



THE BELL TOWER



“PROCLAIM GOOD NEWS TO THE WORLD
JESUS LIVES OUR GOD REIGNS”

Vol. 61 No. 7

East Rockaway, N.Y.

July-August 2021



Bethany's Fall Corporate Meeting

will be on September 26

(following our church service at about 11:45)

This is my favorite meeting as we share each committee's annual report of activities, goals, and plans. Although this past year has been challenging, you will see that we have indeed risen from the depths of quarantine!

The meeting will be in person in the fellowship hall but will also have a Zoom remote component for those unable to attend physically. That link is below.

I look forward to seeing you there. Janet Moser, Bethany Moderator

Topic: Bethany Corporate Meeting

Time: Sep 26, 2021 11:45 AM Eastern Time

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82520306291?pwd=U2t0dnRsMmJsOFBjZ0pZUTNSSitYUT09>

Meeting ID: 825 2030 6291; Passcode: 238352

One tap mobile: +19292056099,,82520306291#,,, *238352# US (New York)

Dates to Remember:

- September 6...Labor Day
- September 7...Rosh Hashanah
- September 11... Patriot Day
- September 12...Grandparents Day
- September 16...Yom Kippur
- September 22...First Day of Autumn
- September 26...Corporate Meeting
- October 11...Columbus Day
- October 31...Halloween
- November 2...Election Day
- November 13...Hurricane Returns!



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

Turning Around

“Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news and saying, “the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent and believe the good news.”
Mark 1:14-15 (NRSV)

One of the first professional jobs I ever had was as a Community Placement Specialist for the NY State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities. I was a young man in my early twenties, and New York, after the scandals of Willowbrook, hired young people like me to develop group homes, day service centers, and other services, in cooperation with local nonprofits, for folks leaving the institutions as we transitioned to this new, community-based way of serving disabled people. A lot of people were very much against the idea of course. There was opposition from communities, afraid of people who for years had been out of sight and out of mind. There was opposition from politicians, of course, but the thing I found hardest to fathom, was the fear of some of the parents of the institutionalized people themselves. As someone who had trained and worked inside the institution, it was inconceivable to me that a parent could negatively compare a beautiful home on a suburban street, or a country lane, to the bleak wards of our state facilities.

That is, until I thought about my own family, about the doctors who told my parents my brother would be better off in an institution than at home, the friends of my parents who wanted to know why they would let this broken child poison their family, the police officer who wanted to know why my brother was allowed to “run around loose,” the doctors who said, “put him away, it’s the best thing.” My family was fortunate. My parents were stubborn, my dad was a professional educator and psychologist, my mom, a journalist and an organizer. But most people were not professionals, and now they felt as if they had done the wrong thing. Each revelation of the horrors of our state institutions felt like a personal indictment, especially for the most active and involved parents, the ones who fought for better conditions in the institutions, who now saw themselves as having failed their children when they needed them most and who pushed back against that feeling and with it, the opportunities for those same children to have a better life. But the thing is, those parents hadn’t failed their children. They had done the best they could with what they knew at the time. “Now,” I would say to them, “we have new opportunities to make life better, and so that is what we are trying to do.”

That’s the thing about being a human being, as Paul said, “we see only in part,” we don’t have perfect knowledge (or perfect anything else for that matter), that’s why we need second and third chances. But we also have the God-given capacity to grow, to change, to learn, so that next time we’ll do better. Without that second chance, without the opportunity to make a turn and do better, there would be no hope for us, because no one gets anything right all the time.

Maybe that’s also why the idea of repentance is so central to our faith and to our hope for salvation for the people of God. As Paul said so succinctly in Romans, “all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.” Our sins and our mistakes are individual, but they are also corporate, systems of injustice that we create that have those sins and mistakes built into them because they are human constructions, as imperfect in knowledge and intent as we all are, and subject to the prejudices and perversities of our fallen humanity, even when they are about pointing us to the stars. I guess that’s human nature. As the apostle Paul says in his first letter to the Corinthians, “we see only in part.” Even our highest aspirations and best intentions, our most noble endeavors are never without flaw or failure. In our experience as individuals, as we struggle to live by the law of love, we recognize that we will make mistakes. The “owning” of the mistakes and failures of the past, is vital to the process of repentance because it is only when we are ready to admit that we need God’s forgiveness and God’s help that we can become ready to accept help and to do what is needed to change direction. To “turn around” after all, is what repentance is all about. Not just admitting we erred but being willing to change it. The same can be said for the institutions we create. We do the best we can with what we know at the time. But our institutions reflect the image of their creators, both in the best aspirations and, in their prejudices and assumptions, good and bad. We imbue them with a kind of sacred aura as if they were the embodiment of our best selves instead of what they are, human mechanisms (even in the church), tools, to help us in our work of discipleship. They are not the ends, but a means to that end which is effective only when it is based in the truth, no mat-

