

BETHEL MATTERS

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Inside This Issue:

Affirming Certainties in a World of Fading Dreams

Recently the pastor of Mars Hill Church, one of Michigan's largest megachurches, announced he will be stepping down from the pastorate. The previous and founding pastor of the church made national news for his resignation for blatant apostasy. The current pastor said that "*being a pastor is not really who I am.*"

Congratulations

There is no problem with that if someone feels his gifts and calling are elsewhere. Better to make a change than to stay in a place not of God's choosing. But what is troubling are other comments this pastor has made, saying he is "*not drawn to the Orthodox,*" and that he doesn't know "*what we mean by God anymore?*" (<http://www.christianpost.com/news/rob-bell-pastor-kent-dobson-steps-down-mar-hill-being-pastor-not-who-i-am-1511-21>.)

Prayer Summit

The word orthodox simply means "right opinion" or "right belief." It refers to an established standard of truth that Christians affirm as being what the Bible actually teaches, "*the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints,*" Jude 3. This pastor's father and grandfather were pastors and his father was known as a very influential preacher of the orthodox faith of the Bible, even having a study center at Grand Rapids Seminary named in his honor. Now some of the language that his son is using as he departs from the ministry is sounding eerily similar to the founding pastor who has abandoned biblical Christianity altogether. Surely he knows the phrases he uses raise big questions about where he is heading biblically and theologically in light of where the first pastor ended up.

Men's Breakfast

AWANA

I can only guess at what has caused all of this doubt. Many have said it is harder today to be a pastor than ever before because of all the changes in American society. I remember a professor once saying that "*many of the things that used to be nailed down have now come loose.*" Some Christians, in an attempt to deal with the new realities, lose their confidence that the orthodox interpretation of the Bible really has it right. Maybe that is what is going on with this pastor; I don't know.

From the Mailbox

Everyday Evangelism

What encourages me to remain true to the Bible despite disappointment is the perspective of Evangelist Billy Graham. Interviewed by Diane Sawyer, she recounted his accomplishments through 50 years of preaching to over 120 million people face to face around the world. She then asked the world-renowned evangelist if he was pleased with his "success." His answer startled her and surprised the vast TV audience. He replied, "*I don't think of myself as successful at all. I feel like a failure.*" Sawyer sought clarity so she asked, "*Did you think you could change the world?*" Dr. Graham softly responded, "*I thought maybe, after a lifetime of preaching. But the world is worse today than when I began my ministry.*"

Annual Meeting Information

That interview with Dr. Graham was 20 years ago. Now approaching 100-yrs-old he has just released a new book about heaven and his certain expectation of going there according to the Bible. His world of fading dreams has not lessened His conviction that God's Word remains true and reliable and will not fail. Reflecting on Sawyer's interview with Graham 20 years later, Pastor Raymond McHenry counsels us, "*Ministry for all Christians, regardless of their calling, is quite challenging and often discouraging. Nonetheless, we must obediently persevere, as did Billy Graham, and follow his example of expectant faith.*" In the New Year some may capitulate to cultural pressures; how much better to reaffirm the certainties that we believe and encourage others by our steadfast faith that God and His Word are still worthy of our trust.

Hymn Sing

Your friend, seeking to remain true, Pastor Brian (-:-).

From the Family Life Pastor:

Various thoughts:

I hope that you all had a very Merry Christmas. Each year as we celebrate the birth of our savior, I become more and more grateful for the overwhelming grace that God showed all of us when He chose to send His very own Son into the world to become the FINAL sacrificial lamb for the removal of our sins. Such an amazing gift and such an amazing love is demonstrated in this act.

Those of us who are parents, can you even conceive of giving a child to be a sacrifice – killed for what someone else did wrong – and then to think that the ones that he/she was given for were your enemies, and some will choose to not even consider or accept the amazing gift being offered. Wow, that is Love and Grace at a level never before or ever again to be seen. What an amazing and awesome God we worship.

