



Bethany Chicago



Remembering the Saints in Resurrection Hope

The early months of 2009 have included the deaths of three of Bethany's most-beloved senior members.

Ruth Grotefeld (1921-2009) was related by marriage to the family that included Bethany Church's first pastor. She joined Bethany in 1957 and became a vital part of the congregation's women's organizations and altar care. Ruth died on Valentine's Day in Michigan, which had been her home the last couple of years. Her son, Roger, lives there, and to both sons, Roger and Jerome, our sympathies are extended.

In 1968 Ethel Stefani (1920-2009) and her husband Victor moved to their family home on Hermitage. That same year, she joined Bethany Church. Memorably outspoken, Ethel was active in our women's organizations and a regular at worship until cancer began to take its toll. Ethel loved gardening and needlepoint, but what she and I had in common was our love for baseball. The new season will not be the same without her. We hope to see Bill and Debbie on Memorial Rose Sunday, when plaques for their mother, for Ruth and for George Swanson will be added to our Memorial Wall.



George Swanson (1912-2009) was Bethany's oldest member at the time of his death. He married Alice at Bethany in 1938 and shortly thereafter was baptized and joined the church. 96 years of life, 70 years of membership, 61 years wed to his beloved Alice, 56 years as a mail carrier in Lakeview are huge numbers, and yet did we not wish they were still larger. The following remarks were made at George's funeral service, at which all three sons and two grandchildren (of seven) also spoke. The hope expressed in these words extends to all three of Bethany's saints...to George, to Ruth and to Ethel.

"There is an inscription on the James Farley Post Office in New York City which has incorrectly been considered the official motto of the U.S. Postal Service. It might as well be, anyway: "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." When we think of the word "Gospel", we usually think of a book, when what the word really means is "good news". I was thinking about that when I received word of George's death, for who delivers good news more than a mail carrier? Letters and magazines and social security checks: some people wait in daily expectation for their mail carrier to arrive. And for 56 years, George did not disappoint them. Well, today, the shoe goes on the other foot. Today, God has good news for George (and Ruth and Ethel)...the good news of that place God has prepared, the good news of life that is eternal, the good news of the saints gathered around the throne of God. And thanks to our Savior, that news is never "postage due". We thank God for this much loved courier who has completed his appointed rounds."



Photos from top: Ruth Grotefeld and Lydia Wolferman; George and Alice Swanson; Ethel Stefani (lower left) in her Easter finery. This 1990 picture also includes Diane Brumbach (lower right), Dorothy Rydin (upper right) and Dolores Wright (upper left).

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Rev. William Bordonaro, Pastor

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Worship and Sunday School Sundays at 10:30 a.m.



The Civil Union Bill...

An update

Former Governor Rod Blagojevich dominated the news to such a degree that all legislative activity in Springfield came to a halt during the first months of 2009. With the matter seemingly behind us, Rep. Greg Harris sent out a letter this week informing us of activity relating to the Civil Unions Bill. Rep. Harris is the chair of the civil union legislative action coordinating task force, a group composed of leaders from organizations lobbying for civil unions in Illinois.

On April 3rd, the Civil Unions Bill will be presented for a third reading. This is the last step for amendments and the next to last step before a vote. The vote will likely be called during the spring, the timing depending on the larger political issues facing the state.

April 4th will be Civil Unions Action Day. The Chicago event will happen at 10 AM at the Center on Halsted. Volunteers are needed to canvass, write letters, work phone banks, and take information back to their organizations.

April 29 will be lobby day in Springfield.

Petitions and postcards will be available to send out the simple message that persons of faith support this legislation. The Roman Catholic and Mormon churches are mounting state-wide campaigns and investing large sums of money against it.



Holocaust Education Project

From April 19-21 at Elmhurst College, a varied and exemplary slate of presenters will use the arts to convey lessons from one of humanity's darkest, yet most important chapters.

Titled "The Holocaust: Testimony through the Arts," the 19th annual Holocaust Education Project at Elmhurst College will present University of Chicago musicologist Dr. Philip V. Bohlman; a solemn Service of Remembrance, combined with choral music and poetry written within a concentration camp; and a biographical play on Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a man who risked his life to battle the evils of Hitler's Germany,

Sunday, April 19: Hammerschmidt Memorial Chapel, 7 pm
Service of Remembrance and Choral Concert

Monday, April 20: Schaible Science Center, Illinois Hall, 7 pm
One man performance on Dietrich Bonhoeffer titled "A View from the Underside" by actor Al Staggs

Tuesday, April 21: Hammerschmidt Memorial Chapel, 7 pm
Keynote concert, "The Tragedy of Transcendence: On the Meaning of the Arts of the Holocaust," led by Philip V. Bohlman, University of Chicago musicologist

As has been true for the last 18 years, the College strives to both teach and commemorate the Holocaust during its annual Holocaust Education Project.

Elmhurst College is a premier comprehensive college in metropolitan Chicago and is affiliated with the United Church of Christ.

