

KALEIDOSCOPE

BETHEL COLLEGE MENNONITE CHURCH

November—December 2017 11:6



Pastor's Corner with Pastor Dawn Yoder Harms



Bethel College Mennonite Church Is 120 Years Old! Ten Short Chapters from Our History

when the college installed an organ in the chapel. Prof. B. F. Welty was the first organist.

8. Women had the vote in church affairs from the beginning. Holding church office came later. The first "lady deacons" were elected in 1959.

9. Early pastor J. W. Kliever took his Mennonitism very seriously – he declared that it combined the best of "Scripture and common sense".

10. The word "Bethel" as part of the church name is meaningful. When we talk about Bethel, it means "House of God" . . . the place "where God appears". May it always be so.

Submitted by Keith Sprunger



BCMC's Trinity Windows

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help our congregation stay connected to its center/"hub"? How does the work of your group help our congregation grow in faith and faithfulness? What gets in the way?

- *Identify 2-3 ways your committee/commission could help our congregation move toward the "hub" this coming year.*

The morning together was not all work. We took time to learn "unusual" things about each other, enjoyed good food and lots of laughter, sang and prayed together.

In the meantime, table conversation notes were recorded, shared with those invited to the retreat, and are currently being discussed by the Church Board.

If you or your Sunday School class has interest in reflecting together on our congregational "wheel," be in touch! I'd be glad to lead you in conversation about it.

~ Dawn Yoder Harms

"When you look at this wheel, what do you see? Where are you? Where is our congregation? Where is God?" These were the questions that opened BCMC's Leadership Retreat on September 9 at Asbury Park, a half-day event attended by around 40 commission, committee, church board and staff members.

Throughout the morning we reflected on this bicycle wheel:

- *How would you describe the hub of our congregational wheel? What is at our congregation's center? What is the common purpose that draws us together?*
- *How does your commission/committee/board*

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40th Anniversary of BCMC's Pony Express



The original Pony Express only

operated for 19 months, covering 2000 miles from Missouri to California in 10 days using 200 relief stations. The BCMC Pony Express has operated since 1978 to ask support for the BCMC mission for another year, connecting more than 200 households in 14 days. Local households are organized into over 30 neighborhood groups, each with a neighborhood captain. (Another 200 who live in outlying areas receive a letter through regular mail.)

A large manila envelope for each neighborhood lists names/addresses/phone numbers on the outside along with instructions. Inside are #10 envelopes for each household on the list containing a narrative budget and "intent" forms. The first household finds their envelope, fills out the intent form and keeps a copy. The form is sealed in the #10 envelope, placed back into the manila envelope, and then delivered to another name on the list. After all have been contacted, the manila envelope is returned to the captain.

Some additional information:

- The Pony starts during worship on November 5 and ends during worship on November 19. The theme is *Basketfuls Left Over* based on Matthew 14:13-21.
- Over 200 households will participate directly and another 200 through regular mail.
- Results will be confidentially tabulated by the treasurer. Totals will be used by the Finance Committee and

Church Board to develop the 2018 budget that will be voted on by the congregation on January 28, 2018.

- There are many giving patterns. Most write a check once a month and place it in the offering plate.
- Many increase their giving from year to year, recognizing that church expenses also increase. A 5% increase is needed to support requests from commissions and committees for 2018.
- Annual intents range from under \$500 (11% of giving units) to more than \$5,000 (9%) with \$2,004 as the 2017 average.
- Some are facing very uncertain financial situations, making it difficult to know how to fill out the intent form. Smaller gifts are valued as much as larger gifts and also show support for the mission of the church. The church knows that circumstances can change during the year so it is called an "intent" and not a "pledge".
- An increasing number, now more than 45, give regularly through electronic fund transfers. (See bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org/community-life/stewardship/electronic-fund-transfers/ for additional information.)
- Growing in popularity for those 70 ½ or older is the Qualified Charitable Distribution from an IRA. This is a good way to deal with Required Minimum Distributions. (See bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org/community-life/stewardship/qualified-charitable-distribution/.)
- If you are not visited by the Pony Express directly or through the mail, contact the church office or treasurer@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org if you are interested in participating.

