THE BEACON

December 2014

Bethania LUTHERAN CHURCH

BETHANIA LUTHERAN CHURCH, SOLVANG CA 93463 805-688-4637 bethania.lutheran@verizon.net

Pastor Russ' Reflections…

Dear Advent People of Bethania,

Our preschool children readying themselves for the annual Christmas pageant reminds me of the days LONG ago when I played various parts in many such plays. I think I was a white fluffy sheep once or twice. I remember being a shepherd several times, dressed in my bathrobe. Once, my classmates played all of the animals in the Bethlehem stable. My line to sing was:

"I said the cow all white and red,
I gave him my manger for his bed.
I gave him my hay to pillow his head.
I said the cow all white and red."

And I did this while holding up a cardboard cutout of a cow. Pretty impressive.
I don't recall ever being asked to be an angel…and that may have been for good reason.
Later, I did achieve the coveted role of one of the three wise men, with the uplifting line:

"Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume,
Breathes a life of gathering gloom,
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
Sealed in a cold, stone tomb."

The three of us had to walk, one by one, down the long center aisle of the sanctuary singing our line solo, wearing a crown and holding a treasure box, all at the same time.

I remember none of us boys ever wanted to play the role of Joseph because it meant you had to be engaged to Mary and you had a baby already! Yikes! Lots of snickering behind Joseph's back, as I recall.

Yes, there were many parts in the original Christmas story. Even King Herod and Caesar Augustus played a role when you think about it.

So, I guess an appropriate question for us this wondrous season is this: "What role are you in this year's Christmas story?" Maybe you feel a little lost, like a wandering sheep. Or perhaps Christmas comes like an intrusion into your life, as the animals may have experienced, making room for sudden out of town guests. Maybe you struggle to find that special gift to give someone…like the cow all white and red. Or maybe you feel like you are on a journey in your life of faith…like the magi. Or maybe you are more comfortable taking a back seat, a bit bewildered at what was going on…like Joseph. Or maybe you simply feel grateful having a part in the story at all….like Mary must have felt.

It's time to join the children and play our part. No one is left out. What role are you? Come and join in the wonder of the season. It is the greatest story ever told, after all.

Pastor Russ

The Advent & Christmas Season at Bethania

Saturday, Dec. 6 **11:00 am**	**Solvang Julefest Parade "The Spirit of Giving" -** Call Marilyn Larsen, 688-6797 if you want to participate in Bethania's entry.
Sunday, Dec. 7 **5:30-8:30 pm**	**Christmas Party at the Elverhoj Museum** - Celebrate the holiday in traditional style with open-face sandwiches, homemade Danish Christmas cookies and chocolates and Christmas cheer.
Wednesday, Dec. 10 **7:00 pm**	**Bethania Preschool Program "A Very Beary Christmas"**
Sunday, Dec. 14 **6:00 pm**	**Danish Sisterhood Christmas Party-**Dinner*singing*dancing around the Christmas Tree* and more! Adult dinner ticket $10.00/each; Children 10 years and under/$5.00 Tickets are available at The Home Connection, 425 Alisal Rd. or after church service on Sundays. Please make reservations before Dec. 7.
Saturday, Dec. 20 **1:00-4:00 pm**	**Open House at Pastor Russ and Jeanie's.** Come and share in the joy of the season. Coffee, tea, and Christmas goodies too! 19 Chuparrosa Drive, SLO
Sunday, Dec. 21 **11:00 am**	**Iglesia Christmas (W)rap** Join us in wrapping presents for the children of Iglesia Luterana Santa Cruz of Santa Maria. We'll sing carols, and get in the sharing and caring spirit of Christmas.
Tuesday, Dec. 23 **6:00 pm**	**Danish Little Christmas Eve Service** Pastor Anne-Grethe Krogh Nielsen leads this service with Danish liturgy, hymns and sermon.
Wednesday, Dec. 24 **4:00 pm** **7:00 pm**	**Christmas Eve** Traditional Worship Service Candlelight Service

Away in a Manger

The Central Coast community is invited to join us for our 12th annual "Away In A Manger" at Calvary Lutheran Church in Morro Bay, on Saturday, Dec.13th , 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. This open house will feature over 250 Nativity Sets from all over the world. There will also be live music and refreshments. Ina Davenport will play the piano and organ at 1:30 p.m. with others leading us in Carols and Songs, at 2:30 p.m. Spirit's Voice, our worship team, will lead us in Christmas Songs. Join us for a little touch of Christmas. There is no admission charge for this event. Calvary Lutheran Church is located at 480 Monterey Ave, Morro Bay, CA . Phone # is 772-8457.

