

The Beacon December 2015

Bethania Lutheran Church
603 Atterdag Rd, Solvang CA 93463
805-688-4637
www.bethanialutheran.net

email: bethania.lutheran@verizon.net



From Pastor Chris

Pa never had much compassion for the lazy, or those who squandered their means and then never had enough for the necessities. But for those who were genuinely in need, his heart was as big as all outdoors. It was from him that I learned the greatest joy in life comes from giving, not from receiving.

It was Christmas Eve - 1881. I was fifteen years old and feeling like the world had caved in on me because there just hadn't been enough money to buy me the rifle that I'd wanted for Christmas. We did the chores early that night for some reason. I just figured Pa wanted a little extra time so we could read in the Bible.

After supper was over I took my boots off and stretched out in front of the fireplace, and waited for Pa to get down the old Bible. I was still feeling sorry for myself, and ... to be honest ... I wasn't in much of a mood to read Scriptures. But Pa didn't get the Bible. Instead, he bundled up again and went outside. I couldn't figure it out because we had already done all the chores. I didn't worry about it long though. I was too busy wallowing in self-pity.

Soon Pa came back in. It was a cold, clear night out and there was ice in his beard. "Come on, Matt," he said. "Bundle up good; it's cold out tonight."

I was really upset then. Not only wasn't I getting the rifle for Christmas - now Pa was dragging me out in the cold, and for no earthly reason that I could see. We'd already done all the chores, and I couldn't think of anything else that needed doing, especially not on a night like this. But I knew Pa was not very patient at one dragging one's feet when he'd told them to do something, so I got up and put my boots back on and got my cap, coat, and mittens. Ma gave me a mysterious smile as I opened the door to leave the house. Something was up, but I didn't know what.

Outside, I became even more dismayed. There in front of the house was the work team, already hitched to the big sled. Whatever it was we were going to do wasn't going to be a short, quick, little job, I could tell. We never hitched up this sled unless we were going to haul a big load. Pa was already up on the seat, reins in hand. I reluctantly climbed up beside him. The cold was already biting at me. I wasn't happy. When I was on, Pa pulled the sled around the house and stopped in front of the woodshed. He got off and I followed.

"I think we'll put on the high sideboards," he said. "Here - help me." The high sideboards?! It had been a bigger job than I wanted to do with just the low sideboards on, but whatever it was we were going to do would be a lot bigger with the high side boards on.

After we had exchanged the sideboards, Pa went into the woodshed and came out with an armload of wood -- the wood I'd spent all summer hauling down from the mountain, and then all fall sawing into blocks and splitting. What was he doing? Finally I said something. "Pa," I asked, "What are you doing?"

"You been by the widow Jensen's lately?" he asked. The widow Jensen lived about two miles down the road. Her husband had died a year or so before and left her with three children, the oldest being eight. Sure, I'd been by, but so *what?* Yeah," I replied, "Why?"

"I rode by just today," Pa said. "Little Jakey was out digging around in the woodpile trying to find a few chips. They're out of wood, Matt."

That was all he said, and then he turned and went back into the woodshed for another armload of wood. I followed him. We loaded the sled so high that I began to wonder if the horses would be able to pull it. Finally, Pa called a halt to our loading, then we went to the smoke house and Pa took down a big ham and a side of bacon. He handed them to me and told me to put them in the sled and wait. When he returned, he was carrying a sack of flour over his right shoulder and a smaller sack of something in his left hand. "What's in the little sack?" I asked.

"Shoes - they're out of shoes. Little Jakey just had gunny sacks wrapped around his feet when he was out in the woodpile this morning. I got the children a little candy too. It just wouldn't be Christmas without a little candy." We rode the two miles to widow Jensen's pretty much in silence. I tried to think through what Pa was doing. We didn't have much by worldly standards. Of course, we did have a big woodpile, though most of what was left now was still in the form of logs that I would have to saw into blocks and split before we could use it. We also had meat and flour, so we could spare that, but I knew we didn't have any money, so why was Pa buying them shoes and candy? Really ... *why* was he doing any of this? Widow Jensen had closer neighbors than us; it shouldn't have been our concern.

We came in from the blind side of the Jensen house and unloaded the wood as quietly as possible. Then we took the meat and flour and shoes to the door. We knocked. The door opened a crack and a timid voice said, "Who is it?" "Lucas Miles, Ma'am, and my son, Matt. Could we come in for a bit?"

Widow Jensen opened the door and let us in. She had a blanket wrapped around her shoulders. The children were wrapped in another blanket and were sitting in front of the fireplace by a very small fire that hardly gave off any heat at all. Widow Jensen fumbled with a match and finally lit the lamp.

