

Bethel Mennonite Church

Celebrating 125 Years

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Newsletter

In This Issue:

Youth Activities	1
Out Yongest Bethelite	1
Announcements	2
Mennonite Women	2
Peace & Justice	2
From Pastor Dave	3
Kidron Relief Sale	
Marks 50 Years	4
Noteworthy Dates	4
Quasquicentennial	
Historical Highlights	5
Lent: A Season of Renewal	6
Community Movie Night	6

Youth Continue to Raise Funds for Convention

By Cheryl Shank, Youth Pastor

The youth's Mystery Meal was a profitable endeavor, totaling \$1300. For a while, the mystery was whether or not the meal would actually take place as twice it was scheduled, and twice rescheduled due to inclement weather conditions. The third date was a charm, and the silent auction added to the excitement. The winners from the auction were Elaine Newcomer (arommatouch massage-dontaed by Tesa), Linda Hostetler and Mary Jean Horn each got a pie baked by Donna Lehman, Peggy Wirick got the wooden shelf made by Bill Shumaker, and Ed & Kim Lehman got the Texas meal by Chuck and Jeanie Swartz. Everyone seemed to enjoy the meal and the 'puzzler'. Great fellowship on a cold day. I am very grateful for the generous giving from the congregation and for the work the parents and youth did to make this such a success.

Coming up, March 8th, the youth will have "Brunch for Lunch," a 'breakfast food' competition (similar to the soup competition last year). Each youth will pick someone from



the congregation to be their 'partner' and create a 'booth'. You will go from booth to booth to eat and 'judge' the different entries. Plan on staying after church that day and enjoy a brunch (it's also the day clocks move ahead an hour.... how appropriate, huh).

Finally, Menno's Best Coffee will soon be available for sale! Coffee has been ordered and the youth will be selling 12oz bags for \$12.00. \$5.00 per bag will go towards the convention costs, and \$1.00 will be evenly split between Mennonite Mission Network and MCC. Menno's Best is grown in Peru and shipped directly to Goshen where it is then roasted. If interested in purchasing, contact any of the youth. Only caffeinated coffee is available, either whole bean or ground.

Photo: Trace Robinaugh serving at Our Daily

Bread. The youth have been very active at this monthly event.

Spotlight on Our Youngest Bethelite

by Kristyn Horn

Dena Hostetler and I have taken on the challenge of talking to Silas Maurer about the lessons in Sunday School that the older kids and adults are learning. Through a little green goo broken apart to represent the Red Sea, we taught Silas about Moses and the Israelites escape from Egypt.

Some of Silas's favorite things are snack time, rewards for going potty, pretending, and other kids. It doesn't matter where he goes, he's always learning something and he just wants to be like the other big kids.



Announcements:

♦ A perennial favorite is back on the calendar for March 22nd, as everyone at Bethel tries to “**Guess Who’s Coming To Dinner?**” Sign ups will begin shortly with Mary Newcomer, Watch your bulletin for more details!

♦ **The New Websites are up and running!** Last fall, Mennonite.net announced that the platform for our website would be changing. After a lengthy process of choosing designs, the transition is complete, and our church website has a new look, and many new features! Check it out at www.bethelchurchwl.org. In addition, we have added a second ‘sister’ site to post videos from our Quastquicentennial, Pastor Dave’s sermons, and other videos, such as youth fundraiser promos. Find these online at www.wbtl.tv.

♦ **Photo Directory Portrait Time!** Mark your calendars for March 20 & 21st. Lifetouch Photography will be here those two days to shoot portraits for our church directory. There is still time to sign up for your portrait sitting. If you have any questions, call Tesa during her office hours on Weds. or Fri.

Bethel-Oak Grove Mennonite Women Host A February Feast by Donna Lehman

This group canceled their January work day and special “Stone Soup” luncheon because of the icy conditions; but we were able to meet in February and it was a very special day. From noon to 1:00, the spouses were welcomed to join us for a Valentine Luncheon (actually a feast!) There was a lot of good food! So, total attendance of 38, 25 women, and their 13 guests. Thanks so much to the hostesses, Jan Smucker, Barb Schultz and Nellie Lindemer, who had beautifully decorated tables, table service and roses for each of the women.

