Bethany Christian Schools
BULLETIN

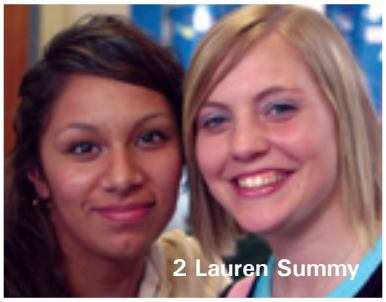
Seniors, 8th Graders Share Faith


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Learning that lasts.
Faith that lives.

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Seniors, 8th Graders Share Faith

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Bethany CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

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Learning that lasts.

Senior Faith Statements

Each year each senior's final Bible assignment is to share his or her faith journey, present beliefs, and future dreams/plans in chapel, class, or a group setting outside of school. Following are excerpts from presentations by five students who shared in a public setting.

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Lauren Summy



I was baptized the summer before entering my freshman year at a local public school. I would like to be able to tell you that I continued to live my life for God, but that would be false.

My friends started doing things I wasn't sure about. I was under a lot of pressure and developed bulimia and anorexia. I became angry with God—he was supposed to be in control of my life—and began experimenting with different things to try and fill the void. Fortunately, I soon realized that these things did not satisfy.

I decided to come to Bethany to be part of a Christian environment. I knew it would take time, effort, God's love, and a good community to fix me completely. Changing schools was one of the best decisions of my life. At Bethany I have been blessed with new friendships that have helped me grow in my faith and as a person. I am continually challenged in my faith and with the way I am living my life, which makes school more than just book work.

[Bible teacher] Dale Shenk challenged the senior class to figure out our gifts and use them to our advantage to serve. God has blessed me with the ability to converse with about anyone and make new friends easily. I prayed and felt God calling me to volunteer at the Boys and Girls Club. The first day a little boy asked me, "Do you believe in Jesus?" I told him what I knew about God, and I pray for him often. My service experience helped me realize how blessed I am.

I look to scripture for answers to my daily questions and find peace with God and myself in these writings. When I go off into the world, I may be considered the life of the party or the blonde cheerleader. But I'd really like to be known as Lauren the daughter of God—because I truly am.

Lauren attends North Goshen Mennonite Church and plans to study cosmetology.

Mitch Stutzman



My story is an uninteresting one. I have never experimented with drugs or alcohol. I've never had any big question surrounding my faith. I have always believed in God. One question I do have is: "Is my story good enough to witness?" People look for inspiration. The dramatic is what is appealing. How would you like it if I were your Spiritual Life Week guest speaker? "I'm Mitch. I have believed in God my whole life and never had any big problems. So believe in God." However, while my story is not as impressive as others, it is just as important.

I have never gone through a time where I questioned if God existed, why people die, or why there is pain. You must be certain of absolutely everything you believe. I believe that the entire Bible should be read literally. Jesus was a man who led a life of simplicity in which he taught us how to be better people, displaying for us peace and justice so that we may become better people. Jesus was without sin and died on the cross in our place so we might live again with him in paradise.

My grandmother is probably the most influential person in my life right now and she is dying of a heart aneurysm. I didn't ask God why. I accept death for what it is, which is just another part of life. I personally look forward to death. Not that I am planning on it any time soon, but if it happens, I'm okay with it.

When you are a little kid learning to ride a bike, your parents hold on to the back seat until they think you are ready to ride on your own. People say it is time to make my faith my own. I feel this is unnecessary. Any time I move away from the faith of my parents, I find flaws and end up falling off my bike. So my faith is my parents' faith.

Mitch attends Pleasant View Mennonite Church and plans to attend Hesston College.

Faith that lives.

Seth Grimes



I was raised Mennonite. Children's Bible songs, Bible stories, and vacation Bible school helped form my initial understanding of God. I knew the Sunday school answers to questions but didn't take what I was saying seriously. As I entered high school, I became skeptical in how I saw the church and God.

Even though I was in a state of questioning, I decided to get baptized in ninth grade, because all my friends were getting baptized. Though I was in baptism exploration class for the wrong reason, the class helped me deal with some of my questions and skepticism. By reading the *Mennonite Confession of Faith*, I was able to see clearly what Mennonites believe and why and decided this was how I wanted to live my life.

Though I am a brother in the wider church of believers, I would classify myself as Mennonite—even though I do not agree with one of the church's basic beliefs: pacifism. I align closely with other Mennonite beliefs such as stewardship—not only being responsible with money, but time, health, and gifts and talents—and community.