"We brought you a few things, Ma'am," Pa said ... and set down the sack of flour. I put the meat on the table. Then Pa handed her the sack that had the shoes in it. She opened it hesitantly and took the shoes out - one pair at a time. There was a pair for her and one for each of the children -- sturdy shoes, the best -- shoes that would last. I watched her carefully. She bit her lower lip to keep it from trembling and then tears filled her eyes and started running down her cheeks. She looked up at Pa like she wanted to say something, but it wouldn't come out.

"We brought a load of wood too, Ma'am," Pa said. He turned to me and said, "Matt, go bring in enough to last awhile. Let's get that fire up to size and heat this place up."

I wasn't the same person when I went back out to bring in the wood. I had a big lump in my throat and as much as I hate to admit it, there were tears in my eyes too. In my mind ... I kept seeing those three kids huddled around the fireplace and their mother standing there with tears running down her cheeks with so much gratitude in her heart that she couldn't speak.

My heart swelled within me and a joy that I'd never known before filled my soul. I had given at Christmas many times before, but never when it had made so much difference. I could see we were literally saving the lives of these people.

I soon had the fire blazing and everyone's spirits soared. The kids started giggling when Pa handed them each a piece of candy and widow Jensen looked on with a smile that probably hadn't crossed her face for a long time. She finally turned to us. "God bless you," she said. "I know the Lord has sent you. The children and I have been praying that he would send one of his angels to spare us."

In spite of myself, the lump returned to my throat and the tears welled up in my eyes again. I'd never thought of Pa in those exact terms before, but after widow Jensen mentioned it, I could see that it was probably true. I was sure that a better man than Pa had never walked the earth. I started remembering all the times he had gone out of his way for Ma and me, and many others. The list seemed endless, as I thought on it.

Pa insisted that everyone try on the shoes before we left. I was amazed when they all fit and I wondered how he had known what sizes to get. Then I guessed that if he was on an errand for the Lord, that the Lord would make sure he got the right sizes.

Tears were running down widow Jensen's face again when we stood up to leave. Pa took each of the kids in his big arms and gave them a hug. They clung to him and didn't want us to go. I could see that they missed their Pa, and I was glad that I still had mine.

At the door, Pa turned to widow Jensen and said, "The Misses wanted me to invite you and the children over for Christmas dinner tomorrow. The turkey will be more than the three of us can eat, and a man can get cantankerous if he has to eat turkey for too many meals. We'll be by to get you about eleven. It'll be nice to have some little ones around again. Matt, here, hasn't been little for quite a spell." I was the youngest. My two brothers and two sisters had all married and had moved away.

Widow Jensen nodded and said, "Thank you, brother Miles. I don't have to say, 'May the Lord bless you.' I know for certain that He will."

Out on the sled, I felt a warmth that came from deep within, and I didn't even notice the cold. When we had gone a ways, Pa turned to me and said, "Matt, I want you to know something. Your ma and me have been tucking a little money away here and there all year so we could buy that rifle for you, but we didn't have quite enough. Then yesterday a man who owed me a little money from years back came by to make things square. Your ma and me were real excited, thinking that now we could get you that rifle, and I started into town this morning to do just that, but on the way I saw little Jakey out scratching in the woodpile with his feet wrapped in those gunny sacks and I knew what I had to do. Son, I spent the money for shoes and a little candy for those children. I hope you understand."

I understood, and my eyes became wet with tears again. I understood very *well*, and I was so glad Pa had done it. Now the rifle seemed very low on my list of priorities. Pa had given me a lot more. He had given me the look on widow Jensen's face and the radiant smiles of her three children.

For the rest of my life, whenever I saw any of the Jensens, or split a block of wood, I remembered ... and remembering brought back that same joy I felt riding home beside Pa that night. Pa had given me much more than a rifle that night; he had given me the best Christmas of my life.

– by **Matt Miles**

Annual Meeting Highlights – Nov. 15, 2015 submitted by Nancy Emerson

*The 2016 budget was approved for \$261,358 in income, \$265,715 in expenses and a net balance of -\$2,357. Copies of this budget are available in the Church Office. Please talk to Ron Walsh, treasurer, if you have any questions about its details.

*The following individuals were elected to office

Cemetery Committee: Annalisa Nearn
Endowment Committee: Donna Hinsbeeck, John Jones
Church Council: Robin Gehrs, Barbara Kargard

*Karl Hatch (Cemetery), Kyle Abello (Endowment), Vladimir McConnell and Annalisa Nearn (Church Council) were thanked for their service.

*Pastor Chris gave a report about his activities. Appreciation was expressed for his caring ministry, including special mention of service to Atterdag Village residents and outreach to the community, e.g. Solvang Senior Center.

*It was requested that members be reminded in worship service about the Noisy Offering cause and the amount eventually raised.

