



Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
621 S. Orchard Ave.
Vacaville, Ca 95688

Phone: (707) 451-6675 Fax: (707)451-1740 muchurch@gobethany.com
www.gobethany.com

Living God's Word through Caring, Sharing, and Teaching

Bethany Breezes

June 2020

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From Pastor Phil

“I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus” (Phillippians 1:3-6).

This Sunday is Pentecost, the Birthday of the Church. We have every reason to celebrate this weekend, now more than ever. After months of quarantine, we can once again celebrate *together* and to receive Christ’s gift of His Body and His Blood.

Although I haven’t yet met most of you, I think I know you. . . at least to some extent. You are people who love our Lord and His Church. The people of Bethany are those who fellowship together, pray for one another, and serve God and our community passionately. You have been and continue to be people of *faith*, meeting challenges with sure and certain hope, and you continually look forward to God’s next exciting adventure.

I suspect St. Paul witnessed a congregation similar to Bethany when he wrote to the people in Philippi and celebrated with them “with joy because of [their] partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. . .”

These coming weeks are going to be very exciting for me (and I hope equally exciting for each of you). Bethany is about to embark into some new territory, new buildings, new ministries, new joy, and new relationships. This is an exciting time for all of us. Together in ministry partnership, we will care and share, build and believe, reach and teach, praise and pray, Disciple and be Discipled, receive love from above and spread God’s Word to those who haven’t heard.

And we can be **“confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion un the day of Christ Jesus!”**

Blessings to all, in Christ!



President's Report

Greetings from Bethany Council

Those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing. Psalm 34:10 The Lord uses Bethany in a new & different way to reach the world with His message via world-wide accessible internet services. Praise the Lord!

Bethany Senior Pastor: Pastor Phillip Pledger began as senior pastor at Bethany on May 3. Pray for God's guidance as he leads Bethany to further God's work in Vacaville. Watch for Pastor's Update emails.

Congregation Meeting: Semi-annual congregation meeting June 28 at 11am to elect council, review financial statements, approve 2020-2021 budget, & review property planning status.

Outreach: Bethany K-8 school continues to reach families with Jesus love through online classes. Bethany preschool reopened May 3 following county directives for class size & precautions (PS -20 & TK-11 students). Bethany worship services are on line at GoBethany.com thanks to efforts of Pastor Pledger, Jim Witt, Katy Green, Libby Stringer, & other Bethany members. Worship services started May 31 in the sanctuary with pandemic limitation of 50 at a time. Pastor started a Tuesday online Bible class: all are invited. Outreach Bible based classes: parenting, personal finance, exercise class, Saturday food & craft events need sponsors to organize. Your personal invitation can help friends & school families learn about Jesus' love for them. Bethany youth group is on line during pandemic. Janine Browne is waiting for Bethany's directory from Lifetouch. Talk to Hew Hesterman to help with outreach.

Stewardship: God blesses Bethany congregation & keeps His work going forward. Bethany members donated \$107K matching fund toward a new preschool! \$14,556 has been matched! \$300K is still needed to build preschool buildings C & D. GoBethany.com has a link to mobile cause options for donations. Thanks for putting the work of Christ first in your plans. Council realized that Bethany needs help during the pandemic during which tuition & offerings declined. Bethany's forgivable PPP loan, through First Northern Bank, \$213K funded. The 1% interest loan is for 8 weeks of payroll, utilities, mortgage interest & then will be forgiven by the federal government. Talk to Curt Johnston, treasurer, to help with Bethany stewardship efforts.



Property Planning: Bethany property team, Terra Realty Advisors (TRA), MADI architects, Swank Construction, IC Engineering Geotech, Phillipi Structural, & Clabaugh Landscape Design work to complete permit drawings. Bethany congregation gave the go ahead to construct building C&D when \$2.7MM dedicated cash is in the bank. Timing depends on city permits & fundraising efforts. The Vacaville Unified School District (VUSD) letter of intent (LOI) to purchase 621 S. Orchard includes \$2.4MM cash as is + free lease back after escrow closes until the new church is built. The purchase agreement with VUSD is under negotiation. God continues to bless Bethany: consider \$700K net insurance proceeds + \$600K for 2 houses + \$2.4MM = \$3.7MM for Orchard property. Bethany congregation voted to proceed with sale of Orchard & design of new sanctuary. A2R Architects is producing a sanctuary rendition for Ulatis.

Orchard Preschool building fire demolition: Ray Clemes of Top Notch Construction is managing the project to move data connection weather head to the roof of a new waterproof utility enclosure mounted on the slab over the existing electrical room for data, electrical, & sprinkler controller & demolish the burned building for ~\$100K.

