



May/June 2023 A.D.

BETHLEHEM
LUTHERAN CHURCH

October 15, 1942

-
April 30, 2023

DEPART IN PEACE

Sunday, April 30, was the final worship service at Bethlehem. It was an emotion-filled morning. We thank Pastor Flath. We thank James Hing. We thank those who assisted with the service, and we thank all who attended.

After everyone received Holy Communion, after the final prayer was spoken and the final hymn was sung, all items from the altar were removed and carried out to the narthex during the recession. Members followed into the narthex and stood as Pastor Flath spoke these words, *"This church building is closed as a place of divine services in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Bethlehem Lutheran Church of Renton, Washington is now officially closed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."*

He then closed the doors to the sanctuary.

"Let us bless the Lord. The LORD bless you and keep you. The LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace. Amen. Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Amen. Depart in peace. Amen."

Thoughts From The Pastor

Brothers and sisters in Christ: Christ is risen! He is risen indeed -- hallelujah!

As I put these thoughts together in the last half of April 2023, the following question came to mind.

What are we to do as disciples of Jesus Christ after April 30, 2023?

A number of the Bible verses have been going through my mind as Bethlehem Lutheran Church approaches its last service and then the selling of its property. One set of verses that stood out is 1 Thessalonians 5, verses 16-18. ***Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*** (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 ESV)

This is the very same thing that we are to be doing right now as Jesus' disciples!

However, often times ***the will of God in Christ Jesus*** for us disciples of Jesus may be a **difficult** and **challenging road** to follow. That's because often in our life there are set-backs, personal health issues, disasters, family difficulties, world events, and especially death, that can throw up some mighty large challenges for us to do the will of God in our living. Yet this portion of God's Word tells us that **God's will** for us His dearly beloved children is: ***rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks***

Continued on page 6

MILESTONE BIRTHDAYS

Gene Baade turned 80 in May, going on 51, which happens to be the age he joined us at Bethlehem!



Elijah (Karen & Brent's grandson) is 3 years old in May.

Calvin (Bruce & Teresa's grandson) is 9 on May 27.

Katelyn celebrates 3 decades in June.

Ella is sweet 16 on June 12.

Kathy L turns 80 in June.



Little KaLyla is now 4



APRIL ANNIVERSARIES WERE MISSED LAST MONTH SO THEY ARE INCLUDED HERE:

Brent Begalka May 2
 Michael Humphrey May 2
 Kerry Mason May 2
 James Hing May 3
 Becky Payne May 3
 Tammy Sturgul May 4
 Renee Barger May 9
 Gene Baade May 10
 Peggy Hanson May 10
 Karen Jackman May 10
 LuAnne Humphrey May 13
 Elijah Ward May 15
 Roger Jackman May 19
 Ted TeGantvoort May 20
 Calvin Dennis May 27
 Joni Stockamp May 30



Tom & Kimberli Clayton
 April 2, 2011 12 years

Art & Amber Wolf
 April 2, 2011 12 years

Jesse & Jeanie Hack
 April 9, 1989 34 years

Brent & Karen Begalka
 April 10, 1976 47 years

Dennis, Joshua & Julie
 April 16, 2005 18 years

Happy MAY/JUNE Anniversary to

Bruce & Teresa Feltmann
 May 12, 1972 51 years

William & Crystal Jordanger
 May 14, 2005 18 years

Ted & Jackie TeGantvoort
 May 16, 1986 37 years

Kerry & Debbie Mason
 May 27, 2006 17 years

Gary & Joanne Jordanger
 June 6, 1970 53 years

Curtis & Cindy Holcomb
 June 18, 1983 40 years

Michael & Cheryl Bumpus
 June 30, 2006 17 years

Nancy Jackman June 3
 Robert Pankow June 4
 Jeanie Hack June 6
 Katelyn Bumpus June 7
 Donna Kahn June 8
 Joyce Baade June 9
 Mary Duett June 9
 Teresa Feltmann June 10
 Halley Gentil June 11
 Ella Browning June 12
 Jon Kuhlmann June 12
 Kathy Logan June 14
 KaLyla Troseth-Singleton June 14
 Gary Jordanger June 17
 James Sturgul June 24
 Neal Duett June 25
 Larry Holcomb June 26

MILESTONES ON PAGE 2

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

**Those living & working in our AbleLight home.
People impacted by the war in Ukraine including
our brothers & sisters in the Moldovan Church.**

Jim & Sharon Buechler	Michael & Cheryl Bumpus
Harold Carlson	Jesse Hack
Marcy Hall	Mardelle Hammond
Gary & Kaye Hanno	Carolyn Hough
Mark Humphrey	Jenny Iles
Joanne Jordanger	Donna Kahn
Pete & Hannelore Maas	Andrea Mangold
Debbie Porter	Linda Sheets
Bev West	Gil & Cathy Wooden



**Jeanne-K Hughes
Joel & Karen Jackman
Glen Koppelman
Hannelore Payne
Ruth Schroeder**

**Brent & Karen Begalka's friend Regina S
Jim & Sharon Buechler his sister JoAnn, her brother James, his cousins Milton & Jerome,
his cousin John, her cousin Wendy
Gretchen Engum's son Robert
Cathy Frank's nephew Gerard
Mardelle Hammond's sister-in-law Barbara
James Hing's mom, Jayne
Chenee' Holcomb and her mom Jocelyn
Curtis Holcomb's friends Wayne H and Crystal
LuAnne Humphrey's mom Delores, cousin Brenda & husband Chris, friends Chris,
David B, Joyce
Don & Dielda Kuhlmann his brother-in-law Randy, her sister Brenda
Pete & Hannelore Maas' friend Bill
Hannelore Payne's stepdaughter Becky, relatives Rolf, June, Johanna, son
Patrick, brother Frank, friend Marge
Debbie Porter's friend Ada
Linda Sheets' daughter Corrie and son-in-law Brian
Dick & Ellen Taylor his cousin Bill
Carolyn Troseth's sister Viola, sister-in-law Viona, friend Anita
David Willett's sister Kelly**

**Pastor David-Paul Zimmerman's daughter, Michelle.
Pastor Arthur Werfelmann and his wife Kris**

We pray for peace, love, safety, and comfort to our members who can't attend church services:
**Frank & Betty Downing, Gretchen Engum, Emma Humphrey, Evelyn Lundstrom-Weiss,
Bob Pankow, Juanita Reynolds, Jean Shaw, and David Willett.**

**We pray that you will bless the new congregation who will worship in our building, and
that they can continue for many generations to share Your Word.**

**Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The
Lord be with all of you. 1 Thessalonians 3:16**

ETERNAL PEACE

Betty Cowan was called to her heavenly home on Wednesday May 10, 2023. At the age of 97, she was our most senior church member. Her husband and love of her life, Jack, passed away February 26, 2018.

Betty is remembered as a vibrant cheerful person, a teacher, and a woman who loved being with people. Her quick wit, zest for life, and genuine interest in people made her a delight to converse with. We were blessed to have her as a church member.

She is survived by daughter Linda Sue (Sterling Kuhlman), son John, 2 granddaughters, 4 step-granddaughters, 4 great grandchildren, 2 great great grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews.

Since Bethlehem is not available for services, her funeral was held at Sunset Community Church (formerly called Calvary Baptist) in the Renton Highlands with Chaplain Arthur Werzner officiating.

Her service was held at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 3rd at Sunset Community Church followed by a reception in the fellowship hall and graveside at Greenwood Memorial Cemetery. On a table at the reception was the small wooden cross that we used at her husband Jack's funeral reception at Bethlehem. It was a way to bring a little of Bethlehem to her service.



BETTY COWAN

August 21, 1925

-
May 10, 2023



5

Pat Mortrud recently took this photo of a rainbow from her porch in Texas.

Flath—continued from page 2

in all circumstances. *All circumstances* include doing God's will as Bethlehem Lutheran Church closes.

