

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
79 Brooklyn Street PO Box 606 Portville, NY 14770
(716)-933-6699

e-mail: bethelportville@gmail.com

Websites: (congregation) www.bethelportvilleny.org; (synod) www.upstatenysynod.org;
(ELCA) www.elca.org

Worship Service - Sundays at 9:00am; Sunday School at 10:15am
God's work. Our hands.

In case of a pastoral emergency, please contact the church at: 716-933-6699 or Pastor Derek Cheek at 716-307-7963.

DECEMBER 2017



Christmas has to do with God's unmatched gift to us in the person of Christ. The late pastor, The Rev. Paul Scherer, poetically put it this way: "God came walking down the stairs of heaven carrying a little baby in his arms." The "baby" was for the whole world and he brought light and love and salvation for anyone who accepted him.

The question for us is what shall we do with this precious gift from God, the one we call the Son of God? Shouldn't we receive Christ joyfully, love him faithfully, and serve him continually?

Christians should be proud to admit that we follow Christ. We should be happy to be a part of the Body of Christ; the Church. And we ought to be prompted to be good Christian stewards of all that is ours: Our bodies, minds, and spirits. Our time, talent, and possessions, including our money,

property, and other worldly goods, which are gifts from God.

A fascinating article in this month's issue of Stewardship speaks of how we Christians are all connected together with the joyous task of living, sharing, and serving together on behalf of the One who came from God to bless us all. What a glorious calling we have!

Prayer:

Lord of us all, you stagger our souls when we consider the indescribable gift of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Grant us the will and the grace to be faithful and eager servants on his behalf until we find ourselves at home with you. **Amen.**



The Portville Food Pantry collects these items on an on-going basis: spaghetti, spaghetti sauce, pasta, mac and cheese, pork and beans, canned vegetables, tuna, soup, rice, egg noodles, and canned tomatoes. **Cereal is also needed as well.**



Pray First!

- For all service men and women, and their families, especially *Casey McCarthy, Tyler McCarthy, Kendra Linn, Travis Dorvit and Kyle Lust*. For Christ to be made known in our companion synods – *Zimbabwe and Zambia*, and our partner synod – *Central/Southern Illinois Synod*. For the Franciscan community at *Mt. Irenaeus* and the *Burkhart Retreat Center for Life* – retreats in our local area. For our Bishops, Bishop Elizabeth Eaton (ELCA) and John Macholz (Upstate New York Synod), Assistants to the Bishop Dave Preisinger, Mary Johnson, and Dean Daniel Rumfelt. For the mission congregations in our synod—*Organic Faith* in Amherst and *Todos los Hijos de Dios* in Amsterdam. For the pastors and congregations in our Southwestern Conference and for our congregation council leaders – President *Bill Graves*, Secretary *Linda Scott*, Treasurer *Doug Ploetz*, Vice President *Ruth Brewer* and members *Caroline Miller, Donald Linn and Jerry Maerten*. For our sister congregation, *Peace Lutheran* and their ministry in Slidell, LA for the ministry of *ELCMA* – Evangelical Lutheran Coalition for Mission in Appalachia. For area ministries: *Genesis House, Portville Community Food Pantry*, and *Interfaith Caregivers*.

PLEASE SEE BULLETIN BOARD outside the sanctuary for a COMPLETE SECRETARY'S REPORT.

Council Member
Assignment

Bill Graves
Ruth Brewer
Linda Scott
Doug Ploetz
Ruth Brewer

Caroline Miller

Jerry Maerten
Don Linn

Committee

Council President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Worship and Music & Christian Education
Stewardship & Fellowship
Outreach/Evangelism
Property

Notice: When you call the church phone number it will be automatically forwarded to church secretary-Nannette Giberson and she will direct your questions or inquiries to the proper people. Thank you.

We NEED people to sign up as worship servants.

We are in need of Lectors, Prayer Leaders, Ushers, Communion assistants and Altar Guild. There are sign-up sheets on the table in Fellowship Hall. Please sign up for one or more of these positions as you feel led. Thank you.

Prayer Chain:

If you have need of prayer, we have an e-mail prayer chain. Just call Bev Robinson – phone number 814-225-3341 or e-mail at grandmagee7@verizon.net.

Have you checked out Bethel's Facebook Group?

The url is:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/127210584114232/>.



