



# Memo

## February 2010

### A Word from Dorothy

#### It matters...

No matter what the issue, what the circumstance, what the conflict, what the joy, it matters that we share it with others.

The earthquake in Haiti is just such a reminder. All of us can do something. Sending financial donations of any size to Mennonite Central Committee, for example, makes a difference. Those school kits, relief kits, sheets and comforters matter.

The healthcare debate in Congress (and in most of our state legislatures) is important to all of us. It is, however, absolutely critical for the poor, the children, the mentally ill, the homeless and people "with pre-existing conditions". Those letters, phone calls and emails matter.

Many of our congregations just experienced an annual business meeting. We gathered to hear reports, wrestle with mission priorities, adjust expenditures and pray for wisdom. Every voice is important--from long-time member to new attendee. Every coin is necessary. Every prayer is heard. Showing up for the conversation is a responsibility and a privilege. It matters.

Our pastors are setting new goals, writing their annual personal spiritual plans for 2010. They are taking time to think ahead, focus on the important, and determine steps to seek God's leading in their critical roles as pastors. It's important to be focused on the Jesus way--preach the Good news, release the captives, recover sight and free oppression. It matters.

Our WDC leaders met for a strategic and vision retreat day in January. It's important to take time to pray, talk, plan, reflect, discuss and discern direction for WDC. With documents and good humor, the Executive Board focused its energy on God's call for 2010--a transition of conference minister leadership, establishing sound policies for organizational mission and health, clarifying the important role of a corporate witness for things we cannot do individually. (I suggest every congregation leadership board/council have an annual retreat to set themes and goals.) It matters.

Personal losses and crises are endured and managed when others stand by and support. How well I

know this! When others are happy and have success, it is also important to celebrate! How well I know this too! Take a look around and write that note, make a phone call, send an email, cook that stew, and pray with your heart--and hands! It matters.

*"Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I; send me!'" (Isaiah 6:8)*

*--Dorothy Nickel Friesen, conference minister*

### **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.**

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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**

**Feb. 7** - Pray for Ervin Stutzman, Executive Director for Mennonite Church USA, as he travels, prepares and leads our denomination.

**Feb. 14** - Pray for new educational programs to train, equip and strengthen our pastors--through college, seminary, conferences, and congregations. (Treat your pastor with a gift certificate for a new book this week!)

**Feb. 21** - Pray for the WDC Gifts Discernment Committee as it prepares a ballot for leadership positions--including a moderator-elect, secretary and eleven board/commission positions.

**Feb. 28** - Give thanks for the leadership of Weldon Schloneger, pastor of First Menn. Church, Beatrice, NE on his farewell Sunday today.

## Pastoral openings

(Congregational Information Forms available)

**Beatrice (NE) Menn. Church** - interim pastor (part-time, March 1, 2010)

**Bethel Menn. Church, Hydro, OK** - pastor

**First Menn. Church, Hutchinson, KS** - pastor (full-time, summer 2010)

**First Menn. Church, Newton, KS** - pastor (full-time, summer 2010)

**Turpin (OK) Menn. Church** - pastor (full-time, June, 2010)

**Western District Conference** - conference minister (full-time, June 15, 2010)

## Transitions

Pray for **Joan Boyer's** (Pastor of Care & Prayer, First Menn. Church, Newton, KS) husband, Carl, as he is in rehab following seizures and surgery.

Our sympathy to Eric (Pastor, Inman Menn. Church, KS) and **Ruth Buller** on the death of her father, Oscar Entz, on January 8 in North Newton, KS

**Deer Creek (OK) Menn. Church** will have their last Sunday worship service on April 25. **John Otto** is serving as interim pastor from January until their closing.

**Brett Dewey** will become Pastor of Hope Menn. Church, Wichita, KS, on March 1.

**First Menn. Church, Halstead, KS** will celebrate their 135<sup>th</sup> anniversary on April 28 with worship and noon lunch following. April 28 is exactly 135 years to the day that this congregation met for the first official worship service.

