



Bethel Mennonite Church

Celebrating 125 Years

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Newsletter

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Youth Anticipating Convention Trip This Summer By Cheryl Shank, Youth Pastor

Convention will take place in Kansas City, Missouri from June 30th to July 5th. The theme for this year is "En el camino" (On the way). A few of the worship speakers include Shane Claiborne (whom I heard at the Columbus convention, and I enjoyed his message), Issac Villegas, Michele Hershberger and Luke Hartman to name a few. We will be traveling by bus, joining the youth group from Oak Grove. There are a few seats still available for those interested in riding along. I registered us to participate in a planned scavenger hunt the afternoon we arrive so as to have an introduction to the area. We are also registered to participate in the servant project.



We have appreciated your prayers and monetary support through some of the fund-raisers in the past, and thank you in advance for your continued assistance. We are planning a special event for Saturday evening, Feb. 14th. The group is calling it The Mystery Meal Mix-up ("#not romantic")!! Details will be forthcoming, but mark it on your calendar. Fellowshiping with friends is such a blessing, and what a great way to show your love for others on Valentines Day.

We are also planning to sell "Menno's Best Coffee", a convention fundraising opportunity headed by Goshen College. As stated in the flyer, "Menno's Best organic coffee beans are grown by small-scale famers whom Goshen College students have worked with during SST in Peru's mountainous Chanchamayo province."

And, after having some individuals approach me asking about another 'rent a youth' day(s) in the spring, we will plan to have that sometime in April or May. It's still winter, but as you think about spring projects needing done, let us know.

Community Movie Night

Our Community Movie night is growing more popular. This month's feature follows a robot, who is designed to clean up an abandoned, waste-covered Earth far in the future. He falls in love with another robot, who also has a programmed task, and follows her into outer space on an adventure that changes the destiny of both his kind and humanity.

Join us Friday, February 6th at 6:30 p.m.. Refreshments will be served and everything is free and open to the public, so invite your friends and neighbors!



Announcements:

♦ **Two New Websites!** Our church's website has undergone a complete overhaul! Watch for the new website design coming soon at www.bethelchurchwl.org. The changes should be online in the next few weeks. In addition, we have added a second 'sister' site, to accommodate video content. This includes Pastor Dave's sermons, Quasiquicentennial related videos, as well as videos of the youth put together for Sunday Morning worship and any other videos that we want to share. The new site is 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. We will have two times in February and two in March following the worship service to sign up for your appointment. Rather than overloading everyone with a lot of information at once, there will be bulletin inserts and brochures dispersed throughout this time. The first day to sign up for your portrait time will be February 15, and the next three Sundays.

Mennonite World Conference Global Assembly in Pennsylvania in July 2015



The Anabaptist groups in North America are quite diverse, each striving to faithfully follow Jesus in multi-cultural settings that value secularism, nationalism, and materialism. Worship on Sunday mornings takes place in more than 20 languages in Canada and the United States. Worship styles vary widely, ranging from loud worship bands to the unaccompanied slow singing of the Amish from their 500-year-old hymnbook, and everything in between. The fastest growing Anabaptist groups in North America are the newer immigrant churches and the Amish.

There are about 530,000 adult baptized members in 37 organized Anabaptist conferences in Canada and the United States. Only about one-half belong to groups that are members of Mennonite World Conference. MWC members in North America make up 20% of MWC's membership globally.

The North American Anabaptist groups that belong to MWC include the Brethren in Christ in Canada and the United States, the Mennonite Brethren in Canada and the United States, the Mennonite Church in Canada and the United States, the Conservative Mennonite Conference in the US, the Evangelical Mennonite Church in Canada, and the Evangelical Mennonite Missionary Church in Canada.

The North American Anabaptist groups that do not belong to MWC are mostly Anabaptists who live very separately from the world, such as the Amish, Old Order Mennonites, Old Colony Mennonites, many plain-dressing Mennonites, Hutterites, Bruderhof, and more.

Mennonite World Conference holds a global Assembly once every six years, and rotates it among the continents, so that everyone might consider attending, and helping to host, an Assembly at least once in their lifetime. This next Assembly will be hosted by the North American Anabaptist churches, and will take place in Pennsylvania in July 2015. Every national church belonging to MWC sends delegates to the General Council of Mennonite World Conference, which meets once every three years. The General Council will meet in July 2015 in conjunction with the next Assembly.

Pray for the North American Anabaptist churches that they might be faithful in following Jesus, and welcoming of all those who will come to the next Assembly, "Pennsylvania 2015."

