

# The Bethany Letter

Sunday ~ August 7, 2011

VOLUME 2011

ISSUE NO. 25

Rev. Stephen Gehlert, Senior Minister

Rev. Mark Steiner, Visitation Minister

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## *Injustice - Compels Us to Act!*

When I was in college, Jim Smith, the campus minister, had a way of drawing us outside the gate of our college. He called us to think about things that people most college students in Springfield, Missouri (aka the buckle on the Bible belt) didn't think much about, and often resented being asked to think about – issues of justice relating to civil rights, issues of peace relating to the war in Vietnam. And he did more than urge us to think, to relate our faith to social and political issues, he got involved, he modeled his convictions, with what he preached, what he taught, what he wrote, and what he did.

Coming, as I did, from beyond the Bible belt, from a family where Sunday sermons were discussed over roast beef and mashed potatoes, I was more open to him than most. I'm still grateful that he became a friend and a mentor. Because I grew to respect and love him, it was hard for me to hear the comments of outrage and loathing about him that some of my fellow students expressed. They were there to take their classes, have a good time, and get their degree (maybe find a spouse), get a job and go out and make some money. They wanted the college to be the place that allowed them to follow that track without being challenged or disturbed by other issues.

Jim, though, was enough of a prophet, enough of a fighter, and careless enough of other's opinions of him that he wouldn't stop. He saw through them, and he let them know it.

“You come to our pretty little campus, where you live so comfortably, and think you've figured out the world because you've read a few books, taken a few tests, gone to some parties, and *maybe* know what you want to do after graduation. You have no idea – and you'll never have any idea – what it's like to live like most of rest of the world. While you sleep tonight, warm, full, clean, safe, there are people hungry; right here in the Bible belt! I know, you say it's their own fault; they're lazy! Well, if you cared enough to get to know them, and saw how hard they work, you'd think differently. But, of course, that would mean there must be another reason, what the prophets called injustice. Something, once you admit to it, calls you to change, and to work for change. So, go on, try to keep this campus a comfortable, fun-loving little island, but until they fire me, I'm here to be a thorn in your side.”

Well, I did study on that island, in the comfort and safety of the campus, but I did it with more to think about than just what I read in the books. There were times when I ventured outside and saw and heard a few more angles about life, other perspectives than we got on campus. Going outside added depth to what happened inside it, but what Jim said informed how I experienced what happened outside. I'm thankful to my Bethany family that many of them have come through my experience here as pastor – in going on mission trips to Ponca Creek, in supporting our work with Family Promise, Miller Avenue, and Willard Churches, and hearing about mission trips to Mexico or New Orleans.

These experiences have convinced me that if much of the world's suffering stems not from people's personal faults but from systemic injustices – things like racism, sexism, and political oppression, then, as Christians, we have two responsibilities.

1. We must minister to the needs of those who are suffering and try to ease their pain.
2. We must do what we can to change the systemic conditions that are the source of the suffering.

By and large, Christians have done a fair-good job with the first responsibility but, by and large, we've shied away from the second. Jesus calls us to go “outside” and give ourselves to both.

With “Justice” Hope,



## Bethany's Ministry Continues Through the Summer

During the summer, many of our schedules get busier or at least take us away from home. At our home church the ministry and mission that we all share at Bethany doesn't stop or even diminish. In fact, several parts of it (VBS, Camp Bethany) happen only in the summer. This is why it's extra important for everyone to keep on giving toward his or her pledge during the vacation season. If you are not here for several Sundays, please feel free to put your offering in the mail or drop it off at the office. This will help us keep the work we share strong all through the year.

### Wow! Incredible Response to ... Good Neighbors Stock-A-Thon

So far we have collected over **700 items** for Good Neighbors including food, baby items, toiletries and back-to-school items. And your contributions have been steady and plentiful. We have two months left in the Good Neighbors Stock-A-Thon. In August we'll collect some more food items. Boxes are available around the church for your donations and our progress is tracked on the display in the social hall.

Here's what we'll be asking for Sundays in August:

#### Non-Perishable Food...



7	Cereal
14	Vegetables
21	Macaroni & Cheese
28	Rice

Thank you again for your continued generosity!

### Pastor Steve – Sabbatical Time

Following United Church of Christ guidelines and at Spiritual Council and Consistory's urging, I will take a month of sabbatical time this summer beginning August 8<sup>th</sup>. Sabbaticals are meant to provide pastors with time to be able to focus on reading, reflection, writing and planning in a more intense and creative way than is possible in the midst of their regular pastoral responsibilities. That's what I'll be doing in this time, focusing especially on Christian Education (especially for adults), Stewardship, Worship and Youth. I am grateful for this opportunity and I ask for your prayers as I seek to use this time in ways that will enhance and strengthen my ministry with you.

