

The Bethany Letter

Sunday ~ April 18, 2010

VOLUME 2010

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The Rev. Stephen Gehlert, Senior Minister

The Rev. Mark Steiner, Visitation Minister

And Indeed it is Very Good

Today many churches are observing “Integrity of Creation Sunday,” a time to remember God’s gift of a good creation and our responsibility to be stewards of it. That’s why I’m including this recent United Church of Christ statement on Faith and the Environment. I hope it will challenge and inspire all of us to grow as stewards of God’s creation.

Light and darkness, water and land, sea creatures, earth creatures, birds, plants, herbs, fruit trees, the sky with its stars, moon, and sun! All mutually co-exist in a symphony of praise to their Creator. Indeed, the creating, redeeming, and sustaining presence of our God weaves the fabric of creation. Together we sing a hymn of holy love for the beauty of the earth as it evolves and we with it, in relationship with one who has called us to love the world.

Faithful to the scripture, which declares creations “very good,” following the witness of the cloud of ancestors, we respond in worship. We befriend creation. Inspired by the gift of humanity’s participation with the hum and pulse of this good earth; we work for well being with a prophetic heart of justice.

Everything created praises God. From the tiniest atom to far-flung stars, the highest mountain, and the widest sea; from the living soil to creatures whose names we do not know, to human communities and to each of us seeking a way in the world; God’s creation sings a hymn of the universe. Our lives intersect and mingle. The ecological order of living things demonstrates a beauty that inspires courage to respond to God’s speaking through the processes of life in a mutually co-existing community. Can we respond fully to the privilege and responsibility to care for God’s creation with this depth of intimacy? Dare our church live into a new and keen attention to those parts of creation that cry for a restorative justice? For new ways of tending are required and simple beauties await recognition.

Guided by our faith in a creating God, trusting in the redemptive power of the body of Christ, and sustained by the Spirit filling our lives with gentle strength, our church has a faith and hope to understand when creation cries. We possess a reservoir of resources and creativity to respond with healing practices: socially, economically, environmentally, culturally, and in our ecumenical and interfaith partnership.

Why does creation cry? It cries because neighborhoods populated by racial minorities and the poor are the resting places for hazardous waste sites, affecting health and quality of life. Creation cries as alarming rates of green house gas emissions in the atmosphere result in global warming and climate changes. Poor and vulnerable communities suffer as rising seas swamp island nations, floods and storms threaten coastlines displacing entire villages of indigenous people and the loss of mountain top ice and snow threatens to starve communities living below.

Humanity is asked to answer a call of stewardship understood as care for and solidarity with God’s good creation. The distinction between humanity and other created things begins to soften, inviting a profound kinship, all participating in a creation community. In a time of environmental concern, the church must respond with its gifts of faith and nurture to work against reckless, negligent, or prejudicial use of natural resources.

Our worship life celebrates the Creator’s intrinsic nature of provider and sustainer. It inspires faith practices of solidarity and community to care for those in harm’s way. We are moved to work to decrease our use of energy and fossil fuels, such as gasoline, heating oils, other petroleum based products, and coal. We study global issues involving quality of life, clean water, food supplies, and vital habitats for God’s creatures. Remembering the beauty of the earth, we are given gifts of grace and attention to celebrate the great gifts of varied cultures, and the geographic and ecological landscapes of each. Wisdom is required to care for them.

There are many ways to do environmental justice work, integrating a celebration of creation’s inherent worth and inspiring prophetic practice. Worshipping God in prayer and communion, energizing community transformation, our efforts become a breathing with the world. We dare to move toward nurturing “creation communities.”

Today, God is still speaking, calling the earth from the rising sun to its setting. Indeed, we make bold to affirm that God is singing to creation, blessing each part to arise as it shine, and blessing the beauty of the earth. It is a good creation. May our worship, our appreciation, our audacity to love, inspire us to action on its behalf!

Treasures Sale Set up this week!

Women's Fellowship



**Tuesday ~ April 20th
2:00 pm**

Join us for our annual trip to Chapel Hill Home for Bingo! We will meet at the church at 12:45 p.m. to carpool or use the van. Please bring prizes and Cookies to share with the residents.

The Men's Breakfast

is a great time for men of the church to get together to share faith, food, and fellowship together; as well as a few chores with which the custodians could use some help. The men gather the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 8:00 a.m. (Next breakfast **April 21st**.) You can help make this time possible by providing breakfast for 8-10 men once during the year. If you'd like to help in this way call Nancy Read.



CHURCH CAMP

Information is available for camps through the summer sponsored by the Ohio Conference of the United Church of Christ held at Pilgrim Hills and Temple Hills at <http://ocucc.org>. Click on the Outdoor Ministry link. You can register online.



celebrate APRIL 22nd

Earth Day is a day designed to inspire awareness and appreciation for the Earth's environment held on April 22. It was founded by U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson as an environmental teach-in in 1970 and is celebrated in many countries every year. The first Earth Day was in 1970. Earth Day is in spring in the Northern Hemisphere and autumn in the Southern Hemisphere.

