

# Bethel Quarterly News



Fall 2010  
Volume 33, Issue 3

## NOVEMBER WEEKENDS WILL FEATURE MISSION THEMES

As part of this year's mission month activities at Bethel, we will host Doug Hostetter the weekend of November 13-14. He is Director of the Mennonite Central Committee United Nations Liaison Office in New York City, and an ordained peace pastor in the Mennonite church.

The weekend will include a Saturday session at 7:00 p.m. on the topic, *God's Way of Peace in a Time of War*. The discussion will focus on conscientious objection with youth and others who are interested in knowing more about the topic or ways they can help those considering conscientious objection.

On Sunday morning, a joint Sunday School class on the topic, *War as the Last Idol*, will look at the way in which nationalism and ideology have been used to call for our ultimate allegiance, the idol in place of the God of all peoples and nations.

Later during the worship service, Doug will deliver the message, *And Who is my Neighbor?*, on the Great Commandment and the story of the Good Samaritan. Following the noon potluck meal, Doug will lead one more session on the topic, *Living Peace: Stories of Radical Christian Peacemaking from Vietnam to Iran*.

**Mark these dates on your calendar now, and plan to attend these special mission events.**

Doug has spent his life working for non-governmental organizations in Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, Europe and the United States. He is also the past Director of the New England Office of the American Friends Service Committee and the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Nyack, NY, and was the Resource Specialist for Peace for the United Methodist Office for the UN. Doug is a sociologist and has taught at Northwestern University in Evanston, IL and Goshen (IN) College. He has published widely on the issues of war, peace and nonviolence.

**November 7 and 21 will also feature local missions and speakers, including Mark and Polly Thomas, who will share their three-month experience at the Haggai Institute in Hawaii, and Rick and Jessica Stoner, who have done various service projects. A noon meal, related to the mission theme in some way, will be served each of the first three Sundays of the month. And, as in year's past, a special offering will be taken for mission projects, local and worldwide. More details will be available later.**

## MARK AND POLLY THOMAS VOLUNTEER AT HAGGAI INSTITUTE IN HAWAII

*Editor's note: Mark and Polly Thomas spent time this summer in Kihei, Hawaii volunteering at the Haggai Institute, a training center for Christian leaders from around the world. They began their service in May, and Polly returned after three months, while Mark remained several weeks to work with landscaping and floral projects. Polly shares a few of her favorites about the experience below. We look forward to hearing more of their stories and seeing pictures when they share with the congregation during Mission Month.*

### **On an interesting person she met:**

Because our daughter, Lane, served in Kyrgyzstan with YES we had a heightened interest in Haggai participants from that country. They were rare. In one of the sessions there was a man from Bishkek, the capital. He had even been raised in the area where Lane had served. He told us he met his future wife in college and they married against their parents' wishes.

(In Kyrgyzstan, marriages are often arranged by the parents, with little input from the couple, especially the woman.) When this man's wife suffered a miscarriage, people thought they should divorce, believing that obviously there would not have been any problem unless the marriage is doomed or there is something wrong with the woman. But this man didn't listen to the advice of friends and family. He loved his wife and stayed married to her.

After some time his wife met a Christian who advised her to pray about having children. She prayed for several years and finally was able to conceive and bear a healthy baby. As she prayed she began to believe in God, and at the birth of the child she was able to lead her husband to Christ. The couple now has three children and both are instructors at a Christian college in Bishkek. *(Read more of Polly's favorites on page 8.)*

## Bible School 2010: Meet God on the Mountain By Lela Faye Graber

The VBS theme this year reflected Bible stories where God acted on a mountain.

**Majesty on Mt. Sinai:** God's rules show us the best way to live when Moses delivers the Ten Commandments; **Power on Mt. Carmel:** God is the one true God as Elijah challenges the prophets of Baal to a contest; **Mystery on Mt. Herman:** Jesus meets with Moses and Elijah where some of the disciples witness God's glory; **Prayer on the Mt. of Olives:** Jesus often went to the mountains to meet God in prayer and receive strength; **Teaching on the mountain:** Jesus speaks to a crowd on a mountainside, teaching us how we can be truly happy.

These themes were learned each day in worship, drama, songs, activities, worship response time, and Bible memory. Children ages 4 through grade 6 participated from 9-11:30 each morning June 14-18. Over 60 children were taught during the week, served by 36 adults and youth.

The offering for missions went to Mennonite Mission Network to support the Holiday Club in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. This is an all-day Vacation Bible School for 500 kids. Each \$20 raised paid for one child to attend Holiday Club. The goal to send 10

kids to VBS was met and surpassed with an offering total of \$281, sending 14 kids during the week. The Sunday morning offering boosted the total to \$831, or 41 kids sent to Holiday Club VBS! Great work kids!

