



## WL Cares—Bringing the Community Together

March is Bethel's month to host the West Liberty Cares Food pantry. This seems a good time to share about how God is working through this service. West Liberty Cares is a church operated entity that provides for the needs in the West Liberty-Salem school district. In addition to the pantry that is open weekly, WL Cares gives vouchers for fresh food at Thoman's, bill coverage, clothing vouchers for MCC Thrift, coats to identified children at WL-S, Christmas gifts, and a Thanksgiving meal in November. Fundraisers, love offerings, individuals, businesses and local churches keep the WL Cares fund supplied. Church's take turns hosting the pantry for a month at a time. This means stocking the pantry and providing volunteers to operate the pantry

"Volunteering at the pantry is a positive discipline for me to express my gratitude to God, experience humility, and expand my comfort zone."

-Sharon Showalter

hours on Wednesdays and the third Saturday of the month from 11am to 2pm. The pantry gets filled during that month either by food donated by church members or funds donated to cover the cost of food. The estimated cost to a church for food during their month is approximately \$1,000 to \$1,200. Additional food is often collected in the community and brought in by groups such as WL-S School, the Boy Scouts, West Liberty

Library and Champaign Bank. In 2012 899 bags were given out over a 52 week period, averaging 17 bags per week. The total amount of bags given out during a month was anywhere from 30 to 130 with December being the largest month.

Continued on page3 ....

## The Uniting Power of Lent By Brody Robinaugh

"Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink."

-1 Corinthians 12: 12-13

Lent is becoming a very meaningful time for me. It's a period of darkness followed by this intense, beautiful white light! My reflections on it have brought me to some powerful conclusions that are making my season of Lent even more momentous. I invite you to consider what I have to say, and I pray that it is as significant to you as it is to me.

We are all different, whether its simple like our tastes in music, books, and food, or compli-

cated like our religion, skin tone, political views, sexuality; you know, the conversation topics we tend to avoid to evade conflict. The problem with us all being different is that we too often let our differences get in the way of progressive relationships that make us better people and allow the Body of Christ to be much more active.

Of course, if you like classical music, John Grisham books, and Italian food, I won't push you away just because I don't like classical music, books make me sleepy (law books make me even more sleepy), and I often eat a cheeseburger over spaghetti. These are little things, so if we disagree on them, we'll agree to disagree and we won't let it get in the

way of our friendship. Sure it might mean that we aren't soul-mates, but we can still be friends, ok? I promise. **Continued on page 3.**



**Create  
in me a  
clean heart,  
O God,  
and put a  
new and right  
spirit within me.**

**Psalms 51.10**

## Reflecting on Organic Church

By Todd Hostetler



The book The Organic Church, in brief, describes the author's philosophy of church planting. Through experiences, references to popular modern media, and Biblical imagery the author explains that in order for any church plant to be successful, the planters must follow God's plan, through direction from the Holy Spirit, and not their own agenda. That's all the book summary I'm giving. I enjoyed reading it and I would encourage you to read it. If the church library

doesn't have a copy, you can borrow mine.

The discussions were informative but more importantly, thought provoking.

*"What does God have in store for us as a congregation?"*

*"What does it mean to be a Christian in West Liberty?"*

## Baking with God's GIRLS

By Beth Maurer

On Sunday, February 17 God's Girls met at the Maurer House. Maddi Sanford, Josie Hostetler, and Maggie Maurer were very excited to gather together. We started our time by making cake pops. Once the pops were made and in the refrigerator to harden, I gave each of the girls some fondant and Maggie showed them how to make roses. While the girls played with the fondant we did a devotional on Esther and talked about how, we are each called to something special. After the devotion the girls dipped their cake pops into chocolate and decorated them with lots of sprinkles! The time passed much too quickly, and fun was had by all!

### Cake Pop Recipe

1 box cake mix (cook as directed on box for 13 X 9 cake)

1 can frosting (16 oz.)

Wax paper

Chocolate Candy Melts (1 lb. pkg.)

Lollipop Sticks

Sprinkles

1. After cake is cooked and cooled completely, crumble into large bowl.

2. Mix thoroughly with 1 can frosting. (You may not need the entire can of frosting, so start out by using part of the can and add more if you need to.)



