Happenings

Youth Group Nature Hike
Sunday, November 8

Women’s Bible Study at Terry Denton’s home on Thursdays at 7pm

Wednesday Advent Services
12pm & 7pm
December 2
December 9
December 16

Christmas Eve Services
5 pm & 7 pm

THANKSGIVING SERVICE
9 am

Meeting Sunday, November 15 at Noon in the Fellowship Hall
The Month of November is known best as the month of Thanksgiving. Although Thanksgiving is not a “religious” holiday as such, the Church has gladly sanctified the day as an opportunity to join the whole country in expressing an attitude of thankfulness to God for His great bounty. It was President Abraham Lincoln, in 1863, who formally established this national day of "Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens", to be celebrated on the last Thursday in November.

There is much for which we can be thankful. As an American, we can be thankful that we live in a free country, that we can freely choose our leaders, that we have historically unparalleled wealth. In the United States, we can worship God freely and enjoy the fact that the government generally stays out of the business of running our churches. As a nation, we are free to engage in the “pursuit of happiness” and invest our lives in what matters most to us as individuals.

For the Christian, there is MUCH more for which we can be thankful. Not only do we live in the most highly blessed country the world has ever known, but we also can be (literally) infinitely thankful for the blessings we have received through Christ Jesus. In Christ we are saints of God, our sins forgiven, filled with God’s Spirit, and a future secure on account of Christ.

But what is thankfulness?

Thankfulness is an attitude. Thankfulness is a healthy foundation on which we embrace life. It is very easy to focus on all the frustrations and troubles in life. As a nation, we could focus on how politically divided we are, center our attention on the riots and demonstrations and the many uncertainties and fears many people share. But we can still maintain an attitude of deep thankfulness. Thank God that He has created this nation of free-thinking and freedom loving people.
Thank God and thank the many people who have fought for and who maintain freedom for the people of our nation; many of whom have paid for that freedom with their lives, fortunes and sacred honor. And we who are yet alive are recipients of the sacrifice of many millions of people who have come before us. We can (and I think should be) profoundly grateful.

And in regards to God; Christians sometimes focus on what we DON’T yet have, on the divisions in the Kingdom of God on earth, and internal issues in the local congregation. But we are infinitely blessed to be part of what God is doing in history; that God invaded space and time to become flesh, to live as the perfect human, Who paid the ultimate price as a sacrifice. And while God pays what we owe, many thoughtlessly and carelessly squander His good graces. We can (and I think should be) profoundly grateful.

Thankfulness is an attitude, an attitude we must develop by learning more about what other people sacrificed for us. . . learning about what God sacrificed for us. . . and learn to appreciate the phenomenal gifts we have received that we don’t deserve.

That’s why the Psalmist writes that we should enter the gates with thanksgiving. We enter worship with the attitude of profound gratefulness and pour out our worship to God as the ONE who moved heaven and earth so that His gates could be open to us. We enter fellowship with one another with profound gratefulness and greet one another as valued saints of God, as those who struggle alongside us and we work out our salvation as God’s dear children. We enter prayer. . .service . . .our marriage. . .the raising of our children. . .we enter those tasks and relationships as people God has raised from death to life and who has filled us with Himself in the form of His Spirit. We are filled with the living Logos of God. . .undeserved as that may be.

And for all this and infinitely more, I am profoundly thankful, and I will give thanks to Him and praise His name!

--Pastor Phil Pledger
Greetings from Bethany Council
“God will answer you from God’s holy heaven with mighty victories by God’s right hand.” —Psalm 20:6

Congregation: In September, the Bethany congregation voted 75 to 13 to pay off the USBANK loan & obtain a partial refinance gap loan of $800,000. Council recommends a loan from Lutheran Church Extension Fund. The congregation met October 25 for a Q&A, review terms, & approve the LCEF loan resolution. Prayerfully review the email from Carole.Wilson@GoBethany.com and vote if you did not attend in person.

Stewardship: God continues to bless the Bethany congregation & keeps His work going forward. $63,660 is matched of the $107K anonymous matching fund! GoBethany.com has a link to make online donations via MobileCause. Thanks for putting the work of Christ first in your plans. Talk to Bob Johnston (treasurer) to help with Bethany stewardship efforts.

