

# **BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

*A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*  
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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

The Rev. Ivy Gauvin, *Pastor*

*God's work. Our hands.*

## **NOVEMBER 2014**

### **Pastor's Ponderings**

As we look out our windows these days, we see change. Green leaves that had turned vibrantly alive with color, are now falling as brown, dead leaves. This happens each fall and is inevitable. In the same way we experience changes in our lives each day. Some are exciting and some cause sadness.

Some very exciting things are coming up in November. All Saints Sunday on November 2, gives us the opportunity to remember those who we have known and loved who are now part of the church triumphant. On November 13, we will be having our first Evangelism Team meeting. Our Conference Fall Assembly is the 16<sup>th</sup>. Once again we will be worshipping with our Methodist and Presbyterian brothers and sisters on Thanksgiving Eve. This year it is at the Presbyterian Church at 7:00 and it's my turn to preach. Finally on Sunday, November 30, we will have a healing service where we can allow the Lord to touch us in ways that only he is able.

God has good things in mind for Bethel Lutheran Church. By now you will have received a letter regarding our special congregational meeting on Nov. 9 following worship. I encourage all members who are able, to attend that meeting. The thought of possible change can create anxiety in us. Remember that nothing takes God by surprise. Jesus is Lord. God is still in control and we are still God's beloved children.

Writer and speaker Eckhart Tolle wrote, "Some changes look negative on the surface but you will soon realize that space is being created in your life for something new to emerge." Let us embrace this concept together. What new thing does God want to do in us individually, as a congregation and

as a community? It is a time for us to spend time in prayer seeking God's desire for us.

I have shared this prayer with your previously, but it is one that is a reminder we need in the coming days:

O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

In Christ's love,  
Pastor Ivy

***If you are interested in becoming a member of Bethel, please talk with Pastor Ivy.***

***You are in my prayers.*** Each week I will be focusing on a different member and their family. I will let you know when you are especially being prayed for. Pastor Ivy

***Going on a trip?*** Let Pastor Ivy know so we can bless you on your way.



A previous issue of *Stewardship* described how a husband and wife manage their money. They use the envelope system. They take 12 envelopes, each of which are labeled with a word indicating where money put in that envelope is to go. For example, one envelope might have the word “Home” on it, another “Food,” still another “Utilities” and so forth.

The first envelope in the stack was labeled “Church.” It was obvious that they realized God and the church were their first priority. That made sense because God is our Creator and the church is where we worship God, where we learn of God’s will for our lives, where we join others in organizing to work on behalf of establishing God’s kingdom on earth for which we regularly pray. The church is also where we have fellowship with other Christians, where we learn and laugh and share joys and sorrows, where we break bread together and where we sing:

*The church’s one foundation is Jesus Christ  
her Lord,  
she is his new creation by water and the  
Word.  
From heaven he came and sought her to be  
his holy bride;  
with his own blood he bought her, and for  
her life he died. (Samuel J. Stone)*

The church was of great importance to this couple; here we are reminded that our lives are in God’s hands and it is God’s care that will guide us through whatever difficulties we face. It is here that we receive guidance and the assurance of God’s love as we worship with the family of God.

**Prayer:** *Merciful God, help us to keep our focus upon you and the helpful guidance you offer us throughout our lives. In Christ’s name we pray.*

**Amen**



### **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 *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  
Pastor Ivy  
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

***We need to have the input of the congregation when making a decision of this magnitude. The Council members continue to pray for guidance in this and we are asking that you, as a voting member, not only pray for our church as we look into this possibility, but please plan to attend this very important meeting to assist us in making this decision.***



**STOP, CARE, ACT FOR THE HUNGRY**

The 2014 Synod Hunger Campaign invites our congregations to follow the example of the Good Samaritan.

**STOP:** Consider hunger needs at home, across the country and around the world. Use the ELCA Hunger Packets.

**CARE:** Raise awareness in your congregation of the needs of you local food banks and pantries. Learn about the many places our Hunger Dollars make a difference.

**ACT:** Each congregation in the Synod is challenged to raise at least \$400 for the Hunger Campaign and bring it to the assembly.

