

KALEIDOSCOPE

BETHEL COLLEGE MENNONITE CHURCH

February— March 2015 9:1



Thanks to Harold Thieszen

Pastoral staff update: Susan Wheeler, Associate Pastor for Faith Formation, took a sabbatical leave January 1 – February 7, 2015. Special events during her sabbatical included participation in the Jerusalem Seminar trip to Israel/Palestine, and a silent retreat at Creighton University Retreat Center in Griswold, IA. Susan plans to share sabbatical reflections during the worship service at BCMC on February 15. During Susan’s absence, retired pastor and BCMC member Harold Thieszen has stepped in to assist with visitation and other pastoral care ministries. Thank you, Harold! *Kaleidoscope team member Lois Goertzen interviewed Harold to learn more about his life and ministry.*

ral care during Susan Wheeler’s sabbatical. Harold has had a rich life filling many roles. After two years at Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Chicago, he served at the Bethel Mennonite Church in Marion, SD for three years – followed by a variety of other jobs in the area. Other pastoratees were First Mennonite in Sugar Creek, OH, Buhler Mennonite in Buhler, KS, First Mennonite at Mountain Lake, MN, and West Zion at Moundridge. Back to a seminary in Oberlin, OH and then a job in Moundridge and at the General Conference doing fund raising. Then he went on to other churches in Kansas – Huffnugsau, Inman Mennonite, and Bethel Mennonite, and Bethesda, Henderson, NE.

A scripture passage in Isaiah 6 “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.” at a winter Bible school between 8th grade and his first year in high school planted the seed for his calling as a pastor.

It is obvious that Harold chose well. He has a true pastoral way about him intertwined with a well-honed sense of humor. Thank you, Harold, for taking on this temporary assignment.



Harold Thieszen filled in as associate pastor for pasto-



BCMC Members participate in the Bethel/Tabor Colleges Jerusalem Seminar— January 2-23, 2015

BCMC members, pictured above from left to right, Marvin Thieszen, Karen Penner, Darlene Dick, Susan Wheeler, Lee Wheeler, Mary Ann Boschmann and Hugo Boschmann, standing in the Jordan River on the Jordan side, Tuesday, January 6 at “Bethany beyond the Jordan,” one of the three sites that are connected to the baptism of Jesus (see John 1:28). Our group explored many ancient sights, many of them related to the Bible, and yet we barely scratched the surface of this ancient land. We explored the religions of the Holy Land, and visited Christian churches, cathedrals, mosques, and synagogues. It gave us pause to think about

interfaith matters. It was meeting and listening to people of these faiths that gave life to our trip.

The conflict and brokenness in the life and politics of the Holy Land is complex and confusing, and peace seems impossible. As we listened to the people from both sides, we first saw despair with no hope for change. Above all else, hope and a deep desire for peace and to live side-by-side as neighbors and friends shone through. Our Mennonite Central Committee representatives, as well as Palestinian and Israeli groups we talked with, continue to work tirelessly for peace and reconciliation. We must continue to pray and act for the good of all those we met, and for those they represent.

~ Karen Penner

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Happy 80th Birthday Merrill Raber!



Merrill F. Raber was born on February 13, 1935 to Frank and Clara Jennings Raber. His birthplace was Detroit, Michigan. Merrill was the youngest child with an older brother Chester and a sister Ann. His father was a minister in a small Mennonite mission church in Detroit. He was baptized by his father at a young age. When they visited the church within the past several years, there were two pictures in the church from the immediate past of an African American woman pastor and Menno Simons.

He attended Cooley High School, a school of 4,000 students. He attended Hesston College Academy and graduated in 1952. This is where he met Boots Esch from Phoenix, Arizona. They were married on December 31, 1954. They are the parents of three children: Mike, Barb and Steve and seven grandchildren. He graduated from Goshen College. A significant turning point in Merrill's life was his Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) responsibilities as personnel director. This marked a growth period in Inter-Mennonite interest and mental health. In 1962 he received his Masters Degree in Social Work from the University of

Southern California. He earned his PhD from Kansas State University in 1982. In 1963 Merrill came to Prairie View in Newton and appreciated the opportunity to work with Elmer Ediger, the executive director in developing the mental health program. He developed and directed Growth Associates as it related to organization development and personal growth. In the past years he and Boots have been active in the Kansas Paraguay Partners organization.