Noteworthy Dates

February Anniversaries

February 3, 1985 – Jeff & Terri Steiner
February 9, 1969 – Paul & Linda Hostetler
February 15, 1975 – Ed & Kim Lehman

February Birthdays

1 Paul Harshbarger
1 Royce Link
6 Nellie Lindemer
8 Tim Lehman
9 Lee Jordan
11 Dennis Showalter
17 Lori Lehman
27 Donna Lehman

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“Through the Bible in a Year...Musings on Genesis”

by Pastor Dave Maurer

One month down and eleven more to go! We have now completed the first month of our Through the Bible in a Year congregational reading plan in which many of us are journeying together through the whole Bible chronologically (rather than canonically) in 2015. It has been personally exciting for me to hear the number of people at Bethel who are participating in this discipline and to be a part of the spontaneous (spirit led?) conversations about scripture that are happening so organically because we are sharing in this journey together. May God bless and guide us as we continue reading, discussing, and discerning together.

As we end the month of January, we have completed our reading of Genesis and Job. Two books down and sixty four more to go! I have spent time reflecting with you on the book of Job during a couple of my sermons. Below, I offer some musings for further consideration from Genesis.

When we read through the whole book of Genesis in such a focused period of time, we may begin to notice recurring patterns and themes that we have missed before. There are the obvious ones like God’s promise that was offered to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But there are other ones like generational family dynamics that may not be as apparent in our typical bits and pieces reading.

Take for instance the recurring trickery that went on within the family over several generations. Abram and Sarai went down to Egypt during a famine and Abram claimed Sarai as his sister rather than his wife (Gen 12:10-20). Later Abraham and Sarah moved into Gerar and Abraham deceived Abimelek by making the same claim (Gen 20:1-8). Sometime later Isaac also deceived Abimelek by making the same claim of Rebekah (Gen 26:1-11).

Along with this, we read of Jacob’s trickery of Esau to steal his birthright (Gen 25:27-34) and then Rebecca’s plot with Jacob to steal Esau’s blessing from Isaac (Gen 27:1-40). Because of these tactics, Jacob left for Paddan Aram where he connected with his Uncle Laban. Laban pulled a fast one on Jacob by giving his daughter Leah first and then his daughter Rachel (Gen 29:14b-30). In return, Jacob determined a way for his flocks to be larger and stronger than Laban’s through breeding practices (Gen 30:25-43). Rachel later joined in this family dynamic by stealing her father’s household gods. When Laban came looking for

them, she sat on them and claimed to be in the midst of her time of the month (Gen 31:22-42).

And then of course Jacob’s children picked-up the family torch of trickery and carried it on. Simeon and Levi took revenge on Shechem for his mistreatment of their sister, Dinah, by attacking the city while all the men were laid up from being circumcised (Gen 34:1-31). When Joseph rose to power in Egypt, his brothers came seeking food. Joseph played the part of the Egyptian ruler; and only later revealed his true identity after playing them several times, including accusing them of stealing a silver cup that one of Joseph’s servants had planted in their bag (Gen 44:1-17).

Clearly the dynamics of family systems have been working long before our generations joined the human race.

The lives that we live and the models that we portray to our families often take on something of a life of their own and are passed on from one to another.

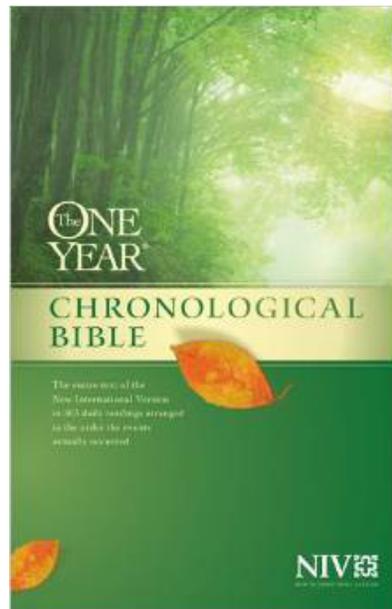
Moreover, the ways that we choose to function within our families of origin and even within our church family are not a simple as A affects B and B affects C in a linear format. The ways in which we choose to interact with one another is co-causal/mutual and in turn affects the system as a whole.

While we cannot change how someone else functions in the system, we can be intentional about choosing how we function in the system. When we choose to function in healthy ways of being clear about what we think and believe while remaining in relationship with others who may think and believe differently than we do; we inherently also affect healthy change on the system. We contribute to the

inoculation of the system against the viruses of disease and unhealth. The reverse is also true.

