

*Bethel Bible Leaders
Graduation*



February 27, 2011

Greetings to everyone!

I want to share with you my wonderful experience of the last two years with the Bethel Bible Series. The Bible Series comes from the Bethel Lutheran Church in Madison, Wisconsin. This study is an overview of the whole Bible.

Two years ago, a special group of people responded to an invitation to study the whole Bible, connecting concepts of the Old Testament to those in the New Testament. The class met thirteen times each semester for four semesters. After each class meeting, students had about eight hours of reading and studying at home.



The class is graduating. We take this opportunity to recognize these special Bethel leaders and also to dedicate them to live out the Bethel motto, "Blessed to be a blessing."

If I had known at the beginning of my ministry the incredible fellowship that is a part of this group, I would have been offering this class from the beginning of my ministry. The class members would say the same for the wonderful journey we have experienced.

BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING

Soon you will have an opportunity to experience the congregational phase of the Bethel Bible class (the class for the congregation doesn't involve so much work). This fall you can join a group and learn of your Bible and its message to you. Let that grow in your thinking and planning.

Pastor Darlene Hann

What Bethel Bible Study Has Meant to Me



Bethel Series Studies came into my life as a hope to transform my inner being into a new one. I am a fourth generation Christian in my family. I have always tried to study the Bible in a deep way, but for some reason I've never gotten it into His full meaning.

When I heard about having BSS in my church, immediately I was so excited to attend it and searched it to know a little bit more about this study. As the time came with daily prayer and asking the Holy Spirit to show me what God's plan was for me, suddenly one day I noticed I was in Rev. Hann's office for the BSS interview. I did know that it was God's will, I did know that I had to make the commitment for two years of study and I did know what would be my obstacles and barriers during this

long journey.

I was very overwhelmed to get started, because English is my fifth language. I had to memorize Bible concepts using pictures as memory aids; this was a way to knock me down. Not to mention the almost monthly tests... Therefore, instead of giving up in the first instance, I continued to pray to the Holy Spirit to help me to overcome these difficulties.

As long as I have stuck with it, God has shown me a way to work it out, my faith has gotten stronger, so my burden became easier. I have only words of praise and thanks for giving me this amazing opportunity, being so close and knowing Him intimately. He is my Rock, My Fortress and My Salvation, what shall I fear?

Thank You Rev. Darlene Hann!!!!

Ya Ten G. Lin

What Bethel Bible Study Has Meant to Me

Before I answer the question of what this Study has meant to me, I thought I would first highlight what this Study did for me; first it opened my heart up to the Lord Jesus Christ. It gave me a better understanding of God's words and it allowed the Word to have life.

What I gained from this study was that God wrote a book and the words in this book were given by God. Just as God spoke His creation into existence, the words written in this book define God's plan for His creation. Some would have you believe that man wrote the book, but I contend that just as God spoke his creation into existence, he spoke to man's heart, who then recorded the word of God.



The Bethel Bible study brought everything together. It helped me piece the Old Testament and New Testament together; one can not stand alone without the other. It clearly showed me that God's plan was for us to be in harmony with Him and His creation. This study opened my eyes to why God gave us free will. When God created humankind He gave them the free will to choose to obey. A choice to place themselves equal with God or a choice to be servant to God. The choices we make establish our relationship with Him. All through the OT, we learned that when humankind focused its attention on worldly things we distanced ourselves from God. I learned that the temptations of the world constantly challenge our obedience to God.

This study also fitted me with the Armor of God. Paul writes to the Ephesians, instructing them (Eph. 6:10) "be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power." To be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power, we must first know the Lord and His mighty powers. Paul tells us to put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes, for our struggles are not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the power of this dark world and against the spiritual force of evil in the heavenly realms.

Throughout the OT I learned that all—Adam, Noah, Abraham, Jacob and David—were tempted by the world. At times they choose to listen to the worldly expectations and fall from the grace of God, but when they put on the full armor of God (truth and faith), they were prepared to take on the world. With God's grace and truth they conquered the evil.

There is another connection between the OT and NT. The world is under the

control of the spiritual force of evil, from beginning of creation to the time when Jesus Christ will come to reclaim his creation and cast judgment on all.

I have just shared a few things that I received from this study, but when all is said and done, this study was just an appetizer. Yes, two years of studies excited me to learn more. There were times when I could not wait to read the next chapter, even when I knew the outcome. For some reason each time that I read the word, I walked away with a stronger understanding. Do I understand it all? Far from it.

This study brought Sue (my faith partner) and me spiritually closer together. We've made new friends in Christ. We became members of the body of Christ, not just members of the church. If I had to summarize in fewer words what the Study meant to me, I would say we are Blessed to be a Blessing, and the best is yet to come.

Ron Minkus

What Bethel Bible Study Has Meant to Me

Enrolling in the Bethel Bible Series has been an extremely enriching experience for me. It has been so rewarding and I have learned so much in these two years. It has inspired me to read the entire Bible not just once, but twice.