So, how does **the will of God** work its way out in our individual life at this time and in our future?

These Bible verses in 1 Thessalonians 5 about God's will for us begin with **rejoice always**.

Someone might be thinking: what's there to rejoice about with the congregation closing and all of the members having to find a new church home?

An approaching death is coming to Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Renton, Washington – this dear gathering place of God's forgiven people around the Word of God and the sacraments. But this death **has not won**. **Jesus has won the victory** over sin, the devil, death, the grave, and all the consequences of sin -- including the closing of this congregation. Jesus Christ's victory over all that is evil is now our victory through faith in Jesus' redeeming work for us.

Even in the midst of our tears, sorrow, pain, and sense of loss at the closing of Bethlehem Lutheran Church, we **can** and **should** rejoice. We read in Philippians: **rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, rejoice!** (Philippians 4:4 RSV). We certainly **don't** rejoice that the congregation is closing. But our rejoicing **centers** around the person and work of Jesus Christ for us and His faithfulness to us.

God promises us that nothing can separate us from His love for us in Christ Jesus our Lord -- not even the closing of this beloved congregation! Therefore, we **rejoice in the Lord always** because His goodness and mercy to us endures forever!

On top of that, we rejoice because Jesus, the Good Shepherd, promises to take care of us who are part of His flock each and every day wherever we are. Jesus is with us today. Jesus will always be with us in all the days ahead as well, wherever we might be. So, let's continue to **rejoice in the Lord always!**

God's will for us is also that we Christians **pray without ceasing** -- that we always keep on praying.

Prayer is speaking with God our heavenly Father and sharing with Him everything that is on our mind and in our heart, and doing our communicating with God in Jesus' name. And let's remember that the Holy Spirit **helps** us in our praying. He leads us to **pray** for our loved ones, for various situations in the world, for the sharing of the good news that Jesus is the Savior, for our enemies, for our fellow believers, for those who are ill, and even to pray for ourself.

Praying should always be an important part of our life as a disciple of Jesus. We **shouldn't** reserve praying as a kind of last resort -- like, when all else fails, then we

better pray. Rather, prayer should be at the very heart of our life as a Christian. Let's take seriously Jesus' thoughts on praying recorded in the Gospel of Luke chapter 18: ***always pray, so that you don't lose heart*** (Luke 18:1). May the Holy Spirit help us all to keep on praying, day in and day out.

Finally, it is God's will for believers in Jesus Christ to ***give thanks in all circumstances***.

God wants us to have and to live a thankful life -- ***in all circumstances*** -- that is, in every situation of life. We can have a "thanks filled" life as we remember with gratitude all that Jesus has done and continues to do for us each day. The spiritual blessings that we have as disciples of Jesus Christ -- such as the forgiveness of sins, life, salvation, and all the other blessings -- **do not change** just because the circumstances and situations in our life, in our families, in our community and world, or in our congregation change. Thank God for that!

May our God continue to bless each one of us with a thankful heart that **sees past** the moment to the great truths of the Christian faith. The "things" happening in our personal life and all around us **do not change the facts that** Jesus Christ's death on the cross was for us as well as for all people, **that** forgiveness of all of our sins is still ours, **that** the changeless Jesus is always with us, **that** eternal life awaits us when we die, and **that** Jesus lives -- Jesus' victory over all evil is ours through faith!

So especially now and in the days ahead, **we thank** our great God and heavenly Father, **with joy** in our heart, that He has brought us His dear children to faith in His Son Jesus Christ. At this time, we **especially** thank God for all the lives that have been touched by the Gospel of Jesus Christ over the past 80 plus years through the efforts of Bethlehem Lutheran Church in this part of the world.

May the peace and love and words of the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, continue to keep us faithful to Jesus, comfort us now, and continue to guide us on our journey down the narrow path to heaven.

After April 30, 2023, wherever we might be worshipping our living Lord and Savior, may the Holy Spirit help us disciples of Jesus Christ to continue to ***rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; because this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.***

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed -- hallelujah!

May the love of the Lord Jesus always be in your heart!

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Corinthians 13:14 ESV)

Rev. Richard E. Flath -- email: (pastor_r_flath@msn.com), cell: 425-210-1795

OUR REMEMBRANCE SERVICE — SATURDAY APRIL 29, 2023



Panoramic photo from the balcony by James Hing.



Pastors Gene Baade, Randy Grauer,
Paul Linnemann, Richard Flath

175 worshippers attended our Saturday Remembrance service. There were 159 in the building & 16 on Zoom. Jim & Sharon Buechler rang the bell to begin the service. James Hing was at the organ. Brent Begalka served as elder and Logan Browning was the crucifer.

A friendly gathering of lifelong members, extended family, members who have moved away, local pastors and their wives, and friends of Bethlehem followed the liturgy led by Pastor Flath & listened to stories of our past from Pastors Grauer and Baade. Rev Dr Paul Linnemann, Pres-

ident of our Northwest District, reminded us that we are turning a page today in our story and that God has a promise for us. *"I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to give you a hope and a future."* Pastor Linnemann shared, "What's ahead is a hope and a future that God already has set aside and set apart for you."

Congregational President Don Kuhlmann read our resolution of closure that had been adopted by the congregation and handed Pastor Linnemann our church records for safekeeping so that the work of God and His people may not be forgotten.



Crucifer Logan Browning

We recessed to the hymn "Go, My Children, with My Blessing". We were blessed that Bethlehem was able to make an impact in people's lives for over 80 years.

We are thankful for all who worked to make this day memorable and for all who attended. We note the following pastors and family members were present (apologies if we left off anyone).

Gene & Joyce Baade
Richard, Sandy & Sarah Flath
Randy & Beth Grauer
Robert & Jan Grothe
Chris & Keisha Howell
Kirk Hulvey

Paul Linnemann
Jon & Robin Mau
Art & Kris Werfelmann
Arthur, Sarah & Elizabeth Werzner
Paul Winterstein
David Zimmerman



Peter Le stands with Dick Taylor in our front yard on Saturday morning. They have maintained a friendship since meeting in 1975. The Le's were refugees from Vietnam who Bethlehem sponsored and helped get them acquainted with life in America. The Taylors were present at the ceremony when the Le's became US citizens. With their faith in God and a lot of hard work, the Le family, which has expanded to include 13 grandchildren and two great grandchildren, have had successful careers, maintained a loving family, and have found ways to be of service to their community through their leadership in the Vietnamese Catholic Church of Tukwila which has over 3,000 members. Bethlehem has been blessed by the friendship of the Le family.

Continued from previous page—Remembrance Celebration

Saturday's reception was a time to talk to old friends, watch a slideshow of our 80 years of history, look through the confirmation photos, eat some delicious food, mingle inside or sit outside on the patio. It was a beautiful sunny day. Attendees were welcome to take home any pictures that were posted on the bulletin board.

Many families took the opportunity to pose for one last Bethlehem photo.



Kathy Logan, Larry Holcomb, and Hannelore Payne at the sandwich table.



Bowls of shrimp was something new to our traditional food table, adding an extra specialness. In the photo are Bruce Feltmann and Brent Begalka.



Big cookies from the Renton Technical College and flower-shaped fruit bouquets were some of the yummy goodies at the dessert table. Janet Lee and Ruth Ann Shimoi are in the photo.

Bonus: We had enough leftovers to share with staff and residents of the AbleLight home in our backyard.



Suzanne (Taylor) Adams and Debbie (Dey) Chinn got reacquainted at the reception. They are holding their June 7, 1981 confirmation photo. They both now live in Oregon.



Bruce & Teresa Feltmann, their children, grandchildren, and her two sisters and niece stood together at the front of the sanctuary for their traditional family portrait at Bethlehem.

Front: Bruce, Teresa, Calvin, Jayda, Nancy
Middle: Julie, Josh, Rowan, Christine, Connie
Back: Nathan, Ryan, Jurgen, Cherokee.



