

# The Bethany Letter

SUNDAY ~ March 27, 2011

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Rev. Stephen Gehlert, Senior Minister

Rev. Mark Steiner, Visitation Minister

## ***God Is Our Refuge and Our Strength***

The recent terrible earthquake, Tsunami, and nuclear tragedies in Japan have touched our hearts and led us to prayer. Here is a prayer by Rev. Dr. John Tamilio, pastor of Pilgrim United Church of Christ in Cleveland, which can both guide us in our prayers and teach us about God's presence and care in such difficult times.

### ***Psalm 46:1-3***

*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*

*Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,*

*though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;*

*though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.*

Holy God of Earth, and Sea, and Sky, of all that was and all that shall be —  
It all seems to happen so quickly: a rumble, a buckle in the earth, a swell.

And then, catching us unawares, all that surrounds us is reduced to rubble.  
Stone upon stone. Ash thickening the air. Silence. Tears. Even nature laments.  
And in the aftermath, the ocean travels to foreign shores bringing ominous waves,  
water that will obliterate, not baptize.

This is where the world stands at the start of this somber, Lenten season.  
Earthquakes thunder and tsunamis inundate with little warning and even less prejudice.

We lift up our prayers and our hearts for the people of Japan and Hawaii, indeed all,  
who lie in the wake of such callous catastrophes.

As death tolls rise and warnings increase as far afield as Canada and South America,  
our feelings of helplessness intensify.  
Our intercessions are with those who border the Pacific, which is anything but placid now.

We turn our despondency over to you, O God.

We know, at the core of our being, that you are not the cause of such travesty.  
We also confess that we do not understand why evil, be it natural or human wrought,  
exists in this world you created and blessed.

For you are a God of minimum protection, yet you are also a God of maximum support.  
For this we offer you our prayers of gratitude and we ask that your sacred presence surround  
the victims of such devastation and that you give them the strength and courage they need  
as they gather with family and friends, with relief workers and missionaries,  
to rebuild their homes and communities.

Bless them, we pray.

Offer solace to the loved ones of those whose lives were lost and to those who desperately  
search for bodies that may never be found.

Indeed, we are dust and to dust we shall return.  
The finitude of our earthly sojourn hits hard during this penitential season of prayer and fasting.  
Be with us through these forty days, O Holy One, as we try to make sense of it all. Help us be still.

We ask this, and all things, in the name of your Son, our Savior, and Jesus Christ—  
the One in whose name we forever rejoice to pray.

**Amen.**



## Soup and Worship Lenten Series Schedule:

<b>March 30</b>	<i>Enemies</i>	Matthew 5:43-48, 7:1-6	Son Singers
<b>April 6</b>	<i>The Way of Love</i>	Luke 23:32-34	Memory Bell Choir
<b>April 13</b>	<i>An Imperative, Not an Option</i>	Matthew 18:23-35	Young Shepherds Choir

### United Church of Christ Summer Camps



The Ohio Conference of the UCC 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](http://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 1<sup>st</sup>, 6:00 pm**. Remember to call in your reservation to the church office, 330-923-5277.

### Youth Fellowship

<b>4/03</b>	6:00 pm	Bethany/New Trinity Swim Party
<b>4/10</b>	11:30 am	Welcome Confirmands to YF
<b>4/17</b>	9:15 am	Confirmation Reunion Breakfast
<b>4/24</b>	8:30 am	Host Easter Brunch

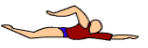
### Confirmation

<b>4/03</b>	11:30 am	Toward Affirmation (2 <sup>nd</sup> year only)
<b>4/10</b>	10:30 am	Confirmation Presentations
	11:30 am	Welcome to YF and dinner
<b>4/17</b>	9:30 am	Confirmation Reunion Breakfast
	10:30 am	Rite of Confirmation



## 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!)*

### Children’s Sunday School Classes

On Sunday, March 27<sup>th</sup>, we read the Exodus story of the wilderness wanderers and learned what an amazing way God provided for their needs. On Sunday, **April 5<sup>th</sup>**, the Fourth Sunday of Lent, we will study the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. During these weeks, the leaders will be praying for each family and child. Please pray for us too! All are welcome. Bethany offers classes for Children of all ages and Adults each Sunday at 9:15 a.m.

### Women’s Spring Lantern Fellowship

Pilgrim Hills Camp – April 8, 9, 10

*Led by Pastor Dale Ann Gray*

We may be pretty well acquainted with God the Almighty, Jehovah, the Most High, but what about God the Sweeper Woman, God the Knitter, God the Mother Hen? What do *these* images tell us about who God is, how God loves, and who we are? Come see! Cost is \$135 – more info? [hoffretire@yahoo.com](mailto:hoffretire@yahoo.com)



## Easter Altar Plants

Please help celebrate Easter with a beautiful plant for the altar. **The deadline for ordering is Friday, April 15<sup>th</sup>.** The Ministry Committee will deliver the plants to those on our Remembrance List after the 10:30 a.m. service Easter Sunday, April 24<sup>th</sup>. 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) \_\_\_\_\_

## Easter Egg Hunt

We need your help with donating candy to fill our Easter eggs for the upcoming Easter Egg Hunt!



Please find small individually wrapped candy that will fit into small plastic eggs. You may drop it off and put it in the workroom next to the office. Thank you for your help.  
**C.E. committee**

## Would You Like to Know More about Bethany?

If you've been attending Bethany as a visitor and would like to know more about our congregation and the wider United Church faith family, please contact Pastor Steve at 330-923-5277 or [pastor@bethany.ald](mailto:pastor@bethany.ald). He'll be glad to talk to you and answer any questions you might have.