Most of us have Romans 3:23 memorized – ***“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”*** – but in its context, there is so much more involved here. This section of scripture is talking about “righteousness” – being “right with God”. Let’s again look at the context, beginning with verse 21 through 26. ***“But now a righteousness from God, apart from the law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference. ‘For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God’, ad are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented Him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in His blood. He did this to demonstrate His justice, because in His forbearance He had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished – He did it to demonstrate His justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.”*** Notice in these verses who it is who does it all for us. It is a Loving God, full of Grace – but notice that He is also a “Just” God, and He does require an act on our part – we must have faith in Jesus. That is why we see over and over a call to “believe” in the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved!

This act by God the Father and God the son is demonstrated so well in Romans 5:6-8 ***“You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us!”*** There is no greater act of love imaginable! Thank you Lord Jesus!

On another thought:

This is the beginning of a New Year. What will you do with your faith this year? Will you choose to continue to walk along the same path you did last year, and perhaps the year before etc etc? Or will you start a new and more committed relationship with our Lord? Most of you know that I read through the bible every year, and have been doing so for the past 8-10 years. Each year I find something new that “I hadn’t seen before”. The Holy Spirit takes me where I am in my spiritual walk and helps me to see something that perhaps I was not prepared to see last year. I am always so amazed and grateful for these new things. One of those new truths started to unfold for me about two years ago, and God is still unfolding it to me on a regular basis.

That truth is about “God’s perfect timing” for everything! God is so amazing, and when we see or hear of something that surprises us, we look and see that God wasn’t surprised, and in fact had told us it was coming. God also allows us to “grow up” in our faith so that we can handle and live a new understanding from Him.

An example of God’s perfect timing is found in a verse that I shared earlier. Notice in Romans verse 6 it starts with: ***“You see, at just the right time”*** – while we were powerless, ***“Christ died for the ungodly”***. So, my question for you as you start the New Year, what are you going to do this year to discover some new truths about God the Father, God The Son, and God the Holy Spirit? There is lots to discover – go on an adventure – Read God’s Word!

HAPPY NEW YEAR!
In Christ – Pastor Hank

Hymn Sing Sunday, January 31, 6 PM

Youth Events & Activities

Junior High Youth Group

6th - 8th Graders

Mondays 6:30 - 8:00 PM

Senior High Youth Group

9th - 12th Graders

Sundays 5:30 - 7:00 PM

If you have questions, contact the church office at 228-7589 or by email at bethel.admin@bbcmqt.org

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 in the church office.

**Items for the January Issue
of Bethel Matters
are due in the office
by Friday, December 18th.**

**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 January Birthday/Anniversary to:

1. Matthew Songer
5. Katherine Wilkinson, Grace Farnsworth
10. Philip Nelson, Nick Valentia
16. Chris Anderson
17. Bill Hoppel
21. Carolyn Deyo
23. Karla Salo
26. Laurie Short
31. Troy Steppe



Bible Studies

For Men

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

For Women

Tuesdays, 6:15 PM at church
beginning January 12th.

“Discerning the Voice of God”

by Priscilla Schierer

Questions: contact Sarah Goupil 250-6130

Thursdays, 9:30 AM at church

beginning on January 14th.

“Twelve Ordinary Men”

by John MacArthur

Childcare is provided.

Questions: contact Bethany Jentoft 459-9310

Stop by the church library to get a book so that
you can get the first chapter read.

Congratulations to:

Brianna Steede and teammates on the 6th grade Negaunee Nets Girls Basketball Team on their 1st place win in the Iron Mountain Invitational Tournament.

Sam Zick and Hannah Shaw on their recent engagement.

Rebekah Newman and Joshua Edwards on their recent engagement.

Allyson Kytta and Zach Radue on their recent engagement.

Steve Snow and Regan Onken on their recent engagement.

Heston Roberts on being selected as a student of the week for North Star Academy.

Sam Salo & Ryan Salo on their early high school graduation from North Star Academy. An open house is scheduled for February 6th at Bethel.

Adam Smith on being selected by the Rotary Club as the Youth Citizen of the Year.

Eric Smith on being selected by the Rotary Club as the non-profit organization person of the year.

Annual Meeting Information

Sunday, January 24th, 1:15 PM

Staff & Board Chair

Reports due on Sunday, January 10th.

