

# Life Together

**Bethany Lutheran Church's  
e-newsletter  
December 2021**



**Pastor Paul  
Stumme-Diers**

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ofbainbridge.org](mailto:pastorpaul@bethanyofbainbridge.org)  
Office: 206-842-4241

**Who we are**

Bethany is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and is Reconciling in Christ, open and affirming.



**Where to find us**

We are at 7968 Finch Road NE, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110.

**Sunday Worship**

10 a.m followed by coffee fellowship

**Saturday Worship**

5 p.m. followed by wine and cheese fellowship.

**Website**

[bethanyofbainbridge.org](http://bethanyofbainbridge.org)

**PASTOR'S ADDRESS**

## **The Light of Advent**

*By Pastor Paul Stumme-Diers*



Dear Bethanians,

A Blessed Advent to each of you. "Light" seems an appropriate image for most every season of the church year, and even for our stewardship emphasis this year, but it seems especially meaningful in the Advent season. "Light" is that which seems to be what we crave, and what we need, in these days of diminishing light.

I once went into an office where a seasoned Northwesterner was working beneath a great light panel beaming down on him. He described it as "light therapy", his "SAD" (seasonal affective disorder) light. Since then, I have seen these SAD lights in many places, and many people report a positive experience with them. But what an interesting name: SAD lights. They are described by the condition they are seeking to remedy, or at least address. SAD

This Advent season, Bethany is distributing battery powered candles to each of our households, and an additional one for each child. These are Advent candles and can be incorporated into Advent logs or wreaths. They can be set in a window at home, or as a night light in a strategic place. Consider the candles to be "Light Therapy", a response to the SAD, a response of "Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace", the rhythm of Advent.

I write this on the first day of Hanukkah, so we light our candle in solidarity with our interfaith neighbors.

*(Continues next page)*

## Council leaders



**Doug Love,**  
president,  
doug.love@  
klgates.com



**Vicki Browning,**  
vice president,  
vickibrowning@  
comcast.net



**Jennie Harris,**  
secretary,  
dgh4653@msn.com



**Jim Rohrscheib,**  
treasurer,  
jrohrscheib@  
juno.com

## The Light of Advent: *Continued*

Our candles, in “light” of

- ...the death of Jennifer Mueller, it is the eternal light of hope and peace
- ...the presence of “Omicron”, may it light the way to healing
- ...the shortest day of the year, it is light extended into the darkness
- ...the increasing cold, the light can provide some heat
- ...the plight of refugees, the light is a lamp (see Emma Lazarus)
- ...those who are lost, a safe refuge
- ...the lonely, the light of accompaniment
- ...those reaching out in the dark, to light the way
- ...our need for prayer, a candlelight vigil
- ...the bland, something to decorate our lives
- ...the prevalence of power outages, an emergency light at the ready
- ...our need for enlightenment, a light by which to read Scripture
- ...our yearning, THE CHRIST CANDLE

Finally, bring your candles to worship throughout this season, each time we sing the Holden Evening Prayer liturgy (“Jesus Christ, you are the light of the world, the light no darkness can overcome...”). There we will combine our lights, allow them to shine together, letting their glow increase as we approach the Nativity of our Lord. And then bring them to the Christmas Eve Candlelight service (5pm and 10pm), where we welcome “The Light of the World”.

*Pastor Paul*



## **ADVENT & WORSHIP AT BETHANY**

### **Advent Sundays**

As is tradition at Bethany, Bethanians made Advent Logs after worship on the first Sunday of Advent. A huge thank you to Jeff Sievertson for providing the logs and to Kathy Dudgeon who organized the greens, candles, and other supplies, and assisted that morning. Children will be released from worship after the children's message on the second Sunday in Advent, December 5<sup>th</sup>, to make Christmas cards and decorate cookies. On the third Sunday in Advent, December 12<sup>th</sup>, children will be released from worship after the children's message to hear a Christmas story and sing Christmas songs. Also on December 12<sup>th</sup>, those interested will depart from Bethany after worship to sing carols and deliver cookies provided by the Altar Guild, bringing cheer to some of our home-bound members. Please sign up on the bulletin board outside fellowship hall if you can join us for caroling. And plan to attend on the fourth Sunday of Advent, December 19<sup>th</sup>, for a service that includes a special telling of the Christmas story intermingled with musical offerings from Bethany members. If you, or anyone in your family are interested in participating in the December 19<sup>th</sup> worship service, contact Pastor Paul.



