

January, 2015

Warm Greetings to my Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

Recently I was reading the Preface to a new book and the author reminded me of a prayer written around 1577 by Sir Francis Drake. The last piece of the prayer is:

Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly,
To venture on wider seas
Where storms will show your mastery;
Where losing sight of land,
We shall find the stars.
We ask You to push back
The horizons of our hopes;
And to push into the future
In strength, courage, hope, and love.

I was struck in that this prayer written so very long ago under very different circumstances and for very different purposes, so perfectly describes my prayers for Bethany. I feel God is pushing us into the future – which we know nothing about, only that God is already there waiting for us.

Each of us approaches change differently. Some like to work with a plan, having steps outlined and measurable goals. Some approach change more casually, knowing that when venturing out, they will need to be flexible. Sometimes the wind will be at our backs pushing us along, but sometimes the wind hits us head on and slows our intended progress.

Buffeting the winds has been the case with Family Promise. But we persevere, knowing that Jesus has instructed us to do missional work. I believe that everything has a purpose. And perhaps all the delays with the Albany government offices serve the purpose of making our relationship sweeter.

I am convinced that God is not so much concerned about our success or failure in whatever missional work we venture out to try. Those are earthly standards. I believe God is far more interested that we do try to reach out beyond our church walls to do work in God's name. Whatever we do in trying to do God's will, God will use all our efforts for good.

Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly!

Pastor Peggy

Bethany Reformed Church Consistory Minutes

January 18, 2015

We are gathered in God's Presence by the lighting of the Christ candle.

According to Christ's promise:

"Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

The lit Christ candle symbolizes the presence of our Lord.

Reflection – Elder Phyllis McClarty

Election or Affirmation of Continuing Positions

Vice President of Consistory: Elder Phyllis McClarty
Senior Deacon: appointment will wait until all are present
Clerk of Consistory: Elder Melody VanAlstyne
Elder Delegate to Classis: appointment will wait until all are present

Giving Thanks to everyone who helped with the de-greening of the church. Thanks to Bruce Neyerlin for shoveling last Sunday. Thanks to Diane Avery, Gordon Davis and Nancy Murray for their service on Consistory.

Reports

Minutes from last meeting approved.

Pastor's Report:

Since our last meeting I have been able to make seven visits to shut-ins, have eight meetings or consultations with groups or individuals about personal matters. Lead the additional worship services on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. Attended four classis sponsored meetings. Volunteered at the Regional Food Bank and attended the ice hockey game. I provided an additional Christmas Sunday Service at The Beverwyck Terrace. Westerlo Consistory did not meet in January and Christine Allen has been away for the holidays.

Communications and Correspondences

1. Thank you letter from the Food Pantry
2. Donation request from American Red Cross.

Treasurer's Report December 31, 2014

SUMMARY - General Fund	This Month	Year to Date
Total Receipts	\$12,987.68	\$136,307.88
Total Disbursements	13,231.96	146,103.85
Net Cash	\$ -244.28	\$ -9,795.97

On-Going Business

Budget received with thanks to Wendy.

Concerns from the Congregation-none reported.

Committee Reports

Elders

Nothing to report.

Elder Delegate to Classis

Deacons

Last report from Nancy Murray:

January 5, five bags were taken to the Food Pantry.

In December the Deacons met and decided to adopt Family Promise as the organization to collect items for the welcome baskets. The Christmas offering will also go to Family Promise. The offering collected was \$1,025.00

Youth Ministry and Education

Wendy Delehanty

Jack Haefeli has offered to teach a class of older students. We currently have 3 students in the appropriate age range. One is not interested. One is willing to try it if there are at least 2 students. The third is undecided at this point.

Stewardship

Phyllis McClarty

Nothing to report.

Congregational Life

(Nancy Murray) Kathy Casey

Nancy reports:

Bethany Family and Friends after worship on December 14th, gathered together for our Annual Festive Christmas pot luck lunch. With full stomachs 7 hearty souls spent the afternoon singing Christmas carols at Beverwyck Terrace, the Beverwyck Inn, Mercy Care (at 4 different locations) and The Atria in Guilderland (with Chris Davis). We made many folks happy and those who sang were blessed as well.

Bethany Family and Friends in January went to a Devils Hockey game. There were 13 who attended the game. Some of us prior to the game enjoyed sharing a feast of Pizza and Soda and a cookie. We all had a great time. February 8, we are planning a soup and sandwich lunch followed by an afternoon of playing games! March will be bowling. Come and join us; all are welcome!

Be Our Guest Supper: On December 16th enjoyed a meal of various Casseroles. There were about 35 in attendance.