190 Prospect Avenue, Elmhurst, Illinois 60126-3296
main number (630) 617-3500

For a complete schedule, visit www.elmhurst.edu
or call 630.617.3033

New Office Manager

You've already seen his work on the bulletins and March newsletter...now get to know a little more about Bethany's new Office Manager.

A professional singer and actor, Shaun Nathan Baer has just recently moved to Chicago with his new husband Rob Onken (both pictured left). His first Chicago performance will be April 24 and 25, playing the role of "Luke" in the Chicago Gay Men's Chorus production *Bad Habits* at the Athenaeum Theatre.

Before their move, Shaun lived in Minneapolis, Minnesota where he worked as the Marketing Coordinator for the Sabes Jewish Community Center for three and a half years. At the same time Shaun was actively performing in the Twin Cities area. Some of his favorite roles are the title role in *Bat Boy: The Musical* with the Minneapolis Musical Theatre and Homer in *Floyd Collins* with Theatre Latte Da. His final Minnesota performance was with the Minnesota Opera.

"I'm really excited to be working here at Bethany Church," Shaun said. "I'm looking forward to doing what I can to help Bethany's community grow."

Holy Week and Easter 2009 at Bethany Church

The services of Holy Week and Easter are the defining moments of the year for the Christian.

Sunday, April 5

Palm Sunday worship will include a procession with palms (weather permitting), the dramatic reading of the Passion history according to Mark's Gospel (with congregational participation), and the making of palm crosses out of palm branches. It's a service that connects the head with the heart where faith is concerned.

Thursday, April 9

Maundy Thursday worship takes place entirely in the fellowship hall. A simple supper begins the evening at 6:30, followed at 7:30 by Holy Communion and the order of Tenebrae. The gradual extinguishing of candles accompany the words of Jesus from the cross, reminding us of the abandonment Jesus faced "on the night in which he was betrayed".

Friday, April 10

On Good Friday, the church will be open between the hours of noon and 3 p.m., the traditional hours when Christ was on the cross, for personal meditation and reflection. Some may wish to participate in the 29th Annual Good Friday Walk for Justice. (More info below)

Sunday, April 12

Easter morning will be spectacular, as it always is at Bethany. A continental breakfast will be served at 9:30. Festival worship will take place at 10:30, including special music from the choir, Holy Communion in celebration of the Risen Christ, and a church decorated in lilies. Following worship, there will be an Easter egg hunt for the children of the congregation and community, either on the church lawn or in the fellowship hall, depending on the weather.

We hope that not only will you be able to attend these services, but that you will invite a friend or neighbor to join you.

Good Friday Walk

The 29th Annual Good Friday Walk for Justice is a project of the 8th Day Center for Justice. The Walk for Justice stems from the Christian tradition of the Stations of the Cross. Beginning at the plaza at the northeast corner of Michigan and Congress streets, people of all faiths and good will process through downtown Chicago stopping at five "stations" or large plazas along the way, e.g. Congress Plaza, Federal Plaza, Daley Plaza.

At each of these stops, participative prayers or reflections are said reminding us of the many communities of people and Earth itself suffering at the hands of the "powers and principalities" of our own day. At Daley Plaza, for example, the grief of Jesus' mother will be extended to include the grief of all mothers for their sons and daughters in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Walk for Justice takes place on Friday, April 10th, between the hours of noon and 3.



Emmy Peek makes her violin debut at Bethany Church.

SIGN-UP REMINDERS

Thank you to the following persons who have volunteered to provide flowers, serve as lector or host a coffee hour during the months of March or April. Contact Shaun in the church office if there has been an error or you need to change a date.

APRIL 5

L: multiple readers
F: palm branches
C: Ruth Cato

APRIL 12

L: Michael Murphy
F: lilies
Easter breakfast/brunch
(volunteers needed)

APRIL 19

L: Nicole Macaluso
F: to be assigned
C: Nicole and Phil

APRIL 26

L: to be assigned
F: to be assigned
C: Kelly Aaron

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 3...JEFF AARON
- 7...SHAUN NATHAN BAER
- 11...CAROL TURNER
- 12...SHAWN PEEK
- 28...MIKE TERMINI
- 30...CATHERINE BAKER, MARY VARGAS



Four Birthdays - Four Cakes

March 8th after the worship service four birthdays were celebrated with four cakes. Pictured above from left are Phil Collins, Angela Zawada, Ruth Cato and Bill Parker as they prepare to blow out the candles.

Ravenswood Run — 5K

On April 26, join 3,500 of your neighbors as we run and walk to support families facing sometimes crushing economic pressure. The Ravenswood Run 5K benefits local hunger relief and youth mentoring programs in this community, as well as school-based health centers that make sure teens get the care they need, regardless of their financial circumstances. More than 300 neighborhood families are fed and cared for each week because of these programs. In 2009, that work is needed more than ever!

REGISTER for this year's Ravenswood Run at www.fleetfeetchicago.com.

Visit www.ravenswoodcommunityservices.org for program information.



Bethany United Church of Christ
4250 N. Paulina St.
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God
is still
speaking,