

The Spirit at Bethel

June 2009

Sherwood Park, Alberta

Sharing the love of Jesus with a hurting world

A Need in Ukraine

Pastor Marv

“A Need in Ukraine” was the subject line of an email I received from Rev. Robert Bugbee, president of Lutheran Church-Canada. In his email he tells the story of his latest visit to Ukraine. President Bugbee’s email is quite lengthy, providing a number of details. However, the following is the gist of the Ukraine story...

In the city of Nikolayev (almost 600,000 people) the Lutheran Church is doing well. They



dedicated a modest new church building in October 2008. The congregation has a very effective ministry to families and young people.

The Ukrainian people are very poor (in some areas unemployment is as high as 70%) and much of the work of the Lutheran Church in Ukraine is supported by German-Russian people who have emigrated from the old USSR to Germany. They now have more prosperous lives and so the congregation in Nikolayev is supported by a German mission society.....which, according to President Bugbee, tends to be somewhat legalistic.

The congregation in Nikolayev is pastored by Yuri Maskov. In the past, Pastor Yuri has struggled with alcoholism. Recently he has again struggled with drinking and he took a 2-month leave of absence from the congregation. The mission society heard of Pastor Yuri’s problems and

they demanded that he be dismissed from office or that they would discontinue supporting him financially. The bishop of the Ukrainian Lutheran Church decided to not dismiss Pastor Yuri and the funds have been discontinued.



President Bugbee knows that not only am I a member of AA and that I am often involved in counseling people with addiction problems...he also knows that Bethel, as a congregation, supports the work of numerous 12-step programs. Therefore President Bugbee asked if Bethel

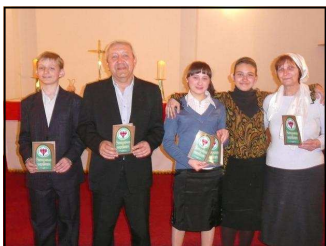
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would be able to assist with financial support for Pastor Yuri. Our Parish Planning Council has decided to pick up Pastor Yuri's \$450/month salary through our next fiscal year (June 2010). Pastor Yuri has 7 family members living in his household. We thank God that he is well onto the path to recovery and is back serving the congregation!



This past week I met with President Bugbee at the Alberta-British Columbia District Convention in Vancouver. He asked me to extend to all of you his sincere gratitude and thanksgiving for your generosity and compassion. He said, "The willingness of Bethel people to help the Maskov family is wonderful beyond what you folks realize. Thank you with all my heart for your prompt and encouraging support. I am overcome, too, with the rapid and deep way the leadership of Bethel Lutheran Church has responded to this need of Pastor Yuri and his large household."



The Good Samaritan Society

Gladys Teske
Congregational Liaison Representative
Good Samaritan Society

In celebration of their 60th anniversary, the GSS has created a book of reflections called "With Open Arms: Reflections on Christian Hospitality". I have placed one of these devotional booklets in every mailbox at Bethel. If there are people without mailboxes, please feel free to pick up one of the copies laying on the shelf by the mailboxes. My hope is that you will find the thoughts and reflections in the book not only inspiring, but useful for devotions in your own family.

Inside the book you will find a donation envelope in support of the Pastoral Care Program at the GSS. By giving to this program, you are helping to support the ministry of 19 chaplains who bring the love of Jesus through regular worship, hymn sings, bible study, visiting and caring to the residents and clients at over 35 facilities and programs throughout Alberta and BC. I know there have been a number of Bethel members who have been residents at the GSS facilities, and have experienced the pastoral support they offer there. I encourage you to support this mission which seeks to extend Christian Hospitality to our elders and persons with developmental disabilities.



An Anonymous Thank You

I would like to say a big thank you to the family who wrote the article for last month's Spirit, "Did you know that your computer has a history?" After reading it, I checked out the X3 Watch site, was impressed with how it worked and decided to give it a try, even though I didn't suspect anything.

