

Community of Witness

Last week, in my invitation to Rally Sunday, I wrote about our life as Christians being centered in giving God thanks and praise in worship. This week, I'd like to build on that by sharing this article by Mark E. Yurs who talks about the church as a community which witnesses to what God has done in Jesus Christ, first in worship, and then in other ways as well. I hope you'll find it helpful.

The church is a community of witness. A witness in this sense is someone who is called to speak, eloquently or ineloquently, on the authority of what he or she has heard or seen some other person say or do. Every congregation is called to speak as such a witness. The summons to speak is found in these words of the risen Christ: "you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8b).

The primary subject of the church's testimony as a witness is the living God who has acted and is acting, has spoken and is speaking. The church believes it has heard and seen something of the nature and purpose of the living God, especially in Jesus as he is revealed in scripture and, by faith, encountered today. Every aspect of a congregation's life, ideally, is organized to place it on a witness stand, as it were, that it might tell its own people and the world at large what it knows about the past and present activities of the God revealed in Jesus.

As in a court of law where testimony is given, the church's central purpose in giving its witness is to help the recipients of its testimony come to some decision about the truth and importance of the words and deeds of God reported, and to order their lives accordingly.

Individual Christians take the witness stand by virtue of their words and involvements in the church and in the world beyond the church. Congregations, too, speak a public witness, and do so in several ways. We can recount here only a few, and these only in the broadest of terms.

Witness through public worship *Everything about a church's life and thought is gathered up in its worship. When the congregation comes together to worship, it is giving voice to a set of fundamental declarations affirming that God is, that the god who is, is worthy of praise, and that this God alone is worthy of life's deepest allegiance. As such, worship is a weekly reminder of the basic truth the church proclaims and a regular opportunity to proclaim that truth.*

Witness through attention to scripture *Congregations approach and interpret scripture in diverse ways, yet they have in common the ideal that the Bible deserves attention because it carries an authority surpassing that of any other book. By turning to this book above any other as it determines matters of faith and practice, a church testifies, both to its own people and to all who would inquire, that the congregation is a distinct people shaped by a distinct history and understanding.*

Witness through welcome *How a congregation may be to outsiders, is a testimony about God as well as the congregation itself. By welcoming participation and membership the church seeks to emulate what it believes God is doing and requiring of persons. The church's official welcome, open or closed, is public testimony to what the church believes it has learned of the heart and mind of God.*

Witness through service in the world *Members of the community equip one another through language and traditions which provide a way of seeing and describing the world in light of the church's best understanding of God and the human situation. Additionally, the community is shaped for service by naming goals it deems worth pursuing, advocating for changes worth effecting, and organizing efforts in these directions. In a world full of voices, the church hopes to help people hear and echo the speech of God, lending their voices not only to the song of faith but also to the cry for justice and mercy.*

As we begin a new program year may we make it our passion and our prayer to grow in all these forms of witness.

With Gratitude and Hope,

THE PURPOSE OF THIS CHURCH IS ...
 to establish a Christian congregation for worship,
 to preach and teach the Gospel of Christ,
 to celebrate the sacraments,
 to render loving service toward humanity,
 to strive for righteousness, justice, and peace,
 to advance the Realm of God at home and abroad.
(The Bethany Constitution)

Presented by Bethany Nurses...
Faithfully Walking
Fitness Challenge
Don't forget your pledge!
Don't forget to walk!



Pastor Steve – Sabbatical Time

Sabbaticals are meant to provide pastors with time to be able to focus on reading, reflection, writing and planning in a more intense and creative way than is possible in the midst of their regular pastoral responsibilities. That's what I'll be doing in this time, focusing especially on Christian Education (especially for adults), Stewardship, Worship and Youth. I am grateful for this opportunity and I ask for your prayers as I seek to use this time in ways that will enhance and strengthen my ministry with you.

