

The Bethany Letter

Sunday ~ May 22, 2011

VOLUME 2011

ISSUE NO. 19

Rev. Stephen Gehlert, Senior Minister

Rev. Mark Steiner, Visitation Minister

In My Father's House, There Are Many...

Sometimes we hear a biblical text so many times that we assume we know just what it means and so it loses its power to speak to us in new ways. That's why it's always helpful when someone can help us understand the original words and their meaning, so we can get a better sense of what the words originally meant to those who first heard them. That's why I'm glad to offer this helpful reflection by Frank Ramirez on this Sunday's gospel passage, John 14:1-14:

You've heard it read at funerals, and maybe you've heard ministers talk about this verse in their sermons. It's John 14:2 – and in the King James translation Jesus says, “In my Father's house are many mansions.” This verse is meant to comfort us with the thought of what God has planned for us as a reward. Some people go on and on about how big their mansion is going to be, and how it will be off in the woods, or on a mountain, or one way or another isolated from everyone else's mansion. You never hear someone say they plan for their mansion to be set right up against their neighbor's house without any yard in between. They all plan on having some space.

But is this what the Bible really says? The Greek word “monai” isn't referring to a mansion as we know it. That's a 400-year-old English word, not a Bible word. The word really means rooms, or apartments. The people Jesus spoke to were familiar with the style of the household in the Roman Empire. The Roman household might consist of 100 people or more. There wouldn't be just mom and dad and the kids, there would also be grandparents and grand uncles and aunts, and cousins and siblings and nephews and nieces, and artisans and writers and philosophers along with servants and other workers. It was an economic as well as a spiritual unit. The household was actually pretty crowded. Everyone lived together, ate together, worshipped together, worked together – and they all lived pretty close together while doing it.

Some people might not think this sounds heavenly, but the vision of God's new heaven and new earth is a city where we all live close together and of a household in which we couldn't be more in each other's way. The difference is – in God's reign we'll all finally get along.

It's God's plan for us to be even more connected in love, in purpose, in unity. That unity, that purpose, that love includes all aspects of our lives, including the economics, the offerings that tie us together, here in this congregation and around the world. This is what heaven looks like. This is what heaven looks like – right now!

I hope this helps us expand our understanding of Jesus' view of heaven, and also, what a good and full life here on earth might look like.

With Resurrection Hope,

MISSION MINUTE

Chapel Hill Community - May Special Offering



We are holding our annual special offering for Chapel Hill Community this May. Chapel Hill is one of our United Church Homes, the nearest one, located in Canal Fulton. Our offering normally goes for benevolent care, no resident has ever been asked to leave due to the lack of funds. This then, is where we come in. The benevolent assistance program that we are asking you to contribute to provides for those whose personal resources have been exhausted. These residents, regardless of their circumstances are provided for with equal dignity and independence just like everyone else.

There are no special envelopes available for this offering. So use any envelope you have, just mark in for Chapel Hill. Please try to give during the month of May. *We ask for your prayers and financial support.*

Important Message from the Green Team

Due to the fact that the Stow Waste Recycling Center will be closing in July, as of May 22nd Bethany will no longer accept recycling for the Center from your home. (e.g.: compact fluorescent lights or batteries). By late May you may check www.saswma.org or call 330/374-0383 for alternative site.

Nursery Volunteers Needed

Each Sunday the nursery needs 4 adults and one youth to cover the nursery. The schedule is made up each year to cover September to September. Two shifts are available: 9:15-10:15 am or 10:15-11:30 am. If you are interested in volunteering in the nursery, please call the office.

Also, SUMMER VOLUNTEERS are needed.

The Incredible Good Neighbors Stock-A-Thon



May is baby item month. Boxes are available around the church for your donation and our progress is tracked on the display in the social hall. *Here's what we'll be asking for on ...*

5/29	Baby Powder
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5/22	6:30 pm	Movie Night
5/29	10:20 am	Out to Breakfast
6/05	6:00 pm	Mission Trip Planning
	8:00 pm	Parent Information Session
6/11	7:00 am	Mission Trip Begins
6/19	9/10:00 pm	Mission Trip Returns

Bethany United Church of Christ

Iva and Ed Hazle Scholarship



A scholarship opportunity is available to Bethany Youth

Who:

- Graduating High School Seniors or GED Certified
- A Bethany member for a minimum of two years
- Entering an accredited education program/trade school in the Fall of 2011

How:

- Applications are available in the church workroom
 - Completed applications are due by **May 30th** in the church office
 - All completed applications will be reviewed
 - The applicant will be selected on need, involvement in church related activities, career goals and extracurricular activities/work history
- Questions, contact Bill Leas at 330-673-3389

The Church office is closed Monday, May 30th (Memorial Day observed). Please plan accordingly.

