

# Introducing...

## *Little Buckhorn Mennonite Church*

by Pastor Eldon Miller

The church was birthed in 1957 when the former Bethel Children's Home property became available for purchase. At approximately the same time, it was determined that the Gays Creek Church property (owned by RMM) needed to be sold and vacated due to the new dam that was being constructed to create Buckhorn Lake. The purchase of the property was transacted in February 1957 and named "Bethel Mennonite Center."

David Showalter (who was serving as pastor of Gays Creek) relocated to Little Buckhorn Creek in 1958 to become the first pastor of this new church program. In the fall of 1960 Eldon Miller was ordained to serve as Assistant Pastor with Brother David. Eldon served in that capacity until June, 1964, when Brother David and his family moved to Virginia to further the children's education. Since then Eldon has served as pastor of Little Buckhorn Church.

With the passing of years we have pondered what God has in store for future leadership. As a church, we have prayed for wisdom and vision to discern the mind of the Lord. On May 1, 2005, the church appointed three brothers from the congregation for a two-year period to discern their giftings. It has been a real joy to see how God is developing the talents of these brothers since that time.

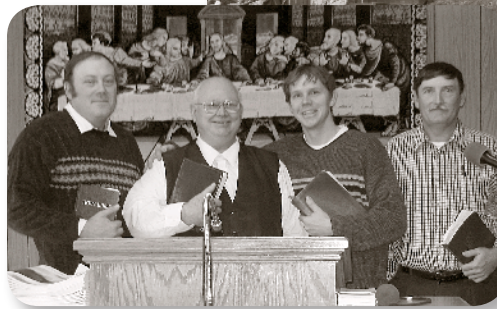
In the early days of the church its ministry was designed with a heavy emphasis on children and youth with a number of adults involved. At that time we needed assistance from numerous voluntary service workers. All who came to help us were a great asset. As the years have passed we have seen a considerable population shift. In the area of the creeks and hollows that we consider our church community we used to have between 400-500 children and youth. We now have approximately 100. We are now blessed with a larger adult audience but unfortunately have fewer children and youth.

Our Wednesday night services usually involved more children and youth than our Sunday services do. It continues to be a challenge to reach the homes these children come from, some from unfortunate and dire circumstances, where there is a lot to be desired when it comes to parental involvement and concern. Having our children and youth attend Bethel Camp has been a real godsend in assisting many of these youth in getting a good foundation for their lives. Parents, even though not always Christians, treasure having their children involved in such a godly environment for a week. Praise God for what Bethel Camp is providing for the youth of our Eastern Kentucky area churches.

One of the amazing things that blesses us is to see how God has, from the early days, called out young men who came to church as young boys and who now, as grown men with families, have been given very fruitful ministries. One who got his start in the first VBS in 1957 even before our church officially



Little Buckhorn Mennonite Church  
Rowdy, Kentucky



Leadership Team—Gene Fugate, Eldon Miller,  
Roger Voth, and Oat Marshall

opened, has been serving as an Assembly of God pastor for many years in the Midwest, in Montana and Wyoming. Another of our boys is now pastor in Louisville, Kentucky, and another one is a radio evangelist and also assists Eldon with the many funerals he

ministers in. While the church at Little Buckhorn has never been large in number, it's awesome to see the impact it has had, and is having, in the Breathitt County and Perry County area.

In the last number of years with the drug problems we face in our area, it also means becoming more involved with drug rehab programs, visiting and counseling those arrested in drug bust roundups, and counseling the drug dealers before they are sent to jail or prison. Recently in one of these visits with one of those who had been sent to jail, Pastor Eldon was privileged to lead a young lady to the Lord for salvation. She is one among others who had a start years ago in our VBS but became involved with the wrong crowd and was now desperate for God to bring about change in her life.

As a church we are concerned that we have to reach our generation if we are to see a bright future for our community. We can't do all we would like to, but we will, by God's grace, keep on sowing the seed and trusting God for the harvest. (I Corinthians 15:58) So, as we look into the future, we are occasionally asked what our goals or missions are? It could be best stated as follows:

"To show and share the love of Jesus with compassion to the unsaved and wounded, and to provide a church family to nurture and disciple believers."

We desire to pass on to the next generation a heritage that we all can be proud of and gratified by, so help us God. **BB**