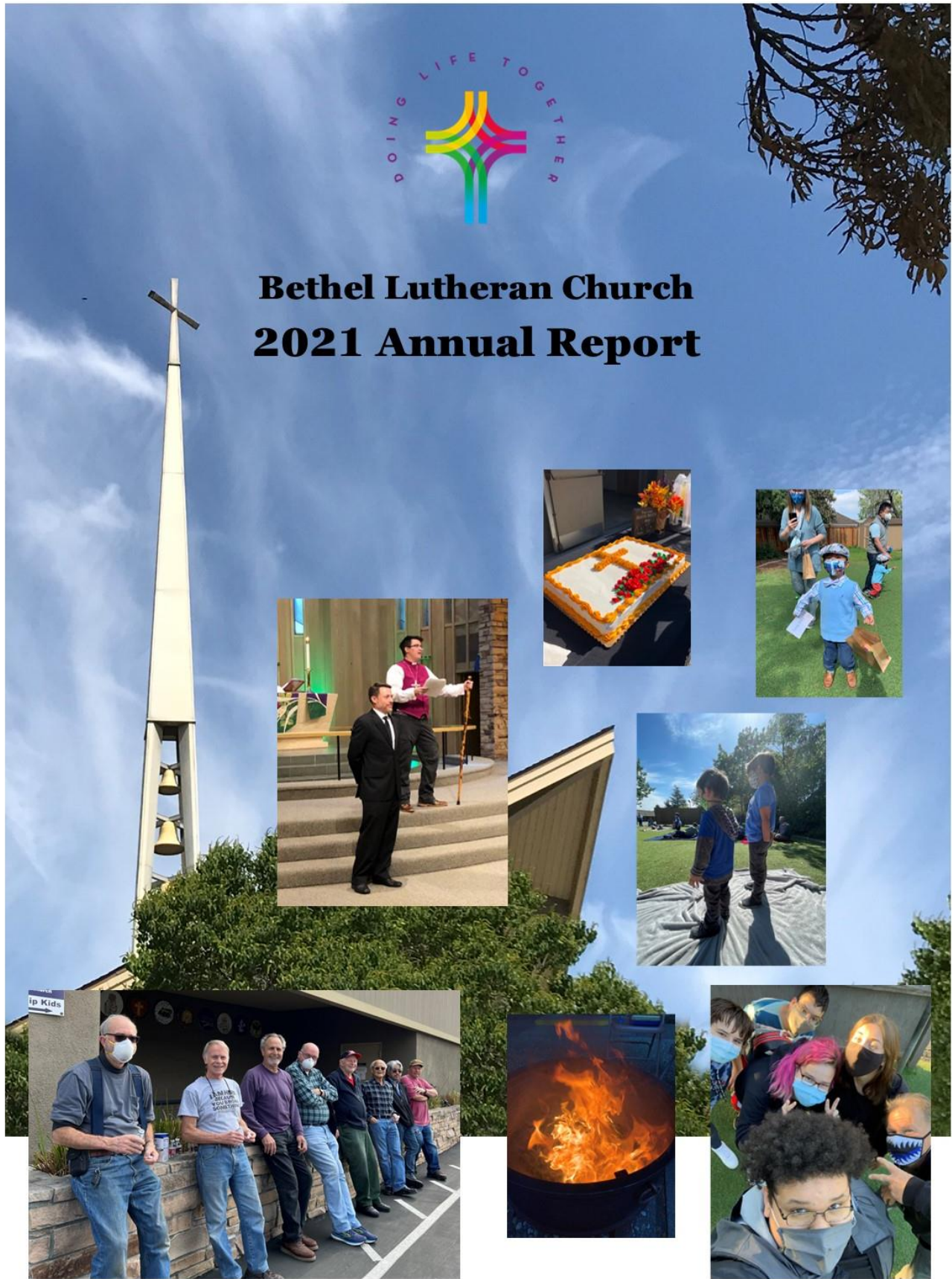




Bethel Lutheran Church 2021 Annual Report



HOSPITALITY **CHRIST-CENTERED COMMUNITY** **SPIRITUAL GROWTH & DISCIPLESHIP** **GENEROSITY** **RESPONDING TO NEEDS**

2021 Bethel at a Glance

Baptisms

Jameson Edward Sandell 11/21/21

First Communion

None

First Bible

Holly Kenyon Boniface

Tristan Janssen

Confirmations: May 23, 2021

Nicholas Kenyon Boniface

Garrett Alan Brown

Jessica Lynne Burkhart

William Alexandre Edstrom

Ohana Lori Miura

Lawrence Freeland Muller

Jacob Lee Riedell

Weddings

Dawn De Bois-Weber and Tyler Sandell 6/19/21

Steven and MJ Wallace 12/29/21

New Members

Benjamin and Kelly Sandin

Deaths

Shirley Jean Gross 6/14/21

Gail Brooks Jones 9/10/21

Thomas Walter Cole 9/28/21

2021 was an exciting year!

