

February 2009

BETHEL MESSENGER

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1Something I realized lately is that God has been encouraging me to take a Sabbath rest every week. This notion of observing a day of rest has shown up in several devotions and books I have read. (I have to admit, this is a commandment I am not consistent about keeping!) "Ok God, I hear you...observe the Sabbath, a day of rest." How is one to do that when there is a child that runs on high speed, full-time work, cleaning, cooking, and other duties that need to be done? How does one make the world just stop for a day?

The more I prayed and thought about Sabbath, though, I learned of its deeper meaning. Observing a day of rest is an outward sign of living in the peace of God. It is the practice of being fully aware of this peace and the privilege to refuse to worry or have anxiety. As believers, we can enter the rest of God. The word *rest* means more than just not working. It also implies setting aside those things that trouble our minds. In other words, to enter the Sabbath rest, we must not allow anything to prevent us from fully enjoying God's peace.

God instructs us to take a day of rest—to cease the daily routine of our busy lives and to spend the Sabbath resting and reflecting on His abundant provision. Just as I wonder how I will get everything done, I hear God's whisper, "I'm in charge. I'll take care of you if you'll trust me." One way to trust God is to set aside time to let our minds get quiet enough to hear God. We don't need to worry about paying bills or having enough food to eat. When we worry about those things, we aren't living in the Sabbath rest of God.

I don't have to do it all. It is God's love and His peace that will see me through. When I allow myself to enter into this Sabbath rest, I know that God is the One who provides and then I can truly rest and enjoy life. Observing the Sabbath is one New Year's resolution I plan to keep. I encourage you to try it also and be pleasantly surprised with all that is accomplished doing nothing.

Peace,
Cary Knier Johannes



Lenten Services

February 25 – Ash Wednesday

7:00 p.m. – Worship with Imposition of Ashes and Communion

The next 5 Wednesdays we will have Soup and Devotions services.

6:30 p.m. – Soup Supper in the Fellowship Hall

7:00 p.m. – Devotions in the Fellowship Hall

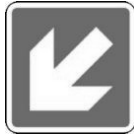
Our theme is Simply Faithfull. Come for a casual and inspiring evening.

The Members of the Search Committee

Peggy Hansen (co-chair), Dana Raquet (co-chair), Vic Schueller, Tony Johannes, Larry Spindler, Carol Roethel, Kaye Milz, & Brian Jeanty. Please contact Peggy or Dana if you have any questions.



Spring Raffle



It's time to start thinking about our Spring Raffle. Do you already have in mind a donation for this year's prizes? If not, start thinking about it. I'll be putting out the donation sheets soon and collecting them through March 15th so I can have the finished prize lists available in early April. This is a good fund raiser for our church and your prize donations are greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please talk to me or any Consistory member.

Carol Roethel

Choir Practice



Choir Practice will be at 7:00 p.m. until lent begins and then it will be at 7:30 p.m. from March 4th – April 8; and then resume to 7:00 p.m. again until we conclude the season. The choir will be singing the following dates (Tentatively):

January 25, February 1, February 8,
March 8, March 22, March 29
April 5, April 12, April 26, May 3,
May 10, May 24

Bethel History

Bethel has a birthday coming up, February 10, 1862-February 10, 2009 – 147 years!!

The founders of Bethel were Christian pioneers who besides making a living for themselves and their families had their spiritual needs. They went to Dr. H.A. Muehlmeier, who was pastor at Immanuel Church. There were two brothers Jacob and Louis Spindler who were spokesmen for the group of pioneer settlers, they asked him to be their spiritual leader. He agreed and held services in various homes from time to time, when the group got too big for anyone's home they were held in the public school in Ada, there was opposition to that and they decided to build a

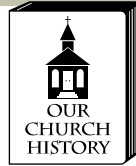
church of their own. On February 10, 1862, a congregation was organized, a constitution was adopted; followed by incorporation as a member of the Reformed church on March 31 1862. The name of the church was BETHEL GERMAN REFORMED CHURCH.