ter how messy or ambiguous or disappointing. But when we sacralize them, place them beyond criticism, it is impossible for them to grow as we grow in understanding and vision. They become “whitened sepulchers,” holding God’s people back instead of pushing them forward toward the kingdom.

That is what makes this cultural battle over Critical Race Theory so sad. It is not really a dispute about a method of inquiry that proposes that the assumptions of a society, its attitudes and prejudices, will become part of its institutions and its perceptions, (a central hypothesis of CRT), as it is an assertion by the opponents of CRT that we ignore the evidence of our own history because a lot of us wish it weren’t so. Critical inquiries remind us that history is never simple, and that even the best of churches, countries, peoples, also have darker sides, as indeed this church and this country do, which not only added to the suffering of the world, but also put a lie to many of our noble claims for a great many of our fellow human beings. If we want to be true to our ideals as a people, we must have the courage to look critically at our history and ourselves, do the hard work of self-examination and root out the causes of those failures, or our symbols will become meaningless, and our institutions will continue to fail us.

This process of self-criticism is even more important in the church. It is vital to our growth as disciples and as a communion of faith. It is process that calls us to be ambassadors for Christ, always taking inventory of ourselves and our church to ensure that we are doing our best to bear the light of the Gospel with integrity and grace. We

aren’t the “right,” or the “left,” because our task is to be an independent moral voice, answerable to the Spirit and our collective conscience as disciples. To be clear-eyed about the past, enables us to see what was hidden from us before, to let go of what doesn’t do justice to the people we wish to become and to lift up what does. It empowers us to move toward more passionate and just relationships by encouraging humility as well as pride in who and what we are and hope and faith in what we can become together. No one likes to see their heroes’ feet of clay, or the dark side of their history. But as Jesus said, one cannot put new wine into old wineskins.

We cannot move forward toward a more compassionate and just world unless we are willing to take a fearless inventory of our attitudes but also our institutions and be ready to re-create them to serve who we are today and who we want to become tomorrow. When we do that, the church becomes a bastion of hope even for those who have not come to faith, an open hand to those in need and a genuine and effective moral voice in the society. When a nation does that, it is truly on a path to greatness. Let’s not hide from ideas, no matter how unsettling. Let’s air them, debate them, welcome them. As Jesus says in the Gospel of John, “You shall know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”

Have a blessed summer!!

Pastor Mark



Bethany Bell Tower ...is a monthly publication of

BETHANY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

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

Are you less than perfect? Welcome! We are a community or 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

Summer Greetings!





You can't help but notice and hear on the news how some/many people are not treating others very well. Well, as Jesus taught us, you can't fight hate with hate. Only love can win that battle. So here is my idea. Let's be a force of kindness! We can start with these ideas from the Random Acts of Kindness site. <https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/> Who knows – maybe our little acts of kindness can grow and flourish in our communities, in our counties, states, country... You get the picture!

What happens after August 31? You can go to <https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/> for the next month's suggestions or maybe create your own calendar of kindness. Remember – whatever you do is your choice.

I pray that you and I always choose the path of kindness.

