



BETHLEHEM STAR

The Newsletter of Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Los Alamitos, California

Volume 46, No. 8

September, 2006



"For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ...you are the body of Christ and individual members of it."
1 Corinthians 12

Like the body our congregation at Bethlehem Lutheran is made up of many people. Our members come in different sizes and shapes, of different ages, of different ethnic backgrounds, and with differing talents and abilities. One thing is true of all our members including you, *every one is important!* **YOU ARE IMPORTANT!**

I recently read an article that talked about a puzzle. The point of this example was to point out that a puzzle is never complete until every piece is in its place. Even if one piece is missing, the picture is not finished. A vacant place was left to be filled. When you think about what Paul said in 1 Corinthians, isn't the same thing true about our church family? As part of the membership of our church, you have a place to fill. You are important and the work of the church will never be at its best or complete until your place is filled.

Paul, I believe, challenges us to ask ourselves if we are filling our spot in the ministry of our church. He challenges us to ask, how do I fit into the work of Bethlehem Lutheran? Many of you may fill roles of leadership. Others assist in the life of the church in other ways. What seems of ultimate importance is that we all realize how important we are to the church and its ministry. We must never forget that every one of us must do our best to fill whatever spot God calls us to fill in the life of our congregation. Only then can our church be at its best and carry out our ministry as God calls us and needs us to do. If even one of us

fails to fill our spot something is going to be left undone. As the article I read said so well, a puzzle is not complete until every piece is in its place. IS THIS ANY DIFFERENT WITH OUR MINISTRY HERE AT BETHLEHEM? You are important! You are important to the educational ministry of our church whether as a leader or a student. There's a place for you to fill. You are important to our music ministry. Is there a place in our choir, bell choir, special music, or cantor that God needs you to fill and make our worship the best it can be? You are important to our outreach ministry. Others are depending on us to share what we have found. You are important to our stewardship ministry. The ministry of our congregation depends on you, your gifts, your time, and your abilities. You are important to the worship life of our church. When we gather for worship our family is not complete if your place is empty. And you are important to the transition process we are now going through. Whether its rediscovering where we've been as the Bethlehem congregation, discerning where we are now, or setting our vision for where our future ministry will take us, we need you to fill your spot. Our process will only be at its best if you are part of it.

A puzzle is not complete without every piece being in place. Our body, as Paul says, only functions at its best when every part fulfills its function. And so it is with our church. **YOU ARE IMPORTANT!** We need you to fill your spot. Only then will our ministry be at its best and will our vision be complete. May the Holy Spirit lead each of you to fill your spot in the worship life and ministry of our church.

In Christ,
Pastor Will

A Message from Our Missionaries to Slovakia

Dear Bethlehem Lutheran Church,

We returned to Slovakia on Aug. 2nd after a two-month trip to the United States. After we met you in June we visited more churches in southern California and spent time with the California/Arizona side of our family. Next we flew to the Kentucky/Ohio area where we presented at more churches and visited with Carla's family. The last two weeks of our visit included our participation in a couple of missionary conferences in Kenosha, Wisconsin and in Amherst, Massachusetts. We enjoyed our time in the States, but we are glad to be back in Slovakia now. It feels like home to us now.

Since we have been back we have been extremely busy getting ready for the teachers that have just arrived, most of them new to Slovakia. There should have been a total of fourteen - seven for Bratislava, four or northern Slovakia and three for eastern Slovakia. Sadly, one of our teachers (who was to have returned for a second year of service) was just found to have a tumor on her bladder. Please pray that it will not turn out to be cancerous, and that she will regain her strength after her recent surgery. Also pray that the new teachers, most of them quite young, will be an inspiration to their students in the three high schools where they will teach.

Thank you for remembering us in your prayers, and we are praying for you as well.

Love in Christ,
Carla and David Schick

September Church Council meeting:

Wednesday, September 13, 2006

7:00 p.m.

Fireside Room

Newsletter deadline for the October issue:

Monday, September 18, 2006.

