



*“I have come
that they may
have life
and have it
abundantly.”*

~ JOHN 10:10

Dear Members and Friends of Bethel,

Abundant life is often difficult to define. Some Christian churches proclaim that God wants us all to be healthy, wealthy and wise (emphasis on the wealthy). Others proclaim that God wants us to have a “spiritual abundance” that brings overwhelming peace in the midst of poverty (emphasis on the poverty). In reality, abundant life is about energized relationships. Here are some of the ways we have energized our relationships with God and each other in the past year:

- We offered 203 public worship services (including Sunday services, seasonal services, BLS chapels, Wednesday Night Worship and memorial services)*
- We averaged 377 people in worship every Sunday*
- We celebrated the Sacrament of Holy Communion 106 times and the Sacrament of Holy Baptism 30 times.*
- We sent 64 people on short-term international mission trips*
- We supported 36 teachers and staff as they helped to educate 177 students in our school*
- We cared for over 80 children and 100 teenagers in our children’s and youth ministry programs*
- We welcomed 47 new members, including 15 teenagers through confirmation*
- We devoted countless hours to studying the scriptures, serving others and celebrating milestones*

These are tremendous accomplishments. However, the abundant life offered by Jesus cannot be adequately depicted with mere numbers. Christianity, like any other part of life, is rooted in moments. We do God’s work and stumble toward heaven one parking lot conversation, one honorable gesture, one encouraging e-mail, one hospital visit, one completed prayer and one invited friend at a time.

As your pastors, we see these “God-moments” occurring all around us and are thankful to be along for the ride.

As we move into 2007, our prayer for you remains the same. We pray that everything we do around here will help to deepen your faith in our Lord, Jesus Christ. He stands ready to energize us beyond our wildest dreams. Are you ready?

2006 ANNUAL REPORT

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Pastor Randal J. Pabst



Pastor Rick Sherrill

Ministry Highlights

2006

Community Life

We hosted two wonderful events, a neighborhood outreach barbecue/fireworks watching on July 4, and a luncheon celebrating Reformation Sunday and dedicating the Stelling Avenue property to a new Asian outreach ministry.

Worship & Music

We continue to be blessed with Joe, Norita, the Worship Team, the Sanctuary Choir, the Celebration Choir, the Seraph Choir and the Joyful Noise Bell Choir all providing us with wonderful worship music throughout the year.

We enjoyed some tremendous special performances throughout the year, including The New Life Band, Mountain View High School Madrigals, High Plains Tradition and Kendall Payne.

Many thanks to our wonderful volunteers who assist with welcoming visitors and members, ushering, altar guild, children's activity bags, altar flowers, seasonal altar decorations and much more.

Discipleship

The overall goal of discipleship ministries at Bethel is to help people grow deeper in their relationship with Jesus. The following classes and programs in 2006 contributed to that goal:

Adult Education offered a variety of classes led by Chuck Couchman, Dave Denny, Laura French, and Pastors Randy and Rick. Topics included Christian History, the book of Genesis, The Welcoming Church, Worldviews, A Living Faith: Essentials of Christianity, and New Member and Old Inquiry Class

The Evergreens met twice monthly and covered a wide range of topics for those age 55 and older. Topics included healthy eating, laughter as medicine, and honoring our neighbor's faith (Facilitated by Kaye Kuhlmann)

The **Men's Ministry** continued its monthly Men's Night Out meetings of study and fellowship. A group

of Bethel men joined other men from the area at the Fall Men's Retreat at Mt. Hermon.

Women's Ministry

- Daughters of the King Conference, attended by 250 women in the spring. Guest speaker Nancy Stafford, recording artist Kendall Payne
- Victorian Fashion Show & High Tea
- Fall Lunch / Gathering of Thankofferings
- Maundy Thursday Communion breakfast
- Welcomed the advent season with "Cookies, Carols and Tea"

Youth Ministry

Senior High Our youth group motto is "Love Like Jesus." - it's the cornerstone of our youth program. Everything we do is intended to point to this reality and to encourage us to live in that same spirit. Our question for the year is "Where is Jesus?" This year, as we work, play, discuss, worship, and serve, we will continue to search for Jesus in everyone we meet and in all we do. Come join us...- Bethel's Youth Program is changing lives!

Junior High Wildside (confirmation) has touched the lives of over 40 kids in 2006 through our Wednesday night program. Thank you to our dedicated small group leaders - Robyn Winegardner, Maggie Emmert, Rich Teed and Susan Leavitt. 20 students and adults spent a week at Rock-n-Water summer camp enjoying white-water rafting, rock climbing, river canyon exploration and fabulous worship campfires.

Children's Ministry

Kid Connection Our Sunday morning program, is under the direction of Marianne Nadell with the help of 28 talented volunteers. The House Band leads the Sunday morning openings. 78 children enrolled with an average Sunday attendance of 51 students. To date, we have collected \$244.54 through the Kid Connection offering for the AIDS orphans in Tanzania. The preschool children have donated 42 cans of food for The Lord's Pantry. From January to May '06 we sent \$164.97 to the ELCA Katrina Relief Fund

GOTCHA Our 4th – 6th grade youth group is under the direction of Brad and Kelly Johnson and has 28 children in the program. Our events include swim parties, glow-in-the dark miniature golf, bowling, and Laser Quest.

Family Connection In 2006 we held four events, including supporting the BLS fall Harvest Festival, bowling and ice skating and a carnival and BBQ.

Vacation Bible School (July 24-28) Bethel hosted 101 children with the help of 94 volunteers for our VBS program, “Fiesta!” The majority of children who attended came from outside of Bethel.

