



December
2020

Pastor David Blair
James Hing, Organist & Zoom Master

Dear Bethlehem Family,

“... but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,” 1 Peter 3:15.

2020 is quickly coming to a close. Thanksgiving Day is just a few days away. Sunday November 29 is the first Sunday in Advent. Our worship theme this year is PREPARE! For what are we preparing? Many things:

- the celebration of our Lord’s first coming in his birth at Bethlehem
- turning from our sin toward our Savior in repentant faith
- the new year of 2021
- the extending of a Call to a pastor to serve as Bethlehem’s residential shepherd
- the Second coming of our Lord
- and ... perhaps most important of all for the eternal welfare of others God brings into our lives ... we are preparing to be ready at a moment’s notice to share the deep hope that we have in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. His grace and mercy have overflowed into our lives; we want those same blessings to flow out of our lives into the lives for who Jesus gave his life on the cross.

To help us prepare ... the themes for our worship are as follows:

Wednesdays
6 p.m. – Zoup; 7 p.m. – Zervice
Dec 2 Ponder
Dec 9 Pray
Dec 16 Praise

Thursday Christmas Eve 7 p.m. Zervice
Dec 24 Prepare a Place

Friday Christmas Morning 10 a.m. Zervice
Dec 25 Prepare for Paradise

Sunday 10 a.m. Zervice
Dec 20 Proclaim

Zee you in worship!
Pastor David

ELECTION RESULTS

We are happy to report that our elections went smoothly, with no hint of voter fraud, illegal ballots or threats of lawsuits!

Thank you to outgoing board members Tracy Brown (Elder) and Betty Downing (Missions) for your service these past 3 & 6 years, respectively.

Reelected officers for 2021 are:

President Carl Stockamp
Vice President Gary Jordanger
Secretary Sharon Buechler

Reelected Elders are:

Pat Eskam for a 1 year commitment
Ron Muller
Dick Taylor



Reelected to Stewardship is Hannelore Payne.

CALL TEAM UPDATE

By Carl Stockamp

President Linnemann has responded to our request for a new call list by providing nine candidates for us to consider. These candidates range in age from 28 to 61 and are currently serving congregations in many parts of our country. All appear to have graduated from one of the Concordia Seminaries. This is certainly good news, and the Call Team will be considering these candidates in the near future. The first step in the consideration process is to call each of the candidates to determine if they are willing to consider a call to serve us. This activity is currently taking place. Remember that none of the candidates in the first call list we received were in a position to consider a call.

President Linnemann also provided insights based on our Congregational Self Study and his knowledge of our congregation. His insights suggest that we truly understand the mission God has given us. This is currently taking place by those of us who are participating in the Congregational Life Cycle Study. This study will be completed by the end of December and the Call Team will use the information gained from the study to consider the candidates.



DECEMBER



Note that all couples this month have been married **OVER 50 years!!**

Linda Sheets	December 8
Deontae Mitchell	December 11
Edward Hughes	December 13
Gretchen Engum	December 15
Beatrice Myers	December 15
Agnes Brown	December 19
Bruce Feltmann	December 19
Virginia Preston	December 24

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Jackman, Joel & Karen
December 6, 1969

Stockamp, Carl & Joni
December 14, 1968

Taylor, Dick & Ellen
December 26, 1964

Wooden, Gil & Cathy
December 31, 1961

*We wish you continued happiness
and God's blessings!*

POTTERY HANDMADE
AT KING'S HOME IN ALABAMA
BY WOMEN
FLEEING HOMELESSNESS,
DOMESTIC ABUSE
& SEX-TRAFFICKING

PRODIGALPOTTERY.COM



REACH celebrated their 50th anniversary this fall. This engraved oval-shaped hand-made platter was hand delivered to Bethlehem in appreciation of us being a founding church of REACH back in 1970!

In her presentation, REACH Board Member Pattie Holt said, "May your work continue to bless!"

We pray for God's ongoing mercy to all. In particular, we pray for:

Karen Begalka
Those living & working in our Bethesda home
Rachel Blair
Tracy Brown
Harold Carlson
Frank & Betty Downing
Marcy Hall
Mardelle Hammond
Carolyn Hough
Emma Humphrey
Joel & Karen Jackman
Glen Koppelman
Bob Pankow
Ruth Schroeder



Gary & Kay Hanno
Jeanne-K Hughes
Jenny Iles
Donna Kahn
Debbie Porter Mason
Bud & Juanita Reynolds
Jerry Schuh

Brent & Karen Begalka's nephew Daniel, niece Naomi
Jim Buechler's sister JoAnn
Sharon Buechler's brother James
Teresa Feltmann's sister Connie & family in Malden, Washington
Jesse Hack's dad Don
Mardelle Hammond's sister-in-law Barbara
Jeanne-K Hughes' sister Denice, son David, aunt Ruth, niece Paula
LuAnne Humphrey's brother James & family, sister Shari, friends Debbie & Chris, David B, Duane. Joe & Kim and their new baby Xyzaleikoe. Family of Walt.
Gary & Joanne Jordanger's friend Joel
Dielda Kuhlmann's sister Brenda
Pete & Hannelore Maas' friend Bill
Ron Muller's relative Shirley, sister Inge
Hannelore Payne's stepdaughter Becky, relatives June and Johanna, friend Marge, son Patrick
Linda Sheets' daughter Corrie
Dick & Ellen Taylor's grandchildren Landon & Caroline, his cousins Bill & Eileen
Carolyn Troseth's sister Viola, sister-in-law Viona, friend Anita, daughter-in-law Sharon
Carolyn Warn's great granddaughter Masyn
Kathy Zable's aunt's caregiver Carol

We pray for the health and safe return home of our members and relatives serving our country in the military: **Alex Murphy (Army), Kyle Murphy (Air Force), Austin Kahn (Air Force), Garrett Kahn (Air Force).**

We pray for peace, love, safety, and comfort to our members who can't attend church services: **Pat Boydston, Wanda Brooks, Betty Cowan, Gretchen Engum, Elden Fischer, Jenny Iles, Evelyn Lundstrom-Weiss, Gerhard & Sabine Muller, Virginia Preston, Fred Schroeder, Jean Shaw, Carolyn Warns, and David Willett.**

HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES



to Mardelle Hammond and her family on the passing of her niece, Jill Smith, on November 9, 2020. Jill died too young, at the age of 54. Mardelle says she was a country girl at heart, and loved to camp and hike. Her funeral was in Hayden, Idaho.