Pastoral Care ~ (during Pastor's sabbatical)

Sept 4 thru Sept 9 Rev. Mark Steiner
1-330-264-6034

Church Office Closed
Monday, September 5th, Labor Day



Sunday - September 11th
 { Retreat Committee Meeting at 11:30 a.m.
 Youth Committee Meeting at 5:30 p.m. }

We're in the home stretch for **The Incredible Good Neighbors Stock-a-Thon.**

September is the last month we'll be asking for weekly donations. Your response has been fantastic and we can't thank you enough! We've had to make some changes for donations in September. Since Good Neighbors has moved to smaller, temporary quarters they can only store food; no toiletries, household products, etc. Below is our new list of items for September. Boxes are available around the church for your donations and our progress is tracked on the display in the social hall.

Here's what we're asking for in September:

(Non-Perishable Food)

9/11	Instant Gelatin
9/18	Pasta
9/25	Pasta Sauce



Thank you again for your continued generosity!

Fall Schedule Resumes
Sunday ~ September 11th

Rally  **Sunday**
A Time to Gather Together

To Worship, Learn, Fellowship, and Serve!

Our summer season is drawing to a close. Many of us are busy with travel and other activities that have taken us away from worship and our faith family. With Labor Day, the last summer holiday, over Rally Sunday calls us to come together and rededicate ourselves to the worship, learning, fellowship, and service that are at the heart of living our faith. This day will include:

8:30 Early Worship returns to the Sanctuary

9:15 Church School:

Infants – 12th grade, Classrooms

Adults – (Seasons of the Spirit will include a continental breakfast)

10:30 Worship with Chancel Choir in the Sanctuary (Bulletin will include information about upcoming programs) Children's Sunday School continues

11:30 Social Hour "Farewell Reception" - Sue Parker



A Time to "Catch Up!"

September 11, 2011

As summer ends, we will once again celebrate **Catch Up Sunday** as a special opportunity to review and renew our financial commitments to Bethany. We ask everyone to remember your estimate of giving.

† If you are behind on fulfilling your estimated giving, we encourage you to do what you can to "catch up."

† If your situation has changed and you will not be able to fulfill your estimate of giving, please inform the office.

† If your ability to giving has grown, we hope that you will take this special opportunity to let your stewardship grow as well.

Please keep Catch Up Sunday in your prayers.

Confirmation Class of 2011/2012

September 11	First Sunday School Class
September 18	Orientation: 11:30 2 nd year 12:00 1 st year
September 25	Toward Affirmation 1 st year only



9/11	6:30p	Meet at Donato's for pizza (our treat) games, election of officers & review of future events
9/18	11:30a	Surprise after church activity (lunch provided)
9/25	6:30p	Talk Time

Christian Education Schedule 2011/2012



Begins ~ Sunday, September 11th

9:15 am to 11:30 am *Nursery available*

9:15 am **Adult Classes**

9:15 am **CHRISTIAN ED for Children**

Children START Sunday School Class at 9:15 and then ... at **10:30 am** ... children leave class and attend worship service, returning to class after the children's message to finish their lesson. Class ends at 11:30 a.m.

Bethany's Sunday School is unique in offering a two hour experience for our children. We hope that parents will bring their children at 9:15a to enable them to receive both hours of this blessing.

ATTENTION: We have reorganized the structure of our children's classes by following UCC Safe Church Policy and a decreasing number of children. New Classes:

Grades 1-4 will meet in Room 2 (down)

Grades 5-6 will meet in Room 11 (up)

🎵 Young Shepherds Choir



Welcome Back – or welcome for the first time to the Young Shepherds Choir! All children grades 1-6 are invited to start their Sunday morning singing with their friends. What a great way to start the day! Choir begins Sunday, **September 11th** from 9:30-9:50 a.m. Through music the children learn about God's love and many stories in the Bible, learn to share their gifts of music with the congregation monthly and also share a Christmas Pageant on Christmas Eve. I am looking forward to seeing you all on the 11th. *Beth McDevitt, Children's Music Director*

🎵 **7thDay Choir ... will begin**
rehearsals on Sunday, September 11th at 11:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary. (High School Age)

FYI Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens

Grandparents' Day – Sunday, September 11th
This is the day to honor all grandparents, a day to spend time with family. At Stan Hywet they are offering all grandparents free admission for a self-guided tour.

330-836-5533 / www.stanhywet.org

Bethany Kitchen's next meal will be served on Saturday, September 17th.