**Henry Goossen**, retired pastor, died on Dec. 26. He had served churches in Burns, Hanston, McPherson, Hillsboro, Goessel, and Halstead, KS.

Congratulations to **Joanna Harader**, pastor at Peace Menn. Church, Lawrence, KS, on her article "*Creativity and Care: Original Cards*", recently published at [http://www.youngclergywomen.org/the\\_young\\_clergy\\_women\\_pr/2010/01/creativity-and-care-original-cards.html#continue](http://www.youngclergywomen.org/the_young_clergy_women_pr/2010/01/creativity-and-care-original-cards.html#continue).

**Bruce Hostetler**, Interim Pastor at Whitestone Menn. Church, Hesston, KS, died on Jan. 21 following a heart attack on Jan. 7.

**Renee Kanagy**, pastor at New Creation Menn. Fellowship, Newton, KS, mourns the loss of her father, Max Kanagy, on January 26.

Miles Reimer, Associate Pastor at First Menn. Church, Hutchinson, KS and wife **Kathy Landis**, mourn the loss of Kathy's father, Dr. Ray LaVerne Landis. A memorial service was held January 17 at the Factoryville First Baptist Church in Pennsylvania.

**Debbie Schmidt**, chaplain at Kidron Bethel in North Newton, KS, will go to Mayo Clinic in late

February to aid in treatment of a painful facial nerve condition. Let us pray for her healing.

**Edwin R. Stucky**, retired pastor, died on Dec. 25 in Moundridge, KS. He served churches in Goessel, McPherson, Newton and Moundridge, KS.

**Lee Suderman** becomes interim pastor at Hoffnungsau Menn. Church, Inman, KS on March 15.

**D.C. Wedel**, age 101, died on Jan. 13 in Goessel, KS. He was the 6<sup>th</sup> president of Bethel College from 1952-59. While most of his career was spent in college administration, Wedel was also either interim or associate pastor at Mennonite churches in Buhler, Elbing, Goessel, Ransom, KS and Souderton, PA.

**Derek Yoder** terminated as youth pastor at Whitestone Menn. Church, Hesston, KS on Dec. 15.

## The Parish Paper

Visit [www.mennowdc.org/Publications.html](http://www.mennowdc.org/Publications.html) to view the February issue of **The Parish Paper**, entitled "*Should we Fine-Tune our church's Internal Culture?*"

AND NOTE: Congregations can now download several dozen free resources from the [www.TheParishPaper.com](http://www.TheParishPaper.com) website.

## Camp Mennoscah

We are looking for dynamic and fun folks to be **summer staffers and counselors** for this upcoming summer. We will be at **Hesston College on Feb. 8-9** and at **Bethel College on Feb. 10**—stop by and talk to us! Can't make it? Information can be found at [www.mennowdc.org/Camp.html](http://www.mennowdc.org/Camp.html). Application deadline is Feb. 24.

Start your spring with one of Camp Mennoscah's fun **retreats!** We have three retreats this spring: **Scrapbooking on March 12-14, Sustainable Living on April 9-11, and Retirees' Relaxation Retreat on April 26-28.** Information about these retreats can be found in the Coming Events section of the Western District Conference website at [www.mennowdc.org](http://www.mennowdc.org).

Think about this—Camp Mennoscah is a great place for **small group gatherings, family get-togethers, and other retreats.** Contact us about available dates or to schedule a visit or tour. We'd love to see you!

