

July/August 2007

A Word from Dorothy

A conference minister job description

So, one day someone said, "What do you really do all day long?" And here's what I said...

I talk (phone, email, in-office visits) with pastors and church leaders, particularly congregational search committee chairs. In fact, some of these folks seem to be on "speed dial" and that's just fine with me. When there are things to decide, when a listening ear is needed, when success or failure--seems overwhelming, when a process needs to be developed, when conflict is erupting, when stress takes its toll, when there are negotiations to handle, I am glad to offer counsel and advice. I spend nearly all of my time being immersed in the life of the church which allows me to offer a perspective that local folks may not have. I can offer suggestions from other congregations--things that worked and some that didn't work out so well--and allow each leadership group to determine the best path for them to follow. I engage our WDC staff--those entrusted with the responsibility to carry out the mission and vision of WDC.

I organize things. I spend time thinking how to make structures work well. I try to find the right people to fulfill the priorities of WDC and its congregations. I lead some meetings--particularly staff meetings and then, in most cases, I offer support, resources, and supportive documentation. I feel as if I'm the grease to help the gears run smoothly and at other times, I'm the engineer designing more efficient gears to help us keep going.

I read and study. I learn about churches and their leaders by keeping up with some of the latest findings and research. I read and meditate on the lectionary texts each week, paying attention to the new word that comes from the Word. I pay attention to what Mennonite scholarship is saying; I pay attention to the ecumenical dialogue. I ask questions about what is working in congregations and I sometimes challenge patterns that have operated for years.

I pray and carry the church in my heart. I sometimes dream about the church and conference--waking up to find a new perspective that seems God-

given. I sometimes worry, fret, and stew about things that seem overwhelming (like health care access) and I sometimes laugh at the crazy notions (like raising \$1.5 million) that just seem to be the right thing to do for the sake of the reign of God in our area conference. I weep when relationships are broken. I seek out the counsel of a spiritual director and of a "coach"--people who listen for that sense of God's call in my life.

I drive my Hybrid to the office in North Newton most days with a sense of eagerness and I sleep well at night. I walk each morning along Sand Creek (or on my treadmill if it's raining, snowing, sleeting, or hailing) and I play with my grandchildren most every week. I am grateful for God's call on my life and I am very grateful for the call from Western District Conference to serve as a conference minister.

So, what do you do for the reign of God?

--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.*

Prayer

In the account of Christ's birth, the angels said, "Do not be afraid." Fear can paralyze us and also help us do more than we imagine.

During Vacation Bible School, "Be Bold!" we made prayer pillows as a "courage connection." An appliquéd angel on one side was personalized with the child's hands for wings. On the other side, the children decorated their own denim prayer pocket.

A visitor from New Mexico bonded with her prayer pillow in a special way. She wrapped her arms around it, held it close, and went to class. Later, again, she held it close. I can only imagine the stories this prayer pillow will tell.

Through prayer, we are held in the loving arms of our Creator. Let us name our fears, be assured we are not alone, and draw on God's strength and purpose.

Through Vision 2012, WDC is called to be bold, with opportunities for spiritual growth. May this be a time of renewal and blessing.

---Debbie Thimm, 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

July 1 - Pray for the MC USA Assembly--all those traveling, speaking, singing, leading, and participating--that this will be a time to "Live the Call"!

July 8 - Pray for Linda Ewert as she begins at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, KS as Associate Pastor for Christian Formation. Also pray for Peace Mennonite Church, Dallas, TX and Houston (TX) Mennonite Church that the Holy Spirit guides them in their pastoral transitions.

July 15 - Pray for Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, KS as it welcomes interim pastor, Orlan Koehn and interim youth pastor Justin Hiebert and says farewell to youth pastor Todd Lehman.

July 22 - Pray for Brett Klingenberg, youth pastor, as he and his wife, Cassie, leave Grace Hill Mennonite Church, Whitewater, KS for a voluntary service assignment.

July 29 - Pray for the Western District Conference and the South Central Conference as they meet in joint worship this morning in Tulsa, OK. May God's voice be heard and may God's people be obedient.

August 5 - Pray for Dorothy Nickel Friesen, WDC conference minister, as she takes vacation to rest and retreat in preparation for her continued service to the church. Give thanks for her call to ministry and the call for her to serve a second five-year term with WDC.

August 12 - Pray for WDC and Vision 2012--the three-year prayer and financial campaign that celebrates the mission of WDC. Pray for the benefit concert this evening in North Newton.

August 19 - Pray for Roger Juhnke, youth pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, KS as he concludes his ministry there today. Give thanks for God's leading in his life. Also pray for the Fort Worth church plant Pastoral Support Committee in their process of candidate interviews.