An Earth Day Prayer of Confession

O God, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen: You place us in your creation, and you command us to care for it. Your works declare glory and splendor, and you call us to praise and reverence. Where we have degraded or destroyed earth's bounty, forgive us. Where we have taken beauty and majesty for granted, have mercy upon us. Where we have become estranged from the creatures with whom we share this planet, grant us your peace. Renew us in the waters of baptism, refresh us with the winds of your spirit, and sustain us with the bread of life. In the name of Jesus Christ, and for the sake of the new creation, we pray. Amen

-Rev. Ken Carter, pastor of Providence UMC, Charlotte NC



Earth Day Every Day



If you are able to donate a baked good item for the bake sale, please bring in your goodies on Friday, **April 23rd**. There will be a table set up in the social hall.

Treasures & Bake Sale



April 24th

Bring in your unwanted items!!

(EXCEPT clothes & exercise equipment)

Please DO NOT bring items to church *until* the week of the sale! (4/19)

Storage at church is very limited.

Furniture to be placed in the social hall & all other items taken to the lower level.

NEED ITEMS PICKED UP?

HAVE QUESTIONS?

Call Kim Wurgler, "The Queen of Treasures"

She truly believes

"Your junk is Bethany's MISSION!"

She will accept anything

(EXCEPT clothes & exercise equipment)

☎ Call our Kim at 330-928-4446.

Don't forget to ATTEND the sale!

Brunch on Bethany!

New Orleans Mission Trip

On Sunday, **April 25th**, Carol Clemente and Brad Bebout will share their experiences of New Orleans with us during the hour between services. Mission Committee will provide the brunch and a free will offering will be collected to benefit missions. Hope you can attend this presentation at 9:30 am in the social hall.

Coffee Sales Resume!



You may have noticed Fair Trade Coffee is back on sale after Sunday services. Coffee makes a good gift and you can be certain the money goes to a good cause as well as protecting song bird habitat.

Safe Church ~ Policy Update

The United Church of Christ has developed a new, more complete disclosure form for volunteers who work with children and youth in churches. We will be requiring all who work in our Christian Education and Youth ministries as well as IHN volunteers, to fill out this new form. There will be a meeting to introduce the new form on **April 25th**, at **11:45 a.m.**, in the social hall. If you are a volunteer in one of these areas but are unable to attend the meeting a form will be sent to you the same day. Thanks for your cooperation with this important part of our being responsible to the children and youth of our faith family.



Sunday ~ May 2nd will be a Family Sunday.

Bryan Sirchio, Christian singer/songwriter, will be here (concert Saturday, May 1st) as a guest singer/speaker. Children will remain in 10:30 worship.

BETHANY BUCKEYES

Are you 50 years or older? Then YOU are invited to join others of this age who meet once a month, the first Friday of each month, for Bethany Buckeyes! Isn't that exciting! FUN is had by all! We celebrate these Fridays with food, some games and lots of laughter. Did we mention the FUN we have?! So please, if you are interested, join us at our next meeting **May 7th**, 6:00 p.m. in the social hall. Because it is so much FUN you must make reservations! Do so by marking your attendance card or call the church office. FUN!

Need a Ride to Worship?

There is one waiting for YOU! Just call the office at 330-923-5277 **BEFORE 4:30 p.m. on Friday** and we will arrange for you to be picked up on Sunday. Worried that something might happen to keep you from attending? Don't ... you will be given the name and phone number of this week's driver so, if need be, you can cancel at the last minute. We do hope you will call.

Bethany United Church of Christ

Iva and Ed Hazle Scholarship

*A scholarship opportunity is
available to Bethany Youth*



Who:

- Graduating High School Seniors or GED Certified
- A Bethany member for a minimum of two years
- Entering an accredited education program/trade school in the Fall of 2010

How:

- Applications are available in the church workroom
- Completed applications are due by July 15th in the church office
- All completed applications will be reviewed
- The applicant will be selected on need, involvement in church related activities, career goals and extra curricular activities/work history

Questions, contact Bill Leas



Please remember in your prayers...

- † Harvey Morrow, Traditions
- † Kathryn McMillen, Akron City Hospital
- † Frank Read, home (from hospital)

† *In Sympathy...*

We express our Christian sympathy to the family of Sue Mancinelli on the death of her father, Charles Crothers, April 10th.

