

# Branching Out

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## Youth Activities, mission projects keep Beech busy

### 4-H remembers Olivia

Club members and the family of Olivia Linder paused to remember her at the Stark County Fair on Sept. 3<sup>rd</sup> just before the Junior Fair lamb sale.

Since Olivia, who died in a swimming accident last October, was raising 4-H lambs, funds were donated in her name, through the Aultman Foundation, for improvements to the sheep barn. A sign was mounted on front of the barn to recognize her life (1998-2010).

Her father, Carl Linder, serving with the U.S. Military in Afghanistan, sent a text message to the fair staff telling them how much this meant to him.

Her great-uncle, Cliff Linder, a member of Beech, was pictured in a recent *Farm and Dairy* standing next to the sign. He commented that "Aultman Foundation really stepped up. It means a lot knowing they care about the youth in...the 4-H program and also the other organizations."

Olivia had been moved in with Cliff's family last year since her father was being deployed. A student at Louisville Middle School, she and her cousin, Rachel, cared for the sheep.

### ELF NIGHT

(Eat, Learn, Fellowship) nights. Session with supper starting at 5:45 p.m. and classes for adults and children from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Approximately 70-75 people have been attending.

Adult classes include Natalie & Dave Sommers, Parenting; Pastor Dan, Spirituality and Patty Yoder's, Hearts and Hands Serving. There are also classes for preschool through MYF. Childcare is also available.



### MISSION NEWS

MWS has packed over 318 School Kits and taken them to Kidron MCC.

October's project is MCC Sewing Kits. The following items or entire kits are needed:

- 1 metric tape measure
- 2 spools dual use white thread (cotton/poly, min. 300 yds.)
- 2 spools dual use black thread (cotton/poly, min. 300 yds.)
- 1 thimble (medium size).
- 1 pkg. needles (approx. 25).
- 1 pkg. straight pins (approx. 100)
- 1 pkg. hooks an eyes (approx. 12).
- 1 pkg. snap fasteners (approx. 20-25).
- 10 assorted safety pins.

Scissors and bags will be provided. Sewing kits are used to teach women and girls how to do simple sewing. These items are hard to come by in some countries.

MISSIONS COMMISSION is planning a Fall Missions program for Nov. and an early Christmas project for Dec.

### OH. MENNONITE WOMEN'S RETREAT

Ten Beech ladies attended all or part of the Ohio Mennonite Women's retreat, Sept. 16-18 at Camp Luz. Everyone enjoyed Jep Hostetler's talks on "Joy and Humor".

OHW chair, Jean Emery dedicated a memory board to be placed in a planned outdoor shelter at Camp Luz. Plaques honoring special mentors can be purchased through OMC.

### Thousands attend

#### Louisville Concert

An estimated 3-4,000 area young people attended the first outdoor Christian concert held at Metzger Park on August 21<sup>st</sup>. Beech Church was among 25 area churches who hosted "Rock the Park!"

Featured musical guest was Grammy nominee, Hawk Nelson. Three bands performed, including, "Oh Tear the Veil" with four Louisville brothers. Comedian, Eric Johnson, emceed the program with the Rev. Jeff Bogue of Grace Church, Akron, sharing his personal struggles and witness of God's love before fully accepting Christ. Trained members from area churches were available to counsel anyone who sought spiritual guidance.

MYF adviser and Concert Hostess Chair, Megan Frederick, thanks many Beech people who provided much of the food served.

All costs were underwritten by the churches; so there were no admission fees or offerings taken.

### Constitution Parade

Under Sandy Roth's direction, enough candy was collected for MYF and others to package almost 2,500 bags which Beech walkers and members on the float handed out at the Louisville Constitution Day parade on Sunday, Sept. 18<sup>th</sup>.

### BEECH HOSTS CONCERT

On Sunday evening, Sept 25<sup>th</sup>, the MacDonald Family from Orange, MA, presented a concert at Beech.

