



Bethany
Presbyterian
Church

Sharing, Caring,
Believing, Doing

The Church Mouse



Bethany Presbyterian Church

**May
2026**

Volume 29, Issue 5

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MUSIC SUNDAY: Mother's Day, May 10th, will be our Music Sunday this spring! On this occasion, the Bethany Choir together with musicians from Eastman will be performing Fanny Hensel's cantata *Lobgesang*. The sister of Felix Mendelssohn, Hensel was a musical prodigy just like her brother, but was unable to achieve the same recognition since the music-making of women was kept out of the public sphere at this time. One of two cantatas she composed, *Lobgesang* (Song of Praise) was written in celebration after the birth of her only child - an appropriate topic for Mother's Day. Please join us for this joyous service!

Youth Sunday May 17th

The Joyful Noise Singers will present the music for the May 17th Worship Service including "Sing the Beauty of the Earth" by Douglas Wagner and "For You Shall Go Out in Joy" with hand chimes. BYF will present a short original play called "Quiz Show". Join us for a celebration of the beauty of God's World and a challenge to confidently speak out your faith!



COMMUNITY SUPPER and SPEAKER Wednesday, May 20 at 6:00 pm

Representatives from the Monroe County Health Department IMPACT team will share information and Narcan samples with us. IMPACT stands for Improving Addiction Coordination Team, and we all can become "members" of the team by recognizing signs of an opioid overdose and perhaps saving the life of a loved one or a stranger by administering a dose of Narcan! Dinner will be provided by the Catering and Hospitality Department at Episcopal SeniorLife Communities. Chicken Alfredo w/broccoli is on the menu. \$10 dinner fee is payable at the door. To register, sign-up in the narthex or call the church office, 663-3000.

Bethany Mission Statement

Bethany is where God's love nurtures friendship, hope, and peace.

**Deadline for the
June
Newsletter is on
May 16, 2026**

Pastor's Page:

Dear Friends,

From the beginning, the primordial waters and sea were given great respect. The water is often viewed as a place where evil lurks. There is much uncertainty about the waters and about the storms that rage on them. Fisher folk and sea traders understand the power and might that the raging sea can possess. Currents and storms leave boats at the mercy of the sea and even the best of Captains struggle under the wind and waves.

The gospel of Mark tells the story of a time when Jesus and his disciples faced a terrible storm. They had set out to cross the Sea of Galilee. As they got part way across the lake, "A furious squall came up and the waves broke over the boat so that it was nearly swamped." The Sea of Galilee is notorious for its storms. The Sea of Galilee, (which is really a large lake) is below sea level, with mountains rising to the east. On the west, the Judean hills bend and twist, so that there are narrow corridors, which the wind can roar down. Violent storms come up very quickly in this area known as the Golan Heights.

It had been a tough day, and Jesus was exhausted from the crowds. He had fallen asleep in the stern of the boat, despite the storm. Even the disciples were surprised by the severity of the storm. They panicked, like so many of us do, and woke Jesus up and expected Jesus to react the same way. When Jesus didn't panic, their fear led to anger, for they felt Jesus didn't care. After calming the storm, Jesus asked them why they were so afraid, He was concerned that they had no faith.

As Christians, we often unexpectedly find ourselves getting caught up in the storms of our lives: a loved one dies, we lose a job, our family falls apart, we are depressed or we get stressed out from all that life has dealt us. There are places in our lives that are filled with uncertainty and fear.

As growing disciples, we are left in the boat to answer Jesus' questions. Can we trust Jesus? Do we know that God is concerned, even when we do not perceive God's presence. Is our faith strong enough to count on God for our every need? When will the storm end? Why do we so often seek everyone's help except God's when life is overtaking us.

Perhaps that is where the problem lies for most of us. We become fearful when the storms of life howl and the waves threaten us because we think we are in control. We think we can save ourselves. We think we can fix the problem on our own. We think we have all the answers. We think it all hangs on us.

The good news is that we are not in control, God is. We must remember in the storms of life, amid the chaos of suffering, through all the temptations that we face, in the unexpected hurricanes and tornados that blow against us, God is present and God is in control. We must remember that we need to be faith-filled and not fear-filled.

Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus and place our faith in the Son of God who has the power to calm the storms on the sea as well as the storms within our very being.