AUGUST 2021



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT																																																																																																																
GIRLFRIEND DAY 1 Plan a brunch with all of your best girlfriends.	2 Send an unexpected, handwritten postcard or letter to a loved one.	3 Expand your mind. Sign up for a free class or workshop to learn something new.	4 Donate to a good cause.	 5 Replace your light bulbs with energy efficient ones.	6 Make a bucket list and start by completing one thing on it by the end of this month.	7 Leave a flower on someone's desk, windshield, or in their mailbox.																																																																																																																
HAPPINESS HAPPENS DAY 8 Do something that makes YOU happy.	BOOK LOVERS DAY  9 Send your friend a book you think they might enjoy.	MUHARRAM BEGINS 10 Make a donation to a global charity of your choice.	SON AND DAUGHTER DAY 11 Plan a fun, special day out with your child.	12 Put a \$10 or \$20 bill in a book with a note that says, "Great choice! This book is on me!"	FRIDAY THE 13th 13 Take old blankets and towels to a local animal shelter.	 14 Cook a healthy meal today.																																																																																																																
15 FREE DAY! What is one way you can show courage today?	ROLLER COASTER DAY 16 Do something childlike today.	17 Make the switch to cruelty-free products.	18 Volunteer to help clean up around your neighborhood.	WORLD PHOTO DAY 19 Send a good friend or family member a framed favorite photo of you both.	20 Plan a fun night out with a friend.	21 Make a conscious effort to avoid judging others today.																																																																																																																
22 Tape coins or hide small toys around a playground for kids to find.	23 Join a group that shares your own interests.	24 Bring someone who is sick some chicken soup and a get well card.	25 Hydrate! Drink more water every day.	WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY 26 Donate to a charity with a mission to help create equality.	 27 Plan a family camping trip.	28 Pay it forward.																																																																																																																
29 Refrain from jumping to conclusions today.	NATIONAL BEACH DAY 30 Take a long walk outside today.	EAT OUTSIDE DAY 31 Spend your lunch hour in the park on a sunny day.	1	2	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">JULY</th> <th colspan="7">SEPTEMBER</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th><th>S</th> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th><th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td> <td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td> <td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td> <td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td> <td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td> <td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>1</td><td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td> <td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		JULY							SEPTEMBER							S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	27	28	29	30	1	2	3	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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But we didn't know!

Please – if you or someone you know needs a visit, prayers, support, whatever – please let us know. Do NOT assume someone else has contacted Bethany.

Unfortunately, we often find out someone is now out of the hospital when we didn't even know they were admitted!

Bethany really wants to be there for you so help us out::

Call the church office – 516-599-5768 – and leave a detailed message.

Although the office is on summer hours right now, Pastor checks the messages frequently.

If possible, email. Pastor's email is revlu@aol.com. Stephanie, head of the deacons, is smaddy29@yahoo.com. My email is janet630@optonline.net or call or text me at 516-603-3972. Play it safe and call the church AND contact one or more of us.

Remember – God loves you and so do we!

Janet Moser, Bethany Moderator

FOOD PANTRY NEEDS:

Remember, a lot of families have children who are receiving breakfast and lunch at school during the school year. With summer coming, these children will no longer be receiving these meals and will rely on the pantry for food.

You can drop food off at the church from 9 a.m. to Noon on Tuesdays and Fridays during July and August. If you would like to make a monetary donation, make checks payable to “The Long Island Council of Churches” with “food pantry” in the memo.

Any questions, please call the office and leave a message at 516-599-5768.

A big “**Thank you**” to all who have been faithfully donating food each week.



FROM THE TRUSTEES:

WE have a new day care provider who will be operating downstairs in the space previously occupied by the Mothers' Center. Will and Sandra Calero hope to ready by August 1. They are accepting enrollment NOW. Please refer to their ad in the back of the Bell Tower for more info. They are called the Little Village Day Care. We certainly wish them success!

Yours in Christ, Richard Eaves

www.bethanycong.com

BOOK REVIEW:

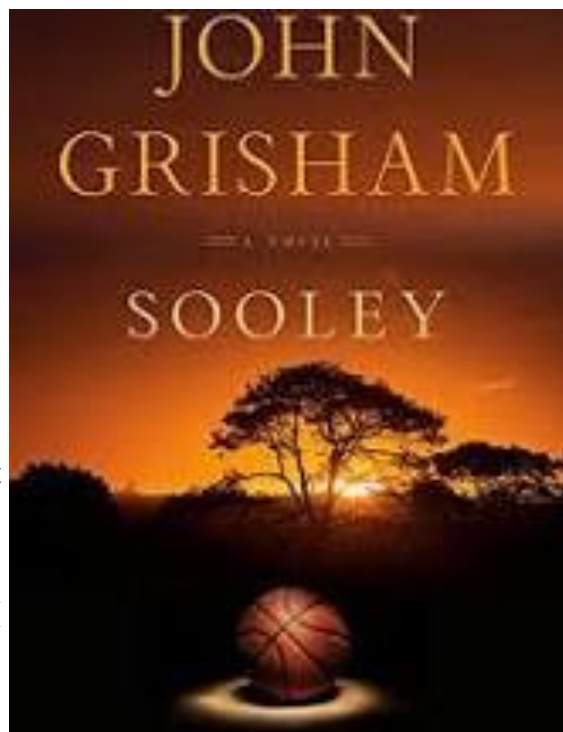
By Lou Gaspari

Sooley

By John Grisham

Let me begin by stating that if you are NOT a basketball fan this book will be hard to understand and follow. I cannot tell if the book is on the refugee issues or just a plot as a tribute to basketball.

This is definitely a male book with an ending which is sprung upon the reader and is very disappointing. I love basketball but not this book. In my opinion, it is not one of Grisham's best.



Write for The Bell Tower

Do you know some Bethany history? A person of interest for a Spotlight article? Let's hear it. We know that some of our congregants are personally involved with a variety of charities. For example, "Locks for Love". If you are involved or know of someone, please drop us a note. Everyone would love to hear about it. Have you read a great book recently? Have you seen a great movie lately? Share a book or movie review. Perhaps a product review? How about having a recipe swap? A 30 minute meal for during the work week? Do you have a favorite poem or prayer? How about a nice clean joke? Do you have a favorite restaurant? Find a new one? Give us a review. Great vacation? Fun getaway place? Tell us.

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

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

FROM THE EDITOR:



Prayers for JoAnn Wright who fractured her wrist this week.

Prayers are being asked for those who have lost family and friends to gun violence, racial inequality issues and other hate crimes.

Prayers of continued healing for our beloved KATE WHITNEY as she recovers from eye surgery.

Lay Readers and Ushers are needed for Sunday Worship. Please sign up on the sheet in the Hallway or speak with Maryanne (516-599-5768) in the office or Stephanie Maddolone (516-355-1970). Lay Readers will be required to assist with the service and read two (2) Bible passages for that Sunday. Please speak to Pastor Mark for further directions. OFFICE HOURS: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon (Closed Thursdays)

BOOK CLUB

Tuesdays, 7:00 p.m. Weekly Book Club,

Led by Pastor Mark - via ZOOM.

If interested, please contact the Office at 516-599-5768.

TROOP 121:

Troop 121 had our last meeting a few weeks ago, but the adventure continues with summer camp at Onteora Scout Reservation in Livingston Manor, NY. On Sunday, August 1st, the troop will be settling in for a week of merit badge classes, camping, fun and memories. Have fun everyone!

Although meetings are done for the scouting season, many will be working through the summer to advance in their Trail to Eagle. We have Eagle board of reviews coming up for Jonathan R. and Matt R. in early August and then later that month Aidan S, and Robert P. will follow. Congratulations to all four young men for completing their Eagle projects and working so hard to achieve their goal. And congratulations to the rest of the troop for all their hard work throughout the year.

At our end of the year barbeque Scoutmaster Nick announced he will be stepping down after many years of service to make way for a new Scoutmaster. We are all sad to hear this news, but we welcome Scoutmaster Paul to carry on all the great work that has been done before him. SM Nick will be taking on the role of Assistant Scoutmaster and Mentor to SM Paul.

Have a great and safe summer to our family at Bethany!
(For more information, please visit the troop's website: <http://troop121ny.org>)

BOY SCOUT TROOP 121
TODAY'S YOUTH...TOMORROW'S LEADERS

CULTURE FESTIVAL 2021

FOOD, MUSIC & COMMUNITY!

LOCAL RESTAURANTS ✦ LIVE MUSIC & DJ

Saturday, August 21st, 2-6pm

What is the Culture Festival?

We are planning a one-day celebration of the wonderful variety of food East Rockaway and its neighbors have to offer. It will be a brilliant way to come together and experience our multicultural community. This will be the first event dedicated to championing, supporting and promoting multiculturalism with the best local food available.

Why you must take part in the Culture Festival!

This outdoor showcase of authentic foods will give your restaurant access to an audience of community minded food-lovers. It's a great opportunity to expose your business to an enthusiastic market and a make new customers.