***The Council has scheduled a special congregational meeting to be held on Sunday, November 9<sup>th</sup> following our worship service. With the economy being what it presently is, we have had to use funds designated for other specific areas in order to pay our monthly bills. This is not a good solution to our financial problems and we are trying to rectify our problem with different methods.***

***After much prayer, discussion and researching other possibilities we, in consultation with Dean Dan Rumfelt and other Synod representatives, have decided to consider going to a part time pastor.***

## 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.



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



### **Bible Study Resumes**

Bible study on Wednesday evenings at 6 and Sunday mornings at 11. We are participating in a study called "Table and Font: Who is Welcome." It is a study regarding the sacraments, especially Holy Communion. Copies of the study guide and one of the resources, *The Use of the Means of Grace* are on the small table by the kitchen in the fellowship hall.

## **Southwestern Conference Fall Assembly**

The Conference Fall Assembly will take place Sunday, November 16 at 3:00 pm at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Lakewood.

***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 second pancake breakfast on Saturday, Oct. 4<sup>th</sup> was another success and took in about \$320.00. Thanks to everyone who helped us with this by either working, eating, or both.



Monthly breakfast scheduled for the first Saturday of the month, Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> 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.



“Healer of our ev’ry ill, light of each tomorrow, give us peace beyond our fear, and hope beyond our sorrow” (Healer of Our Every Ill, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, #612). Let Christ’s healing peace fill us as we pray together for physical, spiritual and emotional healing. Healing, anointing with oil and laying on of hands will be part of our Sunday worship on Sunday November 30<sup>th</sup>.



On Tuesday, November 18<sup>th</sup> from 5:00pm – 7:00pm there will be a Chili/Cornbread supper at our church. The cost will be \$7.00 per person. Please come and enjoy this with us and bring your family, friends and neighbors. Ruth Brewer is in charge of this fundraiser. Please contact her with any questions you may have. Thanks.



Join us on Wednesday evening, November 26 as we worship together at the Portville Community Thanksgiving Eve Service. The service is at 7:00 pm at First Presbyterian Church. Let us give thanks to God together for all of the many blessings we have.



We have arranged for a clothing drop box to be placed in our church parking lot sometime during the month of November. This is in conjunction with Bethel and St Pauly Textile. The clothing will be collected for use in the US and around the world where there is a need. We will receive .04 cents per pound for any clothing collected. Any questions regarding this may be directed to June Murray.

***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*

# NOVEMBER 2014

## Worship Servants

### Lectors:

Nov. 2.....*Bev Robinson*

Nov. 9.....*Gary Murray*

Nov. 16.....*Judy Graves*

Nov. 23..... *Connie Smith Matteson*

Nov. 30.....*Pen Yunghans*

### Prayer Leaders:

Nov. 2.....*Caroline Miller*

Nov. 9.....*Bev. Robinson*

Nov. 16.....*Nannette Giberson*

Nov. 23.....*June Murray*

Nov. 30.....*Connie Smith-Matteson*

## Worship Servants (for the entire month)

Acolyte.....*Robert Wolsky*

Communion Assistants.....*Bill & Judy Graves*

Usher/s.....Nov.2<sup>nd</sup> *Rick Giberson*

Nov. 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> .....*Gary Murray*

Altar Guild.....*Dawn Campbell*

Bread Bakers.....*Ron Kile*



3—Cheryl Warner  
14—Joan Rosell, Kurt Miller  
19— Victoria Rice  
21—Joey Blicharz  
24—Kendra Linn  
25—Eric MacPherson  
28—Leah Doty  
29—Carly Keenan, Terri Ploetz  
Connie Smith-Matteson