All-Church Pot Luck

Sunday, January 24th, 12:30 PM

Families: bring a hot dish to share and last names A-J a dessert
last names K-Z a salad

Singles: bring rolls or bread

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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 book of James

Group #3 Ages 43-55
Meets in Room #6 in Family Life Center
Studying "The Red Sea Rules"

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

Group #5 Ages 70+
Meets in the Wheat Room
Studying the book of Proverbs

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AWANA for Grades K-6

Mondays from 6:30 - 8:05 PM

January 4th, regular club night

January 11th, regular club night

January 18th, Theme Night

(wear pajamas and receive a treat)

January 25th, regular club night

Questions: contact Commander Josh at 360-0201

From the Mailbox:



*Bethel Baptist Church,
Thanks so much for your support of me and my missions trip. It was fun, I had a blast, saw God work in the life of the kids and they were happy to see me come and work with them, our willingness to share clothes and things with them as well. I learned a lot while I was there and how blessed we are to have so much and how little they have to live on.*

*Thanks again for your support,
Abby Nelson*

*Dear Friends at Bethel,
We are so grateful for your faithful support. It enables us to continue sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with who come to camp. God has given us many opportunities to talk with kids who don't even know who Jesus is. I am so excited to work with kids on staff who have put their trust in Christ while at camp. It has been wonderful to see them mature. We appreciate each of you.*

*Ralph Peterson, Director
Lake Ellen Camp*

*Dear Pastor & Mrs Steede and Carolers,
What a pleasant surprise I had when I opened my door and there you were singing Christmas Carols and a little girl was holding a plate of cookies for me. How did you know that I needed to be uplifted like that? I had been feeling sorry for myself and very sad for the past month missing my husband who passed away 2 ½ years ago. We had been married for 64 years and God called him home. I never dreamed it would cause so much sorrow and that I would miss him so much. I have had wonderful support from our Bible study, church and friends but there are times when I feel this void. The hard part is facing holidays alone and coming home from somewhere to an empty house. Once again I want to thank you for your support and wish you all a blessed Christmas in Christ our Lord.*

Bea Wertanen

PS The cookies are wonderful and so many different kinds. Thank you again.

Dear Bethel Family,
Thank you so much for the financial gift for Christmas. It is such a blessing and joy to serve the Lord at Bethel with all of you.

With Love,
Becky Nelson

Dear Bethel Family,
Thank you so much for the generous financial gift for Christmas. We were blown away by how you have blessed us not only with this financial gift but by individual notes, cards, and gifts as well. We feel so loved.

We love you all,
Pastor Hank & Ann

Dear Bethel Family,
We are so grateful for your generosity to us this Christmas season. We are also grateful that the Lord has placed us here at Bethel. May the Lord bless you for the kindness you have shown us.

Thank you,
Pastor Brian, Ellen, Joy & Jay

Prayer Summit for Our Nation

Thursday, January 7th, 6 PM

The call goes out again for all Bethelites to come together to bend our knees before our Holy God and ask His intervention for our country. Consider fasting as part of your worship/prayer preparation.

Everyday Evangelism

New Semester Begins
January 27th, 6 PM

This 12 week training seminar prepares Jesus' followers to become more effective witnesses and so helps them become more obedient to obeying the Great Commission, which is a command not an option. If you plan to participate, please contact Eleanor Maier (226-8597) or Pastor Brian (228-7589)

Address Update

Maynard & Leenamari Bowers
47558 Scenic Circle Dr
Canton, MI 48188
906-228-9190

2016 Phone Directory

Ann will be working on a new directory starting in January. Please make sure that the church office has your latest address, phone numbers, and email address.

Men's Breakfast and Boys 8 and up

Saturday, January 30th, 9 AM

Watch for a sign up sheet on the bulletin board.



Coming in February 2016

NMU Men's and Women's Basketball Game
versus Ferris State

Saturday, February 6th.

Games are at 11am and 1pm.

FREE tickets.

Call 228-5564 for more information,
or stop by

Roberts Financial Services, Inc
989 W Washington St, Mqt
to pick up free tickets.

This would be a great activity to grab your basketball playing children and go as a family.

