

## JOY MENNONITE CHURCH NEWSLETTER

### PASTOR'S CORNER

Have you ever wondered how well

God sleeps (if God would sleep) after the Thanksgiving holiday? In this exceedingly wealthy but very religious country of ours, God must have to listen to many pious prayers of thanksgiving for the blessings people have

acquired by their greed and selfish ambitions. Maybe more common, but just as grievous to God who loves the world, are the prayers of thanks for blessings that God wishes for all humanity but these prayers are made oblivious to the suffering of those who have not. It might help us to think about thanksgiving that would let God sleep well (If God would

sleep) to imagine or to actually write to someone, say an elderly couple in Russia who are trying to sell their shoe laces in order to buy a little food. How would you describe the American holiday of thanksgiving and how would you describe the things you are grateful for? I cannot presume that I know all about how God responds to us blundering humans but

it would seem that thanking God for blessing that are not shared does not give God great joy. I wish all of you good thanksgiving and that your prayers of thanks let God sleep well, that is if God would sleep.

*Moses Mast*

#### Truly Rich People

***This is a story given to us by Martha Shoemaker,***

***that we thought would be helpful in our thanksgiving meditation. We will have to condense the story but give you the message of the story. This is a story of a single mother with her children who worked and saved to be able to give to a special offering at Easter. They sacrificed to save nickels and dimes which they put in the offering. We pick the story up on the Sunday the offering was taken.***

On Sunday morning the rain was pouring. We didn't own an umbrella, and the church was over a mile from our home, but it didn't seem to matter how wet we got. Darlene had cardboard in her shoes to fill the holes. The cardboard came apart, and her feet got wet. But we sat in church proudly. I heard some teenagers talking about the Smith girls having on their old dresses. I looked

at them in their new clothes, and I felt so rich.

When the sacrificial offering was taken, we were sitting on the second row from the front. Mom put in the \$10 bill, and each of us girls put in a 20. As we walked home after church, we sang all the way. At lunch Mom had a surprise for us. She had bought a dozen eggs, and we had boiled Easter eggs with our fried potatoes. Late that afternoon the minister drove up in his car. Mom went to the door, talked with him for a moment, and then came back with an envelope in her hand. We asked what it was, but she didn't say a word. She opened the envelope and out fell a bunch of money. There were three crisp \$20 bills, one \$10 and seventeen \$1 bills. Mom put the money back in the envelope. We didn't talk, just sat and stared at the floor. We had gone from feeling like millionaires to feeling like poor white trash. We kids had such a happy life that we felt sorry for anyone who didn't have our mom and dad for parents

and a house full of brothers and sisters and other kids visiting constantly. We thought it was fun to share silverware and see whether we got the fork or the spoon that night. I knew we didn't have a lot of things that other people had, but I'd never thought we were poor. That Easter day I found out we were. The minister had brought us the money for the poor family, so we must be poor. I didn't like being poor I looked at my dress and worn-out shoes and felt so ashamed that I didn't want to go back to church. We sat in silence for a long time. Then it got dark and we went to bed.

All that week, we girls went to school and came home and no one talked much. Finally on Saturday, Mom asked us what we wanted to do with the money. What did poor people do with money? We didn't know. We didn't want to go to church on Sunday, but Mom said we had to. Although it was a sunny day, we didn't talk on the way. Mom started to sing, but no one joined in, and she only sang one

verse.

At church we had a missionary speaker. He talked about how churches in Africa made buildings out of sun-dried bricks, but they need money to buy roofs. He said \$100 would put a roof on a church. The minister said, "Can't we all sacrifice to help these poor people?" We looked at each other and smiled for the first time in a week. Mom reached into her purse and pulled out the envelope. She passed it to Darlene. Darlene gave it to me, and I handed it to Ocy. Ocy put it in the offering. When the offering was counted, the minister announced that it was a little over \$100. The missionary was excited. He hadn't expected such a large offering from our small church. He said, "You must have some rich people in this church." We had given \$87 of that "little over \$100." We were the family in the church! From that day on I've never been poor again. I've always remembered how rich I am.

NOVEMBER



NEWS

Six people participated in the CROP walk on October 11.

Judy Perkin's father, Bob Standingwater was released from the hospital after spending several weeks there for the second time.

On Oct. 4 several families from the church enjoyed a picnic at Red Rock Canyon and then went on to the new Cheyenne cultural center in Clinton to see the Mirror of the Martyrs.

Jack and Debbie O'neal and children took Debbie's mother Inez Gehman back to Virginia. Inez had spent 6 weeks or more here in Oklahoma, getting acquainted with her new grand daughter.

Belated News...

Bill Klassen is the new President of the Oklahoma Convention of Mennonite Churches. CONGRATULATIONS!

Cheryl Crichley is attending Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. She is working towards her Ph.D. in medical anthropology.

Congratulations to Judie Menadue on her new job: Advocate General at the Oklahoma Department of Human Services.

Coming Events

Workday at the church on October 31.

November 1st Potluck at the church. We are looking forward to have the Abraham and Sarah Caravan people (that worked here several years ago) visit us that weekend.

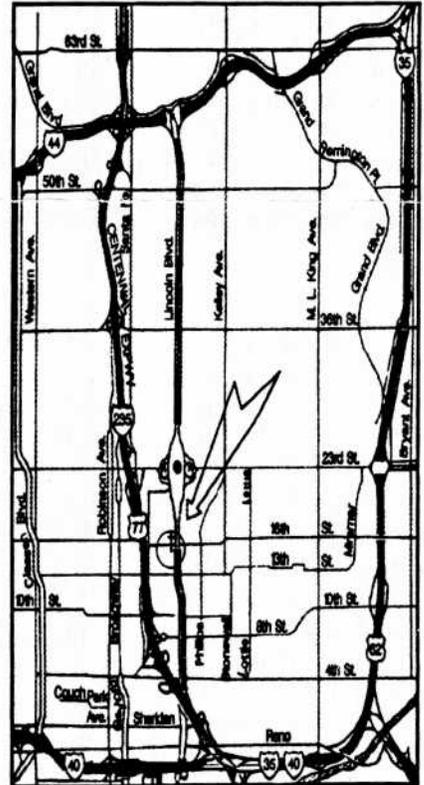
November 6th and 7th Oklahoma M.C.C. relief sale in Enid Oklahoma.



Mennonite Central Committee

December 7th at 9:30 the Oklahoma pastors and spouses will meet at Joy Mennonite. This will be the last time that Floyd Bartel, the W.D.C. Pastor will meet with us. He's retiring the first of the year, '99.

Regular worship services every Sunday at 10:00 AM.



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