~ Richard Friesen, BCMC treasurer

Recycling at BCMC



BCMC can help to make a difference in the amount of waste contributed to the local landfill and your help is needed. You may notice additional recycling receptacles on every floor at Bethel College Mennonite Church. The goal is to make the recycling process more convenient. The Hospitality Commission and the Creation Care Committee are working on several recycling projects. Beginning Nov. 1, we will be recycling both our coffee and plastic water cups. Please don't forget to deposit your cup in one of the conveniently located recycling bins or even better, bring your own cup from home and no waste will be created! ~ Hospitality Commission & Creation Care Committee

Creation Care Practices

The following 10 practices are suggestive; not like Moses' Ten Commandments! Whether young or elderly, physically active or sedentary, living in your own home or retirement community, employed or retired, establishing a home or downsizing, owning or renting, pick out one or two new practices that you can do and that stretch you to expand your care of creation.

1. **Foster a prayerful attitude** of awe, wonder, respect, humility, and gratitude for creation. Slow down. Live in the moment to include all our senses (touch, sight, sound, taste, smell) in savoring God's creation.
2. **Take meditative walks or bike rides to broaden the awareness of our neighbors:** soil, water, birds, pollinators, snakes and spiders, atmosphere, oceans, Kidron, Sand Creek, the Mississippi water-

shed, the prairie, Bluestem, milkweed, Burr Oak, tomatoes, kale, lightning and thunder, wind and rain.

3. **Contribute to a thinking community, in our congregation and the larger public, learning from science, scripture, and the mind of Christ,** to discern the delicate balance between healthy intervention to provide for human food, shelter, and protection, and harmful practices that damage the larger ecosystem.
4. **Consider habitat for pollinators, the soil ecosystem and other creatures who share our neighborhood when managing our yards.** Stretch our minds to ponder (whether? how?) a nonviolent, "pacifist" ethic applies to the creation. Though we do swat flies and mosquitoes, develop vaccines to prevent malaria, God is present in and connected to all life. Every insect and animal is valued not only for its usefulness to us. All are part of a vast, complex system to which we humans belong as fellow creatures.
5. **Imagine the world as God's home, our household. Our home has three basic rules:**
 - A. Take only our share.
 - B. Clean up after ourselves.
 - C. Keep the house in order for future occupants.
6. **Decrease our carbon footprint while enhancing our quality of life:** meditate, pray, read the Bible, walk, run, write poetry, play tag, hang clothes on a line, listen to the birds, sing, weed a garden, soak up the sun, tell a joke, eat less meat, whistle a tune, play hide and seek, solve a puzzle.
7. **Substitute muscle energy for fossil fuel energy where practical:** walk, bike, dig, hoe, hammer, quilt, pull, open a can with an old fashioned opener.
8. **Downsize responsibly.** Give away what we no longer need to Etcetera and other thrift stores, charitable organizations who serve the poor and needy, Book Reviews, the Re-

use It Center in McPherson (call Hugo Boschmann who will pick it up for us). Hazardous waste (paint, chemicals, and pesticides) that are not bagged with regular trash can be taken to a separate location at the Harvey County Landfill.

9. Recycle and Compost. Try garbage minimal days so that the waste that cannot be composted or recycled fits in the palm of our hand. Vegetable wastes, egg shells, coffee grounds can be composted and not flushed down the garbage disposal. Reusable bags for groceries and other items will keep plastic bags from cluttering the landscape.

10. Purchase products and equipment that are produced locally, whenever practical, and that will last and/or are repairable rather than throw-aways. Support the local farmer's market.

