



The Mt. Anthems Newsletter

March/April 2015

March 8, 2015
Maple Glen Mennonite Church
Grantsville, MD

A new chorus season has begun. Tonight is our first program of the year. We were supposed to have two evenings of practice in preparation; however, one of them was cancelled due to bad weather. We are praying with all our might that the Spirit of the Lord will make this a wonderful evening.

Our day started out differently from normal. We didn't have a morning concert, so our home congregation had a "sending" for us as a chorus. It is a real blessing to have their support and encouragement.

Mike pulled out a mixture of old and newer songs. One of the songs I saw people singing along on was "Gettin' Ready Today." It's an old song but one we started doing more recently. The other song that especially blessed me was "Be Strong and Take Courage"

I should share with you the names of all the new folks this year. Brooke Tice, Soncerae Musgrove, and Dorcas Kauffman are joining the sopranos. Jenette Kauffman is joining the altos. Melinda Sommers and Lorraine Yoder are both altos and previous members of the chorus but were not able to sing with us for the past several years; they are returning this year. Lorraine's husband Rodney (returning) and Shannon Kauffman are joining the bass, while the tenor are getting Jalon Sommers, Matthew Hottle, and Matthew "Sonny" Dornburg. We are grateful for each of them and hope they enjoy the year.

As you think of us throughout the year, please remember us in prayer. I'll thank you in advance. :) ~Joye Yoder

March 22, 2015
Kecksburg Church of God
Mount Pleasant, PA

Our first going-away trip of the year... It's fun to climb back on the bus, settle down in your old corner or find a new one, check out your neighbors, and chat with friends! Today we have only one concert, so we were able to attend church like normal this morning.

I am very excited about this coming year! God has blessed us with 11 new people! It seems to me that someone must have been praying about our shortage of personnel, because some of the very parts that Mike was most concerned about are now the strongest! :) It's another reminder to me that if God wants this to keep on going, he is more than capable of supplying the people!

This church has a unique parking lot. I remember last time we were here, Arlin tried for a long time to back into the parking lot, but it was just too tight. This time we just pulled up, unloaded all our things, and Arlin parked the bus elsewhere. We had plenty of time to lounge on the benches before eating supper, since the guys did not set up sound in this church. Caleb and Cameron provided entertainment by doing acrobats on the risers.

We sang songs about the blood, about what Jesus did for us, about God being in control, and about not giving up! "Written in Red" and "Would We Truly Long for Heaven" were given to Mike as requests.

Two older ladies were keeping a running commentary during the service. When Marty stepped off the risers to sing a solo, one of them was heard to comment, "Now he's not so bad looking!" :)

It seems our memories can get a bit rusty over the winter, and sometimes we struggle with our notes and words, the tightness of our vocal blend, etc. Tonight I especially thought about it as we sang "Heavenward Bound." This song is a bit more speedy, and sometimes it can be a struggle for the soprano to get the words out clearly and on time! :)

The people seemed to be blessed and very grateful to have us there! We are always in need of God's presence and power. Without it all our best efforts fall flat, but with it people are touched and moved no matter how good or bad we sound.

April 3, 2015
Bittinger Mennonite Church
Bittinger, MD

Tonight was our annual Good Friday service at Bittinger Mennonite. Lots of familiar faces in the audience... Byron came back and sang with us tonight which put the total bass up to 3. :) Aimee and Landon were also able to attend for the first time this year.

We wore our new red dresses (the guys wore black shirts) again tonight... I like them. I think they look pretty sharp. :)

Some of the songs we sang tonight were... "Heaven Came Down and Glory Filled My Soul," "Praise Medley," "Under Control," "The Father Has a Plan," and "Tears are a Language."

We did something unusual for the final song. Several weeks ago a member of this

church asked Mike how fast we can learn a song, because he had a certain song he wanted us to sing. I can't remember the name of the song, but we did spend some time learning it, and sang it tonight using sheet music. It worked fine, but I am certainly grateful we don't have to bother doing that on a regular basis!

April 5, 2015
Thomas Mennonite Church
Hollsopple, PA

What a beautiful Easter day this was! It was cold, but sunny and nice. We only had an evening service today so we got to be in church for Easter morning.

The bus left the building at 3:30 this afternoon and drove for about an hour to Thomas Mennonite Church. The guys did their usual job of setting up the sound system until it was time for supper.

The service started at seven this evening. Some of the songs we sang tonight were "Because He Lives," "The Holy Hills," "All in All" and "Stand Still." Marty also sang "I'm the Lamb." We ended the evening singing "Ready to Go."

It was special to have Bill and Mary Jane Yoder in the audience tonight.

April 18, 2015
Faith Mennonite Church
South Boston, VA

The bus left at 9:45 for the first overnight trip of the year. It's a beautiful sunny Saturday morning and it's wonderful to see more flowers and green leaves as we go further south.