## Bethany Kitchen

Bethany Kitchen had another great turnout March 19<sup>th</sup>. The menu was Swiss steak, mashed potatoes, peas, pears, rolls and a variety of cakes for dessert. We served 115 meals in an atmosphere equal to none! The table centerpieces were great. Thanks to everyone for his/her outstanding job: Kathy Keenan, Martha Peyak, Harry Cool, Mary Joe Trail, Zach Read, Bob and Carole Pletzer, Lynette Sheppard, Andy McVan, Bobby Read, Marty Crichton, Mandy Keenan, Lou Atleson, John Gonis, Greg Fratz, Gracie Fratz, Kevin Fratz, Cheryl McGraw, Susan Mancinelli and Evelyn Fisher. The **next** Bethany Kitchen meal will be served on **Saturday, April 16<sup>th</sup>**. Help is always needed for food preparation and cleanup. All are welcome!

*Harvey Koudela*



## 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 17<sup>th</sup>. All money collected will go to Bethany's missions. So please start saving that change!

**We hope to hear a loud clamor!**

*It's that time of year again!*



## Bethany's Treasures

*save the date!*

## & Bake Sale

**Saturday ~ April 30<sup>th</sup> 9:00 am ~ 2:00 pm**  
Start cleaning out those closets, drawers and garages for the annual Treasures and Bake Sale! Please hold your treasures until the week of the sale. Any questions call our "Treasure Queen," Kim Wurgler at 330-928-4446.

## River Valley Paper Company

### FUN FACTS!



Did you know...recycling 1 ton of mixed paper saves the energy equivalent of 185 gallons of gasoline! Bethany's recycled paper has had the following environmental impact for 2/1 to 2/28/11

30.39	trees
5.36	cubic yards of landfill
12,512.50	gallons of water
7,328.75	kilowatts of electricity

# 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!

## Important Summer Dates

### *Mark Your Calendar*

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

## *Just for today ...*



Wisdoming ຈຸດ ວ່າ  
ເອນນຸ ອ່າງ!

***I will try to strengthen my mind.***

*I will learn something useful. I will not be a mental loafer. I will read something that requires effort, thought and concentration.*

# The Incredible Good Neighbors Stock-A-Thon

The shelves are bare at Good Neighbors! A lot of people are having a tough time right now and it's difficult for the folks at Good Neighbors to keep the shelves stocked, so we're launching *The Incredible Good Neighbors Stock-A-Thon*. Every week for the next six months, we'll be asking you to bring in a different item. Sometimes it will be food, sometimes baby items, toiletries or school supplies. Boxes will be available around the church for your donation and our progress will be tracked on the display in the social hall.

*Here's what we'll be asking for in April:*

Month	Date	Item
April	3	Canned Fruit
(Non-Perishable Food)	10	Peanut Butter
	17	Instant Potatoes
	24	Soup

**Thank you for your generosity!**

*Please remember in your prayers...*



† Nancy Zucco, Gardens of Western Reserve

*Thank you*

*Bethany Friends,*

*I am so slow but wish to thank Beth McDevitt and John Dix for bringing the youth group with Valentine cookies; Carolyn and Doug Shroyer for the stew and Jello; Rev. Steiner and Howard Edwards for coming to visit; and all who sent cards and called me. So nice to be remembered. I am trying to do as the good man said - do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your God.*

*Love, Mary Coffield*

Calendar for additions to ~ or ~ changes to the  
2011 monthly calendar mailed to you.  
March 28<sup>th</sup> to April 10<sup>th</sup>

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 2<sup>nd</sup> yr. Confirmands "Ready to Affirm"  
11:30a 7thDay Practice  
11:30a **Chili Cook-Off:** Women's Class  
and Bell Choir  
11:30a Youth Committee  
**6:00p SWIM Party at YMCA w/NT**

4/04 1:00p Prayer Chain Meeting  
4/05 9:00a Staff Meeting  
10:00a Newsletter Deadline  
5:30p EOA/WRA Committee Meeting  
7:30p Kerygma  
4/06 **6:30p Lenten Service/ Bell Choir / Soup**  
7:00p Bell Choir Practice  
4/07 7:30p Chancel Choir Practice  
4/08  
4/09

## Sunday ~ April 10, 2011

† Nursery Available 9:15 to 11:30 a.m.  
† Fifth Sunday in Lent  
**8:30a Worship**  
9:15a Church School for Children & Adults  
**10:30a Worship/ Children's S.S.**  
Confirmation Presentations  
11:30a Coffee Hour  
11:30a 7<sup>th</sup> Day Practice  
11:45a 2<sup>nd</sup> yr. Confirmands: meal,  
YF welcome (pictures)

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 April 3<sup>rd</sup>

Altar Flower Delivery: P. Novak / M. Calhoun  
Greeters: E. Albert / H.&D. Koudela  
Lay Reader: J. Wachovec  
Special Music: Story & Song / Chancel Choir  
Nursery: Joann Boling, 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

## Display Cases for April:

Case A-1 Church School – Adults  
Case A-2 New Orleans Mission Trip

## Volunteers for April 10<sup>th</sup>

Altar Flower Delivery: B.&J. Charton / S. Ende-Saxe  
Greeters: S. Ende-Saxe / C.&L. Sheppard  
Lay Reader: S. Holle  
Special Music: / Chancel Choir, Bell Choir  
Nursery: Tracy Ocepek, T. Jensen, K. Melvin,  
K. Dugan, E. Sammons  
Ushers: L. Luginbill, H. Walker, M. Seymour, M. Seguin,  
H. Bowman, R. Berie, A. Pease, C. McGraw  
Van Driver: B. Read  
Visitor Outlook: S. Ward

# Bethany United Church of Christ

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