

The Bethany Letter

SUNDAY ~ JUNE 27, 2010

VOLUME 2010

ISSUE NO. 23

The Rev. Stephen Gehlert, Senior Minister

The Rev. Mark Steiner, Visitation Minister

Blessed by God to Be a Blessing

I'm indebted to Steve Gifford, Pastor, Trinity UCC Canton, for these thoughts on what it means to be blessed.

Everything we have comes from God's bountiful hand and is a blessing to us from Him. Our response to His provision should be one of contentment and thanksgiving, realizing that God is indeed our Source.

But our response should be much more than that. Because of God's love for us, and because He has demonstrated that love in so many ways, we should seek to cultivate a stewardship lifestyle. A stewardship lifestyle is one that realizes that our role is that of a manager, a steward, who is accountable to God for the use of the resources – time, talents and treasure – which He has given to us.

Stewardship has been compared to a three-legged stool. Remove one of the legs and the stool can't stand. But when all three legs are present, the stool is able to do what it was designed to do. Similarly, a stewardship lifestyle consists of time, talents and treasure, all of which are gifts from God and all of which are to be used for God's glory.

God's servant, Moses, gave us tremendous insight concerning the "treasure" aspect of stewardship when he wrote in Deuteronomy chapter 8: "... remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth." For that reason, there is no such thing as a self-made man or woman.

That's why our role is not one of ownership, but that of a manager, a steward, of what God has given to us. What's the difference between an owner and a manager? An owner has rights; a manager has responsibilities. That's why we hold our possessions with an open hand – not a clenched fist – realizing that everything is a gift from God. And as we do so, we seek to put first thing first.

In describing exactly how we are to do that, Jesus said, "... store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:20-21)

How do we lay up treasures in heaven? How do we seek first God's kingdom when it comes to financial matters? How can we who have been blessed by God in turn be a blessing? One of the primary ways is by giving to the ministry here at Trinity United Church of Christ. Our giving to God is thus in response to His blessing in our life and to His love for us. We do not give to prove anything or to earn anything. Rather, we give out of joyful hearts that have been redeemed by God's grace and in response to all He has done for us.

Total stewardship consists of giving to God our time, our talents and our treasure. But even as we emphasize those three important elements, let's remember that the "treasure" aspect is very important. In some ways, it is the culmination of a stewardship lifestyle. As one person expressed it so vividly before the offering was received in his church, "Lord, in spite of all we say or do, this is what we think of you."

Thank you for giving of yourself, of your time, of your talents and of your treasure to the work of the Lord at our church. Thank you for following the pattern of Abraham who realized he'd been blessed by God to be a blessing to others. Thank you for seeking God's direction concerning your financial support of this ministry as part of this year's stewardship emphasis. And thank you for being faithful to the Lord as you covenant with Him concerning your giving in the future. Remember, we have been "blessed by God to be a blessing."

May God help us know, not only that we're blessed, but also the reason it's been given to us.

With Hope,

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING

June 27th – we will be receiving *Strengthen the Church*, a special mission offering that helps to grow the UCC as a vibrant community of God’s love through support of the *God is Stillspeaking Ministry*, Local Church Ministries and our local Conference. Please join us to help spread the love!

Bethany Night at Donato's



We have a great time!

Good food and fellowship!

The Youth Fellowship will be hosting *Bethany Night at Donato's*, Wednesday, June 30th from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. Join us! We have a great time! Good food and fellowship!

“The Bethany Letter”

To save on cost associated with the preparation and distribution of our newsletter, TBL will be ready on our website or you may pick it up at church on the following Sundays this summer:

July 11, 25

August 8, 22, 29 ...

... to continue weekly

TBL will be mailed (if not picked up) on the Monday after the above listed Sundays. Deadline for summer news articles: 10:00 a.m. the Tuesday before. Also, check out our website: www.bethanyucc.org

New Members to be Received

We will be receiving new members into the Bethany Church family of faith on **July 11th**. If you are interested in becoming part of this group or would just like to know more about Bethany, please contact Pastor Steve at 330-923-5277. He will be happy to arrange a time to talk with you.

Sign Up for Camp!

July 25 – 30

Camp Bethany/New Trinity



If you have a child of camp age (finishing 1st – 6th grade) and would like to register him or her for camp here’s what you need to know:

Camp Bethany – New Trinity

Date: July 25 – 30

Place: Camp Trinity, Navarre, OH

\$200 if registered by July 15

Note: registration includes full fee payment.

