

KALEIDOSCOPE

BETHEL COLLEGE MENNONITE CHURCH

April—May 2014 8:2



Days of Prayer and Action for Colombia

Adelante! Peace with Justice for ALL Colombians! Forward! Ahead! Peace with Justice for All Colombians!

The Witness Commission called attention to the Days of Prayer and Action April 6 and 7. Why? Mennonite Central Committee describes reality on the ground this way: “Colombia remains one of the countries in the world with the most internally displaced persons at about 10 per cent of the total population.” Since 2000, the United States has provided over \$6 billion mostly in the form of military and police support to ostensibly eradicate the flow of cocaine and to fight terrorists.

This policy of aid to Colombia, termed “Plan Colombia,” has exacerbated the war while proving ineffective in curbing the drug trade.

BCMC member Nathan Toews, serving with Mennonite Central Committee in Colombia, said in an email dated March 11, 2014: “Here in Bogotá we will be writing letters to the Colombian politicians to bring about positive change in their country. We hope to get signatures from significant Colombian church leaders and present the letters to the offices of influential senators calling for a just peace for Colombians. Thank you for your efforts.”

The Witness Commission will keep the congregation informed of concrete actions we can take to join many other congregations in the US to ask the US government to adopt policies toward Colombia which promote peace.

On April 6, Margaret Toews, Witness Commission chair, present-

ed a kingdom report on Days of Prayer and Action, and the Witness Commission sponsored letter writing to legislators in Washington, D.C.

~ Margaret Toews, chair, Witness Commission

Following is a letter from Nathan Toews, to BCMC
March 28, 2014

Nathan Toews is a Psychosocial Support Worker - Church Coordination for Psychosocial Action with Mennonite Central Committee, in Bogota, Colombia.

Greetings from Colombia! I hope all is well in North Newton, Kansas as spring is on its way. I have now completed two years with the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Colombia and am excited to report that my work here gives me new insight into contextual aspects of the armed conflict and how Colombian Anabaptist churches are responding. The upcoming ecumenical advocacy campaign, Days of Prayer and Action (DOPA) is an important component for raising awareness and promoting policy change both in the United States and in Colombia. Churches here are gathering signatures from prominent church leaders and holding campaign events in support of policy change in Colombia while the churches in the United States will be doing similar activities for policy change in the United States. Current US

and Colombian policy promotes militarism and economic policy that for the past several decades has exacerbated the armed conflict and increased human rights violations by various armed groups and the Colombian military. As Christians who believe in a peace theology we have a responsibility to push for political change. To learn more about this event you can visit the website, <http://washington.mcc.org/days>.

While these international advocacy campaigns are important, much of the work MCC supports is on a community level and in Colombia this work is mostly done through the Colombian Anabaptist church communities. My work as a Psychosocial Support Worker involves me with local Mennonite and Mennonite Brethren communities in the city of Soacha where people who have been displaced from their homes by the armed conflict have come looking for safety and employment. Having left their homes out of fear for their lives they come to the city with very little and while

continued next page



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they did escape the immediate danger from where they came, being displaced and without a home in a context of urban poverty comes with a variety of new and often insurmountable challenges. Anabaptist churches in Colombia have outreach programs and small community churches in Soacha where people suffering the conditions of displacement and urban poverty have come to worship and look for community.

The context of these small urban church communities has given me an understanding of the challenges displaced people face; challenges such as unemployment, overcrowded neighborhoods, lack of infrastructure to support sanitation and water needs, and a general lack of community and a constructive social fabric that provides the social and emotional support that people in such situations are also hungry for. Another often-unexpected challenge is the oppressive governance of urban gangs. These gangs often exercise similar tactics of larger armed groups such as extortion of local businesses and instilling fear in local residences, not to mention overt violence of occasional neighborhood gang conflicts.

