

June 2007

Worship Themes

June 3 - "It's About God"

Matthew 6:24-34 - Corey preaching

June 10 - "Be Bold! God is with You"

Bible School Sunday

June 17 - "It's About Purpose"

Luke 19; Mark 10:17-31

Corey preaching

June 24 - "It's About Provision"

Genesis 22; Hebrews 11:17-19

Corey preaching

July 1 - "It's About Us!"

Luke 12:13-21 - Corey preaching

"Holy Uselessness"

"... O prosper the work of our hands!" - Psalm 90:17b

I confess that I enjoy visiting spiritual retreat centers when I need a personal retreat. My most memorable retreat was in Atchison some years ago at a Benedictine monastery. One important aspect of Benedictines is the *Rule of St. Benedict* which stresses, among other things, the importance of humble menial work. According to the *Rule*, no one is excluded from kitchen duty. Everyone is expected to perform humble tasks and clean up after themselves. As a child, I remember doing menial tasks of dusting and cleaning every Saturday as we prepared the house for Sunday. I thought my mother's desire to keep such a neat and tidy house every week was extreme (even idolatrous) when we could have spent the day off from school doing something fun!

Lately, I've been thinking about what that part of the *Rule* would look like for Anabaptists. We take seriously the value of hard work. Even so, work can become idolatry if our lives are out of balance. We often lose the gift of letting go, for delight in simply being. Is there a place for *holy uselessness* in our purpose-filled lives?

As I prepare for a two-month sabbatical, I hope to find time in simply being. That does not mean, however, a passive existence. Rather, it is a re-creating; something that makes us new when we're tired and worn down.

For me that includes learning, reading good books on spirituality, walks through nature, and praying at the piano. Our work and "uselessness" can be filled with promise. All that we structure in our days can be a source of life and growth. The prayer of Teresa of Avila says it well: "Lord, you are to be blessed and praised; all good things come from you; you are in our words and in our thoughts, and in all that we do." What a great prayer to contemplate as we think about our own *Rule* for life. If God is a part of all we are and do, no task is insignificant. So, whether we're dusting or reading theology, may God bless the work of our hands and minds so we may be filled with promise. Have a great summer!

-Pastor Karen

Praying and Acting for Peace

The Return to the Earth study is finished. The group that studied this topic together will hopefully be gathering to build boxes and sew burial clothes that will hold the sacred bones of culturally unidentifiable Native American bones. The bones will be given a proper burial in one of several locations in the United States. One of the identified burial spots is in Clinton, Oklahoma. There is a possibility of some of our folks going down to Clinton to help with some sheet rocking of a building at the burial site. We will let you know how we are responding to this justice issue in the name of Christ.

Coming in June: 30 Days of Generosity

Jesus had much to say about our financial decisions - because he knew they were really spiritual decisions. Yet too many congregations pile all stewardship teaching and preaching to one Sunday a year. What would happen if a whole church decided to spend ONE MONTH learning about and living out biblical stewardship?

Tabor Mennonite will experience just that during the month of June as we learn from a brand new curriculum from MMA called 30 Days of Generosity. For 30 days, our preaching, our teaching and our sharing will focus on how we can live as good stewards of the time, money and talents that God gives us. 30 Days of Generosity will reinforce the notion that every financial decision is a spiritual decision and after the 30 days are over, we hope that we will be a changed congregation that sees our giving as an act of worship to God's goodness to us.

After reflecting on God's generosity during the worship services, we will then have Sunday school for all adults in the basement around tables. Every participant will get a booklet/journal that will be the basis for our discussions during the SS hour. Special drama's are being written by Carol Duerksen for this series.

These sessions are being planned by the Education Commission and the Stewardship Commission. We are really excited about this opportunity to reflect on God's Generosity for 30 days and we look forward to the fruit it will bear in our lives and in the life of our congregation!

Summer Sunday School

The Junior Sunday School classes will again be combined for the summer. GatherRound provides a summer curriculum designed for combined classes. We will be learning about parables. Join us!

"Practicing Our Faith" is theme for summer conversations for adults at Tabor.

Gather around tables in the fellowship hall, with a cold drink and an open heart this summer to hear stories about how many folks **Practice Their Faith** through their lifestyle choices, vocations and day to day living. This series will begin on Sunday, July 8 and run through August 26. Learn about healthy living, retirement planning, caring for children via education, the ministry of nursing and social work and much more. Weekly topics and presenters will be listed in the church bulletin. All adults are invited to attend!

Prayer and Envisioning Team

Sometime in June, the Tabor prayer and envisioning team will meet to begin dreaming about our future at Tabor. The members are Harlin Unruh, Barb Abrahams, Steve Janzen, Gayle Funk, Carrie Sommerfeld and Pastor Corey. The group will be reflecting on the changing needs of our members, the demographics of our communities, and the structures of our current ministries. Above all, we want to be in prayer for our future, a future that God is already aware of. The group will keep you posted as to what we are learning, discovering and hearing.

