

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
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Websites: (congregation) www.bethelportvilleny.org; (synod) www.upstatenysynod.org;
(ELCA) www.elca.org

Worship Service - Sundays at 9:00am; Sunday School at 10:30am
God's work. Our hands.

MARCH 2015

doing well and may not need my gift. But for my soul's sake, I need to give my offering."

Prayer: Almighty and ever-loving God, please instill in each of us the awareness that we need to be good stewards for our soul's sake. **Amen**



STEWARDSHIP

March issue of **Stewardship** reminds us that the Lenten season is a time for remembering Christ's gift of salvation for us. "During Lent, let us remember true giving involves sacrifice, it is unselfish and it is ongoing." Have you ever known anyone who gave in such a manner? There are such dedicated people.

For instance, a retired pastor was asked to tell about an old saint he had known who was truly dedicated to God named Frank Jones. Mr. Jones was in his nineties and lived alone, yet he was never lonely. In fact, every time the pastor visited him, he found other people coming and going from Frank's home. Old people who had lost a mate loved having fellowship with old Frank. Frank was a cheerful man, warm-hearted, and a true lover of God. His mail carrier always was invited into Frank's home. He would sit for a while, sometimes drinking tea that Frank had prepared for him and always left with a feeling of joy. Frank had worked on the railroad. One of his legs had been badly injured while still a young man. Invariably as the pastor stood to leave, Frank would hand him an offering for the church. Once the pastor said to him, "Frank, it is wonderful that you want to give to the church. But, the church is in good shape now, why don't you keep it to meet some of your own needs?" Frank smiled and replied, "I am very glad the church is



Pray First!

- For all service men and women, and their families, especially *Juan Fraustro, Andrew Wright, Casey McCarthy, Mike Copponi, Lee Walden, Josh Canaan, Zachary Russell and Kendra Linn*. For Christ to be made known in our companion synods – *Zimbabwe and Zambia*, and our partner synod – *Central/Southern Illinois Synod*. For the Franciscan community at *Mt. Irenaeus* and the *Burkhart Retreat Center for Life* – retreats in our local area. For our Bishops, Bishop Elizabeth Eaton (ELCA) and John Macholz (Upstate New York Synod), Assistants to the Bishop Dave Preisinger, Mary Johnson, and Dean Daniel Rumpf. For the mission congregations in our synod—*Organic Faith* in Amherst and *Todos los Hijos de Dios* in Amsterdam. For the pastors and congregations in our Southwestern Conference and for our congregation council leaders – President *Gary Murray*, Secretary *Jo Kile*, Treasurer *Doug Ploetz*, and members *Ruth Brewer, Rick Giberson, Linda Scott, Jerry Maerten and Bryan Hatch*. For our sister congregation, *Peace Lutheran* and their ministry in Slidell, LA for the ministry of *ELCMA* – Evangelical Lutheran Coalition for Mission in Appalachia. For area ministries: *Genesis House, Portville Community Food Pantry, and Interfaith Caregivers*.



PLEASE SEE BULLETIN BOARD outside the sanctuary for a COMPLETE SECRETARY'S REPORT.

Council Member

Gary Murray
Ruth Brewer
Ruth Brewer
Jo Kile
Doug Ploetz
Jerry Maerten
Linda Scott
Bryan Hatch
Rick Giberson
Gary Murray

Committee Assignment

Council President
Vice President
Worship and Music
Stewardship
Treasurer
Outreach/Evangelism
Advertising
Education
Property
Fellowship



Choir practice is held Sunday mornings at 7:45am. All are welcome to join. **No audition necessary.**

We NEED people to sign up as worship servants. We are in need of Lectors, Prayer Leaders, Ushers, Communion assistants and Altar Guild. There are sign-up sheets on the table in Fellowship Hall. Please sign up for one or more of these positions as you feel led. Thank you.



