

KALEIDOSCOPE

BETHEL COLLEGE MENNONITE CHURCH

March-April 2022



Cultivating Generous Congregations

Al Peters, LaVern Stucky and Pastor Todd Schlosser participated in a weekend Everence stewardship workshop March 18 and 19. The premise was to encourage stewardship in all areas of life, especially giving. It was pointed out that since 1970, giving to religious organizations has been flat; Christians giving an average of about 2 1/2% of their income.

We were encouraged to create and cultivate a culture of gratitude in the church. We need to realize the many blessings that we have received from God. A grateful heart has no choice but to overflow with generosity. Giving is a response to the blessings that we have received from God. We can easily believe that good fortune is our doing rather than a result of God's blessings. We need to ask ourselves if our giving reflects gratitude and prayer. Does it reflect our faith and willingness to stretch and step out of our comfort zone?

Giving in the church will happen if we give because we believe in the Mission and Ministry of the Church; if

we are sold on who we are as a church and why we exist. We were reminded of scriptures like Matthew 6:20 – "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." And II Corinthians 9:7 – "God loves a cheerful giver." Or the rich young ruler in Matthew 19. Jesus told him to sell all that he had and give to the poor and he would have treasure in Heaven. He went away sadly because he had much.

BCMC has a record of meeting the need when it is there, usually coming up to bat to meet the budget as needed. It behooves each of us to be aware of the importance of stewardship and what motivates our giving. This is all extremely important as we make some crucial decisions during the next months.

Al Peters, Finance Committee Chair



70 Comforter Challenge: Sharing Warmth and Hope by Esther Kreider Eash

William Eash and Esther Kreider Eash turned 70 within a few days of each other in January. To celebrate, they created a "70" challenge: "Can we knot 70 comforters in one weekend?" They invited family and friends to help. Over 35 people attended one or all three 4-hour sessions at the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Center in North Newton during the weekend of January 22. Fueled by food and lively conversation, and with six comforters going simultaneously, by 3:30 on Sunday afternoon, 71 comforters were knotted! The goal was exceeded!!!

Celebrating birthdays with comforter-making is not a new venture. Esther contributed 20 comforters to her sister Karen's "60 for 60" 60th birthday celebration several years ago. During Mennonite Central Committee's recent 100-year anniversary, Esther's sisters and daughter Rachel collectively contributed 100 comforters, with Esther and Bill making over 30 comforters for that effort. Each of these celebrations was achieved over several months. When decid-

ing how to celebrate 70th birthdays, travel wasn't an option this year, but comforters were! But instead of making comforters over several months, could people come together to knot 70 comforters in a single weekend? They decided to find out!

To prepare for the event, Esther sewed 50 tops and her sisters Karen and Joan each brought 20 more. During the event, most people tied knots--even if they'd never knotted a comforter before! Several volunteered to sew the binding. Still others helped pin comforters into frames or joined Bill and David as they kept the needles

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threaded -- all so the knotting could continue without much down time. Participants celebrated the completion of each knotted comforter by ringing a bell and adding to the goal graph.

Those joining Esther and Bill included many friends from BCMC and beyond. Esther's family present included three of her four siblings: Joan Kreider and her daughter Madeline Kreider Carlson, Karen and Steve Kreider Yoder, David and Heidi Kreider.



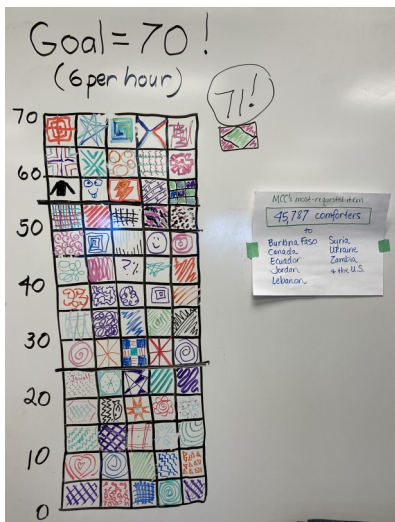
The making of comforters is only the beginning of the journey. Since January, all 71 comforters have been baled and readied for shipment. Comforters continue to be one of the most-requested items by MCC's partners. In 2021, MCC

sent 45,787 comforters to Burkina Faso, Canada, Ecuador, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Zambia, Ukraine, and the US.