Merrill and Boots have authored several books including the most recent book, *A Forty Year History of the Kansas Paraguay Partners*. His hobbies and interests include racquet ball, golf, collecting *LIFE* magazine, political buttons, family history, the Flint Hills and travel.

Merrill's participation in the life of BCMC includes serving as a member of the Church Board, Staff Advisory Committee and currently on the Education and Service Scholarship Committee. He shared the following quotes in his life and thoughts. "I would rather have a mind opened by wonder than closed by belief." Havel's "Run away from those that have 'found the truth,' and cling to those who are searching." He has "less interest in doctrine, more interest in behavior." Merrill's favorite scripture passage is *The Sermon on the Mount*. He and Boots will celebrate his 80th birthday with a small group of friends at the Carriage Factory Art Gallery. HAPPY BIRTHDAY Merrill!

~ Harold D. Thieszen

Happy 80th Birthday Arlo Kasper!



Arlo was born February 27, 1935, at Grace Hospital in Hutchinson, to Katherine (Ediger) and David Kasper. His mother died when Arlo was two years old. His father married Irene Mathies, and they had three children, so Arlo grew up as the oldest of four siblings. The family attended First Mennonite Church in Hutchinson, where Arlo was baptized as a teen-ager. He began first grade in a small country school near Buhler, then attended Hutchinson schools through high school graduation in 1953. Arlo studied mathematics and industrial arts at Bethel College for two years before serving with the Mennonite Central Committee Pax program, a Mennonite alternative service, overseas program for conscientious objectors. He spent two years in Germany constructing housing for refugees and working in information services, and then a third year in Akron, PA, including visiting of I-W units. After Pax, Arlo returned to Bethel College and majored in music, having enjoyed singing with the Pax chorus in Germany.

At Bethel he completed a music education degree, and met Kathryn Dick. They were married in 1962 at BCMC, and she joined him in Leoti, KS, where he had already been teaching music and German for one

year. Arlo had participated in theater during his senior year at Bethel College under the direction of Norman Lofland who later invited Arlo back for a summer production of *Hamlet* at Bethel. A growing interest in theater took Arlo to the Dallas (TX) Theater Center where he studied in the graduate program of Trinity University (San Antonio) beginning in September 1963. He vividly remembers November 22, 1963, when John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas. Ironically, Arlo was rehearsing *Julius Caesar*, in which Caesar is assassinated.

Arlo completed two years of study in Dallas, then he and Kathryn moved to Bethel College, and he began teaching theater and directing productions in the brand new Fine Arts Center, which opened in 1966. He completed his graduate studies with a thesis project on the FAC design process, architecture, and several theater productions in the new auditorium. Arlo and Kathryn were dorm parents in Haury Hall from 1965-70, and welcomed two children, Rachel and Michael. Arlo served on faculty at Bethel College for 36 years until his retirement in 2001. Since then, he has served as the Cultural Arts Chairman with the Kansas-Paraguay Partners organization, and in recent years he and Kathryn have lived in Asunción, Paraguay where Arlo has been involved in opera and other theater projects. Fortunately they return to "cool off" in North Newton during December and January, so we get to see them at BCMC! Happy 80th birthday, Arlo! May you know God's richest blessings in the coming year.

~ Heidi Regier Kreider

Happy 80th Birthday Deane Frey!



Deane Frey was delivered by Dr. Hawkey, a relative, at Axtell Christian Hospital in Newton on February 28, 1935. She was the oldest child of six that were born to Delbert and Dorothy (Steiner) Dreier who were dairy farmers north of Newton. She was baptized in 1935 into the Trinity Evangelical and Reformed Church, now Highland United Church of Christ, was confirmed in 1949, and attended church with many of her relatives. At a very early age Deane learned that her job was to take care of the younger children. Even though she would have liked to ride the tractor with her dad, there was work to be done in the house. She took piano lessons from Mrs. Ferd Voth, a former BCMC member, and played piano for church services.

Deane attended District #53, a one room school where Edna Goossen, also a former BCMC member, was her fourth grade teacher. High school was two years at Hesston Academy and two years at Newton High School where she graduated in 1952. It was in Union Champion 4-H Club that she learned to sew, a hobby to this day. When she was 17

she won a trip to the American Royal in Kansas City, a highlight and first real travel experience.