*Please remember to pick up your newsletter on **Sundays** after worship; located in the social hall. Doing so will help with the cost of postage. Newsletters not picked up will be mailed Monday. The newsletter deadline is now 10:00 a.m. Tuesdays. Please plan accordingly. **Remember** to also look for other mail - for groups, committees, etc.*



The Memory Bell Choir wants to thank everyone for their support of the annual Chili Cook-Off. We were able to enjoy the culinary delights of “My Mom’s Chili,” “Global Warning,” “Brad’s Chili”, “Ariel’s Chili Pie,” and “Bean There, Done That” while spending additional time in fellowship, and \$220 was raised towards sending the bells back to Schulmerich to have them cleaned, polished and adjusted – basic maintenance which keeps this \$10,000 instrument in prime working order and protects your investment. Once again, “My Mom’s Chili” offered by Carol Frederick has taken the number one position as Bethany’s favorite chili, with “Ariel’s Chili Pie” and “Bean There, Done That” in the number two and number three slots. However, everyone wins when this much fun can be had, and the bell choir certainly appreciates the overwhelming demonstration of your support of our musical offerings. Thank you once again, and we hope to see you all again next year!

Bethany’s Community Cash Back from ACME Fresh Market program totaled \$705.48. The Youth Fellowship would like to thank all those who participated in this fundraiser for us. Ten percent will be tithed back to the church and the remainder will go to the youth group account and future mission trips.

Dear Bethany Family,

Thank you for the beautiful pink begonia, it is very much appreciated and thanks to Sharon Otto for delivering it. We enjoyed our visit with her very much.
God Bless, Warren and Mary Jo

Calendar for additions to ~ or ~ changes to the
2010 monthly calendar mailed to you.
April 19th to April 25th

Names of **Sunday Volunteers** are
published **AHEAD OF THE SCHEDULED** Sunday
as a kindly *reminder* and early *thank you!*

Treasures Sale Set Up Week ~ Bring in your goodies!

- 4/19 9:00a Quilters
- 7:00p Bell Choir Practice
- 4/20 9:00a Staff Meeting
- 10:00a Newsletter Deadline
- 12:45p Women's Fellowship meet at church to
car pool - 2:00 Bingo at Chapel Hill
- 4/21 8:00a Men's Breakfast
- 9:30a Bible Study (CE)
- 4/22 **EARLY DAY**
- 7:30p Chancel Choir Practice
- 4/23
- 4/24 **9:00a TREASURES & BAKE SALE!**

If you are unable to volunteer the day you are scheduled, please remember to...
† **Find someone** to take your place **... and then**
† **call the church office** so we may make
the necessary changes on our schedules

Come, pick up a treasure or two!
How about a baked good? Yummmm!

Family Sunday ~ April 25, 2010

† Nursery Available 9:15 to 11:30 a.m.

- 8:30a Worship** (Traditional)
- 9:15a Church School** for Children only
- 9:15a Brunch** -New Orleans Mission Trip Confirmands /Adults
- 10:30a Worship**
- 11:30a 7th Day Practice
- 11:45p Safe Church Meeting
- 5:30p Youth Committee Meeting
- 6:30p YF

Volunteers for April 25th

- Cup Washing: C. Eberhardt
- Greeters: J.&C. Dix / M.&S. Gas kill
- Music: Bell Choir / Children's Choirs
- Nursery: M. Peyek, E.&N. Zeller, K. Renner
- Ushers: T. Hermann, M. Jensen, S. Truby, S. Ward,
M. Spring, E. Albert, K. Renner, L. Sheppard
- Van Driver: S. Gaskill
- Visitor Outlook: B. Lees

- 4/26 9:00a Quilters
- 7:00p Bell Choir Practice
- 4/27 9:00a Staff Meeting (L)
- 10:30a Newsletter Deadline
- 7:00p **GREEN** Team Meeting
- 4/28 7:00p **COMMITTEE NIGHT**
- 7:30p Music Committee
- 4/29 7:30p Chancel Choir Practice



- 4/30 **MAY...**
- 5/01 6:30p *Bryan Sirchio in the Social Hall*

free-will offering or canned good

Family Sunday ~ May 2, 2010

† Nursery Available 9:15 to 11:30 a.m.
† Bryan Sirchio, musician - at both services
† Children remain in worship

- 8:30a Worship** (Communion)
- 9:15a Church School** for Children Only
- 9:15a Bryan Sirchio** (Confirmands/Adults Classes)
- 10:30a Worship**
- 11:30a Social Hour Host: Upper Room

Volunteers for May 2nd

- Cup Washer: A. Zeller
- Greeters:
- Lay Reader: L. Short
- Music: B. Sirchio / B. Sirchio, Chancel Choir, 7th Day
- Nursery: P. Cochran, J. Dugan, K. Dugan, D. Shroyer
- Ushers: C. Hofmann, F. Read, M. Seguin, M. Seymour,
L. Short, J. Smith. N. Buck, B. Pletzer
- Van Driver: C. Jones
- Visitor Outlook: J. Charton

**Bethany United
Church of Christ**

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