Property maintenance: Orchard: Thanks to Bethany preschool teachers for sorting materials stored in FH for saving & for sale. Parking lot sale is the 2nd weekend in June. Thanks to Sharone Webb for maintaining beautiful flowers at sanctuary entry. Ulatis: Thanks to help of Mike McCall, Doug Connor, Hew Hesterman, Darrol Wilson, Julie & Korey Johnson, & Amy & Ron Shively for construction of an 8'x12' shed. Thanks to those who moved toddler materials from Orchard into the Ulatis shed. The Orchard shed roof is repaired. Contact Mike McCall to help with maintenance & projects.

Business Management: Council manages Bethany business work flow & records retention: special thanks to Natalie Hart, Michelle Aas, Diane Irby, Curt Johnston, Shawn Sanborn, Carole Wilson, & Ron Shively. Meeting weekly with US Bank helps ensure tax exempt bond finance covenants are met. Refinance discussions have restarted with First Northern Bank now that the PPP loan wave has passed.

Church council reporting: Ron Shively – President, Shawn Sanborn –VP, Carole Wilson - Secretary



From the Elder's

Dear Friend of God
Church Members and school kids:

Good morning from the sunny, Warm West Coast of California. Hello to my family of fellow christians. Hello to all those who love Jesus and care about the future of our children. You are all pilgrims journeying on a straight and narrow path that leads to the Celestial City not made with human hands.

Take just a moment and consider all that God has blessed you today and all along the way of our lives. Pause to reflect...

Did you recall all those dear moments when God permitted us to come into His House of Prayer, to hear His man of the hour, our pastor give us a sermon of God's Word? Did you thank God recently that He alone has kept the doors of Bethany Lutheran Ministries (Church and elementary school, and preschool) open for our teens, toddlers, elderly seniors, and young married couples and families of the rest of us? Well I have...and I encourage each of us to do the same. God loves our prayers and our fellowship. I can only imagine how precious we children of God are in His sight. He truly loves us.

Perhaps these few weeks of absence has made the heart fond of what we've all come to love. Pray that God will bless our coming in and going out of His presence- whether at our homes or at 621 S. Orchard Avenue or 1011 Ulatis Drive. I know all the children love their teachers and their principal, Dr. Chris Smith and Mrs Cindy Miller, our preschool director.

In these perilous times in which 60,000 Americans have lost their lives due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our hearts are heavy and anxieties play upon our minds.

Yet we know this is only for a season and God is always faithful to His Word: "And it came--to pass."

As members of your Board of Elders, we have been stepping up our meetings to try and reach out to all our members. We've done this by the weekly video sermons (Elder Jim Witt) and Church Pastor Phillip Pledger and Church President Ron Shively and the praise bank and readers.

We have also been immersed in sorting out safety precautions and looking at seating arrangements in the church sanctuary to allow and foster communion services. Don Henrich, Chief Elder has encouraged us to work together to set in motion, a return to the eventual full services on Sunday. That day will soon be here.



Pastor has been quick to point out that our services must continue safely and in order. We need to restore our LCMS style of services we have all come to look forward to each Sunday.

Pastor Phil has also reminded us that God's Work and Bethany's mission requires we all be cheerful givers to the work before us. Jesus once gave the disciples the Great Commission,

"Go ye into all the world and make disciples of the nations."

In order to do this work before us, we have to remember stewardship. We have to focus our eyes on Christ and place great emphasis on our giving of time, talents, and treasure.

We have stayed true to our commitment to outreach even in previous times of financial (world) struggling. We have always encouraged everyone to look at our giving to our church so that we can keep this amazing community of faith going...and going in the way that fits our needs. In 2020, this year, we continue this focus hoping that people will pledge 10% of their income and increase their giving as incomes increase. Please begin thinking prayerfully, progressively, and proportionately about your giving.

What each of Bethany's pastors have done in years past, no matter the issues in our world, have been to write to our members and to encourage and lift one another up.

One pastor, Vern Oestman wrote to all of us the following:
 "You are a congregation of generous people. May you give generously to the churches ministry and mission this year. As you give, may you know the joy of giving and the satisfaction of knowing what an important presence this church is in the world."

We are so very blessed to welcome our new spiritual leader and to experience once more God's gift of Christian leadership to our aspects of Bethany Lutheran's wide-spread ministry to many children, adults, families, and the vast world at large. Let's give God more than lip service, dig deep in your wallets, pocketbooks, check books and simply give. Make your contributions count. This is not the time to consider retreat. The strength of the shoulder-to-shoulder body of Christ is more needed today. God's peace be multiplied to you all...

