

The Bethlehem Star

A PUBLICATION OF BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH AND CHILDREN'S CENTER



Volume 72, Issue 1

January 2022

From Pastor Tyler

“Let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together” Hebrews 10:24-25a

When is the last time you set a New Year's resolution?

It would seem that people have been setting New Year's resolutions since antiquity, even if there was hardly any consensus concerning when the “new year” actually began. Across cultures, ancient people's observance of the new year involved making promises and sacrifices to various gods, praying for bountiful harvests, and paying off debts from the previous year in hopes that all of these actions would help start the new year “on the right foot.” Thousands of years later, many still make resolutions at the turn of the year.

I find the beginning of a new year is a wonderful opportunity for us to reflect on the past year and contemplate the year to come. As we enter into a new year of ministry here at Bethlehem Lutheran Church new opportunities for mission and ministry continue to stand before us. So, I wonder, if we might take time to reflect on the past year and set forth resolutions for ourselves in light of the wonderful gift we have received in Christ Jesus. It causes me to wonder, what New Year's resolutions God would have us make? As Bethlehem Lutheran Church and as individuals, I wonder:

- Where is God encouraging us to grow?
- What changes might God challenge us to make?
- What programs and activities would God have us create and give life to?

I cannot answer these questions for us, but I think they may be valuable reflection tools as we make our annual pilgrimage from manger to cross in the liturgical seasons ahead this new year. God is at work within and around us. Our shared task is to discern as a community what God is calling us into in this particular year. So, my prayer is that each of us each, as God stirs the Spirit within our hearts, take a moment to reflect upon the new life that God is creating and calling us into this new year.

Happy New Year!

~Pastor Tyler W. Jensen

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

The Love Fund

Did you know that Bethlehem Lutheran has a “Love Fund”? Once in a while folks notice the line item in the church budget entitled, “Love Fund” and wonder what it is and what it is for?

Bethlehem's Love Fund is an account that is not funded by members' regular offerings to the budget, but rather by individual contributions of members, specifically designated the Fund.

The Love Fund is a discretionary account used by the pastor to help people (sometimes members, sometimes non-members) who are in need of one-time, short term financial help. The Love Fund has been used to purchase groceries, provide temporary housing, assist with utility bills, and more.



Contributions to the Love Fund can be made through the regular Sunday offering, with “Love Fund” noted on the check memo line.

The Love Fund. Now you know!



Bethlehem's Congregational Meeting

The annual Congregational Meeting is on January 30, at 11:45a.m. following 10:30 a.m. service. At this meeting we will review the accomplishments of 2021; the differences that we at Bethlehem Lutheran have made in our Church, our community and our world. You will meet the new and returning executive committee members and commissioners, and hear about plans for the upcoming year and beyond. There will be items to be voted on and the 2022 budget to be reviewed and approved.

This is also a day to recognize our outgoing council members and commissioners, and to honor them for their dedication and hard work done here at Bethlehem Lutheran.



Topic: Annual Congregational Zoom Meeting

Time: Jan 30, 2022 11:45 AM Pacific Time

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88258638343?pwd=RXNRWTdaVS8wbTErbzFsR1F0VC9MUT09>

Meeting ID: 882 5863 8343

Passcode: 374608

Bethlehem Lutheran Church and Children's Center
1300 St. Francis Road, Santa Rosa, California 95409
Sunday Worship : 10:30 a.m.

Church Office: 707/539-5252, Hours: 9-2:30, M-W

Church Website: www.blc-bcc.com

Church Email: blc@sonic.net

Zoom Meeting ID: 841 0567 7361

Facebook: www.facebook.com/BLCSantaRosa

Password: church

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCA1g8W7SFMET386SfZBdwZQ>

Pastor:

Tyler W. Jensen
510-470-4305 (Pastor's cell)
Email: PastorTylerJensen@gmail.com

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

Congregational Officers:

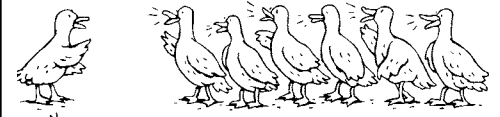
Jason Kracht, President
Janet Bertoli, Vice President
Carolyn Cole-Schweizer, Secretary
Beverly Schaap, Treasurer
Susan Jenkins, Financial Secretary

Staff:

Deborah McNally, BCC Director
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



COMMITTEE MEETINGS

In January, the Worship and Education **Commissions** will meet on Wednesday, the 5th at 7:00 and 7:45 p.m., respectively on Zoom! Contact the office for Zoom information. Joining a commission is a great way to bring new ideas and activities to our Church. There are many things to be done here and many hands make light the work!