While small community churches do not have the means to provide substantial economic support they do provide a space where people can become part of a community once again. Through activities such as providing free lunches for kids, dance classes, craft-making classes, women's discussion groups, prayer groups and worship services, these church projects become places for building new relationships where they can find social, emotional and spiritual support that might not otherwise be available to them. I have been facilitating workshops with community members on a variety of topics such as understanding stress and trauma, and active listening skills as a form of promoting psychosocial accompaniment within the neighborhood. These spaces have become very engaging as community members begin to share their personal experiences of stress and trauma and discuss what it means to listen to each other and how listening can become a way to strengthen relationships that are about dignity and mutual respect. In a context where violence, dominance

and fear drive relationship dynamics, the act of listening with an open mind and an open heart provide a fresh opportunity for people to relate to each other in ways that promote love and mutuality.

Thank you for your interest and blessings to the BCMC community.

~ *Nathan Toews*



Eight New Members Received March 16

New members received into the fellowship of BCMC on March 16 were Carl Andreas (in absentia), Rosalind Andreas, Margret Loewen Gaeddert, Mary Kondziola (in absentia), Interim Associate Pastor Weldon Martens, Jenny Harms Martens, Wendell Rempel and Aleta Rempel. They were introduced by their sponsors, and were welcomed by the congregation at the rear of the sanctuary following the morning service. We are thankful for these valued additions to our church family.

~ *Lois Goertzen*

New members below are:

Front row from left: Jenny Harms Martens, Carl Andreas, Wendell Rempel

Back row from left: Weldon Martens, Mary Kondziola, Aleta Rempel, Rosalind Andreas, Margret Loewen Gaeddert



Pipe Organ Update

The Möller pipe organ at BCMC, newly renovated by Dobson Organ Builders, was dedicated on Sunday, March 9 with a litany of praise during the morning worship service. Another event celebrating the organ and the Lenten and Easter season will be April 19 at 3:00 p.m., in an organ recital and hymn festival led by organist Christopher Shaw on the theme "Raised to New Life." Shaw will be joined by other BCMC musicians – Eleanor Kaufman, organ; Nancy Hilty, piano; Rebecca Schloneger, violin; and Matthew Schloneger, tenor. A freewill offering will be received at the recital to support the organ renovation as part of Living Stones, BCMC's ongoing long-range plan. ~ *Heidi Regier Kreider*

Creation Care Sunday

Creation Care Sunday is coming this April 27 and will include a very special children's story. We hope you can join us for this service where our theme and focus is Light.

~ *Creation Care Committee*

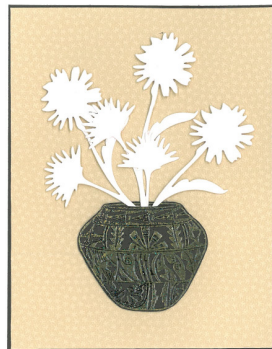


Nathan facilitates a small group discussion

BCMC Members "Art is Ageless" Winners

Two members of BCMC are winners in the annual *Art is Ageless* juried competition held by Newton Presbyterian Manor. Deane Frey was the Judges Choice in the Quilting with her "Roses with Love" quilt. Deane was featured in the October-November 2013 issue of *Kaleidoscope*. Shirley Harms won the Mixed Media/Crafts

(amateur) division with her "Greeting Cards." Congratulations Deane and Shirley! Pictured here are Shirley's cards. Some of them involve Scherenschnitte which means "scissor cuts" in German, and is the art of paper cutting design. Shirley embosses designs on the cards and also does some stitching on them. These pictures do not do the cards justice. You'll have to ask Shirley to show them to you! ~ *Kaliedoscope editors*



BCMC's Dedicated Quilters

The nine dedicated members of the BCMC Quilters, officially known as the North Newton Mission Quilters, work diligently every Monday afternoon in Room B-5 from 1 to 5 p.m. They have completed their quilt for the Mennonite Central Committee Sale, which was recently on display at the back of the sanctuary. With the exception of the MCC quilt, they quilt for private individuals, charging 60 cents per yard of quilting thread. All proceeds received from their quilting for others are given to BCMC or local charities. This year funds were given to the

BCMC Caring Fund and to the General Fund for maintenance. Charity gifts included the Domestic Violence Shelter and Health Ministries.

While quilting, the women enjoy great fellowship and form lasting friendships. From the beginning, the quilters have had someone reading to them while quilting. Justina Neufeld is presently their reader. A wide variety of books have been read, including autobiographies, fiction, nonfiction, social science books. They have a complete list of the books read through the years. They take turns bringing refreshments to share at a break at 3 p.m.