...and God's will be done.



-Your Board of Elders



JUNE 2020

A Christian Look at COVID19

It is hard for us to wrap our heads around the reality that COVID-19 has flipped our world upside down. It seems unreal, like a scary movie. We are undoubtedly witnessing history in the making. Years from now, scholars and historians will analyze the effects of COVID-19 on our society, economy, mental health, physical health, and our spirituality. In many ways, the world has been caught by surprise, but God most certainly has not. In the middle of chaos, make no mistake, God is at work. His plans will not be thwarted, and his people will not be overcome.

Here are 4 signs God is at work in the chaos of COVID-19.

Greater Openness to the Gospel

It has become clear for all of us that regardless of how much we plan, strategize, and think ahead, we cannot control what happens to us and around us. It might seem like bad timing for people to be more open to the gospel because churches are closed, but the opposite could not be truer. Though we do not understand it, God's timing is perfect. As believers in Jesus, we have an opportunity to minister and share the truth of Jesus as at no other time. God is on the move and we can be part of the work he is doing. We are all witnessing a pandemic, so we are all standing on common ground. There is an opportunity to share with friends and family why we are not paralyzed by fear. Let our peace be a testimony to the truth of Jesus. This is a time when more people are open to hear about Jesus and it is time for believers in Jesus to start sharing.

Community is Stronger than Ever

It is quite astonishing how connected people are even when they are unable to see one another in-person. God is at work drawing people together during this time of crisis. Say what you will about technology, but it has been a true benefit for families, friends, and churches to stay connected during a time of social distancing. People are finding ways to be intentional in their communication through Zoom calls, FaceTime, and other creative ways. Even social media is being used to encourage one another. In this time of social distancing we are being reminded that we were never meant to live in isolation. Part of being created in



the image of God is being designed for community. God even said, man not was not meant to be alone. It is not the way he designed humanity.

Forced Rest

The world has slowed down in a way we have never seen before. The mandate to shelter-in-place is forcing people to pause and rest. It is not a pace of life our society is used to living and it is not one that comes easy, but it is a life God has called us to. God even modeled rest for us, “And on the seventh day God rested from all His work that He had done” ([Genesis 2:7](#)). This model of rest from work is something we should follow and likely, not something many of us are particularly good at. Rest is not only good for our physical health. It is good for our spiritual and emotional health, too. To create space in our lives for rest is a way God restores us and revitalizes us. God is moving through this time to remind us about the goodness of rest in our lives.

Your Faith is Growing

It does not matter who you are, COVID-19 is affecting everyone in one way or another. This is a time when believers are collectively facing hardship. The church has a long history of growing during times of trials and difficulty. Christians should view difficult situations as opportunities to grow in faith. Moments like these are when we begin to wrestle with the promises of God and we undoubtedly find Him to be faithful. The relief might not come when we want it and it might look different than what we thought, but God is always true to His promises. It is in times of hardship that we see God’s glory on full display. God moves in ways only He can. It is out of this place our faith will grow deeper, stronger, and wider, but God has not stopped working. He is not silent or passive. He is on the move. He is working in the hearts and faith of His people. It may be difficult to see the hand of God during this time, but rest assured God is at work during the COVID-19 crisis. He is working all things for His glory and for the good of those who love him. Adapted from an article by Tamara Chamberlain.

WOMEN’S RETREAT- “SOUL” FOOD TO BE RESCHEDULED

We are still planning our Women’s retreat. The date has changed because of COVID19 restrictions. Stay tuned for updates.

YOUR SPECIAL INVITATION: Every Bethany lady is invited to attend and participate in LWML

The purpose/goal of our ministry: To provide opportunities for personal spiritual growth, a richer prayer life, and retreating into the Word of God. We value,



accept and encourage each other in Christ. We help each woman to grow in her relationship with others and to use her God-given talents and gifts.

MONDAY NIGHT WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Our Bible study will begin meeting again on June 22nd at 7:00 pm at Terri Denton's home.

MEETING DATE – SUNDAY, June 21st

Please put Sunday, June 21st on your calendar. We will hold our meeting in room B-8 at 12:00 noon. This will be an important meeting! We will be distributing our yearly funds and holding yearly elections.

CNH District Convention was to be held in June, but it has been cancelled. The grant voting was scheduled for the end of May. These are the grants we save our MITES for during the next 2 years. I will have the new list available at our next meeting.

MITE CHALLENGE – The new goal chart will be posted in mid-June. Praise God for each Mite and please continue to fill those Mite Boxes. Let us show God's wondrous work to others!