On January 19th, the **Church Council** meets at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Council meetings are open to all, you are welcomed and invited to see your Church leadership in action.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88983772498?pwd=Q05aOStCbFp1Sk1hbHNHaHkvN1FLUT09>

Meeting ID: 889 8377 2498

Passcode: 485566

Office Closed

The Church office will be closed on Monday, January 17th for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Sign up for Altar Flowers

It's a New Year, with new opportunities for you to honor a special person or remember a loved one, as well as beautify the altar with the gift of flowers. The cost for a bouquet is \$20 and you can sign up in the Narthex.

WELCA NEWS!

Siri Fenson, WELCA President

BABY SHOWER in FEBRUARY

Your donations of babies' clothing will be greatly appreciated. For the little ones, aged 0 to 24 months, sleepers, onesie undershirts, sweaters, receiving blankets, socks, baby formula, disposable diapers, etc., can be placed in the crib, set up in the Narthex during the month of February. The items will be given to the Santa Rosa Birth Center and the SoCo Public Home Visiting Service.

SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE BREAKFAST

hosted by Rebekah Circle

Please, mark March 1, 2022, 8:30AM in your calendar. Speaker: a representative from SAY (Social Advocates for Youth). Reservations for the \$5 breakfast will be taken, starting end of January.

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.

If you cannot pick up your envelopes by Sunday, February 6th, please contact Susan Jenkins at rvwhine@sbcglobal.net or the Church office to make arrangements. Please make plans to pick up your envelopes even if you do not use them every Sunday.

Thank You!

Life Pax

"Feeding the Hungry and Sharing the Love of Christ one meal at a time!"

The youth have put together new supply of Life Pax, and they are available on the table in the Narthex. The donation jar is right next to them and the requested donation is \$2 each to cover the cost. Thank you!

Members are encouraged to store a few in their cars, and share them when they see someone on the street asking for food or money.



Sunday Zoom Worship - 10:30 a.m.



Meeting ID:
841 0567 7361
Password:
church



*We pray for our Homebound:
Astrid Haugaard, Arend
Folkens, Marion Heiken, Glo-
ria Hamilton, Clarissa Tuor,
Judy Warner, Ruby Malde,
Helen Osborne.*

Special Concerns:

*Richard Doran, Adele
Mortensen, Tom Ziegler, Janet
Wolf, Steve Sturgeon, Lin Beck,
Donna Cole, Mira Kiick,
Donna Rudningen & Pam Pegly.*

Take a Bag!

Please take a food bag from the Narthex and return it for the F.I.S.H. food pantry.

Baby food, canned meats, pasta, sauces, peanut butter and cereal are always in high demand.

As the pandemic is still effecting so many in Sonoma County, your donations are needed more than ever. Thanks for caring!



2022 Church Directory Available

The 2022 BLC Directory has been updated!

Look for the new directories in the Narthex starting January 9 or contact Michelle in the Office for a directory to be mailed to your home.



January

- 3 Stephanie Walls
 5 Elizabeth Walls, Stacie Post-Sheffer
 Adriane Clissold
 6 Sophia Thompson
 7 Jeff Thomson
 8 Carrie & Ryan Winn (17)
 11 Ramona Doran,
 Gary & Pat Stone (53)
 12 Cameron McConnell
 14 Melissa Kuhn,
 Wes Silverthorne,
 Christen Thompson
 16 Jaimee Comstock-Skipp
 17 Patrick Riggs
 18 Michael Jeye
 19 Emily Wong,
 Anne-Elise Krug
 20 Lucas Petterssen
 25 Brian Schmidt,
 Don McCullough,
 Barry Wong
 26 Greg Perrone, Nancy Doyle
 28 Luke Jacobson, Tracy Huotari
 29 Tom & Kathy Ziegler (57)
 30 Rachel Anderson
 31 Raymond Skipp

A Time to Pay Attention

By: Chris Michaelis, (*Living Lutheran, January 2022*)

I have a bad habit of looking at my feet when I walk. I don't often stub my toe or trip on uneven ground, but occasionally I run into something or someone I'm not expecting.

Our 2-year-old has the opposite issue. While we walk around our neighborhood, his head is always up and looking around. This means he often trips over his feet, but his view of the world is much broader than mine. As is the case with most toddlers, he might ask, "What's that?" or "What's their name?" or "What's that called?" His curiosity reminds me that a simple shift in perspective can engender wonder.

