

The background of the cover is a photograph of a church steeple against a blue sky with wispy clouds. The steeple is a tall, white, tapered tower with a dark cross at the top. Below the cross, there are two golden bells. The steeple is partially obscured by green trees at the bottom. The text is centered on the page.

# Bethel Lutheran Church & School

## 2018 Annual Report

**Our Core Values: Hospitality to All, Christ Centered Community,  
Spiritual Growth and Discipleship, Generosity, Responding to Needs**



Dear Family and Friends of Bethel,

You hold in your hand the 2018 Annual Report of Bethel Lutheran Church and School. In the following pages you will see and read only a portion of what we accomplished in the previous calendar year. This narrative does not report on the friendships made, the acts of kindness between members and other acts of service done with great joy. However, this report reflects a larger theme used by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: “God’s Work, Our Hands.” We have been busy building God’s Kingdom and expressing the love of Jesus in 2018.

As you read through this report, I hope that you see the ministry that you are a part of and sense the importance of your participation. On the other hand, if you see something that interests you, it is time to get involved! We are the church together and that is what makes Bethel a wonderful, faith filled congregation. This report would be much shorter if we did not invest our time, passion and faith towards the joyful work God sets before us.

As I reflect on 2018, I think back on the wonderful and challenging things that occurred. Our staff is strong, hardworking and cohesive. We are a high functioning team and that brings me great joy. Thank you to Fara, Tom, Amanda, Patricia, Dave, Melody, David, Chris, Leslie and Nikki. As we moved into our 2019 budget, Fara our Director of Finance & Human Resources moved to three days a week and she is as indispensable as ever.

We also, paid off the Bethel bus, celebrated my twentieth ordination anniversary as a pastor (Ben Fest), hosted the New Life Band from Tanzania and even celebrated Easter on April Fool’s Day. That won’t happen again until 2029!

We also made the difficult decision to close our elementary school due to lack of enrollment, however we continue to operate our preschool and the ministry that it provides to the larger community. Our preschool director Nikki works very hard to ensure the preschool is a welcoming place for all.

It is a pleasure and an honor to be your pastor at Bethel. Thank you. I am blessed by your support and more importantly your love.

I do not know what 2019 will bring but I am confident Bethel is up to the challenge of continuing to be the light of Christ in Cupertino and beyond.

God bless you,



Pr. Ben Bergren

## In Memoriam

We said goodbye to Marjorie Knapp. We acknowledge her gifts to this community and thank God for her faithful service.

## Baptisms

We baptized the following children: Mikaela Baker, Bradley Lynch, Christopher Strain, Violet Strain.

## New Members

We welcomed new individuals to our congregation: Robert Beckman (by baptism), Rod Brunngraber, Lloyd Darknell & Doris Smith, Pamela Mullooney.

## Confirmations

The following Bethel youth affirmed their baptismal faith promises: Kayla Burkhart, Abigail Caldwell, Krystal Curtiss, James Schmitt, Aidan Shattuck, Dana Steinke, Stephan Weber.

## First Communion Class

The following children celebrated their First Communion: AJ Aist, Claire Boniface, Jessica Burkhart, Adam Lingscheit, Karina Lui, Gabriel Placencia, Malia Placencia.

## First Bible Distribution

A Holy Bible was presented to Bryson Riedell, Jacob Riedell, Marten Muller, Lars Muller, AJ Aist, and Drew Brown.



## Director of Finance and Human Resources — Fara Brock

As Bethel's financial manager I oversee all church and school financial transactions including deposits, stock donations, bill paying, and payroll. I am responsible for the month-end and year-end close processes and submitting monthly financial reports to the church Treasurer. I also update reports for the church website including monthly Benevolence & Outreach giving, monthly Church Financial Activity, and the annual review by an external CPA firm.

- Fiscal Year 2018 was financially a good year for Bethel:
  - Total giving was 1% above budget and total expenses 2% below budget. The net income of \$-11,000 was \$22,000 above budget.
- Bethel gave \$84,300 to outside agencies as Benevolence and Outreach.
- I am blessed to work with volunteers who work “behind the scenes” to keep Bethel running smoothly:
  - Liz Tribby who manages office IT and member records
  - Kathy Arnold, Audit Committee chair
  - Holly Lofgren, Bethel Asset Coordinator
  - Brad Martinson who manages school computers and Bethel's internet and telephone infrastructure
  - Brian Schuette who optimizes Bethel's wireless network
  - Dave Larson, Bethel's Treasurer, who helps with budgeting and financial reporting along with other Finance Committee members: Dave Tribby, Jack Wedgwood, and Sam Sudarsanam
  - Mark Evashenk who manages the annual plan for benevolence and special designated giving

As Bethel's Human Resource manager, I work closely with Pastor Ben Bergren on personnel issues. Bethel has about 35 employees and we must be on top of changing labor laws to be compliant with California and Federal labor laws and payroll tax laws for small businesses. I work closely with Bethel's benefits broker to offer our employees competitive benefits including health, dental, and retirement accounts.

I work closely with Bethel's program staff on expense budgets and funding Bethel ministries. I look forward to another productive and inspiring year with Bethel's amazing staff and volunteers.

