

# CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE



## Congregation Name and Location

Name Bethel Lutheran Church

Mailing address 624 E Camino Colegio

City Santa Maria State/Province CA Zip/Postal Code 93454

Telephone (805) 922-6601 Fax (805) 922-6602

Email address officebethelsantamaria@gmail.com

Congregation website www.bethelsantamaria.org

Seeking  Full-time pastor  Part-time pastor  Either full-time or part-time

## Congregational President or Vice President

Name Caren Campbell Title President

Mailing address 2602 Lorencita Drive

City Santa Maria State/Province CA Zip/Postal Code 93455

Home phone (805) 937-3936 Cell phone (805) 478-1956

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## Call Committee Chair

Name LaVonne McGee

Mailing address 1856 Wade Court

City Santa Maria State/Province CA Zip/Postal Code 93454

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## Congregational Demographics

Number of **paid** staff (full- or part-time): Clergy 1 Lay professionals \_\_\_\_\_ Secretarial 2 PT

Average worship attendance 73 Average Sunday school attendance 12 adults, 3 children

**Indicate the type of community in which your congregation is located (is it small town, small city, suburban, large city, farming, industrial, etc.).**

Santa Maria is located in a fertile valley, surrounded on three sides by grazing meadows, rolling hills, and fertile farm crop land, open to the ocean. It could be described as a small city with a population of 108,470, making it the most populous city in the County of Santa Barbara. The population of the metropolitan area which includes development adjacent to the city limits is about 142,000. It is located near the Pacific Coast, about halfway between San Francisco and Los Angeles, and about 70 miles north of Santa Barbara.

Agriculture and agri-business are the most significant industries. The crops in this rich agricultural area are primarily strawberries, grapes, and vegetables. There is also a fairly significant commercial and light industrial base. It is 30 miles from Vandenberg Air Force Base.

It has a mild coastal climate, which one of our members describes as “warm when it’s cold, and cool when it’s hot.”

Our community has a ministerial group that meets monthly to support each other.

**Describe the congregation’s ethnic composition and age distribution.**

Currently our congregation has 134 members with the breakdown as follows:

Hispanic	19	14%	under 21 yrs.	25	19%
Black	1	<1%	22-49	23	17%
Asian	2	1%	50-64	19	14%
White	112	84%	65+	67	50%

**Does the congregation have a clear vision for mission — a clear and shared understanding of where God is leading you? If so, state it as succinctly as possible.**

Bethel’s Mission Statement (abbreviated version) is that we: Invite People In, Build People Up and Send People Out – to serve and share Jesus Christ. We are a welcoming, loving congregation but feel that there is room for growth and a desire for more intentional development of discipleship understanding and practices that we may then have a clear and shared vision where God is leading our congregation.

## **What are the primary goals of your congregation?**

To continue, expand and enhance these ministries:

- Strong and relatable Bible-based preaching and teaching
- Ministry to senior citizens in the congregation and community
- Ministry to families and children in the congregation and community
- Service projects locally and globally

## **Describe your congregation's worship practice (liturgy, hymns, vestments, music, hymnals, and frequency of Holy Communion).**

Our congregation currently holds one worship service each Sunday morning at 9:30 a.m. We use a variety of traditional and contemporary liturgy, including both hymns and contemporary music. Music is led by piano, organ, or music team (guitars & vocal). The entire service is projected on a screen. We serve Holy Communion at each worship service. We prefer that our pastor wear vestments during worship services.

## **Describe your congregation's Christian education ministry.**

Our adult Christian education is active with a Sunday morning Bible Study class and mid-week groups including women's circles, 4<sup>th</sup> Day-Emmaus Bible study, Christ Care-Life Journaling and Men of Bethel. Our children and youth education ministry is struggling. We currently do not have children's Sunday school class after worship mostly due to sporadic attendance. There is confirmation class for the Jr High students. The youth (Jr & Sr High students) meet monthly at the Pastor's home for Bible study and fellowship.

## **Describe the congregation's current activities for mission and outreach.**

Locally or in-church, our congregation supports Stephen Ministry, Parents' Night Out four times a year, a nearby elementary school, Iglesia Luterana Santa Cruz (Hispanic congregation using our facilities), Serve Santa Maria (city-wide service days twice a year). We make donations to several local service organizations such as a homeless shelter, women's shelter, pregnancy center, and the local food bank.

We also support global organizations such as China Services Venture (with 2 missionaries), sponsoring a child through Compassion International, and making personal care kits for Lutheran World Relief.

**The NALC is committed to moving away from an institutional understanding of the Church, to the biblical commission to be a community of followers of Jesus who focus on being disciples and making disciples. Which best describes your congregation's understanding of this movement? [Type an X by the appropriate response]**

- Totally unaware
- Have heard about it
- Have been involved personally
- Some in the congregation are involved, some aren't
- Congregation understands, is on-board and involved

**List the *Top Five Things* your congregations hopes for in its next Pastor**

1. Strong Biblical and relational preaching and a passion for teaching
2. Multi-generational people skills
3. Compassion and trustworthiness
4. Supportive of existing ministries
5. Leadership abilities in vision and discipleship

**What were the three most significant events in your congregation's history? Provide the years in which these events happened and why they are important to your congregation.**