We were saddened when we got our first report and saw that pornography websites had been visited while my husband and I were away from home. If not for this program, we would never have been able to confront our son and talk about why pornography is so damaging and then move toward repentance, healing and experiencing God's grace. Hopefully, we have helped him avoid a bigger problem or addiction, and I already see the difference in our relationship and in his whole demeanor. The guilt and shame of having a secret like this one had already started to affect him.

X3 watch (www.x3watch.com) has a free download. You get reports of suspicious sites every two weeks to an email address of your

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(An Anonymous Thank You, Continued from page 2)

choice It's intended as an accountability type of software; if someone has an addiction problem, they have an accountability partner who will receive their reports. But it has also worked really well as a check on what sites have been visited on my computer. I highly recommend it. It has become far too easy and tempting to access porn sites, and we are bombarded daily with advertising, TV and all kinds of media. It's an easy thing to do to try to protect — and help — those we love.



Rhubarb Rally

Gladys Teske, One of the Eastside Grannies

Tickets are going quickly for the 'Rhubarb Rally' to be held on Sunday afternoon, June 7th, from 2:00 to 5:00 PM. This is an awareness event to help tell others about the struggle the African Grandmothers are having in trying to feed, clothe and school their grandchildren with little or no income, because their parents have died from HIV/AIDS. The Eastside Grannies (Sherwood Park) are working under the umbrella of the Stephen Lewis Foundation (SLF) to bring hope and help to these needy situations.

By using 'rhubarb' as the theme, we are trying to relate to these Grandmothers. Just as our pioneer grandmothers struggled for fresh fruit and vegetables for their families when they opened the prairies, so the African Grandmothers' struggle to supply food for their grandchildren.

The desserts will all be of the 'rhubarb' variety ... come and sample the offerings! There will also be a program with an African flair: a Sudanese singer, an African Fashion show, a story-teller from Africa, a short DVD on the work done in Africa under the SLF, African crafts and artifacts for sale, door prizes and fun draws. Also, Daniel Kibarita, from Kenya will have some of his articles there from Kenya! It promises to be a unique and memorable experience.



Tickets are \$10 each...bring a friend for an enjoyable and enlightening afternoon. You can get tickets at the church office during the week, or in the library on Sunday mornings.

Yoga Success at Bethel

Jesse Colbeck

In October 2008, I began teaching a yoga class at Bethel. The class was held on the first and third Tuesday of every month in the evenings and I was blessed with many participants who were looking to combine fun physical activity with fellowship. Yoga is a whole body experience that enhances strength, flexibility, balance, and of course, relaxation.

The classes are drop-in and there is no cost. Attendees are welcome to provide a donation toward the Mission of the Month. I am pleased to report that the current session (from October 2008 – May 2009) raised \$365 toward various Mission of the Month causes!

My husband and I are eagerly expecting our first child, and therefore I will be taking a break from teaching yoga for the summer. The plan is to restart the classes in the fall and I look forward to seeing returning - and hopefully many new - participants at that time! Our yoga class at Bethel is for all levels of fitness, men and women, first-timers and experienced people. Please keep your eyes open for details about the class's return in the fall. If you have any questions or are looking for information please feel free to email me at jessecolbeck@gmail.com.

See you on your mat!



God Uses the Ordinary And Makes It Extraordinary

Lisa Mol

This past week I received a call that my 76 year-old aunt in Winnipeg had fallen and broke her hip. Within hours, my mom and I booked our tickets to fly out the very next day to offer some help and support to her and her only daughter. My aunt's heart stopped the last time she had surgery, so everyone was nervous when surgery was the only option.



The day before her surgery, her pastor from the Lutheran church in Selkirk came up to the hospital to visit her. After visiting and getting to know each

other a bit, I asked her if she could use anything to serve communion. She responded by saying, "Yes, because God takes the ordinary, and can make it extraordinary." I was so taken back by her response to my question. Of course that is true! Jesus took the water and turned it into wine when the wedding guests were running low of wine in the village of Cana in Galilee. (John 2:1-11) Why can't we use "elements" that are ordinary and through words spoken, God turns them into flesh and blood?