Her first job at Hesston State Bank was short lived because she didn't like knowing the financial dealings of her parents and relatives. It was then that she decided to attend nurses training at Bethel Deaconess Hospital. While taking some of her classes at Bethel College she met Marlin Frey, a young man that had recently had polio. Her parents disapproved more about his physical condition than the fact that he was a Mennonite. They were married May 25, 1957 and she joined BCMC in 1959. While raising their two children, Gary and Kim, Deane worked in a number of different nursing settings: seventeen years as a bookkeeper and office nurse at Medical Arts Office on Oak St, nine years as office administrator and billing insurance at Doctors Park, and thirteen years at Halstead Hospital in the transcription department. She remembers that when Medicare began it was a major change that took time to learn, especially for some of the doctors.

As a family they had fun camping and boating at Beaver Lake with the Larry Penner, Keith Rhoades and Orlando Goertzen families. In the 1980s Deane learned to quilt from a neighbor lady and got hooked. She joined the Emma Creek Quilt Guild and has been quilting ever since, recently completing a beautiful whole cloth quilt that she finished with a crocheted edge. Gardening, growing Christmas cactus, African violets and Amaryllis, knitting baby caps and volunteering at Asbury Park give Deane pleasure but the most joy comes from her four grandchildren and one great-grandchild, with one on the way.

A most difficult time

for Deane was when she was no longer able to care for Marlin and he had to live at Asbury Park until he died December 16, 2013. She finds hope and reassurance in her favorite song, *In the bulb there is a flower*, and believes that if we have patience, in time things work out. Deane, blessings to you as you celebrate your 80th birthday, even if it's quiet.
~ Carol Buller

Happy 80th Birthday Keith Sprunger!



On March 16, Keith Sprunger will celebrate his 80th birthday. Keith was born in 1935 in the community of Berne, Indiana to parents Arley and Lillian. As a child, Keith developed a love for reading – a love that continues to this day. At the large congregation of First Mennonite Church Berne, Keith gave his confession of faith and was baptized by Rev. Olin Krehbiel. Keith's educational journey took off when he enrolled at Wheaton College in the Greater Chicago area. He paid his college tuition through a painting job in the summers. He graduated in 1957, but only to return to the classroom at the University of Illinois. Keith decided to "follow his heart" for historical study and completed

his Ph. D in 1963. His primary historical focus centered on 16th and 17th century English Puritan church communities in Holland.

Despite his commitment to academic growth, Keith still found time to develop a relationship with Aldine Slagell. They were married on June 13, 1959 after Aldine completed her nursing degree at Wheaton College.

Keith describes the 1960's as a time when the academic job market was booming. At the chagrin of his academic advisor at University of Illinois, Keith accepted a teaching position at Bethel College. Keith's decision to come to Bethel College was based on many reasons, but his belief in the mission of a rigorous and progressive Christian liberal arts college was central. Keith went on to teach history at Bethel College for 38 years and published several books, including *At the Crossroads of Kansas* and *Voices Against War*. One of his favorite memories is teaching a course on the history of civilization to 160 students.

Keith and Aldine joined BCMC in 1964, shortly after they arrived in North Newton. Within the BCMC community, they raised three children: David, Mary, and Philip. All three children are now college professors teaching at universities across the country.

Leading up to BCMC's centennial celebration, Keith was requested to write a history of the congregation. He spent many hours compiling information in the church archive and eventually published *Campus, Congregation, and Community: The Bethel College Mennonite Church 1897-1997* with the support of the centennial book committee. Keith notes that

the most unique characteristic of BCMC that he discovered in his research is BCMC's connection to two outside communities: Bethel College and the wider Newton community.

Keith and Aldine have many hobbies, including a subscription to Netflix. One of his favorite films is *Chariots of Fire* (1981) directed by Hugh Hudson. Keith is also an avid collector of "Everyman" books and postcards. When the weather is pleasant, you can often find Keith and Aldine enjoying a walk in the community. A few years ago, they walked all 175 miles of road in Newton and North Newton. This endeavor opened their eyes to the diversity, challenges, and gifts of the wider Newton community.

Keith and Aldine continue to be active members of the BCMC community. Keith especially enjoys the musical gifts of the congregation, substantive preaching, and the relationships that he and Aldine have formed as original members of the Catacombs Sunday school class.

Keith, the BCMC community offers our best wishes to you on the occasion of your 80th birthday!

~ John Tyson

Happy 80th Birthday Carolyn Voran!



