

The Bethlehem Star

A PUBLICATION OF BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH AND CHILDREN'S CENTER



Volume 71, Issue 6

June 2021

From Pastor Diane

Dear BLC Community,

Over the last few Sundays there's a theme in my sermons: outreach. Call it what you like – evangelism, or witness, or sharing the gospel – I've been encouraging you to find ways to share your Jesus story.

This is intentional on my part, and there are several reasons. First and foremost, the bible texts we are reading call us to this theme. We are now in the season of Pentecost, and the lectionary (the three-year cycle of scripture readings that we follow) is leading us through the birth of the early church after Jesus's ascension into heaven. Those first disciples and followers, filled with the Holy Spirit, spread the good news, first in Jerusalem, and then beyond, and the church grew.

The second reason I am preaching about outreach – about getting comfortable talking about faith and inviting friends to church – is because this is part of our Christian identity overall. Just as Jesus traveled through the villages and towns of Palestine preaching the good news that God had come near, and that in him all things were being made new, so we are invited to do the same as his followers. We tell the story in speech that makes sense in our time, and we relate it to our own experience, but it is the same message of God's free gifts of grace, forgiveness, love, community, and ministry.

The third reason is because of where you are, Bethlehem, in this time and place. In your Ministry Site Profile, the document created by the call committee with your input to describe BLC to potential pastors, you note that attendance, membership, and especially youth ministries, have all trended downward in the past 15 years. Included among your goals is to "invite and welcome more: more people, more families, more kinds of people, not for the moreness but to share what we have." You note that it is your purpose as a congregation to "Share the love of God through our programs and in our daily lives." You note that you seek a pastor who will help you "step out of your comfort zone."

And finally, here are your top four mission priorities:

- Exploring and expanding our comfort zone when talking about bringing people to Christ (as Lutherans, this is outside of our comfort zone).
- Expanding our diversity (age, race, socio-economical).
- Enthusiastic collaboration with other congregations at the clergy level to develop working relationships for community programs.
- Re-energize the gifts and talents of all members to serve the congregation and the community

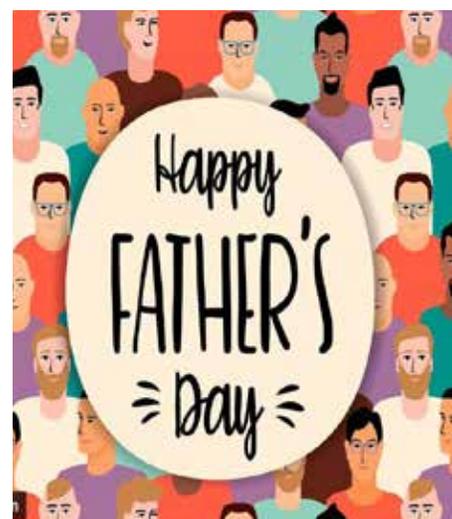
Continued on page 2

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

Bread for the World Update

The Bread for the World Offering of Letters Zoom meeting was successful and generated about 75 letters. Lien Cibulka of Elisha's Pantry was a great speaker. We wrote and emailed letters and had a drawing for 5 bakery certificates. We heard positive comments from attendees. The letters were dedicated in the church service on May 2. Thank you for your support. If you'd like more information, please go to ol.bread.org

~ Witness & Service Commission



Sunday, June 20

Pastor *(continued)*

These are fantastic! These priorities reflect spiritual maturity and that you are in touch with the movement of the Holy Spirit in our times. AND... they are all about outreach.

As your bridge pastor I'd like to help you be ready for your new pastor. It would be wonderful if, when I leave and the new pastor arrives, you already have hopefulness, energy, and ideas for the ministry of outreach to which the Holy Spirit is calling you, and you can get going, together.

May the Holy Spirit bless you richly and guide you into the ways of peace as we share the new life in Christ.

Blessings,
Pastor Diane

Congratulations, Graduates



We are so proud of you and send our best wishes for your future success! Please join us on Sunday, June 6 at 10 am for outdoor church and a special coffee hour in your honor. We will present L.U.T.H.E.R. scholarships to high school graduates Katrina Anderson and Mason Cole-Schweizer, who have successfully completed the application process. We will present the Lutheran Education Scholarship to Jackson Petty who attends California Lutheran University, and also completed the application process. An Endowment Scholarship will also be awarded to Jackson Petty. We look forward to celebrating your accomplishments and pray for God's blessings on you always.