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE – If you have an idea for a mission project, please come to one of the LWML meetings. Many joyful hands are an asset and doing the Lord's work is rewarding. Praise God daily and encourage a fellow sister in Christ through the spoken word, cards, emails and prayers!

Carole Wilson – LWML President

Dear Bethany Family,

We would like to take the opportunity to thank you for all your prayers, phone calls, and cards. You are truly a blessing to us and we love you all!

Jerry is doing well. It's a slow process and easy to get impatient. We need to be reminded that God is in control of all things. We just need to continue to rely on him for wisdom and strength.

We can't wait to be back with you all in worship.



In Him,

Jerry and Cindy

Bethany Youth Ministry Update – Summer

The youth group is hanging in there. The Youth group is still meeting every week via Zoom and doing a bible study. Thank you all that are doing it. We have a good time and we study the word of god. Kudos goes to Pastor Pledger for spending some time with the youth. We really enjoy his participation.

The Youth Group is taking a break over the Summer Time. Once restrictions are lifted, we will send out invites so we all can get together. We are hoping to meet as a group sometime in August. In the meantime, we just made a puppet video for the children's sermon and we are still meeting every Sunday on Zoom, the link to the Zoom Meeting is below.

SAVE THE DATE – We rescheduled our Mt. Cross Event where we will be doing ziplining and the ropes course. We will be going on **Sunday, September 20th**. This is an all-day event and will include lunch.

Be safe, wash your hands, practice social distancing, and pray to God and Jesus. We will see you all soon!

Bethany Youth Ministry Event Calendar

Bible Study - Every Sunday Morning at 10:00 am on ZOOM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/810373457?pwd=Uzl3cWcrNzMrM01TWmMyWkY0WTg2dz09>

Meeting ID: 810 373 457

Password: youth



Preschool News

Our 2020 Summer enrichment program started Tuesday May 26th. We are at our state licensing cap of 10 children per classroom right now. With hopefully more interest coming in the weeks to come.

We have started STEM Friday's with Miss Nat! So for 30mins on Friday morning we will do a new STEM activity..

The first week of school the children learned all about God's Helpers! Doctors, Nurses, Dentists, Teachers, Pastors, Police, Fire Fighters, Garbage Personnel, Farmers, Postal Workers, ect. All the amazing people that help make our city work.

June's themes are: Growing in God's Garden, Creepy Crawlers, A Camping We Will Go, God's Galaxy, and God Bless America!

This week's STEM was learning about chemical reactions and density by making two lava lamps! We took water, oil, food coloring, and alka seltzer tabs...and in the words of Kazan "WOW Miss Nat this was just amazing!!!"



A Morning With Lincoln

By Don Fortin

On the last day of February 2013, I compose these sentences. I'll try to describe the foolishly wild thing I attempted to-day. In completion of this "thing" I believe it achieved for me a feeling of accomplishing good. Although I felt reservation to follow through, I may not have ever come to know the ecstasy that I'll compare to the climb up Mount Everest. Certainly the hero of this story isn't me, but like Mount Everest, he is beyond all comparison to others. So...here's a brief description of what occurred.

Two weeks ago, after finishing a story with First graders, I spied a poster on the corridor wall depicting our 16th U.S. President, Abraham Lincoln. I discovered Mrs. Zadnik, another First Grade teacher, was the artist. I told Mrs. Z how impressed I was by her drawing and as we spoke, discovered she and I both harbor an affinity for Lincoln. I boldly without much thought, made a comment that I'd come back in costume after President's Day when her students return to school. I also said I would give a recital of Mr. Lincoln. And that dear Reader is just what happened to-day. I dressed as old Abe and recited the Gettysburg Address.

A search of local stores in our area and a quick conversation with other parents at the school, resulted in gathering a Lincoln type outfit, all pieced together: a long, black western duster frock; a replica stovepipe hat; a bewhiskered chin beard; a crepe bow tie. From my house, I discovered I could still wedge myself into my own tuxedo shirt. The effect was stunning-I looked like a shorter, plump-faced version of Abe-maybe he had brother named Fat Albert? I practiced in the mirror looking weary, forlorn and almost defeated-as indeed I would have been if I were doing the service for 50,000 slain American soldiers (most Union & Confederate men were born in this country).



