

The Bethany Letter

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The Rev. Stephen Gehlert, Senior Minister

The Rev. Mark Steiner, Visitation Minister

Death Has Its Day

This newsletter comes out on October 3rd, the eve of the Feast of St. Francis who is beloved for living a simple, gentle, peace-making life, which extended beyond people to include a deep sensitivity and care for all God's creatures. Many stories tell of his special relationship with animals, who sensed his gentleness and weren't afraid of him. But there were also times when he felt the need to admonish humans to treat them with more care and respect. That's why we've chosen the eve of his feast day for our Blessing of the Animals service.

I've often wondered what St. Francis would have to say to us today. Recently, I read an article in Sojourner's magazine, by Rev. Bill Wylie-Kellermann, and I thought he had a good idea. It's in response to the tragic oil-spill in the Gulf, but its implications are much broader. He titled it, "Death Has Its Day." He says:

You and me? We are guilty bystanders to planetary domination.

The heart aches with another apocalyptic wound opened in creation, deep and gushing. Instead of the real healing for which it cries, poisons are poured upon it, dispersing and hiding the mushrooming bleed of underwater clouds. Death will have its day. To one degree or another, all flesh of earth and sea will know it. Suffer the sting.

In the lust for oil, drones sail the deserts and robots sink to the deeps. Thus far the reach of the military corporate maw! And the doxology their choristers chant: Drill, baby, kill!

Make no mistake: The powers, and behind them death, are at work. In their own deregulated design, they slip the grip of accountability to human life. They pretend to sovereignty in heights and depths. They set limits to their own culpability. They make themselves, in the imagination of their hearts, too big for political containments. They place their survival, nay their eternal increase, above the common life of all creation. It is time to name their blasphemies and prosecute their crimes. The Mother of us all will not be mocked.

You and me? With our southern Gulf shore? Our freeways and our ignition keys? Our trans-continental vegetables? We are complicit in our own captivity. We are guilty bystanders to planetary domination. We are the users in a culture of addiction. Such is the bondage of sin and death.

Which is also to say: The healing of the planet and the healing of ourselves, inside and out, are one. Apocalyptic events reveal the truth, pull back a veil, break the seal, set us free. Such is grace. We best get with the transformation, dear friends. Be accountable to the Spirit and community of creation. Another world, one oil-free and domination-free, is actually possible. With earth itself, let us fight for it. Heal into it. Let it be.

What do you think? Sound a bit harsh to be of the "spirit" of St. Francis? Maybe, but, then, in St. Francis' day, humanity had not yet so arrogantly and destructively pillaged creation. The offenses were smaller, more capable of being healed. So, though Francis was a gentle soul, he really did love God's creatures, I suspect if he'd had to witness what we've been doing for generations, and then see the amount of deadly toxins that have spilled into the gulf, he'd be outraged, (remember, Jesus was sometimes outraged), and would speak out with very direct and challenging words. That's why I've shared these, today.

With Sadness,

Acme Receipts!

A Chance to Help YF!

Over the years Bethany members have provided important support for our Youth Ministry by collecting Acme Receipts. You can help us again this year! Please save and turn in receipts **dated September 25th – February 19th**. Collection boxes are at all the entrances. The YF is grateful for your support!

Dinner & Concert

The proceeds will benefit The Clean Water Project and Bethany's missions.

Featuring the Musical Stylings of Heyburn, Heyburn, Parker & Bair

Saturday, October 9, 2010

Pasta Dinner

5 p.m. – 6:45 p.m.

CONCERT

**follows at 7 p.m.
Bethany UCC**

Confirmation – *the coming weeks*

- Oct. 10 Meal with Mentors, 11:45a, Lounge
- Oct. 22 Lock-in, 8:00p – 9:00a, Lounge
- Oct. 24 Lead Family Sunday Worship, 10:30a
- Nov. 7 Class with Pastor Steve, 11:45a, Lounge

Youth Fellowship – *what's ahead*

- Oct. 10 Fun & Stuff, 5:00 p, Macedonia
- Oct. 17 Hayride, 4:15p
- Oct. 24 Halloween Planning, 6:30 p, YF room
- Oct. 31 Halloween Party, 5-7:00 p,
Octagon Shelter CVNP

The Youth Fellowship had our first meeting on 9/12/10. At this meeting we discussed possible events for the youth to do on Sunday evenings. Some of our ideas are picking pumpkins and carving them for the Halloween Party, having a lock-in, going to the Dix's Farm and other things of that nature. We also thought of doing baby-sitting days so that parents can take care of things they need to do, working at Miller Avenue and things like that. We also elected our officers: Heather Alberson, President, Anna Zeller, Vice President and Taylor Giffen, Secretary. The youth Fellowship is more than people getting together on Sundays to talk about God – we're a family. So, **"high schoolers"**, come to youth events, join 7thDay, join the family!

