



# The Mt. Anthems Newsletter

July 2007

## **BELIEVER'S FELLOWSHIP**

### **PETERSBURG, WV**

**SUN. AUG. 5, 2007**

This tiny clapboard Mennonite church with a green metal roof and spring flowers edging the basement walls is situated literally at the end of a winding country road, deep in the hills of West Virginia.

To the left of the parking lot flows the South Branch of the Potomac, low this time of year. Dry bands of rocks hem the wide river far below the parking lot. Little rivulets of water laze around an island of rock midstream.

We left this morning at 7 AM under tattered clouds, the sun struggling to peak through. At Oakland we picked up the rest of the chorus members, saving them an hours' drive to the building.

In spite of us being in the middle of nowhere, it was amazing to see the crowds of people who found this little church. It was even more amazing the usher found seats for the estimated 150 people in attendance.

A wedding the day before contributed to this number. In the audience were Oren and Jo (Hostetler) Yoder, former long-time workers at Fellowship Haven, Washington, D.C., with two of their daughters, the family now residing in Kansas. The Paul Petersheims with daughter Debra and last year's Spain travelers, Connie and Jana Lapp, and Milford Yoder were also in the audience.

*Blessed are the flexible . . .*

Mike led us in songs inviting the Holy Spirit into our midst. We were reminded that we were in "Father's House."

Winding over gray mountains with breath-taking vistas and down through deep West Virginia valleys we could not help but be reminded of the greatness of

our God. He is also a good God in both the good and bad times of our lives as Marty sang in "God on the Mountain."

With "Ten Thousand Angels," "He Paid a Debt," and Menno's requested solo, "The Cross in the Middle," we covered the story of the crucifixion. Then what a glorious song is "Gone!"

*"Gone, the stone is rolled back,  
Gone, the tomb is empty,  
Gone, to sit at the Father's side;  
Gone, over death triumphant,  
Gone, sin is defeated,  
Gone, He lives forever more!"*

There were tears in the audience. Mike had the congregation help us with the chorus during "Our God, He is Alive! The church rang as we nearly blew out the walls. Wow!

Mike shared a story he received by e-mail recently:

*A man named Bryan Anderson stopped to help an old lady in a Mercedes change a tire. She would have given him any amount of money for the favor but he refused; though he was not well to do. He never thought of payment. All he asked was that the lady pass on the deed of kindness when she saw someone else in need.*

*The lady stopped at a dreary café for a bite to eat before finishing the last leg of her journey. A waitress with a warm smile brought her a towel to dry her hair. Though it appeared she was 8 months pregnant and had had a long day on her feet, she never let the strain and aches change her cheerful attitude. The lady remembered the words of Bryan Williams.*

*When the waitress returned with change for the \$100 bill the old lady had paid with, she was already gone. A note on the napkin said,*

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*"You don't owe me anything. I have been there too. Somebody once helped me out, the way I'm helping you. If you really want to pay me back, here is what you do: Do not let this chain of love end with you."*

*Under the napkin were four more \$100 bills. The waitress went home, overcome with gratefulness. How could the old lady have known how much she and her husband needed this? With the baby due next month . . . .*

*Crawling into bed beside her husband, she leaned over and kissed him "Everything's going to be all right," she whispered. "I love you, Bryan Anderson."*

We sang *"Show a Little Bit of Love and Kindness."*

On *"I Need the Prayers,"* the guys forgot what they were supposed to do in verse two. Mike hoped the girls would carry on and they did, successfully.

We really picked up the tempo in the last verse of *"I'll Have a New Body."*

A man from Brooklyn, New York had brought his scholars to the service. He told Menno later, he really enjoyed our music, only he missed the Negro spirituals and syncopated numbers. Menno told him we also do the latter but Mike just happened to choose slower, easy-going numbers.

We enjoyed delicious haystacks again for lunch, finishing with frosty slush and cookies.

Winding down a steep, wet, WV mountainside, we came upon a white pick-up on its side, blocking part of our lane. We rolled right on by. No police or rescue personnel were on the scene nor was a driver in sight.

Heavy mists hung over valleys between the ridge tops, creating breath-taking views even in the rain that whipped the bus windshield on our ride to Buckhannon.

Arriving there, we stopped at a Sheetz to wait for our contact man, Bill Durst, to come and lead us to the church.

Bill came onto the bus and welcomed us. He said he grew up in Grantsville.

## Good Hope Tabernacle Buckhannon, WV

### EVENING

This beautiful, white brick church was located down the slope from an ascending roadway that ran up along the trees on top of a steep bank. hungry going into the evening service.

