

Memo

April 2007

**A Word from Dorothy
Speaking—and listening**

As many of you know, Richard and I have two (absolutely charming) grandchildren. Lydia, now five, is beginning to read and Samuel, nearing two, is beginning to talk. The joy that Lydia displays in discovering new ideas through books is visible in her eyes, her laughter, and her constant urge to read. Samuel, however, is sometimes frustrated that his speech isn't understood—even by doting grandparents. Strange syllables hooked together are supposed to mean something but we cannot quite guess what he is asking for. Of course a finger pointing in the right direction or picking up object after object until we locate the right toy brings results—and smiles. He's speaking, we're listening but we don't understand.

I wonder if that is how it seems to lots of pastors. We speak, or preach, and Sunday after Sunday the people are listening. However, where is the understanding? Here are a couple of stories:

- A pastor has been preaching about healing, the need for patient understanding. Yet, the congregation is unable to have honest dialogue about a conflict that has nearly ripped them apart.
- Young people are eager for adult relationships that are genuine. Yet, many congregations struggle to find youth sponsors, mentors, or Sunday School teachers.
- We claim to be a Peace Church with a long history of witnessing to our faith in a nonviolent way. Yet, there are congregational members who insist that the “peace” teaching is an add-on to the Gospel.

I have been wondering how we in WDC might not only speak more clearly, listen more carefully, but understand more completely. For starters, I would wish for a faith formation that starts at the cradle and ends with the grave. In other words, we must be on a continual quest for spiritual growth and nurture. We must strive to speak our faith at every stage of our life. We must listen to each other—and to our context. And finally, we must understand how each of us is a disciple of Jesus Christ—a uniquely gifted person for ministry.

Together, we become the church, the visible body of Christ.

The irony is that the more we live our faith, the less likely we need a lot of words. In the meantime, keep practicing your speech.

--Dorothy Nickel Friesen

Western District Conference empowers its Anabaptist/Mennonite congregations to:

- ***Witness and invite others to faith in Jesus Christ,***
- ***Dwell in just and loving relationships,***
- ***Connect to God's mission in the world.***

Camping programs change lives

In my 30 years of working with teenagers, I have been with thousands of young people in camping situations. I have seen more teens start a relationship with Christ at camp than any other ministry in which I was involved. Camp gives them a chance to get away from their busyness and focus on where their lives are headed. Many make decisions about their lives that last them a lifetime. Vision 2012 is a great way to help our young people get this opportunity. Pray that we will reach our goal so that Camp Mennoscah can have a greater impact on the lives of our youth.

-Verlin Koehn, Enid, OK,

Vision 2012 Prayer Partner

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Please include announcements from this Memo in your bulletins and newsletters.

You are encouraged to copy and distribute the entire Memo in your churches.

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WDC prayer reminders

April 1 – Pray for our conference youth ministers, Doug Krehbiel (KS-based) and Hugo Saucedo (TX-based), as they empower youth leaders and youth to be disciples of Jesus Christ.

April 8 – Pray for young children in your congregation as they are nurtured in their faith through loving parents and caregivers, committed teachers, and generous role models. Also pray for the Mid-Texas meeting on the 14th that the Holy Spirit will guide and give wisdom regarding dual affiliation with WDC and SCC.

April 15 – Pray for Marlene Bogard, Minister of Christian Nurture and Resource Library Director for WDC, as she is ordained to Christian Ministry today at Tabor Mennonite Church, Goessel, KS.

April 22 – Pray for pastors—that they will nurture their relationships with family and friends and pray for congregations that they will be of encouragement to their pastors.

April 29 – Pray for the WDC Executive Board as it prepares the agenda for the summer delegate conference in Tulsa, July 27-29.

Pastoral openings

(Congregational Information Forms completed & available):

Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, KS - associate pastor for youth pastor (half-time); associate pastor for Christian formation (half-time); associate pastor for pastoral care (half-time). Positions may be combined.

Beatrice Mennonite Church, Beatrice, NE - pastor (full-time) beginning September

Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, KS - associate pastor (full-time) beginning August 15

Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman, KS - seniors' minister (half-time), open immediately

Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, KS - associate pastor with youth emphasis (full-time), beginning summer

Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, KS - associate pastor with youth emphasis (full-time), beginning summer

Fort Worth, TX - church planter (one-fourth time)

Grace Hill Mennonite Church, Whitewater, KS – full-time Youth pastor, July 15

Kingman Mennonite Church, KS - youth pastor (half-time)

Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, KS - interim lead pastor (full-time), June 1

Trinity Mennonite Church/First Mennonite, Church, Hillsboro, KS –interim youth pastor (full-time), July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008

Transitions

Floyd Born becomes the interim associate pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, KS on April 1.

Eric Buller, pastor of First Mennonite, Ransom, KS took sabbatical in January and will also have a month in June for continuing education.