*"Am I doing His work or is this guy peddling video games just going through the motions?"*

*"Is that smoothie KJ brought for lunch really filling or would be like a piece of my pizza?"*

But equally important, I feel it brought me to know a few of my brothers and sisters here at Bethel a little better.

The question posed by Pastor Dave early on was, "How does this relate to us as a church?" Before participating in this discussion I would consider how we might get more people to attend Bethel. Now, after reading and discussing The Organic Church, I'm inclined to believe our attention should be directed outwardly instead of inwardly. Our focus shouldn't be to bolster our attendance but rather go out and interact with others outside of our church walls and to be disciples in our every day lives. Not to preach on the street corner but to model our every interaction so that Jesus spews from the very essence of our being. To paraphrase, "A light in the dark room is productive, a light in an already lighted room isn't doing much." People need to connect with God through Jesus not through Bethel church. If in that connection it brings them in to our family here, GREAT, but the goal is for them to connect and develop a personal relationship with Jesus.

3. Roll mixture into quarter size balls and place on wax paper covered cookie sheet.

(Should make 45-50)

4. Melt chocolate in the microwave per directions on package. (30 sec intervals, stirring in between.)

5. Dip the tip of your lollipop stick in a little of the melted candy coating and insert into the cake balls. (Insert a little less than halfway.)

6. Place them in the freezer for a little while to firm up.

7. Once firm, carefully insert the cake ball into the candy coating by holding the lollipop stick and rotating until covered. Once covered remove and softly tap and rotate until the excess chocolate falls off. Don't tap too hard or the cake ball will fall off. (Works best to put the chocolate into a wide mouth glass for dipping.)

8. Decorate with sprinkles.

Place in a Styrofoam block or waxed paper to dry.



## “West Liberty Cares” continued

The WLC Emergency Fund, administered by Pastor Dick Barrett, Pastor Michael Will and Craig Wilson of Peoples Savings, is a resource for those in the community who need help with bills, especially rent, utilities, prescriptions and vehicle maintenance. Winter months with higher energy bills put a strain on this fund. The Emergency Fund covers the cost of the Thoman’s fresh food grocery vouchers and Thanksgiving meat vouchers.

Did you know so many different organizations in West Liberty were working together for WL Cares? Even Subway donates bread on pantry days! Bethel is among these organizations. “[West Liberty Cares] has helped the area churches work together for a common cause,” says Kim Lehman, our WL Cares representative. “[Serving at the pantry] has been for me a way to help people. I’m so glad when someone shares a need that I can direct them to West Liberty

Cares. It is also a source of comfort knowing that people can get help in our community.”

Last fall Bethel’s children’s Sunday School department donated food and money to West Liberty Cares.

Bethel member Sharon Showalter shares the significance of working at the pantry for her. “Extending the kingdom of God means walking beside people at their point of need. Jesus set a perfect example of this. He accepts us as we are and is always available to help us become what we can be through His love. Volunteering at the pantry is a positive discipline for me to express my gratitude to God, experience humility, and expand my comfort zone.”

How will you share in serving the needs in our community? March is your chance to volunteer at the pantry and be part of this combined effort to extend God’s Kingdom!

## “The Power of Lent” continued

However there are complicated differences that we face within each other that can make it hard to still be friends. For example, President Obama and Governor Romney explored their political differences in last year’s Presidential Election, and I’m not sure they could be characterized as friends. Although, they are both powerful men in our country and represent equally important political parties, so I hope that they still exchange Christmas cards and are willing to work with each other for the good of the people. There’s a good chance that you won’t run for President in your lifetime, so you probably won’t have to go through the kind of exploring of differences that a campaign brings about, but you will encounter people who are different than you and its important to not let the differences, no matter how large, get in the way of making a meaningful

relationship that benefits both God, and His people.

As I’m opposed to classical music, I listen to a lot of country music. I’m not much for the Yee-Haw, but I appreciate the many songs that cross the line into faith. One of my favorites is “The Heaven I’m Headed To” by Dierks Bentley. The chorus is as follows: “...in the Heaven I’m headed to, there’s a place for preachers, thieves and prostitutes, saints and soldiers, beggars, kings and renegades; for any soul that ever found amazing grace. Ain’t no tellin’ who on earth He might include in the Heaven I’m headed to...” It’s a reminder to me that God chooses everyone, and that “— whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free —”, as in the 1 Corinthians passage above, we are all connected through Christ. We are the Body of Christ, each of us being one little cell, just as important and blessed as the next.



