Paul found reason to give thanks even for the problematic church at Corinth. When God extends His Grace, how can we not do the same?

**Outreach**: Bethany school is reaching families with Jesus’ love. 136 TK-8, 26 PS children enrolled. Bethany worship continues on-line due to COVID 19 precautions thanks to our AV team. 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 activities resumed at Ulatis on Wednesday afternoons under leadership of Devon Duncan. Talk to Pastor Pledger to help with outreach.

**Congregation**: Bethany congregation is meeting by YouTube January 20 through Feb 6 to accommodate COVID 19 restrictions. Please respond with any questions & vote to approve the congregation minutes. Look for email, presentation link, & attachments from Carole.Wilson@GoBethany.com.

**Stewardship**: God has truly blessed Bethany! Look at the congregation meeting attachments to find the 2020 Blessings report. Praise the Lord!

**Strategic Planning**: Pastor Pledger, working with Bethany leaders, is developing strategic plans for Bethany ministry during this time of COVID19 with goal to focus ministry once pandemic restrictions lift. Look for Pastor’s email message to find the sign up for congregation opinion gathering opportunities.

**Property maintenance**: Ulatis: Room A7 water faucet & B water fill station filter replaced thanks to Mike McCall. Classroom & hallway lights were repaired. Some trees were trimmed thanks to Korey Johnson, Darrol Wilson & Ron Shively. Repairs needed: Fence, trim trees, parking lot light bulbs (2). Orchard: Rain gutters need to be cleared again. 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 Johnston, Shawn Sanborn, Carole Wilson, & Ron Shively. Pastor Pledger meets regularly with the finance committee to monitor Bethany financials. See financial reports attached to email from Carole.Wilson@GoBethany.com.

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

With Christmas just in our rear view mirrors, it is good to reflect on the real reason for Christmas. As a child, the days before Christmas caused great excitement and anticipation as we brothers and sisters began to see Christmas gifts pile up under the Christmas tree. My parents bellowing voices from the other room to “stay away from that tree” did little to discourage a curious mind asking “What am I getting for Christmas?”. As I “snuck” a peek and shook some gift wrapped boxes, my only thought was that “Christmas was about me!”. Oh, I knew the story of Jesus' birth at Bethlehem, but Christmas was (and must be) about me, right? After all.....did I get the biggest present, did I get the prettiest present, and above all.......did I get the most presents?!

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13:11 When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me.

I remember one year as a young child, I asked my parents for a car racing set for Christmas. You know the one. It had multiple racing configurations, but the most common one was a figure 8 with little track grooves for the 5 inch racing cars to track in, driven by a powerful electric controller that you and your buddy operated as the “race car drivers”. I knew that gift had to be the biggest and prettiest gift under the tree.......with my name on it! See, Christmas was about me. Right?!

1 Corinthians 13:11 When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me.

But, when I opened the gift, what was revealed to me was a terrible disappointment. Not at all what I expected. I got this little cheap plastic race set that had tiny 1/2 inch cars that vibrated uncontrolled through narrow 1/2 inch channels of the track by some mysterious hidden vibrating motor. Not at all what I wanted! Such a disappointment, I thought. After all......Christmas is about me, right?! My mother saw the disappointment on my face and took me aside. She very lovingly and quietly apologized for not getting me exactly what I wanted, but said it was a difficult (financial) year for our family. That didn’t
satisfy me as I tried to appreciate and enjoy that little plastic car racing set. I never did, and it quickly became another toy gathering dust in the recesses of my closet.

1 Corinthians 13:11 When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me.

As the years went by, many times I reflected on that little car racing set and by God’s grace, began to realize more and more that “Christmas was about me,” just not in the way that I had thought or wanted. As I recently provided Christmas gifts to my twin 7 year old grandsons, I left them with the reminder that Christmas is about how God gave us His Son, Jesus, who gave us the greatest gift of all….to come to earth out of love for us and offer His life as a gift to me, so that I could join Him in heaven one day. So, Jesus’ birth and Christmas was about me! Christmas is also about others who would grow in their faith to realize that Christmas is about them too. It is about eternal happiness and joy of a secured life in heaven with Jesus, family, friends, and other believers. Let us rejoice together in the Lord knowing that Christmas is about us as we are faithful to know Jesus as our Lord and Savior!

