

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

October 1-2, 2022



300 N. Jensen Road
Vestal, New York
13850

Welcome!

Warm greetings to each of you as you attend the 50th anniversary celebration of Bethel Baptist Church. Your presence with us is a great blessing. We have been eagerly anticipating this weekend and we are very glad you are able to share it with us. Many can not attend, and our warm greetings are extended to every one of you as well.

God has been faithful to this local church through the years and we thank the Lord for every life that God has brought through these doors. As we browse through the pictures, watch the video clips and catch up with friends from the past, may we clearly see the providential hand of our Lord in guiding our lives. He has led us in the past, and He will be faithful to guide us into the future.

In Christ,

Pastor David Rising



WEEKEND SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Saturday, October 1

DINNER (Fellowship Hall) 4:30 PM

Welcome
Wayne Iddings, Chair 50th Anniversary Committee

SERVICE (Auditorium) 6:30 PM

Hymn #277 The Church's One Foundation
Prayer
Hymn #43 Great is Thy Faithfulness
Video & Photo Remembrances
Choir Why Have You Chosen Me?
Message Pastor Richard Lloyd
Prayer

Sunday, October 2

SUNDAY SCHOOL (Auditorium) 9:45 AM

Presentation of missionaries (video, audio)
Panel discussion / question & answer

MORNING SERVICE (Auditorium) 11:00 AM

Prelude
Welcome & Announcements
Call to Worship
Hymn #625 Doxology
Opening Prayer
Hymn #10 O Worship the King
Scripture Reading Ephesians 2:14-22
Prayer
Offering/Offertory
Choir Why Have You Chosen Me?
Hymn Be Thou Exalted
Message Pastor Derwin Hauser
Hymn #379 Take My Life and Let It Be
Prayer

LUNCH (Fellowship Hall) 12:30 PM

Prayer
Food & Fellowship

AFTERNOON SERVICE (Auditorium) 2:00 PM

Hymn Sing
Special Music
Video & Photo Remembrances
Message Pastor Rising
Hymn #43 Great Is Thy Faithfulness
Closing Prayer

BRIEF HISTORY OF BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH

In the **winter of 1971**, a group of Christian believers met in a home for prayer to seek the Lord's direction for them in forming a new fellowship. This new group began meeting in the Vestal Plaza auditorium on the first Sunday of 1972. At this meeting, on Sunday, January 2, 1972, Pastor Kenneth Brown read a statement: *Resolved: That, guided as we believe by the Holy Spirit and relying upon His continued guidance and blessing of the Triune God, we do here and now, by this act constitute ourselves a fellowship to function temporarily until such time as we are formerly organized.*

The group approved this newly organized group as the "Regular Baptist Fellowship." This assisted the church in providing for contributors a name that could be utilized when writing checks, as well as establishing a bank account. A motion was made that Keith St. Clair be temporary Financial Secretary, and that Mrs. Robert Gottschall (Nadj) be temporary Secretary-Treasurer.

On **Sunday, January 16, 1972**, Robert Gottschall (Moderator) called for nominations for a nominating committee. A committee was formed, and this committee then nominated temporary officers for Deacon/Trustee until the group was set up as a church. A pulpit Committee was also formed to assist with a search for a pastor. Pastor Brown started his capacity as pastor of this new group on February 16, 1972, but his stated intention was to serve as an interim pastor.

The group continued to meet, and eventually, a committee was formed to consider purchasing the Jensen Road property, then known as the Willow Point Baptist Church. This church, under the ministry of Pastor Stewart, had dwindled down to only a handful of people. His health had also become such that he could not continue in the ministry.

On **February 9, 1972**, the first fellowship supper was held at the new property followed by a time of prayer and praise to the Lord for His continued blessings. Under the leadership of Dr. Kenneth Brown, the name Bethel Baptist Church was selected. The top two names, not chosen, were "Liberty Baptist Church" and "Fellowship Baptist Church."

On **February 23, 1972**, the fellowship constituted itself a New Testament Baptist church.

On **March 29, 1972**, at 7:00 PM, the church met with the purpose to incorporate as the Bethel Baptist Church. Henry Bolton was nominated as moderator. He read the constitution to the body, which was compiled by Dr. Brown from other constitutions.

On **April 13, 1972**, 2:30 PM, a council convened for the purpose of recognizing this newly formed organization as a Regular Baptist Church. Eighteen pastors and twelve messengers representing seventeen churches were present. On behalf of the church, Dr. Kenneth Brown read the organization, constitution, articles of faith and reason for the church coming into being. After a time of questioning, the council voted to recognize Bethel Baptist Church as a duly organized independent regular Baptist church. Twenty-eight signed a recognition certificate.