*"Our soul finds no rest until it rests in God"*

--Augustine--

Just as Barnabas encouraged others in the New Testament church, let us encourage others here at Beech Church. If you want to thank someone for a job well done, place your item for "Barnabas' Corner" in Alma Schloneger's mailbox, call or e-mail her.

With this issue we begin a new era for *Branching Out*, our church newsletter. Alma will assemble and print all the items given to her for the newsletter. The biggest change is that there is no designated editor. In the past the editors have written editorials. Now that column is vacant. This is an opportunity for anyone to write a paragraph or two (or more) for the newsletter. Topics can be anything that you deem important; i.e. God moments, ideas for the church or community, whatever is on your mind, and if you feel you don't have writing skills, Deanna is available as a consultant. If there are not enough voluntary contributions someone may tap you on the shoulder and ask you to write a paragraph or two.

--Roger Slater--

### Dear Friends of Beech Mennonite Church,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for allowing me to serve as the Director of The Shepherd's Gate Child Care Center for the past four years, and as an employee for the past fourteen years. Your support helped make my job a little easier. It is my hope that my time here honored the mission set forth by Martha and the others who initiated the child care center years ago. It has been a blessing to be a part of this special mission.

As I leave, many memories go with me. There have been some wonderfully joyous times as well as some heart-wrenching sad times. I have enough stories of children's antics to last for years. Many friendships have been formed through the staff, families, and church members. I hope to see many of you from time to time in the future.

--God Bless, Lori Dickerhoof--



### SEPTEMBER 2011 OFFERINGS

Total General Fund Offerings for September 2011 were \$11,342.75. --Paul Helmuth, Treasurer--

### DATES TO REMEMBER

- October 7 - 4:30-7:30 p.m. Central Christian Fall Fish Fry
- October 9 - 2:00 p.m. Louisville Crop Walk
- October 10 - 7:00 p.m. Shepherd's Gate Board mtg.
- October 16 - MYF mission meal after church.
- October 16 - 5-7:30 p.m., Fall Fellowship at the Fredericks' for the "post-college/pre-senior group (The Young Adults).
- October 29 - Youth serve lunch at Refuge of Hope

### Dear Quilting Friends,

What a warm weekend for the Ohio Mennonite Relief Sale. We are grateful for the many people who came and supported the Sale in spite of the heat. Preliminary Sale day receipts were a little over \$308,000.

The quilt auction tent was an important part of the Sale. We want to thank you for the many lovely items you pieced, quilted and donated. Besides the quilts and wall hangings there were beautiful things that you made for the needlecraft tables, as well as materials donated for the Quilter's Corner. It was all very much appreciated.

There were 205 large & small quilts, wall hangings and comforters sold in the auction tent. The large quilts averaged \$539 with the highest selling quilt going for \$2,500. The highest bid for wall hangings and small quilts was \$600 and they averaged \$170. Each item was special and represented many, many stitches and hours of designing, piecing and quilting. We continue to encourage you to keep up the good work. Thank you for keeping the mission of MCC in your hearts and minds in helping relieve the pain and suffering of people in need around the world. --The Relief Sale Quilt Committee--

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### THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

*"When I met Christ, I felt that I had swallowed sunshine."*

--E. Stanley James--

*"The Christian life is not simply an informed life, but a transformed life."*

Branching Out is the newsletter of Beech Mennonite Church. Its purpose is to keep the members and regular attendees informed of coming events and of the church organizations' activities

The publication date is the first Sunday of every month. The submission deadline is the last Sunday of the preceding month.

Pastor: Dan King  
Church Phone: 330-875-1133

## CONGRATULATIONS!!!

**Brandon and Kristina Owen** of Beloit announce the long-awaited birth of their second son and fourth child, **Beau Nathaniel**, on September 15, 2011.

**Rachel Linder**, in her last year of 4-H eligibility, again raised the Simmental steer that was judged reserve champion steer carcass at the recent Stark County Fair. She was pictured in many area papers.