Please submit your article by e-mail or disc to the office. The newsletter is now available to view on our website: www.blcla.org

Please Help Our Navajo Mission

*Excerpted from an email sent by the
Grand Canyon Synod August 4, 2006:*

Dr. Deborah Norland, Chairman of the Board for the Navajo Evangelical Lutheran Mission (NELM) in Rock Point, AZ, called this morning to report an urgent need for funds and manpower due to heavy rains that occurred in Rock Point last night. Work crews had removed the old roof on the school building in order to prepare for replacement of the roof. Unfortunately, the rains came before the new roof could be installed. Much of the ceiling and insulation in the building has collapsed. Damage to the kitchen, telephone lines, etc. has also occurred. Deborah estimates approximately \$50,000 in damages. School was scheduled to open next week. The NELM Board is hoping that our congregations can provide some financial support.

Carole Becker, Assistant to the Bishop
Minister for Leadership & Program Support, Grand Canyon
Synod - ELCA

Please make a contribution today.

Please make your check payable to Bethlehem Lutheran noting the Mission on the memo line and a combined donation from the church will be forwarded to the mission.

Thank you.

W.E.L.C.A. News September 2006

Women's Bible Study

Plan on attending a Circle Meeting and Bible Study where we will explore "Making Sense of Suffering"
Theme Verse: Psalm 22:1-2



Faith Circle will meet on Tues., Sept. 12, 2006 at 9:30 a.m. in the Fireside Room. Joyce Ritz will act as Hostess and Marynell Wolfe will lead the Bible Study. Please bring your filled school bags to this meeting. Call Circle Leader Jean Franz for more information.

Phoebe Circle will meet on Tues., Sept. 12, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. at the home of Carol Snyder. Christina Watson will lead the Bible Study. For more information call Charlotte Driskill.

W.E.L.C.A. Board will meet on Mon. Sept. 11, 2006 at 6:30 p.m. in Bachman Hall.

Both circles have finished 40 school kits for the Lutheran World Relief Project. 5 boxes of sweaters have been collected and will be shipped along with the school kits this September. Donations of canned goods to We Care will continue. For information call President, Christina Watson.



Sunday Morning Coffee & Cookies

Thank you to Phoebe and Faith Circles for providing coffee and cookies in the summer. Men in Mission will be responsible in September.

Upcoming Events:

Wed. Sept. 20th "Boldly We Light Our Way Into International Outreach"-Fall event Bachman Hall 6:30 Salad Supper. Faith Circle-Hostess.

Sat. Oct. 7th Cluster Event "Live Boldly" 9 a.m. Brunch at Our Redeemer, Garden Grove. Contact Marianne for more details.



Mark your calendars for the 33rd Annual Apple Festival Bazaar on October 21st. Dianna Reynolds and Christina Watson will co-chair this great event. If you would like to help, please contact one of us.



Apple Blossoms

Chaplain Virginia Sharma, from the Lutheran Maritime Mission, will be our guest speaker at the Fall General Meeting / Election of Officers on Wed. Sept. 20th. Faith Circle will be our Hostesses and will be serving a salad supper. Love Gifts, such as toothpaste and toothbrushes, pens, combs and wrapped hard candy will be collected. Please plan on attending!

Andrea Campbell, Marianne Sakowski and Christina Watson will be attending the 2006 Pacifica Synod Gathering in Hawaii November 2-5. We will be donating a silent auction basket and would appreciate any gift card donations.

More details to follow.



Theme Verse Hebrews 13:1.

*Reputation is what others say and think-
Integrity is what God knows about you.*

We welcome fall with praise and Thanksgiving!

WE DID IT!

With thanks to all who donated to the Heifer Project we have purchased a "Milk Menagerie" three months ahead of our goal. The goal had been to raise \$1,000 by Thanksgiving. Instead, we have raised the money by Labor Day! The Milk Menagerie consists of a heifer, a water buffalo and two goats. Many thanks to all who contributed!

We will continue to collect for the Heifer Project so keep filling your arks with your spare change. From now until the end of the year we will purchase trees. Trees are the alternative to eroded hillsides, vanishing farmland and forests, polluted water and urban sprawl. One by one each tree becomes a solution. Each tree is \$60. How many trees will we purchase?

We'll continue to keep a running total on the website. Visit Bethlehem's website to check on how we are doing. Click on the Ministries page and then click on Social Ministries to find out how much we have collected. The church website is:

www.blcla.org

A huge thank you to everyone who prayed for my speedy recovery, visited me, sent beautiful Get Well Cards and provided delicious meals and desserts. Your loving care worked! I feel almost back to normal (whatever that is).

Love in Christ, Christina Watson

Parent and Grandparent Corner:

How can I help nurture my child's (or Grandchild's) faith?