Wishing you smooth sailing,

Dr. Bob Spratt

With Our People

With sympathy

Christian love and sympathy is extended to Bruce and Brett Henry and family, at the passing of Karen Henry.



OPEN
Tuesday's - 12:30PM—3:00PM
Thursday's - 9:30AM—Noon
Saturday - 3rd of the month

Fiscal Focus

2026	March	Year to Date	% Budget
Income	\$30,535.30	\$85,917.82	25.10%
Expense	\$39,921.70	\$120,150.53	21.59%
Surplus/ (Deficit)	-\$9,386.40	-\$34,232.71	

Bethany's Library

Bethany's library continues to be a well-used resource and is looking for donations. If you have a good read that you'd like to share with our library, please leave donations in the library next to the book return. Questions? Heide Jorgensen-Murray and Beth Thomsen are our wonderful librarians and are heading up this project with support from the Spiritual Growth Committee.

Bethany Swingers Golf League Friday Mornings Buttonwood Golf Course 600 Trimmer Road Spencerport, New York

It's almost that time,
 to get our golf clubs out,
 Limber up and un-wind,
 and also think about where we can dine.

Come One, Come All,
 It's the fun that is best to recall,
 with fellowship for everyone.

GOLF STARTS on MAY 1 – Weather permitting

Please try to be at Buttonwood by 9:45,
 so we can tee off
 10 AM lunch will follow for those
 who are interested.

All are - welcome to join us,
 All that is required - is that you
 have a set of golf clubs,
 and some golf balls.

Please call or e-mail Bev Murray 865-8507 to sign-up
 or

e-mail – dofm2006@frontiernet.net
 or be at Buttonwood on the 1st of May.

If I know ahead of time who is playing then I can let
 you know of any changes to our start date.

EMERGENCY CONTACT: At times, families or individuals may find they need pastoral support for various reasons ranging from a long-term matter or an emergency. In the event of a pastoral emergency, this can be sought by calling the church office (585) 663-3000 during normal business hours or after hours at (585) 496-4699. In addition, there are several members of the congregation that can be called on for support called Stephen Ministers. To receive support from a Stephen Minister contact Kim Bolinger at (585) 227-2540 or Wendy Watt (585) 415-2351.



Stephen Ministry

I really think that spring is on the way we remember it to be! You remember those cute flowers peeking out and birds singing to us, right? Of course you do. It's part of the seasonal change we deal with every year and we look forward to the transformation.

Spring can also bring us the "chores" that we may not enjoy as much. I'm talking about spring cleaning, lawn repair, closet cleaning, etc. They can all be tough, and even though the finished job feels good, getting started and the actual work – not so much.

I have so many "projects" waiting for that sometimes it becomes overwhelming on which one to start with. Are they a surprise? Nope. They have been waving at me for a while now and no matter how many times I may blink, they are still there when I open my eyes. Now what do I do? I attempt to prioritize. Does it work? Sometimes. I can get distracted with something else that I had not planned on and then I am back to square one. Life, in general, is like this. We just cannot plan every minute of the day, events, or situations that enter our life. We are supposed to be flexible enough to handle all that comes at us.

Well, my friends, it just doesn't work that way. Some things are just too much to work out on our own. Unexpected things just happen and they rock our world. Now, it might be time for a Stephen Minister. We are here to speak with you on all levels of whatever is taking up too much space in your heart and mind. Please don't think any situation is too minimal to visit with us. There are no numbers 1 through 10 here. They are all important.

If you would like to speak with a Stephen Minister, please contact Dr Bob or Wendy Watt. Peace to you from the Stephen Ministers.

Memory of Cindi Sywulski (Cubby)

written May 2019

Session Highlights – April 26, 2026

The Session of Bethany Presbyterian Church met on Sunday, April 26, following worship, with Rev. Dr. Bob Spratt moderating. After opening in prayer, the Session moved through a full agenda of ministry updates, property progress, and planning for the months ahead.

Elevator Nearing Completion - The long-awaited elevator project is almost finished. The unit has been installed, and the contractor will soon return to complete the flooring and doors. Once inspections are completed, the elevator is expected to be fully operational in about two weeks. This marks a major step forward in improving accessibility throughout our building.