- Education Commission and the Endowment Committee

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

Church Office: 707/539-5252, Hours: 9-3, W & F Church Website: www.blc-bcc.com
Church Email: blc@sonic.net Zoom Meeting ID: 889 9423 0337
Facebook: www.facebook.com/BLCSantaRosa Password: church
YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCA1g8W7SFMET386SfZBdwZQ

Bridge Pastor: Linda Knapp, Witness & Service
Reverend Diane Bowers, Ph.D. Michelle Frabotta, Worship
510-816-5765 (Pastor's cell) Michelle Thomson, Youth
Email: Revdrdiane@yahoo.com Susan Jenkins, BCC Executive Board
Siri Fenson, Bethlehem WELCA President

Congregational Officers:
Jason Kracht, President **Staff:**
Janet Bertoli, Vice President Michelle Frabotta, Parish Administrator
Carolyn Cole-Schweizer, Secretary Janet Bertoli, Adult & Youth Choirs
Beverly Schaap, Treasurer Barbara Laferriere, Organist, Adult Choir,
Susan Jenkins, Financial Secretary Laura Lightfoot, Youth Choirs

Council Commissioners:
Laura Lightfoot, Education
Cal Eriksen, Property
George Schweizer, Stewardship

Second Mile Sunday

On June 13, Bethlehem Lutheran Church and the Sierra Pacific Synod will focus on supporting The Lutheran Office of Public Policy (LOPP). This is a ministry of public policy education and advocacy on matters of hunger and economic justice, the health and integrity of God's creation, and human rights and human dignity. It serves the California expressions of the ELCA as they seek to express God's love and care for our neighbors – especially the “least of these” – who experience poverty, deprivation, and discrimination. Priorities for LOPP are determined by a Policy Council appointed by the ELCA bishops in California. Issue areas and specific positions on public policy choices must be within the framework and direction of ELCA social statements, including *The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective ; Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All; Caring for Health – Our Shared Endeavor; Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice; Our Calling in Education; Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture; and Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust.* Guidance is also provided by ELCA social messages and policy resolutions , and synod assembly actions. Priority issue areas have included poverty and the state budget, policies affecting children or immigrants, health care, fair and adequate taxation, and energy policy/climate change. Since “direct democracy” is a declining feature of public life in California, the LOPP Policy Council also makes recommendations on selected ballot propositions where issues of poverty, human rights, and care for creation are at stake.



SUMMER BIBLE STUDY JUNE 30, 2021 WE'RE BACK!!! 9:30 - 2:00

The Summer Bible Study is back this year!
All are welcome!
This is a special, one time deal this summer!

Join us for coffee/tea time at 9:30. Hosted by Miriam Circle.

Followed by Pastor Diane leading us in a Bible Study called Just L.I.F.E.

Then we ask you to bring a bag lunch and gather to eat together for some much-needed social time. Drinks and dessert will be provided.

The day will continue with a mini women's retreat. This is a program organized by the WELCA board at Bethlehem called: For Wherever Two or More are Gathered: A Prayer Mosaic.

And, again, all are welcome! We can't wait to see you!
Please sign up on any Sunday morning.



Hearing Aids and Eyeglasses Needed

Hello. A request (or reminder!) to bring eyeglasses, contact lenses, or hearing aids no longer use to BLC. Donations go to the Lions Club and Kenwood Hearing Centers. A basket for drop-off is currently located in the BLC kitchen. The church is open on Wednesday and Fridays from 9 AM – 3 PM or drop them off at Sunday service. I check the basket from time to time and will deliver items to Exchange Bank or Kenwood Hearing Centers.

With Thanks,

Liz Ferrari - *Stewardship Secretary, WELCA*



We pray for loved ones and friends who are ill, recovering or homebound especially:

Arend Folkens, Marion Heiken, Gloria Hamilton, Clarissa Tuor, Judy Warner, Ruby Malde, Helen Osborne, Richard Doran, Adele Mortensen, Tom Ziegler, Sharon Boschen, Don Hux, Janet Wolf, Brianne Konanz, Sue Bernard, Linda Wilkening, Steve Sturgeon, Donald Schaap, Wyatt Hughes Graham, Martin Curtis, Elaine Gutsch, JoAnn Lockhard, Darci Raphael and Jesse Halderman.

Kitchen Cleaned

The Ruth Circle Ladies completed the annual cleaning of the kitchen on May 18.

