

The Bethlehem Star

A PUBLICATION OF BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH AND CHILDREN'S CENTER



Volume 70, Issue 10

October 2020

From Pastor Bill

A colleague of mine reached out to Pastor Daniel at Faith Lutheran and to me on Tuesday the 29th. He wanted to know how we and the churches were doing after, during the glass fire. (We all want to know how you are doing.) So I described what little we knew about the evacuation of BLC community and the church building itself.

He also asked an evocative question:

We... are praying for you, and we want to know "what to tell God?"

My response was, and remains:

Tell God we are grateful for all the first responders,
for the forecasters who can provide warning,
for all the places to go, for family, friends, and communities who provide,
for the technology and equipment to fight the fires,
for all the people who know how to and have the energy to carry on,
for all the inspiration they spread,
for all who think about, pray for, and remember us,
for all the compassion they share,
for the winds from the Pacific bringing cool, humid, slower air,
for vision beyond today's experience.

Tell God we invoke Divine protection for all others still in harms way,
for all who are not in safe places,
for all we have forgotten because of today's urgency.

Tell God we look forward to receiving
rest from the stress,
renewal of resilience,
healing, wholeness, strength, redemption, being set upright,
that we might witness to God's saving power,
again in the temple and throughout creation,
using all the gifts in front of us, within us, beside us, and behind us.

Peace.

Pastor Bill

Let me know what I have left out....

(Our Bishop, Mark Holmerud, was the first to reach out to me on Sunday night just as the first Nixles were coming in.)

*Gathered to worship,
Equipped by the Holy Spirit,
Strengthened through community,
Sent in peace to serve the Lord.*

Take Time

Take time to think,

It is the source of power.

Take time to play,

It is the secret of perpetual youth.

Take time to read,

It is the fountain of wisdom.

Take time to pray,

It is the greatest power on earth.

Take time to love and be loved,

It is a God-given privilege.

Take time to be friendly,

It is the road to happiness,

Take time to laugh,

It is the music of the soul.

Take time to work,

It is the price of success.

-Jeanette Martino Land



Bible Day

From *Christ in Our Home* (October 2020)

Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away. (Deuteronomy 6:1-9, 20-25)

When I served as a pastor of a congregation, one of my favorite Sundays was the day we gave the third-graders their bibles. Most of them were excited, and I would encourage them and their parents to read the book together. As an added incentive, I promised that I would buy the family a pizza dinner if they read the whole Bible together. Sadly, I never bought one dinner.

I think one of the reasons Deuteronomy is so adamant about the importance of passing the word of God on to our children-and, I would add, to newcomers to the faith-is because doing this well is a challenge. The Bible can be daunting book to someone, young or old, who has never explored it. It's hard to know where to start (I'd suggest one of the gospels because they tell of Jesus, the center of our faith). But wherever you begin, the most important thing is to share your own love of scripture with whoever you are introducing to this powerful book about God and God's steadfast love.

Loving God, open the hearts of all your children to your word through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer concern: Bible teachers and their students



Second Mile Sunday

On October 11th, Bethlehem and the Sierra Pacific Synod churches will give our Second Mile offerings to CLU - the college that our congregational member, Jackson Petty is attending!

Founded in 1959, California Lutheran University is home to more than 2,810 undergraduate and 1,316 graduate students who come from more than 61 countries and represent a wide variety of faiths.

Our dedicated, accomplished faculty works with small classes of students who are open-minded—about ideas, about people, and about faith—and are seeking to grow as individuals. Both in the classroom and outside of it, everyone at Cal Lutheran is committed to helping each student pursue their passions to discover their purpose, and follow that purpose to transform their community—and the world.

Please keep CLU in your prayers this month and consider an additional offering toward their ministries. The Sierra Pacific Synod is blessed to accompany this organization in mutual ministry as we proclaim God's creative, redeeming and sanctifying love in our synod.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church and Children's Center
1300 St. Francis Road, Santa Rosa, California 95409
Sunday worship : 10:00 a.m.

