

The Bethany Letter

SUNDAY ~ NOVEMBER 14, 2010

VOLUME 2010

ISSUE NO. 38

The Rev. Stephen Gehlert, Senior Minister

The Rev. Mark Steiner, Visitation Minister

An Offering You Can't Refuse

Those of you who attended worship today may be picking up this newsletter at the brunch in the social hall after the Dedication Sunday service. Those of you who didn't attend today will be receiving *TBL* a few days later. In about a month, the Finance Committee will begin to use the Estimate of Giving totals to work on a preliminary budget for 2011. The stewardship and finance concerns which come together at this time of year made the following reflection by Martin Copenhaver speak to me in a very powerful way. I'd like to share his thoughts with you beginning with an excerpt from Luke 21:1-3:

"He (Jesus) looked up and saw rich people putting their gifts into the treasury; he also saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. He said, 'Truly, I tell you, this widow has put in more than all of them, for all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in all she had to live on.'"

I have a recurring dream, particularly this time of year. Someone calls me on the phone and invites me to lunch. Over lunch that person says, "Martin, I am aware that the church is pressed for funds, especially in this financial climate, and the church has to spend so much energy to raise those funds. Well, I came into some money this year, so I want to cover this year's entire church budget with my own gift.

First, I try to catch my breath. Then I offer to pay for lunch. But the person goes on: "I ask only one thing," I say, "Sure. Whatever. Would you like some champagne?"

"No, thank you," he says. "All I ask is that you not accept any other contributions or offerings for the rest of the year. I want to do it all. My gift to the congregation."

Then I take another deep breath and say, "I'm sorry, but I cannot accept your gift. I can't do that to the people. It's not just a matter of being able to pay the bills. We need to be able to respond to all that God is doing in our midst and to share in that work. We can't be deprived of the opportunity to give of ourselves. To hear the promise of God and to receive the gifts of God, and to be unable to respond? Why, that's a burden! We just can't do that to the people."

A contribution and an offering are different. We make a contribution because the church needs money. We make an offering because we need to give. Only some are able to give a large contribution. Anyone is able to make a great offering.

Prayer: Giver of every good and perfect gift, accept this gift of mine, that I might share in your work and your work might prosper. Amen.

May God help us all to see and want to share the offering we can give.

With Gratitude and Hope,

The rosebuds on the altar last Sunday were in honor of the baptisms of

Owen Richard Denis Kuhlke and Brooke Summer Zedaker



Owen is the son of Andrew and Diane (Holle) Kuhlke and the grandson of Richard and Sharon Holle.

Brooke is the daughter of David and Christina (McVan) Zedaker and the niece of Andy McVan and Megan Ferda

Youth Fellowship – what's ahead

Nov. 14 Rake'n Run 11:30a

Nov. 21 Rake'n Run 11:30a

Nov. 28 Advent (L) 11:30a

Confirmation – the coming weeks

Nov. 14 Talk/Meal with Mentors 11:30a, Lounge



Collection for Good Neighbors

We are collecting items for Good Neighbors for Thanksgiving and Christmas **November 7th through December 19th**. We will make a delivery before Thanksgiving and another before Christmas. Items can be placed in the back of the sanctuary or in the social hall on the table marked for Good Neighbors. Good Neighbors would prefer to not have clothing donations during this time. If you have clothing you would like to donate, please hold on to it until January.

- ♥ Gift cards to Giant Eagle or Acme to give to the families for a turkey or ham. We are encouraging members to buy the gift cards through our program here at Bethany.
- ♥ Non-perishable food items
- ♥ Paper products such as tissue, toilet tissue, and paper towels
- ♥ Household cleaning products
- ♥ Personal products such as deodorant and toothpaste
- ♥ Diapers
- ♥ Blankets

Thanks!

NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH

Caring For Kids, Inc. presents ...

First-Hand Views of Adoption

Wednesday, November 17th 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Discussion on openness in adoption, older child, inter-country, domestic, and interracial adoption .

Akron Children's Hospital, Considine Prof. Bldg.