10—Bob & Cheryl Warner  
26—Cliff & Marge Nix

## BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH CALENDAR - NOVEMBER 2014

Saturday, Nov. 1	8:00am - 11:00pm—Monthly Church Breakfast
Sunday, Nov. 2	<b>ALL SAINTS SUNDAY</b> 7:45am-Choir rehearsal 9:00am- Worship with Fellowship following and Blessing of Hunters 10:30am - Sunday school 11:00am - Adult Bible Study
Monday, Nov. 3	Pastor Ivy's Day Off
Wed. Nov. 5	6:00pm - Bible Study
Sunday, Nov. 9	<b>TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST</b> 7:45am- Choir rehearsal 9:00am - Worship with <i>Congregational Meeting</i> & Fellowship following 10:30am - Sunday school 11:00am -Adult Bible Study
Monday, Nov. 10	Pastor Ivy's Day Off
Tues. Nov. 11	4:00pm - Worship and Music Meeting
Wed. Nov. 12	6:00pm - Bible Study
Thurs. Nov. 13	4:00pm - Evangelism Team meeting
Sunday, Nov. 16	<b>TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST</b> 7:45am-Choir rehearsal 9:00am- Worship with Fellowship following 10:30am - Sunday school and <i>Confirmation class</i> 11:00am - Adult Bible Study 3:00pm - SW Conference Fall Assembly at Gloria Dei, Lakewood
Monday, Nov. 17	Pastor Ivy's Day Off
Tues, Nov. 18	5:00pm - 7:00pm - Chili/Cornbread dinner (fundraiser)
Wed. Nov. 19	6:00pm - Bible Study
Thurs. Nov. 20	7:00pm - Council Meeting
Sunday, Nov 23	<b>CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY</b> 7:45am-Choir rehearsal 9:00am- Worship with Fellowship following 10:30am - Sunday school 11:00am - Adult Bible Study
Monday, Nov. 24	Pastor Ivy's Day Off
Tues. Nov. 25	4:00pm - Christian Education Meeting
Wed. Nov. 26	7:00 pm - Community Thanksgiving Eve Service at the Presbyterian Church
Sunday, Nov 30	<b>FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b> 7:45am-Choir rehearsal 9:00am- Worship with Healing Service/ Fellowship following 10:30am - Sunday school 11:00am - Adult Bible Study

## Weather Report



Yesterday sunshine,  
Today there's rain—  
Either way,  
He is the same.

Head-winds are blowing,  
Strong at my face...  
I'll press on—  
He sets the pace.

The leaves of autumn  
Fall to the ground—  
Through it all,  
Blessings abound.

The cold of winter  
Gives me a chill—  
All is well,  
He warms me still.

*The Lord makes the clouds. He sends the showers. And He gives everyone green fields. Zechariah 10:1 ICB*

## HYMN HISTORY

### TRUSTING JESUS

*The word of the Lord is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him 2 Samuel 22: 31*

Riverboat pilot turned Methodist preacher, Edgar Stites, the author of “Beulah Land,” also wrote another well-known hymn, “Trusting Jesus.” It was published in a newspaper, and a clipping of the poem was handed to D. L. Moody in Chicago. Moody, reading the poem, passed it to his song leader, Ira Sankey, asking Sankey to write a tune. Sankey agreed on condition that Moody vouch for the doctrine taught in the verses, which he did.

Who was this Ira Sankey who wrote the popular tune to “Trusting Jesus”? Sometimes called the “Father of Gospel Music,” Sankey was born in 1840 in Pennsylvania and came to Christ as a teenager in a revival meeting. When the War Between the States broke out, he joined Union forces and often led the soldiers in singing during chapel services.

He took time in the middle of the Civil War to marry Fanny Edwards, daughter of a Pennsylvania state senator, and after the war the couple settled down in Newcastle, Pennsylvania. Ira found a job with the Internal Revenue Service. The couple had two sons and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church where Ira led the singing.

It was in Indianapolis, Indiana, in June of 1870, while attending a YMCA convention that Ira Sankey met D. L. Moody. Moody, hearing Sankey lead the singing, began peppering him with questions: “Where are you from? Are you married? What is your business?”

Moody, with his usual directness, told Sankey he’d have to give up his job with the IRS to become the song leader for his campaigns. “I have been looking for you for the last eight years,” said Moody.

For the next thirty years, the names of Moody and Sankey would be linked in the world’s greatest evangelistic undertakings. As the nineteenth century wore to a close, Sankey’s beautiful voice became raspy due to overuse in the great halls and arenas where Moody preached, and his eyesight failed due to glaucoma. His years of notes and research on gospel music as well as the only manuscript of his autobiography were lost in a fire. But his work lives on. He composed the music to about twelve hundred songs during his lifetime, including “Faith Is the Victory,” “The Ninety and Nine,” “A Shelter in the time of Storm”, “Under His Wings,” and this one-----“Trusting Jesus.”

Robert J. Morgan book “Then Sings my Soul” copyrighted 2003



## TIMES OF CHANGE

**CHANGE.** Is there anything more mysterious? So many of us fervently desire what we don't possess. If only I were older...if only I were healthy.....If only I were in college... If only I had a job.... If only I had a *better* job...if only I were married...If only my spouse wouldn't do *that*....If only we had a home of our own...If only we didn't live here...The list is as endless as our desires.

And yet, we fear change----the unknown and the possibility of failure or disappointment. Our frequent yearning for something different often clashes with our fear of change. We can't experience the new without going through some type of change.