Our previous organist Wilma Gardner and her husband Doug returned for our Remembrance service and posed in our narthex. Their son, Brian, in the front took the selfie. Cyndee (Gardner) Settle and Wilma are in the second row. Tom and Tyler Settle are in the third row. Doug is in the back.

The Boydston clan had the most family members in attendance. There were 16 Boydston family members with us on Saturday. A great legacy of Jim & Pat Boydston. No group photo available.

"I'm so glad I was here today." "This was so sad." "Thank you." "Nice to talk with previous members." "Great seeing all the pastors." "Loved hearing the memories." "It was wonderful to see so many banners hanging up."

These were just some of the comments heard during the reception. All the emotions don't come through in the photos of smiling faces. There were also plenty of tears that day.

OUR CLOSING SERVICE — SUNDAY APRIL 30

Disposition of the Church Building

Pastor Richard Flath led our final service. Each of our elders, Brent Begalka, Jim Buechler, and Richard Taylor, read Bible verses. Communion was served in the traditional table style, and we sang the Lord's Prayer together for the last time. Many banners were on display in the sanctuary and the social hall. Our final hymn sung at Bethlehem Lutheran Church was "God Be with You Till We Meet Again". An article about the song can be found on page 36.

Then came the time in the service for the removal of our sacred items. It was quiet except for the crying and Pastor Flath's words. Dick Taylor handed each item, slowly and respectfully to a church member as Pastor Flath explained its significance to us as individuals, and its importance to Christianity. After the lectern, pulpit, and altar were bare, Logan Browning led the recession to the narthex.



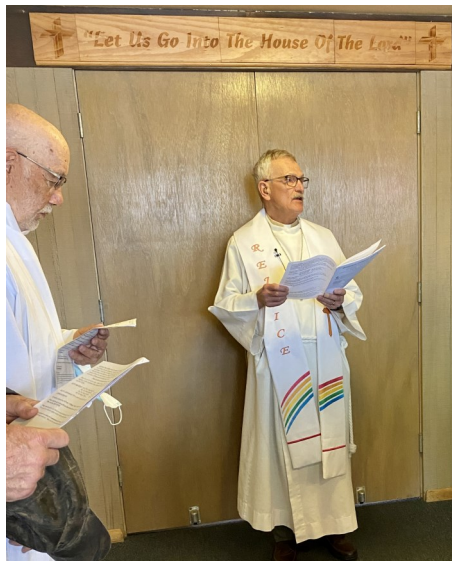
People who recessed with our cherished items:



<i>Logan Browning</i>	<i>Processional cross</i>
<i>Bruce Feltmann</i>	<i>Baptismal bowl</i>
<i>Pete Maas</i>	<i>Paschal candle</i>
<i>Curtis Holcomb</i>	<i>Lectionary book and paraments</i>
<i>Gary Jordanger</i>	<i>Pulpit Bible and parament</i>
<i>Joel Jackman</i>	<i>Missal stand and Altar book</i>
<i>Jim Buechler</i>	<i>Candlesticks</i>
<i>Brent Begalka</i>	<i>Communion tray</i>
<i>Ellen Taylor</i>	<i>Altar linens</i>
<i>Pat Eskam</i>	<i>Altar Parament</i>
<i>Carolyn Troseth</i>	<i>Flowers</i>



Elder Richard Taylor, the last person who left the sanctuary on our final service, Sunday April 30, 2023. Photo by Teresa Feltmann



When the sanctuary was empty, Pastor Flath closed the doors and read the words quoted on the front page of this newsletter.



Gary Jordanger holds the camera for the Zoomers. Sunday worshippers stand in the narthex to hear the final words.

Pastor Blair is serving in Colorado and was unable to attend our closing weekend. He sent this message:

Dear BLC family,

Greetings in the name of Jesus!

It is with both sadness and joy that we write these words to you. Sadness at the news that Bethlehem congregation will close her doors soon.

Sadness at Calls extended and returned.

Sadness at the separation that has and will continue between us and one another as we all find a new church home in which to worship our gracious God.

Yet, JOY, great JOY at the wonderful memories that we shared with BLC over 3 ½ years of Gospel ministry together! February birthday celebrations; Mother-daughter teas, outdoor Covid Holy Communion services, Cropwalk fundraisers, outdoor picnics, preaching sitting down on Zoom for over a year ... just to name a few!

JOY also in the knowledge that even though individual congregations close, the Church does not! Jesus promised Peter that "the gates of Hell would not prevail against his church" (Matthew 16:18). We do not know what the future holds, but we DO KNOW who holds the future!

We have experienced a lot of change in our lives (even without Covid!). We will experience even more in the days ahead ... some change will be perceived as good, some as not. No matter what, our hope must not be placed in our circumstances but in Christ Jesus alone who has conquered all circumstances and caused them to work for our good! He alone (Jesus Christ) "is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

Pastor David and Cindy Blair

Letter of support from Vision House: We are praying for your church body and are grateful for all that you have done over the years to encourage and support the ministries of Vision House! Blessings on each one as new church homes are sought out.

-Debbie Gannon, Vision House

Words from Lutheran Bible Translators: We would love to join you the weekend of April 30, but unfortunately we will both be out of the country, representing Lutheran Bible Translators at a Forum.

Eshinee and I received the news of the closing of Bethlehem Lutheran with heaviness. We have appreciated the many years of partnership and support from the congregation and were privileged to be able to visit a few months ago. I hope and pray you will all find new church homes where you will experience that sense of belonging and community.

Rob & Eshinee Veith, Lutheran Bible Translators



RAVE & CONGRATULATIONS to Alissa Shapsnikoff, Brent & Karen Begalka's granddaughter, who worked hard in high school and will be attending the University of Washington this fall on a full scholarship.

She graduates from Auburn Mountainview High School in June with a 4.0 GPA. And she attended Running Start classes at Green River Community College.

Alissa is looking forward to life on a college campus with an interest in studying psychology.

We thank Thrivent Financial for granting us a gift card for expenses related to our Remembrance reception so we could open the invitation to more friends and neighbors. They were very supportive in our outreach events over the years.

Last pinochle game day at Bethlehem was Friday May 19. Please contact Sharon Buechler for the new location and next game day!



Treasurer's Report May 2023 42% of the year

Total Income \$28,191.33 16% of annual budget
Total Expense - 22,923.63 13% of annual budget
Difference \$ 5,267.70

Total Assets \$110,846.20
Total Equity \$ 83,006.98 (Assets not in memorials or designated funds)

—Kathy Logan, Treasurer



LANDSCAPING GROUP'S FINAL WORK PARTY

At our last landscaping work party on April 27, we planted, weeded, trimmed, mowed, and swept.

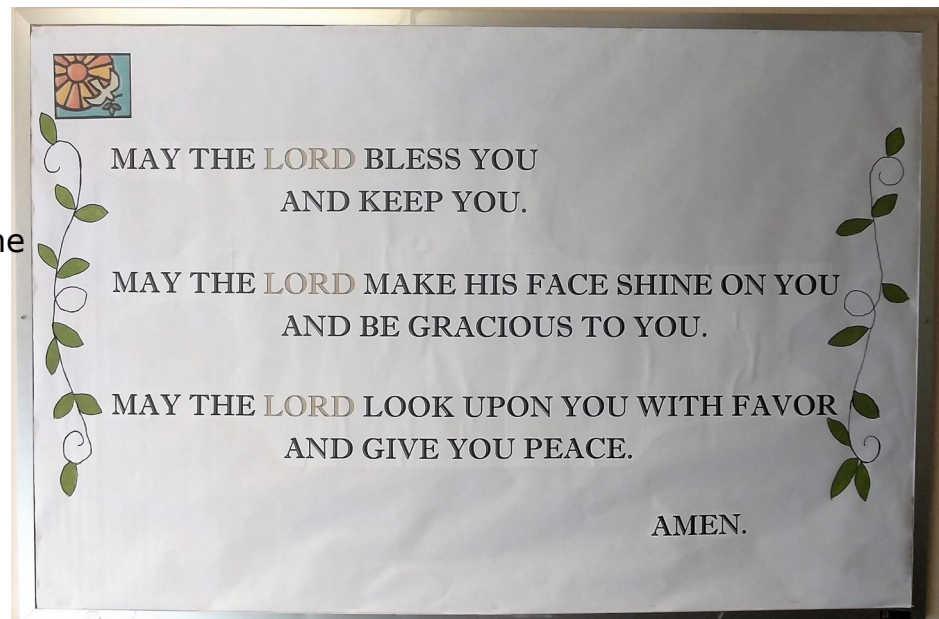
Our break reward was Irish soda bread with butter and strawberry jam, and coffee.

