



THE BELL TOWER



"PROCLAIM GOOD NEWS TO THE WORLD"

JESUS LIVES OUR GOD REIGNS"

Vol. 65 No. 3

East Rockaway, NY 11518

May-June 2025



MEETING NOTICE!

Bethany Congregational Church

The Two Hundred and Fifteenth Corporate Meeting of your church will be held on

Sunday, May 18, 2025, at 11:30 a.m.

(By-Laws Article VI, Section 2c) for the following purposes:

- To elect church officers for the year 2025-2026.
- To review and approve the church budget as presented by the Board of Trustees for 2025-2026.
- To consider and vote upon such other business that may be legally called before the Corporate Body.

Respectfully submitted, Maryanne Walling, Clerk of the Corporation

The meeting will be held in person as well as via Zoom to allow all members to participate. Topic: Bethany Congregational's Corporate Zoom Meeting

Time: May 18, 2025 11:45 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81421883131?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81421883131?pwd=UkAYiw6fCiTs4RbBYkubGeLEF9LbL.1)

[pwd=UkAYiw6fCiTs4RbBYkubGeLEF9LbL.1](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81421883131?pwd=UkAYiw6fCiTs4RbBYkubGeLEF9LbL.1)

Meeting ID: 814 2188 3131, Passcode: 226335

Welcome Home!

Meet our new

Pastor Every Sunday!

***Reverend Prabhu
Sigamani***

Lay Readers and Ushers are needed for Sunday Worship. Please sign up on the sheet in the hallway or speak with someone in the office (516-599-5768). Lay Readers will be required to assist with the service and read two (2) Bible passages for that Sunday. Please speak to Carol Henck for further directions.

OFFICE HOURS: Flexible. Please call the office before going.

Dates to Remember:

May 18...Corporate Meeting
May 26...Memorial Day
June 6...National Gardening Day
June 14...**HurriCon Returns**
June 14...Flag Day
June 15...Father's Day
June 15...PANCAKE BREAKFAST
June 19...Juneteenth
July 4...Independence Day
July 10...**DEADLINE** for next Bell Tower
September 1...Labor Day
October 13...Columbus Day



HurriCon blows back into Bethany Church on June 14 and November 22! Come down to the Parish Hall and meet comic book artists and writers, purchase original comic art and cool comic books and other unique items. Don't miss the raffle with some amazing items up for grabs! And did we mention there will be free comic books for everybody? HurriCon!

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Dear Bethany, Congregational Church, greetings in the name of Jesus Christ.

As I write this note it has been 66 days as your pastor. In this short time the joy of getting to know each other has been an exciting journey. I would like to thank you for generous support along with the willingness to seek God's guidance in our ministry.

I am more than convinced that God is at work. Even though we all know the ministry will never be easy nor it is meant to be simple. Ministry is something that shapes us and the community we live. Imagine a well-done sculpture and the work involved to do it well. Shaping requires, chiseling out some materials, bring the stone to a form, then detailing, such as giving the realistic reflection of the original. Making sure the eyes, nose, hair and other details are perfect in eyes of the viewers.

Ministry is somewhat close to sculpting, until the work is finally completed it requires time, dedication and imagination. If you had a chance to visit a studio where the actual work is done, it is messy, dusty, and various tools are laying around. And the sculpturer is the least bit worried about the tidiness but focuses on the job.

Following the conclusion of the Lenten season and Easter, we have now entered Eastertide as delineated by the Christian calendar. The palms, once vibrant, have dried and now adorn our walls in the form of crosses. Easter lilies endeavor to survive, with some eventually establishing themselves in the soil.

Throughout each season of the Christian Calendar, God is perceived as a sculptor shaping a just world, with "peace" being cen-

tral to His actions. It is imperative that peace also remains at the core of our endeavors—as a church. The world was messy then and it is now, there is a need for our Church to be the agent of change, together we chisel, detail and polish to a fine finish of ourselves and the community around us.