I have genuinely enjoyed the community here at Bethany. My church community also means a lot to me, but I used to take it for granted—it took a disaster in my family for me to recognize this. I will never forget a special anointing in church before my mother had surgery for a cancerous tumor. At this moment I felt an enormous amount of love from my church family, and was also one of the times I have felt closest to God. My church community's love didn't stop at the end of the church service as the following months were filled with prayers, cards, and lasagna and tator tot casseroles. Because of my community experiences at Bethany and church I plan to continue my education at another Mennonite institution.

Seth attends Berkey Avenue Mennonite Church and plans to major in business at Goshen College.

Kirsten Miller



I hate change. So it was a surprising thing for me to consider transferring to Bethany after my sophomore year, though my decision process lasted most of the summer: until two days before school started.

However, it didn't take too many school days at Bethany for me to realize I had found a new community that I loved. I found many meaningful friendships and grew in my faith. I had opportunity to look into Mennonite history and my personal faith through discussions in Bible classes and in chapels and with other students. Being connected to so many people who share my Christian faith encouraged me in my own faith.

I also met people who have different beliefs than my own. This opened new perspectives on Christian faith and forced me to look more at my beliefs and where I stand. I have been strengthened by having friends who have different cultures, background, social status, or beliefs. It is important to allow myself to ask questions related to faith, though I must remember that God cannot always be understood by humans and at this point I must have faith. I must choose to have faith that God exists.

Hating change has been a theme in my life—moving to a new church, siblings leaving home, beginning middle school. Bethany has changed my feeling towards change as I've gained a new experience that has showed me its positive side: change can be good.

I believe in God because I have felt the existence of God and seen evidence of God around me. God has a plan for each of us and shapes us with his plan.

Kirsten attends Siloam Fellowship and plans to serve with Eastern Mennonite Mission's YES (Youth Evangelism Service) beginning this fall.

Learning that lasts.

This I Believe

Three seniors from Suzanne Ehst's World Literature class wrote "This I Believe" essays that aired on WVPE. Maggie Baldridge, Quinton Huffman, and Carrie Slagel shared their thoughts on time-outs (pausing to reflect), half and half (learning to compromise), and our connection to earth. Additional information and audio links are available for download at www.bethanycs.net/news_events/news.detail.php?annc_announcement_id=160.

Quinton Huffman



I do not attend a Mennonite church, but my faith has grown since I started attending Bethany in the sixth grade. At times I recall thinking, "I cannot worship with these Mennonites." That thought was dead wrong.

I believe in the God of the Bible with all my heart (Romans 10:9) for three main reasons. 1) The odds of life by chance are astronomical. Something must have been behind it all in order for it to work. I believe that something is God. 2) I realize there must be a purpose for my existence and I find that purpose in this life is to worship my maker and be as Christ-like as possible. 3) When God isn't foremost on my mind, I am more likely to sin. Yet time after time the message the next Sunday is exactly about what I have done wrong in my Christian walk—as though my pastor had followed me around that week. When I experience this type of revelation, I know God exists.

I still have many questions about God. If God knows what we are going to do, why do we need to pray? Yet I have experienced the power of prayer. I don't know how prayer works, but I know it does work.

I began attending a church youth group in which many kids are influenced by gang culture and go home to broken families. Their world is different than mine. This diverse crowd helps me keep my blessings in perspective. This includes money management and consumption. It is easy to think I can do whatever I want with my money. But the money really belongs to God, and with so many people with nothing, it doesn't make sense to blow off what they couldn't dream of. This may be hard to change, because I absolutely adore convenience, but I am committed to changing and pray I will become a better global citizen.

Quinton attends First Baptist Church of Goshen, plans to study chemical engineering at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, and more recently has also considered pursuing pastoral ministry.

2007 Student Commencement Speakers



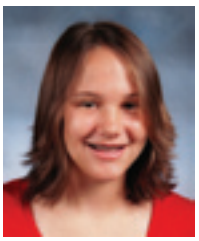
Rachel Lanctot reflected on the strong sense of community she experienced during her two years at Bethany, "I remember the genuine interest and respect I felt from both classmates and teachers starting on the first day of school. You showed me true loyalty, friendship, assurance, and acceptance. You became my community, and I became a part of yours." She concluded, "Let us not forget the unique qualities of self and community that have shaped our time together, that have, in turn, shaped us. We have been blessed with the knowledge and power of God. Let his wisdom guide us as we live out our coming lives as the sons and daughters of Christ."