### Ohio Conference’s Annual Conference Assembly

March 8th-9th

Central Christian, Kidron, OH

This year’s theme: “Signs of the Kingdom” from John 20:30-31

Bethel delegates include: Pastors Dave and Rick, Art and Mary Newcomer, Jim Burkett, Ed Lehman, Bill Shumaker, and Brody Robinaugh. Delegates will report about ACA during the worship service April 7th.

Conference is like a trellis that supports a vine. You don’t always see it, but you can see the beautiful fruit it helps produce.

Have a hobby you can share with your church family?

**Participate in a Hobby Evening later this spring! Contact Mary with your interest in participating!**

Invite your friends and neighbors to this fun event!



## February: an Opportunity for Service

Two families from the congregation share about their service projects

### Traveling to Atlanta...

By Barb and Bryon Kauffman

We chose Berea Mennonite Church in Atlanta, GA for our four week SOOP assignment this year. The Berea Church situated on a nine acre plot is also a farm—the Oakleaf Mennonite Farm. It is being developed for both the production of vegetable and berries and for use as pastureland for the rotational grazing of animals.

Much of our work consisted of cleaning/raking an area to sow rye, clover and fescue to serve as a pasture for sheep and goats. Electronic fencing was built and gates were hung to form paddocks through which animals can be rotated for grazing. Caring for a flock of young chickens was a daily task and “Eggs for Sale” are anticipated in 2-3 months. We prepared a 50 ft greenhouse for use by removing old shredded plastic stapling, stapling a weed barrier mat to the ground, and applying new plastic over the top and sides. Barb also weeded a large strawberry patch.

The Berea church was started in the early 1950’s and was the first integrated church in Atlanta. The current site was purchased in 1974 and had 2 buildings—a sanctuary and an education building. Until the present pastor, John Wierville initiated land development, this acreage sat idle.

A bilingual pre-school is housed in the education building and our apartment was in the basement of this building. Other buildings which have been added over the past three years are a barn, tool shed, chicken house, and two greenhouses. A Ford tractor was recently donated by Geoff, a church member and retired engineer, who gives generously of his time around the farm. Other machinery will be borrowed as needed for spring planting. A farmer, Erin Cescutti has

contracted with the church to grow vegetables and plants for sale at various venues.

Pastor John, raised in the Catholic church, is now a devoted Anabaptist and supporter of the Mennonite Church. He is an avid reader, a dreamer, a visionary, hard worker, and with the help of others, can make things happen. He has had experience with several international organizations, graduated from both law school and seminary, and is constantly involved with marginalized people.

The Berea congregation is small in number and many drive up to an hour to get to church. It is predominately women, has five children, and just recently, several seminary students. These are dedicated women/persons who work diligently to be the Church. Pastor John and others are encouraged by the seminary students and welcome their involvement in the church and farm. These seminary students, who are attending Berea, are there due to

John’s influence and their faith journeys and desire to reach out to the community. They will assist with the community gardening and the church plots, and will give leadership to the summer youth program which combines gardening and peacemaking entitled “Peace and Carrots.”

Both Erin and the church folks are dedicated to growing nutritious crops by following organic, sustainable practices in response to the growing concerns about the health risks associated with industrially processed food.

To our Bethel church family, we appreciate your interest in our work and your prayers on our behalf during our time away.

Again, we found this experience to be a blessing...and a place hard to leave. The persons we met blessed us, changed us, and have become our friends. We are humbled and gratified to have had the opportunity to help them, just a little, on their journey with this ministry project.



Mark Your Calendars for Bethel’s next Red Cross  
Blood Drive!



**Good Friday, March 29th 11am to 4pm.**  
**Because he first gave his blood for us...**

If anyone is interested in helping host, welcome community members to Bethel, or provide the snacks during the drive, please contact Erin.

## Traveling to Austin...

By Jim and Kay Burkett

We served in Austin, TX from January 17<sup>th</sup> through February 12<sup>th</sup>. We worked at the Trinity Child Development Center which is associated with the Austin Mennonite Church. The center originally opened in 1964 with a morning preschool program and is now caring for children full – time and year-round. It is licensed with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and is accredited with the National Association for Education of Young Children.

