



The Mt. Anthems Newsletter

July 2009

July 5, 2009

Greensburg Free Methodist Church Greensburg, PA

At 7:45 a.m. a small group of people met at the "building" and got onto the bus. About ten people are in Canada to teach VBS and 4 are missing due to other reasons. Some former personnel came along to help us out today, and we recruited a person from the soprano section to sing alto for us. The saying "Where there's a will, there's a way" was put into practice today.

Today was Pastor Tim's first Sunday at this church. He had never heard us sing and wasn't quite sure what to expect.☺ I thought we had a very good service. Mike shared 3 solos: "I'm not Ashamed," "The Cross in the Middle," and "I Know a Man Who Can." Marty sang "The Prodigal Son." One song that seemed to really bless people this morning was "One Day at a Time." The men's quartet sang "Would You Truly Long for Heaven."

Since our regular sound man wasn't along, two of the other fellows shared the responsibility. They worked well together. A good sound is very important in my opinion. I dislike listening to groups when the sound is mixed badly. I can hear the problems, but don't ask me how to fix them!☺ God has blessed us with some very talented young men with an ear for these things. I just try not to be around when they're tweaking the system.☺

The church provided a wonderful carry-in lunch (or potluck if you prefer) with heaping platters of food. If you go away hungry after a spread like that, I'd say you're much too picky. There was some exceptionally tasty fried chicken and some very HOT potatoes. My tongue has a blister to prove it! There was a separate table for the desserts, and it was loaded! After filling our tanks, so to speak, we brushed out teeth and then hit the road. Most people took afternoon naps. However, there is always one person that remains faithfully awake and alert - our bus driver. We actually have two who take turns. I trust both of them because they are conscientious in fulfilling their duties.

Altersgate Evangelical Center Terra Alta, WV

I awoke to spectacular scenery of winding roads, hills, and valleys. It was the beautiful hills of WV. When we got to the road leading to the church we had difficulty making the sharp turn. Marty got out to give Arlin

some direction and discovered we were hanging on the edge of a very deep ditch. We'd have been in big trouble if we'd have slipped in. Did you ever try a 3 point turn with a bus on a 300° angled turn? It can have some exciting moments. Several oohs and aahs were heard during the attempt, along with exclamations of "Did you see how close he got to...!" Once again God gave us protection, and we want to thank Him.

The center holds summer camps for kids, and we are here for the first of their Sunday evening Summer Concert Series. They fed us with sandwich fixings, jello salad, and lettuce salad as well as cookies and fruit salad. It was light and refreshing. On my way to the bus afterward, I saw all the gentlemen standing in a circle. Being the curious sort, I asked what they were doing. "Solving the world's problems," one young man told me. I don't know how much progress was made, but they did seem to enjoy the attempt!☺

During our devotions this evening (held in the dining hall), I noticed a motto hanging on the wall. "It is better to build boys and girls than to repair men and women." I hope we, as a chorus, can do some of both.

We had the entire service this evening, and Mike opened with "Jesus, Hold my Hand." Mike did the solo "Ready to Go" for the very first time. He did a good job. It was given as a request if I remember correctly. The ladies sang "Though Your Sins as Scarlet Be" and the men's quartet shared two numbers: "Hallelujah, What a Savior" and "The Fire Song."

Our time on the drive home was spent deer spotting as well as sharing good conversation and laughter. We also made a call to Faith Builders to sing a "back-of-the-bus" Happy Birthday for Dwight. He said it made his night.☺

July 19, 2009

Morrellville Church of the Brethren Johnstown, PA

Today we will be close to home, so we didn't have to leave until 8:15 a.m. It's a beautiful sunny day, and the breezes are wafting across the hay field, causing a ripple effect that is ever-changing.

Realizing that there is a full day ahead of me, I try desperately to catch a nap. Alas! It is not to be. Conversations rage all around me, ranging in topic from family photos to recent vacations. Although it's only been two weeks since our last trip, it seems like a long time since we saw each other. We skipped chorus practice during

our week of VBS. We sort of get used to seeing each other on a weekly basis, and a lot can happen during those gaps of time.☺

We started our morning service with some praise and worship type songs like “I Sing the Mighty Power of God” and “The Wonder of it All.” Marty’s solo was “God on the Mountain,” and Mike shared “I’m Not Ashamed.” We sang a few songs about heaven, and then closed with “Jesus Has a Table Spread” as a blessing for the noon meal. I have never quite figured out why that song is used as a “blessing” or “grace” before meals.

