

## Western District Conference

### Kansas Conference/WDC origins

A presentation will be made on the Kansas Conference/WDC origins October 11 at 3 p.m. at the Goessel (KS) Museum. The South Bloomfield School, part of the Mennonite Heritage & Agricultural Museum complex, was the setting for the first meetings of the Kansas Conference, the forerunner of Western District Conference.

Presenter Brian Stucky, stumbled upon the South Bloomfield School-Kansas Conference connection while doing research for another project. His presentation will include the reading of the minutes of the first Mennonite teachers meeting, held in November 1877, and the minutes of the first Kansas Conference, held in 1878.

The program will begin at 3 p.m. in the South Bloomfield School building. Cookies and coffee will be served in the Preparatory School following the lecture. An offering will be taken for WDC's Vision 2012.

### Menno Simons Lectures

The 58<sup>th</sup> Menno Simons Lectures at Bethel College, North Newton, KS, will be held November 1-3. Scott Holland will speak on the topic: *Prophets, Poets & Pragmatists: The Historic Peace Churches and Public Theology*. For more information: [www.bethelks.edu/academics/lectures/menno\\_simons.php](http://www.bethelks.edu/academics/lectures/menno_simons.php)

### Increase your Bible knowledge in a weekend!

Join Marion Bontrager, Michele Her-shberger, and Ted Swartz for Hesston College's fall conference, "Learning the Bible in Life-giving Ways: History, Hooks, and Heilsgeschichte," Oct. 30-Nov. 1. Contact your church office for information. Child care provided.

### MennoFolk Family Camp

MennoFolk is coming October 9-11 with all sorts of new things- hedge apple games, treasure hunts, and a hayrack ride! Not familiar with these camps? Brochures can be found online at [www.mennowdc.org](http://www.mennowdc.org) contact us at 620-297-3290 for more information.

## Camp Mennoscah

This past summer the following children from Tabor attended camp at Mennoscah:

Rachel Miller, Hannah Miller, Sarah Booth, Jasmine Brandt, Karina Brandt, Carson Voth, Mark Schmidt, Joshua Schmidt.

Those helping at camp were:

Jill Brandt, Anna Unruh, Jason Unruh, Lewis and Carrie Unruh and Michael Unruh.



## Church Retreat At Camp Mennoscah



Hayrack ride at Camp Mennoscah.

### Worship Themes

**October 4 - Rural Church Realities (Communion)** Psalms 24:1-2; Isaiah 5:1-10, Romans 8:18-24  
Corey preaching

**October 11 - Re-Envisioning Rural Ministries** - Psalms 24:1-2; Leviticus 25:24; I Corinthians 3:5-9, Ephesians 4:11-16  
Corey preaching

**October 18 - Practices of Revitalized Rural Churches** - Psalms 24:1-2, Romans 12:9-18  
Corey preaching

**October 25 - Bethel College Sunday Mennonite Heritage Sunday**  
Chad Childs preaching

### Wednesday Evenings at Tabor

- 5:00-5:30 - Active Seniors
- 5:30-6:30 - Supper for everyone  
*Bring your own table service.*
- 6:30-7:15 - Faith Friends  
Faith Adventure  
Youth Explorers  
Adult Bible Study
- 7:00-8:00 - TMYF
- 7:15-8:00 - Sonbeams  
Children of Light  
Worship Team  
Faithful Fitness
- 8:00-9:00 - Adult Choir



# Tabor Church News

October, 2009

## ōRural Realitiesö

*"When a great crowd gathered...from town after town..., Jesus said in a parable: 'A sower went out to sow his seed' öö -Luke 8:4*

For over 100 years, Tabor Mennonite Church has gathered in the country to worship, be nurtured in our faith, do missional work and fellowship together. Our mother congregation, Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church was a rural congregation and we also were born in the country. In spite of the urban mindset that is apparent within the fabric of our current faith community, we at Tabor continue to be a rural congregation. Because we gather at the corner of 80<sup>th</sup> and Chisholm Trail, we are rural.

There are far fewer farmers at Tabor now than there were in 1908 and increasingly, Tabor folks are not as directly affected by weather, crop prices or agricultural programs as we used to be. And yet, what is happening in our rural settings is having a significant impact on our life at Tabor. The decreasing population in rural areas does affect the health of local communities and that in turn affects the vitality of rural churches. I think the reason why Tabor's membership peaked in the 1960's and 70's was because farms (and families) were growing and thriving.