**Pastoral Care** ~ (during Pastor's sabbatical)  
Aug 8 thru Sept 9 **Rev. Mark Steiner**  
**1-330-264-6034**

## Bethany is WALKING!

Presented by Bethany Nurses...  
**Faithfully Walking**

**Fitness Challenge**  
Don't forget your pledge!  
Don't forget to walk!



### Prayer Shawl Ministry

Our knitters are still busy keeping a supply of prayer shawls for our Bethany family and friends. We also have been donating prayer shawls to the Adult Day Center and Hospice Care at Rockynol and to Haven Homes in Stow. We are in need of yarn (LION Brand Homespun) or cash donations to help us buy yarn for this mission project. Also, if you are interested in joining this ministry they meet the second Monday of each month in the lounge at 9:30 a.m. All are welcome. (Next meeting **August 8<sup>th</sup>**.)

### Social Hour

**- a Chance for All to Share!**

Social Hours are a real blessing. We're asking Bethany members to help out as individuals, families, or small groups this summer. Here are some dates we still need help: **Aug. 14, Aug. 21, Aug. 28**

If you can help on one of these days, please call the office at 330-923-5277 or e-mail [cwood@bethany.ald.net](mailto:cwood@bethany.ald.net).

**Special**



**Services**

**August 14 One service only!**

**NO 8:30 SERVICE!**

9:30 – Sanctuary – *The Bethany Concert Band leads a service of sacred music*

We hope that you'll mark these dates on your calendar and plan to share these special worship times.

### Men's Volunteer Breakfast



It 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 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 8:00 a.m. (Next breakfast **August 17<sup>th</sup>**.) 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 at 330-928-3002.

# Bethany Kitchen

Saturday, August 20<sup>th</sup>



A free luncheon at 11:30 a.m. for those in the community who need a meal. Help is always needed for food preparation, serving and cleaning up. All are welcome to join us and enjoy the fellowship and lunch.

*All are welcome!*

**LOOK**

## change of dates!

### "The Bethany Letter"

To save on cost associated with the preparation and distribution of our weekly newsletter during the summer months, TBL will be dated and ready ...

**August 21<sup>st</sup> ... and will then continue weekly.**

**Deadline for news articles: 10:00 a.m. the TUESDAY before the above date.**

Happy Birthday to...



**Vivian Lingo, celebrating August 26<sup>th</sup>**

7601 Briarwood Dr., Crestwood, KY 40014

&

**Betty Pickard, celebrating August 28<sup>th</sup>**

3293 Brookside Ln, Cuy. Falls 44223

Mark your Calendar!



**Bethany Night at Donato's**

**August 31<sup>st</sup>**

**5:00 – 8:00 pm**

**TWO bowlers** needed for Team Bethany. Bethany has bowled with the Falls Church League for years. Mark Jensen is on the team and needs 2 additional bowlers to join him. League meets on Tuesday nights from 6:15-8:30ish pm. Contact Mark for more information at 330-926-0020.

# "All Ye Who Music Love"

"He put a new song in my mouth,  
a song of praise to our God." Ps 40:2



The Bethany Chancel Choir is a wonderful opportunity to express your faith – singing in celebration, praise and prayer to God in worship. We rehearse every Thursday from 7:30 – 9:00 p.m. The Chancel Choir's first rehearsal will be **Thursday, September 1<sup>st</sup>** in the Choir Room. Seasoned singers, new singers, or just curious about singing are welcome. If you have any questions please give me a call at 330-650-9697.

"... with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs to God." Col 3:16 Beth McDevitt

## Bell Choir Director/Organist – Good News!



We are happy to report that an excellent musician, Dawn Filler, has been recruited to serve as our Organist and Bell Choir Director. Dawn has a BA Degree in Organ with a concentration in sacred music and an additional Master's Degree in Organ. She has also taken other biblical courses and has a deep theological understanding of the role of music in worship. She is also a fine organist and has directed several bell choirs for children, youth, and adults. She has a husband, Dan, and a two year old son, Zachary, who will begin worshipping with us as well. Please join in welcoming her and her family when she first plays for us in worship on **September 4<sup>th</sup>**.

*What does it mean to live our*

## **Faith at Home?**

That's the theme of our All-Church Retreat **October 7 – 9** at beautiful Temple Hills. Enjoy great faith-building, fellowship and fun! And it's such a bargain!

**Two Nights:** Age 19 and up = \$60

Age 13-18 = \$30

Age 10-12 = \$25

Age 3-9 = \$20

Age 2 and under = free

**One Night:** Age 19 and up = \$40

Age 13-18 = \$25

Age 10-12 = \$20

Age 3-9 = \$15

Age 2 and under = free

**Day Tripper:** Age 19 and up = \$25

Age 13-18 = 20

Age 10-12 = \$15

Age 3-9 = \$10

Age 2 and under = free

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**These Days** publication should have been available to Bethany for July-August-September. When they were not received, the office made numerous calls to the publishing company to inquire and each time was given the information that they were mailed. To date, we still have not received the books. We are sorry for this inconvenience to those of you who enjoy this booklet. We are still trying to pursue the whereabouts of the books.