Help is always needed for food preparation and cleaning up. We need volunteers from 10:30 to 12:00 for set up; clean up from 1:30 to 2:30. If you can stay for the full time your presence will be appreciated. With more people, the job will be completed much faster. **All are welcome!**

A.E.D.

An Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) was recently approved for purchase and has been delivered and installed. A factory representative will be present on **Sunday, September 18th** immediately following social hour to instruct church members on its care and use. **All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.** This lifesaving device was made possible from proceeds from the annual Treasures and Bake Sale with the balance paid by the Mission Committee. A special thanks to Bruce Wurgler for all his time and effort on the sale that helped make this purchase possible. Hope to see many of you in the social hall on the 18th. Any questions? Please call me, Kim Wurgler at 330-928-4446



Wednesday Morning Bible Study

We will resume Bethany's Bible Study on September 21st at 9:00 a.m. We will begin with I Samuel. All are welcome!

It's time again to...

Save your ACME Receipts!

The ACME programs begins **SEPTEMBER 24TH** and ends **FEBRUARY 11, 2012**

The YF is collecting ACME receipts. Acme Fresh Market will issue a rebate check equal to FIVE PERCENT (5%) of the Cash Back amount printed at the bottom of the receipt. The Cash Back amount includes all Acme store brand merchandise purchases: Acme Fresh Market, Academix, Dining-In, Domestix, Electrix, Food Club, Full Circle, Paws, TopCare, ValuTime and World Classics products. YF truly appreciates your support as the proceeds help fund the youth mission trip.

Family Promise



The Family Promise program continues to grow and be recognized in the area as a reputable agency with dependable volunteers and a great success rate for moving families into their own housing. As the program has grown, each rotation at Bethany has generally been to full capacity. Preparing and serving the supper meal by the host family can be rewarding, but also time consuming and sometimes costly. Therefore, we would like you to consider "sharing" the task of being a host family with another individual or family. We have wonderful meal preparers who look forward to their evening with our guest families. Our next rotation for Family Promise at Bethany is October 10-17th. Please contact Carol Clemente at 330-422-0643 to join us in providing this much needed service.



Nursery Need:

The nursery is in need of a newer (used) crib for the babies at Bethany. (No drop down) If you have one you could donate please contact Tammy Jensen 330-926-0020.

100 Holes for the Homeless

On August 22nd I played 100 holes of golf to raise money for Family Promise of Summit County. If you would like to support me in this cause your contribution would be appreciated. Please make your check payable to Family Promise of Summit County. Mail it to me at 1830 Highbridge Rd., Cuy. Falls 44223. Thank you, Rollie Seguin

Volunteers Needed

Traditions Nursing Home is asking for volunteers to visit with residents. Due to cutbacks in staffing, it has left many of the elderly without visits, etc. They are looking for people to read to them, maybe do a craft or visit. If interested, contact Betty Bramlett at 330-929-6272.

Church School for Adults 2011/2012

This year make a commitment to gather with other believers to learn and grow in faith - together. We need to discipline ourselves to learn and grow in faith so that we can truly discern God's gift of love (as opposed to our favorite opinions and values) so that we can welcome and nurture all he seeks to give in our lives. We need to do it *together* because he called us together, so that we might be his visible presence, doing his work, in the world.

Every Sunday, through our many adult classes, Bethany offers a variety of opportunities to share this sacred purpose. They include:

- † *The Bible Discoveries Class* (2nd floor, off the elevator)
- † *Lounge Class* (Lounge)
- † *Perspectives Class* (2nd floor, Quilters Room, next to women's restroom)
- † *Seasons of the Spirit Class* (lower level, back side)
- † *Upper Room* (2nd floor, library)

*All of these classes are eager to welcome you!
Why not visit some soon and see if you don't find your faith blessed and growing?*

What does it mean to live our Faith at Home?

That's the theme of our All-Church Retreat October 7 – 9 at beautiful Temple Hills. Enjoy great faith-building, fellowship and fun! And it's such a bargain!