Each comforter goes on to have a life and story of its own. Comforters have many uses -- as mattresses, sleeping blankets, clean play areas, room dividers, warmth, etc. Our prayer is that each comforter

brings its recipient warmth, a bright splash of color, a bit of hope, and a reminder that someone cares.

MCC hosted "Great Winter Warmup" again this year to highlight the huge need for comforters and to encourage people to help. There's a task for everyone: cutting fabric, sewing tops, knotting, trimming and pinning, sewing binding, baling, etc.-- contact MCC for ways to help. Or, if you have a long-forgotten stash of fabric in your closet, Esther continues to create comforters and welcomes contributions of any new or almost-new cotton fabric--even if it's not the most beautiful.



Mennonite Disaster Service McAllen, TX Adventure by Valetta Seymour

Last fall my sister Wanda asked if I would like to go on a Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) service and learning trip to the border in February. Without much hesitation I said I was interested, and the two of us made preparations to go.

Under the leadership of Cleo Koop, 15 of us left in two vans from Hesston early on Feb. 19. We drove to San Antonio where we spent the night and attended the San Antonio Mennonite Church on Sunday morning. The church is very active in embracing and supporting immigrants that pass through San Antonio. The congregation is primarily Hispanic and the service is presented in a bilingual format. They treated us to a delicious meal outdoors (beautiful day) after the service. Then Pastor John Garland, a gifted bilingual speaker, helped us understand the complicated status in which would-be immigrants find themselves, most of it having to do with broken US immigration policies as well as extremely dangerous situations in the countries people are choosing to leave.

By Sunday evening we had arrived in Weslaco, Texas, not far from McAllen, where we were warmly welcomed by long-term MDS staff and oriented to our week. We would be working on four homes destroyed by a flood in 2018. These homes are located in Colonias

(neighborhoods) along the US side of the border of which there are thousands. Because these Colonias are not within any municipality, they are dependent on county and state governments to help them get access to services. And they are not a priority for county and state governments, so they are lacking in many basic services, such as trash pickup, police and fire department help, road maintenance, and some don't even have electricity and/or running water.

By 7:30



Monday morning we were on our way to our job sites. We were divided into four work crews, each going to a different site. I spent the first two days

painting interior walls. The last three days I was moved to a different crew that was putting on siding, and my job was to cut up siding boards to the correct lengths. This required use of a chop saw and a skill saw, both of which I'd had no experience with. One of the volunteers who was putting the siding on the house helped me learn how to use these saws. I was able to do my job and stay ahead of their needs of having the appropriate board lengths ready for them. And I still have all my fingers! I was anticipating hot and humid weather and that was what we got the first two days. I did not expect cold weather,



but by the last day I was cutting up boards outside at 42 degrees

and just rainy enough to have mud stick to the bottom of our shoes. That part wasn't pleasant, but all in all I very much enjoyed the work and the satisfaction of our having accomplished so much. Wanda at age 80 was working on yet a different house mudding, taping, and sanding sheetrock. She easily kept up with the others on her crew.

We were able to attend a dedication of a house that had just been completed before we arrived. There was a short dedication ceremony along with some gift presentations to the new owners, a family of six. The keys to the house were then presented to the family who was very grateful to MDS for their new home.

The learning part of the trip involved speakers (arranged for by Ada Schmidt-Tieszen) which added another layer of interest to this trip. A speaker shared his life living the last 25 years in the poorest county in the country, in a Colonia just outside of Brownsville. We heard from a volunteer who crosses the border frequently trying to help with some of the needs of the asylum seekers living in tent cities. As you have likely heard, the living conditions in these tent cities are extremely harsh. Other speakers spoke of their advocacy work there.