I was blessed to accept the call to serve as Bethel's Lead Pastor and began my service in July. This required a cross-country move and all the fun those entail. That being said, it has been a joyful beginning for our partnership in ministry. I have enjoyed learning more about Bethel's history and especially the experience and memories of members of the Bethel family. The listening campaign I conducted was incredibly helpful in getting to know the people of Bethel and to think deeply about future pathways for ministry and mission. Thank you all for your warm welcome and willingness to work together for Bethel's future.

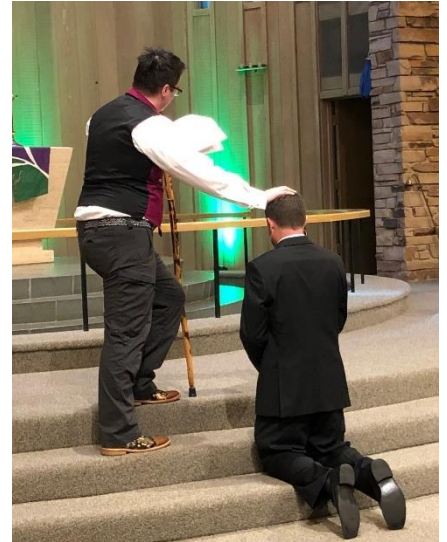
2021 was a year of adaptation. As the global pandemic continued this year, we have all had to adapt. Bethel is no exception as we have continued to stream online worship, while returning to in-person worship in September. It was great to be together in-person even though things are not quite "normal." This has also been true for all our ministries as well, adapting to meet the spiritual needs of our community while also adhering to local health guidelines. As we consider our shared future, we will have opportunities to consider what a new normal will look like and what lessons we have learned in the past two years we wish to carry with us.

The future is filled with hope! One central truth that has consistently given me hope is the ongoing presence of God during this time. God is with us and not against us. God will use our challenges to make us stronger and more resilient. As the prophet Isaiah wrote:

But those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. Isaiah 40:31

Let us place our trust in the Lord with the certain hope that God will be with us for the journey, and we will be blessed along the way!

God's Peace,
Pastor Ben Sandin



ADULT MINISTRY – PATRICIA MYERHOLTZ

Dear Bethel Family,

I continue to be in awe as to how the Bethel family has supported the many opportunities that were made available to them even through the struggles of a pandemic. The many Bethel ministries continued to stay strong and found wonderful creative ways to stay connected.

Here are some highlights: I was able to continue to support hosting the Zoom Wednesday night adult education hours that were led by Pastor Don and Kathy Arnold that included great video series like Guardrails and Get Your Life Back (these were attended sometimes by as many as 20 members). Helping with Zoom hosting the Wednesday night Lent services was also a spirit filled time. I also supported hosting the Zoom meetings for the Caring Connection Ministry (led by Joanne Stensaas) whose energy, dedication and serving hearts have helped Bethel family to stay connected as well. I was also the host to help with Zoom meetings for Readers Anonymous (led by Kathy Arnold) and Women of Wednesday Ministries (led by Kathryn Montano), what a joy to witness such wonderful ways of members staying connected and learning things together. One of my favorite times of Zoom hosting was being the Zoom host to the Sunday Coffee Hour (led by Ann Marie Kenitzer) where it was so energizing to reconnect with Bethel family members, get updates on their lives, and learn from one another. This online hour continues to this day with the monthly social hour which is a testament to the love the Bethel family has for one another. The events I was blessed to lead were the Chili Cook In and Bingo Night, Friday Fun Night Game Nights, Mother's Day Flowers, Father's Day Donuts, and Art Fair. Thank you to all who supported these events which were filled with fun memories of the sharing of talents, the sounds of fun, laughter and joy. It was also great fun to put together Palm Sunday kits and communion kits as well.

I ended my leadership role in September 2021 and am so grateful for all the opportunities given to me to help our Bethel family stay connected thru these past years. All Glory to God always and a big thank you to YOU ALL for all you have done to keep this Bethel family together.

Most of all, I am grateful for Mary Ellen Deutscher who now leads this position with her dedicated, experienced, serving and loving heart. Bethel family is truly blessed by her and have so much to look forward too!