We ask that if you use the kitchen please treat it as our own... spill something, wipe it up, use something, wash it and put it where you found. If you leave something in the refrigerator or freezer please go back and check on it. Unused items such as lemonade, coffee, opened food items and fruit needs to be tossed out after a week or so. Everyone is welcome to use the kitchen and as you leave the kitchen take a look around to make sure you left it in good condition.

Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our kitchen a clean and enjoyable part of Bethlehem Lutheran Church.



- 1 Josh Bertoli, Alan & Joy Petty (29)
- 3 Seth Bowers
- 4 Jason Kracht, Linda Wilkening
- 5 Pr. Brian Claasen, Jim & Kay Fish (55)
- 6 Katrina Kuhn, Janet Bergman
- 7 Tony & Elizabeth Miller (23)
- 8 Alan Schroeder
- 9 Judiann O'Connell, Clint Stevenson,
Astrid Haugaard, Gary & Jenna Stein (41)
- 12 Anita Anderson, Bill Stirnus
- 13 Nancy Marvits, Michele Doss,
Alexander Fountain,
Mary Beth & John Wells (39)
- 14 Ross Winn, Steve & Joyce Mortensen-
Child (34)
- 15 Alexis Kracht
- 16 Gale & Robert Muehlbauer (36)
- 17 Gloria Hamilton
- 18 Jenna Tiedeman, Mike & Donna Jeye (41)
- 19 Alexandra Jeye
- 20 Bev Powell, John LaRussa, Janet & Brian
Bertoli (33)
- 21 Katrina Anderson, Tom Torgerson, Jr.
- 22 Heidi & Justin Wood (7)
- 23 Daniel Abel, Matthew Younger, Bill &
Leslie Stirnus (47)
- 24 Alice Richardson
- 25 Joy Petty, Else Rodrigues
- 26 Jackson Petty, John & Tricia Karriker
(15)
- 27 Duane & Shirley Jensen (61)
- 28 Alan Wall, Alan & Mary Schroeder (62)
- 29 Kaiden Kelly, Karl & Linda Smith (57),
Craig & Sarah Fountain (18)
- 30 Sara Mokaram, Carrie Winn



Elisha's Pantry

Thank you, Bethlehem Community, for your generosity during our Grand Reopening Campaign to Refill Elisha's Pantry's Coffers. On the first Sunday of our collection, we filled Siri and Max's trunk with needed items, including tissue, toilet paper, small laundry detergent, dish soap, large shampoo/conditioner, toothpaste/toothbrushes, deodorant, skin lotion, razors, mouthwash, masks, and lots of sturdy plastic bags. Then on the second Sunday, we not only filled the trunk, but part of the back seat as well! Basic items such as these are so important: they restore human dignity and make people feel good. When clean and cared for, people can focus on the other challenges in their lives. You have made a difference, in Christ's name.

Thank you,
Pastor Diane

Volunteers Needed

Coffee Hour Hosts. Hosts can make coffee in the big urn or pick up coffee from Starbucks (you don't have to pay for this). All paper items provided. Hosts provide a little something to nosh on (packaged cookies are totally okay), and set up and clean up. Sign up coming soon.

Zoom Worship Hosts. We will train you, and you can do this from home or from church. It involves welcoming people, starting the recording, muting as needed, and a few other details. Interested? Let the church office know.

Bethlehem Women's BIBLE STUDY Circles

Ruth Circle will take a break in June and July (except encouraged to attend the June 30 WELCA Bible Study/ Lunch with Pastor Diane). Starting in August, and continuing through October, Shirley Jensen will take on the role of circle "coordinator". Liz Ferrari follows by coordinating the November, December and January '22 ones. Ruth Circle meets every 2nd Tuesday of the month at 10AM. Thanks to Elaine Adams for having served in this capacity for the past three months. Thanks also to the Ruth Circle members who recently cleaned the kitchen.

Miriam Circle, together with Lisa McIntyre, WELCA's Secretary of Education, is planning the June 30 Bible Study and bring-your-own bag lunch. ALL Bethlehem women (and friends) are welcome to this event. Pastor Diane will lead the Bible Study. Details to be forthcoming.

Miriam Circle takes time off in July and August, with start-up again on September 21st at 7PM (it meets monthly on third Tuesdays).

In June, Rebekah Circle is planning to attend the June 30 Bible Study and lunch. The Bible Study, led by Pastor Diane, will center around the Gather Magazine June study, "Just Wisdom".

Rebekah Circle plans to continue meeting at 10AM through the summer ... July 8 and August 12 (and every 2nd Thursday thereafter ... in the Parish Hall and also via zoom.

