Both funds are managed by dedicated Bethlehem endowment teams who review requests carefully, ensuring that gifts are used faithfully and in keeping with the church's mission and values. Together, these endowments make it possible to support God's work today and for years to come.

If you, or one of the church's committees, wishes to make a request from one of these two funds, the applications are in Chandler Hall on our resource board. You will need to complete the application, and then you can either (1) give it to Janet Puchlik as Chair of the Faithful Stewards Endowment Fund, or to Ken Cave as Chair of the Mission Endowment Fund; (2) give it to Jan Maseda as President of the Council; (3) leave it on Joyce's desk; (4) leave it in our black mailbox.

If you have questions about which Fund you should make your request to, you can talk to Jan Maseda, Janet Puchlik or Ken Cave about your proposed request.

SUNDAY WORSHIP
10:00 A.M. SERVICE
(IN-PERSON & ONLINE)

SENIOR PASTOR
REV. MEGAN HUNT FRYLING
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CONTACT BY PHONE:
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PRESIDENT'S CORNER BY JAN MASEDA, COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Thanks to everyone who attended our Congregational Annual Meeting on Feb. 22nd. We elected officers, reviewed Council reports, learned about our financial situation, and made an Amendment to our Constitution/Bylaws. Great job everyone! Onward!!

I hope that many of you are able to attend at least one or two (or all of) our Lenten dinners and service on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 (dinner at 6 and a short service at 7). Thank you to those who are preparing our dinners on those nights, it is greatly appreciated and so delicious! This last Wednesday, Feb. 25th, we had a very full house with the preschool parents and children attending, together with some of our members. So much fun with all the little ones being there!

One of our goals this year is to have the Congregational members give us ideas as to how to spend some of the funds we have available in our Faithful Stewards Account. Think big – and small and outside the box!! The Council would love to hear any and all of your ideas, so please see any Council member in person on a Sunday morning, or email or call any of them, including myself. We are keeping a running list of what you would like to see happen with some of the funds, so please keep your wonderful ideas coming.

There is book out called "Strength for Each Day" by Joyce Meyer. On the day I am writing this article, there is an article called "Dealing with Doubt." Quote: "Doubt is the enemy of faith, and it is something that we all experience.. but we don't have to ponder them or allow them to take root in our minds, making us feel confused or lost in our way. With Jesus, we are never without a way because He is the Way. The only opinion to hang on to is the one about which you have peace in your heart. Feed your faith with the promises of God, and your faith will stay stronger than any doubt you might have."

See you all on Sunday.

Blessings,
Jan Maseda

CHURCH COUNCIL

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JAN MASEDA

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STEWARDSHIP TEAM LEADER

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BEN CROSS

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EVANGELISM

OPEN

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HENRI MATISSE AND THE COLORS OF LENT

Join us for worship during
the season of Lent & Easter
February 18- April 5

Every Week in Lent
SUNDAYS

10:00 a.m.

WEDNESDAYS

Dinner 6:00 p.m.

Worship 7:00- 7:30 p.m.



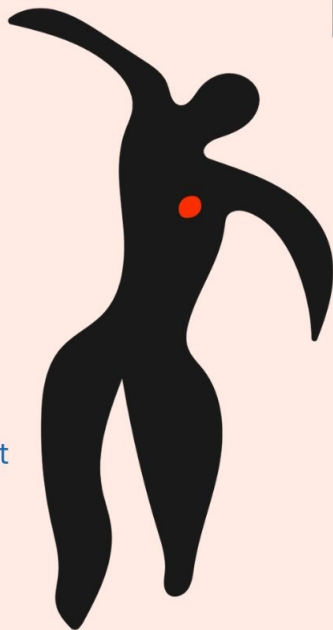
Bethlehem
LUTHERAN
CHURCH & SCHOOL

12227 Balboa Blvd

Granada Hills, CA 91344

818-360-4777

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Holy Week

PALM SUNDAY

March 29, 10:00 a.m.

MAUNDY THURSDAY

April 2, 7:00 p.m.

GOOD FRIDAY

April 3, 7:00 p.m.

EASTER SUNDAY

April 5, Worship 9 a.m.