We pray for all families who have been impacted by the pandemic — physically, financially, emotionally. At press time, November 26, 2020, there have been 60,719,579 confirmed cases of COVID-19 worldwide. 1,427,184 people have died.

MESSAGE FROM MARIE TEEL'S FAMILY

Thank you for telling Sheldon and me about the All Saints service where you'll be honoring Marie. I'm sure it would mean a lot to her. Sheldon and I won't be able to attend because we will be heading to Texas for a happy reason: our daughter's wedding. We will be bringing this beautiful lace handkerchief for our daughter to use at her wedding. It's the handkerchief that Marie had at her wedding in 1940! It's always nice to see the **circle of life**.

Thanks,
Betty and Sheldon Teel



Marie Teel's
wedding handkerchief

The office has 2021 OFFERING ENVELOPES, new addresses & phone numbers for members who have moved during the year, and will soon have new calling trees available. Ladies, the supplies you need for our Zoom Christmas party are waiting for you to pick up! Please drop by during office hours or call to make arrangements on getting these items delivered.



Bonnie + Jay
Photo by Kristin Morrell

THE BEGALKA-ANDERSON WEDDING

How can we have a wedding during the pandemic? Bethlehem Lutheran Church did just that, while following the rules of masking and social distancing. Saturday, November 7 was a day of joy for Bonnie Begalka, our member who now lives in the Phoenix, Arizona area, and Jay Anderson, when they were married in our building by Pastor Blair.

Bonnie and Jay dated when they were attending Ellensburg High School. Then they went their separate ways for more than 50 years, until they renewed their friendship on Facebook. At the wedding they displayed two pictures, a black and white photograph of them in the 1960s, and a color photograph of them today.

Here are the details, for those who did not attend the wedding. Bonnie wore a lavender dress and Jay wore a grey suit and a lavender shirt and necktie. Pastor Blair and Jay waited in the chancel, as a procession neared them. First were the flower girls, who are Bonnie's two little granddaughters. Then came the matron of honor, Bonnie's daughter, Lorelei. Finally, Bonnie was escorted by her son, Marcus, who "gave her away" when they reached the chancel. There was music but no singing. The white parameters and wedding banner adorned the chancel. There was no reception afterwards, but the people had the opportunity to socialize in the narthex. There were gifts of hand sanitizers and chocolates for the guests, all labeled "Bonnie and Jay 11/7/20."

Bonnie stays connected with Bethlehem Lutheran Church by participating in our Sunday Zoom services.

Submitted by Brent Begalka

HONEYMOON UPDATE—Bonnie reports they took a leisurely drive through Idaho and Utah (where they found snow), and on to their home in Mesa, Arizona.

GLORIOUS BABY NEWS

Welcome to the world, baby Carter! The photo shows a delighted Rylan Gunn, age 4, holding his brand new baby brother. Carter Gunn was born Saturday afternoon, November 21, 2020. His parents are Kyle and Brittany Gunn.

We know Rylan is happy about this event. The day before he was born, grandma Marjie Boydston asked Rylan if he was making a wish list for Santa. Rylan quickly responded, *"Grandma, I'm getting a brother!"*



**Carter Gunn
with his big brother Rylan**

Appreciate what you
have while you have it.
Don't dwell on the past,
don't worry about the
future, just live in
the present and make
the most of it.



SATURDAY HOLY COMMUNION



We had the option of celebrating Communion outdoors or in the sanctuary on October 24. The weather was 'iffy' and just when they set up the outdoor altar, Elder Dick Taylor snapped this photo. The apt caption would be

**"The Sun
and The Sun Are Here".**

Pastor Blair gave communion to 44 adults, and 5 children received blessings. Ellen Taylor & Marjie Boydston were the able assistants/sign holders/parking lot attendants.

Due to stricter COVID-19 state restrictions and rising case numbers, the decision was made to have our November 21 communion outdoors only. Again, the week leading up to Saturday was cold, rainy, and dark. But Saturday November 21 just might have been the best weather day of the month! It was a warm, dry and glorious autumnal day.



Art Wolf & Cathy Wooden. Photo by Ruth Ann Shimoi.

Forty adults received communion and 4 children were given blessings.

Helping Pastor Blair this month were elder Art Wolf (left) and Cathy Wooden holding the Prayer of Confession sign (right). Not pictured were Gil Wooden, traffic control, Marjie Boydston and Ruth Ann Shimoi handing out Christmas party invitations, offering envelopes, Advent devotions, Giving Tree gift tags, quilt raffle tickets, and accepting tithes and Mary Martha mite donations, and taking photos.

MARY MARTHA
By Carolyn Troseth

We had our first Zoom meeting on November 19th with 13 members in attendance! Beverly West is our newest member!

Carolyn Troseth presented the Devotions on A Grace-Full Woman. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you!

The Giving Tree is now decorated with the families in need for Christmas. Don't forget to stop by and pick up the family you would like to support for Christmas giving or call the office with your request, so you can get your shopping done!

Thank you for your continued support of providing individual servings of breakfast foods and fresh fruit for the children at Vision House.

