



BETHLEHEM STAR

The Newsletter of Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Los Alamitos, California

Volume 46, No. 1

January, 2006



"And inspired by the Spirit he came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus he took him up in his arms and blessed God,"

Luke 2:27 & 28

Martin Luther compared the Christian life to the problem of putting a drunk on a horse. You just get him up on one side and he falls down the other. The trick, he said, is to stay on the horse.

We have begun a new year and I believe it's more than just staying on the horse. I believe it's having a direction for that horse. A destination that when you shut your eyes can be visualized. The place where my horse is headed. And, never a place where I'm going to get to and stay, but a place I'm going to pass through on my way to the next place. A vision, if you will.

In the drama from Luke 2 (above, in part), Luke parades two people across the stage in cameo appearances. They are a man named Simeon, who was an aged prophet, and an 84 year old prophetess named Anna. They both have visions.

Simeon's vision, inspired by the Holy Spirit, is that he won't see death until he has seen the Messiah. He sees the baby Jesus, takes him up in his arms and realizes that vision. Then there was Anna, who had her vision right there in the temple as the Christ child was brought in. She knew this was the Christ child and immediately began telling everyone about the redemption of Jerusalem. And this is what visions are for - to share.

If I have a vision and keep it to myself, what good does it do? None. I have to share my vision in order for anything to come out of it.

What is the primary purpose of the church? Some say its primary purpose is fellowship and sharing love. Some would say it is to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments. Some would say it's to provide a place where

people can come and worship. Well, none of these are the primary purpose. The primary purpose of the church is to make disciples: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Matt 28:19

Do you know the number one country where churches around the world send the most missionaries? Brazil. And do you know the number two country where churches around the world send the next greatest number of missionaries? The United States of America. Yes - the USA - us. We are a mission field. We sit in a tremendous mission field. What an opportunity we have fulfilling our primary purpose - making disciples. But to do it we need a vision.

Who gets these visions? Well, visions don't come to committees, visions come to individuals. Individuals like Simeon and Anna and you and me. You know, if you are at the church during the week, be it Paper Rollers, straightening out the pews or the music library or whatever, if you are over here during the week you are probably people with visions.

Some visions take a short time to be realized and some take a very long time. Simeon wasn't going to die until he saw the Savior. Anna was 84. "Go and make disciples" is the mandate. All of our visions work toward that end.

We need to hear each other's visions in order to move from maintenance to mission. St. Paul says, "I have become all things to all people, if by any means some might be saved." To do that we need as many visions as possible. People reach people and that happens in many and diverse ways.

Everyone at Bethlehem has spiritual gifts. In this new year of 2006 use them, see a vision, share a vision and the God of peace will be with you.

Love in Christ,

Pastor Tom Lange

Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, February 12, 2006
Immediately following the
9:30 am worship service
Bachman Hall

January Council Meeting

Wednesday, January 11, 2006
7:00 p.m.
Fireside Room

Newsletter Deadline for the February issue:

Monday, January 16, 2006.

Please submit your article by e-mail, on disc, fax
or handwritten to the office.

“Scramble” Golf Tournament in March

We will have a Bethlehem Golf Tournament on Saturday, March 11th, 2006, at the Anaheim Hills Golf Course in Anaheim. The tournament format will be a four-person team “scramble” where the best ball will be played by each team. The Peoria Handicap System will be used. The lowest handicap will be 0 (zero) and the largest 36. The first tee time will be at 10:00 A.M. All golfers are welcome. This format is particularly nice for the lady golfers to participate. You can organize your own team or we will help match-up team members. Cost is \$70 per person and will include green fees, golf cart and prize fund. Please note that NO METAL SPIKES ARE ALLOWED on this course. To secure our reservation we need to have everyone signed up and the money collected by Sunday, February 26th. There will be a sign-up sheet on the Bulletin Board in the Narthex. If you have any questions please contact Dale Retrum at (714) 527-4337 or (562) 982-5732.

Thank you!

Pastor Tom Lange, Intern Pastor Patricia Hoenshell, Linda Nason, Marynell Wolfe and Richard Toth would like to sincerely thank the congregation for your generous Christmas gifts. We would like you all to know what a pleasure it is to serve this church. Thank you.

