

Bethel Mennonite Church

Celebrating 125 Years

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January 2015

Newsletter

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Bethel Youth Working Hard for Kansas Trip

Cheryl Shank

First, we want to thank the congregation for supporting our trip to the youth convention in Kansas City this summer. We worked at 4 different locations in November doing odd jobs for the 'rent-a-youth' fundraiser. A combined effort for these 2 Saturdays included Doug, Ellen, Darin and I along with Alex, Annie, Michael, Daniel, Savannah, Stephen and Trace. We did leaf raking, trimming bushes, picking up branches, cleaning out gutters,



stacking firewood and tidying up flower beds. It proved to be good timing since 2 days later, it snowed and school was canceled 2 days. Also during November, the youth provided desserts after the mission meals. Kim Lehman helped to organize this 'fundraiser'.

We meet twice a month, along with working at Our Daily Bread. In December, I challenged the group to try and keep a 'time diary' for 5 days, recording what they did throughout each day. At the next meeting, I asked, "What would a total stranger learn about you if they found your time diary, and decided to read it?" We had a good discussion! My new challenge was to deliberately place themselves in a position where they have to wait.

Our Sunday School class has been using "A speck in the universe," a Brethren Press and MennoMedia publication, focusing on what the Bible had to say about self-esteem and peer pressure.

Finally, since we are planning to travel with the Oak Grove youth group to convention this summer, Alex Dye and I have been looking at opportunities for the youth to get together for social activities. On Dec. 13th we had a combined Christmas party at Oak Grove. It was a great evening of games, eating and talking. Be sure to ask Alex, Michael and Stephen about the graham cracker house activity.

Gods Girls

by Kristyn Horn

Our Gods G.I.R.L.S. are a great, spirited group. Great thoughts come from these 3, sometimes 4 or 5 girls. My greatest joy from leading the girls, sometimes in Beth's absence, is just Growing In Relationships Like Sisters.



We did an X Factor lesson, teaching them that life is like a cooking contest with God. We made ice cream in cans, and tested which was the best ice cream. Jerry Landes was the Honorary God's Girl, because he was the only guy who stopped in the church that day. The girls also learned how to crochet gifts (scarves) for Christmas.

Announcements:

♦ **Our Quasiquicentennial Year begins this month!** There will be videos, special historical facts, as well as special guests and other surprises all throughout the year as we celebrate 125 years at Bethel.

♦ **The Next Red Cross Blood Drive will be held January 30th** from 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Please note that the change in hours is due to many requests for an earlier donation time. Contact Linda Roth if you are able to help.

♦ **A Ladies Scarf Brunch will be held January 31st** at 9:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. We will enjoy a brunch, and then learn different scarf tying techniques. Please invite friends, and RSVP to Barb Landes or Tesa by January 24, 2015.

MDS Needs

by Dick Lindemer

There are many needs and locations available with MDS. The closest site currently to us is Detroit, MI., mucking out flooded basements. The work started August 11 with 103 volunteers to date. About 200 more homes are still in need of this cleaning. Please contact me if you would like more details. The following are listed as urgent needs on the MDS web-site:

VOLUNTEER NEEDS FOR JANUARY

High River, Alberta:

Assistant Cook (Jan. 5 - 30)

Crew Leader (Jan. 5 - 30)

Far Rockaway, NY:

Assistant Cook (Jan. 7 - 30)

Crew Leader (Jan. 7 - 30)

Jamestown, CO:

Crew Leader (Jan. 3 - 30)

For information about week-long or long-term (one month or longer) volunteer opportunities, call (800) 241-8111 or e-mail ahurst@mds.mennonite.net.

There are other ways to help if you cannot volunteer! Contributions may be sent to: MDS 583 Airport Road, Lititz, PA 17543. You may also designate a contribution through your offerings on Sunday morning by writing For MDS in the memo portion of your check.



(Top) The youth dramas during Advent were a blessed addition to the worship service. Thanks to all who helped!

(Bottom) 17 Carolers met on Dec. 21st and caroled for just over two hours to residents of Green Hills and various West Liberty Residents.