The message to terrified disciples, who were not sure what to do, what actions to take or not to take. Jesus appears and offers, "peace." There was no offering of knowledge, plan or resources but peace. It is only through the Divine peace we will be able to do the work ahead of us.

As we step into the two hundred fifteenth year of service to Christ and Community, may we be assured of the Holy Spirit guiding us. God is shaping us to form His beloved community. Our willingness to participate, share and cherish the ministry together is something God is calling us to. The "peace" Jesus Christ offered is not limited to time and space but surpasses all limitations and boundaries. Consider stepping up into active leaders in life of our Church so we can become peace-makers together as disciples of Jesus Christ.

In closing, the Baptism service on April 27 was very special to me as it was my first. Georgiana's peace during the service was ministering to me—she was calm and comfortable in the entire worship service. Maybe she understands God's peace more than anyone of us. May the Peace of Jesus Christ, shape us, form us and lead us to the future of Bethany Congregational Church.

*The Rev. Prabhu Sigamani,
Pastor*



Baptism of Georgiana, daughter of Katie and Juan Rodriguez.

Barbara Sobey's new granddaughter!



Easter altar with flowers.

Bethany Bell Tower...is a bi-monthly publication of **BETHANY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**
Pastor: Reverend Prabhu Sigamani

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Charles D'Agostino, Editor, Jennifer Valis, Assistant Editor
Reach us directly at: cjdagostino@gmail.com or 516-721-8885

***Statements made in editorials, signed articles or letters, do not represent an official position in this church.
Persons with differing opinions are invited to express their views in letters to the editor.***

Are you less than perfect? Welcome! We are a community of imperfect people (including but not restricted to); squirming children and their harried parents, happy and sad people, people with challenges, seniors, young people, middle aged folks, people of every race, poor people, rich people, in between people, LGBT and straight people, true believers, seekers, agnostics, odd and ordinary people, extraordinary people, un-churched and unsure people, people with disabilities, hypocrites, saints, sinners and everybody else. Because no matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here just as you are!



Greetings from your Bethany Moderator

In peace, Janet Moser, Bethany Moderator

I have a birthday coming up. It's not a particularly special one, not a benchmark age. I'll be 68 and happy to be so. As you have noticed, I'm not particularly shy in sharing my age. I think it is utterly ridiculous that people, especially women, should be ashamed of or try to deny the process of aging. Rage all you want but it's a natural part of our life cycle.

Anyway, birthdays remind me of gifts – both giving and getting. While the excitement of getting gifts tends to lessen as we become adults (at least for some of us!), I experienced the best gift ever on my 30th birthday. My son was born! Sharing a birthdate with my child certainly shifted my celebrations from getting to giving. No complaints from me though. What could top that gift? Truthfully, I think that the joy of giving lasts much longer than the excitement of receiving. Just as doing a good deed provides incredible benefits for the doer, giving from the heart enriches the giver.

Let's extend this out a bit. We are all Gifts – gifts to our family and friends and gifts to those whose lives we better through our work or interactions. We all have Gifts. Some of us sing (please, no judgement here -LOL), some garden, some are electricians or carpenters, some know just the right thing to say to brighten someone's day. Our gifts are as unique and varied as we are. Don't think you don't have them. My mom used to say she had no special gifts or talents. I reminded her that 6 people could stop by unexpected and she could make them feel welcome and put together a nice meal without an ounce of anxiety. That is a Gift!

By the time you read this, our Bethany Corporate Meeting may have happened. This is the meeting in which we vote on the budget and the **list of committee positions that need to be filled**. No matter. It's never too late to step up and help even in an informal capacity. Bethany needs us all to be involved and share our skills and talents. We have positions that require regular involvement but we also have positions like Missions, Nominations, or Bethany Delegate that need you only a few times a year. Whatever your skill or interest, we have a spot for you here.

I present to you here - the Gift of Opportunity!



The Thrift Shop is open Fridays and Saturdays 10:00 AM-2:00 PM

Donations may be left anytime in the sheds next to the garage!