Council Highlights - Nov. 19, 2015 submitted by Nancy Emerson

*A group Armenian Christians visited Pastor Chris on Nov. 17 and were pleased by the church's recommendation that the pedestal with bust of Maria Jacobsen, Danish heroine of Armenians, be placed in the bench area of the garden south of the church. In addition to paying for all costs of this project they will provide an endowment for the installation's continuing care. Esther Bates, Elverhoj Museum, is consulting with the Pastor on this project.

*Council approved appointment of Tom Dimmette for a second 3-year term on Church Council.

*These days, most church buildings are not open to the public. So to be sure all visitors know our church is open to them daily, a welcome sign will be made by Valley Signs and installed to the left of our doors. The Heritage Fund will be asked to pay for this sign.

*To further our mission as a welcoming congregation, Church Council voted to allow Santa Ynez Valley non-profit causes to use the church facilities without a use fee, at the discretion of the Pastor. As was usual policy in the past, Pastor Chris will be in charge of use decisions for our facilities.

*And more welcoming – going beyond just lines in the Santa Ynez Valley News Church Directory and phone books, Church Council voted to send a different Christian message than the one generally heard on radio. It will be a four month trial of extensive radio advertising on KSNI, Sunny Country. Pastor Chris will work with the firm's production staff on writing multiple texts for the ads. Cost will be \$2,160. Please make a Christmas gift to help pay for this project.

*Council agreed with Worship & Music Committee's recommendation that we consider adding Bibles to the pew racks. The Committee will research number needed and cost for Church Council. If you enjoy remembering family and friends by dedicating a book to them, stay tuned for more detailed information.

Bethania Preschool and After School News

Join the Festivities – Preschool Christmas Program, Dec. 8 at 7 pm

Our delightful Bethania preschoolers are busy learning Christmas songs to share during their Christmas Program. Please join their families in celebration in the Parish Hall on Tuesday, Dec. 8 at 7 p.m.

These same children will dance around the Christmas tree at their party on Dec. 18.

Before Thanksgiving, the preschoolers honored the meaning of Thanksgiving in various ways. Older children learned about the traditional Thanksgiving foods while the younger children, not yet fans of tradition, brought their favorite foods to share.

The Preschool and After School will be closed from Dec. 24 – Jan. 4.

Book Discussion Group

The Book Discussion Group will meet on Wednesday, Dec. 16 at 2 pm in the Parish Hall. The group is discussing Luther the Reformer: The Story of the Man and His Career by James M. Kittelson. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Christmas Eve Services

Join us for the services on Little Christmas Eve and Christmas Eve.

Pastor Anne-Grethe Krogh-Nielsen will be here at **6 pm on Dec. 23** for the **Danish Service**. The songs, the liturgy, and the sermon will be in Danish.



Dec. 24 Christmas Eve
Bethania's Traditional
Service is at **4 pm** in the church.

The **Candlelight Service** takes place at **7 pm**.

Pastor Chris preaches at both Christmas Eve services.

Celebrate Christ's birth at Bethania!

If you are interested in being in Bethania's entry for Solvang's Julfest Parade, please contact Marilyn Larsen, 688-6797.

Christmas Angel Project & Preschool Presents: Calling all Angels! The “Wish Lists” are here!

Would you like to be an “angel” to a needy child? Dust off your angel wings if you would be interested in helping to make Christmas special for a needy child this year. We will be Angels for 20 children from Iglesia Luterana Santa Cruz. Wish Lists will be available after worship, until all children get “adopted” by their Christmas Angel. You are welcome to come and choose a child to sponsor or indicate what level of support you would like to contribute at the break out. Or you can email me and let me know if you would like to help or to get a child’s name and list: vikingsprint@verizon.net (see further down in this article for helping ideas).

The Christmas Angel Project helps the members of Iglesia Luterana Santa Cruz by providing Christmas gifts for their children. Iglesia is a mission start up church based at Bethel in Santa Maria. Pastor Patricia at Iglesia serves the very poorest of the farm workers who often live in difficult circumstances. Oftentimes families share one bed and the children may not have shoes or enough to eat. Agricultural conditions, weather and the economy directly affect these hard-working families, especially during the winter months. *(See related article about the Food Shed at Iglesia)*

The Preschool Presents Project helps to support some local families who attend Bethania Preschool and After School program. These local families are chosen by Preschool Director Eileen Knotts for their need and attendance at the Preschool or After School program. We will assist in purchasing gifts for children and other necessary items, to help these families who require some assistance to make their children’s Christmas special. If you would like to shop for a Preschool child or make a donation to this project, you can earmark it “Preschool Presents”.

