



Farewell to Pastor Corey and Family

# Tabor Church News

August, 2011

## Hearts Made to Praise God

*“On the day I called, you answered me, you increased my strength of soul.”  
-Psalm 138:3*

### Worship Themes

**August 7 - News from South Africa**  
-Joe and Anna Sawatzky preaching

**August 14 - Enlarge Your Territory**  
-Matthew 25:31-46  
-Jason Unruh commissioned  
-Maynard Knepp preaching

**August 21 - “Binding and Loosing”**  
-Isaiah 51:1-6, Psalm 138,  
Romans 12:1-8, Matthew 16:13-20  
-Pastor Karen preaching

**August 28 - Ordination Celebration for  
Pastor Doug Krehbiel**  
-Clarence Rempel preaching

One of my desires while on sabbatical in June was to learn how to have a more grateful heart. There are many experiences that can renew our souls. But as we get older, it seems that the list for potential soul-shrinkers (illness, failed relationships, abuse) increases. How does one acquire a grateful heart? Maybe it happens when you come face to face with someone else’s authentic gratitude.

Jean (not her real name) was a mother of four children. She lived with an abusive husband until she decided to move (with her four children) into her mother’s one-bedroom house. Her mother was her only resource. Jean heard about *Circles of Hope*, a program sponsored by Peace Connections of Newton to help people with low resources live a productive life. After attending classes and learning skills to manage her life, Jean was matched with a circle of friends (allies) who began a friendship for the next eighteen months. What a humbling experience to listen as Jean expressed her sincere gratitude for the relationships which have helped nurture her. With the encouragement of others, she now lives in her own home and hopes to go back to school. How many times have I taken for granted my resource of friends who have surrounded me in time of need!

“No matter how hard you strike a bell, it will ring.”

Those words of Brother David Steindl-Rast in his book *Gratefulness, the heart of Prayer*, are an analogy of the human heart which is made for praise. If we pick and choose what we are grateful for, we are not responding from the heart. Even when the soul-shrinkers of life hammer at our hearts, hearts are still made to praise God. Gratitude rearranges our perspective. We are reoriented back to God as the source, the redeemer, the center. Sometimes the damage cannot be denied but what the psalmist reminds us of is the strength of soul. Strength of soul sometimes comes as we look back and see the sustaining hand of God. We are not made whole so that we can just feel better. We are restored and renewed so that we may rejoin God’s great design and give thanks.



In the coming months, I encourage us as a community of faith to engage in the soul-strengthening action of God by practicing gratitude. Seek to serve, not be served. Watch carefully for the steadfast hand of God. Our hearts have felt somewhat hammered with grief this past year. But we call on God, who answers us, and increases our strength of soul. Praise God!

-Pastor Karen



**September 17 & 18  
Camp Mennoscah**

**“If we don’t, God won’t...”**

*What?? What does that mean??*

Come to Tabor Church Retreat Sept. 17-18 and Carol Duerksen & Maynard Knepp will help us find out. Registrations forms are coming to your mailbox soon.

Keep in mind Tabor has already made a \$600 non-refundable deposit to the camp. Look for sign-up sheets for kitchen help & transportation on the bulletin board.



*Farewell Pastor Corey*



*Tabor Women and Girl's Retreat  
Celebrating our Friendships with  
Nancy, Hannah and Rachel*



*Moving Day for the Millers*

## Tabor Welcomes June Thomsen as Interim Pastor

Several weeks ago, the deacons announced June Thomsen as our interim pastor. June will begin her work at Tabor on August 30. June Thomsen is a graduate of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, and has served several congregations in various capacities in Ohio, Chicago, and Kansas. For the past seven years she has served as an intentional interim, or transitional, pastor in four congregations; two in Ohio and two in Kansas - Salina Mennonite Church and First Mennonite Church in Hutchinson. Over the years, June has had both conference and denominational assignments. She anticipates being a new member of the WDC Leadership Commission after the district meeting at the end of this month.

June has shared with us that her primary metaphor for leadership is that of a midwife. She looks forward to the privilege of helping our congregation birth new understandings, insights and/or approaches to the ministry to which God is calling us.

June is married to Ib (pronounced Eeb), who has done farming, flying and education work before retiring. They moved to Newton in 2007. They have two adult daughters, both teachers, and two grandsons who live in the Newton area: Erik, five and Evan, four. Grandparenting is now an important part of their life.

June's other interests include travel, reading, and sewing. She and Ib also enjoy occasional volunteer work together, most recently at the Hopi mission school in Arizona.

June and Ib currently attend First Mennonite Church in Newton. She will be serving us as a  $\frac{3}{4}$  time pastor so she and Ib can continue to attend one Sunday a month together at First Mennonite during her time with us. We have asked June to assume the primary administrative role during this time of transition. She will lead our staff as Tabor seeks God's leading into the future. Over the next weeks and months, the Deacons, Karen, Doug and June will be working to determine how best to share pastoral responsibilities.

