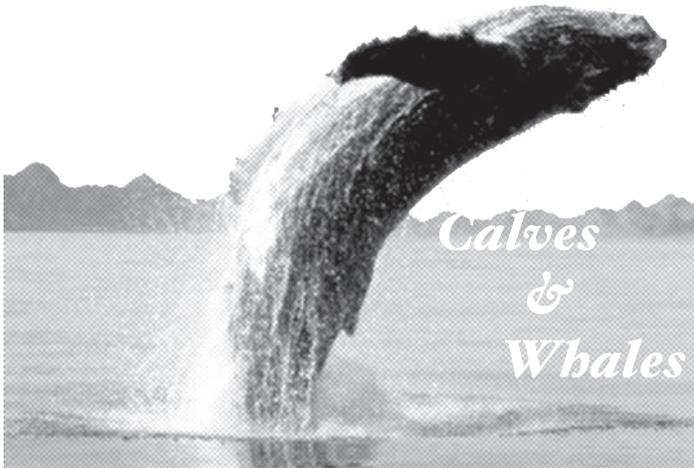


The Taftsville Chapel Current

God calls us as followers of Jesus Christ and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as a of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to our world.

Sam Carbaugh, *Editor*, Carie Good, Janet North & Virginia Schlabach, *Newsletter Staff*

Summer 2011



“But for you who revere my Name the sun of righteousness will arise with healing in its wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall.” Malachi 4:2

The image of a calf released from the confines of a stall is a joyous one. You can just see the little critter “skipping about”, as one translation has it, finally able to be fully itself, exulting in freedom. This is the image God chose to use to help describe how it would feel when the Redeemer comes, the One who “sets the captives free.” Then, and now, there are so many who are still experiencing being stuffed into a stall of some sort or another. The confinements of bad health, finances, relationships and choices made by themselves or others crowd in and suffocate. If we look and listen deeply, even if there is not much current distress confronting us, we know that a part of us all will continue to feel the splinters of the corral walls until Glory.

A joyful short video to watch is about a recent whale rescue in the Sea of Cortez (see it [HERE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EBYPlcSD490)) (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EBYPlcSD490>). I suppose knowing how this ended up made watching it a bit easier, but I was still struck by the ugliness and unfairness illustrated by the massive net dragging down the whale. Isn't this how it feels sometimes? The ways and means of the world wrap themselves around us and threaten to exhaust us, or maybe even drown us. We see it happen all over the world: The pursuit of gain by one costs so dearly in the lives of others. To be fair, the fishermen who cast the net were perhaps just trying to make a living, not make a killing. Maybe they were just scraping by, and now have to find the resources to get a new net.

It makes me wonder. Just by virtue of being “in the world”, and even though we are called to not be “of the world”, is there a way that we, unawares, drag others down or box them in? I'm not saying this to make us feel guilty or morose (those are bad motivations for change anyway), but only to point out that some people will continue to bear on their backs the weight of the lives others, and will feel the press of our common captivity all the more heavily.

What would the Redeemer have us do (continue to do), and with what sort of spirit? Open corral doors and cut nets when you find them in front of you. Not out of guilt or penance or duty, but because of the joy and the love. The prophet Micah pastors us with this (Micah 6:6-8):

With what shall I come before the LORD
and bow down before the exalted God?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?
Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousand rivers of olive oil?
Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?
He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.
And what does the LORD require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God.

Act, Love, Walk. Maybe all we can do some days is pull one nail out of somebody's stall or cut one or two strands of the weighted gill net that is dragging them down. Some days we will see captives go free, and some days not yet. In the mean time (and some days are more mean than others) we can Act, Love and Walk in hope. A promise has been made.

I have seen with my own eyes, close up, a forty-ton whale leap completely out of the water (skip about) again and again, apparently just for the joy of it. May that kind joy motivate us as we serve our broken world in Jesus' name.

Blessings, Randy

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provoking seminars, community service projects, and ethnic eateries; bookended by fireworks over the water on Monday and a Stellar Kart concert on Friday.