We will be having our Christmas Party on Thursday, December 17th, at 3 P.M. Circle it on your calendar! This will also be on Zoom.

How different is our world! We are blessed that we have the technology to accomplish all that we have done, in a safe and productive way!

WHAT CHRISTMAS CAROL ARE YOU?

Results from the Lutheran Hour Ministries' Christmas Quiz, where we discover who has similar outlooks on Christmas.

O Holy Night: Brent & Karen Begalka, David Blair, Pat Eskam, Teresa Feltmann, LuAnne Humphrey, Don Kuhlmann

Go Tell It On the Mountain: James Hing, Amber Wolf

Little Drummer Boy: Marjie Boydston, Carolyn Troseth

My Favorite Things: Dielda Kuhlmann

I'll Be Home for Christmas: Sharon Buechler, Jeanne-K Hughes, Jon Kuhlmann

Jingle Bells: Tracy Brown

You can still take the quiz and find your Carol.

<https://pursuant8.com/lhm/2020/christmasquiz/>





We have adopted 3 single parent families for Christmas. The tags are on the tree. Stop by the office or call to select the gift you'd like to purchase.

They must be returned to the office by December 10.

Thank you for your compassion,
Mission Board



UPDATE ON BASEMENT FLOOD & KITCHEN REPAIRS

Curtis Holcomb is photo documenting our October flood, the deconstruction process and the future reconstruction. Above is our kitchen with the sinks & sanitizer removed. All layers of the floor are gone.

The photo on the bottom is the long meeting room downstairs. Wall and ceiling will be replaced. All downstairs carpet will be cleaned and sanitized.



All items from the downstairs wing are temporarily being stored in the social hall until repairs are finished.

We have received a check from the insurance company to cover repairs and replacements. Reconstruction may begin in December, depending on contractors' availability.

THERE IS NO ROOM IN THIS INN

Please hold your clothes. We are unable to accept any more clothing donations this year. Please keep your unwanted fabrics, purses, shoes, etc for a while. The storage rooms are being repaired after the October 20 flood, and we are working with the insurance company on items that were damaged. We'll let you know when we can start storing things again!

-Mission Board

WE'VE MOVED!



Gretchen Engum's new address is

**Arbor Village
24121 116th Ave SE #109
Kent WA 98030**



Pat Mortrud has moved. Photo of her new home is on the left.

New Address:

**Pat Mortrud
7800 FM 45th South
Brownwood TX 76801**



Jenny Iles has relocated to a new care facility. Photo of the courtyard is on the left.

New Address:

**Jenny Iles
15048 West Young Street
Apt 117A
Surprise. AZ 85374**



Carl & Joni Stockamp are wintering in Leavenworth.

**Carl & Joni Stockamp
3020 Memory Lane
Leavenworth WA 98826**

THRIVENT ACTION CARDS



Carolyn, properly masked up, is shown pushing a grocery cart full of nutritional food.
Photo by RuthAnn Shimoi

We are thankful for Thrivent Financial for Lutherans for providing Carolyn Troseth a \$250 debit card for purchasing healthy breakfast items for the children of Vision House.

We are helping to feed 35 children breakfast 2 days a week. The staff at Vision House are most appreciative.



RuthAnn's trunk is filled every week with items our members donate for the Breakfast Drive!
KEEP IT UP! *Photo by RuthAnn Shimoi*

Thrivent has also provided Pastor Blair with a \$250 card for baby items for local charities. More details on that later.

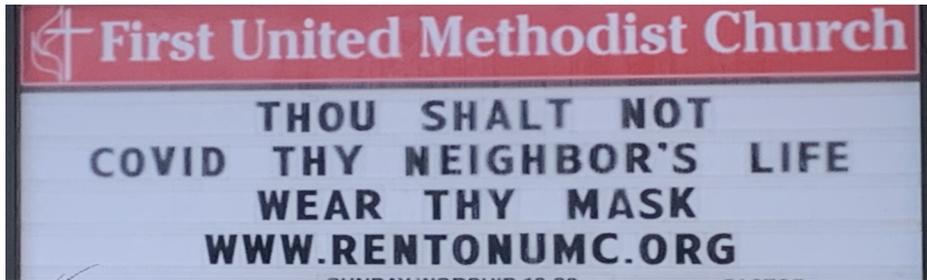
Treasurer Report As of October 31, 2020 (83% of the year)

Total Income	\$122,821.38	(69% of budget)
Total Expense	- 131,585.25	(74% of budget)
Difference	- \$ 8,763.87	

Total Assets \$68,103.16
Total Equity \$ 3,609.49 (money not in a designated or memorial fund)

—Kathy Logan, Treasurer

CHURCHES AROUND THE WORLD



Local church sign spotted by Ron Muller

Recently, on a particularly rainy and windy, stay-at-home kind of day, we took time to watch a video Pete made from our one-month self-contained bike ride in England, Wales and Ireland. This picture was taken in front of Wells Cathedral. Most of our panniers stayed at our B&B in Bath, so it was easy riding, and we had a lovely day exploring the area.

The Cathedral is very impressive, especially the worn down stone steps that are hundred of years old. Makes you wonder how many people have come this way. Anyway, it was a nice moment to look back and relive our adventure in 1995.
Hannelore & Pete Maas



Wells Cathedral
England

The Story Behind The Hymn

Hallelujah Chorus

(from *The Messiah*)

Written in 1741

Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; and let them say among the nations, the LORD reigns. 1 Chronicles 16:31

It was a particularly low period of Handel's life when he was 56 years old. He had been a 'remarkably musically-gifted child', an accomplished organist, harpsichordist, and violinist, written operas in Italian and English, composed music for the King's coronation, and by his 20's, he was the best paid composer on earth. But at this time in his life, he was outdated and his audiences had dwindled. He was bankrupt, depressed, and suffering from a case of palsy that crippled some of his fingers. His inspiration was exhausted.