~ *Creation Care Committee*

Hospitality Month

During the month of September, the Hospitality Commission asked the congregation to focus on Hospitality. Hospitality is a ministry that costs us little and rewards us bountifully with smiles, new friendships and a deeper sense of community. Many thanks to those of you who stepped outside your comfort zone and were willing to participate in the following activities: Wear a name tag each Sunday; Sit in a new seat and worship with people you normally don't sit next to; Count your blessings and share with others during Fellowship Time; Look for three people you don't know well sometime during the morning and welcome them; and eat with someone you didn't know well at the potluck. We will continue to be looking for ways to deepen our commitment to others whether new to our congregation or a well-established member. Do you

have an idea that would help promote this goal? If so, please feel free to contact any member of the commission. (Kathryn Simmons, Barb Voran, Marilyn Stucky, Nadine Peters, Frank Nachtigal)

New Hope Shelter by Valetta Seymour; BCMC Representative to the Shelter



New Hope Shelter, Inc.
Following Christ, Building the Community

New Hope Shelter's logo states: "Following Christ, Building the Community." Reaching Higher, Going Farther, Restoring Hope."

I have been involved as a volunteer and/or contact person for New Hope for approximately eight years. In that time, I have witnessed changes that give evidence of their commitment to this statement. Some of the shelter's residents are in need of only a short-term place to stay. Many, however, need to stay longer, and need more than shelter to get back on their feet. These people are given a (up to) 90 day Life Restoration Program that offers help with life skills, job skills, parenting skills, and budgeting/money management. There is zero tolerance for drugs and alcohol on the premises. Some need help with addiction and are offered help in local recovery programs. New Hope is funded entirely by donations. Volunteer help is an important means of saving on staffing needs. Of even greater significance, though, is the opportunity it provides to enrich our own lives by putting us in contact with people who have not been handed the fortunate circumstances that most of us

have had. We all have much to learn from those with different life experiences.

BCMC and 20 other area churches provide volunteers to stay at the shelter all evenings and two overnights per week. We also provide evening meals for the week. BCMC partners with Faith Mennonite to provide the volunteers/meals five to six weeks per year. Some churches have dropped out due to inability to recruit volunteers. Many of our most faithful BCMC volunteers have had to drop out because of aging and health concerns. We need replacements! I would appreciate talking to Sunday School classes in hopes of convincing new volunteers to step forward. I would also like to encourage SS classes to commit to providing meals. Hint: have someone other than the contact person take charge of organizing the meal. Contact people have enough other matters to deal with.

BCMC's commitment to New Hope Shelter is meaningful outreach and witness. Please help to keep this relationship possible by considering offering volunteer help. The Witness Commission budget allocates money to the shelter, and private contributions are also welcome. You can contact me, Valetta Seymour with questions: 620-217-7536 or seymour2314@gmail.com.

In Touch with the Education and Service Scholarship Committee

As one way of keeping the congregation in touch with our youth attending Mennonite colleges, the Education and Service Scholarship Committee will be sharing some highlights from several students in this and upcoming issues of *The Kaleidoscope*. It is our hope that this communication

will provide opportunities for deeper connections with our youth when we see them in church, on campus, or in the community. This issue features our two Goshen College seniors, our Hesston College 2nd-year student, and a Bethel junior.

Nat Dick, Goshen, shared details of his three-month Study Service Term in Tanzania last year, an opportunity that taught him much about deaf culture, sign language and Swahili, and general issues relating to disabilities. Needing only "a few courses" to graduate, this year Nat is pursuing interests in Game Theory, International Business, and volunteering at a local non-profit bike repair store. He is also looking at job, internship, and graduate school opportunities.

Mark Kreider, Goshen, spent his SST in Peru, improving his Spanish, and learning about the history and culture of that country. He was especially grateful for the lessons he learned about "the tremendous gift of hospitality, welcoming, and love." Another highlight was taking some additional time for hiking in the Andes with his brother! Mark is currently in a research experience for undergraduates through the University of Michigan, studying forest carbon storage. He hopes to continue working with environmental and justice-related problems facing our world, and is involved with campus initiatives related to gender equality and sexual assault prevention, environmental justice and anti-racism.