Church Office: 707/539-5252, Hours: 9-3, M-F

Church Website: www.blc-bcc.com

Church Email: blc@sonic.net

Children's Center: 707/538-2266

Facebook: www.facebook.com/BLCSantaRosa

YouTube: www.youtube.com/channel/UC5xTmtCjUddP81wRiTd2C8w

Pastor:

Bill Wessner
707-782-8703 (Pastor's cell)
Email: PastorBill.BLC@gmail.com

Linda Knapp Witness & Service
Carolyn Cole-Schweizer, Worship
Michelle Thomson, Youth
Janet Krug, BCC Representative
Siri Fenson, Bethlehem WELCA President

Congregational Officers:

Cal Eriksen, President
Brad Powell, Vice President
Bev Powell, Secretary
Beverly Schaap, Treasurer
Susan Jenkins, Financial Secretary

Staff:
Michelle Frabotta, Parish Administrator
Deborah McNally, Tiffany Perry-Co-Directors
Bethlehem Children's Center 538-2266
Janet Bertoli, Adult & Youth Choirs

Council Commissioners:

Nancy Trbovich, Education
Nick Keane, Property
George Schweizer, Stewardship

Barbara Laferriere, Organist, Adult Choir,
Position Available, Bell Choir
Laura Lightfoot, Youth Choirs
Debbie Knudtson, Parish Nurse 537-7450

Esther is an unlikely hero, but one we need.

Debbie Blue

Gather Magazine October 2020

Over 25 years of preaching, I've come to believe that when we look at the Bible through the lens of women within its pages, things shift...Where biblical men build walls, it seems to me that biblical women keep finding ways over, under and around them. Today, when our world is so divided, when stereotypes and religious differences often lead to violence, I think we could use a little of that biblical girl power. Biblical girl power could help us to think more creatively about the intersections of Islam, Judaism and Christianity-and discover new ways forward that include wisdom, strength and vulnerability.

Amid a canon where most VIPs are men, the book of Esther is a surprise. Where did this racy tale about an unorthodox woman hero come from? I was drawn to her because the men in charge kept trying to exclude her. Did you know that Esther is the only book from the Hebrew Bible not found among the Dead Sea Scrolls?...

Rabbi Rob Cabelli, a chaplain at Grinnell College, told me: "The comedic aspect of Esther...truly underscores just how foolish the men are, in their egotism, excruciating insecurity and pompous obliviousness." ...I love that after all these male narratives in the Hebrew scripture, comes a book about a woman who, without being in any way a typical sort of saint, stands in the eye of an ego-driven, farcical, man-made, nearly catastrophic storm and acts to save her people from destruction.

Esther is a matriarch who may not be a natural-born leader but who acts in a crucial moment-beyond even her own expectations-through unsanctioned means to keep her people from destruction. She's a matriarch for all the lip-advocates among us. How surprising and refreshing to meet such a woman in the pages of our holy book.

Esther acts decisively in a world where God is hidden-and seemingly silent. God is not mentioned in the book of Esther, [which] perhaps makes Esther such a compelling book for our times. Think about it: No prophet hears God's voice. God offers no instructions or directions or appearances. If God is present, God is hidden. This sounds familiar. We may say we hear God's voice in Scripture or our neighbor or the poor, but that's a little different from hearing a voice from heaven.

Faith includes ambiguity and mystery. The book of Esther is about having faith in a time when it is not easy to have faith. God is not apparent, but Mordecai urges Esther (4:14) not "to keep silence at such a time as this." Esther is not a likely hero, but in the midst of a violent oppression set in place by foolish men, she acts with bravery. I think we need her.

Benefit BLC with Online Shopping

Many of you are shopping from home as we shelter in place. Don't forget, if you are shopping at Amazon, you can shop instead at smile. amazon.com and increase donations for Bethlehem Lutheran Church. AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support BLC every time you shop, at no cost to you. Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price (.5%) To shop at AmazonSmile simply go to smile.amazon.com from the web browser on your computer or mobile device.