And then a friend, Charles Jennens, mailed a collection of (King James) biblical texts about Christ to George Handel. The opening words from Isaiah 40 moved Handel: *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people.*

On August 22, 1741, he shut the door of his London home and started composing music for the words. Twenty-three days later, the world had *Messiah*. On opening night, Handel led the production from his harpsichord. King George II, who was present that night, surprised everyone by leaping to his feet during the Hallelujah Chorus. No one knows why. Some believe the king, being hard of hearing, thought it was the national anthem.

No matter—from that day audiences everywhere have stood in reverence during the stirring words: *Hallelujah! For He shall reign forever and ever.*

And with *Messiah*, Handel was back in vogue, composing again, playing concerts, and immersed in his passion for music. George Frideric Handel never married. He died on April 14, 1759 at the age of 74, and is buried at Westminster Abbey.

Sources: Then Sings My Soul by Robert J Morgan, wikipedia, and hymnary.org.
Submitted by Joel & Karen Jackman



George Frideric Handel
1685—1759



Charles Jennens
1700—1773

Hallelujah Chorus

Words by Charles Jennens
Music by Frideric George Handel

Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

The kingdom of this world is become
the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ,
and of His Christ;

And He shall reign for ever and ever,
For ever and ever, forever and ever,

King of kings, and Lord of lords.
King of kings, and Lord of lords.
and Lord of lords,

and He shall reign forever and ever,
and He shall reign for ever and ever,
for ever and ever,
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

And He shall reign for ever and ever.
King of kings! and Lord of lords!
King of kings! and Lord of lords!
And He shall reign for ever and ever,
King of kings! and Lord of lords!
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Hallelujah!



WERE YOU BAPTIZED?

If you are a member of Bethlehem, the answer is yes. And in next year's newsletters, we are going to print your name and baptism date in the appropriate month's edition.

We've been publishing your birthday for decades. We will continue to do that but we want to acknowledge that baptisms are **IMPORTANT** and should be **CELEBRATED!**

So please send the office information on your baptism. The date, the location, and any facts you know about the event. Was there a snow storm on your day? Were you related to the person who baptized you? Who were your Godparents? Were you baptized as an infant or adult? We hope to share lots of your baptism stories in 2021.

-Diolda Kuhlmann

**THIS IS NOT
THE YEAR TO GET
EVERYTHING YOU WANT.**



**THIS IS THE YEAR TO
APPRECIATE EVERYTHING
YOU HAVE.**

AMEN!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
OFFICE HOURS: Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 9 a.m. to 12 noon Bible Class Resumes January	Nov 30 6 pm Elder Meeting via Zoom	1 7 pm “Life Cycle” series via Zoom	2 Office Closed 6pm Zoup Zupper ship via Zoom 7 pm Advent Zervi via Zoom “Ponder”
6 FOOD BANK SUNDAY 10 Worship Service via Zoom	7 Trustees Meeting Time TBD	8 7 pm “Life Cycle” series via Zoom	9 Office Closed 6pm Zoup Zupper ship via Zoom 7 pm Advent Zervi Zoom “Pray”
13 10 Worship Service via Zoom 11:45 Council meeting via Zoom	14	15	16 Office Closed 6pm Zoup Zupper ship via Zoom 7 pm Advent Zervi Zoom “Praise”
20 10 Worship Service via Zoom NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	21 Office Open by Appointment Only Dec 21–Jan 3	22	23
27 First Sunday after Christmas 10 Worship Service via Zoom ~12:45 pm movie matinee via zoom	28	29	30

This year Soup is transforming to Zoup. That’s right, the fellowship of Advent Soup Suppers is happening via Zoom on the 3 Wednesdays in Advent, Dec 2, 9 and 16. The link will be given to all members. Non-members who want to join, please contact the office!

DECEMBER 2020

d	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>sed</p> <p>oper fellow-</p> <p>ervice ider”</p>	<p>3 11 am repeat of “Life Cycle” from Tuesday</p> <p>7 pm New Purpose</p> <p>7 pm “Life Cycle” open discussion via Zoom</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Deadline for signing our group Christmas card. See page 30.</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>sed</p> <p>oper fellow-</p> <p>ervice via</p>	<p>10 11 am repeat of “Life Cycle” from Tuesday</p> <p>GIVING TREE GIFTS DUE</p> <p>7 pm New Purpose</p> <p>7 pm “Life Cycle” final open discussion via Zoom</p>	<p>11</p> <p>7:30 pm Channel KING 5 Figgy Pudding TV Special with Starbucks Chorus. More info page 30.</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Men’s Breakfast at Plum Delicious will resume when church reopens.</p>
<p>losed</p> <p>oper fellow-</p> <p>ervice via</p>	<p>17</p> <p>3 pm Mary Martha Christmas Party & Baby Shower for Jesus via Zoom</p> <p>7 pm New Purpose</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19 10:15—noon Communion</p> <p>To be determined— Indoors or Outdoors. Reservations required.</p> <p>Drop off Vision House breakfast food and water AND Food Bank Items</p>
	<p>24</p> <p>7 pm Christmas Eve Service via Zoom</p> <p>7 pm New Purpose</p>	<p>25</p> <p>10 am Christmas Morning Service via Zoom</p>	<p>26</p>
	<p>31</p> <p>GAME NIGHT VIA ZOOM—time to be determined</p> <p>7 pm New Purpose</p>	<p>Jan 1</p>	<p>Jan 2</p>

Pastor Blair email: Pastor@BethlehemLutheranRenton.org
 cell phone: 206-291-4237

Let's **zoom**

SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR ZUNDAY ZERVICES

By Dielda Kuhlmann

The 503rd Anniversary of the Reformation was **October 25**. Our opening hymn was A Mighty Fortress. We sang this old tune mixed with an updated arrangement and 176 singers from 34 different countries. Pastor Blair's sermon was titled "The Son will set you Free" based on John 8:31-36. He said, "Wherever in your life you need to be set free, ask the Lord to reveal it to you and to give you the strength to overcome and follow through. Wherever that place is, there Jesus promises to come. He does so through ... the three foundation stones of the church:



Scripture Alone, Faith Alone, and Grace Alone ...

they will endure forever ... because Jesus himself, our Chief Cornerstone is the same yesterday, today and forever!"