Ever since Dave Beidler's encouragement to the congregation to go and experience for themselves after his return from convention with the youth 2 years ago, I have eagerly desired to go. And go we went! Tori, Ben, Hannah, Tim, Allison, Nick and myself all grew in faith and friendship over the course of our week together.

Youth and Sponsors Head to Pittsburgh for the Mennonite Convention July 4-9

Theme: Bridges to (the) Cross
Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:16-20

So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them, and he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God we making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

The theme was twofold: we have many "bridges to cross" as instruments of reconciliation and we are called to be "bridges to the cross" as ambassadors for Christ.

Pittsburg, the City of Bridges, welcomed 6000 Mennonites (of which there were approximately 3000 youth and 1000 youth sponsors) for a week that was filled with energetic worship, thought

I was pleasantly surprised by many things throughout the week including:
 the fact that we were the only New England representatives , 7 among 6000!
 A better understanding of the structure of the church and conference
 the diversity of the Mennonite church- we sang some songs in Spanish during worship,
 Wednesday "We are the Church" day celebrated the multicultural members of the church
 a reminder that missions/serving is a core Mennonite value right alongside of being Anabaptist, actively working towards peace, and the focus on following Jesus
 emphasis on faith and Anabaptist beliefs over cultural distinctiveness
 how impeccably organized and orchestrated the entire week was and yet it felt so natural and organic
 the smallness of downtown Pittsburg and

the plethora of bridges in greater Pittsburg (over 400?!)

how cheap and easy it was to get baseball tickets to the Pirates- quite a contrast to Fenway

the gift of our amazing Taftsville youth group! Our experience was far richer and more fun for



having shared in their company. They impressed me with adventurous appetites as we tried ethnic food each evening from Vietnamese to Lebanese to famous Primanti brother's sandwiches. They let Nick run them through CrossFit exercises at the hotel gym and came back begging for more day after day despite sore muscles. They defy the stereotype of teens and truly are lights for Christ in this world.

After parting ways from the group at close of conference on Saturday, Nick and I took a few vacation days to tour ourselves through Lancaster County as a continuation of our dive into all things Menno. Thanks to many in the congregation who we polled prior to our travels for their recommendations on must see, do, eats in the area. After a route through W. Virginia and brief stop in Gettysburg we arrived in time to see Central Market, the oldest farmer's market in the country. The Mennonite information center clarified for us timeline, history, beliefs, traditions and distinctions. And yes, the Mennonite game does work. We introduced ourselves to the two gentlemen working at the Info Center, Marvin Weaver and Roy Bender, and discovered they knew of many in both our congregation and Bethany. From there we took back roads through the country side stopping at Amish farm stands, sampling home brewed rootbeer, admiring hand stitched quilts, and smiling at the sight of horse & buggies running (literally) through yellow traffic lights. We had to go to Shady Maple but we didn't have to eat there. The dietitian in me couldn't stomach it, but it was a sight to behold! A backtrack to Yoder's provided us a hearty PA

Dutch meal of broasted chicken, potato filling, pepper cabbage, ham balls, and Harvard beets. Many things about our tour through the county reminded Nick of his recent trip to Germany. How blessed we have been by our travels, visiting the people and places that have laid the foundation for our present. As non-ethnic Mennonites with no personal ties to PA, it was meaningful to explore the roots of our congregation. We are so thankful to those that planted the church here in Vermont and those that joined to grow and nurture it into the vibrant community of genuine faith that receive all with the warmest welcome of friendship and family.

Like Dave, we have come back from convention energized and excited and would encourage all to go and experience, whether for the first time or a repeat. Feel free to ask any of us more about our trip or to show you dance moves to an original a song sung at worship: Be the bridge, yes. I can be the bridge. Be the bridge to Jesus!

---Heather Wolfe





Reflection on Pittsburgh from Nick Wolfe

There are two things that stand out to me from the Pittsburgh 2011 Conference: worship sessions and a seminar on non-violence.