FOR YOUR UPDATE AND INFORMATION

Fundraiser Funds are divided as follows:
10% Charity of our choice
10% Benevolence
Rest in general fund



Our sixth pancake breakfast on Saturday, Feb. 7th was another success and took in about \$220.00 Thanks to everyone who helped us with this by either working, eating, or both.

The March breakfast is scheduled for the first Saturday of the month, March 7th from 8:00am to 11:00am . Please come and join us and bring your friends and neighbors. We need your help in making this fundraiser a success. Thank you.



We have received our clothing drop box to collect clothes for people in need. Box is located in the parking lot of the church next to the utility shed. If you have clothing you wish to drop off, please place them in plastic bags and tie them up. Donations are greatly appreciated. Thank you.

We also have received our first check from St. Pauly Textile. For pickups made in January 2015 we have received \$55.00.

Notice: Deadline for newsletter articles is the third Sunday of each month. Please send them to me at my home e-mail at Junebug44@frontiernet.net or you can leave written ones in the top basket on the secretary's desk in the office. If you have questions you can call me at 814-698-2648

June

March 2015



to:

- 3—Crystal Benson
- 5—Kristen Keenan
- 5—Jo An Brooks
- 6—Ruth Brewer
- 9—Ted Scott
- 14—Amy Giberson
- 18—Marge Nix
- 22—Kyle Dunn
- 22—Alyssa Shelander
- 24—Chris Franquet
- 25—Chris Scott
- 26—Jennifer Baughman
- 27—Jen Talmadge

to:

- 20—Ron & Jo Kile

Worship Assistants

Lectors

- Mar 1st *Jo Kile*
- Mar 8th *Doug Ploetz*
- Mar 15th *Connie Smith-Matteson*
- Mar 22nd] *Pen Yunghans*
- Mar 29th *Ruth Brewer*

Prayer Leaders

- Mar 1st *Nannette Giberson*
- Mar 8th *Connie Smith-Matteson*
- Mar 15th *Gary Murray*
- Mar 22nd *Ruth Brewer*
- Mar 29th *Judy Graves*



to:

- 20—Ron & Jo Kile

Assistants for March

- Acolyte.....*Robert Wolsky*
- Communion Assistants ... *June Murray*
.....*and Ariel Kile*
- Usher/s *Don Linn*
- Altar Guild.....*Ron and Jo Kile*
- Bread Bakers..... *Ron Kile*
- Mail Greeter.....*Caroline Miller*

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH CALENDAR - MARCH 2015

- SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT**
Sunday, Mar. 1st
7:45am-Choir rehearsal
9:00am- Worship with Fellowship following
11:00am - Adult Bible Study and Sunday School
- THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT**
Sunday, Mar. 8th
7:45am- Choir rehearsal
9:00am - Worship with Fellowship following
11:00am - Adult Bible Study and Sunday School
- FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT**
Sunday, Mar. 15th
7:45am-Choir rehearsal
9:00am- Worship with Fellowship following
10:30am- Confirmation Class
11:00am - Adult Bible Study and Sunday School
- Thurs. Feb. 19th
7:00pm - Council Meeting
- FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT**
Sunday, Mar.. 22nd
7:45am-Choir rehearsal
9:00am- Worship with fellowship following
11:00am - Adult Bible Study and Sunday School
- PASSON SUNDAY**
Sunday, Mar, 29th
7:45am-Choir rehearsal
9:00am- Worship with fellowship following
11:00am - Adult Bible Study and Sunday School

LENTEN SERVICES AVAILABLE:

Bethany:

Lenten Services: Wednesdays – 12:10pm Short Service with soup & bread to follow.
6pm – Soup & bread with Short Service to follow

First Presbyterian:

Lenten Services: Mondays – 5:30pm with soup & study (Looking at the Cross)

Methodist:

Lenten Services: Sunday at 6pm (Renegade Gospel – The Rebel)

HYMN HISTORY

1961

HEAVEN CAME DOWN

The heavens declare His righteousness, and all the people see His glory. Psalm 97:6 (NKJV)

As a teenager, John W. Peterson dreamed of being a singer and soloist. He often sang on local radio programs and in churches. "Only in singing did I feel competent and confident," he wrote.