During announcements, Trustee Curtis Holcomb told us that a leak in the kitchen caused a flood in the kitchen and the downstairs wing. The kitchen floor will be completely removed and replaced. They are working with the insurance adjustor. Carl & Joni Stockamp zoomed from their Leavenworth home where we could see 6" of snow! *See photo below.*



Hannelore Payne doesn't have a camera for Zooming but she submitted this photo of herself and granddaughter Julee wearing their red Reformation T-Shirts for the special occasion.

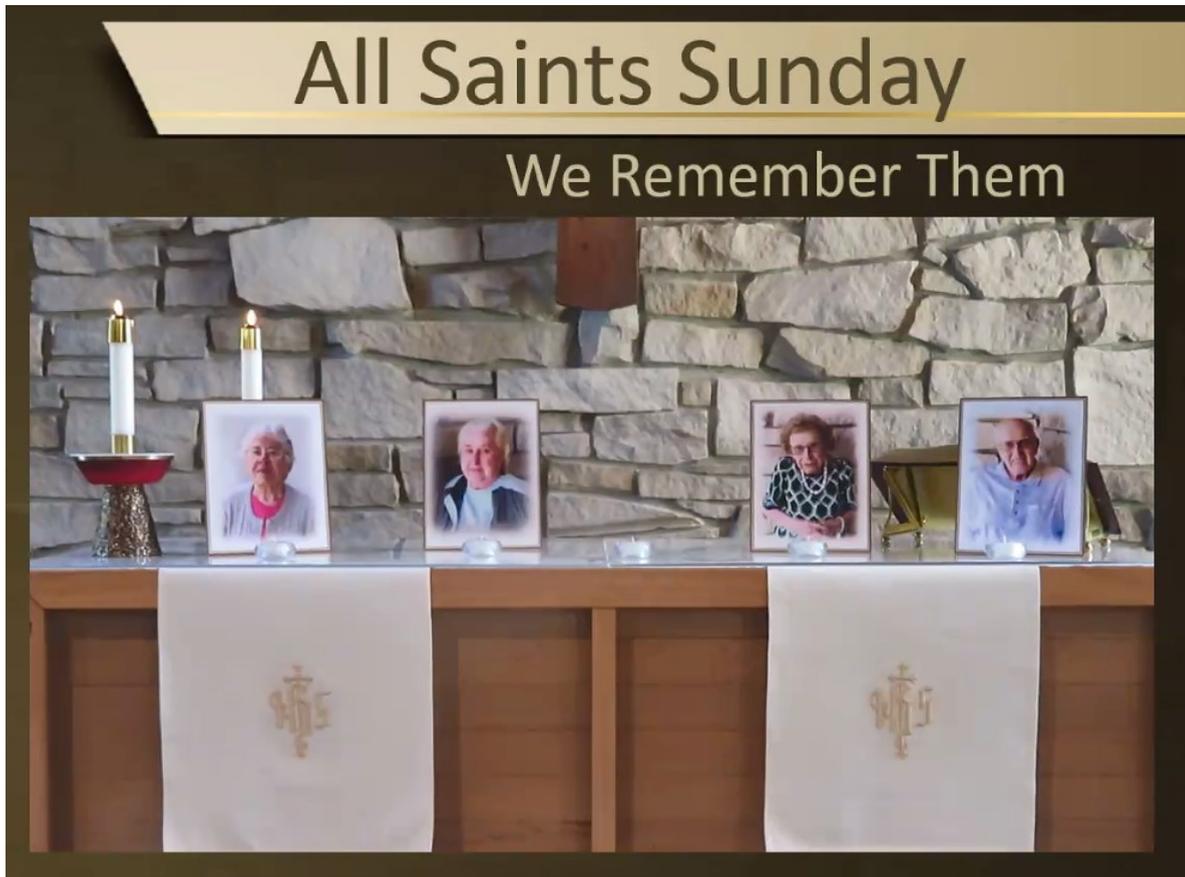




November 1 was a reflective Sunday, with a full range of emotions evoked. The bells rang to begin our worship service. The prelude song was *Be Still My Soul*. Our elder was Dick Taylor. The words in Pastor Blair's sermon seemed especially poignant and meaningful today. We were advised to research God's news more than social media.



After the sermon, our traditional All Saints ceremony took place. A bell was tolled and a candle lit, as the name of each of our recently departed members was spoken: Laura Brester, Dolores Fischer, Marie Teel, and Ray Engum. Ray's daughter, Liz, was able to attend the service. While introducing the postlude, James Hing said, "The greatest, most precious commodity is our gift of time."



Zoom Services continued from previous page

73 people attended our **November 8** Veterans' Recognition Sunday, many wearing red, white and blue, or displaying real or virtual flags.



Pastor David Blair



Jesse Hack & Pastor Blair

We were blessed to have Jesse Hack speak about his military service. A summary of his talk can be found on page 24. In his sermon, Pastor Blair showed us some photos of his and Cindy's trip to Jerusalem. We appreciate James' signature ending to the service, "Keep looking up 'cause that's where it all is!" It was a good day to worship at Bethlehem.



