



THE GOOD NEWS LETTER

Newsletter of the First United Methodist Church of New Berlin, NY

Volume 3, Issue 1— March 29, 2013

News from the Pews

**WORSHIP EVERY SUNDAY ,
11 a.m.**

**Adult, Youth and Children's
Sunday School at 9.45 a.m.**



He is Risen!

**Admin. Council meeting—
First Sunday after church**

**Choir Practice -
Thursdays 6pm**

*First Untd Methodist Church,
52 South Main
New Berlin*

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LETTER FROM THE PASTORS

Lyle and Mary Ann Linder

We are writing this on the first day of Spring. Finally Sun! Life is bursting forth again like a new Resurrection. How appropriate that Easter comes in the Spring. This very moment I hear redwing blackbirds and chickadees calling each other. It's time to get those nests ready. This is what we've been doing at the New Berlin United Methodist Church all last year and up to the present moment. This is the nest - the spiritual home - we have been getting ready for each of us and you. Yes, you! What is a nest for? It is a place of refuge and a place in which to grow. Now this is what we want to focus on - spiritual nurture, strength, and love. Birds love to sing, don't they? Well, so do we! Their

(Continued on page 2)



Cheery kitchen crew supply refreshments and enjoy a spot of drumming at 'District Clergy Day Apart Drumming Circle' event.

L-R: Moe Anderson, Jean Haddon, Becky Reidenbach, Pastor Lyle, Mary Larabee, Linda Wiggins.

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little bosoms are bursting with the love of the Creator and Creation. We too worship God, our loving Father, His Son Jesus, our Savior and our Guide, the Holy Spirit!



To meet more peoples' worship needs, and perhaps yours, we are planning a new Mid-Week Worship Service. Details haven't been worked out yet, but we're thinking it will be somewhat more informal and contemporary. We would like your input about what would be most meaningful to you, including format, time, day of the week, other ideas. You can email us at llinder@stny.rr.com or send us a letter. Also there will be a SUGGESTION BOX in the church you can drop your suggestions into.

We're also working on shaping a new Mission Statement for our church, one that will be meaningful and express what our purpose as a church is.

A tentative idea of such a Mission Statement might sound like the following: "We are a home where all God's children can worship, learn, share, laugh, cry, and share the love of Christ with all our families and communities." If you have ideas about our new Mission Statement please contact us as stated above, or put your ideas in that new SUGGESTION BOX. We also are working on shaping our next set of short and long term goals. We really crave your input. We have accomplished a lot it the last year, but it's time to plant and harvest new fields, particularly in areas of outreach, spiritual growth, prayer, praise, worship, and witness.

Again we want your ideas and input, so please write us, email us, or use that SUGGESTION BOX. Easter is upon us. May we personally experience the Resurrection Christ wishes for us, for which Jesus died for us, may our Church and our Community, State, and Nation experience Resurrection also! Christ is Risen and is truly alive. May we be Risen and truly alive also!

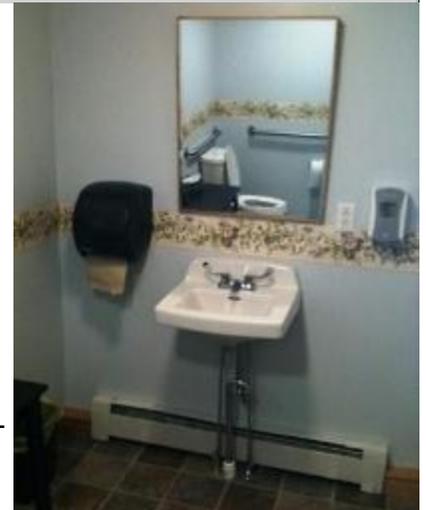
Pastor Lyle and Mary Ann

TRUSTREES REPORT by Tom Benson

Our church is getting stronger every day as we fulfill our goals, acquire a strong church family and participate, to bring out the growth of our church. The new siding and the reconditioning of our Bell Tower, including a new cross, has made our church beautiful again.