We ask for God's blessing on June and Ib as June enters into this transitional role with us. We also ask for God's blessing on our congregation as we enter into this time of transition. May it bring healing, inspiration, and a new passion for the ministry God calls us to in the coming years.

## The Role of a Deacon

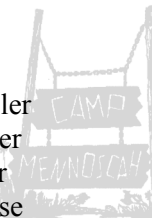
On August 9, the deacons will be hosting an exploratory meeting on what it means to be a deacon at Tabor. A number of persons have been invited to join them to listen, ask questions, and discuss this role within our congregation. Some of these have been nudged through the discernment process in prior years. Others are exploring this opportunity for the first time. Your prayers are welcome as we use this time to be open to God's spirit working in our lives, and as persons consider whether God might be calling them to this role in the future.

## Our Summer Campers

Avery Unruh  
Aidan Unruh  
Emily Brandt  
Karina Brandt

Hannah Miller  
Rachel Miller  
Colton Guhr  
Kellen Froese

Dawson Duerksen  
Kylee Unruh  
Audessi Unruh  
Porcelain Unruh



## Mennonite Church USA Conference

At midnight on Saturday, July 2, I departed on a charter bus with the White-stone Mennonite youth group for the long drive to Pittsburgh. After staying the night at Goshen College on Sunday, we arrived in Pittsburgh Monday afternoon just in time to register and attend the opening worship. It was amazing to see such a large group of Mennonites worshipping in one place together! Tuesday through Friday I attended delegate sessions from 8-12, and then there were two afternoon sessions from 1-3. The big topic we discussed was whether or not to adopt the Pittsburgh Experiment, which was described as a way to discern the direction of the church rather than through the traditional way of resolutions. It was interesting to hear the discussion, and if you would like more information about it just let me know. Other topics we discussed were MCUSA's relationship with Mennonite Church Canada, racism and immigration and how that affects Phoenix 2013, stewardship in its various capacities, leadership development that is focused on bringing out leaders in our congregations, and many other topics. Many of the Mennonite organizations also presented to us, including the newly formed MennoMedia which is a result of the merger between Mennonite Publishing Network and Third Way Media. Evenings were spent at the youth worship, where there were always energizing speakers and great music led by Jeremy Kempf. All too quickly though, our week came to an end. Friday night at midnight we left Pittsburgh for the 18 (or so) hour drive home. It was a great experience being a Young Adult Delegate. Because we were seated at round tables with a very diverse group of people, it was always interesting to hear other peoples opinions on the topics we were discussing. I would definitely encourage more people to go to Phoenix in 2 years! If you have any questions about Pittsburgh, email me at [lauraelaine25@gmail.com](mailto:lauraelaine25@gmail.com) and I can try and answer them or point you in the right direction. Thank you for all your thoughts and prayers over my week at convention! -Laura Unruh, delegate

## TMYF Service Trip to Camp Friedenswald

Road Trip! Road Trip! That's right, it's youth service trip time. We packed up and strapped in the youth along with Doug and Eunice and hit the road for the long drive starting at 6:30 a.m. after of course, a quick low tire check at Fred Unruh's. Around 9:00 a.m. the group stopped for some breakfast at McDonald's and Doug went off to fill up with fuel. We came out and immediately heard a hissing sound, and that's when the trouble started. We had a tire leak. Doug put in a can of stop leak so we'd have a spare and then we had to change the tire. After an hour and a half delay, the rest of our travel time went smoothly and we arrived at camp at 1:00 in the morning.

Of course we all needed to sleep in a little after our arrival. We spent the first morning touring the camp. After lunch we got right to work. We split up, guys and girls. The guys started by restocking firewood at the many different campfire sites. The girls painted a huge door to a shed, and a very long hand rail. After supper we played a tough game of ultimate Frisbee and then we headed into Elkhart to stock up on fireworks. We had campfire with singing and input from Friedenswald staff. Then we shot off a bunch of fireworks with some new friends from camp.

The next day we were right into the swing of things, getting to work after breakfast. The guys split wood all day and the girls stained a playframe. The maintenance director told us we were the hardest working group he's seen in his four years at camp. It felt good knowing that because of our wood splitting we will be a part of every campfire and spiritual experience with God for the kids that will be at camp. We also know the work on the playground equipment will be enjoyed by many children.



## Western District Conference

Day on the Farm has been cancelled due to excessive heat and drought. Look for the event to be held again in August, 2012

August 23: Let's Talk About... the future of adult Sunday School—7:00 pm WDC Office

Women and Girls Retreat at Camp Mennoscah Sept. 9-11.

## AVDS at Hesston College

In a moment of honesty . . . . is there anyone in your church who would say, "I feel a little bit on the outside"? What do you do with that? How do you work with that as a community—especially if there are differing beliefs? What makes us distinctive as Anabaptists? Honestly—what do you do? Please join this conversation at the Anabaptist Vision and Discipleship Series, Fall 2011 at Hesston College on October 28-30: Getting Beyond Them and Us—to We. Go to [www.hesston.edu/AVDS](http://www.hesston.edu/AVDS) for more details.



