

# The Bethlehem Star

A PUBLICATION OF BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH AND CHILDREN'S CENTER



Volume 71, Issue 4

April 2021

## From Pastor Diane

Soon Lent will be over and we enter the holiest, most solemn, and most joyful days of the church year. You are invited to walk with Christ, to shout, weep, and then rejoice, as we observe Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter. It's a little different this year because our worship services are on Zoom, but nonetheless the experiences will be powerful and meaningful. Please join us!

### **PALM SUNDAY (March 28)**

Worship Service at 10 AM - Zoom

Have the palms included in this letter with you for a virtual procession.

Dramatic reading of the passion based on Mark's Gospel.

### **MAUNDY THURSDAY (April 1)**

Worship Service at 7 PM - Zoom

In memory of Christ's last meal with his friends before his arrest, this service includes hand-washing, communion, and the stripping of the altar. Have a basin of water and communion elements prepared.

### **GOOD FRIDAY (April 2)**

Worship Service at 7 PM - Zoom

A worship of scripture, music, bidding prayers for the world and all people, and meditation on the cross.

### **EASTER SUNDAY (April 4)**

Easter EGGstravaganza for All Ages - 9 AM - Zoom

The Easter story, games, and a craft. Register in advance and pick up your bag of craft items from the church on Saturday.

Festival Eucharist Worship Service - 10 AM - Zoom

The Festival Eucharist worship including all choirs, Praise Band, the Easter proclamation and Holy Communion. Have communion elements prepared.

I pray that you will be renewed, encouraged, strengthened and enriched in faith as together we walk the path of Jesus' Passion and rediscover the meaning and power of his resurrection for our lives.

Yours in Christ,

*Pastor Diane*

## A word from Martin

"Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace, so certain that a man could stake his life on it a thousand times."

-Martin Luther



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



## **Elisha's Pantry Essentials:**

- Kleenex
- Toilet paper
- Small size laundry detergent  
(from The Dollar Store)
- Dish soap
- Regular size shampoo
- Toothpaste & toothbrushes
- Deodorant
- Skin lotion
- Razors
- Masks

Drop donations off @ BLC on  
Weds. or Fri. 9 AM - 3 PM  
Next Pick-up Date: April 14th

# Second Mile Sunday

On April 11th, Bethlehem Lutheran, along with the other churches in the Sierra Pacific Synod, will gather contributions to support Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (PLTS). Please mail your donations to the Church office.

PLTS equips faithful leaders who enliven the church and care for the world. Today is a new day for theological education in the West. With expanded residential and online learning options, new faculty, shared teaching resources within Cal Lutheran and the Graduate Theological Union, our students learn, live, and serve in a place that is multi-cultural, economically diverse, and invigorating.

PLTS is one of eight seminaries of the ELCA, a founding member of the Graduate Theological Union, and a graduate school of California Lutheran University. PLTS was the first ELCA seminary to become Reconciling in Christ (RIC).

Theological education at PLTS is done in the context of people who are rich and poor, liberal and conservative, and a wide array of human race, religion, sexuality, education, experience, and background. If our theology did not take all people into account, it would be deficient.

Follow us on social media: <https://www.facebook.com/pltsofclu/>.

Please keep the seminary 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 Zoom worship : 10:00 a.m.

Church Office: 707/539-5252, Hours: 9-3, W & F  
Church Email: [blc@sonic.net](mailto:blc@sonic.net)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/BLCSantaRosa](https://www.facebook.com/BLCSantaRosa)  
YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCA1g8W7SFMET386SfZBdwZQ>

Church Website: [www.blc-bcc.com](http://www.blc-bcc.com)  
Zoom Meeting ID: 889 9423 0337  
Password: church

Bridge Pastor:  
Reverend Diane Bowers, Ph.D.  
510-816-5765 (Pastor's cell)  
Email: [Revdrdiane@yahoo.com](mailto:Revdrdiane@yahoo.com)

Linda Knapp, Witness & Service  
Michelle Frabotta, Worship  
Michelle Thomson, Youth  
Susan Jenkins, BCC Executive Board  
Siri Fenson, Bethlehem WELCA President

Congregational Officers:  
Jason Kracht, President  
Janet Bertoli, Vice President  
Carolyn Cole-Schweizer, Secretary  
Beverly Schaap, Treasurer  
Susan Jenkins, Financial Secretary

Staff:  
Michelle Frabotta, Parish Administrator  
Janet Bertoli, Adult & Youth Choirs  
Barbara Laferriere, Organist, Adult Choir,  
Laura Lightfoot, Youth Choirs

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



## Baby Shower

Even though the annual Baby Shower project will not be promoted this year, we are still welcoming hand-crafted items, should you already have been making some in anticipation of this spring-time event. Knitted or crocheted items, for babies up to 12 months, and knitted hats and scarves for any age, will be brought to Sutter Special Services.