**GRACE**  
**WINS**

## Director of Children's Ministry & Nursery-Amanda Laughlin

2018 was full of service, fun and growth. We used *Dig In – the Bible in One Year*. We had nine dedicated Kid Connection teachers who took turns to lead lessons and shared their faith journeys with our children. These amazing volunteers were Lauren Burch, Patrice Sera, Amanda Boniface, Alice Isaacson, Lynne Stasi, Amber Funsten, Carol Wheaton, Minnie Sudarsanam and Rachel Sudarsanam. Kristine Lui, Jamie Laughlin and Sam Sudarsanam were our loyal substitutes and were willing to jump in when we need them. One of our activities was the “Seder Meal” that was held on Palm Sunday and was led by Robyn Winegardner and supported by Susan Leavitt. Our program was blessed to have such amazing people who gave their time to the children of Bethel and our community.

During Kid Connection, the kids selected and raised money for a charity. They collected over \$200. Kit Leong helped us to raise money by creating a llama themed door prize extravaganza: a llama themed diaper cake! Thank you! Their efforts were matched by a generous anonymous donor, whose company matched his efforts and so all together we had \$1,200 to give to a cause they chose. With the help of Nick Boniface, the children chose to give their offering to the Federation for Children with Special Needs, which is a non-profit organization that informs, educates and empowers families with children with special needs. They are based in Boston, MA. After receiving our check, they reached out to us and shared that they were greatly touched.

Our Little Lights Choir was directed by Amanda Boniface, Lauren Burch and Amanda Laughlin. Our Children's Choir was directed by Barb Larsen. Both choirs sang pieces in front of the congregation.

We held a First Communion Class for two Sundays in March. Seven children took part in this class. Pastor Ben led the class and used the curriculum *Come to God's Table – preparing for Holy Communion*. On Maundy Thursday, Amanda led the class in baking communion bread and took part in their first communion during the service.

First Bible Class was taught during Kid Connection class time in October. The students received their first Bible on Reformation Sunday. For those who have already taken the class this gave them a chance to take a refresher course. They also received a monogrammed Bible case for their first Bibles.



Our fourth Annual Take Out Church was a surprise for our very own Pastor Ben! We had a “Flat Pastor Ben” that the children of our community and the young at heart decorated and took on their vacations and stay-cations and took pictures with. The children were excited to see how many places Flat Pastor Ben visited in one summer!

Our annual Vacation Bible School took place on July 9<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup>. The theme was *Shipwrecked – Rescued by Jesus*. We had 68 campers and 55 amazing volunteers of all ages. Our VBS service project was an Operation Kid to Kid Mission Project, Growing God's Love in Haiti. With the

money collected by our campers and by the congregation we were able to collect \$904. Thank you to all our amazing volunteers, those who helped with sets, provided supplies, worked as a volunteer throughout the week as a crew leader, song leader or station



leader and for those who prayed for us. You made this week possible! A special thanks to Kathy Arnold, Amanda Boniface and Robyn Winegardner who helped with preparations...months before VBS. The kids had a great time!

During Advent the Kid Connection kids had a Secret Angel, who was a member of the congregation. They prayed for them and by week three they gave them a note and the children got a little gift. Thank you to all our members who were Secret Angels! The children love this tradition and look forward to it every year!



We performed our Annual Christmas Program on December 16<sup>th</sup> – *Away in a Manger*. We had 20 children participate. They shared the wonderful story of Jesus birth the way that only children can share it, beautifully tender, honest and real. Thank you to Amanda Boniface who helped with music and planning. Thank you also to

all the Kid Connection teachers, teens, young adult helpers and parents who helped with rehearsals and during the performance.

Thank you for continuing to invest in our children, they are our future and they are our church!

## Sixth to Eighth Grade Confirmation – Robyn Winegardner & Susan Leavitt

### Welcome to the Jeopardy Challenge!

The answer is: What the families of these youth have in common:

\*Kayla Burkhart, Abby Caldwell, Krystal Curtiss, \*James Schmitt,  
Aiden Shattuck, Dana Steinke, Stephan Weber

Response: What is a Confirmand who was confirmed on Pentecost Sunday in 2018?

The answer is: What the families of these youth have in common:

Madi Aamold, Ryan Brown, \*Grant Edstrom, Jack Lingscheit,  
\*Malia Palencia-Lynch, \*Kathleen Podrazza, Phillip Weber, Erica Yeadon

Response: What is a Confirmand who will be confirmed on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019?

The answer is: What the families of these youth have in common:

Ashish Das, \*Devynn Deutscher, Noah Keisch, Jenell Laughlin, \*Ben Schmitt

Response: What is a Confirmand who will be confirmed on Pentecost Sunday in 2020?

The answer is: What the families of these youth have in common:

Megan Aamold, Nick Boniface, Garrett Brown, \*Jessica Burkhart,  
\*William Edstrom, Ivory Miller, Lars Muller, \*Gabriel Palencia-Lynch, \*Jacob Riedel

Response: What is a Confirmand who will be confirmed on Pentecost Sunday in 2021?