We would be happy to have your Angelic assistance for any of these children. If you are interested in sponsoring a child through any size of a donation, doing some shopping on your own, or making a contribution of an item on a wish list, please let Linda Marzullo know.

We need willing hands and generous hearts to make these gifts happen and keep our funding. Would you consider enriching your holiday by helping others in need?

Our “Christmas Wrap” Party, when we package and wrap the gifts for the children while carols are sung, will be at a new time this year: Saturday, Dec. 19th, at 6 pm. Iglesia has changed the date of their Christmas Party to Sunday, Dec. 20th following their worship service, and so all gifts must be turned in to the wrap party on the 19th or the church office by 3:00 p.m. 12-18.

Please contact Linda Marzullo with any questions at vikingsprint@verizon.net, work 688-5219 or cell 451-5548, or the church office.

Cruise the Seine with Carol and Marilyn

BLCW Program/Thankoffering

On Tuesday Dec. 1 at 2:00 pm, a general meeting of the BLCW will be held in the Fireside Room Carol Lake and Marilyn Larsen will take the audience on a cruise on the Seine River, a cruise in which they recently participated.



The annual Thankoffering which benefits the ministries of the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America will be taken. The offering is a response to the many blessings we have received this past year. All interested persons are welcome to attend. Fellowship and refreshments will be enjoyed by all.



Solvang Danish Sisterhood Lodge #177

Is Proud To Present Again This Year Their

Traditional Family Danish Christmas Dinner

Sunday, Dec. 13th (6 pm to 8:30 pm) in the Parish Hall

A traditional Danish Meal will be served including Dessert from Olsen's bakery, along with singing carols around the Christmas tree, visit from Santa, and many handcrafted items for sale in the holiday craft boutique.

**Doors open at 6pm with dinner served at 6:30pm
Dinner Cost \$10 Adult and \$5 (Children 10 and under)**

Please extend an invitation to anyone who may be interested.

Reservations are encouraged by Dec 6th because space is limited.

Can contact Donna Andersen Ineman 805-705-2118 or email The Home Connection
home.connection@verizon.net

Glaedelig Jul og Haaber Vi Ses Der!



Elverhøj Christmas Party - Dec. 6



Elverhøj Museum of History and Art invites members and friends to celebrate the holiday season at the annual Members and Friends Christmas Party on Sunday Dec. 6, 5:30 to 8:00 pm.

The museum glows during the holidays, with a 12-foot tree decorated with handmade Danish Christmas ornaments as the focal point. Live music and the Danish Christmas tradition of dancing around the tree are party highlights. There will be Danish open-face sandwiches, homemade Christmas cookies, chocolates, and Christmas cheer. Santa and Mrs. Claus will stop by with treats for the kids.

Admission: \$5 for member, \$10 for non-member.
No charge for children eight and under.

Elverhøj Museum is located at 1624 Elverhøj Way in Solvang.
More info: www.elverhoj.org



Food Drive for Iglesia Begins!

Bring your donated items to the Parish Hall box

The people who attend Iglesia Luterana in Santa Maria are the poorest of the poor. Iglesia is a mission start-up church based at Bethel Lutheran. We have become partners in their ministry and continue to support Pastor Patricia's work. Iglesia serves many families in their congregation through their food pantry, which is a shed on the church grounds at Bethel. The most difficult months are to come, especially if the El Nino arrives as predicted.

If you would prefer to make a donation and have us do your shopping, please earmark your donation **Iglesia Food**.



Items most needed to re-stock the pantry for Iglesia families include:

5 lb. bags of white flour

5 lb. bags of rice

3 lb. bags of beans

Canola Oil (for cooking)

Canned chicken (no tuna, please!)

Peanut Butter/Jelly or Honey

Breakfast Cereal

Other items which are acceptable but not as critical: Canned Fruit, Cup of Noodles, Soup, Canned Beans. Diapers and Toilet Paper are also accepted.

If you have questions, please contact Linda Marzullo at 688-5219 or 451-5548; email vikingpressprint@verizon.net

Thank you so much for your support!

Fundraiser for Baby Jayce Petersen

A fundraising event will be held for Baby Jayce Petersen on the afternoon of December 6th in the Parish Hall. Tri-tip sandwiches and BBQ chicken halves will be for sale between 1 and 5 o'clock PM. Bring a sweet tooth, baked goods will be available as well! Jayce was born on Sept 15th at only 23 weeks en route to Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital. He is a fighter and continues to show strength and growth. He and his parents, Bryan and Jennifer Petersen, are currently at UCLA Children's Medical Center, hoping to come back to Cottage soon. One surgery down, one more to go, but it will still take a bit of time in the NICU before Jayce will come home. Baby Jayce is the great grandson of Bob Petersen. Contact Robin Laroche for information about pre-orders at 805.245.2014. An account has been set up at Rabobank for contributions if you would like to support, but can not attend. Contact Sarah White about The Benefit of Jayce Petersen Family at 805.688.6150.

