

KALEIDOSCOPE

BETHEL COLLEGE MENNONITE CHURCH

January— February 2017 11:1



Pastor's Corner— Dawn Yoder Harms

January is a month of new beginnings. As we begin a new calendar year and church fiscal year, we also enter the liturgical season of Epiphany, which invites us to celebrate the radiance of God's love revealed in Jesus, for all people, everywhere. I find that it is an opportune time to pause, reflect on the year behind us, and anchor myself in this love as I anticipate the year ahead.

As I look back over this past year, I give thanks for the surprising turn of events that brought Doug and me to BCMC. A year ago at this time we had no inkling that we would be moving to Kansas! Now that we are here, we receive this unexpected turn of events as a gift from God, for which we are grateful. Thank you for your warm welcome, which is helping us feel "at home" sooner than we had imagined.

These days, I am mostly absorbed by the present moment! And each day, I give thanks for the gifts and challenges that fully engage of my energy, imagination, and love. I am grateful for colleagues—gifted staff, committed com-

mission and committee members, all of you—partners in ministry—as we seek to be channels of God's healing and hope.

As I look ahead to the coming year, I look forward to getting to know you better—as individuals and as a congregation. I look forward to hearing your stories and listening for how those stories are shaping the story of this congregation. And I look forward to listening with you to where God is stirring among us, nudging us, encouraging us, stretching us, and consoling us.

As I look ahead, I also find myself praying that we will be continually re-oriented by the one who has been born among us, who was already bearing Good News before he could speak. We hear this Good News "in the lengths his parents went to protect him, the miles the Magi traveled to honor him, the awe of the shepherds who heard his birth announced by an angel, the assurance of the angel that this was good news for all people." (Stephanie Paulsell, *Christian Century*, December 21, 2016). May this Good News illumine our path as we



move into this new year together!

~ Dawn Yoder Harms

Thank you from the Hospitality Commission

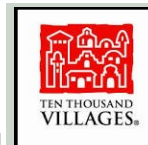
Thank you for practicing simple acts of hospitality at BCMC in November of 2016! We hope you will continue to challenge yourself to meet those in our midst that you do not know well, to share more deeply with those you do know and to be a welcoming presence to all who choose to worship with us here!

~ Members of the Hospitality Commission: *Jeanette Leary, Frank Nachtigal, Margo Schrag, Kathryn Simmons and Barb Voran*

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner . . .



The Hospitality Commission is planning a "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner!" event for February. Watch for details about signing up in mid January bulletins. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to participate in this mixer as either a host or a guest. It's a great opportunity to get to know one another and be blessed by the fellowship of eating together!



Ten Thousand
Villages
Thanks You

A total of \$9200 worth of merchandise was sold at the Festival Sale for Ten Thousand Villages which was held in November/December. Purchase of this merchandise improves the lives of artisans world wide by providing a fair, stable income. Since its founding in 1946 over \$140 Million has been earned by artisans who would otherwise be unemployed or underemployed. Thank you to all who helped make this Festival sale a success. ~ Dianne Epp

Did you know??

That in 1917—100 Years Ago Bethel College Mennonite Church was a young congregation (founded just 20 year before in 1897). Rev. John W. Kliever was pastor and also college president. He received no extra salary as pastor. Most services were in German (but every fourth Sunday morning service was in English). Membership was 108.

That Worship First—Then Sunday School began during the 1930s, when

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Editorial committee: Dianne Epp, Lois Goertzen, Monica Lichti

churches began hearing about an innovative program for organizing the Sunday morning service, called the Unified Service Plan, with the worship first, followed by Sunday School. In 1934 the church voted to try out the program, worship at 9:45 a.m. and Sunday School at 10:45. In 1937 the church voted to continue the program “indefinitely” – and so it has continued to the present day.