## 2010 Camp Mennoscah schedule

### MARCH

12-14 Scrapbooking Retreat

### APRIL

9-11 Sustainable Living Retreat

23-25 Mennonite Men of the Plains Retreat

26-28 Retirees' Relaxation Retreat

### MAY

23-24 JOY (Just fOr You) Disabilities Retreat

### JUNE

6-12 Junior High I - Zac Bartel & Jason Peters

- 13-19 Junior I - Kevin Neufeld  
 20-24 PreJunior I - Jesse Graber & Matt Krehbiel  
 24-26 First Camp - Lindsey Miller & Dana Tolle  
 (designed for first-time campers)

## JULY

- June 27- July 3 Junior II Allen Jantz & Janet McGillivray  
 4-8 PreJunior II - Delon Martens & Tammy Duvanel Unruh  
 11-17 Junior High II - Derek & Kara Klingenberg  
 18-24 Junior III - Adam Robb & Mariah Thompson  
 25-30 Senior High - Kelly Stucky  
 30-Aug 1 Young Adult Retreat

## SEPTEMBER

- 5-6 Mental Health Retreat  
 10-12 Mennonite Women & Girls Retreat  
 19-23 Work & Play Camp  
 Contact us at [campmno@mennowdc.org](mailto:campmno@mennowdc.org) or call 620-297-3290 if you have questions.

### Biblical Storytelling

Dr. Tracy Radosevic will give a workshop on Biblical Storytelling on **Feb. 20** from 3-5 p.m. at First Menn. Church, Newton, KS followed by fellowship meal for workshop participants at 5 p.m. and a Biblical Storytelling concert at 6:30 p.m.

In conjunction with this event, Dr. Radosevic will speak at Bethel College convocation on **February 22** at 11 a.m. These events are co-hosted by Bethel College and Eden Menn. Church, Moundridge, KS. For more information, contact Larry Temple at 620-241-7435 or [thetemples@juno.com](mailto:thetemples@juno.com).

### Pastors' Day Apart

**Pastors** - you are invited to attend a brief Pastors' Day Apart on **February 22** for (free) lunch and conversation (12-2 p.m.) with Dr. Tracy Radosevic (see information above) at Bethel College. Please **RSVP by Feb. 17** to Nancy Funk at 316-283-6300 or [wdc@mennowdc.org](mailto:wdc@mennowdc.org) to attend.

### Free on-line studies from *The Thoughtful Christian*

Good News! The WDC Resource Library has a one-year subscription to *The Thoughtful Christian*. It features hundreds of elective studies for youth and adults, on books of the bible, current events, environment, peace and justice. First, visit and explore the site: <http://www.thethoughtfulchristian.com/New%20Site/main/Home.asp>, THEN email me with the title of the study you want. I will download it using my special powers and then email it to you in a pdf format. Please take advantage of this amazing resource!

--Marlene Bogard, [crlib@mennowdc.org](mailto:crlib@mennowdc.org)

### "Pick My Brain"

A **blog** by Marlene Bogard will be updated about every 3-4 weeks and will feature thoughts and reviews of resources and timely topics.

Go to: <http://wdcresourceibrary.blogspot.com/>. Visit and provide feedback. The current blog is: *Why we need an Embodied Apologetic in Faith Exploration and Catechism*.

### Music Library Sharing Network

An email invitation was sent out to WDC churches this week to participate in an on-line database network to share congregational sheet music with each other. (*Church staff: please forward this information to the appropriate folks in your congregations*). It is an excellent way to stretch funds! For more information, contact Marlene Bogard, [crlib@mennowdc.org](mailto:crlib@mennowdc.org), 316-283-6300.

### Experience a Night at the Library!

**For:** Mentor/Mentee groups, small groups, women's groups, Sunday School classes, children's groups, large families and small churches

**Limit:** 25-30 people

**What:** your choice of informal activities, customized for your group - choose from: storytelling, DVD clips, browsing, book-talks, scavenger hunt, creative prayer activities and more. Marlene Bogard, Resource Library Director will be present as guide. Hot and cold drinks provided for a small fee, food is optional, provided by .....you!

**Why:** The Conference Resource Library is a gem - come and explore our 12,000 items. Contact Marlene if you are interested - 316-283-6300, [crlib@mennowdc.org](mailto:crlib@mennowdc.org)

**Cost:** A donation to the WDC would be very nice.

### Immigration

Consultation on Immigration Part II, will be held at Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, KS on **March 6**, 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m. WDC continues to listen and respond to the immigration concerns, challenges and opportunities in our area conference. This is not just for pastors - but anyone interested in the topic. Content will be follow-up from the Learning Community on immigration at last summer's annual conference and the consultation held in Waxahachie, TX in Sept. 2009.

