

# BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
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(716)-933-6699

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Websites: (congregation) [www.bethelportvilleny.org](http://www.bethelportvilleny.org); (synod) [www.upstatenysynod.org](http://www.upstatenysynod.org);  
(ELCA) [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)

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

## MAY 2015



The May issue **Stewardship** has a delightful story of a little boy who seems to express joy often by clapping his hands eagerly. Put him on the floor with a toy or two and he will clap his hands. Take him to the kitchen table where he sees a container of apple sauce and he claps his hands. Mention that the family is going on a picnic later and he claps his hands in anticipation. This might remind you of a song often sung at a church camp. Remember these words:

*If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands!*

*If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands!*

*If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it;*

*If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands!*

In John's gospel, we find Jesus telling about the main source of joy for his followers. After saying that if we abide in him we will bear much fruit, our Lord said: "I have said

these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete" (John 15:11). Christians should be joyous hand clappers! In John's gospel, Jesus went on to say: "I have called you friends ... You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name" (John 15:16-17). Bearing good fruit through our service in Christ's name is our calling and our duty. **Clap your hands!**

**Prayer:** Loving God, help us to be faithful stewards of our entire lives, always seeking to do thy will. And help us to joyfully clap our hands for all the blessings you bestow on us. **Amen**

**SOME PEOPLE ARE KIND, POLITE, AND SWEET-  
SPIRITED UNTIL YOU TRY TO SIT IN THEIR  
PEWS.**



**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 Rumpfelt. 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 *Bill Graves*, Secretary *Linda Scott*, Treasurer *Doug Ploetz*, Vice President *Ruth Brewer* and members *Caroline Miller, Donald Linn, 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

Bill Graves  
Ruth Brewer  
Linda Scott  
Doug Ploetz  
Ruth Brewer

Caroline Miller  
Jerry Maerten  
Bryan Hatch  
Don Linn

Committee Assignment

Council President  
Vice President  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Worship and Music & Christian Education  
Stewardship  
Outreach/Evangelism  
Fellowship  
Property



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

**Quit griping about your church; If it was perfect, you couldn't belong.**



Our monthly breakfast in April was another success. We made \$247.00 dollars. These breakfasts will be put on hold now until in the fall. We appreciate all the help and support that has been received and hope to have the same success in the future. The start-up date will be announced later.



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.

*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](mailto: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*

***Be ye fishers of men. You catch'em – He'll clean'em***



**IN MEMORY OF JANE RICE**

Kurt and Caroline Miller



We have received a thank you from ELCA for our support of the World Hunger program.

## **SYNOD ASSEMBLY PROJECT - ALUMINUM CAN TAB COLLECTION**

At our June 2013 Synod Assembly, the aluminum can tab collection project was very successful. At a recent meeting of the Synod Assembly Planning Team, it was decided that we would again conduct this collection at the 2014 Synod Assembly. This is a project that every congregation in the Synod can participate in. As we did last year, the collection point will be in the area of the registration table. The proceeds from the collection will benefit two (2) established, Synod supported charities, which have yet to be determined. The Synod Assembly Planning Team will make an announcement as to the charities chosen in the near future.



*We will still be collecting can tabs until the end of May. They will be taken to synod assembly conference on May 29<sup>th</sup>.*

## **Thrivent News**

I am sad to say that as of June 2015, the local Thrivent chapters will be ending. Thrivent Financial believes they can better service community programs by doing the program "Thrivent Action Teams". This program allows any Thrivent member to apply for "starter" money in the amount of \$250 to purchase supplies that are needed for fundraisers. Each member is allowed to apply twice a year. The other Thrivent program is "Thrivent Choice", in which members can direct dollars to any church, school etc. In 2014 Bethel received \$500 in choice dollars. The chicken barbecue is planned for this August and we can apply for the \$250 start up money to use for the needed supplies. ----*Ruth Brewer*

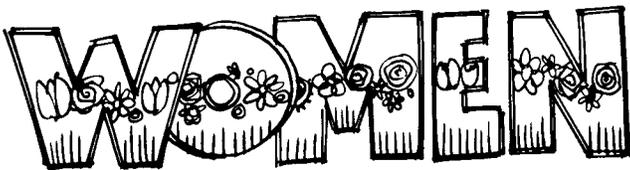


## ATTENTION!!!

The Stewardship committee will be sponsoring our annual Yard Sale on Saturday June 6<sup>th</sup> from 9:00am until 4:00pm.