Hannelore and Pete just hope that whoever comes after us, will be lucky to have a group of people to keep it going. Our thanks to Dick Taylor, Karen Fritsvold, Karen Marsyla, Cathy Frank, and Curtis Holcomb who wasn't able to be here today.

-Hannelore and Pete Maas

Our final bulletin board display in the hallway.

Joel and Karen Jackman shared Numbers 6:24-26 with us.



GRAFFITI—In May, the front of our building and the church across the street were victims of graffiti. We so appreciate the generosity of our friends from Moldovian Baptist who noticed and cleaned it up.

MEMORIAL FUNDS

It is a tradition at Bethlehem that money donated to a person's Memorial Fund goes towards beautification of our building, sacred items, or some project that benefits our time at Bethlehem and honors God's blessings to us.

With our closing, the Memorial funds were not needed to enhance BLC so the families graciously offered to contribute the money in their loved one's memory to various organizations. Family members expressed sorrow we were closing, reflected on how many of their relatives were baptized, confirmed and married here, and were thankful for the opportunity to share the money with organizations to spread God's Word and to help people locally and around the world.

Our members voted to disburse all money we have remaining to 19 charities. Trusting that decision, and with their desire to help as many people as possible, the following families wanted their funds to be part of the final distribution of Bethlehem money, and we thank them.

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| ♦ Jim Boydston | ♦ Cathy Koppelman |
| ♦ Laura Brester | ♦ Lucille Logan |
| ♦ Berle Brooks | ♦ Harley Mangold |
| ♦ Aggie Brown | ♦ Fred Schroeder |
| ♦ Ray Engum | ♦ Mike Shaw |
| ♦ Ren Ellen Henry | ♦ Maynard Svor |
| ♦ Ted & Elsie Hill | ♦ Marie Teel |
| ♦ Bobbi Joos | ♦ Phil & Carolyn Warns |
| ♦ Lena Knight/Henry Knight/Arnold Roduner | |

Some families asked that their loved one's funds be donated to a specific charity that was meaningful to them. All those requests were honored, and the organizations have received the donations. We are blessed to have such caring people among us.

- ♦ **Esther Weigelt Bean** The family asked that her funds be given to 2 organizations. Half went to LWML mites, a cause that was important to her and the other half was donated to help with our church closing costs. See page 26.
- ♦ **Jack Cowan** The family asked that his funds be given to Valley Camp in North Bend. It encompasses everything that they value—the outdoors, Christian fellowship, and family time.

Continued from previous page—In Memory Of

- ♦ **Ted & Elsie Hill** The family asked that their funds be split. Part was given to Valley Camp in North Bend, a place they loved. And part will be given in our church's final distribution to 19 charities.
- ♦ **William & Mildred Kohls and Ben Humphrey** The family asked that their funds be given to Lutheran Bible Translators to help them spread the word of God to more people.
- ♦ **Dorhn & Betty Kuhlmann** The family asked that their funds be given to Valley Camp in North Bend. They had fond memories of the camp.
- ♦ **Henry Lingat** Irene asked that his funds be given to the American Heart Association in his memory.
- ♦ **Bill & Elaine Maas** Bill's best friend asked that their funds be given to the White Center Food Bank, an organization that Bill supported with his time and personal donations.
- ♦ **Gerhard, Sabine and Ron Muller and Mel Suko** The family asked that their funds be given to Valley Camp in North Bend. Ron was a board member, and the camp meant a lot to him and his family.
- ♦ **Helga Pankow** They were an active military family, relocating 17 times during his career. Bob asked that her funds be given to the VFW Post in Milton, Washington.
- ♦ **Bob Payne** Hannelore asked that his funds be donated to the Renton Food Bank, a cause important to both of them.
- ♦ **Erna Pechin** The family asked that her funds be split between Vision House and the Backpack for kids program at Our Savior Lutheran in Tacoma. She wanted to help women in abusive situations & children.
- ♦ **Virginia Preston** Her daughter Sandy asked that her funds be given to the Renton Food Bank.
- ♦ **Ed Sheets** Linda asked that his funds be given to the Renton Food Bank. Helping others in need was important to both of them.
- ♦ **Victor & Norma TeGantvoort** Their family asked that their funds be given to the VFW Post in Renton for Memorial Day Observance expenses.
- ♦ **Gale & Kathy Zable** The family asked that their funds be given to an organization near and dear to their hearts, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center.

All these requests have been mailed. Many of the organizations reached out to the families expressing their gratitude and sorrow at their loss. Bethlehem thanks everyone for their thoughtfulness and compassion.



Here are the basic teachings of Jesus to take with you wherever you go.

Match the Lessons with the Scripture References:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ____ 1. Beatitudes | a. Matthew 28:18-20;
Mark 16:15-18; Luke 24:45-48 |
| ____ 2. The Greatest Commandments | b. Matthew 13:3-23;
Mark 4:3-20; Luke 8:5-15 |
| ____ 3. The Lord's Prayer | c. John 3:16 |
| ____ 4. Parable of the Sower | d. Deuteronomy 6:4;
Leviticus 19:18;
Matthew 22:36;
Mark 12:29-31; Luke 10:27 |
| ____ 5. The Great Commission | e. Matthew 4:19; Mark 1:17 |
| ____ 6. The Golden Rule | f. Matthew 5:3-12; Luke 6:20-23 |
| ____ 7. Follow me and I will make you
fishers of men. | g. Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4 |
| ____ 8. For God so loved the world that
he gave his only Son, that
whoever believes in him
should not perish but have
eternal Life. | h. Matthew 7:12; Luke 6:31 |

Many thanks to Karen Begalka who has been putting together our puzzle page for years.

Answers: 1f, 2d, 3g, 4b, 5a, 6h, 7e, 8c





Our 2023 Group Photo

This tradition started around 2016. Peggy & Jim Hanson generously offered their photography skills to make this possible every year.

This was our first time to pose together since the pandemic closure. And, as a sign of the times, the bottom row shows all the people who were Zooming at our service on January 8, 2023.

President Don Kuhlmann in the center is holding the tablet that doubles as a camera during the services.

Pastor and Sandra Flath are in the back row on the right.

OUR MEMORIES

I was called to be pastor of Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Renton, Washington, in the Spring of 1975. Bethlehem was an exciting community to serve. There was a healthy mixture of all ages and interests. The church buzzed with activity. There were children everywhere. I remember being surrounded by little kids in the chancel on Easter Sunday morning, while they were told the story of the First Easter. When the women approached the Tomb and said "Who will roll away the stone?" One of the children piped up "Carl will do it!" Carl was easily the biggest and strongest man in the congregation. Ken Crossman blessed us by directing the church choir, and we had a very strong youth group, JOY IN HYMN.

