

BETHEL MATTERS

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Paul's *Letter to Titus* is one of the three New Testament books included in *The Pastoral Epistles*. In those books Paul is instructing two of his protégés Timothy and Titus how to pastor churches. Titus is the shortest of the three books with only three chapters. In Titus 1:5 Paul gives the purpose for his letter to Titus, "so that you might put what remained into order." The verb "put into order" was a medical term that was applied to the setting of a crooked limb so that it might heal and be healthy. That is clearly Paul's concern for the churches that Titus pastored on the island of Crete – that they be healthy communities representing the gospel of Jesus Christ well in a dark world.

What this tells us is that "church health" is the number one priority in pastoral ministry of a local church. God desires His Church to be healthy because a healthy church best represents Him and best ministers His healing in a spiritually sick world. Several years ago a well-known pastor wrote a best-selling book in which one sentence was worth the price of the book, "Don't concentrate on church growth, but on church health, because healthy things grow naturally." That is essentially the point that Paul is making to Titus. Concentrate on church health and Titus would have effective churches.

If we ask how a church becomes healthy, Paul did not leave Titus, or us, in doubt. The Book of Titus divides into two parts and both are the keys to a healthy church. Chapter one is Paul's instructions about qualified Christian leadership. Chapters two and three focus on the importance of "sound doctrine." What is interesting about that expression is that the word sound means "healthy." Isn't that interesting in light of our church health discussion so far? This term is defined by Pastor Jeff Reed, author of *The First Principles Series*, as meaning "doctrine that is healthy and integrated fully" into a believer's life.

This is the second way a church becomes healthy – when its members integrate the teachings of Christ into the way they live. A person only can be said to hold to "sound doctrine" when they are living it out in the way they behave and relate to others. This reinforces the vital truth that doctrine is both what we believe and how we behave. A large part of becoming a healthy congregation is emphasizing the integration of sound living into sound believing. That is healthy doctrine. When our churches and families are sound in that way, others see the power of Christ at work affirming the truth we believe.

Now we can begin to see why Paul's first way for a church to become healthy is through qualified Christian leaders. Again Pastor Reed is helpful when he writes, "Men who lead their own families well are to become part of a team of elders who shepherd the whole community, thus keeping the church solid and stable in the teachings of Christ." A church with proper leadership will have healthy examples and healthy teaching that will set a plumb line so that people know how to behave and live out God's design that brings true health. Nothing could be more important in church life.

Now we can see, as we saw in our previous December article, why elders are selected on the basis of spiritual qualifications. Without men of high character and maturity, it is impossible to lead a church into healthy doctrine. The leaders will undermine the very foundation of church health. This is why Paul emphasizes that elders must be spiritually healthy in three areas: 1) family life (1:6), 2) personal life (1:7-8), and 3) public ministry (1:9). We will take those up in another article in this series, but for now, pray for your elders – that they will be men who truly integrate doctrine that is healthy fully into their lives. Any church led by such men is truly blessed.

Your friend, seeking true health with you
Pastor Brian (:~).

From the Family Life Pastor:

Various Thoughts:

As I write this article, it is the season between Christmas and the New Year. There have been a number of things that have happened in this past year that have gotten a lot of attention.

We had a number of natural disasters that caused a great deal of pain and hurt for many people throughout the world. We had quite a number of well known celebrities die, and that caused a great deal of angst for many people. We had some racial issues like we haven't seen in many years, and many people were injured both physically and emotionally through it. We had an election that was very heated and difficult, and many people are still unwilling to accept the results, even though we had a process for electing a president which was followed. All of these things will eventually slip away and we will begin to focus on other "news" items and things that are happening in our close up world.

With all of this, I am grateful that we have the reminder from scripture – In Hebrews 13:8 we read “***Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever***”. He does not change, he is not subject to “re-election”, nor affected by natural disasters or by life or death – He is God! In Psalm 102:27, the Psalmist writes about God – “***But you remain the same, and your years will never end***”. James 1:17 says of God – “***Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.*** In a world where things are changing so quickly, it is great to have a heavenly Father who does not change, who is the same yesterday, today and forever, whose years will never end. So, while we have to adjust to these things that are changing, hurting us and causing uncertainty in the world, we have an anchor. This is summed up by scripture much better than I can say it in Hebrews 6:17-20: “***Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of His purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, He confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us, may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf.***” In these uncertain and difficult times, we have that anchor – Jesus Christ to hold onto. Praise His Name!