Brunch & Egg Hunt, 10 a.m.

Worship 11 a.m.

Belonging Matters.



Bethlehem
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12227 BALBOA BLVD
GRANADA HILLS, CALIFORNIA
WWW.BETHLEHEMLUTHERAN.NET

Church membership is more than a name on a list.

It's a commitment to grow in faith, serve with others, and walk together as the Body of Christ.

If you're wondering what it means to belong here at Bethlehem, join Pastor Megan and church leaders for a Sunday lunch conversation about:

- WHO WE ARE AND WHERE WE'RE HEADED
- WHAT IT MEANS TO BE LUTHERAN AT BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH
- HOW FAITH AND COMMUNITY SHAPE OUR LIFE TOGETHER

This is a relaxed, one-session gathering with plenty of time for questions.

At the end, you'll be invited (but never pressured) to consider officially joining.

RSVP to pastor@bethlehemplutheran.net or text 610.680.7220.

SUNDAY MARCH 15TH

11:15 AM

*Come explore where
God is leading you.*

SCHOOL NEWS

BY MARY KANDILIAN, PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR



As we welcome the month of March, our school community is buzzing with joy, learning, and meaningful celebrations. This season brings with it a sense of renewal, and our students are embracing each moment with curiosity and enthusiasm.

During the first week of March, we are excited to participate in National Lutheran Schools Week, joining Lutheran schools across the country in celebrating faith-based education. Our students will take part in a variety of special activities and events organized by the Eastern Lutheran Education Association (ELEA), all designed to highlight the blessings of learning, service, and community through Christ-centered education.

March also brings festive cultural celebrations! Our students will enjoy St. Patrick's Day, learning about traditions, symbols, and themes of kindness and gratitude, as well as Nowruz, the celebration of the Persian New Year, which offers a beautiful opportunity to explore themes of renewal, hope, and new beginnings.

Looking ahead, we are already planning an exciting summer filled with hands-on, inquisitive learning and joyful experiences. Our summer program will feature engaging weekly themes such as The Magic of Storytelling, Carnivals and Circus, Paws, Claws, and Curious Jaws, Camping Adventures, and Outdoor Artists. Each week will be packed with creative activities, outdoor exploration, and visits from fun and engaging vendors to make the summer truly memorable for our students.

We are also pleased to share that we are still accepting applications and have officially begun fall enrollment. We are incredibly proud of our warm, nurturing, and faith-filled program, and we kindly ask for your help in spreading the word about our amazing school to families who may be searching for

a loving educational home for their children.

Thank you for your continued prayers, encouragement, and support. We are truly blessed to be part of such a strong and caring church and school community.

With gratitude and blessings,
Mary Kandilian



THIS LENT: DO MORE, NOT LESS

BY BEN CROSS

I have been a member here for about 25 years, but it took me almost 20 years to understand what "Lenten sacrifice" means to me. About 4 or 5 years ago during a Sermon by Pastor Megan I learned the definition of Lenten sacrifice. Pastor talked about how we always look at Lent as a period when we personally "give up", "refrain from " or temporarily sacrifice for forty days. This has been the standard practice in our home for decades. Sugar, sweets, sodas, chips, cursing (yes), luxuries, and excessive working hours. But what if we inverted that ideal and instead of "giving up" we "give more"? That was my epiphany! Instead of sacrificing for one, how cool it would be to sacrifice for many by doing the positive of "doing more" instead of "doing less".

Every time there is a call to serve on council or fill positions or Sunday worship, this is your opportunity to do more. More for Christ, more for Bethlehem Congregation, more for the Christian community, and more for your personal satisfaction and modeling. I believe we are expected to help others as our destiny: act as Jesus did on earth. Our power as humans and Christians exists in the capacity to render aid and comfort to those that are in need. To help teach and mentor by actions and deeds to those watching, e.g. our children, spouses, seniors, juniors, peers, coworkers, and friends. This Lenten season, look at sacrificing as doing MORE, rather than doing less!

