

Beech Mennonite Church is

Branching Out

Volume 30 Number 2 November 2011

Congregational meeting today; Fall Mission program, next Sunday

Beech Church's annual

Congregational Meeting will take place following an MYF fund-raising meal after the service today in the Fellowship Hall. Congregational Chairperson, Glenn Hostetler, will be in charge. All members are encouraged to attend.

Annual Reports were placed in the mail-boxes last Sunday.

MYF plans dinner theatre

You are invited...

...to be guests at the **Bethlehem Inn!** Mark your calendars for December 4th, when the Beech MYF will present an interactive dinner theatre program: *The Bethlehem Inn*. Guests will journey back in time over 2000 years, and become travelers sharing a meal at the inn of Eli and Sarah Merriman. The Merrimans and their servants will provide a delicious meal, and some unexpected visitors will surely make it an evening to remember ...even if there's no room in the very full inn, and these visitors need to rest in the stable. Guests will be treated to a light-hearted twist on the Nativity story, full of laughs, lessons, and a reminder of the Reason for the Season.

Cost for the dinner theatre (including meal, beverage and dessert) is \$10 for adults and teens, \$5 for children 5-12, and free for ages four and under. Presale tickets will be available from the MYF on Sundays in November. This will be a great opportunity to fellowship, enjoy a delicious meal with entertainment, and support the youth as they begin raising funds for the Phoenix Convention in 2013. Please invite friends and family!

Other MYF news:

The MYF has been meeting on Wednesday nights during ELF night, preparing for their upcoming dinner theatre program. On October 29th, the group served lunch at Refuge of Hope. The youth are also preparing boxes for Operation Christmas Child with their mentors.



Mission News

MWS met all day Wed., Nov. 3rd to work on comforters and quilts. President, Dorothy Schmucker announced that the group would be working with the Missions Commission on the Christmas Shoeboxes which will be collected Nov. 13th and food items for our Thanksgiving baskets.

In late Nov., the Christmas project, our Mitten Tree, will begin. Introduced to Beech last year, the Mitten Tree gathers hats, gloves and scarves which will be given to children in area schools and shelters. Last year Beech members and Shepherd's Gate families donated over 95 items which joined thousands distributed by Trinity UCC Church, Canton.

General Fund Offerings

Total General Fund offerings for October 2011 (5 Sundays) were \$14,285.64 for an average of \$2,857.13 a Sunday. Designated offerings of \$1,190.00 were also received.

The rules allowing "Qualified Charitable Distributions" from an IRA directly to a charitable organization (such as Beech Mennonite Church or Shepherd's Gate Child Care Center) presently expire 12/31/11. To make such distribution you must be at least 70½ years old and have the distribution made directly from your IRA to the charity. Such a distribution will not be taxable to you and you will not be allowed an itemized charitable deduction on your Federal income tax return. I will be happy to review these rules with you, if you wish.

—Paul Helmuth—

Kurt and Angies speak

Two of our own members, Kurt and Angie Neuenschwander, will be our Fall Mission speakers next Sun., Nov. 13th. They will be giving us information about Christmas Shoebox mission project.

The Neuenschwander family spent 12 years in the mission field, mostly in Africa where Kurt was a pilot with Air Service International. Most recently, they were located in Kenya where Kurt delivered many of the shoeboxes to the children, while Angie volunteered with refugee women and orphans in various centers.

Kurt had given a glimpse of the children excitedly receiving the shoeboxes during a brief slide presentation last year. We look forward to hearing more about his work and the Christmas Shoebox project organized through Samaritan's Purse.

The project was introduced at Beech in October when boxes were handed out to individuals and families gathered through this project, introduced by our Missions Commission in October, will be collected and dedicated during this service.

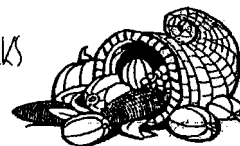
The Fall Missions offering will be given to Mennonite Mission Network and Ohio Conference.

Thanksgiving Meal

Next Sunday evening, Nov. 13th, the annual church Thanksgiving dinner will start at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. The event is sponsored by the Congregational Life Commission. As in previous years, the turkey and dressing, potatoes and gravy, rolls and beverages will be furnished.

Everyone is encouraged to attend and bring other family members. The only request is that each person donate a can of food or other non-perishable food items. These will be donated to the Louisville Community Cupboard.