On **May 1, 1972**, there were 101 charter members. By the end of 1972, there were 117 members.

In 1972 the church was able to acquire the current 300 North Jensen Road property. This property had \$57,000 in obligations to three lenders, one of which was to Pastor Stewart (\$31,000). The mortgage on the Jensen Road property (the church building) was satisfied in 1987 with a Mortgage Burning Day on September 20, 1987. Rev. Arthur Bowser spoke and the Cornerstone Quartet from BBC sang at this service. (David Rising was a member of this quartet.)

At this time, the church began to consider and study the future building needs of the church, including an addition to the existing building to add classrooms, a new nursery, and restrooms. Funds began to be collected for future building needs. In **September 1979**, the church acquired the Phelps property, which affectionately became known as the 'green house.' This mortgage lasted 10 years and was satisfied by December 31, 1989. This house became very useful for many missionaries spending time on furlough, as well as others who had needs. Ken & Sarah Beckley, Dick & Hae Ja Brossea, as well as others used the house. David & Sandy Rising lived in the green house for six months in 1997, partly to live closer to family to receive help with their baby twin boys, and partly to prepare for their internship in Manchester, CT.

In **1980**, the old "white house", which was generally called "the annex", was demolished and the land graded to support finally adding a new paved parking lot to the limited parking space we had. Parking was previously on gravel/dirt, and pavement was a great improvement! The land to the east of the church building that is now residential was originally the Schubmehl farm, and the annex was the original farm house. We used the white house for a number of years for Sunday School classrooms, as well as the home of the Baptist Chronicle newspaper for a time.

In **January 1994**, remodeling of the basement began, adding walls and doors to better assist with Sunday School classes. Carpet was replaced, the partitions were turned into bulletin boards and wiring was redone. The cost for this project was minimized as church personnel worked two days a week for four months to complete the work. After the completion of the basement renovation, the church pushed out into the future the plans for the new addition.

In **2001**, the long-awaited building expansion project began. At the end of 2001, site preparation, expansion of the parking lot with a temporary gravel surface, demolition of the "green house", and the beginnings of the building construction were under way. \$178,550 was spent on this new addition. These expenses were funded out of savings collected since 1987 (15 years). The project continued in 2002 and the church assumed a mortgage loan from Visions Federal Credit Union for \$150,000. This was required to complete the project because by the end of 2002, the total cost had reached \$329,477. Many individuals at Bethel also contributed sweat equity into this project to make it a reality.

In **2003**, just before Easter, Bethel occupied the new addition. Bethel enjoyed Easter breakfast in the new facility. As of **December 31, 2004**, the cumulative cost of the new addition was \$378,014.

By **October 31, 2007**, the remaining balance on the Visions mortgage was \$63,965. Because there was no full-time pastor for the first three quarters of 2007, the church put additional funds on the mortgage.

Bethel has always been an independent Baptist church. This means it is not a member of any denomination nor under the authority of any outside body. Under the headship of Christ, it is an autonomous body of local believers. However, it is not alone nor an isolated body.

Bethel Baptist Church has been affiliated since its beginning with the Northeast Fellowship of Independent Baptist Churches (formerly named the Empire State Fellowship) and the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches.

PASTORS AT BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH

Dr. Kenneth Brown

Our first pastor was Dr. Kenneth Brown, and he served as an interim from its beginning in January 1972 through August 1972. He accepted a call to head the theology department and become the acting dean of the San Francisco Baptist Theological Seminary.

Rev. Derwin Hauser

The next pastor to serve was Rev. Derwin Hauser. His previous ministry was at the Breesport Baptist Church. Pastor Hauser began his ministry in March 1973 and continued through July 1978.

Rev. L. Glenn Seaver

In August 1978 the church called Rev. L. Glenn Seaver to serve as pastor, and his ministry continued through January 2007.

Rev. David Rising

On August 15, 2007, Bethel Baptist Church called Rev. David Rising to serve as their next pastor, and his ministry continues to the present.

TRIVIA ABOUT BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH

In **2006**, the church was approached by local couple who had bought up abandoned properties from the county tax rolls. Due to some issues with land surveys in the misty past there was a strip of land between two and three feet wide along the east border of our property. They offered to donate the strip of land to the church, which we gladly accepted. This tiny strip of land allowed us to run the wiring to the light pole in the northeast corner of the parking lot without digging up the parking lot.

Bethel was at one time part owner of property in Munich, Germany. In her will, Annie Raithel, one of our members, left the church a one-quarter interest in property on Kornweggerstrasse (Kornwegger St.) in Munich. Annie's son Heinz planned to use this property after her death, and needed full interest in the site. By official action of the church in May, 2000, we relinquished our portion of the property to Heinz.