MUSIC NOTES

BY VICENTE DITTO, SENIOR MUSIC MINISTER



Lent seems to bring out a deep complexity in the music choir sings on Sundays. Matthew has picked out several lovely pieces that take familiar hymn tunes and enrich them with unexpected, but engaging and thought provoking arrangements.

"Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song" arranged by Carl Heine makes curious ventures into minor tonal centers that take a hymn tune normally residing in a major key into the realm of reflection. "It Is Well With My Soul" arranged by Andy Kartchner throws the listener off guard with unexpected harmonic shifts from verse to verse, helping the mind to reflect anew on a well worn hymn tune. Jack Schrader injects a healthy heaping of gospel into his arrangement of "Amazing Grace" while Royce Hubert will keep you guessing as to where the melody is headed in "Two Rainstick Pieces." These pieces are certainly very colorful and hopefully will enrich your personal Lenten journey veiled in the canvases of Henri Matisse.

YOUTH NEWS

BY PASTOR MARC MOHR, YOUTH DIRECTOR



As we continue building positive messages that strengthen our relationships with one another and with God, we are grateful for another meaningful month in our youth ministry. It has been a season filled with growth, fellowship, service, and fun.

Below is a look back at what we experienced together and what's ahead for our youth. If you have or know any youth that'd like to get involved, please contact Pastor Marc at youthdirector@bethlehelutheran.net.

- Confirmation - Sunday, March 1st from 1:30 pm to 3:30pm at St. Matthew's in North Hollywood.
- Boba & Retro Arcade - Northridge - Sunday,

March 8th from 4pm—6pm. Bring \$20.

- Youth Group - Sunday, March 22nd at 5pm. - 6:30 p.m. This will be St. Patrick themed with surprises and goodies.
- Lenten Dinners and themed gathering will continue each Wednesday during Lent at 6pm.

FEBRUARY RECAP

February was a full and exciting month for our youth ministry!

We began the month with Confirmation at Shepherd of the Valley, where our students continued growing in their faith and understanding. Soon after, our middle and high school youth headed to Winter Camp at El Camino Pines. It was a wonderful weekend filled with worship, fellowship, games, and time to grow closer to God and one another.

Our Pancake Dinner was a great success! Thank you to everyone who volunteered and supported the event. The funds raised will help support those attending summer camp in 2026. We truly appreciate our congregation stepping up to make this event run smoothly.

We wrapped up the month with a Valentine-themed Youth Group gathering full of music, games, snacks, and fun. It was a joyful way to celebrate friendship and God's love together.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support of our youth and their faith journey

YOUTH PRAYER REQUESTS

- Good Grades
- Serve with Joy
- Completing Classwork

Our youth had a “Mardi” good time at the Mardi Gras Pancake Dinner!

Thank you to everyone who supported this fundraiser for 2026 summer camp scholarships.





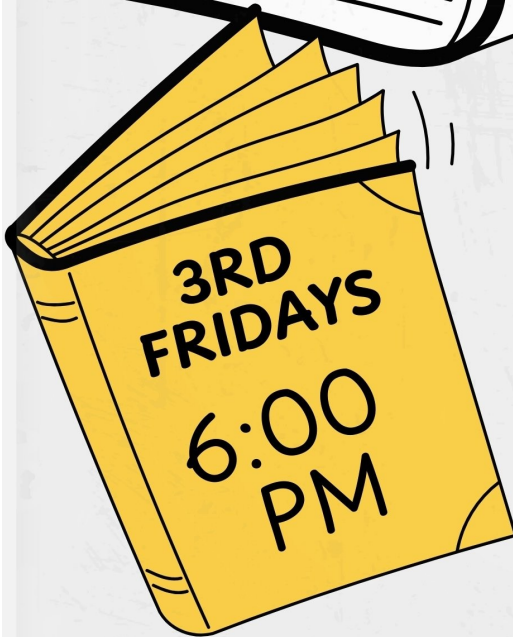
For more information on how you can be a part of this growing ministry, please contact Pastor Marc Mohr at youthdirector@bethlehemlutheran.net



Bethlehem
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12227 Balboa Blvd
Granada Hills, CA
91344

Join
our

Book club



Jan 19- Penguin Lessons by Tom Michell

Feb 20- North & South by Elizabeth Gaskell

March 20- Cook Book Book Club:
Bring your favorite cook book &
prepare a dish from it to share!