The week was filled with eye opening experiences, hard

satisfying work, and enjoying time with the other volunteers. A week well spent.



Valetta with a skill saw (to the left) and a chop saw (above)

Land Acknowledgement Discussions at BCMC By Raylene Hinz-Penner

For longer than a year, we have been reading on the first Sunday of the month a land acknowledgement compiled by Florence Schloneger from words by Mark Charles and *Voices Together* #878 "... we acknowledge that we worship on the land of the Kanza, Osage, and Wichita. We thank them for their care and respect for this land and acknowledge the injustice of their forced removal. We ask the Spirit to heal our histories and find new paths of right relationships with them and all of creation." How has reading that statement together impacted the congregation? What are their responses to the experience of these repeated readings over the past year? How can we at BCMC go beyond the reading of the

statement to further education and engagement in restorative justice for those harmed by settlement of the land?

On Sunday, March 6, after the worship service a large group of interested congregants gathered in the sanctuary to discuss "Land Acknowledgement: Then What?" with resource persons Florence Schloneger, Raylene Hinz-Penner, Karin Kaufman Wall, and Nathan Koontz. In February Florence described a land acknowledgement as a reminder, a call, a recognition, a desire to seek out those harmed in acts of restorative justice. The large attendance at the meeting suggested that people are interested in learning more. Some responses were questions about how to creatively, in a way that is an act of restorative justice, share the land currently owned by members of the congregation. Some spoke of using the land acknowledgement statement in business settings with positive responses. Many asked for resources for further reading, and some wished to study *Healing Haunted Histories* (2021) by Elaine Enns and Ched Meyers where Elaine Enns explores her own history of Canadian Mennonite settlers on native homelands. About a tenth of those in attendance had participated in Mennonite Central Committee's simulation experience, "Loss of Turtle Island." The resource group who called the meeting agreed to build a list of foundational readings on dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery to be made available to interested people in the congregation.

During the worship service In her review of the story of the Kanza people who were eventually moved from their reserve on the Santa Fe Trail near Council Grove to Indian Territory (Oklahoma), Raylene Hinz-Penner remembered with sunflowers at the front of the church the Kanza women who, when they knew they were being removed from the Council Grove area, went each morning and evening to the graves of their dead where they had planted sunflowers. The morning prayers during worship also included prayers for the people of Ukraine--for whom the sunflower is a symbol of peace.



If you would like a copy of the list of readings on dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery referred to in the article they are located in the BCMC Gathering Place on a ledge between the mailboxes; or contact the church office.

MC USA Consultation in May

Mennonite Church USA will be holding a consultation in Kansas City on May 27-30. The agenda calls for discussion and voting on four

resolutions: “The Resolution to Retire Current Membership Guidelines as the Active Mennonite Church USA Policy”, “The MC USA for Justice in the US Criminal Legal System Resolution”, “The MC USA Accessibility Resolution”, and “The Resolution on Repentance and Transformation.”

The Membership Guidelines retirement resolution rescinds membership discrimination against those who identify as LGBTQ+, including those who wish to serve on MCUSA boards and committees. The Resolution for Repentance and Transformation includes a formal apology to LGBTQ+ communities for years of discrimination.

Last year, in sponsoring the Resolution for Repentance and Transformation and by joining the Supportive Communities Network, our congregation made clear BCMC's position to begin to right past wrongs of discrimination against LGBTQ+ people. BCMC delegates will be representing this posture at the Consultation.

—John Kliever for the Inclusion Task Group

Happy 80th Birthday John Albertson! November 27, 1941



BCMC Kaleidoscope

John Albertson was born on Nov 27, 1941 in Hutchinson, KS as the only child of Bill and Evelyn Albertson. He lived with his parents in a three room apartment and was surrounded by good friends and neighbors who had the same values and income as his parents, so he had no idea how destitute they actually were. When he was in the fourth grade he and his family moved to the country, 10 miles east of Hutchinson, where his parents had built a home on farmland where they had finally been able to move. John went to a country school where he was again surrounded with classmates that were a good influence on him. When it was time to go to high school, he attended Buhler High where he eventually started dating Jan. John had first seen Jan in 8th grade and thought that she was the most beautiful girl he had ever seen. When they were both juniors, he finally had the courage to ask her out. The first two times he asked, she flatly turned him down. The third time was the charm and they have been together ever since. Buhler High School was also where he was first exposed to Mennonites; he guesses that at that time, 75% of the student population were Mennonites.