The answer is: What the (\*) families of these youth have in common.

Response: What Confirmands are a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation Bethel Kid?

The answer is: What ALL these Confirmands have in common.

Response: What is they have grown, been loved, prayed, eaten donuts, worshipped, questioned, gotten to know Pastor Ben rafted some white waters, made and shared meals, snapped out of boredom with laughter, read lessons, slept in tree-toppers and just plain hung out with each other? However, their Faith Journey and Discovery are far from over.

Susan Leavitt and Robyn Winegardner will always be thankful for the priceless blessings we've received from each of these families and our time spent with these amazing kids!





## Director of Adult Ministry — Patricia Myerholtz

February 14<sup>th</sup> of this year will mark 9 years of being given the gift of overseeing many of the great Bethel fellowship events and many of its ministries. Because of our amazing and gifted volunteers, we were able to do so many things that brought us all together. These events have had the gifts of the presence of Jesus through them all and the joy of sharing



in life's adventures. *Some* of these events were: Chili Cook-off, BenFest, First Wednesday Speaker Series, 60th wedding anniversary of Bill and Karen Hanson, cookie receptions after concerts, Thanksgiving dinner, pie feast, community egg hunt, donuts for dads, flowers for moms, Christmas and Easter sanctuary décor setup, outdoor tent set up, new member class, clean up Saturdays, Lent soup suppers, ministry leader gatherings, food truck Sundays, Out and About adventures, and Ministry Fair. I was blessed to witness so many Bethel

ministries bring joy to so many and to help in bringing us all together. Bethel members shared their talents in sewing, quilting, the love of reading, handy work, caring for others, being interested in many topics, exploring outings with fellow friends, learning more about the bible, sharing their smile on Sunday mornings, setting up our altar, and so much more! *Thank you* to all the volunteers; your dedication went above and beyond; you all were what makes Bethel an amazing place to share the journey of life with.



I pray many of you will feel called to be a part of this amazing experience in the sharing of Bethel's gifts with others. 2018 was a great year working with a fun, supportive, and loving staff. I am looking forward to the Bethel adventures 2019 will bless us with. I will never take for granted this wonderful opportunity to serve Jesus and how blessed I am to share this life's journey with you all!

## Director of Youth Ministry, Audio/Visual & Facilities — Tom Hoegel

2018 was another great year to be at Bethel. I am continually humbled and inspired to be part of this faith community. My joy is made complete working with all of you and seeing how God works in and through you. As I begin my 35<sup>th</sup> year of ministry with you all, I'm excited about Bethel's journey to become more relevant in our community. The following is a glimpse of some of the major teams I get to lead.

### Youth Ministry



What an exciting year we just finished. We had great events and adventures with some highlights being **Common Ground's** presentation of *Practice not Perfect* and our participation at the **ELCA National**

**Youth Gathering.** *This Changes Everything* was the theme and 32,000 young people and adults were reminded of the great dreams God has for us and the unlimited possibilities of how God's love transforms the world. We also had a chance to stand in support of the "March for our Lives" movement by attending the march/rally in San Jose.

This coming year brings another great **Common Ground** season. Our theme will be *Native Tongue* and we are super excited to share this relevant message with you. We will investigate the public fixation with 23 & Me, Ancestry DNA, etc. and contrast our differences with our greater similarity:



GNA — God's Ribonucleic Acid — that binds us all together. What is our common language? The language of love = Our Native Tongue.

## Facilities Team

This ministry was a kick for me. I loved working with people who love working! 😊. Some fun accomplishments included the rejuvenation of the planter and the replacement of the downed tree at the edge of our parking lot. We also finished the installation of our sanctuary video camera infrastructure.



Another welcome project came via Bill and Karen Hanson by gifting welcome benches and tables in honor of Eric.

Great thanks go out to the Men of Monday, Rob & Trish Cunningham, the sanctuary decoration team and Liz Barton for their vision and muscles! 😊. This year's projects will include archiving and electronically sharing our worship services, refreshing the utility shed out back, movement on the Wedgewood walkway, and starting the Torvend discussion again.

## AV and Transportation Teams

As we enter a new chapter in video production, we would love to engage more people on our AV team. We installed our sanctuary cameras, switcher, and streaming/archiving gear to share our worship and sanctuary activities outside these walls. If you have an interest in sound, media, or video, please contact me and I'd love to tell you more. Regarding transportation, we've had our bus for over three years now and we paid it off!!!!!! We continue to support weekly youth ministry and monthly Out & About events. This ministry tool really helps us get our ministry outside our walls. Come join us! 😊

As I wrote this report, I looked back at last year's and remembered that we were in the middle of an official government shutdown. While that was annoying, we are truly in a state of crisis now with over 800,000 working or furrowed without pay. What a stark reminder as to where we need to put our trust, individually and as a congregation. I am continually moved as to the blessing it is to have a vocation that goes beyond money, that is about working to share Jesus' love with the community called Bethel.