So we all partook in the Lord's Supper as a family around her bed. I will never forget how grateful I was that my family also belonged to the family of God. Perspectives on what is really important in life change when you are staring death in the face.

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it.

"This is my blood of the^{old} covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them. "I tell you the truth, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God." (Mark 14:22-25)

God used an ordinary meal that he was sharing with his disciples and made it extraordinary. He still does this today!



Do you love babies?

If you do, here is your chance to express that love in a very special way.

The LWML is collecting baby stuff for our team to take to Kenya this summer. Here are some of the things the poorest of the poor need.

Baby clothes (newborn to 3 years -gently used)

Baby towels and face clothes

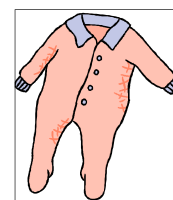
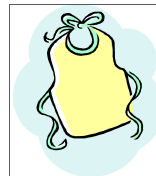
Baby sleepers

Cloth diapers

Bibs

Receiving blankets

T-shirts and shorts



I needed clothes and you clothed me, (Matthew 25:36)

I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' (Matthew 25:40)



Sharing God's Love with Thousands of Girls Across Canada

Linnea Salte

Did you know that 9 out of 10 girls ages 14-15 claim to have suffered from depression? Did you know that 80% of teenage girls are dissatisfied with their appearance? Did you know that in Canada suicide is the second highest cause of death for youth aged 10-20? Also, for every suicide completion there are nearly 400 suicide attempts.

Young girls across Canada are yearning to find a love that is unconditional. Their pain is simply a cry to be loved for who they really are. As Christians, we know that the only source of pure, unconditional love is through Jesus Christ.

This August, I will be traveling with a unique ministry called Beautiful Unique Girl (BUGirl). We travel from town to town, sharing music, the promises of God, friendship, fun and grace with thousands of young girls. Many of you know that Bethel hosted one of these Beautiful Unique Girl events a couple of years ago.

I have been chosen as the primary musical artist to sing songs of God's love to young girls on their Beautiful Unique Girl tour.

While I will miss the family of Bethel that I have grown to love over the past fifteen years as a member and as a part of the worship ministry here, I also sense the strong call of God for my life. Many don't know that as a teenager I also struggled with many of the same issues that girls I will be sharing with are going through. God has miraculously brought healing into my life and I can think of no greater gift than to share God's healing hope in return for all that He has done for me.

I am confident that many young lives will be changed through God's love.

One 13-year old girl named Tessa wrote after her experience at one of these events, "I just turned 13 yesterday and I feel like because I went to the BUGirl night I can be a really strong teenager. All my life, especially in the past year, I've really started to pick myself apart – image-wise – and every day I would look in the mirror and find something new that I didn't like about myself. My self-esteem, self-confidence, and security level were below the floor. Now I know that God created me just how he wanted me, and he thinks I'm beautiful...I still have negative thoughts, how can I not? But my friend and I are really open to the healing process. My relationship with God has really grown since then!"



Due to the expense of these small gatherings of girls, there is very little income from the events. I am required to raise basic tour expenses of \$5,000 plus my personal support through additional financial gifts and through prayer. I am praying not just for the funds to come in but for an additional 50 people from Bethel who will stand along side of me through regular prayer and as God leads, through financial support.

Many of you know that I have recently been recording my first CD which will be available to the girls at all the BUGirl events. I have written or co-written all the songs on the CD. By a miracle of God, I was blessed to record with some of the top musicians in the world. These people have recorded with artists such as Amy Grant, The Temptations, Mercy Me, Lincoln Brewster and others. The engineer alone has five Grammy Awards and over 100 #1 hit singles. All proceeds from the sale of these CDs will also support the ministry of BUGirl.

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On Saturday, June 27th, at Bethel at 6:30 PM, we will be holding a special fund raising concert for the ministry of BUgirl. It is free admission to everyone. Performers include Arlen Salte and the Break Forth Band, as well as The Junkyard Poets (Jared Salte, Peter Mol) and others. I will also be premiering several of my new songs from my CD. An offering will be held to support the ministry of BUgirl. It promises to be a wonderful night of music and ministry as well as inspiring stories of changed lives, including God's miracle in my life as He brought me through deep years of struggle.



