

Bethlehem Star



From the Pastor's Desk...

"We need a little Christmas, right this very minute..." is a lyric from a popular Christmas song and this year, I couldn't agree more! We need a little (or a lot) of Christmas this year, right this very minute, right now BUT in the church, we observe the season of Advent. Advent begins 4 weeks before Christmas and is a time of preparation and hope. Time during this season is often marked with an Advent Wreath of 4 candles, one candle for each of the 4 weeks of Advent and a 5th candle to be lit on Christmas. Another way to mark time in this season is with an Advent calendar, there are many varieties of these, some designed more for children and families and in recent years, some designed for adults...the idea is to "open" the assigned window for each day during Advent, until all windows are opened and it's Christmas.

With all that has been happening in our world this year, I started seeing and hearing people talking about getting ready for Christmas earlier than usual...they were referring to listening to Christmas music and decorating earlier than they usually would. The main reason being that they needed more joy and something to look forward to with all of the challenges of this year. The idea is that the happiness they experience was something that was longed for and they figured, why wait, why not start early. I've also noticed various articles that spoke to this and in a sense, the authors, "gave permission", so that people experienced happiness not guilt.

Advent is a season I treasure, I enjoy the preparations for Christmas, I enjoy the longing and expectant tones of Advent music, the lighting of the Advent Wreath and the opening of Advent calendars, and I usually wait to decorate until after Thanksgiving but not this year. This year, I put my tree up on November 12, unusually early for me, mainly because I wanted the extra light that tree brings with its strings of lights...I have yet to place any ornaments on the tree, nor have I done any other decorating...I simply wanted the extra light in the evening and the hope that even strings of lights bring in this season. As our world continues to face new and different challenges this year and as some traditions and gatherings may look and feel very different this year, hold on to the things that give you hope in this season filled with expectation and hope, even if it's strings of lights hung on a tree in the middle of November...so in this season of Advent, may you be filled with the expectation and hope that the Christ child brings, even if it looks or feels like an early Christmas this year.

Advent Peace and Hope,
Pastor Jennifer Schultz



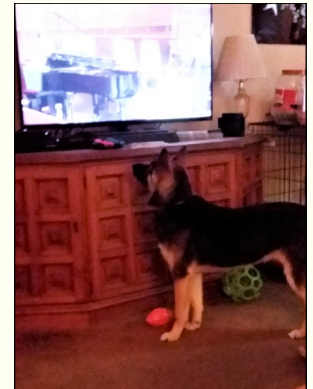
Worship Services have returned to online only...following the current mandates from local health and synod officials, we have suspended in-person worship. We are grateful that we were able to resume in-person worship for 3 Sundays in November, many thanks to the volunteers who helped to carry out our plans and protocols and for those who attended worship. We will keep you updated as to when we can again resume in-person worship and for now. We will continue to record all of our worship services and post them online on the following platforms:

A) Church Website: www.blcla.org On Homepage, in the "Worship" section and on the separate "Worship page"

B) Church Facebook page: Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Los Alamitos

C) YouTube: www.youtube.com Search for "Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Los Alamitos", click on "Videos"

(Toth Family German Shepherd puppy watching Pastor Jennifer)



Advent Preparation: The season of Advent has begun and you are invited to set up an Advent Wreath in your home in observance and celebration of this season. Each week in the Advent season, we mark time by lighting a candle as we prepare for Christ's birth. Your Advent Wreath does not need to be fancy or an established wreath, it can simply be 4 candles (matched or unmatched, tapers or tealights or pillars, flame or battery operated) with space for a 5th candle for Christmas. We hope this will be a meaningful part of our Advent observance this year.

Advent Mid-Week Worship Services: Join us for Holden Evening Prayer and Advent themes on the following 3 Wednesdays, December 2, 9, and 16. Light your Advent candle/s and take some time in the middle of the week for evening worship. These recorded worship services will be posted by Wednesday afternoon on our regular online platforms.

Advent Wreath Readers: Looking for volunteers to read a brief prepared reading for the Advent Wreath Lighting portion of a couple of our upcoming recorded worship services. You can record at home and send it in or you can read from the church while we record worship, whatever you're comfortable with. Looking for a reader for the December 13 and 20 worship services. Please contact Pastor Jennifer if you'd like to volunteer.

The Children's Christmas Play will be part of our recorded worship service on Sunday, December 20, it will be the Message of the day. Join our students and their families as they share the meaning and traditions of Christmas. Thank you in advance to all of our participants.

At this point, we are planning for a recorded worship service for **Christmas Eve**, Thursday, Dec. 24. In anticipation of this year's different worship experience, there are a couple of things that you can do to prepare for this service. A meaningful part of our worship tradition has been to end the Christmas Eve worship with a candlelight service while singing "Silent Night", we are still planning on ending the service in this way but you will be invited to participate from home. So have a candle ready (flame or flameless, any size candle) as you prepare for the Christmas Eve service and we will keep you updated as to any changes.