Thanks for that blessing, Tom

## Bethel Lutheran School



The Bethel Preschool is currently welcoming 56 students, ages 2 through 4 years old, to its classrooms, as well as 25 elementary aged students to the After-Care program from 7 a.m. until 6 p.m. daily. Our students are eager, happy participants in play and learning, greeting people on the sidewalks before scurrying into doors to get the day's learning started. In the Cupertino way, our students represent a variety of home languages, including English! The teachers

joyfully greet each child, tend to their learning and needs, read stories, provide snacks, offer language development in so many ways, and have conversations with the kids about God in their young lives. Our school bears constant witness to our joy in the Lord and the power of learning The Word.

Daily, teachers work on a variety of age appropriate social and academic skills, always incorporating the pleasures of playful inquiry. The current program at the school includes visits from our music teacher, Melody Bast, who cheerfully enters the classrooms with her ukulele under her arm. Kids learn the songs with pleasure and gusto! Melody has worked with teachers to write new verses to songs helping to make the music personal. She is also the author, director and set designer of the festive, meaningful Christmas program, with its sheep and angels, as well as programs presented by the After-School Care students.

In special activities, our preschool students and their parents had a joy filled day, marching through tunnels with fish and balloon walkways in the Fall Walk-a-Thon. This was a fundraiser, with the ocean as decorations and theme this fall. In addition, there was the Fall Festival. It was a fun day of costumes, a student parade and a special puppet assembly. In November, there was a delicious American Thanksgiving Feast Day with tasty foods all around Torvend Hall. In early February, we anticipate our Lunar New Year/International Day celebration with heritage presentations from 5 groups of parents. In addition, beginning in February, the school will feature a yoga instructor for kids and adults, and a gymnastics opportunity for students. Also, there has been a once a week opportunity for school parents to come together to improve their English language skills and grow their understanding of American culture, California style.

After years of experience in Bethel School's classrooms, Nikki Hufana became the director of the preschool this fall. In June of 2018, the elementary portion of the school was shuttered. Our current school is a preschool. Nikki replaced the previous principal at a time of enrollment at its lowest point in decades, as well a time of a large capital shortfall. Through her enthusiasm, faith, and commitment, the school has grown from 42 students in August to its current enrollment of 56 children. Parent referrals for new enrollments have increased to 19, from 7 parent referrals in the 2017-18 school year, as a testimony to the quality of our learning program. Additional changes have included the updating of the school website and a teacher learning opportunity to grow the staff's skills and strengths in effective parent conferencing. It's apparent, the teachers feel supported and are energized in their teaching.

The decades long mission of Bethel School has been to grow young faith-filled learners, as well as witness to and welcome their families into Bethel's Family of God. How can you help our school fulfill our shared mission? \$

## Worship & Music — Brian Schuette

### Bethel Worship Team — Clayton Johnson, Director of Contemporary Music

This year the Bethel Worship Team had 15 members who participated on a rotating basis. In addition to leading the 10:45 contemporary service, we also have the privilege of leading all the outdoor worship services during the summer. Every year it is a great joy for us to be invited to perform with all the other talented musicians at Bethel in the Christmas concert, and this year was no exception. The highlight for me was our rendition of *Go Tell It on the Mountain/Ain't No Mountain High Enough*. Bethel has a long history of innovative contemporary worship. We are privileged to be able to continue that tradition every Sunday and look forward to another year of worshipping together.

We are *always* recruiting new members. If you sing or play an instrument, please think about joining us.

*Thank you* to the 2018 Bethel Worship Team: Liz Barton, Rachel Bergren, Mary Deutscher, David Herberg, Kara Hermann, Katlynn Hoegel, Tom Hoegel, Clayton Johnson, Haven Johnson, Phil Kelman, Adam Klopfenstein, Tom McAvoy, Brian Schuette, Rachel Sudarsanam, and Dana Torgersen.

### Handbell Choir – Chris Hogan

The handbell choir performed at many services and at the Christmas concert. We welcome players of all ages and experience levels.



### Children's Choir — Barb Larsen

The Children's Choir is off to a good start this year. Spencer Choate, who was our wonderful accompanist the past several years is away at college and was not able to continue. I am delighted that Krystal Curtiss is our new accompanist. We have four new 2<sup>nd</sup> graders this year.

We participated in the Christmas Concert, singing with the All Bethel Choir for two selections, and a piece by ourselves. Christmas Eve we were joined by the Little Lights for one of our anthems.

We look forward to another season of praising God with our music.



## Altar Guild — Lois Eid & Judy Johnson

The Altar Guild prepares the altar for worship and Holy Communion, an essential part of worship preparation. The types of tasks included are: setting-up and cleaning the silver service for communion, maintaining the altar linens, purchasing wine and grape juice, changing paraments according to the church calendar, filling the candles with oil, and maintaining the area around the altar, and stripping the altar on Maundy Thursday. We accomplished all the tasks with a group of dedicated volunteers: Lorraine Mencimer, Anna Hoegel, Karen Zettler, Anita Tysseland, Hope Jow, Karin Engelbauer, Erna Trogisch, Sandie Hersh, Janice Martinson, Debby Coleman, Sharon Parady, Dianne Stauffer, Lorene Westmore, and Linda Edwards. We thank them for their faithful service.