Forms: available in social hall & workroom

To Help: sign up to do a meal or donate food

Don't forget...

Scholarships are available to any camp

City of Cuyahoga Falls E-Recycle Drive

Friday July 16th & Saturday July 17th

8:00 a.m. – 12:00 each day

FYI

Cuyahoga Falls City Hall Parking Lot
Second Street & Stow Ave.

More info: 330-971-3201

Have a Favorite Hymn?

What a great treasure we, as Christians have, in the hymns of the church. Through them we give thanks and praise to God. Through them God comforts, challenges, and inspires us. We’re going to celebrate that treasure in a special way with “Hymn Parade Sunday,” when we’ll be singing the “Top Ten” favorite hymns of our Bethany family. How will we know what those hymns are? **YOU** are going to tell us!



All through the summer, every Sunday, you’ll have a chance to share your favorite hymn on your attendance card. One vote per week, use them as you choose: name the same hymn every week, or a different one each week; it’s up to you. But one vote, per person, per week. Then, on September 5th we’ll have a “Hymn Parade” count down in worship to celebrate what a gift it is to sing these songs together.

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Volunteer Opportunity

Faith in Action-Interfaith caregivers is looking for special people to participate in our Volunteer Program. Days and times are flexible – give as much or as little time as you choose. Areas of service range from friendly visits to office work. Free training is provided. For information, please call Sandy Alexander at the *FIA-IC* office 330-922-1900.

River Valley Paper Company Fun Facts!

Did you know: The paper we throw away each year could heat 50,000,000 homes for 20 years!

Bethany's recycled paper for 5/1 to 5/31 has saved:

- 5.70 trees
 - 5.70 cubic yards of landfill
 - 13,293 gallons of water
 - 7,786 kilowatts of electricity
-

C.E Needs YOU!

Christian Education offers Sunday school during 9:30 worship during the summers. Children ages 4 through 6th grade go to the library after the children's message (except for Family Sunday). We have teachers scheduled for each Sunday who will do the lesson, but we need one other volunteer during this time to follow our safe church policy. Maybe it's YOU! Please contact Carolyn Shroyer if you are able to help.

THANK YOU...

Dear Friends,

Since my last letter I have been blessed with visits from dear friends: Carolyn Shroyer with communion and my dear friends Rev. Mark and Dale Renner. Thanks to all who remember me. I love and think and pray for all. Mary Coffield

 Please remember in your prayers...

- † Bob Charton, hospital
- † Harvey Morrow, home
- † Bobbie Berie, home

† *In Sympathy...*

We express our Christian sympathy to the family of Bethany member, Pauline Raleigh, who died June 18th.

Change of Address...

Austin and Lauren (Dix) Cantwell
3173 Westwood Dr. Austin 330-634-4977
Ravenna, OH 44266 Lauren 330-606-5115

Caitlin Dix 330-807-5155
3559 Marcella Ave.
Stow, OH 44224



Stewardship Message Teaching Stewardship

"When your children ask you in times to come..."

Deuteronomy 6:20

In our congregation, we invite our children to lead worship for us on Children's Sunday as summer begins each year. As the children plan that service, it is interesting to watch what they have learned about worship from worshipping in adult-planned services during the year. Hearing their comments as they plan their service makes us look again at what they are receiving and what we think we are transmitting to them in worship; what we think we're giving is not always what they are getting!

Undoubtedly, the same is true about what our children understand about giving and its relationship to the faith of the adults around them. Because the liturgical trappings of our offering time are attention getting (a procession, a special song or two, brass plates with velvet lining!), clearly we are communicating that this is an important part of worship. As congregations, we also need to help parents and other caregivers understand how to communicate to their children how all their decisions around money in their lives have a faith context. An acquaintance of mine, now in her thirties, told me that her mother told her as a child to give a dollar a week to the church, and that is still what she is doing now, despite having a much larger income! Teaching stewardship needs to be an integral and natural part of all our Christian formation programs in our churches, keeping in mind the "times to come."

Rochelle A. Stackhouse is the Senior Minister of The Church of the Redeemer, United Church of Christ, New Haven Connecticut.

June 2010

God is still speaking,

This resource is a free service and is made possible by your gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission.

Calendar for additions to ~ or ~ changes to the
2010 monthly calendar mailed to you.
June 28th to July 11th

6/28 9:00a Quilters
6:00p IHN Meal (SH)
6/29 NO Staff Meeting
6:00p IHN Meal (SH)
6/30 **5:00p Bethany Night at Donato's 8:00p**
6:00p IHN Meal (SH)

JULY...