Gather Bible Study

The Gather Bible study will be held on Thursday Dec. 17 at 10 am. It will be an Advent devotional by Valora K. Starr, based on Luke chapter 1, verses 39-55. See the December issue of "Gather" magazine, pp. 26-29. The discussion will be held in Atterdag Lounge at Atterdag Village of Solvang.

For info call Anabelle at 688-4687.

Memorial/Tribute Gifts Fund

The Memorial/Tribute Gifts Fund Committee reminds all committee chairs that new applications for funding will be considered at their next meeting Tuesday Jan. 5, 2016 at 2 pm in the church office. Blank applications were sent to all committees in September and those are the form(s) to be used. Please be sure to submit applications that are **totally completed**. To make the decision making process fair, we need details provided for **all** questions. Some applications submitted in September were eliminated because specific answers weren't included, especially in the Budget section. For example: "items to be purchased, vendor(s) name(s) with quote of costs"..."items necessary for installation with names of providers and price quotes." We look forward to reviewing new applications at our January meeting.

For questions or help please call Liz Beeler 686-4783.

Merry Christmas!



Preschool & After School Tuition Assistance Narthex & Parish Hall Trees

Your caring donation to Christmas Greetings makes it possible for lower income children to attend our Preschool & After School programs – and it sends your Christmas greetings to all Bethania families via tree ornaments on narthex and Parish Hall trees, and Christmas Eve/Beacon lists.

In 2015-16 our single parent families qualifying for tuition assistance doubled. The result – a need for \$20,000 to fund up to 50% tuition for 16 children from low and moderate income working families. Some of our grant sources are not available this year and your gift will help close the need gap.

Please complete the form below and send it with your check to arrive **no later than Dec. 20**. Mail it to the Preschool, 611 Atterdag Road, Solvang 93463 or put envelope in offering plate.

Christmas Greetings

Name(s) _____

(For ornament: ___ 1st & last name(s), ___ Mr & Mrs, or ___ Family)

Phone _____ Amount enclosed \$ _____.

Please make checks payable to: Bethania Preschool & After School.

Deadline: Sunday, Dec. 20, 2015

Making Change, for the Better:

Noisy Sunday Dec. 20th

Our next “Noisy Sunday” offering will be Dec. 20th. The donations will be used to help purchase food items for Iglesia’s food shed (*see “Food Drive” article*).

During “Noisy Sunday”, any change you would like to get rid of from the bottom of your purse or pockets may be tossed into a bucket. This “noise” (coins) is used to “Make Change for the Better” by helping to fund Social Ministry projects. Thank you all for your support of this endeavor. We can make “change” one coin at a time! –

Kristyl also has a “noisy Offering” jar on her desk in the Church Office for contributions during the week.

Linda Marzullo

November's Noisy Offering

A total of \$201.50 was collected during the November Noisy Offering. These funds will benefit the Christmas Angel project for Iglesia Luterana in Santa Maria. Thank you to all who donated.

In Our Prayers, In Our Hearts

Immediate Prayer Concerns: Joe Bode, Caylin & Katy Corlee, Lisa Demeter, Armando Franco, Ellis McDaniel, Bryan, Jennifer & Jayce Petersen, Marty Steyer

Other Prayer Concerns: Esther Bates, Jim Blanton, Pat Bode, Brian Coover, Kay Corlee, Dorrie Crooks, Nanette Dacuy-cuy, Dolores Dederding, Lois De Meyer, George Eckman, Terri Elwess, Chris Frederiksen, Debbie Fritts, Jack Fujimoto, Dolores Gehrs, Chris Gideon, Arla Hoj, Michael Jech, Robert Jennings (friend of Fred & Genie Machtetanz), Jennifer Juel, Chris Kaping, Melissa Kargard, Richard Lindekens, Rick Marzullo, Anne Mass, Marjorie Mee, Denise Morris, Patricia Myers, Roger Myers, Ned Nelson, Helen Nielsen, Marie Ostertag, Marc & Laurie Owens, Grete Parma, Jensen Paulus (baby), Audrey Robinson, Scotty Sexton, Rose Skytt, Lee Statom, Clay Tremblay-McGaw, Cora Vandecar, Tina Walen, Ann Wallace, Betty Wilkes, Alisha & Anna Marie Wilson, Robert Workman

With Care and Keeping got the family and loved ones of...

Sandra Gomez. Sandra died Oct.24. *An account has been opened at Rabobank in Sandra's name to help Mike and his sons with medical bills and other expenses related to the end of Sandra's life. You can go to any Rabobank and make a deposit.*

Ann Reading, Rick Marzullo's mother. Ann died Oct. 29. Her Remembering and Celebration of Life service took place Nov. 13 at Oak Hill Cemetery.