We are in the process of bringing the community closer to our church family by familiarizing them with how we have strengthened our church to where it is today. We have put in a brand new handicap bathroom to meet community needs and are in the process of redoing our electrical circuits. All church improvements have been made possible through all of our prayers and wonderful contributions. God has surely directed this pathway for us and only the closeness of our church family and organizing these priorities makes it possible.

I want to send a personal invitation to our members and community to join our church family to worship with us Sundays at 11 o'clock . You will find out how fulfilling this is to your life, make new friends and to bring God closer into your lives.



DID NOAH FISH?

A Sunday school teacher asked, "Johnny, do you think Noah did a lot of fishing when he was on the Ark?" "No," replied Johnny. "How could he, with just two worms." _

SUNDAY SCHOOL *by Moe Anderson*

Our youth is engaged in a 7-week study that will conclude on Resurrection Sunday entitled "The Way: Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus". Each week we study a portion of the ministry of Jesus which helps

us to gain a clearer understanding of where Jesus walked and what Jesus taught. By studying His ministry, each of us is learning more about how to live as Christians today. One of the bible verses we are working on is: "Look, I myself will be with you every day." Matthew 28:20b CEB



Pastor Lyle talks to Chloe Patrick, Shaleigh West and Caitlyn Reynolds during children's time.

Prepare now for annual Plant Sale *by Barbara Levenson*

Spring time is great for thinning out thick patches of almost any perennial OR for discovering that you have a need for plants to fill in spaces. Either way, we can help you out at the Plant Sale.

All of the plants we offer for purchase are donated. We will have a large variety of shade loving plants, as well as sun lovers and lots of in-betweeners. House plants, too. If you happen to have plants that

need thinning and would like to give them to us for the plant sale, we'd appreciate it. You can drop them off in the week before the sale, and put them between the church and the parsonage. Pots and soil are available there.

If you need help, please call. This annual event will be the 2nd weekend in June. (Fri, Sat and half price Sun) Signs will be posted to remind everyone. Hope to see you there.

MUSIC MINISTRY *by Rainer Morgan*

It really makes our day when people tell us how much they enjoy our singing and since we enjoy doing it so much – it's a definite win-win situation.

Over Christmas, the choir got into the mood by participating in community carol singing in town and in the Candlelight Evening festivities in Cooperstown.

The first Sunday in March, we celebrated Wales in honor of its patron saint, St David, whose day is March 1st. All music in that service was Welsh



and with no less than 18 Welsh hymn tunes in our Methodist hymnal, there was plenty of choice.

We continue to meet on Thursdays at 6pm and Sundays half an hour before the service to practice. Anyone who'd like join is more than welcome.

Current choir members are Marty Benson, Jean Haddon, Carol Harris, Rainer Morgan, Pastor Mary Ann, Sheree Acre, Eunice Cooper, Tom Benson, Bob Slavicek, Bob Nesbitt and John Rzucidlo.

When The Game Is Over It All Goes Back In The Box— new Adult Bible Study

With his trademark humor and gift for storytelling, author John Ortberg shows what it really takes to win at the game of life.

This new 12 week Adult Bible Study will show us how to live with an eternal perspective, what matters and what doesn't - keeping our eyes on the true prize – the Kingdom of God. We will begin this study on Sunday, April 7, at 9:45 a.m., before church. There is a video and a very interesting book – very reasonably priced at \$4. If you want a copy contact Pastor Lyle. John Ortberg is a pastor at Menlo Park (Cal.) Presbyterian Church. He is the bestsel-

ling author of God is closer than you Think; The Life you've always Wanted; Everybody's Normal Till You Get to Know Them; If You Want to Walk on Water, You've got Get Out of the Boat. We are sure you will enjoy this time of study and the good fellowship around it.

Why not let Pastor Lyle know if you want a copy of "When the Game Is Over . . ."

GOOD SAMARITAN

A Sunday school teacher was telling her class the story of the Good Samaritan. She asked the class, "If you saw a person lying on the roadside, all wounded and bleeding, what would you do?" A thoughtful little girl broke the hushed silence: "I think I'd throw up."



Elinor Webb



Betty Schriber



Marian Wiggins



Norma Ramsey



Gerry Clark



June Morey

Happy Easter to our Homebound Friends by Mary Lyon



Lillian Holl

There are a few members and friends that are unable to make it to church. The following are some names and addresses (and a few photos) of those who have made many contributions to our church in many different ways. We continue to keep them in our prayers and our hearts.