April 17- Little Women by Louisa May Alcott

May 15- A Man Called Ova by Fredrik Backman
In May we'll meet at The Last Book Store at
4437 Lankershim Blvd, Studio City, CA 91602.

BETHLEHEM BOOK CLUB

This month, instead of gathering around a single book, we're gathering around something just as meaningful: the meals and memories that have shaped our lives.

Join us on **Friday, March 20th at 6pm** for a special evening of food, fellowship, and stories! We invite each of you to bring your favorite cookbook and prepare one dish from it to share with the group. Whether it's a treasured family recipe passed down for generations, a comfort dish that blesses your home, or something new that you simply love, we can't wait to taste and hear the story behind it.

Cookbooks often hold more than recipes. They hold memories of family tables, celebrations, comfort during hard seasons, and moments of joy. This will be a beautiful opportunity to connect, learn about one another, and share in the blessing of community.

Come hungry, come ready to share, and don't forget your cookbook! Let's fill the room with good food, warm conversation, and grateful hearts.

We look forward to seeing you there!

MEN'S BREAKFAST

The Men's Breakfast is a meaningful monthly gathering designed to strengthen faith, friendship, and fellowship among the men of our congregation. We meet on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30 a.m. at Coco's Restaurant (10841 Sepulveda Blvd., Mission Hills), beginning the day grounded in God's Word and connected to one another. Our next gathering will be **Wednesday, March 4th**, and all men of the church are warmly encouraged to join us.

There is something powerful about gathering early, breaking bread together, and starting the day strengthened by Christian brotherhood. Come as you are, bring a friend, bring your appetite, and be ready for meaningful connection.

MARCH GATHER BIBLE STUDY Women of the

Jesus responds to His disbelieving critics in John 8:58: "Very truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" Throughout Scripture, Jesus makes numerous "I am" statements that tell us about His character or role. Some familiar verses include "I am the good shepherd" (John 10: 11, 14), "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11: 25), and "I am the true vine" (John 15:1,5).

What did Jesus mean when he said "I am"? The March GATHER BIBLE study begins the season by exploring the story of Moses at the burning bush where we learn about God's holy name, "I AM", a name that holds all that was, is, and will be. From there we will study three of Jesus' familiar "I AM" statements: "I am the bread of life", "I am the true vine", and "I am the light of the world". Each of these declarations reveals the ways that God, whose name is "I Am", abides with God's people in daily life.

Come to Bethlehem's conference room at **9:30 A.M. on Tuesday, March 17th** to learn more about the great "I Am" and how he provides for us, nurtures us, and sustains all people.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN SCHOOL

SUMMER CAMP

Exciting Activities for AGES 0 - 10

Learning and fun through nature and play

- June 1st - August 7th
- Full day and part day options available - open 7am - 6pm
- Healthy and delicious snacks and meals
- Weekly on campus adventure days and additional weekly off site field trips for elementary students
- Science, Music, Arts, Sports - well balanced and engaging curricula

www.bethlehemplutheran.net

Registration
150





Honor Our Veterans This March

Take a moment this March to thank our veterans by signing a card. These cards will be delivered to local veterans along with supplies donated through the Craft Fair.

Cards and writing suggestions will be provided.

Visit the card table on Sundays and during Lenten midweek services to participate.