Allan Farstrup died Oct. 31, 2015. The Remembrance and Celebration of Allan's life was held Nov. 11, 2015 here at Bethania.

Paul Jensen died Nov. 13, 2015. Paul was a resident of Atterdag Village.

Produce Table – You did it!

Thanks to the generosity of all who supported the Produce Table, we sent \$2,000 to the ELCA Good Gifts Hunger Appeal. This money went to the purchase of farm animals, baby chicks, water purification tablets, community fish farm and mosquito nets. So far (as of 11-20-15) we have raised \$1085.81 toward the S.Y.V. Extension of the Salvation Army. These funds will be used for a variety of projects which benefit our community right here in the Santa Ynez Valley. I say “so far” because we continue to occasionally have items donated like persimmons and limes, etc. which are being made available on the Produce Table for your enjoyment. These “late season” offerings will hopefully “grow” additional gifts towards our community outreach goals. Call 688-6243 if you have any questions or would like to talk about this project.

Carolynn Petersen

Poinsettias

Twenty-five poinsettias will adorn the church at Christmastime. If you would like one, please fill out this order blank and return it with \$7.00 to the Church Office. Your dedication will appear in the Christmas Eve bulletins

I/we would like # _____ of poinsettias.

In memory of/in honor of _____

From: _____ Phone #: _____

Payment of \$7/poinsettia is enclosed.

Scarecrow Contest



The Preschool took home a Judges' Choice award and a certificate in this year's Solvang Scarecrow Festival. Congratulations! Thanks to Eileen Knotts, Tymmie LaRoe, Helen and Ida FitzGerald who designed it and constructed the entry. The Preschool Scarecrows were Woodie, Buzz Lightyear and Jessie from Toy Story and were sitting in a wagon.

Thank You's



Thanks to John & Chris Jones for loading up their truck with quilts, health kits and school kits not only from Bethania but also from Hope Lutheran Church of Atascadero. Hope brings their boxes to Bethania to save on shipping. We really appreciate John & Chris!

To all our kind friends at Bethania:

Thank you so much for the love, concern and caring you have expressed to our family over the last few months. While we still have no answers on Rick's medical problems, your support has been much appreciated. The love and prayers offered for our healing following the cancer diagnosis and passing of Rick's mother have been very special. Thank you to all who offered their help and support after Ann passed away. A special thank you to Pastor Chris who did a very lovely job to help us with saying "see you later" to Rick's mom.

We are so fortunate to have a wonderful Pastor and a very special congregational family.

Linda, Rick & James Marzullo

Theology Pub

Theology Pub will meet at the Solvang Brewing Company on the Third Wednesday of every month and will next meet Dec. 16, at 7 pm. We'll either be in the Windmill Room or out in the patio by the fireplace. This is also a great way we can support one of our local businesses so bring your appetites and feel free to order some of their delicious food. For questions, call or email me! I look forward to seeing you!

Pastor Chris

Thrivent Update

Please join Lois DeMeyer's Thrivent Action Team at the Iglesia Wrap, Dec. 19.

Thanks again to 29 Thrivent benefit members for directing Choice Dollars to our church and Preschool & After School. With \$408 directed to the church in October its total is now \$2,565. These funds help the General Fund. The Preschool received \$492 in October and its total is now \$8,965. Its gifts are currently being used for tuition assistance and the new building.

If you don't know if you have Thrivent Choice Dollars or have not yet tried directing them to your favorite registered charity, it is as easy as calling the national Thrivent office at 1-800-236-3736 and asking for the Choice Dollars department. If you want to direct Choice Dollars locally, the official names are Bethania Church, Bethania Preschool, and Solvang Lutheran Home.

Nancy Emerson

Thrivent Congregational Advocate

Thumbnail Portrait - Stewart and Lynne Fries

It is always exciting to welcome new members to our church, but when they are as affable as Stewart and Lynne Fries it seems especially wonderful! They are truly a perfect fit all the way around! And what an interesting story they tell...

Stewart is actually of Danish ancestry (the Aarhus region). He was born in Deadwood, South Dakota the fourth out of five children. He has one brother and three sisters. His mother was a homemaker and his father a road construction contractor. Stewart's family was not religious and he had no faith background as a youth. He grew up in Rock Springs, Wyoming. While there he attended church solely to meet the requirements to participate on a sports team. Stewart says that academically in school he was "average". After graduation, having no money for college, he joined the United States Navy. Stewart says this was "one of the best decisions I ever made". He



volunteered for submarine duty, and his first tour was on the USS Benjamin Franklin... out of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii!

