



Memo

March 2010

A Word from Dorothy

On Saturday, February 20, I was part of a glorious celebration in Dallas, Texas. The occasion was the graduation and recognition of six pastors (five from WDC; one from Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference in Oregon) who completed the Seminario program--an eight-course, nearly three-year project sponsored by Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (Elkhart) with the Great Plains Extension and WDC. This Spanish-language seminary program was intended to promote quality education for the formation of Anabaptist/Mennonite pastors and leaders. Professors from many places flew into Dallas, taught in Spanish, in a pattern of a beginning weekend in class, then on-line, and a final weekend in class. All of this was possible due to generous grants from the Lilly and Schowalter Foundations plus the administrative oversight of Lois Barrett, Marco Guete and Esther Vargas and, now, Gilberto Flores and Sandra Martinez.

I wish you could have seen the smiling faces of the graduates, the proud glances from family members and the joyous clapping when the graduates received their certificates. I wish you could have heard the words of appreciation that the Mennonite Church had provided for Christian nurture, the many expressions of "Gracias", the cheering when the many photos were snapped.

What does it mean to be calling to gifted men and women to leadership? It means at least: tapping on the shoulder; providing new and creative ways to educate and resource leaders; it means flexibility and adaptability; it means personal commitment and sacrifice; it means that WDC steps up with finances, oversight, creativity and patience. It means uncovering the resources right in our midst and releasing them for the sake of God's reign on earth.

The blue graduation caps and gowns were an outward symbol of completion. However, the glowing faces and warm embraces were the signs of inward fulfillment of God's grace. Praise God for this bold experience. May it bear much fruit.

--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

March 7 - Pray for Brett Dewey, installed today as the Pastor of Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita, KS.

March 14 - Pray for Jacob Castro (San Antonio), Berni Kaufman (Moundridge) and Conference Minister Dorothy Nickel Friesen as they represent WDC at the Constituency Leaders Council (15th-17th) in Kansas City.

March 21 - Pray for the Program Committee as it plans for the summer WDC annual conference (July 9-11) in Waxahachie, TX. Pray for your congregation's delegates and youth who will attend this important event.

March 28 - Give thanks for Willmar Harder, pastor of Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, KS, as he is farewelled today. He and his family will begin a three-year Mennonite Central Committee assignment in Bolivia beginning with orientation in April. Praise God for First Mennonite Church, Halstead, KS, as it celebrates its 135th anniversary today.

Pastoral openings

(Congregational Information Forms available)

Bethel College Menn. Church, North Newton, KS - associate pastor for pastoral care (1/4th time)

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

Jaime and Suhelen Cazares (pastor of Iglesia Menonita Casa Betania, Newton, KS) had a boy, Jaime Javier on January 31. Congratulations!

CORRECTION: First Mennonite Church, Halstead, KS will celebrate their 135th anniversary on March 28 (not April 28) with worship and noon lunch following. Also, they will have a “Celebration of Music” on March 21 at 7 p.m.

Ken Rupp, retired pastor, was diagnosed with cancer (melanoma) this month. He is receiving radiation and chemotherapy for multiple sites of cancer. His wife, Anne, also a retired pastor, expresses their thanks for prayers of support. Address is: 13844 Sycamore, Olathe, KS 66062.

Bob Sprunger has been called by Bethel Mennonite Church, Hydro, OK to be their next pastor beginning July 1.

Robert Suderman, retired pastor, passed away on February 20 in Wichita, KS.

The WDC Conference Minister Search Committee has identified several candidates and is conducting interviews.

Check It Out

Digging Deep...into Jesus, Justice and Beliefs is the March edition of Check It Out from the Western District Conference Resource Library. Discover DVD and print resources on living everyday justice, unconventional farmers, testimonies on immigration, caring for God’s creation. Call or email the library 316-283-6300 / crlib@mennowdc.org to reserve one of these timely resources. Visit our website to see the full edition: www.mennowdc.org/Library.html.

The Parish Paper

Visit www.mennowdc.org/Publications.html to view the March issue of **The Parish Paper**, entitled: “*New Trends in Belonging*”.

Tournament time!

Get your teams together! The annual spring WDC basketball tournament will be **March 16-20** at Bethel College. The volleyball tournament will be **March 19-20** at the Hesston High School aux. gym. Information has been emailed to churches as well as contact persons from the last two years of teams. Teams must **register by March 2**, and rosters should be turned in by March 9. Rules, guidelines, entry forms and rosters are available at: www.mennowdc.org.

Camp Mennoscah

Three retreats—Camp Mennoscah is offering three retreats this spring and we’re absolutely excited about them. The **Scrapbooking Retreat is March 12-14**. Our incredible **Sustainable Living Retreat is April 9-11**, and the **Retirees’ Retreat is April 26-28**. We’ll accept registrations until the retreats are full, regardless of the preferred “register by” date. More information can be found at www.mennowdc.org in the Coming Events section. We’ll see you there!

It may still feel like winter, but our **summer youth camps** are just around the corner! If you did not receive a catalog with the registration form, it can be found at www.mennowdc.org/Camp.html or we are happy to send you one. Check out our fun-filled schedule for other events, too! We are looking for kitchen staff and nurses. If you would be interested in supporting our camping ministry in this way (and having fun), please contact us. Parents receive a camper discount up to full camp fees.

