



# Bethel Messenger

News of Bethel United Methodist Church, Lower Burrell, PA (724) 339-2420

## The Journey Continues... Bishop's devotion speaks of change

by Thomas J. Bickerton, Resident Bishop

I spend a lot of time on the road and I am continually amazed and disturbed by the number of people who text while driving! It doesn't take long to figure out that someone is using a cell phone on the highway. The car swerves from one lane to another, speeds up, slows down, and presents a real danger to anyone traveling close to it. Taking your eyes off the road for just a second or two can cause even the best driver to lose control. It really IS hard to stay focused.

The statement is true in many aspects of our lives: It really IS hard to stay focused.

Most people who read this can probably quote the mission statement of our United Methodist Church: "to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." Yet it is really hard for us to stay focused on that goal in our churches. Issues related to the building, the budget, or the committee we serve on can present us with the same challenges as texting does to a driver. Taking our eyes away from the goal of constantly inviting people into the heart of God can cause even the best disciple to lose control. It really IS hard to stay focused.

Maintaining focus is very much at the heart of who we are as Methodist people. John Wesley talked about it and Francis Asbury completely embraced it when it came to the annual appointment of circuit riders in early Methodism.

Both Wesley and Asbury knew that it was very easy to lose focus on the worship and adoration of God. That was the reason our church was established: to keep focus on our creating, loving, redeeming, and forgiving God. Wesley and Asbury were afraid that a congregation would lose that focus if it began to worship and adore the pastor more than the God for whom the pastor was sent. To keep the focus on God, pastors frequently were moved from one appointment to the next. Taking our eyes away from God and onto a person can cause even the best member to lose control. It really IS hard to stay focused.



Times have changed, to be sure, but the concept remains the same. The purpose of the church is not a building or a budget or a committee. The purpose of the church is to make disciples. The focal point of the church is not the pastor or the lay leader or even a long-standing member. The focal point is God.

Every appointment season we face the monumental and often misunderstood challenge of moving pastors from one assignment to another. Those moves result from a variety of factors: retirements, requests by pastors, requests by the people, or unfolding circumstances which give us no choice but to put a pastor in another setting. Some factors are very public. Others, for the sake of confidentiality, must remain very private.

In this highly complex system, there are often people within the church who react negatively to their pastor being moved. They do not understand all of the factors involved. They struggle with saying goodbye. They are resistant to change. In the midst of those emotions, it is very tempting to focus on the pastor and not on the God for whom that pastor was sent. It really IS hard to stay focused.

Yet there are some simple and clear reminders:

- God deserves our complete focus.
- All of God's children deserve to know of God's never-ending love.

(Continued on page 2)

## Bishop's devotion continues...

- Making disciples is the mission for God's church.
- Pastors are appointed to deflect attention away from them and onto this loving God and amazing mission.

I have been a part of The United Methodist Church since I was three days old. Rev. Parsons baptized me. Rev. Fleming was the first pastor I remember. Rev. Henson exposed me to service in the community. Rev. Mason confirmed me. Rev. Turley helped me see the potential God had placed within me. They were each very different, yet they shared a similar calling. I loved each of them because they showed me the heart of God. In their diversity, each one showed me a side of God that I would not have seen had they not come.

Driving down the highway of life presents us all with a series of challenges. In the midst of those challenges, how good it is to have individuals come along and remind us that with every twist and turn, every bump and pothole, there is a God who will see us through. I give God thanks for all of the pastors who came my way and blessed my life with those reminders. I pray that you can do the same. It really IS hard to stay focused.

The Journey Continues, ...  
Thomas J. Bickerton  
Resident Bishop

**Witnessing our  
faith and sharing  
God's love**  
as we live, learn, and grow  
as Christians!

## Farewell Brunch on June 22

Everyone is invited to a Farewell Brunch for Pastor Paul immediately following the June 22 Worship Service.

The Transition Team is planning a special event that you won't want to miss!

