

December 24, 2014

Joyous Greetings Brothers and Sisters!

Every year I think things couldn't get any better and the next year rolls around and things seem better than last year! What an amazing God we serve! Never satisfied with sticking us in ruts but always calling us to be born anew – transformed in the light of Christ our Lord.

In some respects this has been a difficult year for Bethany. We have lost 10% of our church rolls due to death. While I am eternally grateful that we are resurrection people ... still saying, "See you later" to so many beloved souls is hard, really hard. But we persevere. And God is surprising us by sending us many new visitors, with new stories, new life experiences.

I am constantly encouraged and reminded that we live by hope. Hope in things not seen by our human eyes. I am filled with hope for Bethany's future. The coming of Family Promise fills me with hope. Do I believe it will work out for us? I don't know but the thing that I find so hopeful is that we are not afraid of trying something new. We are beginning this new adventure with constant prayers for God's guidance and will to be done.

Deana Biondi loaned me a little booklet of prayers and the following struck a chord in my heart. I hope you will be nourished as I have been.

*This I Know* – by Harold F. Mohn  
I know not what tomorrow brings,  
Nor do I fret and fear,  
For be it better or for worse,  
I know that God is near.  
I know if I succeed in life  
Or fail as I may do,  
God will be there to show and lead,  
And help me start anew  
And God will always light my way  
Each day my whole life. Through.

I pray good health for each of you and that you have joy and delight in simple pleasures as we begin 2015 together! You are a gift to me!

*Pastor Peggy*

## Consistory Minutes (Full) December 21, 2014

**Present:** Rev. Peggy Funderburke, Kathy Casey, Kathy Heider, Jessica Faustel, Nancy Murray, Diane Avery, Gordon Davis, Phyllis McClarty  
Elect members present: Jack Hafeli, Wendy Delehanty, and Bill Murray  
Absent: Melody VanAlstyne

**Deacon Nancy Murray led the reflection.**

### Reports

Minutes from last meeting approved.

### Pastor's Report

Since November 20, I have been able to make 6 visits to those in hospitals, nursing or rehabilitation facilities, or in their homes. I had six consultations with members and friends of Bethany concerning personal matters. I met seven times with various committees of Bethany. I attended six Albany Classis-sponsored meetings. I am continuing to mentor Elder Christine Allen and continue to supervise the Consistory of Westerlo. I continue to lead worship at Beverwyck on the first Sunday of the month. And continue to participate in Bethany's Adult Bible Study. I preached at the joint Thanksgiving Service at Third Reformed and participated in Blooming Grove's 200 Anniversary worship service. I facilitated the Celebration of Life for Christine van Alstyne's mother, Bernice Dates, on December 6. I attended and facilitated the Elder's Meeting in which we reviewed the Church Rolls. I am in the midst of preparing for the additional services of Christmas and New Year's Eve.

### Communications and Correspondences – Jessica Faustel

1. Capital Area Council of Churches-general letter regarding information about CACC and request for donation.
2. SALT-Schoharie Area Long Term Recovery-general letter from Executive Director Sarah Goodrich to consider donating again.
3. Letter from Jude Rabig, an Elder Life coaching for those dealing with dementia.

### Treasurer's Report November 30, 2014

SUMMARY - General Fund	<u>This Month</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Total Receipts	10,155.20	123,320.20
Total Disbursements	<u>6,438.24</u>	<u>132,871.89</u>
Net Cash	3,716.96	-9,551.69

### On-Going Business

**Concerns from the Congregation**-None Reported

## **Committee Reports**

### **Elders** Diane Avery

The elder's met on Saturday, November 29 to review the church rolls and discuss the spiritual health of the congregation.

### **Elder Delegate to Classis** Diane Avery

The Albany Regional Synod has approved Bethany's grant request to provide "Welcome Baskets" to families entering Family Promise. Their approval came swiftly and applauded Bethany for the noble and humanitarian use it is making of the parsonage. The Synod felt it was an example that should be shared with other churches in the area who are facing the same dilemma of what to do with an empty parsonage.