Whether I'm looking at my feet while I walk, hunching over my cellphone or resting my elbows on a desk at work, this posture of folding inward prevents me from truly seeing the expansiveness of God's good creation. This makes me wonder about the opportunities we miss simply because our posture doesn't allow us to see the world around us.

Epiphany marks the day and the church season when Jesus comes to be named and understood as God's own son, the living and breathing manifestation of God in our midst.

The Epiphany story begins with three magi noticing a new star and setting off on a journey. Arriving at their destination, these three people from distant places encounter a child born to a teenage mother in a little-known town, a birth heralded by livestock and ranchers. Jesus' birth story isn't what most imagine when they think of a newborn king. Yet the magi come to see and understand Jesus as God on Earth.

The name Epiphany comes from the Greek *epiphaneia*, meaning "manifestation." Most of us think of an epiphany as a flash of insight, but what if Epiphany is an invitation to notice the beauty and brilliance of what's already there?

The magi found a new star in the sky. They bore witness to the presence of God within little Jesus. And during the time after Epiphany, we'll hear Gospel stories of Jesus growing in his understanding of who he is as God's child and of the kind of messiah he is called to be. Perhaps, then, Epiphany is less a sudden realization and more a growth in understanding.

When I realign my focus, when I notice how much I cast my eyes to the ground or hunch over, I can lift my head, straighten my posture and enjoy a new perspective. With my eyes up, I'm free to perceive and appreciate the beautiful diversity of the people and plants and creatures I encounter. I can truly see my neighbors, noticing when someone is having a rough day. I can even serve my neighbor who's reaching out for help. *Continued on page 8*

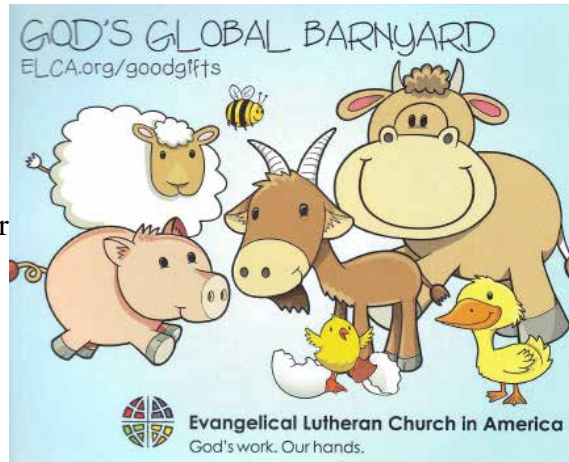
God's Global Barnyard

Thank you for your generosity in supporting God's Global Barnyard. This Advent BLC raised **\$3553!!** Many people in the world are benefitting from our contributions by being the proud owners of new farm animals.

These gifts will go a long way to bringing them out of hunger and poverty.

Thanks!

~Linda Knapp



in a world
where you can
be anything.
BE KIND.

Thank You BLC!

Thank you to all of the people in our Congregation who have helped make this Christmas season a special time. Hands who decorated, harvested trees, strung lights, prepared programs, provided crafts, practiced music, sang, played instruments, led choirs, preached, led bible studies, gave gifts, prepared delicious casseroles, meals and treats, made coffee, worked on our facility and property, visited our homebound, brought Christmas to others, provided sanctuary, counted offerings, sewed, prepared reports, reached out to our community, purchased poinsettias, worked with our youth, brought and delivered food, prayed for us, supported others throughout the world with gifts of crops and animals, and many other acts of kindness. You are a very special and amazing group of people, and your time and talents make the world a better place. Thank you Bethlehem!

Happy New Year!

A word from Martin

"Faith is permitting ourselves to be seized by the things we do not see."

-Martin Luther



You are mine

From *Christ in Our Home* (January 2022)

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;

I have called you by name, you are mine. (Isaiah 43:1-7)

Any number of things in life can threaten our sense of worth and leave us feeling unmoored: job loss, a scary diagnosis, infertility, miscarriage, depression, a loved one's death. Amid situations like these we might feel as though we are passing through tumultuous waters or burning flames, like the images in our reading today.

What strikes me about these verses is that God doesn't say, "If you pass through the waters or walk through the fire..." Rather, God says, "When..." God is honest that in this life we will experience deep struggles. But God's word through Isaiah reassures us that no matter what we are going through, God is with us, cares for us, and will see us through - because of God's love for us.

When we feel vulnerable and shaken, or when the path before us seems filled with difficulty and struggle, we can depend on God to sustain us. We can trust that when God says, "Do not fear...you are mine," God means it.