## Christmas Eve Services

Bethany will have two worship services on Christmas Eve. Both services will include music and candlelight. The earlier service will feature the Bethany Brass and a special message for children. It will be slightly shorter and won't include the Service of Holy Communion. The second service will feature the Bethany Choir and include the Service of Holy Communion.



**5:00pm Early Service (Bethany Brass & Children's Message)**

**10:00pm Late Service (Bethany Choir & Service of Holy Communion)**

Please bring your Advent candles with you. Additional candles will be available as well. All are welcome to come celebrate the birth of our Lord.

### **FROM THE COUNCIL**

## 2022 Stewardship Campaign

Thank you to everyone who has returned the 2022 pledge card! Making a pledge to give in 2022 helps the Church Council formulate a budget that will sustain our existing programs and benevolences. If you have not yet had a chance to get your pledge card in, please mail it, drop it in the collection plate, or bring it to the office at your earliest convenience. Please also complete and return the Time-and-Talent survey. This is your opportunity to let us know what you would like to see in the way of programming for 2022 and how you would like to help the Bethany community as a volunteer. If you did not receive (or can't locate) your package, pledge cards and Time-and-Talent surveys are available on the table as you enter the sanctuary.

## 2021 Year-End Statements

Year-end giving statements will be mailed by the end of January, 2022. **Please note: any year-end donations that you want to count towards your 2021 tax return must be received in the office by December 30<sup>th</sup> so that it can be deposited on December 31<sup>st</sup>.** Donations received after December 30<sup>th</sup> will appear on the first quarter 2022 giving statement.

### **BETHANY TRANSITIONS**

**Moved:** Dorothy Webb to the Seattle area

**Deaths:** Jennifer Mueller on November 27

## **BETHANY NEWS**

### **December Bible Study**

The Rachel Circle Bible Study group will meet on Tuesday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am followed by quilting. The Women's Bible Study group will meet on Monday, December 13<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am in fellowship hall. The Men's Bible Study group will meet on Tuesday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at 8:00am in fellowship hall.

### **Endowment Fund Grant Recipients**

The Bethany Mission Endowment Fund was created to support and expand the mission and ministry of Bethany Lutheran Church in ways not possible using the annual operating budget. This year, ten organizations were awarded grants totaling \$14,750. Organizations who may be interested in applying for a 2022 Endowment Fund grant should contact the church office for more information: [info@bethanyofbainbridge.org](mailto:info@bethanyofbainbridge.org)

<b>Recipient</b>	<b>Given</b>
<b>1. Bethany Affordable Housing</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
<b>2. BI Senior Center</b>	<b>\$1,500</b>
<b>3. Church of Steadfast Love</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
<b>4. Housing Resource Bainbridge</b>	<b>\$2,000</b>
<b>5. Lutheran Community Services</b>	<b>\$3,150</b>
<b>6. LWR School Bags Project</b>	<b>\$500</b>
<b>7. Martha &amp; Mary Chaplain Fund</b>	<b>\$300</b>
<b>8. Martha &amp; Mary KIDS Program</b>	<b>\$3,000</b>
<b>9. Namibia Task Force</b>	<b>\$300</b>
<b>10. Operation Bootstrap Africa</b>	<b>\$2,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$14,750</b>

The following page includes some of the Thank You notes we have already received from grant recipients.

**From Housing Resources Bainbridge:**

Pastor Paul, Helen and the Bethany  
Lutheran Church community,

We are so grateful for the grant award to  
our housing stabilization program! Thank  
you for your continued attention to the  
affordable housing crisis on Bainbridge – we are so grateful for your support and partnership.



Thank you!  
Lara Deits

**From Lutheran Community Services Northwest:**

Dear Paul and Helen,



Thank you for your support of Lutheran Community  
Services (LCS) Northwest. It is our pleasure to  
partner with you in serving your local community.  
Your donation fuels life-changing services to our most  
vulnerable neighbors, and you help us fulfill our  
mission of health, justice and hope. Thank you again

for loving those in need.

With gratitude,

David Duea  
President & CEO

P.S. This year, we are celebrating 100 years of health, justice and hope! Visit our Centennial  
page on our website and celebrate with us.

