

BETHEL MATTERS

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Inside This Issue

Walk for Amy
at Presque Isle

Outdoor Service,
Baptisms,
and Picnic
Information

Hymn Sing

Memorial Service
for Shirley Hoppel

ABF Activities
* Half-timers
* Primetimers

Junior High
Youth Activity

Everyday
Evangelism

The Question of the Need for Church Membership

When I lived in Texas during the 1980s I attended for a while a church that did not have official church membership. The thinking was that formal church membership is not found in the New Testament, therefore it is a manmade practice. Over the years I have encountered others who make the same point as to why they don't join a church or have an official church roll of members. Years ago Dr. Edward T. Hiscox wrote a well-known guide for church polity and order. He wrote, "*It is sometimes said that a church is a voluntary society...But it is not merely optional whether or not a believer identifies himself with the household of faith. He is under moral obligation to do that.*" (*The Hiscox Guide for Baptist Churches*) I believe there are good reasons found in the Bible to support the importance of church membership as Hiscox believed.

Before we mention several Scriptural benefits of membership, let's just consider how Paul uses the word "*member*" in connection with the Church as the body of Christ. The literal meaning of "*member*" is a part of a physical body. Paul uses this word metaphorically very effectively in Romans 12, 15; 1 Corinthians 12 & Ephesians 2, 3, 4 & 5 to compare the parts of the human body to the members in the body of Christ. New Testament word specialist W. E. Vine points out that Ephesians 4:25 means "*the members of the whole Church as the mystical body of Christ.*" Clearly the universal Church cannot have a worldwide membership roll. But Vine writes of 1 Corinthians 12:27 ("*Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.*"), that this means "*the members of a local church as a body.*" (*Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*)

Other Bible students have pointed out that 1 Corinthians 12 is emphasizing the local church body in Corinth. "*As a local congregation they were Christ's body in miniature, a representation of Jesus Christ to all of Corinth.*" (*The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: 1 Corinthians*) Clearly the local church at Corinth knew who their members were because baptism was the initiatory rite that welcomed believers into the local church of the worldwide body of Christ, 1 Corinthians 1:13. "*Baptism is and always was the church's initiation-rite.*" (Jeff Reed, *Becoming a Disciple*) So there was a formal commitment procedure into the membership of a local church: baptism. It identified believers as members. They had made a public commitment to that church. (Note: The identification with the community of believers signified by baptism is often obscured today by emphasizing only the vertical relationship with the Lord that baptism symbolizes. American individualism is likely one of the root causes for this. But baptism also symbolizes our membership in a new family, the church.)

Since in our more mobile society where people are not baptized into the church in which they are currently attending, it makes sense to have a formal membership procedure to demonstrate the same commitment that baptism symbolizes. In fact, three Scriptural benefits of membership include: **1) community** ("*the members may have the same care for one another,*" (1 Corinthians 12:25), **2) commitment** ("*the eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you,'*" (1 Corinthians 12:21), **3) accountability** ("*Obey your leaders and submit to them,*" Hebrews 13:17). We will explore these benefits more fully later. But, for now, membership encourages all three. And that is important.

Your friend, in membership with you,
Pastor Brian (:~).

From the Family Life Pastor:

Various thoughts:

This past Sunday we were scheduled to have our outdoor service at Presque Isle Park. On Friday we looked at the weather forecast and it was calling for a 70% chance of thunderstorms so we postponed the service til August 7th, and decided to hold just one service with no ABFs on Sunday. That meant that everyone had to adjust their plans for that Sunday. Julie Motta did a great job making adjustments to the music that we would sing, and Pastor Brian adjusted his message to accommodate the indoor service instead of the outdoor service.

I felt that Pastor Brian's message on baptism in the Sunday service was one of the best messages on baptism that I have heard (and I have preached some).

It is clear from the scriptures that baptism is an act of obedience for those who are believers. It is not something that our parents or anyone else can decide for us, it is an act of obedience to the calling of Jesus Christ in Matthew 28:18-20 "*Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you'.*" Notice the order here – we are to “go” “make disciples” and “baptize” and “teach”.

Mark 16:15-16 says "*He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the good news (The gospel message 1 Cor. 15:1-8) to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned'.*" As always, we must read scripture in its context – Jesus is giving instructions to the Disciples – some of his last teachings – and makes a very significant point – “go”, “preach” – then the hearers must believe first, then be baptized – but the salvation that He is talking about is dependent upon their **belief**, not their baptism. We are trying to follow the scriptures on this issue, so the first and most important step for a “hearer” of the gospel message is that they “**believe**”, and then as an act of obedience follow Jesus into the waters of baptism.