Jim worked with the Center's board of directors, the director, staff and parents to develop a strategic plan for the Center. Kay worked individually with students preparing for reading readiness and assisted in the classroom of 13 three to five year old students. In addition we participated in worship and other activities with the Austin Mennonite Church. Kay worked in the Church's community garden located in back of the church. One Saturday, we traveled with a group to a Mennonite Disaster Service unit in the Bastrop area located about an hour from Austin. Two years ago a huge forest fire destroyed 1600 homes. The group of 26 helped with rebuilding of four different homes.

Traveling to the Center was a challenge! Every day we traveled south on I 35 for what should be a 12 minute

drive. However it was often a half hour or more in bumper to bumper traffic--not much good for one's blood pressure!

We enjoyed meeting and getting to know the parents and kids at the center. Jim enjoyed working with the board and the director. Meeting and talking with several of the grateful home owners we worked for during the MDS project was rewarding. Our host family was Steve and Pat Hochstetler. They are both farm transplants from the Goshen, IN area and are very environmentally conscious and service oriented. They drive diesel vehicles running them on vegetable oil and are active with the MCC relief sales and 10 Thousand Villages. They made us feel welcome and gave us lots of good tips of things to explore in the Austin area. It was a treat to walk on the walking trails near their home and Kay enjoyed photographing the birds.

We were renewed by the testimony of how God has sustained Trinity all of these years. The Sunday school class we attended was much like the one we attend at Bethel, and we heard testimony of God's work with their lives and felt we were with God's people. We also felt that the assignment, a last minute one after the first fell through, was God's use of our talents and interest.

## Potatoes and Peace

By Bill Shumaker

February 24th following the worship service we were served a potato meal by the Bethel youth. Following the meal we watched excerpts of a DVD promoting the Peace Tax Fund sponsored by the Tuesday noon Peace and Justice group and a testimony about the experience of not paying war tax. Read on to see the full definition of the Peace Tax Fund.

Approximately 35 stayed to see the DVD. On the DVD were interviews from numerous faith persuasions ranging from Anabaptists to Catholics to Jews. Featured on the DVD was a 75 year old peace activist Coleman McCarthy, known as a Journalist and Developer of Peace Studies Curriculum. Perhaps a good way to describe McCarthy is by a quote from him, "Give peace a chance, yes, but why not get serious and give it a place in the curriculum: peace courses in every school, every grade, every nation. Unless we teach our children peace, someone else will teach them violence." Other quotes from McCarthy include, "Violence is sometimes effective in the short run, nonviolence is always effective in the long run," and "It is much easier to raise a peaceful child than to reform a violent criminal."

Audience response was generally positive with the usual questions; "What about wars in the Old Testament" and "What can we do about it?"

*Nationwide 188 organizations have endorsed this bill ranging from the National Committee for Amish religious Freedom to Franciscan Sisters of the Poor to Mennonite Church USA (Official action of the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board in its June 30, 2009 meeting in Columbus) to Veterans for Peace to Jewish Peace Fellowship.*

*The National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund (NCTPF), based in Washington, D.C., is a not-for-profit 501(c)(4) organization which advocates for passage of the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act, H.R. 1191, in the 112th Congress. When enacted, this law will restore the rights of citizens whose conscience does not permit financial participation in any war. This includes both individuals who are members of religious congregations as well as those who are not religious, but have ethical and moral objections to paying for war. Federal taxes of designated conscientious objectors will be placed in a non-military trust fund, enabling the government to obtain needed federal revenue without violating these individuals' right to the free exercise of their beliefs. The Peace Tax Foundation (PTF) is NCTPF's tax-exempt sister 501(c)(3) organization. The Foundation serves to inform the public about the concept of alternative tax payment programs that are based upon moral, ethical, and religious opposition to participation in warfare.*

—www.peacetaxfund.org

## The Show Must Go On!

### Youth participate in theater this spring

**Annie Steiner and Becky Wilkins** will be participating in West Liberty - Salem High School musical Disney's **'Alice in Wonderland'** on **March 21-23** in the high school cafeteria.

**Savannah Hostetler** will be in Center Stage Productions (CSP) play **'Snow White: The Queen's Fair Daughter'** the first two weekends in **May** at the Holland Theater in Bellefontaine. Times are pending.

When asked about their productions, the girls had the following to share.