Elder Ron Muller



Zoom Master James Hing

November 15 was the penultimate Sunday of the church year. We had a first time guest today, Jane Wolf. She is Art's sister and joins us from Pueblo, Colorado. We regularly have people from Texas, Arizona, Leavenworth, and even Olalla, Washington attend our services. Several of our homebound members are able to phone in and listen to the Zervice. And a few Renton neighbors have located our Zoom Zervice and are frequent attendees.



Elder Pat Eskam

It was a special & unique day on Zoom on **November 22**, the last Sunday of the church year, and the Sunday before Thanksgiving. We were given a 1-hour Gratitude Gobble Gabfest at 9 am where we could visit, chat, and share our blessings. It was a complaint-free zone, and it was a blessing.



And then for the prelude, we watched a video of people around the world singing Amazing Grace in their native languages. It brought many to tears.

The slide show had many familiar sights—our "Give Thanks Unto the Lord" banner and several harvest altars that the Moldovans created over the years. Our prayers had dozens of praises and pleas! And for proof that we are active and alive, we had over a dozen announcements for upcoming events and activities.



Remembering our Moldovan Harvest Altars

Zervice continued from previous page

Also on November 22, we were fortunate to watch a presentation of "Look at the World" by John Rutter. The first 2 verses are:

*Look at the world, Everything all around us.
Look at the world, And marvel every day.
Look at the world, so many joys and wonders,
So many miracles along our way.*

*Praise to Thee, O Lord, for all creation.
Give us thankful hearts, that we may see
All the gifts we share and every blessing.
All things come of thee.*

WHAT ARE WE GRATEFUL FOR?

On the Sunday before Thanksgiving, members gathered on Zoom before the regular 10 am start time and shared some of our blessings. This is a small sample of what we are grateful for.

- For creativity, especially during this pandemic.
- For technology to allow us to attend church and talk to family.
- For people who have the skills to repair our broken sinks, our leaking roofs, our cold heaters, and our broken cars.
- For the Moldovans who shared our church building and our lives, and the beautiful memories of their friendship and harvest altars.
- For healthy babies that were born.
- For having the financial ability to get what we need and to share with others.
- For our insurance company that is working with us on our flood.
- For those who have given their time to make the Zoom Zervices so special and meaningful, and for those who log on to the zervices.
- For celebrating another birthday.
- For the wonderful invention of photography to help us keep our memories.
- For the beautiful weather on our outdoor Communion day and for the people who help organize the Communion days and those who attend.
- For being able to look forward to Thanksgiving, for the ability to make holiday decorations, and connect electronically with family.
- For 60 years of marriage.
- For our memories of good times and sad times.
- For Jeanne-K for making a quilt every year for our raffle.
- For our pets.
- For medical staff, medicine, and doctors who mend our broken bodies.
- For first responders.
- For God's amazing grace.

The Word is a gift

"... the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward" (Ps. 19:9–11).

God's Word is a treasure. Nothing in all the world possesses the value of the Word. It has such great value because of what it can do. The world was created by it. This Word became flesh and redeemed us. This Word claimed us as God's own precious child in the waters of Holy Baptism. The Word has done this and so many other things. It has inestimable power and therefore unsearchable value.

It is the Word of which we are ultimately stewards. Nothing you have has any value compared to this Word. How we use the worldly gifts which the Lord has entrusted us for the extension of this Word in the world is really the end goal of our stewardship. As we use this Word in our own lives and share it in the lives of others, there is indeed great reward. This return on investment is not measured in dollars and cents. It is marked by calling sinners to repentance and setting them free to be everything the Lord has given them to be and do. God's ultimate goal for faithful stewards is to use their simple gifts in such a way that souls are rescued from death and given an eternal life that has a value and reward that is literally out of this world!

Prayer:

Word of Life, You speak to us with a power and a tenderness that we can never fully appreciate or understand. It is sweet in our ears and sweeter as it is spoken with our lips and lives. Grant us the simple gift of faith which seeks to share this treasure with those around us so that they may know this sweetness as well. Amen.



Simple Gifts: A series of devotions on stewardship
Submitted by Karen Begalka



WE RECOGNIZE OUR VETERAN JESSE HACK

Jesse Hack served in the Navy 9 years, beginning in September 1984. He was part of the Naval Reserve Sea Air Mariner VOTECH program that allowed college students to do their basic training and remain in college. His duty stations included San Diego, San Francisco, Swan Island Naval Station in Portland, Oregon, and Seattle.

On November 8, we were able to watch a pre-recorded video of Jesse's speech, filmed in our sanctuary. Pastor Blair gave Jesse the traditional wooden Bethlehem Veteran medallion made by Gary Jordanger. Other vets in the Zoom audience were wearing their medallions as well. Thanks to Ellen Taylor for putting up the veteran banner, Don Kuhlmann for recording, and James Hing for directing the production.

And of course a big thank you to Jesse for serving!

Jesse was a Radioman, Seaman 3d Class assigned to the USS Mauna Kea ammunition ship. He was trained in firefighting techniques and how to repair leaks onboard. There were times during the drills when he and the crew were chest high in water before they got the leaks under control. They practiced extinguishing fires in the dark and with large vats of oil burning which added intensity and danger to the drills.

In May 1987, he spent 2 weeks on active duty, and cruised under the Golden Gate Bridge on the Mauna Kea. He participated in maneuvers near San Diego and kept busy with painting and maintenance work. On breaks, he remembers getting to watch porpoises play in the bow wake. Late at night, on watch, is when he felt closest to God. From the bridge and fantail, he saw nothing but stars and sea and the water stirred up by the propellers.

