

required to do two field education components in the Masters of Divinity Degree. My interim at Nettle Creek served as one of these requirements. I am preparing to begin my 2nd field education experience during this academic school year. **I will begin as student pastor in the Cincinnati, Ohio Church of the Brethren on Aug. 31, 2003.** It will last for the entire school year, ending in late April or early May. While this will take me away from the Nettle Creek congregation for a period of time, it is a great opportunity for me to increase my learning and understanding of ministry. **I would deeply appreciate your prayers for me during this time-it is a gift to feel surrounded by others in prayer and faith when we are growing and having new learning experiences.** This is the last big hurdle for me to conquer to be able to graduate. In May 2004 I plan to go to Taizé, France for my multicultural experience. This will allow me to complete my Masters of Divinity review course (my final requirement for graduation) in the fall of 2004. Bethany awards degrees only one time a year, so I will officially graduate in May of 2005, but **I hope to be completed by Christmas of 2004.** **It feels like I have been running this race a long time, but it is exciting for me to begin to see the finish line. While I have had my moments of discouragement that I just wouldn't be able to do this, God has been steady and has reassured me that I didn't have to win the race fast, just pace myself and one day I would achieve the goal. *Slow but steady wins the race!*** Ann Bach

Valerie Healton:

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I began my studies at Bethany in the fall of 2000 pursuing my Master's in Divinity. I attend part-time which is 6 hours or less, however, I usually attend classes anywhere from 2-4 times per week. I am on the 6-year track, which allows me to be more relaxed in completing my course requirements, which fits in well with my family responsibilities. I became licensed by this congregation on January 5, 2003. I finished my middler student preaching assignment with the Troy Church of the Brethren in May and with 36 credit hours complete, I am exactly halfway through. I have truly enjoyed my time at Bethany thus far and look forward to expanding my learning as well as furthering my exploration of the call that God has graciously placed upon my life.

God Bless all of you!

Valerie Healton

See You At the Pole

September 17, 2003 youth across the United States will **gather to experience the power of prayer around their flagpoles.** This year this event will take place both at **Hagerstown Elementary and Hagerstown High School.** Needed are 2 –3 kids from the elementary to high school that want to help plan the event (Parents are welcome to attend the meeting and event). You need to be present at the meeting and event and to pray for the event. **The planning meeting will be September 2 at 7:00 p.m. at New Testament Church of Christ.** Students if you are interested in attending this planning meeting, contact Jeremy Green at 765-489-5762

Sister Church Picnic



Don't forget to come to the Hagerstown Park at noon on **September 21** for food, fun, and fellowship with our sisters and brothers in Christ from Locust Grove and White Branch CoB Congregations. Bring a covered dish and an appetite.

National Young Adult Conference 2004: Stand at the Crossroads and Look

It's not too early to plan to attend the National Young Adult Conference, which will be held **June 14-18, 2004** at Snow Mountain Ranch, Winter Park, Colorado. The conference will be held at the YMCA Retreat center in the Rocky Mountains. The **cost** of registration, which covers housing, programming, and meals, is **\$225.** The conference is geared toward **young adults ages 18-35.** Each day, you will have the opportunity to participate in two worship celebrations. **Keynote speakers** include: Tony Compolo, Angie Lahman Yoder, Belita Mitchell, and Stan Noffsinger. Shawn Kirchner will lead music. You will also have time to enjoy many recreational options such as hiking, swimming, volleyball, tennis, fishing,