

KALEIDOSCOPE

BETHEL COLLEGE MENNONITE CHURCH

July-August 2017 11:4



Pastor's Corner with Dawn Yoder Harms

DISTRACTED BY WEEDS



It's official: Kansas grows weeds just as well as Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and Indiana! I am reminded of this reality every time I step outside my back door and head toward the garden with my watering can and see the weeds. Often I am assailed by a powerful desire to put everything down and start pulling. Often I succumb, and fifteen minutes later, I realize that I am woefully off-task, distracted by weeds again.

Not that this distraction is all bad. Over the years, tending to weeds has provided fruitful time for reflection. As I pry them from the soil, I find myself wondering: what makes a weed a weed? Because it is a plant in the "wrong" place? Because weeds disturb my image of a clean, orderly garden? Because they threaten to choke out the garden vegetables? And why, pray tell, are they so much more prolific and hearty than the plants I am trying to cultivate? I also wonder, how

might weeds be beneficial? Take the buffalo grass creeping into our yard: I am grateful for this grass that needs little water. Or the mysterious purple wild flowers/weeds blooming at the edge of our garden: whatever they are, I am grateful for their beauty. And milk weed (not yet growing in my yard!): I know how important it is for the survival of the monarch butterfly, so I give thanks for its presence, too.

And then my musings move toward the community of faith. In our life together, what do we consider to be "weeds"? Something or someone who doesn't fit our mold? A different or unusual way of doing things? A thought or idea that we are uncomfortable

with? How might perceived "weeds" be beneficial—adding richness, variety, resiliency to our life together? And how do we discern when they are truly noxious? No easy answers here. Just musings from my own weed patch, which is teaching me: weeds are a part of life; learn from them; and tend them a little bit every day to prevent sore muscles. I think I have found a new spiritual practice!

with a small cohort of my colleagues and a professional leadership coach. These were times to share our leadership challenges with each other and receive honest feedback and resources. It's always enriching for me to hear from colleagues who belong to other denominations and different professions. The cross-pollination of unique perspectives often leads to new discoveries.

Nevertheless, for me, the purpose of participating in this program was about more than finding ways to address professional challenges. I needed a way to engage my spiritual life with deeper intention. At each of our gatherings, in January and in June, our coaches structured our time together with poetry, art, lengthy opportunities to reflect and write, and encouraged us to engage each other in truthful and vulnerable conversation about our spiritual lives. As I departed from the retreat center in June, I was awestruck by the community that formed among these twenty strangers in just six months of time. The experience has enlivened my spiritual life. As time moves forward, I hope to integrate my learning into our life together at BCMC. ~ John Tyson

Engaging Young Clergy and Community Innovators



Over the past six months, I've had the privilege to participate in a program put on by the Center for Courage and Renewal. The center was founded by Quaker scholar and activist Parker Palmer to gather educators, clergy, and community leaders for group-based spiritual reflection, conversation, and leadership training. The program that I participated in was specifically designed for young clergy and community innovators. Some of us were pastors and some of us happened to be social entrepreneurs engaged in community development. All of us share the common dream of contributing to thriving communities.

Following our initial face-to-face gathering in January, I engaged in a monthly Google Hangout conversation



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Looking Back and Facing the Future by Kathy Neufeld Dunn WDC Associate Conference Minister (Kansas-based)



Thank you for the opportunity to share a summary of what is going on around and within Western District Con-

ference. I also want to thank Bethel College Mennonite Church for your consistent support of WDC and its congregations through your prayers, volunteer leadership on our commissions and task forces, Assembly delegate engagement, and financial gifts. We do not take it for granted.

Bethel College Mennonite Church offers its unique perspective as “the college church” as WDC celebrates our 125th anniversary. As Heidi Regier Kreider noted in her recent *Garden* article, “Comments from the Conference Minister,” one of the historical themes of our conference has been and continues to be our emphasis on education “to preserve the Mennonite faith and train church leaders.” In addition to education, what other unique ways has BCMC contributed to the culture and ministry of our conference? What are the faith stories that you tell and re-tell? Sharing these stories will be a wonderful part of our 2017 WDC Assembly and in the year to come.

Our annual Assembly will look to our history to inform our future as a multicultural, missional Church. As our Assembly scripture notes, “Continue to live your lives in [Christ], rooted and built up in

him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness” (Col. 2.6-7). We will recall what we have been taught and how this has shaped us and we will continue to live our lives, faithfully following Christ in gratitude in this time and place.

Two ways that WDC is seeking to be faithful to Christ today are through the work of two task forces, one that was formed this year and the other that is in the process of reforming, the Israel-Palestine Task Force and Immigration Task Force, respectively. The Israel-Palestine Task Force is helping delegates to the Mennonite Church USA convention discern how best to respond to the complex and painful context that is Israel-Palestine. The Immigration Task Force is being reformed because recently some WDC congregations noticed the fear of many of their undocumented immigrant neighbors. Other congregations asked for partners in responding to the needs of refugees settling in their communities. There are several people who are dedicated to helping congregations network and learn from each other within these ministry contexts. They are in the process of becoming a recognized task force.