John actually graduated from High School at the age of 16. His music teachers had encouraged his interest in music, he played the trombone and sang in the choirs, and believed that he would learn so much more about music if he became a church choir director. So, at the age of 16, almost 17, John directed the Hutchinson Mennonite Church

choir. He loved that choir of 20 so much that when he saw a flyer about a choir competition at Bethel College, he decided to take them. He learned even more after that experience with choir directors like Elvera Voth and the choir of Eden Mennonite Church also participating. John mentioned that “they pinned his ears back”.

John first attended Hutchinson Junior College, since it was less expensive to attend Junior College. He was one of the first on his father's side of the family to attend college and though his father was supportive of him going, he could not offer any financial help, so John spent his first two years there while also directing the Hutchinson Church choir. By his junior year in college, John had scholarship money and had earned enough that he could transfer to the University of Wichita (as it was called then) where he double majored in voice and trombone. He then became the choir director for Westlink Christian Church, part of the Disciples of Christ denomination. Upon graduating, Jan and John married.

It was at this point, that John had an important decision to make. He could either go on and get his Master's Degree or join the U S Marine Corp, since he had also been in officer's training at the University of Wichita. Much to the relief of Jan's parents, he chose to continue his education at Wichita State (name had now changed) and he finished his enlistment in the reserves. While earning his Master's Degree, John taught voice and choir at WSU. During the summer, to earn extra

money, he worked on a highway construction crew. It worked well for a couple of reasons. At the beginning of the summer, he was so glad to get out of the classroom and away from students and he couldn't wait to be outdoors. By the end of the summer, he couldn't wait to get back to the classroom—he was done with the smell of asphalt!

In 1965, John and the family moved to the Kansas City area. John needed to work somewhere where he could also work on his PhD. For three years, he taught at Rosedale Junior and Senior High School in the Kansas City School District and worked on his PhD at the University of Missouri in Kansas City. He then did his residency for his degree for one year and graduated at the young age of 28. For the next three years, John was the KCK Supervisor of Music K-12. During this time, his superintendent told him he needed to go back to school to get his administrator's certification, which he did (even though he had little interest in going back to school) at the University of Kansas. Upon completion, he became Assistant Principal for a year and then Principal for 3 years within the Kansas City Kansas school district. Then, for over 30 years, John enjoyed being the Director of Music Education in the Kansas City School District which morphed into Director of Fine Arts and Physical Education the last two years. He retired in 2000.

From 1966-2004, John was also the choir director at

Broadway United Methodist Church in Kansas City. When he also retired from that position, Jan told John it was time to be a Mennonite, so they attended Rainbow Mennonite Church for the next 10 years. During this time, he also directed the East Hill Singers prison choir while Elvera Voth was on sabbatical and the Rainbow Church choir while Rosi Penner Kauffman was on sabbatical.

At the end of 2014, Jan and John decided to move to a retirement community and found Showalter Villa to be the right place. It is closer to Jan's family and their son and his family. They like the slower pace of a smaller community. The music (of course!) is what has drawn them to BCMC. The hymn that he immediately said was one of his favorites is Be Thou My Vision (great choice, one of my father's favorites).

John and Jan have three children, Jason who is a veterinarian in Wichita, Janelle who is Director of Communications outside of Denver and JoLynn who is a speech pathologist in Lawrence (the first two born 14 months apart while John was working on his Master's Degree at WSU).