August 26 - Pray for Nita Wilson, youth pastor at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, KS as she concludes her ministry there and prepares to serve one year in Dallas, TX as a church planter intern with Marco Guete.

Pastoral openings

(Congregational Information Forms completed & available):

Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, KS - associate pastor for youth pastor (half-time)

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

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

Buhler (KS) Mennonite Church and Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, KS - associate pastor (full-time)

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

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

Transitions

Katherine (Krehbiel) Goerzen will become the full-time youth pastor at Grace Hill Mennonite Church, Whitewater, KS on August 1. Congratulations on her marriage to Peter Goerzen on June 16.

Todd Lehman, youth pastor for Trinity/First Mennonite churches, Hillsboro, KS, was married to Julie Stoltzfuz on June 9. Congratulations!

Esther Martinez, House of Healing (Dallas, TX) church planter, was married on June 2 to Jose Vazquez.

Natan and Rosalba Navarrete begin as church planters on July 1 for a new church plant, Iglesia Menonita Comunidad de Fe, Dallas, TX. Their roots are in the Mennonite Church in Bogota, Colombia.



Annual Conference

July 27-29 (WDC & SCC)

Register for annual conference by **July 13** to get the best rate. And remember to make your lodging arrangements at the Doubletree Hotel Tulsa at Warren Place by calling 918-495-1000. Identify yourself as a "Mennonite Conference" attendee to get the \$69 rate.

See you in Tulsa!

Summer concert!

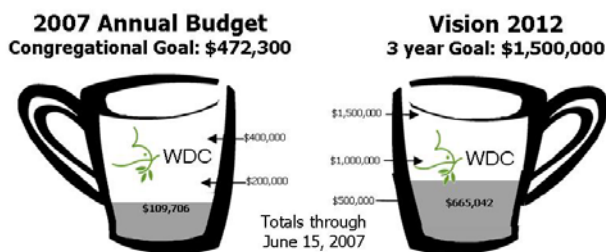
Plan now to attend the (final) **Possum Boys** concert on Sunday, August 12, at 7:00 p.m. at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, KS. This benefit concert will donate all proceeds to Western District Conference Vision 2012--for camping, congregational leadership, church planting, and resource ministries.

Reference Council

WDC Reference Council will meet on **July 27, 1-4 p.m.** just prior to the opening session of annual conference in Tulsa, OK at the Doubletree Hotel at Warren Place. This group is composed of the Executive Board, all members of all commissions, committees and task forces, WDC staff, WDC delegates to Mennonite Church USA assemblies, WDC persons elected and appointed to institutional relationships including MC USA committees, boards and agencies.

Please note this change: Supper will not be provided for Reference Council attendees.

Financial update



Check It Out

This month in "Check It Out", you are invited to select from a smorgasbord of new resources! My favorite in the pack is the new Mennonite Handbook. It's a seriously accurate and seriously funny field guide to all things Mennonite. Use it for introducing the faith or for sharing around a table. Other new titles include The Jesus Way by Eugene Peterson, Meeting Our Multi-faith Neighbors by Balmer and Tear Soup by Schwiebert. See the newsletter on our website at www.mennowdc.org. Call or email us to reserve a copy for your use: crlib@mennowdc.org or 316-283-6300.

--Marlene Bogard, Resource Library Director

Day on the Farm

The 12th annual "Day on the Farm" is scheduled for Saturday, **August 18**, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the Maynard Knepp/Carol Duerksen farm (from Goessel, KS: 3 miles north, 4 miles east, 3/4 mile north). This Agri-Urban event features rural/urban connections - whose fundraising supports WDC, Bethel College and MC USA.

Interim pastor luncheon

A meeting for pastors who have been involved in or are interested in interim pastor opportunities will be held on **August 30, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.** at the WDC office in North Newton (lunch will be provided). This will be a time of sharing interim experiences and updating expectations for future assignments. Put this date on your calendar and we hope you are able to

attend. Contact Lee Lever 316-283-6300 or email: leel@mennowdc.org.

Pastoral compensation

The 2007-2008 guidelines for pastoral compensation have been released by Mennonite Church USA. In addition to the paper forms available at www.mennoniteusa.org/executive/ministerial_leadership/salary_guidelines.html, Western District Conference Leadership Commission makes software available that provides a quick way of calculating compensation according to the annual guidelines and incorporating the results into a covenant of understanding between the congregation and the pastor. Details for experience and education units are saved for updating the following year. A comparison of compensation can be reported from year to year or among positions. A pastor or congregational representatives can download the software from www.manygifts.org/salaryguidelines.