They generally have a list of people waiting for quilts to be quilted. At present the list includes three people. They do not piece or mark the quilts, only quilt for other people, plus quilting for the MCC sale.

Quilting began within a year (1898) of the organization of BCMC as a part of the Women's Sewing Society, as well as doing other sewing and bazaar endeavors to support home and foreign missions. Then in about 1915-16, a group of women decided they would like to only quilt, and originally met in homes. When the Science Hall was completed in 1926, they met in a basement room for a period of time, before going back to meeting in homes. In the 1950s, two quilting groups were formed, and this quilting group had very high standards.

The groups of quilters have shrunk in recent years to only one group and meets one day a week. There are presently nine quilters who meet every Monday. They include Louise Thieszen, chair, Deane Frey, Boots Raber, Evelyn Quiring, Mildred Voran, Marilyn Harrold, Emmy Midkiff, Nancy Hilty and Lois Preheim, the newest member. There are a number of members who quilted for many years, but have retired. They include Viola Unruh, Mary Esther Loganbill, Rubie Reimer, Berta Miller and Ethel Abrahams.

HELP WANTED: There are openings for anyone interested in joining the BCMC Mission Quilters. They extend a sincere invitation and one may contact Louise Thieszen, or any of the current quilters, or simply show up next Monday at 1 p.m. ~ *Karen Penner*



Starting at the left and then clockwise: Marilyn Harrold, Lois Preheim, Louise Thieszen, Evelyn Quiring, Justina Neufeld, Deane Frey, Boots Raber, Mildred Voran



Eighth Annual Comforter Blitz—2014

Picture a large gymnasium, but this gym was not filled with sports equipment. At one end of the gymnasium were nine sewing machines. Thirty-five church tables were scattered around, many have been raised with 12" leg extensions to make higher work surfaces. At the other end of the gym were tables piled high with boxes of fabric, and more tables with chairs to form a dining area. In the corner were a dozen gigantic rolls of polyester batting - each one the size of a bathtub. The rest of the gym had a grid of 22 quilting frames set up - each one with a backing, batting, and donated pieced quilt top carefully pinned onto the quilting frame, and resting on quilt stands.

It took four hours of work by 20 women (and a few men) to get Journey at Yoder set up for the 8th Annual Comforter Blitz. Beginning at noon on Monday, we were joined by over a hundred women who came to help assemble comforters for MCC. Some women came for only an hour or two, others stayed for both days of the Blitz.

Our 2014 Blitz was held on March 10 and 11. We had about 300 women (and five young Amish men) attend the event. These workers came from 57 different church-

es. Most were from Kansas, five women from the Old Colony Mennonites in Mexico, one woman from Canada, two from Oklahoma, and one from Indiana. This year we completed 168 comforters for MCC. A dozen were set aside to sell at the Relief Sale Quilt Auction in April. Some partially completed comforters were set aside for the 2015 Blitz to "fill the pipeline."

The Blitz is a project of Kansas Friends of MCC. KFMCC is a committee of twelve women representing church groups that support MCC. Our members come from these church conferences: Amish, Conservative Amish, MC USA (both Western District Conference and South Central Conference), Mennonite Brethren, Old Colony Mennonite. We meet four times a year to prepare for the blitz. At the present time, Carol Peters of BCMC is chair of KFMCC.

The women from BCMC who attended the Blitz were Lenore Waltner, Carol Buller, Helen Pauls, Deane Frey, Brenda Turner, Justina Neufeld, Helen Nachtigal, Alice Suderman, Lois Preheim, Carol Peters, Marilyn Harrold, Louise Thieszen, and Shirley Harms. ~ *Written by Carol Peters, edited by Lois Goertzen*



(Editor's note: It was very obvious to me that Carol Peters was indeed one of the main cheerleaders for this event - and by her frequent announcements of this event at the weekly quilting group at church and at women's circle meetings encouraged the group of women from our church to attend and participate. What a wonderful event for the many who attended and for the recipients of those warm comforters. ~ *Lois Goertzen*)

Happy 80th Birthday Bernice Esau!