*What part will you play?*

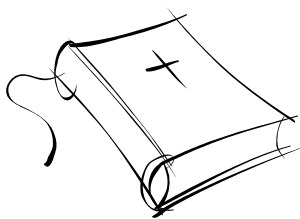
Annie—"I am a flower which is like a prissy, self-centered pageant girl."

Becky—"I will be playing one of seven snobby flowers that are part of an exclusive club, called the 'Girls of the Golden Afternoon'"

Savannah—"I will be one of the seven dwarfs. I really wanted a dwarf part, and I am so glad I got it!"

*How is this different than any other thing you've done?*

Annie—"I've never been in a production this large!"



Our own Savannah Hostetler is in Bible quizzing again this year. She is on a team with Abigail Rabenstein, Christy Kauffman, Matthew Kauffman, Christopher Buscher, and Josh Kratz. For Invitational's in Archbold, OH March 23rd, Savannah's team will also gain Ashley Rabenstein and Lindy Stapleton.

The local quizzing tournament will be Sunday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at Calvary Baptist. There will be a pizza party and awards to follow.



Becky—"When I was in drama club, there was a lot of pressure to get the acting down and to memorize lines. But this is more difficult! Not only do we have to get the acting and lines down, but you also need remember the music and choreography. It's a lot of multitasking, and you have to do it all the time."

Savannah—"I will be playing the part of the fifth dwarf, the largest part I have ever played."

*What are you enjoying about being part of this production?*

Annie—"The rehearsals and parts are fun, and so is being with everyone in it."

Becky—"I am glad I am doing this because I enjoy acting and singing. There is so much talent in our cast, and there is never a dull moment. I love hanging out with my friends and fellow cast members, they are what make practice so lively. Musical also helps me to keep busy, although sometimes I think it keeps me a little too busy, but at the end of the day I love being in musical!"

Savannah—"I enjoy acting because I love the feeling of being on-stage and giving people a performance that was worth their time. This is going to be a great show and I hope to see you there!"

### What Bethel youth are up to this spring:

WL-S Track- Alex Steiner and Michael Lehman

Science Olympiad- Becky Wilkins

WL-S Musical-Annie Steiner and Becky Wilkins

Home School Play-Savannah Hostetler

Bible Quizzing- Savannah Hostetler

## “Jesus Compels Us...”

By Pastor Dave Maurer

Over the last number of months, Joint Council has been engaged in a process of discernment about our church structure. We believe, and many in the congregation have affirmed, that we are at a place in which we need to imagine a different way to organize ourselves. In doing so, we hope to

1. Function with fewer positions
2. Work together with fewer meetings and/or consolidate our nights out
3. Centralize our leadership
4. Empower our missional witness
5. Focus our meetings on discernment and vision rather than reporting

As a first step in the process, Joint Council spent time considering our purpose statement and the role that it may have in helping us envision a revised structure for Bethel. There was strong affirmation for what has been and how it has served us well. At the same time, there was recognition of the importance of a fresh movement of the spirit in our midst that takes the best of who we are and propels us into engagement with our current cultural reality.

Through a process of reflecting on our purpose statement and engaging with scripture, Joint

## Times They are a' Changin'

By Donna Lehman, Church Historian

120 years ago—Bethel's first pastor—Eli Yoder was ordained (1893). They met in homes as the church wasn't built until 1896 at the present location, but not the same building. But, there was an interesting item in the West Liberty Banner from January 14, 1897, Winter Edition, “The Mennonites are graveling Washington St in the vicinity of the church. The Corporation (West Liberty?) furnishes the gravel and the shovelers and the church members are doing the hauling.” (If there were more ‘shovelers and haulers’ today, maybe we wouldn't be facing a fiscal cliff—but graveling Washington St?) Times they are a' changin'.

45 years ago—(1968) The Vietnam War was happening, and Paul Harshbarger (and many others) were at the age to be ‘drafted.’ The draft, a time when many persons (as Paul did) chose to go into a service other than the military—these were called 1-W or VS. which are not heard of much more. Times they are a' changin'.

Council has adopted an updated purpose statement that incorporates the best of what has been, the identities of the Trinity, and the imagination of scripture. This will serve as our purpose statement as we continue to reform the way in which we live out our faith in the context of our daily lives and our fellowship together.