Jon Shetler began his address stating that he was never a star athlete, actor, singer, or academic achiever and that his being chosen to speak at commencement is a "reflection of Bethany's belief in the ability of all its students—no matter how average. My acceptance into this community was not based on achievements. This created a social atmosphere that encouraged me to form my own identity ... and become more aware of my God-given strengths." He concluded, "The small community at Bethany is like a family.... Yet it is important to remain open to the global community in order to see how we can best serve humanity and God."

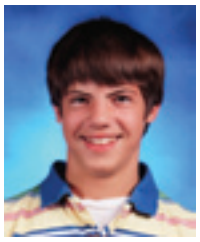


Faith that lives.

Eighth Graders Appreciate Faith Learning



"I feel free to talk about God to anyone around me—and that is something very special. Having a good individual relationship with God is important, but how can that ever be nurtured without discussing things with othes? Here I can grow every day because I can do that. And more importantly, I enjoy doing that."
—Mandy Schlabach, Waterford Mennonite



"No matter what activities we participate in, it all ties in to our spiritual life. This helps me think about my faith and how it relates to these everyday activities." —Benjamin Bontreger, Yellow Creek Mennonite



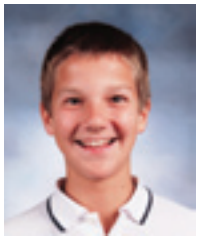
"Bethany is peaceful, and we live together with our differences. I'm Missionary, whereas the majority of students are Mennonite, yet we can still get along and respect each other. We may disagree on some things, but that doesn't stop us from being friends."
—Janice Kleptz, New Paris Missionary Church



"Our school is like a family and helps me feel more comfortable with my faith. Because of this, I've grown to know God a little more each year and be able to express my faith and share it with others." —Rebecca Padilla, Iglesia Menonita del Buen Pastor



"Last year I went to a public school and forgot that God existed. Now I'm reminded every day that God is there and I have someone to turn to in my time of need. My faith is strengthening, and I am much happier at home."
—Heather Schwartz, Silverwood Mennonite



Everyone can talk about their faith. It is wonderful that you don't have to be in Bible class to hear about God; it can be in language arts, math, or social studies too." —Ben Mast, Berkey Avenue Mennonite



"My faith has gone from just knowing a few things about the Bible to being ready to join the church because of what I have learned. God is now in my everyday life. I love going to chapel to sing and hear the messages. I want to learn about ways to be a Christian and be mature in living out my faith." —Hannah Johnson, Eighth Street Mennonite



I like playing guitar in chapel. It is fun getting up in front of the school and playing music." —Seth Krabill, Berkey Avenue Mennonite



At Bethany all students can talk about their beliefs. Being in a Christian school setting has really shaped me. I feel that I can talk to anyone about what I believe and can be myself without feeling like people are judging me. —Nellie Wenger, Holdeman Mennonite



I have enjoyed how both teachers and students share about their faith, and that we can have in-class discussions on Christianity. —James Helmuth, Prairie Street Mennonite

Campus News

53rd Commencement

At Bethany's 53rd commencement on Sunday, May 27, Mick Sommers, father of senior Steffen Sommers and pastor at Hively Avenue Mennonite Church, challenged the 48 graduates to "seek out others who share a desire to build rather than destroy ... and to lead us in working for a better world." (See page 4 for student addresses).



The class gift included fuding to buy plants for the inner courtyard and a contribution toward tuition assistance. Graduates received clay bowls as a symbol of community, often experienced in sharing food together.

Top ten academic graduates (co-valedictorians in italics): (front) Susan Ahn, *Maggie Baldridge*, Wes Klassen, *Rachel Lanctot*, *Rebecca Martin*; (back) Kirsten Miller, Priyata Patel, Hannah Roth, Phil Shenk, *Jakob zumFelde*.

Teacher of the Year



Math 7 & 8 and Bible 8 teacher Matt Miller was named Bethany's 2006-07 teacher of the year. Students and parents who nominated Matt affirmed him for making learning fun, incorporating faith into classroom instruction, forming caring relationships with students, and giving time outside the classroom in coaching, helping students with homework, and planning fun chapels and socials.