Angus Siemens, Hesston, particularly enjoyed experiencing the music program at Hesston, in addition to developing new relationships with fellow students on campus, and in his summer field experience with the Mennonite Disaster Service Disaster Management Program. In the year ahead, Angus hopes to

continue meeting new and interesting people, and completing his degree in spring.

Serena Wong, Bethel, completed her “hardest semester” last year by celebrating the completion of a Paul Lewis course (“so hard!”) with a grade higher than she expected. She continues to play on the tennis team at Bethel, and has been active in music, drama, and Student Government. An additional experience this year was attending the KSPCA (Kansas Private Colleges) Accounting Career Consortium in September. Serena continues to set high academic goals, and looks forward to challenging herself with a variety of courses.

~ Carol Flickinger, ESSC Chair

Happy 80th Birthday Ruthann Dirks!



In certain situations, we find ourselves being asked to make connections with others. The connection

may be a physical connection or it may be relational or geographical. When Ruthann was a student at Bluffton College, there was an old saying that “in the first third of your life, you choose your work, your faith, your wife or husband”. If you are reading this, was that statement true for you?

Ruthann Cochran Dirks was born Nov. 29, 1937, to Pauline Beheydt Cochran and Frank Cochran at home in rural Wadsworth, Ohio. Ruthann has a sister, Karen. Her ancestors include the surnames of Cochran, Morris, Flowers, Lincoln, Smith, Dickinson, Dickerson, Chase, Anderson, Cone, Payne, Deruytter, Spencer, Ma-

lott, Wheeler, Ball, Keyes. She can trace various of her family trees back to 1733 in Belgium and 1598 in France. Ruthann states that, “In hindsight, I call my beginnings ‘Another Mennonite Story’ with name and date connections.” Her father, a Mennonite by choice, was a noncombatant airplane mechanic in WWII. Her mother worked in a parachute factory. During part of WWII, Ruthann and her sister, Karen, lived with the Cochran grandparents. The family lived close to her mother’s parents in sort of a family compound along with her mother’s brother, a cousin and several of grandmother’s brothers from time to time.

Growing up in the family compound was one of acceptance, learning, daily adventures with chickens, neighbors, and relatives. After Ruthann’s sister was born, they went to church. Ruthann went to grade school at the Old Mennonite Seminary in Wadsworth, where her mother had attended. She learned about noncombatants from a visiting peace group, played piano for Sunday school, learned to love the *Tabernacle Hymnbook*, became a leader because she was the oldest of the youth group, and went to church camp where she learned a new way to help others. At age 13, Ruthann was baptized. It wasn’t until about age 15 that she made a more serious commitment to God.

Her family had a boat they took to Lake Erie and Canada for fishing with others. Her father was a mechanic and business owner and he owned a stock car, so the family went to the races many Saturdays and Sundays. However, her mother insisted that they all attend church. In high school, Ruthann sang in a women’s group, played clarinet in the band, took piano lessons, was

homecoming attendant in the 10th grade, was yearbook queen by school vote, and was in honor society for three years and valedictorian of her graduating class. At first, Ruthann wasn’t headed to college because she thought she’d have to help her mother with finances. The church and the Mast family especially encouraged Ruthann to go to Bluffton College. She was opposed to going to the church college but the church leaders prevailed. Connections continued. In 1955 she went to Bluffton. Dr. Raid was Ruthann’s major professor of Economics and Business Administration with an emphasis in education and math. She was the only female in the business courses and held three jobs while attending Bluffton. As a senior, she was paid to teach typing to other college students. For two years, she was a roommate with Muriel Thiessen Stackley. Many wonderful long-time friends were made and to this day they have a Round Robin letter that circulates. At Bluffton she met Marv Dirks, a Chicago Mennonite kid. They were married during their senior year at Bluffton and graduated in 1959. With Marv, many new connections were opened. After college graduation, they lived in a trailer behind the Silver Street Mennonite church parsonage. Ruthann taught business courses at Elkhart High School. Ruthann thought all ministers should know how to type and run the mimeograph so on Saturdays seminary students brought their typewriters with them to Marv and Ruthann’s living room for lessons. In 1962, Marv graduated from seminary and he accepted the Youth Work Program Coordinator for the General Conference Education Board. Ruthann traveled with Marv in U.S. and Canada doing secretarial work. After driving day and night in the