Junior Youth VBS was held the weekend of June 11-12 at a fun overnight campout. Four sponsors led 12 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders at Graber's cabin in Bellefontaine. Girls stayed in a tent or the cabin, while the boys had a tenting area of their own. The *Meet God on the Mountain* theme was the same, learned in sharing times and interactive games.

Thanks to all who participated in VBS for a meaningful week!

Bible School Committee: Lela Faye Graber, Kathy Lehman, and Beth Maurer

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**Sunday, October 3, 2010**

**CROP WALK**  
**Help stop world hunger!**

## SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS



- 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

### ENGAGED!

*Tim Horn & Carolina Huarato*

*will be married October 23, 2010 in a civil ceremony in Manhattan, KS*



*Samantha Lamb & Moses Turay*

*will be married December 18, 2010 at Bethel Mennonite Church*

*Congratulations to both couples!*

# Believer

**Baptism is for believers in Jesus who wish to outwardly show their cleansing from sin and decision to follow Christ.**

By Abigail Rabenstein – One of several projects completed by the recent baptism class. See related story on page 10.

## From the Pastor's desk

### Retreating Engagement By Dave Maurer

On August 15, I took one of my family renewal Sundays to go primitive camping with my family and friends in the greater Cleveland area. Whenever I am not at Bethel, I am committed to worshipping elsewhere if at all possible. This is both an opportunity for me personally to worship without the additional responsibilities of being the pastor and an opportunity to experience what it is like to visit a new church.

There happened to be a Conservative Mennonite Church about 12 miles from where we were camping. I arrived about 5 minutes early, shook the hands of the greeter and usher, and chose to sit in the middle of the sanctuary.

The people looked much like you or I on a Sunday at Bethel. The service was not so unlike one of our services either. It began with announcements, moving on to a time of greeting your neighbor, contemporary singing with drums and an electric bass guitar, sharing and a message. After the service, I walked casually to the rear of the sanctuary where I greeted the pastor and left to meet our friends for lunch.

I made a few observations during that visit. The first is that great contemporary music like what this congregation had was wonderful to be a part of, but without a welcoming congregation, it felt very empty. The only people who greeted me were the ones who "had to," those stationed at the doors and seated near me during the greeting time. Now granted, I was not looking for a new church home and I did not go out of my way to talk with people either; but the whole time I was there, no one asked my name, where I was from, or anything about me.

I take great comfort (and perhaps a healthy bit of pride) in knowing that this wouldn't happen at Bethel. In fact at Bethel,

we are so welcoming that I, as pastor, have to go back into the sanctuary after most everyone else has left in order to greet our visitors. Bethel is very good at this and we can't take the importance of that for granted. We need to continue living in this way and work at extending that welcoming feeling beyond our walls to the people of our community. We need to reach out and invite others to worship with us so that they too may experience this.

I was also reminded of the importance of the church's *inward versus outward focus* or *retreat from versus engagement* of the world. The message I heard proclaimed the need to retreat from the world and avoid any connection with it. For me this was clear in the sermon that held this up as the ideal with Jesus as the prime example. It was also apparent in their lack of interest in getting to know me personally.

I agree that we are to be a city on the hill and that we should live a life that is noticeably different from the world around us. I agree that Jesus went off to be alone and that this is a model for us as well. My concern is that it is only half of the story. Jesus retreated often to be alone, to connect with God and to recharge. But he always came back to re-engage the world. Jesus' retreating was not to avoid the world, but that his contact with the world would flow out of his contact and relationship with God.

***We should not retreat to avoid engaging the world. We should retreat to empower our engagement with the world. We should practice retreating engagement.*** As we move into fall and begin a new church year, may we practice retreat to draw closer to God, but may we do so in an effort to better engage our community around us with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

## Mennonite Women in Mission: Highlights from Summer Meetings

During the summer months, Mennonite Women met in July and August for their regular monthly meetings. July hostesses, Mary Kay King and Eleanor Shumaker, decorated the lunch tables with fresh flowers and birds in keeping with the theme of God's Colorful Creations. They furnished desserts to add to the sack lunches.

August hostesses, Mary, Pat, and Julia Yoder, used a garden theme with black-eyed Susans, fruits and vegetables, as they served the potluck meal featuring orchard and garden produce dishes.