We also had our struggles: during Holy Week in 1980 an arsonist set the Social Hall, office, and Narthex on fire. Thankfully, the Sanctuary was not harmed, although it smelled like smoke on Easter Sunday. The Lord turned that experience into a blessing. Our congregation restored Bethlehem's building by doubling the Social Hall and kitchen, the Sunday School rooms, the offices and Narthex. In 1984 I experienced another great blessing when Beth and I were married in our Sanctuary. I will always be grateful to the people of Bethlehem for welcoming her so openly, and helping her adjust to life with a pastor and three children.

Our church showed how open her doors were: we sponsored refugees from Vietnam, we helped form REACH, the Renton Ecumenical Association of Churches, and the annual Crop Walk.

I am honored to have been a part of Bethlehem's history, and I thank our God for the years we spent together. You have been a blessing, and you will be a blessing wherever the path of God leads you.

Randy Grauer, Pastor of Bethlehem 1975-1991



Ringleman Family. At Bethlehem church in the early 90's. Luke was born on Christmas Eve (1991) after his mom, Shawn, conducted the Sunday School program.

Shawn, Ryan, Megan, Amber, Brett and Luke

Submitted by Wilma Gardner

Y M C A



Elders performed YMCA at the 2001 Talent Show. Left to right: **Doug Gardner, Guy & Curtis Holcomb, Gene Kahn, Brent Begalka, Bruce Feltmann.** It was epic. One of them rolled into the room on a motorcycle.

Dear Bethlehem,

As one of the newest members of BLC, I would like to express my gratitude. I have probably contributed the least, yet gained the most. There is a Bible verse stating "He will give his angels charge over you, lest you cast your foot against a stone." Well, you at Bethlehem have been my angels.

I was sick and you visited me, again and again. But more than this, in this world of rumors, fake news, false prophets, scams and spams, the chaos over values and norms, it appears everything I learned in 12 years of school is now obsolete. Except what I learned at age 14 in confirmation class straight from the Bible. It was my favorite class, my favorite teacher, a very wise one. I'm so thankful for all the homework he gave us! Never ever to change! To hear the Apostles' Creed is like putting on a soft comfy pair of slippers.

God bless you all, **Bev West**

We love everybody at Bethlehem. We enjoyed the people. We were married in the little white church 67 years ago and are still together. **Frank & Betty Downing**

Continued from previous page— memories

I was looking at my old Directories from BLC of years passed. I have 7 of them. I see all of us a lot younger. A lot of great memories. Gil and I joined the church in 1958 when pastor Russert was there. We raised our four kids in that church. I take one day at a time and thank God for it. God Bless everyone at Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

In the love of Christ.

Jenny Iles, Arizona

Bethlehem honored our Veterans over the years, BUT **Bruce Feltmann** took honoring others to a whole different level. His involvement at Tahoma Cemetery gave many veterans and their families great honor. THANK YOU, Bruce.



Norma & Victor TeGantvoort in front row, right.

March 11, 2013 on the occasion of Kenneth TeGantvoort's Memorial luncheon.

Victor & Norma TeGantvoort were lifelong members of Bethlehem until their passing in 2015.

Their son, **Kenneth**, and I, **Cynthia**, were married February 11, 1978. We attended church as a family for many years; our daughter **Julie** attended pre-k at the church 40 years ago! We have 6 grandchildren, ages 12 to 23. Victor & Norma's daughter, **Carole Oppie**, has one son **Jason** and his wife. Their other son **Paul & Karen TeGantvoort** have 3 children, 5 granddaughters & 1 great grandson.

In 1995 the Begalka family was looking for a small, friendly Lutheran church to attend. So when Ruth Ann Shimoi asked us to join her at Bethlehem Lutheran Church (BLC) for a Thanksgiving morning worship service, we agreed because we had never heard of a Thanksgiving Church service before. Ruth Ann introduced us to Pastor Baade & Joyce, Jenny Iles, Pat Boydston, Ellen Taylor, Elsie Hill and the Humphreys. They all made us feel welcome with their genuine friendliness. So we went to the worship service the next Sunday morning. During coffee hour we met and forgot the names of about 70 friendly people. I called Joel, Dick and Dick, James. Eventually, I learned everyone's names. I was impressed with the fellowship and learned that several of them were from the Dakotas, like my husband's Dad's family. There were also a bunch of kids running around about the same age as our kids. Soon we transferred our membership from King of Kings Lutheran Church to Bethlehem.

Sunday, March 24, 1996 was our daughter Brenda's 8th birthday. She asked to have clowns for her birthday. I told her that I don't think clowns worked on Sundays. So as we went to church, I could hear Brenda praying to God to send her some clowns. To our surprise, the Bethlehem Clowns did a skit during the church service. Then after the service Brenda hugged each one of them, saying, "I knew God would bring me clowns for my birthday." So she got her picture taken by a Polaroid camera with the clowns surrounding her. She was elated. Her brother, Aaron, was embarrassed as his picture was taken with a blue-haired clown.

I taught Bethlehem Lutheran Preschool from 1996 - 2013. I had volunteer assistants for the first few years. Among them were Shirley Eliason, Pat Boydston, Myrtle Lotto and Mamie Thirion. Kathy Zable, Wanda Brooks and others also helped with craft materials and kits. Pastor Baade held Chapel for us once a month and Joyce Baade had story time. Our favorite story was Dr. Seuss' "Scary Pants." Also Pat Boydston & Ellen Taylor put on Puppet Shows for us once a month. The last Preschool assistant I had was LuAnne Humphrey. I participated in Vacation Bible School until 2019. Favorite themes of VBS were cities of the Holy Land and one VBS had a Hawaiian theme.

We never missed the Mother/Daughter Tea from 1996-2018. The very first one we attended, my daughter and I had matching dresses. Then from 2008- 018, my granddaughter, Alissa, joined her mother and me.

Both Aaron and Brenda were both confirmed by Pastor Baade at BLC. Aaron was confirmed with Chris (Guy Holcomb's step son) and Halley Kuhlmann, and 2 years later Brenda was confirmed with Tracy Brown's son, Adam, and Jon Kuhlmann.

One year I remember a Talent Show. Mark and LuAnne Humphrey sang the "Green Acres" theme song; Leon Holcomb's children did a skit about "There's a Hole in the Bucket;" Doug Gardner, Brent and Karen Begalka played a squawky clarinet trio of "Sentimental Journey;" and The Preschool did a pantomime of a Mariner's baseball

Continued from previous page— memories

game. There were other participants as well. However, the Grand Finale was the Elders' version of the "Village People" as they sang their songs. They topped it off with the YMCA song, getting the audience involved with the motions.

Two other big events I remember was the trip to Butchart Gardens, north of Victoria B.C. and our Hawaiian Luau at Bethlehem. They were impressive!

Other activities that my husband and I enjoyed a lot were singing in the choir, going to Mariners games, bus trips to Canada, Leavenworth or other events with church members, movie matinees, learning how to Zoom, the Bethlehem Star, Everybody's Birthday Party, potlucks and coffee hour, Game Nights, Pinochle, Bible studies, Fund raisers, giving to charities, teaching and learning.

I have enjoyed every Pastor we have had at Bethlehem, beginning with Pastor Baade. The people are what I will miss the most. "Some are dead and some are living. In my life I've loved them all." (to quote a Beatles' song). I wanted to talk about them all, but there were over 100 members since 1995 who have been promoted to Heaven and about 100 others who are living, but have moved on to other things or places. I knew at least half of them well. Right now we have at least 50 active members left: some on Zoom and some in person and they all have been special to me. I find that my memory of things from the past are not very accurate, but the love and appreciation for the people of Bethlehem will go with me as we part. We all will meet again in Heaven some day.

Love, **Karen Begalka**



A Part of Bethlehem from Beginning to End

The edible fruit flower arrangements, enjoyed by all at the closing reception, were from Esther Weigelt Bean's memorial fund. She was the mother of **Ellen Taylor and Karen Jackman**.

Esther Weigelt helped start Bethlehem as a charter member, but in the early Bethlehem years women were not counted. She was the usual "modest Lutheran" and a faithful member throughout the years. A widow, she remarried and added the last name "Bean".

