Happenings

Wednesday Advent Services
L I V E - S T R E A M E D
12pm
- December 2
- December 9
- December 16

Happenings

LWML Meeting
Sunday, December 13 in the Fellowship Hall

- fill cookie boxes for our shut-ins
- put Christmas bags together for the school children

Bring a small side dish for lunch [and bring your mask]!

*Note: The Christmas Eve Services MAY be live-streamed—check the website. At least one of the services will be uploaded.
tree lighting

Friday, December 11th  6:00 p.m.
Bethany School  (1011 Ulatis Drive)

Please join us near the Nativity Scene on the front lawn for tree lighting and caroling.

Dress warmly and bring a flashlight.

Come early for hot chocolate and cookies.

Outdoor event – COVID guidelines will be followed—if you prefer, you can sit in your car and watch and sing from afar.
Birthday Party

PLEASE JOIN US TO CELEBRATE IN HONOR OF...

Jesus Christ

December 25

OR ANY OTHER DAY, ANY OTHER TIME, WHENEVER YOU’RE READY—he’s flexible just don’t be too late or you’ll miss out on all the fun

Invite someone else to attend with you!

Place    in your heart... He’ll meet you there (you’ll hear Him knock)
Tickets  Admission is free. He’s already paid for everyone. (He says you would not have been able to afford it ... it cost Him everything He had!!)
Gift Suggestions    Your heart. He’s one of those people who already has everything . (He’s very generous in return, though just wait until you see what He has for you.)
Entertainment    Joy, Peace, Truth, Light, Life, Love, Real Happiness, Communion with God, Forgiveness, Miracles, Healing, Power, Eternity in Paradise, and much more! (All rated “G” so bring your family and friends.)
RSVP        Very Important! He must know ahead so He can reserve a spot for you at the table. Also, he’s keeping a list of His friends for future reference. He calls it the “Lamb’s Book of Life.”
Attire    Come as you are—grubbies are okay. He’ll be washing our clothes anyway. He said something about new white robes and crowns for everyone who stays ‘till the last.

“Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.” [fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints] “Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!” --Revelation 19:7-9 NIV
The year 2020 will go down into history as the craziest year ever! It feels as though since March we’ve been living in one type of quarantine or another in anxious anticipation that the year might soon end!

By the time you read this the Christmas sales will have begun and you will see many Christmas lights decorating everything from trees to office buildings. Christmas lights are pretty and they will help 2020 feel more festive AND they can remind us of God’s story of life and salvation. I would like to tell you about Roy G. Biv.

Christmas is a colorful time of year. These colors can remind us of God’s story and plan. Let’s look at some of the colors of Christmas:

**RED** – One of the primary colors, red reminds us of the blood of Jesus. He shed His blood that we might have life. 1 John 1:7 states: ... and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. Jesus planned to be The Sacrifice ever since man sinned. From Genesis through the ‘Law and the Prophets’ (both major and minor), God prepared His people for the coming of The Messiah, the Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world through sacrifice.

**ORANGE** - Perhaps the orange lights could remind us of the rusty nails that the soldiers drove into the hands and feet of Jesus. Imagine, our King dying such a death!

**GREEN** - Green is the color of LIFE on this planet. Jesus came not only that we might merely exist, but He came to give us FULLNESS of life. AND, this life isn’t only for the short time we’re here on this green planet, but a life that continues forever (and ever, and ever, alleluia, alleluia). 2 Peter 3:18 But GROW in grace, and in the knowledge of our God and savior Jesus Christ.

**GOLD** - Gold (or yellow) is a reminder of the eternity of heaven, a place where the paving stones are bars of gold, and the really valuable things are found in our love for and from God Himself, and our love for and from one another. Gold is a reminder of the eternal nature of the love of God and our eternal life in Him.