We talked about all kinds of things on the bus

before going to sleep. The high school came back from convention last evening, so we heard some about their week. Those by me discussed what qualities make a man “manly” and a woman “womanly,” and since Spring Turkey Season opened in MD this morning, of course several hunting stories were floating around.

Some of us really wanted to be able to enjoy fresh air and sunshine instead of being stuck on the bus. That got us dreaming about what the next Mountain Anthems bus should be like. We decided it should be like a mega bus, but without a roof and sides that are only 4 feet high so that we could enjoy God's beautiful creation in a whole new way. If funds allow, couches would be wonderful up there, but we'd be willing to take sleeping bags for a while. :) Joye says that people up there would be straining bugs with their teeth, but I'm sure we could figure something out! Someone thought we'd probably be wanting a little pool up there next... :)

We had a rest stop around 12:45 and when we got going again, people dug out their packed lunches and things quieted down a little. It didn't seem like very long until we pulled off onto an overlook/pull off place and then promptly buzzed back onto the road. I heard that the bus driver thought it was the rest area that was just down the road a bit. :)

We were served haystacks and bread for supper and I thought it really hit the spot after a day of traveling. Our hosts served us dessert after the program.

Rod and I sang for the first time this evening. I was a bit worried when Mike dug out “He Restoreth My Soul” because it was an old one I hadn't brushed up on, and I was happy it came

back to my memory.

I thought we had a good program, even though we were a bit rusty. Some songs we sang were “Jesus Will Outshine Them All,” “God on the Mountain,” and “Exaltation Medley.” We had a few requests we weren't able to do: “Lily In My Valley” and “Stranger of Galilee.”

~Lorraine Yoder

April 19, 2015

Mountain View Mennonite Church

Lyndhurst, VA

It is absolutely beautiful in South Boston, VA! The leaves on the trees are almost completely out, and the flowering trees are absolutely beautiful!

We boarded the bus at 7 a.m. this morning after spending the night with our hosts, and had a 3 hour drive to Mountain View Mennonite Church in Lyndhurst, VA. Thank-fully we're traveling towards home, so it will reduce the number of miles after the evening service tonight.

The church was bustling with activity this morning. It's always so refreshing to see a full house, especially if there are youth and children in the audience. This church was, in fact, so full that instead of finding a place where we could all meet together, we split into our parts to find a corner to pray in. Because of a misunderstanding, we lined up a few minutes earlier than necessary. It was congested most everywhere, and the only available spot was right there in the entry way. So we lined up and then tried to make ourselves as small as possible against the wall while the congregation made their way around us into the sanctuary. Not awkward at all... :)

We sang for about 20 minutes, and then Mike shared a short devotional on change. Change is inevitable, but thankfully God is a steady rock who never changes.

Some of the songs we sang for the second half were “What a Happy Day Twill Be,” “I Believe in a God,” and “Where Will You Be?” We sang the first verse of “Jesus Will Outshine them All,” and then Mike, as he often does, mouthed the beginning words of the second verse. It occurred to me that those words did not seem right, but there we were, cruising right into the second rendition of the first verse! At the end of the verse, Mike stopped us and got us started back onto the right track. Afterward the pastor told the congregation that we should all learn to follow God like the chorus follows Mike. :)

They had tables laden with food for fellowship meal today! There was even a dish of bear meat for us to enjoy. :)

April 19, 2015

Wakemans Grove Church of the Brethren
Edinburg, VA

Due to roughly a four week delay in writing this, the details of this service are a bit hazy.

However, I recall a good bit of time that we had between the end of the afternoon travel and the actual service time. When there is such a delay, there are a few different things that transpire. Number 1 and most important in my book is...sleeping. Many sprawled out in the bus or went

inside on the benches. Number 2...others read and listen to music. Thirdly, sound setup proceeds at a somewhat leisurely pace.

For supper there was a carry-in supper. And for the 3rd time in 2 days we managed to get fried chicken, a great favorite here in the south. :)

As far as the service my details get hazy. There was one man who talked to me afterward and said that he, his wife, and 4 girls had traveled 1 1/2 hrs. to hear us. His girls really enjoy listening to the recordings. It is encouraging to hear of such instances.

~Scott Beachy

April 30, 2015
Frostburg Village
Frostburg, MD

Instead of having chorus practice, we went to sing for the old folks in Frostburg Village, a retirement home in our area. They were all ready and eagerly waiting when we arrived. :)

All the new people sang tonight, most of them for the first time. For some, it went really well. For others, not so well, possibly due to the fact that we usually tend to sing older songs for older people. All the same, it was great to have the addition of their voices.

Parking space was a bit limited, but Arlin is an amazing driver! I overheard someone comment that some of us have trouble parallel parking a vehicle, but Arlin can parallel park a bus. :)

~Written and compiled by Jennifer Kauffman