

The Bethany Letter

SUNDAY ~ March 20 2011

VOLUME 2011

ISSUE NO. 11

Rev. Stephen Gehlert, Senior Minister

Rev. Mark Steiner, Visitation Minister

Open My Eyes, That I May See

Looking at the same reality, one person can only see problems, frustrations and difficult people, while another can only be grateful for everyone's patience and helpfulness. Willa Cather wrote something that helps us understand the difference:

*The miracles of the church seem to me to rest not so much on faces
or voices or healing power suddenly near to us from afar off,
but upon our perceptions being made finer,
so that for a moment our eyes can see and our ears can hear
what is there around us always.*

The longer I minister, and the more I observe people's lives, their attitudes and perceptions, the more I see the wisdom of Cather's words. God's presence and blessings constantly surround us. Life is full of the abundant gifts of God's love. Yet we have difficulty perceiving that presence and blessing and those gifts of love. So instead of our attitudes and character being formed in response to the goodness with which God has surrounded us, they are formed instead in response to the problems and shortcomings, both real and perceived, that we encounter each day. That leads to frustrated and bitter living, to withdrawing more and more from interactions with others, because we find so many of them disappointing.

One of the most important gifts the church can give is the gift of sight, the gift of being able to see life through the eyes of faith. We are called to help each other see where God is present and at work, to remind each other of the abundance of God's blessing, and to celebrate the work of the Holy Spirit within and among us. A fitting prayer for each of us every day comes from the words of the old hymn:

*Open my eyes, that I may see
Glimpses of truth, thou hast for me.*

May God help us see the truth that surrounds us, the truth that can fill our lives with joy and hope and peace.

Blessings,

Steve



Soup and Worship Lenten Series Schedule:

March 16	<i>Who Needs It?</i>	Luke 15:11-32	7 th Day Choir
March 23	<i>Examining Ourselves</i>	Psalms 51, 139	Chancel Choir
March 30	<i>Enemies</i>	Matthew 5:43-48, 7:1-6	Son Singers
April 6	<i>The Way of Love</i>	Luke 23:32-34	Memory Bell Choir
April 13	<i>An Imperative, Not an Option</i>	Matthew 18:23-35	Young Shepherds Choir



Harvest for Hunger Food Drive

During the month of March the Mission Committee will be supporting the *Harvest for Hunger Food Drive*. ***Every Sunday in March, please bring as many canned and dry goods as you can to donate.*** Drop boxes for the canned goods will be available by each of the nametag boards. Together we can make sure all children go to bed full. The Foodbank would like us to focus our donations on the “Super Six” items but any donation is appreciated.

Canned Beef Stew, Canned Tuna Fish, Peanut Butter, Boxed Cereal, Canned Vegetables, and Canned Soup

Financial contributions are appreciated. Checks can be made payable to the Akron Canton Regional Foodbank or Bethany, with “food drive” in the memo section.



Youth Fellowship

3/20	6:30 pm	Movie Night
3/26	5:00 pm	Prep - Indian Taco Family Night!
3/27	6:30 pm	Ponca Creek shares with YF and Parents (<i>mandatory for Mission Trippers!</i>)

**COMMITTEE NIGHT 7:30 P.M.
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23RD**

Guests from Ponca Creek

For years we’ve heard our youth tell about the meaning of our partnership with the Native American members of the Ponca Creek United Church of Christ Community. We’re very excited that soon, three members of that community: lay leaders, Judith Andrews and Judy Hanson and youth member, Lindsay Yellow Hawk, will be with us to share about Native American culture, the importance of our continued partnership and their needs and expectations of the youth who come to lead the all-day Bible School and be role models and witnesses for Jesus Christ. They will be with us three times, each with a different focus:

Sat, March 26, 6:00 pm – Indian Taco Family Night

Learn about Native American culture!
Play Native American games!
Eat GREAT Indian Tacos!

Sun, March 27, 9:30 am – Combined Sunday School

This community still deals with racism and neglect. Hear of the hope our continued commitment offers.

Sun, March 27, 6:30 pm – YF & Parents

Ponca Creek young people need good role models. Potential mission trippers and their parents will hear what that means from Ponca Creek leaders.

