

# The Bethlehem Star

A PUBLICATION OF BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH AND CHILDREN'S CENTER



Volume 70, Issue 2

February 2020

## From Pastor Bill

Some people leave an impression when you met them. Others shape you. I knew a woman named Nona many years ago, always recognized in the community because she attended so many different bible studies and was on several prayer chains. Whenever I saw her she asked me the same question: "what's new at New Life? (New Life is the name of the church I served then.) I would always tell her some detail of the congregation and how things were changing and then switch the topic to her and inquire of her health or family, or what her study revealed. I thought for a long time she just like saying "new" twice in the same sentence as a play on the standard greeting. Then a mutual acquaintance told me she asked the same of him and insisted on an answer. For her the "greeting" of "what's new?" was a genuine inquire. After this discovery, I began to think about an answer to Nona's "new" question whenever I knew I might see her.

What is new? Sometimes new is obvious, such as a newborn child. There is no better time to ask someone "what is new" than right after a birth announcement. Just be ready for some pictures. Other times we ask, "what's new?" include when we start a new year, or a new job, or move to a new place. But now many of those markers are behind us. So, our daily routine can obscure our awareness of the new, and we are tempted to answer, "not much." What if we ask the question a second time? With a pause for contemplation. "Really? What is new?"

Now we are well past our "new year", "new job", "new place" and I am posing the question: "What is new, really?" I am inviting the reflection. This is a good time to ask that question of yourself. Go ahead, I'll wait.

Year for  
2020  
Vision

We could practice with each other. New in our lives, new at our Church. It's not just a greeting it is another chapter in how God is at work healing, making whole, setting upright, drawing together, and redeeming God's people; we are sanctified, made holy and sent. All new; renewed.

Years after meeting Nona she had some changes in her life that made our encounters more frequent and random. I had to be prepared all the time not to be caught flat footed with her question. I found it a good "routine" practice to ask myself "what is new?"

Let us practice asking that "new, really new" question of each other, so that together we may walk in newness of life. —Romans 4

Peace  
~Pastor Bill

Perhaps Nona's name should have been Nova.

## Looking to Lent

This year the season of Lent begins February 26th, with Ash Wednesday. It is a busy season with lots going on around Bethlehem. Prepare for your Lenten Journey. See page 7 for details.



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



## Annual Meeting

On January 19th, around 70 members of Bethlehem Lutheran gathered for our annual meeting.

A budget of \$396,523 was passed, officers and commissioners were voted in, and reports from our different commissions were presented.

Welcome to the 2020 Bethlehem Children's Center school board members; Janet Krug, Stacie Post-Sheffer, Demitri Esquivel, Anna Smith and Sandra McConnell. We look forward to your new ideas, & appreciate your willingness to serve.

Blessings to our continuing and renewing officers, commissioners, and Endowment Committee Members, Cal Eriksen, Brad Powell, Beverly Powell, Beverly Schaap, Susan Jenkins, Nancy Trbovich, Nick Keane, George Kuhn, Linda Knapp, Carolyn Cole-Schweizer, Michelle Thomson, Siri Fenson, Michael Jeye, Laura Knapp, Steve Jenkins, & Brian Bertoli. Your dedication and caring are invaluable. Many thanks!

We look forward to a new and renewed 2020 at BLC!

## Church Office & BCC Closed

The Church office will be closed on February 17th for President's Day.



## Sign up for Altar Flowers

Our flower calendar is filling up, so don't miss out on the opportunity to honor a special person or remember a loved one, as well as beautify the altar with a gift of flowers. The cost for a bouquet is \$20, with two bouquets available each Sunday. Please sign up on the flower chart on the kiosk. Include your name and if you would like to remember or honor a loved one, please include that information too.



## Super Bowl of

### Caring

We all know that the Super Bowl is quickly approaching, but did you remember "Souper Bowl" Sunday?