"Here was at least one place where I could excel. I knew it, and I made the most of it."

One summer John got a job in a factory, earning fifteen cents an hour at a machine making canvas for wheat binders. The machines were so noisy he sang at the top of his lungs, hour on end, making up melodies and imagining he was on stage.

John realized too late that he was ruining his voice. "I put such a terrific strain on my faltering voice," he wrote, "through overuse and inexperience that I damaged it beyond repair. When I realized fully what had happened, that my voice would never again be beautiful, I suffered such an emotional shock that it took months before I recovered."

Looking back now, John is grateful. "If that had not happened, I might never have developed as a writer," he wrote. "With my voice damaged, I turned more and more to writing and that talent was allowed to emerge and develop. What at first seemed a tragedy was used for good, and the course of my life began to take shape."

Today John W. Peterson is called the "Dean of Modern Hymn Writers." He's the author of such favorites as "So Send I You," "It Took a Miracle," "Surely Goodness and Mercy," "Jesus Led Me All the Way," "No One Understands Like Jesus," and "I Believe in Miracles."

"Heaven Came Down," one of John's most popular compositions, was written during the summer of 1961. He was ministering at Montrose Bible Conference Grounds in Montrose, Pennsylvania. During one of the sessions, an opportunity was given for people to share a word of testimony. A man known as "Old Jim" rose to his feet and told of how he had come to Christ. "It seemed like Heaven came down and glory filled my soul," he said.

"Right away I sensed that it would be a fine title for a song," John wrote, "so I wrote it down and later in the week completed the song. It became a favorite almost immediately."

Chorus:

*Heaven came down and glory filled my soul (filled my soul),
When at the cross the Savior made me whole (made me whole);
My sins were washed away and my night turned to day,
Heaven came down and glory filled my soul (filled my soul)!*

taken from "Then Sings my Soul, Book 2" Robert J. Morgan copyright 2004



During the month of March we are going to have a kitchen shower! Items can be donated at any time during the month. Below is a list of items used and needed. Thanks for your support.

List of kitchen products

Coffee
Juice
Paper towels
Toilet paper
Dish detergent
Liquid soap for bathrooms
Small hand sanitizers to place in pews
Hot drink cups (8 oz)
Cold drink cups (8 oz)
Cold drink cups (5 oz)
Plates – small dessert
Plates – large
Napkins
Soup Bowls
Aluminum foil
Press and Seal
Storage bags 1 qt. and 1 gallon
Trash Bags (13 gallon and 39 gallon)
Kleenex

Thank

You



The Thought that Wouldn't Go Away

My daughter needed a place of healing. I was out of ideas.

By Lynne Crimi, Saratoga, New York

Another dead end, I thought, hanging up the phone. And it had felt so right this time. The JFK Johnson Rehabilitation Institute in Edison, New Jersey was almost everything I'd prayed for. A world-class facility specializing in the treatment of young adults with traumatic brain injuries. Everything they told me convinced me that this was the place where my daughter, Jennifer, would finally begin to heal from the skiing accident she'd suffered two years earlier. Except Jenn and her husband lived in Vermont, and all of the housing options near the Institute turned out to be prohibitively expensive.

Lord, I prayed, I just want my daughter back. Why can't I find a way to help her? After the accident, Jenn wasn't herself. Instead of my outgoing, personality-plus daughter, she was impulsive and confused. After years of unsuccessful rehab, her doctor suggested the changes might be permanent. "That's not an option!" I said, but now I wasn't so sure. All my calls for help—on the phone or in my prayers—went nowhere.

Call the Episcopal Church in Metuchen. The thought caught me off guard. Metuchen? I was able to find out that the town was close to Edison, and I was Episcopal, but how would the church solve my problem? What was I going to do, ask them to pray? It was a crazy thought. I shrugged it off.