On January 20th, Be Our Guest Supper will be held. The theme is Chili and is coordinated by Wendy Delehanty.

Worship

Jessica Faustel (Sandy Goodman)

Nothing to report.

Pastoral Relations

Melody Van Alstyne

Nothing to report.

Finance

Wendy Delehanty

Fund Raising

Brooks BBQ – Feb. 11th 3-6:00

Property

Phyllis McClarty (Bruce Neyerlin)

Jack Haefeli is the new liaison to the Property Committee. New 50-gal. hot water heater installed. Newgate painting scheduled for Jan 2015.

Web Site

Wendy Delehanty

Nothing to report.

Helping Hands

Wendy Delehanty

Kitchen Committee

Wendy Delehanty

We plan to take samples of the kitchen tile and the glue holding it down for asbestos testing. It should cost about \$140. We will have a better idea of the possible directions to take once we have the results.

New Business

1. 2015 Consistory Devotion Assignment
2. 2015 Bethany Budget: Thanks to the Finance Committee for preparing the 2015 Budget. 2015 Budget was approved.
3. Items to be discussed at our Congregational Meeting on February 8 are the 2015 Budget and the Annual Report if finalized.
4. Ash Wednesday: will be held at Third and they are offering a meal before service. Rev. Peggy will continue to have a 1 pm Service for those who are not able to drive at night.
5. Jessica's co-worker was in need and the Congregation came forth with assistance.
6. Pam Menton submitted Disability Advocacy opportunities for Bethany. It was decided the Consistory Members will read and reflect on these opportunities and revisit this subject at our February meeting.

Next regular meeting: February 15, Sunday, following worship.

Devotions by: **Deacon Kathy Casey**

We respond to God

With our prayers of concern, prayers of joy, and prayers of praise. We are joyful Kathy Casey's brother traveled the US. Thankful Jessica Faustel's coworker's wife is home. Thanks for Phoebe joining our church. Grateful for hockey outing. Thankful to Times Union Center for giving us our own space. Remember those who spoke out for equality and were brutalized.

Jessica Faustel motioned to adjourn. Bill Murray seconded. All approved. Meeting adjourned at 1:05.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melody Van Alstyne

Clerk of Consistory

Bethany Family and Friends

On February 8, 2015, following the congregational meeting all are invited to stay for lunch and enjoy soup and sandwiches. After lunch, we will have games.

For the lunch I need to know what kind of soup, sandwiches, or desserts you will be bringing to the lunch. We have a Split Pea soup all ready. Please let me know by February 4th. You can email me at nmurray02@earthlink.net or call 452-3500. I look forward to your help and response.

Nancy Murray

Be Our Guest Dinner

The February Be Our Guest Dinner falls on Shrove Tuesday, February 17, 2015. Come and enjoy a Pancake supper with all its fixings. The items needed this year are:

Sausage (not the brown and serve)
Syrup
2 cans of apple pie filling
Frozen blueberries
Desserts.

We also need griddles to cook the pancakes on. There will be a sign up sheet posted in the Narthex. Thanks for your help in advance.

Nancy Murray

Congregational Life

ASH WEDNESDAY – FEBRUARY 18, 2015

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, the season of self-examination. According to the synoptic gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, Jesus spent 40 days fasting in the desert, where he endured temptation by Satan. Lent originated as a mirroring of this, fasting 40 days as preparation for Easter. Every Sunday was seen as a remembrance of the Sunday of Christ's resurrection and so as a feast day on which fasting was inappropriate. Therefore, Christians fasted from Monday to Saturday (6 days) during 6 weeks, and from Wednesday to Saturday (4 days) in the preceding week, thus making up the number of 40 days.

The Season of Lent can be honored in several ways but whatever you decide to do - begin with prayer, making a covenant with God. One way to honor Lent is to deprive yourself of something you really enjoy so that you are reminded each time the desire arises of Jesus' sacrifice for us. Another way is to add something that you do not normally do; volunteering at a food pantry, doing acts of kindness that you would not normally do. The important thing is to be intentional.

This year Bethany will celebrate the beginning of the Lenten journey in two ways. We will have a 1:00pm service at Bethany for those who are finding driving at night an increasing problem. And we will join with Third Reformed at Third for a pot-luck dinner and service beginning at 6:30 PM. Deposition of ashes will be available at each service.

To experience Easter in all its fullness, we need to travel through Lent. Won't you join us so that we journey together? All are welcome.