Noteworthy Dates

January Anniversaries

Jan. 14, 1966 – Nellie & Dick Lindemer

Jan. 16, 1965 – Jeannette & Jim Hostetler

Jan. 25, 1980 – Deanna & Mark Kauffman

January Birthdays

5 – Chuck Swartz

8 – Bill Barrett

10 – Bob VanOsdol

12 – Kyle VanOsdol

14 – Steve Rabenstein

19 – Kathi Robinaugh

19 – Tara Sanford

21 – Trace Robinaugh

22 – Jeanette Hostetler

26 – Wanda Shumaker

31 – Pat Yoder

Contact Information:

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Pastor: Dave Maurer

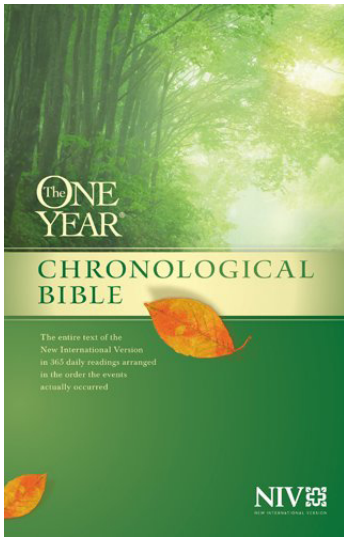
Youth Pastor: Cheryl Shank

Administrative Assistant: Tesa Jordan

Next Newsletter Deadline: Jan. 20, 2015

“Through the Bible in a Year...Chronologically”

by Pastor Dave Maurer



Are you making any New Year's resolutions this year? How about joining us in committing to read through the Bible together? Many of us have read through the whole Bible before on our own; but how many of us have done it with a group of people, let alone our congregation? As we look to the year ahead, Bethel's council is inviting everyone to join together in a journey through the whole of scripture. Doing so will provide healthy accountability and opportunity for meaningful discussion about shared readings.

We believe that the Bible is more than a manual for life. It is also an instrument for our formation. As we dwell with God's word, we are shaped both individually and as a community together. And this happens best when we immerse ourselves into the divine narrative regularly and in community.

Last year we spent time together in prayer for our year of discernment. Now as we enter into a year of celebrating our 125 year history as a congregation, we desire to share in a corporate journey through scripture. As we journey together reading the same passages on the same day, we trust that our lives together will be enriched and nurtured by opportunities to reflect in community on our shared journey through the Bible.

To do this, we will be using the NIV One Year Chronological Bible. This approach to scripture arranges the NIV text into daily 15 minute readings that are in chronological order (rather than canonical order). Thus the order is based on when things happened rather than which book they fit into. This means, for instance, that when we read of events in David's life, we will also read the Psalms that connect to these events. We hope that along with the discipline of reading through the whole Bible, this approach will provide a fresh window into our shared journey and give us a better sense of the arc of God's ongoing narrative.

People may choose to purchase a copy of the NIV One Year Chronological Bible (ISBN 978-1-4143-5993-9) to guide them through this journey. The advantage to buying this Bible is that the daily readings are grouped together and laid out for you. Those who would prefer to use their own Bibles may do that as well. A yearlong guide booklet is available in print or as a PDF from the church office and Tesa has made a larger print version of this guide as well.

Each week the bulletin and my blog will include questions for reflection. These may be used individually or in groups such as Sunday school or small groups. The readings may serve as your daily devotions or for additional reading. We also intend from time to time to incorporate the passages in our Sunday worship services. May God bless and guide, shape and transform us individually and as a body and we dwell deeply with God's word in the year ahead.

Peace & Justice Busy Serving This Fall

by Barbara Kauffman

The peace and justice lunch group was instrumental in planning the mission Sunday with Saulo Padilla and in arranging for further time with him after lunch. He helped us to understand more about immigration in general, offered statistics, spoke of MCC's involvement at the border, and answered questions from the group.

We also sponsored a food drive for Veterans and those items were delivered to the Veterans Resource Center in Springfield on December 15th. This Center provides a variety of services to Veterans in Champaign, Clark and Miami counties.

As a group, we are concentrating on 4 main topics and have divided these topics among us. We bring current informa-

tion, on our particular topic, to each meeting to share with the group. The topics are Syria, Israel/Palestine, Immigration and Veterans.



We have a DVD, Jesus Weeps, available for sharing. This is a recent discussion on the Israel-Palestine issues by Mennonites who have lived and worked in the area in the recent past.

We encouraged alternative or additional Christmas gift giving by making pamphlets and web sites available from MCC, MMN, MEDA, and Heifer International.

We did not meet in December, but anticipate gathering again on January 6th at noon. The group is open to all.

