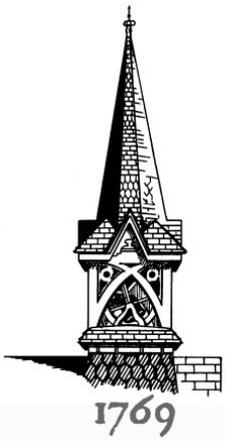


Bethel Presbyterian Review



The Pastor's Corner

Hello Bethel!! I recently was asked once again if there is a reason the bunny is part of Easter and if there is any Christian connection. I remember sharing this article with you a few years ago and thought it might be fun to revisit it in light of the many changes and challenges in our current world.

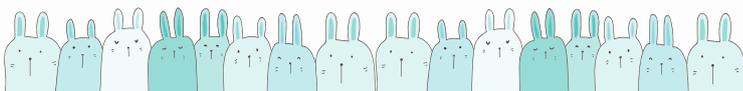
The History Of The Easter Bunny

By Maureen Wuelfing

"Go to sleep now, so the Easter Bunny can come." This is said to Christian children around the world on the night before Easter. Children look forward to Easter and the treats that come with it, especially chocolate eggs and other treats that will be in Easter baskets, delivered by the Easter Bunny. Perhaps the Easter Bunny scatters eggs throughout the house or yard to be found in an Easter egg hunt. Maybe brightly decorated eggs are used in an Easter egg roll, like the one held each year on the White House lawn. Occasionally, a lucky child will be given a live Easter Bunny as a special Easter gift.

Each family may have a unique tradition, but the basic concept is the same; if you've been good, the Easter Bunny will bring a special treat to celebrate Easter, which for Christians celebrates the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. How did the Easter Bunny and Easter eggs come to represent the resurrection? The answer is found not in modern day commercialism but much farther back than Jesus, and was then used by Christians to preach the good news.

To discover the history of the Easter Bunny, you must travel back in time to pagan worship. Babylonians, 2000 years before Christ, worshiped a god named Tammuz. Tammuz, the Babylonians believed, was resurrected from the dead by Ishtar, the symbol for which was a rabbit. The festival commemorating this resurrection was celebrated in the spring. Fathers helped children paint designs on eggs. The eggs would be hidden so the children could enjoy an egg hunt. All members of the family got dressed in their best clothes to attend a worship service.



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How did it become a part of celebrations in Christian families? The answer is really quite simple. Christian missionaries, starting with Paul, were not afraid to use regional or cultural religious symbols to help explain the Gospel. An example would be Paul's discourse at the Areopagus (Acts 17:16) in ancient Greece, when he explained to the people that their tribute to the unknown God was actually the one true God as he presented the Gospel to them.

In the case of the rabbit and the egg, both were used in many different societies, as in ancient Babylon, to represent rebirth and the renewal of life. Christian missionaries would use these familiar symbols to help portray and communicate the Gospel and bring people into a relationship with Christ. Over time the Easter Rabbit and the Easter egg, as well as the word "Easter" (which is not found in the bible) became linked with the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

I thought the article above might be an interesting tidbit to chew on for good brain food. The modern church faces the challenge of how to transition from our pre-Covid reality, through our present Covid reality, and into our post-Covid reality. Traditions are still present, but are being redefined. There is a whole lot of 'new' that has been added to the old, out of necessity. I anticipate that as we emerge, we will continue to build on the adaptations we have made in this past year.

Without a doubt, this past year has been a challenge. We've seen much change in our society, our local communities, and our church as we reinvented worship and fellowship in trying times that have limited and sometimes prevented us from being together.

Yet we have found ways to stay connected to each other, and ways to be the body of Christ to one another. We have connected to each other in very new ways, both virtually and in person. We've grown in so many ways through this adversity, using the various new secular norms and technology available to us. Amazingly, the word went out: we've reached people from all over the world, and we have people from all over the country who attend church at Bethel via livestream each Sunday. Who would've think it!!

We've also kept an active role in service and mission. We just sent another 700 pounds of food to Mason Dixon. We are actively beginning to plan for a gradual reopening of the church as we begin to emerge from this pandemic. It is a powerful reminder that through trial, we grow. As we continue follow the ministry and journey of the incarnate Christ manifested for us in the Holy Spirit this Lenten season, may we never cease to be amazed by the faithfulness of God!

This is the whole reason for the incarnation (God with us) and the resurrection (God never leaving us). Through our faith in Christ as Lord, we have a God who chooses to be with us always, to work alongside us through the presence of the Holy Spirit, and to lift our burdens. If God has done this for us, may we continue to have the strength to do it for each other.