Christmas (Jesus birth) was, and is, about me! And it is about you too!

Submitted by the Bethany Elders
Called to Love!

During times of crisis, we have two choices: we can hunker down, looking out for ourselves and our own interest or we can hunker down, looking out for ourselves and our own interest.

God calls us to show His love toward others. He said, “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me” (Matthew 25:35-36).

1. **Give Them A Call** Call someone on the phone or send a text.
2. **Shop and Drop** If you are going to the grocery store or local pharmacy, check with your neighbors and see if they need anything while you are there.
3. **Share Resources** You can make a care package for people in your neighborhood. This will certainly brighten their day and show them that someone cares.
4. **Make a Donation** Don’t forget your donation to Bethany. Add a food bank, a nonprofit organization or consider donating blood.
5. **Share Your Talents** No matter your age or situation, each person in your family has God-given talents that they can use to bless others. Exercise together from your living rooms. Offer music lessons online or virtual tutoring can help kids in the neighborhood.
6. **Acts of Service** Check to see if there is anyone who needs help with yard maintenance, taking the trash bins to and from the curb, getting the mail or morning newspaper, or walking their dogs.
7. **Thank the Workers on the Front Lines** There are many people who are working on the front lines right now. Ordering a few pizzas and sending them to some healthcare workers or giving a gift card to a grocer.
8. **Stay in the Loop** As a neighborhood, you can organize a weekly neighborhood...
video call on Zoom or Skype. This is a great way to share information and see each other at the same time.

9. **Support Local Businesses**  The people who own and work at local businesses are our neighbors and need to be shown love. One great way to support these businesses is to buy gift cards.

10. **Pray Together**  Offer to pray with your neighbors. Praying together is a wonderful way to connect with each other, bolster your faith, encourage each other, and bring peace. Ask if they have specific needs and requests that you can pray for. God promises that when we gather together to pray, He will also be there (Matthew 18:20).

*Adapted from an article by Carol Cuppy*

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**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.

**MEETING DATE – SUNDAY, February 14th**

Put Sunday, **February 14th** on your calendar. The meeting time will be 12:00 pm. **We will hold our meeting in the Fellowship Hall at the Ulatis campus,** right after our Church service. Be sure to bring your mask.

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**VALENTINES FOR SHUT-INS –**

We will be making and signing Valentines at our next meeting!

**THURSDAY NIGHT WOMEN’S BIBLE STUDY –** restarting as soon as COVID-19 restrictions allow.

Bible study at Terri Denton’s home, 521 Walnut Avenue **THURSDAY evenings at 7:00pm.** 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 and bring them to our next meeting.** COVID has not stop our mission outreach. 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
The new year is here and it is the perfect time to clean things up and start anew. That is exactly what the youth did on Sunday, January 17th, the day before Martin Luther King Day. The youth gathered together at Bethany and travelled to the end of the Butcher Road at the beginning of the North Bay Trail that heads to Pena Adobe Park.

With our trash bags, gloves, masks, and wearing our Bethany shirts, we began our trek to the unknown. We started picking up trash along the riding and walking trails, picking up any trash we saw. Several people said thank you and we found some interesting items—from snack containers, water bottles to random trash.

Dani found the most interesting objects—wagon and an old tool box. Sam found the biggest item—old tarp. We couldn’t take the wagon or the toolbox but we threw away the tarp. We met at the Jack Hume Redwood Grove for rest, snacks, and a devotion. We then circled the other side to finish the day. In all it was very rewarding day and we got outside and got some exercise.
We will continue our Bible study this month on Sundays at 9:45 am. **We encourage both parents and youth to attend on Zoom so we can stay connected.** Our youth need to spend time together and be with Jesus during these tough times.