Enter Lynne Ford, born of English ancestry in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Lynne has one sister. Her dad was a contractor who built houses, commercial buildings, and schools, and her mom was his bookkeeper. Her mother was also a great decorator, and as soon as her father finished a home they moved in and her mother decorated it so attractively that it sold immediately. By the time Lynne was 12 years old she had lived in more than 30 brand new homes. As a child Lynne enjoyed church as several of her aunts were her Sunday School teachers. Her life was pretty stable – but changes were on the way! The family decided to move from Council Bluffs so they auctioned off

their home and all their furniture, purchased a red station wagon and debated which way to go! Her mother wanted Florida, Lynne wanted Hawaii...they considered Seattle where the World's Fair beckoned, camping along the way. Yet they still kept moving, including three months in Europe where they were among the first to see the Berlin Wall in Germany. They went on a bus with Russian guards which Lynne says remains a strong memory for her even now.

During this period the family went through Solvang, loved it and almost stayed. Eventually they ended up in San Diego for an extended period and continued building houses. When Lynne was a senior in high school, her dad became the manager of all federal buildings in San Francisco, so they moved to the Bay Area. Lynne graduated from Crestmoor High School in San Bruno (just south of San Francisco). Her dad then transferred to Hawaii. Hawaii...remember where Stewart was stationed with the Navy?

Stewart returned to port every three months on his Navy submarine. When home he lived in an apartment near the Ala Wai Harbor Canal. He and Lynne wound up, as fate would have it, at the same party, and she found out that Stewart played the guitar and wrote songs. They left the party to escape the noise and wound up walking from one end of Waikiki Beach to the other. From then on they were together every day! They were married in Rock Springs, Wyoming on June 12, 1970, with a large group of Lynne's extended family in attendance. (Stewart said Lynne had very strong family connections which he did not have.) They honeymooned in the Black Hills, northern Wyoming, Devil's Tower, Yellowstone, and the Grand Tetons. Stewart says that as a married couple they have been back to Yellowstone more than any other place.

Stewart then was transferred to a submarine based in Charleston, South Carolina, and it was here that their first child was born. Carrie (born in 1971) is now a Solvang School kindergarten teacher and with her husband has a set of twins (one boy, one girl). When Carrie was three months old the Navy transferred Stewart and Lynne back to Hawaii where their second child Matthew was born in 1972. He now lives in Minnetonka, Minnesota and with his wife has five children (three girls and two boys including a set of twins). Stewart and Lynne spent two more years in Hawaii and then made a big change.

They were transferred to Dunoon at Holy Loch, Scotland. They were both quite effusive when they told me about it. "It was very cold and very damp there! You could see your breath INSIDE the house! We had a coal fireplace. You could not flush the toilet if it was high tide!" Their daughter Carrie started preschool there. During this time Stewart was assigned to the USS Canopus which was a sub tender. They traveled to every

western European country taking the children with them wherever they went. The family remained in Scotland for two and a half years.

Stewart's ship then changed home port to Rota, Spain where they resided for two and a half more years. While there Matthew started school, and both children became fluent in Spanish. Their transition from Scotland to Spain was through Guantanamo Bay. While on the USS Canopus Stewart was attached to the JAG corps and was selected as Atlantic Fleet Submarine Sailor of the Year! In 1978 while stationed in Rota, Spain he was faced with a choice – either re-enlist and go to Washington, DC or end his service. He ended his service and the family moved to Phoenix, Arizona. Lynne's parents lived there, and Lynne became an interior designer, working to put Stewart through school. Stewart attended Arizona State University, working nights as a typist at a law firm. He graduated Summa Cum Laude with a degree in business, and then was hired full time by the same firm he had worked for during college. This firm had California connections. The senior partner was owner of Chalk Hill Winery, and this became Stewart's first experience in the wine industry.

In 1982 Stewart transferred from Phoenix to San Francisco. In July of 1984 the Democratic Convention was held in San Francisco, and yes, you guessed it! Stewart and Lynne were involved. Lynne was hired to buy, furnish, and completely redecorate a house including finding a capable maid service because Ted Kennedy was coming to join Stewart's boss for the convention and needed a place to stay. The owner of Chalk Hill was so impressed with Lynne's capabilities that he hired her as his personal assistant. Her duties included buying presents, groceries, and running the household staff. Stewart, tongue in cheek, told me he learned an important lesson from this: "If your wife ever has the opportunity to work for a very wealthy man don't let her – she will get used to spending lots of money!" Lynne kept this job for 20 years. During this time Stewart was running Chalk Hill Winery and concurrently working in a law office and other related businesses. He left Chalk Hill in 1998.