**Focus:** Anglo congregation response. Congregations are invited to appoint two persons to attend. Brochures coming soon.

### Important address change

Please note that the mailing address for the Newton office of Mennonite Church USA has changed to: **722 N Main St**, Newton KS 67114-1819. Their post office (Box 347) has been discontinued.

### Study this summer!

The Great Plains Extension of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary is offering two summer classes in Kansas:

**Reading Genesis** (2 credit hours), taught by Patricia Shelly, Ph.D., May 25-June 12, **Gospel of John** (3 credit hours), taught by Jerry Truex, Ph.D., August 3-21.

Special audit rates for AMBS graduates! For more information, contact Lois Barrett, Director, AMBS—Great Plains, PO Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117; phone: 316-283-7098; email: [lbarrett@ambs.edu](mailto:lbarrett@ambs.edu). Register for one course at [www.ambs.edu/admissions/register-online](http://www.ambs.edu/admissions/register-online).

### MCC Central States

From Moses Mast, board member: *The Central States board is large because of the effort to have all the supporting bodies represented on the board. It is gratifying to see how the issues that may have divided us do not matter when it comes to caring for the suffering peoples of the world. One can see the same phenomenon in our relief sales of a united support for MCC.*

*I thought I was well informed about the work of MCC. However, most of what I understood was our giving of material aid. MCC CS is also involved in what I would call a ministry to the forgotten ones. There are the forgotten ones from hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Ike. Then we have the Native Americans. Time has erased them from our conscience but time has not healed all the wounds we have inflicted on them. People do respond generously with material aid in times of a crisis. People do not respond the same way to the needs of the forgotten ones whose needs are embedded in a flawed society. MCC is a servant of the church.*

The WDC Executive Board has appointed Moses Mast, Joy Mennonite Church, Oklahoma City, OK to the MCC Central States board for a second three-year term.

### A Retreat for body, mind, soul & spirit

Mennonite Women USA and Laurelville Mennonite Church Center are co-sponsoring a retreat called “*Women in Conversation: Living a Life of Gratitude*” at Crosswind Conference Center, Hesston, KS on **April 30-May 2**. See <http://www.mennonitewomenusa.org/Ministries/Retreats/Pages/WomeninConversationretreats.aspx> for more information.

### Faith & Life Bookstore

Faith & Life Bookstore recently relocated to 606 N. Main in Newton, KS. Upcoming events include a VBS open house from Feb. 6 - Mar. 20, a grand re-

opening celebration from Mar. 1-6, and a “Writing Your Personal Stories” workshop with author Naomi Gaede-Penner on March 6. FLB looks forward to being of continued service to you in their new location.

### Lenten Day of Prayer

“*Burden Bearing as Spiritual Practice*” is a retreat offered on **March 26**, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the Magnificat Center, 3700 E. Lincoln, Wichita, KS.

Offered by Kathryn Damiano, long-time spiritual director, this retreat will explore the roles of both giver and taker of burdens through the process of input and reflection as well as times of practice. Fee: \$35, includes meals/snacks and handouts.

To register, call 316-689-4081 or email: [nkaba@csjoseph.org](mailto:nkaba@csjoseph.org).

### Planting seeds in Vacation Bible School

Randy Smith, Pastor at First, Hillsboro writes: *I'm a Mennonite VBS graduate. Mom made sure of that. So did the two Mennonite congregations in Wadsworth, OH. People from these congregations actually contacted homes prior to VBS to register kids in advance and they came around each morning in cars to pick us up. Keep in mind, no one in my entire extended family had ever been a Mennonite. Until now. Do you suppose there is any connection between me going to Mennonite VBS for ten years, two weeks a year, and me being a Mennonite today?*