In Mountain Lake, Minnesota, on May 1, 1934, Henry and Bertha (Wiebe) Klaassen welcomed their first child, a daughter, named Bernice. Her brother, Eldon, joined the family two years later. Bernice recalls a lot of work to be done on the farm; a good sized garden, chickens and baby chicks added each year, cleaning the house while mother baked zweibach and bread. She says, "I learned to work and not to play!" However, fishing was a pastime her mother especially enjoyed, using worms to catch bullheads. The family took occasional trips to a retreat center in Iowa. Bernice and brother Eldon walked the half-mile to the country schoolhouse where she joined the largest class of five stu-

dents. By 7th grade this school had closed so she attended public school in town going there by bus. She enjoyed playing clarinet in the band, and held second chair while friend Marilyn Kliever (Harrold) held first. Playing in the band at basketball games - for their very good team - and singing in the choir are fond memories. The family regularly attended the Gospel Mennonite Church where Bernice was baptized as a teen. Nursing was her career goal, so upon high school graduation she attended the West Suburban Hospital School of Nursing in Oak Park, Illinois. These three full years passed quickly and then a fourth was added as employment. Now she felt her Mennonite upbringing calling - so it was off to Goshen College for a two year Bible degree. At this juncture she became acquainted with a young man named John Esau. He owned a car and conveniently offered a ride as he was going to Goshen from Mountain Lake. They were joined in marriage on July 24, 1959 at the Gospel Mennonite Church. Bernice worked in the surgical unit at Elkhart General Hospital while John completed seminary at AMBS. Next they followed a call to serve at the Faith Mennonite Church in Minneapolis, MN. Son David and daughter Sheryl were born during these years. Bernice worked evenings so John could provide childcare. A special experience was a year in Winnipeg, Manitoba, where John served as interim instructor at Canadian Mennonite Bible College. Son Keith was added to the family by adoption in Winnipeg. The next call was to North Newton, Kansas, and Bethel College Mennonite Church. Bernice worked for about eight years as College Nurse at Bethel College. She graduated in 1977 from Bethel

College with a unique degree, "Bachelor of Arts with Emphasis in Nursing." Only she and Delores (Lehman) Wedel were granted this degree. Bernice found fulfillment in ten years of work in the surgical area at Bethel Hospital. At BCMC, she enjoyed participating in Women's Fellowship as well as singing in the choir. Most family trips involved Mountain Lake, but later Eureka Springs, Arkansas, for Opera in the Ozarks was a treat. As opportunity came, Bernice and John traveled as far as Alaska, Hawaii, England, Israel, Poland, and with Family Heritage Tour to the Ukraine. Bernice kept computer skills current and her sharp mind busy with genealogy studies and ten years with VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) at the Newton library. Bird watching, flowers, and gardening have always been life giving. *Great is Thy Faithfulness* is a favorite hymn, and God's faithfulness was very near when 41 year old son Keith died on May 9, 2009. Bernice, you have used your mind, talents, and bent for hard work learned in childhood to enrich many lives. May you experience the abundance of God's love as you celebrate a full 80 years granted by God.

~ Susan Wheeler

With Our Members

New members received into fellowship March 19:

- * Carl and Rosalind Andreas
- * Weldon and Jenny Harms Martens
- * Margret Loewen Gaeddert
- * Mary Kondziola
- * Wendell and Aleta Rempel



Happy 60th Wedding Anniversary to Willis and Dorothy Regier Harder May 28, 1954

Meet the Agape Sunday School Class

Agape – "Brotherly love for one's fellow humans," – an appropriate name for our BCMC young adult Sunday School Class. This vital group of 23 young adults meet at KIPCOR on Sunday mornings, as well as sharing monthly potluck meals.