Since we didn’t meet in January, we had 2 devotionals for this meeting. Elaine Newcomer shared about the importance of Jesus’ ‘touch,’ and Miriam Lapp shared about times of ‘sadness and rejoicing.’

The work completed: 6 health kit bags sewn, 7 filled, and 1 comforter. \$100 was donated to the Hopi Mission School and \$100 to the Hi Point Women’s Center. Next month will feature sack lunches with the hostesses serving a ‘green dessert.’ Newborn kits will be the project.

Photo right: One guest, Dick Lindemer, decided that he too wanted one of the roses on the table!



Peace & Justice Update by Pastor Dave Maurer

The Peace and Justice Lunch meets on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at noon in the Fellowship Room. All are welcome to bring a lunch and join us for this informal time together.

Recently, we have been discussing the Dayton International Peace Museum which is currently focusing on 54 years of the Peace Corps. We are planning a trip to the museum on April 19th to attend “Differing Perspectives on the Peace Corps in Africa.” Service providers and service recipients will evaluate the value and effectiveness of the Peace Corps in Africa.

We continue to discuss Israeli-Palestinian conflict and consider resources for discussion related to this topic. We have a DVD of “Jesus Weeps,” the webinar that was offered in December, that we are taking turns watching. Additionally, we are aware of a group called MennoPIN and are exploring what they have to offer.

And we continued to talk about the needs of veterans and how we may be able to minister to those affected by terms of service. A new Sunday school curriculum is available to download called “Returning Veterans. Returning Hope.” More information may be found at <http://mcc.org/media/resources/1719>.

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Next Newsletter Deadline: Mar. 20, 2015

“The Illusion of the Sermon as Monologue”

by Pastor Dave Maurer

As we continue together in our journey through the Bible this year, we have now completed two months of reading (only ten more to go)! And we have read through Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus (you made it, great job!) and Job completely with bits and pieces of I Chronicles and Numbers mixed in for good measure. Four books down and only 62 more to go!

In talking with some of you since beginning this journey, I have deeply valued the organic opportunities that we have had to talk about the Bible. These opportunities came out of the fact that we are reading the same passages at the same or relatively similar times. And several people have noted appreciation for the integration of these readings into the weekly worship services. It seems that doing so has created a richer dynamic in our worship services because a large portion of people (50-75%?) have come having already spent time with the passage(s) for that week's service. And all of this has led me also to think more deeply about the preaching portion of the worship service.

As the pastor, one of my primary tasks is to discern what to share on Sunday mornings during the sermon. It is important for me to spend time with the passage, to pray about what God may have to say through me, to decide where to focus our attention, and to determine how best to invite us into that space. I have a significant role in this that I take very seriously, but it has occurred to me that I only have a part of the responsibility. And considering this has caused me to wonder if our assumption that the sermon is primarily a monologue may be a bit misguided and perhaps even a bit deceptive.

As I have said, it is essential that the preacher does his or her part in preparing for and delivering “the message.” And yet, isn't it just a part of this that I am responsible for? Don't we believe and even count on the Holy Spirit to meet us in the preaching event? Don't we desire and doesn't God often speak into that time, not just through the mouth of the pastor but also in the hearts of the listeners? I and many preachers experience this when someone going through the greeting line after the service thanks us for something that we said that we know we did not say. In those moments, rather than argue about what I did or did not say; I choose to praise God for speaking even in spite of my own shortcomings. I also begin to see how preaching can and should be more of a dialogue than a monologue.

But perhaps sermon as dialogue is even too short sighted. I say this because it seems that people, especially those who have spent time in the passage for that morning prior to arriving for worship, also contribute their voice to the conversation whether audibly or internally. The listener is also responding to what I and the spirit are saying. At the very least, people are considering the words I speak and asking their own questions. But often more than that, people are talking with one another,

with me and even with the whole congregation about what they are seeing in the scripture or what they are hearing God say. This is a beautiful thing that goes beyond monologue or even dialogue. This understanding of preaching moves to “trialogue” at the very least, and to community discernment of the spirit at its best.

