

*“Now all of you together are Christ’s body, and each one of you is a separate and necessary part of it.”*

*1 Corinthians 12:27*

*Dear Members and Friends of Bethel,*

*Take a moment to ponder your health. How are your vital signs right now? Blood pressure? Cholesterol levels? Resting heart rate? Weight? Each of us measures our overall health by these numbers. Now take a moment to ponder the health of Bethel Lutheran Church and School. How are this community’s vital signs right now? Take a look... In 2007 we:*

- Praised God in **211** public worship services at two sites
- Averaged **381** people in worship every Sunday
- Celebrated the Sacrament of Holy Communion **117** times
- Welcomed **22** people into God’s family through Holy Baptism
- Rejoiced with **11** teenagers who affirmed their baptisms
- Invested in over **180** children and teens in our family and youth ministry programs
- Equipped over **110** staff and lay leaders to advance God’s Kingdom
- Presented the gift of education to **178** AIDS orphans in Tanzania
- Embraced over **200** former members and their families at our 50th anniversary celebration
- Educated and enriched the lives of **196** students in our school
- Entered 2008 with a budget deficit of **\$0**.

*Our vital signs are looking fantastic, but numbers only tell part of the story. While as individuals we seek to strengthen the quality of our lives, as a community of faith we strive to maximize the depth of our care. While this is nearly impossible to quantify, it’s easy to see. Bethel may not always be the perfect church, but our capacity to care about each other and the world around us continues to grow.*

*As we move into 2008 you will notice several changes in the way we operate as we seek to follow where God is leading. Try your best not to be afraid. Forging our future for the next 50 years and beyond may be the toughest task we have ever faced as a congregation. However, if we have learned anything over the last 50 years it is this: our God is always faithful. Are you ready?*

**2007 Annual Report**  
**Bethel Lutheran Church**

Pastor Randal J. Pabst



Pastor Rick Sherrill

## Children's Ministry

### Kid Connection (Sunday school)

- In 2007, 72 children were enrolled with an average Sunday attendance of 45. 19 dedicated volunteers served as teachers, assistants and activity leads.
- Kid Connection offering for the 2007-2008 season is designated for the AIDS orphans in Tanzania. So far we have collected \$396.80.
- 16 children attended the First Communion Class

### GOTCHA (4th – 6th grade youth group)

- GOTCHA is under the direction of Yvonne Loo and Anita Fields and has 26 children in the program.
- GOTCHA events in 2007 included swim parties, glow-in-the-dark miniature golf, bowling, and laser tag.

### Vacation Bible School

- During the 4th week of July 2007, Bethel hosted 100 children for our VBS program, "Avalanche Ranch!" The majority of children who attended came from outside of Bethel.
- We had 117 volunteers helping to prepare food, lead activities, lead groups, lead worship and much more.

## Youth Ministry

### Jr. High

- *Wildside* (confirmation) has brought fun and faith together for 38 teens this year through large group theme nights, small group discussions and general hilarity.
- 22 students and adults spent a week at *Rock-n-Water* summer camp enjoying adventure activities.

### Senior High

*Our youth group motto is "Love Like Jesus." Everything we do is intended to point to this reality and to encourage living in that spirit.*

- Almost every Wednesday night *Sr. High Fellowship* met for dinner and a wide range of activities. There are about 50 Bethel Youth participants in total.
- *Common Ground* (40 teenagers and adult sponsors) enjoyed its 24<sup>th</sup> year of music/drama/video ministry with a 9-day tour of the Pacific Northwest.
- The *Mission to Mexico* (youth edition) continued its partnership with Esperanza in April with a mission trip involving over 20 youth and adult sponsors.
- *The House Band*, made up of 12 Bethel teenagers, led a total of 7 Worship Services, provided music for 3 Jr High Youth Gatherings, and were the music leaders for Bethel's VBS.

## Discipleship

### Adult Education

- Sunday morning *adult forums* included a wide range of topics including the Gospel of John, Christianity and Islam, Partnering with Christ through Bethel's Masterplan and several special presentations by Bethel's ministry partners.
- Bethel hosted the Lutheran Bible Institute weekend seminar on "*Where do Lutherans Fit Among Today's Churches?*" (Dr. Michael Rogness from Luther Seminary)
- 28 people attended the *New Member & Old Inquiry* class led by the pastors.

### Women's Ministry

- *Women of Wednesday (WOW)* met weekly and studied Lutheran theology as well as a Bible study on Ecclesiastes.
- Three *women's circles* and an additional bible study met monthly for study and fellowship.
- March's *Daughters of the King* conference featuring speaker/singer Celia Whitler was a big hit.
- Special events included the Spring Mother's Day Tea and Fall Thankoffering lunches.

### The Evergreens (Senior Ministry)

- Met twice monthly for lunch, fellowship and a topical discussion designed to aid in "graceful aging." Gathered together 23 times with average attendance of 28.
- Completed series of six "Our Neighbor's Faith" classes with Buddhism, Islam, and Judaism.
- Toured "Remembered Lights" Glass fragment art exhibit collected by a local army chaplain during WW II from bombed churches, cathedrals and synagogues.
- Davy & Jim Fields brought us up to date in "Communicating with Our Grandchildren in Today's Hi-Tech World."
- Alzheimer's Association gave us many good clues on how to "Maintain Your Brain."

### Men's Ministry

- An average of 15 men participated in monthly Men's Night Out meetings that included worship, study and fellowship.
- 12 men attended the annual fall retreat at Mt. Hermon Conference Center.

## Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry Training was conducted at Bethel for nine students from different churches, including our own Susan Harris. Bethel now has a total of 13 Stephen Ministers who give their support to numerous individuals going through a crisis.

## Worship & Music

- In July, Joe Howard left his ministry here as organist and Sanctuary Choir director, giving us the opportunity to review music ministry at Bethel.
- In November, we said “farewell” to the Celebration Choir and Sanctuary Choirs, and said “hello” to Robert Cornejo, hired as our new choir director for ONE choir that would sing at all services on a rotating schedule.
- The new Adult Choir debuted at the 50th Anniversary weekend with a special reunion choir of approximately 55 singers.
- In late November, Melody Bast joined our staff as organist/pianist and choir accompanist.

## Evangelism

*The goal of the Evangelism Ministry is to invite and welcome those who are new to our community.*

- In 2007 we focused on strengthening our outreach efforts at Bethel Lutheran School.
- Outreach efforts beyond our church and school campus included planning and hosting the Community *Easter Egg Hunt* with four local churches and hosting a booth at the Cupertino Fall Festival.

## Endowment Team

- As part of Bethel’s endowment trust, two new funds with specific targets were unveiled at the 50th Anniversary celebration in November: The *E. Silas Torvend Fund for Mission* (to help fund new missions and train new leaders in our community) and the *Bethel Lutheran School Legacy Circle* (to enhance unique educational opportunities of the school).
- Received \$22,750 for the Torvend Fund and \$3600 for the Legacy Circle Fund.

## Bethel Lutheran School

- Preschool enrollment continues to grow and is near capacity; the school as a whole is fiscally stable.
- School and church worked together on the first annual *Rummage Sale* and the *Harvest Festival*.
- This summer we welcomed Marybarbara Zorio as our interim principal and Angelina Gonzales as preschool coordinator.

- Re-accreditation was completed this fall through the NAEYC. Bethel Lutheran School has been accredited since 1987.

## Mission Outreach

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

- Ministering to incarcerated youth through the Correctional Institution Chaplaincy
- Building Habitat homes for residents 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
- 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
- Providing warmth with 230 quilts made by the Monday Quilters; 110 sent to Lutheran World Relief, remainder to local ministry partners.

## 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion

- Welcomed over 200 former members and 5 former pastors to Bethel for a weekend (Nov. 9-11) highlighted by an open house featuring historical displays, a marvelous BBQ dinner under the “big top tent” and an evening program that was both moving and hilarious.
- Experienced wonderful sermons from Pastor Si Torvend and Pastor Jim Cords in Sunday morning worship services that included a reunion choir.

## Stelling Site Ministry

- Began a ministry relationship with Good Shepherd Christian Church and their Pastor, Joseph Chiu. Good Shepherd is a targeted ministry focusing on young people who have been disaffected by traditional churches. They began worshipping at the Stelling Site in October.
- A task force representing both Bethel and Good Shepherd is in the process of developing a long-term vision, strategic goals and a structural relationship. This task force is also exploring funding channels from the Sierra Pacific Synod, the ELCA and The Lutheran Church of Taiwan.
- Received a \$55,000 grant to repair rotting beams on the sanctuary building.
- Hired Greg Abney as part-time facility coordinator.

In September 2006 Bethel revamped its financial system, changing from cash to accrual accounting. Accrual procedures more accurately reflect the financial position, including committed future obligations overlooked by the cash system. The new system introduced depreciation of assets, an expense that does not immediately affect the cash balance but reflects how much should be set aside for the repair and replacement of assets on an ongoing basis. After fifteen months on the new system, we are still learning how to use some arcane features. For that reason, we chose to enlist an outside CPA firm to conduct a review of our books for FY'07. A few transactions were found to be misclassified, and as soon as the review is complete the books will be corrected and then closed out for the year.

**FY'07** The original budget, built on the old fiscal year of July 2006 through June 2007, called for \$924,000 in both giving to the general fund and expenses. The budget was revised in January 2007 for the new September through August fiscal year. It reflected new financial realities by cutting expenses to \$860,000, but optimistically called on members to continue giving at the \$924,000 level in order to build cash reserves. The unaudited FY'07 results showed over \$867,649 in general fund contributions and \$885,190 in church expenses. The expense total includes both cashless depreciation and events funded by special contributions; the church's financial position actually improved by about \$40,000 during the year.

**FY'08** The current year's budget calls for \$909,000 in expenses (including \$75,000 depreciation) plus \$44,000 in balance sheet cash transfers. The net cash requirement is \$888,000. In recognition that depreciation represents real long-term needs, the general fund budget includes \$22,000 to build reserves, for a total of \$910,000. Each year, based on Bethel's giving patterns we map out how much should be contributed to the general fund each month to meet the annual giving goal. Through October, giving was \$22,000 (18%) behind the goal. Pastor Rick took the lead in challenging the congregation to make up the deficit. On December 31 giving stood at \$339,736 – \$736 over budget. On the other side of the ledger, church expenses stood at \$328,571, about 1.5% over budget. The church will need to continue challenging members to give the amount needed to support ministry and at the same time watch expenses and ensure those donations are used effectively.

– Dave Tribby  
Financial Officer

	BAPTIZED	CONFIRMED
Membership - end of '06	802	615
Received - Baptism	22	3
Received - Other	21	24
Removed - Death	3	3
Removed - Other	5	2
Membership - end of '07	837	637

For detailed information on Bethel's 2007 membership and financial data, visit [www.bethelcupertino.org](http://www.bethelcupertino.org)