The passion and intensity of thousands of youth (and adults) gathered together to worship blew me away. I had never participated in something so grand in size, yet so authentic. Two-hour worship sessions twice daily flew right by and I was always wanting for more. But it was the youth that encouraged me the most—that the next generation is just as excited as I am.

I participated in numerous interesting hour-long seminars throughout the week. One in particular spoke to me: A Soldier's Bridge To Non-Violence. Building off of the theme for the week on "Being a Bridge to the Cross", the seminar featured two young men who were former soldiers speaking about their experience in becoming Conscientious Objectors (CO's) while still on active duty.

What struck me most about these former soldiers was their honesty and openness in this group of Mennonites – willing to share about how they chose to enlist because they saw themselves as "The Hand of God in the Middle East", but then later coming to the conclusion that they were being hypocritical and needed to "Love your enemy" and "Turn the other cheek" to truly follow Jesus. For some Mennonites I am sure the issue

of non-violence is straightforward: always choose nonviolence. But for others, I imagine there is either some hesitation or inner struggle. Living in a country that pumps patriotism and service, I bet it is even harder for those not actively trying to follow Jesus. So it was inspiring to hear these former soldiers share their own difficult transition from fighting in the Middle East, to a life of non-violence. For them, this wasn't a hypothetical issue, it was their life and livelihoods at stake. Colleagues ridiculed, berated, taunted and teased them for making this decision. Family members disowned them for going against the USA and becoming CO's.

The military has a monopoly on "duty", "service", "loyalty" and other terms that are very attractive to people. I have learned from this conference that what we need to focus on is "building that bridge" that reaches out to the next generation and helps them find these ideals in peaceful, non-violent ways.

Healthy People. Healthy Forests. Healthy Babies! An Update from Health in Harmony

When women in the Gunung Palung area get pregnant, most elect a Traditional Birth Attendant (TBA), many of whom come from long lineages of birth attendants. Others choose to work with midwives, whose government training may be minimal. Despite the best efforts of these caregivers, the rate of complications and deaths associated with childbirth in our area is unacceptably high. ASRI is dedicated to decreasing the infant mortality rate.

Recently, Health In Harmony, with the help of the Osborne Foundation, hosted Karen Ruby Brown CNM, MSN, to run a training for local midwives. A Yale-trained Certified Nurse-Midwife, Karen studied the midwife system in Indonesia, investigated low-tech solutions for remote areas, and prepared lesson plans based on the needs

identified by the volunteers and physicians at Project ASRI.

Karen brought crucial equipment with her, like baby-sized ventilator bags and sterile birthing tools, critical to the trainings. The program attracted over 90% of the local midwives and 20 TBAs. The training covered sterilization techniques, handling obstructed labor, bleeding, mouth-to-mouth resuscitation for babies who weren't breathing, and kangaroo care for premature infants.

Global Change on a Local Level

The Forest Guardians program, funded by the prestigious British Whitley Award presented to Dr. Hotlin Ompusunggu, began with an amazing five-day workshop focused on the forest, the impending dangers of illegal logging, and creative solutions to the deforestation problem. The participants, all carefully-selected village men concerned about illegal logging, learned about the state of the rain forest, and how it connects to the well-being of the people who live near it; the intersection of human and environmental health. After two intense days in the classroom, the group headed for the forest. The men were taught to identify trees, animals, and other plants and how to share this information with local communities. In addition to our ASRI volunteers, Gunung Palung National Park staff members also participated in the training- illustrating, once again, our dedication to partnering with local governments and communities to create global change.

Taftsville Chapel Mennonite Fellowship

Located in the village of Taftsville, VT, one block south of Rt. 4 on Happy Valley Road.



