



Tabor Church News

December, 2009

Endless Peace

"... His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace."

-Isaiah 9:7

Worship Themes

Dec. 6 - "Get Ready for Path of Peace"

Advent 2 Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79
 Luke 3:1-6; Philippians 1:3-11
 Karen preaching

Dec. 13 - "Rejoice! God Turns Us Around"

Advent 3 Isaiah 12:1-6; Zephaniah 3: 14-20; Luke 3:7-18; Philippians 4:4-7
 Tony Hartman preaching

Dec. 20 - "God Delivers"

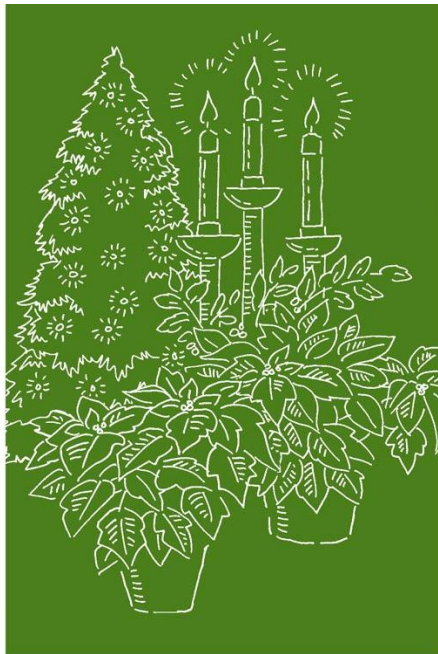
Advent 4 Psalms 80:1-7, Micah 5:2-5; Luke 1:39-56, Hebrews 10:5-10
 Corey/Adult Choir preaching

Dec. 25 - "The Word Made Flesh"

Christmas Isaiah 52:7-10, Psalm 98, Hebrews 1:1-4, John 1:1-14
 Corey preaching

Dec. 27 - "Let all Creation Praise God"

I Samuel 1:18-20, Psalm 148, Colossians 3:12-17, Luke 2:41-52
 College Students (no Sunday)



There is something about this season of Advent that tends to bring out the best in humanity. Normally busy people will take time to help a stranger. Self-centered people stop to think about someone else. Inactive church people will find themselves at a candle light Christmas service. Typically stressed and anxious people discover a peace within their spirit. What is it that creates this change in people?

Some suggest that this is the best of the human spirit coming forth in an environment of joy, sentimentalism and celebration. But I think there is more. I believe at Christmas time, there is a love that is felt, experienced and offered because of the living presence of Christ. People acting nice is great, but I believe that all that is good, honorable and right about this season stems from the restoring, redeeming, re-creating work of God enfolded in Jesus Christ.

When Israel was languishing in exile, the prophet Isaiah reminded them that a light would be coming to the people walking in darkness (Isaiah 9:2). A son would be born for them (and us) and he would be called *Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace*. Any peace that comes in this season of joy is a gift from God, Creator of Shalom.

Isaiah's message gave tremendous hope to these exiles when he proclaimed that this **son's authority would grow continually, and there would be endless peace** (v. 7). This is both our hope and our prayer, that Jesus' authority will continue to grow. We hope and pray that the Good News of Jesus will be heard again and again by all peoples of all nations for all generations. We hope and pray that through the church, Christ's authority will grow and continue to transform this world. And yes, in spite of the wars that continue, the endless acts of violence that confound us and the injustice exercised, we hope and pray for the time when there will be endless peace. In our hearts, lives and world.

Each of us is called to bring this hope and healing to our hurting world in the name of Jesus, the one who has been born to us, our Savior, Christ the Lord. In this Christmas season, may our lives reveal the endless peace that our loving God continues to bring to the entire cosmos. Every day we are given opportunities to be the presence of Christ to others.

May God inspire us and fill us and empower us all in this season of hope, joy, love and peace.

-Pastor Corey



World AIDS Day

December 1st is a day marked as World AIDS Day to remember and stand with those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. Whether someone close to us is living with HIV or not, 33 million people are infected and this does affect us. Every day 7,400 people are newly infected with HIV. There are 14 million children orphaned by AIDS. Not only is there a huge human toll, the long-term development work of organizations such as MCC is at risk because of this lost generation of parents, workers, producers and leaders.

As Jesus calls us to care for those on the margins of society, the church is responding here and around the world to this crisis. Churches reach out by offering home-based care for the sick, education and meals for orphans and vulnerable children, and prevention activities in communities and schools. Mennonite Central Committee supports these efforts by providing material and financial resources as well as training for young people, community health and home-based care workers, pastors and church leaders.

MCC invites us to highlight HIV/AIDS issues and the ways we can partner with strong people of faith around the world through MCC's response to this crisis. On World AIDS Day, join millions of people around the world in worship on December 1 to pray about this challenging issue. There is more information online at aids.mcc.org or call 316-283-2720.