Property Planning: The Bethany congregation voted to delay construction of buildings until ministry needs stabilize after COVID19 restrictions. In the meantime, Council & Elders are organizing to begin cottage meetings to get input from the congregation on which direction to proceed when pandemic restrictions lift. All construction timing depends

Outreach:
- Bethany School is reaching families with Jesus’ love. There are 124 students enrolled in the TK-8 school and 25 in the preschool.
- Bethany worship moved into the Orchard sanctuary with COVID-19 precautions & online at GoBethany.com.
- Pastor Phil began a new Sunday morning Bible study on Ephesians.
- Kevin Shaw holds the Bethany youth group online & outdoors.
- Janine Browne will distribute the Bethany photo directory as soon as it is printed. You can request an electronic copy from Natalie Hart.
- Outreach Bible-based classes needing sponsors to organize: parenting, personal finance, exercise class, and Saturday food & craft events.
- Your personal invitation can help friends & school families learn about Jesus’ love for them.
- Talk to Pastor Pledger to help with outreach.
on congregational decisions, city permits, fund raising efforts, & pandemic limitations. The Orchard property sale escrow is scheduled to close on October 28 (free lease back included). Look for the Ulatis sanctuary design posted in the Narthex.

**Property Maintenance**: Ulatis: Tree trimming away from building roofs is needed. Orchard: Clearing of rain gutters is needed. Contact Mike McCall to help with maintenance & projects.

**Business Management**: Curt Johnston stepped down from Council & Bob Johnston stepped in as treasurer. Pastor Pledger started a finance committee to streamline financial reporting. Pastor Pledger, in cooperation with Council, manages Bethany business work flow & records retention: special thanks to Natalie Hart, Diane Irby, Bob & Curt Johnston, Shawn Sanborn, Carole Wilson, & Ron Shively. Paychex, Inc. was hired to manage Bethany’s payroll & will help prepare PPP loan forgiveness documentation. Bob volunteered to reconcile bank statements vs QuickBooks to replace our bookkeeper, Michelle Aas. Phillip Medlin began the FY 2020-21 financial audit. Bethany awaits the Orchard escrow close to partially pay down the USBANK loan with cash from property sales, insurance settlement, and cash on hand. Complete payoff will happen when the refinance loan funds.

Church Council reporting: Ron Shively – President | Shawn Sanborn –VP | Carole Wilson - Secretary

Spencer and I (and baby Amelia) would like to thank you for the beautiful baby shower that you planned for our baby. God unexpectedly brought her a little early, so we regret that we were unable to attend but we are extremely touched and blessed by the showering of gifts that we received. Spencer, Kristen, and Amelia feel very blessed to be a part of such a loving church family.

God’s blessings to you all.

Love, The Anthonys

Welcome to the World, Amelia!
Beloved, these words are meant to cheer you and to give honor. As we praise our Lord, we must remember our commitment to God and to one another.

Question: What does spiritual commitment mean?

It’s a shared question for any Christian adult or teenager who already feels beleaguered by school, work obligation, feeling pulled by needs of the family and the owed monthly bills. It’s understandable how perplexing that question can be now in 2020 with corona virus19 and unemployment. Some of us remain sheltered and all of us to some extent feel a little handicapped now. Hopefully you wear a mask.

But in this we count the cost of being (or becoming) a disciple of Christ. By faith, we believe in the coming of Our Lord Jesus. We have seen His marvelous work in our lives and we understand we walk by faith and not by sight. Hasn’t Jesus brought us through this far and isn’t Eternity forever? Do you trust God for your increase? Are God’s Words true? Hasn’t God pulled us all back to Him by His marvelous love and gentle, loving spirit in times of overwhelming Life? God certainly has. We are indebted to Our Heavenly Father who created all things. Everything we have, our very breath and our vitality, come from our Creator.

Today we hear the birds singing in the treetops. This fine morning’s song is unknown to our minds. Why were the birds even singing? The Bible says let everything that has breath praise the Lord. “Don’t they know it’s the end of the world?” Skeeter Davis sang these words sixty years ago? Haven’t the birds heard about this virus plague? Aren’t they concerned and stressed about possible food shortages, the political scene in Washington D.C.?

“Oh my; oh my; whatever will happen to me and my little chicks? “ the mother bird does not say in her song. King David our hero says the bird does not worry about her next meal for her and her chicks. She trusts God for all things because she neither toils nor spins as a bird of the air. Like the lilies, she knows who holds tomorrow--Father God. So why should we needlessly worry or complain? Eighty-five times the Bible advises us to “fret not.” If we know God is in charge and as all our currency says: “In God We Trust”, isn’t that enough for us to rely on?

