



# THE BETHEL BREEZE

Bethel United  
Methodist Church

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## Lucy McCracken Nesbitt Slated to Be Speaker for 128th Memorial Day Service

In 1885, the first Memorial Day service that took place at Bethel Church was held to honor members of the Bethel community who had fought in the Civil War. From that day until the present this annual service has been a part of the community's observation of Memorial Day. Now members of the Armed Forces of all wars in which the United States has had a part are remembered and honored.

This year the service will be held on May 27 at 10:30 a.m. in Bethel Church sanctuary. Lucy McCracken Nesbitt will present a program about her father, Milton McCracken and his crew who flew aboard the WW II B-17 heavy bomber, "Victory Bound." The crew was shot down over Yugoslavia on May 10, 1944. Lucy will describe the trials and tribulations the men endured, a story her father never told.

Nineteen times these ten men made their way to the "Victory Bound," climbed in and joined their comrades flying wingtip to wingtip in an effort to bring down the Axis powers. The twentieth

time, they left the "Victory Bound" on the field and boarded one of the new radar planes, or pathfinder.

Weather was poor and several planes turned back. The pathfinder crew felt with their special navigation aids on board, they could guide the bomber stream. Thirty-four planes

been the radio operator on board the "Victory Bound." He lived in Vineland, NJ with his wife Margie. Matt, Lucy, and her sister, Mary Lou Buchan, traveled to Vineland which is where the research started. From there they traveled to Pompano Beach, FL to meet and interview the bombardier, Stanley Gampel. Their research then took them to Europe and back to a reunion in Dayton, Ohio where they met other airmen from the 463<sup>rd</sup> bomb group.

Early this April they flew to Pompano Beach again where they met the daughter of the B 17 pilot, Carol Lackey Cole, and introduced her to Stanley Gampel, bombardier of the crew.

A brief ceremony at Union Cemetery to honor the fallen will complete the Memorial Day service. Following the ceremony at Union Cemetery, a delicious luncheon will be served by the Bethel United Methodist Church women in the fellowship hall to which the public is invited. In lieu of a charge for the luncheon, donations will be greatly appreciated.



*In the center of the photo is Memorial Day speaker, Lucy McCracken Nesbitt. Her son Matt is to her left, and Carol Lackey Cole, daughter of the pilot is to her right. Seated is the plane's bombardier Stanley Gampel.*

flew that day, seven were lost and sixteen enemy planes were destroyed. The result of that bomb strike would be recorded as "excellent," so the mission was a success. But for the men who had flown all their previous missions on board the "Victory Bound," their luck had run out.

Three years ago Lucy's son, Matthew, wanted to know more about his grandfather's war story and suggested they go visit Bud Poulson who had



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### Sunday School

at 10:00 a.m.

### Sunday Worship

at 11:00 a.m.

### Fellowship Dinner

4th Sunday of the month following the worship service

ALL ARE WELCOME!

## “Unbelievable” – *The Word on the Street*

A few weeks ago we journeyed through Holy Week trying to remember and imagine the emotional upheavals for the disciples as they witnessed Jesus' glorious entry into Jerusalem, to the ignominious crucifixion of Jesus on a cross. This past week, tragically, we witnessed the horrific events in Boston, beginning with the unimaginable bombing at the marathon and ending with the dramatic capture of “suspect 2.” At the time of this writing there is great relief in Boston and life there will rapidly return to

normal – except for those families who lost loved ones and limbs to the bombing.

We have been reminded that there is great capacity in humankind to do awful and evil things to others. Hatred and meanness can be witnessed from playgrounds to battlegrounds, from backstreets to backyards. We wish it weren't so. We long for a more “human” world, one where we look out for and after one another. We want to live in a community, both local and worldwide, that is safe and

healthy.

Will we ever find a world at peace with itself? Probably not, at least not with our own abilities.

Yet, Holy Week ended with a Resurrection. Death and destruction does not hold that last card. There is a power at work in the world that transcends evil and can transform people into disciples. There are believers who get the vision. There are voices who will tell the stories of Jesus. There are followers who will show the love of God in

powerful ways. There are disciples who will follow the lead of Jesus to proclaim the love of God at the playgrounds, the battlegrounds, the backstreets and the backyards.

We are Easter people! We are the ones who will carry the gospel to Judea, Samaria, and the outer most parts of the world. We are people who, when facing the shadow of death, know that God will be there with us. We are Easter people!

*Pastor Jerry*



*L to R: Cathy Best, Sherri Russell, Charlene Amoto-Geib, and Carol Sheatz, members of “Whimsey.”*

### **“Whimsey” to Present Special Music For Memorial Day Service**

A ladies' barbershop quartet, *Whimsey*, will provide special music for our upcoming Memorial Day service.

The four singers are members of a larger Sweet Adeline group, *Allegheny Sound*. With a soprano, alto, tenor and bass the smaller group has that same

unaccompanied, close harmony sound that one would hear listening to the larger group.

The main Sweet Adeline group is based in Franklin but the singers come from all around the area.

