



Sabbatical Review

By Pastor Dave Maurer

This summer my family and I were very blessed and are very thankful to have had a family renewal sabbatical. In the midst of my weekly ministry responsibilities, evenings at home with the family can be a rarity and times to worship with my family without other responsibilities are few and far between. Many people tell us to take advantage of this time while our children are young because it goes by so quickly, and we do make intentional choices to work at that. Yet this extended, focused time is something that our family will always have to help carry us through the more hectic times in ministry that come with the territory.

That is why I made my primary goal for this season spending time with family. So often when the kids ask to do something, I say, “no, “not right now,” or “maybe another time.” During my sabbatical, I said “yes” or “in a minute” and stuck to that. We went fishing, camping, hiking, rode bikes, played games, and went to various places. After all how can I be an effective minister of the Word, if in the process I leave my family behind in shambles?

My secondary goal was rest and renewal for myself. As an introvert who is called to minister in settings that require “extroverted energy,” my batteries can easily

run low at times. On top of that, I live in a family of extroverts (yes, I would even say that our 10 month old is already an extrovert). In many ways this is a wonderful blessing. At the same time, it also means that family life does not leave much space to recharge. I’m sure that many of you either experience similar realities or “remember those days” too. So within this extended time with family, I also had two weeks, one at the beginning and one at the end of the summer, in which I spent time in silence and solitude. From those times, I was reenergized to more fully engage with my family and now with the ministry that God has called me to at Bethel.

“...I feel very blessed to have received this gift from my congregation and am very thankful to them for it and for who they are as a family of God.”

—Pastor Dave, taken from his August 31st blog post.

<http://thequest.blogspot.com>

Looking back, these were the goals that I needed to accomplish at this time in my journey; and I believe that I did so. And yet, it was a challenge at

times as a very task oriented, goal setting individual not to be taken in by everything else that I could have accomplished with 3 months of “unstructured time.” Many of those things would have been very good and beneficial, and yet they are also things that I can do later or that have limited application. While spending time with my family and resting was planting seeds that I trust will lead to a fruitful harvest in the months and years to come. As such, the other goals that I had became “icing on the cake,” if I did anything with them at all.

Reflections continued on another Page 4.

Five Practices of a Fruitful Congregation

Starting Wednesday, September 26th, there will be a meal and discussion from “Cultivating Fruitfulness: a Five Week study of Practice and Prayer” from 6-7pm. This is a daily devotional guide, similar to Rejoice, that goes along with the sermon series Five Practices of a Fruitful Congregation and encourages us to reflect together on our congregational vision. The Wednesday discussions will be based on the topic of the upcoming Sunday. The topics include Radical Hospitality, Passionate Worship,

Intentional Faith Development (Nurture), Risk Taking Mission and Service, and Extravagant Generosity (Stewardship).

Please sign up for your own copy of the devotional on the bulletin board by **September 16th**. Please join us on these Wednesdays for a church provided meal and discussion on how to be a fruitful congregation and individual.

The Wednesdays include 9/26, 10/3, 10/10, 10/17, and 10/24.



Summer Success! Check out what Bethel accomplished this summer

Intergenerational Sunday School By Jerry Landes

During the summer a group of 20-30 people from high school to senior citizens, met in the fellowship room each Sunday for the intergenerational SS class. The first Sunday we discussed the themes from the Minor Prophet sermon and Bible study series. It appears that we could say the message of the prophets and Jesus could be summed up in Micah's words asking, "What more could be asked of us, but to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God," and the words of Jesus when he said "Love God and Love your neighbor." Each Sunday after this first session we listened to what some modern day prophets are saying. As we watched DVDs with Max Lucado, Shane Clairborne, June Alliman Yoder, Mandy Yoder Schrock, and Al Gore, we heard the same themes that we heard from the Old Testament prophets and Jesus. Each of these prophets, in their own way and in different situations, encouraged us to give hope to those who are suffering in the world. As we listened to these messages, we discussed how we might respond at Bethel and in our community. We also talked about how people of faith should (or should not) speak to the government relating to these issues. The class represented different ideas, and it was good to listen to thoughts, feelings, and ideas that might be different from our own. Perhaps this was the most exciting aspect of our summer series—being able to enter into dialogue with our brothers and sisters in a non-traditional group. Thanks to each person for your participation.