God Bless,

Patricia Myerholtz

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES – AMANDA LAUGHLIN

Kid Connection Sunday School met by Zoom at 10:00 AM every week, January through May (supplies for each lesson were delivered to homes and or picked up by families)

3rd - 5th Grade Youth Group met every other Sunday January through May (via Zoom at 1:00 PM) for games and fellowship.

Kid Connection Parent Fellowship met weekly January through May (via Zoom at 2:00 PM)

Take Out Church - Summer 2021- “God Loves All Creatures Great and Small” based on Psalm 104 – a picnic basket box, filled with animals (great and small) finger puppets, Activities on how we can take care of God’s Creation, binoculars, tweezers, journals, recycle stickers, and Swedish gummy fish.

Easter Egg Hunt and Craft fun! - April 3rd- We met outside and physically distanced. Hunted for eggs and participated in crafts and games.

3rd - 5th Grade Youth Group One Wednesday a month (July - September) – this group met at Bethel in the evening with their picnic dinners and played games. Rachel Sudarsanam helped with these activities and we did this along with the Confirmation class.



VBS 2021- TREASURED SATURDAYS We had three Saturdays: one in May, one in June and one in July. This allowed parents to attend with their children as we were continuing to stay physically distanced and did this entire event outside on the playground. We followed the VBS curriculum “Treasured” Discovering you are priceless to God. Games were led by Patrice Sera and Bailey Freckman. Arts and Crafts were led by Amanda Boniface. Music was led by Tyler Freckman. Bible Adventures was led by Robyn Winegardner and Nick Boniface.



Susan Leavitt greeted families as they entered. Publications was done by Leah Vieta. Registration and nametags were done by Kathy Arnold. We had about 50 people (on average) attend each Saturday.

Labor Day Retreat Fun at Bethel - September 5, 2021 – Kid Connection kids met on the back playground with me and my Kid Connection Teaching team to “Look for the Surprises”! We hunted for rocks and gems and hit a pinata with lots of surprises!



Kid Connection Outside! Began on Sunday, September 19th through the fall (weather permitting) 9:50 AM – 10:40 AM – Music Opening and Closing led by Amanda Boniface. Lesson and Activities led by me. We have four amazing Kid Connection Teachers who came regularly and helped the children with the activities; Cathy Stahl, Patrice Sera, Bailey Freckman and Lauren Burch. Tyler Freckman is our Music Lead Substitute. All children were given a large bag with their own supplies and blanket that they sit on during the activities. Due to Covid, all children and adults involved continued to wear masks during all activities.

Kid Connection Halloween Fun was held on Sunday October 31st (Reformation Sunday) in the afternoon after church. Pizza was served for lunch and kids hunted for orange eggs that had candy inside. Each orange egg had a sticker on it and the children were given stickers code cards and could only pick up and take the eggs that had their sticker on it. We also decorated pumpkins, made silly monsters and had a Halloween costume contest that was led by our very own Bethel youth group.



First Bible Class – in October - Two third graders took this class with me and each took this class separately... Holly Boniface and Tristan Janssen. They received their Bibles in Kid Connection on Reformation Sunday.

Secret Angels – Bethel Members prayed for a child during the season of Advent, wrote them a note and this along with a little gift was given to our Kid Connection Children at our “Happy Birthday Jesus” party.

Kid Connection Christmas Program – The Christmas Story- Songs were sung by the Kid Connection children and the narration was done by our Confirmation Class. We filmed this on December 12th and showed it during both worship services on Sunday, December 19th. Thank you to Amanda Boniface for leading the music and for Robyn Winegardner who organized the narrations.

Happy Birthday Jesus Party - December 19th – was held during Kid Connection time outside. We celebrated Jesus' birthday by playing birthday party games and eating cupcakes.

The Little Lights Choir (ages 3 through first grade, led by Amanda Boniface, Lauren Kettner, and Amanda Laughlin) and our **Children's Choir** (2nd – 6th grade, led by Barbara Larsen) were not able to meet this year, but are discussing options for when and how we can get back to singing together.