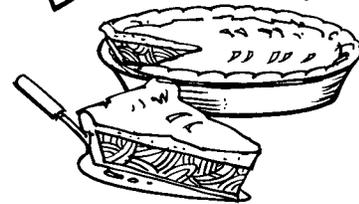
This should give you all lots of time to clean out your houses and garages and compile things that we can sell. We also need some volunteers to help. It makes it so much easier if we have lots of volunteers. Please contact Nannette Giberson, Jo Kile or June Murray if you have questions or would like to sign up to help.

**Saturday – May 2<sup>nd</sup>** there will be a cleanup day at Bethel. We will be starting at 9:00 am. Rick and Nannette Giberson have graciously volunteered to furnish lunch for all the workers. We need as many people as possible to come out for this as there is both inside and outside cleanup to be done.



The annual Bethel “Women of the Church” banquet will be held on Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup> starting at 5:00pm. As before, Gary Murray will be in charge of this and the men will serve the women. He has entertainment lined up for us as well. Please plan to attend this special night and bring your daughters, mothers, sisters and women friends with you. There is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship hall for you to let Gary know how many will be attending. He needs to know this as soon as possible. Thank you.

## Bake Sale



## LOOKING AHEAD

Calling all Pie Bakers!!

Keep tuned for details on the Portville Heritage Days. Bethel holds a pie sale to benefit the Portville Food Pantry during this time. Please see Caroline Miller or Ruth Brewer for details.

# May 2015



Acolyte.....*Dakota Brewer*

Communion Assistants:.....*Caroline Miller*  
.....*Bev Robinson*

Lectors:

(3<sup>rd</sup>) .....*Judy Graves*  
(10<sup>th</sup>) .....*Doug Ploetz*  
(17<sup>th</sup>)..... *Connie Smith-Matteson*  
(24<sup>th</sup>) .....*Doug Ploetz*  
(31<sup>st</sup>).....*Jo Kile*

Prayer Leaders:

(3<sup>rd</sup>) .....*Caroline Miller*  
(10<sup>th</sup>) .....*Jean Morgan*  
(17<sup>th</sup>) .....*Judy Graves*  
(24<sup>th</sup>) ..... *Connie Smith-Matteson*  
(31<sup>st</sup>).....*Nannette Giberson*

Ushers ..... *Chris and Marie Franquet*

Altar Guild.....May 3<sup>rd</sup> *Nannette Giberson*  
May 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup> .....*Trinette Brewer*

Mail Greeter.....*Caroline Miller*

Bread Bakers .....*Ron Kile*

## Happy Birthday to:

- 3—Bill Graves
- 5—Jessianne Doty
- 10—Abigail Benson
- 12—Nathan Gabler
- 15—Mariah Shepard
- 16—Casey Baughman
- 17—Sarah Linn, Rick Chapman
- 18—Don Linn
- 19—Erin Ploetz Hall
- 23—Tom Ploetz
- 24—Dakota Brewer
- 25—Kellie Swanson
- 27—Parker Keenan
- 30—Jon Giberson



## Happy Anniversary to:

- 5—Robert & Barbara MacPherson



## HYMN HISTORY

### BLESSED ASSURANCE

1873

*.....nevertheless I am not ashamed for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day. 2 Timothy 1:12*

Frances Ridley Havergal and Frances (Fanny) Crosby never met, but they became dear pen pals—the two most famous women hymnists of their age, the former in England and the latter in America. Havergal once wrote a poem about her American counterpart:

*Sweet, blind singer over the sea, / Tuneful and jubilant! How can it be, / That the songs of gladness, which float so far; / As if they fell from the evening star / Are the notes of one who may never see 'Visible music' of flower and tree...../ Oh, her heart can see, her heart can see!/ And its sight is strong and swift and free.....*

Another of Fanny's dearest friends was Phoebe Knapp. While Fanny lived in the Manhattan slums and worked in rescue missions, Phoebe lived in the Knapp Mansion, a palatial residence in Brooklyn, where she entertained lavishly. She was an extravagant dresser with a wardrobe full of elaborate gowns and diamond tiaras. Her music room contained one of the finest collections of instruments in the country, and Fanny was a frequent houseguest.