Tim Kliewer, pastor of Trinity Mennonite, Hillsboro, KS, will retire May 31, 2007 from nearly 35 years of pastoral ministry.

Doug Luginbill, pastor at Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita, KS, will be on sabbatical from April 23-August 5. Hope members, Leslie James and Brenda Glanzer-Lilliston will serve as interim pastors.

Clarence Rempel, pastor of First Mennonite, Newton, KS, will be on sabbatical April – June.

Gordon Smith, pastor at Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, KS, will be on sabbatical during May through July. During his absence, **Marvin Zehr** will serve as Sabbatical Interim Pastor.

Western District & South Central Conference Joint Annual Conference 2007

When: July 27-29

Where: Doubletree Hotel at Warren Place, Tulsa, OK

Delegates: Churches - choose your delegates - 1 per 30 members or fraction thereof.

Theme: “Speak Lord! ¡Habla Señor!” (I Samuel 3)

Speakers: Barry Bartel (Bethel College president), Esther Martinez (church planter and storyteller), Raylene Penner (biographer/English professor), Lawrence Hart (Cheyenne pastor and peace chief)

Feature: “The Upside Down King: A Rock & Roots Musical on the life of Jesus” (written by Doug & Jude Krehbiel, Duane Johnson)

Planning Committee: WDC representatives: Dorothy Nickel Friesen, Marco Guete, Berni Kaufman, Corey Miller; SCC representatives: Leona Diener, Darwin Hartman, Cheryl Hershberger, Bill Zuercher.

Workshop ideas: Submit ideas for workshops and leaders to Bill Zuercher, billz@mennowdc.org

Brochures: Will be available in late May.

Check It Out

In this month's edition of Check It Out, discover wonderful new resources on leadership. Find out what coaching is all about, how to defuse pastoral burnout, shaping congregational identity and discover an amazing handbook on caregiving. All this and more in New Resources for Pastoral and Congregational Leadership. This may also be viewed on our website at www.mennowdc.org.

-Marlene Bogard, Minister of Christian Nurture and Resource Library Director

Concert

Canadian Mennonite singer and songwriter **Bryan Moyer Suderman** will be in concert at First Mennonite Church, Newton, KS on **April 15** at 7 p.m. (Freewill offering.) His concerts are for all ages and from the small to the tall. The concert is co-sponsored by First Mennonite Church and Western District Conference. For more bio info etc. check out www.smalltallmusic.com. Other appearances:

- MCC Relief Sale (Hutchinson, KS) opening act, April 13, 7 p.m.
- Inman Community Concert at Zoar Mennonite Brethren Church (sponsored by Inman Ministerial Alliance), April 14, 7 p.m.
- Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, April 15, 10:30 a.m.

Mennonite men & boy's retreat

Come enjoy a weekend with the guys at the annual Men & Boy's Retreat at Camp Mennoscah **April 20-22**. We'll tickle your funnybone, feed your stomach, and allow you to wear the same clothes for 3 days! Come to camp or sleep in more civilized cabins. This is for all men, not just dads and sons. Invite a friend; this is a great outreach opportunity. Bring your work clothes and guitars... we'll have projects for you workaholics and a chance to jam for you bluegrass fans. Questions? Call Brent Voran, 316-284-2657 or email: voranhomeinspections@cox.net. See the poster with all the details.

Retired pastors' lunch

How does an ordained pastor retire? What are the blessings of retirement? What are the difficulties in retirement? All pastors with a credential of "retired" are invited to a luncheon at Bethel College Mantz Library on Thursday, **May 3, at 11:30 – 1:30**. There will be good food, good fellowship, and good sharing by colleagues. Invitations will be sent in mid-April.

Vision 2012 update

Be sure to connect with the Congregational Promoter in your congregation. How is your church doing in its prayer and financial campaign for Vision 2012? By now, we have heard from over 500 individuals from across WDC who have indicated their support through commitments of nearly \$600,000. We have already dedicated the first project—a student library/lounge remodeling effort in the WDC Resource Library and we are about to expand the library into a new space. Another generous donor family has bought a new tractor with loader for Camp Mennoscah. Church planting efforts are using funds already in place. We want to hear from each congregation by Tulsa—our summer conference—in July.

Look for the newest colorful piece for young children -- an activity booklet -- in late May. It has fun activities to help children join in Vision 2012. A letter of introduction and a page of suggestions for use of the activity booklet in your congregation comes with enough booklets for each child. Vision 2012 is for all ages!

Coming Soon to Your Mailbox !

Every WDC church will receive a free copy of the DVD: **Safety Tips on a Sensitive Subject: Child Sexual Abuse**, produced in 2006 by Church Mutual Insurance Company. This DVD is about 15 minutes in length and is accompanied by a booklet that explains ways to prevent child abuse in your congregation. It will provide a good basic training for all who work with children or youth, pointing out the risks, suggesting prevention policies and talking about legal issues. I suggest you view it, pass it on to those who may be working on Safe Sanctuary Policies, and eventually place it in your church library. In addition, we have many other resources available in the Conference Resource Library on this topic. Visit our website at www.mennowdc.org and click on on-line catalog, search under Sexual Abuse Prevention.

