



Bethesda Lutheran Church
"Welcome One Another"

The Visitor

June 2011

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



Retreat

Each week we include Bethesda in our prayers, asking God to guide us into the future. On Saturday, May 7, thirty Bethesda leaders accepted the Council's invitation to talk about our congregation's gifts and challenges at a leadership retreat. Rev. Bill Petersen, pastor of Faith Lutheran Church in East Hartford, led the inquiry, which took place in meeting space provided at no charge by Yale Divinity School.

At 9 am the group gathered for Morning Prayer led by Pastor Keyl in Yale's Marquand Chapel, a setting in which chairs encircled the lectern and font, allowing many to experience worship in a physical space and orientation new to them.

Participants then moved to a large seminar room, where Richard Ford assigned them their first task – to break into small groups and select a verse, story, or character from Scripture that described Bethesda. Pastor Petersen then asked the small groups to discuss Bethesda's impact in and on the congregation and community, and the ministry areas the congregation should focus on, explore, put on hold, and let go of this year. Following lunch, the leaders tackled two areas identified by Council as topics for particular attention: facilities planning and our Sunday schedule – worship, education, fellowship, and meetings. The retreat concluded at 2 pm.

Evaluations of the day's experiences and work were quite favorable, although participants stressed the importance of following up by taking action. The Council was grateful for the thoughtful discussions, openness, good humor, dedication, and care the leaders engaged in at the retreat. The fruits of the group's efforts are being tabulated, and the Executive Committee will identify and charge task forces to move forward, with God's guidance, to build up Bethesda's ministries of witness and service.

Leadership Retreat Gathers; Task Forces to Move Forward



Vacation Bible School will be **August 22 - 25**, from 8:45 to 2:00 p.m., with a 2-hour extended day also offered, for ages 4 through 10. The theme is "All God's Critters" and it looks to be a fun-filled four day celebration of creation. In addition to children attending, we will need some youth volunteers and additional parent help. See Nora Lee with questions or to volunteer. Also, be on the lookout for requests for snacks and other VBS essentials! It will be held at First Presbyterian Church on Whitney Avenue in New Haven in conjunction with Redeemer UCC and First & Summerfield United Methodist Church. Registration information is on Bethesda's website and in hard copy in the church office.

Inside the June Issue...

- Save the Dates! Page 2
- Pastor's Column Page 3
- Sunday School News Page 4
- Graduations Page 5

Save the Dates!

Ascension Day, the Fortieth Day of Easter, is Thursday, June 2. There will be an outdoor worship celebration from 5:30 pm to 6:00 pm, followed by a bratwurst and hotdog barbecue at 6:00 pm. Come for both or either!

+ + + +



Open House and House Blessing is at the Keys' home Sunday, June 12, from 1:30 pm to 5:30 pm. Come for all or any part of the afternoon to enjoy the outdoors, play lawn games, share food, and bless the house. Address: 124 Murlyn Rd, Hamden. Rain date: June 19. For directions, please see the Pastor's message.

RSVP's are helpful, but not necessary, to:
pastor@bethesdanewhaven.org or 203-787-2346



Church World Service "Gift of the Heart" Kits Campaign Update:

We have been notified by Thrivent that \$500 has been sent to CWS on behalf of Bethesda Lutheran Church. Again thank you to all who participated.

+ + + +

Wednesday Morning Bible Study



In June, our study continues on *Gifts and Calling* - how we are God's instruments, how we invest our abilities, how we hear God, and how we live daily in God's promises. Dates for these June's sessions are June 8 and 22. Dates for sessions in the next series are July 8, 22, August 6 and 20.

You are invited to come to the Parish House Living Room from 8:00 to 9:00 am as we gather for light breakfast followed by Bible readings and lively discussions. Let God's Word grow in every heart.

Please join us !

Resurrection Connection Day Camp July 18 – Aug. 5

The Resurrection Connection Day Camp preparations are in full swing. Registration for camp is just around the corner, and there are many needs which must be met in order for the camp experience to be a success. In addition to your financial donations, Lutherans in Mission has compiled a wish-list of items frequently used at camp.

1. Materials: Craft supplies, sidewalk chalk, glitter, bathing suits (for children age 6-14), gimp, beach toys, copy paper, large poster board, cups, plates, paper towels, trash bags, toilet paper, gallon containers with screw tops.
2. Snacks: Powdered drink mix, chips, cookies, freeze pops, fruit - for 100 people twice a day.
3. Lunches for staff: About 24 people need lunch twice a week (when not on field trips)
4. Suppers for Counselors: Twelve counselors need a main meal on Sunday through Thursday. You can provide suppers in one of the following ways:
 - a. Host them and provide a meal at your church or home.
 - b. Arrange to deliver food to Resurrection Lutheran Church during the day.
 - c. Arrange to deliver food to their apartment at the Yale Divinity School.
 - d. Donate money for meals.