## White (Maundy Thursday) Breakfast – Eleanor Incerpi

On March 29, 2018, in Torvend Hall was the White Breakfast. Forty-five people attended the Communion breakfast led by Pastor Ben Bergren. The menu for the event was: Priscilla's Strata, fruit, Hot Cross Bun, Tea or Coffee. Melody Bast and Barbara Larsen provided the music.

We thank the following people who helped with setting up, preparing the food, and washing dishes: Lois Eid, Lorraine Mencimer, Natalie Rogerson, Debby Coleman, Anna Hoegel, Sandie Hersh, Tom Cole, Tom Siron, Janice Martinson, Robyn Winegardner. In addition, Rosemarie Reichard, Joanne Stensaas, and Vivian Walz read from various passages from the Bible.



## Greeters & Ushers — Patricia Myerholtz

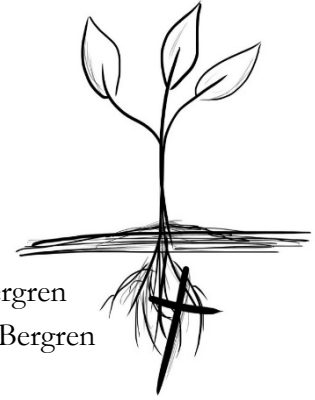
**Greeters:** Greeters Ministry is blessed to have wonderful volunteers who take the time fifteen minutes before each service to welcome all with their warm smiles and kind hearts. Those that have volunteered are: Jean Teed, Janice Martinson, Phyllis Gaffney, Joanne Stensaas, Tillie Hinely, Lou Koehn, Mariann Jones, Doris Smith, Lloyd Darknell, Bill and Rosemarie Reichard, Angela Brown, Ordetta Hovland, Rod Brunngraber This ministry welcomes new participants. Contact Patricia Myerholtz

**Ushers:** Thank you to the following usher volunteers this past year: Pat Starrett, Elliot Hinely, Roger and Vera Edstrom, Larry Polyak, Jamie Laughlin, Paul Baldwin, Greg Abney, Mark and Merle Sandwisch, John Boniface, Nick Boniface, Rick Bryson, Chris Freckman, Greg Steinke, Alan Gu, Dianne and Jack Stauffer, Rob Lingscheit, David Nadell, Lloyd Darknell, Doris Smith, Rod Brunngraber, Greg Myerholtz. Some have been ushering for many years and some have just joined; Bethel is very blessed to have them all. Sunday services are very appreciative of the work you all do to help the service run smoothly. Contact Patricia Myerholtz if this is something you would like to help with.

## Education & Discipleship — Kathy Arnold

Thank you to a very special group of leaders:

- **Library Team** — Margaret Lund
- **Martha Circle** — Vera Edstrom
- **Men's Night Out** — Sam Sudarsanam
- **New Member Classes** — Pastor Ben Bergren,
- **First Wednesday Speaker Series** — Kathy Arnold, Pastor Ben Bergren
- **Sunday Morning Adult Education** — Kathy Arnold, Pastor Ben Bergren
- **Women of the ELCA (WELCA)** — Cindy Arnett
- **Women of Wednesday** — Kathryn Montano



Education and Discipleship is not just for Sunday mornings. This year, our classes and study groups read & discussed books on Sundays, Mondays, and Wednesdays, too!



In addition, our Library team provided Christian books, CDs and DVDs for all ages and interests. Many thanks to the library committee: Margaret Lund, Debby Coleman, Karen Hanson, Natalie Rogerson.

The Women of the ELCA activities allowed us to apply our insights into tangible goods for others.

There were 8 First Wednesday Speaker Series in 2018. The speakers were: Pastor Ben Bergren, Sexuality and the Bible; Awtar Mazloom, Sikhism; Brian Wo, Anti-trafficking; Dave Denny, Poetry; Cupertino Mayor Darcy

Paul; Maggie Robertson, Advance Directives; Jose Antonio Vargas, Immigration Activist; Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb, Jerusalem: What Makes for Peace?. The average attendance was 60. The catered dinners arranged by Patricia Myerholtz were wonderful.

The Sunday Adult Education Classes comprise a video followed by a short discussion. Thank you very much to Randy Shattuck and Dave Denny for backfilling when Pastor Ben Bergren could not make it. This year's topics were: *Moses - In the footsteps of the Reluctant Prophet* by Adam Hamilton, *The Hole in Our Gospel* by Rich Stearns, *Remembering the Forgotten God (Reversing Our Tragic Neglect of the Holy Spirit)* by Francis Chan, *Creed: What Christians Believe and Why* by Adam Hamilton, *Christian: It's Not What You Think* by Andy Stanley, *Unshakable Hope* by Max Lucado. Approximately 45 attended each week.

There were a Summer Book Study and Fall Book Study whose format was to spend two evenings analyzing a single book in-depth. The Summer Book Study was *Myth of Equality: Uncovering the Roots of Injustice and Privilege* by Ken Wytmsa. The Fall Summer Book Study was *Life Together: The Classic Exploration of the Christian Community* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

The Martha Bible Study Circle meets to increase our knowledge of the bible and enjoy the fellowship of others. We met eight times during the year with a different person taken the leadership role.