...Food for thought,
Pastor Todd



Welcome, March



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Sandra Louderback 3/2
John Louderback 3/3
Tom Swift 3/3
Leo Fowler 3/5
Lillian Skidmore 3/5
Jason Troyer 3/7
Melissa Krawczyk 3/9
George Bradford 3/11
Marie Newcomer 3/11
Danielle Saneman 3/11
Mary Rutledge 3/12
Carolyn Mattheiss 3/13
Samuel Brooks 3/15
Christine Horn 3/15
Jennifer Dietz 3/17
Thomas Messenger 3/18
Catherine Smith 3/20
Andi Holmes 3/22
Frank Hughes, Sr. 3/22
Chrissie Galliher 3/24
Barbara Mitchell 3/24
Allen Henderson 3/25
Patricia Troyer 3/26
Jane Burgess 3/31
Steve Kauffman 3/31

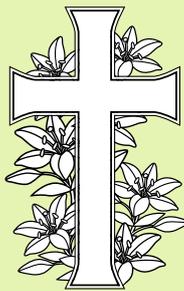


Happy Anniversary!

Mark & Lynne DiBastiani 3/7
Allen & Janet Henderson 3/12
Wiley & Mary Rutledge 3/13



A note from the Worship Committee:



Easter flowers will decorate the Sanctuary on Easter Sunday. We welcome your donations to support this effort. Look for the flyer in your Worship Bulletin, or contact the office for more information

Per Capita 2021

Please be sure to submit your Per Capita Fee by the end of the year.



\$36.06

Thank you





Deacon's Update

We uphold the following members, relatives and friends in our prayers and pray God's healing upon them:

- Howard Eisner
- George Denbow
- The Lowe Family
- Bob Treat, cousin to Dave Hinkley & Laurie Falkner
- Joe & Gerry DePetris, friends of Terri Schwarz
- Shirlee Nystrom
Brendan Lins, grandson of Ron & Andi Holmes
- Liz Brooks, sister of Polly Winskowski
- Henry Kraft, grandson of Gail & David Thomas
- Janet Henderson
- Sam Fielder, Jr., Father of Sam Fielder III & Father-in-law of Margie Fielder
- Frank Clement, friend of Sam & Marsha Brooks
- John Dorn, friend of John and Rita Cairnes
- Beverly Schmidt
- Joe Bradford
- George Cowman
- Betty Rogers
- Nancy Thompson (friend of the Swifts)
- Lenny Downs (niece of the Swifts)
- Jean Mattheiss (sister of Bruce)



One Great Hour of Sharing

February 17 - April 4, 2021

For over 70 years, One Great Hour of Sharing has provided Presbyterians a way to share God's love with our neighbors in need around the world.

One Great Hour of Sharing is the single, largest way that Presbyterians come together every year to work for justice, resilience, and sustainability.

You can participate by sharing a special offering. If you need an envelope, we will have some in the sanctuary or in the office for pickup.

Member Notes

Ruth Calary would like to thank everyone for the cards and calls for Christmas and her birthday. She really appreciates all of your kind gestures. Ruth has recently begun watching the sermons from her computer and has very much enjoyed them! She thinks Pastor Todd has been doing a wonderful job with the Sunday sermons.



Thank you for your expressions of sympathy at the passing of my brother Charles "Mike" Swift and my sister Pauline Brannan. The Bethel Family is always there providing support and comfort.

Sincerely, **Tom Swift**



Shower of Cards

Send a little Sunshine! Each month we select a member (or members) to shower with cards or notes of love, support, encouragement and good cheer!

Our featured Bethel Members for March are:

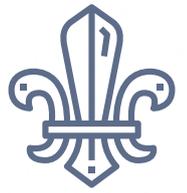
Ruth Calary
1246 Baldwin Mill Road
Jarrettsville, MD 21084
&
Bill Pullen
3729 Old Federal Hill Rd.
Jarrettsville, MD 21084





Wreaths Across America

Scout Troop 265



On the cold, snowy morning of December 19th, **Boy Scout Troop 265** gathered to pay respects to all of the fallen veterans resting in the Bethel cemetery. While Bethel cemetery is not an official *Wreaths Across America* site, the Troop followed their service closely, timing the ceremony with other events across the world so that all would participate in this remembrance in unison.

Thirty-four Scouts and many more leaders and adults gathered for this solemn event. Two wreaths were presented: one for the fallen heroes resting in the cemetery; the other for those who did not come home. A flag-raising to half-staff showed honor and respect for those who we remember.

Each name of all 124 veterans in the Bethel cemetery was read by the Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders, and a moment of silence was offered to them.

Troop 265 is glad that this opportunity happened. COVID, which has significantly impacted our lifestyle, allowed us to hold this event instead of a larger veteran cemetery event. Through this event, we learned about the heroes in our community dating back to the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812.

Troop 265 would like to thank **Ms. Donna Jones** for her knowledge of the cemetery, **Mr. Rich Schuneman** for the donation of a new American flag, **Mrs. Janine Ortt** for making the wreaths, and **Smith Hardware** for donating a Maryland flag.

