



The Mt. Anthems Newsletter

August 2009

August 2, 2009

Blair's Valley First Church of God

Clear Spring, MD

We left for Clear Spring, MD at 8:00 a.m. I, for one, was happy that it wasn't earlier. Maybe I'm strange, but I like staying in bed when it's raining outside.

As we were leaving, Mike warned us of the day ahead – scrambling from place to place and the guys needing to “pitch in” with the sound because our sound men are missing. Arlin is also missing so that leaves Marty as the only bus driver. The bus got quiet on the way down, and pretty much everybody caught a nap.

One of the girls had a surprise when she put her covering on this morning. She must have been in a hurry or something when she left the house, because she had her sister's covering instead of her own! I wonder what her sister's reaction was! The covering fit okay, but was smaller than the one she normally wears.

Mike gave his sheet music away this morning. Well, kind of. There was a lady in the audience who was signing for the deaf, and so Mike loaned the music to her to follow along. He told her that she could go to the recording stand after the concert for a free CD of her choice.

We opened the service this morning with “You Are My All in All” and “Great and Awesome God.” The solos were “God on the Mountain” and “I'm not Ashamed.” I didn't think that the first half went very good and was happy when the second half was better. People seemed to be blessed anyway. One lady thanked us quite a few times. ☺

This was the first time we were at this church. They gave us packed lunches to eat on the road. The thing that made me the happiest about it all was the Sun Chips in my lunch! I love Sun Chips!

By Lorraine Yoder

Roxbury Holiness Camp

Roxbury, PA

This afternoon the Mountain Anthems sang at the Roxbury Holiness Camp. It was the first time I have had the opportunity of being there, and I loved it!

As I got off the bus and began walking around, I was immediately struck with the array of people that were there. There were people from all stages and walks of life. However, I was also impressed with the sense of community that was

there. Even though there were a very large variety of people, they all seemed to be enjoying each other.

As for the service, I felt it went well. Martin sang his new solo “The Prodigal Son.” We also sang “Though Your Sins Be as Scarlet,” on which Mike sings one of the verses. One of my highlights of the service was singing “Christ Arose.” Mike had the audience stand, and we all sang it together. It was great to hear all those people singing together. For the last song of the service, Mike had the men's quartet sing the song “Would You Truly Long for Heaven?”

After we were done singing, there was a speaker by the name of Joy Moore. She talked about us being the image bearers of Christ. One question that she asked really stood out to me. She asked, “What do people see when they look at me? Do they see God?” That really stuck out to me. He is, after all, the One we are trying to portray to those around us.

After the service was over, we quickly packed our things up and headed to the next place we were to sing. All in all, I very much enjoyed the afternoon.

By Rhonda Kinsinger

Chambersburg Church of the Brethren

Chambersburg, PA

Because things took longer than expected at the afternoon service, we were about 15 minutes late for supper at the next place. Our cooks were kind, and our supper waited on us

During the first half of our program, it poured rain for a while. Several of us felt very much like running out in it and jumping in the puddles! It looked very inviting! ☺

A bunch of people came to the recording stand during break which was nice, since it meant that we could leave earlier after the service.

Mike asked the audience what they think they'll do in heaven. He thinks we'll do something a little like the things we like to do here on earth, just in a bigger, better way. When he asked them what they do in Chambersburg, someone piped up, “NOT MUCH!” Mike thought that their part of heaven will be pretty boring! We all had a good chuckle ☺

Mike opened it up for requests the second half of the service, and we had enough to fill the rest of the evening. Two requests we couldn't fill were: "Wish You Were Here" and "Beulah Land." A few we did were, "Where Will you be a Million Years from Now?" "God on the Mountain," and "Father's House." We sang "The Love of God" and "What a Day" with the audience. I always like singing with the audience when they are all into it!

The two hour ride home was a good one. Left-over lunch and supper food was passed around several times, along with notebooks, pens, and Tic-Tacs. After a while things quieted down as some conversations turned more serious and personal, and a few sleepy folk caught a nap. It was a long, warm day but also a good one.