The Agape Young Adult Class was organized in the early 2000's by Pastor Ruth Harder, and met originally at the Agape Center until



Some of the Agape Sunday School class members are front row: Bethany Schrag, Suzy Burch, Crystal Gaeddert Back row: Tim Schrag, Erich Boschmann, Brad Burch, Joel Gaeddert

they outgrew that space. Ruth would often bring a *concept* to the class to discuss. Their agenda is loosely organized, as they are a mobile group and many have young children. A few examples of their class sessions include (1) looking at current events; (2) discussing various issues by inviting older BCMC members to lead discussions, such as John Sheriff, Patty Shelly, and Keith Sprunger; (3) sharing perspectives of their professions/ work. They have read and studied the Mennonite *Confession of Faith*. Matt Schloneger led a study of music in the Mennonite Church, as well as music in the church in general. Class members include Josh and Erin Brubacher, Brad and Suzy Burch, Joel and Crystal Gaeddert, Victoria Janzen and Marshall Schmidt, Matt and Jenni Koontz, Ben Lichti, Alan and Sheri Leopard, Erich Boschmann, Adam and Jill Robb, Patrick and Julia Robb, Matt and Rebecca Schloneger, Tim and Bethany Schrag and Keith Neufeld.

~ Karen Penner

Obituaries



**A. Wayne Wiens—
October 31, 1936—
February 6, 2014**
A. Wayne Wiens Emeritus Professor of Biology

at Bethel College, passed away unexpectedly Feb. 6, 2014. Born Oct. 31, 1936, he graduated from Hillsboro High School, completed a natural science major at Bethel College, a zoology masters at Kansas State University, and a Ph.D in biochemistry and cell biology at Northwestern University. A consummate teacher, Wayne began his career at Kansas University as a teaching assistant and retired from Bethel College in 2010. He loved gardening, his pets, reading, sailing, travel, crafting wooden toys, and working with Habitat for Humanity. He especially enjoyed cutting hedge wood for the stove with his dear friend Charles Graber, and working on the MCC Meat Canning Project with friend and colleague Hugo Boschmann. Wayne is survived by his wife, Gail Lutsch of Newton; daughter, Amy of Columbus, Ohio; son, Eric (Susan Neufeld) of El Cerrito, Calif.; brothers, Wendell Wiens of Newton, Paul Wiens (Dolores) of St. George, Utah; and many nieces and nephews. The memorial service was Feb. 16, in Krehbiel Auditorium, Bethel College. Memorial donations can be sent to the A. Wayne Wiens Biology Scholarship Endowment Fund at Bethel College, Habitat for Humanity, or the MCC Meat Canning Project, care of Bethel College Mennonite Church.



Shirley Anne Goertzen Thieszen

**February 29, 1936—
March 1, 2014**

Shirley Anne Thieszen was born February 29, 1936, to Ben and Susie Goertzen at Mt. Lake, Minnesota. She passed away March 1, 2014, at the age of 78 years, in her home in North Newton.

Shirley attended elementary and high school in Mountain Lake, and was baptized there at age 15 at Bethel Mennonite Church. After completing a bachelor's degree in education at Goshen College, she went with a good friend to Ohio to teach elementary school. She then attended Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Indiana, where she met Marvin Thieszen. They were married December 28, 1962. They spent the first years of their marriage in Chicago, then moved back to Elkhart, Indiana. Shirley continued to teach elementary school until a daughter, Stacy, was born in 1967, and a son, Mark, in 1970. She enjoyed being a stay-at-home mom while her children were young.

In 1970 the family moved to Freeman, South Dakota, and in 1975 they moved to Lakin, Kansas.

Shirley earned a Master's degree in Library Science from Emporia State University and worked as the Lakin Grade School librarian. As a librarian, she touched the lives of many children, bringing them the gift of stories and finding joy in reading and books. She retired in 1997. Shirley and Marvin were active members of the Garden Valley Church in Garden City, Kansas, where Shirley also managed the church library. Shirley went on a number of mission visits to India, where she served by bringing order to the library at Centenary Mennonite Brethren Bible College at Shamshabad, India. These trips offered the opportunity to enjoy her love of travel and to make many new friends. She took great pleasure in both the adventures she had and the connections she made. She also enjoyed hosting meals in her home, playing Scrabble and other games with family and friends, reading, gardening, and trips to the Colorado mountains. She greeted the birth of two grandsons, in 2003 and 2008, with great joy and anticipation.