WDC is looking back and facing the future as people “rooted and built up in Christ.” You are a vital part of our ministry together today and into the future where God already is.



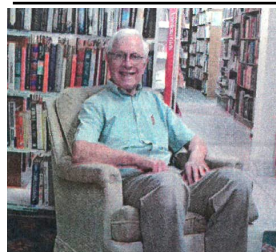
With our members.....



Brenda Turner's 50th Birthday Project

There are many ways to celebrate a milestone such as a 50th birthday, but Brenda Turner came up with a unique way to celebrate all year. She decided this birthday didn't need to be all about her. She has chosen to gift \$50 to 50 different local organizations who help others. She has donated to more than half of the 50 so far, and hopes to continue her project during the rest of the year. So far she has met some very nice people, and is learning much about each organization. We commend you, Brenda, for such a generous outpouring of caring. May you continue to be blessed by your project. Brenda's birth day is February 7. Happy Birthday Brenda!

~ Lois Goertzen



Books, Books, Books!

Volunteerism is alive and well among BCMC members. Within the month of my arrival in North Newton I received a phone call. It was Vern Preheim inquiring whether I would be interested in volunteering at Book ReViews. As the manager, it appeared that he was also chief recruiter of volunteers. Vern himself began volunteering at Book ReViews in June 2006 when he began as manager continuing till September 2013 when he turned over the general managerial duties to Cheryl Major. He now devotes his time to managing the on-line sale of books through ABEbooks.com. Internet sales represent about

18% of the income for Book ReViews. When I asked what types of books he found sold well on the internet he said that they sell a lot of theology books and commentaries as well as books by Mennonite authors and ones dealing with Anabaptist/Mennonite History. Then there are particularly interesting books which someone buys through the internet listings such as one entitled “How to Build a Four-Manifold Organ” which had been donated to Book ReViews by Bill Friesen. Check your bookshelves, that tome which has been languishing there may be just what someone is looking for!

Vern cites the importance of conservation of resources by recycling books and knowing that the profits from their sale support a variety of local service organizations such as The Homeless Shelter, Habitat for Humanity, and CASA, among others, as particular reasons for the many hours he continues to donate to this organization.

~ Dianne Epp



Matt Schloneger has accepted a tenure-track position in voice at Friends University in Wichita. He will be teaching

voice, voice pedagogy, voice literature, and opera workshop and recruiting. He is looking forward to working at an institution that deeply values the performing arts, and being able to fully focus his attention on teaching. Matt has mixed emotions leaving Hesston College where he was nurtured and encouraged over the past 16 years and will miss the fulfilling work of bringing world-class performing arts to the community through the Hesston Bethel Performing Arts. Best wishes, Matt, as you transition to this new position.

~ Lois Goertzen

Happy 80th Birthday Susan Rhoades!



Susan Rhoades was born July 23, 1937, to Mariam Penner and Herbert Schmidt at Bethel Hospital in Newton. Because her

mother's doctor was on vacation, she was delivered by her physician father at Bethel Hospital in Newton. She joined her sister, Madalyn, who was born on the same day three years earlier, and they grew up together in Newton.

As a child, Susan enjoyed spending time at the hospital while her father was working and formed a special bond with the Bethel Hospital Deaconesses. Susan's mother, who was born in India as the daughter of missionaries, helped widen Susan's view of the world. After graduating from high school, Susan went on to study at Emporia State University, where she met Keith Rhoades, a young man from western Kansas. They were married on January 30, 1960, at BCMC, with Reverend Russell Mast officiating. They were the first couple to walk down the church's newly carpeted center aisle! Throughout their years of marriage, Susan and Keith were blessed with three children: Marc, Eric, and Stacey.

For many years of her adult life, Susan worked as a lab technician for several local clinics. Feeling drawn toward work that involved more interaction with people, Susan entered the field of public relations, working for Axtell Hospital, Newton USD 373, and Kidron Bethel Village. Susan has been a lifelong participant of BCMC, becoming a member on May 13, 1951, when she was baptized. Over the years, she has enjoyed serv-

ing as a high school Sunday School teacher, youth group sponsor, Deacon, and on the funeral committee. Susan has seen many changes at BCMC over the 80 years of her life. She loves the music in our congregation, particularly hymn singing, and hopes we will continue to nurture this gift and pass it on to the generations that come.

Over the last year, health challenges have slowed down Susan's pace of life. But they have not diminished her spirit. These days, she finds herself worrying less, leaning more on God, and treasuring this ongoing journey of faith. In the meantime, she loves connecting with her three children, seven grandchildren, two great grandchildren (and two more on the way!), all living at a distance. She has especially enjoyed working with photos on the computer, creating newsletters, and making t-shirt quilts for her grandchildren.

Susan's hopes for the future center around her children and grandchildren: she hopes they will find vocations they love and serve God with their lives.

Blessings to you, Susan, as you celebrate your 80th year of life. Thank you for blessing us with your story and your presence among us! ~ Dawn Yoder Harms

Happy 12th Birthday Alice Claassen!