Congratulations to newly elected church council members: Debby Gustafson, Dianna Reynolds, and Jeanne Sandvig...thank you for saying Yes to serving. Many thanks to Lana Dieter and Shary Reed for serving as council members, their terms are almost completed. Many thanks to remaining council members who continue to serve for the 2021 year.



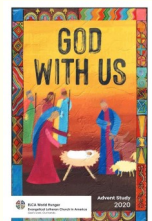
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Congregational Meeting: We encourage you to join us for our congregational meeting on **Sunday, December 13 at 11:00 am on Zoom**...you can use your computer, tablet, or smart phone for video and audio...there is also an option to dial in to the meeting using your phone (smart phone or not), you just won't have video access. We need to have a quorum (10% of membership) for this meeting to be valid and so we are encouraging everyone to participate as they are able. If you are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with using Zoom, please feel free to reach out to me and I will try my best to help you with it.

We are also working on the possibility of setting up a way for you to vote electronically and will send you additional information about that as it becomes available. Thank you for your patience, flexibility, and your participation as we continue to try new things.

The Zoom meeting login information is as follows:

Advent Devotionals, "God With Us", are available in the church office. There is a devotion, scripture, questions to ponder, and a prayer for each week...this resource was published by ELCA World Hunger.



Parish Life will again sponsor this fundraiser, with profits benefiting the church, it runs through December 4. There are some adjustments due to Covid, orders will be shipped directly to you or your designated addressee and there are no discounts. To place an order, have your credit card ready, press this link to the Bethlehem Lutheran Church Storefront, and follow the prompts:

https://www.yumraising.com/secure/bethlehemlc_bethlehem_lutheran_church_losal2/candy?h=CatWar6644&c=ot7028

If you would like some assistance in placing an order, please contact Pastor Jennifer. Thank you for your support in this sweet and delicious fundraiser.

We plan to decorate the altar area with poinsettia plants this year. The cost per plant is \$10.00. You may email, mail or call the church office with your dedication requests. Please make sure that all of the following information is included. Thank you!

All orders and payments must be received by Sunday, December 20th.

NAME OF DONOR:

DAYTIME PHONE: ()

NUMBER OF POINSETTIAS REQUESTED:

DEDICATION WISHES

PLACED IN: ___ MEMORY

 ___ HONOR or CELEBRATION

OF:



You may pick up your plant(s) during the week following Christmas. Poinsettias that are remaining will be given to our homebound members or to a local convalescent home.



Angel Giving Tree

This year, the church will still be supporting local low-income families from the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Anaheim-Cypress through the annual Angel Tree. Now, more than ever, there are local families that could really use some additional support this season with gifts to ensure that they have a special holiday. Since we are not all meeting in person this year, it will look a little bit different. If you are interested in participating this year and purchasing gifts for these families, please contact Erika Gary and you will be matched up with a recipient to get gifts for. All gifts should be wrapped and turned in by Friday, December 11.

Thank you,

Erika Gary



Thank you again for your generosity and support to ensure that all families have a wonderful holiday season.

Dear Altar Guild Members;

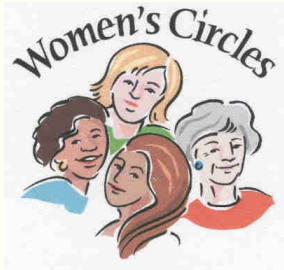
Thank you for your service in 2020. There will be a new schedule available when we resume in person worship services.

Stay safe and well,

Christina Watson, Altar Guild Chair



December
2020



Faith Circle In person meeting has not yet resumed. If interested in a Zoom meeting, contact Pastor Jennifer. Offerings can be sent directly to Christina Watson, Treasurer. For questions and details, call Andrea Campbell.

Phoebe Circle Offerings can be sent directly to Christina Watson, Treasurer. For questions and details, call Jeanne Sandvig.



Sunday Morning

Coffee & Cookies

Coffee service will resume when conditions allow.



Tuesday, December 8 Bethlehem WELCA Board will host a Zoom virtual Christmas Gathering at 7:00 p.m. We will have a business meeting to approve a 2021 Budget and elect our 2021 Board (Current Board members have all agreed to continue to serve for 2021). Zoom meeting invitation and details will be sent by President Erika Gary.

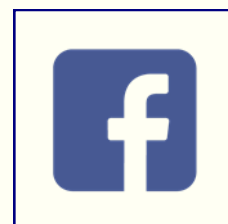
January 23, 2021 watch for information regarding a Zoom gathering for Pacifica WELCA featuring Pr. Gloria Espeseth.