Another thought:

We are so blessed to be part of the body of Christ here at Bethel – We have the honor of working alongside of a wonderful, dedicated staff who are committed to

servicing Christ and helping the body to grow and mature in our spiritual walk. I am thankful for each one and the blessing that they are to me and my family.

We have a VERY generous body of believers here at Bethel. We were blessed with gifts of words of love, encouragement and meals and financial gifts in October for the Pastor appreciation month, and then a very generous financial gift & individual items again in December. It is sometimes overwhelming to be blessed in these ways and thank you does not adequately express our gratitude for our church family!

More thoughts:

A few months ago we celebrated Ann's five years of being cancer free after her bout with breast cancer. That was a very important milestone and we are grateful to God for this blessing and gift.

As we go into each year, we are never sure what is ahead. I choose to believe that Jesus Christ is who God's Word says that He is, He is part of the triune Godhead – God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit. I also believe that each of us must choose personally to believe that Jesus is who He said He is, and make Him our personal Savior and Lord. I choose to proclaim that loudly and as clearly as I can, and pray that in this coming year – 2017, He will be glorified in my life through words and deeds, more and more each day.

Thank you all and
God Bless you in this New Year!
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

Youth Events & Activities

Junior High Youth Group

6th - 8th Graders

Sundays 5:30 - 7:00 PM

Questions: contact Dave Dahlstrom
or Brian Steede

Senior High Youth Group

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

Chris Mauser, Director of Youth Ministries
330-550-0141
christopher.mauser@gmail.com

Watch for special activity notices & information through SLACK.

Jr & Sr High Lock-In

Friday, January 27th
watch for more details to come

Prayer Chain & Official Notices

bethemail@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 February Issue
of Bethel Matters
are due in the office
by, Thursday, January 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.

January Birthday/Anniversary to:

1. Matthew Songer, Jazzmin Erickson
5. Katherine Wilkinson
10. Philip Nelson, Nick Valentia
12. Chris & Laura Mauser (A)
13. Declan Hanson (1 yr)
16. Chris Anderson
17. Bill Hoppel
18. Laura Norton
20. Lucy Loewen (1 yr)
21. Carolyn Deyo
22. Nathan Loewen
23. Karla Salo
24. Dorothy Johnson
26. Laurie Short
31. Troy Steppke

If you or a member of your family should be listed in above, please contact Ann in the church office.

In Sympathy to:

Brian & Cori Steede following the December 27th death of Cori's Grandma, Corinne Hoiem. The funeral will be was held in Negaunee.

Congratulations To:

Annette Brown, Irmgard Miller, Lynn Miller, and Cori Steede as members of the Marquette Choral Society on a wonderful presentation of the Handel's "Messiah".

Adam Smith on his recent appointment as Academic Co-Chair for the Ohio State University's Scholars Program's Leadership Council. He will serve as one of three co-chairs for the coming year to plan and guide program and activities for the campus scholars programs.

Steve Veihl on his graduation from Michigan Tech University with a degree in Mechanical Engineering.

Josh Vissering on his recent engagement to **Julianna Rohrlach**.

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 “30 Life Principles”

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”

Adult fellowship is a wonderful way for us to connect and get to know one another. We are thankful and blessed to have had the use of UP Bible Camp for our all church adults Christmas Party. Over 70 people were in attendance. Special thanks to our hosts, Don & Susie VanRyn for inviting us to share the beautiful facility and awesome food.

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

* January 9th – regular club night

* January 16th – Theme Night (wear your PJs and receive a treat)

* January 23rd – regular club night

* January 30th – regular club night

Questions: contact Josh Vissering at 360-0201

Snow Day Policy: If Marquette Public Schools are closed, we will not have AWANA. If the weather turns questionable after school is out, listen to radio station WHWL for cancellation notice and/or check our website www.bethelmarquette.com or our Bethel Facebook page for updates.

From the Mailbox:



Dear Bethel Family,

My wife, Laura and I were overwhelmed by your generous gift. It was unexpected and we are tremendously grateful for it, as it will go toward our future home-purchasing fund. May God richly reward you return for the great kindness you (all) have bestowed on us. Thank you so, so much.