We will be having a baptism at our outdoor service on August 7th, and I pray that we will have more than had been planned prior to last Sunday's service. If you have been contemplating, feeling led, to be baptized, it is not too late. Give me a call or see me at church and I will make the necessary arrangements.

A different thought:

Do you ever wonder if you are needed at Bethel, if your gifts and talents might be used for the Lord here at the church? We are blessed in that we don't fit the usual 20%-80% - twenty percent of the people doing eighty percent of the work, we are blessed to have many people jumping in to help with ministry around the church. But, we are always looking for others to jump in and do ministry as they feel led. You don't always have to have a specific gift, the church can use your help in many different ways. On the other hand, if you have received a specific gift from the Holy Spirit, it is vital to the health of the church that you use that gift to the glory of God.

Another thought:

I (we) don't say it often enough how blessed we are as a church to have such gifted and gracious staff here at Bethel. I am always honored and humbled at how God has brought our staff together to do the ministry of the church:

Pastor Brian is a gifted and excellent preacher/teacher. His ability to remember names and connections with people is a gift to all of us.

Becky Nelson has a gift of vision for what can be in her ministry to our children. She shows such grace and care for our leaders and children.

Julie Motta has the gift not only of music, but has a heart for the ministry, for the people and for God's Word. She is always so gracious at adjusting when need arises.

Chris Mauser is new, but he has a gift of understanding and communicating God's Word.

Rick Pawley as our Director to Seniors does a great job. He and Cindy make several home visits and taking care of special needs of our seniors.

Ann & Ellen do such a wonderful job in the office keeping the day to day things moving and do so much behind the scenes.

Diane Case with the organ and piano, Abbie Tireman with the website. Of course I could go into many others who are not on staff, but bless the church in many ways. Thank you all!

God Bless you
Pastor Hank

Discipleship Training

Summer is here and Bethel's discipleship program is underway with the Antioch School's First Principles Series! For more information on how you can be involved in future classes, please contact Chris Mauser via email at christopher.mauser@gmail.com

Youth Events & Activities

Junior High Youth Group

6th - 8th Graders

Sundays 5:30 - 7:00 PM

Questions: contact Jon or Julie Motta

Junior High Off Site Activity

Swim/Tubing/S'mores at Pastor Hank & Ann's

114 Parkwood Lane, Negaunee Township

Sunday, August 14th, 5:30 PM

Senior High Youth Group

9th - 12th Graders

Sundays 5:30 - 7:00 PM

Questions: contact Dan or Becky Nelson

Chris Mauser, Director of Youth Ministries

330-550-0141

christopher.mauser@gmail.com

Watch for special activity notices through the Youth/Parent email.

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Prayer Chain & Official Notices

bethelemail@gmail.com

If you have a prayer request or information that you want shared, please send that to the email address above. If you are not receiving email prayer requests or notices, please contact Ann or Ellen in the church office at 228-7589.

Items for the September Issue of Bethel Matters are due in the office by Friday, August 19th.

Items for the Happenings are due in the office by Wednesday noon.

Have you visited our Bethel Website?

Check it Out at:

www.bethelmarquette.com

Audio Sermons are posted weekly along with items of interest, Bethel Matters, Calendar, and Happenings.

Happy August Birthday/Anniversary to:

1. Kathy Johnson, Abbie Tireman, Bob Nelson
2. Spencer & Jean Johnson (A)
3. Jim Noe
4. Dan & Kathy Johnson, Dave & JoAnn Buhl
5. Troy & Nicole Steppke (25 yrs)
7. Walt Anderson
8. Drew & Amy Quinn
9. Kathy Morabito, Sue Goodwin
10. Cliff/Eleanor Maier (A), Jim/Laurel Perko (A), Nathan & Brooke Loewen
12. Rebekah Mackey
13. Caden Steede
15. Ed & Marilyn Morrison
16. Julie Glover, Judy Larson, Maynard & Leenamari Bowers (A)
17. Dan & Becky Nelson (A)
18. Tim Larson, Walley & Karen Helmila (A), David & Mandy Erickson (A)
19. Walt & Chris Anderson (A)
20. Holly Glover, Jordan Smith, Annette Brown, Amy Quinn
22. Don & Karla Salo (A)
23. John Morabito
25. Brian Steede
28. Adelin Deering
29. Kurt & Shelley Janofski (A)
30. Shelley Janofski, Karl Thomsen
31. Jeff MacDonald, Adam Smith

Congratulations to:

Jonathan & Jessica Dale on the July 14th birth of their daughter, Nora Penelope. She weighed in at 7 lbs, 2.9 ozs and was 17.5 inches long.