On February 2nd, the Bethlehem youth, along with churches all throughout the country, will be in the Narthex with their "Souper Bowls" collecting your support for YOUR winning team. We can't say who will win, but we haven't been wrong yet (or not too often, anyway). Whether your support goes to the 49ers or the Chiefs, ALL your support will go to F.I.S.H. and Redwood Empire Food Bank.

## NAGS

The NAGS meets on Feb 25th at 9:30 a.m. to assemble and prepare the newsletter for mailing. Thanks!



## Second Mile Sunday

The second Sunday of each month, Bethlehem Lutheran Church along with the other churches in the Sierra Pacific Synod supports a special Lutheran program with a special offering, beyond your pledged offering. This month on February 9th, the focus is on Lutheran Social Services of Northern California.

Lutheran Social Services responds when people are vulnerable because of homelessness, mental illness, drug addiction or disaster. Providing support services and compassionate guidance, we help individuals and families to stabilize their lives and become self-sufficient.

LSS currently serves nearly 3000 clients in Sacramento, San Francisco, Contra Costa and San Joaquin Counties. Our programs include money management services, case management in transitional and permanent supportive housing sites, case management and housing services for emancipated former foster care youth, disaster preparedness training, and long-term disaster response services in the event of a local disaster.



## Offering Envelopes

If you have not yet picked up your offering envelopes, they are in the Narthex hoping to be picked up and taken to their home.

Envelopes not taken by February 2nd will be mailed to your home.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church and Children's Center

1300 St. Francis Road, Santa Rosa, California 95409

Sunday worship services: 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

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

Church WEB site: www.blc-bcc.com

Church E-Mail: blc@sonic.net

Children's Center: 707/538-2266

### Pastor:

Bill Wessner

707-782-8703 (Pastor's cell)

E-Mail: pastorbill.blc@gmail.com

### Congregational Officers:

Cal Eriksen, President

Brad Powell, Vice President

Bev Powell, Secretary

Beverly Schaap, Treasurer

Susan Jenkins, Financial Secretary

### Council Commissioners:

Nancy Trbovich, Education

Nick Keane, Property

George Kuhn, Stewardship

Linda Knapp, Witness & Service

Carolyn Cole-Schweizer, Worship

Michelle Thomson, Youth

Janet Krug, BCC Representative

Siri Fenson, Bethlehem WELCA President

### Staff:

Michelle Frabotta, Parish Administrator

Deborah McNally, Tiffany Perry-Co-Directors  
Bethlehem Children's Center 538-2266

Janet Bertoli, Adult & Youth Choirs

Barbara Laferriere, Organist, Adult Choir,

Melissa Kuhn, Bell Choir

Laura Llerena, Youth Choirs

Debbie Knudtson, Parish Nurse 537-7450

## BLC Book Club picks for 2020

The book club meets every month to talk about books they have read. Everyone is invited to join in these interesting discussions. You can find copies of several of the books on the table in the Narthex. Upcoming books are:

February 4th - Underground Railroad by Colson Whitehead

Cora is a young slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia. When Caesar, a slave who has recently arrived from Virginia, urges her to join him on the Underground Railroad, she seizes the opportunity and escapes with him. In Colson Whitehead's ingenious conception, the Underground Railroad is no mere metaphor: engineers and conductors operate a secret network of actual tracks and tunnels beneath the Southern soil.

March 3rd - The Moment of Lift by Melinda Gates

Melinda Gates has spent many years working with women around the world. This book is an urgent manifesto for an equal society where women are valued and recognized in all spheres of life. Most of all, it is a call for unity, inclusion and connection. Gates goes long on heartwarming anecdotes, short on argument. She writes often about lifting women up, but it can be difficult to tell how she expects readers without tech fortunes to do so.

We normally meet in BLC's Fireside Room at 7 pm on these evenings. Everyone is welcome.~ Linda Knapp

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## What is WELCA?

The Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America includes all Lutheran women who gather in more than 7000 locations in the US and Caribbean for SERVICE - STUDY - ADVOCACY - FELLOWSHIP.