7/01 6:00p IHN Meal (SH)
7/02 6:00p IHN Meal (SH)
7/03 6:00p IHN Meal (SH)

Independence Day

Sunday, July 4, 2010

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

8:30a Worship (Communion) ~ In the Social Hall
9:30a Worship ~ In the Sanctuary
10:30a Social Hour Host: Stewardship

7/05 OFFICE CLOSED
7/06 NO Staff Meeting
10:30a Newsletter Deadline
7/07
7/08
7/09
7/10

Sunday ~ July 11, 2010

† Nursery Available 9:15 to 10:30 a.m.
† Vacation Bible School Week / July 12~July 16

8:30a Worship (Healing & Reconciliation)
9:30a Worship
10:30a Coffee Hour
10:30a Retreat Committee (Lounge)

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 July 4th

Cup Washing: A. Zeller
Greeters:
Lay Reader: G. Smith
Special Music: Beth McDevitt, piano
Nursery: M. Ferda
Ushers: C. Hofmann, H. Walker, M.&R. Bowmaster,
L. Short, J. Smith, N. buck, B. Pletzer
Van Driver: E. Frederick
Visitor Outlook: S. Ward

Volunteers for July 11th

Cup Washer: C. Eberhardt
Greeters:
Special Music: Olivia Stevens-Sommers, vocal
Nursery: K. Dugan
Ushers: T. Hermann, B. Charton, S. Truby, S. Ward,
A. McVan, Karen Fratz, H. Koudela, K. Koudela
Van Driver: L. Goodwin
Visitor Outlook: L. Goodwin

Bethany's Mission Projects NEVER go on Summer Vacation

Please post this reminder on your refrigerator during this summer. ☺

How can you help support our missions during the summer?

Make a difference with your donations Throughout the summer, we would like the families and members of our congregation to bring in items for Good Neighbors, IHN, and Miller Avenue. For Good Neighbors: a school supply (listed below) or a food item such as peanut butter, cereal, tuna, pasta, soup, or canned vegetables. For Miller Avenue: toothpaste, deodorant, toothbrush, paper towels, tissues, or toilet paper. For IHN: coffee, diapers size 4, 5, and 6, wipes and Desitan, child's underwear sizes 2-6, cleaning supplies. Please put items in the boxes marked in the social hall. Thanks in advance for your support of these missions

Bethany Kitchen Saturday, July 17 and August 21. Can you volunteer a few hours to help prepare and serve this meal? Contact Gail Cool for more info at 330-923-2676.

Fair Trade Coffee We have several regular drip varieties: Breakfast Blend, Bright Day, Columbian, Ethiopian, French Roast and Decaf. Whole bean is available in Breakfast Blend. Check us out at the social hour each Sunday. This is a Mission awareness and benefits the coffee farmers.

Good Neighbors We are requesting donations of school supplies for kids in Cuyahoga Falls who need a hand in preparing for the new school year. We have listed examples of items needed. We are also taking financial donations to help purchase these supplies. Elementary School: Scissors, glue, colored pencils, markers, rulers, #2 pencils, pencil/school boxes, wide rule paper, backpacks, protractors, black and blue pens, mechanical #2 pencils, wide or college rule paper, 3-ring binders, and 3 hold folders with pockets. **Please drop off your school supply donations or financial donations at the box marked Good Neighbors in the Social Hall by the end of July.**

Interfaith Hospitality Network Our next IHN week begins Sunday, June 27 . Thanks to all of our volunteers who have committed to making this mission happen at Bethany. If you have been thinking about getting involved with this mission but you're not sure how to get started, consider shadowing a volunteer during our host week to learn more about the program. The list of volunteers for the week is included in this newsletter. For more information call Bob Pletzer or Carolyn B. Hofmann. Thanks.

Miller Avenue UCC "Lunch on Us" On Saturday, July 31, we will be preparing and serving the meal to the neighborhood from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Bethany members are encouraged and welcome to join the mission committee members with this project.

Please contact Carolyn B. Hofmann at 330-929-7704, 330-543-3897 or chofmann@chmca.org for more information on these many mission projects. Thanks for your support of Bethany's missions.

Our next Mission Committee meeting is Wednesday, July 28 at 7 p.m. Come and join us and learn more about our mission projects.