HurriCon, the only benefit comic art convention in New York returns to Bethany Church on Saturday, June 14, 2025 from 10am to 4pm.

All profits from this event go back to Bethany. There is a \$5 admission charge at the door and free door prizes all day! Our special guest is Joe Kelly, the current writer of Marvel Comics ...The Amazing Spider-Man! We will have free copies of The Amazing Spider-Man #1 to give away all day for you to get signed by Mr. Kelly!

There will be food available, including the amazing Walking Taco and a raffle table full of unique items and much, much more! Don't miss it!

Can't be there and want to donate to the show?

Use the Bethany Venmo @Bethany-Eastrock to contribute.

Thank you!



Write for The Bell Tower: Movie or TV Review? Recipe? Restaurant Review? Play Review? Book Review? Local History or reminiscences? Concert Review? Announcement? *(No political positioning, please)* Sadly, we lost our book reviewer, Lou Gaspari. Any readers out there to step up?

You can email submissions to Charles D'Agostino at cjdagostino@gmail.com or drop them off to the Church office. Or mail to him directly: 70 Sunrise Drive, Lynbrook, NY 11563. *Thank you!*

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CREW 121

Crew 121 had several members perform the call out ceremony of newly elected *Order of the Arrow* candidates at Schiff Scout reservation the first weekend of May. We will also be doing the ceremony on the third weekend of May at Hempstead Lake Camporee. We have been spending the last several months preparing various ceremonies for the Order of the Arrow Spring weekend at the end of May.

Crew 121 was honored to be able to perform the Eagle Ceremony last month for one of our own members JP D'Agostino. Congratulations, JP, on receiving the rank of Eagle Scout—it is a great achievement and well deserved you earned it.



We would like to invite the congregation of Bethany to come and join us to support Crew 121 for a pancake fundraiser on June 15th in the auditorium at Bethany. It will run from 9 AM to 12PM. We will have raffles, food and great company. It's a great opportunity to come and meet the members of Crew 121. The funds will help to support the scouts in all their endeavors during the scouting year. Hope to see you all there. Only \$10.00 donation!

(\$5 for a scout in uniform)

Yours in Scouting, Steven Mascolo, Crew 121 Adviser.

GIRL SCOUT TROOP 2503

The Troop is looking for outdoor volunteer opportunities in June for a Community Project. They are thinking about planting a tree or something along that line. Please reach out if you can help!

If you have a 2nd grade girl interested in joining Brownies, you can reach out to Christine for more info (516) 320-5976

They meet every other Tuesday at 6:00 P.M. in Room 301 (upstairs from the office.)

For information, contact Christine at 516-320-5976

FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Hello folks, the Board has had the flat roof fixed, so the fellowship hall is rain free! Thank you for all the generous donations.

Three sinks leaked and their plumbing have been repaired. The hot water heater has been replaced.

As always, there is plenty to keep us busy.

Please come to the corporate meeting to vote on the budget.

Yours in Christ, Rich Eaves, Chairman of the Board of Trustees

OUTREACH COMMITTEE



We learned on Sunday of a tragic loss for the Fardella family. Joe Fardella's aunt and uncle, Maryann and John Gaeta, and his cousin, Frank, were involved in a tragic house fire recently.

Sadly, cousin Frank (age 56) was killed and his father burned in the fire (currently hospitalized) and their home was destroyed.

We extend our deepest sympathies to Joe and Linda and Family, as well as the Kilgus family.

Please pray for the Gaeta Family, for John's healing, for their most tragic loss of Frank and for strength to navigate these horrendous events.

Joe and Linda will let us know if there is anything we, the Bethany Family, can do to support the Gaeta Family in the near future.

Thank you for your support and prayers.

The Outreach Committee

Carol Henck and Barbara Merna

The Thrift Shop is open Fridays and Saturdays 10:00 AM-2:00 PM

Donations may be left anytime in the sheds next to the garage!