- Gerry Clark - Chase Mem Nursing Home, 1 Terr Hgts, New Berlin
- Eldora Gregory - Terrace Hgts Apts, Apt 16B, 2 Terr Hgts, New Berlin
- Karl Gregory - 2471 Co Rte 18, So New Berlin, 13843

Lillian Holl - Red Mill Apts #8, 5112 State Rte 8, New Berlin

George & Bea Kukulech - 394 Ramey Rd, New Berlin

June Morey - Terrace Hgts Apts, Apt 14B, 2 Terr Hgts, New Berlin

Norma Ramsey, Chase Mem Nursing Home, 1 Terr Hgts, New Berlin

Betty Schriber, Neely Ave, PO Box 384, New Berlin

Lucille Warner - 164 Camp Rd, New Berlin

Eleanor Webb, Chase Mem Nursing Home, 1 Terr Hgts, New Berlin

Marion Wiggins, Chase Mem Nursing Home, 1 Terr Hgts, New Berlin



Eldora Gregory

HAND TO PLOW EXPLORES IDEAS FOR CHURCH FUTURE by Marty Benson

A group of our members went to Sky Lake to attend a meeting to explore ideas for renewing our existing congregation and planning a vision of the future of our church. We want to find what our members believe and think ,which helps us develop our mission.

In Hand to Plow we are asking for ideas, to help us make disciples, from other church members as well as are own members. We are meeting with 75 Methodists from across our state to not only help us but for us to help them too. Many ideas are coming together and it's exciting to meet in small groups and share our faith and ideas with others. This process is for all of us

If any one else from our church would like to attend any of the next 4 workshops, please give me a jingle. We have been carpooling and having a great time.

We have 4 meetings for us laity and our Pastors have 9 meetings. These meetings run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Sky Lake. We pray that this process will not only help our church but others also.

New Berlin Days, May 18

Last year was our first attempt at being part of the New Berlin Days rummage sale event.

What a successful sale we had! This year's date is **Saturday, May 18** and once again, we will be participat-

ing. Please stop by to see what fabulous treasures you may discover.

If you have items you would like to donate, please drop them off at the church the week before the sale.

TOTALLY HOMEMADE IN MAY

Each year , we hold bake sales, usually in conjunction with other events, like our Plant Sale or our New Berlin Days rummage sale. The prices are great and selection fabulous. Best of all, everything is homemade from favorite recipes. When did you last have a slice of real homemade pie? There might be one waiting for you at our next sale but come early, before someone else beats you to it. We hope you can make it to our **Totally Homemade Bake Sale**, coming up in May.

The Treasurer's Corner *by Ken Wiggins*

Spring 2013—Budget Report

Both the income and expenditure sides of the budget are doing relatively well. We continue to be financially solvent with a reasonably good cash flow. Our net available, unencumbered cash is running between \$3,500 and \$4,000 per month, year to date. We have encumbered assets of approximately \$3,800 for special projects, not included in the monthly unencumbered cash figure above.

Building Projects Updates include the following:

1. Interior Windows - Updating the education center with windows in the doors, in compliance with the safe sanctuary requirements. Pending a contractor to perform this change. We have encumbered \$500 for this - a minimal price tag, but needed project.

2. Handicapped Bathroom - Renovation and replacement of the two downstairs front bathrooms into a single handicapped bathroom. This project is completed.

3. Siding Project - This major project has been completed. However a few pieces of the siding have come loose due our recent high winds and they will be replaced under warranty at no cost to us as soon as the weather gets a little better. A reminder, however, we, as a church, did take out a 3 year low interest loan from the Village of New Berlin for this project and are required to pay back that loan by 31 December 2015. The current balance on that loan is approximately \$7,500. An early payout of this loan would, of course, cut costs due to less interest payment.

Proposed Building Projects for 2013 - Projects suggested for this year include some of the following:

1. Evaluation of Electrical Needs - This project has actually been completed, thanks to the generous and expert work of Robert Starr. Updates in electrical outlets in the sanctuary, new ceiling lights in the front fellowship hall and extensive additions to the available outlets in the kitchen (including a sink light for Dick Anderson) were done.