GIVE
THANKS
TO
HIM



AND
PRAISE
HIS
NAME

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

Matt Mottice and Melonie Jurcevic were married by Pastor Dan King in Beech Mennonite Church on Saturday, October 22. Matt, a lifelong member of Beech, is the son of Fred and the late Martha Mottice. The couple resides in New York.

...**Andrew Leaman**, is one of four LHS senior to be honored by the National Merit Scholarship Program. Andrew, the only one designated a NMS finalist, scored in the top 1% of PSAT/NMSQT (qualifying test to become a National Merit semi-Finalist) and is in competition for national scholarships to be announced in February.

DID YOU KNOW...

...**that there were at least 18 young people at Beech playing on a Fall sports team**, 15 of those were soccer players, the youngest being Matthew Frederick?

...**that Vivian Schmucker**, daughter of Earl and Dorothy, walked a marathon, (26.2 miles) two weeks ago in Goshen, IN.

...**that Josh and Jana Sleutz** ran in the Columbus Marathon on Oct. 16 and Jana came in 3rd in her age group of about 3,000 runners?

...**that 11 people** from Beech participated in the **CROP Walk**, which brought in \$545? Part goes to local food banks and part to national groups. **Tim M^cKnight** is our local coordinator.

...**that Melva Conrad**, a member of the LHS class of '51, was recently pictured in the **Louisville Herald** with other classmates who celebrated their 60th reunion at a Skyland Pines dinner? Reunion activities lasted from Friday evening through Sunday brunch.

...**that the Slaters' Fall soccer-watching** concluded recently when grandson, **Brice Bostjancic's** (whose name was pronounced differently every time he entered the game!) Nordonia team lost in the frigid sudden death overtime of tournament play? His junior high sister, **Sydney's** U-13 Hudson team had won the summer NE Ohio tournament.

...**that Nancy Schneider** was recently pictured in the **Louisville Herald** with a group of Louisville knitters who have sent 195 baby blankets, hats and scarf sets and senior lap robes to the Knitting/Crocheting Ministry this year! In the past 15 years the 40-some knitters have made over 17,000 items! The local group is looking for additional members; talk with Nancy if you are interested.

...**that Friedegund and Lloyd Schmucker** have enjoyed a 2½ weeks reunion with her family, including 15 siblings who live in Germany. Several of the families have stayed with them. The entire group of 26 gathered for a weekend in Maryland.

Our Deepest Sympathy

Miriam Wess, lifelong member of Beech Mennonite Church, passed away October 10, 2011 in Aultman Hospital. The daughter of the late Harvey and Mary (Krabill) Maurer. She was preceded in August by the lingering death of her husband of 65 years, Harold Wess.

Survivors include her daughter, LuAnn Sassaman, Goshen, IN and three sons, Larry, FL; Lynn (Eileen), Clinton, OH and Lon (Donna), GA and a brother, Marlin Maurer, Minerva.

Her funeral was conducted by Pastor Dan King in Beech Church on October 14 with burial following in the Beech Church Cemetery. Memorials in Miriam's name may be made to The Beech Mennonite Church.

Letter from Hartville Gift and Thrift Shoppe

To our sponsoring churches and our many fine volunteers: We want to thank our many contributors, shoppers and volunteers who have supported us so faithfully over the years. Currently there are 120 volunteers working in different areas of the Thrift Shoppe. It is the combined effort of so many that has made this venture so successful in making a difference around the world.

The doors of the Thrift Shoppe first opened on October 2, 1978. As of December 31, 2010 the Hartville Thrift Shoppe has sent \$1,738,719.35 to Mennonite Central Committee. Income for the Thrift Shoppe has been steadily increasing.

We appreciate the work of the board in implementing a plan that increased our storage and donation areas and for improving the parking lot.

We are in need of additional volunteer help in testing electronic games and cameras, vacuuming and selling a small amount of items on e-bay.

Please continue to drop off your clean, gently-used items at the Thrift Shoppe. Our efforts are not possible without your donations.

This Fall the Thrift Shoppe had its first \$2,000 day.

--Thrift Shoppe Managers--

No-knead bread/rolls

- 3¾ cups warm water
- 3 pkgs. Dry yeast (or 2 well-rounded tablespoons bulk yeast)
- 4-5 cups unbleached bread flour
- 3 cups whole wheat flour
- ½ cups cracked wheat (Optional)
- 3 1/3 cups quick oats
- ½ cup flax meal (can also use the whole seeds)
- ½ cup honey
- 3 teaspoons salt
- 1/3 cup canola oil
- 2 eggs - beaten

In small bowl, combine yeast and 1¾ cups warm water, stir and let set.

