



Bethesda Lutheran Church

“Welcome One Another”

The Visitor

February 2010

305 Saint Ronan Street, New Haven, Connecticut 06511 • (203) 787-2346

Council Corner



BETHESDA’S SCHEDULE FOR LENT

Ash Wednesday (February 17)

Worship at **12 Noon** and **7:30PM**

A Penitential Service including the Imposition of Ashes and The Sacrament of Holy Communion

Wednesdays during Lent (February 25 – March 31)

12 Noon Worship in the Chapel followed by “coffee and....” with discussion.

6:30PM Soup Supper followed by discussion and concluding with Worship in the Chapel at **7:30PM**.

Holy Thursday (April 1)

Worship at 12 Noon and 7:30PM

Good Friday (April 2)

Worship at 7:30PM

Holy Saturday (April 3)

Easter Vigil Worship at 8:00PM

At the January meeting, the Congregation Council:

- accepted with regret the resignation of George Patrick
- approved by a slim margin the proposed spending plan for 2010
- heard about the process under way for finding a new caretaker
- allocated \$200 to defray the cost of youth attending the Calumet Ski trip in February

Please continue to keep council members in your prayers. Comments, suggestions and questions are always welcome; see any council member on Sundays. Council meets at 7:30pm on the third Monday of each month.

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THANK YOU!!

There are a number of people who have helped out a great deal over the holidays and in recent weeks, and we think they deserve mention:

Tim Bruneau – Repaired the broken crèche in time for the Children’s Christmas program and assisted his Mom with putting up wreaths.

Barbara Stark – Helped by making all new bows for our wreaths, hung them all, and also helped to place lights on the Christmas tree – along with gleeful choir members!

Joanne Kimball – who decorated the Parish House for Christmas using the many greens available following the Intergenerational Event and so lovingly tended to the plants throughout the our facility.

Jake Clapp, our landscaper – for donating the lovely Christmas tree to the church and putting it up for us in the sanctuary.

Doreen Larson-Oboyski and friends - for providing us with a memorable Lucia Day Scandinavian Coffee after the learning hour.

Leon Linquist - for helping in a myriad of ways to pick up the slack following Al Nelson’s untimely death.

Judith Evenson, Paul Stuehrenberg and Dianne Witte – Our Thrivent congregational coordinators for their assistance with the Care in Congregations program. We appreciate their efforts in obtaining matching funds for Bethesda’s many outreach efforts.

Special thanks to Linda Cortright and the crew of workers who helped at the recent workday to clean out the Chapel apartment and the tool room.

As Pastor Preuss mentioned in his annual report, Bethesda has experienced more than its share of change over the last year, and December proved no different. Thanks to all who have helped and continue to chip in to keep Bethesda running smoothly.

The next submission deadline for the next issue of *The Visitor* is Sunday, February 14. Please e-mail your submissions to Nora Lee at bethesda.visitor@gmail.com. Thank you!
Nora Lee, Editor, Clare Couture, Production Manager
(bethesda@snet.net)

Visit our Web page:
www.bethesdanewhaven.org

Fair Trade Coffee and Tea



Fair Trade coffee, teas and chocolate are available for sale the second Sunday of each month. Fair Trade promotes fair wages, children’s rights, women’s rights, the right to organize, environmental rights and indigenous rights. A portion of the Fair Trade proceeds also goes to the Bethesda Women of the ELCA (WELCA)

Pastor's Paragraph...or two

The month of February comes upon us complete with many characterizations. Super Bowl, Valentine's Day, Presidents' Day (Winter Vacation?), Groundhog Day (six more weeks of winter – but days are getting longer), and Mardi Gras ---- these are but some of February's special days or events that appear on many calendars. The list is rather impressive for the shortest month of the year!

In my humble estimation, however, this month provides for the church, the community of faith, the beginning of a most important time for a deepening exploration of what it means to live in faith today. The Season of Lent is upon us!

I invite YOU to join in the journey of Lent this year. Forty days (not including Sundays) during which, from the early days of the church, time has been set aside for a discipline including prayer, study and discernment of God's powerful presence in the life of a believer, or a person preparing to profess faith for the first time, and in the community that is the Body of Christ today.

Our Lenten Journey begins on Ash Wednesday (February 17). On this day we are reminded of our mortality – “Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return” – as we receive the sign of the cross in ashes on our foreheads. Each Wednesday during Lent, opportunities for worship and study will be part of Bethesda's Lenten Schedule. Our journey continues with the rapid series of events of Holy Week.

This year the focus of our Lenten reflections will be the Trinity...One God – three manifestations – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Materials for this Lenten Journey have been prepared by the New England Synod (ELCA) Trinitarian Theology Task Force. Elaine Ramshaw of Bethesda is a member of this task force. I am most grateful to the task force for their work to provide the church with this opportunity for faith exploration.

The schedule for Lenten Worship and Study opportunities offered in addition to our regular Sunday schedule is included in this issue of “The Visitor” (page one). Learning Hour Adult Forum during the Sundays within Lent will provide extra time to discuss our Lenten Theme guided by Elaine Ramshaw.