CONFIRMATION – WATCH FOR THE MIRACLES



6th, 7th and 8th Grade Confirmation - Robyn Winegardner & Susan Leavitt

COVID-19 continued to impact "how" Confirmation gathered in 2021, with a 50/50 year. For the Spring of 2021 we continued to meet via Sunday Zooms and wrapped up our Old Testament study using "The Story". We recorded the readings on Zoom of the lessons for Worship once a month. We added monthly Wednesday Night Socials at Bethel, where we each brought our own dinner and found ways to play some games and do art projects and service opportunities, all within COVID protocol guidelines. On May 23, 2021, Pentecost Sunday, seven 8th graders affirmed their baptisms during the 10:45am Worship Service on our front lawn (left to right): *William Edstrom, Ohana Miura, Jessica Burkhart, Nick Boniface, Jacob Riedell, Lars Muller, and Garrett Brown*. It was an awesome service. In the Fall we were allowed to come back to Bethel and meet onsite. We started our New Testament study, still using "The Story." We met outdoors. We had donuts. We kept our masks on. We kept social distance spacing.

AJ Aist, Jack Hermann, Adam Lingscheit, Claire Boniface, Karina Lui, Drew Brown, Xander Greene, Jocelyn Keish and Bryson Riedell ... continued to read the Worship lessons on the second Sunday of the month, in person. Question - will Susan Leavitt and Robyn Winegardner ever stop seeing themselves as a couple of the luckiest folks at Bethel since they are able to hang out and get to know and learn from Bethel's Confirmands and families?? Probably not!!

YOUTH MINISTRY, AUDIO/VISUAL, AND FACILITIES – TOM HOEGEL



Dear Bethel Friends!

As I complete my 38th year as your youth director and a good chunk as your AV/transportation/facilities director, I am blown away by the journey I get to be a part of. Bethel is not just getting by, it is thriving!

These past two years especially have opened my eyes to new challenges, the deep fears and hurts of many, the blessing of a congregation that is willing to listen to and follow the guidance of science and medical professionals, worship produced in ways we never could have imagined, ministries that have flexed and responded to remain vibrant, 450 boxes of quilts loaded up to blanket the world, and many meetings around a firepit - all in service to God and to continue Doing Life Together. Our other major commitment is to live stream both the traditional and contemporary services each week. I'm so grateful for our dedicated volunteers who support us each week. If you want to be a part of the fun, please let me know. We will train you to be a part of the team. I am really excited that Ben Sandin has come on to lead the congregation and our amazing staff! I think going through the IDI process will also stretch us in new ways to better reach this diverse community we live in.

I want to reflect a bit on my "Covid Kids." As you hopefully know, working with Sr High youth has always been my passion and I am continually impressed by their transparency, their willingness to learn, and their genuine acceptance of others. We meet twice a week: First Sunday mornings for Sunday School with Rachel Sudarsanam. Rachel is an alumna with a great passion for young people and desire to raise up spirituality and increase our youth's faith formation. I get a chance to meet Wednesdays for fellowship and a meal, and every week I remind them that they are the "Covid Kids." The challenges they have faced the past two years has forged a resiliency that can only come through surviving hard times. This hardship will give them the power to conquer and accomplish great things. For generations to come, people will look to them as the survivors and they will have opportunities to tell the stories of this crazy time. The other overarching message we have for them and all of you is that God never has nor ever will forsake us. We can rest in that care.

So here's to moving into 2022! May great healing come to all - physically, emotionally, and spiritually. We have some great things planned for this year, including legit steps at giving Torvend Hall a big shot of TLC. Thank you for the continued partnership. Helping lead the Bethel community is a blessing beyond words ☺

Peace & Love,
Tom



WORSHIP & MUSIC – BRIAN SCHUETTE

2021 was a year of some very welcome transitions. The Worship and Music Ministry has been gratified to see the return of our traditional and contemporary in-person Sunday services. We also welcome our new pastor, Pastor Ben. The team has returned to our more familiar planning for in-person services, and continues to meet on an as-needed basis. Both services continue to be streamed on YouTube.

A JOYFUL NOISE Handbell Choir - Chris Hogan

Two thousand twenty-one was quite the rollercoaster ride for A Joyful Noise Handbell Choir, as we have braved the pandemic restrictions to continue to bring our music to the Bethel community. The year started out with us being unable to meet and having to rely on previously recorded music. Fortunately, we transitioned in March to a model where we were able to meet at Bethel to pre-record music for services. This

would have been impossible without support from Adam Klopfenstein, Chris Larsen, and Tom Hoegel to whom we are indeed grateful. Thanks to everyone's efforts, we were able to continue playing through most of summer resulting in a rare but lovely handbell version of "America, the Beautiful" ([check it out here](#)).



With indoor services starting in September, handbells were once again able to play in person. One highlight was performing for Pastor Ben's installation.

We have had several member changes in 2021. David Kuhlmann decided to ride out the pandemic in Colorado and got a job in Texas later in the year. We will miss David's expert bass playing and his willingness to take on any challenge. Nathaniel Hogan left for college at the end of the summer after many years of playing and filling in missing spots in our choir. On a positive note, Sylvia Halloran joined handbells in September, and has been a great collaborator and a wonderful addition to our community.