October

- 1 Emili Marlar, Naomi Christensen
- 2 Heinz Streckfuss
- 5 Kathy Ziegler
- 6 Gary Stone, Rev. James Fish, Dahlia Nourn Bernard
- 11 Annmarie Kelly
- 12 Marie Eriksen, Karl Smith, Declan Kelly, Janet & Greg Perrone (24)
- 13 Lynn Carlson, Bridget Duffy & David Strand (17)
- 15 Devon Buckley
- 16 Jessica & David Back (16)
- 17 Jessica Back
- 18 Alissa Kelly, Christopher Meyer, Marcus Schmidt
- 19 Brianna Bertoli
- 20 Dorothy Wagner
- 21 Elizabeth Miller, Jack & Penny Dauler (48)
- 22 Patrick Kelly
- 23 Jessica Knudtson, Pat Markusen, Cheri Hershwitzky, Kimberly Clissold
- 25 George Carson
- 26 Jason Kelly
- 27 Jonathan Krug, David Strand, Peggy & Bob Bimbi (18)
- 28 Dixie Offt
- 29 Ellie Petty, Lorie Moser
- 30 Tricia Karriker
- 31 Sandra McConnell, Kaitlyn Morrow, Lynn Kintzi

COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS.
NAME THEM ONE BY ONE.
COUNT YOUR MANY BLESSINGS
SEE WHAT GOD HAS DONE.

Use the arts!

By: Julie Guirgis

Ministry International Journal for Pastors
September 2020

Why does a painting, novel, photograph, or film evoke such emotion and connection in us? Why do we spend so much time expressing how we feel through various arts? There are many surface answers, but the bottom line is that it is a God connection.

Creativity in the garden

In Genesis 1, God set creativity into motion when He created us in His image. God ingrained creativity into our DNA. Our impulse to create and express ourselves is divinely inspired. When we create, it pleases God because He loves to see His image shine through each of us. Whether through gardening, painting, singing, writing, knitting, shaping pottery, can all be potentially prayerful pursuits, we are encouraged to express our creativity in different ways and to various degrees, even if we are not born with a genetic bent to a particular talent.

The arts in the Bible

Language. The Bible is rich in artistic use of metaphor and poetry written with much skill and sophistication. The Psalms, Job, and Song of Songs are the most prominent examples of biblical poetry. The nature of scripture itself affirms the importance of creativity in language.

God chose to reveal Himself through the writings of various authors over many hundreds of years in just about every literature then known to humanity. There are historical stories, laws, poems, songs, proverbs, prophetic oracles, parables, letters, apocalyptic literature, we are following the example of God, who gave us a rich heritage in His word.

Drama. Drama is first mentioned when God tells Ezekiel to "act out" the siege of Jerusalem(4).

He even drew the city skyline and used it as a familiar backdrop. Jesus often spoke in parables and told colorful and intriguing stories that had their fair share of drama.

Art. The visual arts played a major role in building the tabernacle (Exodus 31:1-11) and the temple. First Kings 6:4 says, "He made narrow windows high up in the temple walls." Recessed windows were near the tops of the walls to help light be the center of the temple.

Some of the artwork in the temple, like the pillars, had no utilitarian purpose but simply to reveal beauty. Second Chronicles 3:15-17 provides a beautiful visual image: "For the front of the temple...he made interwoven chains and put them on top of the pillars. He also made a hundred pomegranates and attached them to the chains. He erected the pillars in the front of the temple, one to the south and one to the north. The one to the south he named Jakin and the one to the north Boaz"

Music. Singing was a big part of Hebrew culture. The hymn book of Psalms continually encourages us to sing to the Lord (Psalm 149:1). The Psalms include songs of praise, laments, pleas for help, introspection, prayers of repentance. It provides examples of how to sing our heart cries to God. Jesus and the apostles sang hymns. Paul even suggests that music is a sign of being filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18-20)

Dance. Psalm 149:3 says, Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with timbrel and harp." Psalm 150:4 says, "Praise him with timbrel and dancing, praise him with the strings and pipe."

Use the arts!

Continued from page 4

Practical application

What arts do you wish to cultivate?

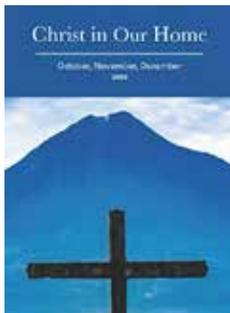
Photography, painted arts, writing, improv/theater, filmmaking, dance, design, graphics, ceramics and sculpture are possibilities. Take time to determine the "why" and "what" of infusing ministry with the arts.



The arts have a powerful impact, awaken us to truth, and change lives if they are produced by the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Creativity can teach and inspire in a way that connects people with the God who loves them.

Christ in Our Home

The October-November-December edition of Christ in Our Home is now available. Please send an email or contact the Church office for a copy to be mailed to your home. Please specify if you would like a large print edition.