~ Keith Sprunger

**Comments from
the Conference
Minister—
Heidi Regier
Kreider**



Held Together in Mission has been WDC’s theme for 2016. We have explored this theme in our annual assembly, and two reference council gatherings focused on being the church in rural and urban contexts. What have we been learning from these experiences? Here are three observations:

1. We have been enriched and enlightened through testimonies and stories shared by individuals from a wide range of perspectives: Church planters and pastors with life experience in places as far away as Myanmar (Burma) and Honduras, and as close as Houston, Austin, Dallas, Turpin, Topeka, Moundridge, and Beatrice; farm families modeling sustainable and generous living; business persons, advocates for peace and justice, food-bank volunteers, writers, musicians, and many more. These stories reflect an interweaving of personal vocation and congregational mission. They encourage us to be intentional in discovering how God uses our gifts, experiences and skills within our particular congregation and community. Marty Troyer’s sermon at annual as-

sembly and his new book *The Gospel Next Door* is a good resource to inspire us in this effort.

2. Our stereotypes have been challenged: For example, there is the assumption that cities are full of diversity and opportunity, and that rural communities are homogeneous and isolated. In fact, we have heard that both cities and rural communities are increasingly impacted by ethnic, religious and economic diversity; poverty exists in rural areas and small towns, even as it does in the city; in the midst of diversity, urban congregations may cluster around affiliation with others of similar culture and background; and electronic communications connect both urban and rural people to global realities beyond their local geography. Another example is the perception that traditional Anglo rural churches are facing inevitable decline, and that church planting and evangelism is only meant for other ethnic populations in the cities. In fact, there are many examples of creative mission and vital ministry within our rural churches, and some people are asking, “When will we have church plants among Anglo communities?” In both rural and urban contexts people are thinking about the lifespan of church communities, looking for the best ways to begin, sustain, and revitalize congregations – and how to know when it is time to plan for a healthy ending or transition to something new.

3. We have explored what it means to do “contextual theology,” seeking to understand how God is working in different ways in our congregations and communities. At the same time, this prompts us to consider whether our structures and relationships reflect this un-

derstanding. Sometimes congregations in WDC may feel “on the margins” or distant from the so-called “center” of Mennonite heritage in Kansas. On the other hand, long-time, traditional Mennonite congregations may get the message that they are out of touch with the urban settings where “real” mission is happening. I hope that our year of being “Held Together in Mission” will move all of us toward deeper affirmation and awareness that God is present in all places, working here and now, wherever we are.

**Happy 80th Birthday
Margaret Hiebert!**



Margaret Koehn was born November 3, 1936 to Jake and Irma Koehn at Bethel Deaconess Hospital,

the eldest of two sisters (one now deceased) and one brother. Her early church experience was at Tabor Church in rural Newton. Her family lived on a farm in rural Newton, and she attended a one room school for seven years near their home. She took her 7th and 8th grades in one year. Then she attended Goessel High School riding with neighbors in a small Model A.

She attended Bethel College for one and half years and Bethel Deaconess Hospital for two and a half years for a RN degree. Later she attended Wichita State where she received her BSN. She worked at Bethel Deaconess Hospital/Newton Medical Center for 32 years where she was a house supervisor, and for 15 years in emergency nursing.

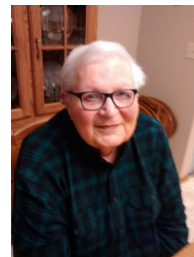
After dating John they were married November 7, 1958, and joined Bethel College Church. She taught some children’s Sunday school classes, served on the Health Cabi-

net, and the Board of Deacons.

With John she has two married children living in California; Kristen and Mark Evans, Matt and Laurie Quenzer Hiebert, and they each have two children.

Flower gardening has been a source of enjoyment for Margaret, and numerous beautiful house plants are witness to that. She retired in 2004 and finds life at Kidron Bethel, where they moved two and half years ago, to be good for them. She hopes that in the years ahead, she will enjoy good health. Our wish for you, Margaret, is that you realize good health and much happiness as you continue your retirement living. Hope your 80th birthday was a special time for you and congratulations for these years well lived. ~ Lois Goertzen & Dawn Yoder Harms

**Happy 80th Birthday
John Hiebert!**



John was born December 4, 1936 in Mountain Lake, MN in the family home. Because his father, John,

died in an accident before he was born, his mother, Marie Penner Hiebert, raised him and his two older brothers alone.

He attended Bethel Church in Mountain Lake, and after attending grade school and high school he hitched a ride to Newton, Kansas. He worked the summer after high school graduation at Mennonite Press and attended Bethel College for one year.