Please drop off donations (clearly marked 'Baby Shower') in the church kitchen by April 14.

The WELCA Board thanks you.



## Tears

There is a sacredness in tears.

They are not the mark of weakness but of power.

They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues.

They are messengers of overwhelming grief,

Of deep contrition, and of unspeakable love.

*Washington Irving*

Bethlehem Lutheran Church  
invites you to...



**VBS 2021**

**June 14-18**

**6:30-8:00 pm**

**Cost: free**

**For kids entering Kindergarten  
through completing 6th grade  
Deadline to register: May 30**

Invite a friend and register now to join the fun!  
We will do experiments, learn about God's  
miracles, do some crafts, and play some games.

<https://forms.gle/ZiuozKj4GHWNfpJgZ>

\*\*This event will be held outdoors and follow all social distancing  
guidelines\*\*



# April

- 1 Sandra Bader, Sharon Boschen
- 2 Rick & Linda Knapp (44)
- 3 Megan McConnell
- 5 Katie McCullough
- 6 Penny Dauler
- 7 Lisa McIntyre, Louann Ekren
- 8 Katie Tiedeman, Richard Schumann
- 9 Barbara Bertoli, Zack Thomson, Elaine Gutsch, Yasha Mokaram
- 11 Donna Jeye, Erica Meyer, Joni Schmidt
- 12 Heinz & Patsy Streckfuss (52)
- 13 John Sass, Carl Bowers
- 16 Clint & Shirley Stevenson (16)
- 17 Brad & Bev Powell (14)
- 20 Carolyn Cole-Schweizer, Katrina Petty, Laura Apostle
- 21 Caecilie Von Perbandt
- 22 Sam Claasen, Corrine Knudtson
- 23 Mikayla Mokaram
- 26 Dan Thomson
- 28 Bridget Duffy
- 29 Richard Vogel
- 30 Peter Walls, Caitlyn Kelly

**We Celebrate  
YOU!**

## BLC Book Club pick for April

The Night Watchman

By: Louise Erdrich

"National Book Award winner Erdrich once again calls upon her considerable storytelling skills to elucidate the struggles of generations of Native people to retain their cultural identity and their connection to the land." -- Library Journal, Starred Review



## Garden Help

Harvest for the Hungry  
Community Garden

**All ages are now welcome!**

Do you like to play in the dirt-while helping others? Then please consider going to the garden any weekday from 9-12 to help so that we will have produce to give away this summer.

Harvest for the Hungry Garden is a 34 year old garden where volunteers this last year grew 26,000 pounds of organic produce to donate to the food pantries in town. We would like to do so again in 2021. But we need your help now!

The garden is located behind Christ Church United Methodist at 1717 Yulupa Avenue.

For more information, call Beverly Schaap 527-2872

## BLC now accepting donations!

Of personal care items for distribution through Elisha's Pantry each month. Your contribution can help in a couple of different ways.

A modest \$10 purchase could give your neighbor access to "good health" items, such as toothbrush, toothpaste, hand sanitizer, a mask or tissues. Or, choose to purchase other important household necessities like laundry detergent, dish soap and toilet paper.\*\*

With the number of people using Elisha's Pantry nearly doubling during this pandemic, the need is great. Your contribution does make a difference to individuals and families on limited budgets. Please consider expanding your support of Elisha's Pantry this year.

The next date for monthly distribution is April 15. Donations can be dropped off in the BLC kitchen Weds. & Friday 9-3pm.

Thank you,

Liz Ferrari, *Elisha's Pantry Volunteer*

\*\*The Dollar Store is a good source for all these items for a small outlay or consider adding one or two items to your weekly cart.

## Christ in Our Home

The April-May-June edition of

Christ in Our Home is now available. Copies are available for pick up Wednesdays and Fridays 9-3. Please send an email or contact the Church office for a copy to be mailed to your home.



These daily devotionals are another great way to worship while we wait for in-person church to resume.

## **Better know a ministry: Elisha's Pantry**

*"Volunteers are not paid- not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless".*

Back in 2004, the Redwood Empire Food Bank asked Christ Church United Methodist to open a new food pantry on its property.