Have you called?



Graduation Accolades!

We will be recognizing Bethany's 2011 graduates during the 10:30 worship service on **June 5th**. If there is someone in your family you want recognized, please call the office by **May 31st**.

Buckeyes

COOKOUT

The Buckeyes will meet **Saturday, June 4th** at the Gehlert home, our final gathering of the season, for a picnic! Time: 6:00 PM

Meat and beverage will be provided.

Please bring a side dish or dessert to share

and your lawn chairs! It'll be fun!



"The Bethany Letter"

To save on cost associated with the preparation and distribution of our weekly newsletter, TBL will be ready on our website, e-mail or to be picked up at church on the following Sundays in the summer:

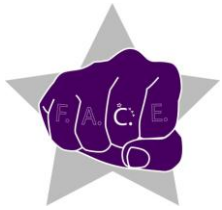
June 5, 12, 26

July 10, 24

August 14, 28 ...

... to continue weekly

TBL will be mailed (if not picked up) on the Monday after the above listed Sunday. Deadline for summer news articles: **10:00 a.m. the TUESDAY before the above date. Please plan accordingly.**



American Cancer Society
Relay for Life

TEAM - F.A.C.E.

(Fighting Against Cancer Everywhere)

Team F.A.C.E. would like to welcome Oz Hibbard, George Jensen, Tiffeny Stokes and Debra Schreiber to the team; along with Brody and Christine, Juliana, Brad and Susan Bebout. We are participating in the Stow-Munroe Falls Relay on **June 4th & 5th**. As of Monday we were at 34% of our goal of \$2250.00. At the Team meeting on Wednesday we raised that goal to \$5,000.00. You can make a donation by finding our team page online or by contacting anyone of us. We will be available at the Social Hour to accept your donations and to sell Suns and Moons and Luminaries in celebration of those who have fought cancer. Contact information is available through the Bethany Office.

http://main.acsevents.org/site/TR?team_id=851756&pg=team&fr_id=31659&fl=en_US&et=LycAqoagNmVxZJXQBeh3OA..&s_tafId=651311

Dates to remember - Mark your calander!

- 6/11 Ponca Creek Mission Trip Begins
- 6/18 Bethany Kitchen
- 6/22 Committee Night
- 6/29 Bethany Night at Donato's
- 7/04 Office Closed (Independence Day)
- 7/24 Camp Bethany / New Trinity Family Promise Guest Week



Save Money

Camp Bethany-New Trinity Register by June 15th

Registration forms for Camp are available in the office. They were mailed to parents of 1st - 6th grade children. A savings is available for registrations received by June 15th. The absolute deadline for registrations is July 15th. Scholarships are also available - contact Pastor Steve.

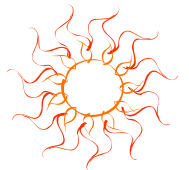


Appreciation Dinner

Thanks to Kathy "Sweet Tea" Keenan and her "Ptomaine Special" Chuck Wagon Gang for preparing a delicious dinner and all the festivities that made for a lovely evening.

Worship Schedule Begins June 12th

- 8:30 a.m. In the Social Hall
- 9:30 a.m. In the Sanctuary



Would You Like to Know More About Bethany UCC?

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. He'll be glad to talk to you and answer any questions you might have.

Social Hours – a Chance for All to Share

Social Hours are a real blessing. They provide a way for us to share fellowship on a weekly basis, stay connected and help welcome new people into our faith family. The way we've organized the hosting of these special times is that various committees and classes are asked to host one once a year. That works well, but it doesn't fully meet the need.

- First of all, there aren't enough committees and classes to cover every Sunday.
- Second, some people are involved in many of these groups and end up helping to host 5, 6, 7, or 8 times in a year.

We need more people. So, we're asking other Bethany members to help out as individuals, families, or small groups. Here are some dates we still need help:

June 19

July 10, July 17, July 31

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.