### **Camp Bethany/New Trinity – THANK YOU!**

We had a wonderful week at camp; learning, growing, and rejoicing together as a faith family. It wouldn't have been possible without the help of many, many people. So we want to thank

- The Staff: Adults, Lead Counselors, Counselors, Counselors-in-Training, Helpers, Craft, and Kitchen Support
- Parents who provided meals
- The campers (and their parents who sent them)

Together, with God's help, we created a week of blessing. For that we are very, very grateful.

### **Family Promise Host Week**

Thanks to all of our volunteers for helping with our Family Promise 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, staying at the Family Center and staying overnight. Thanks also to members who contributed funds for help to be at the Family Center. We had three families, made up of a mom, dads, and eight children. The families were appreciative of the caring attitude and compassion shown to them by our Bethany Volunteers. Many of our regular volunteers were on vacation and we appreciate the extra duty so many of you did this week to accomplish this mission. We are thankful for the support Bethany members give to this important mission in our community.

Bob and Carolyn

## **River Valley FUN FACTS!**



Did you know? Recycling 1 ton of mixed paper saves the energy equivalent of 185 gallons of gasoline! Bethany's recycled paper had the following environmental impact in June:

- 32.13 trees
- 5.7 cubic yards of landfill
- 13,230 gallons of water
- 7,749 kilowatts of electricity

## **Reminder:**

Plastic and paper grocery bags are collected for Williard Food Pantry. The Pantry still has to purchase paper bags, so let's help them save on this cost. Request PAPER BAGS at the store whenever possible, and recycle them through this important mission. Please leave them in the lower level room next to the Choir Room (same place recycled packing materials are collected.)



*Please remember in your prayers...*

† *Olive Devine, Summa Western Reserve Hospital*

## *In Sympathy...*



*We extend our sympathy to Clyde Sheppard and family on the death of his father, Robert Oyler, August 3<sup>rd</sup>.*

### **Lunch on Us**

We served 130 meals and 52 meals "to go" to the Summit Lake Community at Miller Avenue's *Lunch on Us* on July 30<sup>th</sup>. Many meals are served to children who come to this lunch without their parents. It is truly a blessing that Miller Avenue provides this meal to the neighborhood that has so many needs. Thanks to our volunteers for providing this meal: Harry Cool, Donah Gehlert, Kathy Keenan, Bill Leas, Pat McDevitt, Cheryl McGraw, Bob Pletzer, Mary Seymour, and Marcia Spring.

Dear Bethany,

Thank you for the lovely altar flowers I received; especially to Carolyn Shroyer for bringing them and for her visit.

Harvey Koudela

**Calendar for additions to ~ or ~ changes to the  
2011 monthly calendar mailed to you.**

(as of Aug. 4<sup>th</sup>) **August 8<sup>th</sup> to August 21<sup>st</sup>**

8/08 9:30a Prayers Shawl Ministry (Lounge)  
8/09  
8/10  
8/11  
8/12  
8/13 9:00a Social Hall Rsrvd. 4:00p

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

## ONE SERVICE ONLY

### *Sunday ~ August 14, 2011*

† Nursery Available 9:15 to 10:30 a.m.

9:30a **Worship in the Sanctuary/** The Bethany  
Concert Band  
10:30a Social Hour

### *Volunteers for August 14<sup>th</sup>*

Greeters:  
Lay Reader: M Peyak  
Nursery: K. Keenan, S. Melvin  
Special Music: Bethany Concert Band  
Ushers: R.&S. Holle, M. Jensen, H. Koudela,  
B.&C. Pletzer  
Van Driver: C. Frederick  
Visitor Outlook: K. Wurgler

8/15  
8/16  
8/17 8:00a Men's Volunteer Breakfast  
8/18  
8/19  
8/20 11:30a Bethany Kitchen



### *Sunday ~ August 21, 2011*

† Nursery Available 9:15 to 10:30 a.m.  
† Mary Seymour, guest preacher

8:30a **Worship** in the Social Hall  
9:30a **Worship** in the Sanctuary  
10:30a Coffee Hour

### *Volunteers for August 21<sup>st</sup>*

Greeters:  
Lay Reader: J. Roach  
Nursery: L. Rorrer, T. Jensen  
Special Music: S. & H. Gallagher, G. Boughner  
Ushers: L. Luginbill, F. Read, S. Truby, S. Ward,  
N. Buck, L. Short, C. McGraw, L. Sheppard  
Van Driver: E. Frederick  
Visitor Outlook: M. Crichton



## Why Stephen Ministry?

*Because the Bible tells us to:*

“Love one another as I have loved you.”  
John 15:12

“Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”  
Galatians 6:2

“Encourage one another and build each other up.”  
1 Thessalonians 5:11a

“Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.”  
Romans 12:15

“Serve one another in love.”  
Galatians 5:13

“Live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers and sisters, be compassionate and humble.”  
1 Peter 3:8

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”  
Ephesians 4:32

The Stephen Ministry logo, with the broken person behind the cross and the whole person in front of the cross, symbolizes that we are all broken people and that it is only through the cross of Jesus that we are made whole. Stephen Ministers will help guide you in your journey from brokenness to wholeness.

*For more information, contact your Stephen Leader, Tammy Jensen.*