Auditorium Ground Level, 215 W. Bowery St. Akron

RSVP by 11/15 to megan@cfkadopt.org or call 330-928-0044.

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 3rd Wednesday of the month at 8:00 a.m. (Next breakfast **November 17th**.) 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.

FYI: Christian Education and Mission Committees will next meet **November 17th** at 7:00 p.m.; Music Committee will meet at 7:30 p.m.



Bethany Kitchen

Just a reminder ... the kitchen needs help in preparing turkeys for our Thanksgiving dinner. You can pick a turkey up at the church. Schedule your pick up time with Kathy Keenan at 330-688-6108 or Harvey Koudela at 330-940-2107. **Have the birds back by November 19th**. They do not have to be warm and you do not need to stuff them. Also, if you have a frozen turkey or ham you wish to donate to Bethany Kitchen we sure could use them. Thank you for your support.



Chancel Choir Bake Sale!

November 21st

One pan, two pans, three pans, four...

Sugar, flour, butter, more!

If baking, for you, is the worst,

Get to church on November 21st.

Where the Choir will be selling goodies galore!

FYI

*Regarding our weekly
newsletter...*

The office will be closed Thursday, **November 25th** and Friday, **November 26th** for the Thanksgiving holiday. Therefore, *The Bethany Letter* will not be published for Sunday, November 28th.

Please plan accordingly. Have your newsletter articles in by November 16th.

Rake'n Run

One more Sunday....

November 21st



If you would like help getting your leaves raked please call the church office (330-923-5277).

ATTENTION EVERYONE! Although this is a Youth Fellowship sponsored event, there are LOTS of leaves to rake! Just come to the 10:30 worship and then join us for an afternoon of work and fun. Please bring your own rake(s), tarps, and leaf blower (if you have one).



Prepare for Thanksgiving Day!

A special way for you to reflect and give thanks for God's blessings as we prepare for the Thanksgiving holiday is to join us Wednesday **November 24th** at 7:30 p.m. for our Thanksgiving Eve Communion worship service. (Childcare provided)

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Bethany U.C.C. will usher in the Advent Season on **Sunday, November 28** during the 10:30 service with a traditional 'Hanging of the Greens'. This Family Sunday service will be held in the Social Hall rather than the sanctuary. As symbols of Christmas are explained through song and prose, the Social Hall will be decorated. Committees, adult and children's Sunday school classes, and youth and bell choirs will participate. Please plan on joining in as we begin our preparation for the Christ child.



Host Week

Our next Family Promise/IHN Host week is November 28 – December 5. Please consider volunteering to help this week and contact one of our team leaders: Carol Clemente - meal preparation, Carolyn B. Hofmann - overnight and family center volunteers, and Frank Read - van drivers. Thanks to our many volunteers who help make this week possible.



Please remember in your prayers...

David Dietz, Akron City Hospital
Evelyn Vance, Hospice Chapel Hill
Helen Davis, Traditions
Karen Butler, Traditions

THANK YOU

Family Promise Annual Meeting Thanks

Family Promise/IHN held their annual meeting at Bethany this week with a crowd of one hundred and twenty in attendance. Pastor Steve opened the event with a prayer and Kathy Keenan and her crew provided a delicious meal that everyone enjoyed. Thanks to the members who made this event possible: Lou Atleson, Harry Cool, Karen Fratz, Kim Fratz, Sue and George Jensen, Amanda Keenan, Holly Keenan, Susan and John Mancinelli, Martha and Bob Peyak, Bob Read, Lynette Sheppard and friends of Kathy, Marianne and Jim Karlson. Thanks to John Mancinelli who provided wonderful homemade cheesecakes for our guests. Special thanks to Kathy Keenan for taking on this project and for all her planning and preparation to make it a special evening. Thanks to Pat McDevitt for his continued support of this mission by serving on the Board of Family Promise as the Treasurer.

Pamela Betty, the Executive Director of Family Promise/IHN, reported we have served 31 families this year which is 77% increase over 2009. Our success rate with families exiting into secured housing is 87%. Since we opened six years ago, we have served 166 families. Elizabeth Tore from the national office of Family Promise shared an inspirational message for volunteers to continue service to this mission for families of our community.