Change impacts us in ways we can't anticipate and may not understand. This reality is not limited to technology, cultural values, or politics. There is no more profound change than when an individual finds hope and peace in the grace of Jesus. Paul experienced it on the Damascus Road and throughout his journey with the Savior---change so profound that all the elements of his Jewish heritage that meant so much to him faded into the background. He told the Philippians: ***But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ (Phil. 3:7-8).***

Paul experienced this dramatic change in the purpose of his life, and so can we. ***“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, Paul wrote to the church in Corinth. “Old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Cor. 5:17)***

***“All things have become new”*** is the declaration that Jesus came into this world to transform men and women. For 2,000 years, people have found that those words powerfully describe the privilege of relationship with Christ.

In I Timothy 1: 15 Paul ***wrote, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.”*** Interestingly, he did not write in the past tense when he made this claim. He still viewed himself as the most prominent sinner. This is reminiscent of his letter to the Romans, where Paul lamented his propensity to sin by saying, ***“Oh, wretched man that I am!” (Rom. 7:24).*** Though Paul saw himself as the “chief” of

sinners, he knew that his life, purpose, and eternal destiny had been changed by Christ.

The question for us is this: How do we respond to change? Do we kick against it, as Saul of Tarsus did early in his life (Acts 9:5)? Or do we prayerfully seek God's hand in it, as Paul the apostle learned to do in a lifetime of service to his Lord and Savior?

*Father in heaven,*

*We too are a people of strong emotion and commitment, Sometimes we cling to the present as if our lives depended on it, even though our hearts tell us that we have been made for something greater than we have yet experienced.*

*Thank you for using the life of Paul to show us that we are not alone in resisting the changes that end up showing us how much we need You.*

*Help us trust Your Son as our Savior and as the Lord who can bring us to You. Your son died in our place, and we believe His resurrected life impacts and changes us in ways far beyond our ability to understand.*

*Give us the grace to realize that change does not take You by surprise but is a means by which You help us to find in You, through Your Son and Your Spirit, more than our hearts ever imagined.*

---Bill Crowder  
Our Daily Bread  
RBC Ministries

# The Blessing of a Crooked-Floored House

by Victoria Osteen

Years ago when Joel and I first got married, we decided to buy a home. We found a home that looked perfect for us! It was located on a beautiful lot in a neighborhood with other young families and had a swimming pool—something I always wanted. We made the best offer we could and prayed that the owners would accept it. Day after day went by, but we didn't hear anything. We kept speaking words of faith, declaring, "This is our house!" No one was living in it at the time, so we would drive over to it in the evening and sit outside studying it and dreaming about where we would put our furniture. But unfortunately, the homeowners didn't accept our offer. That door totally closed, and I was so disappointed. I thought for sure that was our house! I found myself tempted to say *if only* we had offered more money. *If only* we had prayed harder. *If only* we had acted sooner, on and on. But instead of mourning over what didn't work out, I made the choice to let it go and believe that God had something better in store.

Right after we heard the news about the house, I found another property that caught my attention. It was an old, run-down house on a beautiful lot in a really nice neighborhood. It was actually abandoned with broken windows, no landscaping, and even had a scarecrow in the kitchen to keep the animals out. It didn't look like much, but deep down I believed it was right for us—not based on how much sense it made in the natural, but based on the supernatural peace I had inside. We put a bid on that house, and sure enough, our offer was accepted.

Truthfully, I wasn't as excited about this house as I was the first one. It didn't have a swimming pool like I dreamed of; instead, it had crooked floors. The foundation was cracked, and some of the interior doors wouldn't close. I had to put blocks under my sofa just to keep it from leaning forward. Friends and family used to make jokes about those crooked floors, but I grew to love that house. I knew God gave us that house, so I wasn't going to look back and focus on what I didn't get.

We lived in that house for three years, and God blessed us beyond our wildest dreams. We ended up dividing our lot and selling half of it for the same price we originally paid for the entire piece of property. We were able to build a new home for less than what we would have paid for the first house we wanted. God used that crooked-floored house to bless us and bring us through a journey of faith.

Today, I'm not living in a house with crooked floors. I'm living in a house more beautiful than I ever dreamed we would own. But I'm convinced that if I would have been unhappy over what didn't work out, my attitude would have kept me from God's best.

Today, if you're thinking, *Life would have been different if only I had this or if only that had happened*, let it go. Don't get stuck focusing on what didn't work out. Trust that God is guiding your steps. It may not make a lot of sense right now, but if you'll let go of what you had in mind, God can give you something better. If He can bless us through a crooked-floored house, there's no telling what He will do for you!

*"No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead."* (Philippians 3:13, NLT)