## NK Community Days – the Men need help!

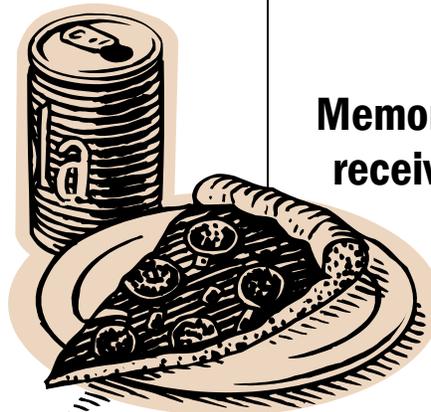
The Bethel United Methodist Men's group is sponsoring their annual Pizza Booth at the New Kensington Community Days which is being held June 20, 21 and 22<sup>nd</sup> at Memorial Park.

They will be making and selling pizza and also selling coffee, water and pop.

The men are asking for your help with staffing the booth for this three day event. "We see this event as an outreach ministry of Bethel Church at large and our one fund-raiser for the year," says Ed King, Chair of the Men's Group.

There is a signup sheet on the bulletin board in the hallway with last year's schedule posted along with a blank signup sheet for this year. "We provide last year's signup to remind everybody who worked last year the day and time that they helped out," says Ed.

People who work in the booth get a pass for free admission and the men can provide transportation if needed.



"In the past years that we have done this event, I have received a lot of positive remarks about how much fun it is working at "the booth", even from the one or two crews that happened to be working during a rain storm. It didn't dampen their spirits, just their hair and clothes!" he chuckles.

If you would like to help out and have not participated in something like this in the past, this is a great time to work together as an outreach of Bethel and with the Bethel men's group and to get to know some of your fellow church members outside of the normal church environment.

Please consider working a shift this year. "With all the other projects that the Trustees and UMM are doing we are going to need a lot of help this year," says Ed.

## Memorial Gifts received

### In Memory of Carolyn Boren

Linda Hess  
Barbara Saylor

### In Memory of Loretta Taylor

Barbara Saylor  
Joan and Don Negley  
Don and Mary Jane Kauffman  
Gary and Diane Moran

## Be a praying parent

Prayer is the saucer into which parental fears are poured to cool. ... Each time a parent prays, Christ responds. His big message to moms and dads? Bring your children to me.

—Max Lucado

# Bethel's Blessings

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Phil McManus for taking the pastor's computer from a dead black screen back to full functionality. It wouldn't even start in Safe Mode. He not only saved the day but saved us the cost of a new computer right now.</li> <li>♥ A great time of fellowship and laughter at the Sunday School End-of-Year bowling party! Twenty-five kids and parents came out to join the fun! Hope you all have a great summer and are looking forward to another great year of Sunday School next year.</li> <li>♥ Jason Moran for heading up the AV Team in worship and Rick Grubb and Kelsey Chabal for their assistance.</li> <li>♥ Rev. Linda Turnnell for taking the time during her recent vacation to not only visit Bethel but also to preach. Linda was part of our congregation until she</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>went to seminary and was ordained in 2004.</li> <li>♥ All who donated blood, giving the gift of life to countless individuals.</li> <li>♥ Rev. Jaime Potter Alvarez who led an inspiring program at the Women's Retreat.</li> <li>♥ Kim Jedlowski for being the church liaison for the Heritage Hospice Memorial Service held here on May 3.</li> <li>♥ Another batch of Baptism Towels. The fabric is purchased by Karen King, cut and fringed by Josie Meredith and machine embroidered by Linda Johnson. They are such a nice keepsake of a sacred occasion.</li> <li>♥ The Baptism of Maggie Georgene Brunner on May 18. She was born on February 18 to Jessica and Jeff Brunner. We join her big brother Mason in</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>welcoming her to the Family of God.</li> <li>♥ The Baptism of Ryder Ashland Vickers, third child of Brittne and Mark Vickers. He was born on February 5. May this be the beginning of a lifelong journey of faith.</li> <li>♥ Patty Boyer for stepping in at the last minute to help Kathy Gaydosik in the nursery on Sunday when she was there by herself.</li> <li>♥ Josie Meredith for picking up the ball to update our pictorial directory with new folks and folks who missed the last opportunity in preparation for Pastor Nancy's arrival.</li> <li>♥ Kim Vivirito for organizing the children's participation in Children's Sunday. The kids served as greeters, ushers, and liturgists.</li> <li>♥ All the youth parents who donated food for the youth picnic!</li> </ul> |
|---|--|--|

## Notes from the heart

To our Friends at Bethel:

Frank and I want to thank everyone for their remembrance gifts in memory of our beloved Clay. It warms our hearts and souls that he is still remembered and loved by so many wonderful people.