The visage of our hero lingered for a day. That night I endured a troubled half-sleep. I argued with myself that seven-year-olds would not understand the big words in the Gettysburg Address. It was this way that I finally slept. Morning came and found me surprised at how eager I was to galvanize my meager talent to depict a man of such eminence. It seems almost surreal to believe Lincoln actually existed in time; To-day, he is only on coins & bills of our currency; on posters, stamps; as the name of parks and neighborhoods; in school and library books; but he is in our memory, tucked away in since we first heard his story in America's many elementary schools we attended. People with only a passing knowledge of Lincoln, cannot help but admire him for all that he now represents.

Bright and early, I entered the school, a little worried that some Smart Alex might see and call out "Hey Willie Wonka," for it is true; in the mirror I appeared a poor specimen to take on such a legend. I entered the room with a furlled up oversize American flag that must have made a peculiar sight. The children has been obliged to study the dry, one-dimension Lincoln during class; what I did not count on was the perpetual kindred spirit teachers and students share of this beloved American.

I commenced my talk with an improvised text sort of a bio bit: Lincoln's year of formal education; his reading of his Bible by candle; Lincoln's judicious repayment of every cent he borrowed; his love of Eddie, Willie, and Robert Lincoln, his sons. I recited the story of the young girl who was the same age as these students- who wrote to the President-Elect "Grow some chin whiskers and strengthen your stature as a leader." He did just what the girl recommended.

A teaching moment was made when I asked for volunteers to stand behind me with the large flag fully extended in their little hands like a beautiful battle sheet draped on a clothesline. I began to tell them the words: Four score and seven years ago..." in a sotto voice whisper. It drew them in like birds straining in the tree to hear the sound of raindrops. My nervous uncertainty fell away as I gestured with my right hand and tugged the lapel of the long coat with my left hand. My glasses say low on the bridge of my nose like spectacles. I raised my frame by tipping on my toes



yet still missing Lincoln's lofty mark of 6'4". I finished off the immortal ending words "...that this new birth of freedom...shall not perish from the earth..."

I lowered my head and dropped my hands in a reverent stance, half of these children silently stood, edged close, and began to hug their hero-it was for me in the representative form; but it was the Great Emancipator for whom they were displaying their love.

I doffed my hat and departed the class. I thought how I should never repeat such a finer hour with children. I thank the Lord for He guides our steps and by His hand encourages us along. Mr. Lincoln would have been okay with this recital, I hope, for he loved children and the students' response clearly showed it would have warmed his heart to say the least.



June Birthdays

Charlotte Carline	June 01
Michael Dabbert	June 01
Johnny Wilson	June 01
Billy IV Kennon	June 02
Betty Olson	June 02
Nina Helton	June 03
Beverly Canova	June 04
Machiko Celli	June 06
Kathryn Johnson	June 06
Adam Irby	June 07
Janet Wetzel	June 08
Michele Reimers	June 09
Xanthia Warren	June 09
Laura Provencher	June 10
Cynthia Miller	June 11
Yvonne DiMichele	June 12
Elizabeth Fortin	June 12
Mitchell Provencher	June 12
Raymond Wenger	June 12
Brandon Carline	June 17
Gary Gardner	June 17
Jeff Strickland	June 17
Randy Pittman	June 21
Kyle Templeton	June 21
Cade Weiss	June 21
Cheryl Elskes	June 23
Renee Bassett	June 26
Katie Ganaway	June 27
Katy Green	June 27
Carly Lamphear	June 27
John Fredericks	June 29
Wanda McPadden	June 30



God's blessings on June Babies!
Statistical Report- May 3-24, 2020

<i>Week #</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Worship Attendance</i>	<i>General Offering Weekly Giving</i>
<i>18</i>	<i>5/3/20</i>	<i>168</i>	<i>\$4,795.00</i>
<i>19</i>	<i>5/10/20</i>	<i>143</i>	<i>\$6,135.00</i>
<i>20</i>	<i>5/17/20</i>	<i>114</i>	<i>\$8,215.00</i>
<i>21</i>	<i>5/24/20</i>	<i>90</i>	<i>\$8,950.00</i>

Average weekly attendance for current calendar year: 128

Meet Our Staff

Senior Pastor- Pastor Phillip Pledger

Church Administrative Assistant- Natalie Hart

School Principal- Dr. Chris Smith

Preschool Director- Cindy Miller

***Bethany Church Council- Janine Browne, Hew Hesterman, Diane Irby, Curt Johnston,
Karen Loewe, Mike McCall, Shawn Sanborn, Ron Shively, Carole Wilson***

Bethany Elder Board- Don Fortin, Don Henrich, Rick Martinez, Jerry Miller, Jim Witt

Fellowship Ministry- Cathy Hesterman

LWML- Carole Wilson

Properties- Mike McCall

Youth- Kevin Shaw