From the Editor

Tesa Jordan

Admittedly, I feel like a novice when it comes to praying. I can remember the first time my dad asked me to say Grace at our dinner table. I had been saying the “God is great, God is good” prayer as a child, and he told me that I had grown out of that prayer and that I should just pray as my older siblings and he and mom did. I was mortified! I had no idea what to say. I stumbled through something very awkwardly that night, but each time it was my turn, the prayers caught in my throat.

My Spirituality has always been deeply personal to me, and I still find it very difficult to share my thoughts out loud without some notes to go by. So a few years ago, when I stumbled onto the 5 Finger Prayer, I was thrilled!

This past Lenten season, when people were talking about what they would ‘give up’ for Lent, I took a different path and decided instead to GIVE something. I put a cover picture on my facebook page and publicly invited anyone who saw it to send me their prayer requests, and offered to pray for them during Lent. I received requests from around the globe and was quite busy some mornings! Amazingly, most of them didn’t give me a specific thing to pray for, but as I prayed for them I felt lead in my prayer to offer up some pretty specific requests.

As we enter the New Year, I invite you to consider using the 5 Finger Prayer as a guide one day a week and watch your how your life is blessed by it.

The Five Finger Prayer

1. Our thumb is nearest to us...Begin your prayers by praying for those closest to you. They’re the easiest to remember. While praying for our loved ones is easy the Bible also tells us to pray for our enemies who, in a negative way, are also near us. Matthew 5:44-But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.

2. The next is our pointer finger...Pray for those who teach, instruct, and heal. This includes teachers, doctors, and ministers (it’s these people who tend to “point” the way). They need support and wisdom in pointing others in the right direction. Keep them in your prayers, these men and women have great influence on society and we should pray that they display and teach Godly principles in all they do.

3. Next is our tallest finger...It reminds us of our leaders. Pray for the president, leaders in business, industry, and administrators. These people shape our nation and guide public opinion, they need God’s guidance. When the king of Nineveh prayed to God he saved his nation from destruction (Jonah 3:6-10). We should pray that our decision makers have repentant hearts and seek God’s will as

they lead us.

4. Fourth is our ring finger...which is surprisingly our weakest finger, as any piano teacher will testify. It should remind us to pray for those who are ill, weak, in trouble, or in pain. They need your prayers day and night.

5. Last is our little finger...The smallest finger of all. Which is where we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. As the Bible says, “...for the one who is least among all of you, this is the one who is great.” (Luke 9:48) Your pinky should remind you to pray for yourself. By the time you have prayed for the other 4 groups, your own needs should be put into proper perspective. We should be asking forgiveness for our sins, thanking God for our many blessings, and last laying out what is on our heart and asking that His will be done in our life.

Mennonite Women

by Donna Lehman

The Mennonite Women’s group enjoyed two wintery days together: Nov. 11th and Dec. 9th. Of course, the November meeting was “pumpkin-y” so tables were decorated alike and a pumpkin pie cake was served for dessert. Following lunch, Mary Psolla shared a devotional “Practicing Presence-Through Weeping”. Biblical examples are Mary & Martha on the death of Lazarus: Jesus wept-then brought life. How do we relate to those who mourn? Attendance was 21.

In December, the tables were decorated with Mary, Joseph and the Baby Jesus, and candy canes were in the greenery for each one present. This was a busy day. Half of the group decorated cookies in the kitchen for Adriel and Bethel’s Homework Help. We enjoyed brunch at 10:30 with several breakfast casseroles, quiches, fruit and bread. A short meeting with devotions followed the Christmas theme as Barb Schultz shared on “I Am the Light of the World.” Attendance was 25.

Work completed: 16 health kit bags filled (12 bags sewed); 4 comforters; 3 baby comforters, (6 baby comforters were given to Hi Point Women’s Center); 750 Box Tops for Education/Campbell Labels sent to Hopi Mission School; 360 cookies iced! Our January meal will be “stone soup.” Attendees are asked to bring 1 cup of cut up raw veggies.

Sojourner’s Social Evening

by Donna Lehman

Eighteen members of the Sojourner’s SS Class gathered at the home of Byron and Barbara Kauffman’s for our annual “Christmas Carol Sing” on the evening of Friday, Dec. 19th. It’s always enjoyable to have the opportunity to sing the wonderful hymns we only sing at Christmas. Then, after an hour plus of enjoying singing of Jesus’ birth, we enjoyed fellowship together and sharing different morsels which were carried in, along with Barb’s hot drinks. Joy to the World!