Congregation Shomrei Torah agreed to become a co-sponsor as did Bethlehem, through efforts by Linda Smith and Dorothy Wagner. Each congregation committed to raise \$2,500 a year and to provide volunteers. After a 12 x 20 foot bare-bone building was constructed, Elisha's Pantry was dedicated on September 11, 2005.

Up until a year ago, volunteers from each congregation, most of us 65 years of age and older, signed up to do the shopping and transporting of food from Redwood Empire; also preparing for clients' arrivals and serving them. The clients parked and walked up to tables and were handed the items they wished to have. As we "oldies" could no longer volunteer due to the pandemic, two Methodist Church employees took over the operation until Lien Cibulka was hired as a coordinator. She now has a fairly steady group of volunteers who come every Thursday to set up tables and pop-ups, and pack bags. Those clients coming by cars, line up in a very organized fashion, and wait for bags of food to be placed in the trunk or back seat. The ones coming by foot, bus or bicycle, stand in a separate line.

From Bethlehem, Melissa Preston and her granddaughter Kiana are helping out about every Thursday. Mary Carson is another BLC volunteer and so is Joni Schmidt.

Here are some impressive numbers: Canned goods and staples, and some vegetables and fruits, are purchased from the Redwood Empire Food Bank. In 2020 over 36,000 pounds were bought at a retail price of \$76,000. We paid \$8,000 ... a savings of \$68,000.

Founded 34 years ago and entirely run by volunteers, Harvest for the Hungry Garden located next to the Pantry, annually provides 8,500 lbs of fresh vegetables to us. By the way, it always needs help and accepts us no matter what age we are!

"Farm to Pantry" brought us 1,800 lbs of gleaned produce.

Boudin, Lucky and Whole Foods donated 4,600 lbs of bread, desserts, etc.

Food drives and individual donations came to about 1,000 lbs.

Last, but not least, we have the Personal Care tables where clients, once a month, choose a few items from the donations that YOU, Bethlehem Lutherans, have been bringing and hopefully, still will continue to bring.

Thank you,

Siri Fenson, *(Elisha's Pantry Steering Committee member)*

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## **Age Gap friendships-God's special blessings**

I'm 92 and I have a boyfriend! No, not that kind of boyfriend. He is- or was- a boy- young teenager when I first met him. I noticed him entertaining the 4 & 5 year old kids after church while their parents chatted over coffee. He came to the house with the youth group a couple of years in a row, to clean our gutters and rake leaves. He and his best friend came over with their youth leader to talk to me about my religious upbringing and why I chose BLC as my church. As an adult, he came over and weed wacked, raked and rototilled my garden. I was invited to his high school graduation party, his going-away party when he went into the Marines and his wedding. He and his wife came to my 90th birthday bash after working the midnight shift. Most of our conversations took place either in the Narthex or outside while I sat on the bench. He always greeted me with a smile. It's surprising how much you can learn about another person in a few minutes conversation and how much advice can be exchanged. *(Continued on page 8)*



*Save the Date! Friday April 30th at 7 pm on Bethlehem's Zoom  
for our Spring 2021 Offering of Letters*

We look forward to seeing your smiling face and having an opportunity to come together, have some fun, and be God's witnesses in our world.

You are invited to write letters urging Congress to address issues of Hunger.

Specifically, we will be writing letters to Congress asking lawmakers to:

**Make permanent the expansion of the child tax credit (CTC) offered through the American Rescue Plan.**

Sadly, 1 in 4 kids are at risk of hunger in the US, the richest country in the world. Forty percent of Black and Latino families struggle feeding their children. These child tax credits will lift some 5.7 million children out of poverty, resulting in a lifetime of benefits for them and for society. Here's a link with more information:

<https://www.bread.org/sites/default/files/downloads/bread-ctc-fact-sheet-2021.pdf>

**Increase US funding and leadership for global nutrition programs to developing countries facing the COVID crisis.**

The COVID-19 pandemic has devastated communities across the country and around the world. In the US, more than 50 million Americans are facing hunger while globally, 270 million people face starvation this year. This is a pivotal year not only to make progress on better nutrition and more sustainable food systems, but also for the U.S. government to enact reforms to ensure food systems are equitable, sustainable, and resilient.

*As people of faith, we are called to:*

*Speak out for the rights of all the destitute, and  
defend the rights of the poor and needy.*

*Proverbs 31:8-9*

We'll be sharing more information on the Offering of Letters over the coming weeks. Please join us on April 30th and make your voice heard.