We at Tabor Mennonite are in a unique time and place. We are over 100 years old and we are finding that some structures and patterns and ministries don't work like they used to and are in need of an overhaul (or even a funeral). We continue to be a rural congregation but we have more of an urban reality. Many of our attenders come to Tabor not from farms, but from towns and cities where they work and live. There is something about Tabor that still draws people from Newton, Hesston, Moundridge and Goessel and that is a special gift.

Jesus loved the country. Instead of beginning the church in Jerusalem or any other city, he chose to do it in the country with fishermen and farmers. Even when large crowds came to him from the towns, he told parables about farming, the land and vineyards. Jesus was born in a barn and I believe that he has a heart for rural churches today. While rural communities and congregations face tremendous challenges in our time, it seems that if we at Tabor can rediscover a vision and rekindle our passion, and renew our commitment, we will experience a growing faith together in new and creative ways out here in the country.

During this month, I will be reflecting on some things I gleaned from my sabbatical about revitalizing rural congregations and I look forward to seeing what we will discover together ö out here in the country!

-Pastor Corey



### New Purpose Editor Excited to Help People Make Faith Practical

#### Carol Duerksen Starts New Assignment in October

For Carol Duerksen, being named editor of Purpose magazine is an exciting opportunity to help people find ways to make their faith practical for their daily lives.

Duerksen begins her new assignment as editor of the Mennonite Publishing Network (MPN)-produced magazine in October. She succeeds James E. Horsch, who has edited Purpose since 1984.

The Tabor Mennonite Church member edited MPN's With Magazine for 18 years, and is a writer and editor for MPN's Gather 'Round Sunday school materials and other Christian education curriculum. She is the co-author with her husband, Maynard Knepp, of nine self-published Amish novels and two children's books, and also co-authored a devotional book, Now It Springs Up. My hope is that Purpose will be able to share many stories and poems that are both lively and inspirational, and that a variety of readers will grow in their faith and consider their time well-spent with this little magazine, she says, adding that the story is the best way to make a lesson for life memorable.

Founded in 1968, Purpose is a monthly magazine that features inspirational articles, illustrations, and verse that encourage Christians in their daily walk with Christ, along with regular columns on food, peace, humor, and resources for faithful living.

Cost of a yearly subscription is \$24 for 12 issues; church group rates are also available. For more information, or to order, go to [www.mpn.net/purpose](http://www.mpn.net/purpose) or call 1-800-245-7894.

Mennonite Publishing Network is the publishing agency of Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada, providing materials that equip the church to experience and share the gospel from an Anabaptist perspective.

John Longhurst  
Director of Marketing & Sales  
Mennonite Publishing Network

## Wednesday Evening Notes

### Schedule Changes

Christian Education has been faced for years with a good challenge (but still a challenge) of how to organize Wednesday night activities. We are thankful for such a full schedule of activities but realize that they create the challenge of providing accommodating schedules for people of all ages. Our philosophy is that the children come first. We have children from the community that attend our activities and we want to accommodate them as much as possible. This fall, we are trying a new schedule in which the Bible studies will happen before the choirs so that the children from the community (who do not participate in choirs) are able to go home early. Christian Ed. will do an evaluation at the end of the semester to see how it's working. Please bear with us as we know this will cause changes on everyone's part. Please pay close attention to the schedule. There is something for everyone! Praise God for these ministries.

### "Praying with our hands"

What was formally known as *Adult Bible Study* on Wednesday nights will change this year to *Praying with our hands*. Adults will gather together to pray by using our hands through service projects for the church or community. This could include anything from washing dishes to helping teachers to MCC projects. If you have a "hand" project that you think our group can handle (men and women), talk with Pastor Karen and we will see what we can do.

### Take Note!

In order to be more green and not raise our meal price on Wednesday evenings please bring your own table service. There will be sign up sheets Wednesday, October 7 for ways you can help with meals. If you need babysitting on Wed evenings contact Brenda 367-8334.

Save the dates November 20-22 for:

### Stewardship Author & Storyteller, Lynn Miller

- Friday evening ó All are invited for input and interaction with Lynn Miller.
- Saturday morning ó Senior adults enjoy coffee & rolls with Lynn Miller and his input on life beyond retirement.
- Saturday evening ó Night Out for 20-40 year olds. Come and enjoy a catered buffet and input from Lynn Miller.
- Sunday morning ó Meditation from Lynn Miller. The youth hear Lynn Miller during Sunday School.
- Sunday Noon ó All are invited to a potluck and visiting with Lynn Miller.

