



# JOY MENNONITE CHURCH NEWSLETTER

## Pastor's Corner

As you can see by our newsletter that the Peace Factory has dominated our time, minds, and energy. It is now history.

The peace factory exhibit was taken down and sent to Dallas last Monday and will be on exhibit in Dallas until Saturday evening, April 26th. We feel there was good support and interest in the Peace Factory. It seems there is an awareness that we have reached a crisis in the way we as a society express our grievances and how we resolve our conflicts. Our guest book had a lot of comments of appreciation.

To be fair, we also had a few expressions of disagreement.

We believe more significant than the number of people who saw the exhibit was the way it served to put peace-making tools in the hands of teachers and leaders. The Peace Factory provided certificates for those who chose to make a commitment to follow Jesus in the way of peace. The certificate for children was a commitment not to make violence and killing a game. When a boy about eight years old asked, "Does this include video games?", we knew he understood. We told him if he makes the commitment he will have to decide. When the children came in a supervised group such as a

Sunday School class we sent the certificates with the teachers. This way the conversations about peace go on and the commitments can be taken more seriously.

The peace factory provided an opportunity for a public proclamation of peace. With the bombing of the Federal Building the level of fear has risen in America. As the trial of those accused for the bombing begins we sense the pain of those affected. In the context of this fear and pain is the news of the Peace Factory in Oklahoma City with the message, "How God's People Make Peace."

We want to acknowledge that the efforts of having the Peace Factory in Oklahoma

City was an effort of the Oklahoma City peace community, people with a commitment and passion for peace and justice from many denominations. Sadie and I want to say that we are grateful for the opportunity we have to be a part of the effort in OKC with these committed people. The Peace Factory is just one of many efforts to promote peace and justice in OKC. We just want to say thank you to all the people who helped in this effort and pray God will bless you for your efforts.

*Moses Mart*

## Would You Like Fries With That?

by Tayan Carter

For Sale: One pre-packaged religion. Contains a patriarchal system that promises salvation for followers, emphasis on unquestioning loyalty. Also comes complete with a kit on how to convert the unripened fruit. Three-in-one deity special!

Sometimes I feel like religion is being sold to the masses as a commodity. I

recently experienced this when a group of students at OU had "Jesus Awareness Week" to tell people about Christianity. They had banners, pamphlets, free pop, T-shirts, and dozens of volunteers. Everywhere people went on campus there was a group of students handing out religious writings. Their intent, I believe, was to tell students about Jesus and convince them of the truth behind his teachings. Instead, people saw Christianity as something to be bought and sold like everything else in

our materialistic society. We can order it to our exact specifications, change it when it suits us, and take it back if we don't like it.

This common attitude often disturbs me. To me, my belief in God is not an object, a sellable item, a fad, or even a religion. It is a way of life. It is simply the most enjoyable way of life I can imagine. I, too, want to tell people about this wonderful thing I have found. But I must stop myself and remember what I felt before

I was a Christian. No amount of pamphlets, T-shirts, Christian musical CD's, revivals, or sermons made me choose Jesus. Instead, it was a simple act of love on the part of God that made me realize what I was missing in my life.

It is this observation that convinces me that Mennonites, and many other Christians, have an even better way of "selling"

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God. We simply do our best to live a life according to God's will. We make mistakes like everyone else. We experience pain, have doubts, and sometimes even briefly lose faith. Yet we stumble on offering what help we can to others, no matter where they are on their own path. I hope that people still see those of us who do this. I hope that we can keep our spirituality in our hearts and off the shelves of the supermarket. No matter how low people drop the price of God and religion, a person who shows God's love by example is always the best advertisement.

(Tayan is a student at the University of Oklahoma. She really adds a lot to our group here at Joy.)

### Speaking of the Peace Factory...

Around 1000 people attended, 650 of them in 35 different groups, such as public and private

schools, after-school groups, and church and Sunday School groups. Approximately 80 volunteers worked at making play dough, helping at the computers, working with turning swords into plough shares, guiding adults and children, selling T-shirts and other things. Sadie and Moses say Thanks! You were needed and appreciated!

### Joyful News...

John Mkhize, from South Africa will be speaking at Joy on May 11th. There will be a potluck. This man of peace will have an important story to bring.

A church camp-out is planned for June 6-8 at Lake Thunderbird.

Moses and Sadie will attend the Pastor-Spouse retreat at Great Bend Kansas, May 2-4. Peter Brueckner will be speaking at Joy.

### Concerns...

Grace Roley's sister, Lula York, passed away on April 28th. Services were on May 1st. Our prayers are with Grace and her family.

Jack O'Neal was admitted to the hospital on April 26th with an asthma attack.

Bill Byerly, 95 years old, a long-time worker for peace went on to be with the Lord on April 22, after a short illness.

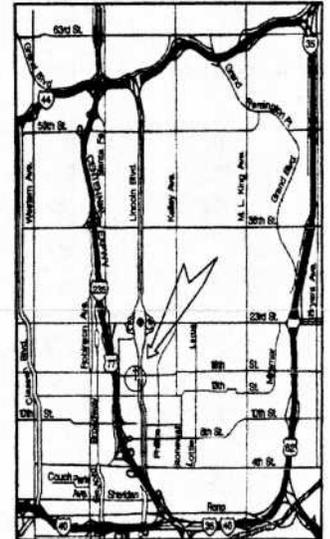
### A "Dear John" Letter

A few days ago I paid last respects to a dear friend who had lost his lengthy battle with cancer.

At the services celebrating his life, it became clear that to many he was more than the dear friend I thought I had known - he was that unpretentious, yet we all knew where he place his faith and trust.

Now, with only happy memories I'll just thank John Henry Williams II for sharing his life with us all. Rest in Peace, Dear John.

*Bee Klassen*



Joy Mennonite Church is located at 504 NE 16th (just west of the oil derrick on Lincoln Blvd., south of the State Capitol.)

Everyone is welcome...  
Worship is at 10:00 am.  
The telephone number is (405) 236-4938.

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