We know he celebrates all our lives with his favorite song *Lord of the Dance*.

Peace and love,  
Karen and Frank Dananay

Dear Friends,

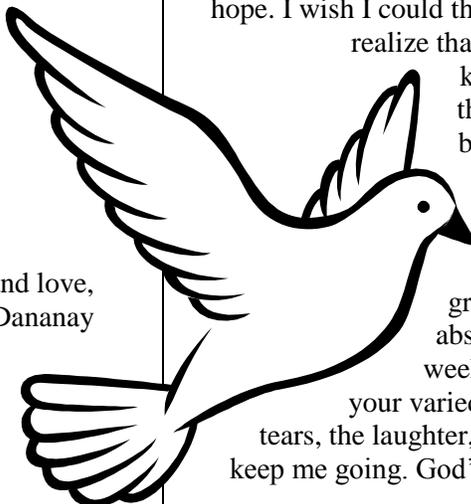
"Thank you" seems so simple and inadequate to express my continued appreciation for all the ways you

have supported me and my family since Loretta's passing. I am still basking in the light of your love and hope. I wish I could thank all of you individually, but I

realize that people have been exhibiting kindness both openly and behind-the-scenes. Every gesture has been both significant and comforting. I am deeply grateful for your being on the journey with me.

I also appreciate your graciousness in understanding my absence from the pulpit for several weeks. I appreciate each of you and your varied responses and kindnesses. The tears, the laughter, the hugs, and the encouragement keep me going. God's grace to each of you.

Blessings,  
Pastor Paul





Hello! Good-bye! These words are a part of life and everyday routine. They stand together to form a never-ending rhythm and pattern of life because everything has a beginning and an ending. The joyful scream of “Hello” at birth means an eventual “Good-bye” to this life.

We say “Hello” and “Good-bye” to family, co-workers, friends, and strangers every day as we come together and go apart, again and again. We say “Hello” to new relationships, dreams, opportunities, and hopes. We bid “Good-bye,” as we leave behind childhood, high school and college graduation caps and gowns, jobs, and challenges.

In July 2008, we courageously began our journey together as congregation and pastor with a “Hello,” full of anticipation, possibilities, hope and expectations. Now we must say “Good-bye.”

Since January I have thought about having to say “Good-bye.” As the time draws near, I find it hard to

imagine saying “good-bye” to you and the congregation I love deeply and dearly. I struggle to process and come to grips with so many feelings and emotions.

Yet, I know that every “Hello” and “Good-bye” is spoken according to God’s providence. I am also certain that our journey together—its beginning and ending—has been in the presence and under the watchful eye of Jesus who is with us.

Still, my leaving is bitter-sweet, overwhelming, and humbling. Bitter-sweet because there were other distant places of spiritual growth, ministry, and mission to which I hoped we would travel. Bitter-sweet because there is more to accomplish and learn.

I am overwhelmed by the love shown to me and to my wife, Loretta. Overwhelmed to tears by the hospitality, kindness, and generosity of so many of you through the years. Touched by your service, support and encouragement of our ministry. Humbled by your presence, prayers, cards of sympathy and encouragement, and support for my family and me in Loretta’s “Good-bye.”

In my “Good-bye” is my deep appreciation and heartfelt gratitude for you. I will cherish the memories of my journey with you

and you with me and of the privilege of serving you as pastor for six years. I will never forget the blessings of holy moments along our

## FAREWELL from the Pastor



journey. Thank you for wonderful memories.

Our time together is yesterday’s closed door of cherished memories. Now, ready yourselves to say “Hello” to Pastor Nancy Shute, incoming pastor. In your “Hello” is tomorrow’s promise of a new song of joy, peace, possibility, potential, expectation, and hope. May you eagerly look forward to holy moments, to making new memories, and to doing greater works.