When Ron and I joined Pleasant Hills, I joined a Bible study that Ron was attending. It opened up a desire in me to learn more about God and the Bible. This class came as the perfect opportunity to do just that. The lessons, pictures, and concepts have given me a clearer understanding of lessons that are in the Bible. I realize study will never be at an end, but this series has given me a wonderful solid basis. It has also given me the confidence to help others who have that hunger to learn more.

Sue Minkus



What Bethel Bible Study Has Meant to Me



The Bethel Bible Series states that its mission is “...to lead members of a local church into disciplined study of scripture in such a way that they encounter the Living Christ.” The question then is—how do we meet the Living Christ? Working through the Bethel Series, I have found that this program seeks to address this question with a unique overview approach of the Old and New Testaments. A biblical knowledge base was established by immersing us (the students) in the Bible. Throughout the study process, from the pages of Scripture, we gleaned the wonderful story of God, showing us His plan of salvation and taking us through history via His word.

When we began this new adventure, I never realized that the amount of time and rigorous discipline demanded by the commitment to biblical study would yield such bountiful rewards. The Scriptures became alive and exciting, most importantly, they became relevant in my daily life. Unique talents and gifts that were mine began to emerge. As my classmates and I studied together, we understood in a deeper way what it meant to be a member of a Christ-centered community. I reflect on the ways I have grown and continue to grow because of this outstanding Bible learning program.

As the Lord promised to Abraham in Genesis 12: 2-3:

*“²I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you;
I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.*

³I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”

It is my prayer that we as Bethel Series “graduates” will be a blessing to all those whose lives we touch.

Charles H. Weber

What Bethel Bible Study Has Meant to Me

I was raised in an era where one's faith was a very private thing. Consequently, there was no discussion about a relationship with the Lord in our family. I did read the Bible but only to select verses in it that I understood. Truthfully, reading the Bible was rather frustrating because of my lack of knowledge. The Bethel Bible Study opened the Old Testament to me and how significant it is to the New Testament. As I became familiar with the Bible, I have a better understanding of where to look for specific scripture; the people of the Bible now have personalities. The study is an ongoing challenge to me—I do not memorize easily!! Was the time I invested in this study worth it? Absolutely.



Joanne Weber

What Bethel Bible Study Has Meant to Me



I retired three plus years ago, I have a wife (Karen), daughter (Lisa) and dog (Samantha). I love to camp, ride my bike and walk.

I came to PHCPC around 1968 while dating Karen and joined around 1972 when Karen and I married.

My passions, projects and goals are to volunteer at PHCPC by helping Bill Rust; going on short term mission trips (one day, one week) and serving others generally.

I joined the Bethel Leaders Class to satisfy my desire to study biblical concepts more in depth than I could on my own.

Bruce Webster

What Bethel Bible Study Has Meant to Me

I was brought up in Pleasant Hills. I have a husband Bruce. Our daughter Lisa worked with CrossOver and is now a Hospice Chaplain. I enjoy the outdoors, sewing, rubber stamping and reading.

I have always attended PHCPC since my parents and grandparents were members.

My passion, projects and goals are to continue to help with IHN, singing in the choir, Stephen Ministry and participating in Bible studies.

I was interested in learning more about the Bible and what it means to be and live as a Christian; that is my reason for joining Bethel Bible class.

Karen Webster



What Bethel Bible Study Has Meant to Me



During my childhood and early adulthood, I was un-churched but did know and believed in God. My reading of the Bible came through exposure via the public school system. When I joined the Navy in 1965, they gave me a small New Testament which I still have to this day.

I am married to Claudia, we have two children and one grandchild.

I came to PHCPC in November 1975. We had two young children and we needed to provide them with a church life. We found that at PHCPC.

In 1993, I took my first church mission trip to Costa Rica. I have done local, national and international trips. I have met so many great Christians doing mission work. While

preparing to go on the mission trips, I realized how little I knew about the Bible. After taking additional mission trips in 1994 and 1995, I decided that I needed more training in the study of the Bible.

In the Fall of 1996, I enrolled in the first Bethel Bible Study offered at PHCPC. I did not have a firm background in the Bible. That study gave me a knowledgeable overview of the Scriptures to serve as a base or a springboard from which to pursue an in-depth study of God's word.

Since 2000, this is my fourth time reading through the Bible. This study has given me additional insight into the books of the Bible. At least now I have some idea as to where to look up Biblical information. I have enjoyed this study.

I joined the Bethel Leaders class to get an in-depth study of the Bible. My goal of learning more about the Bible has been enhanced by this two year program. I recommend it to anyone who desires an in-depth study.

Wayne Wicks

Bethel Bible Leaders



From left to right: Rev. Darlene Hann, Ya Ten Lin, Chuck Weber, Eileen Halpern, Ron and Sue Minkus, Karen and Bruce Webster, Joanne Weber and Wayne Wicks.