There are many ways to help your child grow in faith. One key way though is to help your children understand that prayer is talking to God and that prayers come in all shapes and sizes. They can be formal, conversational, written, spoken or sung. They can be creative and even fun. Help your children memorize common prayers for daily use: the Lord's prayer, a table grace, a bed time favorite. Teach them also how to be spontaneous and original. A prayer begins with a greeting, such as "Dear God," and continues much like a conversation we might have with another person. The top four things children naturally talk to God about include:

1. Things for which they are thankful
2. Requests for things they'd like (nice weather, good grade on a test, etc.)
3. Requests for the health of people they know
4. Requests for God's understanding and forgiveness for mistakes they've made.

Make the most your children's earliest years. Nurture their ability to pray regularly and often. God isn't looking for grand and glorious prayers; God simply longs to hear our voice anytime, anywhere and for any reason.

Join Us For Our Sunday School Kick-Off!

We invite and encourage all children, youth, and parents to join us on September 10th at 9:45 a.m. We will register our Sunday school children and youth, explain what we will be doing this year, and have ice cream and cookies. This year for children up to the eight grade, we will have classes in two year age blocks. SO, JOIN US ON THE 10TH AS WE BEGIN AGAIN THIS IMPORTANT MINISTRY!!!



Property Committee News

The Property Committee has been very busy this summer and here are just a few highlights of what's been done at the parsonage:

- The entire interior was painted;
- Carpets were cleaned, stretched or replaced as needed;
- All cabinets and drawers were relined with new vinyl tile;
- Energy efficient new front and kitchen windows replaced inoperable windows.
(Thank you to the Memorial Fund and Paper Rollers for this gift.)
- A new screen door was installed on the front door.
- Paper Rollers also purchased a new refrigerator.
- A small air conditioning unit and solar walkway lights are other recent replacements.
- Lots of cleaning and repairs were also done.

At the church, we thank the Scouts for refinishing the patio benches and building screens to conceal unattractive exterior equipment.

A lot more work needs to be done both at the church and parsonage. The Property Committee will meet Tuesday, September 5 at 7 p.m. and welcomes new participants and/or visitors.

Did You Know?

- There are 10,585 congregations in the E.L.C.A.
- We have approximately 300 missionaries in 48 countries.
- We have 185 Campus Ministry sites.
- We have 8 seminaries and 28 colleges.

Every dollar that we give to the E.L.C.A. helps make these ministries possible

"Scramble" Golf Tournament in September



G O L F
D A Y

The next Bethlehem Golf Tournament will be on Saturday, September 23rd, at the La Mirada Golf Course in La Mirada. The tournament format will be a four-person team "scramble" where the best ball will be played by each team. The first tee time will be at 10:00 A.M. All golfers are welcome. Cost is \$65 per person and will include green fees, golf cart and prize fund. Sign-ups and money paid must be completed by Sunday,

September 10th. There is 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.

Bethlehem Lutheran's Website and Calendar

Kudos and many thanks to Heidi Kracy for her diligent work on the website: www.blcla.org and the web-based calendar. Heidi has put a lot of time and effort into making both of these very attractive and effective. Thanks, too, to Monica Kracy for her contributions, along with the rest of the Website small group for seeing this through. If you have any requests for room usage or corrections for the calendar please use the webmaster link on the Contacts page or call the church office.

A copy of the calendar is included in this newsletter and updated calendar printouts will be posted on the new calendar board in the church office.

Thanks to These People for Serving in September, 2006

DATE	TIME	ACOLYTE	CROSS BEARER	READER	USHERS	COUNTERS	OPEN/CLOSE
9/3	9:30			Dianna Reynolds		C. Watson J. Buezis, Jr	
9/10	8:30 11:00			Liz Nehrenberg John Buezis, Jr.		M. Schneider S. Schneider	
9/17	8:30 11:00			Christina Watson Charlotte Driskill	Nick Medrano	D. Hansen L. Johnson	
9/24	8:30 11:00			Nick Medrano Daler Retrum		D. Retrum D. Retrum	



ALTAR GUILD

9/3
9/10 Luella Buezis
9/17
9/24 Christina Watson

ALTAR FLOWERS

9/3 Wolfe
9/10 Gustafson
9/17 Lindell
9/24 Watson, Toth



Nursery Care

Nursery care is provided during our Sunday services. An attendant will be in our nursery from 8:15 am - 12:15 pm to care for infants and preschool children.