U.S. and Canada, battling traffic and sleep, they both took flying lessons. Ruthann received a private pilot’s license and Marv had multiple ratings. They established, along with Gary Franz, KansAir Flying Service, as a way of using aircraft in General Conference staff travel.

Ruthann taught at Hesston College and at Bethel College (15 years) and was on the Board of Directors of Mennonite Mutual Aid for 10 years. Ruthann received a master’s degree from Wichita State University in education and communication in 1983, mostly night classes and summer classes. In 1985 she attended Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, taught as a graduate student for two years and received a doctorate in 1988. After OSU, she taught at Emporia State University for 15 years and then retired in 2005. A graduate class she taught allowed her to do business audits with students, research for publications, and attended conferences presenting research. Marv’s statistical and research ability allowed them to work together and they have some peer reviewed journal articles published together. A couple of awards were earned for writing and a service award was welcomed. After Emporia, she taught as a substitute teacher at Newton High School.

Ruthann now serves as President of the Olson Foundation. The Foundation Board’s purpose is to raise funds for private instrumental music lessons for Newton high school students in grades 9-12 and they are now supporting 19 recipients. Marv and Ruthann are proud parents of two daughters, Rachel and Danielle, who are orchestra teachers, performers and church leaders. Both girls married band teachers, Andrew and Mike. Their children so far are following in

their parents musical footsteps. Herbert and Jacob are piano players, one the organ. Gavin and Connor are becoming accomplished in trombone, piano, voice, and acting. Ruthann states that they “are blessed to have wonderful families, relatives and friends from our church and our community, who keep us connected.”
 ~ *Life story by Ruthann Dirks, edited by Susan Wheeler*

friendships with co-pastors Delton Franz and Vincent Harding. In the summer of 1963, after completing everything but his dissertation, Omer returned to teach one year at Bethel. The heavy teaching load concerned him because he needed to finish research and write his dissertation project, so he accepted a position at Vanderbilt University (Nashville) where he was able to complete his dissertation and gain tenure in the sociology department. After spending ten years at Vanderbilt, Omer and family moved to Madison, Wisconsin in 1974 to spend one year as a “visiting professor” at the University of Wisconsin. In the fall of 1975 they moved to Austin, Texas, where he became part of the faculty at the University of Texas at Austin. He continued as a member of the faculty at UT until his retirement in January 2006. His primary areas of research were human migration and racial and ethnic inequality in the United States. At UT, he served in several administrative positions, including Director of the Population Research Center and as acting chair of the Department of Sociology. One of the programs was funded by the National Science Foundation. This program encouraged undergraduate students in “under-represented categories” (Women, African Americans, and Hispanics) to continue to graduate school and become “scientists” in demography and population studies. Omer was pleased that a number of those students went on to do research in major universities.