A Joyful Noise is now seven players strong, but we can always use more. We would need 10 to 12 players to really make use of our full set of handbells. We invite players with all levels of experience.

ALL BETHEL CHOIR - Mike Halloran

As the Choir enters our third year of remote music making over Zoom, the challenge to contribute vibrant music to Worship at Bethel continues. There are added concerns when singing instead of talking; those of us who have tried so called "singers' masks" know that they are an inadequate solution – too much is lost. That said, we eagerly anticipate the weekly rehearsals where fellowship is as important as the music.

As the Director, I can state that, without the support and effort of the members, Sylvia on the piano and Melody on organ, having a choir during these times would not be possible. We didn't know this when it all started and have made it up as we went along.

Bethel's continued support along with Pastor Ben's is paramount in this working at all. We are also grateful for the office and technical staff that allows Worship to happen during these difficult times. Finally, we look forward to the time when we can feel comfortable singing in person at rehearsals and services again. Till then, we will continue to make music in fellowship and joy as we serve the Bethel community and the Lord.

BETHEL WORSHIP TEAM- Clayton Johnson

This year the Bethel Worship Team had 10 members who participated on a rotating basis. In addition to leading the 10:45 contemporary service, both online and in person, we also had the privilege of leading all the outdoor worship services during another year of Covid. Bethel has a long history of innovative contemporary worship. We are grateful 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. We rehearse before church on Sunday mornings from 8:30-10:30 in the Music and Ed Room.

THANK YOU to the 2021 Bethel Worship Team for their dedication and talent:

Liz Barton, Mary Deutscher, Kara Hermann, Katlynn Rhyne, Tom Hoegel, Clayton Johnson, Adam Klopfenstein, Brian Schuette, Rachel Sudarsanam, and Matty VonSchriltz

Peace and Joy,
Clayton Johnson, Director of Contemporary Music

ALTAR GUILD - Judy Johnson and Lois Eid

During the time of Covid restrictions we were not able to continue our regular duties as we were not able to go inside the church. Tom Hoegel changed the paraments for our virtual services. When we started our outdoor worship our deacons Mark Evashenk and Greg Steinke took on the added duties of communion set-up. We thank Tom, Greg and Mark for doing that.

We now welcome new leadership for the Altar Guild. Marion Abney and Hope Jow have volunteered to take on the Altar Guild responsibilities. We thank them for volunteering and we know they will be as blessed as we were in serving in that position. (Pictured: Marion and Lois official key handoff!)



OFFERING COUNTERS - Liz Tribby

The offering counters started counting the Sunday morning offerings again in September. There were some folks who could not continue, so our numbers are down. We have recruited two new counters

(Mark Evashenk and Mike Coleman – thank you!), but we still need another 2 people at first service and 4-6 people at second service to be fully staffed so we could go back to each team counting once a month with one more team counting on 5th Sundays.

MISSION OUTREACH – MARK EVASHENK

Apart from making and serving breakfast at the *San Jose Family Shelter*, all Mission Outreach activities continued in 2021, although sometimes in a modified fashion. A financial contribution to San Jose Family Shelter was made in lieu of volunteers preparing and serving.

A new outreach in 2021 was to donate duffle bags/ or wheelie suitcases for children in the foster care system. These duffle bags will be used by the children when they need to move within the foster care system. In March 2021, Bethel donated close to 50 bags to *Santa Clara County's Social Services Agency* [☑](#) for benefit of *Kinship, Adoptive and Foster Parent Association (KAFPA)*.

The baby layette program to support *Sacred Heart Community Services* was again well received and supported. We collected supplies for 30 bags. The Bethel Quilters Group provided lovely hand-made bags in which the essentials (diapers, wipes, sleepers, onesies, blankets, shampoo, and socks) were placed.

About 60 turkeys were delivered to *The Lord's Pantry* on Sunday November 21.

The Giving Tree sponsored by *Help One Child* was again popular with the Bethel congregation. A total of 80 gifts were donated by Bethel.

And we once again had Advent Giving to support *West Valley Community Services*. Bethel collected and donated barrels of soup, canned goods, pop-top meals, and pasta.

The Bethel congregation showed its love and generosity throughout the year.

QUILTING – Joann Weberg

Quilting in 2021 was a new adventure for us all. Early in the year we started quilting in the parking lot, if it wasn't too cold or windy. Later, getting back into the Fireside room gave us the opportunity to complete so many more quilts and kits. During the year our Quilting group was able to complete 135 quilts, 150 school kits, 35 personal care kits and 6 fabric kits for Lutheran World Relief to send on to needy people around the world.