**From Namibia Task Force, Southwestern Washington Synod:**

Dear People of Bethany,

My sincere and heartfelt thanks goes to the  
Bethany community for the award of \$300 for the  
ELCA companion relationship with Namibia  
Lutheran churches and the Southwestern  
Washington Synod. Our funds will go toward  
support of a hospital, high school and children's  
hostels. Your generosity throughout the years has  
been greatly appreciated.

Rachel Pritchett, chair  
Namibia Task Force  
Southwestern Washington Synod



Rachel Pritchett and Stephanie Armstrong in Namibia in 2017

## **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

### **Sunday Morning Programming for Children**



Sunday morning programming for children returns beginning January 11! Debbie Rimkus will be planning and preparing a simple story, craft, and snack for the children. Children will start in worship with their families and be released to the fellowship hall area after the children's message. Debbie will plan children's Sunday morning programming for January and February while Bethany renews its search for a Children and Family Coordinator. She is looking for volunteers who would be willing to read the story, help with the craft and serve the

snack. Please let Debbie know if you are willing to help with this joyful opportunity to serve our youngest Bethanians.

We are also hoping to bring back our prayer partners program. Pastor Paul and Debbie would like to get together with those who are interested in supporting children's programming or becoming prayer partners with Bethany children. Our hope is to develop a team of volunteers that will be ready to support and work with a new Children and Family Coordinator. Watch for more information on this in the coming weeks.



Pastor Paul continues to record video messages for children each week which can be viewed through our website. Check out this week's message at: <http://bethanyofbainbridge.org/>



### **Confirmation Class**

The 2021-22 Confirmation Class continues to meet at Woodward Middle School during early release on Monday. Class dates for the next two months are December 13, January 10, and January 24.

## Bethany Lutheran Preschool Celebrates Thanksgiving!



## **BETHANY IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY**

### **Helpline House Senior Gift Cards**

Thank you to the many people who brought gift cards in response to the appeal from Helpline House. We more than met Pastor Paul's challenge of 25 gift cards, collecting a total of 31 cards! If you purchased a card and haven't had a chance to drop it off yet, there is still time. You can bring gift cards to Debbie in until Tuesday, December 7<sup>th</sup>. Debbie's office hours are Monday-Thursday, 9am-3pm.



### **A Message from Martha and Mary**



Greetings! We hope this message finds you well and looking forward to the holiday season ahead.

At Martha & Mary we are gearing up for the holidays. We are having fun decorating for Christmas, sharing stories, reflecting on the past and excited for the days ahead.

Bringing joy to our everyone we provide care and services for is something we all strive to do. This is the most challenging in our Health Services building where our visitation remains limited as we continue our efforts to protect our seniors and maintain a COVID-19 free environment.

Each holiday season, we plan celebrations and offer special gifts to our residents delivered by Santa himself. Gathering the 100+ gifts to ensure everyone receives a gift is a task we cannot do alone. We are hopeful you and your congregations might consider shopping from our Amazon Wish List to help us meet our goal of providing a gift of a warm blanket, a 2022 calendar and a pair of non-skid socks to each one of our residents. Additionally, we are seeking a supply of new Gillette razors for some of our residents who have expressed a desire for a better brand than what we have available. These too are included in our wish list.

Please find our Amazon Wish List here: <https://a.co/20m2h1W>

If you have any questions regarding our resident needs, please contact our Resident Life Services Director, Missy Jarvis-Crawford at 360.394.4019.  
Thank you for your continued love and support of Martha & Mary!

## **THE GREATER CHURCH**



### **From the Bishop**

***Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee***

Miriam sings, “*Sing to the Lord, for God has triumphed gloriously!*” Exodus 15:21

Hannah sings, “*My heart exults in the LORD; my strength is exalted in my God!*” 1 Samuel 2:1

Mary sings, “*My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!*” Luke 1:46

I am so grateful for the stories of Miriam, Hannah, and Mary. I love their spirit. I love their faith. I love their songs. I love that even with the great adversity, sorrow, and difficulty each of them endured, Miriam, Hannah, and Mary defiantly sang.

Each of these women’s stories unfolded in a world that seemed bleak. A world of systemic injustice and no safety nets. A world where people upheld their own power to the detriment of others. A world where people refused to see another person made in God’s image before them. A world where people threw away people because they were perceived as “less than”. A world where people threw away people because they could not bear children. A world where people threw away people because they became pregnant without being married.

And while their experiences are not our experiences, for many still today, the world feels desperate.

