



LIVING THE WORD

The Newsletter of the
Huntington Church of the Brethren

306 E. Washington St., Huntington, IN 46750 • 260-356-7983

Pastor, Barry Belknap

Email: office@cobhuntington.org

Web site: cobHuntington.org

February 2010

FROM THE PASTOR

Ministry Team had a very productive conversation at its meeting on January 20 about the church's current financial situation. Thanks to the generosity of a few people we were able to end 2009 with a positive balance and have a small amount of cash in hand to start 2010. However, another article in this newsletter from our treasurer, Dean Beery, articulates that we have to maintain a higher giving level to meet the 2010 budget. I want to take a few minutes to get all of us thinking about some ways to live as a congregation beyond the edge of survival.

My pastoral training enables me to look at a congregation through the lenses of models. We have all driven by large churches perched on the edge of an interstate ramp. They have a large staff, numerous programs for people of all ages, and large modern buildings. That model has appeal for some people looking for a church. That mega church model is not who we are. As I listened to people share at Ministry Team, I heard stories that indicated that HCOB has been at the place more than once in its history of wondering if it can afford to keep going. In the past, there have been times when the pastor's hours have been reduced, salary money for musicians has been cut, and things have looked bleak. That model is often called "The Survival Minded Church". This type of church spends much of its time and energy just trying to keep the doors open. People worry about the future, pastors come and go frequently, and the finances seem to always be hanging on the edge of the cliff. In many ways, that model describes our church.

I have been your pastor for almost three years now. Although it is true that we are in a survival mode at the moment, I see our church as something more than that. I view the strengths of the church as a strong value placed on relationships, a growing number of children, many volunteer leaders, mission mindedness, life long education, and the value of working hard at being the church. Because of these strengths, we are more than a survival minded church. What if we built on these strengths to become a small but vital congregation? There are many churches that never intend to be big, but work at being a strong small church.

A survey as taken at the Fall Council meeting where members prioritized initiatives important to them. Among the top four were community ministry and music. What if we worked to strengthen our ministry in these two areas? We have risen to the challenge more than once in the last few years. We created a Vacation Bible School Program to help our children. We built a ramp for better access to our church. We remodeled the narthex by raising funds and employing many volunteer hours. We raised thousands of dollars for our mission project in Nicaragua. We can be more than a church on the edge of survival. The church I know is one that can do anything when it decides to do it. Food for thought.....

Pastor Barry A. Belknap

Worship Schedule

8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. English Classes for Spanish speakers wanting to learn English
9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. Morning Worship
10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Fellowship Time
11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. Sunday School Classes

The church e-mail address

office@cobhuntington.org

The church web site

<http://www.cobhuntington.org>. You can view the church newsletter and the monthly calendar on this site. If you have an idea, share it with Jeff Lehman or Barry Belknap.

Prayer Concerns

...Korbin Brumley, grandson of Bob & Charlotte Dillon, eye surgery
...Teresa Miller, knee replacement surgery
...Lydia Miller, recovering from surgery
...Jessica, Reba Beery's niece, prayer concerns
...Sandy Hartle's brother, unemployed
...Haiti earthquake victims
...Glenn & Maxine Mulligan, health concerns
... families who were left homeless after the fire in Bluffton, IN
...friend of Amy Beery, diagnosed with cancer
...friend of Laura Summers, diagnosed with cancer

Our Shut-ins

... **Minnie Brandenburg**, Norwood Nursing Center, 3720N. Norwood Rd., Huntington, IN 46750
.. **Kate Craig**, Miller's Merry Manor, 1500 Grant St., Huntington, IN 46750
.. **Dorsan Nichols**, Miller's Merry Manor, 1500 Grant St., Huntington, IN 46750

Budget Crisis

At the November 1 Council meeting, the budget for 2010 was adopted with the challenge to raise our giving to meet the budget. If that didn't happen the Ministry team was to look at adjusting the budget. There has been an increase in the giving since that meeting. In the 10 weeks before the council, giving was averaging \$698. In the weeks since it has averaged \$875. But to meet the new budget requires \$1,066 per Sunday.

There were some special contributions made at the end of the 2009 totaling \$3,100. This has given us a little breathing room, but if our contributions remain at the same level, that will be gone before long.

The ministry team met on Jan. 20th to look over the budget situation. As we met, it became apparent to us that there is not any fat in this budget. We will continue to monitor the situation and if our budget balance reaches zero, we will need to make significant budget reductions. If that happens, we will call a special council meeting to deal with the necessary changes.

We have made a verbal commitment to our staff that we would give them six months notice if we need to make changes in their hours or pay.

We solicit your prayers and support in the meantime.

Heifer Project

In July, 2008, The Kum-Joy-Nus class of the Huntington, Indiana Church of the Brethren mentioned that, as a class, we talked a great deal about what is expected of a Christian, but we didn't act on our beliefs. After a lot of ideas for action were suggested, finally it was decided to try to collect enough money to eventually buy a heifer through Heifer International, which sends animals to impoverished people all over the world. The recipients of these animals agree to pass on the first offspring of the animal to a neighbor who is also in need of help.