Shirley and Marvin moved to North Newton in 2007. Together, they enjoyed concerts at Bethel College, getting involved in the Bethel College Mennonite Church, being closer to family members, connecting with old friends and making new ones. In the last few years of her life, dementia brought with it many unwelcome changes, but her warm smile, her sense of humor, and her affection for her family never left her.

She is survived by her husband, Marvin Thieszen; a daughter, Stacy Thieszen of Minneapolis, Minnesota; a son, Mark Thieszen of North Newton; a sister, Joyce Kre-

hbiel and spouse Larry of Kingman, Kansas; and a brother, Rodney Goertzen and spouse Mary of Mt. Lake, Minnesota; as well as two grandsons, Kai and Soren Thieszen.



William Lewis Friesen
July 9, 1916—March 26, 2014

William Lewis Friesen was born on the 9th of July 1916. Born at home on the Nebraska plains, his early life was filled with the chores and hard work typical of life on the farm. One of the things he was very proud of was the fact that he could plow a straight line with a team of six horses and up until recently he could still name those horses.

After graduating from high school he left for York College where he paid for his first year of school with a side of beef. This was during the depression and the faculty was very happy to get the meat. After two years at York, he spent the next two years teaching in a one room school house while still helping out on the farm. Three years at Nebraska University resulted in a degree in agricultural education and the next three years were spent teaching in Mead Nebraska, followed by another two years in Crete. Although dad registered as a conscientious objector, aged, interestingly enough, offered a deferment from ser-

vice during World War II.

It was during his time in Crete that Dad met and soon thereafter married Margaret Reimer. The following ten years, from 1946-1956, were spent managing the college farm and teaching aged courses at Bethel College. He especially liked teaching botany. It was also during this time that he earned his master's degree in aged and his three children were born.

A change in direction took Dad back to Henderson, Nebraska as office manager for Midwest Irrigation. This adventure lasted two years and was followed by a move back to Newton where he became business manager and treasurer for the then General Conference Mennonite Church.

Dad served the church until 1975. He went on to combine his love for agriculture and his business acumen to serve as President of Showalter Foundation for the next 17 years, retiring at the age of 75. Dad liked to say he retired from work three times, first as an educator, then with the church and finally from Showalter. In retirement he continued to serve the community staying active in the church and helping out in various ways at both Bethel College and Kidron Bethel.



It takes a village

The Spring Congregational Meeting is coming, Sunday, April 27, 12:45 in the sanctuary following an all church potluck in Fellowship Hall at noon. The Annual Reports will be in church mailboxes on Sunday, April 20. BCMC has a Church Board with four committees and a team serving under the Board and also five commissions with numerous committees serving under those commissions. Sounds like a lot, doesn't it, a regular "village" of people? But consider what they do. From the Church Board Handbook: "The Church Board's primary purpose is to understand and articulate the vision and mission for Bethel College Mennonite Church." Church Board minutes are now posted on a bulletin board in the church library. This is where the *Refrigerator Door* is now located also, with articles about BCMC members and other items of interest. The committees under the Church Board are Finance Committee, Gifts Discernment Committee, Facilities Committee, which I'll talk about later, Staff Congregation Relations Committee and Bethel College Relations Team. Besides the people on these committees there are people who are treasurers, a church archivist and public address system operators. The commissions: Deacon Commission, works with care of the congregation; Faith Formation Commission, works with Sunday schools; Hospitality Commission works with congregational fellowship. You can see what the Witness Commission does by what appears on the front page of this newsletter, Wor-

ship Commission works, of course, with worship! All the commissions and committees do much more than what is listed here. There is also the Library Committee, Funeral Committee, Social Committee, Art and Decorating Committee, choirs and choir directors, organists, pianists a music director and individuals who coordinate volunteers for various projects. And did I mention Sunday school teachers? Read all of the reports in the Annual Reports booklet to see what these commissions, committees, teams and individuals have been doing this past year.

The Facilities Committee's work is sometimes less visible and sometimes, more visible. But you may not know what to look for! BCMC has sinks and pipes that leak, the occasional flood in a room or hallway after a hard rain, doors that won't open or get damaged, walls that need painting and patching, grounds around the church that need tidying up after a long winter, trees and bushes that need to be removed, a bulletin board and a mirror that had to be newly installed after the remodeling. They have a plan to protect the church's stained glass windows. Facilities has spent a couple of Saturdays removing old boiler pipe and old heating registers. They will spend quite a few Saturdays more doing this and patching and painting walls afterwards.