One day in 1873, while Fanny was staying at the Knapp Mansion, Phoebe said she had a tune she wanted to play. Going to the music room, she sat at the piano and played a new composition of her own while the blind hymnist listened. Fanny immediately clapped her hands and exclaimed, "Why, that says 'Blessed Assurance!'" She quickly composed the words, and a great hymn was born.

Many years later, D. L. Moody was preaching in New York at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Dutch Reformed Church. The Moody/Sankey meetings had popularized Fanny Crosby's hymns around the world and had made the blind poetess a household name. But whenever she attended a Moody/Sankey meeting, she refused to be recognized, disavowing acclaim.

This day the church was so crowded she could find nowhere to sit, Moody's son, Will, seeing her, offered to find her a seat. To her bewilderment, he led her onto the platform just as the crowd was singing "Blessed Assurance." Moody, Sr., jumped to his feet, raised his hand, and interrupted the singing. "Praise the Lord!" he shouted. "Here comes the authoress!"

Fanny took her seat amid thunderous ovation, humbly thanking God for making her a blessing to so many.

Taken from "Then Sings my Soul" Robert J. Morgan copyright 2003

***Favorite Hymn of Nannette Giberson***

**All it takes  
is 1 song  
to bring  
back 1,000  
memories.**

## Fifth Grade Assignment

Wouldn't this be great if it was taught in every school.

A fifth grade teacher in a school asked her class to look At TV commercials and see if they could use them in 20 ways To communicate ideas about God.

Here are some of the results: scroll down.

*God is like.*

BAYER ASPIRIN

He works miracles.

*God is like.*

A FORD

He's got a better idea..

*God is like.*

COKE

He's the real thing.

(This is great)

*God is like.*

HALLMARK CARDS

He cares enough to send His very best.

*God is like.*

TIDE

He gets the stains out others leave behind. ...

*God is like.*

GENERAL ELECTRIC

He brings good things to life.

*God is like.*

WAL-MART

He has everything.

*God is like.*

ALKA-SELTZER

Try Him, you'll like Him

*God is like.*  
**SCOTCH TAPE**  
You can't see Him, but you know He's there.

*God is like..*  
**DELTA**  
He's ready when you are.

*God is like.*  
**ALLSTATE**  
You're in good hands with Him.

*God is like.*  
**VO-5 Hair Spray ;**  
*He holds through all kinds of weather*

*God is like.*  
**DIAL SOAP**  
*Aren't you glad you have Him?  
Don't you wish everybody did?*

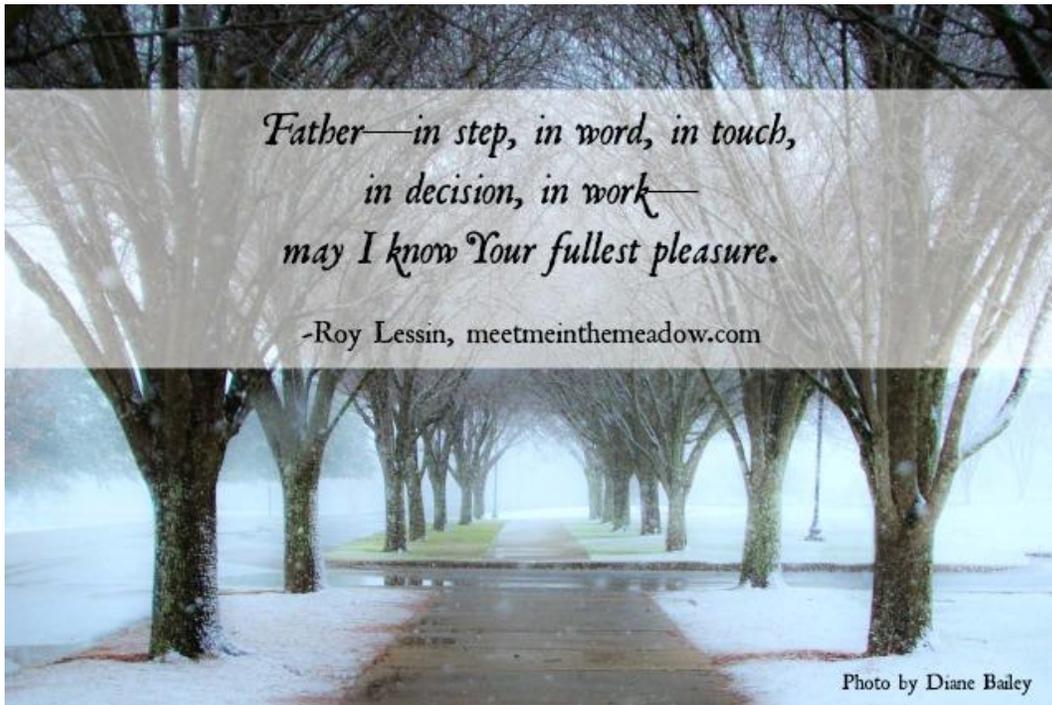
*God is like .*  
**U. S. POST OFFICE**  
*Neither rain, nor snow, nor sleet nor ice will keep Him from  
His appointed destination.*