Bethany Kitchen

Saturday, October 16th 11:30 a.m.

Bethany Kitchen provides a **free luncheon** for those in the community who need a meal. Help is always needed for food preparation, serving and cleaning up. **All are welcome** to join us and enjoy fellowship and lunch.



Sharing God's Love!

One of the doctrines of the Christian Church is that we share God's love with everyone. That is what Williard Food Pantry is doing by feeding some of the hungry people of Akron. The Food Pantry is open 3 days every month and they fed 730 individuals in the month of August. In the second quarter (April, May, June) they fed 3,416 individuals.

Charlie Dorow has been the coordinator since 2001 and he has decided to step aside. It is the Food Pantry Board's responsibility to find the people to take over his duties. I would hate to see the Food Pantry fold up, therefore, in a small way I am asking for people to volunteer 2 hours one day a week in the morning from 7-9 AM to help the Food Pantry.

If you are interested in finding out more information, please call me. [330-928-3002] *Frank Read*

Halloween Party



Something New!

Youth Fellowship and the Youth Committee are very excited about being able to invite Bethany's children to a new location for our Halloween Party – the Octagon Shelter in Cuyahoga Valley National Park. This will enable us to do many new things in a beautiful setting – enjoy a fire in a fireplace, roast marshmallows have s'mores, and play outside games.



The party will be from 5:00 – 7:00 on October 31st. early enough that there will still be daylight, so that parents who'd like to hike while their children are at the party can enjoy the fall beauty of the park by hiking one of the many trails that begin at the Octagon Shelter parking lot. The Shelter is easy to find. It's on Truxell Road, the second exit to the north (right) if you're coming from Old Rte 8.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Prayer shawls are a means to extend our love and prayers to persons who may be homebound, ill or perhaps a way to share a special joy such as a birth or birthday milestone. Bethany's Prayer Shawl group meets the second Monday of each month (10/11/10). If you are interested in this ministry please join them at 9:30 a.m. in the lounge.

Thank You! Thanks to everyone who came to Bethany night at Donato's last Wednesday. As always, the YF will be tithing from what we've raised as a gift of gratitude back to Bethany. In addition to the financial blessings, it was simply good to share fellowship together as a Bethany family; so thanks for the gift of your presence as well as your financial support! With Gratitude –

Youth Fellowship

Chapel Hill Retirement Community's Pumpkin Festival & Craft Sale

Saturday, October 9th 12:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Refreshments, hayrides, cider, donuts, games. Crafters wanted, for table info call 330-854-4177 by October 1st.

Please remember in your prayers...

- † **Joe Probeck**, Select Specialty Hospital
- † **Kathy Ruch**, Summa Western Reserve
- † **Evelyn Vance**, Home
- † **Phoebe Gero**, c/o Susan Hickerson
9024 Linden Dr., Tinley Park, IL 60487



"Special Thoughts" to Bethany members who are unable to worship with us Sunday mornings. Please keep them in your prayers and keep in touch with a call or a card!

MISSION: JUSTICE & COMPASSION

Jesus tells us that whenever we feed or clothe someone or visit the sick or those in prison we are doing it to him. And when we don't...well, we're not doing it to Jesus, too.

On Sunday, October 17 we all have the opportunity to help support ministries of justice and compassion by contributing to the Neighbors in Need special offering. One third of the funds go to the Council for American Indian Ministries which provides financial support for 20 American Indian UCC congregations. Two thirds is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. These initiatives include work on issues such as voting right, hate crimes, civil liberties, hunger and poverty.

On Sunday, October 17, please give as generously as you can using the envelopes in the pews.

"...Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me."

Matthew 25:40

**Calendar for additions to ~ or ~ changes to the
2010 monthly calendar mailed to you.
October 4th - October 17th**

10/04 9:00a Quilters
10/05 9:00a Staff Meeting (lounge)
10:00a Newsletter Deadline
7:30 p Kerygma
10/06 9:00a Bible Study (CE)
7:00p Bell Choir
7:30p Spiritual Council
10/07 7:30p Chancel Choir Practice
10/08
10/09 5:00p Mission's Dinner/ Concert at 7:00p

Sunday ~ October 10

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

8:30a Worship (Healing & Reconciliation)
9:15a Church School for All Ages
10:30a Worship/ Children's Sunday School/ Baptism
11:30a Social Hour Host: Lounge Class
11:30a 7thDay Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
11:30a Confirmands/Mentors - Meal/Meeting
5:00p YF – Fun and Stuff