Our Pastor is truly bless’ed and blessing us at Bethany Lutheran Ministries with good sermons (Gobethany.com. on YouTube), so perhaps we don’t feel the back-lash of anxiety as much as others—thank you Sir, to Pastor Phillip!
Prayers go up to heaven from us in Vacaville, Dixon, Fairfield, Suisun, Vallejo, Winters and Woodland to the Throne of Mercy in heaven; and the return answered prayers come down to your friends, relatives and co-workers. As someone said: “Prayer changes things—if we are faithful.” Jesus reminded the disciples, “if you are faithful in a few matters, I will make you master over many.” That is a wonderful concept to include in your precious promises we rely on in our daily devotions.

Is it possible we can do more to the work of the ministry of the Gospel? We can consult God and ask Him: “How can I be more fulfilled in kingdom work?” It isn’t enough to do natural things: tithing, singing hymns, witnessing about your faith daily. Yes, these are important to help sustain faith in these confusing days in which we live.

An answer is to seek God’s will in your life. When pressed to respond how we can be used in the ministry, we may ask how it impacts our family time; how will it fit our family budget; and are we equipped to serve in some specific capacity in which we have never served before? Sometimes a change of work is as good as a rest.

Our church has a Commitment Sunday and so it is vital to review your Covenant with your Savior and His church. What talents can you bring into action? With God’s help, you can raise your hand willing to do supernatural work. That may be unfamiliar territory. Some of us are content to just occupy a seat in the pew on Sundays, content to fall back on our history of serving the church when we were younger and consumed with that First Love of our Savior. What about today? Shall we rest on our laurels and leave it to our fellow members to carry the workload for Christ? We’re told that 80% of church duties are done by 20% of the congregation. Surely that fact should be a wake-up call. Are you in the pleasant joyful 20%?

Remember that to-day is all we are promised. We cannot reach backward and change our past; neither can we reach into the future. Only what we do for the Master now, to-day will count throughout eternity.

Walt Disney was all about the future. He even coined a phrase called ‘be an Imaginer’ (like a thoughtful engineer who envisions possibilities). Maybe we don’t have that ability to have a vision? But our Pastor does and if you consult with him he will share your part in that future. What we all have though, is a Savior who went to Calvary for our sins and shed His blood and gave His body for our Salvation. Jesus paid the awful price for redemption of our sinful souls.

Whatever you can do to move the Gospel forward can be a wonderful thing. Can you write letters to encourage convalescents and shut-ins, or join in with the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League? Can you give more time to prayer for all the saints of God who carry the workload of our church?

Be as little Samuel in the temple who said: “Here am I, Lord, your servant?” So shall we do, for now is the hour and the need is great.
The Witnessing Continuum

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies…that…God may be glorified.

(1 Peter 4:10-11a)

Witnessing is a continuum that runs from “anonymous” to “personal.” “Anonymous witnessing” includes the “Sure I will write a check!” response. “Personal witnessing” happens face-to-face, like what Jesus did. In between, there are many levels.

Wherever you are in the continuum, be confident that the Holy Spirit is with you; be bold in your witness! (Adapted from Two Minute Tuesdays, by Candy Habich.)

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

The purpose/goal of our ministry is to provide opportunities for personal spiritual growth, a richer prayer life, retreat into the Word of God, mission outreach and encourage growth of time and talents in each person. Women are encouraged to seek out and serve the people of their communities and the world.

WINTER WONDERLAND CRAFT FAIR

The LWML craft fair will be held on Saturday, November 7th, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. BRING YOUR BAKED GOODS TO THE FELLOWSHIP HALL FRIDAY MORNING!!! Stay and help package items for sale in the LWML booth. If you have questions, contact Pat Green at imktzmom@sbcglobal.net or call her at 707-365-3726.

THURSDAY NIGHT WOMEN’S BIBLE STUDY

Bible study at Terri Denton’s home, 521 Walnut Avenue THURSDAY evenings at 7:00pm.
**MITE CHALLENGE** – Bethany’s goal for 2020-2022 is $3800. As of September 30th, Bethany has sent $889. Our goal chart is posted in the Narthex. Praise God for each Mite and please continue to fill those Mite Boxes. Let us show God’s wondrous work to others!

**MEETING DATE – SUNDAY, November 15th**
Put Sunday, November 15th on your calendar. We will hold our meeting at 12:00 pm after our Church service. **We will hold our meeting in the Fellowship Hall.** Be sure to bring your mask.

**YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE** – If you have an idea for a mission project, please come to one of the LWML meetings. Praise God daily and encourage a fellow sister in Christ through the spoken word, cards, emails, and prayers!

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**Winter Wonderland**

**LWML CRAFT FAIR**

Bethany School, 1101 Ulatis Drive  
Saturday, November 7  
9am – 4pm

Sponsored by the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League

To sign up for a space or if you have questions, contact Pat Green at imkyzmom@sbcglobal.net or 707-365-3726
Youth Update

Reaching Out The youth group continues to evolve, even during these unusual times. Our objective is to involve our youth and reach out to other youth to get them involved in church. We are doing this in various ways-

- We performed a puppet play for the children’s sermon on “the One Who knows” Even though actors did not perform the puppets, the congregation was able to use its imagination and get the message—that God is the one who knows.
- Several youth made crafts, helping out the LWML for their November 7 Craft Fair. Please attend the Craft Fair to help out the LWML.
- We also have a new Bible Study—a “Hybrid” Bible Study. We are doing it in person and on Zoom. This allows more youth to be involved as they can either come to church or stay at home depending on their comfort level with the virus. Bible Study is from 9:45 am – 10:45 am on the patio.
- Of course, we have designed this year’s events to be COVID-safe, keeping within social distancing restrictions. We mask and most events are

Enjoy a beautiful Oregon Christmas Wreath and raise funds for Bethany’s Youth Group monthly activities and send them to the next LCMS Youth Gathering—what a great way for you to encourage our youth as they learn about Christ and their Lutheran identity!

Catalogs & order forms are in the Narthex along with a Wreath Box where you can drop off your order. Also, you can contact Kevin Shaw at 707-628-8347 or nafl@nafl-usa.com.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8 IS THE LAST DAY TO ORDER YOUR WREATHS!

Your wreath will be ready to pick up and put on your door on Sunday, November 29.
held outside. The most important thing is to be together and praise God about His Message.

• Please let the youth know that they are welcome to our events either online or in person. Let’s celebrate life and our love for Jesus and God together.  

   Note: no Bible Study November 1.
Our theme for November is "Give Thanks." We will also learn all about where our food comes from and eating healthy. We thank God for all His Blessings!

What are you thankful for?

Uriel—"My mom and dad and me"
Tony—"I can play with my friends at school"
Alana—"Going to the park and smelling the plants"
Cruz—"I'm thankful for burgers"
Renner—"Unicorns and cats"
Annie—"My little sister. We call her Kiwi"

Enjoying the last few warm days!
November Birthdays

- William Johnston  
- Amy Shively  
- Howard Scully  
- Clayton Young  
- Marcy Savala  
- Kathy Wibbeler  
- Kevin Bowman  
- Brian Bowman  
- Carol Schmidt  
- Justin Jamison  
- Marilyn Pye  
- Barbara Ray  
- James Witt  
- Eliya Andrish  
- Mathew Cole  
- Claire Quinata  
- Vickie Johnston  
- Micah Schmidt  
- Cassandra Browne  
- Debbie Duncan  
- Grayson Morris  
- Dean Hess  
- Arthur Kamman  
- Conrad Krass  
- Lauren Hesterman  
- Cody Weiss  
- Vernon Wetzel  
- Gregory Stringer  
- Stepheh Sutphin  
- Meghan Evans  
- Delores Orcher  
- Edward Johnston  
- Alexis Simmons  
- Gisella Barbour  
- Michael Goodson  
- Burt Endsley  
- Annabelle Pittman

Statistical Report

### October

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Meet Our Staff

Senior Pastor  |  Dr. Phillip Pledger
Administrative Assistant  |  Natalie Hart
School Principal  |  Dr. Chris Smith
Preschool Director  |  Cindy Miller
Fellowship Ministry  |  Cathy Hesterman
LWML  |  Carole Wilson
Properties  |  Mike McCall
Youth  |  Kevin Shaw

Bet hany Church Council
Hew Hesterman
Diane Irby
Curt Johnston
Karen Loewe
Mike McCall
Shawn Sanborn
Ron Shively
Carole Wilson

Bet hany Elder Board
Don Fortin
Don Henrich
Bob Johnston
Rick Martinez
Jerry Miller
Jim Witt

Did you order your wreath?

Lutheran Church Missouri Synod
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