Bethel Soccer Camp July 23-26



31 youth participated in camp this year from all over! Youth traveled from Quincy, Waynesfield, Urbana, West Liberty, and Indianapolis. The ages ranged from 5 to 10, K-5th grade. Randy Keeler, a professor from Bluffton and former soccer coach, co-coached with Pastor Rick. The week was a ministry for the youth in that they were building their skills in an affirming environment and coaches model God's love through service and positive role models. Thank you to Carl Newcomer, Ed Lehman, Brody Robinaugh, Alex Dye, and James Lochridge for helping coach. Parents stayed during the practice hours, and many from Bethel came out to talk with them.

Red Cross Blood Drive at Bethel August 9th

The goal was 18 units and... we collected 22 units of blood that potentially can help 66 people! Thank you to all from Bethel who donated blood and goodies. Special thanks to Dena Hostetler, Janice Rabenstein, and Ellen Steiner for their hospitality to donors. The Red Cross found the food "very tasty" and feel confident about Bethel as a good location to schedule at in the future.

Reflections on VBS: Take me to the Water By Beth Maurer, VBS Director

Vacation Bible School at Bethel Mennonite Church is not your typical VBS. Perhaps that is why I love it so much. As I think back on the week of June 11-15, I am struck by how unusual and unique Bethel's VBS is from many other churches. I am inspired by the focus that our congregation places not just on organizing and holding VBS for Bethel's children and youth, but also how our VBS fills other needs. Looking back I see the way VBS at Bethel draws past Bethel members home. Many of the kids that attended VBS this year were the children of Bethelites that have moved into other areas and sometimes even other states. For the past 4 years that I have helped and lead VBS I have watched grandchildren and children of extended Bethel members be nurtured and grow thanks to Bethel's VBS. So often I hear the cry that young people are leaving our churches and not returning. VBS seems to draw Bethelites home, if even for a short time. I have also been blessed to see our VBS fill the need of congregations that do not have the resources to support their own VBS. This year we had children from at least two Mennonite congregations attend Bethel's VBS because their church was not having vacation bible school, and their families wanted their children to experience VBS from a Mennonite perspective. Some may wonder if VBS still has a role to fill at Bethel. I say yes! Perhaps we need to remember to look outside of the box and allow God to work in all of the wonderful ways that God can. Thank you Bethel for being unique.

We heard many stories from parents about how much they appreciated the camp and how their youth were enjoying it. Youth (and coaches) enjoyed the popsicle break each evening and the ice cream celebration the last night of camp.





Penny Power Project

You collected your loose change this summer and it amounted to much! Money raised made clean water possible in Mozambique. Through some innocent competition, Ruby's jar raised \$556.77 and Roy's jar raised \$623.57. and the congregation as a whole raised...**\$1830.34!** If .50 cents feeds a family a day, look what we have done together.



Intergenerational Montreal Service Trip

13 from Bethel attended the service trip up north June 22-30. With a home base at the MCC house in Montreal, the group served at multiple locations. At Casa C.A.F.I they rearranged office space, painted a large shelving unit, and set up for a sale they were having. At Chambre Clerc, a housing development/program for homeless people struggling with addiction, they cleaned the common living spaces (i.e. the bathrooms and kitchens). At Maison de L'Amitié (House of Friendship) they pulled weeds out of flower beds, hauled the weeds to composting areas, built a planter box, moved bricks, making signs for farmer's market, and walking/biking around with those signs to advertise for farmer's market.

Some of the interesting people they

interacted with included two ladies who were Hispanic immigrants to Montreal at CASA C.A.F.I. One of the leaders at Chambre Clerc had a background in computers, but wanted to work with the agency so as to help make a difference.

This trip wasn't just about service. As an intergenerational group, the trip offered an opportunity for shared experiences and bonding within Bethel family. During free time, the group hiked to a city overlook, attended the national celebration on Jean Baptist Day and Jazz Festival, saw the exact replica of Notre Dame, played card games, went to a Montreal Impact soccer game, and saw Niagara Falls on the way home.

Read more on participants favorite memories on Page 4.



Summer Summary

By Rick Stoner

I am truly excited to think about the way the Lord is moving in and through Bethel. This summer I had the opportunity to step into a new leadership role as Pastor Dave was on sabbatical. During this time, I found that the Lord challenged me to let go of myself and my fears and allow God simply to use me. Additionally, I found that this summer was a time of testing out spiritual gifts for further ministry opportunities in the future. I am truly grateful to Bethel for all the support of the congregation, and I think that God is preparing Bethel for its next step in the faith journey of this congregation.