John sang in a select small group at Bethel directed by Elvera Voth. He learned to know Elvera’s niece Margaret Koehn, and called her for a date. After that they spent considerable time together and married on November 7, 1958

at Bethel College Church.

John worked for 50 years at Mennonite Press, first doing various tasks there, and eventually moving into graphic design. He was also Art Editor for The Mennonite for many years. Soon after John and Margaret married, they joined Bethel College Mennonite Church and have remained members since that time. John sang in the church choir for many years, was a member of the worship committee, served on church board, and taught some children's Sunday school classes. He is pleased that good music is still a priority for the church.

They have two children, Kris and Mark Evans, and Matt and Laurie Quenzer Hiebert, who live in California. John and Margaret travel to see them and their four grandchildren about twice a year.

Since retirement John enjoys spending much of his spare time on the computer. He has had a series of health problems, and is happy for relatively good health now. Two and one half years ago John and Margaret received a call from Kidron Bethel to look at a duplex. They immediately decided to take it and have since realized the time was right. Hope your 80th year is one of good health and continued happiness, John. May God bless you as you continue to enjoy your retirement years.
~ Lois Goertzen & Dawn Yoder Harms

John and Margaret



Happy 80th Birthday Berneil Rupp Mueller!



I was shaped by the flat agricultural landscape north of Moundridge by the wind and heat of a Kansas summer, by mountains of snow created by Kansas blizzards, by leisurely walks in the shade of shelter belts planted by the CCC. I was created by a long line of Anabaptist ancestors, Swiss/South German and Dutch/Low German/Russian, by various expressions of their faith – honesty, careful and hard work, care for others, pacifism, a degree of simplicity, selected biblical passages, life styles both stolid and restless, and a few ethnic foods.

My religious sensibilities had their early development in a fundamentalist church environment and in reading biblical stories for children and little books on good behavior – do not blame others for your own actions, obey your parents, do not water flowers in the hot sun! My understanding of biblical scriptures was challenged by meeting, and later marrying, Ted Mueller, a born skeptic; by professors at Bethel College who presented various methods of interpretation; by attending the United Church of Christ—Congregational in Grinnell; by continued, extensive reading about religion. My “faith” is not what it once was. “In our doubt there is believing...” (Natalie Sleeth) Still, the example of the life of Jesus as portrayed in biblical texts is ever with me. My most profound “religious” experience came via a dream about a wolf, subsequent writing about that dream at a writers’ workshop, and an unexpected gift of art. The profound, and difficult, message: We are all one family.

I was nurtured by parents and grandparents who had

an abiding respect for education, those who had extended, formal education and those who had little. I was surrounded by a family that loved Bethel College, and it was at this college that I was exposed to challenging academic material. Here my life was also profoundly changed by an emphasis on living beyond the material and by concern for social justice issues.

Perhaps I was influenced by being born on Nov. 11 (1936), a national holiday, called “Armistice Day”. (I still prefer that name, although armistices are, indeed, fragile). In addition, I was an only child for six and one half years and the first grandchild on both sides of my family for nearly that long which added to my sense of being “special,” not altogether a good thing!

I have also been influenced by my name before marriage – Rupp. “Ruppig” in German means “unruly.” My father, and my mother, too, were spirited people, even, one might say, ornery at times. Mennonite pastor Loris Habegger once told me that he knew of this couple in the Moundridge community who added zest to living! My character and understanding of my social world were shaped by having five adopted brothers, some of them troubled, one dying at the age of ten of tetanus. I knew early that life could be messy, unpredictable. Through it all, I came to appreciate people like my parents who were idealistic and who would not give up.

From before I was born I was shaped and nurtured by music. After their wedding in her parents’ home, my paternal grandparents sang with their friends. My parents met through music – my mother, Linda Balzer Rupp, was the organist Dr. Walter Hohmann recommended to accompany a Christmas cantata my father,

Weldon Rupp, was directing. I have been surrounded by music all my life, and few things give me more pleasure than singing, feeling those wondrous vibrations filling my body and soul, being beside others filled with song. My mother and father were lively storytellers, laying a foundation for a delight in words. I came to love words chosen carefully for their beauty, their insights, their connotations. That love was developed into a deeper understanding of the possibilities of language by Bethel professor Honora Becker, and later through graduate work at the University of Iowa. I have come also to a deep appreciation and love of the visual and theatrical arts and the ways they stimulate and sustain the spirit.