Our mission statement is to *Mobilize Women to Act Boldly on their Faith in Jesus Christ*. All women of Bethlehem Lutheran have a place in WELCA; you are invited and encouraged to attend our sponsored events, whether a Circle member or not.

The newly elected Bethlehem WELCA board for 2020:

Siri Fenson, President	Beverly Schaap, Treasurer
Phyllis Hoover, 1st VP	Janet Bergman, Secretary
Linda Widdifield, 2nd VP	Dixie Offt, Secretary for Stewardship

Secretary of Education - OPEN (Education Secretary helps plan the Day Retreat in early summer)

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## WELCA Circles

We currently have two bible study circles; Miriam and Ruth. The ladies of Miriam Circle meet monthly on the 3rd Tuesday at 7 p.m. at a member's home or in the Parish Hall. Their mission is F.I.S.H. (Friends in Service Here). Ruth Circle meets monthly on the 2nd Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. either in someone's home or the Parish Hall. Their mission is Kid Street Learning Center. A third circle is being created and will plan on meeting on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 10:00 a.m. More details to come!

WELCA Events include:

Christmas Luncheon and Installation of Officers, hosted by Miriam Circle  
 Shrove Tuesday Breakfast, hosted by Ruth Circle  
 Congregational Baby Shower, hosted by WELCA Board  
 Women's Day Retreat, hosted by WELCA Board  
 July Potluck, Bible Study and Thankoffering Sunday, hosted by WELCA Board



# February

- 1 Karen Gundy
- 2 Paul Sengstock, Kayla Steindorf
- 3 Stefanie Hux, Hunter Jacobson
- 5 Terry Newkirk
- 6 Samuel Bertoli
- 8 Helen Osborne, Kristina Pettersen
- 9 Michael Knudtzon
- 10 Lauren McCullough
- 12 Cara Green, George & Carolyn Schweizer (15), Don & Stefanie Hux (65)
- 13 Doug Campbell, Elaine Adams
- 14 Aloha Corning, Gale Muehlbauer
- 15 George & Mary Carson (34), Liz Ferrari
- 16 Riley Winn
- 17 Phyllis Hoover
- 20 Annette Daniele
- 23 Ryan Winn
- 24 Megan Steindorf, Carrie Winn
- 25 Lin Beck, Jeff Perry
- 26 Nancy Trbovich
- 27 Claire-Marie Krug

## Mailing to you on January 31st

The giving statements that were not picked up by January 30th will be sent to you in the mail on January 31st.

If you have any questions, please contact Lynn Carlson at 523-2578.



## Guess Who's Having a Baby Shower?

*The Bethlehem Women of the ELCA!*

For several years we have sponsored a Congregational baby shower provided baby layette items to various charity groups throughout Santa Rosa. As a result of our Congregation's generosity, we have delivered much appreciated baby items to The Living Room, Sutter Hospital, and the Southwest Health Clinic.



So, again the month of February will be Baby Shower Month

at Bethlehem. "Spread the love around" this month by contributing one or more of the following items for babies- aged 0-24 months: disposable diapers, onesie undershirts, sleeper/stretch outfits, sweaters, jackets, hats, receiving blankets, socks, baby formula, bottles, baby lotion, and baby shampoo. Please place all items in the crib located in the Narthex throughout February. If you'd prefer, you can make a cash contribution in the container near the crib, and disposable diapers will be bought and contributed. Thanks for your help! Questions? Ask Linda Knapp at 539-8901.

## New Church Directories

The BLC Directory has been updated for 2020 and will be available in the Narthex February 5th. Be sure and pick one up.

## Men of Bethlehem

The Men of Bethlehem (the MoB) will be meeting on Tues., February 18th at 7:00 p.m.

All men are welcome to join our community for food, fellowship, and discussion. Our lively talks are sometimes based on recent stories in the magazine Living Lutheran, on stories from the Bible, or on current events.

All men are welcome.