Men in Mission Support for Navajo Lutheran Mission

Each year the Bethlehem Men-In-Mission try to provide some mean of support for the Lutheran Navajo Mission in Arizona. This year we are again collecting items in three areas:

1. Bath Towels – Each year in April the Mission school sends home with the students a health kit that includes bath size towels. These are also used for the students’ showers at the school and for the guest apartment. We will be collecting new bath size or accept designated donations so we can purchase as many towels as possible at Costco or Sam’s. Last year our congregation responded with over 70 new towels. We need to have all towels collected by April 9th, 2006, so we can arrange to have them delivered to the reservation.
2. Children’s Clothing – Children’s clothing in all sizes is needed.
3. Layette Items for New Mothers – The Mission gives a layette to each new mother. Infant clothing, blankets, diapers and care items are included.

There will be a box in the Narthex to collect these items. If you would prefer to make a cash contribution to help out please contact any Men-In-Mission member. Thanks for your help.

Veselé Vianoce!

(That is Slovak for "Merry Christmas!")

December 16, 2005

Dear Friends,

Greetings from Bratislava. We hope you are all having a blessed Advent as you prepare to celebrate Christ's birth this Christmas. Snow is falling, the cold winter winds are blowing, but we are doing well.

It has been a very busy December at our congregation, Bratislava International Church. Attendance in both worship and Sunday School has been growing steadily for the last few months. We have had a number of special services, baptisms, and other occasions. Last Sunday morning the children of our church put on a beautiful Christmas presentation during the morning service, complete with little dancing angels. That evening some of our British members helped organize and put on an "English Family Carol Sing." We sang songs of the season and heard holiday poems, stories, and readings from an international group of presenters that included everyone from children of the church to the newly appointed U.S. ambassador to Slovakia. The day ended as we shared some holiday treats and great fellowship. Many commented on the wonderful sense of community we experienced throughout the day.

We have such a great group of people that have joined us since the fall began, and we have picked up a large number of young families. The result is that we now run out of hymnals most Sundays, and we're trying to find a larger meeting space for our Sunday School. These are good "problems" to have, and we are grateful to God for the excitement and vitality we are experiencing in our church.

Our connections to the Slovak church continue to grow as well. David has preached and shared music in a couple of special services for the Slovak youth during the last couple of months. The regular Sunday afternoon Slovak youth

services have been growing tremendously and are attracting many new young people. A big part of our role here is to help people who are far from home to feel like they still have a family. This is, of course, especially important during holidays. During the Thanksgiving holiday Carla was in charge of organizing a large Thanksgiving meal and celebration for almost 60 missionaries, teachers, and support staff serving in this part of the world. For the first time this annual dinner took place up at the seminary where Carla works. It proved to be a wonderful site, and the great food and warm fellowship were appreciated by all.

We have now been in Slovakia a little over a year and a month. Even with all of the good friends we have made and the great activities that have been taking place, it is hard to be so far away from those we love this time of the year. We are really feeling the distance from home this holiday season, and we are especially missing our two sons this Christmas. Your love support and prayers mean so much to us as we carry on our work and life here.

We are grateful for all the newsletters, cards, and letters of support that we have received from so many of you. We pray also that we will be good stewards of your gifts, and we pray that God will bless you for your generosity and for your prayers. You are all in our prayers as well.

May the blessings of the one who was born in Bethlehem be with you this Christmas and in the year to come.

Together in Christ's Service,

David and Carla Schick

WELCA NEWS

January 2006

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Galatians 5: 22-23

"ACT BOLDLY with KINDNESS" Jan. 2006 Part 1

Have you ever given "the shirt off your back" to a stranger? That is what God calls us to do. When we offer kindness to strangers, we are truly acting as Christ commanded.

COME LEARN MORE AT A CIRCLE MEETING!!!

FAITH CIRCLE will meet on Tues., Jan. 3, 2006 at 9:30 a.m. in the Fireside Room. For information call Circle Leader Jean Franz.

Hostess: Janice Hunt Leader: Tom Lange

PHOEBE CIRCLE will meet on Tues., Jan 10, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. at the home of: Cathy Warnock. Bible Study Leader: Margaret Hangartner. For more information call Charlotte Driskill, Circle Leader.

WELCA BOARD will meet on Mon. Jan. 9, 2006 at 6:30 p.m. in Bachman Hall. (Note: date change)

For information call President, Christina Watson.

**SUNDAY MORNING
COFFEE & COOKIES**

Thank you to Men In Mission for providing coffee and cookies in December. Who is the Secret Angel providing cookies??? Thank you.....Arlene

Phoebe Circle will be responsible for coffee and Cookies in January.

Thank you to Dianna Reynolds for opening her beautiful home for our wonderful WELCA Christmas Gathering, to the Board for the delicious desserts and also to Pastor Patricia for sharing the real meaning of "The Twelve Days of Christmas"

Upcoming events:

Jan. 14 2006 Pacifica Synod Information Exchange here at Bethlehem 9am – 1 Theme: "Color Me Bold" Lunch will be served. For information call our Cluster Co-ordinator Marianne Sakowski.