We also hosted a Lutheran World Relief Ingathering in October. We had 20 churches, including Bethel, bringing a total of 401 boxes holding 2567 items. The second northern California location for our Ingathering was at St. James Lutheran Church in Redding. They had an additional 6 churches participating with 59 boxes containing 592 items. Our truck arrived on January 13, 2022 to pick up these boxes. It then went up to Redding to collect their boxes before delivering it all to LWR in St. Paul, MN.



The Quilting group meets on Monday mornings from 9 am until 12 noon with a dedicated group of women. The fellowship that this activity provides is so powerful. Our group of women is very unique and almost all are retired. Bethel's group has been quilting since 1997.

Our biggest need is for new or nearly new sheets that are used for the back of each quilt. We are blessed with donations of cloth for the quilt tops. This material is sorted, washed if needed and cut into various square sizes. Each unique quilt is then designed and sewn. Batting for the quilts is purchased in bulk and is an ongoing expense.

MT CROSS - Holly Lofgren, Camp Liaison

Mt Cross offered a limited summer camp program in the summer of 2021 and will have more of a regular summer camp program for youth (fully vaxed) in the summer of 2022. Space is limited, however, and those interested are encouraged to sign up asap. Pricing is now tiered according to one's ability to pay. This year's theme is "Boundless God Beyond Measure." The website indicates that campers will be putting school kits together for Lutheran World Relief. Sounds exciting!

Retreats were limited in 2021 (but still accessible) due to the CZU Complex fire and the worldwide pandemic. Look for more expanded opportunities in 2022. Mt Cross is offering day use, challenge course, overnight stays and events (think weddings). Food service has resumed.

The Board of Directors has been revamped in recent times to mirror that of a nonprofit organization and not an ecumenical committee. This is an improvement and should bring a lot more accountability and effectiveness to Mt Cross management.

As in 2021, 2022 is a year welcoming those who would like to put in some sweat equity at the camp. There are regular work weekends, but those interested can schedule yourself or your group for workdays on other dates.

SAN JOSE FAMILY SHELTER BREAKFAST MINISTRY - Chris Ford

We did not meet in 2021. The shelter has reopened, but at such a reduced capacity that we might serve only 5 people if we resumed serving breakfast now.

CIC MINISTRIES - Chris Christensen

CIC Ministries is continuing to wait on a contract renewal with the county for chaplain services. We are also waiting on the signing of a short-term contract extension. That does mean we have not received payment from the county for October and November. Your prayers are appreciated.

EDUCATION & DISCIPLESHIP

Discipleship focuses on spiritual growth which can take on many different forms. In the past year, Bethel has offered a variety of ways people could engage. Bible studies were held via Zoom, small groups met together following health protocols, and in-person Sunday forums returned this Fall.

Moving forward, we can anticipate a similar combination of opportunities for spiritual growth utilizing many different tools, with in-person and online iterations. Contact Pastor Ben bsandin@bethelcupertino.org to learn more or get involved.

WOW (Women of Wednesday) - Alice Isaacson

The Bethel Women of Wednesday have continued to meet via Zoom and in person at Bethel throughout 2021 (taking the summer months off). We've studied several books together, including "Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion" and "Everybody, Always: Becoming Love in a World Full of Setbacks and Difficult People" and are currently studying "Take Courage", the study of Haggai. WOW continues to volunteer to sort food at Second Harvest Food Bank, and we pray together and support each other. Please consider joining us on Wednesday mornings 10am-noon; contact is Kathryn Montano.



MARTHA CIRCLE BIBLE STUDY - Vera Edstrom

In 2021 we had bible study from January through June. We broke for the summer but started again in September through December. We use the *Gather* Magazine for our bible study. Each of the members are leaders for one month. We currently meet on the first Monday of each month at 12:00 noon. We have ten to twelve active members.

READERS ANONYMOUS - Kathy Arnold

We began meeting in person outside of the Library in the middle of the year; masked and sometimes bundled up. Zoom was available to those who could not attend. The variety of books included: "The Splendid and the Vile (Winston Churchill)" by Eric Larson, "Sweet Grass" by Robin W. Kimmerer, "A Rule Against Murder" by Louise Penny, "Only Woman in the Room" (Hedy Lamarr) by Marie Benedict, "Dear Wife" by Kimberly Belle, "When All Is Said" by Anne Griffin, "The Halloween Tree" by Ray Bradbury, "The Personal Librarian" by Marie Benedict and Victoria C. Murray. The average attendance was 6. A special thanks goes to Debby Coleman for keeping notes.