Both meetings featured a *Show and Tell* time, with several ladies sharing old quilts and new quilts, baby quilts and quilt tops. A *Wreath of Roses* quilt, cross-stitched by Julia and Pat Yoder, was quilted and finished, and will be sold this fall at Adriel's Auction. Ladies also shared books they had read recently, including ***She has done a good thing***, by various Mennonite women, ***And God Created Wrinkles***, ***Finding Home*** by Jim

Daly, new Focus on the Family president, and ***Three Cups of Tea***, by Greg Mortenson, about his work starting schools in Pakistan.

President Jeanette Hostetler announced that Mary Psolla and Kyle VanOsdol will serve as Co-Presidents for the coming year, and asked the ladies to share their ideas for meals and ways they want to help.

Devotional themes included Ruby Byler talking about *Clothing* – modesty, shopping and worrying about what we wear based on the Matthew 6:25-33 passage. Kyle VanOsdol shared her faith story and growing experiences in her *Life is Good* devotional.

Work completed at the two meetings included 4 comforters, 7 school kit bags, 1 health kit, 1 health kit bag completed, 3 baby comforters, and 1 quilt.

*(compiled from reports by Donna Lehman, Secretary)*

**From the Youth Pastor's desk**

**Thinking about God's redemptive love** By Rick Stoner

As we begin to study the Confession of Faith together, one of the things that strikes me in the first article is the different loves of God. One important love that is challenging for me to think about is God's redemptive love. I think that our culture, and world in general, is longing for redemption, and I think that God is working in the world to bring redemption, if we can only see it.

Sometimes we can find things in our culture that point towards God's redemption. One excellent example of this is a song from 1968 by The Beatles called "Blackbird." The lyrics, *Blackbird singing in the dead of night, Take these broken wings and learn to fly. All your life, you were only waiting for this moment to arise,* call us to think about redemption in the midst of trial and pain.

The imagery of flying with broken wings or seeing with sunken eyes reminds me of how God takes our own brokenness and uses it for his glory. Like the blackbird in the song, our lives are broken and many times we struggle to see past our own egos, but despite that God, in his redemptive love, redeems our lives from the brokenness.

This past summer we, as a youth group, had the opportunity to see how God was taking brokenness and transforming it into something new in Chicago. In that place we saw a lot of brokenness from things like poverty, racism, or just plain neglect. Yet, we were able to see how God's redemptive love was shining there. Part of our group went to

an adult day care, where they saw God's joy and love shining in the elderly people despite their life situations and limitations of their physical bodies. God was using them in their brokenness to show the world that joy is possible in the midst of any situation.

Another example could be seen in those participating in the urban gardening program; transforming abandoned lots into places of life and growth. Here God was at work in the lives of individuals restoring beauty to a scared community.

In the end we can see that God is about transformation and redemption. God is longing to take our brokenness and turn it into something new and beautiful. In Psalms 86:13, David praises the Lord saying, "For great is your love toward me; you have delivered me from the depths of the grave." This image of God turning death into life is powerful, because it reminds us that we are not defined or limited by our condition right now. God will indeed take our broken wings and teach us to fly.

Peter is another excellent example of this. In John 21 Jesus has a conversation with Peter where he takes Peter in his brokenness and points his life in a new direction. This is what God is doing right here in our midst. God is taking our broken lives and turning them into something new. So I would invite us to join in with what God is doing in the world around us.

**Youth Spotlight on Jessica Rabenstein** By Rick Stoner

I have truly enjoyed having Jessica in our youth group and getting to know her better over the past year. She has a deep love for Christ and an infectious joy that is awesome to have in the group. So if you would like to get to know Jessica better here are few things you might want to know.

If you would like to invite Jessica over for a meal, I would suggest that you fix spaghetti because it is her favorite food. And if you would want to have music playing in the background during dinner, you could play Barlow Girl, which is Jessica's favorite music

group. In her free time Jessica likes to hang out with family and friends. So if you really wanted to make her day, you could invite her family and friends to join her on a trip to Paris, France, because she really wants to visit Paris sometime.

Jessica really appreciates the close-knit family feeling that we have at Bethel and would like to thank her church family for being part of her life. She would also like to remind Bethel to stick to the word of God, which is great advice.

**What are our youth up to this fall?**

**West Liberty-Salem High School**

**Boys Soccer**

Jacob Shank

**Girls Soccer**

Lindsay Hostetler

**Marching Band**

Jessica Rabenstein

Lindsay Hostetler

**Concert Choir**

Jessica Rabenstein

**Ben Logan High School**

**Soccer**

Patrick Graber

**Cross Country**

Patrick Graber

**Choir**

Liesl Graber

**Congratulations to Jacob Shank!**



Member of the Elite FC U17 soccer team that recently won the Premiere Division of the Canton (MI) Cup Tournament, the fourth largest tourney in the Midwest.