To make arrangements for drop-off or pick-up of materials and/or meals, please call (860) 301-5075 or (203) 843-3981.

See the poster in the Narthex for more detailed information.

You may make out your checks to Bethesda (noting that it's for the Resurrection Camp program) or send it directly to Lutherans In Mission, c/o Tabor Lutheran Church, 25 Tabor Dr., Branford, CT 06405.

From the Pastor:

Eating our Way through Life Together

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.... Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. (Acts 2: 42, 46-47a)

There is a place I like to go in Vermont, one of those places from where rich memories have emerged. It's called Koinonia, from the Greek which means "fellowship," or "community." It's not fancy. It's just enough away from everything to give space to breathe. I have been there with my family. I have been there with pastors. I have been there on lay leadership retreats.

I think the food has something to do with it. It's a Bed and Breakfast, where the food is wholesome and good. Lisa's homemade hot cereal is interesting. Ken's waffles with Vermont Maple Syrup are yummy.

I think the company has something to do with it. There have been meaningful presentations on prioritizing a life in the Spirit, a balanced life for well-being. There have been ping-pong games in the basement with my zealous tennis table-loving wife, Kari. Conversations around the fire inside or in the hot tub outside have brought news of a new baby on the way and grieved over congregational conflict.

I think prayer has something to do with it. In a room where loveseats are gathered in a circle, God's presence has been invoked with simple song, intentional silences, and the framework of the Bible story read and interpreted.

While I have named "Koinonia" as a place, it really is an experience that has shaped me. I think it has shaped you, too. The pattern for Christian community was already described in the book of Acts. And Bethesda seems to revel in its potlucks and receptions, as gatherings that are accompanied by laughter and conversation.

One way to describe our community is a "meal fellowship," centered in our weekly Sunday gatherings. But this Sunday Eucharistic center radiates out to a slew of other gatherings that deepen our relationship with others, while deepening our relationship with Christ. You could say we are **eating our way through life together**. (I think I just did).

While I'm at it, here are some meal/fellowship invitations for you:

Come to a bratwurst (and hot dog) barbecue as we celebrate Easter's 40th Day, Ascension Day, Thursday June 2. We will worship outdoors at 5:30 pm, then eat at 6:00 pm. Meet behind the Parish House where the grill and the picnic table are. Bring food to share.

Come to snack at an Open House and House Blessing at our home in Hamden, Sunday, June 12, anywhere from 1:30 pm to 5:30 pm. The blessing, eating, and fellowship will be ongoing. We are at 124 Murlyn Rd. We will have light snacks. Just bring yourselves.

Directions from the South: Take Whitney Avenue, or off Interstate 91, take Route 40 (the Connector) until it ends at Whitney Avenue (North). Get into the left lane. Passing Thyme and Season Natural Food Store, take a left at Home Place right after the BP Station. Go up the hill and bear slightly left at the island at the top. Our driveway is almost straightway up.

Parking: You can park on the left side of the driveway (it's quite wide, but we share it with the multi-family home tenants), or on Murlyn Road. Please avoid parking behind the multi-family home.

Look for more opportunities for eating our way together this summer!

Pastor Tim Keyl

Christianity means community through Jesus Christ and in Jesus Christ. No Christian community is more or less than this. Whether it be a brief, single encounter or the daily fellowship of years, Christian community is only this. We belong to one another only through and in Jesus Christ. —Dietrich Bonhoeffer



Bethesda's Sunday School Program



Yes, another year has ended for the Bethesda Sunday School program!! But instead of speaking about endings we wish to stress that we are only pausing for some months while the education committee evaluates its program and plans for the fall semester.

We continue to have a stable program with very committed families, but not much growth regarding the incorporation of new families to the program. Nevertheless, what is important is that we continue working as hard as we can so that when new families come, we have something good and fun to offer. The Education Committee and the Sunday School teachers will meet in June to discuss how the program went this year and how to enhance it for next year. Since we are looking for ways to grow and improve our program, we would like the input of parents and friends. If you are a parent of the SS child or someone interested in this program, please feel free to share with me (priscilla.melendez@sunysb) your concerns and ideas, so that we can present them at the meeting.

On Music Sunday (May 15) Sunday school students participated in an extended music time with Chris and Nora in order to emphasize the musical nature of worship and allow the kids to participate in their own extra music making. This turned out to be an impromptu assessment of the learning that takes place in our program. Through the use of the book and song, "1,2,3 Church!" the gathered children exhibited not only their sound understanding of Bible stories and worship practices, but a contagious enthusiasm that brought many a child to their feet to proclaim: "Adam and Eve!!!!" and "Advent is blue!!!!" and "Look, there's God!!!!!" OK, maybe not the last one, but that is surely what any bystander would have shouted had they watched!