This is why for some time now, as much as is possible at least, we have included the text for the following week in the bulletin on Sunday; and why I often write a sermon preview on my blog on Friday. In doing so, I hope to empower the body to prepare for corporate worship; to be expectant of what God may say in our midst in, and to be more open to what God may do through us. It is also why we typically reserve our sharing time for after the sermon. By doing so, this time is open not only for sharing of joys and concerns; but also for vocalizing to the community what others are hearing God say or seeing God do. I am deeply thankful to those of you who, step out and name these things for us all. This is a part of being the body together.

Far too often in our fast paced culture, we struggle just to make it to corporate worship on a weekly basis. And when we do arrive, it is common and perhaps even natural for us to come hoping to “get something out of” our time together. And at its best, we are able to leave having experienced an encounter with our creator. But it seems to me that it is better and perhaps more faithful when we are able and choose to prepare ourselves first for what God desires of this time. Ultimately, worship is not about us. Worship is about the Lord of the universe and our praise of God. As Chris Tomlin has said, “Worship isn't religious activity. It's the natural response of a heart that sees God!”

Photo right: Debbie Byler (daughter of Ruby) was licensed through the Central District Conference for her work at Menonite Mission Network at Hively Menonite Church in Elkhart, Indiana. She is pictured (left) at her installation with Lois Johns Kauffman on January 11, 2015.



Kidron Relief Sale Celebrates 50 Years in 2015

This year marks the 50th annual relief sale in Kidron, and a number of special events will be taking place.

Our annual Kick-off Banquet will be on April 18 at 6:30pm at Carlisle Inn Walnut Creek. Details are being planned, but we'll have a family-style meal, silent auction plus news from MCC and news about the upcoming 50th Anniversary Auction. Please add this to your calendar! The meal is free, but we will be taking an offering to cover expenses and raise funds for OMRS. RSVP to Beth Miller at 330-473-2253.

We need your help! We are looking for Relief Sale photos from the last 50 years. Along with a display, we're working on a calendar filled with Relief Sale photos, present and past. All submitted photos will be returned.

We're working on a celebration program that features stories, music and skits of Relief Sales happenings. John Schmid and Tim Shue will be coordinating this show and we know it will be great! If you have a story to submit or would like to be a part of the entertainment, please let us know.

We encourage you to be thinking about 50th Anniversary items you might make - wood, quilts, etc. We're also looking to design a unique monopoly-style board game where the idea is to get rid of all your money! But, we need help from you to write the rules and play the game. This is a fun job for creative people who enjoy board games, kids included. If you would be willing to participate, please contact Small Hochstetler at 330-465-2663.

Who will make quilts in the next 20 years? It's a skill that is not being passed on and we'd like to remedy that. Would you like to learn how to piece quilts and/or learn to hand-quilt? Men and women are welcome!

This is in exploratory stages, but we'd like to have an antique tractor cruise-in for Friday night and Saturday. Tractors 50 years old and older would be welcome. If you are interested in participating or coordinating the cruise-in, please contact Beth Miller.

The Butterfly Effect and Service

Have you ever read about Chaos Theory and the Butterfly Effect? In 1960, an MIT meteorologist named Edward Lorenz was attempting to write a primitive computer model for weather prediction. It worked well, except for the fact that the smallest changes in conditions could greatly affect the outcome. Hence, a butterfly flapping its wings in Beijing in March could cause a hurricane in the Atlantic in August.

Service is the same way. You may not think your contribution is worth much, but you never know what your little bit can do in God's hands. In participating in the Relief Sale or other organizations, let God turn your little butterfly wings into something you never thought possible!

