



Heart Matters

Your Connection to Bethany Lutheran Church and Littlest Angels Preschool

FEBRUARY 2010

News from Pastor Jon

Bethany Lutheran Church
Littlest Angels Preschool

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Looking forward . . .

Usually at the end of a decade or some other time period, I take a moment to look back and talk about all of the things that happened during that time. However, for this issue, I will take just a moment and look forward at some of the wonderful opportunities God is presenting to Bethany as we move forward into the second decade of the 21st century.

The second webinar Bible study is up and running, which may not seem like much at first glance. However, Pastor Tom and I are developing plans with K.C. (and soon with the Board of Directors) to expand this program. Our current plan is very ambitious, bringing this Bible study format to many people across the nation and perhaps around the world. Please pray for our efforts as we work on this platform for study, outreach, and proclamation of God's Word.

A number of ideas and plans are about to come to fruition from our work last year on the EPIC Church series. A new sermon series is just one of the more visible events you will see this year. Likewise, there are numerous ideas that came from the dinners we held in the Fall. I am grateful for those ideas we have already put into action and I am excited by the plans which are still being formed. Please encourage one another in these ideas and in these ways to share God's love with our community.

The website is growing and we have heard many complements on how nice it looks. The new system for delivering this newsletter by e-mail is now in place and we are finding wonderful ways to communicate better with all of you. However, there are still some neat ideas that will begin to take shape this year. We are working on ideas to invite new people to worship, to Bethany, and to participate in the many activities of the church.

Sixty years ago, a group of innovative people began Bethany Lutheran Church. What will the next decade bring for our congregation? It is impossible to know the details, but one thing will not change - we will, passionately and in innovative ways, share the love of Jesus . . . one person at a time.

God's Peace,
Pastor Jon

www.bethany-mp.org

Have you seen what's there for you?

Notes from Pastor Tom

On February 17, we will join Christians around the world in observing the season of Lent. Lent is intended to be a deeply spiritual time to reflect on the tremendous love and sacrifice of Jesus for us so that we might have forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. The price of our redemption was overwhelming. As Dr. Martin Luther said in explaining the second article of the Apostles Creed, ***"Jesus, my Lord, has redeemed me a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death."*** As Jesus Himself said, ***"Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."*** (John 15:13 NIV)

Dr. Luther went on with his explanation to state that Jesus made this supreme sacrifice ***"so that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true!"***

In Jesus we have been redeemed from all sins, including the sin of selfishly wanting to use all of God's blessings for our own needs and wants rather than using them to His glory and the welfare of our neighbor. Selfishness is not part of good stewardship! Here is a definition of good and godly stewardship: ***"God's redeemed stewards, in cooperation with and encouragement from fellow redeemed stewards, freely and joyfully manage all of life and life's resources for God's purposes."***

Lent provides us with an excellent opportunity to reflect on what is really important and worth spending our lives and resources on. During this 2010 season of Lent may God's Holy Spirit help us to understand that God wants to use us as instruments in His hands to touch the lives of others in ways that make an eternal difference. As we are led to accept this truth we will better understand what it means to use our time, our skills and talents, and our financial resources in loving and sacrificial ways.

May the love and sacrifice of Jesus so impress us that we will want to reach out in loving and sacrificial ways.

"God's redeemed and maturing stewards do the right things for the right reasons and strive for excellence in all they do."

(adapted from the LCMS website)

Pax,
Pastor Tom

Donate now for our 2010 Altar Flowers!

**What a great way to celebrate a birthday, anniversary,
special memory, or other important occasion!
With a donation of only \$40, you can rejoice with flowers
in the praise & glory of God.**

www.bethany-mp.org/flowers

Youth News

During the next few months, the Senior High youth will be focused on activities that will help fund the National Youth Gathering trip. There will be a number of fundraising activities over the next few months, some of which are also opportunities to help others. We also have events planned for the Junior High youth. Take a look at what's already on the calendar:

January 22 – Happy Birthday, Kelly!

18th birthday party for Kelly Cain! It's now a tradition in the group to have a party to celebrate each person's 18th birthday. What an important milestone in the lives of our youth!