MEN'S NIGHT OUT - David Nadell

Men's Night Out has been meeting monthly for one hour via Zoom. Average attendance is about four.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE - SUE JACOBUS

LABOR DAY RETREAT - Tom Hoegel

Bethel's Labor Day Retreat has been going uninterrupted each Labor Day weekend since the 1960's and not even Covid could take it down. For the 2021 season we started our retreat with the Polar Bear Swim at a Sunnyvale swim club and then made it over to Bethel for some music and yummy snacks

and a coffee truck. After worship we finished the retreat with a delicious lunch served by a gourmet taco truck and dessert by a shave ice truck. While we weren't able to be away that day, we were nourished both physically and spiritually. Our plan for 2022 is to be back at Mt Cross. So fun!!

OUT & ABOUT- Tom Hoegel

Like the Labor Day Retreat, a little Covid isn't going to stop Bethel from Doing Life Together and our Out & About events were great examples of just that. We started our 2021 season with a virtual St Patty's Day beer tour, the annual outing to some Watsonville and Santa Cruz breweries, a trip to SF for Fleet Week, a fall afternoon in Watsonville for the Farm Reality Tour, a December eve taking the bus through the Fantasy of Lights in Vasona followed by dinner in Los Gatos, and we just wrapped up with a wonderful afternoon at Regale Winery in the Santa Cruz mountains. Cool Facts: We just completed our 100th Out & About Trip with 2,176 people in attendance. We've got some fun events planned for this coming year and want to encourage you to use this opportunity to invite someone to join us. Look to the website and E-News for updates and details.



FOOD TRUCKS -Robyn Winegardner

The COVID Protocols affected our ability to have Food Truck Sundays in a significant, and negative, way. We were able to have two wonderful Food Trucks - *WAFFLES AMORE* in July and *CREPE 'em COMING* at Pastor Ben's inaugural Sunday, in August - serve us after Sunday's Worship. We had great responses both Sundays with folks able to visit while sharing a meal and some ordering food and taking it to others. It was yummy. (Hoping to resume the once-a-month Truck appearances in the Spring of 2022).



SUPPER CLUBS (New Lead Needed)

Our Supper Club groups could not meet this year, but we hope to be able to continue this ministry in the future. Supper Club groups of 6-8 are formed through sign-ups several times a year and take turns hosting dinner with their group. If you are interested in being the new coordinator of this ministry please contact Mary Deutscher at maryd@bethelcupertino.org.

CARE MINISTRY – JOANNE STENSAAS

CARING CONNECTIONS – Joanne Stensaas

Caring Connection is a prayer ministry that seeks to be action oriented to do God's work. They meet monthly, via Zoom, sharing information about needs in the congregation and other loved ones. This information is gleaned from the prayer lists, Pastor Ben, and care connection team members. Care is demonstrated in a variety of ways including: birthday cards, sympathy cards, get well notes, congratulations, phone calls, and home visits. Moving forward, Caring Connection members may also serve as home communion ministers and other forms of visitation. We welcome new members to join us and use their gifts to care for our community. Contact Joanne Stensaas joannestens@aol.com to learn more.

PRAYER BYTES - Robyn Winegardner

Prayer Bytes give Bethel's 70+ Prayer Warriors a daily early morning email with 5 or 6 Prayer requests of the Bethel Community. These requests include members, former members, friends and relatives of members and concerns for God's entire Creation, near and far. Anyone can subscribe, or unsubscribe, at any time. Just contact Liz Tribby or Robyn Winegardner and you will be all set. Also, if you have a Prayer request for the eNewsletter or Prayer Bytes contact Pastor Ben or Mary Deutscher or Robyn Winegardner and your request will be sent out.



FINANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES – FARA BROCK

2021 was a year of change while maintaining Bethel's strong foundation. The office opened again in July when we welcomed Pastor Ben, after being closed since March 2020. In the fall we said goodbye to Patricia Myerholtz after 10 years as Bethel's adult ministry coordinator and to Leslie Steen after 14 years as Bethel's bookkeeper. Fortunately, Mary Deutscher accepted the adult ministry role and took over many of Leslie's office management tasks. It's great to have the office open again after such a long closure due to COVID. To keep everyone safe we are all vaccinated and wearing masks in the office. Visitors are required to also wear masks.