Carolyn was born on March 25, 1935 at Bethel Deaconess Hospital. Parents were Otto and Ella (Sperling)

Bachman. She was the youngest of four children: Kathy Schroeder, Gene Bachman, and Norma Wiens. She attended Moundridge Grade School and graduated from Moundridge High School in 1953.

Carolyn's family was always involved in West Zion Mennonite Church, Moundridge. She was baptized as a teenager by Pastor John Graber. Orner Rupp was an important Sunday School teacher for the youth. Carolyn enjoyed singing in the youth choir.

Carolyn attended Bethel College for two years and during that time she was a student secretary for R. C. Kauffinan, Dean and Eldon Graber, Registrar. She met her future husband, Omar Voran at Bethel. They were married on August 22, 1954, by Rev. Harris Waltner at West Zion Mennonite Church. Three children were born to them: Doug (Heather), Brad (Debbie) and Lori (Bill Schmidt). Six grandchildren and two great grandsons complete the family. For the first nine years of their married life they lived in Newton and were members of BCMC. The family moved to Minnesota in 1963 where Omar received his Masters Degree in Hospital Administration at the University of Minnesota. They moved to Iowa in 1965 where they spent the next 34 years in Des Moines, Marshalltown, and Hawarden. During this time Carolyn was very involved in music, community and Methodist Church activities, and her primary interest was raising the family.

Music was always an important part of Carolyn's life. She studied voice at Bethel while still in High

School, and continued her music education while enrolled at Bethel and later at Drake University in Des Moines. While in Des Moines she earned certification as a Radio Engineer and hosted a morning program of classical music at Radio Station KFMG (Keep Fine Music Going).

During this time she participated in many College and Community chorales, including Drake University, Davidson Chorale in Marshalltown, Sioux Land Master Chorale, Morningside College Chorale, and Sioux County Chorus. More recent musical involvement has been the BCMC Choir, Bethel College Masterworks concerts, and Newton Community Choirs. During 26 years of her life in Iowa, Carolyn directed youth and adult church choirs in several United Methodist Churches. Included was an European Methodist Tour which involved 75 youth and a number of adult sponsors.

Avocations included calligraphy, bicycling across state rides in Iowa and Wisconsin (12), golfing, and travel including every state in the Union, and a number of countries in Europe, China, and the Holy Land. Fiftieth, Fifty-fifth and sixtieth wedding anniversaries were celebrated in Colorado with the entire family in attendance.

At Bethel College Mennonite Church she sang in the chancel choir and was a member and chair of the Worship Commission. Her favorite scripture is Psalm 121 and favorite hymn is *Great is Thy Faithfulness*.

Carolyn, what else is important? The immediate reply was "Love BCMC".

~ Harold D. Thieszen

A Brief Summary of the Winter Congregational Meeting

The Winter Congregational Meeting was held in the sanctuary on the afternoon of Jan. 25. A full agenda was covered. The expense budget of \$474,926.00 for fiscal year 2015 was passed after a presentation by Richard Friesen, Treasurer. A report from the Audit Committee was heard and approved. An announcement was made by the Facilities Committee asking the Board to help set priorities for improvements in the coming years. The Art and Facilities Committees asked the members of the congregation to think about what they might be able to donate to a fund raising auction to be held later this summer. The Staff and Congregational Relations Committee explained the Appreciative Inquiry evaluation that will be used during Heidi Regier Kreider's upcoming pastoral evaluation. Margaret Toews presented information from the Witness Commission indicating seeking congregational affirmation for a proposed resolution, "Faithful Witness in a Time of Perpetual War," to be presented at the Kansas City Assembly next July. She also informed us of a second resolution, just received that has to do with the Palestine/Israeli situation. A vote was taken on a motion to eliminate the need for pastor's evaluations to be signed, the motion was defeated. The meeting ended on a high note as Stan Voth, church archivist for the past 16 years was honored for his years of good service.

~ Jim Robb, Church Moderator



Honoring Stan Voth— BCMC Archivist



Since 1996 Stan Voth has been faithfully accumulating and storing records from the church as archivist. The safe is just off fellowship hall in the basement. All records of the church are stored there – minutes of the board meetings, and committee meetings, minutes of annual meetings including annual reports, financial records, church bulletins and newsletters. For most of these years Stan has been working alone, until recently when a three member committee was appointed to help with this task. Stan still does some of the work as he has time. From time to time members need to access past records and he is available to find these. He stated that at one time he gave a talk to the catechism class so they would have information about this.