January 29 – Dinner Meeting

A meeting to discuss plans for the National Youth Gathering will go on during dinner. We will then visit a youth activity at the Tongan Church in East Palo Alto. The youth will also be encouraged to begin selling picture postcards that come 29 for \$10. They are both beautiful and functional.

February 13 and 14 – Hearts for Heroes

On February 13, we will have a joint event for the Junior and Senior High. We will bake cookies at church and package them for Valentine's Day. You are invited to purchase cookies for others or donate cookies to send to relief workers in Haiti or soldiers in Afghanistan or Iraq. This project will serve others while also raising funds for the trip.

Mid-February – Yard Sale prep work

The Youth Group will help move items for John and Ruby Lomax, who are soon relocating to a retirement home in Union City. They have graciously given many items to the youth group for a yard sale in May.

March 13 – Bethany at the Shark Tank

There will be a group event for Junior and Senior High and we are also inviting families and friends to join us for a group night at the San Jose Sharks Hockey Arena. Please look for ticket sign ups in the near future.

March 27 – Workin' at the Car Wash!

We will hold a unique event called a Car Wash-athon. We will offer free car washes to anyone who comes into the parking lot during the hours we are open. We will ask people to sponsor the youth for the number of cars we can wash during the time we are open. At this event, we will do something nice for the community while also raising funds.

April 10 & April 24 – Save the Date

A Junior High event will be held on April 10 and a Senior High event will held on April 24.

May 1 – 4 – Yard Sale

we will have a yard sale at Pilar's house. We are happy to accept any items now and hope to have a silent auction at church during the same weekend. If you have items to donate for the yard sale, please call the office.

God willing, we will be at the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans, LA in mid July. Please pray for our efforts to bring this large group.

Sermon Themes

I hope and pray that you are being enriched by the sermons on the Parable of the Prodigal Son. If you are not participating in the Webinar Bible Study, I will probably be presenting it another time later this year. However, you can also purchase the book by Tim Keller, entitled, The Prodigal God. For me, this was an enlightening book that changed how I understood this well known story.

As we enter Lent, we will be adapting a sermon series created by Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. The sermons will be based on the words of Jesus from the cross and will lead us through some of the conflicts that arise in the lives of people who are not attending a church and who do not yet believe in the message of Jesus. There are many "stumbling blocks" to faith. We will explore these and see how the words from the cross illuminate these concerns and help us see the answers Jesus came to give us.

Women's Ministries

The mission donation for February will go to HCJB Global.

HCJB Global was created to Herald Christ Jesus' Blessings, to tell the world who Jesus is, why He came to earth and the eternal hope that can only be found through Him. This world-wide organization focuses on being the Voice and Hands of Jesus through media and healthcare ministry. It also emphasizes leadership development, training leaders who can impact communities in which they live.

Bethany has a personal connection to HCJB Global. Dorothy (Pfothenhauer) Nelson and her husband, Steve, went to Ecuador to serve in the mission field with HCJB many years ago.

CEF Investments

Your investment builds a new high school!

Church Extension Fund (CEF) puts your investment to work through loans to congregations throughout the CNH District. While that investment earns interest for you, the investment, it is also working to build a new tool for ministry. Work is well underway on a new campus for Sierra Lutheran High School in Minden, NV. Utilizing open BLM property near the community, the facility will support 150 students and add gym and lab resources to better serve the education and spiritual growth needs of their students. Invest in CEF and earn a fair rate of return, while your investment helps build God's Kingdom. Contact your volunteer Congregational Rep John Leveen at 650-324-2043 or call CEF toll-free at (866) 452-6739 for more information on joining this important ministry.

Canned Food Drive

Fill a Bag & Make a Difference!

February 7 - 28

You can make a difference in our community! Take a bag, fill it up with canned goods, and bring it to the Family Center. Contact Ed Stinson or Al & Linda Granucci with any questions.

Will you fill a bag & make a difference?