With all that said, this summer's theme of "Seek Peace and Pursue It" provided several opportunities for us as a congregation to reflect on the idea of God's peace and how we are to live as witnesses to it. This peace cannot be reduced to any simple formula, nor can we just think about it in terms of the absence of conflict. Instead, we must realize that as witness to God's peace we need to be working towards spreading God's love and wholeness to those who are hurting and broken. If I were to highlight some major themes from this summer I would begin with

sight. Without God's vision for peace we simply cannot begin to move. It is hard to walk after God if our eyes are focused on ourselves or closed because of fear. This leads to another huge theme: FEAR. We must let go of our fears and allow God to use us as instruments of peace. As we do this we will find that we are transformed through the intersections of interaction that we have with those around us. Finally, there is always the balance between being and doing. By this I mean that as we allow ourselves to be transformed by God's presence, we must then turn around and live out this transformation and share it. Now I recognize that the being and doing cannot be easily divided and often times flow into each other, yet we cannot emphasize one to the exclusion of the other.

As I look back on this summer, I pray that we can continue to build on what God is doing here at Bethel. Let us not settle for complacent comfort. Let's stand up and walk after our Lord. Let's seek God's peace and pursue it!

Thank you Rick, from all of us at Bethel, for your extra work this summer! The summer overall was a great success!

Montreal Trip continued...

My favorite memory from the trip was...

Alex Steiner— “...Our lunch at our service location and talking to our hosts.”

Annie Steiner— “...The feeling that we were getting a chance to escape from the world for a little bit.”

Becky Wilkins— “...Seeing Niagara Falls.”

Michael Lehman— “...Playing video games at Alex’s cousins house.”

Savannah Hostetler— “...Trying escargot (snails).”

Janet Wilkins— “...Exploring Montreal with the group, riding the metro, having meals together, and hearing French spoken all around! But the least favorite memory was climbing two flights of stairs every evening to sleep on the floor.”

Doug Steiner— “...Getting to know the two ladies at our work site. They were from Central American countries and

taught us about their culture, religion and work. They were excellent hostesses and always served us snacks and a great lunch each day. The fact they were so kind to us made the other groups from our church jealous, but that had nothing to do with how good we felt about our work site!”

Ellen Steiner— “...Seeing Marie Eve’s face brighten up when she learned we had traveled all the way to Montreal to help others. She couldn’t believe we were willing to travel so far for a service trip! Also, singing “Allez, Allez, Allez” (“Let’s go, Let’s go, Let’s go”) at the Montreal/Toronto soccer game with the youth group and the rest of the crowd, even though it didn’t help since Montreal got beat 3-0.”

Cheryl Shank— “My favorite part of the Montreal Service trip was watching the youth enjoy the people & city and hearing some of them try to speak French. I enjoyed working at Maison de l’Amitié (where Ken and I had worked in 1986 - 1988), walking the streets, listening to the language, riding the metro, tasting different foods and just seeing how God is at work within the large city. We all had stories from the different places we worked and had good talks while interacting with the 3 IVEP girls in the house where we stayed. Thanks to Rick and the youth for asking me to be part of this experience.”

Sabbatical Review cont.

As you may have read in my blog, <http://thequest.blogspot.com> (which is still available), I also did “do” a number of things. I read (including our congregational history), exercised, gardened and worked on scripture memory. All of these things were good, but all of these things are also a danger to me in my life as a “doer” if they get out of balance. I am a person who tends to gain a sense of self worth from accomplishing things. While God does call us to do things and it is important to put our faith into action, God also calls us to “be,” to “be still and know that God is God,” to dwell in the love of God that we receive because of who we are as God’s creation, rather than because we have earned it. God calls us to receive our pri-

mary sense of self worth from Him, rather from what we do or what we have or who we know.

As we enter into another church year and as we prepare to focus more deeply on our congregational vision with the Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations study, I invite each one of us to consider, as honestly as possible, where is it that we get our sense of self worth from. Is it from God our creator, or from some other external reality? And are we spending out time on the things of life that really matter or on superficial realities that are like the earthly treasures that moth and rust destroy (Matt 6:19-21).

Maurer Family Reflects on the Summer

The whole Maurer family enjoyed the family renewal sabbatical. See what they enjoyed the most.