*God is like.*  
**Chevrolet. . . .the heart beat of America**

*God is like*  
**Maxwell House. ....**  
*Good to the very last drop*

*God is like.*  
**B o u n t y . . . .**  
*He is the quicker picker upper. . Can handle the tough jobs. ..  
And He won't fall apart on you*

*God is like.*  
**The Energizer Bunny - He Keeps Going, Going, and Going**



*It is God Who is all the while effectually at work in you [energizing and creating in you the power and desire], both to will and to work for His good pleasure and satisfaction and delight. [Philippians 2:13 AMP](#)*

Each step is a right step when it follows His pathway.

Each word is a loving word when it comes from His heart.

Each touch is a healing touch when it is motivated by His compassion.

Each decision is a wise decision when it is made according to His will.

Each work is a good work when it is done for His glory.

*Father—in step, in word, in touch, in decision, in work—may I know Your fullest pleasure.*



Sunday morning, the pastor noticed little Alex standing in the foyer of the church staring up at a large plaque. It was covered with names and small American flags mounted on either side of it.

The six-year old had been staring at the plaque for some time, so the pastor walked up, stood beside the little boy, and said quietly,  
"Good morning, Alex."

"Good morning, Pastor," Alex replied, still focused on the plaque.

"Pastor, what is this?"

The pastor said, "Well son, it's a memorial to all the young men and women who died in the service."

Soberly, they just stood together, staring at the large plaque.

Finally, little Alex's voice, barely audible and trembling ... with fear asked .....

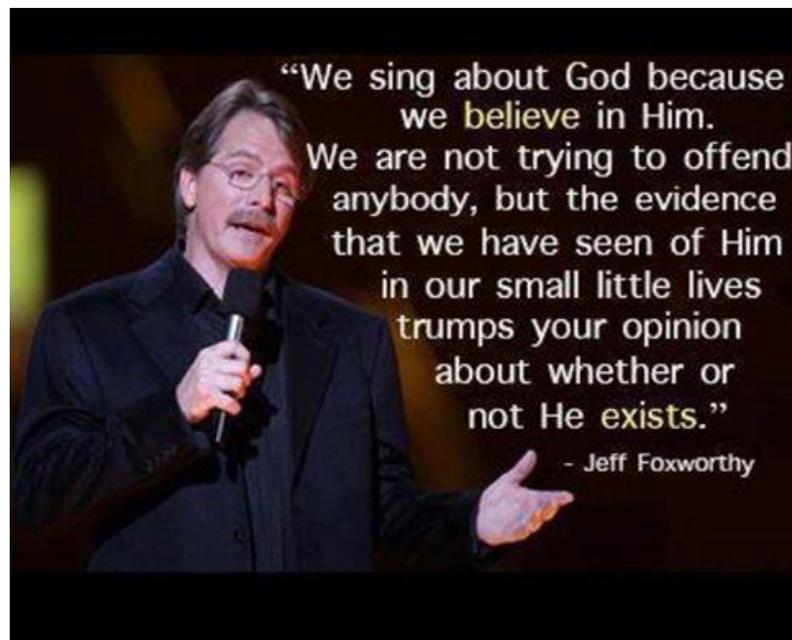
"Which service .... the 8:15 or the 10:30?"

## Prayer

Some of us have a difficult time being asked to pray in public. We seem to do fine in our private time of prayer with our Lord. Public is a different thing and can be scary. Don't be afraid of using the wrong words, or keeping your prayer simple and to the point. Jesus said of the Pharisees, "They think they will be heard because of their many words (Mt. 6:7.) While reading my devotionals the other day I read the following and thought it just too good not to share.