In large tupperware bowl combine 2 cups warm water with all ingredients except flour. Stir until well mixed, then add the yeast mixture and stir a little. Add the whole wheat flour and stir, then add 3-4 cups white flour. Stir and add more white flour until the dough is well mixed, but soft. Put lid on bowl and let rise until doubled in size.

Punch down; pinch off dinner-sized rolls and place on a greased cookie sheet. Let rise until doubled in size. Bake at 375° for 15- 20 minutes, or until lightly browned.

--Submitted by Jeanette King--

(Jeanette baked these for a Wed. evening meal and they are delicious!!!)

Thirteen Simple Words

It took me a while to decide what I really wanted to write about in this small article. There are many important topics that I would love to cover, but I have not been able to dive full-force into them, either for lack of knowledge or lack of full interest. However, I keep coming back to one topic: children.

I was researching the statistics on the un-churched people in the United States earlier this week. It appears that more and more people are straying from Christianity, and that many people express that they are "spiritual" but not "religious." Many also say that they see the God of the Bible and Jesus to be no different than the deities and central figures of Islam, Hinduism, or Buddhism, or even of myriad pagan religions – in other words, to them, all religions are just different paths to the same place. Most of these folks fell into the camps of "I've never belonged to a church," or "I went to church when I was a kid." Interestingly enough, those who had never been "churched" were less likely to eventually belong to a church than those who went when they were just children. Some didn't see any importance in having a church family at all.

Soon after doing my research, a particular verse caught my eye while I was reading Proverbs. "Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray." (Proverbs 22:6, NRSV) There is so much truth in those thirteen simple words.

What those words encompass, to me, is not rigorous discipline, or even that my children should necessarily follow the path in life that I would like for them. I find the deeper meaning to be that we as parents need to be the example, the people that show them the proper way to walk in the world, and how to resist that which tears us down. From a young age I had right and wrong instilled in me, and even though I strayed from the church and flirted with spiritual ruin, I kept those lessons with me. I didn't realize for many years the lessons I took with me into the world from my childhood at Beech, and from the bits of the Bible I'd read or heard throughout.

My own two children, my daughters Olivia Mae and Ava Ann, love coming to church with us. They like to play with the other children, they enjoy the hymns we sing, and they especially like when the Praise Team plays music, when we can hold them up so they can watch the band sing and play their instruments. They probably get the most mileage out of that since it is tangible to them, something that entertains them. I would also like to think that they simply enjoy the time as a family. They may not be able to express that in so many words, but the hugs they give me tell me all I need to know on the subject.

At home, I try to instill in them the peace that God's Word brings to me, and I try my best to live as an example to them of how Christ can truly make a person whole. I read to them from their Bible storybook from time to time, and I try to explain to them in simple terms about the parables that Jesus taught his followers. One of my favorites to tell them is the Parable of the Good Samaritan. I want them to stand up for those who cannot stand up for themselves, to be kind and generous, and to help those in need. In other words, I want them to be of benefit to society because they learned the right way to treat people and the right way to maintain relationships, so I teach them the Bible, for what is the Word but a guide to right living and a primer of beneficial psychology?

I am not a perfect father or husband, but I try to hold myself to the standards found in the teachings of Christ and the Bible. It will take a while to chip away all of my rough edges, to be sure, but that is the essence of it. My utmost desire is for my children to know good people, and see how they handle their lives daily, and to be blind to the divisions with which the rest of the world troubles itself. This is why they attend church with me. I don't want them to try to fill themselves with divisive politics, the hatred of racism, or the greed of consumerism. I want them to simply be at peace with themselves as they grow older and to find the right path, and to have their church family to help them along the path when necessary or desired.

That encompasses what Proverbs 22:6 means, at least to me, and why I think attending a church as a believer is both fitting for Christians and the proper order of things. Where would we be if it were not for the example of others, especially Jesus himself?
--Submitted by Andrew Parish--

Shepherd's Gate News

The children of Shepherd's Gate enjoyed their Harvest Party. They played Holiday Bingo, Bean Bag Throw, Find the Pumpkin in the Cool Whip (no hands allowed), Decorating Treat Bags, and playing in the inflatable Jumping House. Apple cider and donuts were a special treat!

The Shepherd's Gate Board has appointed Cynthia Magda as the Center's new designee. Mrs. Magda has her CDA and 11 years experience running a latch key program for Marlinton schools.

Currently Shepherd's Gate has enrollment openings for preschool ages 3, 4, and 5 year olds. We will have one 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.

Due to the rising costs of supplies, Shepherd's Gate is accepting donations of paper products, snacks, milk, juice, and craft items. God has truly blessed the Center with a wonderful church support system. Thank you for your prayers and support.

Shepherd's Gate is so pleased to see so many children attending E.L.F. Night. We do ask that you keep your children in the Fellowship Hall until the Center is closed at 6:00 p.m. There are legal ramifications involved following O.D.J.F.S. laws. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

--In His Love, Janet Mangus, Director SGCCC--

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Nov 6 (Sun.) - MYF Lunch followed by Annual Business Mtg.
- Nov 8 (Thurs.)-6:30, Elders meet at Kings.
- Nov. 9 (Wed.) - Last ELF night.
Advent Choir Practice
- Nov. 13 (Sun.) - A.M., Fall Missions Sunday - Offering for Operation Shoebox. Speakers: Kurt & Angie Neuenschwander
6:00 p.m.- Beech Thanksgiving meal - Please bring a Non-perishable item for the Louisville Community Food Cupboard.
- Nov. 14 (Mon.) - 7:00 p.m., Shepherd's Gate Child Care Mtg.
- Nov. 17 (Thurs)- 7:00 p.m. Council Meeting
- Nov. 24 (Thurs)- THANKSGIVING DAY!!!

New books, DVDs and CDs that are available in the church library.

BOOKS

Walk in Peace By Ingrid Hess

-A children's book that reminds us that God loves and protects us and to walk in peace.

Heaven is for Real by Todd Burpo with Lynn Vincent

-The true story of Colton Burpo and his trip to Heaven and back when he was four years old.

Teatime in Mogadishu: My Journey as a Peace Ambassador in the World of Islam by Ahmed Ali Haile as told to David W. Shenk

-The story of Ahmed Ali Haile and his tradition from his Islamic heritage to the Christian faith and his work as a Peace Ambassador in his native Somalia.

Forming Christian Habits in the Post-Christendom: The legacy of Alan and Eleanor Kreider edited by James R. Krabill and Stuart Murray

-A book that shares the teachings and writings of Alan and Eleanor Kreider.

Growing Up Colt by Colt McCoy and Brad McCoy with Mike Yorkey

-The life of Colt McCoy as he grow up with his father teaching him about God and football.

Mennonite girls can Cook

-A cook book from a group of Mennonite women sharing recipes that have been passed down through the generations of their families.

DVDs

-Disney Nature's Earth

-BBC's Planet Earth

-Soul Surfer

-Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn -Treader

-Veggie Tales

-Princess and the Pop Star

-The Little Drummer Boy

CDs

-Sing the Journey 1 and 2

-Sing the Story 1 and 2

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.

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A THANKSGIVING PRAYER

*Lord, so often times, as any other day
When we sit down to our meal and pray*

*We hurry along and make fast the blessing
Thanks, amen. Now please pass the dressing*

*We're slaves to the olfactory overload
We must rush our prayer before the food gets cold*

*But Lord, I'd like to take a few minutes more
To really give thanks to what I'm thankful for*

*For my family, my health, a nice soft bed
My friends, my freedom, a roof over my head*

*I'm thankful right now to be surrounded by those
Whose lives touch me more than they'll ever
possibly know*

*Thankful Lord, that You've blessed me
beyond measure*

*Thankful that in my heart lives life's greatest
treasure*

*That You, dear Jesus, reside in that place
And I'm ever so grateful for Your unending grace*

*So please, heavenly Father,
bless this food You've provided
And bless each and every person invited.*

Amen!!

--Scott Wesemann--



Pieces of Peace With Justice— 11/6/11

“But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream” Amos 5:23-25 “And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8

Tuesday, Americans will go to the polls to vote on people and issues facing our country. As God’s people, we are admonished to pray for our government. Also, quoting our Mennonite confession of faith, “Christians are responsible to witness to governments not only because of their citizenship in a particular country, but also in order to reflect Christ’s compassion for *all people* and to proclaim Christ’s lordship over all human institutions.” If we choose to vote, let’s find our guidance under the lordship of Christ.

***About people:**

Helen Miller, wife of Vern, passed away October 20, 2010. The above two scriptures quoted in her memorial program were a guiding force in their lives as they ministered in Cleveland, first in the Gladstone Mennonite Church community and then at Lee Heights Community Church these 60 years. From her obituary “Helen was a vibrant woman spurred by radical compassion, love and practicality. . . She was a friend and mentor to many and even after retirement, people looked to her as a constant source of guidance, advice, and comfort.” She and Vern had 5 children, Robin, Renita, Rosina, Rochele and Ryan, 13 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. She was loved by her family, the church, and the community as indicated by the large attendance and tributes paid at her memorial service. (You will remember Rochele and Nathan Beachy as the husband-wife physicians who came to Beech to share about their service in the AIDS clinic in Nigeria)

Two comments about the brutal killing of Professor James S. Miller of Goshen College: Peter Suderman, Linda’s brother –“We are hoping that the individual who did that will turn himself in. Here’s a person who needs God’s forgiveness. He also needs our forgiveness. That’ll be hard for us to do. But I can say as a family, we would strive to do that.” And Karl Shelly, GC Adjunct Professor of Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies to his class – “Two things I know to be true. This world is filled with remarkable beauty and love. And this world is filled with unspeakable violence and pain. We live in between both, with glimpses of heaven and hell, of darkness and light. As one who seeks to transform conflict and violence, I will live by the proposition and walk in the hope that violence and pain never have the final word. . .” MWR

About War:

“It all reminds me of my weakness of not trusting God. Here I am a pro-life person, and isn’t that 18 or 19 year-old just as much a gift from God as a baby in the womb? . . I am just sick and tired of people sending young men and women to die when it’s not justified.” --Rep. Walter Jones, (R-NC) on why he has become antiwar and writes to the families of war dead as penance for his vote to authorize the use of force in Iraq. (Catholic News Service)

-Lois Leidig, Peace Justice/MCC Rep.

“Another Sacred Cow?” -- Branching Out Pastor’s Corner - Nov 2011

Our October 9 sermon, the story of the Israelites and the golden calf, had us look at possible sacred cows in our day. We briefly explored the false idols of money, sex, and power. But it isn’t hard to find other sacred cows in today’s churches, especially those that have been around for awhile. A few years back I remember hearing a pastor’s comment that “*sometimes sacred cows make good hamburger.*” Soon after I arrived at Beech I mentioned to someone in passing the idea of switching Sunday School hour and worship. There was a quick response (and I believe these exact words), “*Oh, don’t go there. That’s a sacred cow!*” So I haven’t.....yet.

There are obvious advantages in having Sunday School first. There is a natural flow in studying together in smaller, age-related groups and then coming together to worship as a larger church family. Visitors typically are interested in the worship service; they can come without feeling the pressure to stay for Sunday School. Similarly, visitors need not get up as early to attend worship. Generally those who are more involved in the life of the congregation put forth the needed effort to attend Sunday School.

Churches that have Sunday School following Worship report advantages as well. Families who have other activities planned for Sunday can take in worship and have more of the day available afterward. Many churches have a SS option for adults – to discuss the sermon with the preacher. Jeanette and I thoroughly enjoyed that experience in a previous church. One of the most frequently-mentioned benefits of this arrangement is the ability to have an unhurried time of fellowship between worship and SS. People can pick up a mug of coffee/tea and perhaps a snack, chat with friends and visitors, and then head to SS class. (Admittedly, it can be hard getting folks to move into their class time!)

Since I started pastoring here at Beech I have had a growing awareness of the need for a “fellowship time” at some point on Sunday morning. Particularly as God’s Spirit draws new people to our church family, we need to find ways to welcome them warmly and get to know them better. Nothing seems to break down barriers (in our culture and many others) like sharing food and drink as we talk. (Note the book *Three Cups of Tea* as a prime example.)

I’ve chatted briefly with a few Beech people about the idea of enlarging the lobby in order to provide more space for this time of fellowship. A small counter where coffee and tea can be served. Adequate elbow room. Others have been talking recently about the possibility of adapting one of our present rooms on the main floor for this purpose.

Perhaps our sacred cow of SS first, then Worship doesn’t have to be butchered! With a little creative brainstorming we might be able to tweak our schedule and find about 20 minutes between the two events for fellowship time. If we realize the importance of this new feature, could we not, for example, accustom ourselves to finishing Worship around 12 noon? (I’m not too keen on starting any earlier than 9:30, are you?)

The more persons involved in this discussion the better. Groups in particular that should lead the way are Worship Commission, Christian Ed Commission, Congregational Life Commission, Elders, and Trustees. Everyone’s ideas should be heard, however, from youngest to oldest. It has been said that there are at least seven possible solutions to every problem. Can we start exploring the options?

Pastor Dan