Today, so many people are living in dire conditions. So many who are hungry, houseless, voiceless. We have injustice and violence, racism, and hatred. We have anger and acrimony. We have the spreading of lies and misinformation. As I write this, our world is grieving the deaths of over 5 million people who have died of COVID. Over 100,000 people died of drug overdoses in the United States in this past year. And so many other deaths and losses. There are still people that society throws away. There are still people that other people don’t even look at as human.

And yet... And yet...

We have Miriam, Hannah, and Mary. We have their defiant voices lifted up singing not only to their world in their time – but beyond their time – to us – and to future generations beyond us.

In this Advent time, let us turn to the stories and the songs of Miriam, Hannah, and Mary. Let us remember their prophetic voices. Let us remember their perseverance, their faith, and their grit. For even as the reality around them was difficult, they continued to sing of a new day, a new promise, a new reality.

May these amazing prophet women bring hope to us in this time. May we remember that new life is coming. May we trust that the world now is not how the world will be. May we hold before us that, through Christ, a new day is being born.

In this Advent time, we live in anticipation and in faith. And we sing. We sing.

*People of Israel, you heard the prophet tell:  
 "A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel";  
 She conceived him, "God with us," our brother, whose birth  
 Restores hope and courage to children of this earth.  
 ELW #266, All Earth is Hopeful vs. 3*

In Advent Hope,

+Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee  
[bishop@lutheransnw.org](mailto:bishop@lutheransnw.org)



## December

Fred Whittlesey	12/2	Fiona Johnson	12/14	Benjamin Ellerby	12/23
Selina Johnson	12/3	Heather Ballaine	12/15	Marty Dasler	12/24
Barbara Swartling	12/3	Charlene Selvar	12/15	Carol Reitz	12/26
Julia Jakubik	12/5	Richard Solinsky	12/17	Alec Stauffer	12/27
Sonja Selboe	12/13	Bill Brumley	12/22	Mark Drov Dahl	12/28
Carol Fenner	12/14	Calvin Kelly	12/22	Dawnae Whittlesey	12/28

*(Calendar on next page.)*

# The Month Ahead

December 2021						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<b>1</b> Noon: Altar Guild Cookie Exchange, FH  7:15pm Bethany Choir	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> <i>Noon: Al Anon, FH</i>	<b>4</b> 5:00pm: Holden service, followed by wine-and-cheese fellowship
<b>5</b> 10:00am: Holden Service, followed by coffee fellowship	<b>6</b> <i>7:15pm: Boy Scouts, FH</i>	<b>7</b> 10:00am: Rachel Circle Bible Study followed by Quilters, FH  10:15am: Preschool Chapel Time	<b>8</b> 10:15am: Preschool Chapel Time	<b>9</b> 7:00pm Bethany Choir	<b>10</b> <i>Noon: Al Anon, FH</i>	<b>11</b> 5:00pm: Holden service, followed by wine-and-cheese fellowship
<b>12</b> 10:00am: Holden Service, followed by coffee fellowship  11:00am: Caroling	<b>13</b> 9:30am: Women's Bible Study, FH  2:00pm: Confirmation Class, Woodward  <i>7:15pm: Boy Scouts, FH</i>	<b>14</b> 8:00am: Men's Bible Study, FH  10:00am: Quilters, FH  7:00pm: Council Meeting, FH	<b>15</b> 11:00: Preschool Christmas Celebration, Sanctuary  7:00pm: Bethany Choir	<b>16</b> 11:00: Preschool Christmas Celebration, Sanctuary	<b>17</b> <i>Noon: Al Anon, FH</i>	<b>18</b> 5:00pm: Holden service, followed by wine-and-cheese fellowship
<b>19</b> 10:30am: Worship Service, followed by coffee fellowship	<b>20</b> Preschool closed for remainder of 2021	<b>21</b> 10:00am: Quilters, FH  10:00am Sanctuary Christmas Tree Lighting  2:00pm: Christmas Tree Decorating	<b>22</b> 7:00pm Bethany Choir	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> <b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b> <i>Noon: Al Anon, FH</i>  5:00pm Worship, with Children's Message  10:00pm Worship, with Holy Communion	<b>25</b> <b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b>
<b>26</b> 10:00am: Lessons and Carols Service, followed by coffee fellowship	<b>27</b> Office Closed – Christmas Break	<b>28</b> Office Closed – Christmas Break	<b>29</b> Office Closed – Christmas Break	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> <b>NEW YEAR'S EVE</b> <i>Noon: Al Anon, FH</i>	