



## Bethesda Lutheran Church

"Welcome One Another"

# *The Visitor*

February 2012

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

### **Annual Meeting Gives Thanks, Looks Ahead**

Bethesda held its annual congregational meeting on January 29. President Dianne Witte led the proceedings, and about 60 voting members were present. We accepted with gratitude the good work in 2011 of Pastor Timothy Keyl, Music Director Lars Gjerde, parish staff members, and our many committees and volunteers – outlined in the annual report – in prayers led by Kari and Spencer Young. We celebrated the commitment of three members of the Council who completed terms – Karen Baker, Ian Bjorkman, and John Hively – and elected Leslie Dunn, Anibal Gonzales, and Mary Schramm to begin four-year terms. We noted with appreciation the service of Karen Baker and Don Youngberg on the Mission Endowment Fund Committee and elected Leslie Dunn and Lisa Kinsella to three-year terms. Nominating Committee members appointed to serve next year with retiring Council members Margaret Astrup and Barbara Stark were Judy Evenson, Nora Lee, Kay Linquist, and Richard Slater.

The gathering also looked ahead to 2012 with excitement. Finance Committee Chair Maureen Anderson presented the 2012 budget with Dianne. The congregation was challenged to increase giving 6% above what pledging and expected contributions indicated. Dianne noted that Bethesda continues to rely on bequests, memorials, and endowments to balance the budget, and she encouraged members to remember the congregation in their wills. She also encouraged the gathering to suggest ways to direct the distributions of the Mission Endowment Fund. The budget was approved. Pastor Keyl spoke briefly about Bethesda's newly launched capital campaign, "Restore, Renew, Share," following co-chair Paul Stuehrenberg's announcement of the title, Bible verse – 1 Timothy 6:18 – and initial meetings during announcements at worship and Pastor's commission of the campaign's leaders. Kari again led us in prayer for the promise ahead in 2012!

Following the congregational meeting, the Council met to welcome new members and elect leaders for the coming year. The group endorsed the continuation of the officers currently serving: Dianne Witte, President; Katie Gehner, Vice President; Maureen Anderson, Secretary; and Ian Bjorkman, Treasurer.



**Remember that You  
Are Dust:**

**Ash Wednesday  
is**

**February 22, liturgies  
at noon and 7:30 pm  
in the Church Nave  
(the worship space)**

Ash Wednesday is the Christian equivalent of Yom Kippur, a Day of Atonement. On our knees we will confess our human faults and sin. We will be reminded of our mortality with the tracing of the cross with ashes. We will begin the march toward Lenten renewal, wizened, and heading toward Jerusalem, the new Jerusalem. Join others on this holy day.

**On Wednesdays in Lent**  
we will continue to gather  
in prayer at two times:

Noon in the Chapel followed by a shared bag lunch; and 6:00 pm with soup supper in the Campanius Room, followed by a time of conversation and prayer in the Chapel at 7:00 pm

## Worship Ministry Fair Sunday, February 12 and 19

Preparing the altar; writing prayers; handing out bulletins; baking bread; offering bread and wine at communion; smiling and greeting people; reading God's Word aloud. These are just some of the activities that happen each week as the Sunday assembly gathers for worship. If you have never participated in these worship leadership roles and would like to learn more or sign up, look for representatives at tables in the narthex and in the Campanius Room on Sunday, February 12 and 19 after worship. For more information, contact Pastor Keyl at [pastor@bethesdanewhaven.org](mailto:pastor@bethesdanewhaven.org).

## Acolyte Ministry Training Sunday, February 12 at noon

Acolytes light candles and carry things. They assist pastor and the congregation during worship each Sunday. We are delighted that children and youth are participating in this ministry. Current acolytes and those interested in serving are invited to a training at noon on Sunday, February 12, beginning with a pizza lunch. If you think you can carry the Lectionary Book in procession, then you may just be the right person to be an acolyte. Contact Pastor Keyl if you plan to attend at [pastor@bethesdanewhaven.org](mailto:pastor@bethesdanewhaven.org).

## Bring back last year's palms by February 19

If you have palms from last year at home, bring them back and place them in a basket in the narthex by February 19. They will be burned and made into ashes for Ash Wednesday. Thanks!