Choir practice is held Sunday mornings at 7:45am. All are welcome to join. **Sopranos' are needed.**

No audition necessary

Christmas card exchange:

The first of December we will have our little red sleigh ready to take your Christmas cards to share with each other.

Stewardship will deliver the cards to church members providing that they attend church regularly. We will not send them out via the postal service.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

We will be going Christmas caroling on Sunday, December 10th between 2:00 and 4:00 pm. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to join us. You don't have to be a choir member or even a great singer to go with us and have a wonderful afternoon. What a joy and blessing it is to see how very much people enjoy our coming to them and singing Christmas songs. You won't be disappointed!!!

Sunday, December 17th will be the Sunday School Christmas program during the worship service. Please plan to attend as the kids do such a great job with this program and they (and the teachers) need our support.

Fundraiser Funds are divided as follows:

10% Charity of our choice

10% Benevolence

Rest in general fund



Our next church breakfasts will be on **Saturday January 6th**. Breakfast will be held from 8:00am until 11:00am. We need volunteers to help cook and serve. Please help if you are able as this is a great fundraiser and a wonderful time of fellowship. Thanks.

Please keep these members in your prayers and send them a card if you are able.

Skip Robinson

1262 Indian Creek Road
Eldred, PA 16731
(814) 225-3341

Hilda Prosser

% Cuba Memorial Hospital
Nursing Home – Room 238W
140 West Main Street
Cuba, NY 14727
(585) 968-2000 Ext. 712

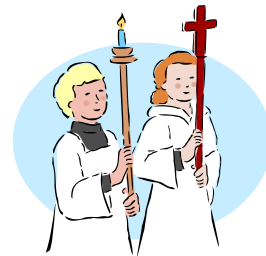
December 2017



02—Nancy Renner
 05--- Julia Yohe
 06—Clinton Brewer
 07---Maria Lewis
 09—Sharon Hepfer
 09—Michelle Clemens
 09—Skip Giberson
 09---Michael Fahnestock
 10—Pam Swanson
 11—Heidi Giberson Doyle
 15—Bob Warner
 16---Kathy Shelander
 18—Mary Jean Brooks
 29—Joe Swanson
 31—Keenan Linn



26—Bill & Kay Anderson
 26—Mike & Joelle Brewer



Worship Assistants

Lectors

Dec. 3rd *Pen Yunghans*
 Dec 10th *Jo Kile*
 Dec. 17th *Connie Smith-Matteson*
 Dec. 24th *June Murray*
 Dec. 31st. *Dakota Brewer*

Prayer Leaders.

Dec. 3rd *Caroline Miller*
 Dec 10th *Connie Smith-Matteson*
 Dec. 17th *Caroline Miller*
 Dec. 24th *Linda Scott*
 Dec. 31st *Ruth Brewer*

Assistants for December

Acolyte.....*Haedyn Brewer*
 Communion Assistants.....*Caroline Miller*
and April Giberson
 Usher/s ...Dec. 3rd & 10th ...*Skip Giberson*
 Dec. 17th, 24th, & 31st.*Jon Giberson*

 Altar Guild .. Dec. 3rd, 17th, 24th, & 31st
Trinette Brewer, Dec. 10th ...Nannette
Giberson

 Mail Greeter.....*Caroline Miller*

 Bread Bakers.....*Ron Kile*

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH CALENDAR - DECEMBER 2017

Sat. Dec. 2nd

Monthly breakfast from 8:00am - 11:00am

Sunday, Dec. 3rd

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

7:45am - Choir Rehearsal

9:00am- Worship with **Advent Dinner following at 1:00pm.**

10:15am - Sunday school

Friday, Dec 10th

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

7:45 - Choir Rehearsal

9:00 - Worship with fellowship following

10:15 am - Sunday school

2:00 - 4:00 pm - Christmas Caroling

Sunday, Dec. 17th

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

7:45am - choir Rehearsal

9:00am - Childrens Sunday school program with Fellowship following

Sunday, Dec. 24th

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

7:45am - Choir rehearsal

9:00am - Worship with Fellowship following

10:15am - Sunday school

5:00pm -Christmas Eve at Manual Lutheran
in Olean with communion and candlelight service.

Sunday, Dec. 31st

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

7:45am - Choir Rehearsal

9:00am - Worship with Fellowship following

10:15am - Sunday school

The charity for the month of December will be World hunger.