United Church of Christ Summer Camps



The Ohio Conference of the United Church of Christ offers a wonderful variety of camps for all ages at two sites. You can register your children for camp at a significant discount if you do so by **March 31**. Just go to www.ocucc.org to link to summer camp registration.

Bethany Buckeyes

The Bethany Buckeyes is an informal group of men and women who are at least 50 years old. We meet the first Friday of every month and celebrate with food, games and laughter. Our next meeting will be Friday, April 1st, 6:00 pm. Remember to call in your reservation to the church office, 330-923-5277; or mark your attendance card.



Swim Party

April 3, 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Riverfront YMCA, Cuyahoga Falls

Youth Fellowship is hosting a swim party for the children and youth of Bethany and New Trinity. The cost is \$5 (maximum \$10 per family) which covers admission and refreshments. All proceeds will go to support the ministry our churches share for the homeless through Family Promise. (Many thanks to the Falls "Y" for generously providing free use of the pool and several lifeguards!)



Noisy Offering



The Mission Committee would like to suggest a 50/50 proposition for Lent. Save your pocket change during Lent and give at least 50% to the Church and keep the other half to do something special for yourself or with your family. We will have a Noisy Offering collection on Palm Sunday, April 17th. We hope to hear a loud clamor! All money collected will go to Bethany's missions. So please start saving that change!

Easter Altar Plants



Please help celebrate Easter with a beautiful plant for the altar. **The deadline for ordering is Friday, April 15th.** The Ministry Committee will deliver the plants to those on our Remembrance List after the 10:30 a.m. service Easter Sunday, April 24th. The plants can only be delivered to those on the list. Thank you for your help. I would like to donate:

_____ plant(s) for the sanctuary @ \$12.00 each.

Total \$ _____ [check enclosed]

In Memory/Honor of _____

Donor(s) _____

Family Promise (IHN)

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. For more information call Bob Pletzer or Carolyn B. Hofmann.

Social Hours

A Chance for All of Us to Share!

Social hours, after worship, are a great way for all of us to share the wonderful gift of fellowship every week after worship. Each week the social hour is hosted by one of the many groups that make up Bethany's active ministry and mission. We can be grateful that so many of them are willing to serve us in this way - preparing food and punch, setting it out, serving it, and then staying to clean up.

Many of us may not realize that for those who are already giving of themselves in many ways by being active in our various ministries and missions, teaching or attending a class, or sharing in a choir this may mean helping with a social hour 5, 6, 7, or 8 times a year. That's a lot!

On the other hand there are those of us who are not currently serving in any of these ways, yet we enjoy the gift of these fellowship opportunities every week. That's why I'd like to invite "the rest of us" to form a small group to host a social hour. It doesn't have to be elaborate or fancy - just set out some snacks and a beverage to share and then clean up! Here are some open dates:

May 29 June 12, 19, 26 July 10, 17, 24, 31
Aug. 7, 14, 21, 28

If you've not been involved in hosting a social hour, I hope you'll consider it. Those who have been involved will be truly grateful!

Social Hall Use

Ever since the social hall was added to Bethany's facilities it has been our policy to make this wonderful space available to our members. That means for a nominal deposit our members may reserve it for their own use. This is a simple way for us to be "a family" and express our gratitude for the support of the ministry and mission we all share. Our ability to share this benefit requires that we limit it to those who are truly members - who share in the life and ministry of our church. So, we have to be clear that this doesn't include friends or relatives of those who are. Thanks to everyone in the Bethany family for understanding and respecting these guidelines.

Important Summer Dates

Mark Your Calendar

June 5	11:30 am	ALL CHURCH PICNIC
June 11-19		Youth Mission Trip to Ponca Creek
July 24-29		Camp Bethany / NT

Please remember in your prayers...



† Nancy Zucco, Gardens of Western Reserve

thank you

To My Bethany Family

I know this is coming late but I just want to thank everyone who made a donation for the Polar Plunge that I participated in a couple weeks ago here at Ohio University. As an event, we raised over \$5,000 for Special Olympics of Ohio and that wouldn't have been possible without people like you. I am truly so grateful and blessed to have an amazing church family that I know will always be there. I personally raised over \$200 with your help and for that, again, I want to say thanks! I couldn't have done it without you. Much Love, Emma Jensen

Dear Bethany,

A big "thank you" to Linda Goodwin, Pastor Steve, and the three young people with Youth Fellowship for stopping by to see us. We really enjoyed our visit and the cookies they brought very much.