My wish is that you will joyfully live every moment with which God blesses you. Value every “Hello” and “Good-bye” spoken to people you meet along the way. People are the blessings on the journey. You have been for me.

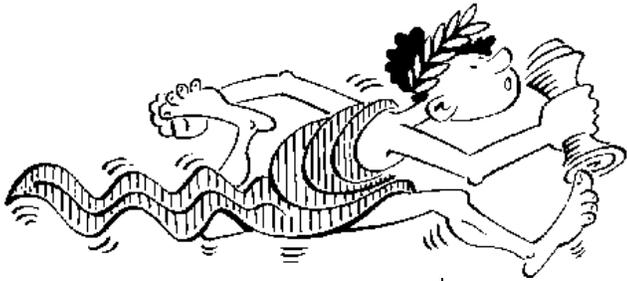
Grace, Peace, and Blessings  
Pastor Paul  
*On the Journey with You*

## Summer Nursery Schedule posted

Hello from the nursery. I need your help! Now that summer is here I know this is a busy time for everyone – graduations, picnics, and vacations. Some of you just need a break from your regular schedule.

The Nursery still needs your help during the summer months. The summer schedule is posted on the bulletin board – please sign up for a day. We still have many dates available. You can call me or e-mail me – 724.882.1638 or [KathyGaydosik@gmail.com](mailto:KathyGaydosik@gmail.com). I thank you in advance for your service.

Love and Blessings,  
Kathy Gaydosik  
Nursery Coordinator



## (Tidbits and Reminders)

- The Ruth Circle will meet on Wednesday, June 11 at 7:00 p.m. They will be discussing their picnic and shut-in outreach.
- We are looking for several individuals or a couple who will come into the Pastor's office the last week of June to patch picture holes in the walls, touch up paint and clean the bookshelves and desk thoroughly in preparation for Pastor Nancy's arrival. Please notify the office if you are willing to make the office inviting for the new pastor.
- The next Pizza Hut Day is June 11. Pick up a coupon from the church or ask a waitress for one. When you eat-in, take-out or order delivery, 20% of your total bill

- will go into the Mary Ann Balmer Retreat Scholarship Fund.
- The Bethel Book Club finishes the year with a picnic at Carol Parsons' house to discuss *The Quilters Apprentice* by Jennifer Chiaverini. For more information, contact the office. New members are always welcome!
  - In an effort to help Pastor Nancy get acquainted with all of us, we are updating our pictorial directory (from 2010). Josie Meredith has graciously offered to make insert pages of those who are not currently in the directory. Please e-mail Josie at [josiemere@yahoo.com](mailto:josiemere@yahoo.com) or if you do not have e-mail, contact her at (724) 335-2067 for more information. You do

- not have to be a member to have your picture included!
- Mark your Calendar for the Church Picnic/ Welcome Pastor Nancy to Bethel Party on Sunday, August 24th, directly after the service in the back parking lot and parsonage yard. Look forward to a bbq'd lunch along with many fun games for all ages, water activities and music. Kids, look forward to a fun surprise that will light up your eyes. Come visit with your Bethel family and take this opportunity to officially welcome Pastor Nancy.
  - Time to register for Vacation Bible School, July 14 -18. Please sign your kids up in advance to help with planning. We still need adult and youth helpers! Call Diane Moran (724.335.9957) to volunteer!

## Congratulations Graduates!

Liz Sanders graduated in December from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill with Masters of Public Health and Registered Dietitian degrees. She's currently employed as an outpatient dietitian and diabetes educator at Randolph Hospital in Asheboro, NC.

Rick Grubb earned a Master of Public and International Affairs from the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs

Sara Speedy graduated from Duquesne University on May 9<sup>th</sup> with a double major: Communications Media Management and Journalism. She has been accepted to the Master's program



at Duquesne and will either be starting that program in the fall or taking an internship.

Dan Nemet graduates from Citizens School of Nursing on June 25th. He will be called a Graduate Nurse until he passes his NClex which will make him an RN.

Hannah Speedy graduates from Burrell High School this June. She will be attending Indiana University of PA (IUP) with an undecided major in the school of Health and Human Services.