### **Deacons** Nancy Murray

In the month of November for the Thanksgiving food collection we collected 30 bags of food. In addition there was a check for \$220.00 that also went to the Food Pantry at First Church in Albany. In December there were 6 bags that were taken to the Food Pantry at First Church in Albany.

The Deacons met on December 7<sup>th</sup>, and decided to give gifts for the welcome baskets for Family Promise our Christmas gifts. Kathy Casey and I made ornaments and they are on the tree for members of the Congregation to take and purchase the items listed on the ornaments. People can also make monetary donations for the purchase of items. This can be an ongoing project as it will be a while before Family Promise will start. The items do not need to be wrapped. On the table in the parlor there is a large box that the gifts can be placed in. We also decided that the Christmas offering will also go to Family Promise.

**Youth Ministry and Education** Kathy Heider-Children have been sending cards to shut-ins.

### **Congregational Life** Nancy Murray

On November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014 the **Be Our Guest** Supper began its second year. We served a Spaghetti and Meatball dinner. We had 60 in attendance and all enjoyed it immensely.

On December 16<sup>th</sup>, will be our next supper at which we will serve various casseroles and desserts. In January the theme is Chili.

On December 14 the Bethany Family and Friends went caroling to The Beverwyck (Terrace and Inn), Mercy Care, and Atria of Guilderland.

January 10 we are going to see the Devils play ice hockey! A good time is had by all who join us!

**Fund Raising** Next event is Brooks BBQ, Wednesday, February 11, 2015.

### **Property** Phyllis McClarty (Bruce Neyerlin)

Ramp replacement in progress. There was a concern about cold water coming out of the hot water faucet in the ladies room and we may need to have the hot water heater replaced.

## **New Business**

1. Since Gordon Davis agreed to be on Consistory for one year, do we want to designate one of the 3 elders coming on to be a 2-year term? If so, who? Diane Avery proposed one incoming elder serve a two year term, Nancy Murray seconded. All approved. Melody VanAlstyne will serve the two year term.
2. What date works well for the Ordination and Installation of the new elders and deacon? It will be January 11, 2015.
3. Family Promise--Bethany's pro bono lawyer has not yet received the official "rejection" of Bethany's variance request to allow Family Promise use of the Parsonage, although the lawyer was assured Bethany would be receiving it and should immediately appeal at the January zoning board meeting. Because the site affords Family Promise a much better setting with easy highway access, Family Promise has voted to postpone opening until at least March 1. They are praying the results of the appeal will be positive and made within the required 60 days. They have expressed appreciation for Bethany's continuing efforts to work with them for the benefit of children and families facing the challenge of homelessness. They also plan to have the entire Family Promise Board at the Albany Zoning Board meeting to support the use of Bethany's parsonage. The zoning board meeting is Wednesday January 14, 2015 at 5:30pm at City Hall. Kathy Casey motioned that we use the New Ministries Fund for expenses associated with Family Promise, Kathy Heider seconded, all approved. In 2015, Consistory will need someone to be a liaison for Family Promise to Bethany Reformed Church.
4. Review and comments on Family Promise contract. Consistory was satisfied with the revised contract dated 12/15/14.
5. Ten Commandments for a Successful Church Meeting
6. Annual budget-Finance Committee will get the proposed budget to Consistory by January 18, 2015. The Congregational Meeting will be February 08, 2015. The meeting will be held in the parlor with juice and snacks.

Next regular meeting: January 18, 2015, Sunday following worship

Meeting Adjourned at 12:45pm  
Respectfully submitted,  
Jessica Faustel

## **Upcoming Events**

### **Bethany Family and Friends**

Saturday, January 10, 2015 – Albany Devil's Hockey Game  
Cost is \$13 for the game, \$6.50 for pizza, and \$3 for a hat!  
Please sign up and submit your money by Sunday, January 4, 2015.  
(Do not let the \$\$ keep you from joining in the fun!)