In the fall of 1987, he was assigned to the Seattle Naval Station Puget sound on Lake Union, now home to the Museum of History and Industry. He also worked at the Sand Point Naval Air Station which is now a park. He worked with US Coast Guard and Canadian Navy collecting data on depths of ports, ship speeds and other critical information for the waters between Grays Harbor and Anacortes. When the office received their first computers in 1989, they were used to help plot courses for the convoys. Unfortunately, the first version of the software guided the ships over dry land as well as the sea.

Jesse shared how he married Jeanie in 1989 and appreciated how she always laundered and pressed his uniforms. Except for that one time when she shrunk his wool dress white swab-bies. They were able to stretch them enough so he could button the pants but they were a bit short.

In 1990, he was scheduled to go on inactive status but the Gulf War broke out, and he was put on 24-hour standby status. He remained in Seattle through the end of the Gulf War.



After Jesse's speech, Pastor Blair bestowed upon him a Bethlehem Veteran medallion and closed the video with a prayer.

Jesse Hack and Pastor David Blair. Photo by Don Kuhlmann



USS Mauna Kea was decommissioned in 2006, it was the oldest active ship in the US Navy. It was sunk during target practice off the coast of Kauai, Hawaii.

God is Sovereign

As we approach the end of a year which included events none of us could have predicted, I believe it is appropriate that we reflect on God's sovereignty and goodness. This is especially true as we prepare to celebrate the gift of salvation, which is enabled through the birth of His Son, Jesus.

You may have heard me say that I believe God's timing is perfect. Yes, even in the time of a pandemic. A recent Bible Study Fellowship (BSF) lesson included a section on the sovereignty of God. The following is a quote from that lesson:

"God is sovereign, whether we recognize it or not. When we do not believe God is sovereign over our lives, we will flounder upon waves of insecurity and indecision. Anxiety will rule over and above the peace of God. Worry and dread will overwhelm us every time we watch the news or hear about our world's evils. We will strive to define truth on our own terms yet never find satisfaction. We will fear failure, doubting God is sovereignly working all things for good. We will fear the future, doubting God's wise control. And we will exhaust ourselves striving unsuccessfully to control every word, every relationship, every act and every outcome in life. When we truly believe God is sovereign over our lives, we are free not to worry. We realize we do not have enough power or control over our lives to thwart the plans and purposes of God. We can take our fears and worries to God in prayer and confidently know His perfect and pleasing will prevails. Romans 8:31 states, If the sovereign God of the universe is for us, who can be against us? He is victorious. He rules everything. He has already determined the moment by moment details, the considerations and the circumstances of our lives. By His Spirit, He conforms our wills to His and weaves our lives into His purposes. He alone is good."

I certainly recognize myself in these words. Do you see yourself? I pray that we can all take comfort in the knowledge that God is with us in this time of uncertainty.

As we look to the future, which only God knows, I see three major decisions that need to be made:

- 1) when and how to reopen for in-person worship;
 - 2) what to do after completion of the Congregational Life Cycle Study;
- and,
- 3) who we call as a new pastor.

Our “Zoom” worship format has enabled us to offer worship opportunities to those who aren’t able to attend in-person services. We will need to find a way to continue offering virtual worship opportunities when we return to in-person worship. You may expect to be contacted soon to determine your views on the timing and format for reopening. Those who have participated in the Life Cycle Study have provided many ideas on how we should approach our future as a congregation. This Study will be completed by the end of the year and we will need to make decisions on how we proceed. Lastly, as you will see in the Call Team report, we have received a new Call List from our District Office. This means we will be asking for God’s guidance in making a decision on calling a new pastor.

God’s sovereignty and goodness assures us that He will lead us as we make these decisions. Let’s remember to ask for His guidance and thank Him for the gift of His Son, Jesus!

Carl Stockamp, Congregational President

“We are not taking God to the people; God is taking us to the people,” says Reuben Kabwe. Lutheran Bible Translator Eshinee Veith shares this quote that she heard in Zambia. It was so impactful that it has stuck with her for 8 years.



KFUO Radio, a media ministry extension of LCMS congregations, shares Christ for you anytime, anywhere on **KFUO.org** via worship services, Bible and theology studies, practical talk programs, and sacred music. You can find programs on demand at kfu.org and wherever you get your podcasts!

MOVIE MATINEE

By Dielda Kuhlmann



We will show Holiday Inn, the original 1942 version starring Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire, on Sunday November 29 around 12:45. The Zoom link will be sent to members. Others interested in joining, please contact Dielda@comcast.net

December's movie has not been decided yet but will be Zoomed on December 27.

Our October movie was Chariots of Fire. In one of those "Godwink" moments, Elder Joel noted that Psalm 46 was read that morning at our zervice. It says in part "**He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the chariots with fire.**"

Which then led Elder Ron to look up another Bible verse that mentions chariots of fire. **And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.** 2 Kings 2:11

Many of us had seen the movie in the theater when it first came out in 1981. We liked it then and love it now. It's based on a true story and worth your time.



- **What is the purpose of a congregation?**
- **Is a congregation immortal?**
- **What is God's foundational mission?**

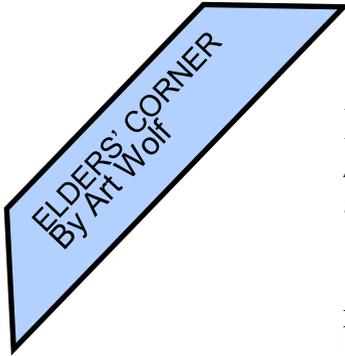
These and other questions are what we are exploring in the Life Cycle series. Please feel free to join us on Tuesday evenings or Thursday mornings.

Schedule:

Tuesday Dec 1 and 8 at 7 pm for those who prefer Zooming at night
or
Thursday Dec 3 and 10 at 11 am for daytime Zoomers.

We join together on Thursday Dec 3 & 10 at 7 pm for an open discussion.