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"He said, 'Listen up, you shepherds! THIS you GOTTA see!'"

from JoyfulNoiseletter.com
Reprinted with permission of Bil Keane

123 Covenant with Tabor Mennonite!

On November 15, all Tabor members and attenders were invited to share their spiritual gifts, talents and skills with the Tabor congregation and we rejoice in reporting that 113 adults and 10 children covenanted themselves to Christ and to Tabor Mennonite for the next year. There are some forms that are still coming in and we welcome them whenever they come. We hope that the rest of our 250 core group of attenders might also feel inspired to willingly share their gifts with the Tabor community so that God's Reign might be realized here and now from across the street to around the world. Extra forms are in the foyer and may be placed in the box on the table. All gifts offered in love are priceless.

Tabor Mennonite begins a new fiscal year!

At our annual meeting on November 15, 81 Tabor members voted to affirm the budget for the upcoming fiscal year starting December 1 and going through November 31. The \$268,127 budget is \$20,615 less than 2009 and therefore appears more manageable for us to achieve. Still, Tabor will need your faithful responses and commitments to help reach our spiritual goals for the upcoming year (as outlined in your Annual Meeting handout). In order to reach our goals we will need **\$5,156 per Sunday**. With the **125** giving units represented at Tabor, this equates to \$2,145 per year or \$41 per Sunday if we were figuring one's fair share. This is doable, and while some might not be able to give this much, others will be able to give more. When we give to Tabor, we bless God, we honor our commitments to each other and we experience joy. May God bless us all as we give joyfully to the ministries we feel God calling us to support this year!

Pastor/Congregational Review comes to Tabor

It is time once again, this January, to have a major pastoral review for each of our pastors, Corey, Karen and Doug. We have done this every three years according to guidelines and it follows with the terms offered for our pastors. Marvin Zehr will be our consultant and will work with our Pastoral Relations group to facilitate the process. In addition to the pastors, the congregation will also have opportunity to review itself and reflect on its ministries and commitments to them. Reviews always tend to bring some anxiety to pastors, but they are also good times to learn, grow and discern our call to ministry.

There were only a few shepherds at the first Bethlehem. The ox and the ass understood more of the first Christmas than the high priests in Jerusalem. And it is the same today.

- Thomas Merton, Seven Storey Mountain

The message of Christmas is that we should never give up on God. God raised up drunks from the gutter and opened doors for the frustrated. Look for God anywhere, but especially in your worst of times. God's message at Christmas time is that help is on the way.

Bursting In and Breaking Out! Celebrate Christmas at Tabor!

Opportunities to Give at Christmas

All throughout December there will be opportunities to give as we celebrate the birth of Christ.

Each Sunday throughout **Advent** we are invited to give items for Newborn Kits that Mennonite Central Committee distributes to hospitals, clinics and orphanages.

ÉNov. 29 ~ 2 gowns/sleepers (lightweight cotton)

ÉDec. 6 ~ 2 undershirts/onesies (any sleeve length)

ÉDec. 13 ~ 4 cloth diapers (flat-fold preferred); 4 safety pins (2 inch)

ÉDec. 20 ~ 1 bar mild soap (min. 4-5 oz. in wrapper);

1 receiving blanket (med. weight cotton or flannel, min. 36ö)

New items only, size 3 to 9 mo. Nylon and nylon fleece are not suitable fabrics.

Items can be purchased or hand sewn.



On **Christmas Eve** the Newborn Kits for MCC which were received during Advent will be dedicated and the offering will be for MCC to cover shipping costs. Make checks payable to Tabor Mennonite Church with MCC on the memo line.

On **Christmas Day** the offering will be in support of our sister church in Houston, TX, Nueva Jersualen Mennonite Church. Make checks payable to Tabor Mennonite Church with New Jerusalem on the memo line.

Night in the Barn

Experience the story of Christmas in the humble outdoor setting of a barn by joining the Tabor Mennonite Youth Fellowship as they present *Night in the Barn* on December 19 and 20. This live nativity will be a come and go event between 6 and 8 pm on the farm of Carol Duerksen and Maynard Knepp. There will be carols sung around a bon fire, hot drinks and the Christmas story will be told as you gather around the nativity in the barn.

Christmas Breakfast

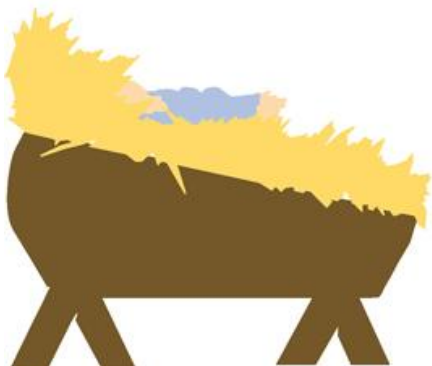
The annual Ladies Christmas Breakfast will be held on Saturday, December 19 at 9 am in the Tabor Fellowship Hall. Invite your mother/daughters/granddaughters and friends. Please sign up on the bulletin board if you would like to attend. The program will be presented by Lucinda Hiebert. Our Prayer Sisters will be revealed with a small gift.