Michaela Alcorn is graduating from Burrell High School. She plans to study human services at WCCC in the fall.

Scott Mahan is also graduating from Burrell High School. We wish him well in future endeavors.

## Women's Retreat great time of fellowship

Twenty-four women headed to the Family Retreat Center in Mars the weekend of May 16-18 for the annual Women's Retreat. The weekend officially began with an optional dinner at the Bravo Restaurant attended by 12. After a delicious Italian dinner, the early-birds headed back up the hill to the Center to find several more carloads of women unpacking their gear. A golf cart expedited the moving of "stuff" up to the cabins. There was a general air of excitement as each woman arrived.

This year's mix included four new ladies – Peggy, Molly, Marcella and Josie. Ages spanned from young 20's to young 70's. We really missed our 80's generation, Lil and Garnett, who were unable to attend this year!

There were 5 mother-daughter teams: Joanne and Lauren: Diane, Kim and Erin: Paula and Kelly, Janet and Molly: and the three generations of Joan, Melissa and Ashley. Five month old Ashley was enjoyed by all.

Rev. Jaime Potter Alvarez led an intense introspective program on the labels that define who we are, both positively and negatively. She started the program by testing our knowledge of questionable "facts" such as cracking your knuckles causes arthritis and Columbus discovered America (both false statements.) It was a fun way to start thinking about the personal "facts" that the ubiquitous "theys" have put on us through the years.

The next step was a bit closer to home as we identified the labels that our immediate family and closest friends, the folks who know us best, put upon us. In all too

many cases, these are not positive in nature and frequently they have changed through the seasons of our lives.

The final and most painful process for many was looking back at the decades of our lives to identify the labels we have placed on ourselves. These were often defined by life events and circumstances. The women laughed till they cried and passed the Kleenex as they shared their pain with one another.

The Scriptural basis of the program was Matthew 16:13-16.

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

The weekend wrapped up on Sunday morning with Pastor Jaime tying everything together in a practical way. Following brunch, the group shared communion, packed up and headed for home.

There were quite a few "regulars" who missed this year's retreat because of other commitments. We're looking forward to seeing you next year as well as some new faces.

## Serving in June

### Greeters

1	Joe & Eileen McCallion
8	Darryl & Kim Jedlowski
15	Tom & Joanne Debolt
22	Elaine Johns

29

Lillian Peterman  
Kaye Crownover  
Al Lucci

### Offering Counters

1 & 8	Nancy Preus Joe McCallion
15 & 22	Open Joe McCallion
29	Open Erin Brenner



Although summer seems to be struggling to get here, youth group meetings have ended for the season! We have grown as a group – both in numbers and in spirit. During June and July, plans for Youth 2015 in Orlando, FL will really speed up as will plans for fundraising for the event.

As soon as preliminary costs are established, all eligible youth and parents will be invited to a meeting to discuss. All youth who have completed 8<sup>th</sup> grade by June of 2015, and who have not gone before, are eligible to attend Youth 2015.

This United Methodist sponsored event happens every four years and promises to be a highlight for all youth. The event site is the Marriott World Center, <http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/mcowc-orlando-world-center-marriott/>. Check out [www.youth2015.net](http://www.youth2015.net) for more information. Early bird registration opens in November! GO ON!

Help us to be prepared. Pre-registration is appreciated!

First day check-in is 9:00 – 9:15 a.m.

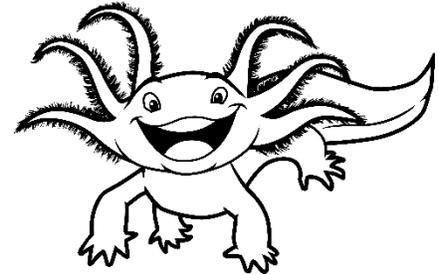


Photos will be taken throughout the week and posted on facebook. If you do NOT want your child's picture posted, circle this box and initial it.

## Vacation Bible School Registration Form

**Where:** Bethel United Methodist Church  
150 Alder Street, Lower Burrell

**When:** July 14 - 18  
9:30 AM - Noon



**Who:** Ages four through 5<sup>th</sup> grade (Younger children are welcome to come to the opening and closing music with a parent. We are also recruiting 6<sup>th</sup> graders and up to serve as Family Team Leaders!)