Check out Pacifica Partners on line
www.pacificawomen.org
click on news & events

Join the Pacifica Synod Women of the ELCA

On Facebook



2021 W.E.L.C.A. Proposed Slate of Officers

<i>President:</i>	<i>Erika Gary</i>
<i>Vice President:</i>	<i>Elaine Schulties</i>
<i>Secretary:</i>	<i>Merle Hower</i>
<i>Treasurer:</i>	<i>Christina Watson</i>

2021 W.E.L.C.A. Board Members

<i>Membership:</i>	<i>Dianna Reynolds</i>
<i>Mission Action Community:</i>	<i>Open</i>
<i>Mission Action Program:</i>	<i>Debby Gustafson</i>
<i>Faith Circle Leader:</i>	<i>Andrea Campbell</i>
<i>Phoebe Circle Leader:</i>	<i>Jeanne Sandvig</i>



Lutheran Social Services-Long Beach Community Care Center Monthly Report

Dear Bethlehem Family and Friends,

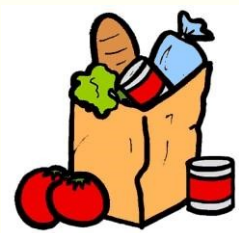
As we end our monthly request for in-kind food donations in 2020 we are asking you for your continuing help during December for **CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY FOOD items** on the list below. Let's see if we can stuff our Narthex Pastor's Food Pantry full of food items.

LSS is so happy to greet and receive the food items and warm clothing and scarfs. In addition, they still have an **immediate need for** more **Socks** (gently used OK) for adults and children of all ages. Any **warm jackets** also needed. **Cereal** and **peanut butter** always needed every day.

Thanks again for helping to keep our Lutheran Social Service cupboard (Pastor's Pantry in Narthex) full. Lutheran Social Services (LSS) Long Beach and the people and families served daily in their Ministry again appreciate your kindness, care and compassion.

Christmas Celebration Needs are in addition to our regular giving, please note the other flyer.

Bob, Andrea and crew
Social Ministry Committee



Holiday Needs:

*Canned Sweet Potatoes, Yams
Canned Gravy
Turkey Stuffing
Macaroni & Cheese
Canned Fruit, Vegetables (Corn & Green Beans)
Box Potatoes/Rice
Marshmallow Bags
Canned Ham & Spam, Corn Beef Hash
Cranberry Sauce
Canned Pumpkin*





Christmas Celebration Needs

Urgently needed!!!! New, unwrapped toys, gift cards for children (ages Newborn- 18) & monetary support for the purchase of food & supplies for our 23rd Annual Christmas Giveaway.

Date: Saturday, December 19th

Time: 10-2PM

Location: Trinity Lutheran Church in Long Beach

Gifts:

**** For children ages, 0-11 Male/Female suggested gift value: \$15 dollars. Please do not wrap the gifts.**

🕒 \$20 Gift Cards to target or Walmart are perfect for teens ages 12-18. Please include the gift receipt with the gift card.

Due to Covid-19 pandemic, we will be modifying our annual Christmas Toy Giveaway. Following the Health Department Guidelines & protocols, we will be distributing toys to Families by appointment only! The use of masks, social distancing, and sanitizing will be exercised and enforced!

****For organizational purposes, the gifts should be unwrapped and brought to LSS on or before December 17, 2020 between 9am-3pm.**

Thank you for your help and support!

Lutheran Social Services of Southern California
Long Beach & South Bay Center
1611 Pine Avenue
Long Beach, CA 90813
(562) 599-1321 Ext. 1029



12/23/1967

12/28/1974

12/2 Joan Ebersold

12/3 Vanessa Stevenson

12/12 Katrina Gary

12/23 John Hunt

12/25 Jeanne Sandvig

12/30 Lulu Meyer

Gary & Liz Nehrenberg

Eric & Cheri Dobberteen

12/3 Ginny Gary

12/9 Alexander Carrillo

12/14 Doug Wolfe

12/23 Richard Toth

12/30 J.R. Anderson



Julie Anderson

Elaine Asbury

Amy Bachman

Kevin Betts

Kate & Steve

John Buezis

Luelle Buezis

Fritz Campbell

Shirley Campbell

Caren Cantafio

Laurie Carpenter

Linnea Clayton

Irene Cooper

Maxine Cornwell

Sara DeWeese

Joan Ebersold

Ruth G.

Frank Gary

Katrina Gary

Janet Harris

Joe Harris

Diana Hayden

Gaylord Hollister

Jason Jackson

Genevieve Jenkins

Betty Jones

Dean Kinzel

Julie Kizziar

Joan Lee

William Lewis

Bill Lindell

Erin Lopez

Patricia Lueckert

John Maio

Lawrence Massey

Jessica McIntire

Hal Miller

Pete Miller

Ethan Mohr

Bill N.

Dan Opoien

Coler Pearce

Retta Rasmussen

Dale Retrum

Sandy Retrum

Elaine Schulthies

Kay Shelton

Hattie Stretz

Leslie Summers

Ed Sutton

Pauline Taylor

Ann Tegtmeier

Steve Tegtmeier

Tom Watkins

Jerry Whitmore

Nancy & H.R. Williamson

Marynell Wolfe

Mitsuko Yamamoto

Margaret Ziegler