Financial Update - March giving and expenses were both more favorable than anticipated, and year-to-date results continue to trend ahead of budget. Although the church is still operating at a deficit, the shortfall is significantly smaller than projected for this point in the year. Session expressed gratitude for the congregation's steady generosity and faithful support of Bethany's ministries.

The Community & Global Mission Committee designated this year's Pentecost Offering to support Artists Unlimited, a local organization empowering individuals with disabilities through the arts. Planning is also underway for a joint Sleep in Heavenly Peace bed-building event in May 2027.

Christian Education is preparing for a planetarium trip in June, and the committee looks forward to welcoming Allison Murray as its new chair this summer.

Generosity Committee begins work this week on a 2027 Wills Emphasis Program, designed to help members consider legacy giving as part of their faith practice.

The Spiritual Growth Committee announced that Wednesday Night Suppers will continue on a September–May schedule.

Worship & Music reported that a promising candidate for Music Director will be interviewed soon.

Property Improvements - Several facility updates are moving forward. A new driveway light has been installed, and the kitchen renovation continues with 22 of 30 cabinet doors now in place. Session also approved the purchase of a new Skylight digital sign for \$35,550, pending confirmation that the original quote remains unchanged.

Personnel Update - Nursery caregiver Jen Watt has stepped down from her position. After discussion, Session voted to discontinue staffing the crib room. The space will remain available for families, with parents supervising their own children.

Looking Ahead - The next Session meeting has been re-scheduled from May 24 to May 31 at 12:00 pm in the Small Hall.

BETHANY WOMEN

BPWC believes that an environment grounded in Christian beliefs promotes the full growth and expression of the individual. Such an environment renews, strengthens, and empowers the individual to participate in the life and work of the church, the servant community of Jesus Christ in the world.



Bethany Women's Meetings: All women are welcome to share in fellowship. Please feel free to bring a friend. Women meet on the second Tuesday of the following months: September- June except for December and May which meet on Saturday. We have speakers who present on a variety of topics. We also coordinate service projects, Christmas Luncheon, Women's Tea, and fellowship opportunities.

April Meeting: Tuesday, April 14, 2026: On Tuesday, April 14th, Benjamin Kjell, Director of Music, presented an outstanding presentation. Benjamin provided information of Bethany's Music Program. We are grateful for his time with us and for getting to know him better. As he completes his Doctoral Program, we wish him all the best in this new chapter of his life.

Budget: During the month of March \$289.50 was paid out for the following expenses:
\$239.50 deposit to Red Bird Cafe for catering of the women's tea.
\$50 honorarium for our April speaker.
Bethany Presbyterian Women in the Congregations received \$755 in new pledges during the month of March. YTD pledges received \$3,475.

Afghan Update: Beth Thomsen delivered two afghans to the Unity Cancer Unit.

Upcoming Activities: Save the Date!

Women's Tea- Saturday, May 2, 2026 @ 11:00 am

Tuesday, June 9th Meeting Speaker- Reverend Laura Fry, Perinton Presbyterian Church Pastor, and Head of Staff



Women's Brunch: We will be sharing "Brunch and Fellowship" at *Bill's Long Pond Diner* on the last Saturday of every month at 10:00 am. Our next Brunch is Saturday, May 30, 2026.

Display Case: Please take a minute to see exciting programs and activities for women in the Parlor Display Case for the 2025-2026 year.

Building Caring Relationships: Any woman currently active or inactive with BPWC who would like to be included in the *Bethany Presbyterian Women Communication Distribution List* please contact Karen Bolinger- 585-227-2540 or kbolinger@rochester.rr.com. May we always remember to love one another unconditionally, no matter what life brings. We know things can make a woman feel beautiful, and that is her love for others.



Artists Unlimited - Changing lives one act at a time.

"The sole mission of Artists Unlimited is to offer individuals with special needs the opportunity to perform and showcase their special talents in a safe haven, and without the barriers or stereotypes often attributed to those who are disabled."



The C&GM Committee has invited one of their Board Members to our May 17th Service, and a wonderful, inspiring video about this organization will be shared!

Part of the Pentecost Special Offering will go to Artists Unlimited, please consider!

You can learn more at <https://rocartistsunlimited.com>

Reflection from Community & Global Mission Meeting



This was shared at our mission meeting as we reflected on our work. We offer it here as an invitation to consider how we are each called to serve and to see others.

