



# Bethel

## Mennonite Church

*Celebrating 125 Years*

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# Newsletter

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## Summer Fun at Bethel



**Top left:** Youth on scavenger hunt at Kansas City Convention. **Top right:** As she was taking this pic at Soccer Camp, Elaine asked this little boy what was wrong, and he said, "I'm mad cause we didn't win. I'm just gonna give up!" We served 42 campers this year, and no, he didn't give up, but kept on playing the rest of the week! **Middle:** Waiting for the outdoor movie to begin. Some viewers watched from their car and tuned in to the fm channel. **Bottom left:** Sam and Stephen play a game of corn-hole before the movie. **Bottom right:** Dave and Todd man the pizza oven while Harry waits for the next pizza.





## Announcements:

- ♦ **The vendor breakfast for the Labor Day Festival** is Friday, September 4th at 8:30 a.m.. All are welcome to attend.
- ♦ **Bethel Pizza Night and Community Movie Night** is scheduled for Friday, September 4th at 6:00 pm. The movie is TBA. Weather permitting, we will show the film outdoors at dusk.
- ♦ **Red Cross Blood Drive is Friday August 21st** from 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall. Assistance is needed with unloading and loading out, as well as refreshments, host/hostessing, and of course, blood donors! A signup sheet is posted by the mailboxes.

## Bethel/Oak Grove Mennonite Women July 2015

When the group met this month, we had a special lunch treat-pizza from Bethel's new pizza oven! Thanks to Beth and Dave and the others, there were even dessert pizzas! Along with these, our hostesses, Janice Rabenstein and Susie Krabill had fixed a large bowl of fruit. Attenders had each brought a fruit item. Janice and Susie also had the tables decorated with beautiful summer flowers and bird nests, cookies and candy!

Admittedly, there was an interruption during our noon meal, as the skies opened up and we had a downpour. Fortunately, we weren't eating outdoors! Eventually, water filled outside the window wells and overflowed into the kitchen and one of the fellowship room windows, so while we were having our meeting, several able ladies were mopping and sopping up water! Thankfully, Mark Kauffman was able to assist later that afternoon by reattaching a downspout to a drain, and Dean Horn cleaned the window well drains to assure we won't have a recurrence!



There will be a MW's retreat weekend at camp Luz September 18-20th. Also, we received a 'thank you' from Hopi Mission School for donations. The next 2 months our project is school kits. Each kit needs: 8-unsharpened pencils, 1-large eraser, 1-box of 12 colored pencils, 1-bendable metric ruler and 4-70 page spiral notebooks. Please feel free to donate any or all items needed in a kit.



For devotions, we shared about Jesus "I AM" words from John; using a devotional from years back, in which Sam Swartz had written re: Jesus as I am the Door, and Ruth Yoder's in which she had written about Jesus being "The Vine."

Attendance was 19. 16 School kits sewn (9 filled), 2 baby comforters and 9 health kits completed. Next month is a garden potluck. Include a garden item in your dish.

### Contact Information:

**Bethel Mennonite Church**  
416 Washington Street  
P.O. Box 549  
West Liberty, OH 43357  
(937) 465-4587  
[www.bethelchurchwl.org/](http://www.bethelchurchwl.org/)  
[www.wbtl.tv](http://www.wbtl.tv)  
Pastor: Dave Maurer  
Youth Pastor: Cheryl Shank  
Administrative Assistant: Tesa Jordan  
Next Newsletter Deadline: Aug. 20, 2015

# “Six Elements of Exponential Growth”

by Pastor Dave Maurer

While I was at the Mennonite Church USA Convention in Kansas City the first week of July, I had the opportunity to sit in on some seminars led by Alan Hirsch. Hirsch has written and spoken extensively on the church and reaching out. One aspect of this is APEST (Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Shepherd, Teacher) which comes from Ephesians 4:11 and is a center piece of our restructure as we move forward.

APEST fits into a larger context, however, that began with a question that pestered Hirsch. “How was it that the early church grew from 25,000 Christians at 100AD to 20 million Christians by 300AD?” That is a significant growth rate especially considering the fact that they had no buildings, they were illegal, they had no clergy class, and they did not have printed Bibles for everyone.

As Hirsch looked into this further, he found similar rates of growth in China and in the early Methodist movement in the US. He compared these movements and found six common elements that were present in each of them. He also concluded that the potential for this kind of growth is always present, the DNA is always there; but it must be released. The elements he shared were...

1. “Jesus is Lord!” This is a simple yet powerful confession of faith. It names the rule of God in the world and that Jesus is the Lord of that rule.

2. Jesus gets into his people through discipleship. The process of discipleship is foundational.

3. Missional Incarnation. Mission means sent in Latin and mission needs to be incarnated/embodied where the people are.

4. APEST/ fivefold ministry taken from Ephesians 4:11. This approach to ministry incarnates the fullness of Christ in the body and empowers the whole of the body to engage in the mission.

5. Organic structures, that is not hierarchical in nature and more fluid in form.

6. Liminality communities which is a combination of risk taking and group connection. As risks are taken in groups, it creates bonds among the people and with God as we rely on God to move us through the risks/challenges.

Additionally, Hirsch noted that Jesus can do more with 12 disciples than with 12,000 consumerists. As such, we need not worry about being small. Hirsch suggested that if you get the DNA right, (make the main thing the main thing) that little things grow.

Much of the growth stems from the assumption that everyone has the seed of the church with the DNA already ready in them. Every one of us has a church in us just as every seed from a tree has a tree in it. Likewise every church has a forest of churches in it just as every tree has a forest of trees in it. Jesus has given us what we need.