Fields Named for Bodiker

In recognition of Dan Bodiker's 43 years of service to Bethany as coach, teacher, and athletic director, principal Allan Dueck announced at Dan's May 12 retirement open house that Bethany's baseball, soccer, and softball fields have been named Bodiker Athletic Fields.

Additionally, parents presented Dan with a quilt made from various Bethany T-shirts. Over 500 people attended the open house, including alumni from Phoenix, Ariz., and Harrisonburg, Va. Dan has been at Bethany for 43 of the school's 53 years. He started Bethany's interscholastic athletic programs in basketball, baseball, and soccer.



Surrounding the newly-unveiled Bodiker Athletic Fields sign are Dan Bodiker (left) and his wife Diane (right) with their sons Scott ('88) and Michael ('92) and their families.

School Begins August 13

2006-07 Awards



Front: Meg Kennell, Beth Berry Peace and Justice Award; Seth Grimes and Alicia Schwartzentruber, Outstanding Senior Athletes; Maggie Baldridge, Art Purchase Award; Jon Shetler, Cup of Kindness Award. Back: Mitch Stutzman, Hannah Roth, and Martin Brubaker, Outstanding Senior Vocalists; Stephanie Hollenberg and Simon Smucker, Outstanding Senior Instrumentalists.

Alumni News

Births

Conrad ('82) and Marypat **Smucker**, Seattle, Wash., adopted brothers Patrick (born Apr. 15, 2003) and Sean (born Apr. 27, 2004) from Russia on Aug. 9, 2006. Conrad is a senior legal counsel for Weyerhaeuser Company.

Eric ('83) and Sheri **Unzicker,** Muncie, Ind., son Leo James, Apr. 4.

Rebekah Stutzman ('87) and Rob Ripperger, Washington, D.C., daughter Elizabeth Joyce, Apr. 25. Grandparents are Phyllis (Dintaman '60) Stutzman and the late Ron Stutzman ('60).

Lynn (Borntreger '88) and Martin **Brubaker**, Lebanon, Ore., daughter Sailor Delaney, Apr. 17. Grandmother is Eva (Hoover '59) Borntreger.

Jim ('89) and Crystal **Maust**, China, daughter Rachel Heng En, adopted Mar. 26; born June 19, 2006. Grandmother is Wilmetta (Yoder, '59, staff '77-94).

Jeff ('93) and Sarah **Bontrager**, Nashville, Tenn., son Samuel Jay, Apr. 11. Jeff graduated from Vanderbilt University School of Medicine in May and will start a combined residency in internal medicine and pediatrics at Indiana University Medical Center in Indianapolis, Ind.

Jill (Landis '94) and Kumar Anuraj **Jha**, Harrisonburg, Va., daughter Anusha, Apr. 25.

Kristian ('94) and Shana **Bontreger**, Fishers, Ind., daughter Abigail Susan, Feb. 1, died Apr. 20. Grandfather is Tim Bontreger ('69).

Tara ('95) and Lucas **Swartzendruber Landis**, Philadelphia, Pa., son Emerson Rodney, Mar. 25.

Maria (Gnagey '97) and Sam **Woelk**, Elkhart, Ind., daughter Kaylee Elizabeth, May 12. Grandmother is Nedra (Beck '71) Gnagey.

Kevin ('98) and Devin **Lehman**, Goshen, daughter Madison Marie, May 14. Grandfather is Tom Lehman ('65).

Alex Krawiec ('06) and Alisa Miller, Goshen, daughter Amanda Justine Paige, Apr. 23. Grandmother is Deb (Homes '80) Krawiec.

Alum/Students on The Globe

91.1 FM The Globe's summer staff consists of Mary Roth ('09), Jen Snyder ('08) (aka Jodi Reese), Trisha Handrich ('07) (aka Sadie Kruise), and Keith Beber ('05). Air schedule each weekday is: 6-10 a.m. Sadie Kruise, 10 a.m. to noon Jodi Reese, noon to 2 p.m. Mary Roth, and 2-4 p.m. Keith Beber. Listen to them online at www.globeradio.org.

Deaths

Bob Stuckey ('70), Oregon, Ohio, Mar. 11.

Marriages

Alice (Trumbull '66) March and John Irwin, Newton, Iowa, May 19.

Jerrol Shaum ('84) and Mary Ann Weber, Goshen, Apr. 14.

Jeff Miller ('95) and Monica Newcomer, Brooksville, Fla., Mar. 31 in Goshen.

Tonya Swartzendruber ('98) and Bradley Bergey, Chicago, June 2 in Goshen.