My life has been blessed by being part of a loving, extended family; through work as a teacher on various levels, including five “formative” years at the Grinnell Community Day Care Center; by working in music program management at Grinnell College for 23 years; by being able to travel extensively, often in northern Europe and England; by the rich tapestry of friendships of many years; by marrying an intriguing and resourceful man; by the family that has come from that marriage – Kim, LuGene, and Melanne, and sons-in-law Bob and Simon; grandchildren Lucas and Tegan (and her husband Jordan); and great-grandchildren Wrigley (yes, Wrigley – think Chicago Cubs) and Maddux (another bow to the Cubs).

My life has gone on in almost endless song. And in the yearning expressed by Wordsworth –

“I could wish my days to be
bound each to each...”
~ Berneil Rupp



Happy 80th Birthday LaWanda Wiens!



November 20, 1936, Adolf and Elizabeth (Funk) Schmidt welcomed daughter LaWanda.

Their farm, located along the North Cottonwood River, was often flooded and was taken over by the Army Corps of Engineers as eminent domain. Marion Reservoir was later created causing LaWanda's parents to move to Newton, after she was married. LaWanda's grade school, the Brudertal church and cemetery, were moved to the Hillsboro area. In 1951, she joined Brudertal church through baptism by Rev. Arnold Funk. The four Schmidt sisters loved singing at programs and visiting the sick.

LaWanda and Emerson Wiens met at Hillsboro High School and were married in 1955. They moved to Denver, CO, for Emerson's 1-W service where LaWanda worked at Mountain States Bank. They returned to Bethel College to further Emerson's education. With the birth of Mark Steven, January 1958, LaWanda dedicated herself to her number one goal; raising their family. Additional children joining the family were Kenton Scott, September 1959, and Renee' Suzanne, December 1964.

While Emerson was a student, they both worked night jobs; cleaning at Bethel Clinic, running the college laundromat washing football and basketball uniforms, and LaWanda ironed for the fellows at Goering Hall, doing routine housework for the College Registrar, taking little Mark along. In 1964 when Emerson started teaching at Bethel, LaWanda provided

childcare for campus and community children. In the early '70s the family moved to Champaign/Urbana, Illinois, for Emerson's PhD work. LaWanda was employed at the United Methodist Church where unfortunately, while at work at her desk, she was mugged and her purse stolen! Thankfully it was not worse than a bad headache and five stitches. Upon returning to North Newton, the family enjoyed campout events, a trip to California, the boundary waters of Minnesota, and built a house in the country.

LaWanda worked at Hesston Corporation, became Associate Registrar at Bethel College and was Secretary to the Dean of Students, Secretary to the Academic Dean, as well as Director of Teacher Placement.

In 1988 Emerson left Bethel to teach at Illinois State University. LaWanda was employed by the Education Department of ISU and, later, by the Finance Department of State Farm Insurance. One particularly memorable trip was in 1996 when the couple spent ten most enjoyable days in Israel with friends Frazie and Dorothy Loepp.

LaWanda's creativity shines especially bright in the array of items she made for the children and seven grandchildren; crocheting afghans, quilting blankets, making stuffed animals and other toys, clothing, and bedding articles for each person to celebrate birthdays. In "retirement" these past 17 years LaWanda has delivered meals on wheels for 11 years, volunteers weekly at Et Cetera Shop, drives her great grandson to Community Playschool twice weekly, has been a part of chancel choir, teaching Sunday School classes, involved with MCC relief sales and Meat Canning. She finds joy meeting her sisters on Mondays to work on MCC projects. Another favorite family event is gathering on the fourth Saturday with sib-

lings to, "keep in touch with the many memories of growing up!" This year LaWanda and Emerson were blessed to celebrate a 60th wedding anniversary/80th birthday party with many friends and family, planned by their children. LaWanda, the gifts of God to you have been bountiful. You have used them well to bring joy and comfort to many! ~ Susan Wheeler

Happy 80th Birthday John Esau!