Elam- “Going fishing.”

Maggie- “Going camping at Hocking Hills as a family”

Josiah- “Going to the water park hotel.”



Silas- “Getting two bottom teeth and spending lots of quality time with Daddy.”

Beth- “Getting to spend extended, long periods of time all together.”



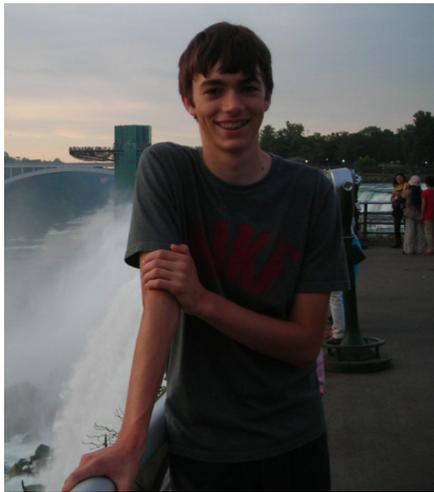
Meet our newest member: Michael Lehman

By Erin Dye

Michael, son of Gary and Kathy Lehman, is a 15 year old sophomore at West Liberty-Salem and the newest member at Bethel. He was baptized in the Mad River this past spring on Sunday, May 27th.

Michael's favorites include pizza, the movie *The Dark Knight*, Buffalo Wild Wings, and verse Philippians 4:13— "I can do all things through Christ because he gives me strength."

His hobbies include cross country and playing video games. One of the most exciting things that happened for him in the last month was attending cross country camp.



His best memory from the summer was going on the Montreal Service trip.

Michael admires Michael Jordan "because he is awesome."

Within the next five years, he plans on graduating high school and attending college.

He felt it was time to get baptized because over the years he has learned much about God through the church and decided it was time to get baptized. He feels baptism will help him get closer to God.

What he enjoys most about Bethel is "the happy people."

Bethel/Oak Grove Mennonite Women

By Donna Lehman, MW Secretary

This group met two times since last newsletter (no meeting in June because of Bible School). At our July meeting, we had an attendance of 25 and enjoyed a summer picnic meal with those good picnic things like hot dogs, salads, and chips. In August, we had a 'garden potluck;' persons brought in dishes made with those refreshing summer items—zucchini, berries, and green beans, etc. with 30 in attendance. The August meeting was the last of the series we've been having on our 'Faith Journeys.' Next year we will sharing

'WOW' verses—meaningful scripture verses through the years. Annabelle Hostetler and Janice Rabenstein shared with Faith journeys in those two meetings. We also had a representative from the Red Cross who showed us the importance of having a 'Vial of Life' stored in your freezer with list of medicine, etc. so the EMS has access to such information.

Work completed: 7 comforters, 2 health kits, 22 school kits.



Thank you to James Lochridge for his added help this summer. We are blessed he chose to do his internship with us!

Congratulations

Esther and Stewart Nafziger!

The happy couple was married Saturday, August 18th at the home of Cheryl and Kenny Shank. The couple will move back to Harrisonburg, VA where Esther will be an admissions councilor at EMU and Stewart will start the Master of Counseling program in January.



What's New

Pastor Rick's Evaluation

Please take time to complete the evaluation sheets in your box for Pastor Rick's three year evaluation. Return evaluations to Pastor Dave's box by **Sunday, September 30th**.

**Annual Business Meeting
Sunday, October 21st**

Mark your calendars! The meeting will start at 6pm with a light meal provided. **Please submit your reports by September 9th** to Erin's box.

West Liberty Cares Food Pantry: September

This month is Bethel's turn to host the food pantry. Please sign up for one of the four Wednesdays or the Saturday the pantry is open. Arrive by 10:30am at South Union Mennonite Church to make phone calls before clients arrive at 11am.

'A.C.'

By Donna Lehman, Bethel Historian

We've had quite a few HOT days this summer, but when we come to Church our sanctuary is quite comfortable. This hasn't always been the case. How did people get along B.A.C.? (before air conditioning?) Let's go back in time. First of all, we had to open the windows! In every hymn book rack in the pews, there were 'hand fans.' There were gifts (actually ads) from the local funeral homes; Troyer-Lynn or Wilkins. (Wise; if you passed out in the heat, you'd know who to call!) And, it was a common thing to stick to the pews—which in earlier days were not padded.