When commenting on challenges he faced, Omer said some of the students he jokingly called “his failures” because they didn’t go on to become research scientists became close friends and productive members of the

larger society. He enjoyed chance opportunities to reconnect with former students and told the following story: his younger son was auditioning for a brass quintet in the Washington D. C. area and discovered one of the quintet’s members had been in Omer’s first class he taught while a graduate student at the U. of Chicago. This former student was now a senior member of the research staff at the National Institute of Aging, part of NIH. After retirement in 2006 Omer and Zona stayed in Texas several years before moving to North Newton in August of 2011. They have been blessed with a daughter, two sons and three granddaughters. Involvement with the Civil Rights Movement, including participating in the last day of the Selma to Montgomery voting rights march in 1965 with his brother-in-law, Dwight Platt, and Bethel students was a life-shaping experience. Currently, Omer and Zona participate with the Newton Community for Racial Justice and have occasionally given programs for The Kansas African-American Museum in Wichita. Their lovely home built by Leona Krehbiel, former Bethel librarian and a relative of mine provides the perfect, restful, secluded environment for Omer to enjoy reading, cooking and eating the produce from Zona and her brother, Dwight Platt’s garden. When asked what he enjoys about BCMC, Omer’s quick response was, “It’s an easy walk from home!” He appreciates the messages that challenge. The congregation and the Seekers Sunday school class are places for interesting interaction with a variety of people. Omer,

BCMC members Jeanette Leary and Vada Snider attended the Comforter Mini Blitz

thank you for your gift of story that reminds us how our past experiences connect to our current reality and can inform what we contribute to make the world a more just and healthy place for all. As you celebrate eighty years of life, may you continue to find meaningful ways to use your experiences and passion for justice!
 ~ *Elizabeth Raid*

With our members.....

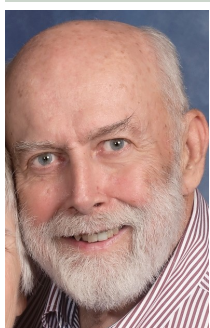
Women and Girls Retreat
Together: Rooted & Reaching was the theme of Mennonite Women & Girls Retreat at Camp Mennoscah September 8-10. Sponsored by Western District Women In Mission, approximately 92 women and girls attended with Barb Krehbiel Gehring as the featured speaker. Vada Snider was part of music and worship and her mass bell choir Sunday morning for worship was one of the highlights. Others attending from BCMC were Barb Koontz and granddaughter Anne Marie Koontz, Carol Peters, Bethany Schrag, Marty Warkentine, Marlene Faul and granddaughter Regan Morris.
 ~ *Marlene Faul, WDWM secretary*

Mennonite Central Committee Comforter Mini Blitz

On Sept. 29 and 30 a number of women from BCMC joined others at the MCC workroom in North Newton for a "Comforter Mini Blitz" where they tied and bound comforters for distribution by MCC. Over the course of the two days 81 comforters were completed.



Happy 80th Birthday Omer Galle!



Omer Galle was born December 13, 1937 in Wichita and spent his early years in Valley Center. He was the youngest of seven children.

His parents, Oswin and Sara Galle, were charter members of Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church where Omer retains his membership.

While attending Bethel College, Zona Platt captured his interest. When his sister paid him \$10 for helping put up hay, he figured he had enough money to ask Zona for a date. There was one problem. He did not have a car. Zona quickly solved that by offering her car! Zona and Omer were married on May 31, 1958 at the Bethel College Mennonite Church, where Zona was (and still is) a member. Reverend’s Russell Mast, (BCMC) and George Stoneback (LAMC) officiated. After graduation from Bethel in 1959, Zona and Omer headed to the University of Chicago to pursue graduate degrees – Zona a Master’s Degree in Social Work, and Omer a Ph.D. in Sociology with a specialization in demography (population statistics). Woodlawn Mennonite Church provided housing and became their church home. They formed



BCMC mentors and mentees gathered on October 1 to eat lunch and pack infant care relief kits for MCC. The items for the relief kits were donated by the congregation. After the mentors and mentees sorted through all of the donated items, they were able to send 15 relief kits to MCC!"