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." — Gospel of Matthew 25:40

Reflection: In mission work, it's easy to focus on *what we are doing*—the donations we give, the events we plan, the number of people we reach. But this passage shifts the focus from *doing* to *seeing*.

Jesus doesn't say, "Thank you for your efficiency" or "Thank you for your well-run programs."

He says: *When you saw someone in need... you saw me.*

That's a much deeper calling.

It asks us: Do we truly *see* the people we serve? Or do we see a project, a need, a task to complete?

In today's world, it's easy to become overwhelmed by the scale of need—globally and locally. There is always more we could do. More organizations, more crises, more requests.

But this scripture reminds us that mission isn't about solving everything.

It's about showing up faithfully, and recognizing Christ in the people right in front of us.

Closing Prayer: God of compassion, Open our eyes to see you in the people we serve.

Keep our hearts from becoming too busy or too comfortable to notice real need.

Guide our decisions so that they reflect not just generosity, but love and respect.

And in all we do, remind us that we are not just giving—we are participating in your work in the world.

Amen.

May 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					<i>1</i>	<i>2</i> 9-Men's breakfast @ Sawyer Park 11-Women's Retreat
<i>3</i> Communion 10-Worship, Childcare 9-Present Word 10:15-Youth Studies 11-Special Session mtg 1-Crop Walk @Aldersgate	<i>4</i> 9:30-Staff meeting 1-SAIL class @Aldersgate 6:30-Nominating Comm. 7-Stephen Ministers	<i>5</i> 12:30-Jennifer's closet	<i>6</i> 1-SAIL class @Aldersgate 6:30-Worship & Music 7:30-Celebration Ringers	<i>7</i> 9:30-Jennifer's closet 7:15-Bethany Choir	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i> 11-Shipmate's Car Rally
<i>10</i> Mother's Day Music Sunday 10-Worship, Childcare 9-Present Word 10:15-Youth Studies	<i>11</i> 9:30-Staff meeting 1-SAIL class @Aldersgate 6:30-Nominating Comm. 7-Pastoral Care Deacons	<i>12</i> 10-Presbyterian Women 12:30-Jennifer's closet	<i>13</i> 1-SAIL class @Aldersgate 6-Christian Ed 6-Spiritual Growth 6:30-BYF 7-Investment Comm. 7:30-Celebration Ringers	<i>14</i> 9:30-Jennifer's closet	<i>15</i> 11-Budget & Finance	<i>16</i> 10-Jennifer's Closet
<i>17</i> Youth Sunday 10-Worship, Childcare 9-Present Word	<i>18</i> 9:30-Staff meeting 1-SAIL class @Aldersgate 6:30-Nominating Comm.	<i>19</i> 10-Personnel Comm. 12:30-Jennifer's closet	<i>20</i> 1-SAIL class @Aldersgate 6-Community Supper 7:30-Celebration Ringers	<i>21</i> 9:30-Jennifer's closet	<i>22</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>24</i> 10-Worship, Childcare 9-Present Word	<i>25</i> Memorial Day Church building closed	<i>26</i> 12:30-Jennifer's closet	<i>27</i> 1-SAIL class @Aldersgate 7:30-Celebration Ringers	<i>28</i> 9:30-Jennifer's closet 12:30-Lunch & Learn	<i>29</i>	<i>30</i> 10-Women's brunch at Bill's Diner
<i>31</i> 10-Worship, Childcare 9-Present Word 12-Session						

Bethany Presbyterian Church

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**We're on the
Web!**

Ministries Team

Head of Staff / Sr. Pastor

Dr. Bob Spratt

Music Ministry

Benjamin Kjell - Music Director
Jean Coniber - Bell Choir Director

Bookkeeper

Tom Olney

Treasurer

Patric Donaghue

Administrative Assistant & Mouse Editor

Eileen Sengillo

Custodian

Patrick Pierre
Cornelius Yawn

Youth & Children's Ministry Leader

Andrew Ferreira

The Session

Kim Bolinger, Budget & Finance
Wendy Watt, Christian Education
Cindy Hetzler, Community & Global Miss.
Michael DePew, Generosity
Bev Murray, Nominating
Jim Hetzler, Personnel
Rick Clement, Property
Heather Kruspe, Spiritual Growth
Karen McIver, Worship & Music
Dr. Bob Spratt, Moderator
Michael DePew, Clerk of Session