Much of the barrier to this type of growth is the reality that many in the American church today do not see themselves as “sent.” Yet Hirsch would assert that there is no such thing as an unsent Christian. If one is a Christian, one is sent thus conversion and call are not separate as we so often make them. Rather, the conversion is the call and the baptism is the ordination. (Which we might note was true of the Mennonite tradition as well in our use of the Lot to call pastors.)

And so I wonder as we move forward in our restructuring, “How are we doing at incorporating these six elements of exponential growth?” Where are our strengths and where are our weaknesses? What adjustments need to be made? But perhaps most important of all, do we each believe that there is the DNA of a church in each one of us? Do we each embody an identity of “sentness?” And are we all committed to being fully engaged and active in the work of the kingdom that God has before us? Exponential growth is possible and Hirsch believes that these are the components of making that reality.

## Swiss Mennonite 175 Aug. 30, 3-8 pm

It has been 175 years since the first Mennonite Church was built in the Pandora/Bluffton area. Many churches have grown from that beginning. The congregations of St. John, Ebenezer, Grace, and First Mennonite invite you to join them for celebration and worship with lectures, displays, hymns, children’s activities, and a traditional Swiss meal under a tent on the historic site of the first church. Bluffton University professors Perry Bush and Gerald Mast are writing a historical essay for the program booklet. Myron Augsburg will be our featured speaker. The location of the site is in a field on road R between Ebenezer and St John Mennonite Churches. If it rains we will gather at Ebenezer Mennonite Church.

A Driving Tour of local church history sites is available in the program booklet.

Free parking is available on site, and golfcarts will be used to aid elderly or handicapped accessibility.

The Swiss Community Historical Society is a nonprofit, founded over fifty years ago to honor and preserve the heritage of the Bluffton-Pandora community. It does this by collecting and preserving papers, books, artifacts, and records of historical interest, and by acquiring property especially important to this heritage. Many of our activities are focused around the Schumacher Homestead, garden, summer kitchen and bank barn, 8350 Bixel Rd, between Bluffton and Pandora. Swiss Community Historical Society facebook page is regularly updated with information about local history. Join us again for our Fall Festival at the homestead Sept 26. See [www.SwissHistorical.com](http://www.SwissHistorical.com) for more information.



## Celebrating 50 Years

Chuck and Jeanie Swartz marked 50 years of marriage last month. We asked them about the secret to their success.

"We were high school and college sweethearts for over six years before we married in 1965. Chuck's grandfather, H.F. Reist and dad, Samuel Swartz, had the ceremony in our little Premont, Texas church. Our church was the United Mennonite Church—a union of Old Mennonite and Mennonite Brethren. Because the church number was so small, everyone participated in serving. Those were enjoyable years even though our three children were 3/4 of the number of children in the church! Chuck often preached when his dad was gone, and we were active in teaching classes, singing, playing the piano and being youth leaders."

"Our marriage has been a longterm friendship. Being



best friends is really an important key. We have been able to laugh together and share serious times also. Our children Mark, Jeremy and Heidi, and grandchildren J.C., Justin, Jadin and Regan have certainly blessed our marriage. We are so thankful for the leading and comfort of our Heavenly Father throughout our lives. We

don't know how we could have gotten through the sickness and loss of J.C. if we had not had our faith in Jesus Christ, the support of the church, and of our community."

"Our wedding anniversary reception last month was great fun. We enjoyed visiting with all who came. We also appreciated all the cards and best wishes that we received. God has truly blessed our 50 years. We are now working on our second 50!"

**Church Service, Baptism  
& Annual Church Picnic at Lion's Park  
Sunday, August 30, 2015  
10:00 a.m.**



**Sausage Booth Volunteers Needed  
All Day September 4, 5, 6 & 7, 2015  
at the Labor Day Festival.**

**Sign up sheet on the bulletin board  
by the mailboxes!**

## Union Station Seeks Volunteers

Eli Carter of Union Station is in search of volunteer assistance. The first area of help is for the 3rd season of Upward Flag Football. In particular we are looking for volunteers that will help officiate games and of course anyone who would like to do devotions at halftimes. Games are every Thursday starting August 20th - Thursday October 8th. You don't have to be an expert on officiating just willing to help guide the games. If officiating is not your thing then we can utilize help preparing the field for games. Painting lines, goal line markers, etc.

They are also looking for individuals who would be willing to serve on maintenance, after school, social media, outreach, and finance committees. The Lord is doing some amazing things with Union Station and they feel the Body of Christ can work together to accomplish His will.

If this sounds of any interest to you please let Eli know by calling (937) 595-0043, or visit their website at: [unionstationoflogancounty.org](http://unionstationoflogancounty.org).

## Noteworthy Dates

### August Birthdays

- 2 – Janet Wilkins
- 3 – Michelle Link
- 3 – Bill Shumaker
- 12 – Mary Psolla
- 18 – Art Newcomer
- 23 – Cody Buck
- 23 – Harry Graber
- 23 – Jane Core Thomas
- 26 – Sally Harshbarger
- 29 – Sam J. Plank

### August Anniversaries

- August 6, 1994 – Greg & Joanna Hostetler
- August 6, 1966 – Jim & Kay Burkett
- August 8, 1981 – Jeff & Suzan Hooper
- August 11, 1978 – Rick & Kathy Norviel
- August 15, 1970 – Bill & Carole Barrett
- August 18, 1973 – Steve & Miriam Lapp
- August 19, 1961 – Art & Mary Newcomer
- August 19, 1967 – Byron & Barb Kauffman
- August 20, 1994 – Dale & Peggy Wirick
- August 21, 1971 – Jerry & Barb Landes
- August 29, 1954 – Lowell & Ellie Kauffman