Please check out the bulletin board for a poster as well as a handbill for more information.

In the mean time, if you have any questions, please email me at linnea@linneasalte.com.

Thank you to Bethel for always being a huge support to me both spiritually and personally over the years.



A BIG THANK-YOU

Normay Wiebe, Worship Coordinator

A big thank you to the 45 amazing kids that presented the musical Let's Rock to us on Mother's Day at Bethel. Their enthusiasm, sincerity and joy was evident both through the drama and the songs. Thank you also to Tom & Brad Armstrong who joined us in the adult roles.

There are parents and people from Bethel too numerous to mention who made this possible. From painting sets to making props, to running equipment, to helping set the stage up, to bringing food for the rehearsal meal, this endeavor was only possible through many, many willing



hands and the wonderful gifts God has given to His people.

One of the theme

verses of the musical was I Peter 4:11: "If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen."



SINGSIPRATION, 2009

Connie Bromley, Worship Coordinator

SINGSPIRATION is an award-winning music camp held at Concordia University College each August for students from grades 4-12. The students spend the week under the guidance of expert choral conductors, concluding with a concert on Saturday. Part of the experience is also handbell ringing. Many other activities round out the week. It is possible to experience the week as a day camp, or to stay in the dormitories.

The conductor of the junior choir this year will be Elaine Quilichini, who conducts the Calgary Girls' Choir, a Canadian award-winning ensemble. Richard Sparks, conductor of Pro Coro Canada, Edmonton's professional choir, will conduct the senior choir. This year the camp runs from August 10-15.

Bethel's Parish Planning Council offers a scholarship each year, permitting a Bethel student to attend this camp. The scholarship has also been shared. Please contact Connie Bromley if interested. Brochures on Singspiration are available on the tract rack in the foyer.



Responding to God's Blessing

Paul Schoepp, PPC Member

God has richly blessed Bethel, and we have grown in terms of the ministry and learning that occurs and in the response to our worship services. About a year ago, our Parish Planning Council (PPC) at Bethel began to be aware of and discuss the reality that the average attendance at our 11:00 a.m. service is running consistently at 75-80% of capacity, with a significant number of Sundays when we exceed capacity and need to set up additional chairs. This was a cause for concern—how do we provide more capacity for people to attend worship at Bethel during the 11:00 time period? What a great “problem” to have!

In exploring this concern, the PPC looked at Bethel's recent attendance statistics. We then brainstormed possible responses to God's blessing. Responses were grouped into four areas:

- ◆ Construction-based responses (renovations, additions, new buildings)
- ◆ Using our existing space differently (squeezing more people into our existing services)
- ◆ Starting another church
- ◆ Adding (a) worship service(s)

After prioritizing these possibilities and dropping construction from the list, the PPC charged the church staff and Paul Schoepp to continue to work through the remaining possibilities. This was done over the course of several meetings—one with Arlen Salte of Break Forth Ministries, one with Faith Lutheran Church in the St. Louis area (a multi-site church), and one with the Bethel's ministry staff. During these discussions, we also received a request for assistance from Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Peace River. The results of these conversations came back to council and we have developed a three prong approach to addressing the seating concern and the request for assistance.

You may have noticed that we've already been experimenting with recording the sermons with temporary equipment. With voter approval for budgetary needs, we'll do ongoing video recording of our sermons on Sundays. These will be used to provide worship assistance to Prince of Peace and perhaps other congregations that are in remote vacancy situations.

With voter approval for budgetary needs, we'll begin a fourth worship service in our activity centre sometime this next year between Thanksgiving and January. It will occur sometime between 11:00 & 11:30; it will have live worship teams and a worship leader; and it will make use of the video-recorded sermon and perhaps some discussion. The intention is to provide another Bethel worship opportunity at a similar time but with a slightly different feel than our existing 11:00 a.m. service. One of the other significant considerations for the development of this additional worship is an awareness by the congregation that there will be many more opportunities for service—more musicians, sound system and video and PowerPoint operators, ushers, greeters, readers, and set-up crews. Do these opportunities for service resonate with you? If we move ahead with this initiative, watch and respond.