Two Nights: Age 19 and up = \$60
Age 13-18 = \$30
Age 10-12 = \$25
Age 3-9 = \$20
Age 2 and under = free

One Night: Age 19 and up = \$40
Age 13-18 = \$25
Age 10-12 = \$20
Age 3-9 = \$15
Age 2 and under = free

Day Tripper: Age 19 and up = \$25
Age 13-18 = \$20
Age 10-12 = \$15
Age 3-9 = \$10
Age 2 and under = free

➤ *Altar Flowers given in August by...*
8/21 Lou Atleson in memory of loved ones



➤ *Please remember in your prayers ...*



In Sympathy...

We extend our Christian sympathy to the family of Ben Bantum on the death of his son, Daniel, August 28th.



O God, support us all the day long, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then in your mercy grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen

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

(as of Sept. 1st) **September 5th to September 18th**

9/05 OFFICE CLOSED - Labor Day

9/06 NO Staff Meeting
10:00a Newsletter Deadline
9/07
9/08 7:30p Chancel Choir Practice
9/09
9/10 9:00a (SH) Rsrvd. 6:00p

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... **... and then**
...Find someone to take your place
...Call the church office so we may make the necessary changes on our schedules

Fall Schedule Resumes

Rally Sunday - Catch-Up Sunday

Sunday ~ September 11, 2011 

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

8:30a Worship (Healing & Reconciliation)
9:15p Church School for Children and Adults
10:30a Worship/ Children's Sunday School
11:30a Social Hour: Farewell Reception, Sue Parker
11:30a Retreat Committee Meeting
11:30a 7thDay Rehearsal
5:30p Youth Committee Meeting
6:30p YF meet at Donato's

Display Cases for September

Case A-1 Retreat Committee
Case A-2 Children's Choirs

Volunteers for September 11th

Greeters: E. Albert, C. Albert / H. Walker
Lay Reader: J. Mancinelli
Nursery: B. Lees, J. Salisbury, S. Ferda, A. Lorentz, R. Read
Special Music: / Chancel Choir
Ushers: C. Hofmann, M. Jensen, J. Grazulis, J. Seymour, S. Mancinelli, L. Short, C. McGraw, L. Sheppard
Van Driver: F. Read
Visitor Outlook: H. Bedillion

9/12 9:30a Prayer Shawl Ministry (Lounge)
9/13 9:00a Staff Meeting
10:30a Newsletter Deadline
7:15p Finance Committee
7:45p Stewardship
9/14 7:30p Consistory
9/15 7:30p Chancel Choir Practice
9/16 6:00p A. Jensen Rehearsal
9/17 11:30a Bethany Kitchen
3:30p A. Jensen Wedding

Important Training Class!

All are invited to attend!



Sunday ~ September 18, 2011

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

8:30a Worship (Fellowship)
9:15p Church School for Children and Adults
10:30a Worship/ Children's Sunday School
11:30a Social Hour
11:30a Orientation for 2nd yr. Confirmands
11:30a YF Surprise Church Activity
12:00p Orientation for 1st yr. Confirmands
12:00p **A.E.D. Class in the Social Hall**

Volunteers for September 18th

Greeters: D.&H. Bedillion / The Shaw Family
Lay Reader: M. Heyburn
Nursery: P. Cochran, A. Thompson, A. Cristino, B. Read, E. Sammons
Special Music: 7thDay / Chancel Choir
Ushers: R.&S.Holle, F. Read, M. Seguin, M. Seymour, R. Berie, B.&C. Pletzer
Van Driver: S. Gaskill
Visitor Outlook: N. Buck

Outdoor Ministries News

Message from Director Joyce Oyler

As the Summer Camp season of 2011 comes to a close, there is much to celebrate!

More than 1,000 campers experienced the wonder and beauty of camp through our Outdoor Ministries program this year. We've hosted more campers this summer than in any camping season since 2005!

Approximately 130 volunteers and over 25 staff members provided amazing support, structure and programming as 40 separate camp events were held - some at Pilgrim Hills, some at Temples Hills, and some offsite.

The number of churches that sent campers increased by 5% this year with 134 of our Ohio Conference congregations sharing in the Outdoor Ministries vision - ***partnering with our local congregations in faith formation, spiritual growth and leadership development.***

We'll keep you updated as we introduce new Fall & Winter programs for adults, pastors, lay members, seniors and couples in the coming months. Stay connected! Join us on Facebook at Outdoor Ministries OCUC where you'll find pictures from the summer and updates on upcoming events.