The names of the founding fathers was as follows: Jacob Spindler, Louis Spindler, Conrad Humke, Martin Roethel, Andrew Papendick, Karl Koeser, George Arnold, Henry Glaser, Henry J. Schnieder, George Maurer, Fred Staeffler, August Wickesberg, George Roethel, and Ernestine Gerlach. They built the first church building in 1863, on land donated by Jacob Spindler, just west of the Spindler farm buildings, amid the hardship of civil war and rumors of Indian unrest. I often wondered why they chose Jacob Spindler's land when there already was land with a cemetery on it just across the road, east of Louis Spindler farm. The cemetery is called St. Paul's Cemetery, Louis and Jacob's parents and a few others, like their sister's husband are buried there.

A lot of these early settlers came from Lippe-Detmold and Hanover, Germany, they were having religious problems caused by the state, there was also talk of war and military service. On May 4, 1847, they left Hanover, Germany on the ship of Agnes VanBrenin, 400 people on board, too many for the size of the ship. Not enough food and water for that many people, their passage was to New York, but it was believed because the boat had more passengers than it's size allowed, they broke the contract and landed a lot of the passengers in Quebec, Canada. Next they traveled by boat or barge down the St. Lawrence River, and then by train over hills when they had to get out and push, in Buffalo, N.Y. they boarded a steamer in Iowa. The land agent told them of land in Sheboygan County that was only \$1.25 an acre and Sheboygan was only 65 miles away. Each family bought at least 40 acres, those with more money bought 80 acres. Just a note, today's land prices are \$5,000 an acre.

The Spindler family came from Gunterblum Hesson, Germany in 1848, the two brothers came first, a year later their parents and a sister and her husband came. One of the brothers bought 80

acres and a cow for \$100, in 1849 when their parents came they bought 40 acres for \$100, prices were going up.



The settlers lived in lean-to shelters at first, because the land had to be cleared and buildings built. They supplemented their funds by buying shingle makers for \$1.00, cut down a tree and at night made shingles that they battered for staples in Sheboygan such as flour, salt pork, clothing, and coffee. The first winter was mild so the animals were left outside, they had trouble the bears carried away some of the animals they were able to buy.

The year 1880, the congregation built a parsonage just east of the church. The ministers were always from mission House, and lived there.

In 1887 the charge celebrated the 25th anniversary, the Rev. J.W. Grossheusch was serving Bethel at this time, and ministers always lived at Mission House up to this time. Rev. Grossheusch was Dr. Muhlmeier son-in-law. They never had a musical instrument, the first organ was purchased for the house of worship in 1887.

In 1894, the church building was dignified by the addition of a tower and bell, while the parsonage was enlarged by the addition of a kitchen.

While the Rev. E.G Krampe was pastor at Bethel it was a time of decided growth, so in 1908 the present house of worship with a basement, a furnace, balcony, a bell tower with two bells was erected on pretty much the same location where the former building stood. The new building was dedicated in the fall of 1908 by a new pastor, Rev. H.W Schroer.

1912, the organ purchased in 1887, was replaced by a new pipe organ and dedicated when the congregation celebrated its fiftieth anniversary.

By 1919, there was an urgent need for a new cemetery because there was no more room to expand on the existing site. An acre of land was purchased from Louis Voss, approximately one mile northeast of the church property on what is now Pigeon River Road.

In 1928, the first telephone was installed.

In 1929, the entire inside of the church was covered in fine embossed tin, while the parsonage was again enlarged by adding a room on the north side of the kitchen. To keep up with the times 1931 brought electricity into the buildings.

June 27, 1937- Bethel celebrated its 75th anniversary, with three church services. 10 a.m., 2:30 p.m., 7:30 p.m. The minister was Rev. Wm. Bollmann served Bethel from 1928 to 1941.

August 1957 Rev. Carl Fried and his family came to Bethel, the church had built an addition of a choir loft, with basement under in-door bathrooms were installed, upstairs a new pulpit, lectern, and baptismal font, the interior of the church was painted a pleasant green. Dedication services were held in September, during worship services.