Both John and Jan had COVID before the vaccine was available. John lost 20 pounds in one week and Jan still hasn't recovered all of her sense of smell or taste. Once it is safe to travel again, something they have both dearly missed during COVID, John and Jan want to return to western Canada to visit friends they have known since their WSU days as graduate students. They have visited them 17

times already and number 18 is long past due. Thanks for sharing your story with me John. It was so good to reconnect from our Rainbow days.

—Kathryn Simmons

Happy 80th Birthday Mary Sue Voth! December 21, 1941



Meeting with fellow tea (not coffee!) - drinker Mary Sue Voth was a real treat! Born December 21, 1941, Mary Sue grew up on the Sadowsky dairy farm southeast of Newton as the second-oldest in her family. She recognizes both the pros and cons of that childhood. As the eldest girl, her responsibilities were more in the house than on the farm, and she became the primary caregiver for her youngest brother.

While there was much freedom in farm life, there was also isolation. Mary Sue was the only one in her class in the McLain one-room rural grade school from 1st grade through 7th grade, so her parents had her attend St. Mary's school for 8th grade, a decision for which she's grateful, as it allowed her to move from a class of 1 to a class of 20, before heading to Newton High School where she graduated with the class of 1959.

Mary Sue knew that she wanted something different from farm life in her future. As a young child she played "business" rather than "school" or "house" (using old grain tickets as her tools of the trade), and NHS business teacher Christine Hetzel played a pivotal role in Mary Sue's education and direction for life. Thanks to Mrs. Hetzel's encouragement and assistance, Mary Sue started on her career path in the banking industry, beginning with a part-time job at Central Securities, Inc. while still in high school. She found that she enjoyed the business environment, especially finance.

Married in 1962, raising three children, and going through a divorce, Mary Sue was always a working mother. She learned the sales and marketing aspects of a business while spending several years in direct sales, but she returned to banking, holding various positions over the years – loan officer, branch management, CFO (starting a new branch in Iowa, and working with a large bank in Colorado), President of two rural Kansas banks, regional Vice-President for Business Development in Colorado Springs – but her favorite positions were in community banking, those that allowed her to focus on relationships with customers and staff alike.

Mary Sue married Mel Voth and they have been married 37 years. The opportunities they pursued together led them to live in Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Arizona and Colorado.

They enjoyed new places, people, and experiences, relating to Methodist, Congregational, and Christian (Disciples of Christ) congregations along the way.

During her adult years, Mary Sue became aware of a tremendous need to reach out to others. In business and personally this became her passion: "to convey Joy and Comfort to friends as well as strangers."

Mary Sue and Mel retired on the same day in 2008, and continued with volunteer opportunities together, traveling to southern Texas for 3 months each year for 4 years, and serving with MCC's SWAP program in the Appalachian Mountains of Kentucky.

They moved to Kidron in 2010 and Mary Sue continued to look for ways to share joy and comfort. One involvement that brought her much joy in return was helping the Activities Director by setting up a mini-nail salon service in Assisted Living. Meeting with, caring for, and being able to provide a physical connection and a "little luxury" to residents there, as well as forging those relationships, has been a highlight. She's also been involved with the Prayer Shawl project, both crocheting and helping with program administration.

Mary Sue and Mel joined BCMC in 2011, and she has served on the Finance Committee and is active with the Sojourners Sunday School Class.

A diagnosis of Fibromyalgia in 2014, with its unpredictability and increasing symptoms, has meant withdrawing from some of her volunteering, which has been a sadness, but

Mary Sue continues to focus on joys in her own life.

Some highlights include:

- A family of six children, eight grandchildren (one in Heaven), three great-grandchildren (and one “pending”)
- a lengthy trip to Europe with Mel
- an extended trip to China with Mel, when he led a group of graduate students from AGISM (American Graduate School of International Management) while he was a professor there
- the experience of living in various parts of the US
- volunteer work with the people in the Appalachian Mountains of Kentucky
- living at Kidron, making many new friends and reconnecting with past acquaintances

Recent new joys include a Zoom book study with a daughter-in-law in Spokane, and piecing quilts with her daughter near Walton.