Yours in Christ,

Chris Mauser

Director of Youth & Discipleship

Dear Bethel Family,

Thank you so much for the generous Christmas gift. It is such a blessing to serve the Lord with you.

Becky Nelson
Director of Children's Ministries

Dear Bethel Family,

We are overwhelmed each year with the generosity and love displayed by our Bethel Family. Our Christmas gifts both monetary and items from individuals are beyond words. We feel so loved by you folks not only at Christmas but throughout the year. We are so blessed to serve the Lord here at Bethel and to also to serve along side you. Again, thank you for your generosity and love for Ann and me.

We Love You All,
Pastor Hank & Ann

Dear Bethel family,

Thank you some much for the Christmas gifts. We are so grateful for your thoughtfulness and kindness that you've shown to us. May you have a blessed 2017.

Pastor Brian, Ellen, Joy and Jay

Dear Bethel Family,

Thank you for thinking of me this Christmas and giving such a generous Christmas gift. We are blessed by your love and thoughtfulness, support and care. Thank you to many who came alongside me and gave of their time during a busy December to serve the congregation.

With love and a thankful heart,
Julie Motta
Director of Music

Brothers & Sisters at Bethel,

Thank you for generously giving and faithfully praying to the Lord this year. I am so grateful for your warm support and partnership in the Gospel! Thank you for your special gift of \$100 too. You're so kind.

May God meet each of you in a significant way this Christmas.

With Love and Gratitude,
Michelle Baumgartner
CRU at NMU

Bethel Baptist Church,

Thank so very much for the gift card. It will be used for the purchase of fresh meat which I can't normally afford very often. Bethel has been such a blessing to me!

Bette Cannon

Dear Bethel Friends & Family,

Thank you so much for your kind and generous gift to me. This was a very humbling experience for me. Pride raised its ugly head – something I battle all the time. But I can't tell you how much this has meant to me; certainly in a monetary way (and timely) but also a new awareness of the kindness of God's people at Bethel. And of course God's goodness to me in common (daily) and unexpected ways. Praise God from Whom All Blessings flow.

Love and Gratitude,
Diane Case

Dear Bethel,

Thank you so much for all the prayers, kind words of concern, visits, meals, & cards you have shared on my behalf during this time of recovery. I so much appreciate each and every one of them & each and everyone of you! I am so blessed to be a part of such a wonderful church family like we have here at Bethel. You have all made me feel so loved and cared for!

In Him,
Diane Kytta

Dear Friends at Bethel,

Thank you so much for the beautiful flowers you sent in memory of our mom. We so appreciate your thoughtfulness. We are also grateful for the many cards we received.

With Love,
Don & Susie VanRyn

Dear Church Family,

I really don't have the words to say that would even come close to expressing my feelings for my Bethel family today.

Over the last year, through the greatest difficulty of my life, I have been truly blown away by the kindness, encouragement and love of an incredible number of you.

Though my parents live in Utah, Pastor Hank & Ann and Pastor Brian & Ellen have demonstrated the same kind of love to me as my parents would if they were here themselves.

Though my brother lives in Wyoming, brothers like Jim Ferris, Jon Motta, Dave Hanson, Gary Wixtrom, Kurt Janofski, Jonathon Dale, Dave Paul, Miah Lacar, Jack Brown, John Thomsen, Lynn Miller and so many others have stepped in at perfect times to fill that role in my life.

My sisters live in Nevada and Iowa, but here at Bethel, surrogate sisters like Amy Shreve, Judy Caldwell,

Julie Motta, Becky Nelson, Cori Steede, Annette Brown, Adelin Deering, Marj Brown, Bette Cannon, Cindy Pawley and many others have in big ways, little ways and ways they may not even know, helped me to feel loved, welcomed and remembered.

My cousin's, nieces and nephews live all over the country, but like they would, many of you beside those I have already mentioned have helped to make such a difficult time easier to handle, because you have reached out a hand, given me a hug, helped me financially, helped me physically and helped me mentally. Those like Chris Mauser and others who have reached out to my boys and loved on them when this has been equally difficult for them.

I am equally thankful for those who continue to treat Sarah like family and reach out to her in various ways.

You are all demonstrating the love of Christ to me in such a profound way that I am humbled and overwhelmed by your example. I cannot ever repay the incredible things you've done. Thank you. Thank you. THANK YOU! From the bottom of my heart. I love you all.

