

# BETHEL MATTERS

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829 Grove Street, Marquette, MI 49855

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### *The Blessing of Godly Elders*

Following Sunday services after preaching on James 5:13-18 on the anointing of the sick with oil by the elders accompanied with prayer, someone told me it was good for the congregation to hear about the responsibilities of the elders. I had not thought about that angle to the message, but it was an interesting take on it. James was an elder himself in the Jerusalem Church and he clearly considered a congregation to be blessed that had a godly group of elders who ministered to them. Such men could have power in prayer because of the holy lives they were living. That could have a dramatic effect upon the people in their churches.

Over the years I have come to appreciate more and more God's wisdom in giving godly elders to His Church. Growing up I heard nothing about the Eldership and didn't know such an office even existed. In the Baptist churches I was familiar with we had deacons, deaconesses, ministry boards, Executive Committees, vice-chairmen, but no elders. It wasn't until seminary that I began learning about elders and the detailed teaching about them and their duties in passages like James 5. I was even appointed to the Eldership in a small church I attended and served in that role before becoming a senior pastor. I am glad now I have both perspectives and have served in both roles.

One of the things that I began to see as a pastor was the weaknesses of the governmental structures in the Baptist churches with which I was familiar. I saw the wrong people leading according to Scripture and some positions that had lots of authority in the church but no accountability. That is always unwise when people have authority but little or no accountability. I saw pastors who viewed the deacons with disdain and felt they could run the church better without them. I saw Deacon Boards who were considered the spiritual leaders of the church, but had little leadership authority because it was structured elsewhere. I began to wonder where Executive Committees run by vice-chairmen originated from since they weren't found in Scripture. Who came up with them and why were they an improvement on the simple plan we see in the Bible for church leadership? And why were elders absent from Baptist churches when they are clearly found in the Bible?

One of the most interesting discoveries I made along the way was that there was a long history of the Eldership in Baptist churches. When Charles Spurgeon became a pastor in the 1800s, he instituted elders at New Park Street Baptist Church to complement the office of deacon. He did this because he saw both offices taught in the New Testament. The elders gave leadership to the spiritual affairs of the church while the deacons oversaw the practical matters. Spurgeon said this arrangement "*worked very well.*" Why are godly elders such a help to a local church? Let me start now and continue next month.

**Elders are selected on the basis of spiritual qualifications.** Both 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 spell out the spiritual qualifications of Elders. If those qualifications are followed that means that high character men will lead the church. High character men are mature men and maturity is always the first requirement of spiritual leadership. Recently one of our sister churches in Wisconsin imploded due to serious character problems among the pastors. We had been there for a conference a year or two before and heard things that raised concerns about how they led. When this sad implosion emerged sometime later we were not totally surprised because of the arrogance and lack of wisdom we had perceived at the conference. When mature elders are in a church there is a balance of humility, wisdom and strength that can keep even pastors in check. When all believe in and respect God's plan for leadership in the church, it can keep sad stories like this from doing so much damage.

Your friend, grateful for godly elders,  
Pastor Brian (-:-).

## From the Family Life Pastor:

### Various thoughts:

As I write this article, it is two days before Thanksgiving. By the time you read it, that holiday will be past and we will be working our way towards Christmas. The Sunday after Thanksgiving I will be speaking about the most important things that we are to be Thankful for – our biological family, our church family – but even a higher level of thanks for the wonderful gift of Christmas, the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ! I know that people don't like to think too far ahead when it comes to seasons, but these thanks can and should be expressed to God on a regular basis. Where would we be without our blessed hope associated with Christmas? I am so thankful for the fact that our Creator God, "***so loved the world*** (that is you and me) ***that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life***" (John 3:16 ESV). God had to supply the "way" because there was none who could earn his or her way into God's heaven, and God wants very much to have a relationship with us, and to have us spend eternity with Him in His heaven – now, that is something to be THANKFUL for!

After our salvation, we become part of a larger "family", it is the family of God. I am mindful of Paul's letters to the churches of his time, and how in all but one – Galatians – he expresses thanks for that church, and encourages them in their spiritual walk. I have been one who has been blessed in so many ways by so many in our church family. First my church family – Bethel Baptist Church in Marquette, but then also my church family, the Evangelical Churches of Marquette, and then beyond that, the churches of Converge Great Lakes (formerly Baptist General Conference) which is made up of about 120 churches in the UP and Wisconsin. I have had the honor of serving on the Board of Overseers for a number of years, and several of those as chair of the Board. I am always so encouraged to interact with folks from these churches that have as their main "agenda" to win people to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, and to see them grow up into mature believers who have a personal relationship with our God!