### Notes from our Music Director:

*The Bethesda Music Series* will host an **Ecumenical Hymn Festival** on February 5 at 4pm. All are encouraged to attend and to bring friends! This will be a very festive occasion for those who like to sing good old, and also new, hymns. We will have a chamber orchestra and will be led by Encore Music Creations (Lars Gjerde, Brett Judson, Scott Perkins).

Several area churches will participate with choral singers. This event is a great chance to feature our proud congregational singing tradition! The free-will offering will benefit **Habitat for Humanity**.

## YDS student brunch after worship Sunday, February 19

Yale Divinity students are invited to a brunch after worship on Sunday, February 19, at around 11 am, in Bethesda's Parish House Dining Room. Abby Ferjak will be preaching that morning at the 9:30 am Eucharist. Pastor Keyl will host conversation about strengthening the local Lutheran connection with the Div School. RSVP's are helpful, but not required, by contacting [pastor@bethesdanewhaven.org](mailto:pastor@bethesdanewhaven.org).

## From the Pastor:

### The Journey is the Destination



*Bless now, O God, the journey that all your people make,  
the path through noise and silence, the way of give and take.  
The trail is found in desert and winds the mountain round,  
then leads beside still waters, the road where faith is found.*

--Sylvia Dunstan, ELW 326

A rule of thumb for grouping youth in small groups is a van load. Given that my minivan holds seven, that's a good number. The idea is that significant conversation happens when traveling in a car.

I once rode back with youth from Hammonasset to New Hampshire, which takes about 3 hours. Two teenage girls asked me what it was like to be a pastor, as if they were really interested. Inside my brain I wondered, "are they really interested in what ministry is like?"

I've ridden frequently with youth who ask permission to play "their music." I almost always say yes, because it promotes conversation. I still remember Joe Bianchi introducing me to Israel Kamakawiwo'ole's version of "Over the Rainbow." We connected over that song to our dreams for the future.

The forty-day season of Lent is compared to a journey, a journey about which we must pay particular attention to the road with God.

We mark the beginning of that season with ashen crosses on February 22, as if the journey is launched. There we commit ourselves to a time of renewal, with prayer, fasting, and works of love. On that day Bethesda will offer the Rite of Confession and Imposition of Ashes with Holy Communion at noon and 7:30 pm.

At the same time this year we will also be renewing ourselves through our Capital Campaign whose theme is RESTORE-RENEW-SHARE. While we are receiving financial commitments to renovate our building, we know at the same time that this is an opportunity to reinvigorate our faith and purpose as a congregation. The commitment date is Palm/Passion Sunday, April 1.

Finally, our road with God is the one that Christ took, that led to his death, and on the third day, new life. Plan to join the three-day journey in our marking of the Three Days, culminating in the Vigil of Easter, April 5 - 7.

Eager for new life,  
Pastor Tim Keyl

*We begin the journey on Ash Wednesday. Many Christians adopt a forty-day practice to mark the journey. They eat less, or give away more, or pray longer, or limit their entertainment, to help them stay focused on the goal. Pilgrims travel light. We join Jesus in the wilderness for forty days, battling our demons. But thank to Christ, we are not alone, as he was. We have one another for comfort and our walk sticks for support. In fact, those walking sticks sometimes come in handy as cudgels, good strong staffs to beat the demons away, a cross to conquer the enemy. ...Lent is the forty days for change, for leaving the old and walking together toward the new. So pick up your staff, and come.*

--from *Welcome Home: Scripture, Prayers, and Blessings for the Household, Year of Mark* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, ©1996)



## Council Corner

At its January meeting the Council focused on preparations for the January 29 annual meeting of the congregation, particularly the financial reports. Treasurer Ian Bjorkman reviewed the congregation’s year-end income and expenses. He noted that we withdrew less from special funds than what had been budgeted in 2011, although that amount was still substantial. He also proposed a budget for 2012, and the Council discussed it.

Pastor Keyl reviewed the meaningful worship and staff and Council celebrations that took place at Christmas and afterwards. He highlighted several meetings he will attend in the next few weeks to learn more about ministries in which Bethesda is involved, especially Christian Community Action and Interfaith Cooperative Ministries.

