



BETHEL GROVE BIBLE CHURCH

1763 Slaterville Rd, Ithaca, NY, 14850

THE MESSENGER

November/December 2011

THOUGHTS FROM DAVE

Each Christmas season, I listen to Handel's rendition of Isaiah 9:6-7 and my heart and mind are stirred. What is it that stirs me? Of course, I am engaged by the sweeping measures of musical accompaniment and the power of Scripture put to music. But, it is the profound truth that a child will be born; a Son given, that captures my heart.

Lacking a clear understanding of Jesus' advent and his connection to today's world is prevalent in our culture. This Christ, born centuries ago, is more than a model to emulate or One who grew to be a good teacher; though both are true. He is the One that brings his kingdom to bear in the hearts of all who believe. This kingdom involves the radical transformation of lives. Grace and truth are now central to our lives. His incarnation means everything to us for faith and life.

As you ponder the incarnation this Christmas, use Isaiah 9:6,7 as a thanksgiving starter. Thank Him that He is the "wonder of a counselor" who sees into the deep recesses of our sinful hearts and addresses our deepest insecurities. Thank him that he is the Mighty God who has authority over all creation, yet transforms his children with unending Father-like compassion. Thank him that he offers wholeness of life, because in him we find the peace that we all seek. Thank him that his kingdom is upheld by his justice and righteousness and that his zeal will accomplish his purposes.

His birth leads me to believe that I have hope in this broken world. We are not alone. We are connected to God's Kingdom through the Son. We have a future as well as a present. How do we know that? This visit of the Living Word speaks volumes to our broken hearts. "Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!"

Advent Devotional

To assist us in preparing for the celebration of Christ's birth on Christmas Day, we are updating and republishing Bethel Grove's 2004 Advent Devotional. Written by past and present Bgers, the Devotional is designed to lead individuals and families through God's immense plan of salvation as portrayed in Isaiah. By reading these daily Advent meditations, we pray that the Lord will bring forth a response of immense gratitude for Christ's work on our behalf. The Devotional will be available on our web page (www.bg.org) and in the church foyer on November 27.

Associate Pastor Search

After several months of inactivity, the search process is being re-established. The Committee, led by Jim Adams, will contact Seminaries and other churches to highlight the opportunity before us. Please contact Jim or Jeff Ives (Elder representative) with any name that might be considered as a candidate for this position.

Thank Offering

Each year at Thanksgiving, Bethel Grove's Elders select a local and global ministry to support with a financial gift. Please prayerfully consider giving to this year's offering which will go to the ministries listed below. To Contribute: Make checks out to Bethel Grove Bible Church and write "thank offering" on the memo line.

- *Renovation House*, a men's residential Christian rehabilitation center in Spencer, NY. Our offering will go towards a new roof for the center.
- *Study Bibles and Leadership Material for Uganda*. This gift will strengthen the leadership training mission, which is part of our global partnership with Kampala Baptist Church.

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2012 Institute of Biblical Studies

Can We Know the World and Still Love the World?

Dr. Steven Garber
Director of The Washington Institute

February 3 @ Cornell
February 4-5 @ BG



Our community, like many others, has seen many new people join the ranks of the impoverished. The number of people receiving food stamps and attending food pantries continues to increase. At our last quarterly meeting, many expressed an interest in reaching out to those in need. Rather than start a new food pantry, it makes sense for us to contribute to one that is already reaching out to those in our “backyard.”

The Brooktondale Food Pantry distributes food on the first and third Monday of every month to over 300 people. Forty boxes are packed and delivered to elderly, disabled and shut-ins who are unable to get to the pantry.

Donations are being received every Sunday morning at BG. Your individual weekly contribution, combined with others, can make a substantial impact on the hungry in our community. You are encouraged to buy items that you would buy for your own family; buy one for you and one for the pantry. Involve your family in choosing, buying and donating.

The items we contribute are considered unique and special compared to those brought in by the Southern Food Bank. At this time they are put on a special table and clients may choose one item from that table as they go through the pantry. Let's fill up that table!

Shopping Ideas

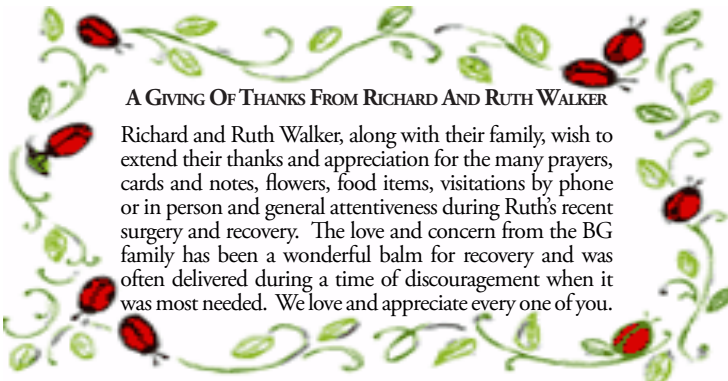
Personal Care Products: toothpaste, dental floss, toilet paper, deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, feminine hygiene products, diapers, wipes, aspirin, band-aids, bar/laundry/dish soap, etc.

Non-Perishable Food Products: cake mixes, frosting, birthday candles, canned veggies, beans and fruit, canned meats – tuna, stews, ravioli, one box meals – hamburger helper, taco dinner, mac & cheese, pasta, noodles, rice, couscous, soups, crackers, cereal, PB & J, instant potatoes, condiments, spices, sauces, coffee, tea, fruit juices, foil, plastic wrap, etc.

School Supplies: pencils, pens, notebooks, crayons, etc.

