

JOY MENNONITE CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Pastor's Corner

Recently I was asked to participate on a Criminal Justice and Corrections Task Force. I was asked because Mennonites have pioneered in search of a biblically-based restorative system of justice. Most of the people on the task force know much more about our justice system than I do. I often feel unqualified to serve on such a task force. I hope I can make a contribution, but a greater value for me is to be connected to people who have a passion for the life our Lord called us to in his references

to the kingdom of God.

One would wish that the issues of peace and justice and ministry to the down trodden were central in the life of the church but it is not so. Recently at a meeting with pastors from various denominations every pastor said that the issues of peace and justice are marginalized in their congregations. People want participation in these issues to be a matter of choice. It seems by popular demand these issues shall be far enough away, on the fringe of congregational life so they will not be made to face the choice very often.

Maybe it should not surprise us

that the concerns Jesus described as concerns of the kingdom of God should be treated marginally. Jesus said it is a road few want to travel. Maybe it is only natural and right that those who want to travel this road find each other and denomination does not matter.

Nathaniel Batchelder, director of The Peace House, says that all efforts of peace and justice are connected. Whether you care for lepers in India, struggle against child labor in Indonesia to produce cheap products for our consumption, or if you help a mother struggling to feed her children and make a home in your community, all these efforts are connected. Nathaniel says they are

connected because a vision of God's will is the foundation for all our struggles for justice. He goes on to say that it does not matter so much where you spend your energies, only that you shoulder part of the load.

I need these people of vision in my journey. We are struggling not against flesh and blood but against powers of this dark world. (Eph. 6:12) These people of vision are the ones that cheer me on.

Moses Mast

A Look Back...

by Ralph Ediger

In 1965, the Western District Conference wanted to establish a Mennonite Church in Oklahoma City. They commissioned Rev. O'Ray and Edith Graber to complete a needs study and search for a church property. By 1996, Oklahoma City had a VS Unit and owned the property at 504 N.E. 16th. Our congregation back then was made up mostly of VS'ers and support committee members. Our greatest mission was "Wonder House", a pre-school in the inner city. We continued this mission until the government duplicated our work with Headstart.

joined the VS unit in 1968. I feel being part of this church gave my

life meaning and enrichment. The church in Oklahoma City has had its ups and downs, but generally the message has been the same. To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God, found in Micah 6:8.

From 1971 to 1979, our church made a bold move. We merged with Trinity Presbyterian Church. It was a wonderful experience: an ecumenical, bi-racial worship environment. One highlight was a social service project where we worked diligently, black and white together. Back then, churches in Oklahoma City were very segregated. Trinity Mennonite-Presbyterian Church was on the cutting edge, setting a good example for the entire city. During that time, the Grabers moved to St. Louis to work for the National Council for Christians and Jesus. New leadership came to Oklahoma

City with Rev. Stan and Marlene Smucker replacing O'Ray and Edith Graber. The split between the Mennonite-Presbyterian congregation in 1979 may have been caused in part by an over-extended building program.

Between 1980 to 1986, the congregation was called the Oklahoma City Fellowship. We met on Sunday evenings with a core of 7 to 8 families to carry on the message. At this time the Smuckers left Oklahoma City to take a church in LaJunta, Colorado.

Around 1987 to 1992, Rev. Mark and Gayle Weins came to Oklahoma City as church planters. This was a time of being the "gypsy" Mennonites, as I think the church moved seven times in one year. Finally, Joy Mennonite Church settled in Mark and

Gayle's home.

Joy Mennonite Church has now come full circle and is meeting once again in the livingroom of 504 N.E. 16th, under the leadership of Rev. Moses and Sadie Mast. Spiritually, I believe our church is as healthy as ever. Besides church and Sunday school, we are meeting in "clusters" and prayer groups which I think will help us to act more justly.

Remember, these ideas are only one person's remembrances. The dates are approximate. I love Joy Mennonite Church. I feel ownership to this church. The message continues. Hopefully, it will be as vital 30 years from now and we can learn even better how to walk more humbly with our Lord.



**Mennonite
Central
Committee**

Announcement:

A song festival celebrating 20 years of the Oklahoma MCC Relief Sale will be held Friday, March 14, 7:00 pm at the Oklahoma Bible Academy auditorium, 5913 West Chestnut, Enid, OK. An offering will be received for the Oklahoma Relief Sale. The two-hour program will include music by a ladies trio and several mens' quartets.

More Music...

Essengo, a Zairian Mennonite Brethren choir will perform in our area on April 23rd. They are being sponsored by the Edmond Mennonite Brethren Church. Mark your calendars now...the place and time to be announced.

The Peace Factory is coming!

The Peace Factory Tour, a biblical, interactive exhibit created by Mennonites to help all Christians connect their faith in God to a life of peacemaking, will be in our city April 16 -20, (during the anniversary of the bombing). Others in the community are helping out with the planning. You may contact Sadie, or show up for a planning meeting on Mondays at 10:00 AM, in room 310 of the Citizens Tower, at NW 23rd & Classen. **Expect to be given an opportunity to help out!**

Habitat for Humanity ... John

Perkins will be the keynote speaker in Oklahoma City on March 7th at 6:45 pm at Olivet Baptist Church, 1201 NW 10th.

Under the Weather ... the following in our group have been ill recently: Moses Mast, Ethel Poser, and Peter Brueckner. We wish them all a speedy recovery.

Grace Roley was in a serious car accident recently. We praise God for for protecting her, and pray for her complete recovery.

Guests... Stanley Shenk gave a presentation at our church on Feb.6th. Perry and Jeanie Klassen blessed us with a report and slides of their visit to the World Conference. We enjoyed having them here on Feb. 16th.

Moses and Sadie...attended the Jesus Lectures at Bethel College this last week.

Spreading the Joy! Our "cluster" or Satellite groups have begun with a meeting of the Eastside group. Being a close community in such a spread-out city is sometimes difficult. We hope that these groups will help us share and respond to each others' concerns as Christ would have us do.

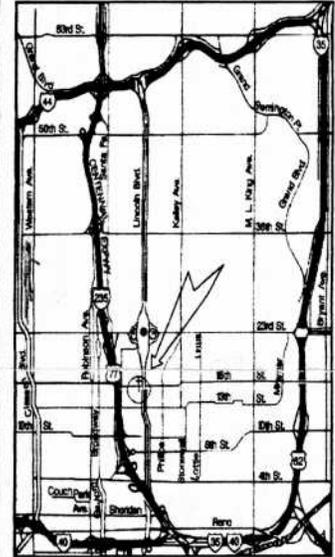
HAVE A BLESSED EASTER!!!!

Calendar:

- March 5 Deacons (worship) committee meets at 1:00 pm at Joy
- 7 Habitat for Humanity speaker
- 14 Songfest for MCC in Enid
- 23 Palm Sunday
- 27 Maundy Thursday
- 28 Good Friday
- 30 **EASTER SUNDAY**

Worship Service

Every Sunday at 10 am



Church Address: 504 NE 16th
(Just west of the oil derrick on Lincoln)



MOSES & SADIE MAST
4708 OUTPOST DR
SPENCER OK 73084

FORWARDING & RETURN
POSTAGE GUARANTEED
ADDRESS CORRECTION
REQUESTED

(405) 23-4938
Spencer, OK 73084-2722

Joy Mennonite Church



U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
OKC, OK
PERMIT NO. 2545