## Scout Sunday

February 9th is Scout Sunday. On Scout Sunday, we celebrate the 110th anniversary of Boy Scouts in the United States.



The mission of the Scouts BSA is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

Scouting starts at age 5, or Kindergarten, boys and girls can join as Cub Scouts, and at age 11, become Scouts and at 14, can become Venturers. With an emphasis on the outdoors, they learn life skills, duty to God, leadership, teamwork, and service to others.

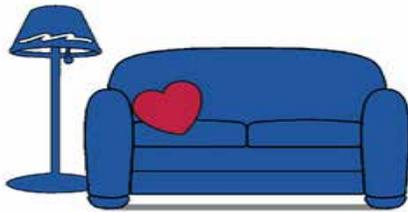
The Lutheran church has been sponsoring Boy Scout troops since 1926, and in 2013 served as the chartering organization for 3,728 units across the United States with a total membership of 111,483 boys active in all three programs programs.



**PANCAKE BREAKFAST**  
*Come feast at Bethlehem*  
Hosted by Ruth Circle  
February 25, at 8:30 a.m.

Ticket sales: February 9, 16, and 23 in the Narthex after services  
\$5 per person

Guest Speaker is Cindy Pasko, Executive Director of



### The Living Room

The only day center in Sonoma County serving homeless and at-risk women and their children.  
Your donations will benefit the Living Room

Shrove is the past tense of the verb shrive and refers to the recognition and confession of sins as a preparation for Lent.  
Shrove Tuesday has many customs pertaining to food. Feasting on Pancakes was a way to clear pantry shelves of eggs, sugar, and fat: foods that were forbidden during the 40 day fast of Lent.

## 90th Birthday Celebration

Following Worship service on February 2nd please join us for cake and punch to celebrate Stefanie Hux turning 90!



Along with birthday wishes, be sure to congratulate Stefanie and Don as they celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary, February 12th.

## Care Notes

The Health Ministries Committee has a display of "Care Notes" in the Narthex that offer encouragement for all kinds of life situations. Please help yourself to any that you, or someone you know, might find useful.



## Midweek Bible Study

Join Pastor Bill for Bible study every Wednesday in the Parish Hall at 10:00 a.m. Everyone is welcome. This year's classes offer a weekly preview and study of the coming Sunday's three assigned scripture readings. Coffee provided! See you there.

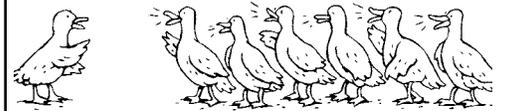
## A word from Martin

"Next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise. The gift of language combined with the gift of song was given to man that he should proclaim the Word of God through Music." -Martin Luther



## Coffee Hour Treats

Treats make our coffee hour extra special! Please sign up on the forms on the kiosk in the Narthex. If you have questions about what to bring you can call Lin Beck at 579-4150.



## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

This month Church Council will meet Wednesday, February 19th at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Bring your questions and concerns and come see your Church Council in action.

Commission Night is on Wednesday, February 5th at 7:00 p.m. meet in the Parish Hall.

## Jim Norem Memorial

Long time member of BLC, Jim Norem passed away peacefully on December 25, 2019 surrounded by family.

A memorial service for Jim will be held on Sunday, February 9th at 10:30 a.m. during worship.

The family kindly suggests sending memorial contributions to the Redwood Empire Food Bank.



## YOUTH GROUP NEWS

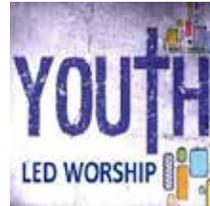
Many thanks to all who helped with our youth program in 2019. It's been a good year, and we look forward to 2020.

We have some activities planned and are in the process of planning for the coming year. Here's what we have calendared so far –

Sunday, Feb. 2nd, our annual Souper Bowl of Caring, will be on Super Bowl Sunday. This is a yearly nationwide Christian youth event to raise money for local and global charities to eradicate hunger. This year, we will have soup pots to raise money for our local entities, F.I.S.H, Friends In Service Here, which is a food bank we regularly support, and Redwood Empire Food Bank. So, give a donation to cheer on your favorite team in the soup pots we will have in the Narthex, and support two of our local organizations.