The Women of Wednesday completed *Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus* by Nabeel Qureshi, and then moved onto *That the World May Know (Volume 11)* by Ray Vanderlaan, followed by *The Girls with Swords* by Lisa Bevere. The average attendance was 8.

## Care Ministries — Joanne Stensaas

Caring Connections Ministry has had the blessing of being able to send out over 100 cards this past year to those who could use a word of encouragement, hope, and love. Through Marianne Jones, the group was able to sponsor a Speaker Series event talking about being prepared in case you cannot make decisions for yourself, it was a well-attended event. This ministry meets once a month and helps keep members connected whether through phone, e-mail, connecting on Sundays, or cards. Dave Denny and Pastor Ben also give connection ideas as well. This group is led by Joanne Stensaas and all are welcome. Participants are: Joanne Stensaas, Pastor Ben, Dave Denny, Rick Bryson, Patricia Myerholtz, Tillie Hinely, Natalie Rogerson, Jean Teed, Phyllis Gaffney, Bill Westmore, Sharon Parady, Marianne Jones, Sam Sudarsanam, Minnie Sudarsanam, Robyn Winegardner, Tony Stieber, and Rachel Sudarsanam

## Spiritual Care Coordinator — Dave Denny

Spiritual Care at Bethel is a wide-ranging and inclusive ministry. My focus is on extending the reach of our pastoral care and visitation program. In so doing, I try to see that each Bethel member or regular visitor feels connected with our community and engaged in Sunday worship, mission outreach, service opportunities, and education. In 2018, I was privileged to substitute for Pastor Ben when he was out of town, assist him in worship and adult education, and participate with Patricia in Bethel's Caring Connection program. In the new year, I look forward to building a supportive community of young Silicon Valley professionals. My second year as a team member of Bethel's program staff has been rich and rewarding. I look forward to serving our church in this capacity in both new and established ways.

## Prayer Bytes – Robyn Winegardner



Prayer Bytes at Bethel give folks a chance to join about 70 people who choose to receive an email each morning with some of the prayer requests of the Bethel community. On the average it is between 6 and 8 Prayers and includes members, former members and friends of Bethel. Anyone can subscribe or unsubscribe at any time. Just contact Patricia Myerholtz, Liz Tribby or Robyn Winegardner and you'll be all set. Also, if you have a Prayer request, just contact Pastor Ben, Dave Denny or Patricia Myerholtz and they will get your request moving.



## Congregational Life — Patricia Myerholtz and Sue Jacobus

The following lists only a few of the events held here at Bethel in which many of the congregation volunteer and attend. These events also help in bringing about community for our Bethel neighbors.

### Egg Hunt:



The Community Egg Hunt is now in its 7<sup>th</sup> year! Every year we fill over 3000 plastic eggs that are then divided into age appropriate egg hunts. This free event also includes snacks and crafts. This event could not happen without this past year's volunteers: Anna Hoegel, Joanne Stensaas, Laurel Euler, Mona Chan, Sharon Parady, Karen Ewers, Cathy Stahl, Sue Jacobus, Kenly Bicht, Josh Myerholtz, Amber Myerholtz, Olivia Lingscheit, Eric

Funsten, Greg Myerholtz, Amanda Laughlin, and Pastor Ben.

### Evergreens: for 55+



Evergreens met once a month for fellowship, devotions, lunch and activities. This past year Evergreens played bingo, filled school bags for kids around the world, painted pumpkins, did crafts, shared pictures of travel and weddings, and

watched a mix of comedies and biblically based movies. There was also a trip to the creche display in Palo Alto. Participants were: Debby Coleman, Sue Jacobus, Betty Danielson, Carol Olson, Father Toma Farag, Anna Hoegel, Eleanor Incerpi, Betty Pohl, Lorain and Dave Sahlit, Merle Sandwisch, Patricia Myerholtz, Lois Eid, and the leader of this ministry, Shirley Gross.



### Chili Cook Off

For 3 years, through the vision of Pastor Ben, Bethel has hosted the Chili cook-off. Over 20 participants enter the event in hopes of winning and being placed on the Bethel Chili Cook-Off plaque. This past year Rachel Sudarsanam took the honor. Pastor Ben won 2<sup>nd</sup> and Sue Jacobus took 3<sup>rd</sup>. Close to 100 attended this fun event and there was a kids' coloring contest as well. This event was led by Patricia Myerholtz, Amanda Laughlin, and Pastor Ben with volunteers Sue Jacobus and Greg Myerholtz.



### Monthly Food Truck (new ministry)

We started a new Fellowship opportunity at Bethel by bringing in a Food Truck on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month from 10:30am–1:00pm in our back parking lot. It is a casual, pay as you go, bring a friend to lunch activity. No mess, no fuss just good food with good conversation and space for kids. We had four different months of great meals from Tas Tee Bytes, El Diferente Loncheria, Waffles Amore and Eduling’s Kitchen. We will be back in March or April based on weather reports. Included on our short list for the spring are: Curry Up Now, Mo Bowl and Patzcuaro Taco Truck.