Ann & I have been blessed with our biological family as well, and we are thankful for the blessing that they are to us, and for us to watch our children and grandchildren walking with the Lord – maybe not perfectly, but consistently (much like their parents and grandparents). I can relate to 3 John 1:4 "***I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth***". The older I get, the more significant that is to me. I am thankful and blessed with our family.

## Different thought:

I know that there has been a great deal of disagreement in our country about the election. I know that even within the church there is differing opinions. I pray that we as a nation will come together under God, seeking Him and His will for our country. We see time and time again the effects of our nation moving away from God, and as a result we have chaos and disorder in ways not seen in many years. If you want to make a change for good, get on our knees and pray to the God above all gods, the One who knows the beginning from the end and the One who is supreme over everything – even our Nation!

### Another thought:

On November 6 we dedicated six (6) children (Olivia Lynn, Isaiah Wayne, Laina Joy, & Camille Rose Erickson, Eloise Fern Veihl, and Samuel Grant Saberniak and then on November 13 we dedicated another seven (7) Adelyn Rachel, & Ivory Rose Pell, Benjamin James & Ruth Sophia Mauser, Adelyn Margaret & Nora Penelope Dale, & Austin Michael Wixtrom - for a total of thirteen (13) children whose parents came to dedicate themselves and their children to the Lord, asking Him to work in their hearts and lives through the parents, extended family and the church family to help these children to become Christ followers at a very early age. It was such a blessing to be able to work on these dedications, and I can promise to parents that we as a body of believers – your church family – will do everything in our power to present the gospel in word and in deed to help you and your children in their Christian walk. We are honored to be a part of your lives.

Thank you all!  
God Bless you  
Pastor Hank

## Discipleship Training

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](mailto:christopher.mauser@gmail.com)

## Youth Events & Activities

### Junior High Youth Group

6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> Graders  
Sundays 5:30 - 7:00 PM  
Questions: contact Dave Dahlstrom  
or Brian Steede

### Senior High Youth Group

9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> Graders  
Sundays 5:30 - 7:00 PM  
Questions: contact Jon Motta

Chris Mauser, Director of Youth Ministries  
330-550-0141

[christopher.mauser@gmail.com](mailto:christopher.mauser@gmail.com)

Watch for special activity notices & information through  
SLACK.

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## Prayer Chain & Official Notices

[bethelemail@gmail.com](mailto: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.

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## In Sympathy to:

**Don & Susie VanRyn** following the recent death of Susie's mom, Madelyn VanderSchoor. The funeral was held in Ohio.

**Dave & Elizabeth Dahlstrom** following the recent death of Elizabeth's Grandma Smith.

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**Items for the January Issue  
of Bethel Matters  
are due in the office  
by, Monday, December 19<sup>th</sup>.**

**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](http://www.bethelmarquette.com)

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

## Bible Studies

For Men

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

For Women

Tuesdays, 6:15 PM at church  
"Jesus - the One and Only" by Beth Moore  
a study of the Gospel of Luke  
Questions: contact Sarah Goupil at 250-6130

Thursdays, 9:30 AM at church  
Questions: contact Bethany Jentoft at 458-9310  
Childcare is provided on Thursday morning.

# Adult Bible Fellowships

Sundays at 10 AM

**Group #1 College - 29 years old**  
Meets in the church library  
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 "Daniel"

**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 "Culture Shock"

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## AWANA Information

Workers' Meal - Mondays at 5:30 PM

AWANA meets on Mondays from 6:30 - 8:05 PM  
throughout the school year for grades K-6

### Monthly Schedule

- \* December 5<sup>th</sup> - regular club night
- \* December 12<sup>th</sup> - regular club night
- \* December 19<sup>th</sup> - Theme Night (**Candy Cane Night - wear red & white and receive a candy treat**)
- \* December 26<sup>th</sup> - NO AWANA

Questions: contact Josh Vissering at 360-0201

## From the Mailbox:



Dear Bethel Family,

Thank you so much for the Red Lobster gift card. One of our favorite places to go. We are so grateful for your kindness to us.  
Pastor Brian, Ellen, Joy, and Jay

Dear Bethel Family,

You amaze me with your generous hearts as you reach out to those in need. You give of your time, your talents, and your resources. I want to give special thanks to all who support the Care Clinic. Many of you actively meet the needs of each unborn baby that enters their door by lovingly volunteering your time, while others give generously. (Bethel's Baby Bottleboomerang brought in \$1,560 for Care Clinic.) Thanks to each and every one of you. I wish we could see and hear those babies as they celebrate this Christmas.