**BLUE** - The sky and the water are blue (I know that there are actually a myriad of colors represented in the sky and water, but for this simple message, we’ll use blue). Blue can remind us of the water of Baptism, where, by God’s grace and work our sins are forgiven and our life in Christ begins. Blue also reminds us of heaven (you know, like the song: My Blue Heaven). Because God came to us in the flesh, suffered and died for us in the person of Jesus, heaven is open to all who trust Jesus for life. John 14 says, If I go away, I will come and receive you unto myself. If I go I will come again, that where I am ... you may be also!
PURPLE - Purple is the color of royalty. Purple reminds me of the Royalty of Jesus Christ and the fact that God calls us to royalty in Him. Jesus is KING, and when He brings us into heaven He will seat us at His side as part of the Royal Family! (Look at Ephesians chapter 1 for more detail about our “royal treatment.”) You might also remember that Jesus, when He was arrested and beaten, wore a purple robe. His royal position, because of His love for us, caused Him to choose the cross for us! (Amazing love, how can it be, that you my King would die for me?)

WHITE - White represents purity. Jesus is pure, holy, and perfect. When Jesus comes into our life, He purifies us, makes us white and perfect and holy. . . in Him. Psalm 51:7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: WASH ME, and I shall be whiter than snow.

BROKEN - This isn’t actually a color, but I’ve never seen a Christmas display that didn’t have some broken lights. These are the colorless lights, the broken ones. When you see this, be reminded that we are by nature broken and colorless until illuminated by the light of Jesus Christ. Our colorlessness is why He came and suffered and died, that we might shine with His brightness in us.

Christmas is a time of many colors, and perhaps these colors could remind us of the story of Jesus, His coming to a colorless, broken world, to illumine us with the color of His grace, hope, peace, and life.

Now, who in the world is Roy G. Biv, and what does he have to do with our story? Well, some of you might remember learning about the Rainbow. The rainbow, an iridescent refraction of light caused by water droplets in the atmosphere, can remind us of the promises of God and the story of His amazing love for us. As God gave to Noah and his family the visual reminder of His promise not to destroy the world through water again, the colors of the rainbow can help remind us of His everlasting promise to rescue all who will trust in Him. Roy G. Biv is an acronym for the colors of the rainbow: Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, and Violet. These are the colors of the rainbow.

May God bless your Christmas season as you remember the Color of His Love!
Greetings from Bethany Council
“Be kinder than necessary because everyone you meet is fighting some battle”. JM Barry

Congregation: In October, Bethany congregation voted 71 to 3 for a resolution to accept the terms of LCEF loan of $800,000 to refinance the gap to pay off USBANK loan of $5.57MM. The rest of the payoff will be with cash on hand per Bethany congregation vote in September. Council awaits LCEF loan funding to pay off USBANK loan which could be as soon as December 15.

Stewardship: God continues to bless Bethany congregation & keeps His work going forward. $66,024 is matched of the $107K anonymous matching fund! GoBethany.com has link to mobile cause options for donations. Thanks for putting the work of Christ first in your plans. Talk to Bob Johnston (treasurer) to help with Bethany stewardship efforts.

Property Planning: All construction timing depends on congregation strategic plan decisions, city permits, fund raising efforts, & pandemic limitations. Orchard property sale escrow closed November 5 (free 1 year lease start date). Look at preliminary Ulatis sanctuary design posted in the Narthex.

Property maintenance: Ulatis: Trees were trimmed away from building A&B roofs & rain gutters cleared. A walkway light pedestal was accidentally knocked over & is repaired. Fence repair & tree trimming off of shed roof is needed. Orchard: Rain gutters were cleared & will need to be cleared again as leaves fall. Trees were trimmed off roof. Contact Mike McCall to help with maintenance.

Business Management: 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. Pastor Pledger meets regularly with the finance committee to monitor Bethany financials. PPP loan forgiveness application was submitted with the required documentation. Phillip Medlin completed FY 2020-21 financial audit.
Outreach:

- Bethany school is reaching families with Jesus love. 130 TK-8, 26 PS children enrolled. Bethany worship moves on-line due to COVID 19 precautions. Bethany leaders are developing strategic plans to be ready to proceed when pandemic restrictions lift.
- LWML craft fair at Ulatis campus was a huge success reaching into the community with Christian crafts. Many stopped by on their way to close by shopping venues who did not know about the fair.
- 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.
- Kevin Shaw holds Bethany youth group on line & outdoors.
- Be sure to pick up your copy of the Bethany photo directory in the Narthex.
- Talk to Pastor Pledger to help with outreach.