By Lynita Yoder

August 15, 2009

New Meadow Run Community

Farmington, PA

We left the building at 5:00 on a beautiful Saturday evening after a very warm day enroute to an unusual and memorable experience. After a quick stop in Grantsville to pick up the Maryland members of the chorus, we traveled to Farmington, Pennsylvania to spend an evening and enjoy a meal with the New Meadow Run Community. Menno and Grace made a special effort to go with us despite the continuing problems of painful tendonitis and arthritis with which he has been dealing. Also traveling with us were a number of Amish people from the Springs and Grantsville area that Menno had invited along. Several of them have visited the community before and made friends there.

We arrived shortly before 6:00 to a warm welcome. Many of the members of the community came out to the parking lot and met us as we exited the bus. While we waited for the meal preparations to be completed, some of the chorus members were taken on a tour of their school while others of us just chatted in small groups. Their friendliness and graciousness made them very easy to converse with as we moved down to an outdoor brick patio where numerous tables were set up in long rows.

I don't know if there was some accepted order or pattern to their seating arrangement which wasn't apparent to me, but it looked like families and individuals found seats in the casual, semi-random fashion that you might see at a fellowship dinner. We chorus members sat with the folks that we had been chatting with earlier, and thus easily and naturally were scattered among the people. I am told that some Saturday evenings at least are open to anyone who wishes to come visit with them. This was one

of those evenings, and several other visitors besides us could be seen.

According to the people at my table, the area right outside the dining hall where we were eating used to be a flat, grassy piece of land. They enjoyed eating outside in the evenings. So much so that they used to have some difficulties when they tried setting up tables and chairs after a rain, and the chair and table legs would sink into the soft ground. They also found that the heavy use tended to be hard on the grass. A little more than a year ago, they discussed the problem and decided to turn this area into an open-air patio. Now the large glass double doors from the dining hall open right onto the patio. They can set up the tables indoors and then move them all outside quickly when ready to eat. If the weather looks doubtful, they can wait until the last minute to decide whether to eat outside or stay inside. The patio evidently gets used a great deal, and they greatly appreciate it.

The meal we were served included homemade sausage, potato salad, fresh tomatoes, fresh corn on the cob, and watermelon. During the meal, some of the high school girls performed an Israeli folk dance for us. After we were done eating, the Mt. Anthems sang half a dozen songs, including one solo by Marty, "God on the Mountain."

When we finished singing, we all helped in moving the chairs back from the tables and carrying the tables—dirty dishes, leftover food, and all—inside the dining hall. The chairs were placed in concentric circles several rows deep on the patio, and a piano was brought out to help keep us on pitch and in time. We all took seats in this large circle and sang for quite awhile. The youth from a sister community had recently visited them and given them a gift of new hymnals, *Hymns for the Family of God*. They sang enthusiastically enough that hearing the piano wasn't always possible on the far side of the circle, but when they tried a new song, the piano helped us all enough that by the end of a verse or two, everyone was singing out again. When the dusk made it difficult to see the words and music, the singing came to an end.

From the comments made by one of the men who seemed to be in charge of the evening, we realized that these people have recently experienced a strong revival. We could sense their heartfelt passion to follow Jesus. One girl went to the microphone that the moderators were using to tell the group that she hadn't been able to be there when the other young people had made a public commitment to follow Jesus, but she too wanted to make that commitment. Her statement and the response of the other people to her made their sincerity obvious.

When the meeting came to a close, the chorus members and the guests traveling with us made our way back onto the bus and back to our homes. We enjoyed the evening and the fellowship with these people. We hope that we were a blessing to them, because they certainly were a blessing to us.

By Kenton Yoder

August 16, 2009

Believer's Fellowship Church
Petersburg, WV

We met at 6:45 a.m. and headed for WV. Most people did their best to catch naps. It's much easier to treat people to a good program when you're not falling asleep on your feet!