Pastors' Day Apart

Announcing the next Pastors' Day Apart - Thursday, **October 4**; 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

- Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, KS
- Topic: "Pastors and Money"
- Presenter: Mark Wenger, Director of Pastoral Training for Eastern Mennonite Seminary at Lancaster, PA
- Sample break-out sessions: "Preaching about money", "How to negotiate compensation package", and "Pastoral financial planning for "builders" (age 60 and over), "boomers" (age 40-60), and "busters" (younger than 40)"
- Sponsored by: Western District Conference, South Central Conference, Southern District Conference (MB), Mennonite Mutual Aid

Mark your calendars now. Registration brochures available September 1.

!Explore

This Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (Elkhart, IN) theological program provides young people in the 11th and 12th grades in high school an experience designed to encourage the development of their gifts in leadership, expose them to the world of theological ideas, and foster in them a call to vocation in the church.

WDC participants for summer 2007 are:

Jennifer Warkentine (Hope, Wichita, KS)
Isaac Yoder-Schrock (West Zion, Moundridge, KS)
Benjamin Baumgartner (Whitestone, Hesston, KS)

For more information about !Explore, see: <http://www.ambs.edu/programs-institutes/clc/explore>

AMBS - Great Plains Extension

Are there church leaders or potential church leaders in your congregation who should consider taking seminary classes?

The Great Plains Extension of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary is offering courses in North Newton and Wichita this fall that would be especially helpful to persons just beginning seminary studies:

--**Reading the Bible**, an introduction to the Old and New testaments, taught by Jerry Truex, M.Div., Ph.D., on Thursday evenings at 2500 Place, North Newton

--**Thinking Ethically**, an introduction to Christian ethics, taught by Duane Friesen, M.Div., Th.D., on Tuesday evenings at 2500 Place

--**Human Development and Christian Formation**, a survey of spiritual formation and personal growth processes as they relate to forming disciples, taught by Kathryn Damiano, M.Div., Ph.D., on Monday evenings in Wichita.

If you have someone in mind to take these classes, please tap them on the shoulder—and contact Norma Johnson, acting director, AMBS–Great Plains Extension, phone: 316-283-7098, email: lbarrett@ambs.edu. (Lois Barrett, Great Plains director, is on sabbatical during the fall semester.)

You could also put an announcement in the bulletin or church newsletter and post the flyer for fall classes on the church bulletin board. It will be coming in the mail in early July. **Registration deadline is August 20.** More information is at <http://www.ambs.edu/greatplains>.

Women & Girls Retreat

September 7-9 at Camp Mennoscah

Do you feel that your life is constantly on “GO”? Or that, despite all our advanced technology and “time-saving” devices, it’s hard to “save time” for yourself or for relationships? Come join women and girls from Western District and South Central conferences for a weekend to focus on the importance of rest in our personal and spiritual lives. There will be time for relaxation, reflection, rejuvenation, refreshment, recreation, and rest. Programming for girls in grades 3-12 is being planned as well as mother-daughter activities. Speaker: Beverly Baumgartner; Retreat Pastor: Mary Herr; Music: Cousins Four; Seminars include: intentional quiet time, yoga, Bible study, book reviews, pedicures, water aerobics, laughter, coping with stress. Registration information will be made to churches in July.

Health Care Summit: Finding our Voice

What is the future of health care? Is our health care system in need of urgent care? Can an individual or churches make a difference?

Mark your calendar for **September 15**, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. at **Hoffnungssau Mennonite Church, Inman, KS**. This seminar will explore aspects of our health care system from ethics to consumer rights, Health Care Policy, end of life issues and more. Speakers and mini-seminars lead by area medical professionals and Kansas State public officials.

Seminar details available end of July. For information, call the church at 620-585-6733 or hmc@dtmspeed.net.

Marriage Enrichment weekend for pastors/spouses

Pastors, take some time for you and your spouse to relax, communicate and spend time enriching your marriage on Friday, **September 28 (7 p.m.) through Sunday September 30 (1:p.m.)** at the Retreat Center at Camp Mennoscah. There is space for 18 pastoral couples who can commit to attending the entire weekend. Marlene Bogard, WDC Minister of Christian Nurture will be the facilitator / presenter for the weekend. She has received certification in Christian Prevention and Relationship Enhancement training, which focuses on maximizing the strengths of marriage, communication, and yes, fun! (Funds are available of \$100 stipend per church to pay for pulpit supply.) **A registration fee of \$100 per couple** includes 2 nights lodging, 5 meals and quality time with your honey in the cozy atmosphere of camp! Reservations are being accepted now by contacting Nancy Funk at 316-283-6300. (Schowalter Foundation is generously supporting this project.)