Happy birthday to Alice Claassen, who turned 12 on July 1! Alice, who was born in Wichita, attended both Northridge and Walton Elementary Schools and just completed 6th grade at Santa Fe Middle School. She will begin the coming school year as a 7th grader at Chisholm

Middle School.

Alice's easiest subject at school is math, but her favorite subject is science. She also loves to read. Since 5th grade, she has been learning to play the cello.

Alice has a keen interest in animals. Since she was a 1st grader, she has been raising pigs, training them, and showing them at the 4-H fair. This summer she plans to show two pigs at the state fair. Other 4-H involvements include photography and fiber arts.

Alice has been attending BCMC with her family since she was a kindergartener. She is currently part of the Junior Youth Group. She enjoys participating in Menno Ringers.

Alice's parents are Mike and Stahli Claassen. She has an older sister, Emma, and younger brother, Payne, and a dog, Lula.

Alice, all the best as you celebrate your first 12 years of life. We are so glad you are part of the BCMC family!

~ Dawn Yoder Harms



Obituaries



Floyd G. Bartel,
November 25,
1929—May 5,
2017

Floyd was born in rural Hillsboro and spent his youth on the farm. He attended the Silverfield school for eight years, Hillsboro High School for two years, and Mennonite Bible Academy at Bethel College, where he finished high school and attended college. He was baptized at Johannestal Mennonite Church. Floyd taught at Steinbach country school and Buhler Elementary School. Floyd married Pearl Schroeder in 1951. Floyd and Pearl served a one-year voluntary service assignment in Cuauthémoc, Mexico. He and Pearl returned to Kansas and Floyd graduated from Bethel College in 1953. He attended Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Chicago, where he also served as interim pastor and minister of community outreach at Woodlawn Mennonite Church. After graduating from seminary in 1956, he taught public school and trained at the Menninger Foundation in Topeka. While in Topeka, he became the founding pastor for the Southern Hills Mennonite Church. In 1965, Floyd and his family moved to Lancaster, PA, where he was the pastor of Bethel Mennonite Church for 11 years. In 1976, he returned to Kansas, where he worked for the General Conference Commission on Home Ministries. In 1982, he became the pastor at First Mennonite Church in Newton, and in 1989 he went to work for the Western District Conference as associate conference pastor, later adding part of his time at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary branch in North Newton, an extension

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of the Elkhart seminary. Pearl died in 1994. In 1995, he married Justina D. Neufeld in North Newton. He retired in 2002. In 2016, health issues required him to move to skilled nursing first at Kidron Bethel then to Schowalter Villa, Hesston.



**Darrell W. Fast—
September 5,
1939—June
11, 2017**

Darrell, 77 years, died peacefully at

the Leamington Mennonite Home, Leamington, Ontario. Beloved husband of Loretta Fast. Dear father of Douglas Fast (Michelle) and Larissa Fast. Loving Grandpa of Avery and Britton Fast. Dear brother of Elisabeth Smith (Aaron), Evelyn Schofield (late Charles), Donald Fast (Diane) and brother-in-law of Anita Janzen, and Betty Ann Bontrager (Mervin). Darrell will be remembered by many nieces, nephews and friends. Darrell was a Pastor at Mennonite churches in Toronto, North Newton, KS and Leamington and served the wider Mennonite Church in a

variety of capacities.

Darrell Fast was pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church from 1986-1999. There will be a memorial service at Bethel College Mennonite Church, for Darrell, on Saturday, August 12 at 10 a.m.

Worship schedule *(Check weekly bulletins and church web site, bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org, for updates and details on worship and other events)* Sunday worship is at 9:30 a.m., unless otherwise noted. Fellowship Time in the Gathering Place with coffee, water and tea available is at 10:30 a.m. Faith Formation is at 10:50 a.m. Everyone is welcome!

July 2017—Summer of Small Things

July 2—Hill Climbing—Worship with sermon by Dawn Yoder Harms; music by Matt and Rebecca Schloneger

July 9—Covenantal Friendship/OR Service—Worship with sermon by John Tyson; music by Evan Koch, trumpet

July 16—Prayer—Worship with sermon by Dawn Yoder Harms; music by Bell Quartet with Suzy Burch, Nat Dick, Marlene Ewert and Ben Lichti; Sunday School Faith Forum with MC USA Convention Reporting by BCMC delegates

July 23—Stuff—Worship with sermon by John Tyson; music by Brent and Maggie Dungan; Sunday School Faith Forum on New Hope Shelter

July 30—Sustaining Creation—Worship with sermon by Dawn Yoder Harms; Sunday School Faith Forum on Sustaining Creation

August 2017—Summer of Small Things

August 6—Unselfish Self-Care—Worship with sermon by Susan Wheeler

August 13—Dying Well—Worship with sermon by Dawn Yoder Harms; music by Andrew Thiesen, trombone; Sunday School elective: Sharing by BCMC delegates to the Western District Conference Assembly

August 20—Entering a new place and a new time (Genesis 12)—Worship with sermon by John Tyson; Welcome to new students at Bethel College; Sunday school classes resume

August 27—Holy Time—Worship with sermon by Eric Massanari

Note: Any given Sunday's events may be subject to change