-Don Kuhlmann



We Are Blessed Every Day By God

Philippians 4:19

And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Amber and I were speaking about how richly God has blessed us. Five years ago, we were blessed with Anna, our Daughter. Also, five years ago, we were blessed with a new job for me in the Seattle area when Safeway moved us from Colorado to Washington. God has blessed us in that we found a church right away to attend, where we have grown spiritually and made incredibly good friends. God has blessed us with a new home, that we were able to furnish with our own things, and then things from my parent's house in Colorado. God has blessed us very richly indeed!

A couple of months ago, Amber, Anna and I were sitting in our Chiropractors office and someone had written on his Good News dry erase board, "we are blessed every day", and that really struck a chord. Amber and I were talking about and being thankful for all the large blessings that God has given us, but were we remembering all the small blessings that are given to us that are not the new car or the new house? Were we remembering the nice sunny days, were we remembering the person driving the car that slowed down for us to let us merge onto the freeway? Are we thankful for the blessing of being kept safe every day and healthy? Are we thankful for the blessing of a spouse or friends to help us meet the day?

We need to remember that we are blessed every day and that God does not forget us or leave us. God is there blessing us and guiding us in all of the big things, but also in the small things, and we need to remember that we are blessed by God, but we could also be used as a blessing to someone else, simply by saying hello to someone or holding a door open for them!

There is a hymn called "Count Your Blessings", and the refrain goes "*count your blessings, name them one by one, count your blessings, see what God has done!*" God blesses us every day, from the big blessings such as a home or a job, to the small blessings, like getting drink of water when we need it, or someone smiling at us and saying hi and lifting our spirits! Be thankful for all your blessings from God!

We Want Your Signature by December 4 CHRISTMAS CARD!!

Church members, do you remember how normally this time of year, we would be signing Christmas cards for our members who couldn't make it in to church? Well, this year none of us are able to make it into the building. So we are asking you to write or type a few words of Christmas cheer, submit a family photo or a nice Christmas picture. Get them to the office or Dielda by December 4. Call if you can't drive; we will come to your house or care facility and pick up your message. And Teresa will craft them into a Bethlehem Family Christmas Card.

We won't be putting cards in our hallway mailbox. Even if you are mailing cards to everyone, you can still sign this group card. The card will be more special if we get your message or at least a signature. Thanks for participating.
-Joni Stockamp, Dielda & Teresa Feltmann



James Hing has been the Director of the Starbucks Chorus for 14 years. They will be performing online and on a special KING 5 TV show!

Money raised during these events help senior citizens facing homelessness & people of all ages with food insecurities.



The 34th Annual Great Figgy Pudding Caroling Competition is online December 4 through 18. There is also a television show on Friday December 11 at 7:30 pm on KING 5. They welcome your donations online or Text "Starbucks" to 71777

Check out their website for more information. <https://www.pmsc-fb.org/figgy-pudding>

WAYS YOU CAN HELP

- ▶ **SUBMIT A PHOTO OF YOUR SPECIAL CHRISTMAS DECORATION OR TREE.** Email dielda@comcast.net or text a picture to 206-972-9107 and she will post it on our church website! This collection replaces the garden pictures we posted this summer.
- ▶ **PRAY** for an effective, safe vaccine to be delivered soon!
- ▶ **BRING IN BREAKFAST ITEMS, FRESH FRUIT, BAGELS, & WATER BOTTLES** for Vision House. Questions? Talk to Ruth Ann or Marjie.
- ▶ **DONATE TO THE FOOD BANK.** Drop off your items at church. Bruce has been making regular delivers to the food bank.
- ▶ **RETURN GIVING TREE ITEMS with TAGS** by December 10. Ellen Taylor is contact person.
- ▶ **RETURN BETHESDA'S GIFTS** with name of the recipient by Saturday December 19. Dielda Kuhlmann is contact person. Gifts of Christmas snacks for staff and residents are also accepted!
- ▶ **Ladies, RETURN BABY SHOWER GIFTS** any time before January 31. Mary Martha will distribute them to local charities.
- ▶ **HELP THE CHRISTMAS COMMITTEE** Check with Sharon Buechler on decorating the outside of the building.



I'm going to stay up on New Year's Eve this year. Not to see the New Year in, but to make sure this one leaves.

Amazon gives money to Bethlehem. They donate 0.5% of your purchase to our church every time you shop online at Amazon.

To sign up, go to smile.amazon.com

In the box where it asks you to type your charitable organization, just enter **91-0850984** and click on the Search button. Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Renton, Washington will appear. Click on select. You only need to do this the first time.

Be sure to order through **smile.amazon.com** so we receive the bonus!

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

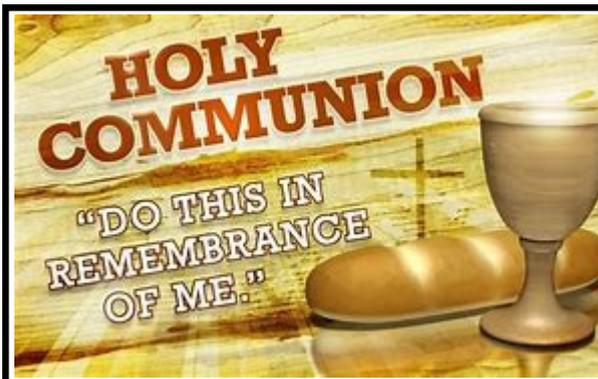
December 2020

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Our Mission Statement

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, empowered by the Holy Spirit, will **encourage** and **inspire** our brothers and sisters by prayer and service.

By the grace of God, we will **reach** out with God's Word and **show** love and fellowship to all.



Holy Communion will be Saturday **December 19** starting at 10:15 am.

Please contact the office with your intention to commune, whether you choose wine or grape juice, and if you wish to remain in your car or enter the sanctuary. An assigned time will be given to you.