Several years into his pastorate at BCMC, John Esau had an idea. He wanted to visit the entire

group of senior citizens one summer. But instead of racking up miles on his vehicle, he purchased a new Schwinn bicycle. With scheduling help from former administrative assistant, Marlene Faul, John rode his bike from home to home throughout Newton and North Newton, taking on the whirlwinds of Kansas weather, to have conversations and develop deep connections in the community. Several years later he again set out to visit all members of the congregation; these were signature highlights of his pastoral work in the late 1970's and early 1980's.

On February 1, John celebrates his 80th birthday. As he comes upon this milestone, he reflects on the fact that his father died just weeks before he was to turn 80. John's father was a traveling evangelist, influenced by his study at the Moody Bible Institute, yet also fiercely loyal to the Mennonite community. He became completely blind as a young adult. John recalls going on trips with his father to Chicago and to

Quakertown, PA to hear him preach, but also to visit cultural and historical sites in those communities. Although John ended up diverting from his father's theology, these experiences impacted him positively as a young person growing up in faith. John spent his younger years in Bluffton, OH. His family soon moved to Omaha, NE and eventually relocated to Reedley, CA, where John graduated from high school at Immanuel Academy. He began his college studies at Grace Bible Institute. But after two years, his theology evolved to the point where he desired wider engagement with the liberal arts. This led him to enroll at Goshen College. It also led him to meet Bernice Klaassen; they were married in 1959.

Following graduation, John moved right into the program at Mennonite Biblical Seminary, while Bernice practiced nursing. John studied diligently in the summers, which allowed him to finish his program early. He became pastor at Faith Mennonite Church, a new urban church plant in Minneapolis, MN in 1961.

John loved working in the city. He drew energy from the diversity of folks he encountered on a daily basis and the progressive academic culture of the community. The uniqueness of this new urban congregation allowed John to find his footing in ministry. He doesn't claim a definitive and traditional call to pastoral ministry. Instead, John senses that he "backed into ministry," always searching for spaces between congregational ministry and academic study. Faith Mennonite Church was a perfect setting to begin his journey as a pastor. The journey eventually led John to BCMC in 1971. For John, the transition to BCMC was natural: he relished the academic setting and the thoughtfulness of the congregation. A few things, however, were difficult: the loss of anonymity, the sense of exposure that comes with a tight-knit

community. For the first six years of his time at BCMC, John taught a Bible course at Bethel College. It was a helpful way to be a presence on campus and make connections in the community. During these years, John and Bernice raised their three children: David, Sheryl, and Keith. David and his wife Jill live in Ann Arbor, MI, while Sheryl resides in Wichita. When Keith passed away in 2009, John and Bernice remained connected to Dee Johnson, a close friend of Keith's, and her nine year old granddaughters, Andrea and Alyssa. They enjoy connecting with Andrea and Alyssa during holiday seasons and birthdays. This relationship has been a source of great joy for John and Bernice.

After his time at BCMC, John's final role in church leadership was Director of Ministerial Leadership for the General Conference. This position was a culmination of his previous roles in the church. During this final phase of his official church work, John engaged in several writing projects aimed toward updating the wider church's understanding of pastoral ministry. In addition, John was a columnist for the Mennonite Weekly Review for 24 years. Years later, John and Bernice continue to find a worship home at BCMC. They are members of the Catacomb's Sunday School class, enjoying fellowship and learning opportunities with other members of the class. John identifies with the open and progressive nature of the congregation. He enjoys the fact the congregation has always preferred to ask challenging theological questions. The music tradition of the congregation is also deeply valued by John. John has a profound love for the church, and BCMC particularly. In his

words, the "congregation has meant a great deal to us." Undoubtedly, the feeling is mutual.

~ John Tyson

Happy 12th Birthday Braylon Butcher!



Next time you come to BCMC, you might end up crossing paths with the next Steph Curry. His name is Braylon Butcher. Soon he's turning 12, (February 7) but his three-point range is already unlimited. Braylon eats, sleeps, and drinks hoops. After each day of school in the sixth grade at Santa Fe Middle School, Braylon trains hard at the Newton Rec Center. Right now, he focuses on ball-handling, passing, and shooting. He's already the quickest guy in the gym. Just wait until next year when he starts lifting weights!