Stewardship Update	2009 Budget	Goal through September 20	Giving through September 20
	\$288,742	\$233,215	\$196,126

Ten Sunday's left in this fiscal year. \$9,272 needed per Sunday to meet budget.

## Caring Group Ministry

One of things that you may or may not realize about caring groups is that they are often working or involved in activities behind the scenes of our church ministries. At the Tabor retreat, one caring group served a meal. Other groups have served meals on Wednesday nights. Other groups have been involved in service projects that have helped members in our community. Others focus on study and prayers. The activity, whatever it may be, is much easier when it's a group effort but all help build up the community of faith.



In the book *Equipped for Every Good Work*, there is a term called "Spirituality Web" which has nothing to do with the internet but refers to the spirituality that a group has corporately. For instance, the web includes head, heart, pilgrim, mystic, servant, or crusader spirituality. The activities you do as a group may stem from the spirituality of your group. Which one defines your group?

Head - study of scripture is important, the Christian life has practical benefits, God can be known.

Heart - faith sharing is important, strong commitment to pray for others, experience rather than study preferred for knowing God.

Pilgrim - faith formation is a process, openness to wide variety of faith traditions, people seek meaning.

Mystic - prayer and meditation are central, retreat/renewal is important, God is listened for.

Servant - people are doers, not hearers, Christianity means being like Jesus, prayer is secondary.

Crusader - people feel single-minded devotion to call, spiritual discipline provide focus, Christian community is found with like-minded crusaders.

In the coming year, we (Karen, Denise, Carol) will be in prayer as we seek to call out people from the congregation who would like to be leaders of a caring group. Some training would be involved learning more about the "Spirituality Web" and spiritual gifts. Please contact us if you are interested (current leaders are welcome too). May we continue to build up the community of faith by our words, actions, and the gifts God has given us.

## College Student Update

### Freshmen:

- James Goerzen - Pratt Co. College
- Grace Unruh - Bethel College
- Kristin Unruh - Bethel College
- Laura Unruh - Hesston College

### Juniors:

- Travis Buller - Friends University
- Brittany Dirksen - Bethel College
- Alex Drake - Baker University
- Brett Goerzen - Friends University
- Sheldon Goerzen - Wichita State U.
- Jason Unruh - Kansas State U.
- Janessa Wedel - Kansas State U.

### Sophmores:

- Ron Dirksen - Hesston College
- Kurtis Duerksen - Southeast Co. College, Milford, NE
- Nathan Ensz - Hesston College
- Jake Schrag - K-State Salina
- Anna Unruh - University of Kansas
- Claire Unruh - Bethel College
- Duane Unruh - Bethel College

### Seniors:

- Josh Andres - Kansas State U.
- Brittany Voth - Bethel College

## Mennonite Church USA Corinthian Plan featured in Christian Century

The Corinthian Plan, the Mennonite Church USA health care plan, is featured in the September 22 issue of the Christian Century. The bi-weekly magazine carries staff writer Amy Frykholm's four-page article titled "Health-care Option: A Mennonite Plan for Mutual Aid."

The article offers personal stories from Mennonite pastors, a look at the Corinthian Plan as well as its background and reasons for its need.

Frykholm interviewed Keith Harder, the denomination's health care access project director and a handful of Mennonite pastors, including Juanita Nuñez, moderator of the Iglesia Menonita Hispania. The writer talked with Marco Guete, conference minister of the Southeast Mennonite Conference. She interviewed Timothy Jost, who crafted the resolution the Delegate Assembly passed in July supporting legislation that would extend health care coverage to all Americans.

The tenor of the Mennonites' conversation and the honesty with which they have faced the dilemma is a model for the nation, Frykholm writes.

## MCC Central States Hours

Beginning Friday, October 2 through Friday, March 26, 2010 the Mennonite Central Committee center in North Newton, KS will close at 3 p.m. on Fridays. Monday through Thursday MCC will be open from 8 a.m. - noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Material donations may be dropped off at MCC during office hours or left in the marked After Hours Donation Drop Off location at any time. The reduced hours are due to budget cuts and salary reductions. We are grateful for the strong support of MCC in the Central States region. However, our budget shares the burden of the recession that has been more challenging in other regions of MCC. We encourage your continued support of MCC through these difficult economic times. If you have questions, call 316-283-2720.

"So what is your son going to be when he gets out of college?"  
"An old man."