1. **The establishment of a Hispanic congregation, Iglesia Luterana Santa Cruz.** In 2002, the Bethel congregation, along with other Lutheran churches, voted to develop this mission. Our facilities and financial support were offered. Initially, Santa Cruz had a pastor and no members. It has grown to an active, vibrant, and mission-minded congregation, often with over 100 worshippers. We continue support of Santa Cruz by providing their occupancy rent-free, along with benevolence support and active participation in their mission to the working poor. This ministry has sharpened our focus for reaching the unchurched and for service to the needy.
2. **Sale of vacant property.** In 2012, the congregation voted to sell a vacant 2½ acre portion of Bethel's 5-acre property to People's Self Help Housing for the development of 40 low-rent housing units for senior citizens. The project will be a benefit to seniors who wish to live in a safe community with on-site management, and who are challenged by the high cost of housing. The congregation feels a sense of fulfillment by facilitating this community need. The development of the property is now underway and is set to be completed in 2020.

We set aside a tithe of the sale proceeds and shared the tithe with various charitable organizations. A significant amount of the sale proceeds has been placed in an endowment fund

3. **Exit from the ELCA.** This action, taken in 2011, is described in a succeeding paragraph.

**Has your congregation participated in the Congregational Workshop Preparatory to the Call Process? [Type an X by the appropriate response]**

**Yes**

**No**

**What were the three most significant results of the workshop?**

1. We live in the joy of the Lord
2. We have a common purpose and mission to move forward
3. We need to be open to a change in pastoral leadership

**Describe the nature and extent of any significant current or recent conflict in the congregation. Is this conflict resolved, or ongoing? If resolved, how was it resolved?**

The action of the ELCA in 2009 to allow practicing homosexuals to serve as pastors was a defining issue for the congregation. Our pastor scheduled many meetings for discussion as to the potential response of the congregation. He also made himself available for private conversations. There was respect for all comments and feelings. After there were no more requests for discussion, a congregation meeting was held. About 89-92% of the votes were to leave the ELCA. A few of the dissenters left the congregation; a few of the dissenters stayed.

**How does your congregation handle conflict/tension? Which of the following do you think best describes your congregation? [Type an X by the appropriate response]**

- As a church, we respect and listen to each other and work things through without generating divisiveness.
- As a church, we try to respect and listen to each other, but it is not uncommon for differences of opinion to be a problem and for some people to choose sides. Some have left our church because of conflict.
- Conflict hurts our sense of unity, but we tend not to talk about it.
- Painful experience with conflict has been present, but it has been worked through, and we have learned from the experience.
- We have had some painful experiences with conflict, and they linger in the background.
- Open conflict is present, and we need a minister who can help us deal with it.
- Other (describe).....

**What was the nature of the relationship between your last pastor and the congregation? Positive? Struggling? Cooperative? Tense?**

Positive and cooperative

**How did your council/congregational leaders work together with your last pastor? [Type an X by the appropriate response]**

- Leadership is shared, with shared decision-making
- Pastor makes important decisions
- Council makes decisions with pastoral input
- Council makes decisions without pastoral input

**Is your pastor a member of council with: [Type an X by the appropriate response(s)]**

Voice     Vote

**Congregational finances**

Total budget for last calendar year: \$ 195,423 \_\_\_\_\_

Benevolence to the North American Lutheran Church: \$ 5,670 \_\_\_\_\_

Other benevolence: \$ 9,750 budgeted, + designated gifts

Total debt of the congregation: \$ 0 \_\_\_\_\_

Total savings, reserves, and endowments: \$ 867,093 \_\_\_\_\_

**Compensation of Last Pastor**

Salary: \$ 32,265 \_\_\_\_\_ Parsonage/housing allowance: \$ 35,000 \_\_\_\_\_

Social security offset: \$ 0 \_\_\_\_\_ Pension: \$ 7,298 \_\_\_\_\_

Health Insurance: \$ 23,810 \_\_\_\_\_ Vacation: 5 weeks \_\_\_\_\_

Continuing education (time/funding): 2 weeks \$2,000 \_\_\_\_\_

Travel reimbursement: mileage@ \$.58/mile \$2,900 budgeted \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**When the Congregational Vacancy List is updated, a short paragraph (3-4 sentences) is included announcing each congregation's ministry. If you wish, your call committee may compose that summary, realizing it may be edited/formatted as needed.**

Santa Maria is a small city located in the Central Coast Valley of California, about halfway between Los Angeles and San Francisco. Strawberries and vegetables are fresh from the farm to the table. The area includes wineries and beaches. The climate is mild, which one of our members describes as "warm when it's cold, and cool when it's hot."

We use a variety of traditional and contemporary liturgy and music. We offer Holy Communion at each service. We look ahead with excitement and anticipation to what God has planned for us in the future. We are an aging congregation, but we are vibrant. We welcome families, children, and adults to fellowship with us and to experience a meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ, the head of the church.

**Provide any other information about your congregation that may be helpful in the call process.**

From September of 2017 to August of 2018, our congregation was extremely supportive with the development and education of an intern pastor, who has since been called to a church in Seattle.

We recognize the value of a long-term pastoral relationship.

Our current pastor is retiring. To facilitate a smooth transition in pastoral service, he is willing to arrange for a short overlap with the incoming pastor or is willing to meet with him or her.

Completed by: LaVonne McGee

Date: June 10, 2019