Thanks to the strong support of the congregation during the ongoing constraints of COVID, Bethel finished its fiscal year with total giving only 1% below forecast and expenses 7% below budget. The net income of \$102,000 was \$84,000 above budget due to a grant from Payroll Protection Program since we kept the entire staff employed during the shelter in place period of 2020.

Throughout 2021 the church continued to address the needs of our community by donating to many local and international relief agencies. Bethel gave \$74,000 to the Synod and outside agencies with benevolence and special designated dollars. Top recipients are Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Disaster Response, Esperanza, Mt. Cross, West Valley Community Services, Habitat for Humanity, Second Harvest Food Bank, and the Synod for churchwide mission support. Bethel also continued to support scholarships for 2 students at MaaSAE Girls school in Tanzania through Bootstrap Operation.

I am blessed to work with volunteers who “behind the scenes” keep Bethel’s infrastructure running smoothly:

- Liz Tribby who manages office IT and membership records;
- Dave Larsen, Bethel’s Treasurer;
- Bethel’s Finance Committee: Dave Tribby, Jack Wedgwood, Brett Deutscher, Joan Christensen, Ann Marie Kenitzer and Pastor Ben;
- Mark Evashenk on benevolence and special designated giving;
- Kathy Arnold and the Audit Committee;
- Holly Lofgren who manages Bethel’s Assets;
- Brad Martinson who manages Bethel computers and the internet and telephone network and
- Brian Schuette who optimizes Bethel’s campus wireless network.

I look forward to another productive and inspiring year with Bethel’s amazing staff and volunteers!

FINANCE & STEWARDSHIP – BRETT DEUTSCHER

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE - Brett Deutscher, Robyn Winegardner, Steve Emmert, & Scott Anderson

We focused our messages to the congregation in May & June, and virtually collected Faith Promise cards at the end of June. We enjoyed making a voice-over conversation between the spirits of abundance and scarcity while a video of the Santa Cruz boardwalk roller coaster (Big Dipper) took us through highs and lows, twists and turns - a metaphor for the previous year with Covid-19 impacting our lives.

Bethel responded with the majority of Faith Promises collected via the new virtual webform, as well as some traditional mail-in Faith Promises. We applaud our congregation as we continued to live out our core value of generosity during another transitional year of online worship that returned to in person worship during the summer.

Planning for our Stewardship campaign started in April, and Faith Promise card follow up with members continued into July, with a final report generated in August. The report showed another solid year of Faith Promises, as nearly 100 Faith Promises were received. We are extremely grateful for the consistent level of giving by our Bethel family during these difficult years of Covid-19 impacting worship and fellowship. This mature level of generosity helps guide Bethel leadership toward responsible budget decisions each year.

Thank you for the generous giving of your resources, and your continued investment in Bethel and its ministries. We look forward to continuing our ministry with you all in 2022.

AUDIT COMMITTEE – Kathy Arnold

The audit committee did not meet again this year due to COVID restrictions. However, they are planning to complete an audit next year.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE – Robyn Winegardner, Doreen Baldwin, & Susan Leavitt

The Nominating Committee worked with the Council President and Pastor Ben Sandin to recruit qualified candidates for open council positions. We worked with President Brett Deutscher and looked at Bethel's Constitution to see which council positions might be open or need to be reaffirmed for another term. We had several email, zoom and in-person conversations concerning open positions and the impact two years of COVID restrictions had made on the make-up of the Council. With unity of thought we have nominated a President-Elect and Project Manager to fill the open positions for 2022. We had conversations concerning the Audit Committee and learned the committee was set for this year.

TECHNOLOGY & ADMINISTRATION

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT – Liz Tribby and Brad Martinson

Computers were moved around and adjustments made as the office opened again this year and we added two new staff members (Pastor Ben Sandin and Mary Deutscher). A new laptop was purchased and set up for Pastor Ben. An update to our church database (Shepherd's Staff) was installed in July. The campus wireless network continues to be upgraded and extended, this year focusing on the front lawn and staff offices. Special thanks to Brian Schuette for his technical assistance.

WEB MINISTRY – Dave Arnold

We maintain the 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.

Each week, there were on average 260 user views of Bethel's YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/user/BethelCupertino>, in 2021. This is mostly worship services, but also includes staff videos.

156 new events were submitted to the Bethel calendar in 2021.

291 updates were applied to the web site in 2021.

Google Analytics reports 40 page views per day to our home page. 41% of these are from mobile and tablet devices. Google Search reports 224 impressions and 9 clicks per day.

February 2022

Thank you to all the Ministry Leaders and staff that contributed to our Annual Report.



BETHEL
LUTHERAN CHURCH
CUPERTINO

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