February Angelic News - Littlest Angels Preschool

The Power of Words

Every child needs to know and believe that they are special, unique and truly loved! During this "love"ly month of February let your children know that they are loved unconditionally because LOVE is the greatest of all gifts! I am a great believer in the power of words. Words can heal or words can hurt. Not long ago I was chatting with my little friends at preschool and I asked them if words could hurt. Their first response was; "No, Teacher Kathy, words can't hurt us!" I explained that words can and do hurt. They don't give us an ouch that we can see with our eyes but they hurt us on the inside where we keep our feelings. Recently, I came across a list called "Nineteen Somethings to Say to Children". I found this list to be very helpful and thought-provoking. I'd like to share some of those quotations with you in hopes that you'll find them useful too.

1. I love you! There is nothing that will make me stop loving you. Nothing you could do or say or think that will ever change that.
2. You are amazing! I look at you with wonder! Not just at what you can do, but who you are. There is no one like you. No one!
3. It's all right to cry. People cry for all kinds of reasons; when they are hurt, sad, glad, or worried; when they are angry, afraid or lonely. Big people cry too. I do.
4. You've made a mistake. That was wrong. People make mistakes. Is it something we can fix? What can we do? It's all over. You can start fresh.
5. That was kind. You did something helpful for that person. That must make you feel good inside. Thank you!
6. I have a surprise for you. It's not your birthday. It's not for any reason at all. Just a little surprise, a little one, but a surprise.
7. Tell me about it. I'd like to hear more. And then what happened? I'll listen.
8. I missed you. I think about you when we're not together!
9. I'm right here. I am watching you. I am listening to you.
10. I'll help you. I heard you call me, here I am. How can I help you? If we both work together, we can get this done. I know you can do it!

The author of this list is unknown but as I was typing the words my heart and mind began thinking about my loving heavenly Father...it's like I could hear Him saying these very words to me and my eyes were filled with tears. I was reminded once again that I have Friend that sends me messages of love and reassurance all the time. It is my prayer that all God's children will cherish His love each and every day of the year!

Happy Valentine's Day!

Kathy Stinson, Director

Staff Spotlight

Sylvie Morissette – Sylvie began her work as a teaching assistant for Littlest Angels Preschool. She worked in different classrooms and with different age groups, but was always loved by parents, students and other teachers regardless of the classroom. A little over a year ago, we were preparing to interview for the preschool secretary position when Sylvie asked to apply. We were excited to find out that she had previously worked as a secretary, which meant that we would benefit from both her past experience and her experience at Littlest Angels.

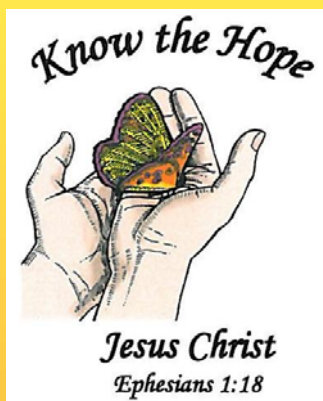
Sylvie has taken over the position and truly added to the care and professional atmosphere in the preschool office. One of the more difficult space considerations at Bethany is the preschool office where three people work together in one open space. However, Sylvie has been a welcome addition as she is always working to make life better for those who work with her and for those who come to Littlest Angels. This month we give thanks for Sylvie.

Nicholas Isaacs – Nicholas brings many things to Bethany which go beyond playing for the worship services and the choir. Nicholas is able to play most music by sight and is therefore very adept at helping others sound wonderful. He is also able to transpose many things without rewriting the music. So on Christmas Eve, he decided that my solo would sound better if it was one half step higher and he simply played it that way from the music. For many musicians, that is an impossible task, but Nicholas did it easily and made me sound much better in the process.

Nicholas has also blessed us with a wealth of musicians who are willing to play at Bethany. This year we are featuring a special musician every month in our new service of Word and Song. Nicholas allows us to have a wonderful and rich musical program through his efforts to recruit and help all of these musicians who play at Bethany. Finally, a word about leading worship...it is definitely more art than science and I know that Nicholas is a true artisan who enhances worship by leading with me and by understanding the needs and desires of the congregation. We are blessed to have Nicholas and give thanks for his service to Bethany.