Gift Cards

Subway, Wal-Mart, Circle K, Acme, Giant Eagle, Target, Starbucks

The above are just a few of the Gift Cards that are available each Sunday morning. We have many cards on hand and others can be ordered. Purchase of these cards is a small way you can support Bethany. We earn a profit of about 4% on the sale of these cards. Look for the "GIFT CARDS" sign each Sunday after church in the social hall.

Sponsored by the Finance Committee

Mark Your Calendar Now

Vacation Bible School at Bethany

**July 11th - July 15th
9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**

Take your old batteries back to the store.

Inside a battery, the chemical reaction that takes place produces energy, which is converted into electricity. Most cylinder and button batteries contain toxic metals such as cadmium, mercury, lead, and nickel, which are extremely harmful to the environment. Even though newer batteries may be disposed of in the trash, it is strongly recommended that you recycle your alkaline batteries.

Many large commercial stores accept batteries for recycling. They may not advertise this fact, so it is a matter of asking the manager. Try to limit the number of products you use that require batteries, and buy a battery charger and rechargeable batteries.

(from the book: 365 Ways to Save the Earth)

Please remember in your prayers...



- † ***Joan Porter, Copley Health Center***
- † ***Olive Devine, Haven Hom***

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

(as of 5/19) **May 23rd to June 5th**

5/23 7:00p Bethany/ NT Partnership Mtg.
5/24 10:00a Newsletter Deadline
5/25 9:00a Bible Study (breakfast)
7:00p Bell Choir Practice
7:00p Committee Night

5/26
5/27
5/28

Sunday ~ May 29, 2011

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

8:00a 7thDay Practice
8:30a Worship (Fellowship)
9:15a Church School for Children & Adults
10:20a YF out to Breakfast
10:30a Worship/ Children's Sunday School
11:30a Social Hour: B.&L. Read

5/30 **Office Closed (Memorial Day)**
5/31 NO Staff Meeting
10:00a Newsletter Deadline

June...

6/01 6:00p EOA-WRA Search Co. (L)
6/02
6/03
6/04 6:00p Buckeyes' Picnic at Gehlerts

Sunday ~ June 5, 2011

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

† **All Church Picnic**

8:30a Worship
9:15a Church School for Children & Adults
10:30a Worship/ Graduation Recognition
11:30a **PICNIC**
6:30p YF – Mission Trip Planning

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 29th

Flower Delivery: G.&C. Eiber / S. Ward
Greeters: M. Craddock, A. Mabie / G. Czetli
Lay Reader: H. Cool
Special Music: 7thDay / Bell Choir
Nursery: A. Thompson, S. Ward, N. Zeller,
J. Dugan, J. Bebout
Ushers: C. Hofmann, H. Walker, M.&R. Bowmaster,
C. McGraw, H. Koudela, J. Sammons, R. Berie
Van Driver: B. Read
Visitor Outlook: M. Crichton

Join us each Sunday!



Volunteers for June 5

Flower Delivery: R. Tromp
Greeters: P. Silliman, J. Dukarich / McVan Family
Nursery: T. Jensen, M. Peyak, A. Lorentz, E. Zeller,
H. Alberson
Special Music: Bell Choir / Children's Choirs
Ushers: R.&S. Holle, B. Charton, S. Truby,
S. Ward, K. Fratz, N. Buck, M. Spring
Van Driver: F. Read
Visitor Outlook: M. Trail

BETHANY CHURCH



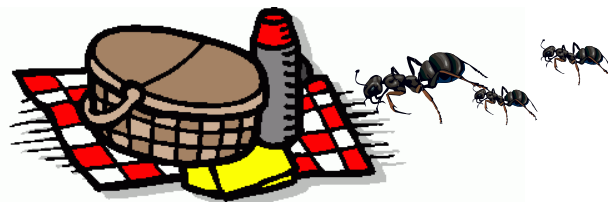
Sunday – June 5th

Immediately following 10:30 Worship

We will be grilling some meat.

We will be playing some games.

We will be sharing great fellowship!



Church Picnic

*Join us for some fun ... just bring a dish to share
... your own table service ... and an appetite!*

**PS: We need grills; if you have one to share,
please contact Kathy Keenan at 330-688-6108.**