2. Back Parking Lot Stairs - Our back stairs, there for about 25 years, gave way due to old age last fall and roped off since then. These need to be replaced for the safety and parking convenience of our congregation and dinner guests. Replacement with new pressure-treated wood or concrete steps, with hand railing, is currently being sought.

3. Pulpit Handrails - We are evaluating simple safety handrails each side of the pulpit as a safety measure.

4. Front Lawn Repair - Deep grooves in the front and side lawns were made by heavy equipment while siding. More a labor job than an expense, it needs to be done and thanks to Milt & Mary Jane Anson, is already underway. They expect to finish in a few months.

5. Parsonage and Garage Facelift - Both the parsonage front porch and garage could use a facelift. Not a major project, but needed for property to look its best.

6. Smoke and Heat Detection System - We have a partial

fire alarm system, mainly in the new wing, but this needs to be evaluated for updating and a continuance into the main church building. Given the recent fire at St. Andrew's we need to be fire-ready.

7. Roof Repairs to the Main Church - We detected a portion of the north-east corner of the main church roof that needs attention, due to water damage.

8. Replacement of Lounge Furniture - Although not a priority, we need to look at replacing our current lounge furniture to make this area more useable.

9. Interior Paint and Trim - We need to evaluate and provide for paper, paint and trim within the building, the fellowship hall, kitchen and hallway especially.

These are but some of the many items on our to-do-list. Many are not expensive or laborious, but need to be completed. We need to remember that many hands and many pockets make all possible.

That's it from the treasurer's corner. We are being good Shepherds with your monies. All-in-all, we are off to another a great year

Culture and Religion in Tanzania *by Rainer Morgan*

This winter I visited my son Thomas and family in Tanzania. They live just a day's drive from famous tourist destinations such as Kilimanjaro and the Serengeti - wonderful places to experience - but what I like best is meeting people of many cultures and religions.

There are about 120 different ethnic groups in Tanzania, each with its own language! Today, more than half the population is Christian, just under half Muslim, (although 97% near the coast) with indigenous tribal beliefs making up

the rest. These beliefs may be incorporated into the larger faith systems. For example, Tanzanians will often give their children an ancestral name in addition to a Christian name, reflecting a relationship with the ancestral world. And it's very common for Tanzanians to seek the help of diviners or witchdoctors in cases of misfortune or sickness.

One tribe which retains its traditional way of life to a marked degree is the Maasai, whose religion, like many others, has a single deity. Their god Engai has two na-



Many Tanzanians decorate their walls with Biblical quotes

tures – the benevolent Engai Narok (Black God) and the vengeful Engai Nanyokie (Red God). Engai is said to live in the "Mountain of God" (Ol Doinyo Lengai) - an active volcano located in northernmost Tanzania.

The Maasai also believe Engai granted all cattle to them for safe-keeping when the earth and sky split. They feel this justifies their raiding cattle from other tribes which, as you can imagine, causes lots of problems!

The Maasai also believe the baobab tree has spiritual significance because when its bark is removed, it will not die like other trees. Legend has it that long ago, their god got angry and ripped all the Baobab trees out of the ground then put them back in upside down, which is why the branches look like roots. Check them out– they really are odd looking trees!



A Maasai elder walks past a makeshift Evangelical Church near his home

A Devotional reading for the Lenten Journey

"We all experience different struggles. I identified with Jacob in this story. See if you can as well,"

Dick Anderson

In His Grip

Genesis 32:22-32

"This left Jacob all alone in the camp, and a man came and wrestled with him until the dawn began to break. When the man saw that he would not win the match, he touched Jacob's hip and wrenched it out of its socket.

Then the man said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking!" But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." "What is your name?" the man asked. He replied, "Jacob."

"Your name will no longer be Jacob," the man told him. "From now on you will be called Israel, because you have fought with God and with men and have won."

"Please tell me your name," Jacob said.