## DID YOU KNOW...

- ...that the **Fall Craft Show**, along with baked goods and produce sale earned \$2,078 to be divided between Shepherd's Gate and the MYF convention fund? Gale Sommers organized the event.
- ...that **Marlene Hostetler**, who has not been able to attend any of this year's Leopard football games due to her hospitalizations and surgeries, was able to watch her grandson, **Lucas Poyser**, play on SportsOhio's telecasting of the Louisville-Marlington game, as well as, his being interviewed afterward?
- ...that **Louisville Marching Band's** halftime show at the Marlington game was also broadcast? The official band picture, including Andrew and Alec Leaman, was in a recent Louisville Herald and a recent paper had a candid shot of Andrew after the Band's competition show.
- ...that many of our youth are involved in fall sports, including **H.S. Soccer players, Logan and Blake Hershberger**, McKinley; **Matt Miller**, St. Thomas; and **Corey Wilson**, Louisville? Other youth soccer players, include **Maria Miller, Austen Black, Darian and Rilen Yoder, Hannah and Matthew Frederick, Josh and Mia Schloneger. Marcus Miller and Andrew Willet** are participating in Little Leopard Football.
- ...that **Louisville H.S. Class of 1971's reunion picture** appeared in a recent **Louisville Herald** with **Sheila Hostetler** in the front row? Although it was not as exciting as her trip to Ireland, Sheila enjoyed reconnecting with classmates.
- ...that a **Men's Fellowship group** has restarted with an overnight retreat held last weekend at Miller's cabin?

## SHEPHERD'S GATE CHILD CARE

Beginning October 1, 2011, **Janet Mangus** will be the director of **Shepherd's Gate Child Care**. Janet has been on the staff since 2002 and has been the assistant for a number of years. We are pleased for her dedication to the children and willingness to continue our mission of providing quality child care to area children. The staff and board appreciate all the support given by the Beech Church over the years and we covet your prayers for Janet as she begins this new position. Stop by and wish her well.

--The Shepherd's Gate Board--

## SHEPHERD'S GATE REPORT

The children of Shepherd's Gate are anxious for Fall's arrival. They are ready to collect beautiful leaves, learn about apples, and decorating pumpkins. Arrowhead Orchards will be coming September 30<sup>th</sup> to share with the children about their apple orchard. Firemen and their fire truck will visit the Center during Fire Safety Week in October.

Special thanks to Gale Sommers and all those who participated in the annual Craft Show. It was another successful event! Your hard work and generosity is greatly appreciated.

Currently Shepherd's Gate has enrollment openings for preschool, ages 3-5 yr. olds. We will have a toddler opening available February, 2012. Beech Mennonite Church members receive a 25% discount off their child's tuition. We also have sibling discounts for full time enrollees. Referral bonuses are issued to enrolled families that recommend new families who enroll their child. Shepherd's Gate is proud to offer high quality child care in a loving, faith based atmosphere. Please tell family and friends about our wonderful facility.

Donations are always welcomed. The Center can always use paper products, snacks, craft supplies, and plastic utensils. We are so blessed to have such wonderful church support. The staff and children appreciate your prayers and support.

Please remember Lori Dickerhoff in your prayers for a swift and full recovery following her shoulder surgery. We will all miss Lori at Shepherd's Gate and wish her the very best as she enters a new phase in her life.

--In His Love, Janet Mangus, Director SGCCC

## GOD MOMENT

If you were at church Sunday, September 4, and the service was over, you probably were at the MYF Missions Meal. Or, if you had guests coming (as we did) you were perhaps in the parking lot in the midst of a quick torrential rain. We saw a cluster of people on the eastern edge of the parking lot surrounding a red pickup truck. Jim slowed down to see what was going on, and we recognized a young woman we had met several weeks previously. Rolling down the window, we called to her and invited her out of the rain into our car.

By then we could see several men replacing a tire on the truck as an older woman stood by. The story we got from our guest in the car, was that a woman had a flat tire on the way back from Sam's Club. She pulled into the parking lot at Beech and was assisted by several men who were getting soaking wet. The tire was replaced promptly and she gratefully thanked all those who helped and was on her way.