Two hymns that are special to Mary Sue are “How Can I Keep from Singing?” and “It Is Well With My Soul”, and she counts as her favorite Bible verse “any verse that includes JOY!”

Thank you, Mary Sue, for the joy that you continue to share with us!

— Carol Flickinger

Happy 12th Birthday Collin Gaeddert! December 18, 2009

Let’s get to know Collin Gaeddert, son of Crystal and Joel, and older brother to Brett, a bit better! Collin is an active 6th grader at Santa Fe 5/6 Center who is outgoing, energetic,



kind, smart, and athletic. He enjoys playing club soccer in the center back position. This position induces a few extra nerves for Collin because he is the last person before the goalie to stop the other team from scoring. In his free time Collin spends time playing tennis, pickleball, video games, and practicing the violin. In addition to being a skilled soccer player, Collin also believes one of his strengths is in mathematics. He enjoys doing puzzles like sudoku and crosswords on his own and with others. A perfect day for Collin would include getting a breakfast burrito from Mojos, watching a PSG (Paris Saint-Germain) soccer game, going fishing with his family, having Chipotle and splurging on the extra queso, going to All Star Sports in Wichita, eating out for supper, and spending the evening playing soccer on a turf with overhead lights. One of Collin’s happiest memories was taking a hiking trip with his family to Mt. Rushmore. This trip especially stands out because it was a longer trip he took with his parents and

brother as well as with his cousins and grandpa. They enjoyed eating good food, some quality family time together, visiting touristy locations like Crazy Horse and Wall Drug, swimming in the hotel pools, and eating lots of ice cream. Reach out to Collin sometime soon to wish him a happy 12th birthday (this past December) and ask him to share more stories about himself. Maybe you’ll even discover you both enjoy Saturday mornings at Mojo’s or quality time with family playing the board game Clue!

—Renee Reimer

Happy 80th Birthday Ron Peters! February 15, 1942



On a sunny afternoon at the beginning of March, I was able to catch up with Ron Peters. I knew he was a skilled carpenter, but there is so much more to learn about Ron.

Ron was born outside of Henderson, NE, the younger brother of Leron, to the parents of Abe and Ada. Their first home was a small 40 x 40 structure. While he was very young, they moved to a

larger home two miles north of Henderson. Even though the farm was larger, there was no electricity until Ron turned 10. His Uncle Morris helped wire the house and it was a big day when it was finally turned on. Ron remembers running to the barn with his brother to turn on the two lights that were in there. Ron also remembers that they didn’t have any money but they ate like millionaires. His family ran a small dairy and also raised cows, pigs, and chickens. Also when he turned 10, flood irrigation became available to farmers which had a big impact on farms that had flat land since the water would drain to the rest of the field. Ron’s farm did and they switched to growing corn.

Farms that were hilly weren’t so lucky since the water couldn’t navigate throughout the field. Around 10 years later, sprinkler irrigation was invented by farmers around Henderson which had a national impact. The one room school he attended through 4th grade was only ¼ mile away and he was the only student in his class out of maybe 14 students total. When it was time for instruction, your class, in this case, Ron, went up to the front for the lesson. From 5th grade on, he was bused to Henderson.

When Ron was a junior in High School, he was baptized by his pastor who happened to be John Gaeddert at Bethesda Mennonite Church. Ron graduated from high school in 1960 and he went on to Freeman Junior College. Then from 62-64 he entered Pax Service and was in the Republic of Congo for two