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## Remembering Our Loved Ones Who Have Died

As with most people that grew up in the Goessel community during the early part of the last century, the core values and beliefs that were so closely held by Dannie were instilled during his early years growing up on the farm. Therefore it seems only appropriate to use the analogy of a growing crop to summarize his life's journey.

The field that Dannie grew in was this community. A community that seeks to follow the will of the Father, God and his Son, Jesus Christ. It was in this field of faith that the seed was planted and germinated. The gift of life was given to Dannie on January 25, 1920, conceived in the love of his Creator God and in the love of his parents, Henry J. S. and Sara Schmidt. The nutrients of the soil could be found in the love of his parents and of his three brothers; Ferd, Walter, and Arnold and his two surviving sisters; Helen and Ruth. Later the family was further blessed with adoption of cousin Elsie following the death of her parents. Strong roots are developed through a combination of periods of stress and periods of ease. Growing up on the farm you learn early that life is not always easy and, at times, can be downright painful. One of Dannie's favorite illustrations of a painful situation occurred when he was still a boy. He was using a team of horses to rake sugar cane into shocks that his brothers would throw into stacks. Something spooked the horses and he could not hold them. He lost his balance when one of the wheels of the rake bounced over a shock of sugar cane. As he fell to the ground, his foot became caught in the tines of the rake and he was drug along behind the bounding horses. But there were also warm sunny days of ease, as illustrated by Dannie's fond memory of the time that his grandmother spent living with the family and the occasions when she gave him a piece of candy.

Dannie grew and matured in this fertile soil, helping with the family's chores, developing friendships at school, and most importantly, seeking a relationship with God. All of which led up to his public profession of faith and baptism on June 5, 1938 by the Rev. P.H. Richert, after which he became a life-long member of the Tabor Mennonite Church. His roots had grown deep and he was able to hold firm in his field of faith for the remainder of his life.

Finally the time of blossoming came. It may have taken some coaxing from his friends, but Dannie finally found that special someone that he could not live without and he was married to Alice Funk on May 24, 1957. The flowers of their love and commitment set the new fruit of three children; two daughters, Cheryl and Lynette, and one son, Dwayne. The nutrients for the new fruit were drawn from the field of faith in which his roots had grown. After a long week of work on the farm or at Hesston Corporation Dannie would often be found sitting at the kitchen table on Saturday night studying that week's Sunday School lesson. The energy for the new fruit was given by the Son of God. The regular family meals were always preceded with a time of prayer. The sustaining water for the fruit came from the relationships of family and friends. There were family gatherings with aunts, uncles and cousins at the holidays, bowling night on Tuesday, and family outings to exotic places like Minden Nebraska, or Glen Elder reservoir. The fruit became full and ripened into three new families that brought eleven grandchildren and most recently one great grandchild.

And now the rewards of the harvest have come as Dannie left the loving arms of his family on June 26, 2011 and went back into the loving arms of his Heavenly Father.

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*TMYF Cont.* That night we had campfire in a very special place called Mosquito Hollow. It was meaningful and we had a great time.

We finished up volunteer work on Thursday. The guys worked with trimming trees and the girls spread wood chips on paths and cleaned up camp vehicles. In the evening a staff member and friend from the camp, Jeremy, who is a maintenance worker and camp helper took us all tubing on the lake and we had a blast. We ended the day with another time of singing and input around the campfire. We also had morning devotions each day on the hill overlooking the woods and lake and did journal work each evening after supper.

On Friday, the youth packed up a picnic and headed for the Dunes on Lake Michigan. At the Dunes we climbed up a huge dune, which was exhausting and then ran down as fast as we could. We swam in the freezing water and had our picnic. On our way home we all heard a loud thud. It was the wheel bearing on the front driver's side and this was big trouble. We stopped about 45 miles away from the camp and had to be towed back. The youth were picked up by some friends from camp while Doug babysat the van. Thanks to the same late night repair work on our van from a camp staffer, Bracton, who is a mechanic, we were able to make the trip to Chicago the next day.

Saturday was Chicago Day! We started off going through the "Bean" and walking through an interesting park until lunch. For lunch the guys found deep dish pizza, because come on, you have to have pizza in Chicago. After lunch we walked to Navy Pier and rode the Ferris wheel. We toured around and saw Wrigley Field. Then for a change up from our normal dining we ate dinner at Ed Debevic's, a 50's restaurant where the waiters are intentionally rude,. Once we got back to camp we stayed up and played cards while Doug and Eunice slept to prepare for the long drive home.

On Sunday, we said good bye to Camp Friedenswald and started the journey home. We arrived at church around 9:00 in the evening. The youth would like to thank the congregation for all their prayers and support over our week of service and fun. It was a very spiritual and special time for all of us and we look forward to next year.

—Reece Hiebert reporting

