

# Joy Mennonite Church Newsletter

November 1996

## Pastor's Corner

The Fifty year celebration of Mennonite Voluntary Service of the General Conference Mennonite Church was a very special occasion at Joy Mennonite on October 20. Especially for the Edigers, who have had close ties to many of the more than 25 years of MVS in Oklahoma City. It was also special because we meet in the very place where hundreds of youth lived and served.

The institutions of voluntary service and Mennonite Central Committee have both played a significant role in shaping the Mennonite Church. One is never the same after a term of service. We do note, however, that while MCC is thriving with strong grass roots support, voluntary service is waning. We ask if this is because the support for MCC is from the older

generation and voluntary service depends on the voluntary commitment of our youth. We are concerned about what will happen to the institutions of the church that are not supported by the younger generation. I believe it is a question of relevance. That is what I wish to address.

The older generation often accuses the younger generation of having a very narrow view of life focused on self. The older generation speaks of the senseless behavior of the younger generation. We should not under-estimate our youth. When we see the institutions of the church in danger of dying from lack of interest by the younger generation, we should think of this: youth perceive irrelevance much more quickly than older people. It is not a question

of the relevance of a specific program but relevance of the church to one's concerns. For the church to be relevant, youth (like all people) have to feel that the church cares about their well-being and the well-being of their generation. Who is going to sacrifice time and energy to an institution that is irrelevant to their concerns?

The Mennonite church in Mexico is a good example. When the people are experiencing economic and social crisis, the bishops concern themselves with maintaining the old traditions, and then the people say, "The bishops no longer care about us." The church cannot just concern itself about how to usher people into heaven when they die, and how to add numbers to their church. To be relevant, the church must concern itself about the social and physical well-being of

people in a non-self-serving way.

To be relevant, the church must address current concerns like violence and war, environmental concerns, economic disparity, social concerns like family values and sexual mores. Many churches have focused on abortion and homosexuality. I believe we should address these concerns, but in a different way from what we have seen. Space does not allow me to do that in this newsletter, but maybe next month I can express my thoughts on some of these issues.

Go and make it a good day. Walk with God. Walk with your brothers and sisters. Concern yourself with the things God is concerned about. Have a good Thanksgiving.

*Moses Mart*

## Meditation

*Terry Hostetler*

The presidential campaign is now in full swing. In just a short time we will be voting once again for President of the US. Now I will not presume to try to influence anyone on who to vote for. I am merely going to share some observations I've made. (I suppose I should mention that I am registered as an independent.)

My first observation would have to be that the network TV news leans so far toward the Democrats, I'm surprised they don't fall down. This I truly feel is an injustice to the American people. The news is to report the facts and events not to slant in favor of one or the other. What caught my attention was the presidential debates. One side asks questions (quite tactfully, considering this is politics)

concerning the opponent's ethics. His opponent simply ignored, made light of, or just moved on to another topic. On the TV reports, the man asking the questions was characterized as desperate, mean-spirited and mud-slinging. The man ignoring the questions is referred to as "taking the high road," or "refusing to engage in negative campaigning." And the networks' polls report Americans are not concerned with ethical questions, but want to hear about the issues. Now, remember, who you vote for is strictly your business. My concern is not politics, but ethics. Who's asking the questions and who's blowing them off is of no real importance.

When a candidate asks a se-

rious question concerning ethics, why is this considered mean-spirited? Or mud-slinging? This is a campaign for President! Don't we want a man of solid ethics or morals as President? Also, why would a man, of good ethical and moral standing, running for a high post, want to side-step questions concerning his character or behavior? What would be wrong with direct, honest answers? Wouldn't you think he would want to "clear the air" in a forthright manner? Does the American public really consider questions on ethics as unimportant? If this is true, I can only ask "Why?"

I quite often, when asking about ethical questions in politics, hear, "All politicians do it." In considering all these questions, I wonder if that response

shouldn't actually be, "We all do it.?" Think about it. Have our own ethics, or morals, gotten so lax, that we simply expect poor behavior? What, you ask, do I mean by our own ethics being lax? Consider it for a moment. Do you deal with everyone in a completely honest, or ethical manner? Are we always honest in our business lives, or in our personal lives, or even in casual-type relationships? How about your taxes, are you completely honest or ethical? Do you feel that you can trust salespeople you meet? How about a plumber? A police officer? Your congressman? Or the President? Can they trust us?