Bethania Preschool Holiday Time

We are in the busy season here at Bethania Preschool and After School, lots of hustle and bustle. We had a wonderful Thanksgiving Feast here at the Preschool in November. Lots of turkey, dressing and cranberries for all. The children were all very excited to bring their own offering for the feast.

We are now busy getting ready for our Christmas Program on Wednesday, Dec. 10th at 7:00 pm in the Parish Hall. We have been practicing our songs for weeks now, and rehearsing every day in preparation. We hope that you can join us. It is going to be a "Beary" Merry Christmas!

The children will be having their gift exchange on Thursday Dec. 18th. Each child brings a gift to put under the tree to exchange with another. We will sing and dance around the Christmas Tree before enjoying some milk and cookies.

Bethania Preschool doing our part to fill your Christmas with joyful noises.

Merry Christmas from all of us here at the Preschool!

- Eileen Knotts, Director

Book Signing in Morro Bay

Coalesce Bookstore, 845 Main Street, Morro Bay, will host a book signing for retired ELCA pastor Don Dallmann of Cambria at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 6. Don will be signing *John J's Journal: A Civil War Diary*. The diary was kept by Don's great-grandfather, John J. Fischer, who fought with the 49th Regiment, New York Volunteers. Wounded at Cedar Creek, Fischer also fought in the battles of Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, The Wilderness, Spotsylvania Court House and the Siege of Petersburg.

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 26 children from Iglesia this year. Contact Linda Marzullo if you would like to be an Angel and adopt a child through fulfilling their wish list.

Some of the children added a special note to their "Angels" on the back of their wish list cards. One girl wrote, "I am very thankful of getting some presents on Christmas. God bless you, Merry Christmas." Another little boy wrote this: "Dear Santa, Thank you very much. I love you (heart shape)!"

We will have the Wish Lists at the Social Ministry break out on Dec. 7th following worship. 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: vikingpressprint@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 needy 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 us 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 have a grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans to assist with the Christmas Angel gift project. 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 held Dec. 21, and the gifts delivered before Christmas Eve services at Iglesia.

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

Christmas Carol Wrap -Sunday, Dec. 21st
Christmas Carols, Coffee & Christmas Gift Wrapping for Iglesia

Bring yourself and your scotch tape…or just your willing hands and singing soul. Everyone is welcome, whether you want to wrap, sing, hang out and talk, or "rap"! We welcome donations of ribbons, bows and boxes for this project.

We will be enjoying Christmas music, coffee, fellowship and singing while we wrap gifts for needy children from Iglesia Luterana Santa Cruz in Santa Maria *(see related article)*. The gifts will be going to the children who have been sponsored through the Angel Project. All wrapped gifts will be delivered the next day to Iglesia, in time for their Christmas Eve service and party.

Sunday School children and Confirmands are especially encouraged to come and help us out. We invite everyone to come and help WRAP up some gifts while we "RAP" to Christmas tunes and share some fun, while sharing the spirit of the Christmas!

Christmas Spirit

The approach of Christmas is a joyful time for Christians and all people of goodwill. We are preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus and our mood is happy. At the same time, we become more aware and sensitive to the significant needs of people world wide. Our mail is full of appeals for help of all kinds.

A very targeted, very local need is right here! An appeal to our congregation is made by Bethania Preschool & After School! This is the time of year to consider being a generous participant in the annual Christmas Greetings campaign to provide funds to support the Tuition Assistance Fund of Bethania Preschool & After School. As we have done for several years, your donation (tax deductible) will be acknowledged by the hanging of a Christmas ornament noting you as a donor to the fund and extending your holiday greetings to the congregation. The trees will be in the Narthax and the parish hall for everyone to see.