GARDENING: Good for Both Body & Soul

It has been a long, cold and nasty winter and I am sure we are all finally glad to feel Spring is in the Air! Warmer weather, sunshine and flowers sprouting are a delight! If you have not yet been so inclined, you might consider planting a garden! Doing so can be a source of joy and boost self-esteem, as well as provide physical health benefits. It can build social connections (through community gardens, local library seed sharing/gardening programs) and intergenerational family fun (plant with your children/grandchildren) !

Gardening on its own is therapeutic. The fresh air and sunshine both allow you to get Vitamin D naturally. Vitamin D is essential for absorbing and retaining adequate amounts of calcium and phosphorous, which are good for the bones. In addition, fresh air is rich in oxygen and a great way to circulate the oxygen your blood. Fresh air will clean your lungs, strengthen your immune system, aid in digestion, and increase your energy. Spending time outdoors helps you sleep better and makes you feel happy!

Being out in the [fresh air and sunshine](#) also adds additional benefits. Incorporating stretching into a gardening routine may help to prevent injury. Squatting contributes to building and maintaining muscle. Taking extra steps while gardening increases the heart rate. Pull those weeds, plant some seeds, and get your muscles moving! Your garden will look great, and you will feel fantastic, too! Other suggestions to get the most exercise out of your gardening:

1. Start slowly. Just like when starting any new activity, small steps work best.
2. Use the right and left hands equally. When raking or shoveling, switch hands every 5-10 minutes to give each side a good workout.
3. Make sure to breathe. Deep, cleansing breaths bring oxygen to those working muscles.
4. Lift with your legs! When lifting, bend your knees. Don't lift with your back.
5. Drink plenty of water and don't forget the sunscreen.

Enjoy your garden!

FYI, June 6th is National Gardening Exercise Day – So get out there and garden!

Wishing you a Wealth of Health!!

Sources: www.NationalDayCalendar.com and www.nytimes.com/2024/05/23/well/live/gardening-health-benefits.html
(Submitted by Carol Henck)



The Thrift Shop is open Fridays and Saturdays 10:00 AM-2:00 PM

SUNDAY SCHOOL:

The Sunday school has been enjoying their lessons with Ms. Marie. One lesson in May was "Feed my Sheep" and the children worked on an adorable sheep craft.



Our last Sunday school class for this year is June 1st, join us by celebrating at coffee hour with our ice cream sundaes!



Bethany Sunday school takes place at 9:45 am with Sunday service directly following @10:30am. If you know anyone who would like to join our classes please reach out to Tina Lewald at 917-270-6509.

WOMEN'S LEAGUE:

The Women's League is hosting their first:

FAMILY FUN GAME NIGHT

FRIDAY, MAY 30, 2025

7PM-9PM

\$5.00 per person paid at the door

Cash or Check made out to Bethany Women's League

Children under 10...**FREE!**



**We will have games, but please feel free to bring your own;
especially games for younger children.**



Refreshments will be served. Please RSVP to Cathy Clarke at cclarke724@gmail.com, so we can get a head-count for refreshments and setup.

**We will have a 50/50 raffle to raise money
for the roof fund.**

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

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"Every action done in company ought to be with some sign of respect for those that are present"

George Washington "Rules of Civility"

Civility Is Contagious

"So I say, live by the Spirit . . . and the fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-Control, and against such things there is no law."

HELP ME HELP BETHANY!

Thinking Real Estate?

As a member of Bethany Church, I will gladly donate to the Church 25% of my earned income (in your name) coming from a referral from any member of Bethany or reader of The Bell Tower, whether it is for yourself, friend, or relative! This includes any rental or the sale of any residential, condo, co-op, commercial or investment property. I am in business since 1994!! I have experience and knowledge. I come to you!

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If you enjoy **The Bell Tower**
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Thank you.



Mural in the Fellowship Hall

Courtesy of Diana Harrison and Anthony Claverie (dec.)