The bus seemed a bit empty this morning, because some of the Oakland people drove straight to the church. That allowed them several more hours of sleep. ☺

This is a small country church that sits right beside a river. The scenery was so peaceful. The sun sparkled off the water, and the deer were meandering slowly along the river bank. We also saw a bird with a white head and tail winging its way swiftly across the sky. I think it was an eagle but I didn't get a close enough look to be 100% positive. God does some pretty awesome artwork.

We had the whole morning service, so our program was longer than usual. We started it off with "Show a Little Bit of Love and Kindness." We sang a good mix of old and new songs today. Mike also gave the audience an opportunity to make requests during the intermission. Marty and Mike both sang several solos today. "God on the Mountain" was a request that Marty fulfilled. He also did "Prodigal Son." Mike sang "Had It not Been," and also fulfilled a request for "Where Will You Be?" at the end of the service. After the intermission, Brent had a story for the children.

While we were waiting to leave, several of the chorus members enjoyed watching two little boys playing in the river. They didn't bother rolling up their pants legs or trying to keep anything else dry. They were getting wetter and wetter. We wondered what Mom and Dad were going to say, but it must have been a common occurrence. Mom was all prepared with a set of dry clothing and a bag for the wet stuff. What fun to be a kid and play in the river. If we wouldn't have needed to keep our clothes pristine, I'm sure we would have been joining them in their fun!

Good Hope Tabernacle
Buckhannon, WV

The heat and humidity of the day made us grateful for air-conditioned buildings. The only problem was the scratchy throats that started to develop. It seems to be a common problem when we experience those constant temperature changes. Several of the chorus members were developing voice problems.

The church ladies put out a spread of sandwich fixings, veggie trays, and fruit. It was very refreshing.

Tonight's service began with "I Sing the Mighty Power of God." Marty sang "I Claim the Blood." Mike received two requests from chorus members: "Tears Are a Language", and "Prayer of Thankful Praise."

The people were so receptive and friendly. It was a joy to share with them! Several people stopped by the recording stand to comment on their enjoyment of the service. These types of comments are always an encouragement to me. The other thing that encourages me and brings enjoyment is watching people mouth the words to the song we're singing. You can see how much they're enjoying the song by the sparkle in their eyes.

The ride home was very noisy initially. There were multiple conversations going full blast. It sounds a bit raucous, but we have to unwind somehow. We always seem to be a bit hyper at the beginning of the ride home. However, things soon quiet down, and the majority of us catch some shut-eye. I know it sounds as if we sleep a lot, and we do. You need to consider how much energy we expend throughout the day. It can be very draining, but the rewards far outweigh the drawbacks! We arrived back at the bus shed at 11:30. Mike gave a short speech about how much he appreciated our hard work, and then we headed home to get in some more sleep before running off to work the next day.

August 30, 2009

Pleasant Ridge Church of the Brethren
Needmore, PA

It's 8:00 a.m. on a bright, sunny morning. There's a bit of a chill in the air indicating Fall is near. It's a beautiful day to travel. We traipse onto the bus by twos and threes, finding our seats and stashing our belongings in the overhead compartments. The chattering ceases only when Mike gets on the bus and leads us in prayer. We always ask God to bless our day and grant us safety before we leave the parking lot.

Our morning and afternoon services are at the same church for a change. They have what they call "Harvest Sunday" (or something like that), and we've been their special guests for this occasion in the past. The church is a good mix of young and old people. There are quite a few families with young children.

We were to sing for about an hour this morning, so we started out with some praise songs. I always sort of cringe when the director decides he wants to group two songs into a medley. Most of the time it works fine, but occasionally we've had some disastrous results. That's the experiment we tried for our first two numbers this morning. The first one went well but the second didn't sound quite as good. I guess as long as people get the message I won't complain too loudly. ☺

Our songs today included “Purify Me,” “Praise Anthem,” and “You Are My All in All.” Marty shared his newest song, “The Prodigal Son” and the ladies sang “Though Your Sins as Scarlet Be.” Toward the end of the service, we sang “Little is Much When God Is in It.” Mike’s comments on the song reminded me of a quote I carry in my Bible – “I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty to accomplish small tasks as if they were great and noble.” *Helen Keller*

We had a potluck meal out under the pavilion. There was an abundance of food and fellowship, both of which were very good. The air was a bit brisk, but it was such a beautiful day I didn’t mind.