"Ever heard the lawyer's version of "Give us this day our daily bread" (Mt. 6:11). " We respectfully petition, request and entreat that a due and adequate provision be made, this day and date first above and inscribed, for the satisfying of petitioners' nutritional requirements, and for the organizing of such methods of allocation and distribution as may be deemed necessary and proper, to assume the reception by and for said petitioners of such quantity of cereal products (hereinafter and herein called "bread"), and shall in the judgment of the aforesaid petitioners constitute a sufficient amount."

Taken from the "Word for Today devotional" Bob Gass ministries





## Annual Hospice Walk steps off on May 30

OLEAN, N.Y. – Help HomeCare & Hospice raise funds for area patients and families by participating in the 19th annual Hospice Walk. The 2015 walk steps off at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 30 on the Allegheny River Trail at St. Bonaventure University.

Walkers typically ask for pledges from family, friends and co-workers, and many walk in memory or honor of a loved one. Money raised from the walk supports HomeCare & Hospice and increases awareness of available services and resources that the agency provides to the community.

Participants may register online at [www.HomeCare-Hospice.org/HospiceWalk](http://www.HomeCare-Hospice.org/HospiceWalk) or by contacting Kathleen Neeson at [1-800-719-7129](tel:1-800-719-7129) or [kneeson@homecare-hospice.org](mailto:kneeson@homecare-hospice.org).

Sign-in begins at 9:30 a.m. at the west entrance of campus. The three-mile course accommodates strollers, wheelchairs, rollerbladers, bicyclists, joggers, walkers and pets. All are welcome.

The top pledge earners will be given the opportunity to win great prizes donated by area businesses, including a Weber natural gas grill, a set of CUTCO knives, St. Bonaventure basketball season tickets or a fun mystery prize.

Participants who raise \$50 or more will be entered into a drawing more prizes. All registered participants will receive a gift compliment of HomeCare & Hospice.

Businesses, groups, clubs and families are encouraged to organize a team and walk as a group to compete for the “Hospice High Scorers Cup”.

Please hang around after the walk for more fun. Post-walk fun will include an awards ceremony with refreshments, giveaways, a Chinese auction and kids’ games and entertainment.

HomeCare & Hospice, a non-profit United Way agency, provides specialized medical care and social/emotional support for patients and families coping with life-limiting illness in Allegany, Cattaraugus, Genesee and Wyoming counties. This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday Sept. 13, 2015



Dear colleague in ministry,

It's not too early to begin exploring opportunities for how your congregation will participate in “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday. The date for this year’s dedicated day of service is Sunday, Sept. 13, when congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) will once again have the opportunity to gather together and celebrate who we are as the ELCA – one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor.

Mark your congregation’s calendar today. If it’s not possible for your congregation to participate on Sept. 13, please consider another day.

Since 2013, thousands of ELCA members have participated in the dedicated day of service. [View this video](#) from ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and see examples of how ELCA congregations share God’s love.

To guide your planning for 2015, visit [www.ELCA.org/dayofservice](http://www.ELCA.org/dayofservice). There are new resources to consider, such as a study guide designed for congregations to discuss what it means to serve with a joyful heart. You’ll also find the 2015 version of the toolkit and more. A new worship resource will be available later this spring.

Also, we ask that you register your congregation. This will help us share and tell stories about the good work that we do together. [Click here to register](#).

“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday celebrates the work you do every day, serving communities in ways that share the love of God with all people. We look forward to doing this work together again this year.

God’s peace,

*Christina*

Christina Jackson-Skelton  
Executive Director, Mission Advancement  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

## **I am a Christian**

When I say that "I am a Christian," I am not shouting that "I am clean living." I'm whispering "I was lost, but now I'm found and forgiven."

When I say "I am a Christian," I don't speak of this with pride. I'm confessing that I stumble and need Christ to be my guide.

When I say "I am a Christian," I'm not trying to be strong. I'm professing that I'm weak and need His strength to carry

on.

When I say "I am a Christian," I'm not bragging of success. I'm admitting I have failed and need God to clean my mess.

When I say "I am a Christian," I'm not claiming to be perfect. My flaws are far too visible, but God believes I am worth it.

When I say "I am a Christian," I still feel the sting of pain. I have my share of heartaches, so I call upon His name.

When I say "I am a Christian," I'm not holier than thou. I'm just a simple sinner who received God's good grace, somehow!

*Family isn't always blood.  
It's the people in your life who  
want you in theirs; the ones who  
accept you for who you are. The ones  
who would do anything to see you smile  
and who love you no matter what.*

*Share If you agree!*