Member Highlight

Chrissie Galliher
and Family



Travis, Chrissie, and Carolina Galliher live in Bel Air, Maryland. They love to do things together as a family. When given the opportunity to take a vacation, it is an action-packed week where they try to do everything they can. Travis and Chrissie have been married since May 2008.

Travis is a public service worker who helps protect the people as a police and fire dispatch assistant supervisor for Baltimore County 911. Travis graduated with his degree in Business administration and Public Safety Administration from University of Maryland Global Campus. He has a love for racing and enjoys sharing his passion with his father. They can usually be found sitting together on the weekend at a dirt track. When not at the track, Travis enjoys cheering on the UNC Tarheels Basketball, the Carolina Panthers and The Hurricanes Hockey team.

Chrissie is the Children's, Youth, and Family Ministries Coordinator here at Bethel and teaches at Bel Air Elementary School. Chrissie graduated from Notre Dame of Maryland University with a bachelor's in Early Childhood Elementary, Elementary Education, and Special Education. She's currently in a Master's Program at Towson University where she is studying Reading Instruction and ESOL Instruction, which caters to students who speak English as second language. In whatever spare time is left, she is usually found reading or with Carolina and her family. She has a powerful love for animals and children, and finds herself drawn to anything that radiates their innocence.

Carolina is 9 years old and a third-grader at Bel Air Elementary School. Her parent's favorite quality that Carolina exhibits is a kind, innocent sweetness that draws all towards her. She loves to dance and loves animals. She loves to be around people -- most of all her family. Carolina was named after her parents' love for the Carolinas and the simple, kind feeling that it emulates (But if you ask Travis, it's after their sports teams, ha!)



Fun Facts:

- The Galliher's have raised 891 Monarch butterflies in the past four years from eggs to butterflies out of their dining room and milkweed gardens, in an effort to help support their dwindling population.
- THEY LOVE TO READ! Chrissie read 110 books, Travis read 21 books and Carolina read 8 chapter books in 2020.
- Carolina is a Brownie Girl Scout and Chrissie is one of her troop leaders.
- For the last seven years, Travis has participated in The St. Baldrick's Foundation events that help to supply funding to conquer childhood cancers. For this event, Travis raises funds from family, friends and businesses and then has his head and beard shaved off in front of a crowd at the event. He usually prepares for months by forgoing haircuts and growing his beard. He has raised almost \$20,000 in his efforts.
- They have two guinea pigs and two fish!

Bethel Family Life



Sophia Litchfield turned **3** on January 10th!
Let her beautiful smile and her bright rainbow outfit bring you a little joy today!

Lisa Robbins would like to thank the Admin & Personnel Committee for the birthday card...and what a treat to indulge in these AMAZING birthday cinnamon rolls made by Gail Thomas!



A little snow can't slow MaryLee Swift down...she is on the move in snowshoes!
Go MaryLee!!



Wintertime fun! The Holt Family and their cute pup had fun with the snow that we welcomed in February!





Sam DiBastiani decided Grandad Wiley needed a snowman, so the DiBastiani family delivered a little green cheer to the residents of Sunshine Acres Assisted Living. And if anyone knows Jerry, red tractors are the preferred color choice! LOL...



Sam & Marsha Brooks enjoying beach life and a beautiful sunrise in sunny South Carolina!



The Fielder Family has been having lots of fun! Sam and Margie celebrated their 31st wedding anniversary on January 27th. Laura is working at a wildlife center and attending church in Florida. Sarah is working from home and taking cool photos around the farm! Sam took a break from studying to make a snowman. And all 3 girls got to go to Disney over the winter break!



The Mission Committee thanks you for your Generous Donations!

We just donated 700 pounds of pantry staples to Mason-Dixon Community Services! Thanks to all of our Bethel family!! The Easter meal collection is now underway. Your donations are greatly appreciated!



Please Note:

The Cemetery Committee requests that all winter holiday decorations or flower be removed from the headstones by **Sunday, March 28th.**

The committee will be getting ready for the spring season as well as the Easter Holiday. The church dumpster is locked for disposal; if you would like to use it to dispose of your decorations, please see the church office for the key.



Pause for Poetry

A Friendship Blessing

by John O'Donohue

May you be blessed with good friends.

May you learn to be a good friend to yourself.

May you be able to journey to that place in your soul where there is great love, warmth, feeling, and forgiveness.

May this change you.

May it transfigure that which is negative, distant, or cold in you.

May you be brought in to the real passion, kinship, and affinity of belonging.

May you treasure your friends.

May you be good to them and may you be there for them;

may they bring you all the blessings, challenges, truth, and light that you need for your journey.

May you never be isolated.

May you always be in the gentle nest of belonging with your anam cara.

(Anam cara means "soul friend" in Gaelic.)

From *Anam Cara: A Book Of Celtic Wisdom* by John O'Donohue





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