Thanks From the Worship Committee January 2015

As the Worship Committee chairperson, I would like to thank all the people who helped make our sanctuary look so beautiful for Advent through Epiphany. Your help was very much appreciated. Thanks to everyone who bought poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary. We hope you enjoyed them at home also! Let's get together to do it again for Advent through Epiphany for **2015!!** THANK YOU!
Sandy Goodman

Congregational Meeting – Sunday, February 8, 2015

11:15 am – in the Church Parlor

Thinking about joining our congregation? Have questions about Bethany or the Reformed Church in America and don't know where or to whom they can be asked? Consider joining our **Inquirer's Group** that will be starting in February. Please speak to Pastor Peggy!

Family Promise of the Capital Region will be having a fundraiser on February 12th from 5:30pm – 7:30 pm at Glennpeter Jewelers located at 1544 Central Avenue, Albany. There is no admission fee to this event which will provide an opportunity to learn more about this interfaith partnership to help homeless children and families and will include hot and cold hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar. Multiple raffle items such as a \$1500 wine tasting package, donated by Glennpeter, will be included. All raffle and bar proceeds will go directly to Family Promise. Please RSVP to Tony at 518-207-6236.

Empire State Youth Orchestra

Saturday, February 28, 2015 – 4:00PM – Please ask Abby or Bruce Neyerlin for location – Another chance to see Abby play her tuba.

Brooks BBQ

Drive Thru

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

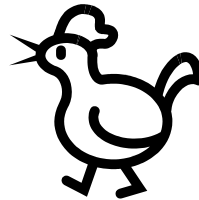
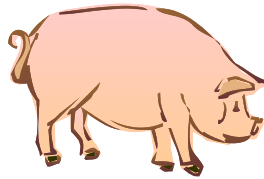
3:00 PM to 6:00 PM

Bethany Reformed Church

760 New Scotland Avenue

Albany

(at Buckingham Dr., convenient to Route 85)



Dinners include:

meat, potato, coleslaw, roll, dessert

This is a great fundraiser for us, but we need your help to make it successful. Please sign up or let Wendy or Pam know what you can do!!!

Birthdays for February

Shirley Phillips	02/02
Michael Bard	02/03
Wendy Delehanty	02/12
Gloria Sleeter	02/17
Abigail Neyerlin	02/24

Calendar - February, 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 09:30 AM - Women's Bible Study 02:30 PM - Albany Senior Services Fellowship 07:00 PM - Step at a Time	3 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM - Narcotics Anonymous 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM - Bell Choir 07:00 PM - 09:00 PM - African Violets 07:30 PM - 09:00 PM - Choir	4 10:00 AM - Helping Hands 07:00 PM - Bible Study 07:30 PM - New Start Step Group	5 06:30 PM - Boy Scouts 07:30 PM - Nicotine Anonymous	6 10:00 AM - Painters 07:30 PM - AA Group	7 09:00 AM - 11:00 AM - Regional Food Bank 10:00 AM - Al Anon Group
8 11:00 AM - Congregational Meeting 12:00 PM - Bethany Family & Friends	9 09:30 AM - Women's Bible Study 07:00 PM - Step at a Time	10 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM - Narcotics Anonymous 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM - Bell Choir 07:30 PM - 09:00 PM - Choir	11 03:00 PM - Brooks BBQ 07:00 PM - Bible Study 07:00 PM - Fort Orange Stamp Club 07:30 PM - New Start Step Group	12 06:30 PM - Boy Scouts 07:30 PM - Nicotine Anonymous	13 10:00 AM - Painters 07:30 PM - AA Group	14 10:00 AM - Al Anon Group
15 11:30 AM - 01:00 PM - Consistory Meeting	16 09:30 AM - Women's Bible Study 07:00 PM - Step at a Time	17 04:45 PM - 05:45 PM - Be Our Guest Pancake Supper 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM - Narcotics Anonymous 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM - Bell Choir 07:30 PM - 09:00 PM - Choir	18 07:00 PM - Bible Study 07:30 PM - New Start Step Group	19 06:30 PM - Boy Scouts 07:30 PM - Nicotine Anonymous	20 10:00 AM - Painters 07:30 PM - AA Group	21 10:00 AM - Al Anon Group
22	23 09:30 AM - Women's Bible Study 07:00 PM - Step at a Time	24 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM - Narcotics Anonymous 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM - Bell Choir 07:00 PM - Fort Orange Stamp Club 07:30 PM - 09:00 PM - Choir	25 10:00 AM - Helping Hands 07:00 PM - Bible Study 07:30 PM - New Start Step Group	26 06:30 PM - Boy Scouts 07:30 PM - Nicotine Anonymous	27 10:00 AM - Painters 07:30 PM - AA Group	28 10:00 AM - Al Anon Group