In 1961, the Congregational Church and Evangelical and Reformed Church became the United Church of Christ. Bethel's new constitution was adopted to reflect our new name, Bethel United Church of Christ.

February 10, 1962, we celebrated our 100th Anniversary, over the past 100 years, 626 children were baptized, 509 were confirmed, 235 couples were join in marriage and 271 persons were laid to rest. The Sunday school had 55 children. Sons of the congregation who are pastors are Rev. Arno Neuhaus and Rev. Paul Olm. Daughters of the congregation who are pastors' wives are Marion Schneider Freid, Helen Neuhaus Ulrich, Margene Burkhardt Jenquin, Bertha Huber Lowenbergh and Martha Olm Actermann.

1963, the north entrance was closed and steps leading to this entrance were taken away. A new entrance on the east was made.

1978, a new three car garage was built for the minister's car and storage for the church. In 1980, the parking lot and driveways were blacktopped



In 1985, the main floor of the parsonage was remodeled and new carpeting was installed in the sanctuary, choir loft and east entrance.

In 1987, Bethel celebrated its 125th anniversary. Rev. James Sizelove was pastor from 1985 to 1989. Special services and special events were celebrated throughout the year.

In June of 1991, Rev. Melinda Feller was called to be our pastor.

At the January 1995 annual meeting the congregation voted to replace the Hammon electric organ with a Rogers Classic electric organ. The organ was dedicated on May 7, 1995.

In 1997, the dark blue covered hymnals, were replaced with red covered Evangelical & Reformed Hymnals using memorial money.

At the 1998, annual meeting of the congregation it was decided to have a committee hire an architect to start a building project.

On March 20, 1999, the ground breaking was held for a new addition of entrances, a narthex, two offices, conference room, restrooms and storage closet for cleaning supplies, a fellowship hall, and a new kitchen.

The narthex, the steps to the basement and the furnace room with three new furnaces was completed. The offices, conference room, bathroom, fellowship hall, and new kitchens were all roughed out to be finished by members of the congregation. A beautiful memorial gift of a 45 X 45 stained glass window was installed on the east wall of the choir loft and can be seen as you enter the church. There are also eight stained glass windows in the sanctuary, plus one is the Parent's room and a little window in the bell tower. All of these windows were given as memorials.

On February 10, 2002, we celebrated our 150th anniversary with a 10:00 a.m. church service and fellowship time following the service.

On May 31, 2002, Rev. Melinda Feller, resigned from Bethel to accept a call to another church.

That same year, the yoke was dissolved between Bethel and Bethlehem after 58 years of being together.

On August 24, 2003, Rev. Sara Morse did a trial sermon and following a vote of the congregation was called to serve our church. Rev. Morse's first official service as our pastor was October 26, 2003. On Sunday, March 7, 2004, Rev. Morse was installed as our pastor and a potluck meal followed the installation service.

The work on the church building was completed and a dedication of our new addition took place on May of 2005.

In 2006, a new roof was done on the sanctuary and bell tower.

February 10, 2007, we celebrated our 145th anniversary, with a church service and fellowship following.

September 2, 2008, a letter went out to the membership, Rev. Sara Morse gave the congregation 60 days notice of her leaving.

Sunday September 21, 2008, there was a bridal shower for Rev. Sara Morse and Timothy Winn following the church service, with a potluck and fellowship. The wedding was at Athens, Wisconsin on October 3, 2008.

Sunday, November 9, 2008, Rev. Sara Morse gave her last service. She and Tim moved to Roseville, MN to be a housewife, at least for now.

We are now in the beginning of the process of finding a new pastor. Throughout the years, money has been given to the congregations as memorials to departed loved ones. These items not only serve the needs of the congregation, but remind us all of those great people who have lived, worked, and worshipped in our midst to help God's kingdom into reality here.

February 10, 2009, we will celebrate our 147th anniversary. May God shine on us in the next years as God has done up to this point. With God's help may we find someone to lead us on.

By: Audrey Ertel