## Youth serve with DOOR in Chicago

### What's happening at The Potter's Place?

"Things are moving along rather slowly," says Pastor Rick Stoner. "There have been times when six youth from the neighborhood have been there, and other times when only a few show up. It's easy to get discouraged, but sometimes I think it just takes time for God to work in a situation."

#### We could use:

- ~An adult to help out after school once a week
- ~Old board or lawn games
- ~Your prayers, "because we don't want to just do something for our own glory but we truly want to be seeking God's will for us on this adventure."

Four youth and four adult sponsors traveled to Chicago June 25 – July 2 to participate in a DOOR service project. "Our task for the week," said Ken Shank, one of the sponsors, "was to look for the face of God in the faces of people we met in the city."

They split into two groups and had that opportunity as they worked in various places in East Garfield Park, a predominantly black neighborhood where the average income is \$12,000. One group, Corey Lianez, Jessica Rabenstein, Jessica Stoner, and Theresa Rabenstein served homeless men at a soup kitchen. Another day, Jacob Shank joined them as they related to the elderly residents at an adult day care center. "It was nice to get to know some of those people and spend our day with them," said Jacob. Their group also helped out at the Living Water Bible School, relating to children hungry for attention.

Patrick Graber, Ken, Rick Stoner, and Brody Robinaugh spent a day at a Catholic Center giving food to women and children.

Another day they "packaged tons of Wheaties in one-pound bags" at the Greater Chicago Food Depository. "And we got pretty good at that," said Patrick. They also helped at a community garden and Final Bridges, a center for assisting people with HIV-Aids, where they worked at filling food orders. "It was eye-opening," said Brody about the week, "People have problems and we need to be aware of the needs of people around us."

"And enjoy what we have and where we live," added Jessica R., who was challenged in learning about poverty and seeing how some people have to live.

The group also did some sightseeing around the city one day, and related to two other groups who were also doing service projects that week. The last night they were challenged to eat dinner with \$1 given to each person, and experience poverty in a small way. "That was a really, really good experience, a real blessing," said Corey.

## My summer experience of French language and culture By Esther Shank

*This June I lived with a family in Brignais, France, about 20 minutes from Lyon in southern France. My reason for going was solely to experience the culture and improve my language speaking skills, both of which I accomplished. The month was full of good food, good times, good laughs and good conversation. I kept a blog, and here is one entry from about halfway through my time there:*

**Guide My Feet** – Today I went running. Last week, Thibault, my host brother, had shown me a route that he used to run, so I decided to try and run it today. Well...I got *beaucoup* lost. It's a little over a 3.5-mile route and I think I ended up running at least 5.5 miles. I kept taking wrong turns and ending up in dead ends, having to turn around and try another street only to find another dead end. It was quite a frustrating experience, but I found that when I don't exactly know where I'm going, I don't think of being tired from running. All I could think was, "I hope this next turn is the right one so I can get home." I didn't have a cell phone or anything with me...and even if I did, I don't know the Huckel's phone number or house number. I had no idea how I would get home.

After taking a turn that I recognized from what Thibault had shown me, and following that road a very VERY long time, I became very worried that I was definitely not going the right way. I felt like I was going away from Brignais and I was afraid I would have to turn around and backtrack the two miles

I had just run in order to get back home.

I was afraid, so I began to pray. Lord, please calm my mind and help me to find the right road back home. Give me a peace of mind and guide me to the right road. Suddenly a song came to my mind. *Guide my feet while I run this race, for I don't want to run this race in vain. Hold my hand while I run this race, for I don't want to run this race in vain.* It was amazing how God put this song in my mind. I sang through the whole song and before I knew it, I was turning into our driveway.

It was amazing. God put the song in my mind and truly did guide my feet. I know this is just a simple example, but thinking on it, I can apply this song to my entire month here. This is a journey (race) I decided to embark on by myself. I have learned much since my first few days here, but in the beginning, God truly did guide my feet and mind and kept me close through all the new and overwhelming experiences.

And I certainly don't want this journey to be in vain. I want to take as much from this month as I can, and I think I am definitely doing that. Even when the activities seem a little tiresome or uninteresting to me, even when I have to sleep in a ferret-smelling bedroom in another new house full of more new people – every experience has been an enlightening one. I have had many productive and insightful conversations with Isabelle and Bertrand and I am thankful that I have chosen to run this race. The race is not over though! I still have two more weeks here, and I hope I will continue to have eye opening experiences.

***Lets get acquainted with***

**The Wilkins Family: Joe, Janet, Becky & Candy**

Janet Kauffman Wilkins was born in Urbana and grew up in West Liberty, the daughter of Lowell and Ellie Kauffman. Her family has a long history of attending Bethel. Currently, she has several aunts and uncles (Dick and Nellie Lindemer, Paul and Linda Hostetler, Eileen Botkin), as well as two siblings, Mark Kauffman and Doris Wilkins, who are Bethel members.