Mennoshirts.com

Can evangelism be done with T-shirts? Doug Krehbiel and Alan Stucky hope so. These two WDC pastors have started a new ministry for the Mennonite church with T-shirts as the focal point.

Mennoshirts.com is a new website selling T-shirts with Anabaptist themes, ranging from silly to serious, designed to help people show their Anabaptist roots and share their faith in a new way. In addition to T-shirts, the website also has a history of Anabaptists and Mennonites as well as links to Mennonite colleges and seminaries, Mennonite Mission Network, Mennonite Disaster Service and other Mennonite organizations. Half of all profits will go to WDC youth ministry.

In the future Krehbiel and Stucky hope to expand with more t-shirt designs and opportunities for ministry as the online world of Mennonites continues to grow.

Conflict resolution training

The **Kansas Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (KIPCOR)** functions as an institute within Bethel College to strengthen conflict resolution and peace-building capacities in the communities and institutions it serves. KIPCOR encourages research, education, skill development and dialogue to enhance the understanding and practice of managing conflict, and to prepare individuals and groups to be peacemakers and to seek social justice.

KIPCOR announces upcoming fall training sessions: **Practical Skills for Managing Interpersonal Conflict**, September 4-5 & 11-12; **Domestic Mediation Training**, October 24-26. For more information, see: www.bethelks.edu/kipcor/

Western District Conference

Coming Events

July 2-7 - Mennonite Church USA Convention, San Jose, CA
July 4 - Staff Birthday: Torrey Ball
July 5 - Staff Birthday: Marlene Bogard
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. 7 - Staff Birthday: Dave Gerbrandt
Aug. 18 - Day on the Farm, rural Hillsboro, KS
August 30 - Interim pastor luncheon; Staff birthday: Doug Krehbiel
Sept. 8-9 - Women's Retreat, Camp Mennoscah
Sept. 15 - Health Care Access conference, Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, KS
Sept. 17-21 - Work & Play Retreat, Camp Mennoscah
Sept. 28-30 - Pastor's Marriage Enrichment weekend, Camp Mennoscah
Oct. 4 - Pastors' Day Apart: "Pastors and Money", 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, First Mennonite Church, Halstead, KS

Conference Ministers' schedules

July 1-7 - San Jose, MC USA Assembly (DNF, LL, MG, MB, DG, DK, HS)
July 8 - Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Linda Ewert installation (DNF)
July 10 - Bi-vocational call to ministry planning committee meeting (MG)
July 15 - Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, KS - install Orlan Koehn, Justin Hiebert; farewell Todd

Lehman (DNF, LL); Mi Redentor Church, Dallas, TX (MG)
July 17 or 19 - Western KS pastors, Dodge City, KS (LL)
July 20 - Women pastors' breakfast (DNF, MB)
July 22 - Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, KS; Grace Hill Mennonite Church, Whitewater, KS Brett Klingenberg farewell (DNF)
July 26-29 - Annual Conference, Tulsa, OK (DNF, LL, DG, MG, DK, HS, MB)
July 30-August 11 - Vacation (DNF)
August 7 - Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, KS (LL)
August 9 - I-70 Pastors, Topeka, KS (LL)
August 12 - 'Possum Boys Benefit Concert for Vision 2012, Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, KS (DNF, LL)
August 13 - Staff Relations Committee (DNF)
August 15 - Wichita pastors, Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, KS (LL)
August 17 - Women pastors' breakfast (DNF)
August 17-19 - UCIM retreat, Mexico (MG)
August 18 - Day on the Farm, rural Hillsboro (DNF)
August 19 - Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, KS, Roger Juhnke farewell (DNF)
August 20 - KEM Governing Board, Hesston, KS (LL)
August 20-22 - AMBS, Elkhart, IN (DNF, MG)
August 23 - Health care for Kansas hearing, Emporia, KS (DNF)
August 24 - Prairie View board (DNF)
August 26 - Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, KS, Nita Wilson farewell (DNF)
August 27 - Newton Hispanic church planting meeting (DNF, MG, LL); Stewardship Commission (DNF)
August 28-29 - WDC staff retreat, Camp Mennoscah
August 30 - Interim pastor luncheon, WDC office (DNF, LL)
(Marlene Bogard-MB; Dorothy Nickel Friesen-DNF; Dave Gerbrandt-DG; Marco Güete-MG; Doug Krehbiel-DK; Lee Lever-LL; Hugo Saucedo-HS)

The MEMO is published monthly for WDC pastors and committee members. Submit articles and correspondence to: Dorothy Nickel Friesen, dorothyntf@mennowdc.org.

Western District Conference MEMO
PO Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117
316-283-6300, FAX 316-283-0620
E-mail: wdc@mennowdc.org; Website: www.mennowdc.org