Thrivent Care in Communities will give us $1 for every $3 raised for a total donation of $800 if we raise $2400. The board anticipates a greater need for the fund in FY 2014-15 even though tuition has remained the same. Tuition ranges from $376/monthly for 1/2 day preschool enrollment to $644/full day enrollment. After School tuition ranges from $116 monthly to $464 depending on number of hours and days of the week selected. Additionally, Preschool and After School also charge annual snack and supply fees. As Eileen Knotts, School Director, said recently, "We have many families who are at the low to very low income level...In addition to proving their financial need, applicants must also be working and/or attending school."

Our students thrive in our loving, supportive environment, designed to prepare them emotionally and academically for the challenges they will encounter. Eileen Knotts has led our school to be one we should all regard with pride. Please remember to consider our Christmas Greetings request. The deadline for donors to be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin is Dec. 15.

-Liz Beeler

Congregational Annual Meeting Highlights – Nov. 9, 2014

*Persons elected include: Cemetery Committee: Bruce Pedersen, Betty Petersen; Endowment Committee: David Nelson, Carolynn Petersen; Church Council: Marilyn Larsen, Robert Laufer, Kevin McConnell, Vladimir McConnell (Youth Representative), Ron Walsh
*A 2015 General Fund budget with projected income of $260,750 and expenses of $268,390 giving a negative year end balance of $7,640 was approved by the congregation. It includes $25,000 for the Family Ministries position. A church-wide task force will be appointed by Church Council to develop, recruit and recommend a candidate for the position. A person will not be hired until funds are available.
*Gerda Willis requested that there be a period during communion for quiet reflection and that hymn singing during communion be eliminated. Several members supported varying versions of her suggestion while one person expressed support for retaining two communion hymns. The matter was referred to the Worship & Music Committee.
*Action on implementing Church Goals was summarized by Pastor Gordon.
*The Preschool Committee reported that the City of Solvang has not yet issued the new building's permits.
*The Call Committee chairperson, Carol Lake, reported that the committee has been meeting frequently, is reading resumes and interviewing candidates.
*Council has formed a four person Memorial Fund Committee to coordinate donor thank yous, family notification, recording keeping and use of funds.
*The new church website was viewed by the members.

Nancy Emerson, Council Secretary

Council Highlights—Nov. 20, 2014

*Council and the Cemetery Committee met together to discuss how Council can best help the Cemetery Committee with its work. The group discussed its current projects which are: archway iron gates and railing infrastructure, cremation sites, what legally can be done about unused plots with no surviving family members, and recent installation of photovoltaic solar panels.

*Approved Endowment Committee expenditures to the following recipients of the Produce Table fundraising project: $600 to ELCA World Hunger and $250 to Salvation Army Santa Ynez Valley Extension to provide vouchers for valley residents and travelers in crisis situations and camper scholarships.

*Discussed the Task Force for Family Ministries Director position, which will develop a job description, recruit candidates and recommend a candidate to Council and the church. This Task Force will begin meeting in January and will coordinate with the Call Committee. The Task force will include 2 Council representatives + Pastor Gordon, Committee representatives - 1 from Christian Education and 1 from Outreach, + at least 2 representatives from parents of children and/or teenagers.

*Discussed and will make appointment to vacant Church Council position at December meeting.

*Accepted General Fund Financial Report with its encouraging news that the October net balance was $1,140 and that the year to date negative balance has been reduced to $364.

*Approved a revised Facilities Use Application.

Nancy Emerson
Church Council Secretary

Danish Sisterhood Christmas Party

It gives us great pleasure to once again have our "Annual Sisterhood Christmas Party" on Sunday, Dec. 14th. We are so pleased that the Church will join us in celebrating our Danish "Traditional Christmas" party with dinner, singing and dancing around our "new" tree and of course that special visit from Santa. The Sisterhood will also have their "Christmas Boutique" set up with homemade Danish treats and items for the holidays. Adult dinner tickets are $10.00 each and children 10 years and under $5.00 – Doors open at 6pm. Tickets are available at The Home Connection, 425 Alisal (across from Solvang Post Office) 686-4553, Or you can send a check with your reservation to Julie Vandecar (1518 Mission Dr. Solvang 93463) 693-9465. We will also have tickets available to purchase after church service on Sundays. Please make your reservations before Dec. 7th space will be limited.