If you have any recommendations send them to Robyn Winegardner.

### Labor Day Retreat — Molly Schrey

The purpose of the ministry is to enjoy worship and fellowship at Mt. Cross camp in Felton, CA over the Labor Day Weekend. Participants have a chance to attend speaker-led sessions and worship, participate in workshops, enjoy a variety of fun activities, socialize, or just relax amidst their beautiful surroundings.

Pastor Brenda Bos from Christ Lutheran Church in San Clemente led our 3 speaker sessions and unpacked the theme *Practice Not Perfect*. In addition, we had mini-workshops led by Dave Denny, Tyler Freckmann, and Brenda Bos, that also explored this theme. Participants enjoyed the tried and true events such as: Bethel Olympics, Variety Show, Carnival, Polar Bear Swim, Campfire, and Morning Devotions. We would like to thank the following LDR members: Tom Hoegel, Ben Bergren, Patrice Sera, Chris Freckmann, Susan Leavitt, Rich Hahn, Holly Lofgren, Dave Lofgren, Brian Schuette, Chris Larsen, Dave Denny, Kara Hermann, Tyler Freckmann, Katlynn Hoegel, and Molly Schrey.



We would love to have more Bethel friends and family enjoy this yearly event! In addition, the committee welcomes new members.

## Out 'n About — The Active Fellowship Ministry — Jules Kurtz



Shade Ranch

The Out 'N About Ministry is all about finding exciting activities, inviting people to join in, fellowship together, and share the glory to God while we explore and enjoy this wonderful world.



In the 9 years of this ministry, there have been a total of 83 events, 1792 participants, with an average of 21.6 people per event.

We explored how to maximize the use of the Signup.com tool and the Eventbrite ticketing tool but found that the Signup tool met most of

our needs, but most importantly it supported the use of the iPad in the Narthex to allow easy sign-up while at Bethel on Sunday mornings.

2018 – 10 activities and (205 total attendees): 1/14 - Escape the Room – 11, 3/17 – Annual St. Paddy’s Day Brewery – 28, 4/28 – Rosie the Riveter – 25, 7/7 – Elkhorn Slough Kayak / Berry Picking – 25, 8/25 – San Jose Brewery Crawl – 22, 9/22 – Santa Cruz Diner / Boardwalk – 15, 10/6 – Fleet Week / Walk the Golden Gate Bridge – 27, 11/3 – Golden Gate Park Segway / Picnic – 15, 1/15 – Kings Brass @ Mt. Herman – 15.



*Rosie the Riveter*

Thank you to the following Out & About Team members: Tom Hoegel, Marianne Nadell, Molly Schrey, Patricia Myerholtz, Paul Baldwin, Jules Kurtz, Dave Lofgren, Adam Klopfenstein (Addition), Joel Heimback (Departure)

It is our hopes and prayers that we may continue to find inspiration and blessings to continue to steward this exciting ministry for growth, inclusion, fellowship, and the possibility of reaching people both inside and outside of Bethel. We believe that if we find the right opportunities, we can attract people to Bethel and maybe they would consider joining the fellowship. We all appreciate the opportunity to serve.

## Supper Club Ministry — Janice Martinson

Nineteen people participated in small groups for fellowship over informal meals. I hope to invite more people to join a Supper Club.

## Sunday Coffee Hosts – Marion Abney

*For I was hungry, and you gave me food,*

*I was thirsty and you gave me drink,*

*I was a stranger you welcomed me.*

Matthew 25:35

Bethel's Coffee Hosting Ministry responds to Jesus' command to address the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of those who worship at Bethel. Our volunteers provided coffee and optional treats to create a setting of welcome and conversation. Special thanks to the fifteen volunteers who arrived early on Sundays to prepare coffee, set up the cart, and clean-up afterwards. Also, a big thank you to our staff member, Leslie Steen, who faithfully orders supplies as needed.

## Mission & Service — Mark Evashenk

This ministry seeks to motivate, equip and support the members of the congregation to address the social, economic, emotional and spiritual needs of the poor and oppressed and to persons in need. It shall provide opportunities for study of social justice issues in the community and the world. It shall promote cooperation and support for Conference, Synod, church wide and ecumenical agencies efforts to further social justice and advocacy.

In 2018 the following were accomplished:



- Layette bags (over 30 bags with diapers, bottles, blankets, sleepwear, wipes) for Sacred Heart Community Services
- Summer camp support (swim suit, towels, PJs) for foster kids via Help One Child
- Turkey Drive (50+ turkeys) for Lords Pantry / Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
- Giving Tree (104 kids supported with Christmas presents) for foster kids via Help One Child
- General food support (>700 pounds of food) for West Valley Community Services
- Mission to Mexico (2 trips) with Esperanza to help build homes for families in Tijuana

## Mt Cross Ministries — Holly Lofgren

This ministry's purpose is to offer a Lutheran summer camp experience for youth. It is also a retreat center for a variety of groups. Bethel Lutheran has held its annual Labor Day Retreat at Mt Cross for over 50 years

## Finance & Stewardship — Scott Anderson & Brett Deutscher

The stewardship committee consisted of 3 members plus Pastor Ben. We welcomed Lisa Onishi to our small but fun group. We focused our messages to the congregation in June, with June 17 being our Faith Promise / Commitment Sunday. Themes for this year's stewardship letter and stewardship announcements included: our core value of "Generosity, How Much is Enough", and celebrating the significant member involvement of service. Planning for our Stewardship campaign started in May, and Faith Promise card follow up with members continued through July, with a final report generated by Liz Tribby in the fall.