The picnic was great despite the soggy weather. Children enjoyed participating in the games and all enjoyed the bountiful feast.

As we encourage our children to learn to give of what they have to help others, we are happy to inform that the SS offering for the year was \$107.00 This money will all go to our partners in ministry Resurrection Lutheran Church in New Haven. Let's continue giving a good example to our children so that they grow looking around for opportunities to help others.

We hope you are enjoying the Welcome banner prepared by the kids during Intergenerational Sunday under the supervision and auspices of Gail Labadia. We thank Gail for working so hard to create this banner and the kids for their invaluable contribution.

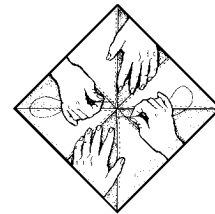
Bethesda Youth Group (BYG):

Save the date for Hammonasset 2011, where hundreds of youth from all over New England campout at Hammonasset State Park for a weekend.

This year it's September 9-11, and will feature a day of service on Saturday (maybe a work project at Bethesda?)
Look for registration materials coming soon!



The Thursday Evening Fair work group continues to meet in the Campanius Room starting at 7:30 pm and welcomes newcomers. We are working on a variety of things, including wrapped rope bowls and baskets. If you would like to help but don't want to come to church to work with a group, on June 19 and 26 after church we will be offering kits of ornaments that you can make at home. And in the summer Visitor we will be asking for some help by donating items for raffle baskets. Stay tuned! And if you have questions, please see Maureen Anderson or Sue Berube.



Quilting

The group working on the quilt for this

year's quilt raffle at the fair have been busily working on making squares for the quilt top. We will be meeting again on June 11 and June 25 from 9:30 – noon in the Muhlenberg Room to hopefully finish all the piecing. Please feel free to join us if you are interested in helping out. If you have questions, please see Maureen Anderson or Carol Moulard.

Congratulations Class of 2011

Dan Cortright is earning a Master's degree in Education from the University of New Haven. He began the program in Dec 2009 and finished all requirements in Dec 2010. During the program he had a brief internship at the Engineering & Science University Magnet School in New Haven. Following the coursework he became a student teacher at John G. Prendergast School in Ansonia where he taught Grade 6 - all subjects. Dan finished student teaching on May 6, and expects to be certified in K-6 education and grades 7-12 Biology. He would like to teach in an upper elementary or middle school classroom in either an urban or suburban school district even though they are very different. Congratulations Dan, and good luck!



(Photo: Dan teaching a 6th grade class.)



Ray Bjorkman is graduating from Hamden High School this year, where he played piano in the jazz band for four years, was varsity tennis captain, and participated in a variety of other community, academic, and service oriented organizations. In the fall he will be attending Tufts University School of Engineering. Though he has not decided on a major, he is interested in mechanical engineering or physics and may explore a minor in political science. He is looking forward to finding a job and squeezing lots of fun out of this last summer before

college. We are proud of you Ray and wish you the best!

Alex Marmor graduated from Hamden High School in January and has spent the spring semester taking classes in philosophy and marketing at Southern. While a student, Alex was active in the Trinity Choir of Men and Boys as an alto and tenor, achieved first stand cello in the Principal Orchestra of the Norwalk Youth Symphony, and was intimately involved in nearly all aspects of his band, Falling Up Stairs. Next year he will attend Berklee College of Music in Boston, MA where he plans to major in music business with focuses in entrepreneurship and marketing; contemporary writing; and production. This summer he plans to work on his own music projects, play music, and hopes to even make some money while doing so! Bravo Alex and best of luck!

Bethesda's Prayer List:

For Healing and strength:

Sarah Yoder, cousin of Molly Dinneen; Sarah Wylie, mother of Clarissa Youngberg; Oscar Roos; Bob Lehet; Ruth Beaumont; Rita Wissink; Nancy Bailey, cousin of Lisa Randall and Leslie Dunn; Verna Carlson; Adele Larson, mother of Doreen Larson Oboyski; Ed Abeling; Ray Anderson; Linda Salisbury; Betty Neal; Betty Henrickson; George Lindbeck; Robert Evenson; Aina Smith; Len DeNardis; Sylvia Dunn; Ruth Mood; Jeanette Tykson; Ruth Jacobson.

For those serving in the military: including members and friends of Bethesda *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); Luther House; 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 those preparing for ministry: Tracy Swan Tuite, Lorraine Peterson, Abby Ferjak, and Ben Groth.