A fun summary: Esther was there at the start of Bethlehem in 1942 and helped commemorate its closing with joyful fruit bouquets. She is looking down at Bethlehem and smiling.

Remembrances of Bethlehem began for me when my folks, Joyce & Kenneth Crossman, moved to Renton, transferring to Bethlehem from St. Paul Lutheran, in Boise, Idaho. I flew home for breaks from Concordia Teacher's College, Seward, Nebraska, worshipping with the congregation under the shepherding of Rev. Walther F. Luttmann and wife Millie. Pretty special as the Rev. Luttmann family were dear friends from Minnesota, to Idaho then to Washington. My father, Kenneth, became the Choir Director, building a large choir to share praise to our God. I sang with and under my dad's leadership. One special memory was on Christmas Eves, dad would always have me sing a solo, 'Lullaby on Christmas Eve' by F. Melius Christiansen, from the balcony in the dark quiet candle light. I cherish that memory. But there are many more of course, like so many of you have of worship here at Bethlehem.

I taught Bible School during college summer breaks, for excited happy children as they grew in their knowledge of Jesus and His great love for us. I helped Rev. Luttmann's children (my friends) fold Sunday bulletins on Saturday during summer. Other remembrances were worshipping with my parents, cousin Raymond and wife Marilyn; Marilyn's funeral; later worshipping with cousin Raymond and wife Patricia; then Raymond's funeral, singing the Lord's Prayer; Pastor and I bringing our children to worship with their grandparents; celebrating my parents 40th then 50th Wedding Anniversaries with special worship services having their grandchildren singing; attending the lovely Mother/Daughter luncheons to celebrate Mother's Day; church picnics; big rummage sales; the joyous Bell Choir with bells given in memory of my dad from my mother; and both my parents - Kenneth's and Joyce's funeral services.

Now we are in 2023, worshipping once again, with my husband Rev. Richard Flath leading Bethlehem in worship as you come upon closure. I, like many of you, am very sad. However, we are safely in the Lord's hands. May each of you find another caring church home where you can continue to worship our risen Savior with joy. May God hold you close in His abiding love. Rejoice, we will be together again with our loving Lord in the glories of heaven.

Sandra Flath - 1425 Lakeview Avenue - Snohomish, WA 98290

I remember Shirley Eliason was our first and only female congregational president in 1998.

Continued from previous page— memories

Dearly beloved at former Bethlehem Lutheran Church—you are still BLC spiritually and at heart.

Joyce and I just returned from being away nearly a month, about three weeks of which were in northern Scotland—Edinburgh all the way around the northern districts of the country. It was a jagged, up and down circular journey around the Highlands that took us through unpronounceable named villages, castle ruins, the magical Isle of Skye, up and around to the North Sea and John O' Groats, and finally down across the Cairngorms and through Balmoral's castle grounds. Of our 1,300 plus miles, we drove far more of them on one-lane roads than otherwise. Even though, on much of our route it was sparingly trafficked except for the tourist destinations, when approaching vehicles were met, we took turns at frequently-placed narrow turn-outs that allowed two vehicles to pass. We nodded and waved at each other when we passed one another.

Perhaps this is a kind of metaphor for Bethlehem. BLC in its 80 years has come full circle. Sometimes on the route we were on a freeway that collectively sped along; sometimes we were on a one-lane road. But we were never strangers meeting but once, never to see one another again.

Mostly, because of the close-knit, family character of Bethlehem, we met one another coming and going several times a week. This blessed and enriched all of our lives. The neat, blessed thing is that we always took turns making room for one another and we "waved"—but more frequently conversed—in a friendly, and almost always loving fashion as we did so, whether it was at the altar receiving Communion together, or at the parish hall hot food counter! We started from our personal homes and went to our church home and returned home again, each time with a memory and a blessing of Christian fellowship.

I learned upon returning from Scotland that there was to be a last BLC newsletter. Diilda invited me to contribute a short piece of memory loss. I am pleased that Joyce is contributing a short piece of memory retention!

At the public service on April 29th, I remembered incidents and certain individuals at Bethlehem. I regret that I left a lot of BLC members "out" when I did so. It was not possible to relate a story about every member.

What I do want to say here is to reassure you that I could have produced words of gratitude and a story for every one of you whom I knew at BLC. Some stories would be stories of griefs felt and observed. Some would be filled with laughter. I want to assure each and every one of you that you were special to us and to me as your pastor. I have wonderful

memories of you and could say kind words about each of you if there was space. And then there are all the people who have been called Home to Heaven.

What I will say is that I would like to meet you again on "the road." I would like to greet and make room for you as you would for me, and more than give you a nod and a wave, embrace you with the love of Christ for both of us.

In Jesus' love, **Pastor Baade**

What I Appreciate Especially About Bethlehem Lutheran Church

I appreciate Bethlehem for giving me the opportunity to use my training in teaching Bible studies and in speaking at the worship services. I also appreciate Bethlehem for being a peaceful congregation--its voters' meetings are without rancor and strife, and it has been able to resolve controversies peacefully. Continue to show love and servanthood wherever you go! Thank you, members of Bethlehem congregation!

-Brent Begalka

Ray Engum married his sweetheart **Gretchen Ducatt** on June 16, 1950 at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Renton, Washington.

I have on multiple occasions been amazed by the fact that whenever we needed funds for a project (like a new church roof), the congregation always came through. A champion came up with a plan, and the members executed the plan (buying squares to pay for the roof).

-Cathy Wooden

Art and I will always remember Anna getting baptized at Bethlehem, and we loved the Vow Renewal ceremony. Thank you, Dielda, for organizing the Vow Renewal ceremony. It was very meaningful to me.

-Amber Wolf



Julie Dennis & son Calvin celebrating Candlelight Christmas Eve service at Bethlehem.

Photo by Teresa Feltmann

Favorite Memories of Mary Martha By Its Members

The earliest and most popular memory among our Mary Martha members was the turkey dinners. They were for special annual events, particularly the Holiday Bazaar. It included turkey, creamed turkey gravy, dressing, mashed potatoes made from scratch, green beans, Jello salad, homemade rolls with dessert of pumpkin pie or apple pie. Originally this meal was 25 cents! Shirley & Jim Fraidenburg loved carving the turkey. Several people worked from 6 am until 8 pm. The Bazaar would begin at 11 am. They catered to the neighborhood and Boeing employees who would come after work. The Bazaar would fund everything Mary Martha would do for the entire year. It was a huge fundraiser.

Originally there were 2 groups: LWML was more of a Bible Study for the younger women of Bethlehem interested in missions. Mary Martha, which was a more mature group, spent most of the time making crafts, sewing, making banners and serving at receptions, especially weddings, funerals and memorial services. LWML met at 7 pm so the working women could attend after work, and Mary Martha mostly worked on projects or receptions during the day.

Both groups would attend retreats together and work together on the Bazaar. Especially during World War II, everybody worked together and helped each other out because they were all "in the same boat" as Ellen Taylor put it. After 1970 when they first amended the 1946 original by-laws, the 2 groups eventually became one.

Long ago, in the 1950s, Mary Martha/LWML membership were huge and their roster of members were 2 pages long. There was no formal voting or rigid formalities. Someone would make a motion, it would be seconded & everyone would agree to whatever it was. The meetings were groups of ladies gathering, talking, sewing and doing things. Whenever a lady had a birthday she put pennies in the MITE box representing each year of her age.