These daily devotionals are another great way to worship while we shelter in place.

As a member of Bethlehem Lutheran, You are a member of WELCA

I am sure many of you have seen the word WELCA mentioned in our bulletins, in your Lutheran magazine or on the information board in the Narthex.

What is WELCA? It is an easy way to say Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. The organization has more than 4,500 locations in the US and Caribbean and its members gather for service, study, advocacy and more. It is separately incorporated (not an auxiliary of the ELCA) and financially independent. Therefore, in these uncertain times of sheltering in place, it is more important than ever to remember our commitment to God, to His works and our church.

Each year, we at BLC, together with ALL Lutheran churches, celebrate THANKOFFERING SUNDAY. This year, the BLC WELCA board asks that you look into your hearts to support this effort. In "normal" times, a Sunday in November is set aside for the membership to place their donations on a special table in the sanctuary. This year we encourage you to mail your check to the church, so soon you will receive a reminder and a return-stamped envelope. Deadline is November 1st.



Thank you for your consideration in giving God's blessings.

Your sisters in Christ,

WELCA Board/Secretary of Stewardship

Lean into God's love

October 2, 2020

Today is the 202nd day since we have been sheltering in place. And it occurred to me this week that this is no longer like a snow day or even a national emergency, but we are in the middle of a long, slow grind. We are also in a time of high anxiety in this country because of the disease because of the fires on the West Coast and because of the floods and hurricanes in the Gulf Coast and also because of the strain on our own civic fiber in this country.

We have to understand that we can't get through this on our own, that we need each other as we try to make our way through these uncharted waters. And that we also need to rely even more deeply on the love of God that we know in Jesus Christ. That we need to lean into that love, that we need to accept that love and in turn we need to give that love and acceptance to others.

Jesus said to his disciples, "Do not let your hearts be troubled believe in God and believe also in me." This is not a call for us to withdraw from the world or to deny the real painful issues that tear apart at our country, or even in our Church. But it is a promise from Christ that He is with us always, to the end of the age. And gives us the strength and perhaps the courage to extend our lives to others.

Be well dear Church.

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, ELCA

Mental Illness Awareness Week

The first full week of October is Mental Illness Awareness Week. A mental illness is a condition that affects a person's thinking, feeling, behavior or mood. These conditions deeply impact day-to-day living and may also affect the ability to relate to others. If you have — or think you might have — a mental illness, the first thing you must know is that you are not alone. Mental health conditions are far more common than you think, mainly because people don't like to, or are scared to, talk about them. However:

1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness each year

1 in 25 U.S. adults experience serious mental illness each year

1 in 6 U.S. youth aged 6-17 experience a mental health disorder each year

50% of all lifetime mental illness begins by age 14, and 75% by age 24

A mental health condition isn't the result of one event. Research suggests multiple, linking causes. Genetics, environment and lifestyle influence whether someone develops a mental health condition. A stressful job or home life makes some people more susceptible, as do traumatic life events (like those we are living through now). Biochemical processes and circuits and basic brain structure may play a role, too.



None of this means that you're broken or that you, or your family, did something "wrong." Mental illness is no one's fault. And for many people, recovery — including meaningful roles in social life, school and work — is possible, especially when you start treatment early and play a strong role in your own recovery process.

For more information, visit the National Alliance on Mental Illness at www.nami.org

Did you know?

Cloth masks will **NOT** protect you from wildfire smoke.

Cloth masks that are used to slow the spread of COVID-19 by blocking respiratory droplets offer little protection against wildfire smoke. They do not catch small, harmful particles in smoke that can harm your health.

Although N95 respirators do provide protection from wildfire smoke, they might be in short supply as frontline healthcare workers use them during the pandemic.