Christmas Eve Service

Everyone is invited to attend Tabor's Christmas Eve Service on December 24 at 7pm. The theme for the evening will be *Christmas at the Stable: The Friendly Beasts Tell Their Stories*. Listen to the Christmas Story as seen through the eyes of the stable animals and through the songs of our children. Come worship Christ, the Newborn King!

Christmas Day Worship

Join Tabor's family in celebrating the birth of Christ. Come at 10 am. for worship, songs of celebration, and Christmas Joy!



Christmas Social Hour

December 27 worship, "*Let all Creation Praise the Lord*", will be lead by our college students. Following we will fellowship together with family and friends. Please bring your favorite Christmas goodies to share.
No Sunday School.

Western District Conference

Hymnsing for Christmas

Mark your calendars now for a special musical evening on Saturday, December 12, 7:00-8:30 p.m. at Bethel College Mennonite Church led by Dr. William Eash. This is a fundraiser with proceeds divided 50% for Western District Conference Vision 2012 and 50% for Bethel College. Let's sing together!

Mennonite Church USA

The Mennonite Women USA board approved \$7,000 in scholarship awards for 11 international women at board meetings Nov. 7. Eight of the scholarships were renewal awards for women who are continuing their education with scholarship assistance given previously from Mennonite Women USA; four of the scholarships are going to new recipients. Individual awards granted ranged from \$500 to \$1,000.

Men always touched by ways these women serve the worldwide church. One of our renewing recipients, Elizabeth Vado, is a leader with Mennonite World Conference. Hellen Biseko Bradburn is the new president of the African Anabaptist Women Theologians. We continue to see former scholarship recipients providing leadership in their churches, communities and countries. These scholarships provide spiritual dividends well beyond the size of the gift, +says Rhoda Keener, Mennonite Women USA executive director.

It is always difficult to make scholarship decisions because the need far exceeds the available funds, +says board member Regina Shands Stoltzfus, but the scholarships awarded make an enormous difference to the recipients' ability to continue their education. +

Donations to Mennonite Women USA can be made to Mennonite Women USA, 722 N. Main Street, Newton, KS 67114-1819.

How many observe Christ's birthday . how few his precepts!
Oh! it is easier to keep Holidays than commandments. +

- Benjamin Franklin



Josh Andres

~ Kansas State University

John Goerzen

Tabor Mennonite Youth Fellowship News

Since beginning a new season of youth group in September, TMYF has been up to many activities. We began with a fun kick-off night full of ultimate Frisbee and a water fight. On Wednesday nights spent in the parsonage basement we have been doing a study series on conflict. The youth group has also volunteered at the homeless shelter where we served a meal and interacted with the people staying there. Don and Rachel Horst allowed us to use their barn to view the movie "Bridge to Terabithia" and we have done a follow up discussion session on the movie. Due to the rainy weather we had an indoor campfire night around a ball of Christmas lights and a candle and microwaved s'mores. The last Wednesday of October was spent at the Gaeddert Corn Maze where we lost ourselves amongst the corn and bounced on a giant pillow. Our youth worship team has made plans to have a joint worship in January with the Goessel area youth groups. In Sunday School last month we studied forgiveness through the powerful documentary "As We Forgive" which shows the Rwandan reconciliation process. It has been a powerful experience and full of good discussion. This month during Sunday School we are studying Shane Claiborne's community and how they are conserving the world we live in. All in all we have been having a lot of fun as a youth group and will continue to plan fun yet meaningful activities as the year progresses.

Monica Voth TMYF Reporter

Happenings in January

Study Leave for Pastor Karen: Karen will be taking a study leave in January of 2010 to study at AMBS in Elkhart, IN. She will be gone 3 weeks from January 4-22.

Adult Bible Study: Violeta Ajquejay and Berni Kaufman will be leading Wed. Night Bible Study exploring immigration in a biblical view on January 13, 20 and 27. More information will be coming later.

Invitation to Join Willing Helpers

Ladies who wish to be a part of Willing Helpers Society should contact Phyllis Goertzen. We have daytime and evening meetings. We work on projects for MCC in the church, have a workday at the MCC Center, EtCetra Shop work evening, have a speaker, salad supper, Christmas Breakfast, Bethesda Home program and visiting and *new this year* a field trip! All of this and more is waiting for you. Join today.

Christmas Giving Tree

The Goessel Christmas Giving Tree is a response to the families and children who need an extra touch of love during the Christmas season. Visit the Crossroads Credit Union and help out by taking a tag from the tree and purchasing the