Randy Good, Pastor

www.taftsvillechapel.org

Send your contributions for the Current to: samuel.carbaugh@gmail.com or contact a Newsletter Staff member: Carie Good, Janet North & Virginia Schlabach

The 9th Annual Bethany Birches Auction

Be sure to save September 24th on your calendars. This will be the 9th year that Bethany Birches Camp has held its benefit auction. It will be a great time to see friends, eat some good food and support the camp. The day's events start at 9AM at the camp with time to preview the items that have been donated. Sandy Alderfer will begin the auction at 10AM and things should wrap up by noon. All those present are invited to stay for lunch that will be provided by the camp.

New this year is a raffle. Tickets are being sold throughout the summer at the camp and will be available the day of the auction. The raffle winners will be drawn during the auction. Items up for raffle include an antique quilt, a youth bicycle, maple syrup and a free week at camp.

There are several ways that you can help with this exciting event. First of all we need quality items to auction off. Past experience has shown us that handmade things sell well. Canned goods, maple syrup, pies, jewelry, artwork, furniture, woodworking and pottery are some perennial favorites. Gift certificates to businesses also do well at the auction. Consider making or donating something to the auction or asking a friend or business for a donation on behalf of the camp. All donations are tax deductible and help make a Christian camping experience affordable to all who wish to come. Please contact Allen Guntz (295-2016 or allenhguntz@mac.com) with your donations. Secondly, come to the auction and tell or bring a friend. More people bring more energy and enthusiasm, which makes for a great event. See you there.

TAFTSVILLE TIDBIT TRIVIA

Do you remember when...



40 YEARS AGO THIS SUMMER

June 10, 1971

Richard will contact one of the Taftsville neighbor boys to discuss their mowing the ball field this summer.

July 15, 1971

The visit of the Ivan Ramer family from Red Lake Ontario was discussed. The Good Samaritan Fund will pay motel costs at the Farmbrook Motel and a love gift will be given.

August 29, 1971

A discussion was held concerning prayer meeting. The men want to continue meeting Sunday morning prior to church service.

35 YEARS AGO THIS SUMMER

June 8, 1976

A record player is being purchased for the nursery Sunday School class.

A considerable amount of time was spent discussing our belief and purpose of baptism and church membership.

July 8, 1976

THANK YOU to Allen Guntz who kindly prepares the tapes of music which we enjoy prior to the starting of our services.

August 28, 1976

A Benefit Auction for Bethany Birches Camp held at the Woodstock Regional High School. Several persons in our fellowship have already notified the committee of items they wish to donate for the auction, but more items would be appreciated. John Lutz is our local contact person for any questions concerning this activity.

30 YEARS AGO THIS SUMMER

June 4, 1981

John and Gail Hutchinson, Wycliff Missionaries, write: "We cannot express in words our heartfelt thanks for your generous and loving gift towards our car fund!"

July 9, 1981

The church council considered Outdoor sign possibilities for the Chapel. Shown were signboards that would be lighted and have changeable messages.

August 9, 1981

A programmable thermostat was mentioned as being a real convenience. It was suggested we actively look into the purchase of one.

25 YEARS AGO THIS SUMMER

June 26, 1986

An effort will be made to provide a bit more break between Sunday School and Worship. The first bell in Sunday School will ring at 10:20 and the second one at 10:25. Worship will begin at 10:30.

July 29, 1986

Some responses to the discussion question “What will Taftsville Chapel be like in the year 2001?”-
- Some’ founding families’ will leave the area to go into service elsewhere. -The building will be handicapped accessible. - We’ll have the same pastor. -More people will know who Mennonites are. -Some young people in the church will stay and take up leadership roles.

August 30, 1986

Taftsville Chapel Fellowship enjoys “Weekend in the Birches”.

15 YEARS AGO THIS SUMMER

June 1, 1996

We will try combining the Sunday School (k-5) for the summer. Mary Guntz is putting together a schedule for teaching times.

July 6, 1996

The new handicapped access has need of a handrail along the sidewalk. Omar will be looking into this. Allen is pursuing the entrance and parking signs.