### **Be Our Guest Dinner**

Tuesday, January 20, 2015 – 4:45pm to 5:45pm - Chili!!!

### **Empire State Youth Orchestra**

Friday, January 30, 2015 – 7:30pm at the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall  
Abby Neyerlin will be playing the tuba at this performance! Cost varies from \$5 to \$15 depending on location.

### **Brooks BBQ**

Wednesday, February 11, 2015 – 3:00pm to 6:00pm  
This is a great fundraiser for us, but we need your help to make it successful. Work the actual BBQ, bake and bring brownies or cookies, wash potatoes, make cole slaw. Many hands make light work!!!

The RCA Assessment for 2015 is \$91.12 per member. It would help our budget tremendously if members could pay their assessment, or even pay for someone else – someone you treasure in the Congregation!!

A Little Humor.....

Actual Announcements taken from church bulletins:

“ Don’t let worry kill you – let the church help. ”

“ Thursday night – potluck supper. Prayer and medication to follow. ”

“ Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community ”

“ For those of you who have children and don’t know it, we have a nursery downstairs. ”

“ The rosebud on the alter this morning is to announce the birth of David Alan Belzer, the son of Rev. and Mrs. Julius Belzer. ”

“ Next Sunday a special collection will be taken to defray the cost of the new carpet. All those wishing to do something on the new carpet will come forward and do so. ”

### January Birthdays

Chris Davis	1/05
Adam van Alstyne	1/05
Emily Trama	1/08
John Sokol	1/13
Ryan Carlson	1/19
Jennifer Empie	1/21
Phyllis McClarty	1/21
Mark Carlson	1/22
David Bard	1/24
Joan Hollner	1/25
David van Alstyne	1/31

### January Anniversaries

Bob and Polly Eberle	1/09
Gordon and Chris Davis	1/22

## Calendar - January, 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 07:30 PM - AA Group	3 09:00 AM - 11:00 AM - Regional Food Bank 10:00 AM - Al Anon Group
4	5 09:00 AM - Chair Caners 09:30 AM - Women's Bible Study	6 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM - Narcotics Anonymous 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM - Bell Choir 07:30 PM - 09:00 PM - Choir	7 10:00 AM - Helping Hands 07:00 PM - Bible Study 07:30 PM - New Start Step Group	8 07:30 PM - Nicotine Anonymous	9 07:30 PM - AA Group	10 Bethany Friends and Family 10:00 AM - Al Anon Group
11	12 09:30 AM - Women's Bible Study	13 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM - Narcotics Anonymous 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM - Bell Choir 07:00 PM - Ft. Orange Stamp Club 07:30 PM - 09:00 PM - Choir	14 07:00 PM - Bible Study 07:30 PM - New Start Step Group	15 07:30 PM - Nicotine Anonymous	16 07:30 PM - AA Group	17 10:00 AM - Al Anon Group
18 11:30 AM - 01:00 PM - Consistory Meeting	19 09:30 AM - Women's Bible Study	20 04:45 PM - 05:45 PM - Be Our Guest Supper 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM - Narcotics Anonymous 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM - Bell Choir 07:30 PM - 09:00 PM - Choir	21 07:00 PM - Bible Study 07:30 PM - New Start Step Group	22 07:30 PM - Nicotine Anonymous	23 07:30 PM - AA Group	24 10:00 AM - Al Anon Group
25	26 09:30 AM - Women's Bible Study	27 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM - Narcotics Anonymous 07:00 PM - 09:00 PM - Choir 07:00 PM - Ft. Orange Stamp Club	28 10:00 AM - Helping Hands 07:00 PM - Bible Study 07:30 PM - New Start Step Group	29 07:30 PM - Nicotine Anonymous	30 07:30 PM - AA Group	31 10:00 AM - Al Anon Group