Janet graduated from West Liberty Salem Schools and attended Goshen College for one semester and Rosedale Bible College for two semesters. She worked at various jobs over the years as a waitress and greenhouse worker, but most of us know her as one of those helpful clerks at Marie's Candies. Someone has even affectionately called her Chocolate Janet because of her job at the candy store.

Joe, the son of Joe and Bernice Wilkins, was also born in Urbana, raised in the West Liberty area, and graduated from West Liberty Salem Schools. He has a brother who is two years younger.

Joe attended the United Church of Christ before he married Janet. Their courtship began "when Joe put a note with flowers on my windshield," says Janet. They were married on April 20, 1996 at Bethel.

Joe and Janet are parents to Becky, who is in

seventh grade this fall. She loves animals, nature, music, playing her flute in band, traveling, being with friends, and puzzling with her Mom. Candy, their pet dog, has been part of the family for seven years.

In the late 1980s, Janet spent a year in Homestead, Florida with Mennonite Voluntary Service. Another highlight for her was traveling with the Gemeinschaft Chamber Singers to Europe in 1992. In addition to singing and music, Janet also enjoys reading, Sudoku, bird watching, flower gardening, and traveling. "Becky and I are saving for a trip out west to our national parks," she says.

Joe served in the United States Army for two years from 1967-68, and worked at International Harvester in Springfield for 30 years. He does odd jobs at Liberty Hills Golf Club, combining work and leisure in his love of the game of golf. Over the years Joe has won many local golf tournaments, and also several trophies from his days of playing fastpitch softball.

Other favorite leisure activities include gardening, being outdoors, listening to 50's and 60's music, and watching his favorite team, the Cincinnati Bengals, while Janet cheers for the Cleveland Browns. "But we all cheer for Ohio State," she says.

**It's Inherited??**

By Donna Lehman, Historian

In the March 1977 newsletter, there is a *Let's Get Acquainted* item regarding a lady named Emma Shumaker. The article states, "Come into Bethel at 6:00 on a Monday morning and you will find Emma with a broom in her hand, or a dust rag, or sweeping the sanctuary. She also has picked up items that are out of place – Bibles, pens, bulletins – and at the end of the day, you will find the church spic and span. She is one of the cleaning ladies."

Emma, at that time age 82, along with Bessie Lehman, age 75, spent quite a few years cleaning Bethel Church. And today, we are so fortunate to have someone who is outdoing her Aunt Emma in these arduous duties. Annabelle (Shumaker) Hostetler has been faithfully cleaning Bethel Church, along with help of her husband, Donald, for 12 years!! But unlike her Aunt Emma, there is much more of a church building now than in 1977, as the three floors of the south wing were added in 1981.

**So, thanks Aunt Emma, for the Dust Rag Heritage you handed down.**

**Bethel girls and moms attend August Jamboree weekend at Camp Luz**

Six girls, Annie Steiner, Becky Wilkins, Savannah Hostetler, Ashley Rabenstein, and Alexa and Allyson Smith (daughters of Geoff and Amanda Smith), along with Mom chaperones, Ellen Steiner and Janet Wilkins, attended Girls' Jamboree at Camp Luz August 13-15.

They enjoyed all the weekend activities of swimming, boating, playing games, eating and listening to Marilyn Laszlo, the weekend speaker, tell inspiring stories about her work in Papua New Guinea working as a Wycliffe translator for 24 years.

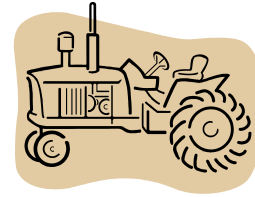
Allyson shares her experience in the following report:

*I love Girls' Jamboree! I've gone twice and each time is so much fun! The food is really good. All the staff members are super nice. You're never bored. They have an awesome water slide. You make friends so easy there. It's like your family.*

*This camp year was awesome. Our sponsors are so funny. Janet does the most awesome chicken dance EVER!! When we did night games, we played Sardines. So, if you're a girl who loves God and wants to have fun, go to Camp Luz Girls' Jamboree.*

## Hobbies and Collections

### Dick Lindemer describes his antique tractor collection



*Editor's note: Because of the Labor Day Festival in September, I have chosen to feature our very own Bethel collector of old tractors, Dick Lindemer.*

#### **Describe your collection. How many tractors do you have?**

I have nine (9) John Deeres, five (5) Farmalls, two (2) Olivers, and one (1) Minneapolis Moline. I also have one tractor built from seven different donor tractors. The interesting thing about this one is that it's the only one in the whole world.