Weeks went by. The thought persisted—*Call the church in Metuchen.* Jenn continued to struggle. Finally, I gave in. I looked up the Episcopal church, called St. Luke's, and left a long, rambling message about Jenn's condition. I hung up feeling flustered.

The next day, I got a call from the Senior Warden of St. Luke's. "Why did you think to call here?" he asked. I told him about the thought that wouldn't go away. "It's crazy, I know," I said.

"No, it's not," he said. "Our priest of 26 years just moved out of the rectory. Your daughter and her husband can stay the six months here, for free."



The Love of a Steward

There's an elderly gentleman named Joe Hollenbeck in our church in Glens Falls, NY, who often goes unnoticed. He can't sing, so he's not in the choir. His voice is rather shaky, so he's never led the prayer group.

What he does possess in abundance is love. Our Vacation Bible School has one hundred-fifty children. There he was blowing up balloons, serving ice cream, and helping clean up. He's always approaching newcomers with a warm handshake and a friendly, "It's really good to see you here. Hope you come back!" If you're hurting, he's the first one by your side at church to pray and give support. If you're experiencing hardship, he's right there to offer help with the grocery bill that week, even though his income is very limited. If a young couple needs a break from all their responsibilities, he's the first one to volunteer to watch the little ones so mom and dad can escape for a weekend.

He does all this without ever being asked. His loving acts of stewardship largely go unheralded, but never unappreciated. Whether it's time or money or abilities, all God asks in a willing heart.

Reprinted from January 2015 Stewardship pamphlet

Little Boy's Explanation of God

It was written by an 8-year-old named Danny Dutton, who lives in Chula Vista , CA . He wrote it for his third grade homework assignment, to 'explain God.' I wonder if any of us could have done as well? (and he had such an assignment, in California , and someone published it, I guess miracles do happen!)

EXPLANATION OF GOD:

'One of God's main jobs is making people. He makes them to replace the ones that die, so there will be enough people to take care of things on earth. He doesn't make grownups, just babies. I think because they are smaller and easier to make. That way he doesn't have to take up his valuable time teaching them to talk and walk. He can just leave that to mothers and fathers.'

'God's second most important job is listening to prayers. An awful lot of this goes on, since some people, like preachers and things, pray at times beside bedtime. God doesn't have time to listen to the radio or TV because of this. Because he hears everything, there must be a terrible lot of noise in his ears, unless he has thought of a way to turn it off.'

'God sees everything and hears everything and is everywhere which keeps Him pretty busy. So you shouldn't go wasting his time by going over your mom and dad's head asking for something they said you couldn't have.'

'Atheists are people who don't believe in God. I don't think there are any in Chula Vista . At least there aren't any who come to our church.'

'Jesus is God's Son. He used to do all the hard work, like walking on water and performing miracles and trying to teach the people who

didn't want to learn about God. They finally got tired of him preaching to them and they crucified him. But he was good and kind, like his father, and he told his father that they didn't know what they were doing and to forgive them and God said O.K.' And God did not let Jesus stay in the grave, but raised him from the dead. 'His dad (God) appreciated everything that he had done and all his hard work on earth so he told him he didn't have to go out on the road anymore. He could stay in heaven. So he did. And now he helps his dad out by listening to prayers and seeing things which are important for God to take care of and which ones he can take care of himself without having to bother God. Like a secretary, only more important.' 'You can pray anytime you want and they are sure to help you because they got it worked out so one of them is on duty all the time.'

'You should always go to church on Sunday because it makes God happy, and if there's anybody you want to make happy, it's God! Don't skip church to do something you think will be more fun like going to the beach. This is wrong. And besides the sun doesn't come out at the beach until noon anyway.'

'If you don't believe in God, besides being an atheist, you will be very lonely, because your parents can't go everywhere with you, like to camp, but God can. It is good to know He's around you when you're scared, in the dark or when you can't swim and you get thrown into real deep water by big kids.' 'But...you shouldn't just always think of what God can do for you. I figure God put me here and he can take me back anytime he pleases. And...that's why I believe in God.'