This is one of the behind-the-scenes jobs in the church that was and still is faithfully accomplished by Stan. Thank you so much, Stan, for your faithful attendance to such an important role. ~ Lois Goertzen



BCMC Kaleidoscope

With Our Members

■ Anniversaries for February-March: 25 Years

Steven and Sharon (Faul) Morris—February 24, 1990—
Congratulations
Steven and Sharon!

■ An Interview with Adam and Jill Robb

Continuing with the theme of “why I chose my career” I interviewed **Adam Robb and Jill Robb** about their chosen professions.

After the first 12 years of school, **Adam Robb** enrolled at Bethel College and was there from 2001 to 2006. He did his student teaching at Moundridge High school. He has taught there beginning with the 2006-2007 school year and is still there – teaching Chemistry, Physics, Algebra 2 and Calculus. From his freshman and sophomore year at Bethel he knew he wanted to go into education. Adam’s parents both chose teaching careers also and Adam admits this may have influenced his choice as well.

In addition to his class teaching he coaches the scholars bowl and junior high boys’ basketball. Both these responsibilities are important to him as well. Adam grew up in Newton and attended McKinley and Chisholm schools, and has always attended BCMC. He now lives in rural Moundridge. In talking with Adam it was soon apparent that he is a devoted teacher and finds it to be a fulfilling career.



Jill Swenson grew up in Hutchinson and attended First Mennonite Church there before coming here.

She also attended Bethel graduating in 2008. Even in grade school she knew she wanted to be a teacher, so pursued education classes in college graduating with an elementary ed degree. She taught 4th grade in Inman schools and was let go because of budget cuts. She was interviewed by channel 12 news on this subject, and was contacted by a school in Hutchinson and taught 4th grade one year, then 1st grade the second year. She was employed at the Moundridge Day Care center for one year, then secured a job at Moundridge grade school and is in her second year teaching 1st grade there. Jill’s enthusiasm for teaching is very evident and for that her students are so fortunate.

Jill and Adam met at Camp Mennoscah when Jill

was in senior high and Adam was on staff at camp. They have been married six and one-half years. Of course we all know both Jill and Adam were effective youth group leaders here at BCMC, and their success in their teaching careers came through to the young people.

Congratulations to both of you for “making a difference” in the lives of our young people both here and in your schools where you teach. We know we need more just like you.

~ Lois Goertzen

■ Elizabeth Raid Ordained

Bethel College Mennonite Church member Elizabeth Raid was ordained at BCMC in an afternoon service on January 4. She serves as a campus pastor at Mennonite Friendship Communities in South Hutchinson, KS. Congratulations, Elizabeth!



■ Members of the Senior High youth group celebrated Christmas with residents at Harvey County Homeless

Shelter on Dec. 21. They baked cookies with residents, helped them wrap Christmas presents, and donated several gifts to each of the children living at the shelter. Senior High youth thank the congregation for the generous donation that allowed them to spread love into our community during the Christmas season!

Obituary



Inez Wiebe Koehn—February 1, 1924—December 18, 2014

Inez (Wiebe) Koehn, 90, loving daughter, sister, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, great-great-grandmother and friend passed away December 18, 2014. She formerly lived in North Newton and had been living at Presbyterian Manor since March 2014. She was born in Hillsboro, KS to Peter K. Wiebe and Elsie Lizzie Schroeder Wiebe. Her first few years she lived on her mother's home place north of Hillsboro, later moving into Hillsboro and then to a farm northwest of Newton. She attended Sand Creek School District #57, in Harvey Co. and graduated from Walton High School in 1942.

She married George Koehn on June 15, 1944. They were married 53 years until he passed away in 1997. Together they raised their children, James (Alice) of Westminster, CO; Virginia (Ron) Benninghoff of Newton; Stanley (Teresa) of Manhattan and Brad also of Manhattan. Their son Steven passed away in 2013. Also surviving is another son by choice – Larry Britton of Wichita and a sister Ruth (Gus) Regehr of Hutchinson. She is survived by 4 grandsons; 4 step-grandchildren; 6 great-grandchildren; 13 step-great-grandchildren; 1 great-great grandson

and 3 step – great grandchildren, many nieces and nephews. Preceding her in death were her parents, older sister Ethlyn Goertz and brother James Wiebe.

Her full time job was raising five children and no mother has ever dedicated herself to her children more than Inez has. When asked to name her best lifetime achievement, without hesitation she would say, “raising five kids”.