Ellen Taylor joined LWML and Mary Martha while she was teaching, but she wasn't able to be very active until later. Several of the members we now have joined in the late 60s: Pat Eskam, Joanne Jordanger, Jeanne-K Hughes. Most of the Mary Martha/LWML members joined because a friend or relative invited them or brought them. Judy Johnson brought Pat Eskam. Alpha Burpee and Shirley Eliason encouraged Jeanne-K Hughes to join and Shirley even made her a MITE box. Later, Shirley Eliason also encouraged Cathy Wooden and Dielda Kuhlmann to join. Myrtle Lotto

asked Joanne Jordanger to join. Pat Boydston brought Marjie when McKayla was a baby. Carolyn Troseth brought her daughter Camille when she was yet a teenager who joined Mary Martha. Then several joined in the late 80s or 90s: Sharon Buechler, Marlene Holcomb, Cathy Wooden, Marjie Boydston, Diilda Kuhlmann, Tracy Brown and Karen Begalka. Our newest Mary Martha member, Amber Wolf, first attended Bethlehem Lutheran Church when she was pregnant, then joined Mary Martha when her daughter began Kindergarten.

Most of these women worked outside of the home and all of them had children, but they gave of themselves to help Bethlehem Lutheran Church, various missions or individuals and to continue the Kingdom of God. God will go with them wherever they go next.

-compiled by **Karen Begalka**



Birthday potlucks and Erna Pechin's cabbage rolls! They were many people's favorite food, including mine. I was able to snap this photo of them moments before the crowd descended on the pan and gobbled them all up.

Diilda Kuhlmann



Jon Kuhlmann vacuuming after the services every Sunday.

Diilda Kuhlmann

On April 30 we had our last service at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Renton. After 80 years our church is closing. We have been members for over 50 years. Marriages, baptisms and confirmations of us and our children have added to our memories. It is a sad time but the joy of having our family together (and a couple of sisters-in-law and a niece) will always be one of our greatest memories. We will miss our wonderful church family that have been a part of our lives for all the years. Our many thanks you to the wonderful teams who have worked tirelessly in this transition. God bless each and every one of them.

Teresa Feltmann

Continued from previous page— memories

I remember fondly the whole church effort in especially three Vacation Bible Schools: Bethlehem Village, Jerusalem Market Place, and Galilee by the Lake. The transformation of the parish hall into an exciting learning environment for our children was amazing. The labor toward the authenticity of activities by the stall operators was a joy to be a part of. I worked with my tireless partner, Kathy Zable, to produce Bible times baked goods and snacks for the children and provided hands-on experiences for them baking pita breads for their own snacks. What a fun way to bring the Bible to life for our youth!

From the very beginning of my time at Bethlehem, Mary Martha welcomed me as a participant in their mission. Working with fellow members, I enjoyed serving at church celebrations, fellowship events, wedding and anniversary celebrations, and funerals. My church sisters were always ready and willing to be where they were needed. The bazaars and bake sales were always a party in which to participate despite the tremendous effort they entailed. The reward was the fun of allocating the money raised to our missions of choice at our next meeting. Annual Christmas parties and Mother-Daughter Banquets were something I looked forward to—salad luncheons and the great English tea among the best of them.

And then there is the banner committee. Never have I worked with a group of women more eager to share, brainstorm, and develop ideas to achieve a better product than any of us could have developed by ourselves. The Christian fellowship I experienced in this group makes this the top of my volunteer experiences anywhere. We saw the banners and their symbolism as a truly devotional tool to enrich the life of the congregation, just as their creation enriched our devotional life. Besides, they helped to beautify the church.

Joyce Baade

My special memory I have to share is, when Mark and I walked in to look into the sanctuary for the first time before we started coming to Bethlehem. I was standing by the table in the narthex and it felt like God put his hand on me and said you are home LuAnne. So this is very hard to know we are losing our church home. And yes it makes me want to cry just writing or I should say just typing this down. I love you all & will miss you all as well. But one good thing is we can stay in touch over the phone and/or computer.

Lu Anne Humphrey

CHOIRS

Music was always a key component to our worship services. We thank our music directors. Some highlights are mentioned below.

Photo on right shows choir in their golden robes. Director Ken Crossman back row center. The date is unknown but it was a long time ago! After Ken retired, a contemporary choir was formed called Praise Singers.

Wilma Gardner was our organist and choir director from 1979 to 2005. In the 80's she was joined by Barbara Warwick who worked with our youth for a few years.

Wilma fondly recalls the 1996 Christmas Cantata performed by the choir. It was their one "fancy" concert.

Other highlights were musical skits performed by the children, special Christmas programs at church, and caroling to our homebound members. Mark Humphrey led our bell choir for many years. People who didn't want to sing had a way of enriching our worship with music, and they performed beautiful songs.



A more recent photo of choir dressed in a Hawaiian theme and including Gerhard Muller (aka Martin Luther). Director James Hing on the right.



1996 Youth Choir: LaShawna & Ashley Holcomb, Chenee Holcomb, Ashley Rose, Colin & Ian Smith, Michael Humphrey. (not pictured Adam Fitzthum (Brown) & Paul Jorgenson)

Choir members
Front: Luanne Humphrey, Debbie Porter, Marlene Holcomb, Sarah Zable, Karen Begalka, Carolyn Troseth.
Back: Mark Humphrey, Brent Begalka, Curtis Holcomb, Michael Humphrey.

Pictures of our Past



We ♥ our clowns! Our clown ministry performed Christian skits at church, nursing homes and schools in the 1980's and 90's. A talented, giving group of people.



The Moldovan congregation adorned our altar every Thanksgiving with fresh fruit, vegetables and bread.



Our rugged wooden cross adorned every Easter.



Playground built in the 1980's. Dedicated in honor of Norman and Bobbie Joos. It was restored in 2013.



Our white chapel on Sunset Highway
1944 — 1958



Our church of worship on Monroe Ave NE.
Carl Pederson, Vic TeGantfort, Bill Weigelt
Pastor Luther Russert, unknown man



Reformation Day Communion with Martin Luther, portrayed by Gerhard Muller.



Mary Martha met outside with masks on in 2020 during COVID pandemic. Kathy Zable (front left) passed away later that year of COVID.



Carolyn Troseth arranges our first flower potluck

July 2015

We were Zoom only from April 1, 2020 to April 25, 2021 with Pastor David Blair.

This is what church looked like for us. James Hing would share his screen so we could read hymn lyrics or watch musicians from around the world sing our hymns for the day.



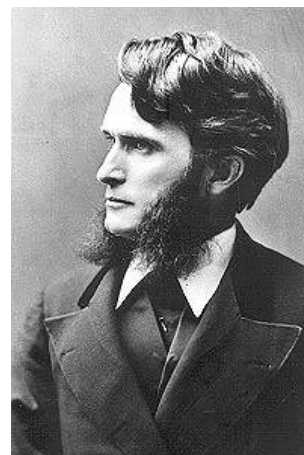
THE STORY BEHIND THE HYMN

God Be With You

Written in 1880

Grace, mercy, and peace will be with you from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love. 2 John 3

On September 19, 1945, missionary Darlene Deibler was liberated from the Japanese Prison Camp at Kampili, seventeen days after Japan had signed the Instrument of Surrender aboard the USS Missouri. She was in bad shape, having been subjected to years of physical suffering and mental torture.



Jeremiah Eames Rankin
B. 1828 New Hampshire
D. 1904 Ohio

Eight years before, Darlene and her husband, Russell, had landed as missionaries in New Guinea. Plunging into the work, they were making solid progress in building a growing church, aided by Darlene's dear friend and mentor, Dr. Robert Jaffray. Now both Russell and Dr. Jaffray were dead, and Darlene was leaving behind two lonely white crosses on the hillside. As a 28-year-old widow, she was returning home without a single possession. All her mementos and private keepsakes were gone, her loved ones were dead, and her body was debilitated by exhaustion, starvation, malaria, beriberi, and dysentery.

For over four years, she had witnessed atrocities that can scarcely be described. Prisoners all around her had suffered horrible deaths, and she herself had seen the inside of death cells. During that time, not one letter or package had reached her.

