



The Buzz

Seventh Day Baptist Church of Berlin Newsletter

Volume 16, Issue 6

February 2012

If you know me at all, you know that I like “fixer uppers.” I enjoy finding things that need a little tender loving care in order to make them work properly or look their best. If you know me very well, you also know that I am a big picture guy, expert at catching the vision for what could be without thinking through all of the steps needed to get there. I can look at a heap and imagine a perfectly-restored car, but I am not very good at all in estimating the amount of time, money or talent needed to finish the job.

I think that is why, when it comes to changing people, the only one who is really up to the job is the Lord. Oh, sure, I have all sorts of ideas about the changes certain people need to make in order to get their lives in order. I even have pretty strong opinions about when they should get started and what steps they need to take. In fact, if you care to ask, I probably have a list all ready for you!

But at the end of the day I don't have the power to effectually change myself, let alone anyone else. Over the years I have discovered this truth: nothing really changes unless God is behind it. We can make small changes around the margins, but unless the Lord steps in we have no hope of experiencing fundamental transformation. It requires the hand of God in order for that to happen.

I am revisiting that thought because, as we prepare ourselves for revival, we want to constantly remind ourselves that our actions alone will not bring it about. We can work with God on being pure. We can pray our hearts out. We can praise God at every turn. We can ask Him to manifest His power through us. We can keep an eye out for the pitfalls that can prevent revival. We can work on being proper priests as we relate to God and one another. We can look to have our perspective changed in the process. But unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain.

As we seek revival, it begins with seeking the Lord, in understanding that He will be the one who sets the agenda regarding the changes we long for in this valley. That does not mean that we get to sit on our hands, waiting for the Lord to act. It is our responsibility to be ready; to be set for action when the Spirit moves. But the credit, the glory, for what will happen does not belong to us, no more than the credit for a sin conquered or a heart changed belongs to us. That credit belongs to God, who is building His house here in Berlin in His time, according to His plan.

Dates to Remember

Weekly Events

Mondays

Youth Fellowship, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Tuesdays

Ladies' Bible Study, 7 p.m., Church Library

Wednesdays

Ladies' Bible Study, 10 a.m., Gerri Greene's
Men's Prayer Group, 8:00 p.m., Sanctuary

Fridays

Friday Nite Fellowship, 7 p.m., John & Damian
Greene's home (February 3 & 17)

Sabbath Day

10:00 a.m., Praise & Worship
10:30 a.m., Worship Service
11:50 a.m., Sabbath School

Monthly Events

2/6 Christian Education Committee,
6 p.m., Church Library

2/10 Couple's Date Night, 6:30 p.m.
Fellowship Hall

2/11 Fellowship Meal
Fellowship Hall, 1 p.m.

2/15 Trustee's Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
Church Library

2/16 Advisory Board, 6:30 p.m.
Church Library

2/18 Community Fellowship, 3:30 p.m.
John & Damian Greene's home

2/22 Snow Tubing outing, 9 a.m.,
at Bousquet Ski Area

Birthdays

2/5 Matthew Simms
2/7 James Davis
2/8 Lexia Stall
2/13 Jennifer Pittman
2/14 Jon Gerstel
2/15 Robert Bentley
2/17 Frances Ellis
Loreli Stall
2/18 Dawn Demick
2/22 Adam Morse
2/23 Paul Demick
2/24 Eric May
2/26 Jennifer Bonesteel
2/28 Nicole Fecteau
Gerri Greene

Refreshments

Church

2/4 Damian Greene

2/11 Ellen Olson
Gerri Greene

2/18

2/25 Dorothy Stall

YF

2/6 Ellen Olson
Gerri Greene
2/13 Damian Greene

2/20

2/27 Dorothy Stall



Sabbath Worship

Children's Message

4 Pastor Matt
11 Teresa Zema
18 Paula Dibble
25 Pastor Josh

Worship Leader

4 Pastor Matt
11 Don Maynard
18 Pastor Matt
25 Craig Mosher

Greeter

4 Ed & Dorothy
11 Ellen M. & Pauline
18 Becky & Paula
25 Denise & Melinda

Christian Craft Circle



Ten ladies were together for two hours laughing, learning and sharing together. Some were working on their own projects. Others were learning to knit and crochet. One made a square for Malawi! Hope you can come and join us next time. It is a great way for us to connect with one another. Look for our next date for a get-together.

Youth Group Scavenger Hunt

On Martin Luther King Day this year, the middle and high school kids of our church went on a scavenger hunt. We met at the church at 1 and divided into three teams. The teams then got in the car and drove to Crossgates Mall, as well as a few other places. We had lists of things to find, from monogrammed underwear to a particularly comfortable massage chair. We also had a list of things to do, like giving store managers high fives and singing "Happy Birthday" to the staff of an ice cream shop. All in all, we had a really great time searching and laughing together.



Date Night Challenge



Research shows that dating at least once a month significantly improves relationships. The Date Night Challenge is a two-hour event featuring comedian Jeff Allen, singer/songwriter Michael O'Brien and bestselling authors Dr. Greg and Erin Smalley via webcast. During the event, the Smalleys will explain the power of dating your mate and encourage couples to take the "Date Night Challenge": go on three dates in three weeks. Please join us in the fellowship hall from 6:30-7 p.m. for a free dessert bar. The webcast will begin at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary. This event is for any couple; you need not be married to attend. Childcare is provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

Meditation on Scripture

Nicole Fecteau

**“But you are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and did not forsake them.”
(Nehemiah 9:17b)**

What shall we say to the fact that we have a God READY to forgive? WOW, that’s easy, we might think. We say, “Hallelujah, praise the Lord, all glory to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!” Like the twenty-four elders in the book of Revelation we are moved to worship him day and night just for this simple fact. Our forgiveness is the reason the Father sent his beloved Son to die for our sins, and when we are reminded of this it moves our hearts to rejoice. As we consider the unfathomable reconciliation now present with our King, we are moved to sing with the angels, as God’s grace brought peace on earth and goodwill to all men who would receive Him. Surely this type of grace, established by the very nature of God, is beyond comprehension, undeserved, and, well, AWESOME!! Unfathomable, true, yet it is so, written and accounted for in both Old and New Testament, and actively present in our daily lives.