Change toward healthier interactions is possible, but it is often not natural. It requires intentionality on our part and resolve to swim against the system’s downstream currents. It involves identifying the natural inclinations of a system toward unhealth and personally choosing to respond in healthy ways rather than reacting with blame, cut-off, subtle manipulation or passive aggressive behavior.

This is all part of the ongoing kingdom work of transformation both of us personally and corporately in the whole of our lives. May we learn from these stories and may the Holy Spirit bless and guide us as we strive toward becoming ever more fully the beautiful creations of God that our heavenly Father desires us to be.



Memories of Founding Member,

Lydia B. Yoder

by Pat & Julia Yoder

Lydia B. Yoder (mother of Clarence Yoder, grandmother of Pat & Julia Yoder) and her brother Eli Yoder (Father of Dorcas Kuuffman and Philip Yoder, grandfather of Lowell Kuuffman), were among the first ten "charter members" of Bethel Mennonite Church. History lists their brother Archie Yoder (father of Newt Yoder) as one of the first trustees.

Julia and I never had the privilege of knowing our Grandmother Yoder as she passed away when our father was sixteen. However, we know that she was involved in the 1889 controversy when many young people were delaying joining the Amish Mennonite Church. They were requesting Sunday School worship services in English as they didn't read or understand German as well as previous generations.

Because of this controversial issue, Lydia (18 yrs.) and Elida (22 yrs.) were among the group of nine who traveled to Elida and were baptized as Mennonites in a small stream one mile west of Salem Mennonite Church on August 17, 1890. They returned to West Liberty and worshipped in homes as they were not permitted to use the Amish Mennonite meeting houses on off Sundays.

The group met weekly and began to grow. On October 21, 1894, the lot fell on Eli D. Yoder to be ordained as deacon. A building committee was appointed and $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre of land was purchased for \$225 from Joshua Lance. The building was completed and Bethel Mennonite Church opened for worship on Christmas Day, 1895.

On April 14, 1901, Lydia and J. Oliver Yoder were mar-

ried. They lived on different farms, later purchasing a farm on Co. Rd. 5. They grew onions, cucumbers, and sorghum which was processed at the sorghum mill. Five children were welcomed into their family--Seba, Edna, Belle, Clarence and Roy.

October 11, 1927 was a very sad day for the family. Lydia passed away.

In 2009 Robin McDonald (Newt Yoder's granddaughter) was researching Archie Yoder's genealogy and discovered Lydia's obituary. We are blessed to have a testimony of how she lived her life with much love and a strong faith in her Savior:

Yoder.--Lydia B., daughter of Eli and Lydia Yoder, was born Jan. 17, 1872; died at her home near West Liberty, Ohio, Oct. 11, 1927; aged 55 y. 8 m. 24 d. Her death was due to acute articular rheumatism, from which she suffered intensely, her sickness being of only short duration. Though all was done that friends or physician could do to keep the spark of life burning, she passed peacefully away. She was united in marriage to J. Oliver, son of C. S. and Rebecca Yoder, April 14, 1901. To this union were born

five children. One (Edna Pearl) preceded her in death. She was a faithful member of the Mennonite Church, and to her Savior, who to her was a real Helper. The cares and problems, which are bound to come in life, she did not allow to disturb her trust in her Master. She was a kind, patient, and loving wife and mother; and will be greatly missed by her host of friends; but in no place so much as in her home, where she left loved ones, the object of her love and tender care. She leaves her husband and 4 children (Seba, Belle, Clarence, and Roy), 5 brothers and 1 sister (Archie, Eli, Bradley, Vern, Harvey, and Emma Plank). Funeral services were held at Bethel Church, Thursday afternoon in charge of Bros. C. H. Byler and S. E. Allgyer. Burial in South Union Cemetery.



Quasiquicentennial 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 January, 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.

✦ There were several Amish Churches in this area. South Union, Oak Grove & Walnut Grove. In March 1890, John F. Funk (Mennonite) from Indiana came to the area and held meetings. Several local young converts went to Elida (the nearest Mennonite church at that time) for baptism.

✦ The New Bethel meeting house would be opened for worship on Dec. 25, 1895. The first Sunday School class was held Jan. 5, 1896 with 70 scholars. David Hilty of Bluffton first gave pastoral leadership, leaving in 1901 for Idaho.

✦ In 1898 Christian Byler was ordained as pastor. Several of his descendants are still members here today.