If you'd like to get a head start, you can download the letter here (it is also printed on the next page):

[https://www.dropbox.com/sh/rt7w2rmdcwmt4o0/AADKVAYf\\_5TuDeesbQX9SI2wa?dl=0&preview=2021OL+Sample+Template+Letter.docx](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/rt7w2rmdcwmt4o0/AADKVAYf_5TuDeesbQX9SI2wa?dl=0&preview=2021OL+Sample+Template+Letter.docx)

April 2021

Representative Mike Thompson  
2300 County Center Dr. Suite A100  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Senator Dianne Feinstein  
One Post Street, Suite 2450  
San Francisco, CA 94104

Senator Alex Padilla  
1500 11th St #495  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Representative \_\_\_\_\_,

Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_,

Hunger is reaching historic levels. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to devastate communities across the United States with a disproportionate impact on Black, Latino, and Native American families, and immigrants, and worsening the effects of hunger and poverty around the globe.

The pandemic has exposed vulnerabilities in our safety net and food systems from farm to fork. And child hunger in both the U.S. and abroad has skyrocketed.

Specifically, Congress should:

Make the expansion of the child tax credit in the American Rescue Plan permanent and available to all children regardless of immigration status. The CTC expansion will lift millions of children out of poverty, as well as help reduce hunger and narrow the racial wealth gap exacerbated by unemployment amid COVID-19.

Increase U.S. leadership and funding for global nutrition programs without which an entire generation may be denied of their God-given right to flourish.

Now more than ever, my faith calls me to stand alongside impacted people in my community and around the world. Let us work together to ensure U.S. policies help people move out of poverty and feed their families in the U.S. and around the world.

Sincerely,  
[Your Name]  
[Your Address]  
[City, State ZIP]

# 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, 2021.**

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, 2021.**

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

\*\*\*\*\*

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 2021-2022 school year. Preference will be given to a student who shows financial need. The application is available by contacting the Church office [blc@sonic.net](mailto:blc@sonic.net)

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

Questions- contact Laura Knapp at 761-4160.

# Age Gap

*(Continued from page 5)*

I had another friendship-the opposite of this one. I was born on Louis Valentine DeRoin's 70th birthday. He lived across the street from my parents. He said he was French Canadian (he looked Eskimo) married to a Mexican lady-I played with his granddaughter when she visited. I don't know how old I was when I started to visit him. Probably when my folks divorced, when I was 6. We would sit on his porch and talk-I don't know what about, probably school or friends. He would read the newspaper and cross off each article until he had read every item. He taught me how to husk and dry walnuts. I whitewashed his grape arbor one year. He was the grandpa I never had. He listened to me when I needed someone to just listen!

God blessed me with two age-gap friendships, one at each end of my life. If you haven't had such friendships, you have missed a lot. I have had several other such friendships. Thanks be to God.

*-Aloha Corning*

# Treasurer's Report

Beverly Schaap

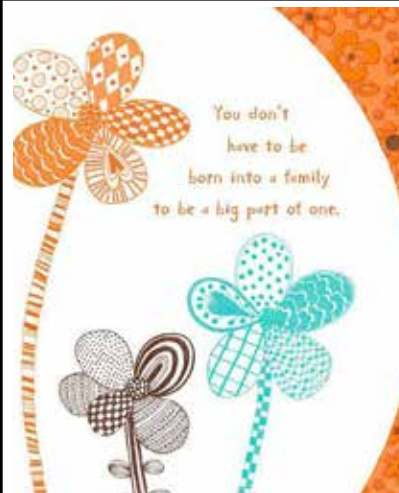
## February 2021

	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Income</b>	<b>\$28,085</b>	<b>\$17,700</b>	<b>\$10,385</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>\$23,016</b>	<b>\$27,668</b>	<b>-\$4,652</b>
<b>Net</b>	<b>\$5,069</b>	<b>-\$9,968</b>	<b>\$15,037</b>

## YTD 2021

	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Income</b>	<b>\$53,328</b>	<b>\$43,000</b>	<b>\$10,328</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>\$53,416</b>	<b>\$53,062</b>	<b>\$354</b>
<b>Net</b>	<b>-\$88</b>	<b>-\$10,062</b>	<b>\$9,974</b>

**Amount needed to meet the budget \$6,216 per week  
February \$7,021**



**A heartfelt congratulations to Pastor Diane and Hans at the adoption of Elijah.**

**Praise be to God!**

**Love, Your BLC Family**

*The deadline for the next issue of The Bethlehem Star is April 23, 2021.*

*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.*