CURRENT VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

- Registration Coordinator - a computer literate person who will coordinate registration volunteers and work with both registering buyers, auction clerking and checkout.
- IT Volunteer - we need another capable computer networking person to aid with sale day computer needs.
- French Fries - would your Sunday School class like to make French Fries at the Sale? No experience necessary.
- Ten Thousand Villages Coordinator - coordinates ordering, unpacking and display of items.
- Children's Activities volunteers - if you enjoy kids, this is for you!
- Signage Crew - a two-person team to coordinate new signage orders and set-up and tear-down of the green signs
- Wood/Tool item solicitation - This work is mostly pre-sale in May and June.
- Knick-Knack Makers - Retired? Can you make knick-knack items for the Wood Auction? We find that the small items bring more value than large big ticket items. Rich Horst (330-466-2973) has ideas of things to make.
- Food Committee - Jerry Miller would like to add several people as a team to help coordinate all the food stands.

If you have interest in serving in any of these positions, please contact the Board of Directors at ohio.reliefsale@gmail.com.

Noteworthy Dates

March Anniversaries

March 9, 1985 – Ken & Cheryl Shank
 March 17, 1973 – Chuck & Carol Buck

March Birthdays

6 -- Larry Horner
 7 -- Kim Lehman
 8 -- Tim Horn
 10 -- Janice Rabenstein
 10 -- Josephine Hostetler
 12 -- Steve Lapp
 13 -- Stephen Hostetler
 13 -- Elizabeth Lochridge
 14 -- Todd Hostetler

15 -- Jerry Landes
 16 -- Elam Maurer
 18 -- Jeanie Swartz
 19 -- Neil Wirick
 22 -- Becky Wilkins
 23 -- Susannah Wirick
 25 -- Bob Rabenstein Sr.
 26 -- Carol Buck
 26 -- Polly Thomas
 28 -- Velma King
 30 -- Michael Lehman
 30 -- Robert Psolla
 31 -- Wilfred Yoder

Quasquicentennial Historical Highlights

As we celebrate 125 years at Bethel, members have been sharing historical facts each Sunday during the sharing time. Our church historian, Donna Lehman has been researching and putting them together. In case you missed a Sunday in February, here are just a few of the highlights. Eventually, all of the facts shared will be on our church website: www.bethelchurchwl.org along with any graphics we have shown to accompany them.

• **W h y**
a deacon and a bishop? Through the years, up until the 1980s, Bethel has had a deacon. One of our first deacons was Eli Yoder, the father of Phil Yoder, a grandfather of Myron Yoder. One of the deacon's responsibilities was to collect the church dues, and give oversight over all. The Bishops were the overseers of the local churches, available for mediation if trouble should arise.

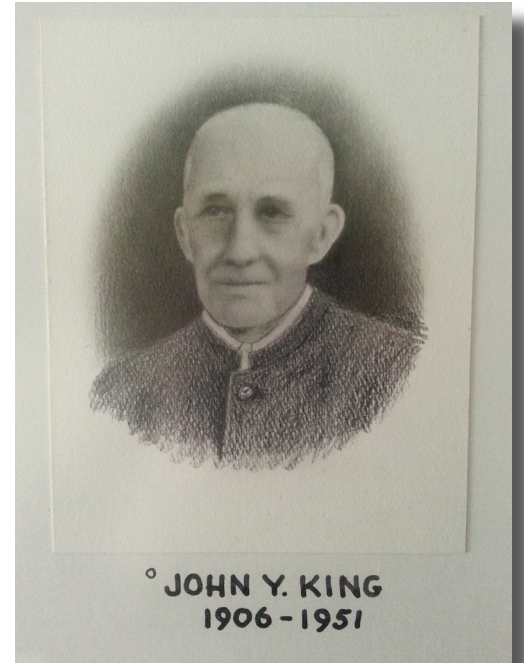


• **Oct. 27-29, 1909** There was a Mennonite General Conference held at South Union. More than 1000 were present! Meals were served in a tent. Along with Conferences, there were annual meetings called the Logan-Champaign Co. Sunday School Union. These were held to study and discuss Sunday School work, provide experience and assistance for those giving leadership in Sunday Schools. Both men and women gave speeches. This was helpful at a time when many giving leadership hadn't attended college or even graduated from High School. It was usually held at Bethel.