I look forward to traveling with you on this Lenten journey for 2010 and I remind you that this is an excellent time to invite others to join in this journey. Together let us continue our growth in faith and understanding.

In Christ's Service,

Pastor Preuss

Disaster Appeal

Many thanks to all who gave generously to the



collection for victims of the devastating earthquake in Haiti in January. As was reported at the annual meeting, Bethesda will be sending \$4,780, including the matching funds, to the relief efforts there. Thank you for the overwhelming generosity!



Children Youth Family Ministry

BYG Ski Trip to Calumet

On February 26, the Bethesda Youth Group will be taking a trip to Camp Calumet Lutheran in Freedom, New Hampshire.

This winter retreat will include everything from an afternoon skiing at nearby King Pine Ski Area, to devotions around a warm campfire on the beach. Our youth will be attending along with other youth groups from New England. They will enjoy the opportunity to meet other Lutherans, grow in faith, make new friends and renew existing friendships, all while enjoying the beauty of God's creation! Mike Carnaroli and Meg Splaine will be leading and chaperoning this trip. Please see them or contact Mike at m_carnaroli@yahoo.com for more information.

Offering Update – a new year, a renewed commitment

After passing a tight budget, members are called to reflect with your family on the value of Bethesda in your life and consider revising your pledge or making an additional gift. Thank you.

	2009	2010	Ahead/Behind	%
As of 1/31	\$11,709	\$13,569	\$1,859	16%
Yr End	\$167,520	\$158,237*	-9,283.82	-6%

*Budgeted based on projections from pledges and past giving habits.

Call Committee



The call committee has begun their work in earnest and the congregation should know that each member takes their charge extremely seriously. Due to necessary confidentiality for the benefit of all parties, updates will probably not satisfy most of our appetites for steady information. Know that we are working and that we will relay information as soon as it becomes appropriate to do so. Please keep the committee in your prayers.

Wednesday Morning Bible Study



The Wednesday morning Bible study continues to meet bi-weekly. On January 20, February 3 and 17, and March 3, the topic will be on *Worship*. We meet from 8:00 – 9:00 am. You are invited to come and enjoy exploring the *Book of Faith*, a light breakfast, and sharing new insights into God's Word in today's world.

Our group has been blessed by lively discussions and astute insights about God's unconditional grace bestowed on us, and about how God's Word is revealed to each individual as we serve one another in faith and love, trusting God's promises. Indeed, His light shines in all daily life experiences.

The next series for our continuing bi-weekly sessions in March and April will focus on *Peace*. Please refer to the Bulletin for updated announcements about our *Book of Faith* studies.

Congregational Meeting



Annual Meeting Highlights

Approximately 52 voting members were present for the annual congregational meeting on Sunday, January 31 in the Campanius room. Following the format of the last several years, we reviewed and accepted the reports of our committees and ministries by giving thanks for what was in 2009.

After a period of prayer, we looked ahead to 2010. The proposed budget, while conservative and tight, passed with no contention. The budget reflects a predicted shortfall, but seeks to inspire the congregation to reflect on their pledges as well as focus efforts to grow in order to maintain our valuable ministries.

The nominating committee presented a slate for openings on Council, the Mission Endowment Fund and the nominating committee. Katie Gehner, Steve Judd, and Dianne Witte were elected to four-year terms to replace retiring members Doug Gray, Nora Lee, and Chris Wigren. Additionally, John Hively was elected to fill the remaining two years of the term vacated by Joanna Price, and Doug Gray was elected to fill the remaining year of the term vacated by George Patrick. Donna Slater and Adam Marchand were each elected to a three-year term on the Mission Endowment Committee. And the 2010 nominating committee will be made up of Molly Dineen, Rebecca Lerud, Paul Stuehnenberg, Janis Underwood, and the retiring members of Council. Retiring members of council were recognized for their service and Chris Wigren, congregation president for the past three years, was thanked by Pastor Preuss on behalf of the congregation for his commitment and hard work. Thanks to all who agree to serve our congregation!

The new 2010 council met briefly immediately after the meeting and elected Dianne Witte as the new congregation president, Katie Gehner as vice president, and Clarissa Youngberg as secretary. Ian Bjorkman was elected to continue serving as treasurer. We give thanks for the gifts of our council members and executive team and will keep them in our prayers as they go about their important work for Bethesda.



Yes, there will be a fair this year! The date will be Saturday, November 13, 2010. The Thursday Night Work Group met and we feel up to the challenge. So here we go! The Work Group will begin meeting on Thursday, February 11 at 7:30 p.m. in the Muhlenberg Room. We meet in the Educational Wing during the winter and early spring to save on heating costs.

If you have ideas on how we can improve the fair or what additional items we can make to sell at the fair we would love to hear from you. Simply contact Sue Berube (203-287-8170) or Maureen Anderson (203-488-4993, karlandmaur@yahoo.com) after church, or call or email us.