It was relaxing not having to worry about how soon we were to be back on the bus. We took our time, ate leisurely, and just enjoyed spending our extra time together.

Our second service began at 2:00 p.m., and the church was much emptier than it was this morning. There were a few new faces in the crowd though. For some reason nearly everyone chose to sit on the left side (our right), and it made things look a bit lopsided. ☺

Mike chose to sing some of the newer, unrecorded songs this afternoon. They included “Great and Awesome God,” “Marriage Supper of the Lamb,” and his solo “I’m Not Ashamed.” The men’s quartet sang “A Wonderful Shepherd.”

The ladies trio was heard practicing in the basement. Someone asked Mike if they were going to sing. He said he didn’t know if they were ready or not. He did ask them, and they consented to give it a try. “Jesus, Be the Lord of All” is the title of their new number. It was recorded by the ladies octet many years ago. Despite a few minor glitches (it still needs some polish) the song went very well, and people commented on how much they enjoyed it.

We were back on the bus and ready to go at 3:30. I planned to get in a good afternoon nap, but I just couldn’t seem to settle down. First the boys spotted a circling airplane, and while they were watching that, someone spotted five or six hang-gliders floating lazily over the valley. They were still watching them with fascination when someone spotted a helicopter landing in what appeared to be a patch of trees. The skies seemed to be buzzing with activity today.

Several miles down the road we came to a road-block. EMS had apparently set up a landing zone right in the middle of the highway. The helicopter was sitting in the middle of the road, and we were sent on a detour. The “scenic route” only added about four miles to our trip and turned into quite a bonus. The mountains and valleys formed such a beautiful panorama. You could see for miles at some spots.

While our trips are not always filled with so many exciting things to see, you can usually find something interesting if you keep your eyes open. When we drive through old towns, I love to keep my eyes open for well

preserved, beautiful old houses and public buildings. I saw some excellent examples today when we drove through Mercersburg. We also passed the Buchanan Birthplace State Park. It must have been James Buchanan, because shortly thereafter I saw a sign with his name at the top. If you don’t know who he is, you better check your encyclopedia for a history lesson!

Well, I really must settle down for a nap now. I want to be able to do my best at tonight’s program!

Marion Mennonite Church Chambersburg, PA

After about an hour and a half ride, we arrived at Marion Mennonite Church at 4:40 p.m. We had a detour on the way because of a Medevac chopper landing in the road, but we had a beautiful drive, and enjoyed the scenery, and watching hang-gliders.

We had a good supper at 5:00. It was a bigger supper than sometimes, and since some of us took advantage of the huge lunch earlier, we couldn’t really do justice to supper. After we were finished, the man in charge said the ladies would be “thankful and blessing” if we would take our dishes to the kitchen.

After supper we got into our standing arrangement and sang 2 songs so the sound guys could tweak the system. We plugged into their speakers, so they couldn’t do it like normal. We also stood in a different arrangement than sometimes—three rows, men on the ends, ladies in the center. After that we cut our devotions short so we could listen to Doug play the prelude for the service on the piano. He also played while they took the offering. The solo of the night was “God on the Mountain.” The quartet sang two songs right after our break.

During break we enjoyed a most extraordinarily exquisite sunset. Our third-from-last song was “Is That the Lights of Home.” I had to think of the sunset we just saw. If that’s the lights of heaven, then I’m definitely ready!! We finished out the service with two songs about heaven. The people just seemed to soak up our songs and really enjoy them. The auditorium was so full that some people had to sit in the foyer.

After the service and conversations with various individuals, we headed home at about 9:30 p.m. with approximately an hour and 45 minutes drive. Several conversations were underway, while other people read or napped as their homeward bound activities.

By Jonathan Yoder