On Sunday, March 1st, is Youth Service. All Bethlehem Youth are invited and encouraged to participate. There are many different ways to be involved. Speak to Janet Bertoli for more information. Rehearsal for the Youth Service will be February 29th from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.



Sunday, March 22nd, is Pretzel Sunday. During the Education Hour at 9:30 we will enjoy hot pretzels and tell the story of the pretzel and why we eat them during Lent.



April 12th, Easter Sunday, we will once again have our Easter Breakfast for the Congregation during services that morning. Look for more Easter information in your email and in future STARs.

We have a few other events in the works. Stay tuned to your STAR and email for more information.

~Michelle Thomson, Youth Commissioner

## Call Committee Update

The BLC Call Committee held their kick-off meeting in January to set expectations for moving forward with the discernment process and work of the Congregation over the next few months. The members of the Call Committee are Elizabeth Goodson, Phyllis Hoover, Michael Knudtson, Alan Petty and Carolyn Cole-Schweizer. They were called and voted in last year as the "Transition Team" to find an interim pastor. We were blessed to find Pastor Bill Wessner who is serving as our two-year term call pastor. Pastor Bill will support our congregation over the next two years and will help us complete the discernment work as laid out by the Pacific Synod. Over the next few months, all members will be asked to participate in discussions and surveys and to prayerfully consider God's plan for our faith community. This is an



CALL COMMITTEE

exciting time of change—the Call Committee looks forward to working with the Congregation in this very important work. Stay tuned for an announcement of next steps and our first Congregational meeting.

## Quilting Group

The BLC Sewing Group meets every 3rd and 5th Tuesday each month (if there is a 5th Tuesday).



This creative and hardworking group gathers bits and pieces of material, and turns them into beautiful quilts. These quilts help provide comfort and warmth to many people here in Sonoma County.

Helping hands are always welcomed and appreciated. No experience is necessary - on the job training is provided!

In February, they will be meeting on the 19th. Contact Beverly Schaap if you have any questions at 527-2872.

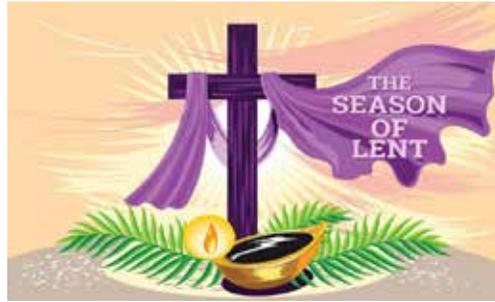
## Life Pax - Assemble!

On February 9th at 9:30 a.m. the Youth will meet to assemble more Life Pax. Snacks will be provided. All are encouraged to help, as many hands make light work!

# Looking to Lent

In 2020 Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, February 26th, with service and imposition of ashes at 7 p.m.

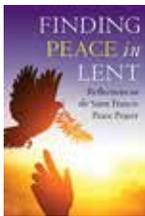
Soup Suppers are a chance during Lent to gather at the end of the day with our BLC family and enjoy a simple meal of soup and bread. Members volunteer to bring soup or bake bread each Wednesday evening. Look for soup signups in the Narthex, January 26th.



Soup Supper Wednesdays:

February 26th, March 4th, March 11th, March 18th, March 25th, April 1st

Lenten Devotionals will be available in the Narthex, February 16th. This year we have three devotionals to help guide you on your Lenten journey.

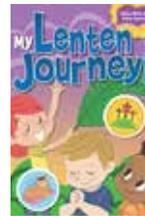


"Finding Peace in Lent: Reflections on the Saint Francis Peace Prayer"

"Living The Gospel Life: Daily Devotions for Christians on a Mission"



and new for this year a Children's themed devotional, "My Lenten Journey! A stickerbook of Ways to Praise for 40 days".