There will also be another quilt that we will raffle. Work will begin on it in March. If you are interested in helping out with the cutting, sewing or quilting, please contact Maureen Anderson



Sunday School Resumes

The 2010 Sunday School program is up and running, and we are excited with the opportunity to gather every Sunday with the children of our church and community. We are looking forward to a fun winter and spring. We are now planning our Spring Family Gathering (SUPER SATURDAY), celebrated on a Saturday from 4:30-7:00 PM. This is an opportunity for our children to share time and activities outside Sunday School (movies, pizza, outside playing), and for parents to spend time together in adult conversation.

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Emilie Swenson, daughter of former Pastor Les Swenson, sent Bethesda a Christmas card from Hungary where she is spending a year working in the ELCA's Young Adults in Global Mission program. The text follows.



To the people of Bethesda,
First of all, Merry Christmas! I hope you find this season joyful and full of celebration. I would like to send warm greetings to you all from the village of Magyarmecske, Hungary, my new home for this year. Bethesda was an important place for me as I was growing up and an important place for my family. As I have pursued my latest adventure as a Young Adult in Global Mission (YAGM) through the ELCA, I want to extend a great Thank You to the people of Bethesda as I received a lot of support before I left this past September. Wishing you a Merry Christmas and many thanks for your support. Aldds bekese! (Blessing and peace)
Love, Emilie Swenson

You can correspond with Emilie and follow her adventure on her blog: <http://jordisk.blogspot.com>, or at these addresses:
7954 Magyarmecske
Petofi Sandor Ut. 30
Magyarország (Hungary)
Emilie.swenson@gmail.com

Learning Hour Calendar: January-May 2010

February 17- Ash

Wednesday

March 14- Collection of coin boxes. Money will be sent to **ELCA World Hunger: God's Global Barnyard**. ELCA uses this money to purchase animals and resources around the world that will "provide families with food, funds, and fertilizer—all for a better future."

April 4- Easter! No LH

May 9- No LH
(Mother's Day)

May 23- Last day of LH
Congregational PICNIC!



Sanctuary Sparkles with Mendelssohn

Contrasting the gray and wintry scene outside, last month's Bethesda Music Series concert featuring the Baumgartner Piano Duet was a sparkling success! Our piano soared under the command (and twenty fingers) of our guest artists as they performed lovely works of Felix and Fanny Mendelssohn.

Approximately \$950 was raised for University Lutheran Ministries at Yale and all were treated to a lovely reception afterward. Thanks to all who attended and those who worked to make this a delightful event!



Please join us on Sunday mornings following the 9:45 a.m. service for the Adult Forum. Grab a cup of coffee and join us in the Living Room for these lively and interesting discussions:

February 7 Leon Linquist *The Drama of the Super Bowl*

February 14 Becky Lerud *Stories of Faith in Action--What is Bethesda's Story?*

February 21-March 21 Elaine Ramshaw *"40 Days 3 Persons 1 God"*
(*this is the NE Synod Lenten Study*)

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Prayers for our Members and Friends:

Healing and strength: Sue Merkel; Richard Ford, Verna Carlson, sister of Ivar Henrickson; Almira Muschamp, mother of Sue Berube; Betty Henrickson; Barbara Veleber, former member; Maureen Matthews, friend of Kathy Wimmer; Edith Swanson; Joe Ekeberg; George Lindbeck; Robert Evenson; James Phillips, husband of Karen Phillips; Martha Morris, sister of Henry Morris; Helen Neumann, mother of Dennis Neumann; Ruth Ebel, sister of Martha Kirschner; Mildred McMann; Richard and Margaret Stark, parents of Barbara Stark; Fran Batka, friend of Nils Svensen; Ethan Nessel, grandson of Mike and Sue Merkel; Richard Treat, friend of Marie and Doug Gray; Virginia Cellura friend of Molly Dinneen; The Baglioni Family; Frank and Jeanne Whalen, friends of Karen Baker; Dot Palcovich; Aina Smith; Mary Beth MacNab, friend of Sue Berube; Margaret Berube, friend of Sue Berube; Len DeNardis; Jonathan Cortright, father of Dan Cortright; Mary Benedosso, friend of Doris Hentz; Ray Anderson; Helen Blade; Sylvia Dunn; Margaret Ogren; Jeanette Tykson; Ruth Jacobson; Ruth Mood and Rita Wissink; .

For those serving in the military: including Allison Mandas, daughter of Greg & Carlen Mandas; Joshua Bender, stepbrother of Chris Lee; ***and the chaplains of our churches who serve them.***

For our partners in the Gospel: the congregations and schools of the Evangelical Lutheran Church In Jordan & The Holy Land (ELCJHL); our mission partners, Resurrection Lutheran Church in New Haven, and the Pangani Children's Centre, Nairobi, Kenya, in its ministry to those living with the impact of AIDS and hunger in Africa.

For Bethesda: that God continues to guide us into the future with ministries of witness and service while building up our community in all of its diversity.

For Comfort in Grief: We remember the family and friends of our long-time caretaker, Albert Nelson who died on December 16th. We continually miss Al's presence among us. -- And -- We remember the family and friends of Joanna Weber, former Bethesda member, wife of Mark and mother of Soren and Anselm, who died in the Lord on January 27. *Rest eternal grant them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.*