Cremation has taken place. There will be a memorial service at Bethel College Mennonite Church on March 21 at 2 p.m. Memorials may be sent to Bethel College Mennonite Church, for the church Kitchen Fund as Inez spent many, many hours serving in different capacities in the church kitchen.

Mennonite Central Committee Relief Sale My Coins Count and More. .

The MCC sale seems a ways off, but the reality of it is it's not too early to be seriously planning what we as individuals might do in support.

The sale board and church committees are already busy with meetings and

plans. The Penny Power project – renamed as Penny Power/My Coins Count – will be in full force from February 8 through April 12 with jars in Sunday school rooms, and at the back of the church with the spinning drop machine in the gathering place. Progress count of what is received will be posted regularly on the bulletin board. Let's not forget that every penny donated is important.

The theme for this year's April 17 & 18 event is “Growing Together in Christ”. Sunday school classes were visited encouraging them to pick a project to fund for the budget items. As is the case with most things, costs are higher, so the opportunity for our generosity is available.

Fellowship meals will be March 1 and 8. This is a time to share a meal and fellowship with other sale supporters, and another way to contribute. Sheets will be available at the tables in church with opportunities for hosting or being hosted, along with brochures and other information about the sale.

Later opportunity for signup for donations of food or working in your desired area will be available. For more information check the website www.kansas.mccsale.org to

keep up to date on what's going on.

Our church reps this year are Kathy and Dennis Campbell, chair; Ron and Carol Peters and Tom and Gayle Jackson. Feel free to contact them with questions. In my visit with Kathy it was obvious she's excited about the sale, and our church participation in it. We appreciate the work this committee is doing.

~ Lois Goertzen

Wednesday Night Suppers Begin

Hospitality Commission will again sponsor a series of eight Wednesday night suppers at BCMC this Spring. Chefs Ben Lichti, Marty Warkentine and Brenda Turner will cook from scratch to prepare the meals, and Sunday school classes are each asked to help serve and clean up one of the evenings. This season the meal time will focus on fellowship and hospitality (only a few additional post-supper programs are planned). This is a great opportunity to invite a friend or neighbor to be a guest for supper, and get to know others in the congregation! Meals are by donation (suggested \$4/person and \$12/family) with proceeds above food expenses going to the Kitchen Fund for supplies and future improvements. Bethel College students are also invited to share in our Wednesday night suppers free of charge; added donations support this gesture of hospitality. This Spring the schedule is adjusted as follows: **From 6:00 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.** the serving line



will be open for you to get food, be seated and begin eating. There will be one basket at the food line to receive donations for supper. Please bring your own table service. **At 6:20 p.m.** will be a welcome, announcements and a meal blessing. Then children will be dismissed to attend choir rehearsal. **From 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.** there will be open time for eating, conversation and fellowship, and clean-up. *(On February 18, a brief Ash Wednesday service will take place at 7:00 pm. in the Sanctuary.)* **Reservations are requested to help determine amount of food to prepare.** Reservations due in church office by 10:00 a.m. Monday before that week's supper by calling 283-3667, emailing office.bcmc@sbcglobal.net, turning in the form in the worship bulletin, or signing up on the prior Wednesday night. (There is also a signup sheet on the bulletin board.)

Need to cancel? A contribution is still encouraged if you have a reservation and do not attend. Hope to see you at supper! Menus for the following 8 weeks:

Feb. 4 Lasagna, garlic bread, salad, tropical fruit, strawberry cream pie

Feb. 11 Tortilla soup, layered salad, pears, chocolate dessert

Feb. 18 Shepherd's pie, peaches, brownies and ice cream

Feb. 25 Sloppy Joes, potato salad, fresh fruit, cookies

Mar. 4 Pork chops, au gratin potatoes, cornbread, peas, applesauce, lemon ice box dessert

Mar. 11 Bierocks, chips, carrots, celery, fruited jello and Rice Krispie treats

Mar. 18 Quiche (bacon and spinach), strawberries & bananas, morning glory muffins

Mar. 25 Chicken Cordon

Bleu, wild rice, California blend vegetables, peaches, dinner rolls, cheesecake



Pastor's Corner— John Tyson

It's cold outside. The sun sets before we see six o'clock in the evening. The winter months are here and they haven't been shy about letting us know it! I've always found a safe haven in basketball gyms during blistering winter months. The sound of shoes squeaking on the slick wooden floor and basketballs bouncing brings me comfort and joy. Basketball gyms are an oasis where it's possible in the dead of winter to wear shorts and short-sleeved shirts and run around breaking a sweat.