Our noon meal consisted of some wonderful fried chicken, stuffing, mashed potatoes, gravy, and a variety of other side dishes. There was also another whole table full of desserts! After such a whopping meal we needed power naps! We headed for our next destination and several people did catch just a few winks on the way. The young married couples were busy discussing an upcoming camping trip. One of them had a very astute observation, “You can’t arrange a spontaneous trip with seven couples involved!”☺

Laurel Village Rest Home

Davidsville, PA

The Chaplain, Wes Yoder, commented on Menno Beachy’s absence, but said he knew it would be a good service because Mike’s last name was Yoder. Mike got up and asked the Yoders in the audience to raise their hands. Maybe five people responded. He then asked all the Yoders in the chorus to raise their hands. Let’s just say the Yoders are well represented.☺ Wes said, “See, I told you it would be a good service!” A ripple of laughter ran through the audience.

Mike almost got himself in trouble when he talked about the age difference between the audience and the chorus members. He got himself out of hot water by saying that he hasn’t had the privilege of retiring yet. That brought about some chuckles as well.

We started this service with an invitation for God’s Spirit to be present – “Come Gracious Spirit, Heavenly Dove.” We sang a number of hymns, and I saw several people mouthing the words as we sang. We had them assist us with two songs: “When We All Get to Heaven” and “’Til the Storm passes by” which was a request.

Today I especially enjoyed seeing the interaction between some of the couples in the audience. They know the good and bad habits their spouses have, but still maintain a sweet relationship that was revealed by some of their actions. For some reason I enjoyed this service more than I have similar ones in the past. I think it was because I paid less attention to the director and more to the faces in the crowd. I suppose that constitutes a con-

fession, because I definitely didn’t sing as well as sometimes. We’re taught to keep our attention focused on the director for that very reason. Today my blessing came from being a little less attentive. That’s not advice, just a statement of fact! I don’t do it often but those people were so sweet!

By Joye Yoder

At the afternoon service a man came to me and said that he was surprised to see more men than women singers. He said this was unusual and added, “it just goes to show that men are better singers!” He really enjoys men’s singing, so he was a bit prejudiced.

By LaVon Yoder

Walnut Grove Church of the Brethren

Johnstown, PA

As usual, by the time we reach the church for the evening service, some of us are feeling a bit tired and sleepy, especially since we already gave a program in the afternoon as well as in the morning. God, however, is not limited by our tiredness. He can and does speak and minister to everyone despite our weakness.

Singing one program in the afternoon does not work up much of an appetite after a good dinner. I’ve discovered a good trick to use when you’re not hungry for supper. Eat just enough to be polite, and then there will probably be enough left over that they will send some extra sandwiches or something with us on the bus after the service when it will be much more appreciated. This evening that trick worked to perfection! We are truly grateful for the way people feed us and take care of us.

There was a bit of “extra excitement” that went on this evening. To make a long story short, there was an older lady in the audience that passed out midway through the first half. Mike could tell that we were watching something happen behind him. When he discovered what was going on, we stopped between songs and had prayer for her. A paramedic in the chorus went back to help, and they carried the lady out. The ambulance came, but she refused transportation and was seen sitting in a rocking chair after the service. As far as I know, it was nothing real serious and she was ok.

I was especially blessed tonight when Mike purposely made a connection between the songs “Great and Awesome God” and “Christ Liveth In Me.” Our great and awesome God, Creator of the

universe, lives inside of me and desires a personal relationship with me. That's incredible! Also, as usual, I was encouraged and excited by the songs we sang about heaven. The time is coming when we will see Jesus in person, face to face. We will reign with Him forever, and when we've been there ten thousand years, we will have no less days to praise and worship Him.

The Lord was present during the service, and I think added a special touch at the end. As we sang our last song, "Marriage Supper of the Lamb," the sun came out for the first time during the evening and poured in through the big windows at the front of the church. It was one of those moments that just makes you smile and gives you goose bumps up and down your back. God is good!

By Brent Schrock