#### **How did you get started collecting?**

One day I was in a junkyard and spotted a 1936 John Deere A. It did not run, the tires were shot, and to top everything off, someone had painted it red. Well, it was love at first sight.

#### **How do you add to your collection?**

I do not add to my collection. They (the tractors) just seem to show up in the barn.

#### **How do you display your tractors?**

I go to tractor shows and parades, and use some of the tractors on the farm. Age is just a number.

#### **Do you belong to a club or meet with other tractor collectors?**

I belong to the Logan County Antique Power Association. We have a plow day once a year at a member's farm. Seeing 15 or so antique tractors in a staggered line, plowing a field is real cool. We also do a couple 20-mile tractor rides.

#### **Is there anything else you'd like to share about your collection?**

The most important thing in tractor collecting is being able to see the finished tractor. Having a little "mad" money also helps. Also, it is very important to have a wife who does not say much about washing your clothes that are stained and smell like 50-year-old rear end oil. On the positive side, my wife Nellie, always knows where to find me, and doesn't mind stepping around various tractor parts and grease. She has also mastered the John Deere hand clutch.



**To read more about the EMU bikers' ideas and adventures, log on to:**

**[www.pedaling4peace.blogspot.com](http://www.pedaling4peace.blogspot.com)**

## Pedaling for Peace: Students share biking passion

Ten persons interested in peace and justice issues related to biking met in the Bethel Fellowship Room on August 14 to dialogue with three bikers, pedaling their way across the U.S. from Portland, Oregon to Virginia Beach this summer.

Ben Bailey, his brother, Nate, and Joe Hochstetler, students at Eastern Mennonite University, began their trip on June 25 and pedaled through 10 states, camping and staying with friends. Along the way they shared their passion for biking, and held discussions with different church groups about ways that biking can serve as an alternative means of transportation in an American car culture.

Ben, a junior peacebuilding and development major, blogged regularly on the trip as part of an independent study class for which he will receive credit. He also completed research on related topics such as our nation's demand for oil, violence that erupts from corporate greed and environmental degradation, and

superpower foreign policy. "By filling up my tank with gasoline, I become complicit in this cycle of violence," says Ben. "I would be hypocritical to declare myself a follower of Jesus and try to live a life of compassion and love, but turn a blind eye to the blood that fuels my car."

The bikers added that besides being fun, bicycling keeps them healthy, and provides a more honest and democratic picture of the places they go. "On a bicycle you must drive around things, sometimes suffer in the heat, or realize that the people you are afraid of are people too, people who may suffer from racism and the oppressive structures hidden in our society," explains Ben.

"Bicycling is great because you have fun while you get places," he adds. "Or you get places while you have fun! It's like golfing to work!" The bikers also answered questions and told stories about their trip during the informative and interesting exchange.

## Everyone can be a peacemaker **By Bill Shumaker**

*Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the children of God. (Matthew 5:9)*

I remember a phrase of a song from when I was growing up. It went like this, "Do not wait until some great deed that you may do, do not wait to spread your light afar . . . brighten the corner where you are." This is a reminder to me that being a peacemaker involves confronting injustice at home and abroad, but it also involves what we do and how we act in our daily lives.

At our Tuesday Peace and Justice meetings, we discussed an article about students at Menno Simons Christian School in Calgary, Alberta. They initiated a project to get students to thinking about peace, with the idea that "peace needs to be a way of life."

Participants in the project would record acts of peace in a journal causing them to become more intentional in their peacemaking lifestyle. Some of their acts of peace were shoveling the neighbor's sidewalks, assembling health kits for Mennonite Central Committee, giving a hug to a friend, and connecting with pen pals in Kenya.

Other ideas include being polite on the highway, encouraging rather than criticizing people, or listening and understanding someone that has an opposing view.

There are many ways of promoting peace, and we want your ideas! The worship service on October 31 will include an emphasis on promoting peace. This is simply an effort to encourage all of us to be peacemakers in our daily lives. May God bless us in these efforts, and as Jesus declares, may we be called children of God.

The Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi expresses well the desire to be a peacemaker.

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
Where there is injury, pardon;  
Where there is doubt, faith;  
Where there is despair, hope;  
Where there is darkness, light;  
Where there is sadness, joy.*

*O Diving Master, grant that I may not so  
much seek to be consoled as to console;  
To be understood as to understand;  
To be loved as to love.*

*For it is in giving that we receive;  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
And it is in dying that we are born  
to eternal life.*

*(Bill Shumaker is Peace and Justice  
Coordinator at Bethel.)*

## BARRETTS ATTEND FAMILY REUNION

Bill and Carole Barrett, along with Son Jim and Granddaughter Gracie, traveled to New Baltimore, MI on August 21 to attend Carole's family reunion.