Church council reporting: Ron Shively – President, Shawn Sanborn –VP, Carole Wilson - Secretary
“My mom, who was a teacher, used to look at her students and see beyond the obvious, recognizing their gifts and abilities whether they saw them or not. She wanted to help them become all that they could become—and she got results.

We’ve all been entrusted with things that might not be obvious to ourselves or others as God’s gifts. But He has shaped each and every one of us with abilities, interests, and talents in distinct combinations and differing amounts that no one else has ever had in the past or will ever have in the future. We are unique, and what we bring to the table, thanks to Him, will not only bring us satisfaction and add something to those around us, but it will also glorify God.

There is a reason He has created us unique for this particular time in history. He knows what the world needs, and He has provided us with the gifts and abilities to address those needs for Him. Like the man who entrusted his money to his servants in Matthew 25:14-21, God expects that we will use the gifts He gives us, not hoard them. In the similar story of the ten servants in Luke 19:11-27, one servant hoarded the money the nobleman entrusted to him. He was afraid to use what he was given for fear he would lose it.

How often has that happened? Fear has a way of creeping into our lives and keeps us from becoming all God created us to be—keeping us from using the gifts and abilities we were given. Fear of failure. Fear we will disappoint someone. Fear we won’t measure up. Fears ingrained in us by a society that measures all the wrong things.

God is measuring how we use the gifts He’s given us. He measures how much we want to glorify Him and touch others—whether we fall short or not.”

Uncommon Key > God has given you incredible gifts and abilities, some more obvious than others. Are you using them? Write down what you think your unique gifts are and then ask your family or friends to write down what they think your gifts are. Compare the lists and prayerfully use those gifts and watch them multiply.

It is really a gift in how the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit communicate with each of us. What a blessing to see God work in this way! Have we truly identified the "individual" gifts God has given us and are we receptive to developing and using those gifts as God leads for His glory? Examine yourself and pray, "How can I use my God-given gifts to glorify God?"

Once you believe God has answered your prayers, share what you believe God is calling you to do with the gifts you’ve been provided. Let us each prayerfully and thoughtfully use our God given gifts to magnify and glorify God’s wonderful Kingdom of Peace!
In Jeremiah 10:1-5, God’s people were following customs of the heathen who cut down trees, shaped the wood into idols, decorated them with silver and gold ornaments, and worshiped them as gods. It is important we keep Christ central, and our worship of Him unhindered in our observance of Christmas. However, we do not believe it is unbiblical to have a Christmas tree lighted and decorated in our homes or the church.

1. The branches of the tree point upward and signifies praise to God.
2. The star at the top represents the star of Bethlehem.
3. The green of the evergreens is symbolic of eternal life, God’s gift to us through our Lord Jesus Christ.

God sent His Son to be our Savior! Merry Christmas!

YOUR SPECIAL INVITATION: Every Bethany lady is invited to attend and participate in LWML. We encourage women to seek out and serve the people of their communities and the world.

BETHANY OUTDOOR TREE LIGHTING – December 11th
This year, we are coordinating with our school families for an outdoor tree lighting at our Ulatis campus. Mark Friday, December 11th, at 6:00 pm. There will be Christmas caroling, cookies and hot chocolate! See you there!

MEETING DATE – SUNDAY, December 13th
Put Sunday, December 13th on your calendar. We will be filling cookie boxes for our shut-ins and putting our Christmas bags together for the school children. Bring a small side dish for lunch. We will hold our meeting in the Fellowship Hall. Be sure to bring your mask.

THURSDAY NIGHT WOMEN’S BIBLE STUDY
Bible study at Terri Denton’s home, 521 Walnut Avenue THURSDAY evenings at 7:00 pm. If you would like to zoom with us, contact Carole Wilson at thewilsons1976@gmail.com.

MITE CHALLENGE – Bethany’s goal for 2020-2022 is $3800. Please do not forget to fill your mite boxes. COVID has not stop our mission outreach. You can drop
your boxes in the Narthex or leave them in the church office. Praise God for each Mite. 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. Praise God daily and encourage a fellow sister in Christ through the spoken word, cards, emails, and prayers!