✦ In Sept. of 1900, Mary (Yoder) Burkhard and her husband Jacob went to India as missionaries, overseeing an orphanage of 185 children.

Holiday Time is Different for Adriel Youth

by Erin Dye

Adriel youth spent their hours differently this year than previous holiday seasons. During December, 17 different youth volunteered various hours at three different locations. Over seven different events, youth served others at Green Hills, the Community Christmas Day Meal, and Our Daily Bread, and brought joy to others as well as brightened their own lives.

All youth feel restless during Christmas break, and this is especially true of Adriel youth who do not have multiple family Christmas parties or last minute shopping to busy themselves with. However, altruism is a healthy outlet and distraction for everyone. The five days spent at Green Hills were mutually beneficial for residents and youth as the two groups teamed up for making crafts and attending a Christmas themed musical event together. Youth filled the brief drive home with

stories about new friends and memorable moments. On New Year's Eve, a few youth delivered popcorn to "Pop in the New Year" to each of the residents in the Center.

Outside of Green Hills, older Adriel boys made new friends with Oak Grove Mennonite Church members as they served and cleaned dishes at Our Daily Bread. On Christmas Day, Adriel youth served drinks and fellowshiped with the approximate 100+ attendees at the Community Christmas Meal at Bethel Mennonite Church. All Adriel youth decorated place-mats for the meal in advance.

These activities helped youth to think about someone other than themselves and made new Christmas memories, reminding (members at Adriel as well as the community) that Adriel is just as much a part of this community as anyone else.



*Happy Valentine's Day to Carl,
my wonderful husband and dandy
handyman. Love, Elaine*

*To Barbara, my
wife and best friend,
Be my Valentine!
- Jerry*



*To All the Women who faithfully
attend Sewing! You are loved and
appreciated for your dedication!
- Kyle & Mary*

*Cheryl: March 9th is 30
Years of Marriage! I love you
more each day! XOXO - Ken*

*To Ellen, Mary are the stars I see,
but in my eye no star like thee.
Love, Doug*

*To Lee- the love of my life.
You continue to model daily
what it means to love. XOXO
- Tesa*



*Beth, The road is not always easy, but
I am so thankful to be traveling it with
you. Thank you for all that you do
for me and for our family. I love you!
Dave*



Match Game

How well do you know our youth group? We asked them some questions and got their responses.. see if you can match the answers to the correct name!

The following youth submitted their answers: Stephen Hostetler, Annie Steiner, Daniel Lehman, Becky Wilkins, Michael Lehman, and Savannah Hostetler.

What is your favorite dessert?

- Chocolate Chip Cookies _____
- Pie _____
- Ice Cream Cake _____
- Maries Candies or Fudge _____
- Chocloate Cupcakes _____
- Chocolate Cake _____

If you could be an animal, what would you choose?

- Cat _____
- Tiger _____
- Manatee, the sea cow! _____
- Monkey _____
- Dragon _____
- Eagle _____

What's your favorite word?

- MOO! _____
- Trailer _____
- Crusty _____
- Cool _____
- Defenestration - the act of throwing something out a window! _____

What is Your Favoirte Hobby?

- Reading _____
- Video Games/TV _____
- Listening to Music _____
- Reading/Genealogy _____
- Eating _____
- Video Games _____

Where do you want to be when you're twice the age you are now?

- Living and working on a farm _____
- Ohio _____
- Overseas somewhere _____
- Maybe married, maybe kids, definitely in my man cave watching TV and playing games _____
- Home owner _____

What is Your Favorite Color?

- Orange _____
- Purple _____
- Red _____
- Mauve _____
- Blue _____
- Orange _____

Where would you like to go on vacation?

- Paris _____
- City _____
- Southwest America _____
- Somewhere with Family _____
- A giant water park _____
- Somewhere new _____



Sharon Showalter made clever centerpieces that five lucky women took home as doorprizes!



Annie Steiner shows us how to wear a scarf as a vest!

Barb Landes found a new way to wear her infinity scarf!

In case you missed it, our own Beth Maurer is on the cover of the Jan/Feb Ohio Mennonite Evangel.



Beth Maurer (left) and Paula King share communion at the Ohio Pastors' Wives Retreat. Pictured in the background are Becky Short and Emagene Stuckey.

The ladies scarf brunch was a big success Saturday morning, Jan. 31st. Approximately 30 women attended, fellowshipped and learned new ways to tie their scarves. Thanks to everyone who brought food, decorations, scarves to trade and the clean up crew!