When I reflect on my childhood, I am drawn to the fact that, besides school, I spent almost all of my free time in church and on the basketball court. (You'd think I'd be a much better player, but I digress...) It's clear to me that both spaces seek to engage in a kind of formation. I suppose that faith formation includes the process by which we as a community, to various degrees, teach one another, from our youngest to our oldest, the core beliefs and practices of Anabaptist Christian faith; most importantly, with Christ at the center. As Associate Pastor for Faith Formation, I am growing into my role of serving the congregation in this process.

From the perspective of children, youth, and young adults, the idea behind faith formation is that as the teachings of the faith "sink in" and as young people have oppor-

tunities to learn from others, such as mentors for instance, they will grow into faithful disciples. I certainly endorse this idea. Yet, when I reflect on my 'formative' years as a child and a teenager, I remember very little of what I was taught in church. I remember very little about the lessons we learned in Sunday school. This doesn't mean lessons didn't have an impact or weren't valuable – they were. What I remember most, though, is relationships with teachers who cared for me and my friends. I remember woodworking with my fourth grade Sunday school teacher, Dave. I remember countless conversations with my youth pastor, another Dave, when I was wrestling with early teenage life. I remember my friend and former pastor, Joe, who welcomed me with open arms into a Mennonite congregation. I remember my academic advisor at Eastern Mennonite University, Nancy, who encouraged me to explore pastoral ministry as a vocation. My point is that what finally drew me into a life of Christ-centered discipleship and the community of faith was caring relationships where Christ's compassion was embodied most vividly. How many of us would express something similar? When you enter a gym to watch a basketball game, you can usually tell in five minutes whether or not a team cares about one another. A team that cares for one another will rush to help up a teammate when they fall to the floor, they will high-five them after a made or missed free throw, they will make the 'extra' pass to ensure a higher percentage shot. It takes a little more time to discern whether or not a congregation cares for one another. It requires paying greater atten-

tion to small, subtle, simple acts of warmth and kindness. In an article entitled "The Caring Church," Jim Merhaut writes, "Churches that care are places where people are kind and kindness is a planned part of the church's mission. Yes, kindness happens all the time, but caring churches shine the spotlight on the myriad simple acts of kindness that knit together a community that is a shining light for the nations."

I believe that we are a caring church. It is one of our greatest gifts. In the many ways that we find ourselves connected to one another and serving alongside one another in community, authentic care is constantly expressed and embodied. Churches who care so deeply for one another sometimes struggle to figure out how to welcome and express that care to those who might be entering the community for the first time without a visible platform, like a pastoral role, or a familiar reputation or family name. This is one of our greatest challenges.

As we pass through this chilly winter, hopefully to be welcomed soon by the kindness of spring air, I find myself asking how we might better embrace and welcome those who might be stumbling into our faith community for the first time? Likewise, I wonder how we might better embrace and welcome those in our community beyond our church walls? What practices could we take up that might better allow us to continue expressing and embodying the compassionate care of Christ to those who need it the most?

Return service requested

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.

February 2015

- February 1** Sermon by John Tyson; music by Chancel Bells and Cherub Choir
- February 8** Sermon by Heidi Regier Kreider; music by Junior Choir; MCC My Coins Count begins
- February 15** Sermon by Susan Wheeler (sabbatical reflections); music by Cherub Choir and Chancel Choir
- February 22** **First Sunday in Lent**
Sermon by Heidi Regier Kreider; music by Chancel Bells; Communion served

March 2015

- March 1** **Second Sunday in Lent**
Sermon by John Tyson; music by Chancel Choir
- March 8** **Third Sunday in Lent**
Sermon by Heidi Regier Kreider; music by Junior Choir
- March 15** **Fourth Sunday in Lent**
Sermon by Heidi Regier Kreider; music by Chancel Choir and Cherub Choir
- March 22** **Fifth Sunday in Lent**
Sermon by Heidi Regier Kreider; music by Chancel Bells
4:00 p.m. *Looking Towards Easter* —
Program of music by organist Shirley S. King
- March 29** **Palm Sunday**
Sermon by John Tyson; music by Youth Bells



Check out BCMC's website at bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org to read the latest Pastor's Post and see other updates from BCMC.
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