BULLETIN FROM FEBRUARY 13, 1972

REGULAR BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP Meeting at

The Former Willow Point Baptist Church
on Jensen Road Vestal, New York
Lord's Day February 13, 1972



HISTORY
MADE
BUT
ONE TIME

(Our First Sunday
in this Building)

Financial Report for January

Jan. 9	\$ 1,082.29	Total Income	\$3,246.67
" 16	956.37		
" 23	519.99	Expenditures	480.00
" 30	688.02	Balance	\$2,766.67
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Pastor Brown has accepted the invitation to serve as Interim Pastor and will begin February 16, 1972.

May our fellowship extend to you and your family a warm Christian WELCOME, Dr. Brown.

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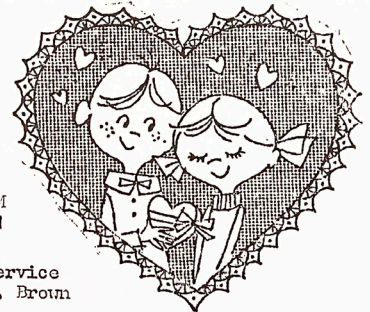
THOUGHT: Lord, let me be just a NOBODY telling EVERYBODY about SOMEBODY who can save ANYBODY!

MORNING WORSHIP SERVICE

Organ Prelude Mrs. Frank Ross
Prayer
Scripture Reading Nehemiah 4:1-15
Pastoral Prayer
Ministry of the Choir - "O For a Thousand Tongues"
Under the direction of Ernie Robstock
Announcements and Church Activities
Worship with our Tithes and Offerings
Doxology
Hymn
Special Music Mrs. Al Thibault
Message - SO BUILT WE THE WALL
By Dr. Kenneth Brown
Hymn
Benediction

Never was there a
nicer Valentine-
When the Congrega-
tion and the
Church Building
Got Together!

Praise GOD from WHOM
ALL BLESSINGS FLOW!



7:00 P.M. Evening Service
LIKE A FLINT - Dr. Brown

Prayer Service - Wednesday 7:00 P.M.
- Choir Rehearsal 8:00P.M.

NAME OUR CHURCH:
BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH ???
FELLOWSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH ???
LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH ???

WHAT IS YOUR CHOICE? COME AND VOTE TONIGHT.

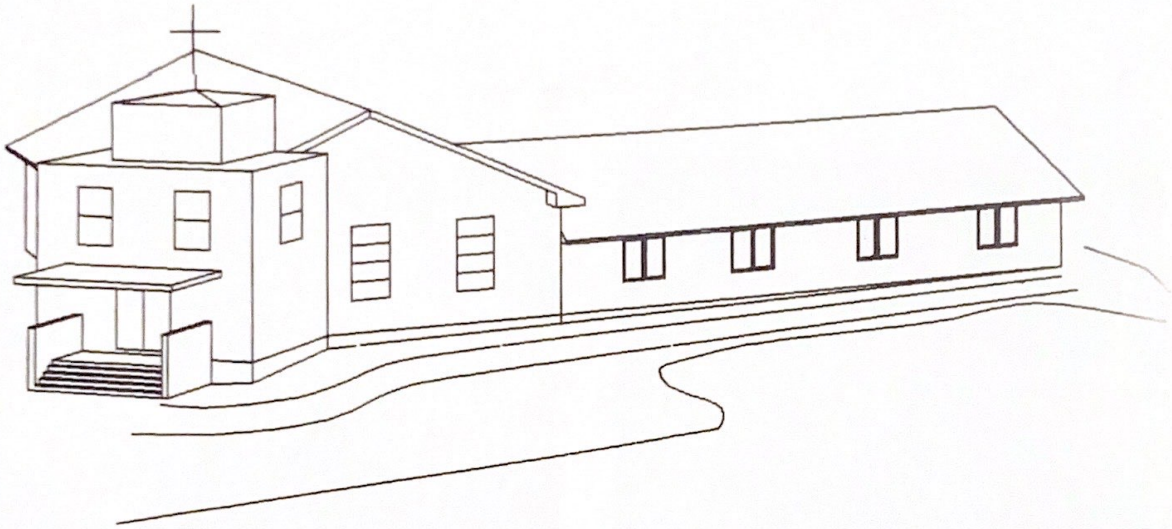
The organ is for our use through the compliments of
Fowler's Department Store. GOD ANSWERS PRAYERS.

Pictured above is the bulletin from the first church service in the current building on Jensen Road

2001 EXPANSION PROJECT

FUTURE PLANS

As God continues to provide, Phase II plans for an addition have already been approved to improve the facilities for fellowship, rest rooms, nursery, office and library space.



CURRENT BUILDING (COMPLETED IN 2003)



BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH
50
YEARS



1972 - 2022