Despite his training regimen, Braylon doesn't just go all-out on the court. He also excels in the classroom. Math and science are favorite classes right now, but social studies isn't far behind. He recently developed a paper airplane that flew thirty feet in his science class!

When Braylon takes a break from the court and the classroom, he loves to eat. His favorite food is enchiladas. He will not turn

down a chance to go to Texas Road House, and he loves having some spaghetti before the game to increase his energy level.

Braylon also likes to watch sports. He's a Dallas Cowboys fan on Sundays and a K-State fan on Saturdays. Braylon reports that he "isn't allowed to be a KU fan." I wonder if that might change when Coach Self starts recruiting him?

Braylon is a member of the Junior Choir and the Junior High Club. He enjoys Sunday School and getting to know friends at BCMC. Happy birthday, Braylon! BCMC wishes you the best!

~ John Tyson

A Decent and Affordable Place to Live

Families in need of affordable housing live everywhere, small towns, sprawling cities and Harvey County. While the vast majority of Americans feel secure in their current situation, housing insecurity touches nearly half of adults at some point in their lives. Harvey County Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry dedicated to eliminating substandard housing and homelessness.

Three members of BCMC, Ron Peters, Sondra Koontz and Wade Brubacher serve on the board of Harvey County Habitat for Humanity. Twelve

houses have been completed in Harvey County and Habitat's local goal is to complete one house per year. The current construction at 314 E. 11th is nearing completion.

In order to initiate construction \$70,000 is required. Fund raisers, direct donations and estate designations all help Habitat raise the money needed to commence construction. Hours of volunteer labor including at least 300 hours of "sweat equity" by the family who will own the home go into the construction of each home. This latter requirement can prove difficult, particularly for a working single mother.

Families who would like a Habitat home submit applications which are evaluated based on the family's size

continued next page

Ron Peters varnishes baseboards for the new Habitat home at 314 E 11th. ↓



and income, and their inability to obtain adequate housing through conventional means. They also must be able to demonstrate ability to pay the mortgage, taxes, insurance and other monthly expenses. The Habitat board is always looking for qualified candidates.

~ Dianne Epp

Carol and Ron Peters celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in December 2016.

They were married December 17, 1966 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kansas. Congratulations Carol and Ron! →



Also celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary November 19, 2016 are BCMC members Harley and Linda (Weber) Voth of Newton. Congratulations Harley and Linda!

Over his Thanksgiving break, Senior Jon Voth traveled to the Standing Rock Native American Reservation that straddles the border between North and South Dakota to protest the Dakota Access Pipeline, which would threaten the local water supply. Construction of the pipeline was halted in early December. Upon graduation, Jon plans to spend a year in the Service Adventure program in Albuquerque, NM.



The children and youth of BCMC sing together on December 24, 2016 — Christmas Eve



BCMC College Students Study Abroad

Two of BCMC's college students, Nat Dick and Mark Kreider, are preparing for a semester of study abroad. Here is an update on their plans.



Nat: I've been studying Swahili this semester in preparation for my upcoming semester in Tanzania.

I will be leaving from Chicago on January 10 for 6 weeks of language and culture study in Dar es Salaam, followed by 6 weeks of a yet-to-be-determined service placement in the Mara region of Tanzania, in the North of the country near Lake Victoria. I'm looking forward to building relationships with the other individuals in my group, as well as bonding with the Tanzanian families who are so generous to allow me to stay in their homes. I'm incredibly excited for the learning and growth that will come with this opportunity, and I am so thankful for the support I know I have from my broader faith community, especially those at BCMC!



Mark: In terms of my Study Service Term, I will be going to Peru. It runs from January 11 to April 10, and I have a

group of 14 people I'm going with. The first six weeks will be spent in the capital, Lima, doing the "Study" portion. We will be taking Spanish classes, learning about the culture/people/traditions of Peru, and going on field trips. During this six weeks, I will be staying with a host family in Lima. For the second six week portion, I will have some sort of service location. I won't find out exactly where I will be going or what I will be doing until I arrive in Peru. For this six-week portion, I will be staying with a new host family. Following my term, my brother Ben is flying in to Lima and we will do some trekking/backpacking in the Andes for a couple weeks before returning home. I'm excited for the semester, but also a little nervous for language barriers. That being said, I look forward to my Spanish greatly improving as well as the adventures that I'm sure will be a part of this experience.