Home Items: towels, sheets and pillow cases.

If you have any questions or wonder how you can help out individually or with your group, contact Joyce Jones, 607-273-1614, joycemj222@aol.com.



A GIVING OF THANKS FROM RICHARD AND RUTH WALKER

Richard and Ruth Walker, along with their family, wish to extend their thanks and appreciation for the many prayers, cards and notes, flowers, food items, visitations by phone or in person and general attentiveness during Ruth's recent surgery and recovery. The love and concern from the BG family has been a wonderful balm for recovery and was often delivered during a time of discouragement when it was most needed. We love and appreciate every one of you.

2011 Women's Retreat



46 women attended the retreat at the Montrose Bible Conference on November 11-14. Throughout the weekend, ladies received teaching on “Living Well” from Beth Moore. Teaching sessions at the retreat focused on the following four confessions:

God is perfect love. *Romans 4:8b, 16b*

Nothing can separate me from God's perfect love. *Romans 8:38,39*

God pours his perfect love into my imperfect heart. *Romans 5:5*

Accessed, I can love anyone through anything. *I John 4:7-12*



Guest appearance from the now famous “Housewives of Bethel Grove”



The ladies completed 10 Blankets of Comfort that are given to wounded U.S. soldiers overseas when they are evacuated from combat by medevac.



Ladies were treated to a luxurious paraffin wax treatment.

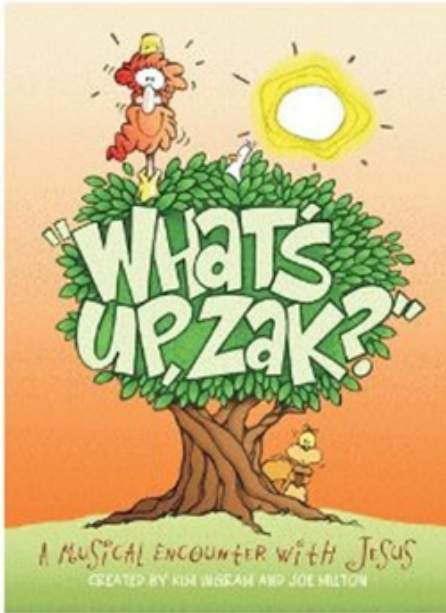
The Bethel Grove version of visiting a spa!



Great door prizes were awarded throughout the weekend to several of the women.

2012 BG Spring Musical

March 24th & 25th



The musical presents the familiar tale of Zacchaeus...as one rich but lonely tax collector casts his ego aside and climbs a tree for just one glimpse of Jesus. January 8th first practice for 4th-8th graders!

AUDITIONS!

December 11th and 18th auditions for 6th -8th graders (check out the bulletin for times.)

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Looking for volunteers to join the Spring Musical team. Volunteers are needed for props/costumes, piano accompanists, music teachers (for helping soloists and teaching group songs), someone to direct the music for performances, assistants for our choreographer, snack makers, lights/sound and anything else you can think of! You can commit to as little as one week or for the duration.

Contact: sandra.sorensen@gmail.com 503-459-9154
for more information or to volunteer your time and talents.

Children's Ministry News!



Forty six parents and children joined us for the Promiseland Fall Fest on November 5 for a lovely sunny afternoon of picking corn, riding in a hay wagon and eating fall snacks. The event took place at Russ and Linda Crispell's farm in Brooktondale. The hard working Promiseland families picked two bucket loaders full of corn, which added up to a generous donation that will be sent to the Hick's family ministry in Spain. They will use the money to buy Bibles and Sunday School materials. Thank you to everyone who attended and made this event possible!



Events For Your Calendar

November 20-26

20th **Services of Thanksgiving**
9:00am & 10:45am Worship Services
5:00pm Youth Worship Service
6:30pm Meeting with the Skaggs
24-25th Office closed for Thanksgiving

November 27-December 3

27th 10:00am Coffee Hour
10:45am Worship Service
Jeff Ives Speaking
First Sunday of Advent
No Adult Education
1st Mid-Week Organ Meditation

December 4-10

4th 9:00am & 10:45am Worship Services
Guest Speaker: Dr. Andrew Lee
Second Sunday of Advent
8th Mid-Week Organ Meditation
10th Caroling at McGraw House

December 11-17

11th 9:00am & 10:45am Worship Services
Third Sunday of Advent
Baptism Sunday
Last Adult Education and Sunday School
15th IWBS Christmas Brunch
Mid-Week Organ Meditation

Baptism Sunday, December 11

If interested in being baptized, please contact one of the pastors below or fill out a form at the Welcome Desk in our foyer.

David Jones, Senior Pastor (dave@bg.org)
Eric Hause, Associate Pastor (eric@bg.org)

December 18-24

18th 10:00am Coffee Hour
10:45am Worship Services
Fourth Sunday of Advent
No Adult Education
22nd Mid-Week Organ Meditation
24th **Christmas Eve Services**
4:00 pm - Young Families service
6:30 pm - Candlelight Service

December 25-31

25th **Merry Christmas!**
10:45am Worship Service
26th Office Closed

January 1 - January 7

1st **Happy New Year!**
10:45am Worship Service
2nd Office Closed

January 8 - 14

8th 9:00am Education
10:45am Worship Service

Babies!

Below is a list of babies born to families who attend Bethel Grove. The infant room sure is busy on Sunday mornings!



Aaron & Carolyn Eberle
Bay Lena - November 2



Levi & Scotia Scott
Kiera Pearl - November 3



Wesley & Meghan Wright
Lily Kathryn - November 12