There were representatives from four generations of nine out of ten Steffen children in attendance. They included two living children of Frederick and Elsie Steffen, three surviving spouses, 20 of 27 living grandchildren, and "I don't know how many great, great-great, and great-great-great grandchildren," says Carole. "I have to admit I didn't know everyone there, but it was a wonderful time."

Gracie loved playing with relatives she didn't even know she had. "We hope to do this more often in the coming years," adds Carole.

## Polly Thomas shares Hawaii mission experiences (continued from page 1)

### On a place that she really enjoyed visiting:

I really loved the lavender fields. The drive upcountry takes one through eucalyptus groves, so that is the first fragrance. Then on top of the hill of lavender, one can look down and see both sides of the island and smell the lavender. It's always cooler there, and sometimes it mists on you. Nearby is an open field where people hang glide. Just below the lavender are other plantings such as proteas, hydrangeas, Brazilian Glorybush, banksias, heliconias. It's a feast for the senses.

### On dinner time conversations:

We would serve ourselves from a buffet, then choose where we sat based on how many other volunteers were already at the table, trying to spread ourselves out among the participants. At their first meal, participants are often shy, withdrawn, or tired, or may not think that you really do want

to know about their lives. Some have never been served by persons who are older, so the simple act of carrying their suitcases to their rooms for them on arrival can be deeply meaningful to them.

Participants are sometimes very surprised that we talk to them at all. A man from Ethiopia told us that in his country, people are not kind to strangers. A man from India told us that people do not cross the caste lines to talk with those in lower castes.

### On one aspect of her job that Polly enjoyed:

As an office volunteer I was privy to things participants wrote . . . essays, feedback on facilitators, and goals they set for themselves at the end of the seminar. It helped me to understand how easy it is for those of us in free countries to choose to be Christians. It's not so easy in many other places.



## New library books raise questions By Jeannette Hostetter, Librarian

*Matthew 4:4 – But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.’”*

I read and read and read – words, words, words. For fun, for laughter, to escape today’s problems, to learn about our world, to share ideas from books with friends, and lastly, to live my life more closely to the Trinity. Why did I put the Trinity last?

Recently I’ve read *Quitting Church: Why the Faithful are fleeing and what to do about it* by Julia Duin, Religion Editor of the *Washington Times*. I was saddened, moved, in agreement with, and not too surprised at her findings in the Christian church today.

I was also asked by a Bethel member to purchase *The Naked Anabaptist: The Bare Essentials of a Radical Faith*, by Stuart Murray. I ordered two copies for the library so that two people can read it and discuss it together. I also printed off the free study guide. And, I bought the book for myself.

When asked what his ultimate goal was for writing this book, Murray said, “My goal is not to promote Anabaptism for its own sake. My interest is in promoting a way of living that

helps people to become more faithful followers of Jesus. Through it, I want to pay tribute to generations of Anabaptist Christians who witnessed faithfully, refused to conform to social norms, pioneered new ways of being church, challenged dominant assumptions about violence, and sometimes suffered appallingly. But, in the end, I am interested in the Anabaptist tradition only as a means to an end, and that end is to point us to Jesus as the one we are to follow and worship.”

All of a sudden I’m finding how very connected these two books really are. This has raised some questions for me and I’m wondering if you might have similar questions? Here are some questions for you to ponder: What is your Sunday experience? What is your life like Monday through Saturday? If you are interested in these topics, read these books and join the discussion.

And, check out the church library for many good Anabaptist and Mennonite resources to supplement our study of the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*, which Pastor Dave Maurer will be preaching on in the coming months. It’s not too late to order your own copy of the *Confession* (\$5) by talking to the Church Secretary.

## Thanks from the Simon Dugal Family

Editor’s note: Jim Burkett recently received a letter from Simon Dugal in India. He is a Christian pastor and father of five daughters, whose education Bethel has supported in the past. We were introduced to this family through Daniel Showalter who met the Dugals during his world travels in 2006. The letter has been edited for clarity.