We are very pleased to have *Whimsey* share in our Memorial Day service.

### **News from Around the Church**

There will soon be a church office in the church. At a special meeting of the Church Council after the Sunday service on April 21, council voted to go ahead with the plans that were presented for doing so.

The closet used for quilting materials and other items just off the fellowship hall

will be converted into office space. A storage area for the quilting materials will be constructed near the kitchen.

The replacement of the kitchen windows is almost complete.

In order to utilize the new projectors in the sanctuary more advantageously, the hanging lights over the pul-

pit and the reading stand will be shortened. This will make images on the front wall more visible to the congregation.

The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee will meet at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, April 28.

The Worship/Education Committee will meet briefly on the following Sunday, May 5, after the service to

make plans for Sunday School and Jr. Church.

Wesley Woods Work Week will be held from April 27–May 4. To register, call 814-436-7802. You will need to say when you are coming, for how long, and whether you need meals and/or overnight accommodations.

## Bethel Church UMW Hosts Mission Study

On Saturday, April 20, Bethel United Methodist Church was the site of the Erie-Meadville District United Methodist Women's annual Mission Study.

This year's topic was the 2010 earthquake-ravaged country of Haiti. Donna Burkhart, presently serving as a member of the General Board of Church and Society and PA UM Advocacy, was the presenter. Donna, who has been an active member of the UMC since 1973, and of the UMW since 1974, has served in many and varied capacities on both the local and conference level.

As a teacher, she lived and worked in Haiti and was able to speak with a voice of experience about the history, people, climate,

culture and religions of the country.

From her time in Haiti, Donna had slides of the country and its people. The United Methodist Church sponsors a school for Haitian children that appeared in some of the slides. A video clip illustrated how some victims of the earthquake were fitted with prosthetics to help them return to more normal lives.

Donna also had a collection of objects from Haiti on display, some of which are visible in the accompanying photo.

For the 30 or so ladies who attended the study from throughout the Erie-Meadville district, it was an opportunity for both learning and fellowship.



*Donna Burkhart presented a study on Haiti.*



*Bonnie Milford, Program Resources Chair, displayed available reading materials.*

### RUMMAGE & BAKE SALE

Saturday, May 18

9:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

Clothing Household Items  
Odds & Ends Baked Goods

### Other News from the UMW

Rev. Alberta Smith, chaplain for Aseracare Hospice, and her colleague, Kim Winger, gave an informative presentation at the April UMW's meeting about the options available to patients through the hospice organization.

The quilters will be using some of their time to make school bags

to be filled with school supplies for children in places around the world where they are needed.

Heavy denim and/or light upholstery fabrics are requested for the school bags to make them durable. Anyone who has fabric to donate for this project may get in touch with Marilyn Edwards.

### "Souper" Sunday Fundraiser Benefits Associated Charities

Instead of our regular monthly fellowship dinner after the service on February 24, Bethel Church held a special event to raise funds and collect non-perishable food items for Titusville Area Associated Charities.

With the willing and helpful cooperation of the ladies - and men - of the church, there were eight different kinds of soup for

our customers to choose from along with scrumptious rolls made by Barb Kerr, salads and crackers.

Tempting us even more was the dessert - sundaes made with Susie Q ice cream accompanied by a choice of toppings. We made over \$350 to donate to Associated Charities along with our box of food to stock their shelves.



*Eight different soups were offered - count 'em!*

Bethel United  
Methodist Church

## BETHEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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**Rev. Jerry Gray,  
Pastor**

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**Sunday Worship**

**11:00 a.m.**

**ALL ARE WELCOME!**

## Volunteer of the Year



Last year when Pastor Jerry decided to hold lunch and an afternoon Bible study, Cheryl Gray, Jerry's wife, spoke up and said, "I'll take care of the lunch!"

Despite offers of help to furnish items of food, Cheryl insisted on making good on her offer. As a result, those of us attending the Bible study enjoyed four very tasty lunches.

Later in the year with Christmas coming on, Cheryl came up with the idea for our "Advent by Candlelight" event which she organized and managed so well that people who attended are often asking church members if we are planning to do it again this year. (Cheryl has a wonderful idea for this year's

theme, she says!)

One Sunday, looking around the fellowship hall, Cheryl mentioned that we really ought to move the filing cabinets (and a few other things) out of the way to give us more space and present a better appearance. She had also discovered a roomy area behind the altar in the sanctuary that could be cleaned out and used for storage. As a result - **with sincere thanks to Cub Knapp for the shelving** - we now have many things, including Christmas decorations, stored in our new spacious storage area.

The upstairs Sunday School room was the next project, and it has also has received some much needed attention. Other plans are in the works!

The Education/Worship Committee, as a way to thank and honor Cheryl for all she has volunteered to do for Bethel Church, asked her to be our Volunteer of the Year and to attend the Titusville Chamber of Commerce Volunteer Awards Luncheon and Ceremony on April 22. She finally agreed to do so. In the photo she is accepting her volunteer certificate and gift bag.

**Congratulations, Cheryl and a big THANK YOU!**