March 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 10 AM Worship 11:20 AM Sunday School & Men's Bible Study 1:30PM Youth Confirmation Sun- day	2	3 6:30 PM Cub Scouts 7:30 PM Boy Scouts	4 7:30 AM Men's Breakfast 10 AM Bible Study 6 PM Women's AA 6 PM Dinner & Worship	5 6 PM Adult Choir	6 9:30 AM Craft Friday	7
8 10 AM Worship & Scout Sunday 11:20 AM Sunday Together: Paint with Jill 4 PM Boba & Retro Arcade	9	10 6:30 PM Cub Scouts 7:30 PM Boy Scouts	11 10 AM Bible Study 6 PM Women's AA 6 PM Dinner & Worship	12 6 PM Adult Choir	13 9:30 AM Craft Friday	14
15 10 AM Worship 11:20 AM Sunday School & Men's Bible Study 11:20 Spring Craft Fair	16	17 9:30 AM WELCA 6:30 PM Cub Scouts 7:30 PM Boy Scouts St. Patrick's Day	18 10 AM Bible Study 6 PM Women's AA 6 PM Dinner & Worship	19 6 PM Adult Choir	20 9:30 AM Craft Friday 6PM BLC Book Club	21
22 10 AM Worship 11:20 Sunday Together 11:20 Spring Craft Fair 5PM Youth Group	23	24 6:30 PM Cub Scouts 7:30 PM Boy Scouts	25 10 AM Bible Study 6 PM Women's AA 6 PM Dinner & Worship	26 6 PM Adult Choir	27 9:30 AM Craft Friday 6 PM Dinner & Movie Night	28
29 10 AM Worship & Palm Sunday 11:20 AM Sunday School & Men's Bible Study	30	31 6:30 PM Cub Scouts 7:30 PM Boy Scouts				

Worship Assistants

	Sunday, Mar 1	Sunday, Mar 8	Sunday, Mar 15	Sunday, Mar 22	Sunday, Mar 29
Assisting Minister	Ron Kraus	Jan Maseda	Jill Goddard	Eileen Raycroft	Cherrie Schilling
Reader	Jill Goddard	Eileen Raycroft Marcus Pattison, Johnny Hughes, & Nathan Mendez	Ron Kraus	Jan Maseda	Marilyn Fursman
Usher	Carla Cross	Scout Sunday	Carla Cross	Ken Cave	Carla Cross
Usher	Fred Ducat	Scout Sunday	Pat St. Michel	Judy Cave	Pat St. Michel
Counter	Ken Cave	Judy Cave	Carla Cross	Pat St. Michel	Brian G.
Counter	Mary Fisher	Fred Ducat	Michael Schilling	Janet Puchlik	Dianne Tillman
Fellowship	Jan Maseda	Ruth Irwin	Judy Cave	Is it You?	Is it You?
Acolyte	Charlotte Cross	Charlotte Cross	Charlotte Cross	Charlotte Cross	Charlotte Cross
Livestream Assistant	Derek Raycroft	Beckett Boysen	Derek Raycroft	Beckett Boysen	Beckett Boysen
Altar Guild	Cherrie Schilling	Cookie Cline	Janet Puchlik	Cherrie Schilling	Cookie Cline

Worship Assistants Needed

- Assisting Minister
- Reader
- Usher
- Counter
- Fellowship
- Acolyte
- Altar Guild

**Volunteer with a friend
or sign up as a family!**

Please contact the church office for more information.
No experience needed!
818.360.4777 | office@bethlehemlutheran.net





Bethlehem LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

Love is kind
- 1 Cor. 13

HOW TO CONTINUE

SUPPORTING BETHLEHEM

- Mail in your check
- Through your bank's Bill Pay
- Donate online 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.

STATISTICS

Avg. February weekly in-person attendance: 63

Avg. weekly online viewers: 17

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Fred Ophus
- 2 Kim Kalusa
- 3 LaVonne Binder
- 4 Robert Yribe
- 5 Zoey Andrews
- 7 Dylan Yribe
- 9 Ryan Andrews
- 9 Bettina Rainey
- 11 Beverly Compton
- 11 Georgia Fisher
- 14 Paige Gleason
- 16 Cordelia Cross
- 22 Kyler Nusbaum
- 23 Steve Nakata

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Richard & Lisa Chow (2008)
- 6 Ron & Susan Van Deest (1965)
- 19 Bud & Gale Gundersen (1983)
- 20 Dwayne & Sue Schmidt (1975)

WORSHIP IS AVAILABLE ON FACEBOOK & YOUTUBE!

Livestream worship will be posted to [facebook.com/BethlehemGranadaHills](https://www.facebook.com/BethlehemGranadaHills) (you don't need a Facebook account to view) and YouTube (search "Bethlehem Granada Hills" then click on our logo).