Thank you,
Miles Bagley

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NMU Students

Welcome back NMU students. You are invited for dinner and Bible study on Sundays (beginning again on January 15th) 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.

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Primetimers' Activity

Wednesday, January 25th, 5:30 PM
Dinner & a Movie (Miracle from Heaven)
at Peter White Public Library
Community Room (downstairs)

Bring a **Dish of Food** to share.

Popcorn, beverages, and table service
will be provided.

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Annual Congregational Meeting Sunday, January 29th

Schedule for the Day

10 AM Worship Service
(No ABFs or SS)

11:30 AM Light Lunch
for those attending the mtg.

12:30 PM Congregational Mtg.

Board Chair & Staff:

Your annual report is due in the church office no later than Sunday, January 15th.

Annual Report Booklets will be available for pickup on Sunday, January 22nd.

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Everyday Evangelism (EE)

A New Beginning and a Grand Finale

EE will begin a new semester on Wednesday, February 1 at 6:00 p.m. As most of you know this class helps to equip Christ's disciples to share the Gospel more effectively. It helps to remove the fear most of us have about witnessing and helps us to know how to handle objections. Applying the knowledge gained in this class helps us to fulfill the last part of Bethel's mission statement - "to go tell"-- and most importantly Jesus' command to "Go into all the world and make disciples." How well are we doing this? Maybe EE can be helpful. Last year EE international has experienced nearly 11 million professions of faith. Wow! Wow!

One of the great training tools is to actually do visits, which we call on-the-job training with

experienced EE trained people. Here's is a glimpse of an EE team's last visit of the semester—a grand finale.

A team visited a family with two children—the boy age 9 and the girl age 5. After a brief conversation, they knew that the parents were already Christians. No need to present the Gospel, they thought. However the man of the house said that he would like to hear the presentation that we generally do. The experienced trainer proceeded, but the parents interrupted and said, “Can the children listen too?” “Of course.” So the children were asked to sit with the foursome and the Gospel was presented. No need to ask for a commitment, he thought. The parents were already Christians. After a bit more visiting, the team left, but that is not the end of the story.

After the team departed the boy said, “I am not sure I am going to heaven.” His mother asked if he would like to be and if he wanted to pray. The little boy bowed his and said something close to this, “Dear God I know that you have been knocking at my heart, please come in and clean the dirt out of my heart!” Then the little girl said, “What about me?” Then she too prayed and accepted Jesus. (Used by permission from the family.)

When we heard this story, we were thrilled and realized afresh how the Holy Spirit uses the Word and makes it real to people. We are just the messengers.

We have many other great stories that EE teams have experienced, but we will have to wait until eternity to “hear the rest of the story...”

- Eleanor Maier

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Library Links

- Gwen Timmons,
Librarian

Here are the titles of some newly donated books and some recently re-shelved. The Bethel Library is a treasure! Come in and browse. Gwen said that she, will gladly accept suggestions for library improvement. Contact: timmons.gb@tds.net

Fiction:

- **A Baxter Family Christmas** by Karen Kingsbury - John Baxter invites a stranger to come to Christmas who is

the recipient of his daughter's heart.

- **The Third Target** by Joel Rosenberg - ISIS plans a 3rd target as Israelis # Palestinians are on the verge of signing an historic treaty.

Christian Living:

- **Spiritual Warfare, Victory Over the Power of This Dark World** by Timothy Warner - “Christian life is the exciting process of trying to keep your balance.”
- **What You Do Best in the Body of Christ** by Bruce Bugbee - discover your spiritual gifts.
- **6 Dangerous Questions** by Paul Borthwick - the answers shape our view of life.

Evidence for the Truth:

- **Why I Believe** by D. James Kennedy - ...in the Bible, God heaven, hell, and more

Social Issues:

- **Culturally Incorrect** by Rod Parsley - addresses the social, political, spiritual & philosophical polarization of our country
- **Why Pro-Life** by Randy Alcorn - caring for both the unborn and their mothers; compassionate, factual answers to abortion debate issues.

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Men & Boys Breakfast

Saturday, January 14th

Come and enjoy a delicious breakfast prepared for you by Pastor Hank. There will be great table conversations and masculinely themed table decorations. A time of singing will be led by David Paul, a testimony relevant to you, and a chance to get to know other men & their boys. Please sign up on the sheet provided on the bulletin board so enough food can be prepared.