Bethany Church Members,

Thank you for the lovely birthday flowers. Flowers are one of the loves of my life! I have them on the kitchen table and they brighten up our day!

Thank you again, Carole Pletzer

Are you an Usher yet?



Christmas Poinsettias



Please help celebrate the Christmas season with a beautiful poinsettia for the altar. The cost is \$12.00 for each plant. The deadline for ordering is **Friday, December 17th**. The poinsettias will be on the altar December 19, 24, and 26. The Ministry Committee will deliver the plants to those on our *Remembrance List* December 26th. The poinsettias 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) _____

How We're Doing

	Income	Expense	+ or -
October	32,649	25,527	7,122
YTD	253,965	271,727	- 17,762

gift cards



Bethany now offers the opportunity to order and purchase gift cards for a huge variety of businesses as a fundraiser for Bethany. We hope that every month we'll have more and more people participating in this easy way to support our church. We invite you to take a look at the gift card order form on the table in the social hall. You can place an order with a check and your cards will be here for you the following Sunday. Try it; you'll like it!

**Calendar for additions to ~ or ~ changes to the
2010 monthly calendar mailed to you.
November 15th to November 28th**

- 11/15 9:00a Quilters
11/16 9:00a Staff Meeting
10:00a Newsletter Deadline
7:30p Kerygma
11/17 8:00a Men's Breakfast
9:00a Bible Study (CE)
7:00p Bell Choir Practice
7:00p Mission Committee Mtg.
7:00p C.E. Committee Mtg.
7:30p Music Committee Mtg.
11/18 7:15p Chancel Choir Practice
11/19
11/20 11:30a Bethany Kitchen

Sunday ~ November 21, 2010

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

- 8:00a 7thDay Meets
8:30a Worship (Fellowship)
9:15a Church School for All Ages
10:30a Worship/ Children's Sunday School/
(Pageant Rehearsal, 2nd hr. S.School)
11:30a Social Hour Host: Betty & Suzanne's Classes
11:30a 7thDay Practice
11:30a **Chancel Choir Bake Sale**
11:30a Rake'n Run

- 11/22 9:00a Quilters
11/23 9:00a Staff Meeting
No newsletter this week
11/24 5:00p J. Probeck Memorial Service
7:00p Bell Choir Practice
7:30p Thanksgiving Communion Service
(w/childcare)
11/25 Happy Thanksgiving! Office Closed.
11/26 Office Closed
5:30p Novak Rehearsal
11/27 9:00a Advent Decorating 12:00p
5:30p Novak Wedding

Family Sunday ~ November 28, 2010

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

† **1st Sunday of Advent**

† **FAMILY PROMISE HOST WEEK**

- 8:30a Worship** (Communion)
9:15a Church School for All Ages
10:30a Worship in Social Hall (children remain in worship)
No Pageant Rehearsal
11:30a Social Hour: C.E. Hosts
11:30a YF – Advent Sharing (L)
6:00p Family Promise Meal (SH)

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

Chancel Choir is having a Bake Sale!
Pick up some goodies to take home!

Volunteers for November 21st

- Cup Washing: A. Zeller
Greeters: E.&Eddie Frederick / B.&M. Leas
Lay Reader: M. Peyak
Special Music: 7thDay / Chancel Choir
Nursery: A. Thompson, T. Jensen, J. Smith,
Kristi Dugan, T. Giffen
Ushers: C. Hofmann, H. Walker, S. Truby, S. Ward,
A. McVan, H. Bowman, Z. Read, N. Buck
Van Driver: C. Frederick
Visitor Outlook: N. Read



Volunteers Thanksgiving Eve Communion Service

- Ushers: T. Hermann, B. Charton, Harvey Koudela,
K. Fratz, L. Sheppard, S. Mancinelli