*Greetings to you in the name of Jesus Christ. I hope all is fine there by the grace of Almighty Lord. My family and I are also keeping well by the grace of our same God, and through your prayers. I got your letter and support and used the money in the same way.*

*One thing I want to share is that your prayers are blessing our lives. I give thanks that your church members are praying for us and remembering us. Our Almighty God is blessing us through your prayers and also your kind support. Thanks a lot for everything that you are doing for us.*

*Brother, all my daughters are improving their standard (grades), this only through your prayers. I am sending and enclosing all the mark sheets of my daughters. Also, I am sending photos of my family.*

*Brother, please pray for peace because prayer will bring the miracles. I especially need your prayers for my family because of the rainy season going on right now. People are busy harvesting.*

*Finally, I give you lots of thanks for your kind support and prayers. We are remembering you all the time. My family is also remembering you. Thanks a lot for everything. Praise the Lord. ~Thanking you, Simon & Family*

## BETHEL SUPPORTS BLOOD DRIVE

On the afternoon of August 13, the Bethel Fellowship Room was the scene of an American Red Cross Blood Drive. Twenty-one persons, 17 of whom are from Bethel, took time from their work and busy schedules to donate blood.

“The Red Cross was really excited about the number of first time donors,” said Lane Thomas, local coordinator for Bethel. She noted that 12 of the 21 donors were giving blood for the first time.

Soup, veggies and cookies, provided by Polly Thomas, Miriam Lapp and Beth Maurer, were served to the donors. Thanks to all who gave the life-giving gift of blood, or who provided food or time during the drive.

“It was definitely a positive experience, and I hope Bethel will consider sponsoring another blood drive in the future,” said Lane. She explained that while publicity for this drive included posters and bulletin announcements in West Liberty and Bellefontaine, she hopes a future drive would target more community people. “It would also be a good event for families to do together.” she added.



## Bethel Church family celebrates baptisms of three youth

Friends and family, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins were on hand Sunday, August 29 when three youth were baptized and received into the Bethel Church family before a crowd assembled near the Onion Creek Pavilion in the Lions Park.

During the worship service, Pastor Dave Maurer opened his new sermon series from the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*, preaching about our awesome God, the Creator of the universe, who desires to be in relationship with us and connect with us personally. Talking about Facebook, the popular internet networking site, Pastor Dave suggested that God is “sending friend requests” to all of us. And while He doesn’t “write on our walls,” he does write on our hearts. Baptism is when we publicly commit our love and commitment to God the Father, and Christ his Son.

The baptismal candidates, Abigail Rabenstein, Larissa Graber, and Alex Steiner shared their personal testimonies, and mentors and mothers of the three also gave words of affirmation. Sandy, mother of Abigail, urged her daughter to “fear and respect God, pray without ceasing, and listen for God’s voice.”

Larissa’s mother, Lela Faye, reminded her that “God holds you and wants to teach you how to hear His voice. A life with God,” she went on, “will provide the closeness you desire. Stay close.”

Ellen told her son, Alex, that he is surrounded by a cloud of friends and family,

who are witnesses as he runs the Christian race. “You are a new witness to God’s remarkable power in our lives,” she added.

Singing and humming *As I went down to the river to pray*, the congregation then proceeded down the path to a spot in the Mad River, where Pastors Dave and Rick led the baptisms. Cheers went up each time one of the youth was baptized, and prayers were offered on behalf of each new Christian, with family members close by to provide love, support . . . and towels.

Everyone then joyously headed back to the pavilion where a delicious array of potluck picnic foods awaited them. The food line was quite long, but that didn’t matter to some folks, who helped themselves to dessert first while they waited. After eating, children headed off to play while the adults talked and talked, and talked some more. The rate of fellowship was at an all-time high.

Jerry Landes and Pastor Rick set up some popular yard games like corn hole, volleyball, Amish golf, and croquet, which some folks, young and old alike, chose to play. A more sedentary group was also spotted playing a round of Bird Bingo in the pavilion.

Worshipping and picnicking in the park was a wonderful way to celebrate an important event in the life of our church, as well as the end of summer and its bountiful produce, and the beginning of the new school year. Thanks to everyone who had a part in planning the day’s activities. Welcome, Fall!

### Bethel Mennonite Church

416 Washington  
P.O. Box 549  
West Liberty, OH  
43357

**Phone:**  
937.465.4587

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

Pastor Rick Stoner  
bethelyp@2access.net

Secretary  
bethelsecretary@  
2access.net

We’re on the Web!  
See us at:  
bethelchurchwl.org

### About the newsletter:

This newsletter is published quarterly in March, June, September and December by the church secretary.

Its purpose is three-fold:

~**Inform** the church about events

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

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

### Conflict Transformation Skills for Churches Workshop

**Saturday, October 30, 2010, 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**  
**Bethel Mennonite Church Fellowship Room**

**Workshops led by Victoria Wilcox of Lombard (IL) Mennonite Peace Center**  
**Registration fee: \$60 (\$65 after Oct. 1; Group discount available)**  
**(for pastors, church leaders and interested persons)**