**Holy God, help us to trust you in all of life's struggles
and to find our strength in you. Amen.**

Prayer Concern: Hospice caregivers

WELCA Board Installation and Christmas Luncheon

The Women of Bethlehem held their annual Christmas Luncheon and WELCA Board Installation on December 29.

Hosted by Ruth Circle, the Luncheon included many fine dishes and desserts. The program included a carol sing-along, a Trivia Game, "Get to know your Pastor" featuring Pastor Tyler and Abigail, as well as a beautiful demonstration by Christiane Silverthorne on flower arranging and the importance of Altar Flowers.

Donations from the Christmas Luncheon were given to Elisha's Pantry.

Thank you to all who helped and participated!



Congratulations!

Elisha's Pantry just celebrated it's 16th anniversary alleviating hunger in Santa Rosa.

Elisha's Pantry is located at 1717 Yulupa Avenue in Santa Rosa. The pantry is open to Clients on Thursdays from 4:00-5:00pm.

Volunteers are ALWAYS needed!

For more information or to volunteer please call (707)542-2569.

DONATE **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
Monday-Wednesday 9-2:30PM
or on Sunday Mornings.
~Thank you!~



Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Monday, January 17, 2022

Remembering Dr. King

An American prophet of justice among races and nations, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was an eloquent preacher, a leader of the nonviolent resistance to race-segregated society, and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. At the age of thirty-five, Martin Luther King, Jr., was the youngest man to have received the Nobel Peace Prize. When notified of his selection, he announced that he would turn over the prize money to the furtherance of the civil rights movement. Born on January 15, 1929 Dr. King was assassinated on April 4, 1968 at the age of 39.

"I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality...I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word. Use me, God. Show me how to take who I am, who I want to be, and what I can do, and use it for a purpose greater than myself."
-Martin Luther King

For more information on Dr. King's life and work visit:

kinginstitute.stanford.edu

2nd Mile Sunday

At Bethlehem Lutheran, in concert with the Sierra Pacific Synod, every second Sunday of each month is designated Second Mile Sunday.

Let's go the Second Mile with our Companion Synods.

During the month of January our Second Mile offerings will be divided among the Sierra Pacific Synod's Companion Synods:

The Lutheran Church of Rwanda

Lutheran Church of El Salvador

Taiwan Lutheran Church

Please keep these sister synods around the world in your prayers this month and consider an additional offering toward their ministries.

The Sierra Pacific Synod is blessed to accompany these Churches in mutual ministry as we proclaim God's creative, redeeming and sanctifying love in all the world.



Zoom 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. Learn a new skill and be apart of an important ministry - online worship!

Pay Attention

Continued from page 4

Amid what's been a very challenging season for many, something as simple as letting someone know you've noticed them can produce a profound impact. We long to be seen by each other and God.

Epiphany calls us to see our neighbors—our neighbor in need, our neighbor who's struggling, our neighbor who puts on a brave face at worship while suffering inside, as well as our neighbor who's rejoicing. It calls us to notice neighbors who don't look, worship, speak, vote or pray as we do. It calls us to recognize them, too, as God's children.

How differently might we treat one another if the first thing we noticed about someone was their identity as a beloved child of God?

When we notice and focus on what draws us together rather than what drives us apart, we can approach our differences from a place of genuine care and concern for one another's well-being. By seeking to understand our neighbors, we can build the world God intends—a world ruled by peace, built upon equity and justice, and infused with the sweet fragrance of love.

During this time after Epiphany, let's commit to noticing and celebrating all the ways God appears in our time and place. You might create a list and write down every time you notice God in your world—from people, plants and animals to the movements of stars and other heavenly bodies.

Take a cue from my 2-year-old: Keep your head up and look around. Maybe you'll fill up your notebook with signs of God's presence so quickly that you'll need to buy another one. Notice your opportunities to bless and be blessed by others. Surely the Messiah is with us.

Treasurer's Report

Beverly Schaap

November 2021

	Actual	Budget	Difference
Income	\$17,903	\$18,400	-\$497
Expenses	\$36,496	\$24,278	\$12,218
Net	-\$18,593	-\$5,878	-\$12,715

YTD 2021

	Actual	Budget	Difference
Income	\$235,619	\$233,800	\$1,819
Expenses	\$278,667	\$299,605	-\$20,938
Net	-\$43,048	-\$65,805	\$22,757

Amount needed to meet the budget \$6,216 per week
November \$4,476

Online shopping benefits Bethlehem!

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. You may also want to add a bookmark to 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 January 21, 2022.

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 would be pleased to receive them.

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