The report highlighted several exciting trends. Over 50% of those who made commitments in 2017 and again in 2018 increased their level of financial generosity. There were more than 15 new commitments made in 2018. Overall, these two influences raised Bethel's financial commitments by 10%, to over \$500K. This maturing generosity helps guide Bethel leadership toward responsible budget decisions in 2019. Thank you for your generous giving of time and talents!

## Nominating Committee — Hella Bluhm-Stieber

The Nominating Committee works with council president and pastor to recruit qualified candidates for open council positions and to advise ministries to fill their open positions. I alerted the council president and Pr. Ben about council positions that might be opening or that need to be reaffirmed for another term. I also met several times with Pastor Ben and the council president to talk about open positions and possible candidates. Members of the nominating committee helped recruit a candidate for the auditing committee. The other members of the committee: Jack Wedgwood, Scott Anderson.

## Technology & Administration

### Web Ministry — Dave Arnold

We maintain a web site for Bethel Lutheran Church at <https://www.bethelcupertino.org/>. This provides a comprehensive and current view of the activities at Bethel for visitors and members alike. It is Bethel's virtual front door to the community. The most popular pages are the home page, the church calendar and the sermons page, where we provide a podcast and audio recording of each week's message.

This year we switched to encrypted access (https) for our web site. The use of https has been a trend throughout the internet; it improves Google's page rank and avoids the "Not secure" label for our pages in browsers. I thank Liz Tribby for her work with Bluehost (our web hosting service) to provide this service at no additional charge.

Google Analytics reports that the number of unique visitors to our home page is gradually increasing and is nearly 400 per month. About 33% of these are mobile users.

Each day, [www.bethelcupertino.org](http://www.bethelcupertino.org) appears 400 times in Google search result pages and typically receives 15 clicks from those pages.

A copy of the weekly eNewsletter that Elise Holst emails (via Constant Contact) to subscribers is posted on the [web site](#).

Users can sign up to attend certain church events online (via Signup.com).

The daily Prayer Bytes email is sent via Bluehost to 65 subscribers. Thanks to Robyn Winegardner, Elise Holst and Liz Tribby for maintaining this service.

Building & Grounds — Tom Cole

Men of Monday — Tom Cole



Our indomitable crew from Men of Monday





*This photograph is the thank you from the summer campers that we helped via Help One Child. Bethel purchased swim suit / towel / PJs in order for the kids to have a fun and warm camp experience.*

*2019 Thank you to Kathy Arnold, Elise Holst, Patricia Myerbolst, Liz Tribby, Dave Arnold Pastor Ben Bergren and all of the Ministry Leads who contributed to our Congregational Report.*



## Building & Grounds — Tom Cole

### Men of Monday — Tom Cole

Purpose: We perform campus repair and maintenance.

Our Team: Bill Weberg, Tom Cole, Roger Edstrom, Mike Rogerson, Mike Bruner, Victor Chinn, And Part Time Help from Mike Coleman, Jules Kurtz And James Aamold.

Our Work: Our group saves Bethel money through our voluntary “do it yourself” efforts. If the job is beyond our ability, we call Tom Hoegel to hire a contractor. We enjoy having coffee and goodies with the Quilters after the morning labor. Fun and fellowship.” Repairs and Replacements Numbers in 2018: 25 Doors And Windows, 12 Fences (and Gates), 25 Tables (and Chairs), 18 Faucets/Sinks/Toilets, 16 Roof Drains/Solar, 80 HVAC Filters, 23 Wasp Treatments, 100 Fluorescent Lamps, 17 Lamp Ballasts. In addition, over 100 single issues were addressed.

Peace,

M.O.M

## Mission & Outreach

### Quilters – Joann Weberg

The Quilting group had its beginning in 1997. They made 17 quilts and donated them locally. Last year we finished 338 quilts. Of these, we donated 189 to Lutheran World Relief and 149 locally. Since our beginning, records show we have made over 4,653 quilts. Lutheran World Relief also received 150 of our school back packs in 2018 which brought our total up to 1584.

Monday mornings from 9am until noon finds 20+ quilters in the Fireside room. We have Bethel members as well as others that enjoy quilting. We have several task areas for the art of quilting, from separating and cutting donated cloth, design work, sewers, pinners and those who tie the quilts.

We welcome any and all who would like to join us; no experience needed. We have been blessed with sharing our quilts with the Bethel Congregation by hanging them in the sanctuary and on the pew backs. New in 2019 we will also be hanging quilts in the Fireside room. Donations of cloth are always welcome.