Bethel Lutheran School

Children, parents, and staff continue to be a blessed, content, and a cohesive family.

Parent Workdays are now done in coordination with the church family. School parents put in 624 hours of work helping with outdoor and indoor projects.

Our **Harvest Festival**, planned with Kid Connection, was a huge success. Please come next year!

We are beginning the **re-accreditation** process through NAEYC. Accreditation since 1987.

Service to our community included: Donating \$5,000 to the American Heart Association through our ‘Jump For Heart’ program, making sandwiches and delivering them to the San Jose Shelter, holding a Sock Drive for Cupertino Community Outreach, donating 100 toys to the ‘Toys for Tots’ and items for ‘Soldier Boxes’. Also provided canned goods during the Thanksgiving season.

Our fifth and sixth grade students went to **Science Camp** last spring and are raising funds to go to San Diego to the Sea World Science Camp.

In Caring Ministry

Stephen Ministry Four Bethel members completed training in 2006 and are now serving as Stephen Ministers for a total of 12 giving caring support to about thirteen people. Stephen Ministers are trained to listen, give caring support and to walk with others as they seek ways through crisis situations.

Lay Eucharistic Ministers This ministry continues as 8 members take communion to shut-ins monthly.

The Caring Ministry at Bethel continues with the quiet, loving support and service many, many members give to family, friends and neighbors.

Evangelism

- Expanded outreach in community newspapers.
- Prominent placement of Bethel information in the Cupertino Welcome Wagon booklet with access to monthly new resident information.
- Successful outreach through the Cupertino Easter Egg Hunt.

Mission Outreach

Thank you, Bethel, for your servants’ hearts...

- building Habitat homes for residents on Murphy St. in San Jose and for helping our friends south of the border build stronger communities
- feeding the homeless at the SJ Family Shelter and through the Lord’s Pantry, for housing our friends from Tanzania, the New Life Band, and supporting their ministry and efforts to build a school
- caring enough about hunger to walk in CROP Walk and write letters to Congress
- helping artisans around the world achieve dignity and a living wage by shopping at the LWR Fair Trade holiday faire
- supporting foster children and their families at their annual Christmas party
- giving the gift of education to AIDS orphans in Tanzania with over \$10,000 in gifts, and supporting our first mission to Tanzania team with your love and prayers

Update: Stelling Property

(Previously known as Redeemer Lutheran Church) All the legal work has been completed in closing Redeemer Lutheran Church. Your Church Council is in the process of finalizing a property management contract with the Sierra Pacific Synod to oversee the Stelling Avenue site. Soon, we will be organizing a committee to oversee use and the future ministries on that site focusing on Chinese centered service. The ELCA is seeking a Mission Developer who can help lead in the formation of that ministry with Bethel as the primary partner for this ministry.

Financial Report 2006

In 2006 Bethel engaged the services of Steve Boersma from Seeba & Associates, a CPA firm in San Jose. Steve's expertise is working with churches and having their accounting systems conform to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. Our bookkeeping may not have been up to GAAP standards; however, there was good documentation which enabled tracking and making corrections to transactions. We became aware that some prior capital expenses had been self-financed from savings and future income, and we could not continue carrying the self-financed loan balance on the books, without having sufficient current assets to cover all our current liabilities, restricted and designated funds. Steve recommended that we use designated account funds to zero out the loan balance. This meant that many funds designated for ministry and for cash reserves have been closed or "frozen" until sufficient cash is available to restore them.

The present financial Profit & Loss statement has a slightly different format. 1. All church and school income and activities are included and visible. 2. Some accounts have new names, e.g., Tithing will be reported under Appreciation & Benevolence. 3. We will now begin expensing for depreciation. 4. We have changed the fiscal year from July-June to September-August to coincide with the school year.

FY06 2005-2006. Since the fiscal year has been changed, the reports for this period are for 14 months. The General Fund Contributions are \$997k, with Total Expenses of \$1,101k resulting in a Net Ordinary Operating Deficit of \$104k. Your church and school financial staff has been working diligently making corrections to our books while keeping current with their other duties. One report, the "Cash Flow Statement", has yet to be generated. This report will shed light on how cash was used during the year, and along with the Profit & Loss and Balance Sheet will make Bethel's financial status and operations clear to all with basic accounting knowledge.

FY07 2006-2007. Over the past three months you have responded generously to our requests. This additional influx of cash assisted us in meeting operating expenses without reducing vital ministries. Our actual General Fund Contribution for the months September through December 2006 is \$330k with Total Expenses of \$282k, resulting to date in a Net Ordinary Income of \$66k. Along with your donations, the staff and ministry leads have done a super job keeping expenses in check. Our projected goal for the remaining months of FY07 is to realize a substantial net income at fiscal year end, so that some zeroed accounts can start to be replenished. Our target is to continue to shoot for our original income budget number of \$925k and hold expenses below \$860k (excluding depreciation). Council asks that you continue with your generous giving, and that the staff and ministry leads continue to hold down expenses. Council and the Pastors will communicate and keep you all informed of the progress.

This is my last report to you as your financial officer. I see much happening at Bethel, and there is excitement in our midst. I want to thank you all for the opportunity to serve, your trust in me, and above all, your generous responses when requests were made. Dave Tribby will be assuming this role, and together with prayer and guidance from the Lord, we will continue with His mission.

~ Eusebio Menezes
Financial Officer, January 2007

Endowment Grant

In partnership with Mt. Cross and Holy Cross Lutheran in Los Gatos, we received a \$50,000 grant from Thrivent to grow our endowment fund.