We were lined up to go up on stage when the church bell rang. Mike checked the pitch. It was B flat.

Menno led the first half. About one third of this wired audience hadn't been with us before. They soaked up the music like the desert takes in rain and applauded after every song.

Requested were Menno's two solos, *"Until Then"* and *"Stand by Me."*

In the second half, the men came in first to do *"Wonderful Story of Love."* We did, *"He's the One"* and *"More than Conquerors."* Marty challenged the audience with *"How Big is God!"*

During Mike's solo *" . . . I can't walk upon these waters . . . . but (I Know A Man Who Can)* I sensed maybe there was someone in the audience who by faith needed to walk on water.

A lady wiped tears during *"I Found the Lily in My Valley."* They kept requesting solos from Menno: *"Come on Home"* and *"Ready to Go."* As we finished the service, there was a rustle of clothing as the audience rose in a standing ovation.

Any praise for anything good we return back to God.

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Rain was falling as we ran down to the fellowship hall for the desserts

## Faith Mennonite Church

South Boston, VA

**SAT. AUG. 18, 2007**

This was a bright, sunny day, perfect for travel with leaving time set for 10 AM. It was unusual that this was an overnight trip since we've had so few this year.

Birthday decorations were draped along the front of the bus above the windshield with a birthday balloon for Marty. .

The bus was pretty quiet between 2-3 PM; chorus members were stretched out sleeping.

The further south we traveled the cheaper the gas. At S. Boston, it was advertised at \$2.45 per gallon.

**TWO PETITE LITTLE GIRLS, (AGES 4 AND 6?) GRACIOUSLY HELD OPEN THE CHURCH DOOR FOR US WHILE WE BROUGHT IN LUGGAGE AND SOUND EQUIPMENT.**

Since we had no good meeting room for our evening meditation, the guys gathered in their changing room and the girls in theirs for prayer.

This was another good service. Only a sprinkle of people hadn't been with us before. Mike started the service with older praise songs: "*Bless the Lord*," "*Praise God from Whom . . .*" and "*Sacrifice of Praise*."

Mike said in the past week, he and Lynnette and his in-laws visited Sight and Sound to see "*In the Beginning*," about creation. It was so beautiful until Eve listened to the serpent and disobeyed. Then what a mess the world became!

When Marty did "*I'm the Lamb*," a request, I was especially impressed with how the audience's gaze fastened on him. Also requested were "*God on the*

*Mountain*," "*Lily in my Valley*," and Menno's solo, "*Stand by Me*."

Someone asked Mike to introduce all the siblings in the chorus.

He said Marty and Joyce don't have children but they are kind of like Mom and Dad to the chorus. And Menno and Grace are Grandpa and Grandma.

## Calvary Baptist Church

Lovington, VA

**SUN. AUG. 19, 2007**

At 8 AM our group met the bus at a lawn mower business, its second stop.

This church is a huge brick structure with many wings and a gigantic vestibule. The greeter at the door always welcomes you with a hug.

The itinerary said we were to be on at 11:00, but it was more like 11:20 until we went on stage. We sang for approximately 25 minutes.

Menno was in charge of the service. We did "*I Stand Amazed*," "*I Forgive*," and "*He's the One*," which was a request. Someone had also asked for Menno's solo, "*Where No One Stands Alone*." For awhile we lost sound doing this one.

It seemed we were finished before we started. In all we did only eight songs. But the audience was very appreciative, giving us a warm response.

A tremendous spread of food awaited us again for lunch. We are so unworthy that people should stretch their energies to accommodate us so.

## Sovereign Grace Baptist

Dale City, VA

**EVENING**

Pastor Gifford gave us an expansive welcome, mentioning how apostasy is creeping into churches and into music. A lot of what passes for Christianity

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today is only fake. He appreciates what the Mt. Anthems have stood for over the years and for the clear, concise, Christ-honoring music. That is why they allow us into their church.

We sang to a full house. Mike led us in "*He Takes a Beggar*," "*O Lord, our Lord*," and "*You are my All in All*."

He got Menno up to do, "*The Cross in the Middle*," a request. For the second time, Marty did "*I'm the Lamb*." Loretta and Brooke did a good job

singing "*Father, I Adore You*" as a duet. Also requested were, "*Deeper than the Sin Stains*" and Menno's "*Stand by Me*."

Given the opportunity, a few people encouraged us to continue on with Christ-centered music.

On the way home, rain beat on the bus on the dark highway. Window blinds rattled here and there. Four guys in the back contested each other in a game of Rook. And here and there pools of light illuminated chorus members reading and relaxing.

-Lena Eicher