This decision by the class represented a significant commitment for a group with an average attendance of 14-16 people per Sunday. A heifer costs \$500.00, so collecting that amount seemed like a really long-range project, but the class was determined.

From July to early November, 2008 the group collected enough to *buy their first heifer*—a remarkable accomplishment for this small group of people.

After buying the first animal, the class wanted to continue working toward another heifer. The *second was purchased in April 2009*, and momentum carried the group to collect enough money to purchase a *third heifer in September, 2009*, and the effort continues.

The Kum-Joy-Nus class has accomplished a small miracle in their effort to add Christian action to their attempt to live a Christian life. We hope they may be an inspiration to others to realize what can be done by a small group of dedicated people. Never say, "We can't."

Community Food Pantry of Love, Inc.

Thank you for your continued support of the Huntington Community Food Pantry. Love, INC receives donations from the community, Kroger's Warehouse and Government Commodities each month. For the month of February they are asking for *hamburger helper & laundry soap*. There is a box in the handicap entrance for these items.

Souper Bowl Sunday

More than 20 years ago, the Souper Bowl of Caring began with a simple prayer from a single youth group: *"Lord as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us to be mindful of those without even a bowl of soup to eat."*

Since that day, more than \$60 million has been raised for local charities across the country through the Souper Bowl of Caring. It has become a powerful movement that is transforming Super Bowl weekend into the nation's largest youth-led weekend of giving and serving.

Through this mission, young people learn what it's like to make a positive difference in the world-as they collect food, raise money and volunteer to work in charities that provide shelter to the homeless, food to the hungry and compassion to those in need.

Be part of this movement that is sharing God's love with those in need. Please give generously on Super Bowl Sunday. A box will be provided in the narthex for can goods for the food pantry at Love, INC. The youth will stand at each entrance to the sanctuary on *Sunday, February 7, 2010* to collect monies for local ministries. The funds collected will be divided between *Habitat for Humanity and Love, In the Name of Christ*.

National Youth Conference

This is the year of National Youth Conference (NYC). Once every four years Church of the Brethren high school age youth from around the country gather to worship, celebrate, learn and fellowship in a once in a life-time opportunity.

Registration has already started and will run until February 15 when the fee will increase.

Anthony Beery Bennett is planning on attending and other youth are considering attending also.

NYC will be held on the campus of Colorado State University in Ft. Collins, Colorado. The dates of the conference are July 17 – 22 and the theme is “More than meets the eye”, taken from II Corinthians 4:6-10, 16-18.

There will be great speakers, workshops, late night activities, beautiful Rocky Mountain scenery, a chance to get involved, spiritual growth, and fun!!!

Registration is \$425 before Feb. 15 and there will be an expense for travel. The youth will be doing some fund raising activities to help them on their way.

If you know of any youth in our church family who may be interested in going who is not aware of this opportunity, please let them know and ask them to contact the church.

The Church of the Brethren in Haiti

A few years ago, Haitian American Church of the Brethren members were instrumental in starting a Brethren mission in Haiti. The first Brethren were baptized there in 2003. By the end of 2008, there were 5 congregations and 10 more preaching points in the country. One of the congregations had started its own school.

In 2008 Haiti was wracked by several hurricanes. Brethren Disaster Ministries started a project which is currently underway to build 100 homes in Haiti. There is a DVD available (15 minutes) which tells the story of this undertaking.

Then came the earthquake. Three of the church's congregations are in Port-au-Prince. The “Mother church”, Delmas 3 was heavily damaged and 30 homes of members were destroyed. Many of the members are missing and at least one death has been confirmed. Pastor Ives Jean who is Moderator of the Haitian Church of the Brethren was missing for awhile. He has been found, but is injured.

Church World Service (CWS), a cooperative effort of many protestant denominations has sent 7 tons of materials by air including blankets, baby kits, hygiene kits, flashlights, toothpaste and medical boxes. These materials are sent from the Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, Maryland, where CWS houses their material aid headquarters. CWS is the group that is partially funded by the CROP walks and is where our Blanket Sunday money goes. They are also sending some supplies by ship. CWS is making an appeal for \$200,000 for this effort and Brethren Disaster Ministries has already contributed \$25,000.

Brethren Disaster Ministries has also made a grant of \$25,000 for its own efforts. As of the first week after the earthquake, \$16,500 had been donated to this effort through the Church of the Brethren website (www.brethren.org). Four representatives from the Church of the Brethren are in Haiti and are helping out there.

If you would like to help with this effort, you may put it in the offering or send it to the church office. Please mark it “Haiti” and our treasurer will send it on. Or you can donate directly through the Brethren website. At least two Sunday school classes have also made hygiene kits to send to Haiti.

Coming up in March:

WHAT: All You Can Eat

PANCAKE AND SAUSAGE BREAKFAST
(coffee – milk – juice)

WHEN: **SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 2010**

TIME: *7 a.m.- 11 a m.*

COST:	Adults	\$6.00
	Children 5-12 years	\$4.00
	Under 5	free

The Men's Fellowship sponsoring this event.

For additional information contact Bob Weinley – 356-5716

Tickets will be available on February 7th

Huntington Church of the Brethren
306 E. Washington St.
Huntington, IN 46750
office@cobhuntington.org
Address Service Requested