Evidently, we needed a change, so in 1982, the circulating ceiling fans were installed. These were a great help, but

From the Library...

Librarian Jeannette Hostetler

Five youth books were donated for girls ages 8-12. A series called Sisters in Time. They look inviting and fun and can be found in the children's library.

Three new books in the Believers Church Bible Commentary Series have been added for study. 1,2,3 John, 1,2 Peter, Jude, and Joshua.

Neta Jackson has a series on "sister" books and "yada, yada." We have the Yada, Yada House of Hope and Stand By Me-Souled Out Sisters. Let Jeannette know if you'd like to add any more of them. The West Liberty Library has them available also.

Two additional books, "Choose Joy because Happiness Isn't Enough" and "Relentless Good Bye" are now in the hallway.

The library is always open for recommendations.

Jeannette would like to pull the Jeannette Oke books and give them to Homework Help children. Please let her know if you have any hesitation.

The Rodney, Liesl, and Larissa

Graber can be reached at:

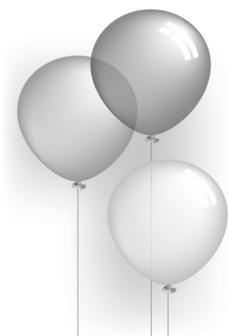
3773 Peter Paul Ln.

Dayton, VA 22821

still required open windows. That was nice, you could hear the birds sing, but sometimes noisy vehicles or motorcycles could be a little annoying. But, all those outdoor sounds, hand fans and willing window-openers were a thing of the past when air conditioning was installed in the sanctuary in 2000. So, for what has been a hot summer, thanks to the Trustees at the time; Mark Kauffman, Ken Hostetler, Ken Shank and Dean Horn from Stewardship; we've had AC. Well, it isn't a cure-all. Can you believe, some people are not too cold, or still too hot (they miss those funeral home fans!), but for others, it's just right!

August birthdays

2 – Janet Wilkins
 3 – Michelle Link
 3 – Bill Shumaker
 10 – Patrick Graber
 12 – Matt King
 12 – Mary Psolla
 17 – Randy Longenecker
 18 – Art Newcomer
 23 – Cody Buck
 23 – Harry Graber
 23 – Jane Core Thomas
 24 – Pam Webb
 26 – Sally Harshbarger
 29 – Sam J. Plank

**September**

2 – Darryl Snyder
 3 – Byron Kauffman
 5 – Levi Schultz
 7 – Chuck Buck
 12 – Rick Norviel
 12 – Rita Roberts
 14 – Linda Hostetler
 18 – Maggie Maurer
 20 – Deanna Kauffman
 21 – Cheryl Shank
 24 – Rachel Snyder
 26 – Dean Horn
 26 – Suzanne Horner
 26 – Barb Kauffman
 26 – Daniel Lehman
 26 – Jessica Stoner
 27 – Jim Burkett
 28 – Greg Hostetler
 29 – Ellen Steiner
 30 – Logan Link

October

4 – Dennis Sanford
 11 – Abigail Rabenstein
 12 – Mary Ann Pratt
 16 – Sarah Hostetler
 17 – Eileen Botkin
 22 – Greg Thomas
 22 – James Lochridge
 22 – Lela Faye Graber
 26 – Joanna Hostetler
 29 – Collin Link
 30 – Dave Link
 31 – David Hostetler

August and October Wedding 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

Oct. 19, 1947 – Roy & Ruby Byler
 Oct. 22, 2000 – Karl & Phyllis Smith
 Oct. 28, 1978 – Larry & Barbara Evans

**Mark your
calendars! The
annual CROP
walk will be
Sunday, October
7th starting at
the Bellefontaine
Court House at
1pm.**

Bethel Mennonite Church

416 Washington St.
 PO Box 549
 West Liberty, OH 43357

Email Addresses:
 Pastor Dave Maurer
 bethelpastor@2access.net

Pastor Rick Stoner
 bethelyp@2access.net

Administrative Assistant,
 Erin Dye
 secretary@2access.net

We're on the web!
 Check out:
 bethelchurchwl.org



Purpose of our Newsletter

This newsletter is published in February, April, June, September, and December by the Administrative Assistant.

Its purpose is three-fold:

-**Inform** the church about events

-**Acquaint** persons who attend Bethel with each other

-**Inspire** us to Christ-like living