Please remember our clothing drop box used to collect clothes for people in need. The box is located in the parking lot of the church next to the utility shed. If you have clothing you wish to drop off, please place them in **plastic bags and tie them up**.

THE GIFT TREE

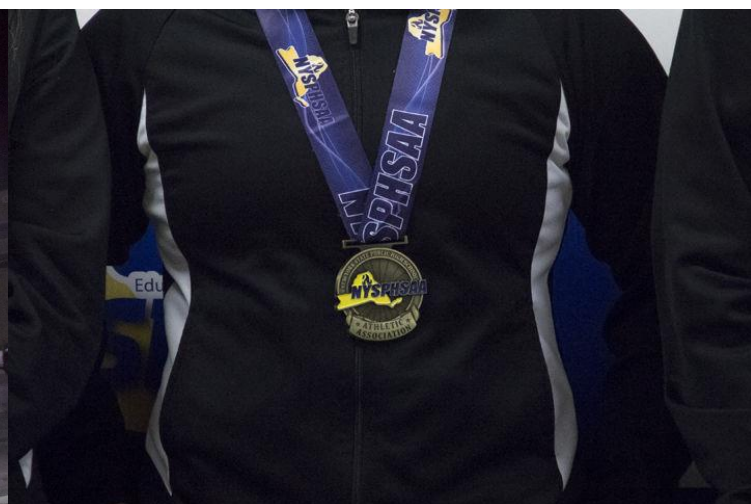
We had a total of \$931 donated by our congregation. We had 15 people shopping and were able to adopt four families and shopped for 11 people. We met at Walmart at 6:00pm and were done shopping by 7:45pm. We went to Bethel to wrap and have pizza. A great evening!!!







Congratulations to the Portville Girls Volleyball team who won the State Championship. Below are some pictures that appeared in the Olean Times Herald upon their return.



We were very blessed to have four children baptized on November 26th. Clairra, Quinn, and Pace Scott, children of Chris and Molly Scott as well as Conner Welles, grandson of Mark and Cheryl Welles. We are so thankful to welcome these children into God's family.







***Are you an active member –
The kind that would be missed?
Or are you just contented
That your name is on the list?***

***Do you attend the meetings
And mingle with the flock?
Or do you stay at home
And criticize and knock?***

***Do you take an active part
To help the work along?
Or are you satisfied to be
Of those that just belong?***

***Do you ever voluntarily
Help at the guiding stick?
Or leave the work to just a few
And talk about the clique?***

***Come out to meetings often
And help with hands and heart.
Don't be just an active member,
But take an active part!***

***Think this over, member,
You know right from wrong;
Are you an active member,
Or do you just belong?***

***This applies from day to day
To everything you cherish -
To God and faith and prayer,
To you home and parish.***

Copied from December
Stewardship pamphlet



GOOD FOR THE GEESE..... (from Dec. Stewardship pamphlet)

Recently, as fall arrived, the air began to cool, leaves started falling from trees, and high overhead geese began honking. Looking up, you could often see that they were flying south in the famous V-shaped formation.

But why do they fly in that pattern? Scientists believe that they do it to help each other. When one bird flies at the tip of the V, it cuts air resistance to those flying behind it. It's harder work for the leader to fly in this position, but easier for its followers.

Of course, it would be difficult for one goose to be the leader over a migration that might be many hundreds of miles long. However, geese take turns, so that no one is pushed too hard.

Every congregation has its leaders; hard-working men and women who organize activities such as a church school or a Thanksgiving food drive. But because what they do is often time-consuming, it's unfair to sit back while the same people work so hard year after year.

Why not take the lead yourself in some major church project this year (or next)? After all, what's good for the geese (in this case) should be good for the Christians!!



Luke 2 (NIV)

The Birth of Jesus

2 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while^[a] Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the

Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

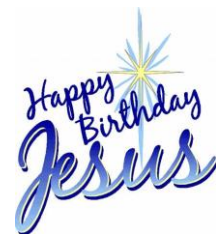
¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

²¹ On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived.



Merry
Christmas

The text "Merry Christmas" is written in a red, cursive font with a slight shadow. The word "Merry" is on the top line, and "Christmas" is on the bottom line. There are two holly leaf and berry decorations: one is positioned between the end of "Merry" and the start of "Christmas", and the other is positioned to the left of the start of "Christmas".