Our sign says "You are welcome here." I wonder if she read the sign before she pulled off the road. We were honored to witness this event and wanted to share it with you. --Jim and Rachel Witmer--

## **"A Time to Laugh" - Pastor's Corner - October 2011**

Kira Knobloch of Allegan, Michigan tells this story: *"When my identical twin sons were only three, our pastor and his family were moving to Utah to do missionary work. As I hurried to get my children into the car, one twin, Josh, was straggling behind. "Come on, honey. We have to get going. Pastor and his family are leaving today. We have to go say good-bye." He stopped and looked very sad. "Oh no, Mom. Now who's gonna be God?"* And Aunt Rene from Grapeland, TX tells this one: *"Whenever my six-year-old niece, Katie, was asked her name, her standard response was "I'm Katie, Pastor Allen's daughter." Thinking she needed to assert her own identity, Katie's mother encouraged her to simply reply "Katie." The next day, a man asked her name. "I'm Katie," she replied. "Oh, you're Pastor Allen's daughter," he said, smiling. "Well, Dad says so," said Katie, "but Mom's not real sure."*

The above chuckles come from the book Let My People Laugh, given to me as a gift from an unnamed Beech member. (Any subtle hints here that I might need to lighten up?)

We've been involved with some heavy topics lately here at church. For starters, there's the ELF class I'm teaching on I Peter, a letter about suffering. There was the recent Sunday School class where we discussed church discipline. And my sermons the last two Sundays on forgiveness and domestic violence, with the respective examples of the shootings of Amish girls at Nickel Mines and the sexual abuse in a Mennonite colony in Bolivia. Not to mention the general mood nationally with fears and preoccupations with a struggling economy. It was time, I concluded, for a little levity in my *Pastor's Corner* this month!

A quick word search in the Concordance for words like *"laugh"* and *"laughter"* reminds us that God intends for humor to be a part of the human experience. (Why else would he have created something as odd as the giraffe? ...or the duck-bill platypus?) Perhaps the first record of laughter is Sarah upon hearing the absurd prophecy of her coming pregnancy. And giving birth, naming her son Isaac, meaning *"he laughs."* Psalm 126:2 records that when God returned captives to their beloved Zion, their *"mouths were filled with laughter."* The description of the "Virtuous Woman" in Proverbs 31 includes this observation, *"...she can laugh at the days to come."* Proverbs 17:22 says, *"A cheerful heart is good medicine."* Ecclesiastes reminds us of the need for balance in our lives: *"a time to weep and a time to laugh."* (3:4) And Jesus promised his listeners, *"Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh."* (Luke 6:21)

I confess to some envy recently when I heard about some of our Beech women attending Women's Retreat, with Jep Hostetler as main speaker. I have heard him on several occasions and have always come away with lifted spirits. His book The Joy Factor underscores one of his life goals – to bring life-giving humor to those who may be taking themselves (and life) too seriously. I was not surprised to hear Jeanette talk of some deep belly laughs that felt so good to her. Any chance that some of you Retreat participants could share some of his humor with us? Any other ideas out there to help us keep humor in our lives? Pastor Dan

## **What is 'Biblical Politics'? -- Jim Wallis- Guest Article**

Sojourners has always tried to understand and advocate for "biblical politics." But what does that mean now, especially as we approach another major election?

I was talking the other day to a Christian leader who has given his life to working with the poor. His approach is very grassroots -- he lives in a poor, virtually all-minority community and provides basic services for low-income people. He said, "If you work with and for the poor, you inevitably run into injustice." In other words, poverty isn't caused by accident. There are unjust systems and structures that create and perpetuate poverty and human suffering. And service alone is never enough; working to change both the attitudes and institutional arrangements that cause poverty is required.

To change injustice, you must confront politics. British abolitionist William Wilberforce, for example, didn't just call upon English Christians not to possess slaves, he wanted to end the slave trade, and that required a long political campaign. Martin Luther King Jr. wasn't content to just ask U.S. Christians not to personally practice discrimination against black people; he understood that the nation needed a civil rights law and a voting rights act. Both took leadership from the White House and votes in Congress. All these changes took politics to accomplish.