Due to this gracious nature, we were forced to concede in our Sabbath class, God does appear to change his mind sometimes. We might object to the idea that God changes But according to scripture, there are times when He apparently does. But before any one has a breakdown, since clearly we depend on the fact God doesn’t change like us fickle humans, hold off, because our study showed that, although God’s nature doesn’t change, He is always ready to forgive, gracious and merciful...abounding in steadfast love. Henceforth, there are times when God’s grace evidently changes His mind.

The Hebrew word, *nahum*, is used in scripture to denote a changing of one’s mind, regret, or showing compassion. Below are just a few of the examples mentioned by the author where *nahum*, in its positive form, meaning, to show compassion, is practiced by God.

When King Hezekiah was sick, Isaiah relayed that he would die. Hezekiah prayed for extra years and Isaiah returned to tell him that his prayer had been answered. The Lord declared He would add fifteen years to Hezekiah’s life. Not only that, but the king would be delivered from the hand of Assyria as well. The word used here to represent the change in God’s will for Hezekiah, shows us that God appears to change his mind in order to show compassion. When the Israelites worshiped that golden calf and the wrath and justice of God was ready to destroy Israel, Moses “changed” the mind of God and the Lord relented (*nahum*). When the Israelites cowered from entering the promised land and the Lord threatened to annihilate them and just start over with Moses, He again “changed his mind” and forgave. God interrupted the judgment concerning the pestilence sent upon Israel due to David’s census as He saw David was grieved and repentant.

God changed his mind in regards to his judgment on Nineveh. [*Of course, God knew from the beginning that the people of Nineveh, upon hearing of God’s intent to judge them, would turn away from their sin. His response of compassion, although it seemed to be a “change,” was foreordained. -ed.*]

The minor prophets, especially Amos and Joel, pleaded for God’s mercy after receiving visions of severe destructive judgment, and God relented from aspects of the judgment. Jeremiah reported that Yahweh chose compassion instead of punishment so often in regard to potential judgments that Our Lord complained of being weary from relenting. (*nahum*, Jeremiah 15:6).

I appreciated the comment made by a few of the other Sabbath class members who said God seems to change his mind in regard to judgment when we change—when we repent and turn from our former course. Hence we can count on God’s compassionate nature, READY TO FORGIVE, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, just as our memory scripture says.

What is Youth Group?

Youth group (often called “youth fellowship” or “Y.F.”) is a weekly activity for young people between 3rd grade and high school. It meets on Monday night from 7pm-8:30pm. The groups have a Bible study, snack time, and recreation. The younger group also frequently does crafts and has a singing time. The goal is to teach young people about Christ at an age appropriate level as well as provide an opportunity for fellowship and fun in an atmosphere that is Christ-like.

Youth group started way back when Damian Greene was in high school and wanted a Bible study for young people her age. Paul Greene told her that if she could find a certain number (I believe 5) high schoolers who would be interested in and commit to a Monday night Bible study, that he would lead it. She found the needed number of youth, and Monday night youth group was born. Shortly after Pastor Matt arrived, it became clear that we had a large number of middle schoolers who could also benefit from a chance to meet and learn about God. Some of the first participants in that group were Craig Mosher and Jeremy and Pete Bullinger. When another leader was found for the Middle school group, Pastor Matt began a group for 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders.



The youth group has always been led by Seventh Day Baptists at our facility, but has included youth from all over the community. We have had people from other churches assist us at times. We have had kids attend from Berlin, Stephentown, Grafton, Cherry Plain, Petersburg, and even Hoosick Falls. We have hosted youth from nearly every church in the area, but tend to get primarily students from our church and those who either do not attend church or could be considered “under churchd”. Numbers of students have varied tremendously over the years and seem to be impacted both by the size of any given grade as well the cohesiveness of the students in that grade.

Pastor Josh Michaels currently coordinates the youth fellowship program under that supervision of the Christian Education Committee. He has a host of teachers, youth leaders, and helpers who help carry out the program and any given Monday night there are generally at least 9 or 10 adults present.

You can help us. We regularly go through 3-6 boxes of cookies a night as well as 3-6 bottles of soda or 2-3 gallons of juice or milk (see youth group refreshment sign up on the ladies aid bulletin board). The youngest group goes through craft materials/projects on a regular basis (see Chantel if you would like to help). Pastor Josh is always looking for people to help out. Most of all we covet your prayers. Working with youth can be difficult and demanding so prayer for the leaders is always welcome. The youth are always struggling with whether or not youth group is cool or if it is more valuable that time spent watching TV or surfing on the internet. While we work hard to make youth group interesting and valuable, it is not entertainment, which is something today’s youth are always searching for. Continue to pray that the youth who need to be there on Monday nights come and that we can meet their needs.



Seventh Day Baptist Church of Berlin
P.O. Box 284
Berlin, NY 12022



Seventh Day Baptist Church of Berlin

41 North Main Street

Berlin, NY 2022

Phone: (518)658-2868

Fax: (518)658-0294

Email: berlinsdb@me.com

Website: www.berlinsdb.org