Updates from our Candidates for Ordination

Each week we pray for members of Bethesda who are seeking ordination. Look for more updates in future issues.

Abby Ferjak writes: This has been a very full, exciting and unexpected year! In the fall after switching to the Master of Divinity degree, I enjoyed learning about college and university chaplaincy in a class taught by Sharon Kugler, the Yale University Chaplain. At YDS in the fall I was also surprised to find that I enjoyed learning the principles of preaching and appreciated the synthesis of learning they required. Toward the end of fall semester I found out I would be traveling to Egypt for the spring semester and was very excited about the interreligious learning and experience I would gain. Unfortunately, our class only spent one week in Egypt instead of three months. We certainly learned a lot and had interesting experiences, just not the ones we were bargaining for! Thank you for all of your prayers for my classmates and me during that time. Once we returned to YDS in February, I spent the rest of the semester catching up on schoolwork. It is certainly a relief to be done with this semester!

In April, after the church council voted to sponsor me in the candidacy process for the ELCA, I drove to Worcester, MA for my entrance interview with the synod. I am happy to say that I am officially “entranced” in the candidacy process! “Entrance” is the first of three steps in the process. I will be taking the process slowly, so it will take me a few years to reach the other steps but I am on my way. Thank you for your support in this journey!

This summer I will be in Burnsville, MN doing a summer unit of clinical pastoral education (CPE). This means that I will spend my summer in a hospital basically acting as an intern chaplain. It will not be easy, but I am looking forward to learning a lot about ministry and myself. After a week of vacation in August I will be back in New Haven for my last year at YDS. What I am most looking forward to about next school year is my part-time internship with the chaplain at Connecticut College where I will learn about college chaplaincy and specifically work to build a stronger connection between the chaplain’s office and the LGBTQ Center.

I will miss Bethesda this summer and I hope that you all have restful summers. I will see you in August!

Peace,
Abby Ferjak

Teresa “Tracy” Swan

Tuite Tracy received a master of divinity degree at Yale Divinity School in 2000 and a Ph.D. in religious studies (theology) in 2005 from Yale’s Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. She and her husband Jim taught at Bates College in Lewiston, Maine, for two years before moving in 2009 to Oberlin, Ohio, for a position at Oberlin College, where they now teach in the Religion Department.

They have a son, George, and are guardians of Tracy’s nephew, Vincent. Regarding her pursuit of ordination, Tracy writes: “Thanks to the support of Bethesda and other friends in the New England Synod, I was officially entered into the ministry process in August 2010 in the Northeastern Ohio Synod, ELCA. I am currently taking a course on the Lutheran Confessions at Trinity Seminary in Columbus.”

-- Tracy, Jim, Vincent, and George

Council Corner



At its May meeting the Council was grateful to receive reports from several committees on their ministries. In particular, the Executive Committee conveyed that it had accepted the generous gift from a member of membership for Bethesda in the Young Musician Partnership in Lutheran Music

Program; the Evangelism Committee reported the ice cream social will be held August 24; and the Council approved the Facilities Committee recommendation to refurbish the sign on Whitney Avenue. Pastor Keyl reported that Vacation Bible School will be held August 22-25 in partnership with Church of the Redeemer, First Presbyterian Church, and First & Summerfield United Methodist Church. He also encouraged the Council to read his blog and shared an article on welcoming newcomers.

Treasurer Ian Bjorkman gave us the good news that offerings are currently 12% ahead of last year, so we are meeting our challenge budget in this income area.

All were grateful to learn that a member plans to make a special gift to help pay for last winter's snow removal. The Council asked the Executive Committee to make a plan to implement the work accomplished at the May 7 Leadership Retreat.

New England Synod Assembly is June 3-5 in Springfield, Massachusetts

Just like Bethesda has an annual congregational meeting, the New England Synod of the ELCA has an annual meeting called the assembly. Attending from Bethesda are Priscilla Melendez and Anibal Gonzalez, and Pastors Tim and Kari Keyl.

The assembly will be from Friday through Sunday, a departure from previous years cycle of Thursday through Saturday. This has been done to attract those who had difficulty getting time off from work and to reach out to youth and young adults. The youth component is called *Youth Matters*, borrowing from the synod-wide renewal and revitalization process called *Doing What Matters*.

On Friday, Pastor Tim Keyl will be honored among others marking milestones in ministry. Pastor Keyl is celebrating his twenty-fifth anniversary of ordination (September 14).

A significant time on Saturday will be spent throughout the city of Springfield with those in attendance taking part in service projects.

A closing eucharist will be held Sunday morning at the MassMutual Center.

Pray for the synod during this time, for Bethesda's Voting Members, and follow along electronically by checking this link: <http://nesynod.org/events/synod-assembly>.