years working with the Congo Republic Relief Agency. The Republic of Congo had just received their independence in 1960 and in only two years the area had grown from 30,000 to 80,000 people. Immigrants were relocating and the country needed help. Ron helped build 36 classrooms and two churches. At a leper camp, he helped build a dispensary which included making bricks. The group would also help find food for immigrants. The country continues to struggle since education is not available to many citizens. In 1964, Ron came to Bethel College to major in Industrial Arts and Physical Education. The summer of 1965, he attended the Estes Park Mennonite Conference. It was here he met Carol. He was wearing a Bethel t-shirt, and Carol went up to him and said "Hi Bethel". They were married a year and a half later. Upon Ron's graduation, Carol and Ron became part of a group that planted a Mennonite church in Houston, TX. Ron taught Industrial Arts at a Junior High while Carol finished her degree at the University of Houston. Three years later, Carol and Ron moved to Wichita, Kansas where Carol taught at the Derby Junior High and Ron taught for five years. Ron had always had a desire to own and successfully operate his own business. After looking at several options, they decided to buy Hesston Decorating Center. They moved to Hesston and owned that business for 31 years. Carol was the interior decorator and Ron ran the carpet part of the business. They sold it in 2006 and moved to North Newton to retire.

While they were in Hesston, they had two sons; Chris who lives with his family in San Francisco and Eric who lives with his family in Prairie Village, KS. When Chris and Eric were young, Ron coached basketball, football and t-ball which changed to baseball when they got older. They also have four grandchildren. Ron has always felt that giving back to the community is important. He was on the Planning Commission both in Hesston and Newton for a total of 40 years. He has been on the Bluestem Board 13 years and the Habitat for Humanity Board 15 years (Ron has been involved with 14 of the 17 houses built through this organization). Ron also volunteers at the MCC center every Wednesday. He's part of a group of 12-14 people who help bale old clothes, books, and shoes; usually baling around 12,000 pounds each time. He also volunteers at Et Cetera checking the small appliances that are donated before they are put on the floor. Ron is in charge of getting the 4 main trailers and 2 reserve trailers for the annual MCC sale. New Year's cookies and the sausages are not allowed to be made in the facility for insurance purposes so trailers are brought in for that purpose. He usually uses his woodworking skills and makes a wooden train and quilt racks to be auctioned off during the sale.

Ron and Carol have enjoyed traveling especially during retirement. They have visited all 50 states, China, St. Petersburg, the Mediterranean, the Holy Land and the Baltic. A highlight of their travels was when 15 of their Sunday

School class hosted by Harald Boschmann went to Paraguay. Church has been important to Ron from an early age. Ron has served two terms on facilities here at BCMC as well as been church liaison for the MCC sale. He lives by the motto of asking himself "Should I Do This or Shouldn't I Do This?" He especially enjoys music at church during the Christmas season. Church has never been more important than it is right now as BCMC has supported them as Carol navigates her battle with cancer. Ron, thank you for freely sharing your gifts with BCMC as well as the wider community. You are truly a blessing to all who know you.

— Kathryn Simmons

Anniversary

In the last issue of the "Kaleidoscope" it was mentioned that **Francis and Margaret (Claassen) Toews celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary December 18.** They were married in 1971. Here is a picture of that happy occasion!



Our faith leads us . . .

By
Dorothy Nickel Friesen

I suppose that most of us will not perform heroic acts of mercy, or supply multi-million dollar donations, or even remember every sermon we heard (or preached!). Most of us are Christians who do ordinary things that do not make headlines or foster public praise. However, most of us cook meals, write cards, and provide a ride to the doctor's office for our friends and neighbors. Being part of BCMC is one aspect of "yes" to following Jesus, doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God.

When I had serious back surgery in 2018, it was the card which came with a handwritten note of encouragement that I deemed an "injection" of hope. The Open Circle Sunday School Class, of which Richard and I are a part, brought home-cooked meals or a frozen casserole for another day. Another friend said that cooking wasn't her thing, but she would offer to play our piano for thirty minutes of classical music while I lay on the couch. My healing was helped by these acts of caring and genuine love.

Just now, our Sunday School class is helping with meals and transportation (and our prayers for healing) for another couple who needs extra care. Next week, it might be us who needs assistance! Even though we plan and practice health measures, accidents happen, sickness occurs, and bodies weaken. We are blessed when we share the burden and the blessing of both giving and receiving offerings of love.

Pastor's Corner By Todd Schlosser *Seeking God's Way...*

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord" Isaiah 55:8

The Lenten worship material from Leader magazine states... "We hope that within this theme of "seeking God's ways" you will find space and encouragement to explore the ways your congregation is being called to greater faithfulness."

