

The Bethany Letter

Sunday ~ April 25, 2010

VOLUME 2010

ISSUE NO. 15

The Rev. Stephen Gehlert, Senior Minister

The Rev. Mark Steiner, Visitation Minister

Spiritual Practices to Honor the Earth

Continuing with the theme of honoring the integrity of creation, which was lifted up last week, I'd like to share these spiritual practices by Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat:

1. Attention

The great Catholic writer Ernesto Cardenal in *Abide in Love* observes: "Everything in nature has a trademark, God's trademark: the stripes on a shell and the stripes on a zebra; the grain of the wood and the veins of the dry leaf; the markings on the dragonfly's wings and the pattern of stars on a photographic plate; the panther's coat and the epidermal cells of the lily petal; the structure of atoms and galaxies. All bear God's fingerprints." Go for a walk and look for God's trademarks. Better still; use a camera to document evidence of God's fingerprints in nature.

2. Being Present

Annie Dillard has written: "My God, what a world. There is no accounting for one second of it." Get personal with one small piece of the Earth. Sit in the dirt in your backyard. Play in the sand at the beach. Roll in the grass. Stand under a waterfall. Sense the Earth as an animal senses it. Be really present with your planetary host.

3. Connections

Share a story with family or friends, or write in your journal, about a time when you were humbled, soothed, or awed by something in the natural world. How did you feel connected to nature?

4. Devotion

Adopt a tree, a park, a beach, a waterway, or a piece of wild land, and look out for its welfare. Clean up in and around it. Write letters to officials and newspapers on issues that affect it. In its honor, include in your daily prayers petitions to alleviate the sufferings of dying plants and trees, polluted rivers and oceans, and toxic lands.

5. Hospitality

Invite some bugs into your house for an evening. Rent the fascinating and illuminating video *Microcosmos* directed by French biologist Claude Nuridsany and Marie Perennou. This documentary presents one day in a French countryside meadow where butterflies, ants, spiders, and many other insects cavort in their small and exquisite worlds.

6. Joy

Listen to Three Dog Night's classic rock song Three Dog Night: *Joy to the World* with the lyric "Joy to the fishes in the deep blue sea." Imagine all the other gifts of God in creation that give you pleasure and fill your heart with joy.

7. Justice

Hold a Council of all Beings in your home, school, or church. Each person in the circle speaks for another life form – an animal, plant, tree, body of water, etc., expressing the being's concerns. You might talk about threats to the being's habitat or freedom, the effects of pollution, natural disasters, and wars. After all the beings have spoken, talk as humans about your responsibilities to correct some of the environmental and cultural injustices you have identified.

8. Openness

Embrace your environment. Walk around the perimeter of your home. Explore it as if being there for the first time. What do you see, feel, hear, smell? Continue this process as you move further out into your community. Make a list of things you discover that you have never seen before.

9. Teachers

Find a teacher in nature and let her give you a lesson today. Here's an example from Natalie Goldberg: "Be tough the way a blade of grass is: rooted, willing to lean, and at peace with what is around it."

10. Wonder

Set up a wonder table in your home or classroom. Make it a place where people can display wonders of the nature world they have found – actual examples or photographs of them.

11. You

Rededicate yourself to live lightly and respectfully on the planet. Repeat the vow on the next page.

Spiritual Practices to Honor the Earth

A Vow

We join with the Earth and with each other.

To bring new life to the land

To restore the waters

To refresh the air

We join with the Earth and with each other.

To renew the forests

To care for the plants

To protect the creatures

We join with the Earth and with each other.

To celebrate the seas

To rejoice in the sunlight

To sing the song of the stars

We join with the Earth and with each other.

To recreate the human community

To promote justice and peace

To remember our children

We join with the Earth and with each other.

We join together as many expressions of one loving mystery: for the healing of the Earth and the renewal of all life.

On Sunday, April 25th Bethany members, Carol Clemente and Brad Bebout, will share their experiences of **New Orleans** with us during the hour between services. It is a goal of theirs to create an interest in sending an adult mission group from Bethany to New Orleans in the very near future. Please join us for brunch, which is being provided by the Mission Committee and learn more about the disastrous affects of Hurricane Katrina and the work that still needs to be done. We will be joined by some of our new friends from Christ United Church of Christ in Orrville for an informative slide presentation followed by a question and answer period.

GREEN Team Meeting

Tuesday, April 27th 7:00 p.m.



Sunday ~ May 2nd will be a Family Sunday

Bryan Sirchio, Christian singer/songwriter (concert Saturday, May 1st), will be our guest vocalist during worship services and guest speaker for Confirmation and Adult Classes at 9:15 a.m. - held in the social hall. Children will remain in 10:30 worship.



RECYCLE BONUS TIME!

April 26 – 30th

To celebrate **Earth Day**, River Valley Paper Company will pay an *additional* \$15 per ton for all paper collected in our recycling container (located in parking lot off Broad Blvd.) Tell your friends!

River Valley Paper Co.