*What if these two Mennonite congregations had decided they were just too busy to organize VBS? What if they never got around to inviting this child from a Presbyterian family? Whether they were conscious of this or not, they actually were planting seeds. And the seeds they planted allowed God to grow them and produce fruit for the future.*

*How about our approach to VBS, or any of our children's ministries? Are we just doing what we have to do? Are we conscious we are planting seeds that provide God with a harvest for his kingdom? Can we imagine the sacred work we are engaged in, with life-changing and eternal consequences?*

*If we plant the seeds, God will grow and harvest the fruit for his Kingdom.*

### Western District Conference coming events

Feb. 4 - Prevention of Clergy Misconduct seminar, Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, KS  
March 6 - Consultation on Immigration, Part II, Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, KS  
March 11 - Women's Spring Sunset Supper, Location TBA  
March 12-14 - Scrapbooking Retreat, Camp Mennoscah  
March 23-27 - WDC Tournament, Hesston and North Newton, KS

April 24-25 - Men & Boys Retreat, Camp Mennoscah  
April 26-28 - Retirees' Retreat, Camp Mennoscah  
May 23-24 - JOY Disabilities Retreat, Camp Mennoscah  
July 9-11 - WDC Annual Conference, Lakeview  
Conference Center, Waxahachie, TX  
July 25 - Dorothy Nickel Friesen Retirement Open  
House, Bethel College Mennonite Church, North  
Newton, KS  
July 30-Aug. 1 - Young Adult Retreat, Camp  
Mennoscah  
Sept. 5-6 - Mental Health Retreat, Camp Mennoscah  
Sept. 19-23 - Work & Play Camp, Camp Mennoscah

*The MEMO is published monthly for  
WDC pastors and committee members.*

**Western District Conference MEMO**  
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**Visit our website: [www.mennowdc.org](http://www.mennowdc.org)**

### **Conference Ministers' schedules**

Feb. 2 - Prairie Pastor Peers, Kingman, KS (CR)  
Feb. 3 - FAB Pastor Peers (CR)  
Feb. 4 - Prevention of Clergy Misconduct seminar (MB);  
Annual Conference Program Committee (DNF)  
Feb. 5 - Prairie View Board meeting (DNF)  
Feb. 8 - Vision Team, Inman (KS) Menn. Church (CR)  
Feb. 6 - WDC Executive Board (DNF)  
Feb. 9 - MC USA leaders' breakfast (DNF); Meet with  
Erwin Stutzman (DNF, CR, MB)  
Feb. 10 - Staff Relations Committee (DNF)  
Feb. 11 - Gifts Discernment Committee (DNF)  
Feb. 12 - Leadership Commission; Executive Committee  
(DNF)  
Feb. 13 - First Menn., Hutchinson KS search committee  
(DNF)  
Feb. 15 - CLC planning committee; Vision 2012 steering  
committee; Stewardship Commission (DNF)  
Feb. 16 - Bethel College children's literature class (MB);  
Great Plains Seminary Board (DNF); Wichita Pastor  
Group (CR)  
Feb. 17 - Sub-committee meeting with Bethel College  
admissions (DNF)  
Feb. 18 - Retreat Day (DNF); Missional Pastor Peers,  
Hesston, KS (CR)  
Feb. 19-20 - Seminario graduation, Dallas, TX (DNF)  
Feb. 20 - Resource Commission (MB)  
Feb. 22 - Biblical Storytelling (DNF, CR, MB)  
Feb. 23 - WDC staff meeting (all)  
Feb. 25 - I-70 Pastor Peer group (CR)  
Feb. 26 - Mar. 3 - First Menn., Clinton and Herold Menn  
Church, OK (CR)  
Feb. 26-28 - MCUSA Resource Advocates, Baltimore,  
MD (MB)  
Feb. 28 - Farewell for Weldon Schloneger, First  
Mennonite, Beatrice, NE (DNF)  
*(Marlene Bogard-MB; Gilberto Flores-GF; Dorothy Nickel  
Friesen-DNF; Dave Gerbrandt--DG; CR--Clarence Rempel)*