Our purpose statement is, “Jesus compels us to experience and extend the gracious rule of God by the power of the Holy Spirit.” In the newsletter, I will engage with components of this statement and consider what it may mean for us as we continue to discern and perceive the ways that God is moving in our midst within and beyond our congregational setting.

“Jesus compels us...” This introduction is adapted from the parable of the Great Banquet in which the master instructs the servant to compel the people to come into the banquet. Beginning in this way names from the very beginning that for us, our faith is about Jesus. Jesus is the center of our faith. It also spurs us to action. Our faith is not intended to be a passive experience of God in our lives. Our faith is to be an active engagement with God and the work of extending God's kingdom in the world around us.

Take a moment to sit with these three words, “Jesus compels us.” What images come to mind? What does it look like for Jesus to compel us? After taking time to consider these things, please spend time in prayer for our congregation and leadership as we consider to discern God's leading.

40 years ago—(1973) The Homebuilders SS Class (now Sojourners) had a Valentine meal at Da-JoLees (now the Gathering Place). Cost was \$2.75 per person! What were they going to eat—coffee and toast? Times they are a' changin'.

25 years ago—(1988) Todd Hostetler was one of the members of Bethel's quiz team. Now, 25 years later, his daughter Savannah is a quizzer. Times they are a' changin'.

5 years ago (April 2008) Dave Maurer was called to be minister at Bethel (this included his wife Beth and 3 children). Since that time, we've welcomed Baby Silas! Times they are a' changin'.

### March Birthdays

- 2 Larissa Graber
- 7 Kim Lehman
- 8 Tim Horn
- 10 Janice Rabenstein
- 10 Josephine Hostetler
- 12 Steve Lapp
- 13 Stephen Hostetler
- 13 Elizabeth Lochridge
- 14 Liesl Graber
- 14 Todd Hostetler
- 15 Jerry Landes
- 18 Jeanie Swartz
- 19 Neil Wirick
- 22 Becky Wilkins
- 24 Marla Longenecker
- 25 Bob Rabenstein Sr.
- 26 Carol Buck
- 26 Polly Thomas
- 28 Velma King
- 30 Michael Lehman
- 30 Robert Psolla
- 31 Wilfred Yoder

### April Birthdays

- 2 – Jacob Shank
- 3 – Christy Headings
- 5 – Maddie Thomas
- 6 – Carole Barrett
- 6 – Roger Headings
- 9 – Mark Thomas
- 18 – Karl Z. Smith
- 22 – Kip Loudon
- 23 – Kristyn Horn
- 23 – Ashley Rabenstein
- 24 – Annie Steiner
- 28 – Carl Newcomer
- 29 – Mike Roberts



## News from the Middle East

By Jacob Shank

This school year at EMU has involved both a fall semester on campus, in which I continued my studies in biology, and now, a spring semester studying abroad in the Middle East. During the fall semester my studies went well, and I am still happy with how I have been successfully moving along in my major. I played soccer again this fall, and although our team had an average year, it was a good season for me.

As for my spring semester in the Middle East, I have loved every minute of it and am looking forward to the remainder of the trip. The first week here we spent in Jordan, visiting the Red Sea, the Dead Sea, Petra, and Wadi Rum, where we camped in the desert for three days. We are currently living in Beit Sahour, Palestine, where we have been staying with host families for three weeks. It has been an amazing experience, and it certainly provides a new insight on the conflict that has been going on here for years, one that is unheard of in the US. It has left a big impact on me and the group. While in Palestine we have been taking Arabic lessons

## Anabaptist Gospelization-Part 1

By Pastor Rick Stoner

I sense that there is a deep hunger within the Mennonite Church today that is longing to burst out from the pews and building walls. For years we have been comfortable in our own Mennonite Christendoms, where we could go through an entire day and never have to associate with anyone outside of our Mennonite bubble. Yet, current trends suggest that this enclave living cannot be maintained if the church is going to grow and flourish. Beyond that, if we claim to be followers of Jesus, then we would see that creating our own Christian kibbutzim falls short of what Jesus is calling us to be as a community of faith.