Kathy Ruch

Dear Bethany Family,

Thank you so much for the beautiful flowers to celebrate my birthday of 82 years. Also very much enjoyed the visit with Karen Fratz.

Thank you, Ted Housley

Just for today ...



I will be happy! This assumes to be true what Abraham Lincoln said:

“Most folks are as happy as they make up their minds to be.”

BUY RECYCLED

Buying power makes the world go 'round, and consumers' decisions to purchase products made with recycled materials ensure continued demand for recycling. “One of the great things about recycling is the end-use innovation that it has sparked, a whole new industry is starting,” Quillard tells Earth911. “I have detergent whose container is made with recycled content, I have toilet paper made with recycled content, paper towels, tissues, basic household items.” If you pay attention to the labels on the products you buy, you should be able to tell if the packaging or product itself is made with recycled materials.

The point: Buying recycled products keeps the cycle of reuse in motion.

Bottle It Up ~ Plant it

The plastic bottle, lid and label make up 90 percent of a plastic bottle's cost. Americans buy an estimated **28 billion** plastic water bottles every year, and nearly eight out of every 10 of those bottles will end up in a landfill, translating to about a **23 percent** recycling rate. Furthermore, it's estimated that the production of plastic accounts for **4 percent** of the energy consumption in the U.S.

Water it

- A small investment upfront can save over the long run. Use your reusable bottles at the gym, the office or around the house
- Keep your reusable bottle in your car at all times for those unexpected trips and stops. You can fill it up at any gas station or fast food restaurant
- When you do buy a plastic bottle, make sure to wrap it up with reuse or recycling

Grow it

- Give the gift of reuse – the options are endless
- Buy matching reusable bottles for your department, co-workers or member of your book club
- Encourage your employer to hand out reusable bottles as promotional gifts, or give them away as party favors at your next major event

News: New Orleans Trip

As George Jensen reported last Sunday at the 10:30 Service, the NOLA Mission Trippers arrived home safely. However, we were not even an hour into our journey before we had our first encounter with God on our trip. You are welcome to ask any of us to relive that and other encounters, but for now, suffice it to say that He delivered us safely, both to and from New Orleans. Seven of us, including George J., Kim F. and I, had the pleasure of meeting Wilhemina and working in her home for the week. The following is a list of the things that we worked on: completed connecting the bathroom ventilation fans and took them through the roof, reinstalled about 36' of aluminum fascia, removed and replaced rotted bottom 10" of the front door jamb and supporting studs, extensive preparation for repainting front door (including priming), added extension jambs to 3 doors and cased them, set toilet in ms/bath, installed sink and vanity in ms/bath, completed plumbing in both bathrooms; installed doors (including jambs and casing) in 2 baths, 2 bedrooms, pantry, computer room and laundry; installed laminate (wood grained) flooring in the hall, 2 bedrooms and 4 closets; painted 1 wall (2 coats), painted many various pieces of wood trim prior to installation, painted jamb extensions after installation, set nails, filled nail holes and began final coat on doors/jambs/casings once installed; installed baseboards in 2 bedrooms, 4 closets, hallway, living room, dining room, computer room and laundry; and trimmed out bathroom light fixtures. And that is just what 7 of the 19 of us accomplished! We again experienced the very thankful and gracious people of New Orleans. We were thanked by everyone who we met along the way, even by the friendly folk at the Winn-Dixie. Along with Wilhemina and the people of New Orleans, and on behalf of your NOLA Mission Trippers, I wish to thank you for your prayers and your generous support of this Mission work. *Brad Bebout*

BETHANY VOLUNTEERS!

We are so grateful to all of you who volunteer your time and talent to Bethany during the year. Thank you! If you are unable to volunteer on your scheduled day you are reminded to call someone to substitute for you; or call the church office. It will be very much appreciated!