Hope to see you there,
- Danish Sisterhood Lodge

Food Drive for Iglesia's Pantry begins

You are invited to bring donations to the box in the Parish Hall to help the members of Iglesia. 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. Because of the economy, and the rising cost of diapers and paper goods, we are also hoping to receive some donations of diapers and toilet paper.

If you would like to contribute funds to this project and have us do the shopping, you can earmark your donation "IGLESIA FOOD" and drop it in the offering plate or at the church office.

We encourage everyone to become more educated about families who are the "working poor" and who struggle every day to feed their families in our area.

If you would like to donate, items most needed at this time to re-stock the pantry for Iglesia families include:

5 lb. bags of white flour
5 lb. bags of white rice
3 lb. bags of Pinto beans
Canned chicken *(no tuna, please!)*
Canned Vegetables
(Corn, Green Beans, Refried Beans, Peas, Mixed Vegetables)
Large cans of Hominy *(very popular and relatively inexpensive if you watch for a sale)*
Canned Soups (Chicken Noodle or Beef)
Peanut Butter
Breakfast Cereal and Breakfast Bars
Diapers (any size, age)
Toilet Paper
Gift Cards to Santa Maria food stores
(FoodsCo is where most of them shop, but Albertsons, Vons and Target are also good)

Thank you for making a difference to people who are struggling in our area, and supporting other Christians involved in a young, vibrant mission church. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 688-3059 (home) or 688-5219 (work) or by email: vikingpressprint@verizon.net

-Linda Marzullo

Gather Bible Study

Theme: "Faith is Nurtured in the Family" - As the Israelites received the commandments, they were to teach them to their children, They also observed holidays, such as the Passover, in their homes (Deuteronomy 6). The Apostles also taught in the homes wherever they traveled. (Acts 16 :11-15 and Acts 18:1-4) This study is printed in the Dec. "Gather " magazine, pp 32-37. If you would like a copy, call Anabelle at 688-4687. Join the group in Atterdag Lounge on Dec. 18 at 10 am.

Join the Bethania Book Group in December – New Book

New participants are always welcome at the monthly Bethania Book Group meetings, which are held the third Wednesday. On Dec. 17 at 2 pm in the Church Office or Parish Hall, we will begin discussion of No God but God by Reza Azlan. His book is an intriguing, clearly written introduction to the history, theology and politics of the Islamic faith. This is a great opportunity to explore a topic that is "front and center" in the news these days. The first reading assignment is Preface, Prologue and Chapters 1-3. Dr. Azlan, born in Iran but educated in the U.S., is a lively author and professor at UC universities, including UCSB.

Kristine Pedersen to speak about PACE

On Sunday Dec. 14 at 11 am after worship in the Fireside Room Bethania member Kristine Pedersen, In-Country Director for PACE UNIVERSAL will speak about the Piiyali Learning Center in Piyali near Calcutta India. PACE Universal is an educational life changing program for girls, women and their villages which was developed by Deepa Willingham, a Solvang resident. Our Church, Bethania, through the BLCW has supported this past year two six year old girls and two young women with scholarships . Many in the church have supported this scholarship program and Kristine will present information about the school and future plans.

- Brenda Knudsen

Poinsettias Available

Twenty poinsettias will grace the sanctuary during the Christmas services. If you would like one please fill out this form and return it with payment to the church office.

I/we would like # ____ of poinsettias in memory/in honor of (Please circle one.)

_____

_____

(You may write your own dedication.)

My/Our Name: _____

Payment of $8.00/poinsettia is enclosed.