I can draw no conclusions. I can give no answers. Only more questions. Isn't it sad?

**Fellowship News:**

The Ediger's and Powers' families enjoyed the weekend of Oct. 12-13 at Bethel College's Fall Festival in Kansas. Bill & Thea Klassen also traveled to Newton that Sunday to see a friend from Germany they hadn't seen in 40 years!

Moses & Sadie attended a workshop on "Facilitating Healthy Pastor-Congregation Relations," Oct. 18-19 at Enid.

James Powers suffered a broken leg on Oct. 18 and will be in a cast for ten weeks. We hope he has a complete and speedy recovery.

Our sympathies are extended to the family and friends of James

Posar, who passed away Oct. 27. Though in failing health, James was able to attend our services the two Sundays before his death, for which we felt honored. The memorial service was held Tuesday, Oct. 29, at Joy Mennonite.

**Quarterly Business Meeting:**

Our 3rd quarter business meeting was held Saturday, Oct. 26, at 3pm. Among the items discussed were: MCC Sale in Fairview, for which we will be making peppernuts to sell; setting dates for Christmas activities; and the possibility of hosting youth groups wishing to do service projects in our city next summer.

**Worship News:**

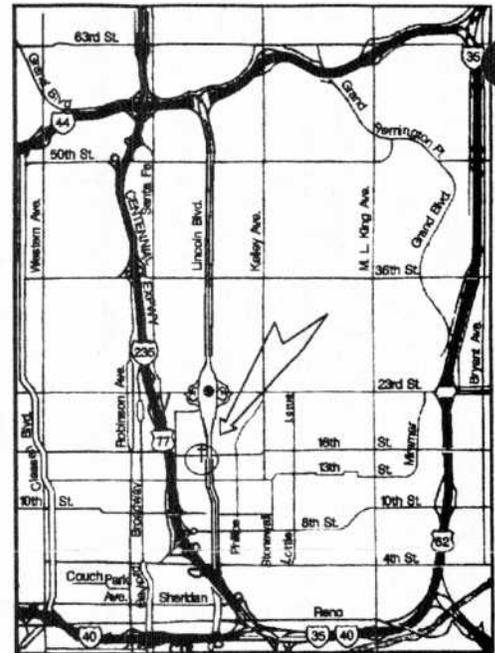
Grace Roley served as Worship Leader for October.

We celebrated World-Wide Communion on October 6, followed by a church dinner. Several persons joined in the CROP Walk that afternoon. Sadie Mast prepared us for giving to CROP with a demonstration of how the world's resources are so unevenly distributed to the people of the world.

On Oct. 20, we heard several people tell about their voluntary service experiences here in OKC, including Ralph & Becky Ediger, and Dennis Graber from Moundridge, KS. Chad Ediger also shared about his year in Hamil-

**Worship Service:**

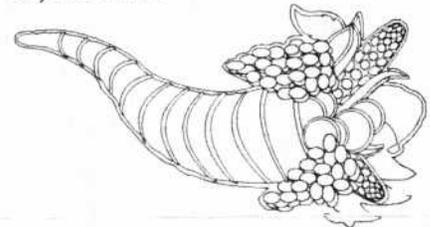
Every Sunday at 10 O'clock A.M.



**Church Address:** 504 NE 16th St.  
(just west of the oil derrick on Lincoln Blvd.)

ton, Ontario. We thank God for these service opportunities and for the personal growth each participant received.

*Newsletter Contributors: Moses Mast, Pastor's Corner; Terry Hostetler, Writer; Bill Klassen, Mailing; Darlene Powers and Sadie Mast, News Items; Mike Powers, Publisher.*



**Calendar**

- Nov 9 Peppernut Baking for OK MCC Sale, 1pm
- Nov 28 Thanksgiving
- Nov 29-30 Oklahoma Mennonite Relief Sale, Fairview, OK
- Dec 1 First Sunday of Advent
- Dec 1 Church Dinner & Decorating
- Dec 21 or 22 Church Caroling Party
- Dec 25 Christmas
- Jan 1 New Year's Day
- Jan 18 Church Annual Business Meeting, 10am

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