August 19, 1996

After many meetings and discussions the Pastoral Search Committee unanimously recommended to the church council Randy Good for the position of pastor. There will be a 3-week evaluation period before discussion and vote by the congregation.

10 YEARS AGO THIS SUMMER

June 10, 2001

Joanna Pejouhy shared with us about her mission trip to Russia.

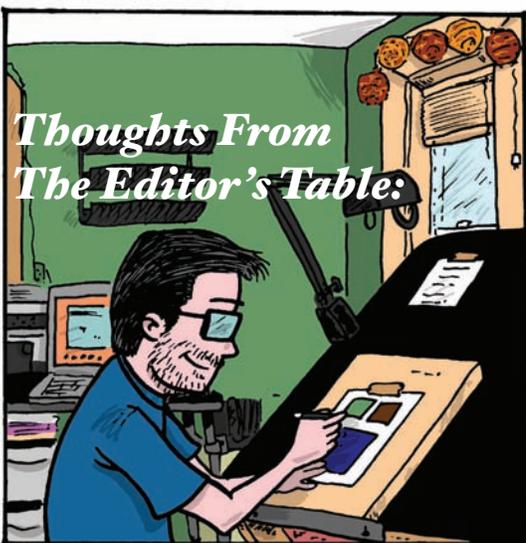
Tim Good joins Tom Glick and the “Bikes of Summer” Team as a support van driver for the month of June.

July 7, 2001

Mary Guntz is coordinating lunch on Saturday for the Habitat for Humanity work crew- about 15 Dartmouth students working on the project in Hartland. Talk to Mary if you can contribute. Also, workers are needed all summer, anybody can help.

August 9, 2001

There was a good representation from Taftsville at the “Bikes of Summer” celebration. Allen rode to Montpelier with the guys; Omar and Janice went to Montreal (not by bicycle) to join them at the Expo’s game. Unfortunately, Red Sox tickets were not available.



Gift Giving

Two months ago Caren Swanson asked me if I'd be willing to take over the editing duties for the Current. She knew I had the computing chops for the job and said the offer came with, "no pressure." Honestly, I was blown away by another example of how this amazing community embraces all its members, even those of us who haven't completed a full liturgical calendar yet.

The invitation Caren offered to me was considered for weeks. I knew the importance of this publication to our immediate and global community and I didn't want to mess up. But the deeper invitation was to use my gifts for the church, something I haven't been able to do in a while.

It's humbling to share what talents the Lord has blessed us with in service to the Kingdom. An added layer of blessing seems to be added to the work we do for one another, allowing the gifts we have been given to bless the church.

I hope my time as editor of the Current adds a small portion of blessing to this shining assembly of Christ followers. I look forward to seeing and sharing the gifts each of us have to bring to the community and beyond in the coming years. Also, please let me know what I can do to improve the Current, and remind me what I have forgotten to include.

One addition I will be bringing to the Current is poetry. I love poetry. Specifically Christian or Christ-imbued verse, of which there is a strong and healthy tradition. I hope to share what verses are bopping around my mind during the months ahead, that they may bring some joy to you as well. This issue's poem is one of my favorites and reads to me like a Psalm. It was written in the 1600's by the metaphysical poet and minister John Donne (He also provided Hemingway with the line, "for whom the bell tolls"). If anyone has poetry of their own they would like to submit to the Current, I would be pleased to include it.

Blessings to you,
Sam Carbaugh

HOLY SONNET

XIV.

Batter my heart, three-person'd God; for you
As yet but knock; breathe, shine, and seek to mend;
That I may rise, and stand, o'erthrow me, and bend
Your force, to break, blow, burn, and make me new.
I, like an usurp'd town, to another due,
Labour to admit you, but O, to no end.
Reason, your viceroy in me, me should defend,
But is captived, and proves weak or untrue.
Yet dearly I love you, and would be loved fain,
But am betroth'd unto your enemy;
Divorce me, untie, or break that knot again,
Take me to you, imprison me, for I,
Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.

-John Donne 1633