-- Marlene Bogard, Minister of Christian Nurture

Attn: Deacons

A **Deacon Ministry Training Event** sponsored by the Association of Brethren Caregivers (ABC) and **open to Mennonites** will be held at The Cedars, McPherson, Kansas, on **June 9**, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The theme "Anoint Us, Lord" will be led by Wallace Landes, pastor of the Palmyra (PA) Church of the Brethren and chair of the ABC Board. He is an adjunct member of the Religious Studies faculty at Elizabethtown (PA) College. The event will include Bible study, keynote presentations, multiple workshops and worship. (Mennonite and Church of the Brethren have close ties as historic peace churches. Brethren and Mennonites have collaborated on a training manual for deacons, Hymnal: A Worship Book and other projects.)

Cost is \$15 per person, which includes lunch for those who register before the registration deadlines. More info and registration at <http://www.brethren.org/abc/>

Network of Biblical Storytellers

The Network of Biblical Storytellers (NOBS) 20th annual festival gathering will be **August 1-4**, in Atlanta, GA. "Welcome Back - Stories to Celebrate Homecoming". www.nobs.org

Take the DEO challenge

DEO (Discipleship, Encounter, Outreach) is looking for young adults (ages 18-25) who are ready to experience an intimate encounter with Jesus. Participants spend two months developing their faith before serving in community-based organizations in Phoenix and Denver. The 12 or 15 month-long program wraps up with a two-month internship in the participant's home congregation. For more information, e-mail Diana Cook at Service@MennoniteMission.net or check online: Service.MennoniteMission.net/DEO or www.d-e-o.org.

Western District Conference coming events

April 20-22 - Men & Boys Retreat, Camp Mennoscah
April 23-25 - Retiree's Relaxation Retreat, Camp Mennoscah
May 3 - Retired pastors' lunch, Bethel College, North Newton, KS
May 27-28 - Just fOr You (JOY) Disabilities Retreat, Camp Mennoscah
July 27 - (1-4 p.m.) - Reference Council, Tulsa, OK
July 27-29 - Western District Conf. & South Central Conf. joint annual conference, Tulsa, OK
Aug. 4-5 - Grand Camp, Camp Mennoscah
Aug. 18 - Day on the Farm, rural Hillsboro, KS
Sept. 8-9 - Women's Retreat, Camp Mennoscah
Sept. 17-21 - Work & Play Retreat, Camp Mennoscah
Oct. 4 - Pastors' Day Apart, Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, KS
Oct. 12-14 Mennofolk on the Prairie Retreat, Camp Mennoscah
Oct. 19-21 - Anabaptist Vision and Discipleship Series, Hesston College, KS
Nov. 3 - Reference Council, Location TBA

Conference Ministers' schedules

April 1 - Mentor Banquet at Eden, Moundridge, KS (MB); Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, KS, Floyd Born Installation as Interim Associate Pastor (LL)
April 2 - Western KS Mennonite Pastors, Dodge City, KS (LL)
April 3 - Vision 2012 steering committee (DNF); Staff meeting
April 4 - Church plant pastoral support committee, Dallas, TX (MG)
April 5 - Goessel, KS Ministerial meeting, noon (DNF, LL)
April 9 - Bethel College vocations seminar (DNF); Learning and Leadership Institute board meeting (MG)
April 10 - Constitution revision committee (DNF); Tulsa '07 planning meeting (DNF, MG)

April 11 - I-70 pastor-peer meeting (DNF, LL)
April 13 - 14 - Mid-Texas Retreat, San Antonio, TX (DNF, MG)
April 15 - Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton KS, Report on Past/Cong Review (LL); Marlene Bogard ordination, Tabor Mennonite, 3:00 p.m. (DNF, MB)
April 17 - Gifts Discernment Committee (DNF)
April 19 - Buhler/Hoffnungsaus, KS search committee (DNF)
April 21-23 Akron PA, Mission Leaders Meeting (LL)
April 21-June 3 - Sabbatical (MG)
April 25 - MC USA leaders' breakfast (DNF)
April 26-28 - Minneapolis MN, Church Innovations Spring Conference "Sustaining Missional Leadership" (LL)
April 27 - Prairie View meeting; WDC Executive Committee and Board (DNF)
April 28 - Anabaptist, History, Theology class (DNF)
April 29-May 2 - Vacation (LL)
(Marlene Bogard-MB; Dorothy Nickel Friesen-DNF; Dave Gerbrandt--DG; Marco Güete-MG; Doug Krehbiel-DK; Lee Lever-LL; Hugo Saucedo-HS)

HAVE A BLESSED EASTER!



The MEMO is published monthly for WDC pastors and committee members. Submit articles and correspondence to:

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