California-Nevada-Hawaii LWML Convention

San Jose, CA ~ April 29-May 2, 2010



Join the excitement at “Know the Hope: Jesus Christ”

Guest speakers will include:

- Rev. Dr. Robert Newton, CNH District President
- Rev. Ken Klaus of Lutheran Hour Ministries
- Peggy Turnipseed
- Heidi Floyd from the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer
- Dina Vendetti
- Rev. Dereje Fantaye
- Linda Arnold

Registration materials will be available soon at CNH LWML www.cnhlwml.org.

More details coming next month . . .

Ash Wednesday Services

February 17

12:00 noon & 7:00 p.m.

Lunch will follow the 12 o'clock service

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Ash Wednesday begins the Lenten season!

Join us for services on Wednesdays

at 12:00 noon and 7:00 p.m.

February 24 – March 24



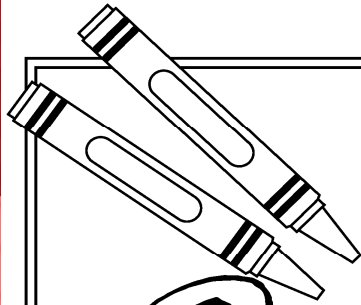
February Lunch Bunch

**Join us for a delicious lunch,
special devotions, and wonderful friendship!**

Wednesday, February 10

12:00 noon

Our guest cook will be Bev Beer!

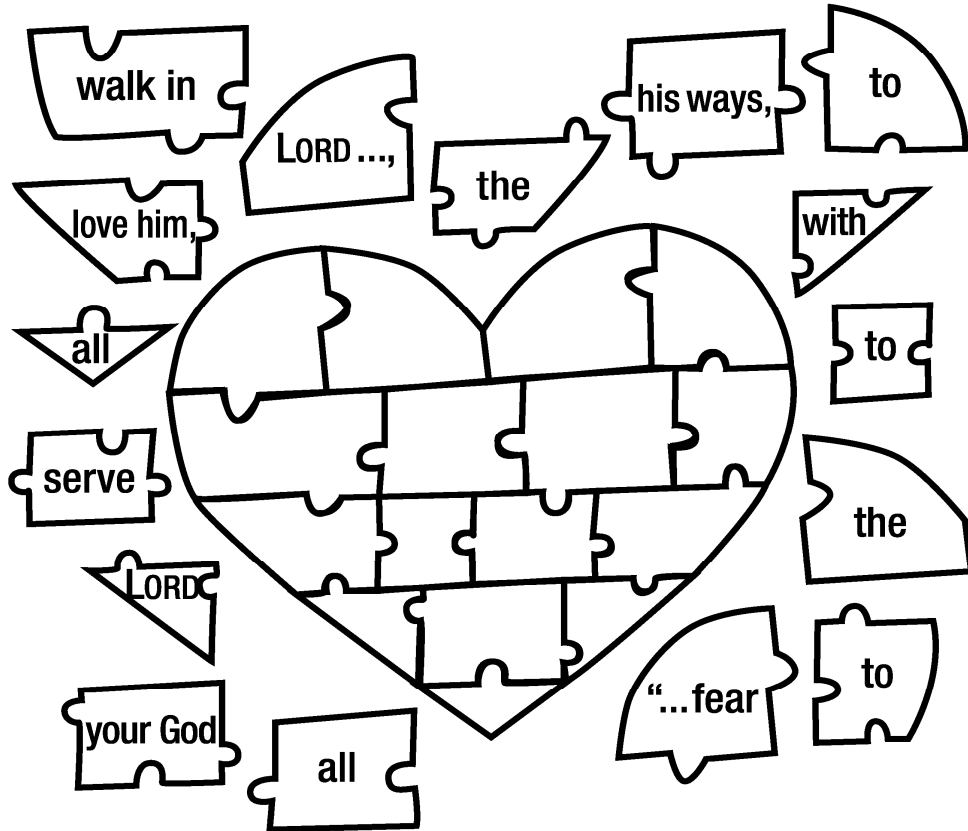


Just for **KIDS**

Our first love

In Deuteronomy 10:12 (NIV), Israel is asked a question that's also for us to answer: "What does the LORD your God ask of you?"

To find the answer, write the words from the puzzle pieces on the matching shapes in the completed heart.



... your heart and with all your soul ..."

Answer:
" ... fear the LORD ... to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all ..."