-Siri Fenson for the BLC Women of the ELCA



Pentecost

The name Pentecost comes from the Greek word meaning "fiftieth." Originally, the name Pentecost referred to a Jewish harvest festival known as the Festival of Weeks. This festival was also called Pentecost because it took place seven full weeks or fifty days after the Feast of Firstfruits. However, fifty days after Jesus' resurrection, the Holy Spirit appeared as tongues of fire above the heads of Jesus' Apostles and gave them the ability to speak in tongues, which is foreign languages they never knew before. Afterward, the Apostles preached to the Jews who had gathered in Jerusalem for Pentecost about how Jesus was their savior. On that day, 3,000 people came to faith in Jesus and the Christian church was born. Today, the Christian Church celebrates this special event 50 days after Jesus' resurrection on the Day of Pentecost.

Bethlehem Believers Schedule

~~May 17 - 7:15 p.m. Bethlehem vs. Calvary RP~~
~~May 24 - 7:15 p.m. Hessel vs. Bethlehem~~
 June 7 - 7:15 p.m. Spring Hills vs. Bethlehem
 June 14 - 6:10 p.m. Bridge vs. Bethlehem
 June 21 - 6:10 p.m. Gateway vs. Bethlehem*
 June 21 - 7:15 p.m. Bethlehem vs. The Rock
 June 28 - 6:10 p.m. The Rock vs. Bethlehem*
 June 28 - 7:10 p.m. Calvary RP vs. Bethlehem
 July 19 - 7:15 p.m. Bethlehem vs. Spring Hills
 July 26 - 7:15 p.m. Hessel vs. Bethlehem
 Aug 2 - 7:15 p.m. Bethlehem vs. Gateway
 Aug 9 - 7:15 p.m. Bridge vs. Bethlehem
 Aug 16 - Playoffs

*Double Header

All games played at Santa Rosa Bible Church, 4575 Badger Road, on the northwest and southwest fields.

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"Building in Faith"

Habitat for Humanity is a faith-based organization dedicated to improving lives by building modest, affordable homes in partnership with communities and families in need.

HfH was founded in 1976 in Americus, Georgia, by Millard and Linda Fuller. Their idea was to have those chosen by need, ability to pay a no-interest mortgage and willingness to partner, come weekly to help build (putting in 500 hours of "sweat equity") and so watch their dreams happen.

***HfH has helped more than 35 million people world-wide.

***The record for fastest Habitat house built is 3-1/2 hours

***HfH is recognized as one of the world's 40 most innovative development organizations.

***The Sonoma County branch was formed in 2002.

***The first Habitat Restore in the US was opened in 1992. It receives donations (furniture, lighting fixtures, doors, windows, etc.) which are then sold to the public at a fraction of retail prices. Santa Rosa's Habitat Restore is located at 1201 Piner Street. Free pick-up service is available for larger items.

Last year has brought many challenges to the communities all over the world. Now more than ever, funds are needed. Your donations will be much welcomed!

In memory or honor of our fathers; or father figures, the BLC women of the ELCA are kindly asking for your support on this Father's Day to benefit the Sonoma County Habitat for Humanity.

Your contributions can either be brought to the church, mailed or given online. For checks issued to BLC, please put Habitat for Humanity in the memo line. For giving online, go to www.blc-bcc.com, then Giving Options, Ways to Give, Give Plus.

You may pick up a card at church saying that "A gift has been made in your honor to Habitat for Humanity".

Siri Fenson, *WELCA President*



Elisha's Pantry Essentials:

- Kleenex
- Toilet paper
- Small size laundry detergent
- Dish soap
- Regular size shampoo
- Toothpaste & toothbrushes
- Deodorant
- Skin lotion
- Razors
- Masks

Drop donations off @ BLC on
Weds. or Fri. 9 AM - 3 PM
or on Sunday Mornings.
~Thank you!~

Bethlehem Weeders

Eight church members, including Master Gardener Jan Gubrud, recently spent time pulling weeds, trimming, pruning and spreading bark in the patio area to prepare for Bethlehem's outdoor services. From left to right, the group included Richard Graalfs, Max Fenson, Linda Widdifield, Barry and Jan Gubrud, Elaine and Bob Adams -Siri, photographer.

The "Bethlehem Weeders" plan to continue improving the appearance of church grounds; think about joining them!

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Bethlehem Lutheran Church
invites you to...



JESUS DOES THE IMPOSSIBLE

VBS 2021

June 14-18

6:30-8:00 pm

Cost: free

For kids entering Kindergarten
through completing 6th grade