During this transition period they visited Solvang many times and were happily anticipating retiring here. Richard Sanford intervened, and offered Stewart the CFO position at Sanford Winery which he accepted. The winery was new and ultra modern, completed just before 9/11 and the downturn of the economy and the resultant downturn of the local wine industry. Stewart was then invited by the Sorenson CPA firm to come aboard which he did and remains there to this day.

On a personal level Stewart and Lynne love to travel worldwide. In the United States Lynne has been to every state except Alaska. Lynne has been very involved in religious studies, and is a trained Stephen minister. She attended classes for six years on the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd as well as attending a Cursillo workshop and a religious retreat in Kanooga, North Carolina. They have both been on church council at Elim Lutheran (ELCA) in Petaluma, and Stewart was baptized there as an adult. They also worked as medical volunteers there setting up for doctors who would treat low income patients and provide meals for the homeless. They have been Scout leaders and volunteered at their kids schools. They were also active in Arizona in Project Potential, a program serving kindergarten through eighth grade gifted children. Lynne is a Daughter of the King, an Anglican lay religious order for women founded in 1885 in New York. They are involved in Meals on Wheels and Project Go Care which works with Rotary International on a mission to fight poverty in the world through education. Stewart is a member of Rotary, Vikings, and has served on the board for our local hospital as well as Friendship House, works with People Helping People, and on the Board of Architectural Review. He has sung in choir.

And now to bring this amazing couple full circle – the church. Their pastor at Elim Lutheran in Petaluma recommended Bethania to them. They visited once but wound up at St. Marks in Los Olivos – for 15 years. They said they always wanted to come back. Lynne said "When we returned to Bethania we felt like we were coming home!" And Stewart added "Pastor Chris makes it good!" Welcome home Stewart and Lynne. We're so glad you're here!

- Robin Gehrs

December 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 2 pm BLCW Program: FR 7 pm Christian Ed. Mtg: FR	2 11:30 am Chapel:CH	3 2 pm Chapel: CH 7:30 pm Choir Practice: CH	4	5 11 am Solvang Julfest Parade
6 9:30 am Worship:& Baptism: PH 9:30 Sunday School: FR 11 am Adult Forum 11 am Confirmation Class: OFC	7 7 pm Finance Cmt. Mtg:OFC 8 pm AA: FR	8 7 pm Bethania Preschool Program: PH	9 11:30 am Chapel:CH 12:45 pm Swing/Quilting Group: PH	10 2 pm Chapel: CH 7:30 pm Choir Practice: CH	11	12
13 9:30 am Worship: PH 9:30 Sunday School: FR 11 am Adult Forum: FR 6 pm Danish Sisterhood Family Christmas: PH	14 7 pm Finance Cmt: OFC 8 pm AA: FR	15	16 11:30 am Chapel:CH 7 pm Theology Pub: Solvang Brewing Company	17 10 am Communion: AV 10:30 am Gather Bible Study:AV 2:30 pm Preschool Board Mtg: FR 7 pm Council @ M.Lake's 7:30 pm Choir: Practice CH	18	19 6 pm Iglesia Wrap Party: PH
20 9:30 am Worship & Moisy Offering: PH 9:30 Sunday School: FR 11 am Adult Forum	21 Beacon Deadline: OFC 8 pm AA:FR	22	23 6 pm Little Christmas Eve Danish Service: CH	24 4 pm Christmas Eve Service: CH 7 pm Christmas Eve Service: CH	25 Christmas Day - The Church Office and the Preschool/After School Program are closed.	28
29 9:30 am Worship: CH Sunday School does not meet.	30 8 pm AA:FR	31				CH = Church PH = Parish Hall FR = Fireside Room AV = Atterdag Village of Solvang

December 2015

THE BEACON

Bethania Lutheran Church
603 Atterdag Rd
Solvang CA 93463

Address Correction Requested

(805)688-4637
bethania.lutheran@verizon.net
www.bethanialutheran.net

Preschool/After School
(805)688-7077
bethaniaps@verizon.net

US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT #12
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SOLVANG CA

Pastor: Chris Brown
Office Manager: Kristyl Downey
Preschool/After School Director:
Eileen Knotts

Church Council:
Pastor Chris Brown
President: Marilyn Larsen
Vice-President: Barbara Kargard
Treasurer: Ron Walsh
Secretary: Nancy Emerson
Annalisa Nearn
Tom Dimmette
Alma Lancaster
Robert Laufer
Kevin McConnell
Youth: Vladimir McConnell

Sunday Schedule
9:30 am Worship
9:30 am Sunday School
11:00 am Adult Forum



CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

DEC. 23
6:00 PM
DANISH
SERVICE

DEC. 24
CHRISTMAS EVE
4:00 PM SERVICE
7:00 PM SERVICE