By supporting this event, you'll put East Rockaway on the map for foodies and those looking for an inclusive multicultural neighborhood. Our planning committee will be publicizing this event through the Bethany Congregational Church website, social media via Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. We will provide flyers and posters for participating restaurants.

Interested? Great!

Here's what to do, please contact our coordinator, _____, to discuss details. Thank you for your interest and supporting the first of it's kind, multicultural event!



EAST ROCKAWAY
FOR
RACIAL JUSTICE

(Editor's Note: Date is still tentative. Check with the Bethany Church Office closer to the date.)



THE SURPRISING HEALTH BENEFITS OF ICE CREAM



JULY IS NATIONAL ICE CREAM MONTH!

There's nothing like a refreshing scoop of Rocky Road or Very Berry Strawberry on a hot summer day—but if you're very health conscious, you might pass on ice cream no matter the season.

Well, you may be interested to learn that ice cream isn't so bad for you after all! In fact, if eaten in moderation, ice cream has some surprising health benefits! Here's the scoop on four reasons to treat yourself:

1. Source of Vitamins

~~Did you know that ice cream happens to be a huge source of vitamins A, B-6, B-12, C, D, and E? Ice cream also contains vitamin K, which prevents blood clotting. It doesn't stop there. Ice cream also contains niacin, thiamine, and riboflavin. Each of these many vitamins provides valuable health benefits!

2. Provides Energy

~~Not only does ice cream have nutritional value, but it also is an incredible source of energy. Ice cream is rich with carbohydrates, fats, and proteins, which are all needed for our bodies to produce energy.

3. Source of Minerals

~~Minerals like calcium and phosphorus are found in ice cream. Calcium is an essential mineral for us as it maintains healthy bones and reduces the chances of kidney stones.

4. Stimulates the Brain

~~Ice cream stimulates thrombotonin, which is a hormone of happiness and helps in reducing the levels of stress in the body. Ice cream is made of milk, which contains L-tryptophane, which is a natural tranquilizer and helps in relaxing the nervous system. It also helps prevent symptoms of insomnia.

Ice cream has incredible benefits and you shouldn't feel guilty if you indulge yourself every so often! After all, it's summer. However, be sure that when you do treat yourself to ice cream, gelato or frozen yogurt cups that you do so in moderation.

ENJOY!!

(Source: catholichealthservices.org)

Wishing You a Wealth of Health!!

Submitted by Carol Henck

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- Published monthly. (Except only one issue for July/August)
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- Send us camera-ready artwork or we will create your ad for you.
- Business expense deduction (Perhaps a charitable deduction?)

Contact our editor: Charles D'Agostino



About Us: Looking for a place where your child can learn and grow at their own pace? A place filled with adventure and where crafts fuel creativity? Do you seek an environment where your little one is safe to explore and discover? Look no further.

Our Center ...provides little ones with a quality educational program which inspires them to create, discover and achieve; fosters self-awareness and self-esteem; teaches them to treat others with gentleness, respect, compassion and generosity and prepares them for advancement to their next level of learning.

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Session B-11:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Session C- 2:30 PM to 5:30 PM

www.thelittlevillagedaycare.com

For more information, contact us at

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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.

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THRIFTique

We are pleased to announce that the Thrift Shop at Bethany Congregational Church located at 100 Main Street, East Rockaway, NY, is open for business once again. Our hours are Friday and Saturday from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Entry of people will be limited to few at a time, temperatures will be taken, hand sanitizer and masks must be used and social distancing will be put into practice to help keep both customers and staff healthy and safe.

We carry many items in our shop and there's something for everyone!

Looking forward to seeing friends
- old and new - real soon!



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Perry Funeral Home, Inc.

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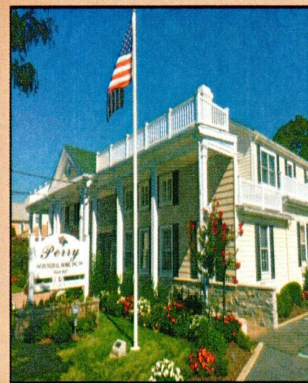
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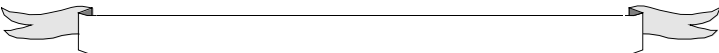
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Mural in the Fellowship Hall

Courtesy of Diana Harrison and Anthony Claverie