Have you heard? Camp Mennoscah is looking for suggestions to **name the house** on the new property. We’re looking for names in keeping with the other building names at Camp Mennoscah—Sunrise, Moonbeams, Meadowlark, Horseshoe. Send your suggestions to Camp Mennoscah. We want to hear your great ideas!

Our contact information: 620-297-3290 or email: campmno@mennowdc.org.

Immigration

WDC will sponsor an immigration consultation on **March 6** (8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.) at Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, KS. “*Immigration, Faith and Justice*” will keep congregations focused on this issue and will encourage all to gain in understanding, solidarity and advocacy. This is for everyone, not just pastors--send several from your congregation! Cost \$25 (\$10 college & seminary students). Lunch is included - **must RSVP by March 2** to 316-283-6300, wdc@mennowdc.org.

Oklahoma Pastor/Spouse meeting

The next Oklahoma Pastor/Spouse meeting will be in Clinton, hosted by Koinonia Fellowship (Lawrence and Betty Hart) on **March 8**, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. The noon meal will be a potluck, carry-in lunch with drinks being provided.

Update WDC records

Attn: church offices - Please send your latest **church directory or yearbook** to WDC for our records. (Send to: PO Box 306, North Newton KS 67117) Thank you!

Bethel College search for president

For information about the Bethel College (North Newton, KS) presidential search, see:

www.mennowdc.org/BethelCollegepresidentsearch.pdf.

Seminario graduation

The following pastors graduated on **February 20** in Dallas, TX from the Seminario Biblio Anabautista, an eight-course Spanish-language program offered by the AMBS—Great Plains Extension with support from WDC: Lois Barrett, Director of the AMBS—Great Plains Extension, presented the graduates with their awards, Gilberto Flores offered a homily, and Dorothy Nickel Friesen brought the prayer of blessing for the graduates. Certificates of participation: Juan Limones, pastor of Luz del Evangelio in Dallas; Aurora Parchmont, church planter with Neuve Jerusalem, Houston; Alberto Parchmont, pastor of Casa del Alfarero, in Houston. Certificates of completion of a Certificate of Theology: Blanca Vargas, pastor of Comunidad de Vida, San Antonio; Oneida Duenas, Bible tutor, Monte Horeb, Dallas; and Samuel Moran, pastor from Oak Grove, Oregon. In addition, there were over 15 people who audited courses through the Seminario program.

Eastern Mennonite Seminary

Distance learning course: *Money, Ministry and Me*, offered May 3-June 26, 2 credit hours, cost \$900. **Summer Institute for Spiritual Formation:** June 14-25, 1-4 credit hours, cost \$450/credit hour.

See information at: www.emu.edu/seminary/courses

Census 2010

Be a part of the 2010 Census Team! Temporary, part-time jobs that offer good pay, flexible hours, and are close to home. Call 1-866-861-2010 or see:

www.2010censusjobs.gov.

Western District Conference coming events

March 6 - Consultation on Immigration, Part II, Faith Menn. Church, Newton, KS
March 11 - Women's Spring Sunset Supper, Eden Menn. Church, Moundridge, KS
March 12-14 - Scrapbooking Retreat, Camp Mennoscah
March 23-27 - WDC Tournament, Hesston and North Newton, KS
April 9-11 - Sustainable Living Retreat, Camp Mennoscah
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 Menn. 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

Conference Ministers' schedules

Mar 1 - Comunidad de Esperanza, Dallas, TX (GF)
Mar 2 - Texas Vision Team (GF)
Mar 4 - Program Committee (DNF, GF)
Mar 5 - Casa Betania, Newton, KS (GF)
Mar 6 - Immigration Consultation, Newton, KS (DNF, GF, MB)
Mar 7 - Grace Hill Menn. Church, Whitewater, KS (GF); Hope Menn. Church, Wichita, KS (DNF)
Mar 8 - Clinton, OK (MB)
Mar 9 - Staff Relations Committee (DNF)
Mar 10 - Hoffnungsau Menn. Church, Inman, KS (DNF)
Mar 11 - Learning Community toward Christian Ministry, Menno Center Dallas, TX (GF); Gifts Discernment Committee (DNF)
Mar 13 - Texas Vision Team, San Antonio, TX (GF)
Mar 14 - Comunidad de Esperanza, Dallas, TX (GF); First Menn. Church, Hutchinson, KS (MB)
Mar 15 - Training for youth leaders, Menno Center, Dallas, TX (GF)
Mar 15-17 - MC USA Constituency Leaders Council, Kansas City (DNF)
Mar 19 - WDC Executive Committee (DNF)
Mar 20 - WDC Executive Board (DNF); Culto unido de las iglesias de Dallas (GF)
Mar 21 - Comunidad de Esperanza, Dallas, TX (GF)
Mar 23 - MMA Advocate dinner (DNF)
Mar 26 - Prairie View board (DNF); Training for youth leaders, Menno Center, Dallas, TX (GF)
Mar 27 - Texas Vision Team (GF); Faith Menn. Church, Newton, KS (MB)
Mar 28 - Hoffnungsau Menn. Church, Inman, KS (DNF); Eden Menn. Church, Moundridge, KS (MB)
Mar 29 - Kansas Christian Leaders Forum, Wichita, KS (DNF); Training for youth leaders, Menno Center, Dallas, TX (GF)
Mar 30 - Staff meeting (all)
(Marlene Bogard-MB; Gilberto Flores-GF; Dorothy Nickel Friesen-DNF; Dave Gerbrandt-DG; CR--Clarence Rempel)

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

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