Rachael Yoder ('98) and Matt Jarvis, Leland, N.C., June 16. She recently earned a master's in clinical social work.

Aaron Lehman ('00) and Anne Albrecht, Goshen, May 26. Aaron graduated from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary on May 19.

Forrest Ramser ('00) and Courtney Johnson, Scottsdale, Ariz., June 2.

Heidi Buller ('02) and Kevin Gunn, Lakewood, Colo., May 19 in Red Feather, Colo.

Melanie Histand ('02) and Jason Schmucker, College Station, Tex., June 2, in Toledo, Ohio.

Aaron Gnagey ('03) and **Rebecca Fath ('03)**, Valparaiso, Ind., June 9 in Goshen.

Justin Heinz ('03) and **Hannah Kehr ('03)**, Goshen, May 19.

Notes

Greg Sommers ('80) is administrator of Warwick River Christian School in Virginia.

Kelly Lerner ('82), co-author of *Natural Remodeling for the Not-So-Green House,* is a 2007 Nautilus Book Awards finalist.

Tony ('88) and Benda **Kauffman,** Goshen, will be directors at Drift Creek Camp in Oregon's Coastal Range Mountains. They sold *The Electric Brew* coffee shop to Myron and Dana (Miller '76) Bontrager.

Chad Martin ('93) began in June as associate pastor at Community Mennonite Church of Lancaster, Pa.

Wes Schrock ('95) received his MBA in global management from Thunderbird University in Arizona.

Jan-Aaron Klassen ('98), Switzerland, is a graduate student in economics.

Sophie Charles ('00), Chicago, Ill, is director of a refugee youth leadership program.

Alumni Reunions

Class of '57: Oct 13 Contact Charlene Farmwald at dcfarm@maplenet.net.

Class of '58: Sept. 27-28, 2008. Contact Steve Kauffman at deergrove@aol.com.

Class of '62: Aug. 11-12. Contact Gretchen Honderich Yoder at yodercj@verizon.net or 574 533-2085.

Class of '67: Sept. 29-30. Contact Joann Troyer Garber at cragarb@maplenet.net or 574 533-0216.

Class of '72: Aug. 10-11. Contact Max Beck at mmbeck@comcast.net.

Class of '77: Aug. 11. Contact Anna Mast at admast@bnin.net.

Class of '82: Aug.11. Contact Cindy Hawkins at hawkmom4@aol.com.

Class of '87: Aug. 11. Contact Marlis Chupp at mchupp@ccsgoshen.org.

Class of '92: Sept. 8. Contact Justin Weaver at justin@friedenswald.org.

Class of '97: Aug. 3. Contact Ben Hartman at benchartman@hotmail.com.

Class of '02: Contact Sonia Oswald at jamaicas_finest20@hotmail.com.

From the Principal

Allan Dueck



A central Anabaptist-Mennonite tenet, from the time of the Reformation until the present, has been the conviction that following Christ must be an individual, adult decision. During early 1500's, this conviction expressed itself in an unshakable commitment to adult believers' baptism. Though today's world seems radically different from the Europe of 500 years ago, young people today also face the challenge of finding their way to a faith they own.

The excerpts from five senior students' faith statements in this *Bulletin* bookmark a stage in the development of five young people at Bethany. That each person's story is unique illustrates that the Christian faith journey can only be an individual one. While one student recognizes the clarity of God's plan for her life, another seeks to grow as a steward of money. And while one student affirms the importance of serving others, another finds that prayer is a powerful avenue for experiencing God.

Bethany challenges each student to explore for herself the significance of Christ's call to follow him. In a faith-based community, adult mentors encourage students to consider Christ's call and respond to it in ways that are meaningful for them. Many students thoughtfully examine their beliefs and identify ingredients of faith they can own.

Notably these senior faith statements are markers of these students' faith journeys at this place and time. Christian faith is not a static, once-for-all event but a commitment to make those little and big decisions each day that draw us closer to Christ. And these students, too, will experience continued growth and change in their faith journeys.

In a culture that diminishes the significance of religious faith and questions God's claim on our lives, these students are grappling with issues of faith, taking a stand for the kinds of convictions and lifestyle to which they believe themselves called. Their personal ownership of faith holds the promise of equipping them for a lifelong journey of serving others in the church and world.

We thank God for the commitments and growth of students at Bethany this year, and we pray that they follow Christ's call to love others and serve as his hands and feet in the church and world.

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