+Pray for God's Good Care and Keeping to be with

Ken Adamek	Mark Anderson	Ellie Andrews	Esther Bates	Ben Bettencourt
Joe & Pat Bode	Bent Clausen	Katy & Kay Corlee	Wayne Countryman	Lois DeMeyer
Jose Diaz & Family	Dick Dorney	George Eckman	Terri Elwess	Kerstin Emerson
Kendall Foster	Dick Fowler	Debbie Fritts	Dolores Gehrs	Chris Gideon
Karl Hatch	David Hollrah	Suzanne Huier	Karena Hvingelby	Janet Johnson
Chris Kaping	Richard Lindekens	Debi Littlejohn	Alma Lock	Virginia McPeak
Mary Mathiasen	Marjorie Mee	Denise Morris	Grace Munoz	Patricia Myers
Andy Narver	Helen Nielsen	Pat Olesen	Grete Parma	Johnnie Rasmussen
Ann Reading	Cosima Rincon	Bob Rundell	Agda Senn	Lee Statom
Bob Tucker	Bud Tullis	Cora Vandecar	Tina Walen	Ann Wallace
Steve White	Betty Wilkes	Robert Workman	Marc & Laurie Owens	
Alisha & Emma Marie Wilson				

The family and friends of Ralph Tayloe. Ralph died Nov. 1, 2014 in Dubuque, Iowa. He and his wife Marjorie lived in Solvang for many years. They often attended worship services and events here at Bethania.

Produce Table

A great big "Thank You" to all who supported the Produce Table May through Nov. 23 including the producers (and sharers of their bounty!), buyers/donors and volunteer table staffers. When the season began, we thought Thrivent Financial for Lutherans would be able to math $1 for every $3 donated as they had in previous years and for which we are very grateful! However, our local chapter of Thrivent did a great job of distributing available funds (from which Bethania benefitted greatly) and their gifting funds were soon exhausted. We approached our own Bethania Lutheran Church Endowment Fund board to request the same kind of match as a part of their 10% gifting of earnings beyond Bethania. Fortunately they agreed and the Church Council approved their action. Thanks to their generosity and your generosity to the Endowment Fund, they were able toi add $600 to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal funds and $250 to the Santa Ynez Valley Extension of the Salvation Army for Season totals of: ELCA Word Hunger Appeal $2,555.42 and locally our Santa Ynez Valley Extension of the Salvation Army $1,354.00. Blessings upon blessings!

Thank you,
Carolynn Petersen

Resignation of Lisa Blanton

It is with regret that we inform you that we have received the resignation of our pianist and choir director, Lisa Blanton. The Executive Board of the Church Council has met and accepted Lisa's resignation with our grateful thanks for her service to our congregation and our blessings for her future, whatever that holds for her. The Executive Board and the Music and Worship Committee will be working to find a replacement for this position as soon as is possible. Lisa has graciously offered to continue in her position through the end of this year. I know that we all wish Lisa the best in whatever is in her future. She has been a blessing to our congregation and we will miss her and the music she shared with us.

Marilyn Larsen
Council President

Social Ministry Break Out!
First Sunday of the Month: Dec. 7th following coffee hour

We will be meeting briefly after coffee on Sunday, Dec. 7th to talk about upcoming goals and events for the Social Ministry Committee at Bethania. We want YOUR ideas and input!

Topics:
1. Christmas Angel / Preschool Presents Project
2. Christmas Angel Wrap Party Dec. 21st
3. Noisy Sunday Offering
4. Food Drive for Iglesia Luterana Santa Cruz
5. Undie & Sock-It-To-Me Sundays
6. Quilting Group

YOUR Ideas

The focal point of Social Ministry is to share with those in need and make positive change in society, as followers of Christ. As Christians we are called to serve others, and it is an important role of the church to support those in need and to share God's love with all.

Confirmation students and people of all ages are invited. We will watch a short video, discuss the Christmas Angel Project and share some ideas. Please plan to come – Social Ministry should be a concern for all of us as followers of Christ.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 688-3059 (home) or 688-5219 (work) or by email: vikingpressprint@verizon.net

- Linda Marzullo

Thank You

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We would like to express our sincere gratitude for your wonderful gift to assist us with our expenses related to Lori's illness and passing. Your generosity is a tremendous witness to your compassion in the name of our Lord. We pray that God will bless you as you have blessed us.