The Council received with gratitude reports from the Evangelism Committee; the Social Ministry Committee, in which Chloe Groth noted becoming involved in Abraham’s Tent, a city effort to provide overflow shelter for homeless people, and Kids Care, a program of the Connecticut Food Bank; and the Facilities Committee, which had received a bid for installing automatic doors at the “bridge” entrance to the sanctuary.

Dianne Witte, President

## Time, Talent, Treasure

### Thanks to Linda Cortright, Ian Bjorkman and Clare Couture

Linda, Ian and Clare worked long and hard to close the books on 2011, prepare the financial reports and develop the budget for 2012 that was passed at the annual meeting.

### and the Restore – Renew – Share Team

An impressive number of congregation leaders were commissioned at the service before the annual meeting. The Steering Team is made up of Executive Co-Directors Kathy Wimmer and Paul Stuehrenberg, Maureen Anderson, Leon Linqvist, Pastor Keyl and Dianne Witte. The leaders of the various teams are Sue Berube, Carole DeVore, Katie Gehner, Ben and Chloe Groth, Kari Keyl, Nora Lee, Kay Linqvist, Carlen Mandas, Priscilla Melendez, Brigitte Neumann, Mary Schramm, Donna Slater, Barbara Stark, Kari Young and Clarissa Youngberg

### And Treasure

We have had a wonderful January, including a very generous gift. Our budget this year includes a 6% stretch for us.

**T** Time  
Talent  
Treasure *An update on offerings to  
Bethesda...*

<b>2011</b>		<b>2012</b>		<b>Ahead/(Behind)</b>
<i>As of 1/23</i>	\$9,140.00	<i>As of 1/22</i>	\$11,780	22%
Year end	<b>\$176,000.00</b>	Budget	<b>\$184,800</b>	

## Bethesda's Capital Campaign is underway!

The Steering Committee met with Pastor Renee LiaBraaten on January 24 followed by a meeting which included the Team Coordinators. On January 25, the following day, Pastor LiaBraaten met individually with each of the Team Coordinators to explain their roles in detail and help them get underway.

The Campaign Theme that was selected is:

**RESTORE      RENEW      SHARE**

The campaign theme represents a threefold description of our plan to **restore** and upgrade our facilities to good condition. Making the building more usable will enable our ministries within to flourish, **renewing** our energy and enthusiasm, especially as we seek to connect more intentionally with our neighbors and city, **sharing** our abundant resources.

The Campaign Scripture selected is from I Timothy 6:18:

*“They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share.”*

The members of the Leadership Team are:

**Steering Team** (organizes and oversees the campaign process):  
Executive Co-Directors: Paul Stuehrenberg and Kathy Wimmer.  
Steering Team: Maureen Anderson, Leon Linquist, Dianne Witte, Pastor Tim Keyl and Pastor Renee LiaBraaten.  
Financial Secretary: Mary Schramm.

**Administrative Support Team** ( handles mailings, making copies, assembling packets of information): Carole DeVore and Nora Lee

**Advance Commitment Team** ( organizes the advance phase of the campaign, including host homes for small leadership gatherings): Priscilla Melendez and Carlen Mandas

**Communication Team** (creates the communication materials for the campaign): Donna Slater and Brigitte Neumann

**Messenger Team** (makes calls to take reservations for the Mission Rally Brunch and to remind people about the Prayer Vigil and Commitment Sunday): Sue Berube

**Children and Youth Team**  
(gathers stories, thoughts, artwork from children, confirmation age youth and senior high youth for the Faith Stories Booklet. Helps children prepare songs and older youth to prepare skits to share during the Mission Rally Brunch): Nora Lee and Meg Carnaroli

**Spiritual Life Team**  
(gathers stories from members for the Faith Stories Booklet, writes and distributes campaign prayer, and organizes a Prayer Vigil): Barbara Stark and Kari Young

**Mission Rally Team** (Plans menu, decorations, emcee and set-up for the Mission Rally Brunch): Katie Gehner

**Commitment Sunday Worship Team** (plans an inspiring worship service and special decorations for Commitment Sunday): Ben and Chloe Groth, Kari Keyl

**Commitment Sunday Festival Team** (Plans an extra special coffee hour following worship on Commitment Sunday): Kay Linquist

There is much work ahead and we are thankful for all those who are willing to help.  
Donna Slater, Co-Coordinator,  
Communications Team

## Forty-Day Journey with Julian of Norwich.

Order this devotional book for use at home during Lent.