With a Grateful Heart  
and wishing you a  
Merry Christmas,  
Jean Johnson

Dear Bethel Family,

Thank you for everyone who remembered me on my 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Special thank you to Sandy Thomsen, Cindy Larson, and to all those that made my day so special.

Mary Houlmont

Dear Bethel Family,

Thank you for your prayers and support following my ankle surgery. I am now walking on two feet.

Barbara Johnson

Dear Bethel Family,

A special thanks to the Junior & Senior High Girls for serving and the College & Career ABF for putting tables away at the Primetimers Thanksgiving Dinner. Also a big THANKS for all who attended. \$1,555 was raised for the Salvation Army's food pantry. Yea God!!!  
Sandy Thomsen

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## Fundraising Results

Baby Bottle Boomerang for Care Clinic  
\$1,560.00

Food Collection for Salvation Army  
Food Pantry  
867 pounds of food

Primetimers Thanksgiving Dinner  
for Salvation Army Food Pantry  
\$1,555.00

Operation Christmas Child  
Bethel gave - 169  
MQT County gave - 1,217

Our Bethel Family is very generous with  
their time, talent, and resources.



## NMU Students

All NMU students are invited for dinner on  
Sundays at 6pm at Matthew & Laura  
Songer's home, 2645 West Grove Street,  
MQT. The study is "The Truth Project".  
Invite another student for a great meal, great  
fellowship, and great study.

## Senior Discounts

To help out our Seniors, Rick & Cindy Pawley  
have put a list of local restaurants/businesses  
that give a discount to Seniors. Put this list in  
your wallet to have it handy when you are out.  
You will have to ask for the discount, the  
retailers will not offer it to you.

## Senior Citizen Discounts:

- \* Applebees - 10%
- \* Arby's - 50 cent drinks
- \* Avis & Budget Rent a Car - 25%
- \* Big Boy - Senior Breakfast \$5.59, punch  
card 10 punches = \$4.50 off next meal
- \* Burger King - free soda or coffee
- \* Culver's - 10%
- \* Denny's - 15%
- \* Donckers - 10% off restaurant
- \* Econo Foods - 5% off on Wednesdays
- \* Huron Mountain Bread Company - 10%
- \* Jeffrey's - 10% (request it)
- \* KFC - 10%
- \* Kohl's - 15% on Wednesdays
- \* McDonald's - 33 cent off small drink
- \* Michael's - 10% off everyday
- \* Shopko - Discounts 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of  
month
- \* Subway - 10%
- \* Taco Bell - free small beverage
- \* Walgreen's - 20% 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of month
- \* Wendy's - free Value Size Drink



# December Specials

## All Adults Christmas Party

Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5:30 PM  
at U.P. Bible Camp  
Cost is Donations  
Please RSVP

## Crosswalkers ABF Christmas Party

Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 6 PM  
at Bob & Yvonne Leaf's home  
10 C0 Rd 480, NEG

## Children's Christmas Program

Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, 10 AM  
(No Sunday School or ABFs)

## Primetimers ABF Christmas Party

Tuesday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 PM  
Lost Creek Community Center  
Bring a dish of food to pass and  
a White Elephant gift  
Drinks and place settings provided.

## All-Church Caroling

Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, 6 PM  
Please bring a plate of cookies  
to share with our Seniors'  
Warm Up afterwards at  
John & Sandy Thomsen's  
405 E. Crescent, MQT



## Candlelight Service

Saturday,  
December 24<sup>th</sup>, 6 PM

## Christmas Day Service

Sunday, December 25<sup>th</sup>, 10 AM  
(One Service only & no Sunday School or  
ABFs)

## Snow Daze at Lake Ellen Camp

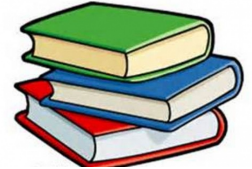
8<sup>th</sup> grade - college  
check the camp's website for more  
information.

[www.lakeellencamp.com](http://www.lakeellencamp.com)

## Half-Timers ABF Party

watch for information  
about a party in January.  
Questions: Dave Dahlstrom  
or Cori Steede

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## Church Library Update

Seasons of Grace Series by Beverly Lewis, Amish  
Inspired

“The Secret”  
“The Missing”  
“The Telling”

“The Auschwitz Escape” by Joel Rosenberg  
A protestant pastor and a Jewish freedom  
fighter are chosen to risk a daring and  
dangerous escape.

Visit Bethel's library! Browse and borrow  
novels, movies, audio books, non-fiction on  
parenting, marriage, biographies, Christian  
living, evangelism, biblical resources, books for  
your and teens, and more

Questions: contact Gwen Timmons.