**Cost:** A free will offering will be taken each day. (Actual cost of VBS is approximately \$10 per student.)

God filled the world with a lot of crazy creatures...including you! When kids feel weird, different, or even lost in a crowd—nothing compares to the extraordinary love of Jesus.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ School grade completed \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Names of Parents or Guardians \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Emergency Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies or other medical conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

## JUNE BIRTHDAYS

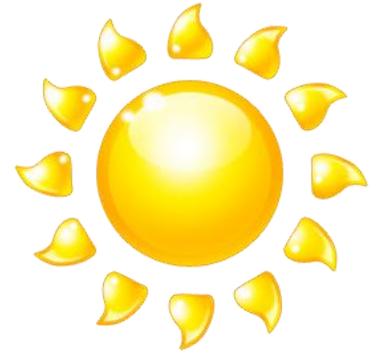
- 1 Courtney Anthony  
Leonard Greiner
- 2 Jessica Brunner
- 3 Miranda Alcorn  
Ian Brenenburg  
John Unik  
Oliver Vickers
- 5 Lori Berringer  
Suzanne Croissant
- 6 Kelsey Johnson  
Kelly McManus  
Sara Speedy
- 9 McKay Ehrman
- 10 Marian Resetar
- 11 Joshua Schall
- 13 Deanna Ormsher
- 14 Lillian Parrotta
- 15 Michaela Alcorn  
Brayden Black  
Matthew Danish  
Don McVay
- 17 Grace Bracken
- 18 David Bracken, Sr.  
Billie Jo Jendrey  
Rebecca Schall
- 20 Fred Simmons
- 21 Jodell Bridgen  
Samuel Hill
- 22 Justin Celo
- 23 Eric Couth
- 24 April George  
Emily Lang
- 25 Will Salem  
Barbara Saylor
- 26 Jennifer Halkias
- 27 Evan McGinnis
- 28 Nathan George
- 29 Erin Brenner  
John Merrick, III

If your name does not appear, or if the information is incorrect, please contact the office so that the records can be updated.



## JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

- 3 Barry and Lori Berringer (25)
- 4 Don and Karen Hecker (31)
- 5 William and Catherine Buffton (66)  
Perry and Lynda Davis (4)
- 9 Bill and Jennifer Salem (24)
- 13 Sam and Karen Hill (51)
- 14 Bob and Jackie Danish (17)  
Brandon and Kasie Orczyk (6)
- 17 John and Melva Unik (48)
- 20 Ryan and Kelly George (5)
- 24 James and Kathryn Bruce (53)
- 28 Bryan and Nikki Jaskiewicz (6)
- 30 Richard and Julie Lewis (7)



## HIT THE ROAD

When a teenager received his driving permit, he asked his father, who was a minister, if they could discuss use of the car.

His father said, "I'll make a deal with you. You bring your grades up, study your Bible a little and get your hair cut, and then we'll talk about it."

A month later, the young man returned to continue the discussion. "Son, I've been real proud of you," the father said. "You've brought your grades up and studied your Bible diligently, but you didn't get your hair cut!"

The teenager replied, "You know, Dad, I've been thinking about that. Samson had long hair, Moses had long hair, Noah had long hair and even Jesus had long hair ...."

"Yes," the father said, "and they walked everywhere they went!"

## FATHERLY REFLECTION

Renowned actor Sidney Poitier once said, "I decided in my life that I would do nothing that did not reflect positively on my father's life." If you're blessed with a dad you admire and respect, how would it affect your life to make such a decision? Would you be inspired to set sound priorities, live with integrity, be a positive role model to the young people you influence? For all of us — children of the only perfect Father — may our prayer and intent be:



God, while earthly fathers are a mix of strengths and flaws, you give yourself to us as our heavenly Father, wholly loving, kind and passionate about our best interests. May we, in turn, seek to reflect positively on you. May my life spread far and wide your love, kindness and passion for the best interests of all, and may others see you in me. Amen.