As the boat carried her from her island prison, she prayed a bitter prayer: "Lord, I'll never come to these islands again. They've robbed me of everything that was most dear to me."

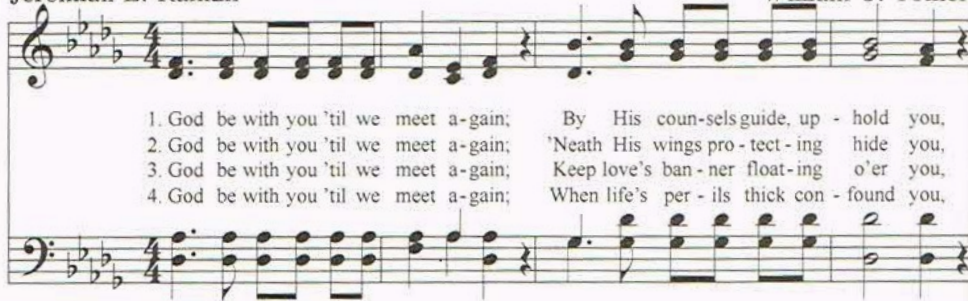
Suddenly she heard voices, Indonesian voices ringing from the distance. There on the shore were those who had come to know the Lord through her mission, raising their voices, singing: "God be with you till we meet again. / By His counsels guide, uphold you, / With His sheep securely fold you; / God be with you till we meet again."

Darlene later wrote in her autobiography, *Evidence Not Seen*: "This song released the waters of bitterness that had flooded my soul, and the hurt began to drain from me as my tears flowed in a steady stream. The healing had begun. I knew then that some day, God only knew when, I would come back to these my people and my island home."

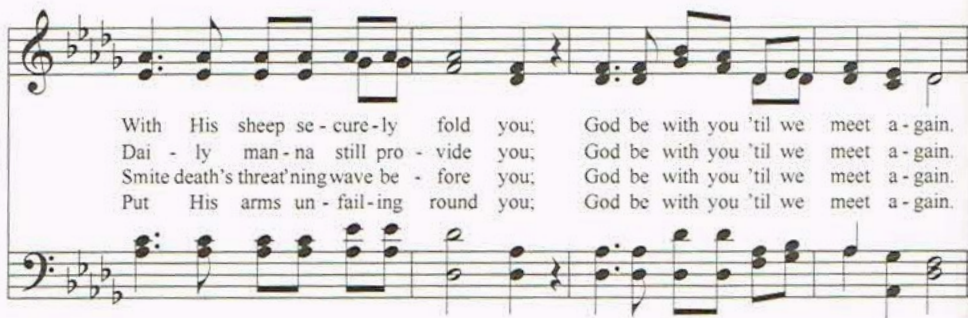
God Be with You

Jeremiah E. Rankin

William G. Tomer



1. God be with you 'til we meet a-gain; By His coun-sels guide, up - hold you,
 2. God be with you 'til we meet a-gain; 'Neath His wings pro - tect - ing hide you,
 3. God be with you 'til we meet a-gain; Keep love's ban - ner float - ing o'er you,
 4. God be with you 'til we meet a-gain; When life's per - ils thick con - found you,



With His sheep se - cure - ly fold you; God be with you 'til we meet a - gain.
 Dai - ly man - na still pro - vide you; God be with you 'til we meet a - gain.
 Smite death's threat'ning wave be - fore you; God be with you 'til we meet a - gain.
 Put His arms un - fail - ing round you; God be with you 'til we meet a - gain.



'Til we meet, 'til we meet, 'Til we meet at Je - sus' feet;



'Til we meet, 'til we meet, God be with you 'til we meet a - gain.

"God Be With You" was written by Jeremiah Rankin, pastor of Washington's First Congregational Church and president of Howard University, the great African-American college in the nation's capital. He wrote it, he said, after discovering that the term "good-bye" meant "God be with you."

This was the last hymn we sang on Sunday April 30.

Article submitted by Joel & Karen Jackman. Sources: Then Sings My Soul by Robert Morgan, hymn-time.com

YOU SELECTED THE APRIL HYMNS!!

**Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia
Alleluia, Alleluia! Hearts to Heaven
Beautiful Savior
At The Lambs High Feast
I Was There to Hear Your Borne Cry
On Eagles' Wings**

**Praise and Thanksgiving
The Strife is O'er, the Battle Done
Praise God, from Whom All Blessing Flow
Amazing Grace
I Love to tell the Story
My Hope is Built on Nothing Less**

**Be Still, My Soul
When Peace, Like a River (It is Well)
What Wondrous Love is This
I Know That My Redeemer Lives
Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us
Seek Ye First
Sent Forth by God's Blessing**

And we sang **"The Lord's Prayer"**.

"God Be With You 'Til We Meet Again"
was specially chosen by Pastor Flath as the
final hymn sung at Bethlehem on April 30.



James Hing counted your votes for favorite hymn and was able to include those with the most votes into our final 3 Sunday services.

James writes, *"What I found interesting is how all the favorite hymns suggested easily folded into the readings for each given Sunday and the theme of that Sunday. All I had to do was study what was chosen to slot them into each Sunday."*

The hymns for our Saturday, April 29 service were selected by the Member Services Team. They were:

**Lift High the Cross
A Mighty Fortress is Our God
Have No Fear, Little Flock
The Church's One Foundation
Go, My Children, with My Blessing**

LIVE GENEROUSLY



Thank you for your generosity in contributing \$750 in the 40th anniversary of the Renton **Crop Walk**.

Tracy Brown was the Team BLC Captain again this year. We walked in memory of Ron Muller.

INSTALLATION at PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH A Message From Our Great Granddaughter Church

Peace is blessed to report that we have called a new Pastor, and he has accepted our call to be our shepherd. Pastor Steve Heinsen is originally from Iowa and is currently serving in Sandpoint ID. He's an avid outdoorsman and traveler, as well as a seeker of lost souls! We are planning his installation to take place on Sunday afternoon, July 9th at 3 pm! You are invited to attend the service.

Peace Lutheran
18615 SE 272nd St, Covington WA
July 9 at 3 pm

Quotes On Coping with Changes

Often when you are at the end of something, it's really the beginning of something else. Fred Rogers

"You can clutch the past so tightly to your chest that it leaves your arms too full to embrace the present." ~Jan Glidewell

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12b)

So, what do you do with a chance?

You take it ... because it just might be the start of something incredible. Kobi Yamada

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
1024 Monroe Ave N.E.
Renton, WA 98056
BethlehemLutheranRenton.org

May/June 2023

This is the final edition of the Bethlehem Star Newsletter. I have been most fortunate to be its editor for 13 years. A sincere thank you to all who helped along this journey. Without you, this paper would not have been nearly as special. Working with our Bethlehem village of reporters, contributing writers, photographers, & editors was truly a blessing.

I will share updates from the closing teams as often as practical.

Do let me know where you are worshipping. Some have transferred and others are still searching. We'd love to share who is where!

-Dielda Kuhlmann

CLOSING TEAM UPDATES

The teams gathered in May to update each other on progress. An email was sent to all members with information. Below is a summary. The next meeting is in mid-July.

Property Team is working with the lawyers to get the necessary documents prepared to sell the building, parsonage, & field to the Moldovian Baptist Church. It's the same group that rented our sanctuary from 2004 to 2015. They are also preparing documents to sell the land where the AbleLight home sits and the adjacent lot (next to Marjie's house) to AbleLight. AbleLight is currently leasing that property from us.

Legacy Team has found new church homes for the organ, banners, hymnals, Bibles, Christus rex statue, choir robes, elder robes, handbells, baptism font, communion ware, and many more cherished items. Details will be shared later.

Membership Services Team came in under budget for the April 29 reception and have put homebound members in touch with their new pastors.

Financial Management Team donated the Memorial Funds of all families according to their wishes. They continue to monitor our financial situation.

Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you. 2 Corinthians 11