THANK YOU FOR:

The Love Gifts for We Care and the Lutheran Maritime Mission

As of 12/20/05 800 gift bags have been distributed to the Seafarers-the only gifts they will receive this Christmas.

Bethlehem WELCA's Board 2006

President: Christina Watson

Vice Pres: Arlene Pollard

Secretary: Cathy Warnock

Treasurer: Alice Roop

Phoebe Circle Leader: Charlotte Driskill

Faith Circle Leader: Jean Franz

Mission Growth/Programs: Marianne Sakowski

Mission Action/Community: Lu Buezis

Membership: Dianna Reynolds

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

Did you know....every Jewish boy was circumcised and formally named on the the eighth day after his birth. January 1st commemorates that event in Jesus' life. Here at the beginning of his earthly life, he shed blood in odedience to the covenant that he made new upon the cross.

**GET INVOLVED - ACT BOLDLY!
WITH KINDNESS!**

January Birthdays

1 st	Andrew Crawford Jean Rich Linda Scott
3 rd	Erik Sandvig
4 th	Nasim Khansari
5 th	David Sandvig
6 th	James Dawson
7 th	Kay Shelton
9 th	Geraldine Dawson Kyle Hastings Juli Medrano
10 th	Phillip Howard Bill Nason Hal Wolfe
11 th	Michelle Freeman Randy Upright
12 th	Granger Riach
13 th	Nina Van Tress
14 th	Jarunee Chasin
15 th	Nellie Malana Annette Rygh
16 th	Kathleen Menchaca Travis Retrum
17 th	Susan Driskill Hunter Riach Christine Wolfe Scott Wooldridge
18 th	Wilkie Adams
20 th	Melinda Bustamante
22 nd	Darlene Urewicz
23 rd	Eric Giese
24 th	Al Thunselle
25 th	Jay Campbell Lisa Crawford Annie Dobberteen
28 th	Betty Nehrenberg
31 st	Debby Gustafson

January Anniversaries

1/30/1954 Bruce & Irene Johnson



Recuperating/Undergoing Treatment:

Pat Denny	Florence Anderson
Jaysen Armas	Amy Bachman
Sigrun Borneo	Anne Marie Buezis
Joel Cooper	Joshua Gimbel
Melanie Henniges	Katherine Lindell
Charlie Lyons	Cyrena Raichel
Mary Seibert	Everett Zupke
Lucille Zupke	Mike Amdal
Anna Backlund	Adeline Beemer
Sophie Buttler	Carmen Chavez
Kyle Cooke	Ruth Dalton
Sara DeWeese	Mike Edson
Katrina Gary	Wilma Gary
Rev Kay M. Glaesner	Barbara Krause
Jack Lyons	Don Magnuson
Harold Miller	Shirley Moleneux
Joanne Montith	Rev. Daniel Morris
Joyce Rekstad	Evie Romano
Lisa Rough	Katherine Shephard
Gary Schulze	Tracy Serve
Glenda Sweger	

Convalescent or Care Facility: Sue Bradish, John Buttler, Ruth Hudson, Ernie Kling, Hartley Koch, Arlene Larson, Jeanette Olmstead, Ruth Precker, Glenn Snyder, Darlene Staglin, Jeff Thompson.

Homebound: Gladyce Ackerman, George Maxwell.

Thanks to These People for Serving in January, 2006

DATE	TIME	ACOLYTE	CROSS BEARER	READER	USHERS	COUNTERS	OPEN/CLOSE
1/1	9:30	Randi Reynolds	Charlie Toth	Jane Clausen		A. Campbell	
						B. Campbell	
1/8	8:30	Briana Rovida	Kristen Davis			C. Warnock	
	11:00	Cameron Bonwit	Glenn Miller			E. Zupke	
1/15	8:30	Randi Reynolds	Emma Cooper			C. Dobberteen	
	11:00	Jessie Welker	Charlie Toth	Charlotte Driskill		B. Gustafson	
1/22	8:30	Juli Medrano	Briana Rovida			D. Hansen	
	11:00		Charlie Toth			C. Watson	
1/29	8:30	Emma Cooper				J. Buezis, Jr.	
	11:00			Ernie Mazzari		B. Nason	

ALTAR GUILD

1/1
1/8 Doris Schaefer
1/15 Christina Watson
1/22 Marianne Sakowski
1/29

ALTAR FLOWERS

1/1 Wolfe
1/8 Robinson
1/15
1/22
1/29