**Calendar for additions to ~ or ~ changes to the
 2011 monthly calendar mailed to you.
 March 21st to April 3rd**

3/21
 3/22 9:00a Staff Meeting
 10:00a Newsletter Deadline
 3/23 9:00a Bible Study (CE)
6:30p Lenten Service/ Chancel Choir / Soup
 7:00p Bell Choir Practice
7:30p COMMITTEE NIGHT
 3/24 7:30p Chancel Choir Practice
 3/25
 3/26 **6:00p Family Night Indian Taco Meal**
 YF - Host

Family Sunday ~ March 27, 2011

† **Nursery Available 9:15 to 11:30 a.m.**
 † **Third Sunday in Lent**
 † **Children remain in worship**
8:30a Worship
 9:15a Church School for Children/
COMBINED Adult Classes
10:30a Worship
 11:30a Social Hour Host: Green Team
 11:30a 7th Day Practice
 6:30p YF – Ponca Creek, share w/parents

3/28
 3/29 9:00a Staff Meeting
 10:00a Newsletter Deadline
 6:30p Annual Interfaith Dinner
 3/30 6:30p **Lenten Service/ Son Singers / Soup**
 7:00p Bell Choir
 3/31 7:30p Chancel Choir Practice
April...
 4/01 6:00p Buckeyes
 4/02

Sunday ~ April 3, 2011

† **Nursery Available 9:15 to 11:30 a.m.**
 † **Fourth Sunday in Lent**
8:30a Worship
 9:15a Church School for Children and Adults
10:30a Worship/ Children's Sunday School
 11:30a 2nd yr. Confirmands "Ready to Affirm"
 11:30a 7thDay
 11:30a Chili Cook-Off: Women's Class and
 Bell Choir
 11:30a Youth Committee
 6:00p SWIM Party at YMCA w/NT

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 March 27th

Altar Flower Delivery: J.&S. Mancinelli/ M.&S. Gaskill
 Greeters: Z. Read, G. Smith / J. Bebout, C. McGraw
 Special Music: Bell Choir / Children's Choirs
 Nursery: H. Bedillion, T. Jensen, M. Ferda, S. Keenan,
 R. Read
 Ushers: C. Hofmann, M. Jensen, S. Truby, S. Ward,
 H. Bowman, K. Fratz, J. Nielson, R. Berie
 Van Driver: E. Frederick
 Visitor Outlook: H. Bedillion

join us

Volunteers for April 3rd

Altar Flower Delivery: P. Novak / M. Calhoun
 Greeters: E. Albert / H.&D. Koudela
 Lay Reader: J. Wachovec
 Special Music: / Chancel Choir
 Nursery: H. Bowman, P. Cochran, S. Ferda,
 B. Read, C. Bedillion
 Ushers: R.&S. Holle, F. Read, J. Grazulis, J. Seymour,
 A. McVan, Z. Read, N. Buck
 Van Driver: L. Goodwin
 Visitor Outlook: N. Buck

**Bethany United
Church of Christ**

1235 Broad Blvd.
Cuyahoga Falls OH 44223

Office: 330-923-5277

Fax: 330-923-3210

Website

www.bethanyucc.org

NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID PERMIT #197
Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio 44223-2428

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Japan Earthquake / Tsunami

Our hearts and prayers are with our sisters and brothers in Japan and throughout the tsunami impact zone. A massive 8.9 earthquake struck off the coast of Japan at 2:46 pm local time, March 11, causing extensive damage and triggering a huge tsunami. Tsunami warnings have been issued for 20 countries across the Pacific basin, extending to the United States, Mexico and the coast of South America.

UCC and Global Ministries staff are monitoring the situation and seeking contact with partners and mission personnel across the impacted region. Updated information on the UCC's response can be found at: <http://www.ucc.org/disaster/japan-earthquake-2011/>

Your UCC & Global Ministries colleagues continue to follow the tsunami as it travels across the Pacific. A One Great Hour of Sharing emergency grant is being sent to our partner the United Church of Christ in Japan. Donations to a special UCC Pacific Earthquake/Tsunami Fund are encouraged.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

1. Pray for the people of Japan and the tsunami impact area, their leaders, and all emergency response workers.
2. To assist people impacted by this disaster, please make a gift payable to Bethany UCC marked for "Pacific earthquake/tsunami." It will be sent on to Wider Church Ministries disaster relief.
3. Make a secure online donation to the International Disaster Relief fund. Please note *Pacific earthquake/tsunami* in the Comments box.