We'll continue to explore the possibility of developing Bethel as a multi-site church at some point in the future. God has gifted greatly us at Bethel with worship resources and a fruitful response to those resources. Perhaps we should consider expanding Bethel beyond our current geographic boundaries.

Please come to the voters meeting on June 28 as these items are unpacked and discussed a little bit more within the context of our mission “to share the love of Jesus with a hurting world” and as we make some budgetary decisions.



Sea Container for Kenya



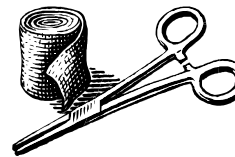
Supplies for Springs of Life Lutheran Church – Nairobi AIC Dispensary – Mukeu Medical Clinic Utugi

In addition to medical and school equipment that we will get through ADRA-ASI (Alberta Distribution Relief Agency – Aid Society International), we invite our Bethel worship community to assist with the following:

- ◆ Clothes (washed and in plastic bags)
- ◆ School books
- ◆ Miscellaneous Christian books
- ◆ Sewing machines
- ◆ Blood pressure machines
- ◆ Water dispensers
- ◆ Wound dressing materials
- ◆ Stethoscopes
- ◆ Ace wraps



- ◆ Sponges
- ◆ Dental floss
- ◆ Ace bandages
- ◆ Bandages and band-aids
- ◆ Blankets
- ◆ Weigh scale
- ◆ Eye patches
- ◆ Staplers/school supplies



- ◆ Scissors
- ◆ Thermometers
- ◆ Surgical gloves
- ◆ Soap
- ◆ Triangular bandages



- ◆ Cotton wrap
- ◆ Face masks
- ◆ First aid kits
- ◆ Masking tape
- ◆ Sterile gauze dressings



Note: We will have a container at Bethel so these items can be brought here and placed in the container. WATCH FOR TIMES POSTED WHEN THE CONTAINER WILL BE OPEN FOR DELIVERY!

Our goal is to have the sea container packed and on its way by the middle of June.

Please – PLEASE – remember this in your prayers!



June Mission of the Month — BLESS Preschool

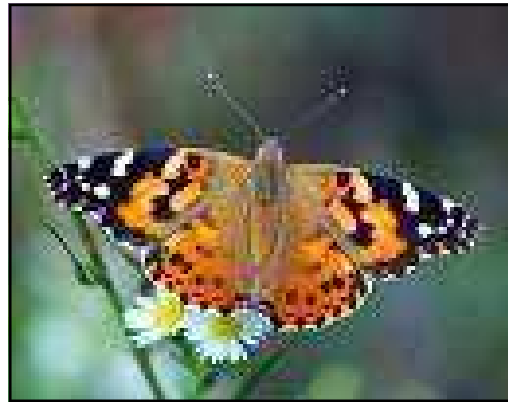
Deloyce Elle

Each May, the children at BLESS Preschool raise



Painted Lady butterflies. The children have the opportunity to see them go through their life cycle, waiting with anticipation for the beautiful butterflies to emerge from their cocoons. On the last day of class, they

carefully release these creatures into nature. It's a symbolic moment, especially for our four-year olds, as the children's time with us also comes to an end. They have been nurtured in this environment for the past nine months and now we send them off for new adventures. The great news is that we are not sending them off on their own. Each day at school, they have heard about God's great love for them through our Saviour, Jesus Christ. We know and trust that God will be walking alongside these children every day throughout their lives.



It is our desire to welcome all families to be a part of BLESS. As the preschool does not receive any government funding, the costs associated with the program are covered through monthly tuition fees (\$110 - \$130). The mission of the month in June is a 'scholarship' fund for BLESS. These funds will be used to subsidize fees for families with financial concerns. This is a gift that extends beyond the monetary contribution as the children and their families learn about the gift of eternal life given to them through Jesus.

Thank you for your prayers and continued support for the preschool ministry at Bethel.