This leads me to Anabaptist gospelization. It is my passion to think about and study and advocate for a form of evangelization, where we, as Mennonites, move from the “quiet in the land” to a people who boldly proclaim the gospel. I feel it is time to stop being allergic to sharing our faith and merge our deeds (which we are very comfortable with the service aspect of faith witness) and our words to form a holistic witness. This faith witness need not amputate the tradition which it emerges from, as if being Mennonite was some gangrenous appendage that is holding us back. Rather this is a rich faith tradition from which we can live out. However, we might need to prune away some of the cultural forms of our faith tradition to allow the vital life of our core to emerge.

So this might leave you wondering what is gospelization. It might sound like a foreign word, yet when it comes down to it: it is quite a natural phenomenon. Wibert Shenk defines it as, “The process by which the gospel takes hold of an individual or group and brings that person or group into rela-

each morning and have many lectures throughout the day from professors at Bethlehem University on a variety of topics related to Palestinian history and literature. We have also visited the shepherds fields where the angels gave the news of Jesus' birth, the Church of the Nativity, Herod's palace, Hebron, Taybeh, Jericho, and many more. When we leave, we will be entering Jerusalem, where we will study at Jerusalem University College for two weeks, followed by stays in Galilee, Nazareth, Turkey, Greece, and lastly, Italy. I look forward to coming back with many stories and a new perspective on life. I appreciate you keeping me in your thoughts and prayers during my time here.

I also would like to thank the Bethel congregation for your financial support through the last year, as it has been significantly helpful to both me and my family. I am privileged to be able to study at such a wonderful university, and the help that Bethel provides certainly aids in making this education and experience possible. For that I am thankful. With this said, I would greatly appreciate the continued financial support of the congregation, as the cost of education is continually rising. Any aid you could provide would be greatly appreciated by both me and my family.

tionship with Jesus the Messiah so that they, too, become Christ-like” (“Three Studies in Mission Strategy,” *Mission Focus* 14, 98). So the beginning stages of gospelization focus on how the gospel grabs a hold of us and transforms

us. However, it does not stop there. Gospelization must flow out of us, as we seek to live out the gospel which is living inside us.

In the end, Anabaptist gospelization isn't about formulas or the latest and most trendy church fads. This isn't something that is just an operational or structural change. Rather, Anabaptist gospelization is a traditioned way of “gospeling,” where the gospel enters our hearts like a song and is in the end is danced, sung, and lived out in our communities. It becomes a part of us that cannot be segregated or relegated to a private sphere of our lives. It cannot be contained in any church program either. No, Anabaptist gospelization involves the whole Body of Christ moving to the margins and being present there. It involves the whole Body of Christ daring to reach out to whole people and loving them. It thrives on multi-vocal worship that reforms and reshapes people into new creations. In short, Anabaptist gospelization becomes who we are; a people on pilgrimage in this life inviting other people to walk with us on the journey!

### March and April Wedding Anniversaries

- March 9, 1985 – Ken & Cheryl Shank
- March 17, 1973 – Chuck & Carol Buck
- April 5, 1997 – Mary & Bob Psolla
- April 13, 1969 – Donna & Dan Risner
- April 14, 1957 – Janice & Bob Rabenstein
- April 20, 1996 – Janet & Joe Wilkins
- April 27, 1996 – Dena & Todd Hostetler
- April 30, 1994 – Sandy & Steve Rabenstein



## Remembering Lyle Pratt

By Donna Lehman

Bethel had a memorial service for Lyle Pratt on February 16<sup>th</sup> following his death on January 29<sup>th</sup>. Lyle was born on November 13, 1924 in Muskegon, MI. Before his marriage to Mary Ann King 16 years ago, Muskegon was his hometown. Lyle was married to Ellen Sells from 1945 until her death in 1993. Lyle and Ellen were parents of six children; and upon his marriage to Mary Ann, he was blessed with six step children. From these children, he had 41 grandchildren and 22 great-grandchildren.

Lyle was an aircraft mechanic in the US Army Air Corps in WWII. He worked at Continental Motors for 43 years, retiring in 1986. He was a member of the First Church of the Nazarene in Muskegon, MI and attended Bethel in West Liberty, and when enjoying winter time in Florida, attended Sunny Breeze Christian Fellowship in Arcadia.

The following are some memories which were shared by several of his children, step children, or grandchildren.

Because of his number of children, he 'numbered' them, thus when he couldn't remember a name; he used a number—from 1 to 12!

Lyle didn't very often rebuff Mary Ann, but one day at dinner when they were having a store-bought frozen pizza, his response when asked to have a table prayer, "I don't think I will."