Volunteers for November 28th

- Cup Washer: C. Eberhardt
Greeters: The Boling Family / S. A. & M. Keenan
Special Music: Bell Choir/ Children's Choirs
Nursery: H. Bowman, S. Ward, N. Zeller, J. Dugan,
J. Sammons
Ushers: J. Mancinelli, M. Jensen, S. Truby, S. Ward,
S. Holle, M. Spring, L. Short, J. Smith, A. McVan,
H. Bowman, B. Pletzer, C. McGraw
Van Driver: E. Frederick
Visitor Outlook: R. Schreiber

Bethany's Missions for Christmas 2010 How YOU can support our missions



THE GIVING TREE – Begins November 21

This will benefit fourteen families at H.M. Life Opportunities and the families of Family Promise/IHN. The tree will be decorated with gift tags at the coffee table in the Social Hall beginning November 21 and the gifts are due back to Bethany by December 13.

Family Promise/IHN is an emergency shelter for homeless families and HM Life Opportunities provides transitional housing to families up to two years. Several of our IHN guests have gone to live at HM Life.

The Giving Tree will contain gift tags for certificates to area businesses for our Family Promise/IHN families when they move into their new homes. It will also have tags for requested gift items from members of fourteen families from HM Life that we have committed to support for the holidays.

If you would like to provide for one of the gifts requested but don't want to do the shopping, the Mission Committee will shop for you. Look for members of the Mission Committee at the coffee table in the Social Hall beginning on November 21 and each Sunday through December 5.

How the Giving Tree Works:

- Take a tag from the Giving Tree in the social hall.
- Record your name and number of the tag on the list provided.
- Buy the item on the tag. If it is for a gift certificate to Marc's or Acme, get whatever amount works for your budget. We are encouraging members to buy the gift certificates through our program here at Bethany.
- Bring the gift back to the social hall **unwrapped** by **December 13.**



GIFTS OF THE HEART - Begins November 21

The Mission Committee selected twelve of the mission projects Bethany supports. You can use this list to give a gift in someone's name or as a special Christmas donation you would like to make. You may want to write a card and tell the person this gift was given by you in their name. Return your list and check at the Mission table in the Social Hall, the offering plate or the church office.

GOOD NEIGHBORS – November 7 through December 19

We are collecting items for Good Neighbors for Thanksgiving and Christmas November 7 through December 19. Please see Good Neighbors article in the newsletter.

STEWARDSHIP COVENANT - 2010

Jesus Says, *Follow Me*, Calling Us...

- **To trust him** – because his love, grace, and abundant blessing are all we need for life.
- **To obey him** – because in serving him, rather than ourselves, we find true, eternal life.
- **To learn from him** – because his way of self-giving love is Truth and Life!
- **To become like him** – so, together, we can be his body, his living presence in the world.

When Jesus Says, *Follow Me*, He Means With Everything...

- **Our time** – because in living every day as gift of God, Jesus showed us that we don't lose time but rather gain "life" when we give the gift of our time.
- **Our talents** – because in using his many talents for God and others, rather than to lift himself up, Jesus showed us that we find joy and meaning is sharing these gifts for others.
- **Our treasure** – because in teaching that "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also," Jesus showed us how to put our hearts right with God - put our treasure right first!

Hearing Jesus Call to *Follow Me*

We urge every Bethany member respond to Jesus' call to *Follow Me* by seeking to trust, obey, and learn from his way of self-giving, so that, through our shared giving, our church can more fully be his presence in the world. We trust that in committing ourselves to give gladly and generously of our time, talent, and treasure, God will work through us for good, and we will continue to know God's abundant blessing. So with gratitude, hope, and joy we invite you to join us in covenanting with God and each other to:

- Make a commitment to share in Dedication Sunday worship on November 14.
- "Follow Jesus" in looking for God's blessings and living with gratitude and generosity.
- Pray about how to express our gratitude by following Jesus with time, talent, and treasure.

In considering your specific gift we urge you to:

- Make an Estimate of Giving.
- Consider your estimate in terms of percentage of income.
- Seek to increase your estimate by one percent of your income.
- Make tithing your ultimate giving goal.

We hope and pray that the whole Bethany family will join us in this covenant.

The Stewardship Committee