# Evening Prayer

Lenten evening prayer service will start after Soup Supper Wednesdays at 7 p.m. Our evening prayer services will be a Lenten exploration entitled, "At the Name of Jesus". This 5-week series will explore Philippians 2:5-11.



# Lenten "Flour"

During the season of Lent, BLC adorns the altar with non-perishable food items rather than flowers, and each week takes this bounty to F.I.S.H. where it is distributed to those that need it.

The Sign-up to bring a bag or two of groceries is in the Narthex, just as if you were signing up for flowers.

We can feed the hungry of Sonoma County one bag at a time.



# Bethlehem Children's Center News

A big thank you to church members that have been going above and beyond for our ministry:

Thank you to Sandra McConnell who is beginning her seventh year serving on the school board.

Thank you to Janet Krug who is beginning her tenth year serving on the school board.

Thank you to Linda Knapp who has graciously been working late afternoons and double shifts as a substitute teacher.

Thank you to Cal Eriksen who has been instrumental in meeting the needs of our facility.

Thank you church members for supporting the church and in turn supporting our school.



## BLC High School and College Scholarships

The Education Commission administers the L.U.T.H.E.R. scholarship, a one time \$500 scholarship for high school graduating members (of at least 1 year) who will be attending a college or trade school. Due May 1, 2020.

The Education Commission administers the congregational Lutheran Education Scholarship, an ongoing \$500 scholarship for those members (of at least 1 year) attending a Lutheran College, university or seminary. Due May 1, 2020.

Eligible students will be contacted by Linda Knapp 539-8901.

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The Endowment Committee has funds available this year for Endowment Scholarships in varying amounts for applicants who will be fulltime sophomores, juniors, or seniors at an accredited college or university for the 2020-2021 school year. Preference will be given to a student who shows financial need. The application is available on the church website: [www.blc-bcc.com](http://www.blc-bcc.com)

All applicants should send their applications to [lak9383@hotmail.com](mailto:lak9383@hotmail.com) in PDF format.

Questions- contact Laura Knapp at 761-4160.

## Youth Day at F.I.S.H.

A team of Youth volunteers from Bethlehem Lutheran will be filling grocery bags and handing out food at Santa Rosa's F.I.S.H. food pantry Saturday, February 29th at 10:30 am to 12:00. Last year, BLC & BCC donated almost 3,000 lbs of food to F.I.S.H. Get involved and feed the hungry!

## Young at Heart

Young at Heart is open to all-

If you are available on the third Monday of the month, join the group for some friendly fellowship. February 17th is the date, 11:45 a.m. is the time, and the International House of Pancakes near the Flamingo is the place. Join us!

## Treasurer's Report

Beverly Schaap

### December 2019

	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Income</b>	<b>\$61,014</b>	<b>\$59,460</b>	<b>\$1,554</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>\$40,331</b>	<b>\$39,612</b>	<b>\$719</b>
<b>Net</b>	<b>\$20,683</b>	<b>\$19,848</b>	<b>\$835</b>

### YTD 2019

	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Income</b>	<b>\$328,089</b>	<b>\$332,600</b>	<b>-\$4,511</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>\$328,345</b>	<b>\$378,134</b>	<b>-\$49,789</b>
<b>Net</b>	<b>-\$256</b>	<b>-\$45,534</b>	<b>\$45,278</b>

**Amount needed to meet the budget \$7,271 per week  
December \$11,612**

## Online shopping benefits BLC

Many of you are shopping for Valentine's Day gifts online. Don't forget, if you are shopping at Amazon, you can shop instead at [smile.amazon.com](http://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](http://smile.amazon.com) from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. You may also want to add a bookmark to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) to make it even easier to return and start your shopping.



The deadline for the next issue of The Bethlehem Star is February 21, 2020.

Please submit information and story ideas to the church office or email [blc@sonic.net](mailto: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.