"Why do you want to know my name?" the man replied. Then he blessed Jacob there. (Genesis 32:24-29

"Jacob was alone - no family, friends, workers, or even animals He was alone with his thoughts and fears. Imagine what he must have felt as he lay on the ground, looking at the stars. But often the best time to meet God is when we are alone and at the end of our resources."

"Jacob had spent most of his life wrestling with people, but now he was wrestling with God. Jacob continued this wrestling match all night just to be blessed. He was persistent.

God encourages persistence in all areas of our lives, in-

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Hands4NY Program receives huge response by Moe Anderson

Hands4NY was an initiative of the Upper New York Annual Conference with the expressed purpose of feeding a million people from June 2011 through June of 2012.

We, as a church, participated in the program by reporting hours volunteered to feed others, money and food donated to food pantries and people fed through feeding programs such as the Community Thanksgiving and "Spirit of Christmas" event as well as the Loaves and Fishes Café in Schoharie which fed many after the floods caused by hurricane Irene. The Hands4NY program received a huge response and reached the

goal of feeding a million prior to March 2012. The final total at the end of June was more than 1.8 million people fed.

As a congregation we have continued to demonstrate our generosity by donating to the food pantry housed at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church and have contributed 141.48 pounds of food from May to December 2012 with even more given since then.

We have also made significant contributions again this year to the Community Thanksgiving, the "Spirit of Christmas" and to the Loaves and Fishes Café's final luncheon of the season.

Volunteer hours recorded

(this total does NOT include hours people put in at home) were 232 hours. The total number of pounds of food donated to the food pantry as well as individuals served with the potatoes and apples that were distributed were 1701.34 pounds.

The number of people fed using the formula provided were 1159. Our church also donated \$428 to the food pantry and Loaves and Fishes Cafe. All of these totals are from September 2011 until April 2012.



Everything I need to know, I learned from Noah's Ark

- ONE: Don't miss the boat.*
- TWO: Remember that we are all in the same boat!*
- THREE: Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.*
- FOUR: Stay fit. When you're 60 years old, someone may ask you to do something really big.*
- FIVE: Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done.*
- SIX: Build your future on high ground.*
- SEVEN: For safety's sake, travel in pairs.*

- EIGHT: Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.*
- NINE: When you're stressed, float awhile.*
- TEN: Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.*
- ELEVEN: No matter the storm, there's always a rainbow waiting.*
- Please pass this on to people you want to be blessed. Give it! Don't just get it!*
- Most people walk in and out of your life, but FRIENDS leave footprints in your heart.*

In Remembrance

We wish to remember these beloved friends and family who have gone home to be with Jesus: Donna Acre, Dorothy Alishauskas, Gladys Austin, Bruno Benson, Ed Busch, Anna Camp, Rick Elam, Walt Henriksen, Ann Marie Hume, Katie Jennings, Jennifer Ramsaram, David Robie, Lori Van Dyke, Don Williams

(Continued from page 6)

cluding the spiritual. Strong character develops as you struggle through tough conditions.

"Where in your spiritual life do you need more persistence?"

"Eventually God overcame Jacob by weakening him. Then God blessed Jacob by giving him a new name: Israel from the Hebrew word that means "to struggle." Various translations of Jacob's new name include "one who struggles with God," "let God rule," and "a God-mastered man." In any case, Israel is a changed man".

"God gave many people in the Bible new names (Abraham,

Sarah, Peter). Their new names symbolized how God had changed their lives. Here we see how Jacob's character had changed. Jacob, the ambitious deceiver, became Israel, the one who struggles with God and overcomes."

"If God changed your name to reflect the kind of person he's making you into, what would that name be? - "Loyal one"? "Courageous"? "Focused on God"? Ask him to help you change in that direction."

(Tyndale House Publishers; March 19, 2013)

In this Lenten season, let us reflect on how we might become changed - "ISRAEL".



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MEETING SCHEDULE

1st Sunday—Ad Council, after worship

Choir rehearsal—Thurs 6 pm, and 1/2 hr. before service most Sundays.

Worship: 11:00 am, Sunday Morning
Summer Hours (July & August): 10:00 am.
Coffee fellowship following the service

To save trees & postage costs, electronic editions of the newsletter are available—please contact Pastor Lyle with your email address to be added to the distribution.



To:

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