Carole Wilson – LWML President

Special Thank you!!
To all who donated baked goods and came to work for our craft fair!
Your loving gifts helped LWML raise more than $2100 for mission outreach.
Youth Update

Wreaths, Puppets, and Hiking

This was another busy month for Youth Ministry. We are trying to continue our activities despite COVID-19. We are doing it safely and we are having fun at it. Here were our activities this past month:

The Bethany Puppets were back in November doing a puppet skit on “Jesus the Bread of Life.” Everyone enjoyed the puppets and the meaning that Jesus is the bread of life and what it means to take communion. In case you missed it, you can check it out on our Youth Ministry page along with the other puppet shows. Go to https://www.gobethany.com/church/ministries/youth-ministry/

We also did a hike this month. We hiked up one of the hills and in the open space of Vacaville. It was a great day to get out and enjoy the great outdoors. It was a little windy but everyone was a trooper! Shout out to Dani for keeping up with Hew and Kevin!
Thank You for Supporting Youth Ministry

The Wreath fundraiser was very successful. It looks like we made more money than last year. That is awesome despite COVID-19. Shout out to West Portal Lutheran for really supporting our youth group! All money raised will be used to support the youth group in our monthly activities and our efforts to attend the National Youth Gathering in 2022.

In Coming Months

With the county going to the purple tier our activities will be restricted to outdoor only or back at home virtually. We will be writing cards for Seniors and will do some virtual events. **Please have your youth attend our Youth Bible Studies on Sundays from 9:45 am – 10:45 am on Zoom so we can stay connected.** Our youth need to spend time together and be with Jesus during these tough times.

Finally, be safe, wash your hands, practice social distancing, wear a mask, and pray to God and Jesus. We will see you all soon!

Bethany Youth Ministry Event Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bible Study</td>
<td>Every Sunday</td>
<td>9:45—10:45</td>
<td>on ZOOM*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>am</td>
<td>Meeting ID: 831 231 04194 Password: youth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christmas Cards</td>
<td>December 13th</td>
<td>1—4pm</td>
<td>Help the Body Event: Writing Christmas Cards for Seniors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drive-In Movie</td>
<td>January 17th</td>
<td>6—10pm</td>
<td>Honor God Event: Drive-in Movie at Bethany</td>
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*LINK: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83123104194?pwd=ZHVHSVBM1lmN3NoTVZ1VjY2ZnZwUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83123104194?pwd=ZHVHSVBM1lmN3NoTVZ1VjY2ZnZwUT09)
Preschool Praises

Our preschool children are excited for Christmas! They have started creating special projects, decorating the class tree, and will be busy making that surprise gift for their family. We will also make the journey to Bethlehem to welcome Baby Jesus.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord.

Our Bible story for December is “Jesus is Born,” found in Luke 12:11:

Natalie Hart, AKA Nurse Natalie, in her PPE making sure our school staff gets their COVID 19 tests.
## December Birthdays

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Birthday</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Birthday</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Birthday</th>
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<tr>
<td>Alexis Martinez</td>
<td>December 02</td>
<td>Rosemary Quinn</td>
<td>December 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles Rice</td>
<td>December 03</td>
<td>Trevor Unverferth</td>
<td>December 19</td>
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<td>Eric Helton</td>
<td>December 06</td>
<td>Rachael Nichols</td>
<td>December 20</td>
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<td>Douglas Conner</td>
<td>December 08</td>
<td>Victoria Nichols</td>
<td>December 20</td>
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<td>Roger Mathews</td>
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<td>Diane Nunes</td>
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<td>Gunnar Unverferth</td>
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<td>Sherry Campbell</td>
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<td>Lindsey Cole</td>
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<td>Sophia Ruiz</td>
<td>December 10</td>
<td>Jordyn Jamison</td>
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<td>Audrey Penny</td>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Tara Strickland</td>
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<td>Sarah Machetta</td>
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<td>Meleah Fields</td>
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<td>Kenneth Celli</td>
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<td>DeBrina Sanchez</td>
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<td>John Orcher</td>
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## Statistical Report

### November

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<tr>
<td>November 29</td>
<td>53</td>
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<td>Will be with 12/6</td>
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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

Bethany Church Council
Hew Hesterman
Diane Irby
Curt Johnston
Karen Loewe
Mike McCall

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

Lutheran Church Missouri Synod
621 S Orchard Ave, Vacaville CA 95688

707-451-6675  mychurch@gobethany.com  www.gobethany.com