• **Back in 1903**, discussion had been started on putting a basement under the church--but there weren't enough funds. Then in 1908, a vote was taken that a basement was a necessity. Up to this time,

the children had been meeting in the ante-rooms for their Sunday School. These were small rooms to the right and left in the front of the church, and all other classes met in the sanctuary. (The Sunday this fact was shared, a special song was presented, "All About The Base-ment" If you missed it, or want to hear it again, go to www.wbtl.tv and look for it in the Quasquicentennial "Just for Fun" videos.

• **In 1906** during a Bible conference, a young man from Bethel was ordained Pastor. Another minister would be welcomed, as Jacob Smith was often preaching at other churches. Soon after Bethel had started, a lady, Barbara Yoder King had been coming to church with her 8 children. Now, she saw one of these children, a son, John Y. King ordained as one of Bethel's ministers. Now, John Y. King would share the pastorate with Chris Byler.



Lent, A Season of Renewal

By Bill Barrett

The word “Lent” comes from the old English, “lencten,” which means “spring.” In Middle English is derived the words, lenten, lente, lent; related to the Dutch, lente, the German, Lenz, also rendered “spring.” In Old German are found the related words: lenzin, lengizin, and lenzo, which probably comes from the same root as “long” and referring to “the lengthening days,” as the earth moves from the winter solstice toward the spring equinox.

In the three-year cycle of the lectionary, the biblical texts for Lent always issue a call to renewal. The readings for Year A focus on new believers; those for Year B focus on the faithful; and those for Year C focus on those who have wandered from Christ and the church.

It’s relatively easy to be excited about years A and C, the years addressed to new believers or those who have fallen away. Joy and drama have a compelling intensity. But what do we do with the ho-hum faithful of Year B, those who (like us?) have been steadily minding their own business, showing up faithfully for worship and potlucks, teaching Sunday school, serving on committees, volunteering, and going on service trips? What does renewal look like for the already committed?

What we saw over and over in the texts for this season is God beginning with people where they are—including those who are already “in.” Yet, as the old saying goes, while God loves us just as we are, God is not content to leave us just as we are, but instead turns our expectations and understanding inside out and upside down. This remaking, reshaping, and recasting make all the difference regardless of the starting point.

As we together reflected on this year’s biblical texts, we became increasingly convinced that being turned upside down and inside out may be precisely what faithful believers need most of all. Believers may not so much need a “reset” as an invitation not to settle, a call to grow up rather than simply to grow. Growing up asks us to take a second look at what we thought we knew, what we thought was decided, what we thought we were done with, and to discover that there is more than we saw at first glance. Growing up means not only saying but actually knowing in our bones that God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom. Growing up means realizing that it’s possible to follow the rules perfectly and still have a heart of stone. Growing up means recognizing that death is absolutely real—and also absolutely powerless to stop God’s reign from coming, here on earth as in heaven. (Excerpt from *Leader: Equipping the Missional Congregation* Winter 2014-15, pg. 24)

Bethel Community Movie Night

by Beth Maurer

Come on out to Bethel Mennonite Church on March 6 at 6:30p.m. for a family friendly film. The movie and refreshments are free as always! Open to all ages, parents are asked to stay with any children under the age of 5. Many of our younger attendees wear their jammies to the show.

This month’s movie is a NEW RELEASE! The movie is about a special bond that develops between plus-sized inflatable robot Baymax, and prodigy Hiro Hamada. They team up with a group of friends to form a band of high-tech heroes to save their city San Fransokyo.

A sign up sheet is posted on the bulletin board for cookies and bottled water donations. Thanks to everyone who bring refreshments for our movie goers to enjoy!



Lori Lehman continually updates our visual displays to coordinate with the Worship Service. On her visual display for Lent she comments, “The two fabrics tied in a knot represent turning the material “upside down and inside out”. God is not content to leave us just as we are, but instead turns our expectations and understandings “upside down and inside out”. The three candles on the table represent each member of the Trinity, God, Savior and Spirit.”