10/11 9:00a Quilters
9:30a Prayer Shawl Ministry
10/12 9:00a Staff Meeting
7:15p Finance Committee Meeting
7:45p Stewardship Committee Meeting
10/13 9:00a Bible Study (CE)
7:00p Bell Choir Practice
7:30p Consistory
10/14 7:30 p Chancel Choir Practice
10/15
10/16 11:30a Bethany Kitchen

Sunday ~ October 17, 2010

† Nursery Available 9:15 to 11:30 a.m.
† Rev. Mark Steiner, guest preacher

8:30a Worship
9:15a Church School for All Ages
10:30a Worship/ Children's Sunday School
11:30a Social Hour Host: 7 & 8 Grades
4:15p Youth Fellowship Hayride

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

† **call the church office** so we may make
the necessary changes on our schedules

... **and then**

Volunteers for October 10th

Cup Washing: C. Eberhardt
Greeters: Pre K-K Class / J.&A. Randall
Lay Reader: H. Keenan
Special Music: / Chancel Choir
Nursery: B. Lees, K. Keenan, S. Ferda, B. Read,
H. Alberson
Ushers: L. Luginbill, M. Jensen, M. Seymour, M. Seguin,
A. McVan, H. Bowman, J. Bebout, R. Berie
Van Driver: E. Frederick
Visitor Outlook: N. Buck

OPPORTUNITY

Excellent Sunday Morning Opportunity!
No computer skills required.
Should speak English and
Be happy to help others.

Become an Usher!

Please call the church office or put a
note on your Registration Card Sunday
to share your interest in helping.

Volunteers for October 17th

Cup Washer: A. Zeller
Greeters: R.&M. Seguin / S.&K. Pietrowski
Lay Reader: G. Smith
Special Music: S. Parker / Chancel Choir
Nursery: H. Bowman, A. Thompson, J. Smith
K. Dugan, J. Nielsen
Ushers: C. Hofmann, F. Read, J. Grazulis, J. Seymour,
C. McGraw, K. Fratz, J. Nielson, M. Spring
Van Driver: L. Goodwin
Visitor Outlook: S. Ward

A MISSION MINUTE

- **Mission and Clean Water Fundraiser**
- **Includes a Pasta Dinner and Musical Performance**
- **Saturday, October 9th**
- **The Meal from 5 to 6:45 PM in the Social Hall**
- **The Musical Program at 7 PM in the Sanctuary**
- **The Cost: \$15 per person for both
\$12 for families of 4 or more**
- **Musical Performance by Sue Parker, Mark Bair,
Meig and Fred Heyburn**

Hopefully you know that all the money budgeted to Missions is given to OCWM. That means that all our other projects depend on your generosity.

Now for a little background: The Heyburn's have been involved with an organization called Charity Water. Charity Water is a non-profit organization bringing clean and safe drinking water to people in developing nations. 100% of public donations directly fund water projects. The Heyburn's approached Missions to see if we could hold some type of a fundraiser for clean water. After some discussion we decided on the program described above with the profits being split between regular mission programs and clean water.

A FEW WATER FACTS

- Though water covers our world, 97% is salty; 2% of fresh water is locked in snow and ice. That leaves 1% for our use; 2/3 of our water is used to grow food.
- Americans use about 100 gallons of water at home each day. Millions of the world's poorest subsist on fewer than 5 gallons.
- 46% of people on earth do not have water piped to their homes. Women in developing countries walk an average of 3.7 miles to get water.
- Gabra women in northern Kenya spend up to five hours a day carrying jerry cans filled with murky water. A lingering drought has created a water crisis.
- One out of 8 people lack access to clean water.
- 3.3 million people die each year from water-related health problems.
- Washing hands with soap can reduce diarrhea problems by 45%

SOME GOOD NEWS

Charity water funds a range of water solutions. These solutions include hand-dug wells, deep wells (boreholes), rehabilitations, spring protections, rainwater harvesting schemes, and bio-sand filters. In 2009, charity water added projects in Cambodia and Sierra Leone, and expanded to Nepal in 2010. As of July 31, 2010, 2,906 water projects serving 1,277,430 people have been completed. Of this total, 66 projects are in clinics/hospitals, 318 in schools, and 2,522 projects in communities.

There are many stories, facts, and figures telling what people do to get water – not always clean water. For more information check out the National Geographic magazine dated April 2010 and the Charity Water website at charitywater.org. Then come out Saturday, October 9th where you can have a good time and learn more about clean water.

Thanks for your prayers and support.

Bethany Mission Committee