It takes a "a village" to accomplish all of these tasks. But what better way to pull together and work towards a common cause than our church. And, by the way, thank you!

~ Monica Lichti, staff liaison to the Facilities Committee



Pastor's Corner—Heidi Regier Kreider

Reading the Bible in 90 Days

From January to March I participated in *The Bible in 90 Days*, a Sunday school elective at BCMC. The purpose of the class— as the title says — was simply to read through the whole Bible in 90 days, from Genesis to Revelation. This meant reading about 15 chapters — approximately 45 minutes — daily. Some people listened to recordings of the readings. Each Sunday we would also gather to share insights and questions about what we had read, and watch a video presentation with more explanation. On the final Sunday, we celebrated the completion of our journey through scripture by sharing in a potluck lunch. Everyone who had participated in some way was invited to the potluck — even those of us who were behind and still reading somewhere in the Epistles, or those who had "fallen off the wagon" (as one person said) after the Old Testament! This was, after all, a Biblical banquet, intended to celebrate God's good news for all! This experience of reading through the whole Bible in a short time was a great way to review the "big picture" of scripture and the themes of God's story: God's creation of the world and calling of a covenant people; God's persistent and passionate desire to restore this relationship when people are unfaithful; God's Word made flesh in Jesus whose life, death and resurrection embody shalom in a new way; God's gift of

the Holy Spirit who breathes life into the church; and God's promise of a new creation in the fulfillment of time. This "big picture" perspective is an essential framework for interpreting scripture, guarding against "proof-texting" and taking individual texts out of context. A full reading of the Bible also raises difficult questions: What do we make of contradictions within scripture? What about all the violence in the Bible? What is the significance of scripture for our lives today? Hopefully, such questions are reason to return to the Bible for further study, to explore it more closely. For me, *Reading the Bible in 90 Days* was like flying in an airplane and seeing the vast contours of landscape below - mountains, valleys, rivers, fields, roads and cities. Now I am eager to get down on the ground again and explore features of this landscape more closely: To struggle step-by-step up the steep inclines of difficult passages, to soak in the waters of poetry and songs of scripture, to trudge through the valleys of suffering and lament in scripture, to walk the paths of Jesus' travels and teachings, to be astounded at the mountaintop visions of scripture — and along the way, take time to pay attention to detail, and ponder how this relates to the landscape of life in today's world. I invite you to join me on the journey of reading the Bible — whether it takes 90 days, or 90 years!

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.

April 2014

April 6—5th Sunday in Lent

Sermon by Heidi Regier Kreider; music by Youth Bells

April 13—Palm Sunday

Sermon by Weldon Martens; music by Cherub Choir and Junior Choir

April 17—Maundy Thursday

7:30 p.m. Maundy Thursday service in the Sanctuary

April 18—Good Friday

7:00 p.m. Community Good Friday service sponsored by Newton Ministerial Alliance, with special offering for Community Assistance Fund – Koerner Heights Church

April 20—Easter

6:30 a.m. Sunrise Service led by the Senior High Youth Group at Hank, Elaine and Austin Prouty's, 332 N. Hoover Road, Newton

9:30 a.m. Organ Prelude by Eleanor Kaufman

10:30 a.m. Worship Service with sermon by Heidi Regier Kreider; music by Chancel Choir

April 27—Creation Care Sunday

Worship led by the Creation Care Committee; music by Chancel Bells

Noon Congregational potluck

12:45 p.m. Congregational annual meeting

May 2014

May 4

Sermon by Heidi Regier Kreider; music by Chancel Choir and Menno Ringers; Recognition of graduates

May 11—Mother's Day

Sermon by Weldon Martens; music by Chancel Choir and Junior Choir; Baptism

May 18—Bethel College Baccalaureate

Prelude: 9:30 a.m. with the service at 10:00 a.m.

May 25

Worship with service by Heidi Regier Kreider; music by Chancel Bells