Second Annual Mennograss

The second annual Mennograss in the Tabor Park will not be held in June this year, but in August, together with the Miller BBQ. So, make plans to come to the park on August 26th, for some good burgers and some good bluegrass music! More details will come later.

TGYF

With finals and school ending, it has been a very stressful month for the TGYF members. However, we still managed to sneak in a couple of meetings. At one meeting we talked about Mennonite values and what it means to be a Mennonite. We also had a party to celebrate the end of the year. We looked at pictures, played pool, and ate s'mores. ~Kristin Unruh, Reporter

Camp Scholarship Available

Are you one of the children or youth planning on participating in a summer camp at Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp or Camp Mennoscah this summer? If so, then up on the bulletin board and you will receive a \$20.00 scholarship to help with your registration. This is made possible through the fund that was established in memory of Linda Voth. Please sign up and note which camp (Rocky Mountain or Mennoscah) and the dates of the camp you will be attending. Your scholarship will be mailed directly to the camp.

Caring Group Ministry.

Summer resources

Is your caring group looking for something different to do in summer? Here are some ideas for summer study and discussion:

-Building on Faith: making poverty housing history. 52 minutes. DVD 261.8325 Bui. For adults. The lack of decent, affordable housing threatens to destroy the health and well-being of humanity. This documentary explores why the average American needs to care for and advocate for more affordable housing. Study guide enclosed.

-Boundaries in Marriage. DVD 306.8 Clo. For adults. Featuring Drs. Henry Cloud and John Townsend. Respecting your spouse's personal territory can strengthen your relationship with each other and with God. Includes materials for eight sessions with video, DVD, leaders and participant's guides.

-Simply Christian: why Christianity makes sense. DVD 230 Wri. For adults. Featuring ten video-based lessons with New Testament scholar and writer N.T. Wright. He offers a fresh presentation of the timeless truths of Christianity, making the case that faith is reasonable and rewarding for us today. Could be used as a refresher-course or for young adults who want to

probe the basics of faith, or segments could be used for a faith-exploration or catechism course. Based on book by same title. (*This book can be checked out from Karen's library.*)

These can be reserved from the Western District resource library. May your summer be filled with good things!

WDC NEWS

Tulsa--here we come!

The WDC and SCC Program Committee has begun planning for the joint **annual conference** sessions to be held at the DoubleTree Warren Place Hotel in Tulsa, OK, **July 27-29**. The WDC Reference Council will meet 1-4 p.m. on July 27; registration is 4-7 p.m.; opening worship is 7 p.m. Separate delegate sessions will be Saturday a.m.; workshops/seminars Saturday afternoon; a youth musical in the evening. All sessions will end by 11 a.m. Sunday. Begin selecting delegates, marking your calendar, and praying for the Holy Spirit's guidance in all preparations. Brochures are available soon!

"Speak Lord! Habla Señor!" is the theme of the joint summer assembly of Western District and South Central Conferences. Based on I Samuel 3, speakers, music, and drama will focus on hearing God's voice. You can be a part of the conference--via video clips. How has God spoken to you? How is your congregation hearing God's voice and following it? Send short clips of people (pastors, youth, young adults) who answer those questions in 3-minute (or so) interviews. Send your clips in any of the formats listed below, and we'll get them ready for showing at Tulsa this summer. Send to WDC, Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117 by July 1. If you have any technical questions prior to proceeding, we have access to knowledgeable technicians who can promptly respond. Preferred digital formats: DVD Video, MiniDV Tape, VCD (or as a data file on a CD/DVD), MPEG2, MPEG4, Quicktime MOV, AVI (preferably not Divx/Xvid), WMV (least preferred). Acceptable analog formats: VHS, Hi8.

Mennonite Church USA

Churches Supporting Churches invites Mennonite Church USA congregations to partner with New Orleans churches

Adapted from article by June Krehbiel

After Hurricane Katrina slammed into the Gulf Coast in September 2005, churches suffered, lacking not only bricks and mortar but emotional unity and stability. Since then a national working group, calling itself Churches Supporting Churches (CSC), is seeing to it that churches along the Gulf Coast are getting the help they need.

African-American Mennonite Association (AAMA) coordinator Steve Brown says, "We need to get our Mennonite churches to consider partnering with CSC. It is a work that we feel can certainly bring peace and calm. New Orleans is in a bad situation, particularly churches in the community. Half the residents have not come back to New Orleans. There's a lot going on there that the media doesn't show. You see homes that have not been gutted, churches not rebuilt, jobs not returned, economy bad."

The CSC project, according to Brown, is assisting African-American congregations in 12 areas of New Orleans where Katrina destroyed or seriously damaged their facilities. The goal is to "restart, reopen, repair and rebuild the churches" so they can once again serve their communities.

Brown is inviting Mennonite Church USA congregations to pair up with churches in the New Orleans area. Both financial resources and supportive relationships are needed. "The wheels of progress turn very slowly. These congregations have been turned down by other organizations and have suffered a lot of road blocks," Brown says. "We need some tangible help from congregations who can put legs under their prayers for the people of New Orleans."