Jan and John Albertson

An orientation to the congregation for people attending BCMC, who might be interested in officially joining the congregation, was October 22. The above people met in the BCMC Fellowship Hall, with Pastors Dawn Yoder Harms and Susan Wheeler and members of the Deacon Commission, for lunch and an introduction to the inner workings of BCMC! They will be officially joining BCMC during the worship service on Sunday, November 19.

Pictured above from left to right: Jim and Virginia Mininger, Bill and Susie Swartley, Carolyn and Don Penner and Reitha Claassen. (Jan and John Albertson are in the separate picture.)

Birth Announcements

Congratulations to Adam and Jill Robb, Moundridge, Kansas, on the birth of Gabriella Rose and Jacob Keith born September 12. Pray for Adam and Jill as they welcome

these little ones into their home. We rejoice with them in their words: "God is so good, patient, steadfast, and loving even as three sets of lives are forever changed and intertwined." Gabriella and Jacob and their parents will have a Parent-Child Dedication at

BCMC on November 12.

Congratulations to Jacob and Marie Brubacher of Prairie Village, Kansas, who welcomed into their home a daughter, Claire Anne Brubacher, born September 15.

Congratulations to Kateisha (Esau) and Fabian Porta, Austin, Texas, who welcomed into their home Tiago Rex Porta on September 17.



Announcements of Coming Events

Great Day of Singing Events

NOTE THIS CHANGE OF DATE! Announcing Great Day of Singing Events - Area congregations are invited to regional hymn sings - The Mennonite Worship and Song Committee, working under the name Resonate Team, has invited congregations to hold a "Great Day of Singing" this fall and has scheduled a series of regional hymn sings. In WDC, on Sunday, December 3 at 6:30 p.m. (not November 19 as was originally announced), Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, will host a hymnsing led by project director and general editor Bradley Kauffman.



Ted Swartz of Ted and Company Theater Works will be at BCMC on Sunday, November 19 presenting *Laughter as a Spiritual Discipline*. He will also be presenting an elective during the Sunday school hour — *Art as a tool for social change*.

Ten Thousand Village/Fair Trade International Gift Festival

Coming to Newton at the Mezzanine above Prairie Harvest, 601 N Main. It will be open on November 24-25, December 1-3, 8-10, 15-17. Hours on Fridays and Saturdays: 10 am-5 pm. Hours on Sundays: 1-4 pm.



December 24, 2017 at BCMC
December 24 is a Sunday -- the church service on

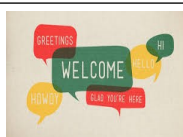
the Sunday of December 24 will be the Children's Christmas Program.

The Children's Christmas Program is usually at 7 p.m. on Christmas Eve when Christmas Eve is not a Sunday, but since Christmas Eve is a Sunday this year, the Children's Program will start at 9:30 a.m. followed by a party for the children in Fellowship Hall. (More details about the party will be clarified later.)

The adult Sunday school classes can decide whether they wish to meet on December 24, or not, and if they DO wish to meet, then they should inform the church office so it can be announced in the bulletin.

There will be a late service of Lessons and Carols at 11 p.m. on December 24.

December 31 is New Year's Eve -- church will start at 9:30 a.m. and there will be NO Sunday school. Everyone will be invited to bring goodies (Christmas or otherwise) to share after the service. The sharing of goodies and fellowship will take place in the Gathering Place.



Do you have a new North Newton neighbor?

Al Peters would like to know. As the only church in North Newton, BCMC has a tradition of welcoming new North Newton neighbors with an informational brochure and a light goody. If you know of a new neighbor, please contact Al. Email: alnaptrs@mainstaycomm.net
Phone: 316-804-7141
~ Hospitality Commission

Western District Conference Update By Kathy Neufeld Dunn, Associate Conference Minister



Our Western District Conference Mission Statement notes that we are committed to

"Witness and invite others to faith in Jesus Christ." Sometimes this takes us deeply into the recognized realm of God in our churches and communities, while at other times it leads us into what, for all the world, looks like the political arena. We follow Jesus faithfully when we witness in either circle. Sometimes those circles of Church and State overlap in disconcerting ways. Other times we get a chance to witness to the way of Christ in exciting, challenging ways. Here are just a few things going on in our conference in both realms:

- Delegates to the Mennonite Church USA Assembly affirmed the resolution, "Seeking Peace in Israel and Palestine." The WDC Israel Palestine Task Force strives to both resource and challenge our delegates to continue the work of being both pro-Jewish and pro-Palestinian as we strive to share the nonviolent, justice-seeking, reconciling love of Christ. If you have not reviewed printed resources on Palestine-Israel lately, check out this resource list: <https://mennowdc.booksys.net/>

opac/crl/index.html?mode=start#search:ExpertSearch?BookbagID=395. It's part of our Resource Library online catalog.

- The Future Church Summit and its findings were so well-received that the conversation has continued. WDC Executive Committee and our delegates raised the same questions for our own conference asking who God is calling us to be as Mennonites today and into the future. Some WDC congregations are asking the same questions in their contexts, as well. Let the holy conversations continue!
- In response to the new MC USA recommendations, WDC is now requiring each of our credentialed ministers to take Healthy Boundaries Training once every three years to learn how to avoid ministerial ethical boundary violations and strengthen internal resources and self-care. October 10 twenty-three ministers were co-trained by Byron Pellecer and myself at Shalom Mennonite Church.
- Executive Board affirmed the formation of a new WDC Immigration task force. Its mission is to serve as a clearinghouse for those seeking information about and counsel on issues of and ministry with immigrants and refugees. Please contact the WDC office if your congregation is engaged in immigration or refugee ministries. Others may wish to partner with you.
- We continue to plan for the exciting Year of Evangelism Kick-Off January 19-20, 2018. It will be practical and Anabaptist to the core. Watch for more information to come soon!

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

November 5, 2017—Stewardship Sunday

9:30 am—Worship with sermon by Dawn Yoder Harms
Music by the Cherub Choir and the Chancel Choir
The Pony Express Begins
Open Forum during the Sunday School hour with
Western District Conference Pastor Kathy Neufeld Dunn

November 12, 2017—Gifts Discernment Sunday

9:30 am—Worship with sermon by John Tyson
Music by Chancel Bells
Gifts Survey presented

November 19, 2017—A Season of Thanksgiving

9:30 am—Worship led by Ted Swartz—
Laughter as a spiritual discipline
Music by Chancel Choir
Open Forum during the Sunday School hour with
Ted Swartz—Art as a tool for social change

November 26, 2017—A Season of Thanksgiving

9:30 am—Worship with sermon by John Tyson
Music by the Junior Choir/Hymn Sing

December 3, 2017—First Sunday of Advent

9:00 am—Advent Prelude—Hesston College Chamber Orchestra
9:30 am—Worship with sermon by Dawn Yoder Harms
Music by the Chancel Choir
6:30 pm—Hymn Sing to introduce the new hymnal

December 10, 2017—Second Sunday of Advent

9:00 am—Advent Prelude—Joel Boettger, Bethel College Instructor
of Jazz Studies
9:30 am—Worship with sermon by John Tyson
Music by Chancel Choir

December 17, 2017—Third Sunday of Advent

9:00 am—Advent Prelude—Christopher Shaw, organ
9:30 am—Worship with sermon by Dawn Yoder Harms
Music by Chancel Bells

December 24, 2017—Fourth Sunday of Advent

9:00 am—Advent Prelude—Vada Snider, Jonah Schloneger,
Alahna Wheat
9:30 am—Children's Christmas Program
Music by Menno Ringers, Cherub Choir, Junior Choir
11:00 pm—Lessons and Carols with music by Chancel Choir and
Chancel Bells

December 31, 2017

9:30 am—Worship with sermon by Dawn Yoder Harms
No Sunday school this Sunday
Bring goodies to share in the Gathering Place after the service