"Seeking God's ways" and exploring the call "to greater faithfulness" can be more than a Lenten calling for us here at BCMC. It can also offer appropriate focus as we stand at this congregational crossroads and prepare for pastoral transition, contemplate a COVID inspired evolution in our understanding of church and/or engage in our forthcoming consultation with Credence. It seems right and good to take some concentrated time and consider God's way and direction for us.

Who and what is God calling BCMC to be and do? What model of pastoral leadership best fits us in this season of our congregational life? What changes from COVID are worth keeping? Where do we as BCMC find our passion and our calling? Where do we find the energy to engage what we are feeling called to embody and live into? These

are exciting questions to ask as we embark on this journey that will help shape our future in the next few years.

As an interim pastor only part of this congregation for the last two months, I perhaps have a slightly different perspective than those of you who have been part of BCMC for many years. Here are some insights gleaned from observation as well conversations with many of you.

First, some important affirmations...those whom I have visited cherish this church, communicating a love for the worship, for the music and for their relationships. BCMC feels like home and there is deep gratitude for this congregational family. Your work together to engage new understandings and take seriously the desire to be inclusive results in an impact that extends far beyond just this congregation.

Second, there is a weariness among you. Is this weariness due to general aging (we are all getting older)? Is it due to the stress of COVID or church burn-out? Other factors? As you spend time seeking God's way for BCMC, it will likely be important to honestly acknowledge the energy and gifts you are willing and able to offer. This is an opportunity to not only name your calling, but also name those initiatives that have served their good purpose in time and can now be released.

Third, I believe BCMC is going to be just fine. While this time might offer some challenges, so often challenges are what help us grow and give us new life! You are faithful people, doing good and faithful work, in the midst of

beloved fellowship with one another. You have a wealth of experience and knowledge. I encourage you to embrace this time in the church's life to seek God's way with trust, kindness, honesty, love and grace.

Senior High Snow Camp at Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp was Feb. 18-20.

BCMCers attending were Ani Koontz, Lilly Schloneger, George Leary and Megan Kohlman (as sponsors) and Pastor Renee Reimer. Pastor Renee was worship speaker for this Snow Camp. BCMC youth joined First Mennonite Church Youth for the trip to camp.

Snow Camp Pictures



Worship Schedule for April

April 3, 2022—Lent 5—from scarcity to abundance—Sermon by Renee Reimer; music by Chancel Choir

April 10, 2022—Palm Sunday—From power over to power with—Sermon by Dale Schrag; music by Chancel Bells

April 14, 2022—Maundy Thursday—7 pm service in the Sanctuary (also live-streamed)

April 17, 2022—Easter—From certainty to openness—Sermon by Nathan Koontz; music by Chancel Choir

April 24, 2022—Holy Hilarity Sunday—Sermon by Renee Reimer

Bethel College Mennonite Church
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Worship schedule *(Check church website, bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org, for updates and details on worship and other events)*
Sunday worship is at 9:30 am, unless otherwise noted. Faith Formation is at 10:50 am. Everyone is welcome!
Note: Any given Sunday's events may be subject to change. "The Kaleidoscope" can be viewed online on the website.

February 6, 2022—Worship with sermon by Western District Conference Minister Kathy Neufeld Dunn—Installation of Interim Pastor Todd Schlosser

February 13, 2022—Worship with sermon by Pastor Renee Reimer

February 20, 2022—Worship with sermon by Pastor Todd Schlosser

February 27, 2022—Worship with sermon by Nathan Koontz

March 2, 2022—Ash Wednesday

March 6, 2022—Lent 1—Worship with sermon by Janeen Bertsche Johnson

March 13, 2022—Lent 2—Worship with sermon by Pastor Nathan Koontz

March 20, 2022—Lent 3—Worship with sermon by Pastor Renee Reimer

March 27, 2022—Lent 4—Worship with sermon by Pastor Todd Schlosser