Cost is \$15. Contact Clare at

[administrator@bethesdanewhaven.org](mailto:administrator@bethesdanewhaven.org) by February 13.

Here's how the book is described:

*Drawing from her published writings, editor Lisa Dahill here selects forty inspiring passages from Julian's work that help illustrate God's love and compassion for all. A medieval Catholic, Julian was seen as a precursor to Martin Luther and other Reformation writers. Much of what she wrote speaks of the most profound mysteries of the Christian faith, and her Sixteen Revelations of Divine Love (circa 1393) is considered to be one of the most remarkable documents of medieval religious experience. In it she speaks of the great love of God for God's people and how sin stands in the way. It is Jesus, however, who assures her, "that all would be well, and all manner of things would be well."*

### From our Parish Assistant:

In the context of studies at Yale, a burning question for me has lately been: How to pursue holiness? This question has become more real for me after reading great theologians last semester, such as St. Augustine, Jeremy Taylor and John Henry Newman. Holiness is supposed to encompass all our life, and yet it is not our achievement, but rather the Holy Spirit working and living within us. A precondition for the indwelling of the Spirit is allowing him to come, which can really only be done if we sit down to wait and listen.

On January 15, we heard about Jesus calling Nathaniel after seeing him sitting under the fig tree. Our guest preacher made a point that in the gospel of John, there is much time for reflection, in fact, time does not seem to matter all that much. This is much in contrast to our society, where we treasure time because there never seems to be enough of it. Yet unless we take a seat under the fig tree, we may not hear the voice of Jesus calling us.

This year we are blessed with an extra long season of Epiphany. Epiphany began on January 6, and is in many traditions the celebration of Christ being revealed to the Gentiles, symbolically by the coming of the Magi to adore him. One of the meanings of the word epiphany is "shining forth." Christ shines forth in our lives, and enables us to come closer to God. Funny enough, we may sometimes block this light in our struggle for efficiency. Is it perhaps time to sit down under the fig tree, to pray and to listen for the voice of Jesus?

Oscar Lied  
Parish Assistant

## Adult Forum in February

### February

5 - *China*- Oscar Lied

12- *Honduras* - Steven Dumas

19- Constance Chase on  
*Pangani*

26- DVD *The Life of St. Peter*,  
narrated by Rick Steves

### Sarah Circle

Join the wonderful women of Bethesda on Monday, Feb. 6 at 7:30 in the Living Room for dessert, coffee, and conversation.

### Attention All Thrivent Members

It is necessary to allocate your 2011 Choice Dollars no later than March 31, 2012. It would be great if you would allocate them to Bethesda, New Haven but you have the choice to give them to over 17,000 different groups. To direct your Choice Dollars visit

[Thrivent.com/thriventchoice](http://Thrivent.com/thriventchoice) and direct them as you choose. If you prefer to avoid the web site just call 1-800-847-4836 and when prompted, say "Thrivent Choice" and follow the prompts. This is a great way to support Bethesda with your benefit dollars. Questions? Contact Katie Gehner at 203-481-9720 or [kgehner@att.net](mailto:kgehner@att.net).

## **“Gift of the Heart” Kits-2012**

### **Community Garden**



Bethesda has prep work laid for a Community Garden. With funding from the Mission Endowment Fund, John ("Jack") and Miles Kirschner, laid the groundwork for the garden during the week after Christmas. Here's how Miles describes the set-up:

Lumber and deck screws were purchased. The lumber was cut to size and assembled into six, three foot by twelve foot beds and two, three foot by four foot beds which equals two hundred and forty square feet of garden space.

The next step was to transport the beds to the church along with landscape fabric and a lawn mower. Upon arrival the lawn was mowed to the shortest setting the mower would allow. The landscape fabric was laid in place, covering the entire garden area. Next the beds were put in place. Soil was then added to each of the beds. The soil mix was made up of three ingredients; compost, peat moss, and vermiculite. It took fifty-four bags of soil to fill the beds and in the early spring twelve more bags of pure compost will be added. The pathways were covered with mulch. All beds were supplemented with vermiculite.