In Christ's love,
- Jeffrey, Talitha, Andrew and Lydia Nelson
Pastor Jeff is pastor at Peace Lutheran Church in Lompoc

Three Wise Gifts

Perhaps, we can thank the three wise kings from the east for our tradition of gift giving at Christmas. Just as the Christ child received three different kinds of gifts, His church today continues to need three kinds of wise gifts. The first is that of our regular weekly giving that we refer to as tithing. The second gift is that which we refer to as offerings where we can support ministries for which we have a passion. The third type of gift is that which we refer to as legacy giving. Legacy giving is where we take a portion of all that He has provided us throughout our life and return that portion to God's continued work here on earth. These gifts come from our estate plans in thanks to Him for all that He has provided us. This Christmas, won't you please consider a legacy gift of your own? To receive assistance on how to give an end of year tax wise legacy gift, contact our ELCA Foundation Gift Planner, Greg Shepherd, at: 909-910-6823 or gregory.shepherd@elca.org.

Thrivent Choice Dollars

Did you know that since late 2010, when Thrivent Financial for Lutherans began its Choice Dollars program, Thrivent benefit members have directed $18,684 to Bethania Lutheran Church, which strengthened the General Fund. The $19,259 directed to Bethania Preschool & After School was used for the New Building Fund, playground equipment, classroom items and tuition assistance.

To direct your Choice Dollars, call Thrivent at 1-800-236-3736 and ask for Choice Dollars. You will need the last 4 digits of your Social Security number or your Thrivent member number as identification when you call. Locally you can direct $s to Bethania Lutheran Church, Bethania Preschool or Solvang Lutheran Home. You can go online at www.thrivent.com to direct $s, too. Please call me at 693-1386 if you have questions or problems.

Nancy Emerson
Bethania Thrivent Congregational Advocate

Thumbnail Portrait
Ruth Plambeck and her Nutcracker Collection

When Ruth moved to her present home eleven years ago, she decided that she needed to downsize her Christmas decorations. She donated most of them to the thrift shop, but kept some nutcrackers that she had accumulated over the years.

When friends and family heard that she enjoyed collecting nutcrackers, she began to get many as gifts. Some of the more unusual pieces include a pastry maker, a toy-maker, a Japanese fish chef, a skier, and a gardener. Most of them are made in China although her gardener is the most valuable, being an authentic German Steinbach. The heads are all very similar, wearing a crown and having a heavy, black moustache. The soldiers carry a sword or gun and the kings carry a scepter.

She has about 75 in total, some standing waist-high on the floor and some small enough to hang on the Christmas tree or to use as place-card holders. Her three kings nutcrackers are especially treasured, as they were gifts of Rod Warren and Chris Lund.

Several years ago a News-Press reporter called Kristyl in the church office to ask if she knew anyone in the congregation who collected nutcrackers. Nobody was more surprised than Ruth to be interviewed and featured in a special Christmas issue.

According to Wikipedia, the nutcracker history indicates that most were associated with the woodcarvers in Germany's Ergebirge area. The first appearance of a decorative nutcracker can be traced to the 13th century where they were fashioned out of poured brass. Since nuts are usually harvested in the fall and traditionally eaten during winter months, it's naturally associated with the holidays and incorporated into holiday foods. Interest in nutcrackers is renewed each year through the tradition of the Nutcracker Ballet.

Ruth hasn't bought any nutcrackers recently, feeling that she has enough to decorate the house for Christmas without creating storage problems for the rest of the year. Bringing the wooden men out each December serves as a harbinger of good times and good foods of the holiday season.

Merry Christmas Everyone!
-Emily Abello

Unite to Light

On Oct. 30 over 30 people gathered in the Parish Hall to hear Dr. Mark Malangko tell of his experiences delivering 350 solar lights to the junior and senior students at St Augustine's Senior High Technical School. In a miraculous way he was able to obtain the lights which Bethania helped to financially support, negotiating his way through airports, transporting them to Ghana and finding someone to take him to his hometown in Ghana to deliver them. Students who had to deal with an undependable source of electricity can now study during the evening hours after completing their famiy chores. Lights were given to students with better grades but it was determined that those with poor grades may have more need of the lights. Dr Malangko is now raising funds to purchase 600 more lights so all students at the school are supplied. When the students graduate the lights are then passed down to the next grade coming. Members of Bethania were a part of this effort, having contributed both individually and through a noisy offering collected in April.