Your recycled paper for 3/1–3/31 to total tonnage 1 has saved:

22.23 Trees

3.92 Cubic yards of Landfill

9,152.50 Gallons of Water

5,360.75 Kilowatts of electricity, enough to heat 1 home for 6 months

Did you know? An average household throws away 13,000 pieces of paper a year! All packaging and junk mail!

Empties4Cash

Bethany received a check in the amount of \$40.90 for recycled ink cartridges.

Bethany Blood Pressure Check

The first Sunday of each month, Bethany's volunteer nurses, offer blood pressure tests during social hour. If you are interested in having your BP checked look for them in the social hall **May 2nd**.



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!



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Prayer shawls are a means to extend our love and prayers to persons who may be homebound, ill or perhaps a way to share a special joy such as a birth or birthday milestone. Bethany's Prayer Shawl group meets the second Monday of each month (**May 10th**). If you are interested in this ministry please join them at 9:30 a.m. in the lounge.

Camp Bethany / New Trinity July 25-30

Once again we'll be at beautiful *Camp Trinity*. Parents of children who'll be finishing grades 1-6, please **mark the date** on your calendar. You may pick up registration materials at church.



Linen Alert!

Faded – Worn – Torn

An update on the 5-year-old linens we use for our IHN guests - please consider donating new or slightly used sets of TWIN size only sheet sets and blankets. Children patterns also needed. Please leave in church workroom.



In Case of Emergency.....

Who would the church call?

Unexpected things happen to all of us from time to time. Have you thought about what would happen if you should fall or perhaps become ill and unable to speak for yourself while here at church? Does the church have information regarding a relative or other responsible person who could be contacted quickly? This is something we may all want to think about. The office would like to add such information to our Rolodex cards so in the event of an emergency we would have someone to call quickly. Let us know if this would be something you would like to have placed in our files.



Volunteer opportunities are available here at **Bethany UCC**. To name a few ... greeters, ushers, Sunday school teachers/substitutes, and always those who will prepare food... that's just a FEW! Call the church office for more information!

Change of Address ...

Glenn and Peg Leiter 330-490-2356
201 Holl Rd., NE #308
North Canton, OH 44720



Please remember in your prayers..

† **Kathryn McMillen**, Akron City Hospital



IHN Host Week

Thanks to all of our volunteers for helping with our IHN Host week. We appreciated the time our volunteers gave to our families by providing leadership each evening, fixing a meal, driving the van, doing the laundry, being at the Family Center and staying over night. We also appreciate the members who contributed funds to pay for students at the Family Center. We had three families - made up of moms, dads, and nine children. The families were appreciative of the caring attitude and compassion shown to them by our Bethany Volunteers. We had several schedule changes during the week and we thank you for your flexibility and willingness to change when needed. We are thankful for the support Bethany members give to this important mission in our community.

Bob and Carolyn

Lunch on Us

We served 140 meals to the Summit Lake Community at Miller Avenue's *Lunch on Us* on April 17. Half of the meals served are to children who come to this lunch without their parents. It truly is a blessing that Miller Avenue provides this meal to this neighborhood that has so many needs. Thanks to our volunteers for providing this meal: Harvey Koudela, Bill Leas, Marcia Spring and Becky and John Wachovec.

**Calendar for additions to ~ or ~ changes to the
2010 monthly calendar mailed to you.
April 26th to May 9th**

- 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*

Family Sunday ~ May 2, 2010

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

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

- 5/03 9:00a Quilters
- 7:00p Bell Choir Practice
- 5/04 9:00a Staff Meeting
- 10:00a Newsletter Deadline
- 5/05 9:30a Bible Study (CE)
- 5/06 7:30p Chancel Choir Practice
- 5/07 6:00p Buckeyes
- 5/08 8:00a (SH) Rsrvd. 10:00p

Sunday, May 9, 2010
Mother's Day

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

- 8:30a Worship** (Healing and Reconciliation)
- 9:15a Church School** for Children and Adults
- 10:30a Worship/** Children's Sunday School
- 11:30a Social Hour Host: Men's Breakfast Group

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

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

Volunteers for May 2nd

- Cup Washer: A. Zeller
- Greeters: F.&N. Read / J. Larkins Family
- Lay Reader: L. Short
- Music: B. Sirchio / B. Sirchio, Chancel Choir
- 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

Come to church!



Volunteers for May 9th

- Cup Washing: C. Eberhardt
- Greeters: G.&N. Jensen / L. Rodgers, L. Luginbill
- Lay Reader: G. Cool
- Music: Organist/ Chancel Choir w/Young Shepherds
- Nursery: A. Thompson, T. Jensen, H. Bedillion, C. Bedillion
- Ushers: R.&S. Holle, H. Walker, J. Grazulis, J. Seymour, R. Berie, T. Robinson, A. McVan
- Van Driver: C. Frederick
- Visitor Outlook:

**Bethany United
Church of Christ**

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Check out our web site!

www.bethanyucc.org

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