Plans are being made for what to plant, how to maintain what we grow, and how we might share the produce. Doreen Larson-Oboyski and Janis Underwood will be working with the Kirschners and others to make this an ongoing ministry.

### **Piano in memory of Iver and Grace Johnson**



On behalf of the Bethesda community, I wish to extend our warmest thanks to Alice Baglioni and Robert I. Johnson for their generous gift of the late Iver and Grace Johnson's piano. The beautiful Yamaha instrument has been placed in the choir room, where it will serve in our weekly rehearsals. The piano will improve the working environment for the choir significantly and will serve as a testimony to Iver and Grace's faithful service and commitment to Bethesda.

Sincerely, Lars Gjerde, Director of Music

Bethesda will again participate in Church World Service's collection of "Gift of the Heart" Kits. Sarah Circle will coordinate. The young children and their parents have already made School Kits. Please join these efforts by:

1. Making a complete Hygiene, School kit (s).
2. Supplying some of the items needed to make a kit. Please check the fact SHEETS carefully to see what is needed.
3. Donating to pay the postage to send the kits where they are needed. An offering will be taken at the end of a service in March.

Fact Sheets, available in the Narthex, will provide the information you need to make the kits. In February, completed kits can be placed in the white box (also in the Narthex). Sue Berube (203-287-8170) will be happy to answer any questions and accept kit items as you collect them.

### **Restore - Renew- Share ... and EAT!**

Please keep the date of **Sunday, March 4, 2012** available to attend our Capital Campaign Mission Rally Brunch after church. This will be a celebration with decorations, great food, entertainment, fellowship and there will be no cost to you for this event. You will hear more as the day comes closer and you will be called for reservations. Call or email Katie Gehner for more info.

## Prayers for Family and Friends

**For Healing and strength:** Eric Larson, brother of Doreen Larson Oboyski; Ellen Wigren, mother of Chris Wigren; Anna-Karin Johansson, sister of Sonja Krummrey; Betty Neal; Almira Muschamp, mother of Sue Berube; John Johansson, brother of Sonja Krummrey; John Kirschner; Anne Keyl, sister-in-law of Pastor Keyl; Len DeNardis; Margaret Stark, mother of Barbara; Charles Dupré; Helen Blade; Nils Svensén; Ruth Mattson; Oscar Roos; Verna Carlson; Ed Abeling; Ray Anderson; Linda Salisbury; Betty Henrickson; George Lindbeck; Robert Evenson; Aina Smith; Sylvia Dunn; Ruth Mood; Jeanette Tykson; and Rita Wissink.

**For those serving in the military:** including family and friends of Bethesda members **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 Bethesda:** as we embark on *Restore – Renew - Serve*, our capital campaign.

**For those preparing for ministry:** Oscar Lied, Tracy Swan Tuite, Abby Ferjak, and Ben Groth.

**For Comfort in Grief:** We remember the families and friends of Adele Larson, mother of Doreen Larson-Oboyski who died on January 28; Sally Lenn, sister of Don Youngberg, who died on Sunday, January 22; Stig Lydell who died on Saturday, January 21 in South Carolina; and Bill Patrick, brother of George Patrick who died on January 4. *Rest eternal grant them, O Lord and let light perpetual shine on them.*



## The New Paradigm Theatre

It's official! There is a new professional theatre in the Stamford/Greenwich area of CT called  
**The New Paradigm Theatre.**

The theatre is Professional, Equity, and benefits from the impressive talents of:  
Diana Dimarzio (Bway:Sweeney Todd)  
as well as Kate Chapman, (Bway: Mary Poppins, Les Miz, Pajama Game, Sweet Smell)  
Jodi Stephens (Bway Jekyll and Hyde) and Jill Soares.

It's an exciting time to start a Regional Theatre so close to NYC.  
Greenwich/Stamford is a very wealthy area and not only will they be producing standard and contemporary musicals and plays, they will also be promoting new works and offering them help with marketing and funding packages.

Jamibeth Margolis (NY casting dir for Phantom, Les Miz, Cats, etc) is the executive director and (Bethesda's own) Kristin Huffman is artistic director. Our mission is to impact an area in more than just artistic ways and we are thinking like a business with a Blue Ocean Strategy.

Be sure to "like" our page: The New Paradigm Theatre on facebook.