Another friend of mine recently told me that she had watched the powerful movie about Wilberforce, *Amazing Grace*, five times this year and was deeply inspired. I was too when I first watched the story of the Wesleyan convert who made ending slavery the mission of his life. But I've always thought that the movie focused too much on the man and not enough on the movement that swept the United Kingdom and made the political victory possible. Likewise, it was more than the inspiring rhetoric of King that propelled the civil rights movement. It was the Birmingham campaign, the dramatic events in Selma, and the march to Montgomery that focused the nation's attention and led to important legislative actions.

It takes a movement to change politics. Change doesn't ever start in Washington, but if public momentum can be built among millions of people, it eventually arrives in the nation's capital.

This is what the Bible teaches us. The scriptures reveal a God of justice, not merely a God of charity. Words such as oppression and justice fill the Bible. The most common objects of the prophets' judgments are kings, rulers, judges, employers -- the rich and the powerful in charge of the world's governments, courts, economies, systems, and structures. When those who are in charge mistreat the poor and vulnerable, say the scriptures, it is not just unkind but also wrong and unjust, and it makes God angry. The subjects of the scriptures' concern are always the widow and the orphan, the poor and oppressed, the victims of courts or unscrupulous employers, debtors whose debts need to be forgiven, strangers in the land who need to be welcomed. And the topics of the prophets' messages to the powerful are things like land, labor, capital, judicial decisions, employer practices, rulers' dictates, and the decisions of the powerful -- all the stuff of politics.

I believe that makes very suspect those who want to privatize most of these very public decisions, who claim to trust "the market" to work things out, who want to leave the powerful alone and the corporate elites unregulated and to relegate solving poverty to private charity, and who want to further reduce political accountability on those who rule the economy and society by "making government so small it can be drowned in a bathtub," as they proudly claim as their goal. The question should never be just about "big" or "small" government, but rather about effective and smart government that has the ability to hold both wealth and power accountable to the common good.

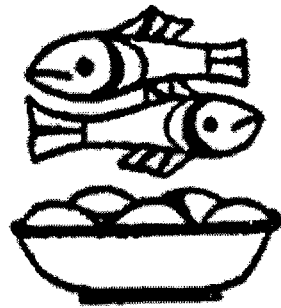
But biblical politics is never just about the candidates either, and some have made that mistake in recent elections. Putting one's hopes in political candidates and parties has only led to disappointment, frustration, and dangerous cynicism. There are systems and structures that undergird and shape the limits of the political agenda, and challenging those limits to get to root causes and real solutions is always the prophetic task. It is always movements that "change the wind," and only a change in the political wind can change political policies in Washington.

People of faith at our best may be the ultimate independents, engaged in politics only because of those moral issues that command our attention and willing to challenge all political sides on behalf of them. Moral independents will change politics more than will religious partisans, who make compromises on behalf of electoral victories. Fighting for justice, not partisan political goals, is the core of biblical politics --and that will continue to be our vocation at Sojourners.

# Jesus Feeds The Five Thousand

They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.  
Matthew 14:20 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 14:13-21 (NIV)



Q W L O A V E S P L T H J E B  
 R Y T G B V G S B X O A H T A  
 F I S H L A N D E D W U S Q S  
 B X E E J T B Q A P N I A J K  
 J B W I F K H O O I S A T W E  
 F T L W T Z N A A Q L G I C T  
 O U A L B K Z O N T S S S T F  
 L P T Q F I P K X K P B F M U  
 L F E J H E A L E D S E I Z L  
 O O C Q T T M L S C L F E C S  
 W O G R J E S U S C L B D W C  
 E T M F O Q S F O O D D J T A  
 D Q G B J W E I Y M H E H P V  
 D A V B U T D C C P E O P L E  
 R P G S A V K S H K I F Q K U

LEFT	BASKETFULS	LANDED	FOLLOWED	LOAVES
THANKS	CROWDS	TWELVE	HEALED	FISH
ATE	FOOD	SATISFIED	JESUS	SICK
FOOT	PEOPLE	LATE	TOWNS	BOAT