Basically, he was easy to cook for;

everyone knew when he was a house guest, his favorite course was meat loaf.

A grandchild said, she always called him 'Papa.' She loved to stay with Grandpa 'Papa;' he was a guardian angel on earth and now a guardian angel above.

One of his sons said as a very young child, his dad rebuilt their house from the basement up; he learned through those values from Lyle to in later years build his own house.

In high school, our dad was always there; always a part of what he did; if we were in sports, he always attended, and helped with school projects as needed.

A grandchild valued fishing times in Grandpa Lyle; he was willing to sit for hours and hours, just putting the worms on the hooks and removing the fish for us.

Lyle grew up in a Christian home, if there were revival meetings, his family were faithful attenders. Growing up, they would often go to the Maranatha Camp Grounds near Muskingham. He used to tell how, as a child, he and his sister would run around in the woods looking for the Holy Ghost!

Lyle taught SS for many years, teaching both children and in later years, adults.

Studying, Bible reading, singing and prayer were an important part of Lyle's life. He would urge you to walk 'humbly with your Lord.' He gave his family a heritage of faith.

## Bethel/Oak Grove Mennonite Women

By Donna Lehman, MW Secretary

January and February had no cancellations because of ice or snow...so this group had meetings as planned. The January meeting featured a Mexican meal with enchilada casseroles, and the tables were bright as the striped Mexican blankets were used for table cloths. Hostesses were Jeanie Swartz, Natalie Evans, and Rudelle Mathews. At that meeting, the devotional time centered on verses and thoughts relating to 'Do Not Fear'. 22 were in attendance.

Then in February, we had sack lunches, but our hostesses for the day made sure we filled in gaps in those lunches as they served sugar cookies, chocolate pudding and of

course Valentines candies. Thanks to Nellie Lindemer and Wanda Shumaker, our hostesses.

We welcomed a guest, Barbara Gant, who is involved in a MW project called 'Sister Care.' It's a program in which women work in ways to be compassionate in working with others. There will be a 'Sister Care' weekend at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton on April 26<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>. Anyone interested should talk with Mary Psolla. 26 were in attendance.

Besides time spent in fellowship, there was the following accomplished: 3 baby comforters, 3 health kits, 5 newborn bundles, and 5 comforters.

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bethelchurchwl.org



### *Purpose of our Newsletter*

Its purpose is three-fold:

- Inform** the church about events
- Acquaint** persons who attend Bethel with each other
- Inspire** us to Christ-like living

The newsletter will be published January, March, May, July, September and December by the Administrative Assistant.


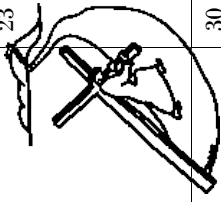

# MARCH 2013

W BS= Women's Bible Study

BHH= Bethel Homework Help

COCO=Coordinating Council

P & J= Peace & Justice Lunch

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3 Lent 3 2p Abraham's Lot & God's GIRLS 6p Guess Who's Coming to Dinner? 	4	5 915a W BS 12p P&J Lunch 3-5p BHH	6 <i>Erin Out of the Office</i> 11a WL Cares pantry 7p Youth BS	7 3-5p BHH 7p Ministry of Worship	8 9a Pastoral Care Team ACA_____	9 8a King's Daughters _____
10 <i>Daylight Savings ends</i> Lent 4	11	12 <i>Erin returns</i> 9a Mennonite Women 3-5p BHH	13 11a WL Cares pantry 7p Youth BS	14 3-5p BHH	15 11a WL Cares pantry 6p F5 Fundraiser	16
17 Lent 5 2p Abraham's Lot & God's GIRLS 6p Youth & Mentors	18	19 915a W BS 12p P&J Lunch 3-5p BHH	20 11a WL Cares pantry 7p Youth BS	21 3-5p BHH 7p COCO	22 	23
24 Lent 6 Palm Sunday	25 	26	27 11a WL Cares pantry 4:15 Our Daily Bread	28 Maundy Thursday	29 11-4 Blood Drive TBD Community Good Friday Service	30
31 <i>Easter</i> Sunrise Service Breakfast 10:40a Worship	But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man....For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death." <p style="text-align: right;">1 Corinthians 15:20-26</p>					