Luke & Heather Pell on the July 16th birth of their daughter, Ivory Rose. She weighed in at 7 lbs 8 oz, and was 16.75 inches long.

Chris & Laura Mauser on the July 20th birth of their daughter, Ruth Sophia. She weighed in at 8 lbs 9.7 ozs and was 18.5 inches long.

Kendyl Dahlstrom for her role in Superior Arts Theater's presentation of "James & the Giant Peach". **Brianna Steede** for her role in PAAC's presentation of "The Little Mermaid". Break a Leg, Girls. ☺

Bible Studies

For Men

Tuesdays, 6:30 AM, Coachlight Restaurant
Questions: contact Pastor Hank 228-7589

For Women

Watch for information for Fall start ups

Adult Bible Fellowships

Sundays at 10 AM

Group #1 College - 29 years old
Meets in Room #1 in Family Life Center
Topical Studies

Group #2 Ages 30-42
Meets in Room #2 in Family Life Center
Studying the Gospel of John

Group #3 Ages 43-55
Meets in Room #6 in Family Life Center
Studying "Images of God"

Group #4 Ages 56-69
Meets in Room #3 in Family Life Center
Studying the book of Thessalonians

Group #5 Ages 70+
Meets in the Wheat Room
Studying "Images of God"

Memorial Service for Shirley Hoppel August 4, 2016, 2 PM Bethel Baptist Church

Shirley grew up at Bethel and after graduation from high school, attended Wheaton College where she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree. She taught in the Art Department at Wheaton Academy. She and Bill married and moved to the Washington DC area. Shirley designed and built their home on the Potomac River where had a successful art school for 15 years. After Shirley & Bill's children went off to college, her interests turned to architecture and graduated with a Master of Architecture degree. Shirley's master thesis was a proposed development of Marquette's waterfront. She worked part time for a local architectural firm while designing and building their summer home on Lake Superior in Shelter Bay. Bill and Shirley then began attending Bethel again.

Half-Timers Activity

BBQ & Waterfront Activity

Saturday, August 6th, 5 PM

at Pastor Hank & Ann's home

114 Parkwood Lane, Negaunee Township

Bring a dish of food to share,

swimsuit/towel, fishing gear if desired.

RSVP to Dave Dahlstrom 906-401-0278



shutterstock - 144637299

Primetimers Activity

Picnic & Ladderball Competition

Thursday, August 18th, 5:30 PM

at Presque Isle (Pavilion side)

405 E. Crescent, MQT

Bring a dish of food to share and something for the grill.

Drinks and table service provided.



Walk for Amy

Presque Isle Bandshell

Saturday, August 27th

There will be a Benefit Walk for Amy Shreve on Saturday, August 27th, at Presque Isle hosted by Bethel Baptist Church. Walkers will meet at the Bandshell at 8 AM for prayer and then proceed to walk around the island until 10 AM. The time from 10 AM to 12 Noon will be used for informal lunch/picnic time. Gary and Amy will be doing a concert in the Bandshell starting at noon with special guest comedian Daren Strelbow. The concert is free (donations welcome) and is open to the community. This is a great outreach opportunity to invite your friends and neighbors.

The purpose of the Walk is to help with the cost of Amy's recent cancer treatments and to help support the music ministry of Gary and Amy. The ministry of Gary and Amy has touched many of us and the Walk is a way to give something back.

We are looking for walkers to ask their friends and families to support this event through prayer and donations. If you would like a donation form or have questions about this event, please call Dave Powers (906-228-6047) or Irma Powers (906-250-9070). Donation forms are also available at the Welcome Center.

Hymn Sing Sunday, July 31st, 6 PM at Bethel



From the Mailbox:



Dear Bethel,

Thank you very much for the thoughtful gift of Amazon giftcards. I greatly appreciate the support!

Jay Oberg

Dear Bethel,

Thank you for the Amazon gift cards. It was very sweet of you to think of me!

Love,
Madi Kytta

Dear Bethel Baptist Family,

Thank you for your generous gift! I am so grateful to be surrounded by such great friends. You all have been (and still are!) Excellent examples and good friends to me. I look forward to seeing what the Lord has in store for all of us!