Best wishes to Nat and Mark as they embark on these international experiences.

Are you finished with all of your peppernuts for the season?

A LITTLE (OR A LOT) ABOUT PFEFFERNUESSE (PEPPERNUTS)

Pfeffernuesse – a tiny spice cookie is a popular holiday treat in Germany, Denmark, and the Netherlands, as well as many ethnic Mennonite communities in North America. They are called peppernoten in Denmark, papanat in Plautdietsch, pfeffer or peppernuts in English and pefernodden in Danish.

While the exact origin of the cookie is uncertain, the traditional Dutch belief links the peppernoten to the feast of

Sinterklaas, celebrated on December 5 in the Netherlands, December 6 in Germany and Belgium. The cookie has been part of the European yuletide celebration since the 1850s. (the above information gleaned from Wikipedia)

There are many variations of this Christmas treat, rock hard, cookie crisp, soft, dark, medium brown and light in color. Some contain brown sugar, honey, sorghum, molasses, and have spices such as cinnamon, cloves and anise. Some are dusted with powdered sugar, however this is not traditional. Most recipes do not contain nuts as the name peppernut might suggest, but some recipes contain finely chopped nuts, raisins, or dates. Eggs and soda are the most common leavening ingredients.

In my cookbook collection is a compilation of cookie recipes collected by Helen (Steve) Epp, former members of BC Church. This book contains 53 peppernut recipes from various cooks. My recipe box contains eight or ten recipes shared by friends over the years. The Bethel College Women's Association and Kauffman Museum sell a small peppernut cookbook.

Making these cookies is a tedious activity, and often shared by family members or friends around the table. December 23 is national Pfeffernuesse Day, so hope you celebrated it with a cup of coffee and a handful of these little bits of traditional cookies.

~ Lois Goertzen



You may not remember the picture below from 2013 of Susan Rhoades, Joyce Holck and Lois Goertzen making peppernuts. From the October-November 2013 issue of *The Kaleidoscope*:

“Every September for the last seven years, this trio of BCMC ladies (Susan Rhoades, Joyce Holck, and Lois Goertzen) has met in each others' homes for a peppernut baking party. Each armed with a large batch of dough, cutting boards, knives and cookie sheets, the morning is spent cutting, baking and visiting. The end result is that at the end of the morning, and after a nice lunch prepared by the hostess, around 15 pounds of peppernuts are ready for sale by the BC Women's Association at Fall Fest. A fun way for good friends to work together for a common cause.”

~ Lois Goertzen

Susan Rhoades, Joyce Holck and Lois Goertzen making peppernuts



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!*

January 2017

January 1, 2017—Happy New Year!

9:45 a.m. Prelude by Mark Kreider, piano

10:00 a.m. Worship with sermon by Dawn Yoder Harms; music by Andrew Thiesen, trombone

11:00 a.m. Fellowship and Coffee—bring goodies to share

No Sunday school

January 8, 2017

9:30 a.m. Worship with sermon by John Tyson; music by Chancel Bells

4:00 p.m. Candle-lighting in memory of BCMC members and friends who died in 2016—Sanctuary

January 15, 2017

9:30 a.m. Worship with sermon by Dawn Yoder Harms; music by Chancel Choir

January 22, 2017

9:30 a.m. Worship with sermon by John Tyson; music by Junior Choir

January 29, 2017

9:30 a.m. Worship with sermon by Michael Unruh, Camp Menno's Executive Director; music by Chancel Choir and Cherub Choir

11:45 a.m. Senior High Youth Lunch Fundraiser in Fellowship Hall

12:45 p.m. Congregational Meeting in Sanctuary

February 2017

February 5, 2017

9:30 a.m. Worship with sermon by Dawn Yoder Harms; music by Chancel Choir

February 12, 2017

9:30 a.m. Worship with sermon by John Tyson; music by Chancel Bells

February 19, 2017

9:30 a.m. Worship with sermon by Dawn Yoder Harms; music by Menno Ringers

February 26, 2017

9:30 a.m. Worship with sermon by John Tyson; music by Junior Choir