Brenda Knudsen and Dr. Mark Malangko

-Brenda Knudsen & Carolynn Petersen

Vesper Guild

Dear Vesper Guild Members,

It has been my honor to serve as your chair all these recent years and I have loved every minute. The companionship and friendships that developed within the group created a very special aura whenever a meeting took place - warm, loving and caring. I wish to thank you all for the lovely candle sconce that I will forever cherish and the card you all signed. We must not say "Goodbye" to Vesper - more like a "Farewell" with definite plans for gatherings in the future when we can enjoy the simple pleasure of fellowship and desserts.

With gratitude and wonderful memories,
-Rita Lunde

More Thanks to Vesper Guild

I also thank the members of Vesper Guild for the Certificate of Appreciation they presented to me at their last meeting. I am grateful they made a donation in my honor to the Preschool and After School Program. It has been my honor to work with the women of Vesper Guild over the many years—26, not 60!

Caritas,
- Kristyl M. Downey

December 2014

Church Office: 805-688-4637

FAX: 805-688-7927 email: bethania.lutheran@verizon.net

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesd'y	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
CH = Church OFC = Office Conference Room FR = Fireside Room PH = Parish Hall AV = Atterdag Village ACC = Atterdag Care Center	1 7 pm Worship & Music Cmt. Mtg: OFC 8 pm AA : FR	2	3 11:30 am & 3:30 pm Chapel: CH 7 pm Choir Practice: FR	4	5	6 10 am FMLS Mtg: OFC
7 8:30 am Choir Practice: CH 9:30 am Worship Service 9:30 am Sunday School: FR 11 am Social Ministry Break-Out: FR 11:00 am-1:00 pm Confirmation Class: OFC	8 7 pm Finance Cmt. Mtg: OFC 8 pm AA : FR	9 8:30 am Piano Tuning: CH, FR & PH	10 11:30 am & 3:30 pm Chapel: CH 12:45 pm Sewing/Quilting: PH 7 pm Preschool Program: PH	11 9 am Conf. Clergy Mtg. 2 pm Preschool Board Mtg: PH 7 pm Call Cmtg. Mtg: OFC	12	13
14 9:30 am Worship: CH 9:30 am Sunday School: FR 10:45 am Coffee Hour: PH 11 am Mtg w/Kristine Pedersen: FR 6:30 Danish Sisterhood Christmas Dinner: PH	15 8 pm AA: FR	16	17 11:30 am & 3:30 pm Chapel: CH 2 pm Book Discussion Group: FR 7 pm Choir Practice: FR	18 10 am Gather Bible Study: AV 10:30 am Communion Service: ACC 7 pm Council Mtg: Nancy Emerson's	19 12 noon Beacon Deadline: OFC	20 1-4 pm Open House @Pastor Russ & Jeanie's house in SLO
21 9:30 am Worship : CH 9:30 am Sunday School: FR 10:45 am Coffee Hour: PH 11:00 am Iglesia (W)rap: PH	22 8 pm AA: FR	23 6 pm Danish Little Christmas Eve Service: CH	24 4 pm Christmas Eve Service: CH 7 pm Candlelight Service: CH	25 Christmas Day The Church Office & Preschool & After School Program are closed.	26	27
28 9:30 am Worship Service: CH No Sunday School 10:45 am Coffee Hour: PH	29 8 pm AA: FR	30	31			

Bethania Lutheran Church
603 Atterdag Rd
Solvang, CA 93463

Address Correction Requested

(805) 688-4637
bethania.lutheran@verizon.net
Preschool/After School (805) 688-7077
bethanips@verizon.net

We're on the web!
www.bethanialutheran.net

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Interim Pastor: Russ Gordon
Pianist & Choir Director: Lisa Blanton
Office Manager: Kristyl Downey
Preschool/After School Director: Eileen Knotts

Church Council:
Interim Pastor: Russ Gordon,
President: Marilyn Larsen
Vice-President: Barbara Kargard
Treasurer: Annalisa Nearn
Secretary: Nancy Emerson
Diana Boltz
Tom Dimmette
Erling Grumstrup
Robert Laufer
Kevin McConnell

Sunday Schedule
9:30 am Worship
9:30 am Sunday School
11:00 am After Worship Education

Christmas Schedule

Danish Service – Dec. 23 6:00 pm

Christmas Eve Services
4:00 pm Traditional Service
7:00 pm Candlelight Service