For more information on wildfires and COVID-19, please visit: www.cdc.gov/disasters/covid-19/wildfire_smoke_covid-19.html



Warning Signs

Below are the common warning signs of Mental Illness:

- Excessive worrying or fear
- Feeling excessively sad or low
- Confused thinking or problems concentrating and learning
- Extreme mood changes, including uncontrollable "highs" or feelings of euphoria
- Prolonged or strong feelings of irritability or anger
- Avoiding friends and social activities
- Difficulties understanding or relating to other people
- Changes in sleeping habits or feeling tired and low energy
- Changes in eating habits such as increased hunger or lack of appetite
- Changes in sex drive
- Difficulty perceiving reality (delusions or hallucinations, in which a person experiences and senses things that don't exist in objective reality)
- Inability to perceive changes in one's own feelings, behavior or personality ("lack of insight" or anosognosia)
- Overuse of substances like alcohol or drugs
- Multiple physical ailments without obvious causes (such as headaches, stomach aches, vague and ongoing "aches and pains")
- Thinking about suicide
- Inability to carry out daily activities or handle daily problems and stress
- An intense fear of weight gain or concern with appearance



Ecclesiastes 3:1

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven...

Bethlehem Women's Time Capsule 2020

The Spring of 2020 has been filled with uncertainty.

Now, we are in the middle of summer and still there is uncertainty in our streets filled with protests for justice.

And, now it is Labor Day!

Yesterday, was the first time for in-person church in 6 months!

But, it was also 111 degrees in Santa Rosa!

And, before you know it, it is Fall.

If you have not seen this because you do not have email, or if you do but have been putting this off, please consider writing something about yourself to be included in this little book about the women of Bethlehem and this season of time in 2020.

Name

Age group (20-30, 30-40, 50-60, 60-70, 70-80, 80-90, 90 and up)

Member of Bethlehem since

Tell a little about who you are. Pick 2 or 3 of the subjects below:

Favorite Sunday school memory

Favorite hymn or Bible song... one verse

Favorite Bible verse

What Extra curriculars are you involved in at church

What is your favorite church holiday/celebration/event

Favorite recipe to bring to church potluck

What I have learned

Is there a quote/poem/words of inspiration you would like to add to your page. Is there something you are thankful for.

...or maybe you'd like to include a prayer.

Return to: lisagmc@att.net or Lisa McIntyre

922 Lodi Street

Santa Rosa, CA 95401





THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT



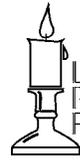
BiblePuzzles.com

Galatians 5:22-23

**FAITHFULNESS
GENTLENESS
GOODNESS
JOY
KINDNESS
LOVE**



**PATIENCE
PEACE
SELF-CONTROL**



LET'S PRAY FOR... We pray today for loved ones and friends who are ill and recovering, especially Margaret Warrick, Don Hux, Vivian Farland, Dorothy Gullixson, Sharon Boschen, Gina Thompson, Mike Turner, Janet Wolf, Brianne Konanz, Sue Barnard, Linda Wilkening, Tom Ziegler, Steve Sturgeon, Donald Schaap, Wyatt Hughes Graham, Judy & Paul Sengstock, Martin Curtis, Judy Warner, Elaine Gutsch, Liz Halburg, Angie Salado, Richard Doran, JoAnn Lockhard, Darci Raphael, Greg Talmadge, Jesse Halderman, Wendy Younger, and Karen Schmidt.

A word from Martin

"Prayer is a strong wall and fortress of the church; it is a goodly Christian weapon."

-Martin Luther



Rebekah Circle

The women of Rebekah Circle will have their monthly meeting and Bible study on Thursday, October 8th at 10 a.m. Miriam and Ruth Circle ladies are all invited. This month's meeting will be held on the BLC Memorial Patio with Christiane Silverthorne leading the study. We will social distance and be sure to bring your masks. For more information contact Siri Fenson, 303-7860 or email sirimax@att.net

Treasurer's Report

Beverly Schaap

August 2020

	Actual	Budget	Difference
Income	\$13,267	\$27,160	-\$13,893
Expenses	\$27,502	\$29,512	-\$2,010
Net	-\$14,235	-\$2,352	-\$11,883

YTD 2020

	Actual	Budget	Difference
Income	\$158,755	\$207,360	-\$48,605
Expenses	\$218,595	\$260,761	-\$42,166
Net	-\$59,840	-\$53,401	-\$6,439

Amount needed to meet the budget \$7,625 per week
August \$3,317

The deadline for the next issue of The Bethlehem Star is October 23, 2020.

Please submit information and story ideas to the church office or email blc@sonic.net

Should you have any comments or suggestions that will help improve The Star, we will be pleased to receive them.

Should you wish to discontinue your subscription to The Star please let us know via email.