Our next event will be on February 14th where we will do another bike ride (weather permitting).

*Finally, be safe, wash your hands, practice social distancing, wear a mask, and pray to God and Jesus. We will see you all soon!*
After an exhaustive review and analysis of the Bethany Lutheran preschool program, the administration determined that some additional management changes were warranted. In light of the recent changes with Cindy Miller, our current Preschool Director, returning to the classroom to teach, the administration believed that this was the best opportunity to seek new leadership for the program overall. Therefore, after weeks of diligently searching, I am proud to announce that through several interviews, the position of Preschool Director has been offered and accepted by Mrs. Kari Morris. Kari brings new energy, a wealth of experience, and long-range vision for the preschool program which is succinct with that of the organization. We would like to thank Cindy Miller for her invaluable service as our director and the leadership she brought to the preschool. Mrs. Miller will continue to teach in the classroom and participate in making our campus one of the best in Solano County. Please help me welcome Kari Morris to Bethany Lutheran Ministries as our new Preschool Director

Chris E. Smith

Welcome Kari Morris

Hello BLS Community,

My name is Kari Morris and I am honored to be a part of this wonderful community as your new Preschool Program Director. I grew up in a loving 2-parent home with a strong Christian faith, where I attended private school until I reached high school. My father was a Police Sergeant in our community for over 30 years and my mother worked at a local school as a Teacher/Administrator for 25 years. I am married to my loving husband; Zack and I have four fun-loving children who keep me smiling every day!

I attended Las Positas College, where I studied Early Childhood Education. In 2006, I graduated and received my Associate Teacher Certificate. I have worked with children for many years as a lead preschool teacher and was promoted to an assistant preschool program director then to an acting director. I have also coached cheerleading on a competitive level for many years as well.

I have always envisioned my life working with children. My vision for our program is to encourage a safe, happy, educational and fun learning environment. I am looking forward to working with the teachers and administration and putting our heads together and coming up with creative and exciting ideas.
January

<table>
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<tr>
<td>January 4</td>
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The best way to help medical staff is to avoid getting sick!

Another meaningful way to reach out and encourage them is to feed them. ICU nurses work so very hard caring for Solano County’s sickest patients, as I see as a critical care administrative worker for VacaValley Hospital and NorthBay Medical Center, VacaValley’s sister facility in Fairfield. These patients include those suffering from COVID-19. You should see the nurses’ faces light up when there are goodies in the break room when they can take a breather during their 12-hour shifts!

If you feel led to donate treats to VacaValley/NorthBay ICU nursing staff, please deliver them to the church office. Also, if getting there is hard for you, I’m happy to pick them up and take them in on your behalf. Donations towards this ministry with which snacks will be purchased are also appreciated.

It is best to give shelf-stable, individually-packaged snacks. Some suggestions: mandarin oranges, bananas, grapes, trail mix, fun-sized candy, or baked goods. I was just at Costco and saw many things they would appreciate.

If you have any questions, please contact me at becscully@sbcglobal.net or 707-301-1556.

If you have a contact at Kaiser, I’m sure their nurses could use a lift, too.

whoever refreshes others will be refreshed!
Proverbs 11:25
### Meet Our Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Pastor</td>
<td>Dr. Phillip Pledger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
<td>Natalie Hart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Principal</td>
<td>Dr. Chris Smith</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preschool Director</td>
<td>Kari Morris</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fellowship Ministry</td>
<td>Cathy Hesterman</td>
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<tr>
<td>LWML</td>
<td>Carole Wilson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Properties</td>
<td>Mike McCall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>Kevin Shaw</td>
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### Bethany Church Council
- Hew Hesterman
- Diane Irby
- Bob Johnston
- Karen Loewe
- Mike McCall
- Shawn Sanborn
- Ron Shively
- Carole Wilson

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

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