Thanks again,
Sam Salo

Dear Bethel Family,

Thank you very much for the generous graduation gift! That was a great blessing to me, as well as the privilege of being a part of the graduation service. Thank you also for all of the support you give me in my relationship with God through the many things you all do at Bethel.

Sincerely,
Ryan Salo

Dear Bethel,

Thank you everyone for having us with you! We so enjoyed sharing what Do is doing, but we enjoyed much more just being with you all. Thank you so much

for your generosity towards us. You blessed us and deeply encouraged us.

We left Bethel feeling loved, cared for and support.

Thank you also for the ministry you are having in Marquette. God is working through each of your lives. May the Good News be proclaimed.

Much Love
Doug & Lori Dawe
Campus Crusade

Everyday Evangelism (EE)

Another semester, the thirty-second one at Bethel, has been completed with four trainees participating. A new semester begins on Wednesday, September 21st at 6:00 p.m. at Bethel. Below is Mary Fuller's testimony about how EE has benefitted her. The Fullers were missionaries for years and still she found EE to be very helpful training. Perhaps it might encourage you to participate this semester. Please read what she says.

"For the majority of my life, I have always been afraid and very reluctant to even attempt to share with others how they too can accept the gift of eternal life and know for certain if they are on their way to heaven. My 4 main excuses were:

- 1) *'I don't want to offend anyone'*
- 2) *'I'm trying to witness with my life', not my words*
- 3) *I don't know how to handle objections so it's better to just not say anything*
- 4) *How can I explain well the whole Gospel, in only a short amount of time, and be sure I'm not opening people up to easy believism?*

Then Eleanor invited me to take Everyday Evangelism here at Bethel, otherwise referred to as EE. That class has really been a blessing to me in a number of ways but I'll share 4 ways the class has helped me:

- 1) *The people that we call on are NMU students or visitors to Bethel that have already indicated that they'd like to have a spiritual discussion regarding who Jesus is and how they can know for certain if they are going to heaven or not when they die. I've yet to meet a person that has seemed offended that we contacted them.*
- 2) *Through the EE class I came to realize that my life, or lifestyle is very limited in conveying the message of eternal life through Jesus*

Christ. How can anyone know that you live the way you do, or that Jesus has made the difference in your life, if you don't tell them with words? And what if people you are friends with die before they ever think to ask you what makes you different? Wouldn't it be better to know exactly how to share with friends the good news, in a clear, positive, and encouraging way, whenever you sense God has opened the door for you to have a conversation with that friend?

- 3) *The presentation you learn answers many questions people have about eternal life. And we ask the person several times for their repeated permission to continue sharing with them so we don't really encounter people who are argumentative. There is never any shame in just telling the person you don't know the answer to their question but that you'll be happy to try to answer them next time you meet together. We can tell them we're not there to argue. :)*
- 4) *The presentation we learn covers the gospel in depth, yet in a concise way, and takes about 30 minutes to go through. So it is less likely for the listener to have easy-believism.*

Taking the EE course has helped me to pull together all I knew already regarding the Gospel, and deliver it in a clear, concise, and understandable way to others. Going over this presentation each week has given me a deeper appreciation for all the Christ did for me on the cross and for the eternal life He has given me. I've really appreciated the friendly and encouraging attitude of the trainers, and that there is no pressure from them. We hope you too will consider taking the EE class."

What more can we say? It is almost without exception that those who take EE have similar sentiments about the training. Perhaps you may wish to participate this fall with this very helpful training to do the most important task we are COMMANDED to do. If interested please contact Pastor Brian (228-7589) or Eleanor Maier (226-8597).

Wedding Invitation

The Bethel Family is invited to the August 27th wedding of **Andy Larsen and Beth Hill** in LaFayette, Indiana. A U.P. reception will be held on Saturday, October 1st from 2-5 PM at Bible Baptist Church in Ishpeming. Watch for more details to follow.

Outdoor Service, Baptisms, & Picnic

Sunday, August 7th - Presque Isle

**Service at 10 AM
Band Shell**



**Baptisms at 11:30 AM
in Lake Superior**

Picnic to follow -Pavillion

**(this year, no one will be able
to eat